

# Central Place Theory



WALTER CHRISTALLER  
1893–1969

Walter Christaller, 1933

# Central Place Theory

- Urban hierarchy is based on the functions available in a city
- Is also related to population as well as functions and services
- Functions and services attract people from the urban areas as well as the hinterlands
- Every urban center has an economic reach
- Central places compete with each other to provide goods and services

# Services

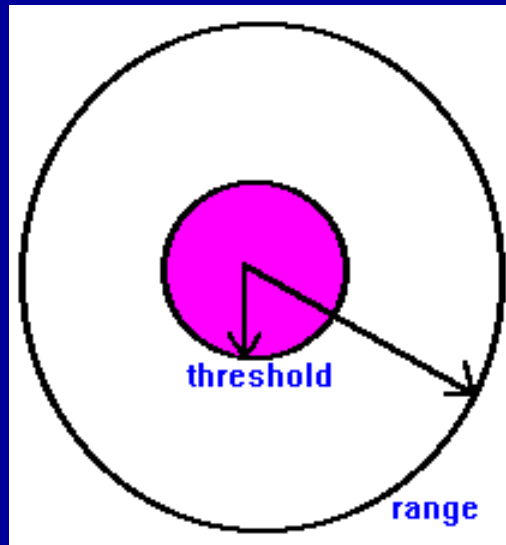
- Consumer Services- Retail and Personal
  - Sell to consumer
- Business Services- Producer and Transportation
  - Support businesses
- Public Services-
  - Security and protection for citizens and businesses

# Central Place Theory

- Economic reach is a measure of centrality
- Centrality is crucial to the development of urban places and their service areas
- Hinterland refers to the area surrounding a service from which consumers are drawn

# Central Place Theory

- Range is the maximum distance people are willing to travel to use a service
- Threshold is the minimum number of people required to support the service



# Central Place Theory

- Christaller attempted to design a model that would show how and where central places in the urban hierarchy would be functionally and spatially distributed

# Central Place Theory: Five Assumptions

- The surface of the ideal region would be flat and have no physical barriers
- Soil fertility would be universal
- Population, purchasing power evenly distributed
- Uniform transport network that permitted direct travel from each settlement to the other
- Constant maximum distance or range for the sale of any good or service produced in a town prevailed in all directions from the town center

## To calculate the degree of centrality:

- Central goods and services are those provided only at a central place
- Range of sale was the distance people would be willing to travel to acquire goods and services
- Model evolved consisting of perfectly fitted hexagonal regions



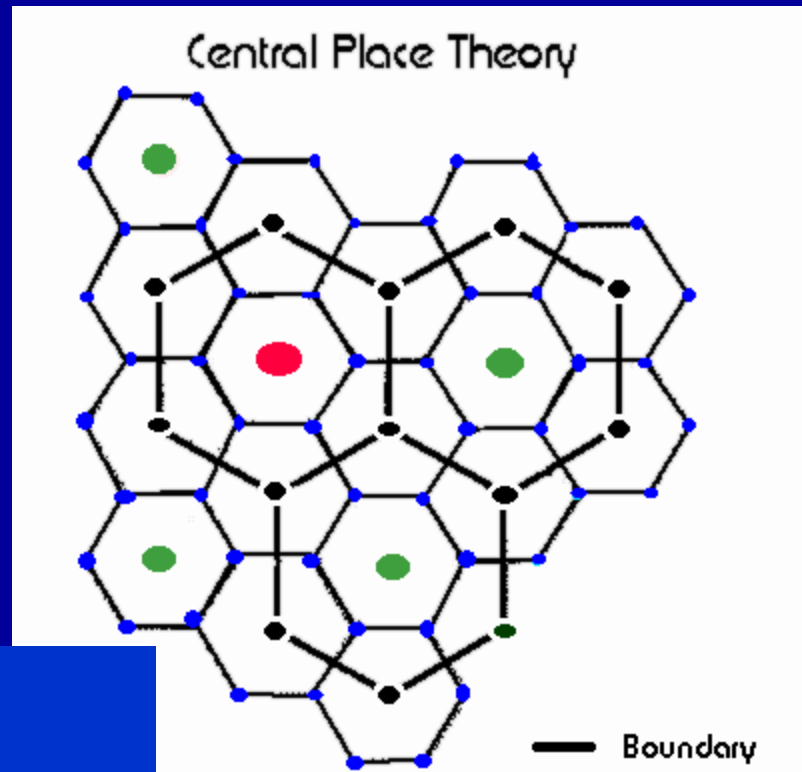
# Hierarchy of Settlements

- Hamlet: fewest goods and services available
- Village: includes the region of the hamlet and some additional goods and services
- Town: includes the region of the village and hamlet and provides some additional goods and services
- City: includes the region of the village, hamlet and town and provides additional goods and services

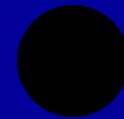
# Distinct Rules

- The larger the settlement, the less there are of them and the farther apart they are
- The less there are of a settlement, the larger the hinterland, or sphere of influence, of its goods and services
- Places of the same size will be spaced the same distance apart

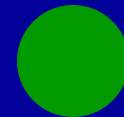
# Central Place Theory



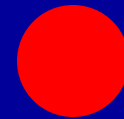
Hamlet



Village



Town

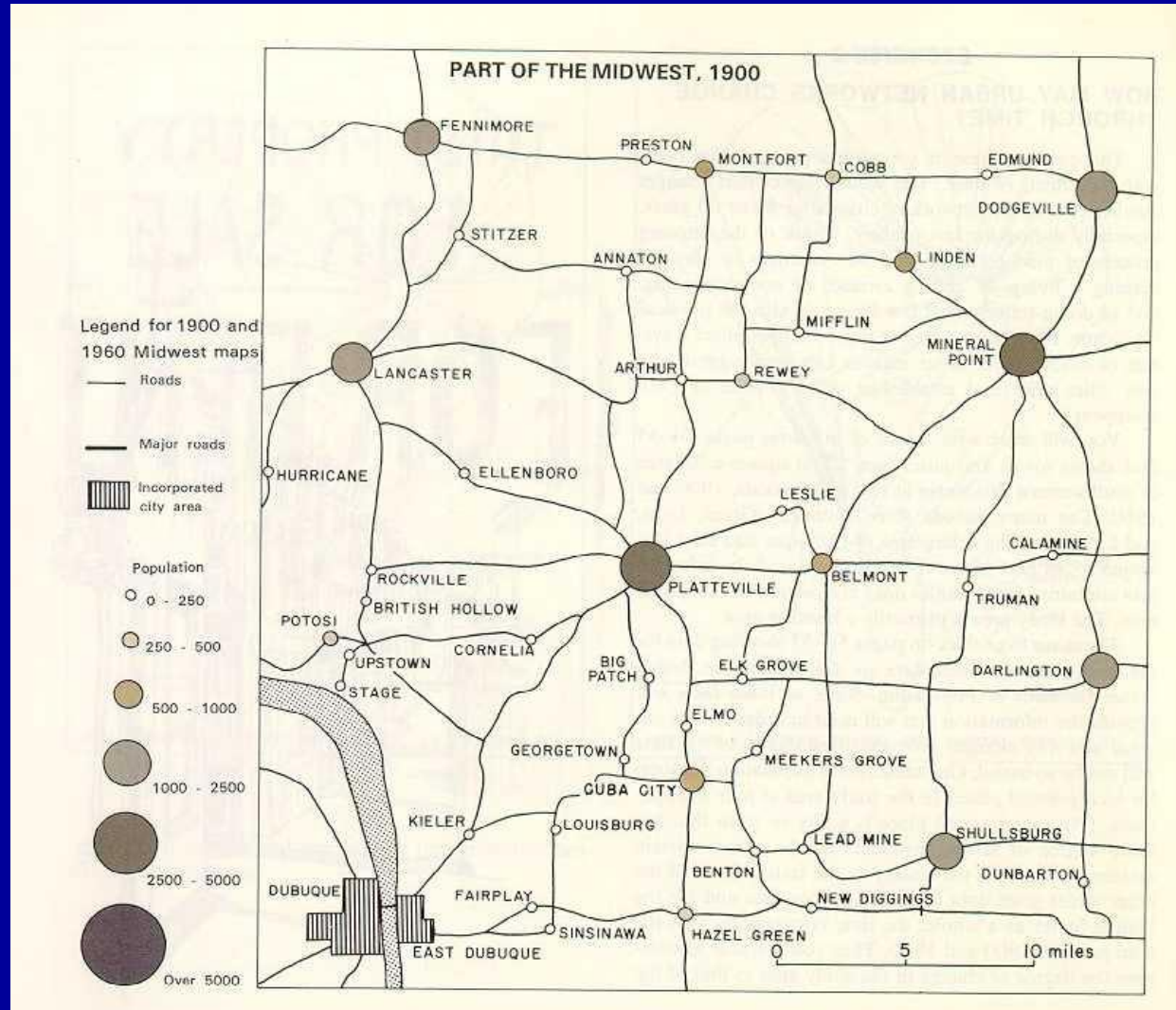


City

# Central Place Theory: Relevance

- This is a model, not reality
- Use of hexagons explain hierarchy and interconnectedness of places
- Originally applied to Germany
- Found to be applicable in China and the Midwestern US
- RTP- Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill= Network city

# Central Place Theory



# Gravity Model

- says-Distance and population size effect receiving and sending countries  
-people will travel closer than far but large populations send more people.
- **ex:** China and India to US