

Ankara University  
Faculty of Languages, History and Geography  
Department of Geography

## GGR203 URBAN GEOGRAPHY

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# PARADIGMS AND URBAN GEOGRAPHY

The content of this course is exactly compatible with the program in which the same course is taught in Turkish, and the open course materials prepared by Prof. Dr. E. Murat Özgür are used.

## Paradigm

- Paradigm is the perspective on how scientific activity should be done. It is an inclusive concept that encompasses epistemology, theory and philosophy along with methods (Punch, 2011: 28).
- **Paradigm is a set of principles, methods and assumptions that determine how individuals should look at the events and phenomena around them and what they should see in an area and in a certain period of time.**

- **Earth Science (Physical) Tradition**
- **Human-Environment Tradition**
- **Regional Tradition**
- **Spatial Tradition and Positivism**

- Many geographers were interested in the physical environment of the earth (especially landforms and climate) at the beginning of the 20th century. Urban geography was a subfield with little research.
- The physical environment of cities was of interest, and geographers focused on natural disasters such as floods, mudslides, and hurricanes.
- A notable research topic was also on urban heat islands (urban climatology), which are now widely used in local weather forecasting, resulting from recording higher temperatures in the city center than in the surrounding rural areas.

- Environmental determinism in geography, which goes back to Aristotle, is based on the idea that the physical environment and climate determine and control the development of human civilization.
- According to this approach, nature sets limits and possibilities for human activities. But human behavior is expressed through cultural traditions that create certain lifestyles.
- The ideas of Tower (1905), who argued that natural conditions were the main controlling element in the development of crowded population centers, or Semple (1911), who claimed that a mountainous environment was an obstacle to urban development, were derived from this approach.

- In the regional geography tradition, research is descriptive rather than analytical, and often has a historical perspective; focuses on a single city, emphasizing how the city grew and developed. All the important physical and human characteristics of the city are presented as a monograph.
- Urban geography studies in Turkey are largely built on this tradition.
- Although the regional approach provided the accumulation of many city-specific geography studies, it also caused urban geography to stay away from the mainstream of social sciences for a long time.

- The first major paradigm (scientific approach) change affecting urban geography reflected the desire to make geographic research more scientific. This led to the introduction of the philosophy of positivism in human geography.
- In developed countries, since the 1950s, the spatial approach gradually replaced the regional tradition in urban geography.
- Spatial analysis/positivism includes developing theories, hypotheses, statistical inference, numerical methods and mathematical models (Quantitative Revolution).

- The positivist approach was also at the center of urban building models that entered geography from neoclassical economics.
- These models are based on the Homo Economicus assumption, or the economic rationality of human behavior.
- This understanding argued that individual decisions were based on the goal of maximizing utility (usually in time and money), minimizing costs and maximizing benefits.
- Quantitative Revolution;
  - 1) Statistical and mathematical technique
  - 2) Theoretical
  - 3) Definitional

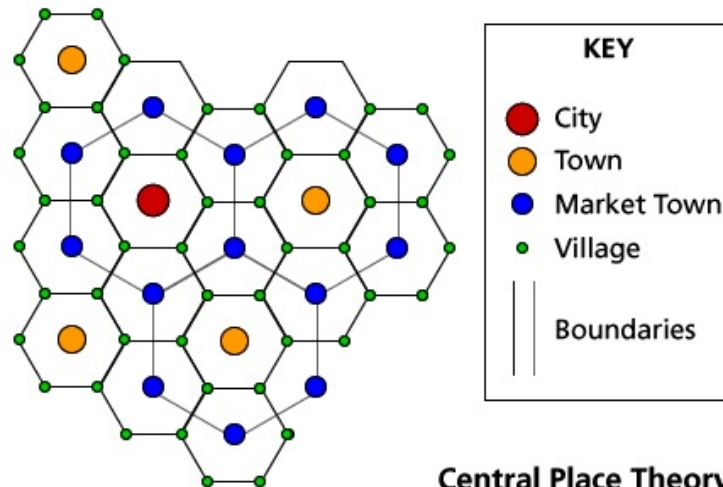


- Few geographers have done research in the spatial analysis tradition from the 1920s to the 1950s. The first important precursor to this tradition was **Robert Platt's (1928) "Microgeography"**.
- The study named **"Law of the Primate City"** made **Mark Jefferson (1939)** the most well-known urban geographer and also formed the basis for research on urban size distributions in the 1950s and 1960s.
- The urban spatial structure model (polycentric model), which **Harris and Ullman (1945)** revealed, still maintains its existence in contemporary urban geography and urban sociology books.

- Three German scientists, the geographer **Walter Christaller** (1933), the economist **August Lösch** (1938) and **Alfred Weber** (1909) had a great influence on urban geography with the books they published.
- **Christaller's central place theory in Southern Germany, Lösch's economic location analysis and Weber's industrial location theory** have been used and cited in subsequent studies for many years.



WALTER CHRISTALLER  
1893–1969



Torsten Hägerstrand



- **Torsten Hägerstrand's** (1953) work titled "Innovation Diffusion as a Spatial Process" was also very influential in the field of urban geography. Hägerstrand's concept of spatial diffusion has been the scene of wide-ranging applications such as Christaller's theory of central place and has been influenced by theoretical, analytical and quantitative interpretations.

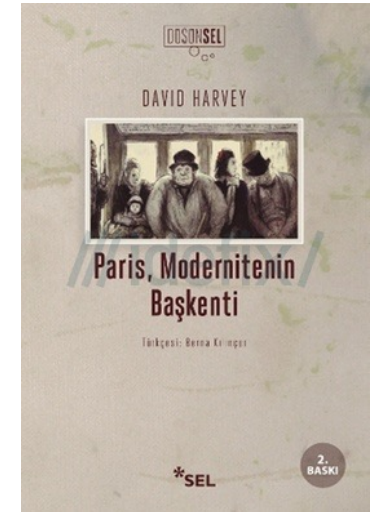
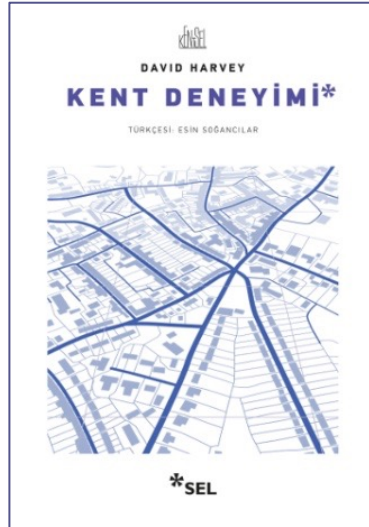
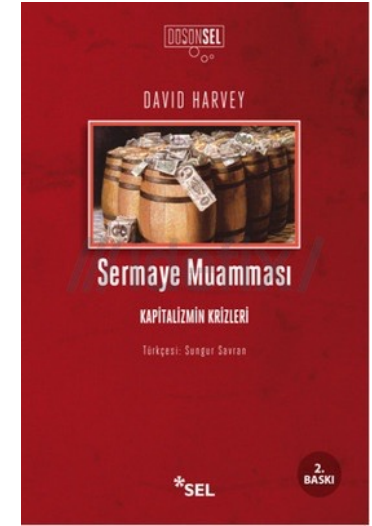
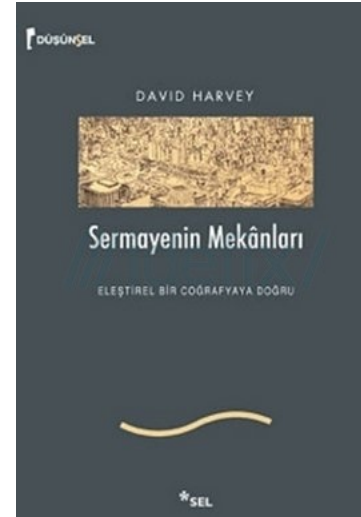
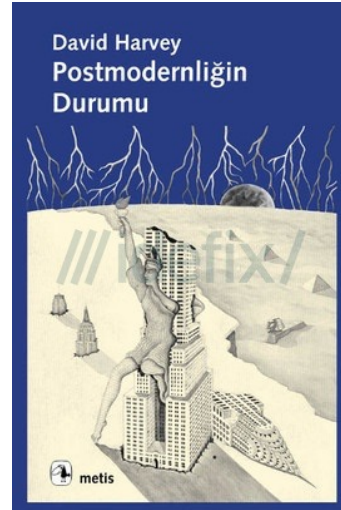
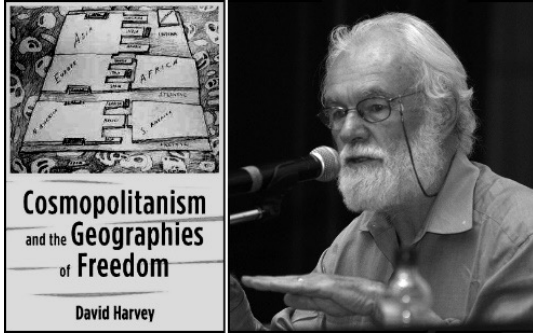
Peter Haggett



- In the study titled "Locational Analysis in Human Geography" by the British geographer **Peter Haggett** (1966), the articles written on spatial analysis were made sense and new concepts and methods were introduced to geographers.

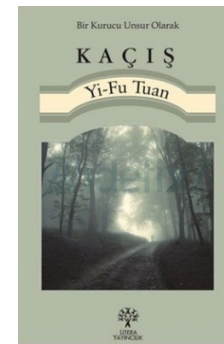
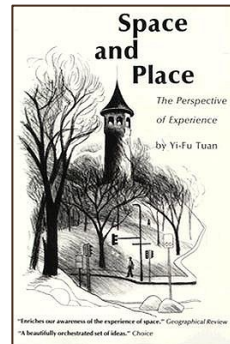
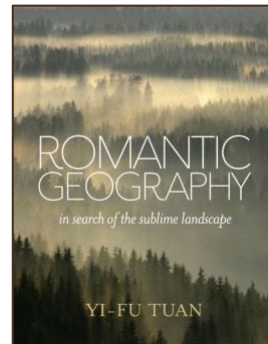
- Representatives: **Jullian Wolpert, Reginald Golledge, Larry Brown ve Gerald Rushton.**
- Behavioral approach emphasized the individual's learning about different city parts, making geographical choices and making decisions, evaluating risks and uncertainties, and attitudes and expectations related to place regarding daily spatial behavior.
- **Urban geographers have used mental mapping techniques to examine many issues such as migration, residential mobility, consumer behavior, housing preferences, neighborhood perception and city image.**

- The Marxist geographical view, which began at Clark University in 1969 with the publication of *Antipode*, a radical geography journal, has spread over time. Richard Peet and David Harvey pioneered the introduction of Marxism into geography.
- **In their research, Marxist geographers emphasized capitalist production and labor relations, the root causes of urban poverty, discrimination against women and minorities, inequality of access to urban social services, and Third World underdevelopment.**
- The political economy approach has had a major impact on urban geography and has provided a real understanding of the economic and political forces underlying urban change.





- The humanist approach is not concerned with a theoretical perspective and testing hypotheses; on the contrary, it is concerned with values (love of place, meaning of place) towards attitudes, perceptions and appearances.
- Humanistic geography tries to obtain a humanistic world understanding by examining human relations with its structure, people's geographical behaviors, perceptions and thoughts about space and place.
- Representatives: Yi-Fu Tuan, Anne Buttimer, Douglas C.D. Pocock, Edward Relph, David Seamon, Edward Casey, Jeff Malpas, James Duncan, David Ley, Marwyn Samuels, Susan Smith, Graham Rowles, John Western.



- **Place attachment** refers to a tendency that people generally share in their interactions with places and the emotional bond they experience towards the place.
- **Place identity**, on the other hand, indicates that the meanings of place and place become a part of the self-concept by pointing to the process of belonging and appropriation in the experience of people with space and the development of their attachment to the place.





- Social theory opposes inductively derived facts and mathematical equations of spatial analysis and adopts a critical political perspective. The concepts of postmodernism have developed with an awareness arising from the discussions on social theory.
- Modernity has supported the idea of rational individual who accepts social moral norms based on reason and knowledge rather than religious authority. Postmodernism, on the other hand, does not accept rationality and understanding the general, while praising differences.
- Representatives: Michael Dear and Edward Soja.
- **Most of the urban geographers adopt postmodern thought as a different perspective towards understanding the city on the axis of diversity and inequality. In terms of the social geography of the city, a post-modern perspective argues that focusing on difference, originality and individuality will make us more sensitive to the needs and situations of all members of society.**

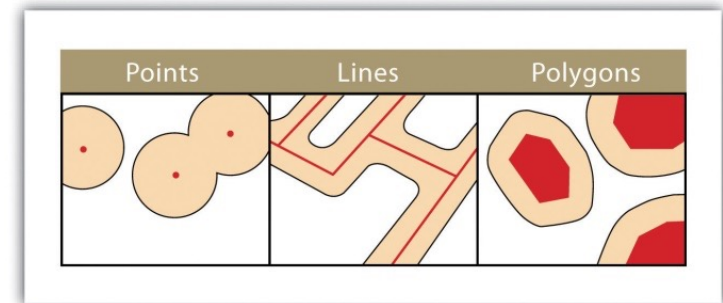
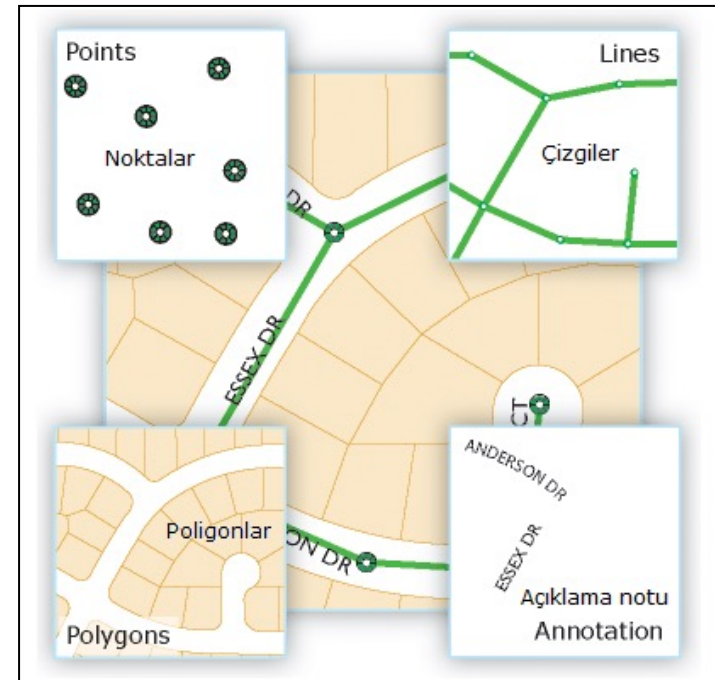
- In addition to the fundamental social divisions based on class and ethnicity, postmodernism has helped to pay attention to the gender and sexuality-based social divisions presented in **feminist geography and queer theory**.
- A postmodern perspective, and particularly queer theory, emphasizes the socially constructed character of sexual identities. Cities can be places of both oppression and liberation for those whose sexuality transcends traditional boundaries.
- Gay and lesbian spaces (which include clubs, retail outlets, and residential gentrification areas) have contributed to the establishment of alternative sexual identities, as well as the creation of a **pink economy** and community in many cities.

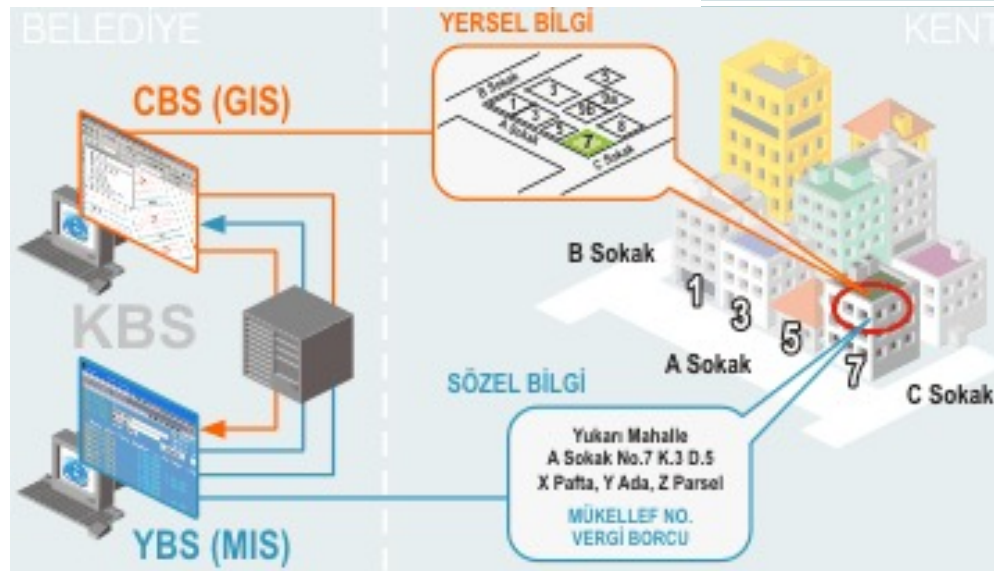
- In the urban context, post-colonial theory contributes to an understanding of cities in colonized societies. This is evident in the colonial traces of former colonial powers in the cities [such as the cultural and ethnic hybridity of Algerian immigrants in Paris, Puerto Ricans in New York, and Jamaicans in London].
- Likewise, the post-colonial perspective emphasizes the construction and rebuilding of cities in the former colonies in a variety of practices, from promoting heritage preservation in Singapore to the conscious escape from the colonial past to the creation of a new capital city (Lilongwe) in Malawi.
- **The unique value of a post-colonial approach to urban studies is its sensitivity to the diversity of urban experience and its defense of a global perspective that sees different forms of urbanism as part of understanding the contemporary world.**

- Transnational urbanism perspective helps illuminate what is common in the diversity of our urban world. This approach focuses specifically on **transnational migration flows and cultural practices that connect people living in transnational space in sending and receiving localities.**
- **According to Smith (2001), the social networks of transnational migrants constitute one of the key circuits of communicative action that connects localities (specific local areas) across borders and creates translocal bonds across the world.**
- An example of this is the economic and cultural connections (such as remittances and communication flows between places) between small rural villages in Mexico and large US cities. In addition, the transnational political networks of immigrants in many countries can be evaluated in this context.

- **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)** is one of the fastest growing and current fields of geography. GIS expertise group, which was established by the American Association of Geographers (AAG) in 1986 in America, turned into the most crowded group of experts within a year, and urban geographers ranked second in this group.
- GIS emerged from traditional subfields of geography such as cartography, remote sensing, satellite image processing, computer science, and geodata.
- **Geographic Information Systems** are defined as software and hardware systems and design methods that support the collection, updating, analysis, modelling and output of all kinds of geographically (spatially) referenced data to solve complex planning and management problems.

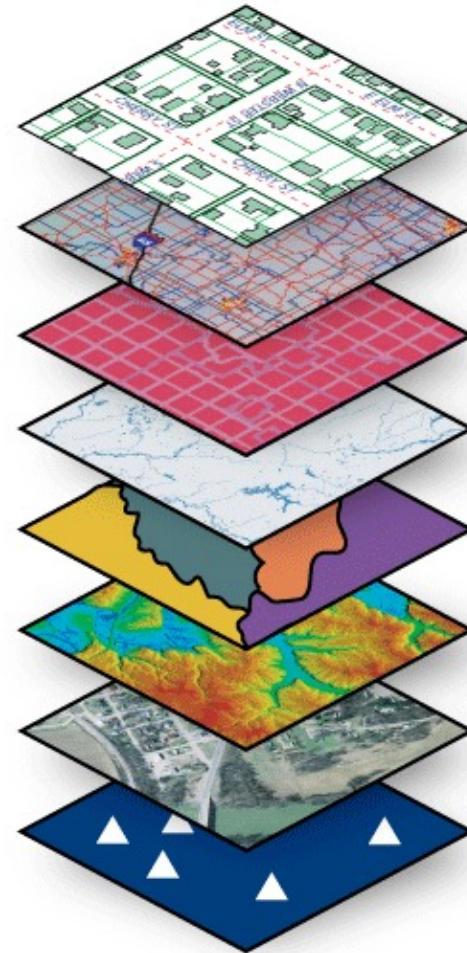
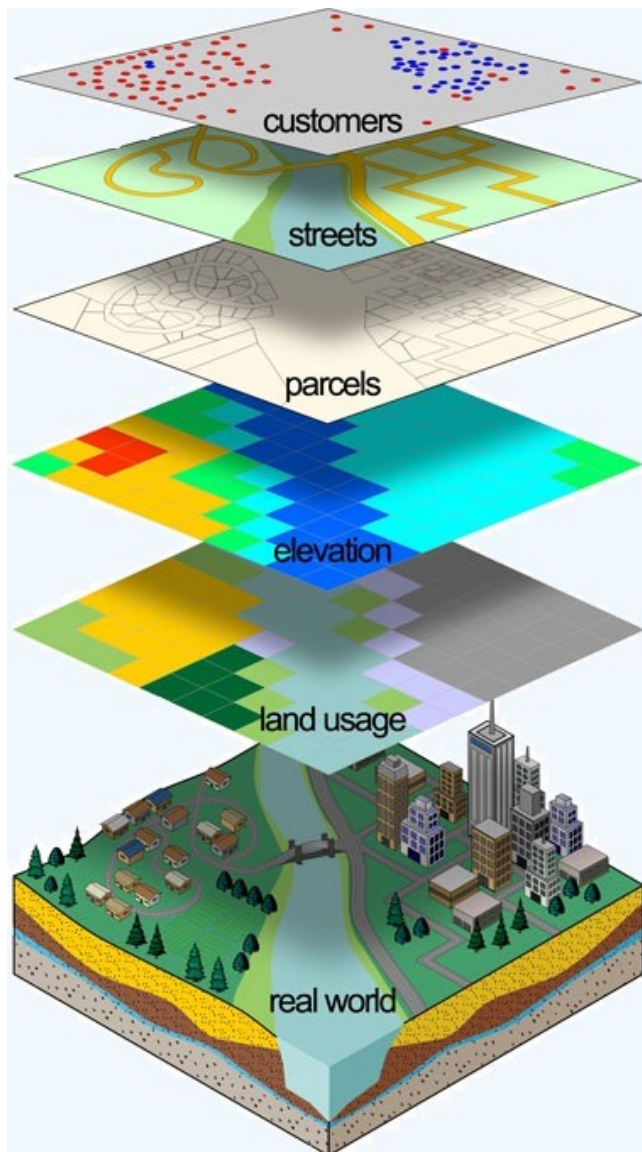
- In GIS, data is represented as **points, lines, and polygons**.
- Examples of data represented by coordinate points are retail sales per facility or consumer quantity.
- Roads, rivers, canals, electricity, water and sewer lines are depicted in linear format.
- Administrative or political borders, parcels are indicated by polygons.





- **Urban Information System** is the association of numerical and verbal information covering geographical features, people and socio-economic characteristics, upper texture and infrastructure, smart and layered maps, income and expenditure systems of a city. In addition, full coordination is ensured in data collection, information presentation and service production for faster and more accurate operation of decision and control mechanisms.







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