

Research Plan

Xuandi He
5098610

Introduction

As the city expands, more and more people live in Amsterdam. The history of urban development is closely related to residents' living environment. The composition of residents has changed over the centuries, but the balance of human well-being and ecological environment has become increasingly important. In order to investigate for strategies, I studied the city planning history of Amsterdam and the specific model of the residential hotel. These studies can help me better understand the evolution of people's living environment in Amsterdam and explore new directions for people's lifestyle in the future.

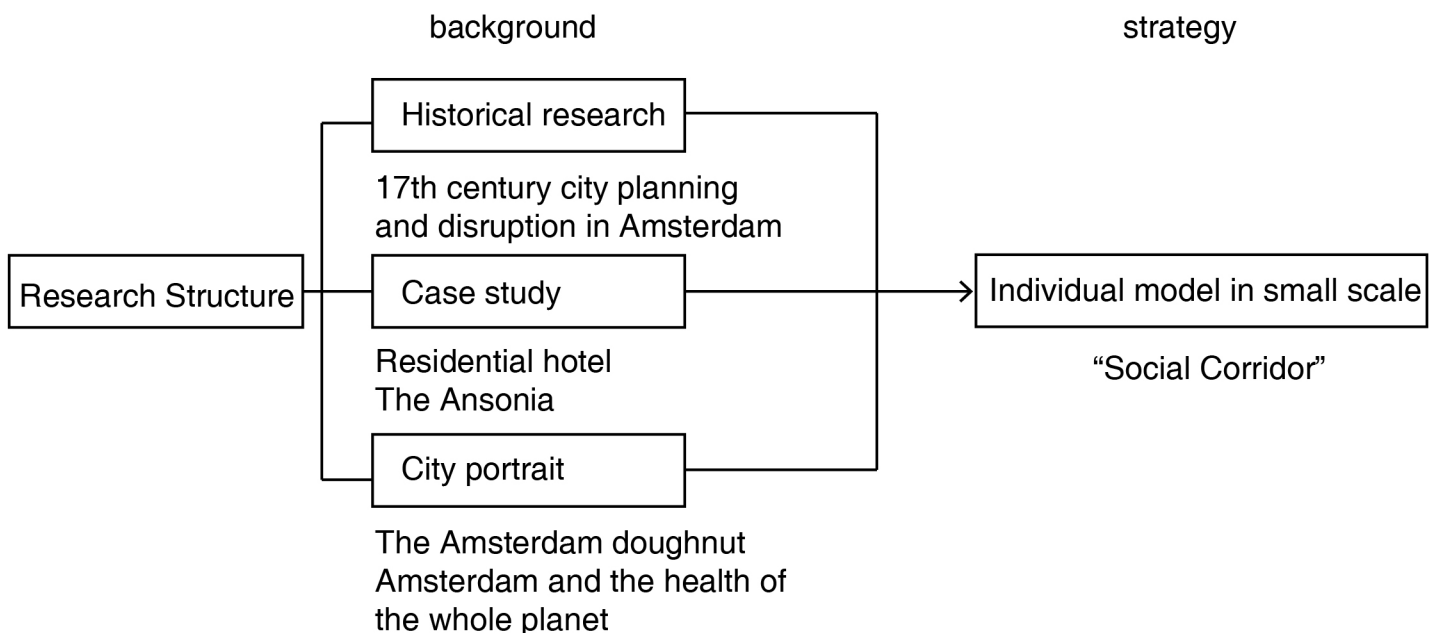
What impressed me the most was the hofje. According to existing research results, hofjes can represent a typical way of collective living in Amsterdam¹. But how this collective lifestyle will exist in the future still needs to be discussed. Combined with the concept about the balance between people's lifestyle and ecological environment from doughnut economics², I designed a model to create a new social space on the facade. From the site analysis about the Driehoekstraat in Jordaan, I can determine the groups to serve in my project and the designing aims.

Problem Statement

The start point is that in the healthy crisis period, due to more unemployment and fewer employment opportunities, low-income groups may have problems to buy more non-necessities of life, such as books, toys, plants, decorations and so on. In fact, many of these items only can be used for a short time, then they will going to be waste. And at the same time, people's outdoor activities are limited a lot while there is less communication between neighbors.

Barter is a good activity on the one hand it can help people who need these things, on the other hand it can help reduce waste. The traditional barter is only the exchange of commodities, which is prevalent in low-income groups. And it also has some social significance. The future barter not only exists on the material level, but also can be exchanged for what one needs by spending time and experience. This reciprocal manner means that people can share their unneeded items or abilities to others. I consider it can allow people to establish stronger community connections while reducing waste of resources.

Diagram.1 Research structure



Research question

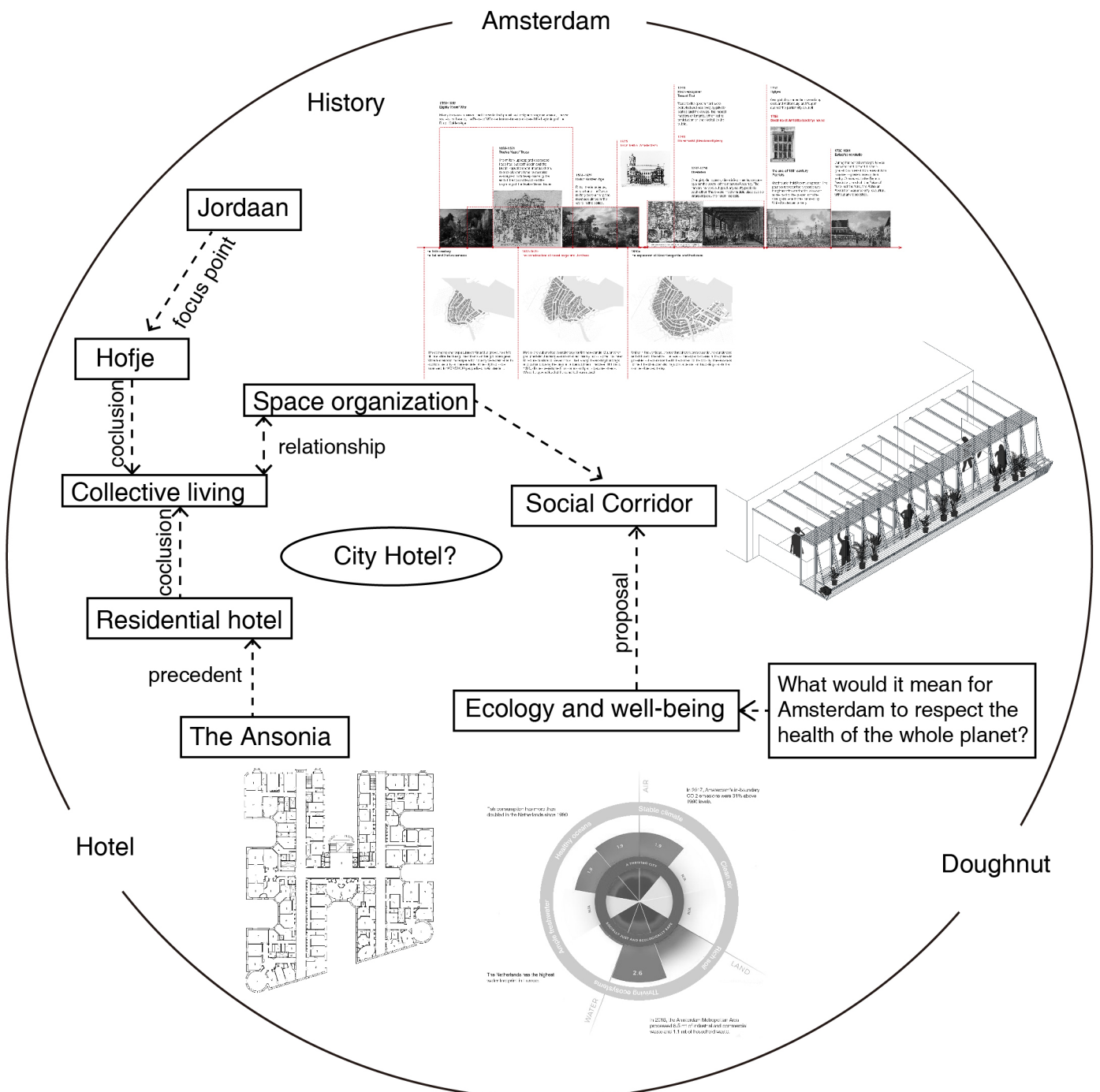
For users

- Who does the hotel serve for?
- How will the users live in the hotel?
- What kind of activities will users do in the hotel?
- What kind of space is for sharing items and time?
- What can the hotel offer to users?

For architecture

- How to connect the hotel with the context?
- How to deal with the relationship between public space and private space?
- What can be done with the facade of the hotel?
- How to create a space for public activities on facades?
- How to shape a garden through facade?

Diagram.2 Research mind mapping



Methodology

The research combines the thoughts of doughnut economics, starting from the research of Amsterdam's city planning and hotel models. On the basis of historical and theoretical research, I propose solutions to specific aspects of Amsterdam.

My historical research focused on the relationship between the living habits of the people in Amsterdam in the 17th century, the form of houses and the development of the city, which provided a basis for my selection of the site.

My case study is the Ansonia in Manhattan. By analyzing the threshold of internal public and private spaces and the behaviors of different users, comparing the similarities and differences of other hotel types in different periods, to study the relationship between space organization and people's living behavior and find what space is suitable for the future social events.

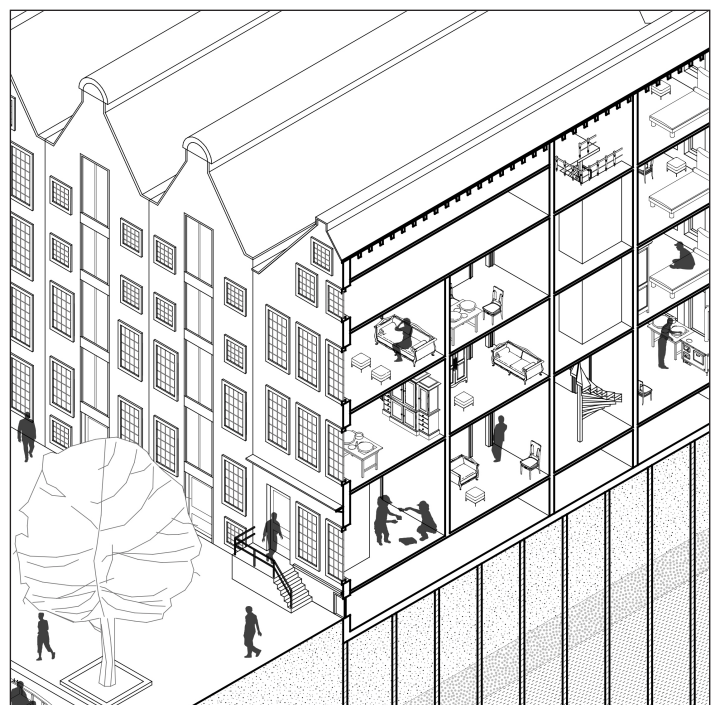
After reading the Doughnut Economics, I pay attention to the well-being of citizens and the environment. I will focus on the local scale of Amsterdam to solve existing problems from the perspective of an architect.

Literature research

Amsterdam in the 17th century

Jordaan, symbolizing an area that provides moderate living space for the middle and low classes, was part of Amsterdam's expansion in the 17th century. It is located on the west side of the city, just outside the grachtengordel designed for the elite group. This canal belt and other parts of the inner city represented the economic and administrative center of Amsterdam.³ In contrast, Jordaan can be seen as the representative of residents' daily life. At that time Jordaan was a combination of residential area and industry and commerce. The narrow alleys of Jordaan are composed of medium-scale buildings with similar characteristics including openings, roofs and staircase features, which led to form inner courtyard. The various building types were arranged together by small businesses, houses, beer houses, and warehouses.⁴ The architectural elements had the architectural style of that period, such as large windows on the first floor, wooden shutters or wooden stairs leading to the entrance. From the house plan in Jordaan in the 17th century, it can be seen that the first floor of the house is a space for working or business, closely connected with street activities. Residents in Jordaan are known to some extent for their street life with a long history. In these street life, they often sat in front of the window, look at the street below, and chat with their neighbors in the opposite window.⁵

Diagram.3 Lifestyle in the 17th century in Amsterdam



Case study

The Ansonia hotel

From the 20th century, cities in America like New York City were full of apartment buildings with no kitchens.⁶ More like hotels than traditional residences, these apartments were supplied with domestic services. At that time, both housing and collective life were understood as tools for social transformation. Residential hotel can usually provide complete and well-equipped apartment units for users.⁷ The residents lived in such luxurious apartments with multiple rooms that were often round or oval. Ansonia provides abundant opportunities for social activities and provides equal privacy protection measures.⁸ It has all the conveniences and advantages as well as attributes that people like to associate with home. In standard floor, the corridor is the only public space connecting all the apartment units. The social activities of residents do not take place in the corridors, but in the semi-public spaces of each apartment unit such as the dining room and living room. The boundary between public and private spaces in this residential hotel is very clear. It is a more complicated place related to the residents' social identity and lifestyle and it can also play a role in the city context.

Modeling

Social corridor

The site is an apartment building for international students. As students renting apartment, we cannot live in one building for a very long time, and in most time we want to save some money because most of us cannot earn much money. But the fact is that in graduation season, when students have to move out, they can only take part of things with them. Even in the middle of education semester, students may have some textbooks, model materials or stationaries they don't need anymore. In addition, during the pandemic period, we cannot have parties in our kitchens, so the balcony becomes an instead place for social.

Therefore, I create a constructure that avoids waste and promotes sharing in a community between neighbors. I think this kind of space can be seen as a gallery, which can be used for people's circulation, exhibition, market, communication and other activities. The balcony in my project becomes an in-between space to connect individual space in the building and the external corridor. So people can use their balconies as the social space. They can exchange the items or share their life in own balcony (private space), while people can barter, communicate, enjoy exhibitions in the exterior corridor.

Diagram.4 Space organization in the Ansonia

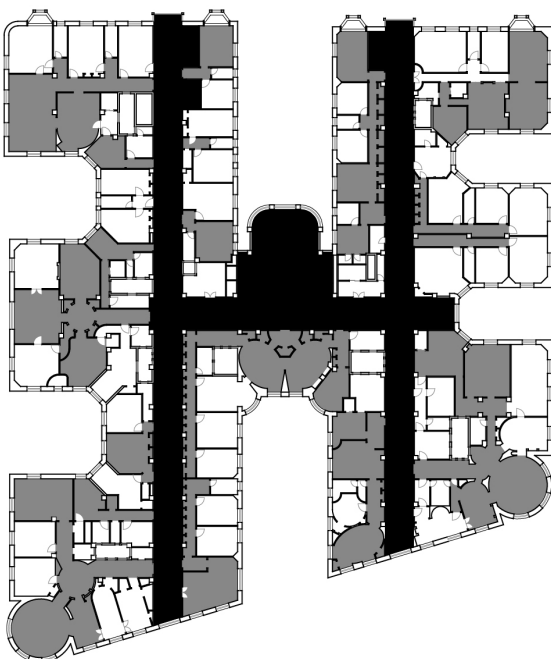
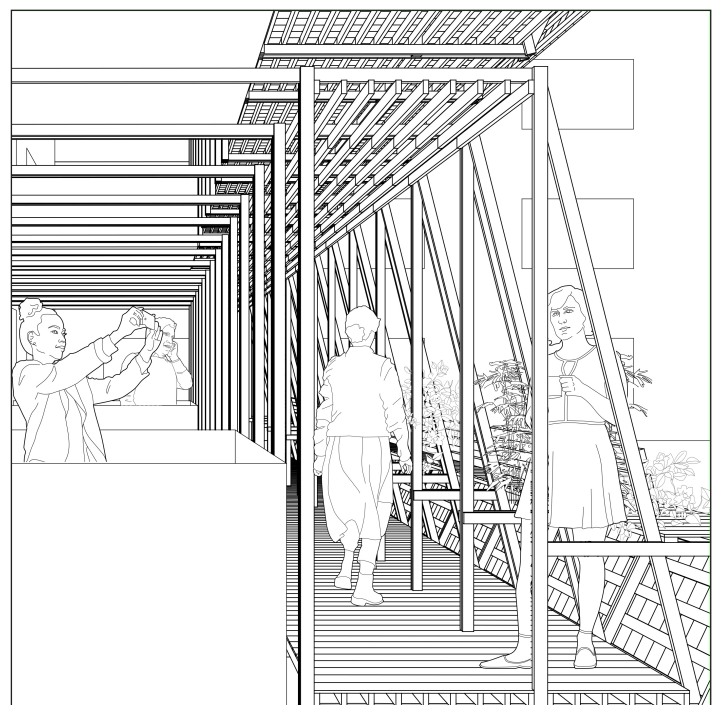


Diagram.5 Social corridor in an residential building



Site analysis

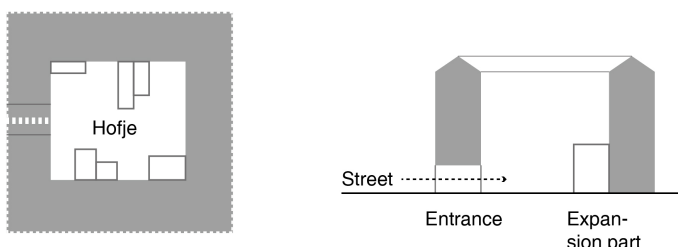
From the previous research on Amsterdam city planning, the population structure and building types are closely related to social activities around the neighborhood in Jordaan. After the development in Jordaan from the 17th century, the current population composition and some buildings have changed. The residents in Jordaan have undergone a transition from working class to a higher class, and the original inhabitants have moved to other districts in Amsterdam or to other cities.⁹

The Driehoekstraat, located on the northernmost edge of Jordaan with a special triangular shape, is a very residential area. Many historical characters are preserved well here, including streets, most buildings and courtyards. There are several hofjes in the neighborhood built centuries ago not for public or visitors. However, in summer, there are free concerts in some courtyards. The young community with strong artistic atmosphere here attracts more groups of artists, students and young professionals.¹⁰

Diagram.6 The Driehoekstraat



Diagram.7 The space sequence of hofje



Reflection and relevance

In the past few decades, Jordaan has been no longer a symbol of the poor, and people's quality of life has improved a lot. But with the development of cities, people began to pay attention to the problems of the ecological environment and disadvantaged groups. In future hotels, residential concepts such as collective lifestyles are becoming more and more important. The hotel is not only providing a place for living, but also an epitome of the city. The environment will have a positive impact on residents through various ways. If a harmonious relationship can be established among different groups while ecological environment can be considered, it is the specific aim of my design through architecture.

I want to create a hotel for young people, which are students or other low-income groups. The hotel can be considered as the center of the community and can strengthen the relationship in this neighborhood. I focus on the function of facades in my project. On the one hand, the external traffic on the facade can be a place for people to interact and communicate. On the other hand, the facade can be a site for building a garden. In this hotel, guests can earn their accommodation fee by exchanging items with residents or sharing time to help those who need help. Such hotels can provide low-income disadvantaged groups a shelter and also pay attention to the ecological environment, reducing waste and adding plants.

Bibliographical references

1. Wilms Floet, W. W. L. M. (2014). Het hofje 1400 - 2000. TU Delft.
2. Raworth, K. (2017). Doughnut Economics Seven ways to think like a 21st-century economist. Random House.
3. Kleijn, K., Zoest, R. van, & Kurpershoek, E. (2013). The canals of amsterdam: 400 years of building, living and working. Thoth.
4. Feddes, F., & Mader, D. H. (2012). A millennium of amsterdam: spatial history of a marvellous city. Thoth.
5. Abrahamse, J. E. (2010). De grote uitleg van Amsterdam. Thoth.
6. Puigjaner, A. (2014). Bootleg Hotels. SQM: the Quantified Home, 32-38. Lars Müller.
7. Gaines, S. (2005). The Ups and Downs of The Ansonia, The Building That Made the Upper West Side. New York Magazine.
8. Puigjaner, A. (2017) The City as a Hotel. Together, 65–71. Ruby Press.
9. Dienst Publieke Werken. (1972). Bestemmingsplan jordan.