

Chapter 1 : The Rise of Urban America

From the City to Urban Society April 23, 1938, by Lewis Mumford in Broader thoughts. In the first section of The Urban Revolution, Lefebvre puts forth the hypothesis of a completely urbanized society, suggesting this as an inevitable process, such that urban society has resulted from complete urbanization.

Important Features of Urban Community in India! By virtue of its size and population, the city cannot be a primary group. The inhabitants of a city do not come into primary contact with each other. Some of them interact with each other without even knowing each others name. Superficial manners of politeness and mutual convenience may evolve in the city but they are mostly mechanical. The city dweller usually treats the other person as a stranger. Thus, anonymity is a common feature of a city life: Therefore, Lee remark best describes urban anonymity; Anonymity is a loss of identity in a city teeming with millions. Many urbanites live in a social void or vacuum in which institutional norms are not effective in controlling or regulating their social behavior. Although they are aware of the existence of many institutional organizations and many people around them, they do not feel a sense of belongingness to any one group or community. Socially, they are in the midst of plenty, but alone. As the urban society is diverse and complex, it is considered as a heterogeneous society. In urban communities, there is a confluence of many cultures. Secondary means of social control: Formal means of social control such as police, law and courts are more powerful and are essential in regulating the behaviour of the people. The urban community is more open. The chances for social mobility are higher. The status of an individual is determined by his own works and economic status and not by his birth into a particular caste unlike the rural community. The barriers based on the caste are breaking down to an extent. Lack of community feeling: In urban societies, there is a lack of community feeling. People are so busy with their own personal works that they do not have time to think about others. Division of labour and specialization are important features of urban community. Nuclear families exist more in number than the joint families. Also, there is a lack of unity and harmony among the members of the families. Most of people in the cities are dissatisfied and discontented, which gradually leads to the social disorganization. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the cities, the chances of conflicts are more. They may arise in the form of class conflicts, communalism, factionalism, etc. People in the urban community are more progressive and broad-minded. They accept changes and are more exposed to the developments in science and technology. Urbanism as a Way of Life: Early sociologists in Europe and the United States of America extensively studied the rise and growth of cities. They presented their views on urbanism as a way of life. German Sociologist, Ferdinand Tonnies, in the late 19th century, studied how life in the cities differs from the life in the rural areas. The Gemein- schaft of the people in the rural village joins people into a single primary group. Tonnies says that Gemeinschaft is absent in the modern city: What he means is that, in a city, a type of social organization is formed by which people come together only on the basis of individual self-interest. In this ways of life, individuals are motivated by their own needs rather than a drive to enhance the well-being of everyone. City dwellers display little sense of community or common identity and look to others mostly as a means of advancing their individual goals. Thus, Tonnies saw in urbanization the erosion of close, enduring social relations in favour of the fleeting and temporary ties typical of business. Mechanical and Organic Solidarity: According to him, the urban people simply organize themselves into social life differently from their rural counterpart. In traditional societies, argues Durkheim, the collectiveâ€™consciousness entirely subsumes individualâ€™consciousnessâ€™ norms are strong and behaviour is well regulated. According to him, urbanization on the other hand erodes this mechanical solidarity. This concept parallels Tonnies Gesellschaft, but there is a difference. Like Tonnies, Durkheim also thought that industrial cities undermined tradition, but he took a more positive view of this change and said that urban centres create a new kind of solidarity. The result of increasing division of labour, according to Durkheim, is that individual consciousness emerges distinct from collective consciousnessâ€™often finding itself in conflict with collective consciousness. This is especially true of societies which have been built on likeness, but their social organization is based on difference. Hence, according to Durkheim, urban society in contrast to rural society offers more individual

choice, moral tolerance and personal privacy. German sociologist Georg Simmel offered a micro-analysis of cities, studying how urban life shapes peoples attitudes and behaviour. According to Simmel, individuals experience the city as an intense crush of people, objects and events. Such detachment does not mean that city dwellers lack compassion for others, although they may sometimes seem cold and heartless. Robert Park and Louis Wirth: Sociologists Robert Park and Louis Wirth in the United States, belonging to the Chicago School, sought to give urban studies a street-level perspective by getting out or walking on the streets and studying real cities. They said that the city is more sophisticated but also more superficial, more challenging but less protective; more exciting but also more impersonal. To him, a city is a living organism—a human kaleidoscope. This interpretation of city life was summed up by Louis Wirth by defining the city as a setting with a large, dense and socially diverse population. According to Wirth, the main effects of urbanism are as follows: The creation of impersonal, transitory and superficial social contacts—in other words, secondary rather than the primary relations. The rise of formal social controls and special-purpose associations. The formation of segregated groups with divergent lifestyles. He believed that urbanism weakens social bonds and this effect accounts for the social disorganization that occurs in cities. Living among millions of others, urbanites come into contact with many more people than rural residents do. Thus, city people notice others not in terms of who they are but in terms of what they do—like bus driver and grocery store owner. Specialized urban relations are sometimes quite pleasant for all concerned. But one should remember that self-interest rather than friendship is the main reason for the interaction. Finally, limited social involvement coupled with great social diversity makes city dwellers more tolerant than rural villages. In rural communities, often jealousy may enforce narrow traditions but the heterogeneous population of a city rarely shares any single code of moral conduct. Sociologists of the Chicago School also developed a concept of urban ecology. It is the study of the link between the physical and the social dimensions of the cities. It tries to answer questions like why do cities develop in some particular places only? What are the causes for their emergence? It is also concerned with the study of the physical location of residential areas, industrial parks, shopping complexes, etc. Urban ecology is also concerned with social area analysis, which investigates what people in particular neighbourhoods have in common, family patterns and social class. The theory of urbanism was modified by Morris, Fisher, Suttles and Janowitz. According to them, among the ways in which people adjust to overload are the methods of limiting social contacts, for example, by wearing a reserved expression or walking rapidly. Norms of non-involvement help people to cope with urban life. Psychological overload is frequent and stressful enough to make non-involvement helpful but the image of city dwellers as constantly harassed is exaggerated.

From the city to urban society was written in the 1930s and has acted as a fundamental piece of text in circles of urban theory. Lefebvre was a French socialist and considered a neo marxist, he also was involved in the French resistance.

The country became increasingly urban, and cities grew not only in terms of population but also in size, with skyscrapers pushing cities upward and new transportation systems extending them outward. Part of the urban population growth was fueled by an unprecedented mass immigration to the United States that continued unabated into the first two decades of the twentieth century. Meanwhile, ongoing industrialization and urbanization left their mark on how people spent their daily lives and used their leisure time. In 1880, there were only two American cities with a population of more than 1 million; by 1900, there were six, and three of these — New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia — boasted over one million inhabitants. Roughly 40 percent of Americans lived in cities and the number was climbing. Although much of the urbanization occurred in the industrial regions of the Northeast and Midwest, it was a national phenomenon that often corresponded to the presence of railroads. For example, Atlanta experienced a rapid economic recovery in the last quarter of the century, and Los Angeles became a boomtown in the 1880s due to the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads. Because the birth rate in the United States declined in the late nineteenth century, urban growth reflected an internal migration of Americans from farms and small towns to the larger cities and the overseas migration that brought millions of people to U.S. In the 1880s, however, the origin of immigrants shifted to Southern and Eastern Europe. Another popular misconception is that all immigrants found permanent homes in the United States. In fact, perhaps as many as three out of every ten new arrivals most of them single young men returned to their homeland after they earned enough money to buy land or set up their own business. Seeking familiar surroundings, they tended to live and work with people from their native country. Although their children attended public schools and quickly learned English, immigrant parents continued to use their native tongue, transplanting a bit of the Old World into the new. Whether nicknamed Little Italy, Little Bohemia, or Chinatown, immigrant neighborhoods were rich with Old World languages, from the words printed in the newspapers and on the signs in store windows to the voices heard on the streets. These neighborhoods, which helped ease the transition from greenhorn as newcomers were often called to citizen, were terribly overcrowded, with upward of 40 people housed on a single block. Such overcrowding contributed to poverty, crime, and disease. Moreover, new immigrants were often portrayed as dangerous radicals ready to undermine the American political system or as threats to the jobs of American workers because of their willingness to settle for lower wages. Given these attitudes toward foreigners, it is not surprising that calls for restrictions on immigration began to sound. In 1882, Congress denied convicts, paupers, and the mentally ill the right to enter the United States and three years later prohibited contract laborers immigrants whose passage was paid in return for working for a certain period of time. Neither law had much effect on what was essentially an open immigration policy. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, on the other hand, suspended immigration from China for ten years; it was extended for another decade in 1892 and then was made permanent in 1902. The law was not repealed until 1943. Skyscrapers and mass transit. As more and more people crowded into the large cities, the value of urban land increased. The solution to rising costs of real estate and the need to maximize the use of available space was to build up. The availability of cheap cast iron and, later, structural steel, improved fireproofing, and the electric elevator allowed for the construction of taller and taller buildings. Chicago became the home of the skyscraper because of the disastrous fire of 1889 that destroyed most of the central business district. The building codes that went into effect after the fire required that all new construction use noncombustible materials. Office buildings of 20 or more stories were common in large cities throughout the country by the end of the nineteenth century. One attempt at improving housing for the poor actually had the opposite effect. When two tenements were built next to each other, the indentations created an airshaft that provided limited ventilation and light to the interior apartments. A block lined with dumbbell tenements housed more than 40 people, significantly adding to overcrowding in poor neighborhoods; future construction was banned in New York in 1890. Improved urban transportation helped shape the modern city. Mass transit helped to change living patterns. As

trolley or subway lines extended beyond what used to be the city limits, the first suburbs were created, resulting in residential segregation by income. While immigrants and the poor remained in the central city, the middle class could live further away from their jobs and commute to work. Bridges also contributed to the outward expansion of cities. Brooklyn Bridge, completed in and the longest suspension bridge in the world at the time, linked the then city of Brooklyn with Manhattan. Urban politics and reform. In the late nineteenth century, municipal government often failed to meet the needs of its constituents – citizen and immigrant alike. In many cities across the country, power rested not in the hands of elected officials but with the boss who handpicked the candidates for office and controlled the vote through the political machine, or organization, that he ran. Although reformers bitterly attacked the corruption and inefficiency that went along with boss politics, the system did provide valuable services. Bosses also provided the poor with money and food and helped them work out problems with the police or other city agencies. Charitable assistance was encouraged by the Social Gospel, a philosophy embraced by a number of Protestant ministers, which noted that personal salvation came through the betterment of society and that churches could help bring this about by fighting poverty, slum conditions, and drunkenness. Churches built gymnasiums, opened libraries, set up lectures, and took on social programs in the hope of attracting the working poor. The settlement house movement was a nonsectarian approach to the same problems addressed by the churches. Established in the poorest neighborhoods, settlement houses served as community centers whose primary function was to help immigrant families adjust to life in the United States. They offered a variety of services, including nurseries and kindergartens, classes on sewing, cooking, and English, and a range of sports and recreation programs. As professionals, they were interested in gathering information on a wide range of urban problems. The data they collected helped bring about changes in building codes, improved health care and factory safety, and highlighted the need for new child labor laws.

Chapter 3 : Urbanization and the Transition from Agrarian to Industrial Society

From the City to Urban Society. Henri Lefebvre: () French Sociologist "The word's "urban society" are often used to refer to any city or urban agglomeration: the Greek polis, the oriental or medieval city, commercial and industrial cities, small cities, the megalopolis."

Chicago school sociology Urban sociology rose to prominence within the academy in North America through a group of sociologists and theorists at the University of Chicago from to in what became known as the Chicago School of Sociology. The Chicago School of Sociology combined sociological and anthropological theory with ethnographic fieldwork in order to understand how individuals interact within urban social systems. The theory of symbolic interaction, the basis through which many methodologically-groundbreaking ethnographies were framed in this period, took primitive shape alongside urban sociology and shaped its early methodological leanings. Symbolic interaction was forged out of the writings of early micro-sociologists George Mead and Max Weber , and sought to frame how individuals interpret symbols in everyday interactions. Urban theorists suggested that these spatially distinct regions helped to solidify and isolate class relations within the modern city, moving the middle class away from the urban core and into the privatized environment of the outer suburbs. Political participation and the rise in inter-community organizations were also frequently covered in this period, with many metropolitan areas adopting census techniques that allowed for information to be stored and easily accessed by participating institutions such as the University of Chicago. Park, Burgess and McKenzie, professors at the University of Chicago and three of the earliest proponents of urban sociology, developed the Subculture Theories , which helped to explain the often-positive role of local institutions on the formation of community acceptance and social ties. The rise of urban sociology coincided with the expansion of statistical inference in the behavioural sciences , which helped ease its transition and acceptance in educational institutions along with other burgeoning social sciences. Micro-sociology courses at the University of Chicago were among the earliest and most prominent courses on urban sociological research in the United States. Evolution of urban sociology[edit] Further information: The Intimate Networks of East Yorkers" which determined the function and position of the individual, institution and community in the urban landscape in relation to their community. The earliest of the three theories, this concept was developed in the late 19th century to account for the rapid development of industrial patterns that seemingly caused rifts between the individual and their local community. This disorganization in turn caused members of urban communities to subsist almost solely on secondary affiliations with others, and rarely allowed them to rely on other members of the community for assistance with their needs. A critical response to the community lost theory that developed during the s, the community saved argument suggests that multistranded ties often emerge in sparsely-knit communities as time goes on, and that urban communities often possess these strong ties, albeit in different forms. Especially among low-income communities, individuals have a tendency to adapt to their environment and pool resources in order to protect themselves collectively against structural changes. A cross-section of the community lost and community saved arguments, the community liberated theory suggests that the separation of workplace, residence and familial kinship groups has caused urbanites to maintain weak ties in multiple community groups that are further weakened by high rates of residential mobility. However, the concentrated number of environments present in the city for interaction increase the likelihood of individuals developing secondary ties, even if they simultaneously maintain distance from tightly-knit communities. Consistent with the community liberated argument, researchers have in large part found that urban residents tend to maintain more spatially-dispersed networks of ties than rural or suburban residents. Among lower-income urban residents, the lack of mobility and communal space within the city often disrupts the formation of social ties and lends itself to creating an unintegrated and distant community space. While the high density of networks within the city weakens relations between individuals, it increases the likelihood that at least one individual within a network can provide the primary support found among smaller and more tightly-knit networks. Since the s, research into social networks has focused primarily on the types of ties developed within residential environments. Bonding ties, common of tightly-knit neighborhoods,

consist of connections that provide an individual with primary support, such as access to income or upward mobility among a neighborhood organization. Bridging ties, in contrast, are the ties that weakly connect strong networks of individuals together. A group of communities concerned about the placement of a nearby highway may only be connected through a few individuals that represent their views at a community board meeting, for instance. As theorist Eric Oliver notes, neighborhoods with vast social networks are also those that most commonly rely on heterogeneous support in problem solving, and are also the most politically active. In their research, impoverished neighborhoods, which often rely on tightly-knit local ties for economic and social support, were found to be targeted by developers for gentrification which displaced residents living within these communities. Yet research covering the social impact of forced movement among these residents has noted the difficulties individuals often have with maintaining a level of economic comfort, which is spurred by rising land values and inter-urban competition between cities in as a means to attract capital investment. For impoverished inner-city residents, the role of highway planning policies and other government-spurred initiatives instituted by the planner Robert Moses and others have been criticized as unsightly and unresponsive to residential needs. The slow development of empirically-based urban research reflects the failure of local urban governments to adapt and ease the transition of local residents to the short-lived industrialization of the city. William Julius Wilson has criticized theory developed throughout the middle of the twentieth century as relying primarily on structural roles of institutions, and not how culture itself affects common aspects of inner-city life such as poverty. The distance shown toward this topic, he argues, presents an incomplete picture of inner-city life. The urban sociological theory is viewed as one important aspect of sociology.

Chapter 4 : From the City to Urban Society | megheis

Synopsis This chapter by Lefebvre discusses the historical aspects of the transition from a city to an urban society. Lefebvre introduces first the notion of organic continuity, growth and evolutionism to demonstrate how change can occur in the world.

Fascists also pandered to antiurban feelings. The Nazis won most of their electoral support from rural areas and small towns. In Nazi propaganda the ideal German was not an urban intellectual but a simple peasant, and uprooted intellectualism was considered a threat to the state. Definitions of the city and urban cultures Research on urban cultures naturally focuses on their defining institution, the city, and the lifeways, or cultural forms, that grow up within cities. Urban scholarship has steadily progressed toward a conception of cities and urban cultures that is free of ethnocentrism, with broad cross-cultural and historical validity. Well into the 20th century conceptions of the city often proceeded as if there were only one authentic or typical form. According to Weber, five attributes define an urban community: Weber believed that Oriental cities rarely achieved these essential characteristics because familial, tribal, or sectarian identities prevented urban residents from forming a unified urban citizenry able to resist state control. The result was an overly limited conception of urban cultures, from which it was extremely difficult to generate a cross-culturally valid understanding. In the 1920s Robert Redfield, strongly influenced by Louis Wirth and other members of the Chicago school of urban ecology, conceived of the urban as invariably impersonal, heterogeneous, secular, and disorganizing. He presumed that as individuals moved from folk community to city or as an entire society moved toward a more urbanized culture, there would be a breakdown in cultural traditions. Urbanizing individuals and societies would suffer from cultural disorganization and would have higher incidences of social pathologies like divorce, alcoholism, crime, and loneliness. He ethnocentrically assumed that their findings could be generalized to all urban cultures. Subsequent research indicated that this conception was in many respects wrong even for American industrial cities. In spite of being generally ethnocentric and specifically inadequate for American cities, this conception still holds sway over much popular thinking, which conceives of cities, in all cultures and all times, as centres of bohemianism, social experimentation, dissent, anomie, crime, and similar conditions—whether for good or bad—created by social breakdown. Gideon Sjoberg *The Preindustrial City, Past and Present*, in the next step toward a cross-culturally valid understanding of cities, challenged this conception of urban culture as ethnocentric and historically narrow. Preindustrial cities, according to Sjoberg, are to be found in societies without sophisticated machine technology, where human and animal labour form the basis for economic production. Industrial cities predominate in the modernized nations of western Europe and America where energy sources from fossil fuels and atomic power phenomenally expand economic productivity. For Sjoberg, preindustrial urban culture differed markedly from its industrial counterpart: Sjoberg collapsed urban cultures of strikingly different sorts into a single undifferentiated preindustrial city type—for example, the cities of ancient empires were conflated with present-day urban places in the Third World. Past urban cultures that did not readily fit the Sjoberg conception, such as the autocephalous self-governing cities of early modern Europe, were disposed of as temporary and unusual variants of his preindustrial type rather than important varieties of urban culture. Redfield and Singer delineated two cultural roles for cities that all urban places perform, although with varying degrees of intensity and elaboration. The cultural message emanating from Delhi, Paris, Washington, D. In cities like London, Marseille, or New York, the intelligentsia challenge old methods, question established traditions, and help make such cities innovative cultural centres. According to Wheatley, only later did economic prominence and political power get added to this original urban cultural role. Wheatley, following Redfield and Singer, established that any conception of an urban culture had to be grounded in the cultural role of cities in their societies; research must specifically address how the urban cultural role organizes beliefs and practices in the wider culture beyond the urban precincts, and, consequently, how this urban cultural role necessitates certain lifeways and social groupings cultural forms in the city. Beginning in the 1970s, David Harvey *Social Justice and the City*, Manuel Castells *The Urban Question*, and other scholars influenced by Marxism caused a major

shift in the conception of urban cultural roles. Although they mainly worked on cities in advanced capitalist cultures, their approach had wide relevance. Rather than looking outward from the city to the urban culture as a whole, the new scholarship conceived the city as a terminus for cultural roles emanating from the wider culture or even the world system. Harvey, for example, linked major changes in American urban lifeways to the urban culture of advanced capitalism: Castells saw the city as an arena for social conflicts ultimately emanating from the class divisions within capitalist society. This Marxist scholarship did not contradict the earlier emphasis on the city as the source of cultural roles so much as complement it. Studying the cultural roles of cities must include not only the cultural beliefs and practices that emanate from cities but also the cultural forms that develop within the city as a result of the impact of the urban culture on it. In this way scholarship can bring forward a cross-culturally and historically valid conception of cities, their cultural forms, and the urban cultures in which they are set.

Types of urban cultures The following typology of urban cultures depends on a conception of cities as centres for the performance of cultural roles found only in state-level societies. Such societies, in contrast to the nonurban cultures previously discussed, have inequalities in economic wealth and political power, the former usually evidenced by class divisions, the latter by specialized institutions of social control ruling elites, government bureaucracies. State-level societies differ in the nature and extent of economic and political inequalities, and this variability accounts for the different types of urban cultures and cultural roles adduced below. The rationale for the labels used below, however, is that given particular constellations of inequalities, certain urban cultures come to exist and certain cultural roles of cities come to characterize or typify them. The typology below draws a major distinction between urban cultures that existed before the development of the world capitalist system in the 16th century and those that came after. Before the world capitalist system developed, state-level societies were not integrated in an economically unequal relationship. The advent of the capitalist world system led to a specialized world economy, in which some state-level societies represented the core and others represented the economically, and often politically, subservient periphery. Before the world system, urban cultures differed mainly on the basis of internal differences in political and economic inequality. After the world system, urban cultures, in addition, differed according to their placement in either the core or the periphery. Ritual was the major cultural role of such cities, and through the enactment of ritual in the urban locale, rural regions were bound together by ties of common belief and cultural performance. Other examples of ritual cities can be drawn from ethnographies of the urban culture of the Swazi in southeast Africa, Dahomey in West Africa, and Bali before the Dutch conquest. In most areas of the world this form of urban culture was quickly succeeded by more complex types. Political authority and economic wealth were therefore widely dispersed. Limited political centralism and economic coordination meant that the ritual, prestige, and status functions of the state loomed large. Segmentary state rulers were symbolic embodiments of supernatural royal cults or sacred ritual ones. Theyâ€”their courts and templesâ€”provided a model of the proper political order and status hierarchy that was adhered to throughout the otherwise weakly cohered segmentary state. Through the awe they inspired, they extracted gifts from the rural populace with which to sustain their royal or priestly election. The cultural forms of ritual cities centred on the cult centres, temple complexes, or royal courts that dominated their physical space and defined their urban role. The everyday population of the city consisted of those bound to court or temple by family, official duties, or craft and ritual specializations; at ceremonial times, people from the surrounding rural areas temporarily swelled the urban area. Therefore, rather than individualism, secularism, or impersonality, the calendrical round of state rituals, kingly ceremonies, divine sacrifices, sacred celebrations, feasts, funerals, and installations defined urban life, rendering it sacred, corporate, and personalistic. The city as ritual centre made for strong ruralâ€”urban solidarity. Because in the segmentary state power and wealth were dispersed rather than concentrated in the city, there existed no intrinsic antagonism between country and city. Consequently the orthogenetic message of tradition and sacredness broadcast from the city throughout the urban culture had a unifying effect, forging a solid ruralâ€”urban bond.

The administrative city Like ritual cities, administrative cities were the habitations of the state rulers. Their major cultural role was to serve as the locus of state administration. State offices and officers had an urban location, from which they exercised a political control and economic exploitation of the surrounding rural

areas quite unknown in ritual cities. Administrative cities also had a qualitatively different demographic and social complexity. They contained large populations, densely settled, often ethnically varied, with heterogeneous occupations. Such cities were nodes of communication and transportation and centres of commerce, crafts, and other economic functions for the surrounding countryside. These states had rulers with great powers of political coercion, which they used to maintain a high level of inequality in wealth between the state ruling elite and the primary producers, the peasantry. This type of urban culture rested on how effectively the state could exploitatively control peasant agricultural productivity for maintaining the elite. The urban administrative cultural role was the major means to this end. The administrative city brought together the political, economic, transport, and communications functions and institutions necessary for this rural rapine. There also grew up urban populations that converted the wealth taxed from the rural area into a sumptuous life-style for the urban-resident state elite: This gave rise to the poor of the city and, often, institutions to help govern and subdue them, such as municipal governments. Administrative cities commonly tried to restrain the wealth of urban merchants from fear that such riches might be converted into political power. As the links between coercive state and oppressed peasant grew stronger that is, as the two became more unequal, the urban cultural practices for the elite became more separated from those of the countryside. The urban area concentrated a sophistication, an elaboration of custom and ideology that marked it off from the rural, which now was defined as rustic. The administrative city had some of the properties commonly attributed to cities: But it was not disorganized or impersonal. Family, guild, and ethnic group framed the allegiances that defined the basic unit of urban cultural practice, the city quarter, which for the urban nonelite functioned with many of the characteristic cohesions of the peasant village. The mercantile city Mercantile cities appeared at the geographic margins or at times of dissolution of agrarian empires—for example, in medieval and early modern Europe, after a decentralized feudalism had fully replaced the Roman Empire. This urban type is thus a variant form that appeared, under particular conditions, in the urban cultures that also contained administrative cities. A class of powerful and wealthy merchants not completely beholden to the state rulers grew up in such cities and, left unchecked, could grow strong enough to effectively challenge the state rulers. This merchant class, and the mercantile cities it occupied, depended for their wealth and political autonomy on the profits of international trade, moneylending, or investment in cash cropping of export agricultural commodities as, for example, vineyards and olive groves in the Mediterranean. The city produced wealth and capital in its own right rather than simply sucking it from rural agriculture. Such wealth provided an avenue for political power separate from that offered by the revenues derived from the peasantry. Often, therefore, urban magnates and state power holders or rural gentry stood in strong opposition, each trying to control—or absorb—the wealth and power of the other. Mercantile cities varied in the extent of legal, fiscal, and martial autonomy they enjoyed. They enjoyed independent municipal government, sported urban fortifications, fielded citizen armies, and even subdued surrounding rural magnates. In less developed generally earlier mercantile cities, urban independence was not so great: Even in such cases, however, rural resources were put to novel uses in the urban setting. The cultural role of mercantile cities grew out of their independent economic productivity and their political autonomy. They played a very strong heterogenetic role. They were strongholds of a merchant class and other social strata based on acquired wealth, against the landed aristocracy of the agrarian empire. Because they were often under attack from the aristocracy, these cities came to symbolize freedom and social mobility: Urban cultural form emphasized achievement, and urban politics involved shifting factional alignments. Given the volatility of commercial operations, leading families rose and fell rapidly, and plutocracies, quite fluid in membership, came to rule these cities. The poor artisans and small traders too were more independent than in administrative cities, and through occupational or sectarian associations, like guilds, they demanded and won political concessions. Although places of innovation, achievement, freedom, and mobility—traits that they share with industrial cities—mercantile cities were neither impersonal nor secular. The extended family was the major institution organizing business firms, political coalitions, and much elite social life. Other corporate institutions, like guilds and religious fraternities, joined city dwellers into highly personalized, ritualized associations that downplayed individualism and secularism in the city. Given the commercial conditions and the difficult class oppositions

that set the cultural context for mercantile cities, they proved evanescent and fragile, usually reverting under state intervention to administrative cities, in which the merchant magnates and their wealth came under the control of state rulers. Urban cultures since the capitalist world system Beginning in the 15th century, the Age of Discovery, Europeans carried the capitalist system burgeoning at home to distant places, whose labour and productivity were harnessed to the European core in an unequal, colonial relationship. The result was the capitalist world system, as Immanuel M. Wallerstein in *The Modern World-System* terms it.

Chapter 5 : History-Theory: From the City to Urban Society - Henri Lefebvre

Originally published in , The Urban Revolution marked Henri Lefebvre's first sustained critique of urban society and is widely considered a foundational book in contemporary thinking about the city.

This urban extends beyond the confines of a city, to encompass entirely new ways of thinking and being throughout all of society. Whereas the city is an object, a collection of parts, urban society is ideas and consciousness. The idea of the urban fabric no longer refers solely to the built environment of the city, but also to all manifestations of the city across the countryside. This total urbanization is a global phenomenon, still only virtual but a future reality. Lefebvre provides an abbreviated history of the city as it transforms into the urban, as part of the urban revolution, beginning with the domination of agriculture by pressure from urban centers. This gave rise to the political city, characterized by writing, from laws to inventories, and established power. This form developed concurrently with the establishment of organized social life and exchange. This city was comprised of not only priests, warriors, and nobles, but also artisans and workers needed to procure the material essentials of warfare and power. Exchange and trade expanded, markets and merchandise integrated into the city, threatening the power of the political city with the idea of personal property and ownership. Urban space became the meeting place for goods and people, allowing the merchant city to succeed the political. Here, commercial exchange became an urban function embodied in form, giving urban space a new structure. Between the home, the focal point of thought and existence, and the world was the urban reality. Following the merchant city was the industrial city, which saw an influx of industry in search of capital, capitalists, markets, and an abundance of low-cost laborers. This transformation involved a process of implosion and explosion, of a concentration of urban reality and immense explosions resulting in fragments such as peripheries and suburbs, of an extension of the urban fabric, and the complete subordination of agrarian culture. The critical zone was a period of industrial production superimposed on the growth of commercial exchange, multiplying the number of exchanges and pushing towards a global market. Lefebvre then switches scales to address the streets and monuments of urban society, perhaps grounding his theories in relatable objects. He first considers streets as more than places of circulation and movement, but also as meeting places, as stages with symbolic and informative functions. Countering this, he calls streets superficial meetings places and areas of repression. Lefebvre asserts they allow for an accumulation of objects, a spectacle of objects accompanying the uniformization of the grid. With monuments, he considers the spaces around them as both sites of colonization and oppression and sites of collective life that bring people together through meaning and beauty. My biggest takeaway from this section is the blurring of town and country into inseparable aspects of the urban. Lefebvre considers the urban conception superior to the city, as the city designates a clearly defined object, while the urban allows for an understanding of the overall process of urbanization, as well as a direction and goal. In providing a brief overview of city forms, he elucidates not only the processes that have taken place, but also those that will continue as society nears complete urbanization. The nature of past processes furthers our understanding of what is occurring now, as well as the direction in which we are going, and legitimizes the need to reframe interpretations of town and country, city and suburbs into the urban.

Chapter 6 : City, Industrial and Urban Society, Sociology Guide

Originally published in , The Urban Revolution marked Henri Lefebvre's first sustained critique of urban society, a work in which he pioneered the use of semiotic, structuralist, and poststructuralist methodologies in analyzing the development of the urban environment.

The most significant current developments in city structure are the metropolitan area including the suburb which accounts for current population growth. The city pulls people from various corners towards its nucleus. The rural people faced with various economic problems are attracted by the city and start moving towards the cities. The city provides ample opportunities for personal advancement. It is the centre of brisk economic, commercial, artistic, literary, political, educational, technological, scientific and other activities. Cities are not only the controlling centers of their societies but also the source of innovation and change. They act as the source of new ideas for production, the pace -setters for consumption, guardians of culture and conservers of order in society. Consensus and continuity in a society are maintained from the city centres. Urban culture has become the legitimation for control. Walter Christaller explained the location of urban cities in terms of their functions as service centres. The basic assumption was that a given rural area supports an urban centre which in turn serves the surrounding countryside. There are smaller towns for smaller areas and bigger cities for larger regions. This concept permitted Christaller to build up an integrated system of cities according to their size. His views conceiving a city as a central place within a rural area was elaborated by Edward L. Ullman with considerable modifications. He admits the vulnerability of the scheme for larger places. In highly industrialized areas the central place schemes is generally distorted by industrial concentration in response to resources and transportation that it may be said to have little significance as an explanation for urban location and distribution. Hyot in his sector theory talked about the growth of cities taking place in sectors and these sectors extend from the centre to periphery. The concentric zone theory given by Park and Burgess suggested that modern cities consisted of a series of concentric zones. There are five such zones Central business district.

Chapter 7 : Brief Essay on Urban Society (Words)

Soleri's urban laboratory says the city is based on evolution and grows like a living organism industrialization is the process of social and economic change that transforms a human group from an agrarian society into an industrial one.

Panama Table of Contents Since the s, Panama has been in the midst of massive urban expansion. In slightly more than one-third of the total population was classified as urban; by the early s, the figure had risen to 55 percent. Between and , overall population increased by 2. Regional cities shared in the general urban expansion: Economic activity and population density in Panama were concentrated along two main axes: In the mids, the region accounted for more than half the total population of the country and over two-thirds of all those classified as inhabitants of cities. It also included most nonagricultural economic activity: In terms of sheer numbers, most of the urban expansion was concentrated in slum tenements and, since the s, in squatter settlements around the major cities. As was the case in most urban trends, Panama City led the way. In there were 11 identifiable slums or squatter settlements housing 18, people associated with the city; by the mids, there were some 34 slum communities and their population had mushroomed more than five-fold. Surveys indicated that 80 percent of slum and squatter settlement inhabitants were migrants to the city. Many of the tenements took the form of two-story frame houses built as pre-World War I temporary housing for the canal labor force. They continued to be occupied, although in the early s they were in an advanced state of decay. When one part of a building collapsed, slum dwellers continued to live in those sections of the building that remained standing. The structures were frequently condemned, which merely added to their attractiveness for impoverished city dwellers, because the rent therefore dropped to nothing. Squatter settlements offered their own inducements. If squatters were able to maintain their claims to land, the settlements tended to improve and gained amenities over time. Because they were essentially rent-free, they gave their inhabitants considerable advantages over costly and over-crowded, if more centrally located, tenements. A substantial portion of the squatters settled on government land, and there were numerous programs to permit them to purchase their housing sites. The Torrijos regime allocated funds for low-income housing projects, and there were efforts to upgrade the amenities available to the urban poor. By the s, about 96 percent of the urban population had access to potable water and nearly 70 percent had electricity. Although rural society was relatively homogeneous and simple in the social distinctions it made, urban Panama was not. It was ethnically and socially diverse and highly stratified. City dwellers took note of ethnic or racial heritage, family background, income and source of income , religion, culture, education, and political influences as key characteristics in classifying individuals. But, in the late s, the boundaries among the elite, the middle class, and the lower class were neither especially well defined nor impervious. The ambitious and lucky city dweller could aspire to better significantly his or her social and economic status. Neither were the distinctions between rural and urban inhabitants absolute. There was considerable social mobility, principally from the lower to the middle class and generally on an individual rather than a group basis. Wealth, occupation, education, and family affiliation were the main factors affecting such mobility.

Chapter 8 : Halfway to boiling: the city at 50C | Cities | The Guardian

The years of industrial expansion after the Civil War brought significant changes to American society. The country became increasingly urban, and cities grew not only in terms of population but also in size, with skyscrapers pushing cities upward and new transportation systems extending them outward.

Here is your essay on Urban Society! Urban society is characterized by a sharp economic disparity between a small number of wealthy families and a large number of petty traders, artisans and the poor. Urban planning is, therefore, necessary to reduce this disparity. Urban, city or town planning deals with the design of the built environment from the municipal or the metropolitan perspective. It is also concerned with the smaller scale of development in the city or town including architecture and urban design. The Greek Hippodamus is often considered the Father of City Planning for his design of the city called Melitus, though examples of cities permeate antiquity. In India, people built planned cities right from the ages of the Harappan culture. But all these cities of antiquity were based on agricultural income and were built mostly because of the rise in population. Gradually, the nature of settlements or urban centres underwent a qualitative change, a transition from a locally focused, isolated, economically and socially self-contained, and basically agricultural community to global, economically and socially dynamic and basically industrial or service-oriented community. People mostly migrate to these centres to earn their livelihood. Among the migrants, some settle down and some others move on to larger cities or towns in search of better opportunities. To improve the economic and physical infrastructure and also to provide essential services and facilities to the existing and forthcoming population, planning is essential. Planning is also required to condense the load of larger cities or towns including metropolitan areas as it is observed that people usually migrate from rural areas to small urban centres, from small and medium towns to larger cities or metropolitan centres in search of livelihood. This can be done by providing similar employment opportunities and standard of living in the smaller towns and cities. Urban planning is mostly concerned with the physical development process; spatial planning plays a significant role in the identification and development of new areas. It helps in creating a new spatio-economic order leading to the rational use of land and other resources. From the late 19th century, modern urban planning started placing stress on the socioeconomic aspects of the urban centres. In addition, today's urban plan is also forced to comply with rapid economic changes that may come about due to liberalization and globalization processes. To understand what city planning is, it is necessary to understand first what planning is. Ideally, an urban plan is based on the best social, economic and physical data available and the best professional, technical and intellectual ideas available. Realistically, it is mitigated by political and cultural considerations. There are two aspects in urban planning – social planning and physical planning. Planning also sometimes includes social policies announced by the central and state governments such as housing, education, mental health, criminal justice, community organization and community development.

Chapter 9 : The Urban Revolution – University of Minnesota Press

In city after city, public authorities mounted an attack on many of the related problems of the urban environment (better water supply and waste disposal) Zoning expropriation laws allowed a majority of owners of land in given quarter of the city to impose major street or sanitation improvements on a reluctant minority.

Sometime in is usually reckoned to be the turning point when city dwellers formed the majority of the global population for the first time in history. Today, the trend toward urbanisation continues: Migration forms a significant, and often controversial, part of this urban population growth. In fact, cities grow in three ways, which can be difficult to distinguish: Although migration is only responsible for one share of this growth, it varies widely from country to country. In some places, particularly in poorer countries, migration is the main driver of urbanisation. In , UN Habitat estimated that 3m people were moving to cities every week. In global gateway cities such as Sydney, London and New York, migrants make up over a third of the population. The proportion in Brussels and Dubai is even greater, with migrants accounting for more than half of the population. The World Migration Report WMR by the International Organisation for Migration argued that this mass movement of people is widely overlooked amid the global concern about urbanisation. And the report considers the widespread challenges, in terms of service provision, for the growing numbers of people moving into cities around the world. Where the significance of migration to cities is recognised, it is widely seen as a problem. It is also more pronounced in poorer countries: But this negative attitude towards migration to cities may well be mistaken. The WMR argues that problems of access to services – such as housing, sanitation, education or employment – that result from rural to urban migration, are not inevitable. Rather, they are caused by poor planning. Although all socio-economic classes are reflected in migration to cities, migrants from rural areas are disproportionately poor, and inadequate planning is often a result of a weak political will to support them. Yet, as the report pointed out, migrants are especially motivated individuals. It is not only the sheer numbers of people involved that makes migration worthy of attention. All around the world, populations of cities are now more diverse than surrounding rural areas. In this way, migrants who come to cities can help diversify the networks that the city can draw upon. For instance, by linking cities to broader global networks. Perhaps the most famous example of this is Eastleigh in Nairobi. Changing with the times So how are cities coping and changing with this influx of both internal and external migrants? While the vast majority of migration policies are set on a national basis, it is increasingly common for cities to develop their own approach to integrating people who come to settle. For example, in the US, many cities support legislation calling for city police forces not to cooperate with certain forms of federal immigration control, which are deemed to be prejudiced against migrant groups. In , the cities of Los Angeles and Chicago passed non-cooperation measures, and in , New York City became the largest city to do so. Yet much of the research into the impact of migrants on cities concerns international migrants in wealthier countries. A key contribution of the WMR has been to turn the focus of migration to cities in poorer countries. This migration is often shorter distance, from rural areas that are relatively close. Slums spread close to the city of Mumbai. Adequate housing is probably the most significant of these. Rather, problems tend to arise as a result of poor planning and forced behaviour change – particularly forced relocation. These issues are exacerbated when informal settlements develop outside the administrative boundary of the city. For instance, in the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo, as many as 60, people are being relocated due to redevelopment of under-served, informal areas of the city. The project I worked on examined the impact of violence on migrants in the city. Through the surveys conducted with groups of these relocated households, we witnessed the enormous contribution that local community and neighbourhood organisations can make to help those coping with forced relocation and the disintegration of migrant communities. Migration to cities significantly contributes to urbanisation. And if well planned, migration can enhance the dynamism of cities making them healthier, more profitable and more interesting places to live.