

**FRAMING
MARKET
HALLS**



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framing market halls

Market, noun. Assembly, place for buying and selling ; demand for goods. ; center for trade. - v.t. bring to, sell in a market.⁰¹

This definition gives us important information regarding the market : the market is a gathering for people, a place for trade. The market is a physical space and the market is an economic activity.

The market is a physical space welcoming the market as an economic activity.

The market has existed for as long as commerce has existed. The market hall is a place that has been one of the greatest institutions of cities. But market halls are not innocent vessels of «everyday life». They also transpose political and economic choices into precise spatial conditions.

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Market halls and their development in cities are closely linked to the evolution of commercial and food systems. It is therefore inseparable from the commercial activity of selling food goods. In the era of globalization, the market represents for cities and municipalities a possible and positive alternative, which tends towards a paradigm shift in the consumption patterns. Currently in Europe, market halls have been reviving their image for a few decades and are part of a desire to consume differently, more locally and in a new way.

This essay attempts «framing market halls»: it aims to understand the evolution of one type, the market hall, as well as to frame its inscription and potential as a building for new vitalities.

methodology

This frame will be organized in three steps, which can create crossed narratives:

Part I traces a history of market halls, their development in cities in relation to the evolution of supply systems. This part allows us to understand the evolution of a type, the relationship it has with public space and cities, and to look at the possibilities for the future.

Part II will open towards the potentials of the market hall, under the prism of socio-economic developments, and understand the possibility of these structures for urban vitalities.

Part III is a collection of market hall artifacts, which allows us to understand the type and organization. The purpose of this collection is to collect market hall artifacts, to capture the developments and potentials that compose them, in order to understand the dynamism in spatial compositions that bring diverse qualities of use across time and offer an opening for reflections and new modes of composition.

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The purpose of this work is to frame the market halls, under a historical prism in order to understand the development of the type as the space to shelter the market, to then be able to identify the characteristics for possible futures. This quote will help us to frame also this direction :

“Nous suivrons le principe méthodologique établi par Claude Lévi-Strauss, selon lequel : “loin donc que la recherche de l’intelligibilité n’aboutisse à l’histoire comme son point d’arrivée, c’est l’histoire qui sert de point de départ pour toute quête de l’intelligibilité”. Dans ce sens, l’histoire et la typologie sont complémentaires, tandis que l’histoire décrit les processus de changement, l’analyse typologique se penche sur ce qui reste identique dans ce processus. Du reste, ces deux aspects se félicitent mutuellement, puisque le seul changement met en lumière ce qui demeure.”⁰²

In order to study the type, we will trace a history of market halls, understand how they develop and thus be able to understand, in their evolution, their potential.

framing the research

The market hall is the architectural device that houses the market activity. We will therefore analyze its evolution over the centuries. We will see how this architectural support of the market activity is composed by focusing on two of its main characteristics: the distribution and the stalls, under a roof. It is a typological development that can be followed over the centuries. We will focus on the plans, in order to analyze the distribution and organization of the stalls, in their evolution throughout history.

Market halls, with the evolution of supply systems, have taken many forms. We will focus on retail markets, rather than wholesale or warehouse markets: retail markets favor the direct link between consumer and seller/producer, which is also the case of traditional markets.

The research focuses mainly on the history of the market halls and will open on the current possibilities that have been put in place in order to continue this built heritage and memory.

The market hall is the architectural support that houses the market activity, that activity of sale and exchange, rich in sociability. It is characterized by its typological aspects, which are distribution and organization. Indeed, as we have seen, the market hall appeared to clarify and organize the activity of the traditional market. To do this, we will look at European examples.

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Towards a history of market halls

Commercial activity has existed for as long as the city has existed. This commercial activity is not only the result of an economic will, but also plays a social role in cities. The market hall is the architectural and physical support of the market and the result of a meticulous organization. It is, however, shaped and conveyed by the evolution of supply systems which, together with the issues of hygiene and control that will emerge in the course of history, modify the nature of this main support, the market hall.

This first part aims to understand and trace the evolution of market halls in the history of cities, through the evolution of supply systems and the ideals of public spaces.

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In parallel to a historical narrative, to reveal the knowledge inherent in these projects, their evolutions of typological characteristics, in order to be able to identify the distinct types of trade spaces for the reception of the market activity in the market context, based on the structural similarities of their characteristic features. This narrative is cross-referenced with the collection of artifacts⁰² that is declined in **part III**⁰³.

03 The typological series is not exhaustive; it is intended to be completed and refined.

04 This collection focuses on the European context, starting from Antiquity.

The origins of selling under a roof

The construction of market halls in Europe is a typological phenomenon that has not developed in the same way everywhere. Traces of covered markets were found as early as Antiquity, and historians have found written traces and fragments of this type in even older accounts. Covered markets can be found in all periods of our era: from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, up to the Enlightenment. Their emergence varies through time and space, but we can try to trace a history of market halls as an architectural type.

going to the market

Ancient Greece shows both the importance and the organization that such a building had for the cities. The market was the place where the inhabitants were fed, which must be accessible and close to the houses. The market hall was held on the Agora, in the stoa, in 7th century BC [a01]. The long building, which covered two stories of 21 enclosed shops each, was not only a place of trade. Under the portico, it was also a place of “promenade”, which gave a view of the landscape⁰⁵. It was also part of the public space of the city, and the idea of the promenade leads the building to be considered as a fragment of the streets.

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The markets of Roman cities developed, on the forum, another type of trading space. In Rome, by the end of the 3rd century BC, the market building was called the macellum [a02], which signifies market⁰⁶. These names referred to a public building, and not a place or square⁰⁷, that was covered and enclosed and almost exclusively food products were sold there. The market also had equipment and facilities that could help in their function. The macellum allowed for the shelter, preservation and hygiene in the sale of perishable products, such as meat and fish which required tables and water basins.⁰⁸ The notion of storage is also important, in order to preserve great quantities of food, in good and stable conditions⁰⁹. That's why the building had *tabernae* in the periphery of the building, in order to keep the food stored and preserved from the weather. Its privileged position in the center of the city, its stature as a public building and its decora-

05 Thompson, « STOA OF ATTALOS », p.126

06 def. “[Macellum] signifie « le marché », c'est-à-dire l'endroit où se pratiquait le commerce, surtout le commerce des vivres : légumes, poissons et viande. Le mot latin issu de l'indo-européen pour « la place du marché » est forum.” De Meyer Léon. L'étymologie de Macellum « Marché ». 1962.

07 Ruyt, « Macellum : marché alimentaire des romains », 1983, p.136

08 ibid.

09 Ibid., p.144

tions and ornaments made it an important building which was most of the time also dedicated to the cults of Neptune or Mercury.¹⁰

These two important examples show the specific distribution of each building. Their position in the public space gives them monumental importance. The covered market was already enclosed and seen as an equipment of the city, with facilities, organization of the stalls as well as a clear distribution pattern, which could also be a promenade. The division of the cells/shops expresses the will of order that resides in these infrastructures. Their vocation to public activities, such as rituals and walks, also give it a character of importance inside the cities.

invisible cells and covered space

Up to the 17th century, markets were the key element of urban renewal in the Middle Ages. They mark the beginning of the economic flows that shape cities : they fostered their subsequent development.¹¹ As such, they became the real heart and basis of urban life, its real potential. In the European urban landscape, small halls with very characteristic architecture were used to shelter the market. In England and France specifically, there are traces of covered markets in the center of villages and cities. Markets took part in the trading : “[t]hey brought together production and consumption; they transformed villages into towns; they provided the basic network which would

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fig. 01
Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Fresque de l'allégorie du bon gouvernement*, 1338-39.

10 Ruyt, « Macellum : marché alimentaire des romains », 1983, p.136

11 Lauret et al., *Bastides: villes nouvelles du Moyen Age*, 1988, p.61.

later underpin a national market economy”¹². The market halls were part of this supply system and testify to the centrality that the market activity represented in the cities of the time.

In France, the very characteristic market halls of the *bastides* are a great archive of the model of the Middle Ages¹³. Between the 13th and 14th centuries, a large number of halls were erected, and still survive today in their original architecture. **[a03]** The market halls were usually simple roofs set on wooden pillars in order to allow a free space, not enclosed¹⁴. In some cases, common rooms were situated on the first floor. The development of this model allowed the shelter of the market, but was not permanent, which allowed «light and air to penetrate under the roof, to ventilate, allowing also the cleaning of the floor once the stalls are cleared away”¹⁵. The model was deployed in the centuries and countries in various ways. This type remains the common definition of the covered market, until a quite late period.

In Great Britain, **[a07-08]** the market hall is also conceived as a multi-storey building. The open ground floor welcomes the market and is in direct relation with the streets or the square where the building is erected. The upper floors where one finds the common rooms such as the town hall, or, in some cases, storage and workshops for the manufacture of goods, such as wool or flannel¹⁶.

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The production of market halls developed in Italy during the same period follows the same pattern, but on one floor only. The Mercato Nuovo, in Florence, is the typical example of this kind of construction **[a05]**. Often composed of a wooden canopy on a series of composite columns, which form a shelter in the urban fabric, and shelters the market. The Loggia del Pesce **[a06]** is another striking example of the kind of construction that was erected in that time.

12 Smith, « The market place and the market's place in London, c. 1660 -1840 », 1964, p.10.

13 From about 1229 onwards, the term «bastide» took on the meaning of a new and democratic town, drawn up before the lots were marketed to the surrounding populations, who were invited to join a project based on equality and the reduction of the weight of the feudal secular or religious structure. The innovation is also the development of access to individual property for populations that for a part come from the rural environment.

14 Lauret et al., *Bastides: villes nouvelles du Moyen Age*, 1988, p.61.

15 Lemoine, *Les Halles de Paris*, 1980, p.31.

16 Wikipédia, « Old Market Hall, Llanidloes ».

In the Middle Ages, the market was a weekly activity.¹⁷ The building could thus couple activities while keeping an aspect of importance by its position in the public space. The free space it formed also represented a public space for the town or village, as well as a space of passage in the density of the urban fabric.

enclosed space and public amenity

For a long time, market halls and covered markets were widespread in various regions, notably for questions of protection and preservation of foodstuffs, as a protection from the weather (whether rain or sun). The building has evolved from an enclosed and organized space to a covered and open and free space. However, in most cases it retains its public building aspect thanks to its mixed programs and offerings to the public space. The markets all had, beyond the functional aspect of commerce that the program imposed on them, a desire to be a public space for the inhabitants. The support of the market was dedicated to the inhabitants and users of the city, in addition to the vendors and consumers of the market.

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The position of the market as well as its public aspect reinforced market halls as an important feature of cities that both hosted the market and were an integral part of the public space. Even if the nature of the building changed typologically, the chore aspect was maintained.



fig. 02
Joachim Beuckelaer, Fish Market, 1568.

the market hall as a facility

The emergence of market halls as a public facility take place in the 18th century in Europe, at the dawn of the industrial revolution¹⁸, when a great deal of technological innovation was taking place in cities and public spaces as well. In most European cities, the traditional market was held in the streets. which raised questions of hygiene and the management of public spaces¹⁹.

Thanks to the new materials resulting from the industrial revolution, as well as the evolution of the conceptions of public and urban healthiness, the succession of projects of sanitation of public spaces has affected a whole series of public facilities, including market halls.²⁰ It has generated a mutation of the functionalities, of the relation to the built fabric as well as to the dispositive of the architectural support to the markets.

revolutions and reforms

At the end of the 18th century in England, and then in France at the beginning of the following century, the economic activity changed its nature only in a few decades : the economy shifted from an essentially agrarian one to one of large-scale production of manufactured goods.²¹ These changes have led to technical improvements in cities and transport systems that have allowed a whole series of adaptations of urban facilities. Moreover, traditional open-air markets gradually became the site of tension in the cities and between the populations. “All this meant greater congestion and overcrowding in market streets and squares, lack of hygiene and increasing difficulty for buying and selling foodstuffs”.²² Thus, market places were known to be the places of “disorder and chaos” in great cities.

By buildings new market halls, the retail system could rationalize “the distribution of food while maintaining public control of commerce”²³. Thus, the municipalities maintained public control, by a security of the taxation as well as maintaining and guaranteeing hygiene in the market places.²⁴ Also, the building of market halls were a way

18 D'après le cours d'Emmanuel Dessefontet, Spatial and Regional Economy, 2021.

19 Lemoine, Les Halles de Paris, 1980, p.6

20 Ibid., p.31.

21 Overton, Baker, et Dennis, Agricultural Revolution in England: The Transformation of the Agrarian Economy 1500-1850, 1996, p.189.

22 Guardia et Oyón, Making Cities through Market Halls in Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries, 2015, p.

23 Lohmeier, « Bürgerliche Gesellschaft and Consumer Interests: The Berlin Public Market Hall Reform, 1867-1891 », 1999, p.91.

24 Ibid., p.91.

for municipalities “to bring the social and moral behavior of citizens under their control through the creation of centralized, covered market spaces; [...] market halls were conceived as promoted as symbols of political, moral and social progress, representing and enhanced urban image”.²⁵ But somehow, these aspects allowed a great possibility of urban designs.

As markets were essential to providing food to the working classes and “employed hundreds if not thousands in transporting and selling food”²⁶. European cities faced this “problem of supplying a growing population in old city centers while simultaneously coping with the expansion of factories and transportation infrastructure”²⁷. Cities were then able to import a wide variety of products from all parts of Europe and overseas, facilitated through storage and transportation. New technologies could also favorize access to this variety of food, by keeping constant prices.

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monuments to control : organization and salubrity

The reform of public space, and consequently of market spaces, will lead to a definition of the concept of boundary: a clear limit between public space and its functions, accentuated by the symbolic character that gives dignity to these public service buildings, including it in the buildings of the city. According to the new bourgeois conception of urban space, the market had to be separated from the street in order to transform the latter into an organized space and, above all, to rid it of street vendors, perceived as a threat by those who carried out legalized activity.²⁸

The questions of public health as well as urban salubrity led the municipalities to rethink, in relation with engineers of the time, to an efficient, hygienic supply system. Separating the market from the streets and putting it in an enclosed building was the first step towards a city of facilities.²⁹ The idea of a covered square seems to be gradually confirmed by the presence of fountains and the clock to underline the importance of the place, reinforcing the image of the market as a public good.³⁰

25 Dobraszcyk, « Victorian Market Halls, Ornamental Iron and Civic Intent », 2012, p.174.

26 Lohmeier, « Bürgerliche Gesellschaft and Consumer Interests: The Berlin Public Market Hall Reform, 1867-1891 », 1999, p.92.

27 Ibid.

28 Guardia et Oyón, Making Cities through Market Halls in Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries, 2015

29 Lemoine, Les Halles de Paris, 1982, p.34.

30 Panattoni, I mercati coperti di Giuseppe Mengoni, 2021, p.22.

The Marché Saint Germain [a10] is one of the first buildings, built under Napoleon I, to contain the neighborhood's covered market.³¹ Designed as an open courtyard building, it is accessible to the center by all four sides. Its single-naved built body is divided into two aisles of circulation between four series of individual stall cells, each corresponding to a vendor. Its raised roof promotes ventilation and illumination. The courtyard is intended to accommodate the surplus of street vendors and in its center is a fountain, a symbol of the importance of this building. This variation can be found in Spain and Portugal, in the Mercado Central de Abastos, the Mercado da Ribeira, and the Mercado do Bolhao [a16-23-29] with slight variations.

Inside the market halls, a whole new way of organizing the market appeared, thanks to the new regulations. First of all, the circulation inside the hall was thought to be the most fluid as possible. The architectural dispositive, in relation with the different flows, gives a functional pattern to the hall to facilitate access to all stalls. The stalls were arranged in rows and the foodstuffs were sorted into categories. The categorization of goods is an important aspect of this period. It facilitates the accessibility of the same types of goods.³² The space was conceived in order to let the consumers wander in the market, and also the accessibility to the retailers to restock the stalls. Openings within all the tables and stalls also permitted free circulation and gave quick access to every part of the building. The openings on the streets were also more effective, in order to also fluidify the circulation, for refurbishing the stalls and accessibility to all. These elements of the circulation avoided any hierarchization of the accessibility of the stalls in relation with their position in the hall.

Hygiene issues were closely linked to market activity. Ventilation, lighting and sanitary facilities were solved thanks to the market hall. The great metal and glass structures allowed effective ventilation in order to remove odors and purify the air.³³ They also allowed indirect light to enter generously into the space.³⁴ The water supply and sewage system quickly became an important part of the city's design, as well as that of the halls. The cleaning of floors and stalls was also important, so the floor coverings were made of ceramic. An important aspect

31 Lemoine, *Les Halles de Paris*, 1982, p.44.

32 Guardia et Oyón, *Making Cities through Market Halls in Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries*, 2015, p.330.

33 Lemoine, *Les Halles de Paris*, 1980, p.40.

34 Martí Arís, *Les Variations de l'identité : Le Type En Architecture*, 2021, p.80.

was the innovation for storage in refrigerated rooms, which was aided by a large water supply. This was also a key element of the new hall system: installation of drains, pipes, to increase the hygienic living conditions. Also the access to a basement in order to store, thanks to the lift. The new materials helped in the construction of a light structure made of the thinnest pillars ensured the free activity of the plan : the metallic constructions as well as the thinnest and lightest roofs allowed this free plan to be possible.

roofs, enclosures and spread

In Great Britain, from 1820, the model of wholesale markets, independent and entirely covered appears.³⁵ The size, height and lightness of the structure, «thanks to the use of iron and glass lead to a typological reinvention of markets», marks a turning point in the apprehension of market halls. The main monumental example is the St. John's Market in Liverpool [a12], which initiates an authentic socio-economic reform, as well as an architectural reform. Its rectangular plan, made as free as possible by the use of very thin metal pillars, which support a framework that offers the possibility of bringing light and ventilation generously inside the building. The distinct stalls are positioned in rows along the length of the building and five avenues, one main central one, shape the new functional organization of the hall. Three secondary entrances on the long side allow for flow management. This is the plan that will be used the most, as it is the most efficient in terms of organization and distribution.

Undoubtedly, the most striking example of the production of market halls is the example of the halls of Paris during the Second Empire, which influenced the current then present in Europe. The series of works, of which those of Haussmann were part, generated drastic changes in the city. The endowment of a coherent and branched system of markets emerged during this period. Baltard's Halles Centrales de Paris [a17] consist of ten square-based pavilions, grouped

35 Guardà et Oyón, Making Cities through Market Halls in Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries, 2015, p.35.

36 Lemoine, Les Halles de Paris, 1980, p.40.

37 Ibid., p.42.

38 Ibid., p.32.

39 Janicka-Świerguła, « The belly of Budapest – the Hungarian Central Market Hall from the end of the 19 century against the backdrop of selected European objects with this function », 2019, p.34

40 Ibid.

in two bodies separated by a large north-south street. Each pavilion is autonomous and assigned to a type of commodity. The complex is intersected by traffic: the covered passageway allows the market to be autonomous. Regions with warmer climates will more easily adopt this solution, thanks to the possibility of shadings. The examples of the central market of Florence, of los Mostenses and El Bron in Spain [a18-19-20], testify to the influence that the halls of Baltard had on the market halls, on a smaller scale.

In colder climates, solutions rooted in England have been adopted to protect against winter heat loss. In central-eastern and northern Europe, some retail markets have been built on this basilica plan, with one or three naves depending on the size of the market. The construction of brick perimeter walls, with interior metal pillars forming the internal aisles, is a popular and widespread solution.⁴¹ In Germany, especially in Berlin, the reform of supply systems and the implementation of a network of new markets demonstrates the generosity of this system.⁴² [a24-25] The self-contained halls were designed according to the plan of the basilica, and the spatial solutions depend on the shape of the plot. The model is developed in a similar way in Frankfurt [a21], but the great example that will allow an influence beyond the German borders is the Stuttgarter Zentral Markthalle [0], an elongated building that will have the possibility to cover within it a retail part as well as a wholesales part. In the 1890s, the Budapest market followed this pattern: its design was based on the experience gained from the construction of other facilities fulfilling the same function [a26].

41 Janicka-Świerguła, « The belly of Budapest – the Hungarian Central Market Hall from the end of the 19 century against the backdrop of selected European objects with this function », 2019, p.34

42 Lohmeier, « Bürgerliche Gesellschaft and Consumer Interests: The Berlin Public Market Hall Reform, 1867-1891 », 1999.

growth and decline

The market hall, as an architectural manifestation, reflects the societal and urban changes that occurred in 18th and 19th century Europe. The market hall is transformed from a simple commercial space to a public facility that is monumental in nature, similar to other public buildings like churches, schools, or townhouses, and it becomes a tool of power for the control, taxation, and education of the population. The structural considerations, due to the emergence of new building materials, play a significant role in the design of these buildings, leading to the desire for large spaces, large roofs, and efficient organization of distribution, circulation, and stalls.

However, the growth and new technologies have led to a decline in the market hall as the central hub of public life and commerce in the cities.

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fig. 03
Andreas Gursky, 99 Cent, 1999.

Obsolescence and the rise of the supermarket

The decline of market halls, once seen as a symbol of modernity and innovation in European cities, was due to a combination of factors. The rise of capitalism and consumer culture, coupled with the challenges faced by municipalities in renovating and building new markets, led to a decline in the popularity and use of market halls.⁴³ This trend was further exacerbated by the allocation of budget towards the renovation of other types of buildings in the aftermath of the war. Open-air markets, which required less investment and could be located in various areas of the city, became a more popular option. As a result, many market halls were closed, repurposed, or demolished.

consumption system in revolution

The 1950s and 1960s marked a turning point in the history of trade and urban planning. The shift from buying food in markets and small shops to primarily purchasing it in supermarkets was a significant change in people's daily lives.⁴⁴ The post-war suburbia development and urban sprawl lead to spatial, cultural and economic changes to food consumption.⁴⁵ A growing urbanization of the areas on the outskirts of cities, which were previously dedicated to agriculture, and a new consumption pattern derived from the Atlantic influences the behavior of consumers, which allows the rapid advent of the supermarket.⁴⁶

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Parham argues that “post-war suburban food shopping models were built on certain assumptions about food consumption that remained in place through changes in retail formats”⁴⁷. The assumptions that are pointed here is that customers would prefer to shop weekly rather than daily, which was the previous pattern. The concentration of services and shops under one roof also favors the consumption of these new public spaces, which empties the city centers in favor of fast consumption. The industrial revolution led to a new form of mass production and consumption, which was extended across the world.⁴⁸ New technologies incoming changed the inner behavior of the consumers, as well as the facilities of food conservation, such as freezing, food packaging and domestic refrigeration, as well as “allowing food shoppers to make direct contact with merchandise and contributing

43 Guardia et Oyón, *Making Cities through Market Halls in Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries*, 2015.

44 Parham, *Food and Urbanism : The Convivial City and a Sustainable Future*, 2015, p.141

45 Ibid. p.139

46 Charles C Carter, *What We Know About Shopping Centers*, 2009, p.165.

47 Parham, *Food and Urbanism : The Convivial City and a Sustainable Future*, 2015, p.148.

48 Mirgani, « *Designing the Shopping Mall* », 2017, p.47.

to both staff reductions and deskilling⁷⁴⁹. The distribution, entrances and the logic inside the supermarket is clearer than ever. Cells, stalls, tables, counters, kiosks disappear to make way for ever-stocked shelves. Vendors and merchants leave their place in favor of self-service. Entrances are controlled by large glass doors and exits by a cashier who will settle the account. In most supermarkets, the same pattern is repeated in every supermarket, with the same logic of productivity.

The first supermarkets in France emerged in the 1960s. [a33-34] The design of modern supermarkets has many similarities to that of traditional market halls. Both are characterized by a spacious, structured layout, however, the design of supermarkets has been optimized for efficiency and convenience. The square plan of supermarkets is designed to be functional and utilitarian, with the organization of the stalls and the management of the flow of customers being carefully planned to optimize the time spent in the store. One key aspect of this design is the «compulsory promenade» which guides customers through the store and ultimately leads them to the checkouts. This feature is a significant departure from the traditional market hall design and is a notable example of how the modern supermarket has revolutionized the way we shop for food. Overall, the supermarket has replaced the traditional model of market halls, which have seen a decline in popularity due to the more convenient and efficient shopping experience provided by supermarkets.

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fig. 04
Le 15 juin 1963 a ouvert le premier hypermarché en France
à Sainte-Geneviève des Bois

supermarkets, cars and the suburban space

“The development of the suburban food space has been a 20th century’s design primacy for the car : as both means of access and around which food retailing has been shaped”⁵⁰. The increase in the number of cars leads to the development of the road network, which has an impact on the outskirts of the cities and the development of suburbs.⁵¹ A growing urbanization of the areas on the outskirts of cities, which were previously dedicated to agriculture. A new consumption pattern derived from the Atlantic influences the behavior of consumers, which allows the rapid advent of «malls» and «shopping centers»⁵². The car facilitates access to outlying areas, which reinvents the offer that was previously present almost exclusively in the city center. «The impact of the automobile also needs to be considered here: many public spaces have been eclipsed by markets, as preferred venues for shopping»⁵³. The increase in the number of cars leads to the development of the road network, which has an impact on the outskirts of the cities and the development of suburbs.

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Gradually, this new commercial format has led to the decline of more traditional supply formats, including market halls in cities.⁵⁴ An era of consumption was opened, and generated the decline of the traditional models. They were eclipsed by this new consumption model and had to face a desertion of the city centers. Nowadays, the supermarket remains the same model.

to supermarkets and beyond

The gradual disappearance of market halls was favored, on the one hand, due to financial incapacities from cities to renovate these facilities after the war, but on the other hand, due to the emergence of a new mode of consumption, coupled with the urbanization of the city in the periphery. There was no need for cities to continue to supply and care for a market, while there were stores in every neighborhood. As material innovations transformed the type, the onslaught of the automobile, along with a new way of consuming - and the desire of city councils to free up valuable downtown land - led to the decline and exile of the large central wholesale markets.

50 Parham, *Food and Urbanism : The Convivial City and a Sustainable Future*. 2015, p.141.

51 Black, *Porta Palazzo : The Anthropology of an Italian Market*, 2012, p.173.

52 Charles C Carter, *What We Know About Shopping Centers*, 2009.

53 Black, *Porta Palazzo : The Anthropology of an Italian Market*, 2012, p.173.

54 Can include other traditional formats, such as traditional markets, small stores, etc.

Despite the decline of some retail markets during the World War I era, a new generation of central concrete markets emerged. This material brought the spatial and functional possibilities of reinforced concrete construction to its full splendor.⁵⁵ The examples of the Hala Targowa in Breslau and the Markthalle Stuttgart **[a27-28]** are pioneers in the use of reinforced concrete, a material that allows the creation of halls completely free of pillars and even larger spans. This material also followed a trend to build them in specific, isolated locations where agricultural products could be quickly transported from railroads and rivers. The central markets built in concrete after the war consolidated the disposition to functional specialization and introduced the truck as the main vehicle for food distribution. First of all, the market hall in Reims, designed in 1923 by Emile Maigrot and the Mercato Ittico in Naples demonstrate this insertion of the vehicle in the design of the halls **[a30-31]**. The expression of the halls has allowed other formulas, as well as other forms of plans as we can see a little later, in the Algeciras market in Cadiz **[a32]**.

30

The supermarket borrows its architectural devices from the market hall, with its distribution patterns as well as the distribution of clear stalls. The architectural production of market halls was almost absent in the second half of the 20th century, due to the very rapid emergence of supermarkets, convenience markets and malls. Indeed, the market halls, which house the qualities of the traditional market (local products, and socio-economic model), have endured because they were still there, or have almost disappeared.

55 Guardia et Oyón, Making Cities through Market Halls in Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries, 2015, p.60

The market hall : an anachronism ?

Markets have suffered a definite decline due to new consumption patterns, as well as the inability of municipalities to renovate and build markets after the war : in fact, budgets were allocated to the renovation of other types of buildings. Open air markets do not need large investments or special facilities and are very flexible in their position in the city.⁵⁶ Market halls were closed, repurposed, or demolished. As the supermarket and new consumption arose in the 20th century, it's legitimate to ask if the market hall is a relevant architectural support to the market.

inefficiency and non-competitive model

Markets and market halls have suffered a sharp decline due to a variety of factors : new consumption patterns and the changing retail landscape in the 20th century, along with the inability of municipalities to renovate and build markets, as budgets were allocated to the renovation of other types of buildings, have all contributed to this decline.⁵⁷ Open-air markets do not require large investments or special facilities, and are more flexible in their position within the city. Market halls have been closed, repurposed, or demolished.

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The inefficiency of the retail model offered by market halls compared to other models that have replaced it, such as supermarkets and shopping malls, has made this system obsolete. The technological innovations and increased accessibility by car of these newer retail models have made them much more competitive with the family model that has spread in recent years. The development of suburbs and urban sprawl has also favored the expansion of these newer formats, leading to the prevalence of the big box model, and emptied the city centers.⁵⁸

These retail formats, those that continue to exist today, make us reflect on the relevance of market halls in cities as an opportunity for commercial activity. The history of market halls in Europe also tells us that cities have been characterized by residential dispersion, which has affected market halls. The other modern distribution formats that appeared in the second half of the 20th century, including supermarkets, made price offers far too competitive.

⁵⁶ Bailly, *La France des halles & [et] marchés*, 1998, p.45.

⁵⁷ Navarro, « *Marchés, Halles Alimentaires et Mise En Tourisme Des Lieux En Europe* ».

⁵⁸ Guardia et Oyón, *Making Cities through Market Halls in Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries*, 2015.

old heritage and privatization

The market halls have been perceived by the municipalities as old relics, which have been transformed or demolished. Even though they have been listed as heritage buildings, they are part of local folklore, which makes them even more obsolete.⁵⁹ The processes of heritage of the building observed towards the end of the 20th century, with the questions raised by the demolition of the halles of Paris in the 1970s, generated a tourism of these places, which lost their soul. The privatizations of the places are particular to this form also: “La restauration des halles ou des marchés couverts est parfois envisagée sous la forme d’une privatisation du lieu : une portion de la superficie est vendue à de grandes enseignes, associant aux halles ou au marché couvert une galerie marchande ; le terrain et la réhabilitation est confiée à des promoteurs.”⁶⁰ The Sheltons tell us that «[t]he reasons for the particular form of the old market halls are not widely understood and the inherited form is, in fact, irrelevant to the present-day needs of most cities and is in need of re-thinking. Yet the inherited form is repeated in most new developments».⁶¹ Indeed, the inscription of market halls in the imaginary of a place as heritage, has marked these buildings as cultural, local, authentic. The potentials of these places can be activated to create new vitalities.

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Despite this decline, the market, sheltered by the market hall, is an activity that has never disappeared from urban and less urban centers. Some cities have even restored and rehabilitated their existing market halls in order to preserve the current economic activity, as in Barcelona, which has maintained and increased its network. Rachel Black argues that farmers’ markets, traditional markets and market halls - are witnessing a resistance to modernity and hyperconsumption.⁶²

While market halls may have become less relevant in some areas, they still hold potential for new vitalities in cities. They are a unique aspect of urban culture and history that should be considered and protected as such. The return of the market hall is an anachronism, but it is also an opportunity for cities to reflect on the importance of preserving and revitalizing this important aspect of urban culture and economy.

59 Navarro, « Marchés, Halles Alimentaires et Mise En Tourisme Des Lieux En Europe ».

60 Ibid.

61 Shelton et Shelton, « Updating Market Halls », 1972.

62 Black, *Porta Palazzo : The Anthropology of an Italian Market*, 2012, p.30.

II

35

The return of the mar- ket hall

The decline of the market halls in the 1950s and 60s, when they were confronted with competition from the big stores on the outskirts, marked the history of this building in a singular way. Indeed, the demolition and the reallocation have testified to the obsolescence of this support to the market activity. Nevertheless, the activity of the traditional market has always resisted in its urban form. It is possible to see a reminiscence of this format within cities, and the format of the market hall and covered market represents 25% of these market typologies that continue to exist⁶³.

The notion of «return» of the market halls wants to underline the renewed interest of the cities, the merchants and the consumers for the place of the values that evoke the mode of sale of the traditional market, compared to its previous state, in decline. In spite of this decline, this return of the market halls proves that they have been able to adapt in order to maintain an economic function and to adapt to new consumption patterns.

37

This part intends to trace the potential return of the market halls: first, we will observe the values that the market hall harbors nowadays in the face of consumption patterns. Then, we will have a look at three possible socio-economic models of market halls. Finally, we will try to understand the inter-influences between the spatiality of the market hall and the socio-economic model.

63 Navarro, « Le marché de plein vent alimentaire, un lieu en marge du commerce de détail alimentaire français ? », 2019, p.2

Change of paradigm

While the market halls have evolved over the centuries to adapt to new modes of consumption, based on efficiency and rationality, we see that market halls have changed to become something else. In the food sector, the sale of food products in public squares, the traditional market, is experiencing a new boom.

consumption crisis

Since the end of the 1970s, the consumer landscape has been transformed by increasing globalization.⁶⁴ However, we perceive the appearance of «alternative geography of food», which Parham explains more globally as a counter-reaction to globalization. This is where the alternatives in the supply chain are currently facing slight paradigm shifts.

Currently, there is a paradigm shift in the consumption pattern regarding food. There's a desire to consume differently. Several French and Swiss studies show that consumers want to consume differently, more locally and in a more conscious way. According to a study by the Federal Office for Agriculture (OFAG), producers are facing an increase in demand for sustainable products.⁶⁵ We also note the multiplicity of new concepts and labels: we can notably find concepts such as slow-food or terroir, and also various labels that all have the vocation to value a production, a heritage and a local know-how.⁶⁶ All of them testify to this paradigm shift, to a desire for local consumption, but also aware of the environmental and social issues that this implies.

legacy and values

Thus, despite the modernization of supply systems that have remained involved in cities, urban markets are like links in a chain.⁶⁷ They evoke values that run counter to overconsumption and globalization, such as local values, socialization and a return to a desire to consume differently, on a small scale.⁶⁸ These aspects are important, because they are the ones that also allow us to grasp the values conveyed through the market halls: by supporting the activity

⁶⁴ Parham, *Food and Urbanism : The Convivial City and a Sustainable Future*, 2015, p.247

⁶⁵ OFAG, *Ventes record de denrées alimentaires dans le commerce de détail suisse*, 2021

⁶⁶ Parham, *Food and Urbanism : The Convivial City and a Sustainable Future*. 2015, p. 257

⁶⁷ Stobart et Van Damme, « Introduction : Markets in Modernization: Transformations in Urban Market Space and Practice, c. 1800 – c. 1970 », p. 359

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* p. 369

of the urban market, they are a potential alternative to «everyday life consumption»⁶⁸. The market halls can be seen as a support for this return, as a resistance to modernity: Black tells us that the market halls are a resistance to modernity.⁷⁰

The social value, also inherited from the past, is an important factor in this reminiscence of the market halls, and it is even the foundation of the market activity.⁷¹ It is, for sociologists but also for other specialists, undeniable that the place where the market takes place is not only commercial.⁷²

The life of a market is very often portrayed as a place with a very strong social character. In several accounts, both customers and traders talk about the conviviality and friendliness that comes from the social activity of markets. The interface of the market, one of the main reasons consumers go to the market is to enjoy the atmosphere, the consumer-producer relationship, the friendly exchanges and the relationship of trust that engenders the encounter. There is a pleasant social relationship of routine, less conducive in places like the supermarket, or other more widespread institutions.

40

On a different level, the value of «walking» and «strolling» that a market hall can have is important. The covered space of the market hall allows in a certain manner the possibility of strolling around and enjoying passing by.

“Il est vrai que la ville est le lieu de marché par excellence, et que tout lieu de marché qui se développe devient ipso facto un centre urbain.”⁷³

69 Navarro, « Le marché de plein vent alimentaire, un lieu en marge du commerce de détail alimentaire français ? », 2019.

70 Black, *Porta Palazzo : The Anthropology of an Italian Market*, 2012, p.154

71 Navarro, « Le marché de plein vent alimentaire, un lieu en marge du commerce de détail alimentaire français ? », 2019.

72 Black, *Porta Palazzo : The Anthropology of an Italian Market*, 2012, p.173

73 Desplat, Christian (dir.). *Foires et marchés : Dans les campagnes de l'Europe médiévale et moderne*. Nouvelle édition [en ligne]. Toulouse : Presses universitaires du Midi, 1996

Reinvesting market halls

In the previous chapters, we have seen that market halls have suffered a decline due to the emergence of more efficient formats, the supermarkets. However, the market has never left the city, and market halls still exist under various socio-economic models.

This chapter will explore these various socio-economic models. They are derived from observations of new market halls, as well as transformations, which demonstrate the possibility of adaptation as well as diversity offered underneath these roofs. The idea is to understand the relationship between the building and the form of socio-economic exchange that appears within it.

hybrid halls

Markthalle, Aarau
Stadsahl, Ghent

food market

Mercado da Caranda, Braga
Foodmet, Bruxelles

food court

Mercado da Ribeira, Lisboa
Markthalle 9, Berlin

hybrid halls

Hybrid halls shelters the traditional urban market (weekly or punctual), while providing a covered space for the inhabitants and passers-by. Hybrid halls are the most flexible hall. It is a covered space that includes the qualities of a public space, an outdoor space, and can accommodate ephemeral commercial activities as well as non commercial activities. This promotes the public space character of the place. It is a hybrid form, because the field of possibilities is open, while not closing a space to a part of the population, but on the contrary, offering varied possibilities of public space and use. They are mostly managed by the municipalities.

The vendors are organized into various groups. The fanthom stalls are planned ahead of time, but there is no designated physical table for vendors to use, so they bring their own setup such as a van, cart, or table. If a physical stall is provided, it typically consists of individual booths, each occupied by a single merchant. The purpose of these halls is to create a central location for producers and consumers to connect and promote the use of local and seasonal products.

Hybrid halls have been an essential element of cities and towns for centuries. These market halls typically follow a socio-economic model based on the following principles:

Accessibility Market halls are most of the time located in central areas, central public places of the city. They are easily accessible to a wide range of consumers.

Inclusivity Public markets tend to be inclusive, offering space for vendors from all walks of life, including small-scale producers and artisans.⁷⁴

Identity Market halls are often seen as a place where people come together to shop, socialize, and exchange.

Economic development Public markets can contribute to local economic development by providing opportunities for small businesses to thrive and by supporting local agriculture.

Sustainability Many traditional market halls are focused on promoting local, seasonal, and sustainable products, which can help to support the environment and local economies.

Hybrid halls serve as a platform for local merchants to sell their goods and for consumers to access a wide variety of products. It also plays a role in building community and promoting economic and sustainable development, as well as offering a non-profit covered space for the inhabitants of the city, in order to shelter other activities.

74 See Black, *Porta Palazzo : The Anthropology of an Italian Market*, 2012.

markthalle, aarau, switzerland, 2002

[a36] The Markthalle in Aarau is a market hall that has been designed by Miller & Maranta and engineer Jurg Conzett. The Markthalle is in the center of the old town and adapts its form to the pattern of the existing fabric. The roof is supported by light wooden elements that rest against the frame. The building is a covered hall, enclosed but open on the two sides to offer a passageway : the building intends to re-activates a hidden alleyway that leads diagonally into the heart of the medieval town and connects it for pedestrians with the railway station and the shopping center by the shortest route. The building was designed to welcome all kinds of activities, as well as fairs and markets, but also other public and cultural events.

44



fig. 05
photos © RUEDI WALTl



fig. 06
photos © RUEDI WALTl

stadsahl, ghent, belgium, 2012

[a37] The Stadsahl is a market built by Marie-José Van Hee and Robbrecht & Daem in the city of Ghent. The Stadsahl is located on a main square in Ghent, in front of the Cathédrale Saint Bavon. It reorganizes the square, which was once a parking lot. Today, this market hall reactivates the square and offers not only a shelter, but also the opportunity to have a real public, pedestrian hub for the city.

The building is a large wooden asymmetric roof structure that relies on massive concrete pillars at each corner, allowing it to be open and accessible from all sides. The concrete pillars contain facilities that allow accessibility to the basement floor.

The roof shelters the weekly market as well as other large-scale events in Ghent. The market is held on Sundays. The market is known for its lively atmosphere and the vendors selling local specialties, like chocolate, beer, cheese and so on. It is also an important cultural site, providing an insight into the traditional way of life of the local community.

45



fig. 07
photos © Hufton + Crow.



fig. 08
photos © Hufton + Crow.

food market

A food market hall is a type of indoor urban market that primarily focuses on fresh food-related products. It has a different socio-economic model from traditional urban market halls and food court market halls. In most cases the food market is a retail market, which prioritizes the direct link between vendor and consumer. The stalls are permanent and held by the sellers themselves - which makes the difference between a supermarket and a market. In this model, the organization of the market as well as the fixed stalls can take various shapes : low stalls allow having an overview of the variety of the market, but kiosks can improve the advertisement for the diverse entrepreneurs. In most cases, the market extends outside the boundaries of the building. It is superimposed on the public space, thus accommodating street vendors. The food market is a form of promenade, and needs to be an efficient system in order to improve accessibility to all stalls. The food markets are usually operated by the municipalities or private enterprises.

The socio-economic model of a food market hall can be described as follows:

Accessibility Food market halls are located near to central areas of the city, making them easily accessible to a wide range of consumers.

Quality Food market halls are known for offering high-quality and fresh products, often directly from local farmers and producers.

Variety Food market halls have the capacity to offer a wide variety of food options.

Support local economy Food market halls can contribute to local economic development by providing opportunities for small businesses and by supporting local agriculture.

Sustainability Many food market halls are focused on promoting local, seasonal, and sustainable products, which can help to support the environment and local economies.

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The socio-economic model of a food market hall is focused on quality, variety, local economy, sustainability, cultural preservation, and education. Food market halls provide a platform for local farmers, producers, and artisans to sell their products and for consumers to access a wide variety of fresh and high-quality foods in a central location.

mercado da caranda, braga, portugal, 1980

[a35] The Mercado da Caranda is a food market hall designed by the architect Eduardo Souto de Moura. Originally built in the 1990s, it was transformed by the architect himself 20 years later to become a city hall for the city of Braga. The market is situated perpendicular to the two main streets that lead to the center of Braga. It was at first designed in order to frame the free landscape and create a «fragment of the city» that can function as an urban mesh, connecting the market hall to the surrounding area and becoming an integral part of the neighbourhood.⁷⁵ The building is thought of as a fragment of the street, a building that is also part of something bigger. This approach results in a functional and aesthetically pleasing space that integrates seamlessly with the urban fabric of the city.

The market hall is designed as a street, with a regular pattern of columns supporting the concrete roof slab, which rises above the side walls. The design creates a long, covered walkway that runs through the market, with stalls and water points along the way. A second part that includes various spaces, all linked by this walkway. The main hall is composed of 28 stalls and 15 locals, mostly for perishable dairy. Along the way, there are other locals, probably for administration or storage.

48



fig. 09
The covered walkway that runs through the market, with stalls and water points along the way



fig. 10
The workers working on the market.

⁷⁵ Eduardo Souto de Moura, <https://arquitecturaviva.com/obras/mercado-de-caranda>

foodmet, bruxelles, belgium, 2015

[a38] The Foodmet, designed by ORG Architecture, is a large indoor public market located in the heart of Bruxelles. It is an extension of the Abattoirs of Anderlecht, which is an intra-urban slaughterhouse, protected since the 1980s. It's situated near the Quai de l'Industrie, which leads to the city center of Bruxelles.

The Foodmet is a L-shaped building that is an extension of an existing market. It provide 50 diverse sales places. In the center of the 8-shaped hall, counters are disposed as square rings, and welcome traders for fruits, vegetables and other dairies. On the periphery, there are locals and shops for mead and fish markets. In the back, the building contains storage space at the back and refrigerated areas for the vendors. The main entrance welcomes a bar-café area. The intent of this hall is to become a popular place, which allows consumers and vendors to enjoy a diversity of food and personalities.

49



fig. 11
the interior of the 8-shaped market hall and the counters.



fig. 12
on the periphery are the stalls for meat and fish.

food court

A food court market hall is a type of covered and indoor urban market that primarily focuses on food-related products and services.⁷⁶ The food court is an area composed of a commercial part, in the usual format of cells or stands, and a part with large tables where customers can eat the products purchased at the covered market. This format aims to offer a gastronomic activity around the promotion of local products. They are developed following the will of public or private actors in order to make a place of conviviality and promotion of the local gastronomy. The plurality of gastronomic offers in a large space is the strength of the food court.

This format aims to offer a gastronomic activity around the promotion of local products, and also offer a variety of experiences such as concerts and exhibitions. Food courts are developing mainly due to new eating habits and consumption patterns, creating a new offer for consumers : “La restauration des halles ou des marchés couverts est parfois envisagée sous la forme d’une privatisation du lieu : une portion de la superficie est vendue à de grandes enseignes, associant aux halles ou au marché couvert une galerie marchande ; le terrain et la réhabilitation est confiée à des promoteurs.”⁷⁷ The food court has a more commercial-oriented approach.

⁷⁶ Wikipedia, «Food court».

⁷⁷ Navarro, « Marchés, Halles Alimentaires et Mise En Tourisme Des Lieux En Europe », 2018.

The socio-economic model of a food court market hall has similar values as a traditional urban market hall, but with a few differences:

Convenience Food court market halls are often located in convenient locations, making it easy for people to access a variety of food options.

Variety Food court market halls offer a wide variety of food options, including different cuisines and price ranges, making them appealing to a diverse range of consumers.

Accessibility Food court market halls are often located in places with a good accessibility by foot, which can be beneficial for vendors as it can increase the visibility and accessibility of their business.

Consumer experience Food court market halls are often designed to enhance the consumer experience, with seating areas and other amenities provided for customers to enjoy their food.

51

The socio-economic model of a food court market hall is focused on convenience, variety, efficiency, and consumer experience, often with a reinforced commercial-oriented approach. Food court market halls can be an opportunity for entrepreneurs and small business owners to grow their business and for consumers to access a wide variety of food options in a great, accessible and nice location, most of the time in historic neighborhoods and buildings.

mercado da ribeira, lisboa, portugal

[a23] The Mercado da Ribeira in Lisboa houses a food court in a historicist extension, built next to the traditional market hall from 1820. It's situated in the city-center, right in front of the Tagus delta that offers a great view to the customers.

This extension was custom made to accommodate the food court. There are more than 40 restaurants around a central courtyard where long tables welcome consumers. The foodcourt also offers an evening space, which can offer exhibitions, concerts, parties, and other events. It is designed to become a real life pole. This food court is open from 10am to midnight, enjoying a varied clientele from morning to night.

52



fig. 13
the inner foodcourt, with the layout of the tables

markthalle 9, berlin, germany,

[a38] The Markthalle 9 is situated in the city-center of Berlin. It has reinvested in the existing historic Markthalle IX. It reuses the same cells layout but they have become more flexible : some of the cell spots have disappeared to make room for a food service area, linked to each merchant. The Markthalle 9 intends to offer a variety of options to the neighborhood, such as a retail market, cafés, or small gastronomy stalls. The intension of the place is to reactivate the hall as a urban social hub, with strong local and environmental qualities. The foodcourt also offers an evening space, which can offer exhibitions, concerts, and other activities.

The Markthalle 9 is open from Monday to Saturday from 12h to 18h, on Thursday from 12h to 22h and is closed on Sunday.

53



fig. 14
the stalls can provide space for the customers



fig. 15
the foodcourt provides space to a retail market

Activity and shape

Through these three socio-economic models, we can see different typologies that have been generated by the market halls. The building, its form and the socio-economic activity that takes place in it interact. The layout of the market halls maintains its historical organization, despite the different activities that take place there.

In these three possibilities, we can notice that the commercial activity is conditioned by certain aspects of the building. In fact, commercial activities such as food courts or food markets are preferred in closed places, which protect the place during the closing hours, and allow a daily cleaning.

Hybrid halls are not only the possibility to welcome a market, but it's also the possibility to have a common space for the inhabitants and users of the city. It's shaping a public space, a which can accommodate all kind of activities.

54

A food market is a possibility for cities and villages to have a place to gather and have a link with another way of purchasing food products. These are also possibilities to have a variety of products and to support the local economy. The location and memory can also be very important because this market benefits greatly from it: the center position of the market favors accessibility.

The food-court is the most commercial and consumer-oriented form of market. In our case, this model fits into existing buildings, which are heritage buildings.⁷⁸ The tendency is that the historical halls are reinvested by attractive formulas, like those included here under the name of food-court, in order to take advantage of a lucrative activity in historical places.

These socio-economic formulas are inserted in the forms that suit them best: from more open formats to more ephemeral activities. Closed formats to more permanent and present activities. However, these are not models that have to respond exactly to an architecture. In fact, it adapts to the needs of the place, the needs of the neighborhoods, and the users. A market hall and cell organization is to be able to adapt to the needs and changes of users, and its architectural specifics can accommodate a variety of models.

⁷⁸ Navarro, « Marchés, Halles Alimentaires et Mise En Tourisme Des Lieux En Europe », 2018.

Heritage and social experience

The possibilities of intervention on markets, the feasibility of continuing to use them, as built heritage or as potential urban structures. Throughout this statement, we have talked about market halls as a structuring element of European cities, and their adaptability must be promoted.

Indeed, Aurore Navarro informs us in a research she is conducting, of the patrimonialization of the market and the halls, but specifies however that they are not places where the households studied do their shopping: they are a new category of people, who are there for the social experience resulting from the values conveyed by the market and the place of memory of the hall.⁷⁹ However, the challenge remains to create places of vitality, and not other places of rapid consumption. Local businesses can quickly be replaced by businesses targeting tourists, which can alter the cultural identity of a neighborhood or city. It is important to balance the interests of local residents with the needs of tourists in order to preserve the diversity and vitality of cities.

55

Market halls are part of a heritage and a desire to consume differently, as close as possible to the shopkeepers, but they are also places that can become places of pleasure, of relaxation, of neighborhood. They take advantage of existing structures, but are also subject to new adaptations, according to the needs and technologies of the places where they are erected. The planned commercial activity takes advantage of the elements characterizing a market hall: it needs an organization, a circuit, and a roof.

⁷⁹ Navarro, « Marchés, Halles Alimentaires et Mise En Tourisme Des Lieux En Europe », 2018.

Synthesis

The intention of this énoncé was to frame market halls, tracing an answer to the question : what is a market hall and what are their current possibilities. While market halls are embedded in our imaginations as places of terroir, local culture and authenticity, market halls may be obsolete places.

Historical exploration has allowed us to understand that the market hall was an infrastructure that responded to a need to contain commercial activity in one place to relieve street congestion, for reasons of hygiene, taxation and population control. Then, it evolved, until it became an outdated format, in the face of ever more efficient competition and new technologies.

The exploration through a contextualization of current socio-economic models, showed us to what extent an imaginary is anchored in new modes of consumption.

The architectural support that is the market hall with respect to its relationship to modes of consumption is part of the potentialities of vitality in cities: the format, still valid in terms of organization and structure, allows for a collective space, where producers, artisans and vendors flourish.

57

While the market halls, as we have understood, have adapted and evolved with their users, the market halls are reminiscences of the past, applied to modern consumption desires: is this not a new evolution? a mutation?

“[L]orsque le marché quitte l’espace public proprement dit pour se réfugier dans un bâtiment indépendant, les étals semblent alignés comme des maisons mitoyennes, selon une trame de rues formant des pâtés de maison et des places, reproduisant obstinément les rythmes et les situations propres au tissu urbain. On voit ainsi ressurgir dans le marché la forme de la vieille ville, avec le va-et-vient à ses portes, l’animation de ses carrefours, les différents métiers regroupés par rues, la stricte hiérarchie des lieux, l’épaisseur de la vie et du contact humain. Et c’est peut-être dans ce lien inconscient, dans cette fixation si puissante, bien que diluée dans l’oubli, que réside sa beauté.”

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