



POLITECNICO
DI TORINO

Honors thesis

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN
ARCHITECTURE CONSTRUCTION CITY

Abstract

**Build above the existing:
a strategy for new land use in Tokyo**

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by

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This thesis work starts from the identification of a problem -the land consumption in the city of Tokyo- and proposes as a solution an architectural strategy aimed at overcoming the physical limit of the lack of soil, without distorting the nature of the city. The purpose of the research is to develop an alternative method for designing hyper-dense cities like Tokyo, building above the existing using the low-rise buildings as new ground zero for the urban community growth. The urban analysis has been thought retrospectively the identification of the architectural strategy, with the intention of finding a concrete application to this specific proposal, going to break the analysis-project temporal dogma. The investigative part intends to observe Tokyo as a city in the most complete sense of the term, deliberately jumping between physical and social descriptions, in order not to fall into the reductionism of classifying Tokyo as a simple sum of the two parts.

In this case, describing the Japanese social needs and habits with the meaning that we Westerners give. In this research I tried to do the opposite, I asked myself the question "Where do people meet in Tokyo?" and I tried to answer simply by observing their behaviors. The deduction I have reached is that it is not possible to draw a clear boundary between what is public and what is private, and that the street is the main place where social interactions take place. The aim of this research is to understand how space is produced by society, how in everyday life people take possession of the space around them to meet their needs, generating unplanned habitats and spontaneous activities.

The design strategy that I propose, tries to demonstrate that a creative use of residual space could be the key for new approaches, for live the city of the future. The idea is the design of a pop-up architecture which stands above, independently, two low-rise existing buildings. The project starts from the ideation of an elevated platform, fluid and flexible, able to fill in an acrobatic way -jumping and evading all possible obstacles- the empty spaces between the two buildings, giving life to a negative architecture, container of new realities. Its premise is to think of Tokyo in a different way, inviting people to really live in the city instead of just hurrying through it. This new architectural strategy does not only want to solve a problem related to the lack of space, but also to propose a solution for a new way of living the city, where space is not strictly classified as private or public, outside or inside, but as a hybrid of all these things. The key point of my work does not want to be the final result, but the initial ambition. The aspiration to find alternative and sustainable solutions to the city urban growth, don't erasing what already exists, but rather starting from that to create a project capable, in addition to filling a void, to rehabilitate even a full.

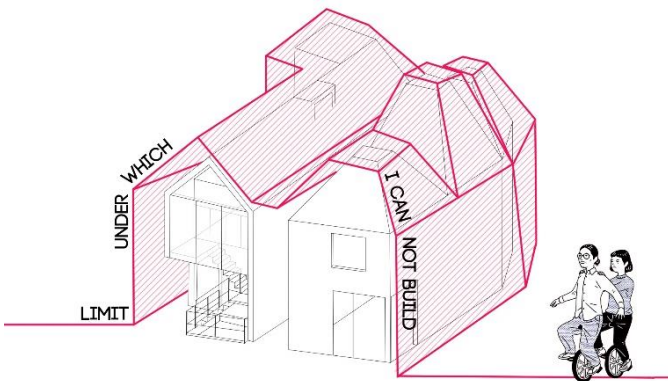


Image 1: minimum distance between buildings

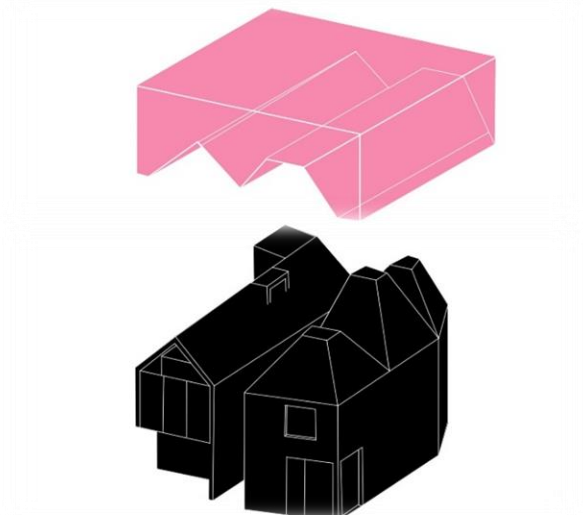


Image 2: pop-up architecture diagram



Image 3: view of the project

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