

Kai Schluckebier

# Intersections in contemporary traffic planning

Introducing a situationist approach for enacting  
different mobilities

Arbeitspapiere zur Mobilitätsforschung Nr. 29



In den Arbeitspapieren zur Mobilitätsforschung veröffentlichen wir Ergebnisse aus Forschung und Lehre der Goethe-Universität.

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“The world... appears as a complicated tissue of events, in which connections of different kinds alternate or overlap or combine and thereby determine the texture of the whole.”

Werner Heisenberg, 1958.



## **A retrospective Foreword**

The starting point of this thesis was a meeting with Dr. Thomas Klinger in his office in autumn 2019. The reason for this meeting was a term paper I had written in the last summer semester on the geosemiotic study of mobility justice at street intersections. During our conversation he told me about his exchange with Marco te Brömmelstroet from the University of Amsterdam and the master thesis of Marina Vasarini-Lopez. Marina studied traffic interactions by making observations at several rebuilt intersections in Amsterdam. In addition, she analysed the reconstruction of the intersections in terms of planning methods and objectives, evaluation of the rebuilding and its spatial organisation after the rebuilding. At the end of our conversation, Thomas and I agreed to carry out a similar study for Frankfurt am Main, in particular by comparing the different planning cultures in Frankfurt and Amsterdam. I took these initial considerations as the basis for the conceptual design of my master thesis.

But even during the initial reading I realised that it would not have been satisfactory if I had stuck to this original idea. The actual theme of the thesis, which was still unknown to me, only became apparent to me now. It was less about designing a new methodology for evaluating traffic and traffic space. It was more about working out a fundamentally new way of thinking and planning traffic. I hope that this work will not only succeed in introducing a social science perspective into transport planning. Nevertheless, I want to remind us why the current corona crisis is a good situation to reflect on contemporary planning practice and to make us aware of our responsibility when we plan traffic.

My special thanks go to my reviewers Prof. Martin Lanzendorf and Dr. Thomas Klinger from the Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, as well as Prof. Marco te Brömmelstroet from the University of Amsterdam, who helped me a lot with his advice. I would also like to thank my family and friends, especially Mr. Adrian Berger and Mrs. Madeleine Berger, with whom I had the opportunity to discuss my master thesis intensively, as well as to my girlfriend, who put up with me even in situations of pure desperation.



# 1

## Introduction: On contemporary traffic planning

“Nine seconds played ... here on Neusser Strasse. Relatively many cars on the road, but you can see that with a lot of safety distance even between the lines. That's good ... here: Cyclist without counter-pressure... what is he doing? Just turn here. Into the last third of Neusser Straße, because nobody bothers him. I like that, that's brave... Two gentlemen down here, at least one and a half metres between them, that's good, that's confident... A lot of space between the lines.” (german in original)

Observation at Neusser Straße 84, Köln  
Robin Hunke, football commentator (Sport 1 2020)

Le Corbusier's hand pointing on Plan Voisin (*see Figure 1*), a utopian modernist vision for Paris, which was never built, but which have enormous impact of today's traffic planning. Modernist city planning produced spaces designed for vehicular traffic, a city were different functions like housing, working, shopping, and so on are strictly separated, a city were streets with all the street life is made obsolete. Much has been written about the hegemony of the car and its destructive impact on the city (e. g. Jacobs 1961; Gehl 2010; Halprin 1966; Mumford 1970). Indeed, large areas of our western cities now consist of car-only environment – the non-places of super-modernity (Augé 1995). In London about one-quarter and nearly two-thirds in LA are devoted to car-only environments, exerting a spatial dominance over surrounding environments. They are sites assembled only as thoroughfares for vehicular traffic (Sheller und Urry 2000: 746).

So, apart from debates raising concerns of environmental sustainability, automobility dominates space, especially urban space and has contributed to the radical re-organisation of urban space (Böhm et al. 2006: 9). In contemporary western societies we could speak of automobility as the dominant practical and cultural paradigm of everyday mobilities (Beckmann 2001a, 2001b; Dant 2004; Featherstone et al. 2005; Freund and Martin 1993; Gartman 2004; Merriman 2004; Miller 2001; Pooley et al. 2005; Sheller 2003, 2004; Sheller and Urry 2000, 2004, 2006; Thrift 2004; Urry 1999, 2000, 2004). Much of people's social life would just not be feasible without the car. There are social relations that get stabilised for long periods of time, even though a massive sociocultural maelstrom of change surround it. It seems to sail on regardless, now over a century old. Thinking about societies without contemplating how everyday activities are constituted by car travel is impossible (Adey 2010: 178).



**Figure 1:** Le Corbusier's hand pointing on Plan Voisin (in Yorgancıoğlu 2014)

But in the recent past, there have been crises, like the oil crises in the 1970s, that challenge the hegemony of modernist car-centric planning of our cities. Since the 1960s, numerous scholars questioning the modernistic ways of planning streets, and the city in a wider sense in the course of increasing vehicle movement and the failure of car-centred cities (see e. g. Lynch 1960; Gehl 1987; Jacobs 1961; Jacobs and Appleyard 1987; Whyte 1968). But only since debates about

urban health and liveability, congestions and climate change, local municipalities are circumventing standard design manuals and redesigning the street in not-car-centred ways. In the most recent Corona crisis, many of such retrofits are gaining momentum around the world. In New York and London, both majors have pronounced to change the traffic systems profoundly: more bicycle lanes, more restrictions for vehicle traffic. In Germany, there are experiments with new types of streets with more space for bicyclists, known as Pop-Up bicycle lanes (Berlin), new types of intersections based on the model of the Dutch Intersection (Darmstadt) which should increase traffic safety. In Vienna, an intersection was rebuilt under the project name Gürtel-frische West. On seven asphaltic lanes they built a swimming pool, next to it a stage, rolled turf covers the asphalt, on top of it there are parasols, palm trees in tubs. All of them are crisis experiments which try to initiate countermovements against modernist planning.

An example for an artificial induced crisis experiment we can observe at Alexanderplein in Amsterdam. In May 2016 at Alexanderplein – a busy intersection near the city centre with three tramlines, where many people were walking, driving and riding bicycles – all traffic lights were shut off for all traffic modes, in all directions (Glaser 2017). This pilot was part of a larger mobility strategy across the city of Amsterdam to make more room for cyclists and pedestrians. The Urban Cycling Institute studied the impact on human behaviour, perceptions, and experiences. They observed that the interactional rituals have shifted. Instead of relying on traffic lights, they now relied on their own abilities and those of the others to interact, communicate and cooperate. Before traffic lights were turned off, bicyclists stopping at the traffic light checked their phone, or adjusted their pedals. Very little interaction among others took place. After, most cyclists interact with others using eyes, gestures, expressions, and voices. It was so successful that the pilot was extended and a few months later the lights were completely removed.

Despite these crises fostering a re-thinking how to assemble the street, modernist planning is still the most hegemonic way to do this in the most cities of the western world. Mumford (1961) argues that this hegemony goes hand in hand with the Platonic overvaluation of abstraction and geometrisation of the city and all things within no matter how complex they are. Streets continue to be designed with the positivist ethos and therefore elicit a certain determinism that corresponds to the economics of increased vehicle mobility (Ingersoll 2006: 123 f.). Indeed, transport planning in modernist tradition has a convincing aura of a hard, objective science. Today, many traffic planning works like a 21<sup>st</sup> century version of Le Corbusier's finger pointing on a model which should represent the image of the city. Of course, we have often not a physical model of the city, but we see these models on our computer screens looking from above on the city, on the in-

between spaces, on a street corner which can be engineered. Traffic planners seemed to ask, what is efficient? As policy domain, traffic planning thinks about mechanic efficiency which is translated in standard norms often developed as handy guidelines. The nature of how they are represented and used in political processes and debates in society make them into unquestioned norms that become accepted. I argue that the ways how we plan traffic do not only describe a reality out there, but also shape this reality. Of course, traffic planning and its methods are productive. They (help us to) make mobile worlds. Regarding Law and Urry (2004), we do not simply describe the world as it is; rather, we also enact it. I suggest, if we make these worlds, we can, in some measure, think about the worlds, we want to make. The argument is that we can understand contemporary traffic planning as an expression of and a reflexive moment in the continuing enactment of a certain world, a certain reality. The reinforcement of a certain reality makes alternatives less possible. Therefore, we are always getting involved in ontological politics (ibid).

However, thinking of crisis experiments, we should see that what might look like purely technical and instrumental questions – the street and what takes place on it – actually points at issues of sociality and culture (Jensen 2013a: 189). The famous journalist and urbanist William Hollingsworth Whyte once beautifully formulated that streets are the rivers of life in the city. Streets help us to move around effectively, but streets are also a stage where public life takes place. And, to Whyte, public life is the essence of cities. To Mumford, “the interest of mechanical efficiency and outward aesthetic conformity the engineer ignored the social structure of the city, and in his effort to accelerate traffic, he impeded the meeting and co-operation of those whom the traffic supposedly served.” (Mumford 1961: 390). The standard modernist approaches to traffic planning have limited itself to pure numbers, measures and models calculating traffic, whereby humans and public life were largely ignored, and cities turned into the transit spaces we know (Peters 2006: 155).

Despite their significance to the social life to the city, we often see streets as monofunctional. We experience interaction with others as traffic, “internalizing and taking for granted the rule systems that mediate that interaction. [...] And we take this social order – its efficiencies, inequalities, and indeed bodily risks – as routine” (Prytherch 2018: 1 f.). In the vein of Normark (2006), I argue that in assessing traffic, contemporary traffic planning is a 21<sup>st</sup> century version of modernist planning and thus has inadequate conceptions of *the street* and *the social*. This inadequacy is two-fold: First, many actors involved in traffic planning, street administrators, traffic politicians, and traffic planners, systematically tend to disconnect the social and the

street, with all respect to their professionalism and lawful purposes. Second, if we look on the relationship between the street and the social, those who can be expected to speak up for its salience under-socialise the social. Many social scientists seem to mean that there is nothing particularly social in the street worth attention. They leave the field to psychologists which apply their cognitive models on traffic behaviour, or to street safety researchers which pleads that streets would work much better without any social interference (ibid: 2).

The exploration of mobilities with the two famous sociologists Harold Garfinkel and Erving Goffman as guides enables us to see that only the most mundane phenomenon like crossing the street is by no means neither just instrumental practices nor they are trivial acts of physical displacement. There is too much going on that we are able to say that. We should have seen that everyday traffic is defined by decisions taken elsewhere: in planning departments, architectural offices, and city governments as, for example, when traffic lights command us to stop. How the street is assembled is meticulously and strategically staged from above. But streets are also stages for interaction, they are the choreographic stages where everyday mobilities and life take place. Therefore, mobilities are also staged from below by us and our consociates presenting ourselves to others. In terms of Goffman,

“[w]hether made in institutionalized settings or not, what is situational about such processing encounters is clear: Every culture, and certainly ours, seems to have a vast lore of fact and fantasy regarding embodied indicators of status and character, thus appearing to render persons readable. By a sort of prearrangement, then, social situations seem to be perfectly designed to provide us with evidence of a participant's various attributes – if only to vividly re-present what we already know. Further, in social situations, as in other circumstances, deciders, if pressed, can employ an open-ended list of rationalizations to conceal from the subject (and even from themselves) the mix of considerations that figure in their decision and, especially, the relative weight given to these several determinants.” (Goffman 1983: 8).

Goffman and Garfinkel's insights into the little dramas of social life substantiate the fact that traffic is staged by ongoing, situationally produced orders connecting from above and from below (Hester and Francis 2003; Jensen 2013a; Livingston 1987; Ryave and Schenkein 1974). In situations, such as crossing the street, we are being 'staged' from above as well as 'staging' ourselves from below (Goffman 1963: 140). The division between 'from above' and 'from below' is not an ontological claim but rather an analytical framing (Jensen 2013a: 9). This above/below-perspective which is inspired by Jensen's *Staging Mobilities* (ibid) provides new ways of interpreting the mobile practices and the sites of these mobilities as potentially interesting and enriching rather than simply mono-dimensional or instrumental. We can transcend

the addressed inadequateness and put light on the modernist blind spots of the street and the social.

The context in which I try to understand *the social* and *the street* is where everyday life mobilities takes place. Remember the description at the beginning of the chapter that we may have found confusing. A reporter, who usually comments on Bundesliga matches, observes traffic from his balcony during the Lockdown in Germany because of the Corona pandemic. In a humorous manner, he describes what is going on in Neusser Straße in Cologne. The context in which he observes everyday life mobilities is where they take place: *in the situation on the ground*. So, and this is the important clue, we are moving from an *in vitro* to an *in situ* analysis and assessment of traffic planning. This epistemological shift can be seen as a response to blind spots of the modernist transport gaze. In contrast to the “eye in the sky” (Lynch 1993) view of Le Corbusier and the *in vitro* view of contemporary traffic planners seeing traffic movement akin to flows of particles, my approach will show how traffic are continuously produced orders (Conley 2012: 219). We do not model how traffic works in our laboratories located in municipal planning departments and so on, we are interested in the situationally produced mobilities. So, instead of asking *what is efficient?*, we ask *what is going on here?*

So, I will take as our point of departure the notion of *mobilities in situ* or in other words, put the situation first. It has been devoted not to study abstract structures, but to the understanding of the situated, everyday life mobilities *on the ground* (e.g. Jensen 2013a, 2014a, 2014b, 2015, 2016; Jensen and Lanng 2017). The theoretical underpinning of this approach is anchored in Garfinkel and Goffman’s interest into the real situation and the multiple little interactions that make up the mobilities of billions of people day after day. It is a description of the social, which always reveals itself only as an excerpt and fragmentary moment, while other moments remain invisible. It refers to fluidity and so, to the ad hoc situated interactions appearing and dissolving (Normark 2006: 11).

This paper should be understood as mobile situationism; by this is meant an endeavour to put the situational interaction at the centre of the analysis. This the mobile situation is the focal point of our analysis. Erving Goffman speaks of situations with his characteristic focus on the dynamic interaction taking place:

“Social situations were defined as arenas of mutual monitoring. It is possible for the student to take social situations very seriously as one natural vantage point from which to view all of social life. After all, it is in social situations that individuals can communicate in the fullest sense of the term, and it is only in them that individuals

can physically coerce one another, assault one another, interact sexually, importune one another gesturally, give physical comfort, and so forth. Moreover, it is in social situations that most of the world's work gets done . . . it is mainly in such contexts [social situations] that individuals can use their faces and bodies, as well as small materials at hand to engage in social portraiture. It is here in these small, local places that they can arrange themselves microecologically to depict what is taken as their place in the wider social frame” (Goffman 1979: 5 f.).

Putting the situation first does not mean to be ignorant of wider processes such as the spatial history of modernist traffic planning, I have outlined above. It rather means starting and ending the analysis in situated mobilities but always in the contexts of these wider processes (Jensen 2018: 7). What is unfold here is a *double dialectic* approach, I will use: Temporally, I will capture both the long duree of modernist traffic planning and the mundane everyday life mobilities in situ in which also temporalities acted out from above and below. Spatially, I will capture the scale of the city imagined in modernist traffic planning as well as simultaneously how it is staged at certain places on street corner scale. However, I argue that the situational perspective of mobilities of the everyday life world comes much closer to ‘real life’ within the scenes of the contemporary city (ibid: 10). This double dialectic gaze gives us the view of the micro-socialities but also of the context in which these practices take place.

However, I argue that for though there are *movements*, a modernist thinking and doing is still hegemonial in contemporary traffic planning. With the situational sensitiveness and the focus on the ordinary perceived-as-familiar everyday life interactions in tradition of Garfinkel and Goffman, I want to find out in this paper *how mobilities are enacted at intersections*. Here, I focus on the spaces between the buildings, where much of quotidian mobile social life takes place (Jensen and Lanng 2017: 4). In streets, here at intersections, we see material relics of former paradigms in traffic planning, and also streets themselves are relics of these elapsed times (but are naturalized by many traffic planners today). So, in stepping out of our offices and sensing these in-between places as intended by an in situ-perspective, we are not only excavating these material relics, we also can uncover the mobilities which were staged by above and below.

As we have certainly recognised, the research question is formulated in an unusual open way. To Goffman (1974b), how we act, however strange or incomprehensible this might seem, is always meaningful. He argues, with regard to human members, that we face situations (tacitly or overtly) with the question “What is going on here?” (ibid: 8). I argue that we should not only raise this question if we interact with others in public space. We should raise this question as

an overall research epistemology. This epistemology refers to ethnographic inquiry. In this epistemological vein, we face our research field as open as possible, questioning what the hell is going on here. Only with this in our minds, we can study how mobilities are staged in interactions.

Now, I think it is fruitful, if not even necessary, to say a few more words about the notion of *enactment* which is used in the research question guiding this study. Since the 1980s, enactment is used in Actor Network Theory<sup>1</sup> to describe especially the performativity of methodology. Beginning on a larger scale, since the writing of Foucault, it has become common in social sciences to argue that different paradigms are constituted by or correspond to different epistemes (Law and Urry 2004: 400). This is part of a more philosophical argument: The predominant understanding of methodology in contemporary science (natural science in particular) is implicitly informed by an empiricist realism. Herein, there is the hidden assumption that there is a definite single reality waiting to be discovered. A second understanding, especially popular in social science, is that we can distinguish between that world and the knowledge that arises from its investigation. If we pose question of that world, then we can generate knowledge. The notion of enactment challenge both ways. The implication is that our methodology helps to create the realities that it describes (ibid: 393). So, the methodology we use has effects; it makes differences; it enacts realities; and it can help us to bring into being what it also discovers (ibid: 393).

However, if methodology per se is performative and therefore helps us to make realities, then differences in the imaginations of traffic in different research traditions have also an alternative significance. We should no longer have debates of different perspectives on a single reality of how traffic might be; these different perspectives become instead an enactment of different realities. This is a strong, but a very important claim influencing the whole investigation: there is a shift from epistemology (where what we might know depends on our perspective) to ontology (what we might know is also being made differently; ibid: 397). Of course, for some of us, on the one hand it is difficult to imagine that different research practices might be making multiple worlds (the core argument is developed by Law 2002, and by Mol 2002), and on the other hand, that these worlds might be equally true, but unlike one another. So, we work upon, and within, a distinct world of mobilities, whether if we are a modernist traffic planner or someone

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the amount of work involved, I cannot give a satisfactory introduction that does justice to the Actor Network Theory. A recommended approach with reference to mobility is: Source.

who comments on the traffic from his balcony like a football match. In turn, we help to make and to remake the world we want to discover (see Giddens 1990, 1991; and Barnes 2000).

## **Structure**

In the first chapter, I will show why we should not see the street only as thoroughfares for vehicular traffic at the one hand. At the other hand, I outline shortly that the notion of the street is entangled with the social, so that we cannot study the street without study the social. To overcome the disentanglement between these two spheres, I introduce the analytical distinction between from above and from below. Of course, this distinction is artificial, and we also cannot put the street only on the from above side, and the social on the from below side. As I said, both are highly entangled. However, the first chapter is to be understood less as a decided theoretical derivation. Rather, it is a kind of prologue which helps us to get started with the following theoretical explanations.

In the following two chapters, we will take a closer look on the street and the social. In chapter 2, we will embark on a genealogical journey, from the streets of the 19th century to modern conceptions of the street and the establishment of new planning philosophies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. First, I show that the taken-for-grantedness of the automobile street as we know today is deeply rooted in modernist urban planning since the 1930s and sociocultural development since the advent of the automobile. Second, I question the taken-for-grantedness of the automobile street as we know today in referring to pre-automobile times and the philosophy of Shared Space. And third, I explain that the ways how we assemble streets refers to our conceptions of the social.

In chapter 3, we will draw on the social. Beginning with a critique on modernistic approaches of assessing traffic planning and social sciences' engagement with traffic, I will outline a new perspective on the social going on the streets. Here, I will refer to two famous sociologists, namely Harold Garfinkel and Erving Goffman. Both show that the social is not a given fact, nor it is an explanans. The social is a relational effect, and therefore an explanandum which we should include to understand traffic. Re-reading both in terms of traffic, we see that they provide rich perspectives, vocabularies and considerations of how we can conceptualise the social and how we can include the street in our investigation of the social. I will use our artificial distinction of from above/from below to outline my approach for thinking the social and the street together.

Afterwards, I will give a short conclusion of the core argumentation which I have presented in the previous chapters. Because we have to consider the street and the social more as enacting-the-street and enacting-the-social, I will outline a new approach which is sensitive to the in-making of the street and the social in everyday situations. With this approach we can understand mobilities different as modernist approaches did and still do.

Although this paper has a more conceptual character, I will explain how we can transfer the theoretical considerations in empirical research methods. Here, we draw on empirical considerations of Garfinkel and Goffman which have especially used ethnographic field studies to investigate behaviour in public space. Inspired by both, I try to outline my own empirical approach to study the street and the social in situ at Willy-Brandt-Platz in Frankfurt.

In the next chapter, I present my empirical findings. It should not be understood as an empirical study which generates new knowledge about mobilities in situ. Rather, it is more a matter of giving traffic planners (and also others) sufficient reasoning on how the approach can enable us to see phenomena that were previously blind spots in assessing traffic in planning processes. This study is a first attempt to make the theoretical consideration empirically tangible. For this reason, I put spotlights in situations which I have observed at Willy-Brandt-Platz explaining how the street and the social is enacted; and how we can study mobilities in public space adequately beyond modernistic thinking.

In the conclusion, I will give a short summary of the theoretical considerations and the empirical findings. However, I use this last chapter to connect and embed this paper in the context of contemporary traffic planning in particular. On the one hand, I compile some quality criteria which is useful to light up the blind spots with more colour and therefore enable us to see what we currently are not able to see. On the other hand, I try to convince you that an in situ-approach is one possible path, we could go, for assessing traffic in the contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## 2

# Theory I: The street and the social

An early summer morning at Willy-Brandt-Platz, 7.48 am, around 18°C. I arrive on the underground station going upstairs. I am surrounded by Städtische Bühnen Frankfurt, Euro Tower and Neue Mainzer Straße. A cold breeze blows over the place, the sky is less cloudy. The humans are still dozey, but the city is already busy. I hear the noise of car and tram traffic, and of a lawn mower »maaaahmaaaah-maaaaahm«. A sweeping machine makes its rounds across the square. The screams of lawn mower and sweeping machine mix with urban traffic noise which pulses through the streets. As I move under Städtische Bühnen, I get a moment of shelter from the cold breeze, and the sunrays which make their way through the clouds. I notice some advertisement on columns, glancing quickly at them while on the move. I exit the shelter and encounter the cold wind again. I make a turn to the left and put some effort into getting across a water puddle on the side of the path because the sun has dazzled me. The sun shines strongly on people's heads, if you walk towards the east you have to squint your eyes to see anything. I sit on the stone benches; the stone is warm. From here I see the light-coloured tile covered with dark bands. Willy-Brandt-Platz looks like a huge stone desert, everything is flattened. It is designed like a thoroughfare for pedestrians and cyclists with little quality to stay. Many pedestrians and cyclists are on the move. Many carry a backpack or briefcase, wear their Corona-masks as accessories around the arms and rush off to work; some make phone calls. A lot of people move across the square in different directions. People regularly rush rhythmically out of the underground stations and the arriving trams – they walk down the stairs towards the east or north. It is a steady coming and going.

In the morning hours, many people stand at the tram station and wait for the line that will take them close to their desired destination. People sit on the benches, look up,

let their gaze wander over Willy-Brandt-Platz, and watch what other people are doing, especially on the platform opposite. From time to time they look at the display to see when their train is coming. Others stand when the benches are already taken, rummage around in their backpacks and bags, drink and eat something. A homeless person looks into the trash bin, and after a prudent look, he tries to fish something out. Another man on the platform reads the FAZ carefully, tries to leaf through it; a woman takes a book out of her backpack. Others look on the phone, stroll on the spot, sway a little, and let their gaze wander into the air or onto the ground. A woman goes to the ticket machine, manoeuvres through the people on the train platform, gets a ticket and checks the timetable to see which train she has to take. Sometimes people talk to each other or look to see when the train is coming. Others only register the train when they hear it, ring its bell or when it arrives. Some people do not wait for the train but even use the benches as seating.

I turn around heading towards Städtische Bühnen, but after a few steps, I am forced to stop abruptly! Only a few steps away from me, the tram pulls into the station, a shrill ringing »klinggggg« that frightens away the people crossing the tram rails slowly. The doors of the tram open, people on the platform line up, wait for people getting off the tram to cross the threshold, and get on the tram, accompanied by green glowing buttons on the doors and a throbbing sound »wiftiwiftiwifti«. With another ringing »klinggggg« the tram continues, while behind it, people start to cross the rails again.

I go on, crossing the tram rails. I hear the engines of numerous cars »brmmbrmmbrmm«. The traffic light turns green. The engines are humming »brrrrrmmm... brrrrrmmm... brrrrrmmm«. A horn honks »beeeep... beeeep«, someone starts the motor »zzzzh... bbbrrmm« and rolls off. Pedestrians watch the car parade from the sidewalk. They stand at the kerb and look at the red pedestrian lights, I too, and hope that a green manikin will appear soon. A woman pushes a yellow box which is attached to the traffic light. I wait a few seconds ... and a few more. The traffic light turns orange, ... then red after a few seconds, two cars accelerate and drive over the traffic light that has already turned red. Even a cyclist who looks right and left several times takes the chance to continue his journey. A green manikin appears at the pedestrian light, a dull clacking sound »klockklockklock« is heard and the first pedestrians pass the asphaltic street, and avoid to bump into other. A small group has gathered behind a man, and follow his path like goslings their mother goose. In a flock they pass the road. The sound of the traffic light becomes slower »kloock... kloock... «, and a red manikin appears. Again, I hear the sound of accelerating cars »brrrrrmmm... brrrrrmmm... brrrrrmmm«.

I now view at a parking lot. Not that many cars are there, and I stroll directly onto the asphalt surface. A few larger puddles have collected here and there, and as I walk around one, I notice a trace of oil on it. In one of the others, a toddler is jumping up and down, while he laughs loudly. Shortly after, I seize the chance to take some quick steps across and continue to cross the road. A group of pedestrians comes towards me. I glance at the people in the front line of the group. They talk to each other or look on their smartphones. They seem to me as inattentive of my appearance. I focus the group, follow where each one goes and try to meander through the group to the traffic island where a group of cyclists has gathered. With their hands

they support themselves, at the bicycle traffic light, the pedestrian traffic light and the traffic sign next to it. Others keep their feet on the ground. The green manikin appears on the pedestrian traffic light opposite, and a mini cyclist on the bicyclist traffic light. A bicyclist moves in the false direction. The group of bicyclist tries to make way for the cyclist coming towards them; they constantly look at him. He also looks at the group and tries to make his way in meandering slowly through the group. After the bicyclists cross Neue Mainzer Straße, they continue in various directions, straight ahead, left towards the Main, across the tram rails, over the platform, or through the bollards on the right. They pay attention to others, exchange looks, change their direction, they break, ring the bell, accelerate, move on. They spread over the square and go their own way.

#### Observation at Willy-Brandt-Platz, Frankfurt am Main

The street facilitates mobilities; in fact, often automobility in western societies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Beckmann 2001a, 2001b; Featherstone et al. 2005; Miller 2001; Pooley et al. 2005; Sheller and Urry 2000, 2006; Urry 1999, 2000, 2004). After we have carefully read the situation above, we should recognise that the street is not only a monofunctional space only built as thoroughfare for motorised vehicles, as we could think. Of course, there is much happening in the spaces between buildings. As we observe the street, we see people driving cars, bicycles motorcycles, taxis, busses, people walking, running, standing, sitting, lying down, in wheelchairs or on crutches, people looking for a destination, getting in or out of vehicles, parking and deparking them, people socialising, playing, hanging out, waiting, resting, and so on (Lynch and Southworth 1974). I have moved in a way that I could protect myself from the icy wind, I have looked at other people, have stood at the kerb and looked on the traffic light on the opposite or simply got across a water puddle. Being on the move is a social affair rendering traffic a complex social interaction with others in motion of everyday mundane mobile situations.

Here, the first claim that I want to make is that the street and the social affairs which take place on the street remain disregarded in contemporary traffic planning. I claim that this stems from traffic planning's inadequate conceptions of the street and the social. According to Normark (2006) this inadequacy is two-fold. One the one hand, traffic planners and others (e. g. road administrators, politicians) systematically tend to disconnect the street and the social, with all respect to their professionalism and lawful purposes. On the other hand, even if they recognise the connection, they tend to under-socialise the social. Also, many social scientists seem to believe that there is nothing particularly social in the street that deserves attention. We leave the field to psychologists using cognitive models on the social, or to others arguing the streets would work much better without any social interaction. But, as Goffman (1963) rightly illustrates, everyday traffic is cultivated into particular ways of interacting in motion.

Therefore, I want to make my second claim. I advocate that we can transcend this inadequate conception of the street and the social by referring to Jensen's *Staging Mobilities* (2013a) as analytical framework to conceptualise traffic different. In his book *Staging Mobilities* (2013a), he argues that mobilities do not just happen or simply take place. With recourse to the famous sociologist Erving Goffman, Jensen (2013a) explains that in every situation, such as crossing the street, mobilities are being *staged* from above as well as *staging* ourselves from below; whereby *above* refers to the decision taken elsewhere by planning, design, regulations and institutions, and *below* to choices made by us and our consociates to present our/themselves. Obviously, situations like the imaginary ones above, are marked and defined by decisions taken elsewhere which shape the situational context: design decisions and interventions in planning departments, architectural offices, and city governments as, for example, when traffic lights command us to stop or when the tram timetables organise your route and itineraries. Things like the traffic lights have not chosen to locate themselves in place in relation to others. Rather, they are meticulously and strategically inserted and assembled into the street to stage mobilities in certain situations. Accordingly, places are therefore better thought of as moments of encounters rather than enduring sites (Amin and Thrift 2002: 30). However, choices are also made by us and our consociates, either in a more or less non-reflexive, routine manner or in deliberate and conscious accord with your values and perception of our/themselves. They are acted out, performed and lived, for example, when we negotiate with others, or waiting at the tram station. Mobilities are multiple situational effects of choices, affects, mood, rationalities and strategies for making everyday life mobilities a habitual practice. The division between 'from above' and 'from below' is not an ontological claim but rather an analytical framing of mobilities in such a way that we may increase our understanding herein (ibid: 9).

According to my understanding, this perspective is suitable if we want to engage traffic apart from hegemonial viewpoints because it is sensitive to the staging of social affairs (the social) as well as the staging of the material space (the street) where they are acted out (of course, these material spaces cannot be seen as a priori dominating). The crucial point is that mobilities are not just there, nor do they just happen; rather, mobilities, and also traffic, are actively staged. This implies that we should not see the street and the social affairs going on there as taken-for-granted entities as they are conceptualised in contemporary transport planning. Seeing mobilities and traffic in this perspective, we can transcend these inadequate but en vogue conceptions and put light on the street and the social which I will turn on in the following two chapters.

### 3

## Theory II: From Above

Mobilities are staged from above by designing the material space which preconditions the social affairs. Mobilities research is taking a material turn in which these sites and the material artefacts therein are increasingly included to understand the multiplicity and complexity of everyday life mobilities (Jensen 2014a; Ingold 1996). In our thinking, we understand how we design and assemble material artefacts at one place is an active practice of staging the street and the social from above. As Yaneva puts it, “[d]esign [is] a way of producing additional attachments that make a variety of actors congregate, forming different groupings and assembling social diversity. [...] design connects us differently, linking disparate heterogeneous elements and effects, thus entering a game of producing, adjusting and enacting the social” (Yaneva 2009: 282). Based on selected literature on materialities (Ingold 2011, 2014; Latour 1996, 2005; Yaneva 2009; Jensen 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2014a; Jensen and Lanng 2017; Lanng 2014, 2015; Lanng et al. 2012) this chapter adds some fundamental insights into how design decisions and interventions made by traffic planners across multiple disciplines and professions shape the scene of everyday mobilities, and enacting mobilities from above.

In discussing how mobilities are enacted from above, the issue of streetscapes is unavoidable. According Prytherch (2018), streets are not only material spaces per se, they have a profound often underestimated impact of how people relate and act to others. They are comprised of asphalt, vehicles, traffic lights, and so on, but also of social interaction (ibid: 13), they are the

choreographic stages where everyday life takes place. Assumption and prediction about the complex social interactions are relevant for how we shape public space, given that we assemble public space as streets if we want to shape space for mobilities (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 161). The staging of interaction in our streets encompasses possibilities for many ways of “engineering relationship among people” (Winner 1980: 124).

In each street crossing, road dimensioning and traffic light code choices were made in municipal planning department (and other places) how interaction should be staged. This, we can assume, is an obvious effect of the fact that multiple different people negotiate in public space. However, and this not just confined to the care of street intersection, how interactions are staged is not a simple matter of deducing values into the design of public space. As Jensen and Lanng (2017) put it: choices are made. The well-known philosopher Michel Foucault wrote, “[a]s whole history remains to be written of spaces – which would at the same time be the history of powers (both these terms in the plural) – from the great strategies of geo-politics to the little tactics of the habitat, institutional architecture from the classroom to the designs of hospitals, passing via economic and political installations” (1980: 149). So, how we design public space and why we design it as the streets we know, is not neutral; it is rather a practice of inscribing normative values, which may be more or less explicit, into materialities and assemble them in a certain way.

Adey (2010) argues, mobilities cannot be treated in neutral or depoliticised ways. In any interventions that redesign public space issues of inequality, power and politics are embedded (Jensen and Lanng 2017: 24). In *Critical Mass: Transport, Environment and Society in the Twenty-first Century* (1997), transport scholar John Whitelegg outlines the significance of design to social relationships by referring to a comparison between the time pedestrians need to cross on a green light in the two German cities Hamburg and Kassel. Here, he uses a cartoon showing an elderly woman at a zebra crossing with a green light, and the question “How fast should grandma run?”. In Hamburg, the elderly woman would have to cross the street with a speed of 2.3 km/h to reach the other sidewalk while the traffic light is still green. In Kassel, she would have to cross with a speed of 9.3 km/h. In the image which portrays Kassel, the woman runs with her cane. Whitelegg describe this image in the following manner:

“[it] shows that traffic engineers have intervened to give priority to drivers at the expense of elderly pedestrians. A deliberate decision has been taken to steal time from the grandma (in this example) and give it to the motorist. All traffic engineering

and infrastructural planning embodies the theft of time in some shape or form an its redistribution to wealthier groups” (Whitelegg 1997: 133).

What we can from Whitelegg’s study are two things in particular. First, mobilities are incredibly uneven and differentiated (Adey 2010: 87). Whitelegg’s mobile situation of crossing the road shows that there are hierarchic relationships giving priority of one type of mobilities users over others. It shapes our attention to the lack of neutrality to the scenes where mobilities takes place. Indeed, this might have real situational effects and repercussions of what takes place (Jensen and Lannig 2017: 125 f.). Second, values and norms are embedded within imaginations of how public space should be designed as well as being enshrined in the materialities in public space (ibid: 125). What is clearly brought out in Whitelegg’s cartoon are the situational dependencies and linkages between the design code of the street, specified by a traffic engineer in accordance with a larger scheme of seamless car-mobility, and the situational practice of people on the street coping with such an order.

We interact with others, internalising and taking for granted the order that mediate these interactions. And we take this social order – its inequalities and hierarchies – as routine, and do not question it (Prytherch 2018: 1 f.). If we want to understand how mobilities are enacted from above, we should understand how the public spaces of the street, banal as it seems, and social relations are entangled. In doing this, we should question the taken-for-granted assumptions about spaces and materials as simply there. Because the ways in which this material stuff makes up streets is not given, it is always in motion, it is assembled and reassembled in changing configurations: they have a spatial history in which conceptions of interaction shape how the street and what takes place therein is designed.

### **Modernistic street and its social order**

The street as we know, which were defined as a privatised public space for motorised vehicles, is not a law of nature. The street is a historical product, a demarcation of its own. Therefore, it can only be understood in its spatiotemporal context (see Norton 2011). In scientific debates, the discussion of street space is especially concerned with the period through the early of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 1970s when efficient movement was considered as the principle by which street space were assembled and urban traffic ordered (Bonham 2006: 58). But often, the stories of streets’ history begin from times of the triumphant automobile. To Norton (2011) to travel to the pre-automobile times in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century would be to travel to a time when such a future was unimageable, “[a]nything seemed more probable than the

motor age that was to come” (ibid: 16). A few writers have commented on the shift in the predominant use of street spaces through the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (e.g., Jacobs 1961; Gutman 1978; De Jong 1986; Rabinow 1989; Sennett 1994; Brown-May 1995; Fyfe 1998). Streets were already shared (see also Mumford 1961; Sennett 2018). Pedestrians, pushcart vendors, and children at play used them as well (Norton 2007: 332). People walked all over the place interacting with others in informal ways through eye contact, face work or gestures. Prytherch (2018: 36 f.) states by the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, streets were defined as place for daily life and exchange than open, articulated means of circulation.

The automobile, at that time a luxury good, was initially regarded as a kind of foreign intruder, the appearance of it was accompanied by disabilities and dangers for all other road users because car drivers did not adhere to the existing social order. It was with the advent of the automobile since the 1920s that this social order was gradually and profoundly challenged (see Geels 2005: 455 ff.). In *Fighting Traffic* (2011), Norton shows how the largescale introduction of automobile traffic to American cities resulted in a different conception of what should happen on public space. Public space to meet, to trade and for children to play was incompatible with automobile traffic. In the course of mass production and mass consumption, the automobile was not only regarded as an important element of democratization (Häußermann et al. 2008: 149 ff.), it was also the means of transport that was best compatible with the capitalist principle of private profit-making (Paterson 2007; Wolf 1996), and as an expression of individuality, freedom and flexibility it embodied central social values of neo-liberal modernity (Rammler 2008). To change public space, traffic planners used a rhetoric of freedom that is firmly rooted in American ideals. The flexibility of automobiles enables the driver to travel at any time, 24 hours a day, in any direction; “[t]he desire to move freely – and not be stuck in traffic – is a sensation we take for granted as natural” (Sennett 2018: 36). Public space should be defined as street for motorised vehicles. From 1930 the freedom for individuals to drive a car dominates the way we think, talk and act onto our city streets: “Today we tend to regard streets as motor thoroughfares [...] and thus the departure of children from streets with the arrivals of automobiles can seem an obvious and simple necessity” (Norton 2011: 1 f.). So, the automobile destabilised prevailing notion of thinking about public space: the social order of 19<sup>th</sup> century was outdated.

## **Dreaming of traffic flow**

In her book *Der Traum vom Verkehrsfluss* (2001; engl. the dream of traffic flow), Schmucki describes the paradigms of traffic planning in West and Eastern Germany after World War II. A paradigm can be understood as a culture which reflects both social practices and physical reality. Regarding Kuhn (1967), a paradigm refers to the common possession of knowledge of a discipline and consists of elements of various kinds, such as symbolic generalizations (formulas), models and examples. I think the concept of paradigm is fruitful here as we will see there are different truths according to which we should plan traffic and cities in a wider context. The assertion of car driving as the dominant form of movement corresponds to the expansion of today's ubiquitous and decentralising road networks. In the post-war period in West Germany, the reconstruction of cities was accompanied with a well-developed road network which should guarantee fluent traffic. Hans Bernhard Reichow's *Die autogerechte Stadt – Ein Weg aus dem Verkehrs-Chaos* (1959) was a guiding principle to traffic planners in Germany and beyond. Although Reichow was by no means striving for the absolute supremacy of the car, but for a city that was equally fair to people and cars, the overarching goal was pointedly formulated that the car should fit into the city without any problems (Schmucki 2001: 123).

The flow of traffic in relation to speed was an important component of the car-friendly planning model. Urban and city motorways were built which had a particularly traffic-separating and fluidising effect (ibid: 129). In this spatial structure pedestrians were pushed to the side space onto the buildings around the road. Traffic planners took them into account as a transport mass in public commuter traffic or as a safety risk in road traffic which had to be eliminated. The overall concept was characterised by a technical functionalism that turned the urban space primarily into a traffic space which had the function of accommodating traffic (ibid: 133). This reorganisation of cities and the rebuilding of public space should be realised to enable a fluent traffic flow. The emphasis on free flow for motorised vehicles became the guide for big city planners in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Examples are Daniel Burnham, whose celebrated plan of Chicago in 1909 was a blueprint for providing roads for automobility; or Robert Moses, the creator of New York's highway network, to whom it was self-evident that to foster efficient car mobility should be the prime concern of city planning (Sennett 2018: 36 ff.). At that time, city planners were "fantasists" who "in effect declared traditional cities obsolete by calling for rebuilding downtown around the car", how McShane (1994: 212) rightly deems.

After World War II, two opposing currents of urban planning from the 19th and early 20th centuries came together in the guiding principle of the traffic planners. On the one hand, there were the concepts of the organic city (or garden city) which were mainly represented by critics of mega cities. On the other hand, there were the progressive designs of modernist cities in the spirit of functionalistic planning (Schmucki 2001: 94). The concept of the *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1898), designed by Ebenezer Howard in 1898, was intended to relieve the dense cities by creating independent settlements in their neighbourhood, which should be modelled like an organism. Even traffic was part of the organism because, like the veins of the human body, it helped the whole city to live. From the main artery, the through road, which did not cross the residential areas but flowed through them, ever smaller veins branched off into the individual cells (ibid: 94).

In addition to the garden city, modern architecture, whose representatives met in 1928 to form the CIAM (*Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne*) architectural community, influenced traffic planning after the Second World War. *Le Corbusier*, one of their most important spokesmen, became world famous for his plan of a contemporary city for three million inhabitants in 1922, *La Ville Contemporaine*. His concept was based on a functional separation within the city, consisting of a city centre and residential, commercial and industrial districts which were grouped around it. In the 1930s, he developed this idea into a functional city, whose centre filled with employees in the morning and emptied into the surrounding residential areas in the evening. The different zones of use were separated by green belts and connected by motorways. The almost aerodynamic shape of the city, in which the road had a dominant position, paid homage to the speed of cars (ibid: 95).

On focal point for traffic planning in 20<sup>th</sup> century, was the IV. CIAM Congress in 1933 which was dominated by this modern urban planning and was intended to clarify whether the urban planning concept of the separation of functions should be adopted as a trend-setting concept. The concept report, the famous *Charter of Athens*, was published in 1943. Written exclusively by Le Corbusier, it represented a harmonised variant of the modern urban concept which should be acceptable to all currents. The modern city, seen as an optimized machine, would be divided into single-purpose city neighbourhoods which needed to be connected by an efficient transport network of streets. The Charter aimed to make cities across the world look more and more the same: the most optimized and efficient urban form. From now on the function of road was to connect the functionally structured sub-areas like assembly lines on which everything circulated in unhindered passage (Hilpert 1978: 54 ff.). The increasing automobility was integrated into

their models of a functionally structured city and propagated a radical departure from the street as a living space: “Where are the cars hurrying to? Into the city centre! There is no drivable area in the centre. You have to create it” (Le Corbusier 2015 [1925]: 101). Ingersoll (2006) deems that Le Corbusier took it too far, leading him into antisocial urban models like *La Ville Contemporaine* or *La Ville Radieuse*. The Charter of Athens, which called for a radical break with historical multi-used urban structures of public space in the sense of a separation of functions, became an essential part of transport and urban planning in Germany after World War II, with the car-only-street as the dominant element (Schmucki 2001: 96). The car-oriented city in the sense of a structure that enabled smooth – and this was synonymous with liveable – motorised traffic, had become the guiding principle of traffic planning.

### **A modernist re-order**

The modernist thinking had international influence on how cities and in-between space were planned. In modernist thought, movement in the western societies has been approached from a technocratic and positivistic position (Cresswell 2010: 554). It was seen as something that flows freely in streets under ideal circumstances. Traffic planners stood for a logic of efficiency especially regarding costs to move across distance (Norton 2011: 130). As outlined in Whitelegg’s example, this approach was not value free and influence largely how we see and conceptualise public space. Lynch (1981) regrets a tendency of traffic planning to relate to statistics and the calculus of costs. Thus, the conception of movement as costs was embedded within the ways traffic planners and urban planners in the wider context look upon the city. The city was seen as a space for the efficient, which mean the cost-extensive-as-possible, distribution of people, goods etc., space; therefore, imposes costs due to the resources required for moving things across space (in human geography we call this friction of distance). This reinforces the focus of our models, and our policies on travel speed as key design variable. The relationship between movement and space as transportation cost works clearly on neoliberal-economic assumptions and is seen as immanently static (ibid: 331). The ordering of street behaviour and street spaces within discourses on urban planning coalesced with the logic of efficient movement for securing the economical operation of the city (Bonham 2006: 70).

Movement is seen in functional terms, mobility become abstracted into a rational movement equation where simple variables and inputs are plugged in. This could be repeated over and over again. “By adding in physical characteristics, the distance that a unit weight would travel, how it would correspond to an exertion of effort, and a factor of services required to overcome

this resistance, or what Isard called friction.” (Cresswell 2010: 46). In combination with an economic rationality, the complexities of movement and its context are simply taken variables; quantifiable and independent variables regardless of its specific context which could be swapped in positivist models and geometrical equations. Just as engineering science, economic thinking’s core assumptions are like physics, an exact science, the gradual realization of universal, unimpeachable mathematical truths. These mathematical and scientific methods were used in traffic planning to calculate traffic demand or increasingly differentiated forecasts of future developments. For example, in order to calculate future demand, the planners first determined the performance of means of transport, mostly due traffic counting, and roads so that the planning of traffic facilities could be based on this basic data (Schmucki 2001: 108). Peters (2006) pronounces that this way of thinking seeped into almost all macroscopic and microscopic traffic models and had as such a more as profound impact on how mobilities were enacted, since today... recognised in regulations, working methods, calculation bases and directives.

Imagine the relationship between mobilities and space not as movement from A to B, but rather as efficient transport of things across space (cost-extensive) has implication of how space in what takes place therein is designed. They were and are engineered, as outlined above, in functionalistic terms of urban modernism to enable smooth traffic flow and constrain the dangers to car traffic. To create all necessary conditions for the dream of the traffic flow, a range of spatio-temporal conditions had to be fulfilled. Traffic planners response was to regulate, or control movement due re-ordering public space. This re-ordering is characterised by three elements in particular which are strongly interwoven: a difference between public space and transit space of definition, a functional segregation of traffic, and a spatiotemporal prioritisation of motorised traffic.

First, with the increase in car traffic, we have increasingly defined our streets as transit space. Behind this redefinition lies the distinction between public space and transit space. Whereby public space is considered in terms of space for social interaction, transit space is defined in monofunctional terms only for efficient movement of motorised vehicles. The street has advanced to become an exclusive place for the automobile. Thus, alternative movements to motorised private transport became recessive, explicitly subordinated to the now dominant role of the automobile and, in order to improve automobility, banned from the road. This is also reflected in the first German *Gesetz über den Verkehr mit Kraftfahrzeugen* (engl.: law on motor

vehicle traffic; 1909) which was intended to steer the conflict between non-motorised and motorised road users in an orderly direction; or in the *Straßenverkehrsordnung* (StVO; engl.: road traffic regulations), which were first issued in 1937. To this day, although it has been changed over time, it serves as a central definition of the exclusivity of the automobile. It stipulates that pedestrians must use the pavement at the side of the road, while the centre of the road is defined as a roadway exclusively reserved for motorised traffic. More generally, modernist urban landscapes were built to facilitate automobility and to discourage other forms of human movement (Freund and Martin 1993: 119). Streets were open to others only under defined restrictions (Norton 2007: 333).

Second, this redefinition is the foundation for a segregated order of traffic postulated by modernist urban planners, particularly when linked to the street's division into subspaces (Prytherch 2018: 50). The Charter of Athens (1943) recommended the principle of strict traffic separation most clearly and forcefully supported by the committee chaired by Colin Buchanan. In his report *Traffic in Towns* (1963), he argued that the two principal purposes associated with public and street space, those of social interaction and movement, would need to be strictly segregated as traffic volumes increased (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 165). In order to achieve the desired separation, traffic planning aimed to redesign street space. A universal street design and its optimisation for motorized flow with its principles of order, uniformity and simplicity and a minimum of disturbances for driving traffic was created (Jensen and Lanng 2017: 133): separate traffic into lanes, imposed one-way streets, parking areas, and pedestrian sidewalks.

Third, it was through this segregation that a hierarchy of urban travel was established by which those who were the fastest, especially motorised vehicles, were prioritised as the most efficient – a reason for the supremacy of the automobile (Bonham 2006: 62; Schmucki 2001: 99). For this hierarchy, the optimal traffic in terms of a time-cost-relation was decisive (Schmucki 2001: 98). An efficient travel was an economical travel: This resulted in the street's primary function to be defined as moving as many cars as possible as fast as possible from A to B. Traffic planners deploy the logic of the economical journey implicated the ordering of urban travel with the consequence of prioritisation of the motorised over all others (Bonham 2006: 58). Freund and Martin argue that “[m]odernist urban landscapes were built to facilitate automobility and to discourage other forms of human movement” (1993: 119).

## **The intersection as a blueprint**

In the re-ordering of public space, particular attention was paid to the nodes where different paths cross, where the functionalist segregation could not be maintained like on a straight street. Even these neuralgic points should ensure the flow of traffic. The discussions revolved around the question of whether traffic should still intersect, whether left turns are permitted or whether a roundabout should be built, and also how traffic can be sorted before it reaches the square (Schmucki 2001: 104 f.). Attempts to order traffic efficiently pre-date the arrival of the automobile. In 1903, Eugène Hénard published his proposals introducing the concept of the roundabout with underpasses and grade separation between pedestrians and horse-drawn traffic for organizing traffic around the Place de l'Opera in Paris (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 165). But, with the modernist paradigm, a new spatiotemporal template was born for organising urban traffic fluently and safely: the traffic light-coordinated intersection. Conflicts between people should be avoided and resolved in favour of traffic flow (Blomley 2007: 59). This form of ordering traffic was the blueprint for a modernist re-ordering of urban nodes in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And it is still fundamental to the field of urban transport and the present-day conduct of travel (Bonham 2006: 70).

The result was a promiscuous mash-up of signs, signals like traffic lights, pedestrian crosswalks, overpasses and underpasses, street pavements and so on which should order traffic as efficient as possible. Streets come with a massive amount of organising and regulation (Normark 2006: 13). The initial establishment of street pavements, traffic signs, and traffic codes, was accompanied with the introduction of traffic lights which are an integral and obvious part of our everyday mobilities (Norton 2011: 54 ff., 134 ff.; Emanuel 2017: 103). For example, the first signal-controlled pedestrian crossing was launched in London in 1868 at the intersection of George and Bridge Streets near the Houses of Parliament. Notable fact: it exploded and dragged a person to their death; it was dismantled in 1872. However, traffic lights, internationally standardised during the 1930s, are one of many but also one of the most important innovations in century-long attempts to order the flow of urban traffic, and come to grips with the uncertainties involved in. According to Norton (2011), across both the US and Europe, the introduction of traffic lights can be considered at first step in replacing the supervision by traffic police with automatic and computerised control measures based on traffic engineering. They are also part of a system “that attempts to impose a strong social control over the most fundamental human behaviour, whether to move or to be still” (McShane 1999: 379). Though, in modernist thought, traffic light-coordinated intersections constitute a framework for behaviour

and interaction; traffic control may be considered a way of “engineering” interaction (Normark 2006: 12 ff.).

This new way of enacting the street order from above intended to shape also the forms of interaction that should occur at such a traffic light-coordinated intersection. In his analysis of the introduction of automatic traffic lights in interwar Stockholm, Martin Emanuel (2017) shows how these deliberately assembled artefacts order social interaction at intersections. In response to a surge in motorized traffic in 1920s measures were introduced to facilitate traffic flow and safety in Stockholm: “special traffic islands for tramway halts, one-way traffic regulations and roundabouts, road lanes, pedestrian crossings and parking spaces for cars, and traffic signs, silent policemen and traffic lights” (Emanuel 2017: 105). On 23 January 1925, Stockholm’s first traffic lights became operational. The four lampposts, one at each corner of the busy downtown intersection Kungsgatan-Vasagatan, had two colours only, red and green, and were manually operated by traffic police officers trained by the Swedish manufacturer AGA (ibid: 103). In the 1930s, experiments were made with different phasing and colour combinations, and there was the transition from hand-signalled to automated control of traffic lights. How did interaction between people change by hand signals of traffic police and later by automated traffic lights for guidance of traffic? The presence of a police officer, people relied more upon the officer and less upon interchange with others through negotiating and coordinating conduct at each street crossing. Their attention ought to have turned towards the police officer. Regarding Harrison and Priest (1934), police hands signal, although they were standardised, were disparaged for lacking clarity and consistency, so that they were unclear and difficult to understand. Harrison and Priest (ibid) further suggest that people confronted by police officers’ hand signals, became hesitant or timid. In contrast, Stockholm’s first traffic lights were seen to have a precision that allowed intersections to swallow more traffic safely. Their instruction was rigid but clear, in contrast to policemen’s instructions making people less hesitant and timid (Emanuel 2017: 112). This transition towards clarity and exactness, in opposition to vagueness and hesitation, was assumed to reduce the number of possible interactions. Traffic light prescribe that people should not drive against red lights – the dangers involved if they do make it almost impossible (ibid: 110). So, in this case, the two-way communication between people, travellers and police officers, which was also based on informal signs, was replaced by a more standardised one-way communication from traffic light signal to people (ibid: 108). Interaction on street became more standardised and informal signs which could lead to uncertainty and timidity were reduced to a minimum in relation to traffic safety and flow.

What this overflowed example of the implementation of traffic lights shows, is that the aim of how we assemble space is how things should relate to others. These relationships define how things interact with other things at one place. In the course of modernist planning and the advent of the car, public space has been drowned-out in the modern street. The role and function of public spaces have altered to the degree that have become subservient to the technical requirements of traffic flow (Adey 2010: 89). Sennett describes how street life used to be “on the surface fluid, with crowds of strangers coming and going, an experience of casual sightings, of few deep, illuminating exchanges” (Sennett 2018: 247). According to Adey (2010), the space for multiple shallow meetings bringing private people together to form a public that characterized public space in 19<sup>th</sup> century is simply erased and replaced with a more systematized, externalized logic of interaction. To conclude, public space, consequently, “has become a system of rules, prohibitions and orders and human beings are required to adapt to the system, rather than the other way around. Social norms and values become subsidiary to traffic rules [...]” (Blomley 2007: 68).

### **Shared Space: Turn the modernist way around**

Aligned with modern ideas of city planning from the 1930's and the popularization of motorized vehicles (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 165; Kaparias et al. 2015: 115), cities witnessed the segregation of traffic and the designation of public spaces for motorized traffic. The consequences of the car-friendly city, and thus also modern traffic planning, were increasingly criticised: The flow of traffic had not arisen, congestion had grown into traffic jams. In the 1960s and 1970s, the urban quality of life became a crucial political issue as cities choked with smog and fumes, as well as beset by traffic flow and parking problems (Liniado 1996: 28). The discussion about the limits of growth (Club of Rome 1972), which was an expression of the new evaluation of the environment and social change, also influenced the imaginations of transport planners (Schmucki 2001: 154).

Already in the 1960s, critics started to question the lack of interest in people in the modern model of city planning. Traffic planners distanced themselves decidedly from the car-friendly city, using car-friendly only in the negative sense of being too much car-oriented. This assessment was confirmed by a look at developments in the USA – LA as the horror scenario of the car-friendly city was used as a deterrent considering that 60 to 70% of a city's public space was designated for streets (ibid: 159). In their paper *Toward an Urban Design Manifesto*, scholars

and urban designers Allan Jacobs and Donald Appleyard outline a critique of the world's functionalist urban environment. Among the points of critique was loss of public life, "massive transportation system [...] segregated for single travel modes [...] that make people feel irrelevant" (Jacobs and Appleyard 1987: 114) They also criticise a rootless professionalism, that urban planners design places without knowing the people who inhabit them: "There is too little inquiry, too much proposing" (ibid.: 115).

At the beginning of the 1980s, qualitative, holistic approaches were an integral part of transport planning, people were at the centre of attention and played an important role in the ideas of traffic planning. There was now a consensus among planners that the priority was to improve the environment for the urban population, which could only be achieved by reducing motorised traffic and redimensioning transport buildings. The aim was to make the city more humane and liveable by curbing the negative emissions of traffic. Traffic planners wanted to reunite men and his environment formed by technology. Publications such as Jane Jacobs' *The Death and life of great American cities* (1961) and Alexander Mitscherlich's *Die Unwirtlichkeit unserer Städte* (1964) had great resonance and contributed to this change, especially in the German context (Schmucki 2001: 154 f.). In common is a concern for the city's public spaces and the citizens' inhabitations and progressive appropriations hereof (Gehl 2010; Jacobs 1961; Hajer and Reijndorp 2001; Lynch 1981; Whyte 1988).

Jane Jacobs' seminal text, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), was one persistent act of critique. She, for instance, questioned the "abstract man", planners considered living in the city (ibid: 92). Famously, she argues for high-quality, interactive, and pedestrian-friendly environments in neighbourhoods where people can form connections, communities and increase joy, as well as safety, in the city. These thoughts were also applied to American journalist and urbanist Whyte's seminal research on parks and plazas, especially the Bryant Park in New York City (Whyte 1990). Whyte's study methods include cautious observations on where and how people tend to gather or take a rest. He concludes unpretentiously that a decisive factor for the thriving of public life in such squares is the number of comfortable options for sitting. Whyte also found that places which do not have people tend to continue not having people and attract deviant behaviour, and the biggest attractor of people, and therefore safety, is in fact other people all having their eyes on the street (ibid). Worked with the City of New York and architect Laurie Olin, Whyte transformed Bryant Park into one of the safest and most attractive destinations in New York (Kent 2012). Bushes and trees were removed, a large open green space with movable chairs where ensembled in middle of the park, and a small

coffee stand and a larger café-bistro were built on both ends of the park to bring people in (Johnston 2000: 30).

Some well-known advocations with careful attention to *the human scale* of public design are also found in the works of Danish architect Jan Gehl (2010) on the design of public spaces that has taken place over several decades now (Jensen 2013a: 179). However, it is Jan Gehl's continuing work that is perhaps most closely representative of a contemporary Whyte-like method. Like Whyte, he has been involved in many projects worldwide that begin with thorough spatial ethnographic studies on how people use urban squares and plazas and create the best solution for that location (Johnston 2000: 30). He conducts pedestrian and bicycle counts, but also considers human-oriented perspectives based on the physical parameters of the human body. The idea of *City for People* (2010) is a contemporary attempt to consider the human being as focal point in the planning process. For example, one of his primary arguments for encouraging pedestrian and bicycle travel is the fact that while walking or on a bicycle, we can see or even touch the others nearby. This stands in contrast with automobiles where we are separate from others through more space and material, and often lack in visibility (Johnston 2000: 30).

So, one of the central concerns of all, Jacobs, Whyte, and Gehl is the discouragement of public street life in the wake of the modern city, and the reimagination of the street as a thriving public space. There is noticeable attention being paid to in-between spaces, like plazas, intersection and streets creating places of human interaction that relink dissected zones of modern planning. From now on, streets should create identity, offer identification, and finally be stimulating and tangible. Space was not seen as a container for technical systems but as a component of the meaningful interaction (Schmucki 2001: 189). Along with academic and planning debates, several new concepts started to express a priority change in street and public space planning, from car-centric to people-centric projects. Albeit usually initiated by grassroots initiatives, the overall aim was to reverse modernist landscape by decreasing cars' central place in streets and encouraging other modes of transport and activities. Started with small interventions such as painting sidewalks, placing flower baskets, or colour temporary games onto car lanes, this was integrated into policies and translated into several contexts (Vasarini Lopes 2018: 9).

### **Shared Space: Critique on modernist thinking**

By nature, new planning ideas pose challenges to prevalent thoughts and practices. The literature has witnessed ideas that are rather radical and may even question the conceptual basis of long-established and institutionalized practices. One such idea is that of *Shared Space* for urban

streets, which has countered hegemonic discourses and proposed an alternative understanding of streets and the principles on which they should be planned and designed. It was a return of people-centric urban planning. This concept contributes to urban design by understanding streets also as public spaces (Wouterson 2016: 14).

The conscious application of Shared Space associates its conceptual roots to pioneer Joost Vahl and others in the Netherlands who practiced “the deliberate integration of traffic into social space” (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 166). In the 1960s, a pilot test was carried out in Delft in the South of Holland, which is why some people talk about the *Delft model*. In 1976, the Dutch government recognized and formalized the approach, defining the concept of the *woonerf* (roughly translated as yard for living) to design low speed residential roads (ibid: 167). As a result of the positive experience, the Dutch government established design guidelines in 1976, which resulted in the creation of approximately 2700 Woonerven in the Netherlands by 1983. The Woonerf principle was an internationally acclaimed model and was taken up by other countries, for example in the 1980s with the introduction of the traffic-calmed area in West Germany, the *Berner Model*<sup>2</sup> (meeting zone), or in more recent approaches such as *Shared Space*.

According to Peters (2017a) the understanding and definition of Shared Space vary from a pure street design template to a whole planning philosophy. In a technocratic perspective, Shared Space is a design solution for streets, squares and plazas mostly in central town or urbanised areas. In the vein of Joost Vahl and others, Shared Space is more like a philosophy because it questions the current paradigm of traffic planning entirely. However, also as philosophy of planning, it focuses especially on intersections because they were seen as core manifestation of modernist planning ideals in cities. So, intersections were also the places where re-design should take place to re-order them profoundly.

Many intersections which are labelled as Shared Space are characterised by an open surface which does not segregate different forms of being mobile, and minimised use of devices, materials, signals for standardising and controlling traffic, such as surface marking, curbs, signals, handrails, pedestrian crossing, traffic signs or lights. All traditional traffic-regulation stuff is removed, making one continuous surface for all modes of traffic. Put it simply, the idea advocates the abandonment of conventional means of traffic regulation. Hans Mondermann, a traffic

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<sup>2</sup> The Berner Model, designed in the Swiss canton of Bern, is a procedural and planning philosophy that pursues similar goals to Shared Space, for example coexistence among road users. In contrast to the Shared Space approach, which focuses on a specific solution approach at the beginning of the planning process, the Berner Model approaches the development of solutions with an open mind.

engineer from Friesland and the designer which is mostly associated with the idea of Shared Space, proposed street space that gave responsibility to people to negotiate through space with others (Peters 2017a: 2). He was appointed as Head of Road Safety for the region in 1978 following the growing national concern about rising child pedestrian casualties. Unconvinced by the conventional of traditional traffic planning, Monderman began to experiment with simple design that emphasized the distinctive history and context of each place, deliberately removing or reducing road markings, signs, chicanes, and road humps. Mondermann and his colleagues began to address more and more complex intersections in more and more busier cities, like Wolvega (1997) or Oosterwolde (1998) in Friesland. In Oostervolde a five-way intersection was redesigned by removing all standardized signs: traffic signals, kerbs, pavements, and so on. It was replaced by a simple paved square on a slightly raised platform where cars, bicycles, trucks, pedestrians, wheelchair users negotiate their way across the place employing an intricate set of protocols. Regarding Hamilton-Baillie, “[i]t is not unusual to see conversations taking place in the middle of the intersection as lorries and cars weave through the apparent chaos of the unregulated space” (2008a: 169).

The liberal assumption behind this radical rethinking of intersections is that people in movement can coordinate themselves without the requirement of external traffic regulation. Monderman also studies places which were re-designed, in his opinion, according to human-centric principles was: Through the absent of conventional means of traffic regulation, traffic become more complicated, traffic space become public space, and interaction become compulsory. And he observed how organic and fluent the traffic became: “I don’t care if you wear a raincoat or a Golf, you are a human and I address you as a human, I want you to behave as a human” (cited in Vanderbilt 2008: 228). When motorized vehicles are present and use the same space as pedestrians and cyclists, a bigger uncertainty is perceived (Vasarini Lopes 2018: 13). But Shared Space is considered to decrease vehicles’ speed and increase safety for all by introducing ambiguity (Kaparias et al. 2015: 116). When people, including drivers, do not know what is expected from them in one situation, they will behave like anybody for whom the situation is new. We learn to observe others, and then act carefully. People become more alert to one another and reduce their average speed significantly (Jensen 2014a: 247). In the village of Makkinga (1992), which was one of the first towns removing every standard road sign, signal and road markings, Monderman could observe that the number of accidents has decreased significantly (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 168). Also, Kasparias et al. (2015) and Wouterson (2016) observed

that people give more room, anticipate the movement of others leading to a decreasing of conflict and accidents. In quantitative terms the redesign has even increased safety (Jensen 2014a: 247).

Once the external rules are absent, users rely on each other to understand the space, implying that interaction between them is inevitable (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 171; Peters 2017a). Pilz (2011) also discusses how Shared Space underlines the importance of complex relationships between people and their urban environment; people should be able to perceive public space “as a stage that becomes individually and communicatively appropriated and played upon. Until then, the public space will not do justice to its function in the complex fabric of public life: It must mirror society” (Pilz 2011: 5; Peters 2017b: 2 translation from German). According to Hamilton-Baillie, a designer specialized in this concept, traffic rules in shared spaces are based on “informal social protocols and negotiation” (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 166), substituting conventional traffic control, by which all participants are able to communicate, anticipate and react. They keep on eye contact and give off signs to each other. As in Pilz’ quote, the sociocultural significance of public space has considerably more weight than its technical organization. This is one of the most challenging aspect of Shared Space, its claims to serve as a kind of catalyst for “socio-spatial self-organization, rendering conventional traffic engineering redundant” (Peters 2017b, S. 2). Shared Space are staged by people who act as socially responsible persons regulating their own doings according to common social norms and rules (e.g. Edquist and Corben 2012; Engwicht 2005; Jones and Young 2010; Karndacharuk et al. 2013; Pilz 2011). Order primarily results from social encounters and to a lesser degree, is conditioned by the physical environment and design. This perspective highlights civility as an important precondition for Shared Space to work (Peters 2017b: 9). Therefore, it promotes that the engineered control of traffic emerging in modernist planning is widely redundant because it suppresses the sociality of urban spaces.

Proponents of Shared Space philosophy argue that the point of departure for designing public space should be urban sociality, and not issues such as road efficiency (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a; Engwicht 2005; Pilz 2011). In addition, technical organisations of public space in the context of traffic should be carefully guided by sociocultural qualities of public space, rather vice versa. Thus, Shared Space is said to be “the integration of traffic into the social and cultural fabric of the built environment” (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 169). However, the philosophy of Shared Space, that of all street users moving and interacting in their use of space on the basis of informal social protocols and negotiation, is nothing new. I argue that such ad hoc arrangements

were the status quo ante of the introduction of segregation associated with modernist traffic planning (ibid: 166). It can be seen as some kind of revival of the social order on streets in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

From its provoking standpoint, this philosophy suggests a shift in power relation between people in terms of governing encounter on the street. Further, it suggests that the prevailing means of governing traffic are dispensable (Peters 2017b: 7). Regarding Peters (ibid: 7), „the idea poses a threat to the domain of transport planning as it goes beyond suggesting an alternative design for certain user conditions. It poses questions about the decision maker for the planning, design and management of streets and the knowledge, skills and methods that are considered legitimate to guide such work”. In other words, it is not a redesign of public space, it conceptually related to wider critiques against modernistic planning in general (e.g. Abram 2011; Healey 2010; Sandercock 2000) and the field of traffic planning in particular (e.g. Beckmann 2004; Sheller 2011; Urry, 2004).

### **Modernist domestication of Shared Space**

Since its pioneers presented the idea (Hamilton-Baillie and Jones 2005; Karndacharuk et al. 2014; Shared Space 2005; 2008), academical debates on Shared Spaced have been extended to the planning domain on a local, national, and international scale and leads to much discussion among experts in urban planning with focus on traffic planning and in a wider public context (Peters 2017b: 1). In recent years, Shared Space has much support on an international scale. Hans Monderman and his colleagues launched the European Shared Space Project as part of the European Union’s Interreg IIIB North Sea Region Program. From 2004 to 2008, in seven municipalities in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, England and the Netherlands pilot schemes were designed and built, generating a pool of Shared Space life experiments. Here again, fewer accidents were observed. In Ashford in England there was seen a 60 % drop in accidents in the first three years. At Laweiplein in Drachten in the Netherland, the study also found that despite motorists driving more slowly in Shared Space zones traffic delays were reduced by around 50 %. However, the ideas of the EU program were subsequently propagated and introduced to different parts of the world. Even though, the most resonance was observed in the implementing seven countries and neighbouring ones (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a, 2008b; Hamilton-Baillie and Jones 2005). New planning ideas ranging from local design concept to large-scale planning policies which involves also changes to prevailing planning policies. Nevertheless, these ideas

materialises in specific context, such as in design guidelines or planning policies influencing decision making at a local level (Peters 2017b: 12).

Regarding Peters (ibid: 2), these debates and ideas have prompted academic research, reports, guidelines, and policies, which provide an example to what he labels as *domestication*. To Peters, “[d]omestication is the process in which new planning and design ideas are adjusted to prevailing thoughts and practices within the professional realm such that they lose their critical momentum” (ibid: 4). For example, Besley (2010) laments that Shared Space is commonly understood not as a design philosophy, but rather as a mere design solution. Thus, its wider implication as a philosophy to think about the public realm in new ways are usually overlooked (ibid: 20). She asserts for an increased focus on the “more progressive and philosophical beginnings” (ibid: 2) of Shared Space. So, her critique is that debates on Shared Space suffer from overemphasis on mere design perspective leading to the marginalisation of its inherent radical zeitgeist to change how we see mobilities (Peters 2017b: 2).

An example of its domestication is the implementation of Shared Space in German traffic planning. Gerlach et al. (2009) presented Shared Space as a critique to prevailing approaches and argued in favour for the deliberative effect of design. This would allow to take a latent social responsibility which is usually constrained by practices of conventional traffic planning; “the concept relies on political responsibility and participation, whereas more personal responsibility from citizens is required for both the planning of and daily encounters with the new traffic situation.” (Gerlach et al. 2009: 62, translation from German by Peters 2017b: 2).

This German guidelines for Shared Space implementation of Gerlach et al. (2009) were later adopted with further recommendation and more technical details by Forschungsgesellschaft für Straßen & Verkehrswesen (see FGSV 2011). It was presented as a “knowledge document” (ibid: 21) that prescribes how specific technical issues should be handled. Shared Space was positioned as a concept in professional streets design. Further, the report tries to fit it into German traffic law and a range of technical requirements for its implementation. Social dimensions such as the creation of a pleasant atmosphere and the facilitation of mutual consideration among traffic participants, were also specified (ibid: 4). But they were solely viewed as an outcome of the design, which can be achieved only by fulfilling the needed technical requirements. The initial purpose of Shared Space is already weakened in Gerlach et al. (2009) suggestions. Although they least stress to importance of the sociality which is often neglected by conventional traffic planning, the guidelines of FGSV reduces Shared Space to a simply street design

which can be taken up from some place and implemented at another place – similar to traffic light-coordinated intersections in modernist planning traditions.

**Table 1: Ten factors necessary for the success of the implementation Shared Space in Germany**

<b>Issues</b>	<b>General Shared Space idea (by Hans Monderman)</b>	<b>Suggestions for Germany by Gerlach et al. (2009)</b>
<b>Application area</b>	All streets	Streets with lingering or stay function, maximum length 300 meters*
<b>Entrance signs/label/marker</b>	None	Necessary
<b>Mobility arrangement</b>	Mixed use, all modes	Safe areas for pedestrians, safe crossing, speed reduction measures
<b>Participation of public and interest groups in planning and design process</b>	Always	Always
<b>Traffic volume</b>	No default limitation	Max. 14.000 vehicles/day, limited heavy vehicle traffic, numerous pedestrians and cyclists
<b>Speed</b>	No default limitation	Max. 30 km/h
<b>Right of way</b>	Left gives way to right	Left gives way to right
<b>Signals, signs and markings</b>	None	If necessary, to provide safety
<b>Parking rules</b>	None	Parking not permitted
<b>Children play on street or driving surface</b>	Permitted	Prohibited

Source: derived and translated by Peters (2017b) from Gerlach et al. (2009); earlier presented in Peters (2011)

\*The length criterion is not found in the original table but mentioned in the report (Gerlach et al. 2009: 29).

So, what this example demonstrated is that if we think Shared Space a pure design, it can be translated into dominant discourses and cultures (Peters 2017b: 5). This translation includes the simplification of elements that do not fit into these dominant discourses. Regarding Healey (2012), planning ideas are often packed up and passed on as planning tools and solutions to legitimate planning problems. Healey (ibid) theorizes that modern planning tends to be driven by the motivation to offer universally applicable design solutions. To understand “how planners’ ideas are disseminated and [...] their ability to insert them in diverse places and spaces”

(Tait and Jensen 2007: 108), Tait and Jensen use the concept of traveling ideas<sup>3</sup>. They conclude that planning ideas cannot be generalised across time and space. Efforts are required to make these ideas transferrable. The point is, when planning ideas are transferred warrants *de-contextualisation* and then, *re-contextualisation* (Czarniawska and Joerges, 1996: 26). In the vein of Healey (2012), ideas span across not only geographical space but also the realm of established culture of modernist traffic planning.

Accordingly, the debate about Shared Space and emerging literature are gradually reframed in context of modernist traffic planning discourses, such as safety or transport efficiency (Peters 2017b: 11). However, it seems that Shared Space is reframed as a technical concept and engineering project what enables a functional relationship in which technical issues play a dominant role, on the one hand. On the other hand, translating Shared Space into an engineering project maintains the legitimacy of the engineering discipline to control traffic in modernistic terms (ibid: 8). Therefore, van Duinen (2015) argues that Shared Space becomes encased and consequently losing much of its initial purpose: the social implications of traffic planning are only loosely addressed, or sometimes even absent (Peters 2017b: 11). The social is largely disregarded.

### **The legislator's view**

Still, there are a variety of views and definitions of what streets are or for what it should be interchangeably endorsed by legislators, designers, traffic engineers, road users and road residents. Even if these are first of all imaginaries in the head, we are at all not unaffected by how they frame the street, and public space in a wider context. Like Normark (2006), I argue that street legislation and regulation (including what we inscribe into and delegate to things to execute) is performing a more or less implicit model of how interaction on streets should be accomplished, no matter at a traffic light-coordinated intersection or a Shared Space. However, the ways we stage streets – even though we do this for the good purpose of serving collective goods, such as safety, justice, and so on – do not simply produce neutral contexts. It reproduces in all its commonplaceness and diversity a distinct *street-interaction paradigm*. The notion is

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<sup>3</sup> Tait and Jensen's (2007) theorization partly builds on Czarniawska and Joerges' concepts, who term these processes as 'disembedding' and 'reembedding' of ideas, thereby avoiding the theoretically problematic claim that ideas can be without a context.

derived from Normark's road-interaction paradigm (ibid). I choose street instead of road, because Normark (ibid) refers the road only to the asphaltic surface on which cars dwell. With streets I want to capture the whole in-between space.

Still, I have argued that traffic planning mainly influenced by modernist thinking on traffic flow and safety, although in academical debates and planning practices there was and still are critiques on this modernist traffic planning. To reduce social interaction between people dwelling in city streets, these interactions were engineered, and the repertoire of acts were limited. Public Space was ordered in a distinct way from above inscribing the intended interaction in place. For example, a traffic light-coordinated interaction, the blueprint of modernist traffic planning, is composed of asphalt roads, sidewalks, sometimes bicycle lines, pedestrian crossings, a lot of pavements, traffic signs and lights, and so on. Roads are typically cut in the middle, with marks, a line indicating that drivers should stay on her lane and side in the direction they are heading (sometimes roads, sidewalks are also separated vertically). Normark concludes, "those that drive a car can use the major segments of the road; you are a cyclist? then you are restricted to that vertical sub-segment; oh! you are a pedestrian, well then we have this pavement for you, and don't you dare bringing your animals – we haven't made a vertical segment for them – not yet. We will sort it out all right, you can be sure – you just trust your road administrators" (2006: 14). By functional segregation legislators could isolate road users and anticipate repertoire of behaviour available for those who might have to interact.

In Shared Space philosophy street interaction is defined differently. Interaction between strangers is not seen as a problem or economically as a risk decreasing safety and traffic flow. Instead, it is considered as part of contemporary mobilities: interactions are desirable because the negotiation with others via informal social protocols makes traffic safer and public space more liveable for all. To foster interaction, public space should be re-ordered; there should be only one surface for all, and traffic regulation devices should be reduced to a minimum or at best removed completely. If there are no traffic signs, or lights, no segregated lanes, we have closely to look how others act, keep on eye contact, use gestures, and so on.

What this example shows is that how traffic space is ordered, meaning from above by traffic planners and many others involved herein, is based on how social interaction is seen. Therefore, I argue that the perspective of street-interaction paradigm which is embedded into the wider context of traffic planning's history is useful in discussing how mobilities are enacted from

above. It is an enactment of street-interaction-paradigms: it does not work upon subject or particular means of transport, rather: it is an order of things in relation to each other (the street) and the relationships between them (the social).

However, let us draw on modernist traffic planning again. For sure, legislators still face conflicts and anomalies regularly which challenge their view on interaction. In her dissertation *Driver interaction, informal rules, irritation and aggressive behaviour*, Gunilla Björklund (2005) raises this problem when she looks closer at interaction of car drivers. She starts by establishing that road use necessarily requires negotiation: “To make the driving task possible every road user has to take the intentions and behaviours of other users into account. In other words, road users have to interact with each other.” (ibid: 7). Car drivers follow also informal rules interpreting each other’s intention meaning the set of rules which others may comply to make their predictions, sometimes in opposition to official rules. Informal rules, according to Björklund (ibid), are caused by vague information in the situation, confusing drivers – this is what Shared Space intends with ambiguity. The solution to the problems caused by informal rules, to legislators, is to eliminate confusion by signs (in a wider sense) along streets, so that drivers are reminded of how they should act (ibid: 35f.). So, methods that are used to interact and signs that are given to interpret one’s behaviour on the street are standardised spatiotemporally from above by eliminating uncertainty and increasing traffic safety and flow.

Today, these modernist assumptions are manifest in the maps, itineraries, production and development plans, engineering manuals and so on that powerfully shape roadway design. Herein, it is prescribed how we should conceive the street and how things taking place on streets should be tackled (Normark 2006: 3). There remain casual relations within a predefined set of variables. Its strong belief in pure categorising and formalising social interaction well echoes the rationale of current street-interaction paradigm of contemporary traffic planning. The question is, however, whether thinking in terms of one street-interaction paradigm provides adequate lenses and heuristics to capture and cope with the contextualised interactivity of everyday mobilities. I argue that people act, react and especially interact in heterogeneous and only partially comprehensible ways. Besides formal signs, there are a much more nonofficial, informal, and fluid signs we use to social interact with others, we cannot wipe away. Even legislators cannot.



## 4

# Theory III: From below

In the previous chapter, we see traffic planning is not a neutral task of applying taken-for-granted mathematical models and rules. It is rather an active process of assembling things and relations between them which is temporally situated and spatially contextualised. I have outlined how mobilities are staged (Jensen 2013a) and enacted *from above*. Public space and stuff within are assembled according to distinct street-interaction paradigms with the prescribed intention how relationships should be and become real in interactions. I need not to say, that power is embedded in these relationships.

As I have argued in chapter one, we should also deal with the enactment of mobilities *from below*. Following the critique on contemporary traffic planning, which is influenced significantly by modernist thinking, I want to put light especially on the social in this chapter. For that reason, I include the scientific debate of social sciences on mobilities into my considerations. Here, I refer on thoughts of the mobilities turn to show that we should engage with mobilities from below to which no attention was paid for a long time in debates on traffic planning. Afterwards, I will draw on the famous social scientists Harold Garfinkel and Erving Goffman to outline more precisely how we could understand everyday mobilities from below. Important are the theories of social interaction and of semiotics in general. Of course, I will surely not lay

out a complete theoretical framework. In fact, I introduce some theoretical and analytical concepts which should enable us to integrate the from below dimension at least into discourses about contemporary traffic planning.

It is obvious to most traffic planners that mobilities are made not simply of technical bits and pieces but also of people (Law 2008: 143). But contemporary traffic planning seems more interested in modelling mobilities, meaning ordering public space as intersection and social interaction as a causal relationship between people that can be engineered in vein of modernist thinking. Rather, than paying attention to “local realities of where, how, and why people move” (Jirón 2011: 265). During the foray through history of traffic planning in chapter 2, we have seen that modernist traffic planning underlies a distinct street-interaction paradigm. The ways in which mobilities are staged from above have a profound impact on the interactions occurring in public space. Interactions in public space are trivialised or neglected in the contemporary paradigm of modernist-street-interaction and this, I have argued, is linked with the inadequate conceptualisation not only of the street, but also of the social (Normark 2006: 17).

Also, in Shared Space philosophy, the social is only seen as given entity, as an explanans for informal interaction, as something that is there, but not questioned. Of course, Shared Space challenge the conventional top-down thinking in transport planning because it promotes social self-organisation through people’s interaction (see e.g.: Clarke, Monderman, and Hamilton-Baillie 2006). Debates are about its normative assumptions related to people’s capabilities to manage Shared Space environment with the focus on disadvantaged people, such as elderly, children or impaired (Imrie 2012; Imrie and Kumar 2011; Havik et al. 2012; Curl et al. 2015). Although a focus is on the effect of Shared Space on these groups, Shared Space research is largely disconnected to social theory and wider academic discourses on sociality in public space. Contributions are more rooted in urban studies and in the design disciplines (see Karndacharuk et al. 2014). Therefore, they are criticised for oversimplifying the socio-spatial relationship (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001; Amin and Thrift 2002; Amin 2008; Cresswell 2010) and the undertheorizing of sociality as a mere consensus of social norms which are accommodated by design.

From our foray in chapter 2, we have learned that the social is especially about relationships. Traffic planners shape the scene in which we should play our roles interacting with others in a distinct manner. For example, if we want to cross the street, we should interact with traffic lights waiting when the lights are red and crossing when the lights are green. But we do not

always behave like it was intended by traffic planners. We have our own minds thinking about how we act and interact with others. Some of us wait at a red traffic light, others glance to the left and the right, and cross the street when there is no car coming. What we see, and this resonates with Björklund's (2005) observation, that there is something going on in the streets transcending the causal relations proclaimed by modernist traffic planning. In the street, and public spaces per se, there are multiple and dynamic social interactions including forms of talk, information gathering, but also simply being connected, moving in presence with other and so many different convergences or divergences of physical presence (Sheller and Urry 2006: 214).

Also, in the social sciences the social of mobilities has been largely ignored or trivialised as given which does not need a further investigation (Sheller and Urry 2006: 212). Regardless, I argue that it will be fruitful here to draw on social science literature, mainly on mobilities studies. As we will see, it will help us to conceptualise the social, and therefore to understand how mobilities are staged from below. A focal point here is the *mobilities turn* as an authentically interdisciplinary field which introduced a critical thinking on mobilities in everyday life (see Adey 2010; Cresswell 2006, 2010; Sheller and Urry 2006, Vannini 2010:112). There is an amount of contributions from anthropology, cultural studies, geography, migration studies, science and technology studies, tourism and transport studies, and sociology (Ahmed et al. 2003; Amin and Thrift 2002; Appadurai 1996; Clifford 1997; Coleman and Crang 2002; Cresswell 2001; Crouch and Lubben 2003; Degen and Hetherington 2001; Ginsburg et al. 2002; Kaplan 1996; Kaufmann 2002; Mol and Law 1994; Pascoe 2001; Riles 2001; Serres 1995; Sheller 2003; Urry 2000; Verstraete and Cresswell 2002; Virilio 1997). In a reissued version of the paper *Mobile Sociology* (1999), John Urry (2010) points to the opening up of the research agenda in sociology which is required to breaking away from notion of society, and the social as something fixed, static and bounded. This paper is a short version of the key arguments presented in Urry's influential *Sociology beyond Societies: Mobilities for the Twenty-first Century* (2000) that is seen as the overture of the mobilities turn.

John Urry and all other contributors acknowledge the significance of mobilities in the complex and tedious re-production of social reality which was neglected for long in planning praxis and in academic debates of social sciences (Urry 2000; Cresswell 2011; Jensen 2013a). Mobilities are more than the proponents of the contemporary street-interaction paradigm suggest. They are more than a solely movement from A to B, simply speaking, and therefore cannot be reduced to derived demands, to instrumental acts of physical displacement, or to economic costs in terms of travel alone. To Jensen (2009b: xvii), we have to be always critical about the taken-for-

granted understanding of mobilities as a cost-full and rational minimization of travel distance and time from point A to point B. Contra to much transport research, the time spend traveling is not dead time that people always seek to minimise. Being on the move can involve sets of occasioned activities (Lyons and Urry, 2005). Lyons (2004) stresses that social norms and habitual behaviour challenge the modernist notion of mobilities. We seek solitude or socialise with others, present ourselves to others and perform a range of social roles which are embedded in power relations and simultaneously contest them. We are doing society when we move in public space (i.e. Bissell 2010; Jensen 2010b; Larsen 2014; Middleton 2010, 2011; Sheller 2004; Spinney 2006). The mobilities turn suggests that as we move and how we move have pervasive repercussions on the ways we think of ourselves, of social others, and of the material world (Jensen 2018: 10; Wilken and Goggin 2012; Vannini et al. 2012).

In the following, I counterbalance the predominance of insufficient and inadequate conceptions of the mobilities by providing alternative sociological modes of understanding and interpreting of mobilities from below. Here, I argue that we need a more nuanced understanding of our actions and interactions with others in everyday situations (Crang and Thrift 2000; Low 2003; Amin 2007, 2012; Jensen 2009a, 2013a; Cresswell 2010). For this purpose, I ground on some large and admittedly abstract concepts of sociological analysis. I do this by rereading the two famous sociological classics, Harold Garfinkel and Erving Goffman. The point is that there is a need to comprehend and conceptualise how mobilities are staged from below.

### **Harold Garfinkel's Ethnomethodology: The social in the making**

Ethnomethodology, which goes back to Harold Garfinkel (1917-2011), is considered an offshoot of symbolic interactionism<sup>4</sup>. In his dissertation *The Perception of the Other: A Study in Social Order* (1952), Garfinkel deals with the conditions under which a person gives her environment a continuous meaning. For him, the process of making sense in everyday actions is not something that can be separated from these actions and therefore it cannot be shifted into people's minds. Instead, he assumes that meaningful on-goings are completely and exclusively on-goings in the behavioural environment of a social actor. Therefore, there is no reason to look

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<sup>4</sup> The concept of Symbolic Interactionism goes back to Herbert Blumer. It is linked to the exploration of subjective views and the subjective meaning that people associate with their actions. A symbolic interaction is a mutual, interrelated behaviour of individuals and groups using common symbols (Lamnek 2010: 25). Symbolically refers to the linguistic basis of human coexistence; interaction means that people do not act together towards their counterpart, but in mutual relation to each other. The term interaction serves to examine and analyse the developmental processes of actions that arise when two or more people (or actors) coordinate their individual lines of action in their respective instance of action (reflexivity) with the aim of acting together (Denzin 2012: 137). Every form of communication (and also conscious non-communication) is a symbolic interaction.

under the skullcap, because there is nothing interesting to be found there except the brain (Garfinkel 1963: 190). Garfinkel's decision to conceptualize the process of subjective sense-making for investigation *ab initio* not as an inner, private process of consciousness, but rather as a social public on-going, is of central importance for ethnomethodology (Bergmann 2012b: 125).

Unlike symbolic interactionism, it is not primarily about the subjective meanings that the interaction has for the participants, but rather about how this interaction is organized (Flick 2011: 88) or about “how it is done” or “how it is to be done” (Lamnek 2010: 39, translated from German). For Garfinkel (1963), the subject of ethnomethodology is the practical, situational everyday action. The aim of ethnomethodological inquiry is to determine the practices and procedures (*methods*) that are taken for granted, by means of which the members of a society (*ethnos*) make their own actions perceptible and recognisable (*accountable*), and meaningfully structure and order the reality around them. Put it simple, Garfinkel understood *ethnomethodology* as a distinct approach to sociological inquiry. It painstakingly analyses and describes the various *methods*. By these methods, *members of a social group* maintain the orderliness and sensibility of their everyday worlds. ‘Ethno’ refers to members of a social or cultural group or in Garfinkel's terms, members of a local social scene and ‘method’ refers to the things members routinely do to create and recreate the various recognizable social actions. ‘Ology’ as in the word sociology implies the study of, or the logic of, these methods. So, Garfinkel was interested in the operative foundation of the meaningful order that is taken for granted in everyday life, i. e. the techniques and mechanisms – the ethno-methods – of their production (Bergmann 2012b: 120).

Thus, Ethnomethodology means the study of members’ methods for producing recognizable social orders in interaction processes (Rawls 2002: 6; Flick 2011: 86). Matthes (1981: 199) defines ethnomethodology as research to uncover the self-evident structures of the everyday world. By using the concept of the member, Garfinkel points out that the concept of the actor as a self with stable personal identity is of secondary sociological relevance. From his perspective, actors are rather constructions of meaning of the members, which are first created by social practices in social situations. Thus, practices are not produced by actors, but actors are produced by practices in a collective (Mehan and Wood 1975). It follows that the attributions of meaning by the actors constantly update and modify the knowledge system of society – one could also say, in the sense of ethnomethodology: that they constantly produce it anew. Ethnomethodological investigation do not fetishizes the social members and their subjective or shared knowledge. Instead, the social member is decentred, and practices that produce social members

and societal knowledge systems are in the first place. Ethnomethodological research is devoted to the question of how they do this. To shed light on this, ethnomethodology identifies and describes the practical and interpretative constructional achievements of members in everyday situations, which remain largely implicit. So, the ethnomethodological concept of the social has an overall praxeological orientation.

Methodologically, ethnomethodological studies examine methods, including especially routines, of everyday actions (e.g. greetings) and take into account the situation and the context in which these actions take place. Since interaction sequences are documented and reconstructively interpreted down to the smallest detail, ethnomethodology is also referred to as the sociological equivalent of the microscope (Treibel 2006: 106). Corresponding approaches are also enjoying increasing popularity in human geography because they offer the possibility of focusing in particular on spatially related, material practices in situ. Garfinkel stresses the importance of the individual moment for the constitution of meanings and interactions. Even more strongly than Schütz, Berger, Luckmann and others, he advocates a sociology of everyday life. For him, all members of a society pursue sociology (ibid: 106).

Garfinkel's decision to place everyday actions at the centre of social science's interest does not stem from a fascination with the exoticism of the trivial. It is based on a presupposition-rich theoretical consideration. The point of reference is the so-called Hobbes' problem, well known in sociology, which concerns the question of how social order is possible when people pursue selfish goals and therefore live in a struggle of all against all. Garfinkel's starting point is the reflections of his doctoral supervisor Talcott Parsons (1937) on the theory of social action. Parsons does not see the solution to the problem of social order in utilitarian models of society. Rather, social integration results from the collective adoption and internalization of commonly shared values and norms, which not only curbs the selfish tendencies of the individual, but also culturally controls the objects of their desire. In referring to Alfred Schütz, Garfinkel (1952) formulated a critique on this solution in his dissertation *The perception of the other: A study in social order*. He criticizes the inadequate explanation of the subjective perspective that the specific achievements of appropriation, interpretation, translation, and decision making of the actors are ignored in Parson's theory and equated with the model of scientific-rational action.

Thus, Garfinkel blocked Parson's recourse to a normative consensus for solving the problem of social order with the argument that there is an epistemological hiatus between the only generally formulated rules and values on the one hand and the inevitably particular situation of current

action on the other (Heritage 1984, 1987). General rules and values, according to Garfinkel, should be necessarily conveyed into the situation, they have to be situated. But the members must achieve this mediation by interpreting the rules as well as the situation; only by attributing meaning and interpretation, these rules, values, and the situation can be coherently related to each other. This process of attribution is mediated by signs, which we will see in detail when we discuss Goffman (Bergmann 2012b: 119). Garfinkel argues that the solution to the problem of social order can be found solely in the elementary processes of the everyday constitution of meaning by following how members in their daily activities convey cultural norms and values into the situation, coordinating them with others in situ and making them relevant for action (Bergmann 2012a: 53).

In Garfinkel's view, contrary to the cognitive consensus assumed in Parsons' theory (Wilson 1973), the members of a society do not passively submit to their socialized systems of needs, internalized norms, social constraints, etc.; rather, in their interaction with others, they continually produce and actively shape social reality as a meaningful context of action. Although this actor model was not politically motivated, it had surely a high affinity with the social emancipation efforts of the 1960s (Bergmann 2012b). Against the background of political, social and generative conflicts in American society, the consensual character of the Parsonian category system was increasingly perceived as inadequate. Approaches that emphasized the constructional and negotiating character of social reality corresponded much more to the zeitgeist of the time (Gouldner 1974). This is a significant – non-scientific – reason for the success of ethnomethodology that began in the 1960s, the symbolic interactionism, the treatise by Berger and Luckmann (1969) or the works of Erving Goffmans (Widmer 1991), which in part draw on different sources of the history of ideas, but nevertheless meet in the emphasis on the active, creative role of the individual in social interaction (Bielefeld Sociologists Working Group 1973). In contrast to Erving Goffman's works, which were written almost at the same time, Harold Garfinkel's works are much more unwieldy and difficult to access; they are fundamental in their demands, consistently programmatic in their character, strongly self-referential in their concepts and distinctions, and therefore often remain dark (Bergmann 2012a: 51).

### **The social order**

Ethnomethodology works with a model of reality that contrasts with the epistemologically realistic notion that social facts as objective reality are the object and legitimation of sociology. In comparison to classic sociological thinkers like Durkheim, ethnomethodology's focus is not

on the characteristics of population, but in the situational details of interaction (Rawls 2002: 24). In *Studies in ethnomethodology*, Garfinkel writes that contrary to Durkheim the view is held (and used as a guideline for investigation) that the objective reality of social facts is a continuous production and performance of the common activities of everyday life. Whereby the members know, use, and take for granted the ordinary ways of this production (Garfinkel 1967a: vii). In contrast to social science theories with an objectivist understanding of reality, ethnomethodology assumes that the reality character of social facts is not an inherent characteristic of these; social facts obtain their reality character exclusively through the interactions taking place between people: Only in everyday practical actions does social reality materialize. This is the fundamental principle: Social facts are not given; they are constantly produced in the everyday interactions of ordinary people. Of course, Garfinkel does not negate the fact that social facts are experienced as objectively given reality, but he resolutely opposes to take this as founding of a science of the social. Garfinkel proposes not to start from the given social facts, but to conceive their objective reality as a continuous production that takes place in and with the activities of everyday life. Social reality is understood by Garfinkel as an ongoing accomplishment, the social order which is produced locally by the interactors in every moment and every situation (Mehan and Wood 1975). For Garfinkel, the answer lies in the detailed studies of the production of these local and situational social orders. The overriding concern of ethnomethodology is to explain the accomplishment of social order.

To explain the social order practically, Garfinkel often used traffic flow as a tutorial example. Ethnomethodologists explain the phenomena of social order of traffic by looking into how traffic is recognised by the drivers on the road (Normark 2006: 20). Livingston argues that the members' "relatively stable, locally produced and regulated driving practices" (Livingston 1987: 30) create such orderliness that they, to an outside observer, can be identified as patterns, predictable movements rather than an ongoing accomplishment. Many outside observers hastily assume that the documentary evidences create stable traffic flow, when in fact these documentary evidences are the upshot of the members' ongoing production and recognition work. Garfinkel (2002: 163) describes how a formal analyst could "specify the traveling wave as a casual structure of the traffic stream's rate of flow. With it they could also specify other consequential structures of the wave and the traffic stream" (ibid: 163). But they can only observe this phenomenon, they do not find any explanation or show in what specific ways the traffic wave and so traffic flow was made observable, and also anticipated in each following situation – since that was witnessable only from the perspective of the members accomplishing the traffic wave.

Regarding Livingston such a casual description “is at best a documented residue of the naturally organized lived work of getting through traffic. It is not the intrinsic structure of that work.” (ibid 1987: 25). So, unlike approaches that took the objectivity of social facts as given, Garfinkel took it as his job to understand how this seemingly objective reality was constantly being produced in interaction.

In Garfinkel’s *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (1967a) the term ‘interaction’ features 31 times. Yet, Garfinkel neither develops a theoretical concept of ‘interaction’ nor undertakes detailed studies of ‘interaction’. Instead, the book is comprised of a variety of studies in which Garfinkel develops some of the key principles of the sociological attitude that has become known as ethnomethodology. But everyday interaction as everyday occurrence between humans stands in the centre of this theory. Interaction produces occasions and matters of fact.

“The following studies seek to treat practical activities, practical circumstances, and practical sociological reasoning as topics of empirical study, and by paying to the most commonplace activities of daily life the attention usually accorded extraordinary events, seek to learn about them as phenomena in their own right.” (Garfinkel 1967a: 1).

Although, he does not conceptualize it explicitly, he understands the social order as an interaction order.

First, in the continuous process of producing this interaction order, everyday knowledge, routines, and interpretations play an important role. Garfinkel writes,

„By ‚cultural dope‘ I refer to the man-in-the-sociologist’s-society who produces the stable features of the society by acting in compliance with preestablished and legitimate alternatives of action that the common culture provides. (...) The common feature of the use of these ‚models of man‘ is the fact that courses of common sense rationalities of judgment which involve the person’s use of common sense knowledge of social structures over the temporal ‚succession‘ of here and now situations are treated as epiphenomenal.“ (Garfinkel 1967a: 68).

Therefore, interaction is only possible on basis of common-sense knowledge. Human’s acting relates to this common-sense knowledge. To understand others and to be understood by others are basic elements of everyday life.

“With respect to the problematic character of practical actions and to the practical adequacy of their enquiries, members take for granted that members must at the outset 'know' the setting in which he is to operate if his practices are to serve as measures to bring particular, located features of these settings to recognizable account. They

treat as the most passing matter of fact that members' accounts, of every sort, in all their logical modes, with all of their uses, and for every method of their assembly, are constituent features of the setting they make observable. Members know, require, count on, and make use of this reflexivity to produce, accomplish, recognize, or demonstrate rational adequacy-for-all-practical-purposes of their procedures and findings.” (Garfinkel 1967a: 8).

So, human possess knowledge about the subjective environment of other humans in everyday life.

Second, Ethnomethodology is guided by the idea that everyday actions are made recognisable in their execution as signs-and-witnesses-of-a-social-order – for example two people walking together make it clear to others that here two people are walking together (Ryave and Schenkein 1974). Regarding Garfinkel (1967a: 74) the existence, content, and validity of norms are only discovered during a social interaction by the members, whose actions are supposed to be guided by these norms. This discovery takes place through interpretative and communicative practices that first produce the context that makes them understandable. Since all competent members of society take part in this process of producing meaning, it cannot take place in any subjectively arbitrary manner, but rather methodically (Weingarten et al. 1976). These ethno-methods are implicit constitutive procedures with which members produce the social order. It means that interaction has formal structural features that can be described as such. This process of producing-social-order-methodologically is of no interest to those who act in everyday life, they take it for granted. For ethnomethodology, this process is the central issue. What is taken for granted in everyday life becomes its problem (Wolff 1976). So, the guiding principle of ethnomethodology was not to bring pre-existing understandings of what constitutes social reality to the setting under study. Rather, the idea is to let members' own methods of establishing social reality speak for themselves.

### **Accounts**

To study ethno-methods, ethnomethodologists start by affirming that the social order is something people must work constantly to achieve, based on witnessed accounts which people must be able to identify; “ethnomethodological studies analyse everyday activities as members' methods for making those same activities visibly-rational-for-all-practical-purposes, i. e. *'accountable,'* as organizations of commonplace everyday activities.” (Garfinkel 1967a: vii). So that members could interact methodically, their methods must be public; they are visible and observable to others and from the member's own point of view they are rationally. As Sharrock

note, „when you go about your actions [...] you do them so that (or in ways that) other people can see what you're doing. You do your actions to have them recognized as the actions they are.” (Sharrock 1995: 4). Important here is the notion of account. *Account* means more than understanding, it means the observable forms and representations in which a perception, an interpretation, an explanation materializes. This externalized character of accounts becomes particularly clear, for example, where Garfinkel writes: "When I speak of accountable [...], I mean observable and direct, i.e. available for the members of society as situated practices of looking and telling" (ibid: 1). Other paraphrases that can be found for accountable include recordable, countable, picturable, tellable, storyable, or representable (Bergmann 2012b: 126 f.).

Sharrock (1995) and Normark (2006) use the example of people who wait for the bus to explain the notion of account. First, it implies “the condition that something can be accounted for, that it is something for which accounts can be given.” (Livingston 1987: 123). For example, a group of people lining up to get on a bus can be called a queue. Second, accountable implies that something is observable – that, both the person producing the account and the co-present members recognising that the account can witness it, e. g. that there are people at the bus stop and that the people are placed, observably, in specific ways in relation to each other. Third, accountability is accomplished within and part and parcel of the activity that it simultaneously creates orderliness for, e. g. the way how the people are located in relation to each other is the order of the queue as well as the queue itself (Normark 2006: 40). Fourth, accounts and accountable are accomplishments by the members, both by those producing it and those recognising it. A people queue at a bus station is accomplished by the movements of the people staying at the station, but also by the people who enter the station and lining up (ibid: 40) Fifth, the competence which is required for the production and recognition work, is anticipated in the situation, as a pedestrian places herself in a queue-specific way and takes for granted that everyone will see that she is queuing. Sixth, accounts are neither objects nor representations, but in-between; they are mashups of witnessed objects and activities. And they are not representations, even though the representations are created out of accounts (ibid: 40). Accounts thus possess a principled referentiality. On the one hand they serve to generate and make recognizable the social order and meaning of a social encounter; on the other hand, they are themselves part of this encounter and only acquire their meaning and intelligible content in the reference to the social order (Bergmann 2012b: 127).

This referentiality of accounts is expressed primarily in the fact that utterances and actions are consistently related to the context in which they take place and thus inevitably assume an

*indexical* character. Accounts continually refer to the situation and context in which they are produced, and in order to understand their meaning, the recipients themselves must continually consider the environment in which they take place. Garfinkel (1967a) showed in a variety of studies that the actors in everyday life are permanently involved in the interpretation, assessment and discussion of their situation. The situation is, as Garfinkel would put it, accountable. We can read associations someone else has provided us with. Whether working-the-queue or doing crossing-a-street, we interact with people, but also with objects which mediate by linking scattered traces. For example, states of being mobile are indexed by words such as walk, crawl, stroll, meander, or stride. Stroll, for example, indexes a relaxed body posture, a relatively slow motion without a fixed line of direction, possibly with the gaze moving from place to place in the environment of the stroller. Stride indexes a more tensed body posture, more erect, longer steps, a rather direct line of movement at a faster pace than a stroll, with the gaze directed ahead in an instrumental way (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 51). According to Garfinkel, indexical expressions are everywhere in everyday life: “The demonstrably rational properties of indexical expressions and indexical actions are an ongoing achievement of the organized activities of everyday life. Here is the heart of the matter. The managed production of this phenomenon in every aspect, from every perspective, and in every stage retains its character for members of serious, practical tasks, subject to every exigency of organizationally situated conduct.” (Garfinkel 1967a: 34). But since the situational and contextual conditions constantly change in the course of an event, every social encounter has something unique and particular (Lynch 1993: 19, 184).

This indexical-particular character of all social events is a nuisance for scientific observation, which is aimed at typification, formalization, and generalization. Attempts to eliminate this annoyance through de-indexicalization – in which indexical expressions are replaced by objective ones – only lead to illusory solutions, because contextual references cannot be avoided in scientific discourse either (Bergmann 2012b: 126). But if, in view of this situation, we go over to conceiving social interaction as a mere actualization and execution of abstractly describable behavioural patterns (roles etc.), we negate precisely the essentially indexical, situational, and contextual quality. Garfinkel has therefore decided to focus his ethnomethodological research program entirely on the question of how the emergence of social order is possible from inevitably indexical, situational, and contextual interactions (Garfinkel 1967a: 11). He further explains:

“The properties of indexical expressions and indexical actions are ordered properties. These consist of organizationally demonstrable sense, or facticity, or methodic use, or agreement among ‘cultural colleagues.’ Their ordered properties consist of organizationally demonstrable rational properties of indexical expressions and indexical actions. Those ordered properties are ongoing achievements of the concerted commonplace activities of investigators.” (Garfinkel 1967a: 11).

He uses the term ethnomethodology to refer to the study of the rational properties of indexical expressions and other practical acts as a continuous, contingent performance of organized, artistic practices of everyday life.

### **Important points of Garfinkel’s thinking on social interaction**

Ethnomethodology rejects demographic macro as well as micro studies of individual actors' point of view. Regarding Lynch, Garfinkel’s *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (1967a) “challenged ‘top down’ theories which proposed that society was structured around relatively limited sets of rules and over-arching values. He presented an alternative ‘bottom up’ picture of society built from innumerable occasions of improved conduct adapted to particular situations” (Lynch 2011). Ethnomethodological studies analyse everyday activities as methods by means of which the members of a society make these activities visible and meaningful for practical purposes (Garfinkel 1967a: vii). This is achieved within the social order which they simultaneously produce. However, there is no division of description, representation, and explanation on the one hand and objects, facts, and circumstances on the other, which is implicit in the concept. Instead, the indivisibility and irreducibility of the production of social order in and as the embodied practices of the members is pronounced (Bergmann 2012b: 131). For ethnomethodologists, this order is restricted to the situations where the members' order-productive work appears (Normark 2006: 40). The emphasis rests on orders and their *just thisness*, the epistemological rationale of which is that the 'role' meaning what someone is accountably seen as, is always created within the situation.

Accounts, accountable, and accountability all refer to members' co-accomplishment of social order and visibility. It is both a process and an accomplishment that can be observed (or rather documented while partaking in it). The minute study of accountability, the witnessed accounts based on which members accomplishes social order can therefore be seen as 'ethnomethodology's central phenomenon and research recommendation' (Livingston 1987:141). The point is not to subsume a social phenomenon under a well-known sociological category, but to work

out by which practical methods something becomes something (Bergmann 2012a: 55). By conclusion, the epistemological gaze for studying mobilities alters when *the social*, previously used as explanation, is treated as the phenomena we need to explain. If we supposed social order as a process which is simultaneously the condition and the result for doing-mobilities, then we can and have to explain how mobilities order is made methodologically in everyday situations.

### **Erving Goffman's symbolic interactionism**

Looking more closely at these social encounters in public space and how social orders are produced, Goffman is one of the principal theorists to consult (Goffman 2003; Ritzer 1992). Erving Goffman (1922-1982) is the quintessential scholar of everyday life, and his theoretical perspective on self, society and interaction remains one of the most used and influential in sociology. According to Goffman, “by moving in the city among buildings, objects and people, one interacts with the ‘environment’, making sense of it and ultimately producing culture and identity” (Jensen 2010a: 389). As an example, when we analyse pedestrians crossing the street, it is possible to observe the complexity of methods – to use ethnomethodology’s termini – which are used to avoid bumping into others (Jensen 2010b: 337).

In social sciences, Goffman has been assigned to different theoretical camps of the sociological landscape, from game theorists to the bearer of the legacy of Émile Durkheim to symbolic interactionism. Nevertheless, he is famous for developing a dramaturgical approach for understanding the sociology of everyday life interaction (Goffman 1959). He studied – influenced by Georg Herbert Mead and symbolic interactionists such as Herbert Blumer – the everyday interaction and identity construction as one study a play or theatrical drama, where social agents play roles in accordance with more or less self-conscious scripts for social action. He shows that the public social self is itself displayed in a highly complex theatre of performances. As Scollon and Scollon point out, “all of winks, nods, nudges, and other signals of collusion between team players while in full performance before their audience show the public and private are probably not as useful as his notions of frontstage and backstage regions and actions” (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 55). Goffman comes up with explorations of a much more general phenomena than simple street encounters. Here, he creates and apply metaphors to understand everyday life sociality. Thus, Goffman throws light upon the fact that we are ‘role playing animals’ (rather than ‘just animals’) and that our performance depends upon our expectations of how the others interpret our acts. Hence, the ‘theatre of everyday life’ is about production of identities and social order (Jensen 2006: 154). Goffman’s theatre-based metaphors on social

interactions in public spaces, where individuals express their behaviour in public and private settings respectively, have shaped the way sociologists look at social interactions until today.

### **The interaction order**

Erving Goffman began to transform how we think about the self in everyday life in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). Four years later in *Behaviour in Public Places* (1963), he further extended these ideas to lay a foundation for the analysis of the ways in which social life is constructed in an active dialectic between psychological selves and the material worlds of our lives; “[i]t is a fact of our human condition that, for most of us, our daily life is spent in the immediate presence of others; in other words, that whatever they are, our doings are likely to be, in the narrow sense, socially situated” (Goffman 1983: 2). In a longer essay entitled *Remedial Interchanges*, in the book *Relations in Public* (1972), he precise our relationships to others:

“[...] when the individual is in a public place, he is not merely moving from point to point silently and mechanically managing traffic problems; he is also involved in taking constant care to sustain a viable position relative to what has come to happen around him, and he will initiate gestural interchanges with acquainted and unacquainted others in order to establish what this position is!” (Goffman 1972: 154).

So, members’ action are produced not only out of internal motivations and meanings, but also in reference to and in conjunction with the actions of others in the same space (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 59).

On the streets we navigate and interact on their way through the city. However, we do not move about on our own isolated from all the things around us. Facing a stop light, we pause and even though this is for a very short spell of time, we become a group of pedestrians which wait at a red traffic light (Jensen 2013a: 81). So, when we walk and then stopping at a red light, or we are cycling on the same path with a group of people ... all these situations are characterized by the so-called *mobile with*. Goffman defines a *with* as “a party of more than one whose members are perceived to be together” (Goffman 1972: 19). These are temporary congregations, groups of people that typically meet and move alongside each other for a while (Jensen 2010a). Originating from Goffman, the concept of the mobile with is characterized by the fact that it comes into being very quickly, and when the traffic light turns green can be dissolved very quickly, too (ibid). In a Goffmanian sense a *with* could be characterized by proximity to members, the

right to initiate a conversation or interaction among these members, and ritual processes for joining and leaving (Jensen 2009a).

We relate to our mobile with through interactions. Goffman defines interaction as a reciprocal influence of actions that individuals exert on each other when they are present for each other. What is meant first is the face-to-face situation. Of course, since the days of Goffman the inter-relations of non-proxemic networks have grown dramatically. In his book *Interaction Ritual* (1967), he defines a “sociology of occasions” in arguing that the study of interaction should not be focused on the individual and her psychology, but rather on the relations between their acts. I concur with this, but the next part, I join with Jensen (2013a), is problematic as he states that these person have to be mutually co-present to one another in situations. By this, Goffman mean physically co-present. Likewise, he argues in *Behaviour in Public Places* (1963) that the situation is defined by its physical boundaries. However, this thought is not fully consistent because in the same book he opened elsewhere to include interaction into an expanded notion of the situation. He spoke of a possibility of interaction that would “transform a mere physical region into the locus of a sociologically relevant entity, the situation” (ibid: 154). In *Frame Analysis* (1974b) published a decade later, Goffman again suggested that a situation may stretch out: “situational, meaning here a concern for what one individual can be alive to at a particular moment, this often involving a few other particular individuals and not necessarily restricted to the mutually monitored area of a face- to-face gathering” (ibid: 8). Although he made this opening to a more stretched definition, it became never precise (Jensen 2013a: 11).

Hence, some authors still mention that Goffman gave exclusive priority to physical co-presence and thus ignored the role of information and communication technologies in social interaction. Like Meyrowitz (1990), they argue for a thinking of situations as information systems rather than bounded localities. Of course, Goffman did not speak of networked technologies and how they transform the dynamics of the interaction and situation. But he provides a framework from which we can approach the problem. However, in all situation *Net Localities* become inscribed into the whole setting of interaction. Networked technologies are part of situation adding new complexity to them, but are also as material as any other material artefact and people in the situation (Jensen 2013a: 130). Put differently:

“[...] the local space is not always solely physical. In the physical spaces of the street, the technology is brought to bear on one’s assessment of the ‘situation’... Net

localities are spaces where one can shift their attention outside of the physical situation, because the situation is understood to be larger than what is physically near.” (Gordon and Silva 2011: 93).

According to Jensen (2013a), we can speak of a “stretched mobile with” when the co-present mobile with on the move is coordinated or interacting across space. If we think about ordinary, everyday-life interaction, we easily see that the requisites that Goffman have seen as important tools for non-engagement and privacy in public space (newspapers, books etc.) have today broadened by iPads, mobile phones, headphones, laptops and so on. Sure, many of these artefacts do not only work that we may hide behind them, but they are networked and connected into many other interactions that make up contemporary mobilities (Jensen 2008). There are also examples of staging from above, like when traffic lights are optimized for traffic surveillance, cameras tracking criminals, and pollution sensors, stretching our interactions and relations elsewhere. In this perspective, the concept of the situation leans predominantly not on who is physically co-present, rather on where attention is. In recontextualising Goffman’s thinking, the situation have to be seen as stretching beyond the immediate face-to-face engagement (Jensen 2013a: 12). We need to account this if we want to be able to understand contemporary mobilities more clearly.

However, “temporary congregation” (Jensen 2010a, 2013a) occur between individuals who are familiar with each other, and individuals who do not know each other in the same place; “[t]o indicate their own courses of physical action and to rapidly convey reactions to such indications from others, provides the precondition for something crucial: the sustained, intimate coordination of action” (Goffman 1983: 3). So, if someone comes into another’s presence the evidential character of social life becomes pronounced. As Goffman (ibid) explains not only our appearance and manner provide evidence of our statuses and relationships. But, it is also that our visual regard, the intensity of our involvement and the shape of our actions allow others to “gleam our immediate intent and purpose” (ibid: 3). Important here is Goffman’s notion of contact. “I will refer thus to any occasion when an individual comes into an other's response presence, whether through physical copresence, telephonic connection or letter exchange. I am thus counting as part of the same contact all those sightings and exchanges that occur during one such occasion” (ibid: 6). So, a glance, a conversation, an exchange of greetings while circulating at a social gathering, all these are a single contact.

In his presidential address to the American Sociological Association in 1982, entitled *The Interaction Order*, Goffman became more explicit in his articulation of the relationship between *withs*:

“I remind you that it is in social situations that these enablements and risks are faced and will have their initial effect. And it is social situations that provide the natural theater in which all bodily displays are enacted and in which all bodily displays are read. Thus, the warrant for employing the social situation as the basic working unit in the study of the interaction order. And thus, incidentally, a warrant for claiming that our experience of the world has a confrontational character” (Goffman 1983: 4).

Like Garfinkel, he uses the concept of order to understand the ways in which humans form social arrangements and produce social interactions among themselves. Goffman presupposed the term order referring in the first instance to a domain of activity. Surely, the interaction order is not (only) a product of traffic planning from above. Certainly most of this order is produced and sustained from below (ibid: 6). Regarding Goffman,

“[n]o implications are intended concerning how "orderly" such activity ordinarily is, or the role of norms and rules in supporting such orderliness as does obtain. Yet it appears to me that as an order of activity, the interaction one, more than any other perhaps, is in fact orderly, and that this orderliness is predicated on a large base of shared cognitive presuppositions, if not normative ones, and self-sustained restraints” (Goffman 1983: 6).

How a given set of such understandings comes into being historically, spreads and contracts in geographical distribution over time, and how at one place and time individuals acquire these understandings are good questions, but not ones I can address (although I will take up this thought on habitus later) (ibid: 6). Nevertheless, if we follow Giddens’s theory of structuring and his concept of the duality of structures then the interaction order function simultaneously as medium and result of social actions as it is the case with Garfinkel's social order (Giddens 1981: 19).

### **Interaction units**

So, interaction order relates to the social relationship between the actors and the spaces (e.g. sense of time, perceptual spaces, interpersonal distances and so on). It consists of the current, ongoing, accepted (but also contested and declined) set of social relationships which we take up and try to maintain with other people who are in our current presence. In public space there are analytically *singles* (a party of one) and *withs* (a party of more than one), there are larger units like the queue, when we line up next to an entrance of a bus, and many others. Near the end

of his life, Goffman identified 11 main types beginning with a single person. Scollon and Scollon (2003) summarizes them as follows:

**Table 2: Interaction units**

<b>Singles</b>	a person who is by himself or herself in a social space among others
<b>Withs</b>	two or more who are perceived as being together with each other as the main focus of their mutual attention
<b>Files and processions</b>	groups which move together, whether more or less loosely formed as military parades or groups of tourists
<b>Queues</b>	aggregates of people, mostly not known to each other, who coordinate their activities so that they will arrive at some transaction point in a sequence
<b>Contacts</b>	the fleeting social interactions that are produced by glances of mutual recognition, but which are not allowed to segue into more fully developed forms such as the with or the service encounter
<b>Service encounters</b>	the social arrangements that occur when we procure and are delivered some service such as buying a cup of coffee at a counter or exchanging a bus ticket with the driver as we board a bus
<b>Conventional encounters</b>	a with which has as its main focus of attention the production and the maintenance of a state of talk among a relatively small group
<b>Meetings</b>	more tightly structured encounters which normally have a declared purpose with a ratifiable set of participants, relatively clear beginnings and endings, and most often a char or facilitator
<b>People-processing encounter</b>	others have used the term gatekeeping encounters: social interactions which are polarised into those who have some power to define significant outcomes for those others normally must provide some account of themselves, like traffic violation tickets by the police
<b>Platform events</b>	someone or a small group performs as a spectacle for others to watch whether on an elevated platform or encircled by the group of watchers
<b>Celebrative occasions</b>	social interactions which are tightly ritualized such as weddings, award ceremonies and the like where the actions of all participants are governed by prior scripts for performance

Source: Goffman in Scollon and Scollon (2003)

These types Goffman proposes are not universal in all societies. They are constructed out of a very full repertoire of resources which are available in complex combinations in all societies (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 16). Furthermore, these groupings form semiotic units which become indexable social organizations in public places (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 61). So, we

can understand the interaction is a term which includes all of the ways in which we may be together with others in public space.

A collection of articles inspired by the work of Goffman appeared in the publication *People in Places: The Sociology of the Familiar* (Birenbaum and Sagarin 1973). These are the chapter on the behaviour of pedestrians by Michael Wolff (1973) and the chapter on subway behaviour by Janey Levine et al. (1973). Both contributions deal with elements of urban mobilities seen through Goffman-inspired frameworks. In accordance with the afore mentioned notion of the mobile with, Wolff's research shows (though without using the term) that people in public transit constitute a co-acting group or a "team" (Wolff 1973: 35). The second contribution to the publication made by Levine et al. (1973) deals with field observations made on the subways of Boston and New York. One of the crucial elements in the informal regulation of subway behaviour seems to be the way one enters and finds a place in the compartments. The process of selecting a seat is governed by a principal need to sit alone that is only dispensed off in cases of shortage of free seats. The newcomer thus performs on a stage already inhabited and symbolically inscribed by the passengers already there. Both the pedestrian study and the subway study indicate that Goffman's concepts are empirically very relevant to studies of urban mobilities (Jensen 2013a: 79).

We might ask about the nature of the relationship between the 'mobile with' and the 'team' that Goffman coins in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). Accordingly, he defines a team as a set of persons who cooperate in practising a simple routine (ibid). This may seem like the notion of mobile with presented here. However, Goffman stresses that a team put on a play and thus that there is an audience; in a sense one might see our fellow urban travellers as audiences looking at the spectacle of urban mobilities. But as opposed to, for example, a team of theatre actors, the mobile with is not (consciously or collectively) working on *giving off* a particular impression. Often the mobile with is much more situational and spontaneous but can of course also be very planned and orchestrated (Jensen 2013a: 83).

At times this becomes a matter of either to follow or to break away. This could occur if, for example, someone stops for a red light whilst others cross the street. It is an example of a dynamic situational pressure and negotiation within the mobile with and thus of the power relations manifest in any mobile situation and its staging from below (Jensen 2013a: 83). What on the surface looks rather trivial – a random meeting in the street – becomes in this perspective

an important window into profound social processes that make up actual everyday-life mobilities (ibid: 76).

Trivial interactions and arrangements show us a great diversity of intentions to be realised in relation to social norms and conventions. And, to accept the norms and convention as given (so to initiate one member's action accordingly), is to put trust in those about someone (Goffman 1983: 6). An example of putting trust in strangers is the observation Goffman (1972) made of what we may term the production of street order. He understands public thoroughfares are interactional settings that sustain an interactional order extending in time and space beyond a single social situation occurring within (Goffman 1983: 5). In the essay *The Individual as a Unit*, Goffman articulates,

“City streets, even in times that defame them, provide a setting where mutual trust is routinely displayed between strangers. Voluntary coordination of action is achieved in which each of the two parties has a conception of how matters ought to be handled between them, the two conceptions agree, each party believes that this agreement exists and each appreciates that this knowledge about the agreement is possessed by the other. In brief, structural prerequisites for rule by convention are found. Avoidance of collision is one example of the consequence!” (Goffman 1972: 17).

So, to live in the city means to live in the presence of strangers. Passing strangers on busy streets is unremarkable for those of us living in cities. We rush to our next appointment, with our own thoughts in mind, navigating through crowded places. On “auto-pilot” (Middleton 2011), we do not think about brief encounters with unknown others in the public. Lofland (1998) introduced the term public realm, defined as areas of urban settlements where the most other present people tend to be personally unknown or categorically known to one another. Goffman's (1963, 1971c) studies of mobile encounters between strangers in public space make the norms, conventions, and manoeuvres of situated interactions an object to study. Traffic can be considered as both a social order and a diffuse social occasion composed of focused and unfocused interactions (Goffman 1961, 1971c). Being together on a journey constitute a focused social interaction, whereas an interaction with strangers constitutes an unfocused interaction. Both types of interaction are equally relevant for the study of mobilities (Jensen 2013a).

Goffman directs attention to the fact that we manage to get around in busy and dense public space without constantly coming to halt or colliding. Regarding Scollon and Scollon, this is characterised by “proximity to members, the right to initiate talk and interaction amongst members, availability of interactions to members, ritual practices for joining and departing and

greater latitude in behaviour than members would have as singles in a comparable situation” (2003: 60). But, as already said, there is a norm of anonymity governing interaction in public between strangers. Usually, strangers glance quickly at others and then look away. Through this ritual to non-members, Erving Goffman calls it *civil inattention*, we show that we recognize the other’s presence. We are not seeking a sustained interaction with someone (even avoiding it) and have therefore no hostile intention.

In his book *Behaviour in Public Places* (1963), Goffman defines the concept of civil inattention in the following manner: “What seems to be involved is that one gives to another enough visual notice to demonstrate that one appreciates that the other is present... while at the next moment withdrawing one’s attention from him so as to express that he does not constitute a target of special curiosity or design.” (ibid: 84). Normally, strangers do not talk to others, are about eight to ten feet from one another, have a very brief exchange of eye contact, and then avert our eyes. When we look at others, we acknowledge that we see this other person and we will not invade their territory. Goffman (ibid) develops the idea of *involvement shields* which work to make individuals inaccessible to others, they create a kind of civil inattention: “the individual apportion his involvement among main and side involvements, dominant and subordinate ones, and ... in each situation a particular apportionment will be defined as proper.” (Goffman 1963: 64). In this vein, Jensen (2006), Jirón (2010), and Bissell (2010), have drawn on Goffman’s work to explore how people on the move develop such strategies. So, we carry not only on our actions in the presence of other who are physically co-present. But also, we display a range of involvements which are socially judged if they are appropriate to the situation normatively and concerning taken-for-granted conventions.

For Goffman, traffic rules and the consequent traffic order provide an obvious example of how social encounters are ordered by conventions and normative consensuses (Conley 2012: 222). Workings on the interaction order can be viewed as an effect of systems enabling conventions, in the sense of the ground rules for a game, like the provisions of a traffic code. Goffman (1983: 6) presses two accounts of this perspective. First, as an effect of a given set of conventions facilitating coordination people pay small attention so long as everyone could be induced to uphold it. Second, orderly interaction is understood as a product of normative consensus, that individuals unthinkingly take for granted rules they nonetheless feel are intrinsically just (ibid: 6). Conformity to rules is supplemented with “by-passings, secret deviations, excusable infractions, flagrant violations, and the like” (Goffman 1971c: x). So, the social order is an effect of

both the rules (of the traffic code) and the manoeuvrings of people within and beyond its constraints. Much of Erving Goffman's work is about how rules, rituals, and frames are vulnerable to violation, exploitation, or game-playing (Goffman 1961, 1969a, 1983). In this sense, traffic can be considered a diffuse social occasion in which mobile actors come into each other's presence as part of "a wider social affair, undertaking, or event... [that] provides the structuring social context in which many situations and their gatherings are likely to form, dissolve, and re-form" (Goffman 1963: 18). Monday afternoon rush hour is thus a diffuse social occasion, within which temporary and moving ensembles of human and things form, gain, and lose members, and break up. In such gatherings<sup>5</sup>, people manages "sheer and mere copresence" (ibid) looks and body gestures (Conley 2012: 222).

### **Self-presentation in public space**

Looks and body gestures are of notably relevance in managing interaction especially with strangers. For example, in averting our gaze, we also display our lack of recognition and our unwillingness to become more familiar. This type of *face work* helps us to keep down the feeling of anxiety or fear and suggest »you can trust me«. John Urry (2007) argues, with reference to Goffman, that meetings are important in face work between people who interact. The term face work is precisely Goffman's terminology for how "we, as consociates, both give and take impressions by means of our (bodily as well as facial) expressions in face- to-face interactions. Interestingly, the many transit spaces of our global network society facilitate meetings of all kinds" (Jensen 2013a: 75). Goffman takes the example of American downtown streets to describe the managing of giving and taking impressions as follows:

"Street traffic would be a shambles without them... In American downtown streets, traffic tends to sort itself out into two opposite-going sides... The workability of lane and passing rules is based upon two processes important in the organization of public life: externalization and scanning. By the term "externalization," or "body gloss," I refer to the process whereby an individual pointedly uses over-all body gesture to make otherwise unavailable facts about his situation gleanable... he provides an "intention display." (Goffman 1972: 6 ff.)

However, according to Goffman, in interactions we try to convey a certain image of ourselves, because we know that we are observed by others. Continuing this thought, he concludes that, in principle, we always play theatre and create a façade for ourselves, a standardised repertoire

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<sup>5</sup> To Giddens, *gatherings* are informal and ephemeral whereas *social occasions* are formal and more permanent (1984: 71).

of expression with stage set and props. Goffman says, when an actor takes on an established social role (e. g. a pedestrian), she will find that there is already a certain façade for that role. What is central in Goffman's theoretical perspective on face-to-face interaction are his ideas about impression management using concepts like face work, body gloss or intention display. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), Goffman tries to outline what he understands of impression management. He holds that when we come in contact with others. We attempt to control the impression that the other person has of us by altering our own appearance. Simultaneously, the other person attempts to form an impression of, and obtain information about us. Goffman believes that we engage in certain practices while we interact to avoid embarrassing ourselves or others. He further argues that we use our bodies to take on social role performances in the presence of others to signal them what actions we are taking.

Impression management is thus the attempt to control one's own appearance. This includes the use of special signs with corresponding connotations, with the help of which the knowledge about one's own person is controlled. This includes language, facial expressions, gestures, but also interaction-free communication. Whether we are actively communicating to someone, waiting for the tram or at a traffic light, or just trying to be nearly invisible, we take up particular postures, gestures, make movements or are expressively still. Whatever we do, we signal something to those others which are in presence. So, our bodies give off much of their meanings by where they are and what they are doing in place. This led Goffman to his dramaturgical analysis. He sees, resemblances between the kinds of acts we put on in our daily lives and theatrical performances. In social interaction there is a front stage where actors appear; and this is where positive self-concepts and desired impressions are offered. But there is also a hidden back stage where the self can be herself and drop her societal roles and identities. By the *self*, Goffman understands the result of impression management. The self is therefore a product of attribution. We are what others perceive us to be. It is therefore nothing other than a dramaturgic effect that unfolds from a scene that is portrayed. The theatre is used as a metaphor for social reality<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> But Goffman makes also notable differences between the theatrical and the everyday world. First, the reality of theatre is fictional. Second, in the theatre, there are usually at least two actors who perform their roles in front of each other; as well as the audience. In everyday life, these three positions are reduced to two: there is no such thing as a pure audience, since every spectator potentially always embodies a role. As a spectator, one can be drawn into the action at any time. Third, the beliefs of the performers are different. The performers themselves usually believe in their roles. It corresponds to the generally spread opinion that the individual plays his role for the others and stages his performance only for them. For our analysis of such representations, it will be useful to

## 5

# Theory IV: Semiotics

What Goffman refers to is semiotics. Semiotics is the study of signs and signification in general, of how humans make meaning of signs (Scollon and Scollon 2003). It is rooted in linguistics, predominantly associated with Ferdinand de Saussure, who studied the role of language in culture. Today, semiotics is usually used to study sign systems other than language (or written text), often based on Charles Sanders Peirce who broadened the narrow linguistic approach in his works. He saw semiotics as the study of meaning-making in general (Jaworski and Thurlow 2010). Crucial here is the notion of *sign* which Peirce argue, is something that stands for something in some respect. A sign works as a triadic relation between a sign, an object and an interpretant. For Peirce, a sign thus means “any material object that indicates or refers to something other than itself” (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 3). Here, objects are defined as the non-liveable environment which is read by social actors. But with reference to Goffman who argues that also human bodies give off meaning through their physical movement, we should redefine Peirce’s definition of a sign. In our interpretation a sign is anything that give off a meaning which indicates or refers to something other than itself.

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start from the opposite question and examine to what extent the individual himself believes in the semblance of reality one is trying to create in his surroundings (Goffman 1959: 19).

## **From below**

However, what becomes interesting is that the body on its own becomes a sign vehicle communicating intentions. Semiotic theory has always been important in understanding the signs in our everyday lives. Here, Goffman requires (and rewards) a careful reading. Nevertheless, he develops several concepts, metaphors, and termini to describe what is going on at public space. In matters of semiotics two quotations encode much of Goffman's argument. As Goffman observes "the expressiveness of the individual appears to involve two radically different kinds of sign activity: The expression that he *gives* and the expression he *gives off*" (1959: 2). The point is that we might intend not to express ourselves, but we cannot (as soon as we engage in social interaction) avoid giving off signs, signals and expressions that will be interpreted by our consociates. In the words of Goffman: "performers can stop giving expressions but cannot stop giving them off" (1959: 108). So, the distinction between giving and giving off expression is reiterated and developed in several places, to make certain that others understands that we are not thinking only of what a person *intends* to communicate. Whether or not we intend our embodied communications, our bodies continue to give off meanings for others to read (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 58). Put it simple, Goffman distinguishes between the expression we give ourselves and expressions we give off to others.

In their studies both Garfinkel and Goffman tried to categorise semiotic expressions and their given off meaning. We can imagine that they have developed a whole amount of. With the background that we investigate especially interactions between strangers in public space, I will only outline the following three expressions: *looks and glances*, *distances*, and *involvement*.

### **Looks and glances**

In his influential essays, *The Stranger* and *The Metropolis and Mental Life*, the philosopher and sociologist Georg Simmel (1971a, 1971b) examines how social life in 19<sup>th</sup> century is affected by modern mobilities. His remarks on the function of the eye have been often cited by mobilities scholars, notably John Urry (2004: 30, 2006: 21, 2007: 24). According to Simmel, modern life mobilities has an increasing effect on our visual senses. He argues that the emergence of public transport (buses, trams, subways) led to a new way of looking at the fellow urbanite (Simmel 1969) – the mobile with to use a Goffmanian grammar. In the essay on the *Sociology of the Senses* (1969), Simmel has an interesting observation regarding the importance of the eye in social interaction when we on the move:

“Of the special sense-organs, the eye has a uniquely sociological function. The union and interaction of individuals is based on mutual glances... This mutual glance between persons, in distinction from the simple sight or observation of the other, signifies a wholly new and unique union between them. The limits of this relation are to be determined by the significant fact that the glance by which one seeks to perceive the other is itself expressive. By the glance which reveals the other, one discloses himself... What occurs in this direct mutual glance represents the most perfect reciprocity in the entire field of human relationships.” (Simmel 1971b: 148).

Although Simmel understands the spatial dimension of social life as anchored in a subject-centred perspective, he makes some relevant points about looks in social interaction. Looking at one another is what effects the connections and interactions of individuals. Looks are the most direct and purest interaction; it is the look between people which produces extraordinary moments or intimacy since “[o]ne cannot take through the eye without at the same time giving”; this produces the “most complete reciprocity” of person to person, face to face (Frisby and Featherstone 1997: 112). Simmel further argues that the visual sense enables people to take possession of other people and things around. We are able to see gazes, gestures, and interaction that take place ever so swiftly as people move. So, we are applying different glances and looks to present ourselves and monitor human/non-human others (Goffman 1972).

Drawing on works of Goffman (1963, 1971c) and ethnomethodologists like Harold Garfinkel (1952, 1963, 1967a, 1967b), Harvey Sacks (1989) und David Sudnow (1972), four types of looks are used in traffic between unacquainted persons. They differ in their timing and duration on the one hand, and their focusedness, on the other. This typology provides a useful framework for qualitative differences of looks and glances, also in view of our empirical investigation (see chapter 5).

First, *identifying scans* are unfocused and brief as “a flick or a shadow of concern”; they are sufficient to determine whether the observed scene is a “normal appearance” (Goffman 1971c: 238 f.). It can tell us if the scene we see is an expected or coherent combination of setting, appearance, and manner, or an incongruent one (Goffman 1959: 24 f.; Sudnow 1972: 276). Sacks uses the example of the incongruence of a “flashy” car driven by someone “who looks like a bum” (Sacks 1989: 342 f.). So, we are co-present in spaces of mutual visibility making classifications “on the fly” (Joseph 1998: 46) to orient ourselves seeing situations as normal or not, perceiving collusion and avoiding them, and so forth (Conley 2012: 220).

Second, regarding Sudnow (1972), a *focused look* interrupts an identifying scan. Momentarily, it settles on actors, actions, or arrangements in the situation which is noticeably relevant to the

observer's current action. Although Goffman (1971c) has limited these to threatening features of a situation, to Conley (2012: 220) puzzling or aesthetically pleasing features may also attract focused looks. One example is how a pedestrian position her body to signal that she intends to cross the street, as opposed to wait at the street corner.

Third, a *sanctioning look* conveys disapproval to its recipient, for example when a driver looks disapprovingly at a pedestrian who has crossed an intersection although the pedestrian traffic light is red. Conley argues that such a look "requires getting the offender's attention in order to deliver the sanction and can be evaded by the intended recipient knowingly avoiding the other's gaze" (2012: 220). As Simmel noted: "shame causes a person to look to the ground to avoid the glance of the other" (1969: 148), preventing the sanction from being received. A sanctioning look can also be aggressive, threatening, or hostile; thus, avoiding the appearance of staring is a central component of civil inattention (Goffman 1963).

Finally, an *integrating glance* is the mutual glance that "signifies a wholly new and unique union" (Simmel 1969: 148) between persons which creates "a fantastic kind of social integration" (Sacks 1989: 347). It is the momentary glance in which one person catches another's eye to make a shared assessment of the situation. This "communion of looks" (Goffman 1959) can be only a momentary form, but when prolonged, such eye contact can mobilise a joint action (Goffman 1971c; Joseph 1998). So, integrating glances can facilitate coordinated interaction. Or by ignoring them, we can evade cooperative claims (Goffman 1963).

In ordinary face-to-face interaction, where sanctioning looks or integrating glances are exchanged, "each giver [of embodied messages] is himself a receiver and each receiver is a giver" (Goffman 1963: 16), as each can see how she is being received by the other and can see that she recognises it. "One gives to another enough visual notice to demonstrate that one appreciates that the other is present ... while at the next moment withdrawing one's attention from him so as to express that he does not constitute a target of special curiosity of design" (Goffman 1963: 84). Crucial here is the delicate balance of glancing and looking away; too much glance can become a stare, too little can signal that we ignore each other. For instance, take the basic principle of *friendly recognition* (Kusenbach 2003), which is the parochial equivalent of *civil inattention* (Goffman 1963; Lofland 1998) in the public realm.

## Distances

We have outlined, that the social problem taken up by Goffman is in how we display our intentions to others. In addition to looks, we can also signal to others about our relationships through our distances. Scollon and Scollon (2003) defines four categories of interpersonal distances (see *Table 3*)

**Table 3: Interpersonal distances**

<b>Intimate</b>	touch to 18 inches	~ 45 cm
<b>Personal</b>	18 inches to 4 feet	~ 45 cm to ~ 120 cm
<b>Social</b>	4 feet to 12 feet	~ 120 cm to ~ 365 cm
<b>Public</b>	12 feet to 25 feet	~ 365 cm to ~ 760 cm

Source: Scollon and Scollon (2003)

In crowded city streets, and in many other public situations when we wiggle through masses of people, we can often find the *intimate distance* (touch to 18 inches). Aside from them with whom we are familiar and have an intimate relationship, there are intimate personal distances only in settings within we cannot held up more distance to others.

*Personal distance* (18 inches to 4 feet) is the distance we feel that we need to engage in some kind of social interaction with others. In many societies it is very difficult to ignore someone who is in our personal bubble. Goffman (1963) notes that when many North Americans approach another person who is in public, we first look into their eyes to show that we see them, that we recognize them as socially present in the same space. But then we look away to signal, as we enter the personal space, that we are not looking for any further or closer relationship with them.

*Social distance* allows us to deal in a civilised way, but without interpersonal involvement, with someone else who is in the same space (*public distance* equal). Beyond 25 feet it is in most cases quite an exaggeration to say that it is an interpersonal distance, since it is very unlikely that the two parties are in any kind of social interaction (see Scollon and Scollon 2003).

So, different interpersonal distances index differences in interpersonal social relationships. Scollon and Scollon argue that because “we express our relationships to others in part by where (and how) we stand or sit and touch, those postures can be read by others to be signalling those

interpersonal relationships” (2003: 63). Interpersonal distance becomes a crucial sign by which we embody significant meaning about ourselves, others, and about our relationships.

Regarding interpersonal distances, we have to make two annotations. First, we cannot use these categories one-to-one in our study. The crucial point is that our interpretations of these spaces are different in different sociocultural groups, we could misunderstand what others are intending. Second, we have to take the Covid-19 pandemic into account. Important here is the rule of social distancing prescribing an interpersonal distance of 1,5 m between strangers in public space. In chapter 5, I will outline the influence of Covid-19 on this study in more detail.

### **Involvement**

Goffman (1961) uses the term *activity involvement* to indicate the specific stances taken by a person toward any current activity or activities. He differentiates between four different forms of involvement: A *dominant* involvement is the activity which may interrupt any others; a *subordinate* involvement may take place in a hiatus of a dominant involvement; a *main* involvement is what one is doing just now, and a *side* involvement might be carried on simultaneously. For example, waiting for the tram might be a person’s dominant involvement on a particular occasion and reading a newspaper on the platform the subordinate involvement. Within that subordinate involvement reading the newspaper, the main involvement might be reading it (i.e. actually reading, turning pages etc.) and a side involvement might be glancing around from time to time to see what other sorts of people are on the platform. Perhaps any or all social occasions are made up of these multiple and complex involvements. Certainly, the mix of dominant and subordinate, of main and side is likely to be part of the definition of the occasion.

However, there are also expressions of involvement which recall Goffman’s concept of civil inattention. One such example is the *I pretend not to have seen you*-expression or what Jensen term “seeming unawareness” (2013a) which is used by pedestrians and bicyclists in particular. The notion was earlier described by Vanderbilt with reference to Mexico City (Vanderbilt 2008:32) and Kingwall’s stating that “running is a sign of failure” (Kingwall 2008: 41) when he observes pedestrians in the Street of New York. Running across the street is a bodily expression of seeming unawareness; we put the responsibility for diverging or stopping on those who have seen us. We can imagine how risky this could be if others, in fact, might not have seen us. With reference to Schelling’s analysis of bargaining power, Goffman (1963) label this expression “avoidance of cooperative claims” which can be one possible expression which we give off to index civil inattention: “If a pedestrian wants to ensure a particular allocation of the street

relative to a fellow pedestrian, or if a motorist wants to ensure priority of his line of proposed action over that of a fellow motorist or pedestrian, one strategy is to avoid meeting the other's eyes and thus avoid cooperative claims." (ibid:94).

### **On habit**

If we dwell in public space, we make meaning when we interact with others which is displayed by their looks and gazes, gestures, personal distances, involvements, manner of movement, and so on and so forth. If we cross an intersection, we can keep our attention to the pedestrian light, talk with others in presence or on the phone, look at our smartphone displays, or stay alone or in a crowd (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 176). Whether or not the person consciously undertakes any particular action, she will give off, as Goffman puts it, a personal identity and a position in a social world that is visible to others. How we interact with others is inter alia produced through collectively shaped norms.

Emphasising on collective norms highlights the social dimension of interacting with reference to these larger social structures. Goffman notes that

“[t]rough costume, gesture, and bodily alignment we can depict and represent a heterogeneous list of immaterial things, sharing only the fact that they have a significance in our lives and yet do not cast a shadow: notable events in the past, beliefs about the cosmos and our place in it, ideals regarding our various categories of persons, and of course social relationships and larger social structures” (Goffman 1983: 9).

The social dimension is central to Bourdieu's notion of the habitus<sup>7</sup>. Acting in line or against norms is an important part of the habitus because of the accountability that it provides between people. Every social action consists of social practices that are situated in space and time and are organized by the actors in a skilful and comprehensible manner (Giddens 1981: 19). In practice, each individual act, even if his or her actions are limited by structure-building rules, material resources and the structured processes related to his or her class situation, gender, racial and ethnic affiliation, nationality, and local community (Denzin 2012: 138). Therefore, we

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<sup>7</sup> Psychology-oriented studies of behaviour change in passenger transport tend to understand habit primarily in terms of automaticity and mechanical repetition (Schwanen et al. 2012: 524). Following Dewey (1922), Merleau-Ponty (1962[1945]) and others, we consider habits to be primordial to deliberative action. Rather than as automatic response to certain cues, habit needs to be thought of as a tendency or force (Schwanen et al. 2012: 524). They are more-than-individual and emerge from the relations between person and environment: “habits are ways of using and incorporating” objects, tools, the physical surroundings, other human beings in which all these have their “say as surely as the former” (Dewey 1922: 15).

simply cannot act in the world without indexing our own habitus on the one hand and the sociocultural and socio-political structures among which we act on the other (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 15).

Indexing our own habitus, each member enters a social interaction carrying an

“established biography of prior dealing with other[s] [...]; and enters with a vast array of cultural assumptions presumed to be shared. We could not disattend strangers in our presence unless their appearance and manner implied a benign intent, a course of action that was identifiable and unthreatening, and such readings can only be made on the basis of prior experience and cultural lore” (Goffman 1983: 5).

The meaning is derived from, or arises from, the social interaction (Blumer 1973: 81). The meanings can be learned, one appropriates them (for the example of the traffic sign: we learn at the latest in driving school what meaning certain metal signs have for us as drivers). These meanings are handled and modified in an interpretative process that we use in our confrontation with others we encounter (Blumer 1973: 81). Not only the spaces in which we dwell (chapter 2), we also have our own temporalities: we make visible and intelligible how our experience transcends the here and now, as we weave previous knowledge and our biography into immediate situated interaction (Merleau-Ponty 1968). For example, *Looking to the left – looking to the right and stop – look – listen*, that performance at the kerbside prior to crossing the road were drilled into us as we were a child, in the classroom, at home (Bonham 2006: 68). What are appropriate modes of acting in different social fields are acquired through processes of socialisation, and thus becomes an important dimension of culture (Bourdieu 1991). “All elements of social life have a history and are subject to critical change through time, and none can be fully understood apart from the particular culture in which it occurs” (Goffman 1983: 9).

For example, our own habitus as well as wider structures influence how we would come to a corner and how we would treat the problem of crossing the street. Do we wait for the walk light or do when the road is free of traffic? Do we worry about whether others are watching us? Do we even notice? As I have argued in the light of Goffman, there is nothing that we do that does not at least give off expression to our role performances and positions. At a street intersection, glances are exchanged, even when the conversation continues to see if someone is paying attention to the problem of crossing the streets. This person arriving at the street corner is not only waiting for the walk light or not, he or she is also signalling to others whether or not he or she is the sort of person who waits and in so signalling is either contesting or ratifying the

regulatory and other discourses present in that place (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 199). As Goffman has noted, their full attention is given over to each other (ibid: 200). In this way, social life is marked by the expressions we offer, as we attempt to control how these are perceived by others. These “habitual ballets of mobility can have important and meaningful consequences” (Adey 2010: 143). If these ballets become habitual, these “relatively stabilized forms of mobility both add up to reflect and reproduce an apparent social order.” (ibid: 141).

### **Modes of being on the move**

Goffman observes how the speed of vehicular units and the material qualities of their shells impacts interaction with others. In *Relations in Public* (1971c), Goffman treated pedestrians as “vehicular units”, that is, as shells controlled by human pilots or navigators (see Jensen 2006: 153 f. for a brief discussion). In using this trick, Goffman roughly sketches some important similarities and differences between vehicular and pedestrian traffic in mid-twentieth century American settings (Conley 2012: 222). To Goffman observational interchanges between pedestrians follow visibility rituals. The typical sequence of pedestrians passing another begins often with identifying scans and brief glances to acknowledge the other and to enable avoidance of conflicts by reading the other’s signal. It ends with mutually averted glances to disattend the other (Goffman 1963: 84). We can make considerable efforts to perform identifying scans or focused looks. Wolff (1973) showed that pedestrian position themselves to see beyond the person being in front of them, they move their heads only slightly to monitor what is behind them, they use the expressions of other oncoming pedestrians as a rearview mirror indicating what is going on behind them. When we are in the presence of others, a focused look can become a focusing look, if we follow a person’s gaze to see what she is looking at (Sacks 1989). A social order is produced from conventions and manoeuvres which are used by pedestrians to avoid “mutual intrusions” in their private territories of the self, such as following someone too closely (Wolff 1973).

Of course, observational interchanges are possible because of the low speed of pedestrians as vehicular units. This slow speed and the flexible movements pedestrians are identified by Goffman as features of walking. The “fluidity, flexibility, and mostly cooperative character, the prevalence of ritual rather than physical damage from collisions, and the dominance of informal negotiated understandings” (Wolff 1973) can only occur because glances and supportive and remedial remark can be exchanged easily between slow-moving and open pedestrian shells (Conley 2012: 224). Pedestrian low speed affects what Demerath and Levinger (2003) called

“pausability”. We can easily stop and start when we are on the move, it is possible for us to switch quickly from unfocussed interactions to focused face-to-face-interaction, such as we may walk on the street and encounter friends, and can easily stop for a quick conversation (Conley 2012: 224). Therefore, the potential for social interaction increases. It allows for more opportunities for “spontaneous ‘bumping into’”, as described by Leyden, where such “...brief (seemingly trivial) conversations can help to encourage a sense of trust and a sense of connection between people and the places they live” (Leyden 2003: 1546).

Goffman (1971c: 7) considered “the individual as pedestrian” as “a pilot encased in a soft and exposing shell” of skin and clothing. But he is limited to the expressive and symbolic aspects of the latter. During a cold, windy, winter morning the pedestrian shell of woolly, scarf, coat and boots can restrict all forms of looking. When we kept eyes on the ground, watching for ice or feeling the uneven snow under our boots, peripheral vision obscured, can we even notice others, and if we do, are they identifiable to us behind their own warm layers (Conley 2012: 224)? In other seasons, like autumn, umbrellas and rain limit what we can see as pedestrian, “although the interactional dance of umbrellas being moved up, down, and sideways to avoid collision with faces or other umbrellas shows that scanning and avoidance of intrusions is usually maintained” (ibid: 224)

According to Goffman (1971c: 7 ff.), beyond the similarities lie important differences between automobile and pedestrian traffic. When we walk, we are immersed into the sensescapes of the place in which we dwell, inviting us to fully “experience place” (Middleton 2010; Wunderlich 2008). If we sit in a car our relations with something outside our shell is limited to brief encounters through the reflective glass of a car windshield or windows. To many mobilities scholars, the car driver’s outside relations are limited to a virtual tv screen through which she has a special view on visual marks, changing seasons when daffodils bloom along the road or the visual overview on the road on a misty day. In their pioneering work on automobility, Peter Freund and George Martin (1993: 4 f.) referred to the “windshield perspective”. The steel shell and the glass of the automobile shell detaches us from the outside and the outside largely from us, but as Conley (2012) rightly advises that we are deliberately putting on a performance for the audience outside.

The windshield perspective is an apt term for our engagement as drivers with other people in place. Through the windshield and to a lesser extent the various mirrors on board we engage in unfocussed monitoring or identifying scans, and more or less focused looks (Laurier 2001);

sanctioning looks or integrating glances are only scarcely possible. The mutual glance, this “most perfect reciprocity in the entire field of human relationships” (Sheller and Urry 2000: 745), is almost impossible. So, in the situational management of co-presence “car-drivers are excused from the normal etiquette and social co-ordination of face-to-face interactions” (Sheller and Urry 2000: 745). Therefore, similar to pedestrians, the speed of car travel constrains opportunities for social interaction. If we walk at low speed or stop, eye contact with others is possible, enabling cooperative and ritual courtesies (Goffman 1967; Jonasson 1999; Jørgensen 2008; Vannini 2011). But if we travel above 40 or 50 km/h, eye contact becomes less feasible, and our attention becomes more focused on the road ahead (Jensen 2006; Laurier 2001). Nonetheless, driving in traffic is above all a matter of looking and seeing at speed (Edensor 2003).

Goffman notes that automobile traffic lacks the “richness of information flow and facilitation of feedback” of face-to-face interaction (Goffman, 1963, p. 17). We are equipped with only a reduced repertoire of driver-to-driver interaction (see Thrift 2004: 47), for example the sounding of the horn, the brake light, hand gestures and so on. As Edensor (2003) correctly argue, this reduced repertoire does not make driving completely asocial and desensitizing. Following Thrift (2004), to drive a car is necessarily a less valuable experience but perhaps rather another type which can “be as rich and convoluted as that of walking” (Thrift 2004: 45). Informal understandings are important in both, but vehicular traffic relies more on formal rules.

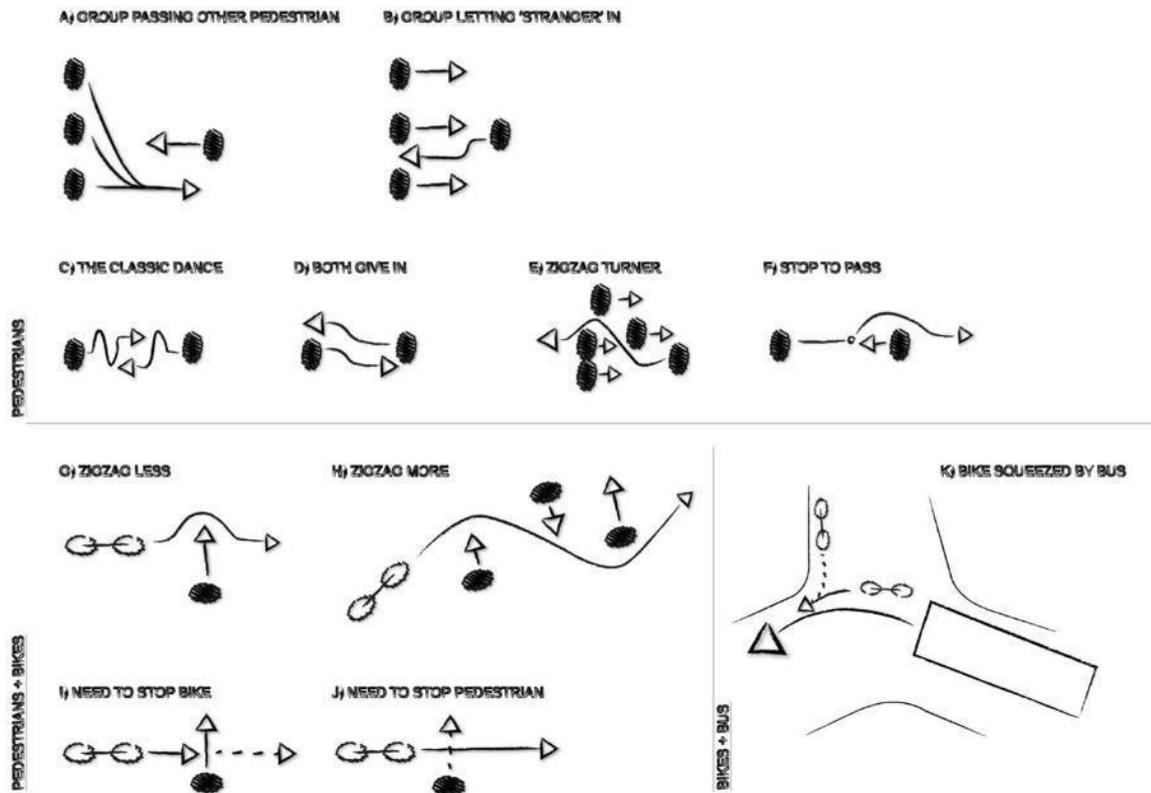
Like when we walk, riding a bike we have more possibilities to interact with others. Because of the small size, lightness and manoeuvrability, cycling is similar to walking, “the cyclist can stop, chat, and divert from her planned course with relative ease”, and easily pick up and push their bikes (Aldred 2010: 50; Jones 2005). They can also form a team with other mobile users, such as Conley (2012) saw a couple riding abreast on Boulevard Saint-Michel in Paris one sunny October afternoon, taking up a lane as they chatted. Nevertheless, like car travel, giving expression as bicyclist and reading those of others, speed plays an important role. Chan (2015) observes that the most activities of cyclists involve social interactions with other users. Through the racing posture, or a 30-40 degrees angle, the cyclist sight focus on the road immediately in front of her. In this posture, we can easily make eye contact with others, recognise faces, read advertisement, or have a conversation. Higher speeds make it difficult to constantly scan and engage with others. It results in a trade-off between the depth of interactions and the amount of interactions.

One of the most influential mobilities researcher using semiotics in mobilities research is Ole B. Jensen (2006, 2010a, 2010b, 2013a). He uses Erving Goffman's theory to analyse social interaction in public transit spaces. Empirically Nytorv Square in Aalborg in Denmark is analysed in field studies (Jensen 2013a: 138). Nyortov square is a central traffic node and a meeting point connecting the pedestrian zones in Aalborg. In the 1990s Nyortov was changed from a heavily car-dominated intersection connecting traffic arteries into a slow-traffic area where traffic segregation was removed by abolishing the visible demarcation between asphalt lanes for cars and brick sidewalks for pedestrians (ibid: 140).

Jensen (2010a) conducted ethnographic observations from two places focusing on patterns of interaction between different modes of transport. One place was a bench on the square and the other was from a window in the second floor of a nearby building. He observes that pedestrians move from all direction across place in all kinds of paces, "[t]hey stroll, walk or run as they shop, talk or simply cross the street." (Jensen 2013a: 140). Buses stop let off passengers and set off again, taxis also let passengers off and take new ones in. Traffic flows in an unhindered manner which might be due the small amount of traffic signage and regulatory interventions. This would be in accordance with the findings of the Shared Space design principles (Shared Space 2005). Also, Jensen see that road people become more attentive. They adjust to each other developing a level of mutual trust (Jensen 2013a: 140). The main behaviours to interact are, in Jensen's own words, "body language, eye contact, changing direction to give room, speeding-up to join a crowd that is already crossing before vehicles start moving, taking a step back, moving parallel with the sidewalk before crossing" (Jensen 2010a: 397). He concludes that interactions between bicyclists and pedestrians, different form pedestrians-pedestrians, are "a matter of a 'reading' and evaluating body language, not so much in direct negotiation but more as an estimation of the situation" (ibid: 397).

In the vein of Goffman, he uses metaphors to describe the interactions taking place. The first is "temporary congregations" as we slip in and out of different mobile withs (Jensen 2013a: 152). By this he meant "that people meet, team up and break up, in very rapidly changing social interactional patterns" (ibid: 151). These are sufficiently enduring to make us feel the collective (when we wating as group of pedestrians at a traffic light). The second is "negotiation in motion" (Jensen 2010a) to capture that social interaction is made in a mobile space of norms, values and power. It is the act of avoiding physical contact which is predominant in most mobile situations and the ways to avoid such contact is due many complex embodied and visual cues whether within vehicles or as pedestrians. In some of the ways may be likened to an already-

existing repertoire of actions ranging from these “mobile negotiation techniques” (see *Figure 2*) that people apply to avoid collision to more general ones, like one of the personal distance accepted for co-presence in a situation (like being together in a tram (Jensen 2013a: 151, 202).



**Figure 2:** Techniques for negotiation in motion (Jensen 2013a: 148)

## From above

We have learned, sign-giving in traffic is about interaction. In his PhD thesis on interaction in a Shetland Island community from 1953, Goffman laid much of the ground for the later perspective. From his studies in an isolated island community, Goffman saw the way members greet each other. He concludes that the particular mode of transportation and infrastructure had repercussions on what he terms “road salutations” (Goffman 1953: 181 ff.). So, there are more than humans interacting with each other. There is a *scene* in which they accomplish these interactions; there is a setting where they play the ritual of road salutations. According to Goffman,

“there is the ‘setting’, involving furniture, décor, physical layout, and other background items which supply the scenery and stage props for the space of human action played out before, within, or upon it. A setting tends to stay put, geographically speaking, so that those who would use a particular setting as part of their performance cannot begin their act until they have brought themselves to the appropriate

place and must terminate their performance when they leave it.” (Goffman 1959: 32 f.).

In my opinion Goffman’s (and also Garfinkel’s) work lacks in a sensitivity to the material dimension of the setting. He only does offer some additional help if we look to his discussion in *Behaviour in Public Places* (1963). There he opens the notion of situational interactions up towards the material:

“I shall use the term gathering to refer to any set of two or more individuals whose members include all and only those who are at the moment in one another’s presence. By the term situation I shall refer to the full spatial environment anywhere within which an entering person becomes a member of the gathering that is (or does then become) present ...” (Goffman 1963: 18; italics original).

The situation includes urban planning design by which the streets in your city are designed as well as the signs placed on those streets through which we interact with these many semiotic systems of the world around us (Scollon and Scollon 2003: x).

In referring to chapter 2, we see that the scene is not only a stage for interaction. Through the scene, in Goffman terms the setting and how these things belonging to are ordered. Traffic planners (and many others) intend to give signs how interaction should be accomplished. When we cross a busy street intersection, we encounter and are involved in a complex array of signs; not only signs which are given off by our withs, but also other material things. There are signs to mediate traffic, like street pavements, traffic lights, sidewalks, red-coloured bicycle lanes, and traffic signs. There are also other signs, like billboards, bumper stickers, flowerpots, mobile phone, ticket automats etc. at intersections. All these stuff indexes a distinct signification, they are, however, semiotic.

In urban design theory which we have broached in chapter 2, the study of materials as sign have been discussed for a long time as an option to explore their symbolic meanings (see Venturi and Scott Brown 2004; Venturi et al. 1972; Ellin 1999; Jencks 1969). It is by no means an attempt to reduce the materials to signs but rather to claim that all our environs need interpretation to make sense of the key question: ‘what is this situation?’ These is crucial to the mundane social interaction we encounter. Here, we follow Ingold who argue that we should not thinking about an abstract materiality, but concrete, tangible physical space and things which makes all the differences to situations (Jensen and Lanng 2017: 34). As Rob Shields argues, we actualise materials as this or that at any given time; for example, we can walk, drive, or sit on pavement. We play essential roles in the actualisation of materials. But he also notes that we

“should not underestimate the materials: their hardness, their softness, their ability to maintain a shape. All this makes the material a player in a way that is significant, causative, but not causal” (Interview with Rob Shields in Farias and Bender 2010: 297). Thus, if we consider what designed artefacts offer to mundane interaction the very quality of the materials should not be underestimated (Jensen and Lanng 2017: 55).

Moreover, all materials may be thought of as semiotic, either simply because they are coded with signs and signage systems, or because we tend to read them as signs. For example, we need not to verify that we are in a motorway setting as soon as we observe key features such as separated lanes, large traffic signs and fast-moving vehicles (Jensen 2013a: 55). Much of materials’ semiotic is codified from above by municipal government through quite universal procedures of law-making, posting and signalling (street signs, traffic lights, painted lines), and law enforcement specifying the meaning of various signs (ibid: 77). Traffic planners held the ambition that signs they give should be accountable to others and interpreted the same way by their reader as by their writer. The sign that the writer give should be the same as the sign which is in fact given off. To make sure this will happen, they use all sorts of tricks such as developing sign-languages (Normark 2006: 33). Here, the advent of transnational auto-mobility at the end of the nineteenth century is crucial. In 1909 most European countries signed the *Convention of Paris of 1909* which may be seen as a first step to a unified system of comprehensible signs for road traffic regulation (Wagner 2006: 315). Internationally this step was done with the *Convention on Road Signs of Vienna 1968*. In this convention it was specified which shapes, colours and texts are appropriate for different types of road signs (ibid: 319). These early attempts to codify the semiotics of road space follow two predominant key rationales which we are acquainted with in chapter 2: facilitation of mobilities and increase in safety (ibid: 315).

Public space and the materialities within are nested into socio-cultural practices with underpinning values and norms of the ‘correct’ methods for interacting. A non-human thus imposes behaviour in return on a human who must interact with the non-human actant. Here, we can also see traffic lights as a good example. Remembering Emanuel’s (2017) story about the introduction of automatic traffic lights in interwar Stockholm (see chapter 2). Traffic light regulated by police officers were replaced by automatic traffic light because they were often seen as unclear leading to irritation and hesitation to car drivers. It was argued that automatic traffic lights would give off clear signals to car drivers and they could be seen from hundreds of metres away. It implies that non-humans, here traffic lights, are not dumb, they have values, duties,

and ethics. Seemingly cold material artefacts such as traffic signs along streets, may in fact, analytically regarded, be seething with life (Normark 2006: 49).

Especially, proponents of Actor Network Theory use the notion of script to explain this seething with life. According to Akrich (1992) traffic planners make assumptions about how humans should interact with these artefacts – their preferences, competencies, motives, and aspirations – and then inscribe these assumptions in the technical content of the artefact. These scripts are important in the understanding of non-human interaction, since they can be seen as,

“[...] a key that can be used to interpret all subsequent events... so long as the circumstances in which the device is used do not diverge too radically from those predicted by the designer, it is likely that the script will become a major element for interpreting interaction between the object and its users.” (Akrich 1992: 216).

Therefore, such scripts appear as the end-product of an operationalisation of the traffic planner’s perception of the appropriate relationship between the artefacts and the human user – they inscribing the rationalities of a distinct street-interaction paradigm. Like a film script, which sets the framework for the plot, the script of a technology is intended to stabilise and privilege a specific way of using it over others. This step is the translation of knowledge models and action imperatives (prescriptions) into another matter.

Design documents, manuals, and engineering literature provide an abundance of exemplifications, rules of conduct and scenarios that script the envisioned relationship between the artefacts and the human user. Latour has already described the translation or inscription of legal speed limits into an artefact using ground sill and pothole as examples (Latour 2007). The omnipresence of the ground sill, however, is permanently reinforced, undermined and partially caricatured in its prescriptive power by its convex and quasi-organic counterpart, the pothole. As targeted and stable as ground thresholds intervene in the socio-technical traffic structure, potholes erode the potential speed and linear mobility of paved roads (Sheller and Urry 2000). In contrast to the intentional delegation of traffic rules to the ground sill, the successive appearance of the pothole as a small crack or break in a closed surface is an unplanned event. Not evenly distributed across the width of the road, but at the edge or in the middle of the road, the pothole, or manoeuvring around and through the cavity, interferes with the formal script of the road. Suddenly the smooth passing and thus the circulation of people and goods seems to be irritated. On the one hand, in the immediacy with which ground sills and potholes emerges and slowly intrudes into the habits of local drivers, it makes the constructedness and transience of static infrastructures visible (Graham and Thrift 2007). On the other hand, the translation of these

deceleration vignettes as an integral component of everyday locomotion – and not as a temporary deviation from normality – shows how the disturbance itself is made productive and becomes an impetus for informal self-organisation (Stasik 2012). So, of course, users then add their own interpretations. However, through these scripts, traffic planners prescribe appropriate forms of mobilities (Akrich 1992: 207; Akrich and Latour 1992; see also Woolgar 1991).

Here, I will make two important claims. First, social order is accomplished not only through the interacting humans which are co-present in the social occasion, but through everything that acts in the situation. And everything here includes every thing. Latour (1988) recognises how artefacts help to accomplish social order; how they partake in the order-productive ensemble. This connects to a much wider philosophical enquiry and critique. On the surface, this is about an understanding of that stuff not as passive, but as a vital part of human-non-human interaction (Jensen and Lanng 2017: 53). I include signs in a more conventional sense, of traffic regulatory signs, shop signs, but also material artefacts like kerbs, ground materials, markings, fences, or bollards. And, of course, we should not forget that we ourselves are the embodiment of signs in our physical presence, movement, and gestures.

Let us take, for example, the traffic light or the familiar stop sign on the street corner. At a busy street intersection traffic lights not only narrowly manages the flow of motorised vehicles; it also indexes the municipal regulatory apparatus that have placed the traffic light on a certain place maintain its functioning (Scollon and Scollon 2003: x). Reading a stop sign at a corner means that motorised vehicle (and also bicyclists) should stop. The stop sign indexes where and how and who should stop when it is grounded in the material of asphalt roadways, curbs and metal poles (Scollon and Scollon 2003: viii). Peters (2017a: 70) notes that also that a bench in public space and one surface for all traffic modes also give off signs, e. g. an invitation to take a seat and make a pause. In his study of St. Olavs plass in central Oslo, he observes how humans and nonhumans interact. St. Olavs plass was rebuilt as a Shared Space with a cobble stone layer, a water fountain edged with benches in the middle of the place indicating a roundabout. The light fountain triggers pedestrians to cross from all direction, and the semiotic ambiguity of indicating a roundabout-or-not causes conflict between people travelling around or across St. Olavs plass (ibid: 78). Also Jensen (2010b) observe in his field studies at Nytorv Square in Aalborg (Denmark); the presence of the global burger chain McDonald's has a permanent impact on the order as the site in front of the restaurant is widely recognised as the central meeting point amongst young people in the city. Seen from this perspective the place in front of McDonald's has become a place of meetings and interactions (Jensen 2013a: 145). So, every thing,

whether humans, signs in a traditional sense, and also all other things are an active part of producing interaction order. And, this is the second claim, in adopting semiotics, it is not only important what signs things give off. It is also important where things are located in the material world in relation to other signs in this place (Law 1999: 4); this influences what signs are given off and how these signs are accountable by others.

To conclude, not only humans, but also artefacts are also order-productive members. With an expanded definition of Garfinkel's conception of members and Goffman's concept of semiotic impression management, we can integrate artefacts like traffic lights, road pavements, speed bumps etc. ... we can capture every thing in our investigation. Material things do not only do things in functional (or dysfunctional) terms, but they are also semiotic. However, intentionality and purposeful action are by no means attributes of members. They are produced within interactions between them (Latour 2002: 221, 235). The important point is, that if we see each member presenting themselves in public space, and give off meaningful signs to others, we cannot differentiate between humans and non-humans ontologically.

A vital part of this investigation is this made of semiotics. It ties with both, from below (e. g. people's gestures, looks, and bodily postures signalling intentions on the street) and from above (e. g. traffic light and signs, pavements, or asphaltic streets). The sign system as, to say it clumsily, the interface between the staging of mobilities from above and from below is the pivotal point of contact and will be fruitful to use it as an umbrella for analysis. In that sense, semiotics is the study of order production (Akrich and Latour 1992: 259). Therefore, the interaction order is a semiotic order.

## 6

# Mobilities in situ I: Epistemology

Phew, let us breathe a moment... I will conclude and order my thoughts of the previous chapters briefly. Although there is an array of critical movements in academical debates and planning practices, contemporary traffic planning refers still largely to a modernist view on street-interaction in terms of traffic flow and safety. I argue that the street and the social remain disregarded and is therefore not conceptualised adequately in contemporary traffic planning. I claim that this stems from the inadequate conceptions of both the streets and the social. According to Normark (2006) this inadequacy is two-fold. First, we systematically tend to disconnect the street and the social. Second, even if we recognise this connection, we tend to under-socialise the social.

However, I have outlined that traffic planning is not a neutral task of applying taken-for-granted mathematical models. It is rather an active political practice of inscribing normative values into materialities, order them and the relations between them in a certain way. What we all should hopefully pick up is one the one hand that the street is not fixed or static, it is continuously reordered, social relationships become materially stabilised. On the other hand, mobilities seem to be much more as it is often proclaimed by contemporary traffic planners (and many others). Streets are not only material spaces per se, but they also have a profound often underestimated impact of how people relate and act to others. I have argued that mobilities are staged from above according to a distinct street-interaction paradigm. For example, we still take

for granted the modernist traffic light-coordinated intersection as blueprint to order public space spatiotemporally (Bonham 2006: 70). In the modernist style, the phenomenon of intersecting is dealt with by preventing intersection (Peters 2006: 132). Contemporary traffic planning reproduces in all its commonplaceness and diversity a modernist street-interaction-paradigm with a strong belief in pure categorising and formalising social interaction. This is part of the problem of not understanding urban mobilities (Jensen 2015: 480). We only partially understand the complex and multiple urban mobilities in the contemporary city (Jensen 2018: 7). Transport planning seems to live with these blind spots (Watts and Lyons 2011: 106).

The exploration of everyday life mobilities using Goffman and Garfinkel as a guide makes us see that only the most mundane phenomenon like crossing the street is by no means neither just instrumental practices nor they are trivial acts of physical displacement. There is too much going on here to be able to say that. It is an understanding of mobilities towards seeing the street not only in material terms; rather they are social stages for interaction. They are the choreographic stages where everyday life takes place. Therefore, mobilities are also staged from below by us and our consociates presenting ourselves to each other. In terms of Goffman,

“[w]hether made in institutionalized settings or not, what is situational about such processing encounters is clear: Every culture, and certainly ours, seems to have a vast lore of fact and fantasy regarding embodied indicators of status and character, thus appearing to render persons readable. By a sort of prearrangement, then, social situations seem to be perfectly designed to provide us with evidence of a participant's various attributes – if only to vividly re-present what we already know. Further, in social situations, as in other circumstances, deciders, if pressed, can employ an open-ended list of rationalizations to conceal from the subject (and even from themselves) the mix of considerations that figure in their decision and, especially, the relative weight given to these several determinants” (Goffman 1983: 8).

I claim that *the social* and *the street* can only be understood if we include both: from above and from below (of course, this separation is artificial, both are *one* in the social reality). How the scene is assembled according to a distinct street-interaction paradigm is just as important as how people present themselves in public space.

Goffman's insights into the little dramas of social life substantiate the fact that contemporary everyday-life mobilities are produced by and re-produce the social as they connect staging from above and below in situations of mobilities (Jensen 2013a: 89). Also, as ethnomethodological studies have shown, the social are ongoing, collectively produced orders (Hester and Francis 2003; Livingston 1987; Ryave and Schenkein, 1974). The social becomes real, as a

relation effect, in social interaction which is often methodically and ritually accomplished producing the so-called interaction order (Goffman 1983). We should understand interaction not that people do act together towards their counterpart; instead, they act in mutual relation to each other. Although Garfinkel and Goffman explicitly stress that there cannot be any form of social interaction between humans and nonhumans, I argue that there is social interaction between everything, and with this claim I mean every thing. They are all members giving off signs which are accountable to others, out of which members can build their actions. The scene is the spatiotemporal reference frame in which accounts are contextualised in the here and situated in the now. The embeddedness of these accounts is not a given, but more or less spatiotemporally instable. This is expressed in the concept of street-interaction paradigm. However, accounts, we make, produce the interaction order which we understand as semiotic and become meaningful through their relation to this continuously produced order.

Thus, the interaction order is precarious. It is reproduced in the situation. So, I will take as our point of departure the notion of *mobilities in situ* (for other examples using this epistemology see Bissell 2018; Jensen 2013a), or in other words, put the situation first. It has been devoted not to study abstract structures, but to the understanding of the situated, everyday life mobilities *on the ground* (e. g. Jensen 2013a, 2014a, 2015; Jensen and Lanng 2017). The theoretical underpinning of this approach is anchored in Garfinkel and Goffman's interest into the real situation and the multiple little interactions that make up the mobilities of billions of people day after day. It is a description of the social, which always reveals itself only as an excerpt and fragmentary moment, while other moments remain invisible. It refers to fluidity, to the ad hoc situated interactions appearing and dissolving (Normark 2006: 11).

In contrast to the "eye in the sky" (Lynch 1993) view of traffic planners seeing traffic movement akin to flows of particles, my approach shows how the characteristics of the assembled scene and members' everyday life presentations accomplish social interaction between them (Conley 2012: 219). The situation, or as Amin and Thrift put it, the "moments of encounter" (Amin and Thrift 2002: 30), is to focus to unpack the meaning of mobilities and to understand "how various social others are entangled in particular situations" (Jensen 2014a: 144). So, a new sensitivity to the interrelatedness of members and their interactions is in the foreground (Jensen 2013a: 20). It is just this situation, when just these acts are accountable in terms of Garfinkel. The outcome of the interaction is contingent, depending on precisely this situation and the accounts the members make (i.e. through looking at each other). In prolongation of such situational emphasis I argue that important are the interactions between every-thing. By paying particular

attention to the situational relationship between every-thing in public space, we can foregrounding a new conception of the social and the street (ibid: 41).

Putting the situation first does not mean to be ignorant of wider processes such as street-interaction paradigms and so on. It rather means starting and ending the analysis in situated interaction but always in the contexts of these wider processes (Jensen 2018: 7). What is unfold here is a *double dialectic* approach, I have noted in the introduction. Temporally, I will capture both the historic paradigms of street-interaction in traffic planning and the mundane everyday life interactions in situ in which also temporalities acted out from below. Spatially, I will capture the scale of the image of the city as well as simultaneously how it is staged in public space at the scale of the street corner. Through this, we can reflect and question the underlying thoughts of the interaction order. However, what I argue is that the situational perspective of mobilities of the everyday life world comes much closer to ‘real life’ within the scenes of the contemporary city (Jensen 2018: 10). We aim to learn to see new things in mundane and ordinary sites where everyday life mobilities are staged. This double dialectic gaze gives us the view of the micro-socialities of social space but also of the context in which these take place.

The context in which I try to understand how the social order is interactively produced is where everyday life mobilities *on the ground* takes place. So, and this is the important clue, we are moving from an *in vitro* to an *in situ* analysis and assessment of traffic planning. This epistemological shift can be seen as a response to the blind spots of the transport gaze I have mentioned above. We do not model how traffic works in our laboratories located in municipal planning departments and so on, we are interested in the doing things together in the here and now. Being sensitive to the situatedness, my research question is open formulated: *How mobilities are enacted at intersections?* Here I want to make additional indications. First, I will focus on intersections because they are still the blueprints for traffic planning in assemble public space for ordering traffic in terms of flow and safety. And they are also the critical points of contact which were re-assembled by critics of the modernist street-interaction paradigm. They are the places where we encounter and negotiate with social others.

Second, the research question is formulated in an unusual open way to find out how mobilities are enacted in the everyday little dramas. To Goffman (1974b), how we act, however strange or incomprehensible this might seem, is always meaningful. He argues, with regard to human members, that we face situations (tacitly or overtly) with the question “What is going on here?” (ibid: 8). I argue that we should not only raise this question if we interact with others in public

space. We should raise this question as an overall research epistemology which refers to ethnographic inquiry (which I will turn on the next chapter). In this epistemological vein, we face our research field as open as possible, questioning what the hell is going on here. Only with this in our minds, we can study how mobilities are enacted in the everyday little dramas. But, this approach, Hubbard and Lyon (2018) would label street ethnography, is spurred on by the desire to make sense of the everyday in particular. Of course, the idea that the street is a privileged site for accessing everyday life mobilities is problematic because the everyday is itself inherently problematic. It is a contradiction and a paradox (see especially Highmore 2002). What I will be aware of is to fetishizing the ordinary or mundane dramas on the street, noting that what happens on the street is not necessarily about methodised, habitual and routine, but also the exceptional: a fragment of one moment that punctures the ordinary dramas of everyday life mobilities.

Third, I use the notion of enactment, because I argue that mobilities are not only staged from above and below. They are also simultaneously enacted. The notion of enactment is used especially in Actor Network Theory to describe especially the performativity of methodology. The implication is that the methodology we use to engage with mobilities helps to create the mobilities we want to describe (Law and Urry 2004: 393). This is a strong, but a very important claim which influences the whole investigation: there is a shift from epistemology (where what we might know depends on our perspective) to ontology (what we might know is also being made differently; *ibid*: 397). Put it simply, we bring the reality we want to discover simultaneously into being (see Law and Urry 2004; Giddens 1990, 1991; and Barnes 2000).



# 7

## Mobilities in situ II: Methodology

We are all staging mobilities – no matter if we are in municipal planning departments planning an intersection, if we are dwelling in motion at intersections while interacting with strangers, or if we want to study mobilities at intersections to develop a new approach for traffic planning. Thus, our research question – how are mobilities enacted at intersections? – has multiple dimensions. Like in chapter 1, I differentiate these dimensions analytically in *from above* and *from below*. I do this in investigating how mobilities are staged by municipal planning departments on the one hand (see Jensen 2013a). On the other hand, I study what methods are used, what accounts are made (Garfinkel), and what signs are given off (Goffman) when interaction are accomplished. As we have seen there are an array of non-human members which play an active part. The focus is on the *situation* when and the *scene* where mobilities are staged producing the social order, and therefore socio-material realities.

First, I will refer in this chapter how we engage with the interaction order methodically. Here I will look on the methodological implications of Garfinkel's ethnomethodology and Goffman's symbolic interactionism because these will be fruitful insights which we will use also for our study. Second, then I will outline my methodical approach to catch the fluent interactions in situ in detail. I will explain the two-staged process I use in which standardised as well as qualitative methods included. I will describe this process in detail because it is important for understanding for what I do, how I do it, and of course why I do it. Further, I will develop some

useful devices which have the potential integrating them in traffic planning processes. Third, I will reflect upon my methodological approach.

## **Inspiration from Garfinkel and Goffman**

In my opinion it is fruitful not only to refer on Harold Garfinkel and Erving Goffman theoretically. It is also consequent to look on their comprehensive methodological implications and guidelines which both have used in their famous studies on behaviour in public space. Garfinkel as well as Goffman align their methodological approach towards the central object of investigation, the situational interaction. In an ethnomethodological sense, the empirical aim is to identify the taken-for-granted *methods*, by means of which the members of a society (*ethnos*) make their own actions perceptible and recognisable (*accountable*) and meaningfully order the social reality around them (*interaction order*). The analytical attention lies on the re-construction of the production of the interaction order. Here, regarding Garfinkel, we should observe the observations, interpret the interpretations, and methodise the methods of members (Bergmann 2012a: 60).

In his empirical studies, Goffman develops an *interaction-ethology* (1974a: 10). Within this methodological framework, the aim is to investigate interaction processes *naturalistically*, i. e. first to seek out and document them in their *natural milieu* (for analytical purposes I have called it *scene*). In his early works, Goffman understood a naturalistic investigation of interactions to be mainly participatory observation. Goffman sees in direct interaction mainly – and this also characterizes his methodology – a sphere of implicit knowledge that we can hardly articulate because of its habitual character. The knowledge meant here is manifested, for example, in the equally unreflected and subtly behaviour of looking, smiling, or overlooking. So, first no decision is fully visible from the outside, on the contrary: they may often not be fully conscious to us, as Giddens (1988: 91 ff.) notes with his distinction between practical and discursive consciousness. Second, our action and the imagination about is subjective like our perceptions, constructions, and symbolizations of the physical-material environment. As such, the one, quasi-objective reality does not exist (we enact it!) in the context of social interaction, but only a variety of different, competing perspectives. So, the subjectivity and the unconsciousness of behaviour results in the limitations of methods that rely on explications and self-descriptions of actors (interviews, biographical self-descriptions, etc.).

Garfinkel elaborates on this point when writes, although practices are seen in everyday life, they remain unnoticed (“seen but unnoticed”). Judgments as to whether statements by everyday

actors are appropriate, correct, or significant, are always practical judgments. Because they are made and accepted with the help of situational procedures with regard to practical purposes and constraints. For this reason, ethnomethodology adopts an attitude of “indifference” towards them (Garfinkel and Sacks 1976: 138 ff.). In other words, we cannot simply rely on interview answers (unless it is asked what makes an interview an interview in the behaviour of those involved in an interview) (Bergmann 2012a: 56). In Goffman's view, laboratory experiments are even more limited, because they eliminate through coding and numerical-statistical transformation exactly what needs to be investigated first, the “social nature” of (interaction) practice (Willems 2012: 43). Garfinkel postulates a “unique adequacy requirement” for research methods. They must be designed in such a way that they are uniquely appropriate to their object; methods must never be placed in front of objects and in case of doubt must be sacrificed (Bergmann 2012a: 57). He draws attention to the fact that research should analyse its social objects in the temporal structure in which life takes place. Like Goffman, he demonstrates the great gain in knowledge for sociology that lies in the consideration of seemingly insignificant details (Bergmann 2012a: 62). Also, Garfinkel shows that the construction of social reality can be observed in the interactional processes and situational practices of everyday action. In contrast to memories, opinions and descriptions expressed by interviewees in interviews, conversations and discussions, i. e. in contrast to reconstructions of experiences, adventures and events, Goffman and Garfinkel, both focus on the participation and coexistence of contemporary cultural events or – to use a term from Goffman – on co-presence (Goffman 1971a). Therefore, both see observation as the appropriated method for investigating interaction processes naturalistically.

The use of observation as research methodology has its historical roots in anthropology and ethnology on the one hand, and in the social reform movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the USA and Great Britain on the other. Ethnic as well as distribution- and migration-related conflicts in the urban industrial centres and the emergence of new forms of poverty and impoverishment in the slums of the big cities mobilised not only social reformers, but also scientists. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Chicago School of Sociology developed its own tradition of urban sociology based on extensive participatory observations and reports. The studies of Thomas and Znaniecki, Park, Burgess and others became particularly famous (Lindner 1990). This tradition was continued in the 1950s, above by the Street Corner Society study by William F. Whyte<sup>8</sup> and also by studies of Erving Goffman and ethnomethodologists

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<sup>8</sup> not to be confused with the journalist, sociologist, and urban planner William Hollingsworth Whyte.

like Harold Garfinkel or Harvey Sacks (Lüders 2012: 385), which have all become sociological classics. Over time, participatory observation in a broader sense began to be understood as a flexible, method-plural contextual strategy that could include quite different procedures. For this understanding, the term *ethnography* has meanwhile become established, although it seems sensible to use it only in this sense (ibid: 389). Ethnographies usually focus on the respective culture and the knowledge stored in it. Unlike traditional ethnology and cultural anthropology, however, social science ethnographies primarily focus on one's own culture, or more precisely: the cultures in one's own society. Ethnography of one's own cultures thus becomes a medium of social self-observation (ibid: 389 f.).

The central question of ethnographic curiosity is – formulated more theoretically – how social realities are produced in practice; like Garfinkel and Goffman it is thus concerned with the means employed in a given situation for constituting social phenomena. The ethnographic gaze does not focus on the apparently visible problems of action-practice, but on those aspects of reality that these take for granted, as it were, namely the practices for their production, and asks how actors manage to create social facts for themselves and others. It is therefore inevitable that the familiar is regarded as if it were foreign, it is not understood in a comprehensible way, but methodically alienated: it is brought into distance from the observer (Amann and Hirschauer 1997: 12). So, ethnographies can be understood as forms of empirical social research whose selectivity and methodicality are not regulated by external regulations and hypotheses about the what, when, where and how of a standardized observation procedure. Instead, they are expected from the experiential object, which relate to the seemingly trivial and unmethodical initial question “What the hell is going on here? (Geertz)” (ibid: 20).

Doing ethnographies of their own culture, Garfinkel and Goffman see social events, and therefore observation and research practice as highly depended on their natural context (*the scene*) and in their real temporal course (*the situation*) (Bergmann 2012a: 58). In a posthumous published essay of Goffman (1996) about field research, he pronounces that we have to get as close as possible to the researched to expose themselves as authentically as possible to the natural context. Only in this way, we can achieve the goal of deep familiarity with the researched and their practices. Goffman understands familiarity as a kind of preliminary stage of sociological information, which arises on when it is possible to discover the “natural behavioural patterns” (1974a: 10) in the observed disorderly behavioural streams. In relation to this, Goffman (1989, 1996) emphasizes the role of the researcher when he explains his understanding of participating observations in the context of a research seminar. By participatory observation, Goffman means

a technique of data collection in which one subjects oneself, one's own body, one's own personality, one's social situation, to the circumstances to which certain individuals are exposed. The technique of subjecting oneself to the life circumstances of others, of behaving as if one could not, even though one can practically leave at any time, enables us to get into their social situation, their work situation, their ethnic position or whatever. Being close to them, which means to their living conditions, enables us to perceive their gestural, visual, physical reactions to the things going on around them. So, we artificially force ourselves to tune into something, which we then take on as a witness – not as an interviewer, not as a listener, but as a witness to how they react to what is happening to them and around them. To Goffman this situation can only be realized in certain research situations and requires a comparatively long duration in the field (Goffman 1989: 125 f.).

With their focus on local practices in their real temporal course (*the situation*) and the unsmoothed details in which a social phenomenon is constituted, Garfinkel and Goffman depend for their own research on obtaining data material in which the processes it focuses on are preserved. This commits it to a recording mode of *conservation* (Bergmann 1985), in which a social event is preserved in its raw appearance without regard to plausibility and behavioural expectations (Bergmann 2012a: 56). One of Goffman's research strategies for conserving these naturalistic interactions is sequence analysis, with the aim to reconstruct the sequential order of interactions. Sequence analysis, based on ethnomethodological conversation analysis, refers to an (interaction) order that does not consist solely in the succession of two utterances. Sequence rather means the specific entanglement of behavioural elements forming a genuine sequence pattern. Goffman calls for recognizing and describing sequence patterns (1978: 168). He is concerned with sequences of action in which the step of one participant is followed by the step of another and the first step sets the framework for the second (Goffman 1974a: 207). However, Goffman considers that sequence analysis, practiced by conversation analysts as a pure system analysis in which the process of communication is conceptualized as an autonomously organized system, is insufficient (Bergmann 1991: 311). What Goffman opposes when he criticizes the view of conversation analysts who is optimistic about the possibility of culture-free formulations is the uncoupling or nihilation of the obviously culture-specifically (Goffman 1978: 129, 1989: 127). He is interested in the moral-ritual dimension of social practice. In this dimension Goffman discovers the peculiar sequential order of interaction (1971b: 25).

Goffman's naturalism does not just mean empiricism. Rather, he is a theoretically oriented empiricist (Collins 1980: 174). Instead of building a theory from above, he first imported concept

means into empirical work. This approach pursues two main goals: On the one hand, the conception of social action should be restructured (Goffman 1974a: 19), on the other hand, it is a matter of organizing or reorganizing diverse and large amounts of data. All this always takes place in the processing of and confrontation with materials on which the concepts have to prove themselves (Williams 1988: 71). The goal of this induction and deduction mediated process is a formal analytical language that allows the field of face-to-face interaction to be described (Willems 2012: 50; Lenz 1991: 57). Garfinkel and other ethnomethodologists use imaginary to make the hidden production of social reality visible. One example are crisis experiments that aim at the violation of social conventions to make implicit social norms visible and to break into the opaque everyday world. The turning off of traffic lights at Alexanderplein in Amsterdam can in some way be seen as an experiment in crisis, because expected behavioural conventions of traffic lights are suspended. However, Goffman aims at sociological information through relative alienations of social reality, namely the familiar reality of everyday life. He uses metaphors, concepts and models, for example, the metaphor of theatre (1969b), the ritual model (1971a, b) and game theory (1981). Here it is important that Goffman uses means of interpretation which represent a sphere of meaning and reality that is indeed its own but also similar to the subject area to be analysed (Willems 2012: 45).

What we have also learned about Garfinkel and Goffman's research style through this methodological parenthesis is that an abductive approach, a methodological approach where the empirical and the theoretical work together, is useful for our investigation. This methodology is characterized by empirical work, which is inspired by the theoretical, while the empirical simultaneously calls for new theoretical clarifications. These two elements interact with each other, and therefore it is possible to achieve a theoretically informed and empirically based analytical production of knowledge (Freudental-Pedersen et al. 2010: 30 f.). Regarding Freudental-Pedersen et al., in this research process, “there is not a theoretical basis to be tested which determines the production of empirical results (induction), and there is not an empirical basis calling on certain theoretical frameworks for developing the analysis (deduction)” (ibid: 30 f.). So, there is an abductive interaction, in which empirical data and theory are living side by side.

## **Own methods**

The focus of this investigation is on the *situation* and the *scene* where mobilities are staged interactionally producing socio-material realities. On the one hand we will observe interactions, the methods are used, the accounts are made (Garfinkel), and the signs are given off (Goffman)

at certain sites in certain moments from within. On the other hand, we have to relate this micro-sociological investigation to a micro-political setting of municipal design, planning practices, and traffic regulations. Thus, we should include a genealogical setting of street-interaction paradigms in traffic planning and their spatial histories. With this in mind, I have constructed a two-staged process. Like in the theoretical derivation, I will focus on *the scene* in the first stage. In the second stage, which is informed by Garfinkel and Goffman, I will investigate the mundane interactions in situ – *the situation*. This is connected to well-known ethnographic methods and approaches like site inspections, field studies, and observations. This study does not aim to delve deeply into cultural live worlds as proposed by Goffman, nor it is equitable in respect to the roots of ethnographic thought. Ethnographers in urban design often label this approach as quick and dirty or rapid ethnography (see on quick and dirty ethnography Hughes et al. 1994, 1995; Hughes et al. 1997; and on rapid ethnography Millen 2000; and Norman 1999). Deliberately, I will call my approach ethnographic-inspired because to predicate an ethnographic inquiry would be methodically incorrect. This fieldwork utilising ethnographic-inspired observational techniques in the vein of Garfinkel and Goffman is used.

### **The 1<sup>st</sup> stage: the scene**

This study takes place at the intersection of mobilities. I relate the micro-sociological investigation to the micro-political setting, namely the scene. The first stage can be seen as a methodological deduction of chapter 2, whereby we have to connect the scene at an intersection to wider genealogical settings of paradigms in traffic planning and their spatial histories. To study where mobilities takes place, I will focus on redesigned intersection because it shows how mobilities are staged by municipal planning departments through municipal design, planning practices, and traffic regulations. Being more precise, from these redesigns we can see according to which street-interaction paradigm public space is designed and assessed. With reference to our contrasting juxtaposition of modernist street intersections and Shared Space, the selection of intersection followed the criteria of being finished since 2006 to 2019. Because in 2006, the EU Interact project Shared Space: Reconciling People, Places and Transport (2000-2006) was completed which supports the implementation of the Shared Space strategy into municipal traffic planning.

As research area, I choose the inner districts of Frankfurt am Main mainly for three reasons. First, Frankfurt am Main is a central hub of regional, national, and international traffic flows; examples are Frankfurt Airport and Central Railway Station with its 350,000 users daily

(HMWVL 2013). In peak times traffic density reaches and, in some cases, exceeds the capacity limits of the transport system (Stadtplanungsamt Frankfurt a. M. 2012: 86). Only inland traffic within the city of Frankfurt am Main generates more than 2 million passenger trips per day. In addition, there are more than 1 million passenger journeys per day in source and destination traffic between the city area and the surrounding region. The share of motorised private transport in the total traffic of the Frankfurt population has decreased from 40% in 1998 to 34% in 2008, in urban-rural traffic it is around 80 % (ibid: 88). The shares of pedestrian traffic and local public transport have stabilized at a high level and the share of bicycle traffic has more than doubled since 1998. While almost three-quarters of all domestic journeys within the city are now made by foot, by bicycle or by public transport, these means of passenger transport to and from Frankfurt am Main together account for only a fifth of all journeys. Here, motorised private transport continues to dominate, so that the motor vehicle continues to dominate the Frankfurt street scene (ibid: 88). Furthermore, motorised vehicles were also prioritised in traffic planning after World War II. The reconstruction of the war-ravaged historic city centre was implemented in modern forms, followed by car-friendly urban planning. Notably examples are *Schienenfreie Innenstadt*, a traffic concept of the 1980s with aim to shutter all tram lines in the inner-city districts and use the vacated track areas for an upgrading public spaces; whereby upgrading was often connect with the construction of streets for motorised traffic. So, Frankfurt am Main is characterised by a tradition of car-centred traffic planning which is still visible today.

Second, street space and the tradition of traffic planning in Frankfurt am Main contrast with Amsterdam. As I mentioned in the foreword, this investigation takes its inspiration by the study of Vasarini Lopes (2018) who have also conducted observations at street interaction in Amsterdam, and the exchange with Marco te Brömmelstroet. In comparison to Amsterdam, traffic planning in Frankfurt is still largely based (1) on the aim of traffic flow (of vehicular traffic) and safety, (2) on engineering tools for planning street space (3) and on traditional definition of street space and uses. With new initiatives to support bicycle infrastructure, bicycle lanes and traffic lights were built to improve safety for bicyclists. This contrasts with the programme in Amsterdam which also had the aim to improve traffic safety. But they decided to turn off the traffic lights at intersection. We have two strategies to increase traffic safety: Amsterdam turns off traffic light, and Frankfurt implements even more. There we see two concepts of social interaction in traffic planning, one which focuses on command-and-control, and the other on

informal negotiations between people. Frankfurt am Main provides a useful contrast sample to Amsterdam for comparing social interaction.

Third, although traffic planning is still car-centred in Frankfurt am Main, there are movements characterized by a new conception of street space and for whom this space should be for. New approaches to street design and traffic calming were discussed and tested by municipal planning agencies. By the special investment programme “Schöneres Frankfurt” public space in Frankfurt am Main once again became the subject of intensive municipal involvement. The public road space should be made available to non-motorised traffic to a greater extent and be calmed to provide a higher quality of stay (Stadtplanungsamt Frankfurt a. M. 2012: 90). In selected residential streets, encounter zones were established based on the Berner Model, in which pedestrian and motorised traffic are on an equal surface and in which togetherness and interaction between road users play a particularly important role (ibid: 94). Reclaiming the street as a living space was also the trigger for the initiation of the model project *Frankfurt: Vernetzte Spiel- und Begegnungsräume*, building on the pilot project *Nahmobilität Nordend* carried out in 2006. The project focuses on the smaller neighbourhood squares in Frankfurt Nordend which are converted into temporary play streets during the summer months of 2008, 2009 and 2011 (ibid: 94).

Since 2009, the Radfahrbüro which is integrated within the Straßenverkehrsamt has been working on improvements for cyclists in Frankfurt am Main. They have no redesign projects of their own, but they interfere into planning projects to represent the interests of non-motorised traffic, for example redistribution of marking areas during renewal/maintenance. One notable grassroots initiative that has also attracted media attention is the Radentscheid Frankfurt which wants to support the improvement of bicycles infrastructure in Frankfurt am Main. Although it was rejected by the City of Frankfurt initially, there was an agreement between the coalition and Radentscheid. On 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019, the coalition proposal *Maßnahmenkatalog Fahrradstadt Frankfurt am Main* was approved by the city council. It was also agreed that 15 intersections should be made bicycle-friendly by 2022. In addition, the Radentscheid receives further support from the city council by an increase of financial and personnel resources. So, there are resources available to implement the measures of the coalition proposal and the aims of the Radfahrbüro more programmatically.

So, in the first stage, we study the scene of redesigned street intersection in the inner districts of Frankfurt am Main. In order to do this, I needed to find out, which intersections were redesigned between 2006 and 2019, which were relevant for this investigation, and how could we collect and categorise these intersections regarding different design goals. To get an introduction into the research field, I conduct an interview with an employee of the Radfahrbüro Frankfurt am Main on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020. This interview had two basic objectives. One the one hand, it should generate more information on the general planning process in Frankfurt am Main: What methods are used to redesign intersection? How are decisions to redesign intersections usually brought about? What are the usual criteria for redesigning intersections? On the other hand, it should provide knowledge about how intersections are redesigned in Frankfurt am Main: What intersections were redesigned? According to which design goal? How are intersections assessed before and after?

To prepare myself for the interview, first, I have defined criteria filtering what intersections are relevant for this investigation at all. Generally speaking, all intersections are relevant whose scene was changed by redesign interventions. These changings of the scene are (1) the material form, e. g. other ground materials, setting up or removing traffic lights or signs, (2) the visual form, e. g. street pavements, red colouring of bicycle lanes, turning off traffic lights, changing traffic light circuit, and (3) the organisational form, e. g. resolution of functional segregation, changing prioritisation of traffic modes, introduction of Tempo-30-Zone.

Second, I have developed an *intersection glossary* in which all redesigned intersection will be itemised and categorised using the following variables (see **Table 4**). After the interview, I consolidated the given information and had a session of desk research in which I have evaluated planning documents. I searched for further information about the intersections to complete all categories for each intersection. I also looked for further intersections which were redesigned. I have aggregated my findings in the glossary whose template I had already created before the interview. Additionally, I have conducted site visits on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (see **Figure 28**). I stayed at one intersection for 10-15 min noting my impressions, the variables and taking photos from each corner at each intersection.

**Table 4: Variables of the interaction glossary**

Variable	Definition	Example
<b>ID</b>	unique number to specify for each interaction	6
<b>Intersection</b>	name for each intersection composed of the intersecting streets (e. g. Hofstraße/Untermainkai) or official name of the place (Willy-Brandt-Platz)	Willy-Brandt-Platz
<b>Description</b>	General description of intersection	A central intersection in Frankfurt's inner city which has two areas: a traffic light-coordinated but also a shared space at Städtische Bühnen, without out pavements, differences in materials, and signals, and segregation. Also, there is an underground station with lines to the inner-city, central train station, Goethe University and Sachsenhausen. Right lane of Neue Mainzer Straße defined as logistic lane
<b>Main Design Goal</b>	Aim of redesign (e. g. slowing down motorised traffic, or improvement of bicycle infrastructure)	Increasing traffic safety through implementing bicycle safety zones at Weißfrauenstraße; optimization bicycle traffic. At Städtische Bühnen: car-free area, only trams are allowed.
<b>Assessment Before</b>	Reason and method for evaluating the former situation at one intersection which lead to a redesign	reconstruction of the street intersection because of the real estate project <i>MainTor</i> ; feeling of an increase in bicycle traffic
<b>Assessment After</b>	Methods for evaluating the situation after the redesign of one intersection	No assessment

Source: adapted from Vasarini Lopes (2018)

In the first step, the intersections were classified by four variables: conventional traffic regulation, diversity of space functions, modes of transport, and size (see **Table 5**). The variables conventional traffic regulation represents scores from 1 to 4, diversity of space functions from A to C. Modes of transport captures cars, bicyclists, pedestrians, trams and so on. In the background of the two variables lies an analytical construction in which we see traffic light regulated intersections and Shared Space as opposite poles. The assumption is that at traffic light regulated intersections there are an amount of traffic regulation, whereby at a Shared Space there are much less or no traffic regulation at all. Under traffic regulations I capture pavement marks, traffic signs, traffic lights, and traffic segregation (segregated sidewalks, bicycles and car lanes). An intersection with 1-A would be a completely Shared Space and 4-C a completely traffic light regulated intersection. The size is defined in small, medium, and big. These qualitative graduations relate to the number of lanes in each direction, or rather the width of the lanes

meaning. The width of lanes is oriented on the *Richtlinien für die Anlage von Stadtstraßen* (RASt 06): small  $\leq 7,50$  m, medium  $> 7,50$  m to 15,00 m, and big  $> 15,00$  m. If there are no lanes, as in the case of Shared Space, then the width and length of the place are used for its classification. The analysis also included the modes of transport sharing the space, since framing slower traffic was relevant to this research (Vasarini Lopes 2018: 21).

**Table 5: Variables for categorising intersections**

Size		Conventional traffic regulation		Diversity of space functions		Modes of traffic
Small	One lane each direction ( $\leq 7,50$ m)	No pavement marks, no traffic signs, no traffic light, no traffic segregation	1	Traffic, active façade, places to stay	A	All modes
Medium	One lane each direction ( $> 7,50$ m to 15,00 m)	Pavement marks, no traffic signs, no traffic light, no traffic segregation	2	Traffic, active façade	B	Cars are guests + trams
Big	One lane each direction ( $\leq 7,50$ m)	Pavement marks, traffic signs, traffic light, small traffic segregation	3	Only traffic	C	Car free + trams
		Pavement marks, no traffic signs, no traffic light, traffic segregation	4			Only cyclists and pedestrians

Source: adapted from Vasarini Lopes (2018)

After the site visits came the Corona Lock Down. The planned project to categorise the intersection according to the four variables and to carry out observations at one intersection of each category was not feasible in terms of time because of the initial restrictions which were decided by the Bundesregierung (federal government). Because of Covid-19 pandemic which would turn this study upside down, I had to shift my empirical study in observing only one intersection. As we can imagine, to choose an intersection of the 18, I have collected, is not abundant. However, I decided to do observations at Willy-Brandt-Platz because at this intersection a Shared Space and a traffic light-coordinated intersection adjoin each other. So, it is possible to observe different interaction orders not at different intersections, but at one intersection so that we can see what takes place when both intersect. Despite these unpredictable constrains, we should take the one-site study not as a less-than-ideal solution. In my opinion it is a chance to compare social interactions within different enacted planning paradigms at one site, on the one hand. At

the other hand, we can also observe what happens when these different material layouts and concept of how-should interaction-takes-place collide.

### **The 2nd stage: below**

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of my empirical approach, I investigated what takes place at Willy-Brandt-Platz. We study how the social order is produced; whereby social order is treated as a phenomenon which is situationally and locally accomplished. These accomplishments are observable in every occasion people are engaged in interactively. For example, we can recognise a queue because of the observable order-productive details of doing-queuing, or what Garfinkel would term the just-thisness of doing-queuing. Following from this, *just-thisness* can only be obtained from *inside* the situation. It is not any situation which attracted us, it is the ordinary, the commonsense situations, that mundane everyday life which often escapes our attention: “what is right before our eyes, but we cannot see because we are blinded by its obviousness.” (Nor-mark 2006: 19). It takes seriously the details of the specific setting at Willy-Brandt-Platz into account.

A situated emphasis on movement provokes interesting methodological questions about how to capture these every day, and even mundane interactions. Early transport research has, so far, focused on modelling. Here, we will question the taken-for-grantedness of mobilities often proclaimed by transport studies. To transcend these narrow conceptions of mobilities, we have to move away from calculating, like transport modelling, to more qualitative approaches. So, we cannot see the ordinary interaction we seek to investigate as a mathematical formula  $E = MC^2$ , where E is the interaction, M the methods are used and C the signs we give off. Instead, we need to move from an in vitro to an in situ analysis according to which we examine how things are done together in the here and now. We do this by making the familiar strange which evade a critical gaze on the banal actions at Willy-Brandt-Platz. The central methodological question is, what is going on here? My approach therefore requires new methods to understand the social aspects of corporeal mobilities. We see interaction in a qualitative way which allows us to explore beyond the taken-for-granted knowledge and helps us to understand both the social phenomena and the street as spatiotemporal context in which they are rooted.

I investigated interaction by directly engaging with them in the contexts in which all takes place, rather than using some of these fantastic formulas like the one above. Mobilities involves occasional interactions within certain places at certain moments that seemingly are obligatory to

all the people dwelling there (Büscher and Urry 2009: 104). So, the key idea of using observation is to document how people move in their urban context and as well as how they interact in mobile situations rather than enquire into what they think about thus and how they would verbalize it. William H. Whyte (1980, 1988, 1990) often proclaimed that observing people rather than asking them to reason and rationalise was, for him, the key to find out more about people's habitual behaviour. By his research in the 1970s and 1980s of numerous public spaces in New York City, he aimed to attract people back to the urban centre at a time of urban sprawl. By utilising numerous different methods, like photography, video recordings, direct observations, interviews, mapping, and pedestrian counts, he was able to provide city officials and policy makers a thorough analysis of New York City's spaces, its characters, and what it needed to design better spaces for people. During his research, he also asked people in the middle of crowded flows about their behaviour, many people said that they had acted differently (Whyte 1988: 10). The non-reflective behaviour may be studied better with observations rather than with interviews (Jensen 2014a: 62), because it is "inappropriate to talk to people about their practices because they will be unable to discuss the habitual" (Hitchings 2010: 288). So, doing observations rather than interviews, I wanted to keep a deliberate distance from people's inner life. This is important, but my focus lays on the situation as we may all observe on the street (Jensen 2014a: 124).

The field study has carried out over a 2-week period in May and June in 2020. During this 2-week period between May 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> randomized observations were conducted at Willy-Brandt-Platz. Two days between Monday and Saturday each week were chosen at random and three observation slots between 8:00 AM and 7:00 PM were observed at random as well (see **Table 6** for observation schedules). Observation days were on Monday 25.05.2020, Saturday 30.05.2020, Tuesday 02.06.2020, and Friday 05.06.2020. The observation was differentiated in three phases. The assumption is that after a broad descriptive phase (introductory observation) the gaze can be directed more and more precisely to the object of research (focused observation), in order to then interrogate only selected aspects more precisely (selective observation; Spradley 1980).

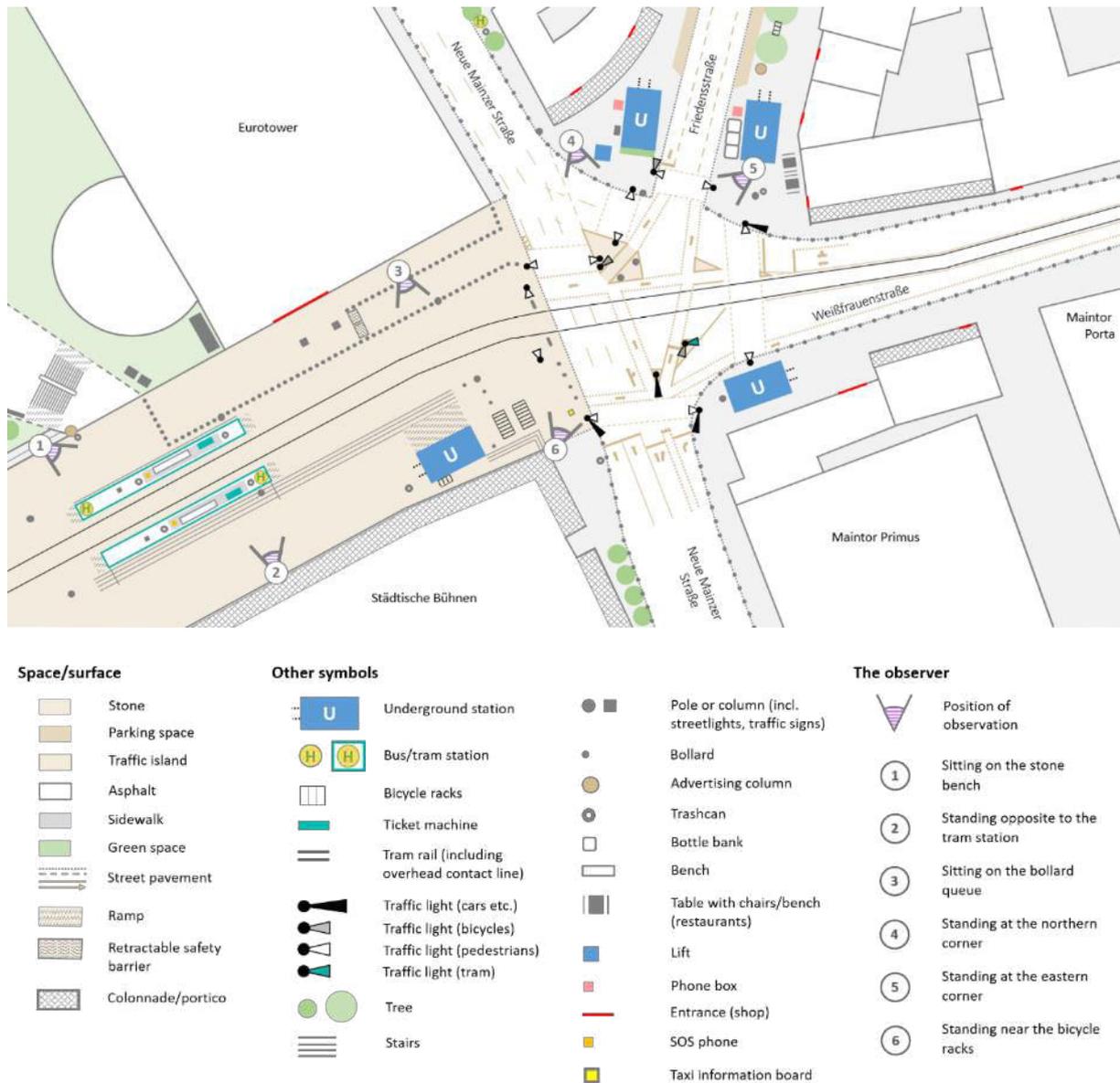
**Table 6: observation slots**

Day time	Day 1: Monday 25.05.2020	Day 2: Saturday 30.05.2020	Day 3: Tuesday 02.06.2020	Day 4: Friday 05.06.2020
Morning	08:00-10:00	09:00-11:00	08:00-10:00	08:00-10:00
Afternoon	12:00-14:00	12:00-14:00	12:00-14:00	12:00-14:00
Evening	16:00-18:00	17:00-19:00	16:00-18:00	16:00-18:00

I observed the interactions in situ from six different places (see *Figure 3*). The sites were chosen with the aim to have different perspectives on the place ballet at Willy-Brandt-Platz. Although I paid attention that I observe from each place in the morning, afternoon and evening, there is a small variance between these places. This is due the fact that firstly there are observation intervals which were longer than 15 minutes. Secondly, if I recognised that at the current observation place, I could observe only a few interactions, I changed the observation place.

On the observation days I went at Willy-Brandt-Platz by underground in the morning and leave it by tram in the evening. I used the morning walk from the subway station to my first observation point, and the waiting time at the tram station in the evening for more casual observations. These more casual observations provided supplemental qualitative information for the randomized observations. Some of these observations were also conducted from a slight distance, like sitting at a table outside a restaurant.

During the conduct of ethnographic-style fieldwork, changes in the research environment often have a profound impact on the process of data acquisition as well as on the relations with the researched and the research environment. The time and temporality (including seasons, annual festivals, temperature, and weather) affect how we experience within the research site. My observations took place during the warmer month, because given the weather condition in a Middle European country, a study in late spring (or in summer) might provide more richness. We can see more people outside, more seating events, more interactions than at a rainy day in autumn, or a cold snowy day in winter. However, there is no reason to believe that the results of this study would look significantly different if the study was done at another time of the year (Jensen 2010b: 396). But nevertheless, we have to become aware of how such unexpected changes often require (re)negotiating the balance between multiple roles in the ‘field’ and how we interpret the observation we made.



**Figure 3:** observation spots (own visualisation)

One important issue we should consider when we want to do observations is not only how the observation will be taken, but also whether the observation will be overt or covert. Although the principles of ethnography usually prohibit covert observations, Lofland (1989) argues that there are public spheres – in shopping malls, in the subway, in the elevator, in bars – which requires an attentive observer who does not reveal himself as a researcher. In public space, especially if we are not interested to go deep into people’s own environments, it may well be appropriate, for reasons of research interest, to make covert observations. In contexts in which observation is covert, it is also in an ethnographic sense not allowed to take notes in the direct presence of the people being observed. It can, as Goffman rightly notes, disturb the normal procedures if one sits there and takes notes. Goffman (1989) strictly rejected taking notes in the

presence of the people observed in the field, not least because it would potentially divert their attention from their ‘natural processes’ and direct it to the activity of the researcher. It is then better to retreat somewhere in between for writing or to postpone the notes to the time of the day when one leaves the field. Here one will be referred to memory protocols in order to record what has been observed, so one will have to do without the usual forms of documentation.

Certainly, I have taken notes during the observations. Based on ethnomethodology’s conservation method I have used both memory protocols and field notes in which I have conserved what actually takes place in currently observed situations. To take field notes, I have conceptualised an *observation notebook* (see Appendix, **Table 7: Annex B**) and an *observation catalogue* (see Appendix, **Table 8: Annex C.1, Table 9: Annex C.2, Table 10: Annex C.3**). The observation notebook contains general information like number of observation, place, date, beginning and end time. Important is the *observation ID* which is composed of observation day, observation spot (see **Table 6**), and observation on one day. For example, if we observe on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May (Day 2), it was our 5<sup>th</sup> observation at this day, and we observe at A seating on the stone bench (observation place 1), then the observation ID is **2-05-1**. The *description of the scene* includes at the one hand the variables of the site visit which was done in the 1<sup>st</sup> stage, conventional traffic regulation, diversity of space function, modes of transport. On the other hand, I write up my sensory impression (sights, sounds, textures, smells, taste) which means how I perceive the intersection at the moment just before I observe to give us a more tangible feeling of the place. In the field *site facts* typical interactions are noted which were observed during the observation; surely not all interactions, only those which happened regularly, meaning which I have observed almost in every observation. In combination with *future actions*, it is the basis for focused and selective observations at this observation site. Most important are the fields *What I observe* and *What I think*. In the first I describe every-thing that I observe, in the second I write down my analyses, reflection, questions and personal responses. So, these fields capture my observation and my interpretations about it.

The observation catalogue is a hodgepodge of what we can observe in situ. It is classified in three levels: (1) the interactions methods meaning the little practices (actions and combination of actions), for example hand movements or walking techniques; (2) interactions performed in mobile situations, for example negotiation techniques, eye contact, or activity involvement; (3) spatiality and temporality of interaction meaning a spatial and temporal aggregated view on interaction, for example frequent travel pathways. We should not understand this catalogue misleadingly as a checklist or a quantitative observation survey which we will use to capture

interactions deductively. Rather, we should see it as a catalogue with which we can classify our observations and use these classifications to describe new observations as well as deriving new classification, figures, etc inductively from our observations. So, this catalogue is not completed at all, rather it is always in-making. In confronting this catalogue always with our observations in the real world, it becomes dynamically and reflexive.

Observing interaction situationally is more than just conserving a situation, for the sake of conserving a situation, freezing it with a pen on a paper (Humphreys and Watson 2009: 47). Field notes (observation notebook and catalogue) and memory protocols are not a 1:1 representation of observable reality, but the results of active processes of creating meaning (Lüders 2012: 397; Przyborski and Wohlrab-Sahr 2008: 56). Jensen (2014a) has illuminated the role of writing in mobilities research as a way of producing knowledge about mobile situations. Although writing and stories emerging out of it are integral to understanding everyday life mobilities, writing is in my opinion not enough to understand the observed interaction. We will need methodologically less control and more experimentation. For example, Halprin (1963, 1966) examined mobilities under the heading of choreography (Lawrence Halprin's wife Anna is a dance choreographer). In his analytical endeavour, he worked with expressive photographic and artful attempts, like dance notations which should capture the movement patterns of people in time and space (Jensen 2014a: 30). Like Halprin's photographic and artful attempts, this examination also requires a form of optic visualisation of the interactions I have observed.

Here, I am primarily interested in the visual mapping. Taking inspiration from Appleyard, Lynch and Meyer's *The view from the road* (1964), I pronounce the potential of mapping to capture and to interrogate the complex relationship between stagings from above and from below. To Farrelly, mapping is a "frame of the imagination" (Farrelly 2011) which allows us to envisage relationships that are not usually visible and to consider both the probable and improbable. So, my examination aims to contribute to new ways of seeing intersections: as interaction orders. In a first step, I created a map which contains ground materials, space uses, traffic lights, and an array of other material things at Willy-Brandt-Platz. This map I will call *basic map*. Not included, are mobile materialities which dwell in that place situationally, like trams, bicycles, but also animals, people, and also garbage or advertising signs. These mobile things I will capture in the maps in which I draw observed interactions. I will call these *interaction maps*.

However, if I speak of mapping, I do not deal with this cartographic work alone, and certainly not with this surely not neutral representational practice. Of course, I plead guilty to a visual bias for methods of visual representation. Maps indicates objectivity and distance from what we observe through visual abstraction and representation. Creating maps involves the taking of an imaginary bird's eye view through which we look on the world. But we do not realise a 1:1 reproduction of the world we might observe. It is too simplistic to think that maps simply depict the world. Maps are criticised for their modernistic abstraction that deliberately excludes many aspects, in that they “reduce the complex multi-sensuous experience to visually encoded features and then organise and synthesise these into a meaningful whole.” (Urry 2000: 88 f.). In some cases, mapping tend to regard sites “as blank surfaces on which to organize urban functions in efficient and often standardised ways’ and reduce ‘the innate richness and history of sites ... into diagrammatic map-forms” (Marot 1999: 47). They implying a mastery over what is and what should viewed (Urry 2000: 88 f.).

This point was made vibrant by architect James Corner in his essay *The Agency of Mapping: Speculation, Critique and Intervention* (1999). In referring to philosophers Deleuze and Guattari, Corner advocates that we should move beyond mapping as a pure representation practice of tracing something which is already known. We move towards mapping as an active practice of actualization of site occurrences, processes, and interrelations. Its capacity for description can also set conditions for new physical and eidetic worlds to emerge. It has the capacity to formulate. So, what exists is more than the physical attributes of terrain (topography, rivers, roads, buildings) (ibid: 214); “mapping allows for an understanding of terrain as only the surface expression of a complex and dynamic imbroglio of social and natural processes. In visualizing these interrelationships and interactions, mapping itself participates in any future unfoldings.” (ibid: 214).

So, maps are not only about representation what we assume what is really there at a certain place. Mappings are active tools expressing mobile situations in an abstract manner. Often seen as visual representations or a pure cartographic practice (Harley 1992; Rodaway 1994: 133 ff.; see also Abrams and Hall 2006) with a representational scope, in urban design it was used as an evocative operation (Corner 1999). Site mapping can be seen as an epistemological and methodological move allowing us to (en)act sites and what takes place there. James Corner argues that “... the function of mapping is less to mirror reality than to engender the re-shaping of the worlds in which people live” (ibid: 2013). So, maps are performative as “mappings do not represent the geographies of ideas; rather they affect their actualization” (ibid: 225). So,

mapping is also a “theoretical, conceptual and reflective practice including the map as a vehicle for thinking” (Jensen 2014a: 28). Here, I do not intend to represent an objective reality. Rather, I implicitly enact a possible reality when I create maps. My intention is to create maps which are different to those which are create in contemporary traffic planning to show aspect that are not visible in those maps.

By observing and mapping situation and scenes, I develop a twofold approach of seeing mobilities differently as it was done in traffic planning until now. On the one hand, De Certeau (1984) illustrates the richness of the zoomed in street level gaze of the ethnographer doing observation in situ. On the other hand, Lefebvre (1991) asks us to zoom out from the micro-scale where we have an optimal gaze to view the micro-socialities of mobilities but also the context in which these takes place. This combination of zooming-in and zooming-out illuminates “the disjunction between overall patterns of movement seen from a distance and the quirks of individual movements when seen close up/in detail – and the differences of space/time” (Murray and Robertson 2017: 213). So, rather than looking at it in a top-down way, like modernist traffic engage with mobilities, we zoom in and out of the situation. This zooming-out/zooming-in perspective resonates well with Jensen’s (2010b) metaphors of river and ballet which he applied in the observation of Nyortov Square in Aalborg. Seeing the mobility practices at Nytorv ‘as a ballet’ means to be at the eye-level of the moving urbanites and thus we are able to actually see gestures, gazes, and embodied negotiations and micro-interactions that take place ever so swiftly as people move into and out of public place. Seeing the mobility practices ‘as a river’ means then to aggregate and look down on the mobile urbanites and thus create more abstract and generalised understandings and interpretations. These metaphors carry, on the one hand, the risk of over-simplifying mobilities. On the other hand, metaphors have blind spots that might cloud our analysis. However, by using the zooming-in and zooming-out metaphor, and the methods of observing and mapping, I will try to give us a feeling of actually ‘being there’. Being there means that not only myself, but all of us can look through my eyes on what is going on the street corner level at Willy-Brandt-Platz.

Methodically, I strengthen the situational perspective of mobilities in situ. With this perspective of researching in place, we can investigate how everyday life mobilities are staged from above and below. By connecting and adjusting the theoretical concepts, especially those of Garfinkel and Goffman, with pieces of fieldwork utilising ethnography-styled observational and mapping techniques, the ambition is to register the situational accomplishments of ordinary social interaction (Normark 2006: 2). By exploring these situations where the interaction order is produced,

we gain deeper insights into *the social* and *the material* (the street) of mobilities. In conjunction, I want to put the social and the material of mobilities to front stage what is usually neglected by contemporary urban traffic planning.

## **Reflections and Limitations**

I want to conclude my remarks about methodology with some recommendations and reflections of the methods especially on the spatiality of fieldwork, and the social constellations embedded herein. Perhaps, taking notes and observing, “the most ordinary of ordinary things” as Normark (2006: 62) puts it, can be sometimes boring, tedious, and odd on the one hand. On the other hand, the interest in the ordinary is exotic especially in comparison to traditional methodologies of traffic planning. However, I have highlighted the importance of being there in doing observations opening new perspectives for looking on and thinking of traffic. However, we also should call attention to the difficulties of observing how people move and what they are actually do while they are on the move. When we are at the human scale, more details can be captured. But from Jensen’s experiences in numerous studies (2010b, 2013a), we learn that observing interactions between pedestrians is easier than, for example, between car drivers because of their speed and metal-glass shell. Some attempts using recording equipment like video cameras so that we are able to capture the entire interaction, but the body language and interactions are less clear. Also, they can entail privacy issues.

Indeed, we are only sampling a small fraction of each human’s journey. Each observation is intimately tied to the place at which the observation takes place. In the words of Walker (2010: 48), each observation is “coloured” by the place at which it was made. I have mentioned shortly that time and temporality like temperature, the day, or the week of the period of the year, but also annual festival and events (remembering the Corona crisis) come together and affect how we experience a situation. Imaging the sleepiness of a cold and dark morning, or a major city transport hub at the afternoon rush-hour. It is the mundane and ordinary everyday that constitute most of mobilities life influenced by our phenomenological experience of what we are doing at place (Fincham et al. 2010: 6). This experience during the conduct of ethnographic-style fieldwork has a profound impact on the role of us as researcher, our approach of data acquisition, and our relations with others dwelling in place.

The partiality and contextuality of interpretation and knowledge make the position of the researcher and her relations with others important to the data generation (and the analytical) process. In his doctoral thesis *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*

(1943), William F. Whyte describes the results of two years of field research in a slum area in Boston (USA), which at that time was mainly inhabited by Italian immigrants and which he called Cornerville. In particular, the epistemological questions added in the second edition (1955), such as how social data emerge, which relationships between observers and those observed influence the depiction of social processes, how the stories the scientist tells come about are still today the occasion for epistemological reflections. In his introductory thoughts on the German translation (1996), Peter Atteslander (1996: x ff.) praises the significance of the work. The field researcher is his own instrument; he himself must exist in his activity. The essence of his work is self-knowledge. Self-knowledge alone leads to discovery, controlled discovery ultimately to knowledge. Therefore, in the context of field research, it is more important to observe not only others but also oneself during the research, and to record not only the behaviour of others but also one's own position. So, if we choose the method of observation, we need to be aware of the inherent subjectivity of the method. It relies largely on the evaluation of the observer.

Within this study it is of epistemological significance how our knowledge of space, time and movement in everyday life is produced (Freudental-Pedersen et al. 2010: 29). As we have seen it implies a reflection of how knowledge is generated in the interaction between the researcher and the researched (if we should use this artificial separation at all) within the research field. Among other, literature on feminist geography has contributed to issues of positionality and power relations between the researcher and the researched (England 1994; Rose 1997; Twyman et al. 1999; Moss 2002; Worth 2008). The research process is always entangled in the social relations of both the researcher and the researched. Regarding England, research is “produced in a world already interpreted by people, including ourselves, who live their lives in it.” (2006: 287). Regarding the role of the researcher, Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) take the position that all social research is a kind of participatory observation, since one cannot explore the social world without being part of it. The degree of involvement in the field of research and the role of the researcher varies. It should not be forgotten that one is in a certain social role in the field of research. Unexpected changes often require negotiating the balance between multiple roles which have a profound impact on our impartiality and personal involvement and therefore on our interrelatedness to others. The interrelatedness and interaction between the researcher and the researched is a process which evolves when we articulate it.

Thinking about the processual relationships within the research field, remembers me of Werner Heisenberg. As physician (he was also interested in philosophy) he was concerned with the

weird world of subatomic particles and what goes on there. In his remarks on the Uncertainty Principle, he argues that the ordinary act of observation can change the thing being observed. Although we surely cannot apply Heisenberg's conclusion to the large-scale world of flowing cars, pedestrians and other, it is still intriguing for researchers to question whether a similar principle might apply in analysing of traffic behaviour. Walker rightly asks, "Could our attempts to study people's traffic behaviour be undermined because our observation changes the very behaviour we wish to study?" (Walker 2010: 43). This refers to Bissell's study presented in his book *Transit Life: How Commuting Is Transforming Our Cities* (2018). During observing at a street intersection, his presence has retained by the attention of the people that move through this space every day. He has eye contact with commuters, and he was asked by several people what he is doing here. When capturing the multiple encounters at Willy-Brand-Platz, it seemed that there was a deal of interference from me affecting or dissolving the situation. Although people did not directly confront me, they often felt watched due to the presence of me. But it does not only change the behaviour I want to study, it has also changed my own behaviour. On the 1<sup>st</sup> observation day, I feel strange to observe other people's actions. A feeling of closeness, of uneasiness, of allowing too much intimacy and thus making others too close, too intimate. One already feels like a stalker, more like a sniffer, who is on the prowl for the intersection and those who are dwelling at place, shadowing, and photographing them. We first have to become familiar in a Goffmanian sense, and that takes time to get used to the role you are playing, which does not quite fit into the role which is intended to be staged from above. Each encounter changed my sensing of what is going on, and therefore questioning the role which I play and which I maybe should play.

There are numerous factors influencing how relations between the researcher and the researched are defined and redefined by the spaces and the social constellations within which they occur. In this context, Doreen Massey points out that "some of these relations will be, as it were, contained within the place; others will stretch beyond it, tying any particular locality into wider relations and processes" (1994: 120). The story is that it is never possible to stand back and have an objective bird's-eye gaze of a situation. According to Bissell (2018), such a view is impossible because we are immersed, embedded, and entangled in worlds that affect us just like we affect them. It is not a high seat on which one takes a seat, we are part of the worlds about which we want to generate knowledge (ibid: 159). Against this backdrop, our ethnographic-inspired approach helps us to reflect on knowledge production. As John Law notes, "[...] ethnography lets us see the relative messiness of practice. It looks behind the official accounts of

method (which are often clean and reassuring) to try to understand the often-ragged ways in which knowledge is produced in research.” (Law 2004: 18-19)

Reflecting upon this should be a fundamental part of the research process and for situating and contextualising the empirical data obtained through it. However, Gillian Rose cautions that a total reflexivity is impossible because there are factors situating us in specific ways that we are unaware of. As a result, Rose advocates, we should “inscribe into our research practices some absences and fallibilities while recognizing that the significance of this does not rest entirely in our own hands” (1997: 319).

## 8

# **Mobilities in situ III: Conceptual field study**

Before I will outline my empirical work at Willy-Brandt-Platz, I have to make a few recommendations on how we should read this chapter. First, this empirical investigation does not claim to be a comprehensive study on how mobilities are enacted at Willy-Brandt-Platz. As I already said, mobilities are by no means one-dimensional phenomena which we can assume as given requirement for human life. Mobilities are in-making, and they are manifold. I argued that the mundane situations are a window through which we can see these enactments from above and from below. Still, aim of this study is not to capture everything (although the ambition is to include every thing in our empirical considerations). During the observation so much material has accumulated that it is almost impossible to present every aspect. So, rather, I will put spotlights on situations which, I hope, illustrate us two things. On the one hand, these situations should put light on the enactments of mobilities from above and below. On the other hand, it should enable us to deal with mobilities in traffic planning beyond modernistic thinking.

Second, I will not differentiate between the result of empirical investigation and the theoretical discussion of these findings. Because I use an abductive approach, empirical findings and theoretical consideration will merge. As I have outlined in my introduction, this paper should not be understood as an empirical study which generates new knowledge about mobilities in situ. Rather, it is more a matter of giving traffic planners (and others) sufficient reasoning on how

this approach can enable us to see phenomena which are currently blind spots in planning processes. For this reason, I will present situations which I have observed at Willy-Brandt-Platz to explain how we can adequately study mobilities in public space empirically. The selection of situations is not based on quantitative counts of their occurrence. Rather, the interaction which I observed in these situations are typical the interaction orders at Willy-Brandt-Platz.

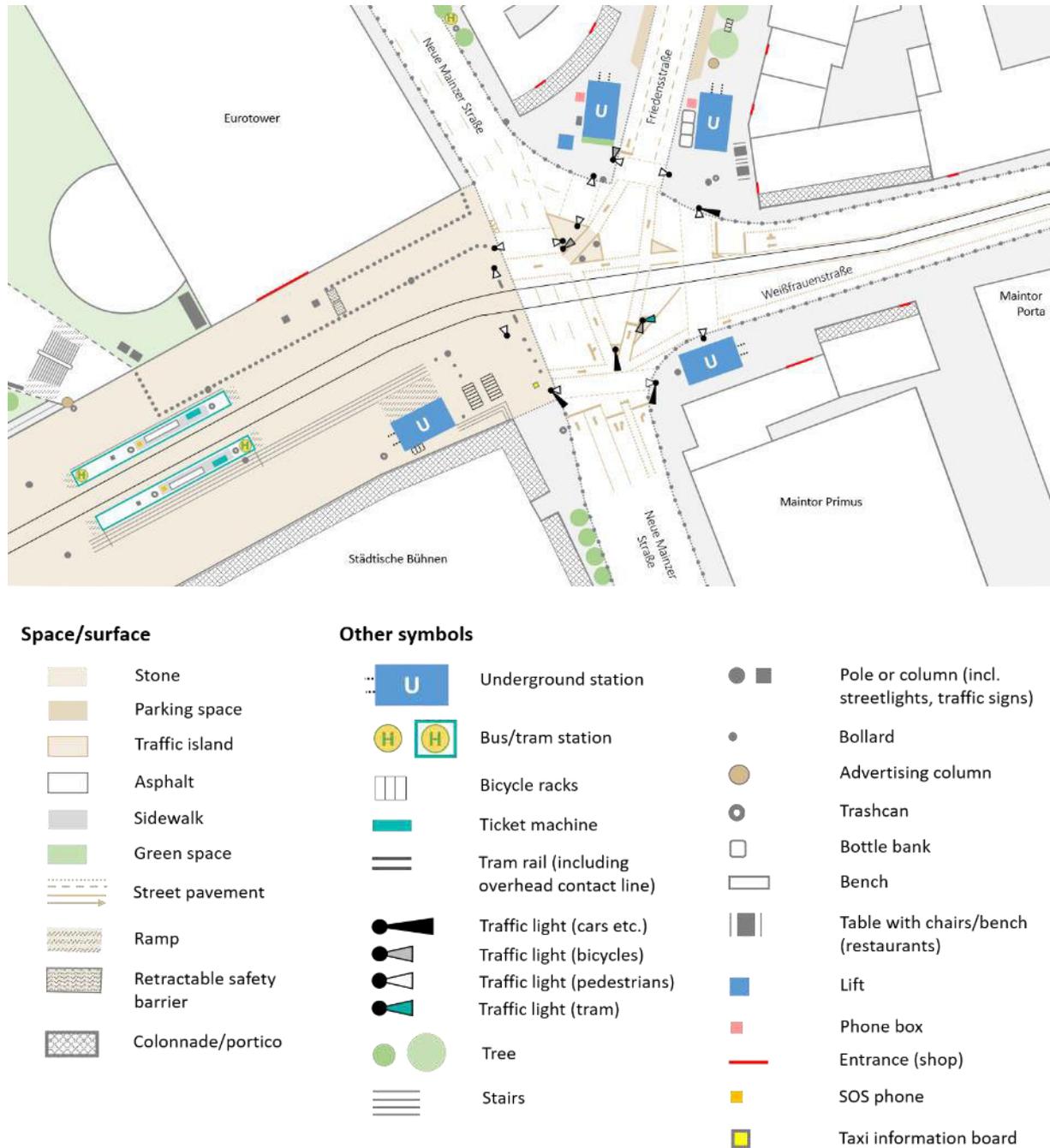
Third, and this takes up the latter, this investigation we should not read as an empirical realisation of a methodical framework or instrument which we can transfer one-to-one in planning practice. In chapter 5, I have outlined that my empirical approach is largely inspired by consideration of Garfinkel and Goffman, and by ethnographic inquiry. This study is a first attempt to make this methodology empirically tangible in using observational methods and mapping. So, I do not raise the claim that this investigation is a methodology. Rather, we should read it as an epistemological and analytical heuristic. My intention is to expand our imaginative space to see what can be and how it could be if we think critical of contemporary approaches and enrich our approach with new ways of thinking mobilities.

But now, let us put aside further considerations and focus on our actual investigation and let us resort to Willy-Brandt-Platz. Willy-Brandt-Platz is a “gearbox full of speeds” (Graham & Marvin 2001); it is a transit space, a hinge between urban neighbourhoods. To reduce some of the complexity, and for the sake of clarity, I will maintain the analytical separation between from above and from below that I made at the beginning of the paper (although these two analytical spheres are entangled).

### **The scene of Willy-Brandt-Platz**

Willy-Brandt-Platz (known as Theaterplatz from 1902 to 1 July 1993) is a square in the south-western city centre of Frankfurt am Main. It is located in Frankfurt's Anlagenring between Untermainanlage and Gallusanlage and is part of the so-called Bankenviertel (engl.: banking district). Besides the Opernplatz, the Willy-Brandt-Platz is one of the large (approx. 7160 sqm) urban squares in the Anlagenring. Seven streets touch Willy-Brandt-Platz: from the east, Friedensstraße leads to the square from Kaiserplatz and Weißfrauenstraße from the old town. Three streets are part of Frankfurt's ring of facilities around the city centre, following the course of the former Frankfurt city fortifications. Neue Mainzer Straße, the main street of the banking district, borders the eastern edge of the square, and Untermainanlage and Gallusanlage border the western edge. Gutleutstraße and Münchener Straße run westwards through the Bahnhofsviertel in the direction of the main railway station. It should be emphasised once again

that in this work we are concentrating on the eastern part of Willy-Brandt-Platz, including Neue Mainzer Straße, Weißfrauenstraße and Friedensstraße (see **Figure 4**). It is used daily by about 14000 vehicles.



**Figure 4:** Willy-Brandt-Platz Basic Map (own visualisation)

Willy-Brandt-Platz is characterised by the municipal opera and theatre house and the Eurotower. Under the square are the underground station Willy-Brandt-Platz and the Theatertunnel. The Eurotower towers above the square with its height of almost 150 metres was built in 1977 for the Bank für Gemeinwirtschaft (BfG). From 1998 until the new building was occupied in

2014, it served as the headquarters of the European Central Bank ECB. Since the end of 2014, the Eurotower has been the headquarters of the Single Banking Supervision Mechanism (SSM) of the ECB. To the southwest, the Städtische Bühnen border on Willy-Brandt-Platz, the municipal theatre operations in Frankfurt am Main. Between 1959 and 1963, both buildings were completely rebuilt according to plans by architects Apel+Beckert. To the southeast are the Primus and Porta properties, which were built as part of the MainTor quarter (also known as The Riverside Financial District) on the former Degussa headquarters since 2012.

Willy-Brandt-Platz is a combined square for pedestrians, individual road transport, tram, underground and buses. The Willy-Brandt-Platz station is a junction in the Frankfurt underground network. The A-line running in north-south direction (lines U1, U2, U3 and U8) and the B-line running in east-west direction (lines U4 and U5) cross here. It was built in 1971 as a transfer hub and was put into operation in its present form in 1974. Entrances to the underground station are located directly at Willy-Brandt-Platz, but also at Kaiserplatz 200 metres away. Entrances are at the street corners Neue Mainzer Straße/Friedensstraße, Friedensstraße/Weißfrauenstraße, Weißfrauenstraße/Neue Mainzer Straße, and at the south-eastern end of Willy-Brandt-Platz next to the bicycle stands. In addition to the four underground entrances, there is a bus stop (Neue Mainzer Straße; night lines n1, n8) and two tram stops with platforms suitable for mobility on the square.

For a long time, the design of Willy-Brandt-Platz was oriented towards the needs of car traffic. Since 1974, motorised individual traffic has largely been relocated to the Theatertunnel running under the square, whose estuaries lie in Gutleutstraße and Weißfrauenstraße. As early as 1985, the city intended to redesign the square, then known as Theaterplatz, according to the competition design of the Drumm und Zahn office from Frankfurt. Under the model of a rail-free city centre, the tram tracks were removed. In 1987, the conversion began with a partial realisation of the southern, lower-lying square directly in front of the Städtische Bühnen. The lower-lying area of the square was divided into large, almost square slab fields, which are related to the support grid of the Städtische Bühnen. A generous group of trees formed the western end of the square. It created a green connection between the previously interrupted ramparts north and south of the theatre square. However, the redesign could not be completed because the city councillors wanted to preserve the old town tram.

In 2004, Willy-Brandt-Platz was redesigned and rearranged as the forecourt of the Städtische Bühnen after the installation of the underground theatre garage. Since the square was redesigned, the Eurotower has been served via Neue Mainzer Straße and from there via the square to the underground car park. This opened the possibility to abandon the square crossing in the northern area. The deconstruction of this street has created a spacious, level and connected square and an open foyer as an extended stage in front of the Städtische Bühnen. The access to the Eurotower and the tram stops were integrated into the concept with mobility-friendly access platforms. Starting at track level, the surface of the northern part of the square, like the existing square, is covered in light-coloured slabs with dark decorative bands. The difference in height to the urban stages is conveyed by an elongated staircase, which could be reduced by one step. Everything forms a closed surface – let us remember the principles of Shared Space.

The northern end of the square is straightened and bordered by a two-stage staircase with elliptical seat backs as skate protection on the seat steps. To the east, descending stairs lead to the adjoining green area. From the seating groups, we can look down on the tram station, where trams run in an east-west and west-east direction (lines 11, 12, 14); the departure times are visible on a digital display attached to a pillar at a height of approximately 2.5 m. In 2005, Willy-Brandt-Platz was made barrier-free so that people with reduced mobility can cross the square and access the platform from east and west. The platforms are equipped with ticket machines and seats in painted metal. North of the tram station, the entrance to the Eurotower car park is separated from Willy-Brandt-Platz by bollards. To the south-east is an entrance and exit of the Willy-Brandt-Platz underground station, where parking facilities for bicycles are located to the south and east. From the underground station, a ramp provides barrier-free access to the tram station.

A lift in the direction of the underground station Willy-Brandt-Platz is at the corner of Neue Mainzer-Straße/Friedensstraße. At the corner of Friedensstraße/Weißfrauenstraße there are old glass containers next to the underground station, and there are still open telephone booths at both corners. Further into Friedensstraße there are parking spaces for motorised vehicles on both sides and bicycle parking facilities on the right-hand side. In addition to restaurants (Kamon Sushi Bar, Die Kuh die lacht, Sultan Saray), there are also other retail shops on Friedensstraße (furniture shop Hedegger, Meiser Home of Living). In Weifrauenstraße and Neue Mainzer Straße there are mainly offices.

Between Willy-Brandt-Platz and the eastern intersection, a clear spatial separation can be seen. At the intersection where Friedensstraße, Weißfrauenstraße and Neue Mainzer Straße meet, the light-coloured slab pavement changes into an asphalt road. This asphalted surface is only interrupted by several islands paved with beige-grey stones and bright white markings; these markings signal pedestrian crossings, as well as lanes for cars and bicycles. Between the buildings and the asphalt there are pavements, separated from the asphalt road by bollards lined at the edges. These rows of bollards are only broken up at pedestrian crossings. There are plenty of traffic signs and traffic lights for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and even tram drivers at the adjacent intersection. The different forms of mobility are spatially separated.

During my observation I have drawn an artificial distinction of Willy-Brandt-Platz in three areas. I made this distinction because Willy-Brandt-Platz is not a homogeneous space. Rather, different planning paradigms are enacted. Near to Neue Mainzer Straße there is a clear cut: on the right space is ordered in a certain manner, there are different surfaces segregating different forms of being mobile, there are also markings, traffic signs, and traffic lights in the scene ordering traffic. On the left, there is one surface for all forms of being mobile, no pavements, traffic signs or lights which should order traffic. Hence, I differentiate between: (1) Theaterplatz, (2) street intersection, and (3) the frontier region. Theaterplatz captures the Shared Space-styled area. Street intersection is the area which is designed like a classic modernist intersection including Neue Mainzer Landstraße, Friedensstraße and Weißfrauenstraße. The frontier region is an analytical constructed stripe between these two larger areas where the different planning paradigms collide, and so different notions of interactional interrelatedness are staged. We have two interactional orders intersecting with each other.

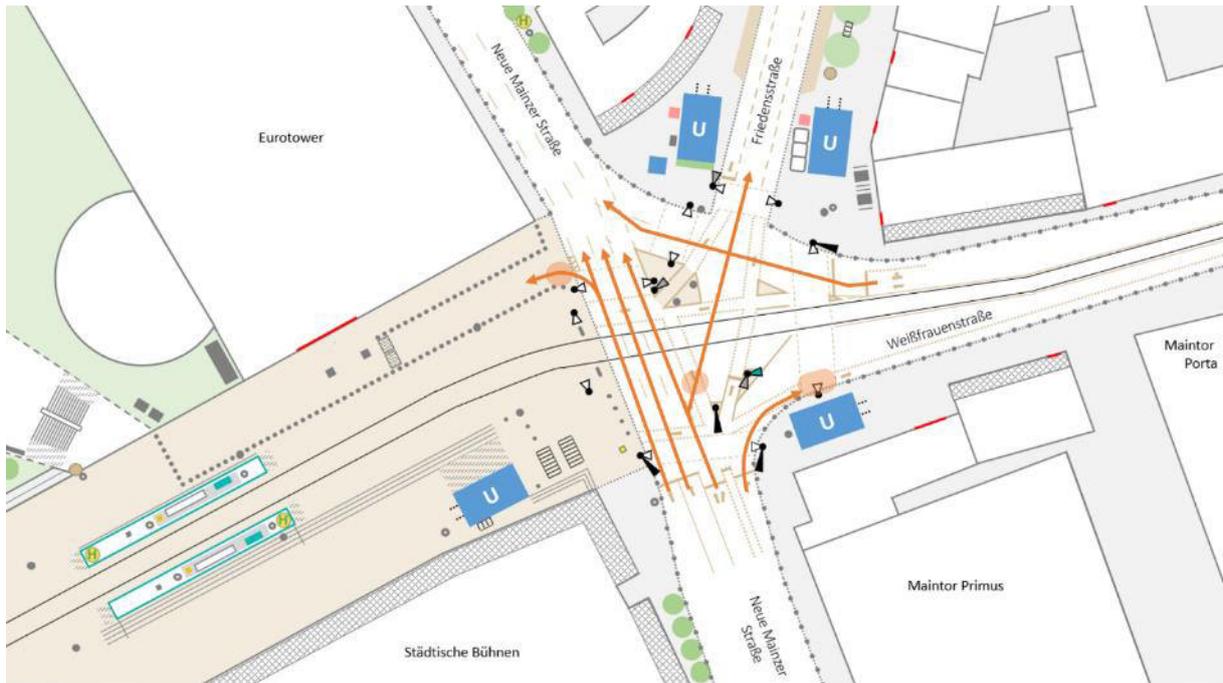
So far, I have kept the *from above-perspective* and illustrated how situations are framed by the scene. Now, we have reached the most detailed level of the zooming and in the last section I will focus on situational interactions. Having the analytical framing in mind, though, I want to zoom in even closer and start to explore the perspective of the mobile interactions taking place at Willy-Brandt-Platz. The *from below-perspective* is the other half of the story to which I now turn. It includes the interactional dynamics and interrelatedness among members. Therefore, the level of situational detail will increase as I will be inferring more analytical and interpretative conclusions. As mentioned, the chosen method of field observation rather than interviews will only let me go that far in stipulating what people's motives, thoughts and rationales are. However, here I want to keep a deliberate distance from people's inner life. This is important, certainly, but if the focus is on the situation as we may all observe and recognise it on the street,

and observe the complex everyday life mobilities, we stay on the concrete, observable and situational level.

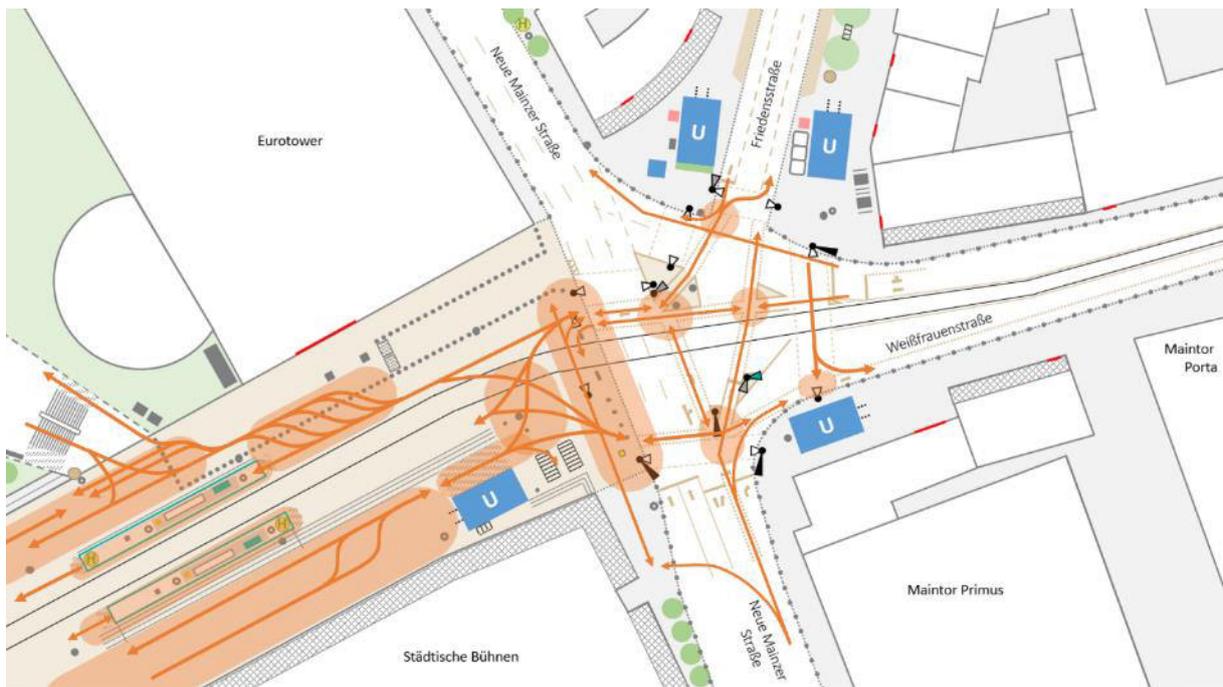
### **Street intersection: more than law-and-order**

Looking at the street intersection, it surely reminds us of the modernist traffic light-coordinated intersection: a mash-up of asphalt roads, sidewalks, sometimes bicycle lanes, pedestrian crossings, a lot of pavements, traffic signs and lights, and so on. There is a massive amount of organisation and regulation. If we drive a car, we can use the major segments of the road; if we are cyclists, then we are restricted to the bicycle lanes on the asphaltic street; if we are on the move as pedestrians, well then, we have the sidewalk.

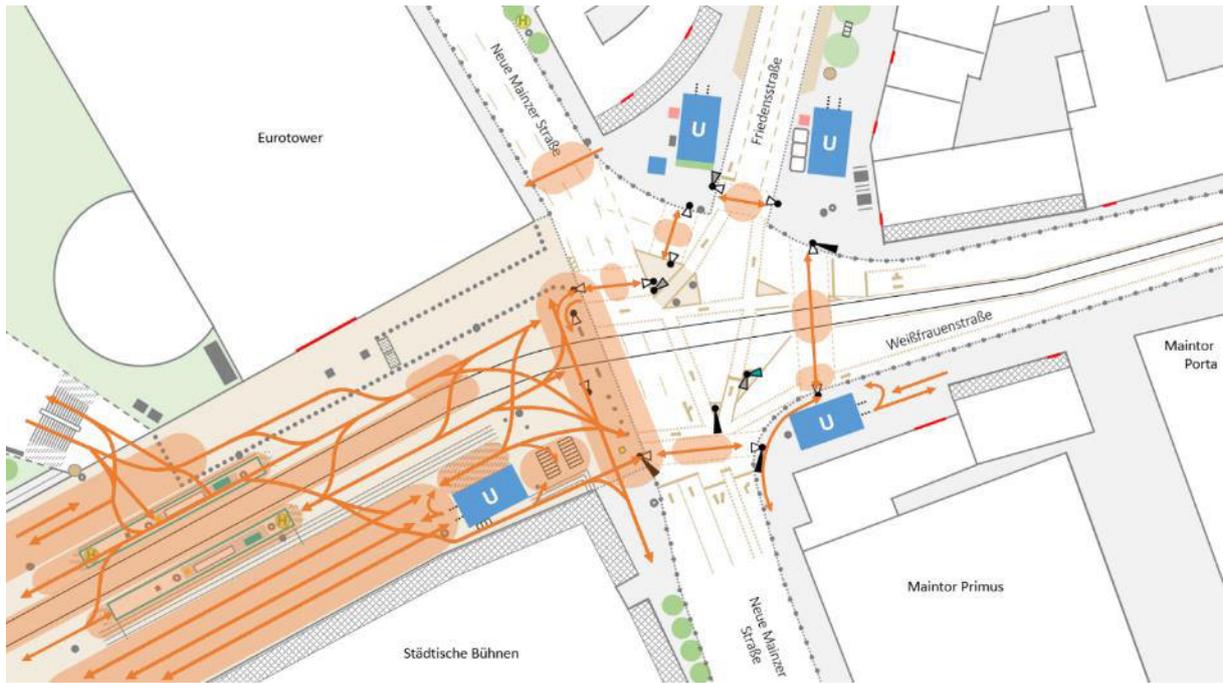
Looking at the frequent sit and pause events, and frequent travel paths at street intersection, we can see the functional segregation. The travel paths of all are determined by the assigned lanes: the asphaltic streets for motorised vehicles, marked bicycle lanes for bicyclists, and the sidewalk for pedestrians. Therefore, it is not astonishing that most pause events are when we wait at a red traffic light. Drivers also stop when they turn right into Weißfrauenstraße and are aware of crossing pedestrians, or when they turn left from Neue Mainzer Straße onto Theaterplatz in direction to the car park of Euro Tower (at Theaterplatz there are no motorised vehicles allowed with the exception of the Euro Tower car park entrance). Bicyclists pause at bicycle racks to lock up or unlock their bicycles. Furthermore, bicyclists wait at pedestrian crossings especially when they cross Weißfrauenstraße in south direction and Neue Mainzer Straße in west direction. Sometimes they move in false direction if they come from Theaterplatz negotiating with bicyclists in the right direction. Also, there are informal crossings from pedestrian at Neue Mainzer Straße and Friedensstraße.



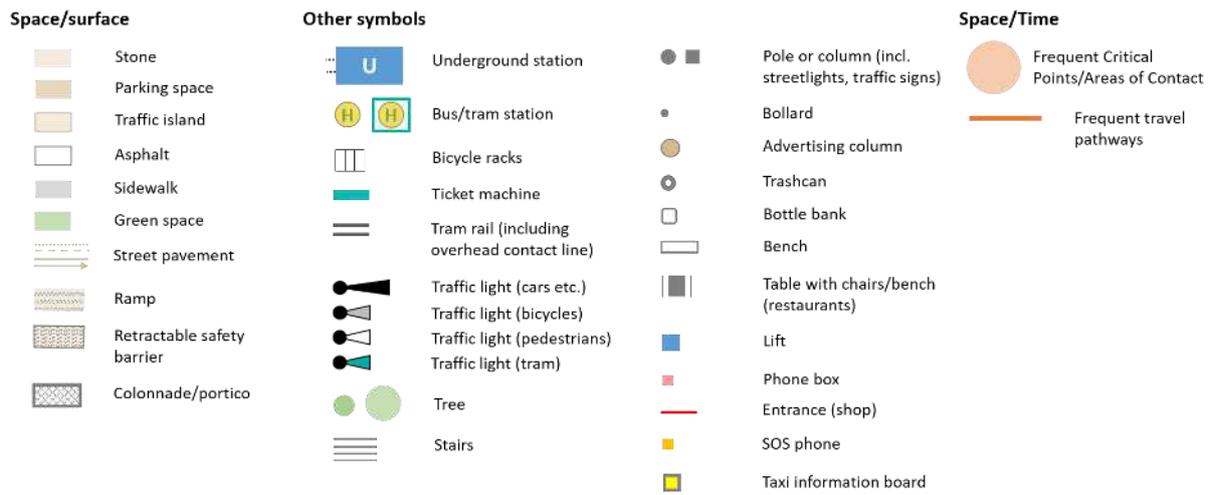
**Figure 5:** Frequent travel paths - cars (own visualisation)



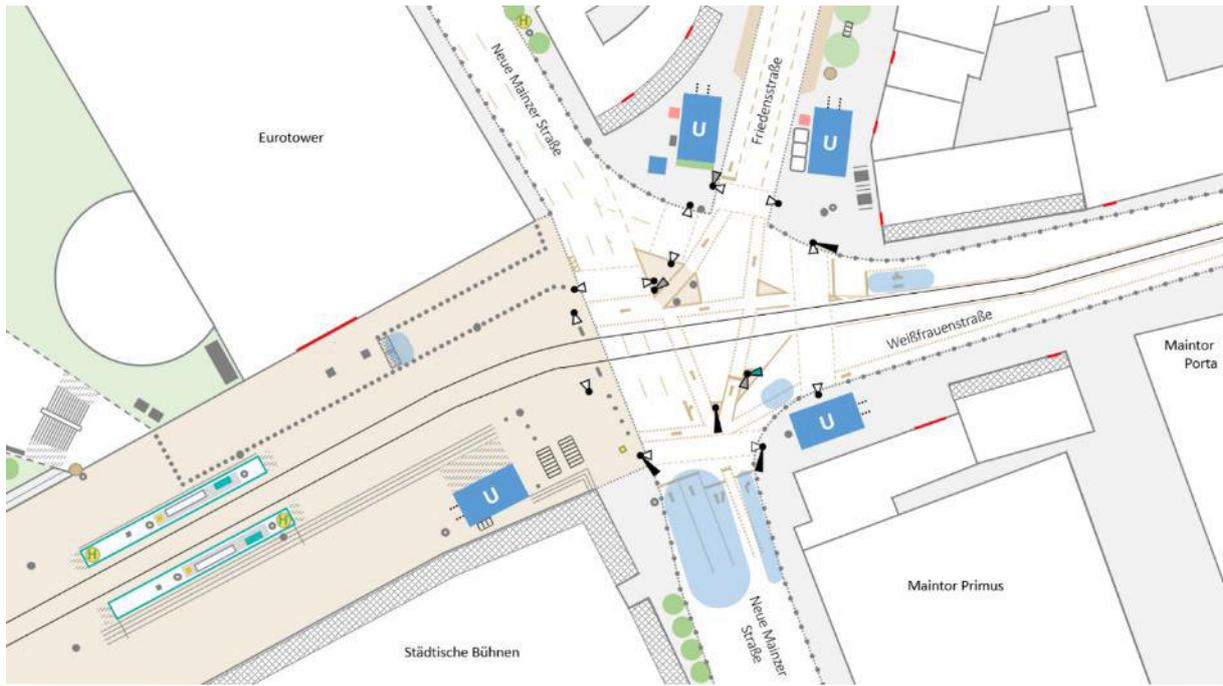
**Figure 6:** Frequent travel paths - bicycles (own visualisation)



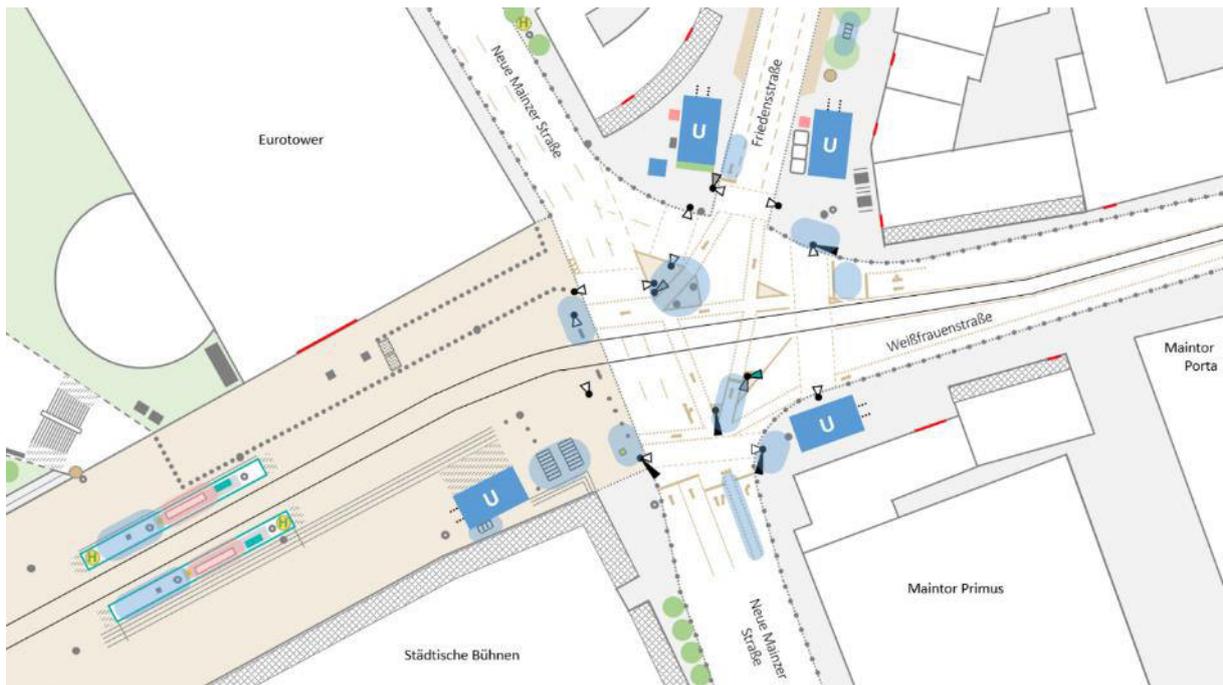
**Figure 7: Frequent travel paths - pedestrians (own visualisation)**



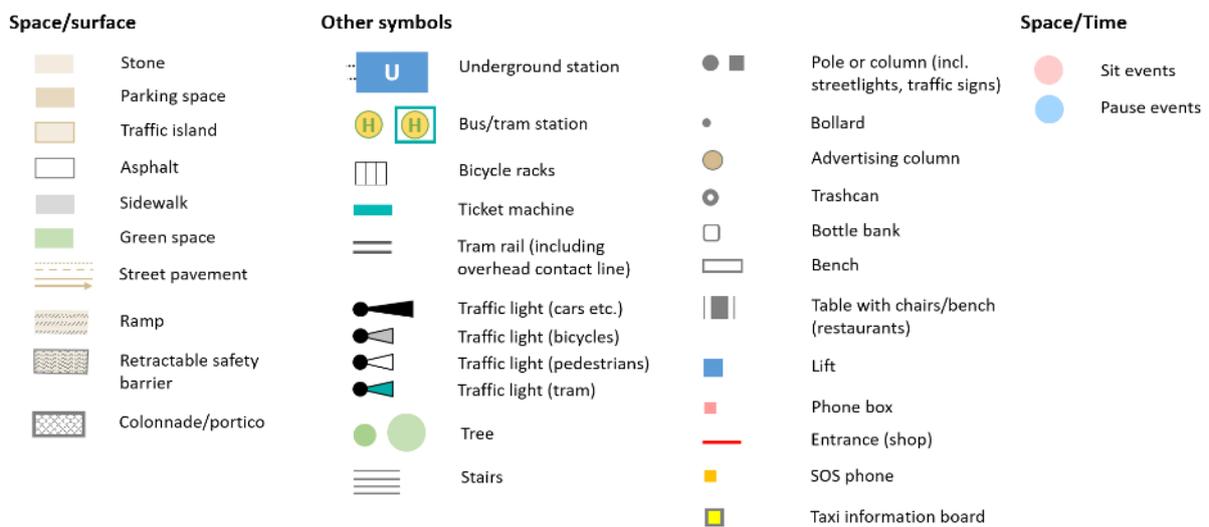
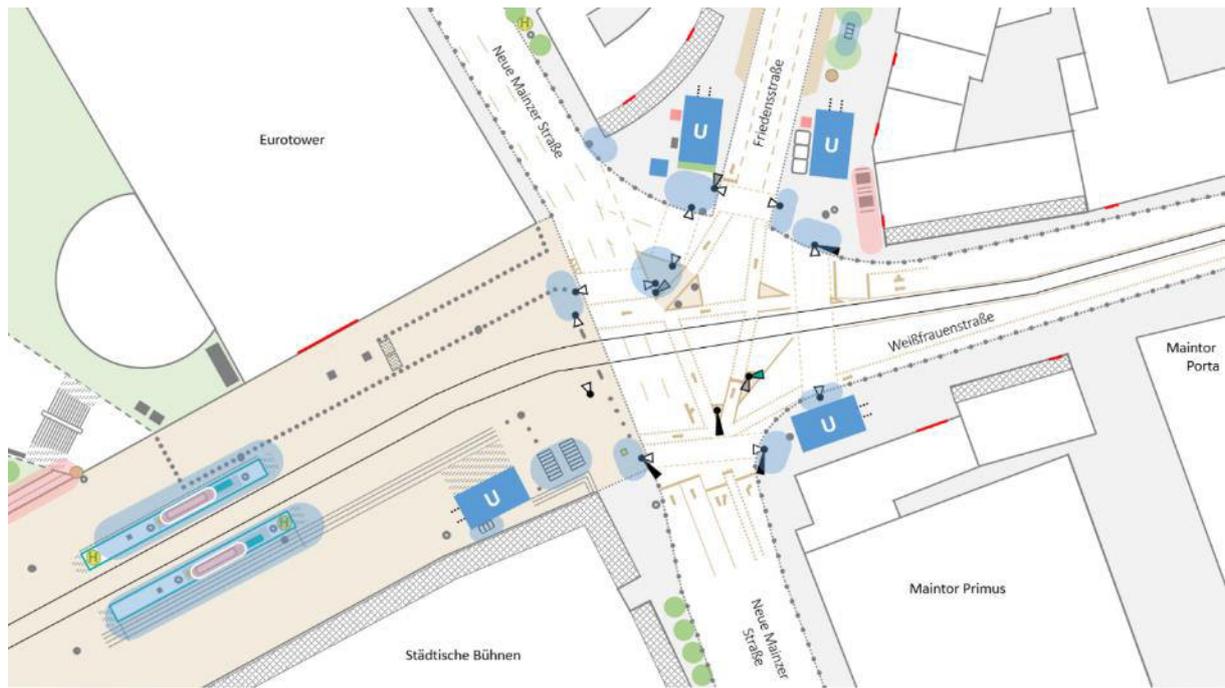
Please note: Frequent travel paths are not based on quantitative surveys; rather, the maps are results of the drawing of people's paths on the basic map during observations.



**Figure 8:** Frequent sit and pause events - cars (own observations)



**Figure 9:** Frequent sit and pause events - bicycles (own observations)

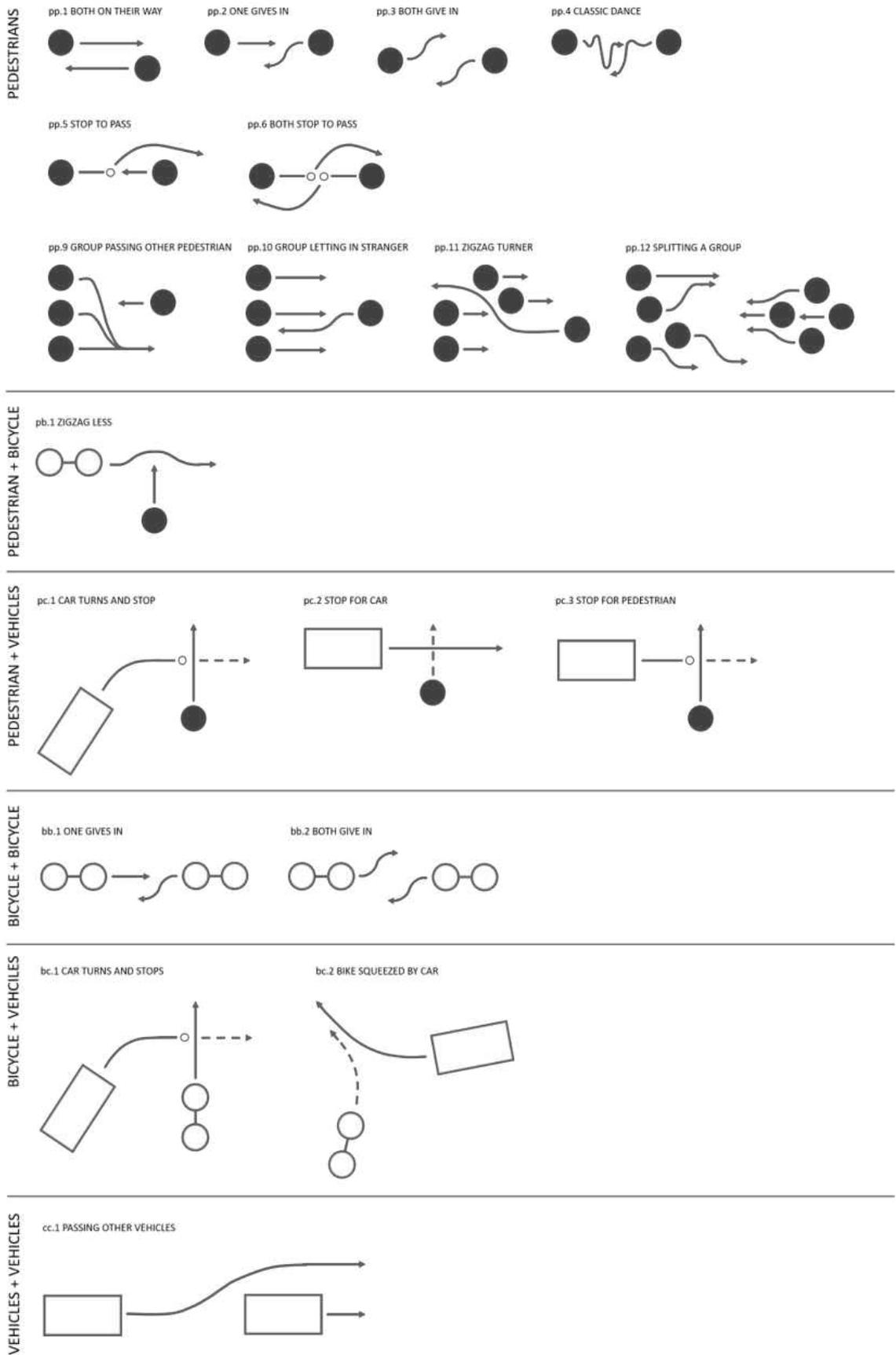


**Figure 10:** Frequent sit and pause events - pedestrians (own observations)

Between different members at different locations, we see also different forms of negotiations (see **Figure 11**; for further description see Observation Catalogue in the Appendix, **Table 8-10: Annex C.1-C.3**). many negotiations I have observed at pedestrian crossings which are not segregated in lanes, so that pedestrians position themselves, and look for their own path, but always in relation to others which are co-present. Looking at street crossings, I have observed especially negotiation techniques which are characterised by meandering movements on the one hand; on the other hand, pedestrians are often on the move in temporary congregations which emerges if they wait at the kerb and face a red traffic light at the opposite. If there is enough space on the sidewalk or traffic island, pedestrians often position themselves so that they can cross the road on a straight path (*pp.1 both on their way*). Also, one or both pedestrians give in

a little and pass each other, often both slow down, and change direction to give more room to the other (*pp.2 one gives in; pp.3 both give in*). Sometimes, I have observed the so-called classic dance where no one gives a clear signal indicating which way they want to go. Often, if there are two or more pedestrians on a side, they build a swarm crossing the street together. The group will come closer together to pass and give more room for the other pedestrian (*pp.9 group passing other pedestrian*) or split and let the pedestrian between them (*pp.10 group letting in stranger*).

Other negotiations were observed when the functional segregation could not hold up, for example, when car drivers turn right into Weißfrauenstraße they are usually aware of pedestrians crossing the street, or when they turn into Friedensstraße they should also be aware of bicyclists which follow Neue Mainzer Straße (*pb.1 zigzag less*). At Weißfrauenstraße the car driver turns and stops, so pedestrians cross the street to avoid a confrontation (Car turns and stops; stop for pedestrian); if they want to turn into Friedensstraße, car drivers also stop to let bicyclists follow their path on Neue Mainzer Straße (Car turns and stops (bicyclists)). The third phenomena where we can observe negotiation is when people behave deviant according to the order intended from above. Examples are bicyclists which move on the bicycle lane in the false direction, and informal crossings especially at Friedensstraße (*bb.1 one gives in; bb.2 both gives in*). Bicyclists both give in a little, slow down, change direction, give in a little to give more room and pass each other (both give in); at Friedensstraße pedestrians stop carefully and stand back either at the sidewalk or on the road, because they do not want to negotiate either and therefore let pass the car (Stop for car). So, although the street intersection is ordered like the modernistic blueprint of the traffic-light coordinated intersection, we have observed a lot of different negotiations between different forms of being mobile. Now, I will look on these negotiations and other forms of interaction in more detail to show us how we interact with others at street intersection.



**Figure 11: Negotiations at Street Intersection**

## **Standardised interaction: Red traffic light**

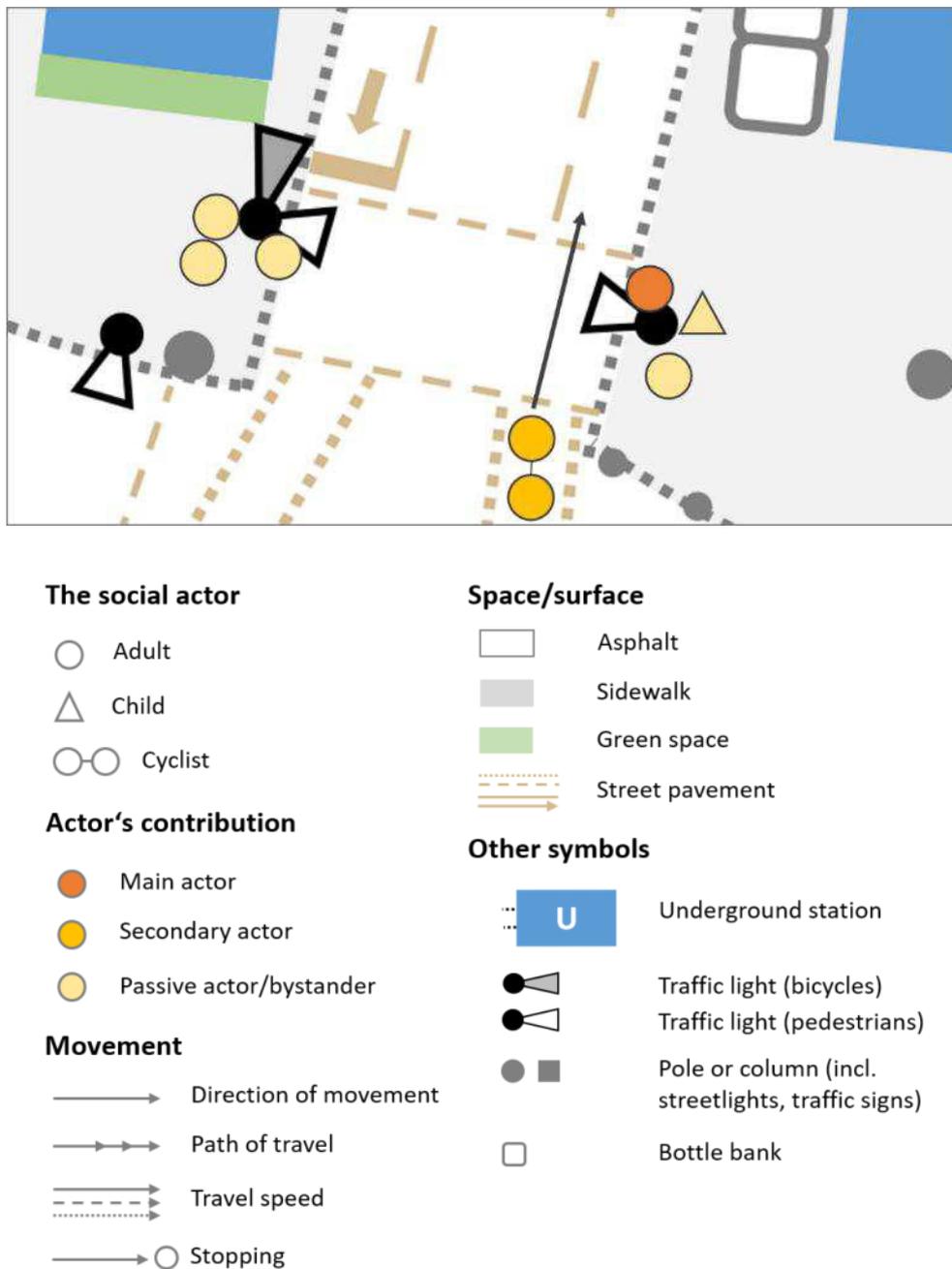
At the street intersection, I have observed a more systematised, external logic of interaction. Forms of being mobile are segregated functionally, and spatiotemporally prioritised by the rhythms of traffic lights, so that interactions among members should reduce to a minimum in both form and content that legislators can anticipate the repertoire of behaviour available for those who might have to interact. There are rules and orders which are commonly known by people. Interactions are more standardised one-way and mediated by non-human members. A good example is the situation at the corner Friedensstraße/Weißfrauenstraße where pedestrians would like to cross Friedensstraße but have to wait because of the red manikin which is signalled by the pedestrian traffic light at the opposite.

People stand along the kerb looking at the opposite red manikin signal of the traffic light, they have eye contact to the pedestrian light. They do not pass over the kerb of the sidewalk; they are standing more or less in a line and keep their distance from each other. A woman presses the yellow box with the elbow which is attached to the traffic light next to her, another few times she presses the yellow box with her elbow. Red letters begin to blink „Bitte warten“. While people wait at the corner, and also at the opposite one, they are involved in many other things: a boy looks on his smart phone, and bites into his sandwich from time to time; the women who press the yellow box stares continuously at the red manikin. When the green manikin appears on the opposite pedestrian traffic light, the most people look towards it, they rarely look in other directions. A cyclist who looks right and left several times, drives over the pedestrian crossing and continues his journey into Friedensstraße.

Waiting at the red traffic light  
[30.05.2020, 12:18, ID 2-07-5]

A red traffic light signals people to stop, and not to trespass the kerb or go on the asphalt street. Before a pedestrian crosses Weißfrauenstraße, she waits (or not) at the red pedestrian traffic light. When it shifts green, she starts moving and crosses the street from one sidewalk to another. What happens here is an interaction, even if she stands seemingly alone next to the traffic light. When we cross the street, we do this not simply alone. There is an array of withs with which we continuously interact. It is not only the green shining manikin onto the traffic light. It is the ground materials, pavements, streetlamps, traffic signs, bollards, bicycle racks, trees, and so on. She interacts with multiple members apparently with the pedestrian traffic light. The traffic light gives off a continuously red light. This sign was intended by planners according to StVO signalling that as pedestrian you should wait at the sidewalk because there is the danger of motorised traffic if you cross the asphaltic street. You are only allowed to cross the street

which belongs to motorised traffic if the traffic light turns green for you. By their socialisation, pedestrians can read and also interpret the given off sign as was indicated by traffic planners.



**Figure 12:** Situation 1: Waiting at a red traffic light (own visualisation)

Of course, remember the differentiation which Goffman draws between to give and to give off a sign. To give a sign means that you will present something to other, you have an intention which you want to give. To give off is what sign you actually present others, it can surely be different to the sign that you have intended to give. But the given off sign is what is accountable to others. A pedestrian wants to cross the street, and she sees there is a traffic light blinking in

different colours which gives off signs to people that they should walk or stay (if you cross the street if the light is red, or if you stay (as a driver) if the light is green, then you commit a traffic violation). It stipulates that pedestrians should use the pavement at the side of the road, while the centre of the road is defined as a roadway exclusively reserved for motorised traffic. If they want to cross the street, they have to ask by giving a sign to the traffic lights, “Hey, I want to cross the street”. The woman recognises a yellow box at the traffic light next to her on which is written „Bitte berühren“ in black letters. She pushes the yellow box, and red letters begin to blink „Bitte warten“. Here, city planners want to give the sign that if we push the button, then the traffic light knows that we want to cross the street, and then it will shift green. Most people can read the sign, but some recognize this little yellow box in an inattentive way. Of course, we can also be civil inattentive towards material non-liveable members, not only to other humans. If we do not push the yellow button, we do not give off the sign to the traffic light that we want to cross the street.

However, traffic lights can only interpret our intention to cross the street if we give off a sign which is accountable for them, for example, a push on the little yellow box. Even if we push to lightly, it is possible that the traffic light cannot be interpret our intention. Here, we can see another quality of traffic lights: the signalling us if they can understand our given signs (or not). If we push the yellow box correctly, red letters begin to blink „Bitte warten“. The traffic light gives off the sign that our sign was accountable for it, so that it could interpret our intention that we want to cross the street. If we do not push the yellow box or push it to lightly, the red letters do not begin to blink. We have not given off a sign which is accountable for it. Therefore, we cannot expect that the traffic light shifts green. Again, we can interpret that the sign which the yellow box give off: there is no blinking „Bitte warten“. We push another time on the yellow box, a few more times and with more muscular power in the hope that the blinking sign „Bitte warten“ appears. Nevertheless, I observed that people push the yellow box, but being unaware whether the blinking letters appear or not because they assume that the traffic light has recognised their given off sign. Like the woman, they wait for a green manikin which do not appear. I have observed that people use different tactics to avoid such situations. When they arrive at the street intersection, they push the yellow box a few more times or with more muscular power. So, pushing-the-yellow-box in a distinct manner and blinking-“Bitte warten are signs which should be accountable for other and signal that these others have understood the signs the others have given off.

Traffic lights became an active member of mediating traffic. We take them for granted as part of the street which guiding us safely and fluently across a busy intersection. But these non-liveable members interacting with us together can only interpret a certain set of signs. This is because interactions at this modernist street intersection are scripted into the street, and so in traffic lights, too. Scripted means that traffic planners have intended a concept of how interaction should work at street intersections. At the street intersection we can see some typical characteristics of the modernist planning paradigm: there are spaces for each means of transport. Sidewalks for pedestrians, asphaltic streets for motorised vehicles and bicycle lanes for cyclists which are only recognisable by street pavements. Inscripted in different separate space is an intended traffic segregation meaning that interaction between different road users should be reduced to a minimum. The assumption is that the more interaction we have between road users the more dangerous and unsafe streets become, and the more inefficient traffic flows. So, also in traffic lights which are able to interpret signs (on the contrary to bare asphaltic surfaces), this concept of interaction is inscripted; and the interaction processes become ritualised.

So, the difference between informal and formal inscripted interactions is that there is the intention of traffic planners to reduce interaction and if the avoidance of interaction is not possible then interaction has to follow certain rules, and processes which have to be staged from above. They are accountable for people dwelling in the place through a semiotic system which is highly regulated, formal and dismantle the complex interactions which are possible. Remembering Bruno Latour's example of ground still and pothole as translation and inscription of legal speed limits. Through scripts, traffic planners can delegate traffic rules intentionally in artefacts and prescribe appropriate forms of interaction. To reduce the repertoire of interaction which could take place, traffic planners use regulation devices like traffic signs and especially traffic lights. Traffic lights, in my opinion, are the crucial elements producing the interaction order at street intersection according to the inscripted principles of traffic flow and safety. Traffic lights prescribe that people should not drive over red lights – the dangers involved if they do so, make it almost impossible. Like ground stills and potholes, traffic lights are omnipresent, permanently reinforced, undermined. They interfere with the formal script of the street intersection using a standardised repertoire to talk to us, and to order traffic temporally. So, through these scripts, traffic planners prescribe appropriate forms of mobilities.

### **Informal interaction: Crossing Friedensstraße, Cars turning right**

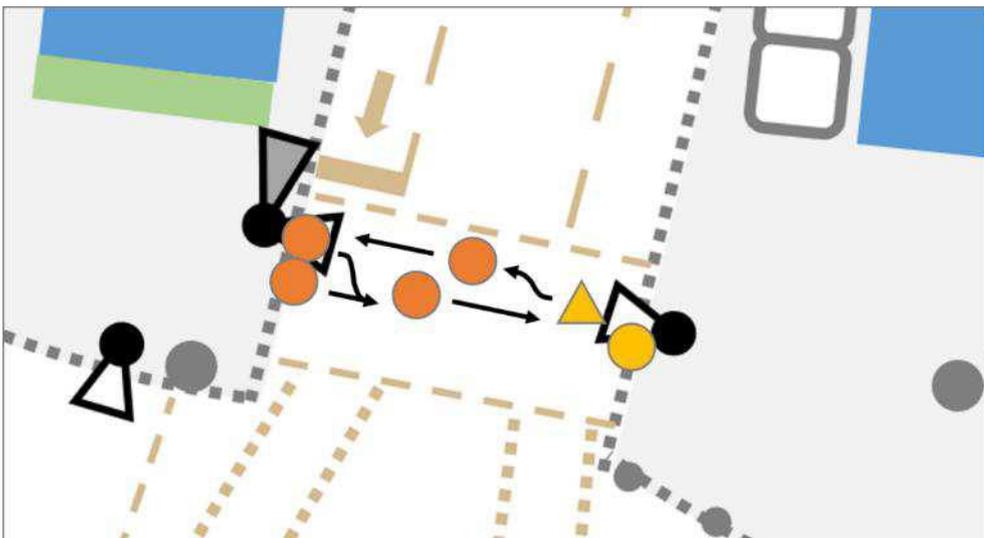
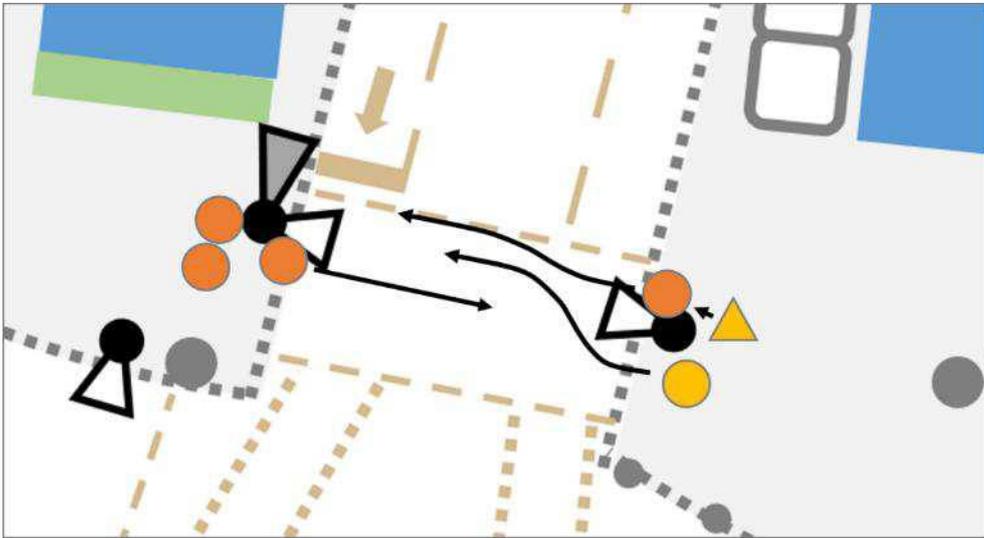
Interaction on street become more standardised and informal signs which could lead to uncertainty and timidity were reduced to a minimum in relation to traffic safety and flow. But of course, there is more than these modernistic planned interactions, also at the street intersection. If we think that everything happens according to the standardised ways of law and order, we will tell a too simplistic story about mobilities in situ. Although social norms or values are seemingly subsidiary to the formalised rules, we cannot indicate that there is no informal interaction at all. For sure, like at the street intersection there are an array of members which actively interact with another, adding their own interpretations. However, we see this phenomenon also on sidewalks, sometimes on bicycles lanes when a bicycle moves in the false direction according to the street marking, at traffic island or street corner if we wait at a red traffic light to cross the street, and especially at pedestrian crossing where we negotiate with others using informal interaction methods. Not every pedestrian has his own lane on the pedestrian crossing. Rather, there is a shared space where they have to coordinate their movements in order to reach the other side. So, also at the street intersection there are little territories where the spatiotemporal segregation cannot be upheld. There are negotiations between people. If we observe these negotiations in detail, we can see interactions challenging the order principles of uniformity, simplicity, and standardisation.

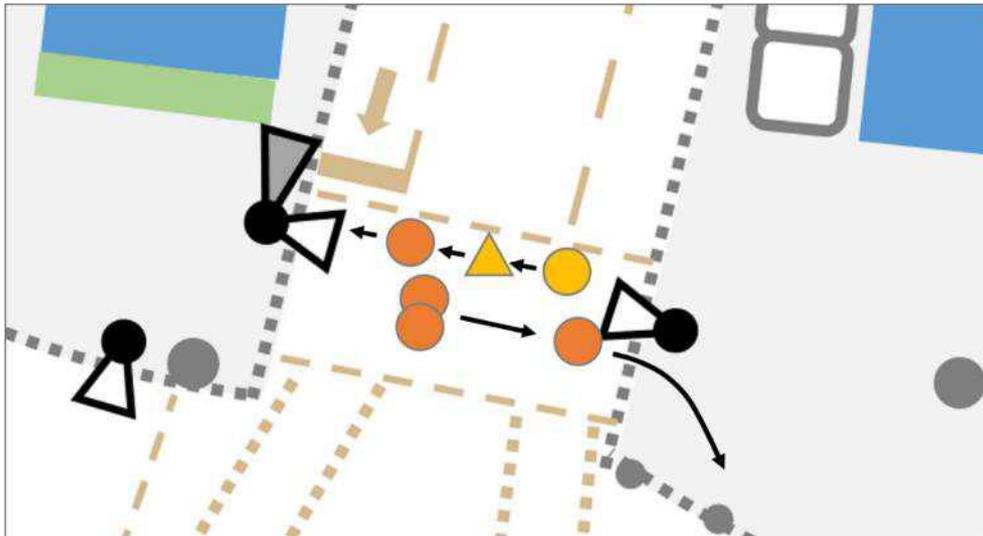
A good example of these negotiations are pedestrians crossing Friedensstraße because we can observe, what we call, deviant behaviour on the one hand. On the other hand, when people cross Friedensstraße, then they are involved in negotiations in motion coordinating their movement in relation to each other.

A dull clacking sound »klockklockklock« (traffic light) is heard and the people standing at the kerb accelerate their bodies touch the asphalt with their shoes and cross the street in direction to the opposite corner and avoid bumping into each other. The woman walks quickly, the boy gets in line behind her and looks continuously on his mobile phone screen. Only one time he looks up and scans the women which makes a small step to the right to give room to a man coming towards her. Also, the boy takes a step to the right and again looks on the screen of his mobile phone. The boy and another man walk behind the woman and cross the street together like a queue entering a bus. While they cross the street together, they negotiate with people crossing the street from the opposite. At the opposite corner a young man and women, and a middle age man begin also to cross the street. The young woman looks to the woman and the boy behind her looking on his mobile phone. She scans them only, there is no eye contact between them. She holds hands with the younger man on her left side pulling him to the right to give the woman and the boy more room

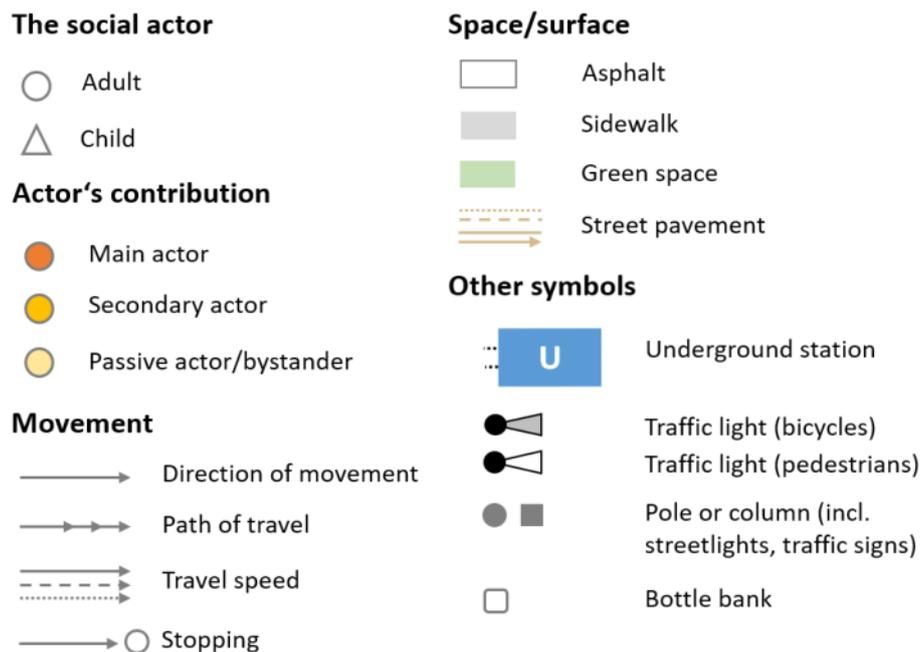
to cross the street. The sound of the traffic light becomes slower »kloock... kloock... «, and the red manikin appears again on the pedestrian traffic light, although the boy is still on the street.

The crossing of Friedensstraße  
[30.05.2020, 12:19, ID 2-08-5]





For better comprehensibility I have made three maps for this situation, each representing a moment in the observation sequence. The time interval between the maps is about two seconds.



**Figure 13:** Situation 2: Crossing Friedensstraße (own visualisation)

Facing a red pedestrian traffic light, we pause and even though for a noticeably short spell of time we become a group of pedestrians waiting for the red light. So, when we walk and then stopping at a red light, or also we wait with other bicyclists on the traffic island in the middle of Neue Mainzer Straße, we are not a lonely individual, we are a temporary congregation, a group of people that typically meet and move alongside each other for a while and when the traffic light turns green can be dissolved very quickly, too (Jensen 2010a). If we cross an intersection, we can keep our attention to the pedestrian light, talk with others in presence, or look

at our smartphone displays, or stay alone or in a crowd (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 176). We see in this situation that not only attention is given to the green manikin appearing on the traffic light. Attention is also given to mobile phones. Texting, looking or talking on mobile phones while we cross a street intersection creates a greater safety risk, to use a modernistic grammar. It is no more exotic to see people on the move at same time as they are engaged in a mobile phone conversation, game, or chat, with some distant but situationally co-present other. The boy is obviously focusing the mobile phone, but it is interesting to notice how he also coordinates his body movements, looks sometimes to the woman in front of him, and follows her movements almost synchronically. It is a kind of mirroring effect between interacting people. Micro-communication studies, for example, has shown how interacting people may mirror each other's bodily gestures like shifting weight to another leg (see Hall 1966; Whyte 1988). What we have observed is that people interpreting each other's body language: Is the other person attentive? Is she looking at me? Where does she go? In a Goffmanian sense we provide an intention display making our own accounts readable for our consociates. Our actions are visibly-rational-for-all-practical-purposes as organizations of commonplace everyday activities. Here again, Goffman's distinction should be mentioned between signs given and given off. If the sign, we intend to give differ from the sign we give off, then the others may not recognise our intention or interpret them in other ways. Similar happens if other misinterpret our signs given off which leading to conflicts like bumping into each other. An example for such situations is the negotiation of classic dance.

Such situations in which interactions are managed informally look differently if cars, buses, or other motorised vehicles are involved. Goffman observed that compared to pedestrian traffic, automobile traffic is more instrumental, linear, competitive, and formally regulated, collisions are more serious, the units in motion less manoeuvrable, and communication between them is more difficult. Conley (2012) argue that these differences depend on the extent to which speed and hard, clumsy shells limit the possibilities for social interaction with others They are equipped only with a reduced repertoire of formal and informal interaction methods which are accountable to others, for example the sounding of the horn, the brake light, turning signal, the head light flasher, but also hand gestures, and few forms of facework.

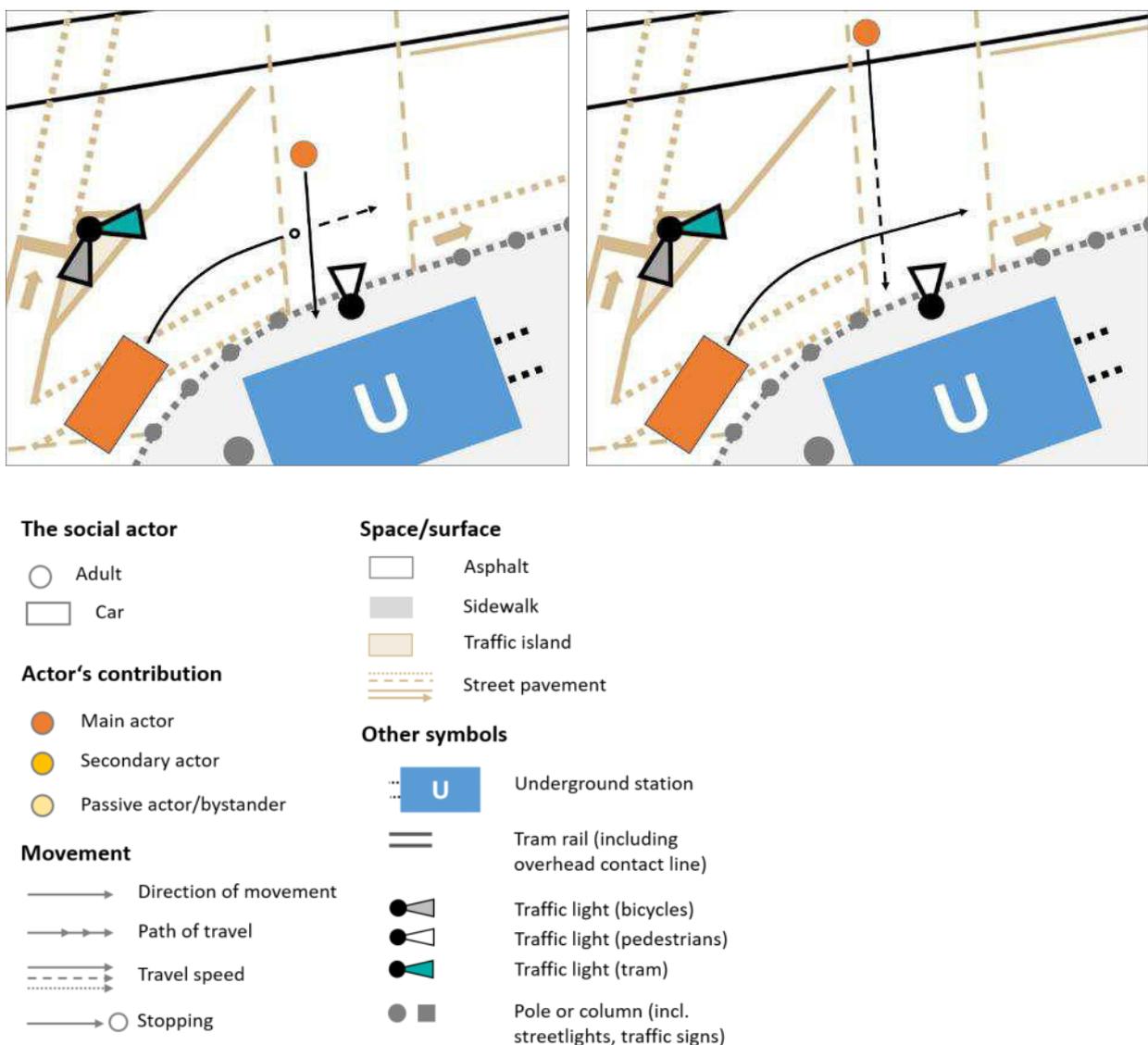
Between pedestrians (or bicycles) and cars or other vehicles no extensive interaction was observed at Willy-Brandt-Platz. One exception is when drivers turn right into Weißfrauenstraße because the spatiotemporal segregation cannot be upheld. Drivers use right turning light of their cars to indicate a right turn into Weißfrauenstraße. They scan the orange-blinking traffic light

which signals them that they have to be aware of crossing pedestrians and sometimes bicyclists, so they should drive with low speed or brake if a pedestrian actually crosses the street. They often hold back if someone is already in the middle of the street and want to cross it. But if a pedestrian has just walked a few steps on the street, some car drivers do not reduce speed; instead, they accelerate and turn right although they commit a traffic offence. They are inattentive to the sign, the orange-blinking traffic light, which is given off from above; they pretend not to have seen the sign. However, if drivers are attentive to the sign, the pedestrian recognises the signs which is given off by the car driver (right turning light blinking, turning right, move at slow speed, brake slightly) as a car-waiting-for-her. Although she looks in the direction to the car driver, there is no eye contact between them, only identifying scans, unfocussed monitoring, and more or less focused looks. But people often turn their heads to try to catch the eye of the car driver and thereby tell them that they are pedestrians-crossing-the-street (see *Figure 14*).

This scarcity of informal interactions by the car driver – the pedestrians look focussed on the car – is described with the windshield perspective: when being in a car we are constrained in giving of signs accountable for others, but also in recognising signs which are given off by others. At a speed of 50 km/h, as car driver, we cannot see if someone does facework. Much of informal interaction is invisible to us. Also, if we want to smile to a pedestrian, she is not able to recognise our efforts. We are constrained, and all others, too. This observation is crucial for understanding why street intersections look as we know. Because, how interactions are scripted depends on what interactions car drivers are able to accomplish, and this is why the street intersection is spatiotemporally assembled from above like it is, on the base of signs which are accountable for car drivers driving with a speed 50 km/h through the city.

But the street intersection, we could not only assume as a powerful staging of a certain order from above. Rather, order is produced also from below. At a street intersection, glances are exchanged, even when the conversation continues to see if someone is paying attention to the problem of crossing the streets. This person arriving at the street corner is not only waiting for the green light or not, but she is also signalling to others whether or not he or she is the sort of person who waits and in so signalling is either contesting or following the interaction processes which are inscribed in that place. We have also script to play roles to present ourselves in public space. Our own habitus as well as wider structures influence how we would come to a corner and how we would treat the problem of crossing the street. Do we wait for the green light or do when the road is free of traffic? Do we worry about whether others are watching us?

Do we even notice? Our liveable consociates maybe can interpret that we want to cross because we stand at the sidewalk next to a traffic light, our body in direction to the traffic light on the opposite street corner, and we look to the left and to the right alternately observing if there was a car, a bus or other vehicles are coming, which signalise to us that we can cross the street, although the pedestrian traffic light is still red. Another example is when a traffic light turns green, but a car driver is inattentive and does not recognise the green light as a request to move on. Drivers of cars standing behind the inattentive driver use their horn or their headlamp flasher, and hand gestures and face work. These substitute methods should signal the inattentive driver on the one hand that she should become attentive to what is going on, on the street in front of her, and that she should move on. On the other hand, they signalise that the inattentive driver behaves deviant towards the order which is inscripted.



**Figure 14:** Situation 3: Turning left into Weißfrauenstraße (own visualisation)

But traffic planners do not only stage a certain order from above. What traffic planners do also, is a prescription of members knowledge. First then, there is a lot of knowledge concerning how we should act. It is largely about social competence, but social in a certain sense. We have to learn about rules and norms, and quite substantially too; for many, I imagine, learning to drive in a driving-school may well be facing the most extensive series of interrelated rules during our entire lifetime. Learning which those rules are, recognising their relevance in a certain situation (but not in others), and applying them while we drive a vehicle, or bicycle, or also as pedestrian are established as the firm foundation for social interaction. Without underestimating what it takes, in a perhaps stressful situation with many other humans and non-humans, to learn to recognise when a method to act is applicable or not, it denotes patterns of harmonious interaction; for example, a prevailing social order, a composition of rules governing behaviour, a procedure for obtaining an objective, everything that pursues orderliness which is organised methodologically.

So, we see there is not always conformity to an order staged from above. If someone behave deviant, pedestrians and bicyclist can act out of informal scripts. For example, if a bicyclist coming from Theaterplatz cross Neue Mainzer Straße at the northern crossing, she travels in the false direction according to the bicycle marking on the asphalt ground. Bicyclists travelling in the right direction look at her, noticing her, and negotiate with her: they are giving room, and she is travelling more slowly meandering through them. So, situations which seem obviously dangerous to traffic planners in terms of the modernist segregation principle, can be managed by informal scripts. We can even assume that deviant behaviour has to be managed by informal scripts because our non-human consociates are not able to recognise that someone behave against what traffic planners intended: the sign are not accountable for them.

So, although the street intersection is spatiotemporally segregated, street traffic would be a shamble without informal interaction methods which can interpreted by others. The workability of orders facilitating traffic flow are based also upon what Goffman terms externalization or body gloss. It refers to the use of body gestures to make otherwise unavailable facts about his situation gleanable. Whether we are waiting at traffic lights, looking on the screen of our mobile phones or just trying to be nearly invisible, we take up postures, gestures, make movements or are expressively still. Whatever we do (or whatever we do not do), we signal something to those others which are in presence. When we go about our actions, we do them so that (or in ways that) others can see what we are doing. The modernist street intersection is more than law-and-order, it is, in fact, an amalgam of standardised and little informal interactions, we often taken-

for-granted, and are therefore almost invisible for us although they are important for the interaction order, and in a wider sense for understanding the social and the street at the street intersection.

### **Theaterplatz: an orderly disorder**

The scene of the street intersection discussed here draw from various ways of thinking about mode coexistence or mode separation (Carmona et al. 2010; Gehl 2010; Jacobs 1961; Shane 2011). From the doctrines of modernist functional planning, we know mode separation is necessary. More recent planning and design philosophies such as Shared Space challenge the principle of segregation; and if we look on Theaterplatz, we see a rather different scene: All traditional traffic-regulation stuff like traffic light and signs, marked pedestrian crossings and so on is reduced to a minimum; there are no segregated lanes, only a pedestrian traffic light for crossing tram rails near to Neue Mainzer Straße has been left over making one continuous surface for all modes of traffic. Only the tram station standing out like an island. The one-level surface is covered with light-coloured slabs with dark decorative bands which does not segregate different forms of being mobile. There is an open stage for all people.

I should mention that Theaterplatz at which all traffic regulation was removed is unfortunately cheated. If we observe the place from our viewpoint, through our eyes, we only see one surface with different forms of being mobile, in which cars are even not allowed. But if we move a few steps in Weißfrauenstraße, we realise that the cars that would actually drive across Willy-Brandt-Platz are guided one floor lower through the Theatre Tunnel. An illusion entirely in line with modernist traffic planning. This do not mean that at Willy-Brandt-Platz informal social scripts are absent, I saw so many interactions that I cannot describe them all in detail. What it means is that drivers are excluded from these non-standardised and informal interactions with others. So, we use vertical segregation to maintain traffic flow. It is gradually reframed in context of modernist traffic planning culture, of safety and transport efficiency which is still hegemonial in Frankfurt.

However, if there are no traffic lights, or signs, no segregated lanes, we should look closely how people act. Looking on the mappings again (see *Figure 5-10*), we see some notably differences in comparison to the street intersection. First, there are less pause events, but more sit events as at the street intersection. I have observed pause events only at bicycle racks, and near the tram platform; people sat especially on the benches on the tram platform or on the stone benches next to the stairs in north direction. In contrast to the street intersection, the sit

and pause events depend on two different temporalities, the time of day and the timetables of the tram station. In the morning, many people move through Willy-Brandt-Platz on their way. Seldom we see a person or two may be sitting down briefly on the terraced benches at Theaterplatz or at the tram station. During the lunch hour, there are more people alone or in groups sitting on the terraced benches which simultaneously chat and eat. There is less traffic than in the morning hours, more sit and pause events. Backpacks are replaced by lunch boxes and shopping bags. More groups at the place: colleagues, couples, and friends. Communication also increases. In the afternoon, we can observe a similar situation as in the morning: people who leave their workplaces are on their way home. But there are more people sitting on the terraced stone benches. On another scale, the timetables at the tram platform have a profound impact on the temporal order of mobilities. The tram platform is attracting and pushing people away as if it were the epicentre of a magnetic field of gravity. Like traffic lights at the street intersection, the temporalities of tram station are staged from above, but not with the intention to order mobilities in situ. It is more about coordinating timetables throughout the public transport network of the city of Frankfurt. Nevertheless, when a tram arrives or departs, a new situation emerges in which different interactions are possible. For example, if a tram arrives at Theaterplatz, then people flow in and out, and spread in all directions, and negotiate with others which are at place. It is a pulse, a rhythm of ebb and flow.

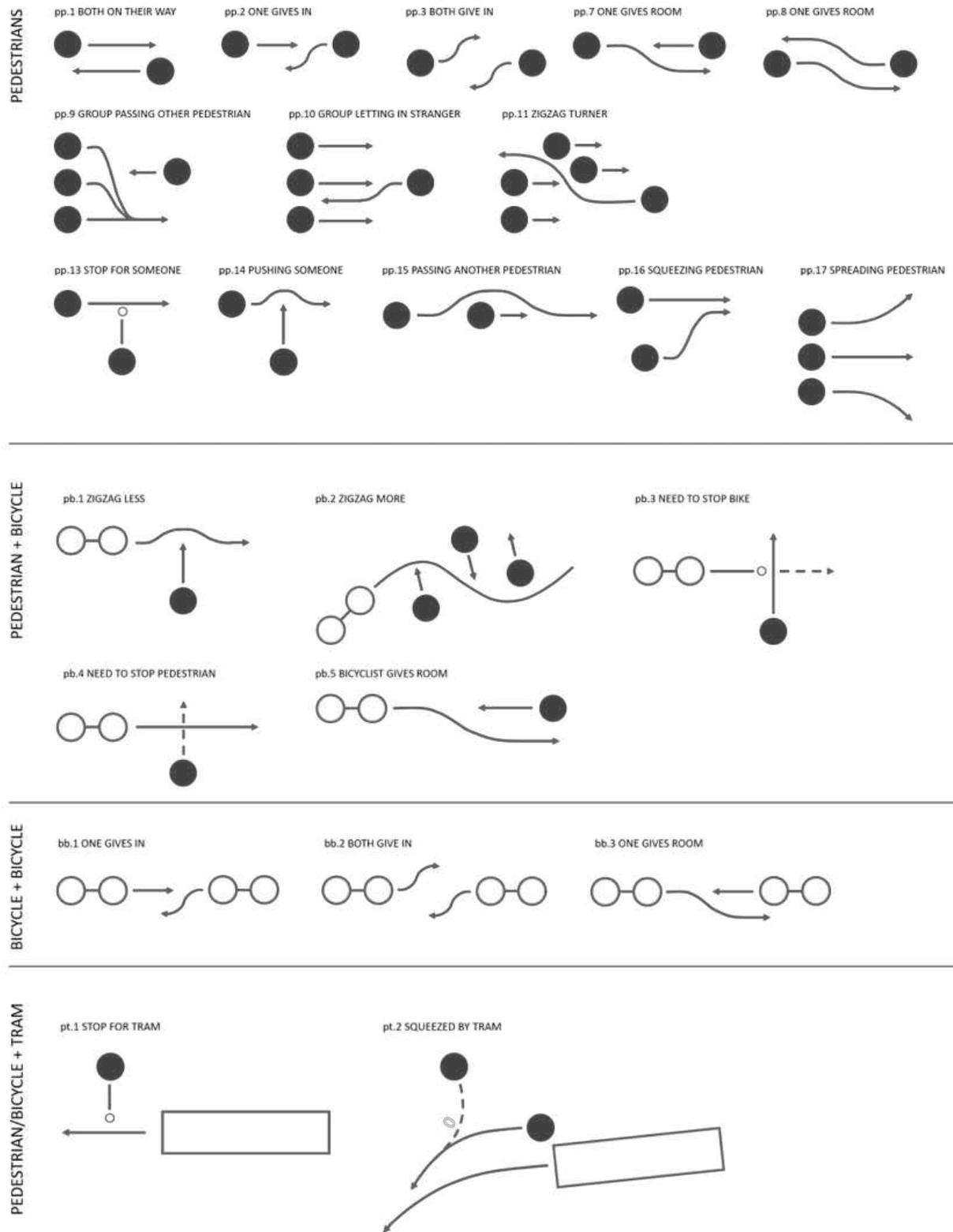
Second, paths are more heterogeneous and there more negotiations in motion takes place. Of course, there is no functional segregation between pedestrians and bicycles, and other forms of being mobile (only car driver are separated vertically and can drive fluent through the Theater-tunnel under Willy-Brandt-Platz). But there is a segregating impact of tram rails and especially tram platform. There are especially crossings when the surface is one-level; at tram station the surface is slightly elevated, there is a kerb similar to sidewalks so that it is difficult for bicyclist to cross he rails. For pedestrians, the elevated platform is less constraining because they can take a step down and cross the rails if no tram is arriving or departing. Also, by the segregating impact of tram station and rails many people moves in west-east direction and vice versa. At the north bicyclists and pedestrians move through the bollards, sometimes bicyclists ride over the tram platform if there are not many people on it. At the south, the main route of pedestrians and bicycles is over the ramp and then move parallel with the tram rails, or vice versa. The crucial phenomena, we see on the mappings (and which we have observed in situ), is that at Theaterplatz there are more intersecting paths and negotiations as on the street intersection at which people are restricted to the paths which are materially staged from above. Instead,

Theaterplatz must be understood both as a space of coexistence as well as it has the potential for offering new interactions opportunities in comparison to the street intersections. They keep eye contact, use gestures, and so on giving signs to each other. Conventional regulation of traffic from above is compensated by informal social scripts from below. Of course, we have observed more informal and different situational interactions as at the street intersection which are manifold.

However, if we look on the negotiations at Theaterplatz, then we recognize that there are not any certain locations where negotiation should and could take place (see *Figure 15*). Because of the one level surface we can observe negotiations nearly all over Theaterplatz. In comparison to the street intersection, I have observed more parallel, and especially orthogonal negotiations which happen next to the tram platform in particular (pp. 13-17). I have noted that the rhythms of Theaterplatz are shaped by the arriving and departing of tram when people spread in all directions negotiating with others which are at place. Pedestrians simply stop for each other, to figure out which way to go and to pass and avoid a confrontation (*pp.13 top for someone*); often they stand back on the tram platform waiting for a free passage. Pedestrians moving from east to west or vice versa along the platform often follow their paths and make a small curve to get around the other pedestrian who has just got off the tram (*pp.14 pushing someone*). If the pedestrians (also bicyclists) do not analyse the situation there or are unaware of it, there is a potential confrontation, maybe perhaps a need to stop to avoid bumping into each other; often an agreement is reached often with eye contact, one or both stop and then negotiate carefully (*pb.3 need to stop bike; pb.4 need to stop pedestrian*). Before the tram arrives at the platform, we can observe negotiations between the tram, and pedestrians/bicycles (*pt.1; pt.2*). Whereas pedestrians often stop for the tram and wait until the tram has passed (*pt.1 stopping for the tram*); bicyclist evaluate the situation, and sometimes getting squeezed by the tram (*pt.2 squeezing (tram)*).

There are also frontal negotiations especially between pedestrians and pedestrians, and bicyclist and bicyclists. These frontal negotiations appear when people move in west-east direction or vice versa. In comparison to the negotiation at the pedestrian crossings of the street intersection, these negotiations are characterised by less meandering movements and an early recognition of the situation; I have observed this in negotiations between pedestrians, bicycles, and also between pedestrians and bicycles. One gives more room to the other, but they do usually not slow down (*bb.3 one gives room*); only next to the tram station they slow down and meandering more (*bb.1 one gives in; bb.2 both give in*). For example, cyclist often move with moderate or

at higher speed across Theaterplatz, make larger curves to get around several pedestrians (or if there are many pedestrians, they zigzag in and out between other pedestrians) and move without slowing down (*pb.1 zigzag less; pb.2 zigzag more*). So, in comparison to the street intersection, negotiations at Theaterplatz are more heterogeneous and can appear at every place. However, I have observed negotiations especially near tram station, the tram rails, and the bollards; because there are more people, negotiations are more meandering, with low speed and stop events. At areas, where we have observed east-west movements, negotiations were at constant speed and less meandering.



**Figure 15:** Negotiations at Theaterplatz

Of course, I have observed more informal and different situational interactions at Theaterplatz as at the street intersection. Although these interactions are manifold, I want to present three

that are distinctively illustrative for interactions at Theaterplatz: waiting for the tram, manoeuvring around the bollards, and moving from east to west.

### **Waiting for the tram**

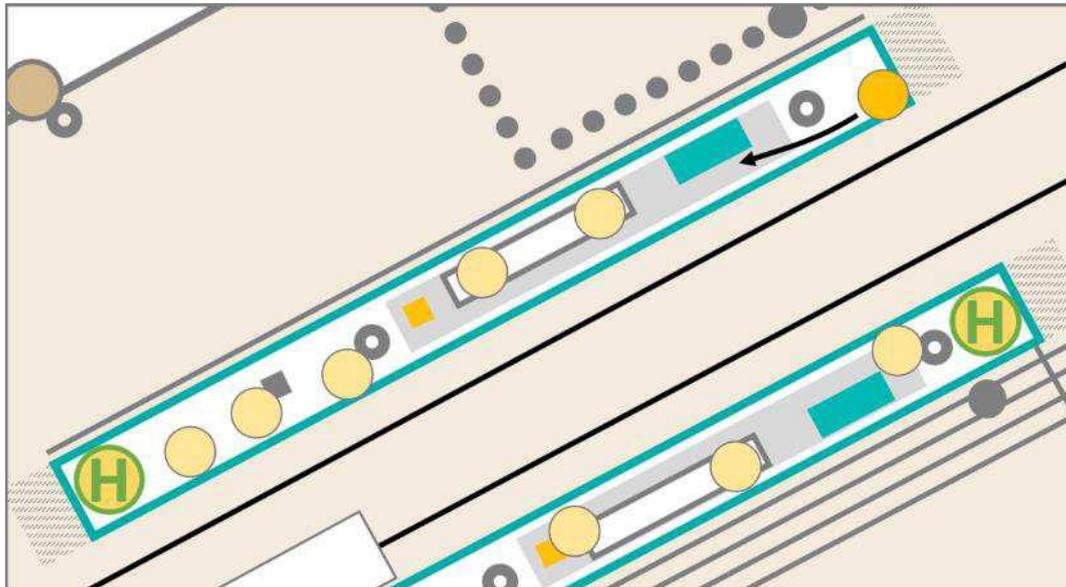
From time to time, we might experience the arriving of a tram. With the arrival of such temporary members has observable consequences for movement patterns and interactions. We might speak of temporary and permanent members and people themselves might, of course, also be seen as temporary members. At Theaterplatz the presence of the tram station has a permanent impact on the scene; it can be recognised as the central point of interaction at Theaterplatz. Seen from this perspective, the tram station is an island of occasions, gatherings, and of interactions. At tram platform, interactions are manifold, including the various uses of the platform as a waiting area, lounge, and transit route.

People sit on the benches, look up and let their gaze wander over Willy-Brandt-Platz, and watch what other people are doing, especially on the platform opposite. From time to time, they look at the display of the destination board to see when their tram is coming. Others have to stand when the benches are already taken, rummage around in their backpacks and bags, drink and eat something. A homeless person looks into the trash bin, and after a prudent look, he tries to fish something out. Another man reads the FAZ carefully, and tries to leaf through it, another takes a book out of her backpack. Others are on the phone, strolling on the spot, swaying a little, letting their gaze wander into the air or onto the ground, but rarely forward. A woman manoeuvres through the people on the train platform towards the ticket machine, gets a ticket and checks the timetable to see which train she has to take. Others register the train when they hear it, ring its bell »kliiinggggg« or when it arrives. Some people do not wait for the train but use the benches as seating.

Waiting for the tram  
[25.05.2020, 09:51, ID 1-03-2]

People let their gaze wander over the square, look the timetable, on their mobile phone displays; they read a book or a newspaper, call someone and stroll around in circles; they eat or drink, look for something in their backpack, or stew it; or they buy a ticket. So, while people wait for the tram, people are involved in multiple other interactions. Remembering Goffman's concept of activity involvement. He uses term to indicate the specific stances taken by a person toward any current activity or activities. He differentiates in dominant, subordinate, main and side involvement. Waiting for the tram might be the dominant involvement of the most people on the tram platform; reading a book, a newspaper, or calling with someone is the subordinate involvement taking place in a hiatus of waiting for the tram, whereas the main involvement might be reading the newspaper and turning the pages. Simultaneously, we glance around from time to

time and look at other people on the platform. Every social occasion is made up of these multiple and complex involvements.



**The social actor**

- Adult
- ▭ Tram

**Actor's contribution**

- Main actor
- Secondary actor
- Passive actor/bystander

**Movement**

- Direction of movement
- Path of travel
- Travel speed
- Stopping

**Space/surface**

- Stone
- ▨ Ramp

**Other symbols**

- (H) Bus/tram station
- ▭ (H) Ticket machine
- ▬▬▬ Tram rail (including overhead contact line)
- ▬▬▬ Stairs
- (grey) Pole or column (incl. streetlights, traffic signs)
- (small) Bollard
- (brown) Advertising column
- (grey) Trashcan
- ▭ (white) Bench
- (yellow) SOS phone

**Figure 16:** Situation 4: Waiting at the tram platform (own visualisation)

So, when we stand on the tram platform, we stand in such a way that we can be seen to be waiting for the tram while reading the FAZ newspaper. People who see us recognise what we

are doing, according to where and how we are standing. We give off signs which are accountable by others as I outlined the workability of this order-productive performances are based on Goffman's semiotic concept of body gloss. We use gestures whatever we do to signal something to those others which are in presence, so that those can see what we are doing and recognise our actions as the actions they are. If a tram arrives, it signals people waiting on the platform and people which might cross the tram rails that it is arriving not only by their physical position. By the sound of a ringing bell, people are woken up to keep their attention to the arriving tram. We see here a visual and acoustic orientation of people's attention. Here, I think, we can see how Goffman's concept of civil inattention works in situ. We show that we recognize the other's presence. We are not seeking a sustained interaction with someone (even avoiding it) and have therefore no hostile intention; we are only glancing at others and then keep our attention back on reading the book or looking on our mobile phones, or whatever. What seems to be involved is that we give another enough visual notice that we appreciate that the other is present, while at the next moment we withdraw our attention from the other. Trough reading a book, looking on our mobile phone screens or on the timetable, buying a ticket, or let our gaze wander over the place, we give off certain signs to make us inaccessible to others creating what Goffman (1963) calls involvement shields: Others look at us acknowledging that they see us reading a book and so they will not invade our territory. Therefore, it makes sense to stress co-presence in terms of involvement and attention, and not only in terms of physical proximity.

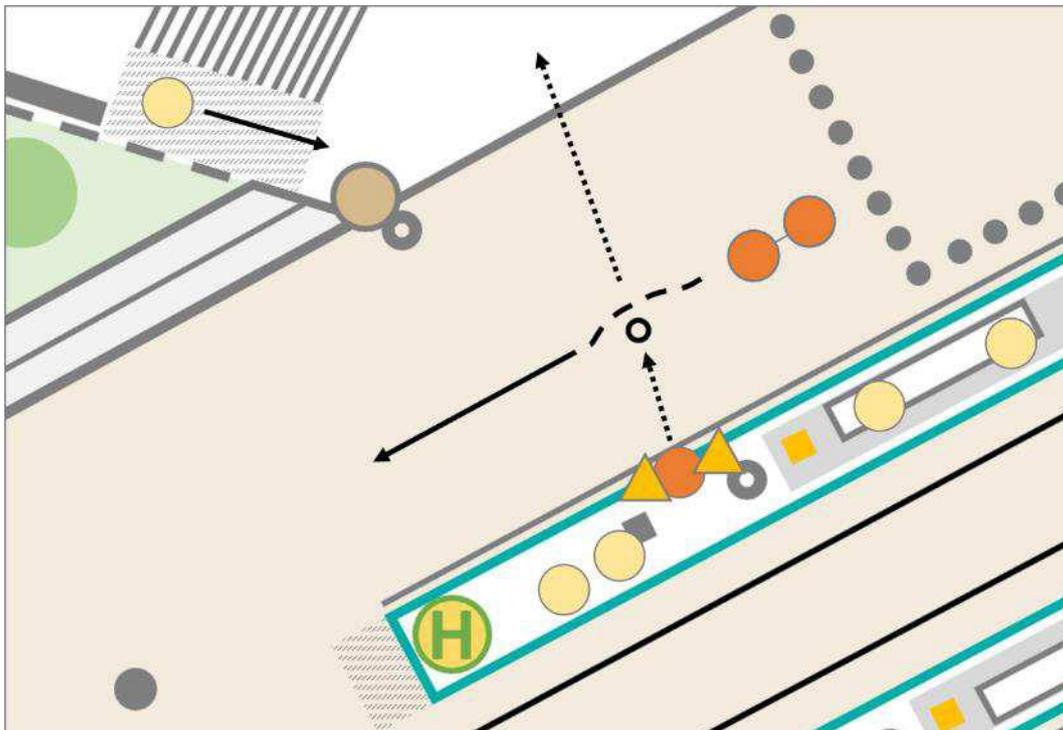
### **Moving from east to west.**

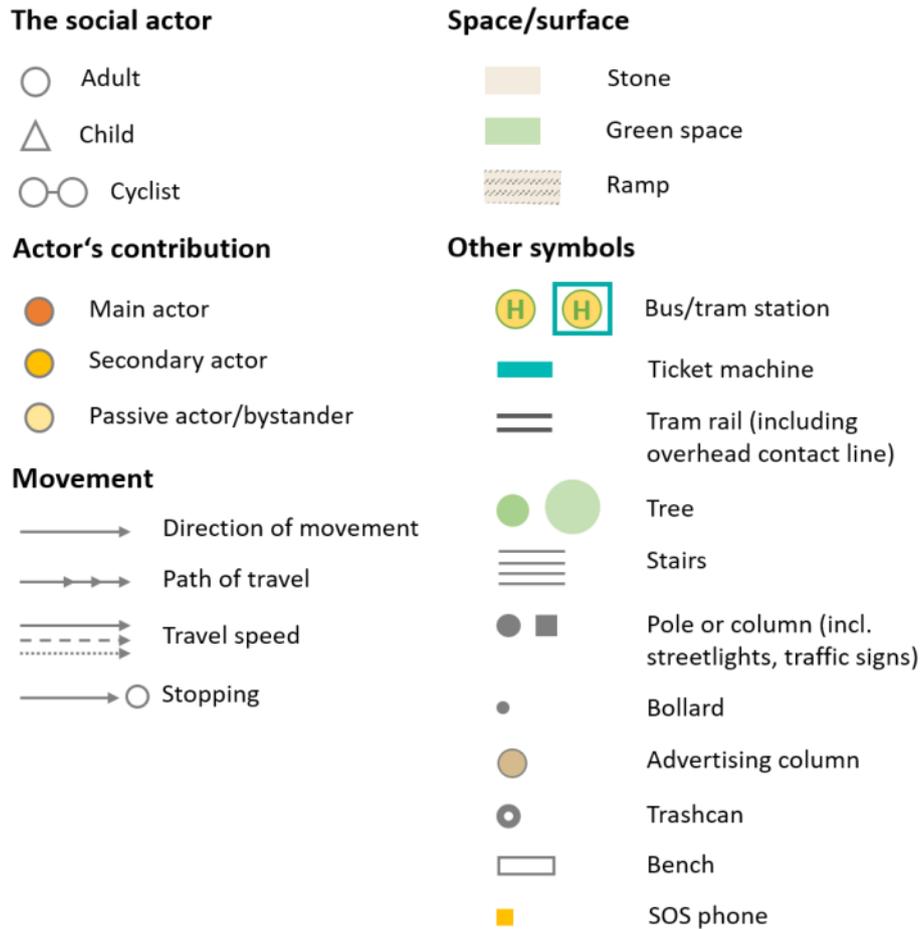
At Theaterplatz, there is a setting where mutual trust is routinely displayed between strangers. The lack of clear guidance has pushed the people into becoming more alert to one another.

She [a bicyclist] moves her head leftwards looking at a woman with two children, maybe 3-6 years old. The woman and the two children are walking hand in hand from the tram platform in north direction, orthogonal to the cyclists crossing her ways. She is focussing the group, turning her head slightly leftwards, looking at them. The women and children are continuing on towards north direction. She is stopping pedalling, slowing down, looking constantly towards the woman. Now, the woman is rising her gaze, looking forward, to the left and to the right. Her gaze is meeting the gaze of the cyclist, they have eye contact. The woman stops immediately, pulling both arms slightly backwards and saying to her children "[first name child A], [first name child B], plead stop! There is a cyclist coming". The children are stopping. The woman keeps looking at the cyclist, smiling at her and making a movement with her head, turning it from the right to left upwardly. The cyclist is smiling at the woman, starting pedalling and saying to the woman, "Thanks!" as she is passing the woman and the children. The woman is looking to the left and to the

right, lowering her gaze and saying to her children, “Now we can move on”. They are moving on, leaving the intersection in north direction, walking down the stairs. The cyclist is pedalling more powerfully, accelerating. She is seeing a bicyclist coming straight towards her; he is not looking at her. With his right hand, he is tipping on his mobile phone, and holds on to the handlebars with his left hand. He is continuously looking on his phone. She looks at him, there is no eye contact. She is turning slightly to the right; the speed remains unchanged. After she passed the bicyclist, she continues to steer straight ahead, drives on and steers slightly to the left, then drives straight ahead again. She is leaving Theaterplatz in west direction.

From east to west  
[02.06.2020, 12:33, 3-08-1]





**Figure 17:** Situation 5: From East to West (own visualisation)

Looking at the interaction between the bicyclist and the woman with two kids: the bicyclist looks at the group, stops pedalling and slows down. Also, the woman rises her gaze, looking forward, to the left and to the right. The gazes meet, they have eye contact, the woman slows down immediately. These bodily expressions show that both have seen each other: first there is a change in speed of the bicyclist and the woman with the children; they slow down by stopping pedalling and breaking, and by decreasing the size of the steps, and stopping completely. Second, they look at each other, there is eye contact. For cyclists, a slight movement of the head, combined with the posterior behaviour (e. g. changing speed or direction) was considered looking at the other's direction. The woman tells the children that they had to stop because of the bicyclist crossing their path. Usually, strangers do not talk to others, have a very brief exchange of eye contact, and then avert their eyes. Then the woman and the bicyclist smile at each other. Each of the two parties has a conception of how matters ought to be handled between them; each party believes that this agreement exists, and each appreciates that this knowledge about the agreement is possessed by the other. So, they can avoid bumping or colliding with each

other. These semiotic expressions indicate that we have seen our mobile with. We are aware of others.

But we can also express seeming unawareness; it is an expression of what Goffman terms civil inattention like producing involvement shields while waiting on the tram platform. Goffman label this expression “avoidance of cooperative claims” (1963) which can be one possible expression which we give off to index civil inattention. However, the two cyclists are clearly aware of each other’s presence and are equally clear about the other’s intention. But we see that not both look at each other and so are not aware of each other. If a bicyclist wants to ensure a particular priority of her line of proposed action over that of the other bicyclist, the practice is to avoid meeting the other’s eyes and thus avoid cooperative claims. The bicyclist uses the ‘I pretend not to have seen you’ expression producing the accountability of seeming unawareness. Expressing seeming unawareness, we put the responsibility for diverging or stopping on those who have seen us. We can imagine how risky this could be if others in fact might not have seen us.

### **Through the bollards**

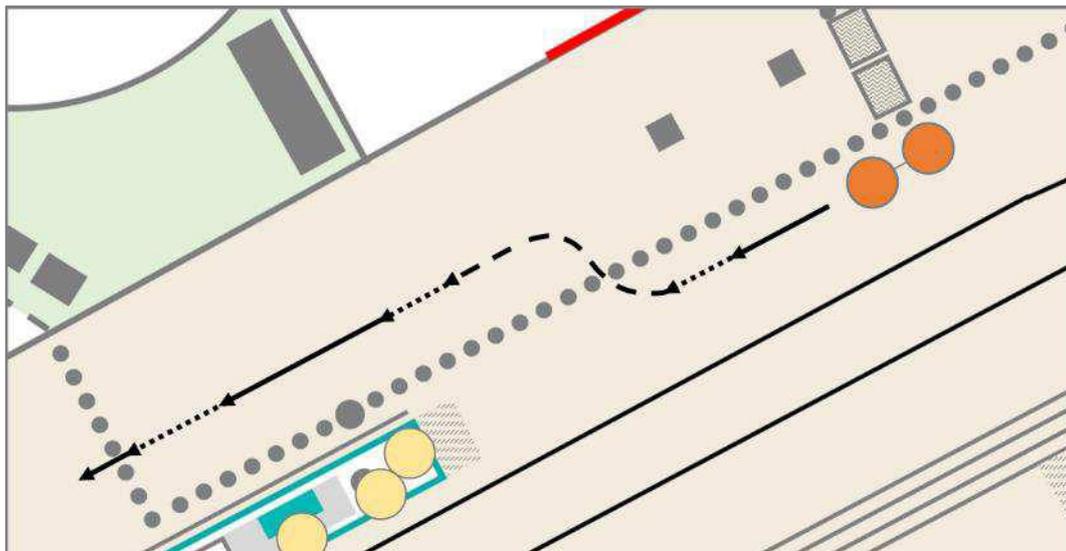
In analysing situations at the street intersection, I have mentioned that traffic planners have intended a concept of how interaction should work. This concept of interaction is inscribed in the scene and the materials, like traffic lights, within via protocols so that certain interaction processes become ritualised. At the street intersection, interaction between street users should be reduced to a minimum by the functional segregation of traffic modes. Such an inscription of the modernist segregation rationale, we can also find at Theaterplatz: As we see in the Basic map (see *Figure 4*) vehicles are allowed at Theaterplatz if drivers want to deposit their vehicles in the car park of Euro Tower. The entrance of the car park is delimited by bollards; and these bollards have a profound impact on the interaction taking place at Theaterplatz, as we have observed in the following situation.

Coming from Weißfrauenstraße a bicyclist is entering the Shared Space area of Willy-Brandt-Platz. She is riding parallel with the tram rails on the left-hand and with the grey metal bollards on the right-hand side from east in west direction. She is moving up her head and looking up ... and stops pedalling. With both hands, she is clutching the handlebar. She is looking at the bollards on the right and on the tram station, she glances at the people on the platform waiting for the tram. There are two middle age men talking to each other, a young woman nearby the ticket machine pushing a few times on the screen, putting something in it, and taking something out of it with the right hand while holding a paper cup in the left hand. Also on the

platform, there are two middle aged women sitting on the bench under the roofing, and two others, a middle-aged man and a young man both are waiting for the tram and simultaneously looking and tipping on their mobile phone screens, and standing on the platform near the tram rails. The cyclist rides in a moderate tempo onwards parallel with the tram rails, then starts slightly pedalling and then stop it before the platform; she moves parallel with the bollards. A tram is coming from Weißfrauenstraße entering Willy-Brandt-Platz with a jingling signal. The cyclist is turning her head leftwards looking in direction to the tram for a subsecond, then turning her head forward, then to slightly to the right, lowering her gaze and looking towards the bollards. She is pressing the brake with both hands. With low speed she moves rightwards and then leftwards between two bollards. Her gaze rises, she is looking forward to the next queue of bollards. She starts pedalling and accelerate. She is focussing the bollards with her eyes. She stops pedalling, rides through the bollards with a lowered gaze. Then she starts pedalling again.

Through the bollards  
[05.06.2020, 16:08, ID 4-13-3]

Although traffic planners have placed the bollards to restrict vehicles traffic at Theaterplatz, they have an unintended impact on and interfere with the informal scripts used by people dwelling there. Because of the bollards the bicyclist reduces speed and changes direction, so that she can take a path between two of the bollards. When cyclists come from the east, at high speed without slowing down much. Cyclists who do not continue eastwards, but down the stairs towards the north, slow down (and get up) more strongly in front of the second queue of bollards, and steer more strongly. They pass through on the far right, whereas otherwise the passages on the left are used. Pedestrians usually react with longer glances and a foresighted change of direction to avoid conflicts. The speed of pedestrians remains the same when they navigate through the bollards; their movements are also less meandering; they tend to give the bollards a wide berth. Also, the choice between which bollards they pass through tends to be short-term, especially when others are passing them. They look at others for a medium length of time to interpret their path. We have observed less face work and eye contact with other people; instead, we scan the queue of bollards and search for a path between two of these bollards. Signs are given off by this early indication of a path by which we are sorted (or even segregated).



### The social actor

- Adult
- Cyclist

### Actor's contribution

- Main actor
- Secondary actor
- Passive actor/bystander

### Movement

- Direction of movement
- Path of travel
- Travel speed
- Stopping

### Space/surface

- Stone
- Green space
- ▨ Ramp
- ▨ Retractable safety barrier

### Other symbols

- Ⓜ Ⓜ Bus/tram station
- Ticket machine
- ≡≡≡ Tram rail (including overhead contact line)
- ≡≡≡ Stairs
- ■ Pole or column (incl. streetlights, traffic signs)
- Bollard
- Trashcan
- ▭ Bench
- Entrance (shop)

**Figure 18:** Situation 6: Through the bollards (own visualisation)

We also observed situational improvisations; the bicyclist improvises in the situation at hand in the best possible way, and in this situation, we see how the cyclist jumps off (or better dismount) the bike and go through the bollards and moves into space form which she can continue her

journey. Another example are elderly people or people with cargo bikes. Both often get off their bikes in front of the bollards because they do not dare to navigate through the bollards (wobbly driving by elderly people). They push the bicycle further, through the second queue of bollards, only then get back on their bike. One strategy to avoid driving or going through the bollards is to drive or go over the tram platform. They could move with constant speed and without major changes in direction; here different forms of looks and face work were used more frequent. This was often used by bicyclists especially if there were only a few people on the platform.

Latour's example of the ground still is used as a translation of legal speed limits intending that car drivers reduce speed, for example in front of a crosswalk or because an elementary school is next to the street. Like Latour's ground still, these bollards are omnipresent, and their impact often undermined. In fact, the paths of people and the interactions between them were ordered in new unintended ways: actually, intended as restrictions for vehicles, the bollards restrict the other's paths across Theaterplatz; bollards sorted these paths. This unintended rationale of sorting interferes with the informal methods of interacting used by people dwelling at Theaterplatz. So, if intended or not how the scene is assembled from above is entangled with the multiple stagings from below and has therefore an impact on mobilities in situ that should not be underestimated.

### **Frontier region: the thing with the threshold**

As noted, I have used an analytical stripe for analysing what happens where two different orders intersect. I can only give us an impression what is going on here; and at this frontier region a lot is going on, but it has been fuzzy to capture because order-productive interaction practices of different interaction orders coalesce. What I have observed is not the ambiguity which is proposed as a typical principle of which interaction is built up at Shared Spaces. What I have observed goes beyond this ambiguity; we should call it a kind of surprising confusion because if we move across Willy-Brandt-Platz, we intersect with two largely different orders which lead to a confusion of how we should act after we have passed the threshold. The peculiarity of confusion depends on our paths, more precisely whether we are coming from the street intersection moving through Theaterplatz or vice versa. I will give us two examples illustrating the surprising confusion at the frontier region.

Coming from the street intersection pedestrians and bicyclists spread all over Theaterplatz and choose their path. They keep pace or slow down, turn their heads slightly and sometimes dras-

tically sideways and make identifying scans and sometimes focused looks to figure out if someone gives a clear sign indicating which way they are going, and look which way they can go across Theaterplatz. Although most people are aware of others, I have observed negotiations which could have led probably to conflicts, if someone has not stopped to avoid a confrontation. Coming from Theaterplatz, pedestrians and especially bicyclists search for the right lane to cross the street intersection; they first have to orientate which way they can go, and which way they should go. But it is not unusual for cyclists to choose a path that is not intended by the traffic planners; this is expressed in the fact that cyclists move on bicycle lanes in the opposite to the actual direction of travel to cross the intersection (which I have already described further ahead as deviant behaviour according to the intended behaviour from above).

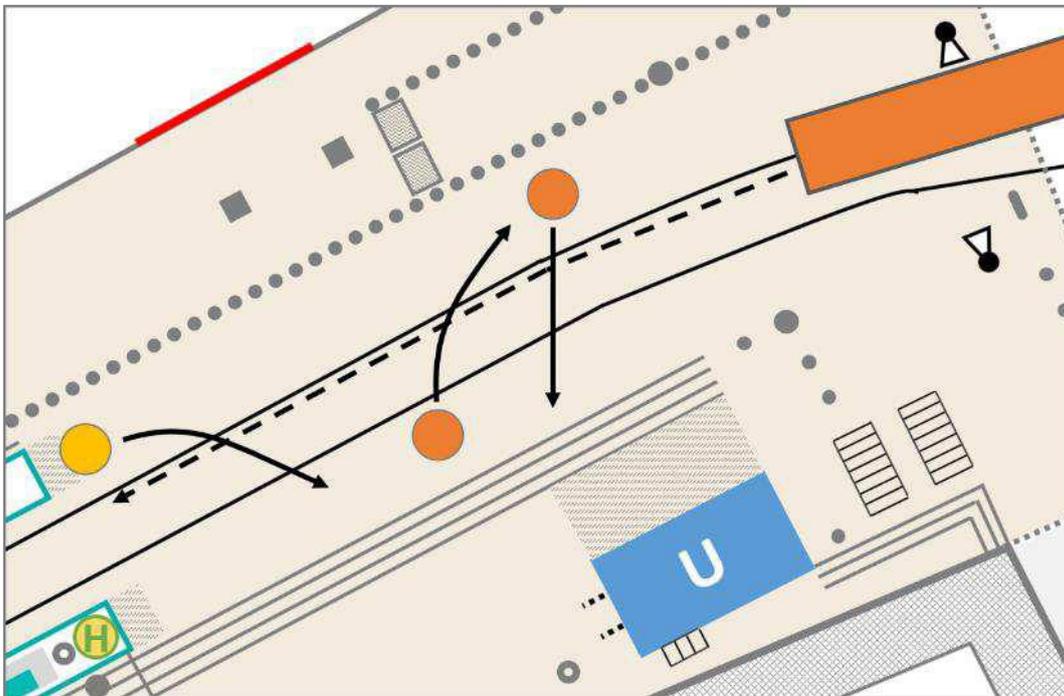
However, as I have mentioned, to capture the nitty gritty interactions at the frontier region is difficult because on the one hand there is a lot going on here; and on the other hand there is a fuzziness because the different orders of street intersection and Theaterplatz coalesce, so it is hard to see the pure interaction sequences, especially if numerous people spread all over Theaterplatz or join to form a temporally dense swarm at the pedestrian crossing and bicycle lanes of the street intersection. However, what we should note is that, after the moment of confusion, people quickly get used to the staged interaction order. They know how to behave, what methods they should use in interacting with others and how to stage their own actions so that they are comprehensible to others.

### **What could be there: a reconciliation with traffic planning in Frankfurt am Main**

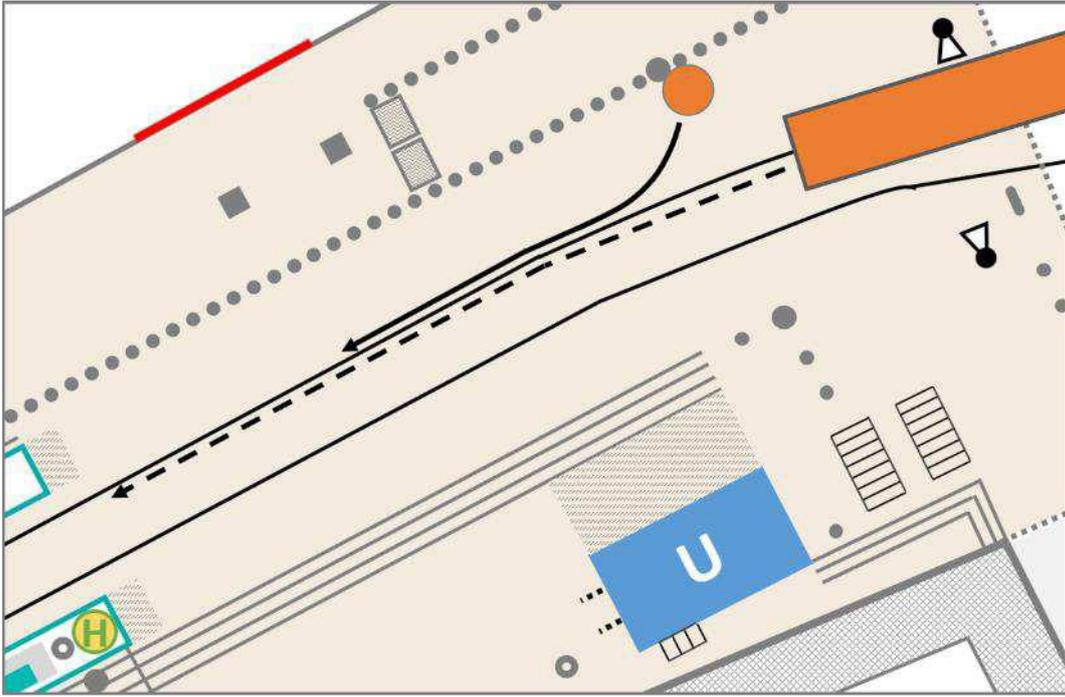
After I have presented you some spotlights on which I have tried to show the interactions at the street intersection and Theaterplatz, I would like to introduce another important dimension of the in situ-approach I have outlined. Like Jensen (2014a), I take the view that the in situ-perspective do not show us *what is going on* in the blind spots of modernistic approaches, it also has the potential to assess traffic planning in terms of the question: *what could be there*. I want to give us two examples that I observed at Willy-Brandt-Platz. I have noted that at Theaterplatz there is a traffic light on the right side next to Neue Mainzer Straße, although Theaterplatz is actually assembled with the intention to minimise traffic regulation devices. However, the traffic light should signal people when they can cross the tram lines safely meaning if no tram is arriving at or departing from the tram station. During my observations I also focused on where and how people cross the tram rails. People especially cross tram rails next to the tram station,

only pedestrians cross the rails at the tram platform when they get out of the tram and look to the right and left and then cross the rails behind the tram.

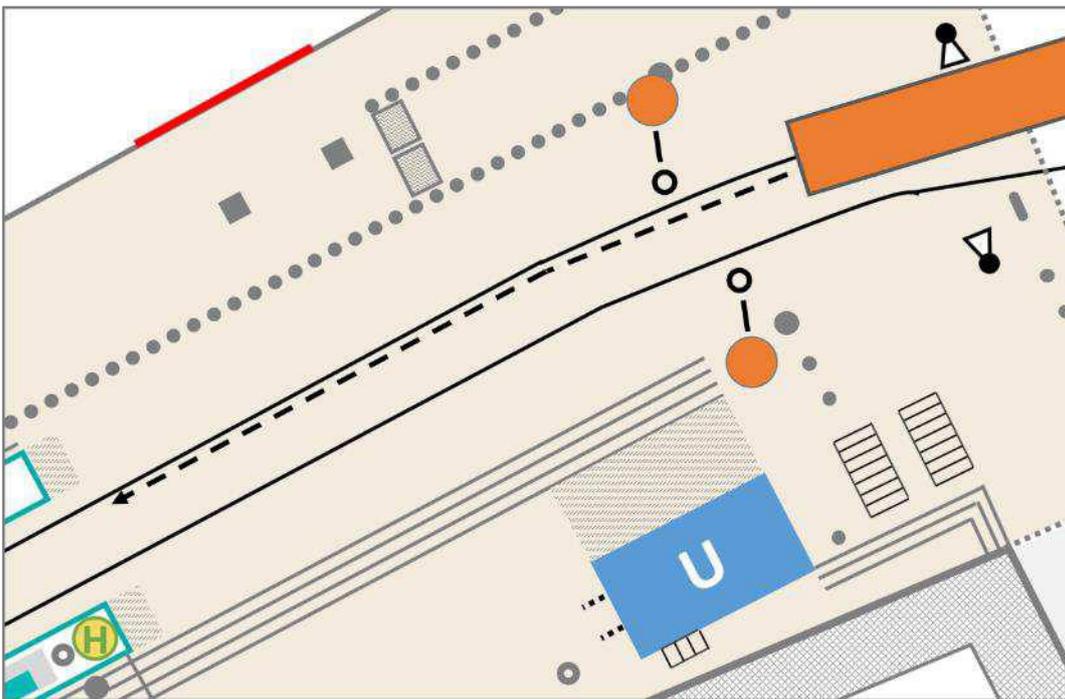
Three different methods are especially used (needless to say, more might be relevant): speeded-up crossing, random crossing, and tram line crossing. At street intersection we have observed especially a crossing type which Jensen (2010b) labels as “speed-up crosser”. This type is characterised by wanting to join a group of people crossing the street before the motorised vehicles drive again. As the label suggest, she speeds up and sometimes run a little, or even jump to make it to the safe shore. At Theaterplatz, I have also observed a form of speeded-up crossing when the tram arrives and use the ringing sound; then people try the cross the tram rails hastily. But more common is tram line crossing; this is a well-used practice for crossing the tram rails. People follow the tram rails more or less parallelly before they turn their heads and look if a tram is coming. Although there is a one-level surface, the tram rails act like the kerbs of the sidewalks at street intersection where pedestrian stop when the traffic light is red, or they move along if they want to cross the street and look for motorised vehicles on the road. Also, when someone crosses the rails, she looks carefully to the left and the right for arriving and departing trams.



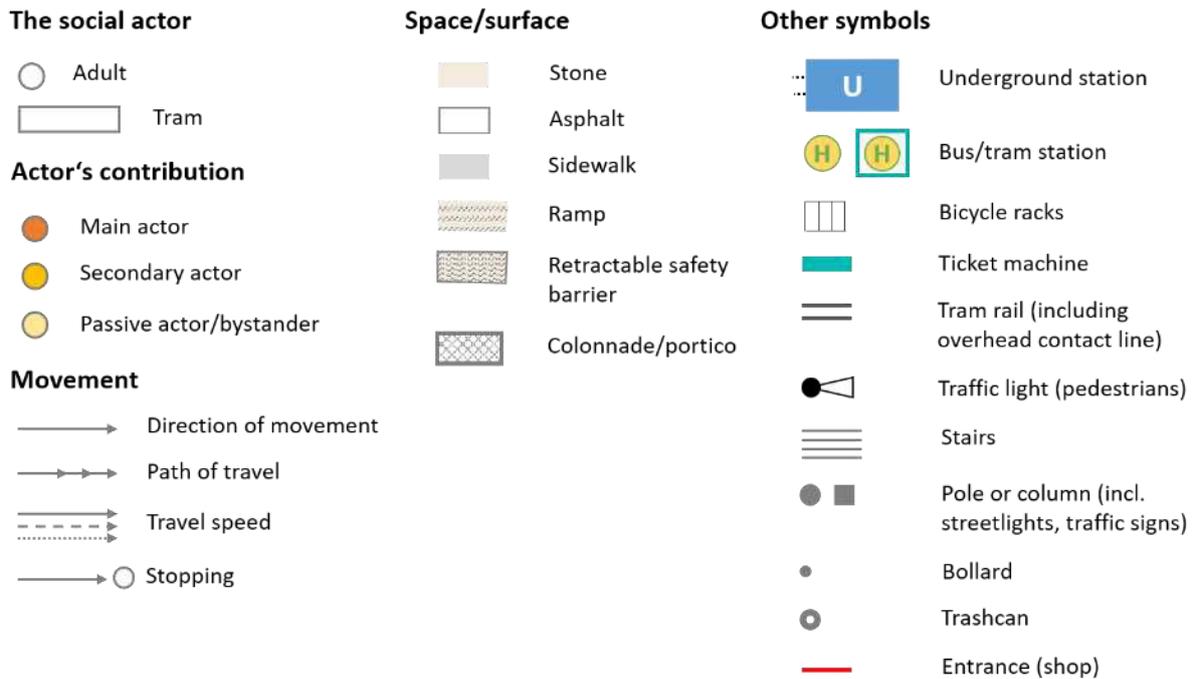
**Figure 19:** Crossing tram rails: Speeded-up crossing (own visualisation)



**Figure 20:** Crossing tram rails: Tram-line crossing (own visualisation)



**Figure 21:** Crossing tram rails: random crossing (own visualisation)

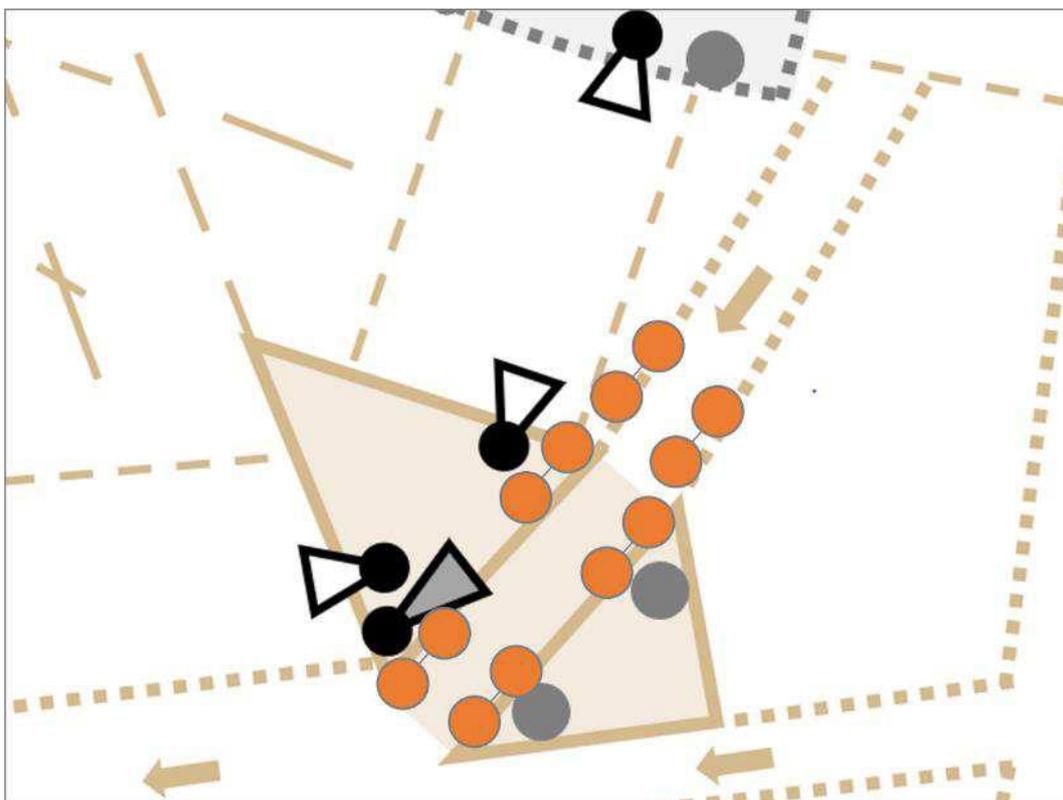


At several places we have observed random crossing; people move, sometimes even drifting through Theaterplatz in all directions. This method is very prevalent at Theaterplatz and illustrative of how moving pedestrians and bicyclists read, interpret and negotiate the site and the members therein in a highly volatile and dynamic negotiation-in-motion (Jensen 2010b). Needless to say, this only works in situations such as the one described here, when no tram is arriving at or departing from tram station. When a tram is coming, pedestrian wait until the tram passes and cross the place more or less orthogonal towards the tram rails. The important observation was that almost no one, no pedestrians, nor bicyclists interact with the traffic light if they want to cross the tram rails. Even if they want to cross the rails at the traffic light, they use informal methods such as looking to the right and the left or hearing the jingling sound of an arriving or departing tram.

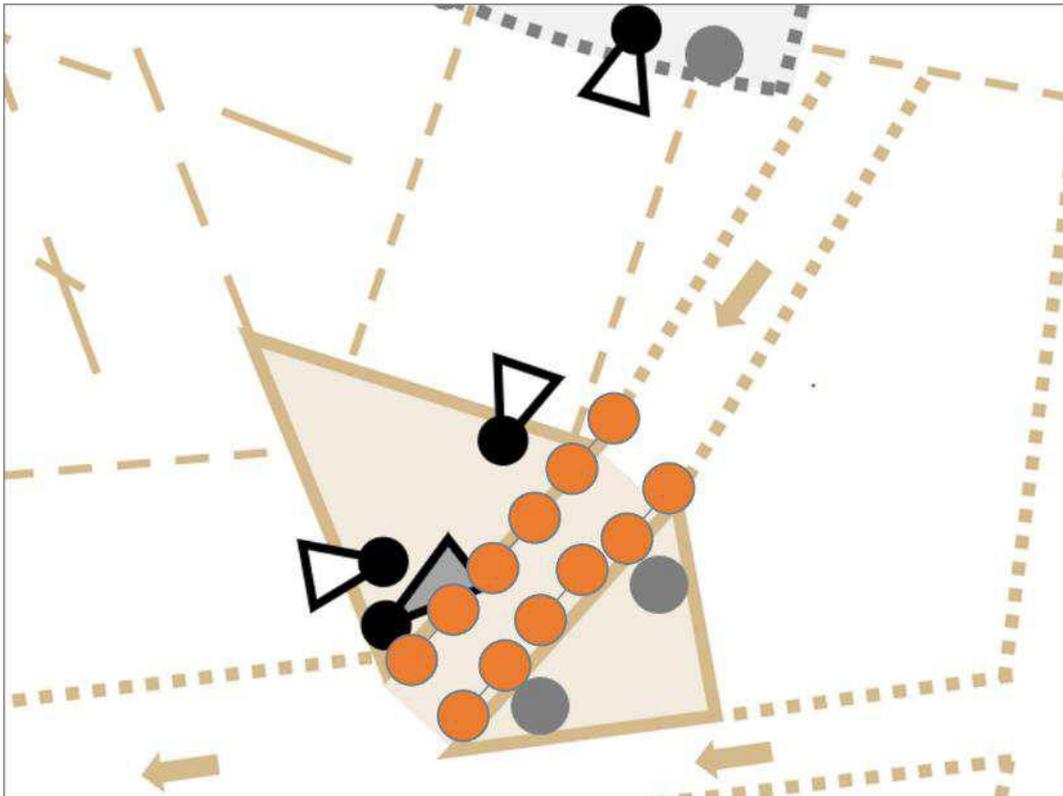
An example at the street intersection is the traffic island in the middle of Neue Mainzer Straße. There are bicyclists which are co-present and place themselves in relation to others: one bicyclist holds on the bicyclist traffic light, another at the pedestrian traffic light, another on the traffic sign, and another on a traffic sign further back. They are located in relation not only to other bicyclists, but also to other non-human members. This refers to Garfinkel's accountability: the swarm at traffic island is observable, both the person which produces the account and the co-present members which recognise the account and can witness it. The accountability is accomplished within and as part of the activity that simultaneously creates orderliness for the way the bicyclists locate themselves in relation to each other on the traffic island. It is the order

of the swarm as well as the swarm itself. All bicyclists produce these accountable accomplishments and recognise them. The swarm of the traffic island is accomplished by the movements of the bicyclists which stay on the traffic island, but also by bicyclists who enter the island and join the swarm. The bicyclists place themselves in a swarm-specific way and take for granted that everyone see that they are swarming (I have observed this phenomenon also at the tram station at Theaterplatz).

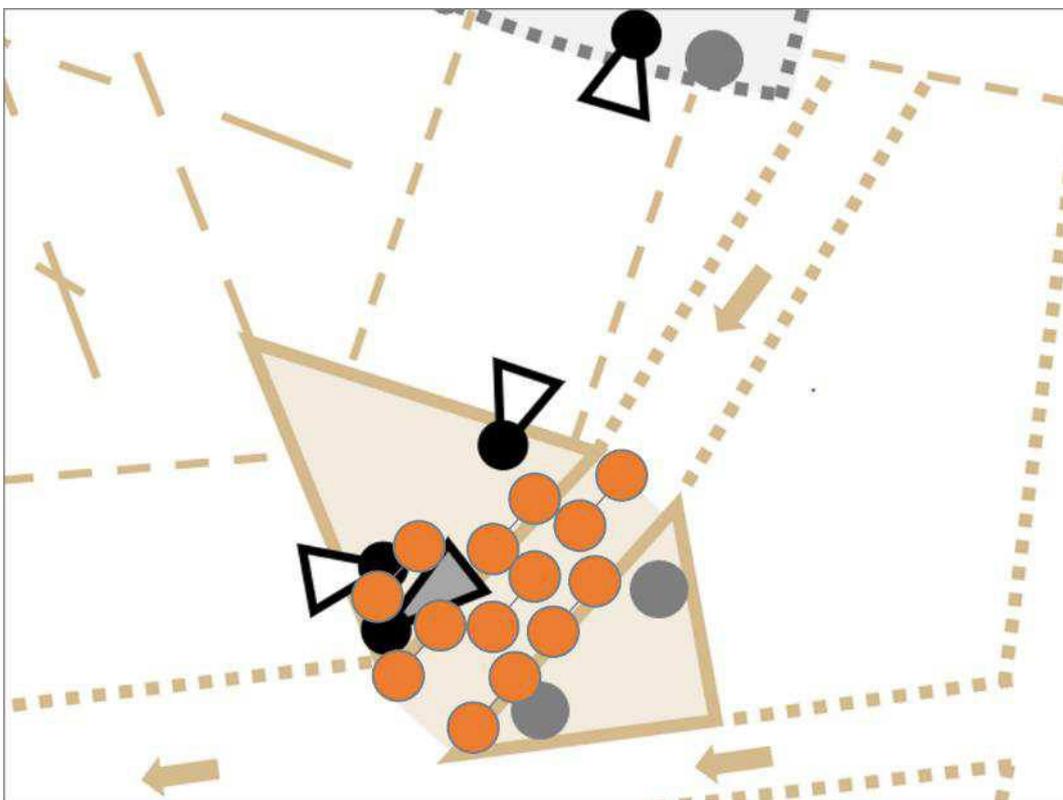
During observation I have looked in detail on how the bicycle swarm have been performed by the bicyclists who stay on the island, but also by bicyclists who enter the island and join the other bicyclists. As I described, bicyclists use traffic signs and lights to support themselves and avoid dismounting. Because of these typical order-productive interaction with the metal posts of traffic signs and lights, we can see three formations of the bicyclists-swarming-on-traffic-island (see *Figure 22-24*): couples, rows-of-two, and tetris.



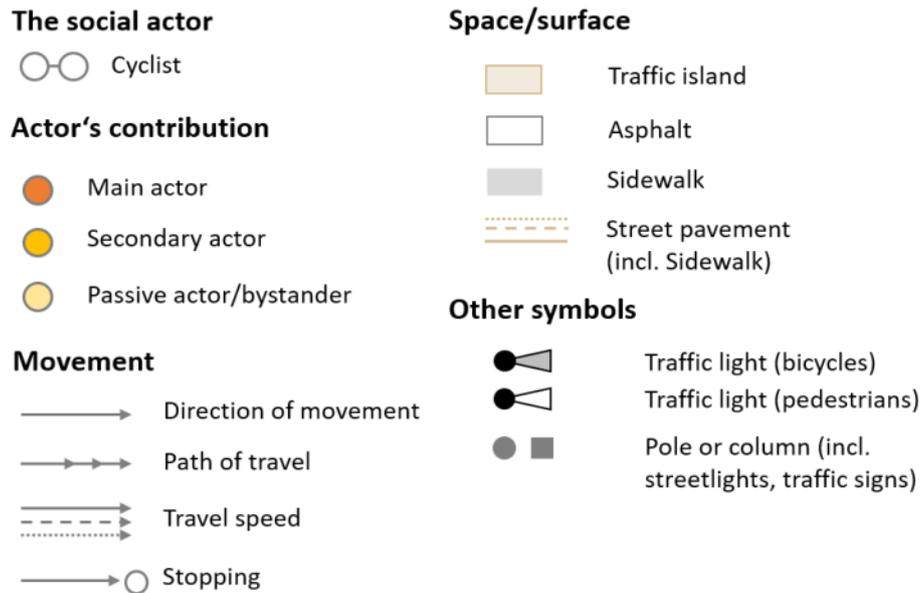
**Figure 22:** Bicyclists at traffic island: couples (own visualisation)



**Figure 23:** Bicyclists at traffic island: rows of two (own visualisation)



**Figure 24:** Bicyclists at traffic island: tetris (own visualisation)



I have described *the couples* formation above; each bicyclist uses the metal post of a traffic sign or light to support themselves. This creates a gap between the cyclists who hold onto the front metal posts and the ones who hold onto the rear metal posts. As soon as the little green man appears on the traffic lights, the cyclists start moving. Due to the gap, fewer cyclists manage to cross Neue Mainzer Straße. This resonates with the *rows-of-two* formation; here also fewer cyclists manage to cross Neue Mainzer Straße, not because of a gap between bicyclists. Rather those bicyclists filling the gap must first stand up their bike, push off, put their foot on the pedals and accelerate, often with more or less meandering movements. The *tetris* formation is quite different compared to the presented ones. The cyclists do not form around the metal posts or in rows. They arrange themselves like building blocks in a Tetris game: the first cyclist places herself at the front, she sometimes lean on the metal post; cyclists who arrive on the island afterwards look for a free space and place themselves. If the traffic light turns green each bicyclist looks at the actions of the cyclists in front of them and anticipate their movements, so that the swarm starts to move slowly.

This situational episteme of *what is here* and *what could be here* resonates well with the culture of traffic planning in Frankfurt. In an interview with a representative of the Radfahrbüro Frankfurt am Main, I learned that planning processes and culture are confusing and fuzzy in Frankfurt. One reason is the multitude of actors and their cultures involved in transport planning: Abteilung für Verkehrsplanung des Stadtplanungsamts (Department for traffic planning of the urban planning office), Bauamt (Building authority), Straßenbauamt (Department of Public

Roads), Unfallkommission (accident commission) and Straßenverkehrsamt (Road Traffic Department) and the Radfahrbüro. The main reasons for rebuilding intersections are the political will (coalition agreement, applications) and serious accidents. But the representative also told me that sometimes their own situational observations are reasons for transformations. An example to illustrate this informal method is the introduction of a metal footboard at the bicycle traffic lights at intersection Hofstraße/Untermainkai.



**Figure 25:** Intersection Hofstraße/Untermainkai from South direction (own photo)



**Figure 26:** Intersection Hofstraße/Untermainkai from Northwest direction (own photo)



**Figure 27:** Intersection Hofstraße/Untermainkai from North direction (own photo)

For many employees of the Radfahrbüro, the daily commute leads over the Untermain bridge. On the way back, the cycle path is led over a traffic island, which is in the middle of the road. On the left-hand side of this traffic island, a raised flower bed has been built, which ends a few metres before the bicycle traffic light. The employees observed that the cyclist who first runs the red light is holding onto the metal post of the traffic light with his right hand. The other cyclists often do not stand beside or behind the first cyclist. They ride to the end of the flowerbed and supported themselves with their left foot. This gap between the first and further cyclists meant that only a few cyclists were able to cross the street; it is like the formations on the traffic island in the middle of Neue Mainzer Straße. To close the gap in the bicyclist queue and therefore to allow more cyclists to pass the road during the green light phase, a metal footboard (as already found at intersections in Copenhagen) has been installed next to the traffic lights, where cyclists can park their right foot on.

For sure, although this solution is motivated by the modernist principle of efficient traffic flow, i. e. allowing as many cyclists as possible to pass through the road, it shows that by using a situational methodology we can make visible phenomena that remain hidden to us with previous modernist theory. Based on what I have said so far, we could assume that there is a dissonance between a modernist epistemology (and ontology) and a situational methodology. But it is not only a question of choosing a situational methodology, but rather it is a question of ontology. Do we want to build footboards that we increase the number of bicyclists which can cross the street? Or do we want to think different and extend the green phase for bicyclists? Or reducing the speed of motorised vehicles and giving bicyclist right of way? Or rebuilding the intersection profoundly as bicycle street or Shared Space? So, no matter whether we analyse or intervene in traffic, it is about which realities we seem to be able to study methodically and which realities we (can) imagine ontologically.

Although it seems that everyday life mobilities may be solitary practices where people are on the move, as we are looking more closely, I have observed an array of examples of how traffic is a complex, dynamic, and situational order of social interaction. We have called it like Goffman the interaction order. It reaffirms the often taken-for-granted assertion that mobilities are more than mechanical movements from one place to another. Surely, we are engaged in acts of physical displacement, but, equally, we perform sociality and using the street for more than just moving. Mobilities are socio-material complex affairs, and even the smallest turn, rerouting, or gesture call for scanning others, their speed and positioning. This is obviously a banal observation. But it is relevant to the point that a *in situ* perspective is sensitive to the micro-

actions and -interactions that make up everyday life mobilities. Following Goffman, we have to make the familiar strange to recognise how what is going on at one place, what everyday life mobilities are and do.

I hope that I could show that much of what may look simply like traffic is a series of complex social interactions. The social interaction producing everyday life mobilities are characterised by communicative practice that for most of the time is routine and goes on unreflected. Although we might think that this only applies to informal interaction between people, we have also observed these habitualised practices in the apparently standardised interaction at street crossings. For example, the interaction with traffic lights is highly ritualised and not questioned. We also see that this changes when things go wrong (for example, if a driver do not accelerate although the traffic light is green, or driving through a red light, or as bicyclist in the false direction). However, at pedestrian crossings, the interactional proximity is remarkably close and speed slow, similar to the situation at Theaterplatz. In such gatherings, people manage negotiation in motion “sheer and mere copresence” (Goffman, 1963) by body gestures and gazes of mutual reinforcement (Conley 2012: 222). The simple street intersection turns into a microcosm of the combination of formal traffic rules, social interaction according to social norms, staged interactions from above and from below producing the interaction order. Although we have turned the spotlight also into the messy worlds of traffic lights, bike path pavements, asphaltic streets, stony sidewalks, kerbs, traffic signs, bollards, and multiple other requisites for staging situational mobilities, these worlds are dependent on the dynamics of the situation rather of something to be deducted a prior. Crucial here are semiotics. Traffic signs, painted pavements, and other traditional illustrations of mobile semiotics are evident; and we are ourselves signs that need interpretation. Of course, it is not the legal code, but our body giving off signs. By applying highly ritualised gestures and hand/body signalling (also remembering the push of the yellow box of the traffic light) adds considerably to the complexity of the mobile situations. Everyday life mobilities may therefore be understood as shaped by the materialities of the street as well as by the members in co-presence interacting what we erroneously often think of as simply traffic. As Conley argues with sociological sensitivity, “it takes two to traffic” (Conley 2012: 222). However, traffic is an interaction order produced by social occasion, within which temporary and moving ensembles of human and things form, gain, and lose members, and break up (Goffman, 1963).

The examples which I have chosen, have not covered all the situations we observed and documented completely. However, a select number have been chosen for practical reasons and much

more detailed analysis and exploration is possible. It should remember that the situations presented are explored mainly to illustrate how an in situ-approach may be used on the one hand for analysing these empirical expressions of contemporary society. On the other hand, it helps to point towards new thinking of, and engaging with mobilities. To progress this discussion, I move to the last chapter of this paper.

## **Conclusion: A path we can take**

I have begun this paper with a humoristic football reportage from the balcony of a DAZN-commentator observing traffic in Corona-Times. Although we can rather describe this observation as an occupation that was carried out of boredom, we should have noticed in the course of this work that it is precisely this crude idea of situational observation which is not considered in contemporary transport planning. Of course, this plea for a situational epistemology was preceded by sufficient preliminary considerations.

During the most recent Corona crisis, the Lockdown in Germany in particular, we could observe that the in-between spaces of our cities are mostly ordered facilitating the traffic flow of vehicles. Although the crisis has opened a space for other possibilities and fostered a re-thinking of how we should order our streets, we have also seen that a modernist philosophy of traffic and city planning is hegemonial in most cities of the western world. As Mumford (1961) has argued that this hegemony is entangled with an overvaluation of abstraction and geometrization of the city and all things within no matter complex they are. So, that streets are still ordered with a positivistic ethos of a science accepted as objective eliciting a certain determinism that corresponds to the economics of increased vehicle mobility (Ingersoll 2006: 123 f.). Most traffic planners seemed and still seem to ask what is efficient in cost-economically terms. The nature of how this planning philosophy is represented in handy guidelines according to which traffic should be planned and is used in political processes and debates in society make them into

unquestioned norms that become accepted. At the same time, it makes other ways of thinking less possible.

Indeed, today, many traffic planners work with a 21<sup>st</sup> century version of Le Corbusier's eye in the sky-view. They point with their fingers not on physical city models; rather, we see these models on our computer screens. We look down on the public space from the sky, to put it metaphorically, with the firm belief that we can design these spaces *in vitro*. In the vein of Normark (2006), I have argued that the *in vitro* episteme of contemporary traffic planning has inadequate conceptions of both the street and the social. On the one hand, we tend to disconnect the social from the street because of the modernistic belief defining the street as mono-functional thoroughfares for vehicle traffic. The narrative is dominated that this space is no man's land; we take for granted that the road as we know it is what it is. On the other hand, even if we recognise the connection, we tend to under-socialise the social because we conceptualise movement as traffic meaning as mechanical movement from A to B. To Mumford, "the interest of mechanical efficiency and outward aesthetic conformity the engineer ignored the social structure of the city, and in his effort to accelerate traffic, he impeded the meeting and cooperation of those whom the traffic supposedly served." (Mumford 1961: 390). The modernist approaches to traffic planning have limited itself to pure numbers, measures and models analysing and designing traffic whereby humans and public life were largely ignored, and cities turned into the transit spaces we know (Peters 2006: 155).

In my double dialectic approach, I have hopefully shown that we should think the street and the social differently to understand and to intervene in mobilities. The message I wanted to convey is that we should not see the street as a given entity which we could take for granted, nor we should take up the social as explanandum for mobilities. Rather, both are *in-making* stages of orders from above and from below. I have used this artificial analytical distinction, inspired from Jensen's *Staging Mobilities* (2013a), to make a theorisation of both possible: decisions and interventions taken in planning departments as well as the multiple performances at place making up the mobilities of billions of people day after day.

We began our story with a foray through the history of traffic planning to understand how we have planned the streets and what takes place on them: the nitty-gritty interactions of everyday mobilities. In defining traffic planning not as a static definition of a domain, but as an active practice of shaping mobilities, the notion of the street becomes porous and dynamic. We cannot

take the recent conception of the street for granted. The street is, in fact, a temporally contextualised product. (Norton 2011; de Certeau 1988[1980]: 217 ff.). We have seen that how the street should be ordered has changed throughout history; but of course, since the advent of the car, streets were built as thoroughfares for motorised vehicles in dreams of Le Corbusier by many traffic planners in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Traffic planning is not a neutral, rather than an *a-spatial*, *a-historic* or *a-social* practical task of applying taken-for-granted mathematical models. It is rather an active political practice of inscribing more or less explicit normative values into materialities and order them and relations between them in a certain way. The crucial point is that assumptions and predictions about interaction are relevant to how we define streets and how we shape them (Hamilton-Baillie 2008a: 161). The traffic light-coordinated intersection, for example, reproduces in all its commonplaceness and diversity a modernist thinking with a strong belief in pure categorising and formalising social interaction: traffic signs and signals, road segregation and pavements orchestrate traffic at street intersections by formalised interaction sequences; it is a spatial manifestation of the modernist conception of public space (see Schmucki 2001). Instead, Shared Space reproduces another form of interaction: traffic regulation devices are removed because proponents argue that traffic can be ordered by the informal interaction events, the facework and the body gestures between different road users. Looking on the spatial history of traffic planning in a Kuhnian logic, I have argued that mobilities are enacted from above according to a distinct street-interaction paradigm.

If we want to understand the street and the social which underlies everyday life mobilities, the enactments from below is as important as the enactments from above. For this purpose, I have used the works of the two famous sociologist Harold Garfinkel and Erving Goffman. With the help of their considerations, we could see that only the most mundane phenomenon like crossing the street is by no means neither just instrumental practices nor trivial acts of physical displacement. There is too much going on that we are able to say that. We do not move from A to B silently and mechanically. Rather, we are involved in taking care to what has come to happen around us, we will initiate informal interchanges with acquainted and unacquainted others. We should understand the street not only in material terms; they are also social stages on which we interact. They are the choreographic stages where everyday life takes place. So, mobilities are also staged from below by us and our consociates presenting ourselves to each other in public space. When we go about our actions, we do them so that (or in ways that) others can see what we are doing. Remember Garfinkel, he argues that everyday actions are made recognisable in

their execution as signs-and-witnesses-of-a-social-order – for example, if I cross the street, I make clear to my consociates that here is a young man crossing the street.

However, Garfinkel and Goffman’s insights into the little dramas of social life substantiate the fact that mobilities are produced by and reproduce the so-called interactional order. The street and the social becomes real, as a relational effect of these interactional orders; both are in fact the condition for these interactional orders. These orders are collectively produced in the interaction which is often methodically and ritually accomplished (Goffman 1983). These order-production is visible to an outside observer as patterns, predictable movements rather than an ongoing accomplishment. We do our actions to have them recognised as the actions they are. Our actions are visibly-rational-for-all-practical-purposes as organizations of commonplace everyday activities. We make our own actions accountable to others, and meaningfully structure and order the social reality around us. We could hastily assume that these documented evidences producing the social order, which should enable a stable traffic flow for example, are the upshot of the members’ ongoing production and recognition work.

So, we give off signs which are accountable to others, out of which members can build their actions: from below how we present ourselves in public space, and from above how public space is ordered and the things therein relate to each other. I claim that the interaction order, which I understand as semiotic, is produced from above and below; these stagings from above and below become meaningful through their relation to this continuously produced order. Although Garfinkel and Goffman explicitly stress that there cannot be any form of social interaction between humans and nonhumans, I argue that there is social interaction between everything, and with this claim I mean every thing: humans but also traffic lights, water puddles or animals, to name a few. The interaction between them is mediated by a semiotic interface. Put it simple, humans and nonhumans produce orderliness together.

The interaction order is produced in the situation. So, I take as point of departure the notion of *mobilities in situ*, or in other words, put the situation first. The theoretical underpinning of this approach is anchored in Garfinkel and Goffman’s interest into the real situations and the multiple little interactions that make up everyday mobilities. It has been devoted not to study abstract structures, but to the understanding of the situated, everyday life mobilities (e. g. Jensen 2013a, 2014a, 2015; Jensen and Lanng 2017). Thus, in contrast to the “eye in the sky”-view (Lynch 1993), my approach is sensitive to the situatedness of order-productive interactions through which both the street and the social is produced (Conley 2012: 219). The context in

which I try to understand these relationships is where these interactions which make up everyday mobilities take place *on the ground*. So, and this is the important clue, we are moving from an *in vitro* to an *in situ* analysis and assessment of traffic. This epistemological shift can be seen as a response to the blind spots of the modernist gaze. We do not model how traffic works in our laboratories in municipal planning departments. Instead, taking the situation first means to understand “how various social others are entangled in particular situations” (Jensen 2014a: 144). So, a new sensitivity to the interrelatedness and situatedness is in the foreground (Jensen 2013a: 20).

Putting the situation first does not mean to be ignorant of wider processes such as street-interaction paradigms and so on. It rather means starting and ending the analysis in situated interaction but always in the contexts of these wider processes (Jensen 2018: 7). What is unfold here is the *double dialectic* approach. It gives us the view of the micro-socialities but also of the micro-political settings in which these practices take place. Through this, we can reflect and question the underlying thoughts of the interaction order.

In being sensitive to the situational interrelatedness of things, I have formulated a research question which is quite open: *How mobilities are enacted at intersections?* The openness originates from an epistemological consideration. To Goffman (1974b), how we act, however strange or incomprehensible this might seem, is always meaningful. In referring to ethnographic inquiry, he argues that we face situations with the question “What is going on here?” (ibid: 8). I have argued that we should follow Goffman and raise this question as an overall research epistemology which means that we face our research field as open as possible. Furthermore, I have chosen the focus on intersections because, on the one hand they are still the blueprints for traffic planning for ordering public space and therefore for ordering traffic in terms of flow and safety. Intersection are also the critical places which were re-ordered by critics of the modernist traffic planning. On the other hand, intersection are the places at which we encounter and negotiate with others, put it simple, they are places where much is going on.

A situated emphasis on mobilities provokes methodological questions about how we can capture the ephemeral interactions. Here, I have looked on Garfinkel and Goffman’s comprehensive methodological implications and guidelines which both have given in their famous studies on behaviour in public space. First, I use an abductive approach for the investigation. This research methodology is characterized by empirical work, which is inspired by the theoretical, while the empirical simultaneously calls for new theoretical clarifications. Second, I translated

the in situ methodologically in what Garfinkel calls just-thisness which can be only obtained from inside the situation. It is the ordinary situation which attracted us that mundane everyday life mobilities escaping our attention: “what is right before our eyes, but we cannot see because we are blinded by its obviousness.” (Normark 2006: 19). In their empirical studies Garfinkel and Goffman aim to investigate the naturalistic interaction processes and document them in their natural milieu. In his early works, Goffman understood an investigation of interactions to be ethnographic observation in the milieu where these interactions take place.

Using ethnographic-inspired observation and mapping techniques, I have tried to be sensitive to both, the “[...] overall pattern of movements seen from a distance and the quirks of individual movements when seen close up/in detail [...]” (Murray and Robertson 2017: 213). What I tried with this research approach, with the methods of observing and mapping, is to give a feeling of actually ‘being there’ inside the situation. Although ethnographies may lack the concrete results of other methods, it engages us to think through the entanglements and complexities rather than deny them (Cook and Crang 1995: 92). However, because of Covid-19 pandemic, I had to shift my empirical study. Instead of focusing on rebuilt intersection in the inner-city districts of Frankfurt am, I have done one-site investigation at Willy-Brandt-Platz. Despite all unpredictable constrains, I have argued that we understand the one-site study as a less-than-ideal solution. I could observe two different social orders at one site and what happens where these social orders intersect. The field study has been carried out over a 2-week period in May and June in 2020. During this 2-week period between May 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> randomized observation were conducted at Willy-Brandt-Platz.

Methodologically, I have gradually and in an ad hoc manner tried to extract some guidelines which I have used to study mobilities at Willy-Brandt-Platz, and from which I think that they are useful for further studies investigating mobilities in situ (see also Normark 2006: 63):

1. We should focus on in the making of the *order-productive accomplishments in situ*; it is about how members do what they do.
2. We should *observe the scene from within*.
3. We should *take into account everything* we can observe, no matter how banal it might seem.
4. We should put the *interrelatedness and interactions* between both humans and nonhumans in the foreground; defying a priori divides.

5. We should be careful *not to replace the explanandum with the explanans* – the social and the street *sui generis* are what we study; both are not an explanation.

What we should have taken with us is that at Willy-Brandt-Platz there are staged and enacted more or less two street-interaction paradigms. At the street intersection we observe the traditional modernist functional segregation of traffic, asphaltic pavements for the car traffic separated in lanes by markings, and sidewalks for all others, only bicyclists are allowed to drive on the asphaltic pavements, but they are also separated from car traffic by marked bicycle lanes. Important for understand how the order at the street intersection is produced are traffic lights. There are traffic lights for car drivers, bicycles, pedestrians, and trams which determine when we can go, stop, and when and how we interact with others. The spatial and temporal ordering from above is characteristic for a modernist street-interaction paradigm. When we interact, we do it in a standardised way like a law-and-order-scheme: pressing-the-yellow-box and standing-at-the-kerb, but also the-blinking-of-“Bitte warten” and shifting-between-the-red-and-green-manikin. However, we observe that there are also many informal interactions, especially if spatiotemporal segregation cannot be upheld. For example, when pedestrians cross the street and negotiate-with-others, or if people behave-deviant according to the order intended from above by traffic planners.

At Theaterplatz a different street-interaction paradigm is staged. There are no segregated lanes, or traffic lights ordering traffic spatiotemporally. It is characterised by an open surface where all traffic regulation is removed (only one traffic light is left as a relic of the modernist era). It does not segregate different forms of being mobile. So, rather, the spatiotemporal ordering of traffic, interactions are not characterised by trust in traffic planners which have designed the roads, sidewalks, traffic island, painted the markings on the ground and placed the various traffic lights. They are characterised by trust into others being on the move with us, the numerous mobile withs. We interact with these withs by informal, but widely ritualised methods which give off signs which are accountable for others. In comparison to the street intersection, interactions at Theaterplatz are more fluid, gel-like, flickering like fire, and thus, sometimes not easy to observe. There is an orderly disorder at Theaterplatz.

The artificially produced frontier region is characterised by the intersection of these two different interaction orders. It was not surprising that we see numerous situations in which people were confused where to go, how others behave which leads to more conflicts as at the street intersection or Theaterplatz. I have argued that the reason for confusion is the edgy threshold

between these two orders; people need a few moments to shift and adjust to the new order after they have passed the threshold in this new world.

As I have noted, using a situational research epistemology, we could not only study *what is going on here*; at the same time, we could seek out of *what could be here*. Using the example of the situational observation of employees of Radfahrbüro, I have argued that this situational episteme resonates well with the culture of traffic planning in Frankfurt. Surely, much more thorough explorations need to be conducted to discover the richness and fruitfulness of situational approaches for traffic planning. Probable next steps are the conception of a programmatic methodological process and a comprehensive empirical study to improve this approach and to make it fruitful for traffic planning. Here, video techniques and software could be integrated.

### **Reflect and rethink**

Nonetheless, I hope that I have strengthened the necessity for other epistemological, ontological, and also analytical approaches for studying traffic far from contemporary *in vitro* approaches. The little dramas of everyday mobilities which I have observed at Willy-Brandt-Platz are often taken for granted, or rather wished away by contemporary traffic planning. The aim of this study was to determine how people interact with others, how they make their own actions visibly-rational-for-all-practical-purposes to others, and meaningfully order the mobilities reality around them. I think that these initial considerations on an *in situ* approach are a good starting point to *reflect* how we do traffic planning, and a first step to *think* of what traffic planning is and could be.

I cannot answer these questions. But I have mentioned that the power of modernist traffic planning with its convincing aura of an objective and neutral science still influences political agendas set by practitioners, including how we define problems (or not), design visions (or not), and fabricate solutions (or not). It becomes accepted which means that reality is not arbitrary; it is obdurate. So, this modernist reality as we knew is both real and it is produced with a considerable effort (see Latour and Woolgar 1979). We do not only describe reality, but also shape it which reinforces a certain reality and make others less possible. However, the argument, I want to make, is about method-making-knowledge-and-realities; it is about both, epistemology, and ontology (see Latour 1993, 1999). In some measure that which is real is made by and through the methods we use in traffic planning. Though, it remains important, what is at stake is not simply what is taken place out there can be uncovered and brought into the spotlight. It is what might be brought into being, and indeed, what should be brought into being (Law und Urry

2004: 396). In the introduction, I have brought up this performativity of methods (and here we can expand the notion of methods to Garfinkel's concept of methods) referring to the DAZN commentator, and now I will draw the argument further.

In a world in which everything has consequences, in which everything is performative, we cannot assert that methods how we plan traffic are neutral or value-free. We have seen that certain rationalities were inscribed in the modernist street facilitating vehicle traffic and increasing traffic safety. Thoughts in our minds could become powerful narratives and even materialised. It was forcibly reminded by Donna Haraway that there can be no innocence (see Haraway 1991a, 1991b, 1992, 1997). She indicates that all methods involve forms of social practice; they are all part of the world they help to produce. Heisenberg wrote about this in physics, "What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning" (quoted in Capra 1996: 40). So, we all are always "embedded in, produced by, and productive of the worlds we might enact" (Law und Urry 2004: 392). My argument is that because of their inherent non-innocence, methods and those how use it enact whatever they describe into this reality (ibid: 403). Of course, this story is an enactment of a certain world, making it real. It is also a normative statement against the backdrop of a critique of modernist traffic planning which shapes our everyday life mobilities. It is an alternative reality in which we can think mobilities in traffic planning not in terms of modernistic fantasy.

However, methods are not innocent, they are political. Therefore, two questions arises (Law and Urry 2004: 396): what realities do the current methods of traffic planning help to enact or erode (*reflect* how we do traffic planning)? And what realities might we want to enact or erode (*think* of what traffic planning is and could be)? The conclusion, we should derive from this, is inescapable: as we write, speak, intervene and so on, we have simultaneously a responsibility. We are continuously standing at intersections, that flows into different paths, we can walk. Every time, we decide which route we want to take, and this decision needs to be well considered in terms of what kind of difference we want to make. "The brush we tar mobilities with can leave quite a permanent stain. And the meanings given to mobilities make a difference. [...] they might alter the way we think about and act towards them." (Adey 2010: 38). I think, the recent Corona crisis is a good momentum to rethink and reflect this question because we have begun to question our habits and routines in many domains. But, of course, to reflect and rethink is not a total rejection with contemporary traffic planning. It is a process that we first have to learn.



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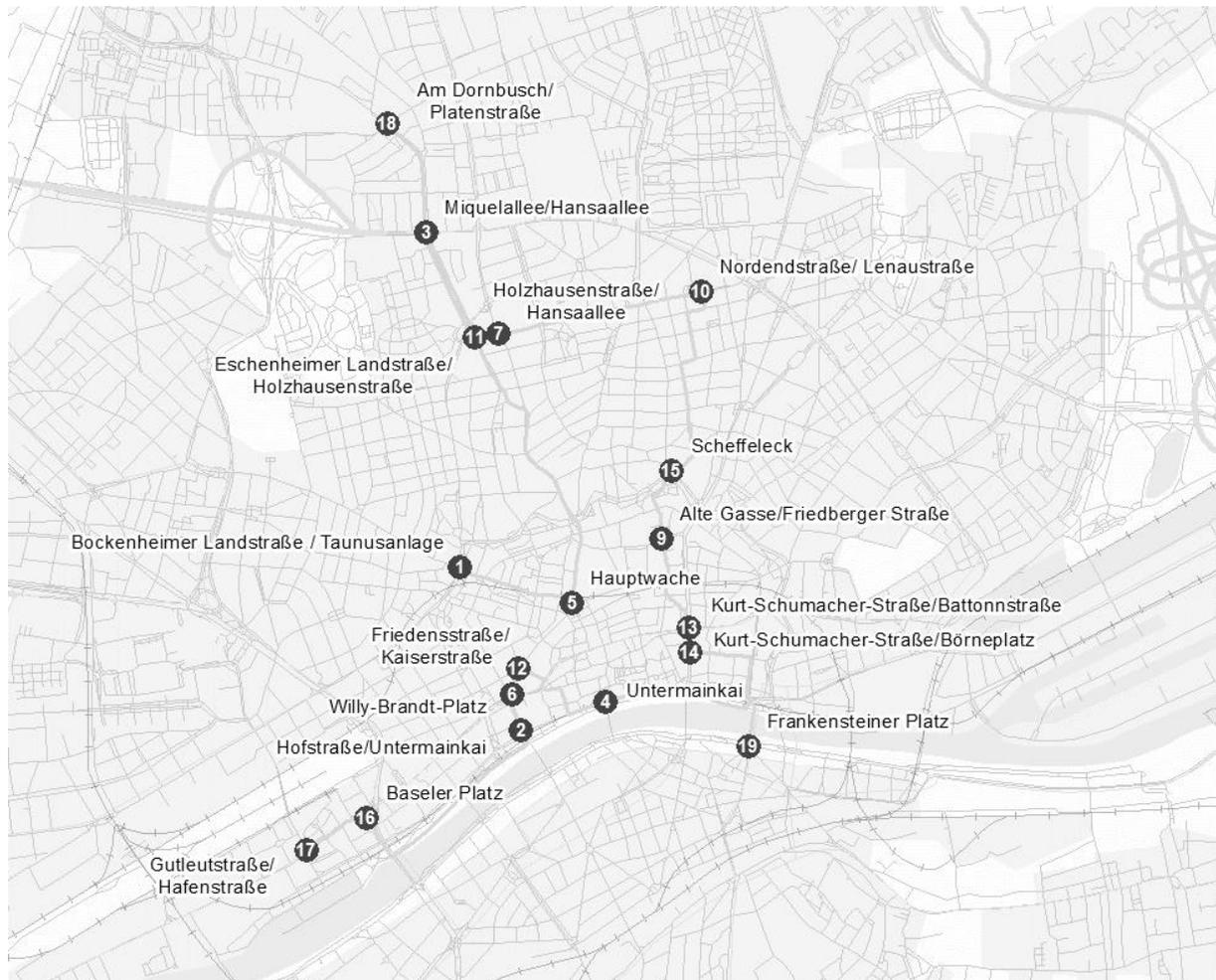
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# Appendix



**Figure 28: Annex A:** Route of the site visits on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

The intersection Kleinschmidtstraße/Am Lindenbaum (no. 8) was not recorded because it was outside the inner districts of Frankfurt am Main (note, the inner districts are Ortsbezirke Innenstadt I, Innenstadt II, and Innenstadt III);

**Table 7: Annex B: Observation notebook with explanations**

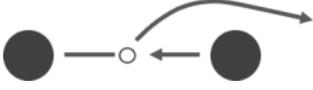
<b>Number:</b>	<b>Place:</b>	<b>Beginning time:</b>
<b>Date:</b>		<b>End time:</b>
<p><b>Description of scene</b>          [conventional traffic regulation, diversity of space function, modes of transport]  <i>On basis of the intersection glossary of first empiric analysis (first categorization of intersections) a more detailed investigation of materialities</i>          [Sensory impressions: sights, sounds, textures, smells, taste]  <i>How is the intersection perceived (gasoline or food smell, engine noise, etc.)?</i></p>		
<p><b>Site facts</b>          [typical interactions, details of what happens at the site]  <i>Distinctive features: What interactions (and where) are typical for the site of observation?</i></p>		
<p><b>What I observed</b>          [Description of everything that can be remembered]</p>	<p><b>What I think about it</b>          [Analysis, reflections, questions, personal responses]</p>	
<p><b>Future Actions</b>          [Questions about people or behaviors at the site for future investigation]</p>		
<p><b>Further Notes</b></p>		

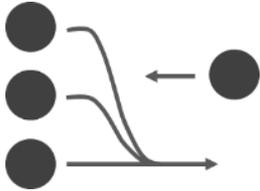
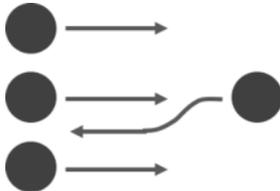
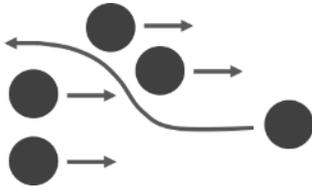
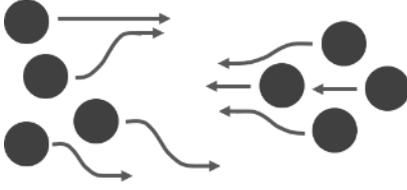
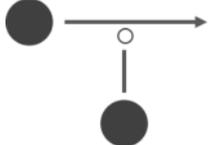
**Table 8: Annex C.1: Observation catalogue – Part I**

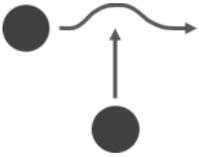
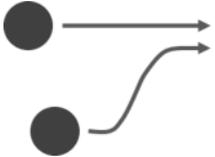
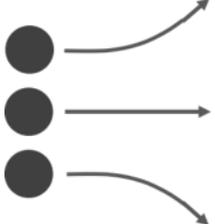
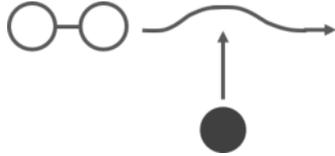
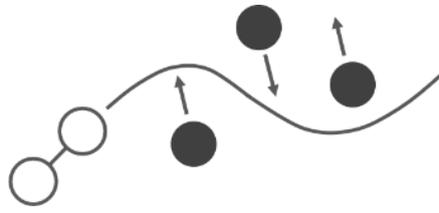
<b>Observation survey for situational interactions</b>		
<b>Elements for operationalization</b>	<b>Examples (sign type)</b>	<b>Sources</b>
<b>1. Level: Interaction methods</b>		
<b>Repertoire of actions</b>		
<i>Speed/pace of travel</i>		
Changes in speed/pace	Starting, anticipating (slowing down/ speeding up), keeping pace, continuing without changes (unchanged), hesitating, give way, stop	Kasparias et al. (), Vasarini (2018)
Stop completely	suddenly or gradually, with or without control of the bicycle/vehicle	Jensen (2010, 2014), Vasarini (2018)
Speed before interaction point	Fast to slow	Vasarini (2018)
Subsequent acceleration	Immediate acceleration after, wait to clear, do not accelerate	Kasparias et al. (), Vasarini (2018)
Stop pedalling (cyclists)	A way of showing change in speed	Vasarini (2018)
<i>Movement of travel</i>		
Changes in direction	Unchanged, making curves around things, deviate, return, taking a step back	Jensen (2010, 2014), Kasparias et al. (), Vasarini (2018)
Moving parallel before crossing	Moving parallel with the sidewalk, the tram rails etc. before crossing	Jensen (2010, 2014), Vasarini (2018)
Indicating the right turn (cyclists, vehicles)	Use of the hand (bicycle)/turn signal (vehicles) to indicate right turn, clearness of the movement (amplitude, time)	Vasarini (2018)
Indicating the left turn (cyclists, vehicles)	Use of the hand (bicycle)/turn signal (vehicles) to indicate left turn, clearness of the movement (amplitude, time)	Vasarini (2018)
Path of travel	Travel path of actor at intersection	Jensen (2014)
<i>Body language/gestures</i>		
Hand movement	raised hand, move hand sideways, show palm, waving,	Vasarini (2018)
Head movement	Turning the head, head nodding: sideways, downwards, slightly or drastically, fast or controlled	Goffman (1972), Vasarini (2018)
Body movements	Turning the torso (incl. nudges): slightly or drastically, fast or controlled	Goffman (1972), Vasarini (2018)
Facework	Smiling, winking, looking (angry, happy, surprised, afraid etc.)	Simmel (), Goffman (1967), Jensen (2006, 2010, 2013), (Björklund 2005):

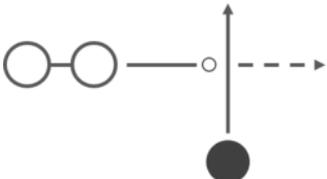
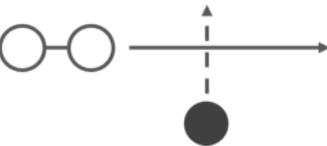
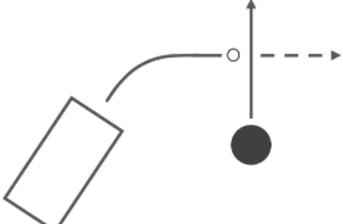
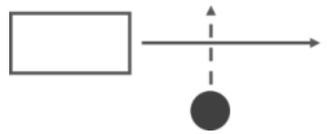
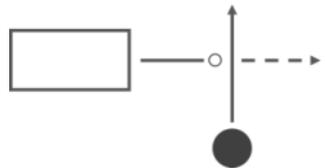
Eye contact	Eye contact with other street actors used in traffic between persons differ in their timing and duration and their focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identifying scans,</li> <li>- focused looks,</li> <li>- sanctioning looks, and</li> <li>- integrating glances</li> <li>- observations</li> </ul>	(Conley 2012),
Clear sign of stopping completely	controlled or uncontrolled, putting the foot on the ground, dismounting (cyclists)	Vasarini (2018)
Standing on bike (cyclist)	Cyclists who, in the moment of or approach the meeting, raise themselves off their saddle (usually combined with increasing speed)	Vasarini (2018)
Use of the bell (cyclists), using horn (car drivers)	Count the amount of times cyclists used the bell/drivers used the horn: one long press, one monetary, two ...	Vasarini (2018), own observation
Headlights flashing	Using headlights: one long press, one monetary, two ...	Vasarini (2018)
<b>Combination of actions</b>		
Tactics of civil inattention	avoid interaction with other's physically present, like "I pretend not to have seen you-tactic", observe if people, in an intersection, do not clearly look at others and do not turn their head. Usually she/he will still slightly change direction to give more room to the other.	Goffman (), Simmel (), Johnson 2013
Crossing techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- speeded-up crosser</li> <li>- random crosser</li> <li>- shopping crosser</li> <li>- line crosser</li> </ul> <p>The "speeded-up crosser" is characterized by wanting to join a group of crossing people (an already existing "mobile with") before the cars/busses start to drive again. The speeded-up crosser will, as the name suggests, speed up, maybe even run a little, or even jump to make it for the safe "shore." This is especially seen at the pedestrian crossings.</p> <p>The "random crosser" who moves toward the road to cross, maybe even drifting toward the road, not paying much attention to the traffic. The random crosser might even reach the road before looking out for traffic. If there is traffic, the person take a step back and instead follows the edge of the sidewalk to cross.</p> <p>The "shopping crosser," crosses when the row of shops stops. The crossing line for the shopping crosser is very long and sloped (this type is defined by the contextual location of urban functions and thus becomes highly site specific).</p> <p>The "line crosser," who follows the lines in the pattern of the paving in the road to cross.</p>	Jensen (2010, 2014)
Walking techniques (pedestrian)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walking</li> <li>- Strolling</li> <li>- Meandering</li> <li>- Striding</li> <li>- Running</li> </ul>	(e.g., Edensor, 2000, 2010; Ingold, 2004; Scollon & Scollon 2003; Vergunst, 2008);
Head/body orientation	(combined since semantically they form a whole): facing car, facing sideways	Own observation
Gestures to get right of way (pedestrians)	Put the hand in front of the body, make a stop sign with the hand, indicate the turn as cyclists	Vasarini (2018)
Irritation	Misunderstandings, misrepresentations	Björklund (2005)
Piggybacking	speeding-up to join a crowd that is already crossing without interacting with users before vehicles start moving, ritual processes for joining and leaving	Goffman (), Vasarini (2018)
B line tactic	Observe if users have focused eyes, moderate speed, do not look at others and change speed and direct as little as possible.	Vasarini (2018)
Being in their own bubble	Observe if users are walking/cycling distracted, not looking around, moving randomly, talking to others, using their cellphone	Vasarini (2018)

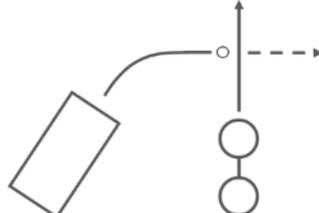
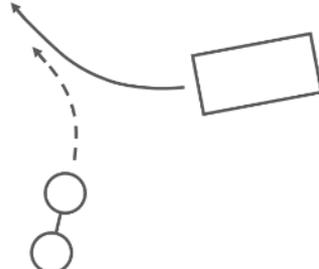
**Table 9: Annex C.2: Observation catalogue – Part II**

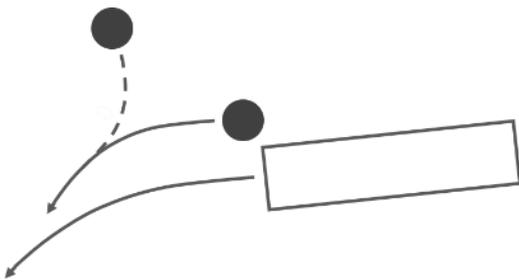
<b>2. Level: interaction types</b>		
<b>Mobile negotiation techniques</b>		
Meetings	frontal, orthogonal, parallel	Jensen (2010, 2013)
Pedestrians + Pedestrians		
Both on their way	Both pedestrians wait (often at a red traffic light) and position themselves that they can pass the other without slowing down or changing direction. 	Own observation
One gives in	Illustrates a situation when one pedestrian gives in a little and pass each other by, often one slows down, or changed direction, giving more room to the other. 	Own observation
Both give in	Illustrates a situation when both pedestrians give in a little and pass each other by, often both slow down, or changed direction, giving more room to the other (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.). 	(Jensen 2010, 2013)
Classic dance	This one could also be termed pedestrian confusion and is typically found in a situation where no one gives a clear signal indicating which way they are going. This type is often found at large spaces that should make it easy to avoid each other (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.). 	(Jensen 2010, 2013)
Stop to pass	It is the situation where pedestrians simply stop for each other, to figure out which way to go and to pass (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.). 	(Jensen 2010, 2013)
Both stop to pass	Pedestrians stop to avoiding confrontation. 	Own observation
One giving room	Illustrates a situation when one pedestrian gives more room and pass each other by changed direction but often no slowing down. 	Own observation

Both give room	<p>Illustrates a situation when both pedestrians give more room and pass each other by changed direction but often no slowing down.</p> 	Own observation
Group passing other pedestrians	<p>the group will come closer together to pass, in order to make room for the “strangers.” (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	(Jensen 2010, 2013)
Group letting in stranger	<p>Same situation as in “Group passing other pedestrians”, but with a different reaction. The group split and let the “stranger” between them (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	(Jensen 2010, 2013)
Zigzag turner	<p>This technique is exemplary of the pedestrian in a hurry zigzagging through the site (like the cyclist in high speed). To reach their goal faster, they zigzag in and out between other pedestrians and often turn the upper body sideways to fit between people walking closely together (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	(Jensen 2010, 2013)
Splitting a group	<p>Situation in which one group of pedestrians split and let the stranger group between them (similar to “Group letting in stranger”).</p> 	Own observation
Stop for someone	<p>Orthogonal negotiation in which one pedestrian stops to let the other pedestrian pass.</p> 	Own observation

<p>Pushing someone</p>	<p>Orthogonal negotiation in which one pedestrian do not stop to let the others pass. Instead, she move on so that the other pedestrian make a curve to avoid a confrontation.</p> 	<p>Own observation</p>
<p>Passing another pedestrian</p>	<p>Parallel negotiation in which one pedestrian (mostly observed if someone is in hurry) pass the other by changing direction and with higher speed.</p> 	<p>Own observation</p>
<p>Squeezing pedestrian</p>	<p>Evaluating the situation, and sometimes getting squeezed.</p> 	<p>Own observation</p>
<p>Spreading pedestrians</p>	<p>Situation in which a group of pedestrian dissolve moving in other directions (mostly observed when a group enter an open space).</p> 	<p>Own observation</p>
<p>Pedestrians + Bicycles</p>		
<p>Zigzag less</p>	<p>Bicyclists follows the kerb and makes a small curve to get around the pedestrian (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	<p>(Jensen 2010, 2013)</p>
<p>Zigzag more</p>	<p>Cyclists move at high speed, making large curves to get around several pedestrians and moving faster through without slowing down (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	<p>(Jensen 2010, 2013)</p>

<p>Need to stop bike</p>	<p>If the cyclist does not analyse the situation there is a potential confrontation, maybe with eye contact and perhaps a need to stop to avoid an accident. In some cases no agreement is reached in the negotiation and the 'opponents' face each other head on.</p> <p>The bicycle stops – this is mostly seen at zebra crossings where pedestrians often do not want to negotiate (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	<p>(Jensen 2010, 2013)</p>
<p>Need to stop pedestrian (bicycle)</p>	<p>Pedestrian stops carefully and stands back either at the sidewalk or on the road, not wanting to negotiate either (but in contrast to the former situation, merely waits for free passage (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	<p>(Jensen 2010, 2013)</p>
<p>Bicyclist give room</p>	<p>Illustrates a situation when one bicyclist gives more room and pass each other by changed direction but no slowing down.</p> 	<p>Own observation</p>
<p>Pedestrians + cars/other vehicles</p>		
<p>Car turns and stops</p>	<p>Car/bus stops avoiding confrontation when they turn right – especially when an orange traffic signal that drivers have to be aware of crossing pedestrians.</p> 	<p>Own observation</p>
<p>Stop for car</p>	<p>Pedestrian stops carefully and stands back either at the sidewalk or on the road, not wanting to negotiate either letting pass bus/car (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	<p>Own observation</p>
<p>Stop for pedestrian</p>	<p>Bus/car stops avoiding a confrontation – especially informal crossings (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	<p>Own observation</p>

Bicycles + Bicycles		
One gives in	<p>Illustrates a situation when one bicycle gives in a little and pass each other by, often one slows down, or changed direction, giving more room to the other (observed especially at bicycle lanes).</p> 	Own observation
Both give in	<p>Illustrates a situation when both bicyclists give in a little and pass each other by, often both slow down, or changed direction, giving more room to the other (observed especially at bicycle lanes).</p> 	Own observation
One gives room	<p>Illustrates a situation when one bicycle gives more room and pass each other by changed direction but often no slowing down.</p> 	Own observation
Both give room	<p>Illustrates a situation when both bicyclists give more room and pass each other by changed direction but often no slowing down.</p> 	Own observation
Bicycles + Cars/other vehicles		
Cars turn and stop (bicycles)	<p>Car/bus stops avoiding confrontation when they turn right – especially when drivers have to be aware of bicyclist if they want to turn right (into Friedensstraße).</p> 	Own observation
Bike squeezed by bus/car	<p>Evaluating the situation, and sometimes risk getting squeezed (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	(Jensen 2010, 2013)

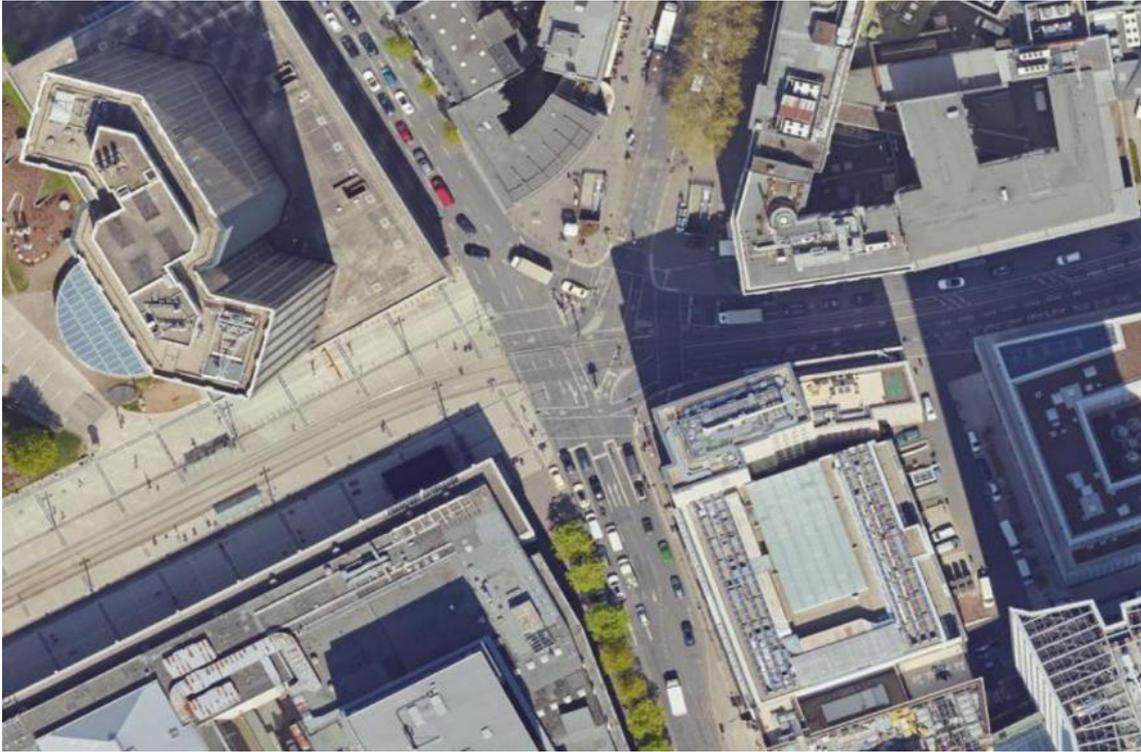
Pedestrians/bicycles + tram		
Stop for the tram	<p>Pedestrian/bicyclist stop carefully and stands back not wanting to negotiate either when a tram arrives or departs and thus waits for free passage.</p> 	Own observation
Squeezed by tram	<p>Evaluating the situation, and sometimes risk getting squeezed (Jensen 2013, orig. cit.).</p> 	Own observation
Cars/other vehicles + Cars/other vehicles		
Passing other vehicles	<p>Parallel negotiation in which one car driver pass the other by changing direction and with higher speed.</p> 	Own observation
<b>Mobile interaction tactics</b>		
Communicating (talking)	<p>Talking to each other – mostly seen when actors misinterpret each other and cannot anticipate their movement, or in conflict situations</p> <p>conversation or exclamation</p>	(Jensen 2013, 2014), own observation
Exchanging smiles	Observe if one or both users changes some smiled	Vasarini (2018)
Exchanges looks	Observe if one or both users looked at each other	Vasarini (2018)
Giving right of way	In a meeting, which user got the right of way? (related to speed before the interaction, characteristics of the users, piggybacking, B line tactic)	Vasarini (2018)
How different types of users are perceived	Observe how different groups (mother with stroller, small children on bike, elderly, people carrying objects, people wearing helmets and lycra clothing) are perceived in an interaction (related to given priority, B line tactic)	Vasarini (2018)
Swarming	Moving together with other people in a crowd characterised by forming and dissolving temporally and quickly.	Urban Cycling Institute
Push traffic light control button	Pushing the control button of traffic lights (signalling red) when people want to cross the street	Own observation
Using smart phone	Using smartphone for calling or texting someone, or looking at the screen	Own observation

<b>Interaction characteristics</b>		
Actors contribution	Main, secondary, passive	Jensen (2014)
Activity involvement	Dominant, subordinate, main, side	Scollon & Scollon (2003), Goffman ()
Human actors involved	Adults, elderly people, children, persons with injuries, impaired, animals	Jensen (2014)
Non-human actors involved	Objects, surrounding environment, infrastructure, traffic law: traffic lights, crosswalks, signs, posts, landmarks, speed bumps, automatic speed adjustment systems and speed cameras, reading advertisement, window shop, trains, rails, station, platforms, escalators, metro staff, travellers, signs, commercials, musicians, homeless, police force, tickets, ticket machines, power supplies, newspaper stands, coffee shops, customers, etc	
Number of people in a crowd (incl. temporary congregations)	Counting the number of people, in one same direction, involved in the interaction (related to getting right of way, pretend not to see).	Vasarini (2018)
Units of interaction order	<p>Singles – a person who is by himself or herself in a social space among others.</p> <p>Withs – two or more who are perceived as being together with each other as the main focus of their mutual attention</p> <p>Files and procession – groups which move together, whether more or less loosely formed as military parades or groups of tourists.</p> <p>Queues – aggregates of people, mostly not known to each other, who coordinate their activities so that they will arrive at some transaction point in a sequence.</p> <p>Contacts – the fleeting social interactions that are produced by glances of mutual recognition, but which are not allowed to segue into more fully developed forms such as the with or the service encounter.</p> <p>Service encounters – the social arrangements that occur when we procure and are delivered some service such as buying a cup of coffee at a counter or exchanging a bus ticket with the driver as we board a bus.</p> <p>Conversational encounters – a with which has as its main focus of attention the production and the maintenance of a state of talk among a relatively small group</p> <p>Meetings – more tightly structured encounters which normally have a declared purpose with a ratifiable set of participants, relatively clear beginnings and endings, and most often a char or facilitator.</p> <p>People-processing encounters – others have used the term gatekeeping encounters: social interactions which are polarised into those who have some power to define significant outcomes for those others normally must provide some account of themselves, like traffic violation tickets by the police.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interview</li> <li>- Screening</li> <li>- Examination</li> </ul> <p>Platform events – someone or a small group performs as a spectacle for others to watch whether on an elevated platform or encircled by the group of watchers.</p> <p>Celebrative occasions – social interactions which are tightly ritualized such as weddings, award ceremonies and the like where the actions of all participants are governed by prior scripts for performance.</p>	Goffman () in Scollon & Scollon (2003)
Interpersonal distances	<p>proximity to members, behavioural territory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intimate (touch to 18 inches)</li> <li>- Personal (18 inches to 4 feet)</li> <li>- Social (4 feet to 12 feet)</li> <li>- Public (12 feet to 25 feet)</li> </ul>	(Scollon & Scollon 2003), Hall (1959, 1969)
Cooperating/Conflict	Cooperation or conflict with social actor/material things (interacting with/constraint by others)	(Jensen 2014)

People with objects	Observe what people are carrying (related to predicting others' movement) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- communication technology: mobile phone, in-ears, headphones, etc.</li> <li>- bicycle (incl. e-bike, pedelec, cargo bike), skateboard (incl. long board) etc.</li> <li>- wheel chair, walking frame, electromobile for elder people, guide dog, white cane etc.</li> </ul>	Jensen (2010), Vasarini (2018)
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**Table 10: Annex C.3: Observation catalogue – Part III**

<b>3. Level: spatiality and temporality of interaction</b>		
Sit or pause events	Where, at the intersection, are sit and pause events?	Johnson (2013), own observation
Places used to cross	Observe the route, with the usage of pavement marks, and the destination	Vasarini (2018)
Frequent meeting events	Moments of encounter that are typical at a place	Own observation
Frequent travel pathways	Time-space diagram, aggregated paths	Bissell (2009b), Johnson (2013), own observation
Frequent Critical Points of Contact	Places of frequent interaction	Own observation
User interaction and hierarchy	overall impression of hierarchies between traffic modes and interaction potential	Goffman ()
<b>Physical Settings</b>		
Pavement materials	Separating of modes, asphalt street, red bike lane etc.	Own observation
Streets furniture	light poles, trash bins, benches, trees, fountain etc.	Peters (2017a), own observation
Semiotics (signs)	directional signs, shop signs, drawings on surface etc.	Scollon & Scollon (2003)



**Figure 29: Annex E.1:** Satellite Photo of Willy-Brandt-Platz (GeoInfo Frankfurt 2019)



**Figure 30: Annex E.2:** Willy-Brandt-Platz - Bicycle racks (own photo)



**Figure 31: Annex E.3: Willy-Brandt-Platz - Tram platform (own photo)**



**Figure 32: Annex E.4: Willy-Brandt-Platz - Städtische Bühnen (own photo)**



**Figure 33: Annex E.5: Willy-Brandt-Platz - View towards Friedensstraße (own photo)**



**Figure 34: Annex E.6: Willy-Brandt-Platz - View towards Weißfrauenstraße (own photo)**



**Figure 35: Annex E.7: Willy-Brandt-Platz - Bollards (own photo)**

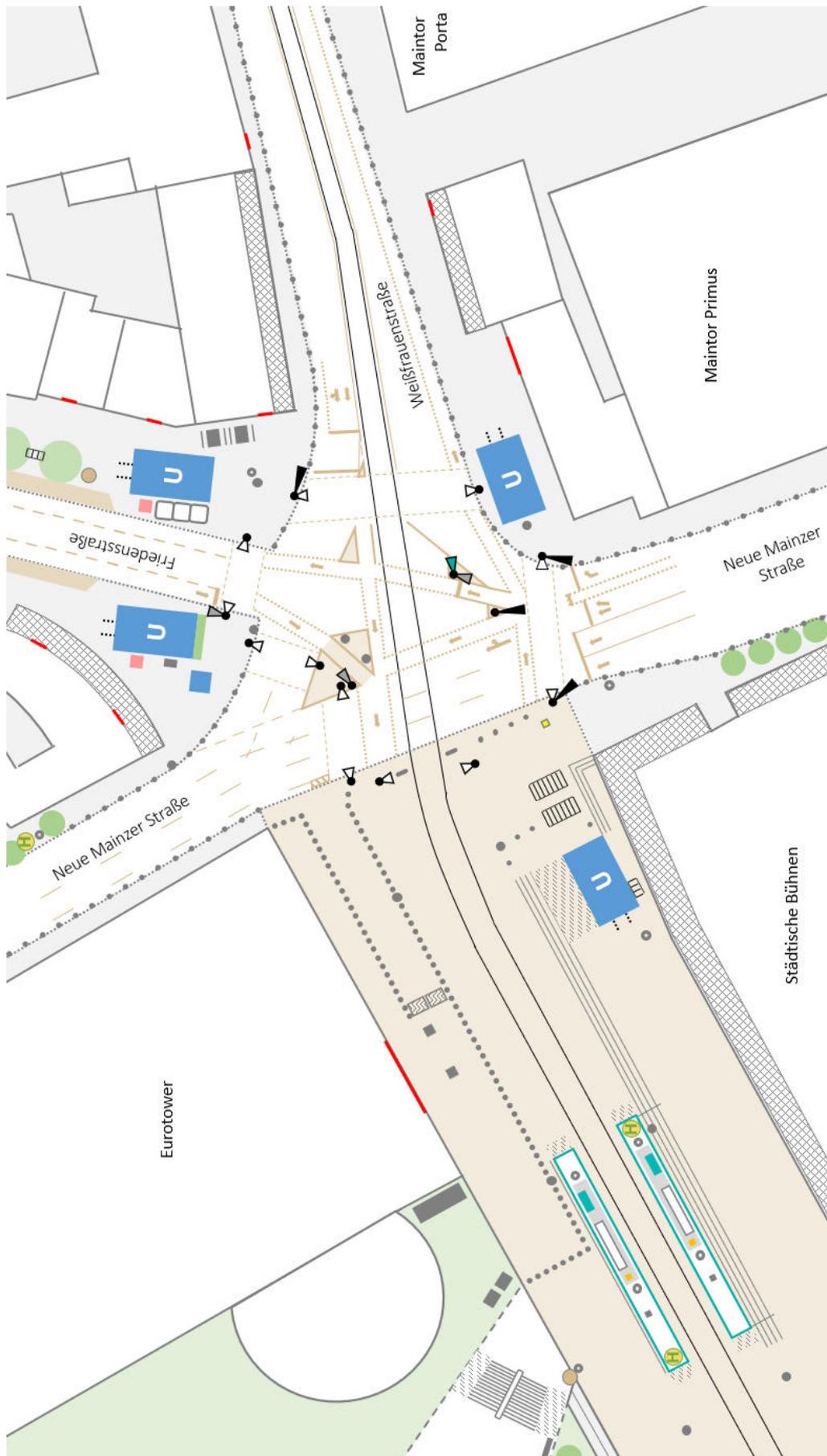


Figure 36: Annex F: Basic Map (own visualisation)

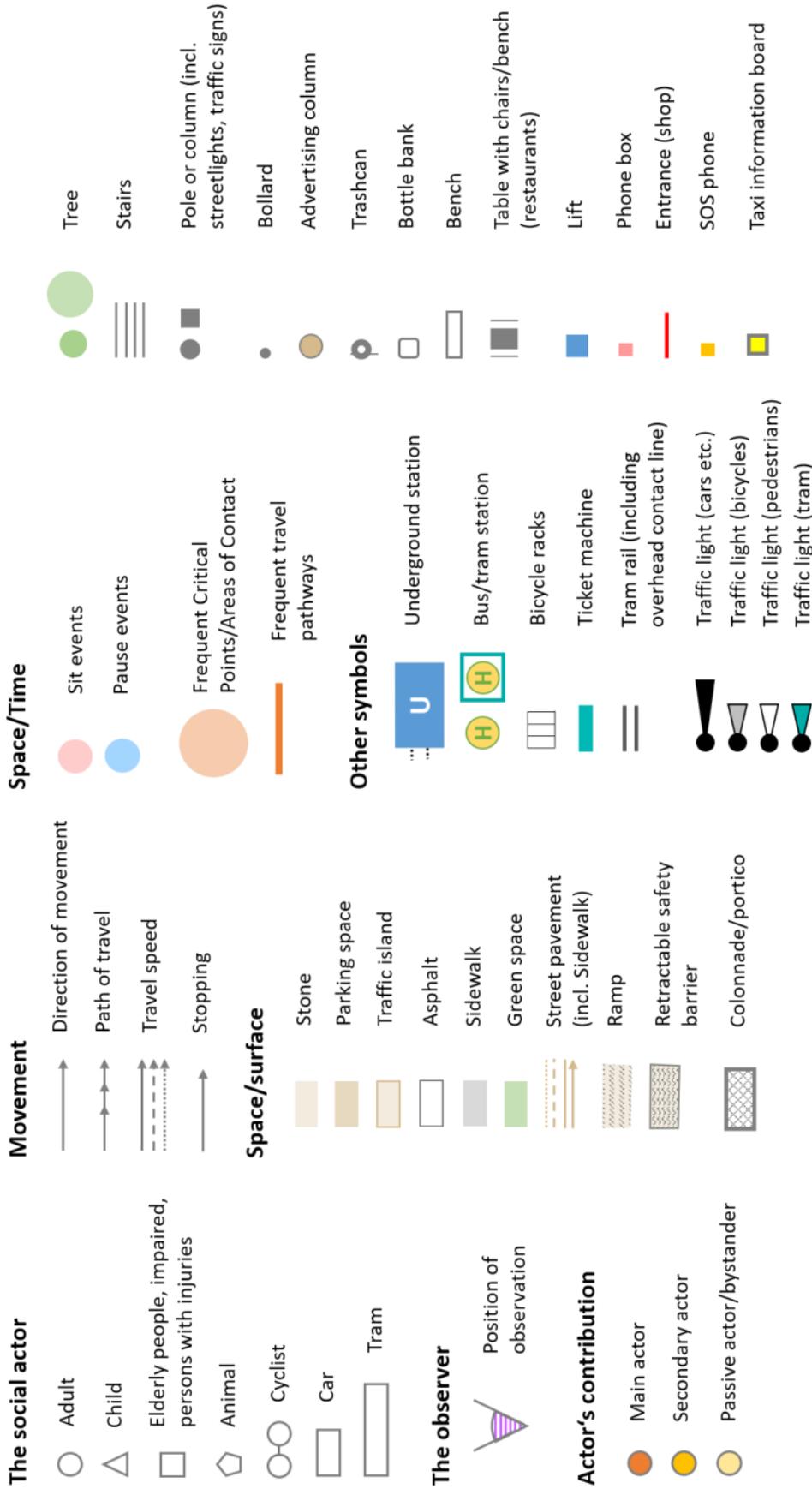


Figure 37: Annex G: Map Legend (own visualisation)

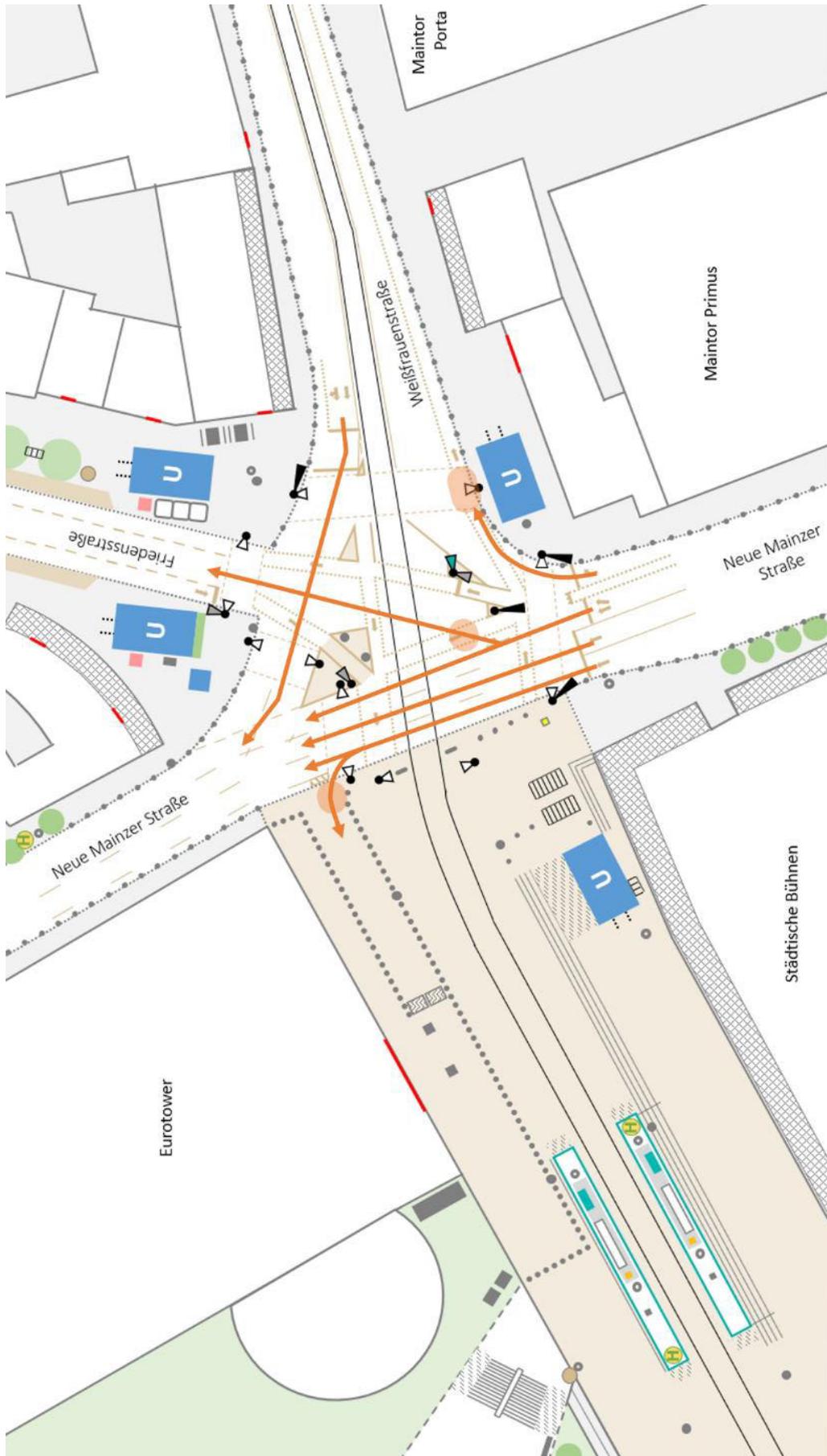
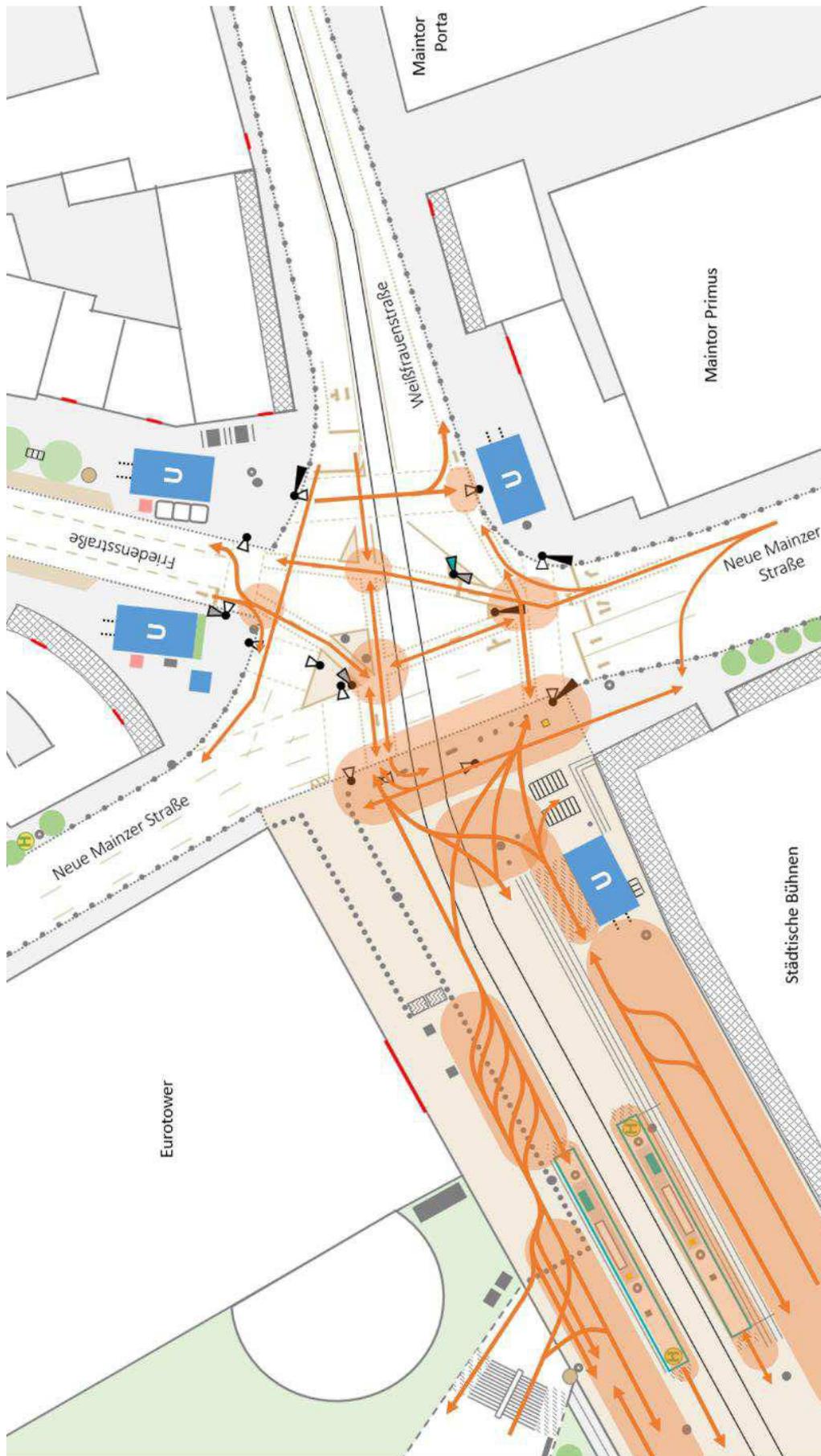


Figure 38: Annex H.1: Frequent travel path - cars (own visualisation)



**Figure 39: Annex H.2:** Frequent travel paths - bicycles (own visualisation)

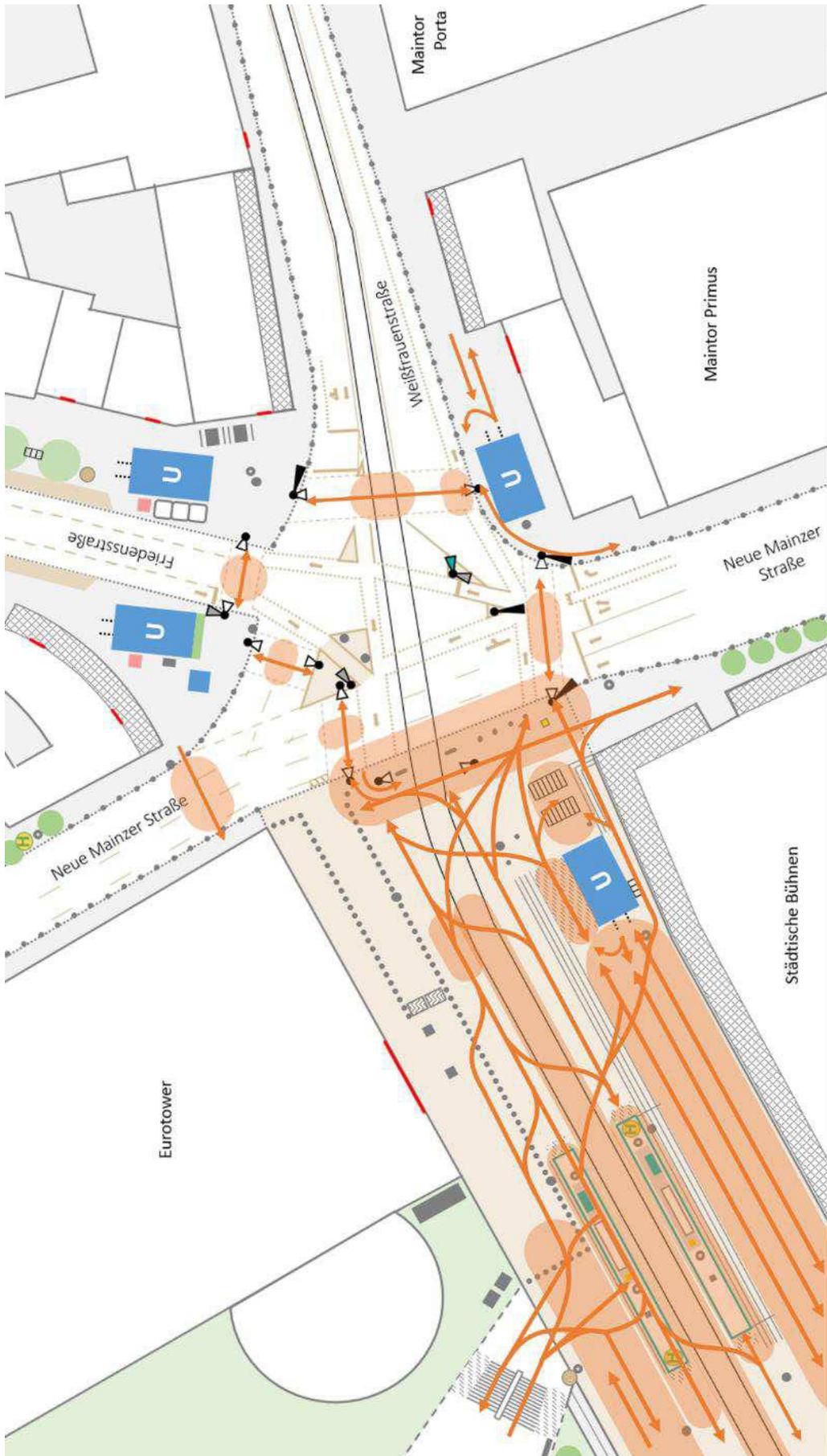
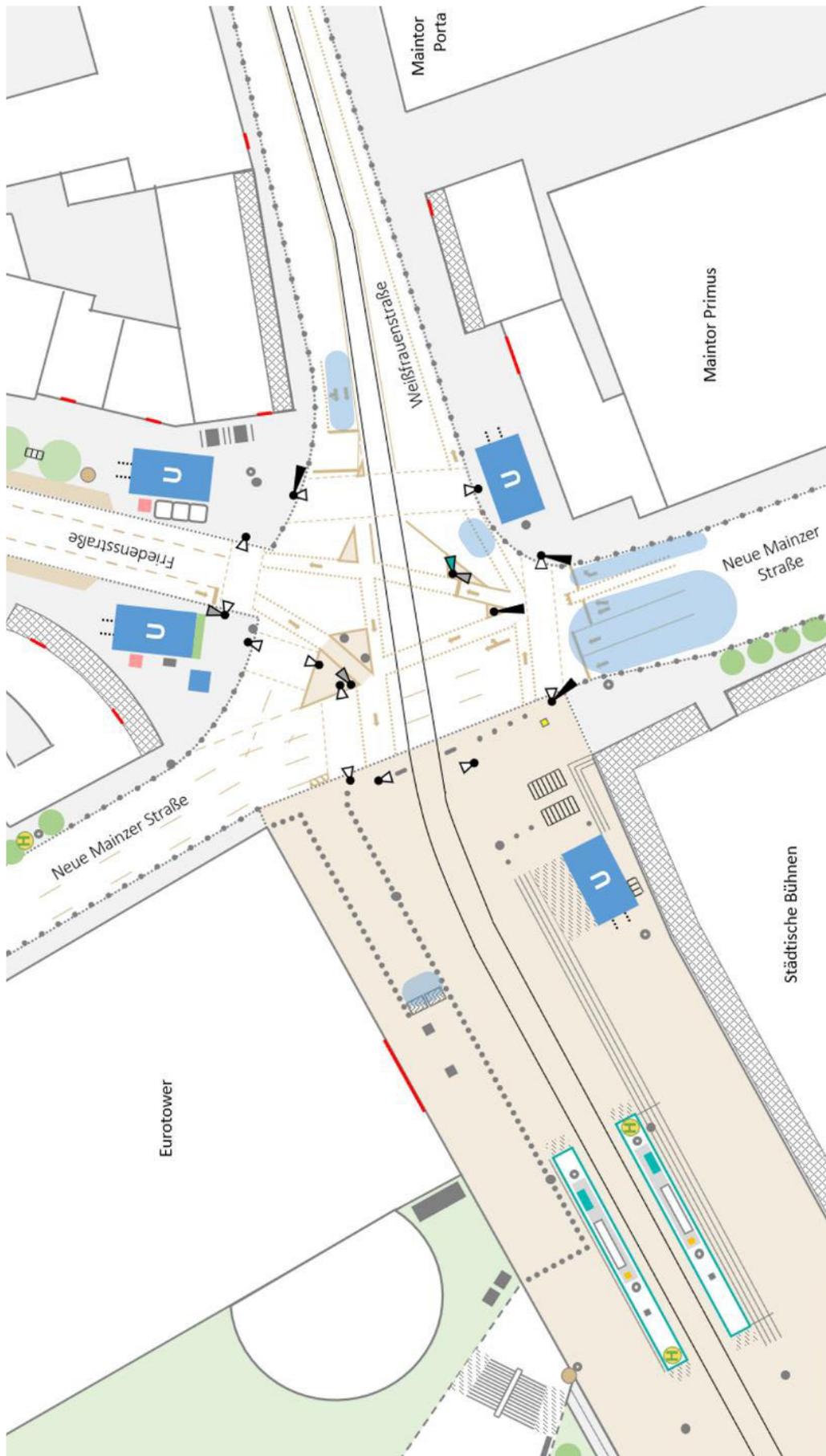


Figure 40: Annex H.3: Frequent travel path - pedestrians (own visualisation)



**Figure 41: Annex I.1: Sit and pause events - cars (own visualisation)**

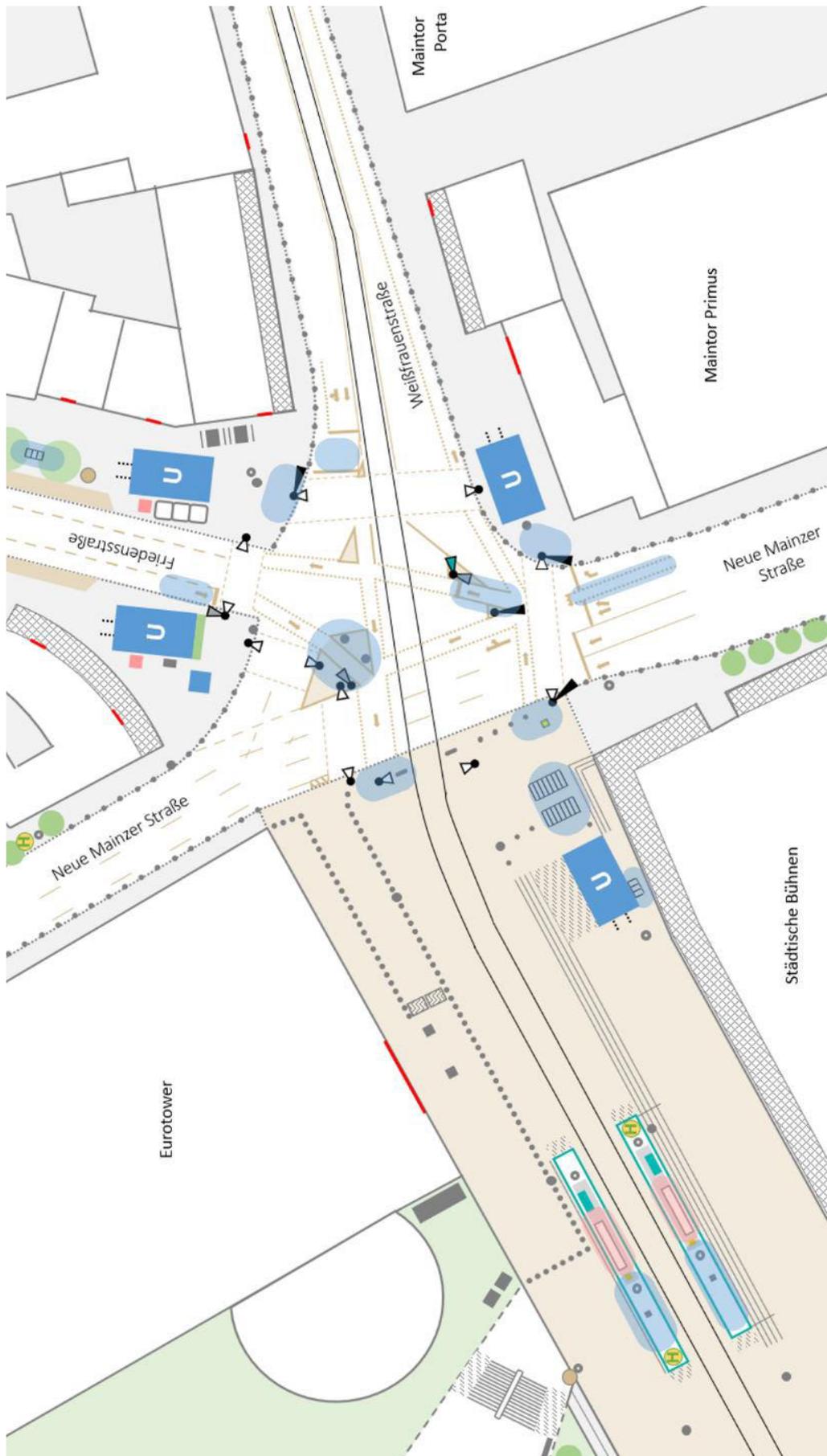
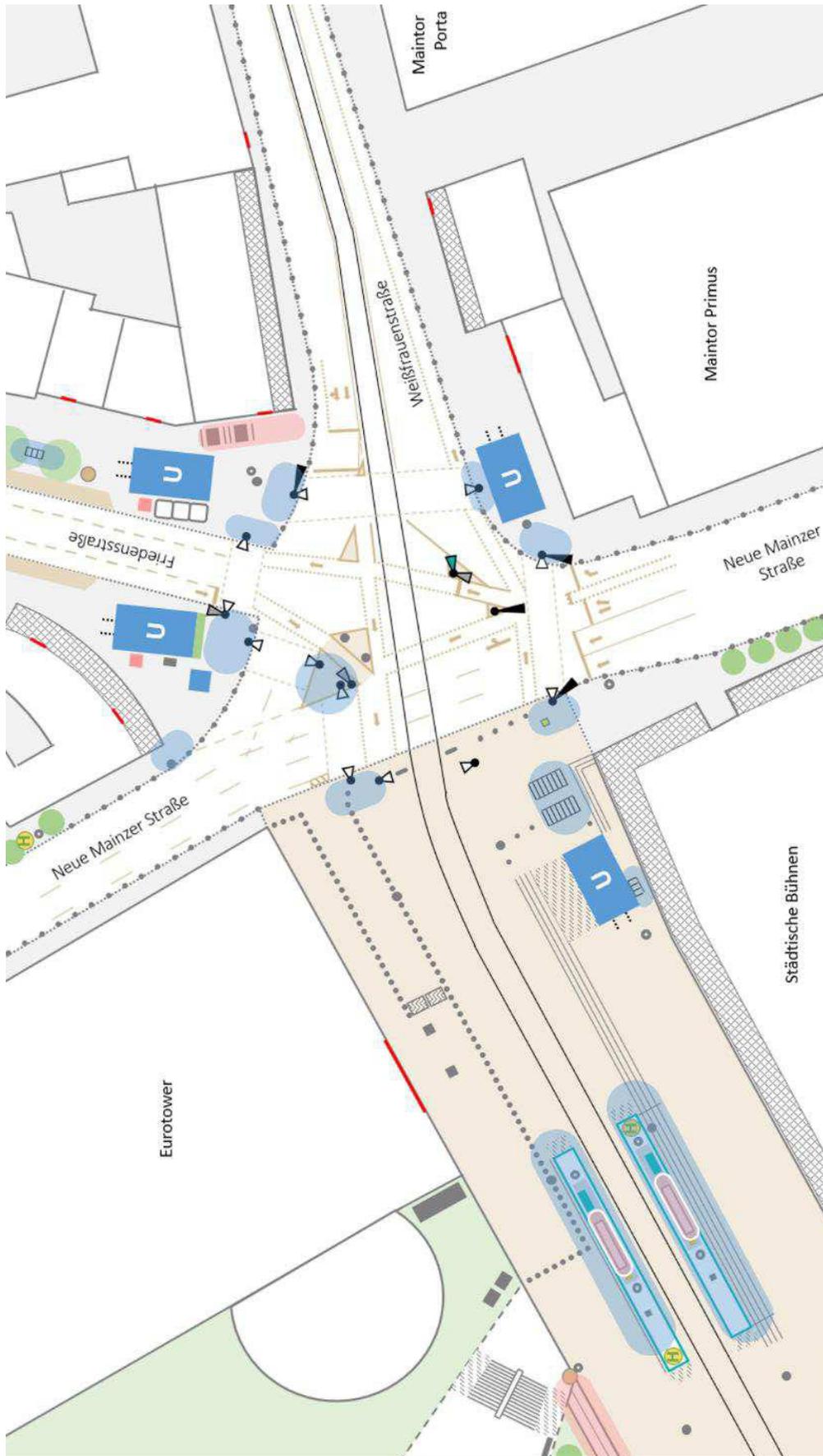


Figure 42: Annex I.2: Sit and pause events - bicyclists (own visualisation)



**Figure 43: Annex I.3: Sit and pause events - pedestrians (own visualisation)**



# Arbeitspapiere zur Mobilitätsforschung

In den Arbeitspapieren zur Mobilitätsforschung veröffentlichen wir Ergebnisse aus Forschung und Lehre der Goethe-Universität. Online erhältlich unter: <http://tinygu.de/Mobilitaet>

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19. Blechschmidt, A.; Czowalla, L.; Lanzendorf, M. (2018): Fahrrad und öffentlichen Verkehr gemeinsam denken: die Verknüpfung von Fahrradmobilität mit öffentlichem Verkehr als Beitrag zu Daseinsvorsorge und Klimaschutz. Ein Handlungsleitfaden für Bund, Länder, Kommunen sowie Mobilitätsdienstleister. Arbeitspapiere zur Mobilitätsforschung Nr. 19. Frankfurt a.M.
18. Czowalla, L.; Blechschmidt, A.; Busch, D.; Fromberg, A.; Grün, C.; Gwiasda, P.; Hartmann, P.; Wilde, M.; Lanzendorf, M. (2018): Handlungsansätze zur verbesserten Verknüpfung von Fahrrad und Öffentlichem Verkehr. Eine vertiefende Analyse von vier Fallstudien. Arbeitspapiere zur Mobilitätsforschung Nr. 18. Frankfurt a.M.
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16. Schwerdtfeger, S.; Wilde, M.; Lanzendorf, M. (2018): Motive des Fahrens ohne (gültigen) Fahrschein. Arbeitspapiere zur Mobilitätsforschung Nr. 16. Frankfurt a.M.
15. Czowalla, L.; Busch, D.; Fromberg, A.; Gwiasda, P.; Wilde, M.; Lanzendorf, M. (2017): Neuere Entwicklungen zur Integration von Fahrrad und Öffentlichem Verkehr in Deutschland: Überblick zum Stand des Wissens und der Praxis. Arbeitspapiere zur Mobilitätsforschung Nr. 15. Frankfurt a.M.
14. Schwerdtfeger, S.; Wilde, M.; Lanzendorf, M. (2017): Dokumentation von Best-Practice-Beispielen zum Umgang mit dem Fahren ohne (gültigen) Fahrschein. Arbeitspapiere zur Mobilitätsforschung Nr. 14. Frankfurt a.M.
13. Selzer, S.; Kruse, C.; Wilde, M.; Lanzendorf, M. (2016): Integration von Fernbuslinienangeboten. Anforderungen an und Handlungsoptionen für städtebauliche und verkehrliche Integration der Fernbusse in lokale Verkehrssysteme. Ergebnisse einer Fahrgastbefragung in Frankfurt am Main. Arbeitspapiere zur Mobilitätsforschung Nr. 13. Frankfurt a.M.

12. Schwerdtfeger, S.; Wilde, M.; Mehler, F.; Lanzendorf, M. (2016): Fahren ohne gültigen Fahrschein. Stand der Forschung und medialer Diskurs. Arbeitspapiere zur Mobilitätsforschung Nr. 12. Frankfurt a.M.
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