

South Korean Embassy

The embassy in a feeling as home

*KAWS; Kimpsons; Atmosphere; Migration of Atmosphere; Embassy; Korean Atmosphere; Chaewon Yoo*



Figure 1: Migration of Atmosphere Collage (Yoo, 2020)

ABSTRACT

Every space has its own atmosphere. This atmosphere consists of elements that stimulate a person’s various senses, and the person slowly feels the collection of these elements and recognizes them as the atmosphere of space. This study focuses on what elements make up this atmosphere (Figure 2), how they approach and influence people, and how they will be applied to create space. In addition, it raises the question of ‘Does the atmosphere remain the same when a particular atmosphere is moved to another place and recreated as it is?’. To address this, this project sets up a space and analyses the features by studying the elements that make up the atmosphere of that space (Figure 3). It then creates a new atmosphere by looking for a new place to place such elements. In this process, the space that had its own atmosphere, the place to newly deploy, and the appropriate program are determined (Figure 4). Therefore, based on an understanding of atmosphere, this article explores how the atmosphere affects the formation of space, What kind of building “migration of atmosphere” might be, and furthermore, how this atmosphere of new building makes relationship to the surrounding environment and how it affects society.

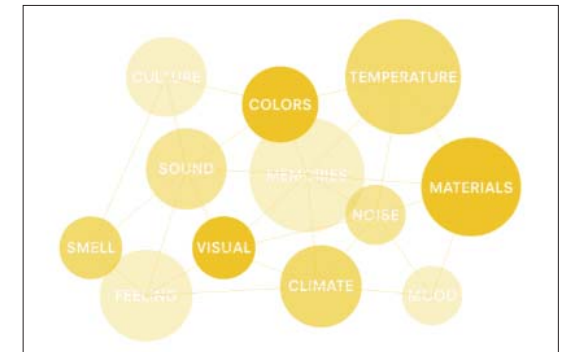


Figure 2: Elements of Atmosphere (Yoo, 2020)



Figure 3: A Diagram of Atmosphere (Yoo, 2021)

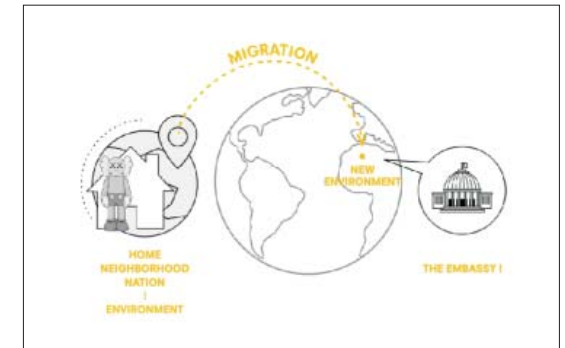


Figure 4: Migration of Atmosphere (Yoo, 2020)

## INTRODUCTION

When you hear the word “migration”, ordinary people think of human migration. The definition of “migration” at this time simply means that people move from one place to another with intentions of settling, permanently or temporarily, at a new location (geographic region). People may migrate as individuals, in family units or in large groups. However, the human migration in reality is not as simple as a dictionary definition. It is not just about people moving from one place to another, it’s about bringing its own atmosphere (food, culture, experience, memories, etc.) to another. This is a very interesting point. People don’t just move the area, they move their atmosphere together. Then it meets with the new atmosphere of the new area and create another atmosphere.

It’s as if “Companion (1999)” by KAWS walks into a Simpsons cartoon and turns “The Simpsons (1989)” into “The Kimpsons (2004)” - At this time, the characters in “The Kimpsons (2004)” are no longer Simpson characters, nor “Companion (1999)” by KAWS (Figure 5, Figure 6, Figure 7). They have already been influenced by each other, especially Simpsons was influenced by KAWS, to become a new character. It’s a new character with their atmosphere. Take a Chinatown for example. As many Chinese settled in other countries such as Europe, the United States etc., sharing their culture, selling their food and sometimes enjoying important events on certain days of the country: their own towns arose. It can come as a familiarity and welcome for new settlers, or a device to soothe the loneliness of immigrants. But this is still not China. The original atmosphere of the area where this Chinatown is located and the atmosphere of China meet to create a new exotic atmosphere.

## ATMOSPHERE

Following the example above, we need to think about what the atmosphere is. By definition, it is the influence of the surrounding environment. Then how to explain the

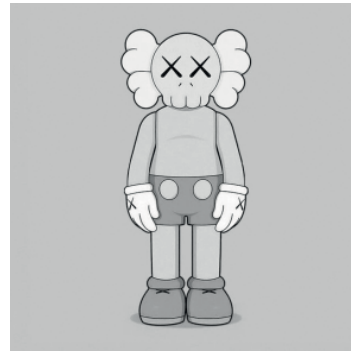


Figure 5: Companion (KAWS, 1999)



Figure 6: “Companion” in “The Simpsons(1989)” (Yoo, 2020)



Figure 7: The Kimpsons (KAWS, 2004)

atmosphere of a particular space? In Peter Zumthor’s words, The building, city, house, or street seems consciously placed. It generates a place. Where it stands, there is a back and a front, there is a left and a right, there is closeness and distance, an inside and outside, there are forms that focus and condense or modify the landscape. The result is an environment (ZumthorPeter, 1998). The environment here means the atmosphere. And go further, atmosphere does not end in a particular place, but leads to an urban atmosphere.

In order to do a more detailed study of the atmosphere, we need to ask various questions: how does it transform, structure the space and interact with the lives of people? In Emotion, Space and Society Bille said, atmosphere constitutes a fundamental aspect of the human experience of the world and that it thus is an important part of the identities and conceptualizations of landscapes, architecture and homes. In this sense atmospheres circumscribe or fill the space we inhabit, and they may define moments for individuals as well as for human collectives (Mikkel BillePeter, 2015). Furthermore, he mentioned that atmosphere has increasingly become a point of reference for the immediate human interaction with particular places. [...] Atmospheres can be encountered in everyday language as ‘ambience’, ‘sense of place’, or the ‘feel’ of a room, [...] atmospheres are always located in between experiences and environments (Mikkel BillePeter, 2015). Also, marketing researcher Philip Kotler famously stated that in some cases of consumption ‘the atmosphere of the place, is more influential than the product itself in the purchase situation’ (KotlerPhilip, 1974). And there is another example. When it comes to a football match, the proper atmosphere is already being generated in advance as fans meet and prepare for the match before entering the stadium. In a sense, then, the football stadium comes to host a tension by a planned staging of atmosphere and an emerging, improvised atmosphere generated by fans (Mikkel BillePeter, 2015). All these things illustrate how much experience and environment have

to do with the atmosphere.

Then what factors are included in the experience and environment that have a big impact on the atmosphere? Focusing on atmospheres means addressing not simply ‘experience’, but rather the co-existence of embodied experience and the material environment. In order to get to grips with atmospheres, we have to engage more actively and analytically with architecture, colors, lighting, humidity, sound, odor, the texture of things and their mutual juxtaposition. The dual understanding of atmosphere as a meteorological phenomenon and a spatial experience of affect and materiality should most often not be seen as distinct, but rather as feeding on each other, whether through the impact of a sunny day on the feel of the city, or the way rain may turn the experience of an open air concert or football match into something completely different (Mikkel BillePeter, 2015).

As mentioned above, there are various elements that make up the atmosphere of the place: visual, colors, materials, smell, sound, noise, mood, feeling, memories, climate, temperature, culture, etc. Among all, the atmosphere for certain places is highly related to sight, smell, and hearing. When people sensing a space for the first time, they may grasp the atmosphere of a particular place or city directly through the eyes. And then, the auditory and olfactory parts could give an indirect feeling of atmosphere. To reiterate, affects, sensations, materialities, emotions and meanings are all enrolled within the force-field of an atmosphere (EdensorT, 2012), and though each of these terms might be fruitfully conceptualized separately, we contend that atmospheres are phenomena that blur the boundaries between them. (DavidsonL, 2011).





Figure 8: Atmosphere of "The Therme Vals" (Zumthor, 1996)

One example can be "The Therme Vals (1996)" by Peter Zumthor. This building is a very good example of not only visual, auditory, and olfactory sense, but also stimulating the five senses and giving a feeling of the atmosphere of the building (Figure 8). The material of this building is made of Quartzite, which has a strong locality of Switzerland, and the surrounding scenery is also impressively showed how Switzerland is. And the sound of water everywhere, and the smell of stones and water make the atmosphere stronger.

#### MIGRATION OF ATMOSPHERE

Then, what is migration of atmosphere? My thesis topic starts here. What would happen if "The Therme Vals" moved into the middle of a crowded city (Figure 9)? Is it still "The Therme Vals" or just a public bath in the city? Is it still the atmosphere of Switzerland, or will another new atmosphere be born? What are the elements that keep "The Therme Vals" atmosphere if it is maintained and how are such elements contributing to certain space? Through these questions I would like to delve deeply into the meaning of "migration of atmosphere".

Furthermore, as in the example above, what functions of a building would be appropriate if the 'migration of atmosphere' apply to a particular building? The answer may also be the result of various studies on atmosphere above. Atmosphere, which is the result of visual, colors, materials, smell, noise, memories, etc., is always located in between

human experiences and environments (Mikkel BillePeter, 2015). These experiences and environments are done within the radius of human behavior, like from a house to a country (Figure 10). From this point of view, the migration of atmosphere may be seen as one country moving to another. Therefore, the most appropriate function can be an embassy.

There are many immigrants in the world. For various reasons, such as work, study, or family, they leave their hometown and flow into a new country to start adapting. Also, there are many travelers in the world. To have new experiences, meet new people, and feel new feelings, they leave for a new country. And in that new country, there's a place these people might have stopped by for some reason. It's the embassy. The embassy is a building that represents a country, so it also can be regarded as 'A small country' and we don't know what it is, but it is reliable and familiar with. It also can be seen as an example of migration of atmosphere in a certain country because of its image that is likely to give off the atmosphere of a certain country (Figure 11).

Ironically, however, most of the atmosphere there is artificial, so the natural atmosphere is hard to find. Then, what is the atmosphere of space and what are the elements that make it up? Also, how can these elements be applied to real space to create a specific natural atmosphere? My research goal is to study what the atmosphere is and how to create the atmosphere of a new embassy.



Figure 9: "The Therme Vals" in the city Collage (Yoo, 2021)

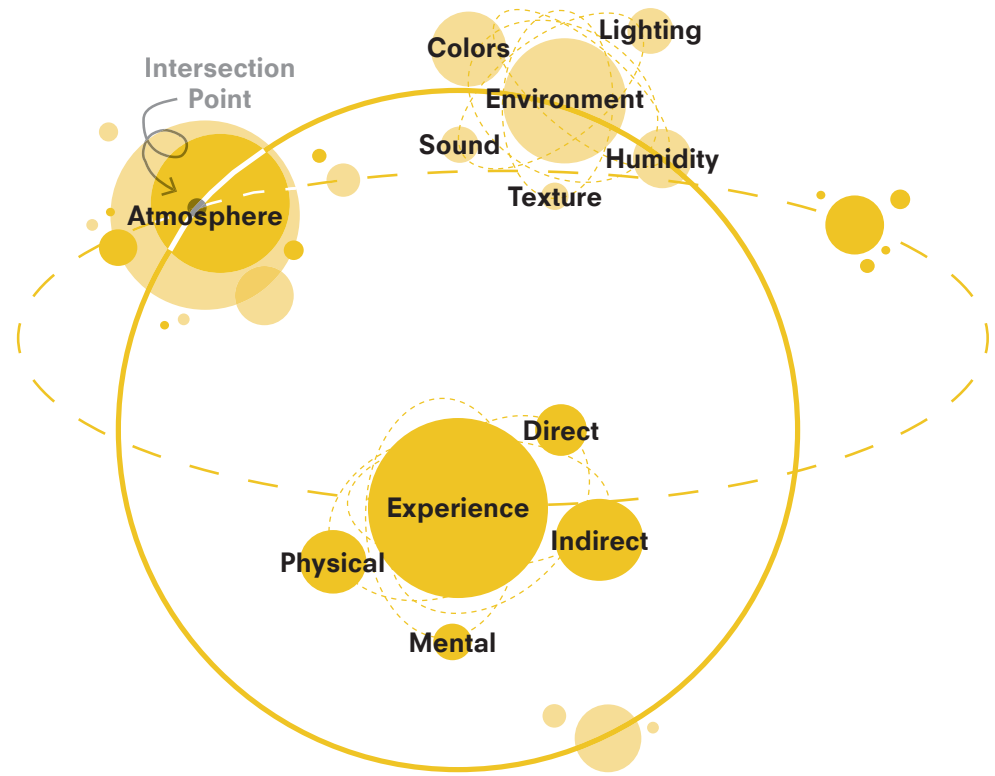


Figure 3: A Diagram of Atmosphere (Yoo, 2021)

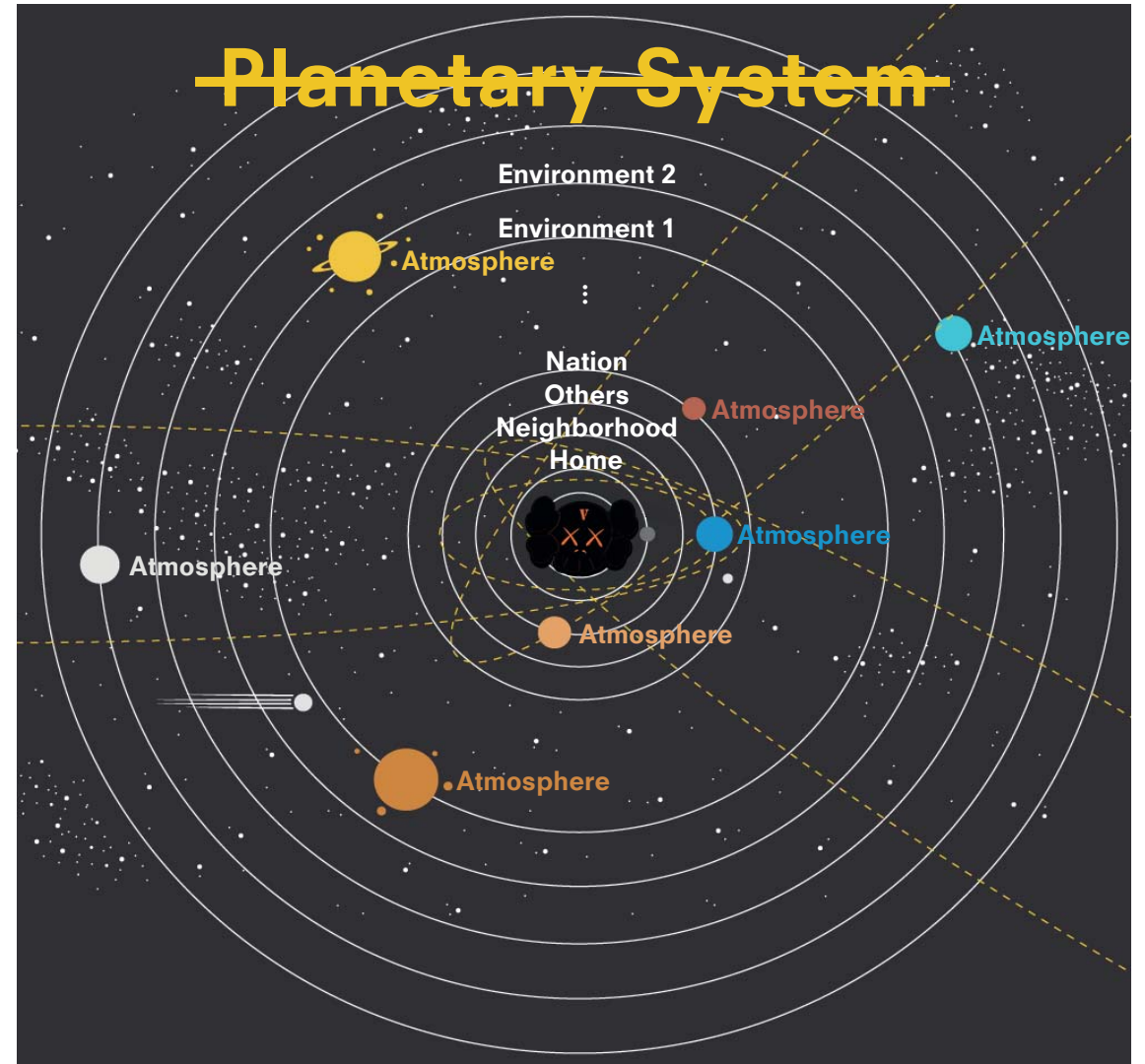


Figure 10: Migration of Atmo 'sphere' Collage (Yoo, 2021)





Figure 11: Migration of 'A small Country' Collage (Yoo, 2020)

RESEARCH QUESTION:

Therefore, the research asks

**How can such elements that determine the atmosphere of the space be applied to the real space to derive the natural atmosphere of the space?**

FIND "KAWS"!

Research questions for the project have also been set. And we already know who the "Simpsons" are: Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Then it's time to find "KAWS". Which country's embassy will be designed? While searching for the answer, an interesting fact was found. First, I started investigating the history of diplomacy, after understanding the beginning of diplomatic relations, then studied when and how countries got to know each other.

For these questions, a very famous case in relation to the Netherlands could be the answer. It is the Pilgrim Fathers. They moved to the United States in 1620 and settled early in the Plymouth Colony. They travelled from England to the United States via the Netherlands. And Delfshaven which is located in Rotterdam was the starting point of their journey toward America. And at a similar time, the Netherlands finds another new country. It was Korea. And it was Hendrik Hamel, who discovered it. Hendrik Hamel was a Dutch navigator. He was wrecked on a commercial ship, Spherver, in 1653 on his way to Nagasaki, Japan, and was detained for 13 years in Joseon (Former name of Korea) before escaping to the Netherlands in 1668. Hamel, who returned home with a book recording this arduous journey, claimed wages he had not received for 13 years from the East India Company, and this book was written as evidence (Figure 12). The book records various information about Joseon that Hamel saw and heard during his stay in Joseon, which became an opportunity for the West to pay attention to Korea, where much information was not known to the West, and many European countries tried to exchange, but failed due to various factors.

In conclusion, Pilgrim Father left for the United States in 1620, and in the not-too-distant future, in 1653, Hendrik Hamel unintentionally discovered South Korea (Figure 13). Although his discovery did not lead to exchanges at the time, the Korean Embassy was adopted because of this strong historical issue and the possibility to be a new starting point this time.

In addition, the fact that Delfshaven was the starting point of the journey for the founding of America by the Pilgrim Fathers, who were religious immigrants is meaningful for this project. That could mean the starting point of migration. And it is the port of the city of Delft: The town of Delfshaven grew around the port of the city of Delft, this settlement was named Delfshaven. Also, this district fortunately escaped from bombing, so it is a historically well-preserved area. Therefore, Delfshaven could be a place that retains its unique atmosphere of the Netherlands. According to these factors, this is enough to be the place to conduct new experiments on "migration of atmosphere".



Figure 12: Hamel's Journal (Hamel, 1668)



Figure 13: Comparison Map (Yoo, 2020)



“KAWS” = KOREAN ATMOSPHERE

If someone asked what the atmosphere of Korea is, most Korean will definitely answer it as Hanok (Figure 14). It is a Korean traditional architecture, and there is a lot of data about it. Because it is known as one of Korea's representative symbols. This is one of the reasons why many Korean architects want to design buildings using Hanok. Joongeop Kim, one of Korea's famous architects, also dedicated his life to harmonizing the atmosphere of Korea and the European country where he studied, utilizing the characteristic elements of Hanok. And it is very well illustrated at the French Embassy in South Korea. According to many research data on Hanok, Hanok has at least six characteristic elements:

#### 1 Flexible Structure (Figure 15)

- Changeability, Expandability

#### 2 Distinguish between Outside and Inside (Figure 16)

#### 3 Outbuildings (Figure 17)

#### 4 Several Courtyards (Figure 18)

#### 5 차경 (CHA GYEONG) - Borrowed Scenery (Figure 19)

#### 6 Harmony with Nature (Figure 20)

#### 1 Flexible Structure

The structure of Hanok is flexible. The boundary between rooms is divided into partitions, not walls and doors. In fact, the partition acts as a door, but after the door is fully opened, the separated space is merged into one space. Korean ancestors did not give the Hanok rooms their own functions. So the use of space is flexible, changeable, and scalable.

#### 2 Distinguish between Outside and Inside

This can be seen as one of the major cultural differences between the East and the West, and Korea is clearly distinguished inside and outside. So people take off their shoes when they go inside the building. They live without shoes in the room. This custom has been handed down from a long time ago. Korean ancestors designed the floor level

of the building higher than the ground level to ensure the distinction between inside and outside. So people were naturally led to take off their shoes and go up into the building.

#### 3 Outbuildings

Hanok usually has a number of outbuildings. Generally, there is one main building, and two or three outbuildings. Instead of giving function to each room, separate houses were placed to distinguish between the main building, guest building, and servant building, etc. And there were fences around the buildings so that they belonged to a group.

#### 4 Several Courtyards

Each building has a structure that surrounds the yard. Generally, there are 'ㄱ' shapes, 'ㄷ' shapes, and 'ㅁ' shapes.

#### 5 차경 (CHA GYEONG) - Borrowed Scenery

Called Cha-Gyeong in Korean, it literally borrows the surrounding landscape. Korean ancestors loved and valued the surrounding natural scenery. So, when designing the building, the locations of the doors and windows were arranged in consideration of the location of the natural landscape, and the shapes of these doors and windows were framed to enjoy the scenery inside the house.

#### 6 Harmony with Nature

As explained above, natural scenery was one of the most important factors in their lives for Korean ancestors. Therefore, it was considered to preserve the natural scenery as much as possible and to blend well with the building when placing the building. The slope of the land was also preserved to the fullest extent, and various factors such as the location of the surrounding trees and waterfront areas were taken into account.

Accordingly, there are several features related to Hanok. These various features can be reinterpreted and applied to the new building.



Figure 14: Typical Hanok in South Korea (<http://www.hahoe.or.kr/>)



Figure 15: Flexible Structure (<http://www.hahoe.or.kr/>)



Figure 18: Several Courtyards (<http://www.hahoe.or.kr/>)



Figure 16: Distinguish In & Out (<http://www.hahoe.or.kr/>)

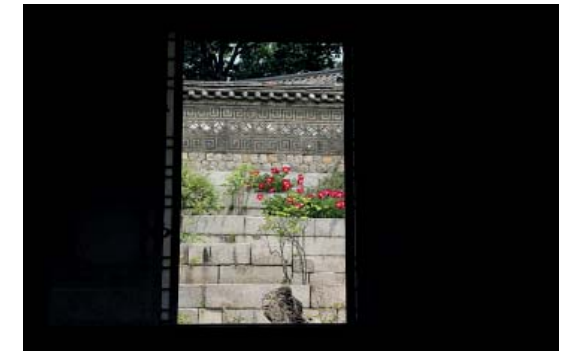


Figure 19: 차경 (CHA GYEONG) (<http://www.hahoe.or.kr/>)



Figure 17: Outbuildings (<http://www.hahoe.or.kr/>)



Figure 20: Harmony with Nature (<http://www.hahoe.or.kr/>)



## CONCLUSIONS

Overall, this project will be to design the South Korean Embassy in Delfshaven. First, it focuses on whether the building gives off a genuine Korean atmosphere, so that people in the country can feel home when they enter the building, then studies how this building affects the surrounding environment. And the final goal is that make this result of new experiment to play an important role in relations with other countries as well as the Western Archipelago, the group's site.

As globalization progresses worldwide, the emergence of people of various nationalities in various countries is increasing. Those people might be immigrants or travelers. This is evidence that the pace of exchanges between countries is increasing. This situation is not only true for individuals, but also for businesses and organizations. For instance, it has become more difficult to find countries that are hard to see Apple or Samsung. This can be seen as an increasing importance of exchanges with other countries. In other words, the proper response from the embassy is more required.

I aim to design embassies required by the present society through my graduation project. I would like to not only design a building suitable for the globalized market, but also give some public function to it and further study how it can build relationships with the surrounding community. For example, designing an archive about Hamel or a library that collects information about South Korea. At this time, the two functional buildings might be designed as separate buildings from the embassy, following the characteristics of the Hanok annex, to be thoroughly distinguished private and public spaces.

And the experiment will take place in Rotterdam, which is already famous for an experimental city related to architecture. The aim of this project is that Rotterdam's first embassy building will be successful, and embassies from other countries will gradually emerge in there and exchanges will become more active around the world.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author of this research article, Chaewon Yoo, declares that there is no conflict of interest.



Figure 21: Korean Atmosphere Collage (Yoo, 2021)

## APPENDIX - DESIGN BRIEF

Designing an embassy differentiated from the existing one with artificial atmosphere is the purpose of the project: an embassy that can feel the atmosphere of a real hometown, an embassy that is more open to the public, but has a better distinction between private and public spaces. Through this project, we can see the possibility that embassies can integrate with the community.

#### ■ USERS

The aim of the project is to open the embassy to the public a little more so that it can be harmonized with the surrounding community without any sense of discomfort. Users will be people who want to do embassy work, companies and organizations, and embassy-related employees or people who want to enjoy cultural life.

#### ■ URBAN

The building will economically link businesses between countries, which will increase employment opportunities. Socially, it aims to become a place where public spaces such as archives and libraries are familiar to the public and meet, and where people with the same consensus can interact.

#### ■ BUILDING

The building will be designed as a sustainable embassy based on the characteristic elements of Hanok mentioned above. It will utilize shapes and materials considering flexibility and changeability, and aims at designs that blend with natural landscapes such as green areas and waterfront spaces around it.

#### ■ SITE

The building is located in Delfshaven. The site is 3.300m<sup>2</sup> of vacant land. Residential facilities are surrounded around the vacant lot, and waterfront spaces are located to the west. It has two more features, in addition to the aforementioned characteristics of starting point of migration: a business strip by group strategy and sea lane. There are 4 strips in our group site. One of them, the business strip, passes just below my site in pursuit of connectivity with other economic-related

buildings. And the other one is sea lane. Rotterdam is the largest and most prosperous port city in Europe, also called the gateway to Europe. Rotterdam Port has sisterhood ties with various countries, one of which is the port of Busan in South Korea. And on June 19, 2019, Busan port authority and port of Rotterdam authority signed a contract for a 5 hectare site on Maasvlakte Distribution park west. Busan port authority is developing a sustainable 30.000m<sup>2</sup> warehouse on that site. And for them, the port of Rotterdam is the perfect location to run a warehouse. It is such a strong relationship with my project. Furthermore, the sea lane that connects them goes through just below my site.

#### ■ PROGRAM

The program includes private and public spaces with several yards(semi-public). Private spaces would include embassy and related offices. And for public spaces, there will be a library with cultures, foods, and containing various information about South Korea. And also archive with relations between the Netherlands and South Korea such as Hamel's story.

According to reference research into the Embassy of the Netherlands in Germany by OMA, Embassy of the State of Qatar in Iraq by Makiya Associates, Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Oman by Makiya Associates, Embassy of the Netherlands in Mozambique by KAAAN Architecten and Embassy of Australia in Japan by Denton Corker Marshall, the private area is from 55% to 87%, and the public area is between 13% and 45%. And there are various public functions like yard, lounge, café, fitness, exhibition, store, library, etc. Through these program types and ratios, embassies with well-separated private public spaces and with various public functions can be designed.

Among them, the reference is planned to be benchmarked, which is 8.500m<sup>2</sup> in total area with 70% private space and 30% public space.

## APPENDIX - GRADUATION PLAN

The graduation project is carried out with a proper balance between group research and individual research. Collaborative group studies find problems and new potential by collecting and analysis of a wide range of information from a given site. The results of the analysis solve problems, establish new appropriate plans, and give a new identity to the site. At the same time, personal research sets a theme and sets up research questions by collecting and analyzing a wide range of data related to the topic. It also continues to lay the groundwork for design, such as setting up a site and programs suitable for the topic. Design interventions that occur at this time should not only be well aligned with the strategies of group research, but also should be carried out in anticipation of some degree of synergy with the studies of other individuals around them. In this way, each person's strategy and the group's overall plan are combined to create a beautiful master plan.

While the study up to P2 focused on quantitative collection of information for the overall research, P3 requires more in-depth study of the specified target. More research is needed not only on building-related research like program analysis, layout of space and research on materials, but also on how to combine topics and designs well.

Hence, more in-depth analysis of the embassy is needed first to design the building. The embassy has limited information and needs time to collect sufficient data. By P2.5, I will complete analysis of embassies and zoning programs that take into account users and conduct various mass studies based on this. I will also complete site analysis and the resulting overall layout of buildings. Up to P3, I will begin with a specific design and conduct plan and section drawing with structural research. By then P4, the overall design will be finished, with research of materials, structures, and facades to complete the overall design will be completed. P5 will be the final stage of completing the previous deficiencies. Along with this overall plan, I

will constantly think about how to harmonize the "Korean atmosphere," the result of the initial research, into the building. In addition, various methods, including sketching and 3D modeling, will be used as the main methods while conducting design research.



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