The Square in space and time

Classification and typologies

Kaisa Kangur Mirko Traks 2011

For the square there are three space-confining elements:

-the row of surrounding structures

-the expansion of the floor

-the imaginary sphere of the sky above

Historical squares can be basically divided into two:

- square within a town have been developed gradually with town
- square have been planned as clearly defined as a any individual piece of architecture

The appearance of each individual square represents a blend of factors

- Topographical
- Climatic
- National

Beginning of the square

- First squares were formed in Greek acropolis
- as space in acropolis was never organized, squares were irregular
- *agora* was a place for political gathering and changed gradually into a center for marketing and eventually become solely commercial

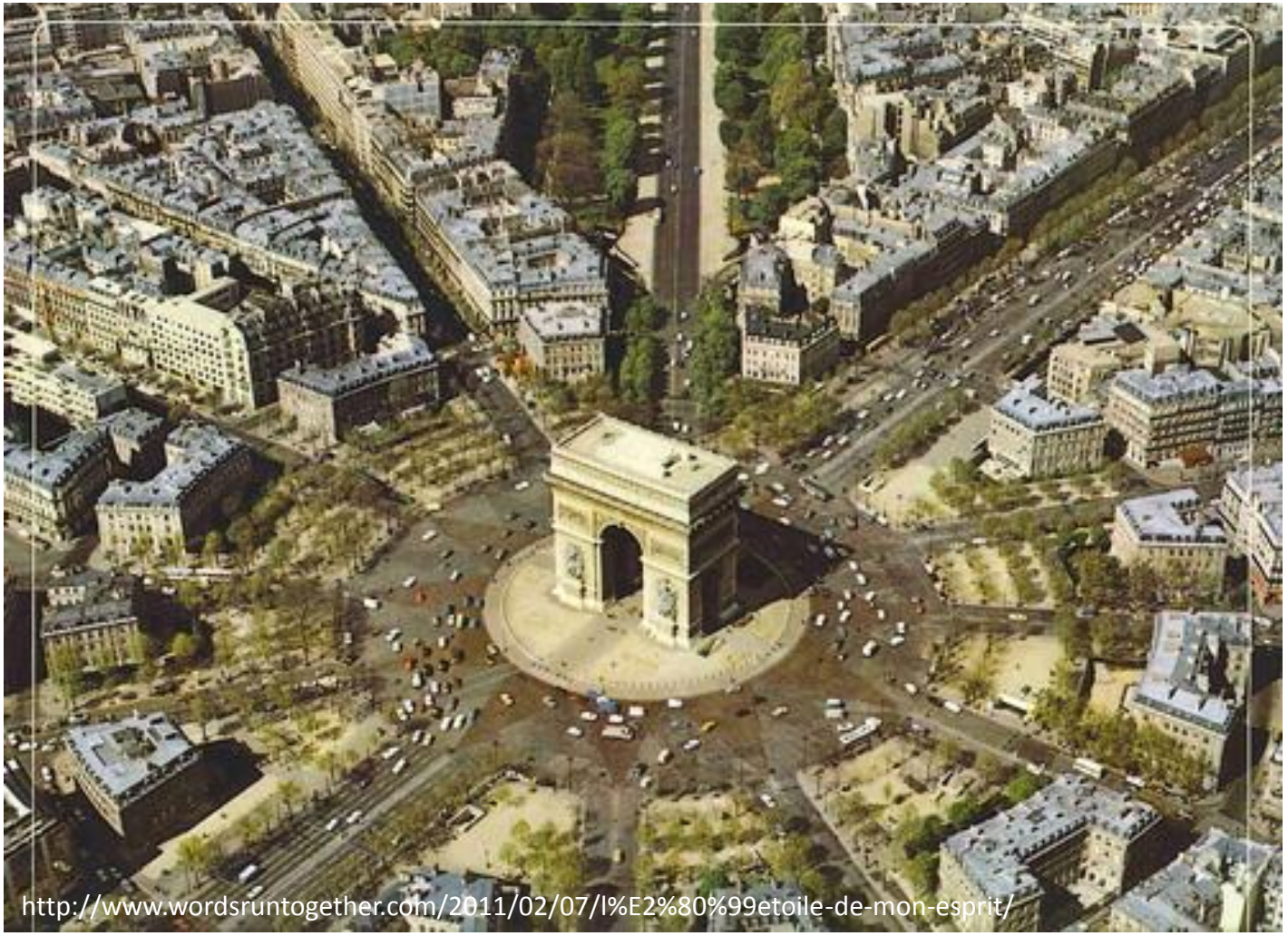
Classification

By Joseph Stübben 1845- 1936
German architect, urban planner and professor

First category: Traffic squares, modern interchanges, circular and polygonal “star plazas”

Place de l'Étoile ("Square of the Star")

- Large road junction
- meeting point for twelve straight avenues
- *Arc de Triomphe*
- no pedestrian access
- constant movement of automobile traffic
- underpass to visit the *Arc de Triomphe*



The square is surrounded by two streets forming a circle around it.

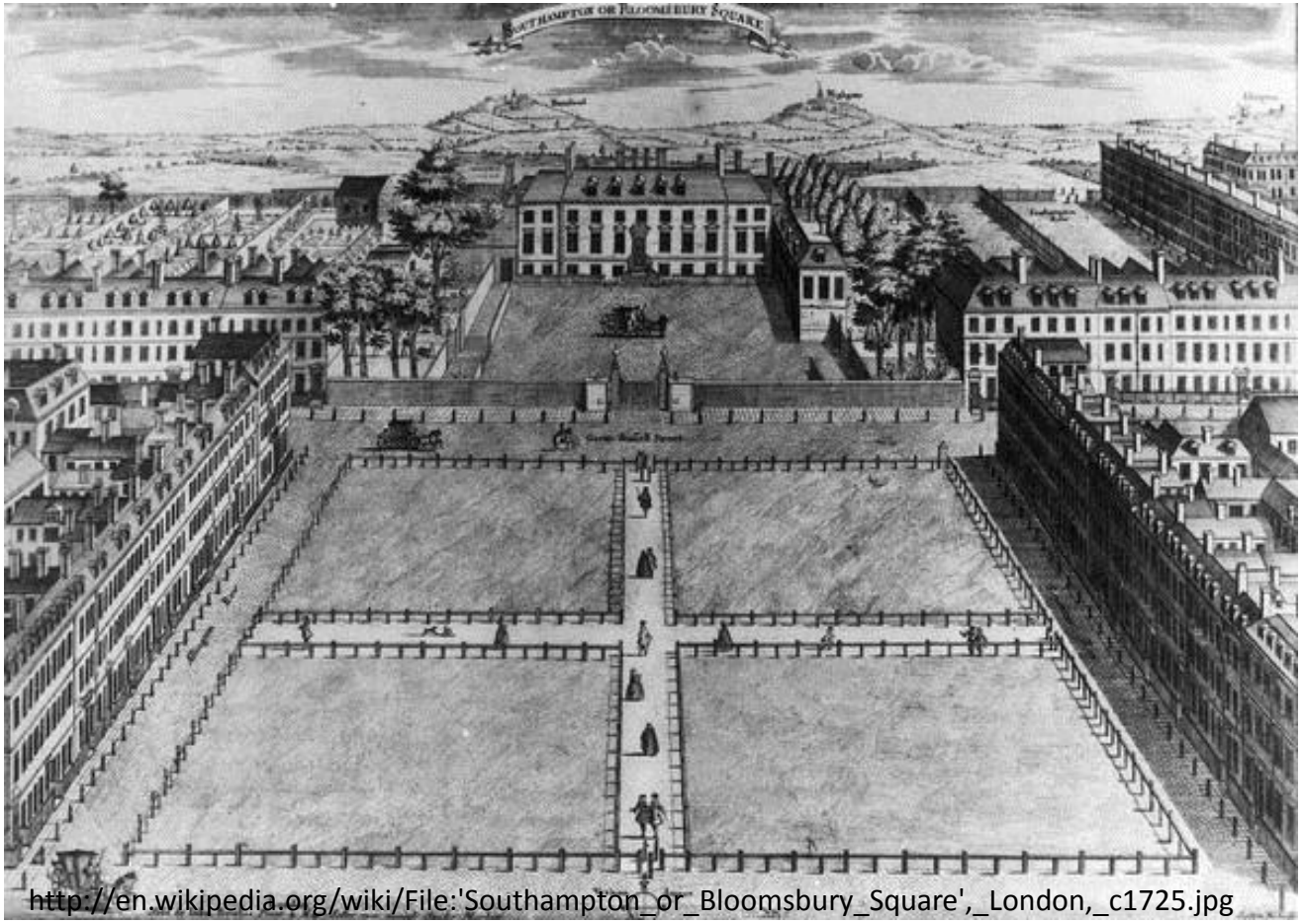
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Place.de.l%27etoile.from.35000.feet.arp.jpg

Second category: Square for public use

- places for markets, parades, and public festivities

Marktplatz in Germany

Third category: English garden squares, landscaped squares



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:'Southampton_or_Bloomsbury_Square',_London,_c1725.jpg

Bloomsbury Square in London

Russel Square in London

Fourth category: Architectural square, monument square

Trafalgar square

- public space and tourist attraction
- *Nelson´s Column*
- north side of the square is the *National Gallery* with terrace
- east side of the square is the St *Martin-in-the-Field* church
- large central area with roadways on three sides
- used for political demonstration and community gatherings

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Trafalgar_square_england_1908.jpg

Square is one of the city's most vibrant open spaces

Piazza dello Statuto

- in the Torino city center
- elongated shape
- an impressive monument dedicated to the creation of the railway tunnel of Frejus (France-Italy)

http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Brogi,_Giacomo_(1822-1881)_-_Torino_-_Piazza_dello_Statuto_(1865s).jpg

There are wide porches around the square

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/ba/FrejusMemorial03.JPG

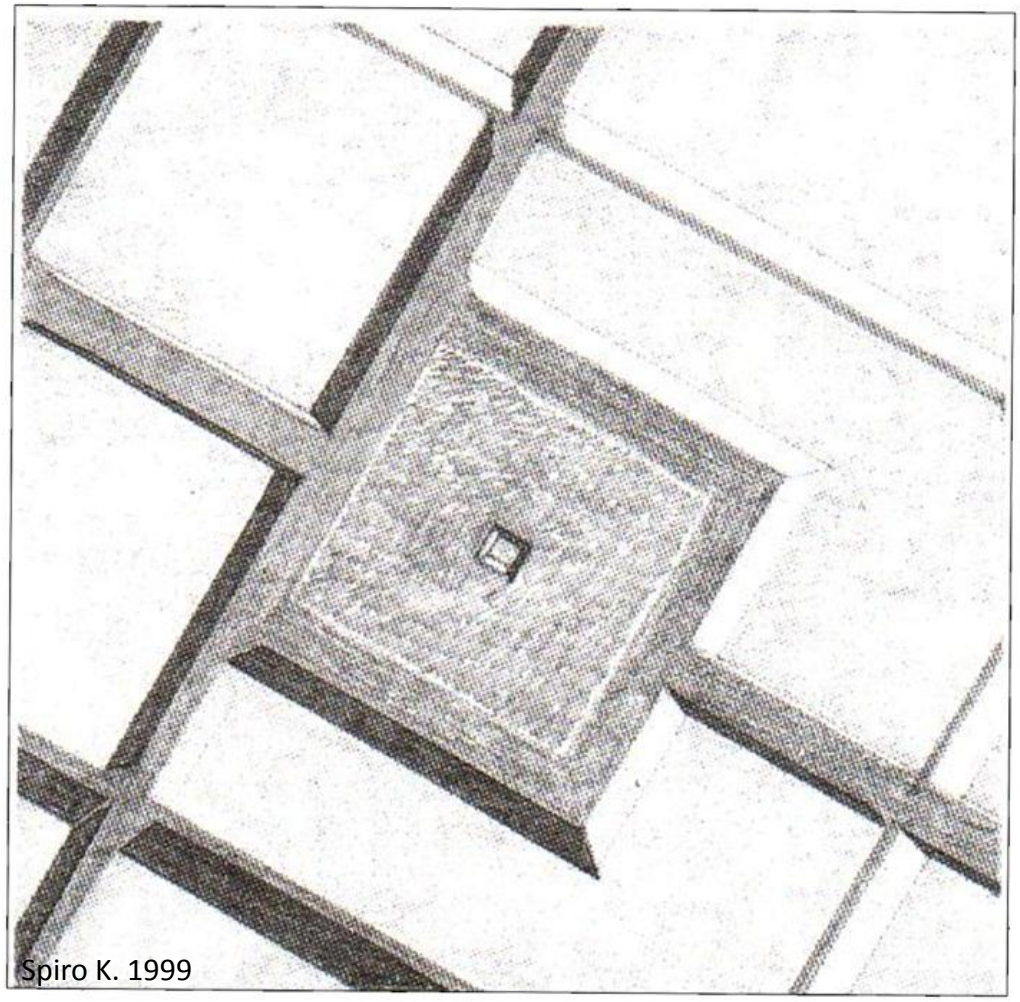
Monument consists huge pyramid of boulders. It is an allegory of the triumph of reason over brute force.

Classification

By Paul Zucker 1888- 1971

German architect, art hístórian, art critic

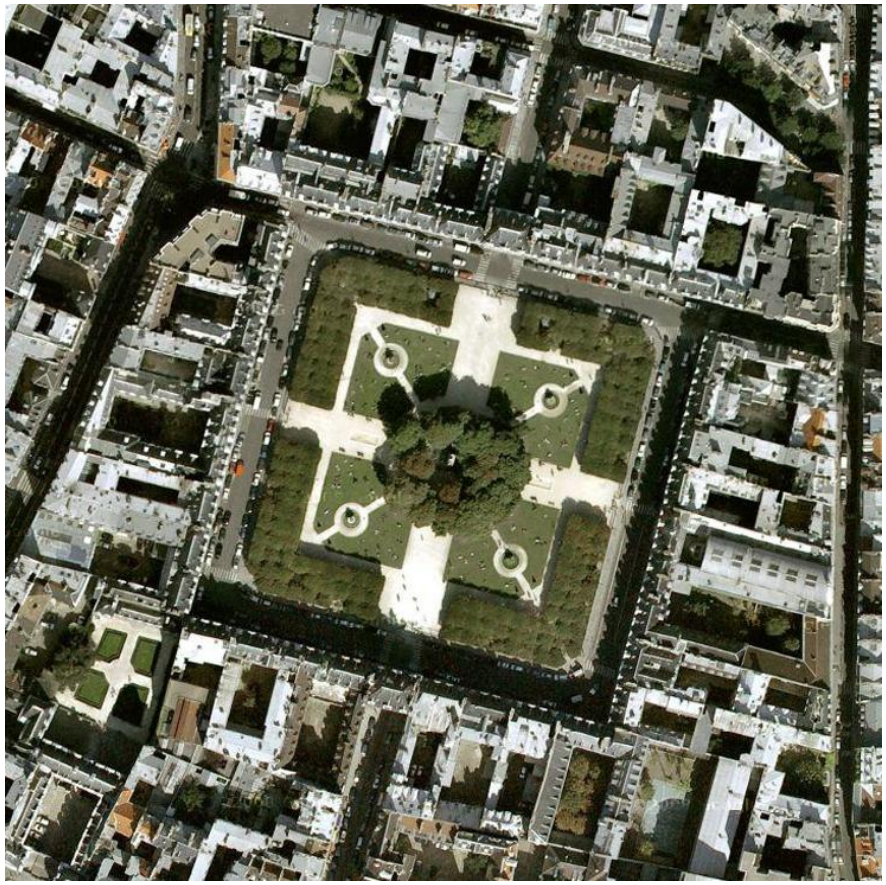
1. The closed squares



Space is static and self-contained

Place des Vosges

- oldest planned square in Paris
- was built by Henri IV from 1605 to 1612
- originally known as the *Place Royale*

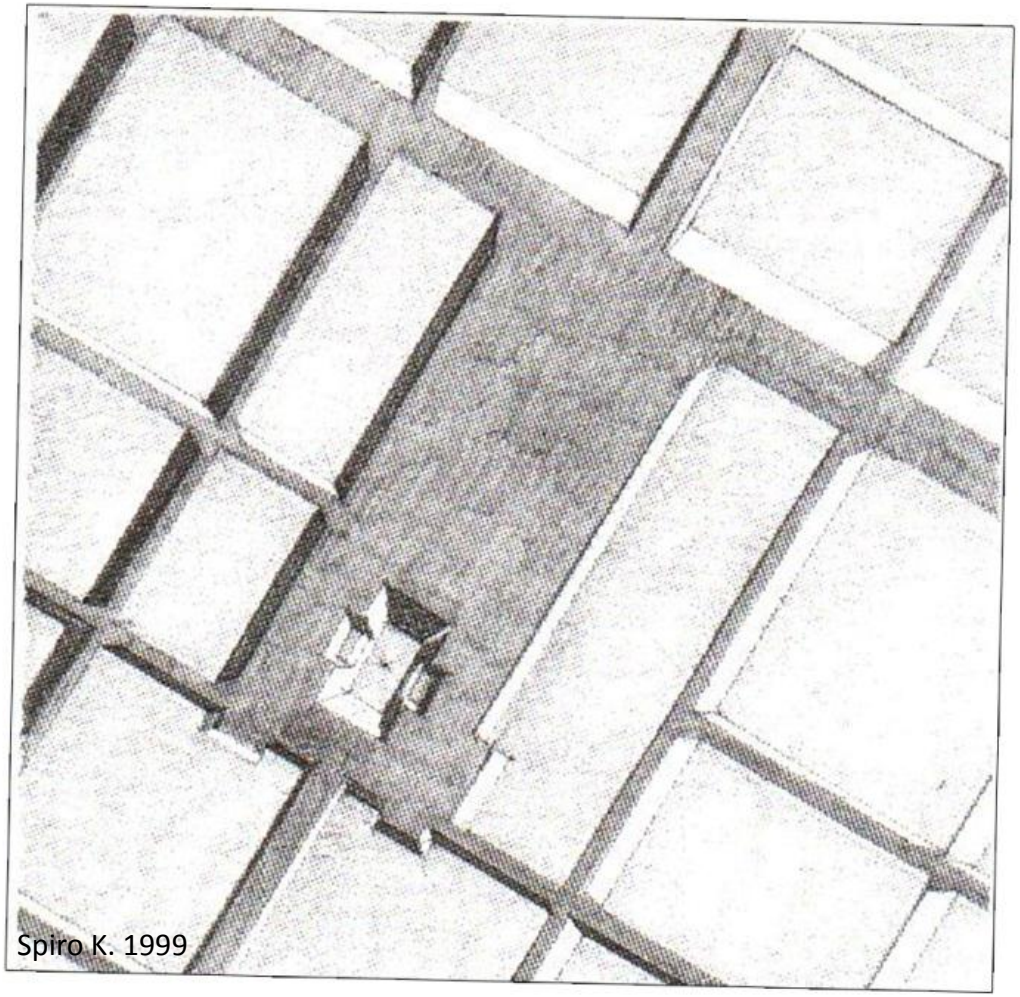


Square is surrounded with clipped bosquet of Tilia

http://maps.google.com/

It is a true square 140 m x 140 m

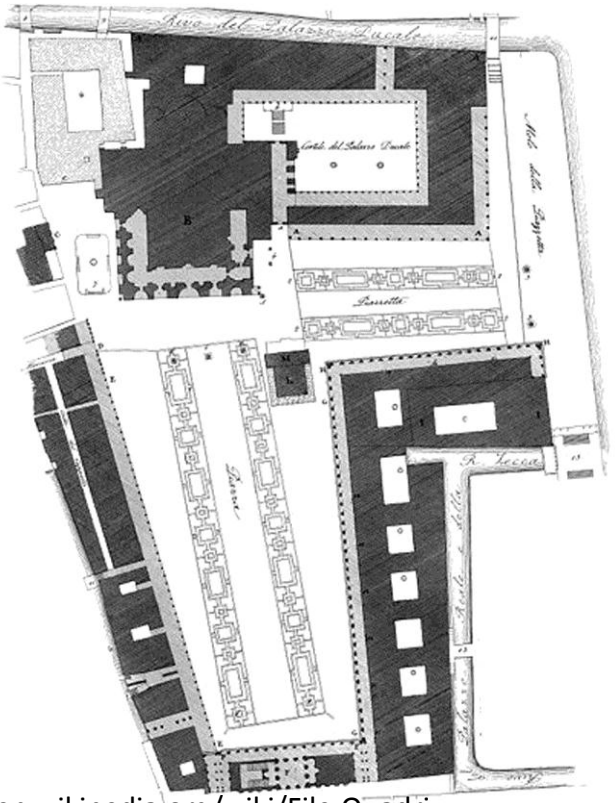
2. The dominated squares



The space is dynamic and is directed toward a terminal object which can be church, a gate or an arch, a fountain or a view.

Piazza San Marco

- principal public square in Venice
- The Piazzetta and Piazza
- two spaces together form the social, religious and political centre of Venice



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Quadri-Moretti,_Piazza_San_Marco_(1831),_01.jpg

The plan of the Piazza and Piazzetta The Piazzetta is an extension of the Piazza towards the lagoon

http://artslink.wordpress.com/2009/11/02/money-for-study-abroad/piazza-san-marco-aerial-venice/

Square is directed toward the sea

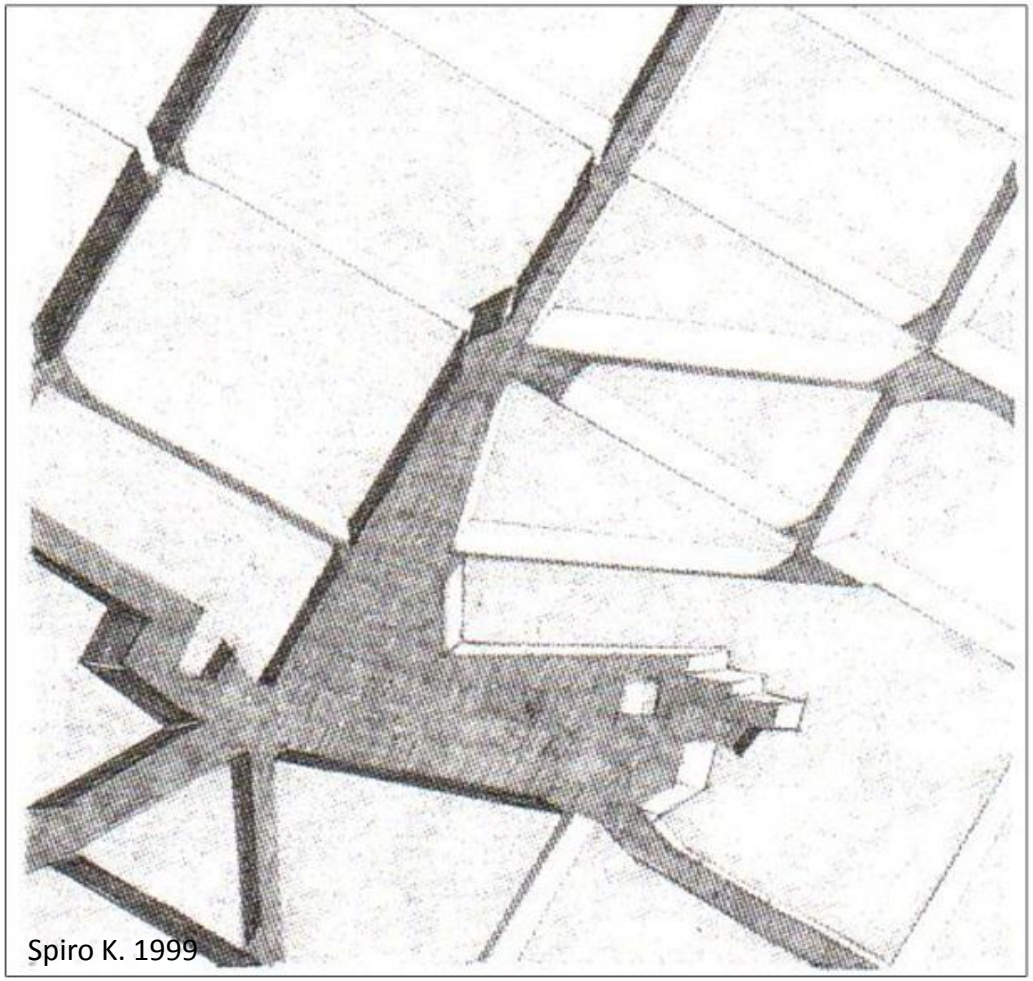
Trevi Fountain

- the largest Baroque fountain in the Rome
- marks the terminal point of "modern" aqueduct

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Trevi_Fountain_wide.jpg

It is 26 meter high and 20 meter wide

3. The nuclear square

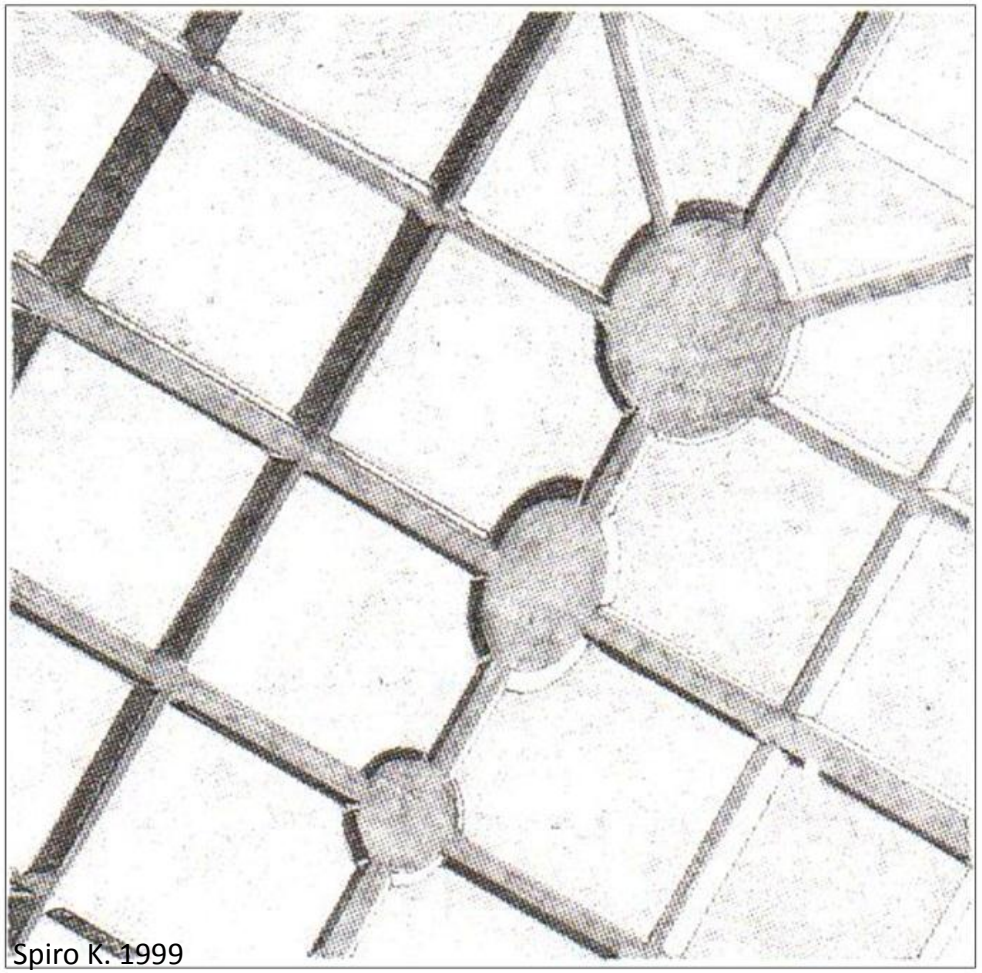


Space is formed around the central statue, fountain, or other vertical accent


http://maps.google.com/

Piazza di SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice. As long as there is a nucleus, a strong vertical accent powerful enough to charge the space around with a tension that keeps the whole together, the impression of a square will be evoked.

4. Grouped squares

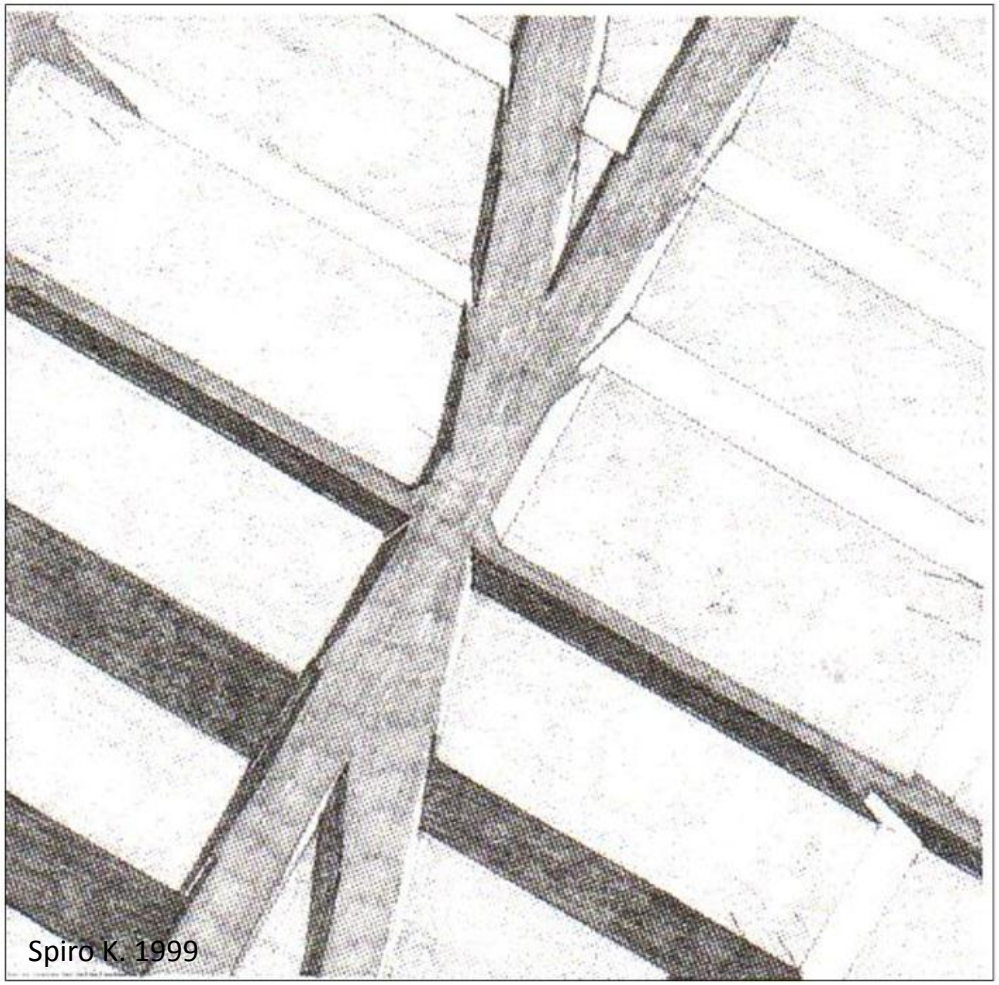


The combination of spatial units.
A sequence of squares, different in size and form, develops in only one direction, thus establishing a straight axis.

Salzburg Cathedral, Austria

The Imperial Fora in Rome. It consist of a series of monumental public squares

5. The amorphous square



Space is unlimited

Place de l'Opera, Paris

Times Square

- a major commercial intersection in Manhattan
- junction of Broadway and Seventh Avenue and stretching from West 42nd to West 47th Streets

Times Square became New York's agora, a place to gather to await great tidings and to celebrate them


http://nyc-architecture.com/MID/MID-TimesSquare3.htm

1919

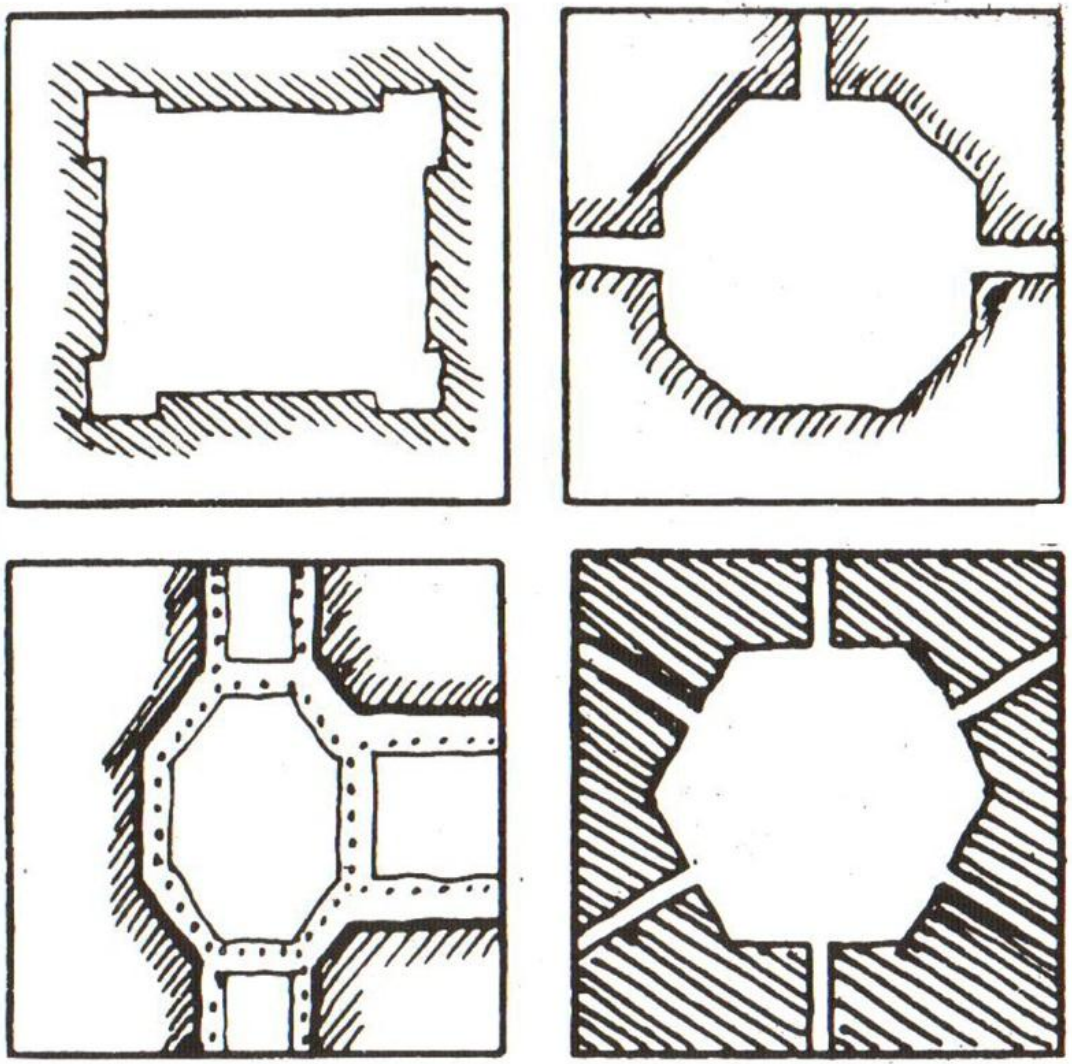

VOTE!
TOSHIBA
KNOWLEDGE TO ACT
CHEVROLET
Budweiser
Panasonic

2010

Classification

By Rob Krier 1938
Luxembourgian sculptor, architect
urban designer and theorist

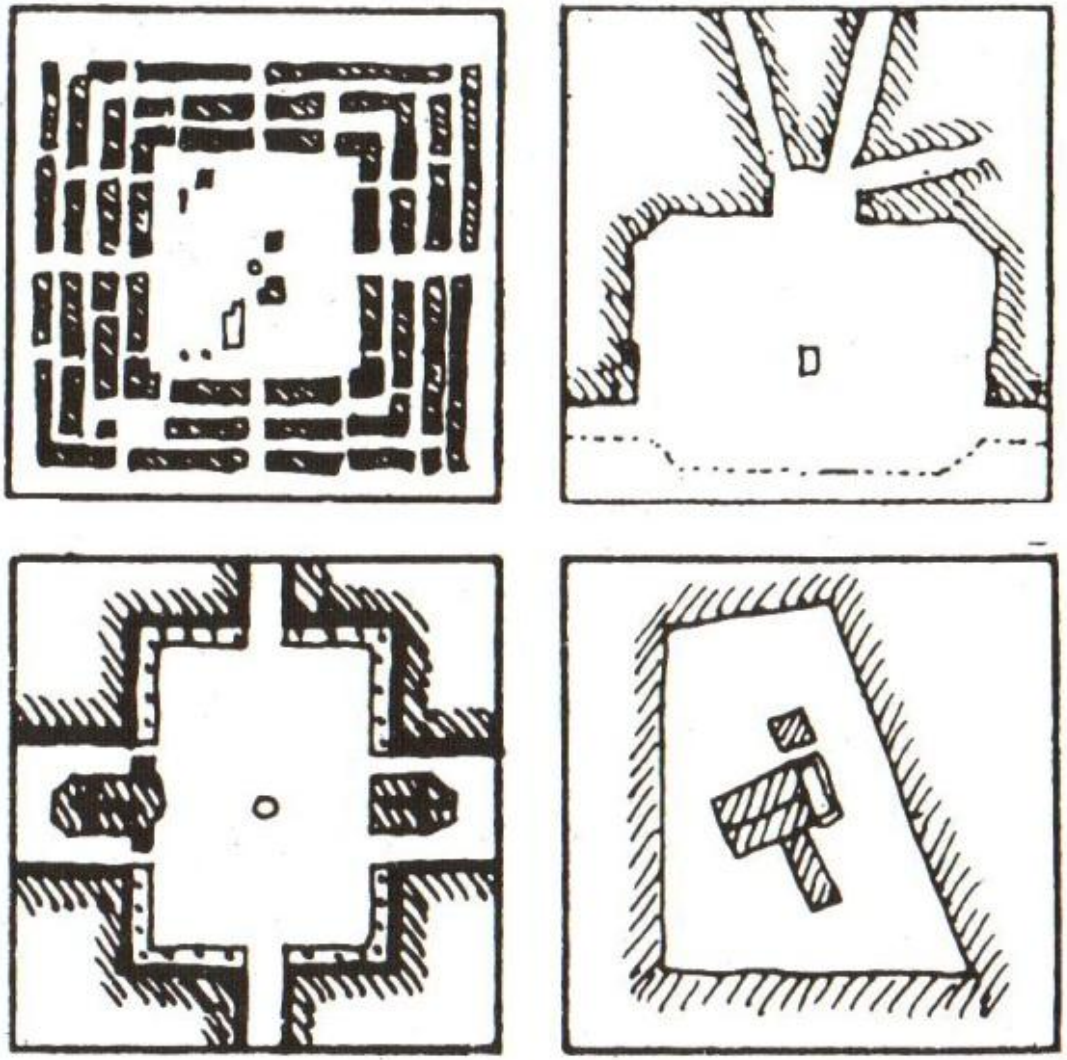
1. Rectangular squares with variations



Spiro K. 1999

Piazza di S. Lorenzo.

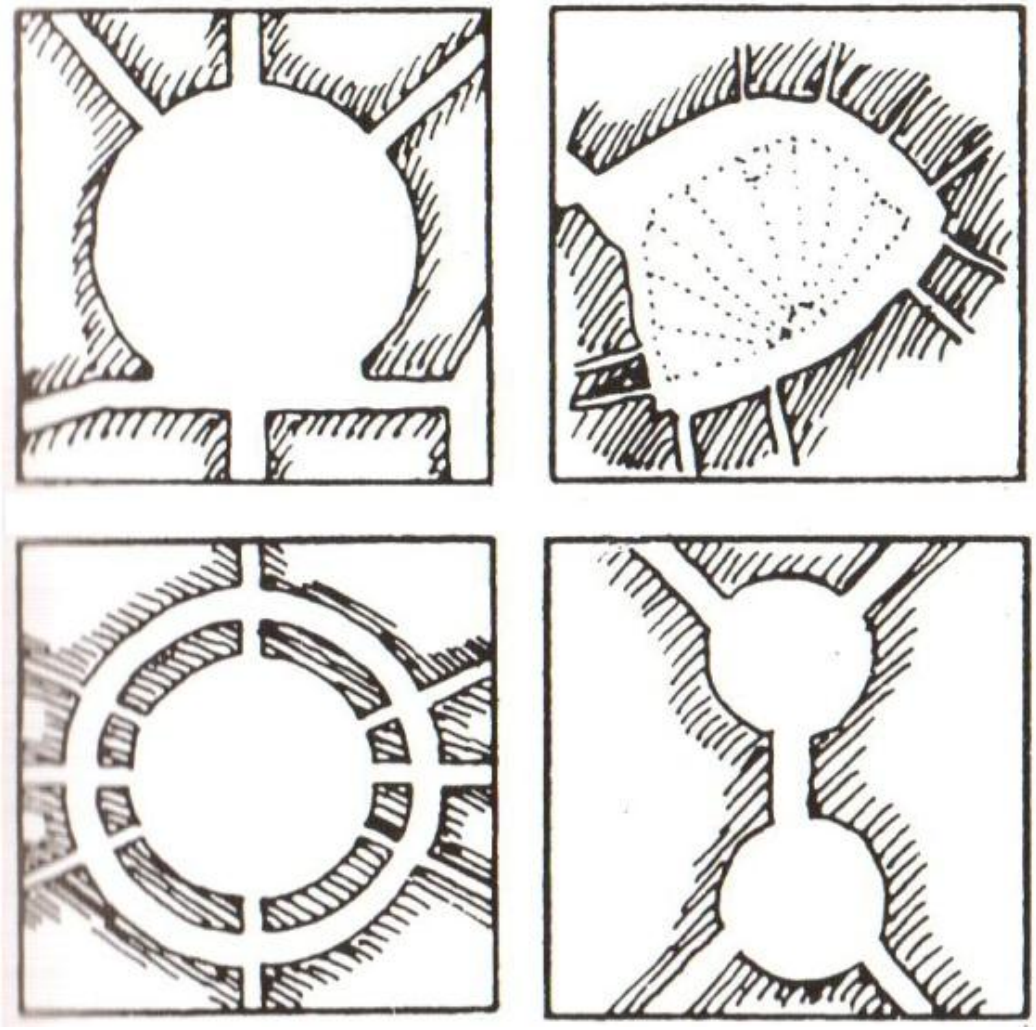
2. Orthogonal plans for squares



Spiro K. 1999

Freudenstadt in Baden-Württemberg

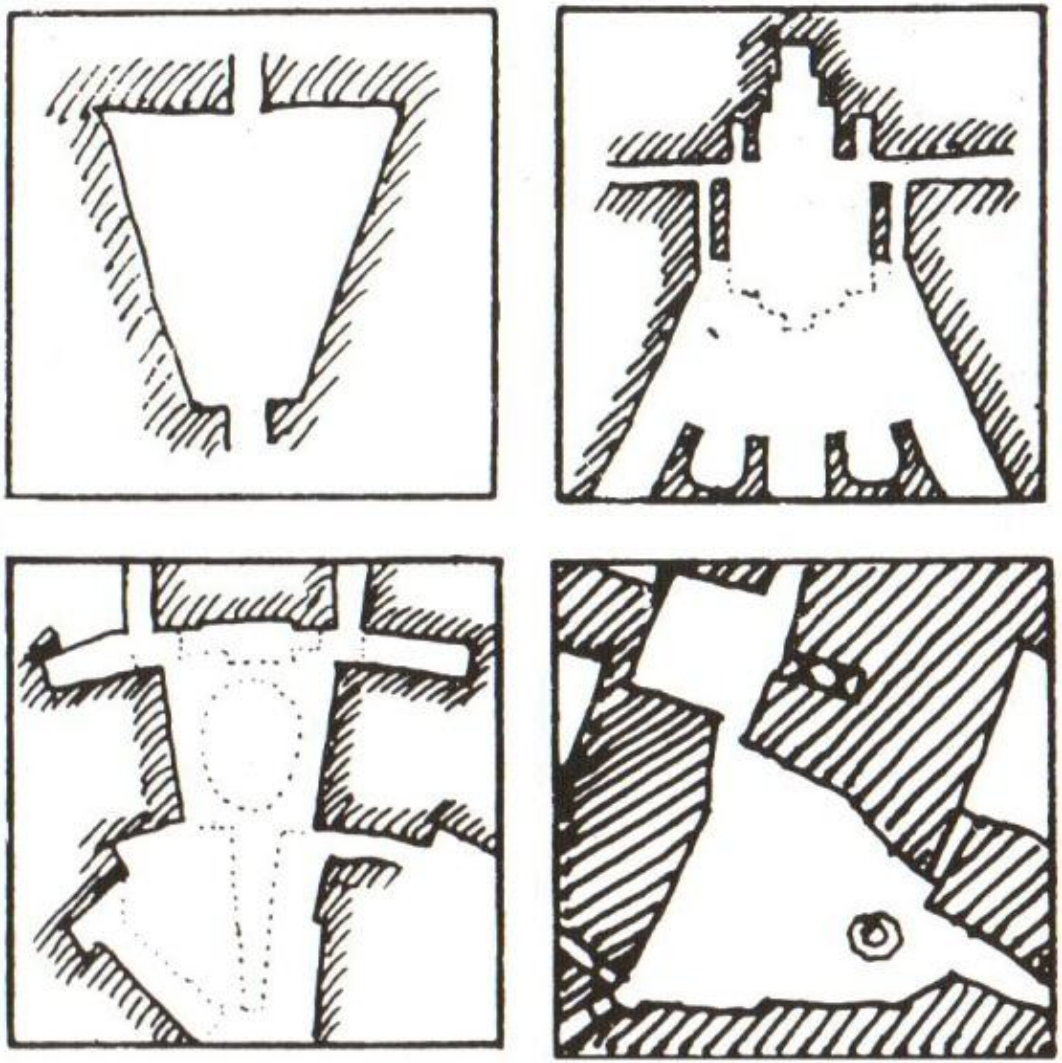
3. Circuses and variations



Spiro K. 1999

Place des Victoires in Paris

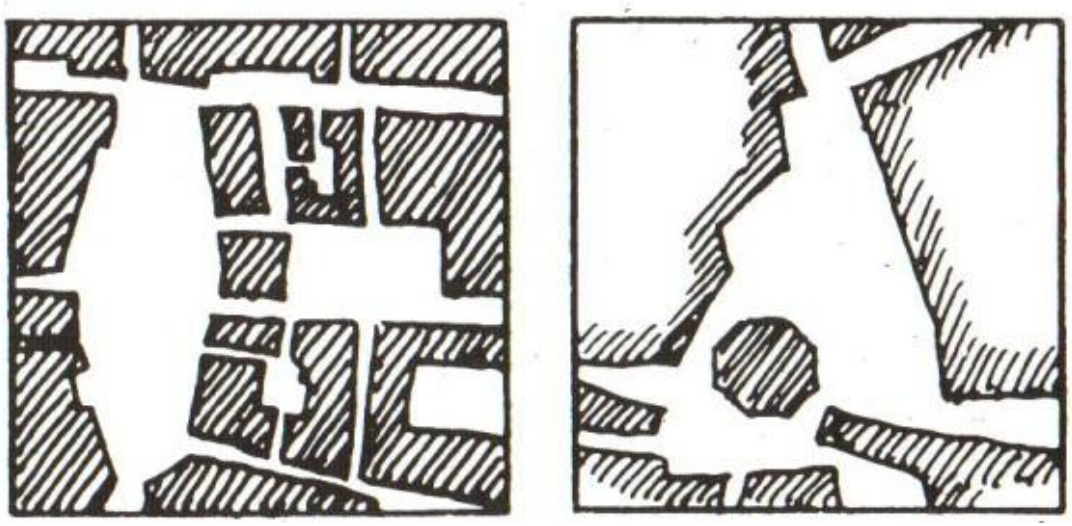
4. Triangular squares and their derivatives



Spiro K. 1999

Piazza della Cisterna in San Gimignano, Italy

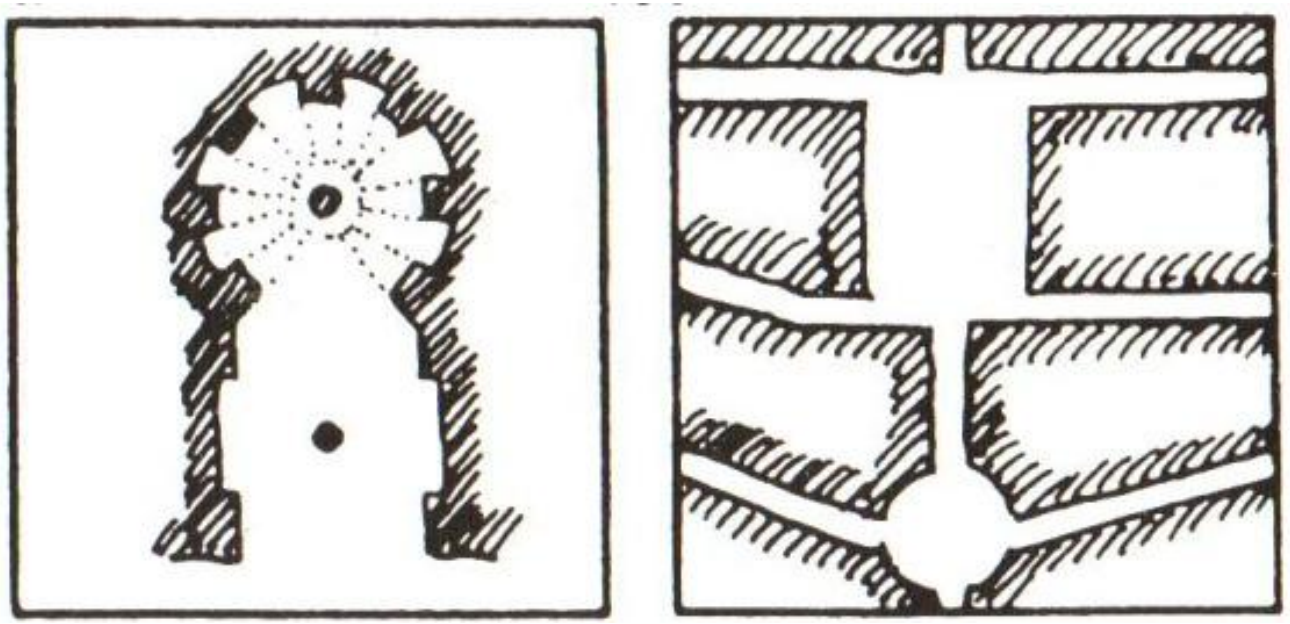
5. Spaces which are angled, divided, added and superimposed



Spiro K. 1999

Piazza del Battistero in Firenze

6. Geometrically complex systems



Spiro K. 1999

The material used:

Spiro K. The city assembled: the elements of urban form through history. 1999 Thames and Hudson, London
Zucker P. Town and Square. 1970 Columbia University Press, New York