

# Creative Cities: Concepts, Critique, and Policy Issues

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# ECONOMIC STRUCTURE AND URBANIZATION: Three waves

- 1. The factory system: the classical factory town
- 2. Fordist mass production: the large industrial metropolis
- 3. Post-fordism, the “new” economy, cognitive-cultural capitalism: the creative city.

# Rise of a Cognitive-Cultural Economy

- 1. Digitization and the destandardization of work.
- 2. The new division of labor (Levy and Murnane).

# THE COGNITIVE-CULTURAL ECONOMY

- 1. Digital technologies
- 2. High levels of scientific/technical labor
- 3. Human intermediation of services
- 4. Symbolic outputs
- 5. Aestheticization of commodities

- The concomitant rise of “creativity” as an issue on academic and policy agendas:
- Creative economy.
- Creative class.
- Creative cities.

- Two views of creativity
- 1. The individual genius. Creativity as communication with the transcendent.
- 2. Creativity as a socially-situated and bounded process (Csikszentmihalyi; Bourdieu's *habitus*)

- Creativity is concretely situated in time-space frameworks (cf. modern theories of artistic and scientific production)
- Manchester 19<sup>th</sup> C.: Textile machinery
- Hollywood in the 1930s: Visual storytelling techniques.
- Silicon Valley: Semiconductor technologies.
- City of London: Financial instruments.
- “Creative class” idea is abstracted from specific social conditions that give real content to the notion of creativity

# (Flawed) theorizations of the new cognitive-cultural order

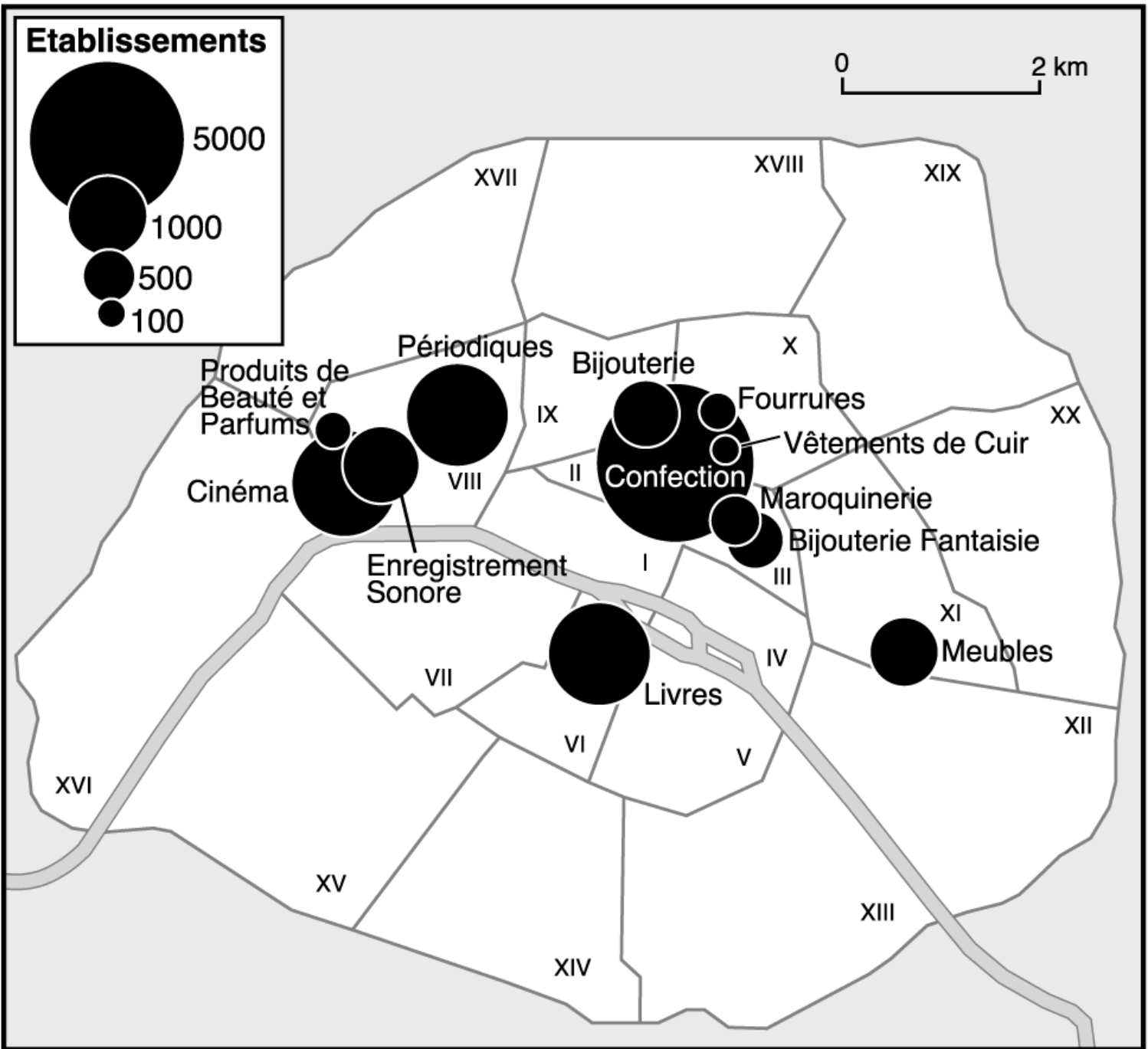
- Managerial discourse: flexibility, fast capitalism, human capital, empathy, creativity, adaptability, etc.
- Urban policy discourse: consumer city (Glaeser), entertainment machine (Clark), “creative city” (Florida, Landry).



**BEYOND THE CREATIVE CITY:  
THE EMERGING THIRD WAVE  
OF URBANIZATION**

# The driving forces behind urban agglomeration and growth

1. Networks of specialized but complementary producers
2. Local labor markets: skills, socialization
3. The creative field: learning and innovation, i.e. creativity is always mobilized in concrete ways (textiles industry, car industry, film industry)



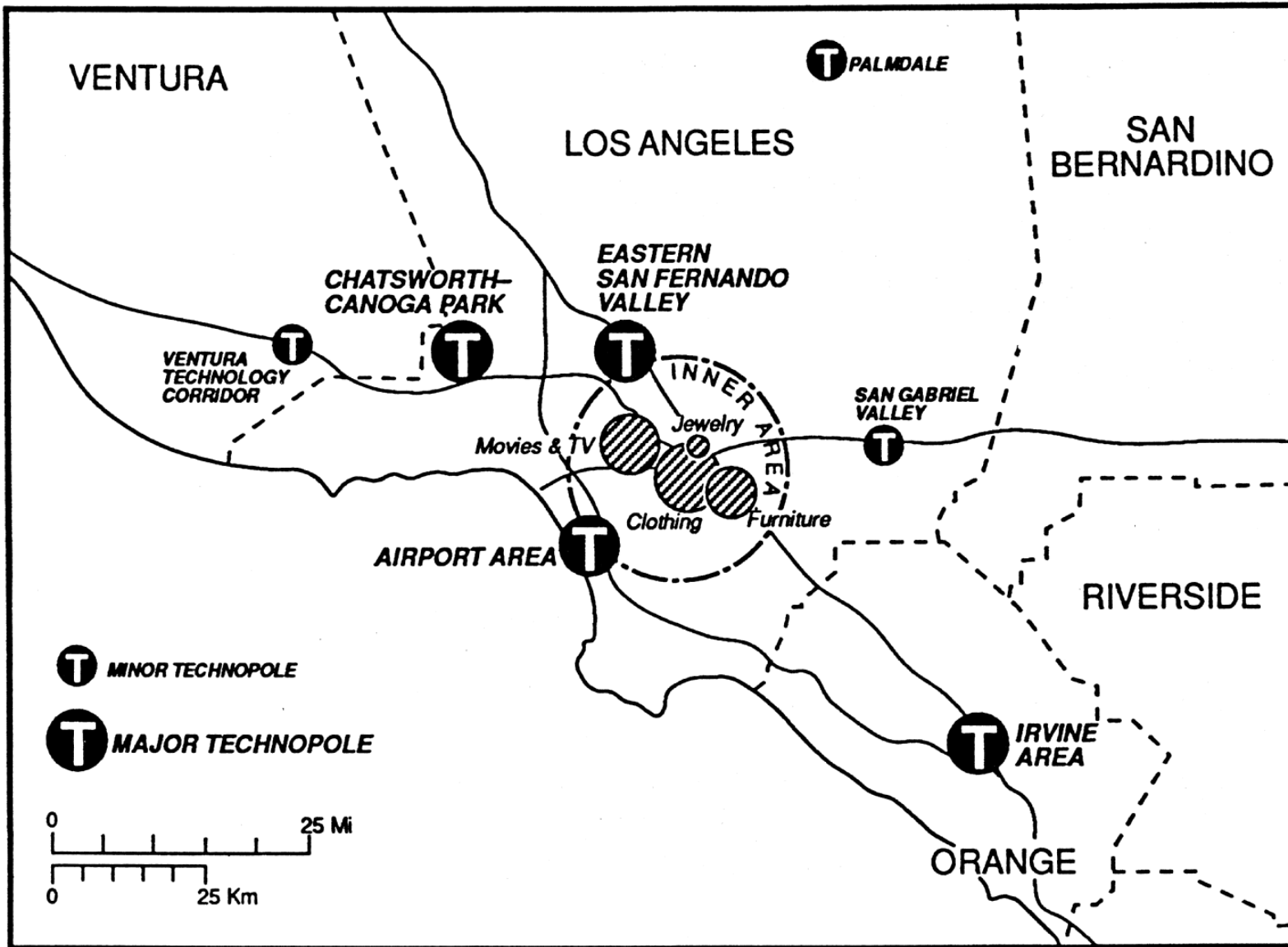
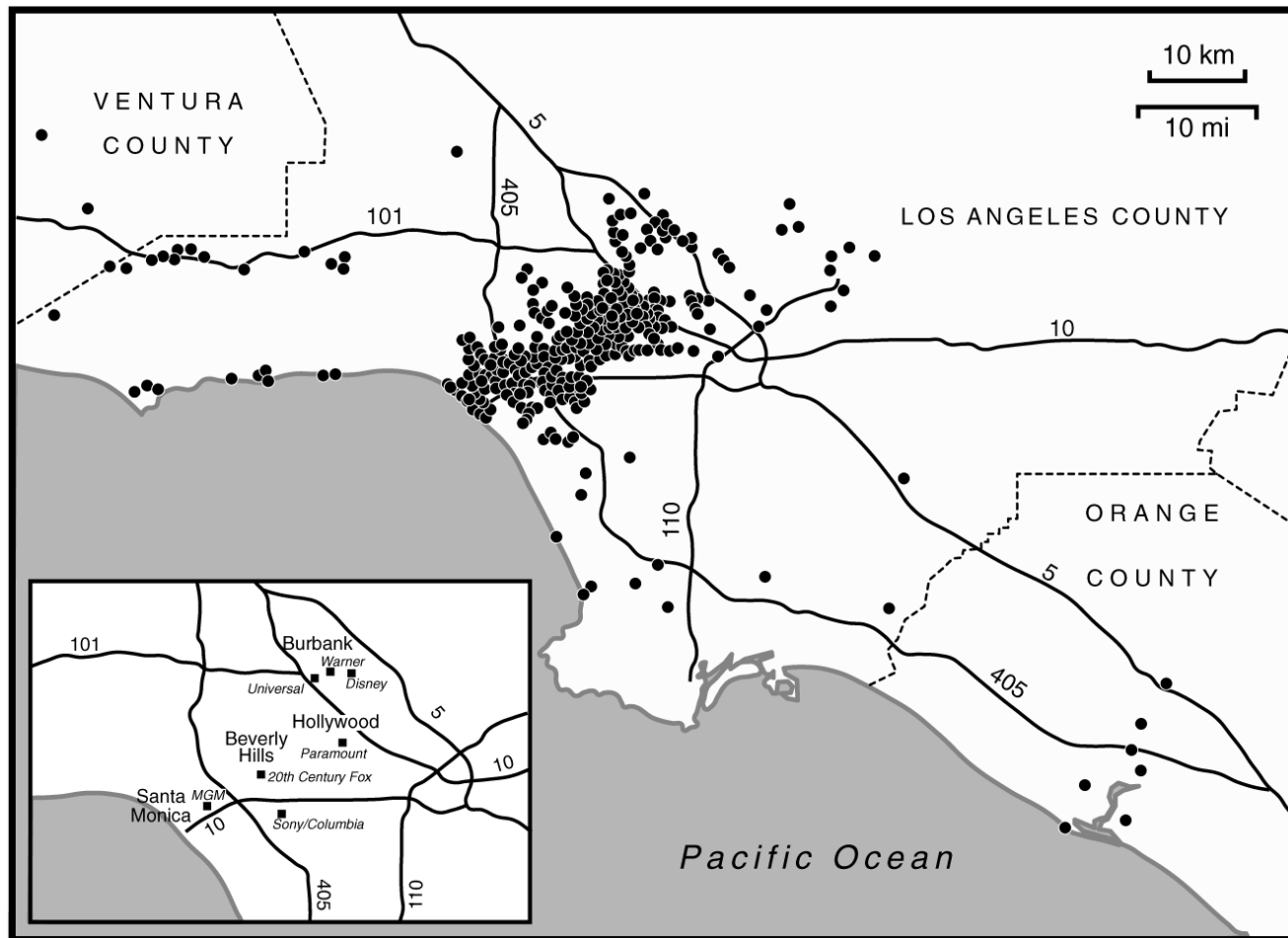


Figure 1: Principal Industrial Districts of the Greater Los Angeles Area

Motion-picture production companies in Southern California. The inset shows locations of the majors and selected place-names



# Clustering and competitive advantage

- Increasing returns to scale
- Agglomeration economies
- Monopoly powers of place (product differentiation and branding; Chamberlinian competition)

# A new balance between work, life, and leisure in the city

1. Interpenetration of upgraded production space and gentrified social space
2. Proliferation of cultural/entertainment facilities (Clark: “Entertainment machine”)
3. City of the spectacle (Debord)
4. Iconic architecture and recycling of the built environment: Bilbao Guggenheim, Westergasfabriek, Petronas Towers, London Docklands.

# THE POLICY PROBLEM

1. Bottom up
2. Harvest external economies (networks, labor markets, innovation)
3. Sustain wider social milieu (urban planning, transport, housing, etc.)
4. Institution-building in the interests of regional coordination: internalizing externalities



# The Richard Florida Recipe

Invest in amenities.

Encourage tolerance, openness and diversity.

Creative city emerges.

# BUT cf.:

1. The complex production machinery of the city
2. The recursive pathway of cumulative of causation in the urban economy.
3. The privileged role of productive activity in the spiral of interdependencies
4. Qualified workers are attracted by job opportunities more than amenities.

# The dark side of the dialectic: The new servile class

- Sweatshops
- Underclass
- Immigrant, often undocumented, labor
- Social segmentation
- Widening divide

- Low-wage immigrant workers who maintain the infrastructures and services on which the third wave cities depend.

- The decline of community
- The withdrawal of public services
- The retreat of the public sphere
- The narcissistic society

# Tasks ahead

- From the creative city of neoliberalism to the social democratic city:
- i.e. Prosperity and growth, PLUS citizenship, solidarity, sociability, political community
- From the “creative city” of possessive individualism and consumer capitalism toward the convivial city