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The Invisible Processes of Urban Design

A Qualitative Investigation into the Dynamics of Collective Decision-Making

in Urban Development and their Potential for Spatial Quality

THESIS

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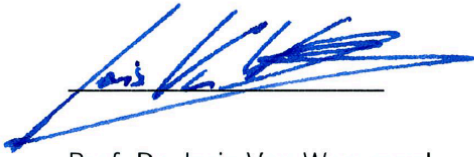
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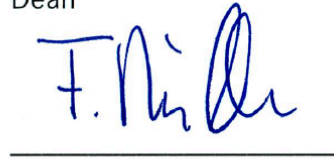
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Summary

In recent decades, the urban landscape of Switzerland has changed drastically and is now in sharp contrast to the ideals of planners and urban designers, such as the compact form of the *Historical European City*. Especially for the agglomeration areas, the call for a re-qualification of the built environment is strong, where spatial quality is still low from a planning and urban design viewpoint. In the thesis at hand, it is argued that the quality of the built environment is not failing mainly due to a lack of quality goals and imprecise normative concepts rather it fails because of scarce knowledge about the dynamics of spatially relevant decision-making. From a relational perspective, it becomes clear that *content* cannot be separated from *process*. Consequently, the important question is not what good spatial quality *is*, but how quality goals and normative concepts are embedded in and emerge through decision-making processes. This question addresses a hidden process on which conventional perspectives in the urban design field do not focus.

In this cumulative dissertation, a *place-making* perspective is chosen in order to uncover the invisible processes of urban design. Consequently, the empirical investigation focuses on the analysis of the dynamics of local planning strategies and urban development projects in suburban and periurban areas in Switzerland and the identification of potentials for spatial quality. In particular, ten site developments in five municipalities were analyzed in-depth in order to comprehend the mechanisms of decision-making. The observed dynamics in turn served as entry points for the investigation of the robustness of spatial quality concepts.

Three major tendencies in contemporary *place-making* have been identified: the lack of open decision-making forums and functional logics of thinking, the de-politicization of spatial quality debates and the tendency to fix quality goals. As a consequence of these mechanisms and their inherent *logic of control*, an intensified fragmentation of the already heterogeneous urban landscape in agglomeration areas has been observed. Since these fragmented landscapes are produced rather systematically, I propose not to condemn heterogeneity per se but to consider it as a potential guideline for spatial quality that addresses the locally grown structures. Finally, through the liberation from the *logic of control*, potentials both for a better qualification of existing urban landscapes and for the activation of spatially relevant actor-networks are opened up. One of the crucial elements of such a new planning and urban design ethos is the establishment of open forums, in which spatial quality is politicized and debated beyond formal political institutions and expert systems.

Zusammenfassung

In den letzten Jahrzehnten hat sich die Siedlungslandschaft der Schweiz drastisch verändert und steht heute im Widerspruch zu den Idealen von Planern und Städtebauern, wie z.B. die kompakte Form der *Historischen Europäischen Stadt*. Vor allem in den Agglomerationen ist der Ruf nach einer Re-Qualifizierung der gebauten Umwelt stark, wo die Siedlungsqualität aus der Sicht der genannten Disziplinen negativ beurteilt wird. In der vorliegenden Arbeit argumentiere ich, dass die Qualifizierung der bebauten Umwelt hauptsächlich nicht an fehlenden Qualitätszielen und unpräzisen normativen Konzepten scheitert, sondern am geringen Wissen über die Dynamik von raumrelevanten Entscheidungsprozessen. Aus einer relationalen Perspektive wird klar, dass *Inhalt* nicht von *Prozess* getrennt werden kann. Dementsprechend stellt sich in erster Linie nicht die Frage was gute Qualität *ist*, sondern wie Qualitätsziele in Entscheidungsprozessen eingebettet sind und wie sie handlungswirksam werden. Diese Frage verweist auf einen versteckten Prozess, der nicht im Vordergrund von herkömmlichen Betrachtungsweisen im Städtebau steht.

Um die unsichtbaren Prozesse des Städtebaus aufzudecken, wurde für diese kumulative Dissertation entsprechend eine prozessorientierte *place-making* Perspektive gewählt. Konsequenterweise fokussiert die empirische Studie auf die Analyse von Dynamiken in lokalen Planungsstrategien und räumlichen Entwicklungsprojekten in suburbanen und periurbanen Gebieten in der Schweiz und die Identifikation von Potentialen für räumliche Qualität. Im Speziellen wurden zehn Arealentwicklungen in fünf Gemeinden tiefgehend analysiert, mit dem Ziel, die Mechanismen der Entscheidungsfindung zu verstehen. Die beobachteten Dynamiken dienten wiederum als Einstiegspunkte für die Studie von Robustheiten von Qualitätskriterien.

Es konnten drei Tendenzen im heutigen *place-making* identifiziert werden: Das Fehlen von offenen Entscheidungsforen und funktionale Denklogiken, die De-Politisierung von Debatten über räumliche Qualität und die Tendenz, Qualitätsziele zu fixieren. Es wurde zudem beobachtet, dass diese Mechanismen und ihre inherente *Logik der Kontrolle* zu einer intensivierten Fragmentierung des ohnehin schon heterogenen Siedlungsraumes in Agglomerationen führen. Da dies in einer systematischen Art und Weise vonstatten geht, möchte ich vorschlagen, dass Heterogenität nicht per se verurteilt sondern als potentielle Leitlinie für räumliche Qualität gelesen wird, die lokal gewachsenen Strukturen mit aufnimmt. Potentiale für eine bessere Qualifizierung der Siedlungslandschaften und zu einer Aktivierung von raumrelevanten Akteur-Netzwerken ergeben sich schliesslich durch eine Befreiung von der *Logik der Kontrolle*, im Speziellen durch die Etablierung von offenen Foren, in der räumliche Qualität im Sinne einer breiten Debatte jenseits von formalen politischen Gremien und Expertensystemen politisiert und debattiert werden kann.

1. A New Perspective on Urban Design

1.1. Between regret and desire: Failed planning policies and the call for *Stadt machen*

In recent decades, the urban landscape in Switzerland has changed drastically: since the 1980s, new settlement growth has risen about 24%, about the size of Lake Geneva (Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE, 2014). Today, one square meter of agricultural land is lost every second. Settlement areas are still growing faster than the population. Not only has the absolute population increased, but the area occupied per person has also increased from 34sqm in 1980 to 45sqm in 2012 (Swiss Federal Office of Statistics, 2014). This tendency is in sharp contrast to the ideals of spatial planning, in particular, the efficient use of land, which is written into the Constitution (*haushälterische Nutzung des Bodens*, Art. 75 Raumplanung, Paragraph 1) and should protect the natural and cultural landscape. Planners and urban designers, as well as the majority of politicians and Swiss people, have agreed that urban sprawl is a serious problem, not only based on ecological reasons, but also economic and social reasons, such as the costs for infrastructure maintenance and social segregation. In the recent ballot on the new spatial planning law in March 2013, Swiss people voted for a slight centralization of planning authority, particularly a more effective cantonal practice to control communal land use development as well as a value-added tax on new zoning. This strengthens the capacity to limit settlement use and supports strategies for densification and development within the urban fabric, which have formed the goals of planning policies since the spatial planning law was passed in 1979, but obviously has not had the intended effect on urban development.

The reinforcement of these strategies implies that the existing urban fabric is going to be re-structured, which in turn puts the issue of what is good spatial quality and how spatial qualities can be claimed, assured and generated in the necessary transformation processes. The use of fuzz-words such as "density stress" in the current vote for the restriction of immigration from the EU countries underlines the societal explosiveness of this issue. The call for a re-qualification of the built environment is especially strong in agglomeration areas where urban designers and planners agree there are neither urban nor rural spatial qualities. Caught between the (seeming) dichotomy between village and city, there seems to be only one way out: transformation into a city (*Stadt machen*). As a strong normative point of orientation, not a few urban designers and planners call for a return to the morphological principles of the *Historical European City* with a dense and compact form, short distances, a strengthening of

public spaces and mixed use. They share this opinion with the Management Committee of the National Research Program NRP 65: New Urban Quality (see chapter 1.3.), which says that an urban quality is missing in the agglomeration areas and therefore concepts and strategies on how these spaces can be made into a city must be researched. As the past has shown, and is still true today, such normative objectives have collided with local practice and often break down during the actual implementation in development and construction processes. The strong call for creating cities (*Stadt machen*) and the discrepancies between the goals and the realities of the types of settlements that are produced daily, brought the present work to its starting point.

1.2. Qualifying the built environment: A question of process knowledge

The doctoral thesis presents the issue that the failure of this (specific) idea of the city does not have to do with missing or imprecise content goals and quality concepts rather it is mainly a lack of understanding of the decision-making process in urban development. Consequently knowledge about such decision-making processes is needed, in particular about:

- The dynamic of spatially relevant decision-making in general
- The relationship between goal formulation in strategies and implementation in concrete projects
- The relationship between dynamics of decision-making and concepts of spatial qualities
- The relationship between planning and urban design

Starting from this assumption, the research for this dissertation investigated the conditions and potential for spatial quality in suburban and periurban areas from a relational perspective. From a relational point of view, it is clear that content and process cannot be separated from one another and the question of spatial quality will always be embedded in specific constellations of actors and decision-making processes and must be so. Accordingly, the relevant question for this work is not what *is* good spatial quality, rather how quality goals and normative concepts appear in processes and can be effective. In other words: How spatial concepts are qualified in the decision-making process. Consequently, the study of content-process relationships is the core of the research: How far does the dynamic of decision-making processes ("process") influence the concepts of spatial quality ("content") and the reverse? How and why do certain concepts materialize and others do not?

1.3. The NRP 65 as research context

The dissertation presented here was conducted within the framework of the National Research Program NRP 65 "New Urban Quality". The NRP 65 set itself the goal to develop concepts and strategies to promote a new urban quality. The program consists of various projects. This dissertation was part of the project "Urban Ruptures / Local Interventions: Perspectives of a Suburban Planning" that assumed that the capacity for design disciplines urban design and architecture is essentially influenced through decision-making processes in politics, spatial planning and administration. Starting from this hypothesis, three dissertations in the disciplines political sciences, planning studies / geography and ethnography explored how concepts of spatial quality in situations of increased transformation of the built environment are formulated, negotiated and translated into spatial policies, planning strategies, development projects and administrative routines. The entry points for the project were planning and urban design activities that take place in selected suburban and periurban municipalities. The main research question of the project is then which concepts of spatial quality are current and relevant, what vehicles were used for their circulation, how they change and how robust such concepts are. For example, a city architect has a vision of a busy square with a Mediterranean flair, for his community. It is manifested in the form of an illustrative example in a strategic guideline, which was formulated in a political process. Through an urban design competition, then this guideline was implemented as a specific model. Finally, this model was translated into the plans that are needed to legitimize the project through the local authorities and became manifest in the built environment. The project retraces these transformation processes and uses the knowledge of the dynamics of decision-making processes to find intervention points for a promotion of a desired spatial quality. While the other two dissertations of the NRP project cover the areas of administration and politics, this dissertation focuses on planning, however, it also connects planning to the other areas by using a process perspective. Its core theme is thus the process and the accompanying changing relationship between actors from these areas, but not a specific "field" itself. Finally, these processes were examined in the context of suburban and periurban municipalities that find themselves in a phase of increased transformation in the built environment and therefore in a phase of reorganization.

1.4. Aims and contributions

Through its relational approach, the dissertation provides a scientific contribution to current social sciences at the interface of planning and urban design. On the theoretical and methodological levels, the thesis develops, based on the concepts of social complexity, a process-oriented approach to decision-making in general, and politics, strategy and agency in particular. This approach sees these concepts in a more expanded environment than the area of planning. Moreover, the dissertation develops a practice-oriented version of *Assemblage Thinking* and therefore reacts to current critics of this particular relational approach. In the disciplines of urban design, as well for all participating actors in spatial development, the results of the dissertation are important insofar as they lead to a deeper understanding of the logic and mechanisms of those decision-making processes that have led to today's urban landscape. From this, it can be inferred that how these decision-making processes could be newly organized.

1.5. Overview

In chapter 2, the current state of the research in the disciplines of urban design and planning is presented and the dissertation is placed in these fields. The chapter also serves to find a relational access to the concept of spatial quality, which is required in order to link it with process dynamics. The research questions are formulated on this base. Chapter 3 contains clarifications of the chosen theoretical perspective. In addition to the theory part about Assemblage Thinking, the interface to related approaches, such as *Complex Adaptive Systems* and *Actor-Network-Theory*, will be covered. Chapter 4, Research Design and Methods, presents the methodological process, the case selection and the methods for gathering, processing and analyzing empirical data. Under the title Research Contributions, chapter 5 contains the results of the research in a form of scientific publications. For orientation, in the introductory part of chapter 5, the connections between the papers as well as the relationship to the research questions will be demonstrated. Chapter 6 discusses these results in the light of the research questions and the aim of improving spatial quality. It addresses major challenges in the observed processes of *Stadt machen* and identifies potential for alternative modes of decision-making, which is sketched out under the label "from striated control to smooth circulation." Finally, chapter 7 summarizes the main findings of the cumulative dissertation, presents the conclusions and formulates five major concerns for future *place-making* that addresses both planning and urban design.

2. Rejoining the (Seemingly) Separated –
Literature Review on Urban Design and Planning

It is a truism that place matters. But what are "good places" and how can we create them? Considering worldwide urban transformation trends, this question is of increasing importance, and not only in Switzerland. Given the diversity of people and their demands, the shortage of natural resources, and the intensified economic dynamics, it is becoming more challenging to build good places for people. The question is anything but new, however. Urbanists, urban planners and designers have been dealing with it for a long time, as documentation of the design of new buildings, public spaces and cities back in ancient Greece and Rome show (Lampugnani, 2010). Other well-known historical examples include designers, such as Ildefonso Cerdà (Barcelona), Ebenezer Howard (England, Garden City) or Hendrik Petrus Berlage (Amsterdam), who have left us various concepts on how to approach and treat "quality of place". Nevertheless, we can also see one commonality in these premodern[1] examples: the integrative treatment of planning and urban design as parts of the same discipline. In their 1904 call for an intensified (academic) debate about urban design/*Städtebau*, Camillo Sitte and Theodor Goecke presented the discipline as an integration of technical and visual arts. In their view, urban design/*Städtebau* includes tasks that remind one of the activities of planners today, such as traffic organization or the spatial provision of social equality. Moreover, Sitte and Goecke agreed that the competence of urban designers also included an engagement with people's subjectivities and their spatial expression through the arts:

> Urban design is the union of all technical and visual arts in a large, self-contained entity; urban design is the monumental expression of true citizen pride; the fertile ground of true love of home; urban design regulates traffic, creates the foundation for a healthy and comfortable life for modern people settled in the cities and are already in a predominant majority: it finds advantageous sites for industry and commerce and supports the reconciliation of social discrepancies. (Sitte & Goecke, 1904; in Koch, 1992: 82–83; translated by author)

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[1] Although Berlage is seen as an early forerunner of modernism (Lampugnani, 2010).

Spatial planning, influenced by the new management and organizational sciences, started evolving as an independent field of activities in the second half of the 20th century (Hillier & Healey, 2008a). Since then, planning could be viewed as a discipline, and, as such, as a vital force for urban design, both as a determining constraint and a requirement. Not only the historical examples mentioned above, but current urban development practice also shows that planning and urban design are still closely interwoven, despite its separation into different schools, occupational titles, institutions and academic fields. Chapter 2 follows up on this distinction and maps the current state of literature on spatial qualities, particularly the qualities of places. Serving as a compass through the diverse academic fields, the different traditions of thought are identified, which offers an opportunity to position the research (and on the basis of that, to formulate the research questions), but also to show similarities between the disciplines. In this sense, the chapter can also be read as an attempt to rejoin the (seemingly) separated.

2.1. Unraveling the field of urban design

Urban design is not a uniform discipline rather it is a heterogeneous, multi-disciplinary field. This can already be demonstrated by the use of different terms such as Städtebau (German), Urbanisme (French), Planologie (Dutch) or Urban Design (English), which refers to different contexts and thus different traditions of thought as well as different understandings of the object of investigation. The present doctoral thesis uses the English debate as its entry point. However, there will be links to particular concepts and approaches of the German-speaking debate.

Moreover, the topic leads not only into different geographical contexts, but to a number of related academic fields, such as cultural and social geography, architecture and spatial planning (see chapter 2.2). This subsequently opens up a plethora of methodological and theoretical approaches. Madanipour (1997) demonstrates the plurality of definitions and meanings in urban design by identifying "seven areas of confusion and ambiguity". Among them, the scale of the built environment being addressed, its *spatial* or *social* emphasis, the relationship between *process* and *product* and the implications of seeing design as an *objective-rational* or an *expressive-subjective* process. The "areas of confusion and ambiguity" can also be used as ordering principles to map out the different accounts. It will be referred to throughout chapter 2.1.

For orientation, it makes sense to clarify how urban design is understood in this thesis. The present dissertation refers back to a broad understanding from Carmona, Tiesdell, Heath & Oc (2003: 3) and defines urban design as "making places for people". This definition emphasizes

the *process*, rather than the product of urban design. In this investigation, the stress is on the collective character and diverse processes that are involved in the generation of the built environment. These processes involve the spatialization of the values, needs and interests of diverse actors, not only planners and designers, and the qualification as well as materialization of those spatial concepts and designs. This perspective strongly resonates with *place-making* approaches (see chapter 2.1.1), which underline the generation of spatial qualities as a collective decision-making process. As a consequence of this perspective, urban design is not seen in a narrow sense as an "artistic" activity of the architect or urban designer, such as the English Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), which defines urban design as the "art of making places for people" (DETR/CABE, 2000). Surely, such a view can serve as an ideal and thus as a mirror for the reflection of today's often technocratic ways of making places. However, it ignores the formative economic and political forces that affect this artistic practice, and consequently overestimates the current role of architecture (see also Eisinger & Kurath, 2008).[2]

2.1.1. Traditions of thought – Mapping out the academic field

It is possible to map out the field of urban design along diverse dimensions. According to Carmona & Tiesdell (2007; see also Dempsey, 2008), accounts in urban design can be distinguished, as in planning theory (see chapter 2.2), by theories *in*, and theories *of* urban design. Theories *in* urban design relate to normative approaches (What is good urban design? How can we achieve better place qualities?), the garden city movement of Ebenezer Howard is a powerful example of this.

Theories *of* urban design refer to the general characteristics of the object of investigation and an understanding of analytical purposes (What is urban design?), e.g. the evolving *place-making* tradition. According to Carmona & Tiesdell (2007), theories of urban design mainly evolved in the last two decades, Alexander Cuthbert's *Designing Cities, Critical Reading in Urban Design* (2003) marked a turning point as one of the first readers that selected papers "outside the

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[2] In the same line of reasoning, the author is also critical towards Carmona, Tiesdell, Heath & Oc's (2003; see also Sternberg, 2000) more specified definition, namely urban design as „the process of making better places for people than would otherwise be produced" (3, emphasis in the original). On one hand, such a definition addresses the inherent subjectivity of the issue, which I think of as an important perspective (see chapter 5.2.). On the other hand, it gives the impression that there are development processes that do without urban design. According to my understanding this is not only problematic, as this leads to normative statements whether there is/was urban design or not. Moreover, strictly speaking, this is impossible as there is always a more or less collective process of spatialization, qualification and materialization involved, whether the urban designers are present or not. In other words: Each square meter per second has to be qualified somehow.

traditional urban design canon" (Carmona & Tiesdell, 2007: 3), in particular, by seeing urban design as a branch of the spatial political economy.

In the following sections, the field of urban design is structured into different traditions of thought: the visual-artistic, the social-usage and the *place-making* traditions. This separation is based on Jarvis (1980) and Carmona et al. (2003) and allows a more differentiated, but still aggregated discussion, than the distinction of theory in/of.[3] The sections should not be read as historical episodes only, but rather as traditions that are present and influential in today's urban design theory and practice.

Visual-artistic tradition

The visual-artistic tradition is primarily concerned with the visual and spatial aspects of place qualities, rather than the social, economic and political factors that influence the qualities of the location. The tradition is dominated by a rational-objective and functional mode of thinking and is focused on material products and representations rather than the processes. According to Carmona et al. (2003), the visual-artistic tradition represents a more architectural understanding of urban design. Jarvis (1980) sees Camillo Sitte as an early (19th century), but influential representative of this school of thought, as Sitte's concern is the careful organization of spaces, which he derives from ancient examples in order to re-establish urban design as an artistic enterprise.

Although being the "aesthetic antithesis of Sitte" (Jarvis, 1980: 51), Le Corbusier can be considered another prominent name in the visual-aesthetic tradition. He used geometry as a tool to design order and overcome natural chaos. Social needs were transformed into a simple and rectangular geometry. Jarvis asks, consequently and critically, if his formal and visual qualities still correspond to social reality. Finally, Jarvis thinks Gordon Cullen (townscape philosophy) is another proponent of the visual-aesthetic tradition.

This list of past examples should not lead to the conclusion that the visual-aesthetic tradition is a closed chapter of history. As I argue, in the contemporary Swiss discourse about *Städtebau*, and in policy documents and the practice of planning and construction (see chapter 5.4), the type of thinking is often oriented towards physical aspects and products and not social aspects and processes. In particular, the concept of the *Historical European City* (see chapter 2.1.2) is currently circulating in a version that is reduced to its morphological and visual-aesthetic

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[3] Another promising entry point for mapping out the field is offered by Miciukiewicz, Abdelwahab, Schreurs, & Hillier (2010) as well as Moulaert, Van Dyck, Khan & Schreurs (2013), which includes a state-of-the-art summary against the background of the research project SPINDUS (http://e-scapes.be/spindus).

dimensions, thereby ignoring the social and political conditions of its generation. Here the visual-aesthetic logic backs up a purely functional and modernist type of thinking that is informed by the dominant sustainability discourse.

Vittorio M. Lampugnani, as a prominent representative of this particular discourse about the European city, is an influential writer in the current debate about urban design in the German-speaking regions. Lampugnani can be also assigned to this tradition of thought. In Handbook for the Periphery (*Handbuch zum Stadtrand*, Lampugnani & Noell, 2007), the authors not only offer a typology of suburban regions, but also examples of how to use the methodology and design strategies of analogy in the context of such spaces. The guiding criteria of this work are the production of "identificatory" places, the clarification of boundaries, interconnectedness, coherence and the strengthening of public spaces. Although Lampugnani is anticipating the social dimension of urban design, his perspective is still very much focused on physical form, thereby promoting designs that presume a certain urban lifestyle that do not seem to be about current suburban lifestyles.

Nevertheless, it would be too simple to ignore this tradition of thought, not only due to its presence in the current debate about *Städtebau* (both theory and practice), but also due to common misunderstandings. First, despite its physical and visual-aesthetic entry point, this does not mean that the political and social conditions, the role of subjectivity and perception, are not taken into consideration. For example, the garden city was a model that charted both a physical and a social organization of society. Nevertheless, today it has become a purely physical model, reduced to green space qualities. This shows that initial ideas can be transformed into models that can be used in a current discourse, e.g. for the argumentation of a distinctive urban development such as Winterthur, the Garden City. Second, as in the planning era of rational scientific management (chapter 2.2.1), it seemed not to be a goal of the representatives of this tradition to be realistic or even design a theory of, rather to imagine a different "state" (how it could be?) and design theories in, and consequently open up other possible worlds.

Social-usage tradition

In contrast to the material bias of the visual-artistic perspective, the social-usage tradition "emphasizes the way in which people use space and encompasses issues of perception" (Carmona et al. 2003: 7). Jarvis (1980) identifies Kevin Lynch as a pioneer of this tradition of thought. In his seminal book The Image of the City, Lynch argues that the city is an experience shared by different people and this experience is always "in relation to its surroundings, the series of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences" (Lynch, 1960: 1).

Consequently, he pleads for a shift in the object of study from the physical and material form of the city, towards its perception by the people. For Jarvis (1980), two other key proponents of the social-usage tradition are Jane Jacobs and Christopher Alexander, both critics of the modernist types of thinking that underlie the visual-artistic tradition. In Jacobs' behavioral studies, urban spaces were emphasized in their socio-functional role for social interaction and human activity per se. Alexander argued for a deepened reflection on context. In *A Pattern Language* (1997), he provides a range of patterns on different scales, whereby he focuses not only on the physical aspects, but also on activities and the use of places.

In a similar vein, the current and influential debate about the concept sense of place (see also: attachment to place, place familiarity or place commitment) in social and cultural geography as well as in urban psychology and sociology, addresses the quality of the relationship between place and people (Holloway & Hubbard, 2000; Davenport & Anderson, 2005; Najafi & Shariff, 2011; Vanclay, 2008). In a mostly social-constructivist perspective, *place-making* in this context is considered as everyday (and individual) geography-making. "'Place' is generally conceived as being 'space' imbued with meaning. Thus, it refers more to the meanings that are invested in a location than to the physicality of the locality" says Vanclay (2008: 3). *Place-making* as a transformation from space into place consequently needs an active investment of meaning and value into the material form and the geographical location, whether positive or negative. However, as Vanclay emphasizes, physical space can also contribute to a positive sense of place, e.g. a distinctive or characteristic landscape or building that offers an opportunity to ascribe symbolic meaning to it. In this sense, *place-making* is an interplay between physical settings, activities and meanings (Montgomery, 1998). Whereas the earlier debate estimated that attributions of meanings and perceptions were more (or the only) relevant than the materiality of space (cultural turn; Cook, 2000), the role of material elements gained more importance recently, particularly due to the emergence of relational-realist perspectives (Latham & McCormack, 2004; see chapter 3).

Place-making tradition

Carmona et al. (2003) identify a third tradition of thought, which integrates the two previous perspectives as they consider both the physical and the social aspects of the generation of places. In this sense, the aforementioned later developments of sense-of-place can also be counted as a part of this tradition. The latest contributions to developing a relational approach towards spatial quality, e.g. the SPINDUS project (http://e-scapes.be/spindus), can also be associated with this perspective: "What is probably most important is a turn to the assessment of both physical and social qualities of spaces" (Miciukiewicz, Abdelwahab, Schreurs, & Hillier,

2010: no page number). Moreover, in contrast to the orientation on the products of the visual-aesthetic tradition, it emphasizes urban design as a process.

The German discourse on the Zwischenstadt and its continuations (Sieverts, Koch, Stein & Steinbusch, 2005; Bormann, Koch, Schmeing, Schröder & Wall, 2005; see also Koch, Schröder, Schumacher & Schubarth, 2003; *Metrozonen*, e.g. Hamm & Koch, 2010) can also be related to the *place-making* tradition, as the concept addresses both the social and the spatial dimensions. Further, by offering a process perspective on spatial qualities, on a mostly regional level, it can be viewed as a pragmatic voice in the German discourse on spatial qualities:

> Once you have beaten an egg, you can't put it back to its original state (…) You must then think about what you can do with a beaten egg. (Zlonicky 2003: 9, in: Bormann et al., 2005: 42, translated by author).

Focused on those areas that are called *Zwischenstadt* (*Cities without cities*) by Sieverts, namely the undefined suburban and periurban areas between the sharp identities of rural and urban, the authors have a concept for the urban landscape that most urbanists criticize (which nevertheless still form great parts of today's urban settlements). Moreover, on the principle of emergence, the authors try to acknowledge, understand and develop the existing inherent qualities of such spaces, without introducing a pre-defined normative position. In this sense, the authors try to read those spaces as living spaces and to identify the potential for change in both the perceptual patterns of people and well-considered urbanistic measures.

In contrast to the sense-of-place debate, a *place-making* perspective also involves all the attempts to design and shape urban environments, not only by everyday geography-making (as in the social-usage tradition), but by markets and policies. According to Healey, Adams & Tiesdell (2013) emphasize a perspective in urban development practices that is sensitive to place qualities: "For too long, the focus has been preoccupied with regulating land use and development. Adams and Tiesdell argue that the focus instead should be on *place-making*, and shaping development projects so that they are "successful" in making an enduring contribution to place quality." (Healey, 2013: 497). Such a view emphasizes that place qualities are not only controlled, but are developed through mechanisms other than regulation. Moreover, and more fundamentally, it draws our attention towards the collective decision-making processes of different actors involved in urban development (see also Healey, 1997).

As a differentiation in the *place-making* tradition, Adams & Tiesdell (2013) distinguish between *place-making* as a first-order activity and *place-making* as a second-order activity. Whereas first-order design focuses on the design process of specific places, e.g. street space, public space, and the role of the designer, second-order design refers to the modification of decision-making environments "within which other development actors operate, including developers,

investors, architects" (Adams & Tiesdell, 2013: 14; George, 1997). Burckhardt (1980) refers to second-order design as invisible design, meaning the design of framework conditions, institutions and systems in addition to the design of objects. Both second-order and invisible design refer to the concept of place-shaping (Andres, 2013) that can be conceived of as practice that addresses the prerequisites and conditions for *place-making*, e.g. through the establishment of planning rules, development of visions, guidelines, investment strategies etc., which in turn (intentionally or unintentionally) affect *place-making* without intervening directly in space. Consequently, place-shaping involves governance of place (Madanipour, Hull & Healey, 2001), and refers to the fields of policy-making and planning (strategic planning, process management).

The present thesis understands urban design as *place-making*, thereby harnessing the process of becoming, in particular, by opening up the perspective for place-shaping effects that are traced back to its forums of generation, e.g. construction permissions that are informed by strategic visions. The collective character of urban design is thus moved into center place, and the attempted analysis of its conditions and (invisible) mechanisms will lead to the diverse decision-making arenas that are involved in the process of "becoming a place". In this sense, the approach described in this thesis rejects the strict separation between *place-making* and place-shaping (Andres, 2013).

2.1.2. Spatial qualities: normative positions and analytical criteria

This investigation not only studies the dynamics of *place-making*, but also how different concepts of quality are negotiated (see 2.5 Research Questions). This is why the next section is dedicated to a literature review on normative positions and analytical criteria. The review and the empirical study have both shown that most of the uses of the word "quality" are at least implicitly normative. Consequently, such approaches can be assigned to theories in urban design (in contrast to theories of urban design that focus on analytical perspectives) and must be treated carefully. For example, the empirical investigation has shown that urban quality, used in the literature in a rather undifferentiated, but throughout positive way (e.g. Trip, 2007), in the context of this research stands for a mostly newly emerging kind of quality that is separated from rural quality. Although municipalities are already urbanized in a physical way, an urban quality stands for a new level of the built environment, mental mindset and way of living that is characterized by density, public spaces and livability. Instead, the present doctoral thesis uses the idea of spatial qualities that refers to it in a general sense and on different scales (such as the regional scale, see Hartman & De Roo, 2013); or place qualities to specifically address the local scale. In the *place-making* tradition, I conceive of place as an

interplay between physical and social processes (Miciukiewicz et al., 2010), in particular physical settings, activities and meanings (Montgomery, 1998). In addition, "quality" is primarily used as recognition of aspects of places, and whether they are collectively perceived as good or bad qualities. For example, dense areas with mixed use are currently seen as having good quality from a planning perspective, sprawled and segregated areas as negative quality. However, both have qualities that can be sensed as distinct characteristics. In this sense, the concept of non-lieux from Marc Augé (Augé & Howe, 2008) is rejected. In the first part of this chapter (2.1.2) some of the most important normative positions in the current Swiss debate will be discussed. The second part gives an overview of different analytical criteria, mostly developed in the place-making tradition.

Leitmotifs for urban development in Switzerland

The search for a common leitmotif in urban design in Switzerland is a challenging task, as it has to take Switzerland's decentralized form of government into account and consequently a small-scale spatial and cultural heterogeneity that consists of partly ambivalent rural and urban identities. One important reason for this decentralized settlement pattern is the federalist political-administrative system resulting in a relatively decentralized planning system. The spatial effects of federalism are in some cases a paradox. For example, based on the original principle of solidarity and a market-driven logic of (half)private transport services – and economic growth, of course – the nationwide and extensive supply of transport infrastructure leads to a fair distribution of "goods" while simultaneously challenging the existing political-administrative order. In particular, municipal autonomy and the division of authority between the federal state and the cantons are being challenged through the establishment of new functional spaces and interdependencies, accompanied by the emergence of collaborative forums, such as regional planning associations. In the last few years, public planning authorities have begun to develop planning concepts and "categories of spaces" that are oriented towards functional spaces and set a certain focus for urban development (e.g. Raumkonzept Schweiz: www.raumkonzeptschweiz.ch; Kanton St.Gallen Amt für Raumentwicklung und Geoinformation, 2014).

Also older leitmotifs, like Armin Meili's design of the de-centralized metropolis Switzerland (*dezentralisierte Grossstadt Schweiz*) in 1933 and the so-called *CK73* in 1973, are attempts to develop the idea of a Swiss city that is compatible with its federalist structure. Both are based on the principle of decentralized concentrations and the concept of small units of settlements (maximum 10,000 inhabitants), similar to the satellite towns of Ebenezer Howard, that jointly form a Swiss metropolitan zone (*Grossstadtzone*) from St. Gallen to Geneva.

Not revolutionary, but still scratching the current structures and thus a small attempt to think "out of the box", ETH's *Städtebauliches Portrait der Schweiz* (*Switzerland: An Urban Portrait*; Diener, Herzog, Meili & Schmid, 2006) is perhaps the most provocative contribution in recent years as it introduces, in addition to metropolitan regions (*Metropolitanregionen*), city networks (*Städtenetze*), alpine resorts (Alpine Resorts), so-called fallow alpine fields (*Alpine Brachen*) and quiet zones (*Stille Zonen*). These terms refer to zones that, according to Diener et al. (2006), have little potential for urban development. According to the authors, their contribution offers "a new urban topography that challenges the traditional societal model of solidarity" as well as the existing built environment. Moreover, mourning the lack of urbanity in Switzerland, they critically remark:

> The specific Swiss urbanity proves to be a kind of culture of rejection and prevention of density, height, volume, concentration, chance and of nearly all other characteristics that one desires for a city and that the Swiss also love wishfully – merely at the farthest possible distance from their homeland. (17, translation by author)

Despite its essential character, the ETH contribution lacks the clear formulation of a theory in since it does not offer a cultural and spatial vision for the future, rather it remains a historical and critical analysis of the status quo.

In a similar line, *Stadt Land Schweiz* (*Urban-Scape Switzerland*, Eisinger & Schneider, 2003), which is another important contemporary study, critically analyzes current trends in urban development, in particular, the lack of urban projects and visions. According to the authors, images of order could not be the future of Switzerland, rather a "dissolution of existing patterns", in particular, the opposites of *Stadt* and *Land*, is seen as the paradigmatic issue in past Swiss urban development. Consequently, this points to a potential common leitmotif – on the local and regional level as well (see also Kurath, 2011).

Leitmotifs on the regional and local level

A prominent leitmotif for the regional and local levels is the Garden City movement. It served as a point of orientation on several occasions, e.g. Armin Meili's plans in 1933 or the *Kleinstadt* of the 1950s. However, the model was not only reduced to its morphological-aesthetical dimensions, but also to the form construction on a smaller scale, in particular the free-standing little house in the garden (Koch, 1992). This interpretation of the Garden City was a stable concept of quality as it was seen as "the marriage of the urban way of life with the amenities of the country life" (Pflüger in Koch, 1992: 88). It seemed to satisfy the contrasting, but spatially finely interwoven opposites of *Stadt* and *Land*.

In view of the current concentration trend and the blatantly expressed need for the qualification and transformation of existing settlement structures under the motto Stadt machen, the question is raised as to which principle and quality criteria is the city of the future oriented. A specially strong and succinct ideal model represents thereby the so-called *Historical European City*.[4] According to Frey & Koch (2010), hardly any concept finds such a positive resonance in contemporary urban development, they actually describe the use of the term as "inflationary". In their analysis of the use of the term, Frey & Koch (2010) show that the concept is used in most cases as a normative-utopian leitmotif and includes diverse dimensions:

- Historical-cultural dimension: presence of history, a balanced relationship between individual rights and public control, urban lifestyles
- Social dimension: diversity of social milieus, participative inhabitants as active actors
- Political dimension: self-empowerment within city borders
- Urban design dimension: density, compactness, centrality and mix of uses

In particular, the urban design dimension includes a city core, central public spaces for public use, socially mixed housing neighborhoods with a small-scale mix of economic uses, sharp city borders and a closely knit public transport system. The authors also express the criticism, which the empirical research for this thesis supports, that the multi-dimensional concept in practice is often only used in the normative-utopian sense and, in addition, in a form that is reduced to the urban design dimensions. According to the authors, this disregards the fact that urban design dimensions are connected with other dimensions: It arises out of historical, cultural, social and political conditions, in particular, a coherent society of the city that shows responsibility. The authors state that in practice, the concept is often used in an unreflective manner, e.g. for the legitimation of new urbanism projects or the support of a strict protection of historical monuments.

As the thesis before you will show, the requirements that an orientation on the *Historical European City* imply, in practice, often stand in an unproductive relationship to the situations found. In addition to Frey & Koch (2010), other urbanists have joined the group of critics. As Siebel (2000) states "Today's one replies to the settlement 'soup' of the largest agglomerations with the allegedly better world of the dense, diverse, mixed city of the 19th century" (28). According to Frei & Koch (2010), the central question is whether the vision of the realities of urban development has distanced itself so far that adherence to this vision is blocking the view

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[4] The *Historical European City* will be somewhat more closely examined in the thesis as it served as an orientation for the program management of the NRP 65 and consequently also as a point of reference for the present research.

that would allow future development to be appropriately and accurately managed. Corboz (1993) specified that above all, the negative judgment on the development of the agglomeration prevents us from determining what is really going on. In addition, our ideal image is due to a pathetic-restrictive concept: a compact built-up environment that is at the same time, because of the density of one building next to the other, like a uniform standard and therefore is distinguished by homogeneity and harmony. Corboz argues that the term harmony is a bit dated. Finally he states that the concepts city, center, suburban, periphery, agglomeration, inner city, are not appropriate for the phenomena anymore, since they do not designate what they pretend to designate.

One conclusion is that the urbanists are missing the "sensory apparatus" and the abstract thinking needed to develop new qualities. What's needed is not positions that set themselves off from the existing environment, but rather positions that are oriented to the existing environment in order to develop context-specific new visions. This is the point when the *Zwischenstadt* debate comes in. As an integrated *place-making* approach, it leads to a vision that can be developed inclusively and that is not essentially based on large-scale, physical-spatial interventions. In this sense, it makes sense to see this approach as a process model, which is characterized by a certain openness to the results. Accordingly, local visions must be developed differently to suit the locality.

Criteria for place qualities

Authors, especially from the *place-making* debate, have made a great effort to establish criteria for place qualities (note the local level). These criteria can again be associated with dimensions, such as normative-prescriptive vs. substantive-descriptive[5] (Murdon 2003, in Miciukiewicz et al., 2010: 3) or the division between physical, social, economic, and environmental criteria (Moulaert et al., 2013). For an overview, criteria from several authors are assembled in Figure 1 and positioned according to the dimensions that were introduced by Montgomery (1998) as well as Carmona et al. (2003). As a result, Figure 1 represents a selection of dimensions (inner circles) and quality criteria (outer circles). It exemplarily shows the richness of concepts and the complexity of the phenomenon. The high degree of abstraction of these concepts is an expression of another characteristic of place quality, namely that quality is always situational and relative. Consequently, place quality can hardly be measured and positivistic and social-constructivist approaches are limited, which are also the ontological foundations of most contributions in the visual-artistic, as well as in the social-usage tradition.

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[5] Although most of the analytical criteria do have normative underpinnings (see Frey & Koch, 2010).
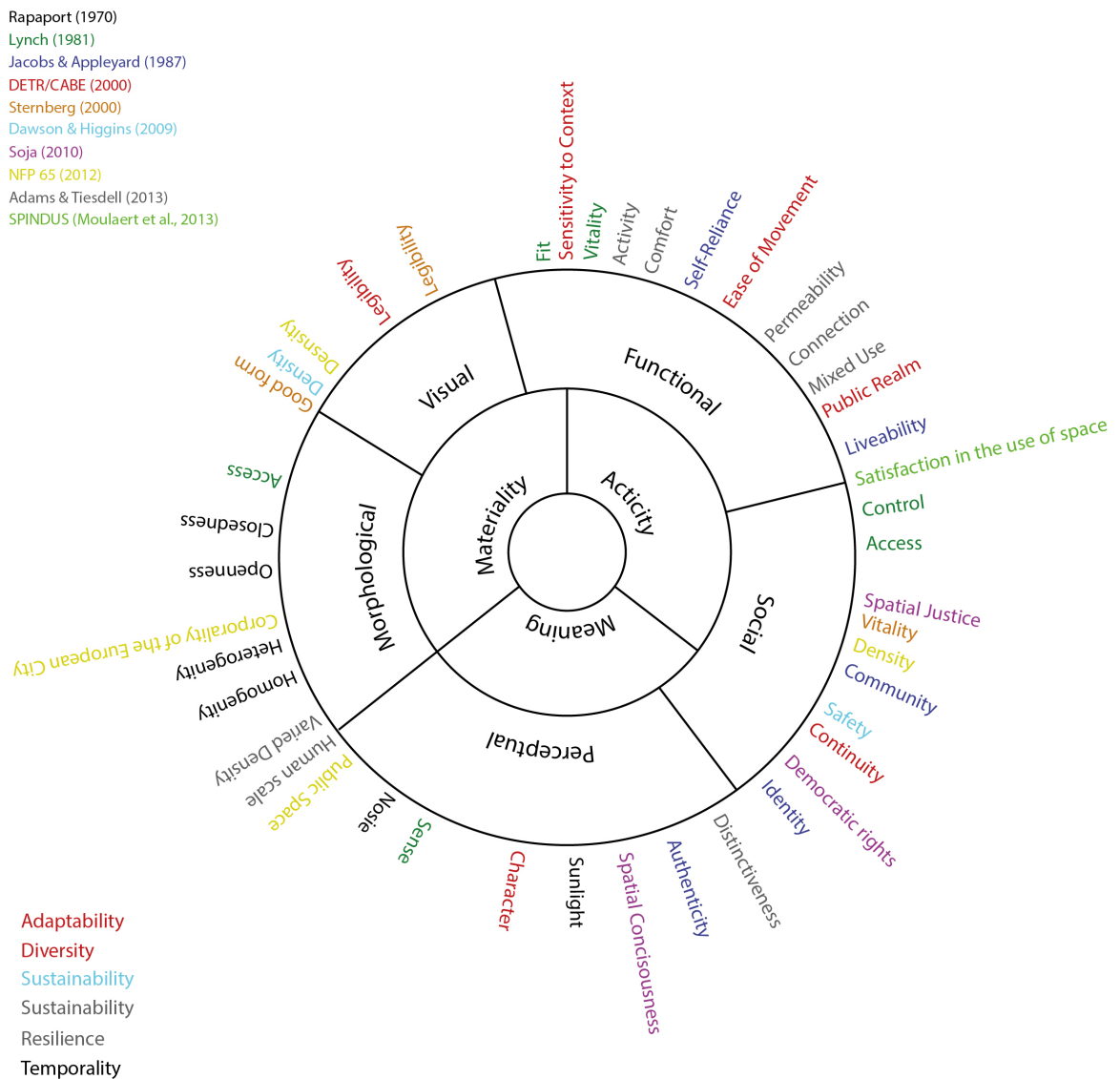
Figure 1: Selection of criteria for place qualities

Consequently, I argue that there is a need for an ontological and theoretical perspective that accounts for the heterogeneity of the concepts and criteria and also emphasizes the collective character of those issues, place quality being embedded into the complex dynamics of collective *place-making* that are shaped by their economic and regulatory context as well as specific actor-constellations and process designs. The following section is dedicated to finding such a perspective in the literature about planning theory.

2.2. Planning theory as a conceptual resource for place-making

There are two reasons why it is important to reflect on planning theories: First, planning can be viewed as second order or invisible design, and consequently can shape places significantly. Second, drawing on a process-oriented, collective decision-making perspective, which is an explicit *place-making* perspective, the field of planning theory becomes an important source for conceptual thinking. According to Hillier & Healey (2008a), the field of planning is created through debates about the nature and purpose of planning practice. The discipline of planning theory is a historically grown multidisciplinary field that evolved out of the investigation of the disciplines of sociology, economics, political science and geography into planning practice. Certainly, it is not always clear which concepts will diffuse into practice, which ideas they will generate in practice and which innovations will travel from practice to theory and become part of the philosophy. It has been a complex process of exchange. Nevertheless, Hillier & Healey (2008a) identify a common idea that planning theory and practice share, namely the:

> ... attempt to manage societal development in places in ways which promote the 'betterment', however understood, of the human condition as experienced through time and as lived in a wider world of human and non-human relations and forces (Hillier & Healey, 2008a: xv, referring to Friedmann,1987)

Through this definition, it is obvious that planning, in contrast to urban design, integrates the social dimension more explicitly in its focus ("societal development"), but emphasizing the spatial aspect of it ("in places"). Moreover, planning moves questions of direction and management into center-place ("attempt to manage"). Consequently, planning offers different entry points for spatial qualities than urban design perspectives.

The debate about planning intensified after 1950, due to increasing urbanization processes and the intensity and reach of scientific, technological and industrial innovation that changed the way cities and towns develop. Hillier & Healey (2008a, 2008b, 2008c) compiled a historical review based on a collection of influential papers from 1950, whereby they also responded to so-called precursors, like Patrick Geddes, Ebenezer Howard and Lewis Mumford. Interestingly, due to their focus on physical forms and manifestations those authors could well be associated with the urban design debate. For example, Howard's garden city illustrates that, in contrast to its misuses as a place-holder for green cities, an urban design model (a theory *in*) always includes a spatial and a social "design". As a consequence, urban design not only is inherently a political and societal issue, but also addresses planning as a discipline.

2.2.1. Traditions of thought in planning theory as perspectives on spatial qualities

As in the urban design field, different traditions of thought can be also identified in planning theory. These are always characterized by shifts and transitions, not least due to the openness of the field towards philosophy and the wider political and societal situation. The following sections provide an overview of the three most important traditions of thought, with a focus on the implications of the different perspectives on how to approach spatial qualities. Hillier & Healey (2008a, 2008b, 2008c) arranged their collection of essays by the various traditions, parts of it will be included in this section. The various organizing principles derived from the reading, will also be used to describe the traditions of thought and the differences between them more precisely.[6] One of these is how the role of the planner shifted and took on multiple roles, which were sometimes unclear (see Figure 2).
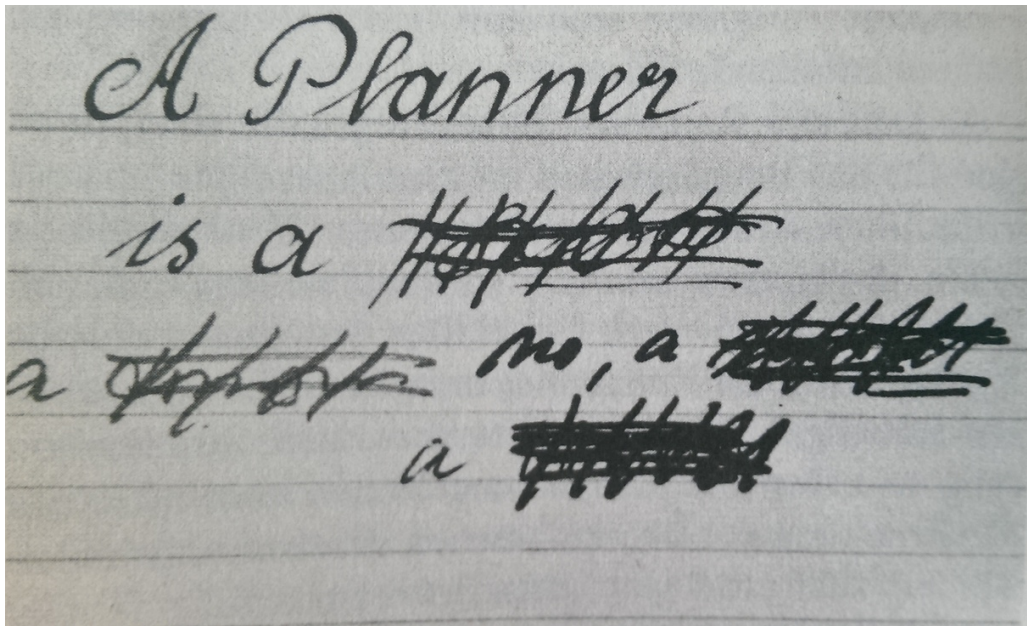
Figure 2: The role of the planner seems to be complicated. (Burckhardt, Blumenthal & Schmitz, 2012: 84)

Rational planning: Spatial quality as a measurable property of an object

Central to rational planning is its positivistic underpinning, the assumption that there is one, even if partially hidden, logic on which the world is operating. Knowledge about this world is going to be achieved through systematic, deductive thinking. Planning theory provides the

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[6] These criteria include: interface theory and practice, self-conception (the idea of planning), role and identity of the planner, kind of knowledge and its production, interface planning and politics, political and social background.

scientific methods that should be applied in planning practice that in turn is seen as social management. The significant academic influence then came from economic and management science,[7] in particular, the Program of Education and Research in Planning of the University of Chicago (*Chicago School*). On the basis of positivism and through empirical testing of a hypothesis, rules about social processes could be deducted. The development of models of social systems led to a specific branch of planning, called operations research. In the rational planning model, the planner is a scientist with an objective outside view, who has the task of rational trade-offs between (given) interests on the basis of scientific methods and meeting democratic, efficient and effective decisions – or the necessary basis for the decisions to deliver the policy.

What are the implications of this perspective for the research on spatial quality? In the line of reasoning of rational planning, spatial quality is a property of an object that can be determined or measured by scientific methods. This view closes itself off from subjectivity. Thinking strictly in the logic of rational-scientific management means that different perspectives and perceptions are not valid or at least there should be a more objective, science-based statement, on which decisions in planning and control of urban development can be based. The topic of what constitutes quality will inevitably be objectified by a rational thinking logic and thus de-politicized (see chapters 5.2 and 5.4). This kind of thinking logic still determines present planning practice, despite the fact that planning theories moved away from it a long time ago. The planner is apparently defined as value-free, which also is one of the basic criticisms. Another point of criticism that is stated often is the fundamental discrepancy between the formulated ideals and actual planning practice.

Nevertheless, the approach should not be devalued as naive. Planning scholars did not claim to explain practice, rather, as Healey & Hillier (2008a) argue, the representatives of this approach understood the value conflicts in society, but believed that with a joint effort, politicians and experts could achieve better, more informed decisions. The focus was the hope and belief that every society has common social values and goals, and these can be better implemented with the help of scientific methods. However, after about two decades, a shift in theory can finally be identified: Due to the increasing social dynamics in urban development (diversification, strongly fluctuating economies) and obvious implementation deficits, the call for new approaches became stronger.

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[7] Note that management and organizational studies today offer promising approaches on the organization of space that significantly differ from this tradition of thought (e.g. Clegg & Kornberger, 2006; Thanem, 2011; Mintzberg, 2003).

Communicative planning: Spatial quality as a negotiated consensus between subjects

In the 1990s, a new branch was established in planning theory: collaborative or communicative planning. Influential scholars in this tradition are Patsy Healey (Healey, 1997) and John Forester (Forester, 1999). The core of this tradition of thought is a more inclusive form of decision-making according to the logic of negotiation, based on a relativistic worldview that acknowledged different subjectivities. A crucial conceptual resource was the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, who decisively shaped the "communicative turn" with his work *Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas, 1981).

Various lines of development led to the establishment of this strand of planning theory: First, as already mentioned, the prevailing logic of rational planning failed in its planning attempts and could not meet the increasing diversity of lifestyles.[8] Second, postmodern theories evolved that included the acknowledgement of fragmented identities and diversity in human perception, the centrality of discourse in the production of collectively accepted realities and a focus on agency and practice (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2005). This provided, in addition to Habermas's work, the basis for the development of a more inclusive approach in planning. Third, there were several precursors before the 1990s. For example, John Forester (critical pragmatism; Forester, 1980), inspired by the pragmatist philosophers of the early 20th century, argued for planning that mobilizes the potential of situated knowledge through social learning processes. In a similar vein, John Friedmann (*transactive planning*; Friedmann, 1973) argued to see planning as an instrument of innovation, not (only) as an instrument for control.

Communicative or collaborative planning situates the planner in a context that is shaped by the logic of negotiation. This moves attention to the planner(s) him/herself(themselves), in other words: it focuses on the subject(s), not the object of planning. Planners take on the roles of innovators of joint learning processes and as communication specialists (moderator, mediator, and transformer of power relationships). In this logic, spatial quality becomes an issue that is situationally negotiated and involves different subjectivities. Collaborative planning assumes that a planning process allows, despite subjectivities, the production of a, at least temporary, collective frame of reference. However, this consensus orientation involves the risk that incompatible items are excluded ex ante from the process or that place-holders serve as the lowest common denominator (empty signifiers; Hillier, 2003). A main criticism is that communicative planning ignores power relationships and the influence of the setting,

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[8] In addition to collaborative planning, in the 1970s with Critical Political Economy, an even more critical approach on planning emerged. Scholars accused rational scientific management of not addressing the diversity and disparities in society and, moreover, that they were even responsible for producing increased inequality as a part of the capitalistic system. In this perspective, spatial quality is a question of power balance.

consequently, the "unforced force of the better argument" (Habermas) is an ideal that is hardly ever achieved (Versteeg & Hayer, 2010; Brand & Gaffikin, 2007). To differentiate, the initial approach did not see planning as a pure communication process nor aimed at establishing heuristics for communication, but merely pointed out that certain issues of planning follow a communicative logic and that the situatedness of practice and the role of communication as a research focus should be increasingly considered. Despite criticism, communicative planning theory is still highly relevant for contemporary planning practice, which is expressed not only in the numerous standards (in Switzerland, for example, Article 4 in the Federal Law on Spatial Planning), but also in policy documents and in practical schools for planning.

Relational planning: Spatial quality as emerging between changing subjects and objects

Relational planning theories will be summed up as separate theoretical branches, such as relational thinking in general, institutionalist thinking and complexity thinking. These fields are influenced by the theoretical developments in different disciplines, such as political economics, sociology and complex systems theory.

Although these approaches differ in their basic assumptions and research focus, they all assume that planning practice is situated in a context. In this sense, the approaches react to a specific criticism of communicative planning, namely that despite its focus on the active and multiple role of planners, they underestimated the effects of the settings where collaboration should take place. This context and its relationship to planning practice is a common concern of relational planning theories. The question of "who is the planning agent" and his decisive, constituting factors are one of the main concerns.

Relational thinking particularly emphasizes the informal relationships in planning and chooses the analysis of networks as an entry point to trace the mechanisms in planning practice. The relational understanding of the organization of societies is based on the network metaphor of Manuel Castells. This metaphor can serve as a perspective on how social dynamics and organizations are seen, or as a form of social organization that defines itself as different from the hierarchical and market approaches (Jessop, 1998).

An institutionalist perspective emphasizes the importance of the context of planning beyond state and government actors, in particular how its dynamics and forces shape the potential and actual forms of governance. Consequently, the approach is paying attention to both informal and formal processes of planning and addresses power as both "generative as well as dominating force" (Hillier & Healey, 2008c: 240).

Both the relational and the institutionalist perspectives are an attempt to have a concept of structure without being too deterministic, as in rational scientific management or critical

political ecology. By situating planners in a context or a structure, it becomes increasingly unclear what the subject of planning – the agent capable of acting – really is. The two approaches try to theoretically bridge the gap between individual actions and holistic concepts, such as systems, structures or networks. (see Healey, 2007).

In this respect, the complexity thinking approach goes the farthest and has grown more influential in recent years. System-theoretical approaches (De Roo & Silva, 2010) conceptualize the subject of planning as a complex adaptive system that consists of various components and their relationships (the planner being part of it) and is characterized by properties, such as non-linearity, emergence and self-organization. Moreover, post-structuralist approaches to social complexity question the existence of a per se existing actor in principle. The epistemological consequence of the latter approaches is to explain how, in a fundamentally unstable world that is marked by uncertainties and unpredictability, associations can be maintained to stabilize actors as a collective ensemble of different people, materialities and rationalities in order to be able to act, to create agency (chapter 3.2.1 discusses the interface between the two approaches).

What are the implications for the study of spatial qualities? Relational accounts stress the embeddedness of spatial quality in settings and processes. Strictly speaking, spatial qualities do not exist per se, but only in specific relationships between different objects and subjects of urban development. In particular, complexity thinking opens up the possibility of being able to read the other traditions of thought as models that are indeed partially obsolete in academic discourse, but still are manifest in planning practice and thus significant to urban development. As De Roo (2000: 151) states, "functional and communicative rationality are seen as two extremes of the same spectrum, with complexity as the key word linking the two together." At the same time, however, in a post-structuralist perspective, conceptual models and theories do not exist per se, but only in their expression or performance in practice (*performativity*, see Schoepfer & Paisiou, forthcoming). Consequently, this perspective is anti-essentialist, and relies on empirical research, as it has no explanatory model but allows a critical analytical view of current phenomena in urban development.

2.3. Perspectives on (spatial) quality

As presented in chapter 2.1, the visual-artistic and the social-usage perspectives each emphasize a specific dimension (the physical and the social) and the associated aspects of spatial qualities. Integrating the two traditions, the *place-making* approach opens up a variety of concepts and aspects (see chapter 2.1.2) and on the other hand brings in a process perspective. This doctoral thesis follows a *place-making* perspective, consequently, it is based on a process perspective. This perspective on urban design has led us directly to planning theory, for two reasons: First, the field of planning theory offers approaches and concepts for decision-making processes (including place-shaping). Second, by identifying traditions of thought, it opens up perspectives for a meta-reading of the topic. The following section briefly sums up the implications of each tradition of thought for the understanding of (spatial) quality:

For rational scientific management, quality is an aspect of an object. It can be (objectively) measured and prescribed. Good quality is a matter of evaluation from experts. The relevant questions are: Which objects? What are the relevant aspects of objects? Steering spatial quality is first of all a matter of defining differentiated quality goals.

For communicative/collaborative planning, quality is still an aspect of an object, but it can be perceived and evaluated in different ways. Good quality is a collectively accepted, temporary version of reality (consensus) and can be achieved by negotiation between different subjects with different perspectives. The relevant questions are: Who is involved? Who has to be involved? Managing spatial quality is primarily a matter of negotiation and communication.

For relational planning, quality does not exist per se, but only in situations where it can emerge. It is not an aspect of an object anymore, because there is no defined object, nor a pre-existing subject. Rather, through a relational perspective, it becomes clear that object and subject are changing and mutually constituting each other. In extreme cases, an object can even become a subject (actants, non-human actors, see chapter 3). In constellations (of actors) and processes, what quality is, how it transforms and how it is able to stabilize (and consequently, which part of the fuzzy concept of quality gets actualized) is a matter of relational embeddedness. As a consequence, theoretical and methodological approaches are needed that account for processes, transformations and uncertainties. The relevant questions are: Who or what is constituting what/who? How are both subjects and objects stabilized? Influencing spatial quality is a matter of creating actor constellations and dynamics to let concepts of spatial quality emerge.

„Ich bin eine Kapelle in der Landschaft", Früher-Heute – Heute muss die Kapelle sagen, was sie ist. Zeichnung: Lucius Burckhardt
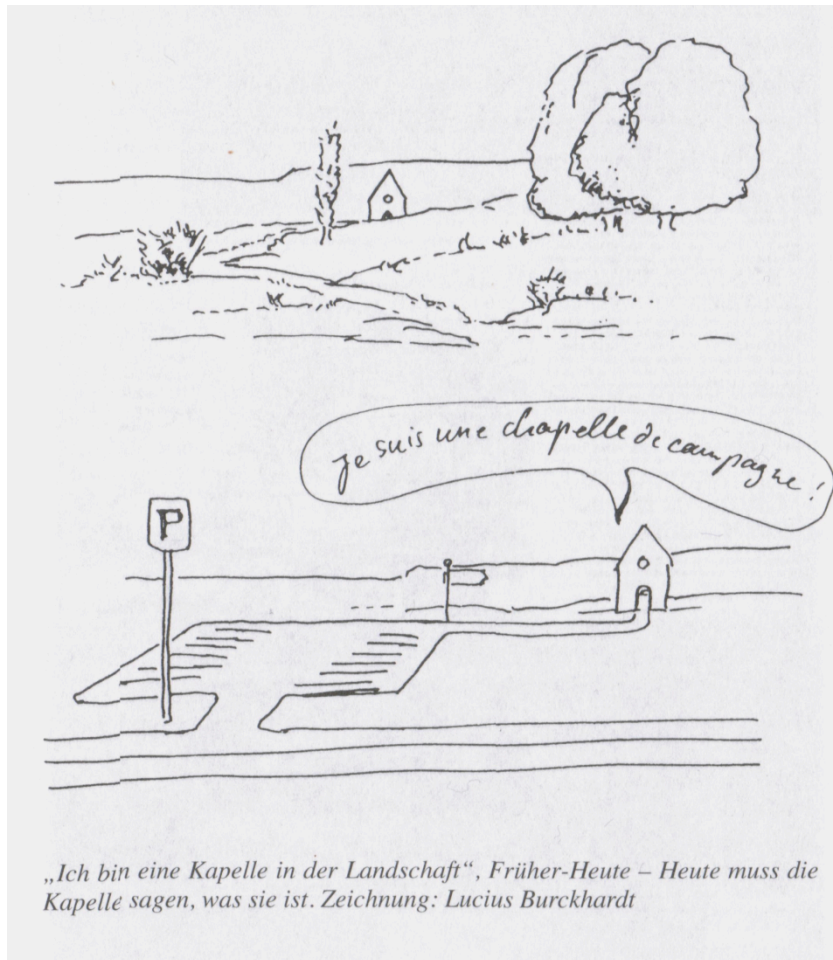
Figure 3: Quality is relational. Drawing by Lucius Burckhardt (Burckhardt, Blumenthal & Schmitz, 2012: 225).

In Figure 3, the relational perspective on spatial quality is illustrated. Good quality is not only an aspect of the object itself (the chapel), but a question of how the object is embedded in which landscape. This is understood as relational in the first sense. In the second sense, a relational perspective adds how such a concept of quality (e.g. in the form of the drawing) is embedded in decision-making processes and affects it.

The present doctoral thesis chooses a relational view of *place-making.* In the remaining sections of chapter 2, based on the understanding gained from the literature review, the specific theoretical account of the doctoral thesis will be introduced (chapter 2.3, and will be further discussed in chapter 3) and the focus and the questions of the research will be formulated (chapter 2.4).

2.4. Choosing a post-structuralist account on social complexity

As this review has shown, the separation of urban design and planning is first of all a matter of the perspective on the fields. With its emphasis on the process of urban design (not the product), *place-making* approaches come very close to planning theories, which in turn offer the conceptual tools for the analysis of these processes. Moreover, planning theories offer perspectives on the complex phenomena of spatial quality. In my opinion, a relational perspective offers a valuable and sensitive approach to an empirical investigation into the dynamics of *place-making*. Consequently, this doctoral thesis is based on a relational perspective, in particular, a post-structuralist account of social complexity (*Assemblage Thinking*, see chapter 3). This specific relational approach offers several advantages in relation to the study of spatial qualities and decision-making:

1. Content, objects, products, and concepts of spatial quality (urban design in the narrow sense) can be related to processes (planning in the narrow sense). In particular this offers an opportunity to see how concepts and criteria of spatial qualities are embedded in decision-making processes and its context.

2. Urban design is no longer "boxed" with planning. Rather the two are interconnected through manifold relationships. As a result, they can stimulate, but also obstruct each other. As products can also influence processes, planning not only poses problems for designers, but designers can offer a potential for processes.

3. Finally, a post-structuralist account of social complexity moves dynamics, instabilities, non-linearity and emergence into center place and offers conceptual tools to grasp these characteristics of decision-making (see chapter 3).

Other recent contributions about spatial qualities that draw on a relational perspective include Hartman & De Roo (2013, *Complex Adaptive Systems*, on a regional scale) and Kurath (2011, *Actor-Network Theory*). In addition to the contributions mentioned, this doctoral thesis has chosen a consistent process perspective, which is not simply actor-oriented, but uncovers the abstract mechanisms beyond urban development processes. Moreover, it includes a micro-political investigation of how criteria and concepts of spatial quality evolve and transform through decision-making arenas and processes.

2.5. Research questions

Starting from the established discrepancy between planning ideas and existing settlement as well as from the call for a "new urban quality" it is hypothesized that the quality of the existing settlement pattern is not the result of ill-defined goals or failed concepts, but is rather due to a lack of understanding of processes with regard to:

- The dynamic of spatially relevant decision-making in general
- The relationship between goal formulation in strategies and implementation in concrete projects
- The relationship between dynamics of decision-making and spatial qualities
- The relationship between planning and urban design

In the center of the research at hand, there is the question how the planning procedure, the organization (*process*), and the quality concepts and their designs (*content*), are bound up. Based on the assumption that place qualities emerge and transform through *place-making* that is a collective decision-making process, I chose to investigate into the dynamics and mechanisms of these processes. This in turn served as an entry point to discuss the robustness of place qualities. In this sense, four general research questions can be formulated:

a. What are the characteristic **dynamics and mechanisms** of decision-making processes in urban development?

b. How do **concepts and criteria of place qualities** evolve and transform? What concepts and criteria of place qualities prevail and under what conditions? How are strategic goals regarding place qualities translated into specific urban development projects?

c. What is the **relationship** between the process dynamics and organization of a project and the robustness of concepts and criteria of place qualities? How do the process dynamics and mechanisms influence the robustness of place qualities and vice versa?

d. What and how are **entry points for interventions** generated in these processes of transformation?

During the research, in addition to *process* and *content*, another important perspective emerged: *form* (see chapter 5.3). Place qualities can address the same concepts, e.g. public space, but can be manifested in different forms, e.g. an initial idea, a general aim, a type of visualization, an existing place, the outcome of the process, in certain materialized buildings, etc. Given the relational perspective, the robustness of concepts of place quality is a question of how *process*, *content* and *form* each constitute and stabilize each other.

3. Theoretical Approach: Assemblage Thinking

As I have already stated, the doctoral thesis is positioned in a *place-making* perspective on urban design and mobilizes relational planning theories. A relational perspective introduces an even more concise understanding of how to address spatial quality and how to relate it to collective decision-making. In particular, it has been useful to develop and refine the research questions. In this chapter, by introducing *Assemblage Thinking*, a specific post-structuralist account of social complexity, the ontological foundations will be made explicit and, for analytical purposes, different conceptual "tools" will be referred to (discussed in detail in the research contributions, chapters 5.1 to 5.3).

3.1. Ontological background

The ontological basis of this work is *Assemblage Thinking* (DeLanda, 2002, 2006), which is inspired by the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). In the field of geography, particularly in urban geography, *Assemblage Thinking* has established itself in recent years and has also been empirically applied (e.g. Farias & Bender, 2010; Brenner, Madden & Wachsmuth, 2011). The approach has already been used in the fields of planning and decision-making in architectural competitions (e.g. Hillier & Van Wezemael, 2008; Van Wezemael, 2008; 2012; Van Wezemael & Loepfe, 2009; Silberberger, 2011; Paisiou, 2011). Jean Hillier can be seen as a pioneer in this regard (Hillier, 2005).

The assemblage approach is introduced in papers 5.1 and 5.2 and touched on briefly in 5.3; each paper mobilizes specific aspects of the approach. Based on these aspects, specific concepts were selected from the theoretical concepts of *Assemblage Thinking*. Paper 5.1 uses the concept of *concrete machines* to address how agency is formed in urban development processes. Paper 5.2 introduces the concepts *molecular* and *molar* as well as *(de-)territorialization* to develop an understanding of (micro)politics and "the political". Paper 5.3 borrows the idea of translation from *Actor-Network Theory* (*ANT*), which is a distinct, but very much related theoretical approach to analyse processes of implementation and the formation of strategies addressing spatial qualities. The interface to *ANT* will be discussed in chapter 3.3.2. Despite the variety of concepts used in the research contribution papers, the ontological foundations are the same, which will be discussed briefly in the following sections. Four

considerations form the cornerstones of the approach, which will be briefly introduced and illustrated in the following section.

Assemblages are ensembles that are generated through the interaction of their components. This corresponds with the leitmotif of complexity science, which states that every observable order, including every spatial setting or social ensemble, is a generated product of the interactions of elements (Alexander, 2003). Local organisations, developers, networks, communities, cities, and states can be all viewed as *assemblages* that are the product of specific historical processes and, whatever degree of identity they have, they must be accounted for via the processes that created them and those that maintain or change their identity (DeLanda, 2006: 28).

Example of an assemblage

An urban development project can be viewed as an assemblage of heterogeneous components, such as existing buildings and plans of the future area, landowners with their interests, developers, planners, architects and the mayor (each with their own rationalities, world-views and perspectives), etc. Moreover, the specific project was created through different processes, such as economic transformation processes, e.g. by the shutdown of an industrial company or through political processes, e.g. election cycles. In the course of the project, the assemblage is going through several transformations, a trajectory of different states of the assemblage can be traced, such as the initial project group, the assemblage formed by a possible opposition and the project group or the group of actors involved in the realization of the project.

The definition of *assemblages* leads to a crucial point of the theory, namely that in the ontology of Deleuze & Guattari *actuality* is faced with *virtuality*. This means that each entity should be seen not only by the current or given observable properties, but also by its virtual capacity, its potential to change and create other properties in future. Thinking in terms of an ontology of the virtual does not ask for what a thing is, but how it has generated itself and what it can do. According to DeLanda (2002, 2006; see also Van Wezemael, 2010) each *assemblage* spans a possibility space that is structured by the tendencies of future becoming (*singularities*) and the capacity to affect other assemblages (*affects*).

An *assemblage* can be read as an abstract concept of a collective actor, which is produced based on the interaction of material and non-material elements. In *Assemblage Thinking* consequently, material and non-human actors also have their place, because, in the underlying ontology, at each element we face the question of what it can do or effect in the course of an action. Planning situations can be understood from an interplay of material elements and social processes that are mutually dependent.

An element can both be part of several assemblages and play different roles in the different assemblages. As a consequence, relationships can be multiple. DeLanda (2006) refers in this context to *relations of exteriority*. In contrast to *relations of interiority* that assign fixed functions to components of assemblages characterized by relations of exteriority: these are "logically necessary but only contingently obligatory" (11). This means that an element can currently play an important role for a given mechanism, thus fulfilling a function, but this was not fixed from the beginning by a predefined system.

Examples of multiple relationships

A model or plan can help an architectural team develop different project options and reflect upon urban design criteria, but it can also be used in connection with a project submission as a reference point for an assessment, while at the same time, it can be used by a possible opposition group as an argument in a legal objection that is going to be raised against the project. A piece of paper or a block of styrofoam can develop different capacities – depending on the situation – through assemblages such as a community of practice, the municipal administration or the legal system. Of course, human actors can also do this (e.g. the planner as a mediator, a representative of the state, a consignee). These roles are not pre-defined, but can mutually stabilize each other and consequently be effective (e.g. the powerful collaboration between a planner and the mayor, see chapter 5.4).

3.2. Interfaces to related approaches

In this chapter, the similarities and differences of the Assemblage Approach to *Complex Adaptive Systems Thinking (CAST)* and *Actor-Network Theory (ANT)* will be briefly discussed.

3.2.1. Complex Adaptive Systems Thinking (CAST)

As an approach to social complexity, *Assemblage Thinking* strongly resonates with *Complex Systems Thinking*, in particular *Complex Adaptive Systems Thinking (CAST)* (e.g. De Roo & Silva, 2010; De Roo, Hillier & Van Wezemael, 2012; Rauws & Van Dijk, 2013; Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). According to De Roo (2012), one of the key thinkers and driver in the "planning and complexity family", planning has to manage different system classes that can also be referred to as phases in planning theory: blue print planning (class I), scenario planning (class II) and network planning (class III). These classes can be assigned to a continuum between a purely technical, object-oriented rationale and a purely communicative and intersubjective-oriented rationale, which also forms a spectrum between closed and open systems. Although planning practice, as De Roo argues, is confronted with problems that are in the fuzzy middle and consequently both rationales matter. Moreover, to this "spectrum thinking" he introduces a fourth category, *Complex Adaptive Systems* (class IV), which adds time and non-linear behavior and consequently dynamics to the previous static model (the nodes and interactions in classes I to III remain stable). As a consequence, system class IV addresses the becoming instead of being. "Change is the only constant" (De Roo, 2012: 163). With class IV systems, De Roo introduces a number of concepts that are related to time and

process, in particular forward-loops, transitions, emergent networks, self-organization, etc. Obviously, these notions address phenomena that *Assemblage Thinking* also focuses on, consequently both approaches come very close to each other. It turns out that both theories show similar ontological foundations such as non-linearity, unpredictability, emergence and self-organization. They both try to recognize uncertainties and dynamics instead of ignoring it. In particular, both share the world-view of a complex adaptive system, in which situations (and planning problems) are created and do not exist per se. However, there is a small ontological difference that I would like to make. I consider the post-structuralist approach of *Assemblage Thinking* as the more radical version when it comes to the question of the relationship between reality and perspective. For example, is self-organization an aspect of reality or is it (only) a perspective? Regarding this question, a post-structuralist approach presents the more radical answer. In contrast to the implicit assumption of *CAST* that a system exists "out there" and could consequently be observed – and maybe measured, e.g. a certain degree of self-organization that a particular system has – the poststructuralist approach takes the question explicitly as to how far does the theoretical approach not co-produce this reality (ontological politics, see Law & Urry, 2004). As I see it, *CAST* is based on the assumption that there are self-organizing systems "out there", whereas post-structuralism sees, e.g. self-organisation as a perspective that could be productive in sketching out certain aspects of organization, which in turn would be not covered by other perspectives. In relation to spatial qualities, this means that traditions of thought do not exist "out there", they are constantly re-produced, through research as well. This sets another layer for methodological reflection and introduces the sensitivity for the changeability of reality that is only temporarily stable.

3.2.2. Actor-Network Theory (ANT)

The Assemblage approach is also close to *Actor-Network Theory* (Callon, 1986; Latour, 2008; or socio-material semiotics, see Law, 2009) as they are both relational approaches on social complexity that account for the instability and continuous re-production of reality. Moreover, both involve materiality and the social, in contrast to socio-constructivist theories. *ANT* has been applied to planning and urban development through different authors such as Boelens (2010; *Actor-Relational-Approach*, *ARA*), Tait (2002), MacCallum (2008) or Gunn & Hillier (2012). The relationship between *Actor-Network Theory* (*ANT*) and *Assemblage Thinking* has already been discussed in Silberberger (2011). According to Silberberger (2011), *ANT* serves well as a methodology to re-construct existing realities, whereas *Assemblage Thinking* is particularly useful to interpret the research results and to reflect on other worlds than the already existing, in particular, as it gives hints to imagine other roles of the same components, on the basis of relations of exteriority. As I have also shown in chapter 5.2, this points to a

crucial ontological difference between the two approaches: namely the incorporation of *virtuality* as a concept of reality. This concept not only fits well to the everyday practice of planning as both an exploration and a structuring of possibility spaces, it also helps to find points of intervention, e.g. moments of closure, and imagine other possibilities than the ones that were actualized. Despite the conceptual advantages of *Assemblage Thinking*, in chapter 5.3 I borrowed the idea of translation from *ANT* in order to re-construct the actual part of reality in the case studies. In addition, I was able to connect my ideas more efficiently to the current debate about *ANT*, strategy and planning. At this point, it must be said that I do not feel comfortable with *ANT* derivatives, such as *ARA* (Boelens, 2010) that use *ANT*, in particular, Callon's stages (Callon, 1986) as a heuristic and normative approach to design decision-making processes. It was *ANT* that helped me as a methodology in chapter 5.3 to focus on moments and processes of the interfaces between arenas that were necessary for the emergence of a common planning strategy. As a result, the types of translations were named individually in a way that fit the empirical data, and consequently are not congruent with Callon's vocabulary. At the end of such a process, e.g. after having identified different processes of translation, through *Assemblage Thinking* and the concept of *virtuality*, in particular, it becomes possible to reflect on the actualized processes in different cases and to identify the conditions that made certain translations possible and probable.

3.3. Criticism

Recently, several criticisms have been expressed (e.g. Anderson, Kearnes, McFarlane & Swanton, 2012; Allen, 2011) on *Assemblage Thinking*. Two of the main points of criticisms are its descriptive character, respectively its weak conceptualization as well as the lack of methodological consideration.

Indeed, there is a temptation to use the assemblage approach as a "passe-partout" for several phenomena. In my view the open conceptualizations are first of all a strength of the approach, as they introduce an abstract perspective that is able to particularly address various phenomena that could be transdisciplinary, such as spatial qualities. However, this also has its downside as the approach loses its specificity at the same time. In order to react to this critique, the dissertation at hand distinguishes between *agencement* and *assemblage*, a differentiation that is often not made in the current use of the approach, but offers an important specification. As shown in chapter 5.2, an *assemblage* is a network of "generally non-directional, disparate groups of actors" (Hillier, 2011a: 7). This can be distinguished from an *agencement* that "implies that a network of actants generates agency and strategy" (7). In

order to specify the notion of *agencement*, chapter 5.1 develops a practice-oriented version of *Assemblage Thinking* by introducing the notion of *concrete machines* from Félix Guattari. Complementary to the endeavour of opening up situations and tracing all the multiple relationships of an *assemblage*, which could indeed result in a "joining-up exercise" (Allen, 2011: 156) and thus in a vast description, my approach is more focussed and concentrates on how possibilities get selected and relationships stabilized (processes of closure). Consequently, this version of *Assemblage Thinking* does not focus only on fluidity and instabilities, rather on how things get stabilized in order that assemblages became *agencements* with the capability to act. This corresponds well to the empirical finding that planners and urban designers do not always find themselves in situations with a high degree of complexity, or at least they do not estimate the situations like that. Consequently, their reduced versions of reality gain the capacity to shape practices. With its focus on moments of closure, meaning how the involved actors reduce complexity in order to gain agency and power, the new approach offers a stronger and refined conceptualization and increases the sensibility for such mechanisms of closure.

The refined conceptualization of planning practice as processes of opening up <u>and</u> closing down allows methodological consequences to be drawn, which disproves the second point of criticism: the lack of methodological consideration. The focus on moments of closure and its critical reflection in the light of alternative solutions and power formations was one of the keys to empirical analysis. Consequently, methods were adapted, e.g. interview guidelines were kept flexible, but at the same time the focus was set on moments of closure. Further, to investigate into the (micro-)dynamics of both opening-up and closure, the set of methods was complemented with participant observations (see chapter 4). In this sense, the approach offers the flexibility of the development of a meta-framework for the combination and adaptation of different methods. Indeed, there are no direct guidelines for methodologies, but the framework allows the development of meta-concepts for the reflection on empirical research and the methods that are used. In the next chapter, the research design and methodologies will be introduced, and at the same time I will show how the assemblage approach influenced my methodological reflections.

4. Research Design and Methods

In a post-structuralist way of thinking, theories serve as a set of thinking tools during the empirical work, and serve less to deliver the claim of a full, universal explanation of the object of investigation at the end of the research. In any case, it will be – as a result of research in a complex and non-linear world – hardly possible to establish common or general rules. The goal instead is to generate exemplary knowledge. Exemplary knowledge consists of meanings that are extensible and can be interpreted in different contexts and experiential backgrounds (Thomas, 2011; see also the definition of paradigm by Agamben, 2009). In other words, exemplary knowledge offers more than just a narrative of a singular case study, but also offers a productive idea, which is not transferable but can be linked to another case, and in this way stimulate a discussion and generate new questions.

The production of exemplary knowledge and the specific theoretical background requires insight and methods that allow a deepening in cases. The same is true for thinking in possibilities and uncovering the inherent uncertainties and potential in planning situations (see chapter 3). Therefore, the dissertation uses an exploratory and qualitative methodological approach. The strengths of case studies are in its focus on the singular, "to draw thick, related information from this singular focus and develop unique insights into the subsequent analysis" (Thomas, 2011: 37). Thomas (2011) proposes to look at the object of study from different sides and via different methods, in order to make these insights possible. Consequently, different methods of data collection can be assembled through case studies.

In the chapter 4, the design of the empirical research will be presented. As the empirical work is based on case studies, a great part of the chapter will be dedicated to the selection of these case studies. Further, the methods for the empirical inquiry and for data processing and analysis are presented.

4.1. Case studies as a research strategy

The empirical work in general is related to the research project "Urban Ruptures / Local Interventions: Perspectives of a Suburban Planning" of the NRP 65 New Urban Quality, in particular, the selection of case studies. Before entering the discussion on this selection process, it is important to reflect on the general nature and purpose of qualitative case studies, as well as on the identification process of the unit of analysis (what is a case?) and the relationship to its context (a case of what?).

According to Thomas (2011: 37) the study of cases is "not a method, nor a procedure. Rather, it is a focus." Consequently, rather than being method-driven and thus defined by specific methods, a case study is problem-driven and a wrapper for different methods. The key is to draw rich, interconnected information from a singular focus and derive unique insights and in-depth knowledge from the analysis that follows. I have chosen a case study strategy in order to find an entry point to trace the relationships in an assemblage. On this basis, I tried to understand the underlying dynamics and mechanisms of decision-making (see research questions, chapter 2.5). In the sense of *Assemblage Thinking*, I do not claim that these mechanisms are general (and thus valid for all cases and more) rather I am trying to gain a level of abstraction. Consequently, while identifying abstract processes, the focus is still on the singular, which corresponds to Thomas' understanding of case studies. In a similar vein, Merriam-Webster (2009; in Flyvbjerg, 2011) defines case study as "an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to environment." The next two chapters (4.1.1 and 4.1.2) will be dedicated to the identification of this individual unit of analysis, to the question of how the case of the research is defined and how it is selected.

4.1.1. Definition of cases

The definition of cases involves focussing, setting the boundaries of the units and choosing what is to be studied. According to Flyvbjerg and Thomas, the selection process is always based on specifying research questions, and influenced by the theoretical background.

What does an assemblage approach imply? In the research proposal of the NRP 65, this study originally was located in the phase and level of planning (between politics and the administration). However, it has been found in the course of the work that my object of study is neither planning as phase nor level, but the process of collective decision-making in the phase of initiation and development of projects, which in turn is shaped by relationships between the fields of planning, politics and administration. Based on this re-interpretation, the implications of the chosen theoretical perspective can be well understood. If we think consistently in an assemblage perspective, then the "fields" of politics, planning and the administration are not existent per se, nor can they be understood in a linear sequence. Rather, the above fields evolve as complex interwoven constellations that are only established by specific practices and in specific situations. As *place-making* practices are often organized in temporary forms of organization, such situations are often generated through planning and urban design projects. Using a process perspective, these projects will be readable as a dynamic sequence of

situations, while each time different relations between politics, administration and planning become manifest (see Figure 4).

As a consequence of the assemblage perspective, specific urban development projects move into the foreground to study urban design "in the making". In particular, major construction projects in this view represent forums, where both the relationships between planning, politics, administration and urban design become manifest and thus visible, and where the involved processes interact (e.g. political, planning, economic, social processes, opinion-forming processes, etc.). Such projects are thus focal points of (*virtual*)[9] relationships, or an intersection of abstract, not general processes. Urban development projects are therefore methodologically of great importance and have provided the cases of the present study. They serve as an entry point for the investigation into process dynamics and robustness of quality concepts, since they are transformed and tested in the course of the process of materialization. The theoretical argument is now presented on why projects could serve as case unit and thus an entry point for this investigation. The next section presents the arguments from an empirical perspective on why certain kinds of projects were selected.

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[9] According to the ontological differentiation between actuality and virtuality, this means that the situation potentially includes all the possible relationships between the fields mentioned, but only certain ones become manifest and are then reproduced.

Linear perspective
Different fields, different levels

Politics ———————————— *Spatial policies*

Planning ———————————— *Strategic plans and development projects*

Administration ———————————— *Implementation*
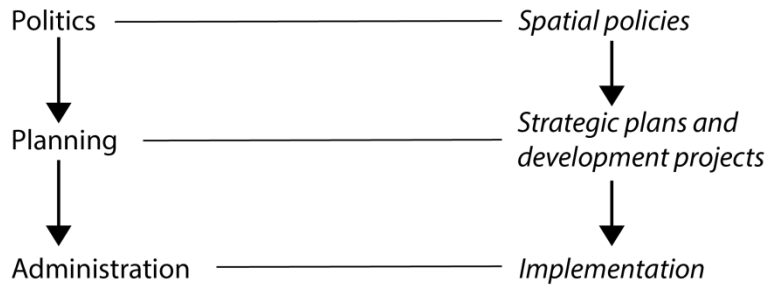
Relational perspective
Fields as manifested relations in decision-making processes (e.g. development projects)

Politics   Politics   *event*

time   Planning   Planning

Admin.   Admin.   Politics

Planning

Admin.
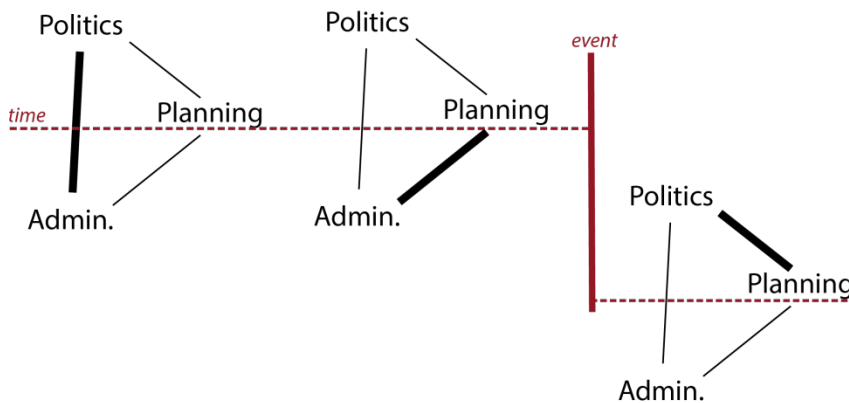
Figure 4: The implications of a relational perspective on the object of investigation.

4.1.2. Selection of cases

In the course of the NRP 65 project "Urban Ruptures / Local Interventions: Perspectives of a Suburban Planning", ten small and mid-sized municipalities were selected according to so-called "urban ruptures", which are defined as significant changes in connectivity through traffic infrastructure projects or economic transformation through de-industrialization. These urban ruptures served both as a vehicle for the selection of cases and as an entry for the empirical investigation, but cannot directly be seen as an object of investigation. In particular, they served as a means to identify situations with a high transformation dynamic in the built environment (in the words of *CAST*: systems in transition, see chapter 3.2.1). In addition, those municipalities were consciously selected because they show intensified tendencies for urbanization and consequently are under settlement pressure, while their management and steering capacity is limited due to small personnel and financial resources in the public

administration. For the project Urban Ruptures / Local Interventions, the challenges of routines and practices in the areas of politics, planning and administration were in the foreground. In the end, ten municipalities were selected that are small or mid-sized but are not part of a major Swiss core city (see Table 1). According to the Federal Office of Statistics, the municipalities selected could be categorized into *periurban*, *suburban* and *Kleinzentrum* (small city center). In the following it will be referred to these municipalities subsumed as "surrounding municipalities". This selection forms a significant framework condition for the present research. As a result, the empirical vehicles of the present dissertation are to be found in these municipalities.

This selection was narrowed using a preliminary study, which was based on interviews with the persons who are responsible for the construction and / or planning in each of the ten municipalities and a supplementary search of relevant documents. Further, an inventory of projects was developed and the preliminary selection of projects to be examined was made. In this assessment, the following criteria were considered to be important:

- Projects "in-the-making": Projects should be advanced during the time window of the data collection, at least until the plan that is binding for authorities starts. Since the access to actors and documents must be guaranteed, the projects must not be implemented since too long.

- Intended and realized impact on the urban fabric: projects should significantly interact with the local spatial context. Based on this criterion, purely strategic projects, such as guideline plans (*Richtplanungen*) or urban development concepts, are not selected as the primary units of analysis. However, through the chosen theoretical perspective, the effect of or the general relationship to such projects is investigated.

- Explicit negotiation of urban design concepts and criteria: The transformation of urban planning concepts and criteria can be better understood when they are explicitly negotiated. Through the preliminary study, it became clear that this is often the case when projects have a certain degree of complexity, scale, or political relevance. In such cases, alternative thinking spaces are often created through temporary project organizations in which conceptions of spatial quality are explicitly negotiated and tested.

- Use of policy, planning and urban design instruments: The selection should guarantee the study of the use of a variety of instruments. This criterion is important because an evaluation of instruments to promote spatial quality is part of the project "Urban Ruptures / Local Interventions".

The preliminary study has shown: 1) the development of the center (its position and potential) in each of the studied municipalities is an issue and 2) urban development projects in general and site developments (*Arealentwicklungen*) in particular, could be identified in each municipality that meet the above criteria and are often used by local authorities as a vehicle to influence and shape urban development. These projects create forums for decision-making. In these forums, visions, planning objectives and concepts of spatial quality gain consistency, are (more or less explicitly) negotiated and translated into specific spatial situations, meaning that they unfold their physical spatial effect. Finally, degrees of depth of analysis are assigned to the selected municipalities, according to different criteria, such as availability and accessibility of projects and coordination of the overall project (interdisciplinary case studies need common cases). Table 1 gives an overview about the selected municipalities, areas and sites.

Municipalities Number of inhabitants*, type of municipality**	Areas	Sites
Affoltern a.A. 10,500, suburban	Oberdorf	Zentrum Oberdorf
Hedingen 3,450, periurban	Center of the village	Obstgarten
St. Margrethen 5'742, suburban	Old town center, Bahnhofstrasse	Bahnhofstrasse Süd
	Station surroundings	HIAG Areal
Wetzikon 23,659, Kleinzentrum (small city center)	Widum	Weidpark
		Mülipark
		Müliwisen
Visp 7,281, Kleinzentrum (small city center)	Station surroundings	Building of the station, bus station
		Centerpark
		Brückenweg

Table 1: Case Selection, *Number of inhabitants according to official websites of the municipalities, **Type of municipality according to Federal Office for Statistics

St. Margrethen, Wetzikon and Visp are municipalities with a high depth of analysis and Affoltern and Hedingen have a middle depth of analysis. Finally, for a variety of reasons, the following projects were planned with a lower depth of analysis:

- *Gestaltungsplan* Obere Bahnhofstrasse in Affoltern a.A.: After the primary analysis of documents, the project was not followed up due to a lack of relevance of the urban design criteria and difficult access to other documents.

- Village center development in Hedingen: The stakeholders have not developed the project any further than the initial ideas.

- *Quartierplanung* Eschenbühl Uster: This project was prepared through interviews and a document analysis as a reference example for the Quartierplanung Widum in Wetzikon, but not analysed in any deeper way.

- Site development Malley in the region of Lausanne West: An intensive analysis of documents was done in this project, and complemented with two interviews. It served as a pilot study to test the research design and as a means to develop a working paper on the theoretical concept of concrete machines.
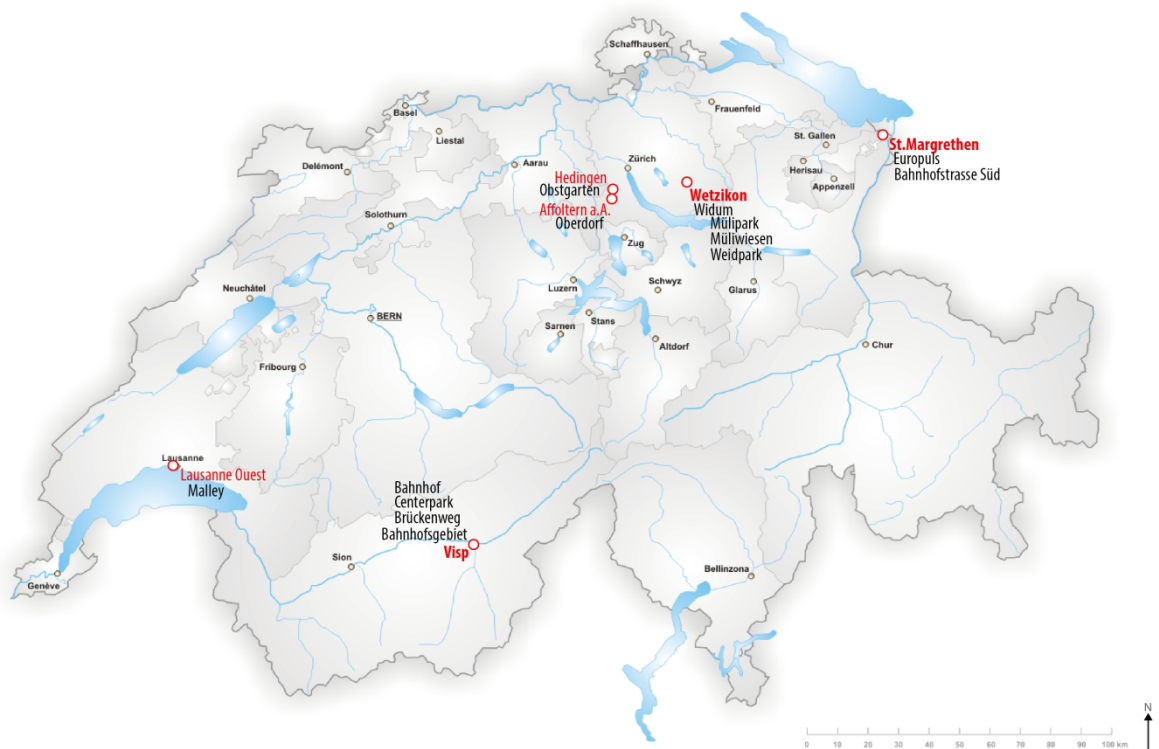
Figure 5: Case selection – Map

As a final point of this chapter, the question of what constitutes a case unit will explicitly be addressed, in particular, the scale of the case in the investigation. What is the case? The main unit of analysis refers to the level of the site (e.g. Bahnhofstrasse Süd in St.Margrethen, see Table 1). However, as can be read in Figure 5, this focus shifts in certain municipalities in the course of the investigation to the level of the area. While in Wetzikon, the area was the entry point into the research (the area is a defined entity and thus a relevant reference for the actors questioned in the pilot study), in Visp, it was the project of the station building and in St. Margrethen, the individual, seemingly unrelated projects of HIAG Areal and Bahnhofstrasse Süd. Only through the empirical study, could the relationship between these projects be made clear. Through rendering this relationship visible, it could also be shown that the actors implicitly have a common idea of how different areas and sites are related. In Visp, it could be shown, for example, that although no master plan has been made for the whole area, notions of spatial quality were circulating between the individual projects and its decision-making arenas. Moreover, the projects were strongly related to each other and to one common spatial concept of the future area that, in turn, was slowly becoming more concrete and materialized in projects (see chapter 5.3). In this sense, the scale of the area, and therefore also the new scale of the case and of the empirical investigation in general, was becoming emergent only through the research itself. The reflection on this forms an important result and would not have been possible without the flexibility of the assemblage approach.

4.2. Organization of the research

This chapter is about how the (empirical) research is organized. Figure 6 gives an overview about the different steps and elements. Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 will address the methods and tools used for the collection and the analysis of the empirical data.

Research Design and Methods

Preliminary Study

Interviews with the persons responsible
for planning and construction
in all 10 municipalities

Field Notes

Pilot Case Study

Document Analysis and Interviews

Documents   *Transcripts*   *Field Notes*

mp3

Selection of Case Studies (Projects)
Development and Testing of Interview Guide

In-depth Case Studies

10 area developments in 5 municipalities
Document Analysis, Interviews, P. Observations

Data collection

Documents   *Transcripts*   *Field Notes*

mp3

Data Analysis

Tracing   *Tracing*

within-case

?

Process Diagrams   *Vignettes of
                            Place Qualities*

cross-case

Mapping

Abstract Mechanisms, Quality Tendencies

Figure 6: Organisation of the research

4.2.1. Data collection

The methods used depend largely on whether the project is examined as retrospective or whether it may be accompanied by participant observation, as it is still "in the making". Basis of both types of investigation in any case is a qualitative document analysis of planning artifacts (documents, reports, plans, etc.). For projects that are processed retrospectively, semi-structured interviews (Flick, 2007: 117–145) were performed with the stakeholders. For each of the ten areas, five to six interviews were conducted with the project's main actors, such as private investors and developers, private planning agencies, architects, representatives of the municipal administration of planning and construction, political authori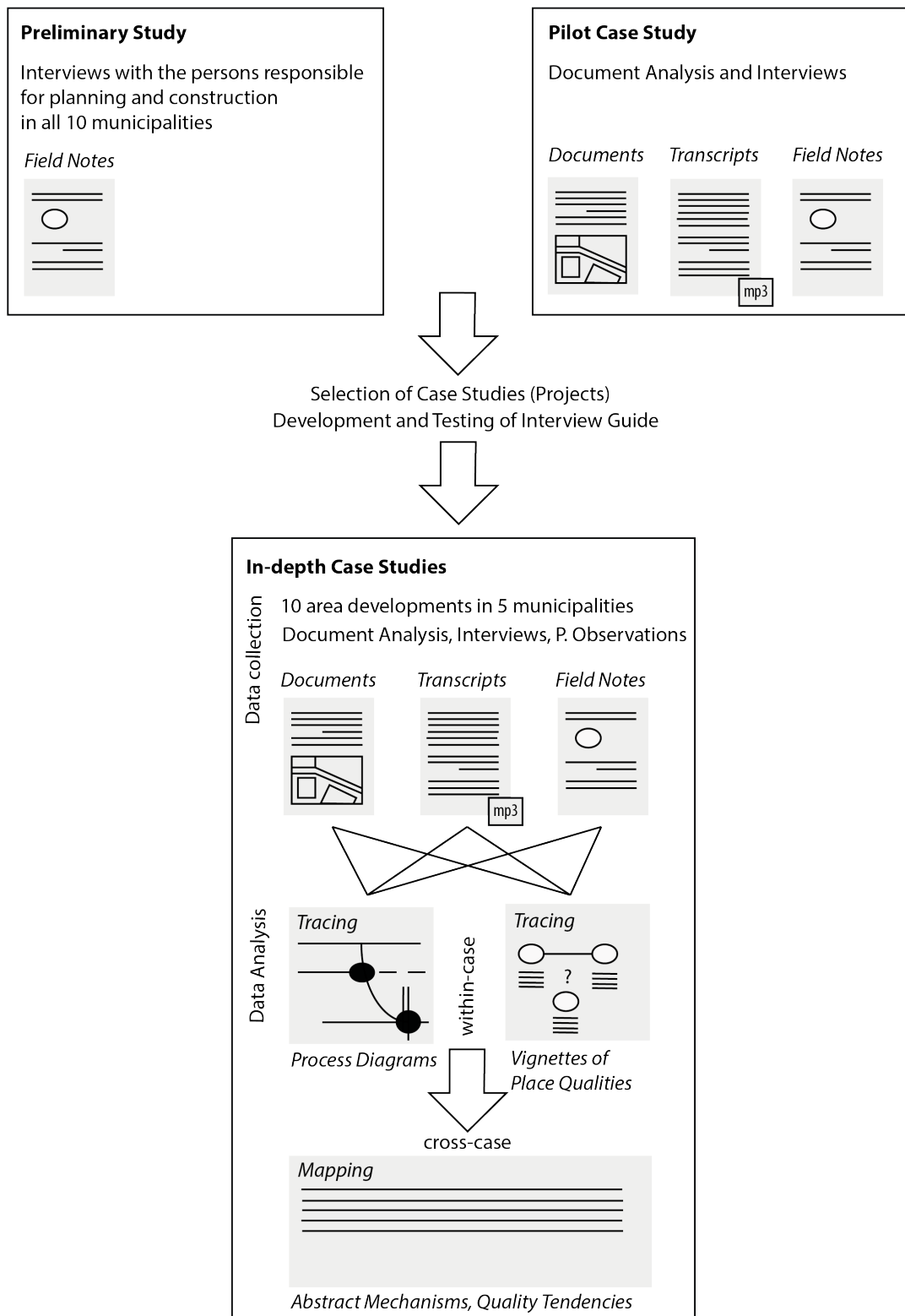ties, members of the cantonal administration. The interview guidelines were structured into blocks of questions such as the process and organization of the project; roles and actors; visions, stories and concepts of spatial qualities.

These blocks of questions were always discussed using the example at hand, while, at the same time, references were made to general opinions and other specific projects. In order to trace relationships between concepts of spatial quality (*content*) and process dynamics (*process*), it was important to remain flexible in relation to the interview blocks, and allow the interviewee to switch between topics and not remain in a strict serial order. Nevertheless, as an order principle of the interview, I tried to focus on disruptions (moments of uncertainty, unexpected events, see chapter 5.2) as well as moments and processes of closure (see chapter 5.1) in the course of the decision-making process. This strategy gave me the opportunity to understand crucial mechanisms of decision-making and how differently (not only the realized) ideas and spatial concepts were negotiated, qualified and selected.

It was intended that the documents would be made accessible before the interviews. However, it was found during the investigation that the documents could be accessed in some cases only through the personal contact of the interviewee during and after the interview. Thus, the two methods had to be applied in an iterative and parallel process.

The choice of interviewees was conducted in accordance with the principle "follow the actors" (see Latour, 2008), i.e. in a snowball-like system. Through procedural information (phases, points of conflict, participants of procedure), further interviewees were identified until the number of required different perspectives and information reached saturation (some degree of redundancy). This kind of choice not only gave me the opportunity to get to relevant stakeholders that were not known beforehand, but also the process of choice generated important data about the case. Who is recommended by whom? Who is not mentioned at all? For example, in Visp almost everybody recommended everybody, thus, the relationship between private developers and municipal authorities as well as the administration seemed

positive. In contrast, in Wetzikon quite an effort had to be made to get from public authorities to the important interviewees in the private sector. This was already an indication for the lack of collective acceptance of the public urban design strategy, in contrast to Visp, where everybody was proud of the realized projects.

For projects that may be accompanied, participant observations (Hauser-Schäublin, 2003) are carried out in project meetings. Because of very slow progress in the project (Rorschach) and other practical reasons (access to confidential meetings) only one project in this process could be carried out. During the observation, thematic blocks and process moments were the focus, according to the interview strategy (see above).

4.2.2. Processing and analysis of data: Tracing and mapping

In addition to practical tools, such as keeping a notebook (Latour, 2008) and the periodic tracking of an inventory of the collected data in the processing and analysis of empirical data two main methods are used, tracing and mapping, which reflect the underlying ontology (actual / virtual, see chapter 3).[10]

Tracing

This method is essentially a process-based, thick description (Geertz, 2006) of the actual and includes tracking various assemblages, their transformation and disruptions as well as the re-configuration of specific elements in the decision-making process. For projects, that means specifically: the description of how different concepts of places and their qualities "travel" through and between the diverse decision-making arenas as well as the identification and description of important moments and phases, such as disruptions, transformations and transitions, or instabilities (see also Table 2). The construction of vignettes served as another technique for a further "densification" of data (see Silberberger, 2011; examples in chapters 5.1 and 5.4).

Mapping

This strategy involves the analysis of possibility spaces. For the analysis of projects, this means working up how possibility spaces were structured and why they open and or close; analyzing which possibilities were created and what were the conditions for them; identify what other directions of development would have been possible, and the understanding of why specific options have been selected and others not. Mapping provides insights into the conditions under which project trajectories and its dynamics are likely. At this point, it is important to

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[10] See also Hillier (2011). Note that this is an adapted version of it.

distinguish between mapping for researchers and mapping for planning practitioners. As I interpret Hillier's account on mapping (Hillier, 2011) it is mainly meant as a technique to explore possibilities and future potentials in urban development practice. This could only be done effectively in collaboration with the diverse actors involved in planning settings.[11] In contrast, I refer here to a technique for the scientific analysis of the arenas and processes involved in planning. In this sense, mapping can be conceived of as an attempt to gain a level of abstraction, in particular, by processing the data through conceptual thought in order to uncover the abstract (not general) mechanisms of decision-making, e.g. opening up and closure (chapter 5.1), politicization and de-politicization (chapter 5.2), gaining and losing abstraction (chapter 5.3.). In this sense, mapping is way out of the traced complexities of a case study with its focus on the singular (see chapter 4.1).

Table 2 summarizes and specifies the methods for data processing and analysis by giving some examples.

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[11] In chapter 5.1, a sound basis for such mapping activities is provided.

Step	Content	Methods	Results – Examples
Tracing (How?)	Follow the different concepts of places and their qualities through and between the diverse decision-making arenas and see how they evolve and transform Identification and description of important moments and phases like disruptions, steps of transformation and transitions, instabilities	Document analysis, participant observation, interviews (when documents provide incomplete information)	Table with the description of the most important moments and concepts of quality, illustrated by artifacts (plans, visualizations) Recurrent concepts of quality in other arenas (circulation): e.g. urban design concept of the station building in Visp in the formulation of the legal objection against another development project or the delimitation to HIAG Areal in the process of evaluation of Bahnhofstrasse Süd
Mapping (Why?)	Working out and identification of other possibilities, and conditions of possibilities in the detected moments Analysis of the logic of how processes are ordered (ordering principles). Where is this logic interrupted? >> Derive points for intervention	Put all tracings in relation to each other and to the interview statements, in order to include normative perspectives, the importance of specific moments and opinions about good / bad qualities	Meta-Reading of process dynamics and tendencies in the evolution of spatial qualities: e.g. conclusion that in St. Margrethen there was a change in planning culture marked by a tipping point in the trajectory of the HIAG Areal or the tendency to formulate precise ideas about the future characteristics of Widum (rigidification)

Table 2: Specification of tracing and mapping.

5. Research Contributions

Using the analysis of the case studies, four publications have been prepared, each with a specific focus. The publications can be organized according to the research questions (see chapter 2.5): to the triad of *process-form-content* in general (see Figure 7) and particularly to research questions a, b, c and d. Each publication is related to a section of this chapter (5.1 to 5.4). In addition, an extract out of the final report for the NRP 65 complements the research results (chapter 5.5).
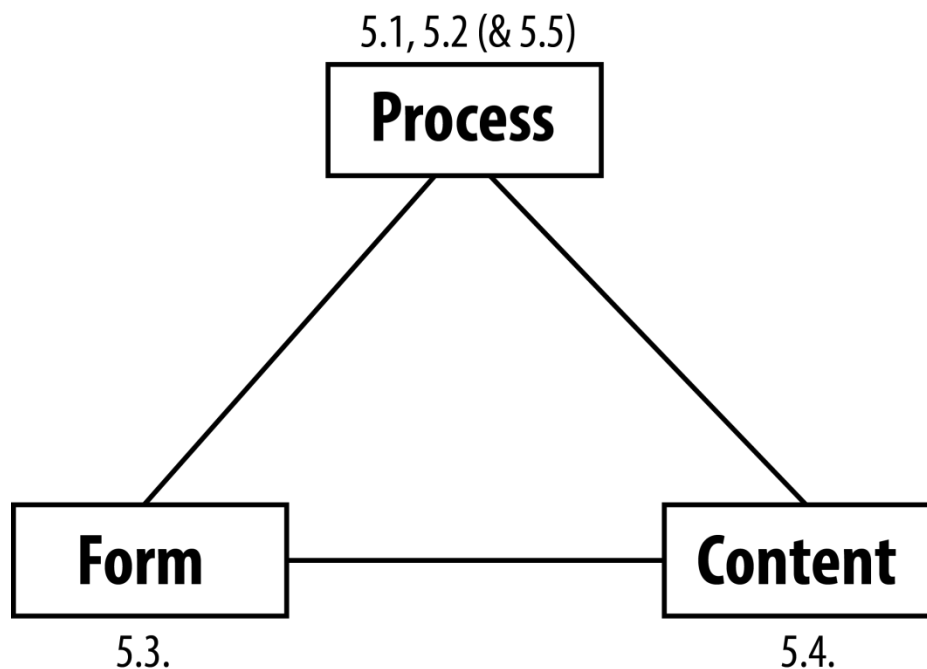
Figure 7: Overview of research contributions.

While sections 5.1 and 5.2 address the dynamics of decision-making processes in detail, sections 5.3 and 5.4 deal with the topic of spatial quality again, and more explicitly. In this sense, they address *content*, although this content is always discussed in relation to process. It follows a short description of each contribution.

Chapters 5.1 and 5.2 can be labeled as process-oriented, because they focus on fundamental mechanisms that are relevant for decision-making in urban development, planning and urban design. In addition, they provide an analytical framework for the empirical analysis of *place-making.*

The publication 5.1 focuses on the question of the emergence of agency and the role of material components. In particular, the question is asked how a group of people may be able to organize and establish the capacity to act, and what role material components such as plans or architectural models play. The publication also discusses the processes of opening-up and closing down as ways of modifying possibility spaces as one of the key mechanisms of *place-making*. At the same time the article introduces a practice-oriented version of *Assemblage Thinking* and reacts to Jean Hillier's multiplanar theory. In addition to Jean Hillier, who argues for a planning ethos that is oriented towards experimentation, processes of closure will be introduced as dominant tendency in planning practice and an activity that primarily structures and selects possibility spaces instead of exploring them. In order to introduce processes of exploration of possibilities, a planner should know the dominant tendencies for closure.

Chapter 5.2 treats micro-political fractures (disruptions) and thus "unevenness" or situations of conflict as another important characteristic of decision-making in urban development. Such moments must be treated carefully, since they point to situations in which new opportunities for spatial quality can be generated and followed. Consequently, processes of closure should be taken under consideration since they could have a significant effect on future *place-making* and, as a result, the spatial quality. Related to this mechanism are tendencies of politicization or de-politicization, which, in addition to the already mentioned opening and closing of possibility spaces, is another way of understanding and reading *place-making*. At the same time the article presents the argument for an understanding of politics and "the political" that is based on *Assemblage Thinking* and the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari. From my theoretical point of view, but also from a Swiss perspective, the paper can be seen as a reaction to the ongoing debate about politics and planning that is in the search of "revised concepts of politics, which do not restrict its realm to formal arenas, and 'the political' as an account for the ever-present subversive and conflictive forces in society" (Chapter 5.2, 94).

Publications 5.3 and 5.4 both move the content, meaning concepts of spatial qualities, back into center place. Chapter 5.3 likewise addresses the *form* of concepts of quality, which is an important issue when it comes to the expression and – even more relevant – the steering of place qualities. Moreover, the paper addresses the issue of the relationship between goal formulations and implemented solutions respectively the journey of quality concepts and its different forms that they take in the course of *place-making*. In particular, the paper analyses the use and effect of strategic plans in the form of guidelines, which is one of the mainstream planning instruments to promote and steer place qualities. The contribution addresses the challenges that are related to the implementation of such strategies. In addition, the article discusses the role of "frames", leading ideas or principles for decision-makers that could

evolve independently from planning processes and urban development projects. However, it has become empirically evident that frames show a significant effect on those processes, intended or not. As a conclusion, such hidden actors should be anticipated in strategic planning and the promotion of spatial qualities. Finally, the paper offers another fundamental perspective for reading the dynamics of the qualification of the built environment in an abstract way. In particular, the different forms of quality concepts can be arranged on an axis with abstract and concrete as poles, whereas frames can refer to the most abstract and specific construction plans to the most concrete.

Overall, sections 5.1 to 5.3 describe three fundamental mechanisms of *place-making* and consequently the key variables to consider as regards the improvement of spatial qualities

- Processes of opening and closing (5.1)
- Processes of politicization and de-politicization (5.2)
- Processes of losing and gaining consistency/abstraction (5.3)

Section 5.4 discusses and concludes how these mechanisms tend to influence the negotiation of concepts of spatial quality and their materialization in concrete physical space. What are the implications of the identified mechanism for the contemporary urban landscape? In addition, the article discusses the potential for another, maybe sounder qualification of our built environment and identifies points of intervention. The contribution could also be read as a practice-oriented summary of the most relevant results of the empirical investigation. Finally, chapter 5.5 that is an extract of the final report of the NRP65 project, complements the practice-oriented research results. The chapter presents five so-called *folds* that can also be viewed as important mechanisms of *place-making* that contribute to the aforementioned fundamental mechanisms. All the research results will be discussed in chapters 6 and 7 against the background of the aim to improve spatial quality.

5.1. Agencies of urban design

Loepfe, M. & Van Wezemael, J. (under review): About flying machines and rafts: Reflections on Jean Hillier's multiplanar planning theory. Submitted to Planning Theory (Peer-Reviewed).

About flying machines and rafts:

Reflections on Jean Hillier's multiplanar planning theory

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Abstract

We read Jean Hillier's multiplanar planning theory as a plea for a new planning ethos that is oriented towards experimentation and the emergence of the new. As we critically observe in our studies of contemporary Swiss planning and urban development, such practices are apparently not decisive. On the contrary, we argue, that planning practice is characterized by processes that contradict Hillier's call for 'opening up' potentialities and connections. Rather, it is concerned with processes of 'closure' that involve selecting possibilities, stabilizing relations and creating agency. In this paper, we mobilize the Guattarian notion of concrete machines in order to conceptualize such processes more specifically. As we argue, it is crucial to understand events and tools that are involved in processes of 'closure' in order to identify potential entry points for 'opening up' practices. In this sense, we re-connect Hillier's planning theory with actual sites of planning practice.

> Strategic spatial planning by strategic navigation is a performance of risk-taking, of not being in total control, of transcending the technicalities of planning practice which demands that strategic spatial planners 'step outside what's been thought before, … venture outside what's familiar and reassuring, … to invent new concepts for unknown lands' (Deleuze, 1995: 103) and to allow possibilities for something new to emerge. (Hillier, 2011a: 14, emphasis added)

> Regardless of what was going on in private development, in a next step we do not want to be controlled from the outside, from the projects, rather – in order to be in control again - we want to go a step forward and say what we want, so that the projects can go in there. (local authority for planning and construction of a Swiss municipality, emphasis added)

Introduction

In the debate about planning and complexity there is an evolving strand that draws from concepts of social complexity which are inspired by the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (e.g. Hillier, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2011a, 2011b; Van Wezemael 2008, 2010; Wood 2009; see also De Roo, Hillier and Van Wezemael, 2012). Jean Hillier can be regarded as a pioneer in this regard, as she is one of the first authors who connected this post-structural philosophy with planning theory (Hillier, 2005). In order to address the challenges of contemporary planning practice she moves instabilities, dynamics and non-linearity into centre place. As we see it, with multiplanar theory, Hillier particularly developed an ontological framework for planners, as well as a planning epistemology that is oriented towards experimentation and the emergence of the new. According to Hillier (2005: 287) 'planning theory and practice need to become in Deleuzean terms, in multiple and constant processes of transformation, opening up potentialities for connections and integrations.' (emphasis in the original).

Further, in her latest contribution about strategic navigation (Hillier, 2011a, 2011b), Hillier presents a more refined methodology for planners and proposes four types of practices: the analysis of planning situations in its complex web of relations (tracing), the exploration of future possibilities and trajectories (mapping), the experimentation with new connections by asking what-if questions (diagramming) and the building of the agency that is needed for transformation (machining). As we see it, this 'cartography' in general, and the practices of mapping and diagramming in particular, can be also read as an invitation for 'opening up' potential transformation. 'Opening up' involves the imagination of future place qualities and the reflection on stabilized relations that lead to our current built environment. In particular, this means that existing governance arrangements or sets of planning and policy instruments should be questioned and new ones formed, in order to explore the possibilities and potentials of a planning situation, to imagine a new world and generate the conditions under which new place qualities can emerge. Or as Hillier (2011a: 8) puts it: 'To raise questions of potential agency and of socio-economic-political and institutional conditions of change.'

In contrast, as we observe in our studies of Swiss planning and urban development, an ethos for opening up is apparently not decisive. Rather planning and urban development processes are characterized by decision-making environments with high regulative densities. In particular development processes are structured by rules e.g. (often un-reflected) norms on construction and traffic such as building heights, densities or requirements for noise protection and traffic supply. Arenas with higher degrees of freedom, which offer certain flexibility on planning norms as well as the potential for reflection on future place qualities, are scarce or initiated only in

exceptions (see Loepfe, forthcoming; Loepfe and Van Wezemael, forthcoming). Further, particularly in small and middle-scaled municipalities we observe that strategic plans do not support the experimental endeavor that Hillier called for. If not absent, strategic plans are an image of the current socio-economic-political conditions with low transformative capacity or even remain 'on the dusty shelves of the administration' (Loepfe, Devecchi and Zweifel, 2013), as they are not able to affect ongoing urban development processes. In our interpretation, this is often the case, when planners attempt to control development in situations with no authority to dispose (see opening citation). Overall, in our view, there is a big gap between Hillier's call for experimental practices of opening up and the contemporary practice of planning in the production of urban landscapes in Switzerland. We will take this contradiction as a starting point for our reflections on Jean Hillier's multiplanar planning theory.

In this article, then, we aim to re-connect Jean Hillier's account with actual sites of planning and urban development. We will argue – both empirically and theoretically - that planning practice is penetrated by processes that fundamentally contradict Hillier's call for opening up. In our perspective, planning is not only reserved to the planner, rather it spans a collective arrangement of investors, developers, inhabitants, architects and planners, as well as infrastructures, images, planning instruments, laws on construction, energy efficiency regulations, etc. In such configurations, not only significant transformations of a planner's ideas can be traced, but also moments, in which the arrangement attempts the capacity 'to get things done' (Allen, 1999; see also Paisiou and Van Wezemael, 2012). At least from then on, planning practice can be understood as an activity that primarily structures, hierarchizes and actualizes possibilities and potentials, rather than it is opening it up. We will refer to these mechanisms as processes of 'closure'. As a basis for the aspired move towards experimentation and exploration of possibilities, we thus propose that we should develop a more in-depth understanding of such moments and the practices of closure.

In order to link Jean Hillier's planning theory with actual sites of planning practices, we propose the following research questions that lead us through our article:

1. How do processes of closure relate to Jean Hillier's planning theory?
2. How can we grasp processes of closure theoretically, in order to empirically analyse them?
3. Where are the points of intervention to promote the explorative endeavour of opening up?

In the next section, we will relate 'closure' to Hillier's multiplanar theory. Further, we will argue for a more concise investigation into the mechanisms of closure, firstly as they are predominant in planning practice and secondly due to the reason that they are important also

in the planning epistemology that Hillier proposes, particularly in the practices of diagramming and machining. In section three, we will mobilize the concept of concrete machines from Félix Guattari in order to conceptualize processes of closure more specifically. We will argue for a practice-oriented perspective of assemblages, which moves the formation and maintenance of agency, the structuring of possibilities and their processes of actualization as well as the role of materiality into centre place. In section four we will address the third of our research questions. With empirical illustrations we will show the analytical value of our approach and substantiate our theoretical argumentation. Further, we will discuss the empirical findings against the background of our theoretical specifications and identify opportunities for mappings. In the final chapter, we will sum up and conclude how our approach can contribute to a more concise understanding of planning practice and to the identification of moments and situations in which mapping activities could be fostered. As a result, this article presents a practice-relevant perspective on assemblage thinking and contributes to the ongoing debate about complexity and planning.

Practice' struggles: between dream worlds and 'harsh realities'
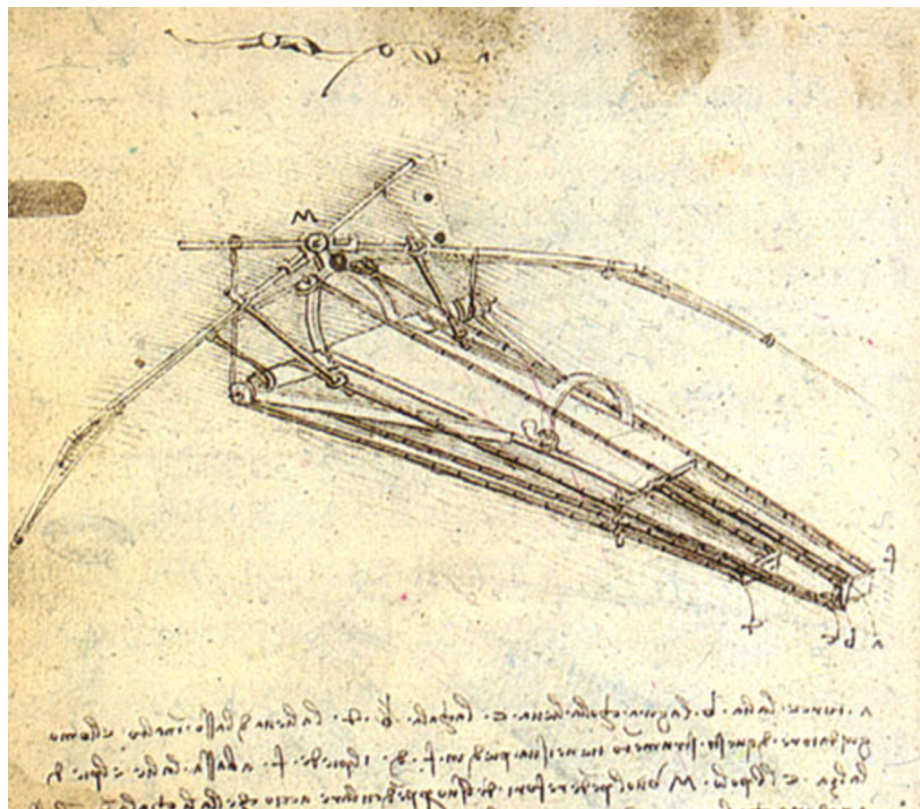
Figure 1. Design for a flying machine, Leonardo da Vinci (Source: http://www.visi.com/~reuteler/leonardo.html)

When Leonardo da Vinci dreams of flying machines, he draws them, he makes plans, but that's it. The representation stewing in his head does not manage to bite into his era's technical-scientific state of affairs. But since then, things have gained consistency, and have become charged with collective enunciation. An immense capital of knowledge has been accumulated at the heart of institutions and facilities, these days with the efficacious help of computers, and by way of the chains of researchers; of inventors; of Phyla of algorithms and of diagrams which proliferate in technological programs; of books; of teachings; of know-how. Today, the innumerable consequences of the 'flying machine' content make a real forest with their 'family trees of implication.' By successive steps, its diagrammation has taken off from its initial dream world, then from the world of slightly mad inventors, in order to finally become incarnated into the mainsprings of modern society.

(Guattari, 1989: 176-177, in: Watson, 2009: 130)

In the thick jungle of planning norms and regulations in Switzerland it becomes questionable whether urban design can still be called 'art' (of making places for people, Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), 2000) and the idea of planning is still readable as 'dreaming alternative futures about place qualities, their potentials and possibilities' (Healey in Hillier and Healey, 2010: 37). If not stuck in daily routines of place-making, planning practice is at least situated uncomfortably between dream worlds and 'harsh realities', such as fixed relations, identities and power formations. As a simple example, planners are confronted with specific intentions of landowners and investors, which might not contribute to their overall vision of a town. As we see it, assemblage thinking and Hillier's multiplanar theory give us the opportunity to grasp these tensions conceptually. In this section, we will develop an understanding of planning practice as thinking and acting on planes of immanence and organization, but also as situated in between theses planes and thus mediating between these different worlds.

Hillier (2011a: 4) speaks of a multiplanar planning practice and refers to it, following Stagoll (2005: 204), as a 'type of thinking which mediates between 'the chaos of chance happenings... on the one hand, and structured, orderly thinking on the other'. Referring to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) she writes about two types of planes: the planes of immanence and planes of organization. As we understand Hillier – she reads these planes not only as types of thinking but also as different types of practices in planning.

The planes of immanence stand for longer-term trajectories that are a 'temporary product of mapping of forces' or as we would say of mapping and exploring possibility spaces of what could and might be (Delanda, 2002, 2006; Van Wezemael, 2011; Silberberger, 2011).

Speaking in the actual/virtual ontology of our Delandian inspired version of assemblage thinking, planes of immanence are oriented towards the virtual. According to Delanda (2002, 2006) the actual consists of the emergent and tangible properties of an assemblage, whereas the virtual refers to its possible properties (capacities) as well as the possibility space that is structured by the tendencies of future becoming (singularities) and the capacities to affect other assemblages (affects). The plane of immanence is fluid, not something fixed or 'the end of a process' (Hillier, this issue: 5) and thus open to 'new connections, creative and novel becomings' (Bonta and Protevi, 2004: 62-3 in Hillier, 2011a: 5). The planes of immanence – like maps defined by Deleuze and Guattari – are oriented towards experimentation which is done, as Hiller adds, collaboratively and as we would continue: in cooperation between research and practice. As an example, such a type of thinking or planning practice could be a collaborative visioning process that questions previously stabilized relationships (e.g. between developers, investors and private planning agencies), creates new concepts, images, metaphors and stories that help a group of stakeholders to make sense of future tasks, problems and possibilities, without pre-defining them. Examples of such flexible ordering principles are 'sustainability' or the '2000 Watt-Society' as both serve as concepts towards which actors desire to navigate.

Planes of organization, in turn, are related to shorter-term plans. According to Hillier (2011a: 5) 'these planes contain hierarchical power relations which regulate or stratify our worlds ... and fix identities'. E.g. areas are coded (e.g. through zoning plans) and relations are organized (e.g. through process designs in an urban design competition or return on investment strategies). Further, Hillier (2011a: 5) speaks of master plans or blueprints with 'tangible' development goals that meet certain standards and are ordered by forms of representation. In opposition to the planes of immanence, such a type of thinking tends to be micro-scaled and content-specific. To say it in the words of our Delandian inspired version of assemblage thinking, planes of organization are situated in the actual and less oriented towards the virtual.

Hillier (2011, this issue: 5) states that, 'the planes of immanence and organization exist simultaneously and are interleaved; sometimes fairly closely knit together and sometimes more separate. We inhabit both planes at the same time.' This corresponds to our understanding of the actual and the virtual. As we interpret it, the virtual is not something constructed, but an always present feature. A planning situation always has its actual and virtual qualities, it is a matter of our concepts which part we render visible. Analyzing a planning situation means sketching out the virtual tendencies of becoming, consequently the question should be raised which possibilities in a planning setting tend to be actualized. Further, Hillier says that the planes should be somehow coordinated, meaning that the short-term plans should 'align' the

longer-term visions, but still be 'contextually appropriate'. We argue that this coordination is the crucial challenge for planning practice due to several reasons:

Firstly, planners are obviously not in complete control of planes, the planes of immanence are influenced by a number of actors and the planes of organization are also populated by plans that are potentially contradictory and probably more powerful than planner's products, such as business plans of investors. Moreover, each planes' setting of authors differs which makes alignments difficult.

Secondly, planning practice – engaged with mediating between the planes – has to consider two fundamental different types of processes: processes of opening up as 'entering' or 'mobilizing' planes of immanence (from planes of organization), and processes of closure as the actualization from planes of immanence into planes of organization. In Deleuze-Guattarian terms we could conceptualize these processes as an exploration of the virtual potentials by the de-territorialization of (present maybe unwanted) relations on planes of organization, to create the situations to be affected by planes of immanence (opening up), and as the generation and selection of possibilities as well as the stabilization or territorialization of other/new relations (closure).

Thirdly and consequently, as the planes are always interrelated and immanent to a planner's situation at the same time, the planners find themselves in a field of tension between these two fundamentaly different movements that we call processes of closure and processes of opening up. As a result, planning practitioners are forced to mediate between the planes and movements (see Figure 2).
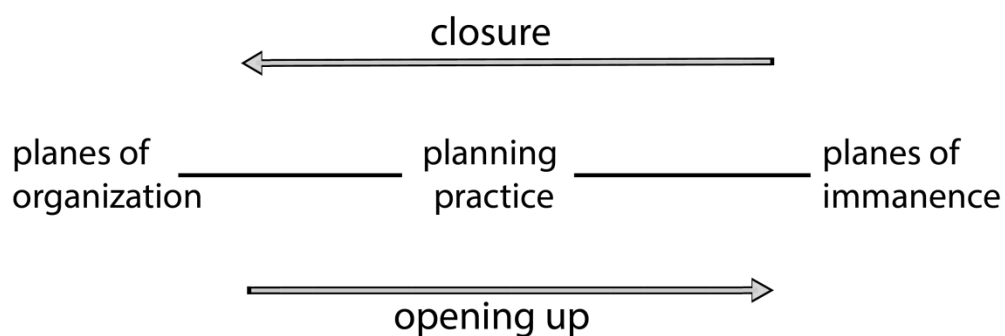
Figure 2. Planning practice between planes of organization and immanence

To manage the tensions and interfaces between the two planes, planners have methods and tools at their disposal. In her cartography, Hillier offered some important methods. In particular, we can understand tracing as a method to provide the knowledge about the relational

complexity planning is situated in, in order to navigate across the multiple planes. Mapping, in turn, is primarily a method for opening up, followed by diagramming. Diagramming is in our view in a 'middle position' between opening up and closure, as it involves closure of some aspects (the selection of possibilities, potentials), however at the same time focuses on the de-territorialization of relations that are necessary to mobilize the needed agency for transformation. Finally, machining involves the active creation of this agency by intervention. We would like to stress at this point that diagramming and machining are dominated by processes of closure. In our view this is also a crucial part of Hillier's methodology, although not obviously depicted in her call for experimentation. Consequently, we would like to promote a view that moves those processes of closure into centre place and understand them more precisely. In addition, this investigation has several other reasons:

Firstly, as we already have shown in the introduction of this article, we empirically observed that in the Swiss planning context, processes of closure are more prevalent than processes of opening up. Planes of organization do scarcely offer opportunities for mappings as planning practice is often about finding an effective way of organizing the complex relations it is interconnected with. In order to gain the capacity to make a difference, a planning collective has to reduce complexities, define problems and fix tasks that can be solved. As we argue, in planning practice, there is a constant tendency for processes of closure that are produced by predominant power relations and specific tools that shape possibilities and stabilize relations.

Secondly, another empirical finding is that if exploration of possibilities by planners is practiced, it is done in a specific context which offers specific opportunities but at the same time has its framing. A development process, for example, is framed through interdependencies, process designs and planning tools. Consequently, processes of closure are also central if mappings are present, as they are embedded in planes of organization. The process itself is based on an agreement how mappings are done and how the possibilities are selected and stabilized. If mappings are done in a different context or sphere, such as a strategic planning process among experts, there is still the question remaining if and how it will be translated into planes of organization in order to affect future decision-making processes. Also in Hillier's methodology, in particular in diagramming and machining, it is still questionable how a vision 'bites' into everyday planning practice, in particular the short-termed plans. Or to use the example from the beginning of the section: How have da Vinci's flying machines been able to transform assemblages and processes in order to establish the airplane industries that we have nowadays? As we argue, processes of closure are a basis for the generation of agency, which in turn is also needed or Hillier's cartographical methods of diagramming and machining. In the next chapter we will theoretically grapple with these questions, and

conceptualize processes of closure more specifically by focusing particularly on the tools that are needed for closure. How are relations stabilized and how do these connections endure?

Processes of closure

Concrete machines

... possible worlds clash with real worlds, and proliferate (Guattari, 2010: 147)

In this section we will refer to some of the examples that Félix Guattari gives us in his reflections about concrete machines (Watson, 2009; Guattari, 2010), in order to make sense of the concept against the background of planning and urban development. For Guattari, a memory, e.g. a childhood memory, could take on special weight, acquiring the function of matrixes, a function of organizing one's mode of subjectivation. As we carry a childhood memory across a long time, it could gain a capacity to organize processes of actualization in a specific way. The memory could then be still relevant in the present, as it imprinted itself into the virtual diagram of a person's self. In the same context Guattari also discusses the organizing qualities of a plan, in particular of the blueprints of the Concorde. At first glance, in relation to the previous example, this seems odd. At second sight, it becomes clear that with childhood memory as well as the plan he emphasizes the organizational power of entities with diverse forms. In this sense, he sees the blueprints for the Concorde as an organisational register of the material parts (e.g. aluminium, steel, synthetics) that make up an aircraft and link these with semiotics (e.g. equations, information). For Guattari the blueprint of the Concorde is much more than just a representation: it has the function of organizing the construction of an airplane by connecting different, previously disconnected domains and assemblages. Guattari refers to both examples as concrete machines (Guattari, 1984).

For Guattari, concrete machines are specialized components of assemblages that hold the assemblages and their heterogeneous components together, such as all the materials, the semiotics and the people involved in the construction of the Concorde. Consequently, concrete machines are able to traverse different domains (Watson, 2009)[12], to join other components and assemblages, to connect and transform. As a result, it is the contingent construction of certain components that take on specialized functions of organizing or specific roles in

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[12] This is the reason why Guattari refers concrete machines also to components of passage and places it into his genealogy of components.

processes of becoming. As Guattari states, concrete machines could transform an existing state, or even bring new entities into existence. They could cause other coordinates of existence to emerge (other singularities, other possible order principles) suddenly and as a result have the ability to 'find a way out' (Guattari, 1995: 10) of situations of blockage.

Their ability to bridge e.g. physical and social assemblages or to move from assemblage to assemblage makes them a medium for the continuous negotiation between assemblages, e.g. between an organization and the 'objects' it tries to organize, such as the planners that try to plan a street space. As a materialized medium in this process, concrete machines are capable of articulating singularities of the assemblages under consideration and as a consequence modulate the virtual singularities of the problem (Paisiou and Van Wezemael, 2012). In this way concrete machines organize various becomings and make some kinds of these depend on others (Guattari, 1984: 154-162). As we argue against the background of Hillier's multiplanar theory, concrete machines – between the actual and the virtual – not only negotiate, but also transfer the virtual organisational qualities (the planes of immanence) to the actual structures (the planes of organization) by articulating the singularities of planning situations. This makes concrete machines hierarchisation devices (Guattari, 1984: 154-162) and thus important conceptual tools to look at processes of closure. As a consequence, with concrete machines we have introduced a concept that bridges between the planes of immanence and the planes of organization. However, there is still an inherent challenge within planning assemblages that Guattari touches implicitly in his theoretical reflections and that we would like to conceptualize more explicitly: the question of agency and power.

Becoming 'agencement'
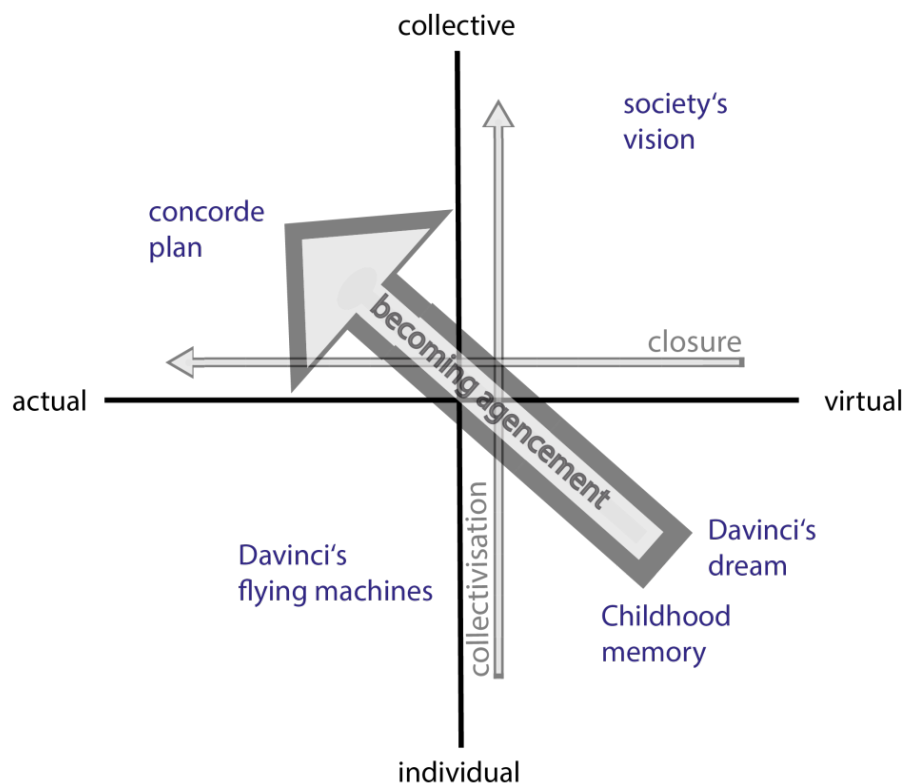
Figure 3. Becoming agencement, processes of closure and processes of collectivization

Like Hillier, we see the term assemblage as a network of 'generally non-directional, disparate groups of actors' (Hillier, 2011a: 7). In turn, 'agencement implies that a network of actants generates agency and strategy' (Hillier, 2011a: 7). We argue that the processes of becoming an agencement, can be grasped by mainly two key processes: 1) processes of closure and 2) processes of collectivization. Processes of closure involve the generation, hierarchization and qualification of possibilities as well as their materialization[13]. Processes of collectivization refer to the diffusion or the establishment of a shared understanding of an issue, problem or solution. With these two dimensions a map can be drawn (Figure 2) in which we are able to situate different examples of plans and ideas between the poles virtual – actual, and the poles individual – collective. Da Vinci's dream or the childhood memory of Guattari can be regarded as highly individual and virtual idea (lower-right corner) that – at the beginning – has not any material counterpart, but still it is influencing the individual's perception and thinking. Da Vinci's flying machines are the result of the materialization of da Vinci's initial dream world. It

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[13] In this sense a third axis with the poles material and conceptual could be added to the diagram (see Loepfe, forthcoming).

can be situated in the lower-left corner of the diagram as has its actual and territorialized form but still it is a highly individual plan that had not the capacity to affect the production processes of that time's society: 'When Leonardo da Vinci dreams of flying machines, he draws them, he makes plans, but that's it.' (Guattari, 1989: 176-177 in Watson, 2009: 130). With the blueprints of the Concorde (upper-left corner), Guattari gives us an example of an idea that already gained consistency as it is coded into semiotics that are linked to and enriched with concrete discourses, practices and materials (the planes of organization). Out of a range of possible plans, this specific plan was selected, qualified and made productive. It 'works' in the sense that it is part of the collective assemblages of production of an airplane that in the end is actually able to take off. It is part of a stabilized assemblage (agencement), has become routine and as a result has already lost its transformational capacity – at least temporarily. Finally, in the upper-right corner, we find collectivized visions, e.g. the dream to fly towards which people and practices are more or less oriented. This points to what Hillier means with planes of immanence, more flexible and as a result less graspable conceptions and ideas.

With this diagram we can now grasp 'becoming agencement' of an assemblage as movement in the two dimensions of the diagram. First, it is as a movement from the virtual to the actual that can be grasped as processes of closure, which in turn involves materialization and hierarchization or qualification. Second, 'becoming agencement' is at the same time a movement from the individual to the collective, the processes of collectivisation. Certainly, this is not a strictly linear process, rather a process of co-evolution: initial individual dream worlds translate into rough plans that are able to circulate and stimulate a community's vision that produce in a trial-and-error process a functioning plan with fixed relations and identities that works in a formalized organization. However, the tendency towards closure remains. It remains a question if there is also a predominant tendency towards collectivization. In the ideal case it may be so, however as we observed in planning practice, it is often the case that this tendency flips into the other direction. As a result, failed planning processes can be observed, e.g. fragmented versions of the future places that are not able to productively resonate with each other and consequently produce disruptions and conflict.

We argue in Guattari's line of reasoning that in processes of closure and collectivization, material elements could gain a specific organizing quality and thus a powerful role. In the case of planning this could be artefacts such as images, models, plans or designs. These elements form the planner's tools to make sense of complex situations, to gather people and ideas, to test them and to shape possibilities in transformation processes. With concrete machines we can conceptualize the organizing qualities of those elements.

For example, as Silberberger (2011) as well as Paisiou and Van Wezemael (2012) have shown thoroughly, in an architectural competition, the contribution of one team of architects in the form of a model could lead to a re-configuration of the jury's evaluation criteria that are originally fixed in a brief before the competition starts. In terms of assemblage thinking this means that the initial singularities of the setting are modulated through a specific design that could be generated rather intuitively. As a result the specific architectural model gains an organizing quality in the evaluation processes of the other contributions. Here again, the tendency of the process is oriented towards closure and collectivization. Although competitions generally are set up to open up possibilities (mapping), in the end a decision should be made, rationalized and legitimized. In addition, the model also serves as a tool for collectivisation of future place qualities. As it is not fixed and can be adjusted (e.g. in building heights, orientation, volumes), at the same time as it is a closure of possibilities, an often conflictive process of collectivization can be traced.

The concept concrete machine is helpful to render such design and decision-making processes visible. In this sense, the approach emphasizes not only processes of closure and collectivisation, but also the role of specific material elements and the relevance of design in decision-making processes. The etymology of the German word for design, 'Entwurf', is about 1) to designate something and 2) to project something, literally meaning to 'throw something forward'. Our approach emphasizes the potential organizing qualities of designs – how individual it may be at the beginning – that could become a collective and virtual point of orientation in future decision-making processes that, in turn, can order practices, world views and intentions of people and the possibility spaces of assemblages. Metaphorically this represents the 'backwards movement' of the 'throwing forward', which is a particular quality of design processes. This dynamic must not be seen as a linear sequence rather we see it as a co-evolutionary perspective on assemblages getting organized. Co-evolution means that the movements between the poles in the diagram can be a dynamic fluctuation, however on the long-term there is a tendency towards closure and collectivisation.

The Davinci example tells us the story of how an individual dream was translated by experimentation, in particular by design ('throwing something forward' and 'order backwards') to an individual and still relatively isolated plan of the flying machine with low capacity that gained through time a virtual quality as an orientation point, a wild dream that inspired other inventors to translate Davincis plans into more sophisticated plans that took in account the new technologies of that time.

By using Hillier's multiplanar theory as a starting point, we have now developed an agency-oriented version of assemblage thinking that focuses on processes of becoming agencement

and the role of materiality. The argument was presented that planning practice is dominated (although not determined) by processes of closure, which thwart Hillier's call for opening up. Nevertheless, we agree with Hillier that processes of opening up are essential for the qualification and transformation of our built environment. In the next section we will therefore not only empirically illustrate our theoretical approach, but also look for potential for mappings. As we argue, our theoretical approach is particularly suitable to do this.

Empirical illustrations: Decision-making in urban development projects

As a basis for mapping activities, we suggest centring in empirical analysis on processes and moments of closure to detect 'the reductionist violence' (Hillier, 2008: 35) that is done by the actors involved: where it could have been different? In these situations a productive question might be how planning tools are used to influence processes of closure and collectivisation, and how they do negotiate between planes of immanence and organization.

The following illustrations stem from participant observations of meetings of an urban development project in a small-scaled Swiss municipality. In the tracing we focussed on criteria and concepts of spatial quality, how they were (de-)stabilized through the processes, events and planning tools. The project development under consideration was serialized into three phases: a feasibility study, an architectural competition and the implementation of the winning project into special zoning plans. In the following sections, we will limit ourselves to illustrations of the first and the second phase.

Study of morphologies as a tool to stabilize 'framework conditions'

As it is mentioned in the planning documents (ERR Raumplaner, 2011), through the feasibility study, a 'starting position' and the 'framework conditions' were created. In our perspective, we understand this process as a production of stabilized facts rather than the collection of givens. Out of a number of possibilities for the future development of the area and the centre of the municipality, some points for orientation should be fixed in the feasibility study for a sound basis for political decisions, the tender of the competition and the integration of the important actors into the project. Our analysis has shown that two important tools were used to create important situation's parameters, and to generate, select and stabilize possibilities: a 'volume study' and an expertise on traffic accessibility.

Through the 'volume study' 'the room for manoeuvre for the future development of the area and the town centre' should be demonstrated (ERR Raumplaner 2011). As it became clear through the analysis of documents, with 'room for manoeuvre' the planners mean gross floor area that of course is an important parameter for potential investors. Four variations of

development patterns and densities were created and evaluated according to their relationship to the urban design situation in the neighbourhood.

Figure 4. Volume study, Source: ERR Raumplaner, 2011 (red areas painted by the author to render the emergence of the matrix visible)

Viewing the volume study as a concrete machine helped to render visible how planes of immanence and planes of organization negotiate through it. The volume study not only served to find an anchor point for the gross floor area (around 3500 to 4000sqm), but also to develop an evaluation matrix for urban design that was not explicitly formulated as 'tangible' goals in the later feasibility study (plane of organization), however circulates as flexible but still structuring sense-making principles in the later decision-making processes. This matrix is composed of different ideas, such as:

- the aim to orient the building typology towards the bigger buildings in the neighbourhood,
- the need to mark the corner of the roundabout with 'urbanistic' measures (but at the same time not dominate the other buildings around the roundabout, such as the municipality's administration and a therapeutic spa),
- the strong orientation towards the main street (north–south orientation, see Figure 4) and
- the idea that the ensemble should be permeable and not 'too urban'.

The matrix gained consistency and collectivized in the project group by testing the vague conceptions of the future place, city centre and the municipality that populate the planes of immanence (some of them stem from former policy instruments on the municipal level) – such as its identity being not too urban but still a lively town, and the release of traffic problems as well as the improvement of the city centre, against concrete options (see Figure 5). In particular, V1 and V2 served mainly to sort out options and the conceptions of place that are connected with them, such as the idea of a city block or the orientation towards the main street (east–west street) and the idea of being 'urban'. As a consequence, the volume study served not only to create a plane of organization, but also to translate vague concepts into consistent forms that make sense for the project group or not, that could be rejected or collectivized.

Adjusting a traffic expertise to create agency for strategic goals

The collectivized concept of morphology and density was then a basis for an expertise on traffic accessibility. This study was another planning tool to hierarchize and qualify possibilities, and consequently create agencement. As the municipality has planned to upgrade the street space of the station street and empty it from motorized traffic and at the same time aim to increase the pedestrian frequencies with the urban development project, the question of accessibility for motorized traffic became crucial. This is in particular the case, because a street of the canton (northeast–southwest orientation, see Figure 4) is involved. An external expertise has created four options that are all 'feasible', however considered option 2 (Variante

2, see Figure 5) as the best according to traffic norms. The canton was against option 1 and 3, as they will lead to more backlog on the canton's street. The municipality, on the other hand, favoured option 1, as they aimed to empty the street space from motorized traffic and – in the line of the matrix – wanted to orientate the developments towards the mentioned street.

4   Erschliessungsvarianten

Bild 5: Erschliessungsvarianten und Abendspitzenbelastungen
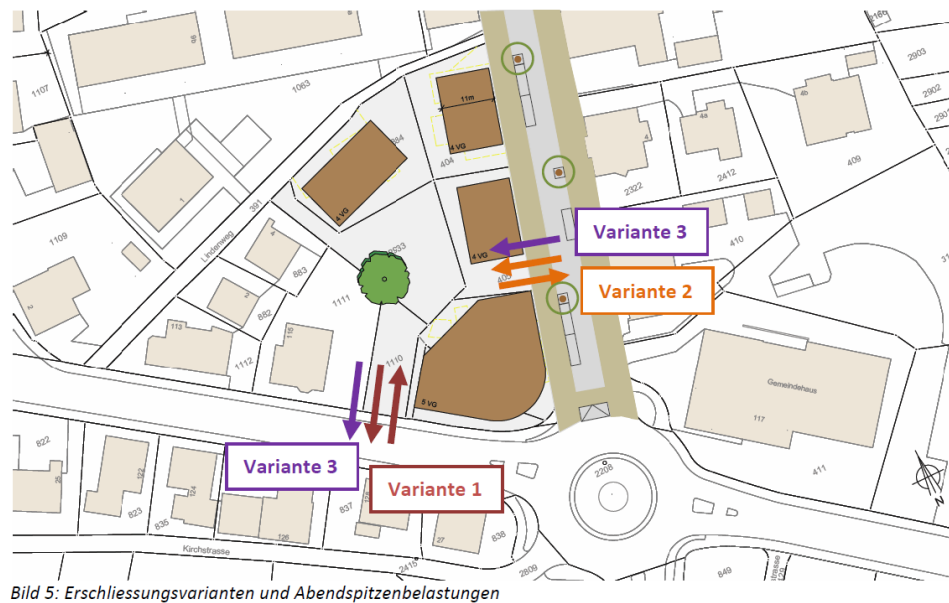
Figure 5. Expertise on traffic accessibility (Source: ERR Raumplaner, 2011)

In order to argue against the canton's department, the municipality's authorities asked the traffic expert as its client to slightly adjust the report in order to equalize the options in their quality. In addition, the municipality brought in a last subsection of the report references to the overall goals of the municipality to upgrade the public space (and to slow down traffic) of the mentioned street. Finally, the report concluded that option 1 (or at least option 3) should be favoured. With this stabilized 'fact' the project group could enter the discussion with the canton's traffic department.[14] As a consequence, the criteria 'revival' and 'calming' served as a virtual point of orientation (plane of immanence) according to that the traffic expertise (concrete machine) was adjusted in order to create room for manoeuvre in the feasibility study (plane of organization). This, in turn, created agency for the favourite option of the municipal administration.

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[14] Note that the option was indeed temporarily stabilized as in the later competition a contribution was selected that planned with option 2.

Spaces for mapping: The design competition

The following extracts stem from field notes of a participant observation that were made in a jury session in the phase of the competition. In extract 1, the planner (A) introduces the evaluation process, after each team individually presented their contributions.

Extract 1

A	In the next part, it is now our task to objectify the subjective presentations. We are doing this by a little tour through the contributions, going through each model and plan, and discuss the contributions in regard to our criteria...

Through the tour, individual impressions and interpretations get into resonance with each other and are tested against the specific contribution that is on the table, in order to make a robust argumentation for the political municipal authorities. This is a dynamic process in which also new criteria can emerge. Our analysis has shown that moments can be traced when there is a shift in the discussion from morphological criteria towards more fuzzy concepts like identity of inhabitants and the future municipality. In particular, the question emerged of who the inhabitant of the specific municipality actually is and which kinds of spatial qualities, e.g. landscape types he/she demands. Extract 2 is a statement of a jury member (B) after this kind of discussions towards the end of the evaluation process and expresses the need to address the evolving criteria by testing it against the contributions that have already been sorted out.

Extract 2

B	To be fair, we should now discuss again the contributions that we discussed at the beginning, in the light of our new criteria.

This proposition was then rejected by a coalition between town planner and mayor who reminded that a decision has to be made presently (the same day) and there is no time to roll out the discussion again. It was argued that other projects were rejected due to the reason that they did not fulfil the main criteria of the competition, such as to strengthen the main street and to have flexible stages. Consequently, they argued that the group should return to these main criteria, and base the argumentations on these.

Discussion: Processes of closure and identification of points for intervention

Planning and development processes should be rather understood as creating facts and finding agencies for these facts than a radical opening up practice. Nevertheless, the illustrations draw a differentiated picture of planning practice as refined calibration of guidelines and room for manoeuvre. This modulation of possibility spaces (Van Wezemael, 2010) can be read as a negotiation between planes of immanence and planes of organization through concrete machines. Through concrete machines vague concepts are tested and translated into planes of organization. On the other side concrete machines offer an entry point to planes of immanence such as the discussion about place identities ('being not too urban'). It also becomes clear that through a specific concrete machine (such as a plan, a model, a 3D visualization, a cross-table) specific dimensions of the issue under consideration (such as a dimension of urban quality, e.g. morphologies) are preferred and other excluded or subordinated (e.g. the identity of inhabitants). As a consequence, the qualification process has its bias.

Mappings, in the form of studies of different options, are present and build an important part of this qualification process. However, they are framed by specific concrete machines and the process itself, where they are embedded. The process is designed by a series of planes of organization (feasibility study, competition, special zoning), this in turn defines its interfaces and points of reference (such as milestones, e.g. the competition tender). As a result, each moment and the issues at stake can be related to a next step and to a plane of organization in which it has to be transformed. As the empirical example has shown, the study of morphologies and volumes should not only be conceived in the light of municipal strategic goals but also against the background of aiming to generate a target measure that is relevant for the investors, thus for the creation of agency. Consequently, the embeddedness of mappings determines the degree of freedom. On the other side, this ensures that it can be utilized in the process and that the agency for transformation could be created. Processes of closure, such as the creation of an argumentative repertoire for a preferred option (e.g. through an expertise on traffic), are the crucial mechanisms for the establishment of agency. To put it simple, as the example has shown literally, in the end of the day decisions have to be made, thus possibility spaces have to be closed and planes of organization fixed. As a consequence, mappings have always to be read in the light of these mechanisms. It is mapping *for*, not mapping for the sake of mapping. Speaking in metaphors, we would rather draw a room full of experts, where window is opened for fresh air when it is needed, than a raft on a stormy sea (see Hillier, 2011a).

However, feeling committed to the same ontological basis as Jean Hillier, we are still trying to think in possibilities and potentials that go beyond the already given. As we argue, through our

conceptual tools we are able to focus on moments before closure, in order to map out different future trajectories. Moreover, with concrete machines, we are instructed to reflect on how different materialities inform decision-making processes by shaping the possibilities for opening up and closure. As a consequence, our approach is able to uncover the 'reductionist violence that is done (on whom, to what and with what implications)' (Hillier, 2008: 35). The empirical illustration has shown that besides other reductions (such as the aiming at a dimension of quality that is relevant for a future investor, e.g. gross floor area), the use of the morphological model was affecting the decision-making process. Through the use of the model the debate about urban quality is reduced, at least during this moment, to its physical-morphological dimension. Later on in the jury sessions another aspect of urban quality emerged, namely the identity of the people living in this municipality and the question of 'who to build for'. This issue was not followed up and the discussion was stopped by a coalition between mayor and planner by referring to the physical-morphological set of criteria. Several questions could be raised at this point, through which we could be guided to mapping out other trajectories: What happens if we change the concrete machine (e.g. using thematic identity maps)? How would the dynamics change when we arrange the phases and the policy instruments in a different way? How could we foster the identity dimension of urban quality and what kind of arenas or processes would be needed to address this problem? What kind of governance arrangement 'closes' and is it a productive and democratic way of closure? Knowing that in such processes we are urged to 'reduce' although this has not to be done 'violently', we propose that analysts or planning practitioners should at least keep record of the lost issues and actors.

Conclusions

We took the contradiction between Hillier's call for experimental practices of 'opening up' and the contemporary practice of planning in Switzerland as a starting point for our reflections on Jean Hillier's multiplanar planning theory. As we argue, contemporary planning practice is situated between planes of immanence and planes of organization. Consequently planning practice is in a field of tension within multiple planes (of immanence and organization) and as a result mediating between the planes through processes of opening up and closure. We argue that there is a tendency towards closure that produces fixities on the plane of organization that serve as qualification devices and reconfigure the virtual singularities which in turn lead to other actualizations of plans etc. As a result, the planes will never be in congruence, there is always something remaining that produces difference and tension. However, this is how planning practice is both challenged and fuelled. It is 'work in progress!' (Guattari, 2005: 133).

Concrete machines and our agency-oriented version of assemblage thinking emphasize that planes of immanence are not completely uncoupled from planes of organization and the material world. Rather they are negotiated through specific events and tools. Planes of immanence could usually only be 'mobilized' through a setting that is on the plane of organization. Consequently, mappings as exploration of possibility spaces are always framed, e.g. through process designs and (material) sense-making devices which in turn serve as a (temporary) hierarchization devices for possibilities and potentials. Through these events and tools planes of organization and planes of immanence are folded and resonate, producing entities that are able to circulate through decision-making arenas. These entities are important elements in processes of closure, materialization and collectivization, which, in turn, are crucial aspects of becoming an agencement. We still feel ourselves committed to the same ontological basis as Jean Hillier. However, we argue for a re-interpretation that emphasises the aspect of becoming an agencement and the role of the diverse planning practitioners as process stabilizers rather than as inventors of new worlds. As an implication of our approach, in tracing we should focus on those events and tools that mediate between planes of immanence and organization and be sensitive for moments of closure to unveil the 'reductionist violence' that is done. At the same time we have to acknowledge that the power of an idea on the one hand depends on how it is staged (by planners), on the other hand it is not only a matter of intention rather it is important if and how an idea is able to mobilize discourses and to connect to urban development practices. Consequently, actualization is not always a matter of 'violence'.

The empirical illustrations show that mappings exist, but they are framed and have to be read against the background of process dynamics and the tools that are used. In planning practice, mappings are hardly done for the sake of mapping rather it is always a mapping *for*. After

identifying moments of closure, practice and research could collaboratively reflect on how processes are closed and relations stabilized, and the role of materiality that brings in, performs and stabilizes probably unwanted relations. For example, as shown in the illustrations, a powerful coalition (between planner and mayor) was able to transform a potentially political issue (place identities) to the physical-morphological dimension of urban quality by referring to a concrete machine that was stabilized from the beginning of the process. Under which conditions could which material components stimulate visionary thinking, create agency, e.g. for the debate about place identities, and serve themselves as hierarchization devices? Some artefacts are able to carry a concept of quality, others are not. Which tools for which concepts? Or to what degree is the 'how' determining the 'what'?

In this sense our version of assemblage thinking gives possible answers to some of the problematics that are stated in the current discourse about the assemblage approach (see Anderson et al. 2012), in particular how heteregenous parts are assembled and orders hold together, how connections and power relations are stabilized and endure, and how we account for both stability in form and the potential for dynamic change. Moreover, it shows that assemblage thinking is not an 'anything goes' approach, as our approach helps to focus on specific moments and dynamics. As we argue, we should understand the practices of giving stability more precisely, before we are able to start the collaborative and interventional process of opening up. It is only through these micropolitical movements that we are able to bring Jean Hillier's ethos for planning to the actual sites of planning practice and urban development, the production of urban landscapes. Or to use Hillier's metaphor for strategic navigation: We have to acknowledge that a planner's raft is not free floating instead it mandatorily has to be landed now and then, unless planners do not want to become meaningless. However, we should not forget to explore the unknown lands neither.

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Rethinking politics and the (post-)political through Deleuze-Guattarian micropolitics

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Becoming-revolutionary is a matter of finding the lines of flight that undermine the existing order and trace the outlines of the new. (Patton 2010: 150)

Abstract

Must the unspecific statement that 'planning is political' nowadays be replaced by the resigned final words that 'planning has become post-political'? In this article, we argue that this is not the case, at least not at every moment and everywhere. Observable post-political tendencies in urban development projects, on one hand, and disruptions through the political spaces of direct democracy on the other, trigger the question of whether post-political theory asks productive questions for countries with a planning culture that has a strong 'participative ethos'. Switzerland is such a country and we will explore Swiss planning practices with regard to politics and 'the political' in spatial planning.

We address the post-political, in the sense of Rancière's police, as a stabilised, but never completely closed form of order, and argue for a theoretical twist towards assemblage thinking, which explicitly moves its generative processes, its incompleteness and its potential to become different into centre place. Through assemblage thinking and Deleuze-Guattarian micropolitics, we are able to grasp a planning situation's contending and productive energies, which may or may not lead to post-political forms of order. In a case study of a 'planning-development hybrid', the predominant form of organisation in contemporary Swiss planning, we will use the above-mentioned analytical tools to understand the dynamics in collective decision-making processes and to identify any potential enable us to imagine alternative planning processes that could be different from the post-political forms of order. This move towards dynamics and potentials helps us to step beyond the either/or question of whether planning is post-political or not and offers a more refined and context-sensitive view of politics and 'the political'.

Is Swiss planning post-political?

Contemporary forms of planning practices, referred to as territorial governance in this book, are characterised by emerging collaborations between the state, private companies and formal and informal institutions, which form networks of interdependent actors that are consequently not under the direct control of anybody, neither formal political institutions nor the public. In planning theory and related fields, these observations recently triggered a debate about democratic legitimacy and transparency and urged recognition of the need for new 'intellectual equipment' for analyses. This appears especially in the form of revised concepts of politics, which do not restrict its realm to formal arenas, and 'the political' as an account for the ever-present subversive and conflictive forces in society. Due to a lack of specificity in those concepts, several contributors in the recent debate came up with a more transformative and concise understanding. In particular, the authors of post-political theory, e.g. Swyngedouw and Oosterlynck (see introduction in this book), define a proper political space as follows:

> A proper (democratic) political space is one that recognises the constitutive split of the people, antagonistic positionalities and the articulation of incommensurable demands. It is a space which permits their expression on the basis of the unconditional presumption of equality of each and every one qua speaking beings. (Oosterlynck & Swyngedouw 2010: 1580).

Oosterlynck and Swyngedouw (2010) argue that the possibilities for radical disagreement that are created in such political spaces are absent in current planning practice. Swyngedouw (2009: 611) refers to this tendency to 'evacuate' proper political moments in urban politics as the post-political condition or the post-political order. He mobilises the political philosophy of Jacques Rancière to grasp this phenomena and, in particular, reads the post-political order as the type of order that Rancière (1995) calls the police (e.g. Swyngedouw 2009). Referring to Dikeç's reading of Rancière (Dikeç 2005: 174), the police can be defined as an 'established social order of governance with everyone in their "proper" place in the seemingly natural order of things'. The political is the disruption of the police 'by a part which has no part' (176) in the police order and that has equality as its guiding principle. According to Oosterlynck and Swyngedouw (2010: 1580) contemporary planning practice has become de-politicised and strengthens the post-political police order as forms of governance and management technologies are mobilised that 'revolve around reflexive risk-calculation, accountancy rules, ... quantification and bench-marking,' and are 'articulated around a market-driven hegemonic logic.' (Oosterlynck & Swyngedouw (2010: 1580). As a consequence, such post-political practice of negating radical disagreement and antagonism, 'generates deadlock and is bound

to fail politically as its negotiated technical compromise will find itself confronted with the "return of the political", the re-emergence of conflict.' (Oosterlynck & Swyngedouw (2010: 1582).

While doing planning research in Switzerland, we felt challenged to adopt the post-political perspective in order to critically reflect current planning practices in our context:[15] We agree with Oosterlynck and Swyngedouw (2010) because we observed post-political tendencies in Switzerland that are strongly related to the rise of 'planning-development hybrids', development projects of a critical size that become strategic planning projects (cf. 'strategic spatial projects' in Oosterlynck et al. 2011). These temporary forms of organisation create new forums of decision-making, where different actors, such as developers, planners, architects and public authorities, are involved (Van Wezemael & Loepfe 2009, Van Wezemael 2011, 2012). In such cases, planning often operates with technical management logic, e.g. participatory strategies are part of risk-calculation and serve as tools to manage information on a target group rather than for entering into a dialogue with the public, with an outcome that is not pre-determined (Buletti forthcoming). In the same line we can observe several strategies of the project organization to avoid or frame a public debate: placing public debates deliberately around technical issues with which the participating citizens do not feel familiar, e.g. flood protection, modelling of traffic flows, or the trick to avoid assessment of credits through community legislative by splitting the financing in order to be below the limit that demands a mandatory referendum.

Furthermore, we observe that consensual strategies to formulate common goals and measures in strategic planning sometimes lead to the exclusion of dissident voices, and often leads to vague definitions of the planning instrument's content. In these cases, the actors' inherent antagonism was not reflected in the development goals, which lead to 'empty signifiers' (Brand & Gaffikin 2007: 303) and vague formulations such as 'traffic and housing should be coordinated' (RZU[16] 2005). Strategic planning attempts in Switzerland could open up the space for people and new ideas, but fundamentally different ideas that cannot be translated into formal planning instruments and that often follow informal processes, are getting lost through the process.

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[15] Note that we focussed, according to the strong autonomy of communes, on planning at the municipal level. All the empirical material used in this article stems from expert interviews and participant observations gathered in the context of the National Research Program NRP 65 New Urban Quality (www.nfp65.ch).

[16] Regionalplanung Zürich und Umgebung, a regional planning agency for the agglomeration area of Zurich.

Is the Swiss planning system – simplified as the role model for those voices in the UK and elsewhere that call for a 'frontloading'[17] of the planning system (cf. ODPM 2004) – also deadlocked in the post-political order? No, not at all: we argue that Swiss federalism and direct democracy create several points of intervention in the planning process that re-politicise planning. To develop this argument, we will now introduce some of the particularities of the Swiss planning system.

The federal state of Switzerland is organised in three political levels: 2495 communes (or municipalities) as the smallest political units, 26 cantons, and the federal state. Although the communes' autonomy can vary between cantons, internationally compared, it is strong, as the communes are responsible for social services and schools, taxes, energy supply, some road construction and land use planning (zoning plans and construction permissions). Spatial planning, as incorporated in the Federal Constitution, is actually a matter of the cantons, which in turn delegate a number of tasks to the communes, such as land use planning and construction permits. The communes each have their executive and legislative bodies. Legislative bodies are the municipal assemblies in roughly 80% of the communes, where all inhabitants who are entitled to vote, meaning Swiss nationals that have turned 18 and are not incapacitated on grounds of mental illness or debility, may participate.[18]

Those persons have the following political rights at each political level: Firstly, they can elect candidates to the legislature and executive levels or can be elected themselves as candidates (active and passive right to vote). Secondly, they can vote on 'people's initiatives' and referenda (direct democracy). Initiatives are requests for new laws or new amendments to the Constitution originating from the people. Depending on the political level, there must be a certain number of signatures collected within a certain time, e.g. 100,000 signatures in 18 months at the federal level, for an initiative to be placed on the ballot. As a current example relevant to planning, people in the canton of Zurich voted for the 'cultural land initiative' (Kulturlandinitiative[19]), which aimed to protect agricultural land and as a consequence forbid any construction activities on land with a certain degree of agricultural quality that was not in the building zone of the local land use plans at the time.

There are two types of referenda: optional and mandatory. Optional referenda are vetoes against parliamentary decisions that can be called for by a certain number of signatures

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[17] We use the term 'frontloading' as a metaphor for more community outreach and participation of neighbourhoods and the public in planning processes. See also Brownhill & Carpenter (2007: 622), who reflected on frontloading and planning reforms in England.

[18] Although some cantons allow foreigners to vote.

[19] Cf. www.kulturlandinitiative.ch; Accessed: 27 February 2013.

collected within a certain time after the publication of new legislation. Mandatory referenda refer to certain forms of parliamentary decisions after which a public vote has to follow, e.g. if a certain number of public investments is exceeded (see the 'finance splitting trick'). Furthermore, in planning, it is mandatory that every change of the 'communal land use plan' has to be authorised by the communal legislative body, (parliament or communal assembly). Moreover, there is the possibility to raise objections, meaning that every inhabitant (not only those who are entitled to vote) can raise an objection against land use plans and construction permits during a certain period of announcement. Those objections will be verified according to their legal basis. Finally, Article 4 in the national law for spatial planning emphasises the 'participative ethos' of the Swiss planning system as it says that authorities should ensure that the people are appropriately involved in planning. (Federal Chancellery of Switzerland, 2013; VLP ASPAN 2013). As a result, the planning system in Switzerland is decentralised and strongly frontloaded. It demonstrates many potential moments, where planning could be (re-)politicised instead of de-politicised. Speaking in post-political terms, the political seems not completely 'evacuated', planning processes are still characterized by many possibilities for radical disagreement that are able to change or even stop planning processes.

After delving into the particularities of the Swiss planning system, we concluded that we are unable to answer the introductory question with a Yes or a No, as our findings show that, despite its post-political practices, Swiss planning is definitely not post-political as such, as Swiss federalism and direct democracy are still influencing those practices and often running the show. How can both 'sides' co-exist, how do they relate, and how can they be conceptualised?

We argue, that, paradoxically, the emergence of post-political practices is very much related to the failure of the technocratic planning system in the context of direct democracy and decentralised planning competences (cf. Allmendinger & Haughton 2012, Metzger 2011, Raco in this book). As we observed, most of the planning-development hybrids that have been finally implemented have a long history of planning attempts, beginning with a technocratic top-down approach and ending with (post-political) forms of planning-development hybrids as attempts that were finally realised (Van Wezemael & Loepfe 2009, Van Wezemael 2011, 2012). In tracing this trial-and-error process, we see that (collective) actors adjust their (modes of) organisation to the uncertainties of the problem given, e.g. resource interdependencies, which are not least generated by the decentralised and frontloaded planning system in Switzerland. This results in a growing governance network that has a greater capacity to cope with these uncertainties, the professionalisation of participation and the development of an 'art' of governance, e.g. through professional real estate developers. These professional actors know

how to manage interdependencies using post-political practices. Nevertheless, planning-development hybrids are still fragile as there are still many moments of potential disagreement remaining that cannot be fully managed.

On the basis of these reconsiderations of the post-political order in Switzerland, we conclude that it may be insufficient to work with post-political theory for two reasons, one has to do with its analytical focus, the other with its implicit normative position: Firstly, the radical sharpness of the concept of the political produces the general question of whether planning practice is post-political or not, which is impossible to answer in the Swiss context. The post-political theory simply does not offer productive questions for Switzerland, and maybe also for other countries that have a strong frontloaded planning history and practice. With the conclusion that everything is post-political, post-political theory loses its conceptual leverage. Secondly, the definition of the proper political space shows that the post-political perspective implies a strong normative position for frontloading, which we find also problematic, because frontloading is paradoxically one of the reasons for the emergence of post-political forms of organising planning and development projects. More frontloading may not mean less post-political.

In this article, we propose more context-sensitive and refined 'intellectual equipment' to understand the crucial micropolitical moments in the emergence and establishment of the post-political order, and to open up possibilities for a way out of it. As our empirical starting point, we will take a planning-development hybrid as an example of contemporary Swiss planning, which (currently) has its post-political form of organisation, as this is now the dominant form of organisation that has significant effects on Swiss spatial development.

In our case study, our theoretical point of departure is that we read this specific case of the post-political as only one form of possible different orders and as only temporarily stabilised. The post-political order in the sense of Rancière's police (Rancière 1995) implies that it is always contested and that there is always the possibility of the 'return of the political' (Oosterlynck & Swyngedouw 2010: 1582). As a consequence, there is no final, completely closed form of police order. Against the background of thinking of planning differently than it is today, inspired by the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, we argue for assemblage thinking as a theoretical understanding of the processes involved in the post-political order, which drives its incompleteness, its stability and its generative processes even more into centre place and helps us to move beyond the either/or question of whether planning is post-political or not.

Assemblage thinking provides us with the analytical tools of the molar and the molecular, with which we are able to grasp the generative processes of different forms of orders and its

contesting forces. This allows us to address politics and 'the political' in a more meticulous way. We refer to this approach as Deleuze-Guattarian micropolitics. In the next section, we will develop Deleuze-Guattarian micropolitics and argue that there is always an uncertain and contested moment before the establishment of any new form of order and identity, which we call a moment of non-identity. This moment is characterised by several possible future trajectories, a high degree of non-linearity, and fragile identities. The concept helps us to identify crucial moments in the emergence of the post-political order and to think of planning processes that are different from post-political practice and are probably more democratic. As Patton (2010: 150) puts it: 'Becoming-revolutionary is a matter of finding the lines of flight that undermine the existing order and trace the outlines of the new.' (Patton 2010: 150)

Towards Deleuze-Guattarian micropolitics

We start the development of our theoretical argument with a short vignette.[20] The following extract stems from field notes taken as a participant observer in a strategic group meeting of an urban development project. The group consisted of the mayor (A), the head of municipal department for construction (B), the town planner (C), and the traffic planner (D) (C and D in private mandate). The canton was not represented in the meeting and neither were the people from the neighbourhood. An expert on traffic concluded that there are four options to make the future development area accessible for motorised private transport. However, the issue cannot be decided without the permission of the Canton's Traffic Department because three of the options affect a road owned by the canton. This department, based on certain norms in traffic planning, rejected the option preferred by the strategic group.

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[20] The term 'vignette' in ethnography refers to a short, concentrated, self-contained description of a situation. A vignette is not to be mistaken for a transcription (e.g. of a tape-recording). It is in fact a reconstruction of a situation based on field notes. (see Silberberger 2011a, b; Söderström 2000).

Extract 1	
C	If we take the goal of the community to reduce traffic in the central street seriously and make it more attractive for pedestrians, we can't live with the decision of the canton. I've talked to the responsible traffic planner, but he is insisting on his norms…
A	Try again. Otherwise, we have to speak to the next level in the hierarchy of the canton. If this doesn't work, we go to another level above until we reach the political authority of the department… and again play stupid games of 'ladder and snakes'.
C	Oho. Now it's getting political (laughs).

What exactly is political in this situation? It could help to clarify the notions of politics and 'the political' by trying to identify it in extract 1. In contrast to the designation of the situation as 'political' through the town planner, a post-political scholar would probably argue that 'ladder and snakes' game is post-political at its best, a game played in the nebulous governance networks of actual planning practice. The political is absent in this current planning situation as the public is excluded from the situation and shows no attempt to intervene or disrupt the existing governance order. But there is apparently still another type of disruption in the situation, which is the challenging of the existing traffic norm. In contrast to post-political scholars who would denote this as 'on the surface', we argue that the disruption in extract 1 remains an important moment to understand the dynamics of contemporary planning practice and has to be conceptualised in order to get a grip on it and its potential to become different.

Science and Technology Studies (STS) scholars recently offered some productive concepts for the analysis of such micropolitical practices (cf. introduction in this book). Among others who promote a process-oriented view of the generation of issues in the analysis of planning and politics, e.g. Barry 2001, Marres 2005, and De Vries 2007, Latour (2007) in his reaction to De Vries (2007), offers a taxonomy of the different types of political stages in the trajectory of an issue, which he calls cosmopolitics. There is one type of political stage that could be productively used to account for the situation in extract 1. If we read the organisation of traffic as an issue, we can detect a process from the past of the situation in extract 1 that Latour refers to as the political-5, which is the translation of an issue into a 'daily routine of administration and management' (Latour 2007: 817). The issue has ceased to be political in

the sense of Latour's other types of cosmopolitics.[21] What we find in extract 1 is actually a reversed movement of this translation process, the re-politicisation of the norm as it is being contested through the governance setting.

What is fruitful in the view of STS is the emphasis on the vector of politics: 'Politics is not some essence; it is something that moves; it is something that has a trajectory.' (Latour 2007: 214). As a result, we are able to describe the (micro)political as a process of rupture, of de-stabilising an institutionalised norm, even if it is not a revolution by the people against the police in the name of equality. We argue that it is the disruption of this norm that actually makes it a matter of concern and thus contested, and therefore a political moment – whether it is in the name of equality, in the name of the people, the community or (just in the name of) the project – that it is able to be continued. There is still the possibility that it could become political in the sense of Rancière, however, as we argue, we have to understand the micropolitical moments before an issue goes or does not go public.

However, there are some questions open that STS seemingly denotes as purely empirical. Firstly, how do orders and their contesting forces relate? Secondly, what drives the situation to disrupt the existing order? Thirdly, how is the situation after the disruption ordered in a new way? We argue that these questions remain under-conceptualised, but resonate strongly with the ontology of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and their concepts of the molar and the molecular. In the next section, we introduce these concepts in order to develop Deleuze-Guattarian micropolitics.

Assemblages, the molar and the molecular

The molecular and the molar are 'different modes of order of a field or "population" of particles of any size' (Bonta & Protevi 2004: 115). According to Van Wezemael (2008), this enables us to theorise modes of governance: The molar can be seen as those lines which map the institutionalised order, molecular lines challenge these stabilised modes of negotiation by de-territorialising the relationship between its components. DeLanda (2006: 12) defines processes of territorialisation as processes that 'stabilise the identity of an assemblage by increasing its degree of internal homogeneity or the degree of sharpness of its boundaries'. Processes that de-stabilise it are called processes of de-territorialisation. Assemblages are

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[21] Although the norm is still able to build new connections, e.g. to be applied in different cases, in this view it still has the potential to be political-1. There is still the opportunity for small variation, which refers to the molecular (see below).

ensembles that are generated through the interaction of their components.[22] Local organisations, developers, networks, communities, cities, and states can be all viewed as assemblages that are the product of specific historical processes and, whatever degree of identity they have, they must be accounted for via the processes that created them and via those that maintain or change their identity (DeLanda 2006: 28).

Let us illustrate this with extract 1: Whereas the molar in the situation could be the planning system based on norms, legal plans, distribution of competences and the organisation of decisions, the molecular, in this case the project meeting, is challenging the existing molar line. Through assemblage thinking, it is possible to see the molar and the molecular not as contradictions, but as mutually dependent and co-constitutive, thus, as part of the same assemblage, involving the canton's traffic department as well as the project meeting. This assemblage is created through a contested object or issue, i.e. the road belonging to the canton, and the different solutions preferred by the project group and the canton, as well as their stabilisations through experts (project meeting) or norms (canton). The molecular is inherent to the system and not outside the assemblage. It is always possible that through processes of (de)-territorialisation, the molar transforms into the molecular and vice versa. Challenging a specific norm could lead to a de-stabilisation of the norm, its stabilizing practices and the establishment of a new accepted way of balancing public interests.[23]

According to the ontological basis of assemblage thinking (Deleuze & Guattari 1987), orders are only temporary stabilisations, thus, there is never a pure molar line, a complete territorialisation, there is always something that escapes the logic of the molar, which remains unmanageable and that generates uncertainty. Or, in the words of systems thinking: there is never a completely closed system. As molecular lines are more fluid (Van Wezemael 2008: 174), molecular lines resonate around molar lines, they do not relate as an either/or. The molecular only exists in relation to the molar (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). We argue that it is through the constant resonating of molecular around molar lines that something new can be created. It is 'the tensions between the experimental and the regular, the fluid and the fixed' (Nyseth et al. 2010: 244) that creates, that opens up potential, e.g. acts of negotiation never entirely conform to the standard (the molar), but exist in a process of continuous variation. (Patton 2005 in Van Wezemael 2008: 179). As Van Wezemael (2008: 179) states, this variation can maintain a heterogeneous quality and create energy.

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[22] This corresponds with the leitmotif of complexity science, which states that every observable order, including every spatial setting or social ensemble, is a generated product of the interactions of elements (cf. Alexander 2003).

[23] This process could lead to the political-5 (Latour 2007).

Naturally, the traffic norm is not the only molar line in the assemblage, especially when treating the assemblage's component parts as lower-scale assemblages themselves, then new molar and molecular lines are opened up. For example, within the project meeting assemblage, we can see molar lines of master signifiers, which include sustainability, accessibility (cf. Hillier 2008: 40), that relate, translate and order everything. In extract 1 this would be the goal of the municipality to regain a level of quality for the town centre by making it a pedestrian zone. As a result, there is always more than one molar line, more than one order. In this sense, the police as an assemblage could be grasped by its multiple molar lines or orders that cannot be reduced to one. Consequently, this enables us to see more than just one of Rancière's police orders. Finally, each relationship of these orders could be viewed again as a relationship between the molecular and the molar, if they relate, e.g. in a subversive way.

An important aspect in assemblage thinking lies in its ontology that refers to basic assumptions of complexity thinking. In our DeLandian inspired version of assemblage thinking, a plane of the actual must be complemented with a virtual plane (DeLanda 2002, 2006). The latter incorporates tendencies of change and 'becoming' as well as its potential properties. An assemblage, on the basis of the relations of its components, displays actual emergent properties. However, these properties are not given; when not exercised, they are merely possible. Any assemblage therefore must be explored as actual elements that generate, through their relations a space of possibilities, which contains the non-actualised tendencies (singularities) and non-actualised capacities to affect and be affected (affects) (DeLanda 2002: 62).[24] A possibility space is not amorphous: if almost everything is possible, not everything is probable. Rather, the virtual is necessarily structured since different assemblages exhibit different sets of capacities, i.e. what it is able to do and what not. (Van Wezemael 2010: 276–277).

Assemblage thinking asks less about what a thing is, rather how it has come into being and what it can do. The virtual ontology enables us to conceptualise the molecular, firstly, as already actualised challenging lines, e.g. practices that challenge the norm of the planning system, and, secondly, as non-actualised (virtual) tendencies that will challenge the pre-dominant molar order in the future. This could be, e.g. vague ideas that are discussed but are not represented in the final planning document and thus do not have the capacity to affect the planning process at this specific moment.[25] Another example would be the inherent tendency of urban development projects to fail. This is a molecular line that is not even discussed or

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[24] This epistemology can be referred to as counter-actualisation or meta-modelling (cf. Watson, 2009).

[25] Although when such ideas are circulating, they could affect other assemblages in other moments and situations.

cannot be expressed in meetings, even though it is influencing a planning process or has the capacity to break through (unexpected disruption).

Disruptions and moments of non-identity

Our micropolitical sensorium consists now of the molecular as a disruptive force of different molar lines (that constitute the police), which may or may not lead to the political in the sense of Rancière. As we have shown with extract 1, these concepts let us get a more fine-tuned grip on micropolitics in planning practice. We can now conceptualise the generative processes of a disruption as an actualisation of a virtual molecular tendencies or as becoming a molar of an already actualised challenging molecular line. In both cases, this leads to a de-territorialisation of the predominant molar order. We argue that the disruption could be a rupture of stabilised modes of negotiation or a rupture of predominant ideas, which in turn are related to stabilised practices and relations. In regard to the empirical analysis, the analyst's attention should not be on the action of the disruption itself, but on how it was generated and the ordering processes after the disruption, on the dynamics and the emergence of a new molar line in decision-making processes in urban development.

As we see it, disruptions can produce moments of non-identity. Moments of non-identity are moments without an existing predominant molar order. Van Wezemael (2008: 179) refers to these moments as 'under far-from-equilibrium conditions, where intensive differences are not equalised, where multiple identities could be actualised'. Such conditions can be described as highly intense (Delanda 2002) as they are characterised by several possible future trajectories and non-linearity, which basically means that small causes could have big effects. In such moments, the molecular has no given identity yet (Van Wezemael 2008: 179), however, the 'suppressed' molecular has a chance to become molar. This could be referred to the moment before something is put into language or 'the unstable condition and the moment in language, where something, which ought to be put in sentence, cannot be' (Lyotard 1990: 147 in Pløger 2004: 74). As a consequence, against the background of our quest of finding points of intervention, we have to identify such moments before things are ordered and a molar line is established, moments in which not everything is fixed and could be represented, e.g. identities, people's roles, or the functions of materialities are not stabilised/territorialised. It is in these moments that we can 'trace the outlines of the new' and create the 'truly Other'. (Patton 2010: 150).

In a moment of non-identity, there is a productive tension that could create new lines of actualisation, new forms of social order. However, the assemblage has an inherent in-stability,

and as a result, it has a tendency to re-territorialise very rapidly, e.g. according to identarian attractors or traffic norms that have a strong territorialising capacity. During this process, the productive and creative power will be lost unless it produces other disruptions and moments of non-identity. At this point, the concept resonates strongly with agonistic theory (cf. Mouffe 1999; Hillier 2003; Pløger 2004). For Mouffe, 'The political is an ever-present ubiquitous feature of society which risks exploding into violent confrontation at any time unless recognised and constructively engaged with.' (Metzger et al. in this book) Agonism, as the productive encounter of 'adversaries', can turn into antagonism, the violent confrontation of 'enemies'. A little less dramatically, we state that in moments of non-identity, like in agonistic spaces, the productive tension is not as easy to uphold. There is a tendency of agonistic spaces to fall apart into antagonistic conflicts or to be treated as such to resolve it by legal systems, consensus steering, majority votes, etc. (Pløger, 2004), which can be seen as the 'becoming' molar of a molecular order, implying that it will become more territorialised and fixed, and, as a result, less productive regarding the emergence of the new.

'For Deleuze, politics starts in such events where there is no choice of either/or between already given identities or entities' (Van Wezemael 2008: 177), or as we stated: in a condition of the productive tension of non-identity. In such conditions the notions of politics and democracy are negotiated and defined for each situation: what issues are contested and how they should be organised, e.g. by a technical norm or by the debate in formal political institutions. Further, if politics is a process not of representation of the people, but of the invention of a new world and new peoples-to-come in an active experimentation (Thoburn n.d. in Van Wezemael 2008: 177), then moments of non-identity have a certain relevance for democracy. As we argue in the line of Mouffe in her call for transformation of antagonisms into agonisms (Mouffe 1999: 755), these moments have to be upheld and not to be solved by regulation, therefore not producing antagonisms, which is the definition of the enemy and the friend, in terms of assemblage thinking, a territorialised space. Furthermore, processes of closure and molarisation in such moments can be done with more or less public involvement. Finally, as we will see in the case study, the identification of disruptions and moments of non-identity before the emergence of a new molar order, can help open up the potential and reflect the possibilities of planning processes becoming different.

Case Study

Case Selection and Methodology

Our empirical starting point is an example of a planning-development hybrid as the dominant form of organisation with significant effects on Swiss spatial development. As we are interested in moments of non-identity and disruption as the epistemic vehicle for identification, we chose a planning-development hybrid in a rather small community in eastern Switzerland (about 5,500 inhabitants) because the project size challenges the routines of the community's administration. The strategy of case selection here was to have an extreme case (Flyvbjerg, 2011) in comparison to the normal cases of development projects in such a small commune, because, in studying the exception and, as a consequence, a system that is far-from-equilibrium, we learn much more about the system's singularities than in a routine case. The case study is based on eight semi-structured interviews and a qualitative analysis of the relevant original documents, such as legal plans, reports, documentation, etc. For the qualitative data processing and analysis, meta-modelling (Watson 2009; Guattari 1984, 2010), which includes a visual tracing of actual events and a mapping of virtual dynamics of the planning processes, was applied.

Empirical analysis of a planning-development hybrid

The case study was conducted in the small community of St. Margrethen in eastern Switzerland (5,568 inhabitants, BFS 2013). The community's development was shaped by industries, such as a wood processing company that terminated its activities in the 1970s, which in turn created an urban brownfield next to the station and the motorway, opposite the old town centre. Today, this privately owned area is still in more or less the same condition, although there is some temporary use as a storage place. The community is nowadays characterised by inhabitants with a low income, a low tax base and building structure quality, in addition to traffic problems mainly caused by the border crossing point to Austria. However, in the last seven years, several activities have been observed, such as the creation of strategic guidelines, improvement of public transport connectivity, a variety of urban development projects and the upgrading of the central road by measures to slow down traffic as well as the design of public spaces. Finally, the development of the community has been and will be heavily influenced by the trajectory of the brownfield area where the newest project is to build a high-density, mixed-use town quarter: apartments, business park, specialised retail and office supply. In the next section, we will trace the disruptions and the moments of non-identity of this trajectory.

Changing Modes of Negotiation

If we trace the story back to before the first disruption in the trajectory of the area, the shutdown of the wood processing company in 1979, we can identify different types of assemblages, which differ in particular according to their molar modes of negotiation and the related molecular challenges and tendencies. The predominant modes of negotiation have changed over time from a sporadic exchange between community officials, the landowner and the canton (phone calls, letters, some meetings) to the establishment of a working group, including the community officials, the landowner, the town planner, architects, traffic planners, different departments of the canton and a real estate developer. Whereas former ideas clashed in an antagonistic way, in the working group, ideas now develop collaboratively, but without the direct involvement of the citizens. However, this is still undermined by the tendency to fall into antagonism.

How did this transition take place? Besides the various processes, such as transforming the wood processing company into a real estate development agency and a positive assessment of the location's quality through a study about the potential for high-tech industries in the region, as well as a location analysis done by the real estate developer, there were many disruptions that influenced the trajectory of the area:
- Generation change in the management of the former wood processing company that drove the transformation into a real estate developer
- Changes in the local community administration that drove their collaborative strategy
- Legal objections from an environmental NGO that led to the withdrawal of a DIY superstore as a potential investor
- A statement of the community's executive against 'low-quality use' (outlet stores, logistics) that de-stabilised the predominant ideas and triggered the current trajectory
- Announced referendum against the related traffic project and legal objections from an environmental NGO and neighbours

The latest established project created:
- A disruption of the routine organisation of the community's administration as well as certain role conflicts between the different cantonal departments

In addition, it will probably cause:
- A changed discourse about the identity of the community (urban vs. rural)

- A disruption in the traffic regime and the urban fabric of the community as traffic heavily intervenes in the context of the town physically, e.g. changed flows of people, traffic, goods

Each of these disruptions de-stabilised some relations, re-defined others, and created new potential, as well as new uncertainties. We will now analyse the dynamics related to one disruption in more detail, one that was relevant for the establishment of today's stabilised planning assemblage and its dominant molar lines. Our discussion concerns the disruption caused by the statement of the community's administration against 'low-quality use', which can be seen as a tipping point in the trajectory as moments of non-identity could be identified after this disruption. How was the disruption generated? What did it produce and how were things ordered after this moment of uncertainty?

Disruption of the predominant tendency produces uncertainty

After some years of a low level of planning activities, in 2005, several specific project ideas emerged that could have had the capacity to be realised through a strong relationship between the investors and the landowner (mainly specialised retail or logistics). The community officials remained reluctant and did not actively collaborate; and in the case of the logistics project, they almost ignored it. The vision of an industrial community with highly qualified employees was still slumbering in the community officials' minds, taking the nearby Rhine valley with its clusters of high-tech industries as a model. This molecular line undermined the project ideas of the landowner. A recently published study about the potential for high-tech industries in the region, done by a German NGO, went in the same direction, so they had not given up hope yet. It also became clear to the community officials that specialised retail and logistics, against the background of the regeneration of the town centre, would be undesirable for them. They mobilised different planning obstacles, such as traffic and air pollution problems as well as complicated and expensive planning procedures, to argue against the ideas of the landowner.

This explicit statement introduced a new molar line and, as a consequence, produced order and disorder at the same time: The third investor in a row bowed out, generating a situation that is, in relation to the future use of the area, completely open. However, it seemed obvious that the previously molar ideas were not going to be realised. Despite this clarification, the situation was characterised by a high degree of uncertainty, due to the missing capacities for realisation (investors) on one side, and wishful thinking on the other. This is a situation that illustrates a moment of non-identity.

Acting under uncertainty – A planner's intervention

In this situation, the responsible authority for planning in the community (the mayor) was interacting with the town planner. Extract 2 stems from an e-mail sent by the mayor to the town planner:

Extract 2	
	'Due to various workshops and discussions on the development of St. Margrethen, we do know what we do not want in the [name of the brownfield area] (maybe they are just feelings). However, there are no positive findings about which direction the development should be guided.'

Extract 2 reflects the existing uncertainties, but also the belief that something other than the solutions advocated by the landowner exists. The situation is unstructured and diffuse. The mayor knew that, according to the de-stabilisation of the previous ideas, the chance for a new direction was present. But, he also knew that negative 'feelings' against the landowners were not enough to guide the development in a different direction, and thus called for external expertise.[26] Later in the process, the local planner rationalised the feelings by citing planning norms, overall objectives and public interests. He transformed his molecular feeling into a molar regulation.

Likewise, it was also important to the municipal administration, on principle, not to prevent new developments in the area. That's the reason why ideas about the organisation of a planning process were developed, which were explained to the landowner under the threat of a 'planning zone' that would freeze construction activities in the industrial zone for three years. The negation of the existing line of development was reinforced by the threat of this top-down instrument, which we interpret as pure antagonism to the previous molar line. The new line of development was sketched out insofar that the community demanded the involvement of a professional developer, who, on the basis of a location analysis, developed a use concept. After that, adaptations of the zoning plan should have been made. That was the beginning of the new line of organisation, which was driven by a project-oriented logic, rather than a deductive planning logic, which is, in fact, an organisation of processes according to the molar line of the use concept of the developer.

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[26] Note also that the landowner got in contact with a real estate developer at the same time.

Becoming a temporarily stable agency

The landowner, with the failed planning attempts and a possible re-positioning of the company in the real estate market in mind, finally accepted the proposed approach, but on the condition that he had the lead and could determine the project developer. A working group was designated, the roles were defined and the community's administration could participate under the condition that it shared the development costs. The selected project developer worked out a use concept that relies on a dense, mixed-use development of residential, commercial and retail structures. The retail section is supposed to have an international catchment area and to provide an 'anchor tenant' for the necessary frequency of shoppers and thus also for the revival of the centre district.

'Changing scales' is another organising principle or molar line, which is an orientation point for the urban design solution (a 200 m boulevard with adjacent modular building structures) as well as for the marketing concept that positions the area in an international context. However, nothing is certain: The project is still marked by many uncertainties, e.g. massive investment in transport infrastructure will be necessary due to the high density of use and the necessary frequency. This infrastructure must be paid partly by the canton and the community, and is thereby connected with the political spaces that the system of direct democracy provides. Even with its unmanageable uncertainties, the project organisation, coordinated by the professional real estate developer, had the capacity to frame negotiation processes in a way that the following extract from an interview with the project developer will show:

Extract 3
The construction of new transport infrastructure is critical for the success of the project, because it is required for the retail 'anchor tenant', which in turn is critical for visitor frequency and revitalisation of the area. Part of this infrastructure – the construction of a roundabout - is subject to an optional referendum. This became a crucial moment in the process: After a conflictive participatory event in which the canton informed the public about the infrastructure projects, some residents threatened to take up the referendum. However, since the development project is also important regarding the canton's strategy for densification, a great effort was made in cooperation between community, canton and project management to submit a revised project as a temporary solution.

There is one important detail that does not appear directly in extract 3. Our analysis has shown that the mentioned revised project brings the project budget below the size that requires a referendum. As a classical strategy to avoid political spaces, this can be read as the post-political ordering principle, a molar line, which systematically circumvents the 'political noise', the molecular potential of the emergence of a dissent molar voice.

Discussion of key moments and the democratic potential

The case study shows that after about 20 years of more or less intense planning activities, the mode of governance and the form of practice can be denoted as post-political: a practice that avoids antagonism, here in the form of the optional referendum mentioned in extract 3. This is part of a set of the predominant form of planning practices that is – whether good or bad – 'working' in the sense of moving the planning-development hybrids towards realization. We hope we have also shown that this does not mean that planning is free of antagonism (also expressed by the public) or micropolitical disruptions. Deleuze-Guattarian micropolitics helps us to render the generative processes that lead to the currently predominant post-political order visible and to think about the potential of becoming different from this, meaning more/less public or more/less democratic.

How could it be different? As we have already theoretically argued, as analysts, we have to turn our attention towards moments of non-identity. In the case study, we found one important instance of such a moment, produced by the elimination of existing ideas by the (formerly molecular) hope of the public authorities to have 'high-quality' use. This produced a situation that was not an either/or situation anymore, because there were no specific options to choose, the positions and identities of the landowner and the municipal officials were unclear, as well as the different concepts of who/what to in-/exclude in the planning process. As a result, the situation is defined by an unstructured, but not amorphous, possibility space. At that moment, other different trajectories could have been possible, e.g.:[27]

- A planning zone could have been adopted through the public authorities, the situation would have been frozen to make time for the strategic re-positioning of the community and the development of a new planning concept through different tools, such as architectural idea competitions or citizen participation models ('go public').
- The town planner could have argued against the negative feelings of the mayor, from a cantonal planning perspective, it could have been possible to argue for logistics at

[27] Real but not actualised possibilities.

this location (this is especially likely if we compare it to the location where the logistics centre finally settled).

- The landowner could have sold the area to an investor with other goals or split the area and sold it to different investors. The community could have bought a part of it. Furthermore, an investor who promoted high-tech industrial use would have been warmly welcomed at this time, by the community too.

- The citizens could have set up a discussion forum about the future of the area, collected ideas and interests, e.g. in the form of 'future workshops', and submitted them.

After identifying other possible trajectories, we can now start a discussion about the different forms of organisation and planning instruments as well as their effects on the inclusion and exclusion of people and issues. Decisive to such decisions are the dynamics that in general accompany project organizations dealing with area developments. Projects never close completely, because they can be re-opened and thus create new potential and new ideas. Nevertheless, development projects are always under the fundamental conflict between the creative potential of participation and the capacity to affect, which needs a certain stability. As a consequence, there is always an exclusion of certain people and issues and there is a strong tendency towards the exclusion of antagonism. It is the molar line of projects that remains stable; it is the line of closure. That's why it is so important to create spaces of contention, and not only through development projects. In this point, we agree with Oosterlynck and Swyngedouw (2010: 1591), who argue for 'the need for a space in which demands for different socio-environments from those currently in place can be voiced, articulated, and discussed'. Further, as projects always include a play of openings and closures, which are related to the politicization and de-politicization of issues, it could be our task as analysts to reflect on the 'reductionist violence that is done (on whom, to what and with what implications)' (Hillier 2008: 35) to cope with uncertainties and complexities in a possible planning trajectory. How does the momentum gain capacity and at the cost of what? Which molecular lines are suppressed? Which actors are included/excluded?

In the end, this 'reductionist violence', which has to be brought out in every project in order to move 'forward' towards materialisation, has been inflicted in a post-political logic of inclusion and exclusion: Firstly, due to resource interdependency, certain actors were consciously included early in the process, e.g. the canton: authority to issue, financing the traffic project. Secondly, political spaces were avoided (see extract 3), to keep the process protected from antagonistic actors and voices, because the project is unable to productively resonate with them as they are contesting the project at its very foundation.

At this point, we would like to reflect on the seeming absence of the people in the project. 'The people' were not directly represented in the working group, but indirectly through the mayor, who in turn informed the people in public forums. There was a public vote concerning a municipal credit for part of the required infrastructure (passenger bridge) and also the possibility of a referendum against the related infrastructure projects (see extract 3). According to the institutionalised procedures of direct democracy, there was an opportunity to raise objections against the zoning plan and the construction permit. Nevertheless, we would like to put forward two critical remarks: Firstly, inhabitants from foreign countries are excluded from public voting (in this case about 45% of the population!). Secondly, the only possibility to engage at the points of intervention is antagonistic. The system of direct democracy and its instruments of votes actually produce either/or situations, which in turn lead to the suppression of molecular tendencies and let agonistic spaces decompose into antagonistic spaces. Voting as an isolated action is not democratic per se in the sense that it does not inevitably lead to a constructive debate about an issue and an agonistic encounter of the conflicting positionalities in society. Nevertheless, they often trigger a public debate. On the other side, antagonism, like objections, could lead to a displacement of issues into juridical spaces or to a standstill of planning processes and, as a consequence, to the establishment of post-political management practices and structures, which try to avoid such standstills by excluding the people.

The democratic potential in this case lies in the moment of non-identity, where we don't have antagonism yet. Respectively, the democratic deficit would be the rapid closure of such moments according to non-democratically legitimised molar lines, e.g. displacements can be viewed as tipping of one defined space of negotiation into another without the emergence of a moment of non-identity. Instead, in the moment of non-identity, there was an opportunity to trigger a collective debate and a process of challenges, experimenting with different (molecular) forms of public engagement and also with different (molecular) ideas, and thus with the future of the area in relation to the whole community's development. The question remains of how many ideas would have been generated or 'lost in translation' during the development of the project after that. Nevertheless, the moment of non-identity could have triggered a debate about identities and visions specifically related to a certain area, but potentially effectuating how people think and engage in future projects.

Conclusion

Due to its narrow concept of the political, post-political theory produces either/or statements, which in the analysis lead, in the context of Swiss planning, to a deadlock because it has both post-political and political sides (cf. Bylund 2012, Metzger 2011). Moreover, in turning a blind eye to the micropolitics in actual planning practice that could further de-politicise or politicise (also in the sense of 'going public'), post-political theorists are not able to provide opportunities for a way out of the post-political order. Deleuze-Guattarian micropolitics offers an analytical account for a finer analysis of collective decision-making processes in planning and contributes to a more sensitive understanding of 'the political' and politics. Moreover, it helps us to move beyond the either/or question of whether planning is political or post-political and allows us to see 'and, and, and…' with regard to the continuous becoming of different kinds of molar and molecular lines which may or may not give rise to processes that deserve the term 'political'. Through the concepts of the molecular and the molar, we are not only able to trace the subversive, always resonating 'noise' of the molecular, but also understand the 'becoming' of disruptions in collective decision-making and identify the key moments in which those lines have the potential to become molar and, of course, to be the ones contested.

In addition to the low analytical leverage of post-political theory in the Swiss context, we find it, in the normative sense, problematic to reduce politics and 'the political' to antagonistic moments. We argue that the definition of an antagonistic space as the only proper democratic space misses one of the vital characteristics of democratic practice, namely processes of ongoing (agonistic) confrontation and the move beyond an already given identity (Van Wezemael 2008: 178). Such processes could have their roots in disruptions and antagonistic moments, but this should not be confused with the process of contestation that follows. Rather, as we have argued, antagonism in the form of objections could foster the post-political practices of exclusion and the displacement of issues into spaces that are probably less democratic.

 Through the concepts of moments of non-identity and disruptions as its epistemic vehicle for identification, we are able to detect the moments where different lines of actualisation are possible, not everything is fixed and ordered yet and new identities could emerge. A careful analysis of all these opportunities is crucial, as agonistic spaces could be created in such moments, which in turn are relevant for democracy in the sense of 'agonistic pluralism' (Mouffe 1999). In this line of argument, the absence of moments of non-identity would consequently be a democratic deficit and the quality of its closing processes would be an index for democracy. The non-normative focus on processes of generation and the potential to become different enables the researcher not only to retrospectively analyse such situations, but also to develop

sensitivity for the democratic potential in such moments and to become an active explorer of a planning situation's inherent tendencies as well as its possible future trajectories.

Acknowledgement

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5.3. Strategies for place qualities

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Frames as Hidden Actors in Strategic Planning: A Study on the Performance of Strategies Promoting Urban Quality

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Frames as Hidden Actors in Strategic Planning: A Study on the Performance of Strategies Promoting Urban Quality

This article starts with Patsy Healey's statement that, despite its current popularity, spatial strategies "do little strategic "work"", meaning they show low performance in urban development. On the basis of assemblage thinking and actor-network theory, the theoretical argument is presented that using frames as fluid and multiple entities could improve strategy performance in complex settings by providing a shared orientation.

In two in-depth case studies, the implementation of an intended local planning strategy is confronted with non-deliberate mechanisms of collective action. In particular, the forms and prerequisites of frames that emerged and their relationship to plans as guidelines with fixed goals are analyzed. The strongest frames appeared in this absence of strategic plans; therefore, in order to improve strategy performance, planning should address these "hidden actors".

Keywords: strategic planning, urban quality, actor-network theory, assemblage, frames

Public spatial strategies "on the dusty shelves" of the administration

One of the main tasks planning practice and theory has been engaged with since its birth is the (collaborative) development of strategies to shape the future development of a specific area, city or region. Albrechts (2006) defines strategic spatial planning as a "transformative and integrative ... process through which a vision, coherent actions and means for implementation are produced that shape and frame what a place is and might become." (p. 1491, emphasis added). The content of this process often finds its way into strategic plans (including documents and visualisations) that are expressions of intention, often in the form of a set of guidelines to deal with actual and future situations (see Mintzberg, 1994). According to Healey (2009), in the last two decades, there has been "a wave of energetic effort in producing spatial strategies" (p. 439). However, she admits that in the end they "do little "strategic work"" (p. 439), meaning that they are not able to provide a shared orientation for stakeholders involved in governance of place, and, as a result, hardly affect urban development.

Looking at the built environment today in Switzerland, it seems to support Healey's opinion that many public land-use strategies did not change the direction of (sub-)urban development processes. A de-centralized planning system and direct democracy[1] are a challenge to making planning strategies "work", in particular, if municipal autonomy or private properties are affected. Besides urban sprawl (see Hersperger, Gennaio, Franscini & Kübler, 2013), one of the consequences of the low performance of strategies is that the built environment in many areas

of the Swiss flatland is lacking coherence, identity or an urban quality in general (see Lampugnani & Noell, 2007).

As a reaction, planning and urban design practitioners are formulating strategies to promote local qualities, mostly in the form of guidelines and mostly on the municipal level. Although proffered with good intent, these soft instruments have limited power, as private property owners are often not obliged to comply. As a result, local spatial strategies are not always able to make a difference in urban development projects or even remain "on the dusty shelves" of the municipal administration.

In complex relational settings with high resource interdependencies (see Van Wezemael & Loepfe, 2009), how can spatial strategies get active support? Are strategic plans effective instruments for steering urban development and promoting urban quality at all? This article studies the challenges associated with the implementation of local public spatial strategies and their performance in private urban development projects from an in-depth and relational perspective (see Block, Steyvers, Oosterlynck, Reynaert & De Rynck, 2012). As in Faludi (2000), the focus is on performance rather than evaluation, which means that the role strategies play in decision-making and sense-making in processes that affect the built environment is emphasised rather than estimating the ends against goals. The arguments, both theoretical and empirical, are that local spatial strategies are only effective in complex relational settings if they are able to generate fluid ordering principles and multiple concepts of a future place that can provide an orientation that is shared by many stakeholders involved in both strategy formulation and implementation. These forms of strategy are referred to as frames (Healey, 2007).

Frames can be powerful in urban development processes and important for strategy performance, but are often not in the foreground of strategic planning practice. Consequently, they become hidden actors, and, as with all hidden processes, need to be brought into the open and addressed. However, to be able to fully develop these arguments, frames need to be studied in practice, in particular, their forms, their prerequisites and their relationship to plans as guidelines with fixed goals. The next section proposes an alternative view of the performance of local planning strategies in urban development projects.

An alternative view of strategy performance: strategic plans need to "travel"

This section presents the development of a view on strategy performance that is based on complexity and assemblage thinking (see Hillier, 2007; Van Wezemael, 2008; De Roo, Hillier & Van Wezemael, 2012). A complexity perspective implies an acceptance of heterogeneity, a

multiplicity of processes, fluidity, non-linearity and emergence rather than trying to control it (see De Roo & Silva, 2010). Seen from an assemblage viewpoint, planning processes and urban development are constantly re-assembling heterogeneous material and non-material elements. As a result, the approach emphasizes the multiple relationships between sites, discourses, artefacts, humans and concepts of place, etc. Such configurations, defined as assemblages, are generated through the interaction of their components (DeLanda, 2006). Interest in the performance of strategies raises the question of how spatial strategies are generated and how they affect future events and arenas by performing specific roles in those assemblages. These roles could be manifold and could also change during formulation and implementation.

In the field of spatial planning, strategy formulation takes place in an often connected, but still different assemblage, e.g. planning, than the one where the strategy needs to be performed, e.g. development projects. These assemblages can be distinguished by different orders, e.g. by rationalities, such as a regulative versus a market-oriented logic of decision-making. For strategies, this implies a need to manage a transfer between these different arrangements and their orders.

Bringing in the actor-network theory at this point (ANT, see Tait, 2002; MacCallum, 2008; Gunn & Hillier, 2012 for ANT and planning) such a movement can be conceptualized as a series of translations between different orders and forms of assemblages. According to Law (2009), the notion of translation stems from Serres (1974) who used it, like Angels, as a metaphor for something that makes "precarious links between places that do not belong to the same world" (Law, 2009, p. 144). For Callon (1986, p. 205, translation by the authors) "translation is the mechanism that allows a social and a natural world to progressively stabilize". Such mechanisms are crucial to the evolution of assemblages in that they are able to "draw together fragmented interests into collective action and to create the spatial imagination to get things done" (Newman, 2008, p. 1374), in other words, to perform and implement strategies. Through these mechanisms "diverse elements are captured and articulated in a system of interdependence, where they will eventually act as a whole, in which their power converges in the same direction by relying on each other, rather than neutralizing each other", as Quéré (1989, p. 106, translation by the authors) interprets Bruno Latour.

To make things act as a whole implies mechanisms of shifting, moving and transforming: new connections have to be made and old connections altered in order to gain stability. Consequently, ideas, aims, and concepts of place as the content of strategies are not simply forwarded or transported rather they are transformed and adapted in order to be embedded in a new set of relationships (Zweifel, 2013). Seeing the poor performance of planning strategies as a problem of translation has the methodological consequence that these connections

should be traced. For example: In order to be stable, the concept of a future neighbourhood being "urban", as stated in a public spatial strategy, has to be connected to the realm of private investors, and correspond to a targeted segment of housing (renters looking for a central location and connectivity).

Certain requirements for strategies can be derived from this: strategies as elements of assemblages are only stable through a process of translation if they have a certain degree of flexibility for change and of openness towards making other connections to stakeholders, practice communities, or policy fields, to name a few. In addition, strategies must have the capacity to "travel", which means that strategies and plans should be able to circulate within and across decision-making arenas in order to make a difference and be shared by stakeholders (see Healey, 2007; Gunn & Hillier, 2012).

With the idea of frames, Healey (2007) introduces a specific form of strategies that are flexible, but are still structuring devices of focusing attention, are able to travel to other arenas and have a transformational capacity. Referring to van Gorp (2001) in Fischer (2003, p. 144), Healey defines frames as "organizing principles" that are able to support sense-making processes and the creation of meaningful wholes out of fragmentary information. In addition, a frame provides a direction for action as well as a basis for persuasion (p. 183, referring to Rein & Schon, 1993). For Healey (2007), a frame is clearly more than a plan as a set of guidelines (Mintzberg, 1994):

> It has the quality of an inspirational, motivating "vision", supported by a way of 'seeing'. It offers a direction and provides some parameters within which specific actions can be set. It creates ideas about how future opportunities may be grasped and threats avoided. (Healey, 2007, p. 183)

Finally, by citing Barrett & Fudge (1981), Healey emphasises the non-linearity of strategy processes and the fluidity of frames: "They are continually shaping and being shaped by the flow of action, in recursive rather than linear processes." (Healey 2007, p. 183)

The authors' view is that a frame can be a shared concept of what a future place might be, e.g. an image of a future inhabitant or a way of living. The 2000-Watt Society as a future idea for sustainable urban areas in terms of energy might serve as an illustration: As this idea, currently prominent in Swiss urban discussions, travels to different arenas, it works as a frame of thought for different people in different institutions, e.g. in the finance sector, it is able to perform as a label for sustainable funds, in the universities, it informs research programs, in the real estate sector, it will probably serve as a best-practice proof to gain public acceptance of a controversial housing project. Consequently, it is part of a heterogeneous assemblage, where it provides a direction for action and allows the practices in different arenas to contribute to each

other. As a frame, the 2000-Watt Society is becoming more concrete each time a new project, e.g. a new way of developing sustainable housing, is realized, but it does not stop being inspiring, manifold and flexible. As the example shows, frames could play a crucial role in processes of translation, e.g. by supporting the establishment of a network that is able to perform the 2000-Watt Society in its different forms. Through the 2000-Watt Society, "precarious links between places that do not belong to the same world" (Law, 2009, p. 144) are created. Or to put it less dramatically: a process of exchange among different people and organizations is facilitated and upheld.

If strategy performance is a process of translation and frames constitute a shared, connectible and flexible element that facilitates the capacity for linkages between different spheres, then, in order to make strategies work, frames are a necessity. But, what do they look like specifically and where can they be found? Through our theoretical perspective, it becomes clear that the flexibility and multiplicity of frames are two of its crucial characteristics. However, frames not only evolve in intended processes of strategy formulation, therefore, the un-planned has to be integrated into the analysis. *Assemblage thinking* opens up the possibility to travel to unusual arenas. In addition to Healey's description, a specification of what a frame might be, consisting of a multitude of material and non-material elements, is presented in the next section.

Using contemporary Swiss urban development and planning practice as the specific background for the analysis of frames, the focus is shifted to their forms, their prerequisites and how they are embedded in processes of translation. In his famous study about the domestication of the scallop and the fishermen of St. Brieuc Bay, Callon (1986) described the establishment of a network by designating four types of translation: *problematisation*, *interessment*, enrolment and mobilization. In contrast to other authors, such as Boelens (2010), the use of "translation" as a model for planning practice is avoided. Rather, and similar to Callon (1986), in the case studies, the different mechanisms of translation are identified and the roles of frames are analyzed.

Two case studies contrast the intended forms of strategy performance with non-intended forms. Both cases involve a closer look at one development area and three urban development projects. In the first case, the complexities and challenges associated with the implementation of a formulated plan in the form of guidelines to promote urban quality are examined. In the second case, an overall strategic plan was absent for a long period, but nevertheless there was coordination between the projects and a spatial strategy was emerging along the development.[2]

The challenges associated with the implementation of a strategic plan: The case of Wetzikon

> Urban quality? The residents don't care a bit about urban quality! (Project Developer)

The municipality of Wetzikon is on the edge of the agglomeration of Zurich. Wetzikon now counts 23,254 inhabitants. It has grown from 8,000 in the 1950s, to 17,000 in the 1980s (Stadt Wetzikon, 2013) and arrived at its current population mainly due to its proximity to the city of Zurich and the construction of the highway and regional train system, which increased its frequency in the last few years (eight connections hourly with 20 to 30 min travel time). This also resulted in a high number of inhabitants commuting to Zurich.

Wetzikon was originally five villages, and thus has a polycentric structure. Growth took place especially between those village centres. The question of whether it is a small town or a big village seems to be prevalent in the local discourse and has also been expressed as part of the latest public spatial strategies ("Wetzikon, where quality points upwards – urban neighbourhoods next to villages" (Gemeinderat Wetzikon, 2010, p. 28, see Devecchi forthcoming).

The case study considers the trajectory of an area that is located between a small lake and one of the town centres (a former village centre), but is separated from the lake by an industrial zone and from the town centre by a train dam. The area has, until now, been scarcely populated by some single-family houses. Attempts to develop the area date back to the 1980s, when an infrastructure plan, which would prepare the site for construction,[3] went through a highly conflictive process and took about 20 years to be authorised.

The analysis starts at the point when the new town planner intervened in the implementation process of this infrastructure plan in order to promote urban quality. The process that followed consisted of formulating a public strategic guideline and several implementation attempts. The quotation above stems from an interview with a landowner who was affected by the strategic plan and shows a spontaneous reaction to the goals to promote urban quality. It indicates that those ideas did not travel unimpeded into the project's development. Table 1 shows an overview of the different types of translation that were identified and the related actors, arenas and products of strategic relevance.

Types of Translation	Actors	Arenas	Products
Intervention	Town planner, municipal executives	Meetings of the municipal executives	A new frame: extension of the new town part (in the end shared by meeting members)
Consolidation	Project group with the municipal and cantonal officials, private planning company	Meetings of the project group	Frame fixed as guidelines through transformation, hierarchism, layering, etc.
Implementation (through expansion and increased flexibility)	Urban design committee, project developer, project architects	Meeting of the urban design commission	Establishing a common frame as a best-practice project that captures the urban atmosphere
Disruption (through rigidifying and break-up)	Urban design committee, project developers, project architects	Meeting of the urban design commission	A project that contradicts the guidelines

Table 1. Overview Wetzikon

Intervention, mobilization of new concepts and connection with political realm

The intervention of the town planner took place in a meeting of the municipal authorities. In his performance, the town planner simply took the perimeter of the existing plan and displaced it onto a map of one of the existing town centres of Wetzikon. With this move, he broke the predominant technical-functional concept of place in the process of infrastructure construction, and introduced other concepts, mainly that the place could also be an extension of the nearby town centre or a new part of the city.

For the town planner, these concepts clearly contradicted the planned street, which he called an unattractive "country road" due to its cross-section, especially for slow traffic, which did not resemble a road in a potential new town centre. His new concept of place gained strength as he related it to inhabitants with a higher socio-economic status. In particular, the town planner was referring to a nearby worst-practice example by connecting the planned type of street with

low-income residents and thus bad tax payers. Through this approach, he addressed an important dimension in the decision-making logic of the political executive: the tax base. When the authorities acknowledged the need for the development of qualitative guidelines for the area and thus the launch of a new planning process, the mobilised (individual) frame seemed to have an effect on the municipal authorities.

Consolidation through planners' techniques

The new planning process formed a project group with the municipality's authorities, the traffic planner from the canton and members of a private planning firm (housing, traffic and landscape planners). In this planning setting, the town planner's initial ideas were tested against other options, selected and differentiated. The new urban concept of the place gained consistency through different techniques: transformation of different elements of the traffic infrastructure, e.g. mixed traffic zones infused with roads, increased quality of public space around the roundabout, design of the place in other scales and networks, e.g. fostering the relationship between the town centre and the lake, creating small-scale connections for slow traffic, creating a hierarchy of spaces (e.g. priorities in public spaces), and thematic layering, e.g. housing, landscape, traffic, etc.

In general, the planning process produced a normative qualification device, for estimating development projects. In particular, the public aspect was considered a primary issue for urban quality and the measures spatially and thematically differentiated according to the different degrees of desired public qualities. As a result, the initial frame was transformed into guidelines. Knowing that their implementation could raise difficulties with private developers and construction firms, the planners referred to an already existing incentive system (area bonus[4]) and coupled it to compliance with the new guidelines.

Uncertain spaces of translation: Implementation close to disruption

Following the newly formulated strategic plan on its journey towards implementation it then moved on to the meetings of the urban design committee. The committee is an advisory board for the municipal administration and consists of three municipal officials and three external experts in architecture. This committee usually comes into play when urban development projects of a certain size apply for a construction permit. In this case, the committee was consulted due to the required confirmation of compliance with the guidelines.

As the committee (implicitly) developed its own style of evaluation with its own criteria and the legal incentive system brought formal criteria from the Cantonal legislature to the table, the

new guidelines now generated uncertainties. The particular question was the interpretation of the various criteria, which were then used to argue for or against the projects under consideration.

In the view of the private developers, this setting was a process risk, which was critical for the implementation of the new guidelines, since for the developer, process risks and thus the lack of planning reliability can outweigh the incentives, e.g. the area bonus. As a consequence, the developer is tempted to change to a project without a bonus and any need to meet the guidelines. Such a solution could be based on the legal norms of the municipal zoning plan, and as a result become a very stable solution. Thus, the project developers would be able to circumvent the discussion about the guidelines for urban quality. The following stories show two types of translations: in the first case, the guidelines could be implemented, in the second case, the process of negotiation finally ended in a disruption, leading to a "failure" of the strategic plan.

Implementation

In one of the examined projects, the concept as formulated in the guidelines could be realized as a neighbourhood with a high degree of public space, compact, large-scale and clearly shaped buildings with "unobtrusive" architecture that let the landscape design come to the foreground and coherently shape the identity of the housing project. Further, a public footpath through the compound was realized that connects the new neighbourhood with the existing town centre.

The urban design committee evaluated the project positively and stated that the project was able to capture the "urban atmosphere" (probably from the existing town centre) and carry it forward into the direction of other projects in the neighbourhood. For the town planner and the urban design commission, the project turned into one of the best-practice cases and as result should have also affected future development projects in other arenas. The project could enable the private developer to position himself in a new segment of the housing market.

Nevertheless, the process of negotiation was not without conflicts: The urban concept conflicted with the estimated demand on the housing market and the target group of the developer, which, according to the developer hardly showed interest in the "urban" qualities promoted by the municipalities' strategic plan. As a consequence, the concept had to be stabilized somehow. In this case, this was possible through the integration of adjacent land plots, the related cubic capacity and the landowners, such as the municipality itself and another private developer. This triggered a bonus in density and some flexibility in the

application of planning norms (such as height and length and distance between buildings). Without this flexibility, the compact and large-scale buildings would not have been possible. In other issues, such as the height of the ground level, the flexibility of norms was just as high because it would not have produced a prejudice and therefore a new norm for the local planning system.

Failure

In another project, after several meetings between the urban design commission and the two collaborating developers, one of the developers decided to go for a solution without an area bonus. Consequently, the leverage on the side of the municipality's authorities regarding the implementation of the strategic guidelines was lost. The reasons for this disruption were manifold, e.g. complicated zoning issues (complicating the transfers of cubic capacities) and changing responsibilities in one of the development companies, changing patterns of evaluation in the urban design commission (different people, different scales of intervention, such as architectural expression or urban design).

More important, however, were the different concepts of the target group, i.e. the future inhabitants, existed not only between the two developers, but also between the municipality and the developers, which hampered the establishment of a common understanding of the place and its future inhabitants that could serve as a common frame. In particular, one building typology (city villas with a common green space) was stabilized during meetings early in the process, from which the other developer was excluded. This concept was criticized later by the excluded developer, and indeed, the included developer. However, the municipality's officials stuck to this concept, and, as a consequence, the new options brought forward by the new developers association were evaluated critically. Finally, not least due to the rigidity of this concept, the whole setting broke apart and projects were realized that conflicted strongly with the intended municipal strategy. In particular, the area was fragmented through single-family housing with a very low degree of public space, e.g. no connections for slow traffic, no common green space.

Preliminary conclusion

Although the strategic plan was highly differentiated, its performance in urban development projects is difficult. The assemblage created by the strategic plan and its attempts for implementation is fragile as it is characterized by different, partially rigid positions and a lack of a collectively accepted frame. It seems to be a challenging task to produce a common frame in

the meetings of the urban design committee, because the positions of the participants have already matured beforehand. A problem might be that the urban concept of the future inhabitant was implicitly treated as given by the public planners and was not made negotiable again in the process. Instead, to control the process, the initial frame was directly transformed into guidelines (urban design committee and land-holding private developers were absent from the process). Further, given the number of guidelines that structure the possibilities, the urban concepts from the strategic plan could only be stabilized by transforming the setting into a state that has more room for manoeuvre. This was done by expanding the actors – and thus the areas involved. Through this situation, the second project was able to emerge as a frame for future project evaluations and also for the developer's position in the housing market. On the basis of an agreed upon minimum standard (initial designs with footprints and landscape planning), the project was pushed towards the optimum which is a very expressive frame consisting of a high-quality living area, but without generating a new rigid norm.

Coordination without a strategic plan: The case of Visp

> ...and so one came after the other. (Architect of the train station building)

Visp is a mid-sized municipality in Switzerland's upper Rhone valley with 7,151 inhabitants. Lonza, a global life-science company, has the largest part of its production and Research & Development departments in Visp, and provides about 3,000 jobs of the town's overall 8,500 (Gemeinde Visp, 2013). The trajectory of this industrial "village" has been heavily influenced by the new AlpTransit railway line (German: Neue Eisenbahn-Alpentransversale, NEAT), which altered train routes and improved Visp's connections to the important cities of Bern, Zurich and Basel. A direct connection to the NEAT, with the railway stopping at Visp, was uncertain for a long time, which challenged and changed municipal planning practices and strategies. However, the situation also triggered processes of transformation, and formed new associations and collaborations between different actors. This year, about ten years after the final decision of the Swiss Federal Railways to directly connect to Visp was taken and six years after the opening of the new train station, a new strategic plan, the Master Plan Visp was authorised by the local authorities. The following extract from this document sketches the lifestyle of a possible future inhabitant of Visp (Gemeinde Visp & KEEAS Raumkonzepte, 2013):

A brief report from the future 2033

Thomas Im Oberdorf now lives partly in Milan. With the ever faster trains, a life half in Visp and Milan can easily be arranged. Depending on his work load, he moves back and forth almost daily between the two different "centres". The family appreciates the benefits. On one hand, they enjoy the ski season around Visp and, on the other, the daughters enjoy shopping at the weekends in Milan. Culture is consumed both locally and according to taste. At both locations, the family lives near the train station, so they are optimally connected. To the question of why he still lives and works in Visp, Thomas replies: "Why not? I am deeply rooted in Visp, where I have friends and enjoy its high recreational value and a good climate, especially in summer, if Milan is wrapped again in smog. Why should I decide between two exciting worlds if I can have both?" He particularly appreciates the very attractive urban residential services directly available in area around the station. He also enjoys, from his attic apartment on the fifteenth floor, one of the best vistas of the mountains and the village. In the winter season, he can stroll on foot to the ice hockey match and afterwards enjoy one or two beers with his friends on the new Blatter-Boulevard. [...]

The story of the future inhabitant supports the guidelines formulated for Visp's future: to become an urban location for housing, culture and work and to promote living quality through public spaces, density and diversity. Moreover, it relates to the area around the station, which is, according to the strategic plan, a unique selling proposition (USP) for Visp and serves as a vehicle to position the entire municipality, as this area was the motor for many recent developments. The story draws on a frame of where to go, who to plan and build for and is collectively accepted by a selection of local stakeholders. Consequently, it offers a direction for action and could serve as motivating vision for future *place-making* activities. Thus, it is a potential frame, in particular, because it is a fictional future that seems clear-cut, but is flexible and can be adjusted. Considering the area around the station in 2004 (Figure 1), the urban lifestyle of Thomas Im Oberdorf and the role of the station for urbanization seem improbable. Things would have to have really changed by then, and have, in fact, already changed, as the following analysis will show.

Figure 1: The train station of Visp in 2004. (Source: Steinmann & Schmid Architects, Basel)

How did this explicit frame emerge? The translations that were necessary for the emergence of this frame will be identified in the following pages. The key point is that this frame, as it is explicitly formulated in the plan now, has existed implicitly as a "hidden actor" since the beginning of the transformation. The frame became more powerful through circulation, differentiation and performance in different arenas and settings. Table 2 gives an overview of the types of translations that were detected in Visp.

Types of Translation	Actors	Arenas	Products
Innovation	Jury for a competition (municipal officials, local railway company, federal railway company), architectural teams	Architectural competition for the train station	A new frame: 'urban' design of the area around the train station with new public spaces, large-scale buildings, expressive architecture of the station g; Guidelines: reformulation of aims
Expansion	Project organization of the new station (federal railway company, municipal officials, local railway company), landowners, renters	Project organization and connected arenas (e.g. meeting of municipal executives, project teams from the federal railways)	A growing network, a potential frame transformed into possibilities
Substitution	Real estate department of the federal railway withdrew, municipal authorities came in, municipal assembly	Project organization and connected arenas	An adaptive and changing network
Contraction	Politicians of Brig and Visp, the inhabitants	Municipal assembly, cantonal parliament, the public	Stronger place identification, affective vocabulary (frame)
Actualization	Architect of the train station, private developers, neighbours	Project organizations of the urban development projects, legal objections	Specific urban forms, exception permits, conflicting concepts, architect as municipal advisor
Sedimentation	Architect of the train station, the industrial company (as real estate developer), municipal officials, private planning firm	New planning arena (through the new strategic plan)	Strategic plan (including story of Thomas Im Oberdorf)

Table 2. Overview Visp

Innovation: From traffic problems to an urban design task

The first type of translation was a process of innovation and was based on the planning setting that was created in 1999, when the municipality and a local railway company decided the conditions for passengers changing between local and national trains was insecure and unattractive. The competition brief focused on efficiency and functionality of the traffic flows, however "urban design quality" was mentioned in the list. In selecting the designs, the jury supported these criteria in that they appreciated projects with a certain size in scale, expressiveness, unity and openness of the new public space. As a result, the winning project was characterized by a "precisely placed" (Gemeinde Visp, SBB & BVZ, 1999) train station building, which created a new open public space through its clear definition.

Furthermore, the design introduced a new scale as it also involved the nearby surroundings of the station, which were consequently also shaped by this "urban" concept of place (again: large-scale buildings, public spaces). The selection of the specific design had its implications for the future aims of planning. In particular, the general aims were substantiated into specific measures and aims through the new design, e.g. freight traffic had to be displaced to an out of town centre in order to gain space for "a central station square with optimal connections to the nearby main street" (Gemeinde Visp, SBB & BVZ, 1999).

These aims and the initial plan of the surroundings, together with the modern and unusual station building, form the "raw materials" of the frame that emerged from then on in different translations. Through the transformation of a traffic problem into an urban design task, a potential frame was created, although there was no wind to fill the sails until 2002.

Expansion: "Full node" and the growing network

Another of the major drivers of the transformation process was the already mentioned decision of the Swiss Federal Railways in 2002 to upgrade the railway station of Visp to a so-called "full node", which reduced travel time to Bern, the capital of Switzerland, from one and a half hours to one hour and made the municipality into an important node of the Swiss railway system. This resulted into hourly train connections to Geneva and Bern (thus also connecting Basel and Zurich) and almost every two hours to Milan.

This decision fuelled the process in different ways: Firstly, the constellation of actors changed. The infrastructure department of the Federal Railways, which had been rather absent and uninterested in the process so far, gained more importance in the decision-making process. For a "full node train station" two more tracks had to be built. Consequently, about ten

buildings had to be pulled down, among them, a local bank (story below). As a result, the network of actors expanded beyond the previous project's boundaries.

Secondly, as the new train station had fallen to Visp, it had to be withdrawn from the neighbouring town of Brig, which had assumed it would get the "full node". This decision fed the long-time conflict between these two towns and produced new heavy tensions in regional politics (also continued below). In addition to the involvement of new actors in this phase of translation, it became clear to the municipal authorities that Visp would be the important traffic hub in the future. The vague potential expressed in the initial plans was transformed into "real" opportunities for a new town centre with new areas for housing, services and employment.

Substitution: Save the expressiveness of the new station building

Later in the process, the real estate department of the Federal Railways, which was not present until after an internal reorganisation, intervened with the option of a more functional one-floor building. They doubted the profitability of a larger building and were not able to legitimize the real estate investment internally, comparing it to other possible investments in bigger and more promising areas. Threatened that without the unique and remarkable building that expressed the new direction in the development of Visp the entire development impulse could ebb away, the municipal authorities decided to invest in at least two floors of the building. This moment marks a tipping point in the process. With one exception, the municipality had never seen itself in the role of an investor. However, the shift in roles also transferred financial risks from the Federal Railways to the municipality: one, regarding finding potential buyers or renters for the office spaces, and two, the investments would have to be submitted to a new setting and new actors: the municipal assembly.[4]

Contraction: The municipal assembly and emerging affective notions

The investment of the municipality in the project had to be authorised by the municipal assembly of Visp, the municipality's legislative organ. Astonishingly, in the two required votes, nobody voted against the investment, which took around one third of an entire year's budget. How can this be explained? According to the interview partners in the communal assemblies and other public arenas, the notion of being a "full node" provided a focus of attention and became an inspiring vision accompanied by stories (Several stories were told, e.g. a kebab shop made his advertisements with a slogan about how close the shop is now to the Zurich airport).

In the meeting of the assembly itself, the project was enriched with a visionary vocabulary, e.g. "Awakening Visp" or "Future-oriented potential for Visp and the whole region" (Gemeinde Visp, internal communication). Moreover, it was mentioned that through the NEAT, Visp will gain "national and international relevance". Finally, before the vote about the major part of the investment, municipal authorities were informed about a resolution against connecting Visp to the NEAT that had been submitted to the cantonal legislature. This action had been taken by a few representatives of the rival municipality of Brig, but in the end it had no chance in the parliamentary session. Nevertheless, among other influences, this affected the communal assembly and led to the statement of one of the municipal authorities that they "won't let the self-referred politicians from Brig spoil such a "project of the century".

Interpreting the process, the investment of the municipality not only invoked this forum of direct democracy, it transformed the project into an issue of identity in regional and cantonal politics. This issue translated back into the local network in the form of a stronger place identity that was manifested in an affective vocabulary. The web of relationships in the local network contracted and was thus stabilized, e.g. the notion of the "project of the century" later circulated into other arenas and settings, and affected them through its role as a stabilizing feature, for example, as an argument for building another floor in the station building.

Actualization: Gaining consistency for the "project of the century"

The following story shows how the intervention of the Swiss Federal Railways, under the given circumstances, not only led to an expansion of local governance networks, it also shaped the potential that design concepts can travel between arenas, gain consistency and actualize in specific urban forms. One of the buildings that had to be demolished for the new railway tracks was a bank; as a result, they needed a new location near the station. The owner of a nearby hotel already had some ideas of expansion for his building and saw the opportunity to offer the bank a new location. Knowing that the architect from the station project had become a very respected architect, he engaged him to attract the bank as a renter of his new building.

This project transformed relationships in the whole assemblage. First, the architect increased his role as a mediator to the municipality. Second, the relationship between the hotel owner and the architect flourished and – as the hotel owner had had a complicated relationship with the municipality from several past cases – the relationship between the municipality and the hotel owner also stabilized.

The hotel owner later bought other buildings next to the new bank and developed a complex with retail, housing and office space, again with the same architect, but this time, the architect

was recommended by the municipal authorities. This made it possible for the architect to finally translate his initial ideas in another project next to the station. In particular, he was able to orient the building towards the new public space and create another compact building with an architecture that once more created an exceptional hallmark of the development of the new urban "hotspot".

Due to the displacement of the local railway tracks, another potential for development was created in an area even closer to the station. Again, the same architect was chosen by the developers, and again he could translate the ideas he had developed so far into the new project. In particular, he used the same building typology to bring public space, retail, private green space and housing together (retail in the base, green space on the base, housing above). Through each project, the concept of an urban hotspot became less abstract.

In both cases, the scale of the buildings clashed with the regular construction norms of the municipality, e.g. building height or distances between buildings. A basis for persuading the public authorities was needed. In most cases, the architect could convince the authorities through arguments of urban design that were based on a perspective of the wider context that he had partly developed in the competition for the station design.

In one case though, a legal objection through a resident led to a compromise. Interestingly, the resident's objection was that the concept of the station area was not appropriately applied in the mentioned case. This again shows that there were different concepts of place for the wider areas circulating in the arenas that were opened up through the specific projects, although those concepts were not formulated in a strategic plan. Despite their vagueness, the concepts had the capacity to change routine planning processes. In the wider area of the station, a place of exception was created and upheld, where these concepts even had the capacity to flip stable planning norms.

Sedimentation: Translation of the frames into plans or guidelines

What emerged through the newly created governance network was not only a highly reactive frame of an urban spot around the newly built station, it was also the role of the station architect as the external consultant in urban design. There was a new division of labour in local planning and urban design tasks had stabilized. Part of this pattern is also the municipality's active engagement in spatial development. This resulted in a process of the strategic repositioning of Visp (Master Plan Visp) in 2012.

One trigger of this process was a request of the largest landowner (the industrial company) to the municipality's administration for a concise overall perspective of the municipality's future

development. This happened against the background of the potential for a revitalisation of their housing areas, which they now interpreted through the lens of the new emerging frame and the actual developments, such as the increasing investments in the area of the station. As a consequence, the emerging frame also stabilized this collaboration and made it possible to collaboratively formulate explicit aims for development that are oriented towards stories like the one about Thomas Im Oberdorf.

Discussion

This article conceptualizes strategy performance as a problem of translation. Translations need elements that have the flexibility to change and to connect to other entities, and to be able to accompany assemblages over the thresholds of transformations without being disrupted. The authors argue that frames could play an important role in such processes. Successful translations are not seen directly as the implementation of an actor's preferred solutions (e.g. public or private actor), but rather as a process that allows a productive exchange and collective identification with a changing subject that is gaining consistency and form. Frames have a degree of abstraction that can serve as a common issue that can be referred to, but are flexible enough to still be negotiable. An inherent characteristic of such frames is that they are themselves transforming and transformative.

In the search for frames and their different forms, it was necessary to go beyond obvious forms of strategies (such as guidelines). In Visp, the assemblage approach carried us to other, but still connected arenas than the initial project and helped us to render visible the different, more fluid forms of strategies that travel between those arenas. As a result, the common frame in Visp unfolds as a multifaceted assemblage consisting of heterogeneous, loosely connected parts with different consistencies and expressions. Seen as an assemblage, the frame of the urban hotspot around the station performed as:

- A plan, showing the design of the station's surroundings, in particular, the public spaces.
- Architecture of the station building that is modern, as well as uncommon.
- Potential for retail and housing development.
- Affective vocabulary used in the communal assembly, e.g. the "project of the century".
- Building typology (retail in the ground floor, housing in the high-rises)
- Exceptional permits that flipped planning norms.
- USP Station and the story of Thomas Im Oberdorf in the new master plan of the municipality.

Through these elements, the frame as a whole emerged and its parts could be differentiated. Despite its heterogeneous manifestations, a common direction of impact is present that guides the transition process. In fact, it is exactly the combination of a vague shared vision and its perceivable materialization in different arenas that makes the frame powerful. As has been observed, the distinct architecture of the station building is one of the main material contributors to this vision as it penetrates every decision-making arena.

In Wetzikon, neither such a powerful element nor a shared frame could be found – although a public strategic plan had been established. Furthermore, the path was much more predefined and controlled and our journey took us to many less fluid concepts. Besides the successfully introduced new frames of reference in the intervention process (the area as an extension of the town centre), the only frame that collectively emerged in the process was the project itself in the implemented case, as it became a frame for future *place-making* activities for both the developer and the municipal administration. The case study shows that there is sometimes a thin line between a frame and a guideline (or even a norm): the process could be seen as an approximation to a point when the project becomes a best-practice example, but at the same time is not challenging the existing planning norms to an extent that it is becoming a new norm that, through displacement into juridical spaces, has to be applied to other projects. Planning practice here became the art of avoiding spaces of new norms while providing opportunities for new frames. This stands in contrast to the general tendency in planning assemblages to over-clarify concepts. However, knowing what good quality is, is not a guarantee for its implementation. Fixed ideas could lead to disruptions if vague but shared visions are absent and not particularly well negotiated. Paradoxically, the municipal administration of Wetzikon was trying to transform the setting into one with more flexibility regarding norms, but, at the same time, it had to go through a setting that was even more populated by rigid and obfuscated positions and quality criteria. This situation makes smooth translations difficult. Collectively shared frames could provide a way out of such situations, e.g. by providing a basis for a reinterpretation of these norms. Through which processes and settings are frames produced and how do they become powerful? What are the prerequisites and favourable conditions for frames?

For enhanced travel capacity, frames should first have an adequate consistency to enter into resonance with other assemblages, e.g. the expressiveness of the station responded well to the overall mood in the public of Visp, or the planner's concept of urbanity had to be transformed into a specific cross-section of the street in order to be received by the infrastructure assemblage. However, the favourite building typology of the municipality's authorities was not able to resonate with the developers' housing market strategy, since, as a

central aspect of the entire bundle of reasons, it was not backed up by a shared concept of future residents. The concept of the future resident lost its characteristics as a potential frame by being transformed into guidelines. In this sense, the planning setting was unfavourable for the creation of frames.

However, project environments can be favourable conditions for the emergence of an affective consistency of frames. Urban development projects have the potential to become strategically relevant and are important places for the creation of frames. Although they could create new norms or plans, e.g. in the form of a prejudice or best-practice example, they can give an abstract concept consistency and thus capacity to affect, as when the concept of an urban hotspot was translated into a specific building typology that in turn also affected other urban development projects.

In addition, as concepts are often vague and not actualized in the form of documents, the travel capacity of concepts of place are mostly dependent on their performer and his performance skills, e.g. using material elements such as models or visualizations. In the case of Visp, through his establishment at an intermediary position between developers and municipal authorities, the architect could play out this position.

This leads to another crucial condition for frames: a dynamic and flexible governance network should be developed. In both cases, the expansion of associations to other stakeholders was one of the key types of translation that allowed the frames to circulate and gain consistency. The case of Visp has shown that the capability of substitution was crucial for the local governance network and thus for the concept of the urban hotspot to be upheld. It can be seen as a requirement for the adaptability of such networks. Finally, "contraction" was another key type of translation, which was also unintended in these cases, and led to the emergence of affective notions that in turn put another twist into the frame. This supports the thesis that the politicization of planning issues should not generally be circumvented (Loepfe & Van Wezemael forthcoming). Rather, it shows the potential (as well as the dangers) of direct democracy and the role of conflict for the establishment of powerful frames and urban quality.

Conclusions

This article has shown that in order to improve strategy performance, planners need to move beyond explicit planning strategies and consider frames as hidden, but powerful actors, particularly in contexts with high resource interdependencies where planning has only an advisory role. However, addressing these fluid entities is a challenge. On one hand, planning practice has to produce concepts that are flexible enough to avoid the "clarification fallacy" that could lead to disruption, while on the other, it must consider the capacity to affect as well as its inherent multiplicity. In other words: frames have to be negotiable but still graspable. This is not only a matter of communication. In addition, for planning practice, against the background of building adaptive capacity, it is crucial to manage artfully the spaces and conditions of norms, guidelines and frames, in particular, the transitions between norms and frames. Given a strong governance network, it seems to be important for adaptive capacity to be able to promote spaces for the emergence of frames, but not to say to avoid spaces of norms.

Frames not only arise in planning meetings, neither are they always intended or "willed" into being (Healey, 2007, p. 188–189). As demonstrated here, public arenas, such as a communal assembly, could create and foster visions of future places. Moreover, the case studies suggest that frames are seldom found in strongly regulated and controlled decision-making environments and processes. At least, it can be said that more differentiated processes of translation could be identified, especially concerning the involvement of new actors and arenas. This increases the chance of new frames circulating and unfolding. Further, as regards planning strategies, the Visp case has shown that not having a master plan does not necessarily mean that there is no coordination. However, whereas the first case represents the more or less classical means of strategy formulation or implementation, it also shows that such planning practice is embedded in and confronted with processes of intervention and disruption. As a consequence, the conclusion indicates that planning generally needs to re-think its own framing and also orient itself towards things that cannot be planned.

In conclusion, the authors see the following potential for the role of planning under conditions of decentralized planning systems and high resource interdependencies:

1. Planners could extend their arenas to get a grip on circulating concepts of place that have the capacity to become ordering principles, e.g. public events.

2. Planners could get a sense of disruptions as chances for the new and unexpected, e.g. a growing governance network, new concepts of place.

3. Planners should anticipate that the roles of the various elements, e.g. people, but also buildings, etc., can shift during planning processes.

4. Finally, as visions are not only produced in planning arenas, planners could engage in the collective production of visions, reflect and manage degrees of consistencies/abstractions, e.g. a plan is not able to travel widely and get into resonance with everybody, whereas a story is more connective, particularly if it is based on a concrete element such as a distinct architecture. "Big strategies can grow from little ideas (initiatives) and in strange places, not to mention at unexpected times." (Mintzberg, 1994, p. 26) and one might add: beyond plans.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. Switzerland counts 2,408 municipalities (Bundesamt für Statistik [BFS], 2013), each with its own authority and autonomy in land-use planning, although there is a tendency towards centralisation in recent years. See Loepfe & Van Wezemael, forthcoming.

2. All the empirical material stems from research that was conducted within the framework of the National Research Program NRP 65 "New Urban Quality". The analysis is based on 20 semi-structured interviews and content analyses of planning documents (plans, reports etc.).

3. A so-called Quartierplan, which is one of the major planning instruments on the local level. Two goals can be achieved with the Quartierplan: First, a new distribution of land plots due to its complicated forms and second, the organisation of the infrastructure supply (streets, canals, electricity, and water).

4. The legal framework in the Canton of Zurich gives the local authorities the authority to provide a bonus in building area or volume for construction companies, if it is larger than a certain building area and conform to the qualitative guidelines listed in the legal framework of the canton. This requires a report from an external expert.

5. In Switzerland, municipalities are one of the three levels of government. The municipal legislative is formed either through an elected parliament or the communal assembly, in

which every Swiss above the age of 18 years old can participate with their right to vote. In Visp, communal assemblies are held twice a year.

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5.4. Implications for place qualities

Loepfe, M. (submitted): Wie in der Schweiz aus Agglomeration „Stadt" gemacht wird: Zentrale Dynamiken von Entscheidungsprozessen in der städtebaulichen Praxis und Potentiale für räumliche Qualität. In: DISP – The Planning Review (Peer-Reviewed).

Wie in der Schweiz aus Agglomeration „Stadt" gemacht wird: Zentrale Dynamiken von Entscheidungsprozessen in der städtebaulichen Praxis und Potentiale für räumliche Qualität

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Abstract - Deutsch

Im *Städtebaulichen Portrait der Schweiz* bezeichnet Jacques Herzog die Schweizer Gemeinde „als eine Art Antikörper der Stadtwerdung". Der Artikel nimmt diese Aussage zum Ausgangspunkt, um *Stadtmachen* in Agglomerationsgebieten aus einer akteur- und prozessorientierten Perspektive zu reflektieren. Die Resultate einer empirischen Untersuchung der Dynamik von Entscheidungsprozessen von Arealentwicklungen im Kontext von kleineren und mittleren Schweizer Gemeinden in peri- und suburbanen Räumen deuten darauf hin, dass das Referenzbild der Stadt sich durchaus als inhaltliche Leitlinie in den Prozessen manifestiert. Zielvorstellungen wie Dichte, Nutzungsdurchmischung oder eine Stärkung der öffentlichen Räume werden von den kommunalen Behörden propagiert. Paradoxerweise führen aber u.a. genau diese Positionen in Verbindung mit verschiedenen grundlegenden Mechanismen in der Aushandlung von Qualitätsvorstellungen – wie De-Politisierung, fehlende Prozessöffnungen, funktionale Ordnungslogiken sowie eine Tendenz zur Fixierung von Qualitätszielen – zu einem fragmentierten und heterogenen Siedlungsbild. Potentiale für eine alternative Qualifizierung liegen gerade im Hinblick auf eine Emanzipation der Agglomeration von der Stadt-Land-Dichotomie im Gegenteil in Momenten von Prozessbrüchen, in offenen Foren und deshalb nicht zuletzt in einem politischeren und demokratisch inklusiveren Umgang mit Fragen der räumlichen Qualität. Insbesondere in peri- und suburbanen Gemeinden dürfen implizite Grundannahmen über zukünftige Ortsidentitäten (z.B. städtisch versus ländlich, Images) und damit verbundene Konflikte von den Verfahren nicht mehr länger ignoriert werden, und sollten im Gegenteil produktiv in die Herstellung einer identifikationsfähigen gebauten Umwelt miteinfliessen.

Keywords: Räumliche Qualität, Urbane Qualität, Siedlungsqualität, Entscheidungsprozesse, Städtebau, Raumplanung, Gemeinde, Komplexität

Abstract - English

In *Switzerland: An Urban Portrait*, Jacques Herzog calls the Swiss municipality "as a kind of antibody to becoming a city". The article takes this statement as a starting point to reflect city making (*Stadt machen*) in agglomeration areas from an actor- and process-oriented perspective. The results of an empirical study of the dynamics of decision-making processes of complex developments in the context of small and medium-sized municipalities in peri- and suburban areas in Switzerland suggest that the reference image of the city becomes manifest as guideline in the examined processes. Objectives such as density, mix of uses or a strengthening of the public spaces quite are propagated by the local authorities. Paradoxically, however, these positions lead to a fragmented and heterogeneous settlement pattern, in conjunction with various basic mechanisms of the negotiation of quality ideas - such as de-politicization, a lack of open forums, functional order logics as well as a tendency for the fixation of quality objectives. On the contrary, potential for an alternative qualification regarding the emancipation of the agglomeration of the urban-rural dichotomy lies in moments of process disruptions and in open forums, since they offer opportunities for a more political and more inclusive dealing with issues of spatial quality. Especially in peri- and suburban municipalities, implicit assumptions about future local identities (e.g. urban versus rural) and related conflicts should not longer be ignored from planning procedures. Rather, it should be used productively for the generation of a built environment, with which people can identify.

Keywords: Spatial Quality, Urban Quality, Place Quality, Decision-Making, Urban Design, Spatial Planning, Municipality, Complexity

> Man könnte die Schweizer Gemeinde auch als eine Art Antikörper der Stadtwerdung bezeichnen, der so effizient und resistent ist, dass es auch heute noch unmöglich ist, ihn zu therapieren. [...] Das spezifische Urbanitätsmolekül – oder eher Antiurbanitätsmolekül – der Schweiz ist die Gemeinde. Ihre Autonomie ist das Schicksal des Landes. (Jacques Herzog in Diener et al. 2006, 142).

Stadtmachen aus der Perspektive von Entscheidungsprozessen

In der Schweiz scheint sich die von den Fachämtern der Raumplanung schon längere Zeit propagierte Strategie der Siedlungsentwicklung nach Innen und der Verdichtung (siehe z.B. Bundesamt für Raumentwicklung, 2005) in den letzten Jahren auch politisch durchzusetzen. Die angenommenen Abstimmungen zur Revision des Bundesgesetzes zur Raumplanung oder die Kulturlandinitiative im Kanton Zürich sind klare Anzeichen dafür, dass auch die Bevölkerung die Zersiedelung der Landschaft als Problem wahrnimmt und entsprechende Massnahmen einfordert. In der Umsetzung führt Begrenzung der Siedlungsfläche zwangsläufig zur Frage, wie innerhalb des Bestandes qualitätsvoll erneuert werden kann. Aus dem städtebaulichen Diskurs erklingt dabei beinahe unisono dass die Agglomeration aufgrund ihrer fehlenden Qualitäten zur Stadt gemacht werden muss (z.B. Leitungsgruppe des Nationalen Forschungsprogrammes NFP 65, 2012). *Stadtmachen* orientiert sich dabei oft auf eine auf Morphologie verkürzte Version der historischen europäischen Stadt (vgl. Frey & Koch, 2010; Siebel, 2000) und damit auf die Kriterien Dichte, Nutzungsdurchmischung und Diversität, kurze Wege, Stärkung von öffentlichen Räumen, Kohärenz sowie Einheitlichkeit (vgl. Lampugnani & Noell, 2007). Wie die Vergangenheit jedoch gezeigt hat und auch heute noch festzustellen ist, kollidieren solche normativen Zielvorstellungen häufig mit der Praxis vor Ort und scheitern dabei in der tatsächlichen Umsetzung in Entwicklungs- und Bauprozessen. Diese Feststellung nimmt der vorliegende Artikel auf, mit folgender Vermutung als Ausgangspunkt: Die Qualifizierung der Siedlungslandschaft – im Sinne der obigen Qualitätsvorstellungen - scheitert in erster Linie nicht an den inhaltlichen Zielen und Qualitätskonzepten, sondern am mangelnden Prozessverständnis über die Dynamik der raumrelevanten Entscheidungsfindung.

Der vorliegende Artikel widmet sich der Frage nach dem Produzieren von Siedlungsqualität entsprechend aus einer prozess- und akteurorientierten Perspektive. Entwürfe und Qualitätsvorstellungen sind immer in Prozesse, das heisst in bestimmte Verfahren und Akteurkonstellationen eingebettet. Es sind nicht nur Architekten und Architektinnen, sondern Ensembles von Akteuren, welche die räumlichen Qualitäten in Form von Entwürfen generieren, debattieren, testen, transformieren und in Bauten materialisieren. *Stadtmachen* ist also nicht nur eine Frage des Designs, sondern auch eine Frage des Prozesses (und *dessen* „Design", vgl. Burckhardt's Design ist unsichtbar in Burckhardt, 1980). Eine solche Perspektive knüpft an die

place-making Forschung an (z.B. Carmona, Tiesdell, Heath & Oc, 2003). Der Ansatz basiert auf relationaler Sozialtheorie und impliziert damit, dass räumliche Qualität situativ nicht nur verschieden wahrgenommen werden kann, sondern auch auf verschiedene Art und Weise in Entscheidungsprozesse miteingebunden wird und diese mitprägt. Somit eröffnet sich eine breite Palette von verschiedenen inhaltlichen Qualitätskriterien und –vorstellungen mit unterschiedlicher Form und Handlungswirksamkeit. Eine derartige Perspektive fragt konsequenterweise nicht nach guter oder schlechter Qualität (und ist deshalb nicht zum Voraus bewertend), sondern rückt die Prozesse des Qualifizierens und die Robustheit von Qualitätsvorstellungen ins Zentrum. Wie kommen Akteure zum Schluss, was gute oder schlechte Qualität ist? Wie stabil sind bestimmte Qualitätsvorstellungen, wenn man sie über den Prozess hinweg verfolgt? Schliesslich führt uns der Ansatz, wie die Bezeichnung *place-making* nahelegt, zu den Produktionsstätten unserer gebauten Umwelt, genauer den Entwicklungs- und Bauprojekten auf kommunaler Ebene. Oder in den Worten von Jacques Herzog: Zum Antikörper der Stadtwerdung.

Das Ziel dieses Artikels ist es, anhand empirischer Einblicke in die Funktionsweise der Produktionsstätten unserer gebauten Umwelt zentrale Prozessdynamiken zu identifizieren und ihre Konsequenzen für die Debatte um räumliche Qualität sowie städtebaulichen Implikationen für die gebaute Umwelt zu diskutieren. Der empirische Fokus der Studie[28] liegt dabei auf Gemeinden kleinerer bis mittlerer Grösse und dementsprechend reduzierter Verwaltungskapazität, welche aber gleichzeitig durch starke Urbanisierungstendenzen gekennzeichnet sind. Da diese gleichzeitig im Einzugsbereich von grösseren städtischen Regionen liegen, wird im folgenden Artikel vereinfacht der Begriff „Umlandgemeinden" verwendet.

Im folgenden Kapitel möchte ich anhand einer inhaltlichen Auslegeordnung sowie der gewählten theoretischen Perspektive den Begriff *räumliche Qualität* präzisieren. Im darauffolgenden, dritten Kapitel sollen empirische Einblicke in die Aushandlungsprozesse von Qualitätskonzepten gegeben werden. Diese werde ich im vierten Kapitel zum Anlass nehmen, die zentralen prozessualen Aspekte der Qualifizierung unserer Siedlungslandschaften zu benennen und zu diskutieren. Im fünften Kapitel sollen Tendenzen aufgezeigt werden, wie die festgestellten Prozessdynamiken die gebaute Umwelt prägen, worauf abschliessend Chancen

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[28] Der vorliegende Artikel basiert auf Forschungsarbeiten, die im Rahmen des Teilprojektes Urbane Brüche / Lokale Interventionen des NFP 65 Neue Urbane Qualität stattgefunden und sich mit Potentialen für räumliche Qualität in lokalen Transformationsprozessen beschäftigt hat. Das Teilprojekt hat sich u.a. zum Ziel gesetzt, die „Ebene der Gemeinde", genauer die Funktionsweise von Administration, Politik und Planung, besser zu verstehen.

und Perspektiven für alternative und allenfalls fundiertere Art der Qualifizierung unserer Siedlungslandschaft aufgezeigt werden.

Das Konzept der räumlichen Qualität: Ein nicht-normativer Annäherungsversuch

Als Arbeitsdefinition für die empirische Feststellung von Qualitätsvorstellungen wird räumliche Qualität inhaltlich bewusst offen als von Akteuren getragene Vorstellungen definiert, was ein Raum auszeichnet und qualitätsvoll macht. Über Literaturstudie und Empirie konnte eine solche Definition inhaltlich angereichert sowie folgendermassen präzisiert werden: räumliche Qualität wird begleitet von einem Prozess des Qualifizierens zwischen den Dimensionen „Massstab" sowie verschiedenen „Deutungsebenen" eines Ortes, wie physisch-räumliche Ausprägungen, Nutzungen und Aktivitäten sowie Bedeutung und Identität (siehe Abbildung 2). Diese Auffassung soll im folgenden Abschnitt hergeleitet werden.

Es gibt unterschiedliche Gründe, wieso eine Fixierung einer normative Sichtweise, wie die Definition von allgemeingültigen Qualitätskriterien, sich für die Erforschung von räumlicher Qualität nicht produktiv erweist: Erstens basiert eine solche auf der Annahme einer technischen Rationalität des rationalen Planungsparadigmas, sprich sie geht davon aus, dass Experten Kriterien definieren, die nachher in der sogenannten Praxis von anderen Akteuren umgesetzt werden (müssen). Dies setzt eine handlungsfähige Instanz voraus, die vielfach nicht vorhanden ist oder – v.a. im Kontext von Umlandgemeinden – nur schwer hergestellt werden kann. Zweitens sind allgemeingültige Kriterien heikel, da sie die Erkennung von situativen Qualitäten erschwert sowie ein per se subjektiv und damit politisches (im Sinne von umstritten) Thema vorwegnehmend definiert. Drittens ist eine Festlegung immer eine Reduktion eines an sich heterogenen Konzeptes. Wie ich in diesem Artikel argumentiere, muss in der Praxis das Phänomen im Sinne der Erreichung einer Handlungsfähigkeit zwangsläufig reduziert werden. Das heisst aber nicht, dass dies die Forschung schon vorwegnimmt, in dem sie diese Breite reduziert. Die Heterogenität von Qualitätskriterien und –dimensionen zeigt Abbildung 2 schematisch und beispielhaft auf.
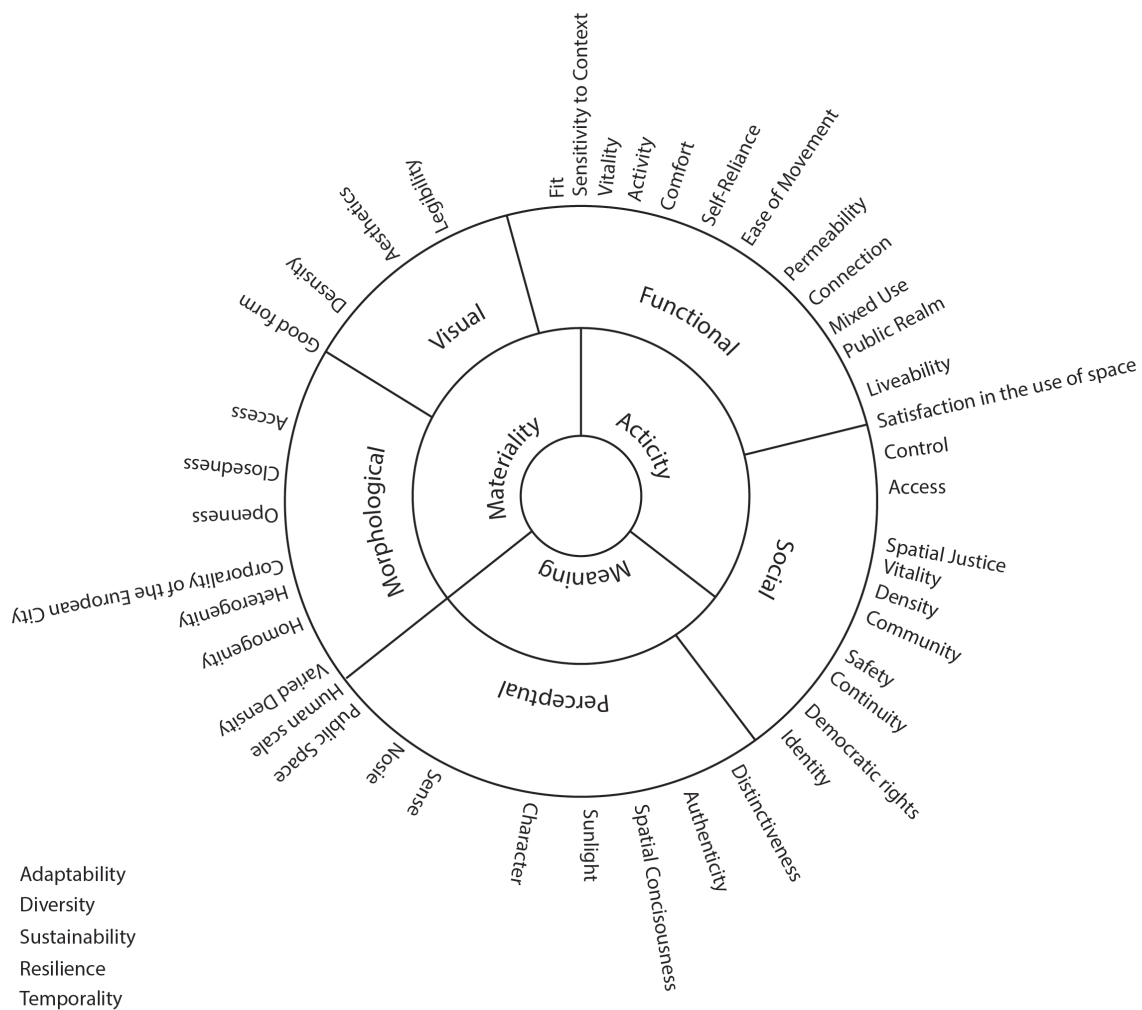
Abbildung 1: Qualitätszirkel: basierend auf einer Auswahl von Autoren (Rapaport, 1970; Lynch, 1981; Jacobs & Appleyard, 1987; DETR/CABE, 2000; Sternberg, 2000; Dawson & Higgins, 2009; Soja, 2010; NFP 65, 2012; Adams & Tiesdell, 2013; Moulaert et al., 2013) und den Dimensionen von Montgomery (1998, innerer Kreis) sowie Carmona et. al (2007, äusserer Kreis)

Um die innewohnenden Komplexität des Phänomens Siedlungsqualität konzeptionell zu fassen und gerecht zu werden, möchte ich das Konzept „wicked problem" (Rittel & Webber, 1973; siehe auch: Spicer & Thanem, 2007) mobilisieren. Die Management- und Organisationswissenschaftler Horst Rittel und Melvin Webber sagen, dass fast alle Public Policy-Issues zu einer Art Probleme gehören, die sich von „zahmen" [tame] Problemen wie z.B. in der Naturwissenschaften unterscheiden, da sie „ill-defined" sind und es deshalb per se keine adäquate Lösung für sie gibt. So argumentieren Rittel und Webber dass „wicked problems" nie

definitv formuliert und vollständig definiert werden können, weil u.a. die Informationen dazu fehlen oder eine Vorstellung einer Lösung fehlt, um die nötigen Informationen zu suchen. Ein „wicked problem" muss in der Praxis zwangsläufig zu einem „zahmen" und lösbaren Problem reduziert werden. Da diese Lösungen der Komplexität des Phänomens nie gerecht werden, sind sie nur temporär (stabil). Die Reduktion des Problems beginnt mit seiner Benennung, die meistens selektiv ist. So hat die Empirie gezeigt, dass der Begriff *urbane* Qualität von den befragten Akteuren vorwiegend für eine spezifische im Forschungskontext der Umlandgemeinden meistens neu auftretende Art von Qualität darstellt. Diese Qualität grenzt sich gegenüber einer ländlichen oder dörflichen Qualität ab und adressiert die baulichen – nicht vordergründig die sozialen – Ausprägungen der Urbanisierung. Um diese Demarkationslinie zu umgehen und weitere Schattierungen von Qualität zugänglich zu machen, möchte ich in diesem Artikel weniger ausgrenzend von räumlicher Qualität im weiteren Sinne und Qualitäten von Orten auf lokaler Ebene sprechen. Ein Ort wird dabei nicht nur physisch-materiell verstanden, sondern als Zusammenspiel zwischen physischen Setting, Aktivitäten und Bedeutungen (Montgomery, 1998). Orte entstehen also nicht nur – oder sogar hauptsächlich nicht – durch die Herstellung eines physischen Settings, sondern durch die Zuschreibung von Bedeutung durch Menschen sowie individuelle Nutzungen und Aktivitäten.

Beispiel Fuss- und Fahrradweg	Physisch-Morphologisch	Nutzung und Aneignung	Bedeutung und Identität
Objekt, Parzelle	Zugang zur Parzelle (Feinerschliessung)	Individuelle Nutzung, z.B. als Spielraum für Kinder angrenzender Wohnbauten	Erweitertes „Wohnzimmer" für die einen, Lärmquelle für die anderen
Quartier, Gemeinde	Quartierverbindung, Durchwegung	Integrations- und Begegnungsfunktion für das Quartier	Erster/letzter Kilometer zu/von der Bushaltestelle, Sonntagsspazierweg
Region, Grossraum	Regionale Netze für den Langsamverkehr	Erholungsfunktion, Verbindung von Grünräumen	„Aggloland"

Abbildung 2: Q-Navigator (nach Van Wezemael, Strebel, Schmidt, Devecchi, Loepfe, Kübler & Eberle, 2014; eigene Darstellung)

Aus Literatur und Empirie kristallisiert sich eine aus den eingangs erwähnten Dimensionen „Massstab" und „Deutungsebene" bestehende Matrix heraus, die die Komplexität des „wicked problem" Siedlungsqualität auf eine für diesen Artikel produktive Art und Weise reduziert. So erweist sie sich als hilfreiches analytisches Werkzeug, um Qualitätskonzepte und -kriterien abstrakt zu lesen, ohne sie zu kategorisieren oder sich in ihren Diversitäten zu verlieren. Zudem kann mit diesem Tool aufgezeigt werden, ob und wie bestimmte Akteurkonstellationen und Arenen jeweils bestimmte Dimensionen von räumlicher Qualität explizit und damit verhandelbar machen sowie andere damit automatisch unterordnen. Dies ist zwangsläufig bei jeder Arena der Fall, rufen wir uns die Beschaffenheit von räumlicher Qualität als „wicked problems" in Erinnerung. Beispielsweise wird die Vorstellung eines Fussweges durch ein Quartier über den Baubewilligungsprozess tendenziell auf seine baulichen-morphologischen Ausprägungen und Funktionen reduziert. Die Debatte desselben Fussweges in einer Kommission für Städtebau kann jedoch über diesen Aspekt hinausgehen, in dem z.B. die Bedeutung für den Quartierzusammenhalt diskutiert wird. Da Arenen meistens nur gewisse Felder der Matrix qualifizieren, eröffnet demnach eine Kombination von verschiedenartigen Arenen und Gefässen eine potentiell breitere Qualifizierung.

Auf der anderen Seite kann mit dieser Matrix aufgezeigt werden, dass Qualitätsvorstellungen sich auf unterschiedliche Massstabsebenen beziehen (siehe Abbildung 2)[29]. Es ist dann schliesslich eine Frage der Robustheit von verschiedenen Qualitätsvorstellungen, ob sie sich über das Testen ihrer verschiedenen Komponenten in einem Entscheidungsprozess – und damit über die Grenzen von unterschiedlichen Arenen hinweg – als qualitätsvoll, d.h. robust erweisen. Schliesslich scheint auch das Testen und Qualifizieren der Relationen zwischen den verschiedenen Dimensionen ein wichtiger Aspekt von Transformationsprozessen. So spielt es beispielsweise eine Rolle, ob eine beabsichtigte physische Ausprägung zu einer erwünschten oder von den Benutzenden schon zugewiesene und damit verfestigten Bedeutung beiträgt oder nicht. Zum Beispiel stellt sich die Frage, ob die gestalterische Aufwertung eines Fussweges zur von den Nutzern zugewiesenen Bedeutung als erster/letzter Kilometer zur ÖV-Haltestelle oder als erweitertes Wohnzimmer für die direkten Anwohner beiträgt oder dieser entgegenläuft (siehe Abbildung 2).

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[29] Es hat sich gezeigt, dass Konflikte in der Debatte um Siedlungsqualität häufig mit unterschiedlichen Massstabsebenen im Zusammenhang stehen. Während die Forderung eines Quartierweges vonseiten der öffentlichen Hand sich auf die Ebene des Quartiers bezieht, fokussiert der Bauherr eher die Qualitäten seiner Parzelle (Wohnqualität, Besonnung, Ruhe, Sicherheit).

Einblicke in die Produktionsstätten der Siedlungslandschaft

Das folgende Kapitel stellt einen Auszug aus den Resultaten einer Fallstudie über eine Arealentwicklung im Ortszentrum einer mittelgrossen suburbanen Gemeinde dar (ca. 6000 Einwohner), die laut Raumkonzept Schweiz (www.raumkonzeptschweiz.ch) Teil eines klein- und mittelstädtischen Handlungsraumes ist. Die Gemeinde wird im Folgenden aus Datenschutzgründen anonymisiert. Als Platzhalter wird der Name „Agglomeratum" eingeführt. Anhand der konkreten Beispiele sollen im darauffolgenden Teil allgemeinere Tendenzen in der Aushandlung von räumlicher Qualität aufgezeigt und thematisiert werden. Diese basieren zusätzlich auf der Studie von zehn Arealentwicklungen in den fünf verschiedenen Schweizer Umlandgemeinden Affoltern a.A., Hedingen, St.Margrethen, Visp und Wetzikon, zu deren Entscheidungsprozessen ich mir mittels 51 halbstrukturierten Experteninterviews und teilnehmenden Beobachtungen in ausgewählten Projektsitzungen Zugang verschafft habe. Analytisch wurden die Interviewtranskripte, die Gesprächsnotizen und das weitere Datenmaterial (Pläne, Berichte, Protokolle) anhand von dichten Beschreibungen (Geertz, 2006) und in der Form von Vignetten[30] (siehe Silberberger, 2011a, b) aufbereitet.

Folgende Auszüge stammen aus einer teilnehmenden Beobachtung einer Tagung der beurteilenden Jury[31] des Investorenwettbewerbes im besagten Projekt. Die von der Gemeinde angetriebene Entwicklung stellt einen wichtigen Bestandteil der kommunalen Strategie dar, das alte Dorfzentrum baulich aufzuwerten. Zwei von fünf Teams (bestehend aus Architekturteam und Investor) haben es in die zweite Runde des Wettbewerbsverfahrens geschafft. Ihre Projekte erfüllten die Beurteilungskriterien der Jury, u.a. Vorgaben zur Etappierbarkeit und die städtebauliche Akzentuierung sowie die Stärkung des Strassenraumes. Beide Teams präsentierten Vorschläge, die auf ihre eigene Art und Weise innovativ und gleichzeitig herausfordernd sind (in dem sie mehr oder weniger von den Erwartungen der Jury abwichen). So präsentiert das Projekt 1 bereits einen interessierten Ankermieter im Bereich Retail/Lebensmittel und richtet den Entwurf auf dessen Erfordernisse (z.B. Raumprogramm) aus. Obwohl die Einbindung eines konkreten Ankermieters nicht explizit Teil der ausgeschriebenen Aufgabe war, verschaffte dies dem Projekt 1 einen gewichtigen Vorteil. Dieser ist vor dem Hintergrund zu lesen, dass das Ortszentrum seit der Errichtung eines peripheren Einkaufszentrums in den 1970erJahren geschwächt ist und die Belebung des Zentrums eines der prioritären Ziele der kommunalen Raumentwicklungsstrategie ist.

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[30] Der Begriff Vignette steht in der Ethnographie für eine verdichtete, auf Feldnotizen beruhende Rekonstruktion von Situationen, z.B. eines Gesprächsverlaufs.

[31] Die Jury setzte sich aus verschiedenen externen Experten in Architektur und Immobilienwirtschaft, den zuständigen Vertretern der politischen Exekutive, einem Vertreter der Bauverwaltung sowie einem Büro für Raumplanung zusammen.

Der zweite Projektvorschlag hingegen überraschte mit einem grösseren Freiraum auf der zur Bahnhofstrasse abgewandten Seite, der gemeinschaftlich genutzt werden sollte und dessen Ausgestaltung es teilweise den zukünftigen Bewohnern überlassen würde. Der Projektvorschlag konzentrierte sich somit auf einen anderen Strassenraum, als den in der Ausschreibung priorisierten.

Wie hat die Jury auf diese beiden Projekte reagiert? In der Diskussion wurden die Projekte aus unterschiedlichsten Gesichtspunkten beleuchtet. Diskussionspunkte waren u.a. die Nutzungsflexibilität in der Gewerbenutzung, die Erschliessung (Zufahrten, Anlieferungen) oder die Morphologie des Kopfbaus, seine Funktion als Eröffner/Markierungspunkt der Bahnhofstrasse sowie der gebotene Landpreis. Ich möchte nun einen bestimmten Moment in der Diskussion herausheben, an dem die Diskussion ihre gewohnten Bahnen verliess. Die folgende Vignette ist ein verdichteter Auszug des Diskussionsverlaufes und zeigt auf, in welche Richtung sich diese entwickelte.

A	Die Projekte legen unterschiedliche Schwerpunkte. Die Frage, die sich für mich stellt: Welches Gewicht hat der Aussenraum für die Zentrumsentwicklung? Falls dieser wichtig wäre, dann wäre nämlich Projekt 1 ungenügend.
B	Dafür ist Projekt 2 beim Gewerbeanteil unflexibel, der reicht ja nur für eine Praxis aus. Wenn dieser ausgedehnt würde, müsste man auch den Freiraum anpassen.
C	Für mich stellt sich grundsätzlich die Frage: Wer will im Zentrum gärtnern? Ist der Freiraum am richtigen Ort und hat er die richtige Typologie? Ich meine, in Zürich kann man sowas ja bauen, aber wir sind hier auf dem Land. [bezieht sich auf Projekt 2]
D	Welche Landschaft wollen wir für welches Agglomeratum? Das ist die entscheidende Frage.
C	Für wen bauen wir überhaupt? Wer sind denn die Agglomeriten?

Anschliessend erhält der Gemeindepräsident – aufgefordert vom Ortsplaner – das Wort, um die Position der Gemeinde nochmals darzulegen. In seinem Votum plädiert er für das Projekt 1, in

dem er erstens die aufgetauchte Identitätsfrage aufnimmt und anfügt, dass die Einwohnenden es nicht oder nur schlecht verstehen würde, wenn als Vorschlag ein Projekt zum Zuge kommen würde, das „im Zentrum gärtnern" beinhaltete. Zweitens fordert er dazu auf, sich auf die anfangs definierten Kriterien zurückzubesinnen. Diese orientieren sich hauptsächlich an finanziellen sowie ortsbaulichen Gesichtspunkten, wie z.B. die Stärkung und Belebung der Bahnhofstrasse. Wie der weitere Gesprächsverlauf sowie definitive Projektauswahl zeigte, wurde diesem Votum gefolgt und dementsprechend wurde Projekt 1 zum Siegerprojekt erkoren.

Zentrale prozessuale Aspekte der Qualifizierung von Siedlungslandschaften

Aus der Analyse der erwähnten zehn Arealentwicklungen in den fünf Umlandgemeinden lassen sich zentrale prozessuale Aspekte der Qualifizierung von Siedlungslandschaften identifizieren. Diese beobachteten Tendenzen bilden den Inhalt des folgenden Kapitels und sollen mit Rückgriff auf die dargelegten empirischen Einblicke sowie vor dem Hintergrund meiner Lesart von räumlicher Qualität diskutiert werden (siehe Abbildung 2).

Tendenz zur De-Politisierung von Inhalten

„Wer sind denn die Agglomeriten?" Diese Frage trifft (explizit) den Kern der (impliziten) Debatte um Identität. Das Wettbewerbsverfahren erweist sich als produktiv um derart grundlegende Fragen hervorzubringen, in dem materialisierte Entwürfe und abstrakte Grundannahmen einander gegenübergestellt und hinterfragt werden. Die Debatte verlässt somit für einen kurzen Moment die räumlich-morphologische Dimension räumlicher Qualität, wobei sie sich auf ein Terrain bewegt, das offensichtlich hochgradig subjektiv und damit per se umstritten ist. Der Bewertungsprozess hat die Jury damit an eine Frage herangeführt, die sie im reduzierten Rahmen des Expertengremiums nicht abschliessend beantworten können. Eine Strategie (bewusst oder unbewusst) mit dieser Herausforderung umzugehen ist eine Versachlichung des potentiell umstrittenen Inhalts.

Ich möchte dafür den Begriff der De-Politisierung beliebt machen und damit auf eine aktuelle Debatte im angelsächsischen Diskurs um Planung und Politik verweisen, die versucht Politik oder „das Politische" jenseits von formalen politischen Arenen zu fassen (vgl. Metzger, Allmendinger & Oosterlynck, 2014). Vielmehr geht es bei diesen Zugängen um das Begreifen der transformativen gesellschaftlichen Kräfte und Momente, sowie der Kapazität von Inhalten, Debatten und Kontroversen auszulösen und damit zu so genannten *Issues* zu werden. Eine mikropolitische und prozessorientierte Sichtweise auf Issues (Loepfe & Van Wezemael, 2014) ermöglicht bei deren Evolution sowie Grade der Umstrittenheit zu erkennen (vgl. Latour, 2007),

und damit die Bewegungen dazwischen als Politisierung oder De-Politisierung zu lesen. De-Politisierung kann folglich der Entzug eines potentiell umstrittenen Inhaltes vor dem Beginn einer Logik der Aushandlung. In der Planung wird diese Abschwächung von Umstrittenheit z.B. mit Hilfe des Rückgriffs auf ein kollektiv erarbeitetes Leitbild versucht oder erfolgt – in weniger qualitativen Fragen – gar über eine Norm. In unserem Fall versteht der Gemeindepräsident, sich unter Entscheidungsdruck von einer „politischen" Debatte zu lösen, indem er erstens die Meinung der Bevölkerung vorwegnimmt: „Die Agglomeriten würden das nie verstehen, wenn wir im Zentrum Wohnen mit alternativem Gartenkonzept hinstellen." Oder: „In den Köpfen ist immer noch, dass das Einkaufszentrum bei der Autobahn das Zentrum abgetötet hat. Darauf müssen wir eine Antwort geben." Zweitens, erinnert er an die ursprünglichen – und damit in der Prozesslogik entscheidungsrelevanten – Kriterien, die sich vorwiegend an der physisch-räumlichen Dimension orientieren (z.B. Stärkung der Bahnhofstrasse durch Orientierung) sowie an der Nutzungsdimension (z.B. Belebung). Die im gezeigten Beispiel implizit mitschwingende Qualitätsdimension „Identität" wird im Aushandlungsprozess einmal kurz explizit. Nur in diesem Moment hat sie das Potential, eine kontroverse Diskussion auszulösen, die ihre Qualifizierung überhaupt bewirken könnte. Eine Qualifizierung bleibt jedoch aufgrund der De-Politisierungsstrategien des Gemeindepräsidenten unmöglich. Die Debatte um Ortsidentität verbleibt dementsprechend als Hintergrundrauschen.

Wie ich an anderer Stelle gezeigt habe (Loepfe & Van Wezemael, bevorstehend), liegt es an der inneren Logik von Projekten, die vor allem während ihrer Initiierung aber auch in ihrem Fortbestehen Prozessstabilität und damit Handlungsfähigkeit benötigen, dass sie sich zwangsläufig gegen zusätzliche Einflüsse von aussen schützen müssen. Die direktdemokratischen Mittel scheinen dieser Logik auf den ersten Blick entgegenzulaufen. Auf der anderen Seite hat dieses „Hindernis" auch dazu geführt, dass im Zuge der Professionalisierung des Prozessmanagements auf privater Seite sich in der Zusammenarbeit mit öffentlichen Behörden eine „Governance-Kultur" etabliert hat, in der bei Projektentwicklungen ab einer gewissen Grösse die politische Räume oder – in anderen Beispielen – auch Expertengremien tendenziell gemieden werden. Meine Forschungsresultate zeichnen ein Bild von Projektentwicklern und Investoren, die das politische Risiko einer Sondernutzungsplanung sorgfältig gegenüber einem möglichen Landwertgewinn abwägen und je nach dem alternative Wege (wie z.B. Arealüberbauungen im Kanton ZH oder der Weg über die Regelbauweise) mit weniger grossen Prozessrisiken eingehen. Auf der öffentlichen Seite sind Planungsträger zu beobachten, die Partizipationsverfahren teilweise bewusst im Umfeld von ingenieur-technischen Fragen ansiedeln (z.B. Hochwasserschutz), um teilnehmenden Laien einen möglichst unattraktiven Rahmen für Mitsprache zu geben und sich so gegenüber Einwänden aus der Bevölkerung zu schützen.

Dabei scheint sich gerade die Deutungsebene „Identität" als per se subjektive und damit umstrittene Qualitätsdimension gerade erst in einer breiten Debatte zu qualifizieren. Meine Studie sowie Devecchi (bevorstehend) haben gezeigt, dass es in den untersuchten Umlandgemeinden oft an einem Referenzrahmen fehlt, der eine gemeinsame und eigenständige Position zur Identität der Gemeinde und dessen Bevölkerung ausdrückt, das sich von den Extremen von Stadt und Land emanzipiert (Stichwort Alleinstellungsmerkmal). Das hier gezeigte empirische Beispiel zeigt auf, dass ein Grund für diese fehlende Position zur Identität auch darin liegt, dass die lokalen Verfahren und Prozesse die implizit vorhandenen Identitätskonflikte nicht angehen, sondern mittels De-Politisierungsstrategie meiden. Diese Tendenzen führen im Gegenteil zu einer Akzentuierung von Positionen, die mit den aktuellen Transformationsbestrebungen unvereinbar sind, wie strikte denkmalschützerische und bestandeswahrende Haltungen. Solche Haltungen können sich dann früher oder später in antagonistischen Entscheidungsräume (Einsprachverfahren, Abstimmungen, Referenden) niederschlagen und im Sinne der räumlichen Transformation als unproduktiv manifestieren (Frustration und Missverständnisse zwischen Bevölkerung und Planungsträgern, Erhöhung der Planungskosten).

Fehlen und Umgehen von offeneren Entscheidungsforen sowie funktionale und prozessorientierte Schliessungslogiken

Der empirische Auszug verweist zusätzlich auf einen noch viel grundlegenderen Mechanismus, der die Verhandlung von räumlicher Qualität prägt (und die De-Politisierung als eine vorherrschende Form verstärken kann). Der oben geschilderte Entwicklungsprozess, insbesondere das Wettbewerbsverfahren, kann als kontrollierte Exploration von Möglichkeitsräumen verstanden werden, sowie deren anschliessende Schliessung, das heisst in diesem Fall die Selektion und Qualifizierung von spezifischen Projektvorschlägen. Ein Öffnen kann beispielsweise durch ein Varianzverfahren initiiert werden, es kann aber auch an sogenannten Prozessbrüchen stattfinden, z.B. wenn ein Akteur in einen laufenden Planungsprozess interveniert (z.B. Stadtplaner, Stadtbildkommission oder Endinvestor) und die räumliche Qualität nochmals aus anderem Blickwinkel reflektiert wird.

Im Regelfall durchlaufen Bau- und Entwicklungsprozessen geschlossene Arenen, z.B. Entscheidungsforen mit niedrigen Freiheitsgraden wie Baukommissionssitzungen. Die Qualifizierung eines Regelprojektes beschränkt sich im Wesentlichen auf die Massstabsebene des zu bauenden Objektes (z.B. ein Einfamilienhaus) und die physisch-räumliche Qualitätsdimension, welche wiederum stark durch Normen geprägt ist. Ein bewusstes Öffnen, im Sinne einer breiteren Qualifizierung über die verschiedenen Felder des Q-Navigators hinweg,

findet nur in Ausnahmesituationen statt. Ausnahmesituationen beinhalten z.B. Sondernutzungsplanungen oder andere Situationen, in denen seitens der öffentlichen Hand ein erhöhter Anspruch an Qualität eingefordert werden kann (Arealbonus, öffentliche Hand als Bauherr oder Grundbesitzer). In diesen Fällen erhöhen sich die Freiheitsgrade der Entscheidungssituation aufgrund der Flexibilität von Normen (z.B. Grenzabstände, Gebäudelängen, Dichten) und neue Beurteilungskriterien durch externe Begutachter, z.B. Stadtbildkommissionen, eingeführt werden, welche sich oft an höheren Massstabsebenen orientieren und weiteren Deutungsebenen orientieren (z.B. Einordnung in die Umgebung, Bezug zum Ortsbild). Eine von der öffentlichen Hand oftmals angestrebte *urbane* Qualität, die sich, wie empirisch in der Analyse der fünf Fallgemeinden festgestellt, an Kriterien wie Einheitlichkeit oder Grossmassstäblichkeit orientiert, kann oftmals erst in solchen offeneren Verfahren von der öffentlichen Hand eingefordert werden, das heisst wenn die geschlosseneren Foren der Regelbauweise ausgehebelt werden.

Für die öffentliche Hand ergeben sich durch die Verlagerung der Debatte um räumliche Qualität in offenere Foren aber auch Herausforderungen. Erstens, wird auf Seite der Bauherren, Projektentwickler und Investoren sehr sorgfältig abgewogen, ob solche Foren überhaupt betreten werden sollen. Sie stellen für diese Gruppe von Akteuren immer auch ein Prozessrisiko dar, u.a. weil die Beurteilungsmassstäbe teilweise nicht eindeutig sind (z.B. je nach beurteilender Person variieren) und sich diese nicht mit der von den Bauherren der öffentlichen Hand zugeschriebenen Kompetenz vereinen (z.B. Konflikte in der Zuständigkeit der Massstabsebenen: Darf die öffentliche Hand beim Wohnungsmix mitreden?). Überwiegen diese Prozessrisiken, dann werden auf privater Seite robustere Lösungen bevorzugt, die sich an Regelbauweise orientieren. Konsequenterweise werden in solchen Fällen potentiell qualifizierende Prozesse falls möglich umgangen, in dem beispielsweise Projekte re-dimensioniert werden. Eine zweite Herausforderung betrifft „Schliessungslogiken", die auch in offenen Foren eine wichtige Rolle in der Dynamik von Entscheidungsprozessen spielen. Im geschilderten Fall konnte die Gemeinde als Grundeigentümerin ein offenes Forum mit höheren Freiheitsgraden erfolgreich kreieren, in dem Möglichkeitsräume geöffnet und dadurch erkundet, aber über eine kontrollierte Qualifikation und Selektion auch geschlossen werden. In der Episode geht es darum, dass ein Entscheid vorbereitet und fachlich qualifiziert wird, um das zuständige politische Organ (hier der Gemeinderat) handlungsfähig zu machen. Demzufolge unterliegen auch offene Foren einer Schliessungslogik, die v.a. im Zusammenhang steht mit der Aufrechterhaltung von Handlungsfähigkeit. Dies kann wie gezeigt zur Folge haben, dass z.B. eine aufkeimende Debatte um lokale Identität nicht mehr weitergeführt wird respektive diese Dimension – u.a. aufgrund eines fehlenden Referenzrahmens wie beispielsweise einer kollektiv erarbeiteten Vorstellung von Identität – sich nicht qualifiziert.

Schliessungslogiken werden nicht nur von machtvollen Akteurkoalitionen (wie z.B. der Ortsplaner und der Gemeindepräsident im Beispiel), sondern auch von Prozessdesigns mitbestimmt. Prozessdesigns haben verschiedene Stellschrauben, wie z.B. der Zeitpunkt des Einbezugs von beurteilenden Instanzen, die Kombination von offenen und geschlossenen Foren oder die Unterscheidung zwischen projekt- und planungsorientierte Vorgehensweisen. Eine Projektorientierung zeichnet sich dadurch aus, dass sie die Entwicklung eines Projektes, und damit auch der Festlegung des Raumprogrammes sowie der räumlichen Ausgestaltung, der Anpassung von Planungsgrundlagen (wie z.B. Zonierung) voranstellt. Auf der anderen Seite versucht ein planungsorientierter Ansatz zuerst planerische Richtlinien aufzustellen (z.B. Festlegung der Dichten, Nutzungen), die als Grundlagen für die Entwicklung von einzelnen Projekten (meistens mehrere, verschiedene Baufelder). Obwohl es in der Praxis Abwandlungen und Mischformen dieser Idealtypen gibt, rückt bei der Projektorientierung das Raumprogramm und die konkrete Nutzung (bis hin zur Bindung eines so genannten Ankermieters) als Ordnungsprinzip in den Vordergrund. Diese Nutzungsorientierung trifft sich häufig mit dem Ziel der Belebung des Zentrums, welches sich die öffentlichen Hände der untersuchten Umlandgemeinden oft auf die Agenda gesetzt haben. Diese Umstände stabilisieren Koalitionen zwischen öffentlicher Hand und Retailern im Bereich Lebensmittel. Dementsprechend verhalten sich dann auch die Schliessungslogiken, konkret im geschilderten Fall: die positivere Bewertung des Projektvorschlages, der den Ankermieter bereits im Entwurf bereits antizipiert. Im tendenziell immer weniger häufigen Fall des planungsorientierten Ansatzes sind die Schliessungslogiken stärker durch rein planerische Idealvorstellungen geprägt (Dichte, Zentralität, Nutzungsdurchmischung, Erschliessung), wobei die Umsetzung in konkrete Projekte danach vom Handlungsspielraum der öffentlichen Hand abhängt (Grundbesitz, Anreizsysteme).

Gemeinsam ist den beiden Ansätzen in den untersuchten Gemeinden die Dominanz des Themas Verkehr als ordnendes Prinzip und damit bestimmendes Element von Schliessungslogiken. Es konnte beobachtet werden, dass beispielsweise der öffentliche Raum als Platzhalter („empty signifier"; Brand & Gaffikin, 2007) zwar eine wichtige Rolle in der Entstehung von Akteurkonstellationen wie die Kooperation zwischen öffentlicher Hand und privaten Partnern spielt, dies aber nicht über die schlussendlich realisierte Form und deren Qualität aussagt. Es zeigt sich dabei, dass sich über den Prozessverlauf erstens die Form und der Stellenwert von öffentlichen Räumen verändern können und zweitens das der öffentliche Raum als Qualitätskriterium nur robust ist, wenn er erfolgreich in Verkehrs- und Retailentwicklungen eingebettet werden kann (z.B. ein Platz als gut sichtbarer Zugang für Fussgänger). Es ist demnach eine funktionale Logik, die die Projekte häufig bestimmt und die städtebaulichen Entwürfe und Ideen ordnet. Der Bereich des Verkehrs ist hier stark abgesichert durch Normen, gegen die städtebauliche Argumentationen, die sich z.B. auf visuell-ästhetische

(wie Atmosphäre, Klarheit des öffentlichen Raumes) oder sozial-kulturelle Dimensionen (wie Belebung, Kulturelle Nutzungen) beziehen, sich nur in Ausnahmefällen durchsetzen können. Schliesslich kann sich die Qualitätsdimension „Identität" aufgrund fehlender Referenzsysteme in Momenten des Schliessens nicht explizit gegenüber diesen Ordnungsprinzipien behaupten.

Tendenz zur Fixierung von Qualitätsvorstellungen

In Qualifizierungsprozessen treffen nicht nur Vorstellungen aufeinander, die sich in Bezug auf die Dimensionen des Q-Navigators unterscheiden, sondern auch unterschiedliche Konsistenzen und Formen. So weisen die Vorstellung eines Hightech-Industrieparks, das Ziel der Belebung des Zentrums, die Markierung des Eingangs einer Strasse mittels Hochhaus oder das Bild einer publikumsintensiven Erdgeschossnutzung verschiedene Grade von Abstraktion auf. Qualifizierungsprozesse können als Resonanz zwischen Vorstellungen verschiedener Abstraktionsgrade gelesen werden, die mehr oder weniger produktiv sind. Im geschilderten Beispiel konnten die konkreten Entwürfe und die kommunalen Ziele durchaus in ein produktives Verhältnis gesetzt werden: einerseits konnten die Ziele als Kriterien mit in die Beurteilung der Projekte miteinfliessen, auf der anderen Seite konnten sich gewisse allgemeinere Zielvorstellungen über die Auseinandersetzung mit den Entwürfen konkretisieren (z.B. die Vorstellung, welche Art Freiraum im Projekt und im Zentrum allgemein gefragt ist). Das öffentliche Ziel der Stärkung und Belebung des öffentlichen Strassenraumes konnte sich im Prozess der Entwicklung robust halten, v.a. da die Gemeinde durch den Landbesitz in einer vorteilhaften Position war, Bedingungen zu stellen.

Häufig ist dieses Verhältnis zwischen Zielen und konkreten Projektentwürfen aber nicht gegeben und Strategien zur Förderung von räumlicher Qualität haben einen empfehlenden Charakter. Meine Untersuchungen haben gezeigt, dass in solchen Situationen eine Schärfung und Verfestigung der Vorstellungen seitens der öffentlichen Hand leicht zu unüberwindbaren Positionen und damit zu Konflikten führen können, insbesondere wenn von den Akteuren gewisse Identitäten vorausgesetzt werden, ohne sie zuvor verhandelt zu haben. So stecken hinter Debatten über räumlich-physische Ausprägungen (z.B. die Frage, ob Freiräume in einem Wohnprojekt vorwiegend durch Privaträume geprägt sein sollen oder ein gemeinsamer, öffentlich nutzbarer Aussenraum entwickelt werden soll) oft Konflikte zwischen Vorstellungen von zukünftigen Bewohnern und deren Lebensstile. Während von der öffentlichen Hand in allen untersuchten Gemeinden eher ein Bild gezeichnet wird, das auf der Annahme eines grundsätzlich urbanen zukünftigen Bewohners beruht, wird diese Ausrichtung von den Entwicklern in einem Teil der untersuchten Gemeinden nicht als Bedürfnis gelesen. Zum Beispiel setzen Entwicklungsleitbilder, die belebte öffentliche Räume in Wohnquartieren

vorsehen eine Art Bewohnerschaft voraus, die solche Räume positiv bewerten und aktiv nutzen. Im Gegensatz dazu finden sich im angestrebten Marktsegment von Entwicklern im gleichen Gebiet Kategorien von Lebensstilen wie „ländlich geprägte Mittelschicht", die laut Investoren einen hohen Grad an Privatheit bevorzugen. Verharrt die öffentliche Hand auf ihren Positionen, kann dies dazu führen, dass sich Bauherren diesen Situationen entziehen und damit die Debatte um räumliche Qualität umgehen (Bruch mit z.B. der Stadtbildkommission, Bauen mittels Regelbauweise oder Nicht-Investition). Zweitens behindern rigide Qualitätsvorstellungen auf öffentlicher und privater Seite häufig die Suche nach einer genuinen Qualität. Vor allem Konzepte der traditionellen europäischen Stadt befinden sich in den untersuchten Umlandgemeinden als Idealvorstellungen und Bewertungsmasstäbe in einem unproduktiven Verhältnis zu den vor Ort vorgefundenen Qualitäten. Beispielsweise gehen planerische Idealvorstellungen und realisierbare Lösungen von publikumswirksamen Erdgeschossnutzungen oft weit auseinander (ein Café mit belebtem vorgelagertem Aufenthaltsraum gegenüber so genannt „ländlichen" Retailern, welche hohe Anforderungen an MIV Erschliessung mit sich bringen[32]).

Wie ich an anderer Stelle gezeigt habe (Loepfe, Devecchi & Zweifel, bevorstehend) könnte es sich im Gegensatz zur Definition von Anforderungen und der Festlegung von genauen Richtlinien und Idealvorstellungen als produktiv erweisen, im Vorfeld (und in offeneren Foren) an einer gemeinsamen Vision zu arbeiten. Diese Vision sollte eine skizzenhafte Konsistenz aufweisen, so dass sie für die unterschiedlichen Akteure greifbar ist, aber gleichzeitig verhandelbar und flexibel bleibt. Beispielsweise könnten Geschichten über Orte (Throgmorton, 2003) die Kapazität entfalten, als Orientierungspunkt in Aushandlungsprozessen handlungswirksam zu werden und quasi als „Transportmittel" von Qualitätskonzepten, welche sich jenseits von Plänen durch Foren, die über Planerkreise hinweg gehen, bewegen. Solche Formen eröffnen das Potential, die systematisch untergeordnete Qualitätsdimension der Identität expliziter in einen Transformationsprozess zu integrieren, zum Beispiel indem die Identität eines zukünftigen Bewohners darin abgebildet wird.

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[32] Im besagten Fall wurde der Projektvorschlag mit einem ländlichen Retailer von einer städtebaulichen Expertise negativ bewertet, so dass schliesslich gänzlich auf eine publikumswirksame Erdgeschossnutzung verzichtet wurde und Wohnnutzungen realisiert wurden, welche den öffentlich zugänglichen Raum zu einem privaten Freiraum verwandelte (der öffentliche Weg führt nun an einer Hecke vorbei, der diese Räume trennt).

Städtebauliche Implikationen

Von den diskutierten Schlüsseldynamiken in der Aushandlung von räumlicher Qualität lassen sich auch direkte Linien zur bebauten Umwelt ziehen. Insgesamt zeichnet sich in den untersuchten Umlandgemeinden das Bild einer heterogenen und fragmentierten Siedlungslandschaft, die durch die festgestellten Dynamiken tendenziell noch verstärkt wird. Dies wird nachvollziehbar, wenn wir die festgestellten Dynamiken in Zusammenhang mit den grundlegenden städtebaulich-morphologischen Grössen „Gebäudehöhe" und „Gebäudegrundriss" stellen, was ich in den folgenden Abschnitten tun möchte:

Die Gebäudehöhe ist ein wichtiger empirischer Parameter in der Aushandlung von räumlicher Qualität. Das potentiell umstrittene Thema wird jedoch häufig aus Angst vor politischen Widerständen reglementiert und damit de-politisiert. In den untersuchten Foren, wie z.B. in Wettbewerbsverfahren oder Gesprächen in Zusammenhang mit Arealüberbauungen wird die Gebäudehöhe als potentiell konfliktreiches Thema antizipiert und tendenziell früh festgelegt, um mögliche bevorstehende Konflikte zu vermeiden. Dies führt nicht nur zu einer Vorwegnahme der Meinung der Bevölkerung sondern auch zu einer Verfestigung auf einem Niveau, das sich an der bestehenden ortsbaulichen Umgebung orientiert. Die Prozessrisiken, welche mit einer Eröffnung von mehr Flexibilität (wie z.B. einer Sondernutzungsplanung) verbunden sind, führen dazu, dass der sichere Hafen der Regelbauweise – und damit die Reproduktionsstätte der herkömmlichen Höhen – nur in Ausnahmesituationen verlassen wird. Werden diese Entscheidungsforen trotzdem betreten, müssen Abweichungen sehr sorgfältig begründet werden. Häufig werden in diesen Fällen morphologisch-visuelle Gründe angeführt, wie z.B. die Markierung eines wichtigen Ortes. Die Untersuchung im Kontext der Umlandgemeinden hat gezeigt, dass Begründungen von Abweichungen besonders robust sind, wenn sie einer Logik der „Abgrenzung gegen aussen" folgen. Es konnte beobachtet werden, dass bei Arealentwicklungen in heterogenen Siedlungsmustern in der Beurteilung der Experten häufig vergebens nach einem Orientierungspunkt ausserhalb der begrenzenden Infrastrukturen (Strassen und Schiene) gesucht wird. Diese Feststellung wird dann in der Folge als Legitimation für die Schaffung einer die Umgebung stark kontrastierende ortsbauliche Entwicklung verstanden. Besonders robust ist die Argumentationslinie offensichtlich bei grösseren, von Infrastruktur abgegrenzten Arealen. Das Resultat sind Inseln in der Nähe von bisherigen dörflichen Strukturen, die physisch-morphologisch einheitlich gestaltete und grossmassstäbliche Bebauungsformen aufweisen.

Der Gebäudegrundriss manifestiert sich in den untersuchten Prozessen als weniger konfliktreiches Thema. Seine Qualifizierung ist durch verschiedenartige Dynamiken geprägt. Einerseits führen prozessorientierte Schliessungslogiken und dementsprechend eine hohe

Robustheit der Kriterien Etappierbarkeit und Aufwärtskompatibilität tendenziell dazu, dass grossmasstäbliche Formen sich in den Qualifizierungsprozessen von kleinräumigeren städtebaulichen Eingriffen nicht halten können und aussortiert werden. Die Kriterien sind entscheidungsrelevant, insbesondere wenn die Grundeigentümerstrukturen kleinräumig und kompliziert sind sowie die Unsicherheit über die zukünftige Nachfrageentwicklung hoch ist. Auf der anderen Seite, führt die Priorisierung von Belebungsfaktoren, wie die Schaffung von Einkaufsmöglichkeiten und Grundversorgung, in den Zielen der öffentlichen Hand zu einer Toleranz gegenüber Retailern mit festgelegten Raumprogrammen. Die Probleme der Zentrumsschwäche in Umlandgemeinden rückt die Retailer zudem in eine vorteilhafte Verhandlungsposition. Dies wird verstärkt durch vermehrt projektorientierte Prozessdesigns, welche sich auf diese Akteurgruppen (Ankermieter) ausrichten und nach einer betriebswirtschaftlichen Logik eine Frequentierung rund um die Uhr priorisieren. Das hat entsprechende morphologische Konsequenzen, z.B. dass Sockelgeschosse gemäss Raumprogramm der Retailer eine gewisse Mindestgrösse aufweisen müssen. Im Umfeld einer heterogenen Siedlungsstruktur, welche vielfach durch Punktbauten geprägt ist, führt dies zu städtebaulichen Brüchen.

Gemäss meiner Untersuchungen verhalten sich demnach die Kriterien „Gebäudehöhe" und „Gebäudegrundriss" in den Aushandlungsprozessen meistens rigide und passen sich nicht flexibel, sondern sprunghaft an die sich verändernden städtebaulichen und damit verbunden sozio-technischen Konstellationen an. Verfolgt man ihre Ausprägungen durch die verschiedenen Arenen des Stadtmachens und ihre Materialisierung, entsteht ein Gesamtbild, das – auch in der gebauten Umwelt – durch Sprünge geprägt ist: ein Nebeneinander von unterschiedlichsten Formen, Materialisierungen, Grössenordnungen: eine auf verschiedenen Massstäben fragmentierten Form der bebauten Umwelt.

Paradoxerweise wird die Fragmentierung zusätzlich verstärkt, wenn idealisierte Vorstellungen der traditionellen europäischen Stadt auf „Zwischenstadt-Settings" prallen, wo die politischen und sozialen Voraussetzungen dafür nicht vorhanden sind oder diese Potentiale von den Bauherren mindestens nicht so gelesen werden. In den untersuchten Umlandgemeinden können diese klassische urbanen Mustern (Kriterien wie Dichte, Nutzungsdurchmischung und Stärkung der öffentlichen Räume) nur realisiert werden, wenn die kommunale Behörde in einer vorteilhaften Position ist, wie z.B. bei Umzonungen und/oder vereinfachten Grundeigentümerverhältnissen (geringe Anzahl oder Gemeinde mit Grundeigentum). An anderer Stelle werden – aus Sicht der kommunalen Behörde beabsichtigt oder auch unbeabsichtigt – andere Qualitätsvorstellungen materialisiert: Durch die Realisierung von hoher Dichte auf den besagten Arealen können die restlichen Gebiete einer Gemeinde vom

Siedlungsdruck – sowie die kommunal implizit geführte Debatte um Urbanisierung und Identität – entlastet werden und es finden beabsichtigt ortssensitive Verdichtungen und Aufwertungen statt. Es gibt aber auch Fälle, wo auf unmittelbar angrenzenden Arealen ungewollt ideologische Gegenpositionen zu klassischen Vorstellungen von Urbanität realisiert werden, wenn die urbanen Positionen von den privaten Entwicklern nicht mitgetragen werden und die Handlungsspielräume der kommunalen Behörde begrenzt sind. Das kleinmasstäbliche Nebeneinander von „erfolgreichen" Projekten und „gescheiterten" Interventionen (oder eben bewusst sensitivere Aufwertungen) zementiert wiederum ein heterogenes und fragmentiertes, durch Inkohärenz geprägtes Bild. Doch kann dieses Siedlungsbild nicht auch eine mögliche Leitlinie für ein *Stadtmachen* in der Agglomeration sein? Definiert man das Städtische über die produktive Differenz und Diversität (vgl. Schmid, 2006 in Diener et al., 2006: 164-223), dann stellt sich die Frage, ob diese nicht auch in der physisch-morphologischen Dimension entsprechend abgebildet werden darf. Eine solche Qualität wäre genuin und authentisch, wird zurzeit aber durch die Referenz zu Idealvorstellungen, die geschilderten Prozessdynamiken und einen fehlenden genuinen Referenzrahmen verhindert.

Schlussfolgerungen und Perspektiven

Ausgehend von Jacques Herzog's Aussage, in der er die Schweizer Gemeinde (Singular?) als „eine Art Antikörper der Stadtwerdung" bezeichnet, habe ich in diesem Artikel versucht, mittels einer prozess- und akteurorientierten Perspektive etwas Licht in die Blackbox der Gemeinden (Plural!) zu werfen. Die Entfaltung räumlicher Qualifizierungsprozesse und die damit verbundenen Akteurkonstellationen und Prozessdynamiken legen eine Diversität unterschiedlichster sozio-technischer Konstellationen und Praktiken an den Tag, die gewisse Qualitätsdimensionen, wie die physisch-morphologischen sowie funktionalen Aspekte und die Massstabsebene des Objektes, tendenziell eher explizieren und damit verhandelbar machen als andere, insbesondere die Dimension der Bedeutung und Identität. De-Politisierungstendenzen, das Fehlen von offenen Entscheidungsforen sowie funktionale und prozessorientierte Schliessungsmechanismen führen dazu, dass diese Dimensionen unqualifiziert als Hintergrundrauschen verbleiben.

Konsequenterweise fehlt es in Umlandgemeinden häufig an einem Referenzrahmen für qualitätsvolles Planen und Bauen, der sich an den genuinen und historisch individuellen Qualitäten orientiert und kollektiv erarbeitet wurde. Dagegen scheint das Referenzbild der Stadt sich durchaus als inhaltliche Leitlinie in den Prozessen zu manifestieren. Zielvorstellungen wie Dichte, Nutzungsdurchmischung oder eine Stärkung der öffentlichen

Räume werden von den kommunalen Behörden propagiert. Paradoxerweise führen aber u.a. genau diese – teilweise verfestigten, ideologischen – Positionen in Verbindung mit einem fehlenden genuinen Referenzrahmen sowie mit wechselnd machtvollen Positionen und Prozessbrüchen zu einem fragmentierten und heterogenen Siedlungsbild: Urbane Inseln innerhalb dörflich geprägten Strukturen. Die von Verfechtern der historischen europäischen Stadt bemängelte Inkohärenz wird also in den Umlandgemeinden systematisch – und nicht zufällig – hergestellt. Grund dafür sind nicht wie von Herzog angenommen die Abwehrhaltungen von Gemeinden, also die Vorstellungen der politisch-administrativen Vertretung, sondern die hier dargestellten Prozesslogiken und fehlende kollektive Referenzbilder. Die Gemeinde als Antiurbanitätsmolekül zu bezeichnen ist deshalb weder zweckmässig noch eine gute Begründung, sondern reine unproduktive Polemik (siehe Van Wezemael et al., 2014).

Neben Prozessbrüchen müssen wir uns demnach auch mit Brüchen in der Siedlungslandschaft auseinandersetzen. Beide Arten von Brüchen können als Chance verstanden werden. Erstens könnte Heterogenität, weil sie paradoxerweise immer wieder hergestellt wird, auch als neue potentielle Qualitätsleitlinie ernster genommen werden und versucht werden, diese gestalterisch und proaktiv anzugehen. Hingegen ist es eher kritisch, dies als neue Richtlinie zu interpretieren oder gar in ein Normenwerk zu implementieren, betrachten wir die zahlreichen Aktivitäten, die heutzutage stattfinden, um sich von den alten Normen zu befreien. Zweitens, können auch Brüche und Konflikte in Entscheidungsprozessen als Chance und Ressource verstanden werden. Erstens, ergibt sich bei Konflikten die Gelegenheit, unterschiedliche (oft implizite) normative Zielhintergründe offenzulegen und zu diskutieren, die oft Ursache dieser Uneinigkeiten sind. Zweitens, lassen Brüche neue unvorhergesehene Ereignisse und damit Inhalte und Sichtweisen zu, weil die Prozess- und damit auch Managementlogik für einen kurzen Moment aussetzt und damit auch die Prozessordnung, die im Regelfall den Inhalt strukturiert. Es ist in diesen Momenten des Öffnens, in denen neuartige Inhalte skizzenhafter Konsistenz und transformativer Kapazität, die fähig sind in andere Entscheidungsarenen zu zirkulieren und die für andere Akteure – nicht nur für Planer – als Bezugspunkt dienen können. Wenn die Planung nicht über die Autorität verfügt Raumqualität zu kontrollieren und es an einer leitenden und wissenden Instanz fehlt, dann sollte sie sich von der Logik der Kontrolle befreien und an Handlungsweisen orientieren, die der Logik der Zirkulation folgen. Es fehlen jedoch immer noch die Verfahren und Foren, die sich dieser Logik entziehen. Zirkulationsfähige Inhalte haben beispielsweise die Form von Geschichten oder Images, an die auch Private und die Bevölkerung anknüpfen können. Ihre Herstellung setzt aber einen politischeren und gleichzeitig inklusiveren demokratischeren Umgang mit Fragen der räumlichen Qualität voraus. Dies eröffnet Potentiale zu einer alternativen, möglicherweise umfassenderen Qualifizierung und zu einer Emanzipation der Agglomeration von der Stadt-Land-Dichotomie. Insbesondere in

Umlandgemeinden darf der implizite Identitätskonflikt von den Verfahren nicht mehr länger ignoriert werden, und sollte im Gegenteil produktiv in die Herstellung einer identifikationsfähigen gebauten Umwelt miteinfliessen. Schliesslich und konsequenterweise müsste sich dabei auch die Architektur demokratisieren, und das heisst in einem ersten Schritt: verständlich machen.

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5.5. Further practice-oriented results

Loepfe, M. (2014): V/3 Städtebauliche Typologien – Falten/Prozessmechanismen. In: Van Wezemael, J., Strebel I., Schmidt, M., Devecchi, L., Loepfe, M., Kübler, D. & Eberle, E. (2014): Prozess Städtebau – Strukturen, Dynamiken und Steuerungsmodi der Raumbildung in der Gegenwart. Schlussbericht zum Forschungsprojekt 'Urbane Brüche / lokale Interventionen' im Rahmen des NFP65 'Neue Urbane Qualität'.[33]

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[33] Note that my individual contribution to this extract begins at page 193.

V/3 Städtebauliche Topologien

„If you take a handkerchief and spread it out in order to iron it, you can see in it certain fixed distances and proximities. If you sketch a circle in one area, you can mark out nearby points and measure far-off distances. Then take the same handkerchief and crumple it, by putting it in your pocket. The two distant points suddenly are close, even superimposed. If, further, you tear it in certain places, two points that were close can become very distant. This science of nearness and rifts is called topology, while the science of stable and well-defined distances is called metrical geometry."

(Serres with Latour, 1995, 60)

Identifikation von Gestaltung und Interventionen

Die folgenden Abschnitte beschäftigen sich mit städtebaulichen Topologien und wie sie in der Projektierung und der Verwaltung gemacht werden. Wir gehen im Sinne einer Respezifikation der städtebaulichen Ordnung vor, wie sie in den Teilen 1 und 2 vorgestellt wurden. Das Urban Assemblage (Farìas und Bender, 2010) 'Gemeinde' haben wir aus unseren Informationen und Daten als Forschungsteam zusammengefügt, jetzt wollen wir wissen, wie unsere Akteure urbane Gefüge zusammenstellen und dieses qualifizieren. Diesen dritten Teil bauen wir einerseits auf unseren ethnographischen Beobachtungen auf, die wir in verschiedenen Foren der Verwaltungspraxis durchgeführt haben. Wir zeigen auf, dass städtebauliche Topologien nicht einfach eine Angelegenheit zwischen einzelnen Menschen sind, sondern eine spezifische Materialität (Formulare, Pläne, Mobiliar), Organisationsformen (sprich Bürokratie) und Räumlichkeit (sprich Arbeitsplätze und Sitzungszimmer) an der Bildung dieser Topologie beteiligt sind. Andererseits nehmen wir die von Michel Serres eingeführte Figur der Falte auf. Um auf unser Beispiel mit der Chinese Box zurückzukommen, stellen wir uns vor, dass der Faltbogen aufgefaltet vor uns liegt (siehe auch unten Abschnitt 'Über das Falten'). Im Folgenden möchten wir erörtern, was die Prozesse der Projektierung und Verwaltung mit diesem Substrat machen. Vorweggenommen werden kann, dass die Faltung der Box nicht in allen Fällen entlang der vorgezeichneten Falten geschieht.

Die Anreicherung der Projektierung erlaubt es, über den Prozessverlauf Konstellationen zu analysieren, die aus der Einberufung verschiedener Foren und der damit involvierten Akteure, Orte etc. begründet sind. Es gibt verschiedene Arten von Foren, diese können verschieden kombiniert werden. Dementsprechend werden die folgenden Falten gelegt resp. die folgenden Prozesse lanciert, verstärkt oder geschwächt. Man muss sich bei der Kombination von Instrumenten und Foren daher bewusst sein, was mit den Prozessen ausgelöst wird. Mit anderen Worten schaffen verschiedene Modi des Faltens (im Sinne des in-Beziehung-Setzens) jeweils Möglichkeitsräume (es kann hier nicht um simple wenn-dann Zusammenhänge gehen), die auch und vor allem von jeweils spezifischen Tendenzen beschrieben werden. Die Kenntnis dieser Tendenzen und der Konstellationen, die sie hervorbringen, ist Voraussetzung für die Gestaltungskompetenz hinsichtlich städtebaulicher Prozesse. Das Studium der Tendenzen erlaubt es zudem, Interventions(zeit)punkte zu identifizieren, um räumliche Entwicklung gezielter zu steuern.

Wir begeben uns als erstes in ein Forum, nämlich in ein Büro einer Bauverwalterin und schauen uns den Aktenschrank an.

Forum – Aktenschrank

In Planungsprozessen gibt es 'Foren' starker Verdichtung von Information, Projekten, Akteuren. Ein Ort starker Verdichtung bildet der Aktenschrank. Aktenschränke und Registraturen, genauer die Hängeregistratur, dienen dem vorübergehenden Aufbewahren von Bauprojekten in Form klar definierter Unterlagen. Die Bauprojekte werden von den Gesuchstellern zumeist per Post an das Bauamt gesandt. Der Moment der Ankunft des verschriftlichten Bauprojektes und das Einhängen in die Hängeregistratur markiert einen entscheidenden Moment im komplexen Verfahren des gesamten Bauprozesses: Projekte, die es bis in den Schrank „geschafft" haben, haben zuvor schon einen weiten Weg von der Idee über die Planung bis zur korrekten (und vollständigen) Eingabe zurückgelegt. Dabei sind sie mehrmals in verschiedene Materialitäten übersetzt worden: in Pläne, Modelle, Berechnungen, Zahlen und Buchstaben (zu Übersetzungsprozessen siehe Callon 1986, Latour 1999, Law & Hassard 2004). Nach der Prüfung der Unterlagen, die ohne den Antragsteller in einem abgeschlossenem Raum, dem Büro der Bauverwalterin oder des Bauverwalters stattfinden, wird dem eingegebenen Bauprojekt ein Platz im Aktenschrank zugewiesen – vorausgesetzt die Unterlagen sind halbwegs vollständig und nach Vorschrift erstellt.

Wie ein Aktenschrank gebraucht wird, legt die Verwalterin selber fest.[i] Die Projekte werden zum Beispiel je nach Jahr in eine andersfarbige Mappe gehängt, um auf einen Blick die Zeitlichkeit zu verdeutlichen. Nach einem Jahr werden alle abgewickelten Bauprojekte aus dem Schrank entfernt und der Schrank füllt sich wieder von Neuem. Dieses zyklische sich Entleeren und Füllen bringt es mit sich, dass die behandelten Bauprojekte innerhalb der Verwaltung nicht singulär stehen. Sie werden als Gruppe erinnert und bearbeitet – auch wenn jedes Projekt für sich steht. Allein die Tatsache des gemeinsamen Hängens im Schrank, des ständigen Aufziehens des Schrankes und des Herausnehmens eines Projektes, lässt die Bauverwalterin an die jeweils anderen Projekte denken. Es findet eine vielfache Kontextualisierung, ein in Beziehung setzten, der Bauprojekte statt. Folgende Beziehungsordnungen werden dadurch festlegt:

- – Einbezug der städtebauliche Situation
- – Erinnern der zeitgleich laufenden Projekte
- – Vergleich mit ähnlichen Fällen
- – Überblick über den Projektverlauf

Es kann vorkommen, dass ein Projekt jahrelang in einem Aktenschrank hängt, da es noch immer nicht abgewickelt und realisiert ist. Andere hängen dort maximal ein Jahr und sind bis zur Entleerung des Schrankes vielleicht schon umgesetzt. Der Schrank ermöglicht es dem Akteur, respektive der Gemeindearbeiterin, die Projekte in einen Zusammenhang zu stellen und miteinander zu vergleichen.

Dieses in Beziehung setzen ist kein vordergründiger funktionaler Zweck des Aktenschrankes. Er erschliesst sich erst durch die Interaktion zwischen den verschiedenen Akteuren (Latour 1987, 1997). Gleichzeitig verkörpert dieser Schrank auch einen Transitraum, denn die Bauprojekte – in Akten übersetzt und materialisiert – befinden sich in einer Warteschleife. Sie sind noch nicht zu Ende gedacht: Weder sind sie realisiert, noch haben sie ihre Bestimmung erreicht. Erst wenn sie den Schrank verlassen, werden sie realisiert oder verworfen. Der Aktenschrank strukturiert nicht nur die Handlungen der Akteure: Er weist darüber hin-

aus als eine wichtiges Etappenziel im Behördenvorgang und es konkretisieren Machtbezie-hungen. Der Aktenschrank kann als Nadelöhr verstanden werden, welches alle Projekte, die umgesetzt werden wollen/sollen passieren müssen (Scheffer 2008). Mit dem erfolgreichen Passieren des Schrankes sind komplexe Verfahren verbunden bei dem der Aktenschrank eine wichtige Rolle spielt: Er ist Sammelbehältnis, Strukturgeber, Verteiler, Bewahrer und Tran-sitraum zugleich.[ix]

Was lernen wir aus dieser detaillierten Beschreibung des Aktenschranks? Der Akten-schrank erlaubt, Projekte auf eine bestimmte Art und Weise zu ordnen. Diese Ordnung ist eine Ordnung der administrativen Zeit, die eine Gleichbehandlung aller Projekte ermöglicht und dem Vergessen eines Projekts entgegenwirkt. Andere Ordnungsmöglichkeiten werden damit ausgeschlossen, zum Beispiel diejenige nach Qualitätsmassstäben, Bauherrn, oder Foren in denen die Projekte bearbeitet werden sowie nach den Orten der Realisierung. Der Aktenschrank ist ein singulärer Moment im Planungsprozess, in dem alle laufenden Projek-te zusammen sind und eine Übersicht über alle Bautätigkeiten in einer Stadt geboten wird. Es handelt sich hier aber nicht um eine Sicht auf die Qualifizierung des Bestandes der Ge-meinde (Städtebau), sondern um die zeitliche Organisation einer Sammlung von individuel-len Bauvorhaben.
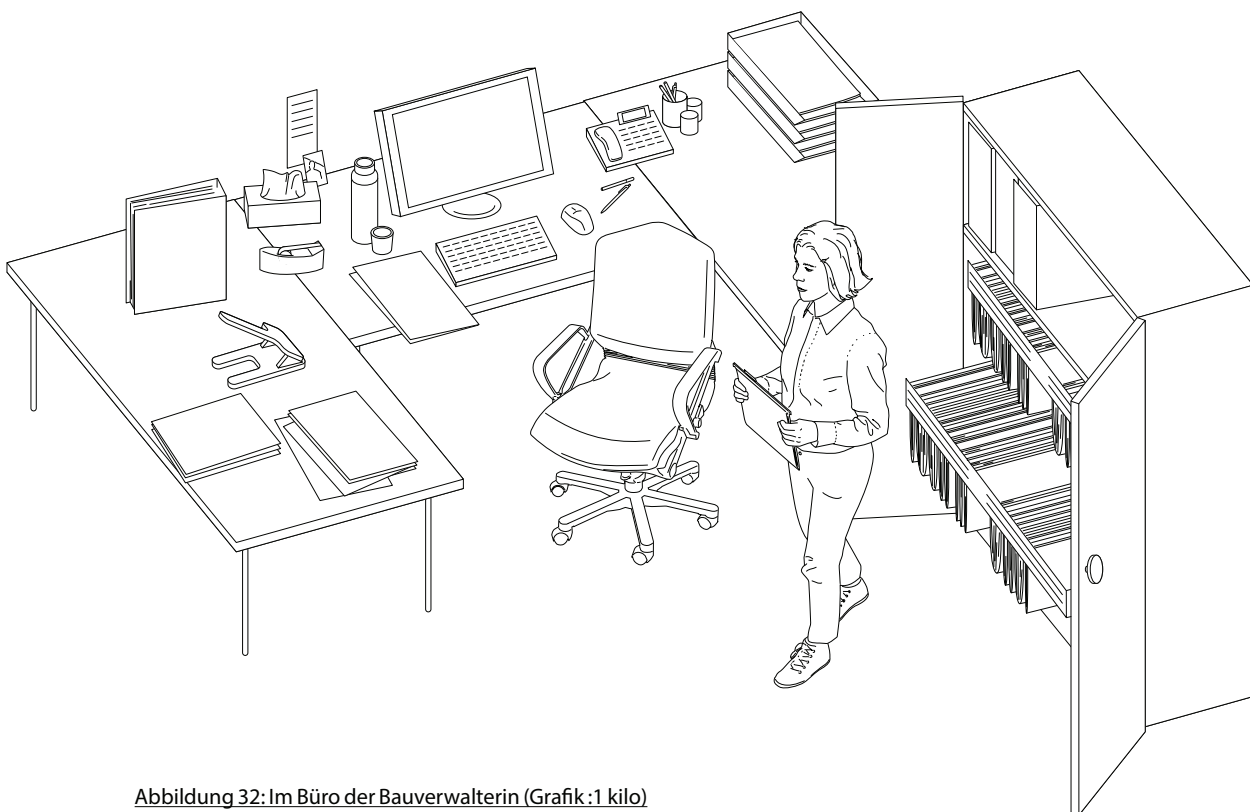

Abbildung 32: Im Büro der Bauverwalterin (Grafik : 1 kilo)

Forum – Sprechstunde

In einer Sprechstunde zwischen Hochbauleiter und Architekt werden Tastbewegungen (siehe Mol 2002) vollzogen. Es kann beobachtet werden, dass der Architekt herausfinden möchte wie die Verwaltung gegenüber dem Projekt eingestellt ist und der Hochbauleiter seinerseits an dem Niveau des Projektes und dem Entwicklungstand interessiert ist. Dieserart findet vielmehr ein Austausch an Informationen als die konkrete Arbeit am Objekt statt. Zugleich tritt die Verwaltung beratend auf, wenn Unklarheiten bei der Auslegung der gesetzlichen Regelungen bestehen. In einer Sprechstunde werden Tendenzen zur weiteren Projektentwicklung ausgelotet. Eine typische Situation ist die, dass ein Bauherr auf die Regelüberbauung statt auf das Instrument des Gestaltungsplans zurückgreift. Dies mit bewusstem Verzicht auf den Mehrgewinn an gestalterischer und konzeptioneller Qualität, den ein Gestaltungsplan bringen kann, aber mit der Absicht das Bauprojekt in der Regelüberbauung einfacher durch den Bewilligungsprozess zu bekommen. Auf diese Weise werden Qualitätsdiskussionen zu Gunsten einer beschleunigten Prozessabwicklung umgangen. Doch findet – in diesem Fall durch das angestrebte Umgehen von Qualitätsdiskussionen – tatsächlich eine Prozessbeschleunigung statt?

Es zeichnet sich regelmässig ab, dass der Entscheid der Projektverfasser zur Regelüberbauung und die angestrebte Prozessbeschleunigung sich nicht so gestaltet, wie die Verfasser es sich gewünscht hätten. Die Sprechstunde ist der Ort für Face-to-Face Abwägungen und Beratung. Eine Gemeinde, die an einer Qualitätsdiskussion interessiert ist, bringt das Projekt in das Gremium der Stadtbildkommission.[x]
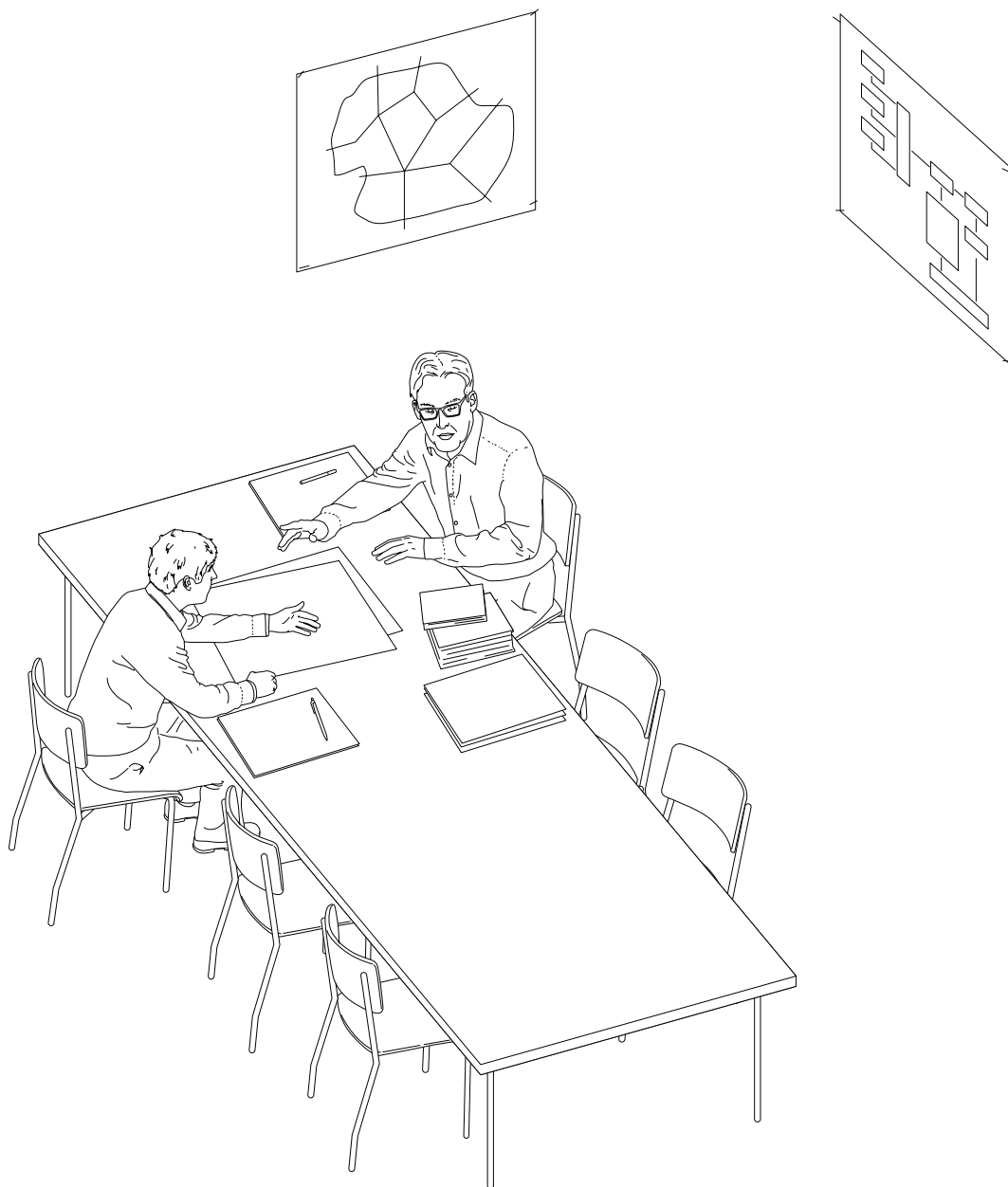
Abbildung 33: Sprechstunde (Grafik:1 kilo)

Forum – Baukommission

Beispiel eines beobachteten Vorgangs: Im Vorfeld der Baukommissionssitzung (BK) selektiert der Hochbauleiter, welche Projekte in die BK kommen.[xi] So wird nicht jede Sonnenstore oder Hundehütte in der BK besprochen. Solche Entscheide (Anzeigeverfahren und sonstige untergeordnete Bewilligungen[xii]) können selbständig von der Verwaltung getroffen werden. Auf diese Weise gibt es eine überschaubare Anzahl von Projekten, die in der jeweiligen Sitzung behandelt werden. Vor den Sitzungen haben die Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer fünf Tage Zeit, die aktuellen Traktanden der kommenden BK in einem Nebenraum der Verwaltung einzusehen und sich vorzubereiten. Auch der eigentliche Entscheid ist bereits vom Hochbauleiter vorformuliert und einzusehen. Dies mit allen Auflagen, die aus der Sicht des Hochbauleiters erfüllt oder bedacht werden müssen. In der Baukommissionssitzung werden diese vorläufigen Bewilligungen besprochen und ergänzt:

Verallgemeinernd können drei Schritte und Verhandlungsstrategien beobachtet werden, die wesentlich zum Entscheid beitragen:

> 1. Verfügbar machen von Informationen
> 2. Bewilligung als Politikum deklarieren
> 3. Qualitätsfragen auf verschiedenen Massstabsebenen diskutieren

Kommen in einer BK sehr viele Projekte vor, was sich in vielen Sitzungen beobachten liess, mutiert die BK zu einem Gremium des Abhakens einer Liste (vgl. zum Umgang mit Listen Goody, Jack 1977). Dadurch wird der eigentliche Entscheid als Ereignis in der BK im Zuge des Prozesses zu einer Nebensächlichkeit (siehe zu der Relation von Ereignis und Prozess Scheffer 2008). Das Abhaken der Liste verschleiert die Entscheidungsfindung, auch weil die BK im Prozess des Laufs eines Bauprojektes durch die administrative Maschinerie immer wieder zwischen die verschiedenen Etappen geschaltet wird. Dementsprechend kommen die Bauprojekte nicht erst am Ende des Prozesses in die BK, wo der Entscheid formuliert wird. Die BK wird als stark sortierendes Instrument genutzt: Sie kontrolliert den Prozess, die Bauprojekte und die Arbeit der Verwaltung. Qualitätsdiskussionen finden dann kaum statt. Im Vordergrund steht die Kontrolle, das Prüfen und das Verfügbar machen von Informationen.

>>> Abbildung 34: Baukommission
>>> Abbildungen 35 & 36: Stadtbildkommission bei der Arbeit (projektinterne Videostills)

Abbildung 37: Stadtbildkommi96 :1 kilo)

Forum – Stadtbildkommission

Eine Stadtbildkommission (SBK) wird von der Gemeinde als regulatives Instrument der Qualitätsbildung genutzt. Sie beurteilt Projekte hinsichtlich ihrer städtebaulichen, architektonischen und gestalterischen Qualität.[xiii] Ihre Empfehlungen zu Händen der Baukommission resp. des Gemeinderates sind nicht bindend, ihnen kommt aber während des Entscheids grosses Gewicht zu. Denn die Empfehlungen der SBK sind ein Destillat aus externen Expertisen und Diskussionen von Verwaltung, Architektur, Stadtplanung und Investor am Objekt. Als solche sind ihre Ergebnisse richtungsweisend für den Entscheid der Baukommission resp. des Gemeinderats.

Die SBK ist für die Bauverwaltung das Gremium, in welchem sie unterschiedliche Sichtweisen zusammen bringen kann, um sich intensiv mit dem konkreten Bauprojekt auseinander zu setzen. Sie gehört aus Sicht der Bauverwaltung zu den kreativsten Arbeitssessionen (vgl. Scheffer 2013), weil die gesetzlichen Rahmenbedingungen, Regeln und Normen zwar mitschwingen, aber recht flexibel gehandhabt werden. Hier wird aktiv an der Qualität eines Bauprojekts gearbeitet. Verwaltung, Architektur, Investoren und zuweilen Politik sitzen an einem Tisch. Sie arbeiten resp. diskutieren am konkreten Projekt. Dies im Zusammenspiel mit Plänen, Modellen, Visualisierungen, Stories, Erfahrungen und Wissensexpertisen der unterschiedlichen Professionen. Dabei ist das Zusammenbringen der verschiedenen Sichtweisen eine grosse Herausforderung. Entscheidend bei dem Ringen um die Qualität des Bauprojekts ist in diesen Sitzungen auch deshalb das Switchen zwischen verschiedenen Massstabsebenen und der Variation des Abstraktionsgrad (Yaneva 2009), sowie Fragen des Verstehens und der Übersetzungen. Die SBK ist als ein Möglichkeitsraum zu begreifen, den die Verwaltung öffnet, um Qualitätsdiskussionen auf einer breiteren Ebene anzuregen. Zugleich ist es ein Regulationsinstrument zur Qualitätskontrolle, welches Empfehlungen für den Bewilligungsentscheid ausspricht.

Die SBK ist ein wirksames Instrument, das es der Verwaltung erlaubt, einen Bauherrn zur Reformulierung seines Projekts zu bewegen. Denn sie greift weniger auf die gesetzlichen Normen, Richtlinien und Regeln zurück, als vielmehr auf das Wissen und die Expertise der externen Experten an denen sich die Projektverfasser messen müssen. Einer Taktik der Prozessbeschleunigung durch die Regelbauweise (siehe im Vergleich die Ausführungen zur Sprechstunde) kann dadurch entgegengewirkt werden. Besonders wenn die Projektverfasser den architektonischen Anforderungen nicht gerecht werden und sie nicht in der Lage sind, die unterschiedlichen Ansprüche und Bedürfnisse der beteiligten resp. betroffenen Akteure in ihrem Projekt zu vereinen.

Forum – Sondersitzung

Da es in manchen Gemeinden kein vergleichbares Gremium wie die der SBK gibt, werden zur intensiven Besprechung von Bauprojekten Sondersitzungen der Baukommission einberufen. Es wird eine Arena geöffnet (DeLanda 2002, 2006; Silberberger 2011) in denen Architektur, Verwaltung und Politik am konkreten Objekt diskutieren können. Ziel einer solchen Öffnung ist, die Entwicklung und/oder Konkretisierung etwaiger Ansätze zur Verbesserung der Bauprojekte und der städtebaulichen Situation einer Gemeinde.

Ein Beispiel: Ein Bauprojekt das behandelt wird kann etwa in zwei verschiedenen Versionen vorliegen. In diesem Beispiel werden zwei verschiedenen Varianten eines Dachabschlusses vorgeschlagen. Das Projekt steht kurz vor der Eingabe zur Bewilligung, ist aber noch recht flexibel. In seiner gemässigten Form entspricht das Projekt dem Baureglement der Gemeinde. Doch die Gemeindeverwaltung und der Präsident der Baukommission sind sehr an der Umsetzung der innovativen Version interessiert, gleichwohl diese eine Sondergenehmigung benötigt (vgl. zur Interessen-abwägung in Organisationen: Harper 1998). Überraschenderweise geht die Gemeinde noch einen Schritt weiter: Sie möchte, statt der Erteilung einer Sondergenehmigung die Änderung des Baureglements anstreben, sodass künftig innovative Dachabschlüsse ohne Sonderbewilligung gebaut werden können. Nicht das Bauprojekt wird hier an das Baureglement angepasst, sondern das Reglement an das Bauprojekt.

Die Bauverwaltung macht hier einen zweifachen Kniff: Sie schafft mit diesem Bauprojekt einen Präzedenzfall, um innovative Dachabschlüsse zu ermöglichen und nutzt zugleich die Baukommissionssitzung als Instrument, um den Gemeinderat von dem Vorhaben der Eingabe zur Änderung des Baureglements zu überzeugen.

Eine besondere Qualität dieses Ereignisses und ein Potential dieses Forums ist die Offenheit, die entstehen kann, wenn nicht nur Projekte, sondern die Regulationen mit in konkreten Bauvorhaben involvierten Akteuren debattiert werden und zu konkreten Anpassungen führen. Hier sind es nicht die Akteure, die in einer von Architekten erschaffenen Welt partizipieren, sondern hier werden die Akteure eingeladen an der städtebaulichen Maschinerie mitzuwirken.

Baukommission:
Bauprojekte machen Bauregeln – und nicht umgekehrt.

Das Bauprojekt, das hier behandelt wird, liegt in zwei verschiedenen Versionen vor. Es steht kurz vor der Eingabe zur Bewilligung, ist aber noch recht flexibel: In seiner gemässigten Form entspricht es absolut dem Baureglement der Gemeinde. Doch die Gemeindeverwaltung und der Präsident der Baukommission sind sehr an der Umsetzung der innovativen Version interessiert, gleichwohl diese eine Sondergenehmigung benötigt. Überraschenderweise geht die Gemeinde noch einen Schritt weiter: Sie möchte, statt der Erteilung einer Sondergenehmigung, die Änderung des Baureglements anstreben, so das künftig innovative Dachabschlüsse ohne Sonderbewilligung gebaut werden können. Nicht das Bauprojekt wird hier an das Baureglement angepasst, sondern das Reglement an das Bauprojekt.

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Die Baukommission in der Schweiz ist eine ständige Kommission, gewählt durch den Gemeinderat. Sie besteht zumeist aus drei Mitgliedern des Gemeinderats. Einer übt den Vorsitz aus. Zu dem nehmen zwei oder mehr Vertreter der Verwaltung teil (z.B. Hochbauleiter und Bausekretär). Die Kommission ist ein prüfendes, beratendes und bewilligendes Gremium von Baugesuchen (Um- Neubauten, Parkplätze, Nutzungsänderungen, Terrainveränderungen usw.). Je nach Auftragsvolumen ist die Zustimmung des Gemeinderates erforderlich. Die Basis ihrer Arbeit bilden die Bau- und Zonenordnung der Gemeinde, sowie das kantonale Baugesetz.

Gelegentlich werden Baufachleute (Architekten, Stadt- Ortsplaner) zur Beratung oder Erklärung eines Projektes eingeladen. Vor allem dann, wenn die Gemeinde nicht über eine Stadtbildkommission verfügt.

Chef Abteilung Bau

Bausekretär

Gemeinderätin

Gemeinderat

Gemeindepräsident

Architekten

Der Gemeindepräsident und Vorsteher der Baukommission eröffnet die Baukommissionsitzung. Er begrüsst alle Anwesenden und stellt die Traktanden der Sitzung vor. Wesentlich ist die Besprechung des Baus eines Mehrfamilienhauses. Zu diesem Anlass sind die Architekten des Bauherrn eingeladen.
Der Gemeindepräsident übergibt den Architekten das Wort.

Einer der Architekten beginnt das Projekt vorzustellen. Er greift dabei immer wieder auf das Architekturmodell zurück und sucht die Blicke der Teilnehmer.

Alsbald kommt er zum Knackpunkt: Das Attikageschoss. Dieses weicht von der Regelbauweise ab. Dafür wird eine Sondergenehmigung benötigt.

Der Bausekretär erklärt den Sachverhalt am Schaumodell und zeigt anschaulich die Abweichung des Bauvorhabens gegenüber der Regelbauweise von Dachgeschossen auf.

Nun ergreift der Gemeindepräsident das Wort und macht deutlich, dass die Gemeinde beabsichtigt, das Baureglement zu ändern. So wird die Sondergenehmigung obsolet. Die Gemeindeverwaltung macht klar, dass sie gerne mit diesem Präzedenzfall das Baureglement der Gemeinde ändern möchten.

Die Architekten begrüssen dies sehr und entwerfen eine Idee: Sie werden das Projekt in der Regelbauweise einreichen. Ist die Sondergenehmigung schliesslich erteilt, geben sie das neue Attikageschoss ein. So verlieren sie keine Bauzeit.
Es wird diskutiert.

Die beiden Gemeinderäte schalten sich aktiv in die Diskussion ein und stellen Fragen.

Einvernehmlich wird das Traktandum beendet. Die Strategie wird, wie besprochen, verfolgt.
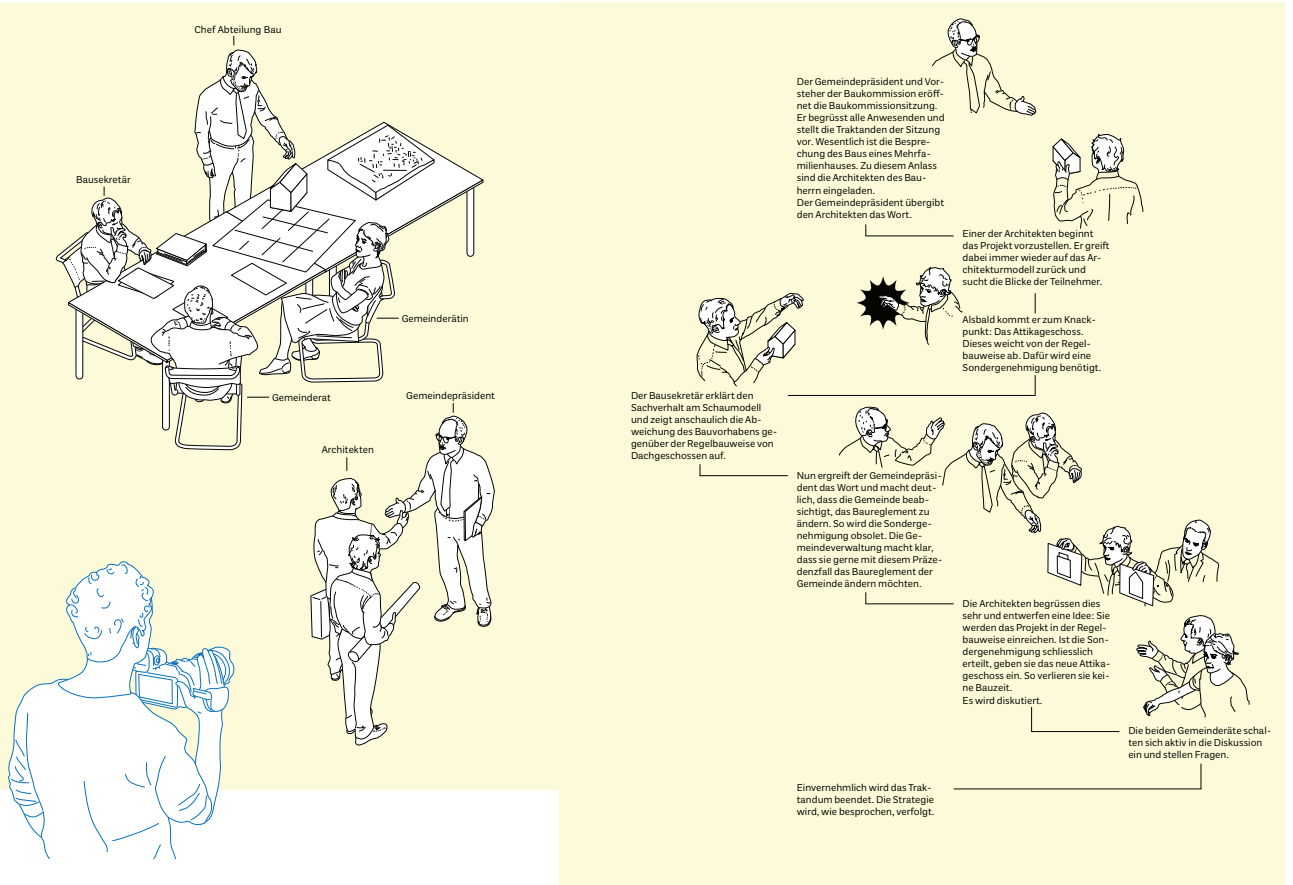
Abbildung 38: Beispiel einer Vignette aus der Publikation 'Produktion von Urbaner Qualität' (in Vorbereitung)

Fünf Prozessmechanismen/Falten wurden aufgrund der empirischen Arbeit identifiziert. Sie werden in den folgenden Abschnitten jeweils präsentiert und mit empirischem Material illustriert.

Falten – Verhinderung

Während der Aktenschrank, die Baubewilligung und damit verbunden die Baukommission (siehe oben) obligatorische Passierpunkte („obligatory passage points", Callon 1986) für Bauprojekte darstellen, existieren für Projektentwickler und Bauherren sowie Investoren dennoch verschiedene Wege, ein Projekt zu realisieren. So lassen sich beispielsweise im Kanton Zürich neben der Regelbauweise mindestens zwei weitere Wege unterscheiden: die Areal-überbauung und die Gestaltungsplanung (xiv) .

Die Wege führen jeweils zu anderen Foren, z.B. in die Gemeinderatsitzung oder ins Stadtparlament der Gemeinde oder allenfalls zu externen Experten und Kommissionen (z.B. Stadtbildkommissionen). Da gewisse Kriterien von Seiten der öffentlichen Hand nur in be-

Abbildung 39: Verhinderung (projektinterne Skizze)

stimmten Foren eingefordert werden können, entscheidet die Wahl des Instrumentes resp. des Weges auch darüber, welche Art von Qualitätsdebatte geführt wird. Dementsprechend verändert sich auch die Art der Qualitätsverhandlung. Tendenziell werden beispielsweise in Stadtbildkommissionen eher Qualitätsaspekte debattiert, welche über den Massstab des Objektes und die physisch-morphologische Qualitätsdimension hinausreichen (siehe Abb. 23, Kapitel VI). Zudem können sich die involvierten Entscheidungsträger von Sachzwängen, die von Normen der Regelbauweise her rühren, befreien (z.B. Gebäudehöhen, -längen und −abstände). Aus Sicht der öffentlichen Hand stellen diese Wege demnach oft eine Möglichkeit für eine breitere und möglicherweise fundiertere Auseinandersetzung mit der Qualifizierung des Baubestandes dar.

Für Projektentwickler, Investoren und Bauherren ist der Entscheid für diese alternativen Wege aber oft ein zweischneidiges Schwert. Einerseits sind die Wege mit höheren Freiheitsgraden (flexible Normen) versehen, auf der anderen Seite sind sie mit höheren Prozessrisi-

ken verbunden. Obwohl die Genehmigung eines Sondernutzungsplans eine spätere Baubewilligung sicherer erscheinen lässt, entstehen durch den Miteinbezug von weiteren Akteuren, wie Experten mit teilweise undurchsichtigen, aber rigiden Positionen, und politischen Foren zum Teil erhebliche nicht einschätzbare Risiken.

Projektentwickler, Bauherren und Investoren wägen deshalb sehr sorgfältig ab, welchen Weg sie gehen wollen. Wie bereits erwähnt, entscheidet die Wahl des Instrumentes über den Weg und dementsprechend auch über die Art von Qualitätsdebatte, die geführt wird. Qualitätsdebatten können von den Projektverfassern deshalb auch umgangen werden.

Zur Illustration sei folgendes Beispiel angeführt: Eine Stadtbildkommission macht über einen Arealbonus zwei Bauherren eine Kooperation „schmackhaft". Die Kommission erhofft sich dadurch mehr Einfluss auf die Umsetzung eines zuvor erarbeiteten Leitbilds. Bei der Beurteilung des Projektes ist die Stadtbildkommission mit folgenden Aspekten nicht einverstanden: Fassadengestaltung, die gestalterische Qualität des Freiraums sowie der Anteil Privatraum, Durchlässigkeit bzw. Riegelbildung der Reiheneinfamilienhäuser, bis zur generellen Kritik: „Den Bauherren werden Beispiele von guter Architektur zugestellt." Schliesslich zieht sich der Bauherr aus der Kooperation zurück und schlägt den Weg der Regelbauweise ein.

Bauherren wägen Forderungen seitens der Gemeinde sorgfältig gegenüber allfälligen Mehrgewinnen von Dichteboni ab. Zudem möchte nicht jeder Bauherr per se dichte Bebauungen realisieren. Die Arealboni greifen deshalb nicht immer. Die Arealboni greifen deshalb nicht immer. Nicht nur, wie auf der ersten Stufe der Anreicherung gezeigt, werden Planungsinstrumente vor dem Hintergrund politischer Wirklichkeiten mit unterschiedlicher Zielsetzung und Wirkungsweise eingesetzt. Auch die weiteren Akteure, in diesem Fall sprechen wir vom Investor, messen den Optionen und Risiken situativ spezifisches Gewicht bei, sodass die Wahl eines Instrumentes nur noch sehr wenig über die soziale und räumliche Intervention aussagen wird. Ein Arealbonus basiert auf der Akzeptanz eines kollektiven Referenzrahmens, eines gemeinsamen Verständnisses der Identität des Ortes und deren Bewohner. Falls sich diese stark unterscheiden, können die unterschiedlichen Positionen nicht erst im Rahmen eines Bauprozesses verhandelt werden, sondern es bedarf vorgelagerten, offeneren Verfahren, die nicht direkt an die Bauprozesse gebunden sind. Die Folge davon sind Prozessbrüche. Im Beispiel oben produzierte der Weg der Regelbauweise eine andersartige Siedlungsform als im Leitbild gewünscht und von der Stadtbildkommission gefördert. Anmerkung: Auf den Parzellen nebenan konnte das Leitbild aber umgesetzt werden (durch z.B. die Einflussnahme über Landbesitz). In der Summe wird ein heterogenes Siedlungsbild produziert. Etwas, das das Leitbild eigentlich verhindern wollte (Kriterium der Einheitlichkeit und Grossmasstäblichkeit).

Um die Projekte möglichst in diejenigen Foren zu „locken", welche ein hohes Potential für eine fundiertere Qualifikation aufweisen, entscheiden sich die Gemeindeverwaltungen teilweise für ein Anreizsystem, wie z.B. einen Dichtebonus für Arealüberbauungen. Die empirische Untersuchung hat gezeigt, dass dieses Instrument im Kontext von Umlandgemeinden jedoch nicht immer optimal greift. Dichtere Bebauungsformen müssen mit einem entsprechenden Lebensstil der antizipierten zukünftigen Bewohnerschaft korrespondieren, damit sie von den Bauherren angestrebt werden. Wenn ein gemeinsames, behördenübergreifendes Verständnis der Identität des Ortes und deren Bewohner fehlt, dann ist ein Aushandlungsprozess von Bauprojekten in den verbundenen Foren tendenziell anfällig für Konflikte, Brü-

che und Umgehungsstrategien (Abbruch des Verfahrens und Entscheid für Regelbauweise). Um divergierende Positionen, wie z.B. die Vision eines urbanen, von Vorstellungen der traditionellen europäischen Stadt geprägten Zentrums seitens der Gemeindeverwaltung und das angestrebte Wohnungsmarktsegment „ländlich-bürgerlich" eines Projektentwicklers zu überwinden, reichen die erwähnten Foren nicht aus. Es müssen offenere und vorgelagerte Verfahren angewendet werden, die nicht direkt in Bauprozesse münden.

Falten – De-Politisierung

Planung und Politik befinden sich in einem Spannungsfeld. Einmal durch einen politischen Prozess legitimiert, können Festlegungen als stabilisierte und versachlichte Normen in den Prozess der Planung und Entwicklung miteinfliessen. Geht es vermehrt um qualitative anstatt quantitative Fragen, wird es schwieriger Inhalte in Form von Normen festzulegen, vor allem wenn Qualität situativ verstanden wird. Im Gegenteil, werden Inhalte zu stark subjektiven Themen, muss für deren Qualifizierung ein kollektiver Aushandlungsprozess stattfinden. In diesem Aushandlungsprozess können wir Inhalte anhand ihrer Grade der Normierung beziehungsweise anhand ihrer Grade an Umstrittenheit beschreiben (wie einleitend als
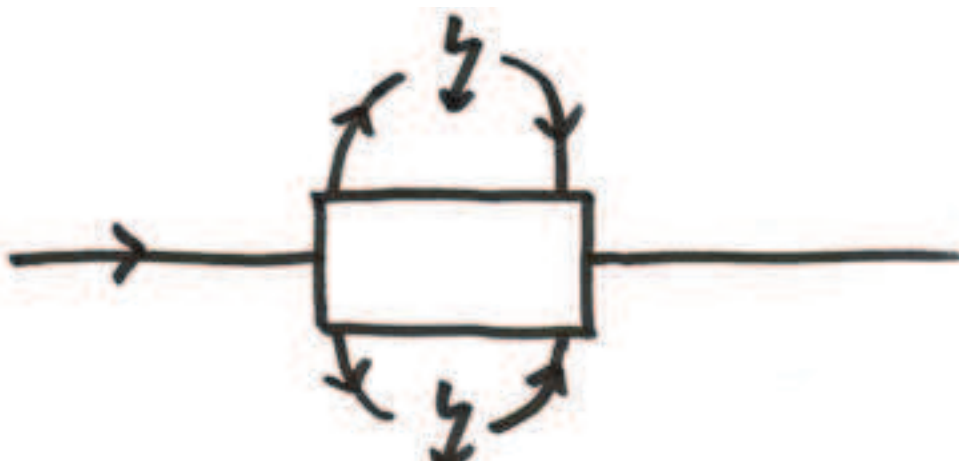

Abbildung 40: De-Politisierung (projektinterne Skizze)

matters of fact und matters of concern bezeichnet). Wenn wir dies über die Aushandlungsprozesse von Qualitätskonzeptionen hinweg beobachten, stellen wir fest, dass gewisse – potentiell umstrittene – Themen bewusst oder unbewusst vermieden oder versachlicht werden. Dies kann sich auf verschiedene Arten in den Prozessdesigns äussern: Beispielsweise werden Partizipationsprozesse teilweise bewusst im Umfeld von technischen Fragen (z.B. im Kontext von Hochwasserschutz oder Verkehr) angesiedelt, so dass die Teilnehmenden sich weniger gut artikulieren können und die Prozesse weniger konfliktreich ablaufen. Zudem werden Entscheidungsgremien, die mit einem hohen Prozessrisiko verbunden sind wie z.B. eine Gemeindeversammlung, tendenziell gemieden (siehe Falte – Verhinderung).

Diese Tendenzen können mit dem Begriff der De-Politisierung aus der angelsächsischen Debatte um Planung und Politik umschrieben werden. (vgl. Metzger, Allmendinger & Oosterlynck, 2014; Loepfe & Van Wezemael, 2014). Diese Debatte fasst Politik oder „das

Politische" jenseits von formalen politischen Arenen, adressiert die transformativen Kräfte und Momente von Planungsprozessen sowie der Kapazität von Inhalten (Issues) Debatten und Kontroversen. Eine mikropolitische und prozessorientierte Sichtweise auf Issues (Loepfe & Van Wezemael, 2014) ermöglicht, bei der Evolution von Issues Grade der Umstrittenheit (vgl. Latour, 2007) und damit die Bewegungen dazwischen als Politisierung oder De-Politisierung zu lesen. De-Politisierung ist der Entzug eines potentiell umstrittenen Inhaltes vor der Logik der Aushandlung.

Eine Tendenz der De-Politisierung ist nicht nur in den oben erwähnten Prozessdesigns, sondern auch innerhalb von Aushandlungsprozessen von urbaner Qualität z.B. in Varianzverfahren von Arealentwicklungen, festzustellen. So wird die Gebäudehöhe als potentiell umstrittener Parameter (in der Bevölkerung) tendenziell früh im Aushandlungsprozess festgelegt, um damit spätere Konflikte zu vermeiden. Weiter konnte beobachtet werden, dass – vorausgesetzt die oft implizit mitschwebende soziale Dimension von urbaner Qualität (z.B. Thema „Identität") wird expliziert, in Expertengremien mit dieser nicht produktiv umgegangen werden kann und die Diskussion auf physisch-morphologische Dimensionen zurückgelenkt wird.

Unsere Einschätzung ist es, dass sich auf lange Sicht hin Strategien der De-Politisierung aus verschiedenen Gründen als nachteilig erweisen könnten:

Erstens, könnte sich die implizite aber allgegenwärtige Debatte um Identität nachteilig auf zukünftige Projekte auswirken, z.B. in dem sich konflikthafte Positionen möglicherweise für die von der öffentlichen Hand geförderten Projekte unvorteilhaft in Entscheidungsforen manifestieren (Einsprachen, Abstimmungen).

Zweitens, wird damit eine breite und fundiertere Qualifizierung von Qualitätsvorstellungen über die physisch-morphologische Dimension hinweg hin zu den Dimensionen „Bedeutung" und „Identität" (siehe Kapitel V/Q-Navigator) verhindert. Das ist nicht nur eine ethische Frage, sondern auch eine städtebauliche Herausforderung. Ein demokratisch inklusiverer Umgang mit urbaner Qualität eröffnet Potentiale für die Herstellung einer identifikationsfähigen bebauten Umwelt, so dass sich Umlandgemeinden von der Stadt-Land-Dichotomie emanzipieren können. Dafür sollte der implizit vorhandene Identitätskonflikt von den Verfahren nicht länger untergeordnet, sondern produktiv angegangen werden. (vgl. Loepfe, 2014)

Falten – Abgrenzung

In Qualifizierungsprozessen offenerer Foren (z.B. Stadtbildkommission, externe Expertisen bei Arealüberbauungen und Sondernutzungsplanungen) stellt der Bezug zur weiteren baulichen und landschaftlichen Umgebung ein wichtiges und robustes Beurteilungskriterium dar. In den untersuchten Fallbeispielen wurde festgestellt, dass die Argumentation in diesen Fällen – aufgrund eines fehlenden genuinen Referenzrahmens – oft einer Logik der Abgrenzung folgt. Damit wird die Schaffung einer neuartigen Qualität legitimiert, wie z.B. einer dichteren Überbauung mit grösseren Grundrissen und einer einheitlichen Gestaltung.

So wird im Kontext von heterogenen Siedlungsmustern in der Beurteilung der Experten häufig vergebens nach einem Orientierungspunkt ausserhalb der begrenzenden Infrastrukturen (Strassen und Schiene) gesucht. An dieser Stelle kann angefügt werden, dass die Experten offenbar nicht über die notwendige Perspektive sowie das Vokabular verfügen, die-
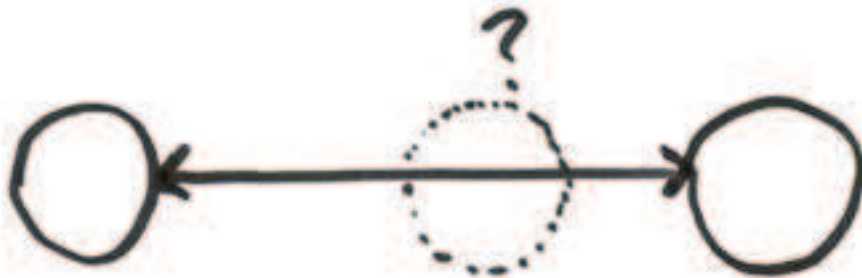
Abbildung 41: Abgrenzung (projektinterne Skizze)

se Strukturen zu lesen. Fehlende Orientierungspunkte werden in der Folge als Legitimation für die Schaffung einer stark kontrastierenden ortsbaulichen Entwicklung verstanden, die sich bewusst gegenüber der Umgebung abheben soll. Hier finden wiederum Referenzen an Fremd- und Idealbilder, wie z.B. Vorstellungen, die sich an der traditionellen europäischen Stadt orientieren (z.B. das Bild eines belebten öffentlichen Raumes) ihren Platz, obwohl sie sich nur schwer in den bestehenden baulichen, sozialen und landschaftlichen Kontext stellen lassen. Das Resultat sind physisch-morphologisch einheitlich gestaltete und grossmassstäbliche Bebauungsformen als Inseln in heterogenen, dörflich anmutenden Strukturen. In Relation zu dieser Heterogenität entsteht eine Einheitlichkeit, die von den Experten positiv beurteilt wird, da sie Orientierung und Ordnung schafft. Durch diese räumliche Entflechtung kann die potentiell konflikthafte Debatte um die Urbanisierung und Identität entschärft werden. Zudem muss die architektonische Herausforderung, hybride Formen und Identitäten jenseits der Pole Stadt oder Land zu bilden, nicht angegangen werden.

„Urbanere" Morphologien werden demnach über eine Argumentation gestärkt, die der Logik der Abgrenzung folgt. Diese basiert auf einer räumlich-morphologischen Sichtweise der Experten und auf einer städtebaulichen Massstabsebene (architektonische Details wie Dachformen oder Materialitäten werden nicht als mögliches Leitprinzip gelesen). Um die Projekte trotzdem im Zusammenhang mit der örtlichen Umgebung zu bringen, stellt sich aus einer place-making Perspektive die Frage, ob das Verständnis von räumlicher Qualität nicht um soziale Dimensionen erweitert werden sollte. Hilfreich könnte zum Beispiel ein Referenzrahmen sein, der sich an den vorgefundenen Qualitäten und Identitäten orientiert (z.B. Heterogenität) und nicht an idealisierten Vorstellungen von Stadt oder Land. Dieser könnte über partizipative Prozesse entstehen, in dem vorhandenen Identitätskonflikte thematisiert werden (siehe Falte – De-Politisierung, vgl. Loepfe, 2014).

Falten – Intervention

Brüche stellen Diskontinuitäten in der Aushandlung von Qualitätsvorstellungen dar und sind meistens unbeabsichtigt. Sie entstehen meistens durch neu hinzukommende Akteure, die in einem bestehenden Prozessverlauf intervenieren. Dadurch werden in der Regel neue Massstäbe und Dimensionen von Qualität hinzugefügt. In diesem Sinne finden

auch hier Prozessöffnungen statt (siehe Falten – Innovation). Interventionen können zu unterschiedlichsten Zeitpunkten im Verlauf von Planungs- und Bauprojekten stattfinden, z.B. bei der Aufgabe der Nutzung eines bestehenden Industriebetriebes, während der Entwicklungsphase von neuer Infrastruktur für eine Quartierentwicklung, bei einer Projektentwicklung vor Baueingabe, nach der Baueingabe, in der Vorprojektphase und während der Reali-
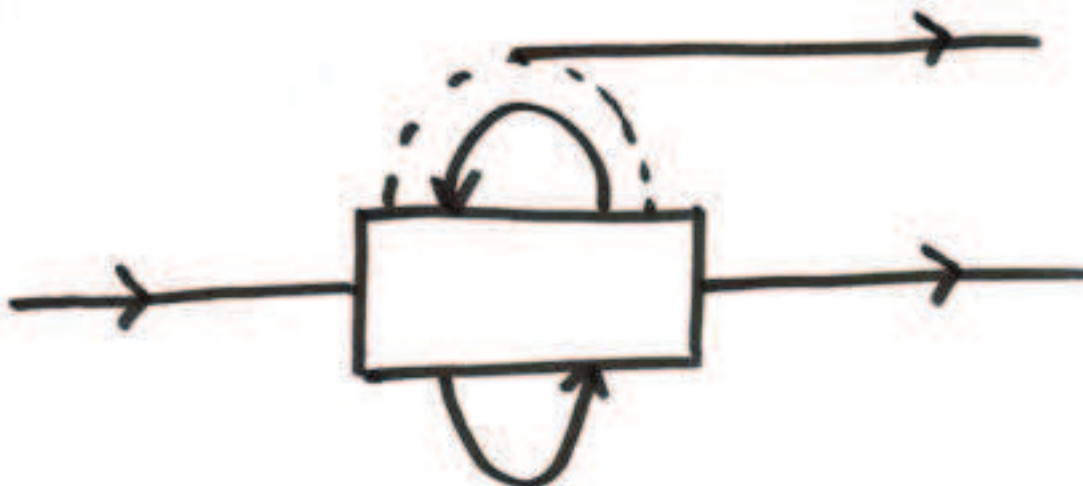

Abbildung 42: Intervention (projektinterne Skizze)

sierungsphase. Sie werden von Seiten der öffentlichen Hand, aber auch von Seiten Privater verursacht. Bei der öffentlichen Hand erweisen sich Allianzen zwischen politischen Entscheidungsträgern und Planenden (z.B. Ortsplanern und Planerinnen, externen Raumplanungsbüros) besonders effektiv.

Häufig basieren Interventionen auf divergierenden Qualitätsvorstellungen auf einer übergeordneten Massstabsebene. Beispielsweise drehen sich die Argumentationen darum, ob ein bestimmter räumlicher Entwurf (die Nutzungsart, die Ausgestaltung einer Strasse oder die Volumetrien eines Projektes) der Identität des Quartiers sowie der gesamten Gemeinde zuträglich ist oder nicht. Trägt das Projekt zur Stärkung des Ortszentrums bei? Entspricht es der Identität der Gemeinde? Fragen der urbanen Qualität verlagern sich somit über ihre rein physisch-morphologischen Ausprägungen hinweg hin zur Dimension der Identität. Diese Praktiken können somit auch als Politisierungsmechanismen gelesen werden (vgl. Falte - De-Politisierung). Sie führen zu einer Politisierung der urbanen Qualität, was jedoch nicht heissen muss, dass diese Fragen über die Expertengremien hinaus in politische Foren getragen werden oder eine öffentliche Debatte darüber stattfindet. Eine aktive Rolle der öffentlichen Hand kann aber auch dazu führen, dass z.B. Investitionen in die Ortsentwicklung getätigt werden, die politisch legitimiert werden müssen. Dies kann dazu beitragen, dass in der öffentlichen Debatte Selbstreflexionsprozesse stattfinden und Sprachbilder, Stories und Images generiert werden, die Einfluss auf zukünftige Planungs- und Bauprozesse nehmen können (vgl. Loepfe, Devecchi & Zweifel, under review).

Interventionen und Brüche können also nicht nur ungewollte Entwicklungen verhindern, sondern auch wichtige Debatten auslösen, die zur Politisierung der Frage der urbanen Qualität und dementsprechend zur Qualifizierung der Dimension der Identität führt. Brüche

– auch als Interventionen von Seiten privater Akteure – sollten konsequenterweise nicht in jedem Fall vermieden oder umgangen werden, sondern im Gegenteil als Potentiale gelesen werden für eine fortlaufende und inklusive Debatte um urbane Qualität, die sich an genuinen Qualitäten orientiert. Teil einer solchen Debatte könnte auch die Hinterfragung von Normen sein, von denen sich „Vorzeigebeispiele" „urbaner" Qualität aktiv befreit haben (z.B. durch die Schaffung von Ausnahmesituationen, wo Verkehrsnormen und Gebäudehöhen flexibler gehandhabt werden). In diesem Sinne wird eine Politisierung (im Sinne der Erhöhung von Debatte und Umstrittenheit, vgl. Loepfe & Van Wezemael, 2014) gewisser Normen praktiziert, ohne dass sich die involvierten Entscheidungsträger aufs politische Parkett wagen.
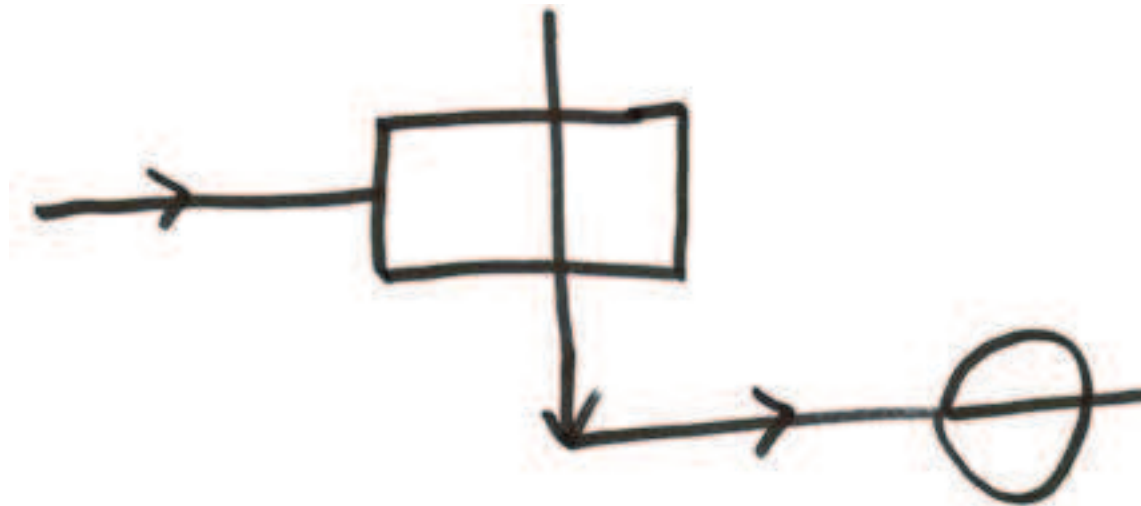
Falten – Innovation

Abbildung 43: Innovation (projektinterne Skizze)

Im Regelfall sind Entwicklungs- und Bauprozesse stark durch Normen und Regeln strukturiert (z.B. Vorgaben in der Nutzungsplanung wie Dichten, Gebäudehöhen und   -abstände oder Lärmschutz- und Verkehrsnormen). In gewissen Situationen werden aber die Freiheitsgrade eines Entscheidungsraumes bewusst geöffnet. Qualifizierungsprozesse können sich so auf andere Massstabsebenen (z.B. Quartier statt Parzelle) sowie andere Qualitätsdimensionen beziehen (z.B. soziale Dimension urbaner Qualität, Verkehrsproblem kann als städtebauliche Aufgabe gelesen werden). Diese Reflexionen können wiederum in die aktuelle räumliche Vorstellung hineinfliessen. Öffnungen können bewusst, z.B. über Varianzverfahren wie Studienaufträge, Testplanungen, Ideen- und Projektwettbewerbe erfolgen, aber auch ungeplant durch Interventionen zustande kommen (siehe Falte – Intervention).

  Prozessöffnungen haben erstens den Vorteil, dass darin eine Palette von verschiedenen Vorschlägen einander gegenüber und in Relation zu abstrakten Grundannahmen gestellt wird. So können nicht nur Entwürfe getestet und qualifiziert, sondern auch Zielvorstellungen präzisiert und revidiert werden. Zweitens wird das Spektrum an Perspektiven erweitert, so dass blinde Flecken erkannt werden und Perspektiven auf „wicked problems" (ein nie voll-

ständig definierbares Problemfeld, vgl. Rittel, 1973) erkundet werden können. Zudem findet eine Qualifizierung tendenziell eher über die verschiedenen Qualitätsdimensionen und Massstabsebenen statt (siehe den Qualitäts-Navigator weiter unten). Schliesslich generieren offene Foren ein Potential für Innovation. Es konnte in der empirischen Untersuchung festgestellt werden, dass offene Foren ein Entstehungsort für skizzenhafte räumliche Vorstellungen sind, die räumlich und thematisch über das bestehende Projekt hinausreichen (vgl. Loepfe, Devecchi & Zweifel, under review) und die Kapazität haben, neue Allianzen zwischen Entscheidungsträgern zu generieren.

Als Beispiel kann ein Fall eines Studienauftrags für ein Bahnhofsgebäude angeführt werden, in dem nicht nur ein Projektvorschlag für ein Gebäude generiert, sondern ein städtebauliches Konzept für ein Gebiet verlangt wurde, das über den Projektperimeter des Objektes hinausgeht. Konkret wurde ein Platz kreiert, der nachher auch als explizites Ziel für die weitere Planung aufgenommen wurde. Zudem wurde damit ein Projekt geschaffen, dass durch seine neuartigen Qualitäten für weitere Akteure (wie z.B. Entwickler), für die Behörden selbst, aber auch für die Bevölkerung der Gemeinde eine inspirierende Wirkung hatte. Auf den visionären Entwurf wurde sodann auch in den zukünftigen Entwicklungen, spezifisch in den Foren der Qualifizierung wie z.B. Baukommissionen, immer wieder Bezug genommen. Obwohl dieser nicht die Form eines behördenverbindlichen Plans aufwies. Im Gegenteil liegt der Vorteil der Form nicht in der Fixierung, sondern in der Konsistenz einer Skizze, die greifbar ist, aber genügend flexibel, dass sie noch verhandelt werden kann. So konnte die abstrakte, kollektiv geteilte Vision des „urbanen" Hotspots sich an das konkrete Vehikel des modernen Bahnhofsgebäudes heften, und sich über ein sich entfaltendes Akteurs-Netzwerk in unterschiedliche andere Situationen übersetzen, ohne dass es schon vordefiniert wurde. Das zirkulierende Konzept konnte sich zudem mit Bildern und Stories anreichern. Offene Foren können demnach als Produktionsstätten von Ressourcen fungieren, die für den Aufbau einer kollektiv getragenen Vision und damit auch für die Etablierung von handlungsfähigen Akteurskonstellationen wichtig sind. Für eine Qualifizierung von Stadtumbaumassnahmen müssen die nötigen Denkräume geschaffen werden, die es erlauben, eine wahrgenommene Aufgabe und die damit verbundenen Ziele neu zu definieren. Somit bezeichnen Prozessöffnungen Momente, in denen Prozesskriterien nicht den Inhalt definieren, sondern eine Umkehr möglich ist: Prozesskriterien, z.B. die Ziele der Planung (Nutzungsplanung) werden dem Inhalt nachgeordnet. Zudem können die in solchen Momenten entstandenen Projekte und Entwürfe eine grosse Wirkung auf die zukünftigen Entwicklungen entfalten und dementsprechend einen wichtigen Teil einer gemeinsamen Vision darstellen.

Die Frage der rein physisch-morphologischen Ausprägung der Qualitätsfrage wird somit um die Dimension der Identität erweitert. Diese Praktiken können auch als Politisierungsmechanismen gelesen werden (vgl. Vignette De-Politisierung). Sie führen zu einer Politisierung der urbanen Qualität, jedoch muss das nicht heissen, dass diese Fragen über die Expertengremien hinaus in politische Foren getragen werden oder eine öffentliche Debatte darüber stattfindet. In diesem Fall hat die Investition ins Bahnhofsgebäude die Gemeindeversammlung ins Spiel gebracht, über die sie legitimiert werden musste. Es wurden u.a. in diesem Forum Stories und Bilder erzeugt, die später auch in anderen Entscheidungsforen zirkulierten: Sprachbilder, die eine visionäre Grundstimmung auf den Punkt brachten, wie

z.B. „das Jahrhundertwerk".

Interventionen und Brüche können nicht nur ungewollte Entwicklungen verhindern, sondern auch wichtige Debatten auslösen, die zur Politisierung der Frage der urbanen Qualität und dementsprechend zur Qualifizierung der Dimension der Identität führt.

Fazit: Städtebauliche Topologien

Prozessdynamiken können modifiziert und somit – teilweise – gesteuert werden, indem Foren gestaltet, Relationen zwischen Akteuren mobilisiert, zeitliche Abfolgen verändert und Planungsmodi kombiniert werden. Dieses in-Beziehung setzen wird als Tätigkeit des Faltens verstanden. Das Falten ist ein kollektives Handeln und nicht durch einen einzelnen Akteur steuerbar. Verhinderungen, De-Politisierung und Abgrenzung weisen auf Prozessmechanismen hin, die sich negativ/kritisch auf eine umfassende Qualifizierung von Siedlungsvorstellungen auswirken. Sie zeichnen ein Bild der Planung und Entwicklung, das durch die Logik der Verfestigung und Kontrolle geprägt ist. Auch ergebnisoffenere Foren mit höheren Freiheitsgraden, wie z.B. Stadtbildkommissionsitzungen, Sondersitzungen oder Sprechstunden werden häufig durch diese Logiken geprägt. Auf der anderen Seite bieten sie aber – wie die empirische Untersuchung zeigt – auch Chancen für die Falten <u>Innovation</u> und <u>Intervention</u>. Diese Topologien stehen für die Eröffnung der Möglichkeit einer fundierteren Qualifizierung von Siedlungslandschaft und der Etablierung von neuen Perspektiven, Wahrnehmungsmuster und Denkweisen. Sie sprechen Prozesse an, die der Logik der Verfestigung und Kontrolle entgegenlaufen und durch eine Logik der Öffnung, der Generierung und Zirkulation von (abstrakten) Bildern und Stories (nicht nur exakte Pläne) und dem Aufbau von neuen Allianzen geprägt ist. Dafür ist die Einführung von offeneren Foren mit höheren Freiheitsgraden zwingend notwendig, aber teilweise aufgrund fehlender Übersetzungsprozesse in die geschlosseneren, formalisierten und oft entscheidungswirksamen Foren nicht hinreichend. Deshalb führt kein Weg an der kontinuierlichen und experimentellen Auseinandersetzung mit urbaner Qualität in verschiedenen Foren vorbei. Ein wichtiger Bestandteil der Etablierung einer derartigen Planungs- und Baukultur ist die inklusive und agnostische Auseinandersetzung mit urbaner Qualität, die Konflikte nicht meidet, sondern aktiv angeht und als eine Ressource für Innovation ansieht. Das erfordert von der Planung einen experimentelleren und flexibleren Umgang mit offenen und geschlossenen Foren und von allen Beteiligten die Akzeptanz einer Ergebnisoffenheit.

In diesem Bild könnten Architektur und Städtebau die Rolle als Entwerfer von greifbaren, stimulierenden und kollektivierungsfähigen Inhalten (kein exakter Plan, sondern Skizze) einnehmen. So könnten sich Architektur und Städtebau aus deren Rolle als nachgelagerter Gestalter befreien und sich zusammen mit der Planung gleichzeitig für verschiedene Beteiligte greifbarer und damit handlungswirksamer machen.

Bruch:
Brüche im Planungsprozess prägen
die Siedlungslandschaft.

Nicht nur unsere Siedlungsland-
schaft, sondern auch Planungs-
prozesse sind durch Brüche und
Übergänge geprägt. Die Vor-
stellungen des zukünftigen Or-
tes können sich in den teils lang-
wierigen Planungsprozessen
stark verändern. Momente, in
denen sich diese unvorherge-
sehen und abrupt ändern, bezeich-
nen wir als Brüche. Was passiert
an diesen Brüchen genau?

Umgesetzte Vorstellungen einer
Stadterweiterung

Gescheiterte Strategieimple-
mentierung

An diesem Beispiel sehen wir,
dass über eine Intervention
des Stadtplaners die Idee einer
Stadterweiterung in einen
(technischen) Quartierplanungs-
prozess eingebracht werden.
Konkret bedeutet dies, dass die
beabsichtigen Elemente der
Quartierstruktur (Verkehr, Lärm-
schutz, Nutzungen) uminter-
pretiert und in einen städtischen
Kontext übersetzt werden müs-
sen. Dies gelingt, in dem die
Spielräume der Verkehrsnormen
ausgereizt werden.

Etwas schwieriger gestaltete
sich die Umsetzung der Idee des
neuen Stadtquartiers in private
Projektentwicklungen. Die Krux:
Die Verhandlung der Qualitäten
wird dabei in ein neues Forum,
die Stadtbildkommission, verla-
gert. Diese bewertet die Einhal-
tung der Leitlinien und kann da-
für einen Ausnützungsbonus als
Anreiz sprechen. Die Verhand-
lungen gestalten sich schwierig.
Der Weg des Ausnützungsbonus'
ist von verschiedenen Unsicher-
heiten wie z.B. unterschiedliche
Bewertungsmassstäben geprägt.
Zu dem kann ein Entwickler
über die Regelbauweise das Fo-
rum auch ganz einfach umge-
hen. Fehlende gemeinsame Vor-
stellungen über die zukünftige
Bewohnerschaft und deren Be-
dürfnisse können deshalb leicht
zu einem Bruch führen: Die Idee
der Stadterweiterung scheitert.
Gebaut werden in diesem Fall
Reihenhäuser mit einem hohen
Anteil an Privaträumen.
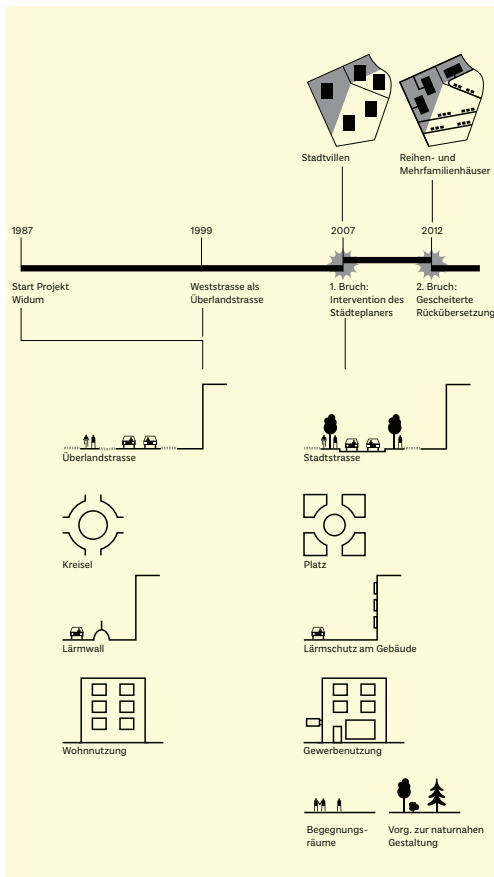
Brüche im Siedlungsgefüge las-
sen sich mit Brüchen in Pla-
nungsprozessen erklären.
Prozessbrüche stellen eine Dis-
kontinuität in der Verhandlung
und Umsetzung von räumlichen
Vorstellungen dar. Sie können
z.B. über Interventionen oder
veränderte Akteurkonstellatio-
nen entstehen. Brüche werden
meistens durch bisher nicht be-
teiligte Akteure ausgelöst.

Abbildung 44: Beispiel einer Vignette aus der Publikation 'Produktion von urbaner Qualität' (in Vorbereitung)

6. Improving Place Qualities: From Striated Control to Smooth Circulation?
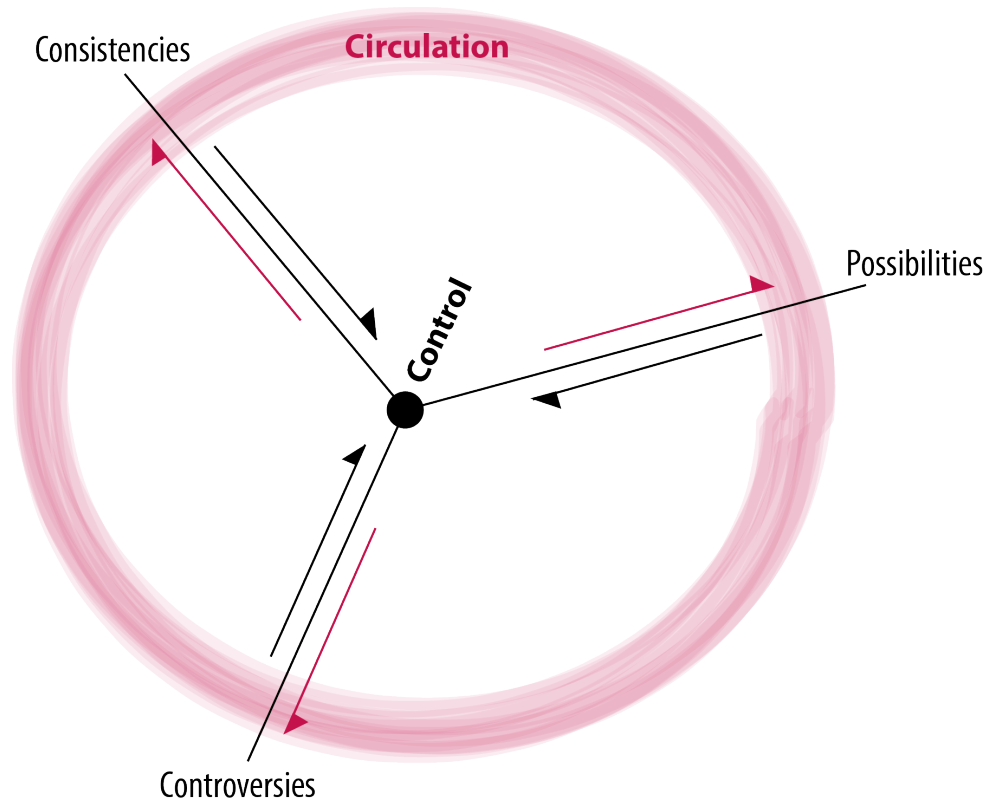

Figure 8: From striated control to smooth circulation?

The present cumulative dissertation took the discrepancy between ideals of the current debate about planning and urban design in Switzerland, like the compact *Historical European City*, and the reality of today's urban settlement, like the sprawled areas in the *Mittelland*, as a starting point for the reflection on urban development processes in Switzerland. The failure of the (often very specific) idea of the city is not the result of ill-defined goals or failed concepts rather it is mainly a lack of understanding of the decision-making process. As a contribution to improving spatial quality in Switzerland, the focus of this dissertation was formulated that urban design research, generating knowledge about those decision-making processes that lead to the current state of urban settlement, should be of concern. As a consequence, this research took a process-oriented qualitative approach to study urban design, thus a *place-making* perspective. In particular, the investigation included the analysis of the fundamental mechanisms in decision-making (research question a, chapter 2.5), the robustness of concepts and criteria of spatial quality (b) and the relationship between content and process (c). In this

chapter the main research results will be summarized and discussed against the background of the goal to improve spatial qualities through interventions in *place-making* and to identify potential to do so (d).

Unstable identities and the lack of genuine concepts of spatial quality

> Due to various workshops and discussions on the development of St. Margrethen, we do know what we do not want in the industrial site (maybe they are just feelings). However, there are no positive findings about which direction the development should be guided. (former mayor of St.Margrethen)

Do you know what you want, do you want what you know or don't you even know what you want? The former mayor of St.Margrethen would have probably asked himself the last of these three questions. This should not be considered as a weak leadership rather such an insight offers an opportunity to enter a collaborative process of reflection, particularly on the goals for local development and spatial quality. Both planners and urban designers can be important dialogue partners and powerful allies in such a process. Consequently, it is not only important to develop sensitivity for such moments and opportunities, but also not to copy paste standard solutions for both process designs and spatial concepts. One of the main findings regarding the robustness of concepts and criteria of spatial quality, then, is the absence of unique, genuine concepts of spatial quality, in particular on the level of areas and the whole municipality. According to the analysis, one important reason for this lies in the systematic de-politication of the issue of spatial quality when it comes to confrontation with its identity dimension (see chapter 5.4; the Q-Navigator), also in such a situation that is sketched above. The lack of references with identificatory power leads to the tendency that actors in surrounding municipalities mobilize prototypical spatial concepts of the village or the city. When there is an opportunity, e.g. a site development with a strong actor constellation, it is an easy move to mobilize a reduced and adapted version of the *Historical European City*, characterized by quasi public spaces that are oriented towards enlarged ground floor commercials topped up with small housing towers. Based on the logic of *Abgrenzung* (see 5.5) the compactness and uniformity have shown to be robust concepts in the decision-making forums of contemporary *place-making* in surrounding municipalities. However, is this what the local authorities really want or do they just want what they know? Are those projects contributing to a place's identity and the identification of people with this place (feeling home)? If interpreting the current trend towards strong protection of agricultural landscape and single monuments as an outcome of decreased identification with newly built environment and disrupted personal and community

identities, the latter question seems of major importance. I have to acknowledge that at this point, this research pushes its limits, as only major stakeholders in today's *place-making* were interviewed, in particular in the urban development projects. Since the opinions of the public did not influence the course of decision-making significantly, they were consequently not systematically collected. Nevertheless, the research results indicate that the local authorities for themselves know, what their municipality represents (what its unique characteristics are), but there is in most cases not an explicit collectivized version of it existing and the spatial consequences are not clear. Consequently, the municipalities' identities are not going to become manifest in the urban development projects. The statement above of the former mayor of St.Margrethen (see paper 5.2.) serves as an illustration for this state of knowledge.

Fragmented landscapes

In chapter 5.4 it has been argued precisely why attempts to make city (*Stadtmachen*) that are characterized by criteria such as homogeneity, coherence, density, strengthening of public spaces, mix of use etc. paradoxically produce a fragmented and heterogeneous built environment. At this point the question can be raised, if not precisely this type of quality, fragmentation, should be part of a new understanding of quality in the surrounding municipalities, in particular since it is produced systematically. Such spaces have their strengths in their uniqueness, density of experience and diversity. These qualities could serve as point of orientation for the development of guidelines that are future-oriented, realistic and address specifically the local situation (and its unique characteristics). Probably they offer also more potential for identification for inhabitants. As already mentioned, such quality concepts do hardly prevail in contemporary *place-making* and consequently are not robust enough, since they have been – inter alia – not qualified through an inclusive debate about spatial quality (including the population). As a result, fragmented landscapes, as they are produced anyway, could be an entry point for the generation of a genuine quality concept which is lacking. Fragmentation could also serve as an opportunity to include the "different" and to address the locally grown structures in order to improve the qualities of such spaces. In this sense, disruption in the current built environment can be viewed as a perspective for improving spatial quality rather than a failure (see 5.4).

The logic of control as major pitfall in contemporary *place-making* settings

In chapters 5.1 to 5.3 fundamental mechanisms of decision-making in urban development projects were identified and discussed separately. In a combined and practice-oriented manner the process mechanisms and their implications for the built environment have also been

discussed in chapter 5.4., however, the tendencies will be briefly summed up in the following section.

The first tendency concerns the mechanisms of opening-up and closure. The empirical results have shown that decision-making arenas with a high degree of freedom (open forums) are normally not present. If introduced, open forums offer the opportunity for the discussion of spatial quality criteria that go beyond the object-oriented and physical-morphological dimension. However, the study of open forums has shown, that also these arenas that are meant for opening-up are characterized by a strong tendency towards closure, meaning the selection of possibilities and the stabilization of actor relationships (whereas the creative moment lies in the opposite, the opening-up, see below). The pitfall here is not the act of closure per se, which obviously is mandatory for implementation and realization. However, we should be critical about doing it in an unreflective manner or about systematically reducing the complexity to the disadvantage of a certain dimension of spatial quality, like identity. The empirical results show that functional criteria, like traffic norms as well as use of mixity, and process-oriented criteria, like "upward compatibility" and the ability to divide the process in phases remain robust during processes of closure and are therefore dominant. The process mechanism that is referred to as the *fold* of prevention (*Falte Verhinderung*) in chapter 5.5 can be also related to this first category of process dynamics, as it is based on a strong robustness of process criteria such as the singularity of reducing the uncertainties in urban development projects. Regular construction can be seen as a fall-back position for (risky) negotiation of spatial qualities in open forums.

The second tendency refers to the mechanisms of politication and de-politication. The empirical results have shown that decision-making in urban development projects is shaped by tendencies for de-politication[34]. Obviously the *fold* of de-politication (*Falte De-Politisierung*, Chapter 5.5) addresses also this tendency. Issues of spatial quality (What is quality? How can we define good quality?) in practice are addressed in the rational scientific tradition of thought, although experts acknowledge that there are different meanings and opinions. Consequently, a communicative rationale is present, although the expert is still seen to have greater knowledge and competence. In addition, remarks from planning consultants, like the proposition to solve the problem of density by adding one floor on every building of the municipality's settlement, support the hypothesis that a relational understanding of spatial quality is not prevalent in current planning and urban design practice. The protection of such expert systems, its rational-

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[34] Note that the term politication and in particular the term "the political" is not understood in a "revolutionary" and antagonistic sense like Oosterlynck & Swyngedouw (2010). Rather I am promoting a more sensitive understanding, namely the micropolitical, as I have discussed in detail in chapter 5.2.

objective mode of thinking, in particular the tendencies to objectify quality in order to make it measurable are the basis of an excluding debate that is unable to trigger a productive discussion in the local communities. However, as it have been shown in chapter 5.4, de-politication should be also seen as a mean to be capable to act during the difficult task of evaluating and pushing urban development in surrounding municipalities forward at the same time. In some municipalities local authorities are glad to even have found a potent investor that is motivated to invest in their municipality. Finally, the empirical research has shown that urban development projects are productive to bring questions of identity to the foreground. However, they could not be answered in the context of the current process designs. Consequently, such questions should be transferred to other forums that could be initiated at such moments.

The third tendency refers to the mechanism of loosing or gaining abstraction/consistency. As I have argued in chapters 5.3 and 5.4 local authorities and planners tend to differentiate and fix spatial qualities. This tendency became manifest in the most clearly way in the case studies in Wetzikon. In Wetzikon identities were not negotiated, rather the process of formulating a vision focussed on the consolidation of a classical concept of urbanity, created well differentiated quality goals, however left the developers and investors out of the game. Consequently, the implementation of the *Leitbild* was challenged by other identities of future inhabitants, like the ones labelled by "middle-class" or "bourgeois" that were expected from part of the investors as target group in the housing sector. In the negotiation of already quite specific projects in the urban design commission, it was too late for any adaption of the fixed quality criteria that are based on diverging identities. The *fold* of demarcation (*Falte Abgrenzung*, see chapter 5.5) can also be seen as related to the tendency for fixation, as it demonstrates the lacking flexibility of the robust concepts of classical urbanity to make sense of to the often heterogeneous urban fabric in surrounding municipalities. However, this must also be understood on the basis of a non-existing genuine spatial quality concept. Both – the tendency to fix quality goals and the lack of local individual concepts – make the conclusion in *place-making* settings facile that in bigger site developments nothing has to be referred to from the local urban fabric except traffic infrastructure (as there is nothing "worthfully" to be referred to, according to the experts). Instead, it is often seen as an opportunity for an urbanistic statement that is oriented towards classical concepts of urban quality.

Overall, these three main tendencies all follow a common mechanism: they are undermined by the logic of control. Speaking in the terms of *Assemblage Thinking* these process tend to fix a point in the possibility space of decision-making and therefore are stratifying decision-making forums (see Figure 8). Having identified the abstract mechanisms, its tendencies and its underlying logic, we are able to go back to the initial research questions and the triad of process, form and content: Despite that *process*, *form* and *content* always each play its role in

collective decision-making in urban development, on the basis of the research results it can be hypothesized that the fundamental mechanisms that come with the establishment of a processes (and their design) are more dominant than the content, the concepts of spatial quality. Evidence is given by the singularity of reducing uncertainties, de-politication mechanisms and the tendency for fixation of concepts of spatial qualities that I have found in diverse forum of *place-making*. In addition, process criteria, like "upward compatibility" and the ability to divide the process in phases, become even stronger in situations with high resource interdependencies and a great number of actors like in situations of transformation of the existing urban fabric. Nevertheless, there are also exceptions, in which the content, meaning specific (new) ideas and concepts of places lead to a re-ordering of the process and the adjustment of process-designs. These moments will be addressed in the remaining sections of this chapter.

Perspectives: Chances for innovation and the logic of circulation

Based on these empirical results, the hypothesis will be proposed that innovation is generated precisely in the converse movements to the mentioned fixation of a point (pitfall) on the axis of the identified process mechanisms (see Figure 8). In particular, new ideas and concepts for places emerge, when possibilities are explored, the controversies intensified through a broader debate and concrete, materialized ideas are tested against abstract and fluid concepts. The observed procedures can accomplish this partly (e.g. competition based instruments), however, due to the mentioned tendencies they do it not consequently enough. One measure that could be consequently derived from this analysis is the establishment of more open forums that are able to promote an inclusive debate about different quality concepts and dimensions. However, in relation to small and middle-sized municipalities it must be said that the lean procedures (in contrast to e.g. costly test planning procedures) are missing that do not overstrain their often scarce financial and personal resources. The empirical results indicate that potential for spatial quality is not only generated by intended procedures but also by interventions. In the remaining parts of this chapter, the creative potentials of such disruptions will be illuminated in order to sketch a planning philosophy that emphasizes the aforementioned reversed movements towards possibilities, controversies and consistencies, which I name *logic of circulation*.

Viewed in the light of the proposed *logic of circulation*, disruptions of decision-making processes (see chapters 5.2 and 5.4; e.g. through interventions of absent actors up to this moment) are not only challenges in relation to process stability, but also they can be seen as potential for innovations (see also *folds* innovation and intervention (*Falten Innovation und*

Intervention, chapter 5.5)). As an empirical example, an intervention from an investor in the end phase of an urban development project seemed to be annoying for the local planners, on the other side it opened up the potential to qualify the identity dimension of spatial quality. In particular, the investor brought the question to the foreground if the "urban morphology" is compatible with the rural identity of the village, consequently triggered a debate about the identity dimension of spatial quality. The generation of new perspectives and concepts of quality can also be productive for the involvement of new actors. This could be private investors as crucial realizing stakeholders, but also the public as important voice in the debate about the identity dimension of spatial quality and therefore creative resource to tackle the lacking local frame of reference for urban development. Like in Visp, a visioning process can have its origin in such events that increase the concern and identification with urban development processes (e.g. the votes in the municipal assembly). In such cases, projects have the potential to initiate a visioning process.

Let us reflect on the creative potential of disruptions in more detail. The development of a cross-table in order to gain an overview about an issue serves as a simple but plausible illustration for the creative potential of disruptions and their innovative mechanisms. These activities can be regarded as both continuous break open of old structures and thus order logics, introducing new contents and order the contents in new ways: introducing a new column, thinking about the content of the newly created cells, re-considering the title of the column, changing the order of columns, evaluating the relevance of old columns and their removal etc. Each disruption involves a creative, but simultaneously insecure moment. Through this simple example also intended interventions and non-intended disruptions in *place-making* could be comprehended. In both cases a disruption generates both uncertainty and tension that could be used as an opportunity for exploration of possibilities and its reflection, before settling the issues and relationships in order to get organized again. However, the risk exists that the exploration phase is dismissed and there is a closure without reflection, in order to reduce uncertainties. A planning philosophy that follows the *logic of circulation* should not be misunderstood as desperately attempt to question issues fundamentally and always, but as celebration of the creative potential that lies in disruptions and the joy of testing out ideas. Also in the simple example of the cross-table it becomes clear that objectives/categories and products/contents are developed in a co-evolutionary way, meaning that the goal dimensions are changed continuously due to new insights (e.g. column titles). The process of trial and error creates recognition and knowledge about the logic of the issue at stake. The experience of knowledge and creativity, as an alternation of clarity and confusion, does not follow any logic of utilization. This "spirit" could be used as a resource and process-stabilizing factor for decision-

making in urban development. In this sense, a participation in the knowledge that was gained should be promoted (collective learning).

Certain requirements must be met to treat disruptions as moments of creativity:

The first requirement concerns the flexibility of goals and means. A move into exploration of possibilities, an intensification of controversies and the reconciliation of abstract quality conceptions (such as initially formulated goals) require that process designs could be fundamentally adapted or even abandoned in order to start a new process. In other words: the chance should be given that *content* restructures the *process*. This sometimes happens in today's planning practice, e.g. in competition briefs that allow framework conditions like the amount and arrangement of uses that is required for a specific site to be adapted if there is a better urban design solution to be found.

Second, adequate consistencies of spatial concepts are needed as frame of reference in such moments of uncertainty, otherwise a "quick closure" is probable. As chapter 5.3 shows, this requirement leads us to other arenas than those of planning, such as the communal assembly. Stories and images have to be proven to be capable of both letting concepts of place "travel" through diverse decision-making areas and to generate new actor constellations. In Visp, in the absence of any master planning a concept of quality emerged that was vague (a future urban place, expressed in material and thus graspable elements, such as the building of the train station and charged with affective notions) but nevertheless formed a reference for different urban development projects. Further, thanks to its flexibility it was still negotiable during implementation processes, consequently it could be enriched by different forms and manifested itself in different physical-spatial forms.

7. Conclusion

The issue of spatial quality must become political if an identificatory built environment is still a relevant objective of *Stadt machen* (or less normative: *place-making*) in surrounding municipalities. It is often overlooked that the claim for *Stadt machen* involves not only a physical-morphological transformation rather it is a far-reaching question that significantly challenges mental landscapes. Spatial quality is embedded in subjective, personal values and, as such, must be negotiated inclusively and democratically without looking for ready-made templates. Urban design is not a purely aesthetic nor a technical issue, but predominantly a question of social discourse and learning and therefore moves the organization of such processes into center stage. The results of the present study indicate that the process of the debate about spatial quality is in part significantly fragmented, meaning that it could not be achieved that different, sometimes opposite, positions of spatial quality are set into a productive relationship, e.g. romantic concepts of the *Historical European City* and the heterogeneity of peri- und suburban realities, or the call for uniformity and the identification with buildings under monument protection. Both positions should be politicized and negotiated because there is a lack of collectively accepted references of cultural capital that could be connected with and that go beyond traditional images, such as medieval city cores or objects under monument protection. However, the term "political" should not be confused with the formal arenas and procedures of politics, rather the term is used in the sense of a critical culture of discussion that goes beyond expert systems and the arenas occupied by politicians.

A relational understanding of spatial quality means that spatial quality is always dependent on its context (see Burckhardt's chapel, Figure 3) and that concepts of spatial quality must be embedded in actor constellations and decision-making processes. In addition, a political view of spatial quality implies that concepts of spatial quality only qualify by being debated. The present cumulative dissertation investigates the dynamics of *place-making* and maps out the predominant mechanisms and tendencies. Current *place-making* is shaped by a functional and rational tradition of thought that systematically prevents agonistic politicization, and consequently the qualification of local identity. Potential for innovation and both the activation of the actor-networks that are capable of acting in *place-making* is given when public authorities and planners deliberate on their demand for control and move beyond its mechanisms. With the *logic of circulation* I sketched out a planning ethos and a mode of decision-making that is characterized by experimentation, with the emphasis on testing and the celebration of the creative act of exploration.

What consequences does the notion *logic of circulation* have for *place-making*? Five major concerns are:

1) Process designs should allow the establishment of innovative decision-making forums that generate new ideas and spatial concepts that are able to create agency across planning and urban design disciplines, in particular in the real estate sector and the public discourse. In this sense, existing planning norms should not be questioned in general but the opportunity should be given for stakeholders to think in decision-making environments that are not obstructed by norms and are not followed by direct economic and constructional utilization. In particular, process designs should allow the assembly of different perspectives and to test ideas against specific situations without having the pressure for closure, in particular, the selection of a specific solution. The result of such processes is not solutions, but more refined questions and perspectives that allow thinking spatial development differently. A powerful example of an innovative decision-making forum that achieved a fundamental change in perspectives can be found in the metropolitan region of Paris. In this case, the Parisian ring highway loop, the "boulevard péripherique" was re-coded into "boulevard central" that in turn changed the ways how the stakeholders see opportunities and consequently shape and make places (see Eisinger & Seifert, 2012). Finally, such "islands of free thought" should be initiated flexibly, for example when in the decision-making forum of an urban development project questions come to the foreground that an expert system cannot answer.

2) *Place-making* practice should go beyond instrumental thinking logic. Using instrumental logic is delicate for several reasons: First, it presumes that there is an actor capable of selecting and implementing planning instruments (misconception of power). Second, most of the instruments presume that there is already a problem, while there are cases in which the problem is not even known (misconception of knowledge). Third, "success" is often independent from the instruments used and instruments are often a bad indicator of quality, rather there are processes that cut across planning instruments. Spatial quality is dependent on process mechanisms: such as opening-up and closure, politicization and de-politicization and gaining and losing consistency, and the folds of prevention, demarcation, intervention and innovation. Planning instruments should be considered on this basis. Moreover, the pre-phase of instrumental planning procedure seems to be crucial in order to be capable of creating collective agency. Here, research is needed to develop tools to initiate debates and create concernment in order to set process designs that still allow "islands of free thought".

3) Planners and local authorities should free themselves from the *logic of control*, when there is no authority to dispose. In situations of open forums with flattened hierarchies that are shaped by markets, hierarchies and communicative logic, both from a public administration's and a private actor's perspective, it seems to be important to know how to steer without controlling. This means knowing the legal room for maneuvering, the power relationships, the interests of market players and their agendas, sometimes hidden, having sensibility for opportunities as well as an awareness of the aims, where to go with the spatial quality of the municipality. Moreover, it could be productive to think about spatial development more consequently from the perspective of actors and non-spatial problems (such as image issues, social cohesion, subcultures) instead of using physical-spatial settings and problems as entry points. In particular, this involves the focus on generating capacities for action (identification of actors that have the resources) and to produce spatial concepts that are more than just a set of guidelines that are meant for control. Instead, more fluid concepts like stories and images that are less controlling, but have the potential to travel beyond planning arenas could be of interest. As a result we as urbanists should learn to let something emerge, that we are not under complete control of.

4) In regard to modes of expression and fluid concepts, architects have a great wealth of experience. In the *logic of circulation*, the role of architects could be more like that of a generator of spatial concepts with discursive value who are able to stimulate discussions in open forums. In this sense, architects could free themselves from the role as a second order designer, thus as a fulfiller of predefined parameters. In the *logic of circulation*, precise quality concepts make a point in the first place in the sense that they form a productive resource for a reflection on space. These ideas do not have to be directly utilized for construction. In this sense, the payment system of current planning instruments should be re-thought against the background of finding the most valuable resource for the generation of innovative perspectives to move a process forward rather than to find a realistic solution. Furthermore, the architect could play an important role in making implicit spatial concepts explicit and negotiable, which would in turn be the basis for the establishment of an inclusive culture of planning and construction. Therefore, architects should dare to participate in open forums and should also be able to communicate to lay people.

5) The breakdown of modernism has dethroned both the planner and the architect. The planner seems to have found his role as a navigator, catalyst or moderator of decision-making processes, although the modernistic type of thinking, the *logic of control*, is still manifest and poses its problems. In a *logic of circulation*, the planner is needed to provide open (pre-instrumental) forums for thinking, that could be initiated by clear and probably provocative (probably non-spatial) ideas that e.g. address the often hidden identity dimension of spatial quality like image problems of municipalities, and by appropriate framings that enable actors to change roles and think outside daily practices. Moreover, planners could be partners in the creative process of disruption-resettling. On the other side, architects and urban designers have to emancipate themselves from second order designers on the level of objects. The role sketched out above would not only lead to a potential for architecture and urban design as a field itself, but also to rejoin the, seemingly, separated field of planning more explicitly. Urban design (theory) as a discourse that is disconnected with *place-making* practice needs planning as a process manager to make a difference again. And planning needs architecture as generator of fluid and comprehendible ideas. Let us unfold the full potential of this intimate, but complicated relationship.

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Appendix

Curriculum vitae

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Personal Data

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Academic Titles

2008	MSc in Human and Economic Geography
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2009-2010	Regionalplanung Zürich und Umgebung, RZU
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Ehrenwörtliche Erklärung

Ich erkläre hiermit ehrenwörtlich, dass ich meine Dissertation mit dem Titel „The Invisible Processes of Urban Design – A Qualitative Investigation into the Dynamics of Collective Decision-Making in Urban Development and their Potential for Spatial Quality" selbstständig und ohne unerlaubte Hilfe verfasst habe.

Freiburg, den 01.04.2014

Matthias Loepfe