

# The Fifth Migration

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In the 1920s, Lewis Mumford correctly predicted that the rest of the century would be dominated by a "Fourth Migration" from the central cities to their suburbs. In this article I argue that we are now at the beginning of a fifth migration that will reurbanize precisely those inner-city districts that were previously depopulated. I identify four sources for this trend: downtown reurbanism; immigrant reurbanism; Black reurbanism; and White middle-class reurbanism, and point out the challenges involved in planning the fifth migration.

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It is evident that each great movement of population, in sum, presents a new opportunity and a new task, and wisdom consists in taking advantage of the movement while it is still fluid. (Lewis Mumford, "The Fourth Migration," 1925, p. 133)

**I**n the longer view, the night of August 14–15, 2003, might prove to be a decisive date in American urban history. August 14 is notorious as the day when a massive power outage suddenly ripped through much of the Northeast and Midwest from New York City to Detroit. And the night of August 14–15 seemed likely to be even worse. In July, 1977, a blackout in New York City resulted in some of the worst rioting in the city's history. A resident of Bushwick, a Brooklyn neighborhood which saw intense looting and burning, recalled that in 1977 "I got five couches, five TV's, two stereo sets, gold chains, everything you could think of. . . . Even the decent people, the churchgoing people, were taking stuff back then" (Barron, 2003, p. A1). Now in 2003, another summer blackout had struck simultaneously not only the nation's largest concentration of urban poverty (New York City) but the nation's two poorest major cities overall, Cleveland and Detroit.

The night of August 14–15 was decisive for what *didn't* happen. Not only Bushwick but every affected inner city escaped destruction; indeed, police in New York, Cleveland, and Detroit reported conditions as "quieter than usual" (Davey & Hakim, 2003, p. A17; MacDonald, 2003, p. A1). In 2003 police morale held, and, more importantly, so did that of ordinary citizens. Newspapers reported countless examples of patience and cooperation. There was an almost festive air as families took to the streets to barbecue and share the food that had been defrosting in their refrigerators and await with their neighbors the return of power. What Jane Jacobs (1961) has called "the public peace . . . an intricate and almost unconscious network of voluntary controls and standards among the people themselves, and enforced by the people themselves" (pp. 31–32)—the public peace prevailed.

This renewed civic order in places like Bushwick was even more striking, given that Bushwick had been one of the many areas identified in 1976 by the influential New York planner and housing administrator Roger Starr (1976) for what he called "planned shrinkage." This meant the systematic withdrawal of

city services, closing of subway stops, and other closings that would force people out of the most devastated neighborhoods so that the city could concentrate its dwindling resources on the rest. This perception of inevitable decline was perhaps most strikingly stated by Lewis Mumford. When asked in 1975 to give his advice on the city's bankruptcy woes, he replied "Make the patient as comfortable as possible. It's too late to operate" (Shenker, 1975, p. 35).

In fact, far from shrinking (planned or otherwise), New York City is now at its peak population of over 8 million people. Bushwick, for example, has grown from 92,000 at the time of the 1980 census to 104,000 today as hundreds of apartments and houses have been rehabilitated or infilled. Although crime and poverty are still problems, the rate of violent crime in the district declined by two thirds over the last 10 years, while welfare rolls have decreased from 37,000 in 1994 under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children system to 13,000 in 2002. The district remains almost entirely minority, with 67% Hispanic, 24% Black, and only 3% White (NYC Department of City Planning, 2003). But this is likely to change as middle-class Whites begin to spill over from "hip" Williamsburg located to the east. Already a developer has converted an abandoned late 19th-century German singing hall into "The Opera House Lofts" (Mooney, 2004).

Clearly something important has changed from the worst days of the urban crisis, not only in New York, where 81% of the city's more than 2,200 census districts gained population between 1990 and 2000 (Berube & Forman, 2003, p. 80), but throughout the country in inner-city districts like the South Side of Chicago, Dorchester and Roxbury in Boston, South Central Los Angeles, and Oakland (Jackson, 2001). Not only has violent crime, the most fearsome aspect of the urban crisis, declined to "historic lows" ("Violent and Property Crime," 2004). But as Patrick A. Simmons and Robert E. Lang have shown in their Census 2000 study of the 36 large American cities that had experienced the worst of the urban crisis in the 1970s, these cities as a group are now increasing in population for the first time since World War II. Although 19 of these cities are still losing population (for reasons I will discuss below), their rate of loss has slowed dramatically since the 1970s, and these losses are now outweighed by the dramatic turnaround in the larger and more globally oriented cities. Chicago, as they point out, lost 360,000 people in the decade of the 1970s, but gained 100,000 in the 1990s; New York lost 800,000 in the 1970s and gained 700,000 in the 1990s (Simmons & Lang, 2003, p. 56).

Immigration is at the heart of this "turnaround," although it is far from the only cause. An unusually complete 2005 study of both documented and undocumented immi-

gration to New York City counted 3.2 million immigrants from more than 40 countries or 36% of the city's population (NYC Planning Department, 2005). As Joseph Salvo, co-author of the report, observed, "Immigrant flows have mitigated catastrophic population losses in the 1970's, stabilized the city's population in the 1980's, and helped the city reach a new population peak of over 8 million in 2000" (Bernstein, 2005, p. A1). The report also emphasizes the renewed vitality of the urban economy, which has enabled immigrant households with several wage earners to compensate for the relatively low wages of each working member. This aspect of the report reinforces the important research of Paul Jargowsky on both immigrant and non-immigrant households. Jargowsky documented a dramatic nationwide decline in the number of people living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty (i.e., where poverty rates exceed 40%), which fell by 24% or 2.5 million people (Jargowsky, 2003). If the epidemic of concentrated poverty was perhaps the worst single outcome of the urban crisis, the decline of concentrated urban poverty is at least as significant as the rise in urban population.

In this longer view, I will argue that we are in the early stages of one of those great "migrations" or "tidal flows" of population that Lewis Mumford argued in a classic 1925 article have largely shaped America. Mumford identified a "First Migration" of pioneers that had settled the continent, a "Second Migration" from the farms to the factory towns, and a "Third Migration" to the great metropolitan centers, which had become the industrial and financial core of the country. In 1925 he predicted a "Fourth Migration" which would radically decentralize the functions of the great metropolis and spread population throughout whole regions. Urban concentration, he announced, was now obsolete. And we now know that Mumford was exactly right to comprehend that the American industrial metropolis, whose growth seemed inevitable at the time, was in fact a highly unstable and temporary urban form. The booming "factory zones" of the 1920s, with their multistory factories surrounded by densely packed housing, would in the second half of the 20th century become the depopulated inner-city epicenters of the urban crisis, while Mumford's fourth migration carried people and population to the ever-receding peripheries of the region.

Today, if we take a longer view comparable to Mumford's in the 1920s, I believe we can see that the fourth migration to suburbia and beyond is now finally ebbing, and a fifth migration is now underway. This fifth migration is most evident in what I call the *reurbanization* of those inner-city districts like Bushwick that had been most devastated during Mumford's fourth migration. This new movement is crucially dependent on the recovery of the elite down-

town office and residential districts that began 40 years ago, but it has spread far beyond them. The real force behind the fifth migration is not the affluent newcomers from the suburbs who "discover" a neighborhood close to the core, but the global migration of immigrants from around the world as well as longer-term residents who are rediscovering the possibilities of inner cities located strategically between the downtown regional core and the suburbs.

The fifth migration is essentially the rediscovery and re-creation of the traditional urbanism of density that Mumford had declared obsolete. In part the fifth migration has been shaped by the presence of relatively cheap housing close to downtown regional employment centers and (in some cases) accessible to the suburbs as well. But more profoundly the fifth migration is re-creating a genuinely urban economy of flexible, small-scale, highly skilled units whose jobs are replacing the lost world of urban mass production. In a strange alchemy, precisely the disadvantages of inner-city districts in the age of the fourth migration—pedestrian scale, resistance to the automobile, aging housing stock, "obsolete" retail and manufacturing facilities, reliance on mass transit, minority and immigrant populations—are turning into advantages for the fifth migration.

As such, the fifth migration appears to be following a model that Jane Jacobs (1961) herself suggested more than 40 years ago: "unslumming." As she wrote, "Unslumming hinges, paradoxically, on the retention of a very considerable part of a slum population within a slum" (p. 272). As immigrant and minority families achieve precarious but real economic gains in a growing urban economy, they choose not to flee but to slowly improve their lives within their neighborhoods, largely through home purchase and improvement (Drew, 2002). This cumulative process, "house by house, block by block" in the phrase of Alexander von Hoffman (2003), its best analyst, represents in part an important contribution by planners who have consistently fought redlining to expand housing opportunities. These initial improvements encourage landlords to improve their rental properties, thus keeping older residents in the area and bringing in others. Retail strips, like Bushwick's Broadway that had been devastated in the 1977 riots, slowly come back to life. Some of the underutilized industrial structures become incubators for small businesses that succeed by building on the inner city's deepening network of skills and their proximity to the hyperactive downtown economy, only a short subway ride or truck trip away. So a fifth migration "virtuous cycle" replaces the vicious cycle of the fourth migration exodus from the city.

As is inevitable, this "virtuous cycle" is relatively advanced in some cities (Boston, San Francisco/Oakland, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York), while in others the fifth

migration has hardly begun. As Alan Berube (2003) rightly reminds us, "decentralization of the population was still the dominant trend [from 1990 to 2000]. Nearly every one of the top 100 cities grew considerably more slowly than its surrounding suburbs" (p. 40). But as Mumford recognized in his 1925 article, the migrations are not sequential events but rather "come as successive waves," with each new wave mingling with the previous one. The dominant trend of the 1920s still appeared to be the centralization of the population, especially the exploding growth of such inner-city factory districts like East Detroit. Only in retrospect can we perceive the significance of the growing counter trend to decentralization that would radically transform regional structure. Perhaps only in 1920s Los Angeles could one see on the ground the new pattern of decentralized growth that Mumford was already calling the "Fourth Migration."

Similarly, today, it is perhaps only in the New York region that one can see the region-wide impact of the fifth migration. In a study titled (perhaps with excessive modesty) "The Beginning of the End of Sprawl?" James Hughes and Joseph J. Seneca (2004) have documented a dramatic reversal starting in the 1990s of what they call the "seemingly inexorable trend" toward decentralization in the New York region. As they show, from the late 1960s to the 1990s, the unique position of Manhattan in the global economy did not prevent the region as a whole from experiencing the New York version of Mumford's fourth migration. The regional core (New York City and Hudson, Essex, and Union counties in New Jersey) lost 8% of its population between 1969 and 1990, while the rest of the region (what the report calls the "suburban ring") gained 11%; and the core lost 6.6% of its jobs between 1969 and 1996, while suburban jobs increased by 56%. But, as they show, since the 1990s these vital measures have stabilized or turned around: population growth in the core from 1990 to 2001 matched that of the ring for the first time since World War II; housing starts in the core, which had slipped to only 16% of the region's total authorized units in 1994, now comprise 39%. And the core since 1996 has not only reversed its long-term job loss but has actually matched job gains in the suburban ring, with both growing by 9% between 1996 and 2001 (Hughes & Seneca, 2004).

As Hughes and Seneca observe, it is too early to tell from the data alone whether we are seeing a new regional pattern or a temporary pause in a continuing process of decentralization. In this article, I will explain why I believe that what I call *reurbanism* is a permanent and growing force, not just in New York but within the American regional system as a whole. In any case, I am not predicting that the fifth migration will mirror the extremes of fevered growth in the favored areas and abandonment in the dis-

favored ones that characterized the fourth migration, an outcome as unlikely as it is undesirable. Mumford's 1925 article celebrating the coming fourth migration observed that the earlier migrations had failed to realize their potentials to create "stable all-round communities" because each was soon dominated by a frenzied rush for maximum growth and profit. In the 1920s he had hoped that the fourth migration could be moderated by beneficent planning to channel the chaotic flow of decentralization into planned Garden Cities or New Towns. But four decades later when he reprinted his "Fourth Migration" essay as the introduction to his collection of articles from the 1950s and 1960s, *The Urban Prospect*, the rest of the book was an anguished cry of protest that his anticipated sites for new self-contained communities had degenerated into "the disorganized mass of formless, low-grade urban tissue that is now nicknamed Megalopolis" (Mumford, 1968, p. 228).

In this context, one great strength of the fifth migration is that it is likely to be a countermovement to the continuing power of decentralization rather than the single dominant pattern within the region. The reurbanization of the core will necessarily ease the pressure for expansion at the edge, thus increasing the chances for successful suburban growth management. And the continuing attachment of the majority of Americans to suburban densities should decrease the pressures of a "land rush" to the core and hence increase the opportunity for stable, diverse, all-round communities in the inner cities. The fifth migration thus carries the promise of something never before seen in American urbanism: balance.

## Analyzing the Fifth Migration

As Mumford emphasized in his 1925 essay, the real impact of the great migrations on American society came not so much from the redistribution of population *per se* but from the ways of life that the migrations fostered and the ideals they expressed. I have tried to express the meaning and the ideals of the fifth migration with the term *reurbanism*. When I taught at the Camden, New Jersey, campus of Rutgers University, I had ample opportunity to reflect on the fact that beyond Camden's catastrophic loss of people and jobs, it had ceased to be a *city*. A city had always meant not merely population density but a unique built environment that supports complex skills, information, and social interactions. These were precisely the qualities that a de-industrialized, racially segregated, physically devastated environment could no longer support. But why did Camden and so many other inner-city districts lose their dynamic urbanism? Their locations close to the cores of their re-

gions where the nation's great networks of rail and water transportation converged seemed to give them a permanent advantage. Why did they lose that advantage? And why are they now regaining it?

The answers to these interrelated questions lie in Mumford's concept of the fourth migration, both the characteristics he perceived as early as the 1920s and those not yet apparent. As he argued in 1925, new technologies of transportation and communication (he cited in particular the automobile, telephone, radio, and long-distance electrical power grids) had now made possible a radical transformation of the urban itself. Urbanity had always meant density and concentration, because in a dispersed rural world where people and goods moved with painful slowness, societies needed to crowd their key functions together at a single favored spot. Only this concentration could provide that speed and variety of face-to-face interchange that could sustain a complex civilization. Even such powerful 19th-century technologies as the railroad and the steamship had promoted concentration in what H.G. Wells called "the whirlpool cities," drawing the resources of whole regions and countries into their giant vortices. But 20th-century technology, in Mumford's view, had the effect of covering the entire region with decentralized networks of movement and information that gave the same advantages to the periphery as to the core. One could thus urbanize at any point in the region: the crowded central city was not only ugly, inefficient, and (for the poor especially) inhuman, it was now "out of square with our new opportunities" (Mumford, 1925, p. 131).

These opportunities, as Mumford saw them, meant spreading urbanism throughout the whole region, thus ending the excessive densities at the core and enabling modern civilization to attain simultaneously the complexity of an advanced technological civilization with a human scale and direct contact with nature of the ancient polis. He could not foresee the vast state and federal programs that would finance the creation of these decentralized networks (in effect taxing the urban economy to promote regional growth) but he did understand that the dominant urban dynamic of his fourth migration would be the *fragmentation of the urban*. Where city building had necessarily meant concentration, it now meant opening up the too-solid built environment to disperse population and permitting rapid automobile and truck movement along the new "townless highways" that Mumford's colleague Benton MacKaye envisioned. The pride of the old metropolis—the dense accumulations of housing, industry, and skills in places like Camden and the deep infrastructure (especially the rail infrastructure) that supported this density—these were now so many liabilities from the past to be written off.

To be sure, Mumford and his colleagues in the Regional Planning Association of America believed that they could somehow control the full impact of the fourth migration by containing it within a region-wide system of New Towns that would be carefully planned to provide a complex, face-to-face urbanism at a small scale. Not surprisingly, this belief proved to be illusory. By the 1960s, Mumford understood that the fourth migration had acquired a momentum he found as frightening as the earlier migration to the industrial cities. Not only were the inner cities being written off and abandoned, but so too were the urban complexity and the "urban dialogue" that Mumford prized above all. Urbanity itself, he feared, was being hopelessly debased and fragmented in suburban sprawl, or what he called "the anti-city":

Though the anti-city, almost by definition, is hardly imageable, its scattered parts are often aesthetically attractive and humanly rewarding. Moreover, it has at its disposal the combined forces of highway engineers, motorcar manufacturers, real-estate developers, and lending institutions; all the more favored because its very randomness avoids the need for disciplined cooperation and municipal coordination. Because the anti-city is by its nature fragmentary, any part can be built by anybody anywhere at any time. This is the ideal formula for promoting total urban disintegration.  
(Mumford, 1968, pp. 132–133)

It was not only Mumford who was haunted by the prospect of "total urban disintegration" as the logical end of the fourth migration. The 1970s, the heyday of the fourth migration, presented the very real possibility of an unstoppable rolling wave of increased abandonment at the core and ever-increasing dispersion at the edge. But, as wise economists observe, "In the end, an unsustainable trend cannot be sustained." The seemingly inevitable force for the fourth migration gave rise to a series of counter trends that are finally coming together to form the fifth migration. These counter trends are all variations on the theme of reurbanism, that is, the rediscovery of density, concentration, and what Mumford termed "disciplined cooperation and municipal coordination" (Mumford, 1968, p. 132) as positive values in American urbanism. I call these variations *downtown reurbanism*; *immigrant reurbanism*; *Black reurbanism*; and *White middle-class reurbanism*.

## Downtown Reurbanism

The first counter trend was the recovery and reinvention of American downtowns as vital points of concentration in their regions and in the emerging global economy.

It is worth remembering that this counter trend began during the worst period of inner-city abandonment, and was largely inspired and directed by precisely those corporate and real estate elites who were directing the decentralization of industrial production. As we know from Joel Garreau's (1991) edge cities and Robert Lang's (2003) edgeless cities, office functions can be decentralized almost as quickly as manufacturing. Indeed, so much office employment did follow the CEOs and other managers to suburban locations close to high-income residential suburbs that we must wonder why the downtowns were not only spared the fate of the inner cities but have attracted extensive new investment and functions.

I would argue that the reason lies with such intangible issues as regional identity and especially "the staging of power." A fundamentally fragmented environment is relatively poor at creating sites with unique identities. No office park can match the aura of a high floor of a skyscraper located at a region's historic core. And, as we know from the Detroit region, even the most extensive collection of prosperous edge cities cannot compensate a region for the image of a semi-abandoned downtown. It is precisely their "100% location" at the heart of a thriving downtown that helps to support those smaller, highly specialized enterprises like law firms, accounting firms, advertising agencies, and investment managers in their claims to regional, national, and even international standing. If a regional downtown becomes itself less than a 100% location, then the opportunity of firms within that region to operate globally correspondingly declines.

Hence the fervor with which regional elites sought to maintain their downtowns as the global showcases for the region. This agenda, which Bernard Frieden and Lynne Sagalyn (1989) have aptly termed *Downtown, Inc.*, went beyond the office towers and plazas of urban renewal to include cultural venues, sports stadiums, convention centers, and urban entertainment zones. Such projects were accompanied by the gentrification of nearby neighborhoods that both benefited from downtown amenities and helped to support them. But downtown reurbanism was always an endeavor limited by space, race, and class; it was perfectly compatible with what commentators called "the dual city" (Mollenkopf & Castells, 1991). Reurbanism would, however, soon receive reinforcement from an unexpected source that would take it far beyond downtown.

## Immigrant Reurbanism

Looking back, we can now see that the one Great Society program that profoundly benefited the cities was one that was not even seen as an urban program at all: the 1965 Immigration Act. As Dowell Myers has observed, one

forgotten element in the urban crisis was the *absence* of immigrants during the critical 1950–1975 period (Myers, 1999). But if downtown reurbanism enabled the urban cores to tap into the energy generated by globalization at its highest levels, the coming of immigrant reurbanism tapped an even more powerful current of energy at the mass level that is at the heart of the fifth migration. And the immigrant impact goes well beyond their numbers: 31.1 million Americans according to the 2000 census, an increase of 11.3 million over 1990 (Singer, 2004, p. 2). As Saskia Sassen and Louis Winnick were perhaps the first to point out, immigrants directly supported downtown reurbanism by staffing the large number of low-paid service jobs that the new downtowns required (Sassen, 1991). More importantly, at least some immigrants brought with them the experience of living in dense cities with a still-vital small-scale economy (Winnick, 1990). I remember my own astonishment in the 1970s when I first saw Asian fruit vendors selling from pushcarts in our major downtowns. Pushcarts belonged in the urban history we taught our students, not on the streets! But in fact the pushcart economy was the urban future, for these and other modest immigrant enterprises were the starting point for the economic reurbanism of the inner cities.

The basic logic of this economic reurbanism is the creation of a truly urban economy of highly interrelated, small-scale units that can collectively produce unique goods and services (Loukaitou Sideris, 2000). The stages in this economic development are now becoming clear. If inner-city immigrant neighborhoods served first merely as cheap dormitory zones for downtown service jobs, these neighborhoods began to develop their own capacity as service providers. Parallel to suburban back offices, inner-city warehouses were the “backstage” for the spectacle of downtown consumption, the place where high-quality food-stuffs, flowers, and other goods were brought together for just-in-time delivery. This function soon broadened as immigrants began to master the skills necessary to produce the downtown spectacle—the metal workers, carpenters, glaziers, tillers, electrical workers who constructed the glittering storefronts, hip restaurants and galleries, and luxury kitchens and bathrooms (Hum, 2003).

Parallel to this craft revival was the renewal of inner-city manufacturing, often initially in the worst forms of sweated labor, but soon moving to relatively high-wage and high-skill operations to supply downtown and suburban demand for high-quality handmade products. And all these skills filtered back into the neighborhood as waiters opened up small restaurants, and building workers applied their new skills to renovating their own and their neighbors’ houses. New kinds of enterprises arose, like the

storefronts that specialize in communication with “the old country,” and offer cheap phone service, discount airfares, instant money transfers to remote villages, and even cheap shipping of Mama’s homemade specialties from her village to the American city (Ong et al., 1994; Porter, 1995; Tseng, 1995).

To be sure, not all immigrants have chosen to live or to remain in inner cities. Indeed, the majority of immigrants now live in areas classified as suburbs (Alba et al., 1999; Singer, 2004, p. 10). In the 69 American metropolitan areas whose populations are more than 10% immigrants, the central cities absorbed 3.5 million new immigrants in the 1990s, but their suburbs absorbed 4.8 million (Logan, 2003, p. 8). Many of these “suburbs” are in fact industrial, first-ring suburbs. Nevertheless, one can agree with John Logan’s (2003) observation that “many new immigrants now move directly to homes in suburban areas, where they join growing clusters of newcomers from the same racial or ethnic group in the kinds of ethnic neighborhoods that used to be associated mainly with cities” (p. 9), a phenomenon Robert E. Lang has called “the new Brooklyns.” But the new Brooklyns exist in suburban zones that would be gaining population and jobs without the immigrants. It is the capacity of immigrant reurbanism to reverse inner-city population decline and to create an urban economy there that makes it crucial within the region.

## Black Reurbanism

One of the tragedies of the great Black migration to the northern cities in the years 1940–1970 was that the southern rural economic order had systematically denied Blacks opportunities for small-scale business entrepreneurship that many immigrant groups did possess (Lemann, 1991). This might not have mattered if the industrial economy of the northern cities had remained strong, but once entry-level factory jobs began to disappear, Black workers faced continuing racial prejudice without the experience of self-enterprise that enabled at least some immigrant groups to create their own niches in an urban economy that was moving rapidly from manufacturing to services (Wilson, 1996). Hence, Black reurbanism has followed a much slower and more painful path than most immigrant reurbanism. Nevertheless, since the great Black migration, Black labor and skills have been increasingly crucial to the urban economy, and Black culture has largely defined that core ideal of hipness and diversity that is the cultural ideal of reurbanism.

Finally, there is increasing evidence that urban Blacks are beginning to benefit significantly from the broader reurbanism of the inner cities. The long-term Black commitment to staffing city governments has been better rewarded now that many central cities and their budgets are growing

again (Coy, 2003). Blacks, too, have benefited from the survival and expansion of key inner-city job sources, especially in health care. And homeownership, another long-term goal of the Black community, is likely to keep successful Black households in urban districts where housing is affordable. From 1993 to 2000, the number of mortgage loans to Blacks increased by 94%, compared to 27% for Whites. In Atlanta, for example, the number of Black homeowners nearly doubled during the 1990s, and, from 1997 to 2002, the number of mortgage loans to unmarried Black women increased by 114% ("Single Black Female," 2004).

### White Middle-class Reurbanism

One irony of Mumford's fourth migration was that suburbs were able to duplicate almost all the urban functions that once defined the central city, but they were unable to duplicate the *urban experience* itself. Jane Jacobs greatly underestimated the capacity of suburbs to generate their own forms of economic diversity, but she was exactly right that only density can provide that pedestrian-oriented street life through which we experience the urban. As the fourth migration took hold, this urban experience grew rarer, and hence more valuable. During the period of gentrification, when the boundary between the privileged and the rest was razor sharp, the urban experience was available only to the rich or to those single-person or childless households who were not restricted to the protected world of doormen, private schools, and private parking garages. Both J. Anthony Lukas's *Common Ground* (1985) and H. G. Bissinger's *A Prayer for the City* (1997) include in their vivid narratives of Boston and Philadelphia, respectively, the story of White middle-class couples with children who attempted to move beyond the invisible line and were forced eventually to give up their hopes by the sheer danger, expense, and difficulty of urban living.

Reurbanism for me means the end, or at least the softening, of the gentrification era. As many neighborhoods "unslum" simultaneously, White middle-class in-migration becomes more widely distributed, and thus only one element in rapidly improving neighborhoods where the main impetus comes from within the neighborhood itself (Freeman & Braconi, 2004).

### Planning the Fifth Migration

As Mumford and his colleagues realized, the great migrations were always conjunctions of demographics, technology, and policy. The first great migration to the West derived its force from the great 18th- and 19th-cen-

tury population boom in Western Europe; the new technologies of communication and industrial production; but ultimately from federal land and transportation policies that covered the continent with family farms and a canal and rail grid. The fourth migration similarly rested initially on the postwar baby boom but also on such policies as federally guaranteed mortgages and the interstate highway system.

Today, the demographic potential of the fifth migration rests on such varied bases as aging baby boomers returning to the cities; their 20-something children rejecting the suburbs in favor of livelier inner city districts; the "natural increase" of unslumming households who choose to stay put; and of course the millions who seek to migrate to the United States. But these demographics are necessarily uneven and episodic. The planning challenge of the fifth migration is to implement policies that not only capitalize on and institutionalize present demographic trends but create diverse, livable, and vibrant cities that can sustain themselves long into the future.

Fortunately for our era of limited government, these fifth migration policies should not require the overwhelming state interventions that made possible the fourth migration. Built before the automobile, many inner-city districts might be considered prophetic examples of what Peter Calthorpe now calls transit-oriented development (Calthorpe & Fulton, 2001; Calthorpe & Poticha, 1991). Where suburbs struggle to add transit and town centers, the inner cities are usually well served by surviving transit lines, and well adapted by their potential density to revive service along the many trolley corridors that once ran through them. They are dotted with neighborhood centers built around transit stops where empty storefronts await redevelopment (Porter, 1998; Pucher, 2002). Moreover, the modest scale of the surviving housing is often well adapted to our smaller "nontraditional" households, and well oriented to a more active street life. Finally, these districts often possess precious legacies of long-lost civic idealism: generous public parks, dignified public libraries, and impressive school buildings.

Planning the fifth migration thus means in large part the imaginative recovery and reuse of the strengths of a sadly depleted urban fabric. One set of planning interventions has targeted the brownfields, abandoned factories, polluted waterways, derelict waterfronts, and other relics of what Mumford called "the Coketown era." As landscape architect Anne Spirn (1998, 2005) has shown in the West Philadelphia Landscape Project she founded, these polluted sites are not only potential locales of waterfront parks, community gardens, and other amenities; more importantly, their reclamation can bring communities together around a new

vision of an urban district in harmony with nature. A second set of planning interventions exemplified by the Johns Hopkins/East Baltimore Project seeks to capitalize on inner-city assets (in this case, one of the world's great medical centers located in a struggling neighborhood) to show that inner cities have unique and hitherto untapped sources for economic and social development (Urban Design Associates, 2005). In infrastructure planning, San Francisco's project to replace the earthquake-damaged Central Freeway with the mixed-use "Octavia Boulevard" is an important model for a transportation policy that supports urban density and complexity (Jacobs et al., 2002).

If there is a single key area in which public policy can guide and encourage the fifth migration, it is surely housing. For a proper housing policy responds to the two major (if somewhat contradictory) dangers that could defeat the potential of the fifth migration. First, there is the possibility that land speculation could result in such rapid and total gentrification of an area that its former residents are simply pushed into isolated and poorly served suburban ghettos (Wyly et al., 2004); and second, the possibility that immigrant and Black reurbanism represent a very temporary fix for urban neighborhoods. If the newly successful move rapidly to the suburbs, they would leave large areas of the inner city as poor as before.

The solution to both these problems is a balanced housing policy that encourages investment in (and hence commitment to) recovering areas by promoting home ownership for those of moderate income (Apgar & Fishbein, 2004); similar programs that encourage rental rehabilitation, especially two- and three-family houses where home ownership and rental strategies can be combined (Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2002); and an expanded Section 8 voucher program that finally fulfills its original hope of allowing low-income households a wide choice of decent apartments (Belsky et al., 2001). In design terms, these policy innovations have been successfully embodied in new housing built by community development corporations under HOPE VI and other programs that provide models of urbane mixed-income, mixed-use projects (Keating, 2000; Myerson, 2002; Pyatok, 2000, 2003; Smith, 2002).

If successful, these housing programs will speak directly to what I regard as the crucial unanswered social question of the fifth migration. We now see the emergence of neighborhoods that are intensely mixed in terms of race, income, and ethnicity (Fasenfest et al., 2004; Glaeser & Vigdor, 2001), but are these repopulating districts merely in transition to the familiar homogeneity of the past? Recent history is not very encouraging here, but we ought to observe that the present wave of immigration, precisely by blurring the Black/White divide that had torn apart American cities,

has already accomplished a crucial social benefit. If rising population, improving economic conditions, and good planning can foster a new vision of the inner cities, then these might be the sites where our culture's oft-repeated celebration of diversity can finally be implemented on the ground (Freeman & Braconi, 2004). Already we see the interaction, primarily in the urban music and fashion scenes, of Black, Hispanic, and White "hipster" elements. This "transgressive" mix could create an exciting fifth migration culture that would animate the renewed public spaces and public institutions of the inner city.

When the chess team from a Brooklyn high school not far from Bushwick won the 2004 United States national championship, I was impressed not only by this remarkable achievement but also by the list of names that the *Daily News* printed under a picture of the winners: Oscar Santana, Dimitry Minevich, Willy Edwards, Cynthia Haq, and Salvijus Bercys (Hays, 2004). Here, potentially, is the human face of the fifth migration.

## Conclusion

In her strangely pessimistic recent book *Dark Age Ahead*, Jane Jacobs (2004) briefly interrupts her account of such phenomena as "Families Rigged to Fail" and "Science Abandoned" to reflect that "When a culture is working wholesomely, beneficent pendulum swings—effective feedback—do occur. . . . Vicious spirals have their opposites: beneficent spirals, processes in which each improvement and strengthening leads to other improvements and strengthenings . . ." (pp. 174–175). In the rest of the book, Jacobs seems to have abandoned hope precisely when the broad movement of "unslumming" she predicted 40 years ago is finally occurring.

Fred Siegel, in his angrily pessimistic 1997 book, took his title from a remark by Mario Cuomo about the American metropolis at its height in the first half of the 20th century: "The future once happened here." I would suggest that the reurbanizing inner city is precisely where the American future is again happening.

What I have called the fifth migration is at least the beginning of a beneficent spiral in which the feedback from the fourth migration (the broad opposition to sprawl and urban disintegration) has finally led to an ever-broadening mobilization of the powers inherent in traditional urbanism. Before he gave up on both the city and the "anti-city," Mumford (1961) himself once celebrated what he called "the essential life of the city itself, with its power to crossbreed, to intermingle, to reconcile opposites, to create new syntheses . . ." (p. 175). The great promise of the

fifth migration is that the unprecedented intermingling of immigrants from around the world with Blacks and Whites from around the region will begin to reconcile the opposites of race and class; the devastated areas of our cities will be rebuilt to become the sites of this new social synthesis; and thus the essential life of the American city will be restored.

## Author's Addendum

The night of August 14–15, 2003, when the public peace prevailed, must now be weighed against the terrible days in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, when natural disaster and official negligence led to the virtual abandonment of that city's poorest and most vulnerable citizens and the consequent breakdown in public order. I continue to believe that August 14–15, 2003, represents the deeper trends in the American city and American society.

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