I Public

As Habermas describes the public sphere is viewed to be an integral part of democracy— a social space in which private citizen can engage in debates pertinent to the public interest, without influenced from the state. The city hall is a place where citizens could equally and freely assemble to engage with each other and the politics, rather than only be an exclusive administrative center. In the profound history, a great amount of civic centers represented by Palazzo della Ragione defined this typology, with small spaces on the ground and big exclusive hall for higher classes on the top, whose influence could still be found in many city halls nowadays. Nevertheless, this model is no longer fitting the contemporary democratic mechanism. In this case, my principle ambition is to reverse the model and return the public resources to the citizens. Based on it, my objective would focus on how to make the space open to public without losing the basic functions of a city hall. However, this arrangement could also become normal if the relationship between the ground and the upper floors are not tight. So certain attention should also be paid to connect the ground and upper floors together, spatially and functionally.

II Representative Character

In Brussles City, the network of public is existed in the urban situation and citizens' daily life, through the passages, libraries, stations and some other halls. Those public spaces are just like the jewelries on a necklace, and designing the new city hall could be seen as adding a new piece of gem on this necklace, which emphasize the representative characters of it. In contemporary context, the city halls are gradually losing their characters as a representative center for citizens celebrating their urban life, which could be evidenced by the gigantic office buildings in EU Quarter. By adding this representative 'new piece', my proposal is to create the public interiors which has the comparable spatial quality provided to the citizens on one hand, establish the exterior character through designing the façade and exterior spaces on the other hand. Of course the materiality and appearance would also considered in the next stage.

III Structure and Activities

The structure is always related to the shape or the scale of space, where all the activities happen. Through the study of office plan typologies, I choose to investigate on three scale of plan typologies, which is S,M,L. In this case, the structure is also following the demand of the space to stretch its span like a tree. Three different scales of structure combined together as a tree scheme to go through the whole building. During the next stage, on the outer aspect, how this structure reflects on the urban context should counted into consideration, and on the inner aspect, how the structure system influences all the spaces inside the building is also my objective. Besides, the sustainable aspect should also be considered on structure. What is the structure built of and how is it built (Material and construction) is two of the main figures to be investigated. Sustainable aspect should be considered as a fundamental mentor.

IV Threshold

Since the site is located in the middle of Brussles City, adjacent to the Anspachlaan, the future pedestrian space is extended until it. Besides, the metro lines also go through the station of Brouckere. In this case, the potential of connecting not only the pedestrian area on the ground floor, but also the metro station underground is evidential. The building is acting as a threshold of the surrounds, spatially and functionally. The passage in the middle could also connect to the upper floors and becomes and center core of this building, one can reach every space through this passage.

V Future Ambition

Through this design as my graduation project, firstly I would like to explore more about the autonomous of architecture itself. Is the form strong enough to influence the whole building, parallel to the function, or maybe serves together with function to the building? Could the single architectural language system reflect well to the increasingly complex world? Secondly, I would like to explore how the building response to the culture background. Is the same building fits different politics system and culture? Those topics are all I need to take into consideration in the upcoming stages.