P1 Report

Heritage & Architecture: Transformations in the historic center of Amsterdam

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Preface

The chosen graduation studio of fall 2014 is the studio of Heritage & Architecture. The subject of the studio is the University of Amsterdam city center campus in Amsterdam. The city center campus is situated on the Binnengasthuis area, which was built at the end of the fourteenth century as a monastery, the Old and New nunnery. After the alteration of 1578, the monastery became a hospital, the St. Pietergasthuis. When a gasthuis was built outside of the city walls in 1635, the area was named the Binnengastuis. Currently, most buildings in the area are owned by the university, accommodating multiple faculties.

This report is part of the P1 presentation during the master architecture at the TU Delft. The report contains a theoretical framework, a spatial analysis and a conclusion, where the position to design is formulated. The p1 is the first official presentation of the graduation year, follow by the p2 in January. The goal of the first part of the semester is a thorough research and group discussion, providing the student with a basis out of which the student can start the design phase in the second part of the semester.
Introduction

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Assignment
The Binnengasthuis area is part of the medieval center of Amsterdam and lies within the buffer zone of the UNESCO world heritage listed Grachtengordel. The area has a rich and complex history, with many functional changes, reconstructions and transformations. The area is one of the four main campuses of the University of Amsterdam, accommodating various faculties and University services. Besides university functions, there is also housing. The UvA aims for a concentrated inner city campus, migrating other faculties to the Binnengasthuisterrein and transforming an existing building into a University library. What are the consequences of these plans for the area? What is the role of a campus within a historic city center? How does the campus deal with the increase of tourists and the dynamic city life of Amsterdam around it? The relevant questions from an architectural perspective are dealing with the tolerance of change. How can the existing and listed buildings deal with the future plans of the city and the university? What is the architectural tolerance of the buildings and ensembles? These are the main questions of the total graduation studio. The final graduation project should answer all these questions. The individual assignment is however yet to be determined and can be different for each student. There is no program or specific building given at the start of the graduation. The program and specific building have to be defined by research and design during, and also after the first and second quarter of the graduation year. The first step in the definition of my personal assignment is an extensive research part done by the entire group. The group analysis forms a base for my own interpretations and positions towards the assignment. Combined with my personal thematic research - containing a more generic theoretical framework and a more specific site analysis - this forms a starting point to the design process and the specific definition of my personal assignment.

Research focus and questions
This global layout of this thematic research report is focused on a generic theoretical framework, followed by a site specific analysis. The site specific analysis will be compared and reflected to the theory. Based on this reflection and personal interpretation, a value assessment will be constructed. The value assessment will be the basis for a set of design principles and position that can be used in the design process.

The research is based on the observations and fascinations, formed in the first weeks of the quarter. The subject is more specific to the site and the architectural scale. The main subject of my thematic research is the use of (semi) public space. The Binnengasthuis area looks like a very fragmented site, with different ensembles, masses and architectural styles. It is constructed out of various buildings connected through a layout of courtyards and corridors or passages. At first sight, this layout resembles the layout of the former cloister and hospital buildings that were there since the 15th century. When investigating the site, I observed that there is a significant difference in how these spaces are used. Some were busy, some not used at all. The research is focused on these observations. I want to explore the reasons for these observations, so I can integrate and improve the public and semi-public space on site. The main questions for the research are:

What are the architectural and technical characteristics of public and semi-public spaces?

Why and how are they used? What are the target groups?

What is the relation to the buildings & typology?

What is the relation of the spaces to the former layout of courtyards and passages of the cloister and hospital buildings?

How can the unused public spaces be improved?

What is the role of public space within a university campus? What kind of public spaces does a University need?
The answer to these questions helps me to define a set of principles for designing public space in both inside, outside and in between buildings. This provides a basis for optimizing spaces for learning, encounter, relax and leisure in a newly transformed university building. In addition to the design principles for a transformation on a building level, I’m able to reflect on a broader scale of the city as a campus, covering a theoretic approach of how a ‘city’ - in this case the campus on the Binnengasthuisterrein - could and should work in terms of public life.

Societal relevance

The graduation project can be relevant in more ways. First of all, the general assignment of transformation within historic cities is a subject that is becoming more and more important, let alone the assignment of transformation of architecture in general. The transformation of monuments and sites with much historical and cultural value is very complex. There is also no general consensus about how to approach these assignments. There is no right or wrong. Therefore, the graduation project has added value to general discourse of transformation projects in a historical context. This research is focused on architectural and urban typologies of spaces on a former cloister area. The present characteristics of the types are compared to the historical characteristics, with the goal of defining the relevance and values of these types. The conclusions of this research give insight into the approach of the relevant types in future transformations; do they have something to offer or not? The relevance and definitions of the types can also point out certain problems or possibilities that help architects and planners in future proposals in historical (former cloister) areas such as the Binnengasthuis area.

Besides an architectural and urban added value, it can also be relevant in the subject of University buildings within city centers. The project shows insight in how a campus works together with a city and the other way around. The final proposal is an example of how a campus can work in itself. Is a campus just a collection of nearby educational buildings or is it a strong cluster that works like a machine? What is the relation between the University area and the urban area? Is there a clear separation or can the University functions be blended with residents, shops and other city-related characteristics? My graduation project shows a possible solution to these questions. The solution is therefore both architectural, urban and societal (educational-city).

Method

The research method of the thematic research around the subject of (semi) public space is explained in diagram 1.
Chapter 1: Theoretic framework

Introduction

The first part of the thematic research will explore the urban and architectural perspective on the use of public and semi-public space. The focus is based on the observations and fascinations of the site. While exploring the site, both physical and through analysis, a few characteristics came to my attention. First of all, the overall impression of the urban layout I got, was that of a fragmented site. The site is constructed by a layout of scattered building volumes with different sizes and scales, intersected by courtyards, a square and accessed by small gates or underpasses. Diagram 1 shows an abstract layout of how I perceive the site. Two of the three courtyards are completely surrounded by the building blocks. The remaining courtyard is constructed by a triangular building block, with an opening on the corner of the block. The fourth open area is the main square, and is located in the center of the area.

The only passage by its definition is the Oudemanhuispoort, located at the north of the site. The passage connects the Kloveniersburgwal and the Oudezijds Achterburgwal, but is closed after opening hours of the faculty next to it. The remaining streets on the site are not passages by definition, but I perceived them as such. This could have something to do with architectural characteristics such as light, contrast and materialization. Also the dimensions of the street can play a role. The characteristics of both the passages, the courtyard and the square will be further elaborated in chapter two – Spatial analysis.

To be able to reflect on the (semi) public spaces on site, I will elaborate a theoretic framework on the three named subjects: square, courtyard and passage. The subjects will be elaborated both from an architectural and an urban perspective. The goal is to gain a wide knowledge framework with different perspectives, so that a significant reflection on the site specific spaces can be performed.
1.1 The square

In this chapter I will explore the definition and several components of the square. I chose this type because the central open area on the BGT looks like a square on first sight. It is the biggest open space that is not considered a courtyard of a building. The two most important traffic lanes come together at this geographically central open space, suggesting that it is in fact the central square of the Binnengasthuis area. During the first site visit, it was hard to grasp the square; it was not busy or crowded and its borders are not clearly defined. It felt like a leftover space constructed between various buildings with different architectural characteristics and functions.

The more generic theoretical framework explores the development and the social components of this type. Afterwards the literature is compared to the historical development of the square on the Binnengasthuis area, defining my preliminary interpretation of the square prior to the more in-depth site analysis of chapter 2.2.

The Oxford dictionary describes ‘square’ as: An open, typically four-sided, area surrounded by buildings in a village, town, or city. Secondly, and a more reduced definition according to the dictionary is: An open area at the meeting of streets (Oxford dictionaries). In Dutch, the translation would be plein, coming from the French word plaine, meaning emptiness or plain. In Italian we know the word originally as campi, which were grass covered left-over areas within the city (Meyer, 2006, p. 89). The squares in Italian cities which were specifically designed as such are called Piazze or plaza in Spain. According to de Vries, the Dutch squares can be categorized in four types and are defined by water. The four types are: Dam square, quay square, damping square and vaulting square (De Vries, 1990). The dominant function of a square in the Netherlands was that of a market, easily identifiable by their present names such as ‘Beestenmarkt’ and ‘Vismarkt’ (Meyer, 2006).

Meyer distinguishes different characteristics and types for the 19th, 20th and 21th century. Nineteenth century squares are usually constructed or formed according three principles. The first principle is based on the rapid expansion and the increasing importance of infrastructure. Car- and train traffic became increasingly important in the structure of the city and the public space, and therefore also squares. Meyer states that this also meant that squares would no longer be defined by water but by infrastructure (Meyer, 2006). The infrastructure-square, is designed as a monumental square, where the different roads or boulevards intersected. The square would have an organizational function within a city (Meyer, 2006). A second type according to Meyer is the entrance-square. The function of the square is to express the character of city of neighborhood at the entrance of the area. The idea dates from the Baroque times in cities as Berlin or Turin, where the square expresses grand character of the city (Meyer, 2006). During city expansions of the 19th century, this type of square was used for the identification and characterization of neighborhoods. Meyer uses the example of the Mathenesserplein in Rotterdam as a combination of both an infrastructure and a expressive function. The square, designed by J.H. van den Broek, expresses the heterogeneous character of the neighborhood by using a composition of different masses (Meyer, 2006). The third type that has been used since the 19th century is the residential square. The square is meant to be a quiet area, not on the junction of infrastructure. It’s an opposition to the previous types (Meyer, 2006). This type would probably be the most related to the square on the Binnengasthuisterrein.

The evolution of the square during the 20th century was under the influence of the ideas

Notes: 1: Oxford dictionary: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/square
After the nineteenth and twentieth century principles of public spaces, Meyer explains the current situation of the 21st century. Meyer wonders if classical principles of the square such as agora or forum could still play a role in the definition of a 21st century square (Meyer, 2006, p. 89). He describes the current time as a struggle for the proper definition of public space, and addresses the ambivalent context of program and people. He does however propose a set of principles or ingredients for a newly built or transformed square. Firstly, he states that a square becomes redundant when the context of program and people becomes insufficient. This sounds rather obvious, but he says that a square also shouldn’t rely on the programmatic context entirely, because then it would not be able to accommodate the unplanned or unexpected ways of use (Meyer, 2006). Secondly, he poses that a square should be comforting and attractive in terms of form, materialization and scale (2006). To me, this is again a rather obvious proposition. The real question and assignment is how to achieve such intangible characteristics. He nuances his latter argument, stating that a square also shouldn’t overdo it, in terms of design or program. This would make a space too dependent on trends (Meyer, 2006). To illustrate his argument, he shows two examples, both on the far end of the two arguments. One is the Potzdammer Platz in Berlin, where a large amount of different programs and design elements are introduced, making the square to dependent on the programs and the people. The other example is the Plaça dels Països Catalans in Barcelona (figure 1.2). The square is situated in the chaotic environment in front of a new train station and several office buildings. The square had to express the new entrance for the train station as well as a new central square for the neighborhood. By a minimal addition of a roof structure and a stone pavement, the square is able to accommodate various functions and behavior of its users (Meyer, 2006).

Figure 1.2: Plaça dels Països Catalans in Barcelona.

Source: http://www.progettuaricchitettura.it/placa-del-paisos-catalans-di-albert-viaplana-eva/
Another study on public space, squares and use performed by Gehl in his book Life between buildings. Gehl discusses the use and development of public space in an historical perspective. Gehl starts with stating that spatial planning has a significant influence on the way that people use a space. To support his argument, he poses two extreme examples. One is that of a city with skyscrapers, underground parking lots and large distances between buildings and recreational functions (Gehl, 2001). These city structures can be found in North America and in modernist European cities. The image of these cities is defined by cars and buildings, no people. The second example is that of a city with a low and dense urban fabric, a pedestrian attractive infrastructure and a vague boundary between the public and private domain (Gehl, 2001). To understand the development of city planning and public space, Gehl describes the public life in a historical perspective. He distinguishes three different main ideas of public space that were leading over time. The middle ages were about the physical and the social aspect, the renaissance was about the visual aspect and functionalism was about the physical and function aspect of public space. He starts with the middle ages, where cities were not built by city planners as we know today but rather by a slow process of city development of use. The city was not a goal by itself, but a tool formed by use (Gehl, 2001, p. 43). He states that especially medieval cities are not developed around buildings, but rather is based on the layout of streets and squares. This is where life happens, the buildings and their facades were just the ‘stage’. As a prime example he uses the Piazza del Campo in Sienna (figure 1.3). Gehl states that this square is perfect for its users, due to the orientation, its bowl shape and strategically places fountains (Gehl, 2001).

Gehl continues with the renaissance, where the main idea behind public space and city planning was the visual aspect. The first main difference with the middle ages was that cities are now being planned and designed specifically, instead of it being built or grown by the people and use. Instead of the streets and squares being the most important spaces, the buildings become more important. They become art pieces, made by artists and architects. The street patterns and general layout of a city becomes almost a graphic, made by hand, and seen from the sky. They look beautifully as a classic pattern, but the ideas behind it had nothing to do with human scale or social use (Gehl, 2001).

The third period Gehl distinguishes is functionalism, where the physical and functional aspect was most important. Gehl's description of these principles resemble Meyer's description about modern squares under influence of CIAM. Gehl adds that the modern principles were also based on medical knowledge gained during the 19th century. The result of this knowledge are the conceptions about people's need for air, light, sun, ventilation and proper access to green. This also meant that the distance between building increased and the orientation towards the sun became important (Gehl, 2001). According to Gehl, functionalism was too much focused on the materialistic and the physical, rather then the social component of architecture. His position to this functional modern public space is quite strong. He states that the large dimensions and straight lines of the new city are very unpleasant to walk through or to stay in. The out of scale environment encourages people to stay indoors (Gehl, 2001, p. 48). Secondly, by increasing the distance between buildings and spreading green space, you would also segregate the public life. At last, he states that a traffic system entirely based on cars would further decrease the ability of social life between buildings and houses (2001).
The square and the Binnengasthuis area

Chapter two of this report describes a thorough analysis of the square in present time. This analysis will be compared and reflected to the literature set out in this chapter. To make this comparison as thorough as possible, I will also describe my interpretation of the literature and the square on the BGT in a historical perspective.

Figure 1.4 shows the development of the area since the late eighteenth century. As seen in the plans, the site changed a lot over time, although the central open space seems to have been present and maintained during all these changes. Except during the first half of the twentieth century, when the three ‘wachtkamers’ were built on the central open space. This stage can be considered as the most chaotic in terms of built structure, when the site consisted of a large amount of separate volumes with different shapes and dimensions. When the ‘wachtkamers’ were demolished in the seventies, the central open space was restored. The layout during 1770 looks very similar to the former cloister layout and is constructed out of courtyards and the open square in between the various buildings with an overall orthogonal structure. The earliest layout consisted of the separated Old and the New nonnenhuis, that were connected after the Alteration. The central space has always been in the center and in between the formerly separated cloisters. I therefore assume that the central space always was an ‘outsider’. It wasn’t part of a building or ensemble, nor was it an enclosed courtyard. I think this in-between character remained until present day, it was never enclosed or moved. The stage of 1883 shows characteristics of a park or garden layout, suggesting that the space was also meant as a central park, square or garden; as a retreat in between all the hospital buildings.

In conclusion, the square as an central open space has always been present on the site, except during the first half of the twentieth century. I assume that the space always fell right outside everything else. This also might have something to do with the large amount of changes around it. For a short period of time, the space was meant as a park; maybe this was even the only stage where the space actually had a definition. The rest of the time - and nowadays - the square is not clearly limited by borders. It was, and still is defined by the surrounding various buildings of different dimensions and shapes.

Figure 1.4 Development Binnengasthuis area.
1.2 Courtyard

In this chapter I will explore the definition and several components of the courtyard. On first sight, the Binnengasthuis area has two types of courtyards. One is surrounded entirely by buildings, and is only accessible through the building(s). The second type is constructed in between a triangular building, with an access point at one corner, directly accessible from the street. It's also accessible from the building itself. I will elaborate on the different types and meanings of courtyards based on literature. Besides the more generic theoretical framework, I will look at the courtyards on the Binnengasthuis area from a historical perspective. I will try to compare the described types from the literature to the types recognizable from historical maps of the area.

The Oxford dictionary describes ‘courtyard’ as: An unroofed area that is completely or partially enclosed by walls or buildings, typically one forming part of a castle or large house. (Oxford dictionaries)¹. This matches with the first observation on site but is of course a generic description.

Brooker & Stone describes the courtyard based on the Neue Staatsgalerie by James Stirling as: “(...) as a point of intellectual escape for the gallery visitors. They can remove themselves from the concentration of the interior spaces and enter this protective and enclosed space that has an open roof to the sky” (Brooker & Stone, 2009, p. 44). They add that the courtyard in the Galerie is a postmodern interpretation of the ancient Roman forum (Figure 1). They describe the courtyard - or enclosed garden - as a space for retreat, a haven for peace and quiet in between the ‘hostile’ and chaotic world (2009, p.44). They distinguish the relevance on an architectural and on an urban level. On an architectural scale, the courtyard still is very important in housing typologies. It provides a protected quiet private space for the inhabitants. On an urban scale, the enclosed garden is even more important. In dense urban situations, a quiet space is often hard to find, making an enclosed garden a very valuable space (2009, p. 44). I immediately think of the Binnengasthuis area as a large courtyard in itself, because it is such a quiet space in relation to its direct surroundings, but I’ll come back to that later. Besides an architectural and urban value, Brooker & Stone describe the courtyard also as a possible tool to dramatize a building, especially within public buildings. They use the Staatsgalerie as an example, where the inside/outside space is a perfect retreat for the visitor to engage with the exterior, without having to leave the premises (2009, p.44).

Figure 1: Model of the Neue Staatsgalerie by James Stirling. Courtyard indicated in red. Source: James Stirling, Michael Wilford and Associates, Neue Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, © Staatsgalerie Stuttgart. Retrieved from: http://www.metalocus.es/

The book De omsloten tuin: geschiedenis en ontwikkeling van de hortus conclusus en de herintroductie ervan in het hedendaagse stadslandschap describes a very thorough analysis of the courtyard. In the book, De Wit describes the courtyard as a type, the history and the related functions. The texts are often very phenomenological and poetic, making a definition sometimes a bit intangible. I will reduce my description and try to focus on the definition, a few types, use and the history of the enclosed garden.

De Wit starts the study by explaining the enclosed garden, focusing on the garden itself. This type originated three thousand years ago in Egypt, Babylonia, Mesopotamia and Persia, where people built walled gardens, ponds and seating areas (Aben & de Wit, 1998, p. 10). During the middle ages, this concept gets transformed into the European context. De Wit describes the beginning of the middle ages as chaos, and generalizes European cities as fortified enclaves within a landscape of monasteries, castles and settlements which are closed of from the landscape. Cities depend on their own food production, building large agricultural areas outside of the city walls. Often, perimeter of the walls was a lot bigger than the city, providing space for city expansions and for agricultural activities in case of sieges and wars (1998, p. 24). Around 1400, garden space became more important with-

Notes: 1: Oxford dictionary: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/courtyard
in cities. The garden spaces are mostly related to the monasteries, which often had large orchards. De Wit distinguishes the spiritual courtyard type of the monk. To clarify the type, De Wit starts with explaining the structure of the monastery. The monastery is a chain of autonomous spaces, which are defined by the thickness of the walls and the connected corridor. The objects are connected through the consistent and continuous rhythm of the gallery, columns and arcades. The gallery is the transition between inside and outside. Seen from the inside, it represents the ‘outside’ of the garden. Seen from the garden, it represents the ‘inside’ of the building. The solid natural stone floor and the back wall pose a contrast to the openness of the sky (cosmos) and the refinement of the columns (1998, p. 54). This contrast between earth and heaven is also identifiable in the arcade. The floor represents the earth and the arcade arch represents the dome of heaven.

The garden itself is a representation of the mental and harmonious world. Eventually, the garden is a square plan, constructed through a cross and surrounded by the gallery (Figure 2) (1998, p. 55).

This description is very spiritual and in my opinion not very tangible, although the physical representation of the spiritual looks quite tangible and possible identifiable within the historical maps of the Binnengasthuis area.

After the middle ages, an interesting shift in the approach of the enclosed garden takes place. Where the previous type is concentrated on verticality, the heaven, the dome, the courtyard develops towards the horizontal. The infinity of the earth is being acknowledged, and the garden is being directed outwards, instead of inwards (Figure 3).

The enclosed garden as an historical type is still visible in historic cities in The Netherlands. The courtyard, or ‘hofje’ is an enclosed garden, segregated from the urban context. The type is constructed in between small houses, that are accessible from the courtyard only. The courtyard is accessible from the street through a small gate, which gets locked at night. Maybe the most well-known example of this type is the Begijnhof, present in multiple cities in The Netherlands. The Begijnhof is the oldest type of the ‘hofjes’ and dates back to the 12th century. It was built as a monastery living community of unmarried woman. The living community subject to strict rules, where the courtyard functions as the binding factor (1998, p. 125). The type is similar to the previous described monk type, with a gallery and an inwards orientation. It’s not faced towards the city but is just related to the building block itself. These middle aged types evolved into more public courtyards.
former modest and sober entrance gates became more important, facing the courtyard more towards the city. The gates became more monumental and representative. When the courtyard became more and more public, it gained the function as buffer space between the street and the individual houses (1998, p. 125).

Further, De Wit describes an interesting development of the enclosed garden. De Wit explains the influence of the enclosed garden to the current public 'green space' in cities as we know them now. After the middle ages and the industrial revolutions, the landscape is segregated from the city. Gardens turn inside the city. This lead to the abolishment of the relation between the enclosed garden and the reference to the landscape (infinite earth and sky dome). The gardens are now intertwined with the urban fabric, reducing the type to squares, parks and front yards. The reference to the landscape as it was before is now limited to parkways, parks and 'swimming paradises' (1998, p. 120). Based on the three remaining types of urban green space - the square, the park and urban garden - De Wit describes the influence of the former type of the enclosed garden.

Similar to Meyer in the previous chapter, De Wit describes the square is a tool to organize the urban structure. In relation to the enclosed garden, the surrounding walls (in this case the built context) create hierarchy and a direct relation between the square and the surrounding buildings (1998, p. 121) (Figure 4). In the case of the park, the city takes over as 'landscape', and forms the background or horizon for the garden. Before, the landscape park was autonomous, now, the urban park is inextricably connected and dependent to the built context. As an example for the decay of a square as a garden, De Wit uses the Place de la Concorde in Paris. The French place, evolved from a structural tool in the urban fabric to a space lacking spatial definition (1998, p. 121). De Wit calls the Place de la Concorde a 'non-place', a traffic junction that doesn't create space but actually expresses the absence of space: the inverse of the enclosed garden (1998, p.121).

The courtyard and the Binnengasthuis area
Chapter two of this report describes a thorough analysis of the elements square, courtyard and passage in present time. This analysis will be compared and reflected to the theoretical framework set out in chapter one. To make this comparison as thorough as possible, I will also elaborate on the described types on the Binnengasthuis area in a historical perspective. I will try to identify similarities between the theoretical framework and the historical development of the three elements in the area.

The courtyard on the Binnengasthuis area in an historical perspective has different appearances and types. Since the Binnengasthuis area started as a monastery, I expect to be able to identify similarities to the described monk type. During the transformations of the hospital, the layout of the area became a pavilion structure. It is possible that these pavilions between open spaces resemble some of the described characteristics.
Figure 5 shows the oldest image available of the Old and New nunnery in 1544. The layout separated monastery is constructed out of building volumes and courtyards. The courtyards had functions such as gardens, orchard, carpenter workspace and a shooting range. As elaborated before, the enclosed gardens back then were still focused on the earth and the sky, the vertical. This is also visible on the map, although a rigid cross layout with a central fountain or sculpture isn’t present. It also seems that an arcade or gallery is not present. There is however is direct relation between the gardens and the surrounded houses.

Figure 6 shows the same area after the Alteration, when the complex accommodated the St. Pietergasthuis. It’s notable that this layout looks more like the monastery structure described by De Wit. The complex looks like a chain of spaces, connected by courtyards and corridors, just like a monastery. This pavilion structure might be derived the former monastery layout.
The presence of courtyards and 'hofjes' seem continuous over the course of time. These six images dating back to the end of the nineteenth century all show a courtyard in one way or another. I assume this characteristic dates back to the monastery type, evolved in the pavilion structure of the hospital.
1.3 Passage

In this chapter I will explore the definition and several components of the passage. As elaborated in the introduction, the Binnengasthuisarea looks like it's constructed from a layout of courtyards, passages or streets, and a square. Only the Oudemanhuispoort can be defined as a passage, but I want to explore if the streets on the area have similar characteristics. I explained that the remaining streets in the area are quite narrow and that they can be perceived as alleys or even passages. This chapter elaborates a theoretical framework on the passage type, after which I will try to reflect on the historical development of the passage on the Binnengasthuisarea.

In the book *Het ontwerp van de openbare ruimte* (Meyer et al., 2006), Harteveld elaborates on the definition and history of the passage. Harteveld describes that the passage is often considered as a covered shopping street, despite the fact that shops are not always the main program on the street (2006, p. 117). He therefore starts his description of the passage with an elaboration on the term 'covered street'. Harteveld distinguishes a private passage and a public passage. The public passage finds its origin in the nineteenth century, when the passage became more important in the urban fabric. The passage became completely public, and was often a strategic connecting element in a city. The prime example of this shift in meaning was the Galeries Saint-Hubert in Brussels (Figure 1). For the first time, the passage changed, and resembled the characteristics of a street (2006, p. 118). Harteveld compares the Saint-Hubert to the Uffizi in Florence (Figure 2), saying that the Saint-Hubert was most likely based on the Uffizi. The dimensions, the rhythm and even the ornaments on the facades are look similar. It's the Saint-Hubert that became a principle model for passage developments in the next centuries. A well-known example is the Galleria Vittorio Emanuelle 2 in Milan. Both in Brussels and in Milan, the passages were strategic elements in the city. In the case of Milan, the passage was built as a connecting junction between the two most important squares of the city, the Piazza del Duomo and the Piazza della Scala. In Brussels, the passage was a tool to open the heart of the city (2006, p. 118). Although the passages are considered as completely public, they do get locked off during the night, just like the Oudemanhuispoort and some entrances in the Binnengasthuis area. Then, the passage is no longer part of the public network and alternative routes or entrances have to be used.

A second strategic meaning of the passage originated in Paris, before the Haussmann city
alterations. Harteveld explains that the passage originated as a small ‘passageway’ or alley without a significant meaning within an urban fabric (2006, p. 119). They were built as new necessary connections in dense city fabric, but also as clean walkways where the bourgeoisie could shop. The origin of this Parisian type was the Galerie de Bois (1784) in Paris. The Galerie can be described as the first real passage, based on the type of the Bazaars in Egypt and Syria. The Galerie was meant as a covered market, but due to a large fire, space became available to expand the idea. Eventually, the Galerie became an important connection between two streets, although it was meant as a covered market, a destination on itself (2006, p. 119). This connection became the walkway, or passage in French. This also marks the shift from shopping destination to an important urban element within the city, independent from its program.

Harteveld distinguishes two different roles of a passage within the city during the nineteenth century. A passage most likely will only work when it has a significant role within the urban fabric, either as a shortcut or as a network of covered shopping streets. Passages which are not part of such a network, or are located away from public activity, became a hotspot for tramps and prostitutes. As an example of a working network of passages, Harteveld describes the network of Passage des Panoramas, Passage Jouffroy and the Passage Vendeau in Paris (Figure 4). The three passages are situated along one axis, making it a comfortable pedestrian route of 350 meters through the crowded city center. It also connects multiple streets and junctions in this part of the Paris (2006, p. 120).

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the number of passages quickly decreased. The overall city hygiene increased significantly, making the passage as a ‘clean street’ no longer important as such. A second reason is the development of the department store, that proved a good alternative for a shopping area. These reasons, combined with the fact that most of the passages only worked when they were important in an urban fabric, made the passage almost extinct at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Harteveld continues with describing a rediscovering of the passage type in seventies and eighties of the 20th century, based on a study by Geist - Ein Bautyp des 19. Jahrhunderts.

Geist poses a rediscovering of the passage, using the type as a way to improve public space within cities. It is stated that his study had significant influence in the years after publications. In Germany especially, many passages were built. Harteveld describes the example of Hamburg, where in a short period of time, the Gänsemarkt-Passage, the Hanse-Viertel and the Galleria were developed. Just like in Paris, the Passages formed a network, connect-

ing different parts of the city (2006, p. 122). The new network of passages in Hamburg resembles the large dimensions and openness of the passages in Brussels and Milan, and were built in extension of each other, just like in Paris. Harteveld asks himself if the new development of passage structures can maintain and secure the traditional outdoor public space. There is for instance a chance that the new passages move the outdoor public life inside, and that outdoor public space can get in neglect (2006, p. 122). He states that this is not the case in the example of Hamburg, where the transition from outdoor public space to indoor public space is successful.

A similar approach in the development of passages can be found in The Hague. The passage in The Hague (1885) is probably the most well-known passage in The Netherlands. Just like the early Parisian type, the passage was built as a necessary shortcut or connection within the city. In the case of The Hague, the passage was built as a proper connection between the north and the south of the city center (Figure 5). At the end of the twentieth century, plans to regenerate the public space in The Hague started. Increase of program in the city center lead to a desire for high quality public space, and with the help of new passages, this could be achieved. The plan (Figure 6) adds new passages in extension of each other, also connecting parking structures, public transport and department stores. Harteveld ends his study stating that public space within city centers can be improved and intensified by the use of a network of passages (Meyer et al., 2006, p. 123).

The passage and the Binnengasthuis area

Chapter two of this report describes a thorough analysis of the elements square, courtyard and passage in present time. This analysis will be compared and reflected to the theoretical framework set out in chapter one. To make this comparison as thorough as possible, I will also elaborate on the described types on the Binnengasthuis area in a historical perspective. I will try to identify similarities between the theoretical framework and the historical development of the three elements in the area.

In the case of the passage, the most characteristic element in the Binnengasthuis area is the Oudemanhuispoort. The Oudemanhuispoort connects the Kloveniersburgwal and the Oudezijds Achterburgwal, and runs through the Oudemanhuispoort building, which accommodates the faculty of law of the UvA. On first sight, the passage can also be called an alley, a street, a corridor, a passageway or maybe even a tunnel. In this paragraph I will explore the history and (former) functions of this passage.
The Oudemanhuispoort originated as Oudemannen and vrouwengasthuis in 1601. It's currently the oldens building on the Binnengasthuis area. It has been expanded and reconstructed several times over the centuries. After the extensive reconstruction of 1757 by Architect Gerard Frederik Maybaum, bookstalls and shops were integrated in the passage. The small shops used to sell books and jewelry, but after the nineteenth century, the main product of commerce was books and music tapes.

Originally, the passage wasn't covered. The Oudemanhuispoort building was constructed on a courtyard between both the Wallen, and was connected to the water through two small alleys with an entrance on the street-side. After the passage was covered, the two small entrance gates were replaced by two larger, more artistic gates. The gate on the Kloveniersburgwal was constructed in 1786 and displays an old man and an old woman. The gate on the Oudezijds Achterburgwal has an unknown date (van Eeghen, 1979, p. 129). During the cholera epidemic of 1831, the hospital became very important. The passage was opened up towards the hospital by breaking down a few bookstalls. The entrances to the Wallen were closed. In 1876, the fair of the Botermarkt and the associated book sellers ended. The former Botermarkt book sellers were moved to the Oudemanhuispoort afterwards, making the passage a vivid and lively space since 1879 (1979, p. 130).

Compared to the theoretical framework, the Oudemanhuispoort resembles the typology of the passage in a few ways. The original, uncovered alley was constructed as a necessity to connect the Oudemanhuispoort complex with the waterside. The theory poses the necessity more on an urban scale, where this passage is more a necessity on the architectural scale. This will be elaborated further in chapter two, but the passage still isn’t very important on an urban scale, but very much so on a building scale. The passage also has a shopping function, similar to the passage type described by Harteveld. It is neither completely a public space, because it is locked after opening hours.

Figure 7: Oudemanhuispoort indicated in red (own illustration)

Figure 8 (left): The Oudemanhuispoort on the side of the Kloveniersburgwal (1787)
Source: B. Mourik (publisher), Collectie Stadsarchief Amsterdam: tekeningen en prenten, Retrieved from: http://stadsarchief.amsterdam.nl/archief/10097/010097003072

Figure 9 (right): Oudemanhuispoort seen from the Oudezijds Achterburgwal (date unknown)
As mentioned before, the only recognizable passage type currently is the Oudemanhuispoort. However, when looking at historic maps from the middle ages, a similar type can be identified. Figure 12 shows the former Old and New nunnery (figure 10), which is combined and transformed into the St. Pietergasthuis after the Alteration in 1578. The Old (below) and New (above) nunnery shown in 1544 were segregated. They were two separated nunneries, and the monastery layout of courtyards and convent houses is clearly visible. After the Alteration, the nunneries became a hospital, that had to be connected. The segregation is abolished, and the two nunneries are connected by means of a corridor. The corridor, or passage is clearly visible in Figure 13, marked by the black arrow.

Characteristics described in the literature such as openness, large dimensions and a shopping function are quite obviously not present, but a few similarities can be found. As described in the literature, city passages were often used to connect important squares or streets within an urban fabric. This can be described as a large scale meaning. This connecting function of the passage can be projected and scaled down to the level of the nunneries. The separated old and new nunneries can then also be considered as important squares or parts of the ‘city’, using a passage to connect both of them to abolish the segregation. In that sense, the passage has a similar function.
Chapter 2: Spatial analysis

Introduction
The second part of the thematic research is more site specific. In chapter one, a theoretical framework about the site specific subjects derived from my fascinations is elaborated. The various characteristics and definitions of the square, the courtyard and the passage based on literature, now has to be reflected to the site.
This chapter content is a taxonomy of the spaces on the Binnengasthuis area that I selected. The selection is based on my fascinations during the first site visit and after analyzing the site more thoroughly. The three chosen types are most significant on the site. A thorough analysis on the three types therefore provides a complete overview of the structure and layout of the site. Secondly, by the analysis I am able to identify problems and opportunities for the future proposal. Each space will be analyzed on the main subjects of: typology, architectural characteristics, use and the related building. An overview of the subjects within the taxonomy is shown in the diagram below (figure 2.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taxonomy of site specific spaces</th>
<th>Tools and representation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Typology</td>
<td>text, drawings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ passage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ courtyard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ square</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* What are the...?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ dimensions</td>
<td>diagrams, axonometric view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ materials</td>
<td>photographs, text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ light/contrast/shadow</td>
<td>sections, photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ construction</td>
<td>sections, text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural &amp; technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* What is the use?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ amount of people</td>
<td>text, table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ function</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ target group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* What is the relation to the building?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ entrances</td>
<td>diagram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ function</td>
<td>diagram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ inside / outside</td>
<td>sections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.1: Overview of method of spatial analysis (own illustration)

Figure 2.2: Layer diagram of Square (own illustration)
Figure 2.3: Layer diagram of Courtyard (own illustration)

Figure 2.4: Layer diagram of Passage (own illustration)
2.2 Square

The square on the Binnengasthuis area is constructed in between a social housing block, the 2nd chirurgische kliniek, the UvA information center and the BG2 building, which accommodates CREA. Geographically speaking, the open space is situated in the center of the Binnengasthuis area. It is also the junction of the main traffic flows in the area: the Binnengasthuisstraat, the Turfdraagsterpad and the Vendelstraat. In terms of area, it’s the largest open space in the area that is not considered a courtyard, it’s completely public. The square is only accessible by bicycle and by foot. There are a few trees, an art piece and a Petanque field. The subjects of analysis are shown in the diagram below.

**Diagram 1: subjects of analysis (own illustration)**

### Subjects
- **architectural & technology**
  - dimensions
  - materials
  - light/contrast/shadow

- **What are the...?**
  - What is the use?
    - amount of people
    - function
    - target group
  - What is the relation to the building?
    - entrances
    - function
    - inside / outside

### Tools and representation
- diagrams, axonometric view
- photographs, text
- sections, photos
- sections, text
- diagram on map
- text, table
- text, table
Dimensions
Compared to other squares in Amsterdam and the squares described in the literature, the square is relatively small. As described in the literature, I interpret the square as leftover space instead of a square (in definition). In the literature, I described my position based on the historical maps and the development. Figure 4 shows the actual dimensions and scale, which also indicates that the space is more leftover space than a square.

Materials
The main materials used in the facades of the surrounding buildings are white plaster, red...
brick, wooden panels, glass, aluminum and wooden window frames. The pavement and bicycle lanes are grey bricks, laid in a herringbone pattern. Part of the pavement is laid with rectangular stone tiles, also colored grey. (Figure 5-8)

**Light contrast / shadow**

The square is probably the most open space in the whole area. To find out how the space is lit by the sun, a sun/shadow projection is constructed. The diagrams show a day in June and in December, at 12:00 and 16:00. Despite the fact that the space is quite open, it doesn't get much sunlight between autumn and winter, because of the height of the surrounded buildings. During summer, the square has areas with sun and shadow, providing space for people who want either sun or shadow.

![Central square showing the Petanque field and the information center (own photo)](image)

![Diagram showing light contrast and shadow](image)

---

26
Use
The central square is quite an unusual space. It is situated in the center, but is hardly used. When visiting the site on different days and times during the week, the space was very empty. It seems like there is no particular relation to the buildings or their function. At least not one that evokes use of the space. The edges of the square are filled with bikes and scooters, presumably owned by the students who are attending classes. So the main use of the square can be described as parking space. Because the square is on a junction of the main traffic routes, it gets separated into three parts. The space in front of the social housing block is the largest piece out of the three. It seems like the residents don’t use the space. There is no ‘claiming’ of public space, for instance by placing benches or chairs outside against the facade. This makes the area besides the social housing block unused and lost. The remaining two parts look like leftover space. It is a small area between the building and the bike bicycle path, a rather oversized sidewalk. I think this is also the reason for the fact that these oversized sidewalks are mainly used as parking spaces for bikes and scooters. (Figure 9).

Relation to the buildings
The entrances at the square are spread. The housing block has entrances all across the square, but the entrances are lifted from the ground floor. The BG14 building has multiple entrances. It’s hard to recognize a main entrance for the building. The info center has its entrance on the edge of the square. The cylindrical volume has one entrance. The sketch diagram below shows the entrances, the functions and two typical sketch sections. The plinths all around the square are either visually closed off, or there is no representative function. I interpret this observation as one of the main missed opportunities at the square. The housing block has its entrances lifted from ground level, making the relation and transition between inside and outside quite harsh. The BG14 building has a very fragmented facade with multiple functions and few windows. I’ll elaborate this further in the conclusion part of this report, but my proposition is focused on the transformation of the plinths around the square, having a significant influence on how the square works.

Figure 9: Separation and use of the square (own illustration)

Figure 10: Sketch diagram of the square and its relation to the buildings. (own illustration)
2.3 Courtyard

The courtyard is constructed in between the triangular shape of the 2nd surgical clinic and the zusterhuis. It is directly accessible from the street, with an opening on the corner of the triangular building shape. The two buildings were built right after each other, and were later merged. The 2nd surgical clinic is a bit taller than the zusterhuis, and the combined building volume has lots of height and shape irregularities.

Currently, the building is nearly empty and has no function except for a few student organization offices and some rooms which can be rented for meetings. The state of the building is not good. The facade is sprayed with graffiti and there is a lot of visible decay in the materials, both in the exterior as the interior.

The UvA has planned a new function for the building, transforming it into the main university library with study spaces. The plans also contain a glass cover over the courtyard, transforming it from a courtyard to an indoor atrium space. The second analysis subject (use) is a bit irrelevant as the building is currently empty. I therefore will describe the former use and a short introduction of my personal proposition for future purposes (which will be elaborated more in detail in the chapter conclusion).

Diagram 1: subjects of analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Architectural &amp; Technology</th>
<th>Tools and representation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* What are the..?</td>
<td>diagrams, axonometric view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- dimensions</td>
<td>photographs, text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- materials</td>
<td>sections, photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- light/contrast/shadow</td>
<td>sections, text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* What is the use?</td>
<td>diagram on map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- amount of people</td>
<td>text, table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- function</td>
<td>text, table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- target group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* What is the relation to the building?</td>
<td>diagram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- entrances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- function</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- inside / outside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: The courtyard of the Zusterhuis & The 2nd Chirurgische kliniek (own illustration)
Figure 2: The courtyard of the Zusterhuis & The 2nd Chirurgische kliniek (own photo)
Dimensions

As mentioned before, the two merged buildings have a variety in height. The diagram below shows the general height of the building. The courtyard itself is quite small in relation to the building height. When visiting the site, I perceived the courtyard really condensed. (Figure 4)

Materials

Just like most buildings in the area, the most common facade material is red brick. The bricks have visible joint decay. Some of the windows on the courtyard side have steel bars in front of them. The balconies within the courtyard have ornaments, and are constructed out of steel.

The ground is covered with grass and the courtyard has several trees and bushes.

Dimensions of the courtyard (own illustration)

Materials

Just like most buildings in the area, the most common facade material is red brick. The bricks have visible joint decay. Some of the windows on the courtyard side have steel bars in front of them. The balconies within the courtyard have ornaments, and are constructed out of steel.

The ground is covered with grass and the courtyard has several trees and bushes.

Dimensions of the courtyard (own illustration)

Materials
Light contrast / shadow

To find out how the space is lit by the sun, a sun/shadow projection is constructed. The diagrams show a day in June and in December, at 12:00 and 16:00. Because the courtyard is relatively small to the building height, sun exposure is not optimal. During spring and summer, the sun will touch the courtyard partly, making it suitable for outdoor relaxing or use. Unfortunately, the winter sun will not touch the courtyard. It will expose part of the building, but the courtyard on the ground floor will always be in shadow (Figure 9).

June, 12:00. (own illustration)
June, 16:00. (own illustration)
December, 12:00. (own illustration)
December, 16:00. (own illustration)
Use
In this paragraph I will discuss the use during the time of the hospital. This analysis is focused on the courtyard, so I will not discuss the interior use. In my opinion, the archive of Amsterdam owns some very appealing photos of the courtyard. It was a hospital, and the courtyard was used as a ‘healing environment’. Both staff and patients used the balconies and the courtyard to relax and take some air.

The photos show that the outside space had multiple purposes. It looks like was even a vegetable garden (bottom right). Because the building is empty, I could not observe how it was used recent before the building became vacant, but somehow these old photos inspire me. Currently, the courtyard looks very neglected and the relation to the building seems like it’s disappeared.

Figure 10: Courtyard use in June 1981.
Source: Roel, I. Collectie Stadsarchief Amsterdam: foto’s eigen fotodienst
Retrieved from: http://beeldbank.amsterdam.nl/afbeelding/010122015579

Figure 11: Courtyard use in June 1981.
Source: Roel, I. Collectie Stadsarchief Amsterdam: foto’s eigen fotodienst
Retrieved from: http://beeldbank.amsterdam.nl/afbeelding/010122015579
Relation to the building

As mentioned before, the building is currently vacant. It’s therefore impossible to analyze the function in relation to the building. I can however see how it was used before. The pictures on the right page (14&15) show the current situation. Currently, a relation between the ground floor of the building and the courtyard is hard to find. There are a lot of bicycles parked, and the windows are barred. Unfortunately, when visiting the building, most rooms that are situated along the courtyard could not be accessed.

The former function of the courtyard was besides a relaxing area also part of the ‘healing environment’ philosophy used in medicine. Beds with patients would be moved outside when the weather was appropriate, allowing the patients fresh air and light. The old photos indicate only a few main entrances towards the courtyard, the rest of the rooms on the ground floor could not be opened with a door.

In my opinion, the direct relation to the courtyard should definitely be restored. De Wit also mentions the importance of the walls and the physical relation to the enclosed garden, but I will elaborate on this in the conclusion and the program of possibilities.

Figure 12: Sketch diagram of the courtyard and its relation to the buildings. Main entrances (own illustration)

Figure 13: Balconies. June 1981.
Source: Roel, I. Collectie Stadsarchief Amsterdam; foto’s eigen fotodienst
Retrieved from: http://beeldbank.amsterdam.nl/afbeelding/010122015589
Figure 14 & 15: Current situation. Ground floor of the courtyard is completely separated by the building (own photo)

View from balcony towards the courtyard. Lots of potential (own photo)
2.4 Passage

The passage is the Oudemanhuispoort, a connecting corridor between the Oudezijds Achterburgwal and the Kloveniersburgwal. The passage was constructed in its current state in 1757 during an extensive reconstruction of the Oudemanhuispoort building complex. Six days of the week there is a book market, where books and music are sold out of the integrated bookstalls. The passage closes from the street, and gets locked at 22:00.

It connects the two Wallen, but is also the main access-point for the Oudemanhuispoort building, accommodating the faculty of law. The passage is intersected in the middle, where students enter the courtyard of the faculty.

*What are the...?
- dimensions
- materials
- light/contrast/shadow

* What is the use?
- amount of people
- function
- target group

* What is the relation to the building?
- entrances
- function
- inside / outside

Diagram 1: subjects of analysis (own illustration)

Tools and representation

- diagrams, axonometric view
- photographs, text
- sections, photos
- sections, text
- diagram on map
- text, table
- text, table
- diagram
- diagram
- sections

Figure 1: The Passage and the Oudemanhuispoort (own illustration)
Figure 2: The Passage and the Oudemanhuispoort (own photo)
I perceived the passage as a very pleasant space, despite the low level of light and the relatively small dimensions compared to the passages described in the literature. The dimensions are not nearly as large as the passages described in the previous chapter, it looks more like an oversized corridor (Figure 4). I think the amount of windows and the height of the windows really define the space. The opposite bookstalls have different dimensions then the windows, but this does not conflict in my opinion. This difference might even help defining the space: bookstalls on one side, and the transition towards the courtyard on the other.

Materials
Just like the courtyard, the passage doesn’t differ from the general use of materials. The walls are built out of red bricks and the condition is good. No significant decay is visible. The ceiling has a white plaster finish, which is also in good condition. Other passages, for example the ones described in the literature all have a ‘skylight’ roof or a glass cover. This allows more light to enter the passage and possibly increase the sense of height and space. This might also be why the ceiling of the Oudemanhuispoort has been painted white. The wooden window frames have a white paint finish, also in good condition. The whole space seems like it’s being maintained very well. The pavement is made out of dark grey bricks. (Figure 5)
Light contrast / shadow

Because the passage is completely covered, there is no direct sunlight exposure. The passage is lit by artificial lights. On both walls, different lighting fixtures lit the space. The wall on the side of the courtyard has windows, but is orientated to the north, so no sunlight will penetrate the space, making the overall lighting mood diffuse. The lighting fixtures on the side of the courtyard look like a more recent addition. The photo below shows the lighting sixty years ago, where only the black down lights are visible (Figure 6).

It is likely that the space formerly was too dark, and that the lighting on the side of the courtyard was built to improve the lighting condition. Personally I think the space currently is very intimate, and that the low light level might even add up to this observation.

Use

During the site analysis and four site visits, the Oudemanhuispoort was the most crowded space. I think it's fair to conclude that this is the actual heart of the Binnengasthuis area (in contrast to the center square). There was a lot of activity and different kind of people around. Besides students, other residents of the city and tourist walked around in the space. At the bookstalls, people stood still to look at books or music.

The adjacent courtyard also was very lively. It is the ‘school yard’, where students and teachers use the space for chatting, relaxing, smoking and eating. A notable fact is that there are hardly any benches in the space. Apparently this doesn't influence the use of the public space. In one of the corners of the courtyard, a large tarp is installed. It's suspended between steel poles, and a lot of students are gathered under or around it (Figure 7 & 8). It's unfortunate that we haven't yet observed the space during a cold or rainy day. I can imagine that the students would then use the passage as a semi-outdoor space to do what they would usually do in the courtyard.

We also shouldn't forget that the courtyard is empty during evening hours and in weekends. Unfortunately, I haven't observed the spaces during those times.

Relation to the building

In contrast to the previous types, the relation of the spaces to the building is very much visible and logical. The passage has a continuous rhythm of windows orientated towards the courtyard, making it a subtle transition between inside and outside. I also think that the rhythm of bookstalls - as a sort of mirror of the window - also helps with the fact that...
the passage is so well perceived. Maybe the cavities bring some sort of ‘breathing space’ for the visitor. A still unmentioned fact are the small gates leading towards the spaces. The entrance gate towards the south of the Binnengasthuis area is small, and leads the visitor towards a fourth type of public space. This fourth type will we described in the conclusion. Already in the second week of the semester, where we first visited the site, I was fascinated by this phenomenon of small streets and gates, continuously present at the site. We had to do a sketch exercise, where-after I could see that I focused on this phenomenon. (Figure 9)

Another observation is the limited height of the Oudemanhuispoort building in relation to the courtyard and the passage. In contrast to the courtyard of the zusterhuis, the Oude- manhuispoort is only 2+ levels. More sunlight is exposed to the courtyard and you feel less ‘trapped’ in the courtyard (Figure 11).
2.4 Comparison and overview

The diagram below shows a summary of all the findings of the three spaces. All the characteristics can now be assessed and reflected towards the literature and my interpretations in the next chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Square</th>
<th>Courtyard</th>
<th>Passage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>dimensions</strong></td>
<td>- irregular dimensions</td>
<td>- tall walls around courtyard</td>
<td>- comfortable dimensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- largest open space BGT</td>
<td>- feeling of being trapped</td>
<td>- relatively small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- perceived relatively small</td>
<td>- in balance with adjacent building and courtyard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>materials</strong></td>
<td>plaster, brick, wood, visible decay</td>
<td>brick</td>
<td>red &amp; grey brick, white plaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>light/shadow</strong></td>
<td>- most sun exposure of BGT</td>
<td>- only sun in spring and summer</td>
<td>- low light level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- shadow</td>
<td></td>
<td>- diffuse &amp; artificial lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- comfortable / intimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>use</strong></td>
<td>- division in three parts</td>
<td>- currently not used</td>
<td>- ‘heart’ of the campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- parts are left over space</td>
<td>- historical photos show a very lively courtyard</td>
<td>- crowded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- no representative function on the plinth</td>
<td>- wide variety of use</td>
<td>- lively, active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- disuse</td>
<td></td>
<td>- eating, drinking, relaxing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- example for future intervention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1: Table of analysis of the three analyzed spaces (own illustration)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Square</th>
<th>Courtyard</th>
<th>Passage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Square diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Courtyard diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Passage diagram" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>entrances</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Entrances" /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>functions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>square around social housing, BG14, BG2 and the info center</td>
<td>none, former zusterhuis &amp; surgical clinic</td>
<td>faculty of law, bookshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>inside outside</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Inside outside" /></td>
<td>Based on old photos, nice direct relation between inside and outside. Currently in bad condition. Desire to restore old relation.</td>
<td>Great transition inside outside. Really in balance. Semi indoor/outdoor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 3: Conclusion

The last chapter of the thematic research will content the connection between theory and site specific analysis. The reflection of the site specific spaces to the theoretical framework will be the basis for a value assessment. The reflection results in design principles that I may or may not use, depending on the result. These principles are converted to a position towards my design development. The summary of the position and principles results in the program of possibilities. I expect that the program of possibilities will conclude a chosen building, a possible building program and maybe some generic design sketches based on the constructed design principles.

Reflection literature to analysis

Square

Meyer (2006) and Gehl (2001) provided me with insights of how a square can be defined, what is needed and what is to be avoided. Meyer distinguishes different type of squares, where the Binnengasthuis square is similar to the residential square. It is meant to be a quiet area, not on the junction of infrastructure. Although the square on the BGT is exactly on the junction of infrastructure, it is still very quiet, and probably also meant that way. The infrastructure that Meyer describes is also concentrated on the car, which is not the case in our project site. The bicycle lanes are busy, but cycling traffic can be considered a lot less stressful than car traffic.

A second interesting thing that Meyer describes is the segregation of public space nowadays. He uses the case of Amstelveen, where separated public spaces are reconnected by small streets and passages. The borders are redefined by buildings and more public program is introduced. I think this scenario is very applicable to the Binnengasthuis area. As mentioned before, the area consists of fragmented public spaces and a square, with program that doesn’t suit the purpose of public space. Meyer also uses the context of program to define a public space. My interpretation of Meyer is that a square should be comforting and attractive in terms of form, materialization and scale, but should not overdo this. The program should be public and attractive.

Gehl adds, that spatial planning has a significant influence on the way that people use a space. The environment should be in balance, the scale of the buildings should match the purpose of the square. Gehl expresses that by increasing distances between buildings and spreading green space, you would segregate public life. The perfect example of a good square according to Gehl are squares in medieval squares, where public space acts as a public living room.

Value and problems

Because the square on the BGT is situated in the center of the area, you would also expect it have appropriate qualities. The analysis shows that the square is not used as a public space as such. It’s used for bicycle parking and circulation, but not as a space to spend time. The square is intersected by three routes, dividing the square into three parts. One part looks like it belongs to the social housing block, but is not used by the residents. I interpret the remain two parts as leftover space, as oversized side walks. The relation to the adjacent buildings is poor. There is no [representative] public function on the plinth.

Opportunities

If I combine my own position and the positions by Meyer and Gehl, a few opportunities come to mind. Meyer proposes that public space should be connected and that the borders should be defined. Also relevant program should be related to the square. I think the square can be much improved if indeed public program is added - I think a coffee bar - where students and residents come drink coffee and eat sandwiches. Of course there should be an appropriate amount of seating space. The sun projection is also very suitable for such a function with both sun and shadow.

Besides this, space for bicycle parking should be integrated. This is as issue for the whole area. I think an underground parking structure would help solving this issue.

A final opportunity is the improvement of the relation towards the buildings. The plinth should be more transparent, and the functions in the building right next to the square should be as public as possible.

Courtyard

The theoretic framework of the courtyard appeared to be really focused on the value of outdoor space. Brooker & Stone express that on an urban scale, the enclosed garden is important. In dense urban situations, a quiet space is often hard to find, making an enclosed garden a very valuable space (2009, p. 44). I immediately think of the Binnengasthuis area as a large courtyard in itself, because it is such a quiet space in relation to its direct surroundings. Besides an urban value, Brooker & Stone describe the courtyard also as a possi-
ble tool to dramatize a building, especially within public buildings. Another way is used in the Neue Staatsgalerie, where the courtyard is a perfect space for the visitor to relax during an intense journey through the succession of the interior focused gallery rooms. Looking at old photos of the courtyard in between the zusterhuis and the surgical clinic, I can imagine that the courtyard also functioned as a sort of retreat, both for patients and staff.

Unfortunately, De Wit’s descriptions were often quite phenomenological and intangible, making a comparison with the analyzed present a bit difficult. It’s interesting that the monk type courtyard De Wit describes, looks more similar to the layout of the hospital after the Alteration than it does to before the Alteration. By looking at old photos, it seems that courtyards and the pavilion structure of the hospital have always been present in the area. De Wit also describes the type of ‘hofjes’, where the more public those courtyard became, the more the courtyard became a buffer space between the public street and the private individual houses.

Value and problems
What I could observe was the feeling of being trapped in the courtyard, the buildings are very tall in relation to the dimensions of the area. This is also why the courtyard only has sun exposure during spring and summer. A second observation was the almost entirely closed perimeter of the plinth inside the courtyard. The windows were barred and a lot of bicycles were parked against the facade. This made it quite an unpleasant space.

The value on a building scale I think came from the old photos I observed. The photos show a very lively space, with different functions and uses. Besides on the ground floor, the balconies on the first and second floor also seem very much connected and related to the courtyard.

Brooker & Stone valued the courtyard also on an urban scale, stating that a quiet space in a city is often hard to find, making a courtyard very attractive. On the scale of the whole Binnengasthuisterrein, I think the courtyard yet doesn’t have much value. It has a small entrance and doesn’t seem very much connected to the other public spaces or routing through the campus.

Opportunities
I think the opportunities are very positive and promising. A new function and use for the building will most likely reactivate the space. The relation towards the courtyard should be restored, both on ground level as on the two first levels. Besides on a building scale, I think that the courtyard can participate in the complete network of public spaces in the Binnengasthuisterrein. This network is yet not present, but I think here lie opportunities. This connection of public spaces is mentioned in both the literature for the square as for the passage. I think this possibility to connect public spaces through the whole area is very valid.

Passage
The main point of interest derived from the literature is the connecting element. Harteveld describes the passage in a historical perspective, where the passage evolved from necessary short cut or alley to successful networks of covered streets. The Oudemanhuispoort was originally built as an alley to connect the building with the Oudezijds Achterburgwal and the Kloveniersburgwal. The roof and the bookstalls were built in the 18th century, transforming the alley into a passage.

Harteveld expresses that a passage most likely will only work when it has a significant role within the urban fabric, either as a shortcut or as a network of covered shopping streets. Passages which are not part of such a network, or are located away from public activity, will come into neglect and disuse. As an example of a working network of passages, Harteveld describes the network of Passage des Panoramas, Passage Jouffroy and the Passage Vendéau in Paris (Figure 4). The three passages are situated along one axis, making it a comfortable pedestrian route of 350 meters through the crowded city center. It also connects multiple streets and junctions in this part of the Paris (2006, p. 120).

Of point of attention however is the transition from inside to outside. The passage, turning the public life inside, should also reflect on the space outside of the passage, making sure this space doesn’t get neglected.
Value and problems
The Oudemanhuispoort is in my opinion the ‘heart’ of the campus. It’s a very lively space, with different uses, people and functions. The space has comfortable dimensions and a significant relation with the adjacent courtyard. In my opinion, the passage is an example of how a public transition space should be treated. The space should be valued and kept in future transformations, and has the potential to support the improvement of the other public spaces in the area.

Opportunities
Since the Oudemanhuispoort is such a great space, it should be an example for the rest of the campus. It’s difficult for me to state what exactly this space can do to help improve the other public spaces, but maybe this lies in the subject of connections again. In the examples of Hamburg and Paris, a network of passages is used to connect the urban fabric and provide a comfortable space for people. Maybe the Oudemanhuispoort can physically be connected with some sort of architectural element to rekindle the spaces. This could lead to the extension of activities across campus and help to define for instance the courtyard and the central square.

Fourth type?
While analyzing the site, another leftover space came to my attention. The space in between the courtyard of the zusterhuis and the entrance of the Oudemanhuispoort passage is neither a courtyard, a square or a passage. It’s a space which on one side has houses, and on the other side the mensa building. This combination of functions makes the space different than the other described spaces. On the side of the houses, you see signs of claiming public space. Residents placed bushes, benches or other private objects to somehow claim some of the space. The space also has a playground for children, right next to the entrance of the passage. This contrast was clearly visible when we visited the site. On one side there were students having a break - eating or drinking something - and on the other side there were parents with their children enjoying the playground. The side of the houses forms a sort of green path, with a lot of vegetation. The adjacent path is full of bicycles an students walking towards the faculty buildings.
I haven't yet been able to fully comprehend the space. It's a space to spend time, but at the same time it is a sort of passage or corridor, connecting the main entrance of the area with the Oudemanhuispoort. Maybe it's more of an avenue. I think this space should be investi-
Overview of opportunities and principles
The summary of the different opportunities of each researched type form a set of principles. These principles construct my position to design. Based on the principles and my position, a program of possibilities will be sketched.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Square</th>
<th>Courtyard</th>
<th>Passage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▶ Improve public space</td>
<td>▶ Restore former relation towards building</td>
<td>▶ Use characteristics of passage in the improvements of other spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Connect square with other public spaces</td>
<td>▶ Enhance scale courtyard towards building</td>
<td>▶ Maintain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Introduce public program like a coffee bar</td>
<td>▶ Optimize use of sun exposure</td>
<td>▶ Possibility of networking public spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Increase relation with building by transforming plinth</td>
<td>▶ Connect courtyard with other public spaces</td>
<td>▶ Extend activities towards other spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Remove bicycles by building underground parking structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Overview of opportunities (own illustration)

Position and principles
The recurring element both from literature and my own interpretation of the analysis is the principle of connection. In case of the passage, the best examples are that of a network of passages, connecting different parts and junctions of the city. The same goes for the square, where Meyer explains that fragmented public space can be reconnected by passages, alleys and or building program.

The second principle is the direct relation between a public space and the building. The courtyard should be very well integrated in the building and the square can be activated by suitable both inside and outside the building.

To reflect on the proposed goal of this research: “[...] these questions helps me to define a set of principles for designing public space in both inside, outside and in between buildings. This provides a basis for optimizing spaces for learning, encounter, relax and leisure in a newly transformed university building. In addition to the design principles for a transformation on a building level, I’m able to reflect on a broader scale of the city as a campus, covering a theoretic approach of how a ‘city’ - in this case the campus on the Binnengasthuisterrein - could and should work in terms of public life.” (p. 5)

Unfortunately the theory didn’t provide me with exactly defined principles to design places specifically for learning, encounter, relax and leisure inside a building. However these principles will become more important when the design process progresses after the first semester. Further researched focused on interior design and interaction should then be performed.

The results of this research until now provide me with a basis. A basis from which I can choose a building and a set of principles in how to approach a transformation in the Binnengasthuis area.

A topic that wasn’t specifically addressed by thematic research is how a campus should work as a system, or as a city (studio assignment). I do however feel the need to explain my
position towards this topic of city as a campus and campus as a city. First of all, I think that the position of the UvA is rather contradictory. Their vision of the campuses of Amsterdam is that of having four clusters of faculties across the city. They want to decrease the occupied area, while the amount of students will increase by 33% in 2020. This means that the buildings, or campuses will be increase in density. Secondly, they want the campus to work as a whole, providing a full-covering program for the users. This means sport facilities, leisure and a supermarket for instance. On the other hand they want the university to work with the city. They want to ‘open up’ towards the city, as Davy Demmers explained in his lecture on Friday the 10th of October 2014. I personally don’t really understand what this means. Does this mean opening up architecturally? When Demmers received a question by one of my fellow students about what this means, he could only answer that the UvA wants to involve residents of Amsterdam by organizing events where residents could participate.

My personal position towards this is that a university campus will always be a system on its own. The university is almost entirely used by students, researchers and teachers, not by residents. Most of the campus’ functions and programs are directed towards students and teachers, not towards residents. Only the Mensa is used by some citizens. I therefore think that the campus will always be outside of the city, not geographically, but in terms of its position: it’s a house in the city. I also think that the Binnengasthuis area already is an enclave in the city, it’s almost isolated. The analysis pointed out that this has to do with the urban structure and history. This already present characteristic combined with my position towards the campus as a house in the city, makes that I want to maintain this ‘isolation’ of the Binnengasthuis area. My transformation of the area will be focused on the purposes of the university, and will not be directed towards the city. Of course I have to deal with the current presence of a social housing block and a few other houses. I think it’s valid that people live in the area, it diversifies the public.

Program of possibilities
Having established some design principles and a position towards the campus, I can propose a program of possibilities. The possibilities are basically the opportunities described in the previous pages, combined with a first choice of a possible program and a choice of a building. I think that my final graduation plan will not only contain a transformation of one building, but will also contain interventions on a broader scale, reflecting on the connection of public spaces.

My first choice of a building is the zusterhuis-2nd surgical clinic building. I think this building can act upon and influence on the different aspects and problems stated in the analysis. The building is situated on the border of the BGT campus, and lies in between the successful Oudemanhuispoort and the central square in disuse. This means that the building has the potential to improve the central square and possibly act as a central role between the Oudemanhuispoort and the southern part of the campus (Figure 3). Besides this strategic position, the building is currently empty and asks for an intervention. The conditions of the facades and the interior are not well, and the courtyard is neglected. All the above provides the opportunity for a significant transformation of the building, improving both the building itself as the direct context.

Figure 3: First choice of building (own illustration)
[page intentionally left blank]
Literature [so far]


Secondary sources


Literature [expected]


Images

ROOF IDEAS

SUMMARY OF THEMES SO FAR

ORGANISATION AROUND CENTRAL COURT

STUDY VS. SOCIAL SPACES RELATED TO COURT

COMPLICATED EXPRESSION OF THE BUILDING INTERIOR - EXTERIOR ON DIFFERENT SCALES