

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Faidra Ntafou
Student number	5138299

Studio		
Name / Theme	Design of the Urban Fabric: At Home	
Main mentor	Maurice Harteveld	Urban Design
Second mentor	Rūta Ubarevičiene	Urban Studies
Argumentation of choice of the studio	This studio is the most suitable for the development of my thesis project, as it is design – driven and offers the possibility to explore various different scales but focuses on the city or neighborhood scale and the eye – level perspective, which intrigue me the most. What is more, the themes of urban transformation, densification and co – creation and “the dynamics between the physical urban environment... and the psychological, socio-cultural, ecological, managerial and economic structures”, as stated, that this studio deals with, really interest me. Focusing on current urgencies in a complex urban settlement and integrating different elements and people into it, is a challenge I really wanted to explore. Additionally, I found the related projects very inspiring and very close to what I already had in mind, about how to create more resilient, more socially cohesive neighborhoods, while answering the current needs of the people and adapting to new circumstances.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Designing for Coexistential Spaces. The case of Afrikaanderwijk.
Goal	
Location:	Afrikaanderwijk, Rotterdam
The posed problem,	Urbanization and the rapid development of cities, both

economically and in size, often attributed to industrialization, has always attracted both national and international migrants in western Europe and has shaped their form and composition. In the last decades, also due to the global economic crisis, cities have become more diverse than ever. This diversity, although an “inherent characteristic of cities” (Tasan-Kok, 2014a) is not always perceived as positive, especially in the so – called deprived areas, which mainly consist of multicultural, low – income social groups.

This has serious implications not only on how people live together in space, but also on the actions taken to “minimize” the differences, with Rotterdam South being a prominent example of this situation. More specifically, this thesis project focuses on Afrikaanderwijk, which as stated before, is one of the most multicultural neighbourhoods of the area and also in the epicentre of the current urban transformations.

Policy and political circles still aim at traditional ways of “regenerating areas”, with gentrification being a central strategy for the neoliberal remaking of urban space (Paton, 2016) and presented as a necessity in order to persuade that social mixing is really what residents envision (van Gent, 2013). In this context, socio – spatial segregation and lack of cohesion are often very prominent, with the design of public space failing to respond to the current needs of the society, in contrast, often exacerbating racial and social stereotypes and further isolating marginalised groups (Valentine, 2008).

The traditional notions of what public space means for a place and its community and how and for whom it should be designed, often leads to exclusion and self – exclusion of several different groups, who do not have the opportunity to participate in public life and coexist under the same conditions. This has immediate effects on the neighbourhood and the city in total, jeopardising its inclusiveness and resilience. In this situation, perceiving a city or a neighbourhood as “super – diverse” (Vertovec, 2007), categorizing people in groups based only on their ethnic and demographic characteristics, can amplify even more the dipoles and stereotypes and oversimplify the way contemporary cities are developed.

Hence, the general problem this thesis is dealing with, is the problematic way in which the different social groups of Afrikaanderwijk are perceived and treated, the way they interact and socialize with each other and therefore the way they occupy and appropriate the public space or not.

Therefore, this project aims to explore the possibilities for spatial and socio-economic transformation, through strategic and local scale interventions that promote common platforms for interaction and communication amongst varied social

	groups in the area. Ultimately, these interventions may help tone down the increased social division and disparity between the neighbourhood, but also the different parts of Rotterdam and promote a fairer distribution of opportunities.
research questions and	To what extent can co - existence be ensured through inclusive spatial interventions in the public space, in the hyper - diverse and socio - spatially segregated neighbourhood of Afrikaanderwijk? SQ1 What are the urgencies, associated with the lack of socio - spatial cohesion in deprived, hyper - diverse communities? SQ2 What can be defined as public space and space of co - existence? SQ3 How can hyper - diversity transform from a given to a quality, in the context of socially deprived neighbourhoods? SQ4 In what way could we design for inclusivity and resilience? SQ5 What are the socio – spatial characteristics of Rotterdam South and more specifically of Afrikaanderwijk, at different spatial scales? SQ6 Which groups of people and in what ways, appropriate the public space in Rotterdam South? Which ones face the most challenges? SQ7 How can the needs of the current and future residents of the area be answered, through spatial interventions in the public space?
design assignment in which these result.	The main aim behind this project is to contribute to redefining the urban landscape, especially in those so-called deprived neighbourhoods, which are characterized by hyper – diversity, where conflicting interests between local authorities, people of power and local inhabitants regularly occur, in order to ensure social cohesion and create a common identity for all. Through spatial interventions, the goal is to enhance the inclusiveness and resilience of disadvantaged neighbourhoods, using Afrikaanderwijk as a case study for the implementation of those interventions, in the context of creating coexistential places. Given the social urgencies mentioned, embracing diversity in Rotterdam South, can be linked with the 11th Goal of “Sustainable Cities and Communities”, set by the United

	Nations in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2020). In order to achieve this goal, firstly, a set of design values about inclusivity and resilience will be formed, which will frame the way that this project will tackle the creation of places of coexistence; thus public spaces, whether interior or exterior. Later on, through these values, a set of design principles will be set, which will form the basis for the design strategies and interventions. Through these strategies, a public space and social network will be proposed, which will integrate formal and informal carriers, as well as a densification plan with emphasis on common spaces. The final designs on the micro - scale will focus on spatial interventions in key locations, by creating new public spaces or transforming current ones, new commons and shared and temporary spaces and activities.
Process	
Method description	
During this graduation project, different types of methods will be used to answer the previously mentioned research questions.	
Literature Review	
Literature studies will form the basis of this graduation project and will help to get a grip on key concepts used within the scope of this thesis. Literature review will therefore be conducted on the concepts of hyper-diversity, socio-spatial segregation, inclusivity, resilience and coexistence. Their conclusions will be able to inform the direction of the research and form the context for the spatial analysis.	
Observational Research	
Observing human behaviour in the public realm will be a very important tool in understanding the multiplicity of the area, the different groups that are formed and how they interact and the ways that people appropriate the space or not. This method is one of the most valuable in really comprehending the area and its needs.	
Interviews	
Interviews will be used to gather information directly from the inhabitants or the people that are responsible about the decision making in the area, in order to understand the needs and the conflicting interests that are formulated in an attempt to make design conclusions that really benefit the neighbourhood.	
Mapping	

Mapping will provide an overview of the online available and gathered data. This analysis will function as the input for the design proposal of the public space. GIS data, demographic and statistical data will be used while analysing the area and its socio – spatial challenges. Fieldwork will help map the different social groups and their behaviour in public space and determine specific locations for interventions.

Design

Designing spatial interventions on various scales will be the result of all the aforementioned analysis in order to produce concrete outcomes for the redefinition and transformation of the public space that could function as a case study on how to integrate theoretical concepts such as hyper-diversity into physical open or interior spaces.

Literature and general practical preference

Literature References

Ahmadi, D. (2017). *Living with diversity in Jane-Finch*. A+BE | Architecture and the Built Environment.

Amin, A. (2002). Ethnicity and the Multicultural City: Living with Diversity. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 34(6), 959–980. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a3537>

Andeweg, M. T., Brunoro, S., Verhoef, L. G. W., & European Cooperation in the Field of Scientific and Technical Research (Organization). COST Action C16, I. the quality of existing urban building envelopes (Project). (2007). *Cost C16, Improving the Quality of Existing Urban Building Envelopes: State of the art*. IOS Press. <https://books.google.gr/books?id=GPJXCZJGL40C>

Atkinson, R. (2003). Introduction: Misunderstood Saviour or Vengeful Wrecker? The Many Meanings and Problems of Gentrification. *Urban Studies*, 40(12), 2343–2350. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0042098032000136093>

Carmona, M. (2019). Principles for public space design, planning to do better. *URBAN DESIGN International*, 24(1), 47–59. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41289-018-0070-3>

Crawford, M. (2021). 1.2 Blurring the Boundaries: Public Space and Private Life. *Public Space Reader*.

Fincher, R., & Iveson, K. (2008). *Planning and Diversity in the City: Redistribution, Recognition and Encounter*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://books.google.gr/books?id=WgodBQAAQBAJ>

Harteveld, M. (2014). *Interior public space on the mazes in the network of an urbanist*. Delft University of Technology.

Harteveld, M., & Asadollahi Asl Zarkhah, S. (2021). Public Spaces for Community Resilience. *The Evolving Scholar, 14th Edition*. <https://doi.org/10.24404/615EE7B5DF40B600098D861D>

Huttenhoff, M. (2021). *Coexistence in Public Space: Engagement tools for creating shared spaces in places with homelessness*. SPUR, Gehl.

Izhak, S., & Yoav, B. (1999). Socio-spatial lifestyles and segregation. *Cybergeo*. <https://doi.org/10.4000/cybergeo.4856>

Landman, K. (2020). Inclusive public space: Rethinking practices of mitigation, adaptation and transformation. *URBAN DESIGN International*, 25(3), 211–214. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41289-020-00136-4>

Lerch, D. (Ed.). (2017). *The Community Resilience Reader*. Island Press/Center for Resource Economics. <https://doi.org/10.5822/978-1-61091-861-9>

Luisa Maffini, A., & Maraschin, C. (2018). Urban Segregation and Socio-Spatial Interactions: A Configurational Approach. *Urban Science*, 2(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/urbansci2030055>

Madanipour, A. (2004). Marginal public spaces in European cities. *Journal of Urban Design*, 9(3), 267–286. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1357480042000283869>

Nissen, S. (2008). Urban Transformation From Public and Private Space to Spaces of Hybrid Character. *Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences*, 44(06/2008).

Paton, K. (2016). *Gentrification: A working-class perspective*.

Peinhardt, K., & Storrington, N. (2019). Inclusive by design: Laying a foundation for diversity in public space. *Project for Public Spaces*.

Putnam, R. D. (2007). E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 30(2), 137–174. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9477.2007.00176.x>

Sanei, M., Khodadad, S., & Khodadad, M. (2018). Flexible Urban Public Spaces and their Designing Principles. *J. Civil Eng. Urban*, 8, 39–43.

Slater, T. (2006). The Eviction of Critical Perspectives from Gentrification Research. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 30(4), 737–757. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2006.00689.x>

Tasan-Kok, T., Kempen, R., Raco, M., & Bolt, G. (2013). *Towards Hyper-Diversified European Cities: A Critical Literature Review*.

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS. (2020). *SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2020*. UNITED NATIONS.

Valentine, G. (2008). Living with difference: Reflections on geographies of encounter. *Progress in Human Geography*, 32(3), 323–337. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309133308089372>

van Gent, W. P. C. (2013). Neoliberalization, Housing Institutions and Variegated Gentrification: How the 'Third Wave' Broke in Amsterdam: Institutional neoliberalization and gentrification in Amsterdam. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(2), 503–522. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2012.01155.x>

Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(6), 1024–1054. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701599465>

Practical References

Buildings that function as real interior public spaces, such as the Rotterdam Central Library and the Gemaal Op Zuid Community Centre in Afrikaanderwijk, from the city to the very local scale.

People's initiatives for the reclamation and repurposing of public spaces, such as "Park Fiction" in Hamburg, "The Cook, the Farmer, his Wife and their Neighbour" in Amsterdam, "Living Room at the Borders" in San Diego.

Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme

(MSc AUBS)?

The Design of the Urban Fabric studio is, as the name implies, design –driven, focusing on urgencies such as social diversification, inequality and the economic crisis, with the aim of creating new urban transformation strategies. This focus aligns with the topic of my graduation project as it tries to shed a light on vulnerable and deprived neighbourhoods, and how neglect and gentrification processes result in social segregation and disparities. This thesis will try to highlight the necessity of turning hyper diversity, from a given to a quality, in order to create more inclusive and resilient cities for the future.

What is more, this project aligns both with the Urbanism master track of the MSc AUBS master program, as it tries to tackle the socio – spatial challenges of contemporary cities with urban and regional design, aiming at a fairer and more sustainable urban development.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

The scientific relevance of my project has to do with the fact that although a lot of literature exists in terms of how to design a public space, it is not really compatible with the current needs of a hyper – diverse society, especially when it comes to deprived areas.

This project aims to contribute and fill some gaps on how to design for different social groups and take into consideration their multiple identities and relations between one another, so that it can become clear that traditional one-size-fits-all policies, can no longer ensure a successful result. The outcomes of this project could function as a case study, or even better as a new vocabulary on how to create inclusive public spaces for all those groups of people to co-exist.

From a societal point of view, this project could, through design, answer on multiplicity and create opportunities for people from different social groups to interact and communicate, thus creating a more inclusive and resilient environment, in places where conflicting interests and gentrification processes occur, at the expense of the most vulnerable. Those traditional processes of “regenerating” an area, have tried to prove that forcing social mixing is a bottom – up approach, which will benefit both the gentrified and non – gentrified communities of an area and create opportunities for all. The reality, however, has proven to be different, as in most cases these experiments end up failing.

Thus, this thesis, through spatial interventions, and taking into account the needs and identities of different social groups, aims at enabling the participation of people from different socio-economic statuses, lifestyles, attitudes and activities to interact and communicate, consequently steering the city towards fairer opportunity distribution and a more harmonious and coexistential urban environment.

--