

Interiors Buildings Cities
Graduation Project P4 Reflection
[City Hotel in Amsterdam]
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1. The relationship between research and design

The history of urban development is closely related to residents' living environment. To search for strategies, I researched the city planning history of Amsterdam and the specific model of the residential hotel. The research on the characteristics of the Amsterdam canal house and the hofje inspired my proposal of the city hotel. Both the spatial sequence and the operation mode will refer to the traditional hofje. The hotel can be considered as a part of the Raepenhofje and can strengthen the relationship in this community. The research on the typology gave me a basic understanding of the hotel's space organization and operating model. Literature reading and interview cases gave me in-depth thinking about the broader social and environmental significance.

2. The relationship between project topic and the studio topic

The theme "Palace" is to consider a city hotel in Amsterdam to become a temporary collective shelter for the target group to gather and live. It represents the social structure, people's change, and cultural identity. Therefore, "Palace" is not the traditional high-ranking representative of political power, but a very important place for its position, form, and appearance in the city promote collective public life.

The uniqueness of a hotel as a public building is that its main function area is the guest room as a private living space. How to balance the threshold between public space and private space in the project, and to understand the behavior of individuals in the private and collective space in the hotel are both very important. A city hotel is a place where users can interact with surrounding citizens, where users can live and meet each other, and where residents can share and celebrate their lives equally. On the one hand, city hotels must respond to the city and have a positive impact on the surrounding environment. On the other hand, it must have humanistic care and point to the specific service position.

Although compared with the living environment of ordinary apartments, the shared facilities, space, and services in the hotel will bring residents a higher sense of community identity, the residents of traditional hotels have not formed a social network nor relevance with the surrounding existing residents. Therefore, to respond more to "City Hotel", I focused on the relationship between the behavior in the hotel and the surrounding existing environment, as well as the relationship between hotel users and the surrounding existing residents.

3. The research methodology

The entire research phase is divided into three phases, including the urban development history of Amsterdam, hotel typological precedents, and Doughnut Economics related research.

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. What impressed me the most in Amsterdam is the

hofje. According to existing research results, hofjes can represent a typical way of collective living in Amsterdam. But how this collective lifestyle will exist in the future still needs to be discussed.

My case study is the Ansonia Hotel in Manhattan to study the relationship between space organization and people's living behavior. After reading Doughnut Economics, I pay attention to the well-being of citizens and the environment. Then combined with my existing living environment and personal experience, I designed the "social balcony" model as a critical solution strategy. This model also lets me focus on the boundary among public space, semi-public space, and private space in a hotel.

4. The relationship between the graduation project and the wider social, professional and scientific framework

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. The site is located in the Jordaan, a young community with a strong artistic atmosphere here attracts more groups of artists, students, and young professionals. In the past, there were many industries of handicraft here. And now, there are still a variety of business functions on the ground floor in this district.

Many hofjes can be found in Jordaan. These small inner courtyards were founded for specific groups, such as women, servants and poor people, as a part of rich people's inheritance or charity. Therefore I want to create a hotel for young people, especially graduated students or artists. It not only can be the center of the residential neighborhood, but it can also attract young people from other regions to integrate into this community.

Like traditional hofjes in Amsterdam, my hotel can also be operated by charity organizations such as art foundation, aiming to provide high-quality studio space and related facilities for artists. The hotel rents out studios to artists and provides them with accommodation. Artists living in the hotel can get some scholarships through artistic creation and can use all related facilities in the hotel for one to two years free of charge. The hotel has an exhibition hall, a gallery and a canteen, and provides citizens with a series of free activities, such as artist-led seminars, art lectures, and exhibitions.

5. The issues and dilemmas

When I enter the design, I was told several times to consider how the hotel operates and how can my project not disturb the neighborhood's daily life. Therefore, the balance of private and public space in the project is an important issue. At first, the outdoor corridor is standing on the windows of the existing house, and a transparent canteen faces the existing private garden. These methods do not make sense to make the hotel more public. The hotel should make sure the existing citizens will not be disturbed.

Another dilemma is the site for the hotel is really small, about 800 square meters. Therefore every little area is important for me in the project. I considered the idea of courtyard and exterior corridor, then I made trade-offs. I try to make more free space as a working space for users, where they can create art, make simple food or take a nap. Also, in such a small space I should choose proper construction and materials. It is difficult for me to present detail by drawings because I did not think deep enough at first.