

Royal Academy of Art(KABK) the Hague

INSIDE Interior Architecture

Theory Course

Arcades as Connections in European Cities And Utopian Ideas in 19th century

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Arcades in 19th century were the new typology of public place, artificial reality full of luxurious goods, place for flaneurs, restaurants, galleries and a lot of other public functions. Walter Benjamin in his book “The Arcades Project” wrote a lot about arcades in sociological aspect, as a public place, salon of the city and what changes in society you can notice in arcades. In architectural aspect it was important because of new structure and glazed roof which were also used more widely in other public buildings. Besides, arcades function as a covered street, it was a way to connect streets and bring flows of people through the blocks in more comfortable way.

Another important researcher who focused more on architectural aspect of arcades is Johan Friedrich Geist. In his book “Arcades: The History of a Building Type” he defines types and functions of arcades. He points out seven characteristics of arcades: access to interior of a block; system of access; public space on private property; symmetrical street space; sky lit space; system of organized retail trade; space of transition. [1] Even three characteristics (access to interior of a block, system of access, space of transition) from those are linked to connectivity. So I am going to analyse how arcades used to work as connections in the urban patterns and blocks, what importance it had and how it was transformed to utopian ideas.

TPOLOGY

By all definitions arcades were located in the interiors of urban blocks. By necessity, streets forming the blocks were commercially active, the arcades acted as connections between those streets and extensions of them. [2] Geist defines different types and organizes them in a chart (see below).[1] Some of arcades makes just a straight way through, though others are spread in all block and have several connections, some have parallel arcades in a block, others diagonal, different intersections, junctions in which squares appear. These variations create different types of connections – link important streets, squares or make an access to other public buildings.

Arcade senkrecht	Käfig	Block 2-fach	Block diagonal	Winkel	Diagonale	3 Zugänge	4 Zugänge	5 Zugänge	6 Zugänge
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Figure 1 Typology of arcades' plan (J.H.Geist)

I am going to give the examples of different types of connections through arcades.

First one is Burlington arcade in London which was one straight covered shopping street built in 1819 which made an important connection in the city. It is still connecting Burlington Gardens with Piccadilly Street, which is the second most important artery in London.



Figure 3 Burlington Arcade, London

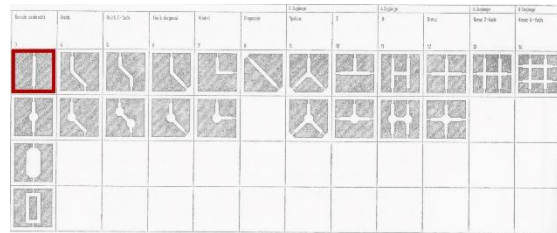


Figure 2 type of Burlington arcade in Geit's table

Galerie de St Hubert, Brussels 1846 is an arcade constructed by the architect Jean-Pierre Cluysenaer in 1847 based on the proportions of the wider alleys of the old city. This arcade particular because of accesses to public buildings through it. There are accesses to Theatre des Galeries Saint-Hubert, a restaurant, club rooms, studios, offices and apartments. The gallery consists of two major sections, each more than 100 meters in length (respectively called Galerie du Roi and Galerie de la Reine), and a smaller side gallery (Galerie des Princes). The main sections (King and Queen's Gallery) are separated by a colonnade at the point where the Rue des Bouchers crosses the gallery complex.



Figure 5 Galerie de St Hubert, Brussels

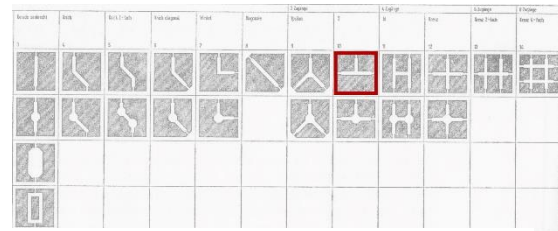


Figure 4 type of St Hubert Arcade in Geit's table



Galeria Umberto I, Naples, 1891 designed by Emmanuelle Rocca is a cross arrangement arcade with a dome. It was part of a larger urban renewal plan. It almost covers all block and is located

entrances being made at the principal cross streets. [6] The glass roof in 21 meter height was supposed to cover street from the Bank of England to Trafalgar Square. The glass structure would not be developed as a straight line but as a one uninterrupted covered promenade with crossing arcades and rotundas, creating accesses to churches, railways, theatres and other public buildings.

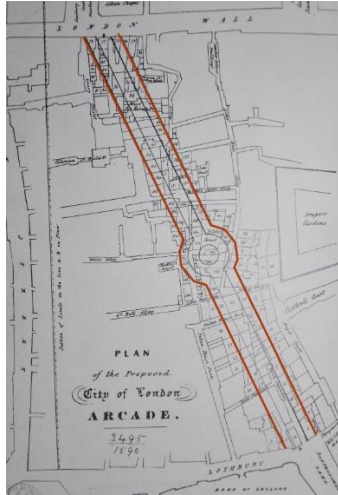


Figure 11 Glass Street by Frederick Gye

Crystal Way in London proposed by architect William Moseley in 1855 is a 3.8 kilometre continuous shopping arcade and underground train system linking the city of London and the West End. The covered street with shops should have become the connective tissue for London.



Figure 13 map of Crystal Way, W.Moseley 1855

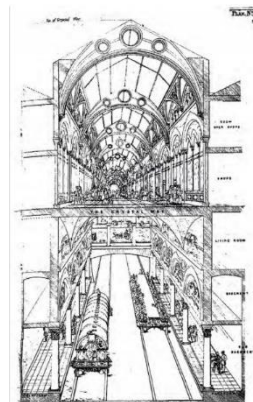


Figure 12 Interior of Crystal Way, W.Moseley 1855

Another utopian idea called The Great Victorian Way was developed by Joseph Paxton and proposed in the same year. 16 kilometre continuous arcade connecting every one of London's train stations was intended to solve all of the metropolis's traffic problems. It was to loop between the City of connecting the pleasure districts at Kensington, Vauxhall Gardens, Regent's Park and Knightsbridge, to the commercial alleyways of Cheapside and Capel Court.[5]

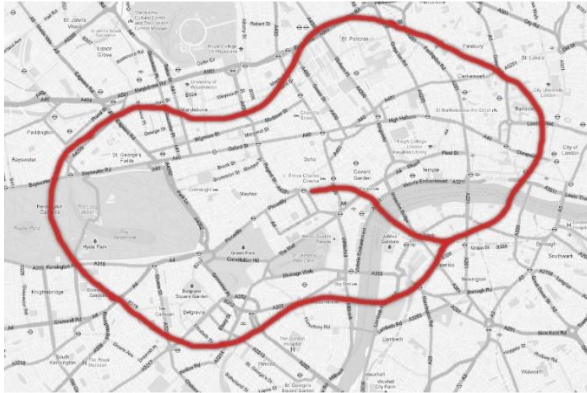


Figure 14 Map of The Great Victorian Way, J.Paxton 1855



Figure 15 The Great Victorian Way, J.Paxton 1855

In 1898 Ebenezer Howard proposes the ideal diagram of the Garden city which is designed in concentrically organized zones with an arcade of shopping as the central ring.[2] It serves as a magnet of activity and a route by which all parts of the city can be accessed. Even though circular shape is unusual to arcade but it serves for better connections, it becomes near to every dweller in the town.

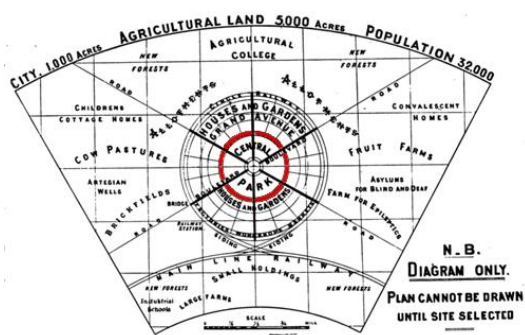


Figure 16 Garden City, E.Howard, 1898

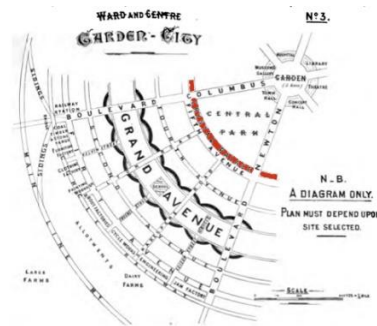


Figure 17 Garden City, E.Howard, 1898

CONCLUSION

Arcades were being developed into more complicated structures and junctions in the city during the 19th century. From being just a straight link of two streets it became a more complicated connections with a squares inside and accesses to public buildings. Arcades became an important part of some European cities, especially to Paris. Together with development of technologies the concept of covered street evolved even to utopian ideas, which were a prototypes of desired cities.

Literature:

1. "Arcades: The History of a Building Type" Johann Friedrich Geist;
2. "Without and Within: Essays on Territory and the Interior" Mark Pimlott;
3. "Benjamin for Architects" Brian Elliot;
4. "The Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping" Chuihua Judy Chung, Jeffrey Inaba, Rem Koolhaas, Sze Tsung Leong, Harvard University
5. "Out of Soho: Reading Joseph Paxton's "Great Victorian Way" Henry Atmore
6. "Subterranean Cities: The World Beneath Paris and London, 1800-1945" David Lawrence Pike
7. "Victorian Glassworlds: Glass Culture and the Imagination 1830-1880" Isobel Armstrong