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	You Wu
Student number	4874854
Telephone number	
Private e-mail address	

Studio		
Name / Theme	Planning Complex Cities	
Main mentor	Gregory Bracken	Spatial Planning & Strategy
Second mentor	Reinout Kleinhans	Urban Studies
Argumentation of choice of the studio	Initially, I am curious about the transformation of Chinatowns, how this ethnic enclave transformed from the marginalised settlement into the institutionalised neighbourhood, even became a popular tourism attraction spreading all over the world. There must be various and complex factors behind, like the transnational cultural conflicts, as well as the integration and segregation of specific ethnic group, to promote the process. This complexity provided me to combine the spatial analysis with the socio-economic environment at multiple layers. The studio Planning Complex Cities also considers those conflicts concerning related topics as well as the spatial change. Besides, because of the multi-layer meanings of Chinatowns, the outcomes of this project cannot be only in design or planning. The governance schemes and policy behind the planning is also essential for this project, which is also compatible with the requirement of PCC studio.	

| Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	The Death and Life of Chinatowns *- Towards an integrated and authentic urban transformation of Chinatown in Amsterdam*
Goal	
Location:	Chinatown (Zeedijk), Amsterdam, the Netherlands
The posed problem,	Chinatowns are important both for Chinese migrants and the cities. It provides the emotional attachment to China and expresses identity of overseas Chinese. Chinatowns

	also enrich the diversity of cities, as an emblem of multi-culture. Chinatowns in Den Haag and Rotterdam represent the two different situations of Chinatowns under the ethno-cultural models. However, both of them cannot positively express the Chinese ethnicity and related culture, even make Chinese away from there. Meanwhile, the misunderstanding and fragmented interpretation of Chinatowns lead to debates on necessity of their existence. Local actors also find themselves in a 'puzzling and paradoxical' situation (Pang & Rath, 2007). Chinatowns need to be further transformed. The situation of Chinatown in Amsterdam is still the in-between of previous two situations. Since the beginning of formation, the Chinese quarter in Amsterdam has been settled down around Zeedijk with more than a-hundred-year history and never moved. It is located in the old city centre, which is well-known as the historical canal district as well as the red-light district. Chinese stores concentratedly locate around Zeedijk and its surrounding. Although the municipality of Amsterdam does not officially acknowledge it, various tourist guides and websites called here as Chinatown. The altitude from the municipality is ambiguous. Although they did not recognize Zeedijk as 'Chinatown', they gave the streets around the cognitive area of Chinese quarter with Chinese name. They supported the proposal of construction of religious Temple with traditional Chinese architectural style in Zeedijk. There are some negotiations between Chinese business organization and city council over 20 years. Entrepreneurs call for the officially ethnic acknowledgement of their concentration, which is still not responded by the municipality. Under the tendency of gentrification, the number of Chinese stores in Zeedijk is also not at a certain scale compared with other Chinatowns in Europe. The strict restriction for world heritage also limits the expansion of Chinatowns. Consequently, the 'Chinatown' in Amsterdam has been slightly with Chineseness.
research questions and	Main Question: Under the tendency of gentrification and ethnocultural models, how can Chinatowns be further transformed in the European countries? Based on the existing urban context, how to address Chinatown in Amsterdam toward an integrated and authentic transformation by using socio-spatial alternatives? Sub-questions: *about the historical development and previous transformation*

	SQ.1- How did Chinatowns in the Netherlands and other European countries form? How did it transform regarding the meaning and recognition?
	about social and spatial definition of Chinatowns SQ.2- What is the social and spatial definition of Chinatowns? What is the current manifestation of ethnicity in current situation?
	about the actors of Zeedijk SQ.3- Under the tendency of gentrification, who has been involved or influenced? How to address the amibiguious altitudes from the local authority?
	about the further transformation of Chinatowns SQ.4- What is an integrated and authentic Chinatown in European contexts? How can socio-spatial planning help Chinatowns to be integrated in the Netherlands?
design assignment in which these results	Firstly, through the historical development, to conclude the previous transformation of Chinatowns in European countries to see how these ethnic enclaves transformed from the marginalised settlement to the institutionalised recreational neighbourhood. Meanwhile, to explore the social and spatial definition of Chinatowns under the European contexts, and conclude the current manifestation of related Chinese culture in Chinatowns through case studies. To conclude the design toolkits for general Chinatowns, providing the recommendations for Chinese characters and social dimensions. Secondly, through spatial analysis, to conclude the current situation of Chinatowns in the Netherlands, and point out the differences between these three Dutch Chinatowns. Through the theoretical support, define the meaning of integration and authenticity of Chinatowns, to endeavour the possible further transformation of Chinatowns in the Netherlands. Consequently, through socio-economic analysis, based on the particular conditions of Amsterdam's Chinatown, to devise a vision for Zeedijk. The vison consists of both design component (at local scale) and planning component (at urban scale). - Design: The design proposal for particular condition of Zeedijk, how to balance Chinese characters and Dutch characters, the selected Chinese elements to be shown in the streetscape.

	- Planning: the community plan and strategies for Zeedijk. This plan would not only in the spatial fields, but also in the social fields, such as the relationship between Zeedijk and other Chinese clusters in Amsterdam, as well as economic activities. This would enable different groups engaged in Chinatown so as to create the integrated social environment.

Process

Method description
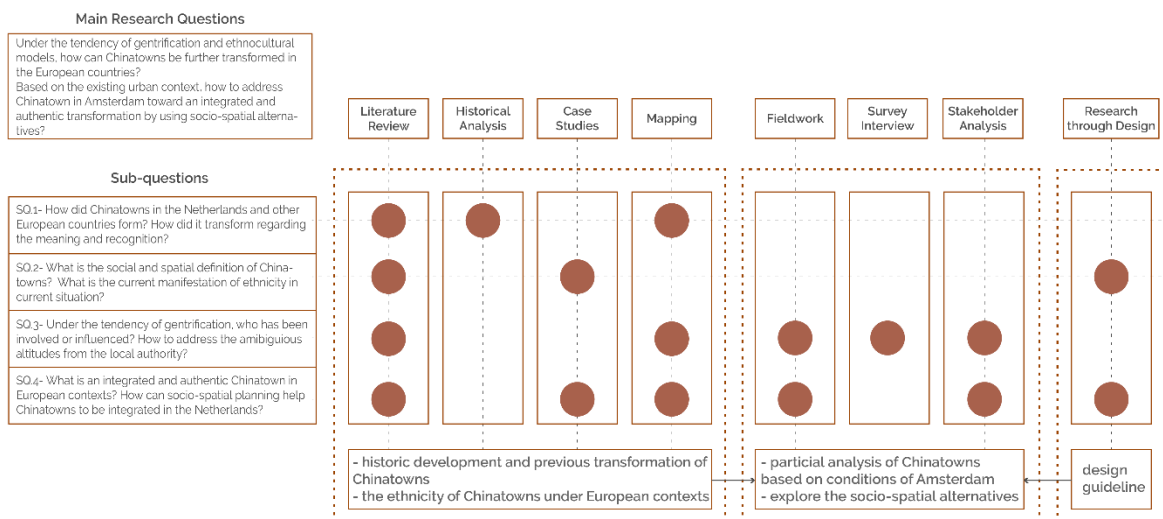
This figure shows the relations between the utilized methods and research questions. Each specific method(s) would be applied to solve a certain sub-question in different stages of project. There are eight methods to develop this exploratory research. Based on the sub-questions and intended outcomes, the whole research progress can be divided into three steps.

Literature review

To develop the theoretical framework and understanding of different related contexts. As an ethnic enclave, there would be complicated factors influenced the development and transformation of Chinatown. The meaning of Chinatowns consists of multiple layers, such as social, cultural and economic, various existing research about Chinatowns are based on different perspectives. After having the overall understanding of Chinatowns, as well as combining with the evaluation and socio-spatial planning approaches to explore the possibilities of the further transformation.

Historical analysis

The pattern of ethnic segregation and mobility of immigrants are evolving over time, rather than fixed. Reviewing back the history, Chinatowns transformed many times, from a relatively enclosed ethnic settlement to an ethnically-themed commercial space. The meanings, functions and recognition had also shifted historically and varied under different local contexts (Sales et al., 2011). Nowadays, Chinatowns are

still changing and facing many threats. In the progress of development, some Chinatowns are going to decline, while the other regarded threats as trigger to transform. Through the historical analysis, it could not only overview the development and factors behind each transformation, but also conclude some regulations and the characters. Consequently, through those historical materials to find out the clue of the essential identity of Chinatown in history and in the current situation. Because there are some differences between Chinatowns in North America and Europe, this historical analysis would be under the European contexts.

Case studies

Because there is limited source of Chinatowns in the Netherlands, even in the European contexts, this approach would select Chinatowns around the world in different contexts to explore the further transformation both in the socio-economic and spatial fields.

Through the case studies of Chinatowns in Rotterdam and Den Haag, to compare the impact of local government altitudes on the development. There are helpful design recommendations from the guideline of Chinatown in Washington, D.C. which could also be applied in Amsterdam. Besides, the study of authenticity in Singapore' Chinatown could give a clear evaluation to develop the authentic Chinatown in Amsterdam.

Mapping

This method is essential for this project, because the aim to combine social and spatial dimensions need map out the social information spatially. Although urban segregation is widespread in large cities with mass immigration, the different urban environment could also influence the social relations and interaction pattern (Vaughan, 2018, p.129). Firstly, through mapping out some basic information of Chinatowns and Chinese clusters like the location, as well as the concentration of Chinese stores. Meanwhile, at the local scale, to collect the information from the travelling recommendation website and the elements of Chinatowns and Chinese clusters and then map that social information out. Subsequently, to synthesis the relation between these concentration and infrastructure, public sequence and surrounding functions. These outcomes would also help the design process.

Fieldwork

The site of this project is located in Zeedijk, Amsterdam. Through the observation of Chinatowns in the Netherlands, to collect and conclude the Chinese elements in each Chinatowns. After previously analysis of Chinatowns and gaining the overall understanding of Chinatowns in European contexts, based on the particular condition of Zeedijk, to reveal the specific information of Zeedijk, to identify the issues happening in Amsterdam. Also, to find the organization related to Chinese entrepreneurs and the Zeedijk neighbourhood. The fieldwork will be closely related to the following methods.

Survey and interview

This method seeks to explore the meaning of Chinatown by using questionnaires and semi-structured interview. Towards different groups, there would be different questionnaires to ask different perspectives.

Stakeholder analysis

This method will recognize the main actors that have intervened in the transformation of Chinatown, according to the previously analysed. The objective of this method is to provide proper planning and strategies for Zeedijk according to the various actors with different degree of power and interests. Through previous analysis of stakeholders (combining with field work), to compare with the different stakeholders and balance them so as to maximize the potential of Chinatowns. Besides, to figure out the potential relations towards a win-win situation, even to attract the potential investors to be involved in this community regeneration.

Research through design

In this project, design will be used as a vehicle to make social problems visual and spatial ('framing'), explore possibilities and to generate solutions (Calabrese, 2019). The 'interesting' landscape could draw tourists (Zukin, 1995). For Chinatowns, to make tourists feel the existential authenticity is essential. In this project, there would be an explorative research regarding the way of representing and emphasizing Chinese identity through the streetscape design. Providing the recommendation for design elements is a part of final products.

Literature and general practical preference

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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 topic of my graduation embodies an important responsibility of urbanism (my master track), to cooperate with different actors who are involved in the process of urban development. Through the study of my project, I discovered contradictions and tried to coordinate with different stakeholders to achieve a balance for the further transformation. Besides, the PCC studio (which I chose) focuses on the combination between spatial planning and governance scheme. Sometimes, it is hard to evaluate a scheme of urban design good or bad, because of the lack of support from authority. Meanwhile, the study of Urbanism provides the multiple layers of understanding cities, also including the layer of landscape architecture and built-up architecture. Therefore, my project also contains the socio-economic analysis and spatial analysis to explore socio-spatial alternatives (with design and strategies) to address problems.

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

   As an ethnic enclave, there are many debates about Chinatowns on the impacts of ethnic segregation. The existing researches and materials about Chinatown and ethnic enclaves are mainly focus on the field of sociology and anthropology, concerning the socio-economic issues and ethnicity. However, there is limited engagement for sociologists to explore the role of space, mobility and urban pattern which could reshape the segregation (Vaughan, 2008). While the urban environment also plays an important role on influencing the social relation. There are few studies of Chinatown in the spatial dimension, especially under the context of European countries. This study would endeavour to combine the social and spatial analysis to explore the further transformation of Chinatowns, which might slightly contribute to the existing knowledge gap.

   Chinatowns have their importance in various perspectives regarding Chinese migrants, the emblem of diversity and urban memory. As an ethnic enclave, exploring proper alternatives of integration is essential to create a stable and diverse society. Meanwhile, with the trend of commodification of ethno-cultural identity, gentrification has highly influenced this inner-city ethnic enclave (Pang & Rath, 2007). Consequently, Chinatowns are going to decline with few visible and invisible Chinese identity which leads to the further transformation. The exploration of an integrated and authentic Chinatown could remain the distinctive identity of the minority and contribute to the urban diversity. Besides, the ethnic entrepreneurs are usually regarded as the vulnerable group. Through exploring

the possibilities of the further transformation of Chinatowns, it might probably help them to alleviate loss. Those alternatives could also be a helpful reference to other ethnic groups.