

## Is the “neutral point of view” compatible with a scientific formulation of the truth?

The German geographer Walter Christaller (1893-1969), member of the Nazi party from 1940, enunciated several principles as part of the formulation of his central places system. The first and the most fundamental is the following:

*“Eine elementare Form der Ordnung von Zusammengehörigen ist in der unorganischen wie in der organischen Natur die Anordnung einer Masse um einen Kern, ein Zentrum: eine zentralistische Anordnung.”* (Christaller, W. (1933). *Die zentralen Orte in Süddeutschland*; p. 21).

“The crystallization of mass around a nucleus is, in inorganic as well as organic nature, an elementary form of order of things which belong together – a centralistic order.” (Baskin, C. W. (1966): *Central places in southern Germany*; p. 14).

*“Une forme élémentaire de l'ordre des choses allant ensemble est, dans la nature non organique comme organique, l'ordonnement [l'organisation, la disposition, l'arrangement, l'« ordre »] d'une masse autour d'un noyau, d'un centre: un ordonnancement centraliste.”* (French literal translation).

Walter Christaller used besides four general “principles”

*Ordnungsprinzip*., Principle of order, *Principe d'ordre*: 1933a et 1969,

*Führer-Gefolgschaftsverhältnis*: Allegiance relation to the Führer, *Relation d'allégeance au Führer*. 1933b et 1941,

*Prinzip höchster Rationalität*: Principle of utmost rationality, *Principe de la plus haute rationalité*: 1933a,

*Immanente Prinzipien*: Immanent principles, *Principes immanents*: 1952,

...and in addition five operational "principles":

*Versorgungsprinzip*: Supply-principle (by misuse of language Market Principle), *Principe d'approvisionnement*: 1933a, 1933b, 1934, 1941a, 1941b, 1950, 1962, 1965,

*Verkehrsprinzip*: Principle of traffic, *Principe de trafic*: 1933a, 1933b, 1934, 1941a, 1941b, 1950, 1962, 1965,

*Zuordnung- (Verwaltungs-) Prinzip*: Principle of [space] allocation (and administration), *Principe de l'assignation [spatiale] (et d'administration)* : 1933a, 1933b, 1934, 1941a, 1941b, 1950, 1962, 1965

*Gleichheitsprinzip*: Principle of uniformity, *Principe d'uniformité (dont l'appartenance raciale)*: 1934,

*Ein kombiniertes und verbessertes System*: A combined and improved system, *Un système combiné et amélioré*: 1941a,

*Die drei Prinzipien... durchkreuzen und mischen sich*: The three principles intertwine and get involved, *Les trois principes s'entrecroisent et se mêlent*: 1962.

Over time, these principles changed or substituted for each other. Moreover, variations in their hierarchy raised questions about the exact meaning of these explicative entities: how indeed can some operating principles first be expressly true, then remain implicit, and finally disappear?

Furthermore, if “general principles” can be considered as "principles" or even "logics", “operational principles” are operating rules that Walter Christaller mistakenly calls "principles".

Three of these “principles” were transformed into “logics” by Walter Christaller’s supporters and their spatial operating schemas into “models”:

*Versorgungsprinzip*: Supply logic, *Logique d’approvisionnement*, by misuse of language: Market logic, *Logique de marché*,

*Verkehrsprinzip*: Traffic logic, *Logique de trafic*, by misuse of language: Transit logic, *Logique de transit*,

*Zuordnung- (Verwaltungs-) Prinzip*: Logic of [space] allocation (and administration), *Logique d’assignation [spatiale] (et d’administration)*: 1933a, 1933b, 1934, 1941a, 1941b, 1950, 1962, 1965.

See :

[http://www.cyberato.org/sites/default/files/cyberato/nicolas-georges/publications/travaux-memoires/wc\\_principes2\\_28juin2015.pdf](http://www.cyberato.org/sites/default/files/cyberato/nicolas-georges/publications/travaux-memoires/wc_principes2_28juin2015.pdf)

Central places criticism refers not only to Walter Christaller’s « principles » but also to “systems” arising from them. For Walter Christaller, the supply-principle’s (*Versorgungsprinzip*) schema is the fundamental one. Yet, this space operating schema is geometrically wrong. See:

[http://www.cyberato.org/sites/default/files/cyberato/nicolas-georges/node-comment-parent-path/nicolas-georges\\_so-called-christallerian-model\\_234.pdf](http://www.cyberato.org/sites/default/files/cyberato/nicolas-georges/node-comment-parent-path/nicolas-georges_so-called-christallerian-model_234.pdf)

These approximations and these errors brought Walter Christaller’s supporters and heirs to mistake supply-principle’s (*Versorgungsprinzip*) schema with August Lösch’s market area (*Marktgebiete*,  $k=3$ ). In addition, they argue that August Lösch “generalized” Walter Christaller. Yet, on one hand, August Lösch – who is the initiator of the “k” notation that Christaller does not use - maintains that the “Axiomatic Principle of space order of economy” is not, as Walter Christaller claims, the supply-principle’s (*Versorgungsprinzip*), but the principle of traffic (*Verkehrsprinzip*). On the other hand, August Lösch’s attempt to derive mathematically the supply-principle’s (*Versorgungsprinzip*) from the principle of traffic (*Verkehrsprinzip*) is a geometrical failure.

See: <http://sapiens.revues.org/843>

Finally, in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, all other aspects of Walter Christaller’s central places theory of were successively disproved. See:

Béguin, H. (1992). Christaller's central places postulates. *The annals of regional science*, 26, 209-229.

Sugiura, Y. (1997). On Theory and Verification in Christaller: Analysis and Speculation. *Geographical Reports of Tokyo Metropolitan University*, 32, 87-102.

Kegler, K. R. (2015). Deutsche Raumplanung. Das Modell der ""Zentralen Orte"" zwischen NS-Staat und Bundesrepublik. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh GmbH.

To the point that, at the start of this 21th century, even for the proven supporters and the apologists of central places theory, Walter Christaller's theoretical schemas and the k notation that August Lösch assigned to their "logics" don't have more than a role of "mental picture" supposed to guide those who still believe in them. "...we do not have to consider that [the geometrical models of central places theory] represents a standard to get closer at any cost, but to use them as mental pictures allowing to reflect, all other things being equal, on various possible forms of a territory's serving."

« ... il ne s'agit pas de considérer que [les modèles géométrique de la théorie des lieux centraux] constituent une norme dont il faudrait se rapprocher à tout prix, mais de les employer comme des images mentales permettant de réfléchir, toutes choses égales par ailleurs, aux différentes formes possibles de la desserte d'un territoire. » (Pumain, D., & Saint Julien, T. (2010). *Analyse spatiale. Les interactions*. Paris: Armand Colin ; p. 137.

Therefore, beyond the material existence of a "thing" called "Christallerian model", is it possible to consider that to write: "*scientifiquement le modèle christallérien n'existe pas*" ("scientifically, the Christallerian model does not exist") do not respect the "*neutral point of view*" which is supposed to be one of Wikipedia's "five pillars"?

[https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mod%C3%A8le\\_christall%C3%A9rien](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mod%C3%A8le_christall%C3%A9rien)