

Methods of investigating

My research focused on studying the behavior of people in public spaces, specifically their desire to occupy space and how they perceive and interact with objects within that space. I was inspired by chapter titles from "Invisible City" such as "Cities & Desire" and "Cities & Signs," which I believe are important topics for discussing urban spaces.

In "Invisible City," Marco Polo described various cities to Kublai Khan, but in reality, he was describing the city within his mind, a city intertwined with memories, desires, and symbols. People use symbols, and their behavior is influenced by them. For example, the beautiful shells at the entrance act as signals to attract visitors. Visitors occupy more chairs with their belongings or bodies, which is another form of expression and communication.

Desire is the driving force behind behavior, and a series of behaviors form a mechanism.

Following Georges Perec's observation method outlined in his book "Species of Spaces and Other Pieces" (2008, pp.50-54), I documented a series of actions using photographs and images:

- Retrieving a tray from under the counter
- Selecting bread or cake
- Paying at the counter and placing the prepared coffee on the tray
- Gathering napkins and cutlery from the side of the counter
- Searching for an unoccupied chair and a suitable place to sit
- Placing the tray on the table
- Adjusting the chair to a comfortable position

By breaking down daily behaviors into these steps and observing the impact of each step, I gained an understanding of the underlying behavioral mechanism. This mechanism can be further abstracted and detached from the actual behavior itself.

These observations were based on specific and detailed records. Georges used texts and photographs taken by others to highlight potential discrepancies. In my case, even though I did both written records and photography simultaneously, these two observation methods provided different perspectives. When analyzing changes over time, visually faithful records hold more power than subjective written records.

When experiencing a place as a participant, associations are more likely to occur. The imagination from the tray to the blocks happens in this situation. Prior to that, I recorded what happened in the place from an overhead perspective, capturing a certain distance. However, when I sit next to the table, the principle of perspective causes the square table to appear more like a triangle, resembling an island at sea.

Georges taught me how to explore a place in depth. Then, Calvino showed me how to discuss broader topics based on these specific things.

Reference list

Calvino, I. (2010) *Invisible cities*. Available at: <https://www-vlebooks-com.arts.idm.oclc.org/Product/Index/668775?>(Accessed: 20 October 2023)

Georges, P.(1974), 'The Street', *Species of Spaces and Other Places*. London: Penguin Books