

# INVISIBLE CITY



ENHANCING THE PAROCHIAL REALM USING INNER COURTYARDS AS AN ALTERNATIVE FOR PUBLIC LIFE IN GAMLA STADEN, MALMÖ

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Den osynliga staden. Att använda innergårdar för att ge ökad plats åt det lokala offentliga stadslivet i Gamla staden, Malmö

Master Thesis in the program Urban Landscape Dynamics, 30 hp  
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Faculty of Landscape Planning, Horticulture and Agricultural Sciences,  
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## INVISIBLE CITY

'...when you least expect it, you see a crack open and a different city appear.'

(Calvino, 1979:136)

# Abstract

Society is continually changing, as are the cities that we live in. The urban structure is not a fixed entity, but a dynamic and evolving one, needing new and different ways of thinking and planning. A city's public space does not escape these needs and it is necessary to recognise that the provision of public space could be approached in innovative ways, through experimentation, more flexible planning controls and questioning traditional values as well as learning from them.

This thesis is about exploring alternative approaches to public space in urban environments. Public space is a concept that carries preconceived connotations made up of certain typologies. This thesis aims to introduce new typologies into the discourse, through a proposal for public space in Gamla Staden, Malmö. While there is a current trend for this to be done through 'loose space' or 'terrain vague,' this thesis approaches this issue from the controversial standpoint of using the inner courtyards in the most significant part of the city as the subject for a new type of public space. The traditional dichotomy of public and private space is broken down through the creation of a new kind of public space, which collapses the boundaries between them and provides an alternative public space in the city. This new public space can be conceived of as exposing a new 'parochial realm' in the city, where a familiar public life is focused on, rather than the anonymous public life in the conventional spaces of the public realm.

This proposal demonstrates how these courtyards and passageways could be transformed to become incorporated into the structure of public space in the city. The design aims to provide a meeting place for residents, workers and visitors. The proposal seeks to improve the parochial realm of Gamla Staden through making intimate places for people to mingle and interact. The proposal is informed by an investigation of what it is that encourages people to integrate in a community. The amalgamation of all the components of this thesis results in a concept for Gamla Staden's Urban Rooms, hidden in the secret gardens of the courtyard spaces.

The proposal that I suggest is not intended to be 'an answer' to the plan for public space in Gamla Staden, but rather, aims to initiate a discussion on the consequences, both positive and negative of the potentials of making the courtyards accessible to the public. It is not intended to replace the existing public spaces but merely to supplement them with some alternatives and more diverse options for public space, by providing spaces for communal use, out of the elements and protected from traffic.

# Preface

The inspiration for this thesis stems from a personal curiosity for hidden, secret and obscure places. I am fascinated by the way people use spaces on almost every corner of the earth, and in cities it seems no different. I come from Melbourne, Australia, a very playful city, where chance and discovery plays a large part in the life of the central city. Losing yourself in the laneways and arcades and meeting others doing the same thing is very much part of the identity of the city. I drew a parallel to my own home city when I first moved to Sweden. Once I started discovering the many of the inner courtyards and passages in Malmö, I felt like they could be enhanced and used to portray the city with a strong identity like Melbourne has achieved with its laneway structure.

Since starting at SLU I have been interested in the limits of public space and finding alternative ways to create and use public space. I have previously researched and written about control and exclusion in public space and possibilities for new approaches to planning and design to address these issues. I am also interested in the concept of ownership and how this can be played with in order to explore new hybrids of public and private merging together. This follows a concern for integration and how public space can support that. I wanted to find out how urban space can be a catalyst for social sustainability. While studying at SLU I was also involved in the artist collective N55, based in Copenhagen. Their ideas and work has influenced me greatly over the course of that time. I wanted to use this master thesis as a platform to take these interests further and focus on a proposal for the city of Malmö.

I am also interested in learning from different cultures to guide design and planning processes and outcomes. It is necessary to understand that of course differences occur and not all situations benefit from the same approach but that we can still learn things from other cultures and it is important to look to different sources for inspiration. This is especially evident in this program Urban Landscape Dynamics, where we are continually learning from people from all over the world.

This master thesis is the culmination of all of these interests and experiences that come from different sources, people and places. Although many of the investigations along the way turned out to be futile, they were part of an important process which went deeper into the topic than could have been achieved had I not investigated these paths.



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# Introduction

“It is necessary... to have a continually questioning and inquisitive approach to the subject, rather than a dogmatic view” (Carmona, 2003:v).

The age of modernism has left cities with a drastic focus on movement corridors for vehicular transport and a lack of focus on the human scale. Several urban design ‘rules’ have emerged in Western cultures that try to address these issues, such as mixed use and high density. Studies have shown though that these accepted standards in planning are not always promoting social sustainability (Bramley, 2009). It is thought by others that these ‘rules’ are not always appropriate to the situation and innovation of alternative planning methods are in need to try to address these issues (Haydn and Temel, 2006). This thesis aims to show how urban open spaces can be thought of in alternative ways.

There are many approaches to this discussion, but for the purpose of this thesis it is necessary to narrow down the scope to investigating a few main concepts. Therefore, I am examining the inner courtyards and passages of Gamla Staden, Malmö as potential spaces for expanding the network of public space in the city. This is about exploring the public/private dichotomy and challenging the barriers that it creates. It is about recognising the changes in our society and continually questioning the way we use space. The thesis will culminate in finding new approaches to urban space without compromising the historic character. It is about enlarging the city without expanding it. It will be revealing an historic structure of space and experimenting with a dynamic future. It is about the idea that courtyards could be used in new ways to the benefit of the whole city. Courtyards are a building typology used in many different cultures. They carry different connotations and are used for different purposes. For the purpose of this thesis I am examining all kinds of outdoor spaces, which are situated within a built form. This includes rooftop courtyards, courtyards which may not be fully enclosed and is not restricted to residential courtyards or any other type of courtyard.

Although this proposal is not meaning to be political, the very topic of public space cannot evade political significance (Madanipour, 2003). This thesis is seeking to challenge established ideas about planning and space in the city. The relegation of someone to one place or another is defined by social hierarchy, hegemony and unspoken rules. In opposition to these conventions, according to Cresswell (1996:3), “there is nothing logical about such observations; neither are they necessarily rules or laws. Rather they are expectations about behaviour that relate a position in a social structure to actions in space.” It is a habitual conception that courtyard spaces should be private. This proposal challenges the conventional notion of courtyards and their role in the city, appropriately in a dynamic city that is continuing a transition from industrial to knowledge based economic dependence. New ways of planning are being sought in response to the cities that modernism created. Alternative methods that have been recently used include public participation, public and private cooperation and temporary uses (Haydn and Temel, 2006).

The concept of owning land is a false perception that people have been using for thousands of years. “...we must admit that we do not own the earth” (Lynch, 1981:205). The notion of land ownership is a convention invented by humans to exert power and control. It is not a fixed imperative that is unbreakable. “In some cultures, land belongs to whoever is using it at the time. This means only the rights of presence, use and appropriation, and these rights are extinguished when active use is abandoned” (Lynch, 1981:207). In the context of the time and place, we cannot challenge or change the laws but discussing alternative ways to use land is an interesting venture. Madanipour (2003) reminds us of the views of Plato and Aristotle, where the former emphasised

the importance of sharing property to unite people and the latter recognising that “the greater the number of property owners, the less respect for common property” (Aristotle, 1992:108). Aristotle, in this view, found it important that property was privately owned but promoted its common use. Haydn and Tegel (2006) describe ownership of land in the city as a paradox. “The dynamics of urban development and the needs of the city’s residents are opposed to static property ownership, which represents an indolent aspect within the rapid city”

In searching for alternative answers to public space, it is interesting to look to different cultures and periods. Miao (2001) writes about public space in China and takes a similar view to this thesis. She discusses creating a series of public courtyards in the city, within walking distance of each other and perceptible from the streets. “Instead of one or two large squares or expensive atriums, numerous small courtyards within urban blocks may provide a more practical and culturally sensitive answer to the need for nodal public spaces.” “Aesthetically, the opening of courtyards onto the street creates layered space and transparency which break the monotony of the solid street facades. These openings also act as urban landmarks, helping visitors acquire a memorable cognitive map of a city.” She also points out as an example in Singapore, that the courtyards, although they are attached to commercial ventures, have more public life than other public spaces in the city. While Miao is describing a very different culture and therefore the same ideas cannot be directly transposed, it is interesting to look to other cultures for ideas on alternative methods.

Opening up the courtyards to be used as ‘common space’ also draws on the concept of ‘play’ in the city. Play, according to Stevens (2006) is largely dependent on experiences such as “spontaneous encounters with strangers; unfamiliar and risky bodily experiences; distraction, and interpreting new meanings in the urban fabric.” In his famous and widely cited account of the way people perceive urban space, Lynch identified certain elements of our cognition that aid in way finding, or understanding of the city (Lynch, 1985). Although these have helped us to understand how people think about space, they don’t necessarily give clues as to how people experience these same places. More importantly, it doesn’t have a significant impact on people’s social or physical wellbeing (Stevens, 2006). Later, Lynch recognised the importance of these experiences

that Stevens defines as play, and “our delight ... in ambiguity, mystery ... surprise and disorder” (Lynch, 1985:250-252). Opening up the courtyards introduces an element of the urban condition which is receptive to this need for “the unexpected, unfamiliar, and incomprehensible, spontaneity, distraction, and risk” (Stevens, 2006:805). “The dynamic and caprice of our around-the-clock society is calling with ever greater urgency for a counterweight, for time and space, for peace and quiet. A typical contemporary notion in this respect is that of ‘speeding down’ (rather than up) and the enclosed garden has all the prerequisites for this condition” (Aben & de Wit, 2001:2).

Opening the courtyards would also have an effect on the identity and branding of the city. In an age when cities are continuing this transformation from industrial to knowledge based income, competition arises between them as to which city has the most to offer. “Travelling, you realise that differences are lost: each city takes to resembling all cities, places exchange their form, order, distances, a shapeless dust cloud evades the continents” (Calvino, 1979). The quality and function of the public landscape in cities is a major attractor to keep current populations and to attract potential new residents to the city. The public realm is one of the factors that draw educated, knowledge-based people who have a choice of where to live, which is important for a city if it wants to grow economically. People choose a city first, for its overall qualities rather than individual spaces. Tourism is also important for the economy of cities these days. The image of the city is important in creating an identity (Schwartz, 2011). The existence of accessible courtyards is a quality that is memorable and describable for people, which enhances its potential for a tourist destination. While other cities have unique opportunities to develop public spaces in different ways such as London’s former underground stations (Stewart, 2011) or New York’s High Line (Mills, 2009), Malmö can make the most of its potential to use courtyard spaces in the centre of the city. The courtyards of Gamla Staden, such an integral part of the city, are currently underused spaces which have the potential to be used in more productive and beneficial ways. This proposal has been explored to look at a more communal way of living, to challenge normalisation and established perceptions, to investigate an alternative kind of public life in a vital part of the city and provide alternative forms of public space, other than street and square and to find a way of using left over spaces, as is the trend these days.



# Methods

This thesis is the amalgamation of several different sources to result in a proposal for the public space in the old town, in the centre of Malmö. Several theories, projects and ideas have been interpreted and drawn upon in order to propose an alternative concept for public space. The main aim for the thesis was to connect some key literature to the design for public space. The thesis is organised into a theoretical framework, which informs a case study including empirical research and studies. As an experimental proposal that will not be carried out, it is difficult to evaluate the success of such an idea but the methods outlined below will be used to try to gauge how it could be achieved in the best way.

The process emerged as a meandering structure and it could be said that it is still a work in progress as I continue to dwell on the ideas in this thesis. I began by looking into the theory on public space to inform the later work and continued in the various steps to lead to the final product. Despite this, I was always going back to each step to refer to the findings and also to add to them once I realised I was missing some perspective or ideas.

## Literature review

It is important to build upon the knowledge of others and use studies that have been done previously to inform this proposal. Although I did not find any studies that I could use to directly reproduce, it was useful to interpret theories and ideas and to apply them to the situation of public courtyards. In order to gain an understanding of whether and how these private courtyards in Malmö could become an extension of the public realm in Gamla Staden, a thorough investigation of some key literature was needed. Two main concepts were determined to be the most important to delve into to determine if courtyards could be appropriate alternative spaces for public use and to assess what type of courtyards would best suit this transformation. To gain an understanding of public space and what is needed to make it successful I researched what public space is, why it is important for cities, how it can be interpreted and the elements that make it successful. Since the transformation

taking place is from a private nature to a public nature it was important to analyse this dichotomy of public/private space and to find out if there are other ways to look at space or even to use language.

## Empirical Studies

Since the open courtyards would be part of a wider structure of public space and not an entity unto themselves, an understanding of the existing public space network in Gamla Staden was also needed. Three different typologies of public space were investigated, to gain an understanding of the current public life in the city and to discover what qualities were existing and what might be missing, or what kind of qualities could the courtyards provide that are not being provided by the city today. The social aspect was observed to determine how public space is used as a meeting place. I visited the three spaces at 3 different times of day and year. I visited in February at around 9.00, March at mid-day and May at about 18.00. They were all observed for half an hour at each visit. Since they were visited on different days because I could not be in 3 different places at once, I tried to visit them on days with a different weather, although the main point was not to compare them but to gain an insight into the public life in the city and to find out the different ways in which people interact in public space. I used photography and hand written notes and sketches to record the observations.

## Research

Research on the city of Malmö and specifically Gamla Staden was done to achieve a thorough understanding of the city and the case study so that I could apply this theory and investigation to a real situation. I used the Green Plan for Malmö and the Comprehensive Plan to gain an understanding of what was missing in the area as well as how it was made up in terms of demographics and space. Research on similar proposals or other kinds of inspiration was done to get another perspective and to provide a source of ideas. Although there have not been many similar proposals, I did not set out to try to revolutionise public

space. It was important to me to build upon traditional and existing successful public spaces, while considering whether a new approach could be incorporated into the existing structure. Mapping was important to visualise the structure of space and to investigate which kind of courtyard would be best suited to a conversion from private space to public. Mapping could not be useful alone though, it was needed in conjunction with all of these other methods to fully understand the place. I mapped the various layers of space in Gamla Staden to get an idea of how much green space and public space there is and the relationships between them. In order to analyse the different courtyards according to which would be the most appropriate to open to the public, I mapped space in Gamla Staden in terms of the zoning, the specific land use on the ground floor of each building, the amount of sun exposure in each courtyard, and the locations and paths of desire. Once the courtyards were chosen, I analysed them in more detail to understand whether they could be used for public space in a parochial setting. It was important to consider the existing use of the courtyards and the use for the enclosing built structures.

### Sketching

Although I have not presented all of the process in this thesis, there was a lot of background work that went into producing it, much of which started with sketching. This was an important step for me to conceptualise the purpose of this proposal and to quickly record my ideas before transferring them to a digital form.

### Proposal

The proposal resulted in the culmination of the previously described methods. I developed the design according to what I had ascertained from the theory, research, analysis and inspiration. I found it important to use these not just to discuss the possibilities of opening the courtyards but also to find a realistic and plausible proposal. Many options were evaluated in the design process, but I chose to present the resulting one in order to create a stronger concept. I found it important to emphasise the juxtaposition of public and private and therefore wanted to provide public spaces where more private activities could be carried out in a space which usually would be part of the private realm.



# Background

## Public Space

“Public space is the stage upon which the drama of communal life unfolds” (Carr et. al., 1992:3).

There are several definitions of the concept of ‘public space’ in the literature on urban design. It is used in a variety of manners by practitioners and researchers and in different disciplines. It has been the subject of much debate over the years and it holds many different connotations (Madanipour, 2003). Although not a ‘reliable’ source, it is worth starting with Wikipedia to find a generally accepted view of public space in the present time. Wikipedia describes public space as ‘social space such as a town square that is open and accessible to all, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or socio-economic level.’ They also note that several different fields employ the use of the terms, including philosophy, (urban) geography, visual art, cultural studies, social studies and urban design (Wikipedia, Public space).

Chua and Edwards (1992) note that the ambiguity and complexity that arises when juxtaposing the two terms ‘public’ and ‘space’ is attributable to a wide range of connotations that accompany each word on its own. In order to clarify the meaning for the purpose of their book, they look to Scruton (1984) for a ‘conceptual substratum.’ For them and the essays in their book, the concept of ‘public space’ covers that which is “used to designate a location which is (i) designed, however minimally, such that (ii) everyone has the rights of access, (iii) encounters in it between individual users are unplanned and unexceptional, and (iv) their behaviour towards each other is subjected to rules none other than those of common norms of social civility.” (Chua and Edwards, 1992:2)

Carr et. al. (1992) have a differing definition. They define public

space as being “the common ground where people carry out the functional and ritual activities that bind community, whether in the normal routines of daily life or in periodic festivities.”

The term is not just used by the classic literature or in academic texts but also in a variety of ways in everyday use. It is also being continually altered and interpreted to allow for a more flexible application. Shonfield (2003), defines it from a wider angle, encompassing all urban space that is not categorised as either work or home. Using this definition, public space does not necessarily mean open to all at all times but anywhere that people have contact with strangers.

Madanipour (2003) deduces from various definitions of public space that it is “provided by the public authorities, concerns the people as a whole, is open or available to all of them and is used or shared by all members of the community.” He goes on to criticize this definition as being too general and describing an ‘ideal’ form of public space which could not eventuate. In reality, he defines public space as being “places outside the boundaries of individual or small group control, mediating between private spaces and used for a variety of often overlapping functional and symbolic purposes.” It is important to note that the term is adapted to suit many different situations and complex aspects of the city. There are several other definitions of the concept which I have not delved into but there are common themes which prevail throughout and also some key issues that differ. Literature on public space deals with many different concepts such as the ‘right to the city’ and who is included in ‘public’. Mitchell

(2003) sees public space as contradictory, due to two opposed visions of public space, one being open to all and the other being order and control. He contends that “public space occupies an important - but contested - ideological position in democratic societies (Mitchell, 2003:130). The ‘ideal’ balance of these two visions is when “cities comprise a variety of public spaces that are open to all and, in the best cases of urbanity, extend the right to carry out one’s desired actions while recognizing the presence and rights of others.” (Franck and Stevens, 2007:4) Other contentious issues in public space include privatisation and design and development (Madinpour, 2003).

Some researchers have taken the concept of public space and avoided the strong connotations that the words suggest by employing alternative terms such as ‘common-place.’ Rather than taking the approach of public space being necessarily open to all and totally inclusive, Bain (2003) discusses all the spaces that we spend our time in when shared with others. Other writers have tried to apply different terms to discuss varying degrees or gradients of public space, including semi-public, heterotopian and parochial. Heterotopian space is used by Dehaene and De Cauter (2008) in reference to the term used by Foucault. “Heterotopian spaces are necessarily collective or shared spaces. Their heterotopian character...was contingent upon a precise mechanism of opening and closing. That closing means excluding the public, a delineation of otherness and a closure vis-a-vis public space, while the opening is an opening unto the public domain” (Dehaene and De Cauter, 2008: 6). Similarly, Lofland (1986) discusses the parochial realm as a way to conceptualise a different kind of space. The term is adapted from Albert Hunter and defined as being “characterized by a sense of commonality among acquaintances and neighbours who are involved in interpersonal networks that are located within “communities” (Lofland, 1986:19). I will be using the idea of the parochial realm in this thesis to discuss the more local community spaces of the courtyards as opposed to the more anonymous spaces of the city streets, squares and parks.

These definitions are significant for the context of this thesis in order to understand the implications of opening up a courtyard space to the public. As a consequence of the ambiguity of the term ‘public space’, it is important for me to define what I mean when I am talking about public space in this thesis. The

definition of public space for the purpose of this thesis refers to outdoor urban space which is experienced as a part of public life of varying gradients, whether privately or publicly owned, open transiently or permanently. Public life includes the time which is spent outside the home or workplace.

In the context of Gamla Staden, Malmö, public space is centralised around small streets and large scale squares. The most prominent urban squares of the city are located here and many of the streets are closed off to vehicular traffic or are shared space like Kalendegatan. This thesis is also aiming to challenge habitual conceptions of what public space is and how it can be approached in urban design and planning. This is done through increasing the typologies of public space in the city through creating a fusion of public and private.

# The role of public space

“The public realm is the pot in which the melting happens” (Schwartz, 2011)

Regardless of definition, public space, in all its many forms is an important component of the urban fabric. There has been a recent refocus on the establishment, improvement, and management of public space in the urban design profession, as well as initiated by city authorities (Madanipour, 2003). Mitchell (2003) points out the need for visible public spaces in cities as a forum for public expression, freedom of speech and democracy. More simply, it is also valuable for community building, social communication, communal play and relaxation and for movement at a pedestrian level (Carr et. al., 1992).

There are numerous benefits of public space, which cannot be covered in the scope of this thesis, but a brief overview is necessary to understand how public space is valued and used. Public space is important for public welfare, encompassing opportunities for public life, recreation, fresh air and relaxation. It is also stated as being visually enhancing for grandeur in the past and aesthetic appeal today. Environmental enhancement can be covered by public space, influencing physiological states and ‘greening’ the city. Economic development is created through public space that is connected to commercial activities and creates spaces for employees to relax and gain social relief. Public space can also be used to enhance city image and sense of community and belonging (Carr et. al., 1992; Schwartz, 2011). Public space satisfies our need for contact with others, in both passive and active ways (Gehl, 1987).

Some theorists stress that the role of public space is free speech and democracy. It is important to democracy in that it is a physical manifestation, rather than merely an intellectual one. Public space provides the opportunity for the experience of democracy, which comes from the sharing of space with people that are not like us. This is an indispensable quality for people, necessary for our physical, social and mental well being. Anonymity and diversity in public space is important for promoting

these qualities (Shonfield, 2003).

Most of the theorists on public space recognise its dynamic nature, since it has been changing in meaning and application since it was first used. The main role of the first kinds of public space, the Greek agora, was as a marketplace. It also fulfilled myriad other requirements for the town including meeting, ceremonial, and spectacle place and was used as a setting for economic, political and cultural interests. The agora was important for supporting community and social interaction although in a very different way than it would be thought of today. Although integral to communal life, it was not the only place where these activities took place, and even the private realm of the home was used for collective purpose (Benn and Gaus, 1983). The significance of public spaces has changed dramatically and repeatedly along with the shifting roles of cities. In recent times, public space has become a secondary thought, with space being designed for movement and zoning underlying the structure of modern cities. The rise of industrialisation caused public space to fall behind on the planning agenda. Along with the subsequent decline of industry, public space is becoming more and more the focus for planning and the tool to overcome the mistakes of the past. Recent theory has honed in on how modernism has brought about ‘the end of public space’ (Sorkin, 1992). Madanipour (2003) has suggested that the importance of public space has diminished in recent years with the advancements in society bringing about a retrieval from the physical public realm, into the cyber public realm.

Alternative approaches to public space are becoming more common, with designers and researchers experimenting with different sites, programming and function of urban open spaces. The decline of industry has left many cities with discarded and derelict site, which are increasing being used as temporary or permanent new public spaces.



New projects for public spaces are “changing the way we live, work and play in cities” (Gastil and Ryan, 2004). Projects are moving away from strictly traditional forms of public space and along with that the meaning of public space changes. It is not necessarily essential for public spaces these days to be open at all hours of the day or to all members of the public. Even though this is an ideal that is still prevalent in thought today, it rarely is manifest in public space today.

It is a current trend that former industrial spaces are reused to become public spaces in the city or on the fringes, to become loose space where people can experiment. Although this is a strong contemporary tendency, they should not be the only residual spaces to be used in this way. Spaces inside the city can also be opened up and be used for unintended purposes. It is important to also consider the centre and the revitalisation of public life within the inner city. (Franck and Stevens, 2007).

## Privately Owned Public Space

Public space is often exclusive to certain groups. There has been a recent trend, globally, for appropriation of ‘left over places’ and the opening of private spaces for more culturally and socially inclusive public use. Spaces in the city that lie dormant and neglected are hidden opportunities for interim uses and alternative forms of public space, providing affordable land for uses that can promote an exciting and vibrant city. The challenges of these spaces can be turned into possibilities for creating a new and different kind of public space, bringing life and stimulation to an area. Public use of private spaces can be facilitated through more flexible planning controls and communication between the different concerned parties. There are limits associated with public space that can be overcome through alternative forms of public space, where marginalised groups of society can take part in public life. Perhaps these spaces also exclude certain groups, but with a variety of public spaces in the city, it is anticipated that all groups can be represented in some way, in some space. Much of the literature on public space talks about the right to the city and how public space is used, but not much is written on alternative ways of making public space.

Danish artists collective N55, founded by Ion Sørvin and Ingvil

Aarbakke and based in Copenhagen, question the rights to property ownership and freedom. Among many other projects which propose alternative ways of living and using space, they have an ongoing project called LAND. “LAND gives access to land. Any person can stay in LAND and use it. LAND can be expanded by anybody who wants to add pieces of land to LAND. Formally, the parts of LAND remain the property of the persons participating in this way, but they guarantee that any person can stay in LAND and use it.” In this way, LAND is still privately owned space but completely open to public use, by anyone, for anything reducing concentrations of power (N55, 2002). N55 are really challenging the idea of land ownership with this project, but it can also be used to look at how private space can be engaged for public use. LAND is unique to public space because it doesn’t hold the same restrictions. Anyone can use land in any manner, which opens it up to be a ‘free zone’ where activities and actions usually considered illegal in state owned public space or many other forms of privately owned public space in cities take place.

LAND may not be available to everyone, but it is a ‘way of effecting some real changes in a realistic way. To change legislation or government is not realistic at the moment’ (N55, 2002). The results of LAND have however been interesting to look at as the project has been used extensively, for building housing and alternative living situations, experimental artistic proposals, spontaneous and informal events and other uses. The success in these cases is in the lack of control and restrictions and the lack of concentrations of power. They serve as a more liberal and open public space, allowing access for all and acknowledging people’s rights.

Public space does not necessarily have to include everyone, but there should be a variety of public spaces in the city, which cater for different people and different needs, or at least public spaces should promote equal access and representation. There are situations where exclusion may be necessary but diversity should be embraced rather than ignored and public space needs to deal with identity and difference. One solution to this is the use of private space in a public manner because it can be more flexible. Private owners of property are more apt to deal with the consequences of making space inclusive, where municipalities might be subject to more responsibilities and therefore are required to hold power, restrictions and control over public space.







# Public and Private Space

Probably the most famous example of a figure ground map, is that drawn by Giovanni Batista Nolli in 1748 (Lehnerer, 2009). The Nolli map of Rome shows a porous and permeable city. It is an appropriate map to discuss the dichotomy of public and private space. The map has been used by many architects, urban designers and writers for different purposes and readings of it vary. The original purpose for the map was to determine the taxes, since the area of property that was subject to taxation was reduced by showing the public spaces (in white) (Lehnerer, 2009). Moughtin, (1992) analyses the depiction of figure and ground and understands it as being an aid for analysing distribution and connection of public spaces and distinguishing between public and private. On the other hand, Lehnerer (2009) sees the map as overcoming this division between public and private spaces. According to Dehaene and De Cauter (2008) the black essentially represents private spaces and the white represents public. The map's 'black and white contrast... is a graphically eloquent representation of the description of the city in terms of the public-private binary opposition.... The interior spaces that are left white... are not public or private but heterotopian. (Dehaene and De Cauter, 2008: 5-6)." The map dissolves the boundaries between outside as public and inside as private although its initial purpose was to be used in the allocation of taxes. The 'heterotopian space that Dehaene and De Cauter (2008) talk about is part of this 'common space,' whereby public space can be conceived in a different way. They define it as spaces that are "necessarily collective or shared spaces (Dehaene and De Cauter, 2008: 5-6)". This heterotopian concept can be linked to the parochial realm, which is how the courtyards will be treated.

# Public and Private Spaces of the City

"As porous as this stone is the architecture. Building and action interpenetrate in the courtyards, arcades and stairways"

(Benjamin and Lacis, 2005: 416)

The porosity that Benjamin and Lacis discuss refers principally to the dichotomies of private and public and inside and outside (Stavrides, 2007). They are describing the city of Naples, at a time when it was not yet structured by modern capitalist boundaries (Buck-Morse, 1991). By opening up the courtyards, the city becomes more 'porous' allowing the public and private to be less strict and more interchangeable rather than fixed and dualistic. This avoidance of a clear separation between public and private means that the spaces of the city are more open to interpretation. It is important to look to theories of public and private in this thesis to comprehend the consequences and subtleties of bringing the public into the private realm.

A defining feature of a city is the way that it is structured around a separation of public and private space. This division of space controls several dimensions of the way that city is then used, in terms of access, movement and activity (Madanipour, 2003). The terms 'public' and 'private' are used in myriad different ways by many different people and groups. The words are used to mean different things in different situations, causing confusion and misinterpretation. (Weintraub and Kumar, 1997). This ambiguity is not widely recognised and addressed within and between different disciplines, each taking for granted that the meanings are an established and common understanding. This 'accepted' use of language can therefore be problematic when everyone believes that they are considering the same concepts when in fact they each understand them in very different ways. Weintraub and Kumar (1997) recognises the "multiple and ambiguous character" of these terms. The use of the words in conjunction with other words also alters the meaning. Public space

and the public sphere are not interchangeable but refer to different phenomena, the latter referring to the broad concept of 'the entire range of places, people, and activities that constitute the public dimension of human social life, the former encompassing the more limited physical aspects associated within the public sphere (Madanipour, 2003).

It is important therefore to define what it is that I mean by the conceptual terms of 'public' and 'private' from the perspective that I am going to be dealing with these terms. I will be looking at public space, not so much from the concept of ownership or control by the state or private enterprise but more from the perspective of public and private use of space. I will be looking at the subtleties which define public and private and define space in a social sense rather than a legal sense. I will not go into depth about public or private ownership of space because I think that would constitute a whole other discourse and a whole other thesis. I am more interested in public, in the sense of allowing for use by the public.

# Mutually exclusive or interdependent?

The distinction between 'private' and 'public' isn't a new concept. It has been structuring cities in thought and practice since their conception (Weintraub and Kumar, 1997; Madanipour, 2003). "...there is a direct link between this distinction and the way that human beings relate to each other in social space. The way space is subdivided and the relationship between the public and private spheres in general are a mirror of social relations and a main indicator of how a society organises itself" (Madanipour, 2003). Although the two terms carry the weight of a great dichotomy, several scholars recognise that they are in fact neither mutually exclusive, nor dualistic, but rather interdependent and diversely variable (Weintraub and Kumar, 1997; Madanipour, 2003).

Madanipour (2003) reiterates the interdependence of public and private, claiming that each influences and shapes the other. He describes the dichotomy through different scales, beginning with that of the body. He demonstrates that while the 'inner space of consciousness' inside the human body is the ultimate private space, it is also continually being shaped by the space outside the body, through biological and social forces. Consequently, the most private space we can possess is constantly being influenced by forces in the public sphere. Simultaneously, the public sphere is continually being produced and reproduced by society and the individual.

Many writers undermine the dichotomy by discussing space in terms of semi-public and semi-private along with public and private. These terms are useful in describing space that isn't strictly public or private and in overcoming this dualism. Space is not thought of as either/or in these situations but rather representing a gradient. Some theorists attempt to get past this dichotomy through introducing new terms or a third realm into the discussion and creating a trichotomy. Lofland (1986) defines three different types of social space to conceptualise. Along with the public and private she introduces the parochial realm (see page 16), which is determined through the emergence of, and emphasis on local community space, as opposed to public space which is usually characterized by anonymity.

Dovey (2010) uses the concept of smooth and striated space in a theoretical point of view derived from Deleuze and Guattari. The notion of thinking of space in this way can aid in overcoming the dialectical nature of public and private space. "Striated space is where identity has become stabilized, as opposed to smooth spaces of becoming. Smooth space is linked to rhizomatic modes of practice - migrating horizontally within the instances of larger order - and contrasted against structures of hierarchical control...Smooth and striated are not types of space or place so much as tools for thought: every real place is a mixture of the two in a reciprocal relation where each is folded into the other" (Dovey, 2010: 169). This is significant for this study because it is exploring the breaking down of strict spatial divisions. Converting courtyards into a parochial space folds public into private, inside into outside and undermines the strength of these dualisms.

# Private Space

"In all communal life there is a balance between public and private activities" (Carr, 1992:3). This balance relies greatly on culture and changes according to advancing and evolving situations and technology (Carr, 1992).

Private space is not always clearly defined as being so. Often it is governed by unwritten laws and is culturally dependent and not always distinguishable by outsiders but in most cases the space of the home is private space. Public space is signified by a "complex system of codes, expressed through physical objects and social arrangements" (Madanipour, 2003a:140). Madanipour (2003:41) identifies private space as being "under the control of the individual in a personal capacity, outside public observation and knowledge and outside official or state control." Madanipour also notes that private life can be played out in public space.

The importance of public space is emphasised in planning discourse and in this thesis. It is important however for this discussion on the possibilities and consequences of converting private spaces into public ones to acknowledge also the importance and need for private space. This aspect is not well covered in the literature and in fact, since the feminist movement, is held with negative connotations. Since the private realm was associated with the suppressed lives of woman, private life was viewed as undesirable by people such as Hannah Arendt (Madanipour, 2003). Others however, note the significance of the private realm and promote its necessity, perceiving it as a crucial part of human life (Madanipour, 2003).

## Projects that highlight this Dichotomy

A recent spate of projects have emerged, which, highlight and challenge the opposition of public and private. These have come from within theory, design, art and social science. There have been several temporary installations and works over the past decade that have focused on either bringing the private out into the public sphere or vice versa, thereby blurring the boundaries between public and private and questioning the public/ private dichotomy.

Seserin, (2010) “examines the social implications of architecture and what happens when alternative or parallel social spaces are created.” She is interested in the division between public and private space and confusing the boundaries between them. She posits



Figure 2

that contemporary society needs to get past this dualism and that architecture needs a new dialogue for the complexities of space. She explores the term parochialization through a temporary private penetration of public space. According to Seserin, these kinds of interventions help to blur these boundaries and connect across different social spheres.

Another design firm involved in exploring the relationship between public and private is REBAR, an ‘interdisciplinary studio operating at the intersection of art, design and activism.’ Some of their projects include Park(ing) day and COMMONspace. Park(ing) day has become an international event, where participants convert metered parking spaces on the sides of the road into public space for the day. The project COMMONspace focuses on creating more



Figure 3

public space through opening private space to the public and evaluate the use of these spaces.

In Eindhoven, the Netherlands, 22 students from the Design Academy were involved in creating an exhibition called HOUSEPROUD for the Dutch Design Week. Inspired by the nature of Holland’s usually exposed ground floor windows of residential buildings, the projects involved playing with this revealing of the private realm through installations in 15 ground floor windows in Eindhoven. “HOUSEPROUD challenged the role design plays in a social environment. It also confronted that slippery line, which demarcates private and public territory in Holland’s ground floor apartments.” One of the most interesting projects of the exhibition, by Daniel Oxholm, explored the concept of public vs private through playing the audio from the house on the outside and vice versa so that in some way both private becomes public and public becomes private (Kennedy, 2008).



Figure 4

## Parochial Realm

The development and consolidation of a parochial realm in cities promotes the formation of community. Establishment of a strong community spirit is important for people to have respect and tolerance for each other. It increases safety, contributes to collective outcomes and people's wellbeing and assists with integration.

Often, integration, community and solidarity within cities is facilitated through clubs and organisations such as sports clubs. Sporting teams create a common interest for people of different backgrounds and ages and are important parts of social cohesion both for spectators and participants. They are an important part of community interaction and relations but not everyone has the means or desire to be a part of these ventures. The open spaces of cities should be an ideal platform for people to come together and share different aspects of their lives and this thesis seeks to discover how that could take place. Cities therefore need a variety of options and more common spaces in which a stronger community can be created. Public space could support these interests and be the platform for initiating a stronger sense of community in the centre of the city through the establishment of parochial space.

The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's ideas on 'doxa,' are defined as activities and proceedings which are taken for granted as being 'natural.' Places themselves have a specific doxa, which is taken for granted. "Where transgressions, occur, things will seem 'out-of-place' because of a lack of doxa-conformity" (Cloke, 2000, p.726). Since the normative connotations that go with courtyards in Sweden are associated with residential private space, it is difficult to surpass this.

The concept of habitus is also drawn on when thinking about public and private spaces and the gradient between them. Habitus is the concept that a set of traits or qualities that a common group of people collectively hold stem from their social structure and practice. It can be associated with place, and the key to habitus is the fact that it is acquired from the social setting that one is in rather than a fixed doctrine. Habitus is "not a logical systematicity but a practical systematicity" (Bourdieu, 2005).

When you look at statistics, you can see that the old mythical opposition still works (between masculine and feminine). All the natural sciences are more masculine in terms of students, in terms of professors and so on. Why does it work? Because it is incorporated in our minds, that is in our bodies, and we act in the world according to this structure and by so doing we tend to contribute to reproduce this structure (Bourdieu, 2005). This relates to the transition of making something that is normally expected to private, into public space as it goes against what is expected or 'normal'.

These phenomenon effect how the parochial realm is established since doxa and habitus contribute to the way people relate to one another in space and are reluctant to communicate with each other.



## Public Space as Meeting Place

Public Space can be a tool for integration but the nature of public space these days often doesn't support spontaneous interaction and meeting. The painting below, Collins Street by John Brack, displays the monotony and impersonality of public life in cities these days. Although we have streets and squares

and public places and there are potentially opportunities to interact, social expectations and norms underlying the doxa and habitus cause us to be unable to relate to each other in these spaces. Just being in the same space as someone doesn't mean that you will begin a conversation, or even look at each other.



Figure 5

## Study into meeting

Many designers aim for public spaces to be places for interaction. The level of interaction that occurs though is often limited to passive relations. Active connections don't arise until people have something in common or something to talk about: "... conversations can start when people are at ease, in particular when they are occupied with the same thing, such as standing or sitting side by side, or while engaging in the same activity together" (Gehl 1987: 170-71). Proposals that claim for urban open spaces to be 'meeting places' are often superficially designed for interaction and don't actually facilitate it. They do not contain the things that encourage people to talk to each other, only to passively be together. For people to get past the point of passive interaction and engage in a more active interaction they need something that can allow them to 'break the ice.' People need to have something to talk about initially in order to start a conversation.

While Whyte (1980) mainly focuses on the amount of people drawn to public spaces and the social life in terms of merely being in the presence of others he also notes a factor that he calls triangulation as affecting the success of public places. He defines this as the "process by which some external stimulus provides a linkage between people and prompts strangers to talk to each other as though they were not" (Whyte, 1980:94). He cites performance, sculpture, physical objects and views as being part of these factors that invite conversation, smiles or merely shocked glances between observers. He does not go deeper into the topic but stresses that there are ways that the design of public spaces can be more directed towards facilitating interaction between strangers. This is particularly important in the parochial realm for the building of community and familiarity.

The public space is very important for the creation of community and currently Gamla Staden is quite an anonymous area, where the parochial realm is less prominent. The opening of courtyards could be an answer to this by providing intimate spaces where people can meet and have contact. Attracting people to a space is the first step for interaction to occur. Then other factors determine whether the place promotes actual exchange between strangers. The main elements that can be

designed into space first of all are the elements that encourage people to be there such as climate, places to sit, position in the urban fabric and other people in the space. These seem to be the most important factors. Other factors then can be considered. Since I did not find many leads in the literature as to what facilitates interaction in public space I will try to use an empirical analysis to gain more insight into this phenomenon. How can public space support the establishment of community and facilitate interaction between people? Does it rely on the physical qualities of the space or something else? The following study has been made in an attempt to better understand the qualities that are required to promote integration and communication. The study examines the non physical qualities which occur in space and allow for people to open up become more receptive to contact with others.

After analysing the literature on public space I found that typologies are too generic to use in this study. I looked to Krier (1979), Alexander et. al. (1977) and Gehl (1987) in an attempt to find out how physical space can affect the social aspects in a place. There are some interesting physical qualities of space that affect the social dynamics of the place but I found that these are too general to apply to real places. The qualities of space are always contextual, so many of the discoveries I made, I do not think apply to this situation. The physical qualities that did come out from the literature study as being important though include micro-climate, territoriality and topology.

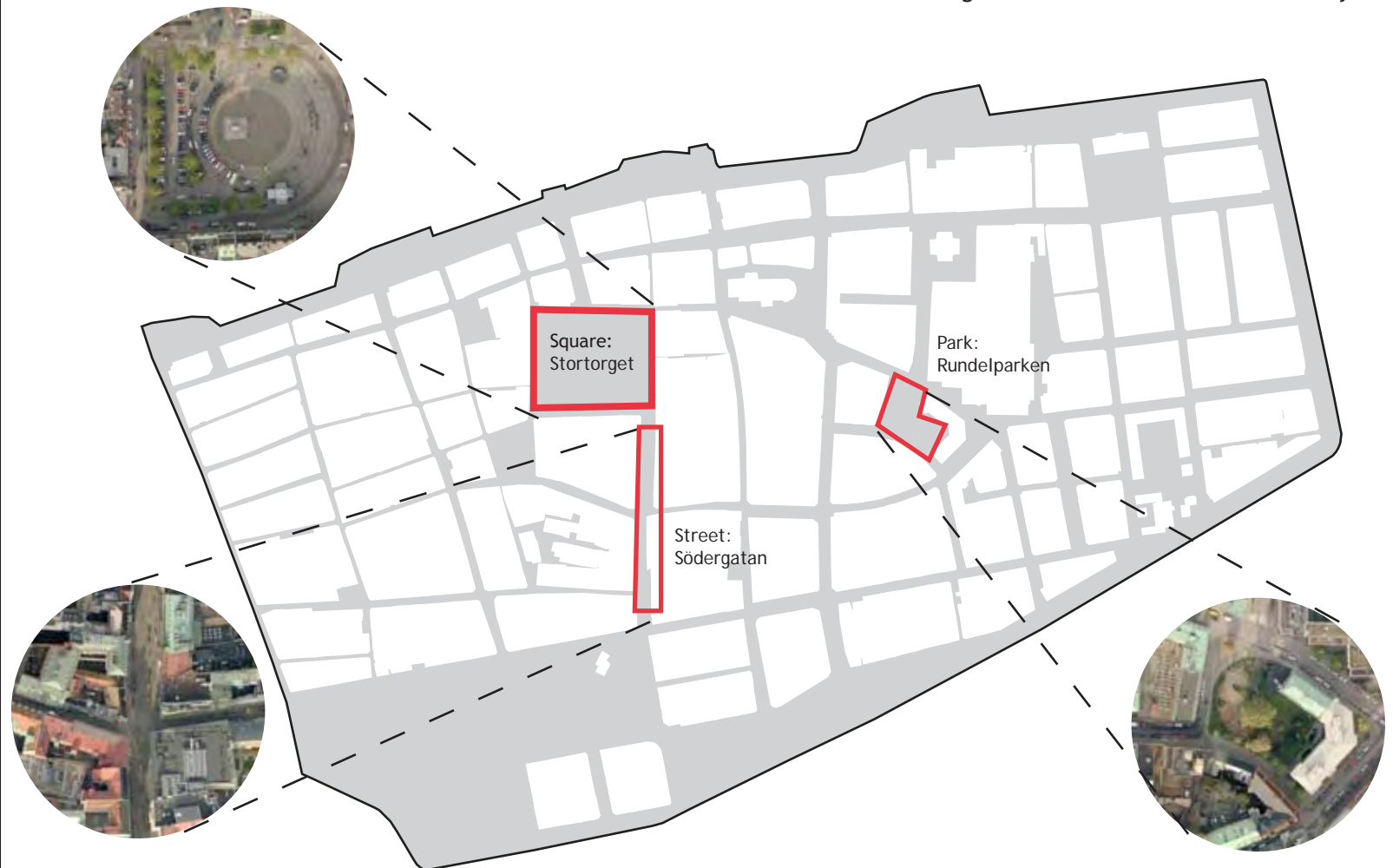
It is not only physical aspects which promote social cohesion. There are other factors which affect social parameters other than typology and perhaps more important because typology cannot break down the barriers created by doxa and habitus. These more subtle qualities are difficult to define and few studies have endeavoured to identify what these are. A small empirical study into the interaction in the spaces of Gamla Staden has been made in an attempt to identify the qualities that help to break down the social norms that hinder human interaction. Social interaction occurrences have been noted from a personal perspective as well as an onlooker perspective in three different types of public space. Interaction is thought of in this case as some kind of connection between strangers. It can be a conversation, a passing comment, a smile or even a knowing glance. The requirement for me is that people acknowledge each other and not just remain in the same space as each other.



## Observations

The interaction between people in three different types of public space in Gamla Staden was observed in order to gain an insight into what factors facilitate meeting in public space. Notes were made and photos taken to record instances of spontaneous interaction. Some key elements were observed in attempt to verify what was found in the literature and other factors were discovered on site. Climate was taken into consideration as sun, shade and wind have effects on people's behaviour according to Whyte (2009). These elements though only draw people to a

space, they cannot determine whether those people then interact with each other in that space. This study is made in order to determine what it is that encourages people to connect with strangers. The first day of observation was in the evening on a cold winter day. The second observation was midday on a sunny, cold day. The third observation was made in the morning on a mild spring day. The observations were done at these different times in attempt to reduce the impact from the time of day and the climate on the study, since these factors have already been determined as having an influence on the level of activity.



# Public Space in Gamla Staden Street

Södergatan appears to be the life vein of the city, where most of the activity is and most of the people are. It is the main shopping street in Malmö, hence provides the structure for a high level of activity. It is also busy because it is a major thoroughfare for the city, connecting the central station with the rest of the city and some of the major 'magnets' of Malmö, including Gustav Adolfs Torg and Stortorget. The relatively narrow width of 20m building to building allows Södergatan to be a lively space and give close proximity to other people. The absence of vehicular traffic also contributes to this vitality and allows for people to move without the obstruction of traffic.

On the three times of the day that I visited, there was a very high density of pedestrians and cyclists in the street. Many spontaneous interactions were noted. The time of day and the climate did not seem to affect the amount of people in this space as it was always very crowded.

On the first occasion an onlooker began a conversation with a busker. One was playing the music, another was listening to it. They have the music in common, which could induce conversation.

On the second occasion, although it was a sunny day, people seemed more inclined to get somewhere else then to linger on the street and take part in any activity.

The final occasion was in the morning on a weekend, and I was surprised to find so many people already there. I observed one person fall over, which resulted in two other passers by stopping to help him up. I see this as being due to a sense of empathy, where people will stop to help strangers in need. Another observation was charity workers stopping people as they walk by. I do not note this as spontaneous interaction since it is part of their purpose to talk to strangers and convince them of something.



Figure i: 17.30 weekday, January



Figure ii: 12.30, weekday, March



Figure iii: 9.00 weekend, April



Figure i: 18.00 weekday, January



Figure ii: 13.00, weekday, March



Figure iii: 9.30 weekend, April

## Public Space in Gamla Staden Square

Stortorget is the main square in Malmö, covering approximate dimensions of 140m x 130m. Stortorget is a connecting node between the station and Södergatan. It is very heavily trafficked from this sense. The square is only really activated when a big festival or event there because of its scale. Even if there are 30 people on the square it doesn't feel lively because of the proximity to others.

The first observation occurred at night when about 20 people were standing around protesting but the impact was dissipated over such a large space. No spontaneous interactions occurred in my visits but many people were moving diagonally across the space. At one point a balloon popped and made a loud bang, causing laughter and shock. From my personal perspective, people were connected in that moment in time, having shared a collective feeling.

The second observation occurred on a sunny day. I was sitting on the steps leading up to the statue in the sun and one person came up to me and started to point out what a nice day it was to sit there and soak up the sun. We both had something in common in that we were enjoying the sun and this started the conversation.

On the final occasion, I did not note of any interaction between strangers.

# Public Space in Gamla Staden Park

Rondelparken is the only park in this part of the city, excluding the cemetery and patches of grass alongside the canal. Residential, commercial and business ventures surround the park, including the monstrous Caroli City. It is also surrounded by vehicular trafficked streets which could contribute to this lack of activity. Although defined by hedges it is not surrounded by walls but roads. There are benches to sit on, it has a good location for sun exposure but it is a poorly used space.

At the initial time that I visited this park, no one was using it. Some people are walking adjacent to it, walking their dogs or on the street but no one loitered there or sat down. There would seem to be enough people moving around the place for it to be noticed but still no people use it. Perhaps this was because it was already dark or because it was very cold.

The second visit was on a sunny day in March, still cold in the air but you could feel the sun on your face. There were about 15 people in the park coming or leaving in the time I was there. Most people were sitting to eat lunch. It was difficult to tell in this situation whether conversations were spontaneous or whether the people already knew each other.

The final time I visited the space it was again empty, with only people passing through it.



Figure i: 18.30 weekday, January



Figure ii: 13.30, weekday, March



Figure iii: 10.00 weekend, April



# Interaction in Public Space - Conclusions

These public spaces in Gamla Staden showed different levels of activity. It is important for this study though, not just to identify the amount of people but to analyse the specific observed interactions between people and to deduce certain elements that allowed for these interaction to occur. Although Södergatan was by far the most busy and alive public space it wasn't necessarily the most susceptible to meeting and conversing. From these observations and analysis of the theory I have made some key conclusions of the elements that encourage spontaneous interaction in public spaces to inform the design of the courtyards. I have analysed the different incidents of interaction and categorised them to help understand what could be needed in public space for people to interact. This can be used in order to understand how public space can be designed to promote the social life of the city.

One key element came out of the study. It seems that for people to make a connection in public space, they need to have something in common, whether it be an activity, a common knowledge, or something else, something to talk about. It was clear that when something happened that made people laugh or be shocked, there was a common feeling between them. Although this may not have spurred a conversation necessarily, people looked at each other knowingly or with a smile, creating a more than passive connection between them. Also when something playful is opportune, people can share in the experience together. People also feel a connection when they share a common knowledge such as a secret.

When people go through something annoying or disruptive to their day they also share a common misfortune which can often spur conversation. Busking or dancing in the street often draws a crowd, where sometimes interaction occurs or there is something to talk about, often the real performance takes place amongst the audience. People are encouraged to interact when they are undertaking a common activity. People feel a connection to each other when they are for example participating in a protest together or watching something together.

The main conclusions derived from these two studies are that interaction is a complex process and that design cannot neces-

sarily force it or want to. There are elements of design though that can lead to a better situation for people to feel more comfortable in the place and a more parochial realm to be developed.

It was found that having something in common draws a connection between strangers and allows them to feel more comfortable in order to start a conversation. Specific qualities that could encourage this include installation art, performance and common activities.

These observations didn't seem enough for me to gain an understanding of what facilitates meeting. Is it more than something in common? So I decided to refer to personal experience as well in judging factors that make it easier to break down these social barriers that prevent connections with others.

One experience is that of tradition, which brings people together in beliefs or merely for the sentimentality, memories and ritual aspect of traditions. This is another form of having something in common. It creates a sense of shared emotional connection between people who are strangers to each other and knowledge of collective identity between people.

Success or a good outcome for something can be used to strengthen community. As mentioned before, sporting teams often bring people together, especially in success, for example when a countries football team wins the world cup, most members of the public are in celebration together and use the public space for festivities which result in interaction. Another element which often brings people together is hardship, which is not as easily or necessarily desired to manufacture.

It was not clear from this small study whether the type of space - street, square or park had an impact on the amount of interaction and I have made the judgement that it is not the type of space that is significant to meeting, but the things that go on there. It is however always assumptive to generalise as space planning is always contextual and there is a danger in trying to postulate formula for space planning.

# Courtyards

Courtyards are a unique typology of space; they invite ambiguity of public and private and support a variety of meanings. In most cases, courtyards are closed to the public, and only accessible by inhabitants or users of the building. This often causes them to be underutilised in certain situations, where there is an anonymous feel in the building. Used by different cultures from all over the world, the inherent qualities identified in them are socially constructed and vary from place to place. Courtyards and the treatment of their social character can reveal something of the society in which they are context since “the way we live is a direct transformation of social structures, politics, religion and topos and, as such, mirrors society” (Pfeifer and Brauneck, 2008:6).

The structure of urban space in the centre of Malmö is typical of what is considered ideal in city planning these days, with small, human scale streets, medium density, with a mix of housing, business and commercial spaces interspersed with public squares. This structure is a result of these courtyard typologies.

Courtyards were initially designed as natural climatic control in ancient times. In warm climates, they are used as a passive cooling system. Courtyards are ideal spaces to escape from the elements, since wind comfort is greatly increased inside them. The below diagram indicates the percentage of time when wind speeds are faster than 5m/s. Red colour indicates adverse condition, and the gradient decreases in wind factor down to the deep blue. The diagram shows that inside courtyards where it is the lowest wind factor, even ones with one side open is very protected from windy conditions.

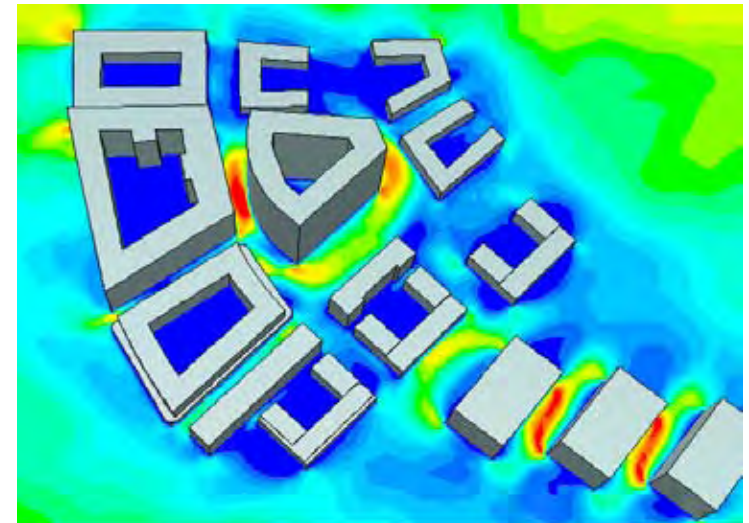


Figure 6

## 5 Courtyards, Munich

A recent project in the old town in Munich displays a similar attitude and purpose as this proposal. The project, by Landscape Architect Susan Burger, in collaboration with Herzog + de Meuron Architects, transforms an existing block in the city and redevelops it to create 5 internal courtyards along with connecting arcades and terraces. The former structure was perceived as a huge impervious block. The courtyards in this case are within a shopping mall block and have different degrees of 'publicness' which is relevant for this project. They were designed as a retreat from the hyper stimulation of the shopping district and the city (Richardson, 2008).



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

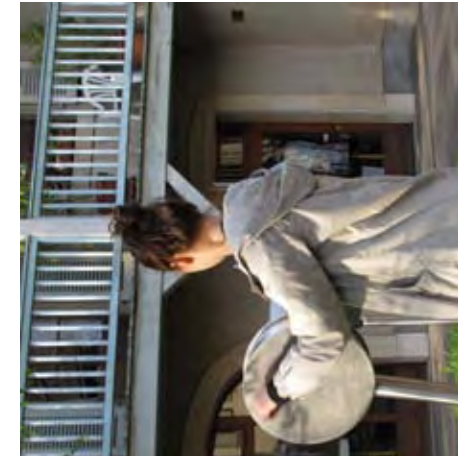


Figure: Carouge inner courtyard

## Carouge

The suburb of Carouge, Geneva, Switzerland has a quite unique and interesting approach to public space. Along with the open squares, which are used for markets, their courtyards are open to the public, providing a more intimate, lush and quite space for meeting others. Several of the courtyards in this area are open and some provide activities such as exercise equipment. The town is proud of its secret gardens, which are promoted in tourist brochures and guides (Guide: Ville de Carouge, available at [http://www.carouge.ch/jahia/webdav/site/carouge/shared/Tourisme/Guide\\_Touristique\\_Edition\\_Bilingue.pdf](http://www.carouge.ch/jahia/webdav/site/carouge/shared/Tourisme/Guide_Touristique_Edition_Bilingue.pdf), accessed 05/03/11). The town offers guided tours, including one of the 'Carouge and its secret gardens' where they will 'unveil the unexpected poetic universe of Old Carouge and its sublime corners...'



## Möllevångsfestivalen

In July 2010, Møllevångsgruppen encouraged residents of Møllevången to open up their courtyards to take part in the Møllevångsfestivalen (<http://ockupantscenen.se/malmo/21>). The festival was a great success and many residents opened their courtyards to the public, both with and without activities inside. Activities included flea markets, concerts, exhibitions, craft sales, live music, yoga, workshops and lush plantings ([www.mollevangfestivalen.wordpress.com](http://www.mollevangfestivalen.wordpress.com)). The Møllevångsgruppen intended for this to be a way to involve all residents in the festival and to use this initiative to promote a well functioning housing network leading to greater cooperation and living together. They encouraged residents to communicate with neighbours in organising this project themselves and also to help them take more responsibility for the courtyards themselves in having them on exhibition (<http://ockupantscenen.se/malmo/21>). The project of opening the courtyards temporarily has been going on now for 10 years (<http://mollevangsgruppen.wordpress.com/>). The project was initially launched to encourage a unity in the community and to enhance the strong collective identity in Møllevången. To the Møllevångsgruppen, the courtyards represent the collective living and social life of the neighbourhood. According to Møllevångsgruppen, the project is much loved among the residents (<http://mollevangsgruppen.wordpress.com/projekt/den-stora-gards-dagen/>).



Figure 10



Figure 11

There is a similar scheme undertaken in Kalmar, where they have “Öppnar innergårdar” on Monday evenings in July. Different activities such as poetry, concerts or wine tasting take place in the different courtyards and costs 90kr (Kalmar, 2010). Festive and ephemeral projects like these have popped up recently in a few cities over the world, including Tallinn, Estonia, where courtyards will be open for 6 days, with different themes to cater for different festive activities (<http://www.tallinn2011.ee/762/open-courtyards-in-kalamaja-musical-courtyard?event=408>).









# Case Study

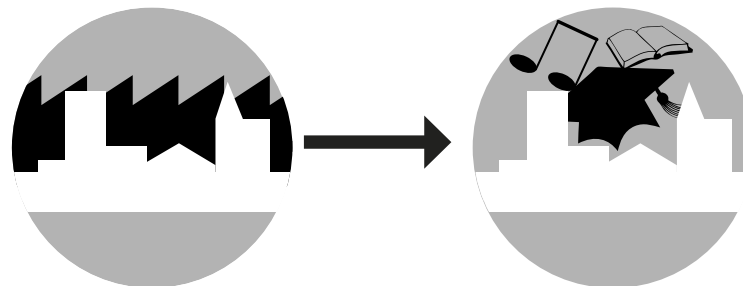
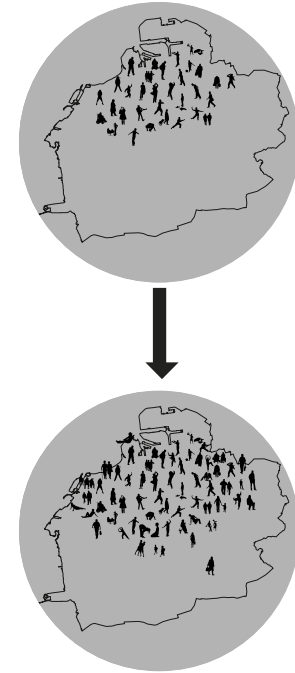
## Context

Malmö is strategically located at the Gateway between Scandinavia and continental Europe, in the Öresund region.



## Malmö - A Growing City

The population of Malmö, Sweden has had a background common to European cities of the 20th Century. The city enjoyed an industrial boom at the end of the 19th Century, when the shipping industry was flourishing and became Sweden's third largest city and an important port in northern Europe (MalmöVision, 2000). The city grew rapidly after this time until the 70's, when the shipbuilding industry declined and with it came economic recession, causing people to leave the city (O'Byrne, 2006; Malmö Stad, 2010). Now the population of Malmö has been on a steady increase for the last 25 years and the economic forces of the city have changed from the flow of goods, towards flows of capital and ideas of an informational economy (Pålsson, 2010; O'Byrne, 2006, Dovey, 2005). Malmö City has published that the population as of 1 Jan 2008 was 280 801 and the forecast for 2014 is 306 359 (Strategisk utveckling, 2008). As more and more people enter the city, the pressure is on for it to grow and expand; adding courtyards to the network of public space in the centre of the city is a plight to accommodate the needs for a growing city within the confines of the centre.



## A City in Transition

Malmö, along with many other cities in the world, is continuing in the transition from industrial city to knowledge and culture based economy (O'Byrne, 2006). This means that there are large tracts of land in the city, close to the centre which are currently undergoing a process of regeneration and redevelopment. Malmö is also focusing on education and information, enhancing the university and building on links within the region and the world (Malmö Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2001).

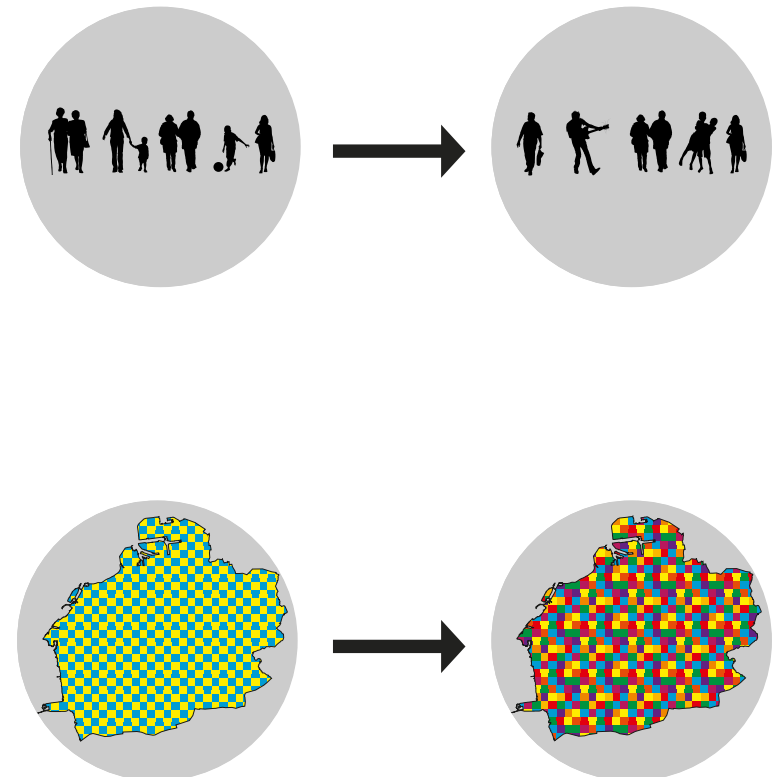
# A Changing Society

Society is changing and cities therefore must respond to these changes. The public realm is bound to increase in importance along with these changes (Schwartz, 2011). The way that we build cities must be constantly questioned, as should current land uses, urban structures and urban theories. As we have seen through history, there is no right way to approach city design, only better ways, and this is why we must not let habitual conceptions preside (Carmona, 2003). The way that we design and use our cities should always be under scrutiny and challenged and this paper is a result of questioning a long and taken for granted use of the inner courtyards (innergårdar) in Malmö. Although the courtyards in Gamla Staden are largely private spaces, inaccessible to users of the city, society is undergoing a process of change, with an influx of immigrants and a changing mindset in the culture and it is my contention that it could be beneficial for the city to change also through the opening of these courtyards.

Malmö has been and is currently experiencing a significant change in demographics. 28% of current inhabitants of Malmö were born in another country, and 9% of those born in Sweden have both parents born in another country. So 37% of Malmö residents have roots in another or several cultures (Strategisk utveckling, 2008). 174 different countries are represented in these numbers, so many cultures are coming together in the city of Malmö. The largest groups are from: Iraq 9500; Denmark 9200; Yugoslavia 8500; Poland 6900; and Bosnia 5 900 (Pålsson, 2010).

Carr (1992) recognises that along with a changing culture and demographic, evolution of types of public space could be necessary along with the regeneration of existing public space. In the year of 2009 almost half the people moving in were 20- 29 (Pålsson, 2010). This is significant because it shows that the attractions of the city appeal to a younger resident.

As society was also undergoing a process of change in Northern Europe, many of the church cloister courtyards, which were originally used by monks and nuns for privacy and meditation, have been opened up to the public and are these days some of the most accessible courtyards in Europe (Keister, 2005).



# Malmö - City of Parks?

The city still holds onto its historical reputation as the 'city of parks' from the 1900s, when the grand parks such as Pildammsparken, Slottsparken and Kungsparken were laid out. Compared to other large cities in Sweden though, Malmö actually has less green space (Malmö Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2003). The Green Plan for Malmö, adopted by the city 13th May, 2003, states that 12% of the city area is secured as green space, but they aim for an additional 19%.

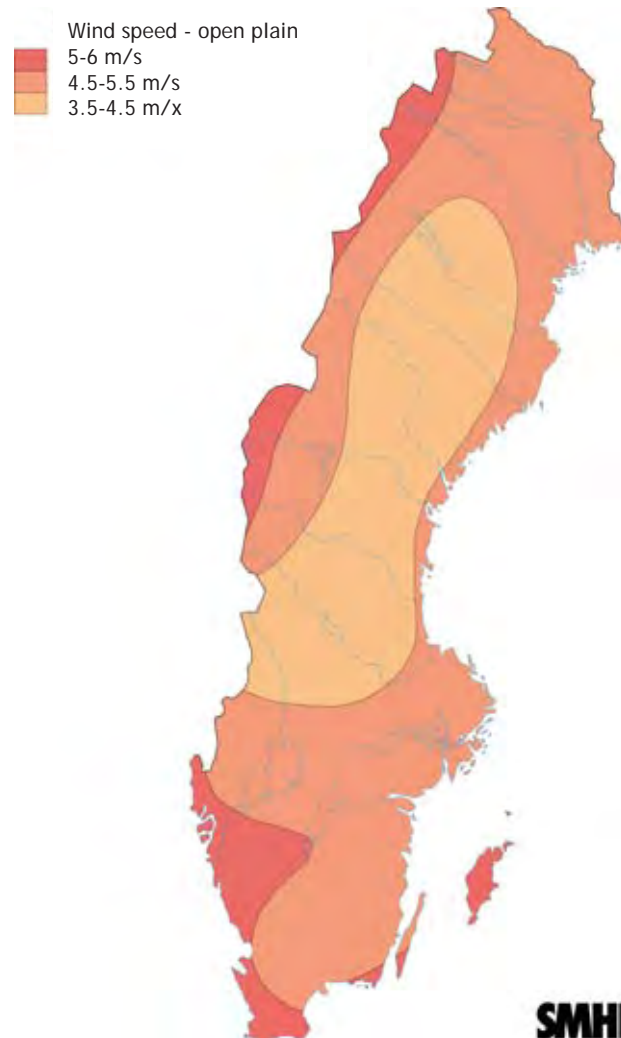


Figure 13

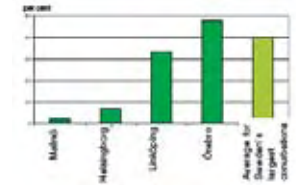
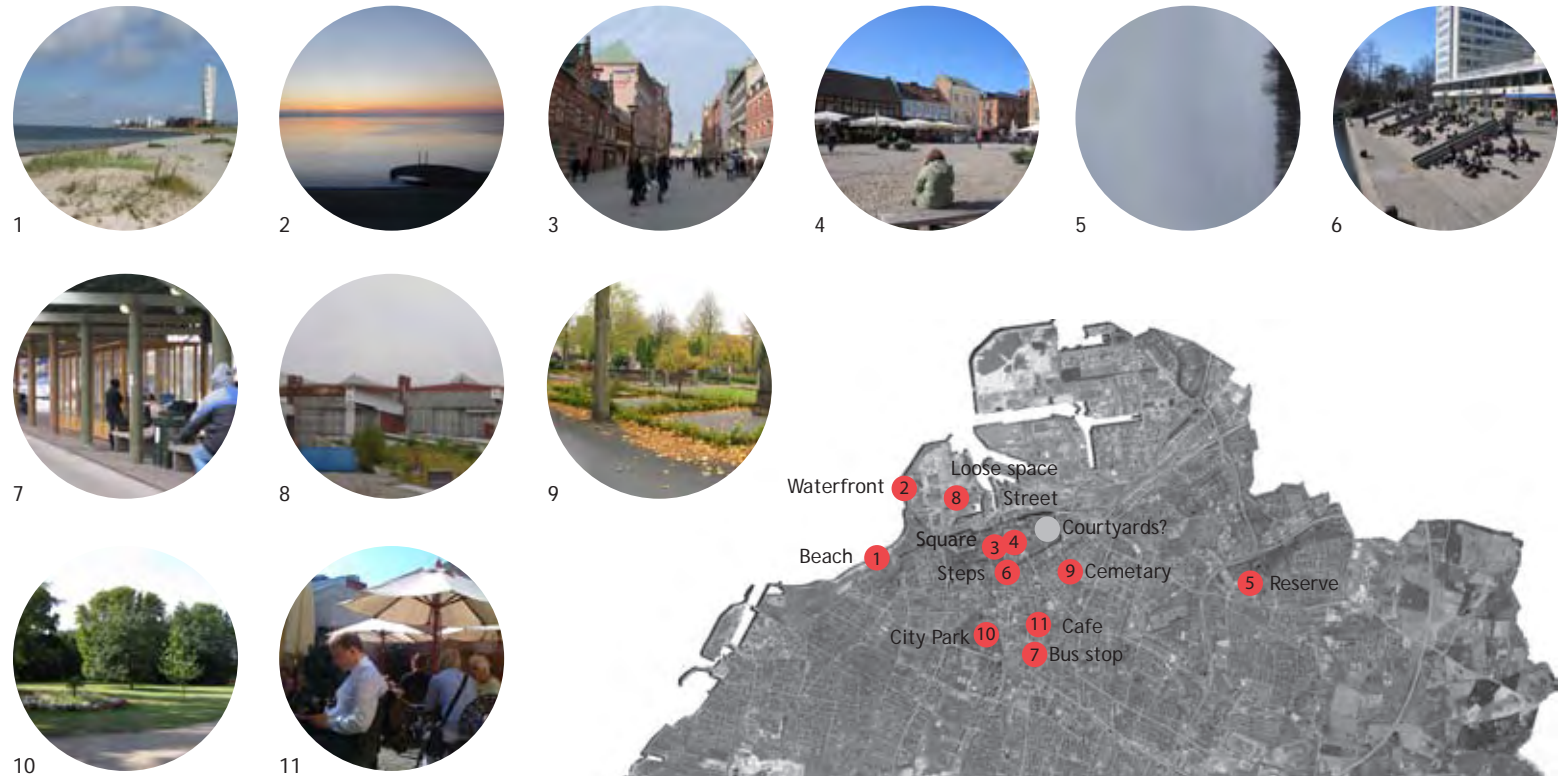


Figure 12: Percent Green Space of Similar sized cities

## Windy City

'A comfortable pedestrian environment is based on human experience. Wind can cause us to perceive a temperature that is up to 10°C colder compared to calm conditions (Johansson and Sandberg, 2006).' Gehl, (1987) asserts that wind is the most significant challenges in outdoor space. Problems include keeping balance, keeping warm and protecting oneself. Opening the courtyards allows people a chance to get out of the elements, even for a moment while travelling in the city. Malmö is a relatively windy city, and when it is windy, it travels down the streets and you feel very exposed in the public squares, you just want to get out of the wind but often if you have no reason to go inside a building, there is no escape from it.

# Identifying different types of public space in Malmö



The comprehensive plan for Malmö doesn't appear to emphasise public space but rather has extensive studies and mapping of specifically green space. I have identified the major public types of public space in Malmö including traditional conventional forms of public space such as open green spaces, streets and squares as well as alternative forms of public space, including train platforms and bus stops, 'loose space,' cemeteries and cafes. Public space can take on many forms these days, with all spaces contributing to the public life of the city.

Figure 13



# Gamla Staden

Gamla Staden was chosen because of the historical significance, the importance of this central part of the city to the whole of Malmö, the lack of green space and the rate of workplaces and the rate of single person dwellings. These factors will be elabo-

rated upon below. Although the city spaces of Gamla Staden are working quite well, there is a feeling of impersonality there, a lack of community like there is in other parts of the city such as Möllevången. How can this be addressed?





## Living City

There is also a greater proportion of workplaces here compared with the rest of the city. Gamla Staden is dominated by workplaces rather than a mix of residential and business as is in the rest of the city. This means that many people come to this area in the day even though they don't live in this area. "If you spend 8 hours of your day at work and eight hours at home, there is no reason why your workplace should be any less of a community than your home" (Alexander et. al., 1977:223).

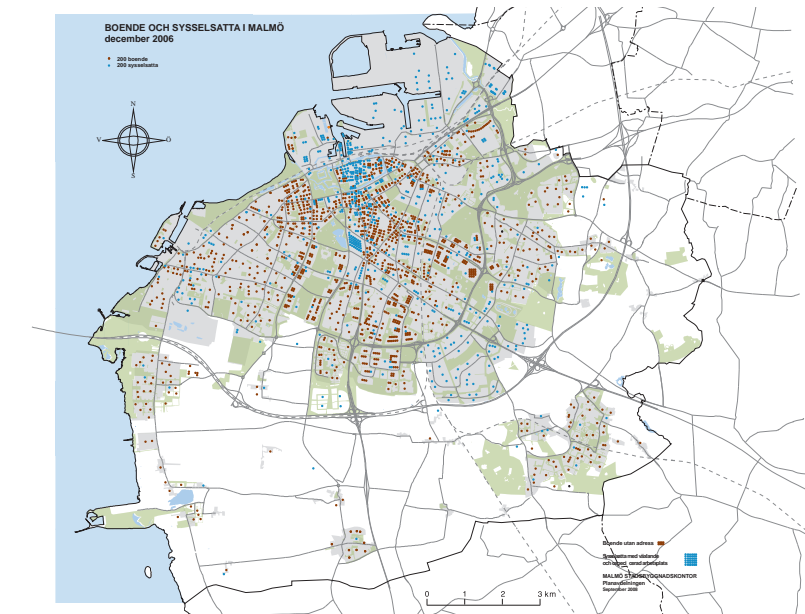


Figure 14: Workplaces and Residences

## Gamla Staden - Lonely City

59% of the residents in Gamla Staden are living alone (Strategisk utveckling, 2008). This means that the "need for human contact" is greater in this area. Social activities are increasingly important and depend on the presence of other human beings (Gehl, 1987).



# A lack of green space

Gamla Staden is one of the least 'green' areas of the city. According to Malmö Stadsbyggnadskontor (2003), Gamla Staden is categorised as 'Grey space,' consisting of less than 5% green space. This is in contrast with the whole city having approximately 12% green space. This is also characteristic of the industrial areas of Malmö, but Gamla Staden holds an important place in the city. It is the symbol of the city in a way since for many visitors it is the first impression. Many people live, work, recreate, come to eat and be entertained here and while there are large squares such as Stortorget and Lilla Torg, there is a lack of green open space. Since the heritage aspect of Gamla Staden is important, how can it increase public green space? Courtyards which are currently private could be thought of in another way to increase the green space in the centre of Malmö. While other parts of the city can reclaim former industrial plots for green or recreational public space, the historical part of the city has no options for expanding in this sense and it is more important to hold onto the old character of the area and find new ways to provide alternative open spaces here. While there are large parks in close proximity to Gamla Staden, it is the lack of smaller local parks within the area that stands out.

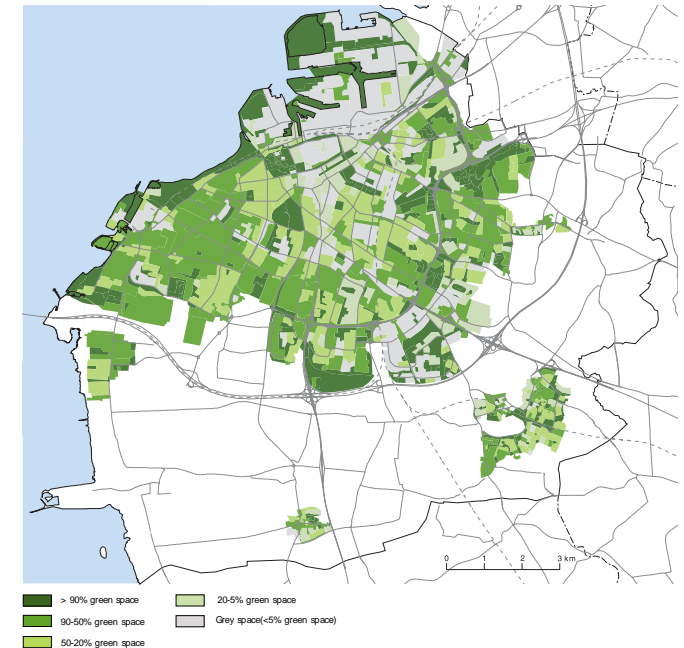


Figure 15

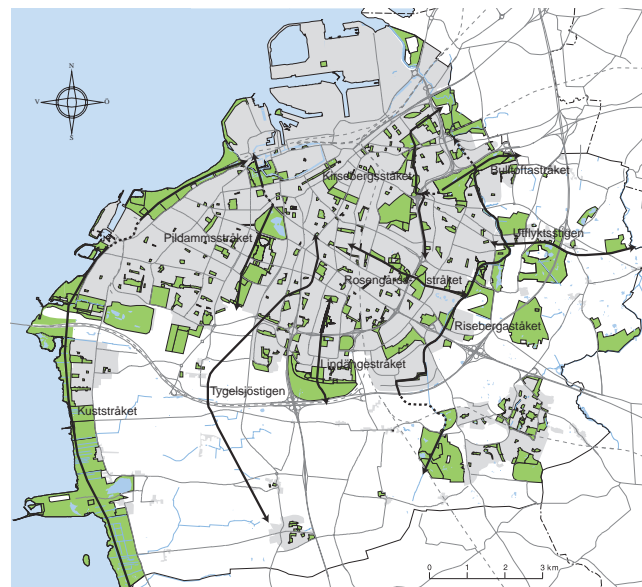


Figure 16

## Fragmented structure

The city aims to connect its open space structure more through the addition of a greater number of smaller spaces which create more comprehensive thoroughfares.

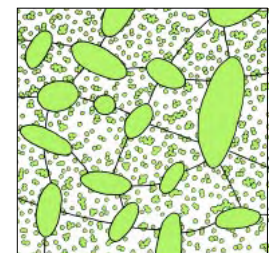


Figure 17

# Caroli City

There are plans for the renovations of Caroli City, a huge commercial and residential development in Gamla Staden. The new center, designed by Schmidt Hammer Lassen Architects, will be more permeable, with more entrances and places to

stay. This is interesting in the context of this project because they have proposed various spaces inside the center which function like courtyards, only are covered by glass roofs.

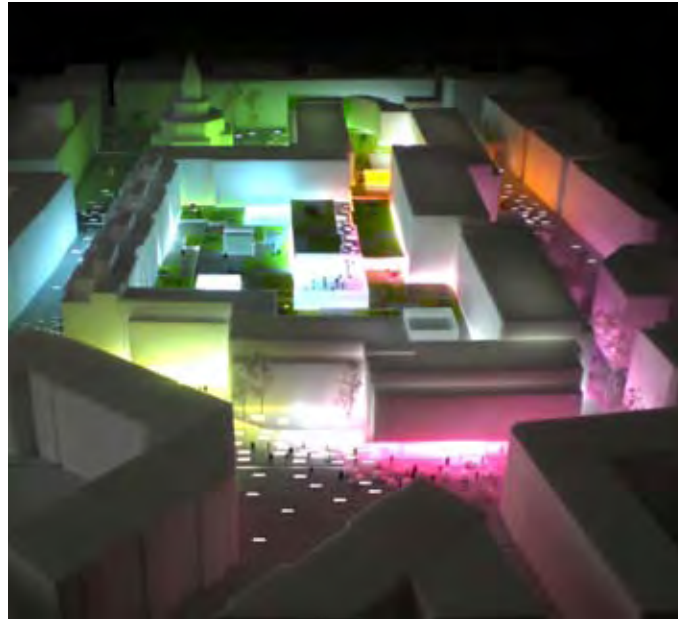


Figure 18



Figure 19



Figure 20



## Publicly Private

There is an interesting cross over between public and private in Gamla Staden. At night the private realm becomes very public where the apartments on ground floor are illuminated and become an interface between inside and outside (figure 11). The private lives of the people living here become very public. In fact, while getting photographic analysis for this report, I was about to take a photo in one window, when someone had just come out of the shower naked and walked into the kitchen, which had a window facing the street, I didn't take the photo but it illustrated to me just how much of a blur there is between public and private here. You also notice how there are often views into the courtyards from the street (figure i). So while they are not really available for public use, they are visually accessible.

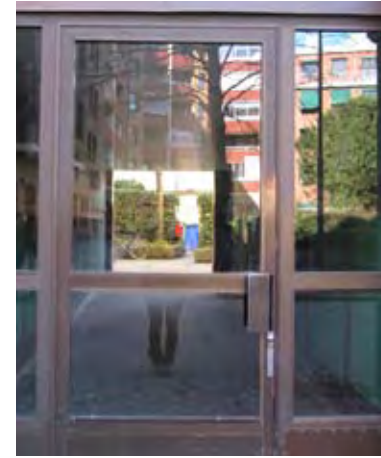


figure i

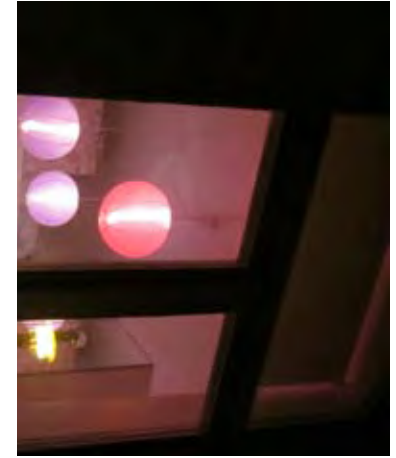


figure ii

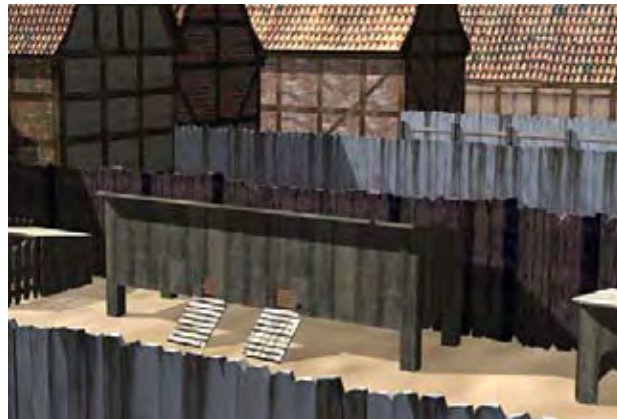


Figure 21



Figure 22

## Courtyards of Gamla Staden

The courtyards already have a shifting history, but before 1700 they were very much private spaces. They were used for growing fruit and vegetables and or if the owner was a merchant or craftsman, they were used to house merchandise or were used as workshops. They were also where the lavatory was built. Sometimes they were even used as grazing land. When the industrial revolution came to Malmö, in the late 1800s multifamily housing and apartments caused them to become communal. They usually had a communal well used for collecting fresh drinking water, but otherwise the properties were separated (Albertsson, 2011). The opening of the courtyards in the old town would expose another level of collective memory in the city. The courtyards used to be used for keeping animals, for collective water pumps, for fruit and vegetable gardens and for storage for merchants and workshops for craftsmen. They are a concealed part of the heritage of the city and opening them would reveal some of this heritage to the public.





# Analysis

The analysis has been made in order to identify which are most receptive to becoming public. Investigations have been made into several aspects of the courtyards, although some of them were determined to be less useful in discovering which are apt for using as public space. I originally looked into the spatial aspects of the courtyards to give indications to whether certain courtyards would be better suited for use by the public. Aspects such as shape and size were evaluated but it was decided that since design can accommodate for these factors they would not be prominent in whether or not courtyards would be suitable to converting from public to private. Other factors then were taken into account, which were more social in thought. The first of these aspects was location, since the position in the urban fabric is important as to whether the spaces would be used. Busier parts of the city are assumed to be better suited to opening to the public. Another of the aspects was surrounding uses, which would reveal something of the social character of the courtyards and their accessibility. Finally it was also assumed that the amount of sun that a courtyard receives was an important factor in drawing people there. Since these aspects draw people to the places, the proposal will deal with how to encourage interaction once people are there by providing something in common.

# Mapping space

Building Volume

Green Space = 14 348m<sup>2</sup>

Parks, Cemeteries

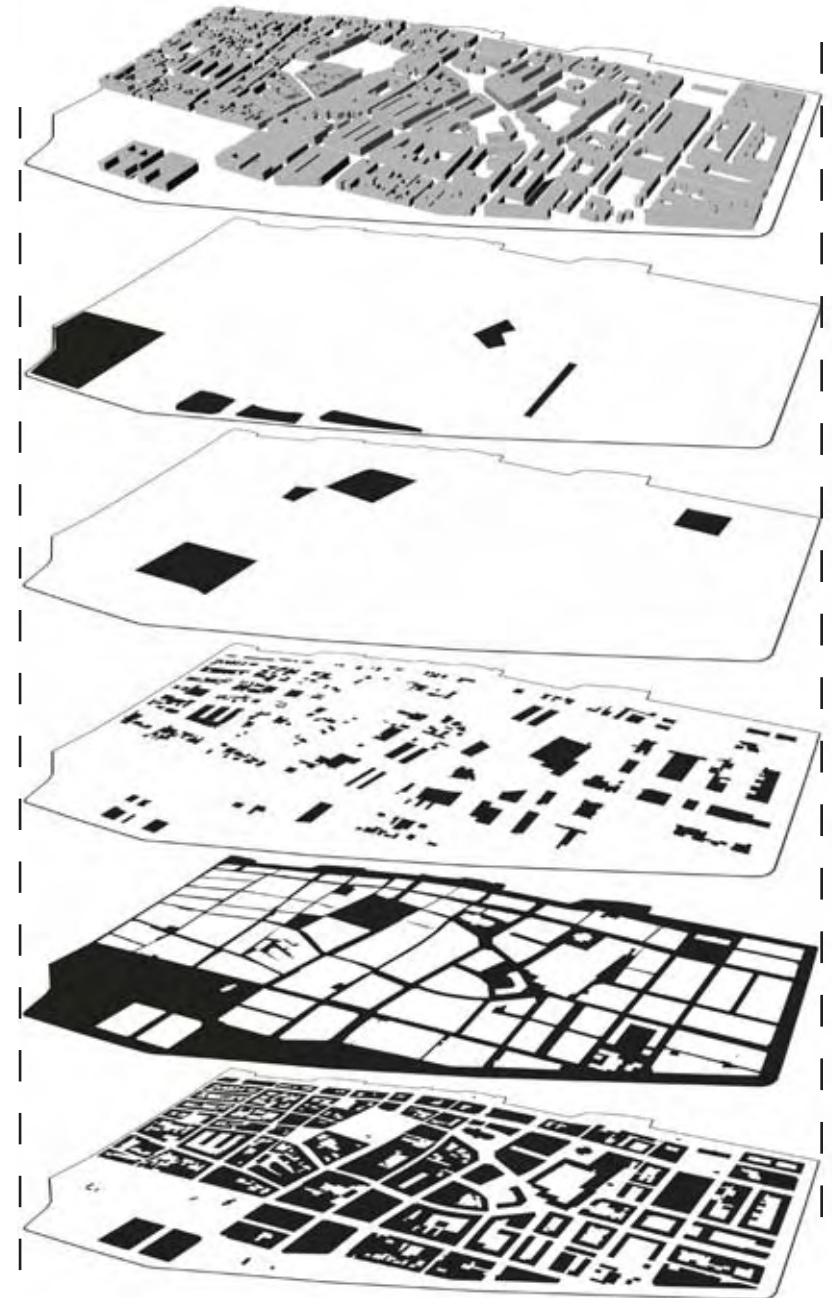
City Squares = 39 672m<sup>2</sup>

Inner Courtyards = 101 165m<sup>2</sup>

Public Space = 334 771m<sup>2</sup>

City Squares, Streets, Parks, Cemeteries

Building Footprint = 346 966m<sup>2</sup>



## Building Volumes

The Courtyards are well hidden behind the mass of buildings. They provide a dense framework for this part of the city, and for the most part make up the private spaces of the city. Building heights vary between 1 and 6 stories, but the majority are 4 or 5 stories high. Overall, although the building density in Gamla Staden is relatively high compared to other parts of the city, the population density is not so high.

## Green Space

The Green Space in Gamla Staden is minimal, comprising only 2% when the aim of the city as a whole is to have 31% green space.

## City Squares

The public squares of Gamla Staden are a central part of the city's identity. They comprise of large spaces, where only Lilla torg is a little more intimate, but still large on Alexander et. al. (1977) standards.

## Inner Courtyards

The inner courtyards in Gamla Staden make up about 13% of the entire area. Although Malmö is a relatively small city and there are not the space restrictions that are evident in other larger cities, the area of Gamla Stan has little possibility to expand in any way due to its historical nature and canal borders.

## Public Space

Buildings make spaces rather than space surrounding buildings. The city's main public squares are located in Gamla Staden, including Stortorget, Lilla Torg, Drottningtorget and Gustav Adolfs Torg. There are not many other typologies of public space located here. The streets of Gamla Staden (many of which are closed to car traffic), a few park spaces surrounding the area and Gamla kyrkogården comprise the remainder of public space. What if another typology of public space was introduced in the form of courtyards?

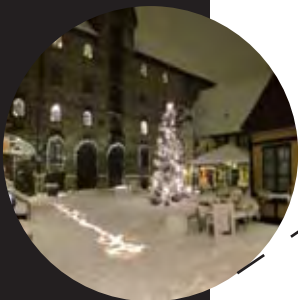
## Building Footprint

The structure of Gamla Staden can be seen quite clearly from the building footprint.

## Open Inner Courtyards and Passages

There are a number of courtyards and internal connections already within the city. Most of these are connected to historical buildings with some kind of cultural or commercial use attached and are only open to the public at certain times of the day. Most of the open courtyards are situated with an historic building with heritage significance attached. They also have connection with some kind of commercial enterprise, whether it be retail, restaurants, bars, cafes or art spaces. Although they are open,

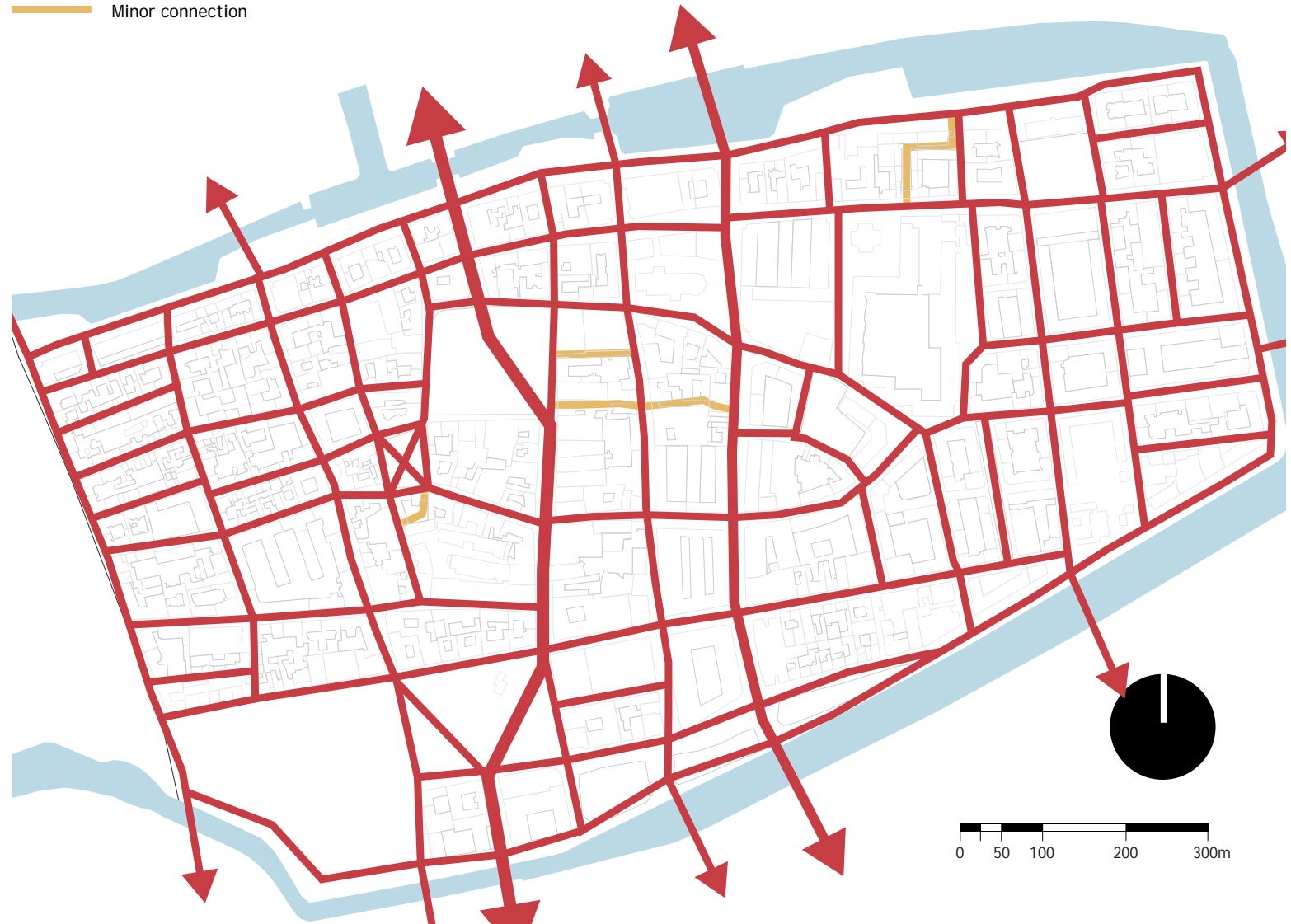
people do not tend to linger there or loiter, perhaps just pausing to take a photo, possibly because of the time of year that the observations were made, which was in winter. It could be noted that in summer the courtyard of Sankt Gertrud is lively and the uses of the surrounding buildings including conference facilities allows the courtyard to be used as a meeting space. They are also sometimes used for events, when they become more lively spaces.



# Connections

Major connections through the streets and squares, minor connections through buildings, courtyards and passages. There is a potential here to create more minor connections. The map shows that the greatest movement occurs along Södergatan.

- Major connections
- Minor connection





# Proximity to Main Activity

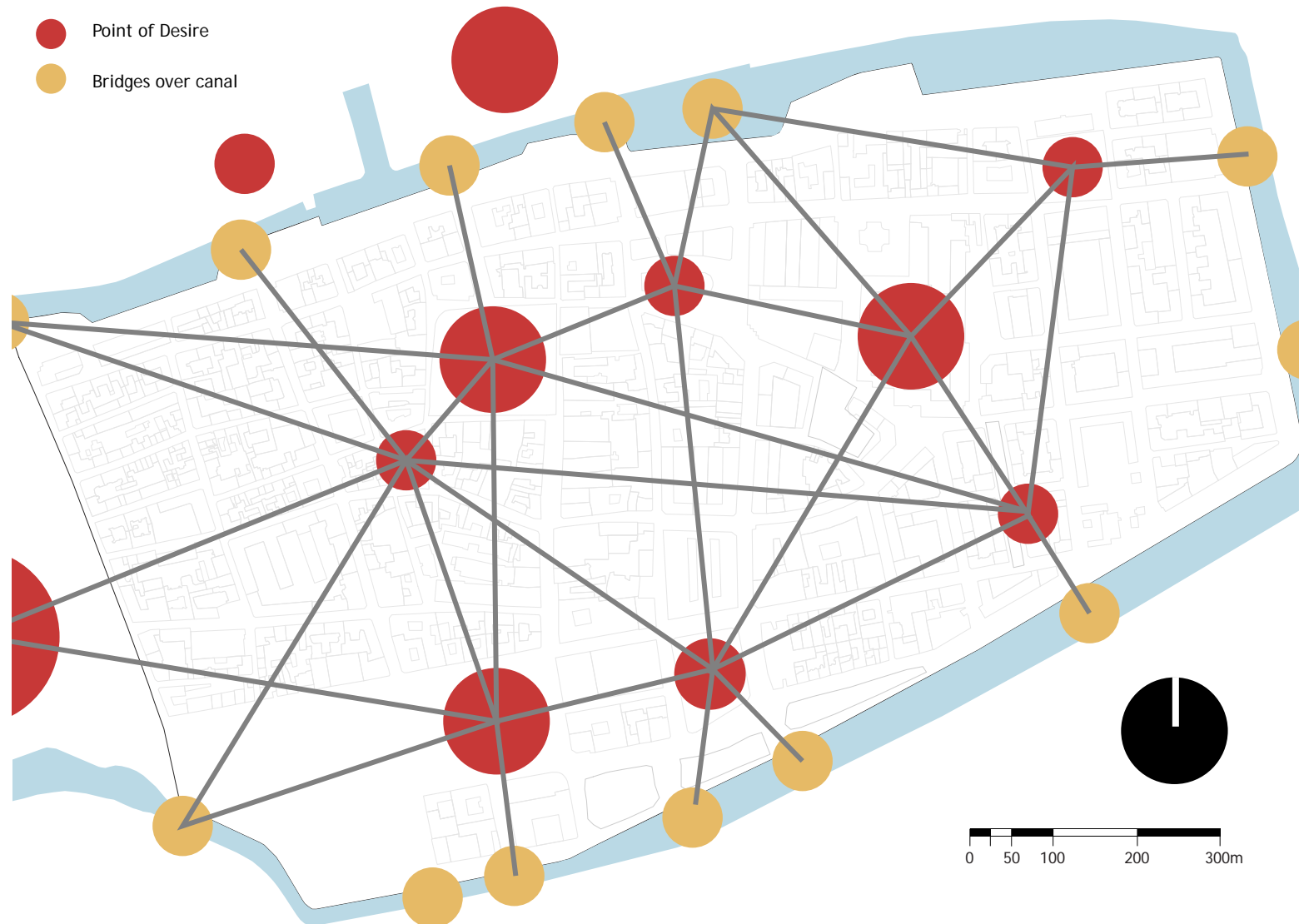
The courtyards shown are those which are closest to the main street of Södergatan and the main squares Lilla Torg, Stortorget and Gustav Adolfs Torg.



# Paths of Desire

I have analysed the city in terms of desire, referring to points of interest for people, namely points of consumer attraction in the city. I use it to materialise ideas on the flows of the city and where people want to go. The main points of attraction in Gamla Staden have been mapped and the connections with the rest of the city to determine where people want to go. Paths of desire have been marked between the anchors to determine

which courtyards could be used for connections. Although some of the courtyards cross these lines they may still be quite easily accessible via the road rather than courtyard. These lines have only been used as a guide and common sense has also been used to determine which courtyards can be used for pedestrian movement.



# Courtyards on Path of Desire

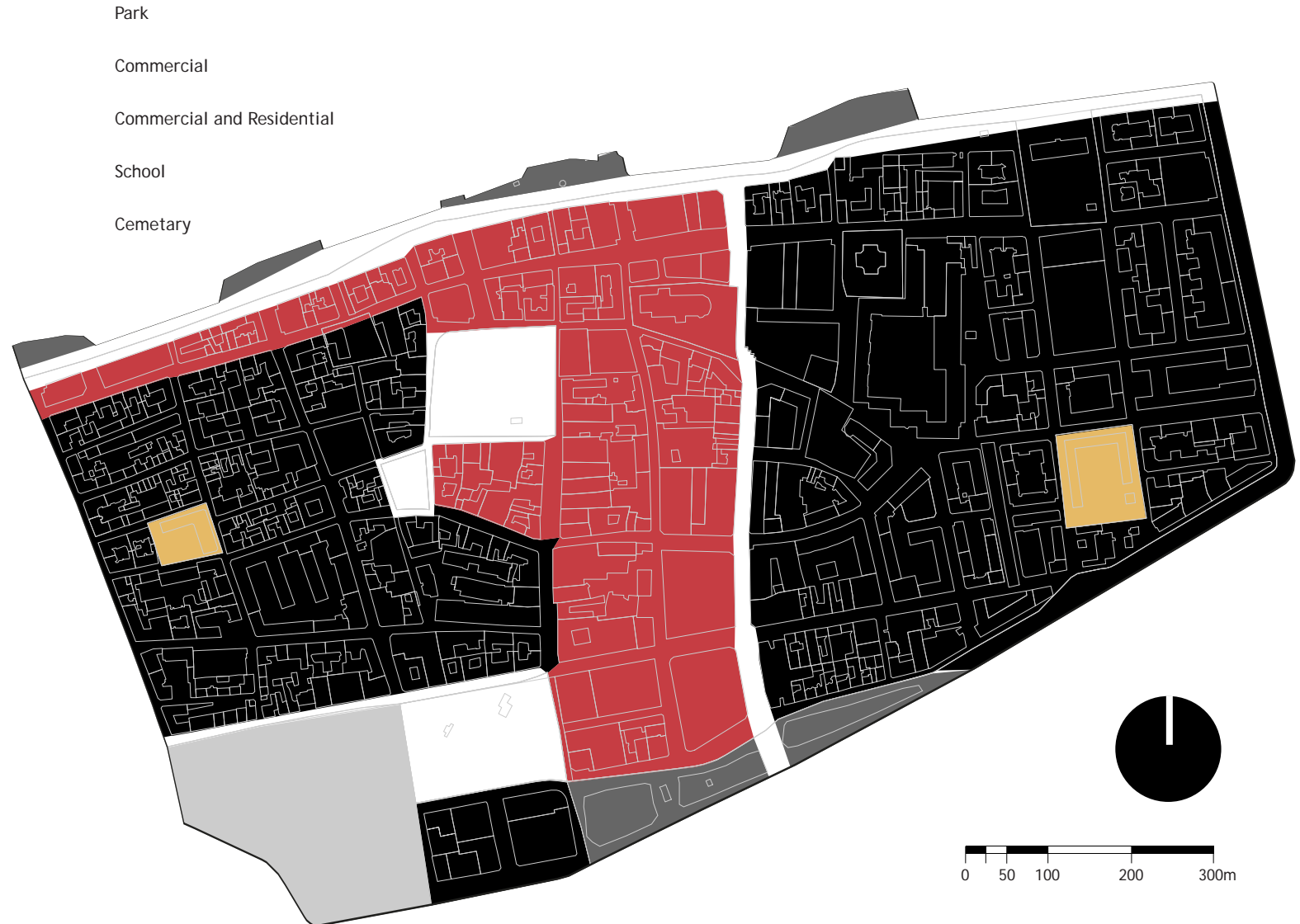
The highlighted courtyards are those which occur along a path of desire.



# Zoning

The dominant zoning type in Gamla Staden is mixed commercial and residential (service och bostäder). It is important to analyse the land use zones to determine the character of the area, but it doesn't tell us the individual character of the courtyards,

only the general area. There are also only commercial zones, centralised around Södergatan and school zones, cemetery and small sections of park zoning.



## Ground Floor Use

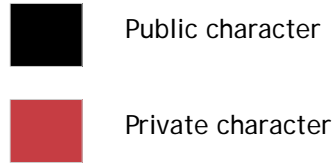


The building use on the ground floor of buildings attached to the courtyards are important to investigate to determine the character of the courtyards, whether there is a dominance of residential surrounding, or whether the building space is used for other purposes. It would also be beneficial to study the programming on each floor but this is considered to be out of the scope of this thesis and ground floor analysis will be sufficient in this study. It is also worth noting that some of the courtyards that are situated above ground floor may have a different character but it was impractical to analyse this because of the lack of access.



# Social Qualities

The land use of the buildings on the ground floor has informed a study on the social qualities of the courtyards. The courtyards were evaluated as being mainly private space in character or mainly public in character according to the majority of surrounding land use on ground floor. Although this reproduces this binary opposition, it was important to analyse which courtyards were surrounded by mainly residential buildings on the ground floor as this affects the resident's private outdoor space.



# Sun

Sunlight and shade play a big part in the social life of urban environments. Whyte (2009) informs that people will even sit outside in cold weather if there is sun available, and they actively

choose spots with sun to stay in. This is especially important in Scandinavia, with long winters and short days. Therefore analysing the sun and shade is important for this study.

Summer Solstice  
13.00





Background

Analysis

Sun

# Sun

Summer Solstice  
9.00



Summer Solstice  
17.00



Equinox  
9.00



Equinox  
13.00



Equinox  
17.00

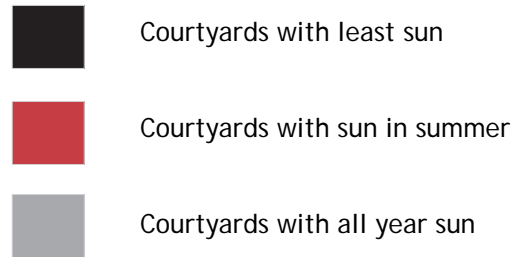


Winter Solstice  
13.00



# Sun

The previous studies of shade diagrams have informed a study of which courtyards get the most sun and which get the least.







“just as the living room reappears on the street, the street... migrates into the living room.”

(Benjamin and Lacis, 2005: 420)

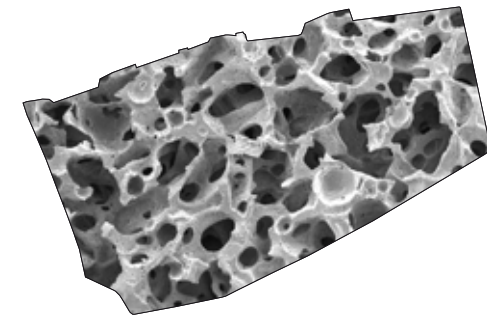
# Proposal



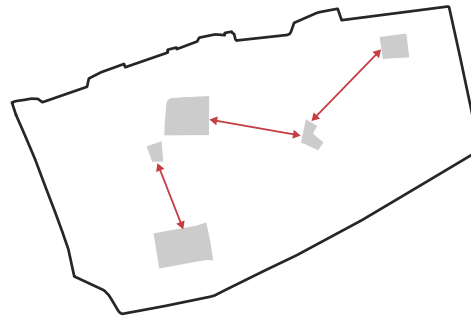
The porosity that Benjamin and Lacis (2005) describe is re-evaluated in this proposal. The porosity of Naples depicted here, defies “any clear demarcation, spaces are separated and simultaneously connected by porous boundaries” (Stavrides, 2007:175). This porous nature in the city results in a lack of definition between certain dualisms (Melberg, 2005). Inside is outside, as outside is inside. The proposal plays on this aspect of bringing the public into a private space as well as bringing the private into the now public through a series of themed courtyards named Urban Rooms. Activities and facilities usually relegated to the private sphere of the home are brought out into these courtyards, to be enjoyed in a common space. This is important for the exploration of bridging the boundaries between public and private in this proposal and also for the ‘meeting place’ as-

Since the study into courtyard typologies did not prove to be successful, courtyards were chosen based on their position in the urban fabric, their social identity, and the amount of sun they receive. The process was quite straightforward since many of the courtyards were inaccessible. For example courtyards adjacent to hotels were not able to be used since only guests are able to have access. Others were actually used as school or kindergarten playgrounds and would not be appropriate to open to the public. The courtyards to use for the proposal then were chosen based on the above criteria with a focus towards courtyards that follow a meandering pathway between the public spaces of the city, connecting them and the existing open courtyards.

pect of the proposal. The Urban Rooms aim to provide a place where people can have a common purpose and therefore provide a platform from which to interact and initiate communication.

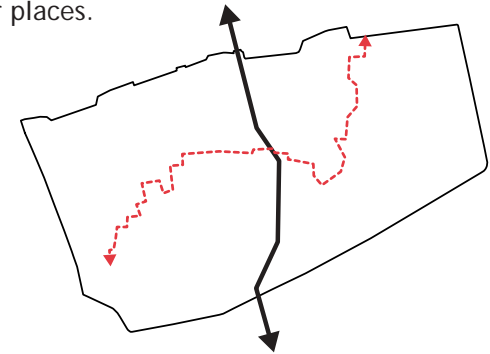


It is important for this proposal to develop in conjunction with the improvement of other public spaces in the city. As we have seen in the analysis, the main street of Södergatan is functioning as a lively public space, with meetings taking place, passive and active social activity and movement at all times of the day. The other public spaces in the city should feed of this vitality and use it. Stortorget is too large to provide certain functions but serves for the city's large events and gatherings. The park at Rundelsplatsen needs to be upgraded and investigated in order for the rest of this proposal to be viable.



The proposal serves as a connection between the rest of the existing public spaces in the city, integrating the lesser used ones and creating a relationship to each other. Through more public spaces in between these main public spaces, the city is made more connected in its public space structure. The green structure plan for the city of Malmö aims to connect open spaces, but the structure plan stops short at Gamla Staden. The proposal suggests a way that the centre of the city can be integrated into this plan and public open space as well as green spaces can be more connected.

The path that the proposal takes in connecting the various public spaces resembles that of the *flâneur*, and encourages people to experience the city in a different way, through strolling, lounging and *being* in the city, rather than merely using it as means to get somewhere. A meandering journey is created through Gamla Staden, rather than a channel for consumption. It is important, while the courtyards may be public to retain the hidden and secret nature of the courtyards, as places to discover and spend time in rather than places to rust through as these kinds of spaces are already catered for in Södergatan and other places.

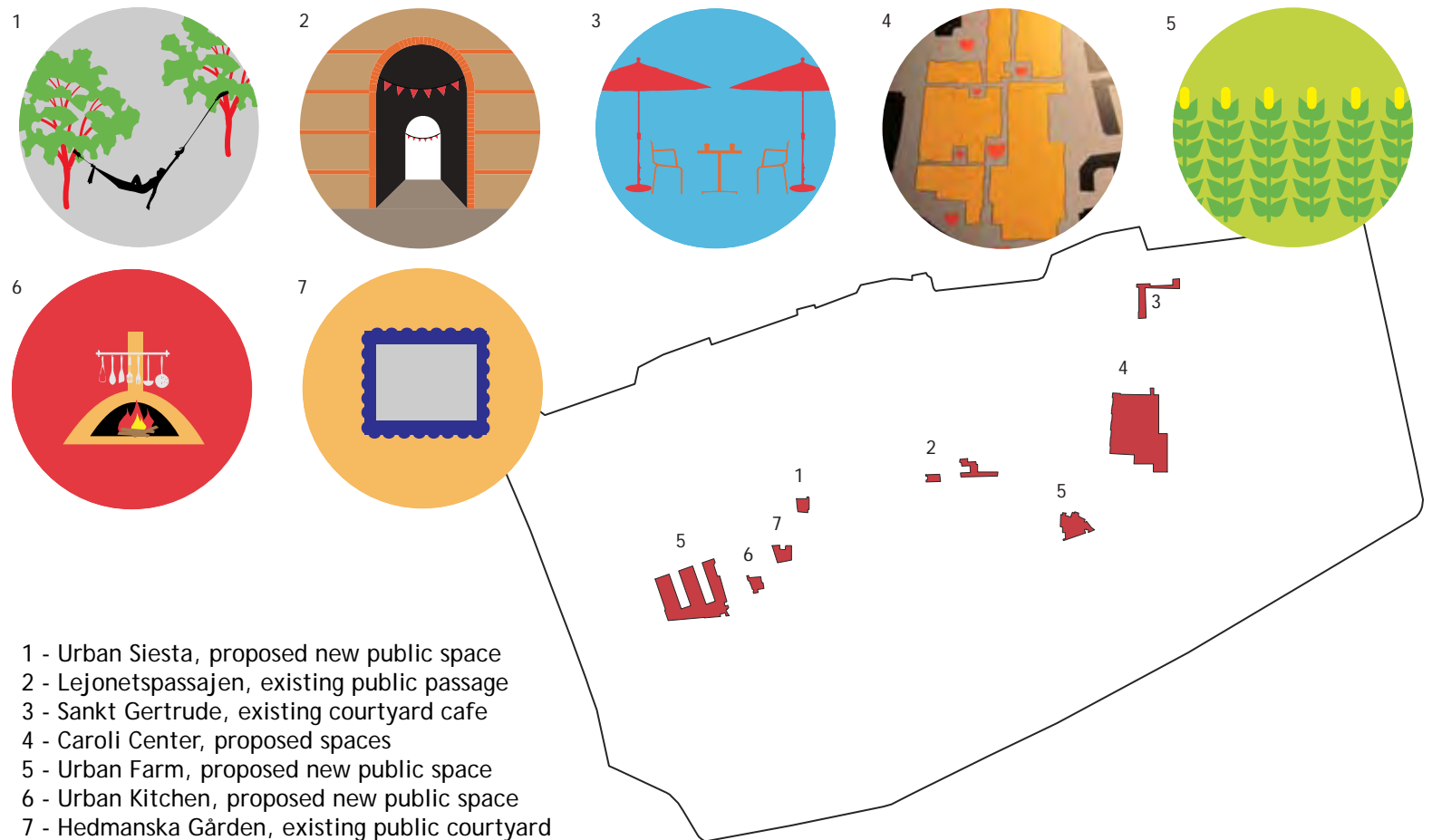


The variety of public space is emphasised and it is important that while these new public spaces are created, that the regeneration of existing ones takes place and that the existing public space structure is not ignored. The courtyards would only be developed in conjunction with the improvement and upgrade of existing public spaces such as Rondelparken.

# Urban Rooms

The courtyards become 'Urban Rooms' in the city, themed to bring the private out into the public through various living spaces. As a series of new spaces which are complemented by the existing public courtyards and connect the public squares of the city, the courtyards act as a new kind of public space, providing for the parochial realm and promoting social life in the centre of the city. The 'Urban Rooms' are in a way an extension of the private realm, out into the public space, creating a new kind of space altogether. 'Urban Rooms' proposed include Communal Kitchen, Urban Siesta and Public Farm. The usually private rooms

such as bedroom for sleeping and kitchen for cooking, which usually occur in private are brought out into the public space. The concept derives from the amount of single person dwellings and the rate of workplaces in Gamla Staden. Urban rooms create places where people can meet, cook, eat, nap and play communally. It gives a more natural meeting place when people have something that they are doing in common. Community created for workplaces and visitors to the centre is emphasised as well, since these people may have nowhere to go on their lunch break which is outdoor, out of the wind and away from the traffic.



## Urban Rooms

The proposal aims to overcome the monotony and impersonality of public life and to encourage meeting and interaction in the parochial realm especially. Urban Rooms are designed to provide a common interest for people, thereby inducing social connections. Social and cultural activities that are non-commercial allow people to be more involved in city life. It provides a chance for people from different backgrounds, cultures, age groups and fields to exchange ideas and ways of life. The courtyards literally become the living spaces of the city, hidden away inside it, a parallel world. Each type of public space has a role in this city. Where the streets serve as transit and activity, the squares serve as market and festival and carnival, the parks serve as recreation and the courtyards serve as the urban rooms of the city. Play is also generated by 'props' as Stevens (2006) points out. Props are provided in the courtyards though the different rooms furniture, whether it be hammocks, benches or other pieces.



Although these situations could be debated as to being public space or not, it is more about providing places to interact and meet rather than making spaces that are truly 'public'. As we saw in the first section of this thesis, the definition of public space is varied and contested but it has been also defined as including "periodic festivities" (Carr, 1992). Therefore, this proposal still responds to the public space by providing 'common space' in Malmö, even if it would not be defined by some as being truly public.

Dovey, (2010) shows how thinking about space in terms of a Deleuzian philosophy of smooth/ striated and folding can help to conceptualise how the habitus can be broken down. Opening the courtyards folds smooth space into striated, thereby undermining the habitus. The proposal folds public into private in a Deleuzian manner, creating new relationships and hybrid forms of space. This folding enhances the parochial realm, resulting in a more communal and integrated city while experimenting with the public space. The proposal highlights the dichotomy of public and private and challenges it through this overlapping and folding of space. Private activities occur in public space, where public activities used to happen in private space. This play on the public and private also contributes to the playful aspects of the proposal. The most important contribution of this proposal to play in the city however is the mere existence of the open courtyards. As Stevens (2006) notes, one of the key aspects of playful behaviour in urban environments is chance. He also contends that this form of play is the most obviously supported by the city's form. "Walter Benjamin noted that urban space was labyrinthine; its complex topology exposes people to new perceptions in an unexpected, seemingly haphazard fashion, and frames new juxtapositions" (Stevens, 2006:821).





“Allotments...provide fresh and healthy food and many non-market benefits such as relaxation, enjoyment and recreation”

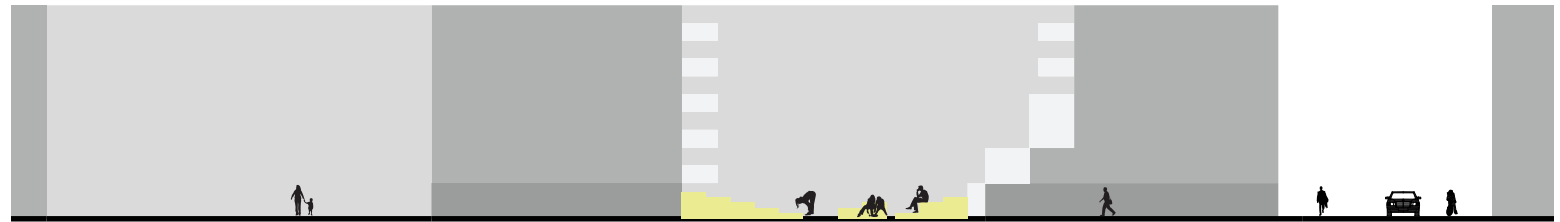
(Perez-Vazquez et. al., 2005: 239)



# Public Farm

Urban farm provides a place where people can grow vegetables communally and share in a common activity for the city. It is also an important place for integration of age groups. Where a teaching process can bring people together and knowledge, tradition and culture can be shared across generations. Many pressures arise for local allotment plots, especially in dense urban environments. Conflicts include land use pressures, pollution and soil contamination and vandalism. The difficulties in quantifying the overall benefits contribute to their demise. Direct and indirect benefits are social, cultural, ecological, economic and recreational. City farming contributes to health in

the form of mental and physical well-being through stimulation and exercise, to social needs in terms of contact with others and to cultural in terms of food preferences and leisure activity (Perez-Vazquez et. al., 2005: 239). The idea with Urban Farm is that the public can be involved in an activity together and then the resulting produce can be used in the restaurants that are attached to this courtyard. The design allows for a flexible arrangement of both farm plots and seating. To begin with the most seating is allowed for where there is most sun but the structure is flexible so that people can design their own seating arrangements in the future.



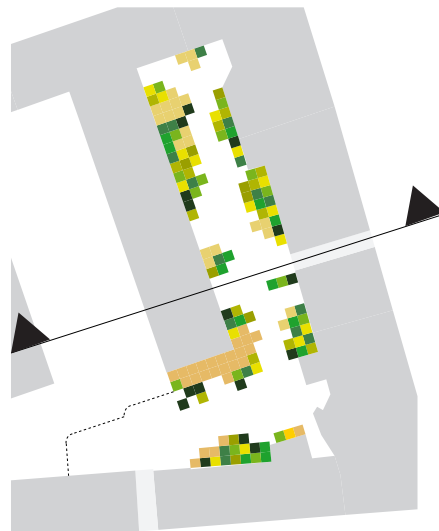
Semi-private courtyard

Private building and  
Semi-private passage

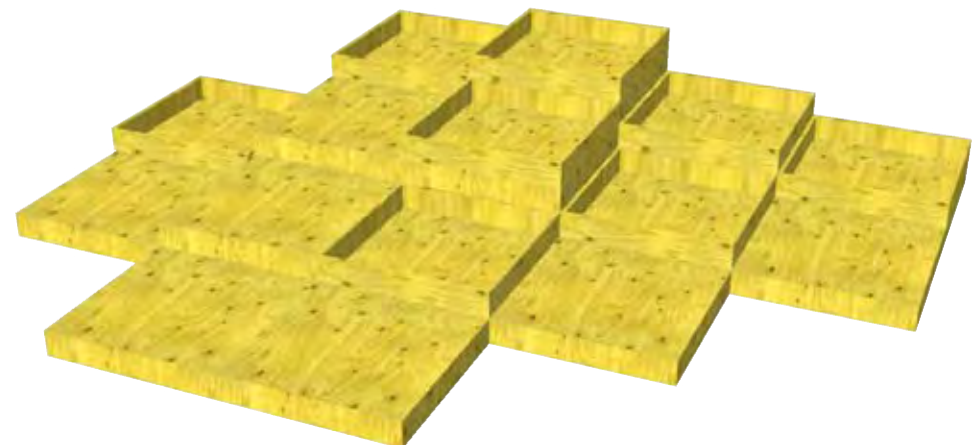
Parochial courtyard  
Private balconies

Private building with  
public ground floor  
restaurants and shops  
Public passage

Public street



0 10 20 30 40 50





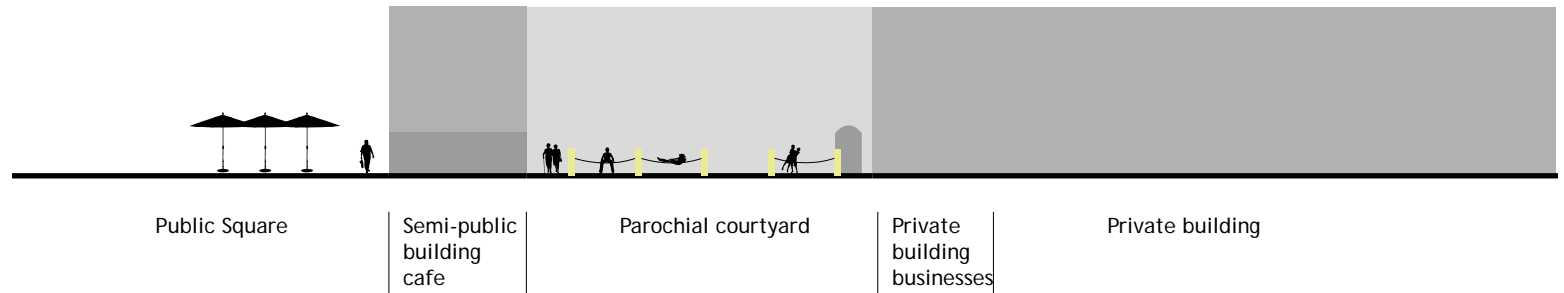
It is possible that sleep as a communal activity may be a vital part of healthy social life, not only for children, but for all adults.

(Alexander et. al 1977: 861)

# Urban Siesta

Urban siesta is a place where people can escape from the city and take a nap. "It is a mark of success in a park, public lobby or a porch when people can come there and fall asleep. In a society which nurtures people and fosters trust. The fact that people sometimes want to sleep in public is the most natural thing in the world" (Alexander et. al. 1977: 458). The proposal uses hammocks to provide a place where people can take a nap and meet others. The lack of fixed bedding arrangements allows people to choose whether they take a nap with others or alone. It is also a playful space, adding to the experience

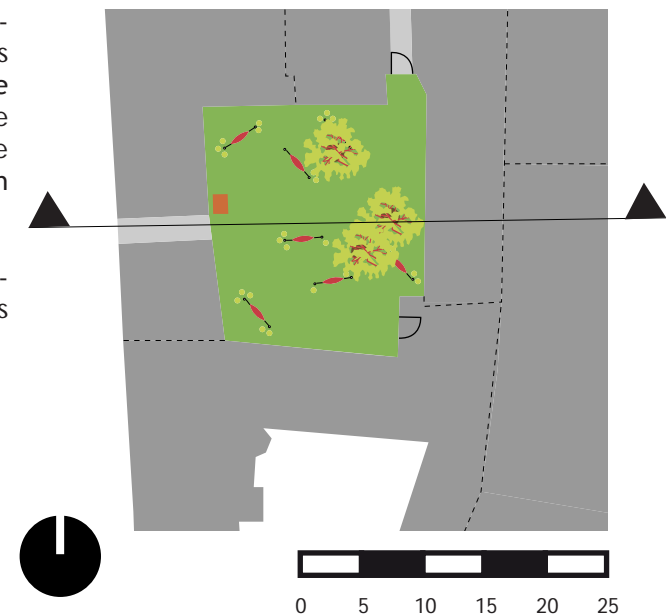
in the city. Sleeping in public places is usually illegal and has been looked down upon historically. Street furniture and public spaces are often designed to deter people from sleeping or napping there. There have been several recent contemporary projects however that challenge this traditional notion of the way time should be spent in public spaces and have actually been designed to promote sleeping in public. In Melbourne, Australia, Sean Godsell Architects have designed benches for public space which act like transformable tents so that people can sleep there (Ryan, 2006).



## Diagrammatical section

Although it would seem that meeting and interaction counteract the act of taking a nap, this proposal allows people to have something in common, which has been identified as a key factor in the facilitation of meeting. Both finding the unexpected and partaking in the same activity draws people together. These kinds of meetings with others encourage more instance of collaboration in the city, with people of different backgrounds and fields communicating with each other.

Sleeping is one of the most private parts of our lives and this proposal is emphasising the folding of public into private by bringing this most private of activities out into the public realm.







"Without communal eating, no human group can hold together.  
The importance of communal eating is clear in all human societies."

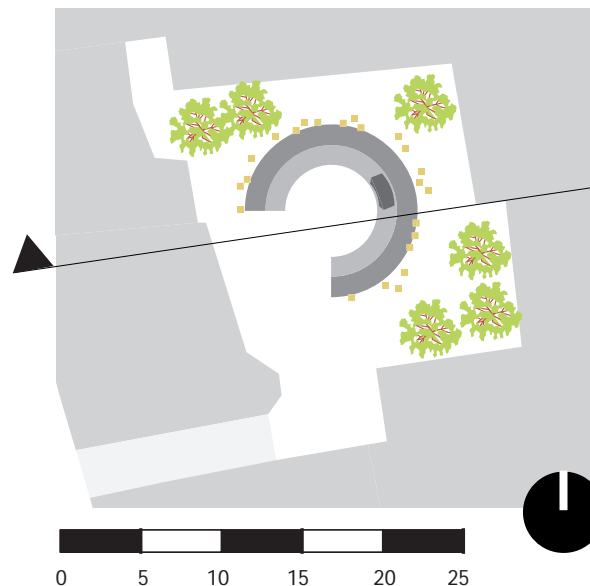
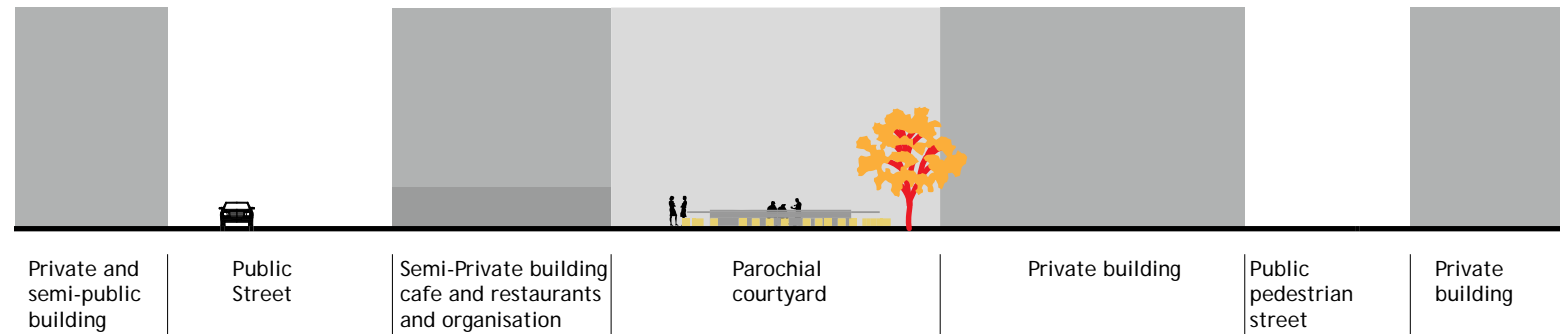
(Alexander et. al. 1977:697).



# Communal Kitchen

Urban Kitchen is a place where people can come to cook together in a communal space and where people can stop to eat a picnic or the food they just cooked. Cooking is a powerful tool that can bring people of different ages, cultures and backgrounds together. Some of the most intimate relationships can be created through cooking together and sharing food and recipes. It is also a place where people can come when they don't have anywhere else to cook a meal for example at work or when they are spending the day in the city. It is also for residents that live alone who may want somewhere to cook with others and to enjoy the community atmosphere. It is a strong point for meet-

ing others and for primary contact rather than only secondary, since people have something that they are doing in common which can be used to initiate conversation. It is a personal observation that cooking together can be a key activity to create integration. Personal experiences have proved that cooking together can tighten bonds and strengthen relationships as well as initiate new ones. It is important for people to be able to eat together and at the same time allows people to use public space for eating without spending money. There are many places in the city where one can go if they want to spend money.



Eating is an important element of culture and affects many of facets of our social lives. Eating and drinking is a social ritual that varies around the world, with a multitude of different traditions, recipes, methods, customs, routines and instruments. Food often acts as a connecting factor across generations, preserving collective memory and strengthening relationships between people and different groups. Food is an important catalyst for communication and collaboration. The production of food used to be a communal process and eating together was part of daily life, compared to often isolated or mass mediated rituals of eating common today (Vannin, 2008). According to Anderson (2005), social life is the most important human need and it is very importantly facilitated by food.







# Discussion

Although in some ways this kind of proposal could be applied in a generic situation, I think the success depends on a great variety of factors. Many cities are undergoing the same changes that Malmö currently is undergoing and brings them into a similar context but of course each place has differences and even the same proposal, applied to different courtyards in Gamla Staden would not necessarily work. This report, in a specific situation concluded with a design proposal which strongly advocates for the opening of inner courtyards, but the issue is still a contentious one. Many of the generic problems of opening up the courtyards were not addressed in this proposal since they courtyards were strategically chosen to avoid these problems. If one was to theorise however on a more general discussion of opening them up for public use, there would be many more questions that would arise. The following discussion addresses issues that come up with the proposal.

While I found many positive aspects of converting private courtyards into public spaces, there are also consequences. The current use of courtyards was a factor taken into consideration when choosing the courtyards. As more and more of them are opened up through the proposal, current uses need to be considered more carefully. Parking for example is an issue faced in all cities. Temporary solutions for parking could be easily created in the cities current ground level open parking lots. Many quick temporary solutions are available to address this issue. Other current uses include storage facilities for waste and other things. The courtyards chosen for the proposal did not have these uses currently available but other courtyards that do would potentially need to revert to other means to fulfil these needs. Another common use of courtyards is for a private outdoor space, shared with the other residents. The proposal demonstrates that an initiative like this can be done without infringing greatly on people's necessary and important private spaces. The courtyards used in the proposal were purposefully chosen to include courtyards with mainly commercial or business in the surrounding uses, especially on ground floor.

Another question that arises is about the security and safety aspects of such a proposal. It is my contention however that people would use the courtyards more if there were more people there using them. Rather than eliminating the secure aspects of these closed courtyards, it is possible that residents could actually be safer as a result of being opened to the public. Gehl (1987), explains how in fact children from both single family houses and apartments play in the streets, where there are people to look at rather than in backyards. This would suggest that opening the courtyards and creating more activity in them would likely encourage residents to use these spaces more as well. It is possible that children would prefer to play in them with more activity happening there, and parents can still watch them from out the windows of their apartments. "If the choice is between sitting in a private backyard or a semi private front yard with a view of the street, people will often choose the front of the house where there is more to see" (Gehl, 1987).

It could be construed that creating more public spaces in the city would disperse people across too much space, creating a multiplicity of 'dead spaces' rather than lively and vibrant public space. Nevertheless, the amount of space isn't the problem, the problem is to create spaces that people want to stay in, which is not always a large square like Stortorget or a commercial one with no public seating such as Lilla Torg. Whyte (1980) states that "supply creates demand," implying that the provision of good quality public spaces generates public use.

It could also be concluded that opening the courtyards could lead to a loss of care and maintenance of these spaces. "A courtyard common to all will be swept by none" (Keister, 2005:7). A fitting Chinese proverb, but there is evidence in Carouge, Switzerland that this doesn't have to be the case. The project in Möllevången has also shown that it is possible for people to become more invested in this common space if it is open to everyone, even for just a weekend.

The courtyards are already spaces where public and private distinctions are variable and ambiguous. They are open to appropriation as public space is and are more receptive to private activities than in the public realm. In this way the vagueness and shifting nature of the space already contradicts the western notion of public/private dichotomy.

# Conclusions

Among current trends in urban design and planning are the experimentation of unconventional forms of public space through derelict industrial sites, temporary spaces and left over places. These have not been thoroughly formally evaluated or tested since they are new ways of thinking and this thesis has been one contribution to looking at different ways of approaching city space.

This paper investigates what it could mean to integrate the inner courtyards of Gamla Staden, Malmö, into the structure of public space in the city. Having gone through this process of trying to determine the potentials and consequences of making the courtyards public I think it could be an interesting and viable proposal for the city. Although Malmö is a relatively small city, without the space restrictions of larger cities, it is still important to consider it as a growing city and to restrict sprawl. This alternative solution for the diversity and increase in public space can expand the city without going beyond its borders. Since the courtyards are currently underused space, they are a valuable resource for the city to use in a more dynamic way.

This thesis has shown that it could be possible to introduce new approaches to public space in the form of new typologies into the planning discourse. It is a current trend for innovative re-use of former spaces to make up these new typologies, but this paper explores using the typology of courtyard spaces, which merge public and private. The result is a dynamic and interesting space, which is more open to creating meeting places and interaction rather than just being together.

It has been important to discuss the concepts of public space, public and private and ownership in different ways so that established connotations do not take hold and rather new ways of thinking can encourage better public spaces. In this way it is interesting to promote the parochial realm when trying to establish new and alternative public structures in the city, which support community and neighbourhood interaction more than the existing structure. This is not to say that traditional forms

and methods of planning public space are not successful but rather to keep questioning and improving the public spaces of cities.

The proposal allows people to see the city in different ways and to find spaces for discovery and play as well a retreat from the sped up drama of city life. It provides a sense of exposing a secret realm and a common knowledge between inhabitants and users of the city. These contribute to the sense of community in the city. It also contributes to the city's aim for an increase in the amount of open green space. The creation of these new kinds of public spaces in the city could be used to promote the image of the city and strengthen its identity.

Although artists are usually responsible for questioning social norms and the way we use public space, this proposal does so through the direct application in public space. It is important that design and planning also takes control of new approaches in the city and does not just reflect on it in a theoretical way.



# Reflections

This thesis was a very interesting venture for me, of which I had many discoveries and fallbacks. I began the thesis to determine whether or not the courtyards could be used as public space, and to investigate the positive and negative aspects of doing so. Seemingly a contentious initiative, this surprisingly developed in the end into strong proposal to do so. On embarking on this thesis I did not expect it to result in a fixed proposal. Although the proposal shows an amount of flexibility with the different stages, which is a tendency of contemporary times, it also became a conceivable and precise design which I believe deals well with the delicate issues of private and public space.

It has been an important process for me to formalise my own views on the role of public space and how this role could be achieved. I broadened my position on the forms that public space can take and have found that all spaces where we are with others could be considered as public life. The exploration of new terms and language for the application of space has been important for me to conceptualise the proposal and what was most important about it, being providing a more local meeting place for users of the city.

Literature on public space and its role was widely available and I found that I had to limit myself on the reading since it could go on potentially forever. It was more difficult however to find a theoretical base for public space as a place of interaction and community cohesion. This led to a small observation study in the three main types of public space in Gamla Staden in order to gauge what it is that encourages spontaneous interaction. I think this study could of course be taken much further to understand specific things and I ended up using my own logical thought to determine that these Urban Rooms could encourage meeting to take place. The empirical study was difficult to gain concrete information from, especially regarding my limited understanding of Swedish.

I found many of the methods I used were not as appropriate as I first thought for this thesis. Since I had not come across a

study of this kind before, I had no set method or rules to follow, which meant that much of the time I had was used to make my own mistakes rather than rely on the tried and tested methods of others. So although a great deal of the work did not result in the way that I set out, it contributed to the learning process and was necessary for me to undertake before I was satisfied with the work. Now that I have completed this thesis there are surely parts that I would do differently next time but I think that Bruce Mau says it well in "An Incomplete Manifesto for Growth" that "process is more important than the outcome".

The case study could have been done in a lot more detail. More information on how people currently use the courtyards would be needed to make a more realistic investigation into whether it would be viable to use them for public space. There wasn't room for this in the scope of this thesis but I think that it would have been very useful to make interviews to find out how people would receive such a proposal as well as if and how people use the courtyards currently. It would have been interesting to use interviews as an additional methodology in order to gain a perspective from the people who actually live and work in Gamla Staden to find out how they would receive a proposal like this. It would also have been interesting to discover what it is that they feel is missing in the city's public spaces and what they would like to see more or less of or what their understanding of public space in the city is and should be. It would have also been beneficial to go into further detail about the current state of use of these courtyards. The study is seen as being a starting point to the discussion of the potentials of converting private space into public.

Another interesting aspect to go more into detail would have been the open courtyards in Carouge, Switzerland. Since I only went to this town when I was about 3/4 way into the thesis, it was difficult to incorporate a proper study of this place into the thesis. I was also there only for one day, during travels, so I could not have anticipated the time needed there to fully understand and gain inspiration from them. Had I had more

time and planning it would have been interesting to study these courtyards more in terms of how much they are used, who allows them to be open, what draws people into them, how they are used, when they are used, and many more aspects that would have been useful for understanding the potentials of doing a similar thing in Malmö. Comparisons between the towns could have been made and this case study could have been used in much greater depth.

The proposal ended up being a very definite contention for the opening up of these spaces to a wider use. It was expected at the commencement of this thesis that the proposal would be more of a discussion into the positive and negative aspects of this possibility. However, the courtyards are perfect for the creation of 'living spaces' for the city since they are in tension between public and private and interior and exterior. Urban Rooms is just one approach to opening the courtyards, of which there could be many other approaches.

The proposal could have been developed in stages since it is a fairly new and controversial proposal. Gradual stages would have allowed time for people to get used to it and also to take on the responsibility themselves. Stages would not be static but occur simultaneously with one aspect involving which courtyards are to be opened and another to what degree, whether ephemeral, temporary, or permanent and whether it is a certain time of the day, a certain day of the week or time of the year. During the design process I initially thought it would be good to include three stages into the proposal but decided against it in the end because I thought it would convey a stronger concept by sticking to the one proposal.





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