

# Personality and Anonymity: Dwelling in Public-Dominated City Environment

Maciej Jan Abramczyk / 4254899  
Delft University of Technology,  
Architecture & Dwelling Graduation Studio:  
*At Home in the City*

## Project Reflection (P5)

### Aspect 1

*The relationship between the theme of the studio and the subject chosen within this framework.*

The subject of the project ("Personality and Anonymity: Dwelling in Public dominated City Environment") is a subset of Studio's theme ("At Home in the City"). The project denotes the primary trait of *home* as its *personality* (understood as dwelling's susceptibility to semiotic changes imposed by its user). Consequently, one of project's main challenges was to implement dwelling typologies susceptible to user personalisation into anonymous, public-dominated city environment of Van Der Kunbuurt (site designated by the studio assignment). However, such implementation was not to be achieved on expense of public domain's quality and functionality, but on the contrary - it should lead to an improved coexistence of public and private realms, which both are constituting *living in the city*.

### Aspect 2

*The relationship between the methodical line of approach of the studio and the method chosen.*

The following methods has been chosen within the framework of Studio's method (comprised of three main consecutive modules: site analysis, thematic research and design):

Site Analysis:

- Available data and literature study: Site history; future plans; social and demographic structure; environmental factors.
- Morphological analysis: Architecture; typologies; programme; routing
- Field research: Spatial character; routing; interviews; mind mapping.

Thematic research:

- Typo-morphological analysis: routing and access; programme; public, collective and private space distribution; scale and proportions; visual connections.
- Semiotic analysis (spatial expression and character): Public, collective & private space; access points; scale; visual connections.
- Field research: Performance assessment via structured interviews.

Design:

- The priorly collected data and theoretical knowledge constituted departing points for design assignment and also served as design solution assessment tool throughout the design process.
- Research through design critically implemented the collected data and theoretical knowledge into practical solutions.
- Additional problems and topics that has emerged in the design process has been investigated via relevant literature and case study, as well as expert consultations.

### **Aspect 3**

*The relationship between research and design.*

Both the site analysis and thematic research have provided fundamental guidelines for design development:

Site analysis:

Morphological analysis has proven to be particularly useful, leading to definition of building masses and access system, via analysis of the Amstel waterfront facade stratification and fragmentation, routing and access patterns in the area.

Thematic research:

All three modules of the research (structured interviews, typo-morphological and semiotic analysis) led to very clear conclusions, which could be implemented as specific design guidelines, of which the primary are as follows:

- Ground level dedicated to the public facilities, with distinctively articulated facade, high transparency level and good accessibility.
- Strong disconnectedness of public and private realms
- Clear demarcation of public and private realm's boundaries (preferably stratification and restricted accessibility)
- Protected, encompassed outdoor community space for dwellers.
- Direct access to dwelling units from an outdoor community space is preferable.

### **Aspect 4**

*The relationship between the project and the wider social context.*

Anonymity of public space is a function of public traffic intensity. Personality of dwelling environment develops only to extents allowed by anonymity of the surrounding public spaces. Growth of cities' population leads to increasing amount of spaces of extreme anonymity, such as communication nodes. In such spaces personality of dwellings is restricted. Consequently the dwelling environment in the cities is becoming increasingly anonymous, or is driven away to suburbs leading to urban sprawl and development of monoprogrammed areas.

In response to this progressing problem the project is an attempt to implement personal dwelling environment into anonymous public space and to establish coexistence of the two realms, rather than collision of interests.