Worldwide courtyard typologies throughout history

First report

Studio-Specific Research Seminar 2, Spring Semester 2016-2017

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Introduction

The courtyard typology knows a long tradition of uses in Western culture. Each of the different courtyard typologies also has its own distinct characteristics in defining the community it is built for. Long before courtyards were applied in Europe however, they were already used in the Middle East and the Far East. The courtyards applied in each of these regions differ significantly. That is mainly due to cultural and climatic reasons[1]. The structure of Iranian and Arab courtyards was mainly defined by the Muslim religion and the resulting need for privacy and a clear separation between men and women. The traditional Chinese courtyards are centered around the idea of creating a place in which family relations can flourish[2]. They were not so much focused on a clear distinction between family members, but rather on emotions, commitments and the willingness to set aside personal goals for the wishes of others.

The courtyards used in Western cultures have a different logic to it. They were initially meant as a place for complete seclusion from the outside world in the form of cloisters. Later on, the residential courtyard typology was introduced as a means of protecting the weaker of society from the outside world. Where courtyards from these different areas differ quite substantially, they have one thing in common however. All of these courtyards share the characteristic of sealing the inhabitants off from the outside world. To get a better understanding of the different forms of courtyards, this paper discusses what the origin of the courtyard typology is and which characteristics those courtyards have. It will do so by researching Arab and Chinese traditional courtyard typologies and to later find how these typologies were introduced in the West.

History of the courtyard typology worldwide

The courtyard typology has a long history of uses around the world. The first records of courtyard settlements are found in the Middle East, in the delta of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers[3]. These settlements date back to the 4th millennium B.C. Dating a little less back, some excavations in Greece suggest that the houses of the wealthy in Ancient Greece were also characteristically inward-looking, with rooms arranged around a central open space called the atrium. With the rise of Islam and its emphasis on the principle of privacy, it comes to no surprise that the use of the courtyard typology, with its seclusion from the outside world, saw a huge increase.

Muslim tradition places great emphasis on the principle of privacy, on the distinction between male and female social spheres, and of the definition of domestic and private space. All of these factors determined the arrangement of space within the dwelling as well as the relationship between the house and the space outside. In this notion, the courtyard had an important place within domesticity, namely a retreat that mimicked the characteristics of paradise on earth[4]. Furthermore, since Islam originated in a region that was mainly hot and dry, the typology of the courtyard house was also needed to provide the physical comfort under extreme climatic conditions.

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1 Edwards, B., *Courtyard Housing: Past, Present and Future* (Taylor & Francis, 2006), 21.

2 Wang, D., "A Form of Affection: Sense of Place and Social Structure in the Chinese Courtyard Residence," *Journal of Interior Design* 32, no. 1 (2006): 28.

3 Memarian, G. and F. E. Brown, "Climate, Culture, and Religion: Aspects of the Traditional Courtyard House in Iran," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* (2003): 182.

4 Lehrman, J. B., *Earthly Paradise: Garden and Courtyard in Islam* (University of California Press, 1980).

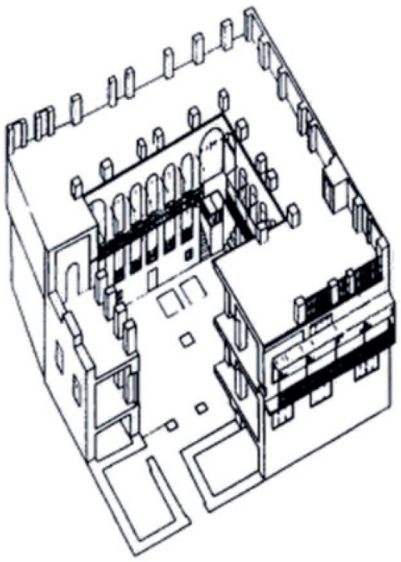

Fig. 1: Traditional Iranian courtyard dwelling

Jumping a few centuries to the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) and Qing dynasty (1644-1911) in China, we can see that the courtyard typology plays a central role in Beijing urban planning and the creation of communities. The courtyard, which is defined by a central opening enclosed by buildings, is a basic model for Chinese built environments, including cities, houses and gardens[5]. The courtyard house was the basic unit of the city; formal city planning arranged courtyards dwellings on a grid system. Almost everyone in Beijing, from the emperor to the common people, lived in a courtyard house. The typical Beijing courtyard house was a group of yards enclosed by one-story buildings, accommodating large families of three or four generations. Feng-shui played a significant role in forming the space of the Beijing courtyard dwelling, both physically and socially. Developed over thousands of years, the ancient practice of feng-shui was deeply embedded in every aspect of traditional Chinese life. The major goal of feng-shui is to find a way to live in harmony with heaven, earth and other people. In the construction of a dwelling, the site selection is very important to address issues of the feng-shui practice, namely to control the relation of the dwelling with the surrounding nature.

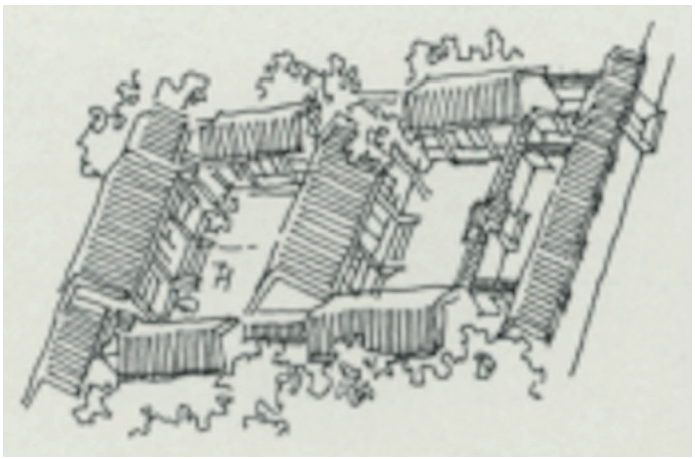

Fig. 2: Traditional Beijing courtyard dwelling

[5] Xu, P., ""Feng-Shui" Models Structured Traditional Beijing Courtyard Houses," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* (1998): 272.

One of the first known uses of the courtyard typology is in the Córdoba Mosque in Spain. It is a compound which symbolizes paradise. Faradis, the root of the word paradise, means 'enclosed garden' in Arabic. The courtyard symbolizes this encolsed precinct, and has commonly been used as an ordering and planning device in Middle Eastern countries. The Moors, who dominated most of the Iberian Peninsula from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries, used the courtyard a lot in their houses, palaces, mosques and other buildings[6]. Water is usually present in the courtyard. Fountains, usually in the center of the patio or courtyard, or small water canals symbolize the Islamic belief of the four rivers that flow into paradise. This remarkable concept has often been reinterpreted in architecture. Not only in Islamic architecture, but also in other architecture for its ability to provide a place of and calmness to the user of the building. After the conquest of Spain by the Christians, the tradition of the courtyard typology survived.

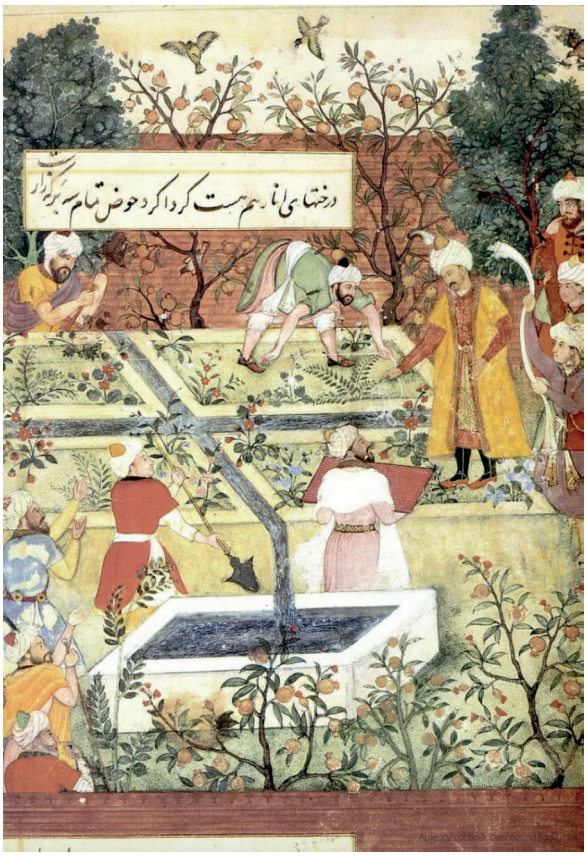

Fig. 3: Enclosed garden in Islamic culture

The courtyard was, in turn, exported to the overseas colonies beginning in the sixteenth century[7]. There, the Conquistadors would maintain the tradition, in their organization of the territory. For example, in rural colonial architecture, water canals typically flow through haciendas. A hacienda is a large ranch in Spain's former colonies. The haciendas have as their counterparts the urban houses, also organized around a central courtyard, with rooms hierarchically arranged. The courtyard scheme also appears in the rural religious architecture of the Spanish colonies. The Ecce Homo convent in Villa de Leyva, built like the haciendas in the middle of the landscape, is an example of this. In cities, the same ordering principle appears repeatedly in various building types. Houses, convents and institutions are characterized by their

[6] Castro, R. L., B. V. Jiménez, R. Salmona, and G. Téllez, *Rogelio Salmona* (Independent Publishing Group, 1998), 19.
[7] Ibid., 20.

interior courtyards. Ultimately, at the urban scale the courtyard becomes the plaza, the only public space of the colonial city, and just like the courtyard the space where most important activities happen within a city.

Characteristics of the Arab courtyard house

With the extreme climatic conditions that Iran knows, the spatial distribution of the courtyard dwelling is probably mostly based on the climatic conditions. Because of the intensity of the summer sun and the extreme temperature differences, inhabitants do not use all rooms of the house at all times[8]. For the warmer periods of the year, it is best to have the main living quarters in the shade on the south side of the courtyard. Conversely, the north side of the courtyard is most suitable for the winter months, since it is warmed by the low winter sun. The same logic of finding comfortable spaces to stay can be found over the course of the day.

In summer, the southern rooms will be used until late morning, after which the inhabitants move to the basement. In the late afternoon, the preference is to move into the courtyard or back to the well-ventilated south rooms. At night, the occupants continue to use the courtyard or migrate to the roof. In winter, most activities take place in the northern rooms, since the southern sun is able to warm these rooms. During the evening and at night, the small corner rooms with its sparse openings are the warmest, since warmth could not ventilate out as easily, and are therefore the most comfortable rooms to stay in. This hybridity of rooms based on the period in the year or during the day calls for rooms that are modular and repetitive, and can therefore switch functions easily.

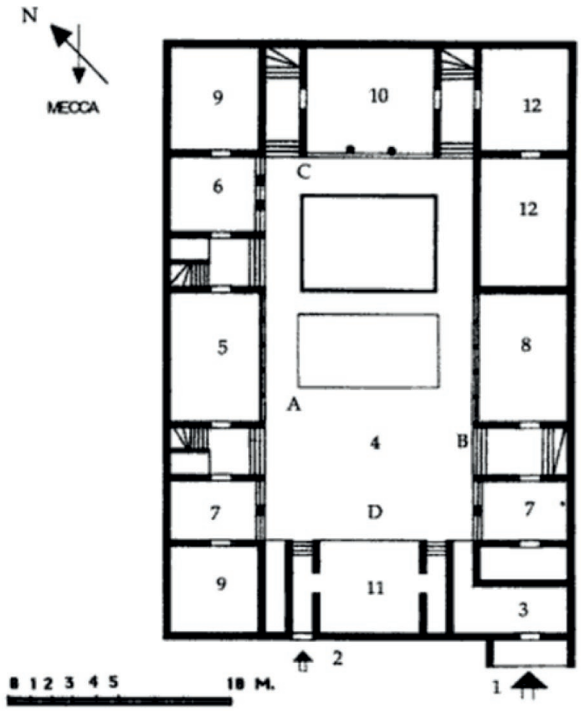

Fig. 4: Floor plan of a traditional Iranian courtyard dwelling

With its inward-facing rooms, the courtyard house lent itself to a high level of domestic privacy, being of great importance within the Islam. Fundamental to Islamic religious tradition is

[8] Memarian, G. and F. E. Brown, "Climate, Culture, and Religion: Aspects of the Traditional Courtyard House in Iran," 186.

the control of social interaction between the sexes[9]. There should be a minimal of contact between men and women who are unrelated to each other, as this can cause sexual desire and potentially lead to illegal sexual intercourse. These Islamic principles caused a sharp distinction between the male and the female world, as well as between the public world and the private world. As this is the case even within dwellings, special measures are taken to keep unrelated men and women separated from each other.

The first measure is the sparse use of openings in the outside wall, and if so then the openings are above eye-level. The second one is the use of two door-bells, indicating male or female visitors. Furthermore, the house is usually split up into male quarters, situated close to the entrance of the house, and female quarters, well-protected at the back of the house. The entrance area was therefore shaped in such a way as to prevent direct views into the back of the house. This would mean that the entrance area does not provide the best welcome in terms of hospitality. That is in conflict with another principle of Islamic culture, which is that hospitality is also an important part of Muslim tradition.

Characteristics of the Beijing courtyard house

In the traditional Beijing houses, feng shui had a big influence on the design of the dwelling. If one follows the principles of feng shui, one is believed to get good fortune, both personally as well as within the family[10]. In ancient times, good fortune began with responding to and accommodating nature. The ideal feng shui site is supposed to balance Yan and Ying. In designing the dwelling, inspiration is taken from nature. Where solid mountains stand for Yin, the void where water runs stands for Yang. In an ideal feng shui site, an open space (Yang) is enfolded by surrounding buildings (Yin). Mimicking these conditions that are usually found in nature is believed to bring prosperity to the inhabitants. A further emphasis lies on orientations and positions of the courtyard plan, as a good position in relation to heaven was believed to arrange vital energy for the whole family.

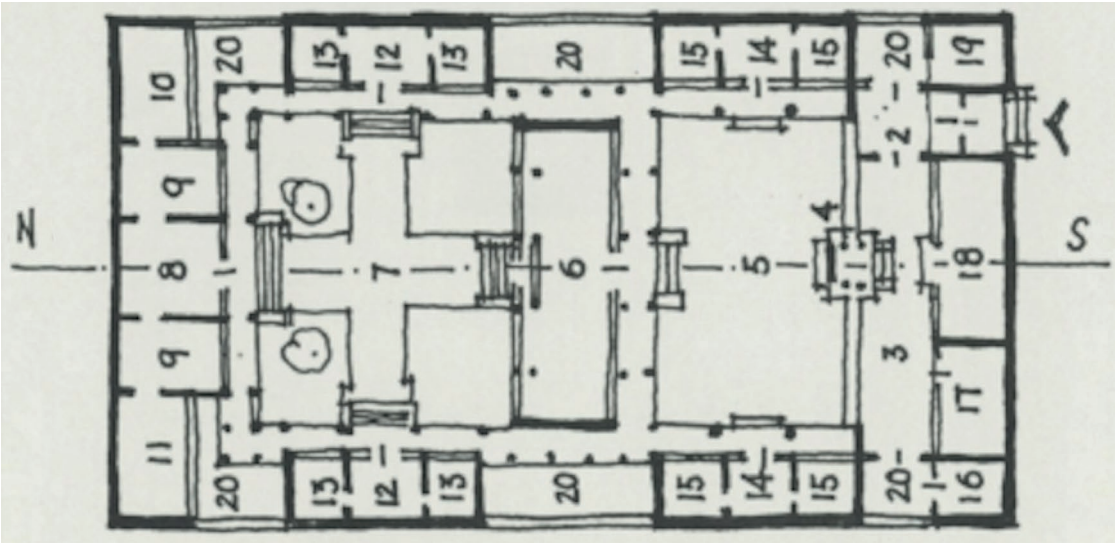

Fig. 5: Traditional Beijing courtyard dwelling

Furthermore, feng shui principles were applied in a manner that reflected and reinforced the strict class system visible within the traditional Chinese society and families. The resulting

[9] Ibid., 188.

[10] Xu, P., ""Feng-Shui" Models Structured Traditional Beijing Courtyard Houses," ibid. (1998): 281.

house rather attempted to capture prosperity through social control than through the means of individual freedom and privacy. The Beijing courtyard dwelling was created as a space to exercise constant rule over the large family[11]. Chinese society was ordered very hierarchically, with the emperor at the top and the common people at the bottom.

The same accounted for the Chinese family. The grandfather sat atop the pyramid of power, with the women and the servants at the bottom. This was also translated into the lay-out of the Beijing courtyard dwelling. The grandparents always occupied the major yard, and resided in the highest rooms that faced south and had the most steps. These were believed to have the best feng shui quality. The grandfather's family lived in rooms facing east or west with fewer steps, while the servants lived in rooms facing north. Furthermore, the grandparents lived in the major yard, that was always protected by a few other yards. This inaccessibility was not only for defense, but was also a symbol of his importance due to the distance between him and other members of the family.

The allocation of specific areas within the courtyard dwelling to specific members of the family also helped in giving these members a sense of place, and thereby their position within the family[12]. David Wang argues that in open office schemes, where all workstations are shared by all persons regardless of rank within the company, have been unsuccessful in causing a sense of place among its users. These users have therefore been unable to distinguish the hierarchy within such an organization. Wang claims that the traditional Beijing courtyard typology makes sure that there is a permanent connection between the social role and the physical form of the courtyard.

Conclusion

Throughout history, the courtyard typology has known a long tradition of uses, although in slightly different forms. These differences were caused by climatic and cultural conditions. Muslim tradition places great emphasis on the principle of privacy and on the distinction between male and female social spheres. The courtyard is therefore organized in such a way that the interior is not visible from the outside, as well as the back of the dwelling being not visible for visitors. Furthermore, the spatial distribution of the courtyard dwelling is based on the extreme climatic conditions. To find comfortable rooms to stay in according to the time of the day or period of the year, rooms are used in a flexible way. This hybridity of rooms calls for rooms that are modular and repetitive and can therefore switch functions easily.

In the traditional Beijing houses, feng shui had a big influence on the design of the dwelling as well as the hierarchical ordering of a Chinese family. The ideal feng shui site is supposed to balance Yan and Ying in order to bring good fortune, which is done by responding to and accommodating nature in the courtyard dwelling. Furthermore, the Beijing courtyard dwelling was created as a space to exercise constant rule over the large family given the strict hierarchical order of the Chinese family. The grandfather sat atop the pyramid of power and always occupied the major yard at the back of the complex, which had the best feng shui qualities. Other members of the family were given an area which had less feng shui qualities. The position of the grandparents was a symbol of his importance due to the distance between him and other members of the family. This allocation of specific areas within the courtyard dwelling to specific members of the family also helped in giving these members a sense of place, and thereby their position within the family.

Looking at the similarities between the Arab and Beijing courtyard house, it must be noted that both typologies are structured in order to create multiple levels of privacy. The Arab courtyard does this by creating a difference between the 'public' area of the courtyard, which is also used to host guests, and the 'private' area of the courtyard. The Beijing courtyard is structured in such a way as to assure that the grandparents of the family reside at the back of

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[11] Ibid., 278.

[12] Wang, D., "A Form of Affection: Sense of Place and Social Structure in the Chinese Courtyard Residence," 10.

the courtyard, providing them with the best protection from the outside world. Furthermore, there is a similarity in the addressing of climatic conditions in both typologies. Where the climatic conditions in the Arab courtyard house forced the layout to cater a flexible use of rooms, the Beijing courtyard house responded to natural phenomena due to their believe in the feng shui principles.

Some of these principles can serve as inspiration, although translated to the current needs, for the design of an extension to the Roosenberg Abbey. This design will be further elaborated in report three.

References

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Figures

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Fig. 3: Taken from: Lehrman, J. B. *Earthly Paradise: Garden and Courtyard in Islam.*, 9

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Fig. 5: Taken from: Memarian, G., and F. E. Brown. "Climate, Culture, and Religion: Aspects of the Traditional Courtyard House in Iran.", 3

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Rituals in a monastery and rituals on a university; a comparison

Second report

Studio-Specific Research Seminar 2, Spring Semester 2016-2017
Irene Cieraad Research Seminar AR3AI055
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Introduction

Over the course of KU Leuven's past, the university has made a transition from a religiously inspired institution to a scientifically inspired institution. Paradoxically enough, a few hundred years ago no one would have thought that both ideologies could have been united in any institution. Religion namely believes in the Story of Creation as an explanation to why things happen in the way they do, while scientists believe in natural laws for this explanation. The climax of this discussion was the publication of The Origin of the Species by Charles Darwin in 1859, with its complete refusal of every principle from the Story of Creation. This event is exemplary for the development that was set into motion by the Enlightment and that will probably continue in the future, namely the decreasing importance of the Church within all aspects of our culture.

The upcoming transition from the Roosenberg Abbey as a place devoted to religion towards a place devoted to science is just another step in this development. It is noteworthy that a university with such a strong religious past is involved in this transition. This report therefore researches the best way in which the KU Leuven can strengthen its ties with its Catholic past when inhabiting the abbey. Both institutions are characterized by a strong set of rituals that define its daily rhythm. Although rituals in an abbey differ from rituals in a university, the rituals that defined life withing Roosenberg can form an inspiration for the new Campus Roosenberg. The hypothesis is that KU Leuven's ties with history are strengthened by providing the university with a location which is dedicated to its ceremonies.

The ceremonies that take place within the KU Leuven and which are defined by strong rituals are events such as inauguration events, PhD events and conferences. First this report focuses on an analysis of rituals that take place within an abbey. The daily life of the Nový Dvůr Monastery will be analyzed for that purpose and compared to the Roosenberg Abbey. Subsequently the ceremonies that take place within the KU Leuven will be analyzed. A comparison will be made with a ritual taking place at the Universiteit van Amsterdam, namely a PhD defence. The goal is to find out if a location dedicated to ceremonies away from KU Leuven's main campus adds any value to the university.

Roosenberg Abbey

The Roosenberg Abbey was initially founded in 1237 and has a strong emphasis on Marian and Franciscan spirituality[1]. These spiritual orders were introduced in 1830 by the Marian Sisters of Saint Francis. On their website, it can be found that they are exploring with new forms of religious life as well as inter-religious living. Their tradition is built on three pillars however, namely living in a community, silence and prayer and hospitality. For them, living in a community is important due to the awareness that they have of their interdependence with each other, with God and with the whole world around them. Therefore, they participate in a lot of communal prayers, which helps them to grow as a community. For the community of Sisters within the Roosenberg Abbey, silence forms a good tool to find the deep relationships that they have with each other, with God and with the surrounding world. In their encounter with guests they hope to share their joys, sorrows, hopes, fears and anxieties, in order to help them in their journey toward God.

The Sisters of the Roosenberg Abbey life according the Marian and Franciscan order. At the heart of the Franciscan spirituality is the gospel[2]. St. Francis stressed that everything that life is made up of is a gift and that one should not own anything. One should be content with what is given and have respect for every form of life. That means that no one should exploit or manipulate the gifts of nature. This seems like a call for a sober lifestyle and focuses mainly on the own individual. The Marian spirituality lays the focus on attention on other members of society. Mary was a woman of faith and had a great affection for the poor ones. With this faith she made sure that the poor and marginalized members of society got a voice as well.

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[1] www.abdij-roosenberg.be/gemeenschap

[2] www.abdij-roosenberg.be/spiritualiteit

Unfortunately, the exact daily rhythm of life in the Roosenberg Abbey has not been documented. There is a very detailed record of daily life within a different European monastery however, namely the Monastery of Nový Dvůr in the Czech Republic[3]. This monastery differs from the Roosenberg Abbey in that it belongs to the Cistercian order, which takes its inspiration from the Rule of St. Benedict dating back to medieval times. The Rule of St. Benedict prescribed a strict daily rhythm of prayer, work and study in order to make a man totally receptive to God[4]. For this purpose the Rule foresaw in a strict rhythm of eight religious services a day, which started around 2 o'clock in the morning and ended with the last night service.

> "The Rule and the Cistercian tradition
> have succeeded in making a subtle mix of
> community life and of independence, of work
> and of prayer, of poverty without indigence,
> of silence, of space and austere solitude
> for going to God, in a fraternal atmosphere."[5]

Outside the hours of common prayer there was time for manual work and periods of reading. Noteworthy is also that there is no time allocated for leisure, since Benedict believes that 'idleness is the enemy of the soul'[6]. Although the Nový Dvůr Monastery belongs to a different order than the Roosenberg Abbey, their shared believe in the power of communal prayer, study and poverty makes that analyzing the daily life in the Nový Dvůr Monastery gives a good insight into the daily life at the Roosenberg Abbey.

Documentation of life in a Cistercian abbey

This section documents the daily life within the Nový Dvůr Monastery and analyzes the spaces used for those actions and the movements in between them. In doing so, a schematic plan of the monastery shows the movements according to the time of the day.

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[3] www.novydvur.cz/en/day

[4] Lawrence, C. H., *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (New York City, NY, USA: Routledge, 2015), 31.

[5] www.novydvur.cz/en/day

[6] Lawrence, C. H., *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, 34.

Fig. 1: The Nový Dvůr Monastery in the Czech Republic

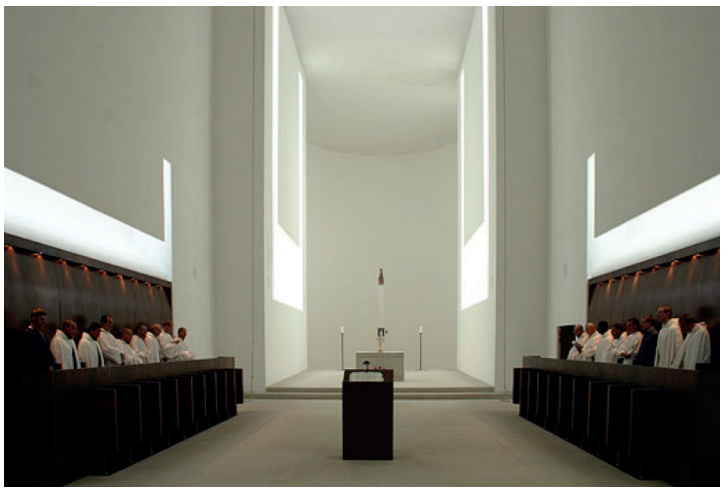
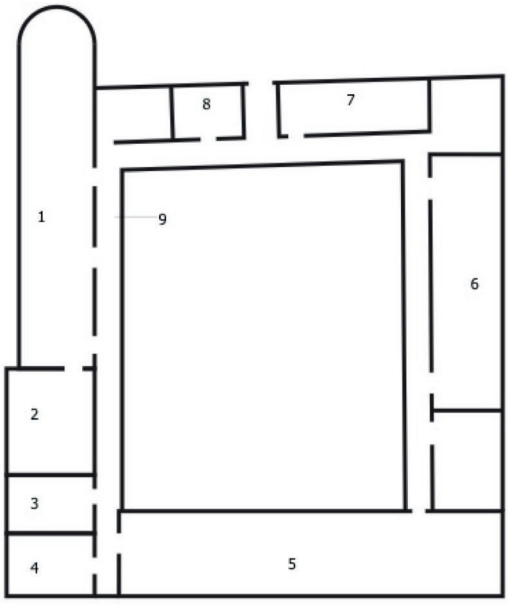


Fig. 2: The church of the Nový Dvůr Monastery



1 church
2 court
3 chapel
4 conference room
5 administration
6 refectory (dining room)
7 scriptorium (library)
8 sacristy (preparation)
9 cloister
10 courtyard

Fig. 3: Schematic plan of the Nový Dvůr monastery with the rooms indicated

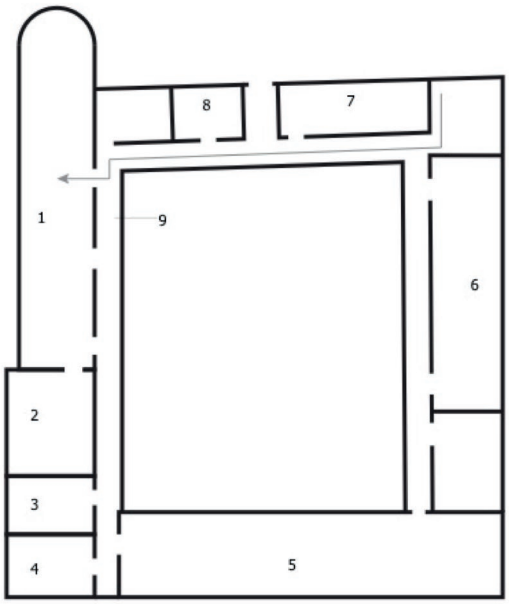


Fig. 4: Movement at 3.15

3.00

With a few variations according to the season, the monks get up at 3.00 a.m.

3.15

The night office, or Matins. It lasts about an hour, followed by half hour of prayer in silence.

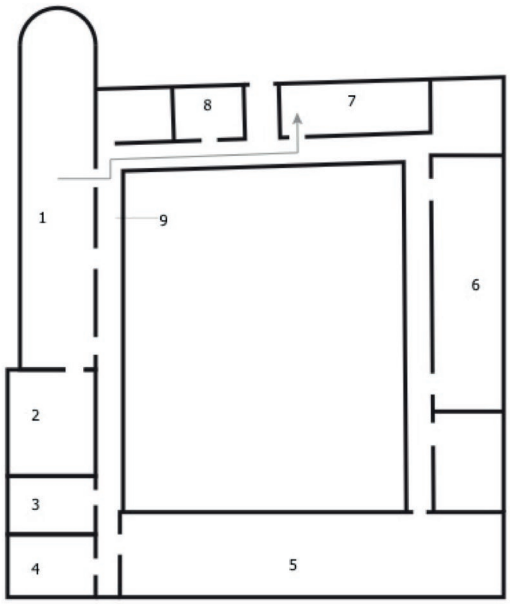


Fig. 5 & 6: Movement at 5.00

5.00

Reading (or *lectio divina*), or also for some...rest!

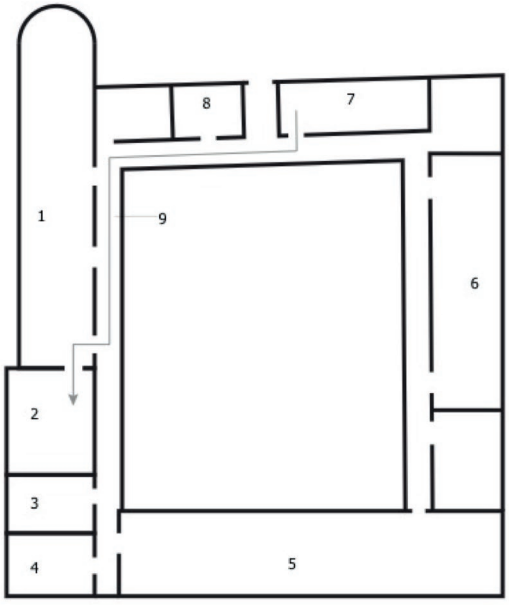


Fig. 7: Movement at 6.15

6.15

Every other day, lecture in the chapter room where the Father Abbot commentates the Rule of Saint Benedict, applying it to the current needs and situations.

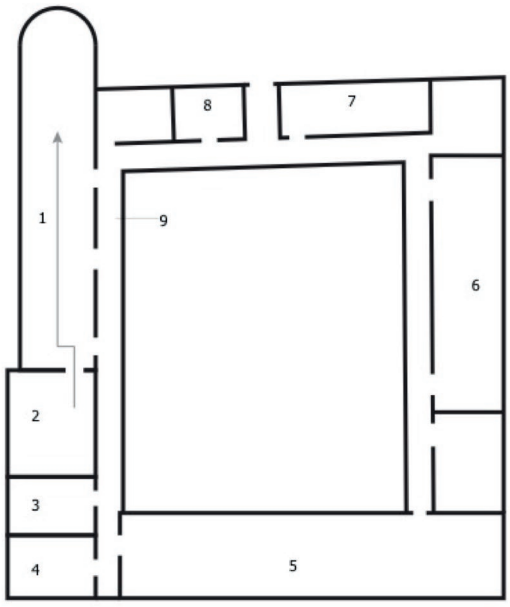


Fig. 8 & 9: Movement at 6.30

6.30

The service of Lauds – which is the prayer of the start of the day – and Mass.

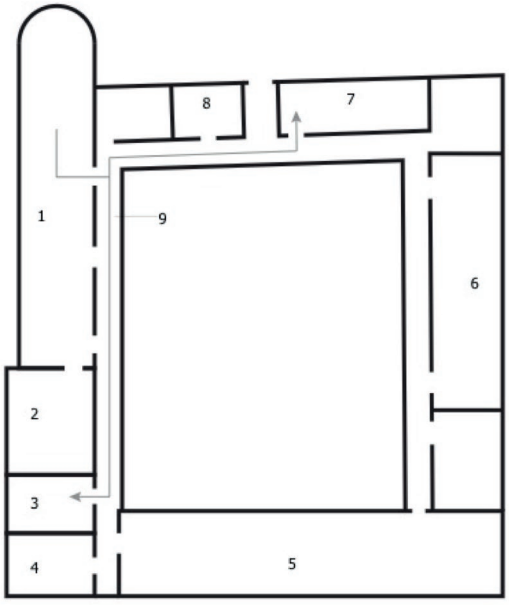


Fig. 10: Movement at 8.00

8.00

Time of prayer or reading; some brothers begin already their work.

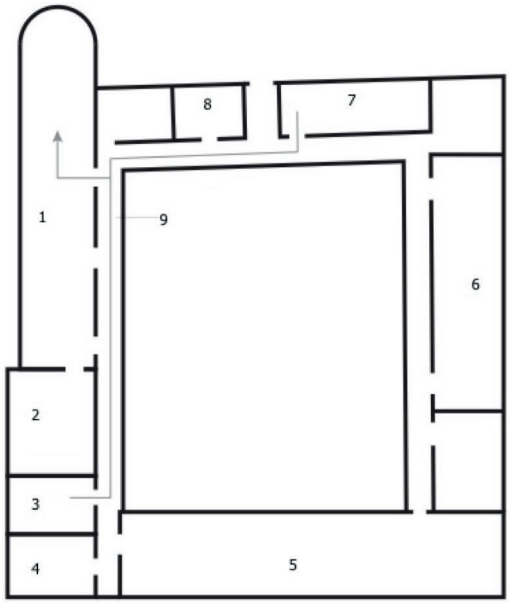


Fig. 11: Movement at 9.00

9.00

The service of the middle of the morning, called Terce

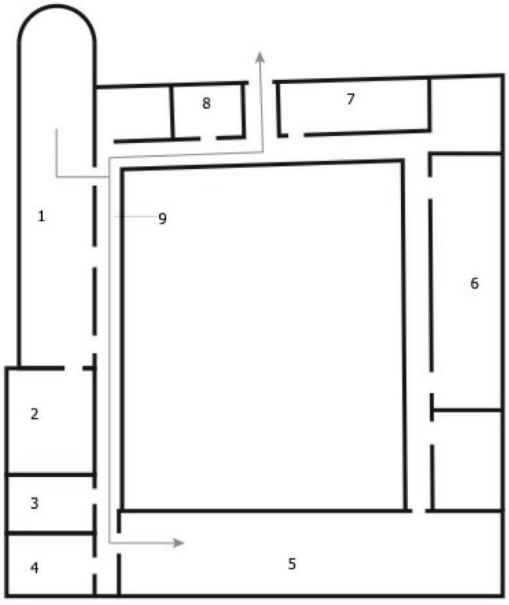


Fig. 12: Movement at 10.00

10.00

For all, priests and non-priests alike, work.

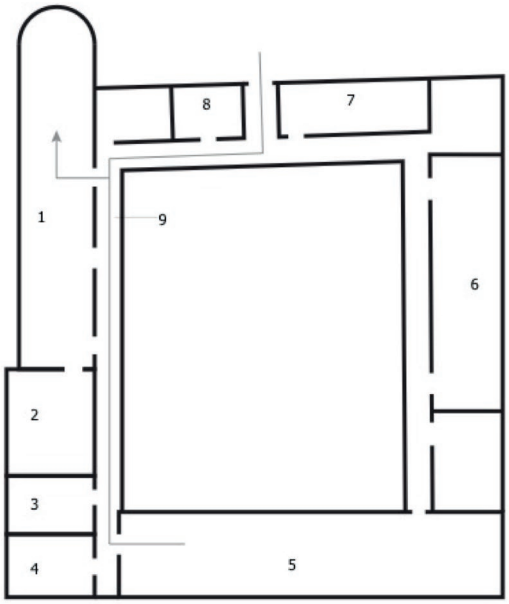


Fig. 13: Movement at 12.00

12.00

Service of the middle of the day, called Sext

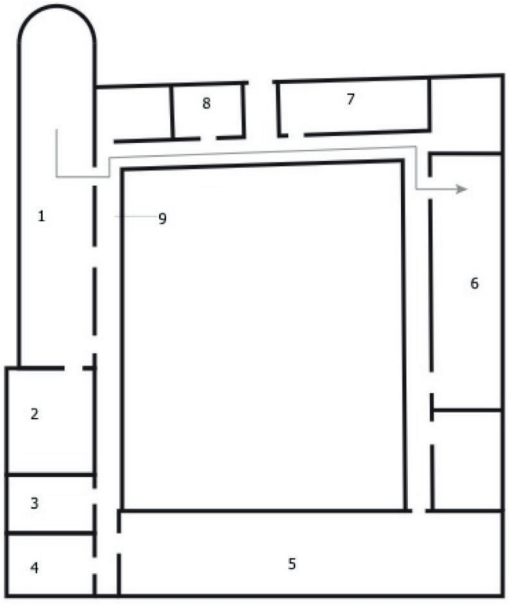


Fig. 14: Movement at 13.00

13.00

Lunch in the refectory.

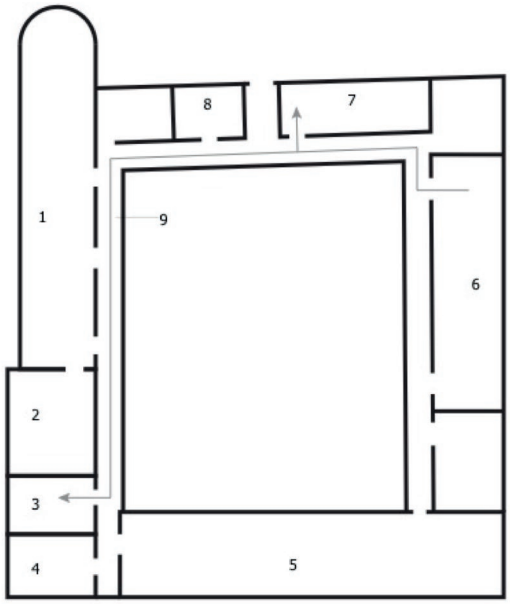


Fig. 15: Movement at 13.30

13.30

A time of rest, prayer or reading.

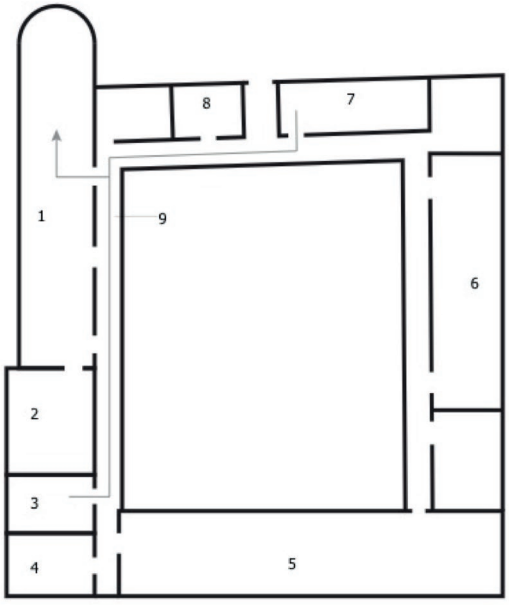


Fig. 16: Movement at 14.00

14.00

Service of the beginning of the afternoon, or None.

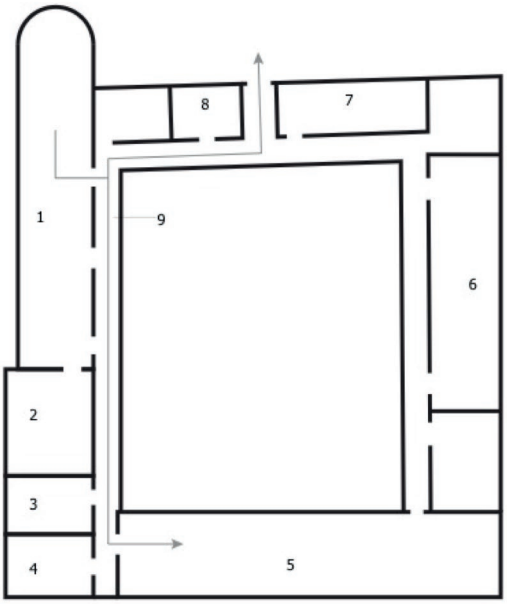


Fig. 17: Movement at 14.15

14.15

Manual work.

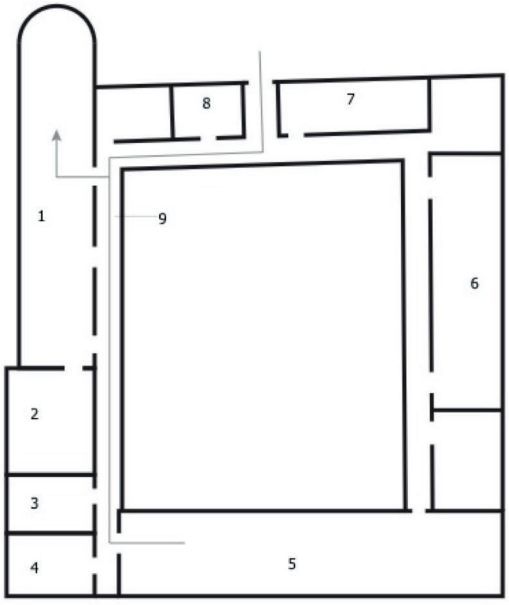


Fig. 18: Movement at 17.30

17.30

Service of Vespers followed by a time of prayer in community.

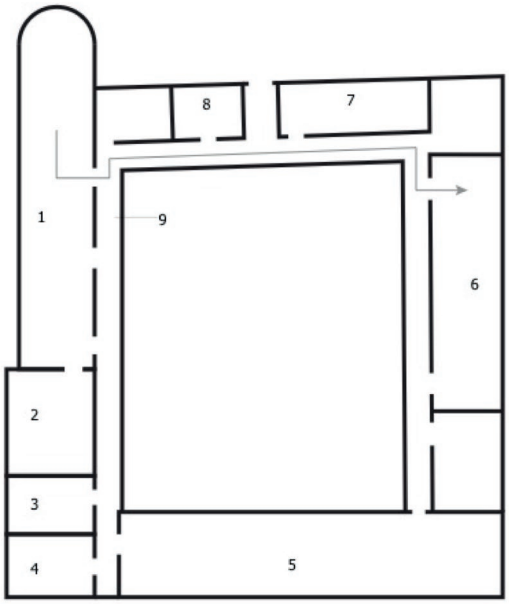


Fig. 19: Movement at 18.30

18.30

Dinner in the refectory.

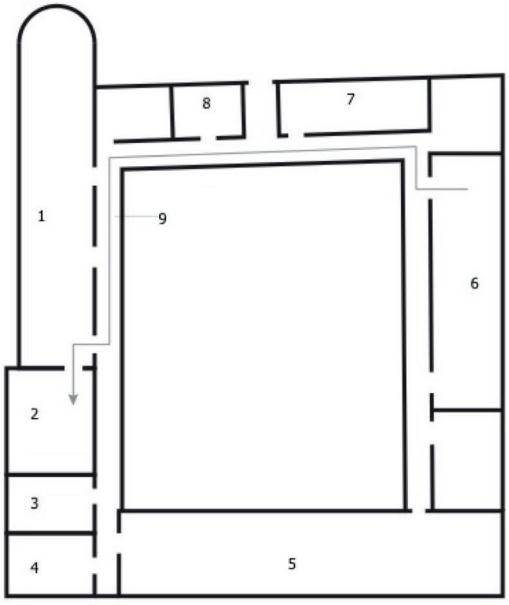


Fig. 20: Movement at 19.10

19.10

The community reunites less formally than for the morning chapter for a spiritual reading listened to together: the "Reading of Compline;" or, if not this, then the peeling of vegetables: the "Portion;" or else a singing class.

19.30

The service of the beginning of the night or "Compline," ended by the solemn chant of the *Salve Regina*, the "sublime antiphony," as it was called in the Middle Ages, hymn to the Blessed Virgin Mary that the monks of Cîteaux sing every evening since the twelfth century:

We salute you, Queen,
Mother of mercy,
Our life, our sweetness, our hope.
Exiled children of Eve, we shout to you,
To you we sigh,
Crying and moaning in this valley of tears.
Oh, you, our advocate,
Turn to us your look of mercy
And, after this exile, show us Jesus,
The blessed fruit of your womb.
Oh, clement,
Oh, merciful,
Oh, tender Virgin Mary.

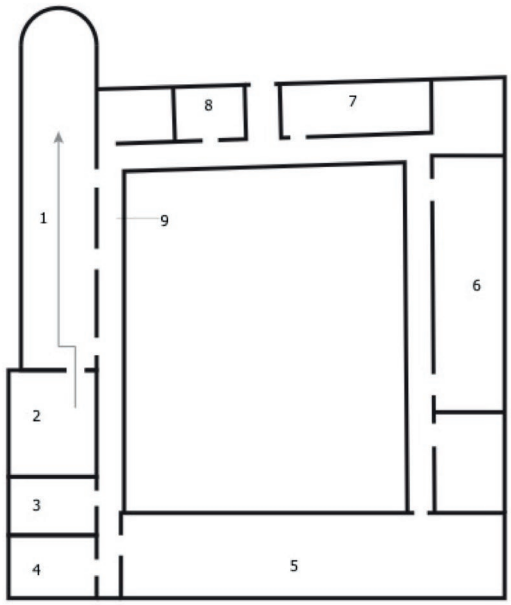


Fig. 21: Movement at 19.30

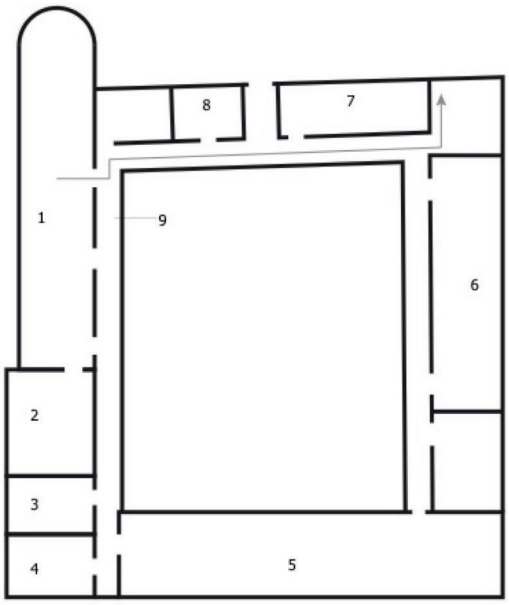


Fig. 22: Movement at 20.00

20.00

After the Father Abbot has blessed each monk, it's the Great Silence of the night and bedtime.

Fig. 23: Monks moving through the cloister

Rituals at the KU Leuven

PhD defences are the rituals taking place at the KU Leuven which are best documented online. At average, three PhD defences take place every day at the KU Leuven[7]. PhD candidadtes have a few rooms at their disposal which they can reserve free of charge for their presentation, including a room afterwards for the reception. The rooms that are used for these PhD defences are located at the Campus Leuven and the Campus Heverlee[8]. The website of the KU Leuven shows that there are clear timeframes to make sure that as many PhD candidates as possible can use these rooms and its facilities, up to a maximum of three per day per room. The most eye-catching rooms are the 'Promotiezaal' and the 'Jubileumzaal'. Furthermore these and other rooms of the KU Leuven can be rented for special events, with prices for the rooms varying greatly from € 45,- to € 335,-[9]. It is noteworthy that given KU Leuven's recent expansion across Flanders, the only locations that are available for PhD defences are in Leuven.

Fig. 24: Promotiezaal of the KU Leuven

Fig. 25: Locations of the KU Leuven across Flanders, with Waasmunster in the middle

[7] www.agenda.kuleuven.be/nl/overzicht

[8] www.admin.kuleuven.be/td/fd/le/doctoraten

[9] www.admin.kuleuven.be/td/fd/le/bijzondere_zalen

Documentation of a PhD defence at the Universiteit van Amsterdam

Promotion of Mr. A. Chuklin, from the Department of Computation Science (Informatica), on Wednesday the 10th of May, 2017. The promotor is Prof. Dr. M. de Rijke and the co-promotor is Dr. E. Kanoulas. The subject is the 'Complexity of search engines'. The promotion presentation takes place in the Oude Luthersekerk, which is the UvA's Aula, in the heart of Amsterdam at the Singel 411.

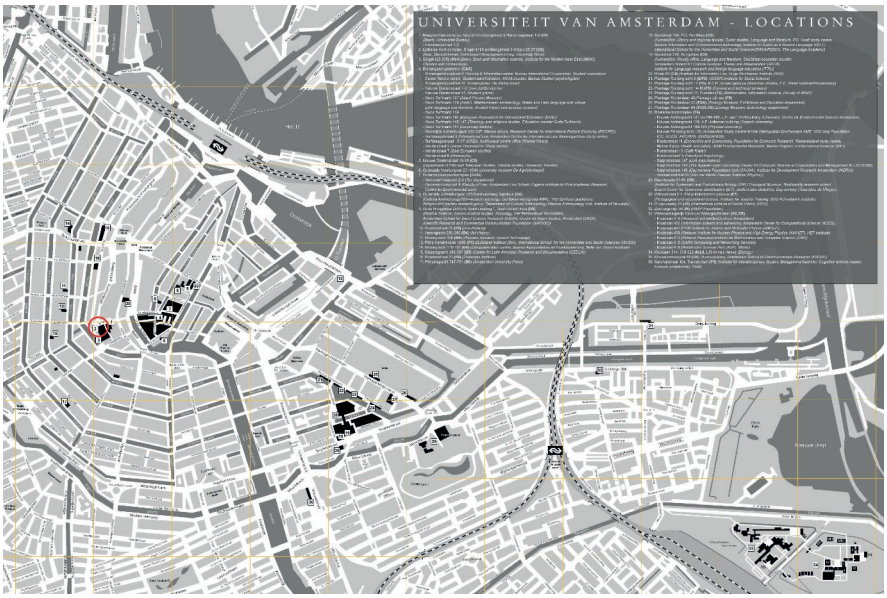
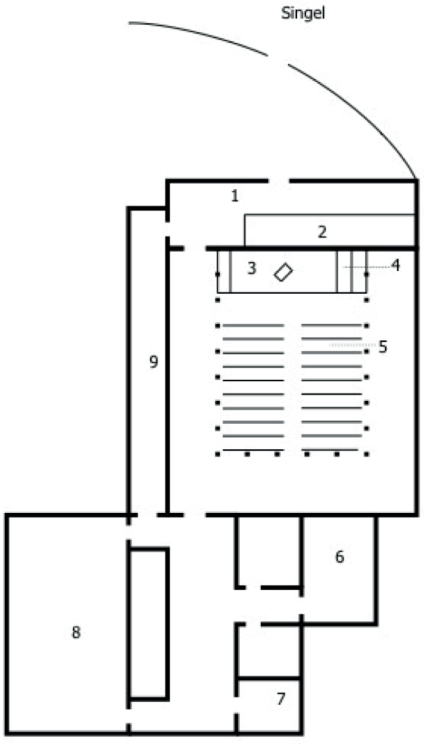


Fig. 26: Map of Amsterdam with all of UvA's 36 locations listed, the Oude Luthersekerk is indicated in red



1	entrance area
2	wardrobe
3	stage
4	benches of committee
5	seats audience
6	toga room
7	discussion room
8	Tetterode library
9	hallway

Fig. 27: Diagrammatic plan of the Oude Luthersekerk with the rooms indicated

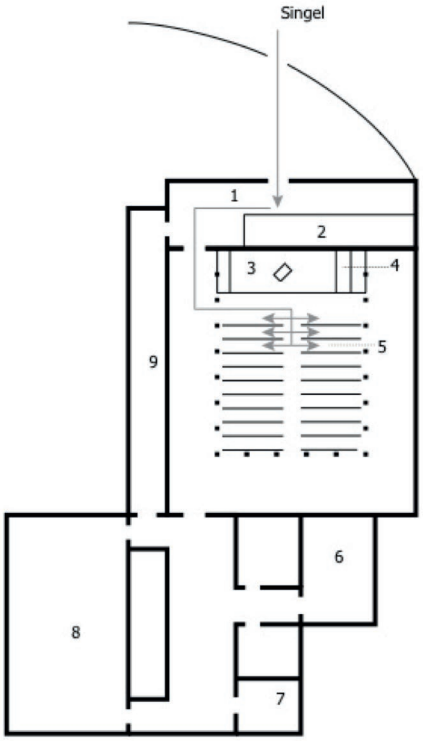


Fig. 28: Movement at 12.45

12.45

The first people gather in the main hall of the Oude Lutherskerk, anticipating the starts of the presentation at 13.00. There is a wardrobe at the entrance of the building. Among the audience there seem to be only family and colleagues from the same PhD group. Some of them are talking to each other near the stage, while others have found their seat already. I am clearly the only unknown guest here. Some of them do say hello to me, which might indicate that although this is a public event, the space feels quite personal for their specific social group. In the back of the building, in the Tetterode library, there are drinks underway as a closing to a previous promotion presentation while this presentation starts to get underway.

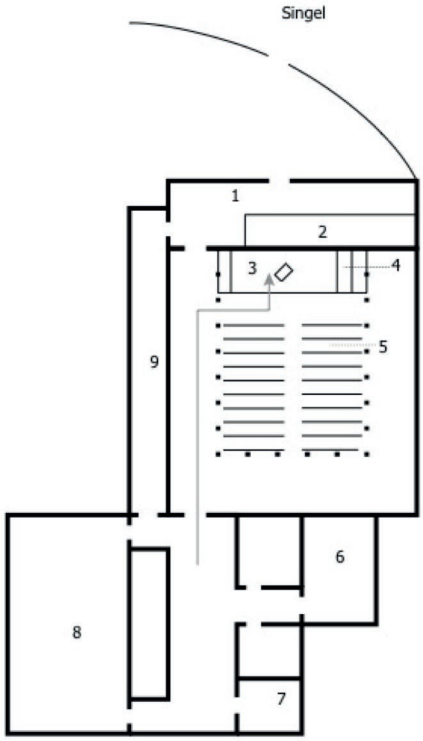


Fig. 29: Movement at 12.55

12.55

The PhD'er who is presenting walks into the main hall flanked by two colleagues, all three of them dressed in the same formal suit. While the PhD'er presenting prepares his presentation, one of the colleagues turns to the audience and explains how the presentation will happen. He explains where to sit, when to applaud, how to behave when the ceremony with the professors walk in and how long everything is going to take.

13.00

The presentation is underway with the family and colleagues of the PhD'er as the only audience. The PhD'er stands on the stage behind the desk, with his two colleagues sitting on either side of the desk. This seems quite formal and monumental. It is clearly a so-called dummy presentation, as even I am capable of understanding the story.

13.07

The presentation is finished after seven minutes. The PhD'er turns off the screen and gets off the stage to talk to his family and colleagues. We are being told that it takes a few minutes before the professors will arrive.

Fig. 30: The PhD candidate on stage

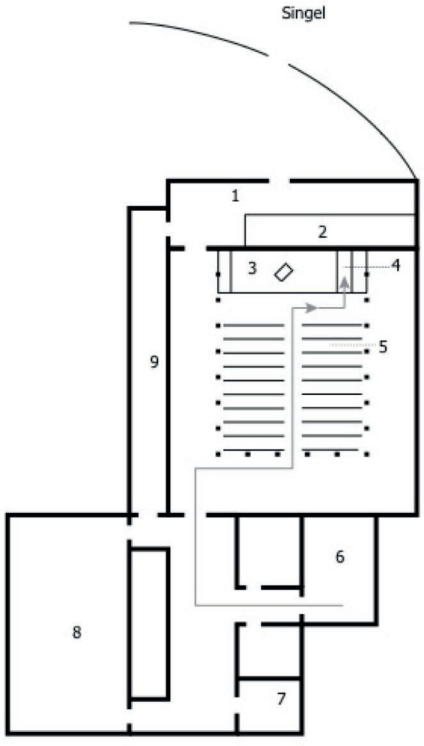
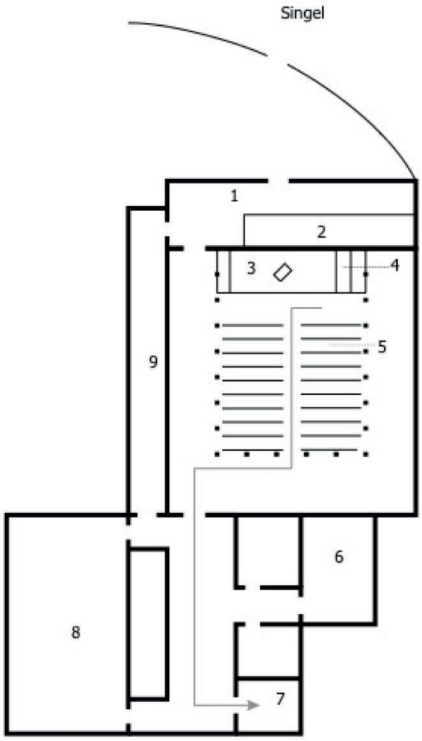


Fig. 31: Movement at 13.15

13.15

At exactly fifteen minutes after the scheduled start of the presentation, we hear the sound from the ceremony with the profesors walking into the main hall of the church from the back of the building. The sound we hear is the scepter of the ceremony leader. As explained before the start of the presentation, everybode stands up, stops talking and turns toward the ceremony. The group consists of nine persons; the ceremony leader in toga, the chairman of the committee in toga, the promotor and the co-promotor in toga and four external critics, all of them not in toga. The external critics are professionals working at a range of companies, so they probably came straight from their work to this presentation. The companies include Microsoft Research and several institutes. The committee is escorted into the seats at the right side of the podium.



13.18

The ceremony leader retreats into the back of the building, after which everybody sits down again.

Fig. 32: Movement at 13.18

Fig. 33: The PhD candidate, the ceremony leader in the middle and the committee on the right

13.20

The chairman of the committee starts the session with critics. The word is given to the first external critic, after which the three remaining external critics and the co-promotor have the opportunity to ask questions. The promotor doesn't have the opportunity to ask questions. All of them refer to a copy of the research they have in their hands, there is no visual material of any sort. It soon raises my attention that the questions are being asked in a very formal way. Each critic starts by congratulating the PhD'er with his research, after which they also have some remaining questions. The PhD'er responds to each question in an identical way. He first says: "thank you for your comments and your questions, I see your point", after which the actual response to the question comes. Sometimes he even continues by saying: "that's a very interesting question", while in fact he already said that before. It must be noted that most of the questions are very critical. After some time the chairman starts to look at the clock to see how much time they have left.

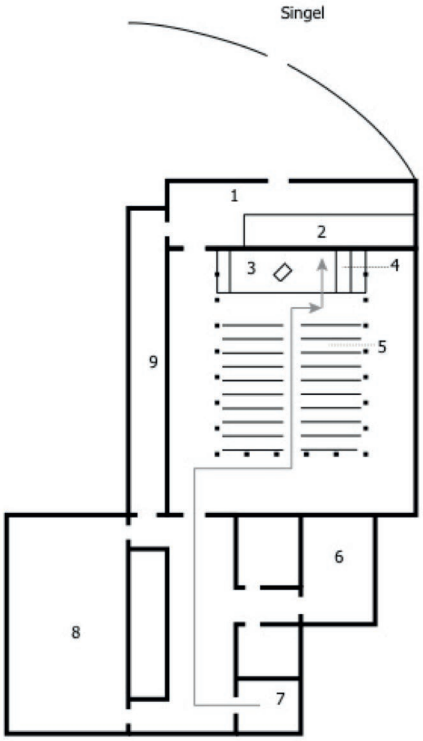


Fig. 34: Movement at 14.00

14.00

At exactly an hour after the scheduled start of the presentation the ceremony leader walks in again from the back of the building. Everybody stands up and turns to her. She walks to the stage, smashes her scepter on the ground and says: "hora est". She then walks to the back of the stage where she turns around to face the audience. In the meantime the questions from the critics continue. This is the sign however that the questions should come to an end now.

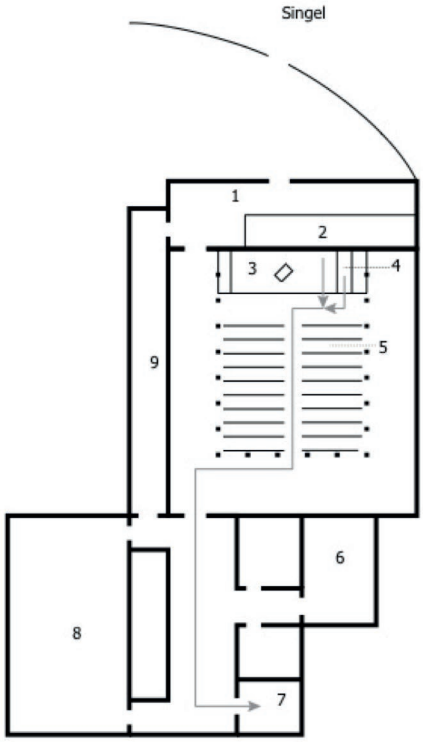


Fig. 35: Movement at 14.10

14.10

When the discussion is over, the ceremony leader asks the PhD'er to read the last sentence from his research. After this she walks off the stage and waits for the members of the committee to line up behind her. Everybody in the audience stands up again. The ceremony leader guides the committee out of the main hall to the back of the building where they discuss the outcome of the presentation (although it is already clear from before the presentation that the PhD'er will be awarded the doctor's title). The audience stands up and starts to congratulate the PhD'er.

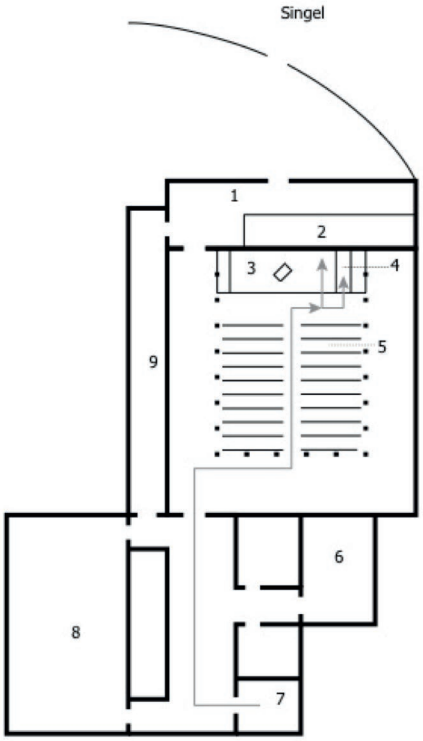


Fig. 36: Movement at 14.20

14.20

The committee walks back in and everybody stands up again. The ceremony leader guides the committee back to their seats on the right side of the stage. The chairman starts the conversation with a formal talk to congratulate him with his doctor's title. This first talk is on behalf of the rector magnificus of the UvA. The PhD'er is then awarded the official promotion document. The ceremony leader guides the audience to sit down after this speech. After this the chairman talks on a more informal note about the process of his PhD research and a personal reflection on this, with other tutors reflecting on the process as well. In the meantime a lot of pictures are being taken and the ceremony starts to become a little less stiff.

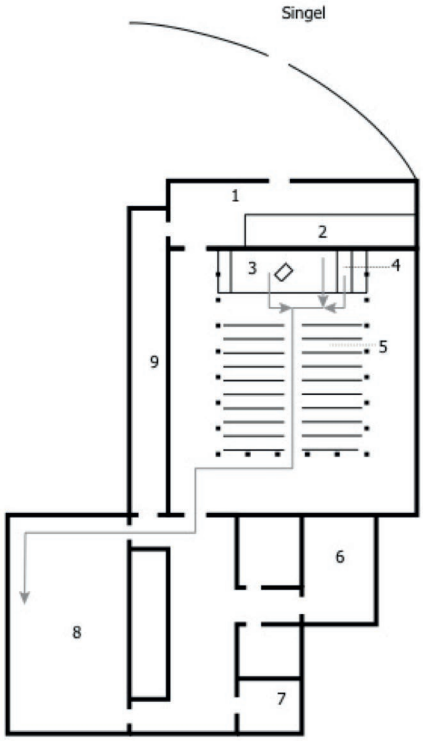


Fig. 37: Movement at 14.35

14.35

The ceremony leader walks to the front of the stage again. Here she directs the PhD'er, his girlfriend and his family to line up behind her. The committee lines up behind them and the whole group is being escorted to the Tetterode Library for drinks.

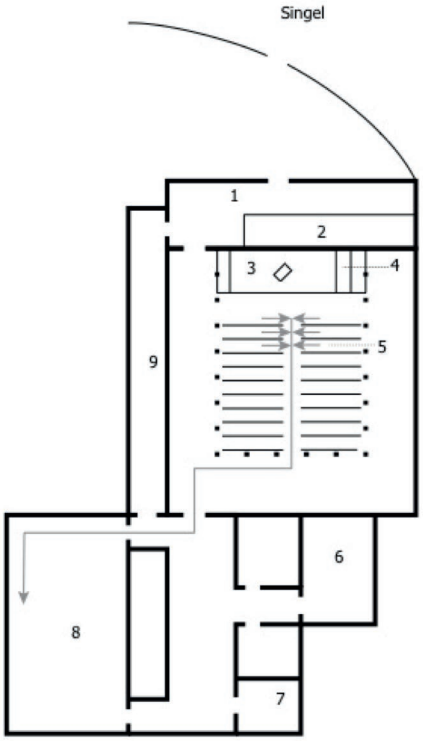


Fig. 38: Movement at 14.38

14.38

The rest of the audience follows after them to leave the main hall entirely empty.

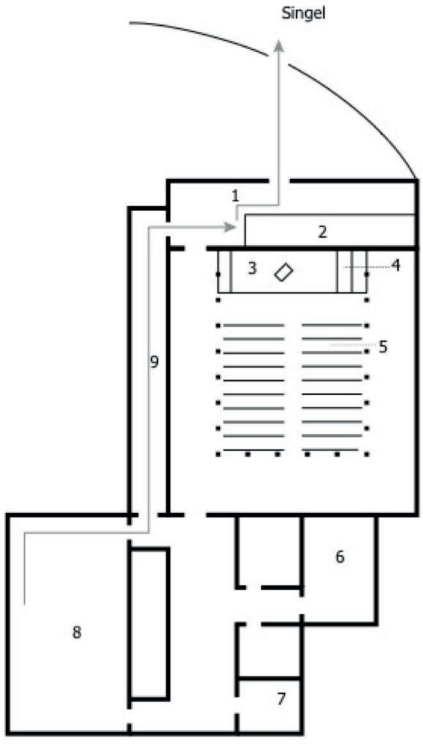


Fig. 39: Movement at 14.40

14.40

I take a peak inside the Tetterode Library to see that everybody is lining up to congratulate the PhD'er with his doctor's title. It would feel like I would be intruding a very intimate moment, so I decide that this is the best time for me to leave. I pick my coat up from the wardrobe and walk onto the Singel.

Comparison of the rituals

The different characters of the events must be noted when comparing the rituals in both the Nový Dvůr Monastery and the Oude Luthersekerk in Amsterdam. Where the rituals taking place in the Nový Dvůr Monastery are conducted by a single person during every consecutive day for a number of years, the ritual taking place at the Universiteit van Amsterdam is conducted by the PhD candidate only once in his lifetime. Furthermore the rituals taking place in the Nový Dvůr Monastery are not meant to celebrate the person doing it, whereas the PhD presentation is focused on the success of a single person. Bearing these clear differences in mind, there are a few interesting similarities as well.

It becomes clear that both of the rituals have a very strong rhythm as it comes to the timing of the events. In the monastery, every single event happens at a certain time. These events are also tied to a specific time due to specific morning or evening prayers or outside work being only possible during daylight. During the PhD presentation, the rhythm of time seems to be even more important. Every part of the event has a timeslot which is respected by the minute, with the ceremony leader indicating when the timeslot has passed by walking in or out of the room. With each of these movements, the ceremony leader guides the committee in or out of the room as well. In both the monastery and during the PhD presentation, this rhythm draws the attention to the more symbolic part of the event.

Repetition seems to be an important factor in both the rituals. In the Nový Dvůr Monastery, rituals are characterized by an eternal passing of the cloister, bringing peace to the monks and a clear point of focus. In the Oude Luthersekerk, rituals are characterized by a movement along the axis of the church by members of the committee. Each of these movements is a relatively long process, really getting the attention of the audience.

> "Of utterly importance in the ceremony is the precise and flawless execution, according to the rules of the many rites, recitals and hymns. The result is important, but only has a ritual use and can only be achieved as is prescribed in the ritual itself." [10]

The documented rituals in both the Nový Dvůr Monastery and in the Oude Luthersekerk in Amsterdam show similarities with Bart Verschaffel's analysis of rituals. He notes that rituals consist of a strict order of acts that all have to be executed in a prescribed way[11]. He references to the quote above by Frits Staal, after which he argues that a ritual is not intended to reach a certain end result or to communicate a certain message, but rather is intended to execute the acts of the rituals in the correct way. He claims that the actual goal of the ritual is almost forgotten, but rather one focuses on the exact execution of the specific ritual. Because the ritual has no meaning in itself, it is impossible for the executor to interpret or appropriate the act. Therefore, the personal identity of the executor dissolves in the ritual which makes that the 'higher' purpose is clearly communicated.

Where there is a difference in the celebration of the person conducting the ritual between the monastery and the PhD defence, it seems that both of the rituals also serve a higher purpose.

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[10] Staal, F., "De Zinloosheid van het Ritueel," *Over Zin en Onzin in Filosofie, Religie en Wetenschap* (1986).

[11] Verschaffel, B., "'Architectuur is (als) een Gebaar': Over het 'Echte' als Architecturaal Criterium," in *Van Hermes en Hestia: Over Architectuur* (Ghent, Belgium: A&S/books - Ghent University, 2010), 4.

In the monastery it, is clear that this purpose is the affection to God and to live a proper, sober life. In the ritual taking place at the PhD defence there are a few hints that give away its higher purpose as well. First of all, the location makes for an impressive situation, both in terms of its position in the city as well as the monumentality of the building. Secondly the way in which the committee enters and leaves the room by means of the ceremony leader is an impressive statement. Most of the members of the committee wearing togas contributes to that. The last thing which gives the higher purpose away is the formal talk with which the PhD candidate is awarded the official document. The way in which the rector magnificus and the whole board of advisors is stated gives away that this ceremony is also intended to show the importance and the influence of the Universiteit van Amsterdam. By providing such monumental rituals one gets the assurance of the importance of the UvA as an institution within the academic field.

This is strengthened by the appliance of togas and garments in both the rituals. In the monastery, the garments make sure that no individual sticks out, everyone seems to be equal. During the ritual at the Oude Luthersekerk the individual characters of the professors seem to make way for a more anonymous way of presenting themselves by means of wearing a toga. Where they are normally respected for their personal successes, they now seem to be masked by these togas, denying to express themselves by means of normal clothing. This is further exemplified by the PhD candidate wearing a formal costume, so as to rule out any expression of his personal identity. Although of a different nature, this bears similarities to the life in a monastery. Upon entering, the monk gives up all his personal belongings, dresses in a garment and becomes absorbed by the monks community. The minimalistic character of the cloister and building as a whole, makes that the religious artifacts in the rituals are emphasized even more.

Conclusion

Given the KU Leuven's Catholic history, its involvement in the transition of a religious institution like the Roosenberg Abbey might seem paradoxical. Its ties with the KU Leuven's past might be strengthened by drawing inspiration from the rituals taking place in an abbey to serve the rituals that take place within a university. It seems appropriate to do so given the fact that all rooms for such ceremonies are located in Leuven, while the KU Leuven expanded recently across the whole of Flanders. The ceremonies that qualify for this specific function are inauguration events and PhD defences.

In analyzing both the rituals in a monastery and during a PhD defence, it became clear that these events show similarities, of which the strict ordering of the ritual according to time and the dissolvement of the personal identity in favor of the higher purpose are the most important. It also becomes clear that the higher purpose of these events within a university are meant to give it a certain status, both to the PhD candidate as to the professors involved. For the professors, these events seem to be one of the scheduled meetings on their busy days. Therefore, a location far away from its main campus does not seem to be a practical option. However, a location like the Roosenberg Abbey which forces candidates and critics alike to spend more time on such events might improve the importance of such events. If this location then also caters for a space where the research can be exhibited, which lacks in the current day space at the Oude Luthersekerk, the importance of these events is even further raised.

The best viable option is to enable the Roosenberg Abbey to be used for such events, but not to focus it entirely on these events. Like seen in Bart Verschaffel's analysis, rituals demand acts that are an exact copy of rules and dissolve any personal identity. The same would count for the space in which these rituals are performed, they would be an exact imitation of other known spaces dedicated to rituals. It is more interesting to focus the Roosenberg Abbey also on more regular events, like congresses and exhibitions. Rituals lack mostly in these events and rather the individual gets more space. This has consequences for the architecture as well, which will be discussed in report three.

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Figures

Fig. 1: Taken from: http://www.zivykraj.cz/en/discover/novy-dvur-monastery

Fig. 2: Taken from: http://novydvur.cz/en/photos/021.html

Fig. 3-5: Own image

Fig. 6: Taken from: http://novydvur.cz/en/photos/006.html

Fig. 7-8: Own image

Fig. 9: Taken from: http://novydvur.cz/en/photos/026.html

Fig. 10-22: Own image

Fig. 23: Taken from: http://novydvur.cz/en/photos/031.html

Fig. 24: Taken from: https://fys.kuleuven.be/ster/meetings/lemaitre/promotiezaal.jpg/image

Fig. 25: Taken from: https://www.kuleuven.be/communicatie/marketing/publicaties/infocus-uk.pdf (location of Waasmunster added by myself)

Fig. 26: Taken from: http://acle.uva.nl/binaries/content/assets/subsites/amsterdam-center-for-law--economics/cr-meetings/2007/map_amsterdam.gif?1346598209257

Fig. 27-39: Own image

Word count: ± 4.500

The Dutch courtyard typology and applying principles to the extension of the Roosenberg Abbey

Third report

Studio-Specific Research Seminar 2, Spring Semester 2016-2017

Irene Cieraad Research Seminar AR3AI055

May 18th, 2017

Table of contents

Introduction

Within the Netherlands the courtyard has fulfilled a long tradition of residential uses. The Dutch term for a residential complex around a courtyard is the *hofje* (plural is *hofjes*), and refers to a type of living which purpose it originally was to form a protected environment for certain members of society[1]. In these hofjes, the poor and weak of society were given a protected living environment that catered them with all the basic services they needed. These hofjes were mostly built inside the urban block and were visually cut off from the street. Furthermore the architecture of these hofjes was mostly strict and formed a unified whole, emphasizing the fact that everyone within the hofje is equal. This feeling of enclosement and equality strengthened the sense of community of the hofje and its status as safe haven within the city. The hofjes were all built with private money and were usually a way for the rich to do something good for the poor. Hofjes were rarely meant for specific groups of society, although the fact that most application processes involved a selection by the regents of that hofje and that all the hofjes were meant for the poor of society, the hofjes were usually inhabited by a homogeneous group of residents.

This report tries to find out which specific characteristics define the intimate communities of a hofje. This will be researched by looking at the history of Dutch hofjes as described by Willemijn Wilms Floet in her PhD research, as well as from findings of own fieldwork in Leiden, in which interviews were conducted with inhabitants from two hofjes. From these findings, both the architectural as well as the social elements that contribute to the characteristic of a hofje are singled out. These elements are ordered according to two different principles. The first principle is the Dom Hans van der Laan's ordering of the three worlds of forms that humans are dealing with[2], while the second is Bart Verschaffel's ordering of the three types of human actions[3]. Subsequently, the lessons learned are then translated into the design for an extension of the Roosenberg Abbey in Waasmunster, a building which is characterized by two courtyards. The extension to this abbey has to become a new study- and conference center for the Catholic University of Leuven. The outcome of the research forms the base on which to judge the design and come up with possible alterations.

History of the courtyard typology in The Netherlands

The first hofje was probably founded in the period between 1350 and 1500. It is believed that a hofje was only supposed for single women living together, while in fact it was meant for a broader group of society[4]. For example, one-fourth of the hofjes in Leiden of the 17th Century was originally meant for poor men, whom could be both single and married. In Gouda even half of all the hofjes were meant for poor people.

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[1] Wilms Floet, W. W. L. M., "Het Hofje 1400-2000: (On)zichtbare bouwstenen van de Hollandse stad" (TU Delft, Delft University of Technology, 2014), 31.

[2] Ferlenga, A., "Liturgy and Architecture: Forms in General," in *Dom Hans van der Laan: Works and Words* (Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Architectura & Natura, 2001), 1.

[3] Verschaffel, B., "'Architectuur is (als) een Gebaar': Over het 'Echte' als Architecturaal Criterium," in *Van Hermes en Hestia: Over Architectuur* (Ghent, Belgium: A&S/books - Ghent University, 2010), 2.

[4] Wilms Floet, W. W. L. M., "Het Hofje 1400-2000: (On)zichtbare bouwstenen van de Hollandse stad", 31.

Fig. 1: The city center of Leiden with all its current hofjes

The groups of people who founded hofjes can generally be divided into noblemen, city rulers, merchants, factory directors and religious figures[5]. All of these groups represented the most important and powerful figures in society around those times. By creating hofjes these groups combined the useful with the pleasant, by creating an environment that is both protective and unites people. Furthermore, founding a hofje gave these figures even more social status within the local community. Because these hofjes were founded by the upper class of society they were usually in the position to hire the best architects[6].

Future inhabitants had to be introduced to the regents of the specific hofje, who checked if the applicant met the requirements and would fit in well with the group of current inhabitants. This is a phenomenon that still exists today and which has the effect that hofjes are still mostly inhabited by homogeneous groups of people. Nowadays for example, still half of all the hofjes are inhabited by people above the age of fifty, while in Leiden a relative big number of hofjes is turned into housing exclusively meant for students. Sporadically hofjes were meant for a very specific group of society, like widowers of sailors or soldiers. Along with certain architectural elements, which will be discussed later on in this report, the homogeneous character of the inhabitants of the hofje played a role in the formation of such strong communities. An interview with members from the Pieter Loridanshofje, as discussed in the next section, exemplifies this.

Interview Pieter Loridanshofje

Interview with a couple sharing a house, aged 25-30. This hofje belongs to the student housing organization DUWO.

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[5] Ibid., 33.

[6] Wilms Floet, W. W. L. M., *Lecture on Courtyards* (TU Delft, Delft University of Technology), 2017.

How long do you live here?
-> They live here for two years now (guy and girl living together).

Do you know how long most of the residents live here?
-> Most of the residents usually live here for 4-5 years, but there are two persons with an old DUWO-contract who are approximately 50 years old and live here for a much longer time already.

What is the age of the average residents?
-> The average age of the residents is 25-30 years old. Due to the waiting list for these houses of 4-5 years, students usually are only able to live here during their masters. Only couples are allowed to live here, since there is only one bedroom in the house. If the couples break up, it is allowed for one person to remain living there.

How well do you know your next door neighbors?
-> They know all of their neighbors very well, for them it almost feels like a family. They know all their first names and know from all of them what they do in their life. Furthermore they celebrate all of their birthdays and celebrate celebrations like Sinterklaas and Christmas with each other.

Do you have casual conversations with your next-door neighbors?
-> Yes they have a lot of casual conversations with their neighbors. Every now and then they spend free time together. They also have a Whatsapp-group for spontaneous events.

Do you know the neighbors opposite also by name? Do you greet each other?
-> They do know all the names of all the neighbors. They always greet each other and can always borrow some sugar from neighbors.

Does your hofje organize collective activities? Do all residents join in? If so, where?
-> They organize a lot of collective activities, like on national celebrations days, with their birthdays and outside diners during the summer. Usually all of the young residents join in, only the two older residents don't join so much. The collective activities range from in the hofje itself, in someone's house or outside the hofje in the city center.

Does someone in particular always takes the initiative for collective activities? For example the residents with the longest residency?
-> There is not someone in particular who also takes the initiative with collective activities. The oldest residents tend to organize the least since they have the least bonding with the younger residents. Some of the younger residents take more initiatives than others, but everyone takes initiative every now and then, both for the planned and spontaneous events.

Do you have unwritten rules of conduct among the residents of this hofje, like mutual assistance?
-> There are some basic rules like be quiet after a certain hour, where to put the bikes, not to put stuff outside that would bother others and to return things in the garden if they use someone else's. Some of these habits are also important because of the masses of tourists that visit their hofje on certain days. Then putting the wash to dry outside or have food lying around outside might result in those things disappearing.

Do you have a watchful eye on the street and on the other residents or their children?
-> Yes, during quiet periods like Christmas they watch out for each other and if tourists use their stuff, they tell them to go away.

Do you think that these nice neighborly contacts would also occur in a normal street? Why not?
-> They think that there would never be such a close relation in a normal street. This has to do that most people here have the same age and have the same situation in life. When the ages starts to differ too much, people can't relate to each other's life situation that close anymore as what is the case in this hofje.

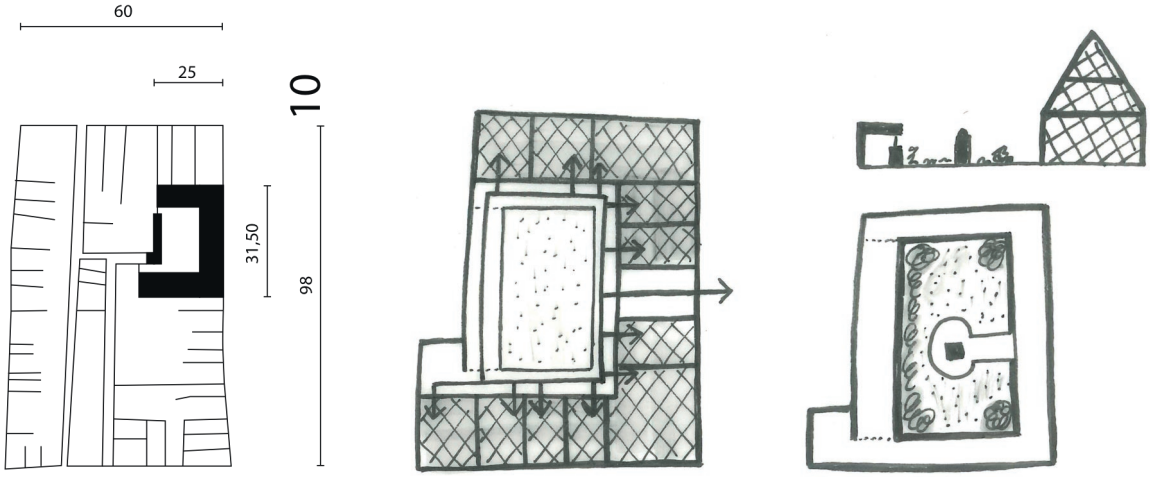

Fig. 2, 3 & 4: Situation (l), organization (m) and atmpshere (r) of the Pieter Loridanshofje in Leiden

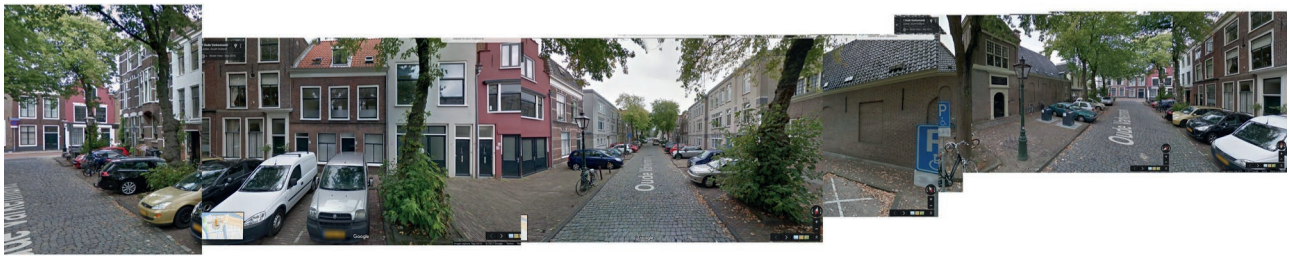

Fig. 5: Entrance of the Pieter Loridanshofje in Leiden

Fig. 6: Courtyard of the Pieter Loridanshofje in Leiden

From the interview in the Pieter Loridanshofje it becomes clear that the inhabitants feel a strong sense of community. The inhabitants state that this is mainly due to the hofje being inhabited mainly by people who belong to the same members of society, in this case students between the ages of twenty-five and thirty. However, it can be doubted that this is the only cause,

since this strong community feeling is usually not visible in a student apartment with rooms on a shared hallway.

Rather there are also architectural reasons to pinpoint, which the inhabitants probably take for granted or do not even notice. The first important factor in that is the seclusion from the rest of the city by means of a closed outer wall, as is visible in figure 5. Furthermore the heavy door and the dark hallway makes for an even greater separation, making the inhabitants feel in their own intimate space once they have crossed that. The uniform character of the houses and its main focus on the central garden makes sure that none of the houses or their residents are dominating the space, thus everybody seems equal. It is assumable that these factors, which work subconsciously on a specific person, make that these persons are more open to act in an equal way within the formed community.

Different forms of hofjes

The Pieter Loridanshofje from the interview is one specific type of hofje, but hofjes exist in a greater variety. As can be seen in the map of the city center of Leiden in figure 1, hofjes are generally spread throughout the city and occupy a wide range of locations and types of plots. The choice for a specific plot depended on the availability of ground, the cost of the ground, city policies and the ambition of the founder to represent itself in a certain way within the city[7]. Typical locations for hofjes were in alleys, next to the city wall or close to institutions. In most Dutch cities hofjes were built on the outskirts of the city center or away from the main circulation routes as a way to strengthen the isolated character of a hofje. However in Leiden it can be seen that more prominent locations became more popular over time, like on the square next to the church. The hofjes that were clearly visible within the city center had a less isolated character, but was a way to showcase the strength of the founder to the city[8].

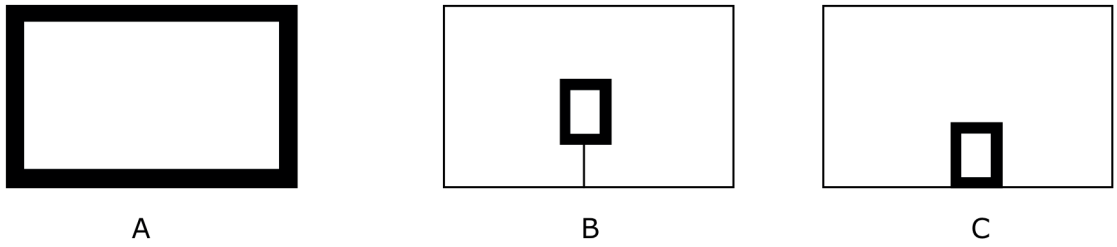

Fig. 7: The three types of hofjes as positioned within the city:
A: courtyards occupying the entire urban block
B: courtyards within an urban block
C: courtyards bordering the street

In regards to the positioning of a hofje within the urban block, three different types can be seen. Type A is the hofje which covers an entire urban block. These hofjes are rarely seen in the Netherlands, each of the cities has a maximum of one of these type of hofjes[9]. The second type is the hofje which is situated entirely within the urban block. Most of these hofjes were built on plots where backyards were purchased in order to form the hofje or where previous users left the interior of the urban block vacant, thereby forming a relatively cheap way of densifying the city. The last type is the hofje which is situated at the border between the urban block and the street. These

[7] Wilms Floet, W. W. L. M., "Het Hofje 1400-2000: (On)zichtbare bouwstenen van de Hollandse stad", 91.
[8] Ibid., 93.
[9] Ibid., 96.

hofjes took up half of the depth of the urban block, thereby fitting in with the rest of the buildings in the block. Because of its confirmation to the surrounding buildings this was not the cheapest way to build a hofje. Subsequently the street façade was usually well represented.

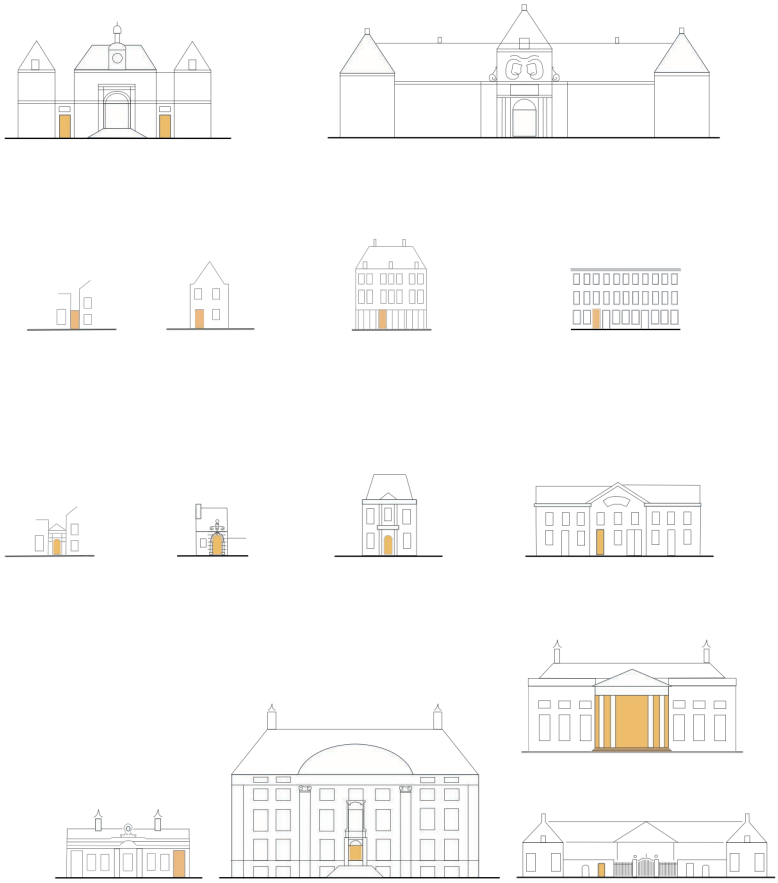

Fig. 8: The four types of facades facing the street:
Top row: façade as a closed wall
Second row: only door visible in façade
Third row: gate in façade
Bottom row: façade mimics city palaces

The different forms of representation as can be seen in the configuration of the hofje within the urban block can be seen even more clearly in the articulation of the entrances. The first type of facades is the closed wall. The hofje borders the street but the closed wall is the literal sign that the hofje turns itself away from the city and creates peace for the inhabitants[10]. The closed wall is in fact the back of the individual houses inside the hofje. The only clearly articulated element within this type is usually the entrance door. These closed walls were also a way in which to create monumentality. The second type of entrance belongs to the hofjes which are hidden inside the urban block. The only representation of the hofje is the door, which is usually not clearly articulated at all. These are mostly taken up in the rhythm from the neighboring buildings or in fact seem to be a part of a regular house. Because of that one passes by these hofjes without noticing easily. The third type of entrance is articulated more clearly than the previous two types. It's entrance is formed by a gate which is usually decorated with ornamentation referring to the founder of the hofje. Furthermore the gate is usually located in a building which also houses the regents room above the gate. Later on this entrance building was developed into a highly monumental building

[10] Ibid., 109.

with two wings, giving the specific hofje an even bigger representation within the city. The last type of hofjes seems to be the most representative of the bunch, but in fact fits in so well with its surroundings that it doesn't draw any attention to itself. These are the facades which look like city palaces and were mostly built in Amsterdam next to actual city palaces.

Staging of the entrance scene

Next to the physical appearance of the hofjes both within the urban block and to the street, the entrance route plays an important role in determining it's privacy. The scenes that a visitor is taken through upon entering a hofje is decisive in determining how open or closed the character of a specific hofje is[11]. Even though a specific hofje might be freely accessible, some psychological borders might make potential visitors decide not to enter the hofje. The weight of a door, the light conditions and acoustics of the entrance space and sight lines from the entrance are examples of elements that determine the 'hospitality' of a hofje.

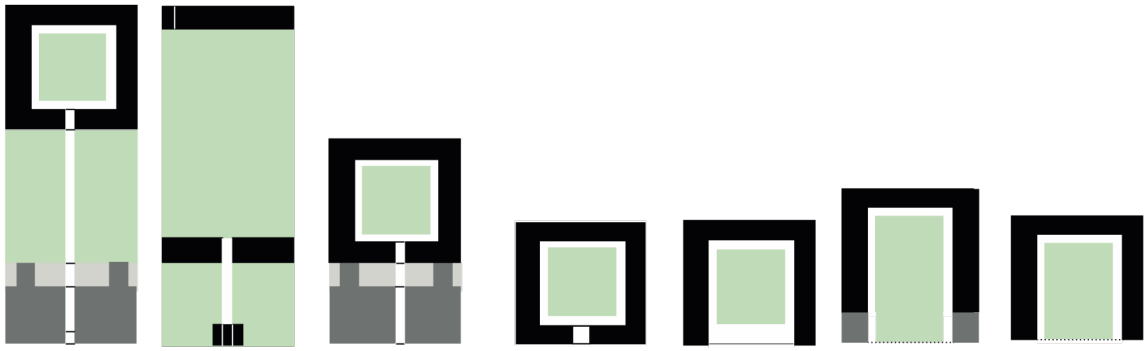

Fig. 9: The types of entrances to a hofje ordered according to accessibility:
First from left: an alley, followed by a path
Second: a path
Third: a path, followed by a hallway
Fourth: a gate, followed by a hall
Fifth: closed wall
Sixth: fence
Last: fence

As seen in the above figure, the entrance sequence can be formed in a lot of different ways. It can range from a single door after which one enters the courtyard immediately, to a sequence of alleys and hallways one needs to cross to reach the courtyard. In the most extreme case the transition from the public street to the 'private' courtyard is defined by a range of elements like doors, hallways, alleys and gates. The height of the surrounding buildings, the presence of a garden, the number of doors one has to pass through and the distance from the street all play a role in determining how likely one is to enter.

Some of the hofjes have little tricks in emphasizing certain characteristics of that particular hofje. For example the Hofje van Samuel de Zee in Leiden has an element which visually traps people inside. Upon entering the building the house of the doorman is emphasized by a light, broader part of the path after which one enters through a gate. From inside the courtyard this threshold is identical to the other thresholds, making it harder for the visitor to find the exit again.

[11] Ibid., 113.

Fig. 10, 11 & 12: Hofje van Samuel de Zee in Leiden: entrance from the outside (l), entrance from the inside, notice the missing door in the middle which indicates the exit (m) and plan (r):

Besides the elements that make up the clear borders between the street and the hofje as discussed in figure 4, there are a lot of smaller elements that mark the transition from public to private. This more subtle transition is made up of elements like doors, fences, lattices, gates, engraved stones, water pumps and benches. Passing each of these elements makes one feel more in an intimate space and works as a type of filter between the public realm and the private realm. Gates and walls are the elements which still have a more public and urban character. These elements are therefore mostly positioned at the outside of a hofje. Elements like doors, hallways and fences form elements which depict a ore private character, and usually are present towards the interior of a hofje.

One of these elements is the lattice. Lattice would normally be seen as a strict border to a specific space. However due to the transparent character it is also an element that announces the space behind and lures people in, although in a subtle way. It functions both as an element that divides spaces as well as an element that announces the presence of a space behind it[12]. The lattice in the Claes Claeszhofje in figure 13 depicts a passage which would normally be unnoticed.

In the placement of water pumps there is a pattern to be seen. Water pumps form an element that was present in almost every hofje. They form an association with homeliness and therefore make clear to the visitor that passing a water pump means passing into the private realm. Therefore they are usually placed at the entrance of a hofje. With this positioning there is another positive aspect. Since water pumps are such big elements, they also block the view into a hofje.

Fig. 13, 14 & 15: Entrance of Claes Claeszhofje in Amsterdam (l), Sint Andrieshofje in Amsterdam (m) and Hofje de Groene Tuyn in Haarlem (r)

[12] Ibid., 120.

An element that is furthermore worth mentioning in the transition from public to private is the placement of homely elements like benches, mirrors, carpet and delicate lamps. In the hofje de Groene Tuyn in Haarlem for example, after one has passed through the front door one comes into a space which has the feeling of being inside an intimate living room. This is being done by placing a bench and a mirror in the main entrance hall. Furthermore the room is decorated with paneling and stained glass windows. This makes that visitors feel like intruding an intimate room and may decide to leave the hofje again.

Design for the extension of the Roosenberg Abbey

The Roosenberg Abbey formed the home of a community of nuns who lived according to the Marian and Franciscan order. It is designed by the Dutch architect Dom Hans van der Laan, who used to be a munk himself. As discussed in the second report, the extension of the Roosenberg Abbey into a new study and congress center for the KU Leuven is just another example of religious institutions losing its power. It is paradoxical that a Catholic university is the reason for this specific development. That is why the rituals that took place in the Roosenberg Abbey will form inspiration for the rituals that take place within the KU Leuven. These rituals range from inauguration events and PhD defences to daily rituals that take place in a study environment. The researches of the second report into the rituals in the daily life in a Cistercian abbey and during a PhD defence at the Universiteit van Amsterdam act as inspiration in designing the new extension. Furthermore the transgression in spaces from public to private as can be seen in historical Dutch courtyards, as discusses earlier on in this report, form the base of the general layout of the plan.

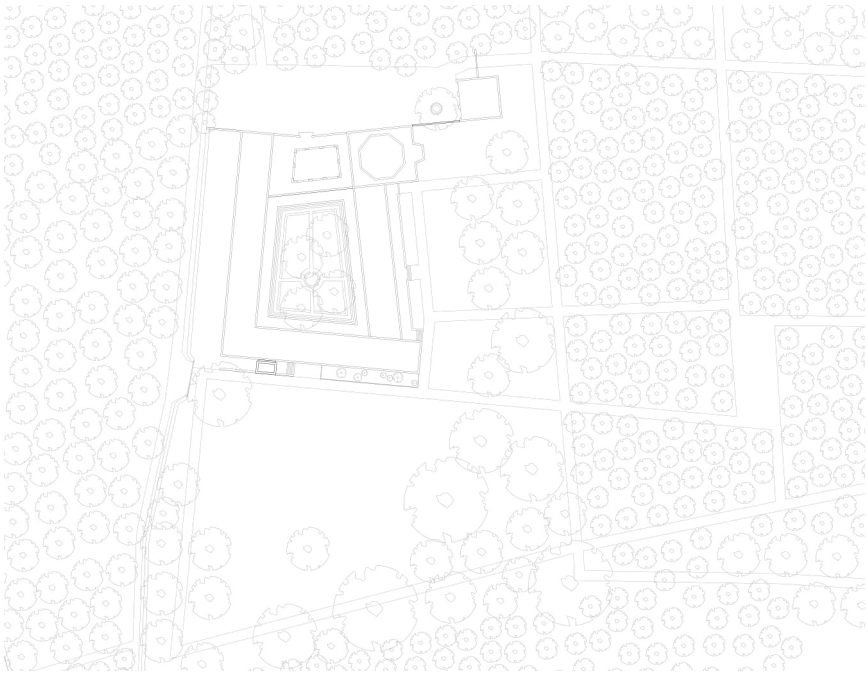

Fig. 16: Situation of the Roosenberg Abbey in the forest surrounding Waasmunster

Upon announcing that it will inhabit the Roosenberg Abbey a press realease was given out by the KU Leuven. In that press release they declared what their ambitions for the abbey are and what departments from the KU Leuven they want to accommodate there. The KU Leuven will host a study and congress center in the Roosenberg Abbey that focuses on the domains of reflection and new education forms[13]. Furthermore it will be a will be a breeding ground where academics, architects and artists from the Faculty of Architecture of Campus Sint-Lucas Ghent and Visual Arts

[13] www.nieuws.kuleuven.be/17443

of LUCA School of Arts will work together. In line with the second report, in which it was concluded that it is not viable to dedicate the Roosenberg Abbey exclusively to KU Leuven's rituals, the focus lies on the given program. This program leaves opportunities open for a wide range of architectural solutions, while the design for certain rituals involves mostly the imitation of known architectural solutions.

Rather than designing specifically for rituals, it is much more interesting to design for events that have a less rigid character. Bart Verschaffel names these actions gestures, of which greeting is an example[14]. He states that a gesture is not an action that must be repeated identically each single time, but rather that each gesture is a translation of the same known form. In this case, the actor interprets a known form like greeting and, in order to feel comfortable with the specific gesture, translates it into a slightly different form. These greetings can differ according to the person, the situation or the time of the day, but they always unmistakably stay recognizable as greetings. These gestures are mostly of an art that are only being able to be performed by human beings. However, Dirk Somers discusses its potential for the use in architecture. He states that an architect should be aware of the known conventions that apply to a certain building, in order to translate it in a meaningful way[15]. This action can be called figurative, as it associates itself with a known form, but certain parts of that form are then translated in order to associate it with the new demands as well. These partly loaded gestures relate the building to the existing surroundings, while it is also appropriate for the new function. Later on in this chapter it will be shown how the design for the Roosenberg Abbey employs these gestures.

A better understanding of the direct surrounding is needed in order to be able to employ these gestures. The Roosenberg Abbey occupies a site in the woods west of the town of Waasmunster, located along the highway between Antwerp and Ghent in Flanders, Belgium. A maximum of forty nuns could be hosted there, spread out across the entire first floor of the abbey. The surrounding of the abbey is characterized by a thick forest, which knows a strong border towards the clearing on which the abbey is positioned. Due to the strong border of the forest and the homogeneous character of the abbey's outer façade, the open space which lies in between those two entities is strongly defined.

Fig. 17 & 18: Border of the forest with adjacent abbey (l) and atmosphere within the forest (r)

This void is important in defining the separation between the abbey and the surrounding forest. Elements that add to that are the distinction in color, material and roughness between the abbey and the forest. The forest is dark in color tone and rough in texture and material, while the abbey is light in color tone and smooth in texture and material. Furthermore the façade is entirely wrapped in white brick with just a few volumes sticking out of the main volume. The unity of the façade is further emphasized by the rich ornament of the roof detail. This homogeneous character

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[14] Verschaffel, B., "'Architectuur is (als) een Gebaar': Over het 'Echte' als Architecturaal Criterium."

[15] Somers, D., "Overtuigend Ontvangen: Op Visite bij Asnago en Vender," *OASE #92* Codes en Continuïteiten (2014): 7.

of the façade makes that the abbey forms an almost solid entity which is in stark contrast with the surrounding forest.


Fig. 19 & 20: Presence of the Roosenberg Abbey within the forest (l) and detail of roof ornament (r)

The entrance of the abbey is concealed behind the only opening in the entire façade. It is characterized by a layering of different elements, quite similar to the different elements that are used to define the transition from public to private in Dutch courtyards as discussed earlier on in this report. Visible transitional elements in the entrance of the Roosenberg abbey are the wall, the fence, the canopy, the gate and the visible courtyard at the other side of the opening. This entrance is just the first step in reaching the core of the building, which is the main courtyard. Caroline Voet has discussed how van der Laan employs the number seven in a lot of elements of the design, one of them being seven steps which are needed to reach the core of the building, as can be seen in figure 22[16]. These seven steps are all defined by an interior atmosphere, as the wall and the canopy makes one lose all reference to the surrounding nature already after the first of seven steps.

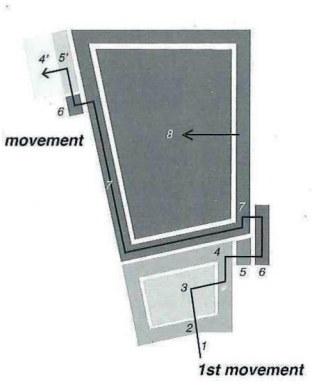



Fig. 21 & 22: Entrance of the Roosenberg Abbey (l) and seven steps needed to reach the core of the building (r); plan is upside down from other plans in this report

The interior of the abbey is characterized by the cloister, which forms the main organizational element. The cloister encloses the central courtyard, both of which are visually closed off from the surrounding nature. The cloister is defined by a strict rhythm of openings towards the courtyard, with just a few openings towards the outer side of the abbey, the part in which all the functions are situated. Each of the seven openings in the cloister open up towards a

[16] Voet, C., *Dom Hans van der Laan: Tomelilla* (Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Architectura & Natura, 2016), 89.

different cluster, with each cluster hosting a distinct function. One cluster is formed by the refectory and kitchen, another is formed by the nuns' wing, a different one is formed by the administration and yet another one is formed by the more informal living room. The circulation through the building is organized in such a way that one has to pass through the cloister each time one moves from one cluster to the other. Furthermore coming from the cloister, one has to pass through a dark dividing space before entering one of the rooms in each cluster. This is repeated throughout the building so as to slow one down while moving from one space to the other. Just like in the shown in the second report, the constant movement through the cloister structures the daily life and focusses attention.

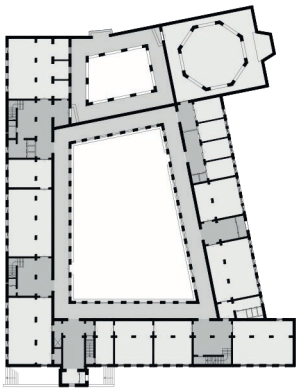
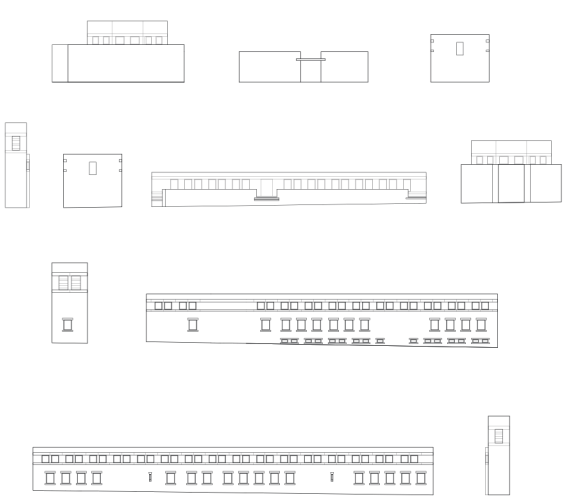


Fig. 23 & 24: Cloister of the Roosenberg Abbey (l) and ground floor plan (r)

Looking at the stark contrast that the abbey forms with its surroundings, both through its solid entity and the strong border of the forest, it is a delicate operation to design an extension. Furthermore the rigidness of the building is continued in the interior through its singular organization principle, leaving few options open to get inspired from. When isolating certain elements from the elevations and the organization principle however, the building starts to appear less solid, as can be seen in figures 25 and 26. Some of the facades are made up of elements that are easily distinctive from one another. The facades in which this appear seem to form a good anchor point to add the new volumes to. This is strengthened by the appearance of distinct clusters when isolating the different areas from the floor plan. They make clear that although the building looks very uniform in floor plan, each of the spaces in the clusters have very distinct measurements. The measurements of these spaces are chosen according to the specific function that these rooms had to accommodate, showing that each room was designed for a specific function.



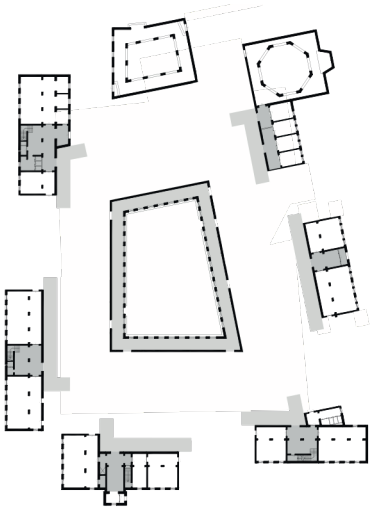


Fig. 25 & 26: Isolated volumes in elevations (l) and isolated clusters ground floor plan (r)

The design for the extension takes on inspiration from the rituals that took place within the Roosenberg Abbey. For that matter certain aspects from the organization principle and the way of moving through the building are extracted. The initial design proposal for the extension creates a second path towards the central courtyard of the abbey. In contrast to the original path to the central courtyard, which moves inside of the abbey after the first step, this new path does not move inside immediately but rather has a stronger relation with the surrounding forest. Just like the original path, it transgresses from public to private in seven steps, although in a different fashion.

Passing a fence is the first step of entering the complex, which just like in the Claes Clarszhofje discussed on page 8, is an element that both divides the two spaces as well as announces the space behind. One arrives in a small courtyard and has to pass through a narrower path towards the next part of the complex, sharing similarities with the Hofje van Samuel de Zee in Leiden as discussed on page 8.

From the start of the complex until the first corner, there is a constant sightline into the forest, as is there the other way around a sightline to the exit. After moving around a corner, one turns onto the open field. The next corner, which is sharper than the previous corner and does not provide a sightline into the forest, indicates the next step in the transition from public to private. Now one is facing the abbey and feels entirely enclosed by homogeneous buildings, without being able to see an exit. This shares similarities with the interior of the Hofje van Samuel de Zee as discussed on page 8, as it is made more difficult to find the way out due to the surrounding homogeneous architecture. The last two steps are two corners which direct the visitor into the central courtyard of the abbey and lead through a hallway. This hallway might be given a homely feeling by adding certain pieces of furniture, just like is done in the Hofje de Groene Tuyn as discussed on page 8.

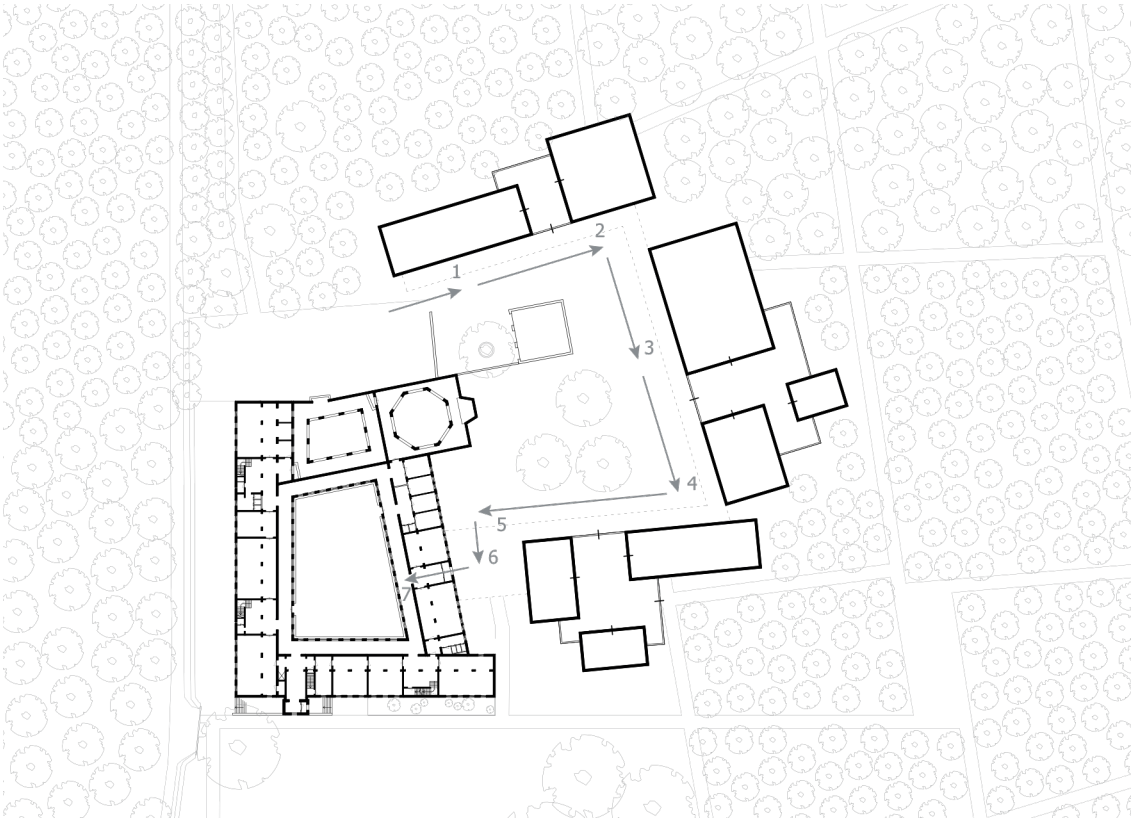


Fig. 27: Initial design proposal for the extension of the Roosenberg Abey

Looking at the given brief it must be noted that a study and congress center have two very distinct characters, the one being introvert while the other is extrovert. Furthermore a place for reflection seems to demand an introvert character as well, while a breeding ground and a place for new education forms demands an extrovert character. For the design of the Roosenberg Abbey this division in characters is a perfect occasion to divide the program between the old and new part. The existing abbey will keep it's introvert character and will be made suitable to accommodate the study center with its focus on reflection. This study center will accommodate students, scholars and professors that need a lot of time to reflect on their research. The new extension will be made suitable to accommodate shorter guests which visit the abbey for its congress center. This congress center is the place where the conclusions derived from the work in the existing abbey will be presented to the outside world. This is in line with the division of functions in the Nový Dvůr Monastery, where the reflection was being done inside, closed off from the outside world, and the monks presented themselves outside to the rest of the world on certain occasions on the day.

For the division of the program in the extension of the abbey, inspiration is taken from the division of program in both the Nový Dvůr Monastery and the Roosenberg Abbey. In both buildings, the division of program is divided into similar clusters which are organized around a central courtyard. This makes that moving from one space to the other forces the visitor to move into the monumental cloister with its inward focus. The monumentality of this space and the ritual character of this movement creates calmness between the activities. A principle that can be implemented from the traditional Beijing courtyard is to place the most intimate function at the back of the route, just like what happened with the rooms of the grandparents of the Chinese family. By creating extra steps that are needed to reach these spaces, one feels properly enclosed and protected from the outside world, hopefully being better able to focus on the discussed matter.

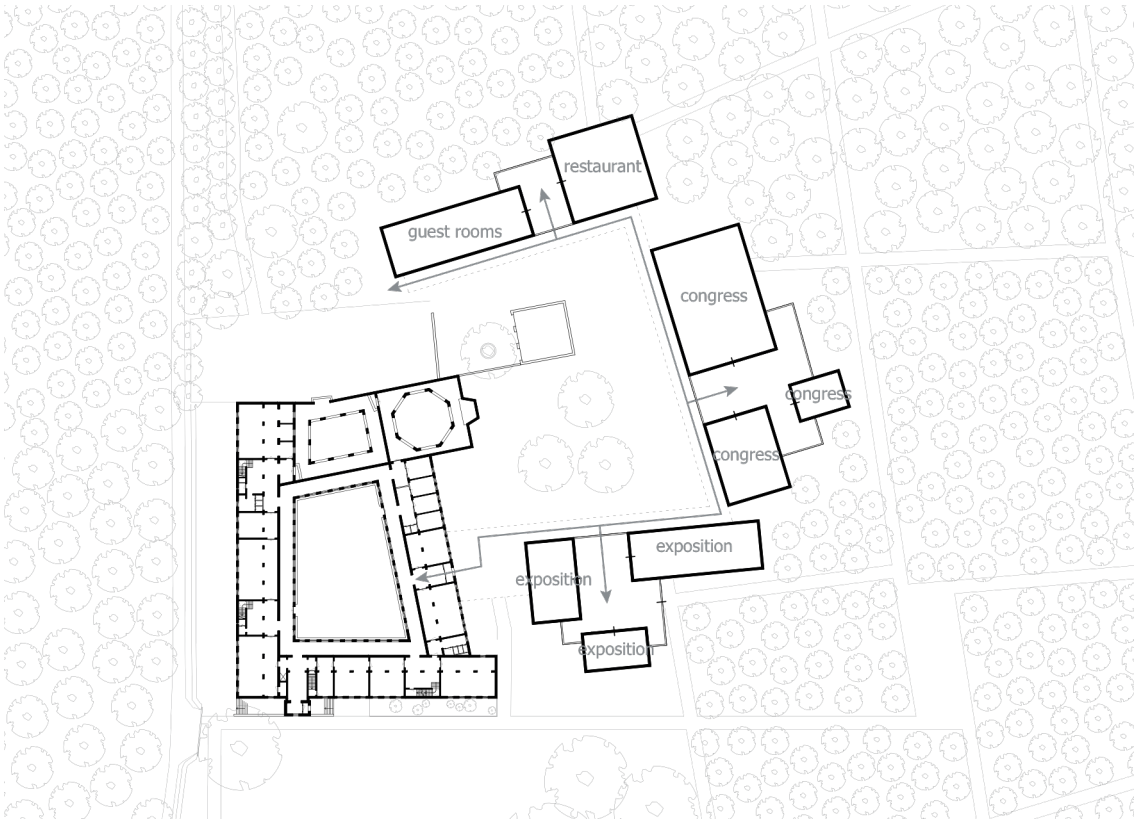


Fig. 28: Clustering of functions in the extension of the Roosenberg Abbey

Furthermore to cater for the flexible character of a study and congress center, inspiration is taken from traditional Iranian courtyards as researched in the first report. In order to control the indoor conditions in these extreme climatic conditions, the rooms around the courtyard had a hybrid use. The same room that was being used in the winter as a sleeping area, was used in the summer as the living room. Sometimes the function of a single room changed over the course of the day. With a program that calls for so many variable uses as a study and congress center, it is advisable to make the rooms more modular and repetitive.

To accommodate the rituals of an inauguration event or of a PhD defence the individual congress halls need to be designed in a specific manner. First of all there needs to be a wardrobe for guests that arrive from outside of the complex. As for the congress hall itself, the stage needs to be at the opposite side of the entrance to accommodate the monumental entrance ceremony of the committee. Furthermore the stage needs a section on the side with benches that can host up to ten committee members. Additionally there needs to be a separate room for the togas of the committee members, as well as a room for them to discuss the end result. The last room that needs to be added is a space where the drinks can take place afterwards. This space needs to be able to work independently from the restaurant, as both functions might be in use at the same time in such a big complex. These elements will be implemented in the design for the given program.

An additional function that is useful during such events but which did not come out of the event at the Oude Luthersekerk is an exposition hall. During the PhD defence there was no material from the research on display in the hall, nor was there any space for it. For events that conclude a multiple-year trajectory it seems reasonable that there is room for the defendant to present his work. Especially since the research is not solely conducted on his own, but involves a lot of outside critics from the professional world. It would improve the status of such events if there is room to showcase the results of the research. The available exposition space on site can cater for that demand.

Conclusion

Within The Netherlands, the courtyard has a long tradition when it comes to residential uses. Where the hofje was originally meant as a way to provide poor members of society a protected way of living, nowadays there are more groups that live in a hofje. These groups appreciate the way in which a hofje creates a sense of community among its inhabitants. From the interview in the Pieter Loridanshofje it became clear that the inhabitants credit this solely to the homogeneous group of residents, while in fact there are certain architectural elements that contribute to this as well. The degree up to which a hofje creates an enclosed atmosphere has to do with the form of the entrance of the hofje. Firstly this is decided by the big element separating the hofje from the street, being a wall, fence or gate. Secondly, smaller elements such as doors, lattices, engraved stones and homely elements define a more subconscious border between public and private. The enclosure of Dutch residential hofjes shows similarities with the courtyard in monasteries, although the latter is characterized by a ritual use of the space.

The rituals taking place in the former Roosenberg Abbey formed the starting point of the search for a suitable program for the Roosenberg Abbey as a way to strengthen the KU Leuven's ties with its Catholic past. As Verschaffel analyzed, rituals demand a perfect execution of the act which have no specific goal besides the act itself. Therefore designing architecture for a ritual will result into the imitation of historic ritual spaces, as is strengthened by the findings from the second report. The program for the extension will stay closer to the study and congress center that the KU Leuven has provided.

Verschaffel notes that, in comparison with the ritual, the gesture is an act that leaves more interpretation open to the actor, as the actor translates the gesture without that specific gesture losing its recognizability. Somers sees potential to use this principle in architecture as a way to come up with appropriate solutions that both respect the existing character of the site, as well as suits present day needs of a new function. More concrete, the strategy takes certain aspects from the context as inspiration, translates those and combines them with other aspects so as to come to a new interpretation of the given.

The design for the extension of the Roosenberg Abbey has applied this strategy by taking inspiration from both the existing Roosenberg Abbey as well as from courtyard typologies seen in the Netherlands. The organizational principle from the Roosenberg Abbey is combined with elements that make for a subtle transition from public to private as seen in courtyards in the Netherlands. In this way the extension stays recognizable as a continuation of the existing abbey, while it also adds new principles seen in other built artifacts.

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Figures

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