

# Unit 9

## Typologies of Cities

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### Learning Objectives

After studying this unit you should be able to:

- describe the emergence and growth of city from the ancient times to the contemporary period;
- discuss some of the major types of cities in general;
- explain the classification of cities according to the census i.e., based on population; and
- describe the historical traces of city types found through a period of time.

## 9.1 Introduction

Cities and towns have become dominant features of spatial landscape, laying down a framework of human existence throughout the world. In the developed world presently, the transformation from rural to urban life-styles occurred during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The role of cities and towns has been important in the development, maintenance and expansion of all great civilisations throughout recorded history. Thus cities have held a central role in the political, social and cultural life of almost all parts of the world and in almost all stages of human history.

## 9.2 City: Emergence and Growth

The growth of cities unleashed revolutionary changes. There emerged several towns and cities which were the main place for the rulers and the tradesmen in those times. Towns and cities are of many kinds—temple towns, garrison towns, seaports, political capitals or administrative towns, resort centres, industrial cities, trading centres, and other types of cities. The company towns are a unique kind of community which has nearly disappeared. Most large cities are diversified, carrying out a number of activities simultaneously.

Modern Indian cities have generally undergone a well defined socio-historical growth process. Though the origin of cities permit a great deal of speculation, by associating it with colonial period or modernisation, it transcends the realm of speculation. It is to be viewed through a definite

framework both as a dynamic social process as well as a result of specific social trends. These specific social trends were unleashed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the rise of scientific technology and the accumulation of capital took place. In the colonial period the urban centres were used as the suppliers of number of raw materials as well as the consumers of foreign products. The old urban centres went through transformations; some became solely military centres, while others were filled with the labour force and industries. However, all the features of the western cities are not seen in Indian urban areas, even though their growth coincided with the growth of large scale industrial and modern capitalism.

According to Adna Weber, concentration of people into cities was a product of the economic forces which were becoming significant with the industrial revolution, which introduced changes such as steam power, mechanization, and trade and commerce etc. The political causes of the emergence of cities were as follows:

- i) Legislation on promoting freedom of trade.
- ii) Legislation promoting freedom of migration.
- iii) Centralised administration with its location of persons in civic centres.
- iv) Free forms of land tenure politically defended in the city.

The social causes were as follows:

- i) Education.
- ii) Amusements.
- iii) Higher standards of living.
- iv) Attraction of intellectual association.
- v) Habituation of an urban environment.
- vi) Diffusion of knowledge of the values of city life.

In ancient India there were no great differences between a village and a town. Some essential conditions and requirements gave rise to towns and cities in India. The first and foremost factor among them is the availability of water. Second, the place must offer good possibilities of defence. The third essential condition was the easy supply of foodstuffs. Finally, communication lines were also a factor determining the fortune of the city. In the third millennium BC, the first probable urban civilisation emerged in India in the Indus valley with Mohanjodaro and Harappa as the most elaborate urban forms. According to Gordon the foundation of the city of Mohanjodaro was laid around 2600 BC. Then the Aryan version of urbanisation took its roots around 600 B.C. During the times of the Mahabharat, there were a number of cities like Hastinapura, Indraprastha, Mathura, Kanayakubja and cities like Kashi and Kausambi. Urbanisation during the Mughal period spread out all the way from north to south, east to west. In the colonial period the urban upsurge in India began after the First World War. The three major port towns,—Calcutta, Bombay and Madras owe their existence to these developments.

### 9.3 Cities and Their Types

If we are talking about the types of cities, one can say that there is no absolute classification system for cities. All classifications are only relative, there can be no single typification of city which is exclusive. Also there are

several types of characteristics found in a single city. Several cities fit in more than one category. Thus once we classify any city we have to see as to which of its feature is most important. We must bear in mind that the classification of types of cities has been done on the basis of the most fundamental or most important and crucial aspect of the city. On the basis of prominent or significant feature of a city we determine which type it is. Suppose a city is an administrative center and also a capital city, then we have to see which activity or character of the city is most important. For example, the city of Hyderabad is considered important as software city. It is also the capital city of Andhra Pradesh state. But as regards its prominent character, then we consider the city as software hub rather than the capital city.

On the other hand some cities are big production centres naturally. Thus we can say that in modern times it is very difficult to find a pure type of city. On the basis of some broad criteria Noel P Gist and L.A. Helbert have classified cities. According to them cities are of the following types:

- i) Production centres.
- ii) Centre of trade and commerce.
- iii) Capitals and administrative centres.
- iv) Health and recreation centres.
- v) Religious and cultural centres.
- vi) Diversified cities.

#### **i) Production Centres**

We know that most of the cities emerged as a result of the development of industries and industrial production. In modern times also one of the important reasons for the growth of cities is the process of industrialisation. This is evident from the fact that the industrial revolution in the modern era is associated not only with the industries only but with the urban revolution as well. In India most of the large cities are also industrial and the production centres. Production centres can be further classified into two broad types: (a) primary production centres, and (b) secondary production centres. The primary production centres are those where primary products for industries are being obtained. They are mainly the suppliers of raw materials. The persons living in these centres are directly or indirectly involved in the production of the raw materials. Some examples of these cities are Nellore, Kolar, and Bareilly. In secondary production centres most of the final products come into existence. Most of the centres of production are included in this category. In these types of cities the population is very large and it keeps growing day by day, for example Mumbai, Chennai, Aligarh, Gwalior, Moradabad etc.

#### **ii) Centres of Trade and Commerce**

In some cities and towns the trade and commerce is the dominant activity. In these cities the production is a secondary activity. A typical example is Mumbai where though production is an important activity, trade and commerce is the most important activity. By and large, the cities which are connected with sea routes are important centres of trade and commerce. The important ports of India are Calicut, Cochin, Visakhapatnam, Calcutta, Kakinada, Muslipatnam, Tuticorin, Chennai etc. While it is true that the ports are usually the centres of trade and commerce, it is by no means always the case.

### iii) Capitals and Administrative Centres

The capital of a state is normally a big city which has seen much growth. These cities are important due to the power centre that exist in them. Indeed once a place is made the capital, business and industry are but the sequel of the main fact of its being the capital. Before the process of industrialisation and globalisation, the capital cities were the most important cities of the world.

### iv) Health and Recreation Centres

Many towns and cities are famous for their beautiful and healthy climate. In general, the towns situated near the sea-coast and the hill stations are health recreation centres. Hill towns are cool in the summer and so tourists rush towards them during this period. In order to attract more tourists to such places, municipal and state authorities do lots of beautification work. In almost every state of India, there are one or more important hill resorts. The livelihood of the people of these places greatly depends upon tourism.

### v) Religious and Cultural Centres

In India where religious sentiments dominate, many towns have become famous and developed into big cities due to their prominence as a religious centre. For example, Allahabad or Prayag, Kashi or Benaras, etc. All the towns situated near the holy rivers have the religious importance. Apart from that, we know that India is a multi-religious country, and every religion has at least one or two important religious centres. For example, Amritsar is regarded as the holy city of the Sikhs. Ajmer is a place of pilgrimage for Muslims. Similarly, among Hindus, Varanasi or Benaras, Kashi, Haridwar, Ayodhya, Tirupati, Rameswaram, Puri etc are holy places. Similarly, Bodh Gaya is holy for Buddhists. Apart from the religious significance there are many cities which are important for the historical sites and monuments like the Taj Mahal in Agra, the Qutab Minar in Delhi. Bijapur is famous for its Gol Gumbad or the circular towers, and Chittorgarh for its victory towers. Nalanda and Taxila are famous for their ancient universities which are now in ruins. Pondicherry is famous for its Aurobindo Ashram.

### vi) Diversified Cities

Besides the cities which fit into one or the other of the above categories, there are some towns which fit into none of these categories. For example, they may be holy but the fundamental reason for their eminence is not holiness. They may also be the capital cities but their fundamental reason for growth may be other factors. Thus, it will not be correct to put them into some specific category. Such towns and cities are accordingly referred to as the diversified towns.

### Some Other Classifications

Apart from the above classifications there are some thinkers who have classified cities according to their different characteristics such as their basis of development, establishment, and law etc. Camille Rosier has classified the cities according to their creation and establishment. According to him cities are of two broad types. They are:

- i) Natural cities.
- ii) Created cities.

Natural cities are those which have evolved in the due process of time due to their strategic and natural location. They are primarily the ancient cities which we have already explained in our above analysis. On the other

hand, created cities are established by us for some special requirement. They are normally new cities. As civilisation progresses the process of industrialisation too has taken place in them. The created cities are the result of this process of industrialisation. The examples of created cities are Jamshedpur, Rourkela, Bangalore, Bokaro, Coimbatore etc.

Apart from the above classifications we can also classify cities according to the time periods in India. They are as follows:

#### i) Ancient City

Ancient cities have their own characteristics. The nature of the city was largely dependent on the causes of its development. According to Anderson, ancient cities have the following characteristic features. First of all most of the cities were ruling centres. Thus these cities were army oriented. If there was any trade practised, it was to serve the large standing armies of the ruler or the state. The authorities were mainly concerned about the needs of the army and the state. The main responsibility of the social authority was the construction of the walls and buildings and the organisation of the army. Favourable climatic conditions were the important reason for the growth of these cities. That is why in India most of the cities are situated on the banks of the major rivers and on the seashore. In ancient times, favourable agricultural conditions were mainly responsible for the development, growth and establishment of cities. The ancient cities were mainly political capitals and rulers and their ruled mainly lived in them. They were the main education centres and the places of learning. In India there are approximately 45 towns and cities which have been classified as ancient cities and they have a historical past. One thing remarkable about these historical cities is that they have a religious and cultural background.

#### ii) Medieval City

Medieval cities were basically trade centres and mainly served the interest of the trading communities like merchants and rich businessmen. Its population was well defined and, consisted of trading people and their dependents and ancillaries. A large number of these towns developed on the sea shores. The medieval towns and cities were largely dependent on the rural areas for their different needs and purposes. The political structures of these cities and towns were autocratic in nature. Social life in these cities was largely conventional. During this period the local ruler, who himself was a major landowner, tended to invite merchants, artisans, administrators, and professionals to settle in his fortress headquarter towns. These tradesmen and professionals were landless and dependend on the ruler for protection. Not being tied to the land, they had great mobility which they could use as leverage against the ruler in case of oppression or excessive taxation. The towns and cities during this period constituted hinges linking vertically the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy with the higher ones. Their main role was to act as military headquarters in the basic antagonistic relations with neighbouring towns, most of which were at the same hierarchical level.

#### Reflection and Action 9.1

Write down some of the major features of the city/town where you live. If you live in a village, describe the features of the nearest district town. From the dominant features of this city/town, mention which type of city/town it is in about two pages.

Compare your essay with those of other students at your Study Centre.

### iii) Modern City

Modern cities in India emerged during the colonial period. They have a large population and there is social heterogeneity. The modern cities are commercial centres. They have elected governments which have specialised functions and very complicated organisations. The modern cities are cosmopolitan in character. These have a large population who are engaged in the service sectors and other related activities which were not seen in the old cities. They are the fashion hubs. In modern cities there are large numbers of voluntary organisations which serve the needs of the large number of people. Social mobility is one of the most important features of the modern cities. In these cities we find many diverse groups and each group represents a different culture of its own. As already stated, the livelihood of the city people is greatly dependent on the service sector and the industrial sector and thus they are not at all dependent on agriculture and farming. The modern city represents a modern lifestyle and modern ethos. The lifestyle of the people is quite different from the rural counterparts. Modern cities have the best means of communication and transportation. Apart from this there are modern health facilities existing in these cities.

## 9.4 Classification of Towns and UAs (Urban Agglomerations) According to Census

- i) Class I (100,000 and more population)
- ii) Class II (50,000 to 99,999 population)
- iii) Class III (20,000 to 49,999 population)
- iv) Class IV (10,000 to 19,999 population)
- v) Class V (5000 to 9999 population)
- vi) Class VI (less than 5000 population).

The Census in India divides the towns and cities into six types according to population. The population of 100,000 or above in a place is kept under a city category. In this way there are 423 cities in India according to the census of 2001. In other words there are 423 class I cities in India. An urban place which contains less than one lakh population is termed as a town in India according to the census. There are 498 towns and urban locations which have a population ranging from 50,000 to 99,999. Similarly, there are 1386 towns and urban areas which have population ranging from 20,000 to 49,999 and 1560 towns have a population ranging from 10,000 to 19,999 persons.

Within these cities, the city which has a population between one to five million is a metropolitan city. Most of these metropolitan cities are called urban agglomerations. According to the census definition an urban agglomeration is one which exhibits the following characteristics. These are:

- i) A town and its adjoining urban outgrowths.
- ii) Two or more similar towns with or without their outgrowth.
- iii) A city and one or more ancillary cities or towns with their outgrowths together forming a similar spread.

Within one decade i.e., from 1991 to 2001 the number of cities and urban agglomerations have increased from 23 to 35. Greater Mumbai has the largest urban agglomerations consisting 16.4 million people. In these cities the total number of persons who reside is 107.88 million according to the 2001 census. The population which resides in the metropolitan and class I cities are about 65 per cent of the total urban population. Within class I cities, 23 cities with a million or more population claims 51 percent of the population. This is also indicative of the high rate of concentration of urban population in large cities, further deepening the urban-rural divide. Most of the class III and class IV towns are growing quite rapidly, while class V and class VI cities have declined. If we take the share of urban population accounted for each class of towns, we find that all classes except class I has lost or declined. The main reason for this is the concentration of industrial and commercial activities in large cities and also due to the pathetic condition of rural development. In the absence of any meaningful employment opportunities in rural areas, people have no choice but to move to cities and towns. Among the 35, million plus cities of India, six are termed as mega cities i.e., cities with more than 5 million population as mentioned in Unit 3 of Block 1. They together account for almost one fourth of the total population living in class I cities of India, and rest of the cities have population of all the remaining million cities of the country.

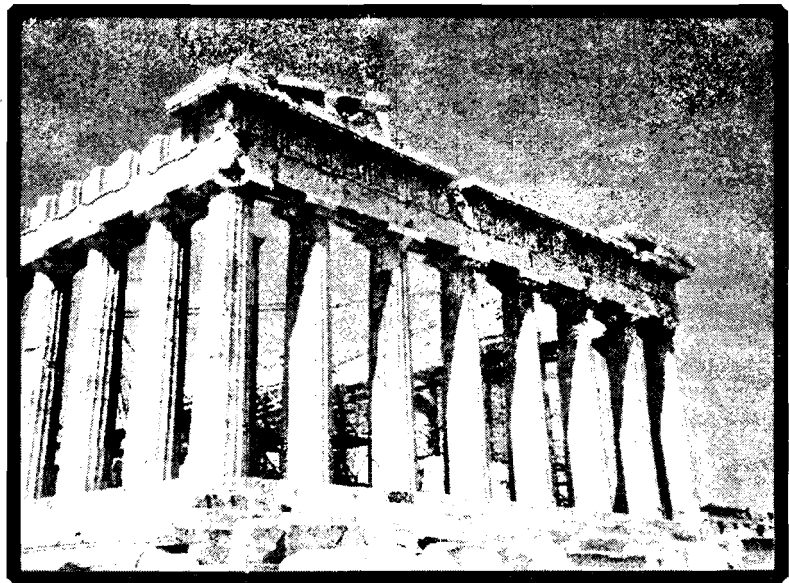
## 9.5 Historical Traces of City Types

### The First Cities

The very first city developed in the wake of the agricultural revolution of the Neolithic period. The very first city marked a great deal of change in human settlement. Before any city to evolve a number of preconditions had to be met. One of the first and foremost precondition was the agricultural production and food surplus. There should be surplus of food in order to feed the large population of these cities. The creation of the food surplus also requires a class of people who could be able to exercise power and authority over the food producers. One of the important features of the first cities was that they were the locus of power. Trade was the most important function of these cities. Most of the large cities have grown on trading routes. Paul Wheatley has identified seven areas of primary urbanisation: Mesopotamia, the Indus valley, the Nile valley, the North China plain, Mesoamerica, Central Andes, and South West Nigeria. Here primary urbanisation means those areas of urbanisation which were generated through internal forces and not through secondary forces and through the diffusion of the other urban parts. According to Mumford, the very first urban settlements grew up in Mesopotamia between the two rivers Euphrates and Tigris. Most of the cities during this period were walled and well protected. The city walls were an important division between protected and unprotected sites. These walls were also the reflection of the areas under control of certain regime. Grouped around the city centres were the ruling elites. The central area of the city was the site of the palace housing which was the apex of the social hierarchy and the granary, the community store house, and the temples. In these cities the place of religion was very important. Religion in its various guises provided the justification for the *status quo*. In other words religion provided the cement binding the urban society.

## The Classical City

The classical cities were the first real cities of the world. For example, the city of classical Greece, evokes admiration as well as wonder. The Greek urban culture and civilisation of the first millennium BC has been a cultural yardstick with which later civilisations have measured and modelled themselves. The Greek city emerged during the dark ages (1200-900BC). The Greek dark ages officially end in 776 BC and at that time the first Olympic Games took place. After the end of the Dark Age, there emerged a number of city states which were ruled by aristocrats. Within these city states there were a strong political struggle. Politics was dominated by a few rich merchants. Women and slaves were not allowed to vote. The classical Greek experience was an explicitly urban one, so the main theme of political debates was only the urban administration. In the course of time the form and structure of the Greek city changed. When the city states emerged during this period, the population was around 20,000, with poor sanitation and no clear cut plan. The cities during the classical period were built around sacred hills-and acropolis which provided religious significance as well as good defensive positions. Many houses grew up around the hills, which produced a mazy pattern of unplanned streets winding around public and private buildings. As time passed there came the concept of urban planning and management. The new towns were constructed on the principle of grid square, with standardised city planning. The Romans were able to extend the Greek urban tradition all over the world. Thus, we can say that the classical cities were the ground on which later on various improved versions of cities were built according to the needs of the period and the needs of the people.



The Greek Acropolis

## The Merchant City

Merchant cities were the cities which were able to transform Europe from feudal to an urban society. Up to the end of the first millennium AD Western Europe was a feudal and rural society. The people worked on the land and practised agriculture in most of the feudal societies. The peasants had to surrender their surplus produce and labour power to the local feudal lords. Feudal Europe was a slow and backward small scale society. In this era towns and cities emerged as trading centres and for small scale



industries. With the growth of trade and commerce from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries the merchant cities had grown up simultaneously. The feudal fortress gathered around its wall groups of dwellings, and towns provided the homes for priests, prelates, deacons and acolytes kept alive by church tithes (taxes) and wealthy endowments, but the merchant towns became the centre of activity. The merchants congregated in space and in economic enterprises.

The growth of trade also saw the growth of the merchants as a class. The merchants thus started living in the cities and towns. By the 12<sup>th</sup> century the old feudal towns were swamped by the aggressive merchant towns and cities where the market place and the rich merchant's houses were jostling with the dwellings of the aristocracy in the urban landscape. The growing towns thus attracted expanding industries. An urban location provided a better place for supply of the products and their easier sales and consumption. In this period the most important industries were clothing industries. The early industries formed associations of producers called guilds. These medieval guilds regulated entry into the professions and controlled the supply of various finished products. This city type was also the important part of the culture. The cradle of the renaissance in Europe was the merchant cities of Southern Europe. With the growth of trade the need for money and banking arose. As trade moved beyond the simple exchange of commodities, there arose a need for a universal medium of exchange. Thus with the growth of the trade and practice of money and the role of finance capital also arose. In Europe, the first merchant cities were the Hanseatic League towns in the north and Geneva, Venice, Milan and Florence in the south. The towns relied on the surrounding areas for the supply of food and the rural areas and agricultural hinterlands were dependent on the markets of these towns. Thus, we can say that there was an economic symbiosis between town and country. The cities were the rich places for trade and commerce and had immense wealth and there lived many rich merchants. Within the merchant cities there was the development of trading and market areas and the development of distinct residential areas. In this city type the urban land day by day became a valuable commodity. In the era of merchant cities systems of cities developed, grew and declined according to the changing patterns of trade. So we can say that the fate of any single city hung on the threads of trade. Thus, we can conclude that the merchant cities were a transitional category from rural feudalism to urban industrial capitalism. It grew up in a feudal period but paved the ground for a different society which was a whole new social order.

### The Industrial City

As we have seen above, the merchant cities paved the way for the industrial city growth and development. This development was an important ingredient for the industrial revolution all over the world. In this period factory production was the most important and most significant development. The industrial cities were distinct from the merchant cities in one most important respect, which was the introduction of the factory production. By concentrating production in factories the owners reduced production costs and increased profits. Factories were set up near the sources of power. At that time the main source of power or energy was coal. In this process of factory production, several cities grew up which we can see even now. In this process of industrial revolution the first industrial cities grew in Britain, which was the first country to experience the The industrial cities were fast growing cities and alarming pace and speed. We can understand

this fact with the example of Manchester which was an industrial city in England. Its population in 1760 was 17,000 and by the year of 1830, it had increased to 180,000. We can thus see a strong connection between industrialisation and the process of urbanisation. Actually, it was the process of urbanisation which paved the way for industrialisation, as the growth of the merchant cities showed the way to industrialisation. This holds true for the other parts of the world too. Other countries industrialisation process too went through many of these stages. The population of these industrial cities had alarmingly grown during the industrial period. The nature and character of these industrial cities were entirely different from other old city types. There grew side by side, a number of unhygienic and slum areas in these cities. The old social norms became weak and the old family and kinship ties either broke down or became loose in the process of the new city life. There also grew many social evils which were not witnessed during earlier periods.

The industrial cities consisted of a central area in which the factories and railway yards exist. Encircling this industrial and business core were the poor housing areas of the mass of the workers. Around the slums, along with the factory and the railway yards, there were the houses of the wealthier class who sought to escape from the unhygienic condition and the noise of the central business districts. The city thus became dense and populated coupled with all types of social evils during this period of its evolution. The shadow or exposure of the city covered wide areas. The rural-urban distinction could be made easily in the industrial cities. Thus the industrial cities were marked with the characteristics of the modern city which we witness during our times. The pace of growth stretched the existing infrastructure to its limits and beyond. Pollution increased in these cities due to industries without industrial waste management. These cities, therefore, had several negative aspects like development of slums, lack of infrastructure, unhygienic conditions, disparity between rich and poor, congestion, crime and delinquency.

#### Reflection and Action 9.2

From your own imagination write about a virtual city of the future based on science and technology in about two pages. If possible, you may even give a sketch of this type of city.

Share your essay with other students at your Study Centre.

#### Post-Industrial City (a future construct)

Cities are agglomerations as you have learnt so far. The reason for their growth was the need of the people and their activities who reside within their limits. The industrial cities grew as stated, as a result of the industrial revolution. Now in advanced countries there may be two trends which can affect the future form of city. The first trend is the replacement of manufacturing is the information processing stage. The second is the advance in telecommunications. In the contemporary period face to face communication does not require physical proximity it is possible through other means, such as, through internet, mobile etc. Industrial houses do not require establishing their offices in a particular city only. The post-industrial city in a way will be no more a city. People may be located anywhere across the surface of the earth in their respective houses. Expansion of the service sector of the economy and development of Call Centres, for example, are all evidence of this factor,

## 9.6 Conclusion

On the basis of the above types of cities we may conclude that no single system of classification can truly depict the varied features of the cities. But these classification and typologies help us to understand the general character of a city. If we consider the Indian city or for instance any European city, we can see more than one type in a single city. So in a strict sense we cannot give an accurate and precise typology of the cities. The maximum that we can do is to categorise them on the basis of their broad features. Most of the Indian cities are administrative centres of high, intermediate or low levels. But side by side they are also religious and cultural centres. The religious cities also happen to be where large scale production is also going on. So no typification system can be pure. Not long ago, a city was easy to define. In olden days it had a defensive wall around it. In due course, the wall was scaled and the city spread to adjoining areas. Delhi is a good example of this kind of city. Their functions thus also get diversified according to the changed time and changed needs of the people. So a single city may exhibit the character and nature of more than one type of city.

## 9.7 Further Reading

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