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## PROBLEM STATEMENT

“Physical presence is the essence of openness”

- Richard Sennett, *Designing the Open City*

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The growing influence of globalization, rise of neo-liberalism and the incremental individualism of contemporary society have all had severe implications on societal relations, the mutual proximity and the changing character of humankind. In the twentieth century, due to industrialization, digitalization, growing influence of technology, decrease in relevant distance, and not to forget the segregating notions of war, the humankind has mutually shifted in character and reciprocal behaviour. According to Kate Raworth we as humans are “the most cooperative species on the planet”. Yet, through these - mostly intangible - influences, we have isolated ourselves from mutual relations, incrementally focusing on the individual goals, rather than the collective purpose. Prompting the issue of lacking reciprocal human connectivity and sense of community in our modern society.

Thereby exists a global tendency of incremental urban densification and the question of the liveable city. As the modern city is becoming incrementally denser, with more interior space and decreasing exterior space. These notions prompt questions on architectural boundaries and the relationship of interiority and exteriority.

Finally, our society is so incredibly stuck in systems of regulation and bureaucracy, trying to control all scenarios of society. While in spontaneous human encounters the most beautiful things will follow. This project must be comprehended as a stimulus for that and a bonding provocation between Amsterdam citizens, the municipality, and everyone else. The City Hotel therefore embodies as a host for initiatives, a space for dialogue, a haven for residence and an intimate urban space for the common. Extending the essential notions of the individual model embodied in the City Salon.

In this project the notion of the City Hotel will be rethought in response to the problematics mentioned above. The City Hotel will be located on the corner of the Nieuwe Doelenstraat and Binnengasthuisstraat, situated in south of ‘De Wallen’ in an area that is characterised by rather grand architecture, unlike the typical Amsterdam architecture of canal houses. The site is situated amidst a cluster compiled by the university campus, grand hotels, museums, a grand café, a theater and few residential architecture.



Individual model of the City Salon articulating necessary spatialities of hospitality in the space of dialogue. Hosting social and political teinted activities in urban voids focused on the local initiatives which aid the citizens of Amsterdam



*Through the institutionalisation of the area across centuries, this area constitutes a territory where the regular citizens are not so familiar with. Creating a project for the citizens of Amsterdam, enables the area to be hospitable to all of Amsterdam, instead of tourists visiting the grand hotels and students visiting the university buildings. Additionally, the location of the Nieuwe Doelenstraat is chosen, because it is inherently connected with the notions of accommodation of Amsterdam people, social discourse and institutions of sociality.*

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“Architecture must stimulate the feeling for the relationships that make real life”

- Jaap Bakema, *Open Society*

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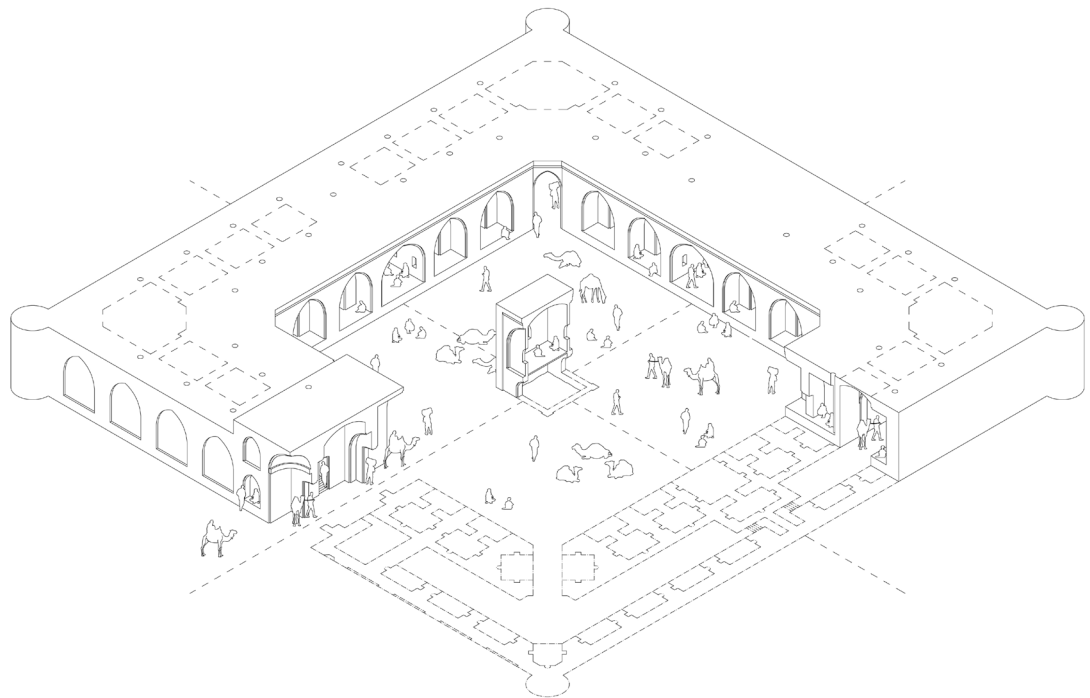
*The research into Amsterdam specifically clarified the contemporary disruptions by the immense influence of tourism, the international hotel investors extracting capital from the economy, the establishment of institutions and companies in the historic centre and the rising housing prices pushing the locals out of the city. Effects as squatting, diminishing of communities and decrease in degree of local Amsterdam people within the historic centre is a direct consequence of these issues.*

*The location of the Nieuwe Doelenstraat chosen, because it is inherently connected with the notions of accommodation of Amsterdam people, social discourse and institutions of sociality. The project will therefore unfold in the realms of social discourse and institution of sociality. These notions can be distilled from the research and set to be exemplary in learning from them, whilst designing the city hotel and the human relations that act within it.*

*The research into the typology of the caravanserai struck me at most. What strikes the eye as simple architecture at first is*

*actually a highly intricate, carefully organized and effective human construct. Fundamentally, through the organization of space, boundaries and thresholds and the relations between privacy and collectivity the caravanserai's architecture functions immensely successful. While the materiality, form and complexity of its spaces is modest and minimal in its core – merely providing what is necessary. The notions of openness to all, its hospitality and servicing, its sense of reciprocal proximity of individuals and the facilitation of space for encounter, connection and dialogue are definitely notions to pursue in the project of the City Hotel. All fundamental stimuli to the exchange of cultures, values, beliefs, language, traditions and other profound intelligences. An exchange - I think - is profoundly imperative to the shift towards the social safe space of the Doughnut Model and the notion of human reciprocal reconnection in contemporary society. Hence, during the research of the caravanserai I posed myself the question; what are the contemporary equivalents of the caravanserai?*

*The implications of the caravanserai resonated in the Hotel Particulier. A model*



The first notion of the platform existed in the model of the caravanserai. Displaying the organisation of space, boundaries and thresholds that allow the exchange of cultures, experience, value and ideas ↑

known for its spatial qualities of reception of people. The entrance sequence resembles the sequence and space of the caravanserai. Moreover, the Hotel Particulier learns how to create interior specific to the means and character of the space.

The traditions of the Viennese café also enact within proximity of the Caravanserai. Functioning as an informal - one can say political - institution of sociality where individuals consume and share time, space, information and conversation, aided by the sense of reciprocal proximity. This informal intention reflects the individual model of the City Salon - a common ground for citizens and municipality - extending the interests in the notions of dialogue, platform and exchange of culture. Yet, the Viennese Café intention of equal interaction in encounter must be revised to work in the contemporary society Which notions of Viennese Café culture can be beneficial for the City Hotel? How can the potentials of the individual model be implemented in the City Hotel?

The Venetian Campo is a public space model - which to some extent also resonates the activity

and spatiality of the Caravanserai - enclosed by urban architecture and a flooring which is materialised with the highest attention. The Campo embodies a symbiotic relationship between a complex, multi-functional, human-scale, quality of community and sociability. This could be serving as a model on how to create this sense of togetherness, quality of space and provision of the ability to host communal activities, which used to take place on archetypal spaces as the venetian campo and the caravanserai. Understanding the surrounding architecture and the architectural elements on the public space that enable the intermediate space of the Venetian campo is important in the translation to the interior and addressing the adjacent exterior space of the Nieuwe Doelenstraat.

Additionally, the Pioneer Health Centre learns how the active use of social groups can stimulate social interaction and communal activities. Thereby, the spatiality of Genlemens Club architecture and the relations and atmosphere it bolters, is an imperative notion in constructing the interior and the relations between different interior spaces and their functions.



The Viennese café tradition displays an institution of sociality, with to some extent political influence. The essence of the social model of the Viennese cafe is the reciprocal proximity of individuals, fundamental in creating ones identity and that of pluralist communities. ↑

*Even the German tradition of Stammtisch can contribute in the creation of the social practice envisioned for the hotel. The ‘Stammtisch’ provided a large table for informal get-togethers, stimulating activities as socio-political and philosophical discourse, card playing and socialising.*

*The link between these exemplary models is the fact that they serve as a social framework model. An prominent ambition for the design of the City Hotel.*

## METHODOLOGICAL POSITIONING

*To order the mind and the complex process of design thinking a visualisation will aid the clarification of methods. Yet, this diagram must be comprehended as a dynamic and ever-evolving process, as the design process is a non-static and non-linear process in which thinking and design is accelerated by various matters, which come and go throughout the complete dynamic process of design.*

*However, the diagram is framing the essence of the project and its imperative elements, imagining a constantly evolving and adapting framework as the process of the design unfolds. This diagram allows the mind to order, value, organize and touch upon the thinking of the design process.*

*Through visualising my thoughts mind entangled with the notion of the City Hotel, the relation between the design process and the research clarifies.*

*In order for the City Hotel to succeed, the embedding in the historical, social and architectural context is fundamental. Therefore, appropriate research and design methods will be outlined;*

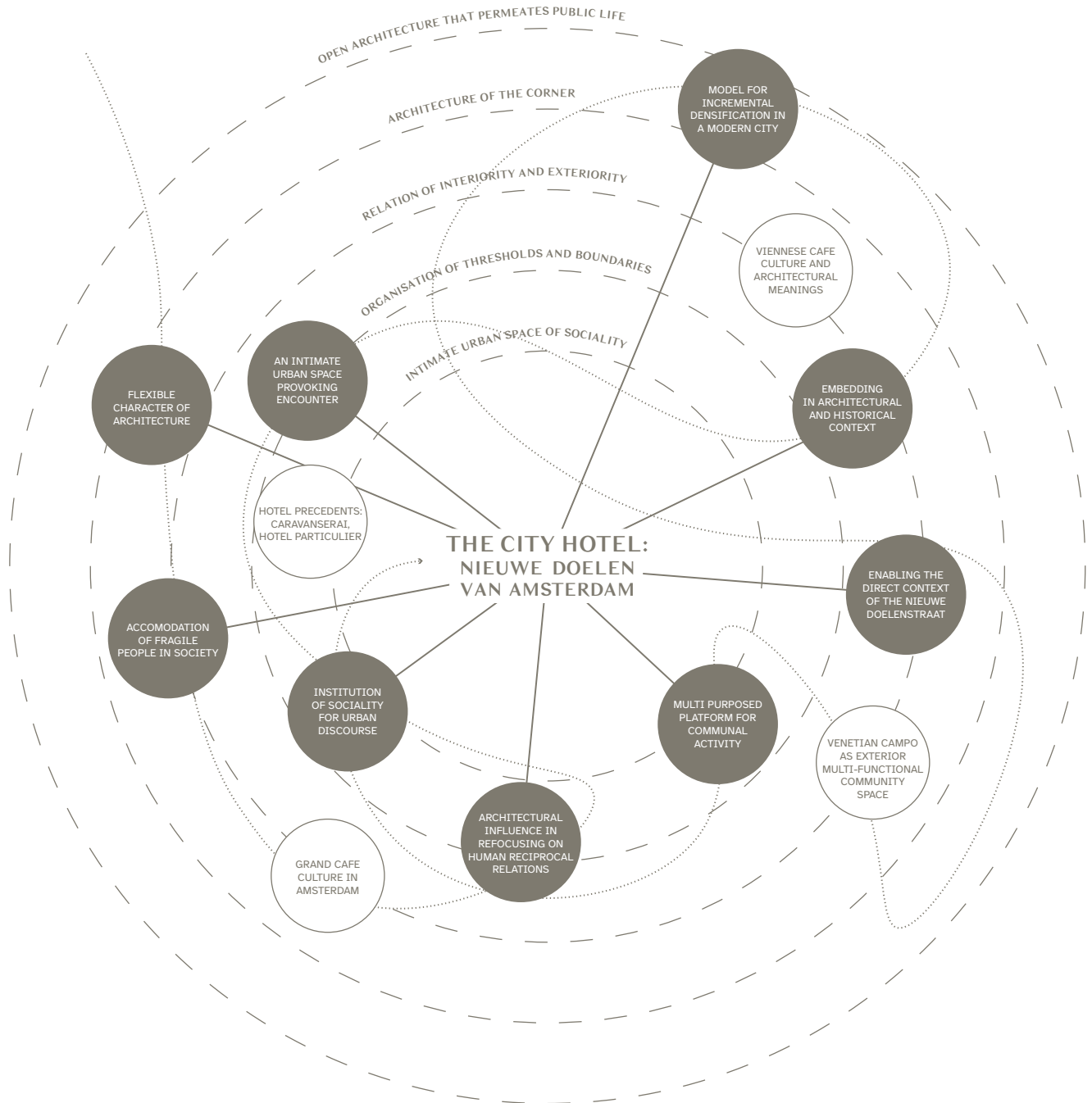
*Firstly, research into the history community, materiality, (prior) function of the context - by archival research - will prompt an appropriate design proposal.*

*Secondly, precedent research of relating architectural models as will be outlined in the theoretical framework, comparing their section, floorplans, thresholds and fundamental architectural elements. Research into social traditions and customs through readings and possibly interviews. A prominent source in this research will be the books of Amsterdam and Hotel models.*

*Thirdly, inquiring and interviewing the institutions of Pakhuis de Zwijger and de Balie, will aid the creation of a social institution, more specifically on the development of a platform, as these actors are fundamental in the creation of a community platform for Amsterdam on cultural innovation and social integration.*

*Fourthly, the precise architectural analysis of the context, through modelling the space of the Nieuwe Doelenstraat at various scales. Moreover, massing studies put into context*







Pascal Flammer's House in Balsthal shows the materialisation, organisation and atmosphere to pursue in creating a City Hotel with a flexible character. In order for the City Hotel to adapt along the dynamic changes in society, to ensure longevivity of the City Hotel for Amsterdam. ↑

*will incite first design directions.*

*Additionally, drawing very accurately the façades of the direct context, recording their textures and materials, understanding their architecture, form and scale, will give a better comprehension of the site. This will aid the process in proposing a appropriate design.*

*Finally, in designing the City Hotel there is much to learn from precedents, models and architectural practices. Research into their practice, methods and atmosphere and ideology will aid the design. A selection of few architects and their ideologies that contribute to the theoretical framework is given hereafter. Yet, not refering to these precedents as fixed framework, allowing inspirations and ideologies to adjoin this frame of reference throughout the design process.*

*For instance, the work of Pascal Flammer. On defining interior space with a freedom of practical realisation. Merely defining the confines and the necessary elements, such as the bathroom, and some storage spaces on the outer confines.*

*The project of Madrid Centro Centro by Hector Fernandez Elorza. On creating flexibility of space and the elements that define and enable its use in various ways and activities.*

*The ideologies of Richard Sennett, Jaap Bakema on an open society and how the role of the city and the human relations that enfold within in.*

*The readings of Mark Pimlott and Elke Krasny of the aesthetics and characteristics of the public interior.*

*David Chipperfield's gallery am Krupferhaben on the architecture of the corner, and how to response on historical architecture.*

*The work of Go Hasegawa on the relation of interiority and exteriority. The organisation of thresholds and boundaries. And his ideas on the use of space and architectural structures*

*The reading of O.F. Bollnow of the characteristics and elements of human space. How to use and organize architectural elements in creating interior relations.*

## DESIGN ASPIRATIONS

“Constitute a public practice beyond the scale of the local, while acknowledging the specific local conditions”

- *Elke Krasny, Divided we Share: On Ethics and Politics of Public Space*

*The focus for the reimagining of the City Hotel is the extension of the public interior. Addressing the public realm with an urban function aiming to aid the local, social sustainability in Amsterdam. Providing space for local initiatives and facilitating key activities for the community on the path to social and ecological balance.*

*Thereby, revising the social frameworks of the Caravanseraï, Venetian Campo, Viennese cafe, Hotel Particulier - its architectural elements and reciprocal relations - to its contemporary successor; an urban common ground which constitutes a prominent character in the shift towards social, cultural and ecological balance in the city. The City Hotel - to me - is a open public space in service to the city, its inhabitants and visitors, permeating social life and its encompassing relations throughout the design; a host for residence, leisure and activity. The City Hotel needs to be a flexible character to in order to remain in service to the city, as the dynamics of the city are so rapidly evolving.*

*Additionally, the City Hotel must embody into a project that enables the direct context of*

*the Nieuwe Doelenstraat. Therefore, it must resonate the memorabilia of historic and contemporary Amsterdam, in creating a host of urban events.*

*The historical architectural language of the site has a particular grandeur to it. The strict façade grid, the ornamented entrances, the materialization and the general architecture constitute a monumental sensibility. In order to fit the context, the architecture of the City Hotel must articulate this historical intention, yet it must be responsive to the receptivity that it must radiate in order to act as hospitable as possible to all people of Amsterdam.*

*In essence, the City Hotel must embody an intimate, yet open urban space settled in the existing fabric of the city, provoking informal, physical encounters in the sharing of experiences, knowledge, cultures. Aiming to enable the plinths and functions present in the direct context of the hotel. Thereby, the project must serve as a catalyst for the neighbourhood and the city of Amsterdam. Serving as an exemplar to the city on changes to be made, focusing on creating a more*



A model of the context of where the project of the City Hotel will be embedded. The architecture of the Nieuwe Doelenstraat exists with a particular grandeur to it. The City Hotel must appropriately respond to the history and architecture and enable the context for citizens of Amsterdam. ↑

*liveable city for all, and moving towards an equilibrium of social, economical, political and ecological sustainability.*

*The City Hotel will focus on the accomodation of fragile people who will be aided by accomodation in a social institution as is envisioned for the hotel. Temporarily accommodating people who fall through the cracks of the societal system, who are not being heard or neglected by official authorities. Instances, which I currently know from, that are highly in need of such accomodation; a Dutch single mom unable to work because she is still recovering from her disease process, yet authorities do not deem her unable for labour, therefore financial support is prevented. Or a Syrian refugee family tortured by their neighbours, while authorities as the police and the housing association do not acknowledge their situation.*

*In other words; people who will be aided by the accomodation in a hospitable and safe environment like this, who are willing to share their stories, on the platform that is provided in the hotel. Hopefully, catalyzing*

*action from municipality or other authorities in assigning a permanent affordable and safe accomodation.*

*However, because of the every changing dynamics of the city and the servicing character of the City Hotel to the city, the design of accommodation should not be fixed on specific social groups or communities, in order to keep accommodating people in need. Now it should host the fragile people as described, but in ten years it could be social living, in twenty years it could be the accomodation of conferential intellectuals sharing their knowledge in the city.*

## DESIGN QUESTIONS

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*How can the qualities of hosting, uniting, enabling abilities of spaces such as the Venetian Campo, the Caravanserai courtyard the Pioneer Health Centre be translated to the interior of the City Hotel?*

*How did the course of history influence the local architecture of the Nieuwe Doelenstraat?*

*What kind of architectural intervention - concerning massing, form and materialization - does this history impose?*

*How to create the flexible / adaptable character, so that the City Hotel can evolve along to the dynamics of Amsterdam?*

*Which functions constitute to the influential notion that is envisioned for the City Hotel to be beneficial for the direct context and the whole city of Amsterdam?*

*How is the architecture of the corner created in order to enable the context in which it is situated?*

*What is the relation of interiority and exteriority? How are these relations designed*

*by the creation, addressing and organisation of architectural massing, boundaries, thresholds?*

*How to address the street / public context in creation of thresholds and boundaries?*

*How to organise (the sequence of) the entrance, reception, public space, transition to (semi-)private space?*

*How can the contemporary reciprocal social precept of society be changed in the space of the city hotel? How does architecture support moving away from individualisation and stimulates open, hospitable, communal human relations?*

*How is an open urban platform created for a wide range of activities focused on socio-cultural and political discourse? How does this constitute to the intended reciprocal relations in the design?*

*How is a multi-purposed building designed? How is interior flexibility with a comfortable atmosphere organised in order to remain in service to the city?*

## ARCHITECTURAL RELEVANCE

*The project contributes to the field of architecture by inquiring and designing urban buildings – in this sense stretching beyond their literal confines in their meaning, function and importance to the city – and how these projects can catalyse an urban balance and the movement towards the safe space of the Doughnut Model as outlined by Kate Raworth.*

*Moreover, this project will be exemplar in the urban question of global urban densification and the incremental influence of globalisation, to counteract on the diminishing of local communities and cultures, while at the same time being hospitable to all cultures, ideas and traditions.*

*Although the project of the city hotel explores solutions in catalysing the movement towards the safe space of the Doughnut Economy model, the project is unlikely to solve this large range of problematics at once. However, a project like the City Hotel in Amsterdam is amenable in setting the first step towards the safe space of the Doughnut Model, taking into account the ecological ceiling, but foremost focusing on the provision of social foundations, as outlined by Kate Raworth.*

*Personally, I think architecture can truly contribute – as it is an essential tool for the adaptation of society which must be utilized – in beneficial changes of society on a small, local scale. Yet, architecture is not a wondrous agent which is able to solve societal problematics of highest intricacy. Therefore the architecture created focuses on local relations in the direct context, whilst addressing issues at the scale of Amsterdam. Therefore I must be critical to the aspects that enable the design to be more stratified. Creating a design that is sensible to its context and feels like a natural extension of the place.*

*In line with this ideology the intention of the project is to create feasible architecture with integrity and modesty, yet effective and imperative in its core, resembling a realistic architectural design which I pursue to practice, following my graduation project.*

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