

How can market halls that are built in current years learn from the market halls in the past?

Ni Nan

Shopping malls are one of the famous 20th century inventions. Market halls as the predecessor of shopping mall, the forms of that didn't change a lot. I would like to know the reasons why market halls are still alive for such a long time, and learn from the evolution history of British market halls. At the same time to understand how the modern market hall transformed from the past.

Please follow the Timeline of Market halls

OPEN-AIR MARKETS AND STREET MARKETS

The open markets have led to more **social mixing** since

1750 in comparison to markets before this time. The traditional markets served as the town's **principal public meeting place**,

both formal and informal. (1) The formal social activities of British markets are announcing public punishments, in the form of stock, pillory and whipping post, were also features of the markets. (Pic 1) The informal public announcements were also made in market at early time— marriage banns. The stalls in open markets were fixed or nomad structures with wood or stone. And the traditional markets were usually placed in the center of the most heavily traversed path, mostly near the church. So, the success of the traditional marketplace, after all, was its access from all points of the town.



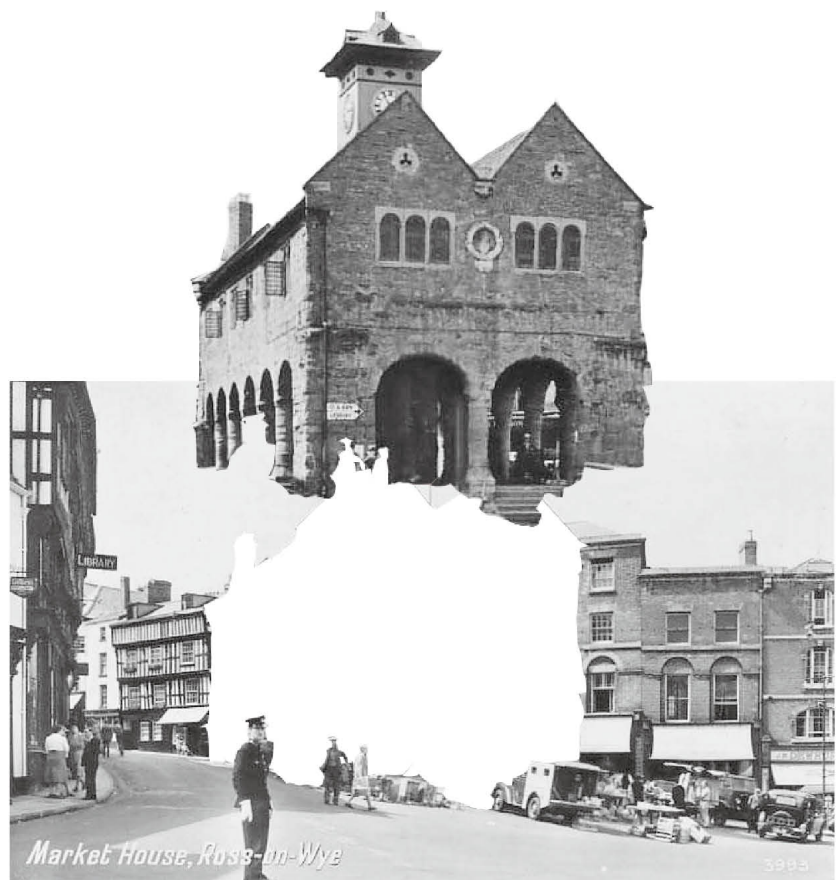
1750

Pic 1. Swansea market 1799

MARKET HOUSES

As one of the substantial social functions of the town, the public market house was planned to contain everyday urban life, which went beyond commercial into the realm of human behavior and social value. (2) More often, the mixed-use market house functioned more as town hall than market. For example, less space in market place used for administrative functions like weighing goods, collecting tolls and settling accounts. Much space was given over to such civic activities as court, school and jail. The basic traditional architecture form of Market house: a two-story brick or stone structure, with the town meeting rooms (including a courtroom perhaps, and a civic hall or assembly rooms) above, and the market space (often an arcade open space) below, a clock tower in the top. (Pic 2)

1789



Pic 2. Herefordshire, Ross on Wye, Market House 1950's

MARKET HALLS

Market hall is the center of the town's social and political activity, social mixture, and entertainment. Like the early open marketplace, the market hall was one of the town's principal promenades, often crowded with young men and women whose main intention was not to buy but to see and be seen. (3) Bolton is a town in the North West of England. The refurbished market hall in Bolton even today has these sorts of festival characters. They used to allow street and fair performers in on Friday and Saturday – night markets. There were many spectacles inside the hall: ice-cream vendors, match sellers, toys, hot ready –to eat food, clog dancers, and jugglers; and as the Saturday market spilled out beyond the confines of market hall into the open air, the spectacle was enhanced. The architecture style of British market halls used similar as London's Crystal Palace, but less detail, more functional. (Pic 3) In some unique cases, they purpose built premises containing both stall spaces and other amenities for the benefit of the space. (4) (Pic 4)



Pic 3. Leeds Kirkgate Market, 1860



Pic 4. Leather Lane Market in London, 1893

1822

THE NEW MARKET HALLS

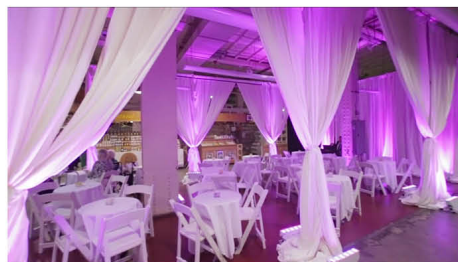
From the history of traditional market hall, those vibrant civic functions are missing even the form of market halls are disappearing in a certain extent. However there are still some change and new form of market halls in modern world.

READING TERMINAL MARKET

Reading Terminal Market as a historic farmers market hall located in Philadelphia, United States. It still has an important **social function** in the city center till now. Citizens could have cooking classes or even celebrate their wedding ceremony in the market hall in the nighttime. On the website of the market, there are schedules of all the events which happened everyday in the hall. In here, people still treat the market hall as a space that is part of their social life, the same as what the market used to be. What is different is the events emerged in market now is more vibrant and flexible than before; market could even work as a school, as a church, as a stage, etc.



1893



Reading Terminal Market, Philadelphia, United States

FREEHOUSE

The free house foundation is an urban social project directed by Jeanne van Heeswijk who is a visual artist. It aimed to present the visibility of the neighborhood in Afrikaanderwijk Rotterdam by creating spaces where local entrepreneurs, young people and artists can come to experience and exchange ideas together. (5) Meanwhile the exchange will lead to form a cultural production that can strengthen the economic and realizing the visible. For instant, they established a district value, a Quarter Kitchen, a Neighborhood store and a number of **new interventions** during local market.

MARKT VAN MORGEN is a project produced by FREE HOUSE TEAM; it is a bustling market among Afrikaandermarkt which locates in Rotterdam, it generates new products, new services and fashion shows, performances, special sales vehicles, market stalls and much more. (6) Rotterdam Afrikaandermarkt is one of the largest markets in the Netherlands. It opens twice a week around 300 stalls with the most "exotic" offerings of Rotterdam. To create a place not only sale products, but also bring an innovative experience. FREE HOUSE developed a plan for the future of the market. They initiated more than 300 interventions within the existing Afrikaandermarkt. Each intervention was established based on a link between a salesman and an artist or a designer. (7) The results ranged from re- styling the stalls to performance, new prototype of market stalls, product innovations to add services to the market. In this project market is a public space in the neighborhood that became a stage to show the final products or process of production or a test field to experiment. FREE

HOUSE promoted the **neighborhood and market constructive mutual coordination.**



Market van morgen, Rotterdam

As a result, the market became a major starting point like a social junction to solve problems in this certain area. Meanwhile, the way what market and neighborhood work like a community is a good example to show the social function of market in the modern city.



2009

MARKET HALL BY MVRDV

The market hall designed by MVRDV is a sustainable combination of food, leisure, living and parking. It includes a supermarket; a numbers of market stalls and rest of it are apartments. It aims to be a new typology of market hall. But those commercial properties made the market hall have the potential turn to be 'market mall'.

Imagining, if you lived above a shopping mall, in the night, the outside view of your window is only empty stalls. What is your feeling? Normally, Market halls usually locate in the city center. As a core space in city, it is hardly to find such civic functions in it. The qualities of social life are lack at MVRDV market hall. In my perspective, this project seems like an excuse of a giant **commercial housing** for minority who want to live in the city center.



Renderings of Market hall by MVRDV

2014

CONCLUSION

When we look back the history and social functions in most market halls are disappearing; even some market halls change to be shopping malls. But **luckily** we still can find new uses of modern market hall. For instant, the Reading terminal market hall was used as a meeting space for citizens, not only commercial activity but also holding daily events or socializing, which follow the long upheld traditions of the former market hall. In the MARKT VAN MORGEN project, as a traditional social junction, market now becomes one of the sources of solutions to solve social problems and the use of diversity in it even could improve urban social life. The Market hall, which was designed by MVRDV, showed how modern land developers established the new typology market hall based on pure economic intention.

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1. <The British Market Hall- A Social and Architectural history> by James Schmiechen, Kenneth Carls, Yale University Press, 1999 (1) (2) (3)
2. <The Death and Life of Great American Cities> by Jane Jacobs, Modern library New York, 1961 (8)

Website:

1. <http://blackcablondon.wordpress.com/tag/london-markets/> (4) (5)
2. <http://www.freehouse.nl/> (6) (7) (8)
3. <http://www.readingterminalmarket.org/>
4. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5H25Uyt_wE
5. <http://www.mvrdv.nl/projects/markethall/>

Our city life needs **further activities**, beyond consuming into the human behavior and social values, which could enhance the diversity of urban life like what traditional market hall involved. A city needs more space where people could go for a little rest, recreation, exercise, and free socializing. According to Jane Jacobs "Lively, diverse, intense cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration, with energy enough to carry over for problems and needs outside themselves." (9) I entirely support this, I expect market hall could provide such a space to enjoy urban life, at same time have the ability to become an indispensable social segment to **influence future urban development.**

