

Designing for Spatial Democracy in Public Urban Space?

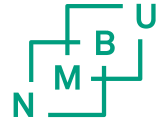
The case of shared space

Sebastian Peters, sepe@nmbu.no
PhD candidate and research fellow,
ILP (Inst. for Landscape Architecture and Planning)

Structure of lecture

- Introduction
 - «Shared Space»
 - the Shared Space challenge
- Case study: St Olavs Plass in Oslo – «uncontrolled» negotiation of space and movement
- Discussion: Shared Space from a landscape democracy perspective?

Shared Space

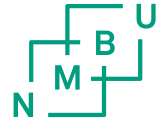


Sonnenfelsplatz, Graz, Austria



<http://www.sensational-adelaide.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=5275>

Shared Space



New Road, Brighton, UK



<http://sustainablecitiescollective.com/walkonomics/31709/are-streets-more-walkable-if-pavements-are-removed>

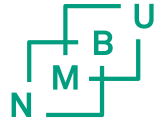
Shared Space

Mariahilfer Strasse, Vienna, Austria



Theoretical basis of Shared Space idea

- Shared Space as a governance challenge?



Technical behaviour

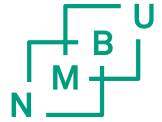
- Top-down,
externally imposed order



Social behaviour

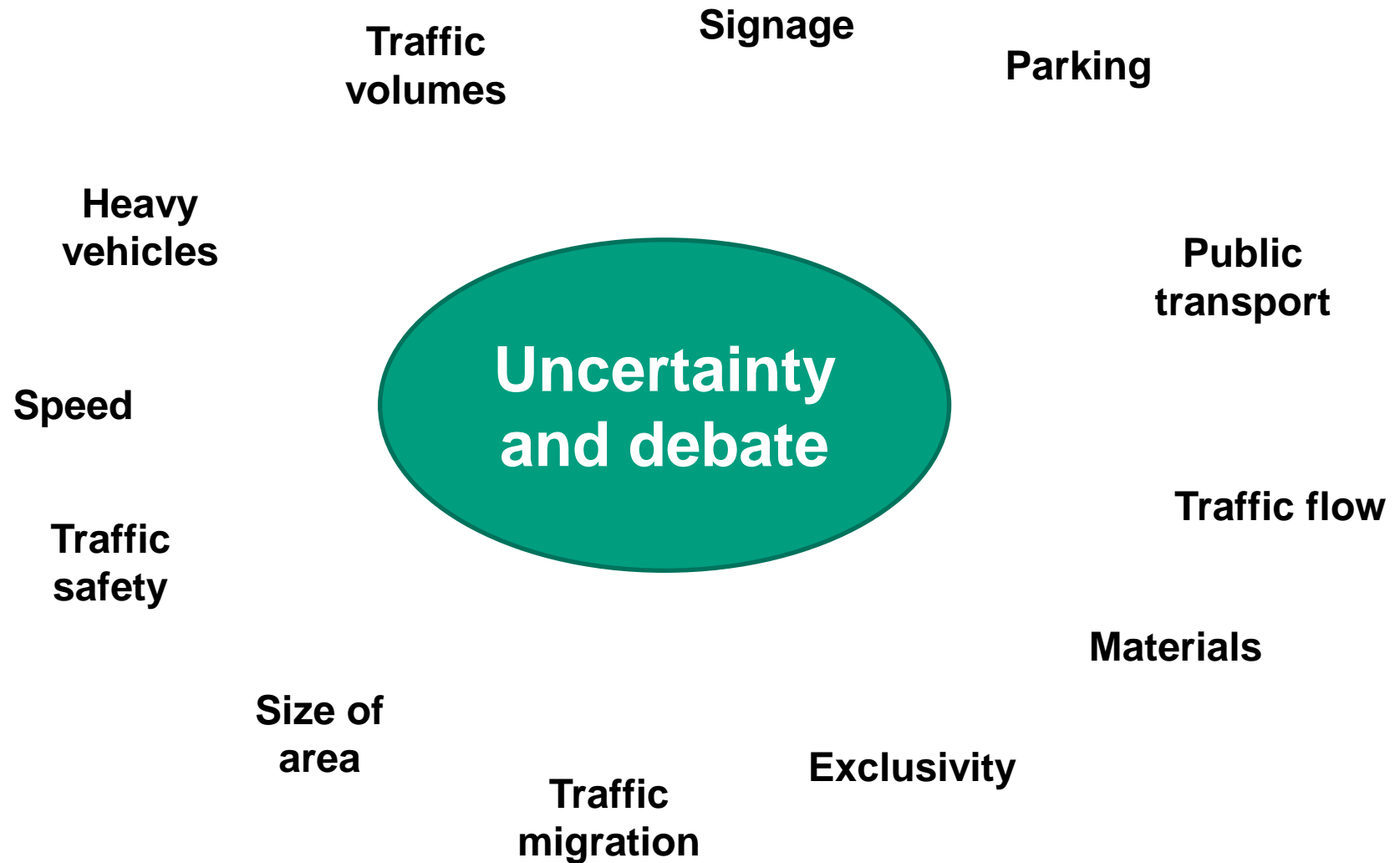
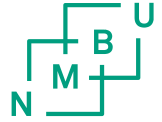
- Bottom-up,
socially created order

Shared space as a challenging idea



- The shared space idea as a critique to existing approaches, on **two** levels:
 - **Professional (planning, design)**
 - Rejects prevailing concepts of traffic regulation and street design
 - **User level**
 - An urban landscape that challenges conventional means of interaction in streets

Typical “standard issues”



Research focus

- How does social interaction play out, under Shared Space conditions?
- How, and to what extend, do users engage in *creating order*?

Case study of social interaction: St Olavs Plass - Oslo







Photo: Arne Langleite

STOP 2

1. floor
restaurant/café
2.+ offices

STOP 3

1. floor: café, supermarket
2.+ offices

Universitetsgata 2

1. floor: Post office
2.+ offices

STOP 5

Oslo University,
Faculty of law

STOP 1

1. floor: Scandic hotel, bar, restaurant
and Theater Edderkobben
2+ Hotel rooms / meeting rooms



Street:
St Olavs gate

Street:
Munchs gate

Street:
Universitets-
gate

Street:
St Olavs gate

Street:
Langens
gate

Street activities related
to building

- Street serving on entire sidewalk
- Meeting, drinking, eating, talking, relaxing
- Children play in sculpture while parents sit at restaurant
- Lunch breaks in sculpture

Street activities related
to building

- Café Chairs, tables and benches used by customers.
- Meeting, drinking, eating, talking, relaxing
- Children play in sculpture while parents sit at cafe
- Lunch breaks in sculpture
- Bicycle parking.
- Divers service vehicles

Street activities related
to building

- People sit on stone chairs and stone wall.
- Preferred stopping space for vehicles.
- Walk through sidewalk.
- Lunch breaks in sculpture

Street activities related
to building

- Students and employees have breaks in sculpture and visit cafe/restaurant

Street activities related
to building

- Guests arrive and leave.
- Tourist busses maneuver
- Guests visit square / sculpture
- Cafe serving outside
- Meeting, drinking, eating, talking, relaxing

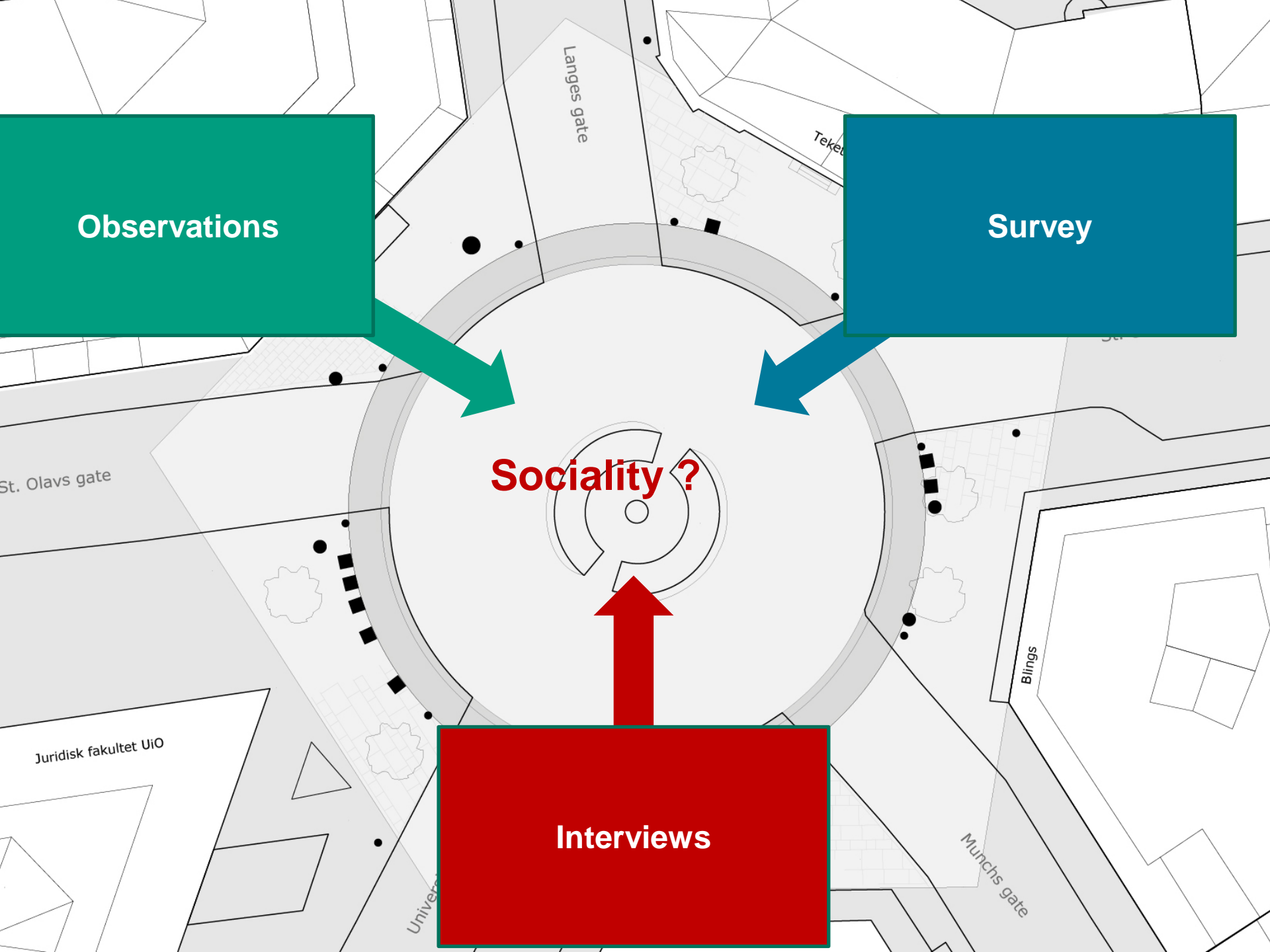


Observations

Survey

Sociality ?

Interviews





ACK architect:

**“Strange things happen at St Olavs Plass
– things we didn’t expect to happen there
...!”**



bingo

SSP

bingo

bingo

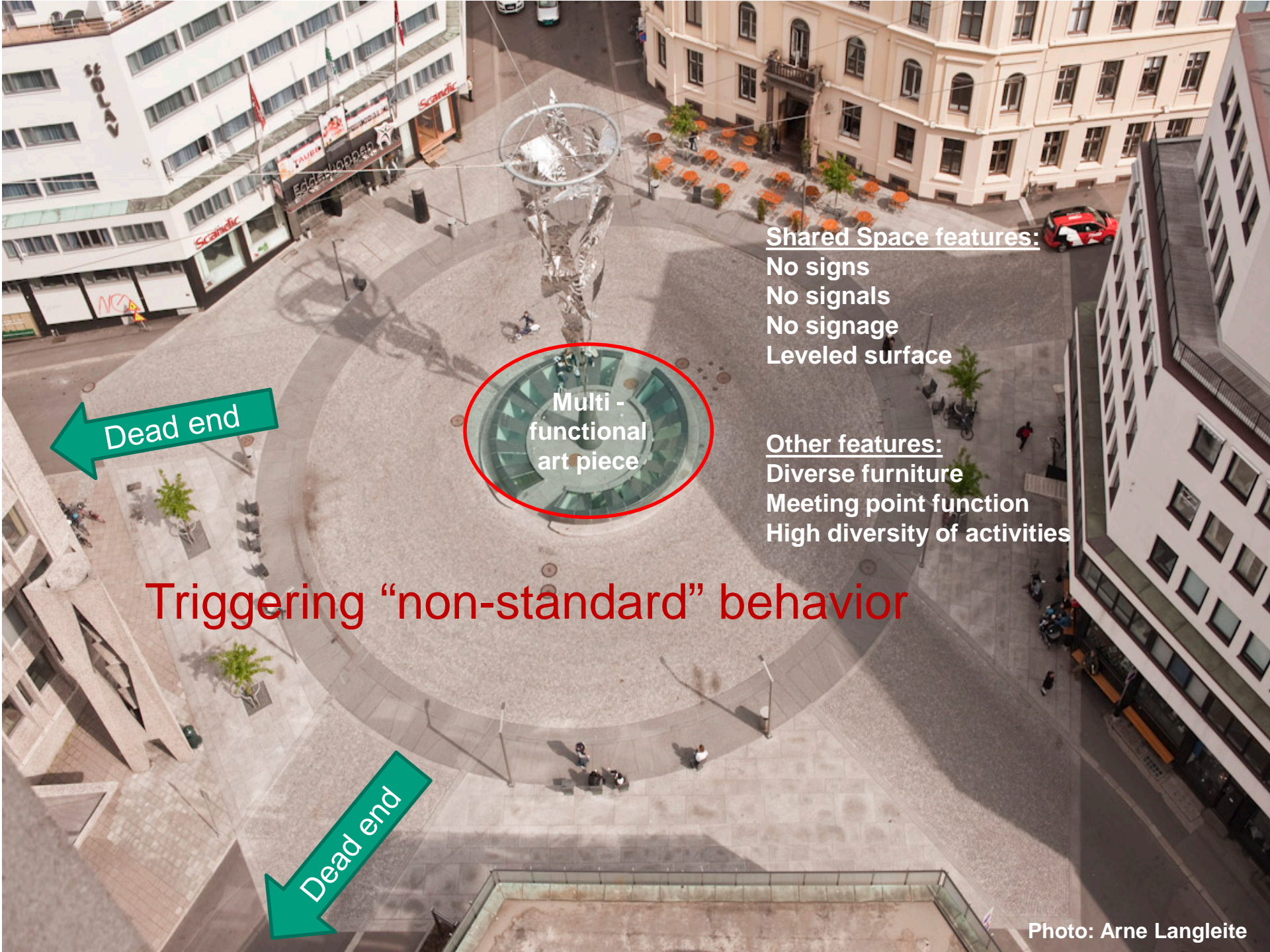












Dead end

Multi-functional art piece

Shared Space features:

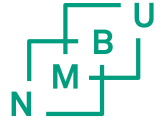
- No signs
- No signals
- No signage
- Leveled surface

Other features:

- Diverse furniture
- Meeting point function
- High diversity of activities

Triggering "non-standard" behavior

Dead end

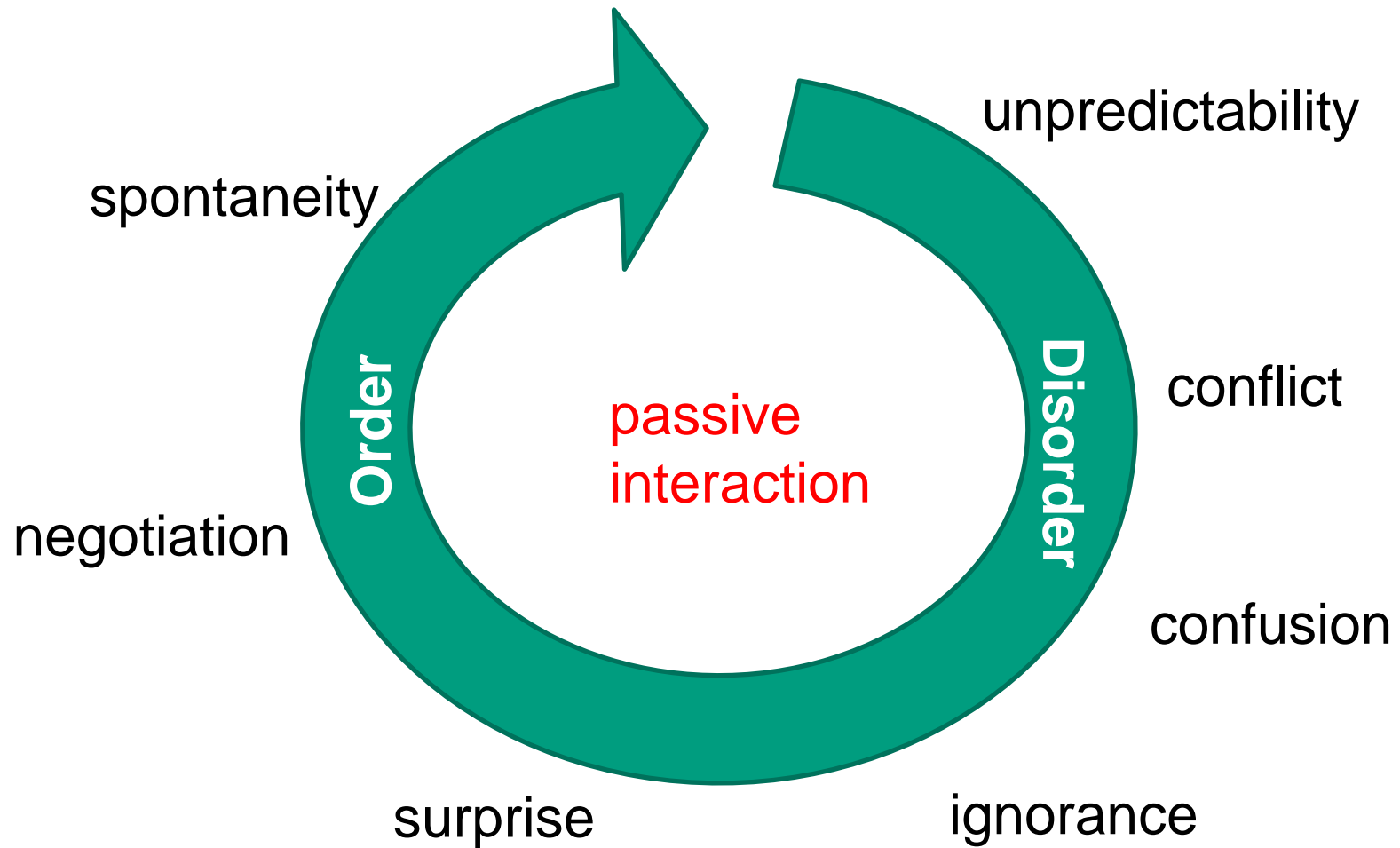
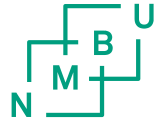


Prel. Findings

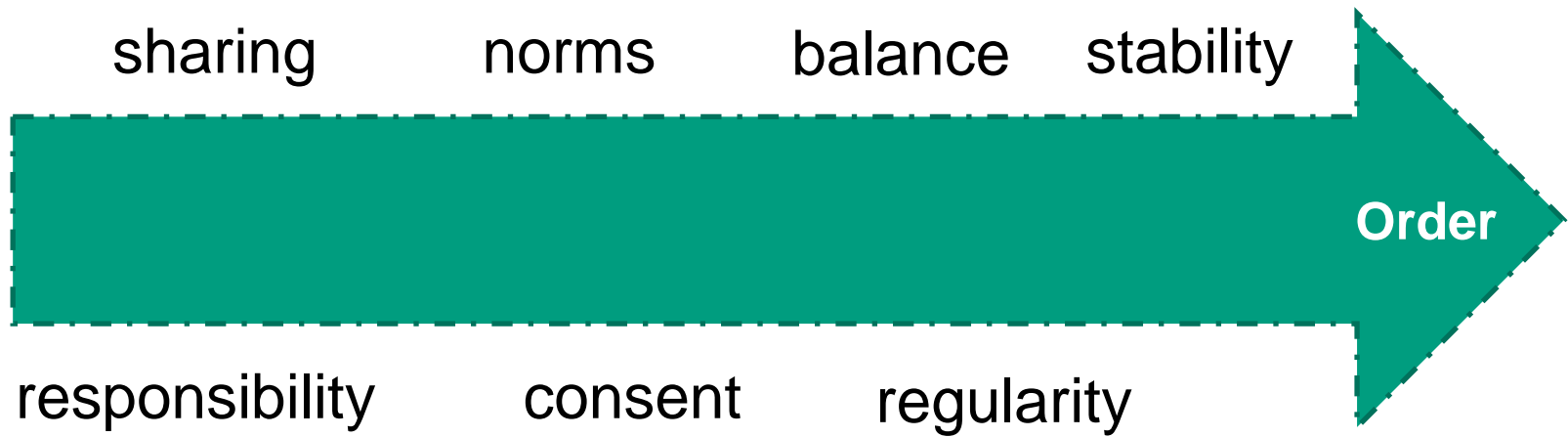
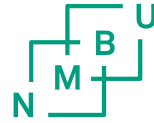
- Socio-spatial characteristics
 - Light confusion and conflict
 - High frequency and variation of “non-standard” behaviour
 - Dissonance instead of harmony
 - Constant renewal and re-negotiation of momentary order
 - Many versions of order (in terms of user composition, activities, noise, weather)
-

Prel. findings:

Shared space from the “inside” (user view)

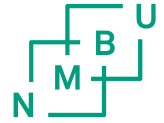


Shared space from the “outside” (the representative view)



The social surplus

- Ash Amin (2007):
 - «virtue» of public place is conditioned by:
 - openness
 - crowdedness, diversity,
 - incompleteness,
 - improvisation,
 - disorder or light regulation.



Reflection: «Landscape» negotiated?

- Users apply strategies of passive interaction - **minimize direct interaction**
- Users **struggle with themselves** not only the space is ambiguous, but users are as well
- Users create the «landscape» momentary – socio-spatial constellations are constantly changing

Discussion - Democracy?

- Does sharing imply democracy?
- From what perspective can you call this landscape democracy?
- Passive democracy?

Thank you for
your attention!

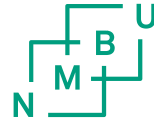




Photo: Arne Langleite