

Paper Name: Human Geography

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Topic: Sector Theory by Hoyt

The 'Sector Theory' of urban land use was propounded by American land Economist Homer Hoyt in 1939. His ideas were first published in 1939 by United States Federal Housing Administration and entitles "the structure and growth of residential neighborhoods in American cities (Washington).

Although M.R. Davie put forward similar views about the same time but Hoyt is considered as the propounded of sector theory. Hoyt had conducted factual examination of residential rent patterns in twenty-five cities of U.S.A. According to Hoyt, there are five types of land use zones in the cities. They are-

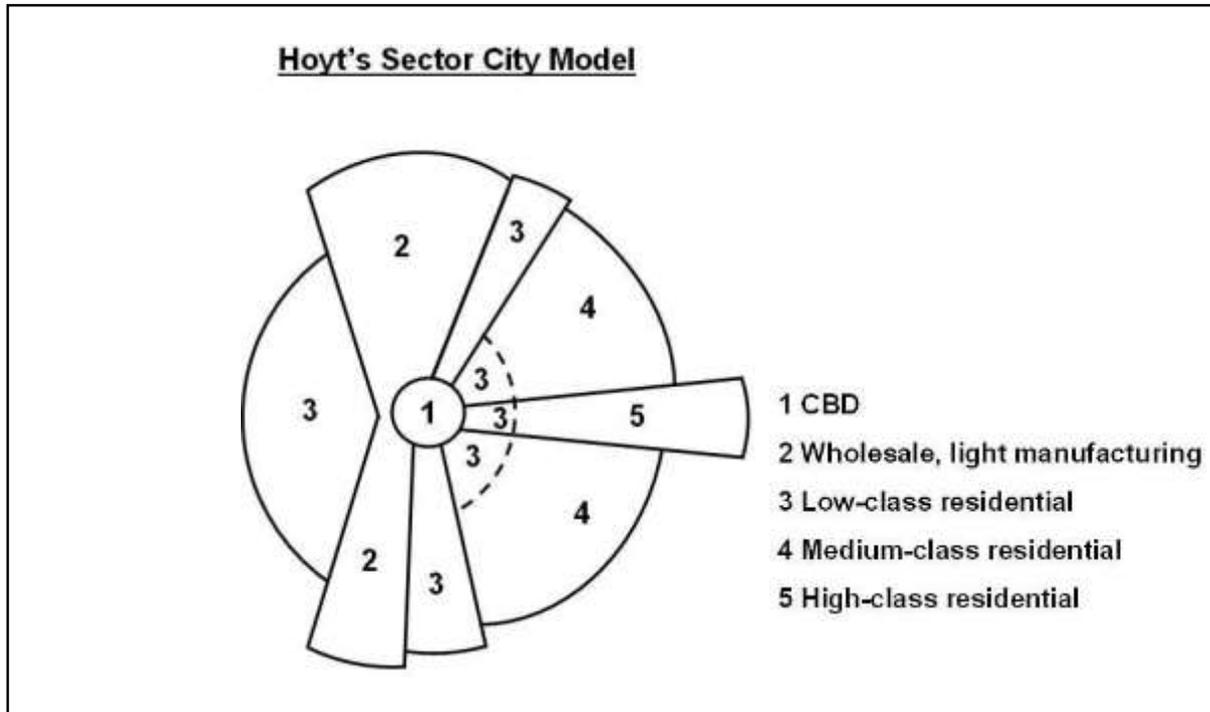
1. CBD Central Business District
2. Wholesale and light industry zone
3. Low class residential zone
4. Medium class residential zone
5. High class residential zone

In Hoyt's model entire city is considered as a circle and different land use / functional zone originate near the centre of the circle and migrate towards the periphery. These differences in land use were perpetuated as the city expanded. Distinctive sectors of land use were likely to grow out from the city centre, often focused at major route ways. According to Hoyt high class residential area is the main instrument in shaping the land use structure of the city.

In a study of 30 American cities published in 1939 Hoyt has termed high class residential zones as Fashionable Residential Area.

According to Hoyt pattern of land use are conditioned by arrangement of transportation routes radiating out from the city centre which created a sectoral system of land and rent values which in turn influence the urban land use pattern. Hoyt's idea of a wedge like expansion of urban land use is an improvement on earlier concentric model of Burgess as it takes into account both the distance and direction of expansion and acknowledges the importance of transportation

routes on the growth of the city.



In Hoyt's model high class residential areas originate in the eastern quadrant of the city and would tend to extend outward along established lines of communication thus producing the sector. In this process certain features exercise dominant role. These are high ground free from flood danger, open country with no physical barriers, the homes of community leader, etc. For example, high class residential areas of Chicago are elongated along the lake which is extended from Loop area to the north limit up to a distance of 50-60 kms and connected with the main city by speedy means of travel. Once a district with high class housing has been established, the most expensive sites for new houses will lie along the outer edge of this area. Over a period of time on account of urban expansion a zone of high class housing tends to be located on one side of a city rather than in the continuous ring as suggested by the concentric theory of Burgess. Industrial areas are developed along waterways e.g. river or along railways.

Hoyt remarked that American cities assume the shape of octopus with tentacles because of their expansion along transport arteries radiating in different directions.

Review and Criticism

An analysis of Hoyt's sector theory reveals that Hoyt explains more about residential structure of the city than concentric zone model of Burgess. Sector theory applies more appropriately to the development of residential areas. The theory explains the patterns of residential growth in specialized manner rather than to the analysis of total structure of American cities. Hoyt also considered future extension and development of city and recognized the importance of transportation routes especially arterial streets and highways in shaping land use pattern of the city. All types of land use are found near the city centre and also found near the periphery. Although better class housing may extend outwards in a sector, at the same time, the edge of buildings is more likely to show a concentric arrangement, as layer of houses are added to the urban fringes. Therefore, it can be said that Hoyt's theory is a refinement of earlier concentric zone model by Burgess rather than as a radical alteration.
