

## The changing economic context of city life

### Key questions addressed in this chapter

- What were the main characteristics of the preindustrial city?
- In what ways did industrial capitalism affect the structure of cities?
- What is meant by the Fordist city?
- How has neo-Fordism influenced city structures?
- What has been the impact of globalization upon the social geography of cities?
- What are the likely effects of new technologies upon urban form?

This chapter examines the influence of changing economic structures upon the structure of Western cities. The economic context is a useful starting point because there can be no doubt that economic systems have a crucial impact on city forms and their social geography. The discussion traces the impact of the shift from the early preindustrial economy, through to the rise of the

capitalist economy, as manifest in the classic industrial city, and then considers contemporary developments in the so-called 'postindustrial' city. At various times issues of culture will be considered but these are given extended treatment in Chapter 3.

### 2.1 The precapitalist, preindustrial city

Before the full emergence of capitalist economies in the eighteenth century and the advent of the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century, cities were essentially small-scale settlements based on a mercantile economy and a rigid social order stemming from the tradition of medieval feudalism. Our knowledge of these early settlements is fairly patchy but it seems likely that they varied considerably in structure. Sjoberg (1960) has provided us with an idealized model of the social geography of the preindustrial city (see Figure 2.1). In essence, this is the spatial expression of the division of the preindustrial city into a small elite and larger groups of lower classes and outcasts. The elite lived in a (by the

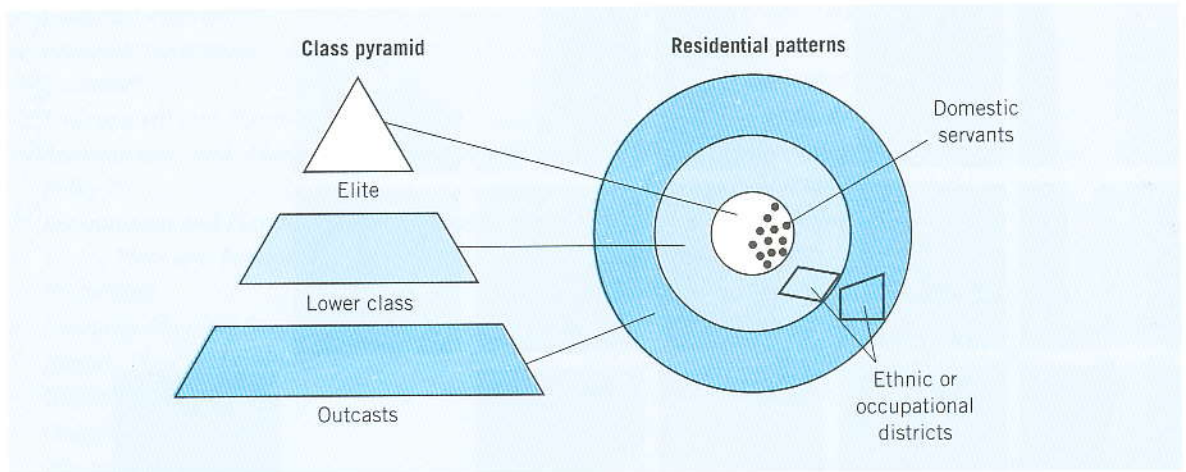


Figure 2.1 Sjoberg's idealized model of the social and geographical structure of the preindustrial city.

Source: Redford (1979) p. 394.

standards of the times) pleasant and exclusive central core while the lower classes and outcasts lived in a surrounding poorly built and garbage-strewn periphery.

According to Sjoberg, the elite group consisted of those in control of the religious, political, administrative and social functions of the city. Merchants – even the wealthy

ones – were generally excluded from the elite because a 'pre-occupation with money and other mundane pursuits ran counter to the religious-philosophical value systems of the dominant group' (Sjoberg, 1960, p. 83). Responding to these values, the elite tended to favour a residential location close to the administrative, political



The imprint of older urban forms: residential street patterns in Ghent, Belgium.  
Photo Credit: Paul Knox.



and religious institutions that were typically located in the centre of the city, thus producing an exclusive, high-status core. In time, the elite came to be increasingly segregated from the rest of urban society, partly because of the repulsiveness of the rest of the city and its inhabitants, and partly because of a clustering reinforced by bonds of kinship and intermarriage among the elite.

Beyond this core area lived the lower classes, although not in an undifferentiated mass. Distinct socioeconomic clusters developed as a result of the spatial association of craftsmen of different kinds, reinforced by social organizations such as guilds, which fostered group cohesion and spatial clustering of their members. Less well-organized groups, including the poor, members of ethnic and religious minority groups, people engaged in particularly malodorous jobs (such as tanning) and people who could

find only menial employment (carting, sweeping or peddling) found themselves pushed to the outskirts of the city in extensive but densely inhabited tracts of the very worst housing. Table 2.1 summarizes the key features of Sjöberg's idealized model of the preindustrial city.

The idea of a preindustrial social geography characterized by an exclusive central core surrounded by a wider area over which status and wealth steadily diminished with distance from the city centre was questioned by Vance (1971), who attached much greater significance to the occupational clusterings arising from the interrelationships between social and economic organization promoted by the craft guilds. For Vance, the early city was 'many centred' in distinct craft quarters – metal working, woodworking, weaving and so on – each with its own shops, workplaces and wide spectrum

**Table 2.1** Characteristics of Sjöberg's idealized model of the preindustrial city

- Inanimate power base
- Dependence upon slave labour
- City has small population
- City has a small proportion of the total population of the society
- City is surrounded by a wall
- City has important internal walls
- Domination by a feudal elite
- Elite is isolated by traditional values
- Elite is isolated by lifestyle
- Elite is impenetrable
- Elite has large households
- Elite privileges leisure and despises industry and commerce
- Elite women are idle
- Education is confined to the elite
- The merchant class are excluded from the elite
- Merchants are regarded as foreign and suspected of spreading heretical ideas
- Successful merchants use wealth to acquire elite symbols
- City has three classes
- Society has a sovereign ruler
- Rigid class structure
- Existence of an outcast group
- Manners, dress and speech reinforce class divisions
- Craft and merchant guilds
- Time is unregulated
- Credit is poorly developed
- Residential status declines with distance from the core
- Elite occupies city centre
- City centre has symbolic sites
- Outcasts are located on the urban periphery
- Part-time farmers on the periphery
- Ethnic quarters within the city
- Residential areas are differentiated by occupation
- Lack of functional specialization of land use

Sources: Sjöberg (1960); Radford (1979).



of inhabitants. The political, social and economic advantages conferred by guild membership reinforced external economies derived from spatial association, creating tight clusters of population living under a patriarchal social system headed by the master craftsmen.

Within each of the occupational districts, dwellings, workshops and store rooms were arranged with a vertical rather than horizontal structuring of space, with workshops on the ground floor, the master's family quarters on the floor above and, higher still, the store rooms and rooms of the journeymen, apprentices and servants. Beyond the specialized craft quarters Vance recognized, like Sjöberg, the existence of a fringe population of the very poorest of the proletariat and a central core inhabited by the city's elite. Unlike Sjöberg, however, Vance interpreted these groups as having only a minor impact on the social geography of the city. The result was a model of the city in which spatial differentiation is dominated by a mosaic of occupational districts, with class and status stratification contributing a secondary dimension that is more important vertically than horizontally.

As with much social history, we do not yet have enough evidence from comparative studies to judge which of these two interpretations of the preindustrial city is more accurate. For present purposes, however, it is probably more helpful to stress the points of common agreement. Both writers portray a city in which everything physical was at a human scale, a 'walking city' in which the distances between home and work were even more tightly constrained by the organization of work into patriarchal and familial groupings. Both portray an immutable social order based on a traditional and essentially non-materialistic value system; and both recognize the existence (though with different emphasis) of a patrician elite residing in the core of the city, a number of occupationally distinctive but socially mixed 'quarters' in intermediate locations, and a residual population of the very poor living on the outskirts of the city.

## 2.2 The growth of the industrial city

The industrial city inherited few of the social or morphological characteristics of the preindustrial city. Some, such as Bologna, Bruges, Norwich and Stirling, were fortunate

enough to retain their castles, cathedrals, palaces and other institutional buildings, together, perhaps, with fragments of the preindustrial residential fabric. Others, such as Aigues Mortes, Bernkastel and Ludlow, were bypassed by change and have consequently retained much of the appearance of the preindustrial city, albeit in a sanitized, renovated and picture postcard way. Many more sprang up with virtually no antecedents, products of a new economic logic that turned urban structure inside out from the preindustrial model, with the rich exchanging their central location for the peripheral location of the poor. Occupational clustering has given way to residential differentiation in terms of status, family structure, ethnicity and lifestyle; power and status in the city are no longer determined by traditional values but by wealth; ownership of land has become divorced from its use; workplace and home have become separated; and family structures have been transformed.

The cause of this profound realignment was primarily economic, rooted in the emergence of capitalism as the dominant means of production and exchange and buttressed by the technologies that subsequently emerged during the Industrial Revolution. Probably the most fundamental change to emerge with the rise of capitalism and its new system of production – the factory – was the creation of two 'new' social groups: the industrial capitalists and the unskilled factory workers. These two groups respectively formed the basis of a new elite and a new proletariat that replaced the old order. As the accumulation of capital by individuals became not only morally acceptable but the dominant criterion of status and power, entrepreneurs introduced a new, materialistic value system to urban affairs.

Meanwhile, competition for the best and most accessible sites for the new factories and the warehouses, shops and offices that depended on them brought about the first crucial changes in land use. Land was given over to the uses that could justify the highest rents, rather than being held by a traditional group of users. The factory and commercial sites secured, there sprang up around them large tracts of housing to accommodate the workers and their families. The new urban structure became increasingly differentiated, with homes no longer used as workplaces, and residential areas graded according to the rents that different sites could command. Social status, newly ascribed in terms of



money, became synonymous with rent-paying ability, so that neighbourhoods were, in effect, created along status divisions.

Inevitably, since the size and quality of buildings was positively linked with price, and price with builders' profits, housing built for the lowest-paid, lowest-status groups was of the lowest quality, crammed in at high densities in order to cover the costs of the ground rent. At the same time, the wealthy moved to new locations on the urban fringe. Edged out of the inner city by factories and warehouses, the wealthy were in any case anxious to add physical distance to the social distance between themselves and the bleak misery of the growing working-class neighbourhoods adjacent to the factories. Encouraged by the introduction of new transport services in the early nineteenth century, they were easily lured to the fashionable new dwellings being built in the suburbs by speculators with an eye towards this lucrative new market.

Later, as the full effects of a dramatic excess of births over deaths (which largely resulted from improvements in medical practice and public health) were reinforced

by massive immigration (in response to the cities' increased range and number of opportunities), the rate of urban growth surged. Changes in building technology made it possible for cities to grow upwards as well as outwards, and the cyclical growth of the capitalist economy, with successive improvements in urban transport systems, produced a sequence of growth phases that endowed the industrial city with a series of patchy but distinctive suburban zones.

## Early models of the spatial structure of industrial cities

For observers in the nineteenth century, one of the most perplexing aspects of the cities was the spatial separation of the classes. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Manchester, the first 'shock city' of the age. Probably the best-known and most succinct description of this segregation is Engels' (1844) work on Manchester in *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (a book that provided much of the documentation for the theories of his friend Karl Marx). Engels wrote that

### Box 2.1

#### Key novels related to urban social geography – Chapter 2

In the various boxes such as this one we have listed some novels that can be related to the changing social geography of city life. These have been selected to provide you with enjoyment as well as intellectual stimulation. Many have been made into films so you might also like to consult the list of films in the relevant boxes.

*Bonfire of the Vanities* (1987) Tom Wolfe. A critique of the excesses of neoliberal capitalism and financial deregulation based around the downfall of a New York financial trader who gets involved in a car accident in the South Bronx. Shows the ethnic tensions and class divides in the city.

*The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) John Steinbeck. A Pulitzer Prize-winning

book set in rural Oklahoma and California farm country. Although not an urban novel, it is worth reading for its moving portrayal of the impact of unbridled capitalism on the lives of ordinary people. Interestingly, unlike the film, which has an upbeat ending, as the government resettlement camp provides a haven for the 'Ookies', in the book things get worse for the central Joad family.

*Hard Times* (1854) Charles Dickens. Dickens' classic novel on the deprivations inflicted by the early capitalist cities. Set in the fictional town of 'Coketown', it is full of Dickens' memorable characters.

*The Jungle* (1906) Upton Sinclair. Another shocking exposé of unregu-

lated capitalism, in this case the Chicago meatpacking industry. A now classic and highly influential novel that ultimately led to public health legislation.

*Love on the Dole* (1933) Walter Greenwood. A classic novel of Lancashire, factory-based, working-class life.

*North and South* (1855) Elizabeth Gaskell. A novel set in Victorian England contrasting the affluence of southern areas with the inequalities generated by a northern mill town.

*Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1958) Alan Sillitoe. A 'kitchen sink' novel portraying the constraints of working-class life in 1950s Nottingham.



the commercial centre of Manchester, largely devoid of urban dwellers, was surrounded by:

unmixed working people's quarters, stretching like a girdle, averaging a mile and a half in breadth . . . Outside, beyond this girdle, lives the upper and middle bourgeoisie, the middle bourgeoisie in regularly laid out streets in the vicinity of the working quarters . . . the upper bourgeoisie in remoter villas with gardens . . . in free, wholesome country air, in fine comfortable homes, passed once every half or quarter hour by omnibuses going into the city.

(Engels, 1844, p. 80)

This pattern of concentric zones, with the working class concentrated near the centre, was to become typical of many Victorian cities. By 1900, London exhibited four distinct zones around the largely unpopulated commercial core of the city. Charles Booth, in his *Life and Labour of the People of London*, provided a series of 'social maps' that showed these zones clearly (Booth, 1903). The innermost zone was characterized by the most severe crowding and extreme poverty, except in the west where there was a sector of extreme affluence. The second zone was slightly less wealthy in this western sector and rather less crowded and impoverished elsewhere, while the third zone was inhabited by the 'short distance commuter' belonging mainly to the lower-middle class. The fourth zone belonged exclusively to the wealthy. The overall pattern of zones was, however, modified by a series of linear features. As competition for central space drove the price of land up and up, industry began to edge outward from the commercial core, following the route of canals, rivers and railways, and so structuring the city into a series of wedges or sectors.

North American cities also exhibited a spatial structure with a predominantly zonal pattern, but with important sectoral components. In the United States, Chicago was the archetypal example. Indeed, the idealized version of the social geography of Chicago in the early decades of the twentieth century became, for urban geographers, 'the seed bed of theory, the norm, the source of urban fact and urban fiction' (Robson, 1975, p. 4). In Chicago, both sectors and zones were particularly pronounced because of the effects of the massive inflows

of immigrant workers and the radial development of the railroads that fanned outwards from the centre of the city, drawing with them corridors of manufacturing industry. The residential communities that developed between the radial corridors during successive phases of urban growth were graphically documented by the Chicago 'School' of urban sociology, providing the basis for ecological ideas that have influenced urban studies ever since (see Chapter 7).

## Marx and the industrial city

It was in this rapidly changing context of the nineteenth-century industrial city that Karl Marx formed his ideas about capitalist society. The key concept in his analysis was the underlying economic base of society – the system of industrial capitalism – which he termed the **mode of production**. This consisted of two further elements: the **forces of production**, the technology underpinning the production process, and the **social relations of production**, the legal system of property rights and trade union legislation that governed the system of production.

Marx argued that the forces of production tend to be held back by the social relations of production – so that a new set of social relations is required in order to release the productive potential of new technologies when they come along. Preindustrial social relations, Marx pointed out, could not cope with the new forces unleashed by the growth of new trading patterns and industrial technologies. From this perspective, therefore, the economic base of society becomes a key driver of a much wider set of social arrangements (which are sometimes termed the **superstructure**).

Marx used his (and Engels') observations to develop a critique of capitalism. Because of the ample supplies of labour in Victorian cities, wages were typically very low. The prevailing economic orthodoxy of the day argued that these wages were just and fair because they represented the most efficient outcome – the intersection of supply and demand in an equilibrium solution. However, Marx argued that price of commodities should not be determined by their **exchange value** (the amount they could command on the market) but by their **use value** (their capacity to satisfy human needs). The difference between what workers were paid



for producing goods and the price that goods could command on the market, Marx termed the **surplus value**. According to his **labour theory of value**, instead of market exchange values, the prices of commodities should reflect the amount of 'socially necessary labour' that went into their production. This perspective enabled Marx to argue that this surplus value was being wrongly taken away from the new industrial proletariat in the form of huge profits by factory owners. Rather than a just reward for taking risks with their investments, these profits were seen as an immoral appropriation of the wealth generated by workers.

This exploitative relationship is usually portrayed as a continuous **circuit of production**. This begins with the investment of capital or money in commodities in the form of labour power, raw materials and the means of production, which is used to produce more commodities, which are then sold to acquire more money. A key principle of a Marxist approach, therefore, is the observation that capitalism is not just the ownership of wealth, it is a set of social relations, or institutional arrangements, that affect the relationships between two classes that are inevitably in conflict – enabling the owners of capital to command labour to produce further wealth.

The labour theory of value has been extremely controversial and has proven extremely difficult to operationalize empirically. Furthermore, much has changed since Marx was writing in the nineteenth century; the interests of capital are now less easily identifiable with a class of individuals (despite the ostentatious presence of the 'super rich') since wealth has become more diffused among banks, pension funds and investment trusts. Companies are now much less likely to be owned by single individuals; skilled labour and knowledge has become much more important than unskilled manual labour in the production system; and the state has taken on an increasing role in regulating economies. In addition, the collapse of communist regimes in the late twentieth century means that Marxist notions are widely perceived to have failed, both as a political ideology and as a system for promoting economic efficiency. Nevertheless, as we will see in this and subsequent chapters, some of the basic concepts underlying Marx's ideas have proved to be a rich source of inspiration for scholars of Western cities.

## Fordism and the industrial city

A key concept used to analyse changes in cities from the 1920s through to the mid-1970s is **Fordism**. The origins of this concept can be traced back to the Italian communist Gramsci (1973) but the notion has been most extensively developed by a group of French scholars in what is known as **regulation theory**. This approach attempts to understand why it is that, despite all their inherent tensions and contradictions, capitalist economies manage to survive. Regulation theorists argue that such tensions and problems are overcome by various regulatory mechanisms, such as those embodied in legislation surrounding commerce, trade and labour relations, together with the activities of various institutions that govern these spheres. From time to time these various regulatory mechanisms show some stability, at which point a **mode of regulation** gets established. A crucial feature of the regulation approach is recognition of the fact that regulatory mechanisms vary considerably from one country to another. Nevertheless, over time they tend to show certain similarities in different places.

Furthermore, if we view economic systems from a broader perspective, it is argued that much more general sets of arrangements can be seen which serve to link production and consumption. These broader structures form what is termed a **regime of accumulation**, and Fordism represents one such regime. Fordism is a very wide-ranging concept that can be used to analyse changes in at least three different ways: first, changes in the way people work; second, changes in the way industrial production is structured; and third, changes in the organization of society as whole (in particular the ways in which production and consumption are coordinated).

Fordism as a way of working and a way of organizing industry is associated with the factory system developed in the early part of the twentieth century by Henry Ford in Detroit to mass-produce automobiles. Ford was an early advocate of **Taylorism** (named after an American engineer called Frederick Taylor), a system of production in which the planning and control of work in manufacturing industries are allocated entirely to management, leaving production workers to be assigned specialized tasks that are subject to careful



analysis – ‘scientific management’ – using techniques such as time-and-motion studies.

The genius of Henry Ford’s approach was to integrate these ideas with the moving assembly line on which each worker did a relatively simple task, often assisted by specialized machines. It is commonly thought that Henry Ford got the idea of the moving assembly line from the method used to transport carcasses of meat around the slaughter-houses of Chicago, but in reality it appears that his chief engineer Charles Sorensen thought up the idea independently and Ford was initially sceptical (Brandon, 2002). Whatever the source of inspiration, this new approach to manufacturing enhanced productivity to such an extent that Henry Ford was able to cut the cost of his cars by one-half, while at the same time paying his workers \$5 a day, a sum that was twice the average industrial wage at the time.

This highly efficient system, combined with the widespread availability of credit, led to a revolution in production. On the one hand, the product, the Model T car, was just what consumers wanted, being reliable and simple to drive and maintain. On the other hand, the system of production suited the labour market of American cities, which at the time were crammed with migrants from many European countries. The relatively simple jobs on the assembly line could be undertaken by immigrants since they required limited training or knowledge of English. Henry Ford’s factory system resulted in a productive linking of the **technical division of labour** (the work tasks that need to be done) with the **social division of labour** (the skills of the people available to do the work). The result was an increase in both supply of, and demand for, the product and the development of mass production.

## Keynesianism and the ‘long boom’ of Fordism

Although Fordism brought a capacity for vastly increased outputs of consumer goods in the 1920s and 1930s, the system faltered during this time because of a lack of demand, which resulted in the onset of a huge economic slump known as the Depression. After the Second World War, however, there emerged a system that, for a quarter of a century, seemed to create a relatively harmonious relationship between production and consumption. This

period is often called the ‘**long boom**’ of Fordism. Underpinning this time period was a government policy known as **Keynesianism**, based on the economic principles of the economist John Maynard Keynes. He argued that governments should intervene to regulate the booms and slumps that characterize capitalist economies. In particular, governments should spend in times of recession to create more effective demand for private goods and services.

In the United States after the Second World War the economy was greatly stimulated by government spending on the interstate and intra-urban highway systems. These new roads enabled unprecedented numbers of households to decentralize out of inner-city areas into surrounding low-density suburban areas. This resulted in greater distances between home, work and shops and therefore greatly boosted the automobile industry. The construction industry was also kept busy building new suburban dwellings as well as roads and there was also a huge demand for domestic consumer products such as televisions, cookers and refrigerators.

Drawing heavily upon the work of the famous French urban analyst Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey formulated a theory linking these new geographical arrangements with the needs of capitalism. Harvey (1978) argues that this massive process of suburbanization represented a shift from the ‘primary circuit’ of capital (investment in the production system) into the ‘secondary circuit’ (various consumption funds including the built environment) (see Figure 2.2). This was extremely useful for the capitalist system at this time in a variety of ways (amounting to what he calls a ‘**spatial fix**’). Harvey argues that suburbanization stimulated a ‘**commodity fetishism**’ – an obsessional tendency for households to compete with one another and display their wealth through consumer products. In addition, since most families needed to raise a mortgage to purchase their properties, it was argued that this tended to stabilize the entire socioeconomic system, producing a class of debt-encumbered households who were unlikely to petition for radical change.

In European cities, as noted in Chapter 1, there was much less suburbanization during the Fordist era. Nevertheless, relatively inexpensive European cars such as the original German Volkswagen Beetle, the French Citroën 2CV, the Italian Fiat Topolino and the British



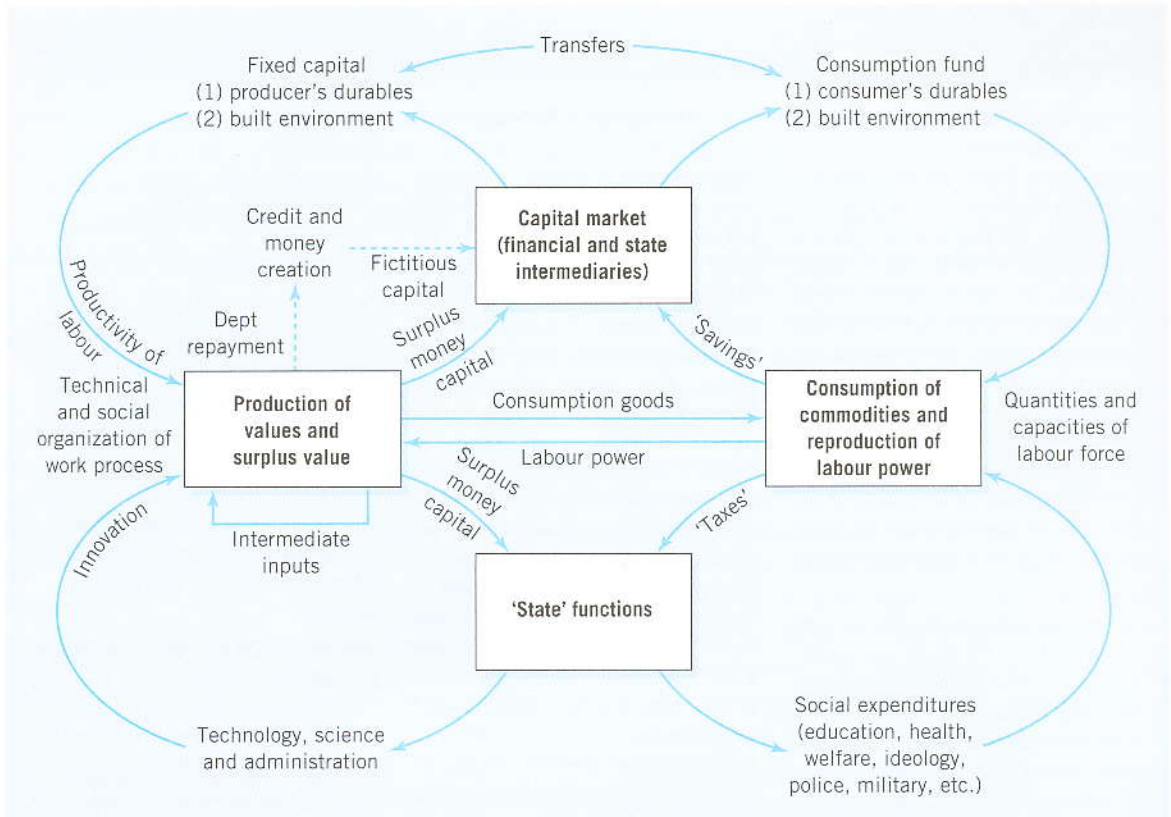


Figure 2.2 David Harvey's model of the circuits of capital involved in suburbanization.

Source: Harvey (1982), Fig. 21.1, p. 408.

Morris Minor, together with the various autobahn, auto-route, autostrada and motorway systems of Europe, played a similar role to the Model T and the interstate highway system in the United States. However, it was the development of the welfare state and welfare statism that helped stimulate demand in European cities. Welfare states vary enormously in structure and scope but they shared a common goal of attempting to ameliorate the inequalities associated with market mechanisms. In British cities this resulted in state-provided housing (known as local authority or 'council' housing) in suburban areas as well as in inner-city renewal areas. In continental European cities less housing was provided directly by the state, with a greater reliance upon state-supported, but privately provided, forms of social housing.

Welfare statism involves more than the direct provision of goods and services by the public sector; it is a broader set of arrangements to ensure full employment, minimum wages, safe working conditions and income

transfers to the less well-off – what is sometimes called the social wage. As we will see in Chapter 13, Western governments have in recent years tended to renege on these arrangements but in the 'long boom' of Fordism they helped to boost consumer demand. Relative affluence was also boosted by the industrial relations systems prominent during this time – trade unions and collective bargaining ensured that workers were relatively well rewarded for their efforts.

It is important at this stage not to paint an idealized picture of the 'long boom' of Fordism. For example, while some of the large industrial sectors such as automobile assembly provided relatively good wages, other 'sweatshop' industries did not. Furthermore, women, ethnic minorities and other marginalized groups were effectively excluded from certain sectors of the economy. In addition, there were still periodic booms and slumps in the economy. In the United States, for example, car sales boomed in the early 1950s, reaching a peak in



## Box 2.2

### Key thinkers in urban social geography – Doreen Massey

Apart from David Harvey (see Box 1.1) and Nigel Thrift (Box 9.5), it is difficult to think of anyone who has had a bigger influence upon human geography than Doreen Massey. Indeed, a case can be made that, in the United Kingdom at least, her influence has been greater than either of these two key thinkers. Like both Harvey and Thrift, Massey's influence on urban social geography has not emerged from a particular set of studies of city life, but instead from her influence on the evolution of human geography as a whole.

Again like Harvey, Massey is best recognised for her Marxian perspective on the development of the space economy. Probably her most influential work was that undertaken in the 1980s when she focused on the impacts of industrial restructuring upon the evolving **spatial division of labour**. In her now classic text *Spatial Divisions of Labour* (Massey, 1984) she argued that economies were shifting away from *regional sectoral specialization* (in which regions tended to specialise in all aspects of the production of particular products, e.g. design, finance and manufacture) towards *regional functional specialization* (in which regions specialize in particular stages in the production of a wide range of products, e.g. just design, finance or manufacture). In recent years many would argue that with the growth of new industrial districts we are seeing a revival of regional sectoral specialization, although the extent of this trend is controversial.

The most important aspect of Massey's approach was that it marked a radical

departure (in all senses) from traditional regional economic geography, and also from the more modern locational analysis inspired by Weberian industrial geography and preoccupied with the impact of transport costs on economic activity. Instead, Massey argued that urban and regional development should be seen in the context of broader periods ('waves') of capitalist economic development. She used her famous geological metaphor (albeit one she subsequently downplayed) to refer to the ways in which 'rounds of investment' left layers of economic activity deposited like rock strata, only to be eroded by subsequent periods of reinvestment. One of the most important, and it turned out controversial, aspects of Massey's analysis was that she did not consider regions to be merely passive recipients of capitalist forces. She considered that there was room for manoeuvre as people in cities and regions with their distinctive characteristics reacted to economic changes while the forces of capital in turn adapted to these distinctive characteristics.

Ever at the forefront of developments in human geography, in recent years Massey has been one of a group of leading geographers to advocate a 'relational' or 'non-scalar' approach (see Box 10.2). This has led to another landmark volume, *For Space* (2005).

#### Key concepts associated with Doreen Massey (see Glossary)

Accumulation, alienation, circuit of production, feminist geography, gender, locality studies, Marxian theory, power

geometries, social division of labour, technical division of labour.

#### Further reading

- Callard, F. (2004) Doreen Massey, in P. Hubbard, R. Kitchin and G. Valentine (eds) *Key Thinkers on Space and Place* Sage, London
- Massey, D. (1984) *Spatial Divisions of Labour* Macmillan, Basingstoke (2nd edn 1995)
- Massey, D. (1994) *Space, Place and Gender* Polity Press, Cambridge (contains reprints of many of her articles)
- Massey, D. (2005) *For Space* Sage, London

#### Links with other chapters

- Chapter 2: Marx and the industrial city, Fordism and the industrial city, Neo-Fordism
- Chapter 5: Structuralist interpretations of the political economy of contemporary cities, The local state and the sociospatial dialectic, The question of social justice in the city
- Chapter 6: Builders, developers and the search for profit, Manipulating social geographies, Blockbusting and gentrification
- Chapter 9: Constructing place through spatial practices, Box 9.4 Henri Lefebvre
- Chapter 10: Alienation, Structuralist theory; Box 10.2 What are the merits of relational geography?
- Chapter 13: Urban change and conflict, The aggregate effects of aggregate patterns



1955, dipping somewhat towards the end of the decade before soaring again in the 1960s. Nevertheless, within the conventions of the day, unemployment was relatively low and there was a 'virtuous circle' of arrangements that brought together production and consumption. From the mid-1970s onwards, however, the Fordist system encountered severe problems and these eventually impacted upon city structures.

## 2.3 The contemporary city

There is a great deal of controversy over how the Fordist system ran into trouble. A core problem was declining productivity, which has been linked to a variety of factors. Among the most important of these factors are the following:

- ▶ A failure to invest sufficiently in research and development (a particular problem in the United States and the United Kingdom).
- ▶ The increasing costs of raw materials (intensified by sharp increases in the price of oil in 1974 and 1979–80).
- ▶ Market saturation of mass-produced goods and increasing consumer hostility to uniform, mediocre-quality goods.
- ▶ System rigidity stemming from the high capital costs of establishing production lines under Fordism.
- ▶ Repetitive, boring, physically demanding assembly line work leading to alienation among the workforce and poorly assembled, low-quality products.
- ▶ Adversarial industrial relations and widespread labour unrest.
- ▶ The increasing costs associated with safety and environmental legislation.

As a result of these problems, Fordism and Keynesianism have imploded. In some ways, Fordism was a victim of its own success, saturated markets for mass consumption having pushed producers towards niche markets, packaging, novelty and design in the search for profit. Keynesianism lost its effectiveness when the influence of organized labour and the authority of national governments were short-circuited by the global reach of

transnational corporations. Fordism and Keynesianism have been replaced by a 'new economy' – a neo-Fordist (or post-Fordist) system underpinned by information technologies and networked around the globe – and **neoliberalism** – the view that the state should have a minimal role. National, state and local governments have found it difficult to regulate and control the new economy and have shed many of their traditional roles as mediators and regulators.

Meanwhile, the proponents of neoliberal policies have advocated free markets as the ideal condition not only for economic organization, but also for political and social life. Ideal for some, of course. Free markets have generated uneven relationships among places and regions, the inevitable result being an intensification of economic inequality at every scale, from the neighbourhood to the nation state. The pursuit of neoliberal policies and free market ideals has also dismantled a great deal of the framework for city building and community development that Western societies used to take for granted: everything from broad concepts such as the public good to the nuts and bolts of the regulatory environment. Globalization has meanwhile contributed to the emergence of a postmodern culture in which the symbolic properties of places and material possessions have assumed unprecedented importance, with places becoming important objects of consumption.

### Neo-Fordism

A crucial problem with the Fordist system was its rigidity in the face of increasing market and technological change. *Flexibility* is therefore the key factor underlying the numerous changes that have modified the Fordist system to the point where we now have to think of a neo-Fordist system (see Table 2.2). In particular, this involves the capacity of firms to adjust the levels and types of their output in response to varying market conditions. One method of increasing flexibility is through increased use of technology, such as computer-aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM). Also of crucial importance has been flexible use of labour. Workers are now much more likely to be multiskilled, rather than committed to just one task as under Fordism. In addition, the labour force increasingly exhibits **numerical flexibility**, the capacity to be hired and laid off when



**Table 2.2** Differences between the ideal types of Fordism and neo-Fordism

Fordism	Neo-Fordism
<p><b>The labour process</b>                      Unskilled and semi-skilled workers                      Single tasks                      Job specialization                      Limited training</p>	<p>Multiskilled workers                      Multiple tasks                      Job demarcation                      Extensive on-the-job training</p>
<p><b>Labour relations</b>                      General or industrial unions                      Taylorism                      Centralized national pay bargaining</p>	<p>Absence of unions, 'company' unions                      'No-strike deals'                      'Human relations management'                      Decentralized, local plant-level bargaining</p>
<p><b>Industrial organization</b>                      Vertically integrated large companies</p>	<p>Quasi-vertical integration, i.e. subcontracting                      Decentralization, strategic alliances, growth of small businesses</p>
<p><b>Technology</b>                      Machinery dedicated to production of single products</p>	<p>Flexible production systems, CAD/CAM robotics, information technology</p>
<p><b>Organizing principles</b>                      Mass production of standardized products                      Economies of scale, resource driven                      Large buffer stocks of parts produced just-in-case                      Quality testing after assembly                      Defective parts concealed in stocks                      Cost reductions primarily through wage control</p>	<p>Small batch production                      Economies of scope, market driven                      Small stocks delivered 'just-in-time'                      Quality built into production process                      Immediate rejection of poor-quality components                      Competitiveness through innovation</p>
<p><b>Modes of consumption</b>                      Mass production of consumer goods                      Uniformity and standardization</p>	<p>Fragmented niche marketing                      Diversity</p>
<p><b>Locational characteristics</b>                      Dispersed manufacturing plants In spatial division of labour                      Regional functional specialization                      World-wide sourcing of components                      Growth of large industrial conurbations</p>	<p>Geographical clustering of industries in flexible industrial districts                      Agglomeration                      Components obtained from spatially proximate quasi-integrated firms                      Growth of 'new industrial spaces' in rural semi-peripheral areas</p>
<p><b>Role of the state</b>                      Keynesian Welfare State                      Demand management of economy                      State funded and state supplied                      Protection of the 'social wage'</p>	<p>The 'Workfare State'                      Encouragement of innovation and competition                      Privatization, deregulation                      Encouragement of self-reliance</p>
<p><b>Problems</b>                      Inflation                      Market saturation                      Poor-quality products                      Inflexibility                      Alienated workforce                      Divergence between rising wages and declining productivity growth                      Fiscal crisis of state</p>	<p>High rates of unemployment                      Labour market dualism                      Social polarization, exclusion and associated social tensions                      Instability of consumer confidence through economic insecurity                      Market volatility</p>

Source: adapted from Pinch (1997).



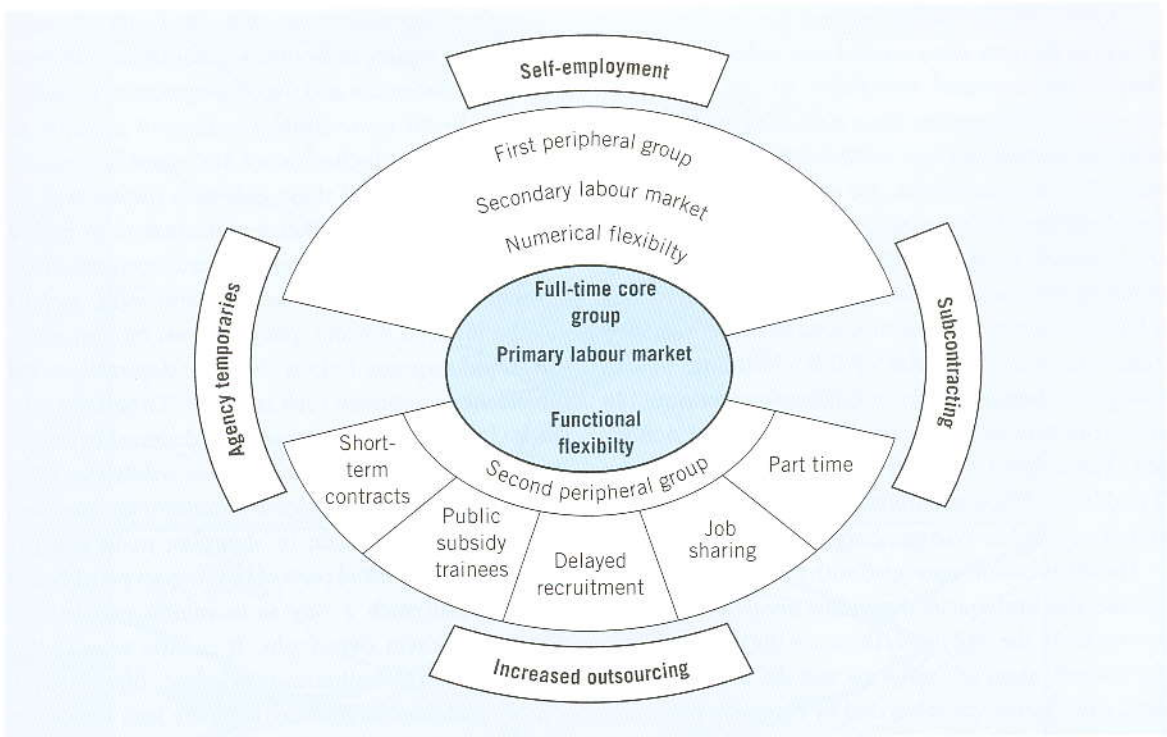


Figure 2.3 An idealized model of the flexible firm in a neo-Fordist economy.

Source: Atkinson (1985), Fig. 2.1, p. 19.

necessary, as is the case with part-time, temporary, agency or subcontract workers (also referred to as contingent workers). It has been suggested that this is leading to a dual labour market, as shown in Figure 2.3. In post-Fordist economies, firms compete less on the basis of cost and increasingly on the basis of factors such as reliability, style, innovation, and branding. Some have argued that these changes are such that they constitute a new regime of accumulation – often termed flexible accumulation.

At the core of the labour market are various workers who are rewarded for their functional flexibility by relatively secure well-paid jobs with good working conditions and company benefits. Surrounding this core, however, are various types of secondary, contingent or peripheral workers who exhibit numerical flexibility with limited rewards, job insecurity and relatively poor working conditions. Such increased use of ‘non-core’ workers such as part-timers, agency and temporary workers is sometimes termed *casualization*. This is an idealized model and there are many variations from

this structure; some core workers’ jobs are relatively insecure while many peripheral workers have job stability if they wish.

### Urban change under neo-Fordism

The consequences for urban change have been significant. One of the main consequences of neo-Fordist technologies and working practices is that far fewer people are needed to manufacture things. In addition, the production of well-established ‘mature’ products has often been shifted to low-cost locations outside the Western countries. The result has been massive *deindustrialization* and the consequent transformation of the classic industrial city. The decline of traditional heavy manufacturing industry has been especially pronounced in the industrial heartlands of Britain – the Midlands, the North, Wales and Scotland – and in the ‘rustbelt’ of the United States – including classic industrial cities such as Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit and Pittsburgh.



Parallel with this decline has been the creation of *new* industrial clusters, often termed **new industrial spaces**. Despite the increased availability of advanced telecommunications systems there is growing evidence that many interactions are best undertaken on a face-to-face basis. This is especially the case when complex items of knowledge have to be exchanged and where transactions are dependent upon trust. One way of reducing the costs of transactions and facilitating face-to-face interactions is for these interacting organizations to cluster together. There are many examples of this clustering: Silicon Valley and Orange County in California and Route 128 around Boston in the United States, the M4 Corridor and 'Motor Sport Valley' in the United Kingdom, the 'Third Italy' (Bologna, Emilia and Arezzo), Grenoble in France and Baden-Württemberg in Germany.

The urbanization associated with these clusters differs considerably in character depending upon the industries involved. On the one hand, there are the rapidly growing 'sunbelt' areas of California and the South West of the United States, characterized by extensive suburban development and conservative political regimes. Then there are clusters of industrial sectors such as finance, design and marketing in major cities such as New York, Paris, Milan and London. Finally, in Europe there are regions specializing in products such as shoes, ceramics and textiles that have left-wing local governments.

Los Angeles is often cited as the exemplar of the product of urbanization under the new regime of flexible accumulation and the harbinger of the future urban form. Soja (1989) has described variously the **postmodern global metropolis**, **cosmopolis** and **post-metropolis** (1997) – a physically and socially fragmented metropolis (see Figure 2.4). Los Angeles has experienced a strong process of recentralization in the form of the command centres linked into the new global economy together with a strong process of decentralization in the form of numerous subcentres and **edge cities**. These are not the exclusively affluent suburbs of an earlier era but show enormous variations in character, some being industrial and commercial, and others being relatively poor and/or with distinctive ethnic minorities (see also Box 2.3). Soja (1992) develops this theme into the concept of **exopolis** – a city that has been turned inside out. In such an environment it is difficult for individuals to have a sense of belonging to a coherent single entity.

Another important theme associated with urbanization under a regime of flexible accumulation is increasing social polarization and the development of protective measures by the more affluent sections of society in an environment in which violence and crime are routine. One manifestation of these defensive measures is the growth of so-called **bunker architecture** (also termed 'citadel', 'fortified' and 'paranoid' architecture): urban developments with gates, barriers and walls, security guards, infrared sensors, panic rooms, motion detectors, rapid response links with police departments and surveillance equipment such as CCTV. These form what Davis (1990) terms a 'scanscape', all designed to exclude those regarded as undesirable. These systems are often established in residential areas but exclusionary measures may also be undertaken in shopping malls and city centres. In some central parts of Los Angeles park benches are curved in such a way as to inhibit people from sleeping on them over night. It is little wonder that Davis talks of the 'militarization' of city life. However, it is not just the marginalized who are kept under surveillance in the contemporary city. New technologies centred around credit and loyalty cards, computers and pay-for-service facilities mean that corporations and governments can access vast amounts of information about people's travel and consumption habits.

## Postindustrial society under neo-Fordism

A key weakness of the regulationist concepts of Fordism and neo-Fordism is their neglect of services. Ironically the **postindustrial society** thesis emerged from experience in the 1950s and 1960s when Fordism was at its zenith. Bell (1973) pointed out that heavy industries were beginning to decrease in importance while employment in service industries was growing, especially in sectors such as finance, business services, retailing, leisure and entertainment industries. The implications of this shift, Bell suggested, pointed to profound shifts in social structure and social relations.

The geographical patterns of this service growth have been complex but a key trend has once again been development away from traditional manufacturing centres. The growth of the service economy has had important consequences for the social geography



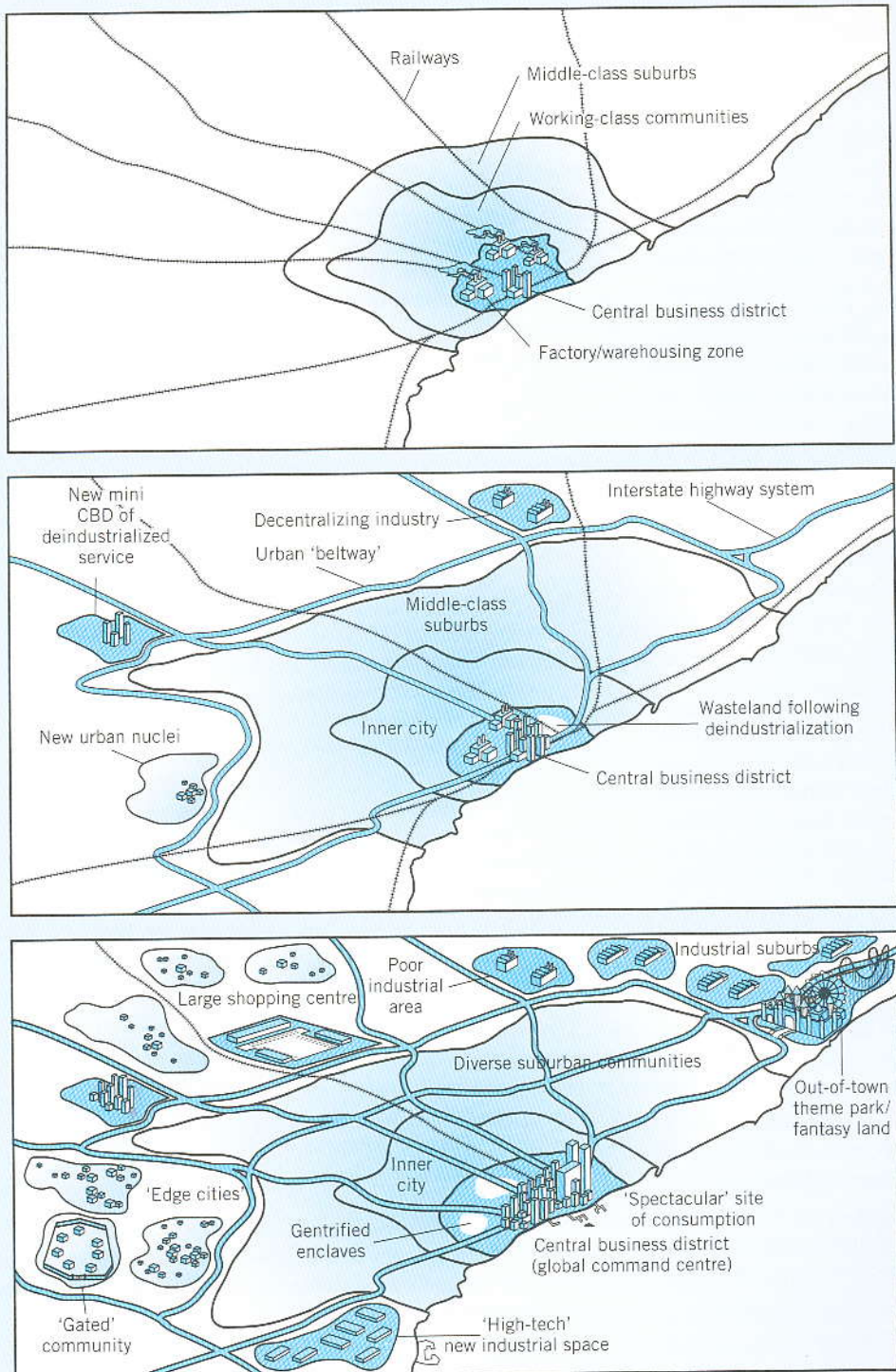


Figure 2.4 The transition from the classic industrial city, circa 1850–1945 (upper) to the Fordist city, circa 1945–1975 (middle) and neo-Fordist metropolis, circa 1975– (lower).



## Box 2.3

### Key trends in urban social geography – ‘edge cities’

A major change in Western cities in recent decades has been the creation of urban development on the fringes of existing suburbs. These developments reflect the decentralization, not only of people, but also employment, services and retailing from inner-city areas. In some cases these urban areas have become functionally independent of existing central city areas, effectively creating new settlements. However, such cities often lack autonomy, being on the fringes of a number of existing political and administrative jurisdictions. Typically, such developments have taken place on the intersections of major highway systems, as in the much-cited case of Tyson's Corner on the edge of Washington, DC.

In the United States public attention was drawn to the phenomenon of these ‘outer cities’ in a book written by the journalist Joel Garreau (1992). He coined the term ‘edge city’, although various other neologisms have been used (e.g. ‘stealth city’, ‘technoburb’, ‘suburban downtown’, ‘perimeter city’ and ‘cyberbia’). Garreau defined edge cities as having the following characteristics:

- ▶ 460 000 square metres (5 million square feet) or more of leaseable office space;
- ▶ 56 000 square metres (600 000 square feet) or more of leaseable retail space;
- ▶ more jobs than bedrooms (to indicate that these are more than dormitory suburbs of commuters);
- ▶ perceived by the population as being one place;

- ▶ nothing like a ‘city’ as recently as 30 years ago.

Garreau's book celebrated the lifestyles of residents in edge cities whom he portrayed as innovative pioneers of new ways of living, combining the best of urban and rural lifestyles. This might account for the good sales of the book, since it gave suburban dwellers (long derided by many urban commentators as conservative and dull!) a flattering view of themselves. More recently, researchers at Virginia Tech's Metropolitan Institute have shown how metropolitan decentralization has gone well beyond ‘edge cities’ to produce ‘boom-burbs’ – especially fast-growing suburban municipalities that lack a dense business core – and ‘edgeless cities’ – sprawling swaths of low-density commercial and residential development that lack a clear physical boundary.

Recognizing a different context, researchers have been cautious in applying notions of ‘edge cities’ in Europe, preferring instead to use the terms ‘edge urban areas’ or ‘peripheral urban areas’. These terms indicate that European edge cities are typically less autonomous than their US counterparts. There is much greater planning of such urban forms in Europe, with local governments and the public sector being much more active partners in their creation (see Phelps and Parsons, 2003). Nevertheless, edge cities are the subject of intense interest throughout the Western world, especially since some of them are the source of innovation in high-technology industries (and even if they have sometimes been derided as ‘Nerdistans’!).

### Key concepts associated with edge cities (see Glossary)

Decentralization, exopolis, metropolitan fragmentation, multiple nuclei model, new industrial spaces.

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### Links with other chapters

Chapter 9: Suburban neighbourhoods: community transformed?, Splintering urbanism and the diversity of suburbia

Chapter 13: Accessibility to services and amenities, Decentralization and accessibility to services, Urban social sustainability



of cities. One of the most important developments has been the tendency to intensify social polarization. Whereas the traditional manufacturing industries tended to have substantial proportions of relatively well-paid, blue-collar, middle-income jobs, services tend to be characterized by both relatively high-paying and relatively low-paying jobs.

Another consequence of service growth has been increasing competition among cities for employment. It is argued that whereas heavy manufacturing industries tended to be firmly rooted in particular places (because of their proximity to certain raw materials, their dependence upon large amounts of capital investment in buildings, machinery, equipment and specialized skilled labour), service industries are much more mobile. The reason for this mobility is that the basic ingredients for many routine service industries – suitable office properties and large supplies of female workers – are much more geographically dispersed. Consequently, there is much more locational freedom on the part of service companies. The result has been vigorous campaigns by city authorities to attract major service employers.

## Globalization

Globalization is usually associated with the growing importance of multinational (or transnational) corporations operating in more than one country. In fact, large companies such as Ford have long manufactured outside their home country, producing goods for local consumption in distant markets. Globalization is thus a more recent process in which the operations of transnationals, both in the spheres of production and marketing, are increasingly *integrated* on a global scale. Thus, products are made in multiple locations from components manufactured in many different places.

Globalization is also associated with the development of a broader global *culture*. This is a controversial idea but essentially involves the widespread diffusion of Western values of materialism. Globalization can also be seen in the popularity of Hollywood films throughout the world and the increased popularity of 'world music'. It is therefore argued that globalization involves the homogenization of the culture – the development of cultural interrelatedness throughout the globe. This process has been encouraged by new telecommunications

systems that facilitate rapid transmission of information and images around the world. However, there has been a resistance to these global forces through the assertion of local cultural identities – most notably in the form of Islamic fundamentalism and various popular movements for regional political autonomy.

Globalization has had a number of profound effects upon urban social geography. Most notably, it has led to the emergence of so-called **world cities** – command centres such as New York, London and Tokyo that are home to concentrations of key players in the world financial system together with the business services that support them (Sassen (2001) has termed these **global cities** to denote city development at a particular phase in history). Sassen argues that one of the main features of global cities is social polarization. In large measure, this inequality stems from the characteristics of financial services; they are dependent upon a narrow stratum of relatively well-paid workers who require many consumer services such as restaurants, shops and cleaners, which in turn utilize large numbers of low-paid workers. This social inequality is also manifest in the social geography of global cities. Housing for affluent workers in financial services may be built in close proximity to poor-quality housing, as in the revitalized London Docklands. The social tensions associated with such inequality mean that the affluent may need to resort to many protective strategies (see Chapter 3).

While few cities can claim true global status as command centres in the world economy, there is a sense in which all urban centres are now global for they are all affected by events and decisions outside of their boundaries. Furthermore, they are all engaged in a fierce competition to attract capital into their areas. There is therefore a close interaction between global and local forces – a process that has been dubbed **glocalization** and which is also referred to as the **global–local nexus**.

Another important change in city development, which has become a new orthodoxy throughout much of the Western world, and which leads on to issues that will be considered in greater detail in Chapter 3, is the growth of culturally driven urban regeneration (Paddison and Miles, 2006). This approach takes many forms (Mommas, 2004); it may incorporate various types of support for culture as it is consumed (e.g. in galleries and exhibition centres) or as culture is produced (e.g.





A command centre in the global economy: downtown Chicago. Photo Credit: Michael Edema Leary.

in support for various economic sectors). As manufacturing has declined, cities have sought to promote the so-called cultural industries (e.g. the performing arts, design, advertising, entertainment, media and publishing), often in older ex-industrial areas sometimes known as 'cultural quarters' (Bell and Jayne, 2004). The value of such policies is the source of considerable debate (Cooke and Lazzarotti, 2008).

## Knowledge economies and the informational city

Some of the newest ideas relating to the changing economic context of city development point to the growing importance of *knowledge* in contemporary economies. Various terms have been used to summarize these developments including *knowledge-based*

*capitalism* (Florida, 1995); the *network society* (Castells, 1996); *reflexive accumulation* (Lash and Urry, 1994); *soft capitalism* (Thrift, 1998) and the *weightless world* (Coyle, 1997). All these theories point in various ways to the increasing importance of knowledge in economic development.

First, there is the ever-increasing and rapidly changing technological sophistication of both goods and services. Thus, products such as computers, cameras, and mobile phones become superseded by more complex models in a very short period of time. Keeping up with this rapid pace of change puts a great premium on knowledge acquisition by manufacturers. Second, the design or fashion element of products is becoming increasingly important, especially in a world in which there are an increasing number of specialized niche markets. As in the case of technological change, these



## Box 2.4

## Key thinkers in urban social geography – Manuel Castells

One of the key thinkers in urban social geography in the past three decades has been Manuel Castells. Born in Spain, Castells' radical activities as a student forced him to flee the dictatorship of General Franco and move to France. However, his participation in the riots of May 1968 led to expulsion by the French government (although he was subsequently pardoned) (Hubbard, 2004). Castells' ideas on public service provision (what he termed 'collective consumption'), as developed in his book *The Urban Question*, were enormously influential in the 1970s (see also Chapter 5). However, his move to the University of California, Berkeley, was associated with less radical work on local protest groups (*The City and the Grassroots*, 1983) and information technology (*The Informational City*, 1989). He also undertook some of the earliest work on gay spaces (Castells and Murphy, 1982).

Castells was one of the first scholars to highlight the role of new forms of information technology in enhancing inequalities between social groups in cities. This he did in three volumes with the general title *The Information Age*: Volume 1 was subtitled *The Rise of the Network Society* (1996), Volume 2 was subtitled *The Power of Identity* (1997) and Volume 3 was subtitled *End of Millennium* (1998).

In these writings Castells argued that we should not envisage cities as static places defined by fixed boundaries, but instead as the sites of what he calls

'spaces of flows' – ever-increasing circulations of peoples, ideas, images and consumer goods. Castells' approach is one of a number of recent 'fluidity-type' conceptualizations in social science that envisage social life as consisting of movement and flows. Castells links these ideas with those who suggest that globalization is eroding the distinctiveness of particular places. A good example of this erosion is the bland 'international style' that pervades many 'postmodern' city skylines as well as the interiors of many public buildings such as airports, hotels and shopping malls.

According to Castells, the global 'network society' consists of three levels. First, there is the infrastructural level, the information technology that permits rapid knowledge flows around the world. Second, there are the global translation centres, the 'world cities' that provide the structures for the flow of knowledge. Finally, there is the managerial elite that operationalizes this global economy.

As with many original, influential, thinkers, Castells' writings can be challenging at times. Furthermore, some of his earlier work on issues such as collective consumption, though highly influential in their day, have been heavily criticized and found wanting. His recent ideas on the network society have also been heavily criticized (see Crang, 2002; Smart, 2000). Nevertheless, Castells' ideas remain highly influential and are essential reading for any serious student of the city.

### Key concepts associated with Manuel Castells (see Glossary)

Collective consumption, informational city, megacities, network society, spaces of flows.

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### Links with other chapters

Chapter 7. Box 4 How useful is network analysis?

Chapter 10: Box 2 what are the merits of relational geography?

Chapter 11: Homosexuality and the city

Chapter 13: Service sector restructuring

fashion changes seem to be taking place at an ever-increasing rate. This tendency to make products outdated by changes in fashion, even though they may function adequately, is sometimes called semiotic redundancy

(after the term semiotics – the study of signs – see Chapter 3). Finally, there is a growing recognition of the need to integrate design with the engineering and production end of manufacturing. All of these processes



mean that firms no longer tend to gain competitive advantage on the basis of price alone but increasingly rely upon factors such as quality, performance, design and marketing.

Closely linked to the above developments has been the evolution of new technologies in the sphere of telecommunications – teleconferencing, faxes, email, the Internet and various other specialized computer network systems. These new technologies mean that it is now possible for many routine and ‘back office’ functions to be undertaken in low-cost labour areas in peripheral

regions of the Western economies and in less-developed and newly industrializing countries. However, there is growing evidence that digital telecommunications technologies are creating a division between favoured cities linked into global command centres and less-favoured cities in older, previously industrialized areas. Within cities, too, there is evidence of a ‘digital divide’ that intensifies and reinforces social polarization. Some of the most influential ideas relating to these new social processes and their effect on cities have come from Manuel Castells (see Boxes 1.2 and 2.4).

## Box 2.5

### Key films related to urban social geography – Chapter 2

*Among Giants* (1998) An amusing comedy written by the author of *The Full Monty* dealing with similar issues – the role of men in a post-Fordist, subcontracted sector of the economy characterized by deskilling and temporary work.

*Blue Collar* (1978) One of the very few films to show the problems facing workers on a Fordist assembly line in Detroit.

*Bonfire of the Vanities* (1990) Based on the best-selling novel by Tom Wolfe, this film highlights the social and ethnic segregation that accompanied economic change in the United States in the 1980s.

*Bread and Roses* (2000) A film from the much-acclaimed veteran left-wing director Ken Loach dealing with the exploitation of the Latino underclass in California.

*City of Hope* (1991) A film directed by John Sayles showing the complex set of conflicts engendered by a city facing economic decline (in this case New Jersey City).

*The Deer Hunter* (1978) The middle section of this film is an extremely

harrowing portrayal of the Vietnam War (although the Russian roulette theme is apparently entirely fictional). Nevertheless, the first and last sections, set in a Pennsylvanian steel town, illustrate the powerful links forged between industrial workers and their local milieu.

*The Full Monty* (1997) An extremely funny, but also at times touching, film about the trials and tribulations facing a group of redundant male steelworkers seeking new employment as strippers! Illuminates in a not too serious manner some of the challenges to male identities brought about by deindustrialization and the rise of the new service economy.

*Matewan* (1987) This film is not set in a major city, but instead is located in a West Virginian coal-mining community in the 1920s. Nevertheless, a complex portrayal of class conflict in the United States.

*On the Waterfront* (1954) An iconic movie focusing on the social relations based around a distinctive locality-based culture: in this case involving racketeering among dock workers in

New Jersey. The first of a series of films categorised as ‘social realism’.

*Roger and Me* (1989) Controversial because of what some regard as director Michael Moore’s ‘fast and loose’ attitude to the truth, nevertheless, a documentary portrayal of the social consequences of deindustrialization in Flint, Michigan that is at times extremely funny but also frequently sad and troubling.

*Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960) Another classic ‘kitchen sink’ drama focusing on the constrained lives of working-class factory workers in northern England in the 1950s.

*Traffic* (2002) A brilliant thriller dealing with the international drugs economy but also many of the issues considered in this book – the illegal economy, social polarization, violence and transnational urbanism.

*Wall Street* (1987) A typical Oliver Stone film full of melodrama and ‘jumpy’ cinematography, but nevertheless, a watchable portrayal of the ethos of greed that surrounded the deregulation of financial services in the 1980s.




## 2.4 Conclusions

It should be clear by now that the contemporary processes discussed in this chapter, neo-Fordism, service sector growth, globalization and new telecommunications systems, are all highly interrelated. None of these perspectives in isolation provides a comprehensive explanation for the changing economic context of city growth. However, taken together they begin to illuminate some of the factors that have so radically altered

city structures in recent years. Cities are no longer single entities, unified around production and consumption, linked into elaborate national hierarchies. Instead, they are increasingly multicentred phenomena, based around both producer and consumer services, and are linked into global networks underpinned by new telecommunications technologies. These developments have impacted upon, and have been influenced by, the cultures of cities – which are considered in the next chapter.

### Chapter summary

- 
- 2.1 Preindustrial cities were essentially small-scale 'walking' cities. Although they displayed an element of vertical differentiation based on social divisions within the districts of the occupational guilds, their main division appears to have been that between the elite who lived in the exclusive central core and the mass of population who lived around the periphery of the city.
  - 2.2 Industrial capitalism inverted the structure of the preindustrial city by forcing the poor into poor-quality, inner-city districts while the middle and upper classes retreated to the urban periphery. The polarized class structure of the early industrial cities was gradually replaced by more complex social divisions that made the capitalist class less easily identifiable.
  - 2.3 The 'long boom' of Fordism brought about a relatively harmonious linking of mass production and consumption that was manifest in extensive suburbanization. The numerous problems associated with the Fordist economic system led to various neo-Fordist developments that have been manifest in new urban forms based around agglomerating industries.
  - 2.4 Globalization has had profound impacts upon cities, leading to the emergence of world cities, centres of corporate and financial control. It has also fostered increased competition between cities and intensified social polarization.
  - 2.5 New telecommunications systems have allowed the exchange of ever more complex information over greater distances. However, as yet, they have not been associated with a decline in the strength of cities as centres for information production and exchange.



## Key concepts and terms



bunker architecture	glocalization	regulation theory
casualization	Keynesianism	'scanscape'
circuit of production	labour theory of value	semiotic redundancy
commodity fetishism	'long boom'	social division of labour
contingent workers	mode of production	social relations of production
cosmopolis	mode of regulation	social wage
cultural industries	multinational	spatial fix
deindustrialization	neo-Fordism	superstructure
edge city	neoliberalism	surplus value
exchange value	new industrial space	Taylorism
exopolis	numerical flexibility	technical division of labour
flexible accumulation	postindustrial society	transnational
forces of production	postmetropolis	use value
Fordism	postmodern global metropolis	welfare state
global cities	preindustrial city	welfare statism
globalization	reflexive accumulation	world cities
global-local nexus	regime of accumulation	

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