

The winner takes it all! Introduction

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The neighborhood Bressoux felt at first as a deserted place. It gave the impression that only people live here because of financial necessity. The people with better jobs move away, the ones left behind seem forgotten and neglected (fig. 1 & 2). "The winner takes it all!" is the attitude of our economy (Brugmans, 2016, p.6). What is left for the 'rest'? Are they the ones hidden behind the facades of Bressoux? The neighborhood has a high rate of unemployment and the poverty is clearly visible. They don't seem to be the 'winners' at all. What will their future perspective be?

We have pushed away the 'production' out of the city. The Manufacturing Economy will focus on bringing this back into the city. This will lead to more (low-skilled) production jobs and craftsmanship, which can empower the financial and social position of the city and its inhabitants (Brugmans, 2016, p.25). For this, spaces for production activities in the city have to be created. Which will lead to the transformation of cities into Productive Cities. This will bring back an economy that adds value locally and is circular and socially inclusive. The high rates of unemployment, the urban voids, its industrial history and the currently present mix of small scale industry and dwelling, makes the idea of a Productive City, suitable for Bressoux: a Productive Neighborhood. So the question is how production spaces can be created within Bressoux.

Production:
Producing or able to produce large amounts of goods, crops, or other commodities.

Productive City:
A city where working and living is mixed, with the focus on a local and inclusive economy.



Fig. 1
Empty event displayer,
down-town Bressoux.
Own photo, 2022.



Fig. 2
Poppey, unemployed resi-
dent in front of his house.
Photo by H.J. Hunter, 2019.



Fig. 3
Re-use of window frames in
the allotment gardens.
Own photo, 2022.

It is necessary that creating more production spaces adds value for the current residents. That is why there should be a strong focus point on the re-appreciation of existing qualities and opportunities. By re-using existing physical, social and cultural elements the neighborhood can overcome the danger of gentrification (fig. 3).

Furthermore, the productive space should be embedded in and empower the public domain. A successful public domain invites exchange between different social groups and therefore improves social cohesion (Hajer, 2016, p.18). This means it needs to be embedded in the physical urban-landscape as well as in the cultural meanings stored in this urban-landscape. (Hajer & Reijndorp, 2001, p.36)

Re-use:
The action of using something again.

Public domain:
We define public domain as places where an exchange between different social groups can take place and actual takes place.

Bread? Research question

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We can state that production spaces have to be created based upon the re-appreciation of the existing, and have to become a meaningful part of the public domain. In order to achieve this we need to know the existing physical, social and cultural elements and meanings of the urban-landscape of Bressoux. What is a common ground that can be used to analyze all those layers?

I believe it is food. And to be more specific: bread. Bread is used in every cuisine of every culture. It is used in many kitchens of many homes, up to even 14.000 years ago and sometimes has religious meanings. It travels through many types of economic activity: from the agricultural landscape (fig. 5), to flour mills, large factories or the hands of a baker and into stores. The way bread is produced unravels different typologies of food production spaces and tells a story of materiality. And it can be used as a medium to explore the different food cultures. Therefore the research will focus on food production spaces with bread as the main medium:

How can food production spaces be created, with the re-appreciation of the existing, and become a meaningful part of the public domain?

*Common ground:
Opinions or interests
shared by each of
two or more parties.*

*Bread:
Food made of flour,
water, and yeast
mixed together and
baked.*

Main question



Fig. 4
Dumped bread next to the church in Droixhe.
Own photo, 2022.



Fig. 5
The Harvesters by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.
Belgium, 1565.

The logbook Methodology

In order to answer the main question, there are two sub-questions formulated. The first one is: *Which cultural meanings are stored in the process of making & eating bread?* This question will explore the social and cultural meanings embedded in Bressoux and the qualities and opportunities lying within.

Sub-question 1.0

1.1: The history of making & eating bread.

There will be a concise time-line formed of the history of bread. It is important to research this within the Belgium culture, but also within other cultures that are present in Bressoux.

1.1

Input: Desk research
Output: Concise
time-line of bread

1.2: The contemporary food culture in Bressoux.

Exploring the different food cultures of Bressoux, will give an inside how the different cultures live in the neighborhood. How their everyday life looks like, how the public domain is shaped and which qualities and opportunities lie within. Rotterdam West will be used as a case-study, because it is easier accessible and very comparable to Bressoux. They are both multicultural neighborhoods where the food culture is clearly displayed on the street, see the similarities between the Rue du Moulin and the West-kruiskade.

1.2

Input: Observations & interviewing
Output: Micro-stories visualized in drawings, photographs and text

1.3: The flows and structures of the production of bread.

Researching the production of bread will give an understanding on the bigger scale of the flows of the process (manufacturing) and its materials as grain, flours and yeast. On a smaller scale it will discover the baking techniques (home made).

1.3

Input: Desk research, interview & baking
Output: Mapping of the process & overview of recipes

The second sub-question is: *Which functional-spatial typology is suitable for a food production space within Bressoux?* This question will explore the more physical aspect of a food production space. It will give an overview of food production spaces of the past, the current production spaces in Bressoux and relevant case-studies. The focus point will be food and bread where possible, but sometimes a zoom out on production spaces in general is needed.

Sub-question 2.0

2.1: Analysis of (historical) typologies in bread production.

There will be a concise catalog built of types of production spaces the flows of grain, flour and bread touches on. This will give an overview of the typologies that are used for the production of bread and which qualities they may have that can be reused.

2.1

Input: Desk research
Output: Photographs & drawings in a concise catalog of (historical) typologies

2.2: Mapping the (potential) production spaces in Bressoux.

To analyze which physical and spatial qualities and opportunities there are in Bressoux in terms of production places, they have to be mapped and analyzed. A catalog of relevant typologies of production places within Bressoux will be made. This will give an overview of locations, typologies and existing production activities. Also the potential production places have to be mapped.

2.2

Input: Desk & field research & mapping
Output: Maps of (potential) production spaces & catalog of typologies

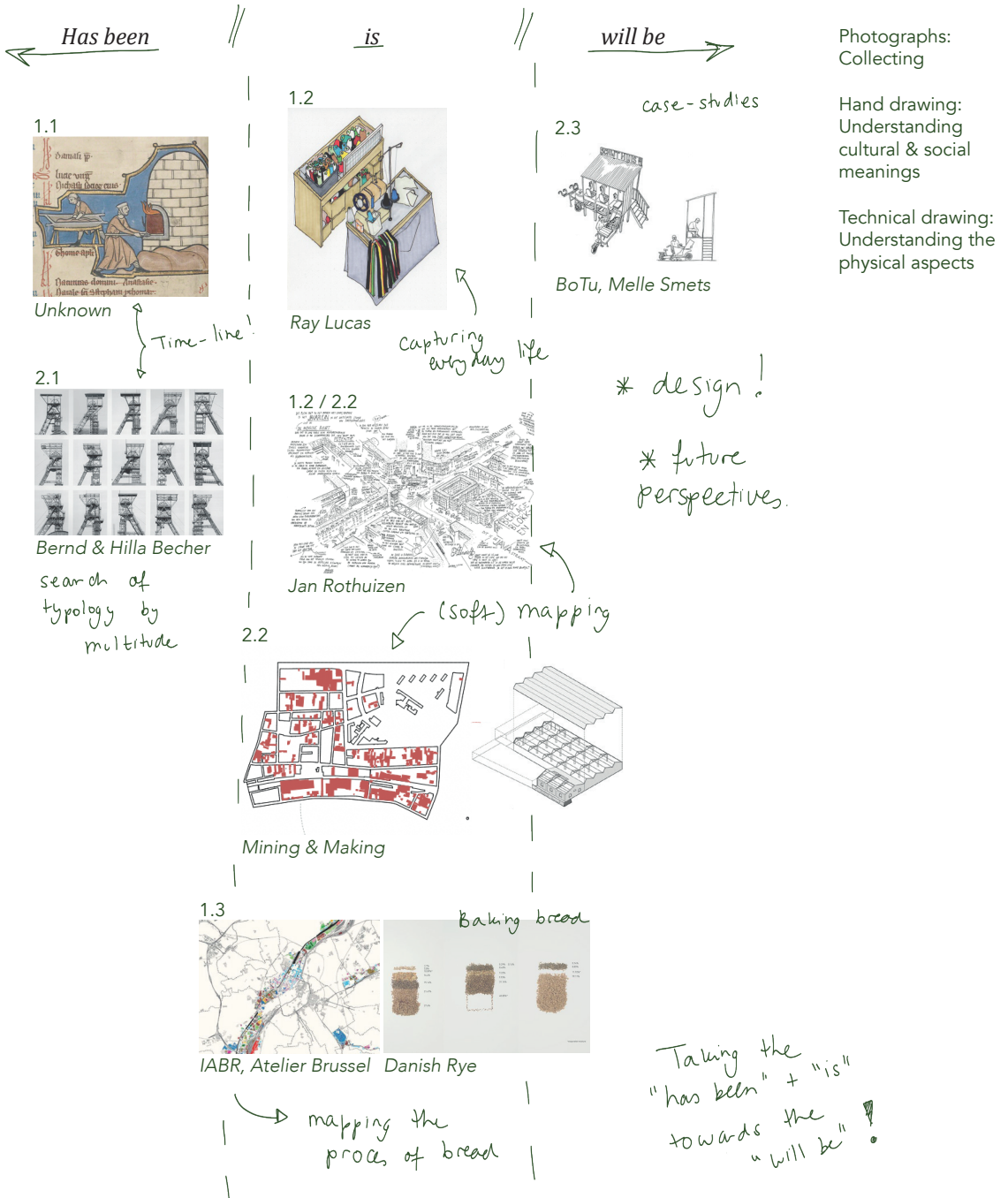
2.3: Analyzing case studies of (food-)production spaces.

To design a future production space (of bread) in Bressoux, it is good to analyze existing production spaces within existing productive cities. This will give an overview of typologies and their spatial and functional qualities. Which can form a base for further design choices. Possible case studies can be 'Veerkrachtig BoTu' which includes 'Bakkerij eenvoud', Parckfarm in Brussels or the 'Deel Fabriek' by TRANS architects in Kortrijk.

2.3

Input: Analyzing case-studies
Output: Overview of relevant qualities

The documentation of the research will be done mostly visual, by photographs, drawings and mapping. Therefore it makes more sense to bind it together in the form of a logbook. Divided into three time frames: has been, is, will be. 'Has been' contains all the historical stories, 'is' the current stories and 'will be' the future perspective and design. In the diagram below the main structure with reference of documentation is shown.



Reflection Why?

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The theme of 'productive city' is closely related with the group-research theme: Mining and Making. In this research the focus is on 'Unidentifiable Potentially Industrial Complex' (U.P.I.C.) and the re-use of materials (Mining & Making, 2022, p. 12). Multiple students of the studio will focus on 'productive city' and will work further on the results of mining and making. My research will bring a more specific view on the topic 'productive city' because it is focused on the food production spaces and will discover the cultural meanings by researching the food-cultures. This will bring an insight on the cultural meanings within Bressoux from a different angle and hopefully also a different type of production space within the range of production spaces we as student will design for Bressoux.

The topic is not only interesting for the discussions and further research and design steps in the studio, but it is also relevant for society in general. Focusing on food production may unfold different strategies for creating a productive city than those already known. Every city on earth can think from the angle of food production, since food is a primary need.

For me personally, I would like to make a design that respects all the layers of a neighborhood: from cultural to physical. By using bread a research medium, all those layers can be explored and the findings can be carefully used to make a design that is fully embedded.

Literature Reading list

Anthropology for Architects by Ray Lucas

Bread by William Rubel

City made by TRANS Architectuur

Culture, Architecture and design by Amos Rapoport

European 14 Productive Cities by Bernd Vlay, Iris Kaltenegger & Dorothee Huber

Everyday Matters: Contemporary Approaches to Architecture by Vanessa Grossman and Ciro Miguel

Opzoek Naar Nieuw Publiek Domein by Maarten Hajer & Arnold Reijndorp

Spatial Divisions of Labour by Doreen Massey

The Next Economy, IABR 2016 by George Brugmans, Jolanda van Dinteren, Maarten Hajer (ed.)

The Workhome by Frances Holliss

Bibliography & Terminology credits

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Productive city: own definition.

Re-use: Oxford languages.

Public Domain:
Hajer & Reijndorp,
2001, p.11

Common ground:
Oxford languages.

Bread: Oxford languages.

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Graduation plan Studio information

Studio name: Urban Architecture, Black Hill City
Main Mentor: Paul Vermeulen, Architecture
Second Mentor: Lex van Deudekom, Building Technology
Third Mentor: Eireen Schreurs, Research

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The decision to graduate within the Urban Architecture studio is based on several reasons. The first reason is the design approach, which takes the existing context as starting point. Not only the physical context but even more the social and cultural context. It is highly stimulated to design for the residents of the area and to formulate a program that has positive impact on the area and the everyday life of the people living or working within.

Secondly, the given location of the studio this year, the post-industrial neighborhood Bressoux in Liege, felt like a place with more than enough challenges and opportunities that could match my personal research interest and way of designing. The neighborhood has a lot of social-economic problems, interesting historical layers and consists of a urban landscape with many voids and abandoned buildings. However the most important reason was the right amount of freedom within the studio. The only given outline is the site. Everything else is open for personal interest and thoughts.

Graduation project Daily Bread

Location: Bressoux, Liege, Belgium

The neighborhood Bressoux felt at first as a deserted place. It gave the impression that only people live here because of financial necessity. The people with better jobs move away, the ones left behind seem forgotten and neglected. "The winner takes it all!" is the attitude of our economy (Brugmans, 2016, p.6). What is left for the 'others'? Are they the ones hidden behind the facades of Bressoux? The neighborhood has a high rate of unemployment and the poverty is clearly visible. They don't seem to be the 'winners' at all. What will their future perspective be?

*Problem:
The winner takes
it all?*

We have pushed away the 'production' out of the city. The concept of 'Productive City' focuses on bringing this back. This will lead to more production jobs and craftsmanship, which can empower the social and economic position of the city and its inhabitants (Brugmans, 2016, p.25). The high rates of unemployment, the urban voids, its industrial history and the current mix of small scale industry and dwelling, makes the idea of a Productive City, suitable for Bressoux: a Productive Neighborhood. How do we create a production space within a neighborhood that has a positive impact on the social-economic position of its residents?

*Research theme:
Daily Bread*

I believe that this can be done by creating a concept based upon the re-appreciation of the existing, which can become a meaningful part of the public domain. In order to achieve this we need to know

the existing physical, social and cultural elements and meanings of the urban-landscape of a neighborhood, in this case Bressoux. What is a common ground that can be used to analyze all those layers?

I believe it is food. And to be more specific: bread. Bread is used in every cuisine of every culture. It is used in many kitchens of many homes, up to even 14.000 years ago and sometimes even has religious meanings. It travels through many types of economic activity: from the agricultural landscape, to flour mills or factories, to the hands of a baker or supermarkets. The way bread is produced unravels different typologies of food production spaces and tells a story of materiality. And it can be used as a medium to explore the different food cultures. Therefore the research will follow the journey of bread through time, space and the everyday life: Daily bread.

The design assignment will answer the question of how a production space can be created in Bressoux. Daily bread as research theme guided the search for the type of production space towards a flour mill factory. By bringing back the production of an everyday used ingredient like flour into the neighborhood, people are more in charge and aware of the quality of their food. The milling will be done by stone instead of rollers, which keeps the minerals and vitamins in the flour. Themselves or the local bakeries can buy flour at the mill factory and make their own affordable healthy bread instead of relying on large industrial mill factories. The program of the flour mill factory will be combined with communal ovens, which are meant to support the process of baking your own bread. The side effect of the ovens is the warmth, which is used to heat up the space around the ovens which can be used as a warm living room for the neighborhood. The fact that people can buy their flour at the factory and use the communal ovens and living room will make it part of the public domain.

The program will also contain dwelling to keep the plot more alive during the evening and create a bigger supporting base around the communal ovens including a home for 'the stoker', the person in charge of the ovens. The site lays within a building block that is now mostly occupied by dwellings. On the site itself there are is a abandoned industry building which will be reused.

If the 'winner' takes it all and the question is what is left for the 'others'? Let's start with warmth and healthy bread.

Method description Travelogue

The topics with accompanying methods used for the research can be divided in different parts. They are all connected because it all follows the journey of bread, either through time, space or the everyday. The research forms a travelogue of bread.

Rotterdam will be used as case study for some parts of the research because of the language barrier in Bressoux. There will always be a reflection on how the stories of Rotterdam are related with Bressoux. The research exists of the following parts:

*Design assignment:
Flour mill, communal
ovens and dwelling*

Historical research: I did desk research on the history of bread and flour mills and factories, mostly based on the book 'Bread' by William Rubel. This travel trough time, gives an overview of the development of the meaning of bread in different cultures. The development of the techniques for milling flour and baking bread are a reflection of the social-economic development.

Time

Production flows: Here the production of bread will be followed, from grain towards the loaf. It started with desk research to get an understanding of this production flow in general. To understand the milling, I visited two mills in Rotterdam. The traditional windmill in Delfshaven and the Dossche Mill, which is a large scale mill factory. To understand the bakeries and bread market, I visited bakeries and supermarkets in Bressoux. Furthermore, I want to understand the production flow of flour and the typology of the mill factory in Belgium better by mapping and drawing them.

Space

Baking process: It is relevant to understand the baking process and to learn how baking and eating bread is embedded in the everyday life. I have started my own sourdough, the next step to be made is baking my own bread. I have interviewed Hannah Kleijne, an amateur baker, she explained me how she bakes bread and the meaning it has in her everyday life. I have also visited Bart Groenewegen at 'Bakkerij de Eenvoud' in Bospolder Tussendijken, who bakes bread in his self-built oven as social activity. Furthermore, I will interview Alsi Hatipoglu, an artist that did research on the meaning of baking bread and the fermentation process. To get a better understanding of the bread culture in Bressoux, I will visit Intissar, a 18 year old resident. She will tell me more about her food culture.

Everyday

Design: For the design the information learned about the milling and production process is very useful and will be further extended. The sizes and sequence of needed machinery and trucks is already investigated in order to design the needed volumes.

Design

In order to investigate the ovens and accompanying (local) materiality, an oven will be built in Rotterdam. Together with Dirk Jan Wooldrik, who already gathered local material, the process of building this oven will be documented. The materiality of the oven will be the starting point for the rest of the design.

Also Melle Smets, an artist who designs future perspectives based on human power for Bospolder Tussendijken, will be interviewed for inspiration to implement natural and human power systems in the design.

Reflection Why?

The theme of the studio, Black Hill City and the accompanying location of the studio, Bressoux a social-economic difficult neighborhood with-

in a post-industrial city, calls for a research on a new social-economic future. One future perspective can be the Productive City. My research will bring a more specific view on the topic 'productive city' because it is focused on the food production spaces and will discover the cultural meanings by researching the food-cultures. This will bring an insight from a different angle and therefore also a different type of production space within the range of production spaces we as student will design for Bressoux.

The topic is not only interesting for the discussions and further research and design steps in the studio, but it is also relevant for society in general. Focusing on food production may unfold different strategies for creating a productive city than those already known. Every city on earth can think from the angle of food production, since food is a primary need.

Sources Literature

Anthropology for Architects by Ray Lucas

Bread by William Rubel

Built your own Earth oven by Kiko Denzer and Hannah Field

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The Next Economy, IABR 2016 by George Brugmans, Jolanda van Dinteren, Maarten Hajer (ed.)

Reflection Graduation studio, Urban Architecture

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How do I want to experience this graduation year? That was the first question that arose at the beginning of the Urban Architecture graduation studio. The answer was simple: I want to enjoy it. Not just because “I want to have fun”, but because I truly believe that if you enjoy something, you put in time and effort. And time and effort will always, at some point, lead to growth.

*Primary need:
Joy & growth*

How do you make sure you will enjoy a full year? I think the basis is to be in a place where you are able to have the freedom to follow your own interests, with people around you that have the same mind-set and motivation. Mostly the people, the other students in this case, are important. Because you learn from each other while working, even working on individual projects. With choosing Urban Architecture as a graduation studio, I knew from previous students that freedom and a good group spirit will be possible in this specific studio. So now it was up to me to take this opportunity and follow my interest within the assignment of the studio.

For me the year, after a first visit to the site (Bressoux, Liege), started with a quote from the Architecture Biennial of Rotterdam: “This has overwhelmingly led to late-capitalist ‘winner takes it all’ societies of which rapidly growing inequality is striking”. And: “For a large group of people - the unemployed, migrants, refugees, youths, minorities - it is increasingly difficult to find them a place in the ‘winner-takes-all’ system in which everyone wants to be a winner, but only 1 percent is.” (George Brugmans, 2016, p.6). Bressoux felt as a place where people live who are definitely not the winners. So what is left for them? What will their future perspective be? That was the starting point for my personal research.

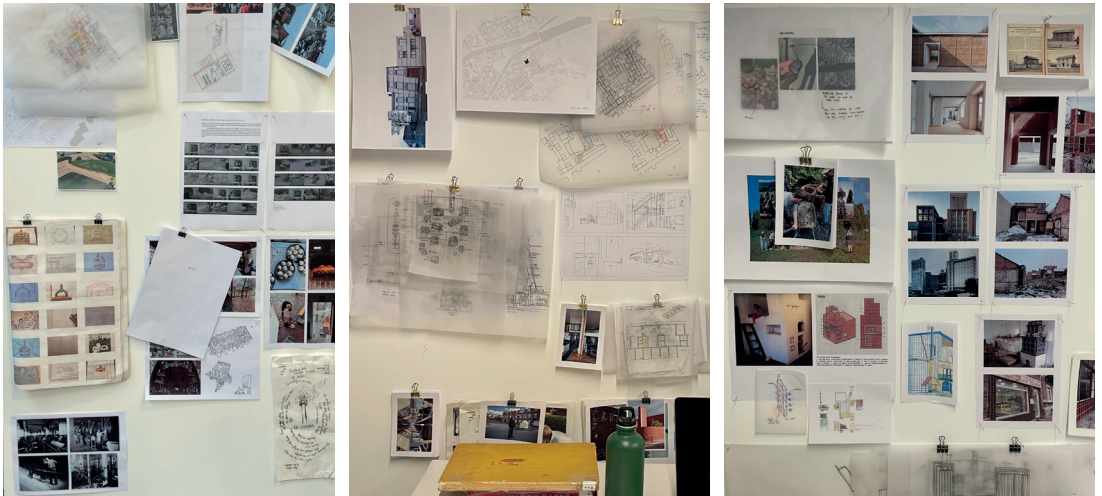
*Starting point:
The winner takes
it all?*

After the group research with the very abstract theme ‘connect & disconnect’, I desired for a more tangible research topic, which is understandable for everyone and forms a common ground for all the different groups of people within Bressoux. This resulted in the topic of ‘bread’. This straightforward topic formed a strong guideline which gave me the freedom to wander around. Besides, bread is an extremely easy topic to talk about and to connect with people. It wasn’t necessary to explain the whole graduation assignment, we just talked about bread, wheat or baking. Therefore, I could dive into a broad set of themes and places: history, production processes, people’s personal lives and neighborhood initiatives. From one of the biggest milling factories towards someone’s kitchen.

*The storyline begins:
Following bread!*

However, the method of following the story of bread, this basal thing, also felt daring at times. Where will it lead me? What will the results be and how am I going to communicate those results?

Because of this difficulty and uncertainty, I fell into my natural and comfortable behavior: organizing. I thought I had to organize the research into a clear structure: time-line, process line or categories. It took some time to digest that the message lying within the research would be killed by too much organizing. The storyline itself, and me picking out bits of information and hanging it on a board in the studio, was already a form of organizing. This was a method that came along by accident, but the board turned out to be an important medium throughout the year.



The board, as a way of communicating, prioritizing and organizing.

Another fear, when I dove into the story of bread, was the connection towards architecture. Will this method of following this basal thing lead to anything fruitful for the design?

One clear connection towards the design is the program I formulated, which I could infer directly from the research: a stone-mill together with a communal wood-fire oven. This makes it possible for people to make affordable and healthy bread and it offers a new (warm) public space for the neighborhood. I decided to also add housing to the program, to make a better connection between daily life and the production of our staple food.

By connection the research and the design with the program, I felt that the research and the design could be furthermore two separated tracks. I did realize that the research could be a source for architectural decisions, but somehow it didn't

*The storyline continuous:
Moving towards
architecture!*

fall in place. I was focused on the housing, with many modern (co-) housing projects from our excursion to Zurich in mind, which architecture does not match or empower the storyline.

So the question 'which role does housing play in the storyline of bread' arose? It took me some time to figure this out. The housing felt random at first. I realized that the power of the theme bread lies in the simplicity and the fact that it forms the base of one of our primary needs: food. What is the base of housing? One of our other primary needs: warmth. 'Warmth' forms the link between the story of bread, which ends up in the oven that as a side effect warms up the space, and housing, which has to fulfill our need for warmth.

*Primary needs: food
& warmth*

Here the connection between the research and the architecture for the housing became more clear. The warmth system is the heart of the housing, in the form of a more simple and visible system: the tile stove. Which comes in many forms and with strong characteristics. It involves a specific material culture of brick and colorful tiles, because of the necessary thermal mass and its position in the middle of the house.

However, taking this into the design, was at first in conflict with the ambition to use as many bio-based materials as possible. I dived into research about bio-based materials and how to use them, not realizing I was creating too many restrictions and a conflict with my story. A wood-fired oven is also built out of clay that needs to be heated to get its strength, just like brick. While forming the building construction, the use of bio-based and non bio-based materials ended up in a compromise. Using wood and straw, bio-based materials, as insulation and load bearing structure and bricks and tiles, non bio-based material, as the finishing layer. This choice in materials also corresponds with the storyline: the straw is the leftover material of the grain harvest and the bricks and tiles refer to the fire-wood oven and tile stoves.

After a phase with more focus on design, I came back to all my research materials to reflect on it. I realized that the storyline began with bread, but turned out to be more a story about basic needs and how we handle them in society today. The need for food and warmth. How the production of food and warmth are estranged from us by technological development and in the hands of a few big companies. Where people are part of the 1 percent of the winners and are trying to stay one of the winners. Even if it is at the expense of all those other people.

Besides, I discovered that loneliness and the fight against it was a theme that showed up in every interview or

visit. The activity of baking bread and using fire-wood ovens is often used for bringing people together. By creating an activity around the primary needs and common ground of food and warmth, another primary need is provided: community.

The design makes an attempt to form an alternative future perspective for the 'non-winners', closer to and more in power of the production of their own food and warmth. And maybe most important, closer to each other.

We go back from the primary needs of food, warmth and community to my own primary need for this graduation year: joy and growth. I have realized that the difference between the amount of joy I receive from the research and from the design, is remarkable. The research came very naturally and with a lot of enthusiasm, while the design felt more like a struggle and it took me more energy to enjoy it. But from hardship you learn and you grow. I have for example learned how to formulate a position from research and how to bring this into a design and how challenging this can be.

However, the largest form of growth I have experienced this year is discovering my intrinsic motivation. The themes of food, warmth and community, and how they are misused in our contemporary society and economics, highly motivate me. It gives me energy to discover stories and relations around these themes and what the influence of architecture is or could be. I would like to use this intrinsic motivation and make a positive impact for the 99 percent who are not the winners. After this year, I believe that my motivation will be more valuable within the field of research than as an architect.