

Chris Liu

Professor Mark Baker

Writing 2 05

19 October 2018

A New Form of Urban Sprawl: A "Migration" of Prosperity

"I love this place," Mr. Wood said, "I will consider staying here teaching for a few more years." When I was still in high school, my psychology teacher, Mr. Wood, always talked about it in class. He grew up in Los Angeles, California, a large city in the United States. Mr. Wood often brought up the discussion that why our third-tier city (second-tier after April 2018), Nanchang, was much bigger and convenient than a first-tier city, San Francisco, in the United States. We just smiled a little because nobody could explain this question. The development was so fast that we did not even realize that a great change was happening to our new district until I heard about the phrase "urban sprawl."

Urban sprawl happens in many cities around the world but in different ways. By definition, it means "population moving away from central urban areas into low-density communities." Nanchang, the capital of province Jiangxi in China, is experiencing urban sprawl. Being different from most of the cities in the United States, urban sprawl has a different impact on Nanchang, forming a trend of migration from the old urban district to the new urban district -- Honggutan. In the analysis of how Honggutan is developed, I will use Jonathan Rose's text, "Sprawl and Its Discontents," and combine his example of thriving cities to explain the reasons why urban sprawl is happening so quickly. Rose's text includes a few examples of city sprawling, analyzing the sprawling from multiple aspects. Problems like classism and racism due to federal government planning, cities declining, heavy traffic, environmental problems are

Commented [MB1]: A very nice title and subtitle for your essay, Chris – well done. I'm eager to see where you will go with and take this through the body of your essay.

Commented [MB2]: And certainly an engaging opening to your essay. Your reader can clearly hear your voice from the start and can see how and why the topic is important for you, the writer. I'm eager to read on, and see where you will go from here.

Commented [MB3]: Nicely introduced and defined, Chris

Formatted: Highlight

Commented [MB4]: The structure here is slightly off

Commented [MB5]: And so, will it be clear to your reader what it is you mean by first tier and second tier?

Commented [MB6]: Interesting point. Why do you think this is? And to that end, did your home city come up in a conversation in high school? Were you attending high school in Los Angeles?

Commented [MB7]: Interesting point – and so, is there a difference between urban sprawl and suburban sprawl?

Commented [MB8]: Quite possibly so.

Commented [MB9]: So, since you are quoting something here, should you include a reference?

Commented [MB10]: If this is a dictionary definition, you would want to avoid using dictionary definitions in academic papers. Rather, see if you're able to define it yourself, using your own words. Or – site from a research based text?

Commented [MB11]: So, would this then necessarily be urban?

Commented [MB12]: Nice use of an appositive here to define, Chris

Commented [MB13]: So, where exactly in China is this?

Deleted: an

Commented [MB14]: Note the organization of this sentence. What exactly is different from most cities in the United States?

Commented [MB15]: And what exactly is this community? A suburb? Something else?

Commented [MB16]: Good: I'm glad you're working with a specific text. But this isn't something you necessarily need to tell your reader here. How might you show this rather than tell?

Commented [MB17]: And again, is it necessarily just about cities that sprawl, or the growth of the suburbs?

happening because of urban sprawl. The urban sprawl happening in Nanchang is caused by two significant factors: the appearance of commercial areas and new types of transportations.

CONTEXT

Honggutan (meaning “the land with red soil in Chinese”) is a new urban district located to the west of downtown Nanchang. In the 1990s, Honggutan was mostly sand piles. The district was not developed until the year 2000. In the beginning, to most of the people in Nanchang Honggutan was just countryside. With more and more government facilities and enterprises moving their base to the new district after 2002, the migration began. In the early stage, the migration was extremely slow since the development was slow. The most rapid development happened in recent four years, accelerating the economy and the population growth of the entire western part of Nanchang. Honggutan now combines business, trade, administration, information, culture, housing, becoming the only central business district in Nanchang.

COMMERCIAL IMPACT

Commercial areas push urban sprawl by providing more job opportunities and using entertainment, shopping, and restaurants to attract people. Wanda Plaza, invested by the largest real estate company in the world, dominates many cities in China. The Wanda Plaza in Honggutan is located at the center of the district, integrating entertainment, food, shopping, finance, hotel, and apartment. People had a different attitude at the moment toward this plaza, but most of them said it would not succeed. Soon they changed their mind. In less than a year, more and more stores opened. The Wanda Plaza was no a “bigger shopping mall” anymore. The first three floors consist of diverse stores, mostly clothing shops, cosmetics shops, and luxury

Deleted: during

Deleted: the

Deleted: sprawling

Commented [MB18]: OK – I can see you’re working towards giving your reader a sense of purpose and focus, a sense as to what you’ll do in and through the body of your essay. What specifically do you see as the “so what” of your paper – what do you see as the actual point you are making and developing in your essay?

Commented [MB19]: Chris: I’m glad you’re aware of and that you’re remembering to provide your reader with context (good!). But as this is an essay and not an article or research paper, you don’t need to name the section, to create a signpost in your paper. Rather, in a short paper like this, the discussion should simply move from paragraph to paragraph without naming sections.

Commented [MB20]: Interesting and useful point

Commented [MB21]: And again, where exactly in China is this? How might you provide your reader with an even clearer sense as to where in the country this is located?

Commented [MB22]: Good description

Deleted: at

Commented [MB23]: And why do you think they decided to develop this region? To that end, would you compare this to a U.S. suburb?

Commented [MB24]: Nicely stated, Chris

Formatted: Highlight

Commented [MB25]: And so, why was it people were moving out to this region? Was there limited housing within the heart of the city? Something else?

Commented [MB26]: OK – so, how then would this be considered sprawl? It sounds like it is the heart of the city – or not? Might you clarify this a bit more concretely?

Commented [MB27]: Again Chris, no need to name/title individual sections of an essay

Commented [MB28]: Quite possibly so, yet do the jobs always move with sprawl? What does Rose suggest? In terms of traditional suburban areas, would people necessarily have moved so as to find employment, or for something else?

Commented [MB29]: Wow!

Commented [MB30]: Wanda plaza dominates most of the cities in China? Might you clarify this?

Commented [MB31]: Could most people then reach this plaza from their homea?

Commented [MB32]: OK – yet how does this reflect something about how sprawl works? I’m not entirely clear here.

Commented [MB33]: Nicely narrated, Chris

Commented [MB34]: Diverse in what regard?

stores, with the maximum flow. The fourth floor has all restaurants, including McDonald's, KFC, Chinese, Western, and Korean restaurants, and many more. On weekends, people will wait in a long line at the front doors of the restaurants. The fifth floor has a Wanda Cinemas, a top cinema in China. The first and second floor under the ground is a supermarket similar to Safeway, but much bigger, surrounded by parking lots with 1250 parking spots. On the back of the mall, a street called "Golden Street" with hundreds of food stands, more restaurants, and stores, are usually as crowded as the streets in New York City. Three office buildings containing many tech and financial companies were built on top of the mall. All these helped increase tens of thousands of employment position in the new district every year and caused the appreciation of the land and real estate in the surrounding area. Shortly after, people in the old district came and invested; some others moved here for the jobs.

As Rose wrote, "Bored by suburbs, the children of baby boomers began to flock back to cities, particularly to edgier emerging neighborhoods. Cities were now much safer, and offer some of the most interesting jobs" (116). People want to live well. Thus, a new place with more opportunities is no doubt a gold mine for them, and they would like to get the gold even if they need to move their house to the city they might not be familiar with. Although cities are different in the United States, people share the same human nature. Both the shopping mall itself and the series of "chain reaction" brought by the commercial area made people flock to Honggutan. This also applies to all the following shopping malls in the district. To the citizen of Nanchang, the old district is like the "suburbs," familiar and boring. After spending years living in a crowded city, they were willing to do something for a change. In the second place, jobs are tempting, especially at Honggutan, a central business district. And off these young people are the very first "immigrants," from the old to the new.

Commented [MB35]: Mostly chain restaurants? No diversity? Would it be more likely then to find smaller, more diverse and/or family run restaurants in areas that are considered more urban?

Commented [MB36]: And so, it sounds as if Wanda Center plays a big role in Honggutan

Deleted: every

Commented [MB37]: OK – so they anticipate most people use cars rather than public transportation?

Commented [MB38]: So it sounds as if the community was planned rather than one that came together organically?

Commented [MB39]: You've done a nice job describing the Wanda Center, Chris

Commented [MB40]: This paragraph needs a topic sentence, Chris – remember, a quote should not be used as the topic sentence for a paragraph. The topic sentence should be your writing: this gives your reader a sense as to the focus of this paragraph. So, what do you see as the focus or purpose of this paragraph? Are you writing about the history of the suburbs? That's what the quote seems to indicate.

Commented [MB41]: This quote needs to be worked with more and analyzed – it seems you're using it to say something about the suburbs and factors as to why people have become/grown bored with and by them. Yet that does not seem to be the focus of the paragraph.

Commented [MB42]: Chris: I would like you to go back and review this paragraph. You're certainly working with some good and important ideas here, yet the discussion seems to move in too many different directions, creating some problems with focus. What exactly are you working towards getting at in this paragraph, and how specifically are you working with the quote from Rose? Right now, it seems dropped in

Commented [MB43]: So the connection with how sprawl works? And again, with how you are using and working with the Rose text?

Commented [MB44]: Yet at the same time, does it necessarily serve the same purpose? Again, I'm not entirely clear as to the focus of this paragraph and/or how you're working with Rose

Commented [MB45]: So this is not sprawl?

DIVERSE TRANSPORTATIONS

Diverse transportation helps urban sprawl by taking advantage of its convenience and building connections between the old and new urban districts. According to Rose's description of modern Alexandria, "Today, the core of the city, designed long before the automobile, has far too much traffic and far too little parking" (119). The booming of the car industry started a long time ago, and the city roads developed before that usually only satisfy the need for normal traffic. Nobody foresees today's overwhelming car chaos because the industry is evolving so fast. Although Nanchang's road construction started way later than Alexandria's, most roads were built in the 20th century, so traffic jams are always a problem. Thus, e-bike became the first successful transporting tool reducing the pressure of the road. With an e-bike, anyone can park it with other standard bicycles and ride e-bikes on bicycle lanes. Such convenience without losing the efficiency helps people travel between the old district and Honggutan. In 2017, the bike-sharing system was added. In both the old and new urban districts, more than a hundred bike-sharing hubs were built for citizen's daily commuting. With the specific app, users can use it after scanning the QR code on the bike. Once again, bike-sharing offers citizens more commuting choices and decreases the commuting stress.

The new subway system is the most efficient one among three transportation systems. Different from bikes and cars, the subway in Nanchang has a much larger carrying capacity. As Rose describes the light-rail system in the United States, "one new light-rail line, has eight times the carrying capacity of one highway lane during the peak travel times ..." (121). Light-rails are common in the United States cities. With the big light-rail car, a large number of people can do both short and long distance traveling without walking, waiting for the traffic light, causing

Commented [MB46]: Again, no need to title sections in an essay

Commented [MB47]: Transportation is not a count noun

Commented [MB48]: What specifically is convenient? Is sprawl convenient?

Deleted: s

Deleted: the

Commented [MB49]: What is this? You need to provide some additional context for your reader here

Commented [MB50]: Quite true – it's almost 100 years old, yes?

Commented [MB51]: Good point. How would you define normal traffic then?

Formatted: Highlight

Commented [MB52]: And again, will your reader necessarily know what this is?

Commented [MB53]: Interesting point – this would be more common to urban areas?

Deleted: is

Commented [MB54]: So how does this then address sprawl?

Commented [MB55]: Plural, yes?

Commented [MB56]: So, would you say then that this is addressing a particular problem Rose examines in his text? How might you make this clearer and more evident to your reader?

Commented [MB57]: Are you looking at a specific subway system?

Commented [MB58]: Is this because it is a city, an urban area?

Commented [MB59]: Again, this quote seems dropped in without much context or specific analysis – it's difficult to see where you're taking this, and likewise, it also seems to be taken somewhat out of context

Commented [MB60]: Some, yes - true

crowding. But light-rail systems are mostly on the ground, and the light-rail itself affects the traffic on the ground more or less. The carrying capacity of the subway is even larger than light-rail, and it has no conflict with the cars on the road. Nanchang's most subway entrances and exits are both located inside malls, buildings, or locations with less flow of people. The design makes sure it will have zero influence on the traffic. So far two phases are operating, and they cover most of the critical public areas in Nanchang, while the other two phases will open by 2020. Inside the subway car, there are enough seats for disabled, and each subway car has a television with interesting advertisement playing. Some subway cars have particular themes of the critical current event, such as the world cup, marathon, city culture, environment. It usually takes citizens five to ten minutes to travel from the old urban district to Honggutan, and less than an hour from the beginning of a phase to the end. Nanchang Metro has average crowds of 550 thousand people per day in one phase.

Mixed transportation systems maximize the efficiency and minimize the time of long-distance travel from the old to the new district. Rose uses the example of Denver to illustrate the same convenience of a mixed transportation system in Denver:

The city's old Union Station has been revitalized as a transit hub, connecting the national Amtrak system, the regional light-rail system, the local electric downtown mall shuttle, the bus system, and the airport. Suburban communities are densifying, diversifying their offering, appealing to young urban families. The Denver region's multiple modes of transportation offer its residents choices that make it an appealing place to live. The commuter may want to take the train into the city during the week, walk to the restaurant in the evening, and drive to the country on the weekend, all of which may now be possible. (121)

Commented [MB61]: Aren't they often built above ground?

Commented [MB62]: Interesting point

Formatted: Highlight

Commented [MB63]: This sounds like a good thing, something well thought out and planned

Commented [MB64]: The meaning here is not entirely clear, Chris

Commented [MB65]: So through your discussion in this paragraph, what specifically is it you are working towards getting at and saying?

Commented [MB66]: Note the dropped -ed ending here

Commented [MB67]: So this would be an example of a more traditional city rather than a sprawling one?

Deleted: In the text,

Commented [MB68]: Nicely introduced, Chris

This information provides what it is like to have an interconnected transportation system – a way to maximize the efficiency of travel. Because of the convenience, people in Denver have more options to work, play, and live. The possibility brought by interconnected transportation is infinite. Similar to Denver's, the unique design of the transportation in Honggutan is that subway stations, bus stations, bike-sharing hubs, are also located next to each other so that people can immediately do short distance travel with a bike after exiting the subway, offering high citizen accessibility and more route choices. With the ease of traveling, people flock to Honggutan and call this place their “new city.”

Commented [MB69]: Yes, good point

Commented [MB70]: Indeed, and quite true!

Commented [MB71]: And so they planned these carefully?

Commented [MB72]: I'm still not entirely clear as to what you're working towards getting at and saying in your paper about Honggutan, most notably in terms of the community being one that has experienced sprawl and/or is suburban in nature

CONCLUSION

The urban sprawl happening in Honggutan is a representation of people's increasing quality of life and a phenomenon symbolizing the rapid development in the new urban area. Unlike most of the urban sprawls, immigrants not only moved to the suburban area but also turned it into a district busier than the old city. For the people in China, this type of city sprawling is always good news for them. Due to the change in traditional thoughts, Chinese people no longer consider suburb an excellent place to live if they want job opportunities and convenience of life, which are the two essential things they care about nowadays. Utilizing the commercial impact and deploying new technology into the transportation will become the critical idea of developing most of the third-tier city in China, using ‘small migration’ to reduce ‘large migration’ (people migrate to another city) and avoid uneven distribution of resources in such a big country.

Commented [MB73]: Again, in an essay, you would want to avoid naming sections. You want your paragraphs to build upon one another naturally, to build upon one another. You don't need to use section titles to break them up.

Commented [MB74]: OK

Commented [MB75]: Yet how is this an example of sprawl?

Commented [MB76]: The meaning in this sentence is not entirely clear

Commented [MB77]: And so the community you are writing on is not a suburb, not an example of sprawl?

Commented [MB78]: Interesting concluding point.

Work Cited

Rose, Jonathan P. *The Well-Tempered City: What Modern Science, Ancient Civilizations, and Human Nature Teaches Us about the Future of Urban Life*. Harper, 2016. [.](#)

Deleted: s

Chris Liu
 Essay 2 comments

Chris:

You have opened up a number of important and thought provoking questions along the way and through the body of your essay. Your paper contains very good ideas. It's evident from the start of your paper that you are committed to your topic and focus, to the concepts you are working with and exploring along the way. I found your opening paragraph to be engaging: here you provide an example from your own high school experience that got you thinking about the nature of cities. From there you have done a nice job of introducing the city of Nanchang and the new community that has formed alongside it, Honggutan. You have also done a nice job of introducing the Rose text. I can tell that you're starting to do some valuable thinking about your reader and your reader's needs whereby you provide some useful context as to Nanchang and Honggutan. The details you provide along the way provide your reader with somewhat of a sense as to what these cities look like and how people live their lives. You effectively note and describe how Honggutan is the "new" area, developed for greater convenience and even greater luxury (so seems to be the case based upon what you describe in your paper regarding the plaza, etc.). You have also opened an important discussion regarding transportation and the significance thereof, especially regarding the fact people need greater access to public transportation, something that has been overlooked in traditional suburban settings. You introduce the Rose text to your reader – and you're starting to work with that text in the body of your essay. The quotes you include along the way provide your reader with an important and useful sense as to the voice of the text (Rose). In all, you're a good thinker, and you are likewise asking your reader to engage critically.

Please make sure to take careful note as to the comments and questions I have included along the way and on the draft of your essay, and I would like you to plan on meeting with me in conference so that we can discuss your essay together as you revise. This is a good start, yet the paper will need further consideration and work in terms of focus, organization, use of texts, description/detail, analysis. To start – and in preparation for your conference – please consider the following:

1. Focus/purpose. As the purpose of an essay is to make a point, what do you see this as being? What specifically is it that you are working towards saying and getting at in your essay, and how might you give your reader an even clearer sense of this? To that end, what do you see as the "so what" of your paper? How might you give your reader an even clearer sense of this?
2. Organization. In some cases, connections between paragraphs are unclear. Remember, paragraphs build upon one another – they connect. Likewise, in some spots paragraphs lack topic sentences that provide focus and directions, and/or ideas within body paragraphs float away from the topic sentence. They move in different directions creating problems with confusion for your reader. As you begin the revision process, I would suggest you do some paragraph-by-paragraph reverse outlining so that you can check this yourself.

3. Organization of paper. I'd actually recommend that you take a few paragraphs to go into greater detail and description about both Nanchang and Honggutan. This would give you more focused space to go into greater detail (and description) as to what your reader needs to know about Honggutan and specifically its relationship to Nanchang. This is something you hint at, but is not fully developed. Remember, this is something you really want your reader to be able to see.

4. Use of text (Rose). I'm glad you're working with the Rose text, yet I'm concerned that the discussion is taken out of context. Rose writes on sprawl and the nature of and history of the suburbs: I'm not entirely clear as to the connection you're making, and/or how you're using the text to open up a discussion/conversation as to the nature of sprawl, about suburban developments, etc. You have included some quotes, yet these seem to be taken out of context (please see my questions along the way – we can certainly chat about these when we meet in conference). You'll also want to work on re-organizing your use of the text as you consider the best way to help your reader see what you are getting at.

5. Analysis – in terms of what you're looking at as to the text and Honggutan, is there a particular problem or concern you're looking at? If it's about sprawl, how then are you asking your reader to see Honggutan as a sprawling community? If this is the case, what then does or might the community lack?

6. Sentence level editing. You bring an honest sense of your own voice to your essay, and you have crafted some nice images with language along the way. Your MLA formatting looks fine. There are some minor errors/concerns with sentence level editing I would like you to note – verb form, word form, -ed endings, punctuation, sentence structure/organization/clarity.

In all, a good start and some nice material here with which to work. I can tell you're working to provide your reader with a clear sense as to Honggutan. As you plan your revision, you'll want to continue to work to provide your reader with an even clearer sense as to your focus and purpose, to address concerns regarding organization, to engage the text more concretely, and to continue to work on developing your analysis.

I look forward to meeting and working with you in conference – let's meet.

Conference

-Mark