
Presentation

THE ORIGIN OF CITIES is strongly related to the drift towards sedentary lifestyle that our civilization suffered once our ancestors abandoned their condition of hunter–gatherers upon discovering agriculture, thus favoring the existence of surpluses that allowed the establishment of stable groups in space over time.

Since then, cities have played a fundamental role in the history and evolution of our civilization. At the time of this writing, approximately half of humans live in cities, but it is estimated that by 2050 this proportion will reach 70%. This process of aggregation is generated in the crucible of the interaction of antagonistic forces. On the one hand, access to better living conditions encourages those who live on the periphery (particularly in rural areas) to integrate into the urban population. But access to that well-being becomes more difficult as the number of applicants to it increases. This raises a phenomenon with a fractal structure. In his work *Human Behavior and the Least Effort Principle*, the American linguist George Kingsley Zipf posited that if cities were listed according to their size, then the rank of a city would be inversely proportional to the number of people living in it.

Rural communities are halfway up the scale-free spectrum that human settlements make up. The landscape drawn in broad strokes above has a finer structure in the case of these settlements, outlined by economic structures and agricultural policies carried out by governments, the existence of adequate means of transport and access to information technologies and communication, among others. The study of this universe is of vital importance for the creation of an accurate picture of the structure of rural households.

The dossier in this issue of the **INTER DISCIPLINA** magazine is dedicated to the analysis of the structure of rural households through reflections and empirical evidence regarding their dynamics. The scope of this discussion goes far beyond the Mexican national framework. This makes this number a must-see in the literature on this topic.

In the section of Independent Communications there are six papers that deal with economic theory, higher education, psychological disorders and alcoholism, network models and mortality in different settings. These works are accompanied by three book reviews. **ID**

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