

Cities: Internal Structure

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Abstract

The article concentrates on big cities in western societies and the changing principles of urban development since the twentieth century. It combines general principles and the dual cycle theory of urban expansion and urban renewal with the impact of political systems and cultural environments.

Three general principles are formative for the internal structure of cities:

1. The accessibility determined by transport technology.
2. The so-called 'distance-decay' from center to periphery, defined by the social gradient and the land values gradient.
3. The hierarchical organization of urban space.

The dual cycle theory of urban development, explains urban decay as a consequence of the time lag between urban expansion and urban renewal. Development differs greatly depending on whether it takes place under private capitalism, in welfare states, or in postsocialist countries.

Three periods of urban development are distinguished. After World War II the system of centered cities dating from the period of Europeanization of the globe, was superseded by city models derived from North America.

During the period AD 1950–2000, a rapidly growing system of suburbia created a sort of extensive – though not ubiquitous – network. The combination of 'urban-like,' suburban structures and new megastructures seems to correspond to postindustrial America's abandonment of the areas of earlier industrial-city development.

In the foreseeable future, however, twenty-first century city development is unlikely to follow North American models much longer. All over the globe – in the geo-strategically and economically newly relevant BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) countries as well as in all countries of the Islamic world – decision makers have recognized that the inherent functioning of cities (above all of metropolises and capital cities) with the help of state-of-the-art technologies, has gained in importance. Megacities in these regions with populations of 20 million and more surpass all European and North American big cities.

General Principles

Accessibility and Transport Technology

The city is a centered system based on the twofold premise that the city center is the engine of development and the place easiest to access. Accessibility of both the center and the entire city area is determined by its opening up for development and by transport technology (see [Figure 1](#)).

A city of pedestrians and coaches tended to be circular. When streetcars came into use in Europe, they started mostly at the town gates. This made for star-shaped growth, with the interstitial areas lagging behind in development. Where public transport is predominant, the city center remains the place of highest access to the metro region. The *métropole concentrée* of Paris is an example.

The Régie Autonome de Transports Parisiens transports more than 3 billion passengers (2011) annually, half of them underground (<http://wikipedia.org/wiki/RATP>; 12 December 2013).

The absolute predominance of private transport reduces access to the center; under a liberal political system and with land abundantly available, a city or metropolitan region designed for car traffic emerges. Los Angeles offers a prototype of this; the City of Los Angeles Transportation Authority (Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT)), for example, moves only about 30 million passengers per year (<http://www.discoverlosangeles.com/blog/los-angeles-public-transit>; 12 December 2013) although the population of LA is significantly larger than that of Paris.

Distance Decay

There are two theoretical approaches for analyzing gradients from the center to the periphery.

Social Gradients

The central-peripheral organization of urban society may be described by means of centrifugal and centripetal social gradients. These gradients permit the following diagnosis regarding urban growth. Wherever the city center is also the social center and a centripetal social gradient is in evidence, the demand for space of the upper classes extends outward from the center. This causes residential and social upgrading of the adjacent middle class districts. In the middle zone, former lower class quarters are turned into middle class districts. The Founders Period growth of Berlin, Budapest, Copenhagen, Paris, Prague, and Vienna was of this kind. This type of upgrading must not be confused with the recent phenomenon of gentrification in North American cities. Here, middle and upper income urbanites move centripetally into rundown central districts (see [Figure 2](#)).

Wherever a centrifugal social gradient predominates, as in US cities, a filtering down takes place, with the deterioration of the building fabric in the center; lower class people move outward into adjacent middle and upper class districts. This social downgrading of high-quality living quarters is hard to stop and presented a major problem for British town planners. Having accomplished the redevelopment of rundown early industrial terrace houses next to the old town centers, they were faced with the daunting task of redeveloping devastated mid- and late-nineteenth centuries terrace house districts (the necessary renovation of early twentieth century council housing was partly effected by privatization under Thatcher).

Land Values Gradient

According to the theory of urban land markets ([Alonso, 1964](#)), transport costs determine land rents and therefore

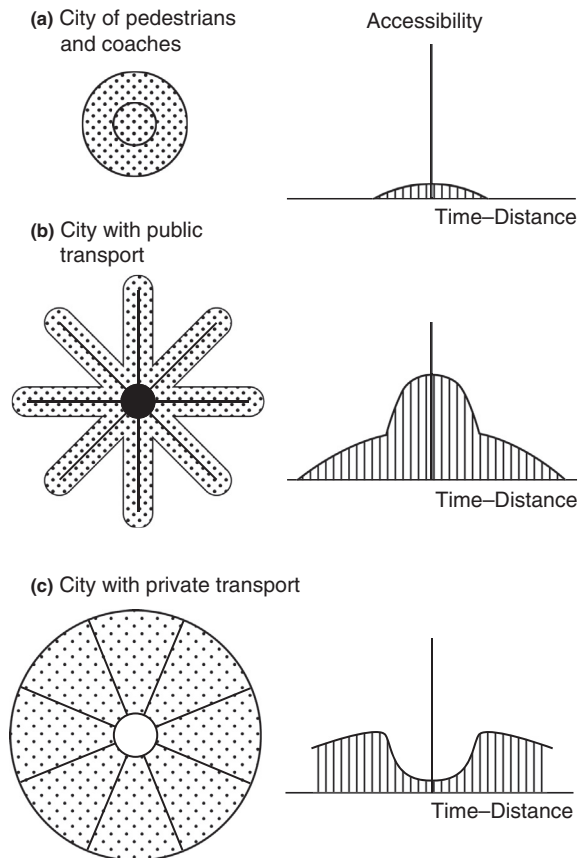


Figure 1 The accessibility of the city center. Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography)*, third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 2.30, p. 103.

urban land uses. Regularly, in socioeconomically intact city centers, there is a center-periphery gradient with several consecutive zones of use, outward from the central business district (CBD). Replacement of historical city-models by the new model of suburbia has made for abandonment of central areas, resulting in 'craters' of land prices and visible decay of inner cities in the United States. As there are no efficient means of public transport, inhabitants of the centers of most metropolitan areas are at a disadvantage. Detroit is the classic example of a dying US-American metropolitan area.

The Alonso model excludes restrictions on planning land use and vertical development. With zoning laws, building categories, and other legal regulations, the gradient of real estate prices is altered. Each category or zone is divided in two, with the inner zone obviously better suited for business purposes and office space than the outer zone that is used for dwelling as it is more profitable (see [Figure 3](#)).

Hierarchical Structures

Hierarchical order is one of the basic types of systemic organization. When organizing the physical space of urban areas,

a hierarchical order has been attempted wherever planned development was feasible and land in abundant supply. Examples run from seventeenth century Sicily (Granmichele) via Howard's New Town idea (1902) (with city center and garden suburbs in a cluster city), to major planning projects for urban peripheries in Europe at present. The hierarchy is constructed from the bottom upward. The basic units are electoral ward, whose dimensions in many European countries and in North America are derived from the traditional 'pedestrian ideology' of 1 km (i.e., 15 min walking distance) as the determinant of standard size. Comprehensive hierarchical urban structures have been realized only in the former Socialist countries of Eastern Europe, above all the USSR. In the rest of Europe, hierarchical organization of urban space is the exception rather than the rule.

The Impact of Political Systems

Social-Ecological City Models

In their paper, *The Nature of Cities* (1945), Harris and Ullman tried to model internal patterns within cities. The triad of models presented makes use of diverse development phenomena:

1. invasion and succession of social groups in Burgess' zonal model,
2. transport-induced ribbon-developments along traffic lines in Hoyt's sector model, and
3. collective preferences in respect of the allocation of workplaces in the Harris-Ullman multiple-nuclei model.

However, three important underlying assumptions have not yet been made explicit:

1. the political system of liberalism,
2. the historical 'one-dimensionality' of urban development, and
3. the concept of the city center as CBD.

The models mentioned represent ideal types of North American cities of the interwar period (see [Figure 4](#)).

Historical-Political Systems and the Concept of the City Center

Changes in the political system alter the conceptions of the city and urban society. The function of the city center is changed. European urban development may be defined as a succession of four types of political systems and corresponding types of cities ([Lichtenberger, 1970, 1976](#)).

The concepts of the city center were markedly different in each of the four cases:

1. In the burghers' city of the medieval feudal territorial state, the marketplace was the social center.
2. The center shifted to the ruler's residence in the residence city of the absolutist state. Thus, a social gradient falling from the center toward the periphery is the general rule in preindustrial cities.
3. In the age of liberalism, Great Britain created the prototype of the industrial city. A social gradient rising from the center toward the periphery predominated, a development later paralleled in North American cities.

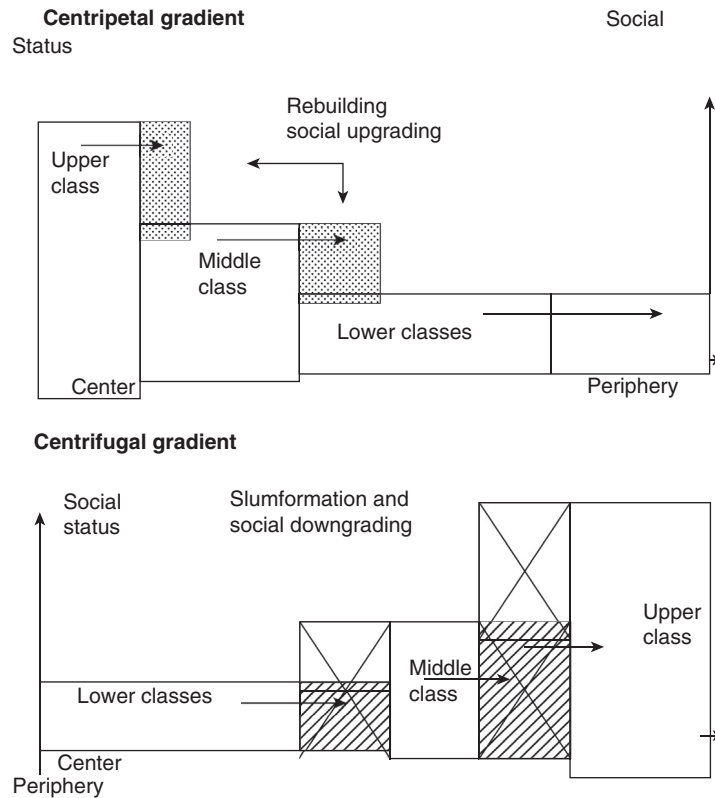


Figure 2 Centrifugal and centripetal social gradients. Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography)*, third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 2.35, p. 110.

4. Again, Great Britain set the rules for the New Town idea; the attempt at structuring the amorphous masses of big industrialized cities on a human scale, with the city divided into parts with different functions. From the outset, spatial segregation of inhabitants was barred from the design of New Towns – a fact that is still influential in urban planning today. European city development is most complex; various superpositions and (to different degrees) the persistence of historical structures, caused the diversification of socioeconomic patterns and the creation of different social gradients.

Vienna in the 1960s offers the model for the traditional continental European city (Lichtenberger, 1993b):

1. Social status is still highest in the core and declines toward the periphery. Depending on site preferences, individual districts deviate from this rule.
2. The CBD has maintained some residential functions and is not surrounded by slums, but by middle and upper class residential districts, encircled by lower class quarters.
3. The wide belt of multistory blocks is followed on its outside by Founders Period industrial quarters, followed in their turn by loosely built-up districts.
4. The fringe zone is not defined by an extensive speculation area of ‘vacant land’ as in North America, but by sectors of intensive agricultural land use (in keeping with the von Thünen model) such as truck farming and viticulture, as well as allotment gardens and weekend homes (see Figure 5).

The Impact of State Socialism

Under state socialism, municipal governments were the local planning authorities, responsible for the mass of multistory housing that was unprofitable because of ‘social’ low rents. They lost all chances of capital accumulation from real estate property and became dependent on financial endowments from the central government and on central planning. The consequences were:

- Big cities’ increasing demand for space was met by extensive incorporations.
- Public construction (by state, municipal, and other collective institutions) took absolute precedence over private construction.
- Architectural design followed totalitarian principles, stressing elements of over-wide avenues and huge squares, both imposing and strategically important.
- Massive antisegregation strategies were pursued.
- Entire old city centers were listed on historical registers.
- City enlargement was effected via New Cities in the shape of hierarchically structured giant multistory blocks.
- In compliance with the Charter of Athens, industrial and dwelling zones were strictly separated.
- Commuting requirements were taken care of by subway construction.
- Forced industrialization created extensive industrial zones with plants located close to railway lines and superhighways.

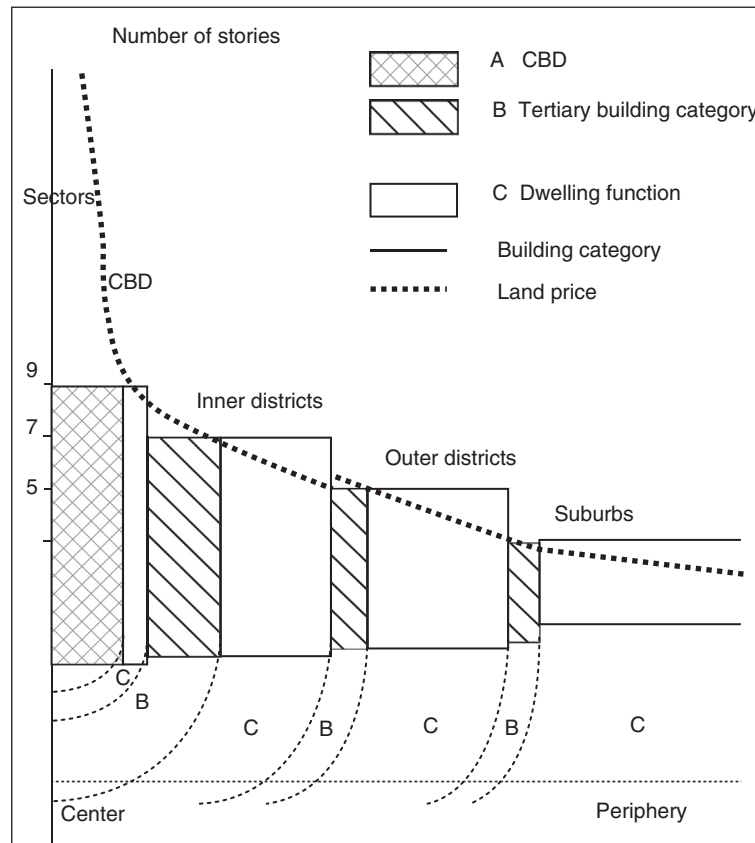


Figure 3 Land values gradient and zoning. Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography)*, third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 2.3, p. 107.

Extensive leisure zones were created on the fringes, with both collective recreation facilities and private second homes (see Figure 6).

City Growth and Political Systems

Cities are growing systems, with increasing populations and/or with increasing demand for space for diverse urban functions (housing, work, education, leisure, traffic, etc.) in a setting of economic growth and technical innovation.

The diverging political-economic effects of central planning and of a free enterprise economy cause significant differences in the physical growth of cities in particular systems. Cities grow in two directions: laterally and vertically (Lichtenberger, 1992).

The Third Dimension

Vertical growth means high-rise construction. Up to the 1970s, when some cities changed their laws, European cities could not expand vertically because of strict zoning laws, but were forced to grow laterally. This necessitated the conversion of dwelling space into office space, e.g., in Paris and Vienna. High-rise construction in European cities started relatively late (see Figure 7). Its location within the city – frequently subject to special permission – is different from that in North America. There, the vertical structure of urban skylines shows that land prices peak in the center while in European cities

'monument protection' bars high-rises from the centers. Thus, the new landmarks of banks, insurance firms, corporation headquarters, and hotels keep a polite distance from the old landmarks of churches, town halls, and palaces.

For the sake of access to the various supply and disposal mains, high-rises are preferably located along urban 'scars': at the interfaces of traditional zones where former boundaries still show in open space or low physical objects. Frequently, new high-rises accent not only the edge of traditional inner cities but also, major points of access to older outer cities and suburbs. High-rises also mark the front of growth of the CBD, busy commuter train stations, as well as 'satellite' districts. They are also instrumental in slum clearing.

Development of Urban Fringes

The development of urban fringes differs materially depending on whether it takes place under private capitalism, in welfare states or, in retrospect, under state capitalism.

1. Under US private capitalism, cities grow as profits from land speculation and rising land prices are invested in land development and in technical improvements. This starts an upward spiral of development and rising prices. North American cities show two wide zones of speculation. The inner one, around the CBD, is marked by decay and slum areas at present. Far more impressive, at least because of its

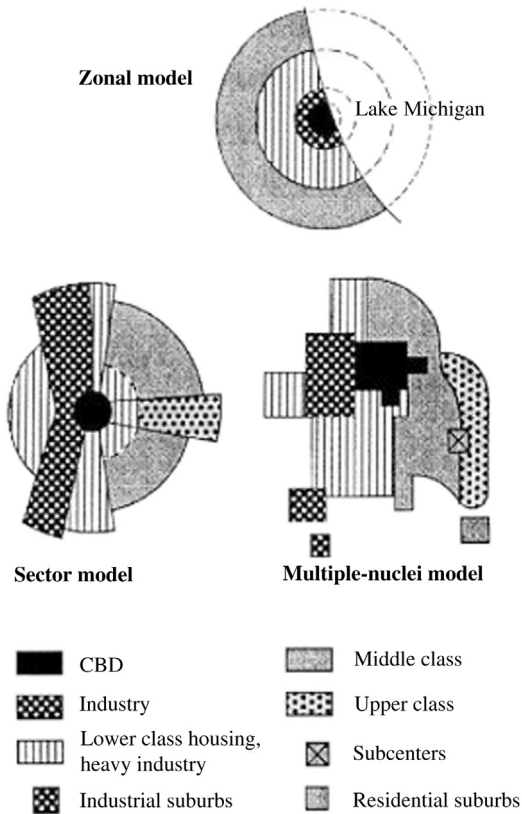


Figure 4 Social ecological models of US cities during the inter-war period. Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography)*, third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 2.7, p. 58; Hoyt, 1939. *The Structure and Growth of Residential Neighborhoods in American Cities*. Federal Housing Administration, Washington, DC; and Harris C.D., Ullman, E.L., 1945. *The nature of cities*. *The Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 242, 7–17.

extent, is the peripheral zone of vacant land around core cities and suburbs, which, even in the 1950s amounted to 20–60% of core areas (Bartholomew, 1955). Anglo-American urban geography textbooks completely ignore those huge tracts of vacant land – implying that non-utilization of these spaces is taken for granted rather than considered a problem.

- In continental Europe, too, urban fringes attracted speculation. During World War I, they were occupied by so-called ‘emergency gardening plots,’ and later turned into allotment gardens. Frequently, these became temporary settlements, partly forerunners of a second-home periphery. All over post-World War I continental Europe, spontaneous settlements typically marked city fringes – a consequence of fundamental political changes. The absence of government checks on land use made for temporary settlements, among them the pavilions of ‘chaotic urbanization’ in France as well as the often illegal occupation of land around big central European cities (Belgrade, Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia, Vienna, and Warsaw). The succession states were less successful than the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in repelling indigent illegal immigrants. Those postwar squatters

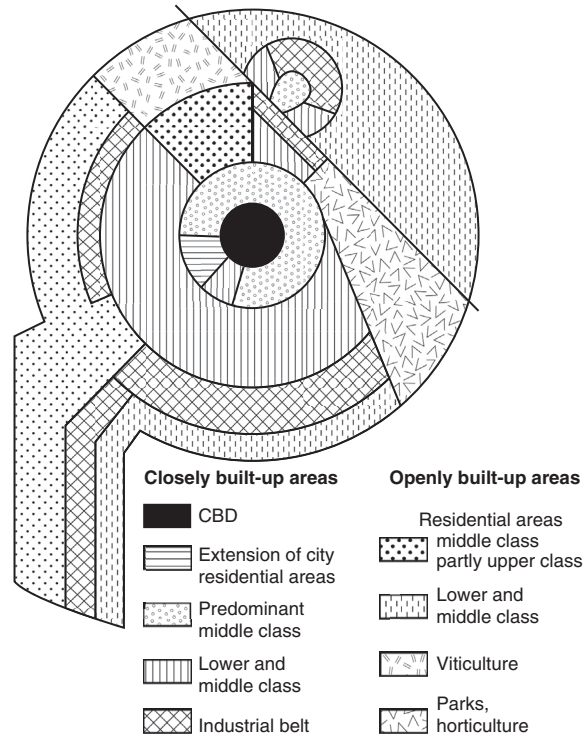


Figure 5 The dual model of Vienna. Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography)*, third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 2.17, p. 78.

were comparable to today’s squatter settlements on the fringes of Third World cities beyond the reach of state or municipal authorities.

- As to planning and regulating the growth of agglomerations, Great Britain set the standard in the early twentieth century, with the two important concepts of the New Town (referred to above) and the ‘Green Belt.’ The creation of a Green Belt presupposes government control of land use, replacing the market mechanism of the liberal age. Originating in London, Green Belts have also become constituent features of zoning plans in other cities of the former British Empire. The urban development plan of Ottawa shows a Green Belt several miles wide. Persistent urban sprawl caused a characteristic overspill. In the United States too, Green-Belt concepts were introduced into various urban development plans; but in contrast to Europe, the enormous extent of suburbanization could not be contained to fulfill the original purpose of separating urban space from the periphery.
- In the former Socialist countries, extensive public recreation areas and large private second-home districts exist (neither of these important elements of the periphery of urban regions is to be found in the USA). The public recreation area of Moscow goes back to a Green Belt idea already incorporated in the city development plan of 1935. It is 20–40 km wide and includes major sports and cultural facilities. In most of the big cities of the former USSR, the Green Belt was an integral part of development planning.

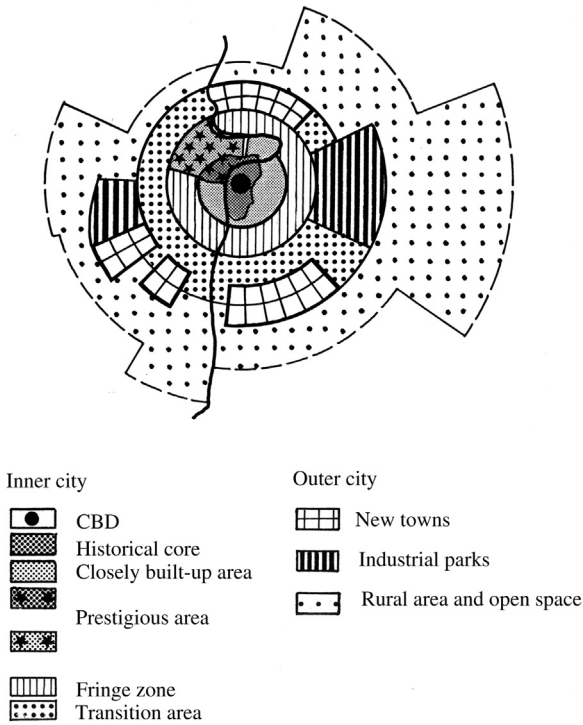


Figure 6 The model of a socialist city: Prague. Lichtenberger, E., 1993b. *Wien-Prag: Metropolenforschung* (Vienna-Prague: Metropolitan Research). Böhlau, Vienna, Cologne, Weimar, ill. 14, p. 102.

Urban Development in the Twenty-First Century

The New Megacities

The increase in world population from around 2 billion humans in 1925 to 7 billion in 2010, favored the growth of mega-metropolises. New global cities also have prominent quaternary sectors (financial, cultural, and political services).

In the foreseeable future, however, twenty-first century city development is unlikely to follow North American models much longer. All over the globe – in the geo-strategically and economically newly relevant BRIC-countries as well as in all countries of the Islamic world – decision makers have recognized that the inherent function of cities, above all of metropolises and capital cities, is unchanged and, with the help of state-of-the-art technologies, has even gained in importance. In these regions megacities with populations of 20 million and more surpass all European and North American metropolises. Two features are typical of them: monumental structures in their city centers are often also social centers and their adherence to the central places system.

It has never been duly recognized that the Chinese urban system has had the longest continuity by far. Already at the time of the Han dynasty (c. 200 BC to AD 200) Chinese regional planning authorities devised hierarchies of cities and these cities were considered ‘central places’ – thereby anticipating what Christaller would present as his concept of central places in 1930.

At the top of the hierarchy are the megacities, with technological infrastructures that often surpass their western models.

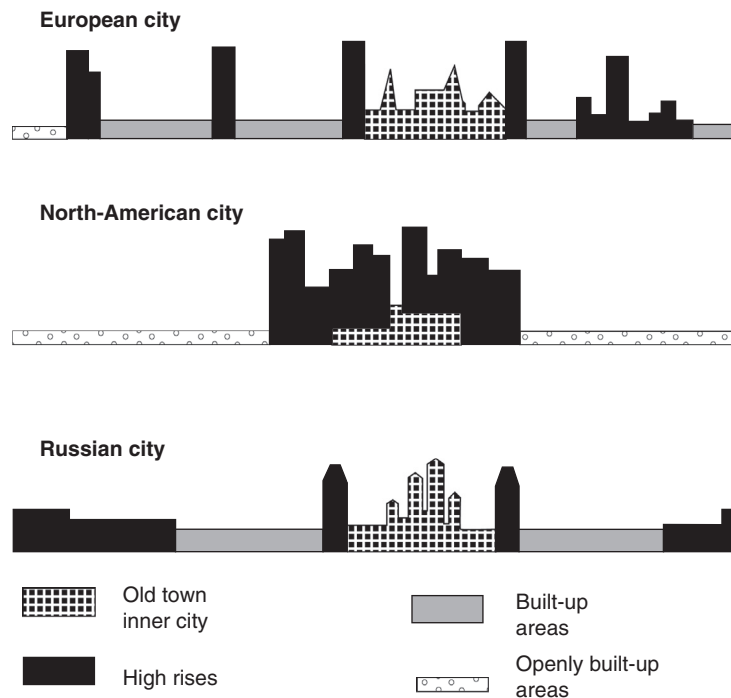


Figure 7 Skylines of European, North-American, and Russian million-cities. Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie* (Urban Geography), third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 3.16, p. 198.

The central places hierarchy can also be found in traditional oriental cities. Here, a spatial hierarchy of family, clan, and local quarters is based on family, religious, and ethnic affiliations. The hierarchical organization of living quarters and subcenters is paralleled in the hierarchy of semi-private, semi-public, and public institutions as well as markets (Wirth, 2000–2001).

Twenty-first century megalopolises exceed the scope and feasibility of democratic urban planning. For 20 years, Martin Seger and his team studied the case of Istanbul and analyzed the complexity of its spatial structuring (see Figure 8). This is affected by a variety of factors, such as: political changes; a ribbon development of more than 80 km along the seaside and simultaneous fragmentation of urban satellites; changes in the use of land, e.g., displacement of industries and removal of workshops; developments along the highway to Ankara; construction of the Bosphorus bridges. A special feature of Istanbul is the chain of CBDs from the traditional center, the one-time core of the Ottoman Empire, to the westernized downtown areas. In addition, Istanbul is a model for other megalopolises in developing countries in respect of the upgrading of dwellings constructed over one night (so-called Gecekondu); these cover wide stretches of the periphery and, under existing law, may not be torn down (Seger, 2012).

New Variants of Urban Development in the Western World

Although the arena of twenty-first century urban development has already been moved away from Europe, from the North American countries settled from Europe, and from Australia, to regions which the twentieth century considered

‘underdeveloped,’ the Western world, too, will witness new variants of urban development.

Changes in the Life Expectancy of the Physical Structure of Cities in Relation to the Life Expectancy of Their Populations

Without being explicitly recognized by the agencies responsible, the relation of urban development to societal changes has altered. Up to the postwar period it was generally accepted as a fact that the life expectancy of the urban fabric was higher than that of their populations. Research into this relationship, however, has shown that this rule is no longer valid (E. Lichtenberger, 1998. Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography) third ed., p. 198). That discovery also reduces the explanatory value of the ‘filtering-down’ concept of socio-ecological theory, which presupposes a building fabric lasting long enough for several successive cohorts to use it and eventually run it down.

Since the life expectancy of humans increased by more than 30 years during the twentieth century, the curve of the decreasing life expectancy of the physical fabric of cities intersects the curve of the increasing life expectancy of urban population (see Figure 9). The point of intersection must be seen as a turning point in the relation of urban development and population development. The period of (intergenerational) changes in the building fabric of cities is ended; a period of recycling of buildings within the lifetime of a generation begins. When exactly this turning point will be reached depends on various factors, including:

- building regulations and zoning laws,
- quality of buildings: materials used and construction technology, and
- socio-economic succession potential.

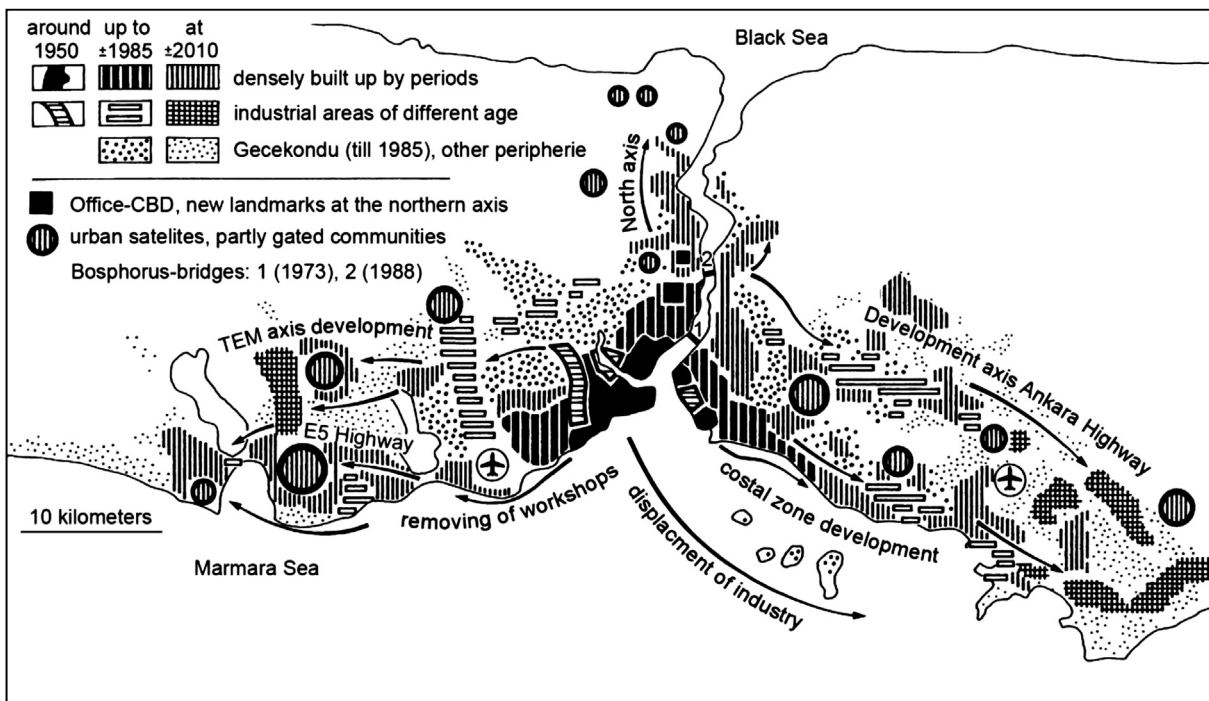


Figure 8 The Megalopolis Istanbul. Seger, M., 2012. Istanbul’s backbone – a chain of central business districts (CBDs). In: Polyzos, S. (Ed.), Urban Development. InTech, pp. 201–216.

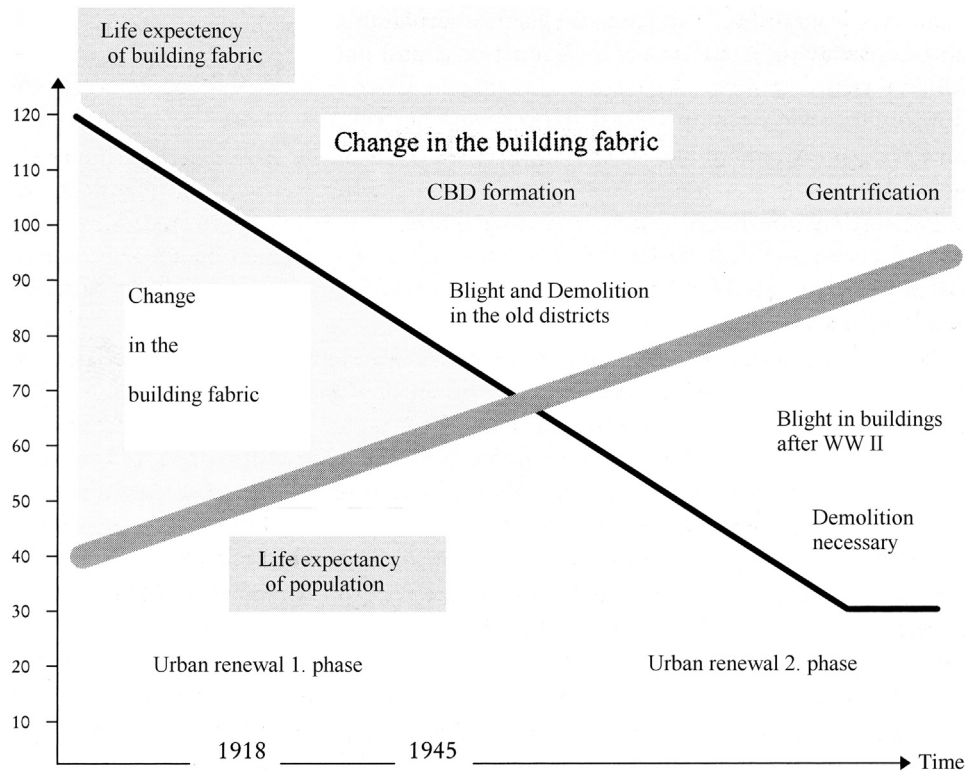


Figure 9 Life expectancy of population versus life expectancy of building fabric. Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography)*, third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 4.1, p. 275.

As a rule, the turning point will be reached at different times in different city quarters, depending on the land price gradient.

The consequences of this change may already be seen in North America, where increasing mobility has led to settlements in increasingly peripheral locations. These locations are abandoned as soon as they become outmoded or outdated.

A Dual Cycle Model of Urban Development

In urban research, the theory of cycles, derived from the theory of evolution and first applied in economics, is applied to the problems of producing urban fabric (Lichtenberger, 1991). The concept of urban development is split in two complementary notions: urban expansion and urban renewal, with urban decay (urban blight) being explained as a consequence of the time lag between the two (see Figure 10). A new urban development cycle is started by a change in the political system or in government or in consequence of a major technological innovation. At the other end, a premature or sudden stop to this process will occur only consequent to changes in the political system – examples are the two World Wars and the turning point of 1989. As a rule, such ruptures leave a considerable part of renewal work undone, with unimproved building fabric to be renewed at best in the next cycle. The fact that buildings from different time periods often exist side by side (a fact that in most cases could not be explained by the local situation alone) can be explained by reference to successive urban development cycles in which urban renewal came to a sudden end before the

renewal could be completed. As to their relation in time, urban expansion has always preceded urban renewal.

Urban Decay and Urban Renewal in Different Political Systems

A comparison of political systems shows that urban decay is a feature common to all political systems in the Western world and in threshold countries. On the homepage of the London School of Economics, Director Ricky Burdett informs us: “Fifty per cent of the world’s population currently live in cities, with 33% of city dwellers currently living in slums. By 2020, 75 per cent will live in cities, with half the world’s population living in slums.”

The following is a comparison of the United States and the transforming countries of the EU.

Urban Decay and Urban Renewal in the USA

Apart from the brief period of colonial dependence, urban development in the United States has taken place in a climate of liberalism, i.e., with a real estate market determined by the forces of supply and demand and governed by land prices, land rent, and speculation. Banks and insurance companies invest only when and where they can expect appropriate profits: rundown sections of core cities, being deserted zones, will be excluded from their investment considerations. Thus, urban renewal means either complete clearance of former residential quarters and their designation as traffic areas or a historically or museum-inspired adaptation of attractive parts as living quarters for an affluent new population segment.

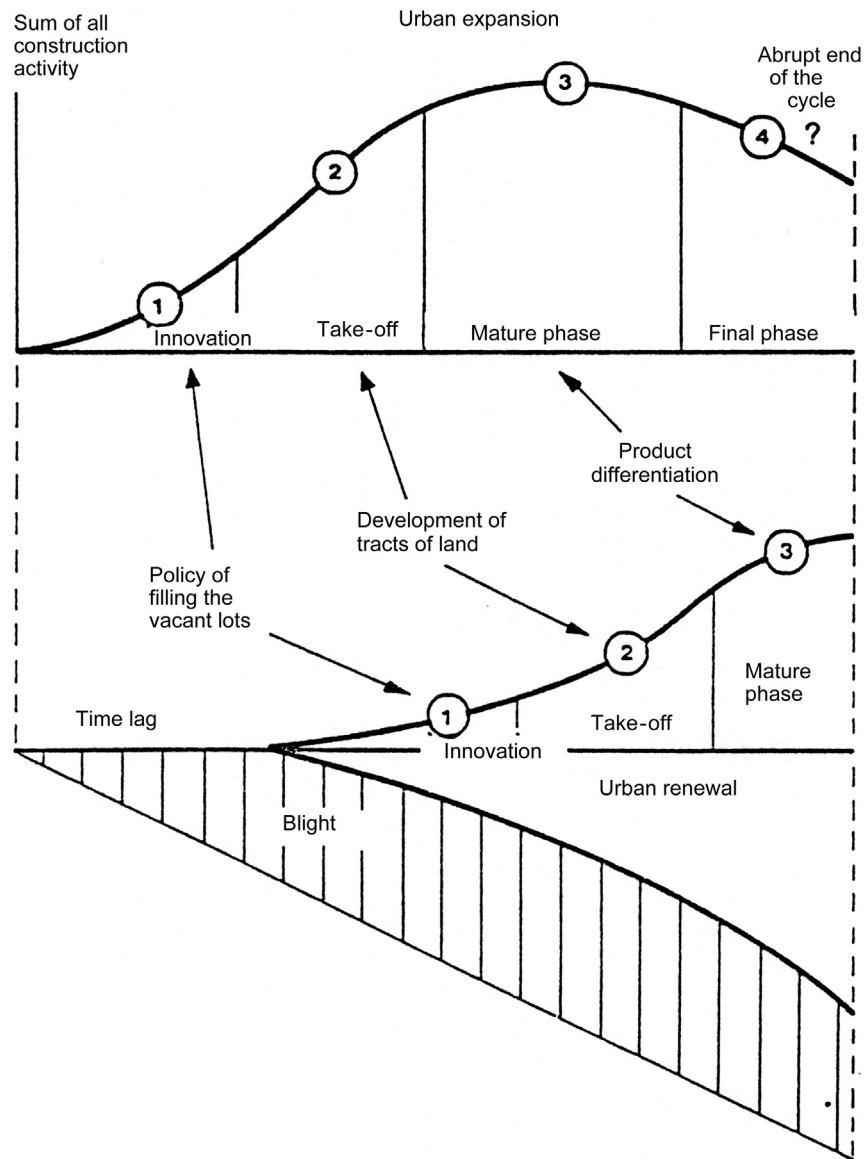


Figure 10 The two-stage model of metropolitan expansion and urban renewal. Lichtenberger, E., 1991. Product cycle theory and city development. In: Pumain, D., Saint-Julien, T., van der Haegen, H. (Eds.), *Cities in Movement, Urban Systems on the Eve of the 21st Century*. Acta Geographica Lovaniensia 31, pp. 120.

The extraordinary amount of new construction, hand in hand with advances in technology, has reduced the life expectancy of residential buildings to one generation. At present, new buildings invade blighted areas faster than was the case 30 years ago. Deserted buildings ‘offend’ no one, as there is no sense of collective responsibility for the attractive appearance of cities, apart from one’s own neighborhood. Government expenditures in the United States have grown consistently over recent decades, but there is relatively little public interest in spending public money on urban revitalization (see [Figure 11](#)).

The tax system is a major factor in urbanization. Real estate taxes are the mainstay of local budgets. There is no way out of the vicious circle of marginal populations, small tax yields

for local authorities, poor public services (e.g., schools and hospitals), and the physical decay of the building fabric. The indirect effects of the enormous suburban expansion of metropolitan areas are visible in all sectors of the core cities and have resulted in a staggering amount of commercial blight (documented for the first – and the last – time by Brian Berry for Chicago in 1963), of industrial blight, and residential blight.

In the later 1960s, private business became interested in two problems: the renewal of downtown areas and the provision of residential quarters for a new city population. New commercial superstructures were taken out of the public space at the same time. Thus, private interest took over the requisite areas, which had so far been public space. Eventually, three processes were

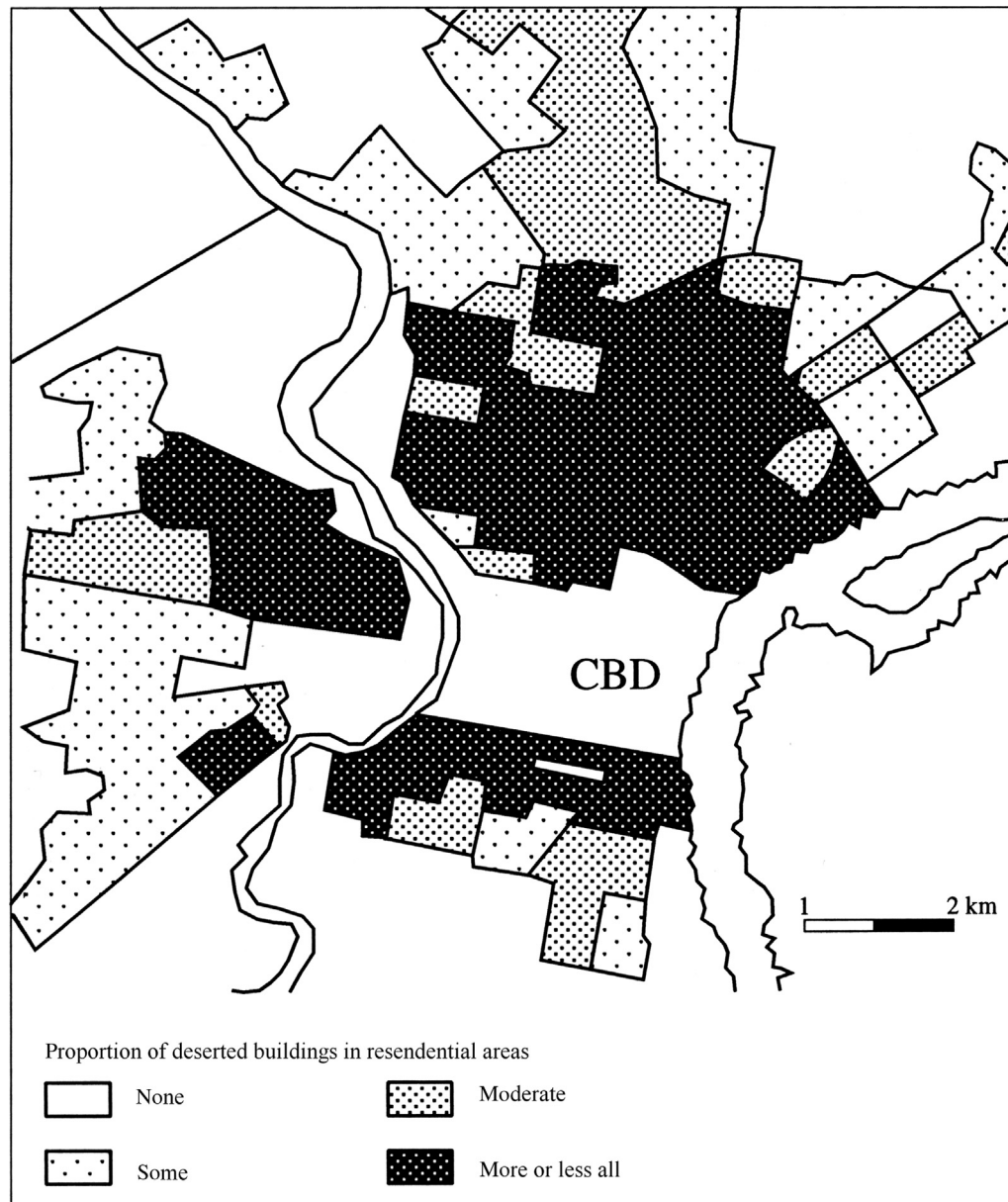


Figure 11 Decaying residential areas in Philadelphia. Bourne, L.S., 1981. *The Geography of Housing*. Scripta Series in Geography, London, p. 183; and Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography)*, third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 4.4, p. 288.

set in motion, the results of which are now a distinctive feature of many 'modern' cities:

Malling: Shopping malls have become a way of life in America.

There are more malls than cities, colleges, or television stations. Shopping center space has increased by a factor of 12 in the last 40 years (Ashish Kumar Sen, 2005). Malls have become social centers, venues for entertainment, and employment hubs in addition to being centers for shopping (<http://www.nielsen.com/en/newswire2013/>).

Gating: The privatization of public space in various forms from Watched Neighborhoods in the suburbs to Common Interest Developments, to gated communities, and walled cities.

Privatopia, a combination of Gating and Malling: This is the new ghetto of postindustrial American society with its different life styles; this is the ghetto of a group that excludes itself from the 'city' and attempts to create its own rules and administration, centered in 'pseudo local authorities.'

Urban Decay and Urban Renewal in Postsocialist Countries

Postsocialist cities bear a heavy burden from the time of Communism. Core cities show extensive blighted areas: Private homes had been expropriated and administered by public authorities, but government budgets never sufficed to do both erect public housing (and requisite public transport) on a large scale and maintain the building fabric in the centers. Before

1989, the blighted districts adjacent to downtown areas bore comparison with the situation in the United States, apart from the fact that defective building fabric was not met with social marginalization.

After 1989, however, a sort of 'New Founders' Period' began. Privatization of real estate is a major consequence of liberalization; thus the functioning of city centers has become a major objective of urban planning (Lichtenberger et al., 1994).

The Locations of Office Quarters in the USA and in Europe

In North America the office sector is the offspring of business while in Europe it rests on two additional pillars: the demands of government and administrative agencies and of semiofficial institutions. As to the quarters chosen for office buildings, America and Europe differ substantially. North America has been the trendsetter of economic globalization. After World War II skyscrapers became the typical buildings of the metropolitan downtown. But Chicago's Sears Tower, erected in 1974, is nearly synchronous with starting the suburbanization

of its office sector in 1975 as the last step in the suburbanization of private homes as well as of industry and business. After industrial parks came office parks and Edge Cities (Garreau, 1991). A case in point is Washington, with 16 major edge centers recently constructed. In consequence of such relocations, more than a quarter of the office spaces available in downtown areas have been deserted (see Figure 12).

Developments in Europe have been quite different. There, the construction of metropolitan subcities initiated by public planning (e.g., La Défense in Paris, the City Nord in Hamburg, or the UN City in Vienna) has met only a fraction of the demand. Nor do office buildings erected by big corporations make up more than a fraction of the total supply of office space (Figures 12 and 13).

In Europe, the construction of office towers lagged one generation behind North America. They are not located in traditional downtown areas, but rather at the edge of built-up spaces. In all compactly built-up continental cities the conversion of private apartments into offices is still a considerable factor in the creation of office space. The suburbanization of the office

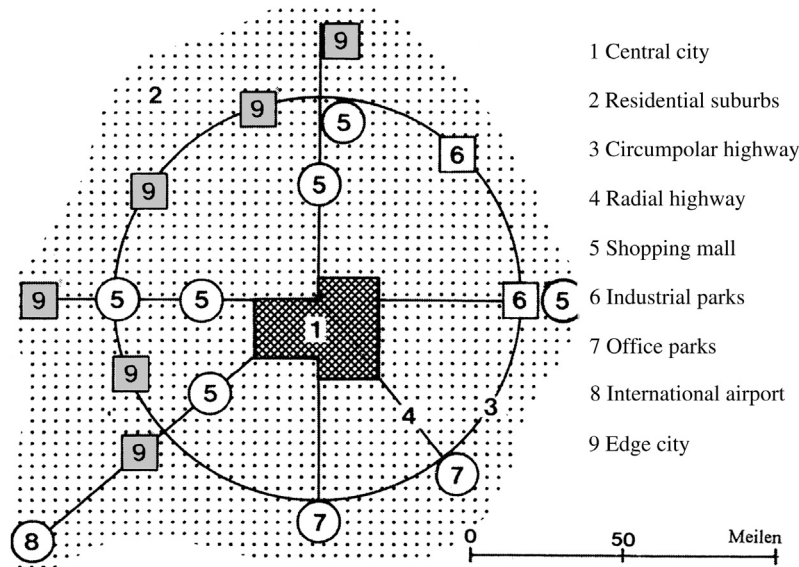


Figure 12 The model of downtown and edge cities in US metropolitan areas. Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography)*, third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 2.5, p. 48.



Figure 13 The changing logo of Syracuse from an industrial to a leisure city. Lichtenberger, E., 1998. *Stadtgeographie (Urban Geography)*, third ed. Teubner, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Germany. Italian translation: *Geografia dello spazio urbano*, first ed. Unicopli, Milano, ill. 5.8, p. 334.

sector has now advanced as far as the Trade Centers next to international airports. Edge cities are nowhere in sight.

From the City of the Labor Oriented Society to the City of the Leisure Society

Urban planning in Europe is based on the organizational model of a labor oriented society, with the most important functions of the tertiary and quaternary sectors to be discharged in the city center. In recent decades, however, the organizational model of a consumer society has come to the fore, at least in North America, where the consumers are responsible for the takeoff of suburbia.

By now, the city of the consumer society is being rivaled by the city of the leisure society. Wherever it was newly established, like in Florida and California, later in France, in the Alps and around the Mediterranean, this type of city depends on favorable climatic conditions. At present European countries tend to locate their leisure societies in rural areas – with the effects of causing rhythmical over-crowding and desertion of the countryside in the course both of weeks and years. While the labor society depends upon the redistribution mechanisms of the welfare state as to its organization and financing, the commercialization of leisure takes place in a near-perfect capitalist system. By way of direct and indirect government subsidization of the tourism industry, today's leisure society is actually subsidized by the labor society, i.e., by the gainfully employed: e.g., by concessionary rates in public transport or accident insurance services.

Among the most recent developments is "city marketing," a consequence of the discovery that not only the *ville festive* offers a considerable potential of commercialization in the steadily growing city tourism. The idea is that of marketing the image of a city as an export article. Subsidized by the French government, Paris constructed the event city "Eurodisney" as part of the *agglomération*. In North American metropolises one finds examples of event cities offering all sorts of entertainment, catering and fun. There are also examples of employing a city's "logo" in state-of-the-art advertising (see [Figure 13](#)). The recreational quality of a city for its own inhabitants is not affected as long as a temporal and spatial separation of residents and foreign leisure population is possible (motto: "When the tourists come, the Romans leave their town").

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See also: Access: Geographical; Local Economic Development; Residential Segregation: Geographic Aspects; Urban Geography; Urbanization in China.

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