INTRODUCTION

The last decades a technological revolution has taken place, leading to globalisation all over the world. A network society has developed in which we challenge our societies in a process of structural change and a new perception of time and space. (Castells 1989: 1)

In the developments in a network society, and in network cities, the focus lies on the nodes and the links between them. The nodes reinforce, and the connections between them become only faster and faster. Every node seems to focus only on the other nodes, and not on the surrounding area. They are not well embedded in the urban surroundings. How does the direct environment react upon new developments in nodes and connections? How can we make certain these places benefit optimal from the surrounding network and will not be left behind?

HYPOTHESES

The network strengthens, but the neighbourhoods in between stay behind

Nodes develop quickly and focus only on surrounding nodes and not on the direct surroundings

A border arises between the node itself and the direct environment, social coherence lacks

The city network is not well embedded in the urban surroundings and therefore misses opportunities

RESEARCH QUESTION

How do the strongly evolving nodes and its connections react on their direct environment and vice versa?

ASSIGNMENT

Understanding globalisation as an ongoing process altering space and time, I will analyse the network society that is present in Amsterdam. Starting from a regional scale, I will look into its history and present form, I will define the most rapidly changing urban nodes and connections. By understanding the transformation of the network itself, I can take a look at the parts of the city that are not part of the nodes and the connections, and state desirable conditions for these places to benefit from and cooperate with the network, and not to be left behind.

The deliverables will be:
- A strategic plan on how Dutch neighbourhoods can react upon networks
- A set of design principles on how the nodes of a network can be embedded in the urban framework
- An urban design that shows what the previous points can look like in Amsterdam North

PLANNING

LITERATURE

Boelens (ed.) - Nederland Netwerkenland 2000
Castells - The Information Age (trilogy) 1994-96
Salingaros - Principles of Urban Structure 2005
Sassen - Sociology of Globalization 2007
Zilberti - Saskia Sassen interview 2008

RELEVANCE

When we look at this topic in a broader context, the relevance becomes clear. Globalisation is a topic that the world deals with since several decades. It is an ongoing process that stimulates the strengthening of the network, consisting of nodes and connections. The nodes seem to focus only on other nodes that are fast to reach, and not on the direct environment. A gap arises between the node and its environment.

Globalisation increases diversity. “The city’s spaces are inscribed with the dominant corporate culture but also with a multiplicity of other cultures and identities, notably through immigration. While corporate power inscribes non-corporate cultures and identities with otherness, thereby devaluing them, they are present everywhere.” (Sassen 2008: 6)

The role of the nodes seems to change from serving its environment, to serving other nodes.