

## SECTION F, GEOGRAPHY

### The Field of Urban Geography

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Very few if any urban geography text books exist in the English language and none have been written by United States geographers. The one most nearly a text was written by Griffith Taylor (1951), an Australian-American. Geographers talked to, and listened to, disagree greatly on the value of the organization and content of this book. Another, not written as a text but sometimes used as one, is by Lewis Mumford (1938), an Englishman. Although very stimulating on some aspects of Urban Geography, this work could hardly be considered, at present, to adequately introduce the field. The only other book which might be used as a text is by an English geographer, Arthur E. Smailes. It gives a rather brief survey (150 pages) in small format of most of the aspects of the field that urban geographers are studying and writing about at the present time. Two chapters in James (1954) summarize the work in the field and suggest its direction.

It seems that urban geography in the United States has appeared so recently and evolved so rapidly that no one here has attempted to formally define and present it, except in brief. The writer wishes to present an outline of the field for your consideration and criticism. This is based upon information obtained in graduate work in urban geography and in four years teaching of a course covering the field. Specifically it organizes the recently-published studies considered to fall within the discipline.

The writer believes the field should be divided into three, or possibly four, divisions which will be called "parts." Some of the terminology used may not be too satisfactory and is open to suggested improvement. If the field were divided into four parts, they would be: I. World and Regional Urban Systems, II. Urbanized Areas and Complexes, III. Intra-Urban Spatial Organization and IV. Intra-Urban Elements. The questionable division is Part II, Urbanized Areas and Complexes. Let's take a look at each part individually, indicating its substance and sub-divisions.

Part I. World and Regional Urban Systems, would deal with some very general aspects of urban distribution and some specific ones. It would present cities as points or spots in space on small scale maps, probably 1:250,000 and smaller. Section one would deal with the world pattern of cities, particularly large cities. The distribution of these cities could be analyzed in relation to climate, landforms, soils, economies, etc.

Another major division of this part would consider the functional classification of cities. Methods and bases of classification as well as the distribution of cities of various classes would be included. These again would be related to various elements of the physical and cultural environment.

The urban hierarchy would be another section of this part. Size classes and the spacing of cities would constitute the core. The effect of landforms, climate, transportation, functions, economies, etc. in skewing the hierarchy should be emphasized.

Urban fields or hinterlands would comprise another topic under world and regional urban systems. Kinds of fields, their characters, complexi-

ties, and uses could be brought out. Various kinds of trade areas, port hinterlands, collection, and distribution areas would be a part. Rules, such as Reilley's Law, for finding certain kinds of boundaries would be discussed.

Part I could be summarized and tied together by a discussion of metropolitan and nodal regions.

Part II. Urbanized Areas and Complexes would probably be relatively short. Two sections are envisioned at the moment. One would deal with standard metropolitan and urbanized areas including rural residents engaged in urban activities. The other would analyze the associations in small areas of intensive industrial development such as done by Chardonnet (1953). One would probably work in the map scale range from 1:250,000 to 1:30,000. This part would bridge the gap between the study of cities as points in Part I and the study of the internal structure of cities in Part 3.

Part III. Intra-urban Spatial Organization, would study the major internal divisions of cities and their relationships to one another and other factors. Models of internal morphology, such as the concentric zone, sector, and multiple nuclei theories, should be included. Each one of these might constitute a section in this part. Discussions of site and transportation factors would comprise other divisions. The scale, probably from 1:30,000 to 1:6,000, would be large enough to show the main land uses by city blocks but not according to individual lots or structures.

Part IV. Intra-urban Elements, would deal with the functional use of lots and structures and their associations with one another and the city as a whole. Various divisions could be based upon retail, wholesale, administrative, educational, industrial, and residential elements. The scale range here would be from about 1:6,000 to as large as practical for a given piece of research.

As indicated in opening this paper criticism of this suggested organization, content, and terminology of urban geography would be welcomed. Does this provide a well-balanced coverage of the field? Is anything included that should not be? Has something been omitted that should be included?

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Chardonnet, Jean. 1953. *Les grands types de complexes industriels*, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris.
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- Mumford, Lewis. 1938. *The Culture of Cities*, Harcourt, Brace and Company.
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