

# ECON 797 Urban Development Notes

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## Abstract

This document contains my class notes for the Urban Development class.

## 1 January 22

Two ideas:

1. Socio-spatial dialectic (Edward Soja)

Social	Spatial
Economic	
Political	
Cultural	

Social -> Determines spatial structure, which then also determines social structure

Spatial -> Social is undertheorized (ex: See Chetty)

Theoretical Approaches (with respect to socio/spatial causation):

Centrality of Social Causation/Centrality of Spatial Causation

	Yes	No
<b>Yes</b>	Lefebvre, Soja, Massey	Castells, Most social scientists
<b>No</b>	Simmel Chicago School of Sociology	Neoclassical Economists

### 1.1 Intro: Perspectives in the Literature

Rapid physical urbanization -> Rapid urbanization of inequality; i.e., a *movement* of inequality from rural to urban spaces.

**Readings: Soja & Engels.** *Read from a spatial perspective (in addition to class)*

Questions:

1. *What is the Socio-Spatial Dialectic?*
2. *How do we think about Spatial Causation?*
3. *How do Patterns of Land Ownership determine the Right to the City?*

## 2 January 24

1. Socio-spatial dialectic
2. “Spatial Turn”

### 2.1 Spatial Turn

#### 2.1.1 Geo-History

Spatial Configuration of the world/regional economy (space as an analytical category)

#### 2.1.2 City-spaces

#### 2.1.3 Scaling/Re-scaling

ex: Local -> city -> city-region -> Provincial -> National -> Supra-National  
-> Global

Consider the *dynamism* surrounding scales wrt history

#### 2.1.4 Soja’s Categories

First space -> Perceived space: Material, physical space

Second -> Conceived: Space as reflected by the human brain

Third -> Lived reality

First and second dialectically produce the biography of the city

### 2.1.5 Spatial Specificity of Urbanism

1. Built environment (as opposed to natural environment) with complex boundaries
2. Focus on space and its complexity rather than just time
3. Micro vs. Macro scales

### 2.1.6 Synekism

**Synekimism:** A set of city-specific characteristics of cities that lead to innovation, growth, and development; the spatial structure of the city influences the social (“endogenous spark” – Jane Jacobs)

Otherwise known as: *agglomeration economies*

Economic reflexivity is driven by:

1. Competitive Learning
2. Collaborative Learning

### 2.1.7 City-Regions

1. Multi-Nodality
2. Hierarchical relations among nodes
3. Multiple combinations of densities, concentricities
4. Occupational Diversity and agglomerations

## 3 January 29

### 3.1 Story of Urban Change

1. First Urban Revolution: Urban centers *preceded* agricultural settlement (Jacobs)
2. Second UR: Sumeria, emergence of urban governance and writing -> emergence of the city-state. From this class, hierarchy, and surplus emerges. City becomes the *destination* of surplus, but do not produce surplus themselves. The urban form is dictated by the form of extraction of surplus from the “countryside.”

3. Third UR: Industrial Capitalism/Modernity/Liberal Democracy; Manchester & Chicago. They were \* Greenfield sites - new development not constrained by old \* City subsumed by the state – inversion of the city-state \* Cities become *producers* of surplus \* Discipline– labor discipline (micro), spatial control/urban planning (macro)
4. Post-1960s: Urban Decay/Renewal

## 3.2 On Modernity

Modernity vs. Modernization vs. Modernism

Modernity: A living condition under which societies are/were organized.

1. Disenchantment
2. Secularism
3. Rationalism/Scientism
4. Human intentionality - we intentionally create society

Modernity: Self-reflexivity; logic of skepticism Instrumental reason: Things happen for a reason “All that is solid melts into air” – Constant change **Under all of this complexity is simplicity**

## 3.3 Capitalism

## 3.4 Democracy

Usually liberal movements, but sometimes transformed into radical socialist projects -> a direct outgrowth of modernity in the state

**For Thursday:** Manchester School (Engels), Chicago School (Soja), Castells & Harvey

# 4 February 5

## 4.1 The Chicago School

Became amenable to neoclassical methods of urban analysis– understanding came within a very narrow paradigm. In response to critiques from outside (e.g. Goffman, 2nd-generation sociologists), but also changes within the cities themselves

#### 4.1.1 Urban Crisis

Theories of urban crisis: Crotty & Boddy, Bowles & Gintis, Lefebvre

##### **Manuel Castells:**

Moved urban sociology/geography towards Marx.

Fundamental approach: Cities are sites of consumption; social struggle occurs over consumption, rather than production. No need to theorize space.

##### **David Harvey:**

Began as positivist, attacked by radical geographers at Johns Hopkins. (read: *Social Justice and the City*)

Ideas:

1. The normal function of urban space reifies regressive distributions (i.e., urban capitalism produces inequality). Here, the main engine is capitalism rather than space (social rather than spatial).
2. 3 levels: Land markets, Labor markets, Financial markets, all play role in restructuring urban space.
3. Urban plans are always a physical expression of class power
4. The Urban Process -> acts as a “spatial fix” for capitalist crisis. ex: re-construction of Paris by Hausmann was a response to the crisis of the city.

Thus, urban space has a fluid form– rather than gradually developing solidity, it is constantly re-forming according to the dictates of capital.

#### 4.1.2 Lefebvre and Simmel

Simmel: What happens to the individual? How does the urban relationship affect human behavior? What is the mental attitude of people towards one another?

An individual gets both enriched and impoverished in the metropolis

## 5 February 7

### **Simmel**

Individual atrophy → produces:

1. Freedom
2. Loneliness

3. Self-distantiation →each individual wishes to appear different from the other →conflict among individuals replaces the struggle against nature

Is Simmel a spatial determinist? This was picked up by the Chicagoists.

### **Lefebvre**

The “Urban Revolution:” the onset of urbanization separate from industry is a separate phase of capitalism; the “globalization of urbanization.”

“The Urban” is not:

- the city → cities are not urban in the historical sense
- Urbanism vs. urban society → Urbanism is an ideology (a representation of the urban)
- Marxists are wrong: space is not part of the superstructure; it is part of the base (or *is* the base); **The Urban is not *simply* a product of capitalism**

Phases of history: Agrarian → Industrial → Urban

### **Features of the urban**

1. Global → urbanization is a global phenomenon
2. Reason and nature are mixed differently
3. “Complexification”
4. Internal contradictions
5. Isotopy, heterotopy, utopias
6. Dynamism; movement towards utopia
7. Liberatory; opposes time-space-fixing strategies of the state
8. Can’t be understood through positivism/empricism/scientism; requires epistemology of its own

## **6 February 12**

### **6.1 The Chicago School**

1. Context: City and University of Chicago
2. Scholars, environment, city;
  - a. Euro-American background, European traditions
  - b. Philosophical pragmatism (e. g. John Dewey, Richard Rorty) Progressivism Botany/Ecology German sociology, Anti-Marxism (maybe?)

### 6.1.1 Exploring City

1. Social Surveys
2. Ethnography: Field research
3. Mapping (multiple levels [DuBois])
4. Early statistical research

Representations: Maps, studies of localities, institutions, macro-city level analyses (spatial)

### 6.1.2 Paradigm

Known as the *ecological* paradigm

Ecology	Social worlds/institutions
Economic Rationality	Behavior

→ City

### 6.1.3 Ecology

Plant Ecology vs. City Ecology

#### similarities:

1. Concentric Evolution within geographic constraints
2. Locations with highest value will be filled by their best use (survival of the fittest) → Von Thunen model
3. Inner zones extending outward: Metabolism/Anabolism (organization)/Catabolism (disorganization)
4. Centralization - Decentralization
5. Competition & Conflict

#### differences

1. Purpose (plants don't have it)
2. Division of Labor
3. Mobility (mobility) → Expansion and Metabolism

## 7 February 14 - Chicago School

### 7.1 Social Worlds

“Natural Areas”:

- Neighborhood
- Ghetto
- Slum

Natural worlds investigated through ethnography. Since there is no class analysis, social organization is seen as purely ecological.

Mobility: Changes in neighborhoods over time, caused(exogenously) by technology, transportation, immigration, competition, conflict, community, succession, “invasion”

#### Life cycles

Communities: Simple or Complex

The creation of social worlds by the chicao school *themselves* altered the social worlds they analyzed e.g. redlining

### 7.2 Behavior

What determines individual behavior:

1. Space creates behavior (Simmel, the “Marginal Man”) (i.e., Ecology determines social worlds and behavior)
2. Belonging to voluntary associations (political parties, fraternal/civil society organizations, etc., church)
3. Social Control

### 7.3 Last words on the Chicago School

CS Schematic:

$$Ecology \rightarrow SocialWorlds$$
$$\rightarrow Behavior$$

Ecology: Biological determinism and economic determinism dominate



Social worlds: are they really social? Does Social determine ecology?

Behavior: Where is agency? does agency matter?

Urban studies division: Ecology vs. Political Economy

## 8 February 21 - Neoclassical school

### 8.1 Brueckner

Issues:

1. Production and Retail

Economies of scale: arise from increasing within-firm division of labor

Economies of agglomeration:

a. pecuniary: costs of inputs decrease (e.g. search costs, shipping costs)

b. technological: 1) spillover effects of skill and technology, and 2) inter-industry spillover

2. Spatial Structure

CBD determines the spatial structure of the entire city

Critiques:

What happens with out-of-equilibrium behavior?

### 8.2 Jacobs

Urban primacy: Urban settlements emerged historically prior to agricultural, and directed their development

## 9 February 26 - Marxian School

Class monopoly rents?

### 9.1 Neil Brenner

#### Critical Theory

1. "Critical" -> Marx, Frankfurt School
2. Four "postulates"

- a. Is a theory
  - i. Critical theory is not a call to action
  - ii. Operates at the highest level of abstraction (i.e., it is general)
  - iii. It is not positivist; it generates its own perception of the world
- b. Reflexive
  - i. It views itself as within a fractured social totality
- c. Critique of instrumental rationality
  - i. Do not hold to any determining logic (i.e. of the market) in which the means themselves produce certain kinds of ends
- d. Disjuncture between actual and possible
  - i. Towards the creation of better worlds

#### *Urban Critical Theory*

1. Lefebvre's Urban Revolution has happened – the world is urban
2. Globalization of connections across urban space
3. All scales matter- urban processes depend on national, global processes, etc.

## **9.2 David Harvey – The Urban Process under Capitalism**

Question: What is the interaction between capitalism and cities?

Physiocrats: Land is the only source of value

### **Competition between Cities for Command and Control Functions**

Saskia Sassen

Fundamental tension within urban capitalism is:

*The logic of capital accumulation produces fixities (the built environment), but as soon as the built environment comes into existence, they become barriers to the circulation of capital*

Cutting down turnover time drives the engine of capital accumulation.

## **10 February 28 - Marxian School Continued**

### **10.1 David Harvey**

#### **10.1.1 Accumulation (structure)**

Circuits of Capital

1. Primary

- One period:  $M-C-C'-M'$
- Normally,  $M' > M$ . If so, all is well.
- Primary production of space: factories have to be built, workers need to be housed, etc., which is fundamentally dependent on technology.
- Primary sector can undergo periodic **overaccumulation crises**:
  - a. overproduction
  - b. profitability
  - c. disproportionality
  - d. profit squeeze
- Primary sector can also undergo crises of surplus capital and surplus labor

## 2. Secondary

- Longer term projects (multiple production periods)
- Surplus capital tends to leave primary sector to go to secondary
- Consumers accumulate consumption funds (e.g. pension funds, savings); capitalists accumulate investment savings (?)
- Usually built environments (e.g. residential, factories, infrastructure)
- Low rate of return, very long turnover time
- arises due to lack of immediate profitability in primary circuit
- Crises in secondary circuit:
  - a. Devaluation of built environment
  - b. Moral depreciation: Production technique becomes obsolete

## 3. Tertiary

- Research & Development: investments in science and engineering
- Capabilities (a la Sen): education and health
- Ideology (e.g. homeownership culture)

Crises:

1. **Partial Crisis** which can be (relatively) easily dealt with through market or state means
2. **Switching Crisis** in which the solution to the crisis is to exit a particular market
3. **Global Crisis** where *everything* is fucked up, all the time, forever

Are building cycles in the built environment the result of crises?

### 10.1.2 Class struggle (agency)

Direct (in the workplace) vs. Indirect (over e.g. redistribution) class struggle -> bargaining power!

### Class Monopoly Rents

How does the materiality of the post-industrial city work?

Is post-industrial urban capitalism sustainable?

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**Rent:** Transfer payment accrued to owner of some resource; A slice of produced surplus value

from Ricardo: absolute rent emerges from scarcity

Rent helps to allocate “natural” resources

Forms of rent:

1. Differential rent: rent accrued based on differential productivity
2. Absolute rent: By virtue of owning any piece of land, the owner is entitled to its productivity, no matter how shitty it is
3. Monopoly rent: spatial rent created through power (e.g. state, class power). Arises from:
  - a. ownership
  - b. power

Class monopoly rent: raises the *absolute rent* that can be extracted

1. Resource units: Land plus “relatively permanent” components and improvements that allow for greater extraction of surplus value.
2. Only willing to dispose of resource units in exchange for some portion of surplus
3. Able to get it due to class power

Q: Why does the capitalist pay rent to the landlord?

A: because free markets in land (i.e. private ownership) will naturally lead to this outcome

## 11 March 5

### 11.1 Class-Monopoly Rent

Monopoly rent: derives from special characteristics of land and the *power* to keep the price over the value of the commodity.

vs. Absolute rent, which is below power

Permanent improvements - Power-biased technical change??? e.g. improving s.t. you are no longer rent controlled

Two varieties:

1. Landlord-tenant monopoly rent
2. Speculator-developer

How do landlords become speculators?

Production produces objective classes; consumption produces *subjective* classes  
-> Financial capital unifies them

## 11.2 Castells

Urban -> Social Production of Spatial Forms

What happens when urbanization > industrialization? This produces the informal sector (through rural-urban migration).

Spatial forms constituted by structure and agency

Castells: City is the site of social reproduction (reproduction of labor-power)

Harvey: City is the site of production & accumulation

Read: Post-colonial scholars

## 12 March 7

### 12.1 Massey

All geographies are gendered, and gender is constitutive of social categories.

Space-time conception:

- In response to Laclau (and others e.g. Patnaik):
  1. The view of space as static is depoliticized
  2. The view of space as chaotic is not useful for politics (Jameson)
  3. *Time* represents: Progress, change, reason, disruption; time imposes a logical structure on the stages of society; time is masculine, space is feminine.

Massey: The world has space, and time, and both are *constitutive of each other*.  
“ALL DUALISMS ARE WRONG”

Critique of Cartesian categories: critique of “categories-in-themselves”

“Dynamic simultaneity” of various levels.

Gender relations that vary across space

immanence vs. transcendence (wat)

Particular gender relations lead to particular kinds of economic development

1. North England: (mining) workers have no control over workplace, but exercised dictatorial control over the household
2. Lancashire: Women and children worked in the mills (major contributors to industrial revolution); had a larger degree of household freedom
3. Midlands: Agricultural (seasonal) employment, but also majority of household work -> gendered hierarchy of agricultural labor
4. London: Enclosure (home production) was non-threatening as it was located in the home, but they were basically sweatshops -> fell prey to competition from developing world

4 different geographies, 4 different patriarchies

## 12.2 Mcdowell

Relations production and reproduction: Class, Gender, and Space-time

Housing policies of England w.r.t reproduction -> A historical shift in land ownership?

## 13 March 21 - Neo-Gramscian frameworks, etc.

- Non-capital will remain even after capitalists become dominant

### 13.1 Postcoloniality and the Urban

READ ROY

- Post-colonial difference: They seem to be different from cities within advanced capitalism

Roy: There is no universal theory of cities

### 13.2 George Lin

a. Demographic argument:

1. pre-industrial phase: high fertility, high mortality
2. post-industrial: low fertility, low mortality

Did this happen? In Asian cities, there was instead a population *boom*

b. Economic argument:

- Movement from agriculture to non-agriculture
- cities become the engine of growth
- agricultural sector and productivity levels tend to grow slowly; agricultural goods tend to be non-elastic

Problem: 1) developing cities skipped to service sector, 2) “over-urbanization”

c. Social Argument:

???

Lin’s 5 points:

1. Are city regions *generative* or *parasitical*? Both. Cities are symptoms of the wider social system -> space is subordinate to the social
2. Dualism: modern vs. tradition, formal vs. informal
3. Trans-national capital: There is an emergence of world-cities
4. Socialism: Urbanization rates remained slow in socialist countries.

### 13.3 Ananya Roy

1. Calling for a “worlding” of cities:

- a. Start with local cities and try to construct the network; transnational urbanism, disjunctive spaces

2. Emphasize the production of *global* space

- Urban revanchism: Movement of elites back to the city (gentrification)
- Informality, within- and without- state -> sets up the contours of primitive accumulation

3. Dynamics of “exurbanity”/extraterritoriality (cf Soja)

- Exurban geographies changed focus to city-regions
- diaspora communities

“Provincialize” European development

Dominant models do not have politics in them – bring politics back into political economy

The logic of democracy is not taken into account – urban politics becomes “managerial localism.”

revitalization of “area studies”: “process geographies” vs “trait geographies” -> study as a world-system

“strategic essentialisms” ->

Overcoming the “tyranny of time,” privileging space. Is there any logic of transformation?

Concrete universal vs. empty universal -> Area studies?

## 14 March 26 Methodologies

### 14.1 Arguments in favor of Quantitative approach:

1. Representativeness
2. Generalizability
3. Precision
4. Circumscription - attribute quantitative variables to phenomena
5. Data mining
6. Easier Interpretation (?)
7. Causality??

### 14.2 Arguments against

1. What is the theory?
2. Can data exist without theory? (i.e., how do we know *what* data is appropriate to collect?)
3. Precision vs. Truth
4. Dialectics
5. Mechanisms
6. Importance of outliers
7. Space-time complexity
8. Structural Issues - What is the relationship between data and... anything?

i.e. no mapping from the mathematical world to the “real” world

### 14.3 The Ethnographic Method

1. Description of social practice created by dialectic between ethnographer and studied population



What are the categories? What do they come from?

Fieldwork -> categories -> process categories according to theory -> Generation of Knowledge

## 15 March 28 GIS Approaches

Empiricism vs. Empirical work

Empiricism: The only accurate picture of the world comes from sensory perception

“Poverty of Economics” Banerjee & Duflo

**Models:** empirical vs theoretical

Why not localized data?

1. Political reasons
2. Ethical reasons

What does GIS offer?

1. Urban Structure
2. Produces valuable understanding in conjunction with other knowledge

Baud et. al -

Multidimensional poverty index

Development of a spatial metric using census data