Chapter 7

POSTSUBURBAN SPRAWL IN EUROPEAN CITIES: CHALLENGES FOR EUROPEAN URBAN POLICY AND RESEARCH IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Axel Borsdorf

Institute of Geography, University of Innsbruck,
Innsbruck, Austria

1. FROM CENTRAL CITIES TO URBAN CRATERS? FROM "LAND"SCAPE TO "URBAN"SCAPE?

"Where are the Innsbrucker's?" tourists may ask themselves visiting the town centre of the Tyrolean capital. Among the thousands of people crowding the seven hectars the old city is occupying there are hardly some locals. Italian, French, English, Japanese, Spanish are the languages talken, and when the German language is used it is mostly High-German, not the local Tyrolean dialect. This phenomenon may be regarded as a consequence of the rise of city-tourism, to be observed in most European cities. It is not very clear to the tourists that in some cases – like in Innsbruck – they are visiting "living museums". Without the visitors a lot of city centres would appear dead.

The question, where the Innsbrucker's are is strongly linked with the question why they should visit the city centre. The retail trade, once a powerful infrastructure of the central areas, moved out to peripherical locations. Some of the remaining shops belong to chains to be found in the outside locations with an identical offer and identical prices. And the "anchor stores" fled their central establishments years ago and fill the malls and shopping centres.

Not only retail trade, even more functions left the city centres, followed by large parts of the urban population. Since three decades most German and Austrian cities are characterised by a remarkable loss of citizens. Between 1991 and 2001 Innsbruck for example lost about 10 % of its population. Much higher loss rates are to be observed in the new Federal States of Germany, where the process of urban shrinking and the rise of so-called "urban craters" is regarded to be an alarming result of urban out-migration, the loss of urban functions, and the powerful competition of peripherical locations.

In contrast to stagnation and decline in the traditional (urban) foci of the European spatial structure the urban "outskirts" are developing very dynamic. Most European cities are circled by a "Speckgürtel" (bacon ribbon) – a belt of wealthy communes; wealthy because of the high standing equipment with retail trade, commerce, industrial sites or education and health infrastructure. New installations in the sectors of trade, industry, research, education and leisure even look for more peripherical locations in areas which until recently could be characterised as totally rural. Open landscapes were newly shaped, "land"-structures replaced by "urban" elements. This motivated the Swiss authors EISINGER a. SCHNEIDER (2003) to define the new structure as "urbanscape", replacing the former "landscape". SIEVERTS (1999) introduced the term of "Zwischenstadt", thus stimulating the scientific discussion. DUBOIS-TAINE (2004) in four volumes was more modest with "outskirts", replacing her former term of "ville émergente" (PIRON a. DUBOIS-TAINE 1998), BACCINI-OSWALD (1998) called it "Netzstadt" (network city), and recently the German authors ARING (2001), PRIEBS (2001) and BORSDORF (2005) use the term "Postsuburbia", created by KLING, OLIN a. POSTER in 1991.

In this paper, too, "postsuburbia" will be taken to characterise the new structures at the edge of the traditional agglomerations, functionally almost independent from the city centres, forming a highly diverse patchwork of different functions, structures and styles. The term characterises also a paradigmatic shift in urban shape and structure. The town of the 20th century was structured in a gravitate sense, a functional and economical slope form centre to periphery. To demonstrate this structure the disciplines that deal with the territory (geography, spatial economy, town planning, architecture, sociology, history) formed models that place the city in the centre. This approach establishes a clear distinction between an urban centre and a peripheral and dependent countryside. The German and Austrian model of "urban regions", the French "agglomeration" and even the British "conurbation" were reflecting this gravitate structure, defining concentric rings of density, value, attractiveness and networking. Suburbia in this time was the zone of living quarters, dependent from and complementary to the city centre.

Since the city of the early 19th century, whose perimeter still had a clear definition through a straight form and the control of its expansion, and which remained strongly related to the countryside (so-called urban-rural dichotomy), the urban growth expanded into suburbia, the territory which becomes more and more complex, uncontrolled and vague. In the 20th century the spatial fusion of surrounding minor centres with the major cities and their suburban zones is taking place by interaction and mutual growth.

In the last decades both tendencies overlap, inducing conversely forces: from centripetal to centrifugal, the "in" becomes "out". The dynamics of transformation and the shape of appearance of this intermediate space - while staying in interaction with cities - developed an undeniable autonomy: it is a new urban category. In its spatial interlacing, the major cities maintain their role of cultural cores, but their polarising force is weakened. A new spatial pattern, a patchwork formed by diverse and specialised spatial units with some urbanity, is replacing the old hierarchies.

The spatial system between city and countryside is no longer structured in a modern, rational way. Randomness and diversity are characteristics not only of post modernity, but of postsuburbia as well. Fig. 1 demonstrates the change from the urban-rural dichotomy of the 19th century to the urban-rural continuum of the 20th century and at last stage the shift towards the urban-rural-compound we are experiencing at the beginning of the 21st century.
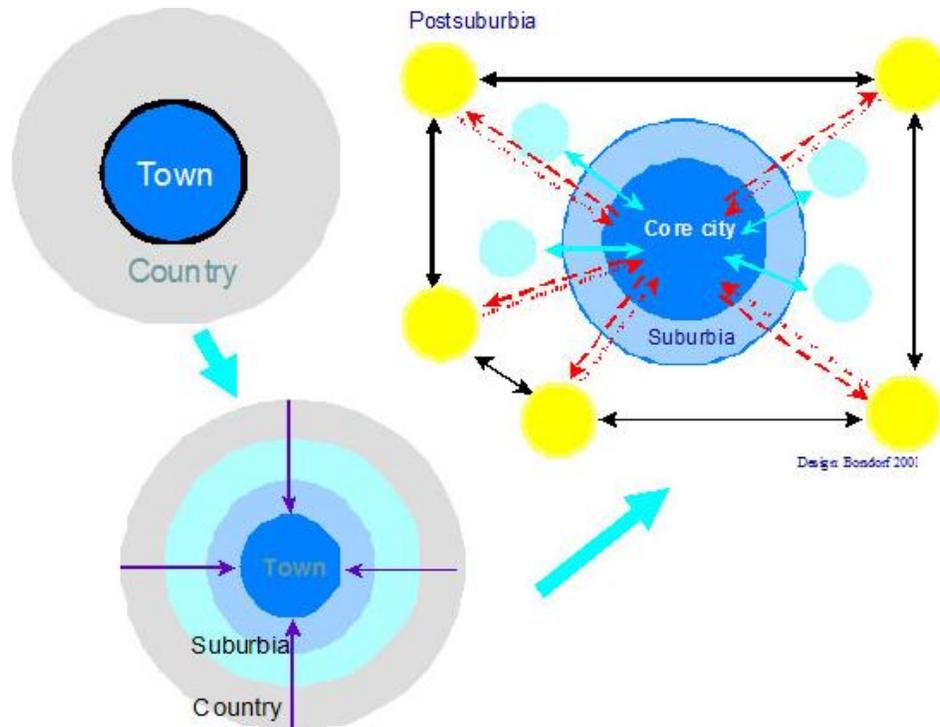
Source: Borsdorf 2004.

Figure 1. From urban dichotomy and the urban-rural continuum to a new urban-rural compound.

Is the traditional European city a phase-out model? Are we experiencing another "global change" phenomenon, not only "global warming", but also urban-rural change under globalising conditions? The following paper will not formulate answers, but it will address open questions, define needs for research and propose Europe wide interdisciplinary research programmes, similar to the international global change attempts to analyse the phenomenon, identify the drivers, and develop planning and steering strategies in order to avoid risks and to strengthen the spatial system.

2. THE DYNAMICS OF SPATIAL RESTRUCTURING

2.1. Models of Urban Structure

Since Hippodamus designed the city of Milet some 400 years before Christ, architects, planners and geographers tried to form and structure the urban space. They did it in different ways: Describing the urban shape, as the Chicago school of Social Ecology did with its models, or drawing models for shaping the city, following a specific idea. Pekka Lahti's attempt to compare some of these models demonstrates in Fig. 2 the broad variety of these visions. Linear city, garden city, finger plans and Hillebrecht's regional town are planning models, which are influenced urbanism in different regions of the world during the last century. The models of market areas and land values – and to a certain degree the model of

fractalisation as well, are descriptive, whereas the central place pattern, although designed as a descriptive model, later became a concept for regional planning and infrastructure location. At least the world wide visions show the global city network in different variations.
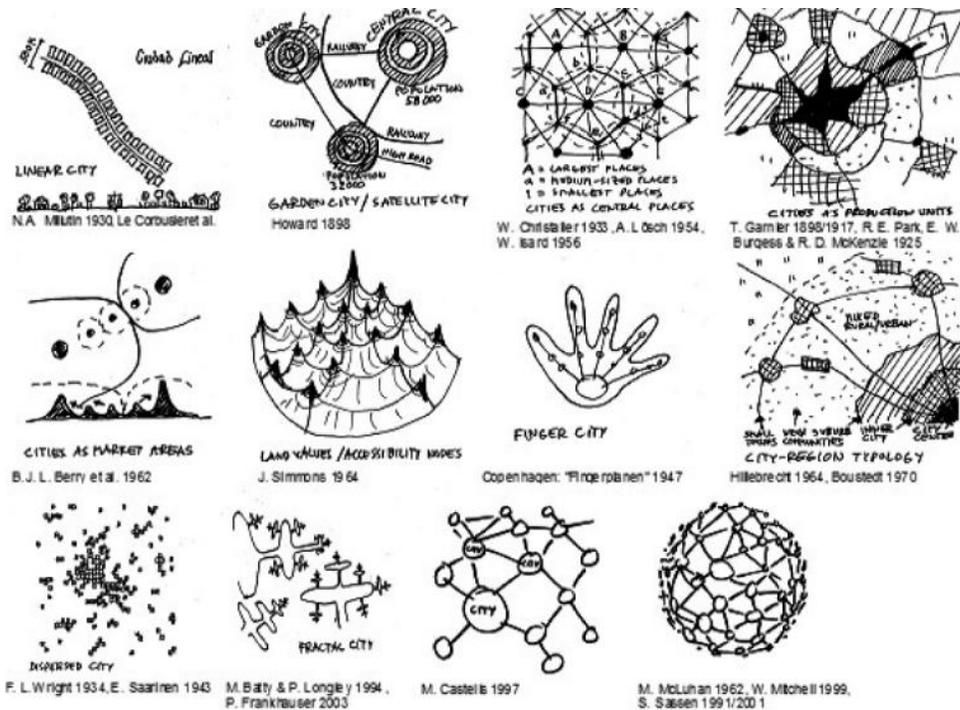
Source: Lahti 2004.

Figure 2. Models of urban structure.

It is obvious that most models of urban space in Fig. 2 deal with the attempt to describe and even canalize urban sprawl. Urban expansion on a local, regional, national or even global scale seems to be one of the most challenging spatial developments, worth to analyse, describe, explain, evaluate and to reflect on. However, urban sprawl may favour the importance of the core city, but in most cases processes of decentralised concentration of new activities or (infra)structures minder indirectly the importance of the town centre as the real "central place". This means that urban development in the 20th century was necessarily leading to a certain and relative decline of the central city districts, but it was only in the last decades of this century that first negative results became visible and gained the attention of many politicians and citizens. Thus the decline of the centres and the rise of suburbia and postsuburbia have to be discussed now.

2.2. The Decline of the Central Town and the Emergence of Urban Craters

In Europe urban centres showed an accelerated growth, beginning in the middle of the 19th century and leading up to the first post Second World War decade. In some continents like Africa and some regions of Asia urban growth is still continuing, whereas in Latin

America, which had remarkable growth rates up to the 1980s, polarisation reversal started, too, and most mega-cities are growing with rates below the national average (BORSDORF 2004). In Europe this process started in the 1960s, when the improvement of public transport and the rise of car ownership allowed a growing share of inhabitants to escape the crowed core districts and to settle on "the green meadow" of the new suburbs. Since then, not only the very central districts, but in the course of the process even the administrative units of the towns themselves started to decline.

Nowadays cities are shrinking nearly everywhere: whether in the USA, Great Britain or Belgium, whether in Finland, Italy, or Germany; the traditional understanding of the city and urban development is being put in question. A massive decrease of population and job losses are shaking urban quarters, towns, cities and regions. The enlargement process of the European Union goes ahead with a rising heterogeneity between the city regions. While for instance, some bigger and economic powerful urban agglomerations still keep growing due to internal and international migration processes taking place, many urban regions within Europe are in strong decline due to out-migration and demographic reduction.

The dramatic development in East Germany since 1989, which has resulted in over a million vacant flats and houses, the abandonment of innumerable industrial sites and the collapse of social and cultural institutions, are turning out to become a general pattern even in highly developed welfare-states. The massive appearance of "urban craters", defined as spaces with a former use, which under the current social and demographic conditions and the market economy cannot be redesigned for a new destination.

The zones of shrinkage in which cities, but in some cases even whole regions are losing millions of people and suffering high unemployment are still not sufficiently analysed, and social, economic and spatial sciences have not yet sufficiently focussed their attention to this problem as they are still orientated towards the other coin of the medal, the growing megacities and agglomerations. Post-Fordism and globalisation seem to produce quite different patterns, and the fact of growth in some parts does not disagree with the fact of shrinking in other part. Polarisation and fragmentation seem to be characteristics of spatial dynamics under the rule of globalisation.

The forecast falls in the populations of numerous countries will aggravate this polarisation over the next few decades. Shrinking cities conflict with the image of the emerging city: an agglomeration characterised by accelerated economic and demographic growth. Shrinking cities are provoking efforts to rethink both traditional ideas of the European city and the future development of urban environments (Kabisch 2007). On the other hand new re-urbanisation tendencies may be regarded as a reaction to those tendencies (STEINFÜHRER ET AL. 2008; HAASE ET AL. 2006, 2008).

Within Europe, demographic transformations and migration processes cause a rising number of urban areas with a decreasing demand not only on housing space necessities but also tertiary activities. This demographic reduction implies a clear break with the economic model of incrementalism such as with the model of the European city and state actuation, based on the growth of the urban machine and the possibilities to re-distribute the surplus of growth. Within societies which are based on the demand of a growth of the economic output, discussion about decreasing urban societies is still untypical. The challenge offered by the proliferation of urban craters and the decrease of urban agglomerations, will be one of the basic topics of urban investigation and intervention in the next years due to the mere demography of the European countries.

On the other hand cities and in special their central locations are the destination of new migration processes. Highly flexible and mobile migrants are coming to Europe with migration plans clearly different from former times. In order to face this phenomenon, central city areas are re-valuated in many ways within these changing social contexts. Inclusion and exclusion processes follow new guidelines. By government intervention in central areas, the re-organization is guided regarding the actual ethnic diversity. Main problems to be solved are ethnic diversity and the requirements for urban policies, the integration of different ethnic groups in the local economy and society, the finding of innovative strategies for a mutual benefit within ethnic diverse neighbourhoods and innovative perspectives for urban planning in ethnic diverse neighbourhoods.

The city region development of the last fifteen years has been marked by a stronger differentiation of suburban areas with the subsequent sprawl of CBD functions also outside the compact city. In this way, a new fringe including former rural areas surged: Leisure oriented and space-intensive installations were located in peripheral locations. The factual and used city regions grew substantially and while transportation systems improved. Developments such as urban theme parks, peri-urbanisation, post-suburbanisation, following a space intensive and not sustainable model of urban expansion, are challenging the traditionally compact European city model.

2.3. The Rise of Suburbia

All over Europe suburbanisation started not earlier than with the installation of mass-transport systems. The horse railway, the railway and the tram acted as the initial drivers of the sprawl. Many authors have demonstrated how the radius of suburban quarters was dependent to the speed of these transport systems. Later on, in the middle of the 20th century urban development plans were often orientated to the axes of public transport. The model of decentralised concentration, of the "Regional Town" (Regionalstadt) in Germany, the finger plan in Copenhagen or the Randstad Holland based on the pattern of the public and mostly rail-orientated transport system.

Thus suburbanisation meant commuting. The monofunctional living quarters, combined as well with the city centres as with the industrial quarters by effective transportation, were characterised by a small rate of daily population and a high degree of night population. In the 1960s "Green widows", spending the day alone at home and waiting for their working husbands, were addressed as a main problem of suburbia. When the economic system allowed the integration of more female working power, the so-called "key-children" became the next problem of suburbia. These urban sectors, the living quarters of young families, characterised by sterile architecture and a certain lack of attractive infrastructure suffered by their bad image and were thought to be the main reason for the "inhospitality of our cities" (MITSCHERLICH 1968).

However, never again urban construction was as effective as in these decades after Second World War. The highest population growth rates ever registered in the different rings of urban systems were to be observed in these years in the suburban belt. But today many of these quarters suffer problems like decay, vandalism, criminality and a remarkable lack of identification of the inhabitants with their domain. It does not surprise, that in Eastern Europe, where prefabricated and standardised slab-construction buildings were constructed in a very

sterile way these quarters are the main source of emigration and many apartments or even complete buildings are vacant. Shrinking cities – this certificate characterises not only the city centres, but also the suburban belt in Eastern Germany and some other countries of the former Eastern Block.

2.4. The Rise of Post-Suburbia

However, it was not the missing attractiveness of suburbia, which stimulated new structures in the urban-rural fabric, but the rise of post-modernism, post-fordism, the creation of and demand for new lifestyles and the ecological problems that more and more infected the core cities. With the mass motorisation of the citizens the mobility increased enormously, and when the first shopping centres and malls were located in the very outskirts of the cities (in the late 1960s) a new quality of urban sprawl was reached.
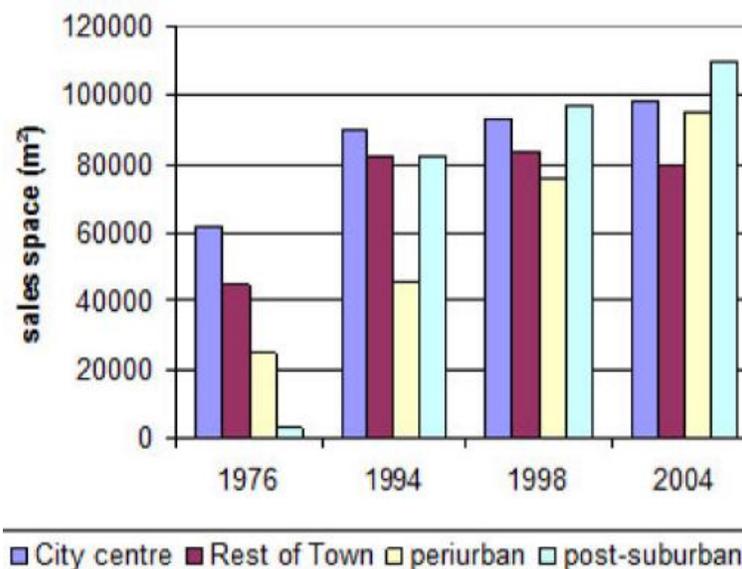
Data source: Innsbruck trade monitoring system (Borsdorf).

Figure 3. Development of retail trade in the Innsbruck region 1976-2004.

The development of the retail trade sector may demonstrate an important part of this process. Innsbruck, the regional capital of the Austrian Federal State Tyrol, with its 113.000 inhabitants (2001) is a good example for locational trends of retail trade. 1976 the traditional central place pattern was still clearly visible: The predominance of the city core and a decline of sales space from the city centre towards the suburban and periurban quarters were clearly visible. However in 1976 the first Austrian shopping centre (dez) was already working since six years and gave new impulses to the outskirts.

Until 1994 retail trade in Innsbruck grew quite dynamically. Not only the central quarters but also the urban and suburban sub centres gained importance. However, the highest increase was visible in the suburbia, specifically in the communities of Rum and Völs, which only then changed its structure from the characteristics of suburbia to post-suburbia.

Thus Innsbruck, although just a medium sized town, is a quite good example for the importance of retail trade development in the process of post-suburbanisation. However, there are much more characteristics which made post-suburbia different from the former suburbia. The independence and emancipation of the outskirts depends on commercial activities in many sectors: New office units in the tertiary sector, business centres, technopolises, industrial estates, leisure centres, urban entertainment poles, campus universities, airport related activities, logistics, and open air sport and wellness facilities, all these activities not concentrated but fragmented and giving each district or community in the outskirts an own profile. A complete patchwork of functionality, organised in a polynuclear way is the predominant structure. People live in post-suburbia, they work there and they organise their consumptions there.

These groups show a quite different demographic and socio-economic profile than the population of suburbia. People of all age groups, wealthier citizens, singles, and businessmen tend to live in the new post-suburbia, where they find all offers allowing them different life-styles: golf, tennis, trend-sports, jogging and Nordic walking, off-road activities and much more. The distance to the city centre is no more a problem for them, as there are only few trips to the centre necessary during the year.
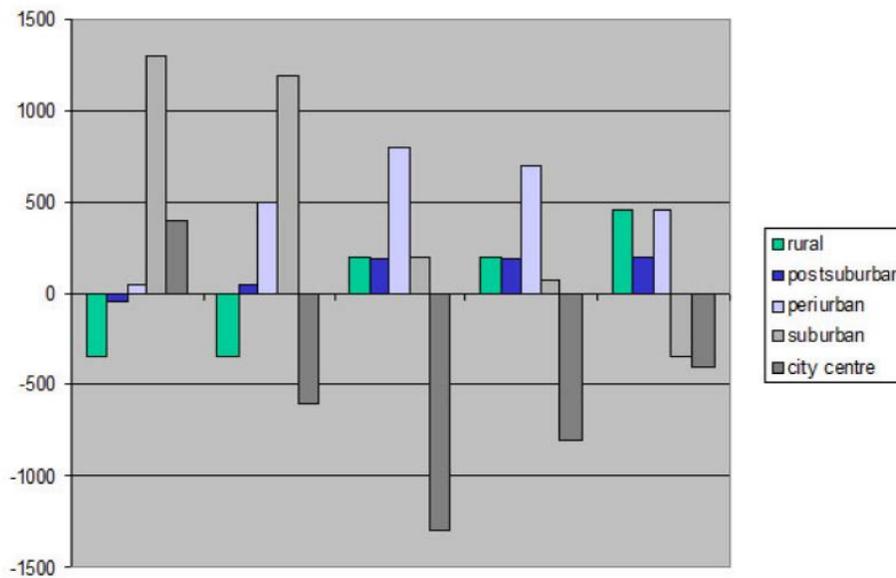

Source: Dubois-Taine 2004.

Figure 4. Variation of residential preferences in France 1962-2000 (in 1000 inhabitants).

So even within attractive urban agglomerations, an accelerated growth of "urban mutations" can be observed. International capital, often finance market-based companies, is able to seek and find ex-urban locations for leisure and service activities which are completely detached from local and urban backgrounds. This dichotomy must be completed by the interaction of both forces: While many agglomerations suffer degradation processes in central areas and proliferation of urban craters, a growing proliferation of urban mutations in the periphery can be observed to occur in parallel.

3. RESTRUCTURING URBAN EUROPE – MAIN TRENDS AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF GLOBAL COMPETITION

3.1. Locational Preferences of the Advanced Tertiary Activities

In a comparative study of seven European metropolises (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen, Strasbourg, Vienna) the locational trends of the service sector were analysed (COMET 2003), compiled and interpreted by M. BACHMANN. Within the tertiary sector the outskirt locations (in the project's system these are suburban, periurban and post-suburban districts and communities) are yet today much more important as locations in the inner city or the rest of the core city. There is to be observed a remarkable mobility of the businesses, moving quite frequently their locations. Whereas many of them tend to do not leave their traditional environment the inner city is loosing businesses, the rest of the core city to a certain degree, too, and the only winner is the strong suburban belt (fig. 5).
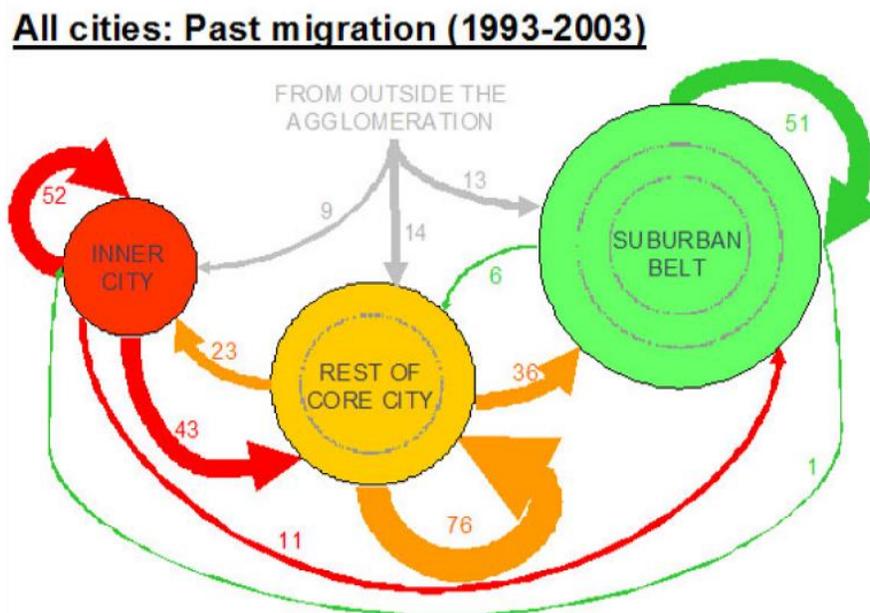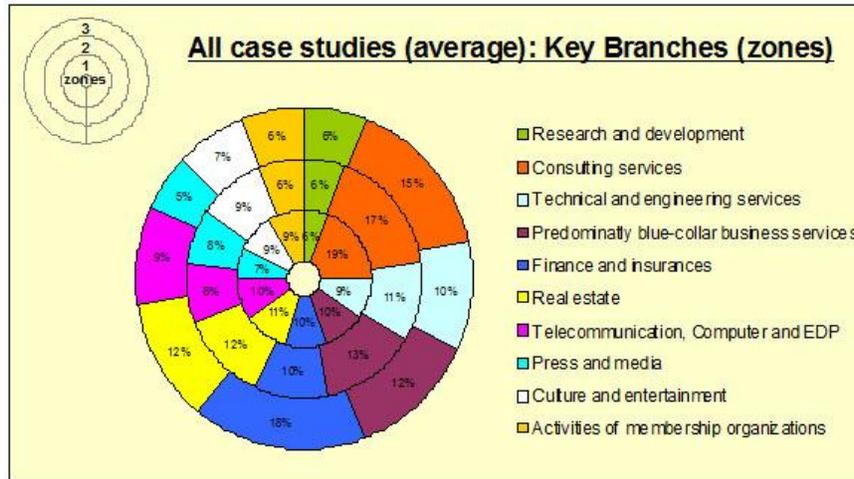

Source: COMET (M. Bachmann) 2003.

Figure 5. Mobility of businesses in the tertiary sector in seven European metropolises. (in absolute digits).

Not all key branches are participating in these movements. Fig. 6 demonstrates that telecommunication, computer and EDP as well as the finance sector have strong centrifugal tendencies, whereas consulting, culture and entertainment as well as the activities of membership organizations are still quite conservative in their location preferences. It may not surprise that blue collar services and press/media prefer the intermediate locations in the rest of the core city. However, the most dynamic and the leading branches for international competitiveness are tending to the outskirts, and this tendency will proceed as the cited project proved that the choice for outskirt locations is predominantly motivated by the

advantages of these locations (75 %), whereas specifically the so-called "rest of the core city" is not as much favoured by its spatial characteristics (63 %). Especially the airport neighbourhoods are quite attractive to innovative and dynamic branches and thus act as a strong motor or regional growth (POORT 2004).

Source: COMET (M. Bachmann) 2003.

Figure 6. Location of tertiary key branches in the inner city, the rest of core city and the suburban belt in seven European metropolises.

3.2. Semiotic Elements as Manifestations of Ideas and Culture

As a closer look to some semiotic elements of the outskirts proves, it is not only the attractiveness of the post-suburban communities producing a strong identification of people living there or the businessmen investing there to these environments (BORSDORF 2004).

It is obvious that the new communities in the outskirts take advantage of the same semantics which is serving the traditional town. "Cyta" the outskirt mall near Innsbruck reminds to terms like city, cite, ciudad – demonstrating that there are concentrated urban functions of the highest level. The main plaza is a characteristic element of each mall, to be compared to the market place of a traditional town. Many of the new peripherical living districts display doorways which were typical for the medieval city. Gated communities generally are equipped with walls and gates which came out of mode in the middle of the 19th century, but seem to be quite appropriate again to the post-modern society.

In France urbanism is much more composed to huge scenery. Star-like squares or endless axes help to stage the built environment in a spectacular way. In the outskirts of Paris the Ville Nouvelle of Cergy Pontoise uses the motive of the central axis to constitute the scenery of a glorious urban environment, even jumping over orographic obstacles like rivers, valleys or even lakes. The huge Grande Arche at La Defense, Paris, is reminiscence to the triumph arcs of absolutistic urbanism.

It is quite interesting to observe the semiotic language of Xanadú, a modern mall South of Madrid (BORSDORF 2004d). As the design and the use of symbolic elements demonstrate,

this new shopping and entertainment centre, too, claims to replace traditional city structures. The main complex is laid out like a medieval city, contained by city gates and guarded by towers, protected by huge, modern looking shields. The shopping sector is designed like the nave of a church, it is so far a new "religious centre" of this artificial world, and it seems that services are dedicated to the new "Consumer God". Traditional city centres are orientated to commerce and services, but Xanadú incorporates the leisure component, too, and among it even an activity which was always regarded to be practised only in peripheral mountains regions and not in urban areas: skiing. Swiss authors called these installations with their short life cycle and their futuristic architecture, coming from anywhere, UFO's (unidentified flight objects), and indeed there are a lot of signs leading the observers to feel himself in the world of virtual science fiction (photo 1).

Post-modern arbitrarity is reflected in this functional mix, and to a certain degree it is also a new interpretation of what is urban. Under post-modern conditions shopping is no longer a matter of supply, it is "consumption" in its widest sense, including entertainment, dining, sporting, communication and meeting place for young and old, and sun ply time-consumption. Under these aspects, the average time of three hours any consumer spends at Xanadú may not surprise.

Source: Xanadu 2004.

Photo 1. The welcome in the world of post-modern virtuality: The entrance to Xanadu, Madrid, with gate, UFO-like dome and other semiotic elements.

The language of forms and symbols may be regarded as an instrument of power, but it is an element of self-understanding, too. Forms and structures, in the course of time may influence behaviour and consciousness of citizen. On the other hand forms, structures and symbols reflect the spirit of its time (BORSDORF 2004c). Eclectics, exchangeability, arbitrarity, and the re-turn to the medieval times make the new elements less rational, accentuate the artificial, some times even virtual reality post-modern people are affected to.

3.3. The Privatisation of Public Space

The enclosure of private isles within the public urban space is not a new phenomenon. During the absolutism the aristocracy tended to separate themselves in form of castles or residential areas not open to the public. From the 19th century there are many examples of closed roads protecting rich quarters reported. At the beginning of the 20th century Vienna was a good example for the enclosure of entire social housing quarters. During these unstable years of the first republic, the socialist municipality financed quaters, which could be completely closed in order to keep hostile national forces out.

With the emergence of neoliberalism and globalisation and the related processes of de-regulation the gating of roads, districts or communities came up in different parts of the world. The gated communities of the United States, causing to characterise this nations as "Fortress America" (BLAKELY a. SNYDER 1998) are not – as often stated – the initial phase of the process but just one variation (see: BORSDORF a. HIDALGO 2004). In France this process is already quite advanced (MADORÉ 2003), but it is progressing in the other European countries as well (DECROLY ET AL. 2003, DESSOUROUX 2003). Private development corporations are controlling the business of gated communities all over Europe and selling their concepts of exclusiveness, security and a standardized quality of life.

Yet huge projects like Alphaville near São Paulo (COY a. PÖHLER 2002) or Nordelta in the Buenos Aires agglomeration (JANOSCHKA 2002) are not know in Europe, but plans to export the Alphaville conception to Portugal raised the public attention.
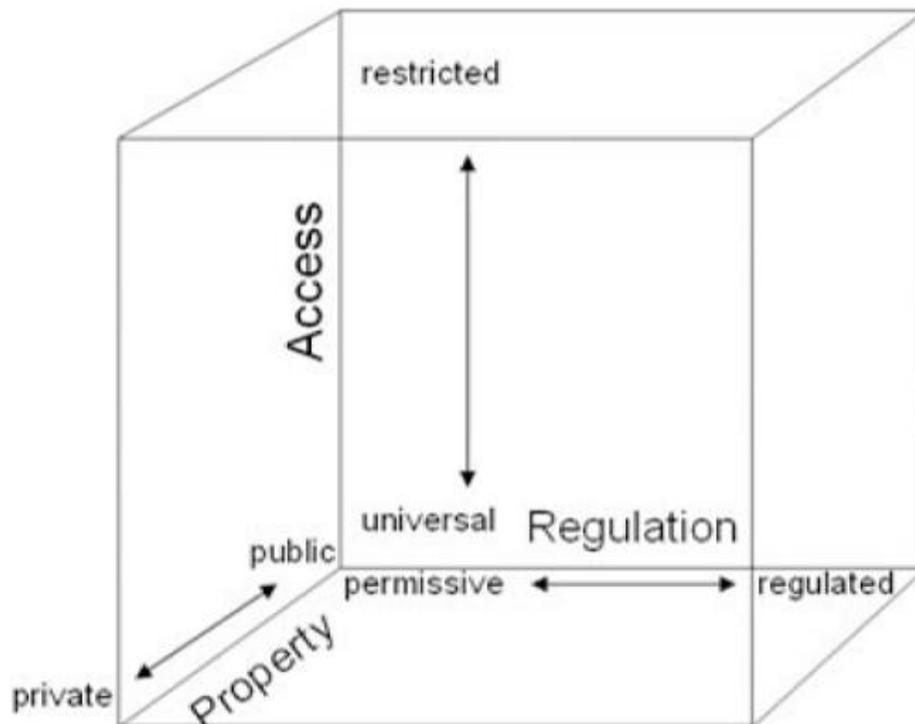
Source: Dessouroux 2003.

Figure 7. The dimensions of public and private space.

However, the privatisation is not a characteristic of the residential quarters. We are used to be excluded from industrial estates, business parks, technopoles, leisure areas, sport clubs and parks, but since some years even shopping centres and malls (DESSOUROUX 2003) or – as in Chile – even private highways, open only to the owners, are under construction (BORSDORF a. HILDAGO 2004) are not open to the general public, but only to a privileged strata.

Under the conditions of de-regulation and neoliberalism the old order is no longer valid. In a traditional understanding public space is dependent from public legislation and public order forces, it contains places, streets and roads, markets and politics, it is orientated to anonymity and the public semiotics sent out the signals of openness and representation of public wealth and interests. On the other hand private space was characterised by private rules of owners, the functions of living, production and reproduction, was the location of intimacy, emotion and home vital functions, and the symbols of private space were dominated by signs of the different wealth, dignity and strata of the specific inhabitants. In post-modern times all these elements were mixed up: Private spaces take over symbols like city-doors, urban axes, urban centres, they function like public systems although being completely private, private security forces are looking like public policemen, places, streets and roads, but even markets and supply centres are private and exclusive, and there is a strong tendency to transform the former symbols of public spaces to those of privacy and exclusiveness (BORSDORF 2004c, SIEBEL a. WEHRHEIM 2003). The paradoxon is that under neoliberalistic paradigms privatisation induces much less permissive and universal than the public space (fig. 7).

The closure of existing public space is much more complicated to realise in already than the construction of newly built closed ones. This is why the privatisation does much more affect the periphery, the post-suburban and rural regions than the existing urban fabric. Europe – and large parts of the complete world – is challenges to find answers to these new tendencies.

4. STRATEGIES OF URBAN PLANNING

In the face of the current socio-spatial trends European city planning is nowadays confronted with phenomena that just some years ago seemed to be limited to American cities:

- an increasing economic development outside the administrative city boarders
- the emergence of an internationally attractive city centre with tourism and representative functions, whereas the rest of the core city is loosing activities towards post-suburbia.
- the selective out-migration of innovative key-branches towards post-suburbia
- growing pressure for investment on highly attractive urban zones (waterfront, city-center, airport-axis) on the one hand side and economic retreat on the other hand side (vacant office space)
- the privatisation of public space with limited access to selected groups
- the rise of consumption-oriented places (malls, urban entertainment centres, outlet-centres) representing new conditions for socialisation for citizens based on limited access, marketing-oriented design of urban environments and the socio-ethnical mix.

- reduced possibilities of influence of to traditional city planning
- a growing ethnic and social heterogeneity with its implications for a more complex consensus-building for city development policy,

The traditionally powerful planning sector in European metropolises has to cope with these trends in the context of an increasing deregulation of planning and decreasing financial possibilities. The stimulation of economic growth has returned to the focus of urban planning more than maybe ever in European cities before. Development plans that some decades ago rather concentrated on the pure redistribution of economic wealth that seemed to come quite naturally to the city nowadays have to give far more attention to the chapter of urban economic development. Characteristically this paradigmatic shift towards economy is reflected both in sectors that are not directly linked to economy: Health-services, education, spatial and environmental planning are increasingly forced to meet the challenge of economic growth.

City planning in the booming post-war period could concentrative of rather prohibitive planning strategies for decades. The main task was to direct economic development in that form as desired. In the current economic context, city-administrations have to meet a double challenge: to attract and stimulate economic investment and to guide it to those locations that are desired from the planner's point of view.

While the attraction of business-services until some years ago could be fostered simply by granting more or less obviously subsidies to those enterprises that intended to locate in a specific city these practices are prohibited in the single European market. City planning therefore can rely less on politics and their possibility to grant subsidies but has to up-grade selected location factors that are demanded by international investors. The identification of these location factors and consequently the strategic development of an urban location profile has gained considerable attention in recent years.

This trend is materialized also in the form of strategic development plans that currently accompany purely spatial urban development plans. Strategic development plans are characterized by a more marketing-oriented discourse, by visioning-techniques for the city development, by the understanding of building a common vision for a city in agreement with multiple urban actors (from politics, planning, development agencies, citizens, businesses) rather than by imposing planners' ideas as the highest authority for urban development.

5. THE EUROPEAN CITY – A PHASE-OUT MODEL OR A CHALLENGE FOR EUROPEAN URBAN POLICY AND RESEARCH?

Following the previous mentioned trends the key challenges for both urban policy and research are becoming clearer. The decision which model of city we intend to promote depends on the values of citizens and politics. Urban research helps to analyse and interpret urban trends and give the best basis for such decisions:

- *Why should we re-invent a „historic city" on the peripheries when we can have a functioning inner city?* The answer to this question surely cannot limit to the wish to preserve "the old historic city centre" but has rather to ask what are the economic

activities that we can hold in inner cities and which activities have to be fostered on the outside in order to promote the metropolitan region as a whole in the international location competition. Urban research may give not just answers to this but may also help to develop strategies how to link the urban economy to the flows of the global network economy.

- *Do we have to accept the social and economic decay of inner city quarters?* Whereas in the American context the decay of urban quarters seems to be rather accepted as "natural course" in the life-cycle of city-quarters that comes to an "natural" end once investors decide to re-invest in such areas, European policy tends to stimulate renewal activities before such quarters reach the bottom end. The comparison of European best-practices gives important answers how cities may break the vicious-circle of the downward mobility of urban quarters. While early research work paid much attention to flagship-projects (the Bilbao-effect, the London docklands waterfront development etc.) currently research seems to concentrate on less-spectacular, but possibly more sustainable forms of urban renewal activities). However, much investigation how to direct renewal-investments in the most sustainable and effective way is still needed.

- *How to deal and guide the investment pressure?* Cities do state an economic pressure on highly attractive urban locations. Under the conditions of decreasing growth rates and global competition they may not simply refuse such investments, even if they do not happen in the form or in the locations, where administrations want to have these developments. Urban research helps to understand location decisions of enterprises. what activities look for which locations.

- *How to save inner cities from becoming museums?* Inner cities tend to form enclaves based on tourism and highly representative functions and their economy is therefore increasingly divided from the rest of the urban economy. Cities seek strategies how to re-direct investment flows in a more balanced way and how to maintain city centres that show a range of urban functions.

- *How to attract inward investments or how to cooperate with growth poles outside administrative borders?* The analysis of location decisions clearly shows, that enterprises evaluate cities as city-regions. Administrative boarders may hinder the performance of a metropolitan region. Economic development increasingly takes place outside the central city. Urban policy has to meet the challenge how to take best advantage of these growth poles outside the municipality. Cooperation between a city and its region is not an easy undertaking. Research about possible forms and effects of cooperation is still needed.

- *How to keep wealthy household inside the city?* As a consequence of growing economic activity in suburbia, the threat of loosing wealthy households is still persistent. Urban research investigates in which factors are influencing households' decisions to move to post-suburbia. Only a sustainable urban development and a high quality of life in the densly built city quarters therefore will help to keep inhabitants in the city centre.

- *How to deal or accept the growing polarisation and heterogeneity within European cities?* Economic and social development in European cities obviously shows a less balanced development than it did some decades ago. Cities face not just economic, but also social and ethnic heterogeneity. Urban research helps to give answers to the

difficult balance between those forms of "heterogeneity" that are still acceptable for a city and which forms are rather problematic in the sense of a multiply fragmented city.

In the face of these very complex questions it becomes clear that those cities will benefit most from international competition that find the best mix of answers and are successful in realising it in their metropolitan region. The effective exchange of knowledge between urban research and practice therefore is essential and has to be developed in the best way. The methodological challenge how to foster this exchange itself has to be addressed in future research work.

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