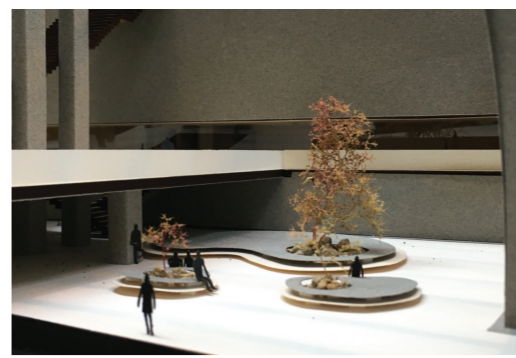


METRO POLIS
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Explorelab graduation studio 2016-2017

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Time (..) is a core system in our lives around which we build our picture of the world - Edward T. Hall in The Dance of Life: The Other Dimension of Time, 1983.

Summary project

METRO POLIS refers to the reciprocal relation between the urban environment and the metro system in Tokyo, Japan. In November 2016, its largest fish market was planned to relocate, leaving behind a vast territory in one of the central wards. As a strategy to connect this post-industrial territory to the everyday of the Tokyoites, a metro station is proposed in a former market hall of the Tsukiji Shijio in Chuo-ku, Tokyo. The design aims to release the potential of the transport hub as an urban centre, by redefining the metro station as a generous, inclusive place for the Tokyoites. Also, an urban plan is proposed which combines housing, commercial functions and offices.

Reflection on process

The initial fascination that propelled the project was with the "experience of time". Within the graduation studio Explorelab each student starts from a personal fascination and develops that into a project. The theories on time are numerous, and this led to some detours and delays in my research and design project. After my P2 I made the decision which of these detours to include in the final thesis, excluding others, intending to make the project a lot clearer. For myself this was an important (and necessary) step because it determined which trajectories I prioritized, and also helped me to develop those more in-depth. This resulted in the construction of a book, which organized the rest of my graduation project. This book consists of four chapters: 1. Time and Architecture, 2. The Territory of Tokyo Metro, 3. From Edo to Tokyo and finally, 4. The Context of Tsukiji, which includes the design proposal. The first chapter is more philosophical, the second concrete/physical, the third historical, and the fourth architectural. This way of working allowed me to develop myself in different directions.

Later, these four chapters were again revised, resulting in two chapters: 1. Time and Architecture and 2. From Edo to Tokyo, which incorporated former chapter 3. The first chapter became the theoretical framework, and the second functioned as a kind of case study. A separate booklet was made introducing a timeline of the site including the design proposal, incorporating former chapter 4. How data is visualized in words and imagery constructs a reality. The book/thesis is therefore considered a medium that helps to sustain or alter existing paradigms, a design in itself.

Abstract thesis

In Tokyo over 90 percent of the passenger traffic is done by railway. Since it is part of the everyday reality of the Tokyoites, it has the potential to be an important place for communal and cultural activities, for social life. By studying practice theory according to philosopher and social theorist Theodore Schatzki, an understanding of social life is sought. His theory poses that practices hang together with material arrangements in a bundle, generating a specific timespace. These bundles are part of larger bundles, which he calls constellations. In this thesis the metro system was described as a constellation, wherein different practices and arrangements bundle. The network above ground, the buildings and streets, is defined as another constellation. At the metro station these two constellations collide.

Many metro stations in Tokyo appear to be built upon a historically significant place, namely at the bases of the bridges of Shitamachi, Edo, former Tokyo. Commerce and culture in Edo often emerged at the waterfronts, firebreaks, sanctuaries, or a combination thereof, bundling with these arrangements. This thesis proposes to use the bridges of Edo as an analogy for the design of the metro stations of Tokyo, in order to redefine them as generous, inclusive, emergent places that allow a multitude of practices to unfold.

Keywords: practice theory, Shitamachi, Tokyo, waterfronts, metro system

For questions and/or more information on Tsukiji or the graduation thesis, please contact me through LinkedIn.

