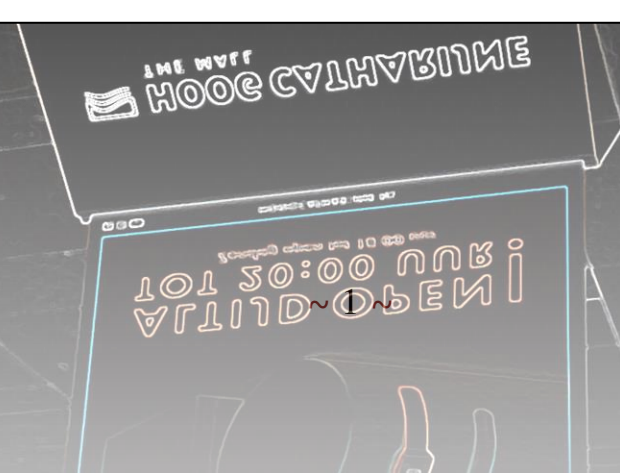


The publicness of public spaces

Consumer behavior, inclusion and social exclusion in Hoog Catharijne

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Abstract

The changing publicness of public spaces in an era of globalization, neo-liberal policies, capitalist economies and growing privatization is examined by many scholars, as contemporary public spaces are to certain groups of people not so 'public' and open anymore. This thesis discusses the ways in which semi public spaces like shopping malls prefer a certain behavior that mainly is focused on consumerism. Through the concepts of privatization, consumerism, inclusion and social exclusion the publicness of Hoog Catharijne in Utrecht is explored and the role of the management, design and security is discussed. Furthermore this thesis treats the ways in which the preference for certain groups can lead to the exclusion of other (groups of) people who do not fit in the prescribed 'image', formed by privatization, commercialization, but also by strategies of designing and planning of the sites.

Keywords:

public space, publicness, exclusion, inclusion, consumerism, minority, shopping mall, privatization



Photo 1 Visitors walking through the long corridors of Hoog Catharijne ¹

¹ All photos in this thesis are taken by the author unless stated otherwise, 2018.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	5
Acknowledgements	8
Introduction: The changing publicness of public space	9
Research Question and Objective	11
Scientific Relevance and Concepts	12
Research Location and Methodology	14
Structure of the Thesis	16
1. Utrecht´s vision on public spaces: Hoog Catharijne as an important player in the redevelopment of Utrecht	19
1.1 Public space in policy documents	20
1.2 The construction of Hoog Catharijne.....	23
1.3 Modernization and Bottom-up Resistance.....	23
2. Who is the boss in Hoog Catharijne: the management and design of Hoog Catharijne	28
2.1 Management of Hoog Catharijne.....	31
2.2 Security and Control	35
2.3 Design of Hoog Catharijne	37
Interlude: the changing publicness of public spaces	41
3. Hoog Catharijne, thé mall for all?: the two faces of the mall: inclusive and exclusive.....	45
3.1 Visitors diversity within the mall.....	47
3.2 Social exclusion of minority groups in a globalized world	49
3.3 Preferring consumption behavior.....	51
Conclusions	57
Bibliography.....	61
Appendices	65
Appendix 1: Format for survey.....	65

Acknowledgements

This thesis is the result of three months of fieldwork in the shopping mall Hoog Catharijne in the city of Utrecht. In the first weeks of my research I felt lost because I was overwhelmed with the crowded character of Hoog Catharijne. I did not know where to start or what to observe and the fact that I failed to contact Klépierre, the owner of the mall, did not help my situation.

However, I am very pleased I could go to the girls working at the information desk. A few of them became my closest informants and through great conversations I heard beautiful stories, but also gained a lot of important information for writing this thesis. I am especially grateful to my key informants² Monica and Isabelle and I like to thank them for making me feel comfortable in the shopping mall. I also want to thank Mario, who works at Illy and who I met several times a week, while getting my coffee. I thank him for his wonderful stories about his past in Italy, about daily happenings and all the information he gave me about the divers visitors of the mall. Furthermore I like to thank the three officials of the municipality of Utrecht, who made time for me and gave me a lot of information during the inspiring conversations.

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Maisam Haydary
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² I used pseudonyms for my research participants to guarantee their anonymity.

Introduction: The changing publicness of public space

“The mall is for everyone and everyone is welcome, as long as they all behave and act to the prescribed rules. Yes, even homeless people and beggars are allowed to visit the mall, if only they do not stay too long at one place. They also are monitored more closely by the security.” With those words in mind, mentioned by one of my participants, I was walking through the long dead ended corridors of Hoog Catharijne. I noticed the smell of fresh coffee and food. I walked around and noticed that the layout and design of almost all shops and corridors looked similar: long and high hallways with a lot of lighting, the stores in tight and straight lines and the usage of glass and colorful vitrines. As usual, I got my daily coffee at Illy and went to the Stadskamer. The Stadskamer is the attraction point of new Hoog Catharijne. It is a big hall with water ornaments, tree tubs, resting places, cafes and restaurants. After different visits I realized that the audience in the Stadskamer is quite diverse: old and young, women and men, but also reasonably multicultural. Where the young people often are 'chilling' and hanging around the benches and the water, the elderly are mainly in the eateries and restaurants. For a moment I got the feeling that Hoog Catharijne is a public space, a place where anyone can freely gather and communicate ideas or information. A place that can be used for many purposes or functions and with no limitations on who can enter or what activities can be done (Bonham 2013). But then I saw two security guards doing their daily surveillance and remembered the sign that Monica³ showed me. On the sign I could read the

³ Monica works at the information desk in Hoog Catharijne and became during my field work one of my key informants.

‘house rules’ of Hoog Catharijne and it was at that moment that I asked myself: “Is Hoog Catharijne even a bit a public space?”⁴

In an era of (high)globalization, neo-liberal policies, capitalist economies and growing privatization large numbers of people are moving to more developed places all over the world. This growing mobility of people results in an increased use of public spaces in urban areas (Low et al. 2005). Public spaces are social spaces that generally are open and accessible to all people (Weszkalnys 2008, 262). Examples of public spaces are roads, public squares, parks, plazas, markets, waterfronts, and natural areas (Amin 2008, 5) and they have an important social effect on people: one can meet, communicate and bond in these sites. Karin Peters (2010, 419) states that public spaces are places where strangers can either meet or conflict with each other, regardless of ethnic, religious, cultural or economic differences and these are the places of interpersonal communication, formation of public opinion, social interaction and an important site of democratic practice. Public spaces are intended to provide connection between people from different cultural groups (Amin 2008; Low 2005; Weszkalnys 2008).

However, to certain groups of people (minorities) public spaces are not so ‘public’ anymore, as they are socially excluded from different public sites and this deliberate program to reduce the number of undesirables and minorities is carried out by privatization, commercialization, but also by strategies of designing and planning (Low 2005, 2). This ensures that public spaces cannot fulfill their traditional role as spaces of civic inclusion and political participation anymore (Amin 2008, 6) and this is visible in many public spaces all over the world: different undesirable and the minority ‘others’ don’t feel welcome and are socially excluded

⁴ Field notes, March 01, 2018

from these sites. This trend is also noticeable in the Netherlands as Ali Madanipour (2004 in Peters 2010, 419) discusses that the intensive use of public spaces in the Netherlands led to problematic incidents involving minority groups. Since the population in most neighborhoods in Dutch cities are mixed, the users of the public spaces also have various ethnic, but also economic, cultural and religious backgrounds. The contradictions between the main purpose of public spaces with its inclusive character and contemporary privatized spaces which exclude some groups of people is best to observe in crowded 'private' public spaces, like shopping malls and city centers (Melik, R. van. et al. 2009, 205). According to Malcolm Voyce (2006 in Bonham 2013) the medieval market place was a site of what a real public spaces should be: many shoppers and merchants being in the marketplace which was open to all, with its particular code of behavior. Nowadays shopping malls however, are privately owned and there are limitations on who can enter or enjoy of the services that are created. The diversity of the population in malls is often highly controlled as it is mainly focused on a consumerist attitude (Bonham 2013). Even though shopping malls are presented as quasi-public spaces, they mainly are focused on encouraging a consumerist attitude and behavior and thus limiting access to groups of people who do not fit in this profile.

Research Question and Objective

It is interesting to find out why shopping malls are presented as public spaces and what actually the difference is between the classical public spaces and quasi-public spaces like shopping malls. The objective of my research was to examine whether and in what way public spaces that are under the control of private parties, differ in the way of publicness, management and design from the traditional public spaces.

Hereby I focused on the planning and management of Hoog Catharijne and public spaces in general, but I also observed the bottom up actions and activities of the visitors. I wanted to investigate the social meaning of public spaces for visitors, but also the role and programs of the municipality of Utrecht, private initiatives and store owners in their way of involving visitors with different ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds. During my fieldwork, which took place between 1 February 2018 and 11 May 2018, for a total of 14 weeks, I have focused on the following central research question: “How do the design and the management of Hoog Catharijne lead to inclusion and exclusion of different groups within the Dutch population?”

Scientific Relevance and Concepts

I decided to do my research in Utrecht, by focusing in various settings on the vision and legislation of the municipality of Utrecht, the management and design of the private owned Hoog Catharijne and the experiences of the visitors and employees of the mall. To answer the main question and to position and frame it into the theoretical debate, I have concentrated on the concepts of *public space*, *privatization*, *consumerism*, *social inclusion* and *exclusion*.

Throughout this thesis, public space is the central concept and it is understood as a place where anyone can freely gather and communicate ideas or information, with the space being able to be used for many purposes or functions. It is not limiting to who can enter or to what ideas are presented (Bonham 2013). However, a growing body of research on the publicness of public space emphasizes the prejudicial effects of privatization in the management of the spaces and the increasing control over the space (Akkar 2005 in Ekdi 2015, 660). The

consequences of this process are for example the over control of the public spaces, social exclusion and lower diversity of users. People are welcome to the public places, as long as they follow the prescribed rules, managed by the state or privatized parties (Ekdi 2015, 662). As the publicness of public spaces is changing nowadays, not everyone feels welcomed and comfortable in these sites (Low 2005). In recent years, social exclusion has become a particularly relevant issue in diverse national contexts. The term exclusion refers to an incomplete or broken process of social integration (Saraví and Makowski 2011, 316). It is about new features of poverty and inequality in contexts of socioeconomic change driven by globalization, features like the fragility of the links between the individual and society in some vulnerable social groups.

Much literature on urban design and planning focusses on the ‘publicness’ of contemporary public spaces. The privatization policies are often seen as a threat to public spaces (Akker 2005, 95): many public sites are being developed and managed by private parties which are based on making profit and serve to the interests of just a selected part of the population. Also the high degree of control in the accessibility and use of public spaces by using surveillance cameras and other strict control measures have major effects on the publicness of public spaces. Akker (2005, 95) also argues that contemporary public spaces mainly serve a ‘homogenous’ public and they strengthen, social stratification, fragmentation and gentrification (Akker 2005, 95).

Research Location and Methodology

I have conducted fieldwork at Hoog Catharijne, a shopping mall in the city of Utrecht. This site was chosen for various reasons. Firstly because of the rising dominance of shopping malls in city planning and urban structure. When they are actually privatized and at best semi- or quasi-public spaces, they are presented and seen as public (Bonham 2013). This development has paralleled the globalization of retail culture and the standardization of urban architecture (Voyce 2006, 270). Because of globalization a lot of ‘public’ spaces became under the control of private corporations. The second reason of my choice for Hoog Catharijne is the location of the mall: Hoog Catharijne is located between the train station and the city center of Utrecht, so it is a crowded ‘public’ space, which is open and assessable for everyone. Thirdly, because of the interesting history and development of Hoog Catharijne, but also the difficult relationship between the public and private actors in this case.

Hoog Catharijne is an indoor shopping mall, located in the center of Utrecht and it accommodates hundreds of shops and offices. It is owned by investment institution Klépierre, owner of several shopping centers in different European countries. As part of the city planning project CU2030⁵, Hoog Catharijne is being renewed since 2012. One of the main goals of the start of these construction plans was to create a connection between the city center and the rest of the city.

For answering the research question I have used academic literature, theories that I briefly explained, policy documents and websites, but also news items from ‘*De Utrechtse Internet Courant (DUIC)*’. I also used multiple qualitative

⁵ CU2030 is an urban development project which aims to make the station area of Utrecht safer, more livable and to accommodate the growth of the city.

research methods such as participant observation, expert interviews and informal conversations. It involves an interpretive approach to examine the meanings and feelings that people give to public spaces. Only then a research like this can be done in an appropriate way, to understand and examine the feelings that people experience in these settings (DeWalt and DeWalt 2011, 127). During my fieldwork it was not always easy to pay attention, observe daily activity and interactions, and at same time take notes of the important actions, because the shopping mall was so crowded sometimes. As Becker (1998) states, the hard part in this is to decide what is relevant and what is not. After this I became aware that it was useful to also take mental notes, so I could spend more time for better observations.

To make the research more representative and holistic, I approached people responsible for the management of the mall, shop owners, but also visitors. I did formal interviews with three experts from the municipality of Utrecht, all involved in the (project) management of public spaces in the station area and the city center. I used (participant) observations and semi-structured interviews to gather information about the daily activity within the shopping mall. In the first period of my fieldwork I met my first key informant (Monica⁶), who works at the information desk in the Stadskamer. In the second period I met my other two key informants, again a girl working at the information desk (Isabella⁶) and an Italian boy working at Illy (Mario⁶). I wanted to get more information about the vision and activities of the management of Hoog Catharijne, so I approached Klépierre. However, they told me several times that they do not want to be involved in my research at all, so I just got information about them from their websites and through conversations with my

⁶ I used pseudonyms for my research participants to guarantee their anonymity.

key informants and employees of the municipality. I also wanted to have conversations and chats with the security guards about their daily activities, but they told me that they were not allowed to talk about their activities ⁷. Another of the restrictions I experienced was that I was not allowed to approach shop visitors in the shopping mall, but I needed to get insights their experiences so I handed out surveys just outside the mall. The results of the surveys are not hard figures, but they mainly are used to create a better impression of the atmosphere and visitors diversity (see appendix 1 for the format of the survey). I used pseudonyms for my research participants and I also anonymized shops and departments of the municipality, to guarantee the anonymity of my research participants.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consist of three main chapters which are subdivided in different paragraphs. The first chapter of the thesis is about the vision of the municipality of Utrecht about the use and regulations of public spaces in the city. While giving a general overview about policy rules and management on public spaces, the chapter also treats the development of Hoog Catharijne through the years. In this chapter we also can see that the municipality has little control over Hoog Catharijne, since they are not the owner of the area.

In chapter two the design and management of shopping malls is treated and then linked to the results I gathered from my fieldwork. I explain that both the design and especially the privatized management of the mall, can include and invite some groups of people, through different events and activities for a divers public.

⁷ Field notes, March 13, 2018

However, the design and management of shopping malls can also (socially) exclude people and lead to resistance from the outside world.

In between chapters two and three, the reader will find the interlude. In this part I treat the meanings of truly public spaces and also the changing publicness of these spaces is discussed. This interlude consists mainly of scientific literature and it functions as a bridge between the two chapters. Where chapter two is about the way shopping malls are managed by private owners, the third chapter discusses the visitors diversity in Hoog Catharijne. Hereby offers the interlude a more general insight of contemporary global issues concerning public spaces. By getting insight in these global effects, one can better understand and process the result of my research in the situation of Hoog Catharijne. Furthermore, the interlude also explains some crucial concept that are used throughout the thesis.

Chapter three continues on the topic of the privatization of shopping malls and here are also the activities, rules and behaviors in the mall discussed, that can lead to the inclusion of some groups of people, but the (social) exclusion of others. I argue that while shopping malls are promoted as open and public spaces for everyone, these spaces are not truly public but they encourage a consumerist attitude and behavior. After this follows the conclusion, where I will reflect of the research and come up with an answer for the research question.

What is novel and revolutionary is the manner in which the store buildings are placed. The buildings form a cluster of great compactness, with spaces between them reserved for pedestrian use only and equipped with such amenities and improvements as landscaping, rest benches, fountains, and even, in some cases, the work of creative arts. ... Some of them are as esthetically as pleasing and as busy as the long-lost town square of our urban past.

Victor Gruen. *The Heart of Our Cities* (1964)

1. Utrecht's vision on public spaces: Hoog Catharijne as an important player in the redevelopment of Utrecht

It was very crowded. After having spent several hours in Hoog Catharijne, it was nice to be outside again. While I was sitting on the stairs at Stationsplein *west* and enjoying the sun, I noticed two things: the crowds around the station and the noise of the construction work opposite the Beatrix Theater. There were all kinds of people here, screaming children running around, people in suits that were passing by, elderly people who enjoyed the sun. It was almost 15:00 o'clock. I had an appointment with an employee of the municipality of Utrecht. We had agreed to meet in the municipal office, where I could interview her. She is an urban planner/designer who is involved with projects in the station area. I walked into the municipal office and went to the second floor. There I met her near the scale model of the station area and she gave me an extensive explanation about the plans and the vision of Utrecht. She also talked about Utrecht's vision and her own vision on public spaces:

My vision, hmm.. It is very much about the relationship between buildings and public space and people. So by giving the ground floor good functions, and using some warmer and more cuddly materials, we do not only want to attract people, but also keep them and let them stay there for a while. We want them be accessible for everyone, it does not matter who you are. We as municipality are now behind this idea for 300%. So the transition from hard building

to open and public space is extremely important. We have written a lot about this in different documents⁸.

In this chapter Utrecht's vision on public spaces is treated. First some policy documents about regulations for public spaces are highlighted and after that the importance of Hoog Catharijne for the development of Utrecht is explained.

1.1 Public space in policy documents

For many cities public spaces are an important subject in their city planning programs. From the short section above, we can notice that also for Utrecht public spaces play an important role in the development of the city, as my participant from the municipality stated that they have written a lot about it in different documents. The municipality of Utrecht has incorporated the subject of public space as a main theme in their 'spatial development strategy'⁹: strengthening the quality of public space runs through the various plan components and is an important instrument in the ambition of Utrecht's spatial development. Besides the spatial development strategy (2004), there are also other policy documents in which the vision and management of Utrecht is elaborated and I will briefly discuss some of these documents, to create a more clear vision of Utrecht on public spaces.

The document '*Kadernota Kwaliteit Openbare Ruimte*' (2016) is about the quality of public space and discusses the substantive frameworks for improving the quality of public spaces in Utrecht. Topics such as the ambition, the spatial quality, the main structures of public space and the collaboration with extern parties are treated in this document. Utrecht is one of the fastest growing cities in the

⁸ Interview with an urban designer from the municipality of Utrecht, April 13, 2018

⁹ Policy document 'Structuurvisie Utrecht 2015-2030'

Netherlands, as in 2030 the city will have circa 400,000 inhabitants. To facilitate this growth the municipal authorities opt for healthy urbanization and an important instrument to do this is the strengthening of the quality of public spaces. For the future of Utrecht the public space is seen as ‘the living room of the residents and entrepreneurs and the visiting card for visitors and tourists’. There is also room for extern initiatives from residents, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders in the public space. By allowing this the municipality tries to bring public space closer to stakeholders and thus creating a shared responsibility. The goal of the municipality is to standardize the design and management wherever possible and this should lead to a good basic quality, management and clarity for the residents of Utrecht.

The *Masterplan Stationsgebied* (2003) is a plan for the development of the station area and it is in line with developments in the entire city. With this project the city’s goal is to create a new center of local, national and international significance. There were different reasons for Utrecht to start back in 2003 with this project. In the first place, the connection between the east side and the west side of Utrecht was not optimal, as the railways, the Westplein and the Catharijnebaan formed a huge barrier between the two sides of the city. Like one of my participants noticed:

..as you can see there is an hard border between the two sides of the city, namely the railway. A large part of the Utrecht residents live on the east side of the city and to involve them and make the city center also attractive for them, we need a good connection from this side of the city with the city center¹⁰.

¹⁰ Interview with a project manager station area from the municipality of Utrecht, March 16, 2018

The municipality also wanted to bring back old structures, such as water in the Catharijnesingel, but also to improve the quality of the environment and to increase social security. In addition to the public spaces in the area, there is also a complex network of large-scale spaces that are not public spaces, but still accessible to the public, like the central station, Jaarbeurs and Hoog Catharijne. They all differ in the ownership and management, opening times and supervision. For the city it was important to have clear boundaries for the manageability and safety for all public and private areas. Furthermore, another important issue for the municipality was to create identifiable identities for the various locations in the Station area. Back then the boundaries were not clear and districts, areas and public spaces flow into each other without the user understanding the situation. This was for example the case in the unclear connection between the central station and Hoog Catharijne¹¹.

We can see that Hoog Catharijne was a major player in this project and so in the redevelopment of Utrecht's city center. However, the shopping mall was a private property and the municipality needed to negotiate with the owner of the mall. Since the streets that passed underneath Hoog Catharijne were popular with tramps and drug addicts as a place to stay overnight, which was considered by many to be unpleasant and unsafe, Hoog Catharijne agreed to cooperate with the redevelopment of the station area. In the next part of the thesis I treat the development of Hoog Catharijne and its major role in the Station area project.

¹¹ Interview with a project manager station area from the municipality of Utrecht, March 16, 2018

1.2 The construction of Hoog Catharijne

To understand the positioning of Hoog Catharijne and its big role within the city of Utrecht, it is important to know more about the history and development of the shopping mall through the years. In the 1960s Utrecht, like many other Dutch cities, had to deal with complicated issues like solving the traffic muck, but also preserving the monumental past and the livability of the future. Since municipal administrators often lacked knowledge, financial means and courage, the initiative of urban projects increasingly came from project developers (Verlaan 2015, 43).

Construction company Bredero¹² offered in 1962 with Hoog Catharijne a modern shopping, business and transport center a total solution for the spatial problems of the city. This led to a large positive reception from politics and press (Verlaan 2015, 44). The design of Hoog Catharijne in 1962 was mainly focused on radically rebuilding the station area of Utrecht. The plan consisted of building apartments, a concert room, parking lots, offices and a shopping center (Hommels 2000, 653). This plan was almost immediately accepted in the city council and the municipality and Bredero signed a contract in February 1964. The first offices and parking garages of Hoog Catharijne were opened in 1969 and the official opening of the mall took place on 23 September 1973 (Hommels 2000, 653).

1.3 Modernization and Bottom-up Resistance

Tim Verlaan (2012, 183) argues that Hoog Catharijne was a typical product of the fifties and sixties, where the municipalities strongly felt necessity for a modernization drive. Several Dutch municipalities considered city center

¹² Bredero was a project developer who operated in several cities and was responsible for constructions activities

reconstructions during this period. This, combined with the fact that municipality administrators often did not know what to do with complex spatial task like traffic muck and the creation of an economic center, drove them into the arms of project developers and non-governmental experts in spatial planning (Verlaan 2012, 188). In Utrecht it was Bredero that controlled the entire development process of the station area and so the creation of an enormous and long-lasting city center reconstruction was in the hands of a single company (Verlaan 2012, 184). This compulsive attitude went so far in Utrecht that the municipal council was willing to share power with a private partner who had the means to prepare the city for the future according to its own views and interests. Bredero made some strategic moves during the negotiations with the municipality. The project developer would not only act as the main financier, but also introduced a completely new integration of previously separate functions in the construction process: both acquisition, design, realization, operation and marketing came into the hands of one company. The private party now had a lot of power and say in Utrecht. However, both left- and right-oriented municipal administrators were pleased with the upcoming public-private partnership (Verlaan 2012, 187).

There was a broad consensus among both the population and the administrators about the positive influence that would come from the reconstruction plan and it was in 1967 that the first parts of Hoog Catharijne were delivered on the west side of the station (Verlaan 2012, 189). However, the first critical voices started in the early 1970s, when (parts of) the population of Utrecht protested against the developments in the city center, including the shopping mall. According to them Hoog Catharijne lacked meeting functions and the buildings were too functionalist and of poor architectural quality (Hommels 2000, 653). They also

stated that Hoog Catharijne was a ‘formless building mass without beginning and without end’ and that the mall ‘looked like a spaceship from an already-past future that has made an emergency landing just next to the Dom’, and ‘that the city center is not visible anymore because of the high-rise buildings and offices (Haver 2014). The director of Bredero showed in a technocratic tone that he was absolutely not to be served by citizens who were meddlesome in his eyes. Municipal politicians were divided and adopted a vacillating attitude and this led to an increasingly storm of protest (Verlaan 2012, 184).

It was during the end of the 1970’s when municipal officials asked themselves whether Hoog Catharijne does meet the requirements that may be set for a well-functioning (part of the) city center (Haver 2014). Although the position of Utrecht had improved in the number of visitors, this has been at the expense of other areas in the city, as shops within the city moved to the center. But apart from shops, offices also moved to the west and therefore, the municipality feared the impoverishment of the northeastern area of the city.

It was not long after that, namely at the beginning of the 1980s when the Dutch government consulted with the Dutch National Railways (NS), the owners of the Jaarbeurs and the owner of the Hoog Catharijne to discuss the future of the station area. Reason for this were the above mentioned problems that occurred in the city, but also expectations for more big changes in the future. One of my participants from the municipality of Utrecht stated: “Utrecht was growing and people visited the city center more often, so the pressure on the city center would increase. At one point there were too few restaurants, hotels and other services”¹³. By involving the station area, the places where people wanted to be and to stay had

¹³ Interview with a project manager station area from the municipality of Utrecht, March 16, 2018

to be enlarged and this should decrease the pressure on the city center. Furthermore, the station was too small and it was a very hard border between the two sides of the city, so a good connection from the west side of the city to the east side was really necessary. Another of my informants from the municipality emphasized why it was important for Hoog Catharijne to agree with the new plans:

Hoog Catharijne needed to be renewed because of its problematic image in those years, with its dark tunnels and junkie accommodation. They also wanted to expand and create a lot of parking spots. There were also ideas for large programs such as Tivoli Vredenburg, but these large programs did not fit in the city center back then¹⁴.

It was in 1988 when the four parties, the Dutch government, the Dutch national railways, the owners of the Jaarbeurs and the owner of the Hoog Catharijne agreed to develop a master plan for the area (Klijn & Teisman 2003, 138-39). We can see that through the years Hoog Catharijne has emerged as an important actor in the reconstruction of the station area in Utrecht. I also treated the vision of the municipality on public spaces, but how does this vision go together with a ‘semi-public space’ like Hoog Catharijne, which is owned and managed by a private company? I will elaborate this further in the next chapter.

¹⁴ Interview with an urban designer from the municipality of Utrecht, April 13, 2018

“These arcades, a recent invention of industrial luxury, are glass-roofed, marble-panelled corridors extending through whole blocks of buildings, whose owners have joined together for such enterprises. Lining both sides of the corridors, which get their light from above, are the most elegant shops, so that the arcade is a city, a world in miniature, in which customers will find everything they need.”

Walter Benjamin (1852)

2. Who is the boss in Hoog Catharijne: the management and design of Hoog Catharijne

It is a fresh morning. While I am walking past the *Vredenburgplein*, a big public square in front of Hoog Catharijne, I see that the square is slowly filling up with people. Like every Friday there is also today a market in the square. At some of the market stalls it is busier than at others. Especially the flower stall attracts a lot of attention, perhaps because of the shouting of the very enthusiastic seller: 'Five euros, your choice, ladies and gentlemen, five euros!' Furthermore, the Friday market is very diverse in its offer. There are stalls where one can buy phone cases, stalls with bicycle accessories, clothing and cards, but also stalls where one can buy food, such as Vietnamese spring rolls, cheese, vegetables and fruit etc. The visitors of the market are also very divers, as I notice elderly people with their walkers, adolescents with their bikes and skateboards, but also parents with their little children or with prams. After I walked freely past the market stalls, I entered the shopping mall and the chaotic appearance of the entrance got my attention, because of all kinds of construction work, the many construction workers and construction scaffolding. Inside the mall I firstly noticed the smell of food and coffee. I walked around, past *Zara*, *Manfield*, *Rituals*, *The Barn*, *The Burger Federation* and *Comptoir Libanais*. up the escalator. Upstairs the offer of shops were even bigger. I noticed *Bershka*, *Timberland*, *Nike*, *The Athlete's Foot*, *Jack & Jones* etc. and realized that all of these shops are well known global retailers. As Voyce (2006, 271) argues on the topic of contemporary shopping malls: 'preferred tenants were franchise stores with a national, if not international appeal, which had recognized labels and brand names and perceived financial backing'.

While sitting opposite to restaurant Comptoir Libanais, I noticed it's beautiful appearance and decoration. With its colorful wallpaper, the wall decorations consisting of very diverse and colorful woven bags, the old-fashioned heaters and tajine pots and of course its products, the restaurant attracts a lot of attention and interest. While I was watching the oriental decoration of the store, my attention went to a man who came out of the restaurant, pushing a cart in front of him. He was probably an employee of the restaurant, given the colors of and text on his uniform. A few seconds later he was stopped by a woman in uniform and she told him: "Good morning sir. I am from the management of Hoog Catharijne and I saw you walking. You are not allowed to drive around Hoog Catharijne with carts around this time". At that moment another man from the restaurant joined the conversation and moments later the man left with the cart towards the exit. Then I went to the information desk where I saw Isabella and we talked about this incident. She confirmed that there are rules within the mall which effect the behavior and the freedom of employees and visitors, like not running, cycling or skating, not shouting or playing music, but also not gathering together in a group or staying too long in one particular spot.

We can notice from the vignette above that both the Vredenburgplein and Hoog Catharijne are spaces that are open and physically accessible to the public. However, there are differences in the ownership and publicness of both spaces, the legislation, but also the degree of freedom of the visitors within these sites, as we see in this chapter that the management has a large role in this. We can agree with Jeremy Bonham (2013) as he argues that the globalized western shopping malls which are owned by private institutions, are challenging and even changing the concept of public space.

In the previous chapter I discussed the development of Hoog Catharijne through the years and also its major role in the reconstruction of the station area was treated. As we can see Hoog Catharijne had and still has an important impact on the city center of Utrecht. As route between the central station and the city center, Hoog Catharijne has a lot of visitors every day, so it is interesting to see how this is handled and managed. In this chapter I discuss the way Hoog Catharijne is designed and managed and I also treat the roles of the municipality and Klépierre in this. Furthermore I explain that both the design and especially the management of the mall, can include and invite some groups of people, but also (socially) exclude people and lead to resistance from the outside world. Wang (2011) argues that malls became the places where public lives take place. However, this public life is not always relaxation or gathering with others, but it is instead more about consumption and profit making activities.

Bill Lindeke (2015) argues that public spaces arise from conflicts, with all kind of rules, territories, borders and policing. Hereby we can think of unspoken social norms but also political demonstrations, making public spaces become the battleground of everyday democracy (Lindeke 2015). However, the rise of shopping malls contradicts this concept of public space, whereby the privatized institutions mainly encourage a consumerist attitude (Bonham 2013). Akker (2005, 95) confirms this trend and adds that these spaces are based on making profit and only serve to the interests of particular groups, while other are left out. With this assumptions in mind, I focused during my fieldwork in Hoog Catharijne on the (architectural) appearance and design of the mall and I did research on the role of the management of the shopping mall and the municipality of Utrecht.

2.1 Management of Hoog Catharijne

Klépierre, formerly known as Corio, is the owner of Hoog Catharijne and responsible for the development, management and safety of the mall. It is a major player in Utrecht and partly responsible for the image that the residents and visitors have of the city of Utrecht (Oosterbroek 2017). The municipality of Utrecht has its own vision, guidelines and legislation on public spaces in the city, but it is Klépierre that makes the decisions about Hoog Catharijne. As an urban designer¹⁵ of the municipality of Utrecht stated:

Because of the location of Hoog Catharijne, the dated old Hoog Catharijne which caused a lot of nuisance, and our vision to connect and emerge the two sides of the city (in which the central station and Hoog Catharijne played important roles), Klépierre got a very strong position in the negotiations and we had to accept it.

This shows that there are of course consultations and negotiations between the municipality and Klépierre, but in the end it is Klépierre who has the most control and the biggest say in the process, mainly because the municipality depended on the area of the private party. I wanted to know more about the management so I went to Monica¹⁶ and I asked her about the regulations. She answered: “Look, those are the rules here, made by the management Klépierre, the owner of Hoog Catharijne”. She walked with me to the other side of the Stadskamer and showed me a sign hanging on the wall near the elevator, on which one could find the house rules of Hoog Catharijne (See figure 1).

¹⁵ Interview with an urban designer from the municipality of Utrecht, April 13, 2018

¹⁶ Monica, one of my key informants who works at the information desk in the mall.

Om uw verblijf zo aangenaam mogelijk te maken, hebben wij een aantal regels. Het is niet toegestaan:

- Overlast of hinder te veroorzaken en samen te scholen.
- Te roken.
- Alcoholische dranken of drugs te gebruiken en/of te verhandelen.
- Rond te hangen of te zitten in liften, trappenhuizen, roltrappen, op balustrades of tegen winkelpuien.
- Geluidsoverlast te veroorzaken.
- Te (brom)fietsen of (brom)fietsen mee te nemen.
- Te rolschaatsen, skaten, skeeleren e.d.
- Honden mee te nemen, m.u.v. hulp- en blindengeleidehonden.
- Elke activiteit die kan leiden tot schade en/of gevaar voor personen of goederen.
- Zonder vergunning of toestemming van het management te:
 - enquêteren - collecteren en straatverkopen - drukwerk te plakken of uit te delen;
 - muziek ten gehore te brengen - beeldopnamen voor commerciële doeleinden te maken

To make your stay as pleasant as possible, we have a number of rules. It is not permitted to:

- Cause nuisance or gather together in groups.
- Smoking.
- Use and / or trade alcoholic beverages or drugs.
- Hang around or sit in elevators, stairwells, escalators, on balustrades or on shop fronts.
- Cause noise disturbance.
- Take bicycles or scooters with you.
- Roller skating, rollerblading.
- Take along dogs, except for help and guide dogs.
- Any activity that can lead to damage and / or danger to persons or goods.
- Without a license or permission from the management:
 - street sales, polling/surveying, collecting, distributing printed matter
 - playing music, making video recordings for commercial purposes.

Figure 1 The house rules of Hoog Catharijne

These house rules show that Klépierre has a preference for a certain behavior in Hoog Catharijne. Judith Williamson (2002, 486-7 in Bonham 2013) argues that it was in (public) spaces, where people often learned civility through social interaction. Nowadays however, with the arise of spaces like shopping malls, this civility is taught through security and ‘house rules’ signs. But the way how shopping malls functioning in these times, is not the way how it actually supposed

to be. The idea of the shopping mall came from Victor Gruen, inventor of Edina's Southdale Mall, built in 1956 (Lindeke 2015). His main purpose was not making profit, but 'saving ruined cities', as he called it. According to him postwar America had failed in her urban structure, ruined by planners and their monolithic neighborhoods. With the invention of a mall, Gruen wanted to create a 'town square', an attractive public space that welcomed all kind of people and many different kinds of activity (Lindeke 2015). However Gruen's dream of public malls never quite came true, as shopping malls evolved into places for only the pursuit of profit (Lindeke 2015).

Bonham (2013) argues that now the private management of shopping malls often decide what behaviour is acceptable within the spaces. This limits lots of possibilities of what can be done in the malls, because when certain acts and behavior do not fit in the rules of owners, security or signs, then it is seen as inappropriate and is not allowed anymore (Bonham 2013). But how did this privatization come in a position to take control over urban space? According to Sylke Nissen (2008, 1141) there are two main reasons for this privatization. The first one is as she calls it 'the reduction of local public debt'. As mentioned in chapter one for the case of Utrecht, here municipalities are in bad financial situations and they need to relieve budget pressure. The privatization of public property takes the burden of management and administration. The second reason is the providing of security and safety, with the focus on cleanliness and service. Private parties are often seen as more competent and specialized (Nissen 2008, 1141). Later in this chapter I discuss the concept of security in more detail.

“It is better if you contact Klépierre about the possibilities of doing research and getting information”, said Monica and she wrote three different numbers on a piece of paper and gave it to me. I started to contact Klépierre and I called a few times and emailed them also various times, but every time I got the same answers (or no answer): “We get a lot of similar requests and unfortunately we cannot make time for them”, and they referred me to their website for more information. After this I did literature research on Hoog Catharijne to find more about the management and the role and image of Klépierre in Utrecht. One possible reason for this reserved behavior can be the pressure and mostly negative (media) attention they got about the ban on the collection of Leger des Heils¹⁷ and the exclusion of dogs in Hoog Catharijne¹⁸. Many times during my observations in the mall, I spoke to Monica about the management. She told me that she does not know that much about the management, because the people who work at the information desk are not part of Klépierre. They are externs who are hired by the management to work in Hoog Catharijne. By doing daily observations and talking to my informants and employees within the shopping mall I noticed the spatial representations of the mall managed and projected by the mall owner.

Hoog Catharijne is, like many other malls, presented as a place for family shopping in a safe and secure environment. Through advertising the mall is also presented as a public space. Steven Wang (2011) argues that in most shopping malls the only goal of the management is to encourage a consumerism attitude and to commercialize the space. Spaces like this are not focused on providing any of the possibilities public spaces should do, like sitting, hanging out or playing music,

¹⁷ article from rtvutrecht.nl, 07-12-2017

¹⁸ article from ad.nl, 02-05-2017

which I will explain more in detail in chapter four. One of my participants from the municipality of Utrecht said that this is also recognizable in Hoog Catharijne:

They want to be the mall, with long structured corridors, striking shops and signs. There is not much place to stay, it is just focused on the visual architecture. Why is that? Why do they not want to stop people from time to time, or let them look around? They just push the visitors through the area, focused only on shopping. Consumption behavior.

My participant at the municipality of Utrecht also referred to the increasing security in the shopping mall, as well cameras as security guards. In the next part I discuss the way and degree of security in Hoog Catharijne.

2.2 Security and Control

According to Jeremy Bonham (2013) both the design and the management of malls are related to the concept of security. He states that throughout almost every shopping mall security guards are walking back and forth through the corridors and doing their daily surveillance. He also argues that there are security cameras observe and control visitors and posted signs, suggesting what behaviors are allowed (Bonham 2013). During my fieldwork and daily walks through Hoog Catharijne I noticed that that there is a lot of security and control in the mall. About every thirty minutes you can find a security guard in every corridor of the mall for surveillance and control in and around the mall. I liked to contact them and talk about their daily activities and their experiences in the mall, so on different times I approached a few guards but they all rejected and told me: “No that is not possible for sure, you can’t get any information from us. We are not allowed to talk about

our work with anyone. Only if you have an official permission on paper from Klépierre themselves, then you can ask us questions”¹⁹. To get an impression of their activities I just followed some security guards and observed their actions for a few days. They were mainly walking through the corridors of the shopping mall, talking to each other and to some shop owners. Isabelle²⁰, who became one of my main key informants throughout my research, told me about the activities and changings in the shopping mall, the diversity of the visitors, but also about the security guards. To my question of how she experienced the behavior of the guards, she replied:

There are a lot of security guards and they differ in their view. Some are really strict in their actions then others. Some have negative stereotypes about youth which are chilling and hanging here. Like last time there were a few groups of children, just sitting there and not bothering or harming anyone. Well then I heard some guards saying things like 'ah yes there you have the annoying youngsters again'. If you are an adult and you are *hanging out*, then it is allowed, but if you are twelve or in a group there, then it is not²¹?

This shows that despite the rules made by the management, the way of acting depends on the security guards and it differs per guard. I also had different conversations with shop owners and workers about the security and safety in Hoog Catharijne. I noticed from these conversations that almost all of them are happy

¹⁹ Field notes, March 12, 2018

²⁰ Isabelle works at the information desk in Hoog Catharijne and became during my field work one of my key informants.

²¹ Field notes, March 12, 2018

about the presence and quantity of the security. One shop owner even told me that there should be more security guards in the mall, as she said:

Our store is in a corridor with a dead end and there is a bench right in front of the store. We witness how some groups of youth, mostly boys, are yelling and shouting towards passing girls and they making a mess in front of our store. And in those times there never is a security guard in the neighborhood, so we have to say something about it ourselves²².

Most of the shop owners I spoke to, feel safer when there is enough security and they think security guards are needed in such a crowded place, to keep the order and safety of the mall. It also seems that, due to inconvenience, most shop owners support the management in not creating too many places in the public space where people can sit down or hang in groups.

2.3 Design of Hoog Catharijne

Next to the role of the management and the security in a mall, the physical design of it is also a tool used by private parties to promote shopping and increase the consumerism behavior. Sylke Nissen (2008, 1136) argues that nowadays malls all over the world are designed and planned in different ways and they are not functioning as the single-purpose shopping centers anymore. Through different services and recreational activities, such as hotels, restaurants, cinemas and bars malls must represent an attempt of urbanity. But according to Nissen (2008, 1136) this is a wrong way to develop urbanity, as a real city has grown over a very long period of time and it is hard to just be copied. Like mentioned earlier, most shopping

²² Field notes, March 13, 2018

malls are designed to encourage consumerism and discourage social behaviours that oppose this or do not fit in this prescribed image (Bonham 2013).

Bill Lindeke (2015) also states that malls are designed in ways to maximize shopping and consumption. Most shopping malls are designed with a lack of entrances and with long dead ended corridors. Even if the shopping malls are not designed with the purpose to limit access, they still do because of the building structure that mainly focuses on shopping. This creates the image that only those who like to shop and have the financial means to shop are welcome in the shopping mall (Bonham 2013). All over the world the way of design of the shopping malls have similarities, arranged to create a global homogeneity of shopping. Reason for this is that for the private owners of these spaces controlled social diversity is more profitable than unconstrained social differences (Mitchell 1995 in Bonham 2013).

This specific way of the design of malls is also visible in Hoog Catharijne, where one can find everyday basic shopping, restaurants and bars on the ground floor, while all kind of fancy stores are located on the top floor, for people who like to spend their money on shopping. This global appearance of a mall is also noticed by some visitors, as two elderly women stated: “The new Hoog Catharijne now really looks like these big shopping centers in the US, you know. Where you can shop on the top floor and relax and have food and drinks on the ground floor. But it is also so chaotic, that we got lost twice, [laughing]”²³.

According to Voyce (2010, 258) this way of design of the shopping malls shows that different areas of the mall are created according to the wishes of the general mall visitor. He argues that there are also areas created to ‘take a rest’ (Voyce 2010, 258), however it must be emphasized that in the time I conducted my

²³ Field notes, March 13, 2018

fieldwork, there were no spaces developed specifically for young people who could come together. My participant from the municipality of Utrecht²⁴ also sees Hoog Catharijne only with the purpose of consumption and shopping: “Long corridors. Long, high endless corridors, with some fancy stores”. On the question how this site differs from other public sites my participant answers:

In Hoog Catharijne you can only do one thing and that is shopping. It is the same every day, it is boring. The whole place is just decorated for one thing, it is mono functional and focused only on retail. Take for example the city center, which also consist of shops and retail. However, the main difference is that the city center is focused on a very varied range of functions. You first can go to the museum, you can shop, have a drink or just be there. So you can follow different activities throughout the day and express different sides of yourself²⁵.

In this chapter I discussed that both the design and management of malls, like Hoog Catharijne, can include and invite some groups of people who fit in the prescribed image of the good customer, but they also can (socially) exclude people who do not want or are not able to take part in the activities. There are reasons why private parties choose for this mono functionality of the mall. This conscious choice has an impact on the diversity of visitors, as it affects who is welcome to the mall and who not. In the chapter three I will discuss this visitors diversity in more detail, but first the changing publicness of (semi) public spaces is treated in the next chapter. This concerns a global trend, and since it also has to do with spaces like Hoog Catharijne, it is useful to get more insight in it, to understand the way it has become.

²⁴ Interview with an area coordinator of the city center at the municipality of Utrecht, May 14, 2018

²⁵ Interview with an area coordinator of the city center at the municipality of Utrecht, May 14, 2018

When public spaces are successful ... they will increase, opportunities to participate in communal activity. This fellowship in the open nurtures the growth of public life, which is stunted by the social isolation of ghettos and suburbs. In the parks, plazas, markets, waterfronts, and natural areas of our cities, people from different cultural groups can come together in a supportive context of mutual enjoyment. As these experiences are repeated, public spaces become vessels to carry positive communal meanings.

Ash Amin (2008, 5)

Interlude: the changing publicness of public spaces

The philosopher Edward Casey (1996, in Jacka 2015) argues that space and time come together in place: *'because place is the most fundamental form of embodied experience'*. Because of this embodied experience, place emphasizes a fusion between human productive activities and the perception of it (Jacka 2015). Public spaces are places, which during time, have developed certain meanings for the visitors of these sites. First some theoretical definitions of *place* are explored and after that the meaning of publicness and public places are discussed, by using ideas of some prominent scientists on place and (public) space.

Keith Basso (1996, in Jacka 2015) states that places are cultural constructions of geographical realities. The conception of place provides a way to examine the articulations between local and global processes concerning place-making, because places are not just locally constructed, they are the result of multi sided interactions, which have effects on the social and ecological systems (Jacka 2015). Places are not passive and self-contained but fluid: they are politicized, culturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions (Jacka 2015). On the relationship between place and its meaning, Ingold (2000: 192) mentions the following:

A place owes its character to the experiences it affords to those who spend time there, to the sights, sounds and indeed smells that constitute its specific ambience. And these, in turn, depend on the kinds of activities in which its inhabitants engage. It is from this relational

context of people's engagement with the world, that each place draws its unique significance.

So we can notice that places and landscapes create feelings which are attached to the world and give meaning to it. Meaning about place is therefore derived from practical engagement with the world (Jacka 2015). Sorensen (2009, 209) argues that the meaning of a place tells itself about its history and valued assets, its characteristics, shared values, boundaries, members, and their relationships and Weszkalnys (2008, 262) discusses that public spaces also are a form of places where one can play, socialize, or simply be.

'Public' refers to being open and accessible for everyone (Ekdi 2015, 659). So public space is a place intended and accessible for all people regardless of cultural or economic differences. As Low (2002, 398) and Hannon (2014, 10) are discussing, it is the place of interpersonal communication, formation of public opinion, social interaction and an important site of democratic practice. As sites of democratic ideas, thoughts and behaviors (of everyone), public spaces create the opportunity to observe other people and their daily activities and cultural norms. Madanipour (2003, in Ekdi 2015, 660) says that public space is the place of 'interpersonal exchange in the center of an impersonal (urbanized) world. To perform its role in serving a high number of people as a site of democratic practice, a public space should be well integrated into the urban system, well connected to the near area and well managed by the public authority, to guarantee a certain level of control for public safety (Ekdi 2015, 660). Ekdi (2015) also argues that *publicness* is a feature of the urban environment and the degree of publicness in fact defines how well a public space serves the public. Low (2002, 401) states that the publicness of spaces consists of five kinds of spatial rights: access the right to

enter and remain in a public space; the ability to carry on all kind of activities in the public space; the ability to fully enjoy of the space and all the resources in it; the ability to modify the environment to your own choice and the feeling that you as visitor have the ultimate form of freedom and control. However, according to Low (2016) nowadays these rights are in many public spaces limited by surveillance and policing with guard dogs and weapons. Akkar (2005, in Ekdi 2015, 660) argues that a growing body of research on the publicness of public space emphasizes the prejudicial effects of privatization in the management of the spaces and the increasing control over the spaces.

The interlude above shows some about the meaning and understanding of public spaces, whereby the changing publicness of the public spaces is pointed out, as result of globalization, neo-liberal policies, capitalist economies and the growing privatization (Amin 2008, 6). After the 9/11 disaster this change of the publicness even was strengthened, as the desire for security has arisen (Hannon 2014; Low 2002; Low 2005; Weszkalnys 2008). Hannon (2014, 10) argues that the privatization of supposedly public spaces changed the concept of 'the public'. One is welcome in public spaces as long as they comport themselves within the bounds of private property and when people 'act as a public', and use their basic freedoms necessary for a democratic society, these spaces are revealed as exclusionary (Hannon 2014, 10). This is equivalent to what Amin (2008), Ekdi (2015) and Low (2016) mention, about the changing publicness of public spaces, that because of globalization and privatization is not so open and accessible anymore.

..the mall is constructed to form a predictable controlled environment which acts like a “prison in reverse: to keep deviant behavior on the outside” and to form a “consumerist form of citizenship” inside.

(Christopherson, 1994, 416–19)

3. Hoog Catharijne, thé mall for all?: the two faces of the mall: inclusive and exclusive

It was a very exciting race. Two boats were far ahead of the others and were competing to win. “Come on Peter, you have to blow harder! A little to the right, come on, come on!” As Peter’s mother, also other parents were cheering for their children. But there were also other spectators, like young teenagers and groups of elderly people, who were enjoying the boat races. In the end it was Valerie who won the race and she received a winning cup.

It was 10 o’clock in the morning and as usual, I got my daily coffee at *illy*. After a short conversation with one of the *illy*’s Italian employees, I started my walk through the shopping centre. While walking around in Hoog Catharijne I noticed that it is really crowded, probably because of some event. Normally it is only early in the morning or after 5 in the afternoon when it is this crowded, the time when people use the mall as a transit route from the station to the city enter and the other way around. That something was happening was confirmed when I arrived in the Stadskamer. As I mentioned before the public in the Stadskamer is quite diverse: old and young people, both men and women, but also different cultural backgrounds. Because of the holidays, the management of Hoog Catharijne organized for the whole week different activities aimed at children, like boat races with paper boats and drawing competitions. In the Stadskamer there were many children screaming and giggling. The regular daily visitor probably would notice the difference quickly, since it is normally much quieter with only some background music and a more chilled atmosphere. One of my key informants from the information desk told me that the management and owner of Hoog Catharijne (Klépierre) hires different agencies to organize such events in all holidays.

Apparently these activity weeks attract a very diverse (multicultural) audience. One of the organizers of the activity with the boat races told me: “In collaboration with Klépierre we organize different activities, like on Valentine's Day, Christmas, Kingsday and special activities for children. These events are meant for everyone and everyone is welcome. Today also I have seen a very diverse audience, of course a lot of young people, but also older seniors, Turkish families with their children, families from Groningen”. When I asked her about the accessibility of entering the mall by homeless people and beggars she responded: “Yes, even homeless people and beggars are allowed to visit the mall, if only they do not stay too long at one place. They also are monitored more closely by the security. I think people are comfortable with the fact that there is a lot of security, especially on such busy days”²⁶.

The vignette above gives us an impression of the very diverse audience who visits the shopping mall, but also the fact that the management of Hoog Catharijne tries to make the shopping center attractive by organizing different events and activities. However, as I mentioned in chapter two there is an idea behind attracting a specific target group, based on encouraging and promoting a consumerist attitude and behaviour. In this chapter I am discussing the visitors diversity in Hoog Catharijne. By making use of the concepts inclusion and exclusion, I am trying to figure out if Hoog Catharijne serves certain groups more than others. The role of the management, the shop owners and the security are also important and thus observed during my fieldwork.

²⁶ Field notes, February 27, 2018

3.1 Visitors diversity within the mall

During my fieldwork I visited Hoog Catharijne on different times of the day. In general in the mornings, between 8 and 10 o'clock, the mall was often really crowded, especially on Wednesdays and Thursdays. From 10 till 13 o'clock the visitors numbers decreased and from 14-15 o'clock it again increased. Teenagers who returned from their schools and came and hang together in the mall, families with children who visited the mall in the afternoon, elderly that came for a coffee together, but probably the mall was at its busiest when people returned from their work after 17:00 and used Hoog Catharijne as a route to reach the railway station or the city enter.

To get a more clear picture about the visitors diversity of Hoog Catharijne, I used different methods of research. I did daily observations on different times and places in the mall and I also contacted Klépierre to have conversations on this topic, but like mentioned before in this thesis, they did not want to meet and they referred me to their website for more information. Although, there is not much useful information about the diversity of visitors on the website of Hoog Catharijne, one can directly guess the main target group of the shopping mall: shoppers. On the website there is much news about the openings of new stores, about sales of the different shops, about the physical accessibility and parking, everything to make shoppers feel comfortable. In the ambition for Hoog Catharijne Klépierre mentions a number of motto's and the first one is as follows: 'consumers are in first place'.

It is not a surprise that the main target group of a mall is shoppers, but for this research the background of these shoppers is more important; their gender, age, cultural and ethnic background and the economic situation need to be examined. Conversations with different groups delivered different results, as for example

almost all my key informants from the information desk argued that the diversity of the people who visit the mall is very high. One time Isabelle told me: “The visitors of Hoog Catharijne are very diverse; they are from all over the Netherlands. For as far as I noticed there is also a mix of people with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. However, the new parts of the mall look really fancy, so maybe it is more for the middle class”. By doing observations, and sometimes little chats, I noticed the same and can agree with Isabelle that the visitors are very diverse in age, ethnicity, gender, but also in cultural background. The financial situations of visitors is not easy to observe and since I was not allowed to hand out survey in the shopping mall, I approached some shop owners and workers. They stated that the visitors of the mall in general are economically and ethnic very diverse, perhaps because Hoog Catharijne is also a walking route from the city center to the station and vice versa. However, they argued that the diversity of visitors of the different shops is much lower. As a woman from a children's clothing store told me: “The visitors are not that let us say ‘multicultural’, maybe because they are unknown with our shop and think our products are too expensive²⁷”. On the question what she meant with not ‘multicultural’, she told me that the visitors of her shop are mainly people from white Dutch origin. A girl from another store told me that there are also many visitors from other cities and even provinces like Groningen and Limburg, but according to her the new mall is really fancy and mostly attractive for the more rich people. Most of the people I spoke argued that the mall is and should be open and accessible for everyone, even homeless people, beggars and youth, if only they behave and do not annoy others.

²⁷ Informal conversation with a shop owner, March 28, 2018

Klépierre's aim is to make Hoog Catharijne as attractive as possible for shoppers. The idea is that the consumers experience something more than only shopping. After all, consumers are no longer been forced to go to a shopping center for their purchases, because of the internet²⁸. This means that only shopping is not enough anymore and the mall needs more functions. Because of that the management organizes every once in a while some event or activity to attract and include people to their area. The mall is also promoted as a safe public space for individuals and family shoppers (Voyce 2006, 282) and in order to realize this, the security of the area has increased. On this Bonham (2013) states that although shopping malls are physically open to all, they still put limitations on the activities that can be participated in within the space. Many things that are possible in public spaces, which I will discuss further in chapter four, are not in shopping malls, or they are highly controlled (Bonham 2013). As a result, certain groups of people are either denied or given limited access to these spaces. In the next session I briefly treat this social exclusion of groups of people from public spaces, that occurs in contemporary society. Understanding the larger picture of social exclusion, helps us to also understand the reasons for this phenomenon in (public) spaces like shopping malls. After this I discuss the situation of minority groups and their accessibility in Hoog Catharijne by using the concept of consumerism.

3.2 Social exclusion of minority groups in a globalized world

As mentioned before public spaces are meant to be sites of interpersonal communication, formation of public opinion, social interaction, an important site of democratic practice, intended to be open and accessible for everyone regardless

²⁸ Article from nrc.nl, 26-03-2013

of cultural or economic differences (Low 2002, 398, Hannon 2014, 10 and Ekdi 2015, 659). However, the publicness of public spaces is changing and nowadays not everyone feels welcome and comfortable in these sites (Low 2005). In recent years, social exclusion has become a particularly relevant issue in diverse national contexts. It forms the base of a new social question associated with recent processes of economic restructuring and the subsequent reforms of welfare regimes (Saraví and Makowski 2011, 315). It is about new features of poverty and inequality in contexts of socioeconomic change driven by globalization, features like the fragility of the links between the individual and society in some vulnerable social groups. The term exclusion refers to an incomplete or broken process of social integration (Saraví and Makowski 2011, 316). But what is the origin of the uncertainty in society, that leads to the preference of some of the population and exclude the unwanted 'other'? Arjun Appadurai (2006, 3) argues that the modern era has privileged the nation state as the real and imagined focus for social life beyond the scale of family and locality. The nation state is inseparable connected to the idea of an ethnos and clearly defined citizens who belong to this nation states, while others who do not fit in this imagined and outlined profile are excluded.

This trend is also visible in public spaces where the publicness is changing, affected by privatization, commercialization, but also by strategies of designing and planning. Müge Akker (2005, 95) states that since the late 1990s the recognition of the importance of the quality of public spaces in cities has been increased in a large number of policy documents. In the last few years this approach have shifted towards other purposes, like building safe and sustainable public spaces and the transition to more holistic strategies for the management of public space (Akker 2005, 95). Many literature on urban design and planning focusses on the

‘publicness’ of contemporary public spaces. The privatization policies are often seen as a threat to public spaces (Akker 2005, 95): Many public sites are being developed and managed by private parties which are based on making profit and serve to the interests of just a selected part of the population. Also the high degree of control in the accessibility and use of public spaces by using surveillance cameras and other strict control measures have major effects on the publicness of public spaces. Akker (2005, 95) also argues that contemporary public spaces mainly serve a ‘homogenous’ public and they strengthen social stratification, fragmentation and gentrification (Akker 2005, 95).

After 9/11 the fear of terrorism encouraged the social acceptance of racial profiling and increased barriers to movement, surveillance of pedestrians, and selective policing of areas (Low 2002, 396). However, according to Low (2002, 399) even before September 11 many civic spaces were no longer democratic and public places, but instead centers of commerce and consumption. Besides of the local impacts of globalization, privatized management of public spaces and deliberate program created and managed by the nation state, there is also another important tool that reduces the number of undesirable and unwanted people. According to Chancer media publicity and diverse public reactions emphasize cultural differences and provide a strong prejudiced image of cultural minorities (Chancer 2005, 38).

3.3 Preferring consumption behavior

Shopping malls are examples of publicly accessible areas in which the above mentioned social exclusion of groups of minorities takes place. Lindeke (2015) argues that shopping malls are developed to encourage a particular behaviour,

mainly focused on consumption. These sites are owned by private parties and they have important social implications. According to Voyce (2006, 281) spaces like shopping malls represent the order of the neoliberal mentality, where those who contribute to society are the good citizens and have right to the benefits of society, and those who are not need to be excluded. Voyce (2006, 282) also argues that shopping malls and middle class ideals both share similar values, so from this one can deduce that malls are focused on the wishes of the middle class in society. People transform from a citizen into a consumer when entering a shopping mall. In terms of rights and voice these two groups differ significantly from each other. People who do not want or are not able to participate in this consumption behaviour are marginalized from the malls and they become the 'undesirables'. Wang (2011) argues that private owners of malls are able to exclude these undesirables by using private laws and regulations or through the use of security, but also by hard architecture. Then within the mall there is a situation created, where the privatized owners become the dictatorship government and the citizens must act according to a certain code of behaviour or face exclusion from the area (Wang 2011).

During my fieldwork in Hoog Catharijne I did not specifically witness the exclusion of (groups of) people from the shopping mall. However, according to Voyce (2006) the exclusiveness of malls is not clear and directly visible, but there are some general characteristics that indicate in what ways malls ensure exclusion. The first thing Voyce (2006, 270) mentions is that malls do not allow any political activity and this is also the case in Hoog Catharijne. On different days I noticed people from political parties who were trying to address and inform people about their political plans, but they all were standing just outside the shopping mall²⁹. The

²⁹ Field notes, April 09, 2018

same thing also happened to me when I was not allowed to hand out surveys within the shopping mall but outside, as mentioned before in the introduction of this thesis.

The second thing is that there are limitations for charitable groups to collect money (Voyce 2006, 270-71). In Hoog Catharijne this topic became a big issue when Klépierre refused the proposal of Leger des Heils³⁰ to collect money within the shopping mall. For long time the management of Hoog Catharijne and Leger des Heils had the agreement that once a year, during Christmas, Leger des Heils could collect in the mall. However, with the development of the new Hoog Catharijne this agreement seems ended³¹. Because of this incident Klépierre was criticized in the media and by many politicians. Voyce's third point of the exclusive characteristics of shopping malls is the preference of franchise stores with a national and international appeal with famous labels and brand names. Because of this small local shopkeepers can no longer compete and are forced to leave the shopping mall (Voyce 2006, 271). This also occurs in Hoog Catharijne, where there are a lot of new stores of famous brands, like I mentioned in the vignette above, and due to the high rents it is not possible for all small shops to continue or start a business anymore. Old local shops like *Salet Frères* and *Vishandel Volendam* are the next ones who are leaving the shopping mall.³²

One cannot notice the presence of social exclusion just by doing observations. To get more information about the experiences of the visitors about feeling welcome in Hoog Catharijne or not, I did hand out about hundred surveys (see Appendix 1 for the format of the survey). Since the amount of the surveys is really small, it is hard to generalize the outcome of the surveys as the general

³⁰ An organization that voluntarily takes care of people from the bottom of society

³¹ Article from De Utrechtse Internet Courant, 04-12-2017, accessed on May 7, 2018

³² Article from De Utrechtse Internet Courant, 23-04-2018, accessed on June 26, 2018

standard of all the mall visitors. However, by using surveys we can gain a bit of insight in the experiences of different groups of visitors, which I randomly divided in age, gender and ethnicity.

Based on the surveys with visitors and shop owners we can see that mostly elderly people and shop owners are happy with the amount of security guards and police officers in the shopping mall. That is because they feel more safe in such a big and crowded place. Some of the shop owners (mostly the ones in closed corners) actually think there should be more surveillance because they sometimes undergo nuisance from (groups) of ‘young’ people. Among the visitors I surveyed there were differences, but in general people felt welcome and safe in Hoog Catharijne. They did not really notice the presence of security guards and they also did not think that there is a shortage of security guards. However, I did speak to a group of four young boys, who had immigrant backgrounds and according to them they sometimes were threatened unfairly by some of the security guards. They did not want to say too much, when I asked them to tell me more about it. But according to them they were threatened unfairly and watched or followed frequently when they were sitting, walking or hanging in the mall. There could be several explanations for this last incident. For example, it can be possible that the security guards are more careful and attentive when it comes to group of young people, because the explaining of the shop owners, as I mentioned in chapter two. It also can be that just by chance the boys met the more strict guards, where Isabella talked about in the previous chapter. It is also possible that visitors in general, who just hang around in the mall and do not take part in the shopping behaviour, are monitored more carefully by the security guards. Another reason can be the contemporary discourse of the exclusion of minorities, which I treated in paragraph 3.2. There is the

possibility that the boys were seen as a minority group and so a threat to the mall, because of the many stereotypes that apply to minority groups with an immigrant background. But it can of course also be that because of their position as minorities with immigrant backgrounds in contemporary society, they experience any form of inferiority and because of this they think, also wrongly, that they are not welcome or extra monitored in different (public) sites.

The public is welcome in these faux public spaces as long as they comport themselves within the bounds of the roles of private property. Once the people act as a public, and assert the basic freedoms necessary for a democratic society, these spaces are revealed as exclusionary.

(Hannon 2014, 10)

Conclusions

Public spaces are places intended to be accessible for all people regardless of cultural or economic differences. It is the place of interpersonal communication, formation of public opinion, social interaction and an important site of democratic practice. Nowadays public spaces are used, perceived and experienced in a different way. Scholars like Amin (2008) and Low (2005, 2016) speak of an age of globalization, neo-liberal practices, capitalist economies, growing privatization and it seems odd to expect public spaces to fulfill their traditional role as spaces of civic inculcation and political participation, but also bring forward issues like ‘cultural diversity’, ‘inequality’ and ‘social exclusion’. According to Low (2005) these issues are the result of a deliberate program to reduce the number of undesirables and the minority ‘others’, and it’s carried out by privatization, commercialization, but also by strategies of designing and planning of the sites. Contemporary shopping malls, for example, are such crowded places that become places of social interaction and some even consider them as the new, ‘modern marketplaces (Voyce 2006, 281). However, these spaces differ a lot from the old marketplaces, as they are highly controlled, privately owned and have a particular agenda focused on consumerism.

In order to study the deliberate program that leads to reducing the number of undesirables and minorities within public accessible areas, which is carried out by privatization, commercialization, and strategies of designing and planning, I have used the following central research question: “How do the design and the management of Hoog Catharijne lead to inclusion and exclusion of different groups within the Dutch population?” By answering this question this thesis provided an insight in the way privatized open spaces like Hoog Catharijne, are arranged and managed. It also makes more clear what kind of people visit the mall and how they

experience the shopping mall. Hoog Catharijne, a shopping mall in the city center of Utrecht, is part of a large development project concerning the station area of Utrecht. The shopping mall is located between the train station and the city center of Utrecht, so it is a crowded 'public' space, which is open and assessable for everyone. Since the shopping mall is so crowded, and parts of it are open and accessible 24 hours a day, the location is ideal for researching the publicness and the visitors diversity.

Most shopping malls are designed to encourage material consumption and profit making activities. This thesis explains that both the design and especially the management of malls, like Hoog Catharijne, can include and invite some groups of people who fit in the prescribed image of the good customer, but they also can (socially) exclude people who do not want or are not able to take part in the activities of the mono functional malls. There are reasons why private parties choose for this mono functionality of the mall. This conscious choice has an impact on the diversity of visitors, as it affects who is welcome to the mall and who not.

The third chapter forms an important part that treats the visitors diversity of Hoog Catharijne and the chapter also discusses the ways the mall attracts visitors, but also excludes and monitors other. Daily observations delivered a more clear image about the visitors diversity of the mall. We can conclude that visitors of the Hoog Catharijne consist of people from all ranks of society: there are people of all ages, from different gender, visitors with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, but also visitors outside Utrecht. However, it was difficult to get more insight about the economic backgrounds, but from conversations with shop owners other informants, one can conclude that the whole new Hoog Catharijne looks really fancy and it is mainly focused on the middle and higher class of society.

So how do the design and management of Hoog Catharijne lead to inclusion and exclusion of different groups within the Dutch population? We can conclude that with the rules set by the management of the mall, the shops which are settled, the design and architecture that is used, Klépierre focusses on a certain target group, mainly based on consumerism. The attraction and inclusion of mainly this target group is done in different ways. First of all the construction and design of the mall is done in a way that is recognizable all over the world, with its long and high corridor, the fully lightened glass vitrines, the large offer of fancy and famous stores and brands, but also many restaurants and cafes. The high amount of security, to create a safe environment, is another way in which the management tries to attract and keep visitors in the shopping mall. There are also several activities organized with different themes, like Christmas, Valentine's day, Kingsday et cetera to attract visitors.

It is mainly elderly people and shop owners who are happy with the amount of security guards and police officers in the shopping mall. That is because they feel more safe in such a big and crowded place. Shop owners that are placed in closed corners actually think there should be more surveillance because they sometimes undergo nuisance from groups of 'young' people. Among the visitors there are differences, but in general people feel safe and do not really notice the security. Although no social exclusion has occurred in the period of my fieldwork, there are people who feel extra monitored and controlled by the security guards. An example of this is a group of young boys with immigrant backgrounds, who felt they were treated unfair by some of the security guards and according to them they were watched and followed frequently more than others when they were sitting,

walking or hanging in the mall. This also applies to beggars and homeless people, as they are monitored by the security more often.

Questions and remarks that have emerged from this research include the difficulty of getting in touch with Klépierre, the management and owner of Hoog Catharijne. I think the research would be more enriching and more objective, if we also had insight in 'the other side of the story' and this could probably provide more facts about the visitors, vision and regulations of the management. Furthermore, the result of this research is just a snapshot from a period of three months. It is possible that at other times and in other circumstances these results would be different, so they cannot sketch an entirely objective and complete picture of the reality. Finally we must confess that because of the selective process of this ethnography we just focused on some specific topic which were the relevant for the thesis. Perhaps it leaves out other details that otherwise could be important and play a large role in the results.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Format for survey

Bezoekers Hoog Catharijne

De resultaten van deze enquête worden anoniem verwerkt, niet doorgespeeld aan derden en uitsluitend gebruikt ten behoeve van mijn afstudeeronderzoek aan de Universiteit Utrecht.

1.

Woont u in Utrecht?

- Ja
 Nee

2.

Geslacht

- Man
 Vrouw
 Other: _____

3.

Leeftijd

- 16-25 jaar
 26-40 jaar
 41-65 jaar
 65+ jaar

4.

Opleidingsniveau

- Basisschool
 Middelbare school (mavo, vmbo, havo, vwo)
 MBO
 HBO
 WO

5.

Hoe vaak per week bezoekt u Hoog Catharijne?

	1-2 dagen	3-4 dagen	5 dagen of meer	Niet
Om te winkelen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Als doorlooproutte van/naar station	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Om te relaxen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Voor werk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6.

Ik voel me welkom in Hoog Catharijne

	1	2	3	4	5	
Helemaal mee oneens	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Helemaal mee eens

7.

Pluspunten van Hoog Catharijne zijn

U mag meerdere opties kiezen.

- Divers winkelaanbod
- De sfeer in het winkelcentrum
- Multiculturaliteit en diversiteit van de bezoekers
- Inrichting en uiterlijk van het winkelcentrum
- Other: _____

8.

Minder sterke punten van Hoog Catharijne zijn

U mag meerdere opties kiezen.

- De drukte in het winkelcentrum
- De bouwwerkzaamheden
- Overlast door bepaalde groepen
- Other: _____

9.

Voelt u zich veilig in Hoog Catharijne?

- Ja, ik voel me altijd veilig.
- Ja, vooral door de aanwezigheid van de bewakers voel ik me veilig in Hoog Catharijne.
- Nee, ik voel me niet veilig in Hoog Catharijne door overlast van verschillende groepen.
- Nee, ik voel me niet veilig in Hoog Catharijne door de aanwezigheid van te veel bewaking/politie.
- Other: _____

10.

Ik vind de hoeveelheid beveiliging in Hoog Catharijne

	1	2	3	4	5	
Veel te weinig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Veel te veel

