

# **REFLECTION - GRADUATION COMPLEX PROJECTS**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The assignment of the graduation studio of Complex Project AMS Mid-city is to investigate the future challenges of Amsterdam in 2100. A scenario is developed for the year 2100 in the Amstel area in Amsterdam. The assignment is partly done as a group, which resulted in a master plan of Amstel in 2100, scenario and a research book. Individually, a design and research topic is chosen within the scenario. This resulted in a thesis and design on the future transport hub in the Amstel area, a building that is a node for the transportation of humans and goods in the city in the year 2100.

## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH AND DESIGN**

The transition from the research phase of the graduation to the design phase was difficult. During the research phase of the graduation a lot of data and information was gathered and analyzed. But this research was at the beginning hard to translate into a design. The research was focused on future trends and technology in the transportation of humans and goods in the city. This resulted in a lot of information and data that were quite hard. Also future trends that were more softer data, were still quite practical and functional research. For example, research about goods delivery drones that was quite conceptual and not that elaborated yet. The research was therefore difficult to translate into a design with social and spatial qualities. Hopefully, at the end of the design process I can fully make use of the research and translate it in a design that is not only functional but also has spatial qualities.

When starting with the design of the building, I was too much focused on translating the research one on one in a design. However, designing requires a different mindset than conducting research, it is therefore good to consider if research and design are connected with each other and in what sense. Also it is good to consider if a connection between research and design was intended by the studio Complex Projects. A inquiry benefited from logical and well-structured argumentation. Making a design is a process of creativity that's requires experimenting, modelling and sketching, and is not immediately looking for solutions of issues that came forward during the research. In this sense one can argue that research is a starting point for a design but not a structure to base your whole design on. In the future I would less focus at the beginning of the design process on the conducted research and more on the social, spatial and typological aspects of the design. The research done for the thesis was a good starting point for the design of the future transport hub, but research about the future identity and typology of the building was a bit missing. This knowledge is gathered and sharpened during the design process.

## **THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE GRADUATION TOPIC, THE TOPIC OF THE STUDIO COMPLEX PROJECTS AND THE TRACK ARCHITECTURE**

"The Chair of Complex Projects investigates settlements around the world that are ambiguous in their development and embedded in the process of globalization." (TU Delft, n.d.). Because the assignment of the graduation is contemplated by the chair, is there a strong relationship between the graduation topic and the topic of Complex Projects. "Complex Projects targets all scales of the

architectural thinking: details, building, city, and region, with the purpose of expanding the knowledge about design and dense urban areas development, and of broadening the mind and thinking of future architects.” (TU Delft, n.d.).

The graduation topic investigate the city both on a large urban scale as on the level of a building. During the research complex issues in the future city are investigated. The surroundings are look at in a critical way, to be able to gather, organize and question current and future the built environment. All this results in a design that tries to solve a complex problem in a simple way. In this sense the individual topic of the graduation is in line with the topic of Complex Projects.

The master track architecture at the TU Delft is in general future orientated, because as architects we design buildings that will be part of the built environment for a long time. The topic of the graduation is maybe further in time than generally is looked at but it both tries to look into the future to investigate how society will be and what the need of the users in the future are. Also does the master track allow you to explore new materials what is useful in selecting materials for 2100. Because this future orientated nature of the assignment had an influence in selecting materials for the project, like fiber reinforced plastic and wood.

#### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE METHODOLOGICAL LINE OF APPROACH OF COMPLEX PROJECTS AND THE CHOSEN METHODS.**

For the graduation research a literature study and case studies was conducted. The research method was more journalistic than academic because of the future orientated nature of the graduation assignment. This resulted in a research that has multiple assumptions about the future that are less supported by academic sources than preferable. For the group work of this graduation literature study is conducted and a master plan is made for the area of Amstel in 2100. This is consistent with the methodical line of approach of Complex projects which is research by design. This methodology zooms in from the large scale of the city itself, to the medium scale of the site, to the small scale of the building (TU Delft, n.d.). During the group work and during the design phase of the graduation has become this method more present when transferring hard data of the research to a master plan for Amstel and the design of the graduation project.

#### **THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE GRADUATION PROJECT WITH THE WIDER SOCIAL, PROFESSIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC FRAMEWORK**

The movement of people and goods in the city is and will have a lot of problems in the future. This graduation project will help to built the professional and scientific framework to solve this problem that will influence life in the city. The design hopefully will result in a new typology for a building that is a node for the transportation of humans and goods in the city. In this way, is for example chosen for drone towers instead of a design where the drones are more part of the building. The towers are creating a new typology of the building, than if the drones where part of the building. Maybe this design and research can be used as a starting point for further research and designs on the topic of transportation of humans and goods in the future city.

## **ETHICAL ISSUES AND DILEMMAS WHEN DOING RESEARCH AND DESIGN**

Because of the future orientated assignment the future society is taken into account. Ethical issues that are rising are subjects like the replacement of jobs by robots. It is therefore good to be aware of the fact that the things you design will make a lot of people unemployed. During the research dilemmas did occur of which future trends to follow. A prediction of how society will be in 2100 can be negative, positive or neutral. It is therefore important to conduct the research in an objective way, because of the futuristic nature of the assignment a couple dilemmas did occur in making certain assumptions about the future. The design and the master plan of Amstel in 2100 proposes a large amount of restructuring of the area. This will have as a consequence that a lot of the city will be demolished. This has sometimes negative effects on social and sustainable aspects and maybe result in ethical issues for future designers.

### **Source:**

TU Delft. (n.d.). Complex Projects. Retrieved from Tudelft.nl: <https://www.tudelft.nl/bk/over-faculteit/afdelingen/architecture/organisatie/leerstoelen/complex-projects/>