



Department of Geography, Environmental Management and Energy Studies

GR3BFET – URBAN GEOGRAPHY

Date: 23 October 2020

Total: 50 Marks

Time: 2 hours

Lecturer: Ms L STOCKIGT

Moderator: Mr JJ Gregory

You have 2 hours to complete this test once you have started it. You must be very careful to use your own words throughout the paper. All answers have to be written as full sentences and paragraphs; any answers written as bullet points will not be marked. You need to provide evidence of your own insights and understanding of the supporting resources given to you (slides, videos and the reading materials provided throughout the term) however this is NOT an open book test and you may not access these sources during the test.

QUESTION 1 [10]

1.1 Discuss Childe's (1950) ten characteristics of an urban civilization. (10)

Primary characteristics:

1. Size and density of cities - Enlargement of an organized population meant a wider level of social integration.
2. Full time specialization of labour - Specialization of production amongst workers was institutionalized and distribution/exchange systems were established
3. Concentration of surplus - Social means for the collection and management of surplus production of farmers and artisans
4. Class-structured society - A privileged ruling class of religious, political and military personnel. Organized and directed society
5. State organization - Well-structured political organization with membership based on residence that replaced political identification based on kinship

Secondary characteristics:

6. Monumental public works - Collective enterprises in the form of temples, palaces, irrigation systems
7. Long distance trade - Specialization and exchange were expanded beyond the city in the development of trade
8. Standardized monumental art work - Highly developed art forms gave expression to symbolic identification and aesthetic enjoyment
9. Writing - The art of writing facilitated the process of social organization and management
10. Arithmetic geometry and astronomy- Exact, predictive science and engineering were initiated

QUESTION 2 [15]

2.1 Discuss the characteristics of world cities and explain their role in globalisation and the global economy. (15)

- World cities are the apex of the global urban hierarchy
- We will inquire what constitutes a world city in the contemporary world
- Have a critical understanding of world-cities research
- Think about the relationship between globalization and urbanization
- External factors have long affected cities – the processes and outcomes of urban change has grown increasingly transnational.
- Cities all over the world are experiencing similar economic, cultural and spatial changes – and this lies at the heart of the “globalization-urbanization nexus”.
- World cities are those that function as primary hubs for global networks of business firms, financial institutions (non)governmental organizations and migrants.
- The “central places where the work of globalization gets done”.
- Globalisation simultaneously causes and reflects changes in the economies, cultures, politics and geographies of world cities
- This notion reinforced the idea that world cities – not nation states – are the basic units of analysis for globalization

Ultimately should highlight the fact that global cities are the key sites of globalisation, where it actually takes place. Should highlight both the positive and negative aspects of the relationship between global cities and globalisation.

QUESTION 3 [25]

4.1 Discuss the main epistemological developments of urban geography and the search for common ground. Conclude with your opinion on which of these developments you believe to be most important and why. (25)

1. Environmentalism

- Relationship of people and the environment, new social dimension. Look into intentions and how people make use of space

2. Positivism

- Scientific method, statistical
- Criticism - Positivist approaches neglected underlying causal processes and there was a switch towards the study of social relations in cities.

3. Behaviouralism

- Highlighted the role of cognitive processes and decision making in the relationship between the urban environment and peoples spatial behaviour.
- Criticized for retaining methodology of positivism.

4. Humanism

- This approach views the individual as a purposeful agent of change in the city rather than a passive respondent to external stimuli.
- Ethnography as methodology
- Criticized for placing excessive power of individual agency

5. Structuralism

- Cities are viewed as integral part of capitalist mode of production and an environment of capital accumulation.
- Critics attack the emphasis attached to class divisions in society

6. Postmodernism

- The focus of postmodernism is on difference, uniqueness and individuality and the need to study urban phenomena from multiple viewpoints.

- Major criticism directed towards this approach is the apparent unlimited relativism. There are no limits to the range of possible interpretations of any situation.

7. Transnationalism

- The approach illuminates the commonality within the diversity of our urban world.
- Role of globalisation on urbanism – migration and transfers of culture

8. Postcolonialism

- The postcolonial stance critically looks at the after-effects of colonialism.
- There is a need to understand cities from both ‘colonising’ and ‘colonised’ states. Diversity of the urban experience

9. Moral philosophy

- Critical evaluations of actual situations against normative conditions as defined by ethical principles
- Ethnocentrism risks of sharing all worldviews as important

10. In search of common ground

- Each of the major philosophical perspectives considered illuminate some part of the complex dynamics and structure of the city, but no single approach can provide a full explanation of urban phenomena
- Various combinations of the different approaches – looking for a middle ground
- Important to employ a multi-layered ‘realist’ perspective that encompass the global and local scales, social structure and human agency with both theoretical and empirical investigations

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