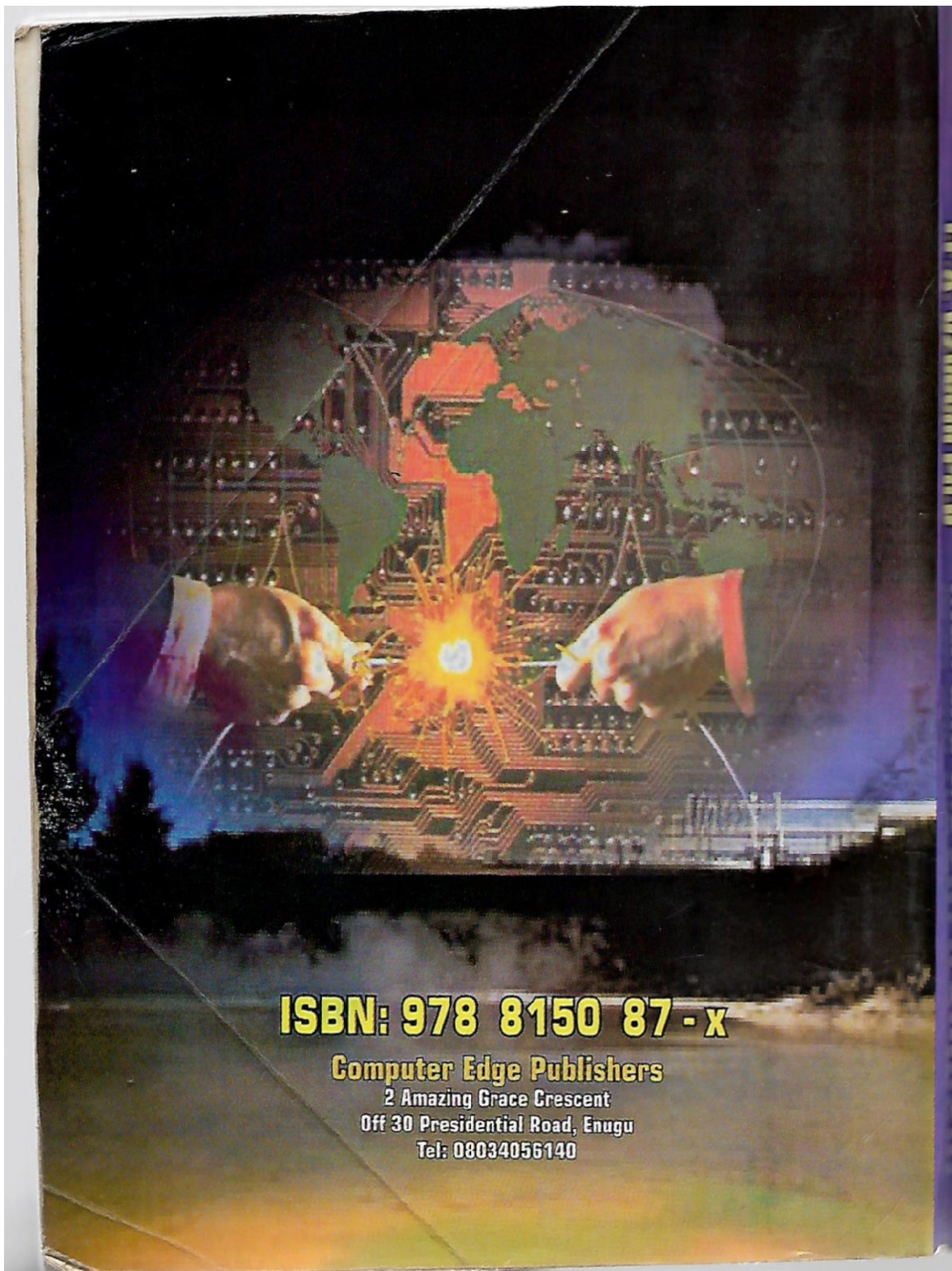
The book cover features a landscape with a cooling tower emitting a large plume of white smoke against a dark, purple-tinged sky. The foreground shows green, terraced hills. The title 'Man and the Environment' is prominently displayed in the center. The authors' names are listed at the bottom.

Man and the **Environment**

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

URBANIZATION: A HISTORICAL VIEW

BY

DR INNOCENT F. A. UZOECHI

Today, if you are not confused
You are just not thinking clearly

-Irene Peter.

Clarity and confusion, however, matter for interpreting settlements. Many scholars have examined the economic side to urban life. Others generalized the constants among human groups more worried about the upsetting problems in settled populations. Currently, inquires struggle to understand this fact through Sociology, Anthropology, History, Ekistics, Planning, Management, and Rural Politics. This attempt treats urbanization as an age-long experience. The theme developed here is that readers understand it easiest from achievements and problems by taking a historical view. This approach examines causes, sets periods, shows effects, and identifies solutions.

To start with, academic inquiries grow with, or die from changes in public interests, often a vague concept. Yet, urban living cannot be ignored for many reasons. First, key social elites, often strategic and self – expanding, reside in the world cities to enjoy the basics for survival. Second, such settlements erode as well as replace the shrinking and decaying rural communities. Third, governments dominate national or state political capitals where their actions touch majorities. Fourth, the city

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cooks revolutions; fosters radical movements; and makes wealthy citizens. Such axial urbanhoods in Nigeria as Enugu, Ibadan, Kaduna and recently Abuja, coexist and operate as pace-setters in most events. Fifth, politics, leaders, monies – all meet in these centres that draw foods and labourers from their hinterlands. Sixth, urbanism, as a new culture, involves dominant and dominated groups. Seventh, rural areas feed the towns. They become hangers-on in their growing poverties or their varieties of underdevelopment.

So, and eight, every city stands as an economic institution, an enterprise. Nursed wisely, it generates revenue, grooms leaders, expands public works, and excites planners. Ninth, cityish studies embrace disciplines ranging from urbanology to environmental management and upbeat, avant-garde art. Tenth, Abrams, an American social scientist, rightly re-names the city "the last frontier". This opinion advertises the urbanites and showcases their opportunities for success to the rural dwellers. Eleventh, inborn problems frighten many publics so much that their fears rise to anxieties, hence the epithet, "the urban jungle evokes despair. Twelfth, ignorance about citylife and death deserves no praise. It kills, in an age oppressed with pollutions, saved by sanitarians and feared by environmentalists, youths foresee their endangered futures and hate to live on unprepared for them. And, finally, the career woman, an advancing social force, rises quickest in the all-comers city where Luck throws its doors wide open while inviting additional residents.

Theme, reason and more-once known can ensure further awareness. This author defines terms, beginning with

urban and ending with problem. Older than great grandfathers, this word conveys different meanings. It is any mixed population arising from migrating countrysiders. Denoting any settlement rooted in non-agricultural living, it is also any other created by law. Such is the charatered city, town, colony or else the metropolis, megalopolis, or cornubation. Specialized areas assume city duties by providing economic or popular services. In this way, interpreters stress central places goods, or services. These swell by absorbing nearby rural spheres of influence. In Lagos as in Enugu or in New York as in Delhi, defining is one thing but fixing limits remains hard. This puzzle suggests degrees in urbanization. Various terms say so, namely, non-urban, suburban, periurban, rurban, urbanism(s), urbanology, and urbiculture. Impressions torment the planners, vex tax managers, challenge politicians; and annoy towners since policies impact on population and thus affect need, time, society and place.

Urbanism, seem en route, shows city culture. In it, settlers live anonymous lives because residents make brief, cold and impersonal contacts. Money gives power in the urban centre because its hunger encourages profit-making without emotion, indeed, at all costs; deepens casualness; and treats other people as statistics, as facesless strangers or as distant neighbours. Called for also is urban dynamics. These forces are social groups such as ethnic colonies; professional elements; pressure alliances; political classes; interest associations, and cultural sets like co-religionsts. As they struggle for power and influence, these heat up problems or solutions and provide energies for exploiting opportunities. Such agents create

tensions of rivalries which hasten the rises and falls of governments that attempt solutions. Urban problems, therefore, mean those issues requiring official answers or solutions as well as behaviour changes. These form the pathology of the city in terms of crime, unemployment, divorce, drug-addiction, transportation, corruption and monopoly power.

To describe urban ways, the reader has to know its processes. Population begins to increase from zero through two thousand and five hundred to over one million inhabitants by rural-urban migration. Migrants envision a better life based on changes away from the custom-bound village. Immigrants compete for resources and services. Social geographers stress living life there, hence able dwellers rush out to make good abroad. In Imo State, rural to urban residents get citified, and soon afterwards return home to bandy successes about and thus de-rank village joys. Society calls them "abroadians", not as foreigners but as upwardly mobile nationals. Upon the evidence, transportation in any civilization advances with historical changes. It affects urban existence in many ways. Moving up, down, and across West Africa, teachers link up various guilds in Cotonou, Accra, Abidjan, Dakar, Bathurst or St. Louis. Aside from administrative cities, to wit, Enugu for coal, Jos for tin, and PortHarcourt for petroleum – all have housed boomers, otherwise called long range commuter residents.

Regions, like territories, specialize, cocoa makes Ghana, groundnut advertises Senegal, Petroleum promotes Nigeria, and so on. Economic change includes expanding wealth-making, diversifying jobs, and

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attracting city governors. Governments, nonetheless, fix policies over planning and housing. By this method, officials map out commercial, residential, and leisure-zones. The Central Business District (CBD) features while tourism boards open parks, build museums, mount art galleries or else establish hotels. Self-interest often colours these efforts. Under the far-sighted President I. Babangida, an impactful change agent, the Directorate for Food Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DIFRI) suburbanized the countryside to detach idel and jobless youths, often the street soldiers in riots and demonstrations, from the violence-prone urban areas. Their absence guarantees more sleep for the richer citizens and lessens general fears in the wider society. Colonies within this urban wilderness attract home-based migrants. These brotherize for job-hunting, welfaring, influence-peddling, and cultural literacy. Born, therefore, are the tugs-of-love between the city fathers, the ins, and the outs over urban governance.

As a process, city-building never ends. Yet its evolutionary understating requires knowable stages ranging from C.6000 BC to C. 2000 AD. The ancient or archaic city, 6000 BC to about 1500-1885 that mid-wifed the modern colonial order of 1885-1960 before the overfast post-colonial urbanworld known for transience, 1960-2000.

While cities in Antiquity, namely Ur, Babylon Alexandria, Nok or Igbo-Ukwu boasted inexact populations, they pioneered earth-shaking revolutions in food, education and professionalized settlement. Social organization in urban society comprised elites – the classes, usually rigid, and the masses often ignored, abused, or

exploited, except perhaps under Urukagina, the Lugal of Lagash. Specialization divides this socioeconomy into urban and rural, and its officials shaded off into the rulers, to guide and indoctrinate the ruled. Slavocracy bred agricultural workers. These lacked that leisure which produces civilization and spreads its gains as well as ills. Transportation, in its changing modes, remained slow as well as geographical till recent times.

Beyond these dying settlements, there are the commercial or feudal ones. They demanded trading colonies, urban charters, nonrural consumers, and oversea merchant companies. Citification in pre-colonial West Africa threw up Koumbi Saleh in old Ghana; Timbuctoo in Mali; Kano in Hausaland and Nike in northern Igboland. International and regional markets satisfied demands for salt, gold, skin, indigo and galena. Possibly those market-places had enough wealth and military energy to last for centuries. In this way, sudanic economies, east or west, in pre-Berlin Conference days emerged from successful urban adaptation. These new towns stirred more needs; developed fresh elites; and mobilized the forces for change, namely, population migration, government, wealth, competition, and ideology. At all events, science and technology enhanced conveyance; quickened expansion, and destroyed any isolation. Then as now, universities in Zazzau (Zaria) or Timbuctoo hatched as well as exchanged ideas for social action.

Granted the mismatch in historians chronologies, this writer considers the third phase as modern. During it Africans supported European empires, resting as they were, on commerce, compulsory slave migration,

imperialism, and stooge politics. By 1885, African cities co-existed with many underarmed and ethnic polities. European warfare, education, trade and diplomacy threatened these. The continuing scramble for African territories in their Industrial Age compelled conquests. Weapons decided events wherever trade, politics, religion and diplomacy clashed. France, Germany, and Great Britain, amongst other predatory nations, swallowed nonwhite sovereign states, thanks to racism and Judaeo-Christianity. Colonial urbanization, thus, opened. It was arterial or resource oriented. As such, the road network, the railway system, the port complex - all called for forced labour, needed food supplies, expanded services, and promoted cooperative groups. Period cities rose on the coast and in the hinterland. More towns began, the likes of Enugu, Jos, Obuasi, Marampa, and further south Mafeking. These centres were fiat or military outposts. Many began third-class, grew into second and later functioned as first class townships. Double-hearted as Afro-European areas, their white overlords practiced apartheid by reserving some zones for themselves while their subjects stayed away as their so called inferiors. Outside the ghettos, the ruralities lived in the outlands. Often the urban colonized showed island poverty, joblessness, cultural lag, and acculturation. The European World Wars I (1914 - 1918) and II (1939 - 1945) certainly fattened urban settlements by warwork, military service, worker mobility, and population jump-up. Increasing numbers fled to the cities, those gateways to wealth, power, success, and freedom.

At independence, the urban idea bloomed. Technology and its science united forces in advancing

hinterland fortunes and overcoming shortage. The white overlord has recently become a foreigner, no longer an arrogant overman. His culture, once accepted as progress, awakened nationalists to return to themselves. Doing so was their first sacred duty. True to life, change necessary for rehumanizing the anti-colonial citizens. Urban centres tie politics to wealth. They expand beyond plans and mature into millionaire cities. Mounting population, widening demands and restless residents make boom cities like Abuja, Lagos and Port Harcourt in Nigeria; Dar es salaam in Tanzania; Brasilia in distant Brazil; Cape Town in South Africa; and Cairo in Egypt. Late twentieth-century towns are over-urbanizing and, therefore, vulnerable to disasters. Of course, they take over nearby territories or else are strong and wealthy enough to grow into megalopolises or conurbations. As cities continue, they get more complex.

However seen in those epochs, urbanization affects society severally. First homourbanus (urban man) enters world history from high antiquity. His urbiculture and politics are unique. Second, city – making as such, erodes rural settlements. The countryside communities live closest to Nature and enjoy its gifts but their inhabitants desert home for the cities. Third, the city milieu shows a dominant culture that co-exists with dependent subcultures. Ethnic colonies feature. Hyphenated Americans, like the Irish or African groups, for an example, typify unmeltable ethnics among the mainstreamers. Fourth, cities dynamize their nations. They boil revolutions, father strikes, organize demonstrations and host urban guerrillas. Blind rural obedience dies, indeed in the rebel city. Fifth, rural poverty gets radicalized through its influences that

spread and combine oppositions to the government. Sixth, food insecurity in the nonurban world often harms the fragile city.

Or else seventh town expansion deepens the hungers for transportation, electricity, water, peace and order. In result, urban dwelling foreshadows an endless future. For henceforth, returning to a de-urbanized life looks illusionist. Eight, city politics hooked the rich, the rising and the poor. They divide society sharply enough to create internal colonies. The slums, the underhoused estates, the waterless neighbourhoods – all these inject tensions. Ninth city-formation hurts the vegetation; upsets the ecosystem, and disorganizes ruralness. To the extent that these faults last, to that extent does the ecocide that follows menace residents. Tenth, an environmental crisis arises from pollutants and other antilife agents. Jointly, these undermine as well as diminish the quantity and quality of urbanism.

Eleventh: vertical, horizontal, and metal mobilities bring risks. Reformers, in fact and renewal agencies face conflicts and resistances from vested interests such as landlords, speculators, politicians, city founders and corruptionists. Twelfth, futurologists, if ever they can read events in motion exactly, may discover in living cities the germs for their deaths. These include transient populations; water stayed communities; overscience minded antihuman regions; and the hard violences that overhaul area changes character. Unless urban man and his eternal ally – urban woman – keep in step with that process, a divorce can exist between citizens and their environments. This nuisance can shorten human survival in a season of mad science.

Effects, often knowable, differ in their impacts. For a fact, urbanization contains endemic problems, counting from definition to changefulness. Scholars rightly argue over and over what this term means. Each thinker, probably, conveys his education, guild and class. Spreading urbanization alongside the much historied industrial revolutions has ended in both success and failure. Advanced countries suffer elephant lacks and confront exploding metropolises. The third-worlders, almost hurriedly urbanize their territories as modernization. They, thus compound third world poverties as well as mistakes. The opportunity that the city is has now become a sorrow, thinks to old educations for the youths, unschooling society for change, de-industrializing in the communities and consumerism rather than productivity in the social-economy. Seen in this way, the cities are now time-bombs. Granted that every city liberates its people, it also makes them nameless. The same tyrant city that swallows all-comers, traps the poor or frightens the rich. So suburbia remedies some problems, indeed.

Each urban zone, nowadays, has political as well as imperial lives. This one like the other eats into its environs. Such "cannibalism" is the reality of realities. Because how to stop rural exploitation is unclear. As the urbanizing territories expand and breed new norms, housing, water, electricity, transport, health and other needs fall short. For one thing, more arrivals outrun supplies. For another, organized crime, official bribery, and systemic corruption frustrate revenue collectors; weaken leaders; and block governments. The economics of urban administration includes such pains.

City decline begins via democratic changes, route diversions, industrial reforms, and resource losses. Contrary to the English proverb to that effect, people now carry coal to Newcastle, suggesting that dying cities lose residents but re-import others while re-building their resources.

True to history, cities as the gardens of radical change, provide homes for the rich, the middle class, and the poor. They sometimes overflow with disobediences that remould old social orders to get new nations. Such experiences built states from the sixteenth century onward. Dutch, English, American, French, Russian and African Revolutions burst in the cities. In those, colonial yesmanship backfired to hatch nationalists who demanded freedom by stirring hostile propaganda and mounting agitations. In many senses, every urban centre represents a hell-paradise: hell for its violences and lacks but paradise through freedoms for knowledge, wealth, culture, admixture and change. City problems attract urbanologists, politicians, lawyers, financiers, and social workers.

Managing such includes solving them. Urbanization, often misunderstood, requires more expert knowledge today. Urbanists and other scholars have to cooperate over discovering ideas and setting up the means for erecting liveable settlements. Every urban enclave requires taming. By funding it wisely. Governing ably, conducting issues politics, and providing fair leadership, human agents can control the growing cities. One solution links others. The Humanities programme in History, Languages, Philosophy, and so forth – gives science and technology enough ability to pull human kind

back from the edge of nuclear suicide. Since urban growths join large populations, cities have to mirror their ecosystems. Presently environmental pollution with its threats, disasters, and illusions, resists control. Citizens should realize that cities will continue, that de-urbanizing is an unlikely culture, and that the future of man and woman is unknowable though these live and act at the centre stages. No matter what its planners do or whatever theories they teach, unless leaders promote justice and uphold law and order rather than foster greed, adopt force, spread fraud, and honour dishonesty, cityward development will fumble. The disobedient city is on the stage of history. Its problems may demand more questions than answers since social issues yield open-ended conclusions. *Ad infinitum*. Arguably, can urbanites see beyond the current confusions over policies, ways and means? Will they avoid wholesale or machine politics? The goals of schooling, finally, remain political. If so, education socializes the offspring into and for the existing order. Yet urban survival requires doing more by generating original ideas for re-making man and society. If change, a permanent force in the universe, cannot be avoided, urbanization is therefore its confusing, complex, and stubborn testimonial. And historians understand it best in the round, through its evolutionary stages with their effects as well as problems. Christopher Morley, a social philosopher, once concluded: "All cities are mad; but the madness is gallant. All cities are beautiful; but the beauty is grim. At all events, this is true."

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Urban policies are now constant among city-planners.
Urban studies are offered in many universities.

See R. C. Okafor, G. C. Enebe & L. Emeka, eds. *Man at Centre Stage* (Enugu: Hugotez Publishers, 1999).
Also, Futurology.

Peter, 17 quoting.

COMPARATIVE
PERCENTAGE OF URBAN POPULATION (1990)

Highest %		Lowest %	
<i>Gaza</i>	100	Burundi	5.0
<i>Macau</i>	100	Bhutan	6.0
Monaco	100	Rwanda	6.0
Singapore	100	Uganda	11.3
Vatican City	100	Nepal	12.1
Belgium	96.0	Ethiopia	14.7
Kuwait	96.0	Malawi	16.5
Andorra	94.3	Bangladeshi	18.0
<i>Hong Kong</i>	94.0	Laos	20.0
Israel	92.0	Vietnam	20.6
Ice land	90.6	Burkina-Faso	21.0
San Amino	90.4	Guinea-Bissan	21.0
Uruguay	89.4	Lesotho	21.0
United Kindom	89.0	Niger	21.0
Netherlands	88.7	Mali	22.0
		Sri Lanka	22.0
(88.7 - 100%)		(5.0 - 22.0%)	

Non-sovereign

States are shown in italics

Source: Clive Carpenter, ed. *The Guinness Book of Answers (The Complete Reference Handbook (1995))*, 552 (Adapted).