Ch. 11: Urban Geography
Introduction to Geography
GEH 101/GEH 501
Lehman College
Spring 2011
Keith Miyake
- In-class final on May 23
- Take-home final handed out next week and posted on website
- Review guide will be posted on website
- Course evaluations
Urban Geography

- Study of urban areas and their functions
- Study of spatial distributions of and linkages *between* cities, and the circulation and flows of people, things, and ideas within networks of cities that bind them together in space-time
- Study of spatial patterns, internal structure, and interactions *within* cities
Definitions

- Urbanization: increasing share of urban population (urbanized societies/rural societies) vs. large cities

- City: concentrated non-agricultural settlement

- Hinterland: Provide services/draws resources

- Incorporation: Defining territory/establishing government

- Primate cities: Largest city in a country twice as large as the second largest
  - Bangkok (7.5m); Nanthaburi (481k)
Defining Cities

- U.S. Census Bureau definition of urban
  - 2,500 or more inhabitants

- City and town
  - Multifunctional nucleated settlements
    - Central business district, both residential and nonresidential land uses
  - Towns are smaller, less functional complexity
Defining Cities

- Central city: Within the boundaries of the main city
- Suburb: Functionally specialized segment of a large urban area outside the central city
- Urbanized area: Continuously built-up landscape defined by building and population densities
- Metropolitan area: Cluster of distinct cities linked to one or more urban city centers by economic activity, which functions as an economic whole
Origins and Evolution of Cities

- Agricultural surplus or resources for trade
  - Food from surrounding hinterlands
  - Denser population
  - Fixed location, abandonment of nomadism
  - Fixed marketplace for trade
- Social organization and power
- Defensible situation to protect resources
- More complex economy
- Reduced transport costs (goods, people, ideas)
Origins and Evolution of Cities

- 1800: 3% of world’s population lived in urban areas
- 1970: ≈ 33% of world’s population lived in urban areas
- Now: ≈ 49% of world’s population lives in urban areas
- Industrialization and commercialization of agriculture foster urbanization
- Urbanization in developing countries only partly due to industrialization—people from rural areas seeking a better life

  - Urban areas: access to services, service jobs
  - Economic system and urban infrastructure often unable to support rapid urban growth
Location of Urban Settlements

- Site (Absolute Location)
  - Latitude and longitude or physical characteristics
  - Head-of-navigation (river origin)
  - Bay head (where land/river meets bay)
Location of Urban Settlements

- Situation (Relative location)

  - In relation to the physical and cultural characteristics of surrounding areas
  - Raw materials, market areas, agricultural regions, mountains, oceans, etc.
  - Break-of-bulk locations (ports)
  - Railheads
  - Relationship to other cities
Poor Site

Good Situation

- New Orleans, LA
- Flooding
- Mouth of river
Early Urban Functions

- Defense: forts, bases
- Religious: temples, churches
- Political: capitals, administration
- Agglomeration (related industries), divisions of labor
- Economic activities: primary, secondary, tertiary
Contemporary Urban Functions

- Primarily economic
- Warehousing, trade, crafts, industry
- Economic activity shift toward secondary/tertiary through quinary
- Academia (e.g., Madison, WI)
Economic Base

- Basic Sectors (exports)
  - New York: finance
  - Seattle: software
  - Los Angeles: aerospace, entertainment

- Nonbasic Sectors (local consumption)

- Multiplier Effect: basic/nonbasic ratio
  - nonbasic population grows faster than basic population (~2:1)
Central Place Theory: helps understand location, development, and interdependence of different sized cities

- Central places serve as markets for their hinterlands, people travel longer distance for things only available in larger cities...

- Urban Influence Zones: areas outside of a city that are still affected by it

- Urban hierarchy: Size/structure of a city is based on size and functional complexity of the urban region
Systems of Cities

- Primate City not always capital, but administrative functions encourage growth (Brasília vs. Rio de Janeiro)

- World Cities: Interconnected, internationally dominant centers of global finance and commerce
Systems of Cities

- Urban hierarchy: Based on size and functional complexity
- Rank-size rule: nth largest city will be 1/n the size of the largest city
- Primate City not always capital, but administrative functions encourage growth (Brasília vs. Rio de Janeiro)
- World Cities: Interconnected, internationally dominant centers of global finance and commerce
World Cities

- Command and control centers of the globalized world economy
- Advanced producer services
- Linked into global city network across national boundaries (globalization)
- International political, cultural organizations, transnational crime
- Attract international migrants
- Dual economy: advanced services and informal economy
- Extreme social polarization
The World According to GaWC 2008

Globalization and World Cities Research Network http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc
Global Cities Attract Migrants
Internal Geography of Cities

- Central Business District (CBD): Center of an urban unit, where retail stores, offices, and cultural activities are concentrated
  - High accessibility
  - High land values
- Outside the CBD
  - Land value and population density generally decrease as distance from the CBD increases
Urban Models

(a) Concentric Zone Model

(b) Sector Model

(c) Multiple-Nuclei Model

Concentric Model: Chicago

Increasing value concentrically radiating outward
Sector Model: Calgary

Growth based on transportation and existing industry
Peripheral Model

- Periphery: large residential tracts
- Transportation designed to serve periphery and feed into city center
- Nodes on the periphery
  - serve the periphery
  - provide employment and services
- Periphery still interdependent on city center
Changes in Urban Form

- Commuting long distances became more feasible
  - Automobile: Freed owner from fixed-route public transit
  - Interstate Highways
  - Labor laws (40-hour work week)
- Increased home ownership
  - Changes in home loan terms
  - Vast areas of nonurban land developed
Suburbanization

- Residential development came first, followed by shopping, then industries and service activities.
- Populations drawn away from the central core:
  - white flight
  - space++
  - homeownership++
- Suburbs became collectively self-sufficient.
Suburbanization

- Edge cities
  - Large nodes of office and retail activity at the margin of an urban area

- Megalopolis
  - Continuous functionally urban corridor (e.g., Boston to D.C.)

- Suburban Sprawl and Suburban Fortresses
  - Gated communities
  - Policing patterns
Decline of the Central City

- Congested and inaccessible
- Upwardly-mobile middle-class moved to urban periphery
- Jobs (tertiary, quaternary) followed
- Ghettoization
<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Cities</th>
<th>Suburbs</th>
<th>Nonmetropolitan</th>
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<td>32.9%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
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<td>1960</td>
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<td>30.6%</td>
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<td>2000</td>
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<td>51.0%</td>
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Problems of Suburbanization

- Loss of tax bases = inadequate social services
- Environmental (no mass transit, urban sprawl, utilities, pollution)
- White flight (racial segregation++)
  - Environmental racism
- Working class isolation, isolation of women (housewives), youth problems, consumption-oriented
Social Areas of Cities

- City residents tend to segregate themselves
- Groupings according to:
  - Family status
  - Social status
  - Ethnicity
- Gated communities and co-ops
- Many groupings fostered by size and value of available housing
- Zoning, redlining, mortgage discrimination, restrictive covenants
- Non-Whites restricted (legally or financially) to “undesirable” neighborhoods
Urban Renewal and Gentrification

- Significant economic and population growth in large urban areas since 1990s

- Gentrification
  - Rehabilitation of housing in deteriorated inner-city areas by middle- and high-income groups
  - Displacement of low-income populations
  - Young professionals and “empty nesters” returning to urban centers

- Fiscal problems due to unrestricted expansion
- Growth boundaries and “smart growth”
Global Urbanization

- Rapid urbanization without economic or infrastructure development
- Disrupted agriculture, mechanization and commercialization: force people from their lands
- Perceived: economic opportunity, lower mortality, better services, greater investment
- Reality: no jobs, technology replaces many jobs, transnational corporatism: informal economy
- Lack water, power, sewage
- Traffic, congestion, pollution
- Shantytowns, slums, makeshift housing