1st Semester Project SDS

Anti-Terror Designs in Copenhagen

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Abstract

The use of anti-terror design as defence mechanisms in the wake of the September 11th terror attacks has contributed to a significant change in cityscapes across the globe and normalised the presence of fortified architecture in public spaces. How has the ubiquity of this design impacted the public's experience of public spaces, and how does the public respond to such fortified design? Thus far, research has indicated that a prevailing sense of "disassurance" within fortified spaces stems from the visibility level of the security functions of the particular anti-terror object – the more "overt" or visible the protective function of an anti-terror device, the more public unease, and vice versa. Yet, this assessment is simplistically linear and limited; it is our goal to expand beyond the visual elements of anti-terror objects to see what else contributes to assessments of anti-terror objects and their relation to the public space around them. We have chosen to examine two case studies, Nyhavn and Amalienborg, using observations, mapping, vox pops, and semi-structured interviews to gain further insights into the nature and experience of user's interactions with different types of anti-terror design located in highly utilised, highly significant spaces. We have found that current understandings of how people first categorise the visibility of anti-terror objects are insufficient and fail to accommodate the role of holistic, systematic factors – such as atmosphere, cultural understandings, affordances, and perceived value – that contribute to how a person reads anti-terror objects and experiences the space around them. Anti-terror devices, albeit ubiquitous and reflective of the "new normal" of terror attacks, thus provide fascinating insight into the factors beyond simple visual cues that determine how people engage with and process overtly coded objects and can be used as the lens by which to understand the role of intangible, influential elements that influence how design is understood.

Keywords: *Anti-terror design, Coaffee, Atmosphere, Affordances, Copenhagen, Perception of Terror, Object-Space Relation*

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1. Introduction

On September 11, 2001, the world watched as one of the most famous terror attacks was carried out on the World Trade Center in New York City. Nineteen members of the terrorist group, Al-Qaeda, hijacked four planes in total: the first two crashing into the two towers of the World Trade Center, one into the Pentagon, and the final into a field in western Pennsylvania (Since 9/11 n.d.). This event would become a catalyst for change in many ways, chief among them an increase in how both public and private institutions began to plan for imminent terror attacks; building infrastructure to prevent and prepare became of utmost concern (Coaffee 2009:491). In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, US embassies across the globe mobilized to increase their protection, fortifying with high fences, concrete barriers, and crash-rated steel barriers, thereby introducing hardened design into urban landscapes across the globe (Ibid:500).

In response to this "new normal," a group in the Danish government called *The inter-ministerial working group on counter-terrorism*[1] made a document re-evaluating the terror threat level in Denmark. It was concluded that action must be taken to protect against terror attacks, mainly through increased video and telephone surveillance of the public. The report also mentioned a series of terror scenarios that could happen in Denmark, but, conspicuously, vehicle-related attacks were omitted (Den tværministerielle arbejdsgruppe om terrorbekæmpelse 2005:9-16). Since 2005, several terror attacks have taken place, particularly between 2016 and 2017, further highlighting the pervasiveness and impact of these attacks within the Western Hemisphere:

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[1] Translated from Danish: Den tværministerielle arbejdsgruppe om terrorbekæmpelse

14th of July

86 killed & 434 injured
Hijacked truck drove into crowded public space in Nice

16th of December

12 killed & 56 injured
Attacker hijacked a truck, shot the driver, and later drove into a crowded Christmas market in Berlin.

2016

23rd of March

5 killed & 50 injured
Hijacked car driven into a crowd of people on Westminster Bridge, London

3rd of June

8 killed & 48 injured
A rental car was driven into the crowd on London Bridge

19th of June

1 killed & 10 injured
A man drove his car into a crowd of Muslims leaving their mosque in Finsbury Park, London, during Ramadan

17th of August

13 killed & 130 injured
In Barcelona, a van was driven into a crowd of pedestrians

2017

31st of October

8 killed & 12 injured
A rented car rammed into a cycle path for several blocks before hitting a school bus in New York City.

23rd of April

10 killed & 16 injured
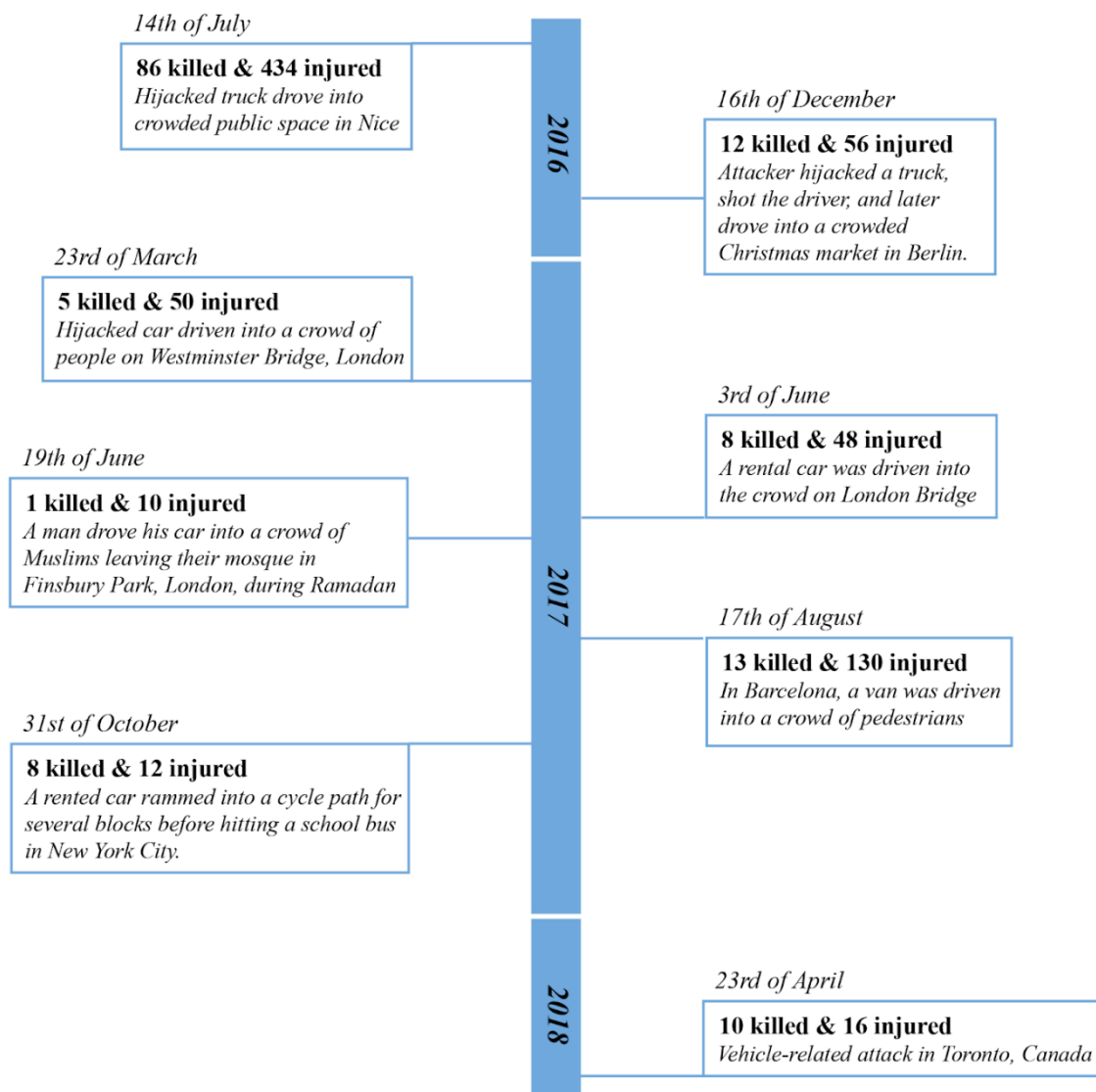*Vehicle-related attack in Toronto, Canada*

2018

Figure 2: Timeline of Terror Attacks

Source: Since 9/11 n.d; webpage, adapted by the authors

Significantly, these attacks have one element in common: they were committed by a weaponised vehicle, and no physical elements were in place to stop them. Although Denmark has not experienced a vehicle-related attack, preemptive, protective measures were later introduced as an extension of original ministerial recommendations: after the attack on the Christmas Market in Berlin in 2016, concrete blockades popped up around Copenhagen, particularly along the main thoroughfare,

Strøget, a highly visited tourist and commercial street. Though these concrete blocks were criticised for not being functional nor safe enough since they could be easily moved using a smaller car, they remained in place. It was only in 2017 and 2018 that the Copenhagen City Council began to install new blockades meant to deter weaponised vehicles: large flowerpots; granite blocks; and concrete blocks covered in wood so they could also be used as benches, bike holders, or another useful device. This new style of blockade was introduced to be less "intimidating," and in this way, created an improved cityscape by aesthetically contributing to their surroundings (Koefoed 2018). However, this initial blockade improvement, and in particular, the flowerpots, was criticised by Morten Andreasen, CEO of Perimeter Protection Group, as they were deemed ineffective against trucks. In his opinion, while Denmark is in a time of "peace," companies should test and implement functional protective solutions that also function aesthetically and beautify the cityscape around them. Andreasen uses the spheres at Christiansborg as the perfect example: as these spheres both fit the cityscape around Christiansborg aesthetically, they have also been tested and are able to withstand vehicles (Andreasen 2019).

Determining the most effective terror blockades that are both effective and pleasing requires a collaboration of many actors. It is a process usually conducted between the client, security consultants (such as PET ("Danish Intelligence Center")[2], architects, landscape architects, and designers. At the same time, the Danish democratic society must be considered in the process, as well. In general, Danes prefer lower, more subdued visual indications of security: one policeman on the street creates a sense of security among the population, whereas five policemen symbolise something warranting alarm (Bendsen & Graakjær 2019). Therefore, care should be taken to design anti-terror elements that add value and function to the space around them instead of adding to public alarm. It is thus the goal of our research to assess how the Danish public engages with these anti-terror measures, and whether these objects are as effective, aesthetically pleasing, or assuring to the public as experts would anticipate.

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[2] Translated from Danish: Politiets Efterretningstjeneste

1.1. Research Question

This report will therefore explore the understanding and perception of anti-terror measures at Nyhavn and Amalienborg, and how the design of these measures is experienced across users, how this design creates different understandings of the space they are in, and how or if these objects potentially create added value to their surrounding environment. Thereby, the prevailing goal of our research is as follows:

How are anti-terror measures perceived in spaces that are engaged with in a habitualized manner, how is the design experienced/reacted to, and does it change the space they are in?

This line of inquiry also encourages the following questions and determines the underlying aspects this paper will focus on:

a. How are anti-terror objects perceived generally?

b. How do users decode or interpret the communicative features of an anti-terror object?

c. How do anti-terror measures give value to the space/area around them?

Thus, through our research question and clarifying sub-questions, we will obtain a basic understanding of the following: how anti-terror design is processed by users as an object; the role surrounding space plays in determining one's appraisal of said object; and how the anti-terror object, in turn, constitutes and constructs the space around it.

2. Methods

In this section, we will provide an overview of how we determined the scope of the project as well as the methods used to aggregate the data needed to efficiently analyse what people's perceptions are of anti-terror objects within specific case studies. Furthermore, we will briefly touch upon the theories that will be used throughout as an analytical framework.

2.1. Field of Research Determination

To determine the scope of our research, first we conducted a walk around the city to identify sites that had anti-terror design elements mentioned in a reference guide compiled by the Danish Police Intelligence Service (PET)[3]. From there, we created a map and brief notes about the location of anti-terror measures across central Copenhagen, and the variety of ways these can be implemented as described in the PET document.
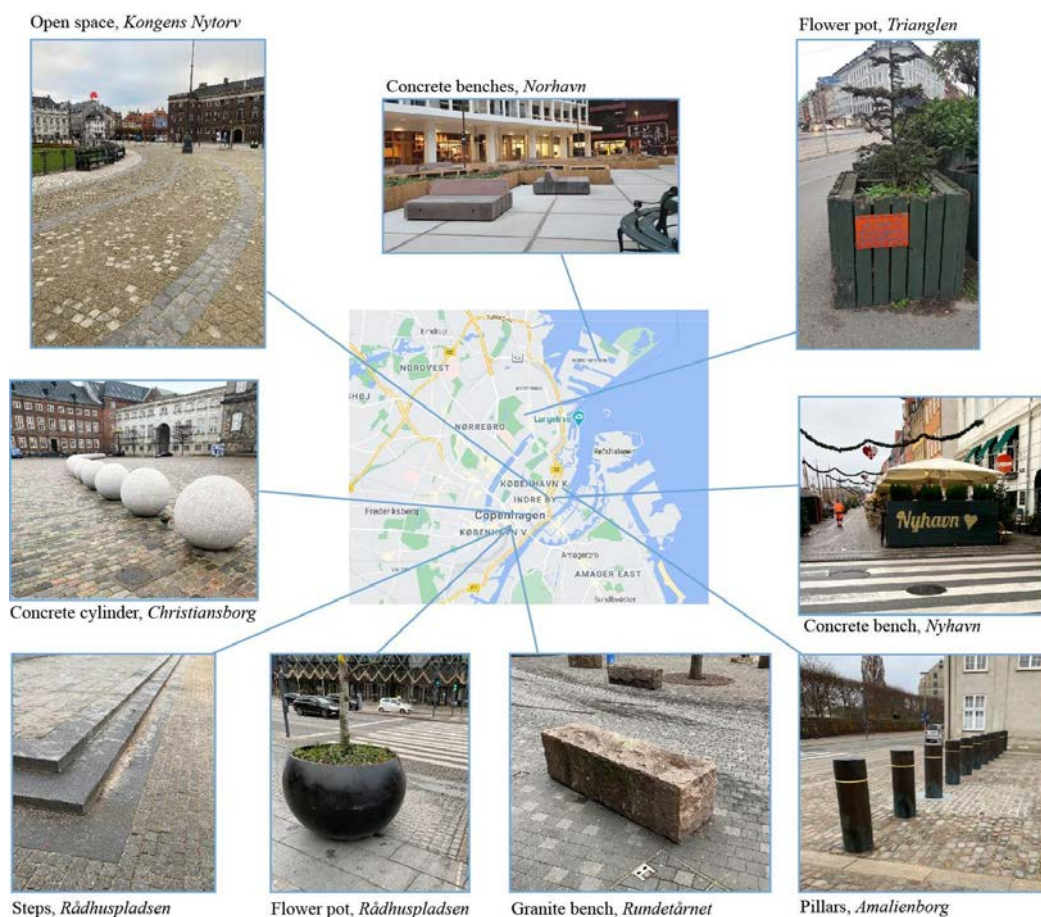

Figure 3: City Map Source: Google Maps / Self Produced

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[3] The document was created in 2019 in cooperation with the Architect Union, Danish Emergency Management Agency, Builders' Association, Engineers' Association in Denmark, Designers' Association in Denmark and the Danish Police (PET 2019).

Next, we created a brief set of questions for vox pop interviews (Appendix 1) to be used within centralised sites mapped during our city walk. The purpose of these vox pop questions was to identify general design features connected to feelings of safety and security and which of those design elements stood out in particular. These interviews were short, about five minutes, and semi-structured to allow for intuitive responses. The vox pop also functioned as a way for us to "take the temperature" of our topic by generating general insights. They helped us determine our central research question, the scope of our longform interview questions, and case study selection: Amalienborg and Nyhavn. In combination with the interviews and mapping, these two sites were chosen due to their cultural and historical value held by citizens of Copenhagen and tourists alike; in this way, they were reliable sites in seeing how users engaged with anti-terror objects within highly utilised and highly valuable spaces, and whether these symbolically important sites were influenced by or influenced the experience of anti-terror objects.

2.2. Qualitative Data Aggregation

In order to aggregate qualitative data, we created a list of long-form interview questions that would allow us to explore further how people experience anti-terror objects, what the design of these objects communicated to individuals, and how these objects shape their understanding and assessment of the surrounding space (Appendix 2: Interview Guide). These interview questions were paired with photos of anti-terror design within the chosen areas, acting as visual probes to encourage reflection among the respondents in addition to gauging their precise reaction to specific anti-terror objects (Appendix 3: Photos used in interviews). The interviews were semi-structured and conducted over the course of 45-60 minutes; this approach allowed interviewers to prepare questions around central themes, but also left room to ask the informant to elaborate on prospective insights not present within initial interview questions (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015:149). The semi-structured interview also allowed for informants to expand on their worldview as it unfolds in a phenomenological sense. Since phenomena is experienced from a first-person perspective, semi-structured interviews enable respondents to expound on why they think and view things the way they do, and how that view then is understood (Ibid:150). Throughout, interviewing was approached as an iterative process to incorporate the themes brought up in previous responses and further hone in on a pointed line of questioning. We began with a pilot interview, after which we edited our interview questions to

accommodate a variety of responses not initially anticipated. Some interviews were conducted in Danish and have been directly translated by the authors.

2.3. Case Study

The case study, the overall framework for this analysis, is defined by Knud Ramian as the study of the case in the "real world", and typically contains in-depth "why" and "how" questions. Special features of the case study are (Ramien 2007:15-24):

- Empirical study
- A selected phenomenon
- A contemporary phenomenon in its natural context
- Various data sources
- Argumentation through evidence

Here, we conducted an empirical study of the phenomenon of anti-terror measures. This was completed from various data sources to triangulate and substantiate our results: interviews, vox pops, mapping, and quantitative data. In the case study, we used a qualitative method, which, according to Ramian, means that "*one acquires knowledge both in a practical, socially anchored way and in a more distant and reflective way*" (Ibid:33). The chosen case studies are sites used on a day-to-day basis by pedestrians and tourists, whereby both hold cultural and symbolic value. The sites have varying levels of significance to the informants, and therefore allowed us to explore the different ways the informants perceive the areas as well as understanding the space and anti-terror elements in that space.

2.4. Structure of the Paper

First, we will start by explaining the main areas of theory that will buttress our analysis. These include: the perception of anti-terror measures in the cityscape (Coaffee, O'Hare & Hawkesworth 2009; Coaffee 2019); sense of place and spatial perception (Massey 2001; Cresswell 2019; Cresswell 2020); and the role of atmosphere in the construction and experience of space (Bille 2015; Böhme 1993; Edensor 2015a; Edensor 2015b). Next, we will examine two case studies, Nyhavn and Amalienborg; it is here we will synthesise our data with the support of the aforementioned theories.

Finally, through our data, observations, and extension of design theory, we will discuss how people interact with anti-terror design in public spaces and the factors that contribute to their understanding and assessment of design and space.

3. Theory

Here, we will outline the prevailing theories that undergird our analytical approach to understanding fundamentally how users understand, interpret, and react to designed objects and the spaces they are in; this, in turn, will bolster our understanding of the specific impact anti-terror design has on our respondents and their understanding of the space surrounding the object. The theories discussed cover a range of approaches, including how people use, practice, and construct public spaces; the perception of anti-terror measures in the cityscape; sense of place and spatial perception; and the role of atmosphere in the construction and experience of space.

3.1. The Perception of Anti-Terror Measures in the Cityscape

The attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on the 11th of September 2001 put an important bookmark in history and initiated mass public awareness of terror. According to Coaffee, we have, since that day, learned to live "with an acceptable degree of risk and danger" (Coaffee 2019:127). Preventing terror attacks has become an essential political topic and the protection of our cities a priority. Today, we are more concerned with *when* the next attack will occur rather than *if* it will (Ibid:121). To a degree, we have accepted the inevitability of attack, and therefore pre-emptively learned to revaluate what, where, and who is seen as vulnerable and how these can be made more resilient (Ibid:120).

According to Coaffee, a focus on fortifying local spaces by identifying and rectifying their physical vulnerability has thus emerged to pre-empt the inevitable (Ibid:130). This is done by implementing anti-terror elements, such as steel pillars (Ibid:132). These elements are applied to places with significant importance, "including administrative buildings and places with iconographic or symbolic significance, as well as commercial or industrial centres." (Coaffee et al. 2009:500) Albeit this process is not without criticism. Some argued that the implementation was without consideration of social, economic, or aesthetic factors, and that the visible anti-terror elements illuminate the vulnerability and insecurity of a place, which then leads to an intensified feeling of danger (Coaffee 2019:132). The government may try to communicate control over the situation by implementing anti-terror elements (Coaffee et al. 2009:498), but this is not necessarily synonymous with the public's perception. The design of the anti-terror elements communicates messages, and these messages can easily be full of contradiction since the transmission and the reception might be understood differently due to subjective interpretations (Ibid:496). One part might try to communicate

through the anti-terror elements that a place is safe to use, but the receiver of this message might interpret the elements as a signal that the place is a target for terror and therefore unsafe to use (Ibid:496). Conversely, the government (the transmitter) may decide to implement invisible anti-terror elements to avoid feelings of danger and insecurity, but the public (the receiver) might then criticise the government for not taking the terror threat seriously enough (Ibid:499).

To simplify the spectrum of visible and invisible design of anti-terror elements, Coaffee has developed a model called "An Indicative Spectrum of Visible Security" (Ibid:499). The model consists of a continuum divided into three categories: overt, stealthy, and invisible. The overt design is obtrusive and has an obviously military purpose. An example of this could be fortress architecture. Stealthy design consists of visible elements but are not identified by the public as safety measures. This could, for example, be security features such as water implements. The invisible design includes elements that are hidden and unobtrusive and not acknowledged by the public--collapsible paving is one example (Ibid:499).
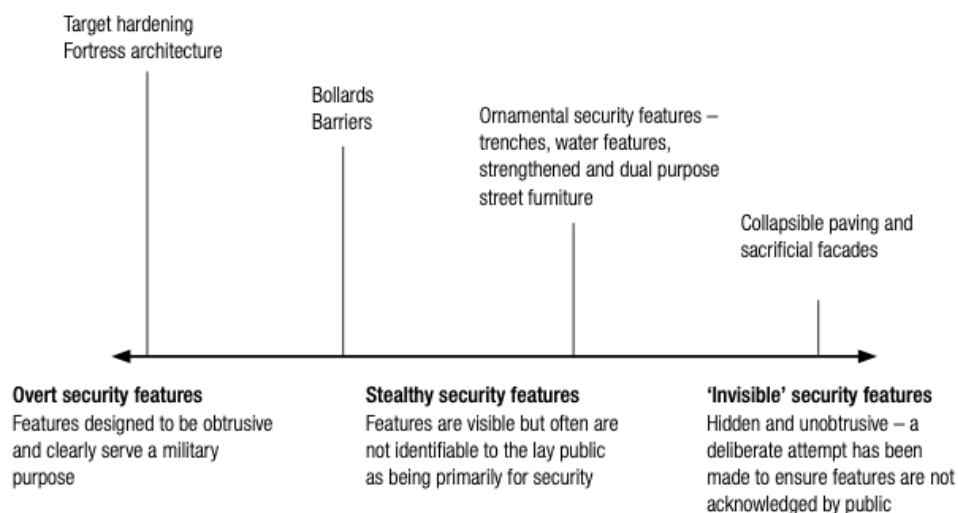

Figure 4: An Indicative Spectrum of Visible Security
Source: Coaffee et al. 2009:499

With Coaffee's theory as a base, we will examine what kind of messages anti-terror objects communicate to the receiver, and the level of visible security these objects have among the public. Moreover, we will use the model as a base for our understanding of how anti-terror elements can be designed. Therefore, the terms 'overt', 'stealthy' and 'invisible' are essential for our interviews and case studies.

3.2. Sense of Place and Spatial Perception

Doreen Massey mentions in her text, *Living in Wythenshawe* (2001)*, how a space transforms into a place when a physical, material space has been transformed through the ever-changing nature of personal relationships to the space or through the changing nature of objects within the space over time (Massey 2001:459). Massey also discusses how an object is designed as an articulation of the social practices they encourage within a place. Similarly, Tim Cresswell's text, *Space* (2020), describes the construction of a place as a space that has been imbued with meanings, feelings, and emotions (Cresswell 2020:117). Cresswell points out that the creation of a place consists of a combination of material, meaning, and practice (Ibid). With the term "material," Cresswell is referring to the material structures that fill and make up an area. This can be everyday structures, like libraries and shops, or more iconic structures that make a place recognisable, such as the Eiffel Tower in Paris (Ibid). This understanding of "material" is useful because it helps us to understand anti-terror measures as the "materials" that constitute and influence the overall sense of place in which they are situated.

Further, places consist of meaning. Meaning can be personal, shared, and/or social (Ibid). A physical space becomes meaningful (and therefore transforms into this more emotionally-charged concept of a "place") when a particularly meaningful experience or memory has been enacted within it, such as the formation of a friendship. In this way, a single place can have several meanings due to the fact that different people have varying, personal attachments to the same location. A shared and social meaning is when there is a shared cultural understanding/appraisal of a place. To exemplify this, Cresswell explains how the meaning of the World Trade Center in New York, before the attack, was one of "*American power, the importance of capitalism, phallic masculinity, and so on*" (Cresswell 2020:117). Today, the site has acquired a new meaning: "*It is both a quiet site of remembrance and a new site of American power projected across the world through the Freedom Tower*." (Cresswell 2020:117) This also stresses the next point: meanings are never fixed and can change over time (Ibid). The meanings attached to a place can change according to how accustomed users become to a space (Massey 2001:462). Additionally, as people use a space, they perform what Cresswell calls "practices," or habitualized behaviours that are carried out (Cresswell 2020:117); these practices and the regular iteration of them thus create the sense we have of place given that place becomes defined by how they are used (Ibid).

In relation to our case studies, these theories encourage us to look at how anti-terror elements establish a sense of place. Anti-terror objects can be viewed as the materials that potentially influence

the overarching sense of place users have; conversely, the reading of anti-terror objects can be subject to the fact that the places they are located in may have varying, changing meanings (personal, cultural) or practices attached to them, therefore influencing how the object is perceived in context and over time.

3.3. The Role of Atmosphere in the Construction and Experience of Space

The atmosphere of a particular place is something that also influences how people experience it. Atmosphere can be a term that exists as a way of describing the mood of a place or described as something that is attached to a place. According to Gernot Böhme (1993), atmosphere exists within the object and subject, but neither subject nor object is dominant in creating it; atmosphere is not created solely through the presence of an object and objects' innate qualities, nor is it solely created by the psychic state of the subject alone (Böhme 1993:122). It is between these two that the atmosphere emerges as a co-existing moment. Yet, Böhme describes atmospheres as *subject-like*, since they can originate from bodily feelings or the presence of a body, and this remains at the same time a bodily state of being within a physical space (Ibid). Atmosphere comes from a shared reality that is perceived through the bodily state of feelings and emotions, but also as an aesthetic and sense of belonging (Böhme 1993:122-123). By aesthetically organizing and unifying the things around us, atmospheres are created (Ibid:124-25).

Tim Edensor further elaborates on atmosphere, describing it as a co-production of a collective feeling that involves various agents; atmospheres are thus produced socially and in context with others (2015a:82). Edensor explains how the spatial context of the atmosphere also depends on the design of the space itself and the objects within:

> *"This may depend on the skill of the designer of atmospheres but also on the particular qualities of the spaces, materialities, media and elements that are manipulated through design. It is also essential to take account of the social, historical, cultural and political contexts in which atmospheres emerge and dissipate, and the attunement of some to become absorbed within them."*

<div align="right">(Edensor 2015b: 252)</div>

In this context, it can be understood that atmospheres are created through the design of a physical area and--as Böhme describes--through the organization of the objects throughout (Edensor 2015b:254). Mikkel Bille (2015) shares a similar view on how atmospheres are created, as it requires a collaboration and "co-presence of things, bodies, and experiences" (Bille 2015:57). According to Bille, the creation of atmospheres is also determined by the emotional state of the subject and the subject's cultural understanding (Ibid).

From these theories, it can be understood that atmosphere always exists in a negotiation between the subject and the object within a physical space (Ibid:58). Bearing this in mind, we can determine how anti-terror objects create an atmosphere and similarly, how the surrounding atmosphere influences the way the anti-terror object is engaged with. We will investigate the cultural, social, emotional, and aesthetic elements that underlie the experience of a space and inform how a user interprets and processes anti-terror design.

4. Analysis

We will apply the aforementioned theories to the analysis of our interview and vox pop responses in order to gain insight as to the factors that contribute to respondents' reading of and engagement with anti-terror objects in Nyhavn and Amalienborg; in particular, we will focus on how the anti-terror objects communicate security, the material elements these objects contribute to the overall sense of place they are within, the meaning these objects add to their surroundings or the meaning the surroundings give to the object, and the overall experience of atmosphere as negotiated through the perception of anti-terror objects.

4.1. Case Study One: Nyhavn

Dating back to 1673, Nyhavn – originally called *"Den Nye Havn"* – was a commercial port where international merchant ships docked. In the beginning, the harbour was an area populated by sailors, pubs, and parties. In the 20th century, boat traffic disappeared completely from Nyhavn, and over time, the sailors as well (Kend København n.d.). In its place, Nyhavn has become one of the largest entertainment venues in Copenhagen that attracts thousands of tourists and Copenhageners alike annually (Visitcopenhagen n.d.). Nyhavn exists as a central figure in Copenhagen's cultural life and history, and holds an esteemed place among Danes. In this particular case study, we will focus on users' appraisal of and relationship to the benches prominently situated within Nyhavn that act as anti-terror devices against weaponised traffic. These benches were implemented in response to a citywide effort, in 2018, to create more aesthetically pleasing defence measures, and were designed by the Danish company, TagTomat (Tagtomat n.d.).

4.1.1. The Experience of the Bench

To understand the role of design elements, such as anti-terror measures, within a public space like Nyhavn, one must first understand how and why people use public spaces. As Quentin Stevens explains in *Public Space as Lived* (2014), how space is utilized is generally determined by observations of user interactions with loose elements, or "props," within the area, such as blockades (Stevens 2014:281). At first glance, the Nyhavn anti-terror barriers appear as festive benches demarcating a spatial perimeter, adorned with Christmas trees and calligraphy text naming the area; some appear as semi-boulders with climbing elements on the side. The materiality is relatively inconspicuous, constructed in wood and covered in an earthy green paint, colours and materials

reflected in the surroundings (Figure 5). Although seemingly innocuous, the benches are assessed in a variety of ways. It can be difficult designing objects that are unilaterally praised or uniformly experienced; as Stevens mentions, *"potential users and uses of a space are extremely diverse"* (Stevens 2014:277) and as such, it is difficult to create static objects that are singularly and universally experienced. Appraisal of the Nyhavn benches exist on a spectrum, from highly complimentary to outright dismissive; some respondents exalt the bench as a "*brilliant*" or "*perfect*" protective solution to the problem of potential terror attacks (Appendix 4: Interview 1); others simply "*like*" or are generally "*positive*" about what they see in Nyhavn (Appendix 4: Interviews 2;3); and one outright assesses the bench as a "*bad solution*" that is "*tacky*":

> *"[The Nyhavn bench] looks like an afterthought because of the materials and the placement, you can just see it doesn't even fit with the cobblestones below it as you can see in picture 1. It just looks a bit messy to me"*
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 4)

For those with a generally positive assessment of the Nyhavn anti-terror devices, benches are seen as creating value for the surrounding environment. According to Cresswell, a place such as Nyhavn is constituted by three things: material, meaning, and practice (Cresswell 2020:117). The anti-terror benches are the iconic materials that contribute to Nyhavn by mimicking and complementing the aesthetics around them, as evidenced by interviews remarking how the objects "fit in" with Nyhavn: "*Because the colour, shape, and style just fit very well into the aesthetics of Nyhavn*" (Appendix 4: Interview 1); "*the blockade fits into [Nyhavn] in relation to the coloured houses in the background. Also, the material choice--I also thought that the blockade communicates that it is a nice area*" (Appendix 4: Interview 3); and later in the same interview, "*At Nyhavn, I think that the installation adds a lot of value to the area, as it fits in and it is multi-functional*" (Appendix 4: Interview 3); some even express displeasure by imagining anything other than the Nyhavn benches:

> *"Whereas picture 3 and 4 [pictures of the Nyhavn benches], they fit into the area where they are placed...It would annoy me if anti-terror elements were made in any different way at Nyhavn"*
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 6)

Additionally, the benches are particularly valuable because they are perceived as a useful tool for an anticipated need: "*At Nyhavn I'm just thinking that it [the bench] is pretty, it is lovely with a place I can sit with my coffee or if I'm waiting for someone*" (Appendix 4: Interview 1). In Donald Norman's "Affordance, conventions, and design" (1999), he defines affordances as relational, the by-product of an object's makeup and the physical capacities of a given human's body: for example, a flat surface enables sitting, walking, or jumping. Given the physical makeup of the anti-terror benches, they are considered multi-functional, and provide a variety of affordances that add to the experience of Nyhavn (such as relaxation, play, and socializing):

> "*At Nyhavn the installation adds a lot of value to the area, because it is multi-functional. It is not just a blockade, you can sit on it, kids can play on it et cetera, and that whole thing…just fit[s] into the area*"
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 1)

> "*The first [photo], the green [bench] in Nyhavn, it has the possibility that allows people to sit on it, which can be good for kids*"
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 5)

The affordances of the anti-terror benches, while contributing to the value and experience of the space around them, also help to make the security function of the benches less visible and "hostile:"

> "*On picture 1 and 2 [Nyhavn benches], I think they communicate anti-terror but in a functional way…because people can sit on it and it's decorated with a Christmas tree. [Anti-terror objects] need to conceal the function they serve mainly because I don't think it's an ideal to strive after for people to think about anti-terror when they enter a space*"
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 4)

The benches also contribute to the meaning of Nyhavn because they function as protective elements that preserve a culturally significant site, and through that protection, signal the singular importance of the site:

"Of course, I thought it was important to secure these areas as well, as they hold a great significance for the Danes...Nyhavn, because it is such a well-known place and well-visited by many different people all year round"

(Appendix 4: Interview 2)

Figure 5: Overview of the bench at Nyhavn
Source: Self Produced

These elements are also particularly valuable given that they are perceived as complementary to the overall "cosy" atmosphere of Nyhavn (Appendix 4: Interviews 1;2;3;6). Even in the context of specifically asking about anti-terror design (and the potential negative implications therein), the informants were quick to address just how cosy the atmosphere of Nyhavn is: "*[the anti-terror bench] fits in the feelings you get from Nyhavn, this very cosy feeling of something older in Copenhagen*" (Appendix 4: Interview 1). According to Böhme, atmospheres are sensed "when a body is present within a space," yet it is difficult to determine whether the experience of the atmosphere comes from the objects within the space, the space itself, or from the subject's own emotions projecting onto the space (Böhme 1993:114). It appears in this case, atmosphere emanates from Nyhavn itself and its recognized cultural heritage; the design of the benches, then, reinforces and contributes to this overarching atmosphere by aesthetically "matching" the mood of the space, and does not exist as a particularly egregious or obvious defence mechanism. This idea that the object fits within a larger cultural understanding of the space is also evidenced by their description of the area as "hygge", implying the somewhat ephemeral but universally understood concept among Danes about an atmosphere that is particularly pleasant, secure, and encourages a relaxed state of mind (Bille 2015:58-59):

> "*The installation [the anti-terror benches] also adds to the senses of hygge that is just around Nyhavn, because it is also an area you connect with hygge*"
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 1)

> "*But Nyhavn itself as an area also seems just hyggelig and peaceful. So, when I'm there, I'm mostly just having fun and not thinking about terror when I'm there*"
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 2)

> "*Now I generally feel safe so I do not notice [anti-terror design] much, otherwise it is actually about whether the place is hyggelig and how the atmosphere is*"
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 3)

Figure 6: Close up of the bench at Nyhavn
Source: Self Produced

In these cases, how the particular anti-terror object of the Nyhavn bench is engaged with and assessed is determined by its contribution to the space in which it resides, whether that is through aesthetically "fitting in;" being multifunctional and providing affordances; protecting cultural meaning; or complementing a surrounding atmosphere. Its security features are, thus, able to exist in relative obscurity to viewers given the added value it creates for the surrounding space takes precedence.

In Massey's text, she describes how objects are the architectural artifact of practiced social relations (Massey 2001:463). At Nyhavn, the benches also reflect social interactions and relations to be carried out within public spaces; as mentioned before, users see the benches as a potential setting

for sitting with friends or playing with children (Appendix 4: Interviews 1;5). In short, Nyhavn is "made" by the social activities practiced there, and the anti-terror benches act as a tool to aid these practices, rather than a detraction, given the object is viewed primarily as "functional" and "welcoming" In this sense, the protective function gets sublimated by the sociability encouraged by the object.

> *"I think that it is important to terror-protect. Because it is a meeting place for people, and it is a brand for Denmark...And then it just might be important to preserve the hygge and the Danish culture at Nyhavn"*
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 6)

Generally, the security features of the bench remain unacknowledged by respondents despite being visual and ornamental, corresponding to Coaffee's definition of "stealthy security features" (Coaffee et al. 2009:499): "*At Nyhavn [the security purpose] is completely invisible. There you do not see what it is primarily there for and why it is actually there*" (Appendix 4: Interview 2). Respondents are "*not intimidated*" (Appendix 4: Interview 3) when looking at the object, and instead assess the benches as much more welcoming: "*It is not like the installation at Nyhavn screams: Watch out for terror! It is more like: Come here and sit or use me to climb on and have a good time*" (Appendix 4: Interview 1). The welcoming nature of the benches seems to take precedence over its protective nature, in part due to the aforementioned functionality:

> *"Nyhavn communicates that it is a friendly area where people are supposed to feel welcome...There might be anti-terror elements at Nyhavn, but you still feel welcome since there is a bench you can sit on which is built into the terror protection"*
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 6)

Figure 7: Bench at Nyhavn
Source: Self Produced

Respondents are able to acknowledge that the security purpose of the benches is revealed the more one thinks about or engages with them, but that protective function is accepted as necessary and thus does not inform a fearful reaction:

> "*At Nyhavn, I would say [the bench] are camouflaged. They are not completely invisible, in that if I stand and look at them long enough, I will be able to convince myself that they are there to stop something. I also thought that ... the blockade itself also communicates that it has a function that it protects, I think that is quite important*"

<div align="right">(Appendix 4: Interview 3)</div>

In Nyhavn, one respondent viewed the benches as an anti-terror device because it *"is a reminder that it is a solution for something that can happen"* (Appendix 4: Interview 5), such as a terror attack. In this sense, the necessity of the bench highlights the suspected vulnerability of Nyhavn, and thus creates a sense of potential threat. Across other interviews, however, there appears to be relatively little awareness of the benches as anti-terror devices and no communication of impending threat. The benches at Nyhavn are thus not overtly registered nor decoded as "anti-terror" devices and do not contribute to an overall feeling of fear or paranoia that can often accompany counter-terrorism design.

Generally, we found the benches at Nyhavn fulfilled their original design intent of creating an aesthetically pleasing anti-terror device. Not only did a majority of respondents have an initial positive assessment of them, but the anti-terror benches are viewed as actively creating value for the surrounding environment: benches aesthetically "fit in" to their surroundings, and are seen as a visually pleasing extension of the overall "look" of Nyhavn; benches are deemed multi-functional and enable multiple affordances and uses among pedestrians, thereby adding to the variety of experiences possible within Nyhavn; benches are valued for their protective function, given that they protect/maintain the cultural significance of one the most important sites in Denmark; and the benches are particularly valuable given that they are perceived as complementary to the overall "cosy" atmosphere of Nyhavn. The benches also act as a tool to aid the social activities that constitute the experience of Nyhavn, and their protective function gets sublimated by the sociability encouraged by the object. Finally, the potentially "dangerous" visual signifiers of the anti-terror benches are sublimated or outright ignored, as the benches communicate a much more welcoming nature to users due to their multi-functionality, or their security purpose is inherently accepted and therefore not deemed disassuring. In this case study, we found how the object of the anti-terror bench contributes to the experience of Nyhavn as a place. We also found how the visual signifiers of security and defence inherent within the design of the anti-terror benches are decoded in a much less hostile way, with users oftentimes overlooking the defence function of the object.

4.2. Case Study Two: Amalienborg

Amalienborg Palace is home to one of the world's oldest monarchies, and thus has a particularly prestigious royal history. Designed in the 1750s by Danish architect, Nicolai Eigtved, the building is made from four identical palace structures that form a perimeter, one of which includes the Amalienborg Museum (Danish Royal Palaces n.d.; Visitcopenhagen n.d.). The palace is known for the changing of the royal guards[4], a cultural attraction that appeals to Danes and tourists alike and has existed since 1794 (Danish Royal Palaces n.d.).

4.2.1 The Experience of the Pillars

This analysis will focus on Amalienborg as a public space, since the general public has access to the area, and the various ways in which that public space is created: through material (pillars), meanings (cultural aspect), and practices (an area of everyday uses such as mobility, public events, and tourism) (Cresswell 2020:117). As mentioned previously, it can be rather difficult to design a public space due to the fact that the users of a space can be very diverse and have different kinds of perspective, behaviour, and opinions that the space has to accommodate (Stevens 2014:277). This challenge is illustrated through our informants who are not keen on the redesign Amalienborg experienced in 2020 (Hedegaard 2020). The majority of the informants think that the pillars looked "*out of place*" or "*misplaced*" (Appendix 4: Interview 1;2;3;5). This is grounded in the fact that they think the material composition of the pillars are too modern for Amalienborg. Aesthetically they do not coexist with the space: *"... I would say they just disrupt my sense of place around Amalienborg because they just look misplaced with the modern look and materials."* (Appendix 4: Interview 1).

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[4] Translated from Danish: *Den Kongelige Livgarde*

Figure 8: Amalienborg before the redesign
Source: Hedegaard 2020

Figure 9: Pillars at Amalienborg
Source: Self Produced

According to Böhme, this mismatch of aesthetics affects the atmosphere within the space because it creates a disjointed appraisal of the environment due to the lack of aesthetic integration of objects that can hinder the organisational flow of the space: *"Their 'properties' would be understood as conditions of their atmospheric effect."* (Böhme 1993:125). Hence, the creation of atmosphere is a mutual process between the individual and object, and this effect can have an impact on the personal experience of the space (Ibid:122-123). Therefore, the pillars disrupt the atmosphere when using the space, pointed out by the following informant:

> *"I also find it important to preserve the old buildings there, and the atmosphere the area gives the place. It doesn't need any modern materials or installations there, that would just ruin the atmosphere of the place"*
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 1)

While the pillars may be somewhat disruptive and create a disjointed sense of atmosphere (and therefore tension), they also make the space feel "safe." Due to the pillars' overt and clear design function (to protect), some informants feel safer. They communicate impenetrability and fortification and reassure a wary public: *"At Amalienborg [the pillars] communicate STOP, they communicate: "Nothing comes by here"* (Appendix 4: Interview 3). At first, the overt visual signifiers of fortification were particularly noticeable; however, over time, users became used to the pillars and were able to appreciate them for their security function:

> *"When they were first put up I noticed them [the pillars] also right away ... But overall now that I got used to them ... they still somehow make me feel safe when I go through the area, or are standing in the square when there are a lot of people"*
>
> (Appendix 4: Interview 1)

However, the overtness of an anti-terror measure is not always so easily overlooked, and thus cannot only create the feeling of safety; it can likewise have the opposite effect and generate a feeling of non-assurance (Coaffee 2019:132). The anti-terror objects communicate threat because their purpose is to protect against a hypothetical threat of violence, and they demarcate what has been deemed an ideal target: *"then it creates a kind of insecurity as you are made more aware that it is a risk area for terrorist attacks"* (Appendix 4: Interview 2). Hence, the overt visibility of the security

features in anti-terror measures can both negatively and positively influence the experience of safety in a space.

When the pillars communicate a sense of security, however, the public feels more at liberty to engage in the various practices and behaviours that constitute the general experience of a space; in this case, the object of the anti-terror device has contributed to the perception of the atmosphere and practice of place (Cresswell 2020:117). One such practice at Amalienborg is the celebration of the Queen's birthday. Here, a festive atmosphere appears when people feel secure enough to gather at the plaza and wish the Queen a happy birthday. Significantly, though, this festive atmosphere can determine how anti-terror objects are perceived. For example, when celebrating the Queen's birthday, the pillars may be overlooked and deemed particularly invisible; in this instance, the atmosphere of collective revelry and celebration takes precedence and thoughts about a possible terror attack would fade, thereby creating a sense of safety and reduction of the embodied threat of anti-terror devices (Edensor 2015a:82). This festive atmosphere would also reinforce the idea of *"hyggelig,"* a descriptor that implies safety in the Danish context (Bille 2015:59). As one of the informants mentions, atmosphere determines the level of safety they experience in Amalienborg, not the visible security elements of the pillars: *"Now I generally feel safe so I do not notice it much, otherwise it is actually about whether the place is hyggelig and how the atmosphere is. I think for me it's about the place being nice to be in."* (Interview 3). The pillars then create a contrast when experiencing them and the space. Our informants state that the pillars disrupt the atmosphere at Amalienborg, but at the same time it would not be possible to create a safe or festive atmosphere without the pillars. Thus, the pillars both disrupt and create atmosphere.

As mentioned above, the security purpose of the pillars is very clear to our informants. According to Coaffee, this is due to the semiotic nature of anti-terror measures, which, through their aesthetic qualities, communicate messages of level of safety to the public (Coaffee et al. 2009:496). There is a general understanding that these objects are not merely decorative, but functional and necessary:

> *"There has definitely been put up these new pillars here at the entrances. I have lived here for a while, and when and in the beginning they first make me feel unsafe, in that sense that there is a need for them now. Before there wasn't. But vice versa, now they actually make me feel more safe standing here in this square"*
>
> (Appendix 5: Amalienborg 2)

"At Amalienborg they are very noticeable. You see them right away and know why they are there and what they are for. They are not there for decoration. They also portray themselves a lot from the rest of Amalienborg, so you notice them very quickly"

(Appendix 4: Interview 2)

While it took a level of adjustment to "get used" to these stark security measures, the harsh protective messages of the pillars may soften over time. The copper on the pillars will oxidise and obtain the same green/blue colour as the central statue and roof of the Marble Church; this process will thus change their perception of the pillars because they will become more aesthetically integrated to their surroundings:

"If this turns green as I was saying, then they've done a really good job. And I think it is very integrated. I think it would be a very effective design to make it an element in the visual part of it"

(Appendix 4: Interview 5)

"Then they would still serve their main function as protection, but if they turn to this bluish metal, then they would 100% fit into the area aesthetically also. I really like that"

(Appendix 4: Interview 1)

Figure 10: Close up of pillars at Amalienborg
Source: Self Produced

When the pillars have gone through this oxidising process, the messages the pillars communicate might have a different meaning for our participants due to the fact that they will not be as overt anymore.

In Coaffee's terms, the pillars are categorised as overt security features insofar that their appearance is obtrusive, and our informants reinforce this definition by defining them as overt anti-terror measurements (Appendix 4: Interview 2;3;6). However, over time, the pillars will change category given that they will oxidise and become more integrated into the space, and therefore become more likely "stealthy." Also, once the pillars have oxidised, they become new objects, according to Böhme, through their new aesthetics. This means that in the future, the pillars might create a new and/or different atmosphere around themselves and within the space of Amalienborg, which can then have an impact on the cultural understanding and social life of the area (Bille 2015:57). The reality of this shift in perception due to change in object is already alluded to by a respondent who anticipates a change in the atmosphere once the oxidising is complete:

> *"[I]t could make the posts [pillars] fit better if they got this blue-like colour, such as. the top of the church in the background or the statues in the square. It will make the posts play well with the area"*

(Appendix 4: Interview 3)

Not only will the experience of the pillars change over time, according to Massey, so will the meaning of the place as well (Massey 2001:459). As the pillars become more and more integrated, we might see a change in how people use the space. More people might visit and use the space due to the camouflaged pillars, since they no longer signal "terror protection," but rather "traffic regulation" instead. Furthermore, instead of being viewed as misplaced, they will be viewed as more included in the aesthetics in the surrounding area. Or perhaps less people will use the space since they do not feel protected as the pillars are camouflaged. Thus, the social relations to and interaction with Amalienborg have the capacity to change over time as the material object changes.

4.3. Summary of Case Studies

Based on the two case studies, it can be concluded that anti-terror objects, such as benches and pillars, were not perceived as particularly obtrusive, noticeable, nor harmful among our respondents. Instead, the objects were seen as giving value, reinforcing social functions or meaning of a place, or reinforcing feelings of security within an area. Notably, the visibility of their security features did not always seem to correspond with Coaffee's prescriptions as "overt" or "stealthy." In particular, atmosphere and intangible biases held by users play a more influential role in the perception of anti-terror design elements. This will be discussed in depth in the following section.

5. Discussion

Thus far, we examined the perception of overt and covert security features in anti-terror objects, and the responses users have to these objects within public spaces across Copenhagen. Using Coaffee's model, "An Indicative Spectrum of Visible Security," we were able to initially categorize two different forms of security devices in our case studies: the "covert" benches at Nyhavn ("covert" or "stealthy" for their ornamental and dual-purpose nature), and the "overt" pillars at Amalienborg ("overt" for their fortress-like materiality and obvious obtrusiveness) (Coaffee et al. 2009:499). Coaffee discusses that the impetus for anti-terror design now has been to encourage further covert design so as to prevent dis-assurance and anxiety that can occur in response to "hardened" architecture; therefore, we anticipated respondents would be generally more accepting of the benches at Nyhavn and slightly more wary of the pillars at Amalienborg. However, throughout our research, we found that respondents did not categorize the visibility of the anti-terror objects as per Coaffee's theory, nor did they follow the linear path of acceptability, where the more "invisible" an object was, the more acceptable. This suggests Coaffee's continuum of security feature visibility is thus insufficient, and how users engage with anti-terror objects does not adhere to this preordained theory.

When conducting vox pop interviews across the city to determine our case study locations, we did initially find one respondent who agreed with Coaffee's model. They found that a more overt anti-terror device communicates a level of unease and threat: "*No… [the concrete blocks are] actually more unsafe. Because they send a strong signal that there is something you have to be aware of, or that here could something go wrong*" (Appendix 5: Amalienborg 2). However, even in this preliminary phase, respondents alluded to a break in Coaffee's analytical framework. Anti-terror design that would be described as "invisible" (a raised square) revealed their safety function to the casual observer: "*The fact that the square is raised makes me feel more safe. But it is not something I'm usually thinking about*" (Appendix 5: Rådhuspladsen 1).

Figure 11: Raised outer edge at the Townsquare
Source: Self Produced

According to Coaffee, an invisible anti-terror device would not result in the user acknowledging the safety feature of the device; however, in this case, the respondent realized the raised (and generally covert) nature of the square at Rådhuspladsen is in service of safety. Another contrast are the responses that assert that a more visible anti-terror design is actually more acceptable (contrasting with the theory that level of visibility is inversely related to the level of comfort or acceptance of that element): "*No, actually I like the signal value if you actually can see it is concrete. Because it signals that it takes care of you, and you get reminded of it…The public needs to be reminded of what is going on*" (Appendix 5: Strøget 2). The more overt the security visibility (such

as concrete barriers), the better because it acts as a reminder to the public to remain vigilant; similarly, overt anti-terror objects that are obtrusive and impede mobility are acceptable because their protective purpose is inherently valuable: "*Because I actually think [flowerpots] are in the way for the mobility along Strøget. But then you realize for a second that they are there for protecting us, and then you accept them being there*" (Strøget - Gammeltorv).

Figure 12: Flowerpots at Strøget
Source: Self Produced

Similarly, informants view the overt pillars at Amalienborg as acceptable for their role in protecting the cultural institution of the royal family:

"On the other side I don't feel bad about Amalienborg since I know it is a castle and the royal family lives there. So, in some way it seems natural that there is some protection at the roads into the plaza"

(Appendix 4: Interview 6)

In these cases, instead of unease in response to the object's overt obtrusiveness, there is assurance.

Coaffee's theory was further challenged within the long-form interviews. Most strikingly was one informant's appraisal of the traditionally "overt" pillars at Amalienborg: "*[The pillars at Amalienborg] are less invasive, it's a small element, and it doesn't take up much space both physically and visually. And again I perceive them as traffic regulation and not anti-terror devices*" (Appendix 4: Interview 4). In this case, the security features of the Amalienborg anti-terror pillars are invisible to the informant in favour of their traffic-controlling function because the visual signifiers and physical interactions with them are assessed as unobtrusive, an almost direct contrast to Coaffee's categorization. Similarly, many informants saw the "stealthy" Nyhavn benches as either completely invisible or overt—invisible to those who had no cause to think about or assess the object despite their somewhat obvious anti-terror placement:

"To be honest...I just first noticed when you sent me the pictures. Like, I have always seen [the benches] there, but I just first noticed what they are used for and I thought it was just benches with some branding, with some Nyhavn text on it"

(Appendix 4: Interview 5)

"I kind of have to say that Nyhavn [benches are] invisible. But that is grounded on that I didn't know. I had no idea. Of course, I could see there was an obstacle, so the right answer is probably somewhat hidden. But I kind of want to call it invisible because I had not thought about it"

(Appendix 4: Interview 6)

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"At Nyhavn, the anti-terror element is invisible. Complete invisible in my opinion. I don't think that there are many people that would think of its main function when you look at it. It is very cosy to look at"

<div align="right">(Appendix 4: Interview 1)</div>

And the Nyhavn benches were overt to those who perceive the bench's placement as particularly obtrusive to mobility:

"The benches at Nyhavn are very abrupt, which is probably why I think about it as more of an anti-terror device than [the Amalienborg pillars] because I can't see why else you would have it there…Because if you were just to build a bench for people to sit on, you would never put it there where it disrupts the flow of people walking"

<div align="right">(Appendix 4: Interview 4)</div>

Coaffee's theory is thus rigidly proscriptive in a way that does not accommodate the variety of visual categorizations different users can place on the same object in the same place.

It is also important to note that Coaffee's theory seems to assess an object as only having one, inherent, static level of security visibility that does not fluctuate. This does not address the fact that, as our data suggests, anti-terror objects are dynamic and their perceptions as "overt" or "covert" change over time; a user's relationship and appraisal of the anti-terror object changes as well as and the level of embodied threat of the object. Objects that start as "overt" (such as the pillars at Amalienborg) become more invisible or unobtrusive if one is able to interact with the object more commonly and integrate them into their "everyday life" and habits; users' perception of an object as more "covert" thus depends on how practiced their interaction with the object is:

"There has definitely been put up these new pillars here at the entrances. I have lived here for a while, and when and in the beginning they first make me feel unsafe, in that sense that there is a need for them now. Before there wasn't. But vice versa, now they actually make me feel more safe standing here in this square"

<div align="right">(Appendix 5: Amalienborg 2)</div>

<div align="right">Page 37 of 47</div>

"The more natural things look [the pillars at Amalienborg as they oxidise], the easier you can get used to them being there… It could be super fun if you also took school students also got them to paint on them. Because it might help to get the little ones used to it not being so bad that they are here if they e.g., have had some kind of relationship with them. It may help to remove the thought that it is an anti-terror object"

(Appendix 4: Interview 3)

And anti-terror objects that start out as "stealthy" or "invisible" (such as the benches at Nyhavn) become more visible/overt the more aware users become of its teleological purpose:

"At Nyhavn, I would say they are camouflaged. They are not completely invisible, in that if I stand and look at them long enough, I will be able to figure out myself that they are there to stop something. Where it is located, what comes after and what comes before the blockade. Now I also know there is concrete inside it"

(Appendix 4: Interview 3)

Additionally, objects are not simply "one thing," in that they can function as both "overt" and "covert" simultaneously. Coaffee's theory does not accommodate the potential "indecisiveness" of users and their constantly fluctuating relationship to the object:

"The anti-terror that is here is pretty good [pillars at Amalienborg], I think. So, you feel safer being in here [within the plaza]. For me, you also feel a bit more a risk since you are standing in a risk zone than if you were standing somewhere else"

(Appendix 5: Amalienborg 1)

Another significant deficiency in Coaffee's theory is that it fails to accommodate the influence of more intangible factors like overarching cultural context and localized atmosphere on the reading of objects and spaces. The acceptance of an anti-terror object stems from their level of security visibility according to Coaffee (the more visible, the less acceptable and vice versa); our research, however, suggests acceptance of an anti-terror object stems from its perceived role within a larger atmosphere or cultural context.

A prevailing cultural understanding that can explain respondents' reactions to anti-terror objects is the fact Danes generally have a low appraisal of terroristic threat. Coaffee discusses how anti-terror devices begin to encode social and political priorities of terror prevention (Coaffee et al. 2009:494). It is a theory predicated on the idea that, at base level, anti-terror objects embody a high perception of terror threat. Despite this assertion, however, our informants demonstrated a universally low perception of terror threat, even when prompted with images of anti-terror objects. Multiple interviews resulted in responses dictating that anti-terror is not something they *"notice*," *"think about*," nor influences their everyday life (Appendix 4: Interviews 2;3;4;5); as one respondent stated, "*I do not feel like terror takes up a lot of space in Denmark*" (Appendix 4: Interview 6). The message transmitted to users by the sheer existence of the object, then, may be one of terror and threat; but the message received by users as of now is one of security or indifference.

Longitudinal safety surveys looking back on public perception about terror, conducted in 2017 and 2019-20, substantiate this culturally low perception of terror threat among Danes. While there have been marked fluctuations in feelings of insecurity about terror attacks from 2004 (from 9% feeling "very insecure" in 2004 to 23% in June of 2017), at the highest rate of insecurity, more than half of the Danish respondents (77%) felt safe from terror threats (Andersen; Hede & Andersen 2017) (see Figure 11).
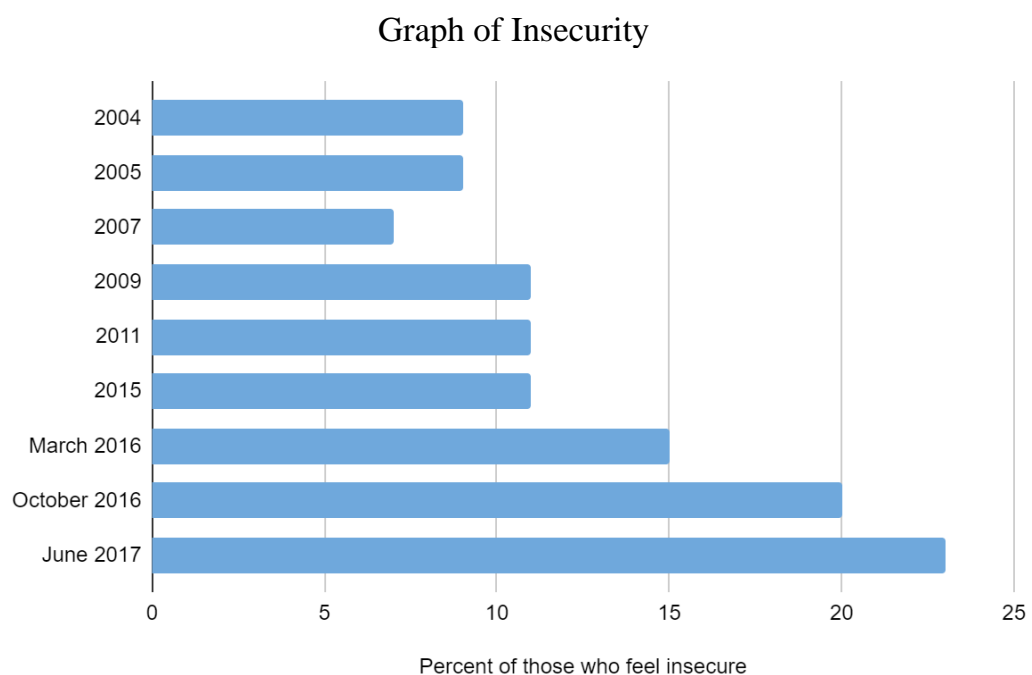

Figure 13: Graph of Insecurity
Source: Andersen; Hede & Andersen 2017, adapted by the authors

Additionally, respondents were consistently more concerned with the prospect of having their homes broken into (25%) than were of experiencing a terror attack (23%) (Survey 2017:18). It appears public perception of terror threats are punctuated by recent terror attacks: increase in fear of terror attacks more than doubles from 2015 to 2017 (11% to 23%), possibly reflecting a social reaction to the 2015 Nice and 2016 Christmas Market attacks. Yet even with these episodes of terror, Danes maintain a low appraisal of terror threat.

Fear of Violence
Percentage of people who feel unsafe
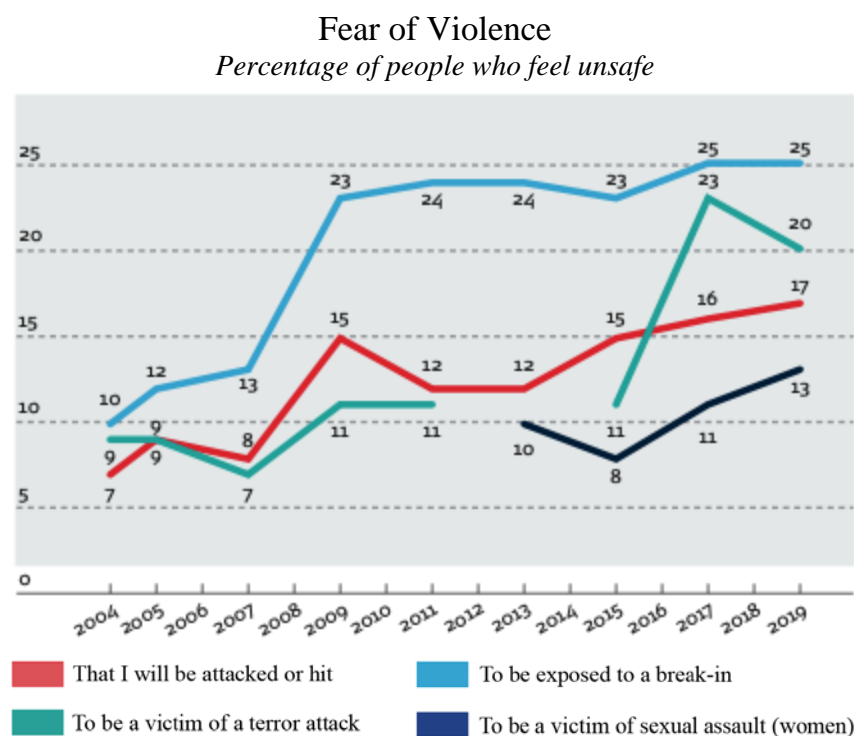
Figure 14: Graph of Fear of Violence
Source: Andersen; Hede & Andersen 2019-20, adapted by the authors

One could argue there are a series of factors that reinforce this low cultural appraisal of terror: level of media prioritization/broadcast of terror; level of trust in authority to protect citizens from attacks; and status of more urgent, global concerns like Covid-19. Some respondents expressed their sole reliance on media to determine their awareness of terror threat, and due to a current lack of media representation, there is thus a lack in perceived personal threat:

"I do not think about [terror] on a daily basis, except if it comes up in the news. I generally believe that it is a Danish trend that our media is not generally characterized by violence and terror around the world. [W]hen something happens, we are made aware of it…but usually [terror is] not something I think about"

(Appendix 4: Interview 3)

"[*M*]y *opinion about my safety in certain areas is based on what the media tells me*"

(Appendix 5: Rådhuspladsen 1)

"[*Terror attacks are*] *not something I think too much about, it's just something I know about because it is a thing that has been discussed years back in the news"*

(Appendix 4: Interview 4)

Others trust authorities to "take care" of the terrorist issue, and thus do not feel immediately threatened:

"*[I do not think of terror] because I trust the authorities to pick up on any terror cells regardless of their political views. And by authorities I mean PET*"

(Appendix 4: Interview 4)

"*I have a general feeling that there are bigger concerns when it comes to terror…that could be done through [law-making] and more institutional changes in society, rather than, you know, just this [design] fix*"

(Appendix 4: Interview 5)

And one saw a global pandemic as a much more pressing issue that overshadows any potential terror threat:

"*At that moment I was more focused on closing times, Corona and stuff like that. It wasn't terror I was thinking of when I walked through Nyhavn*"

(Appendix 4: Interview 6)

Thus, whether due to media, faith in authority, or prioritization of COVID-19, it appears respondents were assessing anti-terror objects with a cultural lack of perceived terror threat; this low perception of threat thus informed a general acceptance of the anti-terror objects since the objects did not embody a feeling of imminent threat. In this sense, we have extended Coaffee's theory to include baseline biases that contribute to the public's assessment of visible security measures.

Additionally, our case studies have shown how atmosphere contributes to a user's appraisal of the visibility level of an anti-terror object, and the degree to which that object is acceptable or non-obtrusive to the user. In Nyhavn, respondents saw the space as consistently "*hygge*" or "*cosy*," and did not think of the benches as particularly threatening because of their ability to contribute to their "peaceful" surroundings. Additionally, the benches contributed to socialization within the space, which reaffirmed this "*cosy*" atmosphere. As shown in Amalienborg, respondents were able to sublimate the overarching security features of the pillars due to its context within the surrounding atmosphere. The object was not registered as a reminder of terroristic threat because respondents were more concerned with atmosphere and how "*hyggelig*" the space is instead. Feelings of "*hyggelig*" are more amplified during significant cultural and social events, such as celebration of the Queen's birthday; in that instance, pillars "fade into the background" and become invisible and the festive atmosphere takes precedence. Therefore, it is the role of atmosphere that determines the level of security visibility of anti-terror objects instead of the functional elements of the objects.

It is thus our conclusion that Coaffee's theory on the "Spectrum of Visible Security" falls short when it comes to assessing user relationship to anti-terror design. First, it fails to accommodate the variety of responses in how respondents class and categorize an object as either "covert," "overt," or "stealthy." Additionally, it fails to account for the influence of intangible elements, such as cultural context and atmosphere, on the reading of objects and space. Whereas Coaffee's theory is static and linear, our data suggests public perception of these anti-terror devices is varied, dynamically changes over time, and incorporates a much more holistic approach.

6. Conclusion

Through our data, case studies, and discussion, we found that anti-terror devices, although saturating the cityscape and potentially intimidating given how prominent a feature they are, are not perceived as particularly hostile elements. "Terror" is not a concept that is thought of in a regular sense, and the objects tasked with combating potential attacks do not embody nor signal a particular level of constant risk. Rather, traffic-stemming anti-terror designs, such as benches or pillars, are perceived as adding value to their surroundings, and help to constitute the experience of place within Nyhavn and Amalienborg. Anti-terror objects add value by "fitting" into and creating aesthetic completeness within an area; they are also multi-functional and therefore allow a physical space to be used, experienced, and practised in a way that contributes to the overall feeling of security and the atmosphere of "cosiness" that defines a place. Therefore, how anti-terror objects are related to and processed is determined by its perceived level of aesthetic value and its contribution to a place's atmosphere and continued use of a space; the utility of an anti-terror object determines how it is read, not its visible design nor visual signifiers of fortification.

Our case studies contrasted greatly with the underlying analytical lens we initially used to categorize anti-terror devices: Coaffee's "An Indicative Spectrum of Visible Security." This continuum of visibility was predicated on the idea that anti-terror devices were "read" according to visual elements and the degree to which the object appeared "overt" and hardened to "invisible" and visually unobtrusive. As mentioned, anti-terror objects were read and reacted to according to their level of utility, not their visual signifiers; yet even classifying the anti-terror objects according to Coaffee's continuum of visual signifiers was insufficient. Notably, respondents did not categorize anti-terror objects in the way Coaffee would assess them: overt objects like the pillars at Amalienborg were classed as "invisible" whereas stealthy objects like the benches at Nyhavn were classed as "invisible" or "overt." Additionally, respondents saw these categories of visibility as changing over time or the anti-terror objects as having two different visual elements of security at the same time, whereas Coaffee's theory asserts that anti-terror objects only have one, inherent, static level of security visibility that does not fluctuate. Finally, Coaffee's theory did not accommodate the pervasive role of atmosphere and cultural contexts that underlie how a user relates to an anti-terror object: a low cultural perception of terror threat and/or a dominating "cosy" or "hyggelig" atmosphere tends to reduce users' ability to notice anti-terror devices. It is thus our conclusion that Coaffee's theory on the "Spectrum of Visible Security" falls short when it comes to assessing user relationship

to anti-terror design, and fails to accommodate the holistic, systematic factors that contribute to how a person reads or decodes anti-terror objects.

Admittedly, there were limitations to our research. While we were able to determine insightful themes from this initial sample size, it would have been useful to extend the number of participants in order to significantly substantiate or challenge our findings. Also, the presence of the Corona-19 pandemic was a potentially corrupting element to our data collection given that a pandemic preoccupies the focus of respondents; thus, the pandemic shifts focus away from processing terror as a primary concern, and therefore sublimates users' traditional reactions to anti-terror objects. It would thus be useful to conduct this line of inquiry when a global pandemic has not taken precedence in order to observe how users "normally" engage with and react to anti-terror objects. In addition to expanding the scope and changing the setting/timing of the research, the research could extend into further considerations: the role of media in determining the public's relationship to or appraisal of anti-terror devices and how object affordances recalibrate how users engage with "hostile" anti-terror devices. Anti-terror devices, albeit ubiquitous and reflective of the "new normal" of terror attacks, provide fascinating insight into the factors beyond simple visual cues that determine how people engage with and process overtly coded objects, and can be used as the lens by which to understand the role of intangible, influential elements that influence how design is understood.

7. Bibliography

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