

## Unit 5

# Invasion, Succession, Concentration, Centralization and Segregation

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### Learning Objectives

A careful study of this unit will help you understand the five major processes mentioned above. You will be able to:

- describe the theories and major perspectives like, the ecological perspective to the study of urban sociology;
- discuss the processes of invasion and succession;
- outline the processes of concentration and centralization; and
- explain the processes of segregation in urban sociology.

### 5.1 Introduction

In the previous block, you learnt about the basic concepts of urban sociology, their origin and evolution. It is important to note that urban sociology developed in the same period or time when sociology itself was developing and achieving greater measure of distinction within social sciences during the nineteenth century. This clearly shows similar roots of theories and social processes of both general sociological principles and the branch of sociology which has its focus on the study of the city. Some of the major theoretical approaches to understand urban society and its nature are evolutionary approach, dichotomous approach, ecological approach and symbolic approach. In this unit you will learn more about the major theories and perspectives of urban sociology to familiarise you with the sociological background of the processes of invasion, succession, concentration, centralization and segregation.

### 5.2 Theories and Major Perspectives of Urban Sociology

The early sociological theories like, the evolutionary theory, the functional and the structure-functional theories (about which you may have learnt in core course, MSO-001 : Sociological Theories and Concepts and MSO-002 :

Research Methodologies and Methods were influenced by biology. In these theories, especially the functional theory the comparison of society with an organism was drawn; that is; organic analogy model was used to study society. It was believed that just as in our body each organ functions for the maintenance and existence of the total body, in society, social institutions function for the maintenance and existence of the total society. This theory is also referred to as equilibrium theory.

Henry Maine's (1885) distinction between status and contract and L. H. Morgan's (1877) concepts of savagery, barbarism and civilisations are clearly based on the organismic theory of social change and development. According to them, the forces of development to civilisational level or to the development of urban features is endogenous and evolutionary in nature. These dichotomies are further followed by Ferdinand Tonnies and Emile Durkhiem.

The classical dichotomous view or typological perspective exercised great influence on the study of the city. It envisaged an ideal typical construct of a city, contrasting it to rural or folk society. It attempted to grasp the nature of the urban social organisation by contrasting it with the non-urban or rural folk which represent distinct social types. European social theorists, such as, Sir Henry Maine, Ferdinand Tonnies, Emile Durkhiem, Simmel and Redfield initially developed the dichotomous approach. They propounded this understanding only because they had witnessed dramatic changes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Western industrial society. In this transitional phase, social thinkers observed how the emerging social order would differ from that of the past. The typological perspective further profoundly influenced the Chicago School of Urban Sociology. You will learn more about this school of thought in unit 13 Development of Urban Sociology.

Tonnies (1887) coined the terms *Gesellschaft* for urban society and *Gemeinschaft* for rural society. According to him, *Gemeinschaft* is dominated by group identity while *Gesellschaft* contrasts with it is characterised by individual identity and self-interest. The dichotomy between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* is not in itself a typology of forms of settlement only but a reflection of the way lives in villages and cities are organised. It refers to the types of social relationship, and more specifically to the contrast between emotional and rational, personal and contractual, communal and individual aspects of human interactions. The two concepts were employed to describe the direction of change in society, rather than differentiate between geographical areas within a society, at any one point of time. Talcott Parsons analysed this dichotomy with greater precision and flexibility. He identified *Gemeinschaft* in terms of particularism, quality, affectivity and diffuseness; while the characteristics of *Gesellschaft* involves universalism, performance, affective neutrality, and specificity.

Emile Durkhiem (1933), one of the founding fathers of sociology also followed the dichotomous view of societies. According to his theory of division of labour, two types of social solidarities exist. These are organic solidarity and mechanical solidarity. Mechanical solidarity refers to simple

segmental societies characterised by only the most rudimentary division of labour, repressive law and a strong 'collective conscience', whereas organic solidarity refers to a more complex society with more population and differentiation of social roles. Thus, for Durkheim the urban complex societies would be marked by organic solidarity. Here the law system will be restitutive law rather than repressive law. Organic solidarity is the feature of the city or a continuous expansion of urban life. He argues that the increasing moral density of a society is expressed through the process of urbanisation. 'Division of labour' and 'collective conscience' are twin concepts for his analysis and understanding of social change. As he explains increasing division of labour in complex societies and erosion of the bonds of collective conscience in these complex societies led to the emergence of organic solidarity. He further explains in his book— **The Division of Labour (1933)** that two factors give rise to an increased division of labour and leading towards urban society i.e., material density (population density) and moral density (density of interaction). In the city the density of population demands occupational specialisation, hence it breaks down the unity formed of common shared experiences and creates in its place an order based on functional interdependence. Like, Tonnies, Durkheim also explains that the moral order of common values gets replaced by an instrumental order in an urban society. Therefore, Durkheim considers urbanisation, including the development of transportation and communication, as the cause of the division of labour.

Max Weber (1905) also followed the ideal typical model of urban life and organisations but differs from Tonnies and Durkheim. He considers city as market places and believed that they did not undermine social solidarity or social cohesion. For him, the city is an elaborate system of exchange; residents naturally acquired a sense of allegiance to that economic arena and at least partially autonomous political units. His ideal type method about which you learnt in the previous Block-1 is clearly evident in his study of the city with particular focus on two aspects – economic and political organizations. With these two factors, he constructed the ideal type of city as a settlement that displays a relative predominance of trade, commercial relations with fortification, a market, a court of its own and at least partially an autonomy and autocephaly. Hence, Weber's ideal-type city is an individual type and cannot therefore be taken as the city at all in any fixed period of time and place. He points out that the conspicuous lack of fortresses in modern cities together with their political subordination to the nation-state is evidence of this fact. Hence the age of medieval city is at an end. However, his methodological writings, not his specific historical descriptions are a guide to understand the modern city as a construct and an ideal type for Weber.

There is one common thread running among F. Tonnies', Emile Durkheim's and Max Weber's theoretical models. They attempt to distinguish between different forms of social relationships through the development of analytical dichotomies. In all their theories, the contrasting relations are drawn to explain different patterns of social interaction, not to different types of human settlements. Hence, the contrast between the way of life in the

country, i.e., the folk society and the city may be used for creating the distinction between the two as an ideal type.

### Ecological Perspective

The ecological approach of urban sociology is based on two fundamental premises to understand the effects produced by the urban environment on social organisation and behaviour. It is presumed that a study of social life in urban space is the creation of urban space. Hence human ecology is concerned with how human populations adapt collectively to their environment. Ecology represents a fusion of different disciplines or it is an interdisciplinary study which covers the areas of economics, geography and sociology.

The ecological approach was developed by Robert Ezra Park and his colleagues at Chicago University in 1950s. His basic proposition was based on the correspondence in plant communities and the emergence of natural areas within cities, where similar social constituents of the urban environment congregated. According to Park, human ecology, as the sociologists would like to use the term, is not identical with geography, nor even with human geography. He further explains that it is not the individual but the community, not human being's relation to the earth rather his/her relation with other human beings. Communities are not merely population aggregates but they also display the nature of relationships among social groups. Cities, particularly great cities, are the places where the process of selection and segregation of the population has achieved its height. These cities also display certain morphological characteristics. Therefore, ecological propositions are generic to human space, which give rise to spatial relationships in urban environment in terms of residences, businesses, various institutions, transportation, and communication facilities. Human space follows some basic principles—competition for the best location, overall efficiency of the use of that space, mutual compatibility of the neighbouring use, evolving changes in the population size and composition, patterns of economic expansion and contraction.

Robert Park's assumptions of ecological model was very much influenced by August Comte, Herbert Spencer, and Emile Durkhiem. All of them are inclined towards the evolutionary path of social change. Similarly, Parks' view of ecology were influenced with these ideas and he tried to apply this theory to the study of urban space. Comte and Spencer's assumption of social organism largely influenced Park's conception of community and society. Emile Durkhiem's influence is more explicit in Park's ontological assumptions regarding human nature and the relationship between individual and society. Robert Park writes that 'the fact seems to be that men are brought into the world with all the passions, instincts and appetites uncontrolled and undisciplined'.

For Robert Park, human society involves double aspects. On the one hand it is an expression of human nature, which is revealed in the competition for survival in which relationships with others are entirely utilitarian. On the other, it is an expression of consensus and common purpose. Individual freedom is supreme on the one hand and on the other, individual will is

subordinated to the collective mind of society as a super organism. The first Park called 'community' and the second 'society'. Ecology is concerned with communities rather than society. However, it is not an easy task to distinguish between them. In his understanding community refers to a specific aspect of human organisation that is identified theoretically as the unorganised and unconscious process whereby human population adjusts to their environment through unrestricted competition. Thus, ecological approach to social relations was characterised by an emphasis on the biotic as opposed to the cultural aspects of human interaction. It does not mean that it denies the relevance of culture in the study of social life, rather it includes the unconscious and social aspects as its specific area of interest.

Charles Darwin in his book—*The Origin of Species* (1859)—viewed the notion of a 'web of life' through which all organisms were related to all others in ties of interdependence or symbiosis. This balance of nature was a product of the tooth and claw struggle for survival, which served to regulate the population size of different species and to distribute them among different habitats according to their relative suitability. Competition for the basic resources of life thus resulted in the adaptation of different species to each other and to their environment and hence to the evolution of a relatively balanced ecological system based upon competition and co-operation among differentiated and specialised organisms. This was an entirely natural and spontaneous process.

The ecological concept that explains the congruence between spatial and economic differentiation is the most dominant factor. Following Darwin's theory, Robert Park viewed that in every living community, there are always one or more dominant species. Similarly, in the human community, industry and commerce are dominant, for that they can outbid other competitors for strategic central locations in the city. The pressure for space at the centre, therefore, creates an area of high land values in every other area of the city and thus the pattern of land-use by different functional groups. As Robert Park writes, that the struggle of industries and commercial institutions for a strategic location determines in the long run the principle of dominance which tends to determine the general ecological pattern of the city and the functional relation of each of the different areas of the city to all others.

### **Reflection and Action 5.1**

Prepare a map of your village/town area or a municipal division of the city you live in. Find out how the different sections of the city are being used and by whom. For example, where the factories are located, where the administrative offices are located etc. Write a report of two pages on "My village/town/city and its Social Space".

Compare your report with those of other students at your Study Centre. You may also discuss it with your Academic Counsellor.

R. D. McKenzie, E. W. Burgess, Louis Wirth, Robert Redfield are other prominent contributors of Chicago School whose thoughts are based on the ecological approach. The first two draw the greatest interest among contemporary researchers who employ classical ecological concepts. Burgess's theory of concentric zones continues to be popular in the study of urban changes in different societies. R. D. McKenzie's study of invasion and succession explains the core urban ecological processes. His study describes the dynamic nature of urban space. He further explains the simultaneous process of the centralisation of essential services and the depression of no specialised ones. There were general tendencies towards residential concentration around commercial and industrial districts. However the transportation development has allowed residential de-concentration along major arteries.

Louis Wirth and Robert Redfield followed the ecological approach with their teacher Robert E. Park at Chicago school. L. Wirth in his famous write-up *Urbanism As a Way of Life* (1938) describes human ecology as one of the three significant perspectives of the city, the other two are organizational and social psychology. He argued that all three should complement each other, human ecology is not a substitute for, but a supplement to, the other frames of reference and method of social investigation. He tried to synthesise Park's human ecology and Simmel's analysis of the form of association and the development of urban personality. Redfield however, viewed the city as a vast, complicated and rapidly changing world and contrasted it with folk society. His ideal type of folk society is characterised by small, isolated, non-literate and homogenous groups with a strong sense of group solidarity. The common factors between the two thinkers exhibits that human relationships can be conceptualised in terms of a pair of logically opposite ideal types. Some of these theories will again be explained in Units 13 and 14 of Block 4 for your further understanding.

### Critique

There are three major criticisms of the ecological approach. These are as following :

**First** there is the important limitation about its basic assumption that the growth of the city was the product of automatic forces involving competition and selection. Davie (1950) argues that the patterns of residential location were largely a function of patterns of industrial location and that industry is located near lines of communication, which exhibited no uniform pattern.

**The second** critique related to the mode of statistical analysis in ecological research. Robinson (1950) made distinctions between ecological correlations (between aggregate phenomena) and individual correlations (between individual units) and pointed to the fallacy of using an ecological correlation as evidence for an individual one. He observed that the ecological correlation over emphasised individual ones. Menzel (1950) also supports Robinson's argument through his research findings.

**The third** drawback of the ecological approach is pointed out by Firey (1945). He suggests that human ecology explained locational activity purely

in terms of economic maximisation. Against this he argued that space may have a symbolic as well as economic value, therefore, locational activity may reflect sentiment as well as economic rationality.

Despite all these limitations, the ecological approach is the only comprehensive theoretical approach to explain the urban social reality. Howley (1951) reformulated the ecological approach and initiated its present revival within the field of sociology. He (It is) stipulated that the constant social processes of change and adjustment, invasion and succession, concentration and centralisation, infiltration and segregation mark the ecological conditions of a city. These processes are the indicator of the development of any city as well as the nature of social change.

The ecological process in urban sociology is a comprehensive process that explains both aspects of changes in cities—physical space and social organisations. The concepts of Invasion, Succession, Concentration, Centralisation and Segregation are very important to understand the changes in demographic structure, social interaction and organisations in the city as a result of physical restructuring. Hence, these concepts not only reflect the changes in social relations in isolation but they are rather attached with particular space. Let us learn more about these concepts.

### 5.3 Invasion and Succession

Both these processes are adopted from ecology to describe the neighbourhood change and growth of the city whereby one social group succeeds in establishing itself by pushing out another in the valued urban space. These terms are associated with the Chicago School and particularly Burgess' Zonal Model. According to this model, the growing demand for land of the immigrant population for housing and other activities forces them to move to outward areas. Invasion refers to the inflow of rural population towards the city centre for various purposes—employments, education etc. It is more reflected among low economic status of immigrant groups. They move into adjacent residential areas, having a negative impact on the quality of life of the current occupant. Sometimes, the highest status groups find it more comfortable and convenient to move out of the city and shift to the periphery of the city. The word 'invasion' has a negative connotation which reflects negative sentiment of the resident population for the fresh migrants.

Succession means a process that shows successive movement of people in outward zones as the need arise. This movement is neither abrupt nor uniform, it moves in successive phases called succession. It is also viewed as an attack on the ecological or natural habitat of outer zones. Succession is a complementary process to invasion as it proceeds only after the invasion. These ecological processes of invasion and succession are frequently associated with an ethnic minority group's movement into an area and the following changes that are characteristics of many of the city's natural areas.

A recent study of ethnic invasion and succession in Brooklyn reveals that the frame of analysis for interpreting ecological data has to be expanded to incorporate worldwide social and economic upheavals as well as trends

in economic restructuring at the national and regional level. Understanding of the local housing patterns depends on the understanding of the global inequalities of income and life chances. Hence, global and holistic awareness certainly prescribes a cure for any tendencies towards narrow empiricism. It also raises deeper questions that how local pattern reflects global influences.

## 5.4 Concentration and Centralization

Concentration is a process of urban society which is very obvious. It occurs due to large rate of the immigration of rural population towards the city. This rural-urban or even urban-urban migration leads to a higher concentration of population in the city with a variable demographic composition. A higher concentration of population further results in higher social interactions but is also characterised by superficial relationship or anonymity, pressure on available infrastructure etc. The fast growing population-density of cities is one significant indicator of the process of concentration.

The tendency is towards localisation of economic activity in and around a relatively small number of urban centres. This condition is also referred to as polarisation or agglomeration about which you learnt in the first Block, Unit 2 as well. It arises from the spatial concentration of the market, sources of information, bases for control and decision-making, interactivity linkages and other external economies. Concentration and centralization increases the disadvantages of peripheral locations and contribute to the economic and social deprivation commonly found with greater distance from the core.

### Reflection and Action 5.2

Visit a residential colony in your city/town or village. Find out the composition of population living in this colony in terms of language, culture, caste/class or ethnic background. Write an essay on "Urban Space and Socio-Cultural Roots" of about two pages.

Discuss your essay with your friends or fellow students at your Study Centre.

Ethnic concentration exhibits another significant aspect of urban society. It is viewed both as a general process of residential differentiation among urban populations and as an aggregate effect of socio-economic and cultural differences. A number of studies have shown that ethnic groups vary considerably in the degree of their residential concentration. Residential proximity to persons of the same ethnic origin provides one important means of preserving familial cultural values and preferred modes of behaviour. For instance – Chittarajan Park, in New Delhi has a concentration of Bengali population. The Muslim population in Old Delhi and Punjabi migrants in Lajpat Nagar in New Delhi are a few examples of ethnic concentration of population.

Spatial concentration and centralization are associated with the tendency for economic activity to be organised in units of increasing size and within



a hierarchical organisational structure. The growing concentration of ownership of capitalist business activity was evident during the nineteenth century, decades before the contemporary emergence of the multinational or transactional corporation. The largest capitalist corporation of today may have productive capacity and sales outlets in many different nations, but ownership and control remains vested in the headquarters that are usually located within one of the major financial centres of Europe or North America. Concentration of capital in a non-spatial sense, i.e. in the hands of fewer large owners, is an important feature of advanced capitalism and a source of concentration of political as well as economic power which transcends that of nation-states. The associated geographical concentration of certain kinds of economic activity facilitates the flow of capital between different uses and the pace of circulation and the turnover on which profit depends.

**Box 5:1: Physical Growth and Spatial Pattern : Bombay**

“The British town of Bombay was built in the South Western part of Bombay Island (Composed of seven separate islands), adjoining the harbour. Its nucleus was Bombay Castle, which was the centre of administration, defence, and supervision of trade. The broad divisions of the Town were the Southern Section occupied by European merchants, and the northern section occupied by Indian merchants. The rest of the island was largely rural, and contained, apart from the town of Mahim in the north, only small hamlets and villages”.

(Rao, M.S.A., Bhat C. and Kadekar, L.N. (ed.) 1991 : pp. 160)

## 5.5 Segregation

Segregation is also an important ecological process to understand social institutions and social groups in urban society. It refers to a process in which urban population becomes more and more divided into various social groups in terms of income status, social status (ethnicity, class) and other criteria. This division is due to spatial isolation and rearrangement of the residential pattern. Residential segregation is quite an observable phenomenon, which further widens the social distance among various localities. There is ample literature available on residential segregation in cities, the largest cities have commonly appeared among the most segregated areas. Therefore, the greater the degree of differences between the spatial distributions of groups within an urban area, the greater their social distance from each other.

Segregation is taking place also due to increasing acceptance of market based land and basic services. This tends to price out the poor and marginalized from better off localities.

Such unevenness might be primarily tenurial, with differences in the types of accommodation occupied, that is further reflected in spatial manifestations. The chances of direct person to person interaction with different kinds of people giving rise to more/less welcome ‘message exchanges’ and influences on behaviour has been one of the traditional

motives for segregation. De-facto segregation may emerge for quite other reasons, but its interest as a phenomenon lies in the fact that residential proximity creates a range of externalities, both positive and negative which people try to make the best of, in part through decisions about where they live.

#### Box 5.1: School Drop outs and Residential Locality

“The suggestion of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI) to make mathematics and English optional so that they do not count for promotion in secondary school would be music to many an ear. The recommendation is not baseless.

It is based on the survey by the elementary education department of the HRD ministry. Student dropouts suddenly increase after class V when clearing all exams becomes a condition for promotion. The survey gives a break-up of sections of society who drop out. The leading dropouts are educationally weaker sections like Muslims, STs, SCs, and OBCs in descending order. Upper castes constitute only about 4 per cent. The figures challenge the stereotype that low scores are obtained by those born with low IQ.

Why do weaker sections account for most of the poor scores in English and Mathematics? A domestic help from a resettlement colony in East Delhi—illiterate, SC and mother of four children—once said, “It all depends on where you live. My brother-in-law lives in Chanakyapuri and his son has a permanent job in the Supreme Court, earning Rs. 6,000 a month. His job is simply to inform lawyers about the list of cases coming up the next day. But none of my children could study and find a permanent job, because we’ve been living in Trilokpuri”. Locality could play a major role in low examination scores.”

(Quotation from Prof. Tulsi Patels. “Do Aur Do Panch” in The Times of India, New Delhi, Tuesday 11 July, 2006.)

This has been observed through various studies on residential segregation in cities, particularly in the US and much of it is focused on the issue of race. It is also reported that the largest cities have commonly appeared among the list of most segregated areas (Massey and Denton, -1993). In other words segregation implies the uneven distribution of different population groups within a local or regional housing system. Such unevenness might be primarily tenurial, with differences in the types of accommodation occupied as a result of spatial segregation. However, there is spectrum of spatial association varying from complete similarity at the one end, to complete differences at the other end.

Robert Park viewed that social relations are inevitably correlated with spatial relations. The degree of residential segregation is directly correlated to social distance. Human ecologists attribute to the spatial distributions of human populations and social institutions is not only widely known but also often misunderstood by many social scientists.

The features of segregation were also observable in pre-industrial cities. Gideon Sjoberg traces the rigid social segregation from Fez, Morocco, Aleppo, Syria, which typically had led to formation of quarters or wards. The quarters reflect sharp local social divisions. The ethnic groups live in special sections. The occupational groupings, some being at the same time ethnic in character, typically reside apart from one another. Often a special street or sector is occupied almost exclusively by members of a particular trade. Sjoberg also cites examples from medieval Europe and modern Afghanistan, which contained streets with names like street of the goldsmiths and outcastes group live on cities' periphery.

Segregation represents a set of processes constraining individuals' location decisions, whatever their cause. Urban society has been segregated in terms of language, culture and ethnicity.

All the ecological processes explained above depict general urban social structure and dynamics. These patterns invariably turn out to be a constellation of typical urban areas. The process of 'succession and invasion' is the core concern of Burgess' concentric zone model whereas 'concentration and centralization' describes differential growth pattern as a result of economic activity. Above all, segregation is the most significant concept in sociological analysis of urban space. It existed worldwide and perpetuated social inequality in terms of caste, class, occupation etc. Thus, the growth of the cities is not only an addition of numbers but also the incidental changes and movements that are invariably associated with differential social groupings in terms of socio-cultural factors.

## 5.7 Conclusion

The development of urban sociological theory has played a significant role to understand urban social structure, its morphology and changes with time and space. The study of the city and its social relationships in a social setting has passed through different stages—the evolutionary approach, dichotomous approach (ideal typical perspective), and the ecological approach. The development of the ecological proposition is one of the first comprehensive analysis of the urban community. However, it has evolved very much with modifications of earlier theories on the subject. Human ecological theory has been thus characterised above all approaches by its emphasis on equilibrium and evolutionary nature of change. The contribution of Robert Park is a turning point in this direction as he has focused on the study of social life in urban space. He viewed settled human space and its spatial relationship with particular focus on residence, businesses, various other institutions, transportation and communication facilities. Further this approach developed by the empirical studies of E. W. Burgess, R. D. Mckenzie, Loius Wirth, Robert Redfield and several others.

Like other theories, the ecological approach too has its limitations. It has been criticized for its belief that urban growth moves by automatic force or that it has organismic bias. Secondly, it has been criticised for its statistical use of ecological correlation and individual correlation. Despite these limitations, it is an important reference. Chicago School remained a

great laboratory to understand urban phenomenon. Particularly in post-world war period the work of Duncan (1959) and Howley (1950) proved its significance. Howley has constructed a dynamic model of ecosystem theory. His analysis of adaptation is developed around the four ecological principles of interdependence, key functions, differentiations and dominance. He argues that these principles are themselves derived and justified from certain 'cardinal assumptions' concerning the invariant conditions in which human populations are situated. Hence the human ecological model is still an influential paradigm in contemporary urban sociology.

## 5.7 Further Reading

Wirth, Louis (1938). Urbanism is a way of life, *American journal of sociology*, volume-44 pp. 1-24.

McKenzie, R. (1967). The Ecological Approach to the Study of the Human Community, in Robert Park and E. Burgess *The City*, London, University of Chicago Press.