

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Olga Psarri
Student number	5513251

Studio		
Name / Theme	Heritage & Architecture / Adapting 20 th Century Heritage: The Modern Mall	
Main mentor	Lidy Meijers	Heritage & Design - Design
Second mentor	Frank Koopman	Heritage & Technology - Building Technology
Third mentor(s)	Marie-Thérèse van Thoor & Bruno de Andrade	Heritage & Values - Research
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>My interest in heritage-oriented design, adaptive re-use and historic preservation, further incited by my concern for the ways to cope with the constant shift of the built environment, was the initial reason that led me to follow the Heritage & Architecture specialization at TU Delft.</p> <p>During my first year of postgraduate studies, having attended all heritage courses, studios and electives and directed my history thesis towards reuse practices as well, I yet again confirmed that I am keen on this type of multifaceted architectural design. After experimenting with industrial and religious heritage, I now decided to continue by exploring a different theme, the one of new heritage; hence, I selected the Modern Mall: Adapting 20th Century Heritage as my graduation studio.</p> <p>The adaptation of a shopping mall seemed an unexpected, yet rather intriguing and challenging subject that I haven't investigated before. I believe that, through this graduation topic, I will enrich my knowledge on another spectrum of interventions on heritage buildings and better prepare for my future professional aims in the field.</p>	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Re-inventing the Urbanity of the Modern Mall The case of Leyweg
Goal	

Location:



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Winkelcentrum Leyweg, Morgenstond, Escamp district, Den Haag Zuidwest

The posed problem,

The principle governing Dutch post-war shopping centers was the creation of internal spatial cohesion within an urban area. They were designed, not as inward-looking, independently functioning units, but as integral urban structures. However, in the 1990's, the majority of shopping centers underwent transformations that affected their spatial characteristics and, thus, their integrated presence in the urban fabric (Galema & van Hoogstraten, 2005).

Nowadays, the emergence of e-commerce and its current dramatic rise due to the recent global pandemic formed a new condition that should be regarded. Consumer needs, current trends and technological advancements are, yet again, altering the structure of the retail market. Consequently, shopping malls are increasingly becoming assets for future redevelopment due to their strategic positioning at the core of urban areas and their ability to accommodate mixed-use developments (IVBN, 2016).

It is already evident that several of them are being currently transformed to keep up with recent events (CBRE, 2022). These interventions may lead to the gradual expansion or enclosure of the mall, as formerly seen in the remodeling of winkelcentra Alexandrium and Leidsenhage, or even to other spatial modifications. Subsequently, problems of scale and frontage inversion that render the mall autonomous and disconnected from its urban environment should be tackled. Such issues can significantly affect the urban area surrounding the building complexes, often resulting in the creation of ruptures in the urban fabric, absorbing public activity to the interior;

	<p>a situation that contradicts the key principle of Dutch shopping centers, namely spatial continuity.</p> <p>The selected post-war shopping center falls within the previously mentioned framework. From a shopping street to a shopping center, Leyweg already underwent a transformation in the late 1990's. This transformation altered the spatial relation to its surroundings, as the continuity and coherence of the urban plan was ruptured with the introduction of new building volumes. Now, the shopping center is about to sustain another change with the introduction of new uses as part of a vision for the redevelopment of the area in 2040.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>Having the principle of spatial continuity in mind, the research is structured upon the upcoming issue of the mall's adaptable re-design. A re-design that renders the mall able to adjust to new uses or purposes, in such a way that the retention of its spatial significance and a lasting coherence with its urban surroundings will be ensured.</p> <p>Main research question: How can the urban spatial identity of Dutch post-war shopping malls be employed in their redesign in order to ensure urban spatial continuity?</p> <p>Consecutive sub-questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What constitutes the urban spatial identity of the mall? 2. Which are the spatial attributes rendering the shopping mall a consistent urban structure? 3. How have different re-design interventions created spatial continuity or discontinuity in the urban fabric?
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>The design assignment starts with a proposal for the spatial configuration of the selected shopping center, employing research methods, findings and resultant principles in order to tackle spatial problems identified in the scale of the district and the site.</p> <p>Subsequently, the social aspect is introduced in order to combine the initial intentions for the spatial configuration of the re-design proposal with a relevant functional program. The area's demographic data are taken into account in order to address local issues of unemployment, segregation and limited social cohesion with the introduction of new uses. Thus, a complete proposal for the masterplan of the site is formed.</p> <p>Next, a part of this masterplan, specifically, a former V&D department store with residences in the northern entrance of the shopping center, is selected to be further designed as a community hub and a cooperative housing complex. Spatial cohesion with the surroundings will be a reference point and crucial part of the proposal.</p>

Process

Method description

Research

The conduction of the research was divided in three parts, relating to the sub-questions posed. In each part, different combinations of methods were employed.

Concerning the first sub-question, literature research was used for data collection, while a theoretical framework was drawn for data analysis and interpretation. As a result, the criteria defining the urban spatial identity of the mall were formulated.

As for the second sub-question, the spatial attributes were identified and classified through literature review in order to establish a framework for the analysis of the research reference case, which was Hoog Catharijne in Utrecht. The data needed to analyze the reference case were documents and information about the former and current state and relevant interventions, historic photographs, architectural drawings, and master plans. These data were collected through historical and archival research. Historical and contextual analyses, as well as examination of the attributes, namely, organizational patterns and boundaries, followed respectively.

Finally, the third sub-question was approached through the comparative analysis of the case study's state before and after the intervention. The intervention strategies' classification was determined through literature research and theoretical review. The attributes were examined in the scale of the district for both states, under the scope of the three urban design theories of Roger Trancik (1986) and respective graphic representation. Then, they were comparatively analyzed through visibility graphs and axials maps. The tools used were depthmap and the isovist component in grasshopper. The results were combined with sketches and on-site observations on pedestrian concentration. The comparative analysis served as means to indicate what changed in the spatial relation between building and context through the intervention strategy. Subsequently, it resulted in the assessment of the intervention's spatial impact, based on Trancik's principles (integrated bridging, linking sequential movement, indoor/outdoor fusion, axis & perspective) and according to a five-point scale of significance; ranging from major beneficial to major adverse. The results revealed potential guiding principles for a re-design that would prevent the creation of ruptures in the overall city pattern, conserving urban spatial continuity.

Design

Regarding the re-design, a case closely related to the research topic was selected. The data needed to analyze the re-design case were architectural and construction drawings for the current situation, information about the history, the context, the district's demographics, the structural system, the materiality and the situation of the site before and after the interventions, masterplans for all phases, historic photographs and newspaper articles. These data were collected through historical, archival and literature research. Other methods employed for data collection were on-site observations and documentation through photography and analytical drawings.

All these data combined with the research results created the framework for the development of a re-design concept. In addition, for the composition of the functional program, literature and reference projects were consulted.

Literature and general practical preference

Research plan

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Trancik, R. (1986). *Finding Lost Space: Theories of urban design*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.

van de Water, B. (2021). *Rediscovering the shopping center*. (Unpublished history history thesis). Delft: Technische Universiteit Delft.

Research case

Buiter, H. (1993). *Hoog Catharijne: De wording van het winkelhart van Nederland*. Utrecht: Matrijs.

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Verjongd stadshart. (2016). *Een Nieuw Utrecht Centraal*. Utrecht: Matrijs.

Verlaan, T. (2017). *De ruimtemakers: Projectontwikkelaars en de Nederlandse binnenstad 1950–1980*. Nijmegen: Uitgeverij Vantilt.

Re-design case

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Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

My graduation topic is connected to the main objective of the Heritage & Architecture studio topic, which is the revitalization of the mall, considered as new heritage. I am, therefore, addressing the impending matter of the post-war shopping center's re-design in its urban context, while reflecting not only on the past and current situation, but also on its potential future recognition as part of the urban heritage. Attention is given to its role as the heart of the district it refers to, its spatial significance and its social function. In addition, even though dealing with an existing construction, the architectural proposal and the re-design strategy will be elaborated in different scales, ranging from urban to structural ones. This provides the opportunity to comprehend different levels of intervention and the challenges an architect may come across while making design decisions that have not only spatial, but also social, functional, technical, and environmental consequences.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

Societal relevance

As previously mentioned, consumer needs and demands are altering as the online market is growing, revealing a new era for mall types (IVBN, 2016). In this transitional phase, the significance of spatial order to social function needs to be acknowledged. Since temporal continuity is indisputable, spatial continuity should follow to accommodate social patterns (Trancik, 1986). In the rapid developments of contemporary life, buildings should continue to adapt, while remaining in constant dialogue with their past images and their urban surroundings. To that end, shopping malls need to be preserved as nodes of social activity and engagement, as stable points within the city for the community to refer to, not as freestanding entities detached from their context. For this reason, my graduation work constitutes an exploration of the capacity of the Dutch shopping center to adapt and respond to societal changes without losing its spatial coherence with its urban context.

Professional & scientific relevance

In the spirit of the times, where more and more post-war buildings are being documented, or even recognized as heritage, shopping centers are about to be placed in the foreground. However, little action has been taken toward the systematic analysis of the malls' integral spatial characteristics, while taking into account its relation to the urban fabric. In the

Netherlands, a step towards official documentation has already been made in 2005. The Cultural Heritage Agency published a report introducing a pre-selection of pre- and post-war shopping centers worth preserving. The selection was made according to their cultural-historical and architectural value, amongst other criteria that weren't considered, as their spatial significance in the urban context (Galema & van Hoogstraten, 2005). As my graduation topic sets forth the spatial impact of shopping facilities' re-design on urban development, it can function as a stimulus and starting point for the composition of a practical toolkit able to assist the architect throughout the process of a mall's re-design directed at sustaining, restoring, or enhancing spatial continuity with the urban fabric.