B(l)ooming Tourism:
A narrative approach on evoking new meaningful connections in the touristic city of Amsterdam

Research method and approach
For my graduation project, I have researched the *embodied experiences* of places in the city centre of Amsterdam where tourism has evoked feelings of alienation among its residents. The aim of this research was to find out which user, activity, structural, experiential and atmospheric aspects the architectural interventions of my design project must contain in order for them to evoke new meaningful connections with the places overwhelmed by tourists, for the residents of these places. I have done this in two ways. Firstly, by *immersing* myself in place and *observing* myself, other residents' and tourists' actions. Secondly, by *creating narratives* from both the resident's and the tourist's perspective, in order to design inclusive spaces where alienation is bridged. Multiple reasons led me to choose this method. Although I initially wanted to do my research by conducting interviews, with covid-19 this turned out not to be the best method for my project specifically. This is because at the time of my research, there were few to no tourists in Amsterdam that I could interview and since I was doing research in neighbourhoods where I do not know residents personally, it would have been hard for me to approach residents during a pandemic. However, due to doing my Msc1 in the studio of the chair Methods of Analysis and Imagination I was already familiar with narratives, and knew that this method could also sustain my research. The advantage to using narratives as a research tool is that they can explore the sensory experience of place as well as how this place is used, from the perspectives of various characters; all while being written in the course of one story. By choosing for this approach, I had to do a pre-liminary (online) research study on who the residents and the tourists of these places are and how they perceive space, which was followed by me observing these places from their perspectives and embodied experiences, from which observations I could create narratives. These narratives were written about the study of two pairs of neighbourhoods: the Canal Belt & the Jordaan and the Burgwallen Oude Zijde and the Lastage. Having created the narratives, I compared within one pair of neighbourhoods the content of these stories and searched for similarities between the embodied experiences of both the residents and tourists of one neighbourhood as well as between the residents and tourists of both neighbourhoods. This approach worked only for the Canal Belt & the Jordaan, but not for the Burgwallen Oude Zijde and the Lastage. However, this was not due to the approach itself, but rather to the combination of the method with these specific places. Since so few residents live in Burgwallen Oude Zijde's Red Light District and they also happen to be quiet latent, it was difficult to find out who these people really are and what their interests are (besides their common interest of wanting the masses of tourists to disappear from their neighbourhood). In addition, the problems that this neighbourhood faces in both a social and economic context, made it hard to create a concept for their architectural interventions. Therefore, when analysing a neighbourhood such as Burgwallen Oude Zijde I recommend to do conduct interviews, as you are able to ask more personal questions.

Relation between research and design
For the research part of my graduation project, I divided my research into three parts: a preliminary literature study, a fieldwork study and the creation of narratives. As discussed above, the goal of this this research was to find out which user, activity, structural, experiential and atmospheric aspects the architectural interventions of my design project must contain in order for them to evoke new meaningful connections with the places overwhelmed by tourists, for the residents of these places. In the pre-liminary research study, I investigated the notions of narrative, perception and structures of space in a tourist city. In addition, I also conducted a social

media study in which I researched who the residents and tourists of these places are and what their interests, desires and backgrounds are. Based on the total of this pre-liminary research study, I was able to define the narratives' character characteristics and to select my research locations. During the fieldwork study, I observed the selected locations from the perspectives of the residents and the tourists. The notes from these observations were used during the creation of the narratives about the resident's and tourist's experience of place. The results from these narratives consisted of 5 site-specific aspects that the design of the architectural interventions must contain in order to evoke new connections for the residents of these places overwelmed by tourists, as well as stimulate for meaningful interactions between residents and tourists. Based on these 5 aspects, for each pair of neighbourhoods design and architectural atmosphere concepts were created. For the Canal Belt and the Jordaan neighbourhoods these results consisted of the users 'gardeners', the activity 'working and enjoying', the experience of space 'hidden worlds', the structure of a 'wooden grid' and an architectural atmosphere of 'from shack to palace'. In the Jordaan, this led to the concept of a wooden seasonal changing blooming pavilion that can be used for the gardening of plants and flowers, by both the residents and tourists. It was in this way that the research established the basis of the design project, which served as both a guide and a guideline throughout the whole design process.

In addition, the interests of the tourists as found during the social media study have been used during the selection of the specific site locations of the pavilions in the Jordaan. Knowing that the tourists in the Canal Belt and the Jordaan are cultural-orientated, the pavilions were placed on or next to culturally important places, which have ultimately been of great importance in spreading of tourism throughout the neighbourhood, which is an important principle in my graduation project. Furthermore, narratives were also used during the design research.

Relation between my graduation topic, and the mastertrack Architecture and the Master program

The path that I followed during my educational career in the master track Architecture has influenced and shaped my graduation project in different ways. From each design studio that I have followed during my Master, I have learned something valuable and I have been able to apply it during the development of this graduation project. Searching for a chair within the master track with which I would fully agree with their approach to architecture, I started my master in the Msc1 studio of Interiors Building Cities. Here I immediately agreed with their focus on interior spaces or buildings accommodating the different scales of public life in the city. However, as I did not resonate with the chair's approach to research, I then decided to follow the chair of Methods of Analysis and Imagination's Msc1 studio 'Ways of Doing'. Here I discovered the use of narratives as a research method. Following this studio with the Msc2 studio of Public Building in Budapest, it was during the fieldwork study of one of the precedent bathhouses when I experienced the powerful effect of the embodied experience in sensory surroundings. Having been interested in the embodied experience of space since when I started my bachelor in architecture, I knew then that I wanted my graduation project to revolve around this. Having found my graduation project's focus, research method and (the clarification of) my fascination during the first year of my master, it was the studio of Explore Lab as well as the Master program in general, which gave me the opportunity to set up my own research and to combine all these aspects of my architectural position into one research and design project.

Relation between my graduation project and the wider social, professional and scientific framework

In the professional framework, my graduation work is important as it introduces in this global age an new approach on preserving the liveability and residential function of touristic cities by researching tourism from an architectural perspective. To both the field of architecture and tourism, such an approach is still something unique. Until now, in the field of architecture tourism has mostly only been researched in architectural history studies (for example, on the travel studies of well-known architects). While in the field of tourism, research on urban tourism mainly comes from the social sciences, in which architecture only functions as a 'decor' or as a tourist attraction. However, having explained the affect tourism has on the experience of place and subsequently the liveability of the city in the problem statement, the research on this theme and the introduction of such an approach has become necessary at a time of increasing global travel, whereby more and more European cities will be faced with these problems more often. By including the residents' perspectives in the research into the experience of place in a tourist city, my graduation project also becomes relevant in the larger social framework. With most studies on tourism having been conducted from the perspective of tourists, so far an experience of place has been evoked to the detriment of the residents. Approaching the experience of place from both perspectives can therefore evoke a more balanced experience of place to residents and tourists alike. In addition, as the narratives study place through the residents' and tourists' perspectives while observing their actions in place, the design of the graduation work will therefore always be focused on (the balance) of their social interests. In the scientific framework, my graduation work is relevant as its method of the use of narratives addressing the experience of place in relation to tourism, can be used as an example for other European cities dealing with similar tourism related problems. Moreover, as the use of literary tools in architectural research is still relatively new, my graduation work can therefore also contribute to the ongoing research on this by serving as an example to be studied.

Ethical issues and dilemmas encountered

In my research, the characteristics of the narratives' characters are based on tourism data research and the studies of social media profiles of residents and tourists. However, with 18 million tourists and counting visiting Amsterdam each year (except in the years affected by covid-19) of whom all have different backgrounds, interests and desires, it is difficult to accurately represent all of these tourists in my research. In order to create the closest representation to the true situation as possible, the largest groups of nationalities, travel companion forms, interests and desires were combined and used during the set-up of these characters. All of these selections were based on previous research and found sources. However, since I was only able to use a limited number of characters for my research, the matter has come up of some countries from certain parts of the world are being overrepresented compared to others. In addition, there is the possibility that people a particular nationality may feel stereotyped. Examples of this are that fact that all characters in my research come from Western countries (this is based on a tourism data research from amsterdam&partners carried out for the municipality of Amsterdam) and that people with an English nationality can feel stereotyped by the character 'the English group of friends'. Although I have been very careful to avoid stereotyping in general, I could not rule out the latter character as this group contributes a great deal to the experience of space in the Red Light District. Furthermore, the group of characters did consist of a more diverse group of nationalities during their initial set-up. However, some of these characters had to be canceled, because otherwise the narrative research would have became to big for me to execute.