Public spaces in post-war housing areas
A Swedish and French comparison

ELODIE PAPIN
ABSTRACT

This master thesis explores and compares through two case studies the characteristics of public spaces in post-war housing areas in terms of appearance and uses in two different countries: France and Sweden. Through observations, interviews and readings, it aims at understanding to which extent public spaces can take part in the creation of social interactions and influence the general perception about such areas, and their importance in such processes. Public spaces play a great role in the democratization, the development and the identity formation of a society and of a place, but in post-war housing areas, criticisms raised about the deadness of these spaces which struggle in fulfilling these important roles. Still, Mermoz (Lyon, France) and Husby (Stockholm, Sweden), the two case studies considered in this paper, showed a different reality. If their structure and organization is still quite characteristic of post-war housing areas, public spaces in these neighborhoods are not the ‘empty’, ‘blank’ spaces often described in theories, and people meet and interact. Still, it shows some limits in terms of meeting quality, accessibility and attractiveness. Moreover, these areas suffer from really bad reputation due to strong negative connotations attached with ‘suburbs’ in these two countries. Public spaces could help in changing this ‘image’ by bringing openness, changing aesthetic and creating different kinds of relations between people – by reducing the dominance of groups of young men and the drugs traffic that often characterize public spaces in these areas for instance. Still, changing an image of an area and creating different social interactions is a much more complex process that has to take into account several factors including public spaces, buildings, employment rates, education etc.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank particularly Moa Tunström for her great support throughout this project, for her expert advices, and her patience. I would also like to thank all interviewees for their interest in my project, for having taken time to discuss about this project’s topic and for their great involvement. I would like to thank especially the chairman of the Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd for his implication, reactivity and his help in getting in contact with Husby’s inhabitants; the project manager of the Mermoz Nord project in Lyon for her investment – with the visit of Mermoz Nord among others – and the president of the association “Clarté” for the personal guiding and visit of Mermoz Sud.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction

II. Literature review
   - II.1. Public space
      - II.1.1. The concept/Different definitions: Understanding public spaces
      - II.1.2. Functions and uses of public spaces
      - II.1.3. Limits of public spaces: segregation and safety obsession
      - II.1.4. Overcoming the limits: toward a “good” public space?
      - II.1.5. Analyzing the use of public spaces in concrete cases
   - II.1. Post-war housing crisis and large housing estates
      - II.1.1. Program development
      - II.1.2. Criticisms and decline
      - II.1.3. Nowadays: segregation, connotation and identity
      - II.1.4. Demolition program and urban policy: the future?
   - II.1.4. Overcoming the limits: toward a “good” public space?

III. Methodology
   - III.1. Case study
   - III.2. Collecting material and Analysis
      - III.2.1. Interviews
      - III.2.2. Observations
      - III.2.3. Limits
   - III.3. My role and influence

IV. Presentation of the areas
   - IV.1. Husby
      - IV.1.1. Context and general characteristics
      - IV.1.2. Original planning
      - IV.1.3. Highlights
   - IV.2. Mermoz
      - IV.2.1. Context and general characteristics
      - IV.2.1. Planning history
      - IV.2.1. Highlights

V. Case study
   - V.1. Public spaces in Husby
      - V.1.1. Spatial organization, physical characteristics and design

---

Degree Project in Urban and Regional Planning, advanced cycle
KTH – Spring 2015
Everybody probably have different opinions about what makes a city what it is and shapes its identity. A city can be defined by its morphology, demography, functions; but most importantly according to René Maunier (1910:545), a city is “a complex community” and hence is characterized by its inhabitants. The ways these people and communities act and interact in the city probably gives it its vitality. In that sense, public spaces are the lungs of cities, where people meet, exchange; go through, i.e. where cities come to life. They are integral part of urban identity (Hajer, 2001:12). Like Lina Olsson (2008), I believe that changing a city and its social reality includes a change of space, and especially of public spaces.

This is especially relevant in neighborhoods such as post-war housing areas where public spaces could be motors for changes. In France for example, if these post-war housing programs helped a lot of people to find a place to live during a critical period, they are now one of the biggest thorns in cities’ side. Their regeneration constitutes one of the most important challenges for planners. The decline of these areas, supposedly insipid, dangerous and poor, led to the constitution of segregated enclaves with bad reputation. These places are seen in the collective mind as not livable anymore and public spaces are seen as degraded spaces for delinquency and violence but empty of any other life form or social relations (Deleuil, 2013). I believe that changes can occur through public spaces that can then be ‘tools’ for planners to bring those neighborhoods ‘back to life’ and change their reputation: they influence of course the urban morphology but also, and most importantly, people’s behavior and social interactions. But to make changes, one should firstly understand the current situation and how public spaces in post-war housing areas really work, not only following the collective perception. This means trying to exit the common thoughts from which each of us more or less depend in our everyday life, by studying different country cases for example to open eyes on what could be a different situation. This paper aims at that by answering the following:

What are the characteristics of public spaces in two different countries’ post-war housing areas?
What is their role in the definition of the place’s image and in social relations?

In the French collective mind, France is ‘well-known’ for its large high-rise housing estates, especially in the Paris region while Sweden is not conceived as being a country with such large housing estates. Taking the opportunity of being connected to these two countries with their own characteristics, two post-war housing areas and their public spaces will be compared: Mermoz – in Lyon (France) – and Husby – in Stockholm (Sweden).

Hence, answering the previous question means working on several aspects in these two areas, like social and structural ones. Several subsidiary questions tend to be answered then:

- The first thing to do is probably to understand the context in which this study fits in. Hence, what are post-war housing areas in France and in Sweden? How do people perceive them?
Moreover, before understanding the role that public spaces can play in post-war housing areas, it seems important to understand their role in general, in theory. How and to which extent are public spaces playing a role in social relations and in the image’s definition of an area?

Then, this study being linking the two previous main concepts, it seems important to have a look at how these concepts are related and to understand the theory about public spaces in postwar housing areas before checking on the reality. Hence what characterizes public spaces in post-war housing areas in general in these countries? And in the two case studies?

After that, it comes to the reality of how people perceive public spaces and the importance they give to them. Hence, how people feel, live, or think about these spaces in the two studied areas?

Understanding how public spaces can influence social relations also means understanding the situation in these areas and to have a look at how people interact – or not – in these spaces. Who, how, and for what do they interact for instance?

Finally, as a comparison, it seems inevitable to look at which differences can be observed between France and Sweden concerning the characteristics, role and use (by inhabitants and planners) of public spaces in post-war housing areas and what can be learned from that.

To fulfill this, the concepts of public spaces and post-war housing areas will firstly be discussed based on other authors’ works in a literature review. Then, concrete areas will be studied through two case studies, in France and in Sweden, after short explanations on the procedures used for such a study. Finally, main comparative conclusions will be drawn between the two areas, supplemented by the theoretical concepts, before concluding this report.
II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As Groat and Wang (2002:45) declared, “there are occasions where we cannot depend upon knowledge we already possess”. This is why literature review is vital in a work such as this degree project. It enables the researcher to totally define and address the research topic by using in a certain way “bodies of information” that are relevant for this topic (ibid.:46). Still, as Groat and Wang (2002:46) reminded, literature review does not consist only in gathering literature references, but is about putting it in a “coherent system” that supports the research topic and has to be expanded by the research itself. The following is a literature review about the two main concepts of this research project: public spaces and post-war housing areas – in France and in Sweden.

Maarten Hajer and Arnold Reijndorp (2001) but also Henry Shaftoe (2008) are of great importance in the discussion about public spaces, with their work discussing public spaces in the context of recent social development and what could make a successful public space. They will be mainly used in this work to discuss the public spaces concept.

Jean-Michel Deleuil is a Doctor of geography and urban planning teacher at the National Institute of Applied Sciences (INSA) in France. None of his writings will be used but the theories taught in his classes about general planning aspects and post-war housing areas in France are definitely valuable for this work and could legitimately be used in this theoretical section. Other authors are important in the understanding of post-war housing areas and will be referred to. The work of Thomas Hall and Sonja Vidén (2005) will be mainly used to talk about post-war housing areas in Sweden, as the work of researchers Dr. Richard Turkington, Dr. Ronald van Kempen and Dr. Frank Wassenberg (2004) who worked on high-rise housing all around Europe, including estates built during the post-war housing area.

The following will be mainly based on these authors’ works.
II.1. PUBLIC SPACE

II.1.1. THE CONCEPT/DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS: UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC SPACES

**Brief history**

The first thing that comes to mind when talking about public spaces in History is probably the Greek Agora, which has been at the heart of civilized urban life (Shaftoe, 2008:15). The opposition between the private sphere – in the sense of what belongs to a specific citizen as the private realm of family and house – and public sphere – what is collective/shared – started there according to Chanial (1992:64). Public spaces took on a more political dimension in the Roman era when they were considered as the places where power is represented (ibid.). At the Renaissance, they became a territory for sociability open to elitist citizens, exiting the family and intimate friend’s sphere toward diversity. From there, a less spatial sense of public spaces emerged, shifting from the public location to the sphere of public opinion (ibid.:65). Hajer and Reijndorp (2001: 76) explained that later, in the middle of the 1960s, cities in Europe needed revitalization, “promotion of active involvement of large sections of the population in the urban culture”, and "creation of new opportunity for personal development", in opposition to the “deathly dullness of the new urban environments” designed few years before (cf. section II.2 reflecting the cities development in France in Sweden in this period). Hence public spaces had to be animated (ibid.). They became places for mass ‘culture consumption’ in response to passive and consumptive attitudes (ibid.:76-77).

These changes through history led to an ambiguous notion of what is a public space nowadays.

**An ambiguous notion**

The term “public space” has several meanings in the current times.

In strictly spatial terms, it is the space that belongs to the public administration (Pumain, Paquot and Kleinschmager, 2006:107). It is still opposed to the private sphere which is about individuals, owner, family and intimacy. Planners usually consider this spatial definition (ibid.). Ideally, this space is universally accessible to citizens (Shaftoe, 2008:75); all of them are granted some legal rights of access (Light and Smith, 1998:3). Still, as Hajer (2001:65) point out, the limit between private and public is thin and private always tended to seep into the public. A broadened concept could be adopted, integrating public spaces and “indistinct privatized spaces” into what could be called ‘collective spaces’ (ibid.:48).

But more restrictively – or widely, depending on points of view – all places in which “an exchange between different social groups is possible and actually occurs” can be considered for some as public space (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:11). It is, in that sense, the space “in which citizens gather to form themselves into, and represent themselves as, a public” (Light and Smith, 1998:4). Light and Smith in their book discussing current public spaces (1998:4), Lo Piccolo and Huw who discuss ethics in planning (2008) and Chania who discusses the social role of public spaces (1992:70) all agree on the fact that public space is the space in which “a community acquires a sense of itself”, an identity, by
interacting in informal and formal ways, one opening to visibility and to the judgment of others. Chanial (1970:70) considers public spaces as theatres, in which social life is dramatized while Bunschoten (2002:6 cited in Shaftoe, 2008:11) called them the “playgrounds of society”, both emphasizing the same idea of public spaces as places of confrontation, exposing and society formation. Shaftoe (2008:11) considered that spaces that are not really used by people should not be considered as public spaces, like publicly owned empty bits between buildings, in opposition to the first definition. In Hajer and Reijndorp’s words (2001:44), we could distinguish “places” marked by identity, social relation and history from “non-places” which are difficult to define in social and historical terms.

But what Philippe Chanial (1992) most importantly expresses in his writing is that this concept of public space as theater, visible at the Renaissance, shift to the concept of public space as a place of opinions, which can be found spatially but also more abstractly. This goes along with Habermas’ (1978 cited in Pumain, Paquot and Kleinenschmager, 2006:107) perception of public spaces as political spheres without real spatial limit, spaces for dialogue with emergence and expression of political opinions – which can be enlarged to all kind of opinions. This non-physical notion of public space can be observed for example through media, which make public some opinions, some thoughts, and share it with the community, submitting it to public examination (Chanial, 1992).

Hajer and Reijndorp (2001:12) finally consider public space as mix of all these concepts and as place which functions as a public domain, including political meaning (or more generally we could say ‘place of opinion’) and spatial meaning.

Recently, a new concept of public space emerged that could challenge the current perception and definition of public spaces: the “cyber-public-space” (Shaftoe, 2008:11). Still, “humans” do not seem to be ready to abandon physical places yet. According to Shaftoe (ibid.), “company of others” is still fundamental to their sense of existence and belonging, and is one of human’s characteristics as “highly sociable species”.

**Types of public spaces**

In the collective imagination, one is still always referring to public spaces as “streets and squares of the historic centers”(Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:29). Indeed, as Shaftoe (2008:76) also points out, open squares are probably the most “people’s stereotype of public space” where people have gathered throughout history. But Shaftoe (2008) and Hajer and Reijndorp (2001) remind that public spaces can also be avenues, boulevards, parks, alleys, public gardens, etc. All these different types of public spaces have their own characteristics and specificities understood by everyone (Hajer and Reijndorp , 2001:109). Shaftoe (2008) also reminds that public spaces are not only outdoor spaces. Enclosed and covered spaces can also count as public spaces and can be particularly used in countries where climate is not necessarily mild (ibid.:76). Places such as cafés or shopping malls can also be considered as public to some extent, even if they belong to a private administration, as important places for gathering of different social groups, part of the previously established notion of ‘collective space’ (cf. section II.1.1 an ambiguous notion).
In the light of all of it, public spaces appear to be a really ambiguous notion to work on. Hence working on this concept implies to make ‘a choice’ and to define precisely what will be considered as public spaces. This paper tends to consider public space as the ‘physical’ space of confrontation between different social groups, outside the private, individual, sphere. Indeed, this paper partly aims at analyzing social relations between people, which means that people need to confront to others, as it will be shown in the next section.

II.1.2. Functions and uses of public spaces

Main functions and uses

The following focuses on the physical public space and not the abstract one in reference to the different concepts explained previously.

Concretely, the Danish architect Jan Gehl (1980) names several activities that can occur in physical public spaces. They can simultaneously or separately be places where people pass through, loaf around, where people stop, where people meet. People can work, shop, rest, play. People can sit, observe, converse, greet etc.

In the cultural, political ideal, public space is synonymous with ‘meeting place’, with various social sectors, interests or groups (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001: 84 - 85). As previously broached, the formation of the society’s identity comes from that variety of meetings (cf. § II.1.1 An ambiguous notion). Indeed, among other things and as Shaftoe (2008) emphasizes several times in his book, public spaces help in the definition and strengthening of the community sense of existence and belonging, and take part in the social learning from which the society is formed. According to him, public space acts as a stage “upon which the drama of social life can be enacted with the actors taking their turn, too, as spectators” (ibid.: 20). He mentioned the great opportunity that these spaces offer hence to be confronted with others and diversity – different behaviors, different norms and values, different backgrounds – and to learn from it, as a school of everyday life (ibid.:12). Actually, Jan Gehl (1980:100) allocates three main types of activities in outdoor public spaces: Necessary activities, more or less compulsory everyday tasks – such as going to work, waiting for a bus etc. – Optional activities taking place only if there is a wish to do so – stop for eating, sitting for a break etc. – and social activities which “depend on the presence of others in public spaces”. This last type is really important to “experience other people functioning” and for stimulation (ibid.:102), to learn to understand and tolerate each other (ibid.:13) and to not be prejudiced and narrow-minded (Shaftoe, 2008:19). Contacts can be active – such as conversing, playing etc. – but also and most importantly passive – seeing and hearing other people. As Shaftoe (2008:12) stated, “people grow only by the processes of encountering the unknown”. This is especially important for children to develop (ibid.:33), which contributes also to their mental health. Still, public spaces also have to provide more intimate spaces with less confrontation, necessary for example for young people to develop “away from immediate adult supervision” (ibid.:40). Public spaces seem to be important tools then for the creation of social interactions, necessary for the development of the society and identities. Hence it seems well and truly relevant to work on public spaces as spaces of confrontation and not only administrative public spaces.
These spaces also have other important functions. Shaftoe (2008:12) reminds that they take a great part in mental and physical health, and more generally, in well-being. Outdoor ones for example offer fresh air and places for exercising – physical exercises or mental. According to him, “humans seem to need both social contacts with others and some access to greenery in order to maintain psychological balance” (ibid.). One should not forget also that public spaces can be made for resting, leisure, playing etc.

Ideally, public spaces are even made for entertainment (Light and Smith, 1998:5). The middle class for example seems to prefer not to be confronted to “gritty and disturbing environment” to not face the social grievance and “preserve its social complacency”; they want some “fantastic” (ibid.:4-5). Actually, Hajer and Reijndorp (2001:40) explain that people want to experience things. Competitiveness of cities depends on offered experiences (ibid.:52): this is what urban marketing, taking part of the “selling of the city”, tends to provide (Deleuil, 2013a), with the use of public spaces to provide experiences and to “polish up” the city’s image (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:100). Entertainment became an industry (Light and Smith, 1998:5), accompanied by consumption: consumption of experiences, consumption of culture and commercial consumption. Some public spaces can “generate benefits”, based on this and on the promotion of city attractiveness by urban marketing, for example with tourism (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:34 and Shaftoe, 2008:14). But public spaces can also generate benefits as direct places of consumption, “through sales and refreshments, market produce and so on” (Shaftoe, 2008:14). Actually Light and Smith (1998:5) consider that “people expect to be entertained by the commercial environment”. Shopping malls in that sense are the typical places of flow and consumption that can be considered as public in the sense of public spaces as theatres. Strictly, these spaces should be considered as collective and not public, which can raise some ambiguity: public spaces tend to act like private places of consumption (urban marketing) and private spaces tend to act as public places (Deleuil, 2013a).

Finally, public spaces have a political function. Chanial (1992:72), Pumain, Paquot, Kleinschmager (2006:107 – 109) and Shaftoe (2008:15) all agree on the fact that public spaces are taking part in the democratization of society and in the establishment of democracy itself, as gathering places where citizens can express political will or opinions, solidarity and dissent – for example through demonstrations. But they can also have the opposite function, as tools for the ruling regime to control and express power, as in non-democratic states for instance with huge and intimidating public spaces (Shaftoe, 2008:15).

With the “telecommunication revolution” (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001: 44) and the new “cyber-public-space” (Shaftoe, 2008:11), new challenges appear in the functioning of public spaces. If it has decreased the need of “functionally necessary meetings”, higher demands with a greater need for face-to-face contacts are made for the places in which the meetings are held (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001: 44 and Shaftoe, 2008:20).

Hence, public spaces fulfill great range of functions, from individual to collective importance. They have a great importance in people’s everyday life and in the society’s construction that finally characterizes a city. Their role and importance in the definition of the image of the city has been well
understood by professionals, in the light of urban marketing that places public spaces at the center of the strategies for city attractiveness.

*Pre-determined functions*

The concept of separation of functions is deeply discussed in Hajer and Reijndorp’s writing (2001). Separation of functions was one of modern planners’ ideals until the 1960s which led to the zoning of cities. Different zones have their own attached functions: residential, work, leisure etc. and public spaces in specific zones tend to support the given function. According to Hajer and Reijndorp (2001:93), behavior is “functionally programmed in a growing number of spaces” including in public spaces. But the meaning that was attached to each space seems to be less and less clear:

“Squares not only had a form and layout that differed from streets or avenue, but there were associated differences in meaning and uses that were understood by everyone. The same held for boulevards and parks, alleys and public gardens. This typology of public space made the city readable. For a number of reasons, this relationship has been lost. [...] Clear typology of public spaces in modern urban planning has been watered down: streets and avenue became roads or child-friendly ‘housing clusters’ with speed restriction, parks became ‘parks strips’ or ‘communal greenbelts’, and squares were assigned the function of ‘sitting room’ for the neighborhood city.”

(Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001: 109 – 112)

Moreover, as users increasingly tend to expect to experience new things, public spaces have to adapt to stay attractive and are now more and more fashion dependent: the meaning and functions of public spaces is less and less easy to predetermine (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:112).

One consequence of all of this is that public spaces are not always used in the way they were planned to be used. But this phenomenon is not only fashion dependent, it seems quite natural. Children for example “will seize play opportunities even in environments that are not explicitly designated as play spaces “ (Shaftoe, 2008: 39) or in contrary tend to use playing facilities “in ways other than intended” (ibid.:38). Actually, children and young people seem to like using places going over the rules according to Shaftoe (2008:39). One should not forget that uses and expectations are different between different cultures but also different ages. Children need adventure and creativity stimulators while adults build for them sterile and ultra-safe places following their principles and expectations. Young people are at the age in which they need to play and socialize and need places for that while adults do not provide them any to avoid ‘threats’ and ‘problems’ (ibid.:33 – 39). Indeed, public spaces can be places of exclusion of some groups of people such as the young people.

II.1.3. LIMITS OF PUBLIC SPACES: SEGREGATION AND SAFETY OBSESSION

The zoning that came from functionalism led to creation of monocultural and monofunctionnal enclaves, socially homogeneous if one use Hajer and Reijndorp’s words (2001:56). People of similar background and interests gather in some spaces: they “meet the people they want to meet” and “avoid the people they want to avoid” (ibid.:53). In the same time, the pre-determination of public
spaces’ functions, planned for specific uses but also for specific persons, implies that these spaces tend to exclude – deliberately or not – persons and functions for which/who they are not planned for. Opportunities for diversity are lowered (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:68). Both phenomenons can be illustrated with the example of the (not so warm) welcome of young people in public spaces, who are nonetheless the “most likely to be found in and to benefit from public spaces” (Shaftoe, 2008:39):

“Yet, for adults at least, the presence of some young people, particularly teenagers, in public spaces is seen as most demanding and potentially problematic. [...] The standard strategy response to groups of young people in public or communal areas is to try to force them out – either by moving them on [...] threatening them with penalties [...] or removing the opportunities for them to gather at all [...]”.

All this can lead to the appropriation of specific spaces by specific groups, spaces in which “stranger feels like a guest, often unwanted” (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:85). Hence, the function of confrontation with the diversity that is essential in public spaces is less and less fulfilled and many public spaces are now “transit zones” between these homogeneous “enclaves” (ibid.:84). Public spaces then acquire a specific etiquette modeled on the leading group, which gives the space its identity and image (ibid.: 89).

According to Hajer and Reijndorp (2001:56), in people’s mind, this homogeneity is often synonymous with safety. Safety is really important; “many places do not develop because of the dominance of the sense of boredom and the lack of safety” (ibid.:130). Indeed, Shaftoe (2008:16), in agreement, explains that a crucial influence on whether people will use or avoid urban public spaces is the degree to which they feel safe in them. This strong concern results in places “becoming increasingly privatized and controlled” (ibid.:6). This excessive control – that can be concretely visible with the positioning of more and more fences for instance as described in a great example in Hajer and Reijndorp’s writing (2001:124) – is also leading to limitations in terms of activities and people’s accessibility (Shaftoe, 2008). Again, young people are often excluded from public spaces because they represent ‘danger’ and ‘illegality’ (ibid.: 40 – 41).

II.1.4. OVERCOMING THE LIMITS: TOWARD A “GOOD” PUBLIC SPACE?

If the zoning and predetermination of functions in public spaces seem to lead to segregation, the systematic will for pure diversity, which seems to be recurrent, is questionable. Many times, such as Shaftoe (2008:48), authors encourage diversity, by mixing uses together “to create more integrated neighborhoods”, to support the learning function of public spaces and interactions, and increase safety with provision of many “eyes on the street”. Still, Hajer and Reijndorp (2001:113 – 116) nuance this general trend for diversity:

“The notion of an ‘absolute’ and location-specific public domain that all the groups in society use must be jettisoned. This pure, politically-correct view of public domain as ‘meeting’, as the Great Fraternization in the public space, forms the biggest hurdle for the creation of public domain”.
Elodie Papin

Public spaces’ users need their homogeneous space but they also like and need to challenge, experience and enter the space of other homogeneous groups (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:116). Hence what is important is the “proximity” between these different spheres, and their accessibility to others if one wants to experience it, more than just “mixing” functions and people, hence attention should be paid on interrelations between and in public spaces (ibid.).

Predetermination of functions does not seem perfectly right to Shaftoe (2008) and Hajer and Reijndorp (2001) anyway. Spaces should be flexible in uses and in time – by adapting to different kind of people at different time of the day for instance. In term of uses, they agree on the fact that the space should stay unpredictable and spontaneous, and functions should not be too much predetermined then. In time, public spaces must be able to adapt for new demands and new public, especially because of the fashion dependency of public spaces in terms of functions and experiences’ expectations, and because of new society’s standards (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001): for instance women who now currently have a job probably have less time to spend in public spaces than decades ago. Garcia-Ramon, Ortiz, and Prats (2004) worked on these kinds of questions in their study of uses by different gender in a peripheral neighborhood of Barcelona (cf. section II.1.5. Analyzing the use of public spaces in concrete cases). Adaptation in time also suggests that public spaces last in time: maintenance is fundamental. Management of public spaces should guarantee safety as well as ensure adequate maintenance (Shaftoe, 2008:127). Shaftoe (2008:21) points out that in some places control measures have to be used “to compensate for ‘bad’ physical infrastructures that would be too costly to ameliorate”. One can assume that this ‘bad’ physical infrastructure is due to deterioration in time or to original design itself.

Actually, design and physical planning have a great influence on public spaces’ functions and uses. As Gehl (1980.: 99 – 100) stated, “physical environment is one of the factor that influences the activities to a varying degree and in many different ways”. Firstly, because it directly dictates functions of public spaces. People will more easily stop, or eat, or sit etc. if the place invites them to stop, eat, or sit etc. and the design is one factor influencing this (ibid.:100). Shaftoe (2008: 92 – 94) completes this statement and points out how design dictates behaviors: functional uses and users will be different depending on the comfort and configuration of the facilities. For example, orientation and location of places to sit is not insignificant: some people need privacy, others want to observe without being observed – by sitting in a corner for example – and others want to be in the middle of the cluster etc. (ibid.: 53). Providing some comfort facilities such as toilets, or eating and drinking places also attracts different users and forms different uses (ibid.) Climate protection is also an important factor for people to use the space – protection from the sun, the wind, the cold etc. (ibid.). The shift from what Gehl (1980) is calling necessary activities to optional activities is influenced by this design. But people also choose to use a space or not because of the design and aesthetics that affects their mind and senses (Shaftoe, 2008). Design gives a city and a public space its atmosphere. From Pumain, Paquot and Kleinenschmager’s definition (2006: 13 – 14), urban atmosphere is a group of things that makes people matching some feelings, of comfort, freedom, pleasure, unease, discomfort, boredom, insecurity etc. with a city, an area, a moment. It is obviously subjective and spontaneous but, according to the author and some sociologists, it can be link with objective elements such as morphology, density, climate, noise, lighting etc. even if these elements depend on the individual perception. Then people can choose to use or not to use the space depending on the feelings they have and feelings they want to experience or not. Hajer and Reijndorp (2001:64) think that “in the
future, the quality of public domain will not merely be measured in terms of space and accessibility, but will increasingly become a question of how it influences the ambiences of specific places”. Whatever it is, design is part of the factors that impact on the frequention of a public spaces: “places that are well designed and cared for feel safer and people tend to use them more” (Shaftoe, 2008:20). And according to the previous definitions, a space without people using it cannot be considered as a public space. Still, as Shaftoe (2008:31) raises, “it would be far too simplistic to say that the way we design the urban realm has a direct influence on how everyone will behave in it”. According to him, it interacts with factors such as location, management, animation and culture.

Finally, some authors – mainly Hajer and Reijndorp (2001) and Shaftoe (2008) will be cited here – tried to give some hints about what can make a “good” or “convivial” public space, which can be interested in order to have basis for comparisons of public spaces. There is no “good” public space in itself, this notion being a really subjective one (Shaftoe, 2008:7). Still, according to Shaftoe (2008:139) “successful spaces” seem to share “common elements”: physical elements – design and practical matters –, geographical – location, managerial, sensual and psychological – feelings and atmosphere. One could cite some key words taken from the two authors: Enjoyable, joy and delight, safe, human in scale, local nuance and adaptability, not isolated, memorable and identifiable, environmentally friendly, with a variety of uses, activities and animation, appropriate and access freely available, flexible, maintained, spontaneous, privacy, confrontation, meeting and gathering, atmosphere, aesthetic, comfort, senses, size, manageability, not too oppressive, etc. Francis Tibbalds (1989, cited in Shaftoe, 2008:47) Ten Commandments can help in the conception of ‘successful’ public spaces. One should:

- Consider places before buildings
- Learn from the past and respect context of buildings and sites
- Encourage mixed-uses
- Design on a human scale
- Encourage freedom to walk about
- Cater for all sections of the community and consult with them
- Build legible environments
- Build to last and adapt
- Avoid change on too great a scale at any one time
- Promote intricacy, joy and visual delight in the built environment.

It is interesting to see to which extent public spaces in post-war housing areas fulfill these criteria.

II.1.5. ANALYZING THE USE OF PUBLIC SPACES IN CONCRETE CASES

The way public spaces tend to be used and their social role has been a topic of discussion for many authors who analyzed concrete cases all around the world. Their findings and way of proceeding are important for this paper, which aims at conducting a similar analysis – observations’ content and interviews’ questions are mainly inspired from these works. Hence, several of them are of great inspiration for this work. This section aims at summarizing their findings.

Garcia-Ramon, Ortiz, and Prats (2004), in their analysis of uses and gender in a peripheral neighborhood of Barcelona, emphasize how different uses can be depending on the gender but also
on their social class, origin, age and how these uses change depending on the time of the day. Preoccupations are different between genders and ages which leads to different appropriation of and interactions in public spaces: some people work, women take care of children, men care more about their own interests etc. But this case study is also an example of how redesigning can provide new activities and new attractiveness to the area, mainly with commercial activities and large events for which it became a central space, implying that people now tend to use this public space and do not move to another area. Authors also emphasized the importance of inhabitants’ implication in the development of public spaces in their neighborhood, especially for women, and how a space can help in building a sense of belonging or even of pride.

Cele (2013) worked on the signification and important role of public spaces for teenage girls’ construction, especially for their identity and in their confrontations to others’ vision and judgment outside family influence. Teenagers learn how to live with others in public spaces. The author also emphasizes the importance for public spaces to be a social place but also a space of privacy, solitude and reflection, which is really important for teenage girls. Again, teenagers seem to not be so welcomed in public spaces but their presence with others is also important for the creation of link between generations. Still, they seem to be under adults’ rules in these spaces and “tend to make themselves ‘invisible’” to “avoid conflict with adult” (ibid.:76). This raises the question of dominance of some population on others in public spaces.

Lina Olsson (2008) raises the question of attractiveness of spaces for visitors. This can be supported by large events such as the famous football tournament in Rinkeby in the Somali week. Self-organized activities are particularly important for people to gather, it leads to an important social exchange and public spaces are of central importance in the creation and supporting of such activities. These spaces are the most accessible spatial resources for voluntary groups with few economic and material resources. In an area such as Rinkeby, such large events taking place in public spaces and then accessible to everybody enable people to gather, exchange and most importantly to show something different, some models, to young people who are often struggling and who just know the model of their neighborhood.

Finally, Holland, Clark, Katz, and Peace (2007) raise the question of dominance of a certain part of the population and focus on activities and relations within, and between, the “marginal” non-adult groups (ibid.:33) which, once again, vary within the time of the day. They emphasize in one hand that some groups of people tend to respect others predetermined space – homeless never ventured to the children’s playgrounds in their case study – while some other spaces are used in unexpected ways. Again, young people are seen as a problematic groups, appropriating some spaces usually isolated for their need of privacy. Relation between young people and the others are complicated, one usually putting distance between themselves and young people that they consider as being a nuisance. On the other hand, elderly usually exclude themselves from public spaces and do not take full advantage of public spaces that do not really present interests for them. Actually, authors emphasize that the mixing between different homogeneous groups of people is rare and accessibility of spaces depends on “who you are” and on the time of the day (ibid.:45).
In the light of the preceding, public spaces are of central importance in the establishment of the individuals and of the society. Worpole and Greenhalgh (1996 cited in Shaftoe, 2008: 12) add that “public space [...] is now of central political importance to questions of sustainable, equitable and enriching urban life”. Shaftoe (2008:15) considers that “the quality and extent of urban space could be used as a litmus test for the state of various societies’ political health”. Still, public spaces present some ‘limits’ especially when they act as exclusion places. Moreover, one should not forget that “ultimately, public spaces are about people” (Shaftoe, 2008: 9) which seems sometimes to have been forgotten in the constitution of postwar housing public spaces mainly “empty or underused” (ibid.).
II.1. POST-WAR HOUSING CRISIS AND LARGE HOUSING ESTATES

The post-war era saw a large and quickly growing need for new housing in France and in Sweden, for several reasons. Europe in general entered a phase of housing shortage, facing mainly a “social, physical and economic chaos” by the end of the second world-war (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:6). First priority for most impacted countries was “to rebuild their national economy”. But the post-war babyboom and family formation from the 1950s, aggravated by population movement from rural to urban areas “placed even greater demands on Europe’s housing stock, and a drive to meet housing shortage and improve dwelling conditions gained priority throughout Europe” (ibid.).

In the same time, post-war era saw the peak of functionalism planning, when architects and planners, convinced of the “necessity of a ‘modern’ and ‘functional’ city” believed they could “improve lives of citizens through radical changes to the build environment” and “construct a new and egalitarian society with dramatically improved housing and environmental conditions for the working class”, following modernism’s principles (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004).

Both France and Sweden adopted massive housing plans to answer the housing shortage, following these principles of functionalism and helped by innovative construction technologies and support of government for radical solution. All of this led to the post-war housing areas we know today.

II.1.1. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The French “‘Grands ensembles’”

As Jean-Michel Deleuil (2013b) and Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg (2004) stated, France suffered from severe damages from the war. Moreover, in the post-war era, baby births increased considerably. Consequently, four million dwellings were missing in 1948. The same era saw a considerable rural exodus and, in 1963, “1.2 million people were repatriated to France” following the end of the Algerian war (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:102-103). But the lack of housing was not the only problem at that time. According to the previous researchers, existing dwellings were highly degraded. The rent freeze imposed by French government after the first world war discouraged private landlords from taking care of the dwellings or from building new ones. Housing policies were missing and public funds were low: urban planning was under the care of the state after the war.

In the 1950s, the reconstruction and housing development started. But too slowly according to Jean-Michel Deleuil (2013b): construction techniques were still artisanal and financing still low. The year 1953, with the launch of the ‘Plan Courant’ was a turning point, with financial support from the state for the construction of new buildings and the right to expropriate for the ‘joint interests of the community’. Construction processes were becoming more industrialized. All of this led to
acceleration in the constructions but as Jean-Michel Deleuil (2013b) stated, this is not enough and housings were still under equipped (no bathroom, etc.). In 1958, Pierre Sudreau created the “ZUP” (areas to urbanize in priority) with an objective: building a lot and quickly, in peripheries to facilitate the land appropriation and access. Large urban and construction operations emerged from that, marked by the standardization under the care of the state (administratively, financially, technically): the “Grands ensembles” (ibid.).

Standardization is also a Modernist consequence. ‘Grands ensembles’ incorporate ideas of architectural unity and spatial autonomy characteristic of modernism and are often represented in the form of High-rise housing estates as Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg (2004:100) point out. The concept raised several opinions: “whilst some compared them to rabbit hutches, for others they provided decent and modern housing, much better than the slums from which they had come” (ibid.:99). ‘Grands ensembles’ were built only for residential use, for families and were mainly occupied at their beginning by lots of quite young middle class households. Plus, they were – and still are – mainly composed of social housing called the HLMs (ibid.). HLMs means ‘controlled rent houses’ and enable low income people to get access to houses more easily by keeping specific flats accessible exclusively to them and with a low rent, in a society in which dwellings are assigned to the ones who make the best offer (Pumain, Paquot and Kleinschmager, 2006:138). Most of them were built after 1945 – 68% were built between 1949 and 1974 (Union des HLM, 1988 cited in Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:99) – and this was a ‘revolution’.

“The Million programme”

As Hall and Vidén (2005:302) rightly point out, Sweden did not suffer from war damages. Still, late but rapid urbanization, growing demands for higher standards of living and lack of vacant flat led to housing queues long of several years and a growing need for housing in the post-war era, even more importantly in big cities. “Several hundred thousand households” were missing (ibid.:303). In the late 1960s – early 1970s, an immigration phenomenon added to that.

Social Democrats, concerned and worried about this queue phenomenon – that was also a handicap for their governing – decided to solve the problem by “completing a million new homes in ten years” (ibid.:303). In 1965, the “Million programme” was launched, under a strong influence of municipalities which had ‘planning monopoly’ – indeed final decisions were made at the municipality level. As in France, two parameters worked in favor of the development of such areas: “generous state loans” and “large-scale industrialized construction” (ibid.). According to Hall and Vidén (2005:324), Sweden at that time saw its future even ‘bigger’, with always more consumption, cars and large living places. As in France, le Corbusier’s influence was strong at that time, and, following his ideas, people believed in the “benefits of large scale collective housing
over individual and small scale projects” (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:32-33). Then, “the majority of the housing that was built took the form of large, rapidly developed areas in peripheral locations” (Hall and Vidén, 2005:303). The growth of Stockholm area for example was “closely linked” to the expansion of the subway (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:34). For some people, standardization and uniformity was representative again, but Hall and Vidén (2005:320) disagree on that. If buildings show some common aspects – Brick, cement and concrete materials, geometrical forms, undecorated façades based on modernism ideals, one should not forget the great diversity in building types and forms (ibid.). Moreover, unlike France, high-rise housing was not an end per se: “about 50% of the dwellings were built in ‘traditional’ three storey slab blocks, and almost 20% in lower slab blocks and rental row houses” (ibid.:306).

Another differing point with France is that ‘Million programme’ areas were not only made for residential use. They have their “own center for local services, surrounded by enclaves with different types of dwellings erected by different developers and with different forms of tenure” (Hall and Vidén, 2005:304). Services such as day-case centers, schools, churches, meeting places etc. were located at a walkable distance.

Still, as in France, Sweden’s ambition was “to create an exemplary welfare state” helped with modernism design and planning (Hall and Vidén, 2005:324). Dwellings were made to mix different types of households, and for all “home-seekers regardless of their income”. Social housing such as HLM does not exist in Sweden.

Outdoor, atmosphere and public spaces in post-war housing areas

Post-war housing areas count lots of “collective spaces” made for “communal use” (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:9). Marion Bonnet (201?) in her master thesis worked specifically on these spaces in between buildings in post-war areas in France. As she points out the ‘space between buildings’ in “Grands ensembles” was not a priority in the conception and design of post-war housing areas. Jean-Michel Deleuil (2013b) explains that this is firstly due to the process of constructions, in which the spaces were just considered as spaces in which the construction materials such as cranes could fit. Buildings were kind of put in the middle of nowhere without even considering the environment surrounding it, and organized in a way that made the construction process optimum, usually consisting in building long linear building ‘blocks’ (Bonnet, 201?:18 and Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:9).

Secondly, Marion Bonnet (201?) emphasized how these spaces were almost left ‘empty’ on purpose, to fit the modernism ideals of hygiene and light/air provision, contrasting with the city center insalubrities. One main rule was to never close spaces and instead, allow fluidity. The construction of buildings far from each other also enabled the creation of large green spaces, which made people think they were living in a park. If these areas are generally zoned, public spaces themselves – especially in France – lack of predetermined functions (Bonnet, 201?:34). It could be seen as problematic for some, while others claim that one should not systematically assign functions to spaces and leave a bit of freedom and unexpected possibilities (cf. section II.1.4 Overcoming the limits: toward a “good” public space?). Inhabitants built their own identity and the identity of their neighborhoods in such free spaces (Bonnet, 201?:36).
II.1.2. Criticisms and decline

Criticisms started to emerge quite early in the post-war years, especially about high-rise housing areas – which form the majority of “Grands ensembles”. Prak and Priemus (1986 cited in Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:11) identified “three cycles of decline: technical (affecting the estate); social (affecting tenants) and financial declines (affecting the viability of the estate)”.

In France, rapidity and industrialization of construction processes, being also opportunities to test new techniques in a hurry without knowing their future impacts, often led to poor areas’ quality (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:107). Infrastructures were incomplete, noisy, cold, areas counted poor amenities (ibid.). On contrary, ‘Million programme’ housings were built to be “of the same quality as housing in general Sweden” (Hall and Vidén, 2005:302). Compared to other Europeans countries, on average “the technical quality of the construction is higher, the flats are better planned and equipped, greater interest is devoted to the external environment and public and private services are better developed”. Hall and Vidén (2005:323) suggested that this is probably closely due to the fact that Sweden did not produce low-cost ‘social housing’ areas. Still, some measures have been needed in several housings due to technical problems and most importantly according to Hall and Vidén (2005: 323), people’s and human’s actual needs were not really considered in the design and building of these areas.

Criticisms started to raise at the end of the 1960s in Sweden according to the two authors (Hall and Vidén, 2005: 303). Even if these authors do not particularly agree with the following, inhabitants especially reproached to the areas their visual monotony and isolation – the areas are located way out of the center (ibid.:303 – 304). Indeed, building in “peripheral areas, poorly connected to the urban core” enabled cheap construction but led to “marginalization and exclusion of their residents” (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:107) (cf. section II.2.3 spatially and socially segregated areas). In Sweden, a big reproach concerned the lack of services and unfinished environment when the areas were completed (ibid.:304). In Stockholm for example, if the construction of the areas was linked to the growth of the subway, several of them had to wait several years before the subway actually ran (Zilliacus, 2013) which made the area even more isolated from the rest of the city.

But most importantly, reproaches started to rise in Sweden about the “desolated external environments” (Hall and Vidén, 303 – 304). Like Young and Willmott (1957 cited in Sendra, 2013:115), some professionals early started to “blame modernist urban designers for creating alienating spaces where communal life was not possible” in post-war housing areas, especially concerning the public spaces that they consider as having been left abandoned. Many criticisms in Sweden for example concerned poor playgrounds, lack of variety in landscaping (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:40) but also internal connection paths considered as poorly designed (Legeby, 2009:9). The empty spaces who were supposed to become ‘parks’ in France were just replaced by some grassy spaces with few plants or trees of which one do not have to take care a lot, put in the middle of multiple spaces reserved for cars. Moreover according to Marion Bonnet (2017:13), public spaces do not fulfill their ‘social role’ and mainly work as passing through spaces that irrigate the buildings (ibid.:17). The streets principally aim at that: in France post-war housing areas are mainly made of dead-ends only aiming at irrigating buildings or offering parking spots in an
Elodie Papin

unorganized pattern (Deleuil, 2013b). In Sweden, separation traffic is almost systematic (Hall and Vidén, 2005:305). The disappearance of the traditional streets pattern in these areas is actually one of the main problematic points according to Jean-Michel Deleuil (2013b). In Sweden, traffic separation and differentiation was strongly wished for children safety (Hall and Vidén, 2005: 311), but this configuration as well as the non-regular and confusing streets pattern in “Grands ensembles” implied that buildings do not relate directly to the streets, the sense of living in a street is totally lost (Sendra, 2013:125 – 126). Moreover, the PhD student Pablo Sendra (2013:129), in his scientific article about public spaces in post-war housing areas in Great-Britain, points out that as most of the activities are not directly connected to the streets, “active use of public spaces” is not encouraged. At the end, it is often more appropriate to use the concept of blank space between buildings rather than talking about public space in these areas (Bonnet, 2017:18). Yet, as Rolins (1995 cited in Bonnet, 2017:29) stated « the extreme fluidity of public spaces [in “Grands ensembles’’] make it incomprehensible, elusive, non-appropriable. It gives the feeling of running away”. The spaces are not clearly delimited and land ownership is not clear (Bonnet, 2017:7). Hall and Vidén (2005: 308) add that traffic separation in Sweden made it often more “difficult to find one’s way around housing estates and, in many places, orientation signs with maps had to be set up to aid visitors”. In few words, as Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg’s (2004:104) would say, public spaces in these areas are “confusing”. Shaftoe (2008) considers that these factors can make it more complicated for users to ‘feel good’ in these spaces.

In the meantime, families seemed to desire more and more to live “at ground level” in a house with a garden (Bauer, 1952 and Dunleavy, 1981 cited in Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:10). Then, as soon as one could afford it, one moved closer to the city core and left the area (Deleuil, 2013b). The release of individual houses program in France – the Chalandonnettes – was more attractive for middle class people who could afford it (ibid.). People who left these areas were replaced by people with less choice, usually poorer. In a same way, the “villa boom” with mass construction of single-family housing took place in the second half of the 1970s in Sweden (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:39). Hence the “Million programme” that was supposed to overcome housing shortage had a reverse effect and Sweden rapidly faced a housing surplus (Hall and Vidén, 2005:302). Lots of flats were vacant. But the immigration that was really significant in the 1970s in France and in the 1980s in Sweden ‘refilled’ these areas as immigrants found a place to live more easily in these big amounts of vacant flats or could only afford to live in low rental housing places in overcrowding conditions (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:109). ‘Million programme’ areas became populated mostly by immigrants’ families and became “less and less popular” (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:39). Moreover, the small amount of owners in ‘Grands ensembles’ could not pay anymore for the maintenance of the areas, which led to degradation of the housing stock which also contributed to reduce the attractiveness of the area for middle class households (Deleuil, 2013b): post-war housing areas became in some cases what Hall and Vidén (2005:313) called “vicious spirals of increasing management problems, vacancies and segregation”.

“Within only a few years, flats and estates which had been viewed as modern and attractive were being refused and rejected, criticized for their inhuman scale and poor environmental quality and associated with overcrowding and dilapidation”.
(Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:109)
As Hall and Vidén (2005:320) stated, even if criticisms seemed to focus on the previous points, organizational and physical aspects of these areas are not the only factors in decline. As in France, over factors such as ownership, resident’s influence, economics or other factors connected to social life had a great influence in the development of ‘Million programme’ housing areas’. A great concerned was also put on crime rates. Unemployment, criminality and school failure increased. Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg (2004:11) also point out ‘non appropriate management’ in some areas that eventually led to problematic collective places, vandalism and safety issues, visible in public spaces. The uneasiness and discontent of the populations materialized in the form of revolts that strongly affected “Grands ensembles” in France. Starting with the “hot summer” near Lyon, in 1981, series of revolts occurred, directly visible in public spaces with lots of stolen and burnt cars, violence, and police resistance (Dikeç, 2006). Indeed, Dikeç (2006) emphasizes the overlapping of revolts and geographies-concentrations of unemployment, inequalities, discrimination and repression, particularly present in ‘banlieues’. The government response was a repressive one rather than considering “devising redistributive measures that would, in the long term, help alleviate some of the problems” of these areas. The blame was rather put on inhabitants’ origin/ethnicity (ibid.:160).

“Neighborhoods with a ‘bad reputation’ in the 1980s became a ‘menace’ in 90s, shifting from being ‘neighborhoods in danger’ to dangerous neighborhoods”.
(Dikeç, 2006: 161)

In Sweden, ‘Contestations’ were less ‘violent’ than in France. Revolts broke out in May 2013 in Husby, one of the Stockholm’s “Million programme” areas and spread to other parts of Sweden. As in France, issues with police engendered the revolts, lots of cars were burnt etc. (Back et al., 2013) but Les Back and a group of researcher (2013) associate these revolts to larger social problems and an obvious segregation and discrimination matter.

II.1.3. Nowadays: Segregation, connotation and identity

Connotation

Connotations attached to some areas are really important in the definition of an area’s identity and impact directly on how people will use this area and its public spaces: for instance, will visitors come and use the spaces? Is the area open to surroundings and hence what public spaces should provide?

In France nowadays, it is usual to conflate ‘Grands ensembles’ and Banlieues. It is a word full of connotations. If banlieues were etymologically defined as areas around the center and usually under the same authority (Pumain, Paquot and Kleinschmager, 2006:27-29), they are now evoking “an image of a peripheral area with concentrations of large-scale, mostly high-rise social housing projects” (Dikeç, 2007). They are these places were the ‘bad’ is concentrated according to Liebig, a caseworker in a banlieue who worked on the understanding and questioning of the current mental representation about banlieues (2010). Nowadays connotation in collective mind suggests exclusion, abandon, poverty, suffer and disregard (Pumain, Paquot and Kleinschmager, 2006:27-29). But also drugs, guns, rapes and Islamism, violence, and ugliness, alterity, insecurity, deprivation and even
terrorism according to Liebig (2010: 25; 36) and Dikeç (2007: 4; 8). As Dikeç (2007:8) stated, these areas became “phobias places” full of threats for all the society values. People living in “Grands ensembles” are usually stigmatized “by the simple name of their estate” (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004: 112 – 113). This mental image creation is greatly supported by elites, mainly politicians and media (Liebig, 2010 and Dikeç, 2007), who particularly reinforce the “stereotypical ideas of people of immigrant origin as fundamentally menacing to the established social order” (Dikeç, 2007:8).

´Million programme´ housing areas in Sweden suffer a similar fate. Moa Tunström (2009) explained in her PhD about the “constructions of contemporary urban ideals” how suburbs in Sweden are strongly connoted and seen as places of “social problems”, “worn residential environments” and as reflections of the “modernist urban planning failure”. They are the places of “differentness”. Their appearance is often criticized – legitimately or not – as Hall and Vidén (2005) and Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, (2004) emphasize, being seen as uniform, large-scale and grey-concrete places sometimes called the “depressed areas”. Still, even if according to the PhD researcher Ann Legeby (2009:3) “direct relation is frequently occurring between the problems of segregation and the large housing estates originating from the ´Million programme´ in general”, connotations do not seem to be as negative as French ones.

Spatially and socially segregated areas

The decline of post-war housing areas in France and Sweden, partly caused by a decrease in attractiveness due to their isolated location, led to a concentration of people who ‘did not have much more choice’ than living in these areas, mostly because of financial limitations (cf. section II.2.2 criticism and decline) and who consequently find themselves socially and spatially excluded (Legeby, 2009:2). Segregation is mostly about “social and ethnic segregation, unequal living conditions, and unequal availability to services and to the labour market” (Legeby, 2009:1). Connotations associated with these areas are at the same time consequences and causes of this.

The location of these areas, generally far from the centers, in peripheral places, is a cause in itself for spatial segregation – it is definitely a disadvantage compared to other locations, and as Hall and Vidén (2005:322) notice, “it has never been a problem to find tenants in centrally located buildings from the Million Homes Programme”. In France more particularly, functionalism led to the creation of a “structurless conglomerate of functions” (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:56), with clusters of specific functions distant from each other but seen as easily reachable by car (ibid.). “Grands ensembles” are the ‘residential area’ cluster of this network. But this system is ‘car-dependent’ and not everybody can afford to have one or to travel by car every day (Deleuil, 2013b). Hence some people are stuck in their isolated residential-areas. The relation of the neighborhood with the adjacent ones and the urban form of the neighborhood itself are also factors for spatial exclusion. As Sendra (2013:124) states, based on the UK example, “although in some cases [post-war housing areas’] location in the inner city and the polycentric character of the city mean that they are close to the town center […] they are usually segregated by physical barriers and discontinuities in the urban fabric”. These physical barriers can ‘translate’ into social divisions (ibid.), because they isolate inhabitants of these areas from the rest of the citizens and ‘confine’ them, accentuating the segregation pattern with visible ‘blocks’ of poor in “socially devalued” areas (Turkington, van Kempen

But in Liebig’s point of view, this isolation and creation of socially segregated clusters is deliberate (2010:23). Based on the French case, the ‘banlieues’ are synonymous with immigration, violence, riots, poverty etc. (cf. section II.2.3 Connotation). In one word, they gather and represent the ‘evils’ of the current French society and people – especially politics, intellectuals and media – needed to symbolize and to demarcate ‘the good’ and ‘the bad’. According to Liebig (2010:23) “Grands ensembles” are ‘malefic entities’ made for that, so that citizens match an image with the ‘bad’ and think their ‘evils’ are controlled by confining it in controlled areas. “People need to know where to point at for their problems” (ibid.). These areas have a great political interest then (ibid.:33).

Belonging and inheritance

As “Grands ensembles” – and then we can probably say “Million programme” housing areas too – were built from nothing, in large empty lands, they did not have any real identity, history or patrimony before construction (Liebig, 2010: 111 – 112). Inhabitants created their own ones, which led to a strong sense of belonging (ibid.). People would not particularly feel at home now in a place looking like exactly the city center (ibid.:125).

II.1.4. Demolition program and urban policy: the future?

Nowadays, planning policies aim at reducing a bit the segregation phenomenon attached to these areas. One main concern was – and is – to “re-introduce diversity” in these areas (Deleuil, 2013b), including in public spaces. But one should remember that “physical proximity does not per se facilitate social intimacy” (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:107).

France and the demolition

The renewal of “Grands ensembles” in France was, and is still, strongly marked by demolitions. First demolitions started in France in the 1970s to try to counteract several years of decline and to re-introduce “human scale” (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:113). They were partly reduced some years later in favor of rehabilitation programs under the urban policy program called nowadays ‘la politique de la ville’ that was initiated after the first riots in 1981 (Dikeç, 2007:4) and that intended to improve the areas by working in collaboration with inhabitants (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:109 – 100). Actually, even if most inhabitants are “very critical of the quality of their housing, [...] they have very mixed feelings about the impact of demolition”, especially because of the feeling of belonging and attachment (ibid.:113). As Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg (2004:113) stated, “some demolition might be acceptable as part of a wider neighborhood strategy, but it is not a solution in itself. It must be carefully planned and its consequences communicated to tenants who will need clear answers to the question of replacement...
housing” (ibid.). Involving inhabitants in the transformation of their housing area is still a challenging task (ibid.).

**Sweden: the softer way**

In the early 1980s, a first improvement program for ‘Million programme’ areas was launched. It aimed mainly at reshaping, sometimes radically (Hall and Vidén, 2005:313), “outer environment” and renovating apartments and buildings (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:40). According to Hall and Vidén (2005: 313), “so far, about 15% of the apartments from the ‘record years’ have been ‘modernized’”. Colors and shapes were changed to adapt to fashions and make the areas more attractive. Courtyards – which are considered as central organizational cores of neighborhood’s redevelopment by Manzo (2012:6) – and exterior environment were mainly concerned and great effort was made in making the outdoor environment “softer, greener, more varied and suitable for use by different groups of residents” (Hall and Vidén, 2005). An attempt was made to give people more intimacy with trees, fences etc. and to improve meeting places. Most of these actions were successful and also “affected the social life in a positive way” (ibid.:315).

Still, if improvement is still needed and more “comprehensive maintenance” will be soon necessary, Sweden does not seem to consider tearing everything down (Hall and Vidén, 2005:324). Renewal has to respect “the character of the buildings and the areas, while simultaneously respecting the wishes of the residents”, taking into account its history (ibid.:325). Less than 3% of the dwellings have been demolished (ibid.:313).

Post-war housing areas were a truly revolution in their day in terms of urbanity and modernity. Unfortunately, over the years, the accumulation of several factors and the changes the society’s standards dragged them in a vicious spiral of decline that led today to isolated, segregated and negatively connoted areas. France in Sweden both work toward changing this situation but have different methods: French policies are mainly based on destruction and reconstruction, which can be criticized. Among others, Sendra (2013:130) points out that “demolition and redevelopment is not an answer since it would repeat the mistakes of the slum clearance process” that these post-war housing areas were aiming at solving at first. What is unquestionable however according to several authors is the great potential that public spaces in post-war areas have. As Grumbach (1994 cited in Bonnet, 2017:33) claimed: “we created, even if not on purpose, lots of land stocks that are germs, possibilities for the city of tomorrow”. All these ‘blanks’ can be turned in convivial meeting places (Bonnet, 2017:24). Some would advise to mix “functions and typologies” to enable “an effective relationship between land, open spaces and infrastructure buildings (Manzo, 2012:6). Others talk about “permeability, integration and constitutedness” (Hanson, cited in Sendra, 2013:124) or about facilitating emergence of processes through design and the venue of strangers (Sendra, 2013: 124 – 125). Sendra (2013:122) believes that public spaces can have a great impact in a long-term perspective and produce a “positive change” in these neighborhoods by encouraging people to use them.
III. METHODOLOGY

III.1. CASE STUDY

Several case studies, according to Groat and Wang (2002b:94), “can be compared to reach a general set of observation” but can also “be used as illustrative examples highlighting larger abstract principles”.

In this study, it has been chosen to compare public spaces in France and in Sweden through two case studies. The first criteria for the choice of these latter was obviously that they had to be post-war housing areas, part of the ‘Million programme’ or ‘Grands ensembles’. Husby, in Stockholm – Sweden – is one of the ‘Million programme’ areas. But Husby was also interesting as a case study because of recent events and actions. Firstly, it is part of a renovation program and many plans were proposed that would have affected public spaces such as the Strukturplan in 2011 (Stockholms Stad, 2011) or the ongoing Järva 2030 (Stockholms Stad, 2014c). However, inhabitants rejected them. Hence, it is interesting to understand the future objectives of professionals but also why they were rejected by the inhabitants and their actual expectations. Secondly, in 2013, Husby was the starting point for riots in ‘Million programme’ areas. If this kind of riots is still occasional in Sweden, what happened in Husby was the symbol of contestation in post-war housing areas, quite similar of the ones that made the reputation of the banlieues in France. One should not forget that public spaces can be used for violence, protesting or in illegal ways.

To make a valid comparison, it was important to find an area in France quite similar to Husby. France has a lot of post-war housing areas, or ‘Grands ensembles’, but they usually have a much larger scale than Husby and a form radically different. Les Minguettes in Lyon is ‘well known’ for instance but seems to differ quite a lot from Husby in terms of scale and forms. Mermoz, in Lyon (France) seems to be an area much more adapted for a comparison with Husby. Moreover, Mermoz is part of a large renewal program in its Northern part. Hence, it is interesting to have a look at the new intentions in terms of public spaces and to understand the differences with the Southern part itself and with Husby. It is also interesting to draw a parallel between current intentions and projects for public spaces between the two case studies.
III.2. COLLECTING MATERIAL AND ANALYSIS

As Hammersley (2010:18) points out, “much effort was made to apply ‘scientific method’ to the task of understanding the social world”. But if traditional quantitative approaches tend to neglect the human dimension and society/personal influence in social sciences, qualitative researches take it into account (Hammersley, 2010:18 and Fink, 2000). This thesis is a qualitative work.

The aim of a qualitative analysis is to study the characteristics of a phenomenon in itself, not its causes or consequences (Lofland, 1971:13). As Lofland (1971:15) stated, it is about knowing the kind of things going on in the study boundaries – acts, activities, meanings, participation, relationships, settings – under which forms and how it varies.

The researcher however cannot do ‘anything and everything’ and should remember simple rules that Postholm and Madsen (2006) remind the reader in their writing. First, ethics are really important. As Lo Piccolo and Huw (2008:17) write, “planning research, like any other kind of social science research, is an intervention in people’s lives”. Even if ethics are context-bounded, Postholm and Madsen (2006:52), who wrote about the ethical responsibility of the researcher, advise some basic things to the reader such as avoiding harm, deceptions and exploitation – with people put in the study directly without knowing or people who feel exploited –, respecting privacy, confidentiality, anonymity in some cases, and informing the participants of the study – even if it is subject to changes. Reciprocity is also an important issue. It is good, for example, to give the participants – from whom one had required efforts – something in return, without promising something one cannot give (ibid.).

Fink (2000) identifies seven stages in a qualitative research process: thematising, designing, collecting material, transcribing, analyzing, verifying and reporting. The following treat the collecting material part.

III.2.1. INTERVIEWS

Interview is a really used research technique. As Kvale (1996, cited in Fink, 2000) pointed out, conversation is “the common technique we all use to learn about phenomena in our world”, hence it seems quite natural to use it also for research purposes. In a few words, interviewing is about soliciting someone or several people for answering some “pre-set questions” (Lofland, 1971: 75). Two types of interviews are considered: the guided conversation, and the questionnaire – or structured interview – with rigid questions and pre-formed answers.

In both cases, Lofland (1971) has several recommendations. First, the making of the questions should be based on what the interviewer – person who interviews – finds “puzzling” and on readings of others author on the same topic to see what they find puzzling (ibid.:76). Secondly, never forget that the interview is made for common people; one should not confuse or put down the interviewee – who is interviewed – by using too “sophisticated sociological words”. Thirdly, questions should not influence the answer of the interviewee, by communicating what is believed to be the preferable
answer for instance. And finally, one should think about postponing sensitive topics close to the end of the interview (ibid.:79).

The guided conversation,

As Jean-Michel Deleuil (2013b) explains, a guided conversation is a discussion and not an interrogation session. The interviewer has to keep in mind the leading questions and remember which information is been looked for, but he/she must adapt to the discussion. According to Lofland (1971:85) pre-established questions provide a check list for that. The interviewee should be able to speak freely, in his own terms, about the topic but also about whatever else he wants to introduce (ibid.:84). This gives the wealth of a guided conversation: one can learn unplanned things.

Guided conversations usually go along with the formation of a relationship between the interviewee and the interviewer as explained by Fink (2000). Interviewer can use “his personal empathy” to establish this relationship, and to make the interviewee “feel more at ease and therefore more willing to tell ‘[its] story’” (ibid.). It is also based on respect to each other and avoidance of judgment (Lofland, 1971).

Fink (2000) advises to choose the interviewee “according to criteria derived from the research objective”. Moreover, Garcia-Ramon, Ortiz, and Prats (2004) but also Cele (2013) emphasize the importance of choosing different types of people to cover a diversity of positions and opinions. One way to reach people, following their model, is to contact them through local associations such as dwelling associations, or social centers. In this master thesis, several people were interviewed, who could be defined as ‘professionals’ and ‘inhabitants’. The aim was to understand in one hand how professionals use public spaces as part of planning strategies in post-war housing areas, what they think as professionals about these spaces in the current situation – their experience of the place mainly is interesting, and what they would change concerning these spaces. On the other hand, it is essential to know inhabitants’ point of view, how they really use the public spaces in their neighborhood, what is their opinion and perception about these spaces and about their neighborhood, and what they would like to change. Hence, interviews were conducted with:

Husby
- **A project leader at Svenska Bostäder** (SB) who is in charge of the major part of Husby and who is working on the new Husby centrum.
- **A member of the original Norra Järva project management team**, who worked in the development of the area and hence on Husby’s development in the 1970s.
- **An architect and PhD student** within the division of Critical Studies at the School of Architecture and Built Environment at the Royal Institute of Technology, whose research explores, through a focus on the ongoing renovation of ‘Million programme’ areas, the potential for architectural practices to contribute to a greater distributive justice of space and of socially valued resources in space. She worked especially on the decrease of communal spaces in Husby.
- **The chairman of Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd** who represents Husby inhabitants’ interests and is also an inhabitant of Husby.
- **An inhabitant of Husby** who is involved in the Husby Konsthall.
Informal interviews were made with two artists on the occasion of the vernissage of the exhibition ‘impressionism aktivism’ at Husby Konsthall to collect opinions of artists about the area, aesthetic and importance of art/aesthetic in public spaces. One of them conducted a long work about façades in Husby in collaboration with inhabitants.

Mermoz

• The urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz.
• The deputy director for the Lyon’s East Entrance Mission which includes Mermoz and another planner, both working on Mermoz Sud and the future projects.
• The president of the tenant committee, Mermoz Sud.
• The president of the association ‘Clarté’, running gardens in Mermoz sud and strongly involved in its neighborhood.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire should use quite rigid questions to limit the possibilities of answering, still without influencing them. A questionnaire was sent to Husby’s inhabitants, with the help of the Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd’s chairman who used the Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd’s mailing list to make the questionnaire circulate among inhabitants. Nineteen answers were received from inhabitants of sixty-one years old in average.

A list of the predetermined questions for the guided conversations and questionnaire is given in appendix.

III.2.2. Observations

According to Lofland (1971:93), to observe is to “orientate one’s consciousness and one’s action explicitly to look, to listen”, and in some cases “to ask ‘what’s happening’ ”.

Jan Gehl (2013) gives some advices on how to make an observation of interactions between life and forms in public spaces. According to him, several methods can be useful: counting (people, furniture etc.), mapping, tracing, tracking, looking for traces, photograph, keeping a diary, test walks. Having a walk with the target group is also really useful as Celé (2013:78) suggests. Still, as Garcia-Ramon, Ortiz, and Prats (2004) emphasize, it is really important to repeat observations and possibly at different times. What is observed varies considerably within one day and within one week. However, in the context of this study and in the imposed timeframe, it is difficult to cover a large variety of timeslots. Moreover, this study is a comparison. Hence, it is important to try to observe the two study places under the same conditions. Hence, the choice has been made to observe the areas at the beginning of the afternoon, in week-days and in week-ends. Based on what has been observed in the study of Garcia-Ramon, Ortiz, and Prats (2004), these two types of timeslots are supposed to be the ones in which activities in public spaces can differ the most. Still for the sake of the comparison, the places that are observed in the two areas should be similar, in forms and possibly in functions. As they could be found in the two areas and are quite characteristic of this type of neighborhoods, it has been chosen to observe:

• Squares close to metro stations and commercial activities,
Main central ‘parks’ with playgrounds and ‘greenery’,
One ‘street’ as a passage,
‘Courtyards’.

One should notice that these spaces are exclusively outdoor public spaces.

Finally, Gehl (2013) suggests that the observer should ask himself five general questions when observing: How many? Who? Where? What? How long? Still, he emphasizes that the list of questions is of course longer and is context dependent. A longer list for this study is given in appendix.

III.2.3. LIMITS

Several factors came as limits in this study. Firstly and as shortly addressed before: the timeframe. In order to be able to make more precise conclusions, more observations should have been done, and in a diversity of timeslots. This could help for example in knowing more precisely the frequency in which some events occur, and to draw conclusions more safely – even if one should remember that correlation do not prove causation (Lofland, 1971:60).

The fact that the study was made between January and May is also a big constraint especially when uses of public spaces are studied: they are obviously dependent on the weather. The study period probably did not fit with the period of highest use of public spaces. The major part of observations in Sweden has been done with public spaces covered of snow. The questionnaire and interviews partly aim at reducing this, by collecting testimonies about the areas and its public spaces’ uses or characteristics at any time of the year. When making observation, the location and the angles under which the place is observed has also a great influence. One probably misses some details depending on its location and orientation in the space. Lofland (1971:94) also reminds the reader of the difficulty to “disentangle emotionally” in an observation (cf. section III.3 My role and influence).

Language was also a barrier in this study. It is difficult to communicate with people in Husby as a non-Swedish speaker, especially in an area where people barely speak Swedish themselves. This was partly overcome with the help of Moa Tunström who helped to translate interview’s questions for inhabitants. Moreover, being a stranger in this kind of neighborhood can be problematic. Indeed, post-war housing areas can be relatively anonymous (Tunström, 2009) or be as small villages where everyone knows each other as it is the case in Husby and Mermoz. It was quite easy for inhabitants to notice the presence of a stranger, taking notes on a small notebook. Hence inhabitants in that case seemed doubtful and suspicious - which was reflected by inhabitants staring and asking details about the reason of this presence - and do not answer easily. This is one of the reasons why street interviews were not performed. Mermoz had its own specificity that limited even more the study: the northern part of Mermoz is currently part of a large renewal project. Almost the whole area has been torn down. Hence, it is impossible to make observations in this area.
III.3. MY ROLE AND INFLUENCE

This research is made in an academic context and has a different meaning and different expectations in terms of excellence and good practice than another type of research then – such as a consultancy one for example (Lo Piccolo and Huw, 2008:12). Still, every research has some common features. The role of the student as a researcher in such a study is of course to collect information, material and date to prove a point, but most importantly, its role is to decide “where to go” with that (Lofland, 1971:122). As Fink (2000) states:

“The result of the analysis should be that codes connect to each other in what can be conceptualized as a web of meanings. It is the researcher who defines the strings that constitute this web (STRAUSS & CORBIN 1990) and thereby defines the “meaning structure’s” logic and coherence”.

The researcher has to make decisions about how to put materials together, what should appear, what should be left out (Lofland, 1971:122). According to Fink (2000), the researcher also have the responsibility of evaluating the validity of the data and facts that are used, their confidential nature, and consequently to choose either to use it or not. Moreover, as Fink (2000) points out, the results of the analysis “depend[s] exclusively upon the researcher’s interpretation of meanings hidden in data” and on its “impressions”.

What is emphasized here is that a research is hardly made under an objective eye (Groat and Wang, 2002b:88). According to Groat and Wang (2002b), the researcher’s background, gender, point of view and so forth, come into play. As a French student in urban planning, the concern about ‘Grands ensembles’ is high and the French collective representation about these areas probably influences the study even if it has been attempted to stay as objective as possible. Indeed, the idea of working on such a topic comes directly from a stereotype vision concerning public spaces in post-war housing areas as problematic spaces and from a will to understand the reasons behind that to try to change it.
IV. PRESENTATION OF THE AREAS

IV.1. HUSBY

IV.1.1. CONTEXT AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

- **Location:** Sweden, Stockholm. Norra Järva, former Järvafältet
- **Population (2014):** 12 108 inhabitants in 2014 (Stockholms Stad, 2014a)
- **Age of the area:** Construction started in 1972 (Stockholm Informationsnämnden, 1974)
- **Surface (2013):** 138 ha (Stockholms stad, 2014b)
- **Number of dwellings:** About 4700 dwelling units (Stockholm Informationsnämnden, 1974)
- **Transports:** Metro line, 2 stations in Husby, runs since 1977 (Stockholm Informationsnämnden, 1974)
  - 19 minutes to the city center/Tcentralen

Husby is like a small island in itself in Norra Järva. It is clearly delimited and isolated because of its topography. In the North Est, it is delimited by a main Road – Hanstavägen – really close to the motorway. North-West and South-East are marked out respectively by Akalla and Kista. South-West of Husby is marked out by a large green park: Järvafältet.

The neighborhood has in its center a large commercial and services area, Husby centrum, and the pedestrian mall, Edvard Griegsgången. Based on the observations of the PhD architect’s work exhibited in Husby Konsthall in 2015, it counts associations and meeting facilities, some schools and childcare places, sport facilities, shops and offices, municipal services, health care and places of worships. In harmony with the definition that Hall and Vidén (2005: 314) give of a typical ‘Million programme’ area, the service and commercial center is surrounded by the residential area, with blocks of buildings and ‘internal’ courtyards which contain playgrounds, smaller buildings with residential ancillaries, and in some parts of the neighborhood, nursery schools as informed in the short summary concerning the planning of Akalla, Husby and Kista, written by a Stockholm Informationsnämnden (1974). Several schools are built in the area, mainly nursery schools and junior and intermediate schools. Husby also count a gymnasium, and play parks with ball-game grounds (ibid.).
Figure 1. Husby location in the Stockholm’s region (OpenStreetMap, 2015)

Figure 2. Map of Husby (Sax, 2000)
Figure 3. Husby and its colorful buildings from above (Stadsbyggnadskontoret Stockholm, 2011)

Figure 4. Husby Centrum (personal picture)
IV.1.2. **ORIGINAL PLANNING**

Husby is a district which was built as part of the ‘Million programme’, mainly planned for Swedish families with two children according to the member of the original Norra Järva project management team. The Stockholm Informationsnämnden (1974) explains that the area on which the district was built was a former military training ground, named Järvafältet, which was moved away in 1961. In 1962 the Stockholm regional planning office began the outline planning of Järvafältet, anxious to go ahead rapidly to answer the housing shortage. In 1970, the global plan for Husby, Akalla, Kista was adopted, and a more precise one was adopted for Husby in October 1970. Construction started in October 1972 (ibid.).

According to the Stockholm Informationsnämnden (1974), the development of the whole Järva area was based on several main concepts, mainly in accordance to the principles of the ‘Million programme’ and modernism (cf. II.2). For example, it was wished that “all development will be within coherent walking distance of the underground railway” and “houses must be within easy reach of large coherent parks area, and [...] kept free of traffic noise and air pollution”. The area was planned for reducing the built up area and producing inbuilt ones which “can be left to serve as valuable recreation area” (ibid.:6) – one can notice through the use of these words that these spaces between buildings are ‘left’ areas, not priorities in the planning, as mentioned in the section II.2.1. Outdoor, atmosphere and public spaces in post-war housing areas.

**IV.1.3. HIGHLIGHTS**

- First inhabitants in the area: intended 1974 (interview of the member of the original Norra Järva project management team and Stockholm Informationsnämnden, 1974).
- The underground was not running before 1977 (Stockholm Informationsnämnden, 1974).
- In 2007 came large intentions and plans for renovation, but these were contested by inhabitants. Svenska Bostäder, that owns and runs the major part of the area including Husby centrum (Stockholm Informationsnämnden, 1974), wanted to renovate buildings or tear down some of the existing ones to build smaller houses, but this would have imply a high rise of the rent and forced the major part of inhabitants to move from the area, as the Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd’s chairman pointed out in an interview. Plans were made also to change the 3 main streets (Trondheimgatan, Oslogatan and Bergengatan).
- In 2011, Stockholm Municipality presented the Strukturplan as a part of the Global ‘Vision Järva 2030’, with major intentions for change, including in public spaces. One of the main goals was the reformation of streets and suppression of traffic differentiation but this was strongly opposed by inhabitants.
- 2013 made unfortunately Husby famous for ‘bad’ reasons.

---

1 Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
IV.2. MERMOZ

IV.2.1. CONTEXT AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

- **Location:** France, Lyon. Eighth arrondissement
- **Population (2006):** 3712 inhabitants, (Genco, 2012) before the start in 2007 of building demolitions in Mermoz Nord (Ville de Lyon, 2006)
- **Age of the area:**
  - Northern part: construction started in 1957
  - Southern part: construction started in 1961 (ANRU, 2006)
- **Surface:** 23 ha (CGET, 2015)
- **Number of dwellings:** About 1500 dwelling units, 100% social housing (ANRU, 2006)
- **Transports:**
  - Metro line, 1 station, runs since 1992 (CERTU, 2004)
  - 12 minutes to the city center/Bellecour

Mermoz is called the “eastern entrance” of Lyon as it is situated at the extreme South-East of the city and is crossed by one of the main streets coming from the East toward the center of the city. Moreover, it is really close to the orbital motorway of Lyon that is used by a huge number of people to go to work or just routing through the region or through France. There is no clear limit between Mermoz and its surroundings in terms of topography, but there is a clear and visible difference in terms of urban form and height which perfectly delimited Mermoz in its environment (Robins des Villes, 2006). While the surroundings are mainly composed of small houses aligned on the streets, Mermoz is composed of high-rise housings in the middle of a disorganized streets network. But most importantly there is a clear limit at its heart: Mermoz is divided in two parts, the Northern part and the Southern part, separated for many years by a huge motorway bridge. Even if the motorway bridge has been torn down and replaced by the avenue Jean Mermoz, one can still see and feel the differences in terms of urban morphologies and social uses, or traditions, that developed through years (Ville de Lyon, 200?c). Rivalries between these two parts are still visible (Ville de Lyon, 200?a).”

The Northern part of Mermoz, called **Mermoz Nord** was characterized by the presence of 499 dwellings spread in seven high-rise buildings up to 10 or 15 floors for some of them (ANRU, 2006). Some local commercial activities and a supermarket were located on, or close to, the square Marc Sangnier. Social centers are also located in the center of Mermoz Nord or nearby, they play a great role in the youth life (Department of urban planning, 2009).

The southern part of Mermoz, **Mermoz Sud**, counts 21 buildings, with 970 dwellings spread in buildings lower than in Mermoz Nord – only up to four floors (ANRU, 2006). More commercial activities and services are located in Mermoz Sud as the observations shown, with small local shops, offices, but also many services like a postal office or Local health insurance office, and even a swimming pool. Associations have sometimes their own locale, like another social center and some associations that help inhabitant to integrate the society, find a job etc. They are mainly located close to the square Latarjet or along the Narvik alley. This area is quite central for the whole Mermoz neighborhood. It can be important to notice that a shopping center is adjacent to the area, Les Galeries Lafayette – the French Åhléns.
Elodie Papin

Mermoz is a ‘priority neighborhood’, under what is called a “CUCS” - Urban contract of social cohesion, the new ‘politique de la ville’ (cf. II.2.4. Demolition program and urban policy: the future?) aiming at reducing social and urban inequities in these targeted areas and reintegrating them as part of the whole city (Ville de Lyon, 200?b).
Figure 7. Mermoz Nord – brown area. The large area represent the perimeter of influence for the renewal project (Atlas, in Department of Urban planning, 2009)

Figure 8. On the right: Mermoz Nord (Grand Lyon)
Figure 9. Mermoz Sud (Grand Lyon)

Figure 10. Mermoz Sud from above (Grand Lyon)
IV.2.1. PLANNING HISTORY

The area where Mermoz is built nowadays was for a long time an industrial and farming area (Department of Urban Planning, 2009:8). But with the decrease of industrial activity, Mermoz became the perfect place for massive construction in the 1960s in order to answer the housing shortage that France was facing at that time (cf. section II.2.1. Programme development). The motorway bridge that created the Mermoz’ division was built later, in the 1970s, and directly crossed over the area (ibid.).

But Mermoz was quite changed through history and already faced several renovation projects, mainly in Mermoz Sud. The commercial area was completely changed and major public spaces were created: the ‘square Latarjet’ and the ‘square Mermoz’ (Department of urban development, 200?). The connection of Mermoz Sud to its Northern and Southern surroundings has been improved through roads crossing over (ibid.). Elements have been added in spaces in between buildings (CERTU, 2004). In his turn, the Northern part of Mermoz became part of a large renewal project in 2007, also part of the national program of urban renewal of ANRU (ANRU,2006) but this time changes are more extreme than they were in Mermoz Sud: the majority of the area was torn down. The new area is still under construction.

IV.2.1. HIGHLIGHTS

- Motorway bridge construction: 1970 (Department of urban Planning, 2009)
- Renewal in Mermoz Sud: 1985 – 2005 (Department of urban development, 200? and Department of Urban Planning, 2009)
  - Changes and reconstruction of the Narvik alley, with separation for pedestrians and parking lots and addition of greenery: 1988 – 1989 (CERTU, 2004)
- Renewal project in Mermoz Nord: operational phase start in 2007
- First demolitions in Mermoz Nord: 2007 (Ville de Lyon, 2006)
V. CASE STUDY

V.1. PUBLIC SPACES IN HUSBY

V.1.1. SPATIAL ORGANIZATION, PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DESIGN

Spatial organization and types of public spaces

As previously briefly explained, the area is functionally zoned. One can consider three main ‘zones’, organized in a concentric way: at the center the commercial and services area, around that the residential area and finally the borders, with Järvfältet in one side. The interviewed member of the planning team at the origin of the area gave more information about this spatial organization and the connections through public spaces between different zones\(^2\). Actually, public spaces in Husby form an authentic network. One can distinguish two networks. The first (in green in fig. 11) tends to connect the three main zones previously identified, with public spaces in the center – made for the commercial activities and services –, Järvfältet in the South-West, and, in between, public spaces that connect these two previous zones. In Husby, paths not only connect the residential area to the center but are made to establish a strong connection between the center to the large park of Järvfältet. Two large green areas also form large green corridors as connections (cf. fig. 12). Still, in contrary, connections are not that strong in the North-West/South-East and between the center and the North-East Part, and the area is quite isolated as lots of ‘Million programme’ areas (cf. section II.2.3. Spatially and socially segregated areas). A second Network of public spaces is formed by the road network (in pink in the fig. 11). It connects the area to external places through car and is the car irrigation network of the district.

These two networks are physically visible as they mainly coincide with the clear traffic differentiation, characteristic of the area. Indeed, in Husby, car lanes are not in the same level as pedestrian lanes. They almost never communicate directly. Moreover, if the pedestrian network is quite developed and allows people to move across the whole area, the car network is just made to supply one’s respective parking lot. It has nothing to do with the organized and regular traditional networks of streets and is typical of post-war housing areas’ street pattern (cf. section II.2. Post-war housing crisis and large housing estates).

\(^2\) Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
Figure 11. South-West part of Husby and connections (based on the meeting with the member of the original Norra Järva project management team)

Figure 12. Green connections (Swanson, 2007)
Elodie Papin

The residential area and its form are also quite specific in Husby and actually do not follow the general description given concerning ‘Million programme’ areas in the part II.2 Post-war housing crisis and large housing estates. Residential buildings are organized in blocks with courtyards in their center. This gives to Husby a configuration more similar to a traditional city even if they are not aligned nor opening along the streets as would be buildings in a traditional city center. According to the Svenska Bostäder project leader interviewed, this is probably due to the fact that Husby was one of the last areas built in the ‘Million programme’, hence planners could learn from previous ‘mistakes’.

From all of this and from observations, main types of public spaces can be identified and will be separately observed in the study:

- Streets for cars,
- Streets for pedestrian,
- Metro station and shopping squares/ shopping area,
- Main parks, like Husby park,
- ‘Courtyards’ inside the residential blocks.

Visual characteristics

Husby is certainly surprising for its greenery. As the member of the original Norra Järva project management team emphasized, keeping a green area was an important issue since the planning of the area. It was specifically asked to preserve nature as much as possible during the construction of the district. This is also probably due to the fact that Husby was built in the late ‘Million programme’. And if according to the Svenska Bostäder project leader there was not enough vegetation at the beginning, more has been planted through years thanks to loans.

Figure 13. The Green Husby (Swanson, 2007)

---

3 Project leader at Svenska Bostäder, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
4 Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24
5 Project leader at Svenska Bostäder, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
But Husby is not just green, Husby is colorful (cf. fig. 3). Buildings in Husby were painted in lots of colors: red, yellow, blue, etc. This is typically contrasting with the vision of grey buildings associated with the ‘Million programme’ housing areas (cf. section II.2 Post-war housing crisis and large housing estates). Still, buildings fulfill criteria of ‘Million programme’ housing areas in terms of dwellings composition – which is not the topic of this work – and height. The buildings beside the commercial area for instance are considerably higher than in the residential area, which is typical of post-war housing construction according to Hall and Vidén (2005: 314). Buildings otherwise are not that high and count usually five storages, which is still higher than the average high in Sweden (ibid.:306).

However, things are currently changing in Husby appearance: buildings are currently repainted. This was part of the renovation project launched in 2007. Colors are recovered by white paint. If these choices were made in consultation with inhabitants, opinions are now divided. Actually, people just wanted changes but they could not really define which changes, the wish of changing colors was a way to express a general need according to the interviewed Svenska Bostäder project leader. One of the artists met at Husby Konsthall worked on these questions and explained how important the colors for the area and its identity are. With this new white façades, the area is looking more alike the inner city and aims at attracting new people thanks its new appearance. But the artist considers it as a camouflage of real problems. Moreover, as the interviewed PhD architect pointed out, people in Husby do not want to live in a place which looks like the inner city. For the member of the original Norra Järva project management team, it is changing too much the character of the area.

Composition of the main observation places

The member of the original Norra Järva project management team emphasized in an interview that first, public spaces construction was regulated: how many square meters, how many playgrounds etc. were calculated corresponding to the standards at that time. Every space was planned with a defined function. What is striking in the area is the amount of playgrounds. According to the PhD architect who was met, people in the area love playground. This is probably due to the fact that Husby is still largely occupied by families. Almost each courtyard has its own playground. The Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd’s chairman explained that after the inhabitants’ opposition in 2007-2008 against the renewal project, a new strategy was adopted and new plans were made for the renovation of buildings, including façades and flats – the latter is not the concern of this work – and for courtyards, all of this made in a consultation with inhabitants. People could send proposal for the yards. He stated that thousands proposals were sent. Moreover, houses are opening onto courtyards. According to the member of the original Norra Järva project management team who was interviewed, it is important to have a view from houses, to check on children playing outside from houses for example. Moreover, the courtyards offer intimate places, quite hidden from the main paths, with buildings ‘turning their back to the streets’. Main Parks, such as Husby Park, also have

---

7 Project leader at Svenska Bostäder, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
8 Artist, interview 2015 – 02 – 19.
10 Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24
11 Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24
12 Husby inhabitant and chairman of Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd, interview 2015 – 02 – 11.
their own playground, but not only. Husby Park for example gathers playgrounds, urban sport field, and places to sit with sun protection, tables and a grill area. The topography also offers intimate places (cf. figure 15). This park is interesting for observations as it gathers several functional zones and is located quite centrally.

Public spaces in the commercial area just offer some benches to sit and mainly shops or restaurants, which can provide themselves some sits and tables. Some trees are planted but this area is not the greenest one in Husby. Most importantly, the metro stations are located in these spaces. It was interesting to make observations in the two squares surrounding these metro stations, but also in an intermediate square only surrounding by shops and services. Hence observations were made in three places: the ‘Husby square’ next to ICA (number 1 in the map figure. 14), the ‘intermediate square’ (number 2 in the map figure. 15) and the one called in this report the ‘Tempo square’ (number 3 in the map figure. 15). Indeed, the squares do not have specific names, some substitute names were given in order to distinguish them. Shaftoe (2008:53) points out the influence of the orientation of sits on uses in a public space. The ‘Husby square’ offers some benches to sit that are distributed around the square, facing the middle of the place where trees are planted. People using them are invited to stare at the middle of the square, which is more favorable for passive social actions. The ‘Tempo square’ presents approximately the same configuration. On the contrary, benches in the intermediate square are put in the middle and surround a fountain. Their circular disposition is more favorable for interactions between the people sitting on different benches and makes it more difficult to observe the surrounding area than in the ‘Husby square’ or ‘Tempo square’ (cf. section I.1.1. Functions and uses of public spaces).

Streets do not have any design specificities. They act as corridors, except for Edvard Griegsgången which is crossing the commercial and services area, joining the three squares cited previously, and which offers some sitting opportunities. Street for cars are ‘less’ interesting in this study as they are less likely to have a role in social interactions than pedestrian paths.
Figure 15. Husby park and its hill (Papin, 2015)

Figure 16. The ´intermediate square´ (Swanson, 2007)

Figure 17. Edvard Griegsgången (Swanson, 2007)
V.1.2. Functions and Uses

Inhabitants spend a lot of time in public spaces in Husby according to the questionnaire’s answers and observations.

Passing through

First of all, public spaces are places of passages linking different points of the district. It is actually one of the main functions of a street and paths by definition, to lead “from one place to another” (Oxford University Press, 2015). Husby, as a mainly pedestrian area and thanks to its spatial organization, sees a lot of people walking from the metro stations toward their houses. Inhabitants in the questionnaire almost systematically cited this as part of their daily activity. But the passages are
not only used for these kinds of compulsory walks, they are also used for pleasure and strolls, especially in spring and summer times. Twelve of the questionnaire’s respondents seem to spend lot of time taking walks around the area, only to revitalize in this green and “fresh-air” area to use inhabitants’ words, “walking with their grandchildren or even jogging”. Most of them not only walk in Husby but also go to Järvaältet which seems to be one of the most appreciate place to spend time outside. The paths network connecting the center of Husby toward Järvaältet, described previously, seems to perfectly make sense. Moreover, the traffic differentiation makes the path really safe for children. A lot of children and teenagers have been seen walking around the area without adults.

Squares and parks are also places for passage. Observations in Husby Park have shown that many people cross it without stopping and finally go in different directions towards what could be probably their own houses. Its central location and the possibility to cross it transversally probably make it a nice place to cross, as a shortcut. Moreover, the park puts several clusters of different functions closer. According to Hajer and Reijndorp (2001), people like to be confronted to other clusters than the one they usually occupy, to experience it (cf. also section II.1.4. Overcoming the limits: toward a “good” public space?). This could be a reason for people to like crossing the park instead of using parallel streets, to experience shortly what is going on in the multiple clusters. The most obvious examples however of parks or square as passage are the squares in which are located the two metro stations and the two main food stores. It has been clearly observed that these squares are like hub between the metro stations or food stores, and the distribution network of streets toward the residential zones. Globally, people rarely stop in them for long times. Actually, it looks like these squares are not really made for people to stop, as typical places of consumption (Hajer and Reijndorp, 2001:97). They offer really few opportunities to sit, with just few benches. The ‘intermediate square’ is also mainly crossed and is on people’s way to the residential area or to other shops, and so is Edvard Griegsgången. Actually, these squares and Edvard Griegsgången, which form mainly the total public space of the central area of commerce and services, look alike. They are designed in the same way: a large empty area with just few benches in it, surrounded by shops and services. Still, even if the squares do not particularly invite people to stop at first sight, meetings still occur.
Meetings can occur everywhere, even in passage places as people are conducive to run into each other.

Even if they are mainly crossed by people, the squares around the metro stations for example see some meetings and gatherings. First of all, these squares are meeting points between people before going to the metro. During the observation times, several people sat for few minutes in benches in ‘Husby square’ until someone join them to go to the metro or to the shops together. Moreover, it was said earlier that these places do not offer many rooms to stop and spend time in there. This is not completely true. Indeed, the central area counts several coffee places and restaurants. If the definition of these spaces as public ones is controversial (cf. section II.1.1. The concept/different definitions: understanding public spaces), the fact remains that these spaces are largely used by inhabitants to stop and meet. They are even part of their favorite meeting places according to the questionnaire, especially Yas Kaffe – number 17 in the figure 4. The Norra Järva Stadsmansråd’s chairman and around one quarter of the questionnaire respondents declare going there to meet friends and spend time, especially in summer, when the café apparently offers sits outside, in the administrative public space.

Observations also showed that the pizzeria in the ‘intermediate square’ is an important meeting point. Indeed, observations in this square mainly saw people passing through, crossing the square toward attached paths or toward the pizzeria. Especially in winter, the only people standing in the area were people smoking or discussing in front of the pizzeria. In summer however, this might be different. Few benches surround a fountain and are inviting people to sit and stop here, in a round so that it is easy to interact with other benches, which is not the case in the square 1 were benches are just aligned along the walls surrounding the square and would be more favorable at passive observation. In winter, the fountain and several benches were full of snow and not really invited people to sit there then. Still, the observations at the beginning of the spring did not show much difference; hence it is difficult to conclude anything concerning this. Also during some months, the ‘intermediate square’ and the ‘tempo square’ house small markets. According to observations, these markets often make people stop on their way home to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. It is difficult to verify it, but these markets might also make more people come in the central area, who come to buy these products, and as Shaftoe say (2008:68), “people attract people”. It is then a snowball effect. This presence of lot of people in the area who go for shopping or to the metro is probably what makes it lively in the eyes of three of the questionnaire respondent, who clearly declared liking the central area and its squares for the presence of people. As Shaftoe (2008:66) stated, humans are “sociable animals” who require and depend on contact with other human beings.

Other places in Husby seem to be favorable for meetings. Inhabitants seem to really appreciate green areas, again: around three quarter of the questionnaire respondents declare that they spend time in green areas. Järva Parket is an appreciated place for them to spend time with relatives or friends. Husby Park has been cited by a respondent as a good place to meet too, and observations showed that different groups of people gather in there: women with children use the playgrounds, teenagers play in the urban sport field, and people cross it. On the top of the hill, teenagers and more particularly young couple of teenagers have been seen. These places, quite hidden, seem to offer the privacy they need far from the adults’ supremacy to experience things such as first love (cf. section
II.1.2 *Main functions and uses*. But also groups of men have been seen gathering there, drinking alcohol. This raises questions about the illegal use of public spaces and the downward slides and will be discussed later in this work. From what has been observed, children and teenagers also seem to like gathering in the urban sports field in Husby Park. Actually, this tendency has been observed in every sports field in the area. As soon as the sun came back and the snow melted, each sport field in the area was full of teenagers. Finally, it appears that Husby Gård is one of the favorite places for meetings in the eyes of inhabitants. Almost half of them declare that they usually go there to meet some friends, take part in activities or just enjoy the nature while observing others and Husby Gård is one of their favorite places for that. It offers an opportunity for people to be socially passive or active which is important for the development of social life (cf. section II.1.2 *Main functions and uses*). Moreover, Husby Gård house the Husby Konsthall, an exhibition hall for art which attracts lots of people. Indeed, it hosts a lot of activities.14

Many activities actually take place in public spaces in Husby allowing people to gather and meet, which is really important for the social life in an area. As explained before, people need to be in contact with others in public spaces for several reasons (cf. section II.1.2 *Main functions and uses*). Husby Konst is organizing activities in outdoor public spaces at least five times a year. They have children’s activities during the summer holidays, but also completely different outdoor activities such as May Day celebration with great fire and music performances, garage sales etc. If the weather is fine many people usually attend this kind of events. Some activities directly involve inhabitants in the modification of their neighborhood, through art for example. But public spaces in Husby are also places where many political and contestation events occur. ‘Husby square’ is the place where people gather to express their contestations or feelings concerning the Husby community. Since the riots, a new tradition was born and takes place every year in May, called “A Day for Husby”. People gather in ‘Husby square’ to remember the events and highlight positive activities and current issues concerning the neighborhood. Actually, inhabitants are strongly committed to the development of their neighborhood. Husby Träff is a really important meeting place for the exercise of democracy in the area15. This indoor space is the place of meeting for the discussion of the neighborhoods issues. Every first Monday of a month, Järva Café takes place there to discuss current or future issues.16

Unfortunately, places like Husby Träff became rare in the area. The member of the original Norra Järva project management team explained in an interview that the area was veritably planned in a human way at the beginning, for people.17 Husby offered many opportunities and room for association or just for free meetings. Everybody was welcome, people from different ages and background met. The PhD architect described the ‘old’ Husby as a kind of ‘holiday camp’ and with places for free exchange and sharing of knowledge. Moreover, indoor public spaces are really important in a country such as Sweden, where winter can be really snowy: the climate is an important factor in the uses of public spaces (Shaftoe, 2008: 60 – 70). But as the PhD architect points

---

15 This distinctive feature has been mentioned in all the interviews.
17 Husby inhabitant and chairman of Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd, interview 2015 – 02 – 11.
18 Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24
out in its study, these community places almost all disappeared, in favor of commercial activities. In that case, what is left for people who do not want to pay to meet? Not everybody can offer to pay every time for meeting, especially in areas such as Husby where the unemployment rate is quite high – 5.1% of unemployment in Husby against 2.5% in average in the whole Stockholm in October 2014 (Stockholms Stad, 2014a). This is especially problematic for young people, who mainly face this employment crisis and who do not have any places left to gather with associations for example. Hence, they just hang around in the area and kind of take over outdoor public spaces.

The appropriation of space

Observations clearly showed that public spaces are not equally used between the genders in Husby. The central zone is clearly male dominated. ‘Husby square’ is an important meeting place for young men. It has been said previously that this square is a main passage. The only people staying for long times in the area are groups of young men, usually staying in front of the ‘Quick shop’ (number 6 in the figure 4). This can lead to a feeling of domination of the spaces. If all the respondents of the questionnaire declare that they feel welcome in Husby and its public spaces, two of them revealed later that they feel sometimes disturbed due to the presence of groups of young men in the area. As Hajer and Reijndorp (2001:85) stated, the dominance of a specific group in a square make the others feeling as if they were unwanted in there. Others will probably not stay in this space then. This can also be part of the reasons why the square is a passage. Moreover, observations shown that these groups of young men are always occupying this space, in week-days or week-ends. During the week-ends, groups of people crossing the squares in the central area are quite diverse, in ages and ethnicities. But in week-days, public spaces in the central zone are mainly occupied by groups of young men gathering in the squares, groups of men walking around the central zone stopping at some shops and restaurants, and small groups or single-women crossing the squares with children. Women usually do not stop in the central area. On the contrary, public spaces in the residential areas, parks and courtyards, are occupied by women, especially if there is a playground. Women do not particularly meet with each other in these spaces but go with children who play in there.

According to the Svenska Bostäder project leader and the member of the original Norra Järva project management team who were interviewed, a lot of immigrants live now in Husby and this separation of uses between genders is mainly due to cultural factors. Culturally, girls are not supposed to use the same public spaces as men or are put under pressure by men staring at them and watching over if they are in the same space. Hence, it is necessary and important to provide specific public spaces for them. The Svenska Bostäder project leader who was interviewed noticed that laundry rooms seem to be important places for women to meet. Hence, some improvements have been made in these places, by providing sofas for example and enabling to see the playgrounds form the laundry rooms so that women can check on their children.

---

21 Project leader at Svenska Bostäder, interview 2015 – 03 – 24, and the former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24
23 Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24
Unplanned uses and downward slides

As previously stated, lots of playgrounds are made for children all around the neighborhood. However, children do not always use it and prefer to use unexpected places. For instance, they seem to like playing on and jumping from the high rocks in Husby Park while this could be dangerous. But this statement is especially true at winter. It might not be as easy to use the playgrounds when there is snow and most of all, the snow is changing all the functions of public spaces: the empty grassy space becomes a perfect location for building a snowman – lots of snowmen has been seen in winter all around the area – and small hills become ideal places for the sledge. But the snow also makes the use of some places impossible – benches and sports field are covered by snow, even dangerous. When the sun is coming out again, on the contrary, every small pieces of sun are favorable for people to stop. Every bench in the sun is occupied, even for short stops. But it is difficult to conclude if this linked to the ‘first sun euphoria’ or if it also happens in summer.

It has been also observed that furniture is not always use the way it should be. Some tables are burned for instance. Still, deteriorations look quite rare in Husby.

But public spaces can also be used in inappropriate ways, for violence and illegal actions. During Husby’s riots, public spaces were places of violence, confrontation with police, and deterioration – with the burning of cars for instance. In everyday life, public spaces in Husby host drugs traffic. The pedestrian paths that were initially made for children safety become ideal ways-out for drug dealers in which police cannot easily chase them.

V.1.3. Opinion, perception and feeling about these spaces

The general feeling emerging from inhabitants in interviews is that they really like Husby and its public spaces, especially for its greenery. More than half of the questionnaire’s respondents declare that they really appreciate this facet of Husby. One of the interviewed inhabitants stated: “We have so fine outdoor environment here that contrasts against the housing environment and becomes a surprising rural element” \(^24\). Respondents qualify the area of a fantastic pleasant oasis, comfortable, practical.

Some also really like the central area as it is the liveliest place in the area. Traffic separation is really appreciated for children safety. One respondent stated that the traffic separation was a “great advantage” in their children life. According to the Svenska Bostäder project leader who was interviewed, it is easier for them to understand the place thanks to that and to find their way, and they know where to go for what\(^25\).

Still, some criticisms emerge, especially about aesthetic and maintenance. For one respondent, the place is too insipid; especially the central area. But on the contrary, one of the artists who was met and her art project in Husby revealed that many inhabitants appreciate the colorful façades of Husby which give life to the area\(^26\). But if the aesthetic in public spaces has its importance for them, it is

\(^{24}\) Husby inhabitant involved in the Husby Konsthall, email interview 2015 – 03 – 04.
\(^{25}\) Project leader at Svenska Bostäder, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
\(^{26}\) Project leader at Svenska Bostäder, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
Elodie Papin

definitely not their priority. Accommodation mainly is seen as a major concern in the area in the eyes of inhabitants according to the Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd’s chairman. More globally, this latter interviewee feels that the place, buildings and public spaces, is getting old and should be freshen up, especially in the center. Several maintenance problems are deplored, especially concerning the cleaning of the area. One quarter of the respondents, when they are asked about their opinion about Husby public spaces, automatically respond that many public spaces are dirty or not well maintained. Moreover, some places are kind of left abandoned. The Svenska Bostäder project leader confirms and deplores it in an interview. She states that either one should take care of these spaces or change them completely. At least one quarter of inhabitants met or interviewed from the questionnaire realized and emphasized that public spaces, including indoor spaces for the community meetings or associations, are taken away or reduced in size, and they strongly deplore that.

If people generally like public spaces in Husby despite some criticisms, the most important thing is that they mainly feel welcome in them; it is at least the case for more than three quarter of the questionnaire respondents. They feel like really belonging to the spaces and to the area in general. One of the interviewed inhabitants stated that everywhere she goes she probably knows someone and people interact with her. Some inhabitants feel welcome, with smiles and outstretched hand. Husby is seen for quarter of inhabitants as an extremely sociable area and lively one – the presence of many families and children contribute to that according to one of them. Questionnaire respondents feel like belonging to Husby and are more than three quarters of them are of proud of it. It seems like it is mostly due to the strong sense of community that reigns there. Husby is like a big family. People are strongly engaged in their neighborhood, reflected by the implication of inhabitants in many actions and in the Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd. Most of them lived here for many years and do not see themselves living in another place – or maybe in a nice house in the middle of forests and lakes, but no one talked about the center of Stockholm. Moreover, some people seem to appreciate the diversity of culture and ethnicities, and see it as a wealth.

Yes, two or three of them seem to disagree, reproaching mainly the high number of immigrants living in the area. According to the PhD architect who was met, there are some ethnic tensions between the Swedish groups and ethnic communities. One respondent stated that immigrants feel accepted in Husby but not in the Swedish society, that’s why they like to stay in the area. On the contrary, two respondents living in Husby stated that they do not feel that much welcome in public spaces, especially as women who have some trouble to deal with the other cultures where women and men do not mix that much. They feel observed then in public spaces. Around one quarter of respondents deplored the dominance of men or young people in specific places such as coffee places and would like more equality and accessibility in public spaces. Finally, around one quarter of respondents declared that they prefer to avoid some places, where they do not feel safe, especially at night in dark places.

Safety is an important issue in public spaces, as explained in the section II.1.3 Limits of public spaces: segregation and safety obsession. Inhabitants globally feel safe in public spaces except maybe at

---

27 Husby inhabitant and chairman of Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd, interview 2015 – 02 – 11.
night as stated before. One respondent stated that he feels even safer in busy spaces, such as the central area and Husby Gård, which verifies Shaftoe’s (2008:48) theory about the influence of the number of people occupying a space in the general safety feeling. Moreover, the ‘gang’ occupation and drugs deals in public spaces scare some inhabitants as one of the questionnaire respondent stated. Still, they are reassured by the close presence of police and the ‘auto-patrol’ composed of inhabitants.

V.1.4. WHAT IS MISSING, WHAT IS NEXT

Needs and inhabitants expectations

Several requests and proposals have been made by inhabitants in the interviews. Around 80% of the questionnaire respondents answered yes when they were asked if they would like to have more opportunities to sit in public spaces all around the neighborhood, with more benches for example. One respondent would appreciate an improvement of the walking paths, especially between the central area and Husby Gård. The amelioration of the path would also suppose addition of obstacles for mopeds. Indeed, three respondents complain about abusive use of moped in the walking paths which can be dangerous for walkers. But this would also stand in the way of policemen in case of chase of delinquent in the area, which is already one safety problem that has been cited before. Several areas would need more maintenance and improvement or refresh according to inhabitants. The grill area for example seems to be quite use in summer according to one of the interviewed inhabitants. It could be improved and made ‘nicer’ with more fantasy and imagination as she suggest. Some would like more open courtyards and other more ‘green’, with plants on the buildings for example.

About half of inhabitants interviewed directly or through questionnaire ask directly to have more places to meet, such as café for instance, restaurants, but mainly community meeting places, in free access and open to everyone – and more importantly open to young people –, as it was at the beginning. The Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd’s chairman agrees with that and deplores the recent suppression of main community and association spaces. Husby Träff is nice according to him but it is nothing compared to what they had before. There is a need for more places for democratic dialogue and social exchange. In the questionnaire, quarter of the respondents declare that they would appreciate to have more places in which all types of people – ages, ethnics and even people from external areas – could gather and share. This could be done also through activities that gathers everyone and create a relationship between all people, but these activities need a place where they can take place and develop as emphasized Lina Olsson (2008). The interviewed inhabitant involved in Husby Konsthall suggests that it could be important to involve inhabitants in the creation of their public spaces, through artistic things for example.

In parallel with the creation of free access meeting places for associations, the PhD architect and the member of the original Norra Järva project management team also suggest to create more sports

---

31 Husby inhabitant and chairman of Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd, interview 2015 – 02 – 11.
fields for the young people. If today they hang around, it might be because they do not have anything else to do: they do not have any job and public spaces are not particularly made for them.

According to the Svenska Bostäder project leader, Husby also needs to open up and to connect to adjacent areas through public spaces, partly to make people living in the surroundings to come in Husby\textsuperscript{33}. This is part of the future plans for the neighborhood.

\textbf{Future plans}

The connection of the area with other neighborhoods through public spaces was one of the 2011 Strukturplan’s objectives (Stockholms Stad, 2011). However, another objective was to remove the traffic differentiation. This led to a strong reject of the project form inhabitants. According to the Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd’s chairman, the main reason was because of children safety\textsuperscript{34}. However, The Svenska Bostäder project leader who was interviewed points out that current car streets are not that much safer. Some people use the roads to walk anyway and it is even worst: as they are currently plan only for cars, they do not offer safe walkable pathways for pedestrians\textsuperscript{35}.

According to the member of the original Norra Järva project management team, streets and roads are the forgotten public spaces; they are then the space with the more potential for changes and improvement\textsuperscript{36}. New plans aim at making the car streets safer and more connected with the adjacent house. Buildings will be open on the streets which was not the case until now. This will confer a more traditional configuration on streets and make them safer as inhabitants can easily access buildings from there and do not have to use the small walking paths especially at night. The aim is also to make the area more welcoming for people coming by car and make them want to stop in Husby centrum for example. Attracting people from other places in the area is an important issue for professionals, even if it is difficult because many inhabitants, especially young people who appropriate themselves the space, object to open up to people from outside according to the member of the original Norra Järva project management team\textsuperscript{37}. According one of the artists, the renovation of buildings and façades also aim at making the area more ‘attractive’ or at least making them looking similar as city center buildings which is, as she stated, questionable: people in these area do not particularly want to live in a place looking like the city center, and attracting new inhabitants can lead to gentrification and exclusion of the current ones\textsuperscript{38}. However, The Svenska Bostäder project leader assures that projects are made to suit in one hand people who already live there but also future – and unknown – inhabitants. It is important for her to not force people to move, which could happen because an important increase of the rents to pay for the renovations. This was actually the reason for which inhabitants strongly opposed the initial projects which were proposed by the city in 2007 – 2008, which was at the origin of the strong movements of inhabitants and the creation of the Järva framtid

\textsuperscript{33} Project leader at Svenska Bostäder, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
\textsuperscript{34} Husby inhabitant and chairman of Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd, interview 2015 – 02 – 11.
\textsuperscript{35} Project leader at Svenska Bostäder, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
\textsuperscript{36} Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24
\textsuperscript{37} Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
\textsuperscript{38} Artist, interview 2015 – 02 – 19.
– or today the Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd\textsuperscript{39}. Actually, inhabitants are more concerned by the price of the projects than the final result and aesthetic\textsuperscript{40}.

Husby centrum is also part of a big renovation project. The Svenska Bostäder project leader who was interviewed explains that the aim is to reintroduce more diversity in activities, with more cultural places for examples. A glass roof will also be built on the top of ‘Husby square’, to accommodate more easily to the weather. But this will force the Yas kaffee to close according to move, which would be deplored by many inhabitants\textsuperscript{41}. However, according to this latter interviewee, nothing will be close but just moved in another place in Husby. Another project is to introduce more gardening places.

Actually Husby is part of a large programme for the whole Järva: the vision Järva 2030. The project aims at having a more varied urban environment, more security and positive social and economic development (Stockholms stad, 2014c). Professionals want to create area where people want to move and stay in and fight against social exclusion. They want various ranges of places for community and a great diversity of services. Pleasant outdoor spaces should be created with beautification of public spaces according to them.

\textsuperscript{39} Husby inhabitant and chairman of Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd, interview 2015 – 02 – 11.
\textsuperscript{40} Architect and PhD student, interview 2015 – 03 – 23.
\textsuperscript{41} Husby inhabitant and chairman of Norra Järva Stadsdelsråd, interview 2015 – 02 – 11.
V.2. PUBLIC SPACES IN MERMOZ

V.2.1. SPATIAL ORGANIZATION, PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DESIGN

Spatial organization and types of public spaces

As previously stated, spatial organization was quite different between the South of Mermoz and the North (Department of Urban development, 200 ?).

In Mermoz Nord, it is difficult to observe how public spaces were organized as the area was all torn down for renewal and is still under construction. However, documents and testimonies help to understand it. The heart of Mermoz Nord was made of a ‘green’ park, the “green lung” as the professionals called it (Department of Urban Planning, 2009). It counted playgrounds, a sports field, and many copses that kind of transformed the place into a labyrinth for pedestrians and enables hidden places to form. The park was marked out by the buildings surrounding it, which also isolated it partly from the noise and views from the streets (ibid.). The streets do not form a regular and traditional network; they are not parallel to the Mermoz Avenue and mostly skirt the area, reducing connection to the surroundings. The Grand Lyon department of Urban Planning (2009: 10) qualifies the local network of “poor and badly defined”. Internal routes are not easily identifiable, getting mixed in the parking lots, and car tracks are not really appropriates for bikes and pedestrian use even if the traffic is mixed in the area. Yet, some are more used by pedestrians than cars, especially the one going along the park (ibid.).

Figure 21. Mermoz Nord and streets + parking organization (Department of Urban planning, 2009)
Instead of being at the center, commercial activities are located in the periphery, west and Est. As seen in figure 21, small public spaces are split in between buildings. Public spaces seem to adapt the buildings disposition and not the contrary, as it is quite often the case in post-war housing areas (cf. section II.2.1. Outdoor, atmosphere and public spaces in post-war housing areas). They are not hierarchically organized, which is also what the Mermoz Nord’s project manager emphasized as the main characteristic in terms of organization of public spaces in Mermoz Nord.

Mermoz Sud is more hierarchically structured. Observations showed that activities and services are centrally located, close to the metro station. The residential area surrounds it and is organized in a tartan (CERTU, 2004:70). The space is made of an alternation of parallel linear buildings and public spaces in between. One cannot really consider that buildings align on the streets. Indeed, roads at the foot of the buildings are dead ends for parking. The president of the association ‘Clarté’ testifies that many car streets were transformed into dead-ends by the municipality to reduce the car traffic, which makes the area into a labyrinth for cars. The street system then is mainly made for the redistribution of cars toward respective houses rather than for pure circulation, which is characteristic of post-war housing areas at least in France (cf. II.2. Post-war housing crisis and large housing estates).

The zone along the Mermoz Avenue is really important according to the two planners working on Mermoz Sud who were interviewed. It forms the “urban staple” between the North and the South.

Confusion is easy in Mermoz according to the Mermoz Nord’s project manager. She points out that identification of what public spaces are made for is not easy: is it ‘courtyard’, a ‘parking’, a ‘square’? This feeling is reinforced because of the absence of nomination of certain spaces (Robins des Villes, 2006). Some main categories of public spaces can be identified:

- The streets, traffic mixed
- Parking which occupy a significant part of public spaces in Mermoz
- Spaces in between buildings in Mermoz Sud that can be assimilated to courtyards

But if some spaces a clearly identifiable as squares – such as the square Latarjet – it is less obvious for some others places like small empty spaces left between buildings and streets. Following the definition of the National center of the literal and lexical resources (2012) a square is an open space usually surrounded by buildings and where several streets end in, while a park is a space made of green spaces. The square Mermoz as his name indicates can be considered more as square but the central zone in Mermoz Nord which seemed quite similar to the square Mermoz in terms of activities taking place in it (playground, sport field, crossing the area etc.) seemed to look more like a park, with more greenery.

**Visual characteristics**

Mermoz Sud and Mermoz Nord were different in terms on visual atmosphere, especially because of the heights and organization of the buildings in space. If Mermoz Nord presented a typical banlieues’

---

42 Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
form with high-rise housings – from 10 or 15 floors – not organized (cf. II.2. Post-war housing crisis and large housing estates), Mermoz Sud is definitely less high and more organized.

The architecture is qualified by the CERTU (2004:70) as “uniform”, at least in Mermoz Sud. The colors of the façades are drabs and the buildings suffered from the city pollution, which is easily observable. The CERTU (2004:70) considers the spaces at the foot of buildings as “unattractive”. Moreover, the organization of the buildings leads to some visual challenges in the whole area, as the Mermoz Nord’s project manager stated. Views are intersected by buildings; street passages through buildings lead to hidden places.

The greenery aspect of the area can be discussed. In Mermoz Nord, the Department of Urban planning (2009:12) explained how good the quality of the vegetal patrimony was, but how it was devalued because of the outdoor spaces “dilapidation”. In Mermoz Sud, not a lot of greenery was observed. Some trees ornament squares and streets but still in a scattered way. Moreover, some trees have been cut for safety reasons. There is no large green area in Mermoz Sud; green parks are located in the surroundings, such as the large park of Parilly, within thirty minutes’ walk. Observations showed than actually, the space is more occupied by cars than by trees.

This is probably the most visually striking thing about Mermoz. Cars are everywhere. Testimonies about Mermoz Nord and observations in Mermoz Sud showed how cars take over the public spaces, especially for parking. Every space is favorable for parking and even when it is not, cars are parked in unauthorized spaces.

45 Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
Composition of the main observation places

Several places have been observed for this study. As Mermoz Nord is currently under reconstruction, no observations have been made there as they would not have reflected the reality of uses but just a temporary state. Still, the central park has been rebuilt already and is composed of a large grassy area and playgrounds for different ages so that mothers can keep an eye on children of different ages.46

In Mermoz Sud, it is interesting to observe places such as the square Latarjet, which is central and in between of the commercial area and metro station. A parallel can be made then with Husby squares in the central part of the neighborhood. The square Latarjet is a really simple rectangular square, empty in the middle and with benches and some tables that circles this empty space. The benches and tables are fixed and oriented so that one either look at the central space of the square or turns his back on it. Some trees are planted in one side of the park, and really few in the middle. Around the square, cars park everywhere and create a barrier between the square and the surroundings.

The square Mermoz is interesting also because of its location and can be assimilated to Husby Park in a comparison. The square counts several playgrounds for children, a main path going from North to South and some trees planted along the alley. It is one of the only places completely free of cars.

An interesting street to observe is the Narvik alley. One part is for car traffic but in the last renovation project, a pedestrian path has been created (Communauté Urbaine de Lyon ed., 1994). This path, under trees, also counts some benches were people can stop and sit. However, this space is full of cars that parks which makes the pedestrian walks more difficult. Moreover, people sitting in the benches usually have a direct view on a car parked just in front of them.

Finally, ‘courtyards’ all have similarities: one car street to serve the buildings and to park, separated from space with generally a playground and a small garden. Installations can vary depending on the ‘courtyard’. Instead of playgrounds, some count sports facilities for adults, small sports field – like a basketball field, benches and tables etc.

Figure 23. Square Latarjet (Papin, 2015)

46 Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
Elodie Papin

Figure 24. Location of the observed spaces (OpenStreetMap, 2015)

Figure 25. Square Mermoz (Papin, 2015)

Figure 26. Typical space in between buildings with gardens, playgrounds and parking (Papin, 2015)
V.2.2. Functions and uses

Even if the Metro is seen as a major attractive feature in Mermoz (Robins des Villes, 2006), most of inhabitants seem to stay in the area when they have free time\(^{47}\). This is particularly true for the adults and children. Indeed, young people or old teenagers tend to go to the center of Lyon or to close surroundings more often\(^ {48} \).

**Passing through**

Mermoz Nord is actually a large transit place. When teenagers and young people move to close surroundings, they usually go to the Laënnec district to do sports in the large sports fields or go to the social centers – such as the ‘house of youths and culture (MJC), in the North of Mermoz (Robins des Villes, 2006). Moreover, schools – and especially a secondary school – are located in the North-East of Mermoz. This implies that a lot of young people pass through the area toward the North. The squares close to the commercial area are rather passages than meeting places. They are directly on the way between housings and the supermarkets and do not offer a lot of opportunities to stop and stay, like benches for example (Department of urban planning, 2009). But most importantly, a lot of people pass through Mermoz toward the metro station located at the south east of the area – even people from other districts, such as the Californie district (Robins des Villes, 2006). As a result, the central park of Mermoz is an important transit place, as shown in the figure 27 (Robins des Villes:2006).

![Figure 27. Pedestrian flows (Robins des Villes, 2006)](image)


The metro station also influences a lot the uses of space in Mermoz Sud. Observations in the square Latarjet, adjacent to the metro station, showed that the square is mainly a passage. People cross it without stopping. Actually, because of its location, it is almost compulsory for people exiting the metro station to cross it to go to their place if they live in Mermoz Sud or to go to the commercial area. Moreover, the square is mainly an empty space and nothing invites people to stop. The square Latarjet is the transit hub of Mermoz Sud.

The square Mermoz also works as a passage in some cases. During observations, it seemed that people, after crossing the square Latarjet, continue toward the square Mermoz before splitting toward their houses in the South-East or South-west directions. It looks like an alternative to the use of the Narvik alley, which functions as a main axis of distribution in the West and East directions. It is, indeed, the only street that fully crosses over between East and West in Mermoz Sud. However, the ‘Mermoz’ square seems to be rarely crossed toward the South, even if an alley clearly invites people to do so. Several hypotheses can be drawn: either inhabitants rarely visit surroundings area in the South, or they prefer to us the parallel streets mixed with cars.

**Meetings**

As in the Husby case, spaces in Mermoz that are passages can also be in some cases meeting places. The central park in Mermoz Nord fulfills both of these functions. According to the Robins des Villes’ study (2006), the central park is an important meeting place for families with children and teenagers (cf. figure 28).

![Figure 28. Space uses (Robins des Villes, 2006)](image)

Indeed, the park was mainly made of playgrounds (Robins des Villes, 2006), which probably explains the main presence of parents in there, who come to play with their children. It is difficult to say only with the help of this document and interviews if the playgrounds were mainly occupied by women and children or also by men. But it appears that men have their own space for meeting in the northern part of the area, at the foot of the G building. The sport field, in light green in the map, was
an important meeting place for teenagers, especially during the afternoon. They played football there and sometimes met to talk. Sports field seem to be important for teenagers. Indeed, when they did not use the sport field in this park, they went to the ones in Laënnec (ibid.). The presence of young people in Mermoz is more occasional. According to the Robins des Villes’ study (2006), they usually leave the area at day and mainly use public spaces in Mermoz at night, gathering in hidden places such as the passage through the D building (cf map.) or in the playground in the west part of the central park. Even if the area is still under construction, main uses did not seem to have changed that much in the newly constructed central park⁴⁹. The playgrounds are still used by parents with children of different ages and young people take over the space in the evenings.

In Mermoz Sud, several places seem to be favorable for meetings. The square Mermoz, even if sometimes can act as a passage, is an important meeting place especially for women. The president of the association ‘Clarté’ calls it with a laugh “the women place”⁵⁰. According to him, women often meet here, sitting on benches on the squares, while keeping an eye on children playing in the playgrounds. Moreover, this place seems to be an important meeting for children themselves. Several time during observations, groups of children or young teenagers gathered in the square without their parents. They were discussing, biking, sitting etc. everywhere in the square and not especially in the playground. A new city sport field has been newly constructed and is almost systematically occupied by teenagers after school time during observations. Interviewed inhabitants emphasize how popular it is in the eyes of teenagers⁵¹. The ‘courtyards’, that are mainly composed of playgrounds, are used by almost the same populations as the square ‘Mermoz’. Some groups of women have been observed chatting at the foot of their building, while children were playing in the playgrounds. Groups of young men play football in the parking places and groups of children without surveillance play in the middle of the grass. ‘Courtyards’ are more or less used depending on their location. Indeed, the president of the association ‘Clarté’, and the two planners working on Mermoz Sud explained that people use almost exclusively the ‘courtyard’ attached to their habituation building, even if ‘they are open to everyone’⁵². Depending on which populations live in which building then, and on the relation between people in these buildings, the ‘courtyards’ will be more or less used. Yet, one element of the courtyards seems to be really important as meeting point in inhabitants’ everyday life: the gardens.

The president of the association ‘Clarté’ was one of the initiators of these gardens in Mermoz Sud. On the demand of inhabitants, the municipality gave some space to inhabitants so that they cultivate their own garden. The number of plots is limited and demands are higher than the supply. Recently, a collective and educational plot has been made and is an important meeting place for different genders and ages, to spend a nice time together. According to the president of the association ‘Clarté’, inhabitants really appreciate that. The idea was repeated in Mermoz Nord with the project “Prenez-racines” that consisted on growing trees with inhabitants in a small garden to plant them in their neighborhood when the re-construction is over. It was a success and people really got involved

⁴⁹ Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
in it, working in the conservation of some heritage in their neighborhood that is mostly torn down\textsuperscript{53}. If these gardens are quite used by a diversity of gender, women asked for the attribution of a garden just for them and gather there quite often according to the Mermoz Sud tenant committee’s president\textsuperscript{54}.

Observation in Mermoz Sud showed that women and men do not often mix. Indeed, as soon as a group was observed discussing or meeting, it was a homogeneous group in terms of gender. Men have their own place for meetings too. They meet every day – especially elderly – in the building called “la chaufferie”, an old boiler room, and usually play cards. Tuesday afternoon is the only moment in which the building is booked for women and the association “vivre ensemble”. It is almost the only accessible indoor public meeting place in the area, with locales for associations and social centers\textsuperscript{55}. The social centers and MJC play a great role in children and young teenagers’ gatherings and in offering activities for them. But men also meet outside, particularly around the Narvik alley and the square Latarjet. During observations, only groups stopping in the Narvik alley to sit in the benches were groups of children, who stayed for a short time, and groups of men. The south of the square Latarjet seems to be a meeting point for old men, who sit facing the street. The president of the association ‘Clarté’ seems to meet Friends there sometimes.

The square Latarjet has been previously described mainly as a passage. Still, as previously explained, some meetings occur. Firstly, this large empty area is favorable for big events and gatherings. Large events take place here several times a year: the “Neighbors day”, music and dance festivals such as the “accordanse festival” which brought people from the whole city\textsuperscript{56}. Gatherings do not lack in Mermoz. On Saturdays also, the square Latarjet, the Narvik Street and square Mermoz host a market that attract inhabitants\textsuperscript{57}. But in everyday life, the square Latarjet is mainly an important meeting place for groups of young men.

**The appropriation of space**

Observations and interviews showed that some places are appropriated by men and some others by women. But actually, if all the previously described meetings well and truly occur, they also showed that all these spaces are also places for meeting of groups of young men at different time of the day. The whole area is monopolized by these groups\textsuperscript{58}. If some seem to, obviously, leave the area during the day – several groups of young have been seen crossing the square Latarjet toward the metro station – most of them just hang out in the district\textsuperscript{59}. The square Latarjet seems to be a central meeting point and is always occupied by groups of young men during the observations. They sit here, listen to music, drink and eat something, and just talk to each other, always joined by new young men. The sport-field at the North of the square Latarjet is often occupied by groups of teenage boys who just sit here. The commercial street facing the square Latarjet is always scattered by two or

\textsuperscript{53} Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.

\textsuperscript{54} President of the Mermoz Sud tenant committee, interview 2015 – 04 – 17.

\textsuperscript{55} Mermoz inhabitant and president of the association ‘clarté’, interview 2015 – 04 – 15


\textsuperscript{57} Planners working on Mermoz Sud, interview 2015 – 04 – 14.

\textsuperscript{58} Mermoz inhabitant and president of the association ‘clarté’, interview 2015 – 04 – 15.

\textsuperscript{59} President of the Mermoz Sud tenant committee, interview 2015 – 04 – 17.
three groups of young men or teenage boys standing there, discussing, smoking and going back and forth. Groups of young men or teenage boys can also be found all around the area, taking over some ‘courtyards’ and outside ground floors of buildings or parking places. According to an interviewee, many of these groups are here to sell drugs.

**Unplanned uses and downward slides**

Obviously, the selling of drugs in public spaces is not a predetermined function of these spaces. Mermoz seems to be a hub for drugs in Lyon\(^{60}\) and drugs sales in the area are well known. The drug sales even occur next to the children playground, in spaces in the square Mermoz hidden from the main streets.

On a lighter note, the predetermined functions of public spaces are not always respected. Playgrounds for children for instance seemed to be quite often used by teenagers who were just sitting in the facilities or damaging it. On the contrary, children do not systematically play in the playgrounds, and even tend to use surroundings to play with concrete, grass or soil. Children really often play in between cars but it is difficult to determine if it is more often because they encroach upon car spaces or the reverse. Indeed, cars usually park everywhere even in spaces not made for that. The Narvik alley for example, in its supposed pedestrian part, is full of car parked which constitutes obstacles for the pedestrians and even great dangers when are driven.

![The Narvik alley (Papin, 2015)](image)

**Figure 29. The Narvik alley (Papin, 2015)**

---

**V.2.3. Opinion, perception and feeling about these spaces**

\(^{60}\) Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
Feelings and opinions are divided about public spaces in Mermoz and differ between the north and south.

In Mermoz Nord, the Robins des Villes (2006) draw a map of perceptions of public spaces.

![Map of perceptions (Robins des Villes, 2006)](image)

The general conclusion about this map is that the greenest spaces are the less appreciated by people in Mermoz Nord while spaces occupied by young people especially at night or by homeless have a strong negative connotation. These spaces are considered as dirty – with empty beer left and waste – and unsafe – people cannot see what is waiting for them for example when they cross the hidden passage under the D building (Robins des Villes, 2006). The square marc Sangnier is also perceived as a noisy place. The parking along the B building is named the “parking of burned cars” which reflects quite clearly the feeling people have about it (Department of urban planning, 2009). Actually, people in Mermoz Nord feel less satisfied in terms of maintenance of their area and in terms of safety than in the South (Department of Territorial Development, 2010). They even feel abandoned (Robins des Villes, 2006). Only one zone is seen in a positive way in Mermoz Nord, which reflect this feeling of “distress” that inhabitants have (ibid.).

In Mermoz Sud, only the square Latarjet seems to really not be appreciated\(^6\). The president of the association ‘Clarté’ describes it as an empty and useless place where people never stop. He deplores the minimalism and uncareful aesthetic of it. He does not like to sit in a circle and observe people crossing the square, as he would not like to be observed when crossing it. Moreover, the presence of many groups of young men makes him feel a bit uncomfortable.

Whether it is in Mermoz Nord or Mermoz Sud, the presence of groups of young men who monopolize the space gives a negative connotation to public spaces. People associate it with the

drug sales and sometimes feel unsafe because of that. However, not any major incident happened in Mermoz Sud and strong violence is rare. Youths are also not welcome as they are considered as noisy. Some meeting spaces such as a basketball field in between buildings have been moved because young people used to go there and inhabitants in adjacent buildings were annoyed with the noise. The map of perceptions (figure 30) reflects quite well this division between the youths and other persons: all spaces occupied by young people have a negative connotation (Robins des Villes, 2006). Because of that, people tend to not really stop in public spaces as the president of the association ‘Clarté’ pointed out but prefer meeting in dedicated structures such as respective association’ locales etc.

A solution to make people feel safer in public spaces was to suppress some trees and reduce the hidden places provided by copses. However, this has other consequences, such as the decrease of greenery in the area. Many people in Mermoz Nord regret that trees were cut and miss the shadow that was provided before (Robins des Villes, 2006). The absence of shadow places is also what is reproached to the square Latarjet by the president of the association ‘Clarté’. As soon as they can, adults leave the area toward greener ones, such as the Parilly Park (Robins des Villes, 2006). On contrary, public spaces are full of cars. Inhabitants deplore that and the fact that they mainly have to sit in the middle of cars when sitting in public spaces and also highlight the danger that cars can represent, especially for children. The limits concerning for whom and for what some spaces are made are sometimes unclear. This is also true concerning ownerships: some spaces are sometimes not used or avoided because inhabitants feel like they do not belong to them but to other inhabitants, living in the adjacent building for instance.

Based on interviews and of the Robins des Villes (2006) diagnosis, it also seems that maintenance is an important issue in the whole neighborhood of Mermoz. The general feeling about public spaces is that they are neglected. This feeling is increasing because of small incivilities such as degradations and broken materials (Department of Territorial Planning, 2010). Observation also showed that a lot of waste and garbage are thrown in the public spaces, people even threw some garbage by the window into the ‘courtyard’. As the place does not directly belong to inhabitants – at least in their mind – they care less about it.

Indeed, if inhabitants point out these small things, the Robins des Villes (2006) stated that public spaces are not the main inhabitant’s preoccupation and they apparently do not really care about it, especially in the old Mermoz Nord. Inhabitants were more preoccupied by their rehousing than the future of public spaces. Public spaces are rather seen as places where the conflict exposes than a collective belonging (ibid.). The feeling of collective belonging is weak in Mermoz Nord. However it is

---

65 Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
70 Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
Elodie Papin

stronger in Mermoz Sud (Robins des Villes, 2006). Inhabitants see it as a small village where
everybody knows each other and interact; they are united and are attached to their neighborhood. They get easily involved in the development of their neighborhood but know the limits and leave a room for professionals work and opinions. They take some initiatives themselves such as the blocking of some spaces for safety reasons. Mermoz is full of life according to the president of the association ‘Clarté’.

V.2.4. WHAT IS MISSING, WHAT IS NEXT

Needs and inhabitants expectations

Some concrete demands are, or were, expressed by inhabitants. In Mermoz Nord, the project manager who was interviewed stated that young people asked for a hip-hop zone for dancing. In Mermoz Sud, a consultation took place on the 24 of March 2015 to discuss about needs and opinions of inhabitants concerning their neighborhood: the ‘World Café Mermoz’. Inhabitants ask for changes in the square Latarjet, such as the adding of movable chairs, a fountain etc. to fill in the space. The Mermoz Sud tenant committee’s president also thinks that addition of playgrounds would be good, but different ones than the ones already present in the area to adapt to more people, with a climbing wall for instance, but still useful ones – she judges that the sport facilities for adults in one of the courtyards are useless and ridiculous. Moreover, she asks for the securing of existing playgrounds which are sometime dangerous for children nowadays.

But some more general demands were expressed. In Mermoz Sud, one request from inhabitants, based on the telling of the Mermoz Sud tenant committee’s president who is gathering demands from them, would be the diminution of the presence of cars in public spaces especially in some spots such as around the square Latarjet, but the increase of parking opportunities for themselves. Actually, she explains that most of the cars present in the area are not inhabitants’ ones but are from people who work on the small commercial area or from people who leave their car here and go to the city center by metro. This is confirmed by the two planners working on Mermoz Sud: Mermoz acts as a ‘park-and-ride’ as it is located at the direct entrance of Lyon from the East. This matter came up again in the World Mermoz Café. In this café, people also ask for more safety in public spaces, with the diminution of the speed of cars through speed bumps for example, and the ‘removal’ of drugs dealer in the area or the presence of more security forces, such as police in the public spaces, combined with more lighting to feel safer at night. More cleaning and caring about the maintenance of public spaces is required, with facades renovation to change visual aspects. Change of visual aspect also includes the presence of more greenery, which is asked by the Mermoz Sud tenant committee’s president.

---

71 This distinctive feature has been mentioned in all the interviews and by the Ville de Lyon (2007a).
72 Mermoz inhabitant and president of the association ‘clarté’, interview 2015 – 04 – 15
73 Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
75 President of the Mermoz Sud tenant committee, interview 2015 – 04 – 17.
76 President of the Mermoz Sud tenant committee, interview 2015 – 04 – 17.
Most importantly, public spaces for gathering of all the communities and all kind of people are missing in Mermoz. The Mermoz Sud tenant committee’s president and the World Café Mermoz rise this topic and the will of people to have a room such as ‘la chaufferie’ but accessible for everyone, especially to enable exchange of the young people with others. The Robins des Villes (2006) say in their diagnosis – translated from French:

“The most recurrent lack is the lack of ‘convivial’ places that could enable exchanges between adults, young people, and even all the generations. Creating meeting spaces would oppose the image of “dead neighborhood”, mainly due to the low attendance of outdoor spaces and to link future residents and those already in the neighborhood”.

Whatever it is, something has to be done for young people according to the Mermoz Sud tenant committee’s president and inhabitants in the World Café Mermoz, like the creation of associations’ locale that fit them to help them for jobs, teach them or canalize them. But what is also implied with this will of meeting places for everyone is a wish for more diversity77. More generally, inhabitants interviewed or in the café asked for more diversity in the area and in public spaces. They are kind of fed up with living with their unique community and would like “to see something else” like the president of the association ‘Clarté’ 78. Indeed, he points out that people not from the North African community almost never stop in public spaces in the area. According to the two planners working on Mermoz Sud, Mermoz need to make all people stop and not only be a place for passage79.

**Future plans**

Mermoz Nord is currently changing and is part of a large renewal project. The project manager explained the main lines of the project80, which is also detailed by the Department of Urban planning (2009) in its report. The whole streets network is going to be changed, to connect more easily with the Mermoz Avenue and with Mermoz Sud. Streets perpendicular to the Mermoz Avenue are created. The buildings are built perpendicular to the avenue to not erect walls in between the avenue and the rest of the area, and they align along the newly created streets. A long pedestrian and green alley, crossing over the area from East To West is created, which also enable to connect Mermoz to its East and West surroundings and connect the two surrounding commercial areas with the supermarket in one part and the ‘Galeries Lafayette’ on the other part. The central park is kept but is modified a bit, and more importantly, is reduced in size. Greenery is added thanks to vegetal pierces. Courtyards in between buildings are visible from the streets but are ‘private’ – or only accessible to inhabitants which question its public character. Public spaces delimitations are made clearer so that one’s know what is a street, a park, or a private courtyard. Actually, the surface of public spaces in Mermoz Nord is reduced – even if public spaces are still well represented in quantity. This is intentional. An aim of this project is to make people move toward their surroundings

77 President of the Mermoz Sud tenant committee, interview 2015 – 04 – 17 and World Café Mermoz, inhabitants consultation with the Grand Lyon, 2015 – 03 – 24.
80 Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
according to the interviewed project manager. This is why it is important according to her to not make duplications of functional areas. For instance, the sport field at the center of Mermoz Nord is going to be removed whilst it is the only place perceived positively by inhabitants, which can be strange then. But there is already a large sports zone in Laënnec and several small ones in Mermoz sud, just few minutes’ walk from Mermoz. Building another one in Mermoz, so close, is non-sense according to her. The same explanation has been provided to explain why the Hip-hop dance zone has been refused by the municipality, even if the inhabitants’ fear about the noise had a great role in this decision. However, for the Robins des Villes (2006), it would be necessary to create substitution places in Mermoz itself, to not completely remove the few things that made it appreciated by inhabitants. The project also aim at getting inhabitants involved and create spaces for them, this is why the project ‘Prenez racines’ is so important and why the former pétanque strip is still not planned: professionals are still thinking about how to make it fit inhabitants in a proper way and keep some inheritance. Public spaces will play a great role in the integration of inhabitants in their new neighborhood (Ville de Lyon, 2007a).

A project in Mermoz sud is currently discussed and first plans and main orientations are drawn. Still, this is in an early stage. For now, main objectives are to open the area in the direction of Mermoz Nord, in extension to the connection already created in the Mermoz Nord’s project. This could be done by the creation of new streets also perpendicular to the Mermoz Avenue and by the destruction of buildings along this avenue, to work on the “urban staple”. The square Latarjet would probably be completely changed: a building could be constructed in it. Instead, a large alley would be created in the Northern part of the square toward the commercial area and in the East toward the Mermoz square. The Mermoz square would be open in the Narvik alley to create continuity between the new Latarjet alley and the square. Vegetal reinforcement is an important issue. Ownership are making clearer and the space in between buildings – the ‘courtyards’ – would probably be closed and only accessible for respective inhabitants. Indeed, this space is private and belongs to the housing company that owns the buildings. The parking areas would be reduced, especially in the Narvik alley. Functions of each public space are not well determined yet, but one of the planners working on

---

81 Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.
Mermoz Sud questions the necessity of assigning functions to all the new spaces. The appearances of the neighborhood along the main communication axis will be polished to influence the image external people have about the neighborhood according to her.
VI. ANALYSIS AND COMPARATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Post-war housing areas’ public spaces were previously described using generalities, based on the hypothesis that they look like each other within a specific country; either in terms of urban morphology or of more abstract characteristics. This might be different from one country to another. In between two countries – studied through two case studies – great differences and similitude appear simultaneously.

Husby and Mermoz are firstly quite different in terms of public spaces’ organization and forms. The most visible difference probably concerns the traffic differentiation which gives a different character to the two areas. While one of the main critics against post-war housing areas was the disappearance of the traditional streets system according to Jean-Michel Deleuil (2013b), surprisingly the traffic differentiation is really appreciated in Husby. Hence, the return to a city street system with traffic mix could be questionable. However, the need for a more traditional street pattern seems to be a key concern for all professionals who were interviewed. Indeed, future projects in both areas focus on the reestablishment of a more traditional streets pattern, with the opening of buildings directly in the streets in Husby and the urban fabric in Mermoz, with creation of streets geometrically organized. The two areas are also quite different in terms of general organization: if Husby’s organization of public spaces is quite atypical, Mermoz Nord’s public spaces organization is quite typical of the “Grands ensembles” described in the section II.2 Post-war housing crisis and large housing estates. In Husby, buildings seem to adapt to the public spaces. Hierarchic organization of public spaces is directly visible and makes the place easily readable for inhabitants and visitors: they know where they are and where to go for what and the pedestrian network is made to interlink zones. On the contrary, Mermoz Nord’s public spaces seem to adapt to the building organization, with big lines of constructions and large spaces in between, where functions were approximately assigned not following any hierarchy and streets just supply parking lots at the foot of housings. Indeed, it was said earlier that public spaces in post-war housing areas are generally functionally zoned – with commercial activities in the center for instance and residences surrounding it – but that the public spaces themselves inside the ‘zones’ might be not clearly defined in terms of functions (cf. section II.2.1. Outdoor atmosphere and public spaces in post-war housing areas). It is the case in Mermoz Nord: some spaces at the foot of buildings are kind of made as ‘left-over’ public spaces but are not easily identifiable as a square, or a park, parking etc.: the Department of Urban Planning (2009:13) calls them the “residual spaces”. Still what is striking in the two case studies is that the

---

83 Project leader at Svenska Bostäder, interview 2015 – 03 – 24; and former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24
majority of public spaces in the areas are dedicated to children leisure with playgrounds, and people without children tend to not use public spaces (Robins des Villes, 2006).

Indeed, these neighborhoods were mainly built for families (Turkington, van Kempen and Wassenberg, 2004:104 – 105 and the former member of the original Norra Järva project management team in an interview\textsuperscript{85}). But the need of all these playgrounds can be questionable. Indeed, observations in both areas showed that children played almost equally in playgrounds as in unplanned zones, confirming the theory of Shaftoe (2008: 37 – 39). This large amount of space used for children’s playground could maybe be reduced, in favor of other types of facilities. Indeed, Mermoz and Husby seem to both lack of ‘free’ meeting places for discussion and associations or other types of activities. Yet, one of the main functions of public spaces is to gather to discuss and to express opinions with a community (cf. section II.1.2. Functions and uses of public spaces). According to Light and Smith (1998:2), “the purpose of a healthy public square, or sphere, is to foster a form of democracy in which issues emerge from, and are clarified by, [a] sort of public debate”. Hence, places where people can meet as equals and where conversation are encouraged are needed for the formation of civil society (ibid.:3). But one should notice that Light and Smith (1998:3) talk about meeting “as equals”, which seems to be a great issue in both case studies, especially in terms of gender accessibility to public spaces. Indeed, in both areas, if people seem to meet others and spend time in public spaces, men and women seem to occupy their own space without mixing. Playgrounds are actually almost exclusively occupied by women with children while men gather in other spaces. It would be important to provide spaces that allow the meeting and confrontation of different genders, but also of different ages: in one word, to create public spaces with more diversity – inhabitants even ask for that. The organization of large events in which everybody is gathering is a great success in both areas: they are attended and appreciated by inhabitants. According to Lina Olsson (2008:64), organized events are great opportunities for confrontation between people and to show examples to children. Indeed, as explained in the section II.1.2. Functions and uses of public spaces, public spaces are of main importance in the formation of society and people – especially for children, acting as stages for social and personal development. People have to be confronted to others, in their diversity. But as Hajer and Reijndorp (2001) suggest, the aim is not to force the different types of groups to mix, but rather to make them closer so that they still have their own space while being more and more confronted to others – and perhaps diminished the pressure that some women feel when they are confronted to men in public spaces\textsuperscript{86}. Still, this constitutes a great challenge in these areas, in which separation between sexes is not only a matter of planning and assigned functions but is rather a cultural thing\textsuperscript{87}. The creation of gardens in Mermoz Sud seems to head in this direction with a diversity of people using their small garden lot close to each other and using the pedagogic garden made for gathering people around this gardening topic\textsuperscript{88}. Numbers of playgrounds could be reduced in favor of this kind of activities. But most importantly, something more must be provided for teenagers and young people.

\textsuperscript{85} Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24
\textsuperscript{86} This unease was mentioned by two respondents in the questionnaire sent to Husby inhabitants.
\textsuperscript{88} Mermoz inhabitant and president of the association ‘clarté’, interview 2015 – 04 – 15.
If the development of sports fields seems to be one of the current trends in order to satisfy teenagers – there are definitely liked by teenagers in both areas and it is a good thing to provide more according to the PhD architect and the member of the original Norra Järva project management team who were interviewed\(^89\), there is still a serious lack of spaces addressed to young people. Indeed, their presence is seen as problematic \(\text{(Shaftoe, 2008: 39 – 40)}\) and they are victims of kind of NIMBY phenomenon – in Mermoz, for example, while inhabitants agree on the fact that something must be provided for young people, the basket-ball field located in between two buildings that became a meeting place for teenagers and young people has been moved because it was too noisy in inhabitants point of view\(^90\). Yet, according to Shaftoe \(\text{(2008: 40 – 41)}\), young people will always meet in a way or another and in what adults generally consider as “inappropriate places” if no “appropriate place” is provided. It is the case in Husby and Mermoz where lots of groups of young men, who are moreover strongly hit by unemployment\(^91\), finally just hang around the area, and even tend to take control of public spaces. The public spaces’ monopole from the young people is especially felt in Mermoz. Groups of young men can be found in almost every public space and they are often the only kind of groups occupying the site, such as in the square Latarjet. Their ‘overpresence’ is systematically pointed out in all interviews made about Mermoz, for several reasons, and inhabitants tend to feel not welcomed\(^92\). Indeed, as the Robins des Villes \(\text{(2006:15)}\) point out, groups of young men are associated to a strong negative image, often attached to incivilities and delinquency. Certainly, Mermoz and Husby public spaces are used for drugs deals which probably strengthen the negative image people generally have about these areas. However, it seems like other kinds of delinquency, especially violence, are quite rare like in the Mermoz case\(^93\). Remarkable episodes of riots and violence broke out in public spaces – in 2013 with riots in Husby and in Mermoz with the shootout that cost life to a twelve years old child (Schittly, R., 2009) – but these occasional misbehaviors cannot be representative of these neighborhoods. Inhabitants even feel quite safe in public spaces (cf. paragraphs \text{Opinion, perception and feeling about these spaces} in the case studies section V). Still, as Liebig \(\text{(2010)}\) and Dikeç \(\text{(2007)}\) point out, Medias and politicians have a great responsibility in spreading this representation of post-war housing areas (cf. section \text{II.2.3 Connotation}). ‘Banlieues’ are almost exclusively cited in media to talk about violence or riots in public spaces but rarely for other aspects – at least in France \(\text{(Béguin, 2010 and Célérier, 2009)}\). This takes part of the creation of the current negative image associated with these areas. The opening of the areas to its surrounding and to the rest of the city can make people see it by themselves and not only through media.

Public spaces can help in doing that. The changes concerning the streets organization take a great part in the connection of the areas to their surroundings to limit the spatial segregation described in the section \text{II.2.3. Spatially and socially segregated areas}. Indeed, both Husby and Mermoz are isolated from their surroundings, and public spaces like the streets can help to integrate the areas in the city landscape and facilitating the access from the surroundings. Compiled to it, organization of

\(^{89}\) Architect and PhD student, interview 2015 – 03 – 23 and former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.


\(^{91}\) Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.


large events and activities in the public spaces help to attract people in the area, such as the big football tournament in Rinkeby (Olsson, 2008) or the ‘accordanse’ festival in Husby. As Lina Olsson (2008) explains, public spaces are essential as supports for this kind of actions. Yet, attracting people from the outside can also be in a permanent way. In light of the objective of future projects for Husby and Mermoz, one of the main current professional concerns is to bring diversity in the area, which can change the perception people have of these areas as ‘homogeneous places for immigrants’. Moreover, Mermoz inhabitants seem to wish to be confronted to other people and other ethnicities – “occidental” people tend to not stop in public spaces. In Husby, almost one quarter of the questionnaire respondents declare that they like to be confronted to the diversity of people in terms of ethnicity. Indeed, Hajer and Reijndorp (2001) explain how people like to experience the otherness in public spaces without being directly involved in the homogeneous group itself, to challenge them but also learn from them, picking new ideas etc., this is why it is important to work on public spaces not in terms of pure diversity but in terms of putting closer different homogeneous groups. Still, for these different groups to exist, it is necessary to have a diversity of population in the area at first. To bring this diversity, the two artists met in Husby Konsthall explain that professionals tend to change the appearance of the neighborhoods and visuals from public spaces to make it looking alike a more traditional city center and attract more diverse kind of inhabitants. However, as they point out, this can lead to the exclusion of current inhabitants and just move all the current issues to other places.

But appearance and visual from public spaces should not be considered only to make new people come, the appearance of the districts and urban atmosphere are really important in any case, and especially in neighborhoods such as Mermoz and Husby. Indeed, as previously stated, unemployment rates are quite high in these neighborhoods. Hence, people tend to have more time to spend in public spaces in these areas and do not particularly leave the area for long time maybe for financial reasons. In summer, when many Lyon’s inhabitants travel and go on holiday, Mermoz is still almost full of inhabitants according to the Mermoz Nord’s project manager. Hence, it is important according to her to provide pleasant public spaces so that inhabitants can at least get away in public spaces and not get stuck in their “flats moroseness”. Shaftoe (2008) in his book emphasizes the importance of the psychological aspects of public spaces in terms of feelings and senses, through their aesthetic and quality among others. Humans affect and are affected by public spaces and their atmosphere. As the Mermoz Nord’s project manager also emphasized, public spaces’ aesthetic and quality have a great impact in the social life of the neighborhood, in inhabitants’ well-being and their behavior, which is confirmed by Brereton and his colleagues at University college Dublin (Brereton et al., 2006:2 cited in Shaftoe 2008: 12): “environmental and urban conditions are critical to people sense of well-being”. The Mermoz Nord’s project manager also reminds that humans are all sensitive to the beauty of spaces, even if it is a subjective notion and all have a right to access it:

94 The president of the Mermoz Sud tenant committee, interview 2015 – 04 – 17.
95 Based on all the professionals’ interviews.
99 Former member of the Husby planning team, interview 2015 – 03 – 24.
100 Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13.

“[…] it is the sensory through which we build feeling and emotion and through which our personal psychological landscapes are built. These in turn determine how well or badly a place works […] and how it feels to its inhabitants and visitors”.

Different parameters can influence urban atmosphere and aesthetic – public spaces are not dissociable from the surrounding built environment as one of its principal characteristics is to link it together (Verfaillie, 2015): the building height, the colors and greenery are obviously some of them. Façades aspects – with lots of colors – seem to be appreciated in Husby. According to Shaftoe (2008: 112), “color brings joy” especially in northern countries where “grey skies and low light predominate”. But most of it, Husby is appreciated for its greenery, while on the contrary Mermoz – and especially Mermoz Sud – seriously lacks of it. Yet, as Shaftoe (2008:12) emphasizes, greenery in public spaces is really important for human’s well-being and “psychological balance”. Mermoz public spaces instead are monopolized by cars especially for parking. The traffic differentiation in Husby and clear parking lots enables to avoid this and to bring greenery instead.

Shaftoe (2008: 12) also emphasizes how management is important: ‘good’ urban atmosphere is ensured by ‘good’ maintenance, “a place that is obviously cared for will be much more popular than one that looks neglected” (ibid.: 140). Yet, “people attract people” (ibid.:20) and public spaces, to fulfill their social function, have to be used by people (cf. section II.1. Public spaces). Yet, either in Husby and Mermoz, the reproach has been made concerning public spaces that are not well-maintained. One reason comes to the users themselves of course, responsible for small degradations or not taking care about their environment – like the Mermoz women seen while throwing away rubbish through the window. This is an educational problem according to the Mermoz Nord’s project manager\footnote{Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13}. The notion of ‘common good’ has to be re-learned. But the complexity of ownership organization in between public spaces makes it even worst. Indeed, post-war housing areas’ land ownership is often complex, with different parts of a same public space owned by different actors (Bonnet, 201?: 31 – 32). Hence, it is not always easy to know who has to take care of which space and this can lead to the neglecting of the space by all parties. To overcome that, it would be necessary to define the ownership and linked responsibilities more clearly. In Mermoz, it has been decided to close ‘private public spaces’, and to proceed to ‘residentilisation’ of public spaces. Indeed, the ‘courtyards’ belong to private housing companies that own the adjacent buildings. Still, until now, if these spaces were administratively ‘private’, they had a public role in everyday life (cf. section II.1.1. The concept/Different Definitions: Understanding public spaces). Closing these courtyards and making them accessible only to residents will limit the public accessibility of these spaces to an access only for inhabitants, and limit the public spaces’ experiences offered. Still, transition spaces between private housing buildings and public spaces are needed in post-war housing areas at least for hierarchy matters (Bonnet, 201?) and flexibility for users, who transit more softly between private and public then\footnote{Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13}. According to Shaftoe (2008: 12), “well designed and well managed public spaces could contribute to overall happiness”. In light of all the former, planners and designers have
a great responsibility in the overall well-being and in the formation of social interactions through public spaces.

Indeed, as Hajer and Reijndorp (2001:73) stated:

"By arranging or rearranging the physical form of the space, or by intervening in the ‘program’ of public spaces, we create new opportunities for particular activities or groups and we possibly reduce the chances for other uses or other groups”.

Shaftoe (2008: 47 – 74) in addition indicates that several factors influence the use of public spaces. Some can be directly controlled by planning and design: pattern coherency, legibility and readability of the spaces, aesthetics comfort and reassurance, integration of nature, size and shape, for instance. The comfort notion includes the provision of places to sit which is according to Shaftoe (2008: 92) “the single most important provision to ensure a successful public space”, which usually push people to stop in the areas: “people tend to sit most where there are places to sit” (William Whyte’s, 1988:110, cited in Shaftoe, 2008:92). This was directly seen in Husby and Mermoz in the central squares, in which people tend to not stop in public spaces when few opportunities to sit were offered. According to the Robins des Villes (2006), the lack of places to sit in some spaces in Mermoz Nord, or lack of shadow places in summers, led to desertion of these spaces. Hence, planners and designers can more or less directly dictate behaviors and functions in/of public spaces. The orientation of benches for example will influence people to look at one specific direction and to be more or less active (cf. section II.1.4. Overcoming the limits: toward a “good” public space?). The providing of playgrounds supposes that the space should be used by children. However, if one reproach made to public spaces in post-war housing areas was their lack of predetermined functions when they were created and their evasive characteristic – especially in France, nowadays critics rise against the new tendency of planners to absolutely want to constraint public spaces in post-war areas to specific uses forever defined (Béguin, 200?:56, cited in Bonnet, 201?:39). Indeed, public spaces vagueness in post-war housing areas was an advantage according to the French geographer and philosophe Francois Béguin (ibid.) for the freedom of uses they enable and the liberty of letting people express and build their own public spaces’ identity (cf. section II.2.1. Outdoor, atmosphere and public spaces in post-war housing areas). It is essential to leave the possibility of public spaces’ appropriation by people (Verfaillie, 2015). Involvement of people in the creation of their public spaces nowadays can enable to keep this aspect and to create adapted spaces in which people feel engaged, modeled on Shaftoe (2008: 41) proposal concerning the involvement of young people in the creation of public spaces so that they are more likely to “safeguard their investment”. Inhabitants can be involved through several ways, thanks to activities in public spaces for example – the interviewed inhabitants involved in Husby Konsthall suggests the involvement through art in public spaces104, and in Mermoz the “Prenez racines” initiative is a great success – or by engagement and discussion. In Husby in particular, inhabitants are definitely engaged in the development of their neighborhood and influence the changes in their public spaces by opposing or expressing their needs on the new projects. Inhabitants are really attached to their neighborhood and the sense of belonging is strong. This is why the changes of the areas and public spaces by complete destruction

and reformation is questionable. Inhabitants created their own neighborhood’s identity, partly through public spaces and how they appropriated them themselves (Bonnet, 201?).

According to one of the artists who were met, judgement of people has always been more or less attached to the appearance of an area, and throughout history renewal of places had frequently been done through a change of image\textsuperscript{105}. Still, changes of image of the area by tearing down and reconstructing everything in post-war housing areas is questionable in light of the inheritance questions, even if aesthetic, design and visuals from public spaces influence the global image people have of the area.

\textsuperscript{105} Artist, interview 2015 – 02 – 19.
VII. CONCLUSION OF THE REPORT

Post-war housing areas still suffer from really bad reputation whether it is in Sweden or in France. People who are not living in these areas usually perceive them as unattractive, violent, uniform places for immigrants with empty public spaces as places for delinquency. Yet, the reality can be different.

Indeed, this work was aiming at understanding the functioning of public spaces in post-war housing areas by answering “what are the characteristics of public spaces in two different countries’ post-war housing areas?” and “what is their role in the definition of the place’s image and in social relations?”. The investigation to answer these questions showed that public spaces are not that much places for violence, unsafety, and are not only dead places: inhabitants meet in these spaces and social interaction exists. Certainly, urban form and public spaces organization is still quite specific and characteristic of post-war housing areas, especially concerning the streets pattern that is nothing like a traditional one and the lack of hierarchy in the organization of public spaces that can make the place not easily readable. But some attempts have been made to change the emptiness character assigned to post-war housing areas’ public spaces, with provision of playgrounds for example in many spaces which gives the areas a deep family orientation. Yet, in the meantime, the number of organized meeting places for discussion; association etc. is critically low or even decreases. Hence, some groups of people, especially groups of young men, are not offered anything from the public spaces and finally just hang out, taking the monopole of spaces, giving others a feeling of exclusion and leading some people to avoid the place. This phenomenon is accentuated by the drug deal phenomenon largely present in these areas and for which groups of men seem to gather. Actually public spaces in these areas are strongly segregated and marked by a division between homogeneous groups, mainly gender dependent. This takes off one of the most important function of public spaces in social relations: public spaces as a place for confrontation between different people, to learn from the diversity, acquire a collective or individual identity and confront opinions. In post-war housing areas, public spaces could contribute to recreate social relations in between different homogeneous groups, through organization of activities for example or creation of more places to gather for the whole community – meeting places for democratic discussion, gardens, etc. Making public spaces pleasant in the eyes of people – with lots of greenery for example like in Husby – is also a good way to attract people in public spaces and make them confronting each other. Indeed, as a reminder, according to Shaftoe (2008:11): a place empty of people cannot completely be considered as a ´public space´. Still, for professionals, the decrease of numbers of public spaces is a way to open the area to the surroundings, by pushing people to exit their neighborhood to use other public spaces with the function they are looking for. Indeed, the areas function as small villages with strong community that barely leaves. This put a greater demand on public spaces within the area that should fulfill as much as possible all the needs of inhabitants and that are supposed to be used a lot – which is reinforced because of the high unemployment rate. Hence, either public spaces are able to fulfill these needs or people have to be encouraged to go to use other area’s public spaces.
Changing the perception people have about these areas also implies indirectly to change their physical aspects. Aesthetic in public spaces is really important, for the quality of life of its inhabitants and for the imagery people have about the neighborhood. Indeed, they are the direct places accessible from visitors and their aesthetic, maintenance state etc. are the most directly visible aspects that visitors access. In France, one way of dealing with this was to tear down the areas and rebuild them in a new way to make something more similar to traditional city centers but this is probably not a solution. This raises the question of inheritance, and is just a camouflage of larger problems.

Indeed, public spaces in post-war housing areas are important to help people to appropriate their area – especially if the area is completely rebuilt, to make activities that bring life and increase social relations, make people go out and confront to diversity, and to make a first visual impression. Indeed, public spaces are important for the previous reasons in any kind of neighborhood but these aspects previously identified are particularly critical in post-war housing areas. Furthermore, according Lina Olsson (2008:67) who refers partly to Henri Lefebvre:

“Space is an important but frequently overlooked factor which not only influences but also structures the development of society. The reproduction of society’s social relations and power relations takes place in social space, but also made possible with that space as a “tool” and medium”.

Hence, planners and architects have a great role as manipulators of this “tool”. But changing the image of an area implies to work on several other factors than just public spaces and tearing down: unemployment, taking advantage of the surroundings, education etc. Everything has to be combined and probably influence each other in a virtuous – or vicious – circle. Moreover, perceptions about these areas are quite fashion dependent, based on current standards. Hence, changing it takes time. Still, higher attention should probably be paid to public spaces and their influence: too many times in interviews, public spaces seemed to be of secondary priority, employment rates, dwellings quality and prices surpassing it while it should all go together.

First recommendations can be made from what has been learned from this work. One of the most urgent challenges is probably to take care of the young people in public spaces. These spaces should be used to provide them something more than just places to hang around or sell drugs. This category of inhabitants has probably lot of free time due to high unemployment rates and something should be provided for them in this free time. Moreover, it can be used to help them for their future, with public places of gathering for education, job search, making contacts etc. This definitely seems to lack in the studied postwar housing areas, in the same way as alternatives for gathering of all the community and for democratic discussion, which should be provided. Indeed, public spaces in postwar housing areas should encourage more different groups to confront, by putting them closer as Hajer and Reijndorp (2001) suggest, making spaces more flexible in terms of uses – by reducing the over-presence of playgrounds among others and making public spaces more easily usable by different groups at different times of the day as suggested in the section “II.1.4 Overcoming the limits: toward a “good” public space?” – and bringing more diversity. Bringing people from outside is part of that but one challenge is to not change too much the identity of the area in doing so or to not force people to confront brutally to others, which could have a reverse effect and lead people to
avoid public spaces to avoid confrontation according to the Mermoz Nord’s project manager\textsuperscript{106}. As previously stated, public spaces can be at the center of the strategies to open the area to the surroundings, which is essential to change the perception people have about these areas, by making people come or making inhabitants leave. However, reducing the number of usable public spaces is questionable. Indeed, there is no guarantee that by doing so inhabitants will leave the area to use public spaces in the surroundings. On the contrary, they might stay and the lack of public spaces will become even more unbearable, leading people to hang out even more. Finally, the appearance and atmosphere in post war housing areas can be changed by public spaces. As stated in the section “II.1.4 Overcoming the limits: toward a “good” public space?”, the fact that people will use or not the public spaces depends a lot on how people feel in the public spaces. Urban atmosphere influences a lot these feelings. In area such as Mermoz, more delight can be provided through the appearance and atmosphere, in an area that is now quite dull, not particularly well managed and car orientated. France could inspire from Sweden for instance and make their post-war housing areas more pleasant to live in the eyes of the people, with addition of greenery and promenades, or by hierarchizing its public spaces to make the area more readable and make people less confused. But mostly, destruction plans, that are quite frequent in France, with the remaking of completely new public spaces in order to change the image of the area should be questioned. Indeed, important points of the Francis Tibbalds’ “ten commandments” are not considered in this kind of projects: “consider places before building”, “respect context of buildings and sites”, and most importantly “avoid change on too great a scale at any one time”. Tearing down an area implies to forget about the people who live in there and about their attachment to current public spaces, to which they usually gave an identity by themselves. Still, almost none of these “ten commandments” were fulfilled in the original construction of post-war housing areas and their public spaces, which imply that the very basis should be called into question and might be difficult to change without radical changes. Follow Tibbalds’ advices hence, planners and designers should work on public spaces in post-war housing areas from what they already have, trying to keep the main identity of these spaces and design while thinking about the future. They should consider human needs – by consulting directly the users for instance, human dimensions, and provide “intricacy, joy and visual delight” for example through the adding of natural elements as previously explained – as Shaftoe (2008) emphasize, water, greenery etc. seem to be really appreciated in public spaces. It remains to be seen if these “ten commandments” should be considered as ‘absolute truth’: they are highly dependent on current standards and might also be questioned in the future.

\textsuperscript{106} Urban development project manager for the Northern part of Mermoz, interview 2015 – 03 – 13
REFERENCES

Agence Nationale pour la Rénovation Urbaine (ANRU), 2006. Conven**


Bonnet, M., 201?. Les espaces libres des ’Grands ensembles’: handicap ou potentiel ? (Free spaces in ‘Grands ensembles’: disadvantage or potential ?) Master Thesis. École d'architecture de la ville et des territoires à Marne-la-Vallée.


Céléri**


Elodie Papin


APPENDIX

Main questions for professionals

These questions may vary depending and who is interviewed and for which case study, and were not asked directly in that way, but the following gather the general ideas about what should be asked:

Current situation/information about the area

What is your opinion about public spaces in the area (mainly outdoor ones), what do you think in terms of quality, design, situation, attractiveness, aesthetic, activities, etc. for example? What is good, what is not?

Which spaces are more “important/dominant/central” in the area, in summer and/or in winter? (Important in the eyes of people but also important for the neighborhood’s life)

Do people actually meet in Husby? Which common areas are the most used by people/where do they meet mostly?

Are there areas suitable for a specific kind of people? Which one to which kind (Inhabitants, visitors, elderly, children, different origins…)? Is there kind of a spatial segregation; are some groups of people excluded?

Do you know if there are “communal” activities taking place in common areas in Husby? (sport tournament for example, artistic activities, planed gatherings etc.). Are there specific summer activities? How activities, uses and life in public spaces differ in summer and in winter?

What about safety? Which space could be considered as safe and which space could be considered as safe?

Planning

Do you think it is important for people to meet in their neighborhood?
Do you plan consequently?

What do you take into account in the planning of public spaces? Do you plan for inhabitants, or other people: potential future inhabitants, visitors etc.? For whom are the public spaces created? Whose needs are taken into account? What do you aim at generally (making people to meet or to just pass through for example …)? Is there a general “rule” for the planning of public spaces?

Do you know if there is a difference between uses originally planned and current ones in reality?
I have the feeling that inhabitants are strongly involved in their neighborhood’s life, is it true? Do you, planners, interact with inhabitants? Do you have to face a strong opposition in your projects? If yes, what are the consequences of that?

**Future**

Are there enough public spaces/common areas in the concerned neighborhood? Is it a problem if there are not enough?

What are the needs in term of public spaces? More, less, better looking, new activities for example? What needs to be changed?

What are the plans for the future? Are public spaces parts of a planning strategy?

**Generalities**

In more general terms, are public spaces important and strategic to use in planning? How important are public spaces in social relations or in everyday life in an area such as the concerned neighborhood? What is their “role” according to you?

Do you think they can help to contribute to a good atmosphere or to reduce social problems like segregation, intolerance, violence if there are some...? How?

Is the image/identity of a neighborhood important and can public spaces influence it?

How can design and planning of these spaces contribute themselves to a good environment or good social relations?

What makes a good public space according to a planner?

**Meeting with the architect and PhD student**

**About meeting places, people meetings and social interactions:**

Among all the common areas remaining in Husby, are there some more “important” in your opinion? Which ones? (Important in the eyes of people but also important for the neighborhood life)

Are the remaining common areas truly used actually? Do people actually meet in Husby? Which common areas are the most used by people/where do they meet? (Maybe they are also the more “important” places)

Do you think it is important for people to meet in their neighborhood?

Do you know if there are “communal” activities taking places in common areas in Husby? (sport tournament for example, artistic activities, planed gatherings etc.)

Is it really different in winter and in summer?
Public spaces generalities

Do you consider Husby as lively? Is there a good atmosphere?

What is your opinion about Husby’s public spaces (mainly outdoor ones)? What do you think in terms of quality, design, situation, attractiveness, aesthetic, etc. for example?

How important are public spaces in social relations or in everyday life in an area such as Husby? What is their “role” according to you? Can they contribute to good atmosphere, environment, and good social interactions/to reduce social tensions if there are some? How?

How can design and planning of these spaces contribute themselves to a good environment or good social relations?

The future

In your point of view, is it important to have a great number of common areas?

Are there enough common areas remaining in Husby? Is it possible to act against the decreasing of community places? How?

What would you change in Husby concerning public spaces/common areas? How to make them more attractive?

Main questions for inhabitants (including questionnaire with questions translated in Swedish)

Do you spend time in outdoor public spaces in Husby such as parks, squares/streets etc.?
  - if yes: mostly where and why? What are you doing in these spaces (in general terms, such as meeting people, going with children, etc.)? Is it often or occasionally?
  - if no: can you briefly explain why?

Are there places where you prefer to go to? Where and why? Are there places that you definitely prefer to avoid? Where and why?

How would you describe outdoor public spaces in Husby? Do you like them? Do you feel good in there? For example, is it comfortable, attractive, Enjoyable, pleasant, welcoming or in the contrary, impractical, uncomfortable, repulsive etc.?

Are there places where you feel more particularly safe? Where and why? Are there places where you feel more particularly unsafe? Where and why?

Do you feel welcomed as a person or do you have the feeling you shouldn’t be there? Do you feel like you belong to the place or do you feel excluded? Can you shortly explain why?

Are you kind of “proud” of your neighborhood? Can you explain why?
Would you like to live somewhere else? Can you shortly explain why?

Would you like to have more parks or squares, places to sit, places to meet, etc. in the area? Where and what?

What about organized activities in outdoor public spaces. Do you take part in activities? Which kind of activities? Would you like to have more activities organized in public spaces? What kind?

Would you like to have anything else there in outdoor public spaces in Husby? Is there anything you would like to change?

Do you have any other comments about public spaces in your neighborhood?

If it is not too impolite, may I ask for your age?

For how long have you lived in the area?

**Questionnaire sent to Husby inhabitants through internet (google survey)**

---

**Offentliga och gemensamma ytor utomhus i Husby**

De följande frågorna handlar mycket om offentliga och gemensamma ytor utomhus, om utomhusmiljön. Det inkluderar sådant som gator, parker och torg. Men du kan också kommentera om offentliga och gemensamma ytor interior.

Tack så mycket för svars.

* Required

**Tillbringar du tid utomhus i Husby?**

I parker, på gator och torg

- **Ja**
- **Nej**

[Continue »]

14% completed
Offentliga och gemensamma ytor utomhus i Husby

Var och varför? På vintern eller på sommaren?

Vad gör du där (träffar folk, är ute med barn etc.)?

Är det ofta eller sällan?

Finns det platser i Husby som du avstår från att vara på, gå till eller passera genom?
- Ja
- Nej

Vilka och varför i så fall?
Second option: the respondent answer “Nej”
Finns det platser i Husby som du särskilt avstår från att vara på, gå till eller passera genom?

- Ja
- Nej

Vilka och varför i så fall?

Finns det platser i Husby som du gillar ändå?

- Ja
- Nej

Vilka och varför i så fall?

Offentliga och gemensamma ytor utomhus i Husby

Yttrande

Hur skulle du beskriva de offentliga, gemensamma ytorna i Husby?
Finns det platser i Husby där du känner dig trygg?
- Ja
- Nej

Vilka och varför i så fall?

Finns det platser i Husby där du känner dig otrygg?
- Ja
- Nej

Vilka och varför i så fall?

Känner du dig välkommen som person, eller har du känslan av att du egentligen inte skulle vara i Husby? Känner du hemhörighet i Husby eller känner du dig uteslängd på något sätt?
- Jag känner välkommen/Jag känner hemhörighet
- Jag skulle inte vara i Husby/Jag känner uteslängd

Kan du kort förklara varför?
Offentliga och gemensamma ytor utomhus i Husby

Är du stolt över ditt område?
- Ja
- Nej

Kan du kort förklara varför?

Skulle du vilja bo någon annanstans?
- Ja
- Nej

Kan du kort förklara varför?
Offentliga och gemensamma ytor utomhus i Husby

Framtiden

Skulle du vilja ha mer parker eller torg, mer sittplatser, mötesplatser etc i området?
- Ja
- Nej

Vad och var i så fall?

Vill du delta i aktiviteter/fritid i Husby?
- Ja
- Nej

Vilka i så fall?

Skulle du vilja ha mer organisierade utomhusaktiviteter i området?
- Ja
- Nej

Vilka i så fall?
Tycker du att något annat behövs i Husbys offentliga, gemensamma utomhusmiljö? Är det något du skulle vilja förändras?
- Ja
- Nej

Vad och var i så fall?

Offentliga och gemensamma ytor utomhus i Husby

Kommentarer

Har du kommentarer om offentliga och gemensamma ytor i Husby

Får jag fråga hur gammal du är?

Hur länge har du bott i Husby?

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.
Observations

What type of meetings? For what people meet or stop: which activities, which type of interaction? Passivity or activity? Where do people meet? Which kind of activity happens where?

Who is interacting with who (diversity of people or homogeneous groups)? What type of people is using the space?

Flows of people: from where to where and what happens in between?

How the previous aspects vary at different time of the day/week?