Reflection

The Architecture of the Interior MSc 3 Graduation Studio
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The Place of Work is a challenging graduation studio focusing on public interior design and interior design, such as plaza, garden, informal meeting space design to single office rooms design. Due to there were many using problems of VROM building, the government decided to transform this building. The task of an architect in this studio is to understand the core meaning of transforming this building and find a method to design this huge complex building.

Here for I have chosen to design this building under two main methods. One is based on general philosophy to control the core part: the realm of this building. Another one is based on investigation and analysis of measureable data, such as research of view requirement in different office spaces, to control the situation of different spaces in my project.

In this studio, students are free to understand and explore this building by themselves. Since I believe that every building hold their own meaning of being and the original VROM building clearly blocked people to understand this meaning from it (not only from outside but also from inside), I figured out that to break this block of communication is to break the original strict forms, cold mechanical atmosphere. After, I decided to cut the middle levels out for open restaurant to make a chance of connection between outdoor and indoor space, civil servants and publics. Then, under the main idea of creating a cozy and warm realm for people, I separated this building to several important public interior spaces and used a sequence to connect one by one. In this way, these different spaces can have their own character (character appears from their location and function) and belong to “cozy and warm realm” as well. In these spaces, people will feel things around are changing smoothly even without notice. In this way, people will become one part of this realm, and meaning of this building will be shown at that moment.

To achieve this ambition: creating a cozy and warm realm for VORM building. The most difficult part for me is to make this unmeasurable feeling to measurable spaces and materialization. Different materials were using in different spaces, such as grey travertine is the main material at lobby, and walnuts and oak constructs the atriums in middle level. The journey from passage to office room is a journey from noisy to quiet, hard to soft, cold to warm. It is a journey for civil servants to prepare for and enjoy a working day.

Also, structural design became a big challenge at the same time, especially at the middle level. There
is a big span of beam upon entrance lobby. To achieve this goal, main load-bearing columns were reinforced to shear walls in order to hold long span trusses and force passing down from higher offices.

Moreover, based on huge volume and many functions of this building, I chose to find a start point of analysis situation of different functions and spaces. When I imagined I was focus on working, I figured I am not sure if I need good view outside. Besides, in the site of VROM building, good outside view is limited at west and north side. For this, I did a questionnaire for civil servants, to build a relationship between outside view requirements and inside functions. As an additional guide and test, this data make whole spaces and functions arrangement of my design more believable and reliable.

From this studio, public image and contribution till most sensitive feeling such as “feeling of touching this door handle” are included. From continuous view change between macro and micro, public and interior, structure and space, users and designer, etc., these conflicts combined together at the end. The complicated and struggled design process leads to a simple answer and show what is the meaning of the VROM building by itself.