REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
ALTINBAŞ UNIVERSITY
Institute of Graduate Studies
Department of Architecture

HOTEL LOBBY AS A PUBLIC SPACE: CASE STUDY OF THE SHERATON ISHTAR HOTEL IN AL-FIRDOS SQUARE

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Master's Thesis

Supervisor
Asst. Prof. Dr. Deniz ÇETİN

İstanbul, 2024

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2024

The thesis titled HOTEL LOBBY AS A PUBLIC SPACE: CASE STUDY OF THE SHERATON ISHTAR HOTEL IN AL-FIRDOS SQUARE prepared by HUDA ADIL SALEH and submitted on 03.05.2024 has been accepted **unanimously/by majority of votes** for the degree of Master of Science in Architecture.

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Huda Adil SALEH

Signature

DEDICATION

For My Parents.

ABSTRACT

HOTEL LOBBY AS A PUBLIC SPACE: CASE STUDY OF THE SHERATON ISHTAR HOTEL IN AL-FIRDOS SQUARE

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Date: 11/2024

Pages: 145

This thesis is a study of the hotel lobby as it is perceived in the light of its similarities with the public space in function and significance. The hotel lobby is often considered a miniature version of the public urban space in the city and holds significant importance in hotels. Any building has different types of spaces, divided into public and private spaces. The lobby is one of the important public spaces and nodes in buildings. The present study aims to establish the relationship between the hotel lobby and the public space by examining each individually and identifying their common features.

Finding accessible and inviting public spaces can be a challenge. However, the hotel lobby can be viewed as an unexpected urban oasis that exists hidden amidst the towering skyscrapers and bustling streets of the city. Conventionally associated with transient visitors and travelers, hotel lobbies are emerging as vibrant and dynamic urban public spaces that transcend their primary function.

Often grand and architecturally appealing, these spaces have evolved beyond mere waiting areas for hotel guests. They have become microcosms of urban life, drawing in a diverse cross-section of the community, including tourists, locals, business professionals, and artists. This transformation is driven by various factors, including design innovations, the need for communal gathering places, and the recognition of these spaces' economic and cultural potential.

The thesis not only discusses the physical dimension but also focuses on the nature of the

systems that govern the lobby and the philosophical dimension. It aims to know the psychological impact of the nature of this important space in the building on the users or visitors.

The thesis will discuss in detail the multifaceted role that hotel lobbies play in our urban landscapes. It will examine how they function as meeting points, culinary destinations, cultural hubs, and even impromptu workplaces. Furthermore, it will highlight the social, economic, and cultural implications of this transformation, shedding light on how hotel lobbies are contributing to the evolution of public spaces in the 21st century. The case study of the present thesis investigates the interconnectedness between the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby and Al-Firdos Square in Baghdad, Iraq. ensuring superior spatial experiences. Through a comprehensive analysis of its layouts and its relationship to the urban context, this study seeks to enhance the overall design and functionality of hotel lobbies.

Keywords: Hotel Lobby, Public Space, Hotels, Sheraton Ishtar Hotel, Al-Firdos Square. Transition Space, Urban Spaces.

ÖZET

KAMUSAL BİR ALAN OLARAK OTEL LOBİSİ: AL-FIRDOS MEYDANI'NDAKİ SHERATON ISHTAR OTELİ ÖRNEĞİ

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Tarih: 11/2024

Sayfa: 145

Bu tez, otel lobisinin, işlev ve önem açısından kamusal alanla benzerlikleri ışığında algılandığı şekliyle bir çalışmadır. Otel lobisi genellikle şehirdeki kamusal kentsel alanın minyatür bir versiyonu olarak kabul edilir ve otellerde önemli bir öneme sahiptir. Herhangi bir binanın, kamusal ve özel alanlar olarak ayrılmış farklı tipte alanları vardır. Lobi, binalardaki önemli kamusal alanlardan ve düğümlerden biridir. Mevcut çalışma, her birini ayrı ayrı inceleyerek ve ortak özelliklerini belirleyerek otel lobisi ile kamusal alan arasındaki ilişkiyi kurmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Erişilebilir ve davetkar kamusal alanlar bulmak zor olabilir. Ancak otel lobisi, şehrin yükselen gökdelenleri ve hareketli sokakları arasında gizlenmiş, beklenmedik bir kentsel vaha olarak görülebilir. Geleneksel olarak geçici ziyaretçiler ve gezginlerle ilişkilendirilen otel lobileri, birincil işlevlerinin ötesine geçen canlı ve dinamik kentsel kamusal alanlar olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Genellikle görkemli ve mimari açıdan çekici olan bu alanlar, otel misafirleri için basit bekleme alanlarının ötesine geçmiştir. Kent yaşamının mikrokozmosları haline geldiler ve turistler, yerel halk, iş profesyonelleri ve sanatçılar dahil olmak üzere toplumun çeşitli kesimlerini kendilerine çektiler. Bu dönüşüm, tasarım yenilikleri, ortak buluşma yerlerine duyulan ihtiyaç ve bu alanların ekonomik ve kültürel potansiyelinin tanınması gibi çeşitli faktörler tarafından yönlendiriliyor.

Tez yalnızca fiziksel boyutu tartışmakla kalmıyor, aynı zamanda lobiyi yöneten sistemlerin doğasına ve felsefi boyuta da odaklanıyor. Binadaki bu önemli alanın doğasının kullanıcılar veya ziyaretçiler üzerindeki psikolojik etkisini bilmeyi amaçlıyor.

Tez, otel lobilerinin kentsel manzaralarımızda oynadığı çok yönlü rolü ayrıntılı olarak tartışacak. Buluşma noktaları, mutfak destinasyonları, kültürel merkezler ve hatta doğaçlama işyerleri olarak nasıl işlev gördüklerini inceleyecek. Dahası, bu dönüşümün sosyal, ekonomik ve kültürel etkilerini vurgulayacak ve otel lobilerinin 21. yüzyılda kamusal alanların evrimine nasıl katkıda bulunduğuna ışık tutacak. Mevcut tezin vaka çalışması, Irak, Bağdat'taki Sheraton Ishtar Otel lobisi ile Al-Firdos Meydanı arasındaki bağlantıyı araştırıyor. üstün mekansal deneyimler sağlıyor. Düzenlerinin ve kentsel bağlamla ilişkisinin kapsamlı bir analizi yoluyla, bu çalışma otel lobilerinin genel tasarımını ve işlevselliğini geliştirmeyi amaçlıyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Otel Lobisi, Kamusal Alan, Oteller, Sheraton Ishtar Oteli, Al-Firdos Meydanı Geçiş Alanı, Kentsel Alanlar.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages

ABSTRACT ..... **vi**

ÖZET ..... **viii**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **xii**

LIST OF CHARTS ..... **xvi**

1. INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1 AIM AND SCOPE OF THE THESIS 3

1.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE THESIS 4

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW 5

1.4 CONCLUSION REMARKS OF LITERATURE REVIEW 14

2. THE HOTEL LOBBY AS A PUBLIC SPACE: A TERMINOLOGICAL ANALYSIS **16**

2.1 DEFINITION OF SPACE 16

2.1.1 Public and Private Spaces 19

2.1.2 POPS AND POPOS 20

2.1.3 PUBLIC URBAN SPACE AND SQUAIRE 20

2.1.4 DEFINITION OF TRANSITIONAL SPACE 26

2.2 DEFINITIONS OF THE HOTEL AND THE LOBBY 27

2.2.1 Hotel 27

2.2.2 Lobby 29

2.3 SUMMARY OF THE DEFINITIONS AND EVALUATION 33

3. HISTORY OF HOTELS AND PUBLIC SPACES **37**

3.1 HISTORY OF HOTELS 37

3.1.1 Greek Thermal Baths 37

3.1.2 Roman Thermal Baths 41
3.1.3 Caravanserais 42
3.1.3.1 Murjan Khan 45
3.1.4 Monasteries 48
3.2 THE EVOLUTION OF HOTEL LOBBY IN HISTORY 48
3.3 HISTORY OF THE PUBLIC SPACE 52
4. THE HOTEL LOBBY AS THE NEW PUBLIC SQUARE 58
4.1 PUBLIC SQUARE AS A "BUILDING" 58
4.2 THE HOTEL LOBBY IS THE NEW PUBLIC SQUARE 61
4.3 THE MARMARA TAKSIM HOTEL IN ISTANBUL TAKSIM SQUARE 63
4.4 MARIOTT MARQUIS HOTEL IN NEW YORK TIME SQUARE 68
4.5 EVALUATION 73
5. CASE STUDY ON THE SHERATON ISHTAR HOTEL OF AL-FIRDOS SQUARE 75
5.1 AL-FIRDOS SQUARE 76
5.2 THE SHERATON ISHTAR HOTEL 83
5.3 ANALYZING THE CASE STUDY 91
5.3.1 Architects Survey Results 95
5.3.1.1 The relationship between the hotel lobby and public squares from the visitor's point of view 95
5.3.2 Guest Survey Results 104
6. CONCLUSIONS 112
REFERENCES 118
APPENDIX A 128

LIST OF FIGURES

Pages

Figure 2.1: Diagram Showing Public, Semi-public, Semi-private, and Private Spaces (Redrawn Faithfully to the Original Diagram) (Trancik,1986). 19

Figure 2.2: Spatial Linkage (Trancik, 1986: 99) 24

Figure 3.1: North Baths, Morgantina, plan. (E. thorkildsen of the American Excavations at Morgantina). (Lucore, 2009: 333) 39

Figure 3.2: North Baths, Morgantina, the Elevation of the North end of Room 9, with Doric Column Supporting Entablature with Mixed Doric and Ionic Frieze over the Immersion Pool. (K. Lucore, 2009: 333) 39

Figure 3.3: Taposiris Magna/Abusir, Baths (Lucore & Trümper, 2013: 329) 40

Figure 3.4: Fletcher, Banister. A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method. (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921: 105)..... 42

Figure 3.5: Taşhan. Istanbul-Laleli. (Photo by the researcher, 2024) 43

Figure 3.6: The 14th-century Khan Murjan Plans. Baghdad, Iraq (Hmood, 2019:9) 46

Figure 3.7: Khan Murjan was Built During the Mughal Period in Baghdad, Iraq (Hmood, 2019:9)..... 47

Figure 3.8: The 14th-Century Khan Murjan is a Former caravanserai that Once Accommodated Merchants Visiting BAGHDAD, Iraq (By David Stanley Retrieved on Date 4\42016, 14:55:32 from Khan Murjan |)..... 47

Figure 3.9: Argos. Plan of the Argive Agora During the Second Half of the Fifth Century BCE. (J.C. Donati, 2015:187)..... 53

Figıre 3.10: History of Public Spaces..... 56

Figure 4.1: Film Still from The Last Laugh, 1924, directed by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau (Avermaete, and Massey, 2013:19)..... 61

Figure 4.2: A Moxy Hotel Lobby (https://in.pinterest.com/pin/meteor-lighting--444730531961752813/)..... 62

Figure 4.3: Artillery Barracks in Taksim c. 1930s. (Reproduced from Istanbul Municipality (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65) 64

Figure 4.4: Taksim Square and Gezi Park's İnönü Promenade Taken from Güzelleşen İstanbul, Istanbul Municipality (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65) 64

Figure 4.5: Taksim Square's Republican Monument c. 1928 (Archives of the MSGSÜ Restoration Department) (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65) 65

Figure 4.6: The Marmara Taksim Hotel and the Republic Monument (https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/istanbul-turkey-december-9-2015-view-641058529) 66

Figure 4.7: The Marmara Taksim Hotel and the Republic Monument (gazeteduvar.com.tr) 67

Figure 4.8: Taksim Square and The Marmara Taksim Hotel (Google Earth) 67

Figure 4.9: Development of The New York Time Square. Before/After comparison. Architecture & Landscape Design: (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)) 68

Figure 4.10: Development of The New York Time Square. Before/After comparison. Architecture & Landscape Design: Before (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)) 69

Figure 4.11: Development of The New York Time Square. Architecture & Landscape Design: In 2017 (After) (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)) 69

Figure 4.12: Development of The New York Time Square. Architecture & Landscape Design: In 2017 (After) (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)) 69

Figure 4.13: Marriott Marquis New York Hotel and New York Time Square. (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)) 70

Figure 4.14: Mariott Marquis Hotel Lobby. Eighth, Ninth, and Sixteenth Floor Plans. (New York Marriott Marquis - Host Hotels & Resorts 71

Figure 4.15: Mariott Marquis Hotel Lobby. (New York Marriott Marquis - Host Hotels & Resorts 72

Figure 4.16: Mariott Marquis Hotel Lobby. Time Square Views. (New York Marriott Marquis - Host Hotels & Resorts) 72

Figure 4.17: New York City Department of City Planning (POPS). (NYC Capital Planning Explorer)..... 73

Figure 5.1: The growth of Baghdad (Al-Ashab, 1974:141) 77

Figure 5.2: Baghdad's morphology at the end of the Abbasid Empire. (Al-Hasani MK. 2012:81)..... 77

Figure 5.3: Bus Map of Baghdad in 1961 (Iraq Maps - Perry-Castañeda Map Collection - UT Library Online (utexas.edu) 78

Figure 5.4: Al-Firdos Square Site (Google Earth)..... 79

Figure 5.5: The Square during the Kingdom of Iraq and the monumental arch (The Unknown Soldier) in 1959. (Firdos Square - Wikipedia) 80

Figure 5.6: Al Firdos Mosque and the old Monument of the Unknown Soldier - Al Firdos Square – Baghdad (Melodhiny's Site: Beautiful Baghdad (melodhinyssite.blogspot.com)80

Figure 5.7: The Infamous Toppling of Saddam Hussein's Statue in Firdos Square in Baghdad Shortly after the Invasion of Iraq in 2003 (Melodhiny's Site: Beautiful Baghdad (melodhinyssite.blogspot.com)..... 81

Figure 5.8: The Sculpture Represents love, Peace, and Freedom. 2003 (BBC ON THIS DAY | 9 | 2003: Saddam Statue Topples with the Regime 82

Figure 5.9: The Hotel and the Square (https://x.com/iraqitweet/status/633713539186827264). 84

Figure 5.10: Digital Image from the Online Portfolio of Hisham Munir and Associates, Showing an Exterior View of the Baghdad Sheraton. (Rifkind, 2016:34) 85

Figure 5.11: Entrance Level Plan of The Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel (From the Hotel Manager)..... 86

Figure 5.12: Mezzanine Level Reflected Ceiling Plan of The Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel. (From the hotel manager) 86

Figure 5.13: The North Elevation of The Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel. (From the Hotel Manager)..... 87

Figure 5.14: The Entrance of the Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel. (Photo by the Researcher, 2024) 87

Figure 5.15: The Sheraton Ishtar Lobby (Booking.com) 88

Figure 5.16: The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby. (Photo by the researcher, 2024) 89

Figure 5.17: The Entrance of The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel. (Photo by the researcher, 2024) 90

Figure 5.18: The Entrance of The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel. (Photo by the researcher, 2024) 90

Figure 5.19: 3D drawing of Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel. (By the Researcher)..... 93

Figure 5.20: Site Plan Showing the Relationship between The Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel and the Square. (By the Researcher) 93

Figure 5.21: Comparison of Hotels 94

Figure 5.22: The relationship between the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and Al-Firdos Square.. 104

LIST OF CHARTS

Pages

Chart 5.1: Age of the Questionnaire Contributors (By the researcher) 95

Chart 5.2: The Education Levels of the Questionnaire Contributors (By the researcher)... 95

Chart 5.3: Analysis of Reasons for Staying People in the Hotels (By the researcher)..... 96

Chart 5.4: Analysis of using Hotel Lobby Times, by the Residents and Visitors (By the Researcher). 97

Chart 5.5: The Commonly used Features in the Hotel Lobby (By the Researcher)..... 98

Chart 5.6: The Analysis of the Most Appealing Aspects for the Customers (By the Researcher). 99

Chart 5.7: The Analysis of Opinions on the Similarity between Hotel Lobbies and Public Spaces (By the Researcher). 99

Chart 5.8: Analysis Results of Resemble Aspects between Hotel Lobbies and Public Squares (By the Researcher). 100

Chart 5.9: Analysis Results of Repetition of Visiting the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel Lobby.. 105

Chart 5.10: Analysis Results of Reasons for Visiting the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel Lobby.. 105

Chart 5.11: Analysis Results of Rating Accessibility of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby 106

Chart 5.12: Analysis Results of Rating Accessibility of Al-Firdos Square..... 106

Chart 5.13: Analysis Results of Rating Welcoming in the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby . 107

Chart 5.14: Analysis Results of Rating Welcoming in Al-Firdos Square 108

Chart 5.15: Analysis Results of Expressing the Feeling in the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby 108

Chart 5.16: Analysis Results of Expressing the Feeling in Al-Firdos Square..... 109

Chart 5.17: Analysis Results of Thinking the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby Encourages Social Interaction 109

Chart 5.18: Analysis Results of Thinking Al-Firdos Square Encourages Social Interaction 110

Chart 5.19: Analysis Results of the Most Appealing Features in the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby 110

Chart 5.20: Analysis Results of the Relationship between the Lobby of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and Al-Firdous Square 111

1. INTRODUCTION

A hotel lobby is a public space within the hotel where guests and visitors can meet, rest, wait, or do business. It is typically the first location customers meet upon entering the hotel. Lobbies are usually divided into functional zones to meet varied visitor demands. These zones sometimes include a reception space for check-in and guest assistance, seating areas for resting or socializing, business centers for duties related to work, and, on occasion, shopping, or food options. The hotel lobby is a reflection of the history, civilization, and culture of the cities in which it is located, just as the urban spaces (public squares) represent the cities.

There is a blurring of lines between public and private spaces. While technically private, hotel lobbies often function as semi-public spaces that invite social interaction and community engagement, similar to public squares. This dual role enhances their value and relevance in contemporary urban life. They are also called the third space or the in-between space. Therefore, the hotel lobby is as important as squares and other public spaces. In this thesis, the similarities between these two spaces, the hotel lobby, and the public square, will be addressed to prove that the hotel lobby is a reflection or a miniature copy of urban public squares and that they are almost equal in importance.

Recent trends in the hospitality industry, such as the use of chip cards for instant check-in, automated express checkout, dual independent telephone lines, individual climate control, pay-per-view movies, high-speed internet connections, and personalized room preferences stored in a profile database linked to chip cards, have primarily prioritized the comfort and convenience of individual guests. The point of departure for the choice of the topic of the present thesis lay in the emphasis on the important and similar societal role that public spaces, particularly hotel lobbies and town or city public squares, play within each of them, and how they might be seen as interrelated and interactive. In general, the hotel lobby serves as the most common social gathering place within hotels, striving to recreate a sense of "home" with welcoming entry flowers, cozy sofas and chairs, carpeted floors, tasteful wall decorations, large TV screens, soothing colors, subtle lighting, and background music. Similarly, the public square is a place where citizens have a strong sense of community. It is a place where they can meet, interact, do business, and hold cultural, social, and political

celebrations. The public square serves as a stage for the various activities of the community's public life.

Hotel lobbies, historically the focal point for social interaction within a hotel, are strategically positioned at the intersection of various hotel functions. Architects, designers, and hotel operators are continuously reassessing and redefining their purpose to create appealing destinations. By employing the geometrical concept of visibility and proximity, it becomes evident that a hotel lobby designed as a central hub for all significant traffic movements within the property, encompassing both public and service circulation, is not only advantageous for maintaining control but also enhances managerial efficiency in hotel operations.

In a world that is becoming more and more virtual, hotel lobbies play a crucial role in establishing emotional connections, building social capital, and fostering a sense of belonging. Public spaces are open and accessible areas that hold great significance in towns and cities. They serve as the heart of communities, representing leisure, consumption, and the community's identity. In a society characterized by isolation and loneliness, where digital connectivity replaces face-to-face interaction, both visitors and residents highly value vibrant public spaces. These spaces are instrumental in upholding democratic values as they symbolize freedom, independence, and can even become catalysts for social transformation.

The concept of the hotel lobby has undergone significant changes since the 1950s. Previously, hotel lobbies were primarily seen as reception areas or uneventful public spaces where guests would wait for check-in, check-out, or simply pass the time without engaging in any activities like consuming food or drinks at the bar or café. However, in modern times, hotel lobbies have evolved into versatile spaces that cater to a range of social and private functions, while remaining accessible to non-residents. Hotel design experts have increasingly focused on the needs of both young and elderly solo travelers, local residents, and the promotion of spontaneous interactions, casual conversations, agreements, self-expression, and the importance of socializing and forming social connections during travel, even though guests may be temporarily confined to the private spaces of their rooms.

1.1 AIM AND SCOPE OF THE THESIS

When looking at almost all the buildings, the observer finds that all these buildings share the presence of a node or space at or near the entrance which is called the lobby. A hotel lobby differs from other types of lobbies, and it shares some similarities with public spaces or public squares. However, the absence of an accurate and comprehensive theoretical conception describing the relationship between the city's public space and the hotel lobby, as well as the absence of a focus on the cultural importance of these spaces, which is represented by the third space or the space in between, led to the initial identification of the aim of the present study and its general search purpose. Hence the general research hypothesis states that the hotel lobby is represented by a miniature public space, which is no less important than the urban public spaces within the city.

The present thesis investigates the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel of Al-Firdos Square in Baghdad and the neighbouring environs. The study aims to offer insights for architectural designers to optimize hotel lobbies' design, thereby ensuring superior spatial experiences. Through a comprehensive analysis of the hotel's architectural features, spatial layout, and relationship with the urban context, this research seeks to contribute to developing innovative design approaches for hotel lobbies that harmonize with their surroundings.

The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel stands as an iconic structure in the heart of Baghdad, overlooking the bustling Al-Firdos Square. As a pivotal hub within the city, Al-Firdos Square attracts a diverse array of visitors and serves as a focal point for social, cultural, and political activities. Understanding the symbiotic relationship between the hotel and its urban context is essential for architects and designers aiming to create cohesive spatial experiences that resonate with both guests and the broader community. The study focuses on several important elements of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel's architectural design and close connection to Al-Firdos Square. These include lobby layout, integration of indoor and outdoor areas, material and lighting selection, and provision of facilities to meet various customer needs. Additionally, the study underlines the importance of cultural sensitivity and contextual responsiveness in creating the entire visitor experience.

1.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE THESIS

The research will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques. Qualitative methods include site visits and architectural documentation. Also, stakeholder interviews will be utilized to gather rich, contextual insights into Ishtar Sheraton Hotel's architectural design and its relationship with Al-Firdaus Square. Quantitative methods involve surveys or spatial analysis to supplement qualitative findings and provide statistical validation where applicable. These techniques will be applied iteratively to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the research subject and achieve the study's objectives effectively.

This thesis investigates the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and its interconnection with Al-Firdos Square and its neighboring environs. The study aims to offer insights for architectural designers to optimize the design of hotel lobbies, thereby ensuring the provision of superior spatial experiences. Through a comprehensive analysis of the hotel's architectural features, spatial layout, and relationship with the urban context, this research seeks to contribute to the development of innovative design approaches for hotel lobbies that harmonize with their surroundings. The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel stands as an iconic structure in the heart of Baghdad, overlooking the bustling Al-Firdos Square. As a pivotal hub within the city, Al-Firdos Square attracts a diverse array of visitors and serves as a focal point for social, cultural, and political activities. Understanding the symbiotic relationship between the hotel and its urban context is essential for architects and designers aiming to create cohesive spatial experiences that resonate with both guests and the broader community. The study focuses on several important elements of Ishtar Sheraton Hotel's architectural design and close connection to Al-Firdos Square. These include lobby layout, integration of indoor and outdoor areas, material and lighting selection, and provision of facilities to meet a variety of customer needs. Additionally, the study underlines the importance of cultural sensitivity and contextual responsiveness in creating the entire visitor experience.

For the analysis of examples in this thesis, CAD Mapper was utilized to import the primary lines of the site plan and the plans of the selected examples. Additionally, AutoCAD, SketchUp, and Lumion were employed for drawing and visualization. SketchBook was also used for modifying the three-dimensional renderings.

The thesis comprises five chapters and a conclusion:

Chapter One includes the following sections: an introduction, aims, and objectives of the study, methodology, and literature review, which will provide an overview of previous studies relevant to the research's idea.

Chapter Two discusses the definitions of the key terms and concepts of the research. It will also study the characteristics and functions of both urban space and hotel lobby separately, followed by the conclusion, which will summarize the common points between the hotel lobby and the public urban space to establish the relationship between them.

Chapter Three offers a historical survey of the evolution of hotels, hotel lobbies and public spaces from their inception to the present day. It also includes a discussion of some Ottoman caravanserais such as Tash Khan and Murjan Khan. It will also study the emergence of public squares in cities and their purposes.

Chapter Four gives a brief account of the connection and interconnectedness between the hotel lobby and the public square in the present. It also provides some examples of a hotel that is connected to a public square. One example is the Marmara Taksim Hotel and Taksim Square in Istanbul, Turkey. The other is the Marriott Marquis Hotel in The New York Times Square in Manhattan. Chapter Five is dedicated to the case study of this thesis. It investigates the sample study, which is the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel of Al-Firdos Square in Baghdad. The Conclusion will sum up the findings of the study.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Hotel lobbies and lounges have been the subject of a study titled "Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality," edited by Tom Avermaete and Anne Massey (2013). The study covers the architectural significance of hotels throughout history, including how their material structure both reflects and facilitates the social and cultural practices for which they are renowned. Contemporary hotel planning and design breakthroughs are discussed through a series of case studies and interviews. With images throughout, it is a unique and important addition to the literature on architectural and interior design theory (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 1-2).

The first section of Avermaete and Massey's book is a collection of essays that investigate

the cultural meaning and history of the hotel lobby from different perspectives. These essays cover a variety of subjects such as a critical reading of the history of the European hotel within the context of social prestige and the development of tourism; a history of the hotel lobby in terms of the filmic representation, or terms of travel and modernity; the architectonics of the hotel lobby and the way that different elements articulate a complex figure of privacy and publicity (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 1-2).

In the first essay of this book, "Beyond the Hotel Lobby: Setting the Stage for the Hotel Lobby-the Cosmos of the Hotel," Franziska Bollerey argues that the hotel lobby is "part of a highly complex system" and that it cannot be separated from the entire cosmos of the hotel neither in its function nor in its spatial disposition. After describing the genesis of the hotel, she discusses social segregation taking place in the hotel seeing it as a mirror of the urban macrocosm. Finally, she demonstrates the role the hotel has played viewing it as a "motor of urbanization, as a consequence of a growing tourism" (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 3).

In another essay entitled "Learning from Los Angeles: Hollywood Hotel Lobbies," Anne Massey considers the emergence of the new architectural form of the hotel lobby in America concerning the parallel rise in Hollywood film. She points out that the hotel lobby is a product of Western modernity. The anonymity of the hotel is a relatively recent type of architectural space that blurs boundaries between the public and the private. It is an interior form that is full of potential – an unknown place, the site of exclusion or inclusion, where public and private are divided. However, it is a particular public space that is non-domestic and private at the same time.

Furthermore, she maintains that the hotel lobby has played a central role in many Hollywood films, because it functioned as the perfect setting for encounters between strangers, and as a narrative device for character and plot development. By way of conclusion, she claims that this special space has been relatively overlooked by architectural theory (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 49-50, 57).

The third essay of this book is "The Architectonics of the Hotel Lobby: The Norms and Forms of a Public-Private Figure" by Tom Avermaete. Starting with Siegfried Kracauer's notion of the hotel lobby as a space that symbolized the cultural transformation of the modern city, as a model of modern space that provides a sense of detachment or isolation due to the

lack of connection between the users of the lobby, Avermaete analyzes the architecture elements in the hotel lobby such as the revolving doors, the halls, reception desks, stairs and elevators. He points out that the first element, the revolving door, articulates the transition between inside and outside public space and acts as a threshold. He further refers to Georg Simmel 's essay "Bridge and Door" in which the latter shows that the revolving door combines the two figures, creating an illusion of an exterior disappearing into interior, and an interior expanding out into an exterior, all in perpetual movement vis-à-vis a well-travelled bridge. It is neither door nor bridge, yet it operates as both, which turn public space inside out (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 59).

Avermaete further points out that the second element, the lobby hall, which is the main gathering and social space, acts as a room that welcomes the visitors and serves as the rest point for the guests (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 62). As for the third element, the reception desk, he maintains that it provides multiple function where necessary financial transaction take place; it plays the role of information counter and serve as a unit that controls the "passage" between the public space of the lobby and the semi-private spaces of the upstairs. It also acts as a barrier or control post along the hotel entrances and circulation ways (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 65).

The last element, the stairs and elevators, provide a connection path for hotel guests to get from one place to another, as well as to mediate the semi-public character of the lobby to the intimacy of the rooms. The elevators serve to increase circulation and improve flow of both people. Avermaete concludes that the combination of turns, corridors, reception areas, stairs and elevators lead to the architectural style of a modern hotel lobby. This architecture expresses changing ideas about tourism and its social functions, different technical developments, and typological changes, but mainly they present a new definition of the public sphere. The contours of the different public areas are defined not as an abstract theoretical structure, but rather through the concrete material articulation of elements and spaces in the hotel lobby (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 68-70).

The second section of the book comprises case studies of a wide range of hotels from different parts of the world. (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 2)

Another study in this field is "Urban Spaces: Plazas, Squares, and Streetscapes" by Chris

van Uffelen. The study discusses the design and characteristics of public urban spaces such as plazas, squares, and streetscapes. These spaces serve pedestrians and accommodate street life, representing the cities and towns. Urban spaces can function as transit or crossroads but also provide opportunities for people to linger or stage events. The design of urban spaces offers a wide range of functional and formal diversity, making it a complex task that intersects architecture, landscape design, and urban planning. The study features recent projects from all continents, showing the different approaches and solutions to this sophisticated design task at the intersection of architecture, landscape design, and urban planning.

"Prioritizing Hotel Lobby Design Factors: Perspectives of Hotel Operators in China" is a study prepared by Hwai-Te Huang and Lucky Shin-Jyun Tsaih, (2021). The study identifies and categorizes fifteen hotel lobby design characteristics as seen by Chinese hotel operators. The research rates the relevance and satisfaction levels of various design criteria, emphasizing the necessity of economic advantage, value creation, modular design, construction management, cost control, simplicity of maintenance and repair, and atmospheric design methodologies. The study also suggests that these insights serve as a reference for international hotel operators in developing business models with effective lobby design strategies. The study further discusses the attractiveness of art concepts, business model innovation, and mobile applications as quality factors in hotel lobby design, the value of theming and brand story elements, and the transformation of heritage buildings into hotels. It recommends that hotel operators in China utilize business model innovation and green values to retain their competitive edge in the global hospitality industry (Huang & Shin-Jyun Tsaih, 2021:3).

The paper highlights the importance of clear perceptions of business model innovation and the complete use of internal and external resources to achieve competitive advantage and increase revenue and customer satisfaction. It also notes that while mobile applications are an attractive design factor, their value in impressing customers is insignificant due to their prevalence in modern hotels. The paper presents the results of a study on hotel lobby design factors from the perspective of hotel operators in China. The study proposed and categorized 15 design factors, or strategies, ranking their importance and satisfaction levels. These factors or strategies are as follows:

a. Economic Advantage
b. Value Creation
c. Modular Design
d. Construction Management
e. Cost Control
f. Ease of Maintenance and Repair
g. Atmospheric Design Methods
h. Art Concepts
i. Business Model Innovation
j. Mobile Applications
k. Theming
l. Brand Story Elements
m. Green Values
n. Effective Resource Use
o. Appropriate Construction Planning and Management Decisions

These factors are categorized into different attributes of importance and satisfaction, and they highlight the need for integrating these elements to achieve competitive advantage, increase revenue, and enhance customer satisfaction in hotel lobby design. The findings highlight the significance of economic advantage, value creation, modular design, construction management, cost control, ease of maintenance and repair, and atmospheric design methods. Art concepts, business model innovation, and mobile applications were identified as attractive quality factors (Huang & Shin-Jyun Tsaih, 2021:3-4).

The study also revealed that business model innovation and green values are important for creating value and success in hotel operations. Hotel operators in China were found to disregard the importance of green values, but the paper suggests that they should focus more on global green values to enhance guest experiences and promote eco-friendliness. The results of the study provide insights for hotel operators in China and serve as a reference for international hotel operators in developing effective lobby design strategies. The study suggests that future studies should include discussions on managerial implications and holistic hotel lobby design to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. It recommends further research on the integration of business model innovation and green

values in hotel lobby design to enhance value creation and success in hotel operations (Huang & Shin-Jyun Tsaih, 2021: 9-10).

The study also highlights the importance of theming and brand story elements in hotel lobby design and suggests exploring their impact on brand image and word-of-mouth publicity in the Chinese hospitality market. Furthermore, the paper suggests that future research could focus on the development of maintenance plans that consider long-term effects on decoration and the living environment, to ensure effective resource use and appropriate construction planning and management decisions. The results of this study revealed that economic advantage and value creation are "the must-be and one-dimensional aspects." Among the 15 proposed hotel lobby design factors, 6 are must-be factors. The remaining nine proposed factors are evenly scored and divided into three attributes: "attractive, one-dimensional, and indifference." The findings highlight the importance of incorporating these concepts into hotel lobby design to allow value creation, sustainable operations, and a comfortable stay for guests. Based on these results, the study recommends that hotel operators in China should "utilize these design factors wisely to retain their competitive edge in the global hospitality industry" Finally, the paper acknowledges the need for future studies to explore lobby design strategies from an international perspective, providing insights for hotel operators in China and serving as a reference for global hotel operators (Huang & Shin-Jyun Tsaih, 2021: 10).

"Characteristics of Urban Public Open Spaces based on Social Interaction (Case study: Salavatabad's 3-kilometer Route" is a case study conducted by Farzad Soltanian and Atefeh Mohammadi. (2015). This paper focuses on studying the characteristics of urban public open spaces, specifically the 3-kilometer route in Salavatabad, in the Iranian city of Sanandaj. Urban public open spaces are important for creating social interactions among citizens and are affected by social-economic changes in the city (Soltanian & Mohammadi, 2015: 553).

The research uses the documentary method to explore definitions, implications, physical characteristics, activities, and usages of urban open spaces. The study also considers people's needs and expectations of these spaces, as well as criteria and indices that affect the attraction of public open spaces from the perspective of urban developers (Soltanian & Mohammadi, 2015: 554).

The results suggest that despite some superficial imitations and improper interventions, the

physical features, and cultural, social, and economic attributes of Sanandaj city can be utilized to improve the quality and social relationships in urban public spaces, leading to a livelier urban life (Soltanian & Mohammadi, 2015: 559-562).

The art and culture theorist and critic, Siegfried Kracauer, begins his pioneering essay entitled “The Hotel Lobby” by comparing two different worlds, the real world, and the society that occupies it on the one hand. On the other hand, higher realms or societies find themselves attached to a divine, metaphysical world in which they search for an alternative to their real existence. This other world is the higher world in which they found themselves both subject to the rule of law and at the same time to the Higher Being beyond the law (Kracauer, 1995:173).

Kracauer proceeds from considering the detective story as a distorted mirror that reflects a distorted image of modern societies because it is the product of a rational process that has no purpose other than to present an accurate picture of the dominant presence or presence based on a rational existential circumstance or condition. He then bases his discussion on the idea that the hotel lobby, which frequently appears in detective novels, is an inverted image of the "house of God," meaning a church, a temple, or any place where people gather for a religious purpose such as worship (Kracauer, 1995:175).

Kracauer draws a comparison here between the two areas in which people exist and the purpose of their presence. He sees that the house of God provides the human group gathered in it (the diocese, the sect, the parishioners of the church, or the visitors of the house of worship) a purpose and meaning for life and a starting point, while the hotel lobby, on the contrary, provides the group of people that exists in it the opposite or its opposite, lack of coherence or unity and lack of purpose or goal from the beginning of their presence in it until its end (Kracauer, 1995:175).

Kracauer says that the two groups that exist in both the House of God and the hotel lobby are different in functions and goals, despite their participation in the status of equality among the members of each group, because both areas and spaces are designed to achieve this equality. In the religious group, differences disappear because of their focus on a common goal, which is God, that is, they find themselves linked to one destiny, which is their relationship with God through worship. As for the hotel lobby, the equality between the

members of the group is not based on any relationship between them and anything else. Those in the hotel lobby do not focus their attention on a specific thing, while the members of the sect in the church focus their attention on a specific and common thing. Therefore, the house of the Lord is a place to meet a specific being, but in the hotel lobby, people gather not to meet a specific person or a specific Being but to remain unknown to each other (Kracauer, 1995:179).

In both places (hotel and church or temple), people appear there as guests. Yet, while the house of God is dedicated to the service of the one who has gone there to meet his God, the hotel lobby accommodates all who go there. (Kracauer, 1995:180)

To conclude, Kracauer mapped ordinary spaces and analyzed them as parts of a wider cultural landscape of modernity. The hotel lobby was, for him, one of the spaces that epitomized the cultural transformation of the modern city, recognizable in cities such as Berlin and New York. He emphasizes this in the following description of the architectural space of the hotel lobby:

The hotel lobby accommodates all who go there to meet no one. It is the setting for those who neither seek nor find the one who is always sought, and who are therefore guests in space as such – a space that encompasses them and has no function other than to encompass them (Kracauer, 1995:175).

As Tom Avermaete argues, Kracauer describes the lobby as an exemplary modern space, where "people found themselves vis-à-vis de rien," that is, face to face with nothingness. This lack of connection, in Kracuer's view, represents the 'mere gap' into which the modern individual finds himself falling. He depicts the disconnection of the subject to the lobby space, as well as the absence of a connection between the users of the lobby. He paradoxically argues, Avermaete further maintains, that this also creates a sense of familiarity. "The knowledge that someone has occupied the space before you, and has had experiences there other than yours," Avermaete explains, "leaves in the lobby a sense of history that is both more powerful but also more alienating than a strong sense of familial history that you would find in a home. This abstract sense of strangers' pasts that fills the space adds to the powerful disconnection felt within the hotel, Kracauer argues" (Avermaete and Massey, 2013: 59).

The papers and studies that have been examined and reviewed in this section are of great value to the present study. The essays presented in the book “Hotel Lobbies and Lounges” discuss important aspects of the hotel lobby which is part of the subject of the present study. The paper "Prioritizing Hotel Lobby Design Factors” concerning hotels in China has provided the present study with some insights about the ways and methods of examining and analyzing data of different types. The research conducted by Soltanian and Mohammadi deals with urban public spaces, offering some suggestions as to how to develop and improve the functions of public spaces, which form the second part of the subject of the present study which also includes a case study. Finally, Kracauer combines the two aspects of the present thesis through his exploration of the cultural significance of the hotel lobby as a social space, in which people from different backgrounds and social classes come together, and their interactions reveal the underlying dynamics of society. Kracauer's insights and methods have been influential in the development of critical theory, and his work continues to be relevant for understanding contemporary phenomena such as globalization, urbanization, and mass culture.

One of the significant experiences that bring the public and private spaces closer and more related to each other has been that of what is called privately owned public space (also known by the acronym POPS) of New York City in the US. Under this rubric, one of the most significant public-private partnerships to obtain urban public space has been pioneered in this city. Since 1961, New York City has actively engaged the private sector in providing publicly accessible spaces through the use of density bonuses and other mechanisms. Thus, hundreds of offices and residential towers have received zoning floor area bonuses to encourage the provision of a wide variety of outdoor and indoor spaces—plazas, arcades, atriums—that are legally required to be open and accessible to the public. This experience is the subject matter of a book titled Privately Owned Public Space: The New York City Experience which was written by Harvard University professor Jerold S. Kayden in collaboration with The New York City Department of City Planning, and The Municipal Art Society of New York. The book is divided into two parts. In the first part, they examine the history, law, design, and use of the city’s privately owned public spaces, through illustrations, photographs, scaled site plans, maps, and analysis of newly assembled data. The second part is a discussion of more than 500 privately owned public spaces in the city. Each of these spaces is individually discussed to provide far-reaching comparative

information about this unique category of public space.

In his Introduction to the book, Jerold S. Kayden offers some reasons and motives behind this unique experience. “I have an abiding intellectual interest in the subject,” he writes to explain the legal aspect of the matter, “especially in the idea that law can significantly affect the design of the built environment for the benefit of society.” A second reason Kayden offers is that these spaces are important contributors to the life of cities because they are areas where accidental and planned encounters among all types of people occur, which are the very interactions that make cities a crucial part of the nation’s social policy. The third reason the author offers is the political, democratic reason. He compares these POPS to the city’s Central Park because they share the hope expressed by the designers of the park “to bring closer together poor and rich, young and old” (Kayden, 2000: viii).

This book provides designers, planners, lawyers, and academics with a greater understanding of the possibilities and problems inherent in the design, management, and enforcement of privately owned public space. It also provides public officials, private owners, and civic group representatives with the necessary knowledge about their roles in ensuring public access and vitality of such spaces. Finally, this study helps the present researcher to comprehend more completely the contribution that privately owned public space can make toward open cities in which all individuals have access to a diversity of public places. It also sheds more light on the problematic relationship between the hotel lobby as a private space and the city square as a public space, which is the subject of the present thesis.

1.4 CONCLUSION REMARKS OF LITERATURE REVIEW

The main points of the literature review can be summarized as follows:

a. The Hotel Lobby is a “part of a highly complex system” and cannot be separated from the entire cosmos of the hotel in its function or spatial disposition.

b. The Hotel Lobby is a reflection of the surrounding urban environment.

c. The lobby acts as a space where various social interactions and segregations occur, reflecting larger societal structures.

d. The new architectural form of the hotel lobby in America developed alongside the rise of Hollywood films.

e. The hotel lobby is seen as a product of Western modernity, embodying contemporary architectural trends.

f. Hotel lobbies blur the lines between public and private spaces, creating a unique interior form that is both inclusive and exclusive.

g. Hotel lobbies are often used in Hollywood films as settings for encounters between strangers and as narrative devices for character and plot development.

h. Despite their significance, architectural theory has relatively overlooked hotel lobbies.

i. The hotel lobby symbolizes the cultural transformation of the modern city, providing a sense of detachment or isolation due to the lack of connection between users.

j. The hotel lobby acts as a threshold, transitioning between inside and outside public spaces.

k. Hotel lobbies Serve as the main gathering and social space, welcome visitors, act as a rest point for guests, and enhance circulation.

l. The architectural style of modern hotel lobbies combines architectural elements (turns, corridors, reception areas, stairs, elevators).

In light of Kracauer's view of the hotel lobby as completely different from "Home" and "House of God", it can be understood that in the hotel lobby people feel like strangers having no pasts or memories, and they feel disconnected and alienated, they have no history together not like being members at families. It can be concluded that the hotel lobby is greatly similar to the public square.

Kayden in his book *Privately Owned Public Space: The New York City Experience*, emphasizes the social, political, and democratic importance of these spaces, he compares them to Central Park for their role in fostering interactions among diverse groups of people. The book is a valuable resource for understanding the complexities of designing, managing, and ensuring public access to such spaces, contributing to the broader discussion on open cities and the interplay between private and public spaces.

2. THE HOTEL LOBBY AS A PUBLIC SPACE: A TERMINOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

This chapter is dedicated to the definitions of the terms and concepts which will be used in the present thesis. It begins with definitions and explanations of the term “hotel,” its origins, and its uses. Then the term “lobby” is also defined and explained, firstly as it is used in linguistic terms, and secondly as it is seen in books and research papers dealing with architecture and urbanism. The chapter will also offer definitions of various types of space, such as urban and public spaces.

Thirdly, urban space is defined in language, terminology, and from architectural and urban perspectives. Additionally, this chapter examines the definitions of transitional spaces and their nature. By studying these definitions, it is expected to draw conclusions about the relationship between these spaces and identify their similarities and differences.

2.1 DEFINITION OF SPACE

In the Oxford dictionary “space” has different meanings. It is the area outside the earth’s atmosphere where all the other planets and stars are. It also means an amount of an area or a place that is empty or that is available for use. It is a place, especially a room or a building, that can be used for a particular purpose. (The Oxford English Dictionary, 1989: 87-88).

The concept of space has been a complex and diverse subject from philosophical and artistic perspectives. Definitions and views on space have varied in studies and theories throughout history. In his book "Timaeus," Plato described space as "a present void without specification, it is the cosmic nature that surrounds all bodies" (Arnheim, 1977: 9).

In semiotics, Khôra (also chora; Ancient Greek: χώρα) is the space that provides a place for existence. This term has been used in philosophy by Plato to refer to a receptacle (as a "third kind". (Timaeus 48e4), a space, a material substratum, or an interval. According to Plato, khôra is described as a formless interval, like non-being, situated between which the "Forms" were received from the intelligible realm (where they originally existed) and were "imitated," taking on the temporary forms of the sensible realm; it "provides space" and carries maternal connotations (like a womb or matrix) (Sallis, 2020:117).

In Jacques Derrida's brief text Khôra, he explores the idea as a radical otherness that lets existence. Like non-being, khôra is described by him as an indeterminate period during which the "Forms" leave their original condition of the intelligible world and are "imitated," becoming the fleeting forms of the sense realm. The concept provides space and is associated with motherhood, like a womb or matrix. Using deconstructionist strategies, Derrida refutes attempts to define khôra using traditional reasoning (Derrida, 1993).
Aristotle, also, considered space as a real entity despite its lack of materiality, describing it as a dynamic coherence with specific directions for places and influencing the movement of bodies within it. Abu Sina, on another note, suggested that space is the environment that contains bodies, indicating its connection to human and mental dimensions more than material ones (Sime, 1995: 27).

According to philosopher Christian Norberg-Schulz, space can be "a tangent point for the inner or outer surface of bodies," enhancing the idea of its interaction with surrounding elements. This is evident in architecture through the formal and functional integration where space is considered a focal point of events and a convergence point for various elements (Norberg-Schulz,1980:17).

From an architectural perspective, space is seen as an element inseparable from architecture and an integral part of it, achieving formal and functional coherence with architecture. The concept of space first emerged during the Renaissance era when expression was conveyed through traditional geometric dimensions and the value of space was explored through the concept of perspective. The movement of elements is determined from the viewer's perspective, while the center of events is the point of disappearance. In practical reality, space, as understood, lacks a definite form, although it has a logical framework in scientific studies; however, there is no complete coherence (Langer, 1953: 71).

Zevi finds that space, especially interior space, is the fundamental element in architecture because it acts as the dividing line between architecture and non-architecture. He believes that space, particularly interior space, has gained sensory perception and mental connection, providing functional specificity for individuals or communities. He also believed that the movement of the receiver and how they perceive space is linked to self-awareness and perception (Zevi, 1974:36).

It is worth noting that interior space may have connections with senses and emotions, giving it uniqueness and a unique experience for individuals. Despite the complexities in defining space and its function, its role remains crucial in architecture and philosophy as a concept that connects the material and spiritual dimensions of a place. The “Space” is a meaningful area that has a purposeful or related symbolic function associated with it. It is a zone of activity, individuals with a strong sense of ownership over the location. It takes on greater significance when it is found in an urban environment since it includes a wider range of users, functions, forms, and demands. "Space" may be equated with a city's "Soul"(Tuan, 1977: 8).

Space is a fundamental form that allows us to understand our external existence. Immanuel Kant proposes the notion that our viewpoint of things in space influences their shape, size, and interactions with one another. Space decides how we move and where objects are placed. As Parker points out, “Space in architecture can be defined as the three-dimensional void within a building. It is the volume that is enclosed by a building’s walls, floors, and ceilings. Space can also be defined as the position of a point or object about other points or objects. In architectural drawings, space is represented using lines, symbols, and shading” (Parker, 2023: 2).

Realspace means the actual physical space in which objects exist and can be measured. This contrasts with virtual space, which is an electronic area designed to be shown to users but not linked to the real world. Measured space is the computer's representation of physical space, and it may be used to find objects based on sensor data.

Takott Parsors have categorized spaces into five categories:

a. Pragmatic Space: The movement of the body defines this space.
b. Perceptual Space: This refers to the psychological and sensory dimensions that arise from adaptation.
c. Existence Space: This concept mostly deals with how people see their immediate surroundings.
d. Cognitive Space: This area consists of architectural spaces as well as certain physical dimensions.
e. Abstract Space: It is predicated on rational connections. (Aboud, 2008: 23,23)

2.1.1 Public and Private Spaces

A public space is a social space that is generally open and accessible to people. Roads, public squares, parks, and beaches are typically public spaces. Government buildings open to the public, such as public libraries are public spaces. Although not regarded as public space, privately owned buildings or property visible from sidewalks and public thoroughfares may affect the public visual landscape, for example, through outdoor advertising. (L. Birch, 2010:119)

Private space is the region surrounding a person which they regard as psychologically theirs. Most people value their personal space and feel discomfort, anger, or anxiety when their personal space is encroached. Permitting a person to enter personal
space and entering somebody else's personal space are indicators of the perception of the relationship between the people. An intimate zone is reserved for lovers, children, and close family members. There is another zone used for conversations with friends, chatting with associates, and group discussions; a further zone is reserved for strangers, newly formed groups, and new acquaintances; and a fourth zone is used for speeches, lectures, and theater; essentially, public distance is that range reserved for larger audiences. (L. Birch, 2010:119)

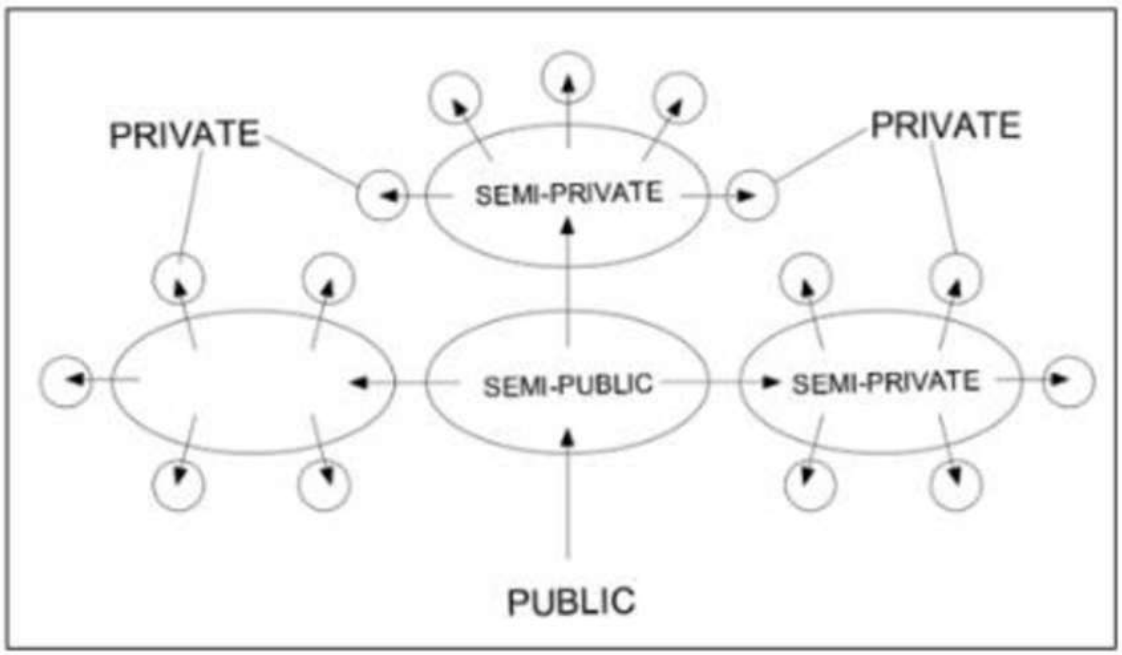


Figure 2.1: Diagram Showing Public, Semi-public, Semi-private, and Private Spaces (Redrawn Faithfully to the Original Diagram) (Trancik,1986).

2.1.2 Pops and Popos

A type of public space that requires it to be accessible to the public by a city's zoning code or other land-use laws is known as privately owned public space (POPS) or, alternately, privately owned public open spaces (POPOS). This plan permits developers to build higher-than-allowed floor areas as long as they include a public place, such as a plaza or roadway (Reeves, 2016:2)

The book which titled Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) in New York City. 1961, co-authored by the City Planning Administration, emphasizes the idea of using privately owned spaces as public spaces. New York City's zoning resolution has been applied to create public space where there wasn't. These places are located in Manhattan's most populated area, where open spaces are at a premium. Even though they are privately owned, they frequently offer significant and priceless public resources. Some of these zones, though, have shown to be problematic. Having worked with incentive zoning for almost 40 years, they believed a thorough examination of these zones was necessary (Kayden, 2000)

The history of (POPS) is linked to the history of zoning in New York City. Zoning has been the city's main tool for establishing "light and air," or a feeling of openness, at the street level since 1916. (Kayden, 2000:7)

The 1961 Zoning Resolution established public policy to support the creation of (POPS), going beyond just zoning that prioritized street-level open spaces. Two notable innovations have been integrated with this strategy. First, by encouraging private developers to operate in ways that the public sector desires rather than forcing them to, the city would utilize its zoning power positively rather than negatively. (Kayden, 2000:11)

2.1.3 Public Urban Space and Squaire

"Public space" refers to areas that are openly accessible and available to the public. It encompasses physical spaces within cities and communities that are intended for public use and enjoyment. Public spaces can include parks, plazas, sidewalks, streets, squares, markets, and other designated or designed to accommodate social interaction, recreation, and collective activities.

Lefebvre and Crawford (2004) both highlight how essential public space is as a place for daily activity. An everyday space, which is created ad hoc between the clearly defined and less clearly defined domains of home (private or first places), institutions (public or second places), and workplaces (third places), is the link between everyday life and urban design (Crawford, 2004). The life of routine public activities what Michel de Certeau (1984) has referred to as the "practice of everyday life", is the underlying premise of such a place. Studies in everyday urbanism try to restore the long-neglected link between the public domain and the human significance of ordinary urban landscapes through the concept of daily space.

Natalia Mezentseva and Maria Palchuk 2016 Provide An overview of international conceptions of urban public space presented in this paper, along with various methods, developments, and assignments related to the study of urban public spaces in Ukraine using a human geography perspective.

The study emphasizes that public spaces are not a placeless phenomenon, and their development is influenced by local traditions, culture, available resources, and forms of regulation (Mezentseva & Palchuk, 2016: 19). The authors argue that the loss of public space is a result of various factors such as changes in residents' lifestyles, increased levels of urbanization, suburbanization, the development of electronic social networks, and social segregation. These processes often lead to the transformation of public spaces into commercial corridors or parking lots, reducing their accessibility and functionality. The paper also discusses the importance of public spaces as key objects for urban activities and the decline in public life and communicability in society due to the loss of public spaces (Mezentseva & Palchuk, 2016: 25).

The study highlights the need to analyze contemporary conceptualizations of public spaces in foreign discourse and explore the results of the study in post-socialist countries, where public spaces were historically controlled and restricted. According to architectural theorists, urban space has been defined as distinct processes that exist for different sorts of spaces between buildings and are linked with various activities. Krier (1979) describes urban space, for example, as being impacted by the design approach or the geometrical and aesthetic qualities of the nearby buildings, such as commuting to work or shopping (Krier,1979:15). The spectator can better understand it because of these features clarity.

Urban space is defined as a meeting and gathering place for a group of individuals outside the home or workplace (Francis et al., 2012:401). This enhances the role of interaction among individuals from the public regarding communication and proximity. Some see urban space as an "artifact of urbanization," meaning that as cities and societies grow, they become more complex (Hussein, 2008:24).

Aldo Rossi emphasized that urban space is a significant part of the urban fabric, noting its fixed characteristics and spatial organization. He described a city as a collection of surfaces, highlighting the distinctive features of urban space (Rossi, 1982: 62).

Salingaros believes that architecture is a visible extension of the human intellect and characterizes modern urban space as fundamentally linked to the information domain. By focusing on the content and information communicated by local nodes like trees, street furniture, and sidewalks as well as the surrounding surfaces represented by building facades, this space improves human perceptions and interactions. It is essential to create touch with the surrounding surfaces, however, it may be visual, auditorially, or physical. People are compelled to leave an unfamiliar place when there is no such interaction (Salingaros, 1999: 29).

Contemporary architectural buildings are not just forms that create urban spaces against a certain background. Instead, they transform the boundaries between interior design and exterior space into points of contact through interstitial spaces, facilitating access to interior spaces (transitional spaces), enhancing functional flow, and organizing spatial arrangements. This integration leads to a blend of the stable elements represented by architecture with the unstable dynamics of external movement, achieving continuity through new formative relationships and tectonic shapes. This results in a contemporary model characterized by the presence of functional and structural contact points with specific dynamics between the interior space of interactions and the visible spatial environment (architecture) (Haupt, 2016: 76, 80).

As a result, the idea of unified urban design (Unitary Urban Design) characterizes modern urban environments as flowing, with no distinct demarcation between the interior and the exterior of the modern building. This contributes to the attribute of extension by causing a phenomenon of mixing and connecting (Haupt, 2016: 76, 80).

For most of the 20th century, the connection between constructed and unbuilt land was expressed using the idea of coverage. To graphically depict coverage as the distribution of

constructed mass and open space, Colin Rowe used figure-ground analysis. Using this depiction, he was able to decipher two competing theories that are at the core of both conventional and contemporary planning: the latter is dominated by bulk intersected by voids, while the former is defined by an accumulation of solids in an unending floating emptiness.

According to Hazem (1988), urban spaces, regardless of their activity, are classified into two sections: “Static Space and Dynamic Space”.

a. Static Space is characterized by its association with a specific spatial location and its defined geometric shape, either regular or irregular, centered around a focal point. It features an enclosed or partially enclosed form and is often found in internal courtyards. This type of space is commonly found in Islamic Arab cities.
b. Dynamic Space is characterized by movement, directionality, and continuity. It is found in modern cities (Hazem, 1988: 5).

Based on their capacity, urban areas are divided into two primary categories according to Krier (1979):

a. Enclosed spaces: Enclosed spaces are those surrounded by clusters of buildings. An example of this is Piazza Navona in Rome, which is surrounded by historical buildings, giving it a unique character, and making it a hub for social and cultural life.

b. Open Spaces: Wide open spaces include squares that are surrounded by natural landscapes or clusters of buildings but offer a sense of expansiveness and openness (Krier, 1979).

Carmona and others categorized urban spaces in 2008 based on their function into several types:

a. Positive Space: Public areas suitable for positive activities, managed as open spaces. These include squares, open natural spaces, and semi-natural areas like parks.

b. Negative Space: Public areas unsuitable for comfortable public activities, such as abandoned spaces lacking community support and safety (Eriawan, 2003: 2).

Tranick (1986) categorizes urban spaces into five types based on their functionality:

a. Open Space in Front of the Main Entrance: These spaces serve as transitional areas

between private and public domains, including forecourts, niches, lobbies, and front yards.

b. Inner Block Voids: Semi-private spaces within urban blocks that facilitate movement and social interactions among residents.

c. Squares and Urban Plazas: Central public spaces that historically served social and functional roles, but their importance has diminished in contemporary times.

d. Public Parks and Gardens: Green urban areas designed for recreation and to introduce natural elements into the cityscape.

e. Linear Open Space Systems: Networks of open spaces like riverfronts and greenways that connect different city parts and integrate natural and urban environments (Tranick, 1986:103).

Access and linkages are crucial for easy connectivity between urban areas, while comfort and image play a role in determining public space usage based on safety, cleanliness, aesthetics, and scale. These classifications illustrate the diverse functions and qualities of urban spaces, supporting social interaction, leisure, and urban connectivity.

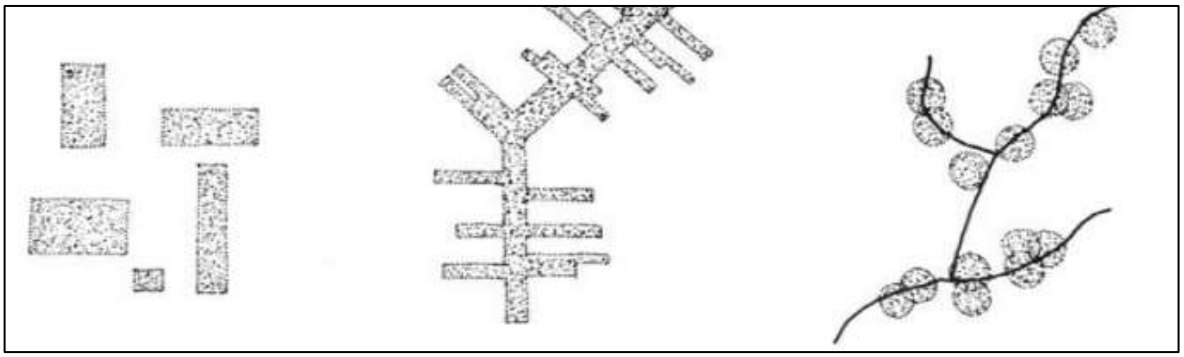


Figure 2.2: Spatial Linkage (Trancik, 1986: 99).

In his discussion of the qualities of urban space, McCluskey addresses the relationship between mass and space, focusing on elements such as building facades, street width, and the continuity of urban space (e.g., defining intersections of movement paths, defining street continuity through urban containment, and building height corresponding to the width of the path to achieve containment) (McCluskey, 1979:92).

Rowe in his 1976 book "Collage City" and his essays labeled "Grid / Frame / Lattice / Web,"

discussed the way mass and space interact to build urban fabric. He focused on the city's structural components, such as edge, pattern, and texture, examining the city as a response to formalism in urban planning and considering social ties.

He focused on using facades to define spatial boundaries and show the connections between buildings and urban spaces to create spatial confinement, he emphasized the need to extend space and link buildings to the ground (front, rear, and corner structures). This method raises structures on columns to reflect texture in designs (Rowe, 1978: 108-110).

Using these characteristics as a guide, he examined the city and observed that social and economic factors should not be divorced from urban planning. The height of the surrounding buildings and human scale define the scale of a metropolitan area. Furthermore, the layout of urban space should provide a variety of layouts that are appropriate for the location's characteristics and distinctiveness (Ibrahim, 1986: 232).

To find shared characteristics between hotel lobbies and public squares it is useful to provide definitions of the term “Square”.

“Squares are places of social interaction, destinations for communal experiences and expression. Squares become depositories of a collective memory that evolve to being synonymous with a city, for example, St Peter’s Square in Rome, Trafalgar Square in London, or the Piazza del Campo in Siena. A square is a place where people can freely congregate. It is a space to visit, to walk through, to experience events, to sit, and relax. Importantly a square need not be a rectilinear form and it need not be enclosed.” (Burns, 2020:2).

Public squares or plazas are crucial components of urban design, coming in various shapes and sizes. They provide an effective setting for public and commercial buildings within cities. A square or plaza serves both as an area enclosed by buildings and as a space designed to showcase these buildings to their best advantage (Moughtin, 2003:78).

Squares serve as focal points for social and cultural life in a city. The distinctive interaction between the open space of the square, the surrounding architecture, and the sky above creates a profound emotional experience, akin to the impact of a significant work of art (Donald, Alan, and Robert, 2003).

2.1.4 Definition of Transitional Space

The word “Transition” in the Oxford dictionary means the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another, for example, a transition between A and B.

The following paragraphs define the meaning of “Transition Spaces” in architecture:

In-between spaces can be interpreted in multiple ways. Nooraddin (1998, 2002) defines these spaces as the connection between indoor and outdoor areas. These transitional spaces are crucial in urban design, shaping city forms, and should be carefully considered by urban designers. The term 'in-between space' is widely used by academics and practitioners (Anderson 1991; Gehl 1996; Hajer and Reijndorp 2001; Hillier and Hanson 1984; Skjaeveland and Garling 1997; Stevens 2007; Dovey and Polakit 2007), who variously describe it as an interface, a public/private boundary, a threshold, a soft edge, a liminal space, a buffer zone, or a smooth/striated space.
These spaces, positioned between indoor and outdoor environments, can be ambiguous and do not completely belong to either realm or any distinct third category. (Grosz, 2001: 90–93), referencing Plato, calls it a ‘choric’ space, while Henri Bergson defines it as a 'space of becoming and movement.' It serves as a mediation space without a distinct form or identity, existing between and adjusting the relationships of other spaces. In-between spaces lack their boundaries and are shaped by the entities on either side. Nevertheless, they provide opportunities for social, cultural, and natural transformations, fostering various virtual and potential possibilities. Their temporary and adaptable nature allows for diverse encounters and personalization (Can & Heath, 2016:32-33).

Singh in her dissertation defined the transition spaces in architecture as A case that emerges between two spaces, and it is characterized as a link or connecting space. Transition spaces are essential to an architectural layout. In most architectural designs, transitional and circulation spaces such as stairwells, atriums, and corridors must be included. However, the proportion of these areas may differ depending on the style and purpose of the structure. Additionally, their functionality varies based on the user's needs or the building's appropriate requirements (Singh, 2025: 5).

A transition space, also known as a space in between or a third space, is a physical space

between the outside and the inside realms. It is recognized as a "buffer zone" or a route from the interior to the exterior. They serve as a physical link as well as a buffer area. In addition to serving as the building's circulation lines, building designers place a high value on the aesthetics, comfort, and safety of these areas, as well as their ability to serve as exits in the case of an emergency (Singh, 2015: 8).

“The transition space, therefore, is neither wholly private nor public, neither external nor internal. It can be defined as an indefinite zone, which is defined by the relationship of the existing extreme zones (internal v/s external and private v/s public)” (Singh, 2015: 8).

These spaces are more than just corridors; they may also function as settings for reflection, interaction, and sensory enjoyment. In his book "The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses," in 2005, architectural theorist Juhani Pallasmaa discusses the important role of sensory experiences in architecture's intermediate spaces (Pallasmaa, 2012: 24).

The term "transitional" is often used to describe the foyer, lobby, and entrance also it can be used to describe urban public spaces such as squares, plazas, or even streets as a case of architectural and urban design. In such a situation, for example, the lobby serves as a transitional zone that allows the movement and transition of users from outside to the inside of a building.

2.2 DEFINITIONS OF THE HOTEL AND THE LOBBY

2.2.1 Hotel

A hotel is defined by Cyril M. Harris’s “Dictionary of Architecture and Construction” as “a building in which lodging and other services, often board, are provided primarily to transients and, less often, to permanent residents” (Harris, 2006: 519).

The term "Menzil" originates from the Arabic root "nezele" and refers to a place for lodging, a distance between lodgings, a stop along a journey, a Tatar mansion, a post-station where horses are kept, a house, or simply a distance. Menzils were primarily established for military and administrative purposes, providing accommodation for officials traveling for official communications and transportation (Açıkel, 2004:2-4).

Monasteries, on the other hand, were religious buildings set up in rural or mountainous areas for Christian clergy or devout individuals seeking solitude from urban life to focus on worship. These places also hosted travelers, courtesy of priests or religious representatives (Mihlayanlar & Aydın, 2017:54).

In his book Geschichte des Deutschen Hotels (History of the German Hotel, 1961), Moritz Hoffmann defines the hotel as a luxurious venue offering accommodation and dining services, characterized by its exceptional architectural and interior design. Typically, hotels operate, within a single building and have a substantial number of beds available. A hotel should include a public lobby or a communal area like a reading or writing room, while the dining or breakfast area is primarily reserved for hotel guests. The building itself must adhere to current technical and sanitary standards. Staffing should consist only of well-trained personnel, especially for establishments hosting international guests who require multilingual staff. Additionally, there should be sufficient personnel with the necessary language skills for guests from different countries. An information desk should be available for both incoming and departing guests. Hotels are also required to provide night services (Hoffmann, 1961: 7).

Hotels come in various types, each catering to the different needs and preferences of travelers:

Chain hotels, like those under Hilton and Marriott, offer a range of brands and services. Motels, designed for motorists, feature rooms accessible directly from parking areas. Resorts provide all-inclusive services, while inns offer a cozy, often family-owned experience with fewer amenities. All-suite hotels feature spacious suites with kitchens and separate living areas, attracting guests seeking longer stays. Conference hotels combine lodging with extensive meeting spaces, and extended-stay hotels cater to guests needing accommodations for extended periods, complete with kitchen facilities. Boutique hotels are smaller, stylish properties with personalized services, often located in trendy areas. Eco-friendly hotels focus on sustainability, and casino hotels offer on-site gambling and entertainment. Pop-up hotels provide short-term, trendy accommodations, while roadhouses and gastro hotels cater to specific interests like location or food. Micro hotels have small, efficient rooms, transit hotels serve travelers at airports, and heritage hotels are in historically significant buildings. Hostels

offer budget-friendly, dormitory-style accommodations and unique concept hotels provide extraordinary experiences, such as ice or underwater stays. (Campbell, 2023)

2.2.2 Lobby

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word "lobby" refers to a hallway or hall that connects a larger space or set of rooms and serves as a passageway or waiting area. Alternatively, it is a big area within the door of a public building where people can gather and wait. The term "lobby" came from the Medieval Latin lobia, laubia, or lobium (Encyclopædia Britannica, 1911: 836).

The Lobby is a large hall used as a foyer (like in a hotel or theater), a public hall where people can meet and speak with Members of Parliament, or a group of people attempting to influence politicians on a particular issue are examples of legislative chamber anterooms. One of the two anterooms of a British parliamentary chamber is where members go to vote during a division. Consequently, the political definition of the term "lobby" or "lobbying" refers to an organized endeavor by a group of individuals to influence politicians on a particular subject. Lobbying is typically connected with politics and government, as interest groups attempt to convince politicians and alter public policy. Lobbying organizations engage in activities such as advocacy, persuasion, and information dissemination to influence political decision-making processes (Berry, 2015:115).

In public relations and communication, lobbying has close ties to public relations and communication strategies. Lobbying organizations often employ public relations techniques to shape public opinion, build relationships with key stakeholders, and effectively convey their messages and policy positions (Waterhouse, 2015: 49).

In philosophy, the term "lobby" typically refers to a physical space within a building, often near the entrance, where people wait or gather. It is not commonly used in philosophical discourse. The concepts of space, architecture, and the environment can be relevant in philosophical discussions. Philosophers such as Martin Heidegger and Gaston Bachelard have explored the significance of space and place in our understanding of existence, perception, and lived experiences. The concept of space, place, or spatiality lies at the heart of Martin Heidegger's thought, as he presents it in his book "Being and Time." It is central in his philosophy of "Dasein," the German word he uses to mean "to exist" or "to be there,

to be here," that is to be existent in time and space, which is the world humans live in (Inwood, 1997: 22). In his "Building Dwelling Thinking," Heidegger points out that not all buildings are designed for dwelling, and he looks into the relation between dwelling and building and explains what it means to dwell, how building relates to dwelling and allows for it. As he puts it, "Dwelling would in any case be the end that presides over all building. Dwelling and building are related as end and means" (Heidegger, 1971: 144).

He looks at the origins of the German word "bauen" – "to build" and points out that it has lost its original meaning of "being" in a certain place. Heidegger further maintains that how we dwell is how we are, we exist, on the face of the earth – an extension of our identity, of who we are. Since dwelling relates to how we exist, our "being in the world", Heidegger holds that problems of the building are essentially problems of dwelling. The building is, in fact, a dwelling, and with dwelling being how human beings exist on earth building as a dwelling is something that nurtures things, natural or man-made (Heidegger, 1971: 144).

Dwelling according to Heidegger is to remain in place and to be situated in a certain relationship with existence, a relationship which is characterized by nurturing, enabling the world to be as it is. In Heidegger's own words: "The basic character of dwelling is to spare, to preserve… dwelling itself is always a staying with things. Dwelling, as preserving, keeps fourfold in that with which mortals stay in things" (Heidegger, 1971: 149).

Accordingly, the relation between man and space takes on the form of dwelling. A building is what allows for a sense of place in which dwelling occurs. A bridge stretched across a river, Heidegger argues, provides such a sense of space.

The relationship between man and space is none other than dwelling, strictly thought and spoken. When we think, in the manner just attempted, about the relation between location and space, but also the relation of man and space, light falls on the nature of the things that are locations and that we call buildings (Heidegger, 1971:155).

Gastone Bachelard in his book "The Poetics of Space" in 1994, applies the method of phenomenology to architecture, basing his analysis on lived experience within architectural spaces and their relationships with nature. He focuses especially on the personal, emotional response to buildings both in life and in literary works. In this, he is led to consider spatial types such as the attic, the cellar, drawers, and the like. In his Forward to the 1994 edition of

The Poetics of Space, the historian John R. Stilgoe discusses the importance of Bachelard's examination of the meaning of domestic space represented by the house, its interior places, and its outdoor contexts (Bachelard, 1994: vii). According to Stilgoe, Bachelard "offers ways of interpreting not only the most contemporary office towers, shopping malls, and condominium complexes but the most ancient of houses as well" (Bachelard, 1994: ix).

Bachelard explores the psychological and poetic aspects of our relationship with different spaces, including houses, rooms, and landscapes. While he doesn't specifically discuss lobbies, his work investigates the philosophical significance of our interactions with architectural spaces.

The importance of Bachelard's concepts for architects is found in his subtly encouraging them to base their work on the sensory impact of their designs as opposed to impersonal guidelines that could or might not influence viewers and users of architecture. He states the following:

Sometimes the house of the future is better built, lighter, and larger than all the houses of the past so that the image of the dream house is opposed to that of the childhood home…. Maybe it is a good thing for us to keep a few dreams of a house that we shall live in later, always, so much later that we shall not have time to achieve it. For a final house, one that stood in symmetrical relation to the house we were born in, would lead to thoughts serious, sad thoughts and not to dreams. It is better to live in a state of impermanence than in one of finality (Bachelard, 1994: 61).

The Lobby in architecture is a hall or a space that is typically located near the entrance of a public building. It can be customized according to the type of use or according to the type of building, for example, in hotels. The reception room in the hotel is one of the most important contents of the lobby. The lobby is an important way to create the first impression of every building, so the designer should know how to use this important space if he or she seeks to influence users (Sully, 2022: 1).

Ana G. Cañizares in her book "Lobby and Lounge" explores the design and function of lobbies and lounge spaces. She mentions that a lobby in architecture serves multiple functions and can have various characteristics depending on the building type and purpose.

The lobby nowadays is more than just a practical space. It has become an interactive space It can contain resting places that allow people to meet and make friends, as well as keep people's memories. In the past, the importance of this lobby was underestimated. It was only used as a waiting area and transit lane. The lobby space includes foyers, entrances, halls, and security screening areas at the entrance. Lobbies aim to welcome visitors and hotel tenants, and they also help them access control and exit routes (Connors, 2017:1).

“The lobby of a hotel is often the hub from which all other major public areas radiate. Many of the daily business transactions and other activities involving the guest during his visit bring him through this place of transition. As a main circulation space, the lobby should be conveniently located near elevators, restrooms, and all other secondary areas lobby design provides the first opportunity for the hotel to present its identity to guests. It could be theme-oriented, small, and intimate, large, and glamorous, modern, or traditional. Aside from guest rooms, the foyer is frequently the most visited place in the hotel" (Baucom, 1996: 159).

A lobby is a Space in a building where people enter from the exterior. It's also known as a foyer, reception room, or entry hall. It is frequently a huge space or group of rooms (in a theater, opera house, music hall, showroom, cinema, etc.). The hotel lobby is one of the most significant rooms or locations in the hotel (with the apparent exception of the guest rooms itself), as it is the first area customers encounter upon arrival. Furthermore, upon arrival, lobbies serve as a point of contact between guests and hotel workers. Aside from that, hotel owners have spent considerable sums remodeling lobbies (Nanu et al., 2020: 22), amounting to $6.85 billion in 2017.

Steven in 2021 defined the hotel lobby and said: “The hotel lobby is the nerve center of almost any hotel. It’s where guests come to check-in and check-out, pose questions to the front desk staff or concierge, wait for taxis or shuttles, and engage in a whole host of other activities. A vibrant and aesthetically pleasing hotel lobby layout sets the tone for a guest’s entire experience at a property and can help make a lasting positive impression” (Williams, 2023: 3).

"The lobby in a hotel is the primary public space and serves as the main entrance area where guests are welcomed. It’s the initial touchpoint, setting the tone for a guest’s entire stay. Typically, it houses the reception desk, the place where visitor’s check-in and check-out, as

well as make inquiries or address concerns" (Williams, 2023: 2).

The lobby is the first place a visitor experiences a building, but quite often this space is confusing and intimidating in its effort to serve a multitude of The hotel lobby is an important place as important as the lobby of the temple, and this increased after the architects focused on paying attention to this space because it is a facade that gives the first impression not only in the hotel but in all kinds of buildings, as it has multiple functions from being a corridor to cross to the rest of the hotel (Williams, 2023: 3).

The lobby in the office is a place to attract customers, not just a corridor.

2.3 SUMMARY OF THE DEFINITIONS AND EVALUATION

From studying the definitions of terms starting with the meaning of public and private spaces in architecture, it has been concluded that a hotel lobby can simultaneously exhibit the characteristics of both types of spaces. It is a semi-public space containing the properties of a public space, as it is a place where strangers can meet, and social interaction may or may not occur among them.

From studying the different types of hotels and reviewing some examples that illustrate hotel designs, various types of hotel lobbies have been identified, which differ depending on the type of hotel, its purpose, and the categories it serves. Some hotels have lobbies that are open to the outside and connected with external activities, serving the surrounding neighborhoods. Others have closed lobbies whose services are only for the hotel itself. Some types of hotels do not emphasize the lobby, focusing instead on guest rooms and their services.

This exploration reveals that hotel lobbies can serve multiple roles. The design of hotels with open lobbies often integrates the lobby with outdoor spaces, creating a seamless transition between inside and outside. These lobbies become vibrant social hubs, not just for hotel guests but also for the local community, promoting interaction and engagement. Hotels with closed lobbies design these spaces to offer privacy and exclusivity. Such lobbies cater specifically to hotel guests, providing a quiet, secure environment free from the bustle of public spaces. This approach is often found in luxury hotels or resorts that emphasize providing a tranquil, intimate atmosphere.

Some hotels, particularly those catering to business travelers or budget-conscious guests,

might prioritize functionality over grandeur. In these cases, the lobby is designed to be efficient and straightforward, focusing more on practical aspects such as quick check-ins and easy access to guest rooms and essential services, rather than serving as a social space.

Upon analyzing the term "lobby" and comparing it with squares and other public spaces, several connections and similar characteristics have been discovered. Lobbies and public spaces serve as centers for people to gather and interact, fostering social interaction. They are easily accessible, open to a wide range of users, and have several uses. While plazas host markets, festivals, and entertainment events, lobbies frequently serve as welcome areas, gathering places, and even cafés. Each of them focuses a strong emphasis on design and aesthetics, crafting aesthetic places with lighting, décor, and comfort.

Hotel lobbies and public spaces have a basic attraction founded in their definitions and roles as meeting places, even when distinct in their functions and contexts. They both work as transition spaces fostering interaction, social connection, and engagement within their contexts.

The similarity of the hotel’s lobby to the public spaces can be withdrawn from their definitions:

A hotel lobby, defined as a large hall used as a foyer, is a space where guests are welcomed, registered, and oriented within the hotel. It serves multiple purposes: a reception area, a meeting point, and a social hub. The lobby should be inviting and functional, providing a first impression of the hotel's ambiance and hospitality. Its spatial design often emphasizes accessibility, comfort, and aesthetic appeal to enhance the guest experience. Similarly, public spaces are places like parks, squares, and streets open to all community members. These spaces are meant for public usage, encouraging civic engagement, social contact, and community involvement. Public spaces are inclusive and visible providing a setting for a variety of activities from demonstrations about politics to social events.

According to the definitions of the terminology in this chapter, it was concluded that:

Hotel lobbies and public spaces are similar in that they are both constructed with accessibility and human interaction in mind. Whether they are community members going about their daily business in public or hotel guests looking for comfort and convenience.

Both public spaces and hotel lobbies are intended to be places of social interaction and gathering. Like public spaces like parks, plazas, and squares, which are meant for social events and community meetings, hotel lobbies offer spaces for guests to gather, unwind, and connect.

As public places can add to a city's identity and aesthetic appeal, hotel lobbies must be designed to provide a good first impression. While public spaces draw attention to a city's social and cultural characteristics, hotel lobbies exhibit the unique personality of the hotel. Both types of spaces reflect the identity and ambiance of their respective contexts.

Public spaces and hotel lobbies have several purposes. To accommodate a range of activities and demands, lobby spaces might contain lounges, security checks, reception rooms, and waiting areas. In a similar vein, public spaces can serve a variety of functions for the community by hosting gatherings, leisure pursuits, and regular social interactions.

Hotel lobbies are primarily designed for hotel guests and visitors; in contrast, public spaces are accessible to the public. This distinction has an impact on the space's design and regulations as public spaces must serve different kinds of public purposes and connect to a wider range of users.

From the scale and context hotel lobbies are typically enclosed spaces within a building, contributing to the internal flow and experience of the hotel. Public spaces, however, are part of the urban fabric and can span large areas, integrating with streets, buildings, and natural elements. This difference in context and scale affects how each space is used and perceived.

The term "transitional" is often used to describe the foyer, lobby, and entrance also it can be used to describe urban public spaces such as squares, plazas, or even streets as a case of architectural and urban design. In such a situation, for example, the lobby serves as a transitional zone that allows the movement and transition of users from outside to the inside of a building. The lobby functions as a physical transition zone for guests moving from the outside, such as the street or entrance area, to the inside of the building. It produces a buffer zone that helps users acclimate to the sudden change in environment, allowing them to transit from the outside to the controlled interior space.

It can serve as a social transition space, where people gather, interact, and meet before

dispersing to different areas of the building. It may include seating arrangements, lounge areas, or meeting points that encourage social interaction and facilitate connections among building users.

In summary, the design and function of a hotel lobby are influenced by the hotel's overall concept and target clientele, ranging from open, community-oriented spaces to exclusive, guest-focused environments, and even minimalistic, function-driven designs.

3. HISTORY OF HOTELS AND PUBLIC SPACES

3.1 HISTORY OF HOTELS

Throughout human history, the innate instinct to protect oneself has driven the necessity for shelter. Spaces have thus represented the concept of accommodation, whether in the places people live or travel to.

Various names like ribat, caravanserai, inn, hostel, monastery, hotel, etc., have been used to describe accommodation structures, depending on factors such as their region, culture, language, function, and historical context. The hospitality industry consists of tourist facilities and organizations that offer a variety of services, involving the provision of rooms and prefabricated dwellings under a short-term lease agreement. It is a commercial institution that offers a mixture of uniform services, or classic Balmfoom (Khenifer, Al-Sarabi, 2011: 20).

Levy-Bonvin in his article studied the history of hotels as intimately linked to the history of civilizations. Or, more accurately, it is a part of that history. Since early biblical times, there have been facilities that provide visitor hospitality. The hotel used to be known by several names, including "hostel," "Khan," "Agency," and "Bar." These organizations are diverse, have multiplied throughout the globe, and are important elements of the travel and tourism industries in each nation, employing a certain proportion of the workforce at a set salary. The Lascaux caves in France, which were constructed to welcome members of neighboring tribes, are credited with starting the hotel industry's early history about 15,000 BCE. In classical antiquity, people seeking peace and relaxation frequented Greek and Roman baths (Levy-Bonvin, 2003: 2).

3.1.1 Greek Thermal Baths

The Greeks built thermal baths in communities for rest and rehabilitation.

The first study of Greek baths was conducted in 1962 and was titled "Balaneutiké". It was authored by René Ginouvès in the same year. In this study, he compiled all the archaeological, textual, and artistic evidence that led us to a comprehensive understanding of these baths.

Subsequent studies have provided more than 75 examples of Greek baths, which have facilitated an understanding of the history and nature of these buildings (Manderscheid, 2000: 534).

In the mid-1980s, some scholars discussed the development of Greek baths and their potential influences on their origins in Sicily and Southern Italy. Greek vessels often depicted bathing scenes and served as a primary source for studying them. Specifically, the study of bathing customs was greatly informed by these images, which portrayed the daily life of people at that time, reflecting the reality of their era (Fournet & Redon, 2009).

Ancient baths in Athens, Greece, are the earliest baths discovered and recorded. They were built in the early part of the 5th century BCE. Athens is renowned for the quantity of baths it could house. Most of these baths were located far from the city center, beyond the city walls. Baths were first privately held for personal gain during the Hellenistic era. Later, they were taken over by the government and managed by the balaneion (Trümper, 2013: 37–40). The baths in Sicily are located in Syracuse and date back to the mid-3rd century BCE. They are almost identical in their layouts. The North Baths in Morgantina are indeed the best-preserved, most advanced, and most elaborately decorated baths in the Greek world. They consist of 11 rooms, including bathing areas, service facilities, a central furnace, a large reservoir, and a service corridor. The building is divided into two distinct zones: a hygienic bathing area and a leisure bathing area with hot water. Each zone has a separate entrance and is situated on either side of a large furnace that heats the water in the tholos. The baths also feature a central channel to draw hot air inward efficiently. The construction of the top of the furnace prevents access between rooms 5 and 8, effectively dividing the building into two separate sections to segregate users based on gender, social class, or other criteria of that time (Lucore, 2016: 332).

The Greek baths in the north were roofed using a dome over the tholos and two barrel-vaulted rooms constructed from interconnected hollow terracotta tubes. This roofing method, according to current evidence, was invented specifically for baths and reflects advancements in science and technology in the Syracuse region under the rule of Hieron II in the third century BCE. This ingenious roofing type is considered a new chapter in the history of Greek architectural engineering (Tsiolis, 2013:89-111).

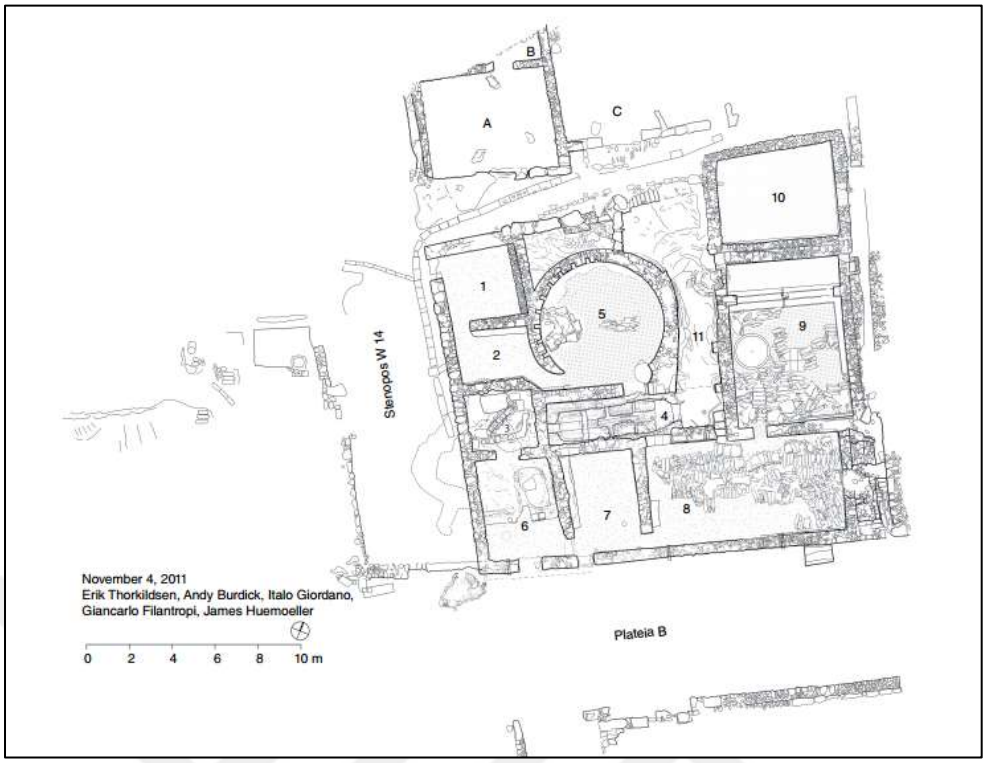


Figure 3.1: North Baths, Morgantina, plan. (E. thorkildsen of the American Excavations at Morgantina). (Lucore, 2009: 333).

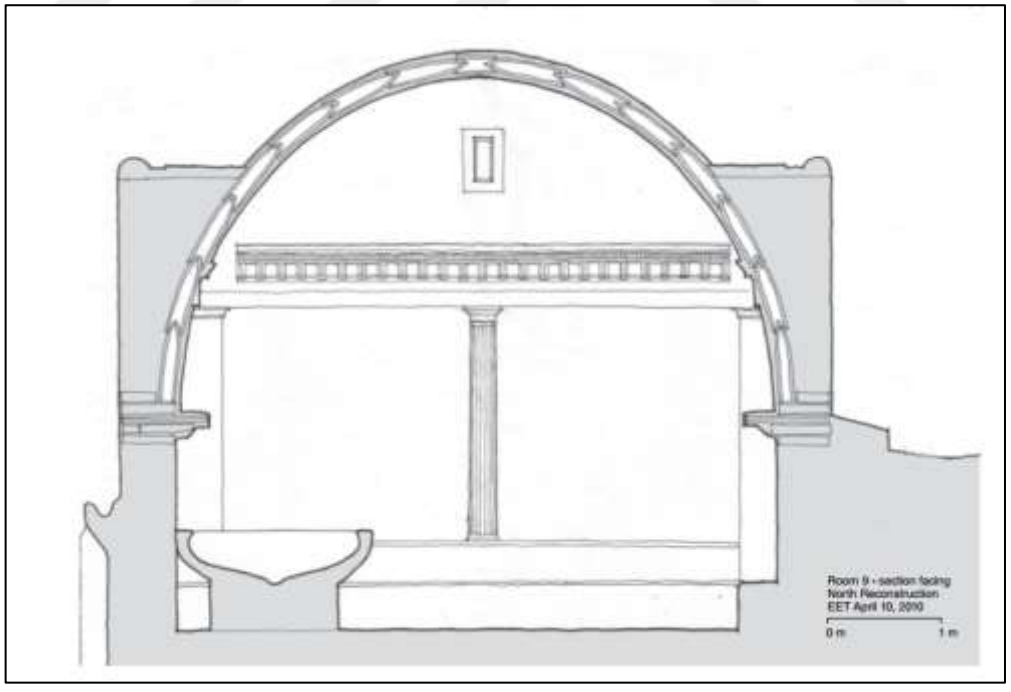


Figure 3.2: North Baths, Morgantina, the Elevation of the North end of Room 9, with Doric Column Supporting Entablature with Mixed Doric and IONIC Frieze over the Immersion Pool. (K. Lucore, 2009: 333).

In Egypt, specifically during the time of Alexander and the settling of the Ptolemies, public Greek baths were established in Alexandria, the Delta, and the Fayum. They were built in the Greek style as mentioned in the previous paragraph, and the traditional Greek bath was adapted in Egypt to suit local environmental conditions, focusing on bathing for cleanliness rather than leisure (Lucore & Trümper, 2013: 269–334). An example of Greek baths in Egypt is the Schedia Baths, which were built in the second half of the third century BCE. In the initial phase, the bath building consisted of a waiting room and two equally sized tholoi, each equipped with 15 bathing tubs and separated by a central corridor to organize the bathing facilities. This feature distinguishes Greek baths in Egypt. Water was heated on portable braziers, indicating the absence of a furnace between the tholoi. Each tholos was designated for one gender, with separate entrances and no connection between them (Meyer, 1992: 51–60).

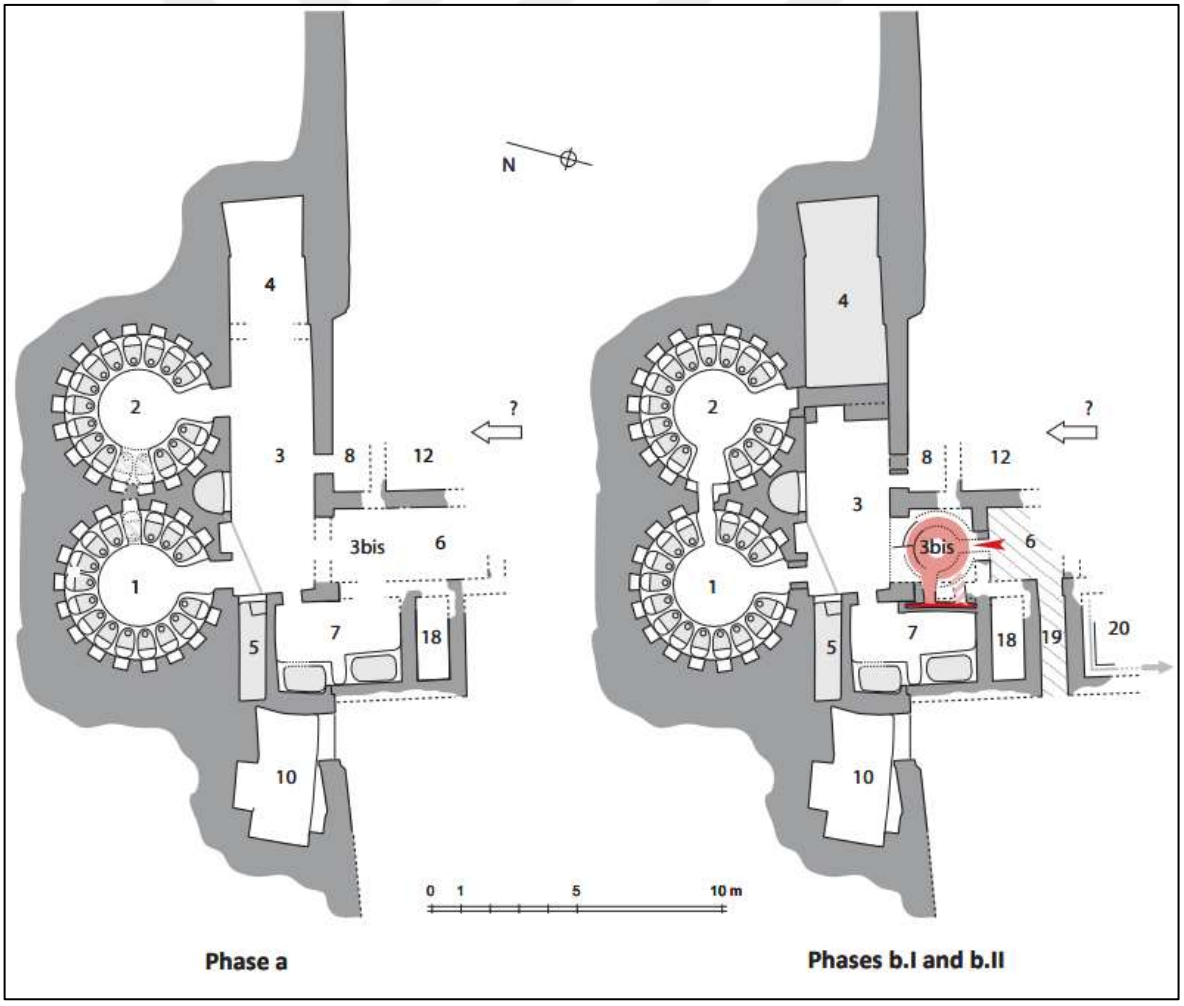


Figure 3.3: Taposiris Magna/Abusir, Baths (Lucore & Trümper, 2013: 329).

In the second century BCE, two different leisure bathing practices were prevalent in the eastern Mediterranean: individual immersion pools and circular sweat baths, both heated by hypocaust channels (Trümper, 2009: 145–149). These baths were not focused solely on cleansing but also served for leisure. These buildings included nine baths in each tholos. The heating of these baths was done through underfloor hypocaust channels. Communal bathing was uncommon during this period (Ginouvès, 1959: 22).

3.1.2 Roman Thermal Baths

The Romans constructed homes to offer lodging for official travelers. In England, Switzerland, and the Middle East, the Romans were the first to create thermal baths. Roman baths emerged in the first century BC in areas near hot springs with therapeutic properties, not in random locations according to archaeological excavations. Their number was limited because people only washed their hands, arms, and feet after work, and their entire bodies when they went to the market once a week. The increased usage of baths among people was due to doctors recommending body cleansing, along with exercise, diet, and massage for a healthy life. Baths in healing waters, believed to be beneficial for certain diseases, contributed to the growing popularity of baths among the public, becoming an important part of Roman culture in the fifth century (Okan Tur, 2023: 3).

One of the most important buildings that demonstrate the power of the emperor in the Roman Empire is the baths known as the Thermae, one of which is the Caracalla Baths, named after the emperor who built it outside the city. It was constructed in 216 by order of the emperor.

It is one of the most luxurious baths in Rome, designed to accommodate 1,600 people. It consists of a courtyard surrounded by a group of large, vaulted rooms measuring 230 by 115 meters, with utility rooms surrounded by a garden for exercise and games. The bathhouse has a large hall covered by an enormous vault with hanging windows, serving as a prototype for the vaulted naves of medieval churches. The baths also include three main rooms: a cold room, a warm room, and a tepid room, along with large outdoor swimming pools. They were adorned with marble, mosaics, sculptures, and frescoes (Okan Tur, 2023: 5).

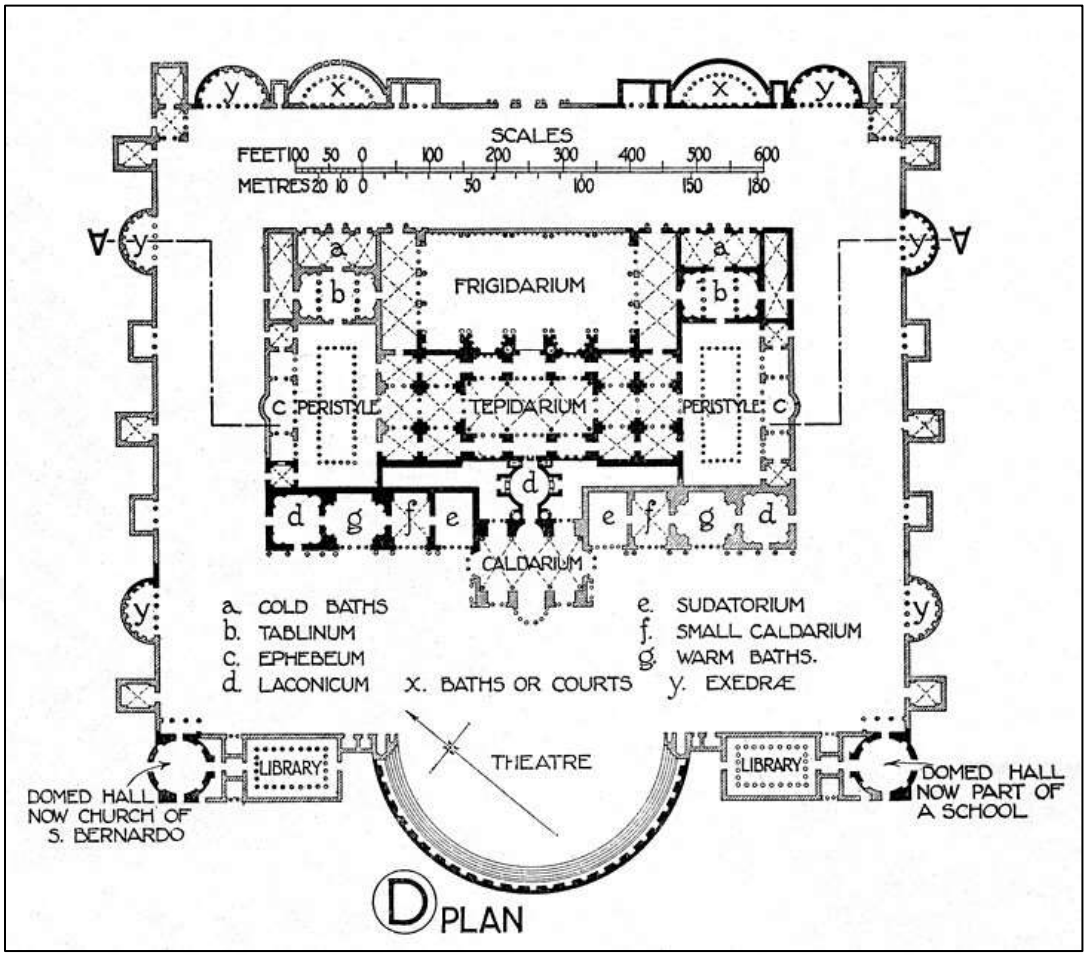


Figure 3.4: Fletcher, Banister. A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method. (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921: 105).

In the plan Frigidarium: The main cold water bathing room.

Tepidarium: The moderately heated room in the bath, used for massages.

Sudatorium: The steam bathroom.

Laconicum: A dry-hot and steamy condensation room, typically domed and circular.

Caldarium: The hottest room in the bath, with hot water pools, sitting areas, and bathrooms.

Aleipterion/Destrictarium/Unctorium: The room for hot oil massage in the baths.

Heliocaminus: A hall specially designed for sun exposure, facing south and southwest with very large windows without glass.

3.1.3 Caravanserais

Caravanserais arose in the Silk Road along the Achaemenid Empire, offering a rest stop for caravans traveling along Middle Eastern routes.

The term "caravanserai," originating from Persian, was commonly found along intercity trade routes. These caravanserais, located away from cities, offered various services like baths, places of worship, and commercial facilities to cater to the needs of travelers. It's also known that caravanserais were significant sources of revenue for the state during their time (Güran, 1976: 1).

Figure 3.5: Taşhan. Istanbul-Laleli. (Photo by the Researcher, 2024).

“Khans” or “Inns” served as roadside shelters where travelers could rest and get something to eat, functioning as places for carriages and carts to stop and for coachmen to lodge from the mid-1600s to the late 1800s (essentially, a roadside inn). This played a role in laying the groundwork for modern lodging facilities. Typically, an inn consisted of bedrooms on either side, a kitchen and living room at the front, and stables at the back, all surrounding an inner courtyard. These lodging places where carriages would stop were crucial before the advent of train travel (Atalan & Arel, 2016: 222).

Given their historical significance dating back to the early Islamic periods, khans’ buildings designed to house travelers and commerce caravans have a unique place in Islamic architectural history.

There were two types of khans: ones that were built inside cities and neighborhoods, and others that were built on roads outside of miles away cities. The center square or rectangular courtyard served as the focal point of the facilities of the caravanserais, which are characterized by their open middle and square or rectangular plan layouts found in Islamic architecture (Atalan & Arel, 2016: 222).

They often consisted of two floors and the passenger rooms were distributed between the two floors or on the upper floor only, where the lower floor was used to store goods. Watchtowers and defense towers occupy travelers and their corners. A reinforced external wall and a huge gate may surround it. The administrative rooms are located within the gate of the Al-Khan building, which was previously a highly important place. as well as safeguarding, control, and interests (Altuhafi, Alaane, F. Mahmoud, 2009, 83).

In his proposal, Robert R. Tate establishes the construction of caravanserais in Anatolia within the context of history and attributes the Seljuk court to creating them in the late 12th century. It mentions that over 200 caravanserais were constructed across Anatolia over 75 to 90 years, creating a network that facilitated trade and travel. highlights the geographic dispersion of these caravanserais, showing that they were centered around Konya in the southwest but extended far east as Lake Van and north to the Black Sea. Their dispersion shows how important these are in developing trade routes and connections between various places. serving caravan travel was the main purpose of caravanserais. It underlines that the word "caravanserai" is a translation of the Turkish word "kervansarayı," focusing on their function as rest stops for caravans and travelers. It also recognizes the use of Arabic words "funduq" and terms like "khan" or "han" which have comparable meanings but can be used differently.

While Seljuk caravanserais and similar buildings in the region known as the Near East have been studied, their exact nature has yet to be fully understood. Traditional interpretations have frequently depicted them as humanitarian institutions primarily meant to house travelers. However, he proposes that these buildings served more than primarily housing uses. The caravans had a vital role in management, control, and economic expansion, as well as connecting areas for numerous functions associated with the overthrow of state power in rural Anatolia, rather than only serving as places to stop for travellers (Tate, 2009, 5).

3.1.3.1 Murjan Khan

Murjan Khan is a famous caravanserai in Iraq's capital city, Baghdad. It was constructed during the Ottoman Middle Ages and at present, part of the city's culture and heritage. Caravanserais were used as rest stops for merchants and travelers passing through Iraq. Khan Murjan's design includes traditional Ottoman architectural characteristics such as large arches and decoration ornaments. This caravanserai reflects the importance of Ottoman architecture and its unique design (Sultani, 2021:1).

Over centuries, caravanserais such as Murjan have encountered challenges that could threaten their survival and historical significance. However, efforts are being made to conserve and use these ancient structures for cultural and tourism purposes. Khan Murjan in Baghdad is a witness to Iraq's history, culture, and arts, and it represents an essential element of Ottoman and Iraqi heritage.) Sultani, 2021(Khan Murjan, also known as "Khan al-Urtmah" or “Al-Tim," represents an essential architectural concept in Islamic architecture. The name "Urtmah" in Turkish relates to the covered or roofed shape, while "Tim" has the Persian meaning of Khan. A Khan, referred to as a "caravanserai" or "wakalah," is a specialty building in Islamic architecture intended to function as a hotel or inn (Sultani, 2021:1).

These constructions found both inside and outside urban areas, include architectural intricacies and ornamental decorations that highlight mastery of Islamic architectural language and compositional abilities (Sultani, 2021:1).

Khan Murjan's floor layout has unique characteristics that set it apart from other Khans. Its design has a central covered hall void of structural elements to optimize space for showing goods, with activities centered on silk and wool products. The lobby is surrounded by 22 ground-floor rooms and 23 first-floor rooms, all of which open onto corridors or balconies on all four sides and have a height of 6 meters. The balconies are identified by brick corbels that serve as consecutive supports, and the lobby's ceiling is decorated with pointed arches known as "Adwar." Two primary entrances to the Khan and extra rooms on the north side that help in Khan management (Sultani, 2021:3).

Khan Murjan's space is unique in its original design and symbolic significance, reflecting the architect's unambiguous intention of restoring one of Islamic architecture's unique

features: the notion of "disintegration" of structural elements. This is supposed to produce a meaningful condition in which the "space" defines dominance and control over the "materiality" of those elements, imbuing the limited space with expansiveness and lightness. This is evident in the architect's careful decisions, such as the purposeful separation of the supporting arches for the ceiling and the lighting style, which gives the impression of reducing the thickness of the arches' lower curves (Intrados). Furthermore, using various aesthetic brickwork bands attached to the walls creates a sense of disintegration, emphasizing the existence and control of space within the atrium (Sultani, 2021:3).

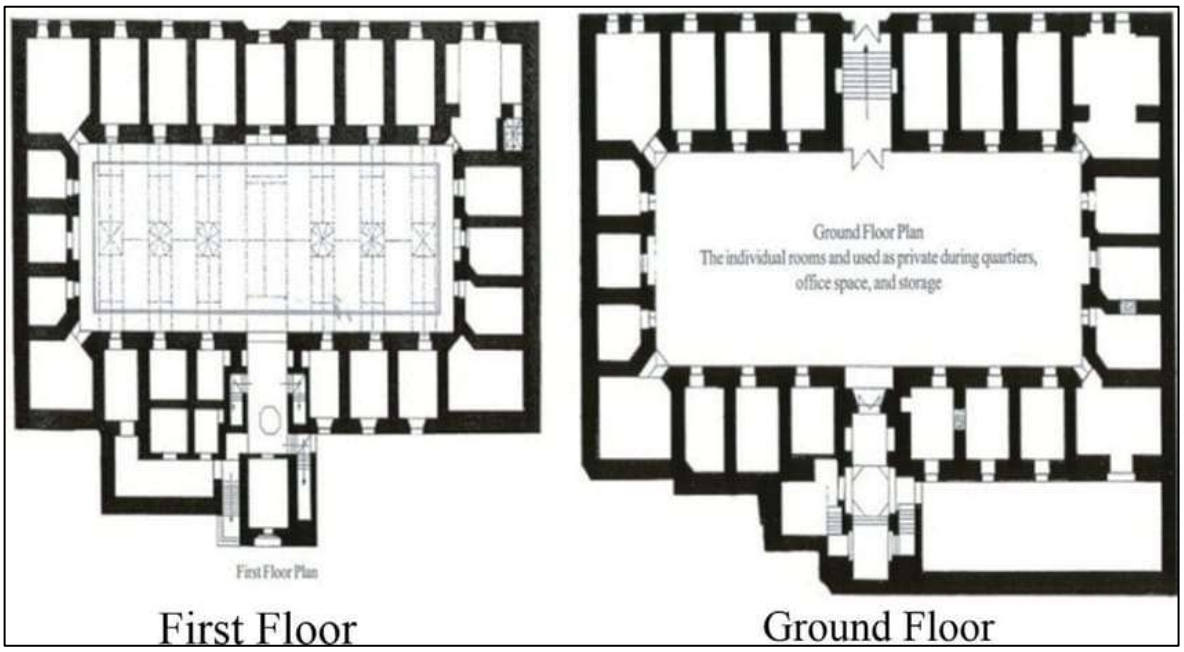


Figure 3.6: The 14th-Century Khan Murjan Plans. Baghdad, Iraq (Hmood, 2019:9).

Despite Khan Murjan's seemingly confined space, it is rich with a sense of spatial expansiveness and the lightness of structural elements. This makes it a clear example in the realm of astonishing design innovations contributed by Islamic architecture to the global architectural repertoire. In this context, the observations of renowned English historian of Islamic architecture, Robert Hillenbrand, about the resemblance of Khan Murjan's vaulting to a Gothic-style arch. Islamic architecture and other architectural styles, providing compelling arguments supported by the remarkable architectural elements of Khan Murjan (Islamic Architecture, 2000: 362- 365).

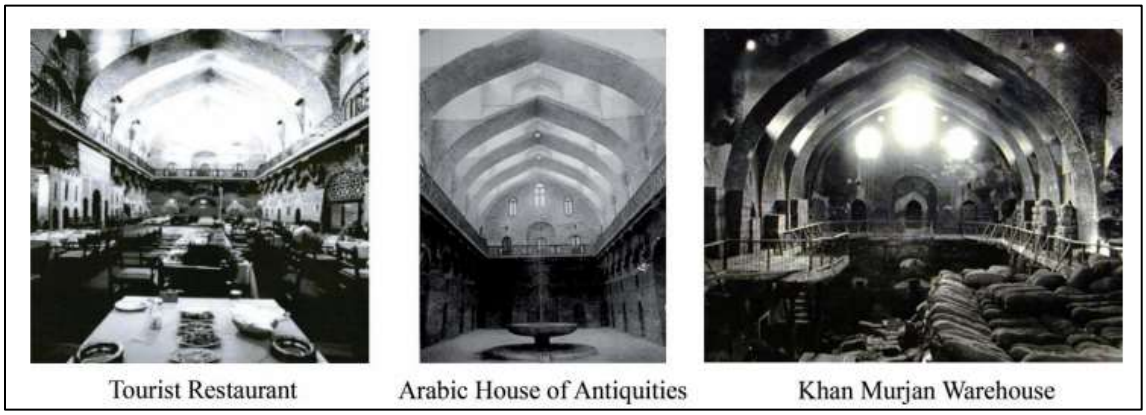


Figure 3.7: Khan Murjan was built During the Mughal Period in Baghdad, Iraq (Hmood, 2019:9).

Early in the 700s, Japan recorded the first two hotels in history or Ryokans. On the Silk Road, these Ryokans functioned as rest stations. By the 1600s, there were over 600 inns registered in England, and the first modern hotel opened its doors in the early 1800s (Hmood, 2019:9).

Figure 3.8: The 14th-Century Khan Murjan is a form+er Caravanserai that Once Accommodated Merchants Visiting Baghdad, Iraq (By David Stanley Retrieved on Date 4\42016, 14:55:32 from Khan Murjan |).

3.1.4 Monasteries

Monasteries and abbeys were the first to regularly grant sanctuary to travelers throughout the Middle Ages to accommodate people on the road, and religious organizations erected inns, hospices, and hospitals (Levy-Bonvin, 2003:4).

From the 15th century onwards in central Paris, hotels known as hôtel particuliers emerged, where aristocratic homeowners rented rooms for short stays to other aristocrats (Anand, 2017: 2). During this period until the 18th century, hotel lobbies were typically spacious foyers adorned with lavish paintings, elegant furniture, and hand-knotted rugs. They primarily served as passageways for hotel guests (Paradigm Design, 2017). However, in the late 18th century, particularly in London, the concept of hotels evolved into the familiar form we know today, and lobbies began to transform. The hotel lobby eventually became the focal point of social interaction, a place for guests to be seen and engaged (Carmichael, 2018).

Nevertheless, in modern times, there have been instances where the significance of the lobby area has been overlooked by architects, resulting in a loss of its social meaning or rendering it a mere "dead space" within a hotel. Fortunately, this trend is now reversing. According to Jacob (as cited in Carmichael, 2018), the lobby is once again becoming an exciting space where activities can occur, serving as an extension of urban life with amenities like seating areas, gift shops, art galleries, and bars. Kazmi (2011) notes that people no longer want to feel isolated, and modern lobbies address this fear of loneliness during travel by providing a place for guests to connect with others through shared experiences of food, drinks, stories, and memories (Kazmi, 2011: 13).

3.2 THE EVOLUTION OF HOTEL LOBBY IN HISTORY

The modern hotel has its start in Paris around the fifteenth century. Rich aristocrats constructed opulent homes known as Hôtel Particulier's in the city center. Aristocrats without city estates used to rent out rooms to other aristocrats because the residences were expensive and frequently idle for large portions of the year. Everyone wishing to stay had to write to the place of residence, even the owner, to inquire about availability (Anand, 2017:1).
The term "hotel" originates from the French word "hôtel," which traditionally denotes a building that frequently receives visitors and provides care, akin to the concept of a

"hospital" (sharing the same root). However, in modern French usage, "hôtel" now carries the same meaning as the English term "hotel," referring to an establishment that offers accommodation, meals, and various services for travelers and tourists (Anand, 2017:1).

London had an important rise in the construction of hotels in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Rather than staying in hotels, the rich tended to purchase or rent their own homes. The industry prospered as passenger numbers surged and railways expanded, drawing more tourists to London. Around the same time, the cost of living in the city considerably increased, and it became commonplace to stay in hotels rather than second homes. Hotels that were deemed to be of a high standard, catering to aristocracy and the upper class, were termed ‘Palace Inns’, with around thirty, all located in the West End, comprising establishments like Browns Hotel, Mivarts, which later became Claridge’s, and the Cavendish Hotel (Kazmi, 2011:11).

During this period, the hotel lobby served as a venue for the gentry to mingle and take advantage of the attention that comes with being in the public eye while still maintaining a distinctly private area. Hoteliers put a lot of effort into creating pleasant spaces for their affluent patrons, all the while preserving a distinct feeling of exclusivity by running their establishments like modern-day member's clubs. This model changed radically during the mid and late 1900s as newly built hotels, responding to mass demand, created growingly sparse and practical lobbies, influenced by cost efficacy and the rapid pace of growth in tourism and business travel, serving chiefly as waiting areas rather than ornamental social spaces (Kazmi, 2011; 11).

In London, empty office buildings started to appear more often in the 1980s and 1990s, which prompted hotel brands to repurpose these areas. These uniform settings frequently served a mostly business audience. Though the practice of using hotel lobbies for informal meetings was not new, the tendency accelerated during this period as business travel boomed and hotels once again invested heavily in their public spaces, expanding them, and installing wireless Internet service in their communal zones, combining open spaces with more private areas for small groups to meet and work together, allowing visitors to tailor the space to suit their needs (Welch, 2006: 1).

Several unique buildings, most notably Robert Swartburg's The Delano South Beach, promoted the idea that the lobby could once again play a role in public socializing and give a different kind of venue to be seen. The Miami Beach resort, which is well-known for its

wacky, art-deco design and its distinguished clientele, incorporated large, opulent common areas and provided guests with a range of hotel services, including a lobby bar. This arrangement promoted integrating temporary visitors into the local community and solidified Delano's status as a Miami landmark (Welch, 2006:1).

These days, the lobby is frequently a destination and a significant meeting place. The neighborhood has progressively transformed into a hybrid one where a variety of populations may live in harmony with one another. It's interesting to note that certain businesses, like Alex Calderwood's Ace Hotel, have subverted the traditional role of the lobby by boldly erasing boundaries between public and private areas. Although there is a certain expectation of patronizing a multifunctional lobby to justify spending time there, Ace's "everybody's welcome" concept provides guests with a social and relatively quiet area with access to services as needed (Johnson, 2013).

"Ace is meant to feel like a visit with friends, so the experience you find here just depends on what you're into," the creator stated. Calderwood was eager to promote interaction between individuals from various social circles and occupations, therefore he envisioned a place that could be utilized by both the locals and hotel visitors. In addition to a large lobby workspace where anybody may set up shop, the London location has a neighborhood restaurant, nightclub, J.W. Anderson boutique, florist, and record store (Welch, 2006:1).

"Over time, the hotel lobby served as a sort of dead place where people waited or loitered, with an excessive amount of chintz and polished items all around," notes London-based architect and designer Sam Jacob. It was supposed to be a serene setting, yet there was a subtle unease all around.

More recently, at places like Ace Hotel, this over-spaced dead zone has become something far more exciting a place where things can happen almost an extension of the street as a public space that is part workspace, part bar, part retail platform, part gallery. This is a different way of thinking about this ground floor hotel space, reimagining its ‘in-between-ness’ not as a limbo but as a place where activities and events can hybridize into more exciting combinations” (Anand, 2017:1). And as Volland states:

From the hotel's origin in humble inns dotted along ancient trade routes, to today's worldwide Hilton and Hyatt networks, the concept of the hotel has come a very long way indeed. We now talk about boutique hotels and resort hotels, places that connote a relatively new lifestyle of perpetual leisure and transience, and as the role of the hotel has expanded, so too have

architects and interior designers risen to the challenge, producing ever more spectacular structures. (Volland, 2013)

During the Renaissance (16th-18th centuries), the concept of hospitality became more refined. Grand hotels began to emerge in major European cities, often serving as meeting places for the elite. These establishments featured larger, more ornate buildings with multiple rooms and services. The Palace Vendome in Paris was the earliest illustration of a multipurpose architectural complex during the reign of Louis XIV, with its classical façade housing hotels, offices, and stores. In New York Hotels began to appear in the city cores, initially and then in Copenhagen. The Royal Hotel was constructed in London during the start of the 1800s. All along the French and Italian rivers, holiday resorts sprung up. A historic mansion in Venice was converted into a hotel in 1822 and given the name "Le Danieli" by a certain Giuseppe Dal Niel. Highway inns catering to stagecoaches began to disappear as railroads took the role of horse-drawn transportation. Around this time, an old harem in the heart of Cairo underwent a comprehensive makeover to become the Shepherds Hotel (Anand, 2017:1).

Railway Hotels (19th century): As rail travel became widespread, hotels were built near railway stations to cater to the needs of train passengers. These railway hotels often featured grand architecture, such as the St. Pancras Renaissance Hotel in London (Anand, 2017).

Golden Ages of Travel (Late 19th -Early 20th century): The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw the golden age of travel, with luxurious hotels becoming symbols of elegance, such as The Ritz in Paris and The Plaza in New York City. Mid-20th Century Modernism brought about a shift in architectural style, with modernism influencing hotel design. Clean lines, functional spaces, and a focus on simplicity characterized many hotels during this period. In recent decades, hotels have continued to evolve in response to changing travel trends and technology. Boutique hotels, eco-friendly designs, and high-tech features have become prominent.

Globalization and Diversification: With the rise of international travel and tourism, hotels have become global entities, adapting their designs to different cultural contexts. Diversification in the types of accommodations, from luxury resorts to budget-friendly hostels, has also become a notable trend (Levy-Bonvin, 14)

A hotel's most basic description is a place to shelter travelers and the injured, but a modern hotel is an integrated organization to provides tourism services in its broadest sense. The role of a hotel nowadays is no longer limited to just providing tourist services and is no longer known as a place to house guests as it was in the past.

3.3 HISTORY OF THE PUBLIC SPACE

It is worth giving a brief historical account of public spaces and their functions throughout the history of architecture.

The beginning of the public space can be traced back to the Greek Agora. Located in the center of the polis or city (900–338 BC), the agora was used for many social, political, and economic functions. “It was a place of assembly where all the citizens except for women and slaves could convene and make democratic decisions. It accommodated commercial, educational, religious, and social activities such as theatrical and gymnastic performances and special celebrations” (Caves. 2005: 10).

In ancient Greek towns, the Agora was a public area used for a variety of events and citizen meetings. The Greeks used the term "Agora," which originally appeared in Homer's works, to refer to the assembly of people and to characterize their everyday, religious, political, judicial, social, and commercial activities. The Agora was an area with shops, colonnades, temples, and public buildings all around it. Statues, trees, fountains, and altars were frequently seen there. It was situated either close to the waterfront or in the center of the city (Donati, 2015: 179).

The American School of Classical Studies in Athens provided information about the early development of Greek and Roman agoras, which were among the most prominent urban centers in the ancient Mediterranean. The epigraphical testimonies and small finds like official weights, transport amphorae, and pottery deposits served as tangible evidence of how the inhabitants of Athens utilized their commercial and civic spaces daily. There was considerable interest among historians in drawing parallels between the emergence of the early Athenian agoras and Athenian democracy. Some structures, like the Old Bouleuterion, became prototypes for Greek civic building designs (Donati, 2015: 179).

Roland Martin's study, titled "Recherches sur l’agora grecque," documented the evolution of

the agoras from the time of Homer to the Hellenistic period. In his book, he described the humble origins of the agoras and their distinctive classical direction that aligned with Greek innovations in urban planning. Martin also highlighted that the decline of the agoras occurred during the Hellenistic period (Martin,1951: 704).

One example of an agora in Greece is the Argive Agora, situated below the eastern slopes of Larissa Hill at the southwest corner of the ancient city. The structure consists of a group of buildings and venues surrounding an unusual triangular space that characterizes the agora. One of the surrounding buildings is a large square hall with columns marking the western boundary of the agora, while the other is a rock-cut theater located west of the agora. Both complexes are historically dated to the fifth century BCE based on stratigraphic evidence. Civil officials like the Boule gathered in one of the places in Argos, and it is possible that this place was the Argive Agora, not just in the large public buildings (Marchetti & Rizakis, 1995 & Pariente, 1998 & Donati, 2010b: 25-89).

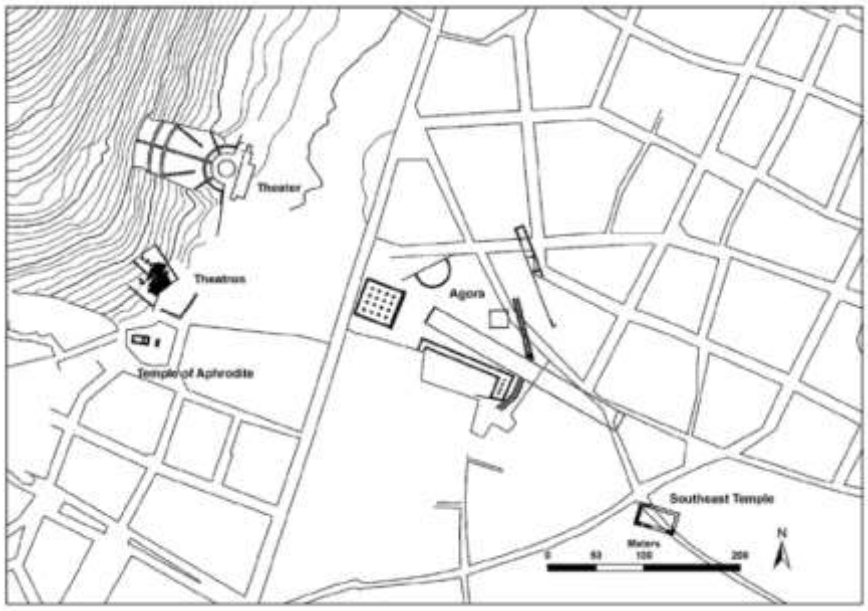


Figure 3.9: Argos. Plan of the Argive Agora During the Second Half of the Fifth Century BCE. (J.C. Donati, 2015:187).

During the Roman Empire, the Greek agora developed into the Roman Forum. Like the agora, the forum was in the center of Rome. It was a public space where the Roman citizens gathered to carry out various activities such as commercial transactions, religious ceremonies, political meetings as well as other social, cultural, athletic, and informal

meetings. The forums blended civic and religious life fabric, thus containing temples, basilicas, shops, and markets, as well as the theatre and public baths. The design of these spaces often reflected the values and priorities of the societies that created them, showcasing the importance of communal interaction and public discourse (Watkins, 2009: 11-12).

In the Middle Ages, the medieval market square, or the marketplace, became a crucial public space and the center of all these activities. It was in the center of the town, usually where the main roads meet, and in front of the castle or cathedral. It is a place where the inhabitants of the city would come together to do various kinds of business and trade activities. During the Renaissance, such public places came to be known as plazas. The Renaissance Plaza contained important buildings like the cathedral, the town hall, and other important buildings. Citizens would gather there to hold public celebrations and carry out plays and stage proceedings. Plazas were designed in such a way as to have a symmetrical geometry. The buildings and the squares surrounding the plaza had a uniform façade to show the importance of proportion and harmony in the design (Donati, 2015: 179).

The Renaissance Plaza underwent various changes and developments during its history up to the modern era. The planning of the modern city developed a close relationship between open space and the surrounding built area. New consumption places were added as spaces for leisure and entertainment, in addition to other important social spaces such as shopping arcades, bazaars, and department stores (Konidari, 2024).

The concept and understanding of public space have changed significantly in the modern era due to significant global shifts. The structure, function, and governance of public space have all been significantly impacted by technology improvements, globalization, privatization, and financial pressure. Thus, new forms of public space emerged, such as the shopping mall. Contemporary shopping malls are fully enclosed and totally pedestrian in a controlled environment with adequate parking facilities and leisure environment replacing the earlier arcades and department stores.

In the book titled “New Life in Public Squares,” the author Marie Burns mentioned that Squares and streets served as spaces for people, activities, and various modes of transportation. However, with the rise in the number of private cars during the 1950s and 1960s, urban planning increasingly prioritized vehicular needs over pedestrian

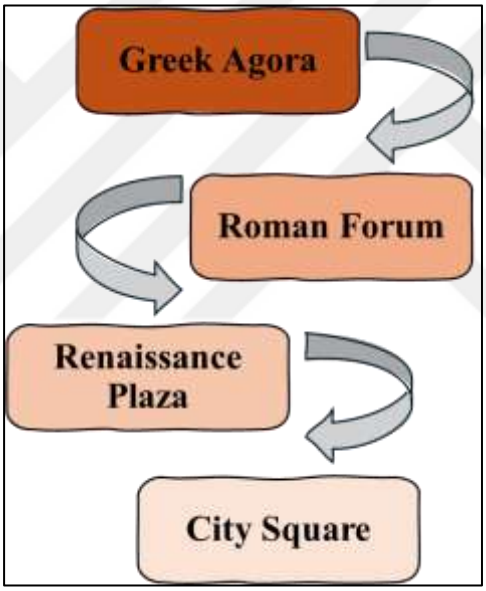
considerations. To accommodate the growing traffic demands, ring roads, and urban motorways were introduced into cities, disrupting traditional city layouts by severing historic connections and diminishing pedestrian spaces. These urban interventions were not designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing historical urban fabric. Instead, they were imposed as separate entities, undermining both the coherence and readability of the city's structure

This functional approach to urban planning emphasized decentralization and suburban development, facilitating access by private vehicles. Consequently, city centers, already suffering from war damage and inadequate housing, experienced further decline. During the 1960s and 1970s, shopping precincts began to supplant public squares as primary destinations. In 1956, the Southdale Centre in Edina, Minnesota, USA, became the first indoor shopping center, strategically located outside the town for easy car access and offering free parking. (Burns, 2020:8) The Garden Court atrium functioned as a private 'public' space, resembling an indoor public square managed by the shopping center, offering a comfortable and crime-free environment. In 1976, Brent Cross in North London became the UK's first out-of-town shopping center, strategically positioned with good access to the M1 motorway and North Circular Road. The 1980s and 1990s saw the rise of more out-of-town shopping centers, facilitated by motorway development and the availability of former industrial land. This shifted the concept of public squares to indoor private spaces, accessible only to those who could travel to these new centers. The rise of car dominance and the proliferation of out-of-town shopping centers and supermarkets left many city centers desolate, with derelict buildings and vacant plots becoming common and sometimes dangerous. The quality of life in cities and the use of public squares deteriorated, with many historic squares converted into car parks to meet the growing demand for vehicle space, such as Praça do Comércio in Lisbon and the former Grønttorvet vegetable market in Copenhagen. While cars were dominating urban planning elsewhere, Copenhagen took a different approach by temporarily closing one of its main streets, Strøget, to traffic in 1962. Initially, this move faced skepticism and resistance from retailers who were concerned about the impact on business. However, it quickly became evident that a pedestrian-friendly environment attracted more visitors who stayed longer, leading to commercial success and increased use of public spaces for leisure activities, which in turn drew even more people. By 1964, this initiative was made permanent. This marked a shift in the traditional role of the street, transforming it into a space primarily occupied by people rather than vehicles.

(Burns, 2020:9)

City squares have always been the heart and soul of the city, representing its history, culture, and identity, and surrounded by some of the city's significant architectural marvels, so they are not just open spaces. They are among the best places for social interaction, sampling local foods with locals, enjoying coffee, and are often lined with cafes and restaurants serving tourists and locals, especially in tourist destinations (Konidari, 2024).

Some of the most famous public squares around the world include Times Square in New York, Saint Peter's Square in Vatican City, Taksim Square in Istanbul, Piazza San Marco in Italy, Old Town Square in the Czech Republic, Grand Place in Belgium, Red Square in Moscow, Al-Tahrir (liberation) Square in Baghdad, and many others.



Figıre 3.10: History of Public Spaces.

From studying the history of hotel lobby spaces and squares, several significant conclusions are drawn:

a. The evolution of both lobbies and squares illustrates their transformation from merely functional spaces to multifaceted environments serving a variety of social, commercial, and cultural purposes. Historically, squares were central to social and cultural life, acting as gathering hubs for communities. The role of hotel lobbies has expanded over time to include not just check-in functions but also spaces for social interaction, business

meetings, and recreational activities.

b. Both types of spaces have demonstrated remarkable resilience and flexibility. For example, the pedestrianization of Strøget in Copenhagen during the 1960s highlighted the potential for reclaiming urban spaces for people rather than vehicles. This initiative not only fostered social interaction but also led to commercial success, illustrating the benefits of prioritizing pedestrian-friendly environments. Similarly, modern hotel lobbies have adapted to become dynamic, multifunctional spaces that attract both guests and visitors, enhancing their role within the urban fabric.
c. The design and aesthetics of squares and lobbies are crucial to their success. Thoughtful design that considers the interaction between open spaces, surrounding structures, and user experience can transform these spaces into vibrant hubs of activity.
d. The distinction between public and private spaces has become increasingly blurred. Hotel lobbies are technically private and often function as semi-public spaces that encourage social interaction and community engagement, much like public squares. This enhances their value and relevance in contemporary urban life, offering inclusive spaces that cater to diverse needs.
e. The quality and accessibility of squares and hotel lobby spaces have an impact on the overall quality of life in urban spaces. A good design of public spaces contributes to a city's vitality, social connectivity, and cultural richness. In contrast, overlooked or poorly planned spaces can lead to urban decay and reduced comfort, focusing on the importance of mindful urban design.

In conclusion, the study of lobby spaces and squares discloses their importance as crucial features of urban design, reflecting broader trends in urban planning, social interaction, and cultural representation. Their evolution, flexibility, and design highlight their enduring significance in shaping the experience and functionality of urban environments, making them essential components of a vibrant and liveable city.

4. THE HOTEL LOBBY AS THE NEW PUBLIC SQUARE

Significant shifts in design philosophy and functional use have marked the transformation of urban public squares and hotel lobbies in recent decades. This chapter will present and discuss several architectural articles and journalistic pieces. According to their vision, these sources shed light on the ideas of some owners of global hotel chains and their plans to expand and enhance hotel lobbies to meet the demands of the modern era. On the other hand, some public squares in major city centers have been developed, providing a focal point for numerous services, including hotels. These expansions aim to increase interaction and meet contemporary needs.

The discussion will also cover examples of hotels where the lobby is closely connected to the square it overlooks, with each space influencing the other. Among these examples are the Marmara Taksim Hotel in Istanbul and the Hilton Times Square Hotel in New York examines these interconnected trends, drawing parallels between urban square design and the reinvention of hotel lobbies as vibrant communal hubs.

4.1 PUBLIC SQUARE AS A “BUILDING”

In her article “Architectural Ideas for Designing Public Squares in Dutch Urban Environments: A City is not a Building”, Sanda Lenzholzer Because of new minimalism and architectural styles in the 1990s, the concept of an open space as a "building" transformed. Upon examining squares redesigned or built during this period, four primary design characteristics emerge:

Public space was seen as a "room" or “void" in the city”, rather than just an open area, giving it a defined purpose and sense of enclosure within the cityscape.

Hard and smooth materials like concrete, stone, and metal were favored, contributing to a modern aesthetic, and ensuring durability (Lenzholzer, 2008: 46, 47).

Cool and bright colors, such as shades of white, gray, blue, and green, were used to enhance the contemporary feel of these spaces.

Street furniture like benches, lighting, and signage were elegantly designed with clean lines and quality materials, adding both functionality and aesthetic appeal to the squares.

In essence, public squares redesigned or built in the 1990s embraced a minimalist and modern design ethos, redefining them as structured urban spaces with carefully curated

elements (Lenzholzer, 2008: 46, 48).

The idea that public areas are "buildings," or as Kevin Lynch puts it, "large-scale architecture," is the foundation for all of these traits (Lynch, 1990: 254). It should be clear to understand that "the urban room/void" is a subset of "the city as a house." This idea of the urban "interior" logically gives rise to the other traits. The hard walls and floors of an architectural interior are often composed of stone; the walls of outdoor urban spaces, known as "places duras" in Barcelona or "hard places" abroad, correspond to this idea. Bright colors are commonly utilized to enhance light reflection, brighten interior spaces, and smooth materials to promote sanitation. A similar approach has been used in outdoor areas. Finally, just as a building's interior may accommodate tasteful and sophisticated furniture, outdoor areas were also outfitted with eye-catching furniture to improve their visual attractiveness (Lenzholzer, 2008: 47).

Modern architecture is intensely concerned with the interaction of interiors and outside spaces. In the early twentieth century, Walter Benjamin's description of the 'bourgeois interior' as a constrained escape from the lively, growing metropolis served as an essential starting point for reimagining modern life arrangements. Architects started on a quest to develop a new type of residential interior, focusing on openness, light, air, and connection to the outside environment (Lenzholzer, 2008: 47).

However, this exterior realm was not urban; rather, it was frequently recognized as 'nature' in various forms, ranging from the wilderness around Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Houses to the expanses of green in Ebenezer Howard's Garden City or the lawns beneath Le Corbusier's Ville Contemporaine. In general, modernist architects and planners overlooked the relationship between private dwellings and public spaces as places of civic engagement, exchange, and spectacle.

Lenzholzer pointed out that the conception of the city as a structure with "rooms" and the idea of the "urban void" that goes along with it are explicitly derived from figure-ground theory (Trancik, 1986: 103), which defines the areas of the city's volume that are devoid of structures. Urban planning has made extensive use of this concept. Several Dutch squares have been described as "living rooms," "foyers," and "theaters or stages" using the idea of a home (Koerse, 2003: 85).

In an article titled “Rubbing Shoulders: the hotel as a social hub.”

“Threshold” and “Transition” as characteristics of both hotel lobby and public squares.

The concept of “Threshold” was first used in 1956, when the Dutch architect Aldo van Eyck explained the relationship between different physical and psychological aspects of a city. Instead of identifying the relationship between interior and exterior spaces simply through a perspective of function or beauty, or as a symbol of an open society, van Eyck connected it with human psychological tendencies and processes (Minsberg, Talya, 2018).

Avermaete, T., and Massey, A., in their book “The Hotel Lobbies and Lounges” (2013) mentioned that the hotel environment encapsulates urban social segregation into a concentrated space. Within this visible realm, the affluent and aspiring individuals move prominently as if on a stage, enjoying ample room. Behind this facade, however, the essential operations of the hotel are carried out by poorly paid and accommodated workers (Avermaete and Massey, 2013:19).

They also mentioned that the film "The Last Laugh” by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau vividly portrays this social divide at the city level and within the hotel itself. He juxtaposes the city's bustling life with the impoverished conditions of tenement housing. The film highlights the grand Hotel Atlantic set in a wealthy area with a humble backyard. The busy hotel lobby contrasts sharply with the back stairs where workers' wives are depicted. A stark example of this contrast is shown with hotel guests indulging in oysters while the doorman's wife brings him a simple meal (Murnau, 1924).

The doorman in the film is more than just a working-class representative. He is a mediator, navigating the external world and the hotel's interior. His duties include overseeing guest arrivals and departures, managing luggage through a side door, and essentially being the hotel's first and last point of contact. He controls the revolving door, symbolically regulating the entry and exit of guests, sometimes accompanied by the hotel manager, reflecting their social status (Avermaete and Massey, 2013:19).

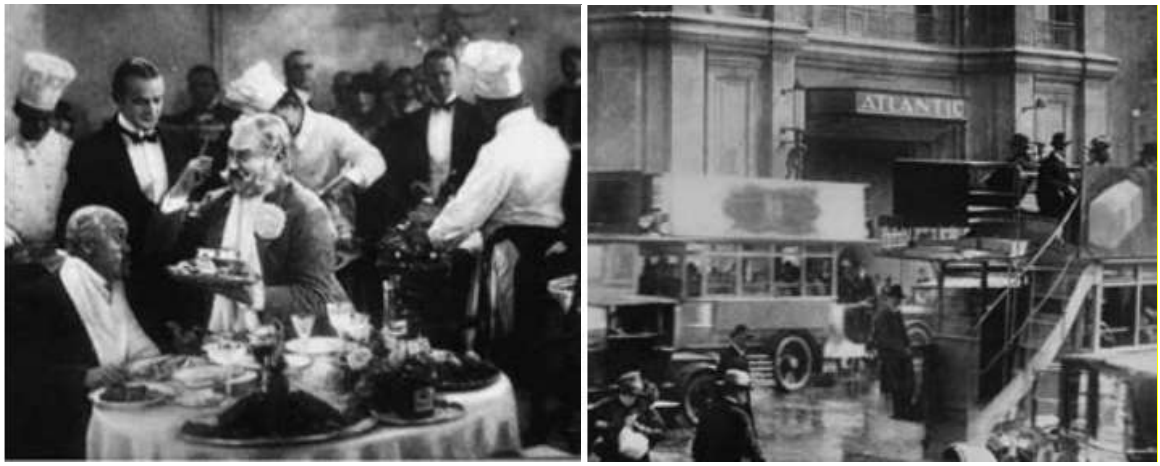


Figure 4.1: Film Still from The Last Laugh, 1924, Directed by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau (Avermaete, and Massey, 2013:19).

4.2 THE HOTEL LOBBY IS THE NEW PUBLIC SQUARE

According to Talya Minsberg's essay “Checking In? No, thank you. I’m Just Here to Use the Wi-Fi”. Aytan Litwin, the founder and CEO of White Space, which oversees the production of bespoke designs for hospitality and commercial spaces, stated in an interview that the hotel lobby is the new public square. "I'm Just Here to Use the Wi-Fi," the statement added. Previously, hotel lobbies were restricted to guests checking in or out, waiting for someone's arrival, and occasionally accommodating quiet activities like playing the piano. These spaces were often characterized by their tranquillity, with only the sounds of elevators and occasional piano tunes, and were frequently empty, thus considered dead spaces. However, this has changed with the evolution of contemporary lifestyles, leading modern hotel lobbies to transform into communal areas for guests, tourists, and locals. This shift is attributed to the emergence of shared workspaces and remote work culture, fostering collaboration and global connectivity (Minsberg, Talya, 2018).

As chief creative officer and partner of Ace Hotels, Kelly Sawdon stated, "We designed our lobbies with the intention of them serving as community gathering spaces." "We want to provide space for everyone, whether they are guests or our neighbors because our hotels are born out of our love for cities and people."

Many modern hotels have been influenced by Ace Hotels, including the Seoul-based Ryse Hotel, the Tel Aviv-based Link, and the exclusive Graduate Hotels group. This influence reached its peak when some major hotels focused on creating brands that emphasize public

spaces or lobbies.

In 2013, Marriott began developing Moxy, a hotel brand with larger, larger common areas and "cozier" (yes, smaller) guest rooms. The Moxy brand achieved great success, with over 80 hotels now under construction all over the world, all of which highlight the necessity of creating large lobbies and public areas (Minsberg, Talya, 2018).

Figure 4.2: A Moxy Hotel Lobby (https://in.pinterest.com/pin/meteor-lighting--444730531961752813/).

One of the prime examples of hotels closely linked with the public square surrounding it is the Marmara Taksim Hotel overlooking Taksim Square in Istanbul. To understand the relationship between the lobby of this hotel and the square, the thesis will first provide an overview of the hotel, its establishment history, and the square. Then, it will analyze some photos and plans related to both.

4.3 THE MARMARA TAKSIM HOTEL IN ISTANBUL TAKSIM SQUARE

Taksim Square, a popular tourist destination and entertainment area known for its eateries, retail establishments, and lodgings, is situated in Beyoğlu, Istanbul, Turkey's European section. With the central station of the Istanbul Metro system located there, it is considered the beating heart of modern-day Istanbul. Additionally, the Republic Monument (Turkish: Cumhuriyet Anıtı), created by Pietro Canonica and inaugurated in 1928, is located in Taksim Square. The monument honors the fifth anniversary of the Turkish War of Independence-era Republic of Turkey's founding in 1923. Gezi Park to the north, Taksim Mosque to the west, The Marmara Hotel to the south, and the Atatürk Cultural Center to the east all encircle Taksim Square. A few key routes come together (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65).

During Sultan Mahmud I's reign in 1732, a water distribution facility was ordered to be built, marking the beginning of Taksim's urban history. The Taksim neighborhood is across from Istanbul's historic walled city on the northern bank of the Golden Horn. Istanbul was split into four main districts during the Ottoman era: the historic city of Istanbul proper, Galata on the other side of the Bosphorus, Eyüp on the northern side, and Üsküdar on the Asian side. Genoese traders had lived in Galata since the Byzantine era
(Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65).

According to Bisel (2007), in the 1930s, Istanbul's urban planning concept began to take shape. The municipality enlisted Henri Prost, a French planner, in 1936 to develop a comprehensive master plan for the city. Prost was in charge of Istanbul's planning efforts from 1936 until 1951. (Bilsel,2007:101,102)

The Artillery Barracks structure was destroyed in 1939 following the approval of Henri Prost's design for Istanbul. The Park known as Gezi Park, which is referred to as a classic-modernist and axial Taksim Esplanade, took the place of the barracks. According to Yücel and Hatipoğlu (2008), the park proposes a disciplined urbanism that overlaps with the

ideology of the era through its surrounding structures and ceremonialism. Thus, one of the most important elements that comprised the square's boundary was removed.
Furthermore, the square lost its purpose as a square and began to resemble a crossroads as more streets opened to it in tandem with the increase in square numbers (Yücel & Hatipoğlu, 2008:112).

Figure 4.3: Artillery Barracks in Taksim c. 1930s. (Reproduced from Istanbul Municipality (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65).

Figure 4.4: Taksim Square and Gezi Park's İnönü Promenade Taken from Güzelleşen İstanbul, Istanbul Municipality (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65).

Building a monument in the middle of the Taksim area used to be one of the most important steps toward turning it into a national place. Constructed in 1928, the Taksim Republic Monument was created with the assistance of Italian artist Pietro Canonica. The foundation and the gardens of a monument architect, Guilio Mongeri, were created by Levanten. The statue portrays Atatürk and his closed environment both after the republic was established and at a moment during the Turkish War of Independence. (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65) These symbols, which indicate a Wreck with the Ottomans, are used to symbolize both the triumph of the battle for national independence and the foundation of the republic (Kuruyazıcı, 1998). Since its construction, the monument has served as a focal point for appropriate Republican festivities (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65).

Figure 4.5: Taksim Square's Republican Monument c. 1928 (Archives of the MSGSÜ Restoration Department) (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65).

Turkey embraced a multiparty democratic system based on Western models following World War II. The buildings were intended to be representations of modern social and political systems. The 1956 Istanbul Hilton, which stood at the northern end of the İnönü Promenade, is a notable example of post-war Worldwide style engineering in Turkey and an early example of its construction. Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, an American architecture firm,

and famous Turkish architect Sedad Hakkı Eldem collaborated on it (Gül& Dee& Özdemir,2014: 65).

One of Taksim's other significant undertakings was the construction of an opera house. Even though the idea for performance originated in the early 1940s, it wasn't until 1946 that it took off. The project was completed in 1969 as a multifunctional cultural center following renovations. Among the many high-rise buildings that have sprung up in Taksim are the Military Officers' Club (1968), the Display Day Ceylan Interconversion Hotel (1973), and the Marmara Hotel (1977), which together show off the diversity of modern engineering in Istanbul (Gül& Dee& Özdemir, 2014: 66).

Figure 4.6: The Marmara Taksim Hotel and the Republic Monument (https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/istanbul-turkey-december-9-2015-view-641058529).

Figure 4.7: The Marmara Taksim Hotel and the Republic Monument (gazeteduvar.com.tr).

Figure 4.5 depicts the connection between the hotel and the square it faces. It shows how the hotel's orientation is towards the square, with some of its amenities like cafes and restaurants directly accessible from the square and the adjacent markets.

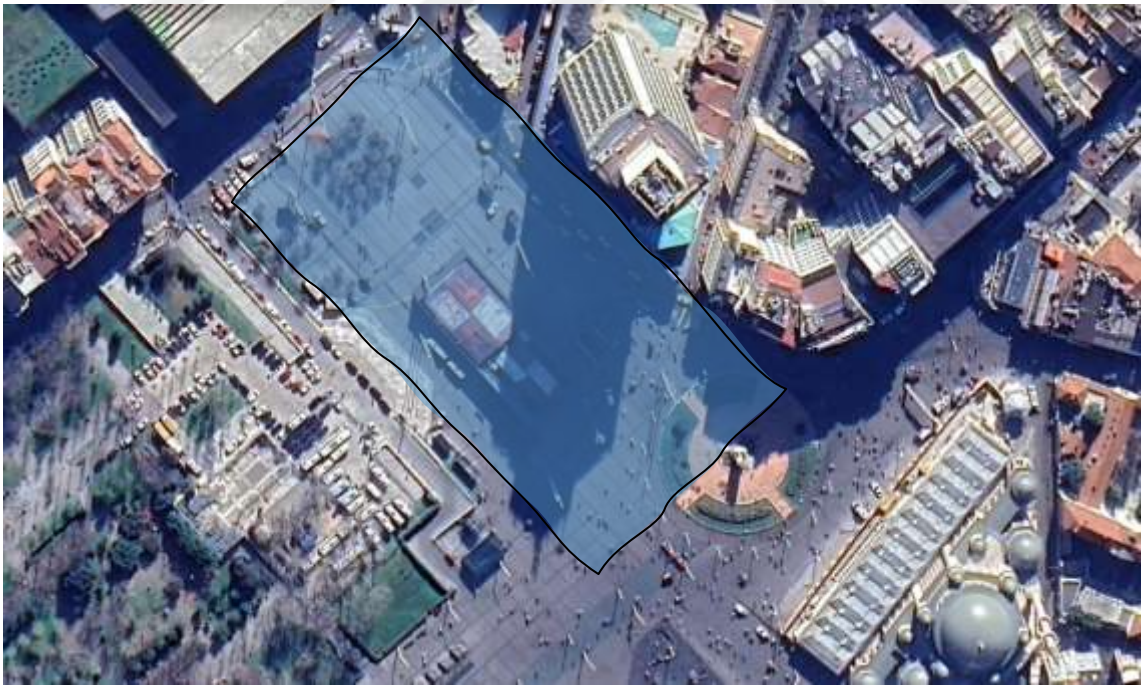


Figure 4.8: Taksim Square and The Marmara Taksim Hotel (Google Earth).

4.4 MARIOTT MARQUIS HOTEL IN NEW YORK TIME SQUARE

Jose Luis Gabriel Cruz reported on January 9, 2014, that New York City's Times Square has completed the first phase of redevelopment for a permanent pedestrian plaza, timed perfectly for the recent New Year's Eve celebrations. Snøhetta's $55 million redesign project between Broadway and 7th Avenue from 42nd to 47th Streets creates a seamless and integrated surface. This redesign enhances Times Square's role as a central outdoor stage for entertainment, culture, and urban life. (Warerkar, 2017:2)

Figure 4.9: Development of the New York Time Square. Before/After Comparison. Architecture & Landscape Design: (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)).

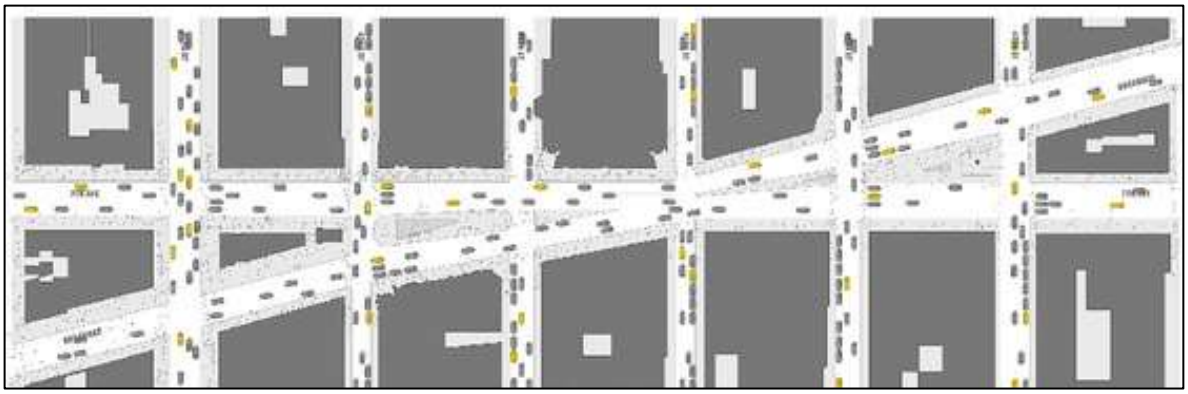


Figure 4.10: Development of the New York Time Square. Before/After comparison. Architecture & Landscape Design: Before (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)).

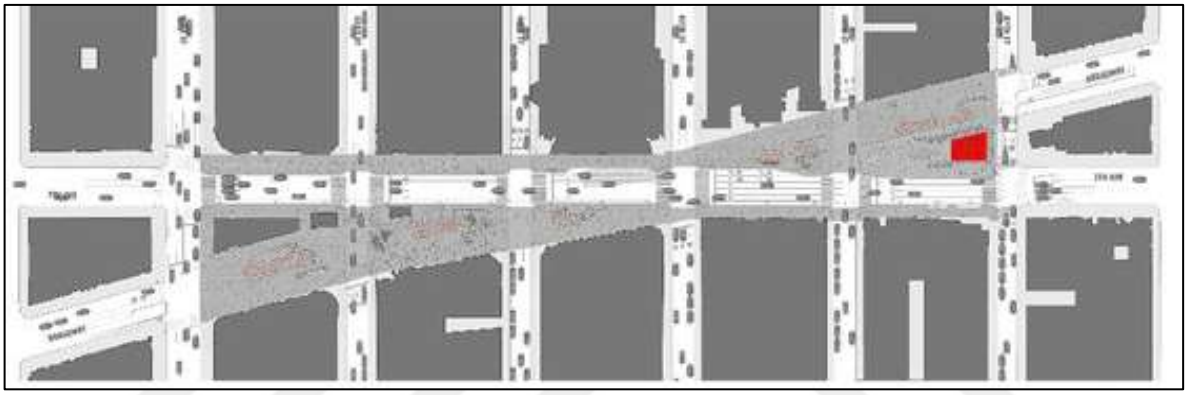


Figure 4.11: Development of the New York Time Square. Architecture & Landscape Design: In 2017 (After) (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)).

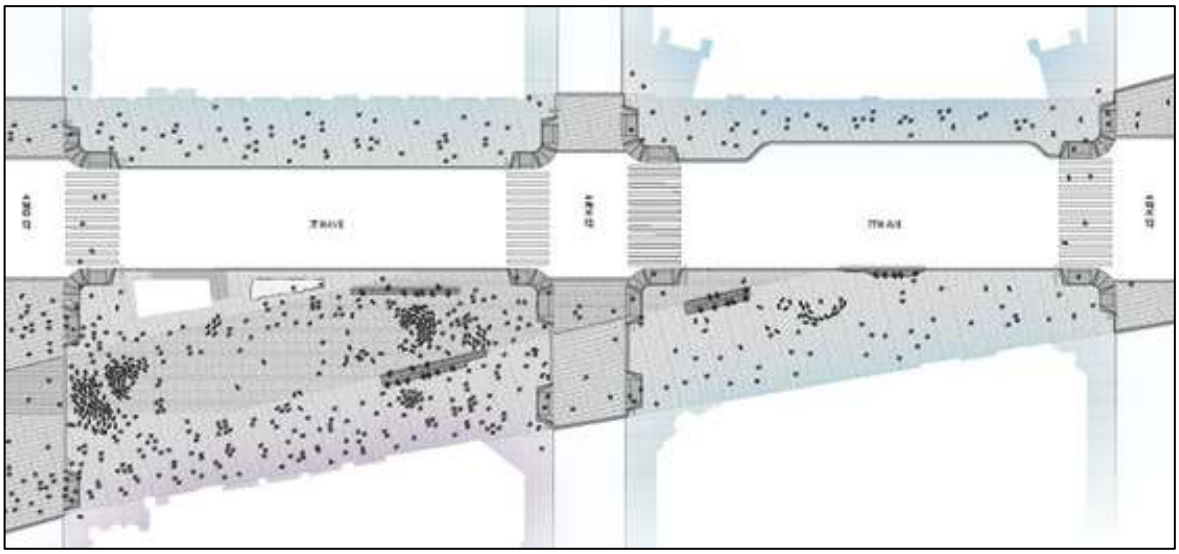


Figure 4.12: Development of the New York Time Square. Architecture & Landscape Design: In 2017 (After) (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)).

The Mariott Marquis Hotel was designed by the architect John Portman and opened. It is one of the tallest structures in Manhattan, with 574-foot-tall, 49 floors, 1,946 rooms, a 1,500-seat theater, and more than 100,000 square feet of conference space, and restaurants.

Figure 4.13: Marriott Marquis New York Hotel and New York Time Square. (Times Square – Snøhetta (snohetta.com)).

The Hotel is known for its iconic atrium lobby, one of the city's largest, which rises multiple stories and is surrounded by glass elevators. The expansive space is designed to create a sense of openness and grandeur, allowing natural light to filter through the interior. It offers various amenities such as multiple dining options, a fitness center, event spaces, and a revolving rooftop restaurant with panoramic city views. It is located near popular attractions like Broadway theaters, Central Park, Rockefeller Center, and more. It is easily accessible by public transportation. The hotel receives positive reviews for its central location. (Goldberger, 1985:23)

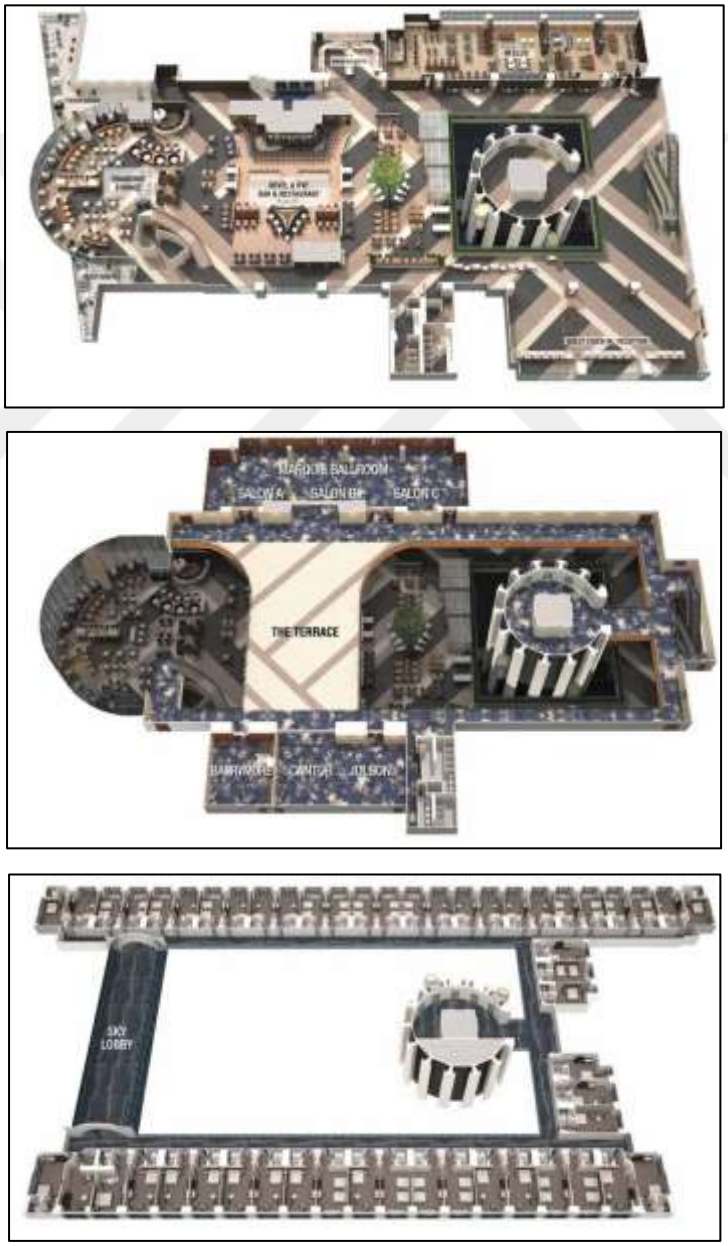


Figure 4.14: Mariott Marquis Hotel Lobby. Eighth, Ninth, and Sixteenth Floor Plans. (New York Marriott Marquis - Host Hotels & Resorts.

At the heart of the hotel is the lobby on the eighth floor, featuring redesigned restaurants Broadway Lounge, Revel & Rye, and Perch Outdoor Terraces. Including dining places with floor-to-ceiling views of Times Square, and classic cocktails.

Figure 4.15: Mariott Marquis Hotel Lobby. (New York Marriott Marquis - Host Hotels & Resorts.

Figure 4.16: Mariott Marquis Hotel Lobby. Time Square Views. (New York Marriott Marquis - Host Hotels & Resorts).

The Mariott Marquis Hotel atrium lobby is one of the places on the list of the (POPS) in Manhattan. That means the lobby of the hotel acts as a public square. (Kayden, 2000:15)

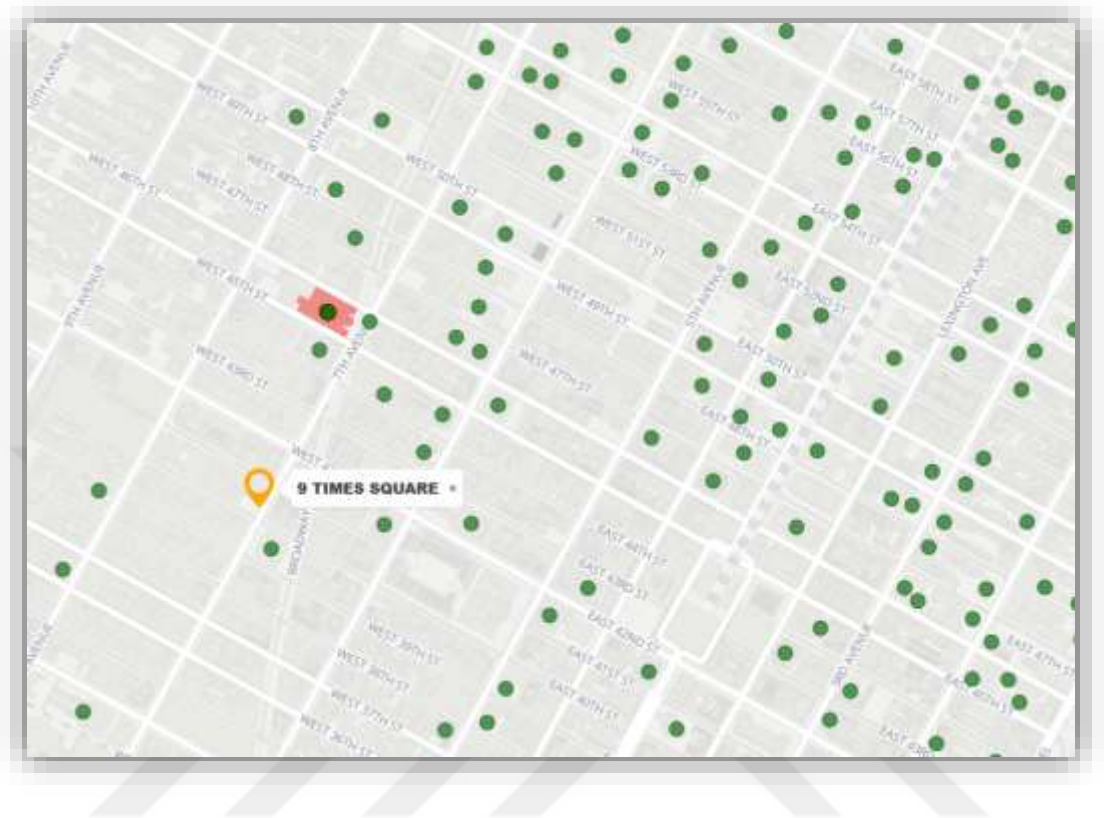


Figure 4.17: New York City Department of City Planning (POPS). (NYC Capital Planning Explorer).

4.5 EVALUATION

In the larger sense of their purpose and impact on city life, public squares serve as essential urban "buildings". These public spaces have historically acted as the focal points of community activities, cultural events, and social interaction. The surrounding architectural design, which often includes walks, seating places, and monuments, defines them and encourages connection and interaction. Everybody can use public squares, that provide a communal space that encourages a sense of identity and belonging. They are essential for improving social cohesion and public life due to their flexible and welcoming design.

On the opposite, beyond the limitations of private zones, hotel lobbies have developed into the contemporary equivalent of public squares. Even though they are officially a part of private property, these lobbies are starting to resemble conventional public squares. They

function as vibrant social hubs where visitors and guests mingle, do business, relax, and enjoy leisure. Modern hotel lobby designs frequently feature features like open floor plans, cozy seating, and integrated services like lounges or cafés that foster social interaction. Hotel lobbies seek to reflect the inclusive and communal aspects of public squares in a regulated, private setting by establishing warm, multipurpose spaces.

The Marmara Taksim lobby has modern decor and luxurious furnishings that blend modern elegance with traditional touches. It is supposed to fit in seamlessly with the hotel's general decor to create a warm and inviting atmosphere for visitors. With check-in and check-out procedures, a concierge desk, and comfortable seating, the lobby serves as a focal point for guest engagement. It frequently acts as a transitional area between the inner experience with Taksim Square's lively surroundings.

Benefiting from an excellent location in Taksim Square, one of Istanbul's key public spaces is the lobby of the Marmara Taksim. The architecture of the hotel frequently emphasizes expansive windows or open spaces that physically and aesthetically link the lobby to the bustling square outside. From the lobby, visitors may stroll with ease to the square, where they can access stores, cafés, and cultural activities. Because of the hotel's ideal location, visitors can take in the vibrant energy of the square while relaxing in the lobby.

On the other hand, the Marriott Marquis lobbies are known for their contemporary design, with large open spaces, modern furnishings, and bright, airy atmospheres. The design

focuses on functionality and comfort, accommodating both business and leisure travelers. The lobby often features a range of amenities, including business centers, dining options, and ample seating areas. It serves as a versatile space that facilitates various functions, from casual meetings to formal events.

Openness and accessibility are frequently emphasized in the Marriott Marquis lobby design, which often has large glass facades or doors that link directly with the outside public spaces. As a result, the transition between the inside and outside surroundings is smooth. The hotel's layout and position usually make reaching neighboring cities or public spaces simple. Convenient access to nearby attractions and facilities enhances guests' entire experience as they can easily walk from the lobby to the surrounding public spaces.

5. CASE STUDY ON THE SHERATON ISHTAR HOTEL OF AL-FIRDOS SQUARE

This chapter will study Al-Firdos Square, its history, location, and importance to the capital city of Baghdad. Additionally, it will examine the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel, detailing its construction and mentioning its designer. Following this, the survey results will be discussed with samples of tourists inside the hotel, as well as a second survey involving experts in architecture and urban design.

The aim is to provide architectural designers with insights to enhance hotel lobby designs and ensure exceptional spatial experiences. By thoroughly analyzing the hotel's architectural features, spatial layout, and urban context, this research aims to contribute to innovative design approaches for hotel lobbies that harmonize with their environment.

The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel, an iconic structure in central Baghdad, overlooks Al-Firdos Square which is a central hub that attracts diverse visitors and serves as a focal point for social, cultural, and political activities. Understanding the interdependent relationship between the hotel and its urban context is crucial for architects and designers aiming to create cohesive spatial experiences that resonate with both guests and the broader community.
It also examines key elements of the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel's architectural design and its connection to Al-Firdos Square. These include the lobby layout, the integration of indoor and outdoor spaces, the selection of materials and lighting, and the provision of facilities to meet a variety of customer needs. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity and contextual responsiveness in creating a holistic visitor experience.

By studying the concepts of space, lobby, public space, and urban space, along with their various types, these terms will be applied to the study by evaluating both the space of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby and the space of Al-Firdos Square. This approach will help in understanding the interaction and relationship between these spaces within the urban fabric of Baghdad.

The reasons for choosing the area of Al-Firdos Square and the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel as a case study are:

The study area is characterized by accessibility and high permeability; it is one of Baghdad's

commercial and residential centers, with an evident heritage in its architectural and urban buildings. The Square has been a focal point for various events throughout history one of these events was the toppling of Saddam Hussein's Statue. On April 9, 2003, during the Iraq War, a crowd gathered in Al-Firdos Square and, with the help of U.S. Marines, pulled down a statue of Saddam Hussein. This moment was widely televised and became an iconic symbol of the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime. (Zidan**,** 14/7/2020**)**

The Sheraton Ishtar or the Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel was chosen in this study because it overlooks the square and, is one of the famous hotels in Baghdad. It was designed by the Iraqi architect Husham Muneer and was built in 1982. It stands as the second tallest building in the Iraqi capital after Al-Mamoun Tower.

5.1 AL-FIRDOS SQUARE

Before examining Al-Firdos Square and its history, the thesis provides a study of the historical development of the city of Baghdad. This aims to identify the historical period during which Al-Firdos Square was formed. The plans indicate that the square emerged with the beginning of modern Baghdad's foundation, which accounts for its importance. Throughout history, Al-Firdos Square has witnessed numerous changes and events, highlighting its significant role (Figure 5.1).

This brief overview of the critical stages in the planning, urban development, and architecture of Baghdad provides a general understanding of the city's evolution. When Baghdad became the capital city of Iraq, it has undergone significant comprehensive development. This development has occurred both within the oldest parts of the city and beyond the remaining walls. In the outer areas, and extending beyond the city's oldest district, Baghdad has expanded significantly in a semicircular shape. This expansion has centered on the traditional zone, which serves as the focal point and foundation for further growth and development (Al-Saaidy, 2020).

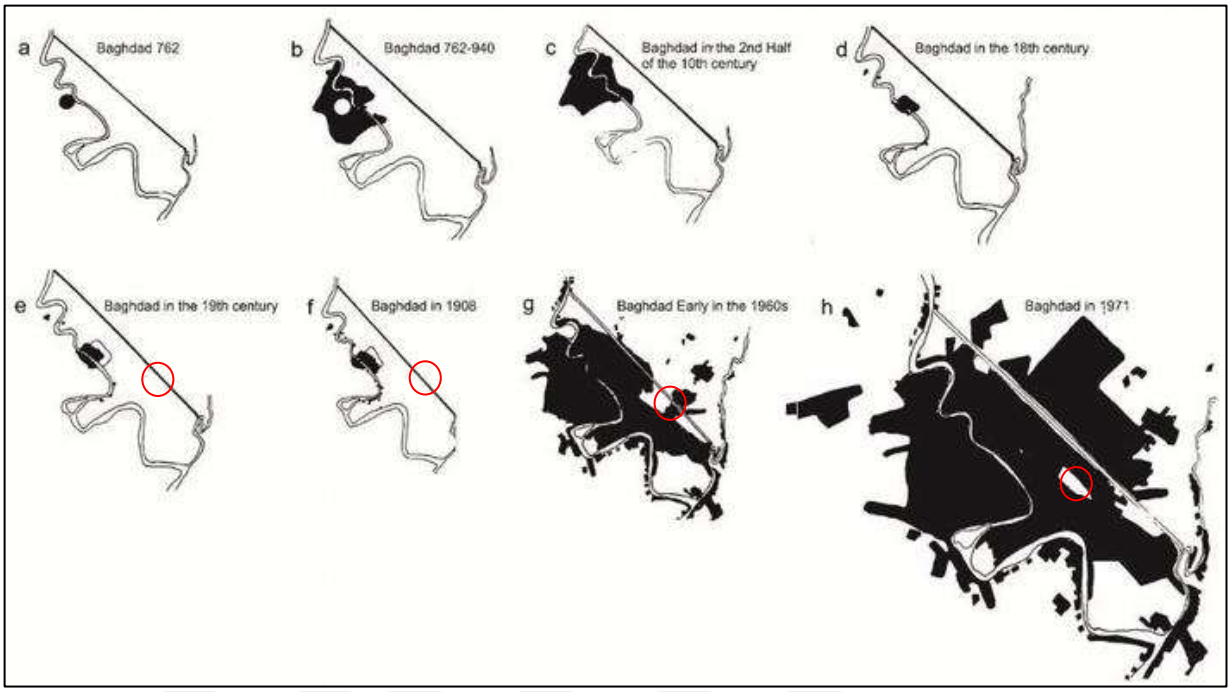


Figure 5.1: The Growth of Baghdad (Al-Ashab, 1974:141).

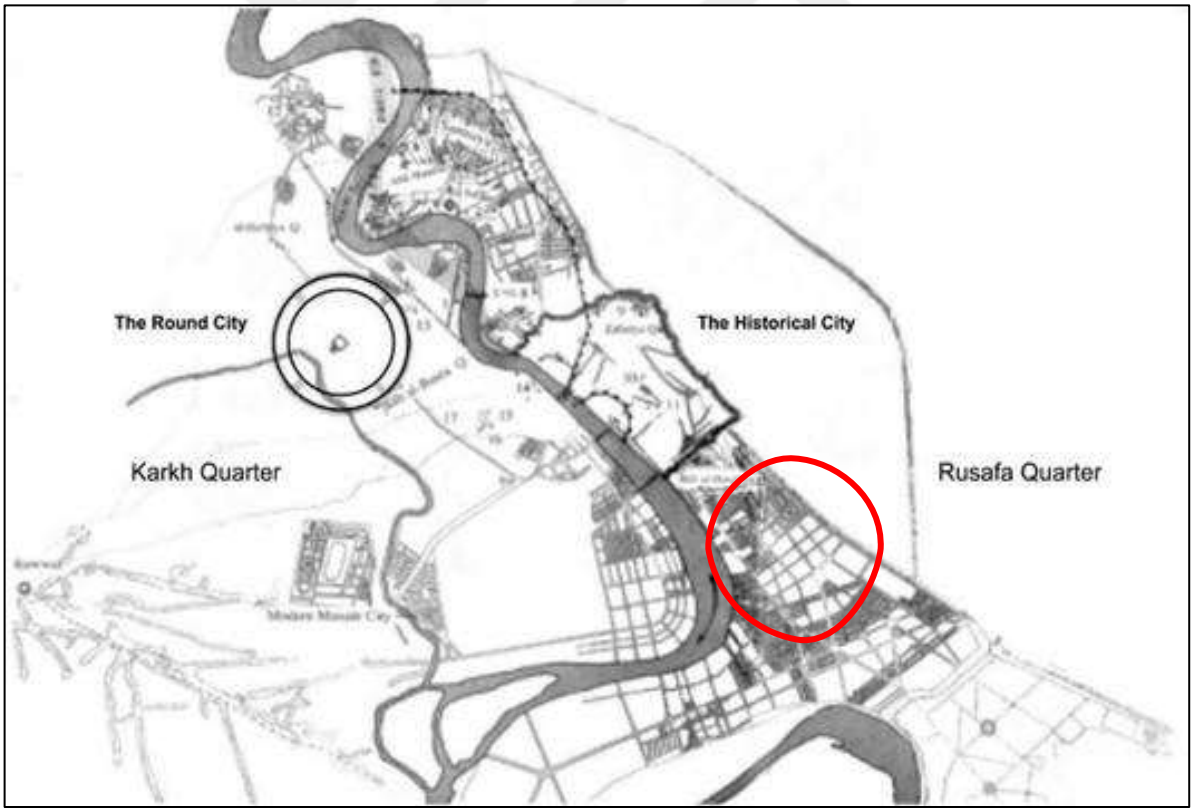


Figure 5.2: Baghdad's Morphology at the End of the Abbasid Empire. (Al-Hasani MK. 2012:81).

Al-Firdos Square is a public open space situated in central Baghdad, Iraq. It takes its name

from the Persian term Ferdows, signifying "paradise." The location has hosted several significant artworks. Found amid al-Sa'doun Street, between Tahrir and Kahramana squares, and facing Ramadan Mosque, Al-Firdos Square is also opposite Abu Nawas Street, offering a view of the Tigris River. Notably, the square hosts two renowned hotels in Baghdad: the Palestine Hotel and the Sheraton Ishtar (Zidan, 2020:2).

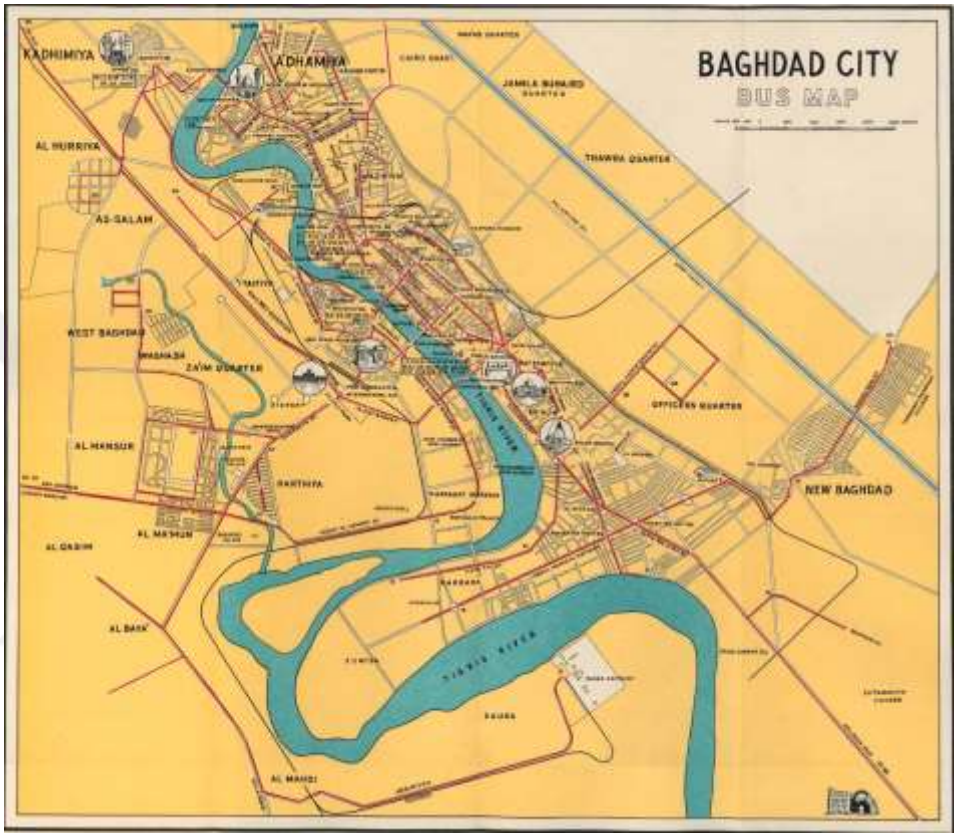


Figure 5.3: Bus Map of Baghdad in 1961 (Iraq Maps - Perry-Castañeda Map Collection - UT Library Online (utexas.edu).

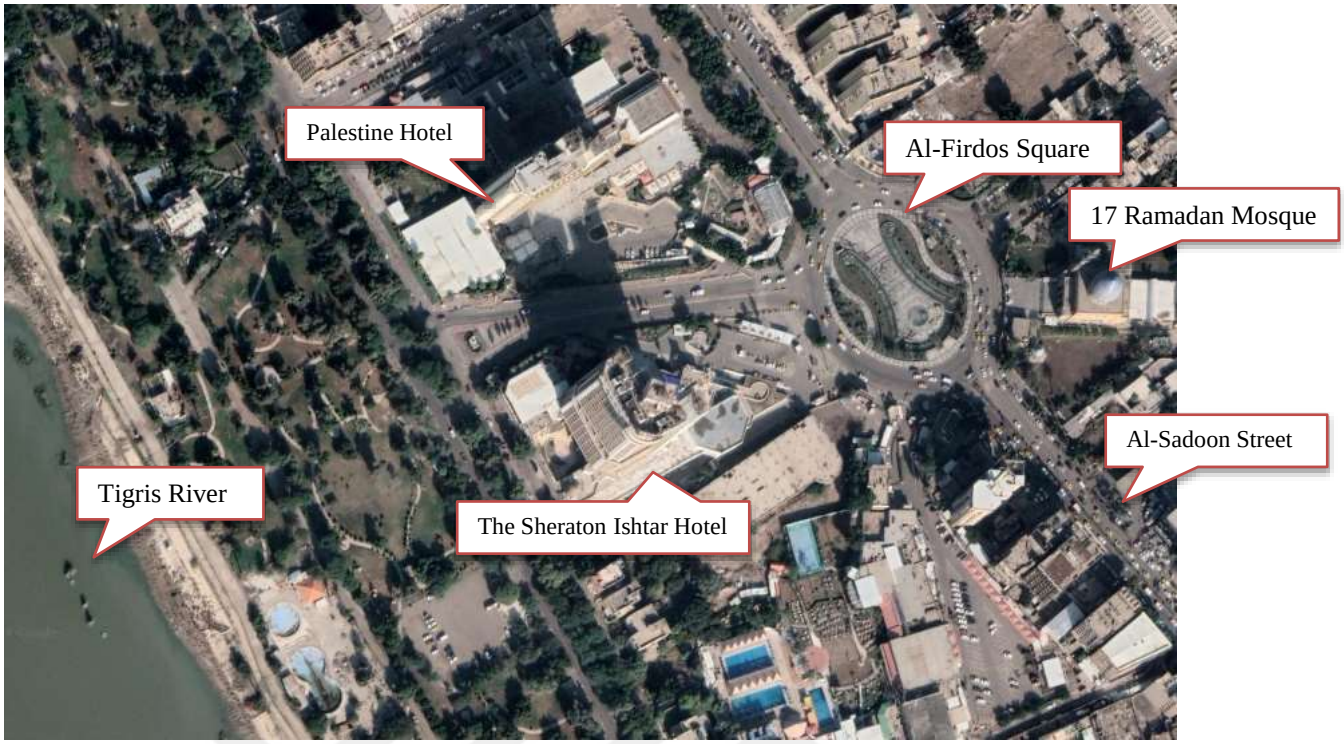


Figure 5.4: Al-Firdos Square Site (Google Earth).

During the Kingdom of Iraq, the Square had a monumental arch (The Unknown Soldier) which was designed by the famous Iraqi architect Rifaa Chadirj. In 1982, the Monument was carried out in the early sixties in the square later called Paradise Square, which was demolished and replaced by a statue of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, which was also demolished after the fall of his regime in 2003 **(**Zidan, 2020:2).

Figure 5.5: The Square During the Kingdom of Iraq and the Monumental Arch (The Unknown Soldier) in 1959. (Firdos Square - Wikipedia).

Figure 5.6: Al Firdos Mosque and the old Monument of the Unknown Soldier - Al Firdos Square – Baghdad (Melodhiny's Site: Beautiful Baghdad (melodhinyssite.blogspot.com).

The square gained global notoriety during the US-led invasion of Iraq when the statue of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was toppled there. This iconic moment was widely broadcast and became a symbol of Western success in Iraq, although it also served as a symbol of American propaganda. Tragically, the square was also the scene of the killing of two journalists at the Palestine Hotel on April 8th (Tunzelmann, 2021: 210).

In 2003 the statue of Saddam Hussein was toppled after the invasion of Iraq.

Figure 5.7: The Infamous Toppling of Saddam Hussein's Statue in Firdos Square in Baghdad Shortly after the Invasion of Iraq in 2003 (Melodhiny's Site: Beautiful Baghdad (melodhinyssite.blogspot.com).

The replacement sculpture, an abstract piece of green art representing freedom, was placed in the spot of the fallen monument. Sculptor Bassem Hamad al-Dawiri created the design, and a collective of artists known as Najin (The Survivors) constructed it. After the original sculpture was removed, the replacement was quickly made and finished in a matter of months (BBC News, 2003).

The statue is seven meters (23 feet) tall and was made with simple building supplies and methods. It is made of painted plaster. It shows a crescent moon representing Islam held up by a symbolic Iraqi family, and the sun signifies the old Sumerian culture (BBC News, 2003).

Figure 5.8: The Sculpture Represents Love, Peace, and Freedom. 2003 (BBC ON THIS DAY | 9 | 2003: Saddam statue topples with the regime.

These events and the location itself highlight the intersection of geopolitics, media coverage, and human tragedy in the context of conflict. Following the Iraq War and subsequent conflicts, efforts may have been made to rebuild and revitalize Al-Firdos Square and the surrounding area. Reconstruction projects aim to restore its historical character while addressing contemporary urban challenges (BBC News, 2003).

Like many public spaces, Al-Firdos Square embodies the collective identity and aspirations of those who inhabit or visit it. Its history, landmarks, and events contribute to the cultural

memory of Baghdad and shape the city's identity over time (BBC News, 2003).

Beyond its physical layout, Al-Firdos Square was a cultural and social hub, where people from diverse backgrounds came together to exchange ideas, conduct business, and interact with one another. Such squares often served as places for intellectual discourse, artistic expression, and civic engagement.

5.2 THE SHERATON ISHTAR HOTEL

The Ishtar Sheraton Hotel & Casino (Arabic: فندق شيراتون عشتار) was the original name of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel, which bears the name of the ancient goddess Ishtar. Under Western administration, it soon rose to prominence as one of Baghdad's most well-liked hotels. But Sheraton Hotels ended its management contract with the property's owner, the Iraqi government, in 1991 amid the Gulf War. For the following twenty-two years, the hotel insisted on using the Sheraton name without permission. (Skyscraper Center)

Although the hotel briefly enjoyed popularity among foreign journalists and contractors after the 2003 Iraq invasion, its occupancy rates declined significantly soon after. Being a prominent and easily identifiable target, the hotel suffered periodic mortar or rocket attacks during the early post-Saddam era. In October 2005, a bomb attack caused severe damage to the structure, leading to its closure for over a year. Tragically, a car bomb outside the hotel claimed the lives of thirty-seven people on January 25, 2010. (Skyscraper Center)

In preparation for the 2012 Arab League summit, the hotel and five other prominent hotels in Baghdad received considerable renovations in 2011. An organization based in Turkey completed these improvements. The hotel was the host hotel for media and officials from several nations during the summit. The hotel was then renamed the Cristal Grand Ishtar Hotel in March 2013. (Skyscraper Center)

Ishtar Hotel, formerly known as Sheraton Baghdad, is a renowned hotel located in the heart of Baghdad. According to the Ishtar Hotel Guide in Baghdad, the hotel was built in 1982 and stands as the second tallest building in the Iraqi capital after Al-Mamoun Tower. It comprises 18 floors and reaches a height of 118 meters above sea level. Named after the ancient goddess Ishtar, the hotel is recognized as one of Baghdad's most prominent Western-operated hotels. In 2011, it underwent extensive renovation to host numerous officials from various countries, journalists, and media professionals for international conferences and workshops. The Ishtar Hotel is considered one of the top-tier luxury hotels in Iraq, offering premium services and

accommodations to its guests. (Skyscraper Center)

Ishtar Hotel is located in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, specifically in Al-Firdos Square near a group of important basic landmarks.

Figure 5.9: The Hotel and the Square (https://x.com/iraqitweet/status/633713539186827264).

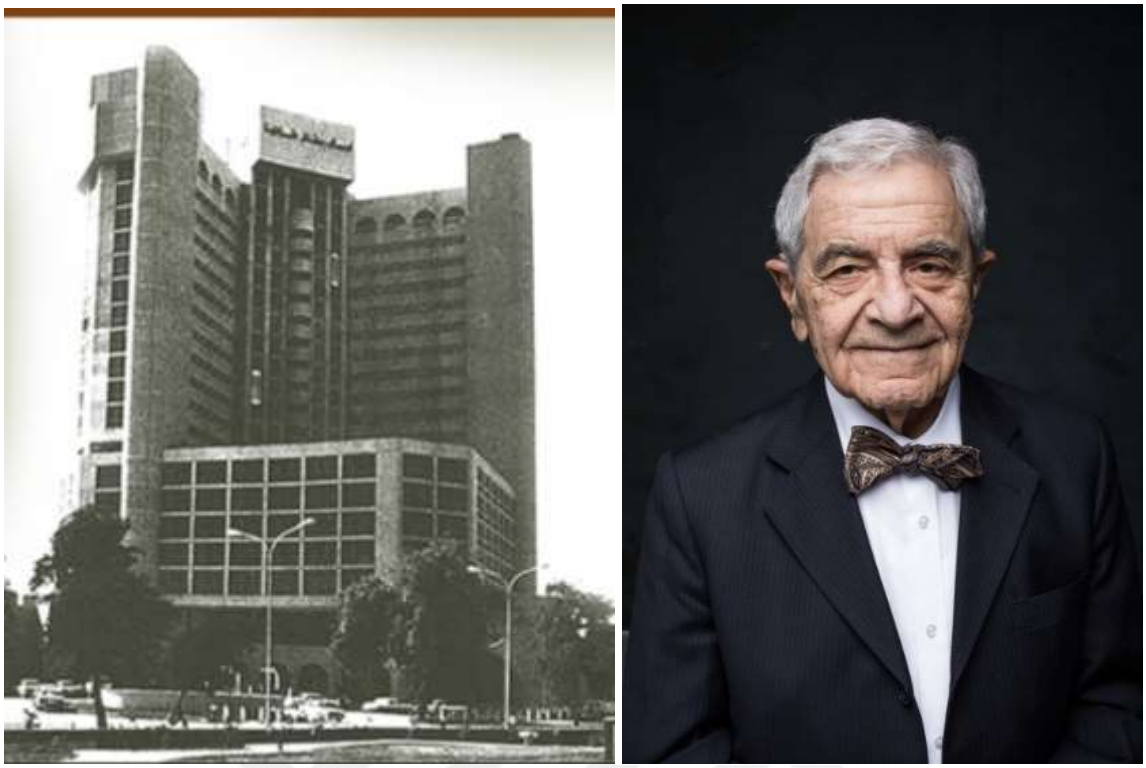


Figure 5.10: Digital Image from the Online Portfolio of Hisham Munir and Associates, Showing an Exterior View of the Baghdad Sheraton. (Rifkind, 2016:34).

The hotel was designed by the Iraqi architect Hisham Munir who is known for pioneering architectural modernism in Iraq. (Staff Writer, 2018) Hisham A. Munir, born in February 1930 in Baghdad, is a notable Iraqi architect who has significantly influenced Iraq's architectural development. After completing his education at the American University of Beirut, the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture, and the University of Southern California in 1956, Munir co-established Iraq's first architecture program at the University of Baghdad in 1959, along with Mohamed Makiya and Abdullah Ihsan Kamel. In 1957, he collaborated with German architect Walter Gropius and his firm, The Architects Collaborative, to design the University of Baghdad campus. Over the next three decades, Munir designed several major projects, including the University of Mosul campus (1966), the Iraqi Ministry of Interior (1974), Baghdad City Hall (1975), and the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel & Casino in Baghdad (1982). His work, particularly the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel, reflects a fusion of modern architectural principles with Iraq's cultural and environmental context, contributing significantly to Baghdad's urban identity. (Staff Writer, 2018)

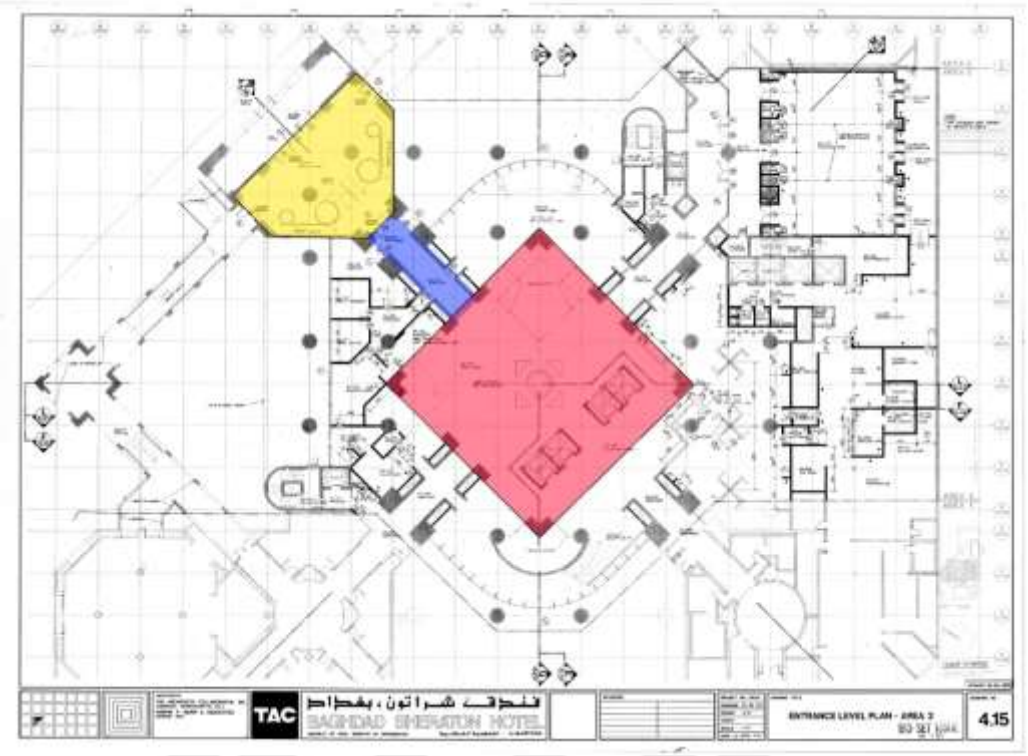


Figure 5.11: Entrance Level Plan of The Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel (From the hotel manager).

The floor plan in Figure 5.9, illustrates the expansive lobby (in red), which follows the main entrance space (in yellow) of the hotel, separated by a corridor (in blue). Both the entrance and lobby serve as transitional spaces: the entrance moves users from the public space of the street to the semi-public space of the lobby, while the lobby transitions users from the semi-public lobby to the private spaces, such as guest rooms and other areas within the hotel.

Figure 5.12: Mezzanine Level Reflected Ceiling Plan of The Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel. (From the hotel manager).

The hotel has 310 rooms in addition to more than 50 junior suites in addition to presidential suites.

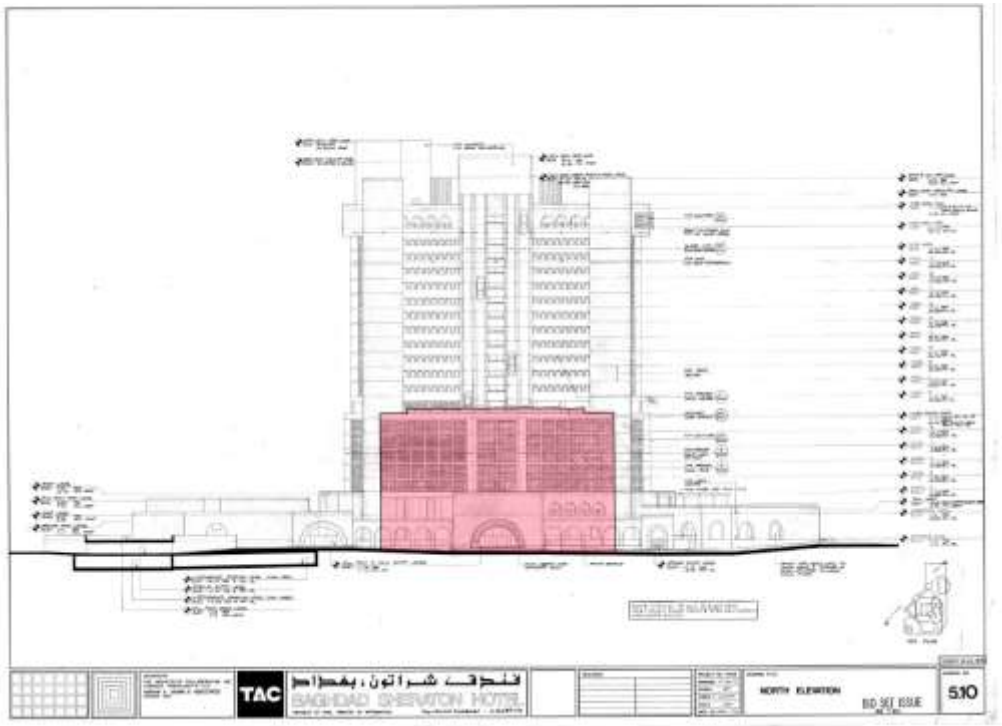


Figure 5.13: The North Elevation of the Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel. (From the hotel manager).

Figure 5.14: The Entrance of the Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel. (Photo by the researcher, 2024).

In the main entrance of the hotel, the architect utilized repetition in the arch element, which is frequently used as an identity feature in Iraqi architecture.

The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel in Baghdad features a central lobby highlighted by elevators behind the Ishtar statue, which is positioned atop a fountain shaped like the Star of Ishtar and the Star of Shamash. These transparent glass elevators offer elevated views of the expansive interior. Architect Hisham Munir designed a mezzanine floor with balconies between the ground and first floors, enhancing the visual connection between levels. He also incorporated hanging plants from these balconies, overlooking the lobby. In the center of the space, the statue reaches the height of one floor. The ground floor of the lobby is clad in marble, with walls adorned with golden ceramic tiles. The lobby spans eight floors in height, capped with a steel network ceiling covered with glass and palm leaf-like decorations inspired by Iraqi heritage. This design diffuses direct sunlight, a method to reduce the intense sun in Iraq. Additionally, chandeliers reflecting Iraqi heritage hang from the ceiling, adding to the lobby's design.

Figure 5.15: The Sheraton Ishtar lobby (Booking.com).

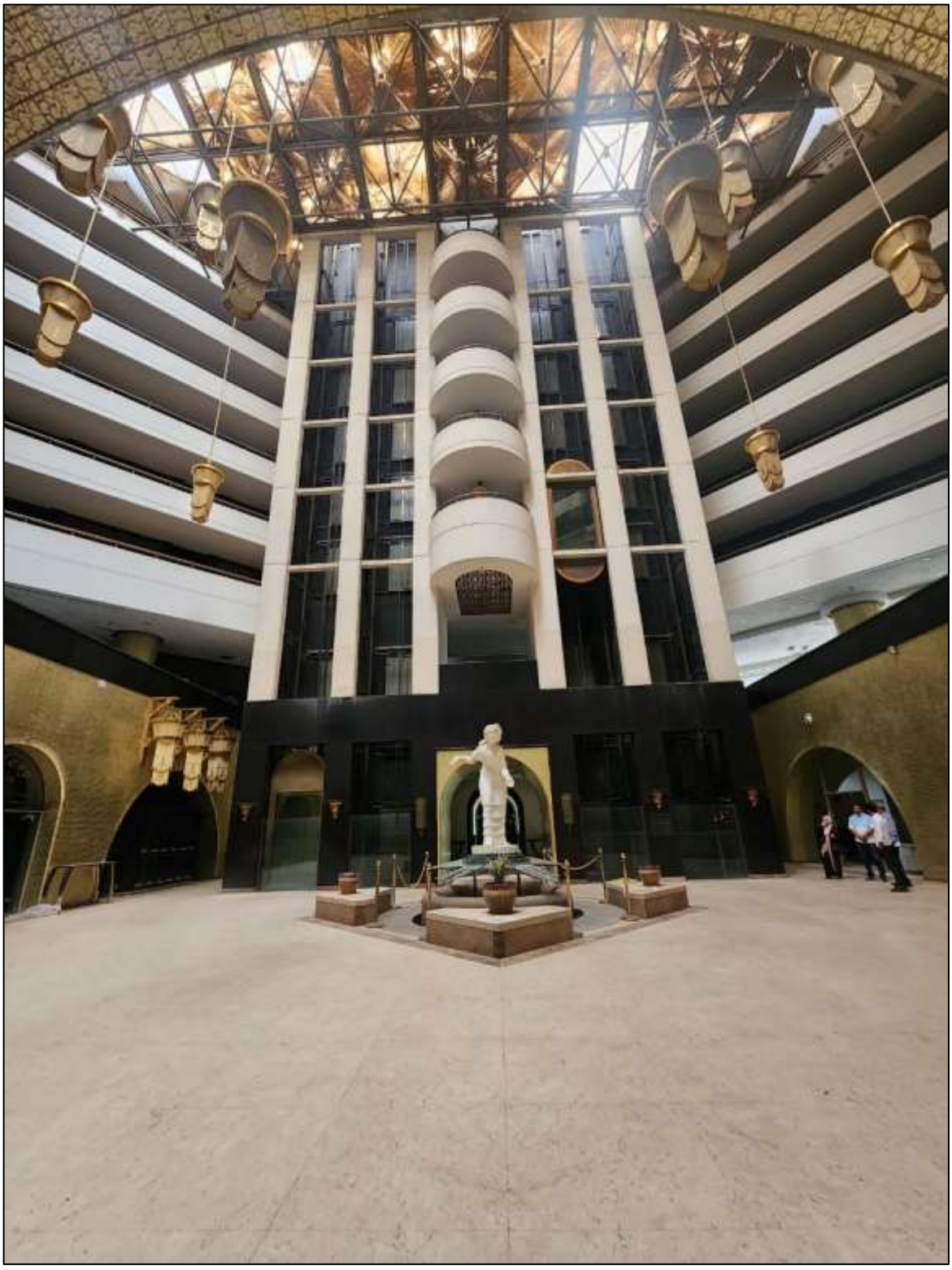


Figure 5.16: The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby. (Photo by the researcher, 2024).

Figure 5.17: The Entrance of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel. (Photo by the researcher, 2024).

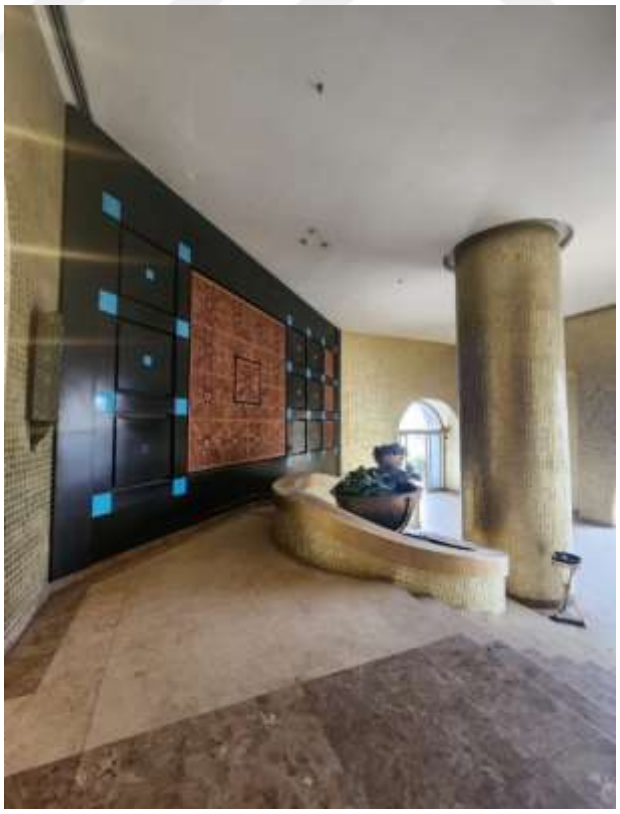


Figure 5.18: The Entrance of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel. (Photo by the researcher, 2024).

5.3 ANALYZING THE CASE STUDY

a. In conclusion, when applying Haupt's (2016) theory of mixing and connecting to the relationship between the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and Al-Firdos Square, it becomes evident that the connection between these two urban spaces does not fully align with the principles of the theory. The presence of a major public street separating the square from the hotel limits their interconnection, reducing the potential for a cohesive urban fabric that the theory advocates.

   Conversely, applying this theory to the Marmara Hotel and Taksim Square reveals a strong dynamic relationship. The hotel lobby and Taksim Square exhibit significant integration, facilitated by the extension of the hotel's services into the square. This seamless interaction between the hotel and the public space exemplifies the concept of a mixed-use urban environment, where the boundaries between private and public spaces are blurred, enhancing the overall urban experience, and fostering greater social interaction.

   This comparative analysis highlights how physical and functional connections, or the lack thereof, between urban elements, can significantly impact the effectiveness of creating integrated and vibrant urban spaces.

b. When applying Carrier's 1979 classification to the lobby of the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel, we find that the hotel lobby exemplifies an enclosed urban space. This type of space is characterized by being surrounded by buildings, creating a sense of containment and intimacy.

   Similarly, Al-Firdos Square is also a closed public space. It is surrounded by buildings rather than nature, which defines its boundary and reinforces its function as an urban square. This classification highlights the enclosed nature of both the lobby and the square, emphasizing their roles as integral parts of the urban fabric, designed to facilitate social interaction within a defined and structured environment.

   Both the lobby of the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel and Al-Firdos Square can be seen as enclosed urban spaces according to Carrier's 1979 classification, with the hotel lobby providing a contained, intimate environment and the square serving as a bounded public area surrounded by urban architecture.

c. When applying Hazem's 1988 classification to the spaces in and around the Ishtar

Sheraton Hotel, the hotel's lobby is identified as a static space. This classification reflects spaces that are primarily used for stationary activities, offering a calm and contained environment conducive to relaxation and passive engagement.

In contrast, Al-Firdos Square is classified as a dynamic space. This type of space is characterized by constant movement and activity, serving as a hub for social interaction, events, and urban life. The dynamic nature of Al-Firdos Square facilitates a wide range of public activities and interactions, reflecting its role as an active and vibrant part of the urban environment.

According to Hazem's 1988 classification, the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel's lobby represents a static urban space, while Al-Firdos Square exemplifies a dynamic space, each serving distinct but complementary functions within the urban landscape.

d. When applying Carmona's classification to Al-Firdos Square, it can be identified as a positive open space where community activities, events, and celebrations take place. This type of space is essential for fostering social interaction and cultural activities within the urban context. Al-Firdos Square's role in Baghdad is like that of Taksim Square in Istanbul and Times Square in New York, both of which serve as vibrant, dynamic urban spaces that host a wide range of public events and activities.

   In Carmona's framework, these squares are considered valuable urban assets that contribute to the social and cultural life of their respective cities. They provide a setting for public gatherings, celebrations, and civic events, enhancing the urban experience for residents and visitors alike. The design and functionality of such spaces are critical in supporting their role as focal points for community engagement and public life.

e. According to Trancik's 1986 classification of urban spaces based on their activities, the lobby space of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel is considered an urban space located at the main entrance of the building. It is a semi-public space or transitional space that facilitates a transitional passage between the private space inside the hotel and the public space outside the hotel.

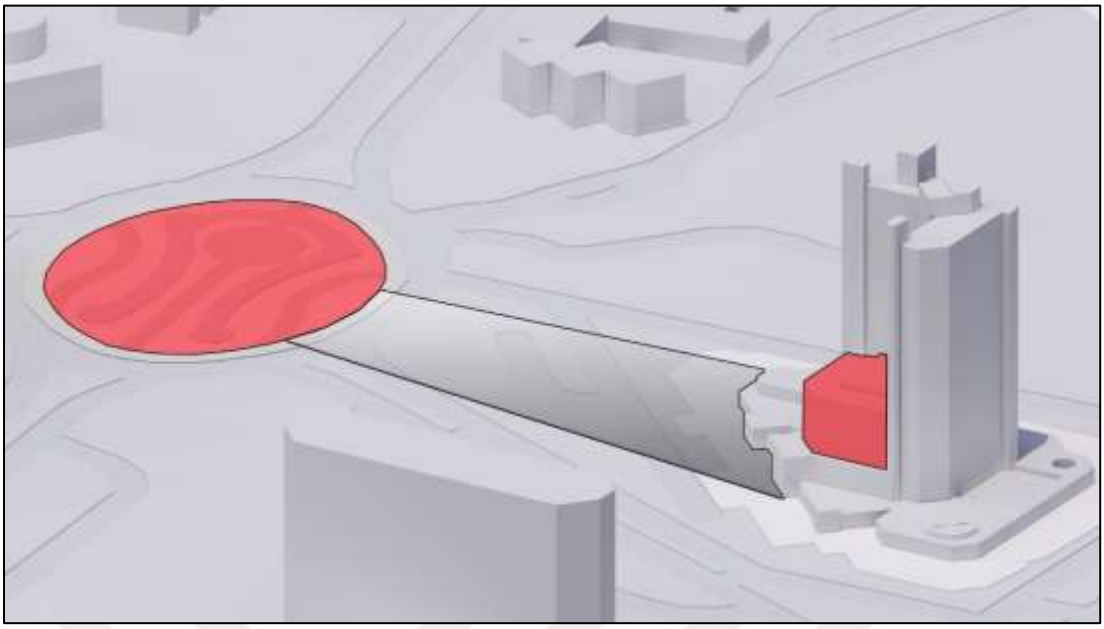


Figure 5.19: 3D Drawing of Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel. (By the Researcher).

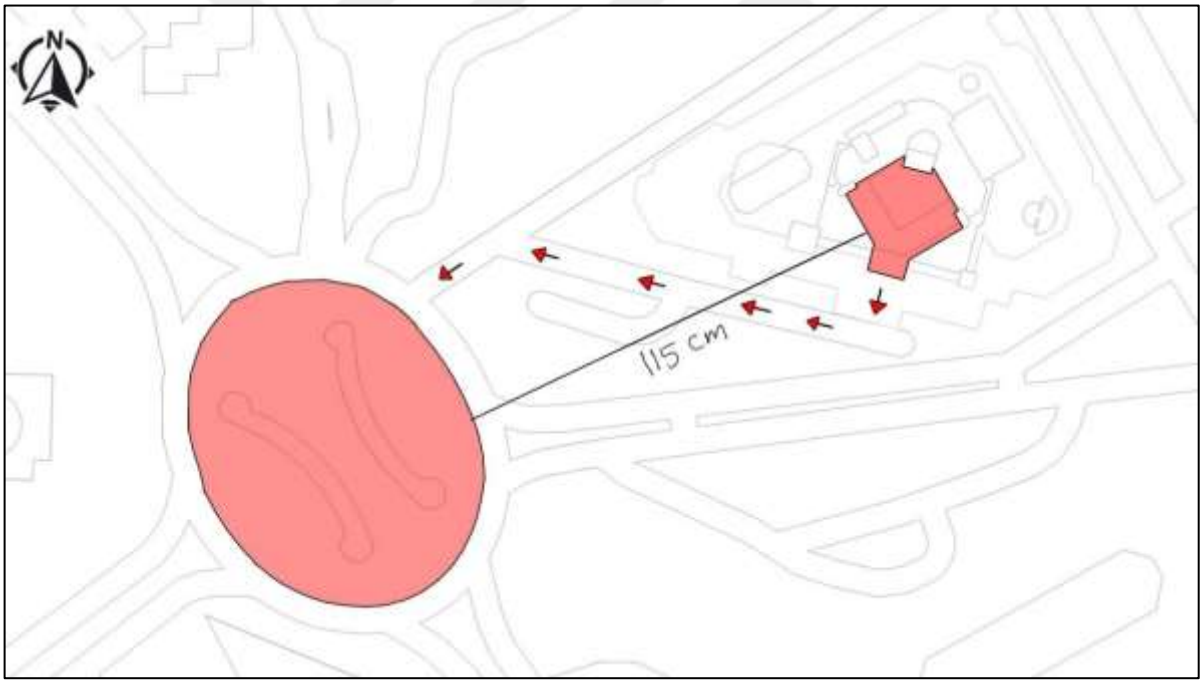


Figure 5.20: Site Plan Showing the Relationship between The Grand Crystal Ishtar Hotel and the Square. (By the Researcher).

Figure 5.21: Comparison of Hotels.

5.3.1 Architects Survey Results

5.3.1.1 The relationship between the hotel lobby and public squares from the visitor's point of view

Part of the practical work included conducting an electronic questionnaire in which several questions were asked about the relationship between the hotel lobby and public squares. Fifty-one people participated in the questionnaire, 57% males and 43% females. The ages of the questionnaire participants ranged between 18 and over 65 years, and their distribution is shown in Figure 1. Their educational level varied from non-formal education to a doctorate. 69% have a bachelor's degree in various specializations, 14% have a master's degree, 8% have a Doctor of Philosophy, and 7% have a secondary school certificate. Chart 5.2 shows the education level of the survey participants.

Chart 5.1: Age of the Questionnaire Contributors (By the Researcher).

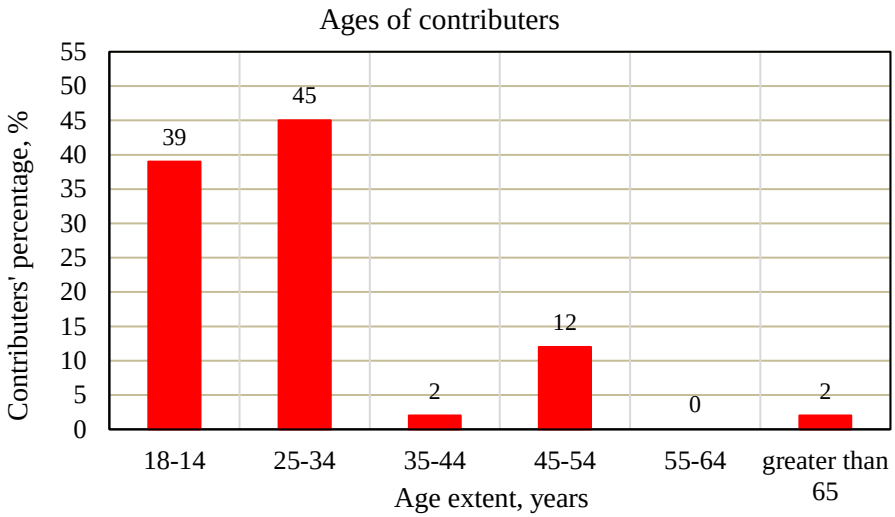
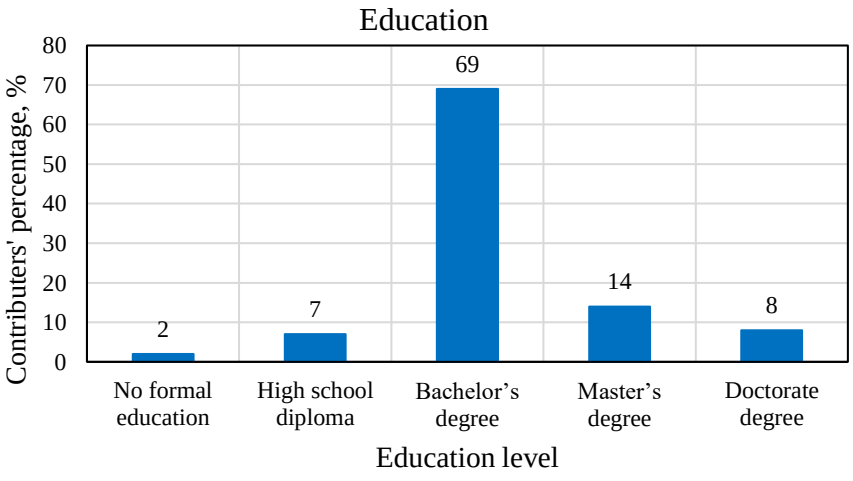


Chart 5.2: The Education Levels of the Questionnaire Contributors (By the Researcher).

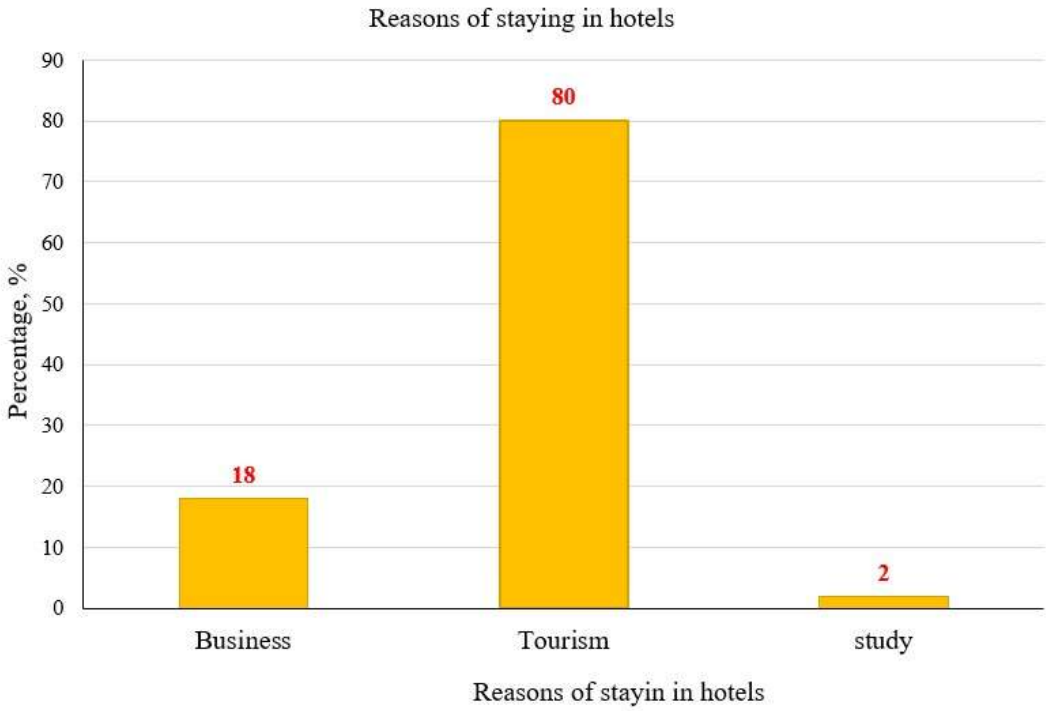


The results of the questionnaire analysis for each question are illustrated below:

i. The primary reason for staying in hotels

The reasons for people staying in a hotel vary. The questionnaire included two main reasons: business and tourism. A third field was added to indicate other possible reasons. The results of the questionnaire analysis showed that 80% of hotel users are due to tourism, 18% for business purposes, and 2% for study purposes, as illustrated in chart 5.3.

Chart 5.3: Analysis of Reasons for Staying People in the Hotels (By the Researcher).

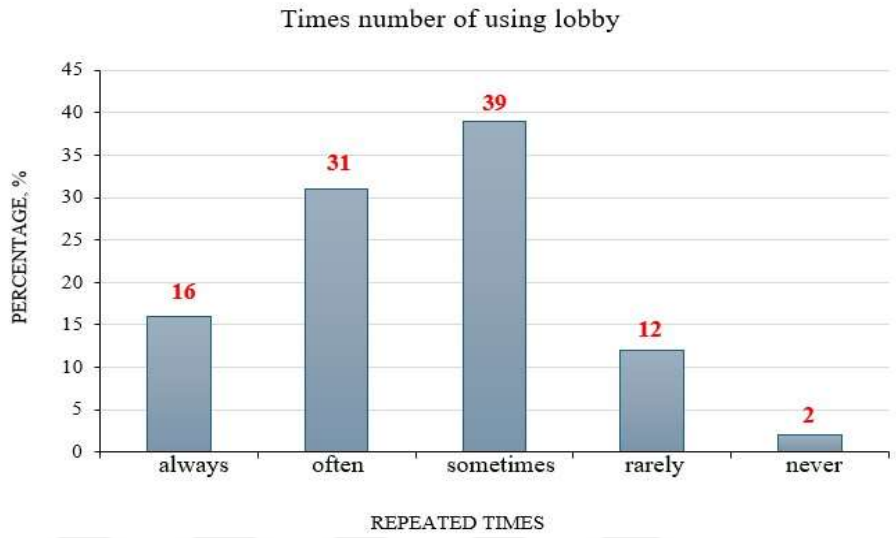


ii. Times numbers of using the lobby while staying in the hotel.

The number of times residents or visitors use the hotel lobby varies depending on the nature of the business they are coming for and the time they spend there. The questionnaire included five criteria to indicate the number of times the lobby was used. Figure 4 shows the distribution of the number of those times. According to Fig. 4, 16 % of the people always use the lobby, 31 % often use it, and 39 % sometimes utilize it, while just 2 % never use the lobby. However, since 80 % of those staying in the hotel are tourists and 18 % are businessmen, the use of the hotel lobby is

significant for them for different purposes, as will be illustrated later.

Chart 5.4: Analysis of using Hotel Lobby Times, by the Residents and Visitors (By the Researcher).

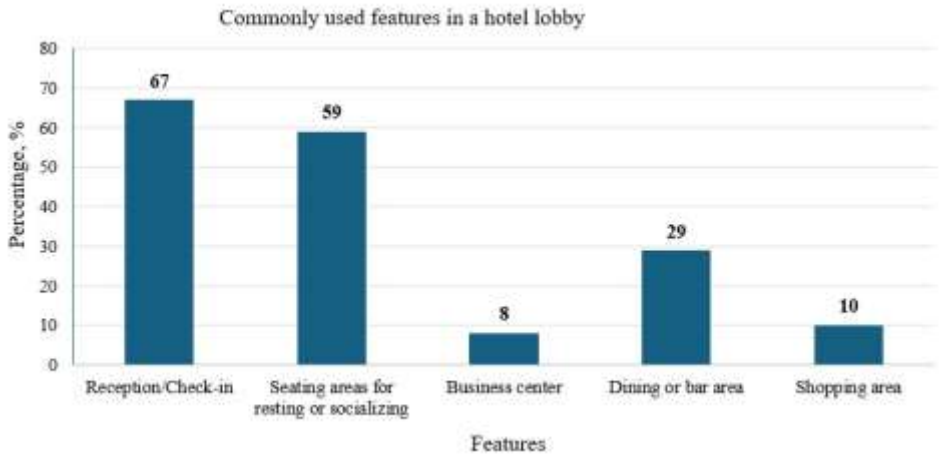


iii. The commonly used features in a hotel lobby

The hotel lobby space contains many services that it provides to customers, such as receiving customers, checking them in and out of the hotel, seating areas for rest and socializing, a business center, a dining or bar area, a shopping area, and some other areas. The questionnaire included all these features, and the analysis of the participants' responses is illustrated in Chart 3.5.

According to the results of the questionnaire analysis, the main feature that the customers need is the reception area, which is a logical result because all customers need reception to check in and out of the hotel. The other features are arranged according to the participants' responses as follows, seating areas, business center, dining or bar, and shopping area.

Chart 5.5: The Commonly used Features in the Hotel Lobby (By the Researcher).



iv. The importance of the design and ambiance of a hotel lobby

55% of the participants in the questionnaire indicated that the design and ambiance of the hotel lobby are essential to them when they experience staying in the hotel, and 35% of them mentioned that it is important to them, whereas there was no opinion for 10% of the participants.

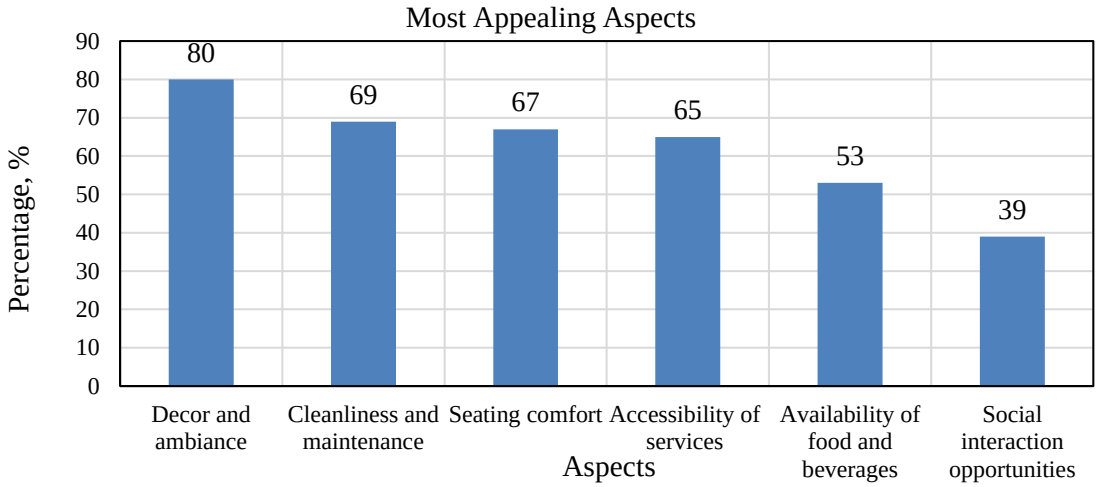
v. The aspects of a hotel lobby that the customers find most appealing

The appealing criteria of the hotel lobby vary according to the customers' views and the time they spend in the hotel. The questionnaire included five criteria as follows.

a. Decor and ambiance
b. Seating comfort
c. Accessibility of services (check-in, business center, etc.)
d. Social interaction opportunities
e. Availability of food and beverages
f. Cleanliness and maintenance

The analysis of the participants' responses showed that the decor and ambiance are the most significant aspects, followed by cleanliness and maintenance, seating comfort, and accessibility of services. Fig. 6 illustrates the results analysis.

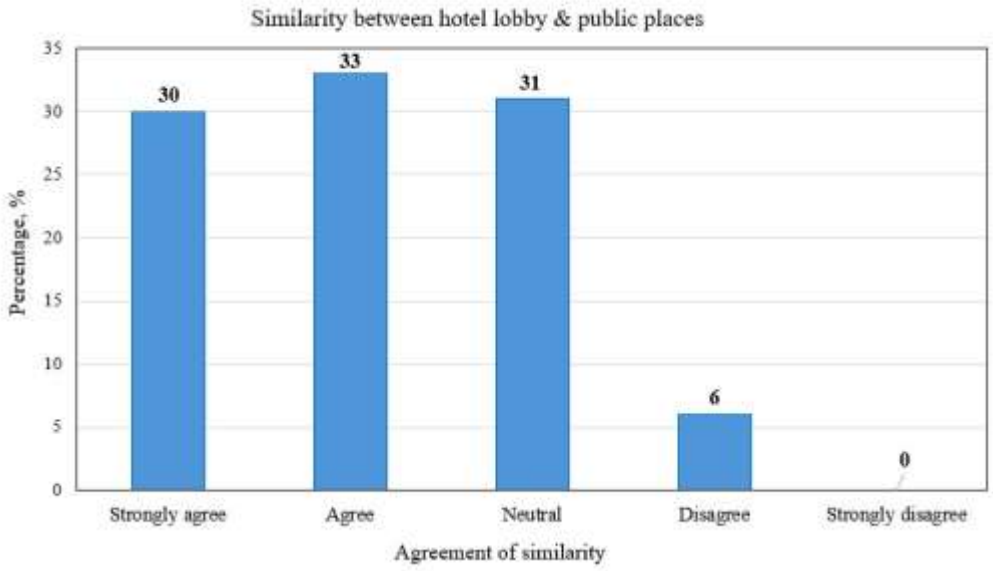
Chart 5.6: The Analysis of the Most Appealing Aspects for the Customers (By the Researcher).



vi. Statement of agreement that the hotel lobbies are similar to public squares in their social function

The results of the questionnaire analysis showed that 63 % of the participants agreed that the hotel lobby is similar to public squares in its social function: 30 % strongly agreed and 33 % agreed. 31 % of the participants had no opinion, while only 6 % did not agree with this opinion. Fig. 7 shows the analysis results.

Chart 5.7: The Analysis of Opinions on the Similarity between Hotel Lobbies and Public Spaces (By the Researcher).



vii. How hotel lobbies resemble urban public squares

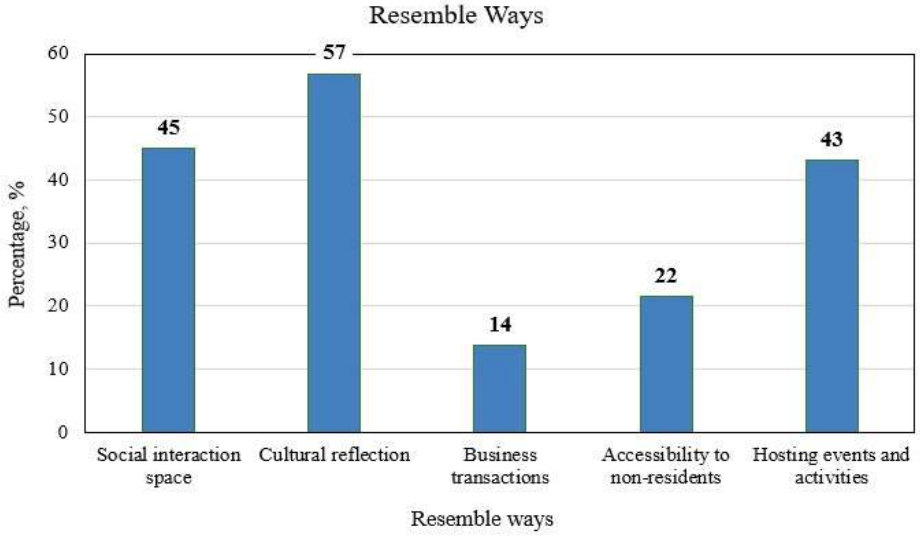
The similarities between the hotel lobbies and public squares can include several

aspects, such as:

a. Social interaction space
b. Cultural reflection
c. Business transactions
d. Accessibility to non-residents
e. Hosting events and activities

The questionnaire included the above aspects, and the analysis results showed that cultural reflection is the most important similarity aspect which represents 57 % of the contributors' opinions, social interaction space and hosting events and activities come in second and third levels in the similarity aspects, where 45 % of contributors' responses chose social interaction space aspect and 43 % chose hosting events and activities aspect. Fig. 8 illustrates the analysis results.

Chart 5.8: Analysis Results of Resemble Aspects between Hotel Lobbies and Public Squares (By the Researcher).



viii. Repeated use of public squares and similar urban spaces.

29 % of the questionnaire's participants indicated that they use public squares and urban spaces monthly, the same percentage use them weekly, 10 % use them daily, 27 % use them rarely, and 4% stated that they never use them.

ix. Evaluation of the opportunity for social interaction in a hotel lobby

The opportunity for social interaction in a hotel lobby is one of the aspects considered

in the hotel lobby, where customers meet in its various spaces. To demonstrate the availability of the opportunity to achieve this communication, 16 % of the participants in the questionnaire stated that it is very high, 49 % mentioned that it is high, 6 % stated that it is low, and 29 % did not indicate their opinions.

x. Thinking that the hotel lobbies contribute to a sense of community within the hotel.

The questionnaire contained the following question (Do you think hotel lobbies contribute to a sense of community within the hotel?) to demonstrate the importance of creating an internal feeling among residents and hotel lobby users of belonging to the community in which they are located, and to demonstrate the importance of community communication. The analysis showed an agreement of 78 %; 25 % strongly agree and 53 % agree. 16 % of participants did not give an opinion, while just 6 % did not agree.

xi. Prefer the hotel lobby to be a private space exclusive for guests only, or to be open to the public and easily accessible to local residents.

To decide on the possibility of making the hotel lobby available to the general public or whether it should be private, the questionnaire included a question about that. The question was (In your travels, do you prefer the hotel lobby to be a private space exclusive for guests only, or to be open to the public and easily accessible to local residents? Please provide reasons). The results showed that 51 % chose private use, 47 % selected to be open to the public, and 2 % stated to be semi-public.

xii. What improvements would you suggest for hotel lobbies to serve guests and visitors better?

This question was mentioned to the participants in the questionnaire, and they expressed several opinions as follows:

a. The spaciousness of the place and easy access to all its components.
b. Paying attention to the interior design of the lobby.
c. The hotel lobby services should be open and connected to the outside, and the design of it should be spacious, open to the outside, and easy to reach. These features provide a good marketing method for the hotel because it will not be ambiguous when its services are available to everyone. They will be tried, which may raise curiosity to

use the rest of the hotel's services.

d. At present, technology is used in many aspects of daily life, some technological aspects can also be added to contribute to serving hotel residents and facilitating some routine matters in a way that does not affect the idea of direct communication between those arriving at the hotel and the employees or public persons in the hotel. Such as payment services, electronic shopping, or electronic entertainment services that could be an electronic museum displaying the human and cultural heritage and the most important tourist destinations that hotel residents can visit.

e. The lobby space must reflect the cultural values of the society and keep pace with its artistic development.

f. The lobby should be very spacious, with an open space and a high ceiling. It should be subject to biophilic design, "merging nature with architectural space."

xiii. Do you have any additional comments on the role and importance of hotel lobbies compared to urban public squares?

This question was mentioned to the participants in the questionnaire, and they expressed several answers as follows:

a. The hotel lobby space has great importance in that it reflects the civilization and identity of the city where the hotel is located. It also resembles public squares in several points, the most important of which is that the people who use it are strangers to each other, thus communication can occur between them if there are activities and events inside the lobby.

b. One of the important aspects of the hotel lobby is that it is a civilizational and cultural reflection of society. This reflection is represented in the interior designs and spaces and in the way of dealing with people, whether tourists or businessmen, as well as in all commercial and recreational activities, to be a microcosm and a clear example of general culture and through which marketing is done, introducing and drawing an image for the person staying in the hotel about an important part of life outside the hotel.

c. Both provide a space for social interaction, but in terms of use and primary purpose, the lobby is designed to attract hotel guests and provide a comfortable experience and easy access. Public squares are designed for the general public and provide a

space for interaction and activities.

d. Despite the hotel lobby's relative privacy, it will increase in importance of its role and tasks which will expand if it is open to the external spaces surrounding it or adjacent, especially the public squares. The more public the hotel lobby becomes, that is, what makes it a public space, the more effective and attractive it becomes to customers.

The questionnaire explored the relationship between hotel lobbies and public squares from a visitor's perspective, gathering insights from 51 participants with diverse demographics. The majority (80%) stayed in hotels for tourism, and a significant portion (86%) used the hotel lobby frequently. Key findings include the importance of the lobby's design and ambiance, with 55% of participants considering it essential. The most commonly used features in hotel lobbies were the reception area, seating spaces, and business centers. Decor and ambiance, cleanliness, and seating comfort were highlighted as the most appealing aspects of lobbies.

Regarding the social function of hotel lobbies, 63% agreed that they are similar to public squares, particularly in aspects like cultural reflection, social interaction, and hosting events. While a portion of participants frequently used public squares, 78% agreed that hotel lobbies contribute to a sense of community within the hotel. However, opinions were split on whether lobbies should be private or open to the public, with 51% favoring privacy and 47% preferring openness.

Participants suggested improvements such as enhancing lobby spaciousness, incorporating cultural elements, and integrating technology without sacrificing direct human interaction. They also emphasized that hotel lobbies reflect the culture and identity of the city, similar to public squares, and can serve as microcosms of the broader community, facilitating social interaction and cultural exchange.

Figure 5.22: The Relationship between the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and Al-Firdos Square.

The relationship between the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and Al-Firdos Square is viewed as strong and significant, enriching the area culturally, historically, and economically. The hotel's strategic location and architectural style make it a vital part of the square's identity. Some respondents note a lack of interaction with the outside environment due to the hotel's inward focus and mention the physical separation caused by a street. However, these do not significantly detract from the overall positive relationship.

The survey results reveal that most respondents perceive hotel lobbies as essential transition spaces that effectively blend public and private functions, facilitating a smooth transition between the external and internal environments. This view underscores the lobby's critical role in enhancing guest experience through its intermediary function.

The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel's relationship with Al-Firdos Square in Baghdad is largely seen as beneficial, contributing significantly to the area's cultural, historical, and economic landscape. However, some respondents highlighted the need for more direct interaction and physical connectivity. Overall, the survey underscores the importance of thoughtful urban planning and architectural design in creating functional, meaningful, and symbiotic spaces with their surroundings.

5.3.2 Guest Survey Results

Personal interviews were conducted with several pioneers in Al-Firdous Square and the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel. The number of people who participated in the interviews was 10 people, whose ages ranged between 18 - 60 years. The interviews included some questions, as illustrated below:

1. **How often do you visit Al-Firdos Square?**

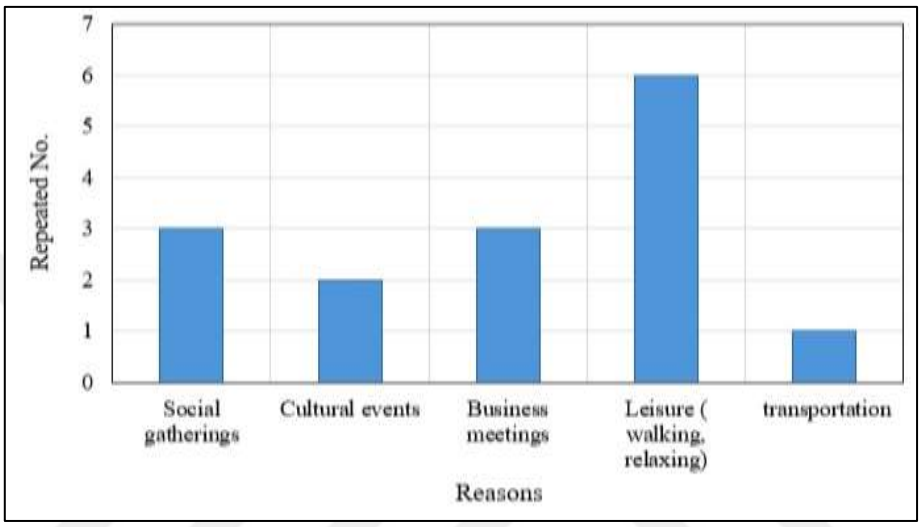
The answers show that seven people visit the square monthly and 3 people visit it weekly.

2. **How often do you visit the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby?**

The answers show that five people visit the Hotel's lobby while the other five never visit it.

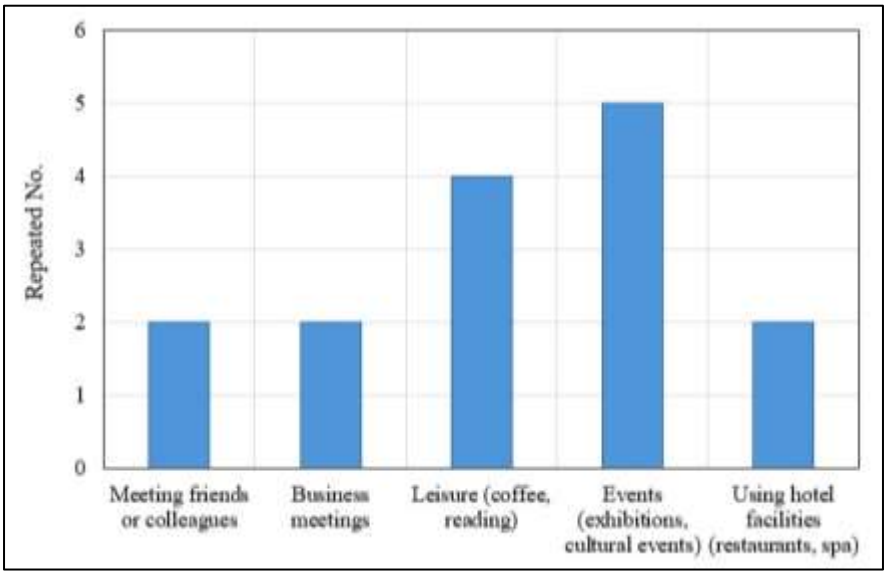
What is your primary reason for visiting Al-Firdos Square? (Select all that apply)

Chart 5.9: Analysis Results of Repetition of Visiting the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel Lobby.



3. **What is your primary reason for visiting the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby? (Select all that apply)?**

Chart 5.10: Analysis Results of Reasons for visiting the Ishtar Sheraton Hotel Lobby.



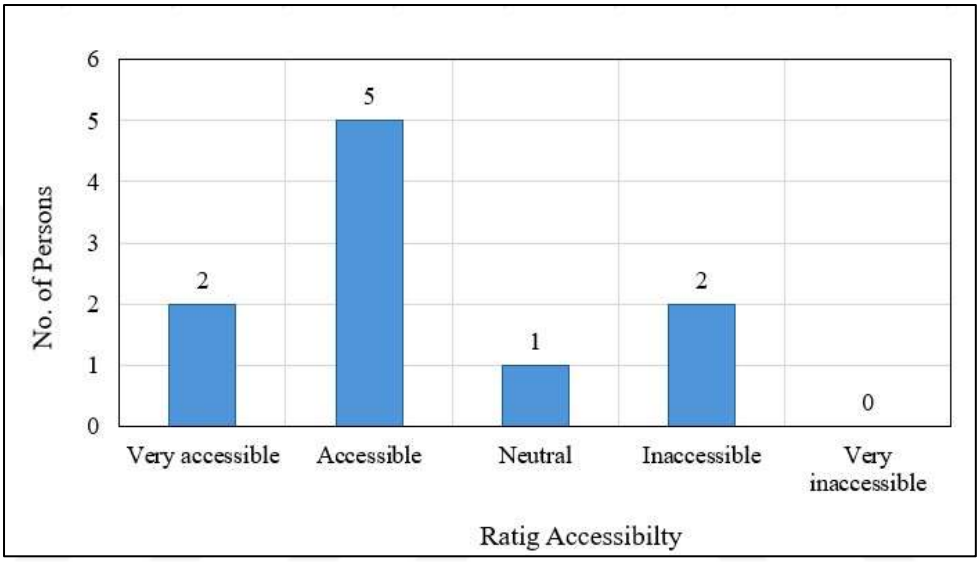
Most of the participants (70%) answered that their primary reason for visiting the hotel was

for events, fewer said their reason was for leisure or reading, and the rest of the selections were equal.

4. How would you rate the accessibility of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby?

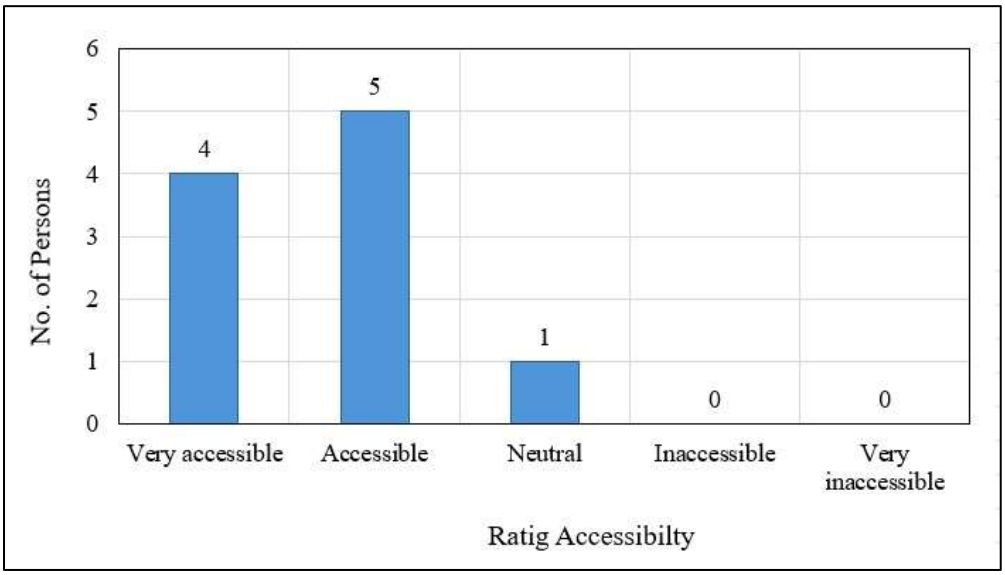
70 % of the interview people show that reaching the Hotel Lobby is accessible, as illustrated in the chart below:

Chart 5.11: Analysis Results of Rating Accessibility of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby.



5. How would you rate the accessibility of Al-Firdos Square?

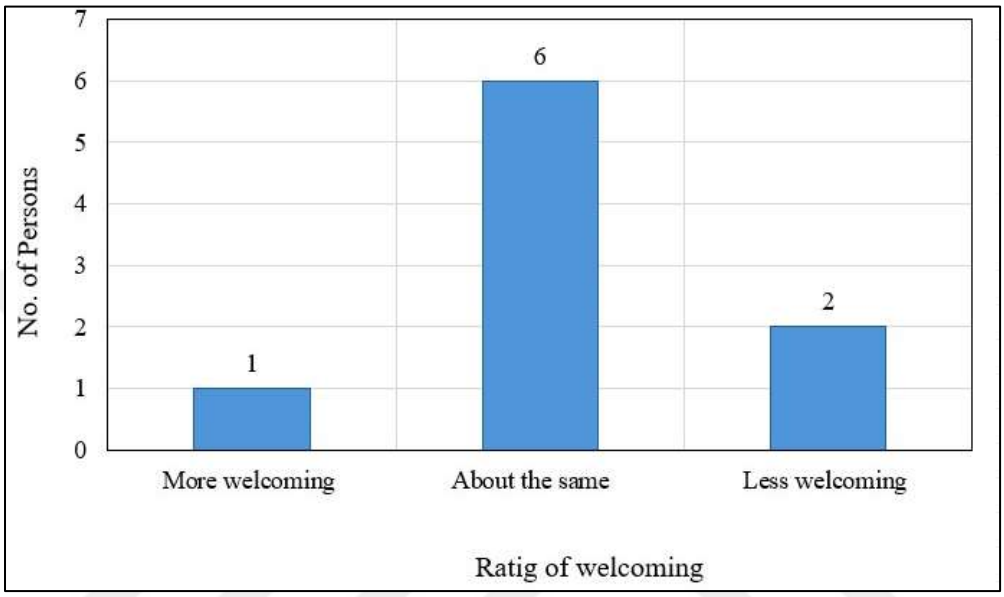
Chart 5.12: Analysis Results of Rating Accessibility of Al-Firdos Square.



70% of the participants said that Al-Firdos Square is an accessible space.

6. How welcoming do you find the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby compared to other public spaces in Baghdad?

Chart 5.13: Analysis Results of Rating Welcoming in the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby.

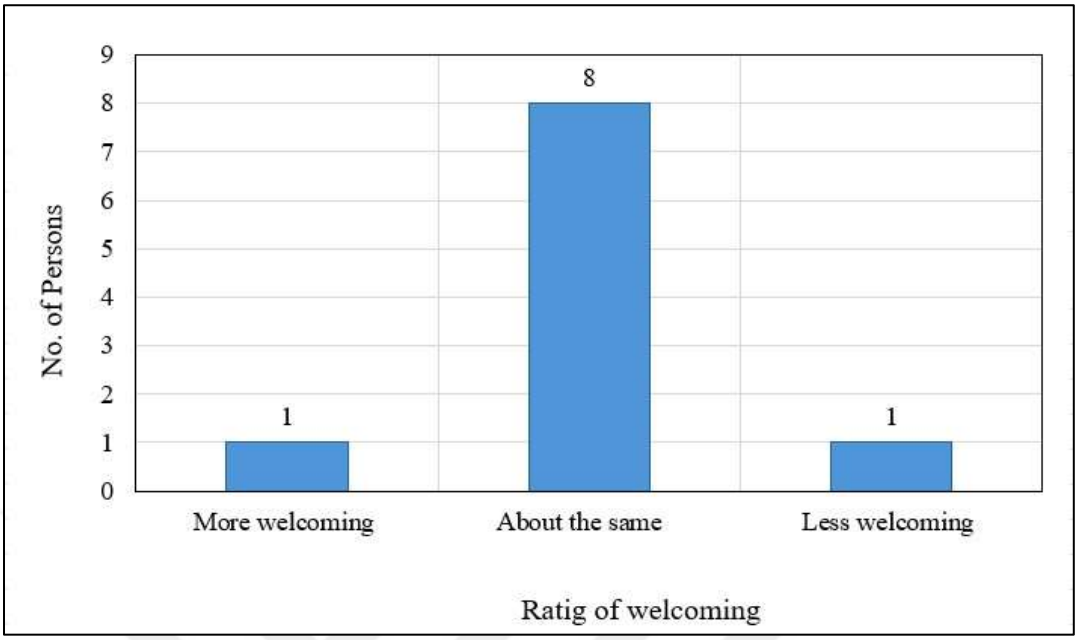


60% of the participants mentioned that the lobby of the Sheraton hotel is about the same in welcoming compared to other public spaces in Baghdad.

7. How welcoming do you find Al-Firdos Square compared to other public spaces in Baghdad?

80 % of people show that Al-Firdos Square is similar to the other squares in Baghdad, those opinions may be due to most of the squares in Baghdad having old designs or were not designed at all but were implemented as part of the requirements of the streets during the time of the street's implementation.

Chart 5.14: Analysis Results of Rating Welcoming in Al-Firdos Square.



8. How do you feel spending time in the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby? (Select all that apply)

Chart 5.15: Analysis Results of Expressing the Feeling in the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby.

Most of the answers go for the feelings of relaxing when spending time in the lobby of the Sheraton Ishtar hotel

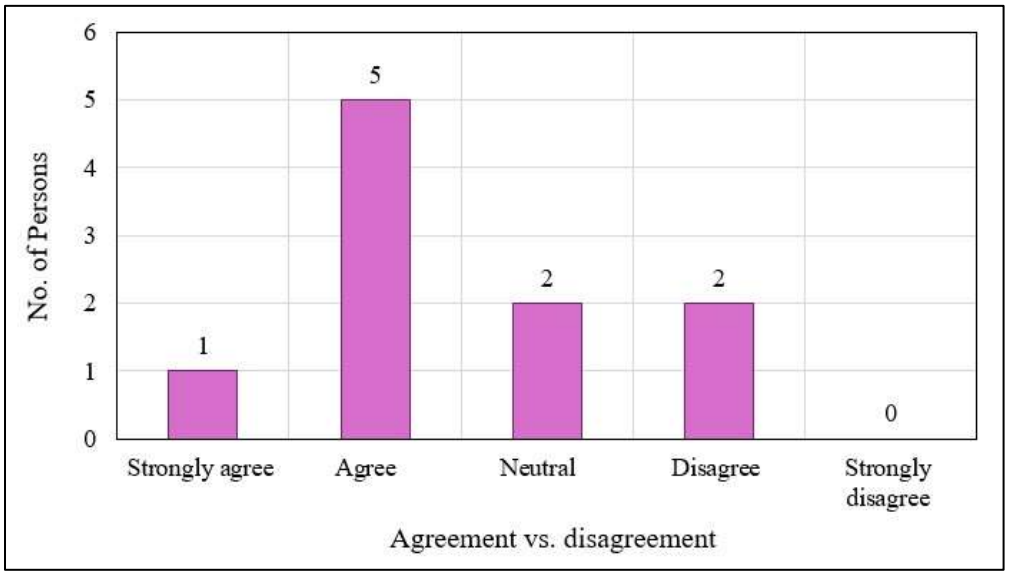
9. How do you feel when you spend time in Al-Firdos Square?

Chart 5.16: Analysis Results of Expressing the Feeling in Al-Firdos Square.

Most of the answers go for the feeling of being energized when spending time in Al-Firdos Square.

10. Do you think the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby encourages social interaction among visitors?

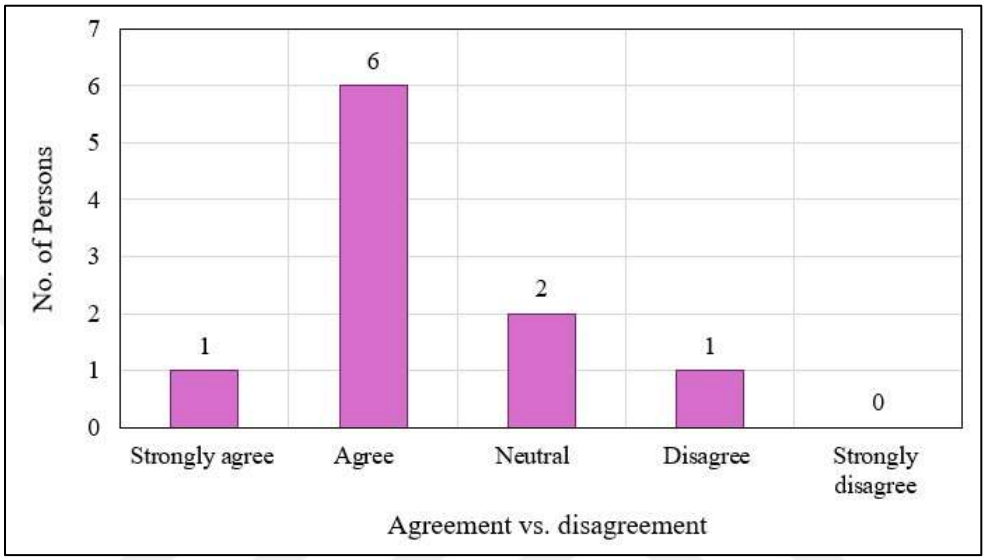
Chart 5.17: Analysis Results of Thinking the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby Encourages Social Interaction.



Most of the participants agree that the Sheraton Ishtar hotel lobby encourages social interaction among visitors.

11. Do you think Al-Firdos Square encourages social interaction among visitors?

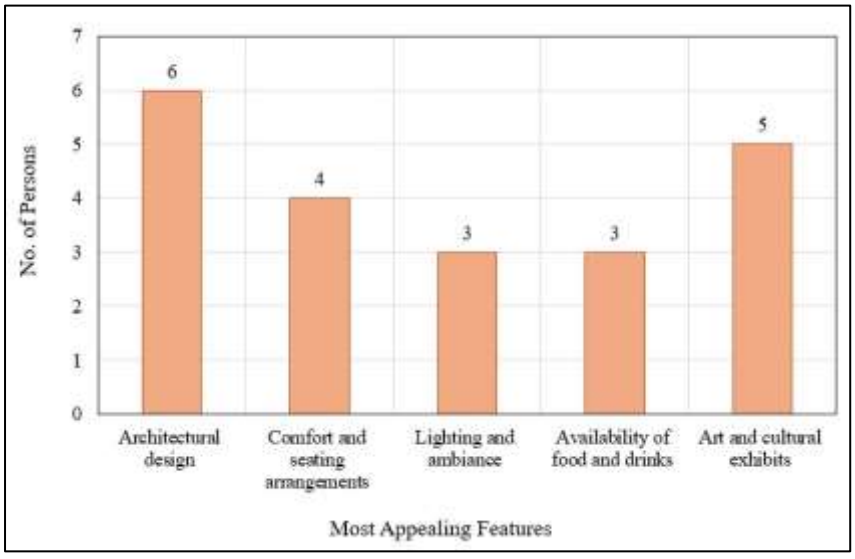
Chart 5.18: Analysis Results of Thinking Al-Firdos Square Encourages Social Interaction.



Most of the participants agree that Al-Firdos Square encourages social interaction among visitors.

12. Which features of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby do you find most appealing? (Select all that apply)

Chart 5.19: Analysis Results of the Most Appealing Features in the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel Lobby.

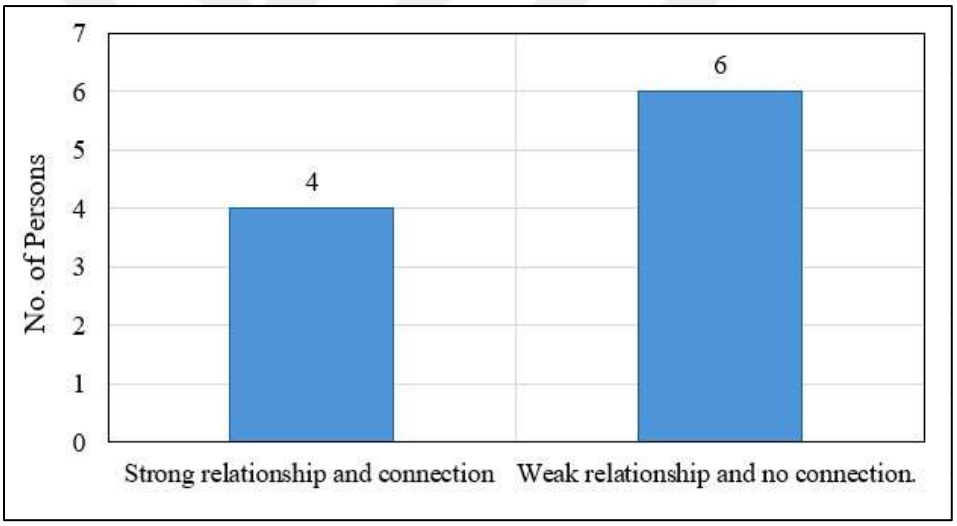


Most of the participants think that the architectural design of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby is the most appealing feature.

13. How do you find the relationship between the lobby of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and Al-Firdous Square?

40 % of people believe the relationship is strong, whereas 60 % believe the relationship is weak. However, the belief in the strength of the connection may have come from the square's proximity to the hotel's location and the ease of visual communication and access between them, while those who see that the relationship is weak take into account the design connection between the two places and the degree of similarity between them.

Chart 5.20: Analysis Results of the Relationship between the Lobby of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and Al-Firdous Square.



Based on the interview, visitors perceive the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby and Al-Firdous Square as accessible spaces for social interactions. However, while the Sheraton Ishtar hotel lobby is considered a relaxing and well-designed space, Al-Firdous Square is considered more energizing, with mixed opinions on how strong the connection between the two locations is.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Despite differences in their purposes and settings, hotel lobbies and public areas have a fundamental allure rooted in their definitions and functions as gathering places. In their respective contexts, they both function as transitional areas that promote engagement, social interaction, and social connection.

A hotel lobby, which is a big hall used as a foyer, is where visitors are greeted, checked in, and given an orientation to the hotel. It functions as a welcome space, a gathering place, and a social center. As the initial point of contact for guests, the lobby should be welcoming and well-equipped to convey the atmosphere and friendliness of the hotel. To improve the visitor experience, its spatial design frequently emphasizes comfort, accessibility, and visual attractiveness.

The hotel lobby is part of a highly intricate system and cannot be separated from the overall functioning or spatial arrangement of the hotel. This interconnectedness highlights the essential role the lobby plays within the hotel cosmos. Hotel lobbies serve as microcosms of the urban environment, reflecting the city's vibrancy and diversity. They act as spaces where various social interactions and segregations occur, mirroring broader societal structures.

The architectural form of the hotel lobby in America developed alongside the rise of Hollywood films. Hotel lobbies are seen as products of Western modernity, embodying contemporary architectural trends and serving as settings for encounters between strangers in films, aiding character and plot development. Hotel lobbies blur the lines between public and private spaces, creating a unique interior form that is both inclusive and exclusive. They serve as semi-public spaces that encourage social interaction and community engagement, similar to public squares.

Despite their importance, hotel lobbies have been relatively overlooked in architectural theory. They symbolize the cultural transformation of the modern city, providing a sense of detachment or isolation due to the lack of connection between users. Hotel lobbies act as thresholds, transitioning between inside and outside public spaces. They serve as main gathering and social spaces, welcoming visitors, acting as rest points for guests, and enhancing circulation within the hotel. The architectural style of modern hotel lobbies combines various elements such as turns, corridors, reception areas, stairs, and elevators. This design creates a seamless flow and enhances the guest experience.

Kracauer’s view of the hotel lobby as distinct from “Home” and “House of God” suggests

that people feel like strangers in the lobby, disconnected and alienated, lacking a shared history. This comparison underscores the similarity between hotel lobbies and public squares as spaces for transient social interactions. Hotel lobbies can exhibit both public and private space characteristics simultaneously. They are semi-public spaces where strangers meet, and social interaction may or may not occur. This dual nature is a defining feature of hotel lobbies.

Different types of hotels have varying lobby designs based on the hotel's purpose and target clientele. Some lobbies are open to the outside and connected with external activities, serving the surrounding neighborhoods, while others are closed, focusing solely on hotel guests. Upon analyzing the term "lobby" and comparing it with squares and other public spaces, several connections and similar characteristics were discovered. Both serve as centers for social interaction, are accessible, and have multiple uses. Hotel lobbies, like public squares, emphasize design and aesthetics, crafting spaces with lighting, décor, and comfort to foster interaction and engagement.

After consulting the meanings of the terms used in chapter two, several conclusions were reached:

Public spaces and hotel lobbies are comparable in that they are designed with human interaction and accessibility in mind. They may be people from the neighborhood going about their regular lives in public or visitors to the hotel seeking ease and comfort. Hotels and public areas are meant to be social hubs and places to congregate. Hotel lobbies provide areas for visitors to congregate, relax, and network, much like public areas like parks, plazas, and squares, which are intended for social gatherings and neighborhood meetings.

Hotel lobbies need to be built to provide a positive first impression since public spaces may enhance a city's identity and visual appeal. Hotel lobbies showcase the distinct character of the hotel, whilst public areas highlight the social and cultural aspects of a city. The character and atmosphere of each sort of space are reflected in it.

Hotel lobbies and public areas provide a variety of functions. Lobby spaces may have security checks, lounges, waiting areas, and reception rooms to handle a variety of uses and needs. Public areas may facilitate frequent social contacts, meetings, and leisure activities in addition to serving a multitude of communal purposes.

While public places are open to the public, hotel lobbies are primarily intended for hotel

guests and visitors.

Hotel lobbies and public spaces share a basic attraction rooted in their definitions and roles as meeting places. They function as transitional spaces fostering interaction, social connection, and engagement within their contexts. The term "transitional" describes both the hotel lobby and urban public spaces. The lobby serves as a transitional zone that allows movement and transition from outside to inside, providing a buffer zone that helps users acclimate to the new environment.

The design and function of a hotel lobby are influenced by the hotel's overall concept and target clientele, ranging from open, community-oriented spaces to exclusive, guest-focused environments, and even minimalistic, function-driven designs. The evolution of both lobbies and squares illustrates their transformation from functional spaces to multifaceted environments serving social, commercial, and cultural purposes. Hotel lobbies have expanded to include check-in functions, social interaction, business meetings, and recreational activities.

Both lobbies and squares have demonstrated resilience and flexibility. The pedestrianization of Strøget in Copenhagen and the adaptation of modern hotel lobbies into dynamic, multifunctional spaces highlight the benefits of prioritizing pedestrian-friendly environments and the evolving role of lobbies. The design and aesthetics of squares and lobbies are crucial to their success. Thoughtful design that considers the interaction between open spaces, surrounding structures, and user experience can transform these spaces into vibrant hubs of activity.

Hotel lobbies, although technically private, often function as semi-public spaces that encourage social interaction and community engagement, much like public squares. This enhances their value and relevance in contemporary urban life. The quality and accessibility of squares and hotel lobby spaces impact the overall quality of life in urban spaces. Well-designed public spaces contribute to a city's vitality, social connectivity, and cultural richness, while neglected or poorly planned spaces can lead to urban decay and reduced comfort.

The evolution of both lobbies and squares illustrates their transformation from merely functional spaces to multifaceted environments serving a variety of social, commercial, and

cultural purposes. Historically, squares were central to social and cultural life, acting as gathering hubs for communities. The role of hotel lobbies has expanded over time to include not just check-in functions but also spaces for social interaction, business meetings, and recreational activities. Hotel lobbies transformed to mirror the role of public squares where many lobbies (once viewed as private spaces) were opened up for public use under New York's 1961 Zoning Resolution.

Public squares serve as essential urban "buildings" and focal points of community activities, cultural events, and social interaction. They provide communal spaces that foster a sense of identity and belonging, enhancing social cohesion and public life. Hotel lobbies have evolved into the contemporary equivalent of public squares. They function as vibrant social hubs where visitors and guests mingle, do business, relax, and enjoy leisure. Modern hotel lobby designs frequently feature open floor plans, cozy seating, and integrated services that foster social interaction.

Comparisons between specific hotels reveal varying lobby designs and their connections to surrounding public spaces. The Marmara Taksim Hotel lobby integrates modern elegance with traditional touches, connecting aesthetically to Taksim Square and enhancing guest interaction with the vibrant surroundings. Marriott Marquis lobbies emphasize openness and accessibility, seamlessly connecting with outside public spaces and providing easy access to nearby attractions. The Ritz-Carlton lobbies exude luxury and exclusivity, often featuring opulent materials and high-end services, with a focus on maintaining privacy while offering access to surrounding public spaces.

The opportunity for social interaction in hotel lobbies varies, with many participants indicating high potential. Hotel lobbies contribute to a sense of community within the hotel, with a significant number of respondents agreeing that these spaces enhance community feeling. Preferences for the public or private nature of hotel lobbies vary. Some prefer lobbies to be exclusive to guests, while others favor open, accessible spaces for local residents, recognizing the benefits of each approach. Participants suggested various improvements for hotel lobbies, including spaciousness, interior design attention, connection to outside spaces, technological integration, cultural reflection, and biophilic design elements. Hotel lobbies reflect the city's civilization and identity, similar to public squares. They offer spaces for social interaction and cultural activities, serving as microcosms of urban life and enhancing

the overall guest experience.

The survey collected data from 51 participants from a range of demographic backgrounds to find out how hotel lobbies and public squares are evaluated by visitors. Among the individuals who responded, guests made up the large majority (80%), and a noteworthy 86% reported using the hotel lobby frequently. The findings emphasize how important the lobby's environment and design are, with 55% of participants thinking that they are important. The most used spaces in hotel lobbies were the reception area, seating areas, and business centers; the most appealing features were considered to be the décor and atmosphere, a clean environment, and the comfort of the furniture.

63% of participants thought that hotel lobbies function a similar social role as public squares, specifically when it comes to identifying culture, encouraging interaction with others, and organizing events. Regarding the fact that many participants used public squares often, 78% of participants thought that hotel lobbies contributed to creating a sense of community within the hotel. There was disagreement about whether lobbies should be public or private, with 47% supporting public access and 51% supporting privacy.

The Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and Al-Firdos Square have a strong and vital connection supporting the area's economy, history, and culture. The hotel's strategic location and architectural design are key to the square's identity. Due to both the hotel's internal value and the physical distance created by a roadway, many participants saw a lack of engagement with the outside environment.

Based on the survey's findings, the majority of participants identified hotel lobbies as vital transitional spaces that effectively integrate public and private uses, allowing a change from the outside to the inside. This highlights how important the lobby's in-between role is in enhancing the guest's experience. Most people view the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel's relationship with Al-Firdos Square as positive since it enhances the area's cultural, historical, and economic context. Better direct communication and physical connection are necessary, though. The survey's overall results illustrate the value of architectural and urban planning in producing environments that are useful, valuable, and balanced with the surroundings.

According to the interview, guests say that Al-Firdous Square and the lobby of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel are socially accessible areas. Despite opinions on how strongly both spaces are connected, the Sheraton Ishtar hotel lobby is a relaxing and well-designed space, while Al-Firdous Square is considered to be more energized.

With the emergence of different types of tourism, individuals' preferences have shifted, and the hotels previously used for leisure vacations have failed to meet their needs. Tourists have started turning to urban hotels in city centers that are easily accessible and cater to their requirements. This has elevated the significance of city hotels, prompting them to renovate their spaces to offer better service and become more desirable.

The Hotel Lobby is:

i. A reflection of the urban environment.
ii. Acts as a social hub.
iii. Acts as threshold, and transitional space.
iv. Hides the lines between public and private.
v. Similar to the public square.

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APPENDIX A

A.1 QUESTIONNAIRE OF "THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HOTEL LOBBY AND PUBLIC SQUARES FROM THE VISITORS' POINT OF VIEW"

1. Age:

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65+

2. Gender:

Male

Female

3. Educational attainment

4. The primary reason for staying in hotels:

Business

Tourism

Other (please specify)

5. How often do you use hotel lobbies during your stay?

Always

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

6. Which features do you commonly use in a hotel lobby? (Check all that apply)

Reception/Check-in

Seating areas for resting or socializing

Business center

Dining or bar area

Shopping area

Other (please specify)

7. How important is the design and ambiance of a hotel lobby to your overall hotel experience?

Very important

Important

Neutral

Not very important

Not important at all

8. What aspects of a hotel lobby do you find most appealing? (Rank in order of importance)

Decor and ambiance

Seating comfort

Accessibility of services (check-in, business center, etc.)

Social interaction opportunities

Availability of food and beverages

Cleanliness and maintenance

9. Do you agree that hotel lobbies can serve a similar social function as public squares?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

10. In what ways do you think hotel lobbies resemble urban public squares? (Check all that apply)

Social interaction space

Cultural reflection

Business transactions

Accessibility to non-residents

Hosting events and activities

Other (please specify)

11. How often do you use public squares or similar urban public spaces in your city?

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Rarely

Never

12. How much do you value the opportunity for social interaction in a hotel lobby?

Very highly

Highly

Neutral

Lowly

Not at all

13. Do you think hotel lobbies contribute to a sense of community within the hotel?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

14. In your travels, do you prefer the hotel lobby to be a private space exclusive for guests only, or to be open to the public and easily accessible to local residents? Please provide reasons.

Open to the public

The hotel lobby is better to be private

15. What improvements would you suggest for hotel lobbies to serve guests and visitors better?

Open-ended response

16. Do you have any additional comments on the role and importance of hotel lobbies compared to urban public squares?

Open-ended response

A.2 THE SHERATON ISHTAR HOTEL GUEST'S QUESTIONS

1. How often do you visit Al-Firdos Square?
   Daily
   Weekly
   Monthly
   Never
2. How often do you visit the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby?
   Daily
   Weekly
   Monthly
   Never
3. What is your primary reason for visiting Al-Firdos Square? (Select all that apply)
   Social gatherings
   Cultural events
   Business meetings
   Leisure (e.g., walking, relaxing)
   Other (please specify)
4. What is your primary reason for visiting the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby? (Select all that apply)
   Meeting friends or colleagues
   Business meetings
   Leisure (e.g., coffee, reading)
   Events (e.g., exhibitions, cultural events)
   Using hotel facilities (e.g., restaurants, spa)
   Other (please specify)
5. How would you rate the accessibility of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby?
   Very accessible
   Accessible
   Neutral
   Inaccessible
   Very inaccessible
6. How would you rate the accessibility of Al-Firdos Square?

Very accessible

Accessible

Neutral

Inaccessible

Very inaccessible

7. How welcoming do you find the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby compared to other public spaces in Baghdad?

More welcoming

About the same

Less welcoming

8. How welcoming do you find Al-Firdos Square compared to other public spaces in Baghdad?

More welcoming

About the same

Less welcoming

9. How do you feel spending time in the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby? (Select all that apply)

Relaxed

Inspired

Stressed

Indifferent

Energized

Other (please specify)

10. How do you feel when you spend time in Al-Firdos Square? (Select all that apply)

Relaxed

Inspired

Stressed

Indifferent

Energized

Other (please specify)

11. Do you think the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby encourages social interaction among visitors?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

12. Do you think Al-Firdos Square encourages social interaction among visitors?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Design and Features

13. Which features of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel lobby do you find most appealing? (Select all that apply)

Architectural design

Comfort and seating arrangements

Lighting and ambiance

Availability of food and drinks

Art and cultural exhibits

14. How do you find the relationship between the lobby of the Sheraton Ishtar Hotel and Al-Firdous Square?

Strong relationship and connection.

Weak relationship and no connection.