RMIT Canal St. Martin PARIS

Théâtre Industrielle

P1 Report

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Introduction

This report is the result of the analysis for the graduation studio ‘Canal Saint-Martin’ taught within the Chair of Research & Education of Modification, Intervention and Transformation (RMIT). The analysis provides the information to formulate the gradation project.

The design project is situated in Paris. This city is the capital of the Constitutional Republic of France. The name Paris is officially used for the region Île-de-France, which has 12 million inhabitants. In the center of Île-de-France lies Petite Couronne, which consists of four departments, the department Paris is located in the center. The exact design location is just outside the department Paris, in the north-east. It is situated next to Canal de l’Ourcq, in the center of the arrondissement Pantin.

In the next chapters the key points of the analysis will be described. I will start with my fascination and research theme. After that there will be zoomed in and looked at Pantin and the masterplan. Then I will describe the chosen building and the program. Last a summary will be provided of the formulated design project.

The drawings of the chosen building are based on some measurements that were made on site, photos and drawings found in the archive.
1. Paris

1.1 Characteristic
What is characteristic about Paris?

1.1.1 History and atmosphere
Paris has a turbulent past with many wars and epidemics like cholera and the Black Death. The most violent years were during the French Revolution (1789-1799), which took off with the Storming of the Bastille on the 14th of July. However the Paris of today is characterized by a much more welcome and friendly atmosphere.

This atmosphere is mainly caused by the large number of public spaces and by the excessive use of them. They vary in size and function. You can find a range of parks, playgrounds, squares and more. The well-known cafes on the corner of nearly every street seem to be the perfect place to meet and have a drink. But perhaps the canal provides even more enjoyment on a sunny day. But only if you can find a place, because it is often overloaded with people.

1.1.2 Research Theme
Which research theme can be linked to the characteristic use of the public spaces?

The numerous public spaces and the excessive use of them, characterize Paris. I am interested to see how this public activity can be connected to a private building. The transition from the public to the private space is a widely discussed theme within the field of architecture. I am mainly interested in the place where the public and private come together, or even overlap, the in-between space.

Besides researching the in-between space by design, I will also look at literature. The literature research will result in a position paper and will provide extra information for the design.

‘The threshold provides the key to the transition and connection between areas with divergent territorial clams and, as a place in its own right, it constitutes, essentially, the spatial conditions for the meeting and dialogue between areas of different orders.’

- Herman Hertzberger, 1991

1.2 Paris versus the Banlieues
What are the characteristic differences and similarities between the center of Paris and the banlieues?

The banlieues are the suburbs of Paris. The first banlieues formed due to the plans of Haussmann. Baron Georges Eugene Haussmann (1809-1892) was appointed in 1853 by Napoleon III, to modernize Paris. The goal was to provide light and air in the city, encourage economic growth, control the traffic flow and to make the city ‘revolutionary proof’. Haussmann achieved this by tearing down large parts of the chaotic houses and replacing them with the large boulevards we know today. The residents of the tiered down houses had to move outside the city. This resulted in the banlieues, with grew in the same chaotic way as the ‘old Paris’.

1.2.1 Morphology
Water Structure: There are merely two structural water elements, the Seine and the Canal. These water elements are of importance, for both the center of Paris as for the banlieues.

Green Structure: Using the public space is characteristic for Paris. Therefore the green space is of importance for both the center of Paris as for the banlieues. The green spaces in the banlieues need to be improved, in order to be of the same quality as the green spaces in the center.

Highways: The Boulevard Périphérique is the ring road around the center of Paris. Outside the Périphérique there are the banlieues. These are surrounded by a second ringroad, the Super-Périphérique Parisien (A86). The two ring roads are connected to the north by Autoroute du Nord, to the east by Autoroute du l’Est, to the south by Autoroute du Soleil and to the west by Autoroute du Normandie.

Public transport: The RER has been realized between 1959 and 1969, to improve the connection between the banlieues and the center. The problem with the RER is, that it provides merely a connection with the center and no connection between the banlieues themselves. This forces people to travel through the center when going from one suburb to the other.

Building height: The average building height is 8-19 meters lower in the banlieues then in the center of Paris.

**Water structure**

**Green structure**

**Building height**
1.2.2 Demography

**Average Household**

A clear difference between the center Paris and the banlieues is the average household size. The average size in the banlieues is higher than in the center. The average size in the center is 1.8 compared to 2.8 in the northeast banlieues. This difference has to do with the large number of single people living in the center and the young families living in the banlieues. It is important to consider the high number of young families when deciding on the program for the redesign.

**Average Income**

The northeast banlieues are the poorest of the whole of Paris. This has to do with the higher number of unemployment and as a result there is more social welfare and more social housing.

The number of jobs is higher in the center of Paris then in the banlieues and the higher incomes can be found in the southwest. When zooming in at the design area, there has to be looked further at the social and economic situation.

### Average Household Size

![Size of Households in Paris](image1)

- **Average Household Size**
  - Most larger households live outside the center.
  - Average household size is 1.8.

### Average Income

![Income Distribution in Paris](image2)

- **Income Distribution**
  - Percentage of single people.
  - Families with child(ren) younger than 25.

#### Evolution of Single People (1999-2009)

- **Evolution of Single People**
  - Percentage of single people: plus de 55%, de 45 à 55%, de 35 à 45%, de 25 à 35%, moins de 25%.

#### Evolution of Families with child(ren) younger than 25 (1999-2009)

- **Evolution of Families**
  - Percentage of families with children: plus de 50%, de 40 à 50%, de 30 à 40%, de 20 à 30%, moins de 20%.

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1.3 Grand Paris, Future plans for Paris

**What are important points for future developments in Paris?**

In September 2007 Sarkozy announced his idea to create a 'new comprehensive development project for Greater Paris'. An international urban and architectural competition for the future development of the metropolis Paris was launched in 2008. Ten teams of urban planners, architects, landscape architects and geographers were asked to give their vision for future Paris. In other words, give their vision of Grand Paris.

The ten leading architects were: Jean Nouvel, Christian de Portzamparc, Antoine Grumbach, Roland Castro, Yves Lion, Djamel Klouche, Richard Rogers, Bernardo Secchi, Paola Vigano, Finn Geipel, Giulia Andi and Winy Maas.

Four main points can be found in the ten diverse visions. The first argues an improved mobility and better access from and to all areas, in order to create urban equality. The second states that the different areas of the polycentric city need to have their own identity and strengths. The third is about the integration of nature and water in the city and the fourth argues the intensification of the urban fabric and looking for possibilities within the city.

The assumption is made that the ten visions are based on elaborate research. The four point are therefore considered to be important for the own redesign.

- **Improved mobility and better access from and to all areas to create urban equality**
- **Polycentric city with different areas that have their own identity and strengths**
- **Integrate nature and water in the city**
- **Intensify the current urban fabric and look for possibilities within the city**
2. Pantin, Ville Industrielle

2.1 History
How has Pantin developed over the last centuries?

2.1.1 From small rural village, to active industrial city

Pantin was before the 19th century a small rural village. During the industrialization Pantin evolved to an industrial town. A town for production, storage and redistribution.

Around 1854 the focus of the area was still on the two main roads. The focus was on the main roads until approximately 1895. The railway was further developed and building around the railroad and canal started. The area continued to develop. Because of the industrialization the area reserved for the railroads kept extending. The same happened with the canal.

In the beginning of the 20th century the situation in Pantin was poor. Epidemics occurred because of the bad hygiene. It was time to make some serious improvements. Besides better housing there was made an effort to improve the change for everyone to get education and participate in sport.

After the Second World War the situation was again far from good. This time the main focus was on reconstruction.

Today Pantin is a mixed area. There is still the industrial atmosphere, even though there are many developments going on. Pantin is continuously developing the residential areas, together with offices, cultural facilities and public green.

The industrial atmosphere is still present today and considered to be essential to retain, due to the importance of the industrialization of Pantin.

2.1.2 Canal de l'Ourcq

The railway and the canal de l'Ourcq are characteristic for Pantin. For a long time the area was mainly dedicated to production, storage and redistribution, giving Pantin its industrial atmosphere.

The canal was originally designed to supply Paris with fresh water. The first products to be transported over the canal towards the city center were wood and grain. The capacity of the canal became inefficient during the industrialization. In 1892 the expansion of the canal started. Until 1931 there had been worked on deepening and widening the canal. From then on heavier vessels could be used.

The canal was used in both directions. Raw materials were manufactured and stored in Pantin before moving them to Paris. From Paris towards Pantin came the byproducts of the slaughterhouses. These were used to produce soap, perfume and cream. Today there is still industrial activity around the canal, but it has also become a place for leisure. In future plans for the center of Pantin a cultural area is planned next to the canal.

The Canal has played a leading role in the history of Pantin. In combination with the visual qualities it is considered to be of high importance for the redesign.
2.2 Social and economic situation
How is the social and the economic situation in Pantin?

2.2.1 Statistics
The social and economic situation in Pantin is below average compared to the rest of Paris. It is an area with many young families and a low average income. 27% of the active population (15-64 years) has left school without ever getting a diploma. 8% of the active population had no income.

2.2.2 Projects
What kind of projects are there to improve the social situation for the youngsters and starters? What type of facilities are needed?

The statistics show some social and economic problems in Pantin. This raises questions about the possibilities for youngsters and starters. Therefore there is looked at projects that are supposed to improve their situation.

The Service Municipal de la Jeunesse (SMJ) makes a division of three age groups, namely:
- 8 – 11 years old
- 12 – 17 years old
- 16 – 25 years old

For the youngest group there is daycare on four locations in Pantin. They are open during the week and on Sunday and provide a variety of activities.

Recreation centers are open to all school children that are 3 - 12 years old. They promote the development and creativity of children through multiple projects. One of these projects is Le Projet Educatif Local (PEL) de Pantin. PEL attempts to create equal rights and changes for all the children in Pantin. A part of this project is providing more and better after school activities. These activities are divided in four sections: culture, science, health and sports. In the section culture there is a division into: dance, music, drama, and art.

For the group of 12 – 17 years old, there is a variety of after school activities. Besides that there is a centre where they can get help with finding a job. For the group of 16-25 years old there is a centre that provides help with the realization of various projects and initiatives.

The group of 18 – 25 years old is considered to be the ‘problem group’ of Pantin. There are not enough facilities and activities for them. The city Pantin is looking for new locations and projects, to provide in the need of this age group.

An answer has to be provided in the redesign, to the needs of the group of 18 – 25 years old.
2.3 Creative and cultural facilities

2.3.1 Creative facilities
Are there enough facilities for the creative sector?

The commercial activities of Pantin have always been located around the two main roads. Now a days there is also more and more in the streets towards the Canal.

The type of commercial activities vary from markets and shops till cafes and restaurant. Pantin is best known however for the local markets and the various craftsmen and designers. In the 90s the city started the project Le Pôle Pantin Métiers d'Art, with the aim to accelerate the development of the area. This was done by offering various workshops as promotion of the creation and implementation of arts and crafts. Pantin got national recognition through the label Ville et Métiers d'Art which was awarded in March. Pantin is the first city in the Seine-Saint-Denis and the third Île-de-France to receive this distinction. This makes Pantin one of the 63 cities of the Villes et Métiers d'Art in France.

Today there are more than forty craftsmen and designers. Unfortunately there are not enough ateliers for this group. Therefore Pantin is looking into the realization of new ateliers.

This importance of the arts and crafts for Pantin, and the lack of ateliers, have to be considered when deciding on the program for the redesign.

2.3.2 Cultural facilities
What type of cultural facilities are there?

The formed industrial Pantin is transforming into a mixed urban area. Part of the mix are a variety of cultural facilities. Besides the three libraries there is a theatre, a salle de spectacle, a cinema, a conservatory and a dance school. In the future plans of Pantin they designed a space for music performances in the open air.

2.4 Future Plans for Pantin

Which developments are currently taking place near the design location? What elements can be used for the own masterplan?

There are multiple developments taking place in Pantin. The most interesting one is ZAC (Zone d’aménagement concerté) Du Port, since this project is located next to the design location.

ZAC Du Port is one of the larger projects that are planned for Pantin. The zone between the Avenue Jean Lolive and the canal provides space for cultural facilities, shops, offices and more than 200 dwellings. The realization will be completed in 2017.

The connection between the Avenue Jean Lolive and the canal is made by the creation of green axes. These axes provide a connection between the canal and the church, the market and the Parc the la Manufacture as well. A second bridge is planned on the west side of the plan, to improve the connection between the south and north side of the canal.

This plan corresponds with the four main points of Grand Paris. It improves the accessibility, the different areas have their own identity, the plan integrates water and green and there is an intensification of the location. Therefore the plan can be seen as a good fit in ‘future Paris’.

It is interesting to continue on this plan in my own design, since they started with the realization and it is located next to my own design location. One of the elements that can be used in the own masterplan are the green axes.
3. Location, Canal de l’Ourcq

3.1 Urban plan by PLU Pantin
How does the urban plan of the design location look like?

The PLU (Plan local d’urbanisme) of Pantin shows a zoning according to the regulations for the building functions. On the north side of the canal there is mostly industry. There are however ‘mixed urban’ developments going on. The mixed urban is a place for living, working and for leisure.

This mixed urban is dominating on the south side of the canal. Besides that there are two zones with mostly dwellings and a green zone. A second green zone can be found on the east side of the location.

The center of the location is marked as cultural zone. This is described in the PLU as the future cultural center of the whole of Pantin. The local theater and a podium in the open air are located here.

The current developments and zoning have to be taken into account when designing my own masterplan. This in order to make the masterplan more realistic. The design location is in the industrial zone and in between the developments of the mixed urban and green zone. The building is located right next to the cultural zone.

3.2 Movement and recreation
What type of public activity is there in the area near the design location?

The canal is in the current situation most of all a place for passing by. There are many people walking, running or passing by on their bike. There are people sitting and relaxing next to the canal on sunny days, but this is much less than in the center of Paris. This difference can be partially explained by the effort that has been put in design of the public spaces in the center.

The city Pantin is working on the improvement of the public spaces. An example of this next to the canal is the ZAC Du Port project. However, there can still be done more in the redesign to make the canal a place for recreation and longer stays.

At this moment there is only one connection between the canal and the main street that is actively used by pedestrians. An improvement on this is made in the ZAC Du Port. This plan provides multiple connections between the two areas.
4. Terrain Pouchard

4.1 History
How has the terrain of Pouchard developed?

The building of interest is from the company Pouchard Tubes, which manufactures steel tubes. Pouchard was established in Paris in 1927 by Francis Pouchard. There original location was on the Rue Jules Auffret in Paris. Due to lack of space Pouchard decided to realize the complex at the Rue du Cheval Blanc. The location at Rue Jules Auffret is now in use for the preproduction work. The production and storage happens at the Rue du Chaval Blanc.

The first part of the complex was built in 1945. The company kept growing over the years and so did the building complex. The fourth part of the block of warehouses was realized in 1961.

4.2 Characteristic
What are the characteristics of the Pouchard terrain?

On the north side of Pouchard there are the train tracks and on the south side there is the canal. This is a unique location, since both the railroads and the canal are essential in the history of Pantin.

On the side of the railroads there are a couple of smaller buildings. The functions of these buildings include the reception and offices. The more characteristic, large warehouses are used for the production and storage of the steel tubes.

The most characteristic part are the two largest warehouses at the side of the canal. This block has impressive dimensions with a length of 170 meters and a total with of 50 meters. The dimensions are one of the reasons that the building is mentioned in the "Inventaire Du Patrimoine Industriel Pantin" as "très intéressant" (The Magasin Generaux is also considered as ‘trés intéressant’ in this document).

4.3 Future plans for Pouchard
Are there developments planned for Pouchard?

The owner of Pouchard retired, without a successor. Therefore the whole terrain is becoming available for new developments. The train tracks make it difficult to realize dwellings. It will probably become a place for (commercial) activity, but there have not been any decisions made yet.

It is really interesting that the Pouchard terrain is becoming available and that the city Pantin is still looking for an infill. This makes my own project current and more realistic.
5. Masterplan

5.1 Masterplan northeast Paris

How can a connection be made between the center of Paris and the banlieues in the northeast, by redesigning the public space?

Before the visit to Paris a master plan was made with the theme: Public space. In this plan the public space is essential in connecting the Banlieues in the north-east with the center of Paris.

In the Paris there is a lot of public activity around the Seine. A connection with the north-east of Paris is made, by extending the possibility for public activity alongside the canal. The public spaces along the canal are extended and improved. The two intersections of the canal and the Péripherique need special attention in future designs, since they are essential in the connection between the Banlieues and Paris.

During our visit in Paris it turned out that the canal already functioned as a connection. The banks of the canal are used for jogging, biking, relaxing and meeting people. A perfect route to connect Pantin with Paris.

Public Activity around the Seine

Connecting Banlieues with Paris

Intersection Canal and Périphérique

Connecting Public Spaces

Impression Urban Canal

Impression Parc Canal

5.2 Master plan Pantin

It is important that the masterplan is part of the urban plans for the whole of Paris. The four point of Grand Paris are therefore considered to be important for the masterplan. These were improved mobility and better access from and to all areas, in order to create urban equality. Different areas with an own identity and strengths. Integration of nature and water in the city and intensification of the urban fabric.

In the existing plans for Pantin there is an Eco Green Zone and Mixed Urban included. The mixed urban is a place for living, working and for leisure. Another part of the existing plans is a cultural zone. This zone is located in the center of Pantin, next to the canal.

The own master plan designs further on the plans of Pantin. The three zones are extended. The mixed urban and the green zone come together in the cultural area.

The canal is in the current situation mostly a space for passing by. In the design there is more focus on recreation and longer stays. The plans for ZAC Du Port are integrated in the design. The bridge that is part of this plan improves the connection between the design area and the center of Paris. This bridge improves the accessibility of the metro, and thereby the connection with the center.

Four points Grand Paris

Continue on ZAC Du Port

Continue on Urban plan PLU Pantin

Mixed Urban

Green

Cultural Area
6. Bâtiment Pouchard

6.1 Situation

How is the Pouchard building situated?

The building is situated on the south side of the Pouchard terrain, next to the canal. There is no actual connection between the two. Over the years there never has been a connection. This is a shame, since the canal is of high value for the whole of Pantin. Therefore a connection will be made in the redesign.

The building has been connected to the railroads. The railroads are still visible on the street and in the building. They are however no longer in use. The railroads are of historically important and will therefore be part of the redesign.

An extension for the public activity will be created into the building. The first idea to achieve this, is by breaking parts of the building open.

The new bridge improves the connection between the design area and the center of Paris. This bridge improves the accessibility of the metro, and thereby the connection with the center. This means that the building is also better accessible in the future. The redesign can therefore function on a larger scale.

Extension public activity into building  Connecting building with the canal  New bridge - Connection metro - Connection Paris
6.2 Inspiration and fascination
What elements are fascinating and inspirational?

What I find most fascinating about the Pouchard building is the huge contrast between the interior and the exterior. From the outside it looks closed and reasonable sized. The inside however shows an enormous open space.

One of the elements that enhances this contrast are the rooflights. Besides providing a large amount of daylight, the make the space look higher.

6.3 Repetition and exception
What are the primary measurements of the building? What exceptions can be found?

The Pouchard building is a typical building for production. The total dimensions of the building are 170m by 50m, providing a floor area of 8500 m². The construction is simple and has a lot of repetition.

There are three exceptions on this repetition. The first exception is the former entrance for the train in the middle of the building. The entrance has a double width compared to the standard.

The second exception is the newer entrance for the trucks on the east side of the building. This extension had the width of 5/4 compared to the standard.

The third exception is on the opposite site, on the west. This section is only half the width compared to the standard.

These three exceptions are drawn with a more expressive and special façade in the original drawings (there are copies of these drawings in the archive of Pantin). The three parts of the façade are however never realized with this expressive look.

The three exceptions with their original designs, give a reason to articulate these parts in the redesign.
6.4 Materialization

How is the Pouchard building materialized and is this common for the area of Pantin?

6.4.1 Colors of Pantin
The industrial history of Pantin is still visible in the materialization of the different buildings. Metal, (red) brick and earth ware can be found in buildings that were used or are used for production. The red brick was generally used for these type of buildings since 1930.

Another color that is seen often is grey. This was typically used for buildings with a low budget, like for instance the social housing. Other facades have turned greyish over the years. This due to the black smoke of the former industry, and the non-refurbishing of these facades since.

A third type of color that is becoming more notable, are the vivid colors of some of the modern architecture.

Simon Texier, Les vouleurs urbaines les sens de la ville, Archives patrimoine, 2008

6.4.2 Colors of the building
The materialization of the Pouchard building enhances the contrast between the exterior and interior. In the exterior brick is dominating, while in the interior steel and concrete are dominating. All these materials are typical for a Pantin production building.

The exception on this materialization is the entrance on the east side of the building. Here the façade is covered with corrugated sheets that are of no value. There is no roof light in this part and a different type of tiles has been used. The exception motivates to do something special with this part of the building.

There can be argued that the Pouchard building is one of the many production buildings and therefore of minimal value. However, the contrast of in and outside and the fascinating atmosphere, which are articulated by the materialization, make the building interesting and valuable.

Typical materials and the exception
6.5 Construction
What are the basic principles of the construction? How does the construction of the tree exceptions look like?

The Pouchard building is built of steel columns and trusses that are connected with bolts and rivets. The main trusses are connected to each other by eleven sub trusses.

The lower part of the columns are heavier dimensioned because they have to carry the load of the crane tracks. The top part of the columns simply need to carry the light roof construction. Stability is in the longitudinal direction accomplished by the crane track construction. In the cross direction it is accomplished by the rigid angle between the columns and main trusses.

The exceptions in the construction are at the same three places that have been mentioned earlier. The exception on the west of half the width, makes a connection with the front façade. The diagonals in the construction are moved with respect to each other, and connected to vertical elements in the façade.

The exception in the middle of the building has to do with the entrance. A variation in the construction is needed in order to make this large opening. A heavier construction is realized to carry the weight above the opening.

It is not completely clear how the third exception is constructed. Unfortunately there are no accurate drawings of it and it has not been possible to make pictures inside. It is clear however that the construction of this part is based on the same principles as the rest of the construction.

The three exceptions in the construction, give a reason to articulate these parts in the redesign.
7. Program
What is an interesting program for the Pouchard building?

The program had to be a contribution to both Pantin and Paris. The scale of the building gives the possibility to introduce multiple functions.

7.1 Theatre
The first and main function is a theatre. A small theatre is located in the building next to the Pouchard building. This Théâtre Du Fil de L'eau, is a local theatre with a capacity of 270 seats. The theatre functions well, but has much more potential. It is located in the cultural area of Pantin. This area is currently under development, which provides the opportunity to extend this theatre.

Not only is extending the theatre interesting for the cultural area, it is also an interesting opportunity to make a connection between Pantin and Paris. The theatre for Pantin becomes a theatre for Paris.

7.2 Drama and Music School
The city Pantin is trying to realize more facilities and activities for the age group of 18 – 25 years old, the ‘problem group’ of Pantin. Some of these facilities and activities will be provided in the redesign. They have to be related to the theatre, since this is the main function of the redesign.

The second function is therefore a Drama and Music School. A socially based connection between the Pouchard building and the whole of Pantin will be established this way.

7.3 Ateliers
The importance of the arts and crafts for Pantin, and the lack of ateliers result in the third function; ateliers. These ateliers can also be used by the age group of 18 – 25 years old. This ‘creative program’ fits well with the other cultural functions.
8. Value Assessment

+ Location
+ Typical Pantin building for production
+ Roof light
- Poor condition
- Quality material

+ Water and Green
+ History
+ Connection Paris

+ Location
+ Typical Pantin building for production
+ Contrast inside-outside
+ Dimensions
+ Roof light
- Quality material

+ Typical Pantin building for production
+ Roof light
- Poor condition
- Chaotic

+ Construction
+ Traintracks
- Exceptions not of the quality that was originally intended
9. Conceptual Model

Area Pantin

Small rural village
Becomes industrial town
Becomes mixed urban

Shifting relation between public and private

Theme ‘In-Between Space’

‘The key to the transition and connection between areas with different territorial claims. Spatial condition for the meeting and dialogue between areas of different orders.’
- Herman Hertzberger -

Programme Theatre

Various areas with different territorial claims
Include Drama and Music school

City Paris

Contrast between public city and private building

Batiment Pouchard

Extremely private

10. Impression
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