

# The Stories behind **Craftsmanship**

The use of brick and stone in the V&D stores in Leiden and Enschede

Heritage & Architecture Graduation Studio

AR3A010 Research Plan

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Front Cover: The former V&D building in Leiden standing next to the historic "Waag" building. Picture captured and edited by the author.

# 1. Introduction

The evaluation of the materiality of a heritage building has traditionally been performed in relation to the physical state of the materials (for example Age Value & New-Ness Value according to De Jonge and Kuipers)<sup>1</sup> or in relation to other factors, like the rarity of a material. Since the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century various opinions have been raised in Dutch architectural circles to re-examine the way architects should inspect and value the construction materials of a heritage building. Architects such as Wessel de Jonge, Jo Coenen and Job Roos are among the individuals that have been involved in this matter. The main argument these architects hold is associated with the need for searching for information that goes beyond the tangible (what we can physically observe), and search for information (the stories) behind the use of certain construction materials. Intangible values have gradually become more important in the field of conservation through time. The introduction of “spiritual value” as a component of the cultural significance of a heritage site in the Australian Burra Charter of 1999 was revolutionary in this aspect.<sup>2</sup> Yet, even though intangible values are gradually gaining territory in the field of conservation, there is still space for further debate, relating them to specific tangible aspects, such as construction materials.

Dutch architect Wessel de Jonge and architecture historian Marieke Kuipers expand on this issue in their book “Designing from Heritage”. One of the cases the authors make is that in modern heritage in particular, the “conceptual background or design intent behind the material aspects” should be studied in depth before intervening in a building.<sup>3</sup> The authors use two case studies to support their argument, namely the Van Nelle factory in Rotterdam and Sanatorium Zonnestraal in Hilversum. Even though the two buildings were built around the same time period and share the same modern architectural style and language, the conservation approach was completely different. In the sanatorium the materials were mostly replaced, something that was “morally justifiable” due to the fact that the architect never intended the construction materials to withstand the test of time. In the Van Nelle factory, many original materials were preserved, because it was clearly the intention of the architect to assemble the building in a specific way to resist the test of time and survive. In both cases, the interventions were aligned as much as possible with the original design intentions.

Job Roos also elaborates on this issue in the book *Discovering the Assignment*. In the book, Roos compares the architect who intends to re-use a historic building to a writer who bases his work on existing stories. More specifically he mentions that:

“Neither Marlowe nor Goethe wrote their Faust on an empty page; (...) One must understand the form and content, the structure, the grammar, the syntax, the meaning, the theme, the motive and the plot, and the world that lies behind these. Who was and is the writer, in what tradition did he write, who were *the contemporaries who inspired him or against whom he reacted?* And above all, which source did he

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<sup>1</sup> Kuipers, M., De Jonge, W., *Designing from Heritage: Strategies for Conservation and Conversion*, (Delft: TU Delft - Heritage & Architecture [Fac. Architecture], 2017), pg. 87

<sup>2</sup> ICOMOS, *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, (Burwood Victoria: Australia ICOMOS Incorporated)

<sup>3</sup> Kuipers, M., De Jonge, W., *Designing from Heritage: Strategies for Conservation and Conversion*, (Delft: TU Delft - Heritage & Architecture [Fac. Architecture], 2017), pg. 20

use himself? (...) The old casts its light ahead and from the new the old is reevaluated. To continue the comparison with the writer in redevelopment the architect is always the co-author. (...) The author, or architect, who keeps the stories separate from each other avoids the challenge and makes no choices."<sup>4</sup>

One could conclude from this passage that in Roos' view a successful adaptation practice, has to search for the stories that are hidden beneath the tangible. If this is not done, the architect "makes no choices". I would add to this quote that the architect might make *wrong* choices. One could argue that the search for the intents behind material selection in heritage buildings is a good way of making the *right decisions* leading to a successful redesign project. For example: It could be concluded after the analysis of an old department store that certain materials with bright colours were used with the aim to draw the attention of the public eye. If the future use of the heritage building is benefited by staying out of the public eye, it should be reconsidered if the building to be adapted is indeed suitable for this new use.

While conducting research on the materiality of the facades, I noticed exactly the lack which the aforementioned architects (and architecture historian) are describing. The *stories and the intents* beneath the material aspects in the facades of these department stores is rarely mentioned and even less focused upon. It is often noted in the façades of the department stores (also to be mentioned in this text) that certain materials are used or assembled in such a manner which requires relatively much expertise, craftsmanship and of course capital. Especially when this is the case, it is interesting to research what inspired the architects to use and assemble the materials in this particular manner. The more particular problematization of this research is if the precision in the façade design and craftsmanship of a building is related to the urban context and surrounding architecture.

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<sup>4</sup> Roos, J., *Discovering the Assignment: Redevelopment in Practice*, (Delft: VSSD, 2007), pg. 25-26

## 2. Methodological Reflection

This particular research plan is a combination of two research approaches. The first research approach is the so-called “context led research” as defined by British architect Lucas Ray. In the book *Research Methods for Architecture* he maintains that one can start a research from a certain context such as an “established typology or a piece of architecture or a city”. Examining this context as a case study of a type – particularly with reference to other circumstances following the same rules allows a typology or a repeating pattern”<sup>5</sup> to be established.

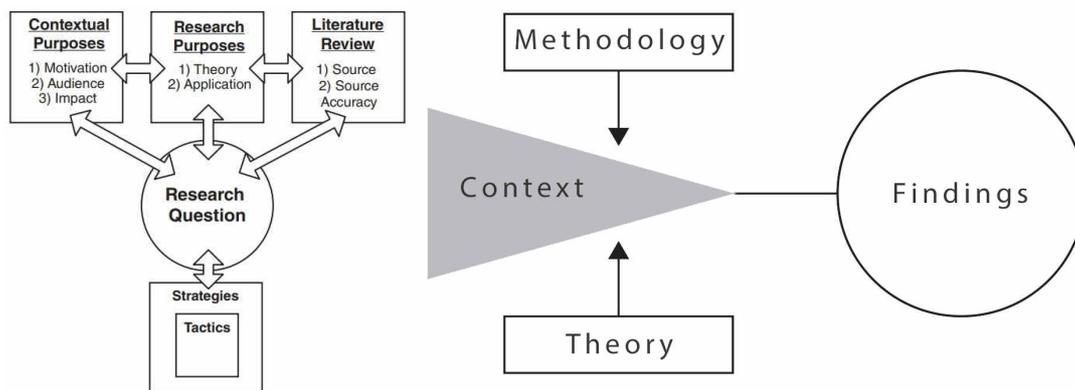


Figure 1: Diagrams of the Context Led Research (Lucas) and of Research Design (Groat & Wang)

The schemes presented above visualize the design approaches by different architects. Lucas clearly sees the context (in this research the facades of the V&D stores in Leiden and Enschede) as the sole starting point leading to a problematization through the use of a certain methodology and theory. In the book *Architectural Research Methods*, Groat and Wang introduce a certain methodology called “research design”. Together with theory which can be traced back as literary review (“the internalization of literature”<sup>6</sup>), starting points of the research are also the contextual and research purposes. Contextual purposes are related with the motivation for starting the research while research purposes are connected with the aim of the data to be obtained from the research. Will the theoretical outcome be used to create new theory, or will it expand to new venues?<sup>7</sup>

The research purpose is to create a solid theoretical base for the adaptive re-use of one of the V&D buildings. The contextual purpose of the research is my own interest in the role of the construction details in the perception and evaluation of a heritage building. In this particular research plan, the context consists of two Vroom & Dreesmann department stores, both built during the 1930's in the Dutch cities of Leiden and Enschede.

<sup>5</sup> Lucas, R., *Research Methods for Architecture*, (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016), pg. 12

<sup>6</sup> Groat, L., Wang D., *Architectural Research Methods* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), pg. 143

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pg. 101

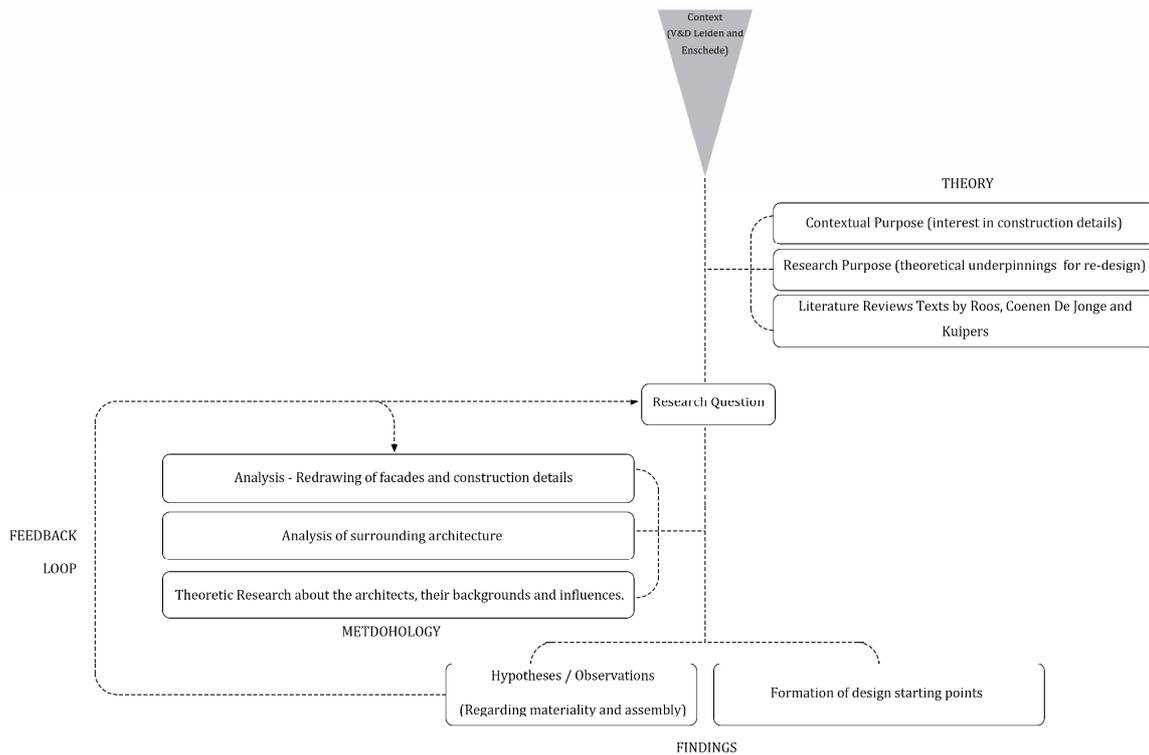


Figure 2: Diagram of the research plan's structure based on the diagrams of Groat, Wand & Ray

As presented in the diagram above, the start of the research is the context, the V&D stores. The main research question is formed from defining the contextual and research purposes and reviewing a series of texts concerning re-use and materiality in heritage buildings. The research question instigates an analysis which focuses on three aspects, namely the architects, the building, and the surrounding context. A large part of the analysis is done by re-drawing the facades and construction details. This methodology is inspired by Dutch architect J. G. Wattjes, who carefully drew and documented the facades of stores in his book *Constructie en Architectuur van Winkelpuizen*. The methodology includes the examination of written sources which together with the redrawing of the façade details leads to the formation of the design starting points as well as observations and new hypotheses. The hypotheses and observations can either lead to the enrichment of the research conducted, or to the formation of new research questions leading to new research carried out throughout the graduation studio (feedback loop).

The documentation of façade details, based on the work of Wattjes, is also the way in which the "Touch and Feel" research team works, of which I am part of (research mentor Wido Quist). The studio focusses on researching the construction details of the facades of some of the V&D department stores in The Netherlands with the aim of defining attributes as well as a useful vocabulary to value and discuss materiality in view of adaptive reuse as well as widening the knowledge on 20th century building materials and constructions.

### 3. Analysis

“Serious architectonic knowledge of the façade, the surface that intermediates between the interior and the city, can be developed very effectively by a study of old buildings. This is an excellent way of learning about such things as proportions, window openings, the effect of depth, detailing, façade coping, the silhouette of a building, the possible methods of supporting it and so on. There is a real need for this kind of knowledge.”<sup>8</sup>

In this sentence, from the book “The Art of Blending” Dutch architect Jo Coenen underlines the importance of studying historical facades in our urban landscapes. This statement is part of the main case he makes in the book, namely that architects today should try to design in a certain way in order for their buildings not to “violently collide” with their surroundings but rather to “work together” with them.<sup>9</sup> The neglect of the existing architecture in new construction has led to a “disjointed public space without direction”.<sup>10</sup> One of the key steps to achieve a desirable outcome is the careful study of the facades.

The V&D buildings in Enschede and Leiden while having been constructed for the same company and in the same decade do not resemble each other. One can easily notice that the building in Leiden has a more traditional appearance in contrast to that in Enschede which is simple and modernistic. The reason these totally different buildings were selected was to make the investigation of material craftsmanship representative of Dutch 1930's department stores in general.

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<sup>8</sup> Coenen, J., *The Art of Blending*, (Delft: VSSD, 2006), pg. 63

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, pg. 75

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, pg. 67

### 3.1 V&D Enschede

Year of completion: 1939  
Status: National Monument  
Address: Korte Hengelosestraat 1, Enschede  
Total Surface: 8456 sqm  
Number of floors: 4  
(Maximum) Dimensions: 77,8 m x 31,5 m  
Height: 15,9 m

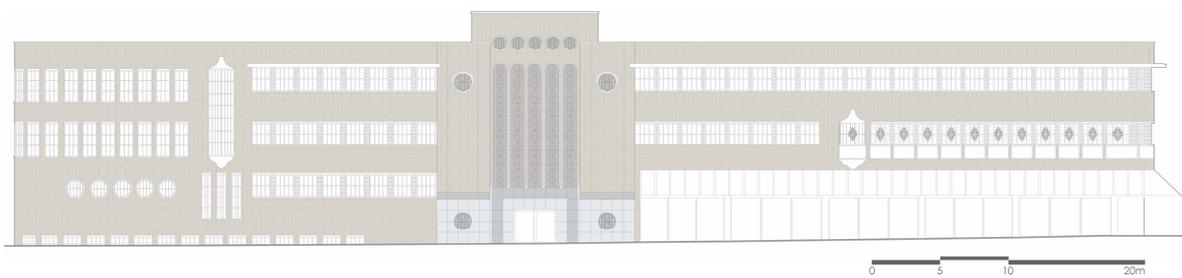


Figure 3: Southern Elevation of the V&D store in Enschede.

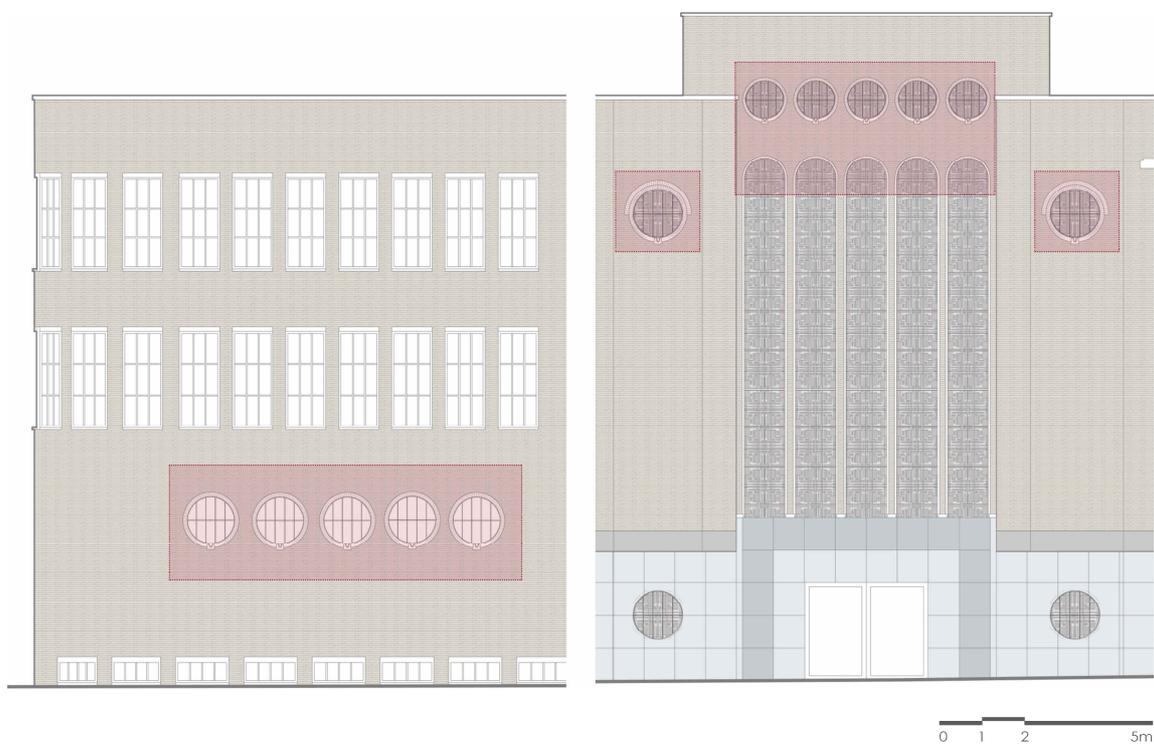


Figure 4: The round openings in the front façade of the V&D in Enschede.

The Vroom & Dreesmann department store in Enschede was completed in the year 1939. It was designed by the Dutch architect Jan Kuijt (1884-1944).

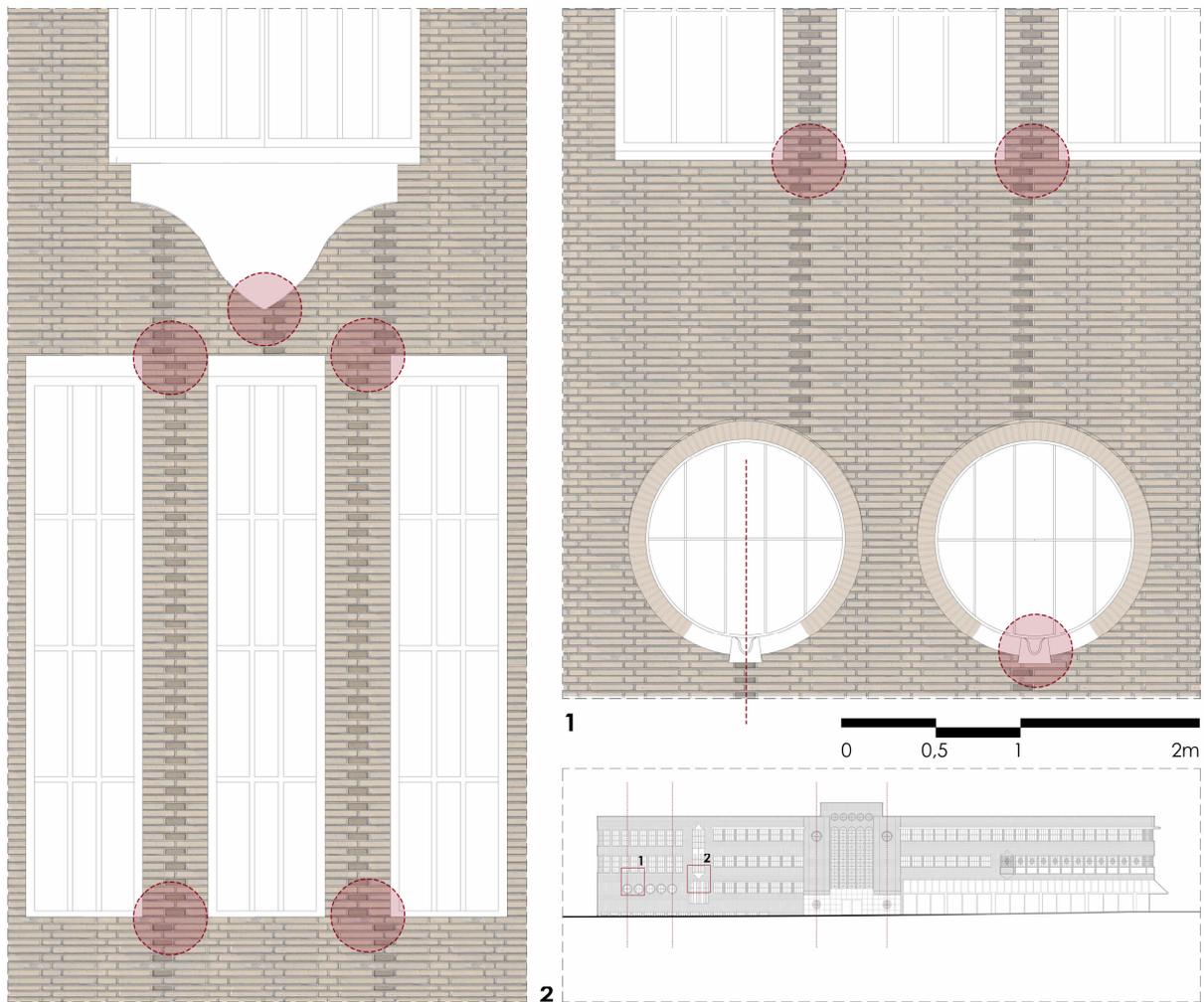


Figure 5: Details of the front façade highlighting the relationship of the openings with the brickwork.

The yellow bricks, assembled in a Monk bond system cover a large part of the building's façade. These bricks can also be found in the townhall of Hilversum by Willem Dudok (1884-1974), completed in the year 1931. It is documented that Kuijt was generally inspired by the architecture of Dudok.<sup>11</sup> The townhall of Hilversum especially was one of the most celebrated buildings of its era on an international level, being documented by many architectural magazines and visited by many young architects during the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>12</sup> The building was in fact so famous that the Monk bond system was generally known as the "Hilversumsch" bond system in The Netherlands at the time.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Van Beekum, R., *Architect Jan Kuijt Wzn . 1884-1944 Bouwen voor Vroom & Dreesmann*, (Amsterdam: Cultuurhistorische Uitgeverij Stokerkade, 2018), pg. 55

<sup>12</sup> Van Bergeijk, H., *Buitenlands Bezoek aan Hilversum*, (Article in the book: *Het werk van Dudok: 100 jaar Betekenis*, pp. 48-51), (Delft: Delft Digital Press: 2015), pg. 48

<sup>13</sup> *De Standaard* 68 (1939), "Een Nieuw Gebouw te Enschede", (Amsterdam: H. de Hoogh en Co., 24 April, 1939), issue 20555, 68, pg. 4

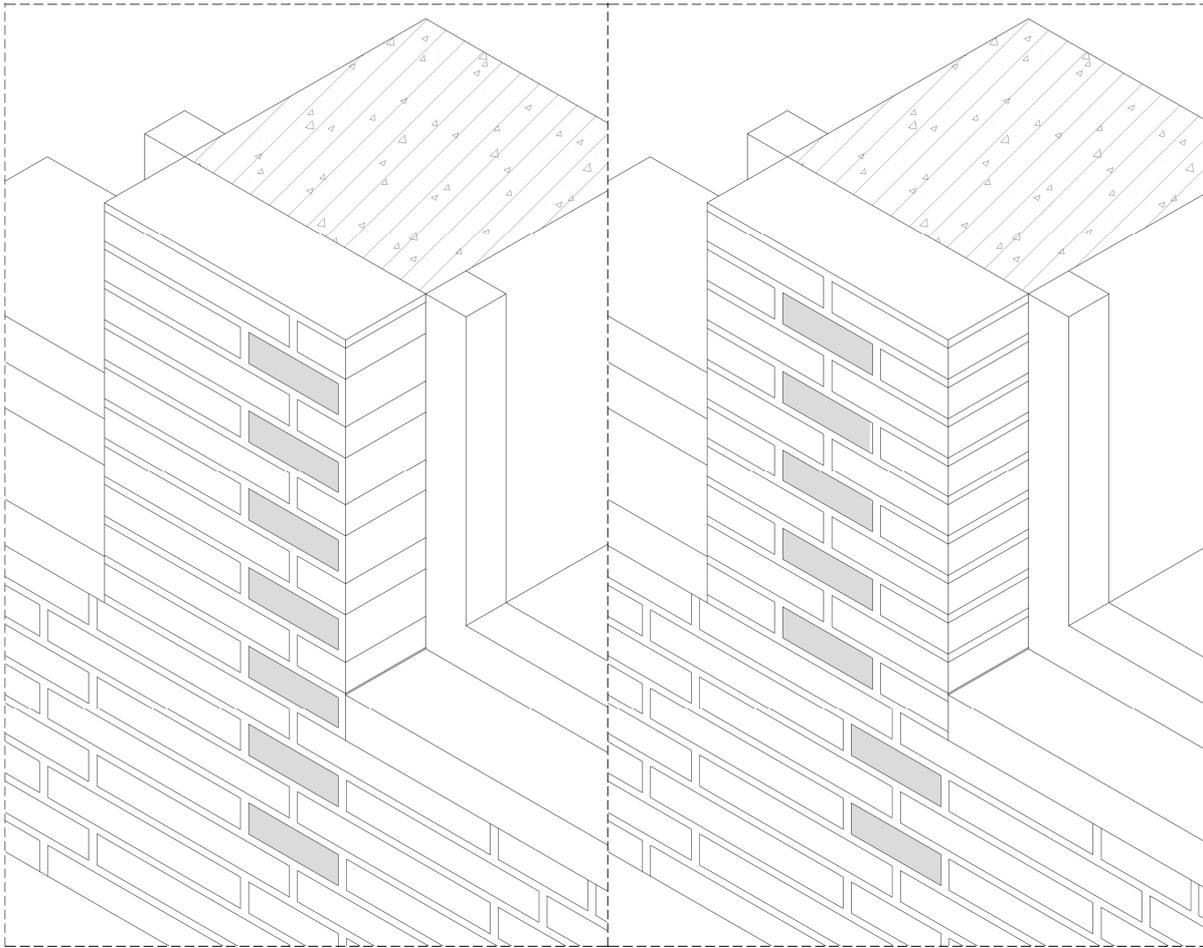


Figure 6: Axonometric section highlighting the relationship of the openings with the brickwork.

The header bricks in the monk bond are placed in such a way that they form a “vertical line” pattern in the façade. The positioning of most openings was not calculated or aligned with respect to these vertical lines of the headers. In order to avoid a disrupting aesthetic effect which could possibly be interpreted as a lack of meticulous design, the architect chose to slightly shift the brickwork so that the headers would still fall centrally between the openings. As indicated in bottom right of figure 5, there are only six windows in the whole front façade that are aligned with the brickwork. All these windows have this circular shape.

Although there are imperfections in the façade's design, carefully performed craftsmanship is still to be found in the circular openings of the façade. Circular openings in a brick wall are challenging to realize mainly due to the fact that curved cuts will have to be made in the bricks surrounding the opening.

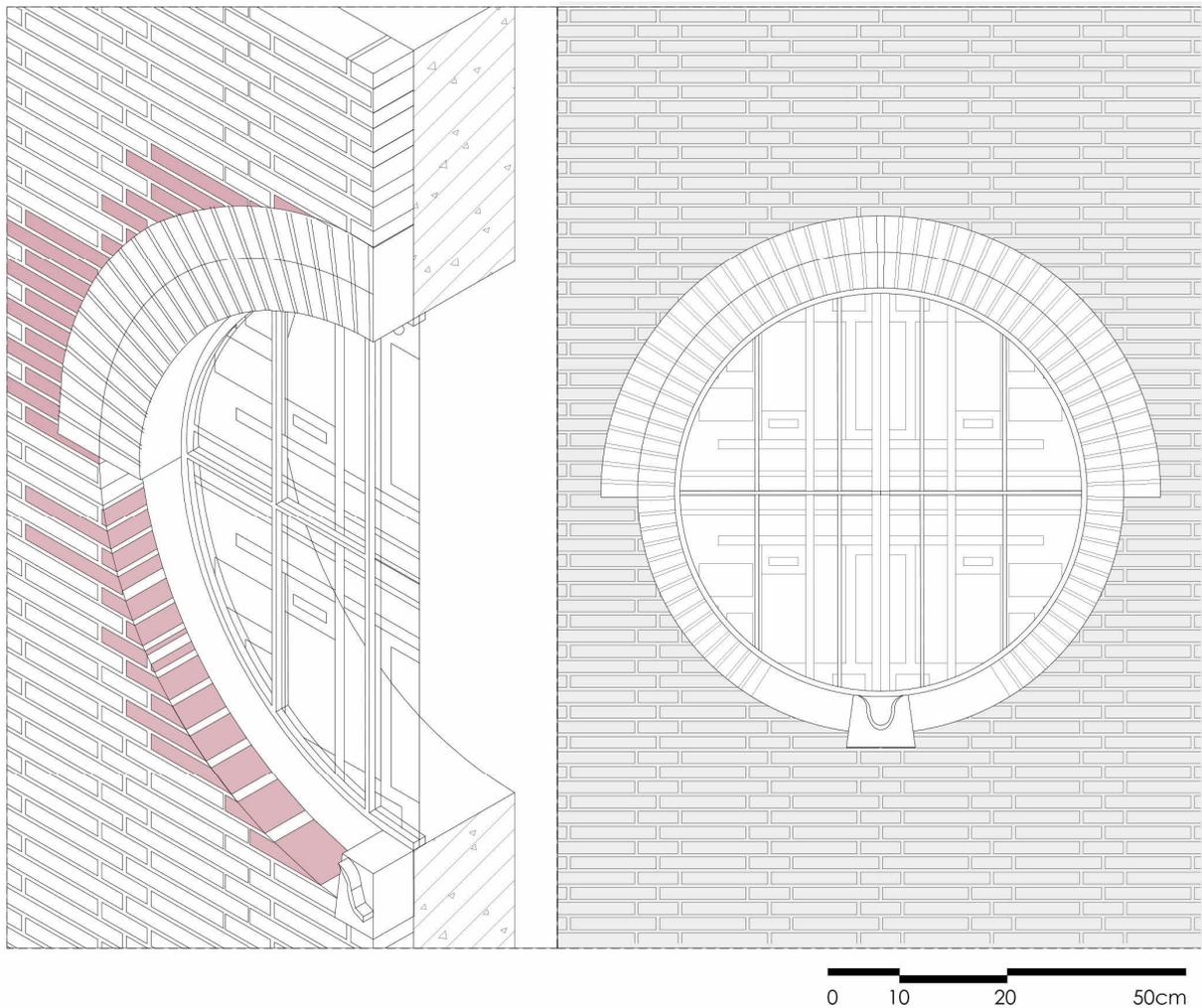


Figure 7: Details of the front façade highlighting the relationship of the openings with the brickwork.

It is clear that Kuijt focused in a large part especially on the circular openings, because he chose to align the brickwork only to these. When looking at the building's urban context, it is interesting that the same circular openings can be found in some of the surrounding buildings as well, namely the townhall of Enschede, by architect G. Friedhoff and the church of St. Jacob by H.W. Valk and J.H. Sluijmer, both completed in 1933. The fact that these circular windows have a similar stone scupper could potentially lead to the assumption that Kuijt was inspired by these buildings for his own design. Presumably, he could have wanted the V&D building to harmonize with the surrounding architecture.

Another and probably even more plausible reason could be that Kuijt was again inspired by W. Dudok's architecture. Van Beekum mentions that Dudok's Bijenkorf department store was a role model for the glass facades of the V&D stores in Amsterdam and Utrecht.<sup>14</sup> A closer look at the V&D in Utrecht and the Bijenkorf indicates that Kuijt most likely also "borrowed" the circular openings from Dudok. It is

<sup>14</sup> Van Beekum, R., *Architect Jan Kuijt Wzn . 1BB4-1944 Bouwen voor Vroom & Dreesmann*, (Amsterdam: Cultuurhistorische Uitgeverij Stokerkade, 2018), pg. 55

interesting that in contrast to Enschede, in the V&D buildings in Utrecht and Amsterdam all the openings are aligned with the brickwork.

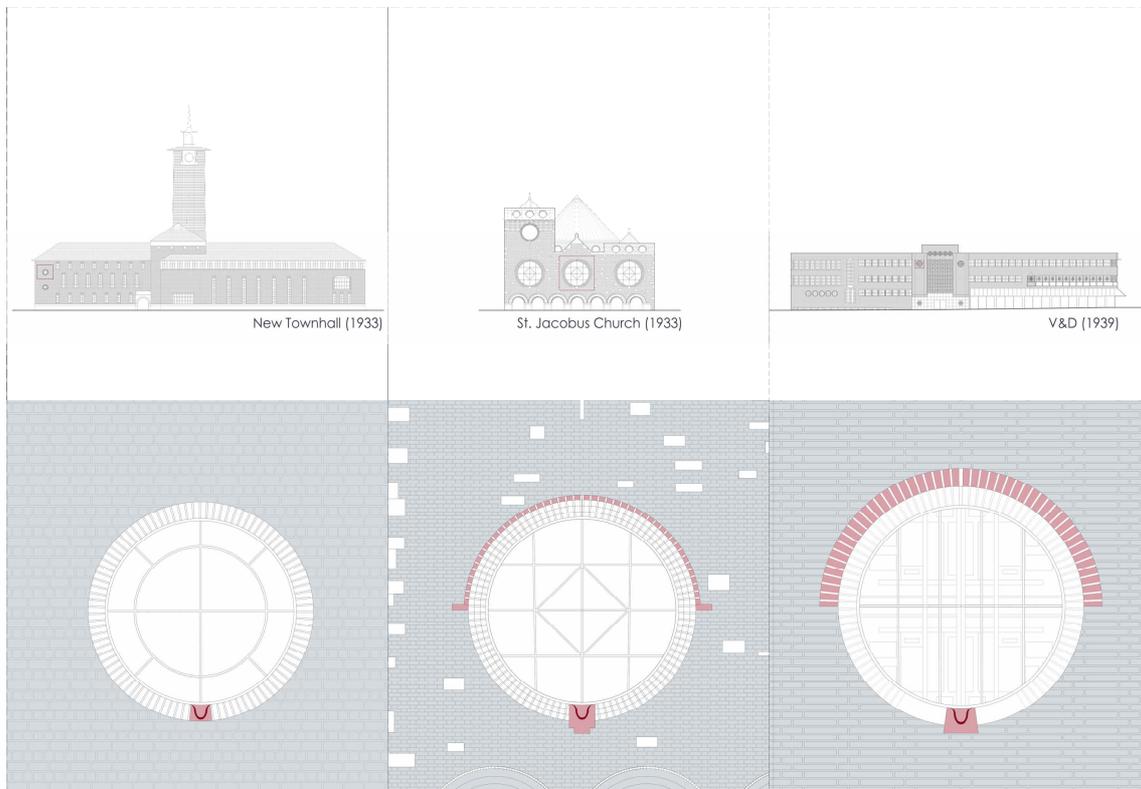


Figure 8: The round openings in the townhall, the church and the V&D

Was it a case of Kuijt not having enough time for his design in Enschede to bring the design to the perfection of Amsterdam and Utrecht, or did he not consider this particular case (which means the town as well) as important as others? In either case it is interesting that he continued a tradition of the craftsmanship of constructing curved openings in brick walls which can be traced back to the architecture of H. P. Berlage (as seen in the Beurs building for example). Berlage firmly believed that the aesthetics of facades are dependent on construction details. Berlage wrote the following regarding how concrete would affect aesthetics in architecture: "(The use of concrete) means that we will no longer have the beautiful wall surface as we have known it, a surface that radiates such an extraordinary charm precisely because it is visibly constructed. United and delineated by the joints, the various elements of the wall form a mosaic of unprecedented splendor. (...) We will lose the beautiful shadow effects and the *profiles around wall openings*—exactly those elements that constitute the immortal beauty of medieval architecture."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Berlage, H. P., *Hendrik Petrus Berlage Thoughts on Style 1886-1909*, Translated by Iain Boyd White and Wim de Wit, (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for History and Art, 1996), pg. 173

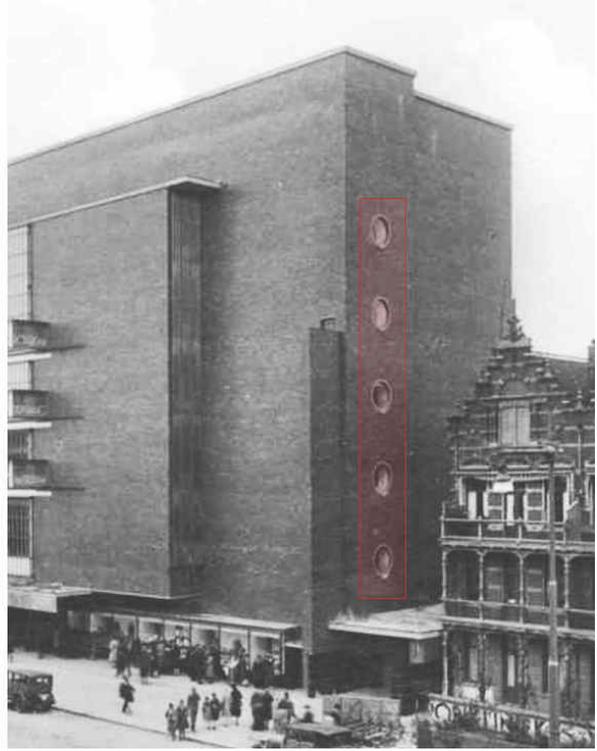


Figure 9: The round openings in the V&D in Utrecht (1940) and Dudoks Bijenkorf in Rotterdam (1930)

### 3.2 V&D Leiden

Year of completion: 1936  
Status: National Monument  
Address: Aalmarkt 22, Leiden  
Total Surface: 13000 sqm  
Number of floors: 6  
(Maximum) Dimensions: 77,8 m x 45,6 m  
Height: 26,8 m



Figure 10: The front façade of the V&D department store in Leiden

In a 1912 book about department stores, German writer Alfred Wiener (1885-1964) stated that the large stores aimed to pull people in by “displaying the goods from the best angle and by making a visit to the store and the shopping experience as pleasant as possible. Everything that the department store has and is must contribute to attracting the public (...) The fact that the visitors can stroll freely through the department store’s *beautiful spaces* draws many people into the department store who had no intention at all of buying anything”.<sup>16</sup> It is clear from this text that the “beautiful spaces” had an important part in the “pleasant shopping experience”. Not only did the new megastores attract visitors through “beauty” but also by their size, which would impress people and compel them to enter, just like the cathedrals did in medieval Europe. In general, early twentieth-century department stores were “distinguishable by their size”.<sup>17</sup> A substantial portion of the first large publicly accessible buildings in The Netherlands like the Tuschinski Theatre in Amsterdam were designed with the underlying principle of “standing out” from the surrounding urban environment, either through size but also through ornamentation. From the 1920’s

<sup>16</sup> Wiener, A., *Das Warenhaus: Kauf-, Geschäfts-, Büro-Haus* (Berlin: E. Wasmuth, 1912), pg. 22

<sup>17</sup> Lerner, P., *The Consuming Temple: Jews, Department Stores, and the Consuming Revolution in Germany: 1880-1940*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), pg. 29

onwards, the approach of many architects started to shift, aiming in the exact opposite direction, namely to design the building with the aim of fitting in with the surrounding architecture.<sup>18</sup> One of the first notable large public buildings in the Netherlands that followed this design principle was the “Telegraaf” building, designed by architects Langhout and Staal, and completed in 1930. This particular building used bricks with a dark brown hue, that matched many of the surrounding buildings of that neighbourhood in Amsterdam. A design “technique” used by architects to achieve urban integration of the new building was to relocate the exterior wall of the top floor of the building a few meters backwards. In this way, the masses of these new buildings would seem slightly smaller, and thus closer in scale to the smaller surrounding old buildings.<sup>19</sup>



Figure 11: Diagram showing how the building would have looked like without the stone panel cladding and the “shift” of the façade on the top floor.

Both of these two design “techniques”, namely the displacement of the upper floor’s exterior wall and the use of materials seen in surrounding buildings, were implemented in the design of the V&D department store in Leiden. The building was completed in the year 1936 and designed by Leo (1864-1942) and Jan (1896-1966) van der Laan. The main element that stands out in the façade of the building is its materiality. The building skin consists mostly of brick, a material widely used by the Van der Laans in

<sup>18</sup> Van Beekum, R., *Architect Jan Kuijt Wzn . 1864-1944 Bouwen voor Vroom & Dreesmann*, (Amsterdam: Cultuurhistorische Uitgeverij Stokerkade, 2018), pg. 20

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 20

most of their buildings<sup>20</sup>, but also of sandstone, specifically on the part of the façade covering the first floor. Not only is the use of sandstone interesting but so is the way it interacts with the brickwork. As seen in the figure below, in the part of the façade covering the first floor, the stone panels and brickworks are positioned in layers, and placed one on top of another.



Figure 12: Diagram showing the use of sandstone panels in the V&D store and the Waag building.

The reason for the use of sandstone in the façade has been documented. Marjan Groot claims that the use of sandstone in the building has to do with the building standing exactly next to it, the historic “Waag” building. The Waag building was constructed in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century in classical style, and is largely covered with sandstone. The architects, wishing to create a “smooth transition” from the large department store to the Waag building, made the façade shorter to the right. The lower parts of the façade of the V&D are covered with sandstone blocks, also a feature for which the Waag building stood as a “role model”.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Van der Goes, B., *Familie Van der Laan Bouwde Leiden Vol*, Article in the Newspaper *Leidsch Dagblad*, (Leiden: Leidsch Dagblad, 24 June 2004), pg. 4

<sup>21</sup> Groot, M., *V&D Leiden: Een oud kleed past geen nieuwen mensch, elk jaartij heeft een eigen wensch*, Article in the book: *Leidsch Jaarboekje 1993*, (Leiden: Nautilus Leiden, 1993), pg. 139



Figure 13: Drawing of the Waag by Van der Laan (From the NAI Archives)

The drawing above of the Waag building made by Van der Laan shows that he was interested in the building to say the least. One main difference between the stone cladding of the V&D and the Waag building is that the joints between the stones are much wider in the Waag building than the V&D. The architect chose to make only specific joints wider, namely those above the entrance next to the Waag (see figure above). As a result, this particular entrance of the V&D resembles the entrance of the Waag more.

It is possible that the architects used the lower stone cladding to make the building mass look smaller. Together with the displacement of the upper floor wall, the façade is fragmented into three smaller distinct parts, and gives a more elegant impression than it would have if it were designed as a solid brick wall.

Except from interesting proportions (see figure 13) between the stone pieces, one can observe that the sandstone panels are organized in layers. The parts of the façade between these layers is cladded with brick masonry. This “typically Dutch”<sup>22</sup> layering

<sup>22</sup> Berlage, H. P., *Hendrik Petrus Berlage Thoughts on Style 1886-1909*, Translated by Iain Boyd White and Wim de Wit, (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for History and Art, 1996), pg. 261

of alternating sandstone panels and brick, is also a traditional form of craftsmanship seen in many historic buildings in Leiden.

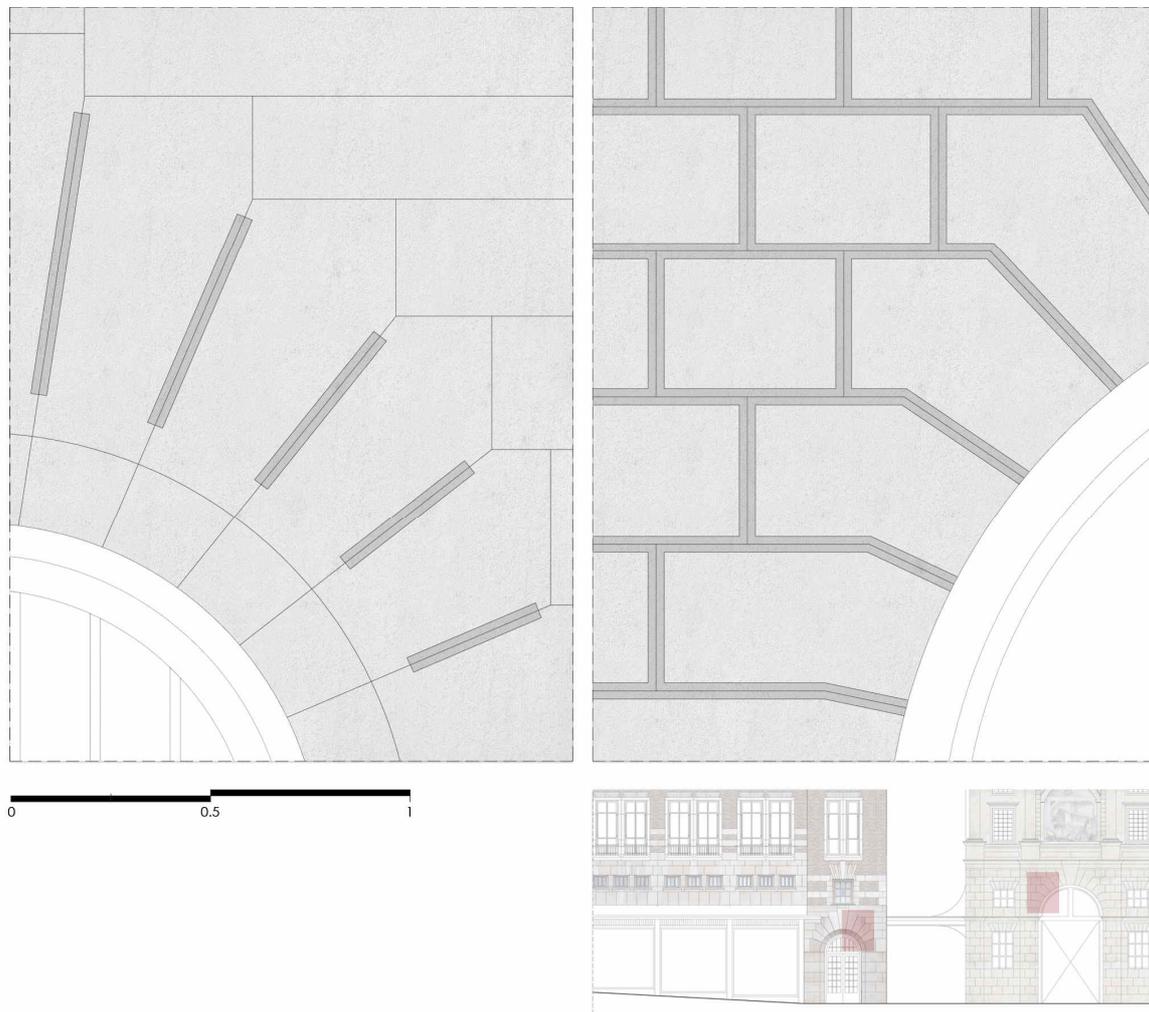


Figure 14: Diagram showing the joints in the V&D and the Waag buildings.

The same exact pattern of alternating brick and stone can be found in the old and new parts of the townhall of Leiden which is situated within 50 meters from the V&D. The new part in particular was designed by architect Cornelis Blaauw in the year 1932. It could be argued that the architects of the V&D were inspired by this building, even though the “enrichment of brickwork with horizontal bands is a characteristic of many of Van der Laan’s earlier works<sup>23</sup>.

The assumption of a design connection between the V&D and the townhall can be strengthened by a common architectural feature. On the façade of the V&D facing the Waag building, a circular opening is to be found which is surrounded by four oblong stone pieces. The same exact opening is to be found in the townhall.

<sup>23</sup> Remery, M., *Katholieke Architectuur in de Twintigste Eeuw: De Vier Architecten van de Leidse Familie Van der Laan*, (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2018), pg. 52



Figure 15: Diagram showing the proportions existing between the sandstone pieces which closely (and possibly on purpose) adhere to the golden ratio.

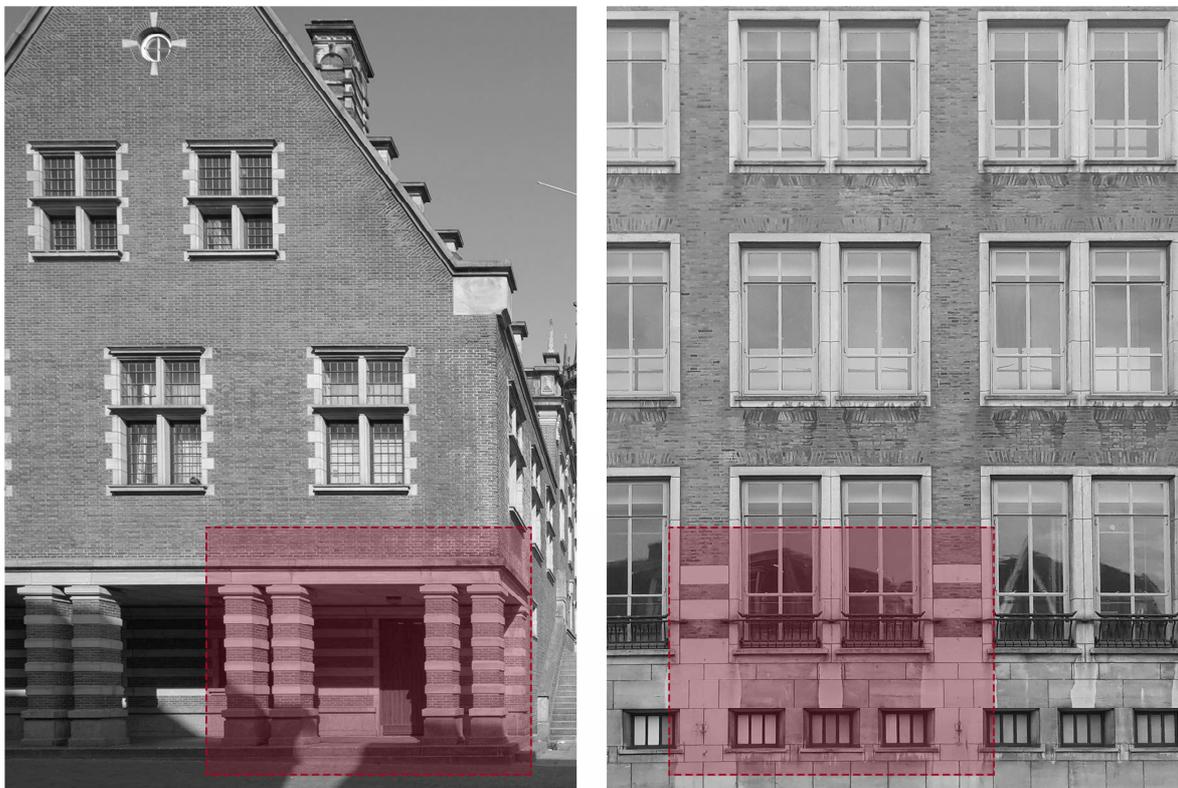


Figure 16: The similar layering of brickwork and stone in the Townhall of Leiden and the V&D store.



Figure 17: The round window of the Townhall of Leiden (left) and the V&D store (right).

As seen in the figure below, the openings are in complete alignment with the brickwork. A following question is if there could be a particular reason for the imitation of the materiality and architectural features of the surrounding buildings. When a building is designed a historic context full of monumental buildings constructed with great craftsmanship, it needs to reach certain expectations and standards. These standards are not only linked to the view of the building as an architectural object but as a store was well. Particularly in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, department stores had to meet the high demands of the well-to-do audiences.<sup>24</sup> One could suggest that the reason the department store in Leiden uses the architectural language of monumental buildings was not done purely out of respect of the heritage, but rather to suit the likings and taste of the bourgeois class of Leiden. The citizens of Leiden were raised within the traditional and monumental buildings and might have been estranged from the V&D store if it was built in a more modern fashion, without the use of any traditional materials or typologies. In contrast to the V&D in Leiden, the V&D in Enschede which shows more imperfections on the detail scale is not situated in a neighbourhood of comparable historic or architectural value. Thus, it can be hypothesized that also in Enschede the level of detailing (meaning really lack of detailing) is dependent on the urban context.

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<sup>24</sup> Van Beekum, R., *Architect Jan Kuijt Wzn . 1BB4-1944 Bouwen voor Vroom & Dreesmann*, (Amsterdam: Cultuurhistorische Uitgeverij Stokerkade, 2018), pg. 19



Figure 18: The alignment of brickwork and openings in the V&D of Leiden

During the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture seemed to play a large role in the promotion and the marketing part of the department store. A principle held by owners, investors and architects alike was "The fancier the building, the more customers it will attract". With the passing of time though, this did not prove to be the case. The V&D stores, though masterfully and beautifully constructed and detailed, eventually declared bankruptcy and became vacant.

## 5 Research Outcomes

When the old stories are preserved and connected with new ones, heritage buildings can serve as a “memory palace” in which cultural historical value and academic significance are materialized, in such a way that “those who understand the language of the building, can read many stories”.<sup>25</sup> From the research carried out to this point, either through re-drawing facades, or through examining written sources, it became clear that the buildings in Enschede and Leiden carry memories and stories which are indeed “materialized” in their facades. The examination of the materials themselves along with the way they are assembled can lead to interesting assumptions and hypotheses regarding the way the architects thought about the surrounding architecture, their level of consciousness of the urban context, and their influences. The research plan is a starting point for design as for further research-investigation, which from now on will be focused on the V&D in Leiden. This is due to the facts that the building as an object (composed by pre-existing and newer parts), its urban context (historic neighbourhood) as well as the intricacy in the design of the construction details are more interesting in my personal view in the case of Leiden than in that of Enschede.

### Design

When intervening in an existing building, I believe it is fundamental that one should take the original architect's design principles into account, and if possible, use these principles as a way to strengthen one's own design. This is by no means an attempt to imitate the existing, but rather a way to create a new outcome, where the “new” is compatible with the “old”. In this way, even when different materials and architectural language are implemented in the redesign, there still exists a coherence in the final outcome instead of a “chaos” to use the words of Jo Coenen. What were the design principles of the Van der Laans regarding materiality? It is difficult to provide an answer to this question at this point. One fact that is beyond debate however is that the Van der Laans carefully designed the construction details of the building's skin in alignment with the larger elements of the facade, such as the openings. All the stone pieces and bricks composing the skin are symmetrically laid around the windows. This results in a coherence as we move from the small scale (brick, stones joints and mortar) up to the larger scale (position and dimension of windows etc.). This is something that could form a starting point for the redesign. When I personally design an extension or a new part in a heritage building, I aim to harmonize it with the existing architecture. In the scope of materiality this means that the detailing of the materials to be used for extensions (for example the joints between two panels or the connection between two steel sheets) should be aligned with the openings of the existing and the new structure. This coherence between the small and large scale should be reflected in the materials and construction details of the new parts of the design as well.

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<sup>25</sup> Kuipers, M., *The Architectural Memory*, (Delft: VSSD, 2010), pg. 27

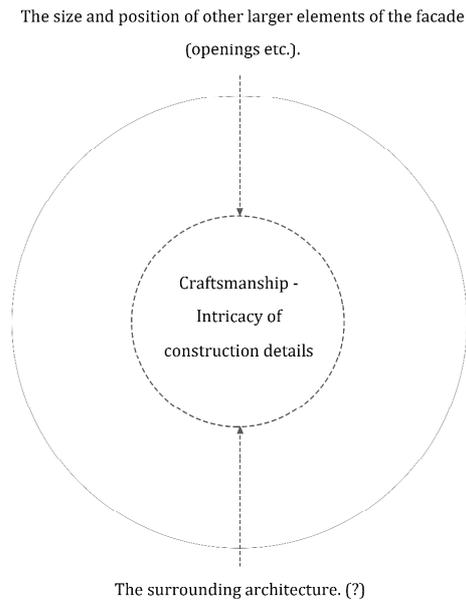


Figure 19: Diagram of the possible factors interacting with the intricacy of the construction details in the V&D in Leiden.

If we also take into account the hypothesis made earlier regarding the connection between the surrounding architecture and the façade's materiality, one principle to serve as a starting point could be the use of materials and textures found in the urban context for the new parts of the design. These textures do not necessarily only have to be from buildings, but could also be found in streets for example. This could lead to greater "urban coherence" between the building and its surroundings.

It is interesting that the building makes all the alleged connections with its surroundings only through the façade. The interior space of the building generates a very neutral impression. In contrast to the exterior, the building's interior is isolated from the surrounding urban or architectural context.

One could say that a major way in which the interior interacts with the exterior is through windows. As seen in the photograph below, taken from the building's first floor, when someone stands in the middle of the space, there is little to no visual connection with the outside. This is something to change, to not only have the building's façade in connection with the surroundings, but the inside as well, making the outside part of the interior experience. This can be done by creating new openings in the façade overlooking the Marsmansteeg for example, or by removing an interior section of the building to allow for more light in the centre of the building and the remaining interior spaces. Another alternative way of creating a more interesting experience of the building's interior is to use some of the architectural features found on the façade and the local architecture (like brick or stone) in the interior spaces as well.



Figure 20: View of the first floor of the V&D building in Leiden in its current state.

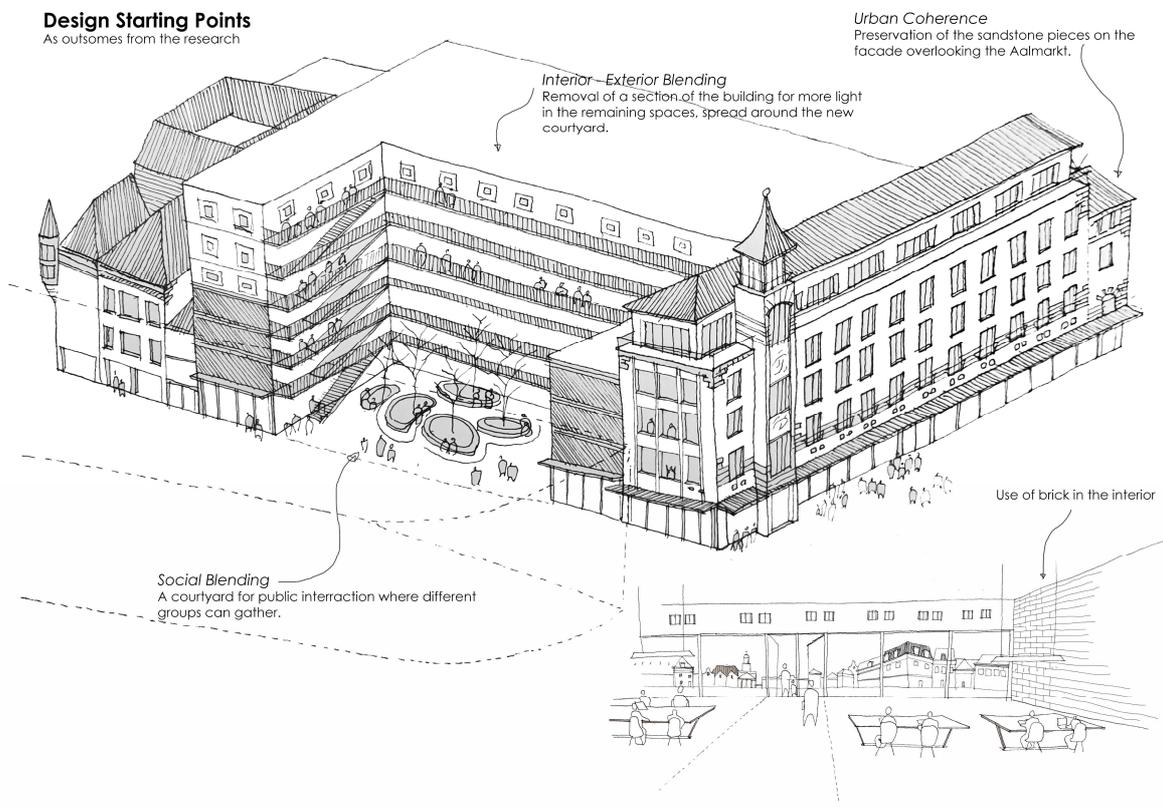


Figure 21: Sketch showing the research-based design starting points for the re-design in Leiden.

## Research

Up to this point, the focus of the research has been exclusively on the front facades of the buildings. The original architects of the V&D in Leiden also designed a part of the façade facing the Breestraat. From a first glance, this part of the façade does not seem to have any striking resemblance with its surrounding monumental buildings. Why did the architects have a different approach for the construction of the façade facing the Breestraat? Could it be that façade on the Breestraat was designed based on Van der Laan's personal style, disregarding the surroundings? Are there elements in this part of the façade (and the front façade) that can be traced back in older buildings designed by Van der Laan? It could be interesting if the research to be conducted would go in the exact opposite direction from the research already carried out. Which façade details were not influenced by the surrounding and what were the sources instead?



Figure 22: The façade of the V&D in Leiden on the Breestraat. The coloured part was designed by the Van der Laans.

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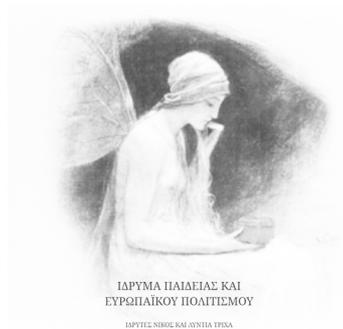
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