

Research Plan

Steven Bouma

Studentnr.: 5006732

AR3A010 - Research Plan (2020/21 Q1)

INTRODUCTION

Since the start of the 21st-century Amsterdam has experienced an exponential rise in tourist numbers and property value in the city. This has resulted in city wide gentrification and has made the city uninhabitable for local citizens. Due to social pressure Amsterdam had to take measures, and so had raised tourist taxes and created a 'hotel-stop' in 2016 (Couzy, 2019). In an attempt to create positive change Amsterdam has embraced the Doughnut Economic model by Kate Raworth to try and become a more sustainable, social and inclusive city. And thus, has made the pledge to become: "a home to thriving people, in a thriving place, while respecting the wellbeing of all people, and the health of the whole planet?" (DEAL, 2020). Through this the city tries to create a new relationship with its inhabitants, tourists, nature, and historical disproportionately disadvantaged people.

The eventual goal of this project is to design a hotel in Amsterdam – How cynical this may sound – I believe this provides an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the city. Coming to the main research question: How can City-Hotel have a meaningful contribution to the city of Amsterdam? To answer this question the next questions are researched:

Which historical and social developments of Amsterdam have an influence on the City-Hotel?

Which historical types and ideas of the hotel can be used for the design of the City-Hotel?

What can be learned from the Amsterdam's Doughnut Coalition?

How can public space in Amsterdam, used to commemorate Amsterdam's colonial past, be repurposed to a more inclusive space representing its diverse society?

How can inclusivity and solidarity become a center point of the city-hotel?

AMSTERDAM: PLANNING & DISRUPTIONS

To be able to start forming ideas of how to approach a new project in Amsterdam, the first step was to understand its past and present and investigate: Which historical and social developments of Amsterdam have an influence on the City-Hotel? A collective and qualitative research followed into the morphology of the city based on its urban expansions through time. Furthermore, the influence of cultural changes and urban movements on the city and its architecture have been studied. This research part is based on primary sources such as archival documents, drawings and pictures, but also secondary sources, such as personal accounts to get a sense of the time period. The data has been translated into text, diagrams and drawings, and are collected in a collective book.

HOTELS: TYPOLOGIES & PRECEDENTS

The typological research has been a research into the origin, history and developments of the hotel, as both an idea and a type. Similar to the first research, this part is a collective and qualitative research into multiple precedents of the hotel. Primary sources, such as architectural drawings and paintings have been retraced and redrawn in the process. By filtering these drawings and portraying them on eponymous scales, they could be compared and analyzed next to each other. Giving us insight into their organization, lay-out, construction, architecture and inner workings. By asking the question: Which historical types and ideas of the hotel can be used for the design of the City-Hotel? the first ideas were established of what a hotel is, what it can be and who it could serve.

DOUGHNUT ECONOMY: INTERVIEWS & MODELS

The Doughnut Economic Model, presented by Kate Raworth in her book *Doughnut Economics* (2017), is considered to be the key supporting theory of this project. After finishing reading the book a qualitative research was started into how the Doughnut Coalition Amsterdam implemented Raworth's theory, considering the question: What can be learned from the Amsterdam's Doughnut Coalition? The main reason why was to understand how one could translate certain dilemmas addressed by Raworth into a design proposal. What followed was a collective analysis of the Amsterdam City Portrait through the four different lenses (Local-Social, Local-Ecological, Global-Ecological, and Global-Social) and interviews with affiliated projects.



photo 1: Model of The Decolonized Courtyard

FIRST DESIGN

An alarming discovery while doing this research was the absence of projects in the Amsterdam's Doughnut Coalition focusing on the topic of social equity. A topic concerned with social themes such as inclusivity, diversity, representation and equality. This is alarming, –as multiple theories delineate– because climate justice is as important as equal- and racial justice. For instance, British MP David Lammy said: “Climate justice can't happen without racial justice”(Lammy, 2020). Climate activists think the same, stating in a Time article about architect Bjarke Ingels (in-)ability to be the sole author of a masterplan to save planet earth, that “climate action needs to address not only emissions but also systemic inequalities” (Nugent, 2020). Raworth emphasizes that inequality often runs parallel with increase of social degradation (Raworth, 2017, p. 172). This emphasizes the importance of projects which focus on the topic of social equity.

This discovery led to the idea of the first design exercise, The Decolonized Courtyard. A design exercise created to implemented one's ideas of Raworth's theory into a tangible architectural outcome. The starting point was questioning

what a Doughnut Coalition project concerned with social equity can address. Settling on the question: How can public space in Amsterdam, used to commemorate Amsterdam's colonial past, be repurposed to a more inclusive space representing its diverse society? The result is a design of a repurposed courtyard of the Dutch West-India Company in Amsterdam (see photo 1). This is done through: (1) changing the central fountain into a ground-level fountain, (2) by introducing a reconfigurable composition of greenery, and finally, (3) through decentralizing the statue within the composition. This first design exercise has been an interesting and instructive experience, and in the end resulted in some tangible ideas that can be used for the design of the City-Hotel.

THE CITY-HOTEL

Working on the topic of social equity led to the idea of designing a City-Hotel along the lines of the former Chelsea Hotel in New York City. A hotel where multiple cultures collide as artist from all backgrounds can become residence and can pay for their stay through the art they make. Artists are one of the groups affected by the rise in property value.



photo 2: arial view of Mr. Visserplein (© google, 2020)

An important question needs to be considered is that: How can inclusivity and solidarity become a center point of the city-hotel? Not only for its artists in residence but also for the staff.

Another question that needs answering for this type of hotel, is: Why would artist want to stay at this hotel? How does one create agency? One interview conducted with the organization CitySpheres made clear that this can be achieved through sharing ones idea with the community (in this case the artists) and letting them become co-owners of the idea. Thus, letting artists be part of the process.

A relatable historical example are the public bathhouses in Amsterdam, build by the socialists in the 1920's, to support their supporters in the city. An example is the Public Bathhouse in the Diamantbuurt by architect A.J. Westerman. In the case of the City-Hotel, this could be through incorporating galleries in the building, so that the artists are able to exhibit and sell their work. A part of the profit could then be used for the hotel as a way to compensate for the artist's stay.

MR. VISSERPLEIN

The choice for the location of the City-Hotel is based on my immediate attraction to site when it was presented amongst 11 other potential sites. Mr. Visserplein is considered the ugliest square in Amsterdam amongst locals (Verlaan, 2010), (see photo 2). The complex problems posed by the products of modernity generate a very challenging set of circumstances. The square is also a historically loaded place, located in the heart of the Jewish quarter and being at center of attention during the squatter protests in the 60's and 70's. Furthermore, it has been a gateway into the city throughout time, thus being a place where multiple cultures collided. It therefore can be an ideal place to design the envisioned a City-Hotel that tries to bring together different cultures. Mr. Visserplein is one of those disused spaces that needs 'cleaning-up', by releasing the pressure pragmatically but elegantly (Hannema, deKort, & Schrijver, 2019, p. 5). Hence, providing an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the city.

FINISHING STATEMENT (WHAT IS NEXT?):

The collective research has given interesting insight, into Amsterdam, the hotel and the Doughnut Economy. It has shown Amsterdam crucial relationship with water. How, through history the city swung between socialist believes and capitalistic ideas. That the combination of these ideals sometimes created wonderful buildings, such as the Wolkenkrabber by J.F. Staal in the Plan-Zuid, the “Hofjes” in the historic city center, socialist bathhouses, union salons or resulted in extremes such as the squatter movements.

The typological study showed the importance of the courtyard in the earlier models of the hotel. How the courtyard evolved through time to big atriums, or got pushed to the outside to create more façade surface, and thus generating the possibility for more room. Eventually disappear in the collective living areas of moneymaking machines of hotel brands like CitizenM or WeLive. Furthermore, the evolution of the hotel room form big ill-defined dormitories to small highly efficient economical rooms or big expensive mansions inside the Ritz. Form the earlier precedents to more recent one, the hotels always seems to be worlds on their own.

The Doughnut Economy research has let me believe that a sustainable, inclusive and social future is possible. Raworth’s theory is really a holistic approach, that, by using her model as a guide enables you to tap into every possible problem that needs addressing in order to create a resilient building for the future.

That is also were on one side I hope to continue my research in MSc 4. Looking to the possibilities of designing a sustainable building. For this research what I mean by sustainable. In architecture, many different concepts of what a sustainable building is, have been implemented over the years. For instance the concept of a Net-Zero Emissions Building, which assumes a building is sustainable if it has zero energy loss (Satory, Napolitano, & Voss, 2012). However, the energy lost during construction is completely ignored. Another example is BREEAM, a method which tests the integral sustainability of a building, by looking at its energy use, internal climate, materials, etc. (Dutch-Green-Building-Council, 2020). But for all that, its highest scoring projects still use depleting resources, usually shipping them from all over the world, being only accessible for people who can afford it. Sustainability concepts which seem to get a wider support recently, are concepts of rewilding and regenerative

buildings. Rewilding is an idea which focusses on retaking land in rural and urban areas for planting forests, and so improve biodiversity and habitats for animals (Goulson, 2019). These forests at the same time filter the air of carbon and other pollutants. Regenerative buildings, are buildings that use materials that are regenerative, store CO₂, and those could be carbon negative.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Verlaan, T. (2010). Stadsgezichten: Mr. Visserplein. Retrieved Dec 18, 2020 from <https://www.parool.nl/nieuws/stadsgezichten-mr-visserplein~b6287de4/>
- Boer, R., Verzier, M. O., & Truijen, K. Tracing the impact of squatting on the Dutch Urban Landscape. Retrieved from <https://architecture-appropriation.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/en/tracing-impact-squatting-dutch-urban-landscape-conversation-mark-minkjan>
- Buckminster Fuller, R. (1969). *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth*. Zurich: Lars Müller Publishers.
- Wassmann, C. (2020). Shedding Light. PIN-UP Magazine for architectural entertainment, 28, 64-65.
- Couzy, M. (2019, May, 4). Amsterdam scherpt hotelstop aan. Het Parool. Retrieved from <https://www.parool.nl/nieuws/amsterdam-scherpt-hotelstop-aan~b67ade868/>
- Attenborough, D., Fothergill, A., & Hughes, J. (2020). *David Attenborough: A Life On Our Planet*.
- DEAL. (2020). *The Amsterdam City Doughnut*. Amsterdam: Doughnut Economics Action Lab.
- Dutch-Green-Building-Council. (2020). BREEAM-NL. Retrieved from <https://www.breeam.nl/>
- Evans, R. (1978). *Figures, Doors and Passages*. In *Translations from Drawing to Building and Other Essays* (pp. 55-91). London: Architectural Association Publications.
- Goulson, D. (2019). *The Garden Jungle*. London: Penguin Random House.
- Graaf, R. (2017). *With the Masses*. In *Four Walls and a Roof* (pp. 133-143). Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Hannema, K., deKort, R.-J., & Schrijver, L. (2019). *Architecture in the Netherlands, Yearbook 2018/19*. nai010 publishers.
- Herzog, J. (2020). Jacques Herzog: letter to David Chipperfield. *Domus*. Retrieved from <https://www.domusweb.it/en/architecture/2020/10/13/jacques-herzog-letter-from-basel.html>
- Ibelings, H., & Hannema, K. (2019). *In Between*. Montreal/ Amsterdam: The Architecture Observer.
- (Eds.). (2019). *Tatiana Bilbao Estudio*. Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers.
- Kohlstedt, K. (2017). *Fruit Walls*. Retrieved October 30, 2020 from <https://99percentinvisible.org/>
- Kroll, L. (1986). *The Architecture of Complexity* (P. B. Jones, Trans.). London: B.T. Batsford Ltd.
- Lammy, D. (2020). *Climate Justice Can't Happen Without Racial Justice*. Retrieved October 30, 2020 from <https://www.ted.com/talks/>
- Lewis, H. (2020, June 22). *Fast-growing mini-forests spring up in Europe to aid climate*. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/>
- Nugent, C. (2020, October 22). *The Climate is Breaking Down. Architect Bjarke Ingels Has a Masterplan for That*. *Time*. Retrieved from <https://time.com/collection/great-reset/5900743/bjarke-ingels-climate-change-architecture/>
- Oudman, T. (2020, October 29). *Beste David Attenborough, mooie Netflixdocu. Jammer dat uw "oplossingen" de natuur alleen maar verder vernietigen*. *deCorrespondent*. Retrieved from <https://decorrespondent.nl/11745/beste-david-attenborough-mooie-netflixdocu-jammer-dat-uw-oplossingen-de-natuur-alleen-maar-verder-vernietigen/18517783812165-eef0b14a>
- Perry, G. (2017). *The Descent of Man*. London: Penguin Books.
- Pfeijffer, I. L. (2018). *Grand Hotel Europa*. Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspres.
- Raworth, K. (2017). *Doughnut Economics* (13). London: Random House Business.
- Rosbottom, D. (2019). *Let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for*. *Proceedings from Longevity and Sustainability*, Oslo.
- Salas, R. N. (2020). *A pathway to net zero emissions for healthcare*. *thebmj*, 371, 95-98.
- Satory, I., Napolitano, A., & Voss, K. (2012). *Net zero energy buildings*. In *Energy and Buildings* (48 ed., pp. 220-232). Elsevier. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0378778812000497>
- Teerds, H., Grafe, C., & Koekoek, C. (2020). *Table Settings, Reflectins on Architecture with Hannah Arendt*. *Journal for Architecture OASE*, 106.
- Assembly, U. N. G. (2015). *Transforming our world : the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Retrieved 1 December, 2020 from <https://www.refworld.org/docid/57b6e3e44.html>
- Verkade, T. (2020, October 14). *Na dit boek denk je nooit meer dat er één oorzaak is, met één gevolg*. *DeCorrespondent*. Retrieved from <https://decorrespondent.nl/11595/na-dit-boek-denk-je-nooit-meer-dat-er-eeen-oorzaak-is-met-eeen-gevolg/18281285934615-cc5c2b94>