CITY LIFE AND ARCHITECTURE AT THE THRESHOLDS:
THE CASE OF YALOVA

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ABSTRACT

CITY LIFE AND ARCHITECTURE AT THE THRESHOLDS:
THE CASE OF YALOVA

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While this thesis on city life and architecture reconsiders the quality of life between buildings, it draws attention to the often overlooked potential of architecture in many contexts where city spaces have lost their livability. Accordingly, it aims to rediscover the vital role of architecture in urban life through threshold spaces and highlight its socially initiating and shaping effect. From this point of view, the study primarily provides an overview of the city and urban life related to the qualities of the built environment. In particular, it creates an insight into the effectiveness of building edges and threshold spaces in defining, sustaining and improving urban life. On this research ground, the study seeks answers to its questions through an urban investigation, tracing city activities and spaces in the light of specific design principles. Compact, unpretentious, but lively coastal city Yalova represents the constant social need for urban life and urban threshold spaces, with the familiar cityscapes it offers from its daily life. Correspondingly, the threshold spaces and their uses, shaped by need, spontaneously and various methods, provide the opportunity to rediscover their positions and impacts in urban life, most simply and

genuinely. As a result, these threshold spaces are significant formations that reveal the role of architectural space in the urban context and the potential of architectural action. Thus, Yalova city observations prove how vital and indispensable threshold spaces can be, and therefore architecture, for a city and its effective functioning. The real question, in that case, is how to introduce "new" threshold spaces into the built environments today.

ÖZ

EŞİKLERDE KENTSEL YAŞAM VE MİMARİ:
YALOVA ÖRNEĞİ

Aydın, Rümeysa
Yüksek Lisans, Mimarlık
Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. İnci Basa

Eylül 2022, 129 sayfa

Kentsel yaşam ve mimariye ilişkin bu tez, binalar arasındaki yaşam kalitesini yeniden ele alırken, kent mekanlarının yaşanabilirliğini yitirdiği birçok bağlamda mimarinin sıklıkla göz ardı edilen potansiyeline dikkat çeker. Bu doğrultuda, mimarinin kentsel yaşam adına üstlendiği hayati rolü eşik mekanlar aracılığıyla yeniden keşfetmeyi ve sosyal anlamda başlatıcı ve şekillendirici etkisini öne çıkarmayı amaçlar. Buradan hareketle, çalışma öncelikle yapılı çevrenin niteliklerine bağlı olarak kent ve kentsel yaşama genel bir bakış sunar. Özellikle, bina kenarları ve eşik mekanların kentsel yaşamı tanımlama, sürdürme ve iyileştirmedeki etkinliklerine dair bir içgörü oluşturur. Bu araştırma zemini üzerinde çalışma, sorularına bir kent incelemesi üzerinden, kent aktivite ve mekanlarının belirli tasarım yaklaşımları ışığında izini sürmek suretiyle cevap arar. Kompakt, gösterişsiz fakat yaşam dolu sahil kenti Yalova, günlük yaşamından sunduğu tanıdık kent manzaraları ile, kentsel yaşam ve kentte eşik mekanlarına duyulan daimi toplumsal ihtiyacı temsil eder. Buna bağlı olarak, ihtiyaçlar doğrultusunda, kendiliğinden ve çeşitli yöntemlerle şekillenen eşik mekanlar ve kullanımları, onların kentsel yaşamdaki

konum ve etkilerini en yalın ve gerçek haliyle yeniden keşfetme imkanı sunar. Sonuç olarak, söz konusu eşik mekanlar, mimari mekanın kent bağlamındaki rolünü ve mimari eylem potansiyelini açığa çıkaran önemli oluşumlardır. Böylelikle, Yalova kent gözlemleri, eşik mekanların, ve dolayısıyla mimarinin, bir kent ve onun etkin işleyişi için ne kadar hayati ve vazgeçilemez olabileceğini kanıtlar. Öyleyse asıl soru, bugün "yeni" eşik mekanların yapılı çevrelere nasıl tanıtılacağıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mimari, Şehir, Yapılı Çevrenin Kalitesi, Eşik Mekan, Kentsel Yaşam

To my family, to the people of Yalova,

and all children…

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Statement of the Research Problem

Today, many settlements in the world suffer from "lifelessness". The open public spaces of the cities are on the verge of disappearing since economic and efficiency-based concerns began to dominate life or even become a lifestyle. In this sense, the exteriors of many cities recently tend to deteriorate to a great extent, both physically and mentally. Meaningful transitions as key interaction venues of urban life are increasingly disappearing from built environments and related experiences. In these contexts dominated by efficiency, mobility and speed, spaces, their connections and transitions become no longer regarded as worthy of particular attention. Instead, they lack charm and quality as a place and consist only of the function or data they contain. Therefore, the journeys between city spaces, that is, between different functions, become no longer experiences. They merely consist of moments with no feeling of living.

If the background of this problem is retraced, it could be primarily pointed out that the quality of life and spatial experience relatively lose significance in the hypermobile society model. For those who think that all kinds of physical and spatial elements that could limit the speed of individuals should be eliminated, the problem of connecting spaces and providing meaningful transitions also no longer applies. Accordingly, in such a system based on function and efficiency, there exists no place for qualified spatial elements. Purposeful transition spaces could cause material and temporal loss. From this point of view, *threshold spaces* are now at the forefront of the most unnecessary and should be removed. In this direction, the design of the building edges also recedes into the background. Thus, building edges whose

architectural elements are restricted become deprived of meaningful connection and spatial and transitional qualities. They become condemned to lose their permeability and versatility, oversimplified as plain boundary pieces, and gradually lose their urban architectural form and capacity to gain spatial attributes. They eventually turn into some uninhabitable layers. Ultimately, this process explains how the city's transitional areas and building edges have become inadequate to accommodate the most basic forms of social contact and the most substantial stationary activities, although they have been successful before.

Thereby, the open spaces of the city, surrounded by such buildings and unqualified transition areas, become unable to accommodate activity and life around them. Buildings generally become more isolated from the rest of the city and its coherent flow. Along with the buildings, spaces, functions, and activities diverge and separate. In addition, with the onset of deterioration in the physical framework in which they are settled, spatial quality and human scale are further removed. In these situations, even fully transparent facades cannot prevent the buildings, spaces and people from becoming more segregated from each other. Likewise, they cannot make some meaningful contribution to sustaining life within or outside the area they delimit. Ultimately, the roles of the city's transitional areas, as well as architecture, buildings and their edges in urban life, fade into oblivion. Their crucial positions in inspiring urban activities and life, triggering and catalyzing contact and social possibilities, begin to go unnoticed.

As a result, the most prominent urban spaces for many cities today are usually stations and stops. Likewise, urban life consists merely of traveling from one place to another. In these contexts, the city has become devoid of public places, and urban spaces lack their activities and people. Thus, urban life has lost its socially effective functioning, and this deterioration leaves inevitable traces on the individual and society. However, disconnecting from city life, the activities, places, streets, squares, neighbors and other people would probably not be the first choice of anyone. In brief, probably no one prefers to be isolated from the city and society and to deal with the mental and social consequences of this deprivation. Nevertheless, this fact and the

accompanying problems and shortcomings are often ignored in many respects, especially in terms of architecture, and the issue's significance still cannot be fully grasped.

In that case, what does the architectural space, which will be described as threshold space in general terms within this study's scope, really have to do with keeping the city life and the idea of the city alive? To what extent could threshold spaces have a say in maintaining urban life and individual and social mechanisms effectively and consistently?

1.2 Aim, Scope and Methodology

This study of city life and architecture aims to call attention to the quality of life, especially outside the buildings, through the city's spaces in between. It traces the fading exterior spaces with the urban life that is about to lose vitality in many contexts. It seeks to prevent the gradual disintegration of urban life, activities and people along with the buildings or to promote the re-integration of the urban components with all their aspects. What is essential here is the city's actual outdoor spaces, that is, the quality and spatiality of the transitions. From this perspective, this study proposes to reinterpret the relationship between urban life and the built environment and invites people to observe the city and activities in transition situations with urban architectural elements.

At this point, this study considers all kinds of spatial formations on an architectural scale, established on transitions in the city, as threshold spaces. Although the threshold spaces, which are the focus of attention in the study's essence, are usually located at the building edges, they could sometimes consist of an uncomplicated door sill, sometimes under an awning, or a utilizable free-standing spatial object on the passage route. With this perspective, with its research and observations, the study ultimately aims to question the socially initiating and formative influences of buildings, their edges and threshold spaces and to recall the vital role that architecture

takes on behalf of city life. Because, in fact, life takes place in transitions, it is the sum of the experiences gained at the thresholds.

From this point of view, before making more detailed inferences or initiatives about urban life and threshold spaces, the study first raises the following question to understand its meaning, character and content: why (there is) urban life. In fact, urban life is so comprehensive and complicated that it cannot be reduced to its physical existence in an operational sense. It includes many dimensions, such as psychological, social, cultural and economic. This understanding brings with it the recognition of the latent potential of urban life and the significance and urgency of the issue. Accordingly, urban life constitutes a need on an individual and social dimension. But this perception can appropriately be possible by observing the city, its spaces, the activities it contains, usage patterns and user behaviors. It presupposes the understanding of the city's unique functioning, the order and hidden principles behind this disorder in the integral framework. Therefore, this study leaves stereotypes aside while observing the city's open spaces and tries to understand its mechanism and activities directly from the daily street scene. This approach based on sincere and realistic observation is a prerequisite for understanding the city and its life to maintain its social meanings, potential and vitality despite the individualistic confusion caused by the current lifestyle.

Following this insight, it can be determined that appropriate physical attributes enable open public spaces, streets and sidewalks to fulfill their social potential and uses. Accordingly, it is necessary to reconsider the physical and spatial criteria and the elements on which they might depend. For this purpose, the study embraces planning and architecture as attributes of the built environment. In this respect, it seeks to detect favorable physical conditions for outdoor stays and increased probabilities of activities. These reasonings are primarily based on the capacity scale of the human senses. On this ground, various exemplary urban models explain how human behavior and urban activities are reshaped depending on the physical qualities of urban spaces. The aim, in essence, is to predict how a physically and spatially

equipped urban framework sensitive to its users can contribute positively to the city's functioning.

However, although a proper physical framework has a say in the number of activities and people in the city's spaces, it is not sufficient and decisive for the maintenance of social life. Therefore, from this stage, the quality of individual segments of the outdoor environment and the design of spaces and details gain significance. In this sense, this study traces the elements that essentially define the city's outdoor space. They also determine the character and content of urban life when favorable conditions are available within the physical framework of the city. These physical and social qualifiers are mainly building edges and threshold spaces. They are also places where users are estimated to be most likely to "stay" but which are just as ignored and eliminated in contemporary urban contexts. However, contrary to their recent decline in practice, building edges and threshold spaces contain the most operative spatial components in defining, sustaining and improving urban life through architectural form. In that case, the activation of the city transitions and the re-integration of threshold spaces into the built environment could be considered a profound intervention of architecture in the urban realm. At this point, the truth emerges about how closely the practice of architecture is related to the idea of the city and its life. Accordingly, the main argument becomes about understanding how the potential of architecture could be rediscovered in this regard.

In line with this purpose, the study will notice how threshold spaces, as architectural spaces in the urban context, help keep the idea of the city and urban life alive. However, standing out amongst many studies in the literature, this research turns its lens to an example of a city in Turkey, which is compact and therefore inconspicuous today but has a remarkable urban culture and life. Its subject is not a Northern European city devoid of life or another known settlement that stands out with its historical or aesthetic value. Yet the familiarity and unpretentiousness of this city is its greatest strength and potential, according to this research. Such that through this genuine case study, the thesis will have the chance to rediscover the impact of the

qualities of the built environment, especially threshold space formations and uses, on urban life in their simplest and truest form.

Yalova is a lively coastal city that challenges the soulless and insensitive attitude of over-simplified building techniques toward open public spaces. Throughout its history, it has been restructured several times due to repeated heavy demolitions. After all these destructions and deterioration, the built qualities of the city have undergone a significant change. Hence, today the physical and spatial attributes of the city's public spaces, streets and sidewalks are not very favorable at first glance. However, rivetingly, instinctive interventions to improve and use city spaces and make them full of life are usually carried out directly by the space users themselves, at the street level. Thus, threshold spaces reclaimed by various methods have become socially indispensable elements of the city in Yalova again. Indeed, it can be indicated that urban life here is carried out on transitions, in threshold spaces, to a great extent.

In addition, Yalova is a sample of a compact city that is old enough to have a settled urban life and exhibits a conventional settlement structure. Due to its small area, dense population, rich content of urban activities, and always hosting intimate and intriguing cityscapes, it provides a manageable investigation and attractive study context. Besides, despite the unfavorable impacts of the urban and spatial transformation after the catastrophic earthquake, the effort and success of maintaining the city life make the city worthy of attention and exploration.

From this point of view, within the scope of its urban investigations, this study traces Yalova city activities. It pursues the relationship between urban life and the quality of the built environment through the spaces in which these activities are maintained. In doing so, it draws on specific planning and design principles that underpin these examinations. These guidelines prepare the research ground by referring to the concepts developed by many designers and thinkers from different periods. In this sense, some of the leading names who contributed to this basis with their ideas and work are Jane Jacobs, particularly with her book *The Death and Life of Great*

American Cities[1]*,* Aldo van Eyck, Herman Hertzberger and Jan Gehl. Among these, Gehl constitutes an outstanding reference for this study with his perspective, the detailed analysis methods he presented in his books *Life Between Buildings*[2], *Cities for People*[3] and *How to Study Public Life*[4] and the design principles he developed. In fact, in this study, Yalova's urban research will be guided predominantly by his methods and design principles.

In these regards, the study collects some spontaneous urban scenes from the city's open spaces to reveal the daily lives and haunts of the city dwellers. While all the current photographs presented belong to the author, some archive photographs will be utilized occasionally to make retrospective comparisons. As a result, the compiled pictures aim to shed light on the urban activities, especially in the city's transition areas, building edges or threshold spaces. In particular, the search for threshold space, which has re-emerged as a spatial need, will help to reconceive its spatial qualities and the position of architecture in urban life.

1.3   Theoretical Background and Related Terms

Human life is established upon transition and is an uninterrupted movement. It is the sum of the spatial experiences between walls and destinations and subsequent relationships between multidimensional entities. Aureli implies that every moment of human activity ultimately assembles in one continuous act of movement through the space defined by walls.[5] This interpretation, in fact, reveals the position and significance of spatial experience and architectural space in human life. It even underlines the cruciality of walls as the message conveyors of spatial experience marking the boundaries of these spaces. In that case, from the spatial point of view, the perception of space relies on the capability of movement. For instance, Lefebvre bases the establishment of a meaningful space on being perceived and experienced

[1] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961).
[2] Jan Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space* (Washington: Island Press, 2011).
[3] Jan Gehl, *Cities for People* (Washington: Island Press, 2013).
[4] Jan Gehl and Birgitte Svarre, *How to Study Public Life* (Washington: Island Press, 2013).
[5] Pier Vittorio Aureli, *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture* (MIT Press, 2011), 46.

by its user.[6] This space production process stipulates that the space in question must first be separated from its surroundings employing space-defining elements. Then, it should be lived in or "moved" in.

The act of binding and unbinding is only a human ability, Georg Simmel states in *Bridge and Door*.[7] These are the most primitive activities having their origins in the human instinct to create from what already exists. This process of unification is only possible when there is first separation. It is a separation that is for connection. If there is a separation, there is a connection. The experience of connectedness follows the perception of isolation. In a similar vein, creating spaces is a human artifice to separate, and it simultaneously delivers the problem of connection. In fact, creating spaces is about separating by establishing boundaries with some potential to enter and exit. Usable rooms are to be entered, passed through, filled or emptied necessarily.[8] They are physically formed by the edges or defined by the objects they embrace, as also deduced from Hertzberger's supportive explanations in *Space and the Architect*.[9] In this sense, architectural space is what remains in-between and evokes in-betweenness. Nevertheless, it is meaningful as long as it is open for contact, perceivable and accessible by some subject.

The practice of creating space implies a separation that is still connected in consciousness to be called separate.[10] Thereby, space embodies both separation and connection in its entirety. At the joint exists a *threshold* as a concrete correspondence of the cognitive link. It interrupts spatial boundaries for transition, possibly to enter and to exit.[11] In fact, the threshold is established to initiate access as an unavoidable consequence of the fundamental demand to produce and utilize the space. In this

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[6] Lefebre bases the space production process on certain conditions. in Henri Lefebre and Donald Nicholson-Smith, *The Production of Space* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2009).

[7] Georg Simmel, "Bridge and Door," *Theory, Culture &Amp; Society* 11, no.1 (1994): pp. 5-10, 1-3, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/026327694011001002.

[8] Till Boettger, *Threshold Spaces: Transitions in Architecture: Analysis and Design Tools* (Basel: Birkhauser, 2014), 10.

[9] Herman Hertzberger, *Space and the Architect: Lessons in Architecture 2* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2010), 15.

[10] Simmel, "Bridge and Door," 1-3.

[11] Boettger, *Threshold Spaces: Transitions in Architecture: Analysis and Design Tools,* 10.

sense, thresholds are the architectural means that define the openings and organize the passages between adjacent but divergent zones. Therefore, they are both inside and outside. They are spatially ambiguous and released from any territorial claims. As tools and products of division, thresholds concurrently mediate between conflicts and contrasts. They are both the consequences of creation and the components of spatial integrity.

Contrary to the simplicity of its formal expression, the term threshold reserves meanings within cultural, factual, imaginary and spatial contexts. It infers the doorsill, the doorway, the low step in front of the door, the opening, the place near the door or the mound separating the pits.[12] In addition, the threshold could represent an imaginary line between public and private or a security border, an image in art and literature, a symbol in beliefs, a stage, a psychological limit or the situations of indecision and hope.[13] However, as Sensual City Studio points out in its innovative manifesto, the threshold usually evokes planarity as a border piece or edge. It always implies some sort of a width where the alterations and transformations take place. Therefore, the threshold always incorporates a spatial and temporal dimension.[14]

The threshold, in architectural discourse, was introduced by Aldo van Eyck to describe the relationship between different spatial and psychological registers of divergent scales in the city.[15] This attempt also initiated the recall for thresholds' intrinsic capacity to gain spatial attributions. They have become no longer regarded as plain boundary pieces but the delimiters of *threshold space*. Another leading name that reconsiders the thresholds in spatial contexts by bringing to the fore the threshold spatiality is Boettger. In his book *Threshold Spaces: Transitions in Architecture:*

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[12] Emine Atmaca, and Reshide Adzhumerova, "Kapı ve Eşik Kelimeleri Üzerine," *SAÜ Fen Edebiyat Dergisi (II)* (2010): pp. 23-45.

[13] Ahmet Gökçen, "Eşik: Olgular ve İmgeler Bağlamında Bir Mekân Analizi," *İçtimaiyat*, 2019, https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/ictimaiyat/issue/50439/644874.

[14] Sensual City Studio, *A History of Thresholds: Life, Death & Rebirth: A Visual Narrative* (Berlin: Jovis, 2018), 21.

[15] Karin Jaschke, "City Is House and House Is City: Aldo van Eyck, Piet Blom and the Architecture of Homecoming," in Marina Lathouri, Diana Periton, and Vittoria Di Palma, *Intimate Metropolis: Urban Subjects in the Modern City* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 175-194, 176.

Analysis and Design Tools, he describes threshold space as a spatial extension delimited by the thresholds and other space-defining elements.[16]

If it is necessary to approach the subject again from an upper scale, it would be appropriate to reconsider it in the context of the city. Cities, with their unique identities and facilities, invite and bring together; constitute the context and background in which social situations and events occur. The cities' streets and squares are essentially collective. They are capable of drawing attention, paving the way for the circumstances that present and pursue the social focus. These are the cities' social spaces, where the majority of social interactions and outdoor events are supposed to take shape. They are also the places where the affinity between the residents is established. In this sense, the cities' streets and their spatial fragments must be reviewed in terms of their active role in socialization and development of potent activities. At this point, the role of buildings as space-defining elements that characterize the cities' streets and other social spaces is revealed. In other words, buildings with their enclosures and edges form the cities' outdoor spaces beyond being just responsive to some internal demand for room. Accordingly, these are the thresholds and threshold spaces that surround and qualify the cities' outdoor spaces. The thresholds in urban contexts reciprocally define the void outside so that it becomes a space, and to be used. Often endowed with some welcoming and communicative gestures, they establish the manner of contact and interaction between indoors and outdoors, human and city, individual and community. Their ambivalent position provokes complicated sensory relations and helps thoroughly blending into the atmosphere. Their entire absence causes delineative deficiencies and fractions in communication, further isolation and perishment.

Consequently, the thresholds provide the city spaces with some reason to be a place where the most precious connections occur every day. Threshold extensions correspond to extensions of opportunities to communicate, socialize, negotiate, understand and learn while living together in the cities' spaces. In this sense,

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[16] Boettger, *Threshold Spaces: Transitions in Architecture: Analysis and Design Tools,* 10-13.

threshold spatiality implies the meaningful extension, the spatiality of in-betweenness. Then, the threshold space is the passage in-between, attached to the daily movement route of city life. Concordantly, architecture, in this sense, becomes the art of creating passages.[17] Such that the passages it creates are effective enough to determine the life and quality that the city contains.

1.4   Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first introductory chapter presents the statement of the research problem, establishes the aim, scope and methodology of the research. It introduces related terms through a theoretical background, and outlines the research structure. This chapter constitutes a reference to the body of the study by stimulating an idea and interest in the general context and origin of the research topic.

The second chapter, which consists of two main parts in itself, aims to form an overall research ground on city and life in urban public spaces. The first part re-examines the daily-life mechanism of the city through its components, uses and meanings. It incorporates the quality of the built environment, into the elements of the city, as one of its inviting attributions. Subsequently, the second part presents a retrospective, brief assessment to grasp the relationship between the city's life and the built environment.

The third chapter first deals with the role of the city's physical structure in bringing together and multiplying the city's activities by bringing the spaces closer and thus promoting urban life. The following section goes a little further, emphasizing the capacity of space to catalyze and accommodate urban life on an architectural scale. It adapts, along with some other concepts, the "edge effect" to the urban context as a user trend and behavioral pattern. Ultimately, addressing various spatial pursuits and operations related to the social activation of building edges, it also draws

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[17] Stavros Stavrides, *Common Space: The City as Commons* (London: Zed Books, 2016), 68.

attention to the vital significance of "threshold space" for urban life. Consequently, this chapter accepts urban life as one of the vital missions of architecture and urban life as an essential dimension of architecture.

The fourth chapter deals with life in the city of Yalova as a case study to rediscover the acquisitions of the previous chapters within a particular city context. From this perspective, the first part of the chapter includes reference information such as the location, administrative structure and urban settlement history to provide an overview of the city, its life and society. Thus, for the next part, it assists the dominant understanding of the city's atmosphere and life in many aspects. The second part of the chapter aims to establish a realistic and intimate connection between the city's life and the quality of the built environment. For this, it first deals with the city's spatial structure in the planning scale by observing its relationships with the urban activities. Meanwhile, it draws attention to the compact lifestyle of the city. In the next stage, the city's public spaces and life are evaluated in terms of the spatial qualities and uses at the scale of architectural space. The emphasis is placed on the threshold space, which emerges as a spatial need in the urban context and where life continues to a great extent. Thus, the potential of architectural space as urban public space is revealed again.

The fifth chapter is the conclusion. It includes a concise retrospective re-examination of the research. It reviews the appropriate activation of transitions by some deliberate operations of threshold spaces to remodel the relationship between city life and architecture in general terms.

CHAPTER 2

CITY AND LIFE THROUGH URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

"Take good care of the people and the precious life between buildings."[18] Moving about the places between buildings, seeing, watching, hearing, talking, meeting other people, waiting on a bench or resting on a step, engaging in a conversation in the bank queue, sunbathing in front of the shop door while having a chat with a neighbor, watching the kids playing on the sidewalk, following a distant sound of a busker, are some of the ordinary city scenes captured from daily street life. Generously embracing, city life paves the way for blending in with others not necessarily accompanied by someone known; it enables one to exist in the crowd. Even merely watching through the window or effortless presence, being among others, seeing and hearing, the simplest and most basic forms of contact are sufficient to feel accepted and positively affiliated.

It would be an illusion to assume that city life is solely about traveling from one place to another. City life incorporates all the layers of activities that render the city's spaces meaningful and engaging. In fact, the description of city life and its content is so intertwined with the city itself that these two interpretations often overlap and be used interchangeably. From a similar perspective, Jane Jacobs equates the city's attractiveness with the appeal of its core public spaces, streets and sidewalks.[19] However, in this comparison, the charm of the streets and sidewalks is not precisely attributed only to their physical or tangible qualities. In a similar vein to Jacobs, Jan Gehl qualifies a city as a living city according to the richness of experiences it offers on its streets and the level of interaction people have.[20] In other words, a city is

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[18] Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 7.
[19] Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 29.
[20] Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 21.

devoid of life or dull, and its meaning is incomplete to the extent that the urban experiences and activities are pale or missing. On the other hand, they are people and human activities that attract other people. No matter what color or shapes the buildings have, city life is more interesting for its citizens than how interesting the buildings look.

This chapter intends to provoke a question once again: *why city life*? It aims to achieve this, primarily arousing curiosity and enthusiasm in the context, calling attention to meaning, character and content of urban life. Thereby, it initiates the open and conscious observation of the city and its authentic way of social life.

The growth policies, the trials and failures of planning and architectural trends reveal the loss of original values in street culture and the point reached today in terms of urban life quality. The impacts of all these on lifestyles and unhealthy community relationships are inevitable. The historical processes that many cities have undergone explicitly affirm that current strategies have not carried the issue to a favorable point in this sense. Urban initiatives will probably not go beyond problems unless they reconsider the city's meaning, life and scope in its multiple dimensions. Such awareness and compromise should lead to a better understanding of the city's components, places and activities. Besides, this understanding cannot be limited to physical entities. From this perspective, focusing on space, its users and use, this research aims to observe, analyze and learn from the street scene by leaving aside what is thought to or should be. In its mindset, city life is a dimension of architecture and urban planning. Going beyond the teachings of the disciplines, at least initially, this chapter seeks to understand the city and its humble activities.

2.1 City and its Daily-Life Mechanism: Components, Uses and Meanings

Knowing what to want is because of or begins with knowing how it already works, Jacobs implies.[21] Being able to speak of potential developments or introduce

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[21] Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 29.

innovative design principles for the sake of the cities attaches priority to knowing what is for the sake of the cities. At that rate, knowing what is good for the city makes it vital to observe city life and how it works. It is about understanding the latent principles behind such a usual order in disorder to grasp the established whole of intricate behaviors. However, if the aim is to sustain and exhilarate city life, the reason behind must also be evidently known. Therefore, the purpose here in the first stage is to draw attention to the significance and urgency of the subject by asking why (there is) city life.

In this direction, Jacobs invites her readers, architects and urban planners to a real-life adventure to look more closely at the most ordinary street events. To discover their meanings that seem secretive at first glance, she intends to catch any traces of principles that naturally transpire among them. Therefore, she first focuses on the social behavior of people in urban circumstances by addressing the unique functioning of the city. Her ultimate goal is to introduce new and reformative design principles. In her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, while manifesting an attack on the methods of urban planning and rebuilding, she preliminarily elaborates on the daily-life mechanism of the cities. Because she declares such a realistic approach based on observation is the only way to learn the principles or practices that capably promote social and economic vitality in the cities.[22] Apart from the prevailing view of the period that discussed how the city should look, Jacobs assesses the peculiar nature of the city through the components and uses of its primary public spaces.

From this perspective, to track the social and economic effects of a healthy and contentful urban life on individuals and society, Jacobs first takes a stroll on the streets and blends in the sidewalks. Because according to her, these are the streets and sidewalks, the most fundamental spatial components of the cities where social and economic life is mainly carried out. These are the places where the most basic interactions are realized, and collective values and relations are established and kept

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[22] Ibid, 4.

alive. On the other hand, city sidewalks or streets per se are meaningless rather than some abstraction unless they are interpreted in the entirety of their contexts. The many elements that surround them contribute to the semantic existence of the city and its streets. Although their use is deeply tied to circulation, streets and sidewalks serve many purposes, including the proper functioning of the cities. With this understanding, Jacobs examines the uses of city sidewalks in terms of *safety*, *contact* and *assimilating children*.

Jacobs associates the problem of securing the city with the multifaceted functionality of its streets and sidewalks. While frequently underlining this judgment, she does not imply security of the cities is ensured by the police unless seriously needed. Instead, she describes that the residents of the cities are capable of ensuring each other's security within themselves and against foreigners within the framework of the common values they built together. That could be possible by getting more people on the streets and keeping the sidewalks busy with varied activities. She depicts this situation as keeping *eyes on the street,* the eyes of the inherent proprietors of the street. These are the watchers sometimes of residents or of shopkeepers.[23] Therefore, the role of a lively street is substantial in making each user feel safe and belong to the place where they live. Hertzberger's example creates a similar connotation to this situation. Sitting on a step in front of the door of her/his house, the child feels safe while feeling included in the outside world and society.[24] She/he knows that her/his mother is near, and her eyes are on him. The same is true for the adult members of the society. The same sense of trust takes shape in the crowd, with the awareness of the presence of the other's eyes. Thus, inhabitants of a vivid street feel comfortable and engaged. In addition, they feel implicitly responsible for the securities of the other members of the society. Consequently, a lively street is a necessity for city life which accommodates strangers, ordinary users and watchers, eyes on the street.

Jacobs finds "eyes on the street" vital in building and maintaining a self-developed inner security system in society. She also points out that the most basic form of

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[23] Jacobs describes her concept of *eyes on the street* in Ibid, 35.
[24] Herman Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2005), 32.

overall public interaction prevailed on the cities' streets. So much so that she addresses the "public contacts" as the second most fundamental function of the sidewalks. Such seemingly insignificant, casual or random contacts are so substantial that she accredits the formation of trust in the city and the feeling of public identity to these little contacts.[25] Moreover, even little glimpses might be amplified or multiplied by little steps to culminate in a well-established sense of togetherness. That is actually one of the most basic needs of being human as a social being. In this way, it could also be possible to help prevent more serious social problems such as segregation and discrimination or safety and trust issues that might arise in the long term due to the deficiencies of public contact.

In addition to their economic, social and safety-wise functions, lively sidewalks also contain positive attributes that, albeit indirectly, assume crucial roles in meeting children's curiosity, play and learning needs. Thus, Jacobs has drawn attention to a significant yet overlooked subject: assimilating children in urban public domains.[26] Today's lifestyle and relationships changed dramatically compared to the living trends of the '50s and '60s when she made her observations. However, the fact that children learned the values of society and life from the adults around them remained unchanged. Besides, apart from family, relatives and immediate circle, this adult community consists of ordinary adults on the "sidewalks". Moreover, the fact that children tend to play amongst people instead of on playgrounds makes this determination more substantial. If they have a chance, they prefer the streets and sidewalks in lively neighborhoods that are more attractive to play. Initially, this idea might seem primitive or old-fashioned. However, what could be more worthwhile in society than giving young individuals the chance to mingle safely with the crowd and learn with the community? Even the realization of this might serve to increase the responsibility and appropriation motives of the adult members of the society and reinforce social consciousness and values. In addition, children have a safe, rich environment to play, observe, learn and grow as healthy individuals under the

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[25] Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 56.
[26] For the relevant chapter of the book see Ibid, 74-88.

surveillance of many adults. Thus, the city's sidewalks become safer places than parks or playgrounds.

With a similar approach, Hertzberger invites people to carry the education that the young individuals receive at the school to the street, not limiting it to the walls. He often expresses his idea with the concepts of *the schoolyard a street, the street a schoolyard* or *the city as a macro school*.[27] According to him, the exterior of the school should be part of the street. The schools should not merely consist of classrooms. They should include the streets, squares and some other local facilities where the students could interact with others. In this way, students could learn partly on the street, intertwined with the community. Thus, in fact, also society continues to learn from them.

However, the function of streets and sidewalks today have been attempted to be reduced to provide access to the buildings due to the established view of the practice. Their irreplaceable functions were ignored following the "new" way of life. However, this research aims to point out this confusion as one of the primary problems of city planning and design. Within this context, where city life is brought to the fore, social and economic potential of the city's public spaces, streets, squares, and sidewalks cannot be underestimated.

From this point of view, it becomes possible to make some design inferences for good street attributes or some of the main qualities. However, it will be left aside to be discussed and elaborated on in the next chapter. Instead, it could be concluded that every spatial use and advantage discussed in this section about the city's streets and sidewalks, cannot be considered independently of each other. They fairly and concurrently complement each other. For instance, there is no point in designing streets specifically for children to play if the sidewalks are desirably kept occupied with diverse activities by sufficient people with multiple profiles. On a lively street, incidental play will already come along with other uses and activities in all its

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[27] For the referred part of the book see Herman Hertzberger, *Space and Learning: Lessons in Architecture 3* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2008), 201-204.

vividness. Because all sorts of uses and activities need each other and their mutual surveillance to exist and function well. Likewise, such a dependent co-existence of the activities on the streets and an environment of trust will naturally trigger the unconstrained development of other social activities.[28] This coherence is essential for an urban public life with some liveliness and appeal. In fact, it is significant but not essential what equipment it has or how much quality it has. It is prior to having some people around in the street and something to arouse interest and curiosity.

At this point, it would be appropriate to revisit the concept of *activity as an attraction*. It is obvious that somehow equipped parks, self-existing benches, or vast lawns imagined as overflowing with users do not provide reasonable enough reasons for people to get out and linger. Such an illusion has often been experienced in the past and should have been acknowledged. However, it seems that many policy developers, urban planners or architects still have some points they have overlooked: events actually unfold beyond the expected. No matter what equipment, color or shape the public spaces are provided with, people are primarily and essentially influenced and attracted by other people and human activities in reality. However, this finding also leads to another dilemma. People are needed on the sidewalks to attract and invite other people out to the streets and their ongoing activities. So what is the practical relationship between human activities and urban public space, mainly the streets and sidewalks, that keep people out? People need to stay outside on the streets, but they also need some concrete reason to stay on the streets. Then, keeping people out and providing them with valid reasons to stay out first initiates observation. It requires an understanding why people go out, what they do outside, what activities they engage in, and what spaces they use. Being able to predict these causes begins with perceiving the relationship between outdoor activities and outdoor space by reducing it to the most fundamental level. In that case, the core and urgent concern is evident: *what makes people go out and stay out.*

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[28] Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 86.

2.1.1 Quality of the Built Environment as an Inviting Element

<div align="right">"Man is man's greatest joy."[29]</div>

People do not use the streets unless they have a reason to use them; in that vein, people do not watch the streets unless they want to.[30] People do not leave the benches of the busy streets empty, not just because they are tired and need a rest. There might be other reasons but for no other reason, people like "activities". They even enjoy simply watching them, watching moving pedestrians, or even traffic as much as getting involved in the activities on the sidewalks. All these are not just guesses or some limited generalizations. Based on his team's field observations, surveys and numerical analysis, Gehl expresses that when they have a choice, people prefer walking on a lively street to walking on a deserted one. Likewise, they prefer sitting in a semi-private front yard with a view of the street to sitting in a private backyard.[31] In parallel, they mostly tend to sit on the benches of public spaces with the best view of the surrounding activities rather than the benches with less or no view.

He explains the superiority of human activities over the other types of attractions with an example. According to on-site observations, while a street musician could gather a large crowd when he performs his art, the same impact cannot be achieved by the music coming out from the loudspeakers. It usually does not even create any reaction.[32] At that rate, the opportunity to see and hear others and interact on the sidewalks, might be addressed as one of the foremost city attractions. Such that Gehl qualifies human activities and the capability of seeing other people's activities as the area's main attraction. In the sum of his investigations, he arrives at a conclusion that even the modest forms of contact, seeing and hearing or being near and close to others, constitute the core of human activities and the greatest object of attention. They are more in demand than the majority of other attractions provided in the cities'

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[29] The expression describes human interest in other people. It was cited from a more than 1,000-year-old Icelandic Eddic poem, Hávamál; Carolyne Larrington, trans., *The Poetic Edda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[30] Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 36.

[31] Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 25.

[32] For details see Ibid, 29.

public spaces. Then, what are the parameters that these activities depend on, whether they occur and are carried out consistently? What are the factors that invite more people and contribute to the socially diversified and rich content of the city?

The coherent blend, content and character of outdoor activities are influenced by many conditions. One of them is *the quality of the physical environment*. It is a factor that affects outdoor activities in various forms and degrees. However, first of all, it is relevant to understand the types and spatial demands of the activities carried out on the streets in a simplified manner. For this purpose, Gehl re-introduces the outdoor activities under three categories: *necessary activities*, *optional activities*, and *social activities*.

According to this classification, *necessary activities* comprise simple daily tasks, which are mostly related to compulsory participation. Shopping, going to school or work and necessarily waiting could be counted among the necessary activities. These are the activities whose majority intrinsically depend on walking. Since they are need-oriented, they take place under nearly all conditions with almost no influence of physical quality.[33] *Optional activities*, on the other hand, merely occur if there is a wish to participate. Time, place or weather should be appealing and welcoming enough for the engagement in social events. Therefore, the role of exterior physical conditions and planning in the activities of this category is particularly significant. Recreational activities such as taking a walk for refreshment, sitting and sunbathing, or standing, fall under this category. In this respect, *social activities* are closely related to optional activities since they are implicit results of optional and necessary activities. They basically develop from other activities and depend on the presence of others in the same place where they meet, pass each other or merely share the same view. Communal activities, playing of children, greetings, casual conversations and discussions are some examples of social activities. They usually occur

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[33] Jan Gehl, *Cities for People*, 20.

spontaneously. Therefore, they are implicitly encouraged when the other two types of activities are provided with better conditions.[34]

To draw a conclusion, Gehl makes an inference that if the physical quality of the built environment is low, only vitally necessary outdoor activities are performed and take minimum time. Conversely, when the quality of outdoor spaces is more favorable, the necessary activities tend to take longer, although there is not much change in their frequency.[35] This improvement also remarkably paves way for the development and diversification of optional and resultant social activities. When the physical conditions of the built environment are appealing, people stop rushing and spend more time in urban public spaces, sitting somewhere and enjoying the place. Therefore, depending on their origin and quality of the physical context, the character of social activities in urban public spaces might vary, be it superficial or more elaborative and intimate. However, any social interaction, superficial or extensive, is positive and desirable.

The underlying purpose is to determine the conditions that draw more people out, more densely, more frequently and for longer. In support of this, identifying the implementations that make people go out and stay out prioritizes understanding the reason behind these actions. At this point, the potential impact of enhancing the physical and spatial qualities of the built environment, should also be taken into account. Understanding the activities carried out on the streets and in the city's outdoor spaces and classifying them is of great significance to realize their relationship with the physical-spatial quality. To remind, the reason for urging upon these activity contents lies in the search for the conditions to promote the continuation and reproduction of social activities. These are essentially the main attractions of the city.

To recap the issue, the city's built quality, planning, and architectural design remarkably influence the city's communal activities and urban life. Not because they

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[34] For the relevant part of the book see Ibid, 20-23.
[35] Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 11.

are of good quality on their own. Actually, it does not matter alone. However, the quality could change the way city life works because the built environment is a significant element of invitation to the city's exteriors, streets and activities. It has the ability to bring people out, which is the best source of attraction.

To conclude, good street life is capable of significantly improving socio-economic situations. It does not imply that it will instantly transform or automatically overcome some societal problems. Many other measures might be required to initiate radical developments. However, a well-functioning urban life considerably contributes to these developments. A quality built environment and better design of urban form improve the functioning of city life and are essential for communal living. Surveys reveal that these spatial qualities encourage physical activities and improve individual and public health.[36] Besides, they facilitate outdoor social activities and make them possible. In this sense, while they do not have direct authority over the content and intensity of the city's activities and life, architects and urban planners could enhance the quality of the built environment. They are capable of influencing how people meet and interact. Likewise, they could help unlock significant social potential with thoughtful design strategies. It is now necessary to focus on the characteristics of a high-quality built environment. How could the city's open spaces be developed spatially to accommodate more social activities? How could they invite more people to the city's streets, and what architectural design and planning techniques could accomplish this?

Regarding the design tools and principles, more comprehensive approaches will be mentioned, and further discussions will be proposed later in the thesis. However, before that, it would be relevant to retrace some historical breaks having impacts on architecture and planning and the city's outdoor activities and social context. Such a retrospective assessment aims to assist in a better understanding of the impact of the quality of the built environment on city life. From this point of view, the following

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[36] Survey and analysis data on the effects of environmental quality and urban planning attributes on physical activity and health are available at Sadegh Fathi et al., "The Role of Urban Morphology Design on Enhancing Physical Activity and Public Health," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17, no. 7 (2020): p. 2359, https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17072359.

section presents some historical turning points where ideas were made and applied and some urban samples collected from different periods.

2.2   A Retrospective Assessment of City's Life and the Built Environment

It is henceforth admitted that the scope, content and character of outdoor activities are significantly affected by the quality of the physical environment. As field analyzes reveal, the formation and sprawl of social activities apart from those that compulsorily require going out are almost entirely dependent on the availability of some favorable physical conditions. In that case, the ideal in question is a matter of curiosity. Which urban planning principles or architectural trends of divergent periods have influenced the social and outdoor activities, to what extent and how? Such a retrospective assessment of socio-urban circumstances is also valid for examining the current situations and future projections. From this perspective, this section insights into some distinct historical periods and the social environment within particular urban contexts. By investigating some urban samples, it seems possible to distinguish historical reflections of the city's physical fabric on the social context. Eventually, these developments seem to influence all phases of the city's outdoor activities.

Today, in almost every part of the world, there are numerous well-preserved cities from nearly all historical times. They are still standing and in use, and their intrinsic layouts are in inner transformation. Under the favor of their existence, it is currently possible to observe their periodical distinctions, investigating and comparing different city models and their varying lifestyles. In an overview, in the formal qualities of the city layouts from different periods, large variations could be easily detected. However, it is specifically necessary to distinguish two major turning points that are prevalently and in certain respects influential worldwide: the *Renaissance* and *Functionalism*.

2.2.1 From Self-Evolved to Planned City

Gehl addresses the Renaissance as the origin of professional planning as a discipline in its own right.[37] Before that, cities were built on their own by their inhabitants according to their needs. Jaschke substantially attributes the reason behind the failure of early modern architecture and the inconsistencies between architecture and urban planning to this disciplinary shaping.[38] Because the disciplinary split is the beginning of treating the built environment as "interior" and "exterior" rather than a whole. This segregation brought about other problems and spatial contradictions, leaving impressions on the design processes. Its impact on the physical environment, daily activities and the ordinary functioning of the day is still evident. In this sense, these developments could be the first and heaviest blows to the city's self-consistent, organic urban development process. They also significantly delayed or hindered the easy formation of social activities and city life.

The city inherently holds the capacity to shape itself responsively and adjust according to the lifestyle which is most convenient for it. This self-design and the progressive process has its basis in long-term practice and the accumulation of urban experiences. At this point, it is vital to remember that the urban development of many self-evolved medieval cities is a continuous process that takes hundreds of years and is never actually completed. Such much so that their streets and squares evolve and form a susceptible arrangement based on people's behavior, activities and movement. Still, these old cities, with their streets and squares, could offer unusually better conditions and opportunities on behalf of social activities and city life. For instance, in the Piazza del Campo in Siena, collecting urban planning, enclosed spatial design, bowl-formed section and other auxiliary space-defining elements such as fountains and bollards, all the parameters have been ideally composed. Thus, the city center serves as *a meeting place* or *a public living room*, from the first days of its

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[37] Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 39.
[38] Karin Jaschke, "City Is House and House Is City: Aldo van Eyck, Piet Blom and the Architecture of Homecoming," 175.

construction till today.[39] Compared to well-planned settlements of recent times, Siena and similar cities have naturally become cities with distinctive urban qualities not found in recently built ones. They are increasingly more in demand as tourist attractions, research fields and residential cities in contemporary times. So, if this is not a real achievement on an urban scale, what is? What makes them truly successful?

Inferentially, the cities, which provide excellent conditions for outdoor activities and city life, are not the credit of precise planning but a product of a relatively self-developed transformation process of many years. Herein, De Carlo's approach could be evoked that, architecture cannot make much change on its own, but it does pave the way for change in society.[40] Architectural design and planning generate some potentialities but not actualities.[41] It may not always ensure that the spaces are used as expected. However, it frames the physical space and simultaneously people's social behavior. The rest is shaped by people, the users of the city's spaces. Therefore, a city project or architecture is not an object or not an end. Its fate is sometimes unpredictable. The present way of life in society has to somehow dominate the city's design process to a certain extent. Because societies and cities cannot remain unchanged. The lifestyles evolve as they did, and what might be good or right for them may not be predicted. Gehl explains one of the best examples of a changing society with a changing street life through Copenhagen. Some of his improvements to the city's built environment prove how a society without street culture could change and have a vibrant urban life.[42] As a result, design is a multi-faceted process driven by interactions and reciprocal responses. Therefore, the city cannot be considered as a sole design object that could or should be planned.

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[39] This example is mentioned in Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 41.

[40] Giancarlo De Carlo, "Why/How to Build School Buildings," *Harvard Educational Review* 39 (4):12-35, 1969. cited in Adam Wood, "City Schools as Meeting Places," *Architecture and Education*, June, 10, 2019, https://architectureandeducation.org/2019/06/10/city-schools-as-meeting-places/.

[41] Adam Wood, "A Useful Definition of Architecture," *Architecture and Education*, November 27, 2018 Retrieved from https://architectureandeducation.org/2018/11/27/a-useful-definition-of-architecture/#:~:text=Architects%20organize%20space%20with%20walls,to%20each%20other%20%5B3%5D.

[42] Relevant data and survey analyzes could be found in Jan Gehl, "A Changing Street Life in a Changing Society," *Places* 6.1, 1989, 8-17.

Respecting its evolutionary process, which has no beginning and no end, it is necessary to accept that the city is a means, not a consequence. Therefore, always leaving room for creative flexibility is substantial.

However, with a sudden change, it started to be thought otherwise. Thus, a rapid transformation from freely developing to well-planned cities has begun. With their spatial qualities and appropriate dimensioning, the cities' outdoor spaces that were once successfully adapted to social activities have lost their human scale. They often tended to be too wide, too large or too flat. Their positively intricate and intimate relationships, in a sense, spiritual characteristics, have been undermined. As a result of strained and contrived planning ideas, their spatial potentials have been almost ignored. As in the star-shaped Renaissance city of Palmanova, interesting graphic works were implemented into reality under the name of urban planning. They were usually out of concern for city life and spatial function. They had some repetitive and rigorous planning dimensions tightly bound to their geometry. However, they had no life inside. Henceforth, the cities, each like an art piece had turned into objects that could be thought about for their "good" design and how they "should" be. That was a challenge to the nature and intrinsic processes of the city. Eventually, while early on cities were the tools for social formations shaped by life, many of them have turned into some objects of goal in themselves.

2.2.2   Over-Functionalism against City Life

Functionalism broke out around 1930 as the second most influential development to hit the city's unique and usual developmental process. The trend initially brought results that only reinforced the impacts of the Renaissance movement on the city and society. Although it aimed at a "healthy" planning principle for society, it probably could not foresee some of its current effects.

In pursuit of the new passion for an "equally high standard of hygiene for all", residential areas, in particular, were designed with a completely new character. Accordingly, buildings have been oriented parallel to the sun so that each would

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naturally benefit from the sun, light and air fairly and the best.[43] In other words, buildings that once faced the street were now oriented to the sun to offer healthier living conditions for individuals. They were torn off, detached from each other. This attempt rarely referred to the psychological and social aspects of design. In the end, the new city planning, the design of the buildings and especially the city's outdoor public spaces got their share of this indifference.

Such a one-sided design and planning approach, which relies on a physical-functional and materially oriented ideology, violated the city's physical and social properties in some contexts. Streets and squares have disappeared from the new residential landscapes and the cities. In this sense, the 1933 CIAM Conference could be addressed as another striking driver behind this negative outcome. Although the street was considered an integral part of the urban fabric at the 1910 RIBA Conference, it was assigned as an element to be eliminated in 1933. It has hereinafter referred to as an obstacle to the progress of humanity.[44] Le Corbusier was one of the most influential figures who destroyed the respect for the street at the 1933 CIAM Conference. According to him, the street was nothing more than a narrow and deep rift or a trench full of dangers that overwhelm its inhabitants.[45] His vision, and Gropius's, was to create an urban pattern without streets. With such an aspiration, Le Corbusier, Gropius and the designers who shared the same view fell to develop and implement some ultra-innovative city projects, sometimes challenging reality.

As the culmination of these, combined with related welfare policies, the streets' losing their social and cultural attributions has been accelerated. They have gradually diminished and destroyed, lost their distinctive characteristics, identities and contextual properties. Urban qualities that were once considered valuable were rapidly abandoned, standardized and globalized. Post-war planning and quick structuring also had an impact on all these. In particular, economic efficiency rules

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[43] Gunnar Asplund, et al. *Acceptera* (Stockholm: Tiden, 1931).
[44] M. Adnan Barlas, *Kentsel Törenler, Kentsel Sokaklar* (ODTÜ Mimarlık Fakültesi, 2014), 130-131.
[45] Le Corbusier, *Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret: The Complete Architectural Works, Vol. 1: 1919-1929* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964).

and alternation in the mode of transportation, resultant infrastructure and land-use strategies sharply interrupted the cities' self-consistent spatial composition.

Consequently, streets and squares have been gradually removed and replaced by mere wide roads or endless grass lawns. With such immense emptiness, the city's new and so-called social space fantasized as a place where various outdoor activities would occur. It was a misconception and did not happen as thought. People did not prefer to spend time on vast lawns or wide-open spaces. Instead, emergent shopping malls, as some global gathering halls, have become nearly the only points that enable social interaction with the outside world. They have become almost the only usual possibility to connect with society in real life. Although real-life is mentioned here, its reality is still debatable. The result was a brand-new way of city life brought about by a radical spatial breakdown. In this scenario, the spaces, activities, interaction between people and interrelations have been all virtualized.

Thereby, a culture also disappeared, along with the disappearing street. Urban life and social activities faced extinction. Sidewalks have become much emptier than in the past since people had less attractive-enough reasons to go out. In addition, as the distance between buildings increased, the distance between people and events also increased over time. In other words, the decrease in the densities of spaces and functions correspondingly caused a reduction in the number of inhabitants and relevant communal activities. In addition, the increase in the use of motor vehicles and this subject's becoming the top priority in urban planning could only have supported this consequence. Thus, the streets detracted from their humanistic objectives based on pedestrian use and circulation. They were almost freed from any other function. Far above the human scale and devoid of any meaningful quality, they have been expanded to sustain vehicular transportation. In this sense, the streets were emptied, ultimately transformed into urban voids and ruptures. As a result, the citizens have become further isolated first from the streets, then the urban public spaces and the city.

At this juncture, it is relevant to re-draw attention to the practical reflections of these and similar planning strategies praised by some functionalist pioneers. Their projects were the opposite of the socio-urban order of that period. Occasionally, the implemented projects had such staggering social outcomes that Gordon Cullen uses the metaphor of "desert planning" while describing the planning models developed during this period.[46] Desert planning was the type of planning of *lifeless places*. From an analogous perspective, while James Holston assesses the transformation of the street in Brasilia from preindustrial times to the modernist city, he labels this process as the "death of the street".[47] According to Holston, the street was dying. The city lost its urban public life while becoming *a city without street corners* but only edged with some continuous building facades. This comparison seems valid as the summary of many socio-urban deteriorations of the relevant processes.

In addition, in many urban samples exposed to similar influences, almost every possible physical and spatial distinction has become more pronounced. Functions have become sharpened and segregated. While the boundaries within the city's physical domain have become prominently linearized, the urban fabric of many developing settlements has become fragmented into distinct segments. On the pretext of offering healthier and more equal living conditions, the living areas have been divided and territorialized into residential and work areas. As in Corbusier's contemporary city model for three million inhabitants and "Plan Voisin" for Paris, different functions, once located around the street, were attempted to be separated from each other. They were clustered and enclosed within themselves. The existing congestion in the city center had to be removed. Therefore, the commercial units have been concentrated in skyscrapers to manage trade more efficiently.[48] According to Barlas, such severance of functions is the most significant blow to the street. Because the essential existence of the street and urban social life depends on the

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[46] Gordon Cullen, *Concise Townscape* (Routledge, 2012).

[47] James Holston. *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasilia* (University of Chicago Press, 1989).

[48] Le Corbusier. *The City of To-morrow and its Planning: by Le Corbusier, Translated from 8th French Edition of Urbanisme , with an Introduction, by Frederick Etchells* (Architectural Press, 1947) cited in Barlas, *Kentsel Törenler, Kentsel Sokaklar,* 133-135.

variety of functions the street brings together.[49] A similar approach to Corbusier's, which aims at a "better" distribution of functions, actually reduces the functional diversity in living areas. Simultaneously, it minimizes the possible advantages of closer contact. That is to say, these newly demarcated areas with urban gaps and disconnections merely prompt the reduction and scattering of outdoor activities.

On the other hand, this functional decomposition began to manifest itself not only at the urban scale but also at the scale of buildings and architectural spaces. With the impact of functional zoning, architectural problems were also intended to be solved and made "efficient" by segregating functions rather than integrating them. Whereas, this was such a solution method that it caused not only dysfunctionality but also serious inefficiency.[50] Separation of functions on an architectural scale would be possible by clear-cut spatial delimitations and sharp transitions as mentioned. Herewith, such an attempt caused multidimensional spatial and perceptual problems. That brought discussions on the separation of interior and exterior, or private and public spaces. In newly developed residential areas, buildings have been placed into some void disconnected from the urban realm and almost independent of environmental elements. They have faced the urban fabric directly, without concern regarding some reasonable transition. The transition in question either consisted of a completely transparent membrane, or it was a nonporous opaque surface piece. In both cases, it was too far from spatiality.

The initial implications regarding the failure of early modern architecture were precisely related to the problem of interior-exterior connectivity.[51] Along with the disciplinary separation of architecture and urban planning, the architectural practice has progressively closed its doors on the city and its built environment. Buildings were decontextualized, detached from their inherent surroundings and the urban circumstances. The new building topography for many of them was absolute nature, not the city. Correspondingly, a new building typology suggested an open space with

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[49] Barlas, *Kentsel Törenler, Kentsel Sokaklar,* 141.
[50] Details could be found in Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture*, 146.
[51] For further discussion see Jaschke, "City Is House and House Is City: Aldo van Eyck, Piet Blom and the Architecture of Homecoming", 175.

a huge transparent frame to be totally absorbed by nature. In this way, early modernist architects and planners skipped the issue of individual dwelling's relation to the "public space" where people once encountered and interacted. This new project and attitude also contradicted the current reality. Because it was inadequate to adapt to an urban context. In other words, the new type of building, with its all flatness and transparency, was unable to fit into everyday life. Even in urban environments where lived together and the built elements were consistent with each other in the past, buildings exposed nearly the same attempt.

Besides, the footprints of the buildings were compelled to consume the whole plot they were erected. That was the product of the new construction order based on over-functionalism and economy. As a result, the transmissive areas entirely vanished or were restricted. The building edges degraded into some flat and spatially unqualified layer. The elaborate treatment of building facades has gradually reduced. Herewith, the spaces of socially conflicting zones are left exposed more directly to each other, as the different functions did.[52] Thus, the first debates about these new and radical design ideas and lifestyles began to break out in the wake of the physical and mental disappearance of the transitional spaces. This extinction has brought many other problems and interruptions in urban life. Disruptions in communication and confusion of symbols and meanings are some of these problems.

Within this framework, one of the first objections coincided in the 1950s. A group of young architects emerging from CIAM and known as Team 10, questioned the consequences of the disciplinary split between architecture and urban planning. The underlying concern behind this act was the fact that the early modernists had constructed the relationship between interior and exterior improperly. This misconception became more evident over time. Thus, adopting a new attitude, referred to as "architect-urbanist", they intended to treat *the built environment as one indivisible whole*.[53] According to this thought, they rejected the reductive rationalism

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[52] Boettger, *Threshold Spaces: Transitions in Architecture: Analysis and Design Tools*, 11-12.
[53] Jaschke, "City Is House and House Is City: Aldo van Eyck, Piet Blom and the Architecture of Homecoming", 176.

of CIAM. They also ignored the persistence in dividing the built environment into distinct zones such as dwelling, work, recreation and circulation. They aimed to aggregate the city's scattered parts to form a consistent, conductive and communicative whole again.[54] In this sense, the connection issue between interior and exterior, private and public spaces was reviewed. According to this integrative view, the connection should have been based on *meaningful and psychologically effective transitions* rather than spatial continuity and visual transparency. In parallel, Dutch architect and Team 10 member Aldo van Eyck pointed out the relationship between interior and exterior as a common problem in architecture and urban planning. Thus, he addressed it from a mental and psychological perspective, not functional, aesthetic or symbolic, unlike previous movements. Meanwhile, he put the signature to a renewed proposal: "the dwelling and its extension into the exterior, the city and its extension into the interior, that's what we have to achieve!".[55]

The protests against the new city model were not limited to the previous one, after the experience of many other minor project failures. The growing objections contributed to the reduction of antipathic perspectives that developed against the street. They even helped positively change the perception. It began to acknowledge that the street, with its all dimensions, contributes significantly to individuals' social and psychological well-being. Nevertheless, a large number of small-scale early modernist projects' impact on countless cities cannot be denied. Because the doctrines of CIAM somehow have remained valid in many regions, despite the group's dissolution in 1959. This dominance caused all counter-reaction efforts to be insufficient to restore the street's physical and social qualities. Such that, the implementations of urban planning still prevalently adopt the principle that assures functional separation and zoning as the leading methodology.

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[54] Francis Strauven, "Aldo van Eyck–Shaping the New Reality from the in-between to the Aesthetics of Number", *CCA Mellon Lectures* 12: 1-20, 2007, 10.

[55] Aldo Van Eyck, "Over Binnen-en Buitenruimte," *Forum, Maandblad voor Architectuur en Gebonden Kunst,* 1956. cited in Jaschke, "City Is House and House Is City: Aldo van Eyck, Piet Blom and the Architecture of Homecoming", 176.

Nevertheless, many designers and thinkers, such as Richard Sennett[56] (1961; 1974) and Jane Jacobs[57] (1961), have emphasized the necessity of rich city life as well as the streets and sidewalks. However, although they had carried out studies in this direction since the beginning of the 1960s, the number of cases where improvement proposals were influential seems to be limited. For instance, as one of the most cardinal urban planning problems, the regulation of vehicular traffic still almost entirely relies on economic interests. So much so that in many settlements, the common areas of the streets are majorly reserved for vehicles. To provide ease in vehicle traffic, the physical quality elements of the sidewalks, their width being in the first place, are almost always taken into the background. As a result, significant concessions have been made to pedestrian comfort.

However, it is still possible to mention projects that will set an example from that period to the present. For instance, Gehl's revival project of the city of Copenhagen in the 1960s and his urban implementations in reaction to early functionalism is worth referring to as a recognized success.[58] Like other protests of the period, he highlighted the priority of a built environment with better physical-spatial qualities. His urban improvement vision aimed to offer more favorable conditions for people, activities and life, especially for children and the elderly. Accordingly, he intended to rebuild an urban framework based on pedestrian circulation rather than vehicular and constructed upon recreational and social community functions. In this sense, all his operations aimed to revitalize the city and life and build a new way of street life. This new life would best reflect the changing characteristics and demands of the changing urban society.

With the historical and developmental trends in the cities, the societies, family patterns, lifestyles and working environments have also changed dramatically. In addition, due to ever-changing technology and efficiency measures, more people have had more time to spend outside their homes and workplaces. Correlatively, the

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[56] See R. Sennett, *Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life*, 1973. Sennett criticizes the excessively ordered communities and seeks new modes of urban organization for richer city life.
[57] See Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.
[58] For project details see Gehl, "A Changing Street Life in a Changing Society."

demand for easily accessible social opportunities has re-emerged with the need for more social facilities and their social and creative content.[59] The changed perception of the city and urban life left significant traces on the street life patterns. Therefore, the changing social demands required renewed proposals for street use. This initiative has revived the issue of designing neglected urban public spaces, streets and squares. It has stipulated the development of more careful planning and street design principles. In line with this purpose, for instance, the transformation process of Copenhagen's urban life began when Stroget was closed to vehicular traffic and pedestrianized in 1962. The first pedestrian street of Scandinavia met with criticism at first. However, according to the survey data carried out at regular intervals, this practice was found to be so appropriate and influential. In the first year of the new implementation, a 35 percent increase was observed in the number of pedestrians using the street that was closed to vehicle traffic. Besides, it has been determined that the region also began to host new social formations and street life patterns. Eventually, it was understood that the reason was not *the lack of tradition* in using urban spaces and streets in Scandinavian cities. The problem was about the heavy vehicle traffic and lack of physical quality for the formation of street life.[60]

In the ensuing process of the project, more pedestrian streets have been constructed in Copenhagen. Urban life has grown in scope and ingenuity year by year, with the growth in everyday activities' content and number.[61] The urban survey studies were conducted in 1967, 1968, 1986 and 1995 to investigate and test the validity of the recovery actions and to evaluate the street life patterns starting to re-take shape. They proved the long-term progress with numerical field data. They also identified the evident need for urban public spaces of any size, type or function, from sidewalks to huge piazzas.

To conclude, inherently adorned with conscious or unconscious symbolic features, the street constitutes the place where the formation of psychological and social

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[59] The determination belongs to Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 50.
[60] Gehl, "A Changing Street Life in a Changing Society."
[61] The numerical data is provided in Ibid.

relations effectively occurs. Therefore, it might be assigned as an inseparable entry ingrained in the human experience. Besides, it is collective in its essence. It is capable of bringing people together or dispersing them in a measured and sufficient way. However, after over-functionalist project trials of usually small scale yet widespread, the physical entities that make the street have been dispersed or changed to lose their function. It could be implied the street has become like an organism with its limbs amputated after the implementations in question.[62] Thus, for the first time, the cities' "death and life" discussions came to the fore with their invasion by the planning ideals of urbanism. Indeed, in many settlements, it has become seemingly impossible to still use the words "city" and "street" in their old sense. Because in many urban cases, there is no street anymore.

On the other hand, together with the street, the urban components that were most affected by over-functional urbanization have been transitional spaces. They also have disappeared along with the street. However, the transitional spaces, as the physical expression or representation of the relationship between "me" and the "other", play a significant role in the individualization and socialization processes. Correlatively, their absence causes psychological and social disruptions. Therefore, early functional implementations, which intended to eliminate streets and transitional spaces, has also interrupted the psychological processes. In that case, from the reverse perspective, the recovery of the streets and transitional spaces brings some psychological and social gains. However, the main reason behind the abandonment of the transitional spaces is related to economic and political uneasiness. Since territorial and material efficiency and budgetary concerns are pursued, the recovery processes are considered a loss. Therefore, re-introducing the transitional spaces into the urban environments requires critical social and economic incentives. The demand in question is about finding a balance in-between. Besides, from a design point of view, handling the street and transitional spaces is a common problem that concerns not only the urban planner but also the architect. Because the buildings, with their

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[62] Barlas, *Kentsel Törenler, Kentsel Sokaklar,* 144.

edges and transitional spaces, also have a crucial impact on a range of social possibilities within the scope of urban life.

In the 1950s, Aldo van Eyck and many Team 10 members made such a reminder, especially regarding the connection between different urban affiliation zones. They pointed out the treatment of the streets and particularly the transitional spaces. Although they made their calls at different times, the origin of their concern was nearly the same. Almost all of them defended that despite the temporariness of time, trends, societies and the character of the urban life, the design principles and criteria for humane quality would be permanent. In design and planning, their focal points were always people and life. They strived to make human life higher in quality. They traced a healthier, safer and more livable city life through urban activities that are meaningful, productive and rich in content. From this perspective, many sensitive thinkers and designers have taken actions with similar intentions. They remarked on the shortcomings and failures of early functionalist planning strategies. However, their impact on practice, economic reasons and resultant state policies continue to govern lives in every sense. Nevertheless, it is still possible to mention some precautions, strategies and solutions that architects and urban planners might adopt and realize within the scope of their practices. Because despite all the pressure of being circumscribed or restricted, they still have a responsibility in cities, streets and life.

Re-embracing this crucial task, especially of the architect, as the architect's competence in this matter is often ignored or underestimated, is one of the essential purposes of this study. Thus, the architect's first responsibility seems to be comprehensively observing the city, its streets and other elements and life it contains. While doing this, the central attention and effort must be on daily life, ordinary urban situations and outdoor public spaces as venues. Because understanding the physical-spatial framework of urban life is crucial to envisage and re-construct. In fact, the ultimate purpose is to figure out the conditions for a better and more effective spatial structure for everyday activities and city life. What about architecture? Because architecture is not composed of "starchitecture", and buildings are not "perfume

bottles".[63] What is the accurate position of architecture today and the buildings, within this spatial structure for city life?

[63] Jan Gehl likens the buildings that are independent of the environment in which they are built, only concerned for some extraordinary form to "the perfume bottles". "Starchitecture" here is pointed out as a common architectural problem today, from AD Editorial Team, "These are Jan Gehl's Methods For Building Good Cities," *ArchDaily*, 2017 Retrieved from
https://www.archdaily.com/880923/jan-gehl-puts-forward-methods-toward-building-a-good-city

CHAPTER 3

CITY LIFE AS A DIMENSION OF ARCHITECTURE

"First we shape the cities – then they shape us."[64] The city's physical structure constitutes the framework for everyday activities and city life. It is a framework that is, to a certain extent, capable of making some impact on individuals' urban social life. Considering the cities' chronological processes, various samples reveal that urban structures and different spatial models somehow affect human behavior and the way the cities operate. For instance, the Roman colony towns' fixed and regimented order of the built elements draws a military image. Likewise, the wide boulevards of Paris were designed to provide military control over the city after 1852. Concurrently, this planning arrangement paved the way for establishing a unique "boulevard culture" as a social formation. It resulted in the emergence of "cafe life" along the city's wide streets.[65] The Medieval cities, on the other hand, with their compact urban layouts and short walking distances, consolidated their urban identity as the centers of trade and craftsmanship. In that case, again, it is possible to deduce that physical planning contributes to the emergence of the patterns of use. The city's physical-spatial structure effectively promotes the settlement of usages and functions and thus the formation of urban culture. That is how people shape cities first, then they shape the people.

In addition, the physical structure of a settlement or the planning framework reflects some social structures. Already, Kevin Lynch considers the city itself as *a powerful symbol of a complex society*.[66] This expression could also be interpreted as such that the complex social relations constitute the semantic whole of the city. The physical

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[64] Gehl, *Cities for People*, 9.
[65] Examples are mentioned in Ibid, 9.
[66] Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (MIT Press, 1964), 5.

placement and arrangement of the built components within a hierarchical framework of urban order implies the social structure within the society. Establishing such a physical and social structure is at the same time closely related to constructing a practically and mentally legible *image* for the city. Besides providing ease of movement and identification, this image also assumes a significant social role. It not only reinforces individuals' self-growth and self-security but also contributes to the sense of community and belonging. In addition, a distinct physical-spatial structure and legible environmental perception amplify the probable depth and intensity of the human experience.[67] Thus, the image of the city and society and the meanings they reserve also deepen and strengthen.

The physical framework for city life, people and societies; its meaning, nature and cruciality have been briefly expressed. As also embraced in the previous sections, a better spatial structure for patterns of use and better conditions for the city's spaces mean more invitation to the city, its activities and life. In this sense, a qualified spatial structure is able to promote interaction and offer endless rich possibilities for using the city's spaces. Or on the contrary, it could restrict or entirely inhibit any form of contact. The city's spatial structure and quality could catalyze a wide range of communal activities. However, an ill-defined and uncertain urban framework could constitute a real and tangible obstacle to the survival of city life. So how do the parameters that depend on these results work in practice? Going into more detail, how do all these occur within the totality and complexity of the city's physical-spatial structure?

3.1   Bringing Closer the Probabilities of Activities

The physical arrangement of the built elements is capable of both boosting and impeding visual and auditory contact in several formats and fashions. While constructing or operating a physical framework for city life, several methods could be employed to provide the different types of contact and intensities. Any social

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[67] Ibid, 5.

activity to take place and expand requires the simplest forms of sensory interaction. Therefore, the design process and dimensioning of a framework for a city's spaces require fundamental familiarity with the human senses. Such knowledge is also essential to comprehend the other aspects of direct communication and human perception of spaces.

At this point, Edward T. Hall's descriptive categorization of human sensory systems would be worth mentioning. Basically, Hall divides these human sensory apparatus into two sections: *the distant receptors* for the distant objects of interest to the eyes, ears, and nose, and *the immediate receptors* for the closer objects of interest to the skin, membranes, and muscles.[68] Sensory receptors receive different types of external information so that they become processed by individuals. In this evaluation, individual differences and the culture in which they live also have some impact. As expected from the context of this study, the distance receptors are of vital significance for the occurrence of the contact forms in city spaces. Particularly "seeing" and "hearing" becomes prominent in urban contexts.

Depending on the senses of sight and hearing, distance, time and speed factors constitute the main sensory concerns of any urban or architectural project. It is neither acceptable nor possible for a design project for human activity and life to ignore these factors, no matter what period, place or context it belongs. Such that the regulation of distance and dimensioning is one of the most crucial spatial attributes a designer could operate. Because some reasonable distance adjustment in spatial domains determines affection and intensity in social situations. It also measures the start and end of conversations. Therefore, the distance either implies closeness and warmth or coldness and impersonality. On the other hand, to use urban public space and have an idea about it, the individual must first be able to experience it. It is about seeing, hearing, and being able to physically contact, access or be in that place. In short, the usability of a space or its spatial appeal primarily depends on its being accessible to the relevant senses. Considering that the human senses have a limited

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[68] Edward T. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 41.

scope, this could only be possible by positioning the sensory inputs close to each other and to the user so they could be received. That means as compact a physical-spatial settlement framework as possible.

In addition, the human perceiver needs sufficient time to process the visual inputs and details caught into some meaningful impressions. Due to the capacity of the receptor organs, this interpretation process could only be possible at walking, or at most at running speed, 5 to 15 km/hr.[69] Accordingly, if the movement speed increases, the probability of capturing visual details decreases correspondingly. Thereby, the interpretation process also becomes interrupted by not providing enough grip time. That is why automobile cities have considerably larger sizes and proportions compared to pedestrian cities to close the gap. Las Vegas' huge and ostentatious signs and displays are good examples of this situation.[70] Cities like Las Vegas need and are equipped with more noticeable visual stimuli and larger indicators to create meaningful impressions at high speeds. However, this attempt is not enough to close any social gap. Because, any opportunity for contact and all social activities involving worthwhile experiences and conversations take place on foot.[71] Purposeful and content-intensive interactions occur when the individual has the time to stay and experience while walking, standing, or sitting.

Consequently, a sensitive urban designer who aims to manage the relationship between the physical framework and the potential forms of social contact and activities is able to develop some simple design principles. These implementations would be some mindful arrangement of the built elements with the awareness of the possibilities and limitations of the human senses. Referring to the human sensory and perceptual mechanisms, this could be achieved in at least five different ways and their combinations, according to Gehl. In this sense, he proposes five principles that could settle the prerequisites for an appropriate physical framework for city life, and respectively isolation and contact. Gehl classifies these principles as follows; 1-

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[69] Gehl, *Cities for People*, 43.

[70] Brown and Venturi elaborate on this issue through the case of Las Vegas in Robert Venturi et al., *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2017).

[71] Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 72.

walls/no walls, 2- *long distances/short distances*, 3- *high speeds/low speeds*, and 4- *back-to-back orientation/face-to-face orientation*.[72] Utilizing the deliberate combinations of these basic parameters, the designer could physically promote or inhibit isolation and contact. According to the function, situation or demand, both possibilities, isolation and contact, could be preferred. Or, more plausibly, the designer might propose a cascading spatial setup for patterns of use and interaction in which both possibilities are intertwined.

From this foundation, the treatment of transitional zones gains a particular significance in the composition of isolation and contact manners. Referring to the five principles and prerequisites and their operative components, the transitions and transitional zones could be recognized as the leading fields of practice and implementation. The transition, for instance, between the residence and the street might equally hinder or promote the occurrence of any form of activity. As a result of the planning strategy applied, the arrangement of physical elements determines the form of interaction and the degree of contact. The purpose in any context would be to provide some perceivable and meaningful transition between the various privacy zones as smoothly as possible. The problem of visual connection is crucial, as well as how divisions of the built units are accomplished. Building segments belonging to divergent functions or privacy zones should be well-defined while simultaneously accessible. Such a clear and open physical demarcation of transitional zones could be achieved via portals or gates, the effective transitions. In addition, establishing such a perceivable spatial framework with gradual transmission from small to larger and from more private to more public provokes a greater feeling of security and a stronger sense of belonging. In the end, this alone could lead to more and longer use of the city's public spaces.

All these initiatives aim to reach the same point with a common goal: seeking the conditions for frequent use of the city's spaces and longer outdoor stays. As mentioned in the previous sections, city life is potentially a self-reinforcing process

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[72] Ibid, 72.

in which individuals and events are likely to affect and stimulate each other. Then, people and activities could change the whole course of the actions in a chain. That means when the chain effect begins, more people tend to participate if there are any people. Correlatively, activity inputs stimulate and inspire each other. They tend to multiply, diversify and grow both in scope and duration. The opposite is also valid. If there is no activity, or if they are away from each other, a positive and encouraging chain effect similar to the previous one, cannot be mentioned.

Then, first of all, the conditions that will initiate the chain effect should be sought. In the light of the acquisitions related to the capacity of the human sense, the start of the chain effect in question depends on the formation of sensory interaction at the most basic level. A qualified and subtly organized physical-spatial framework could increase and diversify the opportunities for the most basic forms of contact in urban realms. The construction of such a physical framework relies on bringing the elements that will create sensory inputs closer together. Therefore, such a framework brings the city's spaces together, and thus the probabilities of activities closer. That is where the practice of planning and spatial structuring comes into play.

It is possible to envision and grasp an urban planning layout similar to the one described here, also at the architectural planning scale, through more compact structuring examples. These examples are often inspired by the urban hierarchical order in their design processes. Accordingly, streets are replaced by corridors, and squares are replaced by central assembly halls in these building models. Their inner circulation principle is entirely based on user interactions.

In this respect, Robin Evans' argument in *Figures, Doors and Passages* exemplifies a situation of what is intended to be meant here. In this case, architectural planning constitutes one of the most significant and powerful attributes of a quality built environment. That Evans first distinguishes between two architectural plans to figure out the impact of spatial organization on social situations. He compares the Italian medieval matrix of connected spaces and the British corridor and cellular room model. While the first example has a planning layout based on closeness, the second

has distance. Thus, the first one has incidental encounters and multiplied social interaction opportunities. On the other hand, the second has only excessive privacy and segregation.[73] Consequently, he questions the impact of such different spatial organization frameworks on patterns for use and social relations.

It is possible to observe another example of a similar approach that aims to increase and reinforce the sensory interactions between individuals through qualified planning strategies. Hertzberger designed Montessori School in Delft, particularly in the light of this idea. Carefully arranged, leveled and articulated, smoothly defined spatial particles constitute the essence of his design. He organized the interior space in this project with a layout reminiscent of an urban hierarchy. Such that it has an internal circulation that opens into and derives from a central hall so that everyone keeps returning to it.[74] It is such a spatial construct that enables a condition for meeting and dialogue between realms of distinct orders. One crosses another one's path, the users often and accidentally meet each other. They see, hear and talk, or at least, somehow have a visual connection. To reinforce these simple interactions with social events, he attached intimate and incidental spatial extensions around the main spaces so that they welcomingly host spontaneous gatherings. Besides, he succeeded in reflecting this sensitive design approach not only in the interior space of the building but also in the parts that open to the street. In this sense, he attached cellular articulations, niches and pockets to the facade. The entrance of the building became more than an opening. It contained a bunch of places where the users are welcomed to rest or linger, play games, wait for each other or arrange their meetings.[75]

Hertzberger's planning and spatial articulation techniques that pave the way for rich sensory interactions and social formations are not limited to this project. Actually, the community has always been the core of his design. His spaces always invite in to interact. In this sense, De Overloop care home for the elderly sets another good example. His intricate planning in this project collects inhabitants in the central hall

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[73] Robin Evans, "Figures, Doors and Passages," *Translations from Drawings to Buildings and Other Essays*, 1997, Architectural Association Publications (London), 73-95.
[74] Hertzberger, *Space and the Architect: Lessons in Architecture 2*, 172.
[75] Hertzberger describes his project in Herman Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture*, 33.

where all routes intersect.[76] He also offers venues of various types and scales around the center, according to everyone and every activity. Besides, the project demonstrates how borders could gain a social dimension by encouraging interaction with an effective spatial organization.[77] At this point, Boettger's threshold analyzes are worth mentioning, as they provide pertinent examples of these socially enriched spatial boundary formations. His analysis projects include many architectural projects similar to Hertzberger's sensitive buildings. They have cascading sequences of indoor and outdoor spaces, enhanced sensory contact possibilities, and inviting and active transition zones.[78]

The examples mentioned give an idea about how a compact planning framework, which is sensitive to human senses, could catalyze social interactions at both architectural and urban scales. In particular, they make it easier to envision the competence of planning practice for a qualified urban life. Similar cases could be multiplied, the main idea expressed could be supported by many other representations. However, what is crucial for this section is calling attention to the impact of the quality arrangement of the built elements on shaping the users' activities and patterns for daily life. The briefly mentioned ideas aim to open a window on the quality improving capability of some urban and architectural planning facts. They prove the capability of effective planning in bringing people together and multiplying social life. The ideas presented are some of the design attributes that will be discussed more comprehensively.

3.2   Architecture as an Attribute to City Life

"Lengthy stays mean lively cities."[79]

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[76] For detailed project description and review see Peter Buchanan, "De Overloop Care Home, Almere, Netherlands, by Herman Hertzberger," Architectural Review, October 2, 2020, https://www.architectural-review.com/buildings/de-overloop-care-home-almere-netherlands-by-herman-hertzberger.

[77] Hertzberger describes his project and design idea regarding the articulation of entrances in Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture*, 34.

[78] See Boettger, *Threshold Spaces: Transitions in Architecture: Analysis and Design Tools*.

[79] Gehl, *Cities for People*, 72.

The previous section focused on what a good, useful physical-spatial framework for city life means. It urged upon the factors it could depend on and its capabilities. Considering the limited capacity of the human sensory system, it made certain inferences about the physical qualities of a spatial structure. This is such a framework that could pave the way for interaction and social activities in the city. From this perspective, it has been determined that qualified city life could only be sustained when any stimulus, urban element, person or event could be seen, heard if possible and easily reached. Accordingly, urban life could only be carried out at low speed and on foot. Therefore, a qualified physical framework for the city had to exhibit a structure as compact as possible, to support a walkable usage pattern. This framework could encourage the city's people to use the city's spaces by making them accessible and attractive. Thus, it could gather people and activities in the city's streets and squares and increase the user density in the space.

However, although the physical framework has an influence on the number of activities and people in the city's spaces, it is not adequate and decisive for the sustainability of social life and a quality built environment. City life depends on the number of people outside, but one of its requirements is the length of time spent outdoors. If vivid and compelling city life is the matter, it depends not only on the number of activities and participants but more substantially on the duration of individual stays. Therefore, promoting city life is as much about encouraging the total span of outdoor stays as it is about promoting different forms of contact at various levels. Within this context, one of the most effective criteria when comparing urban "liveliness" is the entire time spent outdoors, represented by the "activity level". To illustrate with an example, three people each spend sixty minutes outside, and thirty people each spend six minutes; both cases are spending hundred and eighty minutes outside in total. Therefore their activity levels are equivalent. In other words, both scenarios contain equally "life".[80]

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[80] Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 77.

This section of the research traces the spaces and their qualities that will encourage the space users to stay out longer. In this sense, the quality of individual parts of the built environment and the design of spaces and details become prominent. These enclosing spatial properties define the city's outdoor space and determine the scope, character and content of urban life. From this aspect, architectural form becomes one of the most influential physical veins in assigning the quality of the built environment and city life.

However, many urban design projects regarding the improvement of the physical quality in the built environment relatively lack clarifying the accurate position of architecture. They overlook architecture's capability of rehabilitating the city's social space and urban life. The same uncertainty also applies to many architectural projects. Particularly, since the rise of over-functionalist architecture and the pronounced disciplinary split of urban planning and architectural design, the potential of architecture in urban situations has been often underestimated and misguided. Thus, the city's public spaces have gradually lost their social content and habitability. In urban contexts, it is vital to identify this problem and its relation to architectural practice and to retrace its origin. Today, it must be re-embraced that buildings and their edges also held some crucial role to inspire outdoor activities and social possibilities in the urban realm.

3.2.1 The Edge Effect

"...the most natural place to linger is the doorstep..."
"...events grow from the edge toward the middle of public spaces..."[81]
While describing city life, three basic types of physical activities conducted outdoors could be mentioned: *walking*, *sitting* and *standing*. Walking and sitting activities relatively require more particular settings and preferably equipment in the built environments. On the other hand, standing activities significantly reveal some behavioral patterns and characteristics of stationary activities in outdoor public

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[81] Ibid, 150.

spaces. These activities might occur for any reason, for a moment or a while. When it comes to standing for a while necessarily or arbitrarily, the need for staying and finding a good place to stand arises. Several surveys and analyses reveal that the popular zones for staying reside along facades or in the transitional zones between two distinguished areas where the occupants have a view of both simultaneously.[82] To describe this tendency and the potential of transitional zones Gehl borrows Derk de Jonge's concept of *the edge effect*.[83] As the most preferred outdoor staying areas, the edge zones along the building facades provide some favorable environment to sit or stand for their users. Moreover, they help them commune with the city and society, reinforcing their perception and living experience.

To better describe and grasp the notion of edge effect, it is possible to refer to some supporting concepts and arguments. For instance, it is also possible to observe the edge effect in ecology. In the ecosystem, the impact of different communities sharing the same boundary on each other is also called *the edge effect*. While the transition zone between different communities is called *ecotone*, the creatures of this region could carry some characteristics of both communities. Thus, the diversity of species in the ecotone is high. Besides, the density of individuals is observed in the area.[84]

In a similar vein, *borderland* is one of the ideal representations to refer to when describing the "fertility" of edge interactions. Ecotone corresponds to borderland in the disciplinary dimension. In response to the growing complexity of scientific knowledge in the prevailing disciplinary format, *the new disciplinarity* has flourished as a recent and dynamic form of discipline.[85] Although it is more flexible and compatible with the emergent forms, it rejects "boundarylessness". Instead, as Abbott highlights, the new disciplinarity puts its position to be liable for the retention

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[82] For further description see Gehl, *Cities for People*, 137-147.
[83] See Derk de Jonge, "Applied Hodology," *Landscape* 17, no. 2 (1967-68): 10-11.
[84] See "Ecotone," Encyclopædia Britannica (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc.), accessed July 24, 2022, https://www.britannica.com/science/ecotone#ref277755.
[85] Anne Marcovich and Terry Shinn, "Where Is Disciplinarity Going? Meeting on the Borderland," *Social Science Information* 50, no. 3-4 (2011): pp. 582-606, https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018411411036.

of the boundary lines along which the individuals negotiate.[86] In this sense, the boundaries are not only considered the unconditioned resultants of the differences. They gain another dimension, providing a communicative setting for social exchange and extra interaction. That could only be achieved by placing the boundaries with a slight margin for uncertainty. This place of territorial ambiguity is declared as the borderland. Kohler describes the indefinite character of the borderland, while he locates it in-between two distinguished entities.[87] For that reason, the borderland is the fertile terrain where the most inventive and unprecedented ideas or products are released, and the grounds of the discipline are prospered and modified.

In new disciplinarity, the boundaries should not be read merely as interfacial elements of the definition. They are also the surfaces capable of acquiring some volumetric attributions and spatial quality. Consciously articulated to get sprawled to a certain extent, the borderlands provide the actors of the divergent disciplines with a common field adjacent to their territories. In this region, individuals belong to all disciplinary fields. They have ideas about each other and might have common traits. In this transition zone, they express, share, learn and produce their ideas. The representatives of the disciplines stand on the area of the borderland closest to their specific domain. They perform extra-territorial contact and exchange without endangering or alienating their disciplines' prevalent identities.[88] Therefore, the borderlands as a place are naturally communicative agents. They pioneer dialogues and participative conversations between fairly complex and dissimilar communities so that the conflicts coexist.

If this relationship is applied to an urban context, *threshold spaces* take the role of the ecotone and borderland. The edge effect in the ecosystem and the diversity in the ecotone are just like the gathering of different types of activities carried out in the city's outdoor spaces, usually in the transition and edge areas. In its simplest form, even within a room, although they have a choice, individuals mostly prefer to be in

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86 Andrew Abbott, "Things of Boundaries," *Social research* (1995): 857-882.
87 Robert E. Kohler, "Landscapes and Labscapes," 2002, https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226450117.001.0001.
88 Marcovich and Shinn, "Where Is Disciplinarity Going? Meeting on the Borderland."

the edge areas.[89] In addition, while borderlands are the ambiguous region where the most productive interactions occur, this analogy is fully valid for the city's threshold spaces. In this sense, threshold spaces are the embodied form of the intersections of urban planning and architecture disciplines. They appear between the city and architecture, in the common area of the city's spaces and buildings. They are included in both regions and thus have a say over both.

The city's threshold spaces have the richest content in terms of sensory stimuli. For instance, the first impression of the place, its identity, invitingness, use and content depend on the physical qualities of these spaces. Accordingly, the first sensory contact, social interaction and communication occur at the threshold. Reconciliation between different elements is also achieved here. Therefore, building edges and threshold spaces are the places where the spatial tolerance is highest against different activities and users. Like ecotones and borderlands, the most diversity of activities and users is observed in threshold spaces. Therefore, they are places where the most efficient interaction and sharing occur, ideas are expressed, and meanings are reproduced in the city. Threshold spaces, which define and re-interpret city and life are indispensable for a city project.

From an architectural point of view, these edge areas and thresholds are sufficient to have all kinds of spatial equipment that could make the use of a space convenient and attractive. Most of the time, they already have them by nature. For instance, qualified threshold spaces are generally semi-shaded, sheltered against unfavorable weather conditions, with a good view of the outside world. Besides, they are usually provided with some equipment so that the user could stand or sit. In addition, they create a sense of "place" where the user feels relatively safer and could simultaneously engage in social interaction. Spatial and socially qualified building edges have threshold spaces that could accommodate many positive qualities such as these. All these qualities make any space a pleasant place in every respect. In other words, they could have the most satisfying qualities a place could have. These are

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[89] For more detailed survey data see Vacit İmamoğlu, "Öğrencilerin ODTÜ Kafeteryasında Yer Seçimi," *Çevre ve Mimarlık Bilimleri Derneği* (1979): pp. 67-87.

spatial qualities necessary for the eruption of optional, recreational and social activities in the city's public spaces. At that rate, it could be interpreted that the threshold spaces that could have all these qualities are able to provide suitable conditions and space for these activities. Moreover, it could be deduced that building edges and threshold spaces must meet these conditions to certain and various extents in order for these activities to occur in the city. Such that it is impossible for any of these to take place in a street surrounded by dead building facades. That is only possible with permeable, articulated building facades. Eventually, this initiative makes threshold spaces the main focus of interest in the search for more habitable building edges.

3.2.2 Threshold Space as a Quest for Habitable Edges

These are the building edges, thresholds and threshold spaces that determine whether the city's outdoors performs as a public space. In many cases, social activities and events primarily occur at the edges to further grow towards the middle. Therefore, the real success of public space and communal life remarkably lies behind the operativeness and quality of the enclosing edges and their thresholds. Although often disregarded in practice, the critical role of thresholds and their spatial quality have prompted many architects to re-address the issue. They have developed some projects on the city, having their origins from architectural discussions about the building edges. To better comprehend the city and its architecture in transitions, this section presents some threshold concepts in search of habitable edges.

The early questionings regarding the disciplinary separation of urban planning and architectural design, as well as its unfavorable manifestations in the cities, resulted in the first formations of the idea: *the architect-urbanist*. Pioneers of this thought assumed the built environment as one indivisible whole. As aforementioned, in the 1950s, together with a group of young architects known as Team 10, Aldo van Eyck put forward one of the most considerable discussions on the concept of threshold. All the key projects developed met the common concern of connecting the interior

and exterior. According to the team, the link had not to be through spatial continuity or visual transparency but through meaningful and psychologically effective transitions.[90] Such an approach prompted the practitioners also to rethink the city's spatiality. It evoked one of the prime missions of an architect to restore the social integrity of the city and society. As processed in Blom's projection of *Cities like Villages*, the city had to promote encounters and communication through deliberate paths, crossing networks and other architectural features.[91] The spatial articulation of buildings and facades was essential for enriched visual and volumetric connections and making use of the city's exterior spaces in their ultimate capacity.[92]

As one of the representatives of the same arguments and a member of Team 10, Hertzberger frequently refers to the concepts of *in-betweenness*. Especially in his book Lessons for Students in Architecture, he points out in-between spaces for their substantial capacity for accommodation in the urban realm. Instead of sharp divisions, he suggests irregularities and articulations in built forms so that they foster everyday opportunities and attachment. From this perspective, Hertzberger not only designed the building for its own sake but also designed the sidewalk and implicitly open public spaces of the city. Such that these interconnected spatial segments became not only the extensions of the building but also the extensions of the street. It is possible to observe this approach in almost every project of his, especially the Montessori School in Delft. According to him, more articulation and smaller units, inside and outside the building, mean more convenient space, more centers of interest, and more intense and varied urban activities. Thus, different activity types could be carried out simultaneously, side by side and effectively by divergent user groups.[93] Such diversity means more possibilities for life and social potential.

In this sense, Hertzberger shares an analogous attitude with Robert Venturi, who criticizes early modern architecture's substantial avoidance of complexity and

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[90] Jaschke, "City Is House and House Is City: Aldo van Eyck, Piet Blom and the Architecture of Homecoming", 176.

[91] For the project details see Piet Blom, Project P. Blom, Forum 14, no. I (1959), 322-3.

[92] Jaschke, "City Is House and House Is City: Aldo van Eyck, Piet Blom and the Architecture of Homecoming", 181.

[93] For further discussion see Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture*, 176-177.

ambiguity. Venturi rejects the plain massiveness of built form while defending complexity in architectural form and function. He draws attention that a living organism could maintain its working mechanism more effectively as its units become distinguished and the distribution of functions becomes clear and increased. Subsequently, he emphasizes that the same setup should be achieved in the built environment.[94] Thus, different functions could be maintained together in a more effective and diverse manner in intricately specialized spaces. In this context, spatial specialization implies a delineative attempt to make the space usable rather than an element that will hinder the flexibility of use. Besides, such a complex spatial model could only be possible with the increased elaboration of form and spatial articulation.

Another name who took action to prevent mis-implementations and their unfavorable, large-scale divisive manifestations in the cities is John Montgomery. His principles for place-making and the physical quality conditions of the city constitute some remarkable references. Through his principles, Montgomery particularly highlights the street life and suggests the diversity of activities, small units and the adaptability of built form. In addition, he propounds that city blocks must be short, and more streets and corners between them should be created, which means more permeability.[95] This approach does not directly offer a proposal on threshold spaces. However, it indirectly aims to bring the built environment closer to the human scale with smaller building units, thus increasing the surface of the building edges. According to Montgomery, more surfaces and corners mean more streets and urban life. His intention also overlaps with the deductions of Jane Jacobs and Team 10. As a reminder, Jacobs' conditions for the city's diversity and life stipulate the provisions of the human dimension, the small blocks and more concentration.

In addition, Stavros Stavrides is an architect who is concerned with city life and the city's public space. He puts forward discussions on the spatiality of transitions and

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[94] For further discussion see Robert Venturi and Vincent Scully, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2019).

[95] John Montgomery, "Making a City: Urbanity, Vitality and Urban Design," *Journal of Urban Design* 3, no. 1 (1998): pp. 93-116, https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809808724418.

the threshold space in the urban context. In this sense, coinciding with the aforementioned discussions on edge effect, he considers threshold space as a potentiality of space to exchange and encounter.[96] Moreover, his definition of *common space* emerges as threshold space in its essence. It collects people and activities in the city since it is "open" to public use. Thus, it paves the way for new forms of relationships and public negotiations. In this sense, the common spaces, in-between areas on urban sites, are regarded as crucial public spaces achieved without clear boundaries.[97] His "porous boundaries" in this context, where porosity is prioritized as the ability to separate while connecting, match the idea of threshold in this study's domain. The porosity of the boundaries relies upon loosening the borders and enhancing their transmittance. Therefore, the concept of commoning involves opening and thresholds. That is an opening for sharing and welcoming while defining the spaces of sharing. Consequently, with the awareness of threshold potential, Stavrides proposes *a city of thresholds* as an alternative to *a city of enclaves*.[98] His perspective, as this study does, aims to bring a reconsidered threshold understanding to the city.

There exist several projections on threshold concepts for the city and life more than mentioned. However, Jan Gehl's description of *soft edges* based on the notion of the edge effect and David Sim's concept of *soft cities* constitute some of the most relevant references for this study in terms of its focus of interest and methodology.[99] As in the previous discussions, also these concepts stem from the same concern of good connections between indoors and outdoors. The soft edges intend to investigate how resting areas and sub-spatial and functional formations attached directly to the edge of the buildings affect the scope and character of city life.[100] Then, Gehl concludes that the users of the city's public spaces instinctively tend to stay next to

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[96] Stavrides, *Common Space: The City as Commons*, 156.
[97] Ibid, 82.
[98] For further discussion see Stavros Stavrides, *Towards the City of Thresholds* (Trento: Professional dreamers, 2010).
[99] See David Sim and Jan Gehl, *Soft City: Building Density for Everyday Life* (Washington: Island Press, 2019).
[100] For the relevant book chapter see "Soft Edges" in Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 183-197.

the building edges, and the soft edges adorned with some places to linger enable the visitors to stay next to the buildings. Accordingly, as good opportunities for stationary activities, such extensions for outdoor stays constitute the places where everyday activities come out. Thus, Gehl and Sim also emphasize the priority of effective activation of building edges, transitions, and thresholds spaces for an urban project.

In the end, the contribution of the architectural implementations, spatial extensions and articulations along the building edges and threshold spaces to the city and life cannot be underestimated. Although the mentioned architecture practitioners and thinkers from various periods have developed discussions and concepts through divergent analogies, their methods are similar, and their destinations are the same. The target is a city life that does not compromise on architecture to survive; and an architecture that does not compromise on city life. These concepts recognize that the improvement of a city and its life depends on the activation of transition zones through architecture. In other words, the recovery of the city's architecture through building edges and threshold spaces recovers the city's public spaces and life.

As a result, could an existing city life be traced in the light of these briefly mentioned references and through certain design principles? Is it possible to rediscover the extent to which architectural moves could affect the character, content and mechanism of urban life? Thus, could the impact and potential of architectural space in the particular city context be reinterpreted by including city life in the dimensions of architecture?

CHAPTER 4

CITY LIFE AND ARCHITECTURE IN TRANSITIONS:
YALOVA AT THE THRESHOLDS

City and site planning strategies and architectural principles developed on the basis of urban life and everyday activities could be significantly influential in their occurrence and maintenance. They could re-converge and expand the city's activities and could trigger their reproduction. If urban activities and people once come together, it becomes possible for individual events to proliferate by stimulating each other, thus starting a self-reinforcing chain process. At this point, conscious design decisions play a substantial role in bringing people and events together in the city's outdoor public spaces or dispersing them. Correlatively, they capably integrate or segregate, invite or repel, open up or close in depending on the situation and purpose.

Then, how exactly do all these strategic projections come to life within the city's unique physical and social framework? To what extent do the city's physical framework and spatial qualities have a say in its activities and life? Moreover, is it possible to re-explore and make sense of the origin of an existing and settled urban life through certain design principles? In this way, could architecture's sphere of influence in the city be revealed again?

The exact purpose of this research is not to reproduce some examples of these design inferences and principles or to test them. This chapter aims to notice and pay attention to a small city whose physical and spatial characteristics are not very favorable and qualified at first glance. However, it somehow has a unique urban life that could be considered vibrant and valuable within the scope of this research. From this perspective, this chapter intends to penetrate the reasons behind this fact,

associating it with the qualities of the built environment. The proceeding sections seek answers through some fundamental planning and architectural design principles or pursue their traces.

Based on this purpose, the city life in Yalova will be investigated. This city builds itself with its own methods, responds to its own needs, and struggles to maintain urban life. It has been devastated by war and natural disasters several times. Therefore, it has inevitably been subjected to over-functionalist interventions to quickly compensate for the destruction. Even though these initiatives ignored the quality of life, none of them, no matter how severe, has not been enough to eliminate the urban life here. Besides, there has never been a period when this city did not try to recover its losses in its own way.

Today, Yalova still exhibits some physical and spatial improvement efforts and practical initiatives, often instinctively, to maintain the urban social life it contains. At this point, it should be noted that this struggle for physical improvement is not to get more people to go out and to provide reasons to go out and use the city's public spaces. Or, it is not to make the street lively again and build some social feelings and communal values, as in some of the previous examples. This time, the struggle stems from the need to maintain the city life that is already being lived. This impulse is probably influenced by a strong sense of community and unity that, despite all destructions, already exists through the influence of urban culture. Because the struggle to keep the city, its social values and urban life alive is carried out instinctively by the citizens themselves. Moreover, without the need for any noteworthy encouragement, they tend to use the city's public spaces, coasts, streets, squares, pavements or doorways to linger, interact, socialize if possible, meet, create events and participate in them. Even if there are no necessary reasons or conditions for all these, they tend to provide them, improve and act on their own.

The spatialization and improvement effort, the origin of all these, the factors that might be effective in this origin, and possible incentives and obstacles in the city's physical framework are some of the focuses of this research. What is meant here is

different from the focus of many conventional urban studies. Because Yalova is not one of those well-designed or branded cities with some unique and outstanding aesthetic value. It is relatively usual but full of life. If not a spatial or aesthetic pleasure that keeps people out, what is it then? In that case, if a reverse approach is adopted and the city could be observed and evaluated from this perspective, the answers to the questions could be found. Besides, the research process could be conducted more effectively by contributing to the self-reinforcing development of the city. Or, at least, the possibility of disrupting or preventing the city's intrinsic growth could be reduced by avoiding the wrong urban transformation strategies. In addition, such an assessment could serve as a reference in the search for more realistic and familiar solutions in similar city samples. It could help to save urban lives subjected to reductions in its architecture.

The city in question is the product of a natural and spontaneous urban formation process, as in many cities with a relatively old settlement history. Although some improvement programs have been implemented later to advance the urban texture and transportation network, no professional planning or draft could be mentioned at the beginning. Therefore, it would not be entirely possible or accurate to adopt the goal of testing the validity of any design strategy while observing this city. Likewise, socially qualified urban life has probably never been one of the essential concerns in this city's development. However, urban life has been a reason, and also a natural result, for the foundations of the city to be laid and to survive. Today, the city life in Yalova is a reflection of its unique social and historical processes, in which multidimensional elements are influential. In addition, no urban component could be the product of swanky design in this city. Far from having impressive architecture, it often lacks this aspect qualitatively. Here, the city's spaces have evolved in the most practical way possible to respond to social life and convergent needs. Life here is naturally significant. Therefore, the transformation process of the city, the origin of urban social life, and its relationship with the physical and social framework are also a matter of curiosity.

4.1   The City Overview

Yalova is a gateway city known by different names in history. According to its known history, it is a coastal town that hosted various Anatolian tribes in the Prehistoric era, and today the Republic of Turkey. Yalova, which still has one of the most demanded and crucial coasts of Marmara, has taken various roles and identities throughout history.[101] Since the first years of the republic, Yalova has been at the forefront of the settlements in Turkey after the new capital Ankara. With the effective urban development strategies implemented within a brief time, it came to the fore as the summer capital of the country. It became another strategic center outside Ankara, shaped by the young republic and where the young republic is shaped.[102]

With its strategic location next to İstanbul, highly fertile lands, healing thermal waters and natural beauties, Yalova has always been a prime residential area with its potential for development. In this respect, it has received a wealth of immigrants in all periods of history. It has added value to its cultural accumulation by hosting a wide variety of societies and traditions, especially of Turkish, Greek and Armenian origin. However, its urban development as a small settlement was neglected for a long time. Since its outstanding potential was foreseen in the first years of the republic, the urbanization process of Yalova was given particular significance. It was aimed to be developed as a rival to Europe's leading tourism cities at that time, and many projects were successfully implemented in this sense. So indeed, Yalova started to be heard in Europe at that time as Atatürk's *water city*. Especially with its qualified spa facilities, it gained a reputation as one of the most exclusive and popular healing and entertainment centers of its time, having the visits of European tourists and leading political leaders.

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[101] For instance, it was a gateway in the Prehistoric age, a rest and healing center in the Roman-Byzantine period, and the fruit, vegetable, honey and wood warehouse and quarry of the Ottoman Palace.

[102] Selçuk Seçkin, "Atatürk Döneminde Yapılan İmar Uygulamaları," *Uluslararası Ahmet Yesevi'den Günümüze İnsanlığa Yön Veren Türk Büyükleri Sempozyumu Bildirileri*, 2009, 76-82.

The value of the city's image, which was once drawn with great devotion and effort, with the best and contemporary possibilities of the period, could not have been appreciated enough today. Because Yalova has lost its feature of being the elite and modern city of the republic that it had at that time and is far removed from its prestigious status. Unconscious and fully functional planning practices, especially after the catastrophic earthquake, wrong land-use, and deficiencies in project design and inspections are some of the reasons the city lost some of its qualities and strayed away from its image. In addition, the recent uncontrollably increased Middle Eastern immigrant population challenged the city's capacity. Yalova and its inhabitants have been exposed to immense economic, cultural and social tensions.

Although Yalova has always been a prominent city throughout history, its value could not be claimed as it deserves today. It was often pushed into the background, and very little urban research has been conducted about it. In this sense, this research also aims to support the preservation of its potential, social values and image, as well as the authentic, rich and sincere way of life it contains and anything meaningful about it. Thus, while seeking answers to its own research questions, it also contributes to the social and spatial rehabilitation of the city.

4.1.1 Location and Administrative Structure

Yalova, the smallest province of Turkey, is a coastal city in northwest Anatolia, surrounded by the Marmara Sea. It is located on the transition route from Europe to Anatolia, Aegean and Mediterranean regions. Due to its geographical position, it could be indicated that the settlement area acts as a corridor on its own by

constituting a strategically significant link. In this aspect, and because it has a considerable coastal length, it always has high development potential.[103]

Figure 4.1. Map of Yalova in Turkey
Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/ce/Yalova_in_Turkey.svg

Yalova has been exposed to the most severe and destructive earthquakes throughout history due to its location in the first-degree seismic belt and rebuilt. It was and is today a port city, spread along the coast on a low-sloping field. The port culture led to the formation and development of the first settlement traces in the city. In the following years, it made transportation to the city and commercial activities attractive and easy. The flat land in the coastal areas and the low indentation on the shores had a direct impact on the settlement of the city and seaside activities.[104] On the other hand, the land structure of the city demonstrates a relatively rough feature when going south and away from the coast.[105] Therefore, the Sea of Marmara in the

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[103] In fact, Yalova is one of the provinces with the longest coastline in Turkey, with 8 km of coastline in the central district and 110 km of coastline in total. It is also the county's smallest province, with a surface area of 847 km^2.
Numerical data is from "Yalova Vizyon Planı, Körfez Kuşağının Odağı," *Kentsel Vizyon Platformu* (n.d.), 2011, Retrived from http://www.kentselvizyon.org/assets/77_yalova__vizyonplani_small.pdf
[104] Ercan Kazel, and Mehmet Bayartan, "Yerleşme Coğrafyası Açısından Bir İnceleme: Yalova Şehri," *Coğrafya Dergisi* 43, 2021: 143-158, 148.
[105] The steep slopes are completely covered with lush forests which make up about 58% of the province's total surface area. See Atasoy, and Oğuz, "Yalova'nın 25 Yıllık Gelecek Perspektifi," *Yalova İl Özel İdaresi*, February 2021, Retrieved from

north, the steep slopes in the south, and the four streams could be considered the natural thresholds of the city's settlement.

Yalova, not only with its geographical position but also constitutes a transition area between the Mediterranean and Black Sea climate zones.[106] With moderate climatic features, it offers favorable living conditions for its inhabitants both in summer and winter and facilitates agricultural activities, especially floriculture. Besides, its distinguished thermal springs make Yalova unique for thermal and health tourism.[107] The advantages of location and climate in terms of tourism and general life comfort make settlement in this area and various economic and social activities more attractive.

Yalova and its surroundings have always been considered among the most distinguished settlements throughout history, due to the favorable living conditions in many aspects but especially its strategic location. Such that İstanbul, always one of the most significant cities in the world, is one of the closest neighbors of Yalova. Not only with İstanbul, but Yalova shares its borders with some of Turkey's most developed and significant metropolises, namely Kocaeli in the east and Bursa in the south. It is located in the center of these three. Thus, although it is a small city, it offers convenience and many options to its residents, especially in terms of accessibility to the most advanced facilities in the country's sectors such as health, education, trade and industry. Therefore, it is evident that it has substantial development potential, with its proximity to the developed centers and its bridge role in the transportation network. In this sense, Yalova is in a position to become one of the prime logistics and tourism centers of Turkey today as it was in the past.

When evaluated in terms of its administrative structure, while recorded as a district of neighboring provinces in history, Yalova was among the districts of İstanbul till

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http://www.yalovaozelidare.gov.tr/kurumlar/yalovaozelidare.gov.tr/Tasarim/haberler/2021/Yalovanin-25-Yili-Raporu/2_yalovanin_25_yillik_gelecek_perspektifi_raporu.pdf

[106] It has the climate type known as the macroclimate having the characteristics of both. Atasoy, and Oğuz, "Yalova'nın 25 Yıllık Gelecek Perspektifi," 4.

[107] The city has an annual average temperature of 10.1-14.6 ˚C. Relevant information could be found in; Kazel, and Bayartan, "Yerleşme Coğrafyası Açısından Bir İnceleme: Yalova Şehri," 148.

the recent past. In 1995, it was separated from the metropolitan city and accepted as a province. According to today's division, it has six districts namely Merkez, Termal, Armutlu, Altınova, Çınarcık and Çiftlikköy. The fact that its six districts have their coasts and their settlement developed along the sea proves how influential the traces of the coastal and port culture could be in the city. Accordingly, it also demonstrates how settled tourism and trade.

Figure 4.2. Map of Yalova Districts
Source:
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/3/3b/Yalova_location_districts.svg/640px-Yalova_location_districts.svg.png

4.1.2 Urban Settlement History

Together with no exact information about the date of its establishment, the oldest settlement in Yalova is estimated to date back to the Neolithic period of 8000-5500 BC. As a stronger assumption, Yalova is thought to have been founded by the Bithynians in the 6-7th century BC.[108] The first settlement in the region was completed 4000 years ago with the infrastructure works to provide access to the

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[108] Kazel, and Bayartan, "Yerleşme Coğrafyası Açısından Bir İnceleme: Yalova Şehri," 149.

thermal spas. Besides, it could be assumed that the first settlement formations emerged in Yalova, especially after the construction of a pier to reach the hot springs from İstanbul. Therefore, the history of Yalova as an urban settlement is parallel to the history of the spa region, and the zoning activities around the spa and pier were influential in the establishment and development of the city.[109] In this sense, it seems impossible to explain Yalova's settlement history without mentioning the history of thermal spas.

Yalova Thermal Spas were established 12 km away from the present city center. The first baths of the spa were built and used by the Byzantine emperor Constantinus approximately 1600 years ago.[110] Then, the facilities were developed by various Byzantine emperors, and some of the structures have managed to reach today. After being neglected for a while, the region was reconstructed by Sultan Abdülmecid. During this period (1831-1861), existing buildings were repaired, and some new bathrooms and kiosks were added to the facility.[111] In addition, the roads that still provide access to thermal spas today were opened at that time. In the following years, the region reinforced its fame when the thermal water was analyzed for the first time in 1892. The water quality was found equivalent to the waters of the world-famous France Aix Les-Bains. Thus, Yalova Thermal Spas became one of the most popular health and entertainment centers in the world of its time.[112] The reputation it already had, was reinforced in 1911 after Yalova Thermal Springs won the title of "the most healing spa" in the competition between thermal springs held in Rome. That continued until the war overshadowed its value and disrupted the development activities. Even worse, the region was destroyed during the 1920 Greek Invasion.

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[109] Metin Tuncel, *Yalova, İslam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, Cilt: 43, 2013), 306.
[110] Yalova Thermal Spas, has been operating for more than 4000 years and known as a popular healing center for more than 2000 years. See "Termal Kaplıcalarının Tarihi," *Yalova Termal,* (n.d.), Retrieved April, 2022, from http://www.yalovatermal.com/Tarihce
[111] Mustafa Noyan, "İstanbul'un Sayfiye Yeri Yalova Kaplıcaları," *Zdergisi İstanbul*, (n.d.), Retrieved April, 2022, from https://www.zdergisi.istanbul/makale/istanbulun-sayfiye-yeri-yalova-kaplicalari-121
[112] Noyan, "İstanbul'un Sayfiye Yeri Yalova Kaplıcaları."

Returning to the impact of thermal spas on the urbanization of Yalova, it could be indicated that the first residential settlements in Yalova began to take shape since the region became a popular holiday destination. Altınova, Çiftlikköy and Koruköy districts, located on the transportation route from the surrounding centers to the spa area, could be pointed out as the first settlement examples. However, until a new pier was built in the current city square, there was no sign of significant settlement in the city center.[113] Nevertheless, it should be noted that before the pier, there were also agricultural farms and some public buildings such as mosques, kulliyes, inns, and baths around the current city center.[114] However, the construction in question did not belong to any systematic layout and spread out as relatively isolated farms.

After the new pier, the Government House was built in front of it in 1901. Yalova was declared a district. Meanwhile, the start of regular ferry services between İstanbul and Yalova, paved the way for a more organized and developed urban formation in the city center. With this decision, Yalova reinforced its identity and reputation as an accessible and attractive holiday resort that Istanbulites could visit more often and easily. These frequent visits developed the touristic and commercial activities in the region. They also started and accelerated the settlement works, especially to respond to the temporary accommodation needs of the summer residents. Thus, the first foundations of the city were laid.

The process in question is a story of urban formation. Each of the developments mentioned was sizably effective on its own. However, it is open to debate whether the entire zoning process is effective enough compared to the total period. This partial inconsistency in urban development could be attributed to several reasons. However, the shaking destructions that Yalova was subjected to throughout history have a great share of these factors. One of the first demolitions of historical significance among these is the catastrophic earthquake in 1894. More than half of today's Yalova, or according to one estimation, its totality was destroyed in this

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[113] Seçkin, "Atatürk Döneminde Yapılan İmar Uygulamaları," 77.
[114] Some of them were known to have been constructed by Mimar Sinan upon the commission of Rüstem Pasha.

disaster.[115] Assuming that the city was still developing significantly at that time, it might be estimated that the reconstruction works afterwards could effectively compensate for the destruction. However, the 1912-1913 Balkan War and the First World War dealt a comparatively greater financial and moral blow to the urban development process of Yalova. Moreover, between 1920-1921, the city was exposed to Greek occupation during the War of Independence. After all this war and occupation, Yalova was saved again in a burned and destroyed state with the organization and resistance of the people. However, Yalova was already untended due to the constant state of war. Especially after the occupation period, it was sheerly devastated. The thermal springs were almost entirely forgotten.

Eight years after the Greek occupation, the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, made his first visit to Yalova in 1929, which changed its fate. He found the city completely collapsed, tired and sick.[116] From his very first arrival, the leader frequented his visits and embarked on recovery and reconstruction activities that were rooted enough to compensate for the destruction left behind by the war. He had foreseen the potential the city had. In this sense, despite the economic crises in the country, the zoning activities in Yalova were granted a privilege. Hundreds of construction masters and workers were assigned between 1929 and 1930 for the city's development. First, the existing transportation networks were improved, and new roads between districts and cities were built. By restarting regular ferry services, Yalova was administratively connected to İstanbul as a district to accelerate its development.[117] Thus, it started to be mentioned again, this time as the new face of the republic and a respected model city in Turkish and foreign publications.

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[115] Mehmet Akif Ceylan, *Marmara Depreminin (17 Ağustos 1999) Yalova Şehrine Etkileri* (Gündüz Eğitim ve Yayıncılık, 2003), 42.

[116] In addition to the devastating social and economic effects of the war, Yalova was struggling with the malaria epidemic, swamp and mosquito problems at that time. Therefore, the most significant result of Atatürk's first visit was to end the epidemic, which became the primary problem of the city, with steps such as arranging the streams, drying the swamps and distributing free drugs to the public. See Ahmet Akyol, *Atatürk'ün Kenti Yalova* (Yalova: Yalova Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2003), 22.

[117] All these developments regarding the urbanization of Yalova were published day by day as articles in the newspapers of the period. They were documented in detail and shared with the Turkish people. For the articles published in newspapers between 1929-1938 see Akyol, *Atatürk'ün Kenti Yalova,* 48-165.

Figure 4.3. Atatürk at the Threshold: Yalova Termal Otel, 1930
Source: https://www.farkyalovada.com/haber-kategori-nostalji/1.html

In the first years of the Republic, the exemplary reconstruction activities were carried out within the scope of the town's reconstruction project, which was undertaken with great enthusiasm and speed. However, what was rebuilt in this town was not only the town's zoning plan, but also the construction of its vision and identity. It was also the construction of a society. Atatürk desired to shape this social and urban identity with the values of Yalova itself, preserving and enriching. The aim was to make Yalova appear among the exclusive and exemplary settlements of the Republic, as a "modern water town".[118]

Based on this idea, the Delegation of Executives decided to invite the Chief Architect of Paris Municipality Henri Prost to Yalova in 1935. The purpose of this invitation was to reinforce the desired "water town" image for the town, improve the quality of

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[118] Within this context, only five days after his discovery of Yalova, Atatürk brought about 400 masters and craftsmen to the town. They started the cleaning and repair of the hot springs area, roads, existing structures, bathrooms, fountains and water tanks. For relevant information also see "Atatürk ve Yalova," *Yalova Şehir Rehberi* (n.d.), Retrieved March 2022, from http://yalova.org/ataturk-ve-yalova/., Seçkin, "Atatürk Döneminde Yapılan İmar Uygulamaları," 79-80., and "Çınarlı Hıyaban (Çınarlı Yol)," *T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, Yalova İl Kültür ve Turizm Müdürlüğü*, (n.d.), Retrieved April 2022, from https://yalova.ktb.gov.tr/TR-75626/cinarli-hiyaban-cinarli-yol.html

the existing spa facilities and have Yalova's first zoning plan.[119] Prost's arrival in Yalova was one of the turning points in the city's history. With the cooperation of the most distinguished architects, planners and landscape masters of the period, Yalova Thermal Spas have achieved the desired contemporary appearance. In addition, by bringing various tree species from many parts of the world for landscaping, the region also had the title of "Turkey's first living tree museum". A step had to be taken to preserve these developments. For this purpose, the law entered into force in 1938 and restricted the use and zoning of the hot springs area by prohibiting the construction within 500 meters from the border of the region.[120] Thus, the thermal springs and their surroundings have managed to preserve the qualities they had at that time to a great extent.

As a result, the thermal springs became a tool of the modernization goal of the newly established republic with the region's brand new image in the 1930s. They simultaneously necessitated the planning and zoning of the Yalova city center. In this sense, the first zoning plan of Yalova was prepared in 1938. This arrangement was based on the creation of a meaningful, useful and holistic transportation network. Thereby, with the main transportation axes, which still form the skeleton of the city today, the development direction of the city has been determined.

The Yalova Zoning Plan published in 1938, aimed to preserve the current physical framework and functional structure of the city to a large extent.[121] From this perspective, firstly, all the existing streets were reviewed in terms of their width and the size of the islands, following the building and roads law. The roads were expanded and rearranged if possible. The old roads that could not be rearranged were left as pedestrian promenades.[122] In addition, the existing pier in the center was also considered critical for this new city layout. It had a direct impact on the determination

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[119] Özlem Sıla Durhan, "Erken Cumhuriyet İstanbul'unda Kentsel Değişim (1928-1950)," *Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü*, 2009, 118-124.

[120] Seçkin, "Atatürk Döneminde Yapılan İmar Uygulamaları," 80-81.

[121] The report was for the 50-year development of the town. For a portion of the report see Ahmet Akyol, "Atatürk Dönemi Yalova İmar Planı," *Yalovamız*, 2018, Retrieved April 2022, from http://www.yalovamiz.com/makale/ataturk-donemi-yalova-imar-plni-4018/

[122] Akyol, "Atatürk Dönemi Yalova İmar Planı."

of the physical framework of the region, the planning and orientation of the buildings. Such that the city's entire settlement and transportation system was arranged with reference to this pier square. All the main streets parallel and vertical to the sea, including the intercity and intracity transportation axes, intersected here. Besides, the former Government Office building in front of the pier was also preserved. The buildings surrounding it and the square were reserved for other administrative buildings. Thus, the city square has been known as the "honorable and great *Republic Square*" from now on. Starting from the first years of the republic till today, this square has become a significant symbol for the identity of the city and its citizens. It has hosted the liberation celebrations of Yalova from the enemy occupation and other enthusiastic national holidays, concerts and entertainments, public meetings and speeches for years.

Figure 4.4. A Celebration in the Republic Square, 1960
Source: https://www.farkyalovada.com/haber-kategori-nostalji/1.html

Figure 4.5. Celebrations of Yalova's Liberation in the Republic Square, 2021
Source: Author

In addition, some other significant decisions were also announced in the zoning plan report. For instance, the coastal part would be reserved for the construction of single-storey villas with gardens and arranged in groups in orchards. Besides, the new settlement was planned to be established along the streets parallel to the sea, back on the land relatively close to the hot springs area. Immigrants would be settled in the empty land behind the described zones to increase the population of the city. On the other hand, wide lands between them would be utilized as fruit and vegetable fields or sample gardens.[123] In addition, the positions of social areas such as running and sports, education, health and trade facilities have been determined in the content of this report. Each of these has been reasonably distributed in the town to reinforce its summer resort image.

As a result, some of the critical decisions described here have been implemented, and some could not. Or, some of the implementations could not maintain their quality as planned or reach today. However, the zoning studies conducted between 1929-1938 and the zoning plan presented in 1938 have the value of being turning points in

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[123] Ibid.

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the settlement history of the city. Because the physical framework in question still constitutes the main structure of the city, around which the city develops. It not only provides the settlement and expansion layout for the city, but also the formation and settlement of the character and content of the city life.
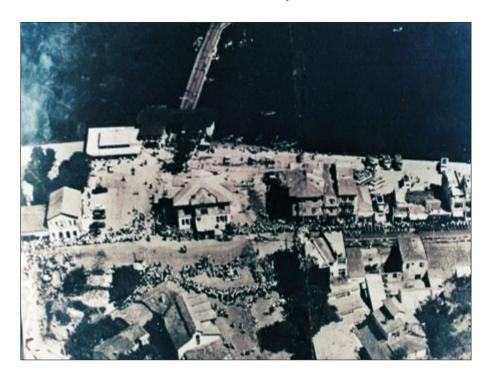

Figure 4.6. Bird's Eye View Yalova, 1950
Source: https://www.farkyalovada.com/haber-kategori-nostalji/1.html

After 1938, the zoning activities and expansion of the city continued, although it was not very qualified. Yalova, where the foundations of a modern city and society were laid in the first years of the republic, was on the way to becoming a developing settlement with a population of 2635 people in 1935. Its population increased continuously after 1950.[124] It exceeded 10.000 people, making a big leap with the establishment of a NATO military base in the east of the town in 1960.[125] Thus, the settled Americans not only accelerated the construction activities in the city center but also added economic and cultural vitality and richness to the region.

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[124] Bursa Street is renamed Cumhuriyet Street.
[125] Tuncel, *Yalova, İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 306-308.

With the increasing population, as a result of the rapid construction in the early 1960s, the urban texture of Yalova exemplified a simple composition yet became more evident. This simple plan model consisted of a main transportation axis parallel to the coast and the streets that cut this axis vertically. It exhibited a compact pattern only in the "çarşı (bazaar)" section while taking a looser appearance with the gardens towards the periphery. Nevertheless, it could be indicated that Yalova's actual growth in spatial and demographic terms took place after 1970. Since these years, advanced industrial facilities have been established in the east of the town, and floriculture and greenhouse activities have also progressed significantly.[126] Besides, the tourism aspect of the region came to the fore even more, since the summer facilities and sites have been multiplied. Thus, it could be concluded that the developing commercial and social life contributed to the increase in the interest in Yalova and the settlement demand.[127] Furthermore, this rapid growth was reinforced, since the administrative change in 1995. Yalova was no longer a district of İstanbul but a city on its own.

On the other hand, the acceleration in development and expansion was interrupted for the first time and most severely in 1999. Yalova, which had been shaken by earthquakes many times before, was shaken this time by the catastrophic Marmara Earthquake. This time the size and severity of the earthquake's mark on a relatively developed city was inevitably increased. That was actually one of the most severe and unforgettable disasters in the history of the country.[128] Like many cities affected by it, Yalova had entered a process that would completely change its future in every aspect.

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[126] The production content of the mentioned industrial facilities was textile, chemistry, silk, paper, fiber, yarn and packaging.

[127] After these developments, the town's population accelerated dramatically, approaching 20.000 in 1970, 30.000 in 1975, and exceeding 40.000 in 1980. The numerical data is from Tuncel, *Yalova, İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 306-308.

[128] After the earthquake, approximately 1500 loss of life, more than 2500 injured, and destruction reached serious figures that cannot be fully estimated are determined. Along with the moral losses, at least 7606 buildings with severe damage were also identified. See Ibid, 306-308.

After this disaster, the development activities in the city stopped for a while, but it gained momentum in a short time. The aim was to urgently compensate for the demolitions with the new zoning regulations. However, perhaps because it is too urgent, or because this restructuring process was carried out purely by functional and economic concerns, the extent to which this purpose is realized and in what sense it is a "compensation" is a matter of debate. Because, with the restructuring process, the city would now have a completely different silhouette than the one it had before and planned to have in the future. The fact that single or 2-storey buildings in the city center are replaced by 4-5-storey apartments after they were destroyed by the earthquake, had an impact on this result. Instead of single or 2-storey buildings that once spread in groups buried in gardens, 4-5-storey buildings that consume the entire lot without leaving any garden or transition area had become widespread.

Figure 4.7. Cumhuriyet Street View, 1962
Source: https://www.farkyalovada.com/haber-kategori-nostalji/1.html

Figure 4.8. Cumhuriyet Street View, 2022
Source: Author

As a result, although the compact framework and land-street systems that previously existed in the city center have been adhered to, the general appearance of the city has begun to deviate from what was described in the 1938 zoning report. Moreover, the city has faced the danger of completely losing the unique qualities of its built environment. Front and back gardens, intermediate spaces, and spatially qualified building edges have substantially disappeared. Since then, not much has changed in the city's appearance, except for its expansion and spatial improvements added later. In the end, what has changed drastically here is the city's architecture. Along with it, the city's public spaces and lifestyle have relatively changed too.

4.1.3 Towards Understanding the City and Life

After the breaks that changed the destiny of the city and society, the impacts of these physical and spatial changes on the city's streets, public spaces, the way the society uses these spaces and other interests of this research will be set aside to be discussed

later. However, before returning to the main subject of the study, it seems necessary to make an up-to-date evaluation to understand the general context in which city life is maintained, and the society and the social structure.

From this perspective, if the current demographic data of Yalova is reviewed, it could be determined that the population of Yalova made a breakthrough in 2007. That was the first serious population increase in Yalova after the decline for the first time in its history because of the earthquake.[129] With 291.001 inhabitants in 2021, Yalova reached a population density of 342/km^2 as Turkey's smallest province.[130] It also became the second province with the highest annual population growth rate in Turkey, with 1.87% in 2020 and jumping to 5.42% in 2021. Although it is a center of attraction that has always received immigrants, the impact of the excessive immigration in recent years on this dramatic increase is undeniable.[131]

On the other hand, with the university established in 2008, the positive effect of the increase in the young population on the social image is remarkable. Thus, commercial and social life has evolved and diversified with the university students who migrated to the city, and its development gained momentum. Apart from that, the improvements in transportation systems have facilitated and diversified Yalova's connection with the surrounding provinces. For instance, the newly built intercity highway and Osman Gazi bridge, new ferry routes and hourly services are some of the transportation means that have contributed to the city's growth and social life in recent years.

As a result, if the city's current sprawl is evaluated in response to the increasing population and spatial demand, it could be concluded that the city's sprawl approaches its boundaries in recent years. The change in the city macroform reveals that the settlement still spread along the seaside. This fact proves that the presence

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[129] The population reached 181.758 in 2007, and exceeded 203.741 in 2010.
[130] Based on the statement published by the Turkish Statistical Institute on February 4, 2022.
[131] According to the latest data presented in 2022, the foreign national population in the city has reached 31.100, excluding unregistered residents. See Habertürk, "Yalova Nüfus Artış Hızı En Yüksek İkinci İl Oldu - Yalova Haberleri," www.haberturk.com (Habertürk, February 4, 2022), https://www.haberturk.com/yalova-haberleri/94266724-yalova-nufus-artis-hizi-en-yuksek-ikinci-il-oldu.

of the sea directly affected the spread of the city. 1994, 2004 and 2019 satellite data also demonstrates that the urban settlement has expanded predominantly on the flat lands in the south.[132] It means that the coastline and the slopes that increase towards the south shape the city's settlement form.[133]

Currently, the spread of the settlement is extending to the limits, and its total area is large enough to include the city center spatially several times. However, the city center, namely the Merkez district, alone reaches a rate of 53.9% of the total population of the city's six districts, with a population of 156.838. With this aspect, it is still by far the city's most dense district with its highest population and compact structure. At that rate, what could be the effect that could cause this serious demand and density, particularly in the city center?

Indeed, looking at any street in the city center today, what exactly is the source of the intense social life glimpsed? The spatial qualities and structure of the city?

Today, despite all this crowd, density, the pressure this density creates on the space and all this chaos, it seems that the people of Yalova cannot give up on the city center. They do not leave the city center, prefer to live and be in it, and if necessary, struggle to live there together. It seems that the people of Yalova somehow derive pleasure from the busy lifestyle in this seaside city, from living together with others and socializing in its public spaces despite everything. Or, the physical framework of the city creates such a strong image of the "city center" that the people cannot cut free from it. In this result, it is possible to mention the cultural and social influences and personal tendencies. However, the physical environment in which people live has also some impact on the origin and formation of all these, and spatial usage tendencies. But what makes the Yalova city center so popular today, which lost its built quality to a considerable extent, especially after the quick reconstruction in the post-earthquake period? What could be the effect of the city's built quality,

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[132] İbrahim Emir Keçeci, Tuğba Kiper, and Murat Özyavuz, "Yalova Merkez İlçesi Kıyı Bandı Örneğinde Kentsel Peyzaj Planlama Odaklı Mekansal Gelişim Stratejilerinin Belirlenmesi," *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Tarım Bilimleri Dergisi* 26.1 (2021): 142-154, 145.
[133] Kazel, and Bayartan, "Yerleşme Coğrafyası Açısından Bir İnceleme: Yalova Şehri," 147.

particularly of architecture, on the excess and intensity of people and social activities in its streets and squares?

At this point, the research returns to its main point of curiosity with these questions. This study locates its focus on city life and built quality, particularly the architecture of the city. After its examinations, it acknowledges that the quality of the built environment and architecture could contribute significantly to the unique functioning of everyday city life, the gathering of people and the emergence of social activities. From this perspective, what this section dwelled on is the formation of a city's physical entity and life. The explanation of Yalova's urbanization process, the settlement history and a recent urban-social evaluation aim to assess the understanding of the complex relationships on which urban life depends. In the light of these acquisitions, the upcoming section focuses on reinterpreting the relationship between urban life and architecture in Yalova, in its current sense, through some design principles related to the quality of the built environment.

At first glance, the data presented on the city's overview and history sometimes could be found exceeding considering the aim and scope of this study. However, the information conveyed also aims to help preserve the city history of Yalova, which is sizably scarce in the literature. In this way, limited data will not be lost, and they could constitute an accessible and remarkable reference for future research through this academic study.

4.2   The City's Life and Quality of the Built Environment

City life and vitality depend on the social activities it contains. In that case, the whole process of city life relies on the probabilities of activities and the most basic forms of contact. Such that it is essentially a self-nurturing process with more activities and more people. Therefore, it inherently depends on people spending more time outside, on the streets. That is possible, first of all, if the city's exteriors and built qualities are inviting enough for people to go out and spend time. In the next step, the city activities and people need to be somehow close to each other. Because it is only by

their proximity that new forms of contact could develop and multiply. Thuswise, the physical framework of a settlement is able to fire that fuse. Its plan and spatial qualities could invite people together and bring activities closer. Thus, they could trigger and encourage each other, and the self-reinforcing process begins.

In that case, the city life and vitality in the small coastal city of Yalova must have something to do with the settlement plan and spatial characteristics. How could the physical attributes and the city's built environment have an impact on urban life in its current sense? Could the foundations of the first social life interactions in the city have been laid through this spatial framework?

Based on these questions, this part of the research will cover a stroll through the streets of Yalova to finally rediscover the position of architectural space in urban life. It will observe the city, its activities and public spaces on foot. But first of all, it deals with the characteristics of the city's spatial structure, which has a crucial influence on human behavior, urban activities and lifestyle. Afterwards, it draws attention to the city life carried out in transitions and threshold spaces. It tries to determine the connection between the most basic types of urban life activities and the qualities of the place they occur. Finally, it reconsiders architectural space as a threshold space in city life.

From this point of view, this part of the research follows the city's most usual activities and places. All of the photographs presented in this sense belong to the author herself, and they aim to shed light on the urban life on the thresholds in Yalova. Activity-space analysis and inferences in the city will be conveyed through these photographs. In addition, some design principles referenced, mainly Gehl's, aim to give an idea about user trends and spatial needs in urban spaces.

4.2.1 A Compact Way of Life: The City's Spatial Structure and Activities

Yalova is a city that develops around streets and squares and has a rigid and compact settlement scheme. Here, the buildings are placed in a clear physical framework

exhibiting a hierarchical arrangement of main and side streets and primary and secondary squares. As in every city organized around such a differentiated structure, streets and squares are the most crucial urban components that conceptually determine the city image in Yalova. In addition, the main transportation lines arranged in a simple street layout are another significant aspect that reinforces this urban perception.

A street running parallel to the sea, another street cutting it perpendicularly, and the main square at the intersection express the city layout in Yalova most simply. According to this layout, all the critical streets usually intersect in the main square. Lower or side streets cut them perpendicularly to provide their connections. Therefore, these two streets, their extensions, and parallel side streets determine the main settlement and transportation network in the city. Based on Lynch's discussions referred to in previous chapters, this legible spatial structure also creates a strong city image. And this image in their minds attracts and attaches people to the city center.[134] Thus, it gathers them mentally and physically in the main square where all roads somehow intersect.

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[134] See Lynch, *The Image of the City*.

Figure 4.9. The Main Square where All Roads Intersect, 2022
Source: Author

Likewise, while describing a city structure that brings people and their activities together, Gehl draws attention to a clear and basic city pattern. A layout like this also applies to many old residential areas, where all buildings are placed along the streets, each having a view of it.[135] In this respect, Yalova's settlement pattern seems compatible with the described urban form. Buildings in the city center are lined up uninterruptedly along the long streets. Thus, access to different functions becomes reduced to a short walking distance within a simple linear logic. Easy access and low walking distance alone are factors in themselves that encourage users to use streets and urban spaces.

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[135] Some traditional village settlements with a street-oriented structure exhibit a similar pattern to this. These towns were built up around a single street and so became a street itself with houses along it. See Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 87.
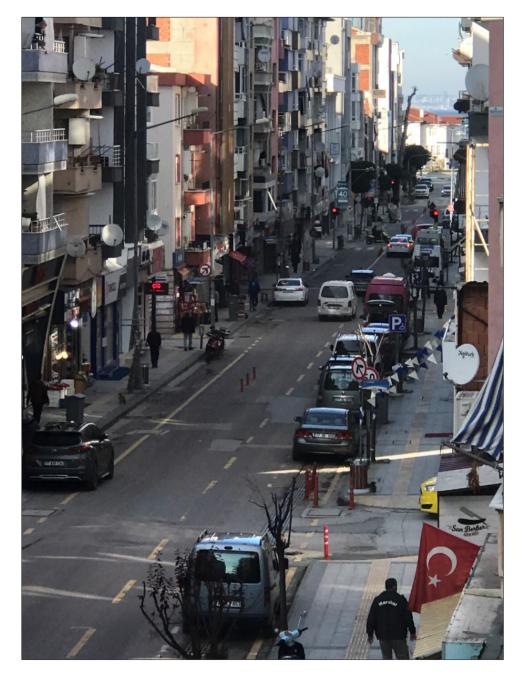
Figure 4.10. Yalova's Long Streets; Cumhuriyet Street and the Main Square, 2021
Source: Author

Especially in narrow streets closed to vehicular traffic, this feature becomes even more effective and evident. In these streets, pedestrian reach and sensory experiences become shortened. Thus, the interaction between buildings and streets and spaces and pedestrians gains also a more intimate and intense dimension, like *friends sitting around a table*, as in Gehl's analogy.[136]

Figure 4.11. Friends Sitting around a Table in Yalova's Narrow Streets, Hürriyet Street, 2022
Source: Author

In addition, the usual placement of building units in Yalova on narrow-long plots with minimum facade length reinforces the aforementioned result. The narrowing of the facades facing the street contributes to the reduction of the average total walking

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[136] Ibid, 87.

distance. Access to different functions becomes easier. Because a large number and variety of units can open onto the street and take their place on the daily pedestrian route. In addition, with the increase in active use, the possibility of social interaction that may develop on the pavements increases. Thus, a well-functioning and vibrant street life could be mentioned. Urban life here is attractive with its uninterrupted, compact and dynamic appearance.

Figure 4.12. Narrow Shops and Attractive Street Life,
Huzur Street, 2022
Source: Author

Related to its spatial structure but not directly to its compactness, every social function that can increase active interaction on the sidewalks in the city center is aligned at street level. Correlatively, office or official units that might cause any gaps in the street flow are located on the upper floors of the buildings. In addition, it is

usually impossible to come across large buildings with long and passive facades and few entrances. Instead, the buildings show an arrangement into narrow units with the potential to create many entries, sub-spaces and social interactions. Therefore, there seem no considerable factors in the functional and spatial organization of Yalova that could interrupt the user route or the active use of the spaces.

The visibility of the actively used functions plays a crucial role as much as their being at street level. Research data shows that pedestrians tend to use only the places where they can see directly or only the ones on the ground level.[137] In Yalova city center, no remarkable and sudden level difference could cause visual disconnections in the built environment. Therefore, uninterrupted visual contact is another critical attribute in the consistency of city living.

For similar reasons, the absence of any building exceeding five floors in Yalova city center makes it possible for residents to maintain their sensory connection with the street and urban activities from their homes. Because according to surveys, meaningful interaction with ground-level activities can only be sustained on the first few floors of a multi-storey building. In the same experiment, there appears to be a distinct decrease in the ability to contact the ground level at a threshold between the third and fourth floors. Besides, above the fifth and sixth floors, the reliable sensory connection disappears.[138] This visual connection is crucial for the inviting and vitality of urban spaces and life. For instance, because the building heights are generally favorable, a resident looking out of her window can see the crowd and what is happening on the street, making it relatively easy to get out. Because it is only a matter of time before an impulse develops that causes her to go. Likewise, a child who notices a riveting event on the street or a game in the park through the window will probably want to participate.

At this point, it should be remembered that all of the principles discussed so far somehow establish their basis on the capabilities of basic human senses, or rather the

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[137] Ibid, 96-97.
[138] For the details of the experiment see Gehl, *Cities for People*, 42.

incapabilities. The realization of a space and its potential depend primarily on whether the spatial inputs are included in the limited human sensory range and radius of action. In this sense, the experimental data has determined that the acceptable walking distance is approximately limited to 500 meters for most people per excursion.[139] Besides, the possible range of seeing others within an urban setting is limited to 20-100 meters.[140] Then, an individual could only be involved in urban life to the extent that it could experience the space within this competence zone. Therefore, the first condition that brings events and people together is primarily related to the "compactness" of the built environment. In other words, the design and dimensioning of the built elements should be compatible with the human scale. This principle encompasses all aspects of the built environment that have been addressed so far. It means that the spatial structure of Yalova has been evaluated within the scope of this principle. In the light of the evaluations, it could be determined that the framework in question provided a significant basis for shaping urban life in its current sense. This spatial structure is still effective in bringing together the people and activities of the city.

However, is it just a compact physical settlement framework that brings together urban activities and people in Yalova today? What other configurations could be effective in this result?

Yalova city center has an activity pattern in which various urban functions are intertwined. In this sense, it is distinct from the segregation-oriented city models common today, consisting of disjointed single-functional parts. Such that no clear functional regionalization prevails in the city center of Yalova. Almost all urban functions coexist at the same time. Because they need each other to fulfill their functions properly. Just as these functions cannot exist on their own, city life in Yalova cannot remain without this diversity. Thus, urban life, integrated urban structure and functions in Yalova somehow gather people and activities together.

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[139] Ibid, 121.
[140] Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 83.

Atatürk Primary School stands out as a value that exemplifies the city's unifying spatial framework where various functions are effectively distributed and combined. This school is located near the city square, on one of the two main axes of the city. Therefore, it has always appeared in the middle of a very dense residential and commercial network. Several banks, restaurants, hotels, various shops, offices and residences are some of the current functions that the school neighbors. In this example, the functional diversity in the environment does not harm their operation separately. This situation even paved the way for the school and its borders to gain a social image. Such that the street edge of Atatürk Primary School is a safe and popular waiting and meeting area for many individuals today. Therefore, although it is partially fenced off from its surroundings, this boundary never weakens the school's connection to the street and the city.

Figure 4.13. Atatürk Primary School in the Hearth of the City,
Cumhuriyet Street, 2022
Source: Author

Another example that best represents the city's complex and diverse function structure is the main square. This square is also the social activity magnet of the city. It is home to several local commercial shops, banks, private and government offices, various educational institutions, hotels, restaurants and sidewalk cafes, a museum, a small park, taxi rank, and walking and cycling paths. In addition, small group or public political meetings, events, demonstrations, concerts and exhibitions take place on this urban stage. Accordingly, this square, where the diversity of functions and users is at the highest level, is usually the most crowded, busiest and socially fertile point of the city. As in the analogies of Gehl and Hertzberger, this place is the city's "living room" that hosts the most creative events and all family members.[141]

Figure 4.14. The City's Living Room; Pedestrian Circulation in the Main Square, 2022

Source: Author

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[141] Hertzberger, *Space and Learning: Lessons in Architecture 3*.

As in these two examples, each function scattered in the city within the integrated structure could also create a destination in the city's public space. These destinations are critical centers that offer the opportunity of places to go and things to do, thus stimulating the urge to go out.[142] They are also catalysts that lead to the development of informal contact situations that activate urban life. In this sense, Yalova city center contains many inviting destinations. Moreover, its compact spatial and functional structure brings these inviting destinations closer together, making them walkable. Thus, easy accessibility makes these places even more appealing.

In this sense, each function could be a destination. Local shops where daily shopping activities are carried out, such as markets, bakeries, banks or restaurants are counted among the simple city destinations. Besides, schools, the library, training courses, gyms and playgrounds are some of the more comprehensive and accessible activity centers. Or apart from these, the beach, the walking paths and the square are among the other specific city destinations. Almost all of these destinations can be reached on foot in the city center simultaneously. They invite the people of Yalova to the city spaces for walking, resting, swimming, or watching the sunset or the opposite shore, without needing a more serious reason. In brief, the people of Yalova always have a place to go and something to do in the city's public spaces. Because all urban activities are interwoven in the city center with countless combinations and interactions.

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[142] Gehl highlights the cruciality of urban destinations while explaining the characteristics of inviting urban spaces in Gehl, *Life between Buildings: Using Public Space*, 117-120.

Figure 4.15. People of Yalova Always Have a Place to Go,
Gazi Paşa Street, 2022

Source: Author

Figure 4.16. People of Yalova Always Have a Place to Go,
Yalı Street, 1960

Source: https://www.farkyalovada.com/haber-kategori-nostalji/1.html

The integrated function structure in the city center also covers the traffic systems. Not only different activities and groups of people are found together in the city's public spaces, but also transportation means. A combined transportation network in which cars, public transport vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists travel together in the same place is valid here, as in many cities dominated by pedestrian traffic. The opposite is that different transport vehicles become more isolated and dull due to the separation of routes. Traffic cannot initiate such a process since such a division cannot be mentioned in Yalova. Thus, it cannot emerge as a potentially divisive threat that could disrupt urban life. Instead, the integrated traffic system paves the way for different functions and activities to come together effectively and with more participants. Because many social activities that develop in the urban context usually begin when the participant is busy with another activity or is on the way.[143] Thus, a passenger traveling by any vehicle or on foot in the traffic flow of Yalova continues to be a potential participant in city activities and life.

Figure 4.17. Integrated Traffic System in Yalova,
Cumhuriyet Street, 2022
Source: Author

However, if a generalization is made, the diversity in the traffic system is essentially based on pedestrian-oriented transportation in the city center. Also, the predominant mode of transport is still pedestrian, albeit indirectly. For instance, residents in the city center often walk from their homes to their jobs. Or citizens who have a vehicle walk to their destinations after leaving their vehicles in the parking lot. In this way,

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[143] Ibid, 112.

more people spend more time on the streets on foot. Thus, the likelihood and frequency of familiar encounters increase. Consequently, the more crowded street becomes a more attractive, inviting and safe public space.

Figure 4.18. Passanger as a Potential Participant,
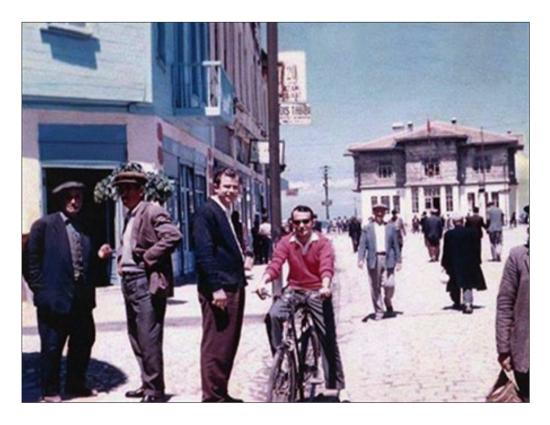Cumhuriyet Street, 2022
Source: Author

Figure 4.19. Passanger as a Potential Participant,
Cumhuriyet Caddesi, 1965
Source: https://www.farkyalovada.com/haber-kategori-nostalji/1.html

Besides, in this traffic system, where pedestrians are almost always prioritized, vehicles are like temporary guests of the pedestrian zone.[144] Most of the time, they have to travel at a slow speed. In this way, pedestrians can still linger and shop on the sidewalk, relatively less disturbed by cars. Also, for instance, Mimar Sinan Street, which is completely open to vehicular traffic, offers plenty of seating equipment for pedestrians to take a break and engage in spontaneous conversation. The street, where the pavements are never left empty, is one of the examples where the uninterrupted local traffic in the city integrates effectively with social life.

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[144] Gehl uses a similar analogy to explain the Dutch Woonerf principle in Ibid,111.
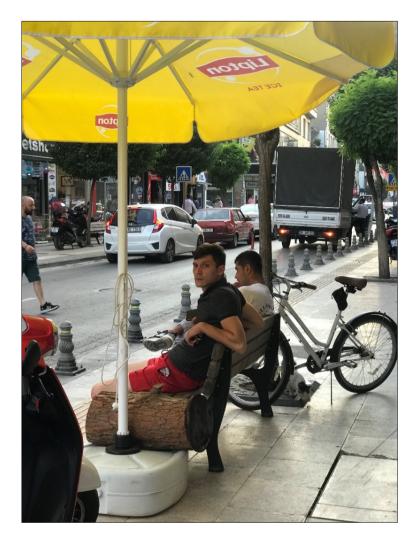
Figure 4.20. A Busy Bench on Mimar Sinan Street, 2021
Source: Author

Consequently, the streets in Yalova are not just simple passageways that provide transportation. Their unifying and socially stimulating effect via the integrated traffic and function system in Yalova can be explained through Hertzberger's concept of *the city as a macro school*.[145] Just as corridors connecting rooms in a school are integral parts of classrooms, the streets in this city function as extensions of primary spaces. Within the city's integrated structure, streets penetrate into various functions and spaces, and these into streets. Thus, the user finds itself in an embedded urban and social system. This system also offers rich and welcoming interaction

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[145] See Hertzberger, *Space and Learning: Lessons in Architecture 3,* 202-237.

possibilities for the use of public spaces and participation in urban life. Thus, the user can intimately and multifariously experience the city and society on the streets.

Figure 4.21. Streets as Corridors in Yalova,
Barış Street, 2021
Source: Author

To conclude, this research examines the qualities on which the invitingness of urban life in Yalova might depend within the city's spatial and functional structure. The determinations made with the guidance of some design principles and concepts provide insight into the origin of the urban lifestyle. Also, it confirms the relationship of this origin with environmental attributes. Consequently, Yalova city center offers its residents a compact and integrated urban life experience through its spatial and functional configuration. Beyond that, these structural features substantially promote the continuity of urban life in Yalova. Because the urban invitation elements, which are made permanent and accessible through this integrated urban system, enable the

development of potential urban activities. But after this initiating effect, to what extent are the qualities of the urban structure alone sufficient to sustain urban activities at the scale of individual and space?

4.2.2 A City Life at the Thresholds: Architectural Space, Searches and Uses

Urban life in Yalova is lived on the streets. Sidewalks are the city's most scenic and popular social venues, hosting the most spontaneous urban activities of the day. Summer or winter, almost unaffected by weather conditions, the pavements of this city are always busy with a wide variety of urban activities and user groups. For this reason, the pavements are seldom empty and are the scene of practical and sometimes creative spatial formations and use.

In this section, the study focuses directly on urban activities and spaces from a more detailed perspective than the previous one. By observing urban life, this section makes some pronounced determinations regarding the common types of urban activities and the qualities of the spaces in which they are carried out. Based on these deductions, it creates six categories of investigation within its scope. The creation of this classification is based only on city observations and not on any design principles. However, the design principles that assist urban surveys can explain the origin of the findings.

Primarily, it is relevant to remind that city life is essentially carried out with three basic types of physical activity. While walking is a temporary state of spatial use, standing and sitting are the "staying" actions that contribute to the formation of urban life and its social content. In this sense, the content of urban social life essentially consists of meaningful staying activities. Therefore, the evaluation of urban life depends on the number of people spending qualified time on the street rather than the number of people. The spatial framework of the city can invite more people to urban spaces with appealing qualities. Or it can gather them together with its compact organization. However, it is relatively insufficient to enable them to spend a more meaningful and longer time on the street. That is only possible by providing the

appropriate spatial environment where people can stop, stand, lean or sit so that they can stay longer on the city's streets.

From this point of view, the most distinct activity-space pattern of Yalova urban life is that the staying activities in the city most commonly occur near the building edges. This behavioral tendency can be explained by the "edge effect" principle mentioned in previous chapters. In line with this principle, the people of Yalova look for a convenient edge to stand and linger or sit in the city exteriors. In this sense, building or shop entrances emerge as the most popular edge areas that host the most spontaneous waiting, breaks or short conversations. This type of activity-space match takes the first place in the categorization determined by this study.

Figure 4.22. Entrances as the most Popular Edge Areas for Standing,
Hürriyet Street, 2022
Source: Author

Figure 4.23. Entrances as the most Popular Edge Areas for Standing,
Cumhuriyet Street, 2021

Source: Author

In the next phase, if the waiting time or chat gets longer, it is shifted to more secluded areas along the building edge. Spontaneous, temporary pauses such as these usually occur standing up. They do not involve sitting and do not require specific equipment.

Figure 4.24. A Secluded Place to Stand on the Building Edge,
Gazi Paşa Street, 2022

Source: Author

However, subjects of these relatively short-term and transient types of action may not always find a favorable building edge to wait. There may be no buildings nearby, or there may not be enough distance to stay in front of the building edges. Another possibility is that the building edges are being occupied by other users or objects. All of these are valid for narrow pavements or open areas such as beaches and parks of Yalova. In such cases, especially in open areas, people need any other edge or object they can be around. In a street context, this is often a car parked on the other side of the curb. Or a tree in the middle of the pavement, a sign, or an electrical box are spontaneous supports that the user can lean on while waiting. If they are nearby at the time of need, they become spatialized, even if that is not their reason for being. As a matter of fact, the built environment of Yalova often cannot offer more qualified or attractive spatial support elements to the users of the space. However, these irrelevant objects, made use outside of their functions, still replace the physical support elements Gehl proposed in principle.[146]

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[146] Gehl cites well-defined bollards, specifically located to meet the need for leaning in urban spaces in Campo in Siena in Ibid, 151.

Figure 4.25. A Spontaneous Place with Something to Lean,
Cumhuriyet Street, 2021

Source: Author

Figure 4.26. A Spontaneous Place with Something to Lean,
Sefabey Street, 2022

Source: Author

Figure 4.27. A Spontaneous Place with Something to Lean,
İstiklal Street, 2022

Source: Author

Apart from these objects, any material or level difference on the ground, as observed especially in open areas, is sufficient for the people of Yalova to identify those areas as usable spaces. Inhabitants can utilize these effortlessly differentiated platforms for standing, lingering or sitting, or even as a meeting point.

Figure 4.28. Just Such a Place, a Good Place for Anything,
Yalova Central Beach, 2021
Source: Author

In the next stage, if the pause action is longer or more extensive than what has been mentioned so far, this time, the search for a place to sit and equipment begins. However, it is not common to come across any urban seating equipment in the city center of Yalova, apart from Mimar Sinan or Gazipaşa Streets, one of the city's occupied walking paths. However, it would be wrong to assume that the people of Yalova cannot make use of the city pavements sitting down because of this lack. Literally thresholds are probably the most popular seating areas of the city. When shopkeepers or pedestrians need to wait or rest for any reason, they choose the threshold of any nearest shop or the step in front of them as a seat. These are regions that are effortless but have little spatial quality. Although they do not offer a comfortable sitting and waiting experience, they spatially satisfy the user's seating needs. Or, despite their discomfort, this high demand attests to the need for sidewalk residents to sit.

Figure 4.29. Thresholds as Popular Urban Seats,
Cumhuriyet Street, 2022
Source: Author

Figure 4.30. Thresholds as Popular Urban Seats,
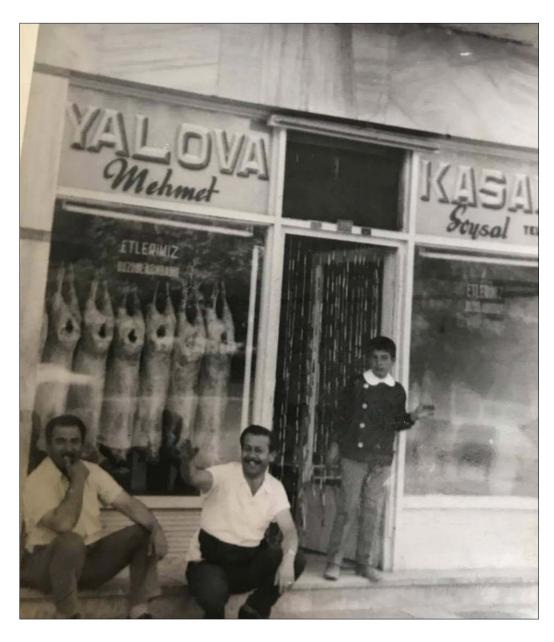The Main Square, 2021
Source: Author

Figure 4.31. A Yalova Shopkeeper at the Threshold, Date Unkown
Source: https://www.farkyalovada.com/haber-kategori-nostalji/1.html

In the fifth category of activity-space pairing, users are now in search of "creating a useful space for themselves". If the appropriate conditions in the spatial framework are valid but do not offer a usable transition space, they create on their own. If there is enough space, the occupant of the main room puts a chair in front of the door. This space does not usually refer to a physically defined place. Nevertheless, it is tempting enough for the occupant to take a break, relax, watch, or socialize.

Figure 4.32. Creating a Place to Sit at the Threshold,
İstanbul Street, 2022
Source: Author

Figure 4.33. Creating a Place to Sit at the Threshold, Cumhuriyet Street 1966
Source: https://www.farkyalovada.com/haber/1966-yilinda-yalova-cumhuriyet-ve-iskele-meydani-548.html

Figure 4.34. Creating a Place to Sit Along the Building Edge,
Cumhuriyet Street, 2021

Source: Author

Figure 4.35. Creating a Place to Sit Along the Building Edge,
Çeşme Street, 2021

Source: Author

Also, similar to the previous situation, if the building edge is somehow occupied, the user moves his furniture to a more suitable area. The base of a tree on the sidewalk, the side of a parked vehicle, or a somewhat defined area are possible areas where the user can pull their stool. If attention is paid, these zones, which the user makes more defined and usable, add a spatial and social dimension to the pavement. But at the same time, these formations might complicate foot traffic partially and occasionally cause confusion and disorder.
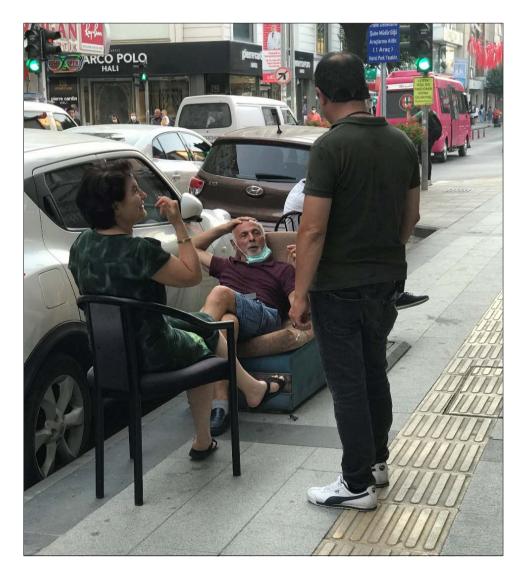

Figure 4.36. Creating a Place to Sit on the Pavement,
Cumhuriyet Street, 2021
Source: Author

Figure 4.37. Creating a Place to Sit on the Pavement,
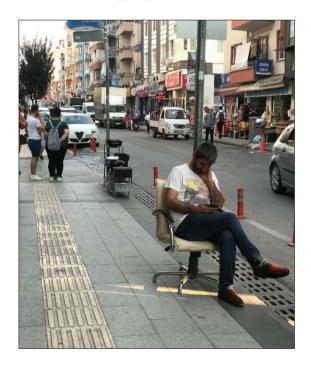İsmet Acar Street, 2021

Source: Author

Figure 4.38. Creating a Place to Sit on the Pavement,
Cumhuriyet Street, 2021

Source: Author

Figure 4.39. Creating a Place to Sit in an Urban Niche,
Çeşme Street, 2022
Source: Author

The last activity-space category of the study draws attention to building facades that have been made relatively more permanent spatial additions later for more comprehensive, diverse and qualified usage experiences. Especially in the post-earthquake construction period, buildings in the city center have risen, and the edges of the buildings have become relatively devoid of remarkable spatial features. The sub-spaces created later in the building facades aim to compensate for the sensory experiences and uses that the flat surfaces are insufficient to offer. Thus, they offer their users the opportunity to spend more time in urban spaces more comfortably.

Primarily, three methods could be mentioned regarding the spatial improvement and use of building edges in Yalova. First, although rare, the facade is already sufficiently articulated to initiate new spatial formations and uses on pavements. Thus, it offers users seating or leaning elements through its architectural form and appropriate scale without the need for additional equipment.

Figure 4.40. Building Facade Offers Seating,
Arabacılar Street, 2022
Source: Author

Or commonly, facades do not have such a relatively complex form or physical properties that encourage use. In this case, some owners place urban seating equipment, such as benches, at the building edges. Thus, they make the building edges and the transition a relatively defined space and simultaneously increase the invitingness of their places. Essentially, these simple seating units instinctively placed by the owners could be sizably functional. In the concept of *soft edges* for a lively urban life, Gehl describes and exalts the building edges that offer convenient seating areas to its users with various additions, just like these.[147]

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[147] See Ibid, 183-197.

Figure 4.41. Soft Edges in Yalova,
Mimar Sinan Street, 2022
Source: Author

Figure 4.42. Soft Edges in Yalova,
İsmet Acar Street, 2021
Source: Author

Finally, it is also quite common for some high-rise buildings to have a spatial extension towards the pavement on the ground floor if the spatial framework is appropriate. These formations are usually built later with lightweight structural elements on the facades and offer more defined transition spaces. They are often observable in pedestrian-dominated streets that are predominantly closed to vehicular traffic. And through these places, social interaction and spending time opportunities in these streets reach the highest level. These spaces are usually half or fully closed. They provide better protection against adverse weather conditions. However, they maintain their connection with the street in a sensory sense. They usually have a good street vision. Thus, space users can monitor people and city activities on the pavement and get involved when necessary. In addition, they create a more secure and pleasant "place" perception for their users. These are essentially the same spatial qualities that Gehl pointed out in his description of *a pleasant place in every respect*.[148] Besides, Hertzberger makes a similar description of a favorable place while clarifying the spatial qualities that "in-between" spaces should have.[149] Nicole Eleb Harle also explains the design qualities of qualified transition spaces as a spatial need similar to them.[150]

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[148] See Ibid, 171-181.
[149] See Hertzberger, *Lessons for Students in Architecture,* 32-33.
[150] See Nicole Eleb Harle, and Rue Ribevald, "Roles and meanings of transitional spaces: Some aspects for consideration," *Arch. & Comport./Arch. and Behav* 9.3 (1993): 6-9, pp. 417-423.

Figure 4.43. Threshold Space as a Pleasant Place in Every Respect,
Hürriyet Street, 2022

Source: Author

Figure 4.44. A Pleasant Place for Standing,
Hürriyet Street, 2021
Source: Author

Figure 4.45. Qualified Threshold Space Formations in the Narrow Strrets,
Hürriyet Street, 2021
Source: Author

Figure 4.46. Qualified Threshold Space Formations in the Narrow Strrets,
Huzur Street, 2021

Source: Author

In summary, from the simplest to the most complex, all of the presented activity-space relations and exemplary cityscapes reveal the attempts of residents of Yalova to spatialize the open spaces of the city, especially the pavements. The manners of determining and using the space are described and exemplified under different categories according to the type of activity and the search for a place. These are acts of unconditioned space creation for life and ordinary activities, realized entirely out of need. All these spatialization efforts, whether permanent or temporary, stem from the drive to utilize the building edges and surrounding transition areas. Many do not seriously interfere with the built environment. However, these areas, which have become somewhat more defined and functional through the users, give the city a spatial and social dimension, albeit temporarily. Moreover, these spatial formations become the most demanded places with the highest potential for social interaction in Yalova.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In many urban contexts, where there is no meaningful life, threshold spaces are often missing. In efficiency-based living scenarios, where the social quality of life is usually ignored, threshold spaces are declared unnecessary and deleted from space setups. This development also means the reduction in the competence of architecture and, in some contexts, the end of its influence in the city.

With unlimited mobility, speed and globalization, buildings and functions have increasingly distanced from each other, and their spatial connections have disappeared. Thus, the problem of establishing the connection and harmony between different urban components has been ignored. With this neglect, the competence of architecture in built environments, whose task was to create meaningful distinctions and bonds, has been reduced. As a result, city life, intrinsically established on passages, has been left placeless as the transition spaces have lost their architectural qualities.

Research carried out within the scope of this study reveals that a physically and spatially qualified built environment can constitute an invitation element that encourages urban life. It triggers the initiation and diversification of outdoor activities. In addition, a conducive built environment is a constant need for residents to carry out their urban life activities and mental processes in a meaningful and coherent manner. It helps meet the social and spatial demands of individuals in any context. Accordingly, the spatial disconnection and lack of quality in urban environments cause interruptions in the functioning of urban social life. Besides, it harms the individuals' mental processes and daily life experiences. In circumstances where such unfavourable effects are valid, even as this situation has become a way

of life, compensation for these experiential interruptions has begun to be sought in digital environments. However, it is still controversial whether some activities lost from everyday life can replace real human experiences in virtual universes. Nevertheless, urban studies prove that an integrated built environment with physically and sensually qualified spaces can substantially improve individual and social life in many aspects.

From this point of view, this study has aimed to draw attention to the quality of life in the city's transitions and around the building edges. It has questioned the formative and socially initiating influence of buildings and the position of threshold spaces in the city. Urban investigations and arguments have finally intended to remind the vital role that architecture takes on behalf of the city and its life.

Accordingly, the study has presented the initiating questions, the essential purpose and the overall subject at the first stage. It has been followed by understanding the city, its life, content and elements. Thus, the general research context and background have been introduced. This basis has been reinforced by establishing the connection between city life and the quality of the built environment. Hence, in the next stage, urban planning and architecture have been assumed as the principal physical attributes of city life. In this respect, the study has rediscovered the value of the spatial qualities and details of the individual building units. Eventually, it has embraced the essential role and social potential of architectural space as a threshold space in urban life, incorporating urban life into the dimensions of architecture in its mindset.

In light of these acquisitions, the study has intended to re-explore and retrace the origin of the inferences through a particular urban context: Yalova. The urban investigations have examined the impact of the quality of the built environment on city life in two dimensions: the city's spatial structure and spaces. In essence, they have aimed to reconsider the extent to which architecture has a say in social life and activities in the city through threshold spaces.

Daily-life city observations have revealed that without needing any remarkable spatial attractions, the people of Yalova tended to utilize the city spaces arbitrarily to linger, interact, socialize or participate in an event. Moreover, the places where they carry out the urban activities usually appear around the building edges or threshold spaces. Even if there are no necessary reasons or spatial conditions for all these, the city inhabitants tend to make up for them and use the space. In addition, the instances also offer insight into the residents' urban activities. But more significantly, they reveal their "search for a place" for these activities, their spatial preferences, and methods of creating threshold spaces.

According to investigations, the search methods for finding suitable "places" for the basic activities of urban life differ. However, all of them are essentially spatialization actions performed on transitions at the scale of human and architectural space. For this reason, this study considers all these space formations realized in the open, that is, actually transitional areas of the city, as threshold spaces. Therefore, from the perspective of this study, the most efficient and functional spaces among urban spaces are threshold spaces. Such that urban life takes place in these spaces in essence. Besides, threshold spaces are crucial formations that reveal the role of architectural space in the context of the city and the potential of architectural action.

The design principles regarding the physical qualities in city spaces, referred to during the urban investigations, can explain the need-based origin of the spontaneously forming threshold spaces in Yalova. However, these principles have been developed and applied, usually to encourage urban activities in the settlements that generally do not have a socially qualified and rich urban life. For instance, Gehl sought to reconstruct virtually nonexistent street life in Copenhagen through spatial design principles similar to those referenced in this study. Survey data obtained over the years determine that these spatial improvement initiatives have caused significant changes in street life. On the other hand, regardless of this example, the principles mentioned in this study are often inspired by contexts with appropriate spatial qualities that support social interactions. These are generally well-known touristic

settlements that also stand out for their quality and rich urban life, such as Venice or Siena, which Gehl also often refers to as examples of ideal cities.

Consequently, it is crucial to identify the distinction described here because it leads to a significant deduction. Namely, it can be concluded that urban life is incomplete in settlements such as Copenhagen, as the built qualities initially did not fulfil sufficient conditions. As a matter of fact, it has been proven by experimental data that urban life emerges and proliferates when spatial attributes are improved. In support of this, some cities are able to sustain urban life because they have appealing and inviting spatial conditions in many ways. At that rate, can it be implied that the origin of a well-functioning and versatile urban life lies in the existence of some spatial demands for it in the built environment?

At this point, this study differs from other urban studies in terms of its context, perspective and destination. Such that although Yalova urban spaces do not have sufficiently attractive or comfortable physical elements to spend time in, they continue to contain life in their content. And for that, they do not need any spatial incentives offered through someone. However, dramatically, the inhabitants try to compensate for the spatial and physically qualitative deficiencies in the built environment by their means to sustain their daily activities and urban life. Despite everything, they struggle to turn the city's open spaces and streets into places to spend time. It means that the need for certain spatial elements and qualities for a well-functioning and versatile urban life is indeed inevitable. Because if there is no actual need, it would not be possible to observe any spatial improvement or formation initiatives.

As a result, this spontaneous effort is the simplest, unpretentious and most prominent indicator of the social need for urban life and consequently for city spaces, namely threshold spaces. It also proves the vital task that the spatialization of the city's transitions on an architectural scale, and thus architectural operations, takes on for a city, its activities and life. Because without this effort, it would probably not be possible to sustain the urban life in Yalova and in many other contexts with their

current diversities and vitalities. Therefore, it does not seem reasonable to ignore the need for urban life and urban spaces and the potential of architecture within the scope of this problem. In addition, changing lifestyles require reconsidered threshold space concepts and integrations without sacrificing humane standards, instead of temporary or superficial spatial trials or illusions. In that case, the real question for architects and future research is how to introduce "new" threshold spaces into the built environments today.

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