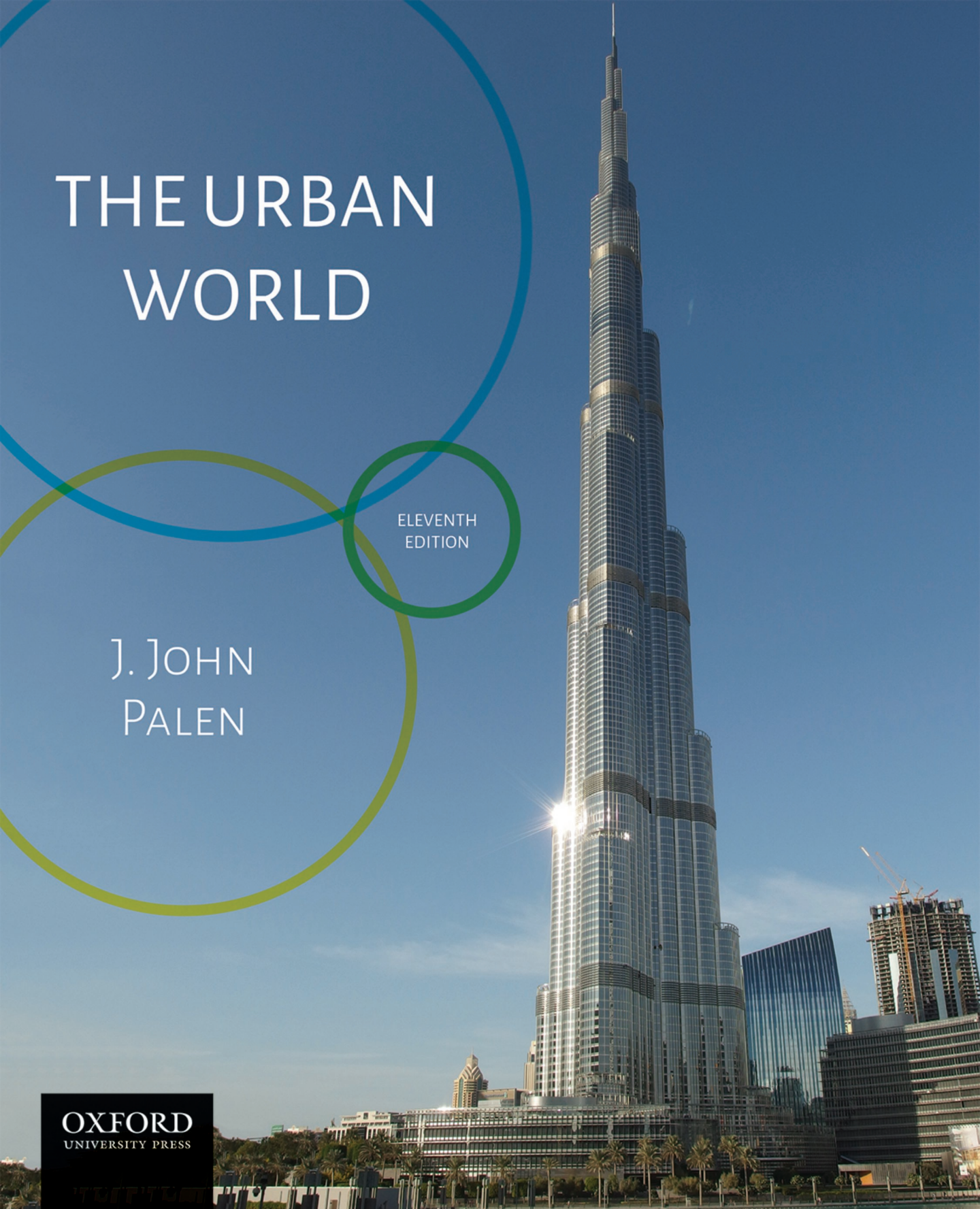
THE URBAN WORLD

ELEVENTH EDITION

J. JOHN PALEN



OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

THE URBAN WORLD

ELEVENTH EDITION

J. John Palen

NEW YORK OXFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and certain other countries.

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America.

For titles covered by Section 112 of the US Higher Education Opportunity Act, please visit www.oup.com/us/he for the latest information about pricing and alternate formats.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Palen, J. John, author.
Title: The urban world / J. John Palen.
Description: Eleventh edition. | New York : Oxford University Press, [2018] |
Revised edition of the author's The urban world, [2015]
Identifiers: LCCN 2018033792 | ISBN 9780190903169 (pbk.)
Subjects: LCSH: Cities and towns. | Cities and towns—United States. |
Urbanization—Developing countries.
Classification: LCC HT151 .P283 2018 | DDC 307.76—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2018033792

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Printed by Sheridan Books, Inc., United States of America

For Madeleine, Jack,
Conor, and Emmett, who are living
in an urban world

BRIEF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

LIST OF BOXES

PREFACE

As we enter the third decade of the twenty-first century, *The Urban World* reflects the changing urban scene with numerous updates to this newest edition. Previous readers will note that the text's organization remains constant, while the content has undergone considerable updating. Examples include new material on the Black Lives Matter movement, tiny houses, pollution in Delhi, and the world-wide exolosion of bike-sharing. All United States and international data has been updated to reflect the latest figures available.

Previous editions of *The Urban World* have received scholarly praise for being knowledgeable, current, and comprehensive. Strongly appreciated by both instructors and college students is the text's user-friendly style. Instructors report that their students actually read the text. For the eleventh edition, the entire text has been reviewed line-by-line and, when necessary, rewritten. For new topics and new ideas, I owe thanks to my reviewers and especially to the course instructors who have made *The Urban World* the most-used urban text.

The last edition was the first urban text to document and discuss the reversal of the 90-year pattern that showed suburbs growing faster than central cities. This edition is the first to discuss the newest census data, which indicates city growth easing, while suburban growth is resuming. The growing gap between successful and unsuccessful cities is also becoming more apparent. Today, the rustbelt vs. sunbelt distinction is increasingly being replaced by differences between those cities that attract tech-savvy millennials and those that don't. Winners, such as Boston, Seattle, and even Pittsburgh, are economically booming. On the street, this success can be seen in the proliferation of coffee shops, hip restaurants, craft beer breweries, and food trucks. The inner-city areas have experienced the in-movement of tech and service organizations and the conversion of old manufacturing plants into high priced rental units. Tech oriented firms such as Google, Apple, and Twitter are responding to millennials' preference for city life by greatly expanding their urban footprints. The eleventh edition has been thoroughly updated to reflect these and other changes.

In the twenty-first century, urban change often comes with remarkable speed. For example, in 2007, the city of Las Vegas seemed a charmed boomtown riding a crest of prosperity. It was the nation's fastest growing city. Only three years later, Las Vegas was notable for being a case study in urban failure. The city was in severe recession and had the highest home foreclosure rate in the entire country. Today, Las Vegas is showing economic recovery and population growth. However, the city's image as a place where anything goes was damaged in 2017 by the tragedy of the nation's largest mass killing by a shooter.

One of the most important questions to be addressed in the eleventh edition is to what degree central cities will continue their current growth. Also is North America's pattern of endless suburban sprawl

declining, or about to be reborn? Will the widespread adoption of self-driving electric autos make long commutes less of an issue? Or will millennials' apparent preference for city life be passed on to the younger Gen Z population? City-based transportation such as Uber/Lyft mean cars are becoming less necessary. Thanks to new immigrant populations as well as millennials, housing growth now is occurring in inner parts of the metro area that were written off by many experts as recently as the first decade of the twenty-first century. For younger populations, the McMansions built on the suburban fringe are now white elephants. *The Urban World* is the first urban text to document and discuss these potentially monumental changes.

My goal in this work is to convey to students some of my own excitement over the changes now taking place in our urban environments. To give some perspective on the significance of worldwide urban change, it is worth noting that almost all of us reading this book grew up in a city or suburb of a metropolitan area. And we tend to assume that most of the world's population share our metropolitan-based experiences. However, the reality is that everyone reading this book was born into a world that still was primarily rural. Not until the early twenty-first century did more than half the world's people actually live in urban rather than rural places. Our world is, for the first time in history, truly an urban world.

Since the world of the future will be an urban world, it is important that we try to understand urban change and how urbanism as a way of life affects our lives and behaviour. *The Urban World* is written to give students a coherent overview of contemporary urban patterns and developments. To accomplish this, it draws upon a wide body of research—including demographic, sociological, geographic, economic, and urban studies—to provide up-to-date information on urbanization and the nature of urban life.

LOW PRICE

In an academic world where textbook prices constantly move ever higher; both students and instructors will be happy to see that *The Urban World* is an exception. Oxford University Press has worked hard to publish this text in a quality paperback format with an affordable price. We have successfully kept *The Urban World* considerably lower-priced than competing texts. This means the instructor, if she or he chooses, can assign additional materials.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

I have strived to make *The Urban World*, eleventh edition, readable, comprehensive, balanced, and up-to-date. It is designed to expose students to both an understanding of past urban trends and twenty-first century urban changes. Students deserve the most recent data and information presented in a clear writing style. What also hasn't changed is strong academic content and instructor-friendly organization. The text is organized into seventeen chapters. The chapters are written in a self-contained manner that permits instructors to restructure topics to best suit their unique course interests and needs. A large and comprehensive test bank is also available for instructors' use.

A good textbook should provide a strong base, while also reflecting contemporary developments. Thus, the eleventh edition reflects new developments such as:

- The question of the rebirth of central city and inner suburb population growth, particularly in so-called brain gain cities.
- The impact of millennials, and possibly Gen Z, choosing cities and inner suburbs for residence .
- The result of millennials being less auto oriented, and the role of technologies such as Uber/Lyft on the future of urban transportation.
- Changing attitudes of younger population groups toward suburban sprawl, and the potential impact of self-driving cars on commuting.
- The largely hidden growth and effect of suburban poverty.
- The differing experiences of American cities with some prospering and others declining.
- The partial replacement of the older Sunbelt-Rustbelt distinction with differences being between cities that are tech and service oriented (e.g., San Francisco and Pittsburgh) and those still manufacturing focused.

- Boxed Insert material on impact of hurricane Harvey on Houston and Isabel on Florida and Maria on Puerto Rico.
- Discussion of the consequences for post hurricane Houston of the city having no zoning laws or prohibition of building on flood plains.
- The continued Latino growth as the largest U.S. minority; and the demographic, social, and political consequence of this change (e.g., Latinos became California's largest population in 2013).
- Political economic and social consequences of changing national administration attitudes toward minorities (e.g., the 800,000 DACA Dreamers brought to the U.S. as children, the Black Lives Matter movement) and the effect of growing minority voting strength.
- Changing White House policies toward minorities (e.g., President Trump's equating white power marchers and neo-Nazis with anti-racist protesters in Charlottesville, VA after a woman murdered by a neo-Nazi. The President criticizing Puerto Rican American's responses to the devastation caused by hurricane Maria, while praising the responses of the largely white Houston and Florida hurricane victims).
- The impact of Broken Window police practices on Persons of Color, and the development of computer based predictive policing.
- The seeming paradox of metro areas becoming more racially diverse, while at the same time racial relations within metro areas showing increased stress.
- Latest census findings from the United States and Canada, and discussion of how the metro areas of both nations are changing.
- The decline of homelessness due to housing people first policies.
- New boxed insert material on Detroit's fight to survive since bankruptcy, and Detroit's appeal to new tech start-ups.
- Updating Buenos Aires garbage pickers, detailed in new boxed inserts.
- Updated data Brain-Gain cities and their characteristics.
- Growth of downtown housing and its causes, consequences, and possible disadvantages. (e.g., whether Vancouver has been too successful in having people move back into downtown).
- The future of urban developments such as smart growth, new urbanism, and the "greening" of cities (e.g., Chicago's turning the roof of City Hall into a garden of plants, grass, and trees).
- The increasing pace of world urbanization.
- Dramatic changes in the cities of India, especially Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata.
- China's national urban policy for moving 250 million peasants into new cities by 2025.
- China's currently building scores of new megacities, the rising prices for high-rise flats and the number of empty flats being purchased for speculation.
- India's likelihood of seeing its population surpass China's by the early 2025, and its building a city of the future.
- The new futuristic cities built by Persian Gulf countries such as Dubai, which has the tallest building in the world, and Abu Dhabi, which has built a whole new world-class city virtually from scratch.
- Proposed new "smart cities" in Saudi Arabia and India.
- The dramatic worldwide growth of of urban bike sharing programs first proposed by the author decades ago.

ORGANIZATION

Part One: Focus and Development begins by examining the dramatic changes caused by urbanization and the impact of the worldwide urban explosion. Concepts of the city and early theories of urban change are presented in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 looks at how and why cities emerged and at urban places from the earliest settlements up to the Industrial Revolution.

Part Two: American Urbanization switches the focus to North America. Chapter 3 discusses the rise of urban America and the importance of urban technology, immigrants, political bosses, and reform movements to contemporary cities. The American ambivalence about cities and our myth of rural virtue are also noted. Chapter 4 presents competing models for understanding urban spatial patterns. Ecological

and political economy models are presented and there is a discussion of the new Los Angeles School and the postmodern city. Chapter 5 looks at the rebirth of city growth. The unique characteristics of edge cities, the malling of the land, and the future of the Sunbelt are all covered. The ramifications of political reapportionment favoring the South and West are examined. Chapter 6 provides extensive discussion of the development of suburban dominance. Suburbs are seen moving from fringe settlements to the demographic and economic centers of the nation. The causes of suburbanization and categories of suburbs are discussed, as is the myth of suburbia. Data on the increase in suburban poverty are included. The latest census and other data are provided on African American, Latino, and Asian suburbanites.

Part Three: Metropolitan Life shifts from a macro focus on metro areas to the micro level of how urbanism affects the lives and lifestyles of those within the metro area. Chapter 7 explores urban lifestyles and the social psychology of urban life. The Chicago School, Compositional, and Subcultural theories of urban life are examined. Chapter 8 continues the discussion of urban life with an examination of how we deal with strangers, the codes of urban behavior, and the effects of density and crowding. The changing situation and characteristics of homeless people are examined. Urban crime variations and the broken windows theory and predictive policing are discussed. Chapter 9 presents a discussion of urban diversity focusing on the experiences of women, white ethnics, and African Americans. Issues such as the gendering of public spaces, changing immigration patterns, and urban segregation patterns are covered. The black "Great Migration" from the South to northern cities is discussed, as is the current movement of African Americans toward Southern urban areas. Chapter 10 continues the focus on urban diversity. Detailed discussion is provided on Latino, Asian American, and Native American patterns of urbanization. New data on the continued growth and diversity of the Latino population is discussed, as is the impact of growing Latino political strength. The effect of the Trump administrations anti-Hispanic policies on the issue of "Dreamers" and current immigration is discussed. The growth of Asian populations and the problem of being a "model minority" also are covered as is the movement of Native Americans to metro areas.

Part Four: Metro Issues: Housing, Sprawl, and Planning moves the focus to contemporary issues over how to plan and design the city. Chapter 11 discusses the impact of the housing recession and recovery. Also discussed are the urban crisis and urban revival theses, and issues with downtown revitalization and neighborhood gentrification. What is the future of the urban core? Chapter 12 discusses the effects of the housing market downturn and recovery. The possible end of sprawl is discussed. The chapter also contains material on the changing federal role from FHA loans to urban redevelopment policies to housing vouchers, to HOPE VI projects. There is also a discussion of the problems of commuting and of suburban sprawl, and the development of Smart Growth policies. Chapter 13 extends the discussion of how to use urban space by examining planning policies in the United States and Europe. New towns in both Europe and America are examined, and the growth of traditional neighborhood developments and New Urbanism communities are discussed.

Part Five: Worldwide Urbanization takes us beyond North America and Western Europe to look at new and changing urbanization patterns in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Chapter 14 provides new data on the rapid changes in developing countries. Chapter 15 looks at the cities of Asia, and especially at the dramatic developments in the world's two largest nations, India and China. Chapter 16 discusses the social consequences of urbanization trends in both Africa and Latin America and the problems of Brazil. The historical influence of colonial patterns is examined as is the impact of the city on the status of women.The roles played by shantytowns, crime, and the myth of marginalityare discussed.

Part Six: Conclusion looks toward the urban future. Chapter 17, adds material on new developments from the ecological planting on the roof of Chicago's City Hall with grass and trees, to the recent widespread adoption of urban bike sharing, to the building of whole cities of the future in Abu Dhabi Saudi Arabia, and India.

ENDURING FEATURES

The Urban World retains its scholarly focus in a readable style. It is the only American text to provide Canadian content in order to provide a comparative North American context. *The Urban World* is the only text to prove up-to-date data and discussion of millennials and the new growth of cities. It also remains the only urban text to devote two full chapters to minorities in metro areas and specifically the growing influence of Latinos. Full discussion is given to topics such as the increasing presence of minorities in suburbs. *The Urban World* is also unique in devoting three fully updated chapters to the remarkable changes in worldwide urbanization.

PEDAGOGICAL AIDS

The eleventh edition of *The Urban World* provides a chapter OUTLINE at the beginning of each chapter and a SUMMARY at the chapter end. A listing of KEY CONCEPTS is also provided. Additionally, to help answer the age-old student question, "What do we need to know?" each chapter concludes with REVIEW QUESTIONS. A student who can satisfactorily answer these questions knows the text material. Also available to the instructor is a large and comprehensive test bank.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For this eleventh edition, it has been my good fortune again to work with a fine set of professionals at Oxford University Press. Special thanks go to Sherith Pankratz as executive editor. Grace Li as assistant editor deserves special praise for her competency and skill. She also served as photo editor. It was a pleasure to work with both her and Sherith. They are first rate colleagues. Matthew Fox also did an excellent production job as project manager. Over the 11 editions many reviewers, instructors, and students have made recommendations to improve the text. I am indebted to you all. Those who have made *The Urban World* a better text include:

Anna Bounds, Queens College
William C. Burger, Longwood University
Joseph F. Cabrera, Marywood University
Raymond Callouri, Monclaire State University
Obie Clayton, Morehouse College
George H. Conklin, North Carolina Central University
Edward Crenshaw, Ohio State University
Sachi G. Dastidar, SUNY, Old Westbury
Kirk D. Fasshauer, Florida Southern College
Daniel Fischer, Mercer University
Karl Flaming, University of Colorado, Denver
David S. Surrey, St. Peters College
Kate H. Fletcher, University of Florida
Joseph Galaskiewicz, University of Arizona
Joan M. Gibran, Tennessee State University
Janell Gibson, Keiser University
Curtis Holland, Northeastern University
Katherine Johnson, Niagara County Community College
Antwan Jones, George Washington University
Judith Kelley, Curry College
Robert Kerstein, University of Tampa
Marilyn C. Krogh, Loyola University, Chicago
Diane Lindley, The University of Mississippi
Yvonne McDonald, Winston-Salem State University
Richard Mordi, Keiser University
James Mulvihill, California State University, San Bernardino
Charles Perabeau, Olivet Nazarene University
Dorothy Remy, University of the District of Columbia
Meghan Ashlin Rich, University of Scranton
Cara Beth Robinson, Tennessee State University
Robert Ross, Clark University
Joyce A. Sween, DePaul University
Karen Tejada, University of Hartford
Joshua Tetteh, Missouri Valley College
Frederick E. S. Wagg, Virginia Commonwealth University
Rachael Woldoff, West Virginia University
Peggy Robinson Wright, Arkansas State University

My deep thanks for your efforts.
—J. John Palen

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

J. John Palen is professor emeritus at Virginia Commonwealth University. He is the author of eighteen books and has received the Virginia Commonwealth University Distinguished Scholar Award. Dr. Palen has been designated a Distinguished Fulbright Chair, and was awarded a Fulbright-Calgary Chair in North American Studies by the University of Calgary. He has received research grants from NSF, NIH, NIMH, the Population Council, and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. Dr. Palen served as a Captain on the faculty of the National Defence University and as a Joint Chiefs of Staff researcher. He was appointed a United Nations demographer and served at the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa. He is a Civil War buff who enjoys progressive jazz, hiking in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains, and observing the street life of urban places everywhere.

PART

1

FOCUS AND DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 1

THE URBAN WORLD

A city is a collective body of persons sufficient in themselves for all purposes of life.
—Aristotle, *Politics*

OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

This text explores and explains the patterns of urban life in North America as we enter the third decade of the twenty-first century. The first decade of the twenty-first century saw the global change from a predominantly rural world to one where the majority of us live in urban places. Now, for the first time in history, we live in an urban world. The United Nations estimates that *all* worldwide growth in the next thirty years will be in urban areas. Closer to home, the United States population passed 325 million in 2018, and four out of five Americans now live in metropolitan areas. The situation is similar for Canada's 37 million people.

The goal of this text is to help the reader better understand the cities and suburbs where most of us live and then to give some awareness of the major urban changes taking place elsewhere around the globe. To do this, we begin at the beginning, since without knowing how we got here it is difficult to make sense of what is happening, both in North America and in the developing world, where the great bulk of urban growth is now taking place. As you read the following chapters, keep in mind that the one constant in urban areas is change. Metropolitan areas are not museums but are constantly undergoing both physical and social change.

THE PROCESS OF URBANIZATION

Cities, it turns out, are a relatively new idea. Archaeologists tell us that the human species has been on the globe several million years. However, for the overwhelming number of these millennia our ancestors lived in a world without cities. Cities and urban places, in spite of our acceptance of them as an inevitable consequence of human life are, in the eyes of history, hardly even a blink. Not until the end of the last ice age, around 11,000 years ago, did the first villages emerge. Cities are an even more recent social invention, having existed at most probably

7,000 to 8,000 years. Their period of social, economic, and cultural dominance is even shorter.

Nonetheless, the era of cities encompasses the totality of the period we label "civilization." The story of human social and cultural development—and regression—is in major part the tale of the cities that have been built and the lives that have been lived within them. The saga of wars, architecture, and art—almost the whole of what we know of human triumphs and tragedies—is encompassed within the period of cities. The very terms *civilization* and *civilized* come from the Latin *civis*, which refers to a citizen living in a city. The city was civilization; those outside were barbarians. Among the ancient Greeks, the greatest punishment was to be ostracized (banned) from the city. In Roman times, *civitas* referred to the political and moral nature of community, while the term *urbs*, from which we get the term *urban*, referred more to the built form of the city.

The vital and occasionally magnificent cities of the past, however, existed as small islands in an overwhelmingly rural sea. As recently as the year 1800, the population of the world was still 97 percent rural.[1] Just over a hundred years ago in 1900 the world was still 86 percent rural. In 1900 the proportion of the world's population living in cities of 100,000 or more was only 5.5 percent, and only 13.6 percent lived in places of 5,000 or more. Cities were growing very rapidly, but most people still lived in the countryside or small villages. Now we live in a world that for the first time numbers more urban than rural residents. Demographically, the twenty-first century is the world's first urban century (Figure 1.1).[2]

URBAN GROWTH

The rapidity of the change from rural to urban life is at least as important as the amount of urbanization. One hundred and twenty-five years ago not a single nation was as urban as the world is today. The urban transformation initially took place in Europe and countries largely settled by Europeans, such as the United States, during the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. These were the places that first developed modern agricultural, transportation, and industrial technologies. England, the first country to enter the industrial age, was also the first country to undergo the urban transformation. Somewhat over a century ago, England became the world's first predominantly urban country.[3] Not until approximately one hundred years

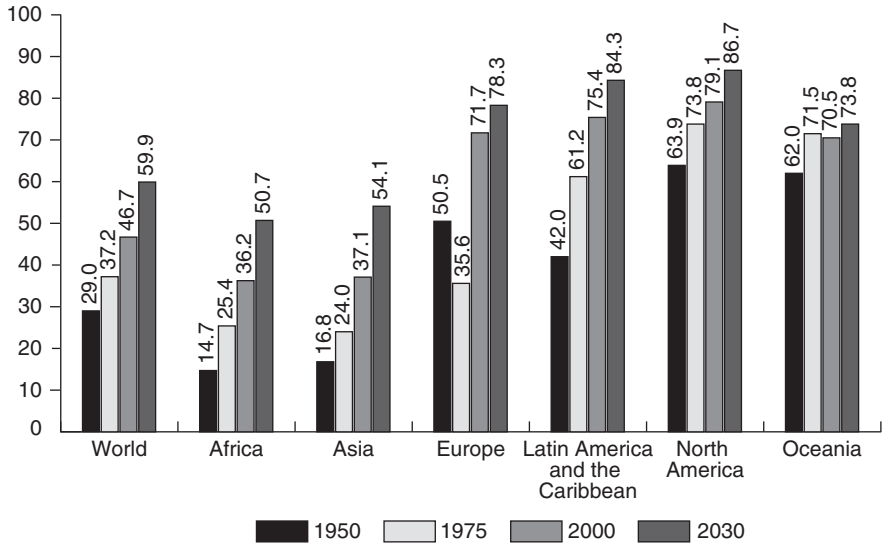


FIGURE 1.1 Percentage of Population Residing in Urban Areas by Major Area, 1950, 1975, 2005, and 2030

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2006). World Urbanization Prospects: The 2005 Revision, Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP/200

ago (1920) did half the population of the United States reside in urban places, and not until 1931 was this true of Canada. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 dramatically indicate how the urban population of the world has increased over the last century and will continue to expand. This rapid growth of cities during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is sometimes referred to as the *urban revolution*.

We take large cities for granted. Almost everyone reading this book has spent at least part of their lives living in a central city or suburb, so it is difficult for us to conceive of a world without large cities. However, 120 years ago only twelve cities housed a million or more inhabitants.

The rapidity and extent of the urban revolution can perhaps be understood if one reflects that if San Antonio, with a 2018 population of 1.4 million, had had the same population two centuries ago, it would have been the largest urban place in the world.[4] By 2030, some 60 percent of the world's people will live in urban places. According to United Nations estimates, the 3.6 billion urban people today will be 6.3 billion in 2050.

The United Nations estimates that some 414 cities have over a million inhabitants, and over a third of these cities first reached the million mark in the last fifteen years. We now live in an urban world of mega-metropolises; Tokyo-Yokohama has a population of 37 million and greater Mexico City has 21 million. Within the United States, the 2010 census reported the New York–New Jersey–Long Island metro area at 20 million and Los Angeles–Riverside–Orange County (California) at 16 million. Chicago–Gary (Indiana)–Kenosha (Wisconsin) was third largest at 9 million. Metro Toronto in Canada had 5 million.

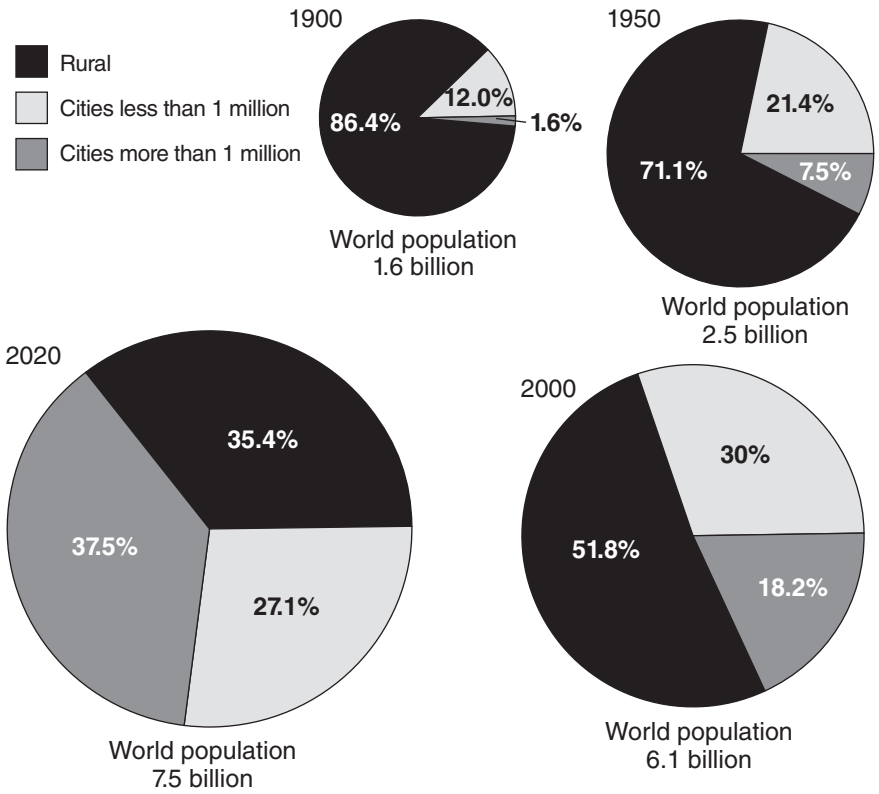


FIGURE 1.2 Population Growth by Region, 1900–2020

Source: United Nations Population Division

MEGACITIES

Today, 95 percent of all urban growth is taking place not in Europe or North America, but in rapidly growing cities in the developing world. Some of this change is breathtakingly fast. In Beijing, China, the equivalent of three Manhattans was added to its skyline just for the 2008 Olympics. Twenty-first-century world urbanization patterns are different from those of the twentieth century. Today developed Western nations are experiencing little urban growth. Of the 414 previously noted cities of over a million inhabitants, over two-thirds are in developing countries. How many of us could name more than a few dozen of such million-plus developing world cities?

The United Nations uses the term *megacities* to designate places of over 10 million inhabitants. As recently as 1950, only New York and Tokyo had megacity status. By contrast, in 2018 there were thirty seven megacities. Of these thirty seven megacities, nine out of ten are found in developing countries. Mumbai (previously named Bombay), India, for example, even with falling growth rates, is still adding half a million new city residents each year. It is difficult for us to keep up either intellectually or emotionally with these changes.

As of 2017, the United Nations estimated a population of 37 million for the megacity of Tokyo-Yokohama, 23 million for Greater Mumbai, and over 21 million for the megacity of Mexico City. By any measure these megacities dwarf anything the world has ever experienced. The United Nations says that in 2020, nine cities—Delhi, Dhaka, Jakarta, Lagos, Mexico City, Mumbai, New York, São Paulo, and Tokyo—will have more than 20 million inhabitants.[5] One out of ten of the globe's urban residents already lives in a megacity.

Some of our difficulty in understanding or coping with urban patterns and problems can be attributed to the newness of the emergence of this urban world with its huge megacities. Living as we do in developed, Western, urban-oriented places, it is easy for us to forget three important facts:

First, even in the industrialized West, massive urbanization is a very recent phenomenon. This rapid transformation from a basically rural to a heavily urbanized world and the development of urbanism as a way of life have been far more dramatic and spectacular than the much better-known population explosion. Today, the number of people living in cities of the developing world outnumbers the entire population of the world only one hundred years ago.

Second, over 95 percent of future urban growth will occur in cities of the developing world. The population explosion is, in reality, a Third World urban explosion.

Third, about half the urban residents in developing countries live in slums. There are currently some 1 billion slum dwellers, and this will rise to 2 billion slum dwellers by 2030.[6]

THE URBAN EXPLOSION

Urban growth first accelerated cumulatively during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. By 1800, London, the largest city on earth, reached almost 1 million, Paris exceeded 500,000, and Vienna and St. Petersburg had each reached 200,000. A century later, as the twentieth century began, ten cities had reached or exceeded 1 million: London, Paris, Vienna, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Calcutta, Tokyo, New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. This urban explosion began over two hundred years ago in the more developed nations of Europe. Among the more important reasons for this spurt in European population were (1) declining death rates, (2) the beginning of scientific management of agriculture, (3) improved transportation and communication systems, (4) stable political governments, and (5) the development of the Industrial Revolution. While details differ from country to country, the pattern for Western nations was similar. Improvements in agriculture caused a surplus. Then, in rather short order, entrepreneurs, and later governments, transferred this extra margin into the manufacturing sector. The result was urban expansion and growth fed by a demand from the burgeoning manufacturing, commercial, and service sectors for a concentrated labor force. Today the developed world is over three-quarters urban. By contrast, just under half of those in less developed countries live in urban areas.

Heavy urbanization in the developing world is largely a post–World War II phenomenon (see Chapter 14: Developing Countries). The pace of urbanization in developing countries has been far more rapid than that found during the nineteenth century in Europe or North America. Note in Table 1.1 the dramatic projection of African, and especially Asian, urban growth

TABLE 1.1 PERCENTAGE URBAN BY MAJOR AREA, SELECTED PERIODS, 1950–2030

	Percentage Urban				
	1950	1975	2000	2017	2030
World	29	37	47	54	60
Africa	15	25	36	41	51
Asia	17	24	37	49	54
Europe	51	66	72	74	78
Latin America and the Caribbean	42	61	75	80	84
Northern America	64	74	79	80	86
Oceania	62	71	71	69	74

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2006. *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2005 Revision*, Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP/2000. Figures for 2017 from *2017 World Population Data Sheet*, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, DC, 2017.

over the next half century. At the same time, the United Nations anticipates a declining population in Europe.

Whether we are delighted by the variety and excitement of urban life or horrified by the anonymity and occasional brutality of cities, population concentration—that is, urbanization—is becoming the way of life in developing as well as developed nations. Attempts to return to a supposedly simpler rural past must be viewed as futile escapism. Longings for a pastoral utopia where all exist in rural bliss have no chance of becoming reality. We live in an urban world, and for all of our complaints about it, few would reverse the clock.

DEFINING URBAN AREAS

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to define some of the terms we will be using. This is not altogether as simple as it might seem, since countries differ in how they define a place as *urban*. About thirty definitions of *urban population* are currently in use, none of them totally satisfactory. Urban settlements have been defined on the basis of an urban culture (a cultural definition), administrative functions (a political definition), the percentage of people in nonagricultural occupations (an economic definition), and the size of the population (a demographic definition). In the United States, we define places as urban by using population criteria along with some geographical and political elements. In actual practice, the various criteria tend to overlap and be reinforcing.

Let us look briefly at some of the criteria that can be used. In terms of cultural criteria, a city is "a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions."[7] The city thus is the place, as sociologists put it, where relations are *gesellschaft* (larger-scale "societal" or formal role relationships) rather than *gemeinschaft* (more intimate-scale "community" or primary relationships). In short, the city is large, culturally heterogeneous, and socially diverse. It is the antithesis of "folk society." The problem with the cultural definitions of an urban place is the difficulty of measurement; for example, if a city is a state of mind, who can ever say where the boundaries of the urban area lie?

The United Nations has urban data for some 228 countries and accepts each nation's definition of what it considers urban. This makes cross-nation comparisons difficult. Economic activity is used in defining what is urban in thirty-nine countries. In terms of economic criteria, a country has sometimes been described as urban if fewer than half its workers are engaged in agriculture. Here *urban* and *nonagricultural* are taken to be synonymous. This distinction, of course, tells us nothing about the degree of urbanization or its pattern of spatial distribution within the country. Distinctions have also been made between the town as the center for processing and service functions and the countryside as the area for producing raw materials. However, while in the past these distinctions may have had utility, today it is difficult to distinguish among areas by means of such criteria. How far out do the producing and service functions of a New York or a Los Angeles extend?

Politically or administratively, a national government may define its urban areas in terms of functions. Roughly half the nations for which the United Nations has data use administrative criteria.[8] The difficulty is that there is no agreement internationally on what the political or administrative criteria should be. Often those residing in the capital of a country or a province are designated as urban. In some countries, such as Kenya and Thailand, all incorporated places are urban, regardless of size. In Canada until 1971, all incorporated places were automatically urban.

Finally, some fifty-one countries use size of the urban population as the criterion in deciding what

is urban and what is not. Demographically, a place is defined as being urban because a certain number of people live within it, a certain density of people is within it, or both. Measurement and comparison of rural and urban populations within a country can be relatively simple when demographic criteria are used, although the problem of making comparisons among nations still remains. Only 250 persons are necessary to qualify an area as urban in Denmark, and 1,000 in Canada, while 10,000 are needed in Italy. The United Nations recommends that countries define urban areas as localities with a population of 2,000 or more, and this is the most commonly used figure worldwide. According to the definition used by the United States for the 2010 census, the official urban population of the United States comprises all persons living in urbanized areas, all persons outside of urbanized areas who live in places with 2,500 persons or more, and all persons living in unincorporated settlements of fewer than 2,500 persons living in "urbanized zones" on the fringes of metropolitan areas. By this definition, three-quarters of the United States population is urban.

Worldwide, the percentage of the population living in urban places varies from 12 percent in Burundi to 100 percent in Qatar, Singapore, and Hong Kong.[9] (Table 1.1 shows the percent of urbanization by world regions.)

URBANIZATION AND URBANISM

In this work we will distinguish between *urbanization*, which relates to the number of people in urban places, and *urbanism*, which concerns the sociocultural consequences of living in urban places, the human culture side of urbanization. As we will see in Part Five: Worldwide Urbanization, cities in the developing world are the largest and the fastest growing in the world. Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that the growth of cities and a high level of national urbanization are not the same thing; in the Western world both happened at the same time, but it is possible to find extremely large cities in overwhelmingly rural countries. Some of the world's largest cities—for example, Manilla, Mumbai, and Cairo—exist in nations that are still largely rural. Extremely large cities do not necessarily indicate an urban nation.

URBANIZATION

Urbanization not only refers to the changes in the proportion of the population of a nation living in urban

The Tokyo-Yokohama metro area has 38 million residents and Tokyo city alone has over 13 million. The photo shows crowds in downtown Tokyo taking pictures with their phones to greet the New Year. Kyodo via AP Images

areas but also to the process of people moving to cities or other densely settled areas. The term is also used to describe the changes in social organization that occur as a consequence of population concentration. Urbanization is thus a process—the process by which rural areas become transformed into urban areas. In demographic terms, urbanization is an increase in population concentration (numbers and density); organizationally, it is an alteration in structure and patterns of organization. Demographically, urbanization involves two elements: the multiplication of points of concentration and the increase in the size of individual concentrations.[10]

Urbanization, described demographically as the percentage of a nation's total population living in urban areas, is a process that clearly has a beginning and an end. Four-fifths of the United States population of 325 million is now urban; the maximum level of urbanization is probably somewhere around 90 percent. (Nations that comprise only one city, such as Singapore, can be 100 percent urban.) Even after a nation achieves a high level of urbanization, its cities and metropolitan areas can continue to grow. While there is a limit to the percentage of urbanization possible, the practical limit for the size of cities or metropolitan areas is not yet known.

URBANISM

While urbanization has to do with metropolitan growth, *urbanism* refers to the social patterns and behaviors associated with living in cities. Urbanism, with its changes in the values, mores, customs, and behaviors of a population, is often seen as one of the consequences of urbanization.[11] Urbanism is a social and behavioral response to living in certain places.

Under the conceptual label "urbanism" is found research concerning the social psychological aspects of urban life, urban personality patterns, and the behavioral adaptations required by city life. Urbanism as a way of life receives detailed treatment in Chapter 6: The Suburban Era?, Chapter 7: Urban Culture and Lifestyles, and Chapter 8: The Social Environment of Metro Areas.

It should be noted that it is possible to live in an area with a high degree of urbanization (population concentration) and a low level of urbanism (urban behaviors) or a low level of urbanization and a high level of urbanism. Examples of the former can be found in the large cities of the developing world, where the city is filled with immigrants who now reside in an urban place but remain basically rural in outlook.

Cairo, for example, is typical of developing cities in that over one-third of its residents were born outside the city. Many of these newcomers are urban in residence but remain rural in outlook and behavior. On the other hand, if the urbanization process in the United States becomes one of population decentralization, the United States might have some decline in levels of urbanization, while urban lifestyles (due to satellite TV, Internet, Facebook, etc.) become even more universal.[12]

The explicit belief in most older sociological writings—and an implicit premise in much of what is written about cities today—is that cities produce a characteristic way of life known as "urbanism." Moreover, urbanism as a way of life, while often successful economically, is said to produce personal alienation, social disorganization, and the whole range of ills falling under the cliché "the crisis of the cities."

A classic statement of the effects of urbanization on urban behavior patterns is Louis Wirth's article, "Urbanism as a Way of Life."[13] According to Wirth, "For sociological purposes a city may be defined as a relatively large, dense, permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals."[14] Wirth further suggested that these components of urbanization—size, density, and heterogeneity—are the independent variables that create a distinct way of life called "urbanism." Urbanism, with its emphasis on competition, achievement, specialization, superficiality, anonymity, independence, and tangential relationships, is often compared—at least implicitly—with a simpler and less competitive idealized rural past. (The adequacy of this approach is addressed in detail in Chapter 7: Urban Culture and Lifestyles.)

Today urbanism as a way of life is virtually universal in nations with high levels of urbanization such as the United States, with their elaborate media and communications networks. Even the attitudes, behaviors, and cultural patterns of rural areas in the United States are dominated by urban values and lifestyles. Rural wheat farmers, cattle ranchers, and dairy farmers—with their accountants, professional lobbies, and government subsidies—are all part of a complex and highly integrated agribusiness enterprise. They are hardly innocent country bumpkins, preyed upon by

city slickers. By comparison, urban consumers often appear naive regarding contemporary rural life.

The degree to which, even fifty years ago, urbanism already had permeated every aspect of American culture was documented in Vidich and Bensman's study of an upstate New York hamlet with a population of 1,700. Their book, which they titled *Small Town in Mass Society*, presented a detailed and careful picture of how industrialization and bureaucratization totally dominated the rural village.[15] Everything—from 4H clubs and Girl Scout troops, through the American Legion and national churches, to university agriculture agents, the Social Security Administration, and marketing organizations to raise the price supports for milk—influenced how the village residents thought, acted, and lived. The town was totally dependent on outside political and economic institutions for its survival.

The small-towners, though, had an entirely different conception of themselves and their hamlet. They saw themselves as rugged individualists living in a town that, in contrast to city life, prided itself on friendliness, being a good neighbor, grassroots democracy, and independence. Their town was small, self-reliant, and friendly, while the city was large, coldly impersonal, and full of welfare loafers. In spite of the absence of a viable local culture and the clear division of the town by socioeconomic class differences, the myth of a unique rural lifestyle and social equality persisted.

Contemporary small-town America is totally enmeshed in an urban economic and social system despite its pride in its independence of the city and cosmopolitan ways. The small town even relies on the mass media to help reaffirm its own fading self-image. Even the most isolated rural area in Montana has access to over two hundred channels of satellite TV, web access, email, Twitter, and Facebook. Distances have shrunk. You can view American news on CNN in Indonesian villages, while the Internet provides an international information superhighway.

Today in North America, young people in both rural and urban areas follow the same rap, rock, and concert stars. Partially excepting separatist religious groups such as the Amish, there no longer is a unique rural culture independent of urban influence.

ORGANIZING THE STUDY OF URBAN LIFE

Over the years, scholars have studied cities in many different ways. Academics in a variety of disciplines have concerned themselves with a wide variety of questions such as why cities are located at particular places and not others; what the growth patterns of cities are; who lives in cities; how different ethnic and racial groups arrange themselves therein; how living in cities affects social relationships; how cities govern themselves; and whether city living produces certain behaviors and social problems.

If these and numerous other questions addressed in this book are to have meaning for the student, the questions have to be more than an ad hoc list of interesting topics. The material has to be related and organized in some general fashion in order to provide a common understanding and body of knowledge.

The material that follows is organized—with an occasional bit of squeezing—under the previously mentioned headings of *urbanization* and *urbanism*. Under the more abstract heading of urbanization are included those questions and issues dealing with the city as a spatial, economic, and political entity. This traditionally has been referred to by sociologists as the *human ecological* approach, since it is broadly concerned with how the ecology of the city developed, particularly the interrelationship and interdependence of organisms and their environment.

In recent decades, an alternative approach called *political economy* has become widely used by urban scholars. Those taking a political economy perspective are less likely to give weight to ecological factors. Rather, in explaining the decline of the central city, suburbanization, edge cities, and the explosion of Third World cities, they look to the explicit political and economic decisions made by multinationals and political institutions.[16] Those advocating a political economy approach are concerned with how economic forces shape urban patterns. Research, for example, might be done on how property values are manipulated to encourage gentrification. (Political economy and other conflict approaches are discussed in detail in Chapter 4: Ecology and Political Economy Perspectives.)

What ecological and political economy approaches have in common is that they both focus on the larger macro-level urban units and social and economic

questions. The urbanization, ecological, or political economy focus is generally on the big picture. They use cities—or, at their most micro-level, neighborhoods—as the unit of analysis. A human ecologist, for example, might research the predictable pattern of neighborhood change over time, while a political economy advocate might look at how major economic institutions decide growth patterns. Such macro-level approaches are heavily used in Part I: Focus and Development and Part II: American Urbanization.

Urbanism as a way of life, on the other hand, is far more micro-level oriented. It focuses on the impact of the city on small groups or individuals. This *cultural*, *sociocultural*, or *social psychological* approach focuses on how the experience of living in cities affects people's social relationships and personalities. The concern of this approach is primarily with the psychological, cultural, and social ramifications of city life. For example, one of the questions regarding the social psychological impact of city life that we will examine is whether living in a city, suburb, or rural area produces differences in personalities, socialization patterns, or even levels of pathology. To put it in oversimplified form, are city dwellers different? While human ecology focuses on how social and spatial patterns are maintained, and political economy focuses on economic systems, the social psychological or cultural approach is concerned with human effects.

Historically, urbanization scholars and urban social psychologists have gone their own way, while largely ignoring their opposite numbers. Some textbooks also perpetuate the division by all but ignoring alternative approaches, or by treating alternative explanations as discredited straw men. This is unfortunate, for the different perspectives complement each other in the same way that the social science disciplines of political science, economics, and sociology provide alternative focuses and approaches. This book, written by one trained in the urban ecology tradition who finds much of value in the political economy model, makes a conscious effort to present all positions fairly as a means of better understanding the patterns of metropolitan areas and of the lives of those of us living within them. I believe it is necessary to have an understanding both of urbanization and of urbanism as a way of life or, if you prefer, an alternate terminology, of urban ecology and urban political economy on one hand, and of urban culture and urban social psychology on the other.

CONCEPTS OF THE CITY

URBAN CHANGE AND CONFUSION

The scientific study of urbanism and urbanization is a relative newcomer to the academic scene. Systematic empirical examination of cities and city life only began during the first half of the twentieth century, a period in which American cities were experiencing considerable transformation in terms of both industrialization and a massive influx of immigrants from the rural areas of Europe and the American South. To many observers of the time, the city, with its emphasis on efficiency, technology, and division of labor, was undermining simpler rural forms of social organization. The social consequences were disorganization, depersonalization, and the breakdown of traditional norms and values. Classic early twentieth-century social protest novels such as Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906) and Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900) reflect this breakdown. An anonymous poem of 1916 titled "While the City Sleeps" mirrors this negative view of urban life:

> While the City Sleeps
> Stand in your window and scan the sights,
> On Broadway with its bright white lights.
> Its dashing cabs and cabarets,
> Its painted women and fast cafés.
> That's when you really see New York.
> Vulgar of manner, overfed,
> Overdressed and underbred.
> Heartless and Godless, Hell's delight,
> Rude by day and lewd by night.

RURAL SIMPLICITY VERSUS URBAN COMPLEXITY

In the usual description of the transition from simple to complex forms of social organization, there is, at least implicitly, a time frame in which rural areas represent the past and traditional values, and the city represents the future with its emphasis on technology, division of labor, and emergence of new values. Early movies reinforced this view. In silent movies the villain invariably was the city banker, while the hero was a simple farm boy. Similarly, in cowboy movies the villain often had

his bank in town, while the hero rode in from the open country. This picture of a fast-paced, alienating, stimulating, and anonymous city life, along with the contrasting romanticized picture of the warm, personal, and well-adjusted rural life is, of course, a stereotype. Such stereotypes affect not only social behavior but also social policy—even if they are poor reflectors of reality. For example, in spite of the emphasis on the isolation, anonymity, and mental stress of the city, there are indications that city residents are actually happier and better adjusted than their rural cousins.

With the exception of the largest cities, Claude Fischer found, for example, that on a worldwide scale there is greater evidence of rural as opposed to urban dissatisfaction, unhappiness, despair, and melancholy.[17] Also, research by Palen and Johnson on the relationship between urbanization and health status in nineteenth- and twentieth-century American cities found that inhabitants of large cities were consistently healthier than inhabitants of rural areas or small towns.[18] Contrary to the stereotype, today, Americans residing in cities live healthier and longer lives than their rural cousins.[19]

EARLY SOCIAL THEORIES AND URBAN CHANGE

The cleavage between the city and the countryside is, of course, not a uniquely American idea. The great European social theorists of the nineteenth century described the social changes that were then taking place in terms of a shift from a warm, supportive community based on kinship in which common aims were shared to a larger, more impersonal society in which ties were based not on kinship but on interlocking economic, political, and other interests. These views had, and continue to have, profound impact on sociological thought.[20]

EUROPEAN THEORISTS

Many of the core ideas of the classical (so-called) Chicago School writings of the 1920s and 1930s were based implicitly on the views of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European social theorists. Of these, the most influential were the Germans Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936), Karl Marx (1818–1883), Max Weber (1864–1920), and Georg Simmel (1858–1918), and the Frenchman Émile Durkheim (1858–1917). These theorists sought to explain the twin changes of industrialization and urbanization that were undermining the small-scale, traditional, rural-based communities of Europe. All about, they saw the crumbling of old economic patterns, social customs, and family organization. The growth of urbanization was bringing in its wake new urban ways of life. They sought to theoretically explain these changes.

Rapid urbanization is dramatically transforming China's cities. Guangzhou (formerly Canton) was as of 2016 China's third largest city with over 12 million inhabitants. xuyingtu/Shutterstock.com

Typologies

Commonly, changes were presented by theorists in terms of typologies, which sociologists refer to as *ideal types*. The term *ideal type* doesn't mean "perfect," rather, an ideal type is a *model*. An ideal type doesn't represent a specific reality; it is, instead, a logical construct. One ideal-type model was rural society; its opposite was urban society.

Probably the most important nineteenth-century European social theorist was Karl Marx, who was born in 1818 in Trier into an agrarian Germany that had yet to undergo the Industrial Revolution. Yet Marx spent most of his adult life in an industrializing London where factories, and exploitation of the new class of wage workers, were part of daily life. In the booming cities, a few industrialists enjoyed a level of wealth and comfort more luxurious than that of kings of old, while workers slaved twelve hours a day, six days a week, for subsistence wages and lived in unspeakable tenements and slums (see Box 2.3, "Engels on Industrial Slums," in Chapter 2).

Not surprisingly, Marx saw economic structure as the infrastructural foundation of society. It therefore follows that change in society results from conflict over resources and the means of production. Ultimately, the final struggle of mature urban industrial capitalism would be between the capitalists, who own factories and the means of production, and the urban proletariat, who provide the underpaid labor. However, for Marx, before this could occur, there first had to be a shift from agrarian feudal society to the new, urban, property-owning bourgeoisie. (Since a bourg, or burg, is a town, a bourgeois is by definition a town dweller.) According to Marx:

> The greatest division of material and mental labour is the separation of town and country. The antagonism between town and country begins with the transition from barbarism to civilization, from tribe to State, from locality to nation, and runs through the whole history of civilization to the present day. . . . Here first became the division of the population into two great classes, which is directly based on the division of labor and on the instruments of production.[21]

In early-twentieth-century urban sociology, Ferdinand Tönnies had great impact with his elaborate discussions of the shift from *gemeinschaft*—a smaller country or village community based on ties of blood (family) and kinship—to *gesellschaft*—a larger, more complex urban society or association based on economic, political, or other interests.[22] In rural gemeinschaft, people were bound together by common values and by family and kinship ties, and they worked together for the common goal. At the gesellschaft pole of the typology, on the other hand, personal relationships count for little, with money and contract replacing sentiment. City people were individualistic and selfishly out for themselves. For Tönnies, this change from common good to private advantage arose as a consequence of the growth of money-based capitalism. Further, he saw this evolutionary change as inevitable, but not desirable. Tönnies mourned the increasing loss of community. A century later his idea of the warm local town in contrast to the impersonal city still continues to influence popular views of urban life.

Others were more positive regarding urban life. A century ago, the great French sociologist Émile Durkheim saw societies moving from a commonality of tasks and outlook to a complex division of labor. Societies based on shared sentiments and tasks were said to possess "mechanical solidarity," while those based on integrating different but complementary economic and social functions were said to possess "organic solidarity."[23] In Durkheim's view, the collective conscience of rural society is replaced by a complex division of labor in urban society. The latter is both far more productive economically and far more socially liberating. Durkheim was more positive about urban life than Tönnies; while Durkheim saw the division of labor undermining traditional life, he also saw cities creating new forms of mutual interdependence.

Expanding his theory beyond the European city, the German sociologist Max Weber made an ideal-type distinction between "traditional society" based upon ascription and "rational society" based on the "technical superiority" of formalized and impersonal bureaucracy.[24] Weber saw that with the rise of the nation-state, the autonomous city of the medieval period was no more.

All the above theorists looked at the city from a macro-level. More psychologically oriented was Georg Simmel, whose famous essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life" concentrated on how urbanization increases individuals' alienation and mental isolation.[25] Simmel's concern was on how the individual could survive the city's intense social interaction and

still maintain her or his personality. Simmel saw the city as a place of intense stimuli that stimulated freedom but also forced the city dweller to become blasé and calculating in order to survive. Simmel's ideas were very important in influencing America's first urban sociologists and are the base of much of the work of the so-called Chicago School of sociologists. The influence of Simmel's ideas is fully discussed in Part Three: Metropolitan Life. A twentieth-century anthropology version of the dichotomy between rural and urban places was the distinction made by the anthropologist Robert Redfield between what he characterized as "folk" and "urban" societies. He described folk peasant societies as:

> Small, isolated, non-literate, and homogeneous, with a strong sense of group solidarity. The ways of living are conventionalized into that coherent system which we call "a culture." Behavior is traditional, spontaneous, uncritical, and personal; there is no legislation, or habit of experiment and reflection for intellectual ends. Kinship, its relationships and institutions, are the type categories of experience and the familial group is the unit of action. The sacred prevails over the secular; the economy is one of status rather than market.[26]

Interestingly, Redfield never did define "urban life," simply saying that it was the opposite of folk society.

Assumptions

The theoretical frameworks described above all contain three general assumptions: (1) Evolutionary movement from simple rural to complex urban is unilinear (that is, it goes only in one direction: from simple to complex); (2) modern urban life stresses achievement over ascription (that is, what you do is more important than your parentage); and (3) the supposed characteristics of city life apply not just to specific groups or neighborhoods but to urban areas as a whole. As you read through this text, note whether these assumptions are supported or rejected.

All these models have at least an implicit evolutionary framework: Societies follow a unilinear path of development from simple rural to complex urban. Rural areas and ways of life typify the past, while the city is the mirror to the future. This change is assumed to be both inevitable and irreversible. A subset of this belief is that the city fosters goal-oriented, formal, secondary-group relationships—rather than face-to-face primary-group relationships.

Unspoken but often implicit in this is the value judgment that the old ways were better, or at least more humane. The city is presented as more efficient, but the inevitable price of efficiency is the breakdown of meaningful social relationships. The countryside exemplifies stable rules, roles, and relationships, while the city is characterized by innovation, experimentation, flexibility, and disorganization. In cultural terms the small town represents continuity, conformity, and stability, while the big city stands for heterogeneity, variety, and originality. In terms of personality, country folk are supposed to be neighborly people who help one another—they lack the sophistication of city slickers but also lack the city dweller's guile. In short, country folk are "real," while city people are artificial and impersonal.

Fortunately, the newly emerging disciplines of urban sociology and urban studies did not calcify into explaining supposed differences between the rural and the urban, but rather began to examine the urban scene empirically and systematically. Eventually the original rural-urban dichotomy was abandoned, and hypotheses began to be developed on the basis of empirical research. Emphasis on the importance of actual studies and research data is one of the characteristics of urban sociology. The Chicago School of sociology set this pattern.

THE CHICAGO SCHOOL

Urban research (and in fact virtually all sociological research) until World War II is largely associated with a remarkable group of scholars connected with the University of Chicago during the 1920s and 1930s. The "Chicago School" found sociology a loose collection of untested theories, interesting facts, social work, and social reform. It converted sociology into an established academic discipline and an emerging science.[27] Foremost among the Chicago School pioneers was Robert E. Park (1864–1944), who emphasized not moral preachments about the sins of the city but detailed empirical observation. Park had held a variety of jobs, including newspaper reporter and personal secretary to national black leader Booker T. Washington. He was constantly fascinated by studying the city and passed his enthusiasm on to several generations of graduate students. He was also most interested in how the supposed chaos

of the city actually was underlaid by a pattern of systematic social and spatial organization.[28]

Early empirical sociologists, studying under Park, described the effects of urbanization on immigrant and rural newcomers to the city and the emergence of "urbanization as a way of life." Works such as *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, *The Ghetto*, *The Jack-Roller*, and *The Gold Coast and the Slum* are minor classics describing the effects of urbanization.[29]

However, it remained for Louis Wirth (1897–1952), a student of Park, to consolidate and expressly formulate how the size, density, and heterogeneous nature of cities produce a unique urban way of life. Wirth's essay "Urbanism as a Way of Life," although much challenged, remains the most influential essay in urban studies.[30] Wirth suggested that large cities inevitably produce a host of changes that, although economically productive, are destructive of family life and close social interaction. Wirth's ideas are examined in detail in Chapter 7: Urban Culture and Lifestyles.

For now, however, let us temporarily put aside the questions of the social psychology of city living and focus our primary attention on the spatial and social organization of urban places. We will begin our discussion of the urbanization process by examining how and why cities have come into existence.

SUMMARY

As the twenty-first century progresses, the world is changing from one that always has been mostly rural to one that is primarily urban. Cities have only existed for 7,000 to 8,000 years, but what we call "civilization" is the record of that period. At the beginning of the twentieth century, 86 percent of the globe's inhabitants were rural. Today most are urban. We are now in a period of explosive urban growth, with the globe having 414 cities of at least a million inhabitants. Dramatic urban growth in the developing world is largely a postwar phenomenon, but today over nine-tenths of the world's urban growth is in developing countries—much of it in megacities of over 10 million.

Urban places can be defined on the basis of having an urban culture (a cultural definition), administrative function (a political definition), the percentage of the population in non-agricultural occupations (an economic definition), or on the basis of population size and concentration (a demographic definition). The latter is most commonly used and indicates that the percentage of urban population varies from a low of 12 percent in Burundi to 100 percent in Kuwait and Singapore.

The term *urbanization* refers to the proportion of persons living in urban places, while *urbanism* refers to the social-psychological aspects or ways of life found in cities. Urbanism as a way of life has permeated even the most rural areas of North America. Social theorists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century focused on how moving from rural to urban places changes people's economic behavior, social customs, and family organization.

These changes, as discussed by theorists such as Ferdinand Tönnies, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Émile Durkheim, and Georg Simmel, were commonly presented as dichotomous models called *ideal types*. The ideal types commonly contrasted a simpler and more personal rural past with a complex and impersonal urban future.

Urban research (and most sociological research) prior to World War II is associated with urban sociologists at the University of Chicago known collectively as the "Chicago School." Their research was wide ranging but had at its core the study of the impact of urbanization on urban newcomers and the development of an urban social culture or urbanism as a way of life.

KEY CONCEPTS

Urban Growth
Megacities
Urban Explosion
Urban Area Definitions
Urbanization
Urbanism
Rural Simplicity versus Urban Complexity
Theories of Urban Change
Chicago School

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How have urban growth patterns changed over the last two centuries?
2. How has the proportion of the world's population living in cities changed over the last fifty years?

3. Where on the globe is virtually all contemporary urban growth (the so-called Urban Explosion) taking place?
4. Where did most urban growth occur a century ago?
5. What criteria do different countries use to define urban areas?
6. What is the difference between *urbanization* and *urbanism*?
7. Ecological and political economy models or approaches both focus on what level of analysis and questions?
8. Urbanism as a way of life focuses on what level of analysis and questions?
9. Who were some of the major European social theorists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and how did their typologies explain urban change?
10. What was the focus of the Chicago School scholars, and how did they change urban sociology?

NOTES

1. As of 1800, only 1.7 percent of the world's population resided in places of 100,000 people or more, 2.4 percent in places of 20,000 or more, and 3 percent in communities of 5,000 or more. Philip Hauser and Leo Schnore (eds.), *The Study of Urbanization* (New York: Wiley & Sons, 1965), p. 7.
2. *2011 World Population Prospects, The 2011 Revision*, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division, New York, 2012.
3. Adna Ferrin Weber, *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1899), Table 3.
4. For data for cities in earlier eras see, Tertius Chandler and Gerald Fox, *3,000 Years of Urban Growth* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).
5. United Nations, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2011 Revisions* (New York: United Nations, 2012).
6. *2006 World Population Data Sheet*, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, DC, 2006.
7. Robert E. Park, "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment," in Robert E. Park, E. W. Burgess, and Roderick D. McKenzie (eds.), *The City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925).
8. Martin P. Brockerhoff, "An Urbanizing World," *Population Bulletin* 55(3):6, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, DC, September 2000.
9. *2017 World Population Data Sheet*, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, DC, 2017.
10. Hope Tisdale Eldridge, "The Process of Urbanization," in J. J. Spengler and O. D. Duncan (eds.), *Demographic Analysis* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1956), pp. 338–343.
11. Leo Schnore, "Urbanization and Economic Development: The Demographic Contribution," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 23:37–48, 1964.
12. Brian J. L. Berry, "The Counterurbanization Process: Urban America since 1970," in *Urbanization and Counterurbanization*, Vol. II: Urban Affairs Annual Reviews (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1976), pp. 17–39.
13. Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology* 44:1–24, July 1938.
14. Ibid., p. 8.
15. Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman, *Small Town in Mass Society: Class, Power, and Religion in a Rural Community* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).
16. Mark Gottdiener and Joe Feagin, "The Paradigm Shift in Urban Sociology," *Urban Affairs Review* 24:163–187, 1988; Ray Hutchinson, "The Crisis in Urban Sociology," in Ray Hutchinson (ed.), *Research in Urban Sociology* (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1993), pp. 3–26; David A. Smith, "The New Urban Sociology Meets the Old: Rereading Some Classical Human Ecology," *Urban Affairs Review* 30(3):432–457, 1995.
17. Claude S. Fischer, "Urban Malaise," *Social Forces* 52(2):221, December 1973.
18. J. John Palen and Daniel Johnson, "Urbanization and Health Status," in Ann and Scott Greer (eds.), *Cities and Sickness: Health Care in Urban America* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage 1983), pp. 25–34.
19. Melinda Beck, "City vs. Country: Who Is Healthier?" *Wall Street Journal*, July 12, 2011, p. D1.
20. Michael Peter Smith, *Transitional Urbanism: Locating Globalization* (London: Blackwell, 2001).
21. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, R. Pascal (trans.) (New York: International Publishers, 1947), pp. 68–69.

22. Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Society*, Charles P. Loomis (trans.) (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).
23. Émile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, George Simpson (trans.) (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1960).
24. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (trans. and ed.), *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).
25. Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, Kurt Wolff (trans.) (New York: Free Press, 1964).
26. Robert Redfield, "The Folk Society," *American Journal of Sociology* 52:293–308, 1947.
27. For an evaluation of the Chicago legacy, see Lyn H. Lofland, "Understanding Urban Life: The Chicago Legacy," *Urban Life* 11:491–511, 1983.
28. Robert E. Park, "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment," in Robert Park, E. W. Burgess, and Roderick McKenzie (eds.), *The City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925).
29. William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 5 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1918–1920); Louis Wirth, *The Ghetto* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928); Clifford R. Shaw, *The Jack-Roller* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930); and Harvey W. Zorbaugh, *The Gold Coast and the Slum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929).
30. Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology* 44:1–24, July 1938.

CHAPTER 2

THE EMERGENCE OF CITIES

The past is prologue.
—SHAKESPEARE

OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins at the beginning of urban life. It outlines the dramatic growth from the first tentative agricultural villages to the massive industrial cities of the last century. In brief, what is being discussed is the rise of civilization. When reading this longish chapter the goal is not to memorize a series of dates and places, but rather to develop some understanding of the process of urban development—that is, how and why cities developed. Thus, read this chapter to better understand patterns rather than to remember numerous facts. We start with archaeological, anthropological, and historical material, not because there is anything sacred about beginnings as such, but because having some understanding of the origin and function of cities helps us to better understand contemporary cities and how and why they got to be what they are today.

THE ECOLOGICAL COMPLEX

One model that helps us to understand change is the ecological complex. The ecological complex is an ecosystem framework used to explain broad urban change. An *ecosystem* is defined as a natural unit in which there is an interaction of an environmental and a biotic system—that is, a community together with its habitat. At the upper extreme, the whole earth is a world ecosystem. The ecological framework has been criticized by political economy scholars for not giving sufficient attention to deliberate changes planned by economic and political elites.[1] This is a valid criticism when discussing industrial and post-industrial cities. However, for viewing early pre-industrial cities, an ecological framework is a useful tool.

In basic terms, the ecological complex identifies the relationship between four concepts or classes of variables: population, organization, environment, and technology. (Some add a fifth category of "social.") These variables are frequently referred to by the acronym "POET."

Population refers not only to the number of people but also to growth or contraction through either migration or natural increase. An example of the first is the growth of Houston through in-migration, both from northern Frostbelt cities and from Mexico. Population also refers to the composition of the population by variables such as age, sex, and race.

Organization, or social structure, is the way urban populations are organized according to social stratification, the political system, and the economic system. For example, one might want to examine the effect of Nevada's pro-growth political system and related tax system in encouraging population growth through in-migration.

Environment refers to the natural environment (e.g., Miami's absence of snow, or Vancouver's mild maritime climate) and the built environment of streets, parks, and buildings.

Technology refers to tools, inventions, ideas, and techniques that directly impact urban growth and form. Examples in Dallas's case are the private automobile and air conditioning. Air conditioning made the Sunbelt not only prosperous but possible. Without air conditioning the states of Nevada, Arizona, Florida, and Texas would still be the relative economic backwaters they were seventy years ago. Humid Houston, the control center for the world's gas and oil industry, would be unthinkable without air conditioning. Similarly, Dallas would never have emerged as a business center, and Austin's rise as a computer technology center would have been impossible. (Microchip manufacturing requires a constant 72 degrees and 35 percent humidity.) It should be kept in mind that how technology is used, and who has access to it, has social and political ramifications.

The ecological complex is not a theory, but it does provide a simplified way of reminding us of the interrelated properties of urban settings and how each class of variables is related to and has implications for the others.[2] Each of the four variables is causally interdependent; depending on the way a problem is stated, each may serve either as an independent (or thing-explaining) or a dependent (thing-to-be-explained) variable. In sociological research, organization is commonly viewed as the dependent variable to be influenced by the other three independent variables, but a more sophisticated view of organization sees it as reciprocally related to the other elements of the ecological complex.

For example, if we are looking at the destruction of the Brazilian rain forests, we can view rapid population growth and availability of modern technology as "causing" massive environmental degradation and destruction of the earth's ozone layer. On the other hand, one could view the environmental variable as "causing" the social organizational response of the international environmental movement.

A major advantage of the ecological complex as a conceptual scheme is its simplicity, since economy of explanation is a basic scientific goal. For example, using the example of smog in Los Angeles, one can see that as transportation technology changed, the environment, organization, and population of the city also changed. In Los Angeles a favorable natural environment led to large-scale increases in population, which resulted in organizational problems (civic and governmental) and technological changes (freeways and factories). These in turn led to environmental changes (smog), which resulted in organizational changes (new pollution laws), which in turn resulted

in technological changes (electric and hybrid automobiles, and an expensive subway system).

This example illustrates how sociologists can use the conceptual scheme of the ecological complex to clarify significant sets of variables when studying urban growth patterns. This can be of considerable help in enlightening policy options. Note, for example, the dominant importance of environmental factors in the first cities and how this, in time, is modified by technological and social inventions. The role of technology, for instance, becomes increasingly important in the nineteenth century (railroads, telephones, elevators, and high-rise buildings).

A problem with the ecological complex is that the categories themselves are somewhat arbitrary, and the boundaries between them are not always precise. The ecological complex is best seen as simply a tool to help us understand better the interaction patterns within urban systems. It is not intended to be a fully developed theory of urbanization.

Perhaps the greatest limitation of the original ecological complex is that it subsumes cultural values under the variable of organization. A strong case can be made that "culture" should be a separate reference variable in its own right. Thus, as previously noted, some would add an "S" for social to make the acronym POETS. Another limitation is that the ecological complex as such does not explain how, when, to what degree, or under what circumstances the categories of variables interact. Nonetheless, the ecological complex remains a useful explanatory tool for organizing large bodies of material and showing relationships. It is less useful when addressing specific questions requiring conceptual precision.

POLITICAL ECONOMY MODELS

The ecological model has been challenged by a variety of political economy models. Conflict-based paradigms or models are commonly referred to as political economy models. Originally, these were neo-Marxist in nature, but some contemporary models have moved beyond Marxism.[3] Today, both ecological and political economy models are undergoing considerable change. (Political-economic conflict theories are discussed in detail in Chapter 4: Ecology and Political Economy Perspectives.)

Political economy models differ in specifics, but they all stress that urban growth is largely a consequence of capitalist economic systems of capital accumulation, conflict between classes, and economic exploitation of the powerless by the rich and powerful. The capitalist mode of production and capital accumulation are seen as being manipulated by real estate speculators and business elites for their private profit. The assumptions are that "societal interaction is dominated by antagonistic social relationships," "social development is unstable in societies with antagonistic owner relationships," and "power inequality is a basic element in societal relationships."[4]

Critical theorists criticize ecological models as being ahistorical and mechanistic, and stress that social conflict is an inevitable consequence of capitalistic political economies. Thus, they discount the ecological model's reliance on transportation and communication technologies in explaining urban-suburban development. Rather, they place greater emphasis on the deliberate and conscious manipulation by real estate and government interests in order to promote growth and profits. Suburbanization, for example, is not viewed as resulting from individual choices made possible by access to outer land by streetcar and automobile, but rather as the deliberate decision of economic elites to disinvest in the city and manipulate suburban real estate markets.[5]

The strength of political economy models is their attention to the influence of the economic elites on political decision making and the role played by real estate speculators. The weakness is the assumption that local government acts largely at the bidding of economic elites, and thus citizens' wishes have little impact on growth patterns or on local government. Both ecological and political economy models will be used throughout this text.

FIRST SETTLEMENTS

Our knowledge of the origin and development of the first human settlements, and our understanding of the goals, hopes, and fears of those who lived within them, must forever remain tentative. Because the first towns emerged before the invention of writing, about 7500 BCE, we must depend for our knowledge on the

research of archaeologists. Understandably, historians, sociologists, and other scholars sometimes differ in their interpretations of the limited archaeological and historical data. Lewis Mumford has stated the problem aptly:

> Five thousand years of urban history and perhaps as many of proto-urban history are spread over a few score of only partly exposed sites. The great urban landmarks Ur, Nippur, Uruk, Thebes, Heliopolis, Assur, Nineveh, [and] Babylon, cover a span of three thousand years whose vast emptiness we cannot hope to fill with a handful of monuments and a few hundred pages of written records.[6]

This chapter, which outlines the growth of urban settlements, must necessarily be based in part on scholarly speculation as to what happened before the historical era. Fortunately, our interest is not so much in an exact chronology of historical events as in the patterns and process of development.

AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION

Hunting-and-Gathering Societies

It is generally believed that before the urban revolution's first settlements could take place, an agricultural revolution was necessary.[7] Nomadic hunting-and-gathering bands could not accumulate, store, and transport more goods than they could carry with them. Hunting-and-gathering groups were small, ranging from twenty-five to at most fifty persons. Hunting-and-gathering societies were equalitarian, lacked private property, and had no fixed leadership. Since the group was mobile, parents could pass on little in goods to their children. However, there was not a total absence of culture. The hunter-gatherers of Japan's Jōmon culture produced pottery with a cord pattern in the tenth millennium BCE.[8] Hunting and gathering societies also had the advantage of a diverse diet which better met nutritional needs than the grain biased societies that followed.

Settled Agriculture

Settled agriculture changed everything. Some groups gained enough knowledge of the seasons and the cycle of growth to forsake constant nomadic life in favor of permanent settlement in one location. The Neolithic period is characterized by this change from gathering food to producing food. There is fairly clear evidence that a transformation from a specialized food-collecting culture to a culture where grains were cultivated occurred in the Middle East around 8000 BCE. The population of the world at this dawn of agriculture was something on the order of 5 million.[9]

Agricultural systems became capable of producing a surplus, which made it possible to withdraw some labor from food production and apply it to the production of other goods.[10] A permanent place of settlement led to both population growth and rudimentary social stratification since not all land was equal. However, while a surplus was essential to the emergence of towns, it was not essential that the surplus come from agriculture. Early hamlets, from India to the Baltic area, based their cultures on the use of shellfish and fish. Within these Mesolithic hamlets possibly were seen the earliest domestic animals, such as pigs, ducks, geese, and our oldest companion, the dog. Mumford suggests that the practice of reproducing food plants through plant cuttings—as with the date palm, the olive, the fig, and the grape—probably derives from Mesolithic culture.[11]

Early settlements had only a rudimentary division of labor. The existence of some form of permanent social organization, more than just numbers of persons, is what separates informally organized villages from formally organized towns. Jericho—which was an early town with some 600 people as early as 8000 BCE—had a fairly complex architectural construction.[12] This suggests the inhabitants had sufficient civic organization and division of labor to build defensive walls and towers in a period when they had barely begun to domesticate grains. Inside the town walls they built round houses of sun-dried bricks. Further north in what is now Turkey, permanent villages emerged about the same time. However, the first true cities are generally thought to have begun in the "Fertile Crescent" of Mesopotamia around 4000 BCE. Uruk, the city of the legendary king Gilgamesh, was founded about this time. By 3000 BCE, Uruk covered two square miles and had roughly 40,000 inhabitants. Uruk had the first known system of writing (cuneiform) and had a developed a religion, a bureaucracy, and an elaborate social system. For 2,000 years it was the largest city in the world, only surpassed in size by Babylon in the sixth century BCE.[13]

POPULATION EXPANSION

The first population explosion—an increase in tribe size to the point where hunting and gathering could no longer provide adequate food—further encouraged fixed settlements. This was most likely to occur in fertile locations where land, water, and climate favored intensive cultivation of food. Archaeologists suggest that population growth, in fact, forced the invention of agriculture.[14] Hunting, gathering, and primitive plant cultivation simply could not support the growing population.

Since the plow did not yet exist—it was not invented until sometime in the sixth century BCE—farmers of this period used a form of slash-and-burn agriculture. This method required cutting down what you could and burning off the rest before planting—an inefficient form of farming, but one with a long history. It was even used by the American pioneers who first crossed the Appalachian Mountains into the new lands of Kentucky and Ohio. It was still being used in isolated areas of the Appalachians in the first decades of the twentieth century. The first farmers in ancient times soon discovered that slash-and-burn farming quickly depleted the soil and forced them to migrate—and probably spread their knowledge by means of cultural diffusion.

The consequences of these developments were momentous: With grain cultivation, a surplus could be accumulated and people could plan for the future. One of the early permanent Neolithic farming communities—Jarmo, in the Kurdistan area of Iraq—was inhabited between 7000 and 6500 BCE. It has been calculated that approximately 150 people lived in Jarmo, and archaeological evidence indicates a population density of 27 people per square mile (about the same as the population density today in that area).[15] Soil erosion, deforestation, and 9,000 years of human warfare have offset the technological advantages of the intervening centuries.

Village farming communities like Jarmo had stabilized by about 5500 BCE and spread over alluvial plains of river valleys like that of the Tigris-Euphrates. A similar process took place in the great river valleys of the Nile, the Indus, and the Yellow. The invention of agriculture was quite possibly an independent development in China and was certainly independent in the New World.

Although China's cities evolved somewhat after those of the Middle East, the latest archaeological evidence suggests the concept of the city probably was not borrowed from Mesopotamia but developed independently.[16] By the time of the Shang dynasty (1600–1100 BCE) China had cities that were laid out according to plan, complete with ceremonial buildings and palaces, as well as dwellings.

MESOAMERICA

The civilizations of Mesoamerica were physically isolated from those of the Middle East and Asia and thus had to invent independently. In pre-Mayan Mesoamerica, elaborate systems for irrigating and raising corn were developed. The fifteenth-century high-Andean Inca City of Machu Picchu had an extensive canal system channeling fresh water to sixteen fountains, as well as a well-thought-out drainage system. It also had an elaborate system of stone terraces. Terraces that are still farmed today.

In Mesoamerica, cities were not a product of cultural diffusion, but rather a separate invention. Mayan cities in Central America developed somewhat later than those in Mesopotamia or China. New research confirms that the city of Caral in Peru existed in 2600 BCE, a thousand years earlier than cities in the Americas were thought to exist.[17]

The Mayans had a major civilization and large cities dating from roughly 500 BCE. Since these cities had no walls, it was thought until roughly fifty years ago that the Mayans were peaceful. They weren't. Decoding of Mayan writing indicates that Mayan religious rituals and wars were remarkably bloody. There is dispute as to whether the Central American Mayan sites were true cities with resident populations or rather huge ceremonial sites. Most contemporary scholars incline toward seeing them as true cities. Probably the largest early city was El Mirador in Guatemala, which was the center for several interconnected cities and was three times the size of downtown Los Angeles.[18] In 2000, one of the richest Mayan cities and royal palaces yet discovered was found buried deep and virtually intact in a neglected part of the Guatemalan rain forest. The city, named Cancuen, or "place of serpents," after the name of its dynasty, rose to power about 300 CE and continued beyond 600 CE. Because of constant warfare, none of the other Mayan dynasties lasted so long. The Mayan era of greatest city building was between 600 and 800 CE.

BOX 2.1 THE SPANISH ON FIRST VIEWING MEXICO CITY

The plunder-seeking Spanish conquistadors under the command of Cortez were overcome by the magnificence of Mexico City. It was the legendary City of Gold they had sought—and that Columbus and others had failed to find. The city was conquered in 1521 by a combination of guile and dishonesty—combined with the fact that most of the city's population was seriously ill or dying from European-introduced disease. The following excerpt is from *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, written in 1568 by Bernal Diaz del Castillo:

> Gazing on such wonderful sights, we did not know what to say or whether what appeared before us was real, for on one side of the land there were great cities and in the lake ever so many more, and the lake itself was crowded with canoes, and in the causeway there were many bridges at intervals, and we did not even number four hundred soldiers.

Between 800 and 900 CE most of the great cities of Central America were abandoned, for reasons that are still debated and unclear.[19] It appears that populations increased while resources declined because of overfarming, deforestation, drought, and constant warfare. Cities were abandoned and taken over by the jungle. Population growth combined with constant warfare may have brought environmental collapse.[20]

At its peak, Teotihuacan, in central Mexico, built by the Mayans, numbered perhaps 150,000 persons or more. By the time the Spanish invaders arrived in 1521, both Mayan society and its cities had collapsed. However, their successors, the Aztecs, had built the city of Tenochtitlán (Mexico City), which dazzled Cortez and his Spanish troops. No such cities existed north of the Rio Grande.

INTERACTIONS OF POPULATION, ORGANIZATION, ENVIRONMENT, AND TECHNOLOGY

The relationships among population, organization, environment, and technology are clearer in their consequences than in their timing. The creation of an agricultural surplus made permanent settlements possible. Agricultural villages could support up to twenty-five persons per square mile, a dramatic improvement over the maximum of three to five persons per square mile found in hunting-and-gathering societies. Technology had spurred population growth. Stable yields meant that larger numbers of people could be sustained in a relatively compact space.

The establishment of sedentary agricultural villages with growing populations increased the pressure for more intensive agriculture and complex patterns of organization. Agriculture in the river valleys required at least small-scale irrigation systems, something not necessary in the highlands. Rudimentary social organization and specialization began to develop; periodic flooding made it necessary for village farmers to band together to create a system of irrigation canals and repair damage done by floods. The existence of irrigation systems also led to the development of systems of control and the emergence of more detailed social stratification within the permanent settlements.

Relatively permanent settlements in one place also allowed the structure of the family itself to change. In a hunting-and-gathering society, the only legacy parents could pass on to their progeny was their physical strength and knowledge of basic skills. Agriculturalists, though, can also pass on land to their children, and all land is not equal. Social stratification emerged over generations, with some children born into prosperity and others into poverty.

Extended family forms can also more easily emerge under sedentary conditions. Patriarchal family systems, such as those found in the Bible, can have major economic as well as sexual advantages for those in charge, since extra wives mean extra hands to tend animals and cultivate fields. Importantly, many wives meant many sons—sons to work the fields, help protect what one has from the raiding of others, provide for one in old age, make offerings to the gods at one's grave, and carry one's lineage forward. The last was particularly important in many early societies. For example, in the Old Testament the greatest gift God could bestow on

Abraham was not wealth, fame, or everlasting life, but that his descendants would number more than the stars in the sky and grains of sand.

Environmentally, those located on rivers had advantages not only in terms of soil fertility, but also in terms of transportation and trade. Particularly environmentally blessed were those settlements in Mesopotamia and the Nile River valley that could exploit the rich soil of the alluvial riverbeds. The very name "Mesopotamia," which refers to the land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in what is now Iraq, means "land between rivers."

By the middle of the fourth millennium BCE the economy of the Nile valley in Egypt had shifted once and for all from a combination of farming and food gathering to a reliance on agriculture. In this great river valley, two and sometimes three crops a year were possible because the annual floods brought rich silt to replace the exhausted soil. (The Aswan High Dam now blocks the annual floods.) To the dependable crops of wheat and barley was added the cultivation of the date palm. This was a great improvement since the palm provided more than simple food; from it were obtained wood, roofing, matting, wine, and fiber for rope. Grapes were also first crushed and fermented in the Middle East about 3000 BCE.

The use of rivers for transportation further encouraged the aggregation of population, for now it was relatively easy to gather food at a few centers. Thus, in the valleys of the Nile, the Tigris-Euphrates, the Indus, and the Yellow a population surplus developed, which in turn permitted the rise of the first cities (see Figure 2.1). By the third century BCE, Egyptian peasants from the fertile river floodplain could produce approximately three times the food they needed. The city served as a "central place" where goods and services could be exchanged.

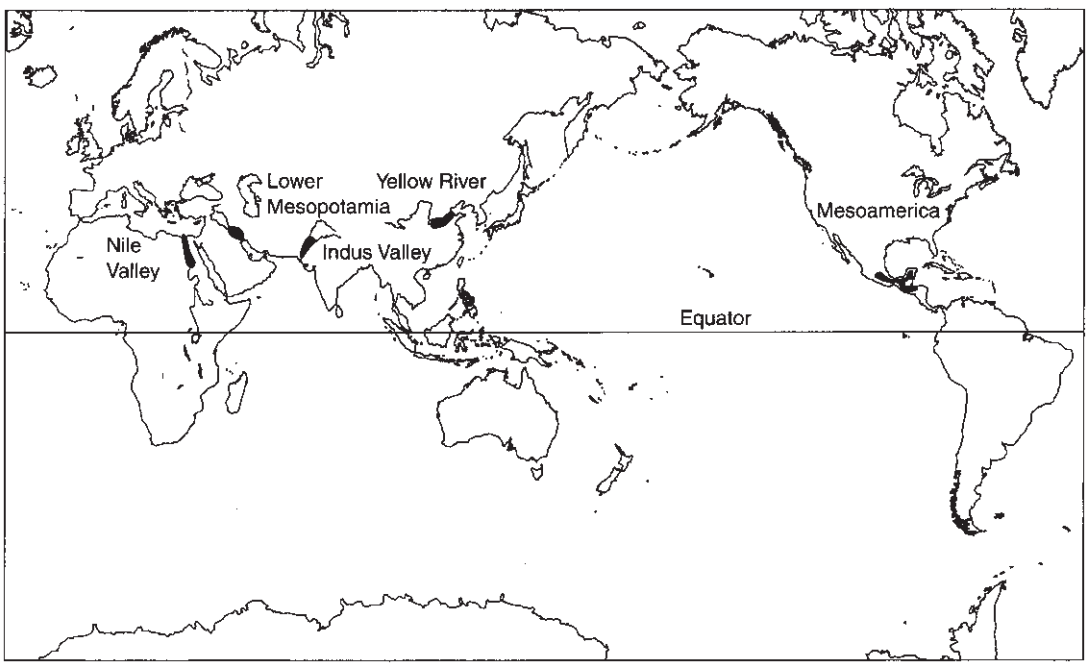


FIGURE 2.1 Location of Early Urban Settlements

Source: *Scientific American*

CITY POPULATIONS

By contemporary standards, the largest early cities were little more than small towns. However, in their own day they must have been looked upon with the same awe with which nineteenth-century immigrants viewed New York, for these first cities were ten times the size of the Neolithic villages that had previously been the largest settlements. Babylon, with its hanging gardens, one of the wonders of the ancient world, embraced a physical area of, roughly, only 3.2 square miles. The city of Ur, located at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, was the largest city in Mesopotamia. With all its canals, temples, and harbors, it occupied only 220 acres.[21] Ur was estimated to have contained 24,000 persons; other towns ranged in population from 2,000 to 20,000 inhabitants.[22] Such cities, however, remained urban islands in the midst of rural seas.

Hawley estimates that although these cities were large for their time, they probably represented no more than 3 or 4 percent of all the people within the various localities.[23] Even Athens at its peak had only 612 acres within its walls, an area smaller than 1 square mile; ancient Antioch was roughly half this size. Carthage at its peak was 712 acres. Of all the ancient cities, only imperial Rome exceeded an area of 5 square miles. Even the biggest places before the Roman period could scarcely have exceeded 200,000 inhabitants, since from fifty to ninety farmers were required to support one person in a city.[24] In an agricultural world, the size of cities was limited by how much surplus could be produced and what technology was available to transport it.

EVOLUTION IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Early cities were important, not because of their size, but because they encouraged innovations in social organization. Even though few in number, the urban elite were the principal carriers of the all-important cultural and intellectual values of the civilization. Needless to say, the city also held economic and political sway over the more numerous country dwellers. The Arab philosopher-sociologist Ibn Khaldun, writing in the fourteenth century, pointed out that the concentration of economic power and the proceeds of taxation in the cities led to a profound difference between the economic pattern of the city and that of the country. The concentration of governmental and educational functions in the city also stimulated new demands that affected the patterns of production and supply.

DIVISION OF LABOR

The earliest cities began to evolve a social organization immensely more complex than that found in the Neolithic village. The slight surplus of food permitted the emergence of a rudimentary division of labor. The city thus differed from a large village not only because it had more people but also because they did different things. The consequence was hierarchy and stratification. Surplus permitted inequality.[25] The early city was also an administrative and religious center.

Archaeological records indicate that the earliest public buildings were temples, suggesting that specialized priests were the first to be released from direct subsistence functions. Early Sumerian cities were basically theocracies—that is, they were ruled by priests. That the priests also assumed the role of economic administrators is indicated by ration or wage lists found in places where temples were located.[26] In Egypt the temples were near the granaries for the community surplus. This surplus could be used to carry a community through a period of famine.

The biblical story of Joseph—who was sold by his jealous brothers into slavery in Egypt, only to become advisor to the Pharaoh and to predict seven good years of harvest followed by seven lean years of famine—points out the relative control the advanced Egyptians had over their environment. Even if the nomadic Israelites had received Joseph's warning, they would have been unable to profit from it—they lacked the transportation and storage technology of the more urban Egyptians. Using granaries the Egyptians had learned how to move a surplus through time as well as through space. Long-term planning—whether to avoid famines, construct temples, or build pyramids—was possible only where a surplus was ensured and storage was available.

KINGSHIP AND SOCIAL CLASS

Warrior-leaders originally served only during times of external threat. Eventually, those chosen as short-term leaders during periods of war came to be retained even

during periods of peace. The process evolved in China in the fifth century BCE:

> Perhaps whole settlements sometimes found it was easier to set up as warriors, and let the people around them work for them, than to labor in the fields. The chiefs and their groups of warriors, no doubt, provided the farmers with "protection" whether they wanted it or not, and in return for that service they took a share of the peasant's crop.[27]

It is hardly necessary to add that the size of the warrior's share of the peasant's crop was fixed by the warrior, not the peasant. The growth of military establishments did contribute, though, to technological innovations—metallurgy for weapons, chariots for battle, and more efficient ships.

It was but a step from a warrior class to kingship and the founding of dynasties with permanent hereditary royalty. The gradual shifting of the central focus from temple to palace was accompanied by the growth of social and economic stratification. Artists working in precious metals became regular attachments to palace life. Records of sales of land indicate that even among farmers there were considerable inequalities in the ownership of productive land. As a result, social differences grew. Some few members of each new generation were born with marked social and economic advantages over the others. If they couldn't afford the luxuries of palace life, they nonetheless lived in considerable comfort.

In China, specialization led to the replacement of hereditary lords with centrally appointed mandarins selected by examination. This bureaucratic system of social organization survived more than 3,000 years until its abolishment in 1905.

Archaeologically, the emergence of urban social classes can be seen clearly in the increasing disparity in the richness of grave offerings.[28] The tombs of royalty are richly furnished with ornaments and weapons of gold and precious metals; those of others, with copper vessels; while the majority have only pottery vessels or nothing at all. The building of burial pyramids was the ultimate case of monumental graves.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL EVOLUTION

In early cities, technology was spurred on by necessity. We are just discovering the elaborate water collection and distribution systems of the ancient Mayan culture of Central America. The system allowed the Mayan elite to develop large cities in areas that had long dry spells. The failure to maintain the water system may have led to the civilization's collapse about 900 CE.[29]

Cities created new technological demands. The military required armor, weapons, and chariots, and the court demanded ever more ornaments and other luxuries. The result was the establishment of a class of full-time artisans and craft workers. The near-isolation of earlier periods was now replaced with trade over long distances, which brought not only new goods but also new ideas.

The first city was far more than an enlarged village—it was a clear break with the past, a whole new social system. It was a social revolution involving the evolution of a whole new set of social institutions. Unlike the agricultural revolution that preceded it, this urban revolution was far more than a basic change in subsistence. It was "preeminently a social process, an expression more of change in man's interaction with his fellows than in his interaction with his environment."[30]

The urban revolution created its own environment. Inventions that have made large settlements possible have been due to the city itself—for example, writing, accounting, bronze, the solar calendar, bureaucracy, and the beginning of science. It has be argued by Diamond that the early necessity of competing with bordering states (and later the competition of emerging European nation-states) fostered societies, technologies, and governments that survived because they successfully innovated.[31] What is beyond dispute is that ever since Mesopotamia, the city as a social institution has been shaping human life.

URBAN REVOLUTION

A number of years ago, V. Gordon Childe listed ten features that, he said, define the "urban revolution"—that is, features that set cities apart from earlier forms of human settlement. The features are:

1. Permanent settlement in dense aggregations
2. Non-agriculturalists engaging in specialized functions

3. Taxation and capital accumulation
4. Monumental public buildings
5. A ruling class
6. The technique of writing
7. The acquisition of predictive sciences—arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy
8. Artistic expression
9. Trade for vital materials
10. The replacement of kinship by residence as the basis for membership in the community.[32]

We now know that all ten are not necessary for cities. For example, monumental urban places developed in Mesoamerica without the wheel, the raising of animals, the plow, or the use of metals. (Actually, the Mayan civilization did have the wheel, but for some reason used it only on children's toys.) They did, however, have other advantages; probably the most significant was the knowledge of how to use irrigation to cultivate large surpluses of domesticated maize (corn). The Mayans also had made major discoveries in mathematics, including the separate invention of the concept of zero. They were accurate astronomers and had an exact calendar; both skills were used for religious purposes but had secular consequences (e.g., indicating when to plant). Social organizations, culture, and technology were interrelated. Lists, such as Childe's, are most useful in indicating what we have come to accept as the general characteristics of cities.

SURVIVAL OF THE CITY

The stable location of the city was not an unmixed blessing. Cities had to be equipped to withstand a siege, since the earliest cities were vulnerable to periodic attacks.[33] The Bible, for instance, devotes considerable attention to the successes of the nomadic Israelites in taking and pillaging the cities of their more advanced enemies. The Biblical description of the fall of the Canaanite city of Jericho tells us that:

> the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword . . . and they burnt the city with fire and all that was therein . . . (Joshua 6:20b–21, 24a KJV).

That "Joshua 'fit' the battle of Jericho . . . and the walls came tumbling down" is known to all those who have heard the stirring spiritual, even if they have not read the Old Testament. While the walls Joshua is said to have miraculously brought down with trumpet blasts about 1500 BCE have not been located, the remains of other walls dating back to 8000 BCE have been excavated. As with some other long-inhabited ancient sites, the walls had been breached many times—sometimes by invaders, sometimes fires, sometimes earthquakes. Actually, Joshua's destroying everything and everyone in the city was shortsighted. By Solomon's time a more complex social organization had evolved in which subjugated peoples were taxed yearly rather than destroyed.

Within the city walls there also were other threats to the inhabitants, the most dangerous being fires and epidemic diseases. Plagues spread easily in cities. City life was more exciting, but it was not necessarily more secure or healthful than life in the countryside.

THE HELLENIC CITY

Environmental factors played a decisive role in early cities. In fact, the history of the city can be considered the story of human attempts, through the use of technology and social organization, to lessen the impact of environmental factors. An example is Athens, widely regarded as the apex of ancient Western urbanism. Not only was the Greek soil thin and rocky and of marginal fertility, but the mountainous hinterland made inland transportation and communication almost impossible. It is estimated that the cost of transporting goods 10 miles from Athens was more than 40 percent of the value of the goods.[34]

But Greece was blessed with fine harbors. Consequently, Athens turned to the sea. A Greek ship could carry 7,000 pounds of grain 65 nautical miles a day and do it at one-tenth the cost of land transportation. (Storms at sea and pirates, however, often made this an ideal rather than a reality.) There were also

technological contributions to Greek prosperity: the use of the lodestone as a basic nautical compass and the development of more seaworthy ships.

SOCIAL INVENTION

The greatest achievement of the Greeks was not in technology but in social organization. The social invention of the *polis*, or "city-state," enabled families, *phratries* (groups of clans), and tribes to organize for mutual aid and protection as citizens of a common state. Because they acknowledged a common mythical ancestry from the gods, different families were able to come together in larger bodies. Citizens were those who could trace their mythical ancestry back to the god or gods responsible for the city and thus could participate in public religious worship. Citizenship and religion were two sides of the same coin.

An Athenian citizen was one who had the right to worship at the temple of Athena, the protector of the city-state of Athens. Citizenship was at its basis a religious status.[35] Socrates' questioning the existence of the gods thus was considered a grave offense because, by threatening established religion, he was undermining the very basis of citizenship in the city-state. His crime was not heresy but treason. As punishment for such a subversive act, he was forced to drink poison hemlock. The Greeks never devised a system for extending citizenship beyond the city-state to all Greeks. This was to be the achievement of the Romans.

Being a citizen of the city was of supreme importance to the Greeks. When Aristotle wished to characterize humans as social animals, he said that man is by nature a citizen of the city. Thus, to the Greeks, being ostracized—that is, being forbidden to enter into the city—was an extremely severe punishment. To be placed beyond the city walls was to be cast out of civilized life. The terms *pagan* and *heathen* originally referred to those beyond the city walls; the contemporary adjective *urban* and the nouns *citizen* and *politics* are derived from the Latin terms for the city. As previously noted, the English terms *city* and *civilization* are both derived from the Latin *civis*.

Ancient Greece was in its day a model of social and political organization. Today, Greece is just coming out from over a decade of economic crises. Central Athens is the site for demonstrations against deep cutbacks in government services and supports.
Sipa USA/*Associated Press*

PHYSICAL DESIGN AND PLANNING

Physically, the Greek cities were of fairly similar design, a phenomenon that is not surprising given the amount of social borrowing that took place among the various city-states, and the fact that the cities were built with military defense in mind. The major city walls were built around a fortified hill called an *acropolis.* Major temples were also placed upon the acropolis. The nearby *agora,* or open space, served as both a meeting place and, in time, a marketplace. All major buildings were located within the city walls. Housing, except for the privileged, was outside but huddled as close to the protective walls as possible.

In describing the Greek *polis,* there is a strong tendency to focus on the image of the Athenian Acropolis harmoniously crowned by the perfectly proportioned Parthenon. Separated by seas and centuries, it is perhaps natural for us to accept Pericles's praise of his fellow Athenians as "lovers of beauty without extravagance and lovers of wisdom without unmanliness."

Yet it is easy to forget that the "classic" white stone of the Parthenon was originally painted garish colors. Traces of red paint can still be seen millennia later. Below the inner order and harmony of the Parthenon was a sprawling, jumbled town in which streets were no more than dirty, winding, narrow lanes and unburied refuse rotted in the sun. Housing for the masses was squalid and cramped. Although the town planner Hippodamus designed a grid street pattern for Piraeus, the port city of Athens, Athens itself had no such ordered arrangement. Athens was the center of an empire, but little of its genius was given to municipal management.

POPULATION

During its peak, the city of Athens achieved a population of possibly 250,000 including slaves and noncitizens (slaves constituted perhaps one-third of the population). The great sociologist Max Weber put the Greek city-states in perspective when he wrote, "The full urbanite of antiquity was a semi-peasant."[36]

Expansion of Greek cities was limited not only by agricultural technology. There is an advantage in having a population low enough to live off the local food supply.[37] Also, the ancient Greeks preferred smaller cities. Both Plato and Aristotle believed that good government was directly related to the size of the city. Plato specified that the ideal republic should have exactly 5,040 citizens, since that number would "furnish numbers for war and peace, and for all contracts and dealings, including taxes and divisions of the land."[38] Adding noncitizens such as children, slaves, and foreigners into the calculation raises the total population of the city-state to approximately 30,000, or about the size chosen later by Leonardo da Vinci and Ebenezer Howard for their ideal cities. Aristotle informs us that Hippodamus envisioned a city of 10,000 citizens divided into three parts: one of artisans, one of farmers, and one of warriors. The land was likewise to be divided into three parts: one to support the gods, one public to support the warriors defending the state, and one private to support the farm owners.[39] This division illustrates the classic Greek interest in balance.

Aristotle's views on the ideal size of the city are less specific, although he believed there needed to be limits so inhabitants could know each other's character and thus properly govern. Aristotle did not think justice should be blind. As he stated it:

> A state then only begins to exist when it has attained a population sufficient for a good life in the political community; it may somewhat exceed this number, but as I was saying there must be a limit. What should be the limit will be easily ascertained by experience.—If the citizens of a state are to judge and distribute offices according to merit, then they must know each other's characters: where they do not possess this knowledge, both the election to offices and the decisions of lawsuits will go wrong.—Clearly then the best limit of the population of a state is the largest number which suffices for the purposes of life and can be taken at a single view.[40]

DIFFUSION OF PEOPLE AND IDEAS

Greek city-states kept growth under control by creating colonies. When a city began growing too large a colony city was established. Between 479 and 431 BCE, over 10,000 families migrated from established cities to newer Greek colonial settlements. Colonization both met the needs of empire and provided a safety valve for a chronic population problem. This diffusion of

population led in turn to a spread of Greek culture and ideas of government far beyond the Peloponnesus. The military campaigns of Alexander the Great (356–323 BCE) also spread Greek culture and led to the establishment of new cities to control the conquered territory (e.g., Alexandria in Egypt).

ROME

If Greece represented philosophy and the arts, Rome represented power and technology. The city as a physical entity reached a high point under the Roman Caesars. Not until the nineteenth century was Europe again to see cities as large as those found within the Roman Empire. Rome itself may have contained 1 million inhabitants at its peak, although an analysis of density figures would make an estimate two-thirds that number seem more reasonable; scholarly estimates vary from a low of 250,000 to a high of 1.6 million. These wide variations are a result of different interpretations of inadequate data. The number given in the total Roman census, for example, jumped from 900,000 in 69 BCE to over 4 million in 28 BCE. No one is quite sure what this increase indicates—probably an extension of citizenship, perhaps the counting of women and children, perhaps something else.[41]

Readers should remind themselves that all figures on the size of cities before the nineteenth century should be taken as estimates rather than empirical census counts. At their most accurate, such figures are formed by multiplying the supposed number of dwelling units in a city at a given period, and then by estimating average family size.

SIZE AND NUMBER OF CITIES

Expertise in the areas of technology and social organization enabled the Romans to organize, administer, and govern an empire containing several cities of more than 200,000 inhabitants. The population of the Roman Empire exceeded that of all but the largest twentieth-century superpowers. According to the historian Edward Gibbon, "We are informed that when the emperor Claudius [41 to 54 CE] exercised the office of censor, he took account of six million nine hundred and forty-five thousand Roman citizens, who with women and children, must have amounted to about twenty million souls." He concludes that there were "about twice as many provincials as there were citizens, of either sex and of every age; and that the slaves were at least equal in number to the free inhabitants of the Roman world. The total amount of this imperfect calculation would rise to about one hundred and twenty million."[42] The total world population at this time was roughly 250 million to 300 million, so Rome controlled over a third of the world's population.

Italy was said to contain 1,197 cities—however defined—and Spain, according to Pliny, had 360 cities.[43] (Most of these we would consider towns.) North Africa had hundreds of cities, and north of the Alps major cities rose from Vienna to Bordeaux. Even in far-off Britain there were major cities at York, Bath, and London. What made all this possible for hundreds of years was a technology of considerable sophistication and—most importantly—Roman social organization. Wherever the legions conquered, they not only built roads, but also brought Roman law and Roman concepts of government. Rome's domination resulted in centuries of urban imperialism.

HOUSING AND PLANNING

"Rome, Goddess of the earth and of its people, without a peer or a second" remains the wonder of the ancient world. Yet despite the emperor Augustus's proud claim that he found a city of brick and left one of marble, much of the city centuries later was still composed of buildings with wood frames and wood roofs on narrow crowded alleys. Fire was a constant worry, and the disastrous fires of 64 CE that some say Nero started left only four of the city's fourteen districts intact.

Wealthy Romans lived on Palatine Hill, where the imperial palaces overlooked the Forum with its temples and public buildings and the Coliseum. However, as was the case in Athens, Roman municipal planning was definitely limited in scope. Magnificent though it was, it did not extend beyond the center of the municipality. Once one branched off the main thoroughfare leading to the city gates, there was only a maze of narrow, crooked lanes winding through the squalid tenements that housed the great bulk of the population. Magnificent public squares and public

baths were built with public taxes for the more affluent Romans. In time, even the Forum became crowded and congested, as the ruins still standing amply testify.

The city was supplied with fresh water through an extensive system of aqueducts. The most important of these, which brought water from the Sabine Hills, was completed in 144 BCE. Parts of the aqueducts still stand—testament to the excellence of the engineering and skill of their builders. (However, use of lead pipes in running water into the homes of the wealthy gradually poisoned them.) Rome even had an elaborate sewer system, at least in the better residential areas. It is an unfortunate comment on progress to note that present-day Rome still dumps sewage in the Tiber River. (The beautiful Canadian city of Victoria similarly dumps its sewage into the Pacific.)

In many ways provincial western Roman cities such as Paris, Vienna, Cologne, Mainz, and London exhibited greater civic planning than Rome itself. These cities grew out of semi-permanent military encampments and thus took the gridiron shape of the standard Roman camp (the pattern can be seen today on football fields, and it also is the origin of the city block). The encampments and later the cities were laid out on a rectangular grid pattern with a gate on each side. The center was reserved for the Forum, the Coliseum, and municipal buildings such as public baths.

In the conquered lands to the east, where there were already Egyptian, Hellenic, and other cities, the Romans simply took them over under Roman jurisdiction. Thus, while eastern cities differed from each other physically as well as politically, the provincial Roman cities of western Europe, because of their commonality of origin, were remarkably similar. (For more detail on Hellenic and Roman planning, see Chapter 13: Planning, New Towns, and New Urbanism). The differences between the older eastern and newer western segments of the empire were never resolved, and the empire eventually split into eastern (Byzantine) and western (Roman) sections.

TRANSPORTATION

Rome was an exporter not only of goods but also of ideas—such as Roman law, government, and engineering—which enabled Rome to control its hinterland. Rome was an importer of necessary goods and, therefore, depended on the hinterland not only for tribute and slaves but for its very life. The city of Rome could feed its population and also import vast quantities of goods other than food because of an unrivaled road network and peaceful routes of sea trade. (The roads were built and the galleys powered largely by slaves.) Some 52,000 miles of well-maintained roads facilitated rapid movement of goods and people. Parts of some of the original roads are still in use today, and the quality of their construction surpasses that of most contemporary highways.

With the elimination of Carthage as a rival, the Mediterranean truly became *Interium*, or "local lake." Foodstuffs for both the civilian population and the legions could be transported easily and inexpensively from the commercial farming areas of Iberia and North Africa. Rome declined when the African grain-producing areas were lost to the Vandals, and barbarians in Germany, Gaul, and England pressed the empire, disrupting vital transportation routes. Without easy transit the decline of Rome was inevitable, since Rome lived off its hinterland.

LIFE AND LEISURE

The prosperity of the Roman Empire during its peak and the leisure it afforded the residents of the capital were imperial indeed. By the second century after Christ, between one-third and one-half of the population were on the dole, and even those who worked (including the third of the population who were slaves) rarely spent more than six hours at their jobs. Moreover, by that period, religious and other holidays had been multiplied by the emperors until the ratio of holidays to workdays was one to one.[44]

To amuse the population and keep their minds off uprisings against the emperor, chariot races and gladiatorial combats were staged. The scene of the races was the colossal Circus Maximus, which seated 260,000 persons, and gladiatorial fights were staged at the smaller Coliseum. When the emperor Titus inaugurated the Coliseum in 80 CE, he imported 5,000 lions, elephants, deer, and other animals to be slaughtered in a single day to excite the spectators. The role Christians came to play in these amusements is well known. Our contemporary beliefs about proper civic amusements were not necessarily shared by earlier eras of urbanites.