IS THERE A MODEL OF THE FRENCH CITY?

Urban Structures and Housing Markets

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Translated by Peter Hamilton

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Urban Structures and Housing Markets

François CUSIN

Abstract. Based on a comparative analysis of housing market price structures in a hundred major French urban areas, this article challenges the idea of the predominance of the "classic" centre–periphery model, according to which prices decrease with distance from the centre. While this "classic" model underpins much work in the field of urban studies, two other models can be identified. A detailed comparison of the urban development of Lyon and Marseille-Aix, two areas that have followed opposing models, helps lay the ground-work for a sociogenetic study of social divisions of space and thus to explaining the observed emergence of two price structures. Using these two case studies as a starting point, the article shows how the value of places is constructed through a cumulative process based on the interaction between long-term population dynamics, socioeconomic change and urban policies. It also highlights how general processes, such as metropolitanization, produce different effects on urban structures which themselves differ. Finally, the article stresses the need to place the housing market at the centre of the analysis of forms of sociospatial structuring of the city.

Keywords. CITIES—METROPOLITANIZATION—GENTRIFICATION—HOUSING MARKETS—HOUSING—POPULATION DYNAMICS—SEGREGATION—ECONOMIC CHANGES—URBAN POLICIES

Comparative studies of cities have been developing over the last twenty years in geography, political science and sociology. This growth has led to important theoretical and methodological debates, mainly in the anglophone academic world (Beauregard 2003; Kantor and Savitch 2005; Soja 2011; Robinson 2011; Scott and Storper 2014). International comparison is at the heart of this debate, which focuses on whether or not urban models are converging in a situation of globalization. While the increasingly decisive role of cities in economic growth and technological innovation is now widely accepted, different visions of urban worlds confront one other. Postmodern approaches herald the destructuring of the "classical" city to the benefit of urban areas and favour the study of "paradigmatic" cities such as Los Angeles (Soja 1989; Davis 1990; Dear 2000). In contrast to these approaches and work on "global cities" (Sassen 1991), some writers emphasize the need to focus on "ordinary" towns and cities in order to account for the diversity of urban processes (Amin and Graham 1997; Robinson 2002). Marxist-inspired works (Harvey 1985 and 1989; Smith 1996) insist on the convergence of economic forces at work in a context of increasing interurban competition and financialisation of the city, and an increase in socio-spatial inequalities (within and between cities). Other works, like those of Kantor and Savitch (2002), attempt to construct a theoretical and methodological

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framework that makes it possible to take global processes and local peculiarities into account.[1]

In an urban world fully engaged in a process of reorganization, what remains of national models? This question has remained on the margin of contemporary debates. However, the "French city" (or more widely the "European city") is often compared to the "American city." This is tantamount to assuming that French cities constitute a coherent whole without internal differences likely to call into question the idea of a common "model." French cities certainly share structural traits inherited from a common history and from an historical political centralization. But this history is also that of the differentiation of cities within a *system of cities*. Classically, cities are distinguished from each other according to their position in the urban hierarchy (based on their size and degree of metropolitanization[2]), the nature of their economic specialization, their degree of integration into the networks of cities (Cattan, Pumain and Rozenblat 1999; Rozenblat and Cicille 2003) or by their system of governance (Le Galès 2011). But the analysis of these differentiations is not likely to answer the question of whether or not a model of the French city exists. These forms of differentiation are found in all national systems.

Another form of differentiation deserves closer examination: that of the socio-spatial structures of cities. Given the local peculiarities and the plurality of variables to be taken into account, the exercise is particularly complex, especially when comparing a large number of cities. To reduce this complexity, I propose to begin from the analysis of residential property price structures. These price structures constitute a "revealing indicator" in the sense of Maurice Halbwachs (1909, 1938), of the "social morphology" of cities. Moreover, by placing the question of residential property prices at the heart of the study of urban organization, this is also a way of filling a gap. Since Halbwachs, French urban studies has devoted little attention to this question, apart from those works in the Marxist tradition (Lefebvre 1974; Lipietz 1974; Topalov 1987) and the study that Pierre Bourdieu (2000) devoted to the housing market. Recent studies dealing with the property price dimensions of urban structures refer most often to theories initially published in English, with on the one hand the neo-Marxist tradition in geography (Harvey 1985; Smith 1996) and, on the other, the neoclassical tradition in urban economics (Alonso 1964; Fujita 1989; Glaeser 2008). While these two opposing traditions highlight general mechanisms concerning the structuring and evolution of urban systems, their respective theoretical frameworks do not allow us to account for the diversity of the concrete urban configurations we encounter.

The comparative study that I propose is based on the articulation of two complementary approaches that can be characterized by adopting the distinction between "scope analysis" and "depth analysis" as formulated by Paul Kantor and Hank

1. The approach of analysing urban phenomena both in their generality and in their particularity is not the most widespread. In the Francophone literature, it can be found in some works on urban governance (Jouve 2007, Pinson 2009, Le Galès 2011) or in works focusing on the role of information flows and mobility in urban restructuring (Ascher 1995, Wiel 2010, Kaufmann 2014).

2. Metropolitanization can be defined as a process of concentration of enterprises, skilled jobs and wealth in a limited number of cities or urban areas at the top of the urban hierarchy. This process can be observed at different scales: regional, national or global (Cattan, Pumain and Rozenblat 1999, Veltz 2005, Scott and Storper 2006, Cusin 2014).

Savitch (2002 2005). The first part of the article is devoted to the comparison of the 100 largest French urban areas identified from notarial (i.e. land-registration) databases. Based on INSEE's zoning of urban areas, emphasis is placed on the relative property values of the cities-urban centres in relation to their suburbs and their peri-urban belt, and such peri-urban spaces correspond to discontinuous suburbs or "exurbs." The use of this zoning is enough to challenge the idea of there being a single model for French cities. Thus, the "classical" centre–periphery model (where real-estate prices decrease with distance from the centre) that is often taken for granted, is not predominant. Other recurring types of price structures emerge clearly from the analysis, with suburbs and peri-urban belts being more valued than urban centres. This contrasts with the image of an urban France dominated by centres that are always going to be the most attractive areas for affluent groups, an image that is often conveyed through debates about the "urban question" (Box 1).

The second part tightens the framing of this picture by proposing an in-depth analysis of the sociogenesis of two urban systems that are similar in size but whose price structures are diametrically opposed, namely the urban areas of Lyon ("classical" model) and Marseille-Aix ("inverted model"). The Weberian perspective I have adopted here pays particular attention to long-term urban developments and the interrelations between the political, economic and social dimensions of the city (Weber 1921). We shall see that from the industrial turn of the 19th century to the contemporary processes of metropolitanization, the two cities underwent several successive changes of scale, both territorial and economic, with important consequences for their physical and social morphology. Socio-historical analysis will

Box 1.—*The city-centres are less favoured than is predicted*

For more than a decade, there has been intense debate in France on the question of which of either the suburbs or the peri-urban areas are the main locations for the banished disadvantaged social classes. For Jacques Donzelot (2004), the suburbs and their large "ghettoized" housing estates are emblematic of the "new urban question." The peri-urban area is associated with a space of "defensive withdrawal" of the middle classes fleeing the suburbs. Christophe Guilluy (2010 and 2014) takes a different view by refuting the idea that the "social question" could be confined only to the failing suburbs where "visible minorities" are concentrated. For him, the real realm of banishment of the disadvantaged social classes is located in "peripheral France," namely peri-urban and rural areas as well as small industrial cities and towns. This France of those people "left behind by globalization" is contrasted with the "France of the metropolises." Consequently peri-urban spaces are less likely to be the location for the middle classes suggested by certain authors (Jaillet 2004). Donzelot and Guilluy nevertheless agree in thinking of city centres as the most privileged spaces, where an eviction of the poorer social classes occurs as a result of processes of gentrification. This hypothesis was called into question by Gérard-François Dumont (2011) who showed that "exclusion" was concentrated more in the centres of the major metropolises than in their periphery. In addition, other work has shown that, given the social diversity they contain, the suburbs (Vieillard-Baron 2009) and the peri-urban belt (Roux and Vanier 2008) cannot be identified *en-masse* with spaces of banishment. Recent data published by INSEE sheds new light on these debates: the suburbs and especially the peri-urban belts display a higher mean standard of living than the centres in large urban areas (Aerts, Chirazi and Cros 2015). Above all, the poverty rate is highest in the centres (19.5%, compared with 13.9% in the suburbs and 8.8% in the peri-urban belts). However, as we shall see, these findings must be set against the diversity of urban configurations.

show how these changes have produced cumulative effects which have resulted in reinforcing the centrality of Lyon and the decline of that of Marseille.

Differentiating French cities: an approach via residential property markets

Although rarely part of the comparative approaches to French cities, residential property markets are an essential factor of differentiation. Not only are cities differentiated by their respective price levels, but the analysis of the urban area's price structures reveals a real diversity of socio-spatial structures. Before demonstrating this, I will explain how INSEE (Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques) determines the criteria for zoning in urban areas, and will then discuss the nature of the residential property market data that is used.

Methodological criteria and data used

The zoning criteria for urban areas established by the INSEE (Box 2) is constructed in terms of a "centre–periphery" type. The concentric organization of urban areas is defined in terms of a tripartite division between the city-centre, the suburban area and the peri-urban belt.

The application of this zoning to key variables such as the rate of ownership or the proportion of all types of houses reveals differences between urban areas while confirming the prevalence of a centre–periphery pattern. To illustrate this I will limit myself here to the ten main French urban areas. Figures 1 and 2 reveal significant differences when comparing urban areas by area. For example, the proportion of detached houses in the city centre of the Bordeaux area is 25%, while in Paris it is only 1%. But if a more general comparison of the structures of the housing stock in each area is made, the effect of distance from the centre is very clear in each of the ten urban areas. The decline of property values with remoteness is clearly marked. Not surprisingly, the proportion of homeowners and of all types of houses is highest in peri-urban belts and lowest in city-centres.

Box 2.—***The definition of urban areas***

According to the Urban Zoning (ZAU—*zonage en aires urbaines*) criteria of 2002, an urban area consists of an urban "*pole*" or hub (urban unit with more than 5,000 jobs) and its peri-urban belt (spaces beyond the agglomerated suburbs, exurbs). While the definition of the urban hub is based on the criterion of the continuity of the buildings within it, the peri-urban area relates to the functional links that transport connections between home and work weave between the urban hub and its peri-urban belts. Those *communes* (municipalities) where at least 40% of the working population are employed in this cluster or in the municipalities attracted by it (the other peri-urban municipalities) belong to the peri-urban belt of an urban hub. For the purposes of the analysis, I have distinguished the city-centres and their suburbs based on zoning in urban units within the hubs. For example, the territory of the urban area of Paris extends beyond the administrative boundaries of the Île-de-France to the north and west. Its surface area was 14,500 sq.km in 1999 (compared with 12,000 sq.km for Ile-de-France), and with a population of 12.1 million inhabitants in 2008.

FIGURE 1.—***Proportion of homeowners by zone (%, 2007)***

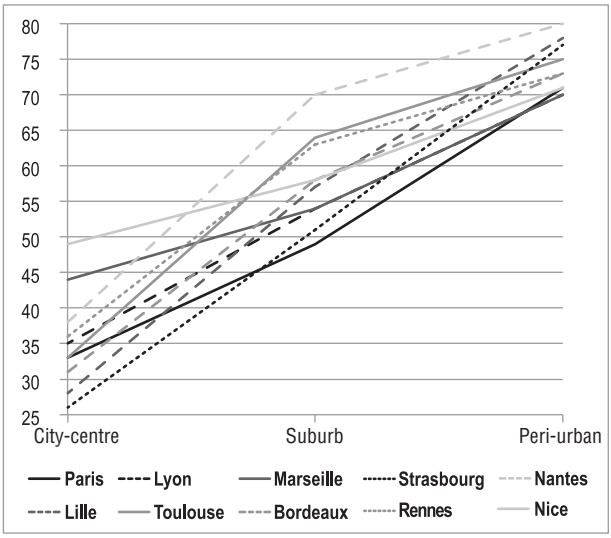
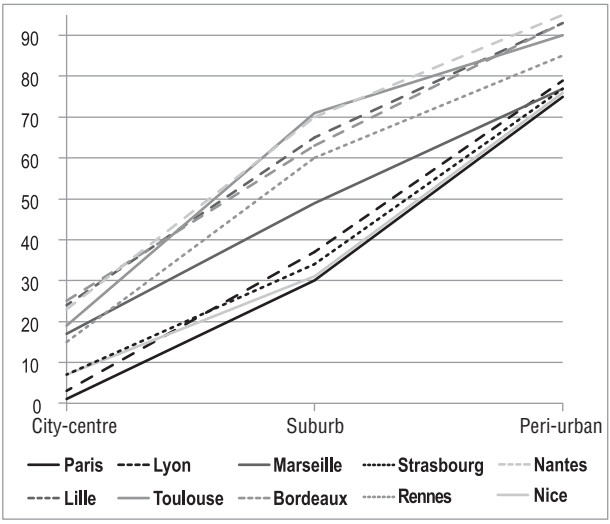


FIGURE 2.—***Proportion of houses by zone (%, 2007)***



Source: INSEE, *Recensement de la population* (Population census). Analysis by the author.

INSEE's zoning certainly has its limits. It provides an extremely simplified picture of urban systems. Distinguishing only three types of space leads to lumping together municipalities and populations with potentially very heterogeneous characteristics within each zone. In addition, it erases other forms of structuring than those that are simply concentric. Sectoral rationales are generally superimposed on

concentric rationales, introducing more or less significant distortions compared to the ideal-type representation of the centre–periphery model. The polycentric character of urban areas is also erased by constructed categories because of the thresholds established by INSEE in order to make secondary centres appear as such.[3] This promotes a mono-centric representation of the city. But it is precisely because the INSEE zoning provides a simplified picture of urban systems that it makes them statistically comparable. This zoning also has the merit of integrating peri-urban spaces within the analysis of the urban. And, as will become clear, its use in identifying residential property price structures is enough in itself to demolish the idea of the uniqueness of the model of the French city.

To carry out this analysis, data was extracted from the notarial databases BIEN (for Ile-de-France) and PERVAL (for the provinces). The perimeter of the study corresponds to the "pool of second hand dwellings." Transactions involve both owner-occupied property and leased property.[4] HLM (social) housing is automatically excluded from the study, as the vast majority of this cannot be the subject of residential property transactions. Since they are not recorded by notarial databases and because of a lack of accessible data bases, "new" dwellings (less than five years old) are not included in the analysis. Transactions in the "pool of second hand dwellings" account for approximately 70% of all annual residential property transactions. Although they do not cover the whole of the market, the notarial databases nevertheless make it possible to capture a large part of the process of valuation/devaluation in the residential property market.

While the exhaustiveness of notarial databases is far from perfect—the degree to which categories of variables are complete varies by location—price is the most reliable variable, not only because it is the most accurately recorded but mainly because it is checked *a posteriori* by Paris Notaires Services and by PERVAL. As far as the buyers' socio-economic status is concerned, there are biases, but at the very aggregate scale we are looking at, they are limited. In addition, there is the question of the comparability of price data for apartments and houses, given the variability in the area of the land occupied by the latter. In France, it is customary to express the value of apartments in prices per square metre and that of houses in unit prices. This leads to a distinction between the two sub-markets. Finally, the analyses were carried out on the basis of the 2006 and 2007 data, i.e. at the time of the peak in the residential property market, after a period of almost ten years of soaring prices, followed by a cyclical downturn caused by the economic crisis. In order to test the robustness of the results obtained, comparisons were made using data from 1998 and 2010.

Differentiation by price levels

French cities are differentiated firstly by the level of their property prices. In the 100 major urban areas, the price of apartments (expressed in €/square metre) is

3. A municipality in the urban area is considered a second centre when its population is at least equal to 50% of that of the main centre. According to this criterion, none of the top hundred urban areas appears to be polycentric.

4. Since the large-scale withdrawal of institutional investors, the vast majority of residential property is held by individuals, occupiers or landlords.

strongly correlated with house prices (in €) (Figure 3). It is thus possible to establish a hierarchy of cities on the basis of this price pairing.

In considering the existence of a link between position in the price hierarchy and city profile, several observations can be made. Firstly, property prices are not simply a reflection of position in the urban hierarchy. Neither the size of the population nor the economic importance of the cities are good predictors of price levels. If, as INSEE does, the degree of metropolitanization of urban areas is measured by the number of executive-level posts with metropolitan functions there are in each urban area,[5] no correlation with the price level of apartments appears. From Figure 4, which is concerned with the top 50 urban areas, however, several groups can be distinguished.

A first group (A) includes the most expensive areas. Among these, some are characterized by their strong residential attractiveness for retirees, second-home residents and tourists. This is the case of Menton-Monaco, Arcachon, Fréjus, Bayonne, Toulon and Nice (the only major metropolitan area in this subgroup) (Cusin 2014). Another subgroup is made up of border areas, with Annemasse, Thonon-les-Bains and Cluses at the forefront. They provide a significant proportion of the nearly 60,000 people who live in France and work in the Geneva area (Floch 2015). This phenomenon is also important in the border areas near Basel (including Mulhouse), Luxembourg (including Thionville) and Monaco.[6] This is explained by wage differentials and has an impact on the residential attractiveness and property prices of the bordering nations in question.

A second group (B) comprises areas that are strongly "metropolitanized" and generally cheaper overall than those in the previous group. These are Paris (2nd most expensive for apartments but only 11th for houses), Marseille-Aix, Grenoble, Lyon, Montpellier, Toulouse, Rennes, Nantes, Strasbourg, Lille and Bordeaux, the twelve "metropolitan areas" in the sense ascribed to the term by INSEE, if Nice is added to them.

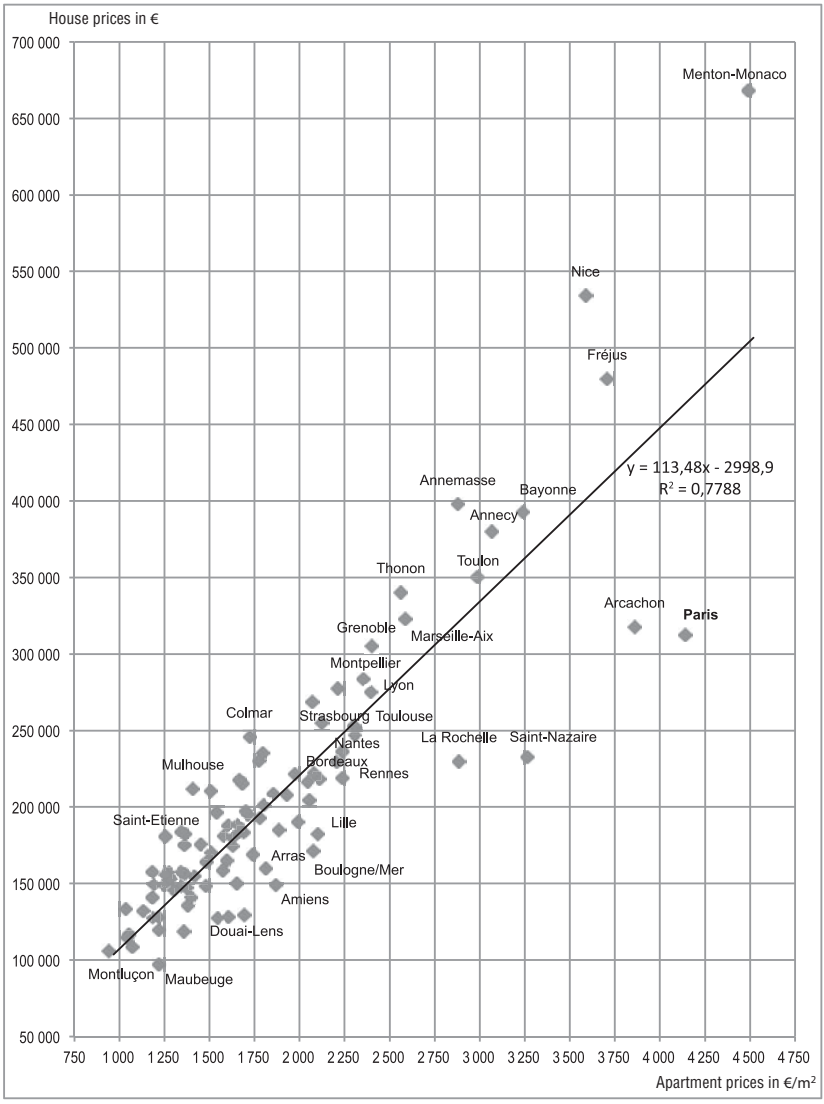
Finally, among the remaining areas (C), which are much cheaper, we can distinguish between attractive middle-sized towns (Albi, Périgueux, Niort, Brive, Saint-Brieuc, etc.) and unattractive areas marked by industrial decline (Douai-Lens, Dunkirk, Valenciennes, Calais, Maubeuge, Saint-Etienne, Montlucon, etc.).

This analysis combining price levels and the degree of metropolitanization of urban areas reveals forms of differentiation in French towns and cities. It refers to a classical approach to hierarchy and urban specialization. To test the existence or not of a social morphology common to French towns and cities, it is nevertheless necessary to turn to the study of the price structure of urban areas.

5. According to the INSEE nomenclature, metropolitan functions are the most creative of added value and they ensure a strong influence on the area (intellectual services, design-research, inter-company trade, management, culture and leisure). On the basis of the double criterion of the number and the share of managers with metropolitan functions, INSEE distinguishes twelve "metropolitan areas" (Van Puymbroeck and Reynard 2010).

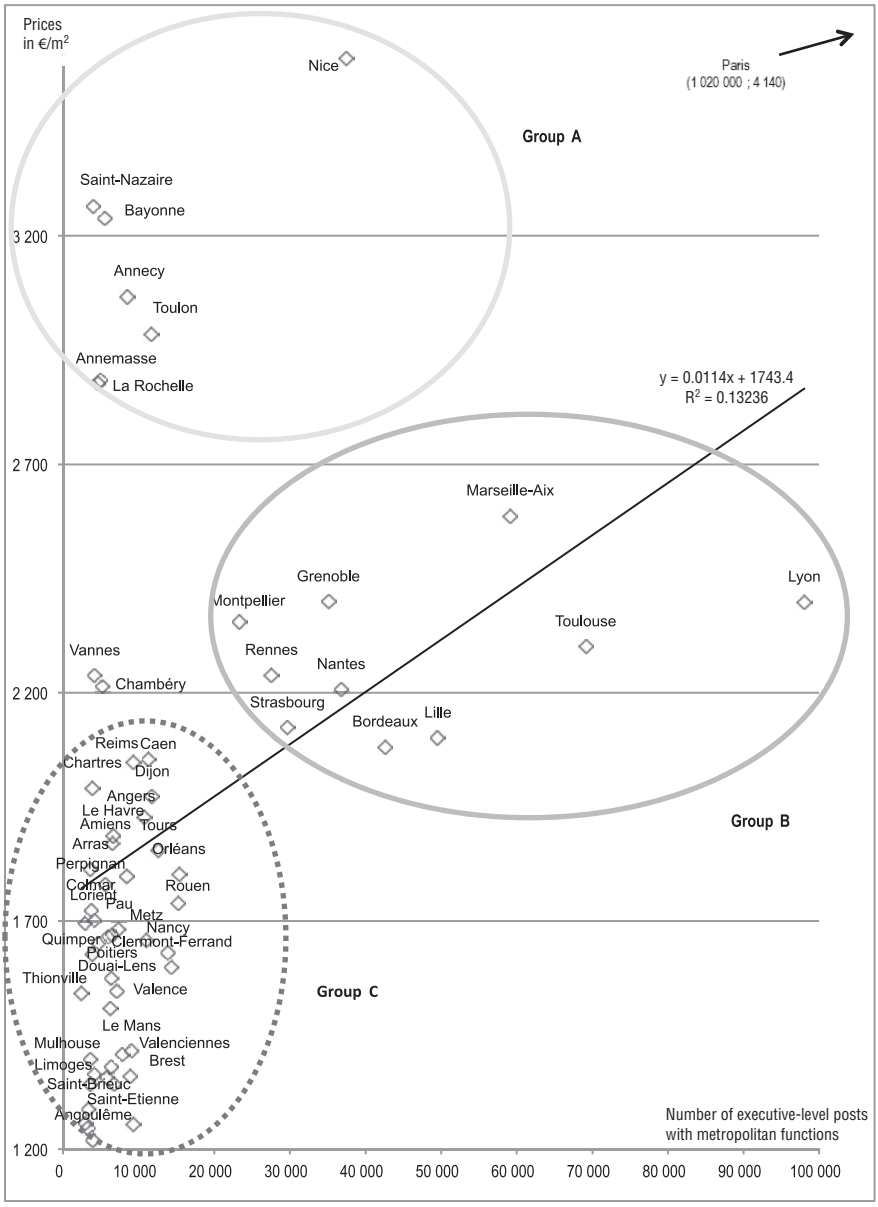
6. In total, 320,000 French residents work in a bordering country (Floch 2015). This phenomenon is rising sharply, except in the case of Germany where it is declining.

FIGURE 3.—***Pairs of average prices of houses (in €) and apartments (in €/m²) for the 100 urban areas in 2006***



Source: BIEN, PERVAL, INSEE, *Recensement de la population* (Population census). Analysis by the author.

FIGURE 4.—***Prices of apartments (in €/m²) according to the number of executive posts with metropolitan functions in the top 50 French urban areas (2006)***



Source: BIEN, PERVAL, INSEE, *Recensement de la population* (Population census). Analysis by the author.

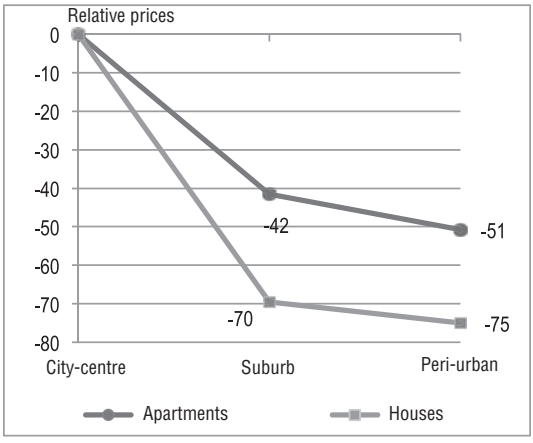
Differentiation by price structure

In order to compare price structures whilst distinguishing the markets for apartments and houses, I have neutralized differences in price levels between urban areas by calculating relative prices expressed as a percentage in relation to the town/city-centre.[7] Based on 2006 and 2007 data, this analysis of the 100 major urban areas reveals a wide variety of price structures. The "classical" model, which posits a declining form to land values, is therefore not systematically applicable to residential property values. Indeed, urban centres are by no means always the most highly priced areas in relation to suburbs and peri-urban belts. A detailed analysis of relative prices reveals two other recurring types of price structure that have been described as "inverted" and "valued-suburban" centre–periphery models, to which are added "mixed" types.

The "classic" centre–periphery model

The urban area of Paris is characteristic of the "classical" centre–periphery model with a particularly significant difference in price between the centre and the suburbs (Figure 5). In 2007, suburban apartments were 42% cheaper than in intra-mural Paris, where the median price was 6,070 €/m². The discount for the peri-urban belt was 51%. These figures are respectively –70% and –75% for houses (with a price of €1 million in the centre of the city). The effect of distance on property prices is all

FIGURE 5.—***"Classic" centre–periphery model: the case of the urban area of Paris (*)***



Source: Data from BIEN—analysis by the author. Idem for the following figures.
(*): Relative prices by zone as a percentage of the median price in the city-centre in 2007.

7. For example, the relative price of the suburb (B) in relation to the reference price of the centre (C) is calculated as follows: $PR_B = \frac{P_B - P_C}{P_C} * 100$. In the centre: $PR_c = 0$.

TABLE 1.—***Socio-occupational group of buyers by zone in the urban area of Paris (% in 2007)***

	City-centre	Suburbs	Peri-urban	Urban area
Farmers	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1
Craftspersons, traders and business owners	3.6	2.8	2.9	3.0
Managers and professionals	44.4	26.4	18.9	28.9
Intermediate occupations	31.0	35.4	36.2	34.7
Employees	9.3	19.3	21.4	17.7
Manual workers	1.5	9.1	13.1	8.1
Retired	6.7	5.7	6.4	6.0
Others	3.4	1.2	1.0	1.6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Data from BIEN—analysis by the author. Idem for the following tables.

the greater as the area of political and economic capital is relatively small: 105 km^2 compared to the 14,518 km^2 of the urban area (according to the 2002 zoning).

This very marked price structure goes hand in hand with a strong polarization of buyers in the top executive and intellectual occupations within Paris *intra muros*. In 2007, they accounted for 44.4% of buyers in the city centre. This proportion decreases with distance from the centre (Table 1). The intermediate professions, with 31% of the buyers, come second. In contrast, the proportion of manual workers among buyers is only 1.5%. They turn to the suburbs and even more to the peri-urban belt. The proportion of employees similarly increases with the distance from the centre. However, they represent 9.3% of buyers in Paris. The size of the social housing stock (16%) accounts for the large differences between the proportion of lower class households in the inner city of Paris (18% of households) and their lower proportion among buyers (10.8%) in a market that had become particularly selective after a decade of soaring prices.

The suburbs generally appear as an intermediate space with a distribution of buyers' socio-occupational categories that is very close to the average for the urban area. While the Parisian peri-urban belt brings together a relatively mixed population of buyers, it nevertheless constitutes a transfer zone for employees and workers.

The Paris area thus follows a pronounced centre–periphery logic. Through the prism of residential property markets and on a very aggregate scale, the classical geographical opposition between spaces that polarize on the one hand managers and professionals and those that polarize manual workers on the other hand is evident (Mansuy and Marpsat 1991; Tabard 1993). One of the main factors in the social mix is the tendency of the intermediate occupations to distribute themselves in a slightly differentiated way between each of the zones. This observation is valid at the finer scale of municipalities (Cusin and Juillard 2012). This is also true when all housing pools are taken into account (Préteceille 2006).

In the provinces, the Lyon area is the one that best embodies the "classical" centre–periphery model. As in Paris, there is an opposition between the central city which polarises buyers with managerial and professional status and higher intellectual professions and the peri-urban municipalities where there is an over-representation

of employees and manual workers among the buyers. This model is however less pronounced than in the Parisian case (Figure 6). In the city centre, managers and professionals account for 36.3% of buyers. They are less over-represented there compared to those managers and professionals who buy property in the urban area as a whole (Table 2). And the prices in the centre of Lyon are very far from the peak figures observed of Paris (2,760 €/m^2 in 2007).

Figure 6.—***"Classical centre–periphery model": the case of the urban area of Lyon***

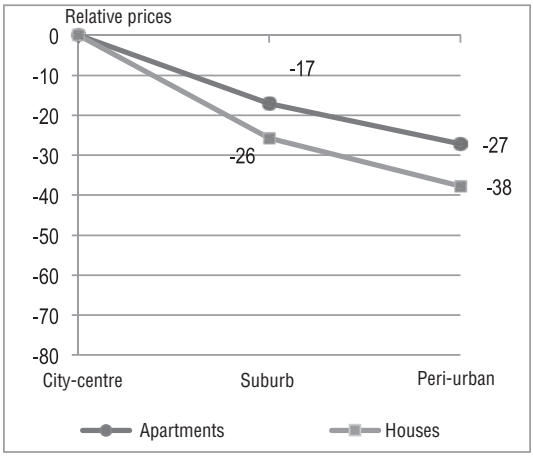


Table 2.—***Socio-occupational group of buyers by zone in the urban area of Lyon (% in 2007)***

	City-centre	Suburbs	Peri-urban	Urban area
Farmers	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.2
Craftspersons, traders and business owners	6.3	7.3	6.3	6.9
Managers and professionals	36.3	22.4	22.0	26.8
Intermediate occupations	34.5	35.0	32.5	34.5
Employees	10.5	14.9	16.8	13.7
Manual workers	3.9	11.9	15.1	9.7
Retired	6.0	7.1	5.6	6.5
Others	2.3	1.3	1.3	1.6
Total	100	100	100	100

The "inverted" centre–periphery model

The urban area of Marseille-Aix offers a good example of an "inverted" model. This was a complete reversal for apartments and a partial one for houses in 2007 (it became complete in 2010). Apartments in the suburbs and the peri-urban belt respectively sold for 8% and 54% more than those in the centre (Figure 7). In the market

for detached houses, although the suburbs show a slight reduction (–2%) compared to the centre, the peri-urban belt is 8% more expensive than in the municipality of Marseille.

In terms of buyers' socio-occupational status, two local characteristics clearly distinguish the Marseille area from the Paris and Lyon areas. Firstly, in the municipality of Marseille, buyers from managerial-executive groups come behind the intermediate professions. Moreover, the over-representation of managerial-executive status groups is stronger in the peri-urban belt, while the manual working classes are relatively uncommon among the buyers in this area (Table 3).

The specificity of Marseille lies not only in the social profile of buyers in the centre and peri-urban belt. As a result of the construction of zoning categories by INSEE, the urban area includes Aix-en-Provence as part of the suburbs of Marseille. Given the attractiveness of Aix, the overall suburban residential property prices of

FIGURE 7.—***The "inverted" model of Marseille-Aix***

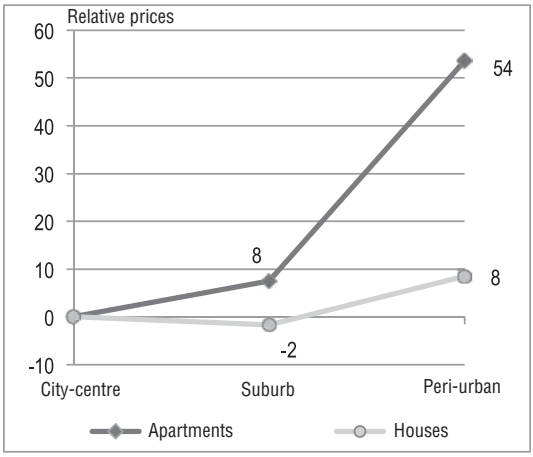


TABLE 3.—***Socio-occupational group of buyers by zone in the urban area of Marseille-Aix (%in 2007)***

	City-centre	Suburbs	Peri-urban	Urban area
Farmers	0	0	0	0
Craftspersons, traders and business owners	7	7	8	7
Managers and professionals	24	17	26	22
Intermediate occupations	31	32	29	31
Employees	19	19	15	18
Manual workers	7	14	9	9
Retired	8	9	11	9
Others	3	2	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100

the suburbs of this area are increased as a result. More fundamentally, INSEE zoning leads to the interpretation of the organization of the urban area of Marseille by the yardstick of a mono-centric scheme. Despite the demographic weight of the municipality of Marseille within the area, this does not correspond to the local urban reality. I shall return to the need to take into account the polycentric organization of the Marseille area. Nevertheless, the structure of prices revealed by the INSEE zoning draws attention to the lower valuation of the municipality of Marseille relative to the rest of the urban area.

The "valued suburbs" model

As the urban area of Nice illustrates, the "valued suburbs" model corresponds to cases where the centre is both cheaper than the suburbs and more expensive than the peri-urban belt (Figure 8). This structure is not due here to a devaluation of the

FIGURE 8.—***The "valued suburbs" model***

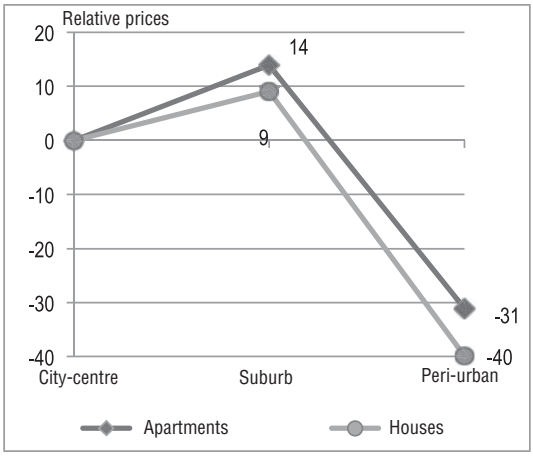


TABLE 4.—***Socio-occupational group of buyers by zone in the urban area of Nice (% in 2007)***

	City-centre	Suburbs	Peri-urban	Urban area
Farmers	0	0	1	0
Craftspersons, traders and business owners	10	12	12	11
Managers and professionals	23	24	15	23
Intermediate occupations	25	23	26	24
Employees	19	15	21	17
Manual workers	8	7	13	8
Retired	12	16	10	14
Others	3	3	3	3
Total	100	100	100	100

centre because the municipality of Nice is numbered in the first rank of the most expensive city centres for houses and in sixth position for apartments.

Managers and higher intellectual professions occupy the suburbs of Nice somewhat more than the town centre. (Table 4). This is particularly true of retired people (already strongly present in the centre), who can be assumed to have higher purchasing power. The price structure of the Nice area is partly explained by the fact that the urban agglomeration is more of a conurbation (including high-value municipalities such as Cannes or Antibes) than a city centre surrounded by its suburbs in the classic sense of the term.

Price structures of the 100 main urban areas of France

By extending this study of residential property price structures to all 100 major French urban areas, and combining the results obtained for apartments and houses, the objective is to test the recurrence of the models identified. For each of the three models, a "full" model was distinguished where the price structure is the same for apartments and houses; a "probable" model where the data is missing for apartments in peri-urban areas (too few registered sales); and a "partial" model where the price structure follows the reference model but with a slight deviation from it.[8]

As shown in Table 5, the "classical" centre–periphery model is the most frequent, but does not represent the majority of cases. With its different variants (type 1), it represents only 29% of the sample. As with Paris and Lyon, Toulouse, Bordeaux and Nantes represent the "full" model. 18% of urban areas follow an "inverted" centre–periphery model (type 2). In addition to Marseille-Aix (which became "full model" in 2010), this is particularly the case of Le Havre, Annemasse, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Mulhouse and Fréjus. Areas conforming to the "valued suburbs" model (type 3), such as Nice, Bayonne, Saint-Nazaire or Menton-Monaco, account for 19% of the urban areas. Finally, 30% of the areas belong to "mixed" types (types 4, 5 and 6), with a dissociation between the price structures of the apartment and house markets. Lille, for example, combines a "classical" structure for apartments and an "inverted" structure for houses.

In order to assess the robustness of these results, the 2006 price structures (high point of the cycle) were compared with those observed in 1999 (the bottom point of the cycle) and in 2010 (the turnaround point accompanied by a greater variability in prices). For the vast majority of urban areas, the models identified are stable over the whole period. Some have even seen their price structure reinforced. The only urban areas that have changed their model are those whose price structure was initially little differentiated. This is particularly the case in Rennes, where the apartment market between 2007 and 2010 has shifted from one that exhibits a slightly valued suburbs structure to one of a "classic" centre–periphery structure.

This typology does not suggest a clear link between price structures and the geographical location of the cities in question. Moreover, among the type 1 areas ("classical" model), there are very metropolitanized areas (Paris, Lyon and Toulouse, etc.) and non-metropolitanized areas such as Arras, Epinal or Vichy. In this group, the attractive areas due to the quality of life they offer are poorly

8. For example, in Strasbourg, peri-urban apartments are slightly more expensive than those in the suburbs.

TABLE 5.—***Classification of the top 100 French urban areas according to the structure of their property prices in 2006 (apartments and houses)***

Model type	Model form	Urban area				Number of urban areas	
1 "classic centre–periphery model" (C>B>P)	Full	Annecy	Dijon	Metz	Orléans	13	29
		Arcachon	Epinal	Nancy	**Paris**		
		Bordeaux	**Lyon**	**Nantes**	**Toulouse**		
		Compiègne					
	Probable	Arras	Douai-Lens	Vannes		6	
		Charleville-Mézières	Valenciennes	Vichy			
	Partial	Angers	Nîmes	Rouen	Thionville	10	
		Montbéliard	Reims	**Strasbourg**	Tours		
		Montluçon	**Rennes**				
2 "inverted" centre–periphery model (C<B<P)	Full	Annemasse	Fréjus	Boulogne-sur-Mer	Mulhouse	4	18
	Probable	Agen	Bergerac	Evreux	Saint-Quentin	11	
		Alès	Béziers	Le Havre	Villefranche-sur-Saône		
		Angoulême	Calais	Quimper			
	Partial	Beauvais	**Marseille-Aix**	Niort		3	
3 Valued suburbs (C<B>P)	Full	Bayonne	Menton-Monaco	Saint-Nazaire		5	19
		Clermont-Ferrand	**Nice**				
	Probable	Albi	Bourges	Laval	Roanne	7	
		Amiens	Brive	Montauban			
	Partial	**Grenoble**	Thonon-les-Bains			2	
	Variant with peri-urban belt more expensive than the centre	Blois	Creil	Saint-Brieuc		5	
		Brest	Lorient				
4 Mixed inverted/ valued suburbs	Disconnected markets for apartments and houses	Belfort	**Montpellier**	Saint-Etienne		6	6
		Colmar	Perpignan	Toulon			
5 Mixed classic/ inverted	Disconnected markets for apartments and houses	Chalon-sur-Saône	**Lille**	Saint-Chamond	Troyes	11	11
		Cluses	Pau	Sète	Valence		
		Elbeuf	Périgueux	Tarbes			
6 Other mixed types		Avignon	Caen	Dunkerque	Poitiers	13	13
		Bastia	Chambéry	La Rochelle			
		Besançon	Chartres	Le Mans			
		Béthune	Cherbourg	Limoges			
7 Atypical areas		Ajaccio	Châteauroux	Forbach	Maubeuge	4	4
Total						100	100

Note: (*)Comparison of prices in city centre (C), suburbs (B) and peri-urban belt (P). Urban areas in bold are metropolises or "metropolitan areas" as defined by INSEE.

represented (only Annecy and Arcachon are part of it). In group 2, outside Marseille-Aix, there is no metropolitan area, which underlines the atypical character of the city of Marseille. Group 3 includes two metropolises (Nice and Grenoble). Thus, with three exceptions out of twelve, the status of metropolis does not guarantee the prevalence of a "classic" model. Finally, the structure of residential property prices cannot be deduced from the size of the population and the level of residential property prices. The explanation must be sought elsewhere, as close as possible to local contexts.

Property markets and sociogenesis of the social divisions of space

I propose to explain the sociogenesis of the two opposing models displayed by Lyon ("classical" structure) and Marseille-Aix ("inverted" structure) on the basis of the socio-historical analysis of the transformations of each urban centre, its urbanization and forms of functional and social divisions of space. It will be seen that the contrasting destiny of the two city centres has been compounded by powerful mechanisms of differentiation of urban spaces which have accompanied the successive changes of scale of the city since the first period of industrialisation. In the final analysis, the comparison between Lyon and Marseille-Aix leads to a distinction between two different forms of metropolitanization: the first being organized around a strong and valued centrality reflected in prices at the residential property level, while the second relies on a system that is increasingly polycentric, with the main centre of its urban area being devalued in overall terms.

Sociogenesis of the "classic" model in Lyon

The "classic" centre–periphery structure of Lyon is the outcome of a long history. It is currently being reinforced by the dynamics of metropolitanization, which intensifies the concentration of tertiary jobs and the middle and upper social classes in the centre. As for the rest of the urban area, it is mainly structured around a historical division between east and west.

Development and continuity of upper class centrality

The development of the centre of Lyon has historically been carried out from west to east according to a logic of "juxtaposition" of the new districts rather than by the destruction and reconstruction of the existing urban fabric of the area (Lequin 1996). A first extension led to the displacement of the centre of gravity of the city from "Old Lyon" (Vieux-Lyon) to the "Presqu'île," inhabited in the 17th and 18th centuries by the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. A second extension of the bourgeois neighbourhoods took place in the 19th century with the urbanization of the left bank of the Rhone, but without challenging the centrality represented by the Presqu'île. On the contrary, its bourgeois character was reinforced by its partial "Haussmannisation."

A century later, a major new development project modified the organization of the central focus of Lyon. During the 1960s, the Part-Dieu business and administrative

centre was created to the east of the historic centre of the city. Designed according to the principles of modern urban planning, this extension of the centrality of Lyon was essentially administrative and commercial (Authier et al. 2010). The eastern tropism of the extension of the bourgeois districts of the city thus did not continue. The Part-Dieu district symbolically marked a break between the bourgeois central focus and the working class neighbourhoods which continued their development further to the east. It was thus towards the west and outside the city (towards the Monts-d'or) that the bourgeois areas continued their extension. However, this dynamic of settlement did not call into question the historical anchoring of local elites in a very small number of central districts (Grafmeyer 1991).

First change of scale: extension of the working class area of the city by juxtaposition of new districts

As in most French cities, the working class city districts had long remained contained within the dense urban fabric of the old city, or in neighbourhoods juxtaposed with bourgeois districts (the Croix-Rousse and its silk workers' buildings). In the 19th century, when silk-weaving was experiencing its golden age, the industrialisation and extension of the working-class neighbourhoods took place in the east of the municipality.

During the "great overspill" of the early 20th century (Lequin 1996), the large industrial establishments left Lyon. This was the time when the chemical, pharmaceutical and mechanical industries took over from the silk factories. In the 1930s, two urban projects (the *Etats-Unis* district in Lyon and the *Gratte-Ciel* district in Villeurbanne) marked the extension of the working-class city in the continuity of the agglomerated city and testified to the concern for the quality of working-class housing built near the production sites to the east of Lyon.

The new industrial geography of which a new foreign workforce became part in the inter-war period already foreshadowed the development of the working-class neighbourhoods during the era of large-scale working class housing development. With the exception of the Duchère (west), the "*cités*" of large social housing blocks built in the years 1950–1960 (Rilleux-Ville-Nouvelle, Vaulx-en-Velin, Bron-Parilly, Saint-Priest and Vénissieux-les-Minguettes) were strung out along an arc running from north-east to south-east. They anchored the working classes and immigrant populations in areas close to the employment zones, but in landlocked locations far from the centre of the city. The departure of the middle classes from social housing towards the peri-urban municipalities reinforced the social specialization and impoverishment of these districts. In this general movement of urban growth by suburban sprawl, functional division thus imposed its logic on the social division of space. The centrality of Lyon was thus reinforced.

New change of scale: Expansion of the area and reinforcement of the centre

As elsewhere, Lyon experienced a sharp expansion of its territory from the 1970s due to the spreading out of inhabitants and jobs (Kaufmann 2008; Wiel 2010). In addition to this change in geographical scale, which reflected a new form of urban growth, there was another change of scale, more specifically linked to the process of metropolitanization. This translates into a general increase in the socio-economic

level of the inhabitants of the urban area. The attractiveness of the area of Lyon has become more and more selective, with an over-representation of managerial/executive and higher intellectual occupations settling in the area (Cusin 2014). In this general movement, the centre appears to be the main anchor of metropolitanization. It more strongly polarizes skilled jobs and the upper classes. Hence the reinforcement of a residential property model of the "classic" centre–periphery type. Between 1998 and 2007, prices rose in the centre by nearly 190% for apartments and houses, which was higher than in the suburban and peri-urban areas (Cusin and Juillard 2012).

During this period, the traditionally bourgeois *arrondissements* (2nd and 6th: two administrative clusters of several districts) saw their residential specialisation become more pronounced. The gentrification of working-class districts has also contributed to the development of the central districts. Near the hyper-centre, the Croix-Rousse neighbourhoods—the "Plateau" (4th) and the "Pentes" (1st)—are emblematic of a "classical" process of gentrification (Authier *et al*. 2010; Collet[9] 2015), similar to that observed in many American or British cities (Ley 1996). After the arrival of "pioneers" (young students or active members of the less-wealthy fringes of the middle classes), the process became widespread with the arrival of new households belonging to what David Ley called the "new cultural class" (with careers in culture and education, fashion and design,, media, consultancy, etc.). Local urban policies have promoted this process through the planned *Operations of Habitat Improvement* (OPAH—*Opérations programmées d'amélioration de l'habitat*) and a redevelopment of public spaces.

However, in Lyon, as in other metropolitan areas, the value of property in the city centre is not limited to an increasingly exclusive gentrification of affluent neighbourhoods or to "classical" gentrification, where the arrival of the middle classes in working-class neighbourhoods occurs spontaneously. It is also based on what are termed the policies of "urban regeneration" aimed at strengthening the attractiveness of the city in a context of increasing interurban competition. These policies are part of what many authors refer to as the "entrepreneurial turning point" of cities (Harvey 1989; Brenner 2004; Smith 1996; Savitch and Kantor 2005; Pinson 2009; Le Galès 2011). The development of urban heritage, the construction of new neighbourhoods according to a logic of "new-built gentrification" (Lees, Slater and Wyly 2008) and the promotion of major structuring projects (Fainstein 2011) testify to this "entrepreneurial" strategy following a new form of the "urbanization of capital," as David Harvey (1985) puts it. The creation of property value and the profitability of urban land (especially of brownfield and logistic sites) by private actors are accompanied by an increasing use of territorial marketing by public authorities (Jouve 2009). The capacity to carry out these projects depends on the establishment of governance systems involving public and private actors. From this point of view, Lyon provides an emblematic case of "urban entrepreneurialism," initiated under the mayoral mandates of Michel Noir and Raymond Barre, and deepened under that of the current mayor, Gérard Colomb (Boino 2009). While the strengthening of the governance system at the level of the agglomeration has encouraged the scaling-up of Greater Lyon projects, the city centre remains at the heart of urban development strategies. The construction of the *Cité Internationale* (north of the 6th *arrondissement*) or the Confluence project (south of the Presqu'ile) testify to this, as does the

9. In 2007, the median price of apartments in the 4th (€3,110/m^2) was even greater than in the 2nd (€3,010/m^2).

Box 3.—*Gentrification as a challenge for theoretical debates*

The notion of "gentrification," created by Ruth Glass (1963), has evolved greatly since then, and not only because the phenomenon has become more complex and diffused, but also because competing theories have taken hold of the topic. We can distinguish two main axes of differentiation in theories of gentrification. The first distinguishes "classic" gentrification from "generalized" gentrification. For Ruth Glass in the London context, or for Philip Clay (1979) in the North American cities, "classic" gentrification refers to the arrival of the modest middle classes, followed by wealthier households in central, working class and impoverished neighbourhoods. Subsequently, most British and American authors have expanded the notion to include upper-class residential decision-making and to combine it with the role of "urban renaissance" policies based on the coordinated action of local government and private-sector organizations. The second axis distinguishes between two types of approach: 1/ those which emphasize the social and cultural dynamics at work in the revaluation of central districts, following the higher tertiarisation of the urban economies and the formation of the "new middle classes" (Ley 1996); 2) those which emphasize economic determinism by emphasizing the decisive role of the "return" of capital to be invested in the centres (Smith 1996) and the development of place marketing (Zukin 1995) in a more general context of "neo-liberalisation" of urban policies (Harvey 1989). This paradigmatic opposition has had a major structural impact on the field of gentrification studies since the end of the 1970s. Chris Hamnett (1991) proposed a theoretical synthesis aimed at articulating the two paradigms which he calls a "demand-driven" approach and "supply-side" approach to neighbourhoods to be gentrified. On the problems raised by the recent importation of the concept of gentrification in France, see in particular: Fijalkow and Préteceille (2006), Préteceille (2007), Authier and Bidou-Zachariasen (2008). According to the definition adopted, gentrification can be considered as a phenomenon distinct from *embourgeoisement*, a particular modality of it, or as a synonym for it.

classification of *Vieux-Lyon* (Old Lyon) as a UNESCO world heritage site. Today, the construction of new office towers at Part-Dieu is part of a desire to strengthen the position of the second national tertiary centre of this business district. The installation of new high-tech activities in Gerland illustrates the competitive hubs policy.

In short, in a context of metropolitanization of the urban area, the political, economic and social centrality of the municipality of Lyon has been strengthened (Authier, et al. 2010). But significant as they are, the socio-spatial and property changes promoted by local urban policies are not as radical as in American cities (Smith 1996; Beauregard 2006). Unlike the latter, gentrification in Lyon cannot be interpreted as a phenomenon of "urban renaissance" following a long period of decline marked by the "flight" of the middle and upper classes ("white flight") and of capital to suburban spaces. As an industrial city, Lyon was confronted with the problems of reconverting part of its economic fabric, but a large part of the economic and social difficulties had been polarized outside the municipality, especially to the east of Lyon.

At the level of the urban area, the centre–periphery model is therefore combined with the strengthening of sectoral logics. The municipalities of the suburbs and of the peri-urban belt to the west continue to specialize in the reception of families from the middle and upper classes. The socio-economic contrast with the eastern part of Lyon is all the more marked by the decline in low-skilled industrial employment, which reinforces the impoverishment of the social housing districts of the East of Lyon. These areas remain devalued in spite of the development policies of the city and the policies of urban renewal, attempts at opening them up by extending the tram network or the installation of large-scale infrastructural equipment.

Marseille: from the bipolarization of the centre to the shattered metropolis

The "inverted" structure of the urban area of Marseille-Aix is also the result of a long history. Among the specific features of Marseille, it should first be noted that, because of the very large area occupied by the municipal territory, the city does not have "suburbs" in the classic sense of the term, or rather it encompasses them. This specificity has been influential in the devaluation of the city centre within the urban area. It remains to be understood why the historical centre is one of the most undervalued areas and why, in a polycentric pattern, the metropolitanization of the area benefits the secondary centres more than the city centre itself.

The "duplication" of the centre

The first expansion of Marseille in the late 17th century, with the construction of a new town to the south-east of the Vieux Port, was the starting point for a historical shift towards increasing remoteness of the local elites from the old town, mainly to the benefit of the southern districts of the city (Roncayolo 1990). In the 19th century, this southern tropism was strengthened. The districts below the Canebière (the Marseille's famous street separating the North and the South parts of the city) inherited the financial and commercial activities that had deserted the Belsunce district. From the 1830s, all major public buildings (courthouse, prefecture, museums, etc.), banks, corporate headquarters, department stores, luxury shops and theatres came to be concentrated in these quarters of the new town. Further south, the space would in essence come to be devoted to further expansion of the city and to the building sites of property developments destined for the great Marseille families (Zalio 1999).

The districts located to the north of the Vieux Port welcomed the harbour and port extensions that accompanied the development of the colonial empire, as well as a good part of the new industrial activities. This functional division of space accentuated the social divisions within Marseille: with the northern districts in particular being devoted to housing the working classes.[10]

Just as described by the the Chicago sociologists (Park, Burgess and McKenzie 1925), the historical central districts abandoned by the bourgeoisie, and the middle classes, but also by some of the local working classes, would become the "zone of transition" specializing in the reception of migrants",[11] such as the Belsunce quarter, the Butte des Carmes, the Butte des Moulins and the Panier. This "zone of transition" was transformed into a "zone of deterioration" in a process comparable to the social filtering observed in American cities (Hoyt 1939). The devaluation of the historic centre as well as the "free-ranging growth" model that prevailed until the end of the 1950s within a framework of liberal urban management explain why Marseille has often been compared to American cities and to Chicago in particular (Roncayolo 1996). But old Marseille is not only a "zone of deterioration." According

10. Nevertheless, the social division of space along a north-south axis is neither total nor exclusive. Marseille is at the same time a "social mosaic" with marked differentiation between neighbourhoods on a micro-local scale (Mansuy and Marpsat 1991; Roncayolo 1996b).

11. Originally from Provence, Corsica, Italy, Armenia and Spain, these waves of migration were later opened up to the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa.

to Marcel Roncayolo, one can speak of "duplication of the centrality of Marseille" insofar as the historic centre constitutes a working class centrality in its own right, a place for the socialization and entertainment of populations that flock to it from the whole Marseille area.

Change of scale and the break-up of the "Marseille system"

In the early 1960s, the Marseille economy had to cope with the consequences of decolonization—which called into question its role as a major port—and the limits of its economic model based on "industrializing trade" (transformation of raw materials arriving from the colonies). The local productive system was overtaken by the Fordist turn. In addition, it was not very innovative (Roncayolo 1990).

A major land-use planning project initiated by the State therefore offered a source of hope in the form of the construction of a large deep-water port in Fos-sur-Mer (outside of Marseille) associated with an industrial complex (refining, petrochemicals and iron and steel). At the same time, an ambitious urban planning policy was being implemented. The 1960s were marked by an intense activity of "production of space"—as Henri Lefebvre (1974) put it—inspired by American cities and the functionalist urbanism of the Charter of Athens. The objective was not only to make good the lag in development over decades of urban stagnation but to respond to the projected high population growth that would result from the development of the industrial port complex in Fos-sur-Mer. Land and property was becoming a defining vector of urban capitalism driven by the State with the support of the municipality under its mayor, Gaston Deferre, emblematic of the Keynesian period of "urbanization of capital" (Harvey 1985).

Between 1954 and 1975, Marseille's demographic growth was particularly strong (+260,000 inhabitants), notably due to the arrival en masse of the *pied-noirs* from the former French North African colonies and the use of immigration from the Maghreb. Social housing complexes (medium and large) were built in all areas of the city, as were homes for sale. At the same time, the city was rapidly adapting to the car.

This change of both industrial and urban scale considerably altered the local economic equilibrium. The relocation of part of the port and industrial activities around the Étang de Berre lake contributed to the geographical breakdown of the "Marseille system" (Roncayolo 1996; Dell'Umbria 2006). At the same time, the key industrial areas hitherto dominated by family clans were now in the hands of major international groups (Unilever, Panzani or Beghin-Say). A "territorial disembedding" of the control over economic activity, and the prelude to future relocations of the production sites following those of companies' head offices (Zalio 1999) was also in process.

In terms of housing, the quantitative challenge was taken on at the cost of an increase in the socio-economic imbalances in the area (Roncayolo 1990). Two thirds of the social housing units built during the period were located in the northern part of the city. The social division of space was thus considerably reinforced. Moreover, the application of the principles of functionalist urbanism did not produce the rational organization of space that were envisaged. Under the effects of land and property speculation, all the potential building land opportunities (brownfield sites, agricultural land, *bastides* sold by their owners) were seized by investors and builders without any real overall urban plan. The result was a wide dispersion of built-up housing without the provision of local facilities and infrastructure.

With the industrial crisis of the 1970s, a period obscured by the development of the complex of Fos and by intense activity in terms of the "production of space," the decline of the local economy and production system accelerated (Garnier and Zimmerman 2007). New residents in the northern neighbourhoods were the most affected by this. The "residential deterioration zone" now extended beyond the historic centre of the town. The effect of spatial segregation was all the stronger because the centrifugal dynamics of residential mobility were amplified, with the departure of solvent households towards suburban housing developments.

At the same time, the labour market of the area expanded considerably and the city of Marseille was emptied of part of both its economic substance and its population to the benefit of the area around the *étang de Berre*,[12] and the countryside around Aix and even Aubagne (Langevin 2007). Between 1975 and 1999, the city lost 90,000 jobs (Donzel and Bresson 2007) and 111,000 inhabitants. By 1999, there were 798,000 inhabitants, whereas planners had been expecting 2 million by 2000.

A new change of scale: "metropolitanization without a metropolis"

Today, although the area of Marseille-Aix has not caught up in terms of metropolitanization, the phenomenon is on the way (Van Puymbroeck and Reynard 2010; Cusin 2014). The effects are being felt in Marseille itself. Since 1999, the city has regained both inhabitants and jobs. Its net migration rate has returned to being positive and its unemployment rate has fallen from 23.3% to 18.4% (in 2012). The northern districts of Marseille, where two urban tax-free zones have been created, are in a process of full economic reconstruction. But this positive development has not attenuated the social bipolarization of the city. The creation of jobs in the northern districts is of little benefit to their inhabitants, mainly because of their low level of qualifications (Langevin 2007).

More generally, the effects of metropolitanization on the economic development of Marseille are limited by the centrifugal movement of skilled jobs. The polarization of higher tertiary jobs is increasing in Aix-en-Provence and other municipalities in the Pays d'Aix with the development of technological enterprises, business services and research activities. A similar phenomenon can be observed in municipalities around the étang de Berre, which benefit from the development of business services and the aeronautical industry clusters of Istres and Marignane. The area of Aubagne-Gémenos-La Ciotat has begun to assert itself as a new hub in the high-tech field (Garnier and Zimmermann 2007; D'Apolito et al. 2012).

This strengthening of the economic polycentrism of the urban area has also resulted in significant centrifugal residential mobility which contributed strongly to the demographic boom in the municipalities of the Pays d'Aix (now over), the periphery of the étang de Berre and communities in the agglomeration of the Pays d'Aubagne and Salon-Etang de Berre-Durance. These dynamics of settlement reinforce the social division of the space between the central city and the rest of the urban area, which is now superimposed on the internal north/south division within Marseille. Thus, the Pays d'Aix, Cassis, La Ciotat, Aubagne and Gémenos have contributed to raising property prices in what INSEE defines as the "suburbs."

12. The port is now the 4th largest in Europe and the 3rd largest oil terminal in the world, but most of the tonnage is berthed in Fos.

Finally, contrary to what can be observed in Paris or Lyon, the less affluent groups have very little involvement in the peri-urbanization of the Marseille area.

Without a city-centre concentrating the higher metropolitan functions and benefiting from a positive image, the mobility of companies and households has reinforced the specificity of the urban area, in contrast to the "classic" model of the French city. In addition, the territorial development of the urban area has taken place in a context of political fragmentation and strong competition between intermunicipalities (Peraldi, Duport and Samson 2015). The metropolitanization of this vast urban complex is carried out according to a polycentric pattern with fragmented spaces, linked by the daily transport movements of the inhabitants, if not by a common governance and by strong economic complementarities (Morel 1999 and 2007).

Return to the centre: the successive failures of the policies of revival of historic districts

As has been seen, the devaluation of Marseille in terms of property prices with respect to the rest of the urban area is coupled with a historical opposition between, on the one hand, the sought-after southern districts and, on the other, the northern districts and the hyper-pauperized centre. The history of the repeated failures, since the 19th century, of strategies to revive the centre makes it possible to better understand what differentiates Marseille from cities that are part of a "classic" model of residential property prices.

After two failures during the first half of the 19th century, the Pereire brothers took over the project to rehabilitate the old town in 1862. To link the old and the new port (the quai de la Joliette wharf built in 1853), a breakthrough was achieved in the very heart of the old town. The Rue Imperiale thus created (known today as *Rue de la République*) was intended to serve as a starting point for the reconquest of the centre by the bourgeoisie. This pharaonic urban project triggered a real speculative fever. It led to the destruction of an important part of the historic and working class centre and gave Marseille a street of great architectural prestige (Dell'Umbria 2006). But the bourgeoisie, which had long since turned its back on the old city, were not tempted by the Haussmannian model (Roncayolo 1996; Zalio 1999), contrary to what could be observed in Lyon. The failure of the Haussmannian project led to a property crisis and a financial disaster that would permanently damage the city's finances. The Rue Imperiale was then inhabited by skilled workers and employees (Roncayolo 1990), before gradually becoming an impoverished district (Fournier and Mazzella 2004). The symbolic impact of a Haussmannisation that failed to break the dual centrality of Marseille would be strong and lasting.

At the turn of the 20th century, projects for the demolition and reconstruction of the central working-class neighbourhoods were revived. The city would be severely cut off from part of its urban heritage. The destruction of the neighbourhood behind the Bourse (district of La Blanquerie), begun in 1906, continued until the 1920s. In the absence of agreement within the municipality and insufficient financial resources, the project to build a "little Manhattan" would get no further than a set of plans, leaving the town centre as a wasteland for the next 50 years. Beginning in 1973, there was talk of building a business and administrative centre, a project that would fail due to the economic crisis of the 1970s.

The most recent episode put the Rue de la République once more at centre stage. In a context favourable to property speculation, the Haussmannian buildings were

bought and renovated in the 2000s by an American pension fund (Fournier and Mazzella 2004). But property development history repeated itself in this street. The sale of the apartments (one by one) to the middle and upper classes has not been a success because the Rue de la République was close to some of the poorest neighbourhoods in Marseille.

At the same time, a policy of upgrading the historic centre on a larger scale was implemented by the state, the region and the city. The objectives pursued were the development of tertiary activities, the improvement of the image of the city and the development of urban tourism. The state-led *Euroméditerranée* project that has been running since the end of the 1990s is the key element in the new strategy for urban redevelopment (Pinson 2009; Bertoncello and Dubois 2010). In addition to the establishment of a tertiary sector, it offers increased resources for the urban rehabilitation policy, which extends the many planned housing improvement developments in progress since the 1970s. Redevelopment also involves the construction of prestigious cultural facilities including museums (musée des Civilisations d'Europe et de la Méditerranée, Villa de la Méditerranée, musée des Beaux-Arts-Palais de Longchamp) and the cultural and recreation centre of Belle-de-Mai. The Joliette wharf is being redeveloped to accommodate a large shopping centre. Marseille, the European Capital of Culture in 2013, is now entering the era of urban marketing.

Despite the investments made, the residential component of this policy to enhance Marseille's appeal is still questionable. Gentrification processes are not observed in the central districts in a way that is comparable to those in Paris, Lyon, or many other French cities. Here, the classical model of gentrification according to which the middle classes will migrate "spontaneously" back to the reconquered city centre has not been validated. Similarly, the "rent gap" theory (Smith 1996) stumbles when it comes up against the reality of Marseille. In historic districts, there is indeed a significant gap between actual land rent and the potential rent corresponding to the "best possible use of land." But the "re-urbanization of capital," in the sense described by Harvey (1985), which associates public and private actors has not been enough to produce gentrification, which is either non-existent or very sporadic (Jourdan 2013).

Like the northern districts, the historic centre is still associated with immigration, insecurity and illegal trafficking (Peraldi, Duport and Samson 2015). Are these the only obstacles to gentrification? It is doubtful whether it is possible to compare the fate of Marseille with that of many large American cities. Indeed, before a period of "urban renaissance," these cities had experienced decades of economic decline, reduced public and private investment, ghettoization and rising crime (Beauregard 2006). However, Marseille has not experienced a similar decline, even though city centre property prices were among the lowest in French cities at the end of the 1990s. This leads to the conclusion that the most powerful obstacles to the gentrification of Marseille come from the socio-economic structure of the city. Since the metropolitanization of the area offers little benefit for Marseille, the proportion of managerial and higher intellectual occupations remains low compared to other centres in metropolitan areas. The socio-professional basis for gentrification is therefore lacking in the city. Following Chris Hamnett (1991), the existence of a "rent gap" is undoubtedly a necessary condition for gentrification insofar as it is likely to attract investors, developers and builders. But this is not a sufficient condition: the production of districts to be gentrified does not automatically create demand. Referring to the analysis carried out by Ley (1996), in the absence of significant development of

a "new cultural class" with a "disposition" for centrality and a distinctive lifestyle, gentrification does not occur. In fact, soaring prices in the centre during the 2000s (+ 210% for apartments between 1998 and 2007) resulted more from investors' speculative behaviour than from a real change in population dynamics (Boulay, Guerois, Le Goix 2011; Cusin 2013). The fate of the historic centre of Marseille shows that the symbolic and real value of places is built through cumulative historical processes, and is more difficult when it runs counter to them.

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Like other European cities, French cities are the heirs of a long history (Cattan, Pumain and Rozenblat 1999). Unlike American cities, they have not experienced a radical challenge to the political and economic primacy of their centres to the benefit of suburbs or peri-urban spaces. Despite the effects of centrifugal forces, centres remain dense spaces with strong urban identities and cultures (Le Galès 2011). Beyond these common structural features, French cities nevertheless constitute a world of diversity. This cannot be reduced to differences in the position of the urban hierarchy. To understand this, the political, economic and social characteristics that make what some authors call the "ordinary city" (Amin and Graham 1997; Robinson 2002) need to be examined. The notion of "ordinary city" is opposed to that of the "paradigmatic" city. It invites us not to focus solely on the "qualities" (strategic functions) and the difficulties (socio-spatial dualism) associated with the "global cities" which hold the upper hand in urban research. On the contrary, cities—and all cities regardless of their rank in the world hierarchy—should be understood through their historicity, by varying the scales (from the metropolitan area to the districts), by studying the complex interactions between their different components (spaces, social groups, political institutions, economic and social networks, etc.). Moreover, the capacity of a city to evolve depends not only on the resources needed to integrate it into globalised networks, but also on its social cohesion and the quality of life offered to its inhabitants.

From this point of view, understanding the city via its residential property markets is an heuristic approach. The study of residential property price structures in urban areas has served as a "revealer" of the differentiation of French cities that is apprehended here at the scale of urban systems. Far from being dominant, the "classical" centre–periphery model, often used as an implicit reference for French urban sociology, coexists with other models: "inverted," "valued-suburbs" or "mixed." By proposing two very different case studies (Lyon and Marseille), we have seen how an in-depth analysis of a socio-historical nature explains the formation of those housing price structures that are respectively "classical" and "inverted." Each of these structures is underpinned by particular forms of division, both social and functional, of space. The successive changes in their productive apparatus, actions by the state in terms of planning and development, municipal policies or the dynamics of settlement explain the specificity of the trajectories of these two cities. Each in its own way reveals the existence of *path dependency* phenomena: they have not stopped changing, but these changes have largely contributed more to deepening existing furrows than to creating new ones. It has been shown how general processes (industrialisation, urban planning, metropolitanisation) have brought about changes in the scale of the city, while at the same time producing differentiated effects on urban structures that are themselves differentiated.

This should lead us to think of "city models" not as a reflection of a supposedly stable state of urban structures, but in terms of dynamics and differentiated trajectories resulting from the interaction of multiple processes. From this point of view, French cities stand out strongly from American cities, or even British cities. They have greater inertia and benefit from greater stabilisation factors. The role of the State and local and regional authorities is a major factor in stabilisation, whether through employment and public investment, redistribution policies, the provision of public services or urban policies. French cities are thus less inegalitarian than American cities (and more generally than those in the English-speaking world), but also less subject to phenomena of massive decline linked to deindustrialisation or suburbanization. It can therefore be concluded that, far from being characterized by a process of convergence, the world of cities remains a world of diversity. This can be analyzed at two levels. The persistence of a "French model" appears if one compares it in particular with the American cities which inspire a large part of the urban studies literature. On the other hand, if we look at diversity within French cities, we see a plurality of models that differ not only in their place in the urban hierarchy, but also in their socio-spatial organization and their trajectory.

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