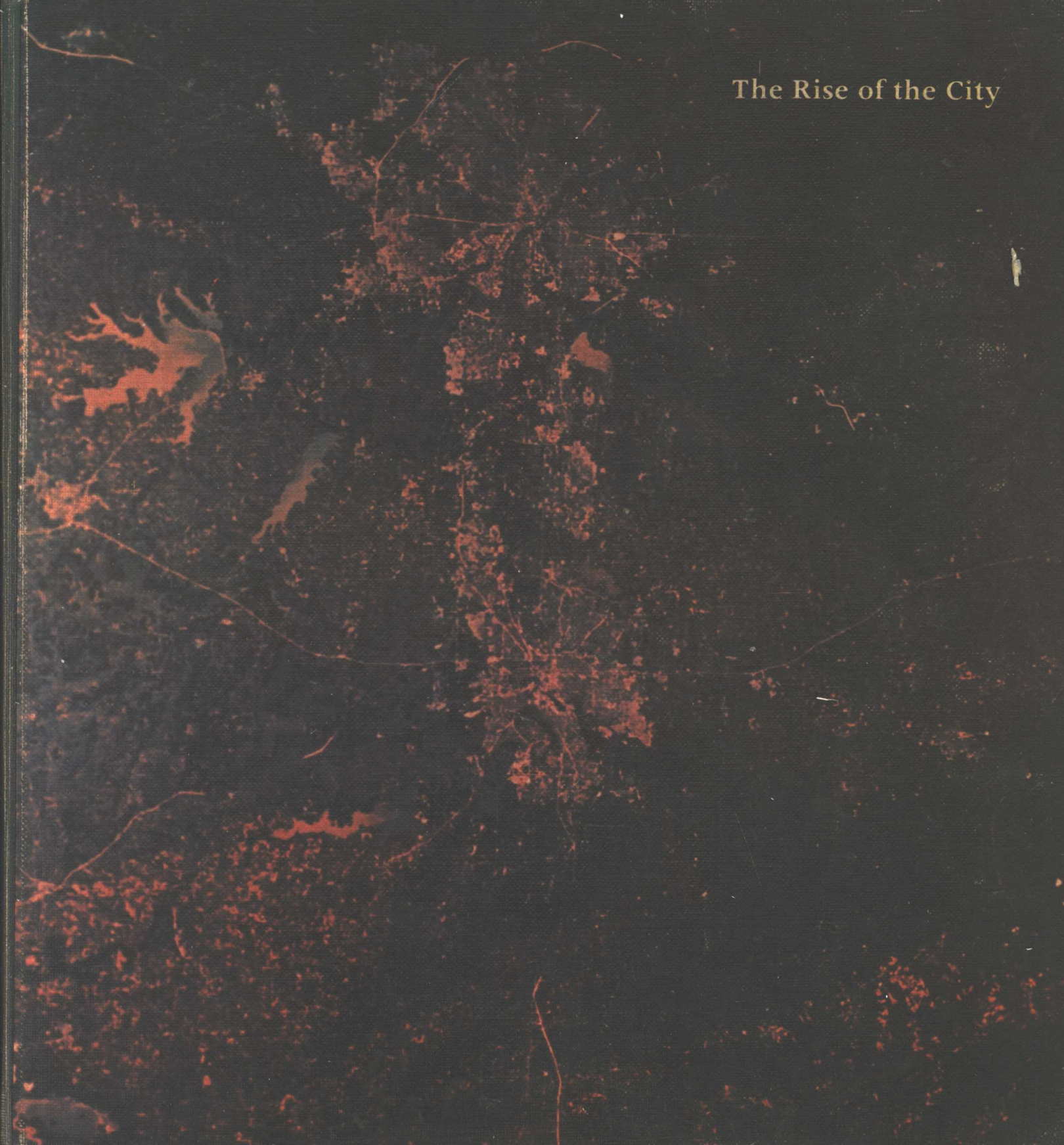


The Rise of the City





# **The Rise of the City**

An Urban Approach to World Geography

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## Preface

Today more than 70 percent of all people living in the Western world have made urban centers their home. Those who have not chosen towns or cities as places of residence live within their sphere of influence. As a result of the growing impact of the urban center upon modern man, the city has become the most important and exciting dimension of all geographic studies.

The urban center has become an important area of study for other reasons too. It is the “real” world in which most students live. It is the stage upon which they will shape their futures and the lives of succeeding generations. Since the urban center has become the focal point of man’s activity, geography students should acquire knowledge of its origins, development, and present status if they wish to take advantage of its many opportunities, to live and work there constructively, and to shape its future. We have written this book to satisfy the need of urban students for such knowledge.

*The Rise of the City: An Urban Approach to World Geography* contains three units, each of which stresses a particular phase of man’s urbanization. Unit One discusses the effect of fresh water, landforms, climate, the geographic locations of cities, historical events, culture, and technology upon the fortunes of man and of his cities. Unit Two traces man’s rise from a remote hunter-gatherer past through his domestication of plants and animals, his beginning to live in communities, his slow development of community life, and his technological advancements that made possible today’s sprawling industrial centers. Unit Three traces the rise of American cities and of their effects upon American society. Also presented in Unit Three is a discussion of the problems of several non-Western cities.

In writing *The Rise of the City*, we have not attempted to offer solutions to the problems of cities. Instead, we have offered in Chapter 1 a set of tools that can be used throughout the text to explore geographic data and form generalizations from those facts. Occasions to apply generalizations occur frequently, especially through the questions appearing in the text material. A second set of geographic tools, presented in Chapter 18, will help the student make an in-depth study of any urban center to determine its character. By applying the tools of geographic inquiry, the student will be able to develop and offer possible solutions to many pressing urban problems and thereby participate in charting the future of cities.

We hope this text will provide the student with not only new geographical dimensions but also insights into the character of the man-made landscape, where the hills are buildings of steel, concrete, and glass, and where streams and rivers are the flowing lines of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. More important, we hope the text will prompt the student to take an active interest in the man-made landscape and to participate in solving its problems.

The Authors

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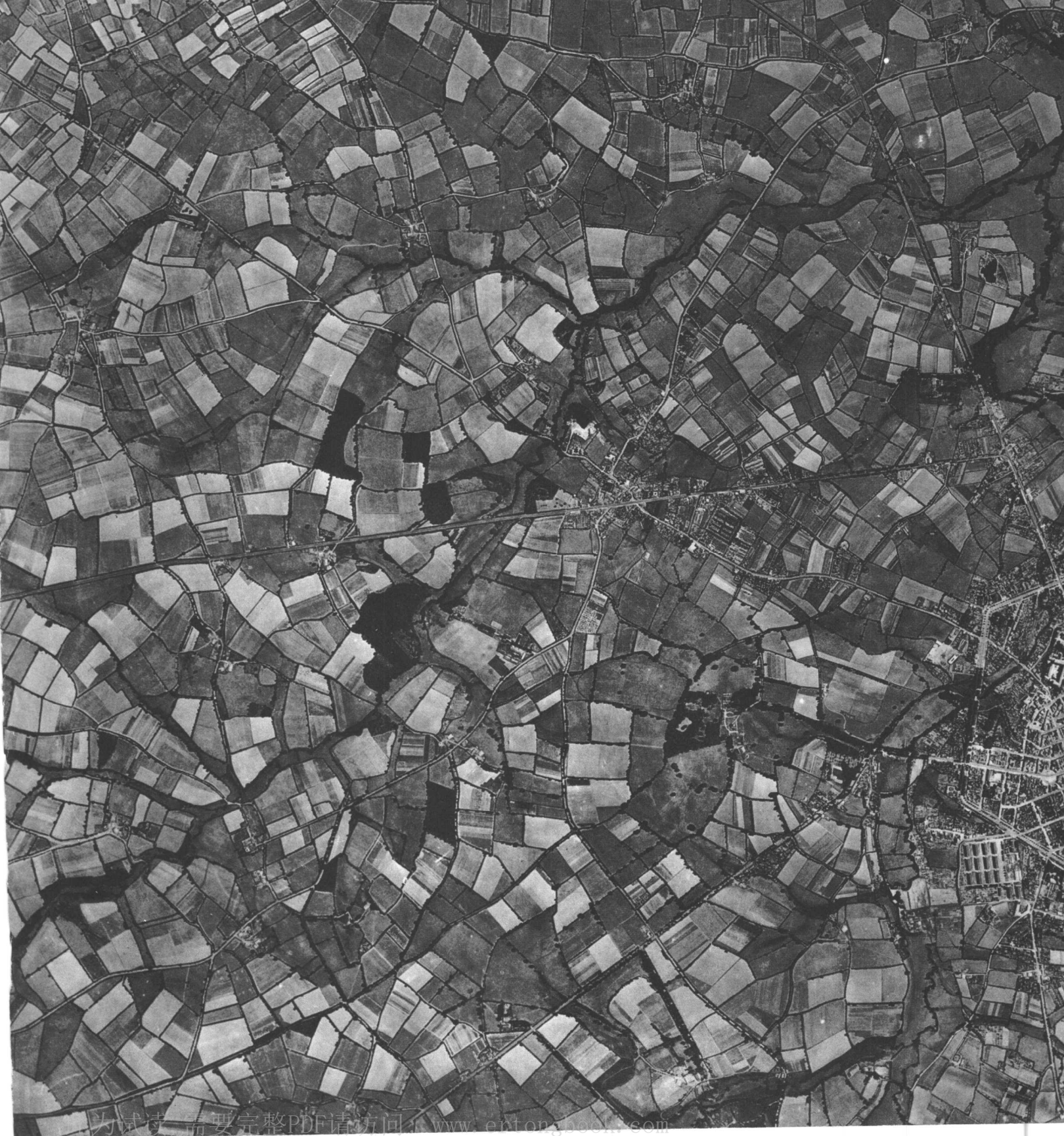
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## **Unit One** Factors Affecting Man's Use of the Land





The industrial city is a recent development in the history of man's growing dominion over the earth. Regardless of its youth, however, the industrial city has already become the home, or stage of action, for most Westerners and will rapidly become the home of most non-Western peoples as their cities become industrialized.

Although the industrial city is a recent development and milestone in the ascendancy of man, it has nonetheless acquired many undesirable features, such as ghettos. Today these features have created serious problems that have prompted some people to question the worth of the city. In spite of these undesirable features, the industrial city has been of incalculable worth, not only to its inhabitants, but to mankind as a whole.

Because the industrial city has been more beneficial than harmful and because of the promise it holds for future generations, urban geography has become an important area of study. Urban geography offers a comprehensive view of the *whys, wheres, whens, and hows* of the creation and development of cities. More important, it offers the means to evaluate cities for what

they are and to find solutions to the problems arising from their more undesirable features.

The materials in Unit One supply the student-geographer with a sample study of a present-day town. The methods of inquiry used in analyzing this town are the same as those used by urban geographers in investigating the *whys, wheres, whens, and hows* of any town or city. By applying such methods of inquiry, the urban geographer is able to determine the *why, where, and when* of a town's establishment, as well as *how* the town has been developed. *How* a town has been developed is the most interesting aspect of urban geography, because a town cannot remain static—like any living organism, it must experience change and growth, or it will stagnate and then die.

Since history offers many examples of the rise and fall of great cities, the urban geographer cannot help asking himself one of several questions: Why has the city being studied continued to live and grow? Why has it deteriorated? Why has it died? Such questions lead to an investigation of the location, or site, of a city and of its relationships to other places and cities, two



factors important to the rise or fall of almost all cities. Without a good site and favorable relationships, the city is doomed to gradual decline and, eventually, extinction.

Unit One also investigates the two primary resources upon which both man and his cities have been so dependent—fresh water and fertile land. The abundance of these two natural resources has often been the deciding factor in determining whether a man, city, or nation lives or dies. So important have these resources been that reference to them can be found in the history, laws, religion, and literature of societies throughout the world.

Also examined in this unit are the invention and spread of man's basic technologies. One such technology is agriculture. This technology is so basic that most Westerners of the twentieth century overlook its significance and take it for granted. The importance of agriculture to the existence of cities can only be appreciated when answering the following questions: How could the people of any city live without the surplus crops produced by modern-day farm technology? How long could farmers live

without the goods and services provided by nearby cities?

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Closely associated with the invention and the spread of technologies are the cultures of the various groups of people inhabiting the earth. The culture of a people, or their ways of believing, of behaving, and of doing things, is one deciding factor that has helped determine the degree to which they accept or reject new inventions or ideas. How has Western culture affected your life?

Of equal importance to the technological level of a people is their nearness to the origin of invention and the extent to which their environment will permit an application of the invention. An Eskimo, for example, could not raise corn, cotton, or wheat in the lands of the Arctic Circle because of prohibitive climatic conditions.

Materials in Unit One provide concepts basic to the study of urban geography and the means of making sound geographic inquiry. By becoming familiar with these concepts and tools, the student-geographer will find the study of man and his cities both fascinating and vital to his appreciation of their true significance.



# I An Introduction to Urban Geography

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What is urban geography? Urban geography is the study of the rise, development, and impact of cities upon man. Urban geography is not as much concerned with climates, landforms, and regions as with how man has adjusted to and used his environment, thereby seeking to gain more control over it and over the course of his destiny.

The use of maps, however, is just as essential to the study of urban geography as it is to the study of traditional geography. Maps show where man has built cities, indicate the kinds of landforms and climates most favored by man for the erection of his cities, and provide much information about the ways that man has used the land.

Why has the study of urban geography become necessary? For several reasons. First, more and more people throughout the world are becoming urban- or city-dwellers. Second, the city way of life has already become the most common way of life in the Western world, and it will become more common in the non-Western world as the countries become more industrialized. Third, the decisions affecting the mass of mankind are made in cities. Fourth, many of the most serious problems confronting mankind are city-caused problems. Fifth, before city-dwellers can reasonably resolve city problems, they must know the origins of these problems—that is, they must know *why* the first communities were founded and *how* they have developed into the sprawling urban centers of today.

