The public realm of covered food halls as the driver of a sense of place and conviviality

A case study of three covered food halls in Rotterdam

YURI IMPENS
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**PREFACE** .................................................................................................................................................. 3

**ABSTRACT** .............................................................................................................................................. 4

1. **Introduction** .......................................................................................................................................... 5
   1.1 Background ....................................................................................................................................... 5
   1.2 Research problem and relevance ................................................................................................. 6
   1.3 Objective & aims ........................................................................................................................... 7
   1.4 Research questions ......................................................................................................................... 7
   1.4 Disposition ...................................................................................................................................... 8

2. **Methodology** ....................................................................................................................................... 9
   2.1 Research method: case study ....................................................................................................... 9
   2.2 Case selection .................................................................................................................................. 11
   2.3 Data collection ............................................................................................................................... 12
      2.3.1 Introducing the placegame .................................................................................................... 15
   2.4 Methodology & analysis ................................................................................................................ 16
   2.5 Validity & limitations .................................................................................................................... 17

3. **Theoretic framework** ....................................................................................................................... 19
   3.1 Public realm of covered food halls ............................................................................................. 19
      3.1.1. Characterizing covered food halls ....................................................................................... 19
      3.1.2. Characterizing the public realm ......................................................................................... 23
      3.1.3. Characterizing the public realm of the covered food hall .............................................. 27
   3.2 Sense of place & conviviality in the public realm of the covered food halls .................................. 29
      3.2.1. What is sense of place? ...................................................................................................... 29
      3.2.2. What makes a place convivial? ......................................................................................... 32
      3.2.3 Contribution of public realm of covered food hall to sense of place and conviviality ....... 33
   3.3 Answering the main question: theoretic approach ........................................................................ 36
4. Case Study I: De Markthal .................................................. 38
   4.1 Introduction and background information .................................. 38
   4.2 Characterization of the public realm ........................................... 40
       4.2.1 Pursued public realm .................................................. 40
       4.2.2 Perceived public realm ............................................... 41
   4.3 Reflection and possible improvements ....................................... 43
5. Case Study II: Fenix Food Factory ............................................. 45
   5.1 Introduction and background information .................................... 45
   5.2 Characterization of the public realm ........................................... 47
       5.2.1 Pursued public realm .................................................. 47
       5.2.2 Perceived public realm ............................................... 48
   5.3 Reflection and possible improvements ....................................... 50
6. Case Study III: Marché 010 .................................................... 51
   6.1 Introduction and background information .................................... 51
   6.2 Characterization of the public realm ........................................... 52
       6.2.1 Pursued public realm .................................................. 53
       6.2.2 Characterization of the perceived public realm during the Placegame 54
   6.3 Reflection and possible improvements ....................................... 56
7. Discussion .............................................................................. 57
8. Conclusion ............................................................................... 62
References ................................................................................ 65
List of interviewees ...................................................................... 69
List of Figures ............................................................................. 70

APPENDIX I - Placegame form ENGLISH ............................................ 71
APPENDIX II - Placegame form DUTCH ............................................. 73
APPENDIX III - Interview outlines ..................................................... 74
PREFACE

I would like to start with thanking the different supervisors who helped me to find a good topic, and who consequently were very kind and helpful along the way in making me be able to write this thesis. In the first place these are my supervisors from KTH, Tigran Haas and Rosa Danenberg. I want to thank Tigran for his enthusiasm on the topic and his suggestions for new insights. Rosa helped me in detail in finding the right questions, methods and making good choices in the execution of the research. She has been so kind and patient with me and her constructive feedback has helped me a great deal. I enjoyed her supervision and I could not have written this thesis without her.

Secondly I want to thank everyone at STIPO, who made my internship interesting, instructive and most of all very much fun. First of all I want to thank Jeroen Laven who guided me in the first stages of my process of doing this research. I learned a lot from him and his extensive knowledge on public spaces, urban development and most of all: Rotterdam. Secondly I want to thank Sander van der Ham who was most kind to help me in the later stages of the research, especially in organizing the placegame. I could not have done this without your help. I want to thank in general all of my other colleagues at STIPO, both the experts and the interns, for making my time in Rotterdam very special and valuable. I want to name Dahlia in specific for always being there for me and the other interns.

I also want to thank the Ax:son and Johnson foundation for the very generous contribution that made it possible for me to go to Rotterdam for the internship at STIPO and to be able to get the best results for the research. The same goes for the contribution of the Erasmus program, and especially Anna Hellberg Gustafsson for being so kind in making this possible for me.

The research would not have been possible to make without the very generous responses of all the interview respondents, thank you for making time to talk to me and share your insights with me. I want to thank Nathalie Lauw, Hakim Farkouchi and Jacco Bakker for making it possible to organize the placegame at the Marché 010 and being so generous with your time and attention in doing so.

Lastly I want to thank my family, and in particular my parents, who supported me in my choices of going to Stockholm and subsequently Rotterdam. I also want to thank my friends that made me feel like I always had their support both while studying and in the off time. Thank you for making me feel like coming home whether I was in Sweden or The Netherlands, and thanks to all the people I’ve met over the years that I am still in touch with outside the previous two countries, whether you are in Spain, France, Italy or Germany.
**ABSTRACT**

In the modern consumer economy, experience is playing an increasingly important role. We are looking to buy a special but authentic experience, in particular when it comes to food consumption. These developments have led to a resurface and reinvention of the traditional covered market hall. New versions of the conventional concept have been created, and these covered food halls put emphasis on creating an attractive public realm for the visitor. However, the different versions of the covered food halls have different public realms with varied effects on the sense of place and conviviality for the visitor. The aim of this research is to find out what the drivers of the public realm of the modern covered food hall are, and to analyze how these influence, and can possibly improve the sense of place and conviviality. Three case studies of new covered food halls in Rotterdam provided valuable insights. From the theories it became apparent that there are four drivers of the public realm when it comes to the creation of a sense of place and conviviality: economical, social, cultural and political. The case studies showed the same result, however it has come to show that the tangible public realm is first and foremost the result of the intangible organization behind the covered food halls, relating to the political driver of the public realm. The structure and the aim of the organization determine the other 3 drivers, resulting in the physical structure of the public realm, and the activities that take place in the space. Within the physical realm, elements such as personalization, flexibility and transparency have shown to be crucial to create a sense of place and conviviality. The organization behind the hall also influences the activities that take place inside and around the hall. In order to possibly improve the public realm of the covered food hall, it is therefore important to start with finding a fitting organization for the aims and goals the covered food halls has as part of the public realm.
1. Introduction

1.1 Background
In recent years, there is has been increasing demand for, and attention to, experience and authenticity in consumers’ needs and wishes, especially when it comes to shopping and eating. Bishop & Williams (2012, p. 70) mention that there is a growing group of middle-class incomes that have “a reduced need for constant securing of the basics, […] the only thing that remains is consumption of the thrill, the experience, the new”. The “new experience economy” offers opportunities and a consumer culture that taps into our desires asks for an increasing amount of entertainment, leisure and social contact (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, in: Banerjee, 2001, p. 14). Because of increased mobility, welfare and the amount of leisure time, consumers can be more critical on their behavior and choice of destination, leading to an increased competition between cities and the amenities it has to offer. The result is that many cities are finding their own identity, attractiveness and sense of places questioned and challenged, as they are undergoing transformations from centers of production to centers of consumption (Haas & Olsson, 2014, p. 59).

The result of the developments described above is that new concepts have evolved around the experience of the city itself, and there has been an urban renaissance, marked also by a growing urban tourism (Gonzalez & Waley, 2012). Something that has simultaneously been subject to a recent revival is the interest in food (Bishop & Williams, 2012, p. 76). This applies to the group of middle-class incomes that was mentioned before, as it seems that this group cooks more themselves but also eats out more, demanding higher standards in their choice of food and atmosphere of the places they eat. This is challenging conventional restaurants & supermarkets to compete and deliver offering innovate ways of shopping and experiencing a certain place. Different concepts of restaurants, shops and merges between those two show that consumers want something different and something new. A concept that has, as a result of amongst others the previous reasons, received new attention is the market hall.

Market halls have been existent in many European cities since the end of the 19th century, or even earlier. Traditionally, these were places were publicly owned covered markets where people of all classes came together to buy mostly food, but also other artifacts such as clothes. These market halls lost their attractiveness with the increasing popularity of supermarkets for grocery shopping, and a decreasing attention towards the management and maintenance of the mostly public market halls (Jones et. al., 2007), leading to a decreasing quality of the market itself and the maintenance of the place. However, supermarkets couldn’t take over the role of the market halls as social meeting places for their users. There was no longer the possibility to interact with individual, professional sellers or other visitors. Over recent years, new versions on the familiar concept have become popular destinations for consumers. These are often privately owned, and are therefore different in their management and maintenance than the previously mentioned public market halls.

Over time these markets have become popular marketing assets in attracting tourists – La Boqueria in Barcelona for instance – and transformed into “[…] new playground[s] for those members of the middle classes who seek authenticity and alternative consumption possibilities” (Gonzalez & Waley, 2012). Market halls are currently alternating from their original shape and concept, in order to connect better to the modern, although middle class, visitor. New places like Markthalle Neun in Berlin offer a market for the everyday visit, but also offer themed markets and other activities on different times throughout the week to keep the experience of the new version of
the market hall surprising and give it a sense of authenticity. In doing so, the new version of the market halls meets the demands of the modern consumer that were previously mentioned for more experience and innovativeness in buying and consuming food.

A result is also that these new concepts are emerging in places that have no history with traditional market halls, such as The Netherlands. In 2014, the ambitious Markthal opened in Rotterdam, giving space to mixed uses such as shopping, eating, parking and living (Markthal, n.d.). This sparked a debate around market halls and has inspired many cities to create plans to initiate their own market hall. Other initiatives followed in other cities, but Rotterdam continued to be enriched by new concepts around the traditional market hall as well. Also in 2014, the Fenix Food Factory opened in Rotterdam, creating a ‘culinary hotbed’ (Fenix Food Factory, n.d.). To finish it off, there is a third initiative for a vershal – a fresh food market – and meeting place in ZOHO, an outworn business area close to the center of the city of Rotterdam (ZOHO, 2016). Since all halls are related to food and to markets, but are not focused only on markets anymore, it would be more appropriate to call these type of halls covered food halls, in which markets are part of a wider spectrum of themes and facilities centered around food.

As mentioned before, the three food halls in Rotterdam are all different from each other, but all show that the revival of food and search for new and exciting experiences is very much real. They also show the transition of Rotterdam as that of an industrial harbor city, a city of production and the working class, to a city in search for a new identity and place in this rapidly-changing world in which identity is centered around consumerism. After years of creating architectural and commercial uniformity in cities around the world, in which places have turned into spaces, it seems apparent that with new initiatives like the covered market halls, a new sense of local identity, a new sense of place, is being pursued (Haas & Olsson, 2014, p. 60). The covered food halls in Rotterdam seem to contribute, or at least try to contribute, to this process of creating a new identity, attractive public places and a sense of place.

1.2 Research problem and relevance

Covered food halls can be seen as part of the public space of a city, generating public places where the creation of a sense of places can be pursued. Public places are the places where a city comes alive and shows its real identity and that of its inhabitants and users. There are different concepts that can be linked to the creation of a sense of place in public places. Examples of these are place-attachment and place-identity. A concept that will be used in this research and that is containing more than just the public space is the public realm. The public realm includes the public space but also the adjoining facades of buildings, and one could argue that even public buildings or semi-public buildings themselves belong to the public realm (Karssenberg & Laven, 2016, p. 15). Because it takes into consideration more aspects than just the streets and squares usually connected to the public space, the public realm is more appropriate to apply to this research. In this research, the public realm will be linked to covered food halls to find out how the public realm can be characterized and can contribute to a sense of place that gives the place an identity, and a meaningful place for its users. Haas and Olsson (2014, p. 61) are writing that the provision and creation of public spaces is expected “to promote social life and generate values that are beneficial to all – in other words, to contribute to a sense of place”. According to them, public spaces have the ability to create or contribute to a sense of place. However, it is still relatively unclear how the wider spectrum of the public realm can contribute to a sense of place, and how this influences the attractiveness of the place. As attractiveness of a place is a very subjective and hard to measure concept, what will be
central in this research instead is conviviality. Convivial places are at the heart of democratic life as they are places for social and joyful interaction (Shaftoe, 2008, p. 5).

Conviviality is preferable to use in this research as it is specifically applicable to the usage of covered food halls as case studies or research objects. Parham (2008, p. 16) mentions that eating and drinking is at the heart of conviviality, as it stimulates social interaction and joyful activities. Conviviality in this sense could be seen as the main aim of every food-related public place, and the idea of pursuing a convivial public realm could therefore be applied very well to the public realm of the covered food hall. What needs to be added here is that the public realm of covered food halls exists both around the building as a whole, as well as within the hall surrounding the different stalls in the building. In this research, it will be interesting to see how the public realm of one specific type of public place, the covered food hall, is able to contribute to the creation of a convivial public realm with a sense of place, that becomes meaningful for visitors even beyond the current trend of food consumerism.

1.3 Objective & aims
The objective of this study is to analyze the current ways the public realm of and within food halls can be characterized, to see how this currently contributes to a sense of place and conviviality and how this could possibly be improved. For this, literature on the different will be used for a theoretic insight, while three food halls in Rotterdam will be analyzed to compare the theoretic outcomes with the empirical outcomes.

Using covered food halls as a research object, this research aims to extend the existing knowledge in two specific ways. Covered food halls have so far only limitedly been examined in academic research when it comes to the characterization of their public realm and how this influences the sense of place. This research aims to add knowledge to the existing academic research on public places, the public realm, conviviality and sense of place by applying these concepts to the cases of covered food halls. Besides that, another aim is to see how the public realm of the covered food hall could be improved by using practical methods that have been used to improve public spaces, and see if these are applicable in an academic research, as well as adding the practical know how to the academic field of research on the public realm. The Placegame-method created by PPS will be central.

1.4 Research questions
This research starts from the academic literature on the public realm and on covered food halls. Central concepts that are connected to these are public places, sense of place, third places and place-identity. These aspects are central to understand the public realm and the covered food hall, and it is important to first get a theoretical overview on the subject before the empirical situation will be studied through the three cases. The cases that will be used are all located in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and are all relatively new. Although they differ in many aspects in their concept, they share some of the basic characteristics that make them recognizable as covered food halls.

The main research question “What are the drivers of the public realm of covered food halls that are most important in the creation of a convivial public realm and a sense of place, and how can these be used to improve the public realm?” is divided into four sub questions:
Theoretical sub questions
1. “What characterizes the public realm of covered food halls?” seeks to go into the basic understanding of what constitutes the public realm of covered food halls. This insight is needed before anything can be said about the value and attraction the public realm can have in creating a sense of place or convivial space, or before conclusions can be drawn about possible improvement.

2. “How can the characteristics of the public realm of covered food halls contribute to conviviality and a sense of place?” uses the basic theoretic groundwork that was created in the first sub question to argue what the most important drivers are of the public realm and how these can contribute to conviviality and a sense of place, concepts that will be elaborated on before connecting them to the characteristics of the public realm.

Empirical subquestion
3. “How can the public realm of the covered food halls in Rotterdam – Markthal, Fenix Food Factory and Marché010 – be characterized when it comes to conviviality and a sense of place, and how could this possibly be improved?” analyses the public realm of three covered food halls in Rotterdam, and how the public realm of these three covered food halls contribute to conviviality and a sense of place.

Analytical subquestion
4. “From the perspective of the stakeholders and users of the covered food halls in Rotterdam, what are the drivers of the public that are most important in creating a sense of place and conviviality?” will bring conclude on the outcomes of the empirical sub question in relation to the theoretical framework, and will look at the most important drivers of the public realm in order to create a sense of place and conviviality. The stakeholders in this question refer to the interview respondents, while the users refer to the participants of the placegame.

1.4 Disposition
After setting out the starting point for this research in the introduction, as well as the guiding questions, the goals and aims and the relevancy, the following chapters are mapped out in a specific order. First, the methods section will explain how the research is conducted, and why these methods have been chosen. Important here is also the explanation of the placegame as a method developed by PPS. Second, the theoretic background will go deeper into some of the concepts that have been mentioned before, and will provide a purely theoretic answer to the first two sub questions and the main question. After making a theoretical proposition, three chapter with results from empirical research to the three cases will follow. These chapters will go into the background of the three cases, and will characterize the public realm of the covered food halls in Rotterdam in order to give answers to the empirical sub question. A cross-case analysis will follow in the discussion section. This section aims to answers the last and analytical sub question. Here, a bridge will be made between the theoretical background and the empirical findings. The conclusion finally attempts to answer the main question, and will conclude on missing insights and ideas for future research.
2. Methodology

In this research, a qualitatively and empirically method will be central. The research is conducted based on a research design that could be used as a guide during the conduction of the research, though Maxwell (2013, p. 214) quotes Hammersley & Atkinson (1995, p. 24) saying that “research design should be a reflexive process operating through every stage of a project”. He adds to this that all aspects of doing research are happening simultaneously and mutually influence each other. This design should therefore not be taken as irreplaceable, but should however be a guide through the process of conducting the research.

Maxwell’s “Qualitative Research Design – an interactive approach” (2013) sets a model with five components that each relate to a different set of issues in relation to the coherence of the research design. These components are goals, conceptual framework, research questions, methods and validity. Starting with the goals and conceptual framework, introduced in the first chapter, it has become clear that the preferred method of research is a case study. In the following paragraphs, the choice for this type of research method will be explained. Subsequently, the methods of data collection, data analysis and validity of the research will be discussed.

2.1 Research method: case study

Creswell explores in his book “Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design – Choosing Among Five Approaches” five different approaches to qualitative research. Starting off with the question why a qualitative research should be chosen in the first place, he mentions that this is because a problem or issue needs to be explored out of a need to study a group, population or issue in a complex, extensive way (2013, p. 39-40). One of the five approaches Creswell mentions is the case study, “in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case

![Image 1: The Double Diamond (Nessler, 2016)]
description and case-based themes” (p. 73). To get a more extended look into the specific case study, Yin’s “Case Study research – design and methods” (2009) is more elaborate.

Yin begins by saying that case studies are a linear but iterative process. A concept that can be linked to this iterative process is the idea of the double diamond. Originally developed by the British Design Council and further elaborated by Dan Nessler, the Double Diamond states a process in which there are moments of opening up and divergence, followed by moments of narrowing down and convergence (Nessler, 2016). Image 1 shows the whole process in a graph. For this research, the double diamond is a useful framework that describes the process behind the research itself. Starting with the ‘Don’t know’ in Phase A, the first diverging process is starting with an idea, and doing research to this idea. This phase has led to a great amount of information and insights, that then had to be converged in a process in which the research questions were defined. The thesis design has structured the first information and narrowed it down to a limited set of questions. Besides the thesis design, the first part of the double diamond was also about opening up the content in the form of the literature study to find a theoretic framework. First opening up to do research into all possible theories that might be useful, while then converging to use the right information. After finishing the first diamond, a clear image was formed of how the research was designed, and which theories form the basis for the empirical research.

The first part was about designing the right thing, and finding the right theoretic base, the second diamond represents a process of ‘designing things right’. The diverging aspect is to gather empirical data that once again creates a collection of ideas and develops new theories. Then a point was reached in which all the collected data needed to be converged, which led to a discussion in which empirical and theoretical outcomes were combined. Finally, a conclusion was reached at the end of the second diamond. Although this method has not been developed for an academic research, it can be considered very useful as the model reflects visually what elements this research contains. It could be seen as a visual guide of the different iterative elements the process of doing research contains.

Going back to the choice for a case study, Yin, connected to what is said before by Creswell about qualitative research, mentions that cases studies are a good fit if there is the desire to understand complex social phenomena. In this type of research, a holistic view can be taken of real-life events (2009, p. 4) in which the investigator asks a ‘how’ question and has little control over the events (2009, p. 2). In this specific research, the unit of research being covered food halls in Rotterdam, a complex real life situation is at the heart of the research in which a how question is indeed posed. Using a case like this may provoke the criticism that there is a limit to the ability to generalize the outcomes of the specific case study. Yin elaborates on this aspect by saying that case studies are “generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes” (2009, p. 15), adding that the goal ultimately is to expand and generalize theories by applying them to a real life situation.

This research should have two generalizable outcomes. On the one hand, the case that will be studied will be able to give results on the characteristics of the public realm and the relation towards the attractiveness of the public spaces, as well as the influence on the sense of place. Using the three food halls in Rotterdam there will be a certain limit to the extent of generalization. At the same time, already existing concepts and methods that are currently used in practical terms will be applied to see to what extent they are usable in academic research.
2.2 Case selection

The unit of analysis, or case, is related to the initial research question. Having the covered food hall as a central unit, the specific cases have been identified as the covered food halls in Rotterdam. This implies that there are several different cases involved, leading to a multiple case study. Yin mentions that for multiple cases “the mode of generalization is analytic generalization, in which a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study” (2009, p. 38).

The advantage of multiple cases is that the evidence taken from it can be considered more compelling, and the whole study more robust (Herriott & Firestone, 1983; in Yin, 2009, p. 53). In choosing the different cases, contrasting logics can be followed. While a literal replication of a phenomena that becomes apparent in the two cases might be preferable in some researches, others might deliberately choose two or more cases based on contrasting situations, not choosing for direct replication. This might be used if a contrast is hypothesized beforehand (Yin, 2009, p. 61). In this research, it can be said that the choice of cases is to a certain extent contrasting. The proposed objects of study – De Markthal, Fenix Food Factory and Marché 010 – all have in common that they meet some basic requirements that belong to a food hall, while at the same time differ very much in their size, concept and design. There will be a more extensive characterization of the concept food hall later on in the theoretical background, as well as a description of the three cases.

What is important to mention here however is that all three food halls are very different in their set-up, and are characterized by a very different public realm. Treating every different case as a “whole” study can give results as to how the concept of each different food hall, and thus how the public realm of each different food hall, influences the attractiveness of the public space and the sense of place that can be experienced in each different hall. The case of De Markthal could be seen as an example of ‘starchitecture’, a landmark designed by a famous architect that draws people to a, usually, building based in the first place on its architectonic appearance. One of the most famous examples is the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao, that put the city on the map with one instance and has since attracted many people to the city, something that has often been referred to as ‘the Bilbao effect’ (Michael, 2015). De Markthal has been compared to the Guggenheim, for instance by Miles (2015), as this building too is a very iconic landmark by a famous architect, Winy Maas from Rotterdam based MVDRV, and is situated in a (former) industrial city in search for its own identity. The building is quite the opposite from the buildings that host the Fenix Food Factory and Marché 010, both buildings with an industrial past and now re-used to host food halls. This contradiction in the role the building itself, the physical part of the public realm, plays in the experience of the covered food hall makes the cases interesting to put next to each other when it comes to conviviality and sense of place. After analyzing the cases, by comparing those three different cases, conclusions can be drawn and lessons can be learned on the specific case but can also be attempted to generalize. This is related to by Yin (2009) as cross-case analysis.

The reason why all selected cases that have been chosen are located in Rotterdam is dependent on multiple factors. Besides the methodological argumentation, Maxwell (2013) also explains that the choice should connect to practical matters as well as personal interests. Starting with personal interest, I have become interested in these cases as Rotterdam was and still is one of the first and most important places in The Netherlands where covered food halls have been introduced. Being born and raised in The Netherlands, I had always liked to visit covered food halls abroad but had never had the chance to do so as there were no market or food halls in The Netherlands. The reasons behind this will be explained in the theoretic framework. Rotterdam has in
the recent years however been rapidly changing this, opening several covered food halls in just a matter of time. One of these food halls, the Markthal, has additionally received extensive international coverage and has since become one of the symbols for the city’s new ‘hipness’. However, the Markthal has not only received positive attention – it was recently chosen as the best shopping mall of the world by the ICSC, International Council of Shopping Malls (Potters, 2017) – but also receives a lot of negative attention, especially from Rotterdammers, and has recently known many problems with amongst others vacancy. One of the most heard critical notes is that the hall doesn’t speak to Rotterdammers and attracts mostly tourists (Naber, 2016).

Besides this personal link, there were also practicalities involved. While working on this thesis, I am simultaneously conducting an internship at STIPO, which is located in Rotterdam. This office on urban development has developed and worked on many different projects in Rotterdam as well as other cities. Many of these projects, in particular the international platform ‘City at Eye Level’, focus on public places, the public realm and placemaking. By working at STIPO, I got to use both the networks that STIPO has in order to find the right people to talk to, as well as using the knowledge and know how that STIPO has developed over the years concerning the public realm, public place and tools and strategies that can be used to improve these.

2.3 Data collection
The previous sections have elaborated on the choice of research methods and case selection. This paragraph will outline in a more detailed way how the data collection will take place. Having a complex real-life phenomenon as a case, it is hard to set a border as to where the limitations to the case can be set, and the boundaries tend to get blurry. Because of this, the opportunity to use a variety of sources to view the case from different angles occurs and applies. Yin (2009, p. 11) mentions in regards to this that “[...] the case study’s unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence-documents, artifacts, interviews, and observation [...]”. Because of the variety of possible sources of input, this research will also make use of these different sources. By using this combination of sources at different times throughout the research, new questions and new answers open up. The starting point of the research has been a short evaluation of research around market halls. Yin mentions (2009, p. 14) that some may think that a literature review is to get answers about what is known about a topic, however studying previous research often leads to develop sharper and more insightful questions about a topic.

The literature review is thus the starting point, but will continue throughout other steps of the process as well, as was seen in the double diamond. At the same time, talking to several people is good help in sharpening the research question in the first phases and collecting data during the next steps. The first conversations were focused on finding the exact topic of research, and these were talks with my supervisors and colleagues at STIPO to find out what exactly the topic of research was, and what could be interesting questions to ask in the research, and propose to the interviews respondents during data collection. This was the next step: to interview people that are connected to the three objects of research, the three cases. For each of the food halls, it was desirable to talk to a number of people that are connected on different levels to be able to get insights from different points of view. Since the research objects are different in their character, they are also different when it comes to management and people that are involved in this. The respondents per case do slightly differ in their function, but are also comparable under the varying contexts.

There are several reasons why these respective interview respondents have been chosen. If this research would have been a quantitative research, the actual users of the different cases could
have been asked to fill in a survey of how they feel that the public realm of the respective food hall contributes to their sense of place and appreciation of the conviviality. This would have given a first-hand insights in how the users value the public realm. In this research, the interview respondents give their perception of how the public realm contributes to the sense of place and conviviality. However, the in-depth character of the interviews with insiders of the cases leaves the opportunity to find out what public realm was pursued, and why, and how this corresponds or differs from the perceived public realm by these stakeholders, and why. This is in line with the character of the research questions and the aim to add knowledge to existing academic research. The specific respondents that were chosen were the stakeholders that were most involved with the project on different levels and from different organizations, therefore aiming to give a wide spectrum of different views on the pursued and perceived public realm.

For the case of De Markthal, conversations were held with four different persons. The first respondent was an employee of the City of Rotterdam, who has been involved with the development of De Markthal in several roles, including projectmanager and currently processmanager of the greater area ‘Laurenskwartier’ that De Markthal is located in. She gave insights in the history of the development of the hall, as well as the vision of the municipality. The second respondent was an entrepreneur who is located in De Markthal, and who is active in one of the two business associations. He gave insights in the functioning of the hall on a daily basis and the response from the entrepreneurs on the hall. The third respondent was a retail expert that has been very important in the development of the concept of De Markthal, content wise when it comes to retail and market. This interview could be considered most useful for this research in general, as he managed to give a greater understanding into what makes covered markets of food halls place of meaning and conviviality. The last interview was held with the current ‘marketmanager’ of De Markthal, who is employed by the owner of De Markthal, French retail investment group Klépiere. He gave insights into the vision of the owner on the functioning and future of De Markthal.

The second case, that of the Fenix Food Factory, is different when it comes to the history and management which has effects on the identity of the respondents. For this case, an employee of the City of Rotterdam was interviewed as well. This respondent is working in the department of project development, and has been involved since the first beginning with the initiative of the Fenix Food Factory and is still the first connection to the municipality. The interview gave good insights in the development of the Fenix Food Factory and the relation to the surrounding parts of the city. The second respondent is an architect that has been involved in the physical transformation of an old warehouse into a covered food hall, and gave insights into the concepts and sense of place that was pursued by the initiators. The third respondent was one of the initiators of the hall, and is still active as an entrepreneur and member of the business association. This interview gave a good understanding of exactly the identity of the place and the ideas that made the hall come alive. The last respondent was held with an independent entrepreneur that has been first employed by a bakery in the Fenix Food Factory, and since then became involved in the creation of a communal concept for the Fenix Food Factory and later on for the Marché 010.

The third case of the Marché 010 has again a quite different organization and therefore asked for a different approach. Again, there was one respondent that was an employee of the City of Rotterdam. This respondent fulfills the role of area coordinator, meaning that he is involved in many initiatives. He gave insights in the interaction between the municipality and the initiators of the food hall during the development of the plans. The initiator himself, and his second hand in the project, have been interviewed as well to get an understanding of the concept they want to create. Another
interview was held with an entrepreneur in the area that is a member of the ZoHo citizens, a group of entrepreneurs that is located in the area of the Marché 010 and is trying to make the area more attractive. He gave insight in the ways the covered food hall could contribute to the sense of place and conviviality in the wider area of ZoHo. A final interview was held with an independent entrepreneur that has shortly been involved with the Fenix Food Factory and Marché 010 in building the concept, place identity and a sense of place.

The conversations with the different respondents have been in-depth, semi-structured interviews. This way they were guided but kept flexible and adaptive to attain the most and most useful information as possible (Yin, 2009). The questions were all related to the respective cases and therefore related most to the question “How can the covered food halls in Rotterdam – Markthal, Fenix Food Factory and Marché010 – be characterized when it comes to the quality and functioning of the public realm, and how could this be improved?” In order to understand the cases fully, more input on the history and process behind the construction of the food halls has been attained through the interviews. However, the most important information that was collected was in which ways the respective covered food halls were using their public realms to create a sense of place and conviviality. Since this research is of a qualitative character, the results about this have been based on only a small number of respondents, all of them connected deeply to their respective food halls. The information that was attained was therefore about the sense of place and conviviality that was pursued, and about the perceived sense of place and conviviality according to the respondents. This asked for different approaches of analysis of the interviews, which will be discussed on in this chapter.

Besides the interviews, another method was used in order to collect information and attain an understanding of the possibilities of the public realm for creating a sense of place and conviviality. This was done with a placegame. The placegame-method has been used extensively in practice to get an understanding of the character of a public place. For instance to analyze a place, identify the key stakeholders and to engage participants in developing ideas. However, to my knowledge it has not been used in academia before. The game is a good opportunity do get the first-hand perceptions on the public realm from its users, that – as discussed above – are not possible to collect by interviewing stakeholders of the different cases. The placegame therefore adds diversity to the collected data to attain a wider understanding as to what the public realm of a covered food hall contributes to the sense of place and conviviality of the place. The next paragraph will introduce the place in more detail.

2.3.1 Introducing the placegame
Besides the interviews, this research also draws on another tool for the collection of data. This is the placegame, developed by Project for Public Spaces (PPS) in New York. The goal of the game is to have a tool in which information can be attained from the direct users of the public space, on the current quality of public space, and about possible ways to make the place more attractive. PPS has created this method based on their own research and knowledge on ‘What Makes a Place Great’, as can be seen on image 2. They have created an extensive operationalization of the key attributes, intangibles and measurements that make a place great (PPS, 2002). The placegames are usually a tool that are used by PPS or other organizations to gather a group of people that are involved or connected to a public space, for instance people that live around the place or drive a business in the neighborhood. Together with these people, the placegame can be played to analyse the place by its own users, and
to then start working together with this group of people to implement the improvements that they come up with themselves.

During the first part of the game, the big group is split up into smaller groups that all look at one specific area within the respective public space. The categories that are central during the first analysis are: 1. Comfort & image, 2. Access & linkages, 3. Uses & activities, 4. Sociability. After evaluating the place on these different attributes, the second part contains open questions about which aspects of the public space the users like best in the place, which changes can be made in the short and long-term and with the help of which ‘local talents’ this can be realized. After this, the smaller groups would usually come back together to discuss their outcomes and come up with a plan how the public space can be improved.

Although not used in academic research before to my knowledge, the placegame method has been used by many organizations including PPS and STIPO. After the placegame is implemented and the results are analysed, there will be a reflection on its usability and validity in a scientific research like this. It gives an opportunity to reflect on using a method so far only used in practice in scientific context. The process of having a placegame can be compared to having a focus group. Using a small group of individuals, their behavior – or in this case their opinions on the place – are used to be able to draw conclusions. In this way, a relatively large group of respondents contribute their feelings and perceptions of the respective space within a limited time frame, resulting in a large amount of data. The results of the placegame could be treated as surveys and handled in a similar quantitative vein. However, in this research statistical measures will not be made and the focus will be on the outcomes of the open questions to see which elements of the public realm of the food hall are appreciated most, and which improvements will be suggested by the participants of the placegame.

Image 2: What makes a place great? An operationalization made by PPS (PPS, 2002)
Besides using the open questions, the placegame ends with a discussion in which the different perspectives from the participants are discussed. This discussion also offers valuable information.

Although results and generalizability would be optimal if the placegame would be executed in all three cases, this was not possible considering practical limits such as time. This is why there has been chosen to execute the placegame only at one of cases, being it the Marché 010. The reason why this covered food hall was chosen was mostly practical. The location of Marché 010 is within the ZoHo area in Rotterdam, an area in which STIPO is heavily involved. This created a logical choice, even more since STIPO and Marché 010 have collaborated in the past on improving the plinths in the ZoHo area, and share a network of people that are involved in ZoHo or live in the neighborhood. It is exactly this group of people that, based on the method created by PPS, would be the most desirable group of participants of the placegame.

The networks of STIPO and Marché 010 were used to invite possible participants to join the placegame. The placegame itself has a limit of around 30 people to be still controllable and useful, so this was the maximum number of possible participants. In the end, a much smaller group of 9 people took place in the placegame. Although this was a small group, every single participant of the placegame was involved in the Marché 010 or their direct environment. For them, the placegame was a way of getting more involved with each other and to together think of ways to contribute to improving the public realm that all the participants use or have as their daily environment. This made the participants very motivated and resulted in good results. The way these results, and those of the individual interviews, are analyzed will be discussed in the next section.

2.4 Methodology & analysis

Before settling on the practical methods that have been followed to analyse the results from both the interviews and the placegame, it is important to come back to one of the cases that is central in this research. Marché 010 has had many delays in it’s opening date. While the opening was originally set at the beginning of 2017, the final opening date has been moved several times to eventually settle in September 2017. This has made the comparison with the other two cases harder as it is not possible to compare all three the cases based on their final public realm, and the contribution this makes to a sense of place and conviviality. In all interviews a difference has arisen between the pursued public realm, as the stakeholders initially wanted the public realm to look like, and the perceived public realm, as it is actually implemented and functioning according to the stakeholders. One could argue that the perceived public realm of the final Marché 010 is not finished and therefore not analyzable yet. However, the placegame offered the future users and stakeholders to already get a preview of the food hall before opening, and was therefore a way to still get an insight into how the public realm of that case will contribute to a sense of place and conviviality based on the current status of it during the placegame. This is however still a limited insight, as the preview of the hall only shows the tangible elements of the public realm while the intangible elements such as activity and organization are not finalized yet.

In order to analyse these results in a valid way, discourse analysis has been used. Williams (2014, p. 78) writes that discursive social psychology can be used to understand how “people construct their worlds through their own accounts and descriptions as gleaned from interviews”. The processing of the information that comes out of these interviews is therefore more about attitudes and discursive positions than about factual information. Williams writes this in relation to meaning of place, and writes that with a discursive approach the focus shifts from plainly describing a place to the consideration of social processes in the meaning making. For this research, it means that the
during the analysis of the interviews and the placegame, it is crucial to look at three aspects. This is firstly the way the respondents talk about their pursued sense of place and conviviality that was desired while drawing the concepts behind the food halls. Second, with a discursive approach it is important to look at the perceived sense of place and conviviality according to the respondents. Here, it is important to look at the choice of words and the social processes that are talked about by the respondents, as they are their interpretations of how the users of the public realm of the covered food halls respond and appreciate these. Lastly, it could be said that there is a respondent bias, as all the respondents have answered similar questions but with a different context as they responded from their respective professional background.

On a more practical note, the analysis of the data follows the embedded multiple-case study proposed by Yin (2009). The cases will be analysed separately in chapters dedicated to them, which will lead to cross-case conclusions. This will be presented in the discussion, in which a link will be made to the theoretical propositions to find how theory and reality relate to each other. The practical analysis is done by transcribing the interviews and the discussion that followed the placegame, and by coding these transcriptions. The coding is done with the software Atlas TI in which the most important quotes will be coded, and a cross-case analysis can be performed by finding expressions by different respondents about similar subjects or concepts, such as sense of place and conviviality. Besides looking only at the transcribed interviews, the placegame has also produced a number of forms with open questions that are analysed in a similar vein.

2.5 Validity & limitations
In order to reach the results that are pursued based on the research design, Yin (2009, p. 41) has developed a framework of four tests to assess the quality of the design. The first test, *construct validity*, concerns the right operational measures of the research. In this research, multiple sources and methods of data collection will be used. This also includes using methods that have long been used in practice and have given satisfactory results. I hope to make the shift from practical to academic research by applying methods such as the Placegame. The second test is *internal validity*. As this research has a descriptive and partly explorative nature, this validity test does not apply here. *External validity* is the third test and this can be related to *generalizability*. This has been mentioned before, in relation to the amount of cases. The cases themselves however also need to be discussed. The cases are contrasting in their nature and therefore aim to be able to draw higher conclusions, however they might be mostly applicable to cases with similar features. The cases that are selected here are all relatively new food halls, and have altered in their function, appearance and full concept from the traditional market hall. The results will therefore mostly be generalizable to similar covered food halls. Besides that, the location of the cases is Rotterdam, and therefore the results can be used mostly in other Western European countries or cities with a similar size. To finalize, the results are highly context-depending because of the unique characteristics of the specific food halls, but will to some extent be generalizable as they are related back to the general theories from the theoretic background.

The last test is *reliability*. The thesis design has to make sure the eventual research is repeatable. To a certain extent this will be possible by using some of the same theories and methods, and talking to the same background. However, the full combination of all factors that have led the research to be designed in this particular way, with these cases and personal relation to the research and the inside information obtained through the internship of the researcher make it impossible to be able to fully replicate the study.
The validity paragraph is concluded with a critical note on the execution of the research. This research was heavily influenced by the internship that was undertaken at STIPO. This influenced for instance the topic of the research itself, but also the scope of the research and the choice of cases, methods and interview respondents. Because of the ties STIPO has with ZoHo, the case of Marché 010 was a logical pick mostly for that. This has resulted in challenged analysis because of the status of the food hall as not finished during the time of the executions of the interview. Besides that, the choice of the interview respondents in general was also influenced by STIPO as their network was used mostly to reach out to different stakeholders. This made it possible to find stakeholders with real inside knowledge, but the type of information they shared was also different and possibly less objective as they were already connected to STIPO on a professional level.

So to speak, the research and outcomes would have looked considerably different if it was not for the internship. This also includes the use of the placegame, as the use of this tool was recommended by STIPO. Without the internship, this tool would probably not have been used in this thesis. With including the tool, an extra layer of depth is added to this research. However, the organization and use of the placegame has also brought extra complicatedness towards this thesis.

Finally, the limitations to this research should be mentioned. There was the limit of time and the boundedness to execute the empirical research during the period of doing the internship, which led to the fact that there was a limited time frame for the interviews. This was strengthened by the fact that narrowing down the exact topic of research has been challenging, in which more subjects were taken into consideration that were really necessary. The period of research was unfortunate in the case of Marché 010, as the hall itself was not finished. When it comes to the choice of the interview respondents, these were very valuable. However, a more rounded picture could have been formed if more respondents were included, for instance also a number of small interviews with the actual users of the different cases. This might influence the generalizability of the outcomes of this research, as it the current outcomes based on the collected data only show a limited insights that are very context dependent. The respondents themselves have also a certain role in the respective cases, influencing the outcomes. This also goes for the questions that the interviewer asked them, that were based on the researcher’s personal interpretation of the subject. A different researcher would have possibly come up with different questions, leading to different results within the same subject.
3. Theoretic framework

The several concepts that are central in this research – i.e. covered food halls, public realm, sense of place, conviviality – have been the subject of several researches before. This chapter will use these theories to build a base on which the empiric research can be grounded. The theoretic framework will be used to answer the theoretical sub questions.

The first sub question “What characterizes the public realm of covered food halls?” is attempted to be answered in the first part of this chapter. Central in this questions are the two concepts ‘public realm’ and ‘covered food hall’ will be described based on existing theories. This groundwork is important to answer the second question: “How can the characteristics of the public realm of covered food halls contribute to conviviality and a sense of place?” In this second question, the concepts described in the first sub question will be connected to the ideas behind ‘convivial public places’ and ‘sense of place’.

The theoretic framework that will be formed based on these two first sub questions will produce a purely theoretic answer to the first part of the main question “How does the public realm of covered food halls contribute to the creation of convivial public places and a sense of place, and how can this possibly be improved?” After this chapter, the results of the empiric research will show whether or not the theoretic framework is valid for the three covered food halls in Rotterdam. In the discussion the empiric results will be connected to the theoretic framework proposed in this chapter, and where needed this will be supplemented.

3.1 Public realm of covered food halls

Before being able to say something about the public realm of covered food halls, it is needed to make a demarcation towards the two concepts. While not extending too much on the background and history of covered food halls, some explanation of the concept is needed here. Even though the introduction stated that the cases in this research are more than just market halls, and are therefore referred to as food halls, one can argue that the story of the food hall does start with that of the market. To reach a point of defining what exactly a food hall is, a short discussion of the history of the evolution of food halls, market halls and markets is needed before elaborating on the characteristics of the public realm in general, and the specific characteristics of the public realm of covered food halls.

3.1.1. Characterizing covered food halls

A covered food hall covers many different variations of the basic covered market where food is central. The history, description of characteristics and recent revival as public places and drivers of regeneration of food culture and city development will be presented here.

History

Morales (2011, p. 3) begins his exploration of this history of markets citing several writers that have since long ago written about the importance of markets as economic, social and cultural pillars of our current society, dating back to medieval Europe, as well as providing employment and food provision. These authors include Braudel (1979), Mumford (1961) and Pirenne (1925). A European
Union program called Urbact, aiming to point attention to important urban sustainability projects, has set up a project about outdoor- and indoor markets, called Urbact Markets. They (2015, pp. 14) write about the long tradition and the importance of markets, and date them back even far before medieval times to ancient Greece. They mention The Grand Bazaar in Istanbul as the world’s oldest still-operating market, and indeed covered market, the construction of which started in 1455.

Urbact Markets continue (2015, p. 15) to write about the important economic, social and cultural functions markets have for cities. Not only a place for trade, but also highly sociable. Kurland and Aleci (2015, p. 506) add that it is important to talk about public markets, for and by the people, and as a form of urban infrastructure that is responsible for regulation of food and the equitable distribution of it. It was and often still is superintended by city authorities, making it “a mechanism of social as well as civic order [...]”. Morales (2011, p. 3) continues in this vein saying that marketplaces “have been central to historical political, economic, and social revolution in the United States” and still fulfill political, economic and social roles for both people and places.

Schmiechen and Carls (as cited in Jones, Hillier, Comfort, 2007, pp. 201-202) have done extensive writing about the development of covered markets in Britain and talk about societal changes that set in motion a transition in traditional public markets. With the Industrial Revolution, the extreme growth in urban population asked for an increase in food supply. Growing pressure on the markets resulted in chaos and tensions between buyers and suppliers (Van de Wiel & Hospers, 2015, p. 16). During the industrial revolution, a shift started to appear in the importance of consumption. As buying and selling became the central element of modern life, and even food supply was under pressure, the traditional place of buying and exchanging were “transferred from dirty and wind swept streets and ‘marketplaces’ into an enclosed and ‘modern’ building that boasted a number of amenities” (As cited in Jones, Hillier, Comfort, 2007, p. 201). Similarly to this change, Schmiechen and Carls note that there was a widespread shift from public ownership to private ownership. This symbolizes a first transition of conventional public spaces being taken over by the public sector, something that has been happening on a big scale from the end of the 20th century as will be seen later on in this chapter.

Schmiechen and Carls (as cited in Jones, Hillier, Comfort, 2007, p. 202) note the St. John’s Market in Liverpool as the first market hall of an era they describe as ‘The Grand Age of the Market Hall’, describing the period between 1830 and 1890. St. John’s Market in Liverpool is the first of new and much larger generation of the market hall, eventually setting the tone for further controlled retail spaces such as the supermarket, department store and shopping mall. One important reason for this eventual move, that marked the decreasing popularity of the covered market, was that the public character of the market caused ambiguity over the ownership and therefore control and maintenance over the covered market. Nobody took full responsibility over the public space, decreasing the cleanliness and organization of the covered public markets in a time that privately owned, controlled and maintained supermarkets met the modern demands for food handling and eventually leading to a wave of disappearing or decreasingly popular covered markets.

It was the explosion of urban dwellers and the growing awareness around healthy and even food supply that made covered markets central place in many European cities, remaining so over the course of time in for instance Budapest, London and most famously Barcelona. This can however not be said of The Netherlands, that has until recently been missing a similar culture around markets in covered buildings. According to Van de Wiel & Hospers (2015, p 16), one the reasons for this is most notably the very limited growth of urban population during the industrial revolution, a relative increase of 35% between 1800 and 1910 against an increase of 360% in the UK during the same time
span. Another possible reason according to Van de Wiel & Hospers is lack of change in urban planning in the Dutch inner cities, giving no opportunities to build new buildings such as market halls within the city limits and leading to the fact that traders housed themselves in separate shops instead.

Due to the fact that there is no history of covered market halls in The Netherlands, it is noteworthy that the concept has been implemented many times over the last few years, and has received much attention. However, it is not in The Netherlands only that new covered market halls have popped up or old ones have been revived, this has been happening in many western countries. Later on in this chapter this revival of the covered market, and transition into new concepts, will be expanded on.

**Characteristics**

As has been explained before, the covered food hall stems originally from the public market that has been held for many centuries, both inside and outside. Recently this basic idea of trading in the first place, but at the same time creating places where social, political and cultural life happens, has evolved into different concepts of covered food halls. While looking at the characteristics of covered food halls it is good however to begin with the basic characteristics of a market.

Groenendaal (2016, p. 76-78) writes that good markets are mixes of people and products, but most of all a good places where people want to be. No matter if it’s a street market or a market in a building, at the heart of markets are people, people who power the markets. Morales identifies five elements in marketplaces: buyers, sellers, a place and most of all a “recurrent time or periodicity the last of which distinguishes marketplaces from itinerant vendors or from trade shows or fairs held semiannually, annually, or even biannually” (Morales, 2011, P. 4). He continues saying that markets perform different functions, among which sales, business formation, integrating people, enlivening places and promoting tourism. Kurland & Aleci (2015, p 507) add that it is important for markets to be considered ‘public’, and give three determinants that can define markets as such: public goals that define public purposes of markets, the location in – or creation of – a public space and locally owned tenants.

Johnson (2013, p. 319-329), in researching farmer markets in the United States, mentions the role markets have in creating and strengthening communities. Farmer markets are an originally American concept, but are comparable to the European outdoor weekly markets. The primary purpose of visitors of markets might be to purchase groceries, her research showed that visitors of (farmers) markets recognized the leisurely nature of the market experience. A diverse package of activities was offered in the markets, including shopping, eating, socializing and listening to music. Markets offer places for leisure, joint consumption and social interaction and the periodicity or recurrent timing that Morales spoke about make the markets everyday places for their visitors.

Groenendaal (2016, p. 76) also mentions the role markets can have in creating hubs for community life. He also goes into the fact that markets, as hubs of communities, have the ability to express local identity: “many cities have lost their sense of identity. Food will always be the core of markets, but everything else depends on local needs” (Groenendaal, 2016, p. 79). However, besides only strengthening local identities, Tiemann (2008, p. 467) argues that if markets attract a lot of tourists the identity and experience of the market can become staged and commercialized, losing its authentic character. The problem here is according to Pine and Gillmore (1999, in: Tiemann, 2008, p. 479) how long constructed experiences will stay fresh to the regular customer, instead of getting bored.
When looking at covered food halls, the basic characteristics of markets that have been described above still count. However, recently many new versions the traditional market have been created. Some covered food halls focus only on the retail aspect of the market, while others focus only on the catering and hospitality aspects. What most recent covered food halls have in common is the experience that is build up around its central factor: food. Covered food halls may be characterized as indoor markets, or indoor experiences surrounding food. Kurland & Aleci (2015, p. 514) mention this characterization does however match with the idea of a supermarket. The covered food hall or covered market is however intrinsically different from the supermarket on the characterization that has been given before. Even though food may be central in both concepts, supermarkets do not, or very limitedly, offer the opportunities for amongst others social and cultural interaction and expression of identities. Atkins et. al (2007) describe the impersonal, a-social character of the supermarket, creating undifferentiated spaces designed in a utilitarian manner. Kurland and Aleci (2015, p. 514) mention that public markets are construed as “not supermarkets”, where the public market domain offers shoppers to have social interaction with their suppliers instead of the anonymous experiences of typical supermarkets. Here lies the biggest difference between the (covered) food market and the supermarket, besides the fact that supermarkets are also identified with mass retail of industrial brand and self-serve, in contrast to the often authentic and local produces offered on markets with contact between employees and other customers.

Revival of the concept

It has been said earlier that the covered food market was the first version of bringing the traditional outdoor activity of food trading inside, and with this gave way to the evolution of relatively new concepts such as the department store and the supermarket. It can be seen as ironic that this development has lost so many characteristics of the original market as has been described above, but also has reinvented and revived the original concept of indoor food markets.

With modernity, food provision was optimized and technology took over roles that humans had played for a long time. Supermarkets largely took over the role of public markets and local vendors. With this, public space and public activities were privatized. During the last decennia however, consumerism has taken a move away from these practices. Postmodern consumption is seen as a way of expressing identity, and consumers are seen as complex and diverse and able to choose their own cultural identity based on their choice of consumption (Perez, Castano, Quintanilla, 2010, p. 220). The consumer is looking to buy an identity and to buy an experience, and is looking for authenticity. Bishop & Williams (2012, p. 70) mention that “with a reduced need for constant securing of the basics, [...] the only thing that remains is consumption of the thrill, the experience, the new”. Pine & Gilmore (1999) write that the “new experience economy” offers opportunities and a consumer culture that taps into our desires needs for an increasing amount of entertainment, leisure and social contact.

One of the consumer areas that has been influence most by this postmodern idea of identity through consumption is food (Bishop & Williams, 2012, p. 76). You are what you eat seems to be more true than ever, and in food the modern consumer is looking for something that reflects what they want to be. This starts already with the experience of buying the food. The covered food hall has been a concept that has met this societal changes over the last couple of years. New halls have popped up (i.e. Torvehallerne in Copenhagen, Denmark) while existing halls have been renovated (i.e. Mercado San Miguel in Madrid, Spain), often leaving the concept of only a market and instead creating a diverse, multiple-activity hall full of experience. The new versions of covered food
halls are increasingly offering a wide array of hospitality services, ranging from being able to try some small dishes at the vendors’ stall to complete halls focused only on providing meals, for instance by displaying food trucks or food stalls offering food that plays into the current needs for exclusivity and authenticity. These could be exotic foods or foods that play into trends such as slow food and increasing amounts of vegan food. Gonzalez and Wayley (2012) write that covered food halls are “[...] new playground[s] for those members of the middle classes who seek authenticity and alternative consumption possibilities”. Kurland and Aleci mention that the reappearance of the market has led to urban policy experiments “to mobilize city space as an arena both for market-oriented economic growth and for elite consumption practices” (Brenner and Theodore 2002, p. 368 in Kurland and Aleci, 2015, p. 506). By mentioning this, they refer to the link of the newly found interest in food and experience has with the experience and revival of the city.

Urban life has become a consumer item just like food, and covered food halls seem to be places where these two consumer items meet each other. Cities are transforming from centers of production to centers of consumption (Haas & Olsson, 2014, p. 59). Tiemann (2008, p. 474-483) argues that markets have the ability to bring people out of their cars, and ways this introduce and function as places of public life and space, and increase awareness for the importance of this. With the increasing popularity of supermarkets and shopping malls, public space has been privatized. The revival of the public market and covered food hall however opens up a new demand for public space. Morales (2011, p. 4-5) mentions that cities have been revitalizing their public markets, but not just for the sake of the market only. The recent interest in food and urban public space together can make the market the start of revitalizing a neighborhood or enhancing the feel of a place. The target group of the halls have however changed though, as the modern food halls speak mostly to a middle class consumer group, differing from the wider audience the public market used to attract. Parham (2008, p. 45) continues to argue that also place marketing is benefitting from what she calls ‘food quarters’. By the 1990s urban quarters were used in place marketing to brand a place and increase popularity, while the recent food revival is contributing to this and has the ability to regenerate an area based on an identity surrounding food. This could result in gentrification, as a food centered generation of an area may not only strengthen the identity of the place, it may also alter the identity. The relation between food as spatiality in the form of the covered food hall and its surrounding urban public space will be discussed later in more detail, after a characterization of the public realm, which the public space is part of.

3.1.2. Characterizing the public realm

To be able to say something about the public realm of covered food halls, it is important to first look into what the public realms actually is and what functions it fulfills.

What is the public realm?
The public realm is a collection of the public space of towns and cities, but contains more than only the public space as it is seen traditionally by scholars. Garvin (2016, p. 2) mentions that according to him, the public realm included everything that is accessible but not in private ownership. Most important in his understanding of the public realm are street, parks and squares.

In looking at the plinths of buildings – the ground floor of the building including the façade towards the public space – Karssenberg & Laven (2016, p. 15) mention that the public realm has a broader meaning than just public space, and say that also the facades of buildings are part of the
public realm. Image 3 shows a graphic overview of what they characterize as the public realm. In this image, it becomes clear that the public space is only the street or square area, while the public realm contains everything between the buildings and this might even extend to some (semi) public functions within the building. Karssenberg & Laven continue to mention that the functions of buildings can be seen as an extension of the outside public realm, which is why the plinth of the building, and the function behind the plinth is an important part of public life on the ground floor. This is reflected in image 3 with the term ‘city at eye level’, as the public realm and the function of the building is seen first on the level of the plinths of the building, the level of the eyes. This fits well to the description of Carmona et. al. on the public realm.

**Image 3: The public realm according to Karssenberg & Laven (2016, p. 15)**

Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 109-111) question if privately owned spaces that are accessible and usable for and by the public aren’t also part of the public realm, which was argued by Garvin. They distinguish three layers of public spaces that are part of the public realm, being it:

1. External public spaces; consisting mostly of the squares, streets, parks, parking lots et cetera that Garvin was referring to.
2. Internal ‘public’ space; consisting of accessible indoor spaces such as museums and libraries, but also train- and bus stations.
3. External and internal quasi-‘public’-space; consisting of spaces that may be legally private, but open to the public such as restaurants, cinemas and shopping malls. They are often privatized versions of public space.

Taken this into consideration, one could consider the covered food hall as a layer of the public realm, as part of it the external and internal quasi-‘public’-space described by Carmona et. al. This makes that the covered food hall itself is a public realm, including all the stalls and possible public or commercial functions in the plinths. Besides the inside area, the space around it in the form of street and squares is also part of the public realm that could be described as external public spaces.

**Functions**

Based on the previous, it can be said that the public realm can be characterized as the spaces and places that are accessible to the public, even the spaces and places that are inside buildings or privately owned. Garvin (2016, p. 2) continues to six characterizations of the public realm. He says that the public realm is “open to anybody, offers something for everybody, attracts and retains market demand, provides a framework for successful urbanization, sustains a habitable environment and nurtures and supports a civil society.” He continues to say (p. 14) that the public realm is essential in defining and influencing a city’s economy and identity. This connects to what Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 9) write about the different dimensions of the public realm. They mention the public
realm has physical and social dimensions, where “The physical public realms is understood here to mean the spaces and settings – publicly or privately owned – that support or facilitate public life and social interaction. The activities and events occurring in those spaces and settings can be termed the sociocultural public realm.” The public realm in this vein therefore offers a site for public life, for social interaction and communication.

Jan Gehl has elaborated on the activities that take place in the public realm, which he calls the area of life between buildings: “Life between buildings comprises the entire spectrum of activities, which combine to make communal spaces in cities and residential areas meaningful and attractive” (Gehl, 2011, p. 14). He makes a distinction between the different activities, by giving three levels of outdoor activities that take place in the public realm (Gehl, 2011, p. 9-12):

1. Necessary activities; these are compulsory and are independent of the exterior environment.
2. Optional activities; these are done if there is time, desire and place to do so. There is an important relation to exterior environment, and the implementation of the activities is dependent on this.
3. Social activities; these activities depend on others and occur spontaneously when people meet in a place. They will only meet if the exterior environment is inviting enough for them to deliberately stay or go to place.

Garvin (2016) further emphasizes the importance of the public realm as a social place, and says that the perhaps the most important characteristic of a good public realm is that it is a place where people can enjoy themselves. People should be able to identify themselves to make them want to spend time in the public realm. He says that “for that to happen it must be overwhelmingly identifiable, accessible, easy to use, safe, and comfortable” (p. 24). One way the public realm is able to attract the widest variety of people is if the public realm is maintained and organized well. If people feel the public realm and all of its activities are not organized or the place is not safe or comfortable anymore, it won’t be used anymore.

All in all, it seems that the public realm and the use of it is not only dependent on the physical structure, but also on the opportunities to use and socialize in a place and the maintenance or social organization behind the previous two.

‘Publicness’ of the public realm

The previous has shown that the public realm consists of different layers of public places and fulfills multiple functions. It is important to also put attention to the users of the public realm and the access they have (had) to the public realm, as recent years have shown different stages of privatization of the public realm, decreasing the public access to those spaces. Most scholarly attention on this subject have narrowed down on public spaces only. The public space within the public realm is a space of sociality and participation, but it is also a contested territory between the private and the public, however people are still dependent on it for functional, social and leisure activities (Mehta, 2014, p. 54-55).

Carr et. al. (1992) have done extensive research to the meaning of public places, and write that public places should be “responsive, democratic and meaningful” (p. 19). With this they mean that spaces serve the needs of the users, for instance in seeking comfort and engagement (responsiveness), protect the rights of their users and accessible to everybody (democratic) and allows people to make connections to a place (meaningful). Thomas (1991, p. 55) highlights mostly the social roles public space. Mehta (2014, p. 57) continues emphasizing the importance of the social aspects, but links this back to the democratic aspect Carr et. al. wrote about. Mehta writes that the
public space is space of participation, and need to be inclusive. However, he writes that in history public space has never been fully inclusive to everybody. He then continues to write that there is a growing belief that urban societies no longer need public space for basic needs as it has been, but that it is however need for the social and psychological health of modern society. However, there has been a long period of declining significance of the public realm, as a result from the reduced availability of public space and the public realm (Carmona et. al., 2010, p. 110). Many activities that traditionally took place in the public realm have moved to the private realm, and many social public places, such as the shopping street, have been privatized. This has resulted in a loss of meaningful places as places have become commercial and staged. Oldenburg (1999, p. 205) says that nonplaces have replaced places. While in real places a unique human being is central, in nonplaces individuality disappears and one becomes only the customer or client.

Banerjee (2001) also writes about the increasing ‘privatization of public spaces’. None of these places are still truly public if they are in private hands, but they give off a “presumption of “publicness” in these pseudo public spaces” (p. 12). He continues to say that places like shopping malls or arcades and galleries give an illusion of public space, but with the uncertainties and risks of everyday life edited out. Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 124) add that the public realm needs to balance collective and individual interests, and needs to find in this a balance between control and freedom. In privately owned public places, this need for control seems to be easier to apply. However, it might take away some of the main principles behind public space that have been mentioned before, as inclusiveness or democratic space cannot be taken for granted in the ultimately private realm.

Banerjee (2001, p. 14-15) also refers to the consumers culture and new “experience economy” that has been mentioned before, and how this affects public space. He writes that places become reinvented to offer a special experience in the form of a theme to the visitor. These places usually use design metaphors to try to create a meaningful place, but they actually create a public life of consumerism and flânerie where it is no longer important whether this takes places in the public or private space. He continues to say that our modern settings for a desired public life do not necessarily have to take place in the 100% publicly owned realm. One of the concepts he mentions in this is the third place.

**Third places**

Third places can be linked to one of the three layers of the public realm that were mentioned by Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 111) before in this chapter, being it the external and internal quasi-‘public’-space, which covers places like restaurants. These places are also known as third places, a concept developed by Ray Oldenburg and Dennis Brissett in 1982. While ultimately privately owned, these places do seem to offer a place where modern consumer experiences find their places in the extent of fully public places, but therefore still part of the public realm. Oldenburg & Brissett were saying that there is a third place outside the home and work as the first and second place, and it is the third place where people go to meet other people and be social (1982, p. 269). They continue that these place are hard to plan rationally, and they change over time as “Their key ingredients seem to remain elusive and emergent and these no doubt change with the shifting patterns of life style” (p. 269).

Some important characteristics of the third place are the fact they seem to be part of daily life of the customers, part of their own everyday life. They are authentic, and they have “an aura of the unexpected” (Oldenburg & Brissett, 1982, p. 274), which is why these place are unique and not easy to fake or reconstruct. Oldenburg & Brissett mention (1982, p. 282) that third places offer
enabling experiences, where visitors step into a temporary experience within their ordinary worlds, where time often seems to slip by.

Oldenburg has later further developed the concept of the third place (1999, p. 26-40). He goes on to say that the best way to indicate a third place if it is lively and colorful; engaging. The third place is usually a place that is not very special in its physical design or supply of services, facilities or hospitality. Rather, it is the fellow visitor that makes the space come alive and attract other people. The third place furthermore has a sense of ‘at-homeness’ to it, a way of making people identify and feel at home in the place, while at the same time being open to anybody. He mentions that third places have the ability to offer neutral ground in which people gather and no one is required to play host, while at the same time everybody can feel comfortable and at home (1999, p. 22). Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 113) write that these core characteristics and quality of third places are not only the qualities of third places, being the third layer in their description of the public realm, but could be regarded as the core characteristics and qualities of the public realm in general.

**Transition zone**

Oldenburg has only given limited attention to the physical aspects of the third place, and looked mostly at the inside of the third place. Mehta and Bosson (2010) have characterized the connection between third places and their surrounding public places, and therefore looked into more layers of the public realm. They have identified four physical characteristics that support human use and interaction in the transition zone between the third place and the eternal public space. These characteristics are “(a) personalization of the street front by the business, (b) permeability of the business to the street, (c) seating provided by the business, and (d) shelter provided by the business on the street space” (p. 780). Some of these are purely physical while others might be a consequence of human action and management. What they have in common is that it is about the edge of the public realm, and the big effect that this may have on the public realm as a whole.

This transition zones has been named the hybrid zone by Karssenberg & Laven (2016, p. 15), as seen in image 1. Van der Ham & Van Ulden (2016, p. 142) talk about this more in-depth, and say that it is “one of the most visible and well-known spaces in the city, it is also one of the most forgotten and undervalued spaces”. They continue to say that the hybrid zone plays an important part in the social realm of the public realm. The origins of the hybrid zone lay in the Dutch stoep, literally translated to sidewalk, were during the 15th century this transition zone evolved between the private space of the home and the public space of the street, allocation space for social contact and observation of public life (Van der Ham & Van Ulden, 2016, p. 142).

Dovey & Symons (2014) refer to the transition zone or hybrid zone as the interfaces, and refer to several authors including Jane Jacobs for the importance of ‘the edges of streets and public spaces’; for if “edges of streets and public spaces work, they reinforce city life; similarly, when they fail to work, they kill it” (p. 34). They write that transparency in the interfaces is crucial, because it creates a visual extension of the space of the street into the private space and vice versa (p. 38), connecting to what has been mentioned before by Van der Ham & Van Ulden.

**3.1.3. Characterizing the public realm of the covered food hall**

In the previous paragraphs descriptions have been given about what the covered food hall can be described as, and how this concept came to be. Consequently, a characterization has been made about the public realm. In this last part, a description will be given of how exactly the public realm of the covered food hall could be described as. This is important as the groundwork for the next part, in
which these very characteristics will be connected as to how they can contribute to conviviality and a sense of place. In this research, the covered food hall can be seen as a layer of the public realm, as part of it. This makes that the covered food hall itself is a public realm, including all the stalls and possible public or commercial functions in the plinths. Besides the inside area, the space around it in the form of street and squares is also part of the public realm. These different layers all have their own transition zones, or hybrid zones, as has been discussed before. In this paragraph, the most important drivers of the public realm of the covered food hall will be discussed, before going into how these are able to contribute to a sense of place and conviviality.

The recent reinvention of the covered market into an array of different sorts of covered food halls has brought with it different ways of using the public realm. Though the traditional covered market was as described fully public, recent reinterpretations have often been partly or fully privatized. One could discuss whether these spaces are therefore part of the public realm. However, Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 109-111) have distinguished different layers of the public realm and has been mentioned before, they mention external and internal quasi-‘public’-space as one places that have become increasingly important in offering amenities that the public looks for in the public realm. It has been argued in this chapter that public spaces have been getting increasingly privatized, taking away some of the basic characteristics and values of purely public space. However, Carr et. al. (1992, p. 3) mention that the public-private balance is constantly shifting “under the influence of cultural exchange, technology, changing political and economic systems, and the ethos of the time.” It can therefore be argued that our current needs ask for more privatized spaces. When it comes to covered food halls for instance, this can increase the hygiene, climate control and orderliness that made the purely private markets decrease in their popularity in the first place as they were ‘replaced’ by supermarkets. However, one could argue that these covered food halls are then firstly commercial business models offering food and gastronomy services, instead of offering a purely public place that is in private hands. It is therefore important what the aim of the owner of a private covered food hall is in the first place: a public space surrounding food or a food place open for public to keep the commercial activities running.

The modern version of the covered food hall offers a controlled space in which food handling is controlled and assured of meeting modern hygiene demands or orderliness. However, the new versions of the covered food halls also have the ability to offer some of the characteristics of the public realm that have been mentioned before in this chapter. The resemblance to a third place is easy to see, as they offer meeting places for sociality, cultural and civic life and have the ability to reinvent places. Tiemann (2008, p. 474) compares markets to third places, as they have the ability to “develop a personality that mirrors the community.” Like third places, covered food halls can be part of the daily life of the customer, and can be the neutral ground for the public to gather. The public realm of the covered food hall combines the different activities that have been mentioned by Gehl (2011, p. 9-12). There is room for the necessary activity of daily food shopping, but also for the optional and social activities of staying longer in or around the covered food hall to meet people or make use of facilities such as restaurants or hospitality services that seem to take in an increasingly important role in the modern food hall.

The modern day covered food hall offers the satisfaction of needs we seek in the modern experience economy. Both food and place offer possibilities to create an experience, and these seem to be satisfied in the public realm of the covered food hall. The risk however is that the experience of the covered food hall becomes staged, as Tiemann (2008, p. 478-479) mentions. A risk of constructed experiences is that they become too predictable and repetitive. The public realm of the covered food
hall has the opportunity to create inherently meaningful places to create conviviality and stimulate and promote cultural identities, instead of staged tourist attractions. This means that the users of the food halls could be tourists, but are in first place users that can come back to the food hall as they feel it is a meaningful space for them. The next paragraphs will go deeper into the aspects that make a public place like a covered food hall meaningful or attractive to visitors.

3.2 Sense of place & conviviality in the public realm of the covered food halls

After laying out the basic characteristics of covered food halls and the public realm, this paragraph will go into two other concepts. These will be conviviality and a sense of place. These two concepts relate to two of the three conditions Carr et. al. (1992) have referred to, being it responsive and meaningful. Sense of place touches upon how a certain space can become something more than just a space, but can actually be a place of meaning. Conviviality goes into one aspect of responsiveness, being it engaging spaces. These two concepts will be explained first, after which these will be connected with the previously described public realm to see which drivers of the public realm are most important, according to theory, for creating a sense of place and conviviality.

3.2.1. What is sense of place?

To understand what sense of place exactly is, many related concepts should be taken into consideration. Williams (2014, p. 74-75) mentions concepts such as place identity, place dependence, place attachment, rootedness and genius loci as important concepts when it comes to identifying places and their meaning for their users. Place identity and place attachment will be discussed later in this chapter as they play an important role in creating a sense of place.

Out of the other mentioned concepts, it seems to be the genius loci that authors relate to sense of place the most. Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 96) write that the genius loci suggests that people experience a place beyond the physical or sensory characteristics, and are connected to a spirit of place. It relates to the representation of a place as habitus, where a social context related to community and ancestral ties and connections plays an important part (Campelo, Aitken, Thyne & Gnoth, 2014, p. 155). Williams (2014, p. 76) continues to write that although spaces are in the first place something material, they are “interpreted, narrated, understood, felt and imagined – their meanings pliable in the hands of different people or cultures, malleable over time, and inevitably contested.”

It is the human and social engagement within places that connects materiality to meaning in and open process that brings together cultural, natural and social dimensions of a place. The experience of, and engagement to, a place are influenced by the physical, social, historical and cultural aspect to all together contribute to a shared sense of place (Campelo et. al., 2014, p. 155). This makes that the sense of place will always be peculiar and unique to each place (Campelo et. al., 2014, p. 161). By imbuing places with meaning, people and societies change ‘spaces’ into ‘places’, creating a sense of belonging or attachment to the meaning a physical space can have (Carmona et. al., 2010, p. 97; Stedman, 2003, p. 672). This can be both a personal sense of place, or a collective sense of place for a group or society.

Although the physicality is the setting of the place, the importance of the physical environment is often overstated as activities and meanings may mean more to the creation of a sense of place (Carmona et. al., 2010, p. 98). The physical space is ultimately a ‘blank space’ without its own characteristics. However, physical features do influence the symbolic meanings of a
landscape or urban environment and use of the space, relating back to evaluations such as attachment (Stedman, 2003, p. 674). As soon as human value is connected to a place, it becomes differentiated from other spaces (Stedman, 2003, p. 672). Therefore, sense of place could be recognized as a combination of intangibles in a tangible environment (Campelo et. al., 2014, p. 156). Tangibility is one of the three dimensions, besides commonality and emotionality that constitute the meaning of a place (Williams, 2014, p. 76).

Sense of place could therefore be described as a combination of three aspects: physical environment, human behavior and psychological processes (Stedman, 2003, p. 671). Canter (1977, p. 158-160) gives a three component model consisting of constituents of places. The place becomes a result of the relationships between actions, conceptions and physical attributes. He continues that this combination does not only mean something for the creation of a sense of place, but “[...] places represent in the most concrete fashion the great mixture of associations, actions and emotions which contribute to our conceptions of ourselves” (Canter, 1977, p. 178). Carmona et al. (2010, p. 106) also write that the people are not passive, and the change and influence people have on their environment also works the other way around, as places may change and influence them. This becomes more likely as the sense of place becomes stronger.

Campelo et. al. (2014) have created a model of sense of place in which they place sense of place as a combination of the physical environment and the social environment. The model has been made to emphasize the importance of a sense of place in creating an identity and image of a place, so that it can also be used in marketing and branding a place to attract outsiders who are unfamiliar with the place. Image 5.2 shows the model, of which they mention that “it is important to make clear that it is not the presence of the four constructs that shape the sense of place, but the significance and meanings of each construct that determines the sense of place” (Campelo et. al., 2014, p. 161). They further mention that sense of place is a permanent cocreation between the social constructions and reproductions in a physical setting. The meaning of the constructs depend on how they are socially created and shared by people using a particular place. This experience of place differs between local residents and visitors, they mention, as the meaning of a place is eventually something very subjective and individual. However, sense of place is often at the heart of destination branding, and it is therefore important to get a clear view of the shared identity of the place. “Fundamental for a destination branding strategy is to recognize the cultural characteristics of the place, understand the people who live in that place, and to appreciate how a shared sense of place is constituted and experienced. Sense of place is based on and creates the uniqueness of place experience” (Campelo et. al., 2014, p. 155). This is very important in separating a unique, historically grown sense of place from a staged experience in which a sense of place is tried to be created in a new environment.

![Image 4: The sense of place model by Campelo et. al. (2014, p. 161)](image-url)
Place identity & place attachment

Two concepts strongly related to sense of place, or even part of the creation of sense of place, are place identity and place attachment. As sense of place is all about the meaning of a physical place in social terms, the identity of a place is crucial. As was argued before, sense of place is about the meaning people and groups imbue their physical environment with. Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 97) write that people need to express a sense of belonging as part of creating their identity, and the physical environment is a place where they are able to do so. This might be to create an individual identity, by also to be part of a collective identity and in doing so creating a sense of distinctiveness, a feeling of ‘being inside’ the place. They continue to write (p. 98) that the individuality or distinction from other places defines the identity of the place, while, in line with sense of place, it is the combination of physical setting, meanings and activities that constitute three basic elements of the identity of places.

Proshansky et. al (1983, p. 59) create a definition of place identity in which the place it as a sub-structure of the full self-identity of a person, “consisting of, broadly conceived, cognitions about the physical world in which the individual lives. These cognitions represent memories, ideal feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and conceptions of behavior and experience which relate to the variety and complexity of physical settings that define the day-to-day existence of every human being.” They continue to write that the ‘environmental past’ of a person is very important, as a person has created a set of values, attitudes, feelings and beliefs about their environment based on a past consisting of places and their properties that have served the persons social and cultural needs. Besides only places, other persons are also important in the creation of this environmental past.

What becomes clear from this definition is that the identity of place is very subjective as places are perceived and valued individually based on someone’s own set of values and beliefs about their physical environment. However, it is not only the physical reality but also the social meaning and believe attached to it that create someone’s place identity (Proshansky et. al, 1983, p. 59). In this way, the place identity therefore becomes self-evolving in the way that the meaning that is already in a place can influence someone’s relation to it.

Stedman (2003, p. 682) writes that the meaning of a place is however subject of change. This could be both because of changing physical realities, but also because of evolving social, cultural and personal attitudes and beliefs of what the meaning of the place is or should be. However, someone will always identify more easily with an unfamiliar place if there is a familiarity to it, something that a person recognizes in a new or changed environment and feels related to (Proshansky et. al, 1983, p. 66). The same authors continue (p. 77) that the quality of the surrounding physical area also influence the quality of social context, which are in turn both influencing the identity of a place. Good quality may improve the positive feelings and decrease conflict and frustration towards a place and one another. However, they also write that the reverse might be true: “Very poor physical settings may lead to many positive cognitions because the social context is a very rewarding and positive one for the person” (Proshansky et. al, 1983, p. 77). Therefore, the physical context only seems to be complementing the physical environment when it comes to identification with the place.

Important in the creation of sense of place and place identity is attachment, both physically and socially. This relates back to familiarity that was mentioned before, as place identities create a sense of belonging (Cuba & Hummon, 1993, p. 113). Feeling “at-home” in a place is something very important for creating attachment and identifying oneself with a place (Cuba & Hummon, 1993, p. 126). This belonging could come from personal attachment to geographical places, which results in
feeling a sense of belonging and purpose and therefore meaning (Proshansky et. al, 1983, p. 60). Cuba & Hummon (1993, p. 115) however mention also the sense of belonging that results from local social involvements, not only with friends and family but also because of organizational memberships or local shopping, which shows that there are (sentimental) ties to a specific place.

Place attachment is described by Stedman (2003, p. 672) as the “positive emotional bond that develops between people and their environment”, where specifiable conditions of place and characteristics of people are important. We could be attached a place because of its specific physical features, but as can be summarized after the previous parts on place identity and sense of place as the main concept that includes place attachment and place identity, it seems to be a combination of multiple factors. A specific attachment to a place makes however the identification with a place bigger, logically resulting in a high sense of place.

Before going into the role the public realm of food halls can play in creating a sense of place, including place identity and place attachment, another concept will be discussed as well. This is conviviality of a place.

3.2.2. What makes a place convivial?

What became clear from the description of sense of place is that places with a high sense of place are often meaningful for their users. Convivial public places can be described as meaningful as well as responsive, or entertaining. Shaftoe wrote a book dedicated to convivial public places, in which he first gives the dictionary definition of conviviality: “festive, sociable, jovial and fond of merry-making”, usually applied to people but also applicable for situations (2008, p. 5). When used in an urban place context, one could say that spaces, cities and towns that don’t have social and festive places, convivial places, are only collections of buildings without possibilities for casual and positive interactions. Convivial spaces are more than just social or eventful spaces, they are at the heart of democratic life. Shaftoe continues to say that “without good urban public spaces, we are likely to drift into an increasingly privatized and polarized society, with all its concomitant problems” (2008, p. 5).

The description given above by Shaftoe touches a lot upon meaningful and responsive public spaces as was given by Carr et. al (1992). However, it also connects to the description of the public realm discussed before. When Shaftoe (2008, p. 6) continues to say that although there is no single blueprint for convivial spaces, there are some common elements being it physical, geographical, managerial, sensual and psychological. These elements seem to all connect to previously described main elements of the public realm but also sense of place and place attachment. Convivial spaces therefore seem to be those parts of the public realm that offer a variety of functions and attractive physical spaces that attracts people and makes these users attached to the place, and affected by it on a psychological level.

The public places that seem to meet all the demands to make them a convivial spaces might mostly be those places that have grown over time to become attractive and successful. According to Shaftoe (2008, p. 111), the “range of opportunities they provide for the experience of joy or delight” differentiates successful public spaces from not so successful public spaces, which is at the heart of the notion of conviviality. A concept that is related to this is that of the power of 10, created by Project for Public Spaces (PPS). The idea here is that places thrive most if they offer a range of reasons, more than 10 hence the name, why one would be there and what one could do there. To increase the sense of place and place identity, the ideal situation is that some of the activities are
unique to the particular place, reflecting the history and culture of the place and community (PPS, 2009).

Parham has done research in which she links conviviality to food quarters in London, in which food quarters are small neighborhoods or urban blocks that offer several activities all surrounding food as a main theme. She argues that conviviality encompasses drinking, feasting and good company, and “eating and drinking together is at the heart of the notion of conviviality, and this has spatial design implications, which in turn affect the nature of social life and the formation of social groups” (Parham, 2008, p. 16). She argues that the physical design of the city can influence the richness of experiences in food and eating, and by doing so expressing a notion of conviviality. Her main argument is that food related activities and physical spaces are the perfect places to create a convivial urban environment. In this she also refers to third places, as that part of the public realm that is offering convivial spaces surrounding eating and drinking. The central phenomenon in this research is the covered food hall, which is per definition a place within the public realm that revolves around food and is therefore likely to have a high sense of conviviality. In the next paragraph it will be discussed as to how the public realm of covered food halls can contribute to conviviality, but also contribute to a sense of place.

3.2.3 Contribution of public realm of covered food hall to sense of place and conviviality

All the different concepts that are central in this research have been described now, which leads to this last paragraph of the theoretic framework in which the concepts will be combined. This may lead to a purely theoretic answer to the question how the public realm of a covered food hall can contribute to a sense of place and conviviality. Carmona (2010, p. 96-99) says about this that it is relatively easy to think of a successful place and to experience it as such, but much more difficult to say why exactly this place is successful. This paragraph aims to give a theoretic base to this answer.

Characteristics of sense of place in the covered food hall

It became clear that when a place has a high sense of place, this often has to do with the fact that the people like to use the space and the activities it has to offer in the specific place, making them identify with and attached to the place. One basic condition that adds to the sense of place is feeling safe in a place. Mehta (2014, p. 60) writes that something that could help boost the feeling of safety is the presence of stores, bars, restaurants and other ‘third places’. Jane Jacobs has called this the ‘eyes on the street’. Morales (2011, p. 3) connect this to markets, and says that markets contribute to safety as they add a dimension in how a place is used, and in doing so increasing interaction between people. Besides adding to the feeling of safety, the presence of shops can boost the sense of place in the way that it offers activities for the users of the public realm. Mehta (2014, p. 59) says that when places offer activities that are symbolically and culturally meaningful they create meaningful places. These places satisfy basic needs but they also make people go there in their free time, relating back to Gehl’s distinction of different reasons to use the public realm. When it comes to covered food halls, these places offer a range of different third places under one roof, making the space feel alive and safe. At the same time, food has a very strong symbolic and cultural meaning that can represent an identity people relate to. Besides that, shopping groceries or enjoying a meal in the covered food hall makes this environment one that encourages repeated visits, which makes the place familiar and through this offers the opportunity to create a sense of place. Kurland & Aleci (2015, p. 519) also add that the revived interest in markets and experience on markets plays an important part in the creation of what they call a space of “enchantment”, where authenticity and
social interaction are central, instead of quick buying such as is happening in supermarkets. The positive response visitors of markets have renews both the person and the place. Kurland & Aleci write that “food is a source of culture rather than necessity and the market itself expressed as a cultural artifact in need of preservation” (2015, p 519). The covered food hall then can have this function as a collective place where there is a new attention towards people’s own attitude of food and public spaces.

This arguing does however not necessarily happen to all covered food halls. Mehta (2014, p. 59-69) write that the quality of the public space is also important. Several factors are important, and it is not only about the inside of the covered food hall. The space has to be accessible and easy to use, have a comfortable scale and some sense of enclosure. This again adds to the feeling of being safe, but also to feeling comfortable and adds to a feeling of ‘insideness’, that makes the place stand out from other places. Mehta & Bosson (2010, p. 782) add that this shelter also shield users from weather circumstances, making a place like a covered food hall more comfortable and attractive to use at all time places. Mehta & Bosson (2010, p. 782) add that this shelter also shield users from weather circumstances, making a place like a covered food hall more comfortable and attractive to use at all time places. They add that having the combination of food and social activity within a public space makes people want to stay longer and therefore make them more attracted to the space. Crucial in this is offering enough and attractive sitting spaces, preferably with movable chairs for comfort and flexibility. Garvin (2016, p. 44) adds to this that this makes these characteristics make a place identifiable and makes people feel like belonging there, and feel like coming back, adding to the place-attachment.

Hybrid zone of the covered food hall
One important part of the public realm in general, but very much also of the covered food hall, is the hybrid zone or transition zone. Dovey & Symons (2014, p. 37-38) write about the importance of the hybrid zone to the creation of a convivial public realm with a high sense of place, as good hybrid zones offer soft, social and permeable transitions between the public and the private. Transparency is crucial in this, they argue, as it “mediates the public gaze, enabling commercial and social exchange at one extreme and privacy at the other. Transparency involves a visual extension of the space of the street into private space” (Dovey & Symons, 2014, p. 38). In this way, the hybrid zone of the public realm becomes a place to walk, shop, greet, meet, eat and drink, instead of only driving in many car oriented streets. One could argue that this zone is of most importance for the covered food hall, as these have in a way two versions of the hybrid zone. The covered food hall has one communal hybrid zone surrounding the building, towards the adjacent space. But, all the food stalls, shops and restaurants within and around the covered food hall have their own little hybrid zone as well. Having ‘active edges’ is therefore very important for the covered food hall. “If the edge fails, then the space never becomes lively... the spaces becomes a place to walk through, not a place to stop” (Carmona et. al., 2001, p. 173)

These hybrid zones can help to add conviviality and a sense of place to the public realm of the covered food hall. Carmona et. al. (2001, p. 173) write that the interface, as they call it, needs to have the indoor and private activities in a close and visible relation and proximity with the outdoor and public ones. Carr et. al. (1992, p. 138) argue that therefore access is the first step to create this active hybrid zone, where they differentiate between visual access, physical access and symbolic access. This will show what a place has to offer and who should be attracted to it.

The most important way of creating a sense of place in the hybrid zone is through personalization of it. Personalization is “the act of modifying the physical environment and an expression of claiming territory […]” (Mehta & Bosson, 2010, p. 781). Personification is the marking
of a territory for easier identification, but also adds a symbolic aesthetic and increases psychological security. “Personalization of the street front also allows for change to occur in an otherwise familiar setting” (Mehta & Bosson, 2010, p. 781). Connected to personalization of the street front is the permeability of the street, actively revealing to the exterior what is happening interiorly. This influences shopping behavior, but also the pedestrian experience pleasure (Mehta & Bosson, 2010, p. 781).

Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 98) write that personalization is putting a distinctive stamp on one’s environment, in which small design details contribute to symbolism and identification of a place. Though this, somebody can make a physical environment created by somebody else more personal. Mehta (2014, p. 60) writes that this might be to decorate a window shop, create signs, plant trees and other plants, create different colors and textures and offer seating. Mehta & Bosson (2010, p. 794) write that it are typically the third places that personalize their hybrid zone the most.

According to Carmona et. al. (2010, p. 98) there are three strategies that can be used to personalize the hybrid zone, and through this to assist a sense of identity. These are the creation of an environment fitting with identity of the users of a place, the participation of future users in their environment and the creation of environments that users can modify and adapt. It can be argued that the hybrid zone can therefore be personalized according to the specific identity of the place or the shop, but can also be a playground in which users create their own identity within the wider place identity. Relating this to covered food halls, the hybrid zone could be designed by the food stall and shop owners relating to the products they sell or the common (food) identity of the place, however it could also leave room for modification by its users, for instance by offering a common sitting area with moveable chairs that can be arranged by all the visitors as they want it.

Beyond the direct public realm
The effects a covered food hall can have might also be reaching out further than the public realm of and within the hall itself. Parham (2008, p. 20-29) points out that food quarters provide the opportunity for people to identify themselves based on shared values when it comes to food and sociability. This would mean that food quarters, or in the same vein covered food halls, attract likeminded people that find their identity reflected in and around the covered food hall, as it becomes their habitus for walking, shopping eating and socializing. Self-identification is, as has been mentioned before, increasingly based on consumption. Food is part of the consumption lifestyle that is connected to a certain identity, and covered food halls might therefore speak to this identity or extend it. This could create a stronger place identity, but at the same time could attract only a certain group that is attracted by this, negating the attractiveness of the place for other kinds of groups. This could lead to the fact that a covered food market might in some cases be seen as a reinforcement of gentrification, or only speaking to a certain middle-class image.

As has been mentioned before, the sense of place or identity of a place might also be enriched or staged to attract outside visitors, or might even be used to create urban regeneration. Parham (2008, p. 16-17) mentions that food and drinks as part of a lifestyle are used more and more to gentrify run down areas. Therefore covered food halls might be used as a tool to create a certain lifestyle and look in the public realm that is not open to anybody. Gonzalez & Waley (2012) write that in the process of creating a feeling of authenticity, the food hall actually gentrifies through a process of “boutiquing”. Inherently, an (outdoor) market is available to all people, no matter what income or consuming behavior. However, the new formats of covered food halls often speak to a limited, high income groups looking for buying a lifestyle and being open to pay for this.
However, if not speaking only to this specific public, the opening of covered markets or covered food halls can be used to renovate or enrich public space and a gathering spot for a neighborhood. Friends can meet each other, but the dynamism of a the food hall can facilitate the creation of an image of community (Kurland & Aleci, 2015, p. 519; Urbact Markets, 2015, p. 18). Kurland continues to say that the contemporary markets can play an important role in placemaking, in which public spaces and their planning, design, management and usage can maximize the shared value of the space. Urbact Markets (2015, p. 18 & p. 77) once again emphasize the role attractive markets, both indoor and outdoor, can play in social interaction and providing space for social and cultural activities. Good markets provide flexible space for the organization of events outside of the normal activities. Kurland & Aleci (2015, p. 514) emphasize that events, space for dining and other facilities fosters communities and provide reasons to gather. It are these characteristics that can make the covered food hall a place of conviviality. They tap into everyday experiences but can give these an authentic feel, and the identity of a place and of the food that is provided in the place can add to a sense of identity and can make people want to come back. They create a sense of place. In the end, the fact if these place are in public or private ownership is less important than the fact that they are open to everyone who feels connected to these places.

Characterizing the most important drivers of the public realm

The previous paragraphs have emphasized the ways in which the public realm can contribute to the creation of conviviality and a sense of place. It has been shown that conviviality and a sense of place can lead to more benefits for the city and society in general. PPS (2009) talk about the benefits of public spaces for the creation of a civic space. Here, they refer that the characteristics of the public space as drivers of sustainability. PPS identifies five drivers behind the public space that each contribute to an aspect of sustainability in the public space. These drivers are economical, environmental and social as the conventional drivers of sustainability, but also cultural and political aspects as additions. When relating these drivers to this research and the previous paragraphs, one could argue that the characteristics of the public realm of the covered food hall are the drivers of a sense of place and conviviality. In this case, sustainability applies to the fact if the public realm of the covered food hall becomes a place with a sense of place and conviviality, and if the place is economically healthy and inclusive towards it’s visitors. Looking at the drivers that have been identified by PPS, the environmental driver seems not relevant for this research. The other drivers however each relate to the most important characteristics of the public realm that have been discussed in this chapter. Economically, it could be said that the covered food hall contributes to the consumption of the experience economy, but the characteristics of the public realm may differ per hall and may therefore differ in its economic success. The same goes for entrepreneurship within the halls. When it comes to the social aspects, the benefits of conviviality and sense of place are versatile, ranging from increased social interaction to social safety, identification and place bonding. The cultural driver connects most to the theoretic background of a sense of place relating to a strengthened local place identity and the use of the public realm of the covered food hall as a cultural hub. The political driver of the public realm of the covered food hall could be found in the management or governance of the hall.

3.3. Answering the main question: theoretic approach

Based on the theoretic framework that was discussed in the previous paragraphs, a strictly theoretical answer to the main question “How does the public realm of covered food halls contribute
to the creation of convivial public places and a sense of place, and how can this possibly be improved?” has appeared. This last paragraph will summarize the most important findings from the previous part, which constitutes a theoretic framework. In the next chapters, the empirical findings from the case studies in Rotterdam will be used to characterize the public realm of the covered food halls. These findings can then be compared to the theoretic framework to see to what extent these characterizations match, and to see how literature can learn from reality and vice versa as to how the public realm of covered food halls can be used optimally to create conviviality and create a sense of place.

Based on the previous parts, here is summary of what seems like the most important ways the public realm of a covered food hall can contribute to the creation of conviviality and a sense of place, in random order.

- **The importance of the hybrid zone**: Several authors have emphasized the importance of a good hybrid zone, transition zone or interface. The edges of both the covered food hall as a whole and the shops and food stalls inside the covered food hall offer opportunities to create a zone of convivial interaction & activities, and to increase a sense of place through personalization of the zone.

- **The need for a balance between use, physical environment & management**: It has been reasoned many times during the previous paragraphs that the public realm is most attractive, most convivial and offers the highest sense of place if there is a combination of a good physical environment where people want to stay and if there are enough activities for people to make them want to stay. A covered food hall has the possibility to create this. In order for these to happen, and for the space and activities to stay organized, a good management is important.

- **Opportunities for increased place identification**: It became clear that over the last decennia, consumption is becoming increasingly important in self-identification. Food consumption is part of this, and has intrinsically a high sense of identification for people. Food consumption in covered food halls can therefore play an important part in creating a place-identity that people get attached to, making the covered food halls everyday places for their users.

- **Covered food halls as open third places**: Covered food halls, or the stores and restaurants inside could be seen as third places, especially if privately owned. Third places have an important role in people’s social life, and covered food halls could therefore fulfill the role of a place where people socialize and interact, and which is open to anybody even though it might be privately owned.

- **Offering a wide variety of uses & activities**: People are likely to be drawn the most, and stay the longest, in places to offer a wide variety of uses and activities. Therefore, covered food halls will work most optimally if they offer several activities besides the everyday activity of markets or restaurant hospitality services. Here it is important to have flexibility to keep the experience for the guests new by being able to offer different and new things and experiences.

- **Offering a feeling of authenticity**: Related to the previous point, for consumers and visitors of the covered food hall it is important to have an authentic atmosphere. If the place becomes too repetitive it might feel like a staged experience, losing it’s real sense of place and becoming only a place of consumerism and tourism, instead of a real and meaningful place within the everyday experience.
4. Case Study I: De Markthal

The case study highlighting De Markthal is divided into three parts. In the first part, an introduction will be given on the background of the covered food hall. This introduction revolves around facts about the market, and a short description of the process of the development of the hall. Subsequently, a characterization of the public realm will follow in which the relation between the current public realm and the sense of place and conviviality will be highlighted. Here once again the covered food hall can be seen as a layer of the public realm, as part of it. This makes that the covered food hall itself is a public realm, with its own sense of place and conviviality. Besides the inside area, the space around it in the form of street and squares is also part of the public realm taken into consideration. Lastly, there will be a short reflection on the analysis with possible improvements for the public realm. The information in this chapter is largely the result of the interviews with the different stakeholders. These respondents will not be mentioned by name, but by their function. The respective respondents are 1. a process manager of the City of Rotterdam, 2. the market manager for the Markthal, employed by current owner (French real estate investor Klépierre), 3. an entrepreneur in the Markthal and member of the board of one of the two Business associations, and finally 4. a retail developer and specialist involved in the concept development of the Markthal.

4.1 Introduction and background information

The Markthal, literally ‘market hall’, was opened in 2014 and has since then received a great deal of (inter)national attention and has grown to be a symbol of Rotterdam. The Markthal was built to host a number of functions: 96 stands for fresh food, 20 units for shops and restaurants or cafes, 228 apartments in the arc that is the outer cover of the building, and 1200 parking places in the parking garage underneath the building (Markthal, n.d.). These numbers have changed slightly since the opening. Situated in the heart of the city, the Markthal is the covered extension of the outdoor market on the adjoining square ‘Binnenrotte’. The outdoor market is held every Tuesday and Saturday, and offers more than 400 stands for i.e. fresh foods, flowers and clothes, making the market attractive to many Rotterdammers and tourists alike (Gemeente Rotterdam, n.d.). The location of the Markthal within the center Rotterdam can be found on image 5.
The Markthal was built with an €175 million investment, and has been designed by renowned architect Winy Maas from MVRDV (Miles, 2015). Since the opening in 2014, it has already changed owner several times and is now owned by the French company Klépierre, that owns many retail real estates and shopping centers throughout Europe. In 2016, the Markthal attracted 8 million visitors, among which many tourists, but at the same time the hall faces increasing vacancy and image problems. In February 2017, 12 stands were empty and the variety in the supply of food has decreased (Kooiman, 2017).

The reason why the Markthal was built in the first place, according to some of the respondents, is at least twofold according to the interviewed process manager from the City of Rotterdam, as well as the retail concept developer. In the end of the 1990s, there were two direct reasons why the development of the Markthal started. In the first place, it seemed that EU policies concerning the trading of fresh food seemed to be changing, making it impossible to sell these outdoor. This was however never finalized, but at the time this was a direct motivation to think about a covered facility to provide an location for market trading. A second motivation to start the development of the Markthal was concerned with the urban grid and urban development of Rotterdam. Rotterdam was in the 1990s slowly entering a phase of reinventing itself, and moving from a city of production and harbor to a city of consumption. However, the center of the city was not seen as an attractive and competitive center within The Netherlands. The bombardment of Rotterdam in 1940 had left it’s marks that were never fully recovered, according to the process manager of the City of Rotterdam: “The problem with the center of Rotterdam is the amount of emptiness in the area”. Instead of rebuilding a center with mixed functions after the war, Rotterdam’s central area was rebuilt in a highly modernist sense of separation of functions, and radically different from its former urban grid. The retail concept developer adds that “Rotterdam, especially in this neighborhood [location of the Markthal], is a city of icons. Because of the bombardment, there is a lack of a grid, and from the cubic houses [buildings] to Blaak [station and square] and the pencil [building], the city was a collection of incidents.” The second motive behind the creation of the Markthal was therefore to add “An icon next to the river the ‘Binnenrotte’ [adjoining square]”, according to the process manager. The final version of the Markthal that was built is therefore heavily dependent on its iconic appearance, making it an example of ‘starchitecture’ in which the physical design of the building as important, if not more special, than the function of the building itself. The hall can be seen on images 6 and 7.
Later on in the process, the development of the Markthal became part of a bigger area redevelopment in which the Markthal was the landmark and the ‘face’ of the area development. Becoming part of a wider area development, the Markthal was given priority. The inspiration for the hall lay in the traditional market halls and food traditions of southern European countries, according to the current market manager: “We are jealous of the joie de vivre of the French, Spanish and Italian people.” The differences in food cultures between the inspiration of the hall and the implementation in the Dutch context later proved to be a constant factor of challenge. “The Netherlands is not an easy country I think, for a food hall”, the market manager says. One of the results of this might be the changing ownership over time: the Markthal has since development began already had three different owners, and even had a lawsuit about the ownership.

This introduction has given insights to a number of important themes that are driving the public realm of the Markthal. These drivers will be central during the characterization of the public realm in the next paragraphs, and these are 1. the physicality and iconic nature of the building, 2. the use and concept of the hall, 3. the ownership and finally 4. the Dutch food context. The next paragraphs will go into these main drivers and the relation they have to each other and to the pursued and perceived public realm.

4.2 Characterization of the public realm

During the interviews with the respondents it became apparent that there is a difference in the way the public realm was pursued in the creation of the Markthal, and how it is perceived by the involved stakeholders and the users of the hall, according to a discourse analysis of the interviews. Therefore, this paragraph is split into two parts where first the pursued public realm will be discussed, followed by the perceived public realm, or current situation.

4.2.1 Pursued public realm

This paragraph is about how the stakeholders characterize the public realm that was pursued during the development of the Markthal. The building that turned out to be an icon for the city was in the first place a carrier of creating a vibrant new area and a public place within the Laurenskwartier, in the center of Rotterdam. The public realm of this whole area has been part of the redevelopment, and the public realm of the Markthal should therefore be seen within this context. The process manager of the City of Rotterdam says that “the intention was to create an attractive public realm. And that means at least a consistent style.” With this she means that the outdoor space and public realm should have a similar look in the whole area, as well as within the rest of the city. The Markthal would fit into this according to the retail concept developer, as the architect Winy Maas had the idea “we make a sort of covered street. A real public place.” The pursued role of the Markthal was not only that of places dedicated to food, but also a public place. The retail concept developer adds that “It is important that it stays a food experience, but I also think that it should be, which is typical of real public spaces, it of course also is a meeting place, a showcase of what your city stands for.” It becomes clear that the intention was to make the Markthal a place that symbolizes the city, adds something to the city and belongs to the city. “It surely has to be the living room of the Rotterdammer”, is what the process manager of the City of Rotterdammer adds to this pursued concept of the Markthal. This shows that the intention of the creating a place where everybody feels at home, and feels a sense of belonging, according to the retail concept developer.
The second driver, after the physical building, is the use of the place and concept. The pursued concept was described by the process manager as “a mix between gastronomy services and retail in the plinths that has a link to food and also fresh food units”. The concept was to focus on fresh food stalls in the central middle floor, and to have a limited amount of restaurants and shops on the edges. The hall was therefore always meant to be a food hall, not a covered market hall as the names might suggest. “We actually thought that the name Markthal [Market hall] is a very misleading one. It is really about retail, with food specialists, mixed with gastronomy services”, according to the retail concept developer. He continues to say that the development of the process has taken a long time as was done based on extensive research: “We have done extensive research, at least every two years between 2004 and 2013 to how the world is changing when it comes to food. And not only retail but also foodservice such as gastronomy services and the way of experiencing.”

The idea behind the Markthal was therefore to create an everyday space where everybody feels welcome and comfortable, and likes to come back to buy everyday groceries. However, at the same time the idea was to really create an experience for the visitor.

Related to the drivers of use and physicality of the hall were a few other minor drivers of the public realm that were pursued. Diversity and personification of the units could here be considered as the most important elements. Small units create diversity and conviviality, and good sight lines increase a sense of transparency and orientation for the visitor. Pursued was also to have a communal sitting area that was meant to boost the feeling of attachment. The units themselves were supposed to tell a message of both personal influences and communal touch: “Consequently, a logbook was constituted about what was possible and allowed and what not. That was a beautiful balance between showing one’s own face and keeping a sense of collective appearance”, is what the retail concept developer said about how to design the fresh food units. The whole process of designing was one of involving the future entrepreneurs and the current entrepreneurs on the outside market, according to the process manager: “The surrounding neighborhood has been heavily involved, especially with the Markthal but also with redesigning the Binnenrotte [adjoining square]. It has been discussed with the entrepreneurs in the kraamkamer [“nursery meetings”] how this should look like.” In these meetings, it was not only the Markthal that was discussed but also the surrounding area and outdoor market that takes place twice a week. The idea was that the Markthal and the outdoor market could supplement and reinforce each other.

The pursued public realm and concept of the Markthal do not completely match with the perceived public realm and concept that were described by the different stakeholders. However, the current owner Kléppiere still pursues a very similar concept and public realm as the one that is described above. The current vision of Kléppiere is the following: “The meeting place where supply of fresh food, food and gastronomy comes together in an attractive, innovative mix for the Rotterdamer and the tourist, that are seduced to new tasting experiences and are open for distinguishing food concepts in a tasteful ambiance.” The next paragraph will show how this is perceived by the different stakeholders.

4.2.2 Perceived public realm
The pursued public realm that was described above has turned out differently in reality according to all the interviewed stakeholders. Along the development of the project, the physicality of the building became more and more important, resulting in a change of concept and a change of the public realm. The retail concept developer mentions that during the development of the building the emphasis was increasingly the building itself and the architecture of it, and not the mix of functions
and the activities inside the building. The concept and use became submissive to the physical structure and the spectacularism of the design. “I think the most important reason why the original concept was let go, and in my eyes also partly failed, is that me and my employees have been constantly warning since 2004 that the building may be impressive, but not imposing. Everybody that comes there, whether he is from Kralingen [a fancy, student area] or Crooswijk or Feijenoord [working class areas] or Hillegersberg [a fancy area], everyone that walks into the hall should think: yes, this is my hall.” He continues to say that “so much attention went to the building and the impact it has, that after a certain amount of time the Rotterdammers feel like they don’t have anything to do there or any reason to be there”. What he says here is that the imposing nature of the public realm, the Markthal itself, has according to him a negative influence on the place attachment or feeling or belonging for the users of the space. Instead of creating a public realm for the Rotterdammers, it seems like the hall now is having an opposite effect.

The iconic nature of the building seems to drive the public realm and influences all the other main drivers. However, the physical structure is merely the tangible expression of the organization and process behind the Markthal. The second most important driver of the public realm therefore turns out to be the organization behind the hall. Although formulated as a public place centered around food and people, the project in the end remains to be a commercial project, a business model with many stakeholders and interests involved. The retail concept developer says that “Markthal Rotterdam is an isolated purpose, a business model decorated as an icon or a cathedral and has been precipitated as a UFO. The only reason that is still holds on is that it is located in the city of icons.”

The management style and ownership of the hall has its influence on the success of the hall as food hall and as public space, according to the different respondents. The commercial nature of the organization behind the building take away the publicness of the space, and create an entity that lacks connection to the public realm surrounding the building. The commercial nature of the current owner also leads to the fact that the Markthal and its entrepreneurs are not really functioning as a community or are trying to be involved in improving the relation with the environment. The entrepreneur and member of the business association has mentioned that “the batteries of the entrepreneurs are running empty” and the motivation to still organize events or create a community are decreasing. This is being strengthened by the fact that the ownership has switched already several times within it’s relatively short period of life, taking away the possibility to create a community between the several parties. The result is that the personal connection of the entrepreneurs with the hall seems to be lacking.

The first two drivers of the public realm have influenced each other, but in turn also influence the other main drivers of the public space. Starting with the use of the public realm, the character of the organization, the physicality of the building and the high investments that accompanied these have made the original concept change. “The leasing of the units, or filling of the hall, had priority over sticking to the original concept”, according to the retail concept developer. One of the results according to him was that the developer was renting out “too big units out of lack of interest from the market”. The concept itself, the use of the hall, has in this process also changed from a multi-faced food hall to a hall that is mainly focused on restaurants and food retail instead of a combination of these with fresh foods. The process manager doesn’t necessarily think this has benefitted the overall atmosphere of the hall: “all the shops and units that are collected in the building, they can be decisive for the image and atmosphere of the building”. The content of the food hall has therefore an effect on the perceived public realm.
The last element that was mentioned in the first paragraph of this chapter is the Dutch food context. This is not a driver of the public realm per se, but more an element that influences the perception of the public realm of the Markthal by its users. Several stakeholders have questioned if the inspiration from a southern European hall can be realized in The Netherlands and in Rotterdam, since they see a lack of food culture in The Netherlands. The market manager questions if the Markthal should aim to be for all the Rotterdammers as well as the tourists: “I don’t know if the real Rotterdammer will come and connect. Because the real Rotterdammer is not very adventurous”. This discourse has led media publications about the Markthal over the last years, once again comparing it with icons like the Guggenheim in Bilbao that attracted worldwide attention, but might lose their local sync. The process manager of the City of Rotterdam goes into this: “There are discussions about the fact that the hall is not for the real Rotterdammer, but more a sort of tourist factory.” Based on the previous, some respondents hint that this image might have been inevitable. The market manager: “I think that the municipality has been incredibly ambitious to want to create the best food hall of the world here in Rotterdam. [...] You can want things, but if you miss the culture, the timing, well, then it is not so easy”. The process manager says however that it would be a shame if over time the Markthal turns out to be there just for the exclusive food lover or the tourist: “But it surely has to be the ‘living room’ of the Rotterdammer, and it would be a shame if the icon of area development [in the Laurenskwartier], how successful it may be, would have the image of only being attractive for tourists.”

To conclude, a number of elements related to the physical structure of the building have been mentioned as important physical drivers of the public realm. These include flexibility, personalization and transparency. However, the stakeholders have mentioned that these elements have not been carried out in the most optimal way, and they blame these drivers for a lack of sense of place and conviviality that can be linked to the Markthal. “We should have made units more transparent to make it possible to see where you can sit, and be like ‘oh there is a coffee place there, why don’t you sit down and I’ll get some coffee’. Then it becomes a real domain. And I really want to go from a room to a domain where people come and say ‘this is mine’”, is what the retail concept developer says about the Markthal. In the end, the reason why this happened can be pointed back to the organization behind the building, and especially the physicality of the building itself. According to the retail concept developer, these are both inflexible: “moreover, this hall proves once again that if you do not build in flexibility into your design, then you will have a problem because this [the Markthal] of course continues to be an inflexible statement.”

4.3 Reflection and possible improvements

Based on the previous paragraphs, it can be remarked that there is quite a big discrepancy between the pursued and the perceived public realm. It could be concluded that there are four main drivers of the public realm that explain how the public realm has turned out to be the way it is now. These are once again the 1. organization of the hall, 2. dominance of the iconic physicality, 3. the use and concept of the hall, 4. the food context of the hall. It has been shown that the organization and the commercial character of this have dominated the development of the hall, given priority to the physical appearance over the use of the hall. The Dutch context in which the hall has landed also has not helped in creating a place that the visitors respond to the way it was meant to be.

What is striking is that the connection of the inside hall with the surrounding public spaces has not been emphasized extensively by the interviewed stakeholders. One reason for this is the fact
that the owner of the building only looks at the building as an investment object, and doesn’t take into consideration the connection to the surrounding environment. However, if the Markthal would become a truly public place with a greater sense of place and conviviality, it is more about this connection with the surrounding public space and the city in general. The retail concept developer says that in the end, “it is about that city. It is about that experience”. Furthermore, he states that the commercial character of the organization behind the hall is not even of the biggest importance: “For me it is a place that is simply of importance to a city, that should have an impact, and it doesn’t matter if that place is in public or private hands”.

The stakeholders have gone into other possible improvements as well, according to their own insights. The main argument is that within the current physical possibilities, the stakeholders think most improvements can be made by changing the concept. What all respondents mention is to change the concept to create more diversity and possibly more fresh foods. This could contribute to a better atmosphere and conviviality according to the process manager of the City of Rotterdam when asked about the future of the Markthal: “I hope the Markthal still looks the same as it does now, but that the atmosphere inside is more jovial, more lively. With joviality I mean also that people that live here [in Rotterdam] will feel attracted, and that it is more their market hall. And that means changing the assortment and the concept as a whole”.
5. Case study II: Fenix Food Factory

The case study highlighting the Fenix Food Factory is structured in the same way as the previous chapter. The information in this chapter is largely the result of the interviews with the different stakeholders. These respondents will not be mentioned by name, but by their function. The respective respondents are 1. an employee of the department of project development of the City of Rotterdam, 2. an architect that was involved in the (re) design of the Fenix Food Factory, 3. an entrepreneur in the Fenix Food Factory and one of the initiators of the project, and finally 4. a former employee of one of the entrepreneurs in the Fenix Food Factory, and someone who committed herself to the concept development of both the Fenix Food Factory and later on a short period of time for the Marché 010.

5.1 Introduction and background information

This food hall started in 2014 and is located in the south of Rotterdam, in a former warehouse in the former harbor and living area of Katendrecht, which can be seen on image 8. Originally slated to be opened until the end of 2018, the Fenix Food Factory has now received permission to stay at least until January 2020 (Redactie AD, 2017). The hall offers a variety of 9 food related entrepreneurs, 1 bookstore and 1 organizer of events. Although it is possible to buy everyday groceries such as bread and cheese in the Fenix Food Factory, a main part of the concept is the possibility to collect small portions of food from all the stands on one shelf and eat it in the common sitting areas inside or outside. This is possible to do for breakfast, lunch or as a ‘borrelplank’, a collection of small snacks for the afternoon drinks. (Fenix Food Factory, n.d.)

The initiators of the Fenix Food Factory are the entrepreneurs themselves. They have gathered in one of the former warehouses adjacent to the ‘Deliplein’, a square that has in recent years been transformed from dodgy red light district, with high rates of criminality and bad living conditions, into a hub for small-scale and hip restaurants and cafes. This has set in motion a wave of gentrification in the former working class area, reinforced by the development of new houses and offices on the nearby Wilhelminapier, which is now hosting an eclectic collection of high-end skyscrapers. The future of the warehouse the Fenix Food Factory is located in is unsure now, the original pre-crisis plan was to the warehouse into a high-end apartment building which is currently happening in the adjoining warehouse (Introduction, 2014).

![Image 8: Location of the Fenix Food Factory within the neighborhood]
The transition from warehouse to the Fenix Food Factory is one that can be approached from two sides: that of the municipality and that of the entrepreneurs. To start with the municipality, they had bought the two warehouses Fenix 1 and 2 with the idea to develop them both into housing. However, when the crisis hit The Netherlands in 2008 development was stopped and the municipality was left with two empty buildings. The architect says about this: “The municipality was left with two very big warehouses for nothing, and vacancy also costs money. So in the end it is a product of the crisis. We have the crisis to thank for the Fenix Food Factory.” In the crisis, the municipality started looking for new possibilities and interest in the warehouses. They also started thinking about how the neighborhood and specifically the Deliplein could benefit from temporary development. “Then the idea evolved about how to make a better connection between the warehouse and the square [Deliplein]”. This was the moment that conversations started with a group of entrepreneurs that was interested in doing something related to food in the warehouses.

During the time that the empty warehouses were being filled with new functions, one of the initiators of the Fenix Food Factory, the interview respondent, was looking for new opportunities. However, not necessarily for a food hall the way that the Fenix Food Factory turned out to be. An entrepreneur himself, in cider and sausage making, the initiator was initially looking for a place of common production with other startups or small companies. “The idea started with the desire to be able to control a place in which multiple people and entrepreneurs could make use of shared facilities. That was the initial idea.” He was pointed to the warehouses on Katendrecht by an entrepreneur active as a beer brewer that was interested in the same thing, sharing facilities, though he was active in a different part of the food and drinks industry, but still wanted to work together. This is when the idea started to not just make a production hall, but also a place for retail of the products. “Only a brewery is fun, but if you can do more things that will only add up. I had to really think about it, but eventually I just started search in my network who would fit to that idea. What kind of things do you need to be able to do your daily groceries?”. The initiator continues that it was mainly the nature of the building that asked for a different concept: “Eventually it became clear that this space was fit to also do more retail kind of activities, so not only the production but also retail and gastronomy services. I am someone that changes his idea to the location. So on one location something else is possible than on the other, so it transitioned very fast.” This was how the idea for the Fenix Food Factory started. The eventually realized public realm can be seen in images 9 and 10.

Images 9 & 10: The outside and inside public realm of the Fenix Food Factory
This introduction gives insights into some of the most important drivers of the public realm that will be discussed in the coming paragraphs. For the Fenix Food Factory, the drivers that influenced the public realm the most are 1. The temporary character of the food hall, 2. The common organization behind the hall, 3. The connection to the adjoining Deliplein and 4. The use and concept of the place. These drivers will be central during the characterization of the pursued and perceived public realm described in the next paragraphs.

5.2 Characterization of the public realm

During the interviews with the respondents it became apparent that there is a difference in the way the public realm was pursued in the creation of the Fenix Food Factory, and how it is perceived by the involved stakeholders and the users of the hall, according to a discourse analysis of the interviews. Therefore, this paragraph is split into two parts where first the pursued public realm will be discussed, followed by the perceived public realm, or current situation.

5.2.1 Pursued public realm

This part goes into the pursued public realm for the Fenix Food Factory. It became clear during the interviews with the stakeholders that the development of the whole concept, including the public realm, however was very different from the previously discussed Markthal and lacked the same kind of vision or masterplan. “Me looking in my network, that is how it all started actually. And we created the concept all together eventually” is what one of the initiators of the project said about the first concept. This process of thinking about the concept is one that was characterized by all the respondents as one that was guided by the temporary aspect, and the limited (financial) resources that were connected to this. This resulted in the fact that the concept and public realm connected to this were also created with limited resources, not based on a big research or ‘masterplan’ as might have been the case in the Markthal, discussed before. Even though the initiators took from the same inspiration of southern European covered market, the difference with the Markthal was also apparent in the fact that the Fenix Food Factory was always going to be located in an existing building. “The building itself is very powerful. So we wanted to change as little to that as possible, really on purpose. But also born out of financial reasons”, is what the architect that got involved has said about this. Not changing much to the building meant that investments could be kept low. “We have kept everything the way it was, so we could keep investments low but then we also couldn’t let the rents go sky high”, according to the employee of the City of Rotterdam. The temporary and financial aspects played therefore an important part in the ideas of the public realm: “You can think things over, but you often need a budget for that. Here, it is more that as soon as you can do something you just make that step”, is what the initiator said about this. The Fenix Food Factory was shaped more out of possibilities within the budget than on a utopian level.

The second driver of the public realm is one that is inherent to the concept of the Fenix Food Factory. Pursued from the start was to have an building and an organization that is completely shared and owned by a group of entrepreneurs. Even during the development of the project with the municipality, the main idea was always to organically and collaboratively create the food hall. The employee of the City of Rotterdam says: “We did not say what kind of mix of shops we wanted. To me it was more about the fact if you get what you are doing as an entrepreneur. That is a very different approach than the stand one. That approach would go more into the mix of shops, long-term strategies, policy, et. cetera. We did not do that.” This shows again that the Fenix Food Factory is
really about the creation of a community of entrepreneurs, and creating their food hall together. The result is that it really became a collection of different companies under one roof. In the public realm, the challenge was to pursue a combination of showing one's own face and communicating a communal feeling.

While it can be said that the organization itself is one of the drivers of the public realm, the ideas the group had for the use and concept of the place is naturally connected to this. Together, the group of entrepreneurs was pursuing to share a place amongst them and to share it with visitors, where meeting and food are central. Therefore, there was a strong personal connection in the creation of the place that was pursued to be visible in the public realm. The initiator says about this: “It is really about the personal touch, and in the end it sort of is, it is actually the village square of the old days. Bluntly spoken, very black and white, but in the end you just have the bakery and the butcher and the greengrocer.” In order to reach to this idea of a shared space, the entrepreneurs wanted to pursue a common ‘living room’, with tables and seats that is shared by everyone and where visitors would be able to sit, independent of where they would buy something. This concept was only possible because of the low rents, explains the initiator: “What we did, and what normally doesn’t work, is that inside sitting area. That area is part of the rent, you rent those meters. So relatively, you pay more for those meters than for your own unit. There is the crux of the concept, but that is only possible if the rent per square meter is low. If it would be higher, which normal places have, then you can forget about that space.” This concept could be seen as a way of creating a truly public place where visitors can stay for a longer time and get attached to the place.

The final driver that can be mentioned as important during the development of the public realm is to create a better connection with the adjoining Deliplein. The architect explains: “We made a rough layout and division with the entrepreneurs based on the idea of a passage or indoor street”. The idea was thus to really connect the waterside and quay on one side of the building with the Deliplein on the other side by creating a sort of passageway. One of the ideas behind this is to extent the public realm from the outside to the inside. The other goal that the initiators of the Fenix Food Factory pursued is to create a public realm in which the experience and enjoyment of food is higher than usual in the Dutch food context: “In The Netherlands the market is on average only about buying your groceries, maybe eating a small snack, and then going back home. While in other countries it is much more, people take their time. They eat something or sit down with a glass of wine.” Here, a resemblance can be seen with the Markthal in pursuing to through the public realm change the food culture in the Netherlands.

5.2.2 Perceived public realm
The pursued public realm of the Fenix Food Factory described above has over the years slightly changed according to the different interviewed stakeholders. However, all the stakeholder are relatively satisfied with the way the perceived public realm adds to a sense of place and conviviality. The four drivers that have been discussed before are according to the stakeholders the most important reasons for the success, and they have proven to be all connected to each other. The temporary aspect of the hall and the small-scale, entrepreneurial character of the organization made it possible to create the perceived public realm in an organic way, even if this meant changing some of the original ideas to create a better public realm based on the ideas of the entrepreneurs and the reactions of the visitors, as described by the employee of the City of Rotterdam: “They had the idea to create a hall for the production of food, with sales in the sideline. Well, it has become the opposite exactly.” This symbolizes the process the Fenix Food Factory and the people behind it have gone
through. He continues explaining the organic evolution of the place: “I think that the enthusiasm of the visitors has made the place to the thing it is now. The entrepreneurs have anticipated on that by taking in more entrepreneurs and changing the design a bit from what was thought of in the first place. Because the living room area used to be much bigger, surrounded by seven entrepreneurs and that was it. Right now it has become the other way around, and there is more space for the entrepreneurs then for the visitors in the living room. I have told them to be careful with that, because it is an important aspect of the concept that you can really sit there comfortably with a sort of family”. This shows however that even though the organic process has proven successful so far, there might be a risk of too much opportunistic behavior that endangers the ultimate sense of place and conviviality.

It is the combination of the drivers described above – temporary character, small-scale and entrepreneurial organization and the concept of the place with food and people central – that have made the Fenix Food Factory and its public realm successful. The experience that is pursued is according to the respondents the key to the success, as the place offers something special. “The concept here is that you have everything together under one roof [...] The pluriform character of this concept is the factor of success. A bar some meters away from here is just a bar, there are already enough of those”, according to the employee of the City of Rotterdam. To have a place where a lot of different functions are offered seems to make people want to go there and stay there. This is further reinforced by the individuality of the different entrepreneurs according to the initiator: “Eventually, I think the fun thing about this place is that everyone just does the thing he likes, or is good at”. He continues to say that this is also why people visit in the first place, as there is a personal connection with the different entrepreneurs that makes going to the Fenix Food Factory an experience: “You come for that specific entrepreneur, for that specific knowledge, for that specific person. Or for that specific experience, maybe that is a better term.” Although attractive to people, the different entrepreneurs together in one place also might confuse people, which is why it is important to have a commonality or binding style: “You have to have a binding factor somewhere. And people are often confused by this. They often think this is just 1 thing, even though in the end these are all separate companies”. Here, one could question whether the relation between commonality and personality is considered enough by the initiators. This could be a downside to the more organic process, as it might sometimes feel like there was a lack of a common vision. The interviewed stakeholders criticize mostly the way the outside public realm was handled by the initiators of the public realm. The architect says: “If you look from the outside, I think it kind of looks messy and wild now”, and continues to say “I think it’s quite ragged. They should have put a designer on it who is able to design everything a bit more nicely”. He continues to say that this is one downside of the temporary aspect of the place, and doesn’t blame it too much on the organization of the hall yet more on the temporary aspect: “That is the disadvantage of temporariness. There is no money for the outdoor spaces”.

Although in general the stakeholders have been quite content with the way the drivers of the public realm add to sense of place and conviviality, there was some critique on the way the connection towards the Deliplein and the rest of the neighborhood was made. This critique however was not only pointed towards the Fenix Food Factory and the organization of the hall, however also to the physical constraints of the public realm. Described by the architect: “The indoor passage is experience almost as part of the outdoor public space. That is what I like most about it. And the see-through to the other side. And then it’s too bad that it stops at the side of the Deliplein. Because in my ideal world, that street [between Fenix Food Factory and Deliplein] would be pedestrianized. That
would make the square completely connected to the warehouse, that would be great.” He says that even though the indoor set up of the Fenix Food Factory invites people to use it as a passage, the Deliplein simply doesn’t invite people to go and stay there. In the words of the initiator: “The square, I really don’t like the square. [...] It is not a nice or cozy square. Which is a shame, because it would be so much easier to make a good connection.” With this, he expresses that they would really want to improve the connection with the Deliplein. The lacking connection with the Deliplein however is not only physically apparent, some of the stakeholders have also talked about a lacking social connection. The architect mentions that “the old locals from Katendrecht won’t come to do their groceries”, and says this is because the Fenix Food Factory has the image of being too hip or elitist: “The criticism now is that people say that the Fenix Food Factory is a bit of a ‘hipster warehouse’”. The initiator has seen this image more often, but notes that this is not matching with their intention: “We are not an elitist place, or a shop for only deli, we really don’t want to be that kind of place”. Apparently, the public realm does in the end support the image of being a bit exclusive for a certain group of people.

5.3 Reflection and possible improvements

The previous paragraphs have shown the characterization of the public realm of the Fenix Food Factory, and emphasized the importance of four drivers in how the public realm was pursued and subsequently how it is perceived. These are the 1. Temporary character of the hall, 2. The small-scale entrepreneurial organization, 3. The use and concept of the place and finally 4. The connection to the adjoining Deliplein. These drivers were present from the start, but have proven to be inherent to the creation of the public realm. However, some of the drivers have proven to be challenging over time and may need to be adjusted in the future. The most important driver, while at the same time the biggest challenge according to the initiators, has been the organization of the hall in the shape of a collection of entrepreneurs. Like with the Markthal before, the tangible public realm is merely an expression of the intangible organization behind it. “They do it all together, it is a foundation. The cooperation and integrality of the community are needed to make a success out of this concept”, according to the employee of the municipality. This has however proven difficult at times, according to the initiator: ‘It is really a challenge to handle things with such a group of entrepreneurs. We have chosen for this [a foundation] way back then, but I don’t think we would do it all again. I am quite honest in that.” The challenges with this way of management have for instance also shown in how to move ahead with changes to the public realm. The example that all the respondents give is the lack of vision in the outside terrace, that has been mentioned before as a place where the public realm could be crafted in a better way. Part of the reason why this is done is the lack of coherence in the community, according to the architect: “It is a collection of ego’s. Because one wants to do it this way, and the other wants to do it another way and it is going quite opportunistic every now and then”.

The improvements in the public realm could thus be found in the outside area near the quay, both in the sense of the physical design and the design of the community behind it. The public realm at the other side of the Fenix Food Factory, the connection to the Deliplein, has also been mentioned by all the respondents as a place for improvement. The physical connection is currently interrupted by a street for heavy traffic, and the square itself has been said to be quite unattractive. These would be points of improvement, in order to create a more attractive public realm and to extend the public realm of the Fenix Food Factory until the Deliplein.
6. Case study III: Marché 010

The case study highlighting the Marché 010 is structured similar to the previous two chapter. However, the characterization of the public realm will be done differently. This is because the opening of the Marché 010 was much delayed, and the current perceived public realm could therefore not be analysed in the same way. Instead, the analysis of the perceived public realm is done through looking at a combination of the interviews and the results from the placegame. The information in this chapter is largely the result of the interviews with the different stakeholders, and the participants of the placegame. These respondents will not be mentioned by name, but by their function. The respective respondents from the interviews are 1. an area manager working at the City of Rotterdam, responsible amongst others for the area the Marché 010 is located in, 2. an entrepreneur that is active in the area ZoHo, 3. a combined interview with the initiator of the food hall and his partner in the process and finally 4. a former employee of one of the entrepreneurs in the Fenix Food Factory, and someone who committed herself to the concept development of both the Fenix Food Factory and later on a short period of time for the Marché 010. The respondents of the placegame have all been people that were invited to the placegame because of their involvements in the neighborhood or the location of their organization close to the food hall, in order to create a sense of involvement among the participants.

6.1 Introduction and background information

At the start of this research, the planned opening of the hall was spring 2017, after having already been delayed a few times. The final opening date however was during the process of doing research delayed until September 2017. The interviews were therefore mostly about the pursued public realm. These interviews made clear that the project was set up by one initiator who came up with the idea for the covered food hall. During the process of development, he subsequently got the owners of the hall involved, however mostly limited to the financial aspects of the project.

The building that will house the food hall has in the past years been a metal working place, and has since it closed down stood empty until the new ideas for the food hall were developed. The building is located in a former business area north to the center of Rotterdam, which in recent years has been redeveloped into a temporary create hub called ZoHo, after the full name Zomerhofkwartier. The location can be seen on image 11.
The idea for Marché 010 was developed by a Morocco-born entrepreneur that grew up in a pre-war housing area close to the food hall, and was done out of interest in the market business. The plans for the hall contain around 20 stands for food, and these will offer a range of daily products. Besides this, there will be a big room on the first floor that is open for other activities, also outside of opening hours of the hall (Brobbel, 2017).

It became clear from the interviews that the most complicated and time consuming part of the development of the food hall was to get the municipality enthusiastic about the plans. The initiator had initially experienced some trouble in convincing the municipality about the idea at that specific location. “When the owner of the building became a partner, we had some more money and possibilities. The municipalities was more serious now that the owner of the building was involved”, according to the initiator. The area manager of the City of Rotterdam explained that the reason why the municipality was skeptical was basically twofold. First of all, the policy of the municipality is currently to focus on retail activities only in specific locations, of which the location of Marché 010 is not one of them. Secondly, and related to this, the current destination of the building in the zoning plan is an industrial one, and to be able to create a food hall the municipality had to either give a new permit for retail and gastronomy functions or make an exemption. The area manager said that: “after a lot of effort there is now a five year exemption from the retail policy, and they can try it for at least five years.” This means that for now the permit makes the Marché 010 temporary, and the area manager added that it is kind of an experiment for what kind of functions the area in the future should have. The state of the hall during the research can be seen in pictures 12 and 13.

In this introduction, a number of important aspects have been mentioned which can be described as the drivers of the public realm of the Marché 010. These are 1. The character of the initiator and his organization, 2. The physical connection the hall could have in the neighborhood, 3. The social connection the hall could have in the neighborhood and finally, 4. The concept and role of the hall as an everyday market. These drivers will be central during the characterization of the pursued and perceived public realm described in the next paragraphs.

6.2 Characterization of the public realm
As has been mentioned in the previous introduction, the characterization of the public realm of the Marché 010 will be divided into that of the pursued public realm, based on the interviews, and the perceived public realm as it is perceivable already, mostly based on the placegame.
6.2.1 Pursued public realm

This paragraph goes into the most important drivers of the pursued public realm for the Marché 010. The creation of the public realm all started from one initiator, and his background has influenced the pursued public realm quite a lot. Like the initiators of the previous two food halls, the initiator for Marché 010 took his inspiration from southern Europe. The area developer mentions that the first ideas took inspiration from “a sort of Spanish place”. However, the Moroccan roots of the initiator also played a role in the pursued public realm and the concept of the hall. According to the initiator: “There are certain things that connect different ethnical background, and you should focus on that. [...] There is the Islam, halal meat is quite important. So about that we said, let’s take that into consideration. But with events we will also do all the Christian or Dutch events, so you have to find a balance in that.” The area manager also goes into this, although he says more about connecting the public realm to the local identity of this particular neighborhood in Rotterdam, including multicultural elements: “About the identity, you can think about it what you want but isn’t fantastic that he tries to bring the idea of the Hofbogen [adjoining former elevated railway with arch-like structure] into the building with those arches. And upstairs there is a marble floor, and it comes across to me as a sort of Moroccan or Turkish wedding room. But is he allowed, of course the man is Moroccan himself!” According to the area manager, the public realm of the Marché 010 is based on the personal and local identity, and may not be in line with everyone’s tastes.

Another characteristic of the initiator that drives the way the public realm is pursued is his organizational style. Like with the other two food halls, the organization behind this food hall seems to influence the tangible and intangible creation of the public realm and the use of the hall. Here, the initiator and his assistant seem to want to keep all the control in their own hands, before opening up to the group of entrepreneurs that will run their businesses in the hall. “We really wanted to do the management ourselves and don’t give it away [...] because then you can change it every time it is needed”, is what the initiator said about the process. However, the other interviewed stakeholders do mention that this is something new to him. The area manager says: “It is a hard job to manage a whole group of different people. A community. I don’t think it is something he is used to”. Here, it can be concluded that to make the public realm and concept work, the social organization behind this is of vital importance. Handling a community to bring the public realm alive is part of the deal, especially considering the goal to use the Marché 010 as a connection within the neighborhood.

The connective aspect is a driver of the pursued public realm in two ways: both physically and socially. The physical structure of the building inherently connects two streets with each other is it is a sort of passage. “You can go through it from two sides, and it also has that rough, industrial character”, is what the area manager said about the building. This could be used optimally to create a real hall, in which the passageway element also functions as the physical connection in the neighborhood, in which the use of the hall as market already works as a social connector. With the ability to connect different parts of the neighborhood together, the idea is also to bring more life to the little square on the ‘backside’ of the hall, as this square is very hidden and quite desolated apart from a soccer court. “The little square on the backside doesn’t have much activity, so the market gives the opportunity to open the doors and give a see through perspective from the front to the back. Instead of having a dead end, you can also use the space of the square terraces or activities”, according to the local entrepreneur. The idea is to pursue at least monthly events on this square. In this way, the physical connection naturally gives way for social activities to take place to make neighborhood come together. Connecting back to the first driver of the identity of the initiator, the pursued multicultural elements in the public realm also speak to the multicultural character of the
neighborhood. Moreover, by pursuing to create events outside of the hall, the initiators really try to involve the surrounding public space into the public realm of the hall itself, trying to connect the inside and outside areas.

In the previous parts, it already became apparent that the function of the hall itself is an important driver for the public realm as well. According to the area manager, the initiator started with a very basic idea for the hall: “I would like to start a covered market with just plainly renting out stalls, just low cost, and local. There is no covered market in Rotterdam with plain and cheap products, like on the outdoor market.” This shows that the Marché 010 pursues to be the food hall that is most similar to a traditional covered market. The initiators also aim to be inclusive to everyone, where everyone feels at home. The assistant to the initiator said about this: “Just very open to everyone, that if the guy from next door is walking outside in his sweatpants on his flipflops, he will still have the feeling to be welcomed to come in”. Throughout the development of the project, the concept evolved slightly however. During this process, an entrepreneur in ZoHo, who is active as an urban designer, became involved in the creation of the concept. “The idea was that there would also be production of food, or dishes, to make the place a real experience”, he said about the evolving concept, and highlights the importance of the place not only as a place for shopping but also a place where people of different backgrounds would meet. The pursued public realm seems to really focus on creating an everyday market space, while at the same time being an experience for the visitor. The concept itself is pursued to drive in that sense the experience of the public realm. One important last aspect related to that is the personalization of the stalls, on which the initiators let go of their control that characterizes the management of the hall as explained earlier. “Within their own unit or stall, the entrepreneurs are actually free to do with that whatever they want to [...] we won’t interfere with the colors or which kind of lamp they want or whatever, they are free in that. That is what makes it nice, then you will get that diversity and experience of walking past the stalls, to be able to see something new in every unit”, according to the assistant of the initiator.

6.2.2 Characterization of the perceived public realm during the Placegame
As has been mentioned before, the Marché 010 has not opened yet, which makes the characterization of the perceived public realm more complicated. It has been possible however to look at the hall and the direct surroundings during the placegame on the 24th of May 2017, on which the Marché 010 opened the doors for a preview especially for the placegame for this research. There were 9 participants during the placegame, that analyzed the place individually and then made three groups to make a group analysis.

Before going into these results, there are some references that can be made from the interviews about the conceptual development of the public realm of the Marché 010 and the way it looked during the time of the interviews and the placegame. The local entrepreneur that was involved in creating the concept has after that phase dropped out of the project and looks at the differences between the concept that was developed and the way the hall looks now. “It is a pity I think, the implementation could be a bit stronger. So right now a lot of energy and money goes to things of which you can ask yourself if it will add something, or if it had more effect with less input”, he says about the changing public realm. However, this has been based on his own taste and ideas that differs from that of the initiator: “It is of course a certain personal taste that they wanted to bring into the place”. According to the local entrepreneur however, it is not only bringing their own taste in, but also leaving other people out of the developing process: “The initiator has always tried to edge that out, he wants to finish things first and then give people the space to do something, at
least in the hall. Even though my idea was to get the people together first to see the common qualities, and then you know where you to put your energy into”. Because of this, he, and the concept developer that was shortly involved, have argued that a lack of flexibility and involvement might lead to missed opportunities. Here, it can be seen that one of the drivers of the public realm, the character of the organizational initiator, might stand in the way of optimizing the other drivers of the public space, especially creation a connection in the neighborhood on a social level. For this connection, a collaboration with many different parties is required to build a community, instead of handling the whole situation individually. During the placegame, involvement of the entrepreneurs inside and around the hall was also one of the recurring topics.

The results from the placegame were the result of two parts. These results were a lot more detailed aspects of the public realm than those that have been mentioned before as the most important drivers. However, the results can be linked to those bigger drivers. The individual assessment of the space by 9 people resulted for instance in a big appreciation for the possibilities to use the hall as a physical and social connection in the area. Especially the opportunity to organize events on the little square related to the theme of a market or food hall were mentioned more than once as valuable assets. One interesting remark was also the characteristic of the hall to function as a passage way, connecting a street and a square, which was seen as a valuable characteristic. The quality that was mentioned most was the “sheltered” character of the hall itself, and the square behind the hall. The participants felt a sense of protection because of the small scale of the place. By the users of the space this was referred to as “coziness”, hinting at the feeling of finding comfort in the shelter. Amenities that contributed to this were according to both the participants and the users the trees in the streets surrounding the Marché 010, the absence of high amounts of parked cars and the tidiness of the place. Within the sheltered environment however, “spatiality” was mentioned a few times as an amenity to the place. Another characteristic that was mentioned by many respondents and users alike was the potential of the place. Many said that the place right now looks unfinished (the hall itself) and a bit decayed, but it has a lot of potential to make a nice place out of it considering the qualities that have been mentioned before. These elements of the public realm all refer to the physical character of the place, and a connection to the drivers of the public realm that have been mentioned before was a bit hard to detect.

During the second part however, there was room for explanation behind the answers that were given in the first part of the game. The participants worked together in three groups after which a discussion about the hall and the connection to the surrounding area followed. Some of the same reactions emerged again, which of course is natural since the discussion was among the same participants. However, the discussion offered a good way to get some more in-depth insights as to why the participants of the placegame responded the way they do. To start off, one group gave an extensive explanation of what they found were the biggest amenities to the food hall and the adjoining square: “The first big advantage is the fantastic location, so close to the center and so full of possibilities. You don’t really have that at another location. It is very sheltered, the walls are blind of course but it is really demarcated which is good for events. And the size of the square is very clear, not too big and not too small”. Again, the physicality was central and the sheltered feeling was mentioned here, and seen as a positive thing. Another group however was more critical on this: “The visibility is quite low, it is hidden”. To them, this was a negative characteristic. This group continued about the square and the outside look of hall: “We don’t find the place very attractive. It is quite dirty, the buildings are decaying and the facades are ugly”. They were not very happy with the current state of how the place looks. This is however their opinion about the place right now, and
was said about the normal state of the area on an average day. They were more positive about the
feeling they had about the place during the placegame, which is an exception from how it usually is
according to them: “The place is usually, yeah now the sun is shining and there are many people, and
children are playing. But the place is usually quite desolated.” This expression gives hope for the
future, when the Marché 010 will open, but it also shows that active use of the place is needed in
order to create a more lively public realm. One way to increase this, is through strong social ties. This
is one of the missing aspects right now according to one group: “The disadvantage of the square is
the little involvement from neighbors, the municipality and the entrepreneurs.” Taken from this, it
seems that the participants of the placegame, who are all located in the same area, feel a lack of
community that could improve the physical public realm of the Marché 010. Here, the organization
of the hall seems to be unsatisfactory for the creation of a sense of place and conviviality if there is a
lack of cooperation with the other stakeholders of the place. This can prove to be a challenge, as it
was mentioned before that the development of the public realm is currently driven mostly through
only the initiator. The participants of the placegame show that a wider approach would be beneficial
to create a more lively public realm.

6.3 Reflection and possible improvements
What became clear from the pursued public realm is there is a number of most important aspect of
the development of the food hall that can be described as the main drivers of the public realm. These
are 1. The character of the initiator and his organization, 2. The physical connection the hall could
have in the neighborhood, 3. The social connection the hall could have in the neighborhood and
finally, 4. The concept and role of the hall as an everyday market. Again, like in the previous two
halls, the organization of the hall has a big influence on the public realm. In the Marché 010, this is
physically seen in the multicultural influences within the hall, but also in an intangible way when it
comes to the organization of the process. The initiator really takes an individual approach, while
aiming to create a social connection in the area. His lack of experience in setting up a place like this,
with an associated community of entrepreneurs in the hall and possible stakeholders in the
neighborhood, leads to some questioning whether the pursued social connection and community will
be accomplished. The area manager goes into this by saying: “I hope that he [the initiator]
understands that he has to get a grip on that [building a community], so that eventually it will really
become a place of meaning”. This expression clearly points out the importance of a community and
social attachment to the creation of a meaningful public realm.

The placegame brought out the observations of the users of the space that are not directly
involved in the creation of it. This brought some refreshing insights that would have possible not
been made by the stakeholders in the project. Both observations were valuable however, as the
interviews were a good way to get context around why the public realm has been created the way it
was. Also, the placegame mostly led to insights on the perception of the physical public realm, as it
was designed to look mostly at these aspects. However, it has been shown in interviews in all three
cases that the most important drivers of the public realm are not bound in the tangibility, and that
the physicality is a result of an intangible process.

What the placegame was useful for was to show that the physical realm can be improved by
only very small measures. These measures might be physical, the placegame does give the
opportunity to start working together with involved stakeholders to create a better public realm
together. In this way, the physically oriented placegame can lead to the creation of a tighter
community, as well as to the creation of more liveliness by possibly organizing events together.
7. Discussion

In this chapter, the findings of the empirical research are presented aiming to answer the analytical sub question: “From the perspective of the stakeholders and users of the covered food halls in Rotterdam, what are the drivers of the public that are most important in creating a sense of place and conviviality?” In answering this question, the results of the theoretical questions and the empirical question will be connected to each other.

At the end of the theoretic framework, the most important findings from the theory were listed on how the public realm of a covered food hall can contribute to a sense of place and conviviality. One of these was the need for a balance between use, physical environment & management. Several authors have been writing that it is ultimately the social use of a place that gives that place a meaning, with Carmona calling the physical space a blank space (2010, p. 98) and Canter arguing (1977, p. 158-160) that spaces are the result of a relation between actions, conceptions and physical attributes. Garvin (2016) writes that only because of the combination between the physical environment, the social use and the management and organization behind it the public realm will be attractive and safe to people, paving the way to give the place conviviality and meaning. The analysis of the three covered food halls in Rotterdam has shown that the physical public realm is indeed influenced by several physical, but also non-physical and more activity and organization oriented drivers. Even though the three markets stem from the same inspiration, they fulfill the same function to only a certain extent as they attract different groups of people and have a slightly different range of functions. However, they do share some common drivers behind the public realm. This chapter will go into the drivers of the public realm that are most important in creating a sense of place and conviviality, according to the stakeholders (interviewees) and users (participants of the placegame) of the Rotterdam cases. These insights are connected to the theoretic propositions formulated in the theoretic approach, and together this aims to give insights into in which ways the public realm could possibly be improved to create a higher sense of place and conviviality. Here once again the covered food hall can be seen as a layer of the public realm, as part of it. This makes that the covered food hall itself is a public realm, including all the stalls and possible public or commercial functions in the plinths. Besides the inside area, the space around it in the form of street and squares is also part of the public realm.

The analysis of the interviews with the stakeholders made clear that every case has certain specific drivers, but there is clearly one overlapping and dominating driver that influences the public realm of the covered food hall the most. This seems to be the organizational structure behind the food hall. The three food halls in Rotterdam – once again the Markthal, Fenix Food Factory and Marché 010 – have all been developed by an intrinsically different organization. One thing they have in common to a large extent is that they are privately managed. The Fenix Food Factory is the only hall that is owned by the municipality, but also this hall is a result from a private initiative and has since been privately managed and maintained. In the theoretic background, attention has been drawn to what i.e. Banerjee (2011) and Carmona et. al (2010) have said about public or semi-public places becoming increasingly more privatized over the years. This results in pseudo public spaces, sometimes not open to all or at all time but at the same time resulting in better maintenance and organization of the space and activities than fully public places would offer. One could say that this is applies to all the cases in Rotterdam. The stakeholders have said that the private character of the organizations has
allowed them to in the first place pursue a certain identity, and through this pursue a sense of place and conviviality, and in the second place being able to change this concept if there are reasons to do so. This connects to what Garvin (2016) has said about the public realm only being attractive to visitors if the place is well managed.

Connected to the organizational style is the aim of the development of the halls. During the analysis of the interviews it became very clear that the approach to the pursued concept of the food halls is a natural result from the organization behind the hall, influencing the ultimate sense of place and conviviality. From the theoretic background it did not became apparent how big the influence is compared to the results of the respondents. Interestingly, stakeholders of all cases have said that at the core, their aims were all very similar: trying to create a public place centered around food and liveliness, inspired by covered markets in southern Europe. Pursuing this kind of concept has a high likeliness of pursuing a convivial food space, according to amongst others Parham, 2008 and Kurland & Aleci, 2015. The most important result of the analysis is the extent to which the organization behind the development of the concept has influenced the eventual public realm of the different covered food halls, creating a gap between the pursued and perceived public realm and sense of place and conviviality. To strengthen this point, it would be best to go into the three cases separately to attain the best understanding of this driver of the public realm. The Markthal will be discussed first, after which the Fenix Food Factory and Marché 010 will be discussed and compared to the Markthal to reflect on the differences between the cases. In doing so, other drivers of the public realm that are related to the organization of the respective covered food halls will be discussed.

To start off with the Markthal, this project has from the start been characterized as a high-scale development with a series of attached stakeholders that included the municipality, project developers and investment companies. The aim of the development of the Markthal was twofold, and this has influenced the eventual public realm to a high degree. Besides wanting the create a covered food hall inspired by the Southern European examples, the idea was to create a building that was an icon and a new carrier of local identity in this particular, previously ‘faceless’, area of the city. The hall has eventually become an imposing example of (st)architecture, putting the physical building over the functional use of the space. This is contractionary with what many authors (Oldenburg, 1999; Oldenburg & Brissett, 1982; Morales, 2011; Kurland & Aleci, 2015) have said about the fact that a sense of place and place attachment is most likely to occur in everyday places with the feeling of normality. In the case of the Markthal, the aim of creating an icon has resulted in the fact that the building does not speak to the real Rotterdammers and now has the image of being a tourist place. This relates back to what was argued in the theoretic framework about the fine line between authenticity and staged experiences. Tiemann (2008) argues about the risk of places becoming constructed experiences when they become predictable and repetitive, and when they won’t promote the local cultural identity anymore. Campelo et. al. (2014) adds that sense of place is based on the inherent uniqueness of a place. It seems that the respondents think this has not completely succeeded in the Markthal, and the Rotterdammers feel that the Markthal is a constructed experience instead of a natural result of the creation of a public realm based on the location’s unique characteristics. This is tied to the nature of the organization behind the hall, which has approached the Markthal as a commercial and investment object instead of a truly public space. This has led to the fact that the Markthal is seen as an individual entity, separated from the outer urban grid and public realm. The focus on the physical public realm instead of the use of the place by the
organization behind the hall has led to an inflexibility of the realm. The Markthal has been named by one of the stakeholders as an “inflexible statement”, meaning that the physicality is so predominant and fixed that flexibility is hard to achieve. Going back to the theory however, Kurland & Aleci (2015) and urbact Markets (2015) emphasize the importance of having flexibility in order to be able to provide space for special social and cultural activities, both inside and out, which would increase one’s attachment and identification with the place. Conclusively it can be said that the commercial organization and their physical focus on the hall, seen as separated from its urban environment, have led to a public realm that has not fulfilled its potential when it comes to adding a sense of place and conviviality to the city.

When looking at the next case of the Fenix Food Factory, it is clear to see that the aim of this concept, and the organization behind it, are very different from the Markthal. Instead of creating a highly thought-through and commercial building, carrying a sense of area development on the long run, the Fenix Food Factory can be described as a temporary concept developed by a small team of entrepreneurs. It is this approach, in which the entrepreneurs inside the hall are also the initiators and organization behind the hall, that has led to a rather successful public realm when it comes to a sense of place and conviviality. It is striking that even though the Fenix Food Factory lacks the long-term strategy, financial possibilities and intensive development of a masterplan that characterizes the development of the Markthal, the organic process of co-creation of the hall has led to a more satisfactory result. One of the reasons behind this is according to the stakeholders the flexibility, both in organization and in the physicality of the public realm. The public realm has constantly been adapted to fit the wishes of the visitors, which was possible because of the initial success and the low financial investments that were made to adapt to initial industrial building towards a public place. The flexibility in the physical public realm shows for instance in the way the units were shaped but also in the sitting areas in the middle of the hall, which is open for rearranging according to the visitors’ wishes. Mehta & Bosson (2010) and Garvin (2016) connect flexibility in sitting areas in food areas directly to identification of a place, and place attachment. This common sitting area is again the result of the organization and the temporary character of the hall. The group of entrepreneurs form a foundation that together takes care of maintenance and the main ideas for the public realm, but the food hall is eventually a big collection of separate entrepreneurs. This shows in the public realm in the personalization of the hybrid zones of the different units. Mehta and Bosson (2010) named a number of characteristics that support human use and interaction in the transition zone, or hybrid zone, among which the personalization of the front of the street front, or in this case of the stalls or units. The entrepreneurs in the Fenix Food Factory have personalized their stalls as much as possible, showing that even though they form a collective they are still independent entrepreneurs. This is very different from the Markthal, and also for the Marché 010, where the personalization is much less and only takes place within predetermined frameworks. However, it is again the difference in the organization of the hall that has led to this, as the Fenix Food Factory is the only hall in which the entrepreneurs are also the board or organizers of the public realm of the hall. Even though the perceived public realm can be described as adding to a sense of place and conviviality, it can be argued that this is also the result of a process of opportunism and good timing. It has become clear that the initiators have developed the public realm without a real plan, and the hall is more a result of smart entrepreneurialism and making use of the moment than the intention of creation a vibrant public realm.
The third case of Marché 010 again has a different organization than the previous two halls, and the aim slightly differs as well. In this case, the organization has centered around one initiator that brings all the different entrepreneurs together to fill the food hall, of which the concept was developed by the initiator himself. Inspired by the same Mediterranean covered markets as the other two cases, the aim of the Marché 010 is to stay closest to the traditional idea of a market, and the stakeholders put emphasis on the fact that it has to be inclusive and open for all customers of all backgrounds. Parham (2008) and Gonzalez & Waley (2012) have pointed to the fact that the risk of a covered food hall is that it might speak to a certain middle age group of consumers only, selling an image of exclusiveness, resulting in the fact that the hall slowly gentrifies it’s direct surroundings. The stakeholders of Marché 010 argue that this is the opposite feeling of their aim for the food hall. They, and the stakeholders of the other two halls, admit that the other two halls do contribute to an image of gentrification of exclusiveness. The initiators of Marché 010 explicitly mention the fact that they want to be open for everybody, and focus on the multicultural character of the neighborhood. The initiator himself lives in the neighborhood and has a Moroccan background, making this choice very natural. With the food hall, they aim to connect the neighborhood both socially and physically, and can therefore be seen as a generator of a bigger change. Marché 010 has not opened yet so it cannot be taken for granted, but the initiators are planning on organizing different events every month both inside and outside in the adjoining public space. The building itself could form a physical connection between different parts of the neighborhood, and the initiators aim to use the events to connect the neighborhood on a social level. This is what several authors have stated about the basic function of a market in general, fulfilling the function of both a space for shopping and consuming as well as for meeting and connecting socially (i.e. Kurland & Aleci, 2015; Urbact Markets, 2015; Johnson, 2013; Groenendaal, 2016; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). However, the process of development and organization so far can be described as very self-centered around the initiator, and not inclusive when it comes to co-creation of the public realm. In this respect, the pursued social connection is not yet found in the organization of the hall that has proved to be crucial in the perceived public realm, which might be worrisome. When it comes to physical connection, the Marché 010 aims really connect two parts of the neighborhood by offering a transparent passageway. Dovey & Symons (2004) emphasized the importance of transparency in creating a visual extension of the outside onto the street and the other way around. The higher the transparency, the better the connection between the inside and outside parts of the public realm. Interestingly, all halls in Rotterdam were based around the idea of creating a passageway, making the food hall just a covered part of the urban grid of public. This however has not happened out of organizational reasons in the other two halls, as well as physical objections in the case of the connection between the Fenix Food Factory. These physical objections do not count in the case of the Marché 010, so the level of success of having the hall be a carrier of connection depends on a smooth organization and governance, in which building a network in the neighborhood is key, yet not fully promising in the case of this hall.

Concludingly, it would be useful to refer back to the drivers of sustainability developed by PPS (2009), mentioned in the theoretic framework. These consist of five drivers of sustainability in the public space, namely: economic, social, ecological, cultural and political. As discussed, these drivers cover most of the theoretic and empirical stances on the contribution of the public realm to conviviality and a sense of place. From the theory, it seemed like the social and cultural drivers of the public realm were the most important. However, it can be said that the biggest driver of the public realm of covered food halls has turned out to be the organization, or governance, behind the respective hall.
that would categorize as the political driver as mentioned above. Although intangible, the type of organization and their aims influence all the other aspects – tangible and intangible – of the public realm. This was not apparent to most of the interview respondents, and has not been emphasized enough in the theoretic framework. Interestingly, here it can be seen that the food hall in which the organization is in the hands of the entrepreneurs of the hall itself can be labeled as having the public realm with the highest sense of place and conviviality. This is the case in the Fenix Food Factory, where the personal attachment of the organizers, or board, to the functioning of the public realm has resulted in a space with a high degree of personalization, flexibility and commonality, all aspects that have been theoretically referred to as crucial when it comes to creating a sense of place and conviviality. This shows the interconnectedness between the main drivers on a more abstract level, organization and aim, and the elements of the public realm on a more tangible, lower level. Therefore, improvements to the public realm that could be made are inherently related to the organization of the hall. The five types of drivers that can be recognized are all linked together, and it is therefore hard to change one of the drivers of the public realms while the others stay the same.
8. Conclusion

This conclusion aims to answer the main question of this research:

“What are the drivers of the public realm of covered food halls that are most important in the creation of a convivial public realm and a sense of place, and how can this be used to improve the public realm?”

It has become clear that there is a number of drivers of the public realm that influence the creation of conviviality and a sense of place, and these are all connected to each other. These drivers all relate to different aspects of the public realm, and can be distinguished into different categories that have been introduced in the theoretic background: economic, social, cultural and political. There are important drivers of the public realm in each of these categories, however it can be concluded that there is one overarching driver which influences all the others. This one can be found in the political category, and is the organization behind the covered food hall. This intangible driver has proved to influence the tangible public realm and the use of the public realm the most.

The three analyzed covered food halls have all been slightly different in their concept and public realm, and this can be linked to the different characteristics of the organization and their aims behind the halls. Comparing these three halls, one could argue that the organization of the Markthal can be characterized as a big scale, commercially driven organization in which an investment company governs the hall, aiming to create a commercial, food-centered space in an iconic and high-investment but inflexible building slightly alienated from its surrounding urban grid. The organization of the Fenix Food Factory is almost the opposite, consisting of a collective of entrepreneurs that both governs the hall and exploit their own individual units within the hall. The temporary and low-investment initiative aims to create a food and people centered place in a formerly run-down building and neighborhood. The third case of Marché 010 has an organization that is run by a single individual who aims to create a binding factor within the neighborhood, both physically and socially, by creating an everyday covered market with a multicultural yet individually run approach.

Interestingly, it has been the Fenix Food Factory with its relatively spontaneous and low-investment set up that can be characterized as the covered food hall with the most convivial public realm, having the highest sense of place. Crucial here is that the organization of the Fenix Food Factory is made up of the entrepreneurs inside the hall, which is not the case in the other two halls. The organization behind the Fenix Food Factory is one of co-creation and the place was created in an organic process, in which the public realm was changed to make better use of the place after visitor numbers grew and more entrepreneurs got involved. The organization allows this sort of co-creation and flexibility to take place, as all the entrepreneurs in the hall together choose which direction they want to go, and through this are able to show a sense of personal belonging and passion, while at the same time aiming to create a common message to the visitor of the identity of the Fenix Food Factory as a collective food hall.

The organization behind the Markthal follows a more strict way of organizing like the one described above. This hall had the aim to become an icon, and the high investment costs has asked for a commercial organization being able to control the high-investment object. Result however is that the public realm does not function in the first place as a convivial public realm, contributing to a
sense of place. However, the public realm has resulted in a relatively un-personal and commercial shopping hall. The organization is done by one investment company, leaving the entrepreneurs in the hall not sufficiently connected to create a convivial public realm together.

The organization of the third covered food hall, Marché 010, is again of another nature in which there is one initiator that is in control of the a group of entrepreneurs and the design of the public realm. Although the initiator has emphasized that working on this together with all stakeholders both in- and outside of the hall, the final decisions are taking by him. However, the entrepreneurs have a relatively high amount of freedom of personalization of their stalls, and the public realm outside is being driven by trying to organize other events besides the daily food market inside.

It can be concluded that the political driver of the organization has been the most important in characterizing the public realm of covered food halls. The other drivers that have been of importance to the creation of a sense of place and conviviality have all been intrinsically linked to the organization behind the hall. The economical driver of the public realm refers to the entrepreneurship inside the hall, and as discussed the type of organization has an influence on the entrepreneurship itself, and the personal attachment both entrepreneurs and visitors can make with the place. When it comes to the social drivers of public, it can be seen that the aim of the organization has a big influence on the effects of the public realm on the visitors. The less commercially driven and the more personally-attached the organization is to the governance and use of the halls, the more space there seems to be for elements in the public realm that increase a sense of place and conviviality, indicating a relation between a form of social entrepreneurship and a sense of place and conviviality. These are elements such as a common sitting area, flexibility in the use of the public realm both inside and outside of the hall, and transparency of the hall when it comes to connecting the outside urban grid through the structure of the hall, that have all proven to be important in strengthening the identity of the place and the attachment of the visitor towards that place. In that sense, these physical elements also prove to be important cultural drivers of the public realm as they turn these spaces into important cultural places where people meet and like to spend time, and where a local (food) culture is strengthened. Again, the aim and character of the organization has a big influence on the extent to which this becomes reality. Finally, the ecological driver of the public realm has been of least importance, though it can be said that the use of the hall may create the opportunity to promote a more sustainable lifestyle. This has however not been an important element of the public realm in the three cases.

The previous paragraphs have shown the most important drivers of the public realm that create a higher sense of place and conviviality. However, there is a risk that some of the drivers that have been mentioned before become drivers of exclusiveness and gentrification. The concept of the covered food hall is a logical result of societal developments that have created a consumption economy in which an authentic experience is key. The risk is that the public realm of the covered food hall communicates only this message, and therefore excluding an activity and target group focused on using the hall for the everyday activities such as grocery shopping. It has been seen that the public realm of the covered food halls in Rotterdam tend to sell an image of exclusiveness or hipness, therefore excluding groups such as local, traditional consumers that do not take part in the consumption culture of the middle class. A part of the explanation for this, as seen from the cases in Rotterdam, is the absent link with the surroundings of the halls, both physically and culturally. The
covered food halls represent a food culture of enjoying food and using food to socially with people, which is a culture that does not match with the traditional Dutch food culture. Besides that, the physical link between the public realm within the food halls and the public realm outside of the halls has been lacking in the cases in Rotterdam, making the halls separate entities within their physical realm instead of being part of the urban grid. During this thesis, the focus has gradually gone more to the inside realm, resulting in a lock of attention towards ways of connecting covered food halls with their environment. It would be valuable if further research would attain more insight in ways in which the connection with the local environment, both physically and culturally, could be improved to be able to create know how to create a wider public realm around the food halls that is attractive to a bigger amount of people.

This research has focused on finding the most important drivers of the public realm in order to create a sense of place and conviviality. Besides using in-depth interviews, the placegame method developed by PPS has been applied. The method was developed to be the start of a process of building a local community to improve a public place. The data collection that is part of the game has been useful and valuable in this research, although the in-depth interviews have turned out to be more useful and would have led to the same results as if the placegame method had not been used. Besides that, the intrinsic goal of starting a wider process of community building and implementing physical improvements that is usually initiated after the placegame itself is however not optimally useful in a scientific research. A more fitting approach could have been a similar process but only focused on data collection. In order to make the placegame method more appropriate for scientific purposes, further research could be done to evolve the method to create a more useful approach. The method is in the end useful in getting insights into possible improvements to the public realm, however these are focused heavily on the superficial physical public realm. This has not sufficiently met the second part of the research question of this research which focusses on how to improve the public realm to create a higher sense of place and conviviality. The placegame and the interviews have given insights into the most important drivers which are the key to improving the public realm, there is a lack of real strategies on how to improve the public realm. It would be valuable for future research to focus on this. Most notably this research could focus on the different sorts of organizations and ways of governing covered food halls to find out more delicately how the relation between intangible organization and tangible public realm works, as it has been found that current research on the public realm of covered food halls focusses more on the tangible aspects. In this, the previously discussed cultural and physical contexts are important to create a public realm to connects to, and matches with, the local environment and population, which has been an important challenge in the cases discussed in this research.
References


List of interviewees

Markthal:
1. Process manager at the City of Rotterdam – 3 May 2017 at an office in the municipality building De Rotterdam, Wilhelminakade, Rotterdam
2. Local entrepreneur and member of business association for the Markthal – 3 May 2017 at a café in the Markthal, Dominee Jan Scharpstraat, Rotterdam
3. Manager of the Markthal, employed by owner Kléppiere – 23 May 2017 at an office in the Markthal, Dominee Jan Scharpstraat, Rotterdam

Fenix Food Factory:
1. Architect employed by an Rotterdam architecture office – 3 April 2017, at an office in ZoHo, Rotterdam
2. Employee at the department of project development at the City of Rotterdam – 10 May 2017 at a café in the Fenix Food Factory, Veerlaan, Rotterdam
3. Initiator and local entrepreneur at the Fenix Food Factory – 8 June 2017, at an office in the Fenix Food Factory, Veerlaan, Rotterdam

Marché 010:
1. Initiator & assistant – 4 May 2017, at the STIPO office in ZoHo, Rotterdam
2. Area manager at the City of Rotterdam – 17 May 2017, at the STIPO office in ZoHo, Rotterdam
3. Local entrepreneur and member of area community ZoHo citizens – 15 May 2017, at an office in ZoHo, Rotterdam

Fenix Food Factory & Marché 010:
1. Concept developer for Fenix Food Factory and Marché 010 – 1 June 2017, on a terrace in ZoHo, Rotterdam
List of Figures


5. The location of the Markthal – Google maps and private editing


8. The location of the Fenix Food Factory – source: Google maps and private editing


11. The location of the Marché 010 – source: Google maps and private editing

12. Outside of the Marché 010 – source: private material

13. Inside of the Marché 010 – source: private material
APPENDIX I - Placegame form ENGLISH

A Tool for Initiating the Placemaking Process

Place Game

What Makes a Great Place?
Rate the Place:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMFORT &amp; IMAGE</th>
<th>POOR</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall attractiveness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of safety</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness/Quality of Maintenance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort of places to sit</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments/Notes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCESS &amp; LINKAGES</th>
<th>POOR</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visibility from a distance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease in walking to the place</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit access</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of information/signage</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments/Notes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USES &amp; ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>POOR</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mix of stores/services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of community events/activities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall busy-ness of area</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic vitality</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments/Notes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIABILITY</th>
<th>POOR</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people in groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of volunteerism</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of pride and ownership</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of children and seniors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments/Notes:

Identify Opportunities

1. What do you like best about this place?

2. List things that you would do to improve this place that could be done right away and that wouldn’t cost a lot:

3. What changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

4. Ask someone who is in the “place” what they like about it and what they would do to improve it. Their answer:

5. What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed improvements? Please be as specific as possible.
APPENDIX II - Placegame form DUTCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STERK</th>
<th>ZWAK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gemotiveerd in roze</td>
<td>Gemotiveerd zijn in roze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verlangen naar een goed dieet</td>
<td>Verlangen naar een goed dieet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunstmatige kunstenaar</td>
<td>Kunstmatige kunstenaar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**aanwoord:**

1. Wat waarderen u het meeste aan deze plek?

2. Investeren diepen u in deze tekst?

3. Weke veranderingen zoon op lange termijn maken om...

4. Vraag een gebnukker of plekken wat hiit het meeste waarderen aan...

5. Weke Joke en partners, beanghebben of andere...

Verderhouden door Zwierz plants, wees zo speelk moege...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STERK</th>
<th>ZWAK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gemotiveerd in roze</td>
<td>Gemotiveerd zijn in roze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verlangen naar een goed dieet</td>
<td>Verlangen naar een goed dieet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunstmatige kunstenaar</td>
<td>Kunstmatige kunstenaar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**aanwerp:**

1. Wat waarderen u het meeste aan deze plek?

2. Investeren diepen u in deze tekst?

3. Weke veranderingen zoon op lange termijn maken om...

4. Vraag een gebnukker of plekken wat hiit het meeste waarderen aan...

5. Weke Joke en partners, beanghebben of andere...
APPENDIX III – Interview outlines

Interview outline for semi-structured interviews for case 1 – Markthal

1. Could you give a description of your role in the development of the Markthal?
2. With which idea/concept did the development of the Markthal start? How has this changed over time according to you?
3. How would you describe the current identity of the Markthal? And the target group?
4. Which parties were involved in the development of the Markthal?
5. What were the initial ideas for the public space in and around the Markthal? How does this differ from the current, realized state?
6. To which extent have the wishes and ideas of the users (entrepreneurs, residents) been taken into consideration in the development and design of the Markthal?
7. How is the cooperation between the different users of the hall?
8. Which effects has the Markthal brought for the surrounding neighborhood?
9. How does the organization behind the Markthal look like?
10. Is there cooperation when it comes to new chances for the development of the area?
11. What could be improved to improve the functioning of the hall itself?
12. What could be improved to the public space in and around the hall? To create a more attractive identity and image?
13. To which extent are the wishes of the users of the Markthal taken into consideration now when it comes to ideas for changing the hall and surroundings?
14. Have there been initiatives to implement improvements?
15. How do you imagine the future of the Markthal?
16. How do you imagine the future of the public space around the Markthal?
Interview outline for semi-structured interviews for case 2 – Fenix Food Factory

1. Could you give a description of your role in the development of the Fenix Food Factory?

2. With which idea/concept did the development of Fenix Food Factory start? How has this changed over time according to you?

3. How would you describe the current identity of the Fenix Food Factory? And the target group?

4. Which parties were involved in the development of the Fenix Food Factory?

5. What were the initial ideas for the public space in and around the Fenix Food Factory? How does this differ from the current, realized state?

6. To which extent have the wishes and ideas of the users (entrepreneurs, residents) been taken into consideration in the development and design of the Fenix Food Factory?

7. How is the cooperation between the different users of the hall?

8. Which effects has the Fenix Food Factory? brought for the surrounding neighborhood?

9. How does the organization behind the Fenix Food Factory look like?

10. Is there cooperation when it comes to new chances for the development of the area?

11. What could be improved to improve the functioning of the hall itself?

12. What could be improved to the public space in and around the hall? To create a more attractive identity and image?

13. To which extent are the wishes of the users of the Fenix Food Factory taken into consideration now when it comes to ideas for changing the hall and surroundings?

14. Have there been initiatives to implement improvements?

15. How do you imagine the future of the Fenix Food Factory?

16. How do you imagine the future of the public space around the Fenix Food Factory?
Interview outline for semi-structured interviews for case 1 – Marché 010

1. Could you give a description of your role in the development of Marché 010?

2. With which idea/concept did the development of Marché 010 start? Has this changed over time according to you?

3. How would you describe the identity of Marché 010? And the target group?

4. Which parties have been involved in the development of Marché 010?

5. Which were/are the ideas for the public space in and around Marché 010?

6. To which extent have the wishes and ideas of the future tenants of the hall been included in the concept and design of Marché 010 and the public space? And the wishes of others?

7. How is the cooperation between the different users of the hall? Has there been any community building before the opening of the hall?

8. How does the organization behind the Marché 010 look like?

9. How do you imagine the future of Marché 010?

10. How do you imagine the future of the area and space around the hall?