

The Janus-Faced Shopping Center: The Low Countries in Search of a Fitting Shopping Paradigm

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The Janus-faced Shopping Centre

The Low Countries In Search of a Fitting Shopping Paradigm

Abstract

When in the mid-1950s, the shopping centre typology reached the Low Countries, it confronted governments, policy-makers, architects and planners with the question: how to introduce and adapt this novel commercial typology to the local context? To respond to this question, several 'missions' were organised to study this phenomenon abroad. The conclusion was that two distinct shopping centre paradigms existed: The American model, as it could be observed in the United States and Canada, and European model, as it had emerged in Sweden, France and Great Britain. This paper investigates what these missions identified as the distinctive characteristics of these two shopping centre models and which specific recommendations regarding urban and suburban retailing and distribution were derived from them. Finally, the paper examines how these suggestions were implemented in or translated into the first shopping centre designs in the Low Countries: 'Shopping 1' in Genk (Belgium) and Amstelveen shopping centre in The Netherlands.

Keywords

Shopping centre, Belgium, The Netherlands, Victor Gruen, New Towns, Genk, Amstelveen

Introduction

“Between Delft and The Hague, in Rijswijk, a modern shopping centre, of the type that has been in existence in Amstelveen for some time now, is being built. Other parts of the country are also considering the construction of such a ‘shopping centre’. Even more places are studying or developing plans. The situation is similar in other Benelux-countries... All of this following the example of America. Will the shopping streets of Amsterdam, Antwerp, Brussels, The Hague, Luik, Luxemburg or Rotterdam all be de-populated?”¹

When the American suburban shopping centre concept arrived in the Low Countries² in the mid-twentieth century, countless concerns were voiced and numerous questions raised about the impact that this commercial typology would have on the region’s spatial structure. Initially conceived in the mid 1940s by Victor Gruen, a Viennese architect who migrated to the United States in 1938,³ America’s first ‘purebred’ suburban shopping centre, Northland, opened in Detroit in 1954.⁴ Following Gruen’s design, Northland covered close to seventy hectares, housed nearly a hundred stores and could accommodate up to 8344 cars, neatly grouped into a number of colour-coded parking lots, which were accessible through a private circular road system.⁵ Gruen’s most famous creation, however, opened two years later in Edina, just outside of Minneapolis. Southdale shopping centre cost twenty million dollars, had seventy-two shops and two anchor department stores, all combined under one roof, with air-conditioning for the summer and heating for the winter.⁶ Divided over two levels connected by escalators, the complex also hosted a ‘town square’, which combined a fishpond, a café, sculpted trees and a six-metre-high cage with brightly coloured birds at its core, all illuminated by a large skylight.⁷ The result was a sensation. Reporters from all of the country came for the Minneapolis shopping centre’s opening. According to historian Jeffrey Hardwick, the national and local press wore out superlatives attempting to capture the feeling of Southdale. *Life* called it “The Splashiest Center in the U.S.”, *Time* dubbed it a “pleasure-dome-with-parking”, while *Institutions Magazine* declared Southdale a paradigm of “America’s newest institution, the suburban shopping centre”.⁸

Not long after Southdale opened, America’s “newest institution” arrived in Europe, where it quickly forced architects and planners as well as retailers, economists and politicians to come to grips with this novel commercial phenomenon. Many European countries sent ‘missions’ to the United States to investigate this new shopping typology first hand. Between 1953 and 1961, three Swiss delegations visited the US to study the ‘American model’ of retailing,⁹ in 1956 a British delegation journeyed across the ocean to visit shopping centres

in Chicago, Pittsburgh, Washington, Philadelphia and New York,¹⁰ and in 1963, a mission of the Association of German Retailers also travelled to America, visiting the latest examples of shopping centres from Boston to San Francisco.¹¹ The Low Countries did not falter and also sent missions abroad. In 1960 the *Comité Belge de la Distribution*¹² (Belgian Service for the Advancement of Productivity) sent a delegation charged with investigating the development of shopping centres to the United States, and one year later, in 1961, the Dutch *Overheidsadviescommissie voor de Harmonische Ontwikkeling van de Detailhandel* (Governmental Advice Commission for the Harmonious Development of Retail) journeyed across the Atlantic, where they – after attending the ‘International Seminar on Modern Merchandizing Methods’ in Dayton – travelled to Detroit, Washington and New York. During their trip, the Commission not only visited shopping centres but also architectural offices, federal and municipal centres of excellence and various consultants involved in the development of shopping centres.¹³ The discoveries that this Dutch mission made, led to the 1962 *Kopen en Knopen* (Shopping and Tangles) exhibition in the Rotterdam *Bouwcentrum*.¹⁴ The mission of the Belgian delegation in turn gave rise to the publication of a detailed report recounting the experiences from the United States.

Not only Northern America became a source of inspiration, but also certain European countries were increasingly recognized as ‘shopping centre’ destinations. In 1961, one year after their visit to the US, the *Comité Belge de la Distribution* sent a mission to Sweden, France and the UK, and published their findings in a report similar to the publication of the American mission. Under the heading *Blik over de Grenzen* (A view across the borders) Belgium’s northern neighbours also featured several European shopping centres in the *Kopen and Knopen* exhibition and in 1963, Simon Petrus Marie Keesen, a journalist who in 1961 had joined the Dutch mission of the *Overheidsadviescommissie voor de Harmonische Ontwikkeling van de Detailhandel* to the US, published a 112-page book on the ‘retail revolution’ in the US and Sweden.¹⁵

The goal of these foreign missions and their resultant exhibition and publications was twofold; on the one hand they strove to educate the population of the Low Countries about the new ‘shopping centre’ phenomenon, while on the other hand they sought to proffer guidelines and recommendations on how this new typology could be successfully adapted to and integrated in the region. This paper investigates what recommendations regarding urban and suburban retailing – specifically relating to its regulatory framework, planning and programming – were derived from these missions, and how these suggestions were translated into the first shopping centre designs in the Low Countries – Amstelveen’s *Binnenhof* in The Netherlands and Genk’s *Shopping 1* in Belgium.

Recommendations: The Quest for a Shopping Centre Paradigm

The Problem of America

Between 14 October and 6 November 1960, a delegation of the *Comité Belge de la Distribution* went on a mission to the United States to study shopping centres.¹⁶ The company travelled to Ohio, Illinois and Michigan, where it visited a myriad of malls, including Victor Gruen's Northland Centre in Detroit.¹⁷ A few months after the visit, the delegation published a travel report, a significant part of which was dedicated to "the metamorphosis of cities in the United States".¹⁸ The report unambiguously stated: "[i]t is deplorable to have to witness the demise, not to say the death, of the [American] city centre, of which life is retracting at an accelerated pace",¹⁹ and clearly held the shopping centre accountable for this sad situation:

"Numerous shops, both large supermarkets and small specialist shops, close or slowly languish. Save a few exceptions, they are all for sale or simply demolished to make way for parking-facilities, as their revenue rapidly decreases. [...] At the same time, the number of commercial centres in the periphery, as well as their revenue quickly, increases. Everyone we met [...] underlined the pronounced advantages of living outside the 'downtown' and making use of shopping centres in the periphery of large cities."²⁰

Similar observations were made by Keesen who in his 1963 publication on shopping centres in the United States and Sweden, postulated:

"The horror stories about the retail revolution that has happened in America are true: during our study trip to the United States, we were confounded by the price-crash, the destruction of small and large downtown businesses, the emergence of filthy as well as neat discounters, the urban exodus of American citizens and the incredible development of the car park."²¹

The *Kopen en Knopen* exhibition, which was on display in Rotterdam between 5 June and 1 September 1962, revealed these American "horror stories" to the Dutch public. The sixth stop along the exhibition-trajectory that was laid out through the hexadecagonal *Bouwcentrum* carried the theme: "Will the core of the city remain the commercial centre?" "To find the answer", an exhibition panel announced

"[t]he *Kopen en Knopen* exhibition takes you on a journey to the United States. [...] Here a new phenomenon arose, the so-called shopping centre. [...] Located in the urban periphery, it is very appealing to shoppers because of its coordinated design, pleasant shopping, entertainment, easy parking and modern sales methods. It is [however] instructive to examine what subsequently happened in the

United States: shops left the chock-full cities, where traffic had increased to an undesirable level [and] the congested urban core in many cases became the desolate, dead inner city.”²²

Across the Low Countries, the developments in the United States were thus depicted as a cautionary tale, which was to be avoided at all cost. Although the advantages of shopping centre developments were acknowledged, the question: “How can we benefit from this development without suffering the negative effects?”²³ became paramount. The Belgian report suggested that to pre-empt the accelerated spawning of large shopping centres in pursuit of the hot suburban dollar – or rather the hot suburban Belgian Franc – which would negatively affect nearby downtown areas and lead to unfettered (sub)urbanization,²⁴ it would be of prime importance to keep a close watch on the spatial planning and design of shopping centres by forging close collaborations between governmental bodies and the market:

“The mission hopes that in the frame of planned urban development equal attention will be paid to questions of distribution and problems regarding commercial urbanism as to other factors [such as] industry, housing, etc. and, that for the studies that are currently being conducted by the public sector – the Directorate of Urbanism – fruitful collaborations will be forged with the private sector. This will certainly be the case when it comes to the large housing developments, which enable the government to impose certain guidelines regarding the composition and architecture of the shopping centre.”²⁵

The report thus unambiguously placed the development of shopping centres on equal footing with industry and housing, two essential building blocs of the European welfare state.

The socio-political situation in 1960s Europe was quite different from that in the United States. On the continent, the need for reconstruction after the Second World War propelled economic growth and provided resources for welfare state expansion, while rivalry with the Communist block – the Cold War – ensured the ideological imperative for a non-revolutionary route to social improvement.²⁶ As a result, the European welfare state emerged. Contrary to post-war America where – informed by Cold War liberalism – government interventions favoured market benefits, the European welfare state was very interventionist and regulatory, and relied on an agreement between the market, state and civil society.²⁷ These socio-political disparities between Europe and the United States were also picked up by the *Comité Belge de la Distribution*:

“Considerable differences can be noticed regarding the frame of mind, economical organisation and quality of life between Europe and the United States. That which might be conceivable, possible, desirable or feasible in the United States is only found in a very attenuated form in Europe. The European people are more attached to tradition, more stable and more conservative. The cities, and

particularly the city centres have a much deeper significance for them. At the same time, as a general rule, the State and the local public administrations intervene much more actively in the social and economic life in Europe than they do in the United States.”²⁸

Delegates of the Dutch mission to the United States underlined that these profound socio-political and economic differences between the two geographic regions resulted in very different shopping habits and would (inevitably) lead to a different shopping centre development:

“Shopping habits over here [in the Netherlands] are profoundly different [...] And we are not (yet) as indolent as over there [the United States]. ‘No parking, no business’ is currently the highest wisdom over there, which even applies to churches. An American will not walk for more than 200 metres from a parking spot to a shop; a phenomenon which is taken into consideration when planning parking lots around shopping centres. [...] But what is possible in America is not possible here. In contrast to the immense freedom that retailers over there [in America] have to determine how they would like to build on their plot, which often leads to a chaotic urban planning, we have a rigid system of urban expansion plans, plot alignments and building ordinances.”²⁹

The careful planning of the built environment was of course one of the key areas in which the European welfare state sought to achieve its ambitions of economic redistribution and social welfare. The *Comité Belge de la Distribution* therefore – similarly to the Dutch mission – hypothesized that shopping centres in Europe were likely to adopt different forms than those in the United States – “European [shopping] centres undoubtedly take on distinctive forms, [...] different to those that exist in the United States”³⁰ – and sent a delegation to visit commercial centres in Europe. It was “after all in a European frame that viable solutions for the integration of commercial centres in Belgium needed to be found”.³¹

Experiments and Achievements in Sweden: The New Core

Between 7 and 17 May 1961 a delegation of the *Comité Belge de la Distribution* went on a mission to France, Great Britain and Sweden.³² The findings of this mission were presented in a 96-page report, which – in line with expectations – confirmed that shopping centres in Europe had taken a different path from the one that their American ancestors had travelled down. The comparison with Sweden in particular threw this disparity into sharp relief. In Sweden, a country that sociologist Gøsta Esping-Andersen has pinpointed as one of the most pure ‘social democratic’ welfare state regimes,³³ strong government intervention ensured that the development of new shopping went hand in hand with strategic urban planning. These differences between Sweden and the United

States were also highlighted by the Dutch journalist Simon Keesen who in 1962, one year after his trip to the United States, visited Sweden. His publication of the following year brashly stated:

“Sweden is no America. Swedes lack the self-conscious openness of the American, who all too often prides himself on everything that his country achieves. This becomes ever so clear in politics. If America is the epitome of freedom, Sweden is an organised socialist paradise, [where] a sense of justice, organisation, material and humanist tinged spiritual progress are guiding principles for statesmen. Social security from cradle to grave is a reality in Sweden. The hospital is free. The government provides brand new, well-equipped houses, in particular for workers. Planners are held in high regard. And here, we draw nearer to the position of the small- and mid-sized business; nearer to the construction of shopping centres. This development [of shopping centres] can only be understood if one is familiar with the social life of the country.”³⁴

In Europe, Sweden was a forerunner in the domain of shopping centre development as commercial interests transformed planning ideology in the country in the decades following the Second World War,³⁵ In 1954, the (now) famous Vällingby Centrum was inaugurated, which seemingly effortlessly combined the public good with private interests.

Located less than fifteen kilometers north-west of Stockholm, Vällingby was the first so-called ABC-suburb – A for *arbete* (work); B for *bostad* (housing); and C for *centrum* (centre) – and was deemed a successful (built) example of Europe’s ‘middle way’. Situated along a railway line extending from Stockholm and in close proximity of a major arterial road, Vällingby was to become a New Town with sufficient jobs, social services, and leisure and consumer opportunities for it to have a life of its own.³⁶ Vällingby Centrum was organized around a large all-pedestrian, open air shopping square, which effectively functioned as the New Town’s ‘town square’. The pedestrian zone was given a complex shape by a variety of low-slung rectangular buildings, one or two storeys high, which housed the town hall, library and youth centre as well as numerous shops and a cinema. The complex straddled the train line and linked through bridges and tunnels to the adjacent neighbourhoods. The Centre was unified by a whimsical pavement pattern of large circles, some of which were extruded vertically into circular wading ponds that were very inviting for children on hot summer days.

Vällingby and other, comparable Swedish shopping centres constructed at the heart of New Towns thus soon became reference points in Europe, both in terms of social and spatial planning. Already in 1960, the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce remarked: “The recent trends in retail trade evidenced throughout Sweden in the construction of suburban shopping centres of different types have attracted the attention of specialists from

other countries”³⁷ and published a concise, 40-page pamphlet, entitled *Swedish Shopping Centres: Experiments and Achievements* to quell the growing thirst for information. The publication opened by explaining that Sweden had adopted a radically different stance to the development of shopping centres than the United States:

“In the United States public authorities have not had any appreciable influence on the course of events. Businessmen, financial interests and contractors have built the new [shopping] centres on those sites which to them appeared to be the most suitable economically. Sweden may be said to represent the opposite extreme. Its town planning legislation gives the local authorities much wider powers in this field than is the case in most other countries.”³⁸

This alternative approach was supported by the selection of shopping centres included in the brochure. Of the total of six, two shopping centres were developed by municipal societies,³⁹ one was built by a non-profit housing company,⁴⁰ and three were initiated by (a consortium of) private contractors.⁴¹ Nevertheless, even these privately developed shopping centres were often partly financed by state loans,⁴² allowing the public authorities to exert substantial control over shopping centre developments: “Private enterprise has played an important role in the creation of various built-up areas in the neighbourhood of Stockholm. Here again, the responsibility for town planning naturally falls upon local authorities, but its execution is ensured by co-operation between town planners and landowners.”⁴³ The advantages of this collaborative approach were also underlined by the *Comité Belge de la Distribution* in their *Shopping Centres en Europe* report:

“In a liberal economy, it is very difficult to try to impose absolute regulations when it comes to the location, size, ... of commercial infrastructure. [...] Nevertheless, in the present state of things, in which the responsibility of the studies and proposals for the concrete realization of suitable commercial equipment lies with the private sector (both large units and small businesses), a close collaboration with the public authorities is indispensable at various stages of the studies and execution.”⁴⁴

In *Revolutionaire Distributie in U.S.A. en Zweden*, Keesen similarly expressed his admiration for the highly controlled, carefully planned development of shopping centres in the Sweden, which he described as diametrically opposed to the evolution that had occurred in the United States:

“In the United States shopping centres have freely selected their location amidst the vast and chaotic bungalow-houses that sprawl around cities. In Sweden shopping centres have [conversely] become [essential] components of the highly planned suburbs adjoining a few large cities. Such suburbs have been completely planned on the drawing board. Everything that could be provided has been provided.

The Swedish situation therefore approximates the Dutch circumstances much more closely than the American [situation].”⁴⁵

Discovering the ‘European’ concept of the *stadsdeelcentrum*

The shopping centres discussed in the *Swedish Shopping Centres* brochure were all built in the heart of new suburban centres surrounding Stockholm. In order to facilitate communications, these suburban cores were located along underground railway lines extending from Stockholm, which strung them together like pearls on a necklace. While the overall planning policy aimed at locating the majority of retail trade in the core of these suburban centres – allowing local residents to do all their shopping there, visiting several different shops in one trip – a number of premises were also allotted to cultural and social organisations, to make the core the real heart of the district. The 1962 *Kopen en Knopen* exhibition in Rotterdam dubbed these suburban centres *stadsdeelcentra* or ‘sub-city-centres’ and heavily promoted this development as the solution for the integration of shopping centres in the Netherlands. At a study day held during the exhibition, G. van ‘t Hull, alderman of the city of Amsterdam pointed out that: “It is incorrect to liken these sub-city centres with the American phenomenon of shopping centres.”⁴⁶ Contrary to the American shopping centre, he explained:

“These sub-city centres will need to be designed in such a way that they will both functionally and visually function as the ‘heart’ of the sub-city in question. This implies that from the start, a close collaboration between the architects of the centre and the municipal urban authorities is necessary and that apart from shops, cultural, social and administrative facilities will need to be planned in the centre.”⁴⁷

According to the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce,⁴⁸ the *stadsdeelcentrum*, or autonomous suburban centre paradigm was strongly indebted to the developments that had occurred in Great Britain after the war.⁴⁹ In 1946, only one year after the end of the Second World War, the British parliament passed the New Towns Act.⁵⁰ During the war, many buildings had been damaged or destroyed, which combined with depression era slowdowns, lead to overcrowding and congestion in the country’s industrialized cities. The New Towns Act aimed to decongest these larger industrialized centres by rehousing people in freshly built, new and fully planned towns that were completely self-sufficient and provided for the community. It enabled the government to designate areas of land for the formation of new towns, and regulated the establishment of development corporations, each of which was responsible for the building and management of one of the projected new towns. Starting from 1946, three development waves led to the creation of about two dozen new towns in

England and Wales; twelve between 1946 and 1950, five between 1961 and 1964 and six between 1968 and 1971.⁵¹ Many of the British New Town were – just like the Swedish examples – built around what they called a ‘shopping centre’.

In May 1961 the Belgian delegation visited two New Towns in Britain; Stevenage, north of London,⁵² and Harlow in Essex, on the border with Hertfordshire.⁵³ In its mission report, the delegation noted that in these British new towns “[the shopping centre] is integrated in a complete set of social and cultural buildings that add to its attraction and form a complete centre, the function of which is both commercial and civic”.⁵⁴ In spatial planning terms, these shopping centres at the heart of British New Towns were quite similar to the Swedish New Towns– all pedestrian, largely open to the sky, composed of “a coherent piece of architecture”⁵⁵ of low (two- to three storeys high) rectangular volumes, which “give a sense of unity”⁵⁶, and easily accessible by both public and private transport. In a 1959 article on “The Stevenage Town Centre”, *Town and Country Planning* succinctly explained these planning principles as follows:

“The plan of the shopping core is simple. Ring roads form a rectangle enclosing a central pedestrian area [...] off the ring roads open the car parks which are formed in the re-entrant angle of the blocks of buildings. The bus station, the interchange point for local, regional and long-distance services, opens directly on to the Town Square and so is continuous with the pedestrian area. [...] Another factor in the design was the necessity to create within the centre a feeling of intimacy and enclosure as opposed to one of coldness and draughtiness. This has been achieved by a careful relation of heights of buildings to widths of the spaces opposite.”⁵⁷

In January 1960, less than two years after Stevenage’s Town Centre had opened, *The Builder* published a commending review, which emphasized the popularity of the New Town’s “all pedestrian shopping precinct”.⁵⁸ Its success, the journal mooted, “is due not only to the relaxed and convivial atmosphere in which the local residents enjoy their shopping, freed from the tyranny of the motor vehicle, but also to the fact that the motor car has been properly catered for and not banned from the town”.⁵⁹ According to *Town and Country Planning* this clever formula quickly “won the approval both of the local shopping public and of the traders who have taken premises here”.⁶⁰

The Belgian delegation, although impressed by the strong socio-spatial planning principles underpinning European shopping centre design and convinced by the beneficial effects of making the shopping centre a core component of New Towns and sub-city-centres, did point to some negative effects resulting from their (perhaps unanticipated) success: “Just like in Sweden, fact has shown that the attraction of the main centre

[of the New Town] occurs to the detriment of intermediate centres nearby and sometimes even widely surpasses the jurisdictional boundaries of the ‘New Town’, due to the rising motorisation.”⁶¹ Most of the delegation’s critique was however reserved for the architecture of these New Towns, and by extension of the shopping centres that were located at their core. Regarding the British centres, the report concluded that they often miss a “soul” and that “the artistic sense is frequently forgotten”⁶² – a critique that recurred in the discussion of the French *Villes Nouvelles* and their shopping centre cores:

“In France, in the twenty-something commercial centres in the region of Paris, a lot of similarities can be discovered regarding the architecture and it is sufficient to list the most common trait without having to describe each of them separately. The plan is simple: the straight line dominates [...]. The construction is almost always metal frame, which is visible and gives the complex a utilitarian character. The storefronts are sober; sometimes overly so.”⁶³

The anodyne architecture of the European shopping centre that the Belgian delegation critiqued could be understood as an expression of the ideological underpinnings of socio-political system that these structures were inscribed in. Contrary to the garish privately developed shopping centres in the United States, the shopping centres in Sweden and Great Britain were cast as integral building blocs of the welfare state and its planning and architecture – bread and butter architecture⁶⁴ – was designed to embody its egalitarian and democratic ideals. This was also the case in France, where the shopping centre became a cornerstone of new suburban cores. The French New Towns, or *Villes Nouvelles* programme – an ambitious national programme launched by Charles De Gaulle in 1965 – promised to remedy the suburban blues of these *Grands Ensembles*. The *Villes Nouvelles* would create new, vibrant urban centres in the periphery, which would be interconnected by a new regional express train network converging in downtown Paris. Most New Town planners were however critical of shopping malls.⁶⁵ The planning team of the New Town of Évry, for example, emphasized that its new centre – comparably to the approach in Sweden and the UK – was to be “an embryo of an Urban Heart” and was to avoid “the American-style shopping centre, anti-urban by its very nature, with its desolate facades and sea of parking space.”⁶⁶ This was precisely the message that the Low Countries’ delegations brought home from their foreign missions.

Translations: Building Shopping Centres in the Low Countries

When it came to the planning of shopping centres in the Low Countries, the analysis and ensuing recommendations of the Belgian and Dutch foreign missions – in spite of the criticism on some of the architectural features – clearly favoured what they identified as the European shopping centre paradigm of the *stadsdeelcentrum* over the assumed American model. The key difference between these two geographically remote paradigms, following the missions' intelligence, largely had to do with the stakeholders involved in the development process. In Europe, a close collaboration between the private and the public sector had seemingly ensured the creation of carefully planned, cohesive ensembles of commercial, civic and social facilities, which were generally well-connected to both public and private transport infrastructure and stood in sharp contrast with the private sector's profit-driven shopping centre development in the United States, which did not structure suburban sprawl, but exacerbated it.

Shopping I: Belgium following in the footsteps of the United States

In the early 1960s Genk, a municipality in the North-East of Belgium, decided to – in its own words – build an “American inspired” shopping centre.⁶⁷ This plan was first revealed at a town meeting on 18 February 1964, following which a municipal *Commissie voor Commerciële Urbanisatie* (Commission for Commercial Urbanisation) was established. This commission was charged with reconciling commercial demands with Genk's urban development. In October 1964, although well aware of the ‘perils’ of the American shopping centre paradigm and well informed about the developments in Sweden,⁶⁸ the commission unambiguously projected its future on that of Sulzbach in Germany, where (at that time) “[t]he only shopping centre following American norms has been built on the European mainland [...] which has a strong power of attraction on an area with a radius of 30 kilometres surrounding the shopping centre, which is home to two million people”.⁶⁹

The commercial success of Sulzbach's shopping centre and the magnetism that it exerted on its surroundings was very appealing to Genk. At the turn of the 20th century, after the discovery of charcoal in the region, Genk started urbanising at an impressive pace.⁷⁰ Three mining sites opened in the municipality; Waterschei in 1909, Winterslag in 1912 and Zwartberg in 1913 and in the following decades – mainly due to the influx of foreign labourers from Poland, Italy, Ukraine and Turkey – the population increased dramatically from approximately 3500 inhabitants in 1910 up to 47,500 in 1960.⁷¹ Genk's fragmented settlement pattern, which had historically been built up out of a number of dispersed hamlets,⁷² was now further articulated, with the three mining sites functioning as (new) nuclei of growth. In the first half of the twentieth century, the mining patrons constructed not only extensive housing estates for their workers, but also equipped these sites with a multitude of

socio-cultural, educational and recreational facilities, such as kindergartens, schools, hospitals and casinos.⁷³ By the early 1960s, however, when it became clear that the natural resources were not infinite – the mine of Zwartberg closed in 1966 – Genk set out to reinvent itself: “Before 1961-1962, the population components were mainly based on the coal industry (...) employing approximately 15000 workers. But meanwhile other industries have come to Genk, for instance Ford Werke AG from Cologne, to name only the most prominent one (...).”⁷⁴

The development of the shopping centre also formed an important component in the municipality’s endeavour to establish a new economical order. It was to position Genk as a modern centre of urbanity in the region and dissociate the municipality from its black mining past. The new shopping centre was attributed a key role in Genk’s urban planning; located at a short walking distance from Genk’s budding city centre, it was destined to contribute to the formation of a new urban core that could weave the municipality’s dispersed and disjointed urban fabric back together. The land that was expropriated to establish the shopping centre was bordered in the North and South by planned state-roads,⁷⁵ in the East by the municipal park and in the West met Genk’s emerging ‘downtown’. Although the municipal Commission for Commercial Urbanisation had clearly well understood its task of espousing urban development with commercial interest, it was ostensibly unaware of the fact that its approach was much more ‘European’ than ‘American’ in nature. In Genk, just like in most of the examples that the delegation of the *Comité Belge de la Distribution* had visited in Sweden, the UK and France, it was a public authority (the municipality) and not private developers that took the initiative to take the land and construct a shopping centre. The municipality was therefore able to select the location for the shopping centre as well as commission an architect of their choice to come up with a design. In 1964 Genk asked architect J.M. Plumier to develop a proposal for its shopping centre. His initial design, which supposedly responded to the brief that the municipality had set, attests to ambitions that are of a radically different nature than those identified in the American shopping centre. The plans show a complex of detached, rectilinear buildings with different height, size and function, all located in a car-free, open air all-pedestrian area surrounded by parking lots. Next to commercial activity, it incorporated – much like many of the European shopping centres that were visited during the 1961 mission – a large housing block, offices, an administrative centre, a hotel, a café, a restaurant and a range of communal facilities such as a day-care centre and a swimming pool. The buildings were all connected through an intricate system of ‘streets in the sky’, that were according to M. François, Director of Technical Services of the city of Genk, to “[...] separate the vehicular traffic from the pedestrians while maintaining an optimal car-accessibility to the entire perimeter of the shopping centre”.⁷⁶ Sketches that Plumier made however suggest that apart from this very functional aim of grade separation these ‘streets in the sky’ were to fulfil a

social function as well. They were depicted as an extension of the urban fabric, as places where people could linger, chat and observe activities in the lower-lying areas of the shopping centre. [Figure 01, 02, 03]

By 1965 Plumier's design had evolved from this initial multi-level, multifunctional open-air complex to a shopping centre structured around a (predominantly) single-story open-air commercial street, which traversed the plot from East to West and comprised a much more limited set of auxiliary functions. At its most Eastern point, it collected two large supermarkets and a few smaller commercial units around a spacious square, while in the West it gathered a modest health clinic, a restaurant and a hotel around a square with a generous pond. The shopping centre could easily be reached by car via a bridge over the planned state road between Hasselt and Maaseik that gave out onto a three-level car-park, which was serviced by a gas station. Plumier's plan however suggested that local shoppers could just as easily access the shopping centre on foot from the city 'centre' via a pedestrian path that sliced through the adjacent western plot,⁷⁷ which separated the shopping centre from the existing market square. [Figure 04]

Based on this design, the municipality opened a tendering procedure and soon reached an agreement with the company Constructions et Entreprises Industrielles (C.E.I.) from Brussels. Genk would sell the land that it had expropriated to C.E.I., which in exchange was to build a shopping centre on the site following the design of architect Plumier. The company committed to completing the shopping centre within five years, while the municipality pledged to execute all the necessary road works to ensure optimal accessibility to the shopping centre. In the contract that C.E.I. sent to the municipality in May 1965, the company suggested that the established price, 25 million Belgian Francs (approximately 620,000 euros), was still negotiable: "Should Genk refrain from charging the undersigned [C.E.I.] to construct certain of the non profitable components, such as the multi-story carpark, the health clinic, the hotel and the bridge then the conditions of the sale could be revised, taking into account the additional available land and the surplus value that could be attributed to it."⁷⁸

By December 1966, architect Plumier had drawn up new plans. These no longer showed the open-air shopping street, but a fully enclosed large, low-slung complex, composed of six large volumes connected by covered pedestrian streets. Although the hotel, the bridge, the multi-story carpark and the health clinic were still included, these were drawn in dotted lines and carried the inscription "to be part of a next approval application". Meanwhile, the service station had assumed a circular shape that wrapped in ramps, enabled car parking on the roof of the building. Throughout 1967 these plans, which unmistakably made generous concessions to C.E.I., were further elaborated. As a result, when *Shopping 1* finally opened its doors in August 1968, it no longer remotely resembled the initial 'European' proposals that Plumier had made, but was much more akin to what the

foreign delegations had identified as the ‘American’ shopping centre – a dumbbell mall – which the municipality initially aspired to build: fully enclosed, climate-controlled, with parking for 1000 cars on the roof, and a double-height *Bon Marché* supermarket (as anchor store) located in its most north-western corner. [Figure 05] Similar to Southdale, *Shopping I* had a ‘natural feature’ at its core; next to a set of ponds with low fountains, there were large planter boxes filled with shrubbery and small trees. This ‘centrepiece’ was encased by low rock walls and illuminated by a garish chandelier in the shape of a Mesoamerican pyramid, hung upside down. The rest of the interior was lit by a dense array of circular light fixtures, that spread a diffuse artificial light, while cracked stone paving, benches, and light spheres, resembling street lighting, aspired to give this novel, modern artificial environment a familiar ‘urban feel’. This rather drastic scale-back in design did however not reduce the enthusiasm of the local popular press, which (presumably unaware of ‘what could have been’) marvelled about how *Shopping I* had created ‘a new heart in the city’.⁷⁹ In February 1972, four years after *Shopping I*’s opening, *Het Nieuwsblad*, for instance, wrote:

“In Genk the shopping centre is also a meeting place. [...] Random sampling of shoppers has taught us that people come here for just for ‘recreation’, but then quite often ‘purchase something’. Those who live nearby come here to shop and have a coffee, or to meet people. ‘Why would I go the city if I can find everything that is available on the Nieuwstraat [Brussels’ main shopping street] right here’, we were told by one lady.”⁸⁰

Amstelveen, a ‘European’ *stadsdeelcentrum*’s *Binnenhof*

One of the first shopping centres built in the Netherlands was Amstelveen’s *Binnenhof*. The *Binnenhof* was located at the heart of Amstelveen, a sub-city centre of Amsterdam, which was to accommodate a population of 90,000. The plan for the development of Amstelveen was first adopted in 1956, after the inter-municipal corporation *Agglomeratie Amsterdam* was founded. This corporation developed a structure-plan for the whole agglomeration surrounding Amsterdam to initiate controlled decentralisation. The original design was made in 1957 by a team of architects, including the office of van den Broek and Bakema,⁸¹ Arthur Staal and P. Zanstra, who worked in close collaboration with the municipal urban planning cell. In spatial planning terms, Amstelveen was quite comparable to the developments in Sweden, France and the UK. Located in close proximity of the old city (Amsterdam), it was well connected to both the public and private transport infrastructure and had a core or *kern* with commercial, administrative and civic facilities.

In April 1958, the first *kernplan* or core-plan for Amstelveen was published in the journal *Bouw* (see figure 7).⁸² It revealed a neat rectilinear mixed-use development, with a large, three-storey town hall (*raadhuis*) at its heart. To the south of the town hall, a voluminous four-storey office building was sited, which also contained public services, including a post-office (*kantoorflats met openbare diensten*); to the north was a low-slung supermarket (*warenhuis*) with annex bank; to the east the plan included a collection of tall, five-storey apartment buildings with shops on the ground floor; and to the west, the town hall faced an expansive triangular public square. Other components of the plan were a cultural centre, a six-storey hotel, a range of apartment complexes, three to ten storeys high, some of which had shopping on the ground floor, a police station, community services (*wijkverzorgende bedrijven*) and so-called ‘special buildings’ (*bijzondere gebouwen*). [Figure 06]

By November 1961, however, when Amstelveen’s new centre was festively opened, this initial design had changed drastically. One of the most notable changes was the stark increase of shopping facilities (see figure 8: the buildings with numbers 6, 8, 9, 13 and 14 all have shops on the ground floor), which had pushed the town hall out of the core, to the western periphery of the development, where in the 1957 plan the hotel had been. To accommodate this increase in shopping, the *wijkverzorgende bedrijven* (community services) and the spacious public square of the 1957 plan, were replaced by expansive parking lots. At the heart of the development was now a sizeable shopping centre, which surrounded an all-pedestrian open square, called the *Binnenhof*. The *Bouwkundig Weekblad*, which in 1962 devoted a twenty-page article to Amstelveen naïvely remarked: “The original intention placed the town hall more or less in the hustle-and-bustle of the shoppers, but when a prospective buyer expressed his interest to build a department store in this location, the town hall was moved to the south-western corner.”⁸³ [Figure 07, 08]

The changes that were made to the plan aptly illustrate the dynamics that were at play in the development of such sub-city centres, which were the result of collaborations between private contractors, the market, and the state. The undeniable glaring increase of shopping between the first design and the final development, prompted the *Bouwkundig Weekblad* to – in an apologetic manner – point out: “From in the beginning the commission was to design not a shopping centre, but a ‘heart’ for a municipality of 100,000 souls. Governance, culture and a shopping centre were to this end united in one design.”⁸⁴ The periodical furthermore emphasized that this “heart” was primarily designed for the citizens of Amstelveen: “It has been the clear intention of the designers to design this city centre as a meeting place for the inhabitants. Governing elements (council hall, police station) and elements for daily life (housing, shops, corporations, banks, post office) were

clustered in the vicinity of and around a square where also culture receives a share.”⁸⁵ Also the name that was given to the open square at the heart of the shopping centre was to underscore the complex’s civic ambitions. The *Binnenhof* refers to a 13th century Gothic castle (with an open – nowadays public – square in the middle) at the heart of The Hague, which in 1584 became the political centre of the Dutch Republic and is today still the home of the States General of the Netherlands, the Ministry of General Affairs and the office of the Prime Minister.

Nonetheless, in spite of the generous concessions made to the private stakeholders in its planning, the architecture of Amstelveen’s *Binnenhof* was – in line with the sub-city centre developments in Sweden and New Towns in the UK and France – subjected to a carefully defined set of restrictions. The whole complex was to adhere to a square module of 1.10 metres, all its elements were to be visually connected by a canopy, which maintained a continuous height of 2.65 metres and which was clad in teak. Store signs and advertisements could only be placed on the shop-fronts, which were recessed under the canopy.⁸⁶ This resulted in a typical example of dry welfare state architecture that sought to express an equilibrium between the demands of commercial (private) interests and the desire to convey civic solemnity and unity. Nonetheless, the architect, E.F. Groosman, placed a tall ‘advertising-mast’ (*reclamemast*) at the heart of the *Binnenhof*.⁸⁷ Continuously reminding shoppers that “Coca Cola refreshes best”, it not only became the focal point of the complex, but also a pointed herald of the eventual triumph of commercial interests over the public good. [Figure 09]

A decade after Amstelveen was inaugurated, in 1972, another Dutch mission was organised to the US and Canada, this time by a small group of architects and a project developer who, “[...] intrigued by the numerous contradictory opinions [about shopping centres in the US]” set out to “bring some clarity in this matter”.⁸⁸ To that end, the company visited thirty large shopping complexes on their journey and recounted their findings in a lengthy article in the journal *Bouw*. An epilogue projected their American experiences on the situation in the Netherlands and started with an ardent plea for the enclosure of shopping centres in the Netherlands:

“[...] in the US a pronounced preference for enclosed shopping centres exists among consumers, and as a result also among developers and investors, and the open-air centres that we visited were clearly less attractive. Although the Dutch situation is evidently not identical to that of the US, there are probably less differences in human behaviour than many assume or hope.”⁸⁹

The findings of this mission and the tone of the article reporting on its findings were very different those of the 1961 mission, which a decade earlier had proudly written – also in the journal *Bouw* – that: “Shopping habits

over here [in the Netherlands] are profoundly different [...] And we are not (yet) as indolent as over there [the United States].”⁹⁰ In 1988, Amstelveen’s *Binnenhof* was covered in glass, defining it as a formal contrast to the social, cultural and governmental functions housed around the shopping centre and effectively relegating the sometimes eerie, often quite desolate and windswept images of the 1960s and 1970s *Binnenhof* to the past. One year later, in 1989, the project to renovate and expand the ‘heart’ commenced. This included an expansion of shopping functions with an additional (predominantly enclosed) 4500 square metres,⁹¹ which aimed to convert the shopping area into a “vibrant core”.⁹²

Delusions, Disillusions and Conclusions

As the histories of Amstelveen in the Netherlands and *Shopping 1* in Belgium illustrate, the disparities between what the Belgian and Dutch foreign missions identified as the ‘American’ and ‘European’ paradigms were much smaller than implied by their reports, publications and exhibition. The collaborations that were – following the European shopping centre ‘model’ – set up between the state and the free market were tenuous at best and susceptible to considerable market pressures. Both in *Shopping 1* and the *Binnenhof* a clear privatization occurred during the design process – albeit much more extensive in Genk than in Amstelveen. Ironically, this ‘corruption’ of civic ideals by commercial interests had also happened in the United States, a fate about which Gruen complained loudly.⁹³

On both sides of the Atlantic, shopping centre projects of the 1950s incorporated planned decentralization. Many planning and architecture professionals had of course long seen decentralization as a ‘healthy’ process, which had the potential to offer ‘oppressed’ city-dwellers the indispensable benefits of ‘space’ – air, trees and distance from neighbours – and developed spatial models to structure this decentralization. Ebenezer Howard’s *Garden City* and Frank Lloyd Wright’s *Broadacre City* are only a few famous examples preceding José Luis Sert’s writing on the need to create new community centres and civic cores, where gathering among friends and strangers could take place and where a public life could be found. In his 1942 publication *Can Our Cities Survive?* Sert posited: “... organized community meeting places could establish a frame where a new civic life and a healthy civic spirit could develop.” These ideas were further articulated in 1951, when CIAM invited architects to reflect on the theme the *Heart of the City*. The goal was to come up with different possible (symbolic) urban ‘cores’ – a prominent community building, a meeting square, or other central spaces or structures – capable of literally and symbolically unifying the urban fabric beyond the agglomeration of

functional zones. In the city or outside the city community formation was key.

It is against this frame of reference that Sweden, the UK and France elaborated their New Towns and sub-city-centre policies, but also informed by these examples that Gruen developed his shopping centre idea(1). He envisaged the shopping centre to become a ‘suburban crystallization’ point or ‘satellite downtown’ that – once several were realised – could develop into a network of nodes, which would not only structure decentralization, but also safeguard the commercial viability of the (traditional) city centre. These regional centres, he wrote, “[...] will by no means decrease the importance of the downtown business district but they will alleviate the unbearable traffic and parking conditions in the downtown area, thus improving shopping conditions”.⁹⁴ Moreover, these regional centres were multi-functional, like the city. Gruen’s first plans for Southdale placed the shopping centre at the heart of a tidy four-hundred-and-sixty-three-acre development, complete with apartment buildings, houses, schools, a medical centre, a park, and a lake, all of which bears strong resemblance to the original proposals that were made for Genk and Amstelveen. In these terms, Southdale was not a suburban alternative to downtown Minneapolis but, Gruen thought, it was the Minneapolis downtown corrected and cleansed of planning and history’s mistakes. Herein lies the connection between the (assumed) ‘American’ and ‘European’ models. And like the European examples, Victor Gruen’s grand plans for Southdale were never realized. No parks or schools or apartments were built, only a big (if fascinating) box in a sea of parking. His nearly utopian socialist dream was built by American capitalists, who – cleverly using the sudden change in the economics of mall-building – turned into a paradise of the liberal economy.⁹⁵ In Amstelveen and Genk, the market similarly redirected earlier ideals.

In the beginning, the design and planning of the ‘American’ and the ‘European’ shopping centre was identical. Each could be seen as one half of a monozygotic twin, spawned from the desire to create a new and improved version of the European downtown.⁹⁶ However, in the immediate post-war decades, nurture stifled nature as both twins developed differently – or perhaps rather ‘at different speeds’ – according to the different socio-political environments that they found themselves in. In the European welfare state of the 1950s and 1960s the equilibrium between market, state and civil society was initially maintained, resulting in carefully planned shopping centres, equipped with cultural facilities, well-connected to public transport and a ‘sober’ architecture. However, as the Low Countries gradually liberalised and the free market gained power,⁹⁷ the early post-war shopping centres gradually transformed into what their American ancestors had been since the mid-twentieth century: “machines for selling.”⁹⁸ The lessons that the foreign delegations should have drawn from their

excursions to the United States was that the grandest of visions could be derailed by the slightest imbalance in the collaboration between the state and the private market. Also Gruen came to this realization too late. He ended his living disclaiming responsibility for the shopping centre, snarling: “I refuse to pay alimony for those bastard developments.” However, as he turned away from his adopted country, disillusioned, in 1968 and moved back to Vienna, he found that a shopping mall had been built just south of the city, which was putting the beloved independent downtown shopkeepers out of business.⁹⁹

¹ Original quote: “Tussen Delft en Den Haag, in Rijswijk, is een modern winkelcentrum in aanbouw, van het type zoals in Amstelveen nu al enige tijd bestaat. Ook op andere punten in ons land wordt de oprichting van dergelijke ‘shopping centres’ overwogen. In nog meer plaatsen zijn reeds zulke plannen in studie of worden ze al uitgewerkt. Ook in de overige Beneluxlanden is de situatie gelijk... dit allemaal in navolging van Amerika. Zullen de winkelstraten in het centrum van Amsterdam, Antwerpen, Brussel, Den Haag, Luik, Luxemburg of Rotterdam ontvolkt worden?” Source: A.W. Luyckx, “Winkelcentrum: Van Markt tot Shopping Center,” *Actuele Onderwerpen* 953 (15 March 1963): 1.

² The Low Countries is a coastal region in Western Europe, consisting especially of the Netherlands and Belgium. Although the term also encompasses parts of France, Luxembourg and Germany, this paper focuses exclusively on Belgium and the Netherlands, which constitute the core of the Low Countries.

³ Gruenbaum & Krummeck, “Shopping Center,” *Architectural Forum* (May 1943): 101-103.

⁴ Northland was not the first shopping centre built in America, but has been broadly accepted as a milestone for regional shopping centres in the country. At the time, it was the world’s largest shopping centre, with the largest department store branch on the largest site with the greatest number of stores in the world. Shortly after Northland’s opening, *Ladies Home Journal* described it as “the most ambitious of such mercantile centers in America or the world” and *Harper’s Magazine*, having difficulty to come to grips with the hundreds of regional shopping centers on the drawing boards, opted to focus Northland only, considering it the country’s most significant example. Source: M. Jeffrey Hardwick, *Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 127-128.

⁵ Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 124; 129-130.

⁶ It is important to note that Northland and Southdale were not the first shopping centres in the United States, but Southdale was the first realised large-scale, fully enclosed, and air-conditioned centre. See: David Smiley, *Pedestrian Modern: Shopping and American Architecture, 1925-1956* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 1.

⁷ Malcolm Gladwell, “The Terrazzo Jungle,” *New Yorker*, March 15, 2004, accessed January 29, 2015, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2004/03/15/the-terrazzo-jungle>.

⁸ Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 145-147.

⁹ Sibylle Brändli, *Der Supermarkt im Kopf: Konsumkultur und Wohlstand in der Schweiz nach 1945* (Wien/ Köln/ Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2000), 213-214.

¹⁰ Jo Lintonbon, “The Drive to Modernise: Remodelling Birmingham City Centre 1945-1965”, in Janina Gosseye and Tom Avermaete (eds.), *Shopping Towns Europe 1945-1975: Commercial Collectivity and the Architecture of the Shopping Centre* (London, Bloomsbury, forthcoming 2016).

¹¹ The findings of this mission were published in a travel report: Erwin Thomas, “Einzelhandel im Städtebau: Shopping Centers in den USA – Europäische Konsequenzen,” Frankfurt, 1964. See: Steffen de Rudder, “The Shopping Centre Comes to Germany: Frankfurt’s Main-Taunus-Zentrum at the Crossroads of Mass-Motorisation and Retail Economics”, in Gosseye and Avermaete, *Shopping Towns Europe 1945-1975*.

¹² The official Flemish name of the ‘Comité Belge de la Distribution’ is: ‘Belgische Dienst Opvoering Productiviteit’.

¹³ Wijnand Galema and Dorine van Hoogstraten, “Winkelcentra: Categorieaal Onderzoek Wederopbouw 1940-1965,” Report commissioned by the Projectteam Wederopbouw van de Rijksdienst voor de Monumentenzorg, Zeist, March 2005, 22, accessed July 8, 2015, <http://cultureelerfgoed.nl/sites/default/files/publications/winkelcentra.pdf>.

¹⁴ According to the brochure that was printed to promote the exhibition, the choice of the (unlikely) term ‘tangles’ referred to the complex web of connections that needed to be taken into consideration when discussing the concept of ‘shopping’. It hints at the ‘entanglement’ of shopping with society, consumption, welfare state, road construction, ... Source: “Kopen en Knopen,” 1962, brochure for exhibition, *Dubbele Exemplaren Lezingen Kopen en Knopen* (347), Bouwcentrum (122533), Nationaal Archief, Den Haag.

¹⁵ S.P.M. Keesen, *Revolutionaire Distributie in U.S.A. en Zweden: Shopping-centers, Supermarkten en Discounters ook in Nederland?* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij FED, 1963).

¹⁶ The delegation consisted of twenty men and one woman, most of which represented governmental branches and commercial enterprises such as S.A. Le Grand Bazar d’Anvers, Galeries Anspach and S.A. Grands Magasins A l’Innovation. Also several architects and urbanists joined the mission: Jean Grosemans, an architect from Antwerp, Marie-Eliane Havenith,

an architect from Brussels and Emile Parent and Albert Stasse, both architects from Luik. See: *Shopping Centres: Verslag van de Belgische Zending naar de Verenigde Staten*, pp. 151-153.

¹⁷ In Ohio, the delegation traveled from Dayton to Fairborn, Springfield, Columbus, Mansfield, Medina, Brunswick, Cleveland, Sheffield, Loraine and Toledo. From there on, they visited Detroit in Michigan and Chicago in Illinois before travelling to Washington, Boston (Massachusetts) and New York. See: “*Shopping Centres: Verslag van de Belgische Zending naar de Verenigde Staten*,” *Belgische Dienst Opvoering Productiviteit*, 1960, 154-156.

¹⁸ “*Shopping Centres: Verslag*,” 27-41.

¹⁹ Original quote: “Het is inderdaad wel zielig getuige te zijn van de doodstrijd, om niet te spreken van de dood, van een stadscentrum waaruit het leven zich op een versneld ritme terugtrekt.” Source: “*Shopping Centres: Verslag*,” 30.

²⁰ Original quote: “Talrijke winkels, zowel grootwarenhuizen als detailhandelszaken, worden gesloten of zijn langzaam aan het weggwijnen. Op enkele uitzonderingen na zijn ze alle te koop of worden zij eenvoudigweg afgebroken om plaats te maken voor parkings. Hun zakencijfer gaat snel naar beneden. [...] Anderzijds nemen de commerciële centra in de peripheries, evenals hun zakencijfer zeer snel toe. Alle personen die wij ontmoetten [...] leggen de nadruk op de talrijke uitgesproken voordelen, buiten de ‘down-town’ te wonen en gebruik te maken van de shopping centres in de peripheries van grote steden.” Source: “*Shopping Centres: Verslag*,” 30-34.

²¹ Original quote: “De griezelverhalen over de revolutie in de Amerikaanse detailhandel zijn waar: we hebben tijdens onze studiereis geduizeld van de prijsafbraak, van de vernietiging van de grote en kleine zaken in de binnensteden, van smerige maar ook nette discountbedrijven, van de trek van de Amerikaanse burgers naar buiten, van de ongelooflijke ontwikkeling van het autopark.” Source: Keesen, *Revolutionaire Distributie in U.S.A. en Zweden*, 9.

²² ‘Voor het antwoord neemt ‘Kopen en Knopen’ u mee naar Amerika. [...] Een nieuw fenomeen ontstond hier: het z.g.n. shopping center. [...] meestal aan de stadsrand gelegen en voor de koper aantrekkelijk door: gecoördineerd opzet, prettig winkelen, vermaak, eenvoudig parkeren, moderne verkoopmethoden. Het is leerzaam om na te gaan wat hierna in de V.S. gebeurde: de winkels verlieten de propvolle binnenstad, waar het verkeer tot een ongewenst maximum was toegenomen. De overvolle stadskern werd in vele gevallen de verlaten, dode binnenstad.’ Source: “Inhoud van de expositie ‘Kopen en Knopen’,” 1962, concept text for exhibition, *Dubbele Exemplaren Lezingen Kopen en Knopen (347)*, *Bouwcentrum (122533)*, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag.

²³ This question was posed on a leaflet announcing the *Kopen & Knopen* exhibition, 1962, *Dubbele Exemplaren Lezingen Kopen en Knopen (347)*, *Bouwcentrum (122533)*, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag.

²⁴ Shopping centres were however not the sole culprit of the demise of the American downtown. When Northland opened, suburbanisation of the American landscape was already well on its way. Since the 1940s, the construction of hundreds of thousands of new houses, many of which were underwritten by federally financed mortgage insurance, along with the rapid increase in car ownership and federally funded highway construction facilitated the ‘white flight’. For the first time, a powerful interaction between segregation laws and race differences, which were expressed in socioeconomic terms, enabled the white middle-classes to abandon inner cities in favour of suburban living. This resulted in severe levels of urban decay that, by the 1960s, resulted in the formation of crumbling urban ‘ghettos’.

²⁵ Original quote: “De zending wenst derhalve dat men in het kader van de geplande ruimtelijke ordening evenveel aandacht zou besteden aan de distributievraagstukken en aan de problemen met betrekking tot het commercieel urbanisme als aan de andere factoren: industrie, huisvesting, enz. en dat men tevens in het kader van de studies, die voor het ogenblik door de publieke sector en namelijk door de Directie van het Urbanisme worden ondernomen, vruchtbaar zou samengewerkt worden met de privé-sektor. Dit zal ondermeer het geval zijn voor de grote wooneenheden waar de overheid, bij middel van de lastenboeken bepaalde voorwaarden kan opleggen inzake samenstelling en architectuur van het winkelcentrum.” Source: “*Shopping Centres: Verslag*,” 142-143.

²⁶ Mark Swenarton, Tom Avermaete, Dirk van den Heuvel, “Introduction,” in Mark Swenarton, Tom Avermaete, Dirk van den Heuvel (eds.), *Architecture and the Welfare State* (London: Routledge, 2014), 20.

²⁷ Although Gøsta Esping-Andersen’s has defined three distinct models of welfare states in his 1990 publication: *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, no distinction is made in the frame of this paper, not only because this distinction has no bearing on the argument, but also because the distinction between Belgium and The Netherlands is tentative as best. While Belgium fits the ‘Conservative or Corporatist’ model, The Netherlands is much more difficult to classify and displays characteristics of all three models. Source: Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990).

²⁸ Original quote: “Le cadre de vie et de pensée, l’organisation économique et le niveau de vie de l’Europe et des Etats-Unis montrent, en effet, des écarts considerable. Ce qui est concevable, possible, souhaité ou réalisé aux Etats-Unis ne se retrouve que de façon très atténuée en Europe. Les populations y sont plus attachées aux traditions, plus stables, plus conservatrices. Les villes et plus particulièrement le centre de celles-ci ont une signification beaucoup plus profonde pour elles. D’autre part, l’Etat et les pouvoirs publics locaux, interviennent, en règle générale, d’une manière plus active en Europe qu’aux Etats-Unis dans la vie sociale et économique.” Source: “*Shopping Centres en Europe: Compte Rendu d’une Mission d’Etude Organisée en France, Grand-Bretagne et Suède*,” Comité belge de la Distribution, 65.

²⁹ Original quote: “De koopgewoonten zijn hier zo geheel anders [...] En zo gemakzuchtig als daar zijn we (nog) niet. ‘No parking, no business’ geldt daar thans als hoogste wijsheid, zelfs voor de kerken. Verder dan 200 meter lopen van winkel naar parkeerplaats doet de Amerikaan stellig niet meer; een verschijnsel waarmee bij de parkeerterreinen rond de shopping centres rekening wordt gehouden. [...] Maar wat in Amerika kan, kan hier niet. Tegenover de enorme vrijheid, die particulieren daar hebben bij het bepalen van bebouwing van hun grondeigendom en die vaak leidt tot een chaotische stadsaanleg, hebben we hier het stedebouwkundig keurslijf der uitbreidingsplannen, der rooilijnen en bouwverordeningen.” Source: “Problemen van de Stadsuitbreiding en Winkelvoorziening: Studiereis naar de Verenigde Staten van Amerika inzake ‘Shoppingcenters’,” *Bouw* 23 (10 June 1961): 727.

³⁰ Original quote: “Sans doute, les centres Européens pourront-ils se presenter sous des formes propres, parfois différentes de celles qui existent aux Etats-Unis.” Source: “*Shopping Centres en Europe*,” 63.

³¹ Original quote: “[...] tout compte fait, c’est dans un cadre européen que des solutions valables doivent être trouvées en matière d’aménagement des centres commerciaux en Belgique.” Source: “Shopping Centres en Europe,” 1.

³² Similar to the delegation that visited the United States, the Belgian delegation to Europe counted twenty-three participants, the majority of which were representatives of governmental branches and commercial enterprises. Five architects also joined: Jean Grosemans, Marie-Eliane Havenith, Emile Parent and Albert Stasse, who had all participated in the visit to the United States, were joined by J.A. Sporck, an architect-urbanist from Luik. See: “Shopping Centres en Europe,” 74-76.

³³ While Esping-Andersen originally identified three variants of welfare capitalism, the general view now is that within Europe four types can be distinguished. First, the liberal type developed by the Anglophone countries (Britain and Ireland), based on individualism, with pronounced social citizenship in some areas and reliance on market elsewhere. Second, the continental type pioneered in Germany and prevalent in Western European countries (France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Austria), where the primary focus is on protecting the income of the industrial worker via social insurance schemes delivered through employer/employee partnerships. Third, the social democratic type developed in the Nordic countries (Sweden, followed by Norway, Denmark and Finland), in which the state assumes responsibility for the welfare of all on a universal basis. Fourth, the southern type followed in Italy after 1945 and in Spain, Portugal and Greece after the overthrow of the dictatorships in the 1970s, which is based on the primacy of the male wage earner and offers only a weak safety net for those outside the official labour market. Source: Swenarton, Avermaete, van den Heuvel, “Introduction,” 8.

³⁴ Original quote: “Zweden is geen Amerika. De Zweden missen de zelfbewuste openheid van de Amerikanen, die dikwijls ten onrechte prat gaat op alles wat zijn land presteert. Dit blijkt overduidelijk in de politiek. Is in Amerika alles vrijheid wat de klok slaat: Zweden is het socialistisch geordende paradijs. Rechtvaardigheidsgevoel, ordening, materiele en humanistisch getinte geestelijke vooruitgang zijn ook de richtsnoeren voor de regeerders. De sociale zekerheid van de wieg tot het graf is daar werkelijkheid. Het ziekenhuis kost niets. De overheid zorgt voor nieuwe goed-geoutilleerde woningen, vooral voor de arbeiders. Planologen staan hoog in ere. En hier benaderen we [...] de positie van het midden- en kleinbedrijf, de bouw van shopping-centers enzovoorts. Die ontwikkeling komt pas goed uit de verf als men iets van het maatschappelijke leven in dat land weet.” Source: Keesen, *Revolutionaire Distributie in U.S.A. en Zweden*, 90.

³⁵ For an in-depth account on the entanglement between urbanism and commerce in post-war Sweden, see: Helena Mattsson, “Where the Motorways Meet: Architecture and Corporatism in Sweden 1968”, in Mark Swenarton, Tom Avermaete, Dirk van den Heuvel (eds.), *Architecture and the Welfare State* (London: Routledge, 2014), 154-175.

³⁶ “Hubs without Wheels: A comparison of the Market Square, Harlow, with the town centre at Vällingby”, *Architectural Review*, June 1958, 373.

³⁷ “Swedish Shopping Centres: Experiments and Achievements,” The Stockholm Chamber of Commerce, 1960, 3.

³⁸ “Swedish Shopping Centres,” 5.

³⁹ These were: Vällingby Centre (opened in 1954) and Högdalen Centre (opened in 1959).

⁴⁰ This was: Fruängen Centre (opened in 1961).

⁴¹ These were: Hagsätra Centre (opened in 1960), Farsta Centre (1960) and Täby Centre (opened in 1968).

⁴² “Swedish Shopping Centres,” 8.

⁴³ “Swedish Shopping Centres,” 8.

⁴⁴ Original quote: “Il est très difficile, dans une économie libre, de vouloir établir des réglementations absolues relatives aux équipements commerciaux, à leur localisation, leur grandeur, etc... [...] C’est cependant, dans l’état actuel des choses, fondamentalement au secteur privé (tant les grandes unités que les petites entreprises), qu’incombe la responsabilité des études et des propositions pour la réalisation concrète d’un équipement commercial approprié, une collaboration étroite avec les autorités publiques étant indispensable aux divers stades des études et de l’exécution.” Source: “Shopping Centres en Europe,” 64.

⁴⁵ Original quote: “Zweden is geen Amerika. Als u dit bevestigd wilt zien, dan kijkt u maar naar de shopping centers. In de Verenigde Staten hebben de shopping-centers zelf een plaatsje gezocht temidden van de chaotische en enorm uitgestrekte bungalowbebouwing rond de steden. In Zweden zijn de shopping-centers planmatig opgenomen in de precies uitgekiende voorsteden van de enkele grote steden. Zo’n voorstad is van de eerste tot de laatste streep op het tekenbord tot stand gekomen. Alles wat voorzien kon worden, is ook voorzien. De Zweedse situatie benadert dan ook veel meer de Nederlandse dan de Amerikaanse.” Source: Keesen, *Revolutionaire Distributie in U.S.A. en Zweden*, 91.

⁴⁶ Original quote: “Het is onjuist deze sub-citycentra te vereenzelvigen met het Amerikaanse verschijnsel van de shopping centers.” Source: G. van ‘t Hull, “Stellingen over het Onderwerp ‘De Ontwikkeling van de Winkelfunctie in de Grote Stad’,” 1962, speech notes for a speech held at the study day in the Rotterdam Bouwcentrum on 28 June 1962, Inleiding Studiedagen in het Kader van de Tentoonstelling Kopen & Knopen (347), Bouwcentrum (122533), Nationaal Archief, Den Haag.

⁴⁷ Original quote: “De sub-citycentra dienen zodanig te worden ontworpen, dat zij functioneel en uiterlijk als ‘hart’ van het betrokken stadsdeel kunnen functioneren. Dit impliceert dat van stonde af aan een nauw overleg tussen de architecten van het centrum en de gemeentelijke stedenbouwkundige instanties noodzakelijk is en dat naast winkels eenheden van cultureel, sociaal en bestuurlijk karakter in het centrum dienen te worden gepland.” Source: G. van ‘t Hull, “Stellingen over het Onderwerp ‘De Ontwikkeling van de Winkelfunctie in de Grote Stad’,” 1962, speech notes for a speech held at the study day in the Rotterdam Bouwcentrum on 28 June 1962, Inleiding Studiedagen in het Kader van de Tentoonstelling Kopen & Knopen (347), Bouwcentrum (122533), Nationaal Archief, Den Haag.

⁴⁸ The brochure stated: “Actually, it is mainly the town planning doctrines worked out in Great Britain that have inspired Swedish planning.” See: “Swedish Shopping Centres,” 5.

⁴⁹ In a recent paper Lucy Creagh however suggests that Swedish suburban neighbourhood developments were quite different from the British New Towns, noting: “Certainly Vällingby [...] was not really a New Town as it was located a mere 10 kilometres to the north-west of the old centre of Stockholm. Nor was it, with its sizeable civic and commercial centre, its offices and industrial area, anything like a dormitory suburb.” See: Lucy Creagh, “From Acceptera to Vällingby: The Discourse on Individuality and Community in Sweden (1931-54),” *Footprint* 5, 2 (Autumn 2011), 16.

⁵⁰ Brian Harrison, *Seeking a Role: The United Kingdom 1951-1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 154-155.

⁵¹ Harrison, *Seeking a Role*, 154-155.

⁵² See, for instance: Leonard G. Vincent, "The Town Centre, Stevenage," *The Town Planning Review* 31, 2 (July 1960): 103-106.

⁵³ See, for instance: Frederick Gibberd, "Harlow: The Design of a New Town," *The Town Planning Review* 53, 1 (January 1982): 29-50.

⁵⁴ Original quote: "[...] est intégré dans une gamme complète de bâtiments sociaux et culturels qui ajoutent à son attraction, de façon à avoir, formant un seul centre d'attraction intégré, la fonction commerciale et dite de 'centre civique'." Source: "Shopping Centres en Europe," 34.

⁵⁵ T. Hampson, "The Stevenage Town Centre," *Town and Country Planning* 27 (1959): 15.

⁵⁶ T. Hampson, "The Stevenage Town Centre," *Town and Country Planning* 27 (1959): 15.

⁵⁷ T. Hampson, "The Stevenage Town Centre," *Town and Country Planning* 27 (1959): 15.

⁵⁸ "Stevenage Town Centre," *The Builder* 198 (15 January 1960): 127.

⁵⁹ "Stevenage Town Centre," *The Builder* 198 (15 January 1960): 127.

⁶⁰ T. Hampson, "The Stevenage Town Centre," *Town and Country Planning* 27 (1959): 13.

⁶¹ Original quote: "Comme en Suède, les faits ont prouvé que le pouvoir d'attraction du centre principal s'exerce au détriment des centres intermédiaires et parfois même, dépasse de loin les limites juridiques de la 'New Town' et ceci, en raison de la motorisation croissante." Source: "Shopping Centres en Europe," 36.

⁶² Original quote: "Hélas, trop souvent, il y a un manque d'âme, le sens artistique est trop fréquemment oublié." Source: "Shopping Centres en Europe," 37.

⁶³ Original quote: "En France, dans la vingtaine de centres commerciaux de la région parisienne, beaucoup se ressemblent quant au parti architectural et il est suffisant de donner le trait le plus caractéristique sans vouloir décrire chacun d'eux séparément. Le plan est simple: d'abord la ligne droite [...]. La construction est presque toujours une ossature métallique; la charpente est apparente donnant un caractère utilitaire à l'ensemble. L'habillage des devantures est sobre, parfois trop." Source: "Shopping Centres en Europe," 15.

⁶⁴ John Summerson, "Bread and Butter Architecture," *Horizon* (October 1942): 233-243.

⁶⁵ Kenny Cupers, "Shopping à l'américaine", in Gosseye and Avermaete, *Shopping Towns Europe 1945-1975*.

⁶⁶ "Pour une expérience pilote d'action sur l'environnement urbain: La ville nouvelle d'Évry et la mise en oeuvre d'une politique de l'environnement, 1970" (Archives Nationales, Centre d'Archives Contemporaines, 19780319/001), III.1. Cited in: Cupers, "Shopping à l'américaine".

⁶⁷ In a letter by the Mayor of Genk to the Director of the West-flemish inter-municipal corporation for technical advice and support regarding spatial planning (West-vlaamse Intercommunale voor Technisch Advies en Bijstand voor Ruimtelijke Ordening), dated 5 July 1966, he explains his plans to build a shopping centre, of which the planning is "op Amerikaanse leest geschoeid," or "based on American principles." Source: Bouwaanvragen 1966: Shopping Centre 1 (874.1), City Archive, Genk.

⁶⁸ In the municipal archives of Genk, the boxes relating to the development of the shopping centre, contained the report of the mission to the United States, as well as the brochure on Swedish shopping centres.

⁶⁹ Original quote: "Het enige koopcentrum naar Amerikaanse normen op het Europees vasteland ligt in Duitsland tussen Frankfurt-am-Main en Wiesbaden en oefent zijn aantrekkingskracht uit over een gebied, waar in een straal van 30 km twee miljoen mensen gehuisvest zijn." Source: "Korte Historiek," 9 October 1964, short overview of the development of the shopping centre in Genk by the Commissie Commerciële Urbanisatie, Bouwaanvragen 1966: Shopping Centre 1 (874.1), City Archive, Genk.

⁷⁰ Charcoal was first discovered in 1901 in As, a municipality close to Genk in the province of Limburg by André Dumont (1847 – 1920), who was a professor at the Catholic University of Leuven.

⁷¹ Tine De Rijck, Christian Kesteloot, Myriam Jansen-Verbeke, *Sporen van een Mijnverleden: Sociaal Geografische Studies in de Limburgse Mijnstreek* (Heverlee: Instituut voor Sociale en Economische Geografie, 1998), 8; 46.

⁷² The seven hamlets of Genk were: Winterslag, Waterschei, Gelieren, Terboekt, Sledderlo, Camerlo and Langerlo.

⁷³ The term 'casino' (in this context) does not refer to a gambling hall, but is in fact an early term for a 'cultural centre'; it refers to the typology of a 'casino-kursaal' that were built in the more prestigious cities close to the sea. Source: Patrik Jaspers, "De Invloed van de Steenkoolmijnen op de Materiële Cultuur in Limburg," report of research project funded by the Province of Limburg, Leuven, 2001, 269.

⁷⁴ Original quote: "Vóór 1961-1962 waren de bevolkingscomponenten uitsluitend gebaseerd op de kolenindustrie (...), met een tewerkstelling van circa 15000 man. Intussen zijn verscheidene industrieën gevestigd in het Genkse en om slechts de voornaamste te noemen: Ford-Werke A.G. uit Keulen." Source: Letter from the municipal board of Genk to the minister of Public Health and Family, 1964, Sportcentrum 2 Deel 1 (861.6), City Archive, Genk.

⁷⁵ The N75 is a state road North of the shopping centre, connecting Hasselt and Dilsen. A by-pass to the East of the shopping centre connects the N75 to the N77; another state road connecting Genk to The Netherlands.

⁷⁶ E. François, Notes of the meeting of the council of Aldermen of Genk, dated 7 September 1964, 2, Bouwaanvragen 1966: Shopping Centre 1 (874.1), City Archive, Genk.

⁷⁷ This plot was not actually a part of the development site.

⁷⁸ Original quote: "Voor het geval, dat de Stad Genk er vanaf zou zien de ondergetekende [C.E.I.] te verplichten om bepaalde geen voordeel opbrengende onderdelen te bouwen zoals de parkeerplaatsen met verdiepingen, het dispensarium, het hotel, de brug, dan zouden de koopvoorwaarden [...] herzien worden, hierbij rekening houdend met de nieuwe ter beschikking komende oppervlakten en, de meerwaarde die hieraan mogelijker wijze zou toegekend worden." See: Ontwerpcontract van immobilia aan gemeente Genk, dated 20 May 1965, 5, Bouwaanvragen 1966: Shopping Centre 1 (874.1), City Archive, Genk.

⁷⁹ "Genk: Een Nieuw Hart in de Stad; Woluwe: Een Luxe Shopping", *Het Nieuwsblad*, 24 February 1972.

⁸⁰ Original quote: “In Genk is het shopping center ook een ontmoetingsplaats. [...] Een kleine steekproef onder de koperwandelers maakt al gauw duidelijk dat men hier inderdaad ook gewoon als ‘recreatie’ komt maar dan ook wel vaak ‘iets koopt’. Wie dichtbij woont gaat er winkelen en koffie drinken, maakt er afspraakjes. ‘Waarom zou je naar de binnenstad gaan als je hier alles vindt wat je ook in de Nieuwstraat vindt’, zei ons een dame.” Source: “Genk: Een Nieuw Hart in de Stad; Woluwe: Een Luxe Shopping”, *Het Nieuwsblad*, 24 February 1972.

⁸¹ The office of van den Broek and Bakema, which was founded in 1948, was also responsible for the design of the Lijnbaan in Rotterdam (1949-1953), which is broadly considered one of the first ‘shopping centres’ in Europe and, which Victor Gruen and Larry Smith presented as an outstanding example of the new typology in the introduction of their 1960 publication *Shopping Towns U.S.A.* See: Victor Gruen and Larry Smith, *Shopping Towns U.S.A.: The Planning of Shopping Centers* (New York/ Amsterdam/ London: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1960), 12.

⁸² “Kernplan Amstelveen,” *Bouw* 13, 17 (26 April 1958): 435.

⁸³ Original quote: “Het aanvankelijk voornemen plaatste het raadhuis min of meer in het gewoel van de winkellenden, doch toen zich een gegadigde meldde voor de bouw van een warehouse aldaar, leidde dit tot een verplaatsing van het raadhuis naar de zuidwesthoek.” Source: “Een Centrum voor Amstelveen,” *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 79, 9 (1962): 188.

⁸⁴ Original quote: “De opdracht luidde van den beginnen het situeren en ontwerpen niet van een winkelcentrum, doch van een ‘hart’ voor een gemeente van 100 000 zielen. Bestuur, cultuur en koopcentrum dacht men zich hierbij in één ontwerp verenigd.” Source: “Een Centrum voor Amstelveen,” *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 79, 9 (1962): 187. The ‘Heart of the City’ was the theme of the 8th Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne (CIAM), held in Hoddesdon, England, from 7 to 14 July 1951. Since Jaap Bakema began attending CIAM meetings from 1946 on (and became secretary of the organisation in 1955), it is safe to assume that he was well aware of the CIAM discourse regarding the ‘Heart of the City’ and that he had significant influence in formulating the commission for Amstelveen. The relation between the ‘Heart of the City’ and shopping was thus already well-established in Europe by the time Victor Gruen authored *The Heart of Our Cities – The Urban Crisis: Diagnosis and Cure* in 1964. See: Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, “Gruen and the Legacy of CIAM”, in Janina Gosseye and Tom Avermaete (eds.), *The Shopping Centre 1943-2013: The Rise and Demise of a Ubiquitous Collective Architecture*, conference proceedings (Delft: Delft University of Technology, 2014), 73-84.

⁸⁵ Original quote: “Het is de blijkbare opzet der ontwerpers geweest het stadscentrum te ontwerpen als ontmoetingsplaats der bewoners. Bestuurlijke elementen (raadhuis, politiebureau), elementen voor het dagelijkse leven (woning, winkels, bedrijven, banken, postkantoor) werden aan en om een plein gegroepeerd waaraan ook de cultuur deel krijgt.” Source: “Een Centrum voor Amstelveen”, *Bouwkundig Weekblad*: 188.

⁸⁶ Above the shops, which were located on the ground floor, the buildings surrounding the *Binnenhof* had two levels of apartments. Source: “Winkelcentrum en Verzamelgebouw,” *Bouwkundig Weekblad* 79, 9 (1962): 194.

⁸⁷ While most (individual) elements of the kernplan were designed by the original design team, including the office of van den Broek and Bakema, Arthur Staal and P. Zanstra, some elements were outsourced to other designers. These included the shopping centre, which was designed by architect E.F. Grootman in collaboration with T.A. Brouwer and the telephone exchange, which was designed by engineer C. Wegeners Sleswijk and S.J.S. Wichers.

⁸⁸ Jop Leicher and Bonne de Jonge, “Winkelcentra in de Verenigde Staten en Canada”, *Bouw* 27, 51 (December 1972): 1638.

⁸⁹ Original quote: “[...] in de V.S. bij de kopers en daardoor bij ondernemers en beleggers een uitgesproken voorkeur blijkt te bestaan voor de overdekte winkelcentra en dat de bezochte open centra duidelijk minder attractief zijn. De Nederlandse omstandigheden zijn weliswaar niet gelijk aan dit in de V.S., maar in het menselijk gedrag zitten wellicht minder verschillen, dan velen veronderstellen of hopen”. Source: Leicher and de Jonge, “Winkelcentra in de Verenigde Staten en Canada”: 1649.

⁹⁰ “Problemen van de Stadsuitbreiding en Winkelvoorziening,” *Bouw* 23 (10 June 1961): 727.

⁹¹ “Uitbreiding Winkelcentrum te Amstelveen”, *Bouw* 43, 19 (1988): 56.

⁹² “Ontwikkelvisie Stadshart Amstelveen”,

http://www.platformpv.nl/files/Unibail%20R_ontwikkelvisieAmstelveenB_16MR.pdf, accessed 15 July 2015.

⁹³ In her essay on Skärsholmen, Mattsson launches a plea to increase the understanding of the role that capital and commercial groups played in Europe’s post-war ‘welfare state period’, as an attempt to trace the origins of today’s neoliberalism and look for continuities rather than breaks. See: Mattsson, *Where the Motorway Meets*, 157.

⁹⁴ David Smiley, *Pedestrian Modern: Shopping and American Architecture, 1925-1956* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 191; Timothy Mennel, “Victor Gruen and the Construction of Cold War Utopias,” *Journal of Planning History* 3, 2 (May 2004): 137.

⁹⁵ In 1954, Congress – in an attempt to stimulate investment in manufacturing – made a radical change in the tax rules governing depreciation. It launched a program called ‘accelerated depreciation’, which allowed developers to rapidly write off construction of new business buildings and even claim losses against unrelated income. The depreciation deductions were so large that in the first few years after a shopping centre was built, it was almost certainly losing money, at least on paper, as it ensured enormous tax benefits and allowed shopping centre developers to recoup the cost of the investment in a fraction of time. Shopping centres thus became lucrative tax shelters for investors, leading to a ‘bonanza’ for developers. See: Gladwell, “The Terrazzo Jungle.”

⁹⁶ In *Mall Maker*, Hardwick carefully explains how Gruen sought inspiration for his shopping centre designs in his ‘Old World roots’; a tendency which was also picked up by contemporary journalists, who “[...] compared a Gruen shopping centre to the best of Europe’s past: St. Mark’s in Venice, Copenhagen’s old red brick, ‘antiquated areas remindful of an Old Roman Road, and the glassed-in splendour of Victor Emmanuel Galleria of Milan, Italy’”. Hardwick, however, points out that “if Gruen referenced a European city in his American shopping center, it would be Vienna – the only city that truly mattered to him”. Source: Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 131.

⁹⁷ In “Where the Motorways Meet: Architecture and Corporatism in Sweden 1968”, Mattsson points out that capital and commercial groups in the 1950s and 1960s had a significant influence in European welfare states; an influence which was also expressed in so-called welfare state architecture. She launches a plea to – rather than regard the 1970s as a historical break, dually marked by economic restructuring and the advent of a new cultural condition – look for continuities. This paper

could be read as such. See: Mattsson, "Where the Motorways Meet," 155.

⁹⁸ Gruen contended that the shopping centre was neither a "machine for selling" nor a "nostalgic reminiscence of the village green" but "an essentially urban environment". Cited in: Hardwick, *Mall Maker*, 130.

⁹⁹ Gladwell, "The Terrazzo Jungle."