

## **Abstract**

### **CYCLING AS URBAN PRESENCE** an analysis of everyday cycling in Copenhagen

More than 35% of Copenhagen's residents cycle daily to work, schools, institutions and other places within the city area. Bicycle as a daily means of transport has been common in Denmark for almost a hundred years and represents a deeply integrated part of Danish life and mainstream culture. With the increasing international and national focus on climate change and economic downturn, promotion of urban cycling suddenly appears high on the political agenda. Decision-makers around the world are discovering or re-discovering urban cycling and a great attention has been devoted to its many alleged and scientifically proved environmental and health benefits.

However, in the midst of this dawn of the bicycle, very few have attempted to look at the personal sensuous implications of using a bicycle as an everyday urban means of transport. The fundamental question of what actually creates an individual's experience of cycling in an urban context has so far hardly been raised.

My thesis is trying to tackle the question of an individual urban cyclist experience through an innovative method bringing together subjective and objective elements of a wide range of data gathered on one particular bicycle commute through Copenhagen. Getting inspiration from French philosopher Michel de Certeau's work, I have tried to develop a method that can depict a biker's movement through the urban space and convey how and why the manner in which an urban cyclist senses and experiences the cityscape is unique and different from other means of urban movement.

The observations and conclusions of this thesis point towards a better understanding of the urban cyclist situation from a new angle which I believe could be used in a few areas outside the academic world, namely in city development and promotion of cycling and bicycle culture. The conclusions of this thesis could also be used as a part of a comprehensive manual on urban cycling in places with a limited cycling tradition as they present an inside look into what urban cycling is and can be for a cyclist and his/her relationship to the city.

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