Rediscovering the shopping CENTRE

Bram van de Water

History Thesis

I | The ongoing balconies of the 'Lijnbaanflats' designed by Maaskant, Krijgsma and Bakker

Historical analysis of the shopping centre

1950 – 1975

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typology and its succes in the Netherlands

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ABSTRACT

The ***'shopping centre'*** undergoes significant changes due to new social demands and requirements of people. Where large American shopping malls face a consumerist crisis, neighbourhood shopping centres are on the rise in the Netherlands. A combination of complex urban planning concepts, and key building characteristic such as the ***'human scale', 'accessibility', and 'integration'*** into a coherrent environment generate the success of these places. This history thesis provides a framework where the ***'bad name'*** of the shopping centre can be rediscovered.

It begins with an in depth research on **urban planning** to provide a foundation for understanding the idea behind the shopping mall typology. Next, it will discuss the **history of the American Shopping Mall**, since the origin of the Dutch Shopping Centre can be traced back to this typology. After the historical analysis of the American Mall, a **spatial analysis** will be made to understand the building characteristics of these typologies. Ending with the **history and success of the shopping centre in the Netherlands**

II | A sense of community in Kalamazoo shopping centre (1960)

CONTENT

III | Aerial view of Southdale shopping mall, Edina, Minesota (1956)

1 INTRODUCTION

''Seen from above, the mall resembles an ungainly pile of oversized boxes plunked down in the middle of an enormous asphalt sea, surrounded by an endless landscape of single-family houses.''
(Crawford, 1992, p. 3)

Stepping into this typology, often covering an area of multiple acres, a new world emerged consisting of spectacle, attractions and diversions. This implausible fantasy world is based on a scenario where the shopping mall contains the entire world within its boundaries (Crawford, 1992, p. 4). The goods that are presented and the activities that are included inside these malls reflect everything the world has to offer from restaurants to indoor water parks or a 360-room hotel.

Through time, consumption based architecture became a part of European cities. The Greeks used the Agora as a marketplace, the Republican Forum was the commercial centre of Rome, in Medieval times, winding streets directed people towards nearby Piazza's that were filled with different shops, during the Renaissance these Piazza's were given a more monumental and religious scale, and during the baroque period, Plazas were created with a more religious function (Rubenstein, 1992, p. 4-8). These places, either in the open air or covered, weren't just used for consumption, but also facilitated governmental functions and places of assembly. They occurred in between the houses of the city, and became a meeting place where various activities took place that improved the social environment. One of the earliest examples of purely consumption based architecture in the form of a mall occurred in Essen, Germany (1926), where a street dominated by vehicles got renovated into a pedestrian mall (Rubenstein, 1992, P. 15). Simultaneously, pedestrianized concepts arose in the United States, like Hugh Ferriss's 1929 vision for North American cities to separate the pedestrian and automobile traffic, or the proposal of Morris Ketcheum in 1940 to transform Main Streets into pedestrianized retail blocks (Gregg, 2019, p. 552).

The character of the United States pedestrian mall is the product of the existing European Agora and Piazza, where people can come together and relax (Rubenstein, 1992, P. 17). Unlike Europe, the concept of the mall as an individual spatial building got accepted quickly into American urban planning, but without a widespread policy, these suburban shopping malls faced a consumerist crisis that not only led to neglected city centres, but transformed malls into 'zombie-like dead malls' (Marchi, 2017, p. 76). The Dutch took the emergence of the shopping mall in the United States partly as a warning, and partly as an example to improve city planning (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 23). To integrate the shopping centre properly into the original city, the Dutch government implemented meeting points, shorter walking distances and local shops into their shopping centre design. In addition, the Dutch shopping centre typologies were often integrated into residential districts (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 23).

According to the research of Colliers International, the amount of neighbourhood shopping

centres in the Netherlands has grown with 6,6% since 2004 (Rosian & Pustjens, 2020, p. 3). The compactness of Dutch cities in combination with relatively high land costs, resulted in a shopping centre typology that was used to take care of the city and its residents, instead of exploiting them for commerce (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 24). Instead of offering just physical products, they created places of social interaction and community that could not be offered online (Rtl Nieuws, 2020). These area's undergo significant changes due to new social demands and requirements of people. Therefore, it is worthwhile to re-examine, rediscover, reconsider and reinterpret the original design and theoretical work of the shopping centre in the Netherlands. This will be done by means of the following research question:

''To what extent does the Dutch shopping centre differ from the history of the shopping mall typology and how can we explain its success?''

The body of the history thesis consists of four parts, each representing a main step towards answering the research question. After this introduction, chapter two provides the background knowledge required for the understanding of urban planning in the late nineteenth and twentieth century, which lays the base for the realisation of the shopping centre typology. In chapter three, the history of the shopping centre will be interpreted and evaluated in order to understand its characteristics and explain why some failed, while others succeeded. In chapter four, the American mall typology will be analysed in order to identify the fundamental base of the Dutch shopping centre typology. In chapter five, the development of the Dutch shopping centre is shown, on the hand of two visited case studies: de Lijnbaan and de Boogaard, which will be used to find differences between the two typologies. In the concluding part of the history thesis, an answer is developed which shows the characteristics of the Dutch shopping centre in the overall history of the shopping centre typology, and thereby tries to formulate an explanation for its success.

IV | Residential housing blocks surrounding the Boogaard shopping mall in Rijswijk

2 URBAN PLANNING IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Chapter outline
In this chapter, historical aspects concerning urban planning during the twentieth century in Europe and the United States, the ideas of the CIAM and Victor Gruen will be explained. The main focus will be on the concept of the Functional City, the Heart of the City, and the Anti-City which will be the base for chapter three.

2.1 The emergence of urban planning

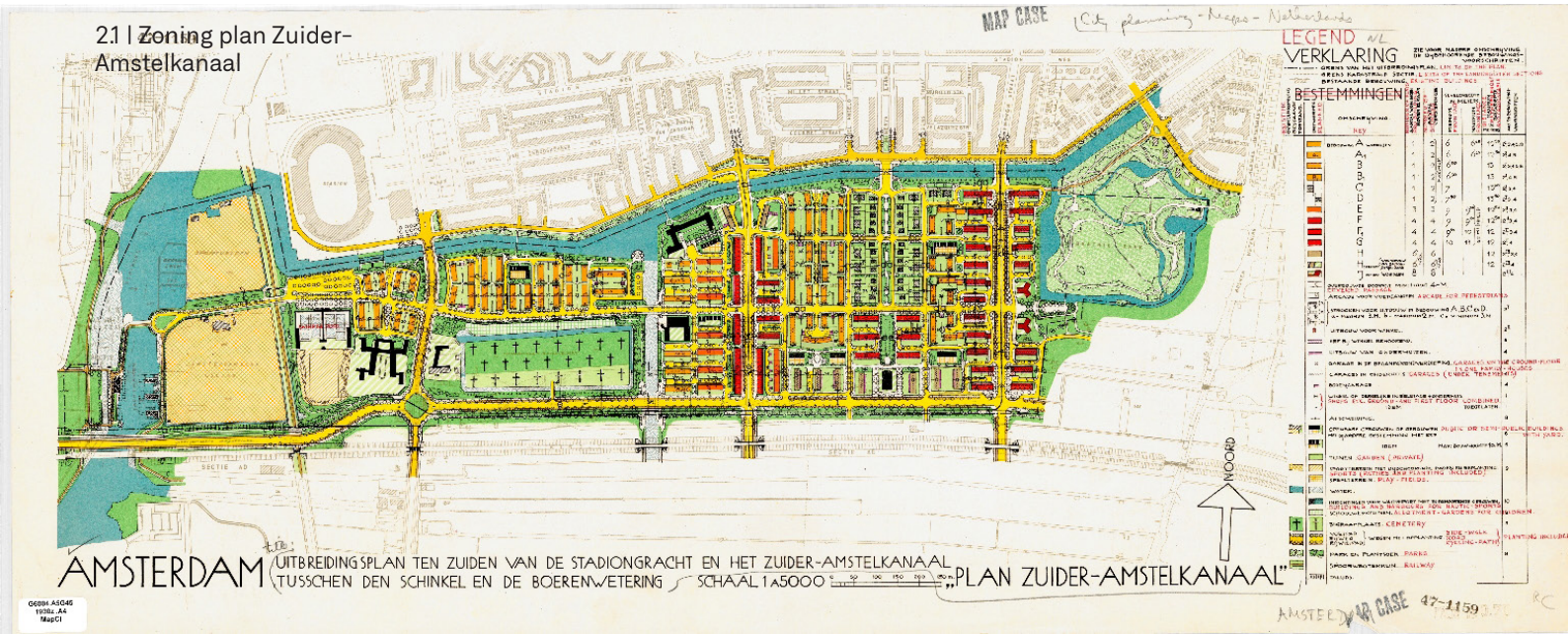
At the beginning of the twentieth century, urban planning and administration of satellite cities were in their infancy in both Europe and the United States (Hourihan, 2000, p. 385). The history of urban planning in these two continents can grant insight into the development of twentieth century societies (Guerra, 2018, p. 2).

2.1.1 Europe

It wasn't until the late nineteenth century when European cities started to implement the concept of 'town planning' or 'urban planning' for complex satellite cities (Hall, 1997, p. 8). These concepts were used to systematically guide the enormous town expansion of cities , and often consisted of rational block divisions that were placed in rectilinear street networks (Hall, 1997, p. 52). In countries such as Germany and the Netherlands, 'Development Plans' started to emerge between 1940 and 1950, with the goal of bringing 'rule and order' to the city (Faludi, 1991, p. 69). These plans were often made by the government and consisted of principles and rules, which governed the process of urban development in the city. They provided citizens with legal certainty the land would be divided equally, and private investments would be coordinated (Healey, P & Williams, R, 1993, p. 703). Eventually, these plans were translated into zoning plans and ordinances, which gave property owners the possibility to develop according to the created plans and building norms that were setup by the government.

2.1.2 The United States

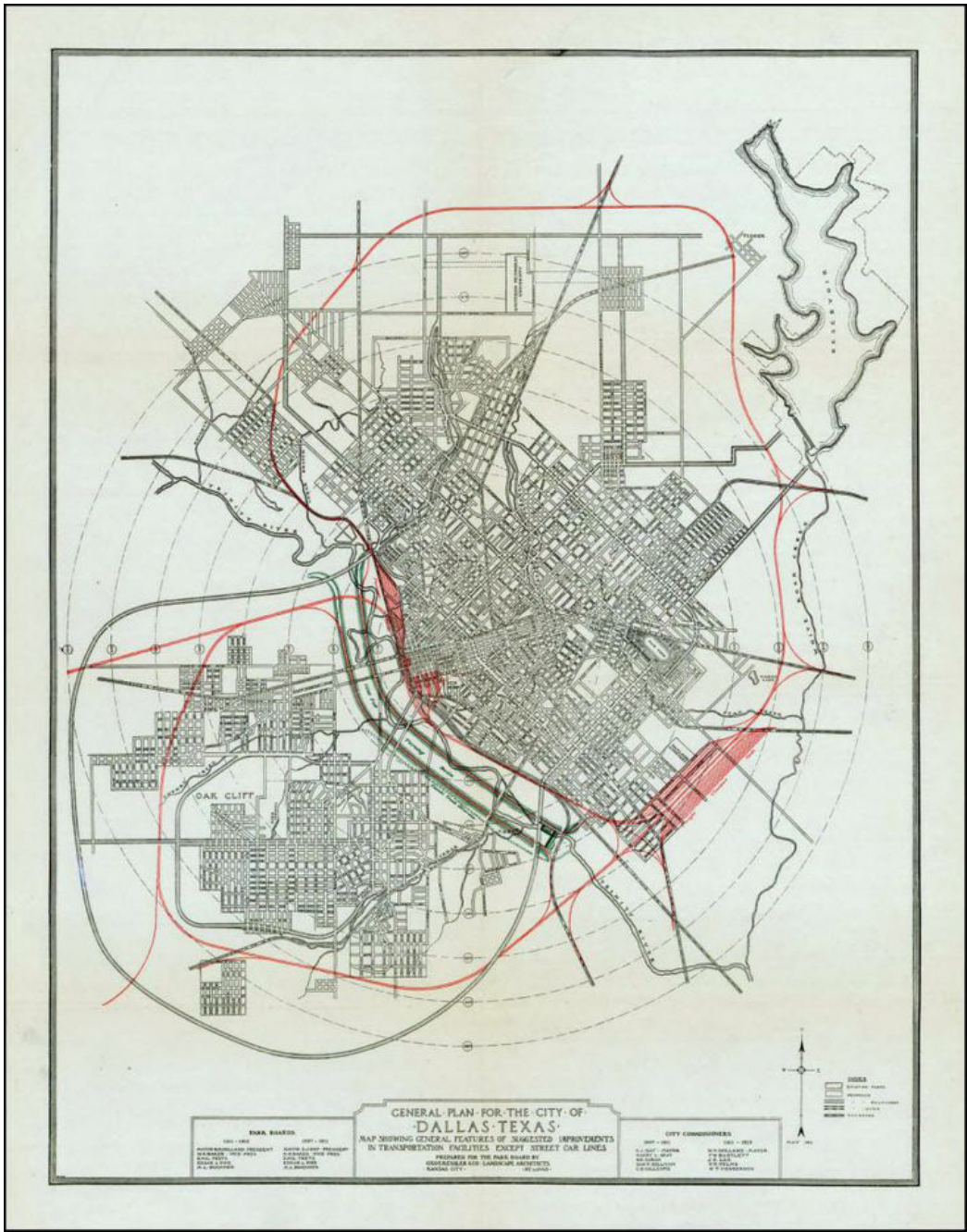
Similarly to Europe, the concept of 'town planning'



2.1 | Zoning plan Zuider-Amstelkanaal

emerged in the United States during the late nineteenth century, and was often executed by city council members who were elected by the city (Hourihan, 2000, p. 385). Between 1865 and 1917, over 25 million people immigrated to the United States, resulting in dense cities with poorly constructed tenements (Gerckens, 1998, p. 12). Big cities such as Dallas invited important American planners to develop a plan for the entire city to rescue them from turning into underdeveloped areas. This resulted in zoning plans such as Kessler' City Plan for Dallas that arose between 1910 and 1930 (Kessler, 1911, p. 5). In this city plan, Kessler had to categorize the ground for the arrangement of new highways, walkways, the location of public buildings and residential housing. But the plan did not offer a solution for the implementation, due to the fact that it was primarily experimental. Around 1930, various groups representing business interest and property owners became active in the urban planning of American cities, which led to large amounts of privately owned ground (Houriha, 2000, p. 386).

2.2 | Kessler's city plan for Dallas (1911)



2.2 The concepts of the CIAM

CIAM, also known as the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne, was founded in 1928 in La Sarraz by a group of European architects (Mumford, 2019, p. 291). They formed a laboratory for progressive ideas concerning the design of the city, and tried to distinguish themselves from traditional urban planning (Domhardt, 2012, p. 173). They worked together during design congresses that were held and tried to determine the directions housing, town planning and regional planning had to take in the modern world.

2.3 | Group photograph of the CIAM congress in La Sarraz

2.2.1 The Functional City

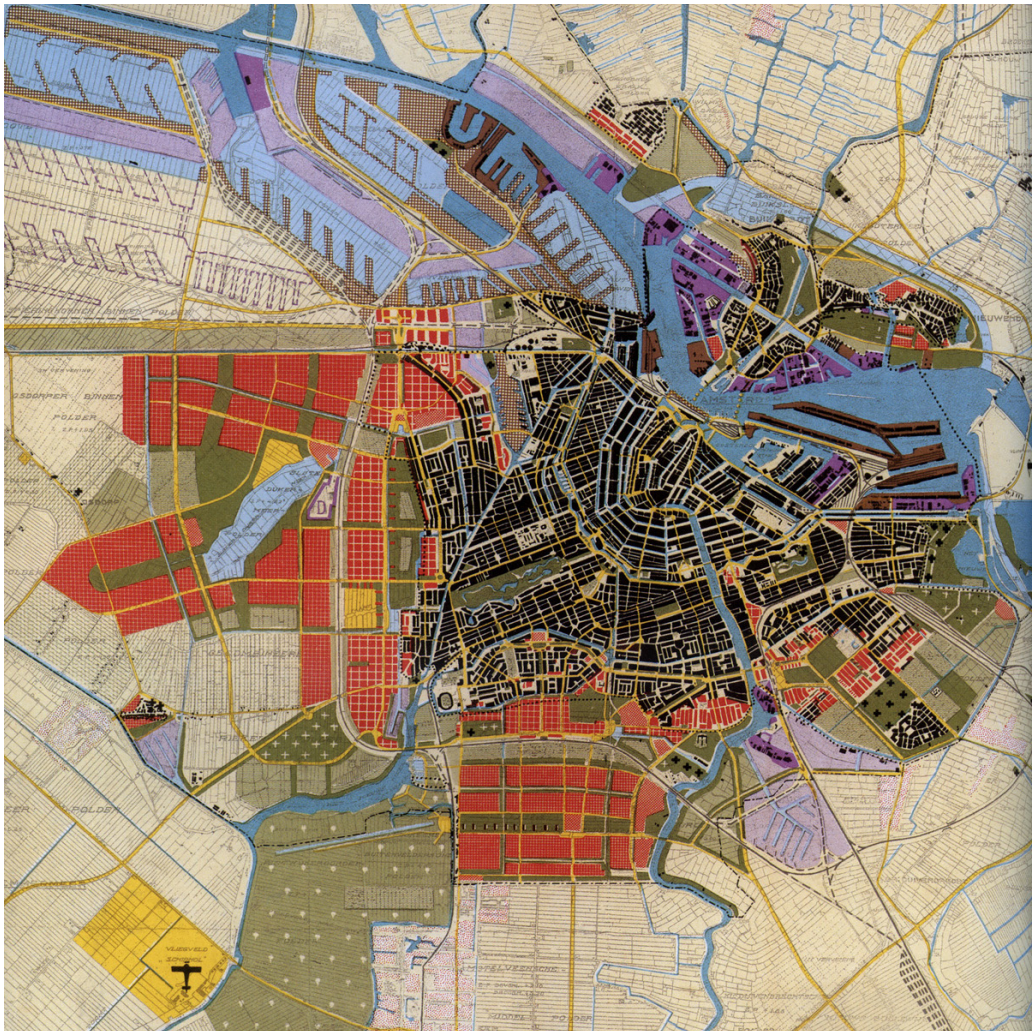
The concept of the Functional City was the product of the fourth congress held by the CIAM on a cruise ship in the Mediterranean. This progressive idea was, according to the CIAM, the best reply on the chaos present in modern cities, which consisted of overcrowded and unsanitary housing conditions (Mumford, 2019, p. 295). The congress resulted into 95 ''Observations'' that were published in the journal of the Technical Chamber of Greece in November 1933, which formed the basis of Le Corbusier's ''Athens Charter'' (Mumford, 2000, p. 73). These observations indicate the problems cities faced at that time, and were categorized into four themes: Habitation, Leisure, Work and Traffic. The observations state that the introduction of the machine disrupted the life in the city. (Corbusier, et Al. 1941, p. 48). The living conditions inside these cities were of very poor quality, open spaces where people could meet disappeared and were covered with buildings, industrial expansion had been unstable due to illogical regulation and the traffic network had not been able to adapt to the introduction of mechanized vehicles (Corbusier, et Al. 1941, p. 54–80).

To save the environment of existing cities from ''*leprous suburbs*,'' Le Corbusier emphasized that dwelling had to be the base of the new hierarchy in which cities would be organized, consisting of four functions: dwelling, work, transportation and recreation (Mumford, 2000, p. 79). The origin of this idea was derived from Van Eesteren and Mulder's Amsterdam planning concept. They argued that functional elements of the city such as collective recreation spaces and large factories could be organized by means of housing and efficient transportation routes (Mumford, 2019, p. 294). Van Eesteren and Mulder joined the idea of Le Corbusier to replace ''*obsolete*'' urban districts with new highways and high-rise housing (van Eesteren, 1928, p. 80). In Europe the concept of the Functional City improved housing conditions within larger metropolitan areas. In the United States, this concept led to the widespread use of zoning ordinances that mandated suburban environments of single family dwellings, which were separated from commercial and industrial uses (Mumford, 2019, p. 295). The concept of the functional city was used to show the problem and complexity of these cities and enabled the CIAM to systematically recode the city (Domhardt, 2012, p. 182).

2.2.2 The Heart of the City

After their fourth congress in Athens, and especially after World War II, the CIAM continued working on the development and improvement of urban city planning (Tyrwhitt et. Al, 1952, p. 3). The full mechanization of the world, which was the product of both World Wars, penetrated the world in one sweep and suddenly entered peoples life with its full impact (Giedion, 1948, p. 41). Because of the fast mechanization of that time, the CIAM felt that there was more need for integrated and coordinated city planning (Tyrwhitt et. Al, 1952, p. 4). The observations that were made during their fourth congress were the starting point for their study on the heart of the city, which was the eight congress held by the C.I.A.M in Hoddesdon.

The Heart of the City illustrates a shift from the functional division of the city into the comprehensive idea of an anthropological city with a central heart that became the centre of new humanism (Marchi, 2016, p. 2). The suburban expansion, because of new transportation methods, full mechanization and unregulated urban planning, resulted in deserted city cores and congested business and industrial areas outside the city (Tyrwhitt et. Al, 1952, p. 4). To stop this decentralisation, new cores had to be created and the growth of the future city had to be limited to a centralized structure, that is constructed in manageable units within a hierarchical system (Domhardt, 2012, p. 192). This study became a counterforce on the zoning method of the Athens Charter and the rational methods of the functional city.



2.4 | Extension plan of Amsterdam by van Eesteren and Mulder (1934)

2.5 | Piazza San Marco, Venice, by Saul Steinberg (1951)

Apparently there was a need for the humanisation of the environment, and the core was the solution to bring back the human scale and the connection between the individual and the city (Giedion, 1952, p. 17). But how do you define the architecture of the core?

''We must try to define the kind of space that is able to grow into a Core. It must be in the strategic centre of the town, a place chosen by the people themselves, hallowed by use. It must be preserved from being built upon and be available for spontaneous manifestations by the populace. Here the individual is king, the pedestrian is his own master, and vehicles are unable to penetrate. In the course of years this space will take on some special form, created by the needs of that particular population, and interpreted by the architects of the time.''

Sert (New York), (Tyrwhitt et. Al, 1952, p. 36).

The Heart of the City, or the Core, is a place where men can walk freely, undistracted by warning signs or traffic, it is the element that brings individuals together and eventually makes a community (Tyrwhitt et. Al, 1952, p. 160). To breathe life into the new city cores, a new space had to be created that would be in constant use and wherein the visitor has the opportunity to give form and expression to its inner feelings. According to the CIAM, the core consisted out of the following needs:

1. That there should only be one main Core in each city.
2. That the Core is an artifact – a man-made thing.
3. That the Core should be a place secure from traffic – where the pedestrian can move about freely
4. That cars should arrive and park on the periphery of the Core, but not cross it.
5. That uncontrolled commercial advertising – such as appears in the Cores of many cities today – should be organised and controlled.
6. That varying (mobile) elements can make an important contribution to animation at the Core, and that the architectural setting should be planned to allow for the inclusion of such elements.
7. That in planning the Core the architect should employ contemporary means of expression and – whenever possible – should work in cooperation with painters and sculptors.

(Tyrwhitt et. Al, 1952)

2.3 The Anti-City

In his book, The Heart of our Cities, Architect Victor Gruen describes the decentralized city as an Anti-City, a *''never-never land, which is neither city, town, village nor countryside, but something that punishes us by harbouring the disadvantages of all know patterns of human habitation [...]''* (Gruen, 1964, p. 63).

In the Anti-City, the condition of the heart – the Core described by CIAM 8 – is often seriously affected and the surrounding urban area has been damaged (Gruen, 1964, p. 83). According to Gruen, the characteristics of a healthy heart of the city should have high vitality, a compact arrangement of functions, good utilities such as electricity, possibilities for core activities such as working, dwelling, shopping, participating in social, cultural and recreational events and good accessibility (Gruen, 1964, p. 84). It should be a place where people meet each other and value the intimate contact with the urban features of the surroundings. One of the needs of the Heart of the City, according to chapter 21.2 *The Heart of the City*, is the fact that it should be made by mankind. In other words, it is the job of the architect to create order in the emerging chaos of the suburbs (Gruen1, 1955, p. 1). Gruen felt that the only way to create order in the decentralized suburbs, was to integrate commercial and non-commercial activities into one typology and connect them by improving the transportation network (Gruen2, 1955, p.2).

2.6 | Today's pattern of the Anti-City in Los Angeles, California

CONCLUSION

In this chapter it was shown that the concept of urban planning got very important during the early twentieth century. The living conditions of cities all around the world were decreasing due to new transportation methods, full mechanization, a fast urban growth and unregulated urban planning. This resulted in various planning concepts, either provided by the government such as Kessler's City Plan for Dallas, which created new walking spaces and open parks, or provided by organizations such as the CIAM, who designed urban planning concepts such as the Functional City, where cities were divided according to the functions of dwelling, work, recreation and transportation. The principle of the functional city created multiple city cores, which led to the neglection of the original core, the Heart of the City. According to Victor Gruen, the city could only function when it was ordered and possessed one city core. This *Heart* or *Core* should consist of a man made structure that integrated commercial and non-commercial activities into one typology which is connected by an improved network of transportation.

V | Southdale shopping mall by night

VI | Interior composition of Northland shopping mall

VI | Window shop display of women's clothing store Roy H. Bjorkman in Southdale shopping mall

3 The history of the shopping centre

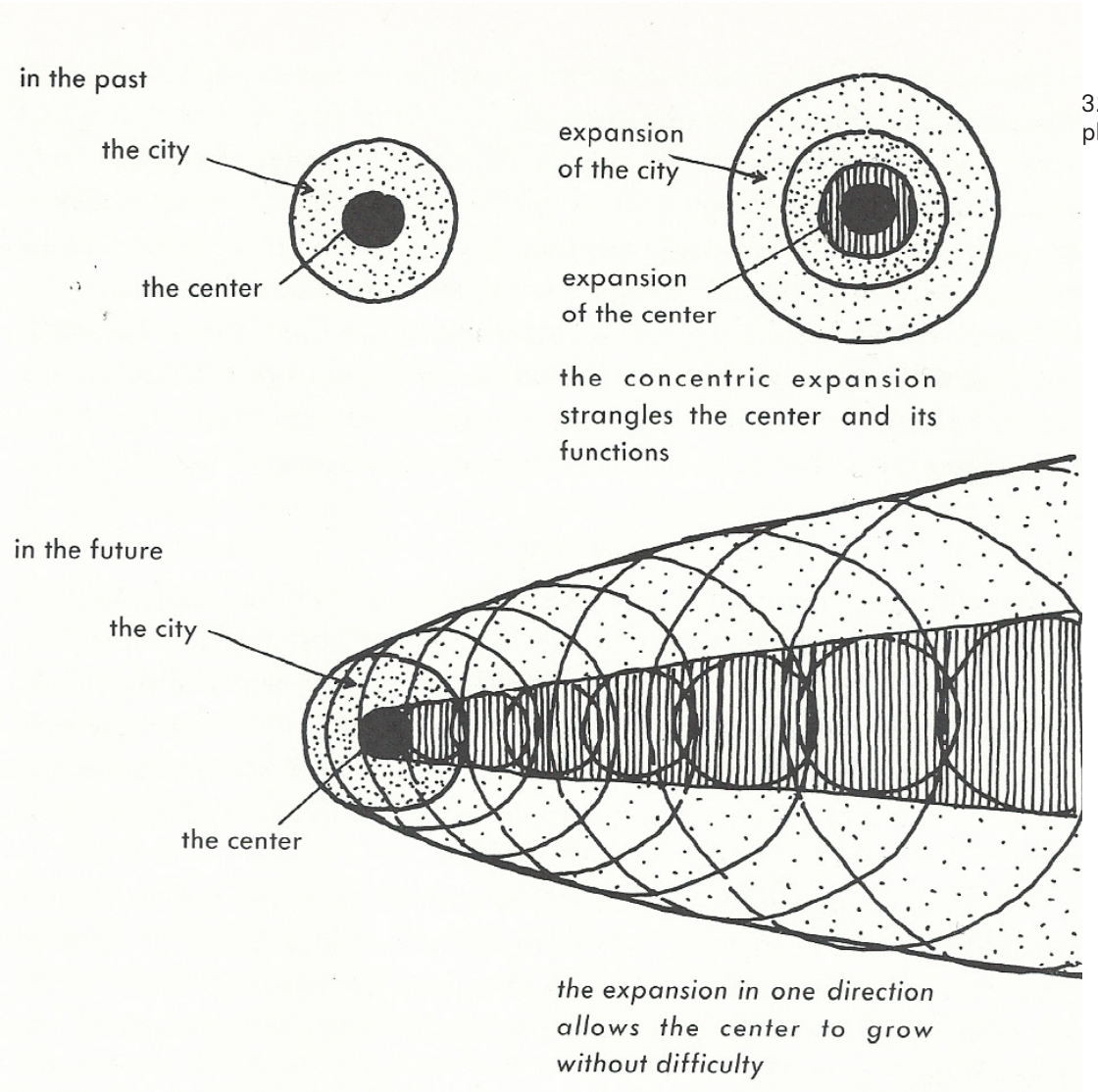
Chapter outline
In the previous chapter, the urban planning concepts of the twentieth century were discussed. In this chapter, historical aspects concerning the American pedestrian mall typology will be explained. The main focus will be on the emergence of this typology, Its successes and failures, and the introduction of pedestrianized concepts.

3.1 The Counterattack

The ongoing urban growth of cities, as described in chapter two, is inevitable, but when urban planning became a serious governmental task, architects and urban planners started to create plans and typologies that could control this everlasting growth.
For example, the Dynapolis concept (1965), by Greek planner Dr. C. A. Doxiadis, who believed that the growth of cities could be organized by creating new urban sectors alongside a linear axis that linked the existing city centre to the outskirts (Theodosis, 2015, p. 168).

But in the overall search for the containment of urban growth, architects and planners often destroyed the existing physical context of urban areas, and thereby eliminated the chance for a truly organized community life that would be in coherence with the landscape, the agricultural land and nature (Gruen, 1964, p. 182). When looking back at the concept of the Heart of the City, as is described in paragraph 2.2.2 *the Heart of the City*, the place where true community life could emerge was inside the city itself. By expanding the city like Doxiadis does in figure 3.1, inhabitants need to travel long distances to visit the urban sector which means that, as described by Hardwick, '*people would squander their days trapped in automobiles*' (Hardwick, 2004, p. 182). A growing dissatisfaction with these automobile-oriented forms of urban planning, which dominated everyday life, arose in the United States, and a shift in urban development was needed (Filion, Kramer & Sands, 2016, p. 658). This new urban development resulted in recentralization concepts, where instead of devoting the Heart of the City to one type of activity, multi-functional clusters of activities had to be created combining retailing, services, institutions and housing (Filion, Kramer & Sands, 2016, p. 667).

According to architect Victor Gruen, elements for such a counterattack on the Anti-City could be found within the city itself, namely the large amount of inexpensive land that was available due to the chaotic conditions in the suburbs (Gruen, 1964, p. 183). Retailers started to settle in these areas, that were often alongside a highway or other transportation networks, which resulted in regional shopping centres (Gregg, 2018, p. 559). But due to complaints about unbearable traffic congestion and not enough parking facilities, the search for a suitable location continued. Eventually in the 1950's, the first attempts to create larger shopping centres were made such as the Northland shopping centre near Detroit, and the shopping mall typology was born (Hardwick, 2004, p. 124).



3.1 | The Dynapolis planning model (1965)

3.2 | Northland shopping centre as the new heart of the city (1973)

SHOPPING STREETS

SHOPPING CENTRES/MALLS

MEGAMALLS

Country Club Plaza – Kansas City

Farmers Market – Los Angeles

Southdale Shopping Mall

West Edmonton mall – Alberta

1922 1931 1934 1954 1956 1972 1980

Highland Park – Dallas

Northland Shopping Centre/Mall

Galleria Shopping Mall – Dallas

3.3 | Time-line of the emerging shopping centre/ mall in the America

3.2 The Pedestrian Revolution

It can be concluded that the automobile plays a permanent role in modern society, and with the shopping mall typology, architects like Victor Gruen tried to create new worlds where the harsh sounds of the ongoing traffic were replaced by the sounds of man, and the rushing motion of cars transformed into vehicle-free islands where the safety and wellbeing of pedestrians are the number one priority (Breines & Dean, 1974, p. 9). What is revolutionary in this matter, is the fact that the store buildings are located in the space that is least visible from public roads and least accessible to the automobile: the centre of the site (Gruen, 1964, p. 190). In this centre, spaces in between the compact cluster of retail shops are reserved for pedestrians only, and are often equipped with amenities such as rest benches, artworks, water fountains and even improvements in the existing landscape. In this typology, pedestrianization has been used to control the traffic in crowded city centres, which have a high density and a wide range of activities (Brambilla & Longo, 1977, p. 14). But the pedestrian mall can only succeed if it is part of an overall traffic plan, which solves the problem of transporting workers, shoppers, and residents from point A to point B with a maximum of comfort.

Figure 3.4 shows the tight cluster of retail buildings that are surrounded by a network of parking facilities and transportation networks, which in turn are surrounded by a green belt. The dominance of the automobile in twentieth century America is still very noticeable, even when the concept of the Mall is supposed to be the new form of pedestrianization. This pedestrianization happens inside the typology, as is shown in figure 3.3. The pedestrian revolution has been the mark of, as described by Rosen, *'bustling and prosperous cities,'* and not only created new centres of community for the suburbs, but aimed to reduce traffic pollution, alleviate congestion and created *''aesthetically pleasing and peaceful urban spaces''* (Rosen, 2006, p. 2).

3.4 | Aerial view of Northland shopping centre

3.5 | Pedestrian walkways inside Northland shopping centre

3.3 The Success and Failure of the American Shopping Mall

When city planners and public officials started to embrace the pedestrian mall, which not only reflected the public opinion towards environmental issues and pedestrianization, but also created new public spaces for the community, the United States started to introduce the concept of the pedestrian mall (Matuke, Schmidt & Li, 2020, p. 2). They borrowed this idea from Western Europe – Essen - where the first pedestrian mall arose, implementing the idea of traffic free zones inside the city centre (Rubenstein, 1992, p.15). These European pedestrian malls often consisted of a series of interlocking streets, squares or other urban areas, which were located in the city centre. These improved pedestrian malls were constructed within the building blocks of the city, which helped to stimulate retail trade in the central business district and minimalize the automobile traffic congestion (Rubenstein, 1992, p. 17). This 'modern' concept of the separation of automobiles and pedestrians began to influence pedestrian malls in the United States, however, they rarely referenced or replicated actual European concepts (Gregg, 2018, p. 555).

Unlike the Europeans, who used the shopping mall to upgrade the commercial function of the already existing city centre, the Americans created pedestrian malls from scratch to revitalize the suburbs (Cohen, 2007, p. 83). The development of the American pedestrian mall was more narrowed down to the economic development of these areas, which resulted into individual structures such as the shopping mall (Matuke, Schmidt & Li, 2020, p. 2). Many elements of the European pedestrian mall were used in these shopping malls, such as resting benches, water fountains and a defined sense of enclosure (Brambilla & Longo, 1977, p. 48). Designers of these shopping centres believed that by designing a building that functions as the new heart or core of the suburbs, which is separated from the congestion of both the city and the automobile, would prompt shoppers to explore the world of shopping, and socializing in the suburbs (Pojani, 2010, p. 175).

As is mentioned in paragraph 2.3, *the Anti-City*, architect Victor Gruen was the first architect that worked on the shopping mall typology as an individual building. Many planners and merchant associations were inspired by this modern typology and started implementing it in various cities across the continent (Rosen, 2006, p. 6). But why did so many of these malls fail?

According to the article of Rosen (2006), the

3.6 | The development of a pedestrian shopping centre in Bavaria, Germany

encirclement of the shopping mall was one of the major reasons for the failure of this typology. Where this transportation network was meant to be *"a surface street"*, in reality, it turned into a superhighway around the intended new core, which eliminated the possibility for new connections between surrounding neighbourhoods (Rosen, 2006, p. 8). According to Jacobs (1961), Gruen's plans were only possible when the number of automobiles would decrease immensely, otherwise the designed parking spaces would not be sufficient, which means that the idea of an accessible new core would vanish (Jacobs, 1961, p. 344). And according to William Whyte (2009), the principal reason for the pedestrian mall to fail is *"too much space for too little activity"*, most malls are simply to big which eliminates any form of human proportions (Whyte, 2009, p. 312). Eventually, even Victor Gruen, the Mall Maker himself, considered that his shopping mall had failed according to Hardwick (2004):

"The ugliness and discomfort of the land-wasting seas of parking [...], And shopping centres focused too much on retailing and left out other community functions"(Hardwick, 2004, p. 216).

Instead of creating a mix between commercial and humanistic values, which could lead to the new community life in the suburbs, the ethos of consumption penetrated every part of people's lives, and the shopping mall typology sucked all the commercial life out of the existing city (Crawford, 1992, p. 11; Marchi, 2017, p. 79).

3.7 | The development of Southdale shopping mall in Edina, Minesota (1956)

3.8 | Covered collonade in Northland shopping mall (1954)

3.9 | The once busy walkways of Rolling Acres Shopping Mall, Ohio

CONCLUSION

The ongoing urban growth of cities is inevitable, and based on this chapter, it can be concluded that creating new city hearts or cores, which only contain the function of retail, are not the solution for the revitalization of the suburbs. The shopping mall typology reacted on the search for the containment of urban growth, which resulted in immense structures in combination with large parking facilities. These structures often destroyed the existing physical context of the urban area, and thereby eliminated the chance for a truly organized community life. The transportation network that needed to connect the different neighbourhoods turned into an unbreakable barrier, the reserved parking facilities were not sufficient enough for the amount of cars present in the city, which resulted in inaccessibility, and the shopping mall was simply too big for the limited activities that took place. As a countereffect, the shopping mall drew all the commercial life out of the existing city centre, resulting in not only deserted shopping malls, but in neglected city centres as well.

VII | 'American' entrance of the Boogaard shopping mall in Rijswijk

4 Analysing the American mall

Chapter outline

The previous chapters discussed the history of urban planning in the twentieth century and the product that came out of this, namely the shopping mall typology. In this chapter, the American Mall typology will be analysed on the following characteristics: spatial configuration, architectural proportions, functions and accessibility. This will lay the base for the comparison in chapter five.

4.1 Northdale Shopping Mall

The Northland Shopping Mall, located on a 161-acre site in Southfield Township, was the first and largest integrated retail shopping district in the world in 1954 (Gruen Associates, 2020). This large multifunctional shopping centre, designed by architect Victor Gruen, was one of the first movements towards the decentralisation of Detroit (Gruen, 1973, p. 90).

Architect: Victor Gruen
Ownership: Oscar Webber
Built in: 1952 - 1954
Surface area: 44.128 m2
Stores: 110 interior-facing stores
Parking spaces: 8000

(Tyler & Goldstein, 2015, p. 4).

4.1.1 Spatial Configuration

The spatial configuration of Northland Shopping Mall consists of a four story department store in the centre, surrounded by tenant buildings that are grouped around four smaller malls in combination with open public spaces (Gruen, 1973, p. 27). The large department store functions as a magnet, ensuring that visitors pass the other stores before entering the department store. In the spatial configuration, future provisions for enlargements have been implemented, as is shown in figure 4.1.

Most buildings of the Northland shopping mall were connected to colonnades, providing a covered walkway that protected shoppers from inclement weather conditions (Gruen, 1973, p. 29). By connecting these walkways, it was possible for visitors to cross from one structure to the other without being exposed to weather influences.

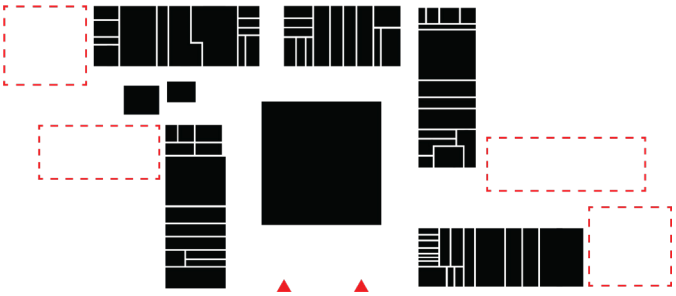
The open public spaces in between the malls and the department store are, according to Gruen, (1973) "shaped in accordance with the pattern found in European cities" (Gruen, 1973, p. 28). They consist of narrow walking lanes and lead the visitors from the parking facilities to the shopping facilities. With these narrow lanes, Gruen tries to create ever changing scenes inside the shopping mall, resulting in a unforgettable experience.

4.1.2 Architectural proportions

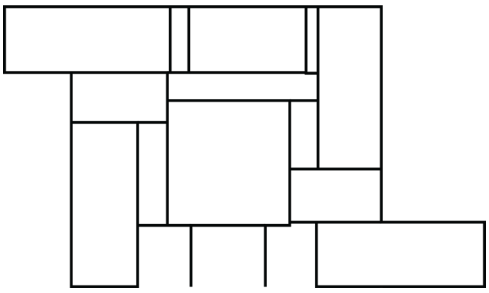
The architectural composition of the buildings consist of the impressive Hudson's department store in the middle, surrounded by standardized tenant buildings that form a unified complex (Gruen, 1973, p. 30). Gruen paid great attention to the architectural proportions of the shopping centre, by eliminating the outgrow of technical equipment, such as electricity pylons and television antennae's.

4.1.3 Functions

As is described at paragraph 4.1.1, the shopping centre is built around a four-storey Hudsons department store. The tenant buildings consist of a supermarket, clothing- and shoe shops, a bank, a beauty salon, various food corners, a gift shop, an arcade, furniture shops, and more. The intent of the inner design streets of the shopping

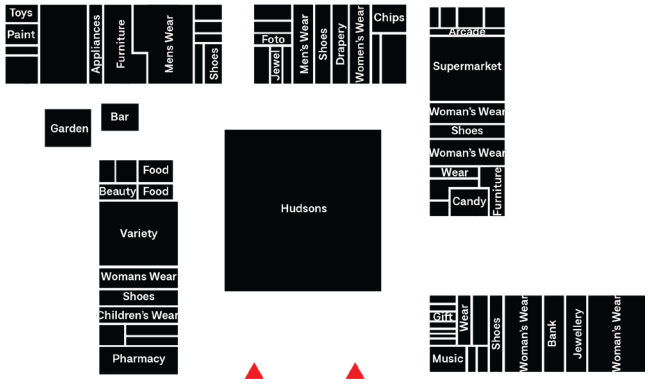


4.1 | Spatial configuration
Northland

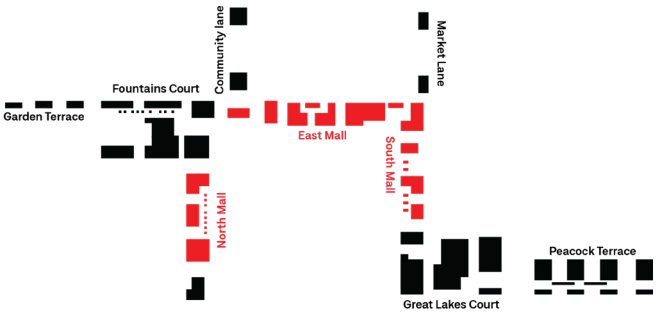


4.2 | Walking routes
Northland

4.3 | Public spaces
Northland

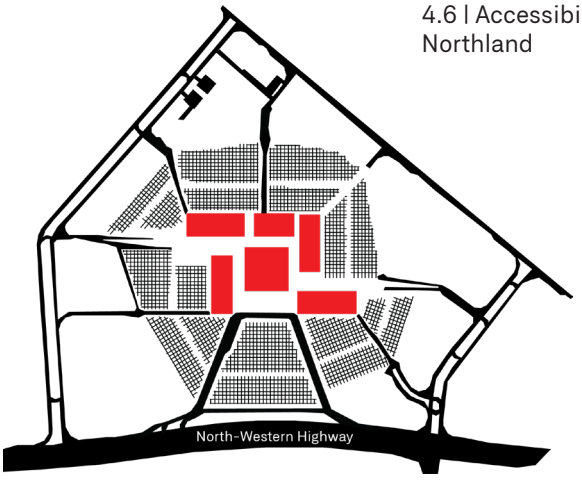


4.4 | Present functions
Northland



4.5 | Recreation spaces
Northland

4.6 | Accessibility
Northland



4.7 | Architectural
proportions Northland

centre was to create urban spaces that would be enriched by trees, flower beds, and fountains, and provide the visitors with a place where they can meet each other (Gruen, 1973, p. 29). You could say that the 'inner malls' functioned as a city within a city (Hardwick, 2004, p. 129).

4.1.4 Accessibility

The shopping centre is connected to the existing North-Western Highway by an inner transportation loop (Gruen, 1973, p. 27). This creates both easy access and egress to the shopping centre. The buildings are surrounded by parking areas and for public transportation, a separated road has been constructed which brought visitors to two covered stations.

4.8 | Inner courtyard Northland shopping centre

4.9 | Resting benches inside Northland shopping centre

4.10 | Collonade present in Northland shopping centre

4.2 Kalamazoo Pedestrian Mall

The Kalamazoo Pedestrian Mall is the first pedestrian mall in the United States, and the plan is designed with the help of architect Victor Gruen (Szymanski, 2020, p. 48). In 1959, two traffic-free blocks were implemented into the existing commercial area of the city, with the goal of improving the downtown economy of Kalamazoo (Brambilla & Longo, 1977, p. 123). The designed ring road and parking areas were not adopted by the local government into the final plan, but the Kalamazoo pedestrian mall became the centrepiece of the city's urban renewal.

Ownership: A combination between the local municipality and business owners
Built in: 1958-1959
Surface area: approximately 20.000 m2
Stores: unknown
Parking spaces: unknown

4.2.1 Spatial Configuration

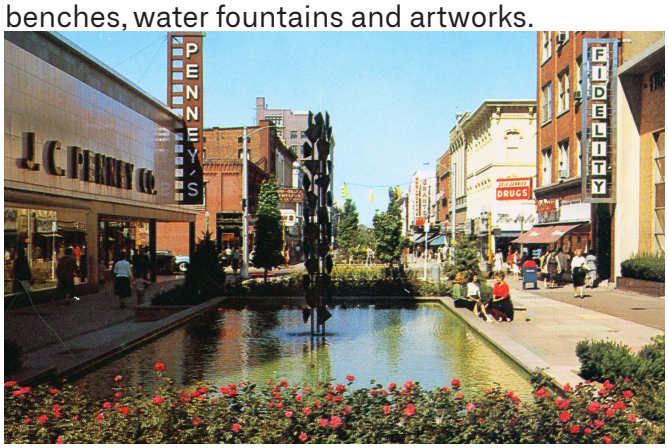
The spatial configuration of the Kalamazoo Pedestrian Mall consists of two traffic-free blocks alongside North and South Burdick Street, that were implemented into the cities commercial district (Brambilla & Longo, p. 123). Gruen claimed that downtowns and the suburbs had ''interchangeable spaces that begged for identical solutions [...]'', and thus implemented rest benches, lots of greenery, parking facilities that surrounded the retail buildings and he even suggested building canopies to protect visitors from bad weather (Cheyne, 2010, p. 106).

To keep downtown Kalamazoo a viral part of the city, Gruen included convenient parking spaces around the retail buildings, which improved the accessibility of the shopping centre enormously (Szymanski, 2020, p. 47). This way, he created a truly car-free zone in the city centre of Kalamazoo.

4.11 | Downtown Kalamazoo shopping centre

4.2.2 Architectural Proportions

The architectural composition of the Kalamazoo shopping centre consist of two existing city streets that were transformed and reserved for pedestrians (Cheyne, 2010, p. 108). Like any suburban mall designed by Gruen, the Kalamazoo mall provided roofed walking areas and even climate controlled areas that complemented the benefits of the visitor. In between the wide pedestrian area, there was room for greenery, rest benches, water fountains and artworks.



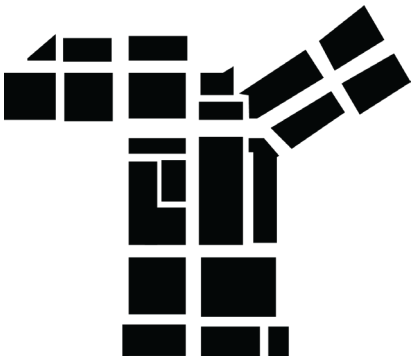
4.12 | Water fountain inside Kalamazoo shopping centre

4.2.3 Functions

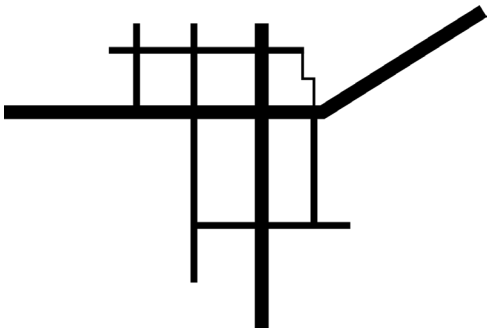
In contrast to Northdale Shopping Mall, Kalamazoo mall has a small department store in the centre, which is surrounded by clothing- and shoe shops, a bank, various food corners, a beauty shop, and a cinema. Gruen also gave function to the surrounding buildings, creating space for a cultural function, in combination with a hospital or research area that are located in between adjacent parking spaces.

4.2.4 Accessibility

In Gruen's plan, the accessibility of the shopping mall was regulated with an peripheral ring road that surrounds the commercial district, and implemented the parking spaces alongside the future shopping centre (Cheyne, 2010, p. 108). Eventually, the ring road was not implemented by the local government, they did create parking spaces around the shopping centre to provide enough access to the site.

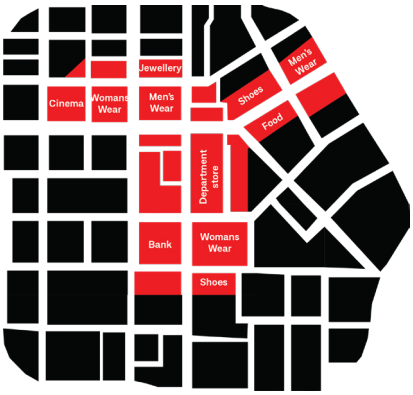


4.13 | Retail buildings Kalamazoo

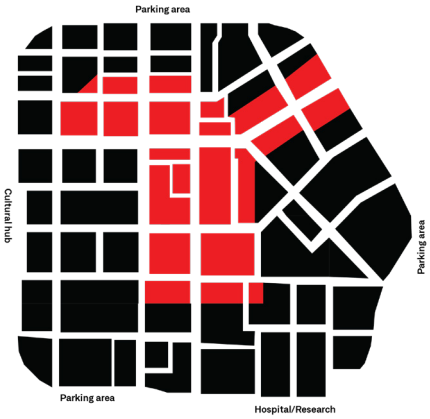


4.14 | Street network Kalamazoo

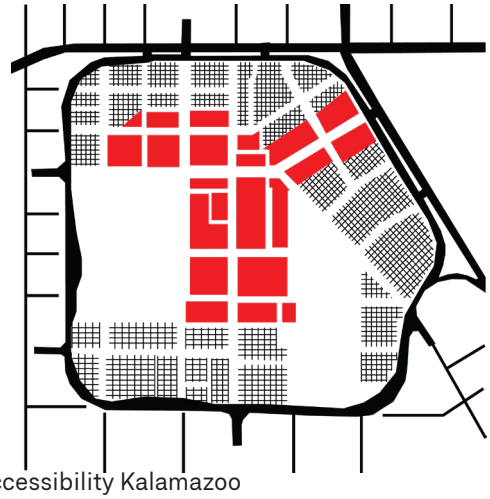
4.15 | Surrounding buildings Kalamazoo



4.16 | Functions retail Kalamazoo



4.17 | Functions adjacent buildings Kalamazoo



4.19 | Accessibility Kalamazoo

4.19 | Architectural proportions Kalamazoo

CONCLUSION

Looking at both the American shopping mall and the American pedestrian mall, one aspect that comes back in both designs is the construction of large access roads to the shopping mall. These access roads often surround either the individual mall structure, or the commercial- and retail spaces. They use narrow walking lanes, which are filled with greenery, artworks, water fountains and rest benches, to guide visitors through the commercial and retail spaces. Individual shopping malls are often organized around a large department store, which functions as the heart of the site and draws visitors past the surrounding stores into the centre. Not knowing the impact digitalisation would have on the world, reserving so much space for one particular store has been fatal to the design of most shopping malls, including Northland shopping mall. All products that are offered here can be offered online, and due to the fact that visitors have to travel by car to the shopping mall, the true centres of the typology became deserted manifestations. While pedestrian malls such as Kalamazoo are more integrated into the existing neighbourhood, creating the opportunity to access the mall not only by car, but also by foot or bike. Perhaps this factor is one of the keys to the success of Kalamazoo pedestrian mall, and the failure of Northland shopping mall. The present shops vary from a supermarket till clothing- or shoe stores, and from jewellery stores till public cinemas and churches. With this variety in shops, the concept of the shopping mall typology tries to create an ever changing scenery, which can be used to blow new life into existing cities.

IX | Iconic entrance
Lijnbaan shopping centre
in Rotterdam

5 The Dutch Shopping Centre

Chapter outline
In the fifth and last chapter, historical aspects concerning the emergence of the shopping mall typology in the Netherlands will be explained. This will be the starting point for explaining the success of the neighbourhood shopping centre in the Netherlands. This success will be strengthened by a comparison between the two analysed American Malls and two case studies of Dutch shopping centres. The main focus will be on the application of the shopping centre typology in the Netherlands.

5.1 The history of the Dutch shopping centre

The inevitable urban growth of cities, as is described in chapter two Urban Planning in the 20th Century, resulted in the Netherlands in larger distances between the city centre and suburban areas, which meant that it became more difficult for residents to travel to the centre for their daily shopping (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 16). As a result, clusters of neighbourhood shops started to emerge, to provide local residents with products such as bread, meat, vegetables, dairy and spices. These clusters consisted of an interaction between main roads, a central square or a connection with the existing buildings.

To prevent the growth of the city from turning into chaos, the Dutch government implemented the 'Woningwet' in 1901, which improved both the quality and quantity of residential housing in the Netherlands (Regnault, 2015, p. 30). Since this bill, the Dutch government was obligated to develop expansion plans that would steer the growth of the cities in the right directions, but knowledge on the implementation of shops or spending patterns were scarce, which meant that minimal decisions were made concerning the location of retail shops (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 17).

With the introduction of modern planning concepts by the CIAM, as described in chapter 2.1 and 2.2, the Netherlands starts to see the benefits of organizing the functions of living, working and leisure and moved towards an efficient building environment that consisted of standardisation (Van Es, 2018, p. 13). The first implementations of these concepts in the Netherlands can be found in the Amsterdam Expansion plan (AUP) by Van Eesteren and Mulder (1934), where they categorize different functions according to the concept of the functional city (Van Eesteren, 1928, p. 58). In these plans, shopping is not seen as a separate function, but as part of the living area. The concept of an individual shopping complex arises only after Word War II (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 17).

World Warr II had a devastating impact on the Netherlands, especially in Rotterdam, where the bombing of 1940 destroyed almost every building on the tabula rasa of the city centre, leaving only City Hall, the Post Office, Hotel Atlanta, the Bijenkorf, the Beurs building and a part of the hospital (Crimson, 2004, p. 15). The municipality of Rotterdam was actively involved in the reconstruction of the city, and commissioned the creation of 250 emergency shops in combination with 75 large emergency buildings, resulting in the predecessor of the Lijnbaan shopping centre, and the first shopping street of the Netherlands (Groenendijk & Lageweg, 2018, p. 11).

After the War, the average income of a Dutch citizen increased steadily, which automatically raised the demand for different forms of consumption, and shopping as a recreational activity, or *''The indomitable desire of humans for social contact, entertainment and chit-chat''* arose in the Netherlands (Galema & Hoogstraten,

p. 22). The first reconstruction plan for the city of Rotterdam, by W.G. Witteveen (1941), offered too little retail and commercial spaces, resulting in a new plan, *''het Basisplan (1946)''*, that functioned as a primary zoning plan, to which no final image or goal was attached (Aarsen, 2013, p. 20). Eventually, the city asked architects Van den Broek and J.B. Bakema to redesign the selected retail area, which resulted in extracted city blocks, consisting of residential buildings varying in height, that surrounded the open courtyards, and retail shops that were located alongside wide pedestrian walkways (Aarsen, 2013, p. 21). This process of integrating retail into urban areas was used more often by other city planners, and the idea arose that within a neighbourhood of approximately 10.000 to 12.000 inhabitants, a network of retail shops was needed (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 27). More shopping centres were built, such as Binnenhof shopping centre in Amstelveen, de Boogaard shopping centre in Rijswijk and Presikhaaf shopping centre in Arnhem.

5.2 | Presikhaaf shopping centre in Arnhem

5.1 | Emergency shops on the Coolsingel in Rotterdam

1940

1953

Lijnbaan shopping centre – Rotterdam

Emergency shopping street – Rotterdam

1960

Binnenhof shopping centre – Amstelveen

1963

De Boogaard shopping centre – Rijswijk

1965

Presikhaaf shopping centre – Arnhem

1967

De Notenhout shopping centre – Nijmegen

1970

Leidsenhage shopping centre – Leidschendam

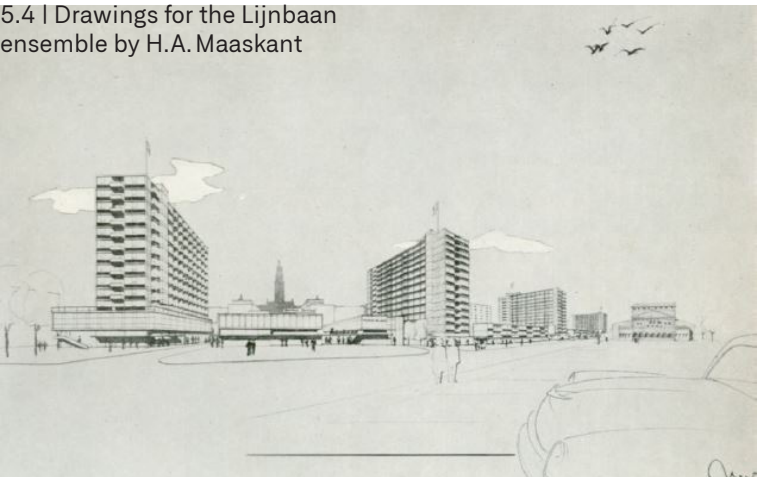
1973

Hoog Catharijne shopping centre – Utrecht

5.3 | Historical timeline showing the emergence of the shopping centre in the Netherlands

5.2 The rise of the neighbourhood shopping centre

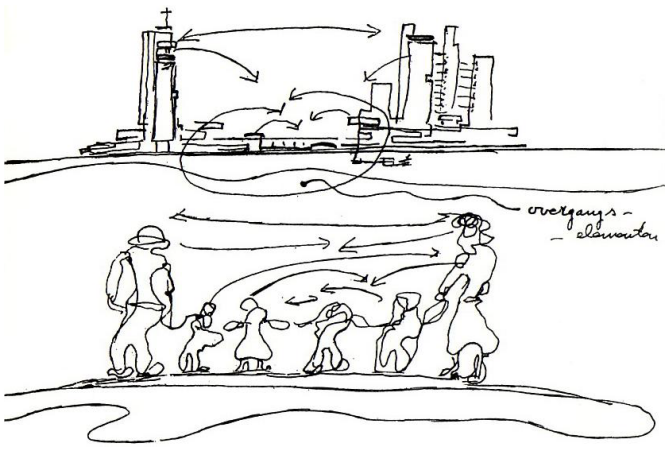
After the introduction of the Lijnbaan in1953 in Rotterdam, people in the Netherlands started to appreciate the concept of ''undisturbed shopping'', and the individual shopping centre was conceived as a shopping machine, where consumers were efficiently linked to the offered goods (Kooijman, 1999, p. 159). In 1961, the Dutch delegation of retail trade implemented four requirements to the design of shopping centres: 1) Residential and retail functions must be separated; 2) The supply of goods and the sale of goods must be separated; 3) The centre must consist of uniformity, but opportunities for the interpretation of individual retailers must be present, and 4) the shopping area should be accessible only to pedestrians. With these requirements, more and more shopping centres started to emerge between 1965 and 1971, and due to the lack of parking spaces inside the city centre, alternative locations outside the city were chosen to offer the requested commercial function such as Presikhaaf shopping centre in Arnhem (1965), and Leidsenhage shopping centre in Leidschendam (1970).



5.4 | Drawings for the Lijnbaan ensemble by H.A. Maaskant

According to the research done by Colliers International, the amount of neighbourhood shopping centres in the Netherlands has increased with 6.6% since 2004, resulting in a total amount of 632 shopping centres (Colliers, 2020, p. 2). These shopping centres, often consisting of daily household shops (bakery, butcher, greengrocer), clothing- and shoe stores, a furniture shop and sometimes even a cinema or church, not only functioned as commercial centres, but acted as social crystallization points for the city (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 28). When the distance between the inner city and retail areas grew bigger, traffic became busier, and parking spaces inside the city were nowhere to be found, the neighbourhood shopping centre offered a place for those who could not reach the commercial areas of the city.

Even in times of full digitalization, the neighbourhood shopping centres are a permanent factor in the Dutch architectural history, due to the fact that they offer not only physical products, but experiences that simply cannot be offered online (Nieuws, 2020). Most shopping centres are not designed purely for retail, but as an extended part of the existing environment, ''as an ordinary street that has lots of shops by accident'', a place that is integrated into a residential district which makes it accessible for both pedestrians and cars (Aarsen, 2013, p. 13). The tactility of shopping centres in the Netherlands is often linked to Bakema's 'vriendschapmodel', which resembles the coherence between the shopping street and the residential houses (Brinkhuysen, 2012, p. 15). In Bakema's 'vriendschapmodel', a walking family is shown with on both ends the parents, resembling the city, and in between are the children, resembling the Lijnbaan. The parents and the children are holding hands, which means that Instead of increasing the building volumes to accommodate more and more retail functions, most Dutch shopping centres stick to the 'human scale', which results in intimate and comfortable shopping environments (De Vletter, 2004, p. 141).



5.5 | Sketch 'Vriendschapmodel' by Bakema

5.6 I Driveway to Northland shopping centre

5.3 What are the differences and similarities?
It is clear that the roots of the neighbourhood shopping centre in the Netherlands can be traced back to Gruen's American Mall typology. But where most of Gruen's typologies fail, the neighbourhood shopping centre is on the rise in the Netherlands, which implicates that there must be differences between the two types.

5.3.1. Human Scale
One of the key factors of the American shopping Mall is the presence of the department store. Both Northdale- and Kalamazoo mall have a department store that functions as the main attraction, where in the Netherlands, the inner-city itself - offering a wide diversity of functions – remains the main attraction (Kooijman, 1999, p. 157). The Hudsons department store, as is shown in figure 5.5, exceeds the surrounding building volumes of the Northdale mall, eliminating all forms of human scale, an element which is clearly present in the design of most Dutch shopping centres such as the Lijnbaan, see figure 5.6. Although the Lijnbaan is surrounded by large towers, inside it sticks to human proportions, which are translated into only two building layers and clear sight lines in each direction, creating beneficial orientation points, a uniform building ensemble and continuity in between the rich building compositions of Rotterdam (Aarsen, 2013, p. 43). In the design of the Lijnbaan, the human scale is also translated into shorter walking distances, that are strengthened by the fact that visitors see where they are going, and therefore can determine how long their walk will take. This creates, despite the city's high density, a certain openness which comforts the visitor (Galema & Hoogstraten, 20 05, p. 33).

This lack of human scale is present in the Boogaard Shopping centre in Rijswijk. Here, the shopping centre functions as an individual entity, with overhanging building structures, long walking distances, and almost no orientation points, see figure 5.8 – 5.11. The individual distances in between the shops of the Boogaard are so large, that one side of the shopping centre is out of impulse distance of the other, and similar to American shopping malls, as is described by Whyte, "you can't even read the lettering on the stores on the other side" (Whyte, 2009, p. 312). Similar to Northdale shopping centre, the building ensemble is positioned mostly inwards, creating a closed environment with little connection to its surroundings, and due to the fact that a large part of the shopping centre is covered, the feeling of openness is completely lost.

5.7 | Sight line towards Rotterdam city hall

5.8 | The prescence of the 'human scale' inside the conmposition of the Lijnbaan ensemble

5.9 | Interior dome inside the Boogaard shopping mall in Rijswijk

5.10 | Upper passage inside the Boogaard shopping mall in Rijswijk

5.11 | Interior building composition of the Boogaard shopping mall in Rijswijk

5.12 | Second entrance of the Boogaard shopping mall in Rijswijk

5.13 | Infinite walking routes inside the Boogaard shopping mall in Rijswijk

5.3.2. Accessibility

A large contradiction present in the typology of the shopping centre is accessibility. The so called ''loop roads'', that were implemented to improve the accessibility, were a common feature of American Mall concepts, and at the same time the key to their destruction (Rosen, 2006, p.9). Both typologies, in the United States and the Netherlands, saw the importance of accessibility by car, but in the Netherlands, shopping centres were designed so that visitors could reach it either by foot or bike (Kooijman, 1999, p. 159). Parking spaces were often smaller and located at the end of the shopping centre, in combination with large customer magnets such as department stores, cinemas, or churches, to lure visitors in and keep them moving, which created a field of tension within which the shopping activities took place (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 35). This also happened in the Kalamazoo mall, where parking spaces were carefully placed around the commercial shopping streets, instead of creating huge parking lots that are only accessible by car, see figure 5.12. Take away the cars, and you will be left with an open and empty field, and the new Heart or Core of the suburbs transforms into a inaccessible no man's land (Whyte, 2009, p. 312).

5.14 | Aerial view of Northland shopping centre

5.16 | Bikeability of the Lijnbaan shopping centre

5.15 | Parking spaces allongside the Boogaard shopping mall

5.17 | Present parking facilities inside the Lijnbaan ensemble

5.3.3. Integration

Despite the relative separation between the commercial area and the surrounding residential buildings, the Dutch shopping centre remains part of a larger composition, resulting in a coherent environment that is part of a carefully planned area (Kooijman, 1999, p. 157). This is due to the fact that with the implementation of the Woningwet in 1901, all municipalities in the Netherlands were obligated to create expansion plans for the growth of cities (Regnault, 2015, p. 30). Most shopping centres, in particular neighbourhood shopping centres, in the Netherlands were inextricably linked to these urban plans, and thereby anchored into the neighbourhood, while the American shopping malls were often individual building blocks that were located next to the highway, and therefore missing every connection with the suburbs they were supposed to revitalize (Galema & Hoogstraten, 2005, p. 34). This integration can be clearly seen in the plan of the Lijnbaan in Rotterdam, where the shopping centre is not only connected with the adjacent residential towers designed by Van den Broek en Bakema, but also within walking distance of public transportation hubs, parking spaces and large orientation points such as the Pathé cinema, which is connected to Schouwburgplein. There is an infinite link with the surroundings, resulting in a true community Core.

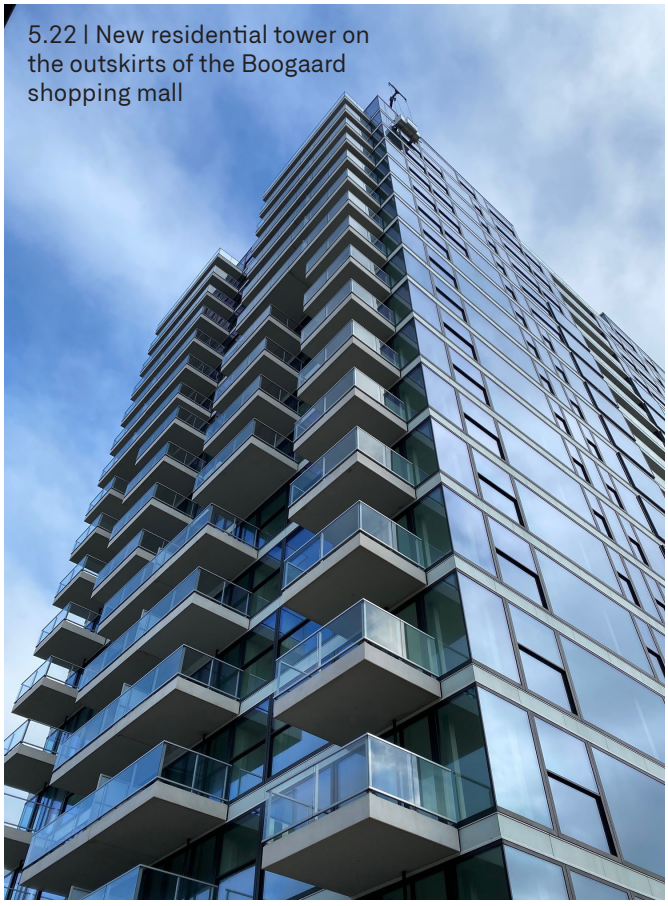
The fact that the management program of a suburban American mall often consists of private owners, creates an environment where they can hand-pick the tenants and place them within the shopping mall where they best complement the existing stores (Whyte, 2009, p. 323). These shops are often driven by commerce, because private owners want to benefit from the large investment they have done, resulting in a low variety of stores, something that is the key to attracting visitors (Rosen, 2006, p. 11). This poor ambiance results in a lack of entertainment, which eliminates the possibility for the mall to build a new community for the suburbs. Because when the shops close, there is no reason to go downtown to the shopping mall after dark.

5.18 | Surrounding Lijnbaanflats designed by Maaskant, Krijgsman and Bakker

5.20 | New residential tower inside the Lijnbaan ensemble

5.19 | New residential tower inside the Lijnbaan ensemble

5.22 | New residential tower on the outskirts of the Boogaard shopping mall



5.21 | Residential flats surrounding the Boogaard shopping mall

5.23 | Inner shopping street of the Lijnbaan shopping centre

CONCLUSION

The origin of the Dutch shopping centre can be found in the emergence of the American Shopping Mall typology. The inexorable urge of American malls to exploit the function of commerce has led to major differences between the two typologies. Main attractions that were located in the central heart of the building ensemble, often consisting of large department stores that transcended every form of human scale, offered a minimal variation of functions to entertain the audience. In the Netherlands, these so called "attraction points" were placed on the outskirts of the mall, creating a field of tension within which the shopping activities took place. Although Dutch shopping centres are often surrounded by large residential towers, they stick to human proportions by creating commercial strips consisting of only two building layers. A network of 'shopping streets' offers clear sight lines in each direction, creating beneficial orientation points, resulting in infinite connections with the surroundings. Walking distances are of human proportions that are strengthened by the fact that visitors see where they are going. The main access roads that were implemented into the DNA of the American shopping mall to improve its accessibility were only accessible by car, and a key factor to the destruction of the famous typology. A big difference is that shopping centres in the Netherlands are always accessible either by bike or by foot. Instead of creating individual entities which were located next to the highway and thereby lost all connections with the suburbs they were supposed to revitalize, the Dutch shopping centre remains part of a larger composition that is inextricably linked to the existing neighbourhood, creating a true city Core.

“To what extent does the Dutch shopping centre differ from the history of the shopping centre typology, and how can we explain its success?”

CONCLUSION

Through time, consumption based architecture became a part of both European and American cities. These places weren't just used for consumption, but functioned as very important social crystallization points in the urban DNA of ancient cities. With the enormous expansion of complex urban cities between 1900 and 1950, living conditions decreased rapidly, and commerce started to influence life on a larger scale. To regulate the uncontrollable urban growth into the preferred direction, various planning concepts started to emerge, which were either provided by the government, or by organizations such as the CIAM. The aim of these plans was to cope with the neglection of the original city suburbs, and in particular the original *Core* or *Heart* that weren't present in these suburbs. To embrace the influence of commerce, architect Victor Gruen integrated commercial and non-commercial activities into one typology that would function as the new *Core* or *Heart* of the city, namely the Shopping Mall.

This ongoing urban growth of cities is inevitable, but based on the research done for this history thesis, it can be concluded that creating new city *Cores* or *Hearts* in the form of a shopping mall, which only contain the function of retail, are not the solution for the revitalization of the suburbs. The shopping centre typology reacted on the search for the containment of urban growth, which resulted in immense structures in combination with large parking facilities, that often destroyed the existing physical context of the urban area. The transportation network that needed to connect the different neighbourhoods turned into an unbreakable barrier, the reserved parking facilities were not sufficient enough for the amount of cars present in the city, which resulted in inaccessibility, and the shopping mall was simply too big for the limited activities that took place. As a countereffect, the shopping mall drew all the commercial life out of the existing city centre, resulting in not only deserted shopping malls, but in neglected city centres as well.

It is clear that there are a lot of similarities between the American shopping mall and the Dutch shopping centre typology. But the inexorable urge of American shopping malls to exploit the function of commerce has led to major differences between the two typologies. The importance of retail and the origin of the Dutch shopping centre comes forth out of the original shopping mall typology designed by Victor Gruen, but the spatial design of most Dutch shopping centres are almost identical to American pedestrian shopping centres. These pedestrian shopping centres, such as the one in Kalamazoo, are more integrated into the existing neighbourhood. Where the American shopping mall often transcended every form of human scale, the Dutch shopping centre sticked to human proportions by creating commercial strips that consisted of only two building layers. Attraction points, such as department stores, churches or cinemas were placed on the outskirts of the mall, creating a field of tension within which the shopping activities took place. A network of shopping streets offers clear sight lines in each direction, creating beneficial orientation points, resulting in infinite connections with the surroundings. A big difference is that shopping centres in the Netherlands are always accessible either by bike or by foot. Instead of creating individual entities which were located next to the highway and thereby lost all connections with the suburbs they were supposed to revitalize, the Dutch shopping centre remains part of a larger composition that is inextricably linked to the existing neighbourhood, creating a true city *Core*.

To understand the success of the Dutch shopping centre, a clear distinction has to be made between a *Shopping Mall*, and a *Shopping centre*. A shopping mall often consists of large building compositions, located next to the highway, offering mostly commercially driven functions and activities. Whereas the Shopping Centre is more integrated into the existing urban context, adding not only commercial functions but creating a big variety of services. Shops that would not provide the needed revenue for private mall owners to sustain, can be found in these shopping centres. Think of your local hairdresser, a tattoo shop or the local bakery. Therefore, the success of the Dutch shopping centre is not related to the integration and exploitation of commerce, but to the immense social function it has to the community. Perhaps in these times, where the world has been taken over by digital platforms that offer everything from groceries to clothes, people long for the ancient social crystallization points where you can meet each other, instead of talking

to a screen, and where you can be involved in a real life community, instead of the online world. Looking at the shopping centre from this perspective, it offers the perfect opportunity to take back our life from the digital world.

X | Artist dancing inside the vivid streets of the Lijnbaan

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