

## Next Station version 24.03.2023

The filling station, classified as a station [1], serves as a transitory point rather than a destination for lingering. It functions as a way station that may unify multiple spaces within a single location, comparable to Michel Foucault's notion of "Heterotopia" [2]. For regular commuters, it provides a second home with recurring patterns and operators, thereby transforming every foreign stop into a familiar space. For others the filling station is just an anonymous place to satisfy the pressing need of the moment, often perceived as nameless and uncommon. Similar to international chains such as McDonald's and Starbucks, filling stations are a reflection of an industrialised identity through branding. Alternatively, smaller providers may showcase their unique identities by selling local products and services, establishing a loyal clientele.

*"Movement shapes the image of reality of modern man. Whether in technology, science, or art: modern reality resists the rigid gaze [traditional kind of observation], it requires perception in motion."*, writes Sokratis Georgiadis in his essay "The Attacked Body - Siegfried Giedion and Mechanization, in 1998. Considering the development of architecture as a discipline of a more static and permanent reality, the question arises as to how the reality of buildings should appear in a modern society?

The creation of the Filling Station building type is inseparably linked to the idea of the internal combustion engine and its application to movement. In contrast to Giedion's *"Mechanization Takes Command"*, the Filling Station is not influenced by increasing mechanization. It does not emerge from a sequence of spaces that are changed by automation, such as the *"evolution"* of stairs that become escalators or kitchens that turn into an optimized apparatus of programmed workflows with the aim of producing food easier and faster in the sense of Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky *"Frankfurter Küche"*. The Filling Station is one of the building types that mechanization itself brought forth.

As the automobile industry grew and the demand for gasoline increased, larger and more specialized retail companies emerged. The mere technical object of the gas pump began its path towards an independent building typology. Companies established gas station networks that offered customers a convenient and standardized source of gasoline and other automotive products. Over time, Filling Stations advanced into service centers, offering a wide range of products and services, from fuel and vehicle maintenance to food, beverages, and other daily necessities.

Looking at the development of the Filling Station, we can observe a variety of connections to society, the environment as well as architectural and industrial building history.

If we highlight only two of these connections, one is the potential of the Filling station to be adaptive for hybrid combinations with varying programs and building forms. Either in a symbiotic manner or as a parasitic appendix. Remarkable is the moment when the Filling station unifies all services under one big roof as an umbrella. The over-proportional building element quickly becomes a recognizable trademark, even in arrangements where the Filling Station itself occupies a subordinate role.

The second development is the filling station's dependence on industrial mass production and its interlinked economic chains. It emerged from it and will likely disappear with a new mode of transportation that does not require stops on independent depots of energy. However, we ask ourselves what have we learned from it? What remains of it? What should we keep and want to keep from it? What can persist in new types?

Undoubtedly, the Filling Station is still strongly intertwined in the trading network of fossil biomass. As an extended arm of an industrial extraction and supply chain, it sells a product that culturally comes from a harvest that knows no sowing. Above all, the petrol station as a trading and storage place promised a seemingly endless supply of energy that we accepted without questioning our freedom and growth. Thinking about the consequences came late. Therefore, many of its manifestations and designs are to be reevaluated also from its role as an interface. How much information did it ever give us about the number of liters in stock or where they were stored? How much information about where it was extracted? However, formative for this typology remains the digital display of the real-time price, which still today gives the impression of being directly linked to the global data of the stock exchange.

Every technical development of the automobile has had an impact on its territorial presence, its ease of use, and its design. Regine Schricker calls them "*monuments of motorisation*". If we consider modernity as an effort to apply a model into the world with each design until a better model stands in our way, then we are now facing the question of the model of the 22nd-century Filling Station.

Without wanting to predict the exact technological development of transportation, the question arises: Will the Filling Station survive this next modifying phase?

We want to comprehend the history of the petrol station and analyze their design elements and forms in the context of their respective eras and conventions. This will enable us to determine which elements and forms are worth preserving for future tasks.

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[1] Webster dictionary

: a stopping place: such as

a regular stopping place in a transportation route

the building connected with such a stopping place

one of the stations of the cross

German Grimms Dictionary

STATION, f. (pron. statsjón) haltestelle, aufenthalt.

1) a loanword from the Latin "statio" of the same meaning.

2) station means, first and most usually, a short stop on a road and the place where this happens. This meaning belongs initially to ecclesiastical usage and is based on mediaeval Latin. Statio,

3) in the same sense, 'place where a stop is made', station is generally used in modern language, beyond this specific case, and especially as an expression of traffic very widespread. Sometimes a station refers not only to the stop, but also to the distance between two stops, the section of the road designated by it.

a) in the 18th-19th century for post stop, post station, station,... also the place where the postmen get fresh horses. Sperander 679; die station.'1. in the postal system, a place where the horses are usually changed; der postwechsel'.

[2] In his article "Other Spaces", Foucault distinguishes between two types of ideally charged spaces: in addition to utopias, which are unreal and only virtual counter-designs or perfections of real social conditions, there are heterotopias, which he sees as "realised utopias", as counter-worlds to the heterogeneous power structures of social reality. Heterotopias are institutionally often closed and often spatially delimited places in a society that are a scaled-down image or counter-image of society as a whole. They are subject to a clear order, set against the disorder of the surrounding world (or against its different, mutually obstructive or even mutually exclusive orders). Foucault's examples of heterotopias are rest homes, psychiatric clinics, prisons, old people's homes, cemeteries, museums, libraries, colonies, etc. Heterotopias often have their own everyday time, which does not correspond to the social everyday time.

The discourse-analytical concept of heterotopias creates a set of instruments for not only modelling institutional intrinsic realities as particular spaces of action in themselves, but also for examining the ordering criteria and values that make up the internal reality of heterotopian spaces in relation to external reality, so that the institutionality of the depicted world can be understood as an allegorical-semiotic reflection on the power and ordering structures of the diegesis.

Literatur: Foucault, Michel: Andere Räume [1967]. In: Aisthesis. Wahrnehmung heute oder Perspektiven einer anderen Ästhetik. Hrsg. v. Karlheinz Barck [...]. Leipzig: Reclam 1990, S. 34-46.