

ORIGINAL

The use of urban management for the city of 2050, a model of a cultural city

El uso de la gestión urbana para la ciudad de 2050, modelo de ciudad cultural

Bernardette Mendez B¹  

¹Profesora Instructora dedicación exclusiva UPTMKR. Mérida, Venezuela.

Cite as: Mendez B B. The use of urban management for the city of 2050, a model of a cultural city. Land and Architecture. 2026;5:289.
<https://doi.org/10.56294/la2026289>


Submitted: 09-01-2025

Revised: 03-05-2025

Accepted: 20-11-2025

Published: 01-01-2026

Editor: Emanuel Maldonado 

Corresponding author: Bernardette Mendez B 

ABSTRACT

Creativity and cultural diversity have been the main drivers of urban success. Cultural activities can promote social inclusion and dialogue between diverse communities. Likewise, the tangible and immaterial is an integral part of the identity of a city and generates a sense belonging and cohesion. Culture represents the soul of a city and allows us to progress and build a dignified future for all. A city centered in the human being it is a space centered on culture. we must transform this reality into more effective policies and sustainable urban governance. Culture occupies a central place in renewal and innovation urban and makes cities attractive, creative and sustainable. The History shows us that culture is key to urban development, as they reveal the monuments, heritage and traditions. Without the culture, cities would not exist as dynamic living spaces; they would be so only concrete and steel constructions, prone to fracture and social degradation. It is the culture that makes the difference.

Keywords: Cultural Management; Urban Future; Sustainability; Heritage; Culture.

RESUMEN

La creatividad y la diversidad cultural han sido los principales motores del éxito urbano. Las actividades culturales pueden promover la inclusión social y el diálogo entre comunidades diversas. Asimismo, el patrimonio material e inmaterial es parte integrante de la identidad de una ciudad y genera un sentido de pertenencia y de cohesión. La cultura representa el alma de una ciudad y le permite progresar y construir un futuro digno para todos. Una ciudad centrada en el ser humano es un espacio centrado en la cultura. Debemos transformar esta realidad en políticas más eficaces y en una gobernanza urbana sostenible. La cultura ocupa un lugar central en la renovación y la innovación urbana y hace que las ciudades sean atractivas, creativas y sostenibles. La historia nos muestra que la cultura es clave para el desarrollo urbano, como ponen de manifiesto los monumentos, el patrimonio y las tradiciones. Sin la cultura, no existirían las ciudades como espacios de vida dinámicos; serían tan solo construcciones de hormigón y acero, proclives a la fractura y la degradación social. Es la cultura la que marca la diferencia.

Palabras clave: Gestión Cultural; Futuro Urbano; Sostenibilidad; Patrimonio; Cultura.

INTRODUCTION

Culture is part of our being and shapes our ways of life: it encompasses the values, beliefs, convictions, human expressiveness, languages, knowledge and arts, traditions, institutions, and ways of life through which people manifest their humanity. Society's values are the foundation on which everything else is built, and the

form in which they are expressed is its culture. Yet the 2030 Agenda does not directly incorporate a cultural goal. This denotes certain circles' difficulty in understanding culture in the contemporary world.

Sustainable development is undoubtedly a necessity for the cultural policies of all governments, which must integrate it in a transversal and coherent manner. And finally, it is the only possible response to the current global situation. The Sustainable Development Goals provide us with a universal value system. Culture transmits values and builds our identity as a species. Together, they are the perfect pairing for the social transformation needed for sustainable development. Without sustainable development, there is no future. This means rethinking how we live in this world, how we do things, and accepting our responsibility towards future generations. It is not difficult to convince people of the culture of this when our survival is at stake. It is undoubtedly a complex challenge, but not an impossible one.

BACKGROUND

Globally, the role of cultural institutions has been key to enhancing the value and image of cities.⁽¹⁾ In the past, urban centers were occupied by symbols of power and religion. Today, city centers are also defined by their cultural institutions: museums, galleries, theatres, academies, and memorials. This global transformation illustrates the importance of culture in urban development at all levels, from defining the city's core identity to providing a key economic resource. It is a way to socialize the artistic values embodied in the city's traditions and attract investment from public and private institutions. Above all, it is a way to attract citizens and visitors to enjoy the city's cultural richness and capacity to be a magnet for artistic creativity.

No city today can do without its cultural dimension, which will become more evident as the demand for cultural services and products expands, especially in emerging economies. Increasingly connected contemporary societies enhance the potential of the creative economy in cities.⁽²⁾ Technology accelerates the exchange and distribution of products and ideas. Undoubtedly, innovative processes are becoming one of the most critical dimensions of new economies worldwide. Whether in the sphere of design, visual and performing arts, media, or food and fashion, the creative economy is gaining ground as one of the dominant sectors of the future.

These processes are inevitably urban-based, requiring various services and a cultural context to grow. Indeed, cities have always been a source for creative processes, as places where innovation meets capital and where market forces operate. The creative economy brings significant new opportunities to cities and opens up new economic dimensions on a global scale. However, creativity needs to be supported by public policies that value education, cultural expressions, experimentation, and innovation to create the right mix and initiate the process.^(2,3,4) They require a cultural environment conducive to this chemistry. Cities provide these unique and critical spaces.

There is a tendency to locate smart city mega-projects in regions of the world where human rights, cultural diversity, and the most basic principles of democracy are not respected. 'These are initiatives that, due to their technical complexity, are presented as examples to be followed, without anyone mentioning that they are being developed in parts of the world where the most basic freedoms are systematically violated,' explains architect Martín Esteve, an expert in urban planning and human rights.

Technological progress is key to many of the solutions demanded by our cities. Still, if we focus the debate on the well-being of citizens, we should not overlook the most elementary issue: democratic coexistence. 'There is much talk, for example, of the Masdar ecological city, a project by Norman Foster's architectural firm in the United Arab Emirates. It is a major challenge because the aim is for this city to be self-sufficient, and as an architect, I understand the enthusiasm it arouses. Still, we must not forget that those who live there will do so under the yoke of a dictatorship,' explains architect Martín Esteve.

Beyond the contradictions that may arise in regions of Asia, the East, or Africa, there is global competition for sustainable city projects. Singapore has developed a smart grid in which a bidirectional network controls and manages energy consumption and integrates a decentralized alternative production system from which electricity is fed into the grid from green generators, such as solar panels or small eco-generation plants. In northern Europe, civic-minded and exemplary Sweden is home to SymbioCity, an 11,000-home project on a former port area in Stockholm that has become the first example of urbanization capable of sustaining itself through renewable sources.

Nevada, USA, has launched Boulder City, a smart grid that will reduce electricity consumption, costs, and reliability and transparency of the system.

In Spain, a country battered by urban planning excesses, the Urban Innovation Club has been established. This ideas laboratory was created at the IE Business School with the support of a group of companies such as Philips and FCC. Its aim is to 'promote a new urban model based on innovation and sustainability in Spanish cities'.⁽³⁾

The new model must emphasize transforming and evolving what has already been built rather than creating new ones. Three good examples of this are the commitment to refurbishment, the energy upgrading of urban planning, and the reinvention of the urban fabric associated with tourism.

Epistemological Position

Phenomenological Cultural City

The epistemic vision regarding this theme is based on the phenomenological current, which guides us to the spatial perception in an urban condition where a three-dimensional approach is required in a section that gives importance to the views of the residents who wander through moving ground planes, experiencing the city from multiple frames of reference.

For Maurice Merleau-Ponty, there is an osmotic relationship between the self and the world (both penetrate and define each other). And I emphasize the simultaneity and interaction of the senses.

According to the phenomenological tradition, all consciousness is the consciousness of something. This would be the simplest way to describe the concept of intentionality. In other words, any individual constantly addresses the world through voluntary actions (act intentionalities) when establishing categorizations, for example, or in relations with the world prior to categorical attitudes (operant intentionality).

Therefore, all perception is incomplete, and this degree of indeterminacy is present in both perception and science. The quality of the perceived object is for consciousness and not in consciousness. It is misleading, however, to believe that the meaning given to perceived qualities is whole and determined, for the human being is a factor of ambiguity in the world's existence.

The Finnish Juhani Pallasmaa,⁽⁵⁾ in his work "The Eyes of the Skin: The Architecture of the Senses," advocates the development of an architecture based on the senses and generating a multisensory perception, overcoming the preponderance of sight and highlighting other senses, such as touch or hearing, in the architectural concept.

The visual experience tends to be cold, distant, and flat. We must understand that any space is multisensory⁴ and he is committed to a perception that involves 'feeling the numerous sensations united or combined in a bodily sensation: relaxation, anxiety, tranquillity.⁽⁶⁾ Sensations that are produced in a single sense". His book questions the hegemony of the visual in all aspects of art and architecture today and, from a phenomenological approach, defends a sensorial architecture that seeks to open up space for the five senses as motors of knowledge, experience, and architectural production.

Pallasmaa, in his book *An Architecture of the Seven Senses*, quotes, "A walk through a forest or a Japanese garden is invigorating and healing because of the interaction of all the senses that reinforce and articulate our understanding of reality is thus strengthened and articulated.

The sound of bells ringing through the streets makes us aware of our citizenship. The echo of our footsteps on the pavement makes us interact with the street, measure the space, and make its scale comprehensible. However, the contemporary city has lost this echo.

A phenomenological cultural city would invite us to live the experience with our whole being and each of our senses. This way of understanding the city, based on the perception of a complex of relationships in which isolated buildings, as they are generally idealized by architects and the specialized architectural media, could allow for 'new spatial compositions.'

Architect Steven Holl's phenomenological urban reading and proposal entitled *Inside the City: Phenomena of Relationships*, in which he attempted to bring phenomenology to the level of urban design, abandons the morphological vision of typology and also of functionalism, which at the urban level translates into zoning and planning, both, as the second term implies, flat. 'The problem of proposing urban space for a metropolitan sector whose program elements, architectural parts, and social aspects are as yet unknown (and may always be in a certain fluid state) leads us to propose, says Holl, to start from the perspective experience of limited space,' imagining it from the point of view of the perceiver and taking into account the axes of horizontal, vertical and oblique movement, which alter the field of vision and overlap with others. Of course, it would also be necessary to consider the impossibility of imagining all possible points of view without even considering all the other sensations that add up to the perception of a place.

Deconstructivist Cultural City

Seen in another way, this subject of study is based on Jacques Derrida's⁽⁷⁾ current philosophical deconstructionist thought, called Deconstructivism at the architectural level. The dialectic of presence and absence, the solid and the void, how form follows function, the purity of form, and the truth of materials show us the capacity to disrupt forms, which makes these projects deconstructivist. The 1988 show presented a point of intersection between many architects, where each one constructs a disturbing building by exploiting potential.

Peter Eisenman defined the MOMA exhibition, called 'Deconstructivist Architecture' (which crystallized the movement and brought fame and notoriety to its members), organized by Architects Philip Johnson and Mark Wigley, as a death knell for Postmodernism' Each of the seven architects had divergent theories and methods that influenced their projects. Still, all seven emphasized form by addressing the chaotic, the incomplete, the fragmented, and the unbalanced.

So, we understand deconstruction as the exploration of the significant icon, moving away from the archetypal models, incorporating the anomaly in the form of the elements in Architecture by moving, tilting or changing

shape, be it cluster or even massive, it loses the structural schematic form, but at the same time, it generates other more optimal possibilities of resistance, that would be the main attribute of this exploration, in the three senses: the significant of ordering Chaos, the articulation of geometric form, experimenting with topological, projective and fractal geometry, to provoke visual effects and the deformation of space especially from the interior and the experimentation of light, color and movement. In short, the dynamics of space.

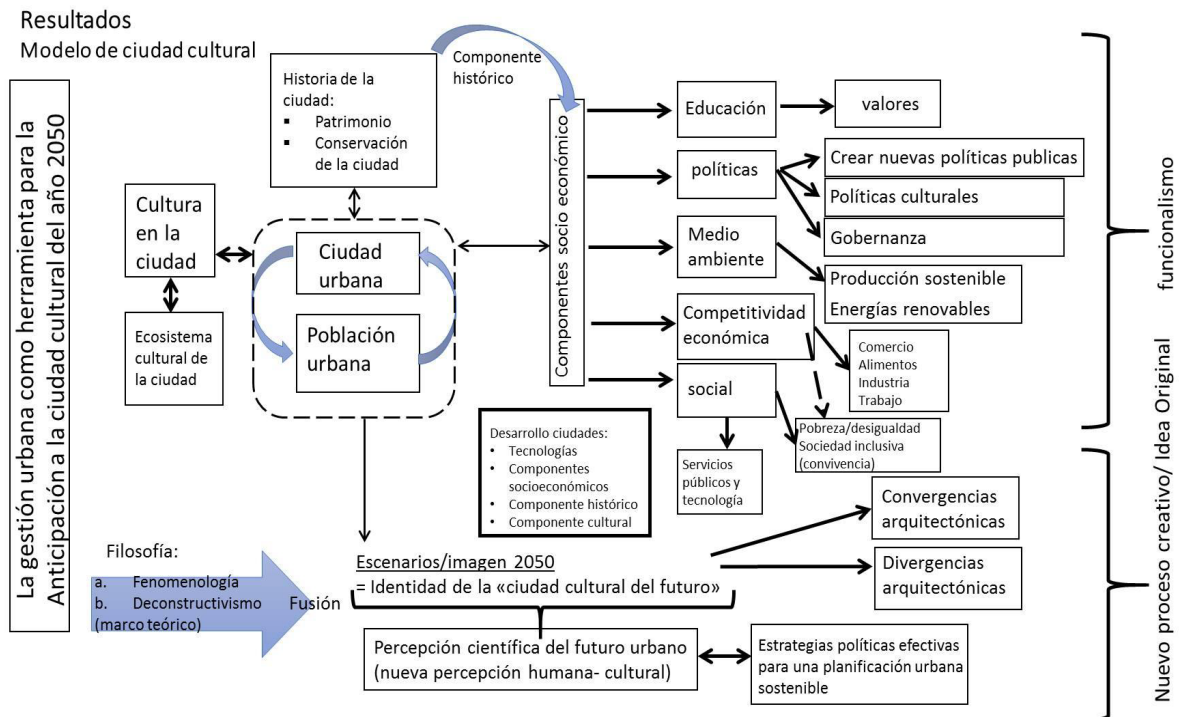


Figure 1. Flowchart of the cultural city model

CONCLUSIONS

Bridging the gap between the two theories

In conclusion, both phenomenological and deconstructivist visions invite us to feel the city, one through all our senses in a calm and ordered way and the other chaotic and disruptive. But in essence, both epistemic positions break the traditional grid of a city.

On a cultural level, both are invitations to ‘live culture’ in the city. Therefore, the study of these approaches allows in some way to explain the theoretical framework of this topic, such as cultural management. It would mean going through the city with an awareness of what surrounds us.

Imagine a city that manages everything related to culture, stopping first at the epistemic approach of phenomenology. It would be full of colors, lights, smells, sounds, and memories, embracing the existing with the new. On the contrary, it would be if we stood on the epistemic approach of deconstruction, where we do not go in search of identity or the natural. Such a city would be defragmented in its essence and form with a non-linear, non-structured design process.

It would be exciting to generate an intermediate epistemic position between both positions (phenomenology and deconstructivism). Because there is a dialogue between both visions, deconstructivism has phenomenological aspects. In urban terms, a city that generates a bridge between both epistemes would allow us to make a small contribution to these two grand theories.

The search for a model of sustainable development involves recognizing and accepting the approaches already presented in the Brundtland Report (1987) regarding the search for a social-economic-environmental balance, the provision of citizens with a high level of human development, and institutions capable of responding to the needs of their inhabitants.

It is ratified that urban cultural intervention and management are complex and implies a social commitment (collective and individual), local entrepreneurship (employment and wealth), political-institutional will (decentralization, investment, agreements, decisions, and sanctions), and responsible environmental management in order to consider new city models for the future.

REFERENCES

1. Organización de las Naciones Unidas. Programa 21 [Internet]. Estados Unidos de América: Departamento

de Asuntos Económicos y Sociales - División de Desarrollo Sostenible; 1982. Disponible en: http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21_spanish/index.shtml

2. Puig T. Marca Ciudad: Cómo rediseñarla para asegurar un futuro espléndido para todos. Argentina: Paidós Contextos; 2009.

3. Rueda S. Urbanismo Ecológico [Internet]. España: Agencia de Ecología Urbana de Barcelona, Dirección General de Arquitectura, Vivienda y Suelo, Ministerio de Fomento-España. Disponible en: <http://bcnecologia.net>

4. San Román JL. Guía para la Planificación Estratégica Sostenible Local (Agenda 21 Local): Eslabón básico para solventar la Pobreza [Internet]. Costa Rica: Coordinación para América Latina y el Caribe - Consejo de la Tierra y Programa Latinoamericano de Desarrollo Local y combate a la Pobreza - Universidad para la Cooperación Internacional; 2003. Disponible en: <http://agenda21ens.cicese.mx/documentos.htm>

5. Pallasmaa J. Los ojos de la piel. Gustavo Gili.

6. Derrida J. La Différance. Conferencia en la Sociedad Francesa de Filosofía.

FINANCING

The author did not receive funding for the development of this research.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

Conceptualization: Bernardette Mendez B.

Data curation: Bernardette Mendez B.

Formal analysis: Bernardette Mendez B.

Research: Bernardette Mendez B.

Methodology: Bernardette Mendez B.

Project Administration: Bernardette Mendez B.

Resources: Bernardette Mendez B.

Software: Bernardette Mendez B.

Supervision: Bernardette Mendez B.

Validation: Bernardette Mendez B.

Visualization: Bernardette Mendez B.

Writing - original draft: Bernardette Mendez B.

Writing - revision and editing: Bernardette Mendez B.