


Chapter 10

Analysis of Demographic Changes in Urban Decline and Shrinkage

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ABSTRACT

This chapter is aimed to analyse the implications that demographic changes have on urban decline and shrinkage in a global environment. The analysis departs from the assumption that deindustrialization restructuring and demographic suburbanization processes contribute to economic urban decline and shrinkage. After reviewing the evolution of urban decline and shrinkage framed on a methodological approach, the study analyses in detail the different factors involved in any demographic and urban decline and shrinkage. It is concluded that deindustrialization restructuring, demographic decline, and suburbanization processes are crucial in urban shrinkage.

INTRODUCTION

Shrinking cities are a global phenomenon no limited to region, regime, or culture of industrial development. The appearance of shrinking cities phenomenon is global (Audirac 2007). The urban decline has been analyzed as a global phenomenon (Oswalt 2006), assuming there has been, and it had been a need for urban growth (Logan and Molotch 1987). Most shrinking cities operate under the assumption that they will continue growing and do not accept that the number of inhabitants is dwindling. Shrinking cities is a global phenomenon that has appeared in urban areas that experimented with sustained growth.

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Increasing urban decline and shrinkage are global phenomena with structural and durable components of urban development, change and growth. Urban shrinkage may result from cities' participation and involvement in the global networks of production chains (Castells 2000, 2002). Economic globalization is a cause of the decline and shrinkage of some industrial cities which do not keep the pace of technological change and do not develop the integration capacity to join into global networks (Scott and Storper 2003). The cities that do not set this capacity to integrate into the global economic networks are affected by the process of economic decline and shrinkage (Audirac 2007).

The phenomena of urban decline and urban shrinkage have an impact on a globalized economy (Cunningham-Sabot and Fol 2009). In the spatial fabric, the concept of black holes in urban territories is related to the phenomenon of urban decline in globalization processes, which is a phenomenon of global shrinkage characterized by its emergence in some regions of the world. The urban shrinkage process is a worldwide phenomenon expanding in scope and new forms (Audirac 2007). The shrinking cities is a global-spatial and multidimensional phenomenon in which urban decline is only one phase of evolution after cities had experienced growth.

The rise of the urban shrinkage phenomenon can be explained as a spatial fix (Harvey 2000), by the relocation of manufacturing plants that large corporations do as a response to the financial crisis, the search for new and cheap resources, as well as markets. Reduction of production factors: labor, capital, organization, and technical progress contribute to accelerating the shrinkage of the cities and the decline of its relative economic development (Fol & Cunningham-Sabot, 2010). Global networks of production, distribution, marketing, and consumption have a relevant impact on urban shrinkage spatial

Urban decline, considered as urban shrinkage, is analyzed as social and evolving political constructs (Wilson and Woulters 2003) and economic, social, and political functions (Beauregard 2003). Urban decline, depopulation, and abandonment are processes of shrinking cities considered features of urban forms and environments for the required theoretical and practical intervention (Dewar & Thomas, 2013; Hollander & Németh, 2011; Mallach, 2012; Smith & Kirkpatrick, 2015).

The shrinkage term is of common use across Europe and more in Germany (Heider, B. 2019). The terms shrinking cities (Weaver 1977; Breckenfeld 1978; Rybczynski and Linneman 1999) and the German term "schrumpfende Städte" (Häussermann and Siebel 1988, Florentin et al. 2009) are used to describe the phenomenon. The German term schrumpfende Städte was introduced by Häussermann and Siebel in 1988 (Florentin et al. 2009). Urban shrinkage took off in the first decade after a vertiginous loss of population during the German reunification when an official report detailed housing vacancy rates in cities of West Germany (Glock and Häußermann 2004).

According to Oswalt (2006) and the European Commission (2007) the term shrinkage is misleading because the cities are not losing surface area but rather the urban cities are spreading out. The French term "rétraction urbaine" refers to urban decline's physical and demographic phenomena (Ducom and Yokohari 2006). The French "rétraction urbaine" highlights urban decline's physical infrastructure and demographic manifestations (Ducom and Yokohari 2006).

Urban decline is an over-simplified concept of urban demography and morphology. Urban decline is a term infused with an anti-urban ideology (Beauregard 2003). The shrinkage phenomena are considered a long-term structural component of urban development. Urban shrinkage is a phenomenon related to suburbanization (Fishman 1987; Downs 1999). Shrinkage is conceived as part of the process in which recovery necessarily follows (Bontje 2004).

Shrinking cities may not always be in a shrinking process and become sustainable. Urban decline and shrinkage are the basis for implementing a sustainable city. Shrinking cities are being considered as

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