

# P4 Reflection

Public Building Graduation Studio

Border Conditions in Bucharest

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## *Aspect 1 • the relationship between research and design*

Through the research period, I got highly interested in the in-between spaces in Bucharest for the spatial richness on materialization, program and quality. After looking into and studying these spaces, I generated 4 categories of in-between spaces namely ***connected, pocket, passage and node***. I try to summaries the most important characters of each category and represent them by making drawings, which enable me to generate insight understandings of these spaces.

In the design process, I choose the conception of ***connected*** and ***pocket*** as the main idea to read or misread the site condition and find inspiration for the innovations. And the drawings from the research phase will work as a pool of references and ideas.

The site of the design locates in a residential area in Bucharest where there is a mixture of different dwelling types through history such as independent single houses with yards, low rise apartments and super blocks from Soviet time of Romania. The research examples are mainly from the houses which are the traditional pattern. Comparing with them, the super blocks are lack of diversity and richness as well as living quality (especially in terms of community spaces). So my main intention of this project is to introducing the richness, both spatially and through adding various of programs by using the notions from ***connected*** and ***pocket*** in every phase of the process.

First I read the existing site from the perspectives of connected and pocket to get a general understanding of the site. And then, design the master plan with connected and pocket spaces (the project is composed by a series of spots; cutting-throughs in the super block are passage, the community facilities are regarded as pockets and links and circulation system between different spots are treated as connects.)

For a further level of the design, I try to introduce these notions into vary nuanced innovation of the space and materialization of how to construct the borders of the in-between spaces I am going to bring. I started with designing different corners in the project which are typical and representative. Because of the enclosure of one corner, I treat it as somehow a pocket or a composition of different pocket and try to break the corner by all kinds of connection which are inspired by the drawings and analysis from the research, such as rain water, view and light, these elements become viable in the design.

*Aspect 2 • the relationship between the theme of the graduation lab and the subject/case study chosen by the student within this framework (location/object)*

The in-between spaces are seen common in daily life, but somehow neglected. In-between spaces embody border conditions among different domains and are important to study the spatial conditions and social relations, for in-between spaces can be seen as cuts in the urban fabric where the public meets with the private; where different groups share with each other. So that in-between space offers a great opportunity to study the city from insight.

*Aspect 3 • the relationship between the methodical line of approach of the graduation lab and the method chosen by the student in this framework*

In the research phase, I try to apply multiple methods and techniques of researching and design. The experimental research starts with a perspective of investigation through a 'bottom-up' process rather than implementing knowledge in a "top-down" way, which enables us to give insights into the spatial workings of the urban territory and open up the discourse to the emergence of possibilities and potentials.

To explore Bucharest which is an unfamiliar city to me at first, a strategy of urban drifting (the so-called 'dérive') was applied. Dérives have neither preconceivable outcomes, nor pre-determined objects of investigation as they rely on an overlapping of experienced spaces and encountered events, alongside hunches and prior knowledge, to form an ad-hoc reading of the city.

Methods of mapping are embraced to dispose and analyze the outcome of the investigation. Mapping reveals the inherent spatial condition and keeps the complexity and multiplicity of the reality. Mapping is deemed to be a good access to analyzing the spatial condition and properties and also a generator of possibilities and future interpretation of ideas for design project. The results of mapping process will be several drawings about different qualities and characteristics of different categories. From this stage, multiple techniques such as modeling, mis-reading, conceptualization will be introduced to generate new understandings of the drawings.

*Aspect 4 • the relationship between the project and the wider social context*

Through this graduation project, spatial conditions and social relations related to in-between spaces could be reconsidered and the insights into methods of spatial analysis would be further developed. Further, it will help to generate a way of regarding the common but neglected spaces which will contribute to the richness of this discourse and the understanding of city from the perspective of social and spatial aspects.

The design process by introducing characters of in-between spaces into renovating the soviet super blocks produces a new idea of bring the context of city into the project.