

INTRODUCTION

1. Introducing the Theme: The Theoretical Concepts.

Fascination with the city is not new. It has existed throughout history. It is as ancient as the origin of the city itself and it can be found in the folk wisdom as well as the sophisticated social and political conjecture of the majority of civilizations. This obsession with the city- to be more precise ,with its singularity, with its strengths along with weaknesses, with its difference from the countryside can be found in all civilizations as diverse as the Roman, Jewish, , Christian, Hellenistic, Chinese, Indian, and Islamic.¹ The moment we hear the word City we start to associate certain physical characteristics such as closed agglomerations, big shopping complexes, sky scrapers, multiplexes, wide roads etc. the city becomes a physical entity. In addition to being a physical entity, a city is also a functional entity where economic, political and administrative activities are carried out. In cities, a large volume of trade, commerce and financial services is carried out, offices of enterprise groups, government offices and main units of administrative bodies are also located, which supports business opportunities. In addition to being a physical or functional entity, a city is also a social entity. Cities are heterogeneous places where people from diverse social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds live in close proximity. We can also say that cities are also a place of social reproduction, comprising the myriad interwoven behaviours and activities of its inhabitants and communities, each of which exhibits idiosyncratic lifestyle preferences and characteristics. Innovations in science, technology and communication are first experienced in cities and then carried elsewhere, whether in steam engines, automobiles, the Internet or telephones or laptops. Each location grows in space, density, facilities and complexity over time. Each of the cities has its own history of growth (spatial and demographic) and development. Therefore, in a temporal sense, every city also has a story.

¹ Ellis, Joyce, John Walton, and Anthony Sutcliffe. "SN Eisenstadt and A. Shachar, Society, Culture and Urbanization. Newbury Park: Sage, 1987, 391pp." *Urban History* 17 (1990): 214-215.

Historians as well as the social scientists have conventionally linked the ‘Urban Revolution’ i.e. the emergence of towns and cities and urban means of living with modernity and progress. Early cities were considered as incubators of the socio-political institutions and technologies that made the rise of history’s great civilizations possible as discussed in the works of Gordon Childe², G. Sjoberg³, Mumford⁴, K. Davis⁵, L.W. Pye ⁶ and for thousands of years towns and cities also served as the nerve centres of expanding political communities and economic networks as argued in the works of Ferdinand Braudel⁷, P. Bairoch⁸ and more recently J. Abu-Lughod⁹. The growth and expansion of cities began as the Industrial Revolution gained momentum in European countries. Thus the European experience of urbanisation is considered as the reference point for researchers seeking to understand the processes of ‘City Development’ as a whole and organic.

This thesis looks at the spatial, locational, economic, physical, and geo-strategic manifestations that combined to make Siliguri, which was once a village, a metropolitan city. The uniqueness of Siliguri city lies in the fact that she has no stories of the past to recount. She had no ancient or middle age lineages that she could endorse to historians and other researchers. She had no royal heritage like Hyderabad or Coochbehar or any trace of feudal prowess to boast of. She was just a halt station for the passengers to board narrow gauge trains to Darjeeling Hill

²Childe, V. Gordon. “‘The Urban Revolution’”. *The City Reader*, Routledge, 2020, pp. 31–39

³Sjoberg, Gideon. *The Preindustrial City: Past and Present*. Free Press, 1965

⁴Mumford, Lewis. *The City in History*. Penguin Books, 1991.

⁵Davis, Kingsley. ‘The Urbanization of the Human Population’. *Scientific American*, vol. 213, no. 3, 1965, pp. 40–53, <https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican0965-40>.

⁶Pye, L. W. ‘The Political Implications of Urbanisation and the Development Process’. *The City in Newly Developing Countries: Readings on Urbanism and Urbanisation*, edited by G. Breese, Prentice Hall, 1969, pp. 401–406

⁷Braudel, Fernand. *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Vol. III: The Perspective of the World*. Translated by Sian Reynold and Si N. Reynold, University of California Press, 1992

⁸Bairoch, Paul. *Cities and Economic Development: From the Dawn of History to the Present*. Translated by C. Braider, University of Chicago Press, 1988

⁹Abu-Lughod, J. *Before European Hegemony: the world system A.D. 1250-1350*. Oxford University Press, 1991.

station. From such an imperious past she rose to become a metropolis of dreams for many. She wants to be no less than Kolkata, the City of Joy. She replicates the flash and glitz of Delhi. Her elegance is defined by hi-tech townships, multi-storey shiny glass buildings, huge warehouses, cold storages, glittering bazaars, international highways, and airport and railway stations. What grace was bestowed upon her that she became a connoisseur of all eyes? This thesis not only makes an attempt to trace but also to deeply understand the growth and expansion of the Siliguri town with particular reference to its geo-strategic importance.

2. Site Of Inquiry and the Time Frame:

Siliguri, a metropolitan region, under the category of Class 1(UA/Towns) spreads over two districts in West Bengal, viz., Jalpaiguri district and Darjeeling district. Geographically it is situated at the latitude of 26°72" N and the longitude of 88°41" E. at the foot of the Himalayan mountain range. However, a hundred years before it was only a hamlet or to be more precise a halt station, but now Siliguri is one of the biggest urban centres of Northern India. It has become the gateway to North-East India and connects the hill towns of Kalimpong (a separate District from 2017), Darjeeling town, Mirik town and Kurseong town in Darjeeling district and the Seven-Sisters with the rest of India. It is bounded by the international borders of Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal making it geo-strategically important. The time period of my research is from 1835 to 2014 C.E. These two dates are very crucial because in the year 1835 A.D. Darjeeling was annexed from the Raja of Sikkim by the British East India Company and a 'Deed of Grant' by the Raja of Sikkim was signed on 1st February 1835. This 'Deed of grant traversed a new era of historical processes in the region and Siliguri being a part of the region stood as a prime active participant in the processes of change. The year 2014 is hallmark for the region because on 3rd December 2014, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee laid the foundation of a major international road project (also called as Asian-Highway project) connecting West Bengal via Siliguri with Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. This landmark project of Rs. 1434 Crore was a part of South Asian Sub-regional Economic Cooperation programme of Asian Development Bank (ADB). The year 2014 also saw a change in the political regime at the centre and the Modi

led government replaced the look east policy with act east policy to give more regional importance to the North east region.

3. Conceptual Theories and Review Of Literatures:

What does urbanisation mean for cities? Urban growth is usually analysed in terms of three elements: the natural increase of the people who already live in the city; the migration of people into the city from rural areas; and the expansion of the city such that populations formerly regarded as non-urban become urban.¹⁰ Of these three the first only contributes to urbanisation if the rate of increase of the urban population is greater than for the rural population-which is not usually the case. It is the second and third that shape urbanisation although even there care has to be taken with the numbers- for instance some migration to large cities may come from smaller cities- so it is intra-urban not rural-urban migration.

One contemporary definition of urbanisation is the upsurge in the number of people living in places that are defined as urban, the increase in the number of people engaged in non-agriculture and the growth in the value of the non-agricultural production in an urban-rural space. The latter two parts of the definition are valuable in drawing attention to the urbanisation that takes place on the margins of cities-"urban frontiers" they can be called. But it is useful to start with the first very simple definition: that urbanisation means an increase in the percentage of a country's population living in urban areas in towns and cities. Studies of a variety of cities in contemporary Asia suggest that the three factors contribute in roughly equal proportions to urban growth and that migration and "re-classification" contribute about equally to urbanisation. The commonly-held view that urbanisation involves only or primarily hundreds of thousands of rural people getting to the city, on foot, horse and cart, truck, train, bus or whatever is true, but not the only truth- it is part of the story. The importance of cities is growing day by day and is linked to the modernist dream and human aspiration to control nature, to excel in all areas of life

¹⁰ Turok Ivan and Gordon McGranahan. 'Urbanisation and Economic Growth: The Arguments and Evidence for Africa and Asia'. *Urbanisation*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2019, pp. 109–125, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2455747119890450>

and to better manage human life. Modern cities are places where the modern is imagined, shaped and translated. Often the progress of modern cities is directly associated with modernization, growth, development and advancement.

Urbanisation can be understood as a natural derivative and expediter of any industrial development which is driven by development of employment prospects in any urban areas as a consequence of industrial investment mainly during the ‘take-off’ stage of the economic development.¹¹ A steady flow of migrants in search of work in the ‘modern sector’ kept the real wages of the workers low. This increased the profits of the industrialists and this surplus capital was used as investment capital further leading to the growth of industrialization according to Lewis¹². By shifting people out of subsistence agricultural production and into higher ‘value-added activities’, the process of urbanisation was seen as contributing to the economic transformation of societies.

The growth of urban settlement in the developed world was the result of the industrial revolution during the 18th and 19th centuries which transformed western society into the most urbanised of the world. Here cities appeared as the necessary outcome of the concentration of the people required for the operation of industry¹³. These societies developed through internal (class) and external (colonial) appropriation¹⁴ which with the expansion of capital stock permitted the productivity of labour to rise dramatically. Hence, urbanisation in the western

¹¹Krueger, Anne, and W. W. Rostow. ‘The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto’. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, vol. 55, no. 292, 1960, p. 772, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2281618>.

¹² Lewis, W.Arthur. ‘Economic Development with Unlimited supplies of Labour.’ *Manchester School*, vol.22, no.2, 1954, pp. 139-191. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9957.1954.tb00021.x>

¹³Gugler, J. "The rural-urban interface and migration" In: Gilbert, Aarid Gugler, J. *Cities, poverty and development, Urbanisation in the Third World*. Oxford University Press, 1982.

¹⁴Abu-Lughod, J., and R. Hay. *Third World Urbanisation*. Routledge, 2013

world is seen in terms of its 'connection with economic growth' and is generally associated with the level of a nation's economic development.¹⁵

So can we transfer the western experience of urbanisation to the Third World? Is the urbanisation process of Developing Countries similar to that of the industrial advanced world? If it is, why are developing nations still not able to escape from poverty and the condition of underdevelopment?

3.1 Modernisation

Modernisation theory was based on the assumption of a linear transition from a 'primitive' undifferentiated and pre-rational society to a modern differentiated and bureaucratically rational society.¹⁶ Some believed that the increasing interaction and integration between less and more developed areas will at some stages, lead to the onset of development in the former areas; especially this belief figured in the thought of ecological school who assumed that Developing Countries are very much like the developed societies, only that they are at an earlier stage and will modernise in time.¹⁷ Among the examples of such diffusionist modernisation thinking can be included the influential core-periphery model of John Friedmann¹⁸ the polarisation and spread effect concepts of F. Perroux¹⁹, and the modernisation school led by E.W. Soja²⁰, Gould P. Tanzania²¹, J.B. Riddell²², and B.J. Berry²³.

¹⁵McGee, T.G. *The Urbanisation Process in the Third World: Explorations in Search of Theory*. Bell & Son, London, 1971.

¹⁶Rimmer, P. G and Forbes, D. K. "Underdevelopment theory: a geographical review." *Australian Geographer*, vol. 15. 4, 1982, pp. 197-211.

¹⁷Kasarda, J. and Crenshaw, E. Third World Urbanisation Dimension: Theories and Determinants. *Annual Review of Sociology*. vol. 17, 1991, pp. 467- 501.

¹⁸ Friedmann, John. "The Role of Cities in National Development." *American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. 12, no. 5, May 1969, pp. 13–21,

¹⁹Perroux, F. "Economic space, theory and application." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. Vol. 64, 1950, pp. 89-104.

²⁰Soja, E.W. *The Geography of Modernization in Kenya: A Spatial Analysis of Social Economic and Political Change*. Syracuse University Press, 1968.

3.2 Dependency theory:

Dependency approaches provide some insights into the inter-relationships between Developing Country's urbanisation and the global expansion of capitalist systems. This theory explains that the expansion of the capitalist system on a world scale was only possible through a core-periphery division of labour and unequal exchange which benefit the core areas at the expense of the periphery. Some believe that the patterns and process of urbanisation are best understood as part of the growth of the capitalist world economy²⁴.

Dependent urbanisation in developing societies has its roots in the colonial period. The critical point is that the developed and undeveloped countries did not emerge independently. The development of the one was integrally related to that of the other²⁵. The current social formations and productive systems of most Developing Countries have emerged in response to colonial and capitalist development. Dependency theory gave historical validity to the world-systems theory of which Wallerstein²⁶ has been the leading advocate. Wallerstein argued that the power of states in different portions of the world is dependent on the regional rates of surplus appropriation in each major zone (core, periphery and semi periphery). The Dependency approach has been criticised because of its under emphasis of internal processes in Developing

²¹Gould, P. "The Spatial Impress of the Modernisation Process." *World Politics*, Vol. 63, 1920, pp. 149-70

²²Riddell, J.B. *The Spatial Dynamics of Modernization in Sierra Leone: Structure, Diffusion and Response*. North Western University Press, Evanston, III, 1970.

²³Berry, B.J.L. "Hierarchical Diffusion: The Basis Of Development Filtering And Spread In A System Of Growth Centres." In: *Hansen, N. W. (ed). Growth Centres in Regional Economic Development*. Macmillan, London, 1972, pp. 108-1038.

²⁴Nemeth, R and Smith, D. "The Political Economy of Contrasting Urban Hierarchies in South Korea and The Philippines" In: Timberlake, M. (ed), *Urbanisation in the World Economy*. Academic Press, New York, 1985, pp. 183-206.

²⁵Gilbert, A. "Urban agglomeration and regional disparities" In: Gilbert A. and Gugler J. (eds), *Cities, Poverty and Development*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1982, pp. 27-47.

²⁶Wallerstein, I. The rise and future demise of the world capitalist system: concepts for comparative analysis. *Comparative Studies in Sociology and History*, Vol. XVI, 1974 pp. 387-415.

Countries.²⁷ Abu-Lughod for example argued that the most important point ignored is the lack of a theoretical framework for seeing the city as the outcome of a larger social, economic scenario.²⁸

The 'world capitalist system', concept was attacked by Skocpol²⁹ who argued that Wallerstein relied only upon arguments about economic conditions and world market interests, largely ignoring other potentially important variables such as historically pre-existing institutional patterns of threats of rebellion from below, and geopolitical pressures and constraints and political process within societies. And secondly, lack of awareness of the extent to which global forces impinge not only on Third World societies. The penetration of the capitalist system varies according to the spatial systems of the Developing Countries and is dependent on the level of capitalist development in the nation and the region. Cities perform a hegemonic role with respect to small towns and rural areas since the capitalist industrial sector has greater urban concentrations. As urban interests are more articulate and powerful, they are able to bias resource allocation, particularly infrastructure investment, in their favour.

4. Social Development Theories:

The earliest contribution about the relationship between social values and development belongs to L. Wirth.³⁰ He considered traditionalism as a barrier to economic growth and that a characteristic of many Developing Countries is the relatively high degree of prevalence of a folk-like society, which is usually opposed to rapid change and unable to adapt it quickly enough to the pressures exerted on it by the increasing integration of Developing Countries into

²⁷Drakakis-Smith, D. "Concepts of Development". In: Dwyer, D. *South East Asian Development, Geographical Perspectives*. Longman Scientific and Technical, 1990, pp. 48-77. Petras, J. *Critical Perspectives on Imperialism and Social Class in the Third World*. Monthly Review Press, New York, 1978.

²⁸Abu-Lughod, J. "Urbanisation in the Arab world and the international system". In: Gugler, J. *The transformation of the Developing world*. Oxford University Press Inc. New York, 1996, pp. 211-53.

²⁹Skocpol, T. "Wallerstein's world capitalist system: a theoretical and historical critique". *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 82 (5), 1993, pp. 1075-1091.

³⁰Wirth, Louis. "Urbanism as a Way of Life." *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 44, no. 1, 1938, pp. 1-24.

the world system. The reasons for this, as prescribed by T.S. Parsons, are that every society possesses a set of 'role expectations' which individuals expect one another to perform. The society protects this series of role expectations by its system of rewards and retributions. Together, the 'role expectation' and the system of rewards and retributions constitute a 'social value system' which has a substantial ability to condition the activities of society's individual members.³¹

The role of social institutions and groups, and values in the development process is examined by Germani. He made three observations; first, in preindustrial societies, most actions are prescriptive. Secondly, change in them tends to be a violation of traditional norms and therefore is abnormal and rare, but in modern societies, change becomes a normal phenomenon. Finally, traditional societies pose an undifferentiated structure with a few institutions performing many functions, while in modern society; each function tends to be performed by a specialised institution which results in a differentiated structure.³²

Some believe that economic criteria alone cannot push a society toward economic growth but also cultural and ethical characteristics of a nation are important. An example of the former is the work of D.C. McClelland, who expanded the idea of Max Weber on the relationship between Protestantism and rise of capitalism, developed a psychological attribute he called the "need for achievement". McClelland examined the fall and rise of Athenian civilization history and then believed that societies with a higher "need for achievement" were more successful in economic growth. In seeking to determine what produces this psychological characteristic, he stated that it is not hereditary but rather is instilled in people.³³

³¹Parsons, T. S. E. *Towards a General Theory of Action*. Harvard University Press, 1956.

³²Gwynne, R.N. *Third World Industrialization in an International Framework* Longman Scientific & Technical, 1990.

³³McClelland, D.C. *The Achievement Motive in Economic Growth*. Lynne Rienner Publisher.Inc. Boulder, Colorado, USA, 1993, pp.141-57.

5. Development and Urbanisation:

Many of the present day policies regarding spatial planning stem from the locational theories as reflected in the works of A.Weber, A.Losch, W.Christaller.³⁴ Central place theory provided an account of the size and distribution of settlements within an urban system. It can be argued that central place theory is relevant to urban and regional planning because it assumes that a hierarchical system provides an efficient means of administering as well as allocating resources to regions. Key central places often grow as a focal point of growth of the region which in turn influences the rate of development over the region as a whole.

5.1 Development From Above:

Since early 1980s the terms 'development from above' and 'development from below' have gained wide acceptance to describe two different sets of development strategies (Stohr & Taylor, 1981)³⁵. Nevertheless both sets of strategies had been in use in developed nations and Developing Countries since earlier years. Different varieties of 'development from above strategies' dominated spatial planning theory and practice of the Developing Countries for about three decades starting from the 1950s. The main theme of the approach was that development would occur in a spontaneous or induced manner in a few dynamic sectors forming geographical clusters from which it would spread over time to the rest of the spatial system.³⁶ Development from above strategies i.e. the 'centre-down' or 'top-down' development paradigm

³⁴Weber, A. *Alfred Weber's Theory of the Location of Industries*. (Translated by Friedrich, C.J. from *Under den Standort der Industrien*).University of Chicago Press, 1929 (First German Edition, 1909). Losch, A. *The Economics of Location*. (Translated by Woglom, W.H., from *Die Räumliche Ordnung der Wirtschaft*). Oxford University Press, 1954 (First German Edition 1940), Christaller, W. *Central Places in Southern Germany*. (Translated by Baukin, C.W.), Englewood Cliffs New Jersey, 1966 (First German Edition, 1933).

³⁵Stohr, W. B. and Taylor, D.R.F. "Development from above or below? Some conclusions". In: Stohr, W.B. and Taylor, D.R.F. (eds) *Development from Above or Below?*.John Wiley and Sons Ltd, London, 1981, pp. 453-480

³⁶Hansen, N. M. "Development from above: the centre-down development paradigm". In: Stohr, W. and Taylor, D. R. F. (eds), *Development from Above or Below?* John Wiley and Sons., 1981, pp15-39.

has its roots in neo-classical economic theory and its spatial manifestation is the growth centre concept. Such strategies tend to be urban and industrial in nature. These are usually capital intensive industrial initiatives which demand the highest technology and depend on economic efficiency through economies of scale.³⁷

F. Perroux³⁸ introduced the concept of the 'growth pole' into the economics literature. His original work focused on the development of growth poles in economic space. This was an attempt to break away from the limitations of the central place concept of Christaller and Losch. Perroux's initially defined growth poles and specifically in relation to abstract economic space and not in relation to geographic-economic or geographic space.³⁹ Thus his primary concern tended to be interactions among industrial sectors rather than a spatial development process. According to him, poles were likely to be firms or industries or groups of industries. A.O. Hirschman⁴⁰ in his classic work 'the strategy of economic development' argued that development strategies should concentrate on a relatively few sectors than on widely dispersed projects. He maintained that key sectors would be determined by measuring the effects of backward and forward linkage in terms of input maxima. He viewed that growth is communicated from the leading sectors of the economy to the rest, from one firm to another. Hirschman expressed similar views to Myrdal regarding backwash and spread effects by the terms 'polarisation' and 'trickle-down'.⁴¹ Before explaining the growth centre concept with reference to the Developing Countries, it is worthwhile discussing Friedmann's 'centre-periphery' model. Friedmann viewed the regional policy problem as an issue of applying national policy in a spatial dimension. Friedmann's centre-hinterland model consists of four stages which trace the transformation of a spatial system from a sparsely populated and newly

³⁷Stohr, Walter B., and Fraser Taylor. *Development from above or below?: Dialectics of Regional Planning in Developing Countries*. John Wiley & Sons, 1982.

³⁸Perroux, F., Economic Space, Theory and Application. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. Vol. 64, 1950, pp. 89-104.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 95

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 183-84

colonised country to a fully integrated urban and regional system in a developed country. To encourage development, he advocated hierarchy of cities as the means of assimilating the periphery with the centre or core.⁴²

5.2. Development From Below

The problems of poverty increased interregional and interpersonal disparities between rural and urban areas which resulted in the beginning of a new paradigm in the 1960s which is broadly termed 'development from below' or 'bottom-up approach'. The primary objective of this approach is social development with a focus on specific human needs. Since the majority of Developing Countries especially in Asia are essentially rural in character, the main idea behind these strategies is rural and agricultural development.⁴³

The earlier agricultural development strategies of the 1960s were capital intensive and were geared to improve the overall condition of rural people through increased output and incomes. The prime economic objective was to increase agricultural output. The 'green revolution' strategies fulfilled the objectives of self-sufficiency in food production in many countries. But the main benefits went to the land owners, the elites and others who were not in real need. Since the majority of the rural population in Developing Countries, especially in Asia and Africa, are marginal and subsistence farmers with limited access to inputs and credit facilities, the green revolution could not initiate any major change in their quality of life. Misra and Bhooshan expressed this as follows: "The green revolution strategy, however, did not mend the living conditions of the rural poor, not so much because it was inherently wrong, but because of the fact that the national Governments did not pursue other rural development strategies with the same vigour and commitment, land reforms, rural industrialisation and other

⁴²Friedmann, J. *Regional Development Policy: a Case Study of Venezuela*. MIT Press, Cambridge, 1966.

⁴³Friedmann, J. and Douglass, M. "Agropolitan development: towards a new strategy for regional planning" In: Lo F. and Saleh K. (eds), *Growth Pole Strategy and Regional Development Policy*. Regional Development. Nagoya, 1978, pp. 163-192.

rural institutional reforms lagged behind. This led to very unfavourable implications for landless and small farmers".⁴⁴

Friedmann and Douglass⁴⁵, like many other authors, observed that the centre-down paradigm of planning has frustratingly failed in Developing Countries. On reviewing the results of the accelerating industrialisation strategies in six Asian countries (India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand), they concluded that the traditional paradigm generated contradictions of crisis proportions in the structure of national development.⁴⁶ They advocated the alternative strategy of accelerated rural development and called it 'agropolitan development'. They argued that the agropolitan strategy should be oriented to human needs, a more equal distribution of economic benefits and more direct participation by local people in the process of development. In the policy framework for agropolitan development, they argued that an agropolitan district should be developed by embedding some of the key elements of urbanism in dense rural areas of limited size. This policy of spatial development had to be promoted through decentralised planning and decision making. The agropolitan approach advocated the creation of self-reliant communities by selective spatial closure, communisation of productive assets and equalisation of access to bases for the accumulation of social power.⁴⁷

The agropolitan approach has been criticised by some scholars⁴⁸; because they believe that the approach does not deal with political and economic realities and is therefore utopian;

⁴⁴Misra, R.P. and Bhooshan, B.S. "Rural development: national policies and experiences". In: Misra, R.P. (ed) *Rural development: national policies and experiences*. Maruzen Asia for U.N.C.R.D., 1981.

⁴⁵Friedmann, J. and Douglass, M. "Agropolitan development: towards a new strategy for regional planning" In: Lo F. and Saleh K. (eds), *Growth Pole Strategy and Regional Development Policy*. Regional Development, Nagoya, 1978, pp. 163-192.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 164

⁴⁷Friedmann, J. and Weaver, C. *Territory and Function: the Evolution of Regional Planning*. University of California Press, 1979.

⁴⁸Gore, C. *Regions in Question; Space, Development Theory and Regional Policy*. Methuen, London, 1984. Mathur, O.P. "Small Cities and Natural Development Re-Examined". In Mathur, O.P. (ed) *Small Cities and National Development*. U.N.C.R.D. Nagoya, 1982. Soja, E.W. *The Geography of*

the approach merely substituted spatial structures or territory for class structure. On the contrary, the approach accepted that power structures not only exist between different classes in a society, but also between different units, for example, central government against local administration and production. Furthermore, important power structures exist within the district, clan, extended family and household. The agropolitan strategy, focused explicitly on these local power structures, highlights their importance

5.3 Globalisation and development:

Clark through his analysis of the world-wide urbanisation growth argued that one of the influencing factors on the urban world is that the world itself has become a coherent and integrated whole, through the globalisation of economic as well as social activity. Markets which were previously discrete and localised have merged and superseded by the world-wide patterns of production as well as consumption co-ordinated through global institutions and organisations.⁴⁹

The impact of globalisation on developing Countries has been evaluated by two groups of economic commentators. In recent years many observers like Krugman and Woods have expressed concern that globalisation may affect the ability of these nations to withstand high living standards. The most extreme expression of it was Ross Perot's warning of serious adverse impacts on the European unemployment rates especially for low wage workers.⁵⁰ The second group consisting of scholars like Thompson and Hirst criticise the pessimistic views on the economic growth of Third World and argues that these analyses suffer from the limitations of

Modernization in Kenya: A Spatial Analysis of Social Economic and Political Change. Syracuse University Press. New York, 1968. Forbes, D.K. *The Geography of Underdevelopment.* Croom Helm Ltd., 1984.

⁴⁹Clark, D. *Urban World, Global City.* Routledge, London, 1996.

⁵⁰Krugman, P. The myth of Asia's miracle. *Foreign Affairs*, Nov. - Dec., 1994, pp. 63-75. Wood, A. *North-south trade, Employment and Inequality: changing fortunes in a skill driven world.* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1994.

econometric statistics, but these are no more disabling than the often journalistic reports that make up a sizeable portion of the literature on Developing Countries.⁵¹

Although globalisation as an external factor seems to play an important role in the development of some Developing Countries, the secret of Asian countries' success is believed to be primarily dependent on the crucial role of their governments as an internal factor. Hamilton after analysing the main factors in the economic growth of some Developing Countries (Pakistan, Nepal, India, Thailand and Malaysia) in Asia concluded that one of the important problems of the latter was the error of 'policy voluntarism' which can be related to the World Bank's negative attitude towards government role in the economy. Hamilton's study has shown that economic growth is not necessarily inhibited by government involvement and above all, it is not the quantity of government intervention and planning that matters, but its quality.⁵²

6. Demography and Urbanisation

There is agreement that the model of demographic change based on Western experience is not adequate for the context of the developing world. Abu-Lughod⁵³ found that, in contrast to western societies, where fertility was lower than rural, the urban and rural rates have been substantially the same. Also, data show that urban death rates were higher than rural in the early stages of urbanisation in the West while it is almost the opposite in the Egypt case. By emphasising the differences between rural and urban places, Gugler has analysed the mortality data for many Developing Countries which showed that urban residents had a better chance of survival than rural people. However he believed the data to be problematic, as it is reasonable to

⁵¹Hirst, P. and Thompson, G. *Globalisation in Question: The International Economy and the Possibilities of Governance*. Polity Press in Association with Blackwell Publisher Ltd., 1996.

⁵²Hamilton, C. Can the Rest of Asia Emulate the NICs? In: Wilber, C.K. and Jamson, K.P. (eds). *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment*. 1992, pp. 403-32.

⁵³Abu-Lughod, J. Urban-Rural Differences as a Function of the Demographic Transition: Egyptian Data and an Analytical Model. *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 69, 1964, pp. 476-90.

assume that they tend to underplay rather than exaggerate the urban-rural differential.⁵⁴ Poor countries with an overwhelmingly rural population exhibit a high fertility pattern that ensures that they are supported by their children in old age according to Lipton.⁵⁵ Caldwell⁵⁶ refuted the idea that traditional agrarian societies make irrational decisions about family size. Instead, he suggested that decisions about family size are explained by the nature of the household economy. When wealth flows from the children to the parents through their productive contribution to the household economy, it is rational to sustain a higher level of fertility. Fertility transition occurs when wealth flows from parents to children become of greater importance

Thus, the most common measure of the rate of urbanisation is the annual change in the proportion of people living in urban places; a city can grow by natural increase or through rural-urban migration. Natural population growth is a major element in urban growth, but rural-urban migration makes an even larger contribution in many developing countries.⁵⁷

6.1. Rural-Urban Migration

Migration is one of the important factors of urban population growth. Nevertheless the causes and patterns of internal migration, especially rural to urban and urban to urban movements, have been and are a crucial component of urbanisation. It is proper here to evaluate popular migration theories to understand their ability to explain patterns for urban growth. One of the earliest theories in the migration literature is that of Ravenstein's laws. The laws consist of observations based on the relationship between migration and factors such as distance, stages, economic stimuli, migration currents and rural-urban differences in the United Kingdom.

⁵⁴Gugler, J. "The rural-urban interface and migration" In: Gilbert, A and Gugler, J. *Cities, poverty and development, Urbanisation in the Third World*. Oxford University Press, 1982.

⁵⁵Lipton, M. *Why Poor Stay Poor. A Study of Urban Bias in World Development*. Maurice Temple Smith Ltd. London, 1977.

⁵⁶Caldwell, J.C. *African Rural-Urban Migration: The Movement to Ghana Towns*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1969.

⁵⁷Gugler, J. *The Transformation of the Developing World*. Oxford University Press Inc., New York, 1996.

Essentially, he was seeking to understand the causes of migration from empirical evidence. This showed that (1) migrants primarily moved a short distance from their birth place; (2) migration preceded by stages; people initially moved to the nearest towns and then transferred to the bigger urban places; (3) each current of migration produced a compensating counter-current; (4) migrants who made the largest distances usually preferred to migrate to one of main centres of commerce and industry; (5) town people were less likely to migrate than rural residents.⁵⁸

Moreover, Ravenstein⁵⁹ predicted that migration would increase over time as a result of development in the means of transport and the growth of industry and commerce. He also explained that other conditions could stimulate migration streams, such as an attractive climate, heavy taxation and compulsion. Therefore, Ravenstein's emphasis was on the economic motives which shifted population from agriculture (rural) to commerce and industry (urban). After Ravenstein, much consideration was given to the pattern and forms of internal migration in the countries of the world. Lee with his definition of migration as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence argued that despite criticisms, the laws of migration have stood the test of time. His own theory of migration, based partly on Ravenstein's laws, is underlain by two sorts of forces working in different areas which lead to push movements from rural places and to pull factors to urban areas.⁶⁰

The push-pull formula suggests that potential migrants will be subjected simultaneously to "centrifugal" forces at their place of origin and "centripetal" forces at the place of destination. This view is favoured by most writers although some researchers have stressed the importance of separating the two effects in order to achieve a better understanding of the decision making process. McGee in his study of the process of city ward migration has compared European

⁵⁸Ravenstein, E. G. Laws of migration. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*. Vol. 48, 1885, pp. 167-227.

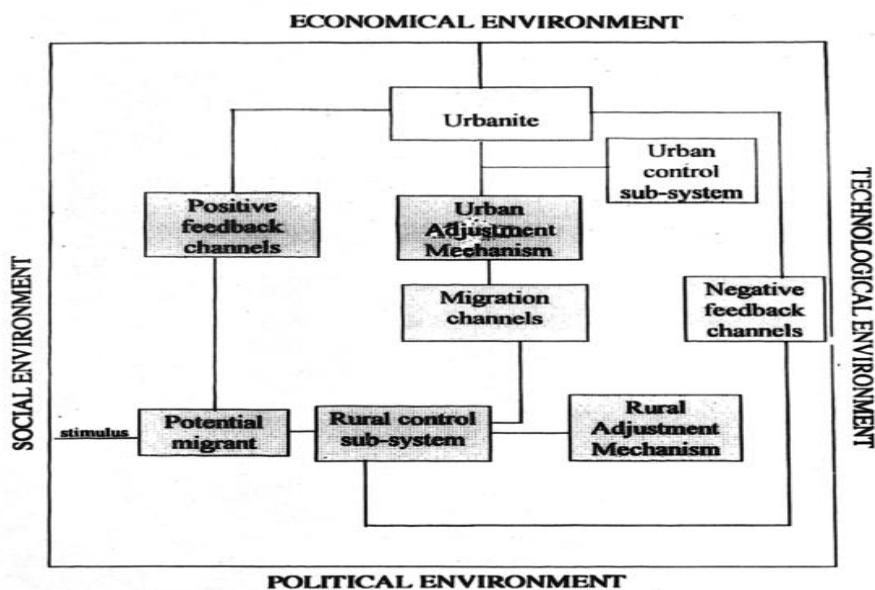
⁵⁹Ravenstein, E. G. The Laws of Migration. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*. Vol. 52, 1889, pp. 241-305.

⁶⁰Lee, S. "A Theory of Migration." In: Demco, G. H. and Schnell, G. A., *Population Geography: A Reader*. McGraw Hill, New York, 1970, pp. 228-98.

rural-urban migration in the different phases of the Industrial Revolution to South East Asian rural-urban migration with which he found some similarities. But he stated that the push pull model of Western European rural-urban migration needs to be modified substantially in the Asian situation. The main motives for migration were the pressure of population and lack of jobs in rural areas; thus rural poverty was replaced by urban poverty, while in Western Europe, the transfer of rural population led to industrial development.⁶¹

Drakakis-Smith pointed out that migration usually occurs initially in response to events (natural, economic, social and political) over which those affected have little control.⁶² If this is accepted, then behavioural theories of migration will have only limited explanatory power and an understanding of the timing of migratory flows is more likely to be found in macroeconomic theories explaining structural changes in society and in the economy.

Fig 1.1: A System Schema for a Theory of Rural-Urban Migration (after Mobogunje, 1972)



Source: Mabogunje, Akin L. *Regional Mobility and Resource Development in West Africa*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972.

⁶¹McGee, T.G. *The Urbanisation Process in the Third World: Explorations in Search of Theory*. Bell & Son, London, 1971.

⁶²Drakakis-Smith, D.W. *The Third World City*. Methuen. London, 1987

As studies and discussion of the different factors of rural-urban migration and natural growth of population have shown, the urbanisation process is fast and despite some decline in the natural increase in some Developing Countries, urbanisation is not a passing phenomenon, but it is widespread and the future of developing nations will be determined by future urban generations rather than by the rural. The development strategies reviewed in the early section of this chapter revealed that one of main outcomes of national and regional development policies has been rural urban inequality.

However, some theoretical debates give more importance to the external forces in Developing Countries' population distribution. Whether one agrees or not, in the contemporary world, the massive improvement of communications through TV screens and information on urban lifestyles encourages the use of manufacturing products by movement to or contact with towns and cities around the Third World.

6.2. Urban Residential Mobility

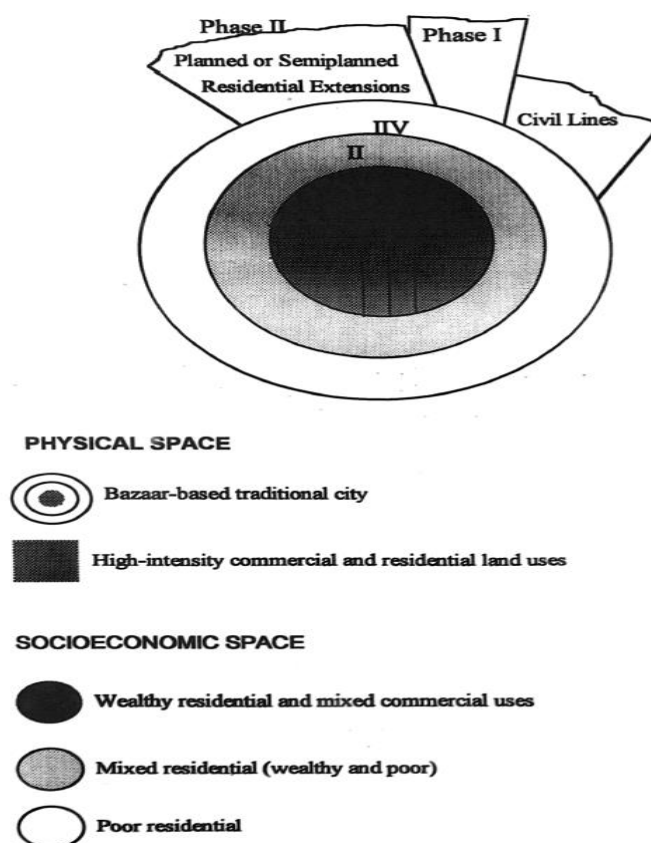
Rapid City growth in Developing Countries, due to migration and natural population increase, has changed the old pattern of population distribution in cities. A variety of theories has been developed to describe the process and factors leading to such a transition. The four best known theories are the concentric zone, the sector theory, the multiple nuclei theory, and inverse concentric theory. The first three theories were formulated based on the experience of developed countries' urban centres, while the majority of cities in Developing Countries follow the inverse concentric theory.⁶³ According to this theory, the elite and upper income classes live in the central part of the city, where they have easy access to their workplaces and urban amenities, and the lower classes reside in peripheral areas of the city.

A.K. Dutt constructed a model explaining the structure of the South Asian cities which he termed as 'Bazaar based' city model. One of the main motives of urban growth in such cities

⁶³Williams, J. F. et al. "World urban development" In: Brunn, S. D. I. and Williams, J. F. (eds), *Cities of the World, World Regional Urban Development*. Harper & Row Publications, New York, 1983, pp. 3-41.

is the increasing function of trade from agricultural exchange, transport nodes, and various administrative activities. The socio-economic space of the bazaar-based city represents a classification of different income groups. The higher income groups usually reside in the central part around the bazaar. In the second zone live the poor and wealthy together, and the third zone is occupied by poor families. It is important to consider that the structure of cities is constantly changing with the improvement of communications and the implementation of urban development plans which accentuate physical expansion. In fact residential patterns are not only the outcome of migrant or even urban residents' choice but more the product of constraints on the availability of land, housing and services in Developing Countries' urban areas.⁶⁴

Fig 1.2: Bazaar based city in South Asia (after Dutt, 1983)



Source: Dutt, Ashok K. "Cities of South Asia" in Stanley Brunn and Jack F. Williams, eds. *Cities of the World*. New York: Harper and Row, 1983.

⁶⁴Dutt, A.K. "Cities of South Asia". In: Brunn, S.D.B and Williams, J.F (eds), *Cities of the World; World Regional Urban Development*. Harper and Row, Publications, New York, 1983, pp. 325-68.

6.3 Peri-urbanisation:

Many people from villages migrate to towns and cities for jobs, livelihood, for accomplishing financial gains or education. There can be other reasons for migration too. However residing in the core of the city is highly expensive due to the fact dwelling costs in towns and cities are high. A greater affordable alternative for them is to settle down at the fringes of the city or at the periphery of the city. There could be other reasons also for any such population relocation in any city, for example development of township leads to uprooting of population that already settled there. Thus peri-urbanisation can be described as urbanisation of areas located at the fringes of a city, are intrinsically linked to the city economic growth and are characterised by mixed urban and rural activities.

.Ravetz, Fertner and Nielsen describe peri-urban regions as “a new type of multi-practical territory.”⁶⁵ The regions could be imagined as some type of intermediary zones overlapping urban and jurisdictions and are inhabited by mostly migrant populace—who're generally participating in the urbanisation process of the city. Narain, Anand and Banerjee observe that small farmers, casual settlers, commercial as well as industrial entrepreneurs, and urban middle class commuters all co-exist within the same existing territory, though with competing pursuits, practices and perceptions.⁶⁶ There also are examples of peri-city regions which were located at a distance from the town core, being engulfed, because of statutory extension of town boundaries.

7. India's Urbanisation Experience

The literature on urbanisation as a process and its spatial manifestation in terms of levels of urbanisation has been extremely varied and intensive. The process can be studied from

⁶⁵ Joe Ravetz, Christian Fertner and Thomas Sick Nielsen, “The Dynamics of Peri-Urbanization.” In *Peri-urban Futures: Scenarios and Models for Land Use Change in Europe*. Edited by K. Nilsson et al. (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 2013:13).

⁶⁶ V. Narain, P. Anand and P. Banerjee, “Periurbanization in India: A Review of the Literature and Evidence,” Report for the Project – Rural to Urban Transitions and the Peri-urban Interface, SaciWATERs, India, 2013, P. 6.

perspectives of all the social sciences. In the early 60's of 20th century Bert F. Hoselitz summarised some noteworthy differences between European urbanisation and Indian urbanisation in the following words "Compared with European cities during a corresponding period of economic development, the cities of India had weak urban industry characterised by a larger number of small-scale and cottage type enterprises; the labour force was fractionalised therefore, was made up of a smaller portion of industrial workers and a larger portion of persons in unskilled service sector. All these features made economic development more difficult in India today than was the case in Europe in the 19th century."⁶⁷

R. Ramachandran discusses the trend of urbanisation in India with the objective to correct imbalances which arise from a western dominated literature. The scope and content of the book give exposition and evaluation on the general study of urbanisation, the long 500 years of urbanisation in India, and the conventional geographers' concerns with patterns of settlement.⁶⁸ Ramachandran has extensively discussed criteria for defining urban places, the theory of systems approaches to urban hierarchy in geographical space and the nature of city-region relationships. He also deals with the policy of urbanisation. India has an unequally long and varied 5000-year history of invasions and successions of cultures and peoples with their contrasting expression of urban development.⁶⁹

Following the contour of Ramachandran, Amitabh Kundu in 1994 discusses the pattern of Urbanisation with special reference to Small and Medium Towns in India. According to him, till the nineties Class- I cities in developed states grew at a quicker rate as compared to small and medium towns. Whereas in the less developed states, small and medium towns grew at a similar or higher rate than that of Class I cities. This pattern changed in the nineties. Less developed

⁶⁷ Bert F. Hoselitz, (1961) "Tradition and Economic Growth" in Ralph Braibanti and Joseph J. Spengler eds. *Tradition, Values, and Socio-Economic Development*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. London: Cambridge University Press. pp. 83–113.

⁶⁸ Ramachandran, R. "Urbanisation and Urban System in India", Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1992.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

states like Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Orissa experienced high urban growth in their Class I cities as compared to smaller towns. Cities with a million-plus population registered higher growth than the overall growth of all the Class I cities during 1981-91 recorded 2.96 per cent growth while in 1991-2001 growth rate of 2.76 percent was recorded. During the same period, million-plus cities grew at the rate of 3.25 percent and 2.88 per cent respectively.⁷⁰ Later on P. Amis (1995) tried to understand the dichotomy between employment creation and environmental improvements. He also gives explanations on the nature of urban poverty in India and the policy response aimed at creating employment and increasing incomes as well as environmental improvement initiatives.⁷¹

G.V. and Lobo, Norbert in 2003 discusses the Rural Urban Migration and Rural Unemployment in India and its impact and the 'push' and 'pull' factors operating with varying intensity and positive effects of rural-to-urban migration overtaking negative effects in a specific regional context. They point out that rural unemployment is one of the burning problems that India has been facing. Its severity has increased in the period following the new economic reforms. To think more about it is to think more about Indian rural problems in general and rural-to-urban migration in particular.⁷²

Kundu, A. in 2003 talks about the impact of Neo-Liberal Paradigm on Urban Dynamics in India. The urban growth rate from 1951 to 1991 was generally high in relatively less developed states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and U.P. The relatively better developed states like Punjab, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal experienced low urban growth. The developed states like Gujarat, Haryana and Maharashtra recorded high or medium growth. There was a significant departure of this pattern in the nineties from the earlier decades as the developed

⁷⁰ Amitabh Kundu. "Pattern of Urbanisation with special reference to Small and Medium Towns in India" in G. K. Chandra (ed) Sectoral Issues in Indian Economy, Anand publications, 1994.

⁷¹ on Amis, P. (1995 "Employment Creation or Environmental Improvements: A Literature Review of Urban Poverty and Policy in India", Habitat International, 19(4), pp. 485-497

⁷² G.V. and Lobo, Norbert. Rural Urban Migration and Rural Unemployment in India", Mohit Publication, New Delhi, 2003

states registered urban growth above the national average while the less developed states experienced growth either below or equal to the Country's growth rate.⁷³ Imura, Hidefumi, Yedla, Sudhakar, Shirakawa, Hiroaki and Memon, Mushtaq observed the linkages between population growth, urbanisation, economic development, and environmental issues in Asian cities by focusing on the areas of transport planning and air pollution, solid waste management, and water supply and sanitation⁷⁴.

Om Prakash studied the effects and implications of globalisation and liberalisation on India's urban system. According to him, the implication of India's post-1991 liberalisation and globalisation on the national urban system, not only resulted in rapid economic growth but affected cities in different ways, primarily by the growth of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).⁷⁵ Sivaramakrishnan, K.C., Kundu, Amitabh and Singh, B.N. (2005) studied urban settlements by the comparative method. In this book, for the first time a comprehensive analysis of urbanisation trends in India was done using 2001 census data. It looks at definitional problems in the identification of urban settlements for comparative analysis. The realistic quantification of migration, its share of urban growth in large cities, the role of small and medium towns, and the growth of large urban agglomerations are also considered.⁷⁶

To define a Town or City in India, the demographic and economic indexes are important and taken into consideration in defining specific areas as town or city. The definitional parameters of an urban area in India have undergone several changes and modifications over the years. The following definition of town was adopted in 1901 census was used until 1961. a) Every municipality, civil lines and cantonment (are not to be included in a

⁷³ Kundu, A. (2003) "Impact of Neo-Liberal Paradigm on Urban Dynamics in India", in Good Governance India, Vol. 1 November-December 2003.

⁷⁴ Imura, Hidefumi, Yedla, Sudhakar, Shirakawa, Hiroaki and Memon, Mushtaq A. (2005): "Urban Environmental Issues and Trends in Asia— An Overview" published in International Review for Environmental Strategies, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 357-382.

⁷⁵ Om Prakash (2005) "Globalisation and Urban Development", Springer Publication, Berlin, Heidelberg

⁷⁶ Sivaramakrishnan, K.C., Kundu, Amitabh and Singh, B.N. (2005): "Handbook of Urbanisation in India: An Analysis of Trends and Process", New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

municipality), b) Houses inhabited permanently by not less than five thousand persons, who the provincial superintendent of the census decides to treat as a town. The definition adopted in the 1961 census was also used in 1971 and 1981. And it remained unchanged in 1991 and 2001 also. According to this definition an urban area is: a) a place which is either a municipal corporation or a municipal area, or under a town committee or a notified area committee or cantonment board, or any place which satisfies the following criteria of: a) Minimum of 5,000 persons and minimum 75% of working occupations are non-agricultural. b) Density not less than one thousand persons per square mile and c) Place should have certain pronounced urban characteristic features and amenities for example newly founded industrial areas or large housing settlements or places of tourist importance or civic amenities. Other than from well-defined towns or cities, the outgrowths of towns as well as cities have also been treated as an urban agglomeration. In the 1961 census, the idea of 'town group' was adopted in order to obtain a large image relating to urban reach. This was refined in the census of 1971 and the concept of urban agglomeration was added to obtain a better feedback on urban continuity, trends and processes of urbanisation and also other related matters. This concept without any modification had remained operative till 2001 census.

The 2011 Census has broadly classified urban areas into ensuing types:

- i) Statutory towns: Places with, corporation, municipality, notified town area committees, cantonment board etc.
- ii) Census towns: all villages with a bare minimum population of 5000 persons in the preceding census, at least 75% of male main working population involved in non-agricultural activities and a population density of minimum 400 persons per sq. km.
- iii) Urban Agglomerations (UAs): It can be understood as a continuous urban spread consisting of one or more towns.
- iv) Urban Growths (OGs): It is defined as areas around a core city or town, like university campus, railways colony, port areas, etc. mainly lying outside the ambit of town.

Cities in India are classified on the basis of population density. Prior to 2008, the cities were classified on the basis of City Compensation Allowance (CCA). CCA was an allowance paid by both public and private sectors to its employees in order to compensate the higher cost of living in metropolitan areas or Tier 1 cities. The Seventh Central Pay commission abolished the CCA classifications of Cities and adopted the earlier practice of House Rent Allowances with minor modifications. The earlier HRA classification of cities was changed from A1 to X, B1 to Y AND C1 to Z. X, Y and Z are popularly known as Tier-1, Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. Areas with population more than 1,00,000 are considered as metropolitan areas. As far Siliguri is considered Siliguri city is governed by Municipal Corporation which comes under Siliguri Metropolitan Region. The historical Population Data of microtrends.net points that the population of Siliguri Metropolitan Region in the year 2020 was 1,020,000.⁷⁷ Thus we see that Siliguri from a mere population of 30,000 in the year 1950 became a metropolitan area.

Trends of Urbanisation in India

Table 1.1: Number of Towns Percentage and Growth Rate of Urban Population in India

Since 1901

Census Year	No. Of Towns	%Urban Total Population	To	%Rural Total Population	To	Annual Exponential Growth
1901	1827	10.84		89.15		-
1911	1815	10.29		89.71		0.03
1921	1949	11.18		88.82		0.79
1931	2072	11.99		88.82		1.75
1941	2250	13.86		88.01		2.77
1951	2843	17.29		86.14		3.47
1961	2365	17.97		82.71		2.34
1971	2590	19.91		82.03		3.21
1981	3378	23.34		76.66		3.83
1991	3768	25.72		74.24		3.09
2001	4368	27.78		72.22		2.73
2011	7935	31.16		68.89		-

⁷⁷ <https://www.macrotrends.net/cities/21405/siliguri/population>>Siliguri, India Metro Area Population 1950-2022. www.macrotrends.net. Retrieved 2022-06-26.

Note: Size categories (Class) of towns by population: Class I: 100,000 or more; Class II: From 50,000 to 99,999; Class III: From 20,000 to 49,999; Class IV: from 10,000 to 19,999; Class V: from 5,000 to 9,999 Class VI: Below 5,000.

Source: Census of India for different years, Kundu, A “Trends & Processes of Urbanisation in India”, Human Settlements Group, IIED, Population and Development Branch, UNFPA, 2011

The census of 1991 had recorded a significant decline in population growth in urban areas during 1981-91, as noted above. The decade of the 1970s saw the growth rate of urban population as 3.79% - by far the highest this century - and came down to 3.09% in the 1980s. It went down further to 2.73% in the 1990s, which was the lowest since the Independence period (Table above), if the rate of the 1950s is revised upwards to take care of definitional anomalies.⁷⁸ As a consequence, the percentage of population in urban areas has gone up sluggishly from 23.34 in 1981 to 25.72 in 1991 and then to 27.78 in 2001.

Urbanisation Pattern across Size Class of Urban Centres

The distribution of urban population through size categories discloses the fact that the process of urbanisation in India was largely city oriented. This is revealed from the high percentage of urban population being concentrated in the class I cities, and this has gone up systematically in the last century. The enormous increase in the percentage share of the class I cities from 26.0 in 1901 to 68.7 in 2001 has often been credited to the faster growth of large cities, without taking into consideration the surge in the number of these cities (Table below). However, the simple reason for the growing dominance of these cities is the promotion of lower order towns into class I category. Importantly, Table below reports two growth rates for the 1970s and subsequent decades, one computed by considering the population in each category as reported in consecutive censuses, the other considering the population of the common towns only. The differences between the two growth rates are due to towns moving in and out of a

⁷⁸ The urban growth rate during the 1950s was less than that of the 1990s, but that can be explained in terms of formalisation of the definition of urban centres for the first time in the census of 1961 and the exclusion of town area committees, etc from the urban list, particularly in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Also see Kundu, A “Trends & Processes of Urbanization in India”, *Human Settlements Group, IIED, Population and Development Branch, UNFPA, 2011*

category over time. It is observed that in 1901, there were only 24 class I cities and that went up to 393 in 2001, which explains largely the increase in the share of population in this size category over the decades. However, in addition to the factors for increase in the number of large cities, the significance of a fast demographic growth in these, making the urban structure top heavy, cannot be minimised.

Table 1.2: Number of Towns and Percentage of Urban Population in Different Size Categories

CENSUS YEAR	NUMBER OF TOWNS						PERCENTAGE OF URBAN POPULATION					
	CLA SS I	CLA SS II	CLA SS III	CLA SS IV	CLA SS V	CLA SS VI	CLA SS I	CLA SS II	CLA SS III	CLA SS IV	CLA SS V	CLA SS VI
1901	24	43	130	391	744	479	26	11.29	15.64	20.83	20.14	6.1
1911	23	40	135	364	707	485	27.48	10.51	16.4	19.73	19.31	6.57
1921	29	45	145	370	734	571	29.7	10.39	15.92	18.29	18.67	7.03
1931	35	56	183	434	800	509	31.2	11.65	16.8	18	17.14	5.21
1941	49	74	242	498	920	407	38.23	11.42	16.35	15.78	15.08	3.14
1951	76	91	327	608	1124	569	44.63	9.96	15.72	13.63	12.97	3.09
1961	102	129	437	719	711	172	51.42	11.23	16.94	12.77	6.87	0.77
1971	148	173	558	827	623	147	57.24	10.92	16.01	10.94	4.45	0.44
1981	218	270	743	1059	758	253	60.37	11.63	14.33	9.54	3.54	0.5
1991	300	345	947	1167	740	197	65.2	10.95	13.19	7.77	2.6	0.29
2001	393	401	1151	1344	888	191	68.67	9.67	12.23	6.84	2.36	0.23

Source: Census of India (compiled by the Researcher)

It is evident from Table 2.5 that this is not the case. The class I cities, for example, show distinctly higher growth rates during the 1970s when compared to the lower order towns, except the class VI towns. Indeed, the class VI towns do not fall in the contour with the general pattern as they exhibit a higher growth rate. One must hasten to add that these towns constitute a special category, as many of these are industrial townships; pilgrimages centres etc. or have come into existence through the establishment of public sector units. Their growth dynamics, therefore, are outside the purview of the regional economy.

The pattern of progress has remained parallel over the past three decades though there is a general slowing in urban growth in all size categories. Nonetheless, one can note that class I

cities have an edge over class II, III, IV and class V towns especially in terms of growth rate of common towns. This gap seems to have widened a bit during 1991-2001 (see the Table). The annual exponential growth rate for class I (common) towns during the 1970s and 1980s were 3.46% and 2.96% respectively. During 1991-2001 periods there is some marginal decrease in the growth rate of class I towns to 2.76% during 1991-2001, computed on the basis of 291 common class I cities. In comparison, the growth rate for class II towns has gone down by a larger margin, from 2.759% in the 1980s to 2.37% in the 1990s. The same is the case of class II towns, the corresponding percentage figures being 2.59 and 2.27. The smaller towns (IV, V and VI together), too, indicate a sharper decline in growth rate-from 2.57% during 1981-91 to 2.22% during 1991-2001. Thus the decline in the growth rate of class I cities is less, compared to all other categories of towns. One would, therefore, stipulate that the urban structure is becoming more and more top heavy due to the higher demographic growth in larger cities, in addition to the other factors discussed above.

Higher demographic growth in the class I cities is due to both areal expansion and in-migration. These cities report the emergence of a large number of satellite towns in their vicinity. Many of these have become a part of the city agglomeration over time. There are also outgrowths that have been treated as parts of the agglomeration by the census. Further, there has been expansion in the municipal boundaries of class I cities, as discussed under the third component of urban growth in the previous section. Besides, these cities fascinate migrants from all over the country due to stronger economic as well as infrastructural base.

The growth pattern of metro cities i.e. cities having a population of one million or more further validates the hypothesis of concentrated urban development. During 1981-91, they grew by 3.25% per annum, which is higher than the growth rate of towns that existed both in the base as well as terminal year, viz. 2.83%. During 1991-2001, the growth rate decreased across all size categories, including metro cities. In the case of the latter, the rate came down to 2.88% and that of common towns went down to 2.6%. The demographic development in metro cities is,

thus, higher than that of common towns or class I cities⁷⁹. The spatial concentration of urban growth can be seen not only in terms of an increase in the share of urban population in class I cities, but also in the metro cities. The latter claimed about 6.4% of urban population in 1981. This increased to 32.5% in 1991 and further to 37.8% in 2001. It may nonetheless be noted that the difference between the growth rates of metro and class I cities has gone down significantly over the past two decades.⁸⁰

It is important to examine if the state capitals have been growing differently from class I cities or common towns during the past two decades. Interestingly, the demographic growth in the state capitals and the national capital were at par with that of the metro cities during 1981-91. The capital cities registered growth rates as high as 3.36% per annum. The percentage of urban population living in these capital cities has, however, increased sluggishly from 25.7% to 25.9% during 1991-2001.⁸¹ This is because the growth rates of the capital cities declined substantially in the 1990s (to 2.79% only) compared to the previous decade⁸². It is a matter for in-depth empirical investigation to show whether the adverse growth of capital cities is because of the strategy of structural adjustment, expenditure control or fall in the infrastructural investments by the central and state governments, etc. Similar analysis needs to be carried out to explain the greater fall in the growth of metro cities in the 1990s as compared to class I cities.

8. Urbanisation In West Bengal

West Bengal was no doubt one of the most urbanised states in the colonial period and it can be traced back to the late 18th century when Calcutta emerged not only as a port town but also as a commercial town. However, the distribution-pattern of the major urban areas shows a marked

⁷⁹ Kundu, A. "Globalisation and the emerging urban structure: Regional inequality and population mobility". In *India: Social development report*. Oxford University Press., 2006.

⁸⁰ Kundu, Amitabh. "Urbanisation and Urban Governance: Search for a Perspective beyond Neo-Liberalism." *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 38, no. 29, 2003, pp. 3079–3087.

⁸¹ Kundu, Amitabh. *In the Name of the Urban Poor: Access to Basic Amenities*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1993.

⁸² Kundu. *Op. Cit.*, 2003.

concentration of urban population in the Central and Western districts - especially along the River Hooghly - for example, the districts of 24 Parganas, Howrah and Murshidabad. In Eastern Bengal, where urban centres were much fewer, the largest concentration of urban population varied from place to place. The unique position held by Calcutta in the hierarchy of cities and towns in Bengal was to a large extent due to its geographical situation, its docks and harbour facilities. It was the main port of India, providing a maritime outlet for the important export staples of jute, tea and indigo. Calcutta's very existence as the capital of the British Empire in India was due to its position "as the entrance of the English seaways into India."⁸³

Calcutta which had originated with and grown at the initiative of the British power in India was a new city compared with the old and "decaying" urban areas like Murshidabad which were the traditional seats of Muslim power and still the centres of Muslim social and cultural life in Bengal. By the passage of time Calcutta had concentrated within its limits various economic functions and, according to contemporary observers, had become the common centre of all commercial operations". It had an extensive hinterland sprawled on both sides of the River Hooghly, with "satellite towns" like Howrah, Hooghly and Chinsurah, Serampore, Naihati, Baidyabati, Bansberia and Agarpara. Murshidabad continued to have the small industries which had developed here under the patronage of the Nawab's court, for example, silk-weaving and ivory-carving, as well as its manufacture of coarse cotton cloth. Serampore was reported to have "a brisk trade in silk and jute" and a hinterland of "a thriving rural population and wealthy zamindars" The smaller towns, in addition to serving their usual function as local points of distribution, produced either one type of commodity or diverse types of goods.⁸⁴

Post-Independence the level of urbanisation was 23.9% in west Bengal. It was fourth in position in comparison to other states of India. It was preceded by the State of Maharashtra,

⁸³ H. K. Spate, "Factors in the Development of Capitals", *Geographical Review*, vol. 32, 1942, pp. 127-128.

⁸⁴ M. Guha, "The Development of Urban Functions of Calcutta", *Journal of Social Research*, vol. 5, no. 1, March 1962, p.93.

Gujrat and Tamil Nadu. It was observed that the rate of urbanisation in the subsequent decades in West Bengal was quite at a slower pace.

West Bengal witnessed a slow rate of urbanisation till 2001 but we see that the last decade experienced a sudden increase in urban population. The assessments reveal that the growth rate of urban population declined during the period 1961-1971 and it steadily plummeted especially during 1991-2001 before shooting up during the last decade. According to Census 2011, West Bengal is a highly urbanised state in the country with 32% of the population living in urban areas.

Table 1.3: Percentage of Decadal Urban Growth Rate in the West Bengal

years	Decadal urban growth (%)	Decadal rural growth(%)
1901-1911	13.7	5.21
1911-1921	17.16	4.43
1921-1931	15.01	6.98
1931-1941	63.69	15.55
1941-1951	32.52	8.27
1951-1961	26.97	31.81
1961-1971	28.41	26.38
1971-1981	31.71	20.36
1981-1991	29.49	23.01
1991-2001	20.20	16.94

Source: Census Data (compiled by the Researcher)

According to the census of India 2011, West Bengal has seen an increase in the number of urban centres over the last one decade. The ‘census towns’ have increased from 255 in 2001 to 780 in 2011 and statutory towns have also increased from 375 in 2001 to 909 in 2011. In the year 2001, West Bengal had 58 class-I cities, as many as 29 class-II cities and only 56 class-III cities.

With a population of about 82 million in 2001, West Bengal is the fourth most populous state, with the highest population density of 904 persons per square kilometre. Greater population pressure inevitably puts more pressure on basic infrastructure as well as on the provision of health and education services. The extremely high population density obviously

affects per capita resource allocation, so whatever West Bengal has achieved has been in spite of this critical negative factor of having the highest population density in the entire nation. The variation across districts in this regard also needs to be borne in mind when considering inter-district differences in human development indicators. In terms of the more obvious indicators of human development, the state is somewhere in the middle of all Indian states. In demographic terms, West Bengal has been successful in bringing down both birth rates and death rates, with one of the most rapid declines in birth rate in India. The decline in the birth rate from 30.2 per thousand to 25.4) has been nearly double that of the all-India average over the period 1991-2001, while the decline in the death rate has been one and a half times that of the national average. Infant mortality had also declined at a marginally more rapid rate than all of India. Life expectancy in West Bengal (at 69 years for males and 65 years for females) is well above the national average. In terms of income West Bengal is a middle-income state, ranked ninth among the fifteen major states in terms of both per capita income (SDP) and per capita consumption expenditure. Several outcome indicators for health and nutrition suggest that while average conditions could have improved more rapidly, there is substantially more equality of access across the population than in other parts of India. West Bengal ranks third in India with respect to infant mortality rates. Not only that the sex-ratio of the state is also increased from the last census period.

Table 1.4: Number of towns and % of urban population by size-class in West Bengal

Census Years	No. of Towns/cities						Percentage of Urban Population					
	CI-1	CI-2	CI-3	CI-4	CI-5	CI-6	CI-1	CI-2	CI-3	CI-4	CI-5	CI-6
1951	3	4	13	24	11	7	79.5	3.7	7.7	6.3	1.9	0.59
1961	4	10	29	29	26	4	76.6	7.1	8.5	4.7	2.7	0.18
1971	5	16	32	32	25	2	75.7	10.4	7.2	4.3	2.1	0.1
1981	12	21	35	35	20	7	77.7	8.8	6.6	4.8	1.7	0.27
1991	23	18	46	32	34	7	80.0	5.6	7.	4.0	2.6	0.29
2001	27	16	43	49	83	21	83.5	4.3	5.9	3.1	2.5	0.43
2011	62	37	81	198	446	85	84.1	5.2	4.9	3.1	2.0	0.45

Source: Census of India (compiled by the Researcher)

The numbers of urban centres have increased in 62 towns to 130 towns i.e. almost double during the three decades (1951- 1981). In the period of 1981 to 2001, it has increased doubly in the state. So, it is stated that the growth of rate towns was fast and steady since post-independence in the study area. Lastly, the state has made phenomenal jump in the number of urban centres over the last one decade. The number of census towns has risen from 255 in 2001 to 909 in 2011 and the numbers of statutory towns have also increased from 375 in 2001 to 909 in 2011. The population size of various cities have slowly increased in the study area where the number of Class-I, Class-II, Class-III, Class-IV, Class-V and Class-VI towns have increased in 24 cities, 12 cities, 30 cities, 25 cities, 72 cities and 14 cities respectively from 1951 to 2001. In this period class-I, Class-IV and Class-V cities have grown comparatively than other cities (Table 2). The remarkable growth of size class cities has noticed that the state has reached 62 Class-I, 37 Class-II, 81 Class-III, 198 Class-IV, 448 Class-V and 85 Class-VI cities respectively during the last decade (Fig. 6). Therefore, medium and small size towns have high tendency for increasing than large cities in the state. Consequently, the urban centres are developing in the peri-urban area to larger cities in irregularly and haphazardly (urban sprawl) following the road connectivity. The eastern and northern parts of Kolkata are high urban sprawling than other part (Bhatta, 2009). The unprecedented growth of small and medium cities has brought in the problem of provision of public goods and services (Chatterjee, 2016).

The population are reducing in class-I towns during the overcrowded and urban problems. It is interesting to note that as a consequence of forces of development around 580 villages have converted to the status of urban areas. As expected, towns and cities are largely concentrated in southern districts which accounted for almost 90% of class-I cities and 70% of class-II in 2011. North 24 Paraganas alone had a share of 27 cities in 2011. The population of statutory towns is reducing in Barrackpore subdivision in 2011 (Pramanick, 2018). It is further noticed that the proportion of urban population in Class-I cities has risen over time. On the contrary, in Class-II, III and IV cities, the proportion of population is found to have come down. However, the last two categories present an increasing trend (Table 2). All these clearly reveal

the enormity of the problems that has come up with the pace and nature of urbanization in West Bengal. Especially, the growth of Class-I cities across the southern parts both in terms of size and number may pose a serious challenge in terms of public health, safety and quality of life in general.

9. Objectives of Study:

The main objectives of the research are:

- To trace the growth and development of Siliguri in the colonial period,
- To identify factors that led to growth of population and its impact on the changing social landscape of Siliguri.
- To discuss how the economy and communication of the region expanded over the decades
- To discuss the geostrategic importance of Siliguri and geopolitical setting of the city in the global network.
- To discuss the impact of globalisation in the growth and development of Siliguri.

10. Research Questions

The research questions are as follows-

- What were the historical reasons for the growth and development of Siliguri in the colonial period?
- What were the causes and trends in population growth and how did it impact the social landscape of Siliguri?
- What was the impact and reason behind the growth of economic sectors and markets on the urbanisation of Siliguri
- What were the causes for the growth and development of the communication system on Siliguri and what was its impact? How did the communication network of the city expanded and what has been the impact?
- What was the geostrategic importance of Siliguri and what role did it play in the growth and development of Siliguri?
- What was the impact of Globalisation on the political economy of the region?

11. Research Methodology:

An analysis of any urban area requires deep and careful examination of the elements upon which the area is built and the different forces that continuously work upon it. Any transformation of a region can be and should be understood and studied in relation to its past. There is no single methodology that dominates the urban analysis, because the complexities of urban study require an adoption of a wide range of approaches. The methodology followed in this research is qualitative in its nature.

The proposed research addresses pertinent questions which aim to add to existing knowledge on Siliguri. The aim focuses on a variety, making it more or less triangulated on, which finally leads to the incitement of different disciplines. The method followed in this research is an in-depth study of discursive textual representation of the first-level and as well as the secondary sources. This thesis draws on sources that may be considered less typical to urban history. The sourcing of secondary urban sector data is embarked on through an in-depth exploration of census of India, Gazetteers, Statistical handbooks, electoral rolls of assembly elections and municipality records.

Primary data collection and generation was done through interviews, field work and survey of the city which included observation, transect walk for understanding the nerve of Siliguri, jotting interviews and narratives. Methodologically this study has combined two methods of knowing cities: “surveying” the city for abstract knowing and “walking” the city for experiential knowing. My research was juxtaposed between archival study and digital media experiments, especially the use of GIS operation, spatial statistics, google maps and satellite images while comprehending the geostrategic importance of the landscape.

12. Chapter Organisation

The whole thesis has been laid out on Six Chapters excluding the conclusion. Chapter 1, Introduction and theoretical basis looks into initiating the whole voyage of research with a converse on the statement of problems, site of enquiry, existing theories and review of existing literature, objective of research, research questions and finally the methodology of the Research. Chapter 2, 'From Obscurity to Sub-divisional Headquarter: Siliguri in the colonial Period' discusses how Siliguri from a village turned to be an entrepot for commercial activities. Chapter 3, 'Population Growth and the Changing Social Landscape' traces how the population of Siliguri changed after independence and especially after the Indo Pakistan war when there was a huge flow of migration of people from surrounding areas and this totally altered the social landscape of the region. Chapter 4, "Communication and Economy of Siliguri" discusses how the improvement of roads and communication system had a huge impact on the economy of the region. From an agrarian economy it got metamorphosed into a logistical hub under the pressure of contemporary neo liberal urbanisation and became the most important urban agglomeration in the region. Chapter 5, 'Geostrategic Importance of Siliguri' discusses the strategic importance of Siliguri has transformed it into a military town and this had a positive impact on growth and development of the town. Chapter 6, 'Siliguri in the era of globalisation discusses the recent changes in Siliguri in the last two decades. Towards the end 'Summary and Conclusion' winds up the whole research work.