IUC WORKING PAPER SERIES

INTER UNIVERSITY CENTRE DUBROVNIK

Reference Number: 2024/02/ACH

Exploring the Social Space in Theory and Practice

Sebastian Wendland and Leila Rudzki

Domain: Behavioural studies, Society and Religion; Law, Economics, Politics and Governance; Earth and Sustainability; Mathematics, Science and Technology; Health and Life Sciences; Media, Arts, Culture and History; Languages and Communication; Philosophy and Philosophy of Science.

IUC course/conference: „Erzählung des Sozialen“/ „Tales of the Social“ 2024

Category: Arts, Culture and History

Submitted: 4 September 2024

Date of publication: 12 November 2024

DOI: https://doi.org/10.53099/ntkd4312

ISSN: 2787-5717

Inter-University Centre for Advanced Studies (IUC)

E-mail: iuc@iuc.hr / web site: https://www.iuc.hr/

Don Frana Bulića 4, 20000 Dubrovnik, CROATIA

Tel: 00 385 (0)20 413 626

IUC Working Paper Series

The IUC Working Papers aim to generate interest for and debate on the ideas and research outcomes presented at IUC-activities. The IUC Working Papers is an inclusive platform for sharing the output of IUC courses, conferences and research meetings. The papers can vary along the whole range of disciplines and subjects addressed in these IUC-activities. Only participants in IUC-activities are eligible to submit and publish papers -or later versions of papers- that were presented during an IUC-activity.

Authors:

Sebastian Wendland is a research assistant in the project "Coherence in Teacher Education", located at the Chair of „Didactics of Visual Communication“ in the Faculty of Design and Art at the Bergische Universität Wuppertal. He leads the seminar model of the Design Thinking Studio and is doing his doctorate on the topic of "Design Thinking in vocational education and consequences for teacher training" in the vocational subjects of media design and design technology and colour technology/spatial design/surface technology.

Leila Rudzki is an urban design expert with a passion for vibrant urban spaces. With a B.A. in Product Design (Hochschule Niederrhein - University of Applied Sciences, 2017) and an M.A. in Public Interest Design (University of Wuppertal, 2022), she investigates the interface between urban design and human well-being. In Viersen's urban development (2020-2022), she focussed on creative solutions for vibrant living spaces. Since 2022, Leila Rudzki has been working at the Chair of Didactics of Visual Communication at the University of Wuppertal, researching the interaction between urban design, perception and well-being.

Author's details:

Sebastian Wendland, Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Gaußstr. 20, 42119, wendland@uni-wuppertal.de, Tel.: +49 17620186775

Leila Rudzki, University of Wuppertal, Gaußstr. 20, 42119, rudzki@uni-wuppertal.de
Tel.: +49 15784197001

Exploring the Social Space in Theory and Practice

Sebastian Wendland and Leila Rudzki

Research Assistants, University of Wuppertal

Abstract

In an essay, the authors of the University of Wuppertal want to devote themselves to the theory and practical methodology of "exploring and researching social space" in the context of socially just urban planning and, in doing so, first present positions of historical and contemporary urban planning and architectural criticism (such as from the Charter of Athens (cf. source year), urban planning concepts by Robert Moses as well as by Jane Jacobs and Jan Gehl) and set them against each other against the background of the consideration of researching social space. Furthermore, the essay can present practical examples from the methodology of social space research as applied in the exam project of Leila Rudzki in the course of study "Public Interest Design" and reflect on them against the background of the previously named parameters of socially just urban development.
In addition to the above-mentioned thesis, the text contribution is based on a 60-minute lecture by the authors on the same topic, which was presented at the Convention „Narrative of the social" on 29.05. to 02.06.23 at the IUC under the direction of Prof. Dr. Heinz Sünker (University Wuppertal, Germany) and Prof. Dr. Goran Gretić (University of Zagreb, Croatia). The lecture expanded the plenary of the Convention, which was largely dedicated to the thematic stand of the "social" from the perspective of epistemological and critical theory, to include a design and planning-conceptual perspective, disciplines that represent the essential reference sciences of the study programme "Public Interest Design".

Key words: architecture critics; design of public spaces; public interest design

1. Introduction

In this essay, the authors address the human-centred revitalisation of inner-city living environments, taking into account perspectives and methodologies for urban planning in general, as well as for the opening and exploration of public social spaces in detail. At the centre of the article are excerpts from a research project that investigates the rule-based and integrative redesign of a residential and working quarter in Viersen on the Lower Rhine (North Rhine-Westphalia/Germany) with regard to inner-city functions.

The basic features of the design task are based on the design ideals of urban planner and architecture critic Jane Jacobs and the regularity of the "human scale", which goes back to the Danish urban planner and architect Jan Gehl. At this point, Jacobs and Gehl stand for representatives of humane urban planning and differentiate their "ideology" from functional and modern urban design, which is particularly and in this case also exemplified by one of their "fathers and masterminds" such as Le Corbusier as well as by the radical representative Robert Moses (as Jacobs' opponent).

Accordingly, the urban planning premises of the representatives of modern functionalism and their exemplary design paradigms in the person of Le Corbusier will be presented first. Consequently, with Robert Moses' urban planning based on car traffic and functional separation, the main antagonist in Jane Jacobs' biography can be shown to be a counterweight to humane urban planning. The subversive counter-positions and writings of the author and architecture critic Jane Jacobs and the Danish urban planner Jan Gehl can then be used as examples to counter the claim of functional urban planning.

Following various positions from historical urban planning and architectural criticism, which deal with the question of what social urban design can look like and how the design of public space in large cities can function in a humane way, concrete application references will be examined. To this end, excerpts from Leila Rudzki's final thesis will show which techniques and methods (leading back to Gehl) can be used to achieve socially just transformations in the public space of the town of Viersen in the Lower Rhine region.

> By presenting historical perspectives and contemporary and methodologically sound real urban planning projects, the essay aims to make a contribution to the current discourse on pedestrian-friendly cities and socially just, people-centred neighborhood design. It is also intended to highlight the relationship between the demands of functional and, in parts, "unfriendly" urban design, as defined in particular in the 1920s and 30s by protagonists such as Robert Moses and architectural greats such as Le Corbusier, and the living needs of the present within established neighborhoods, and to formulate recommendations for the design of urban districts.

The essay is based on the lecture of the same name on the same topic, which the authors presented at the IUC Congress "Narratives of the Social in the Philosophy, Pedagogy, Sociology

and Art". In terms of content and methodology, the lecture at the IUC, this essay and the design project by Leila Rudzki discussed in it can be assigned to the young "Public Interest Design" course at the University of Wuppertal, which (to put it in general terms) deals with the human-centred and participatory design of public space constructions and expands classic design objects to include aspects of the related sciences of architecture and building culture, social sciences and sociology.

2. Creating the social space - historical positions and the way to revive urban social spaces

The chapter (following these paragraphs) presents excerpts from Leila Rudzki's final project, which deals with the research and design of public spaces in the inner-city context of the Lower Rhine town of Viersen. Design decisions are essentially based on the way of thinking of Jane Jacobs (1916 - 2006), who, with her understanding of a diverse city resembling an organism, also inspired the Danish urban planner Jahn Gehl, to whom the instruments for researching the social space in Leila Rudzki's project, which are based on quantitative methods of social research, can be traced back.

In order to understand Jane Jacob's way of thinking, most of which she published in her work "The Death and Life of Great American Cities" (1961), it is worth taking a look not only at Jacob's viewpoint or that of her antagonist Robert Moses (1888 - 1981) himself, but also at exemplary positions in urban planning, which had already been developed in the first decades of the 20th century. These were initiated by prominent representatives such as Le Corbusier (mentioned here), the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) and the Athens Charter.

Starting from the (stylistic-) age of modernism, which manifested itself since the end of the First World War in architectural movements such as functionalism, expressionism and brutalism, among others, contemporaries finally left the historicist understanding of style and the ornamentation of the art noveau behind and developed into the internationalist "state of the art" of architectural design and urban planning. In the spirit of US-American serial construction and the international understanding of architecture as a "mass consumer good" (Delitz, 2010), which grew out of the "social crisis" and the prevailing housing shortage, contemporaries formulated the premise of producing living space that is functional and representative of the transformational character of a modern and contemporary society (ibid.).

As an introduction to the following text passages, it should be noted that the sections on the type of planning by Le Corbusier and Robert Moses in particular illustrate the way in which and the ideals according to which our living environment was planned - the world in which we still live today.

2.1 Le Corbusier, the Cité Radieuse and the Athens Charter

The Swiss-French architect, architectural theorist and urban planner Le Corbusier (1887-1965) is one of, if not the most prominent representative of functional urban design in the modern era. In the 1920s, Le Corbusier developed the utopian concept of a city characterised by the emphasis on vertical construction, i.e. the emphasis on residential towers (so called unité d'habitation ("living machines"). The vision of the so-called "Cité Radieuse" was to create living spaces for the masses of people in large cities and to connect the urban areas, which were separated according to function, by motorways. The automobile as a means of transport worthy of the future played a central role in Le Corbusier's designs. One realisation of the Cité Radieuse that (partially) corresponded to the vision took place at the end of the 1940s with the construction of a residential unit in Marseille (Jenkins & Le Corbusier, 1993). Le Corbusier's avant-garde ideas on urban planning were set out in the so-called Athens Charter in 1933. In an analytical presentation, representatives of the avant-garde under the leadership of Le Corbusier manifested their ideology of urban planning, which propagated the overcrowding of city centers and the separation of districts according to their function. The intention of the Charter can certainly be described as socially orientated in view of the living conditions in the major cities of the 1930s. The representatives not only demanded the fair distribution of living space, but also the separation of industrial facilities and residential neighborhoods as well as the planning of green spaces (Le Corbusier, 1962; Bosmann, 1993).

2.2 Robert Moses and long-distance urban design

Robert Moses, strongly influenced by Le Corbusier's functional urban planning, is considered one of the most influential personalities in the field of US urban planning in the 20th century. As the unrestricted "Rebuilder of New York" (Jakobs, 1961 p. 76) of New York City, he had a decisive influence on the urban development and infrastructure of the state of New York.
Moses' work spanned several decades, and his building projects were controversial because he often pushed them forward at the expense of communities, established neighborhoods and natural spaces. His plans included the demolition of large residential buildings and several historic neighborhoods to make way for new developments and new traffic route. Under Moses' leadership, the idea of new, orderly housing estates with a lower residential density characterized the ideal image of the city. As a result, land redevelopment was encouraged in problematic neighborhoods and slums were eliminated, but this was accompanied by the destruction of the organic structures of the residents and neighborhoods (cf. Jacobs, 1961, p. 20).

The dimensions of Moses' buildings were primarily for the purpose of representation. Jason Haber, professor of urban planning, explains in the Bavarian Radio podcast that most of the

motorways and streets that characterize today's New York were built during Moses' tenure (cf. Jason Haber, Manuscript: The urban planner Robert Moses). According to Caro, Moses not only modeled a place from above on the drawing board, but also physically adopted this perspective. He often flew over New York by airplane to get an impression of the city and generate inspiration for his building projects. (cf. Caro, 1975, S. 301-304). Accordingly, the visions of New York's urban renewal arose from the mind of an urban planner whose perception and the resulting construction measures were determined from a distance.

2.3 Jane Jacobs - Cities for People

The most important critic of Robert Moses, both from today's perspective and with regard to the methodological foundation of humane urban planning, is the Canadian architecture critic Jane Jacobs, who was born in the USA. With her essay "The Death and Life of Great American Cities" from 1961, Jacobs initiated a wave of protest against Moses and his plans to restructure New York's established neighborhoods. "The Death and Life of Great American Cities" reflects Jacob's anti-attitude towards what she herself calls "conventional" urban planning, which she also describes as the "pseudoscience of city rebuilding" (Jacobs, 1961, p. 13). At its core, Jacobs' work is an appeal to the consequences of the transformation of cities by modern planners and architects and in favor of the awareness of a “multiplicity" that distinguishes the grown urban districts such as Greenwich Village in their complexity. The architectural critic was an advocate of a radical change in the methods of modern urban planning in America and played a major role in rehabilitating the design of a diverse city.

2.3.1 The city of Jane Jacobs - the city as a social structure

Jacob's indictment was primarily a protest against the urban development policy of New York's chief planner Robert Moses and the accompanying model of the city divided into functions. Jacobs saw the separation of functions as particularly negative, as it disrupted the everyday lives of people living and working in these areas (cf. Jacobs, 1961, p.136). She also labeled Le Corbusier's approach as "anti-city planning" (Jacobs, 1961, p. 21) and accused him of promoting an urban development in which the goal of "maximum individual freedom" meant that responsibility from person to person was lost. According to Jacobs, Le Corbusier's planning was concerned on the one hand with landscape architecture, and on the other hand he planned his social utopia from his artistic creative process (cf. Jacobs, 1961, p.22).

In contrast to Moses, it was essential for Jacobs to view the city at eye level. For her, it was important that cities ensure the presence of people who can move around the streets according to different daily schedules and for different purposes and make use of different services (cf. Jacobs, 1961, p. 155). According to Jacobs, life in a city can be organized in a variety of ways if there are many paths along which different opportunities are generated to come together, meet and interact (cf. Jacobs, 1961, p.86).

The following three descriptions "city from within", "city as organism" and "city as laboratory" symbolize her way of thinking about urban design in the form of essential starting points for the humane design of grown neighborhoods and thus form an essential basis for the design in Leila Rudzki's development project.

a) City from within

The description of the "city from within" manifests itself less in the assessment of purely physical urban development, but much more in the critical examination of the principles of rational planning at the time, which turned away from the human reference point. Jacobs postulated that the realities of everyday urban life must be included in urban planning and that an external design has no value without considering the laws of the interior. Jacobs comments:

"The pseudo-science of city planning and its companion, the art of city design, have not yet broken with the specious comfort of wishes, familiar superstitions, over-simplifications, and symbols, and have not yet embarked upon the adventure of probing the real world" (Jacobs, 1961, p. 20).

b) The city as an organism

In contrast to modernist urban planners, Jacobs saw the city as something organic and alive. Jacobs accused technocratic modernism of having failed in precisely this respect by planning utopian designs on the drawing board based on their assumptions and wishful thinking, letting themselves be guided by the ideals and utopias of order and simplicity and ignoring the essentials of a city (people as the primary reference point). As a result, Jacobs was preoccupied with studies of local city life in New York neighborhoods. In her observations, Jacobs concentrated primarily on researching established networks, such as urban neighborhoods and overlapping inaccurate structures within the city. She analysed the aforementioned phenomena at eye level (cf. Jacobs, 1961, p.35) by going into the city and investigating urban life in order to discover the diversity of the city. In doing so, she emphasized the need for different fundamental conditions that give a city vitality - in other words, she described the extent to which the quality of life in a city increases or decreases.

c) City as a laboratory

From her perspective, she considered the city as a laboratory in which modern planning should experiment. According to Jacobs, developing an understanding of how city life and neighborhoods result "in real life" is the only way to find out how urban planners can strengthen the social and economic vitality of cities (cf. Jacobs, 1961, p.6-7). Jacobs' work provides concrete recommendations for action, that enable urban planners to plan cities in a more humane way: Observation of actual processes in a city, to proceed from the individual to the general (which the author describes as "inductive work"), to search for non-average characteristics that reveal the way in which the average factors behave. (cf. Jacobs,1961, p.440).

3. Exploring the social/public space in practice - Application of Gehl's methods

As an urban planner, architect and researcher, Jan Gehl investigates the interaction between life and urban development. What is special about the urban planner's approach is that he takes to the streets and explores urban space from the inside. One of the results of his research is that the way in which the city is used, the quality of this space and the consideration of the human dimension in urban planning - all of this is linked and it can be represented at any scale. When asked how to recognise a liveable city, the urban planner has a simple answer: *"Look at how many children and old people are out and about on the streets and squares. A city is liveable if it respects the human scale"* (cf. Gehl, 2016, p.10), says Gehl. For him, the dream of liveable cities is not just a global trend, but the decisive goal of the 21st century.

Based on his own observations, he plans cities for people. He doesn't call for beautiful new cities, but for 'human scale' as a necessary planning criterion once again. The use of his methods aims to provide urban planners and researchers with a precise understanding of the functionality of public spaces in order to be able to give public spaces a better quality of life. In his books "How to Study Public Life: Methods in Urban Design" and "Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space", the urban researcher presents methods that he has developed as tools for studying life and public space. The main tool that Jan Gehl uses in his investigations into life in public spaces is observation. The Danish urban planner compares the method of observation he uses with investigations in the natural sciences. Here he refers to biology, in which animals, organisms or even cells are observed and described in different quantities, conditions and movement sequences (cf. Gehl; Svarre; Nielsen & Papa, 2013, p. 6). The essence of the investigation is to take in the place by spending time there. During observation, it is important to perceive the environment through which we move quite unconsciously every day (cf. Gehl; Svarre; Nielsen & Papa, 2013, p. 5). Everyone is able to observe situations in places, but this method is particularly important for training the eye and learning the technique of spatial perception. This is because seeing with the naked eye is not enough to interpret a place as what it is (cf. Gehl; Svarre; Nielsen & Papa 2013, p. 6).

4. Synthesis: Operative part: Methods in designing social space concepts in the city of Viersen (Germany)

The exploration of social space, as undertaken in the case study of the city of Viersen in the Lower Rhine region, is based on Gehl's essential premise, which is described as "counting and observing" and which takes into account the meta-questions "who", "what", "where" and "when" (Gehl, 2016).

4.1 Counting and observing

For Gehl, "counting and observing" are the central quantitative research activities in the study of social space. For example, simple "counting" can be used to record a certain number of people in motion (pedestrian flow) or lingering (localised activities), genders, age groups or objects in space. By presenting numbers, decisions can be argued, plans can be orientated and projects can be justified. Counts can be documented and recorded manually (with pen and paper) or with a machine counter. To obtain an accurate picture of daily rhythms, it is advisable to count every 10 minutes or every 10 counts within an hour. Accuracy is important with this technique. The 10-minute count must be repeated several times during the day in order to calculate the average pedestrian traffic per hour. The calculation is realised by extrapolating the quantities of the random samples and dividing them by the number of measurements.

4.2 The W-questions (How many, who, where, what, how long?)

As part of the activity of "observing", a detailed picture of the relevant scenario can be gained by answering the questions "How many?", "Who?", "Where?", "What?" and "How long?". In this way, researchers can form as many connections as possible and formulate corresponding hypotheses about life in the social space. The W questions are formulated dynamically, are interdependent and largely build on each other. The question "where do people spend time?" is thus linked to the questions "who are the people?" and "how long do they spend time there?" (cf. Gehl, 2016, p. 11).

4.3 Questions "How many?"

By counting the number of people engaged in an activity, a qualitative assessment can be made of what otherwise appears to be a fast-moving area. Jan Gehl refers here to the liveliness of a city (cf. Gehl, 2016, p. 11). The census provides qualitative data, which in turn can be incorporated into urban regeneration processes. The author recommends carrying out several counts in order to be able to compare different times of day, different days of the week and different seasons. Conditions such as the weather and the time of day must be consistently documented so that comparisons can be made in retrospect (cf. ibid.).

4.4 The question of "who?"

Gehl uses various parameters to measure the different groups of people in public space. According to Gehl, it is important to specify WHO exactly uses the different areas in public space. It makes sense to analyse general categories such as gender and age. Specific knowledge about the use and behaviour of different groups in different places can be used to respond more

precisely to their needs. As it is difficult to categorise people in terms of their work or economic situation by mere observation, the general focus should be on their age and gender. A certain degree of inaccuracy must be taken into account here (cf. Gehl, 2016, p. 14).

4.5 The question of "what?"

Gehl uses the question of "what?" to generate knowledge about types of activities in specific areas. This has the advantage of creating cartographic records that can show static, physical and commercial activities and provide information on the respective requirements in relation to the environment. According to Gehl, the recorded results are particularly important for urban planners, politicians and tradespeople. The author describes the primary activities in public spaces as "standing", "sitting", "walking" and "playing". In his book "Cities for People", Jan Gehl divides the types of urban activities into three groups of "necessary", "voluntary" and "social activities" (cf. Gehl, 2016, p. 34).

Necessary activities arise from necessity and are carried out regardless of the condition, i.e. under all circumstances. Examples include travelling to work or to an educational institution, waiting for public transport or going to the grocery shop.
Voluntary activities include *self-chosen activities* that serve, among other things, to relax and pass the time, i.e. activities that cause people to leave their homes. *Social activities* can in turn be described as activities that take place in a social context (cf. Gehl, 2011).

4.6 The question of "where?"

Jan Gehl emphasises that the question of *"Where do people linger, where do they stay, where do they go for a walk or where can barriers be found?"* is an important question for generating specific knowledge about public space. In addition, the *where* provides a basis for architects and planners to design an area in a targeted manner. According to the Danish urban planner, the importance of the *where* lies in the fact that within a planning process it is usually only vaguely assumed where people want to be, but people do not always behave as expected (cf. Gehl, p.15). Furthermore, the author describes that observing the *where* provides insights that make it possible to focus on the positioning of elements and functions (cf. Gehl, p.15).

4.7 Selection of days

The local conditions determine which time is decisive for the investigation. Prior to the investigation, it should be observed more closely when public life in the city manifests itself. Core investigation times can then be defined. If a "thriving nightlife" can be observed in the research area, it is advantageous to investigate in the period before to after midnight. If the

research subject is a residential area, it makes sense to record the data until the early evening. At playgrounds, the most suitable period is the afternoon. It is important here that differences between weekdays, weekends, holidays and public holidays are taken into account in the study (cf. Gehl, 2016, p. 22).

a) Technology and tools

In order to refine the investigations according to the categories "HOW MANY, WHO, WHAT and WHERE", the urban researcher recommends the use of recording devices such as cameras for documentation. Technical devices can serve as objective solutions alongside the use of one's own intellect. First of all, however, it must be clarified what form of knowledge is to be gained through the investigation.

b) Mapping and cartographic recording

Jan Gehl uses mapping to determine the dwelling behaviour of people in a place, i.e. the localisation of standing or sitting people within a map of the study area. In this way, the researcher draws the places where people spend time at different times of the day or over several periods of time on a map.

To visualise the activity, the author recommends recording multiple samples in the form of snapshots over the course of a day (cf. Gehl, 2016, p. 27).

c) Taking photographs

The Danish urban planner documents the interaction between the built environment and urban life using photographs and video recordings. This allows the character of a place to be captured visually so that a comparison can be made after interventions, for example. Gehl also explains that cameras are a kind of communication aid because the human eye, while observing and registering, cannot capture everything. Accordingly, recording is a good tool for freezing locations for documentation and analyses (cf. Gehl, 2016, p. 30).

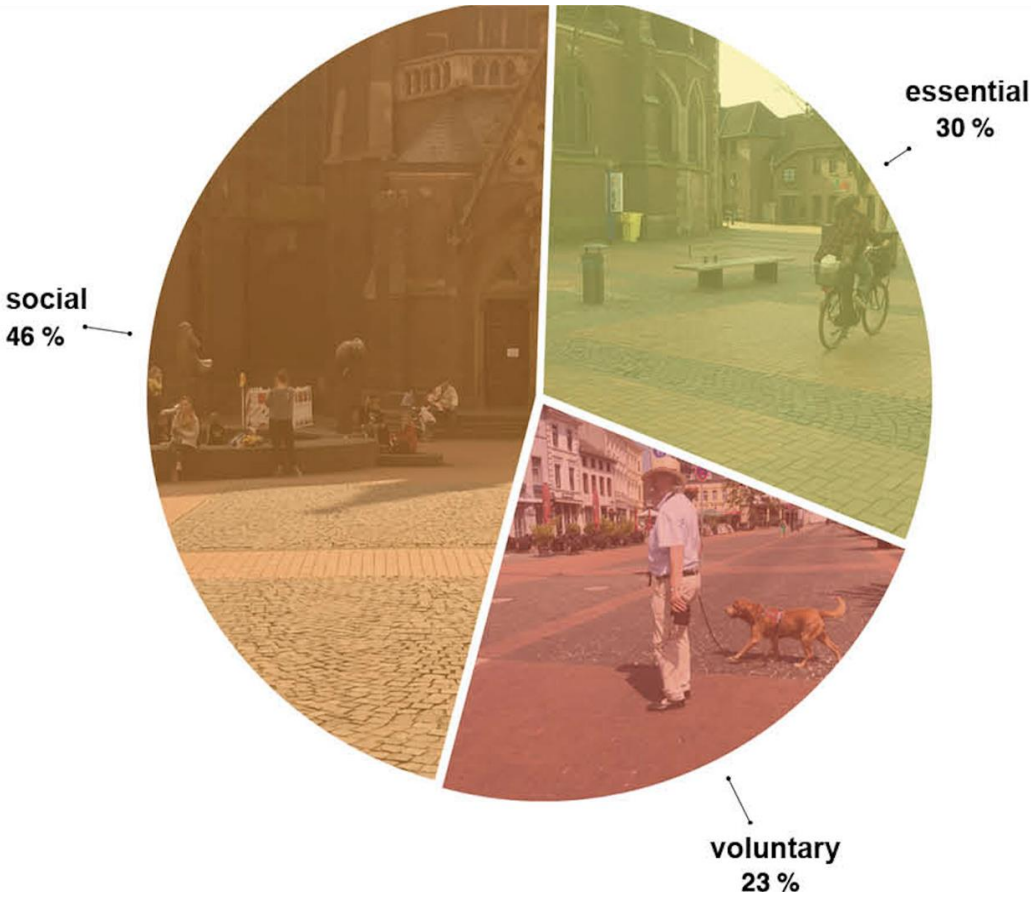
5. Extract from the research on the revitalisation of "Alter Markt" (Dülken/Viersen)

The positions of urban design presented above, with special consideration of the exploration and revitalisation of social space with the inclusion of the human scale, find a practical transfer in the research work. The framework conditions of the research work are briefly outlined below with regard to the study location, the associated current situation, the aim of the study, the research procedure and the time period. A total of three locations were analysed as part of the study, with excerpts from the research into the "Alter Markt (sub-area)" location being presented here. At the beginning of the study, the buildings at the study site showed a high level

of vacancy, so that socio-ecological issues such as the question of factors for revitalisation were a key aspect of the study. The aim of the study was therefore to ultimately formulate design options in the study area, which included the revitalisation of social structures. Key measures promoted by the study included the concrete promotion of start-ups as well as temporary utilisation options and furnishing of parts of the city.

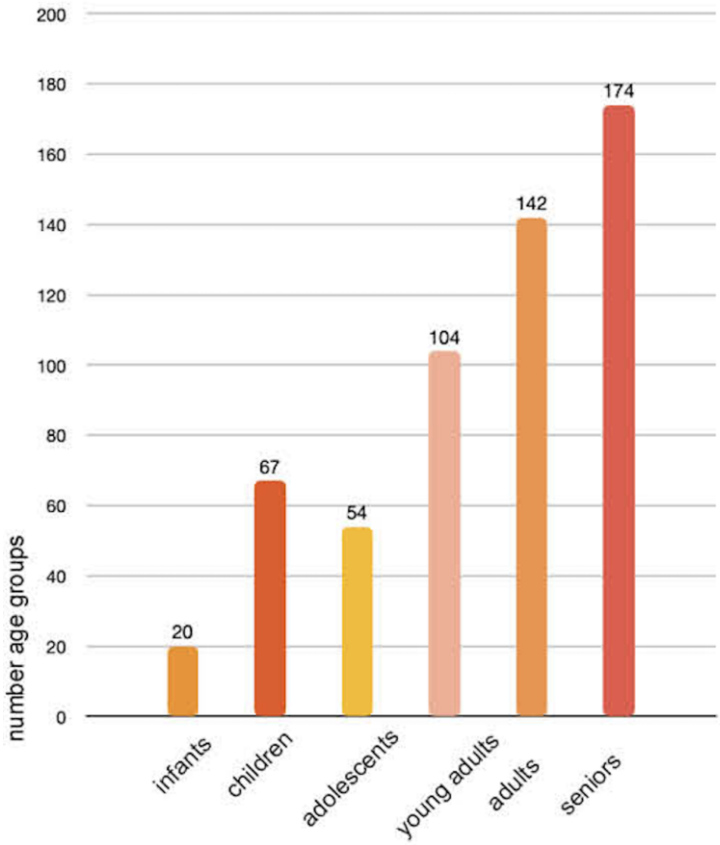
c) What? Analysis of the activities at the "Old Market"

The diagram illustrates the distribution of necessary, social and voluntary activities, which were determined by observations on the Old Market. Around 47% of people's activities on the Alter Markt can be categorised as social, followed by 30% essential activities. Voluntary activities account for 23% (see Figure 1). It was noticeable during the survey that necessary and voluntary activities were frequently associated with social interactions. A third, and therefore the highest proportion of visitors, pass through the Alter Markt on foot (33%), followed by food consumption at 19%. It can be surmised that only 18% of people sit down due to the lack of seating. The number of people standing and cycling is 8%, closely followed by the consumption of intoxicants* (7%), although it must be said that a significantly higher number of people smoke cigarettes than consume alcohol or drugs at the Alter Markt. Standing people were recorded at 6 %.



The lowest value recorded was that of car traffic (1 %). Despite the low level of car traffic, it was noticeable that there are many parked cars on the market area when there is no weekly market. In comparison to the 1 % of car traffic (9 cars), there were 54 parked cars on the Alter Markt throughout the day. Buses were not included in the study.

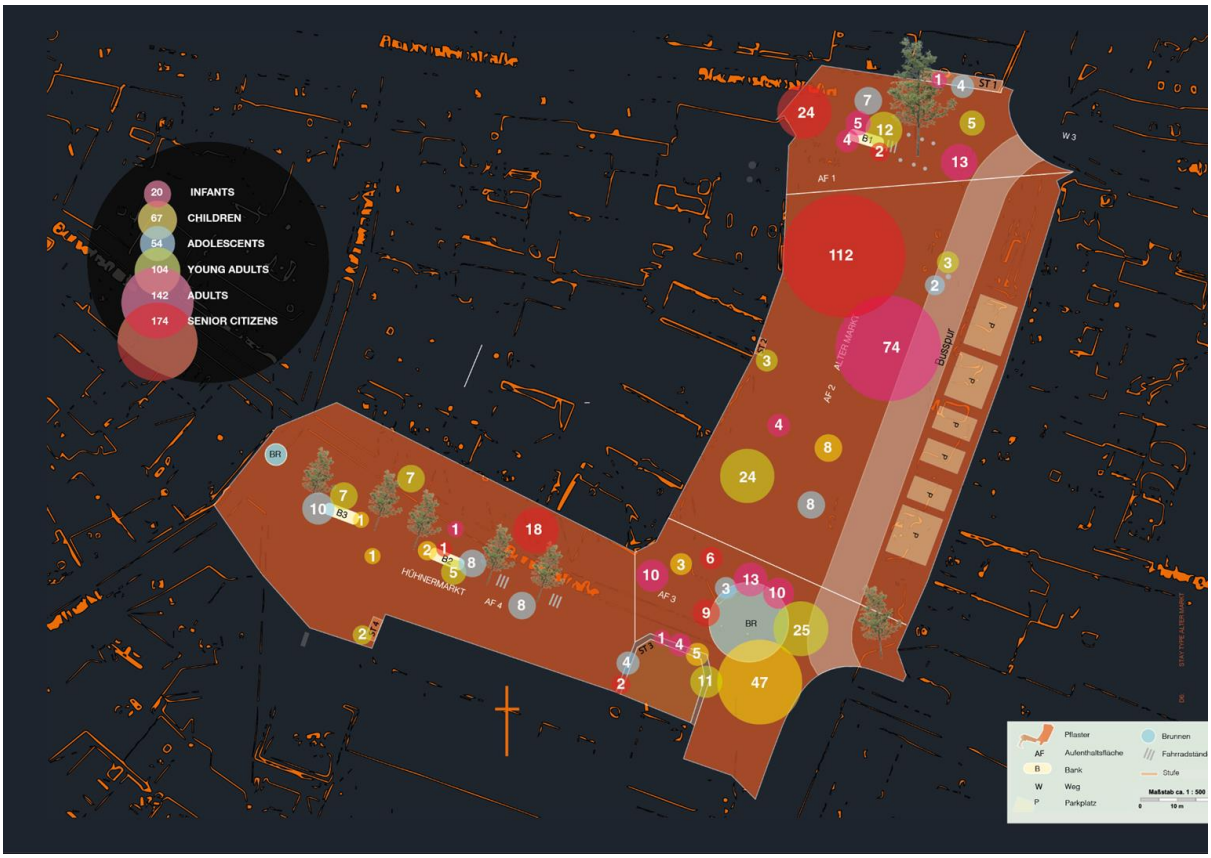
b) Who? Analysing the age groups



With regard to the question of "who?", the study differentiated between age groups, whereby the following observation can be made: The disproportionate number of senior citizens among visitors to the Alter Markt is particularly striking. The total number of 142 adults exceeds that of young adults by 38 people on the days of the survey. The presence of young people is lower than that of other age groups, with a total of 54 people counted. On the other hand, 67 children were spotted on the market.

Figure:

The age groups shown here each represent certain parts of the population that are present at a location. These include, for example, infants (under 1 year), children (approx. 1 to 13 years), adolescents (14 to 17 years), young adults (18 to 35 years), adults (35 to 65) and senior citizens (65 and over).



d) "Where" analysis of the recreational areas

The analysis, which is illustrated in the diagram, shows that the majority of people (230 out of 561 people) spend time in amenity area 2 (AF2), which is attractive due to the weekly market and ice cream parlours. However, this area offers no seating, which means that some people lean against bollards or use steps in front of a shop as improvised seating. Most people on AF2 are walking or standing (230 out of 238 people). Young adults and teenagers are particularly well represented here. The ratio of age groups is unbalanced, with the highest number of senior citizens compared to other areas.

27% of people (154 out of 561 people) spend time in recreation area 3 (AF3), mainly children and their parents or grandparents. Children are most strongly represented here in relation to the entire market square. Walkers and cyclists cross this area, and young adults use the steps in front of the church as a place to sit.

The AF4 recreation area is frequented by 16% of people, mainly those who use the benches. Around half of the people in AF4 are walking or cycling, while two people sit on the steps of the side entrance to the church (ST 4). The AF1 recreation area has the lowest proportion of people (14%) and is used less intensively than the other areas.

e) Concluding remarks

The study emphasises the central role of the Alter Markt as a place for social activities. Targeted promotion, both in terms of urban development and through expanded offerings, harbours the potential to further increase the market's appeal as a social meeting place and as a destination

for shopping trips. In particular, the creation of appropriate seating and catering facilities could have a positive impact on social interaction. Measures to promote voluntary activities and create a pleasant environment could increase the overall value of the Alter Markt as a lively place.

The recommendation from an urban planner's perspective is to diversify the offerings on the Alter Markt, especially for children and senior citizens. The integration of children's playgrounds, age-appropriate seating and new businesses such as cafés for parents and children, children's fashion shops, coworking spaces and cultural and music centres could help to sustainably promote the social dynamics and quality of life in the city. Taking into account Jan Gehl's methods of urban analysis, it is emphasised that while these can provide a basic understanding of urban life, levels of observation alone may not be sufficient to fully capture the complexity of urban life. Unresearched aspects and needs may still exist that cannot be observed directly.

6. Conclusion

The essay explores different urban design approaches, contrasting the functionalist model, advocated by the "Charter of Athens" and emphasizing the separation of urban functions (such as work, housing, and recreation), with the human-centered approaches of Jane Jacobs and Jan Gehl. The functionalist approach is seen as technology- and separation-focused, while Jacobs and Gehl advocate for participatory and people-oriented urban planning.

Through an analysis of an inner-city transformation process, the essay demonstrates how these human-centered approaches can be practically applied to revitalize neighborhoods and prioritize residents' needs. The research by Leila Rudzki illustrates a methodological approach that incorporates various stakeholders, including community groups and municipal authorities.

The approaches to socially orientated planning by Jan Gehl and Jane Jacobs show an approximation to urban life. The methods offer an analogy to the reality of life and can help planners to understand social realities. The precise analysis, i.e. counting, tracing, mapping etc. helps urban planners to understand how places are used or why problems arise. Using this methodology allows planners to understand the actual use of urban spaces rather than relying on theoretical assumptions. However, it must be added that Gehl's methodology is done from an ethnographic point of view - an external perspective. This perspective does not allow for an in-depth questioning of what people need to feel comfortable in cities, which requires dialogue.

Additionally, the essay highlights the role of academic fields like Public Interest Design, and interdisciplinary studies such as architecture and color psychology, environmental engineering, sociology, and social sciences, in contributing to participatory and socially responsible urban design. It notes that, given sustainability concerns such as bicycle and pedestrian-friendly cities and urban smog reduction, there is a growing demand for interdisciplinary design approaches.

References

Caro, R. A. (1975). Award: About the masterbuilder Robert Moses.

Delitz, H. (2010). *Gebaute Gesellschaft: Architektur als Medium des Sozialen*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag.

Gehl, J. (2011). *Life between buildings: Using public space*. Island Press.

Gehl, J., & Svarre, B. (2013). *How to study public life*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

Gehl, J., & Rogers, R. (2016). *Städte für Menschen*. JOVIS Verlag GmbH. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783868598223

Jacobs, J. (1961). *The death and life of great American cities*. Random House.

Jenkins, D., & Le Corbusier. (1993). *Le Corbusier: Unite d'Habitation Marseilles*. Berlin: Phaidon.

Le Corbusier. (1962). *An die Studenten*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt.

Le Corbusier. (1973). *The Athens Charter*. Grossman Publishers.

Moses, R. (1970). *Public works: A dangerous trade*. McGraw-Hill.

Rudzki, L. (2022). *Forschungsarbeit zum Thema „Revitalisierung von sozialen Strukturen am Beispiel des Alter Markt (Dülken/Viersen)“*. (unpublished)

Articles:

Bosman, J. (1993). Jenseits des Textes: Die Charta von Athen im Lichte der Projekte der Nachkriegszeit. *Werk, Bauen + Wohnen, 80*(4), 8. https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-60840

Online:

Deutschlandfunk. (n.d.). Jan Gehl: Der menschenfreundliche Städteplaner. *Deutschlandfunk*. Zugriff am [21.06.2024], von https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/die-stadt-planen-3-4-jan-gehl-der-menschenfreundliche-100.html

Academia.edu. (n.d.). Jane Jacobs: The death and life of great American