

Origins of Cities and Urbanization in Nineteenth-Century Southern California: Regional Changes in the Context of Three Economic-Cultural Regions of the Americas

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INTRODUCTION

The arrival of Columbus at the end of the fifteenth century marked the beginning of change in the Americas. The emergence of urban settlements was one of many changes that occurred for Native Americans, as Europeans introduced urban traditions to colonize the New World. While urban settlements served an important function as the ceremonial and administrative centers of Mesoamerica and the Andes in the pre-Columbian period, large areas with sparse Native American populations, including the area that would become the present-day United States, were occupied by those who engaged in hunting, gathering, and farming; until the European colonization of North America, there was no tradition of building urban settlements there.

Although the European urban tradition was introduced to the Americas, the morphology, function, and landscape of urban settlements differed across regions, reflecting the origin of the colonists, their purpose and method of colonization, the type of colonial economy, and environmental factors. For example, in the vast Spanish colonies, administrative centers and mining towns prospered while the Spaniards assembled natives in rural towns for the

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purpose of Christianizing them and using them as laborers. In the Portuguese colony of Brazil, where the sugar economy prospered, the sugar plantation was a socioeconomic unit that constituted rural regions with urban functions, and Atlantic port towns connected the colonial sugar economy and the European market. In the French colonies of North America, inland trading posts along the waterways played an important role in fur trading, while major port towns were central in the colonial period. In the British colonies, diverse urban settlements appeared, such as New England towns and *entrepôts* on the Atlantic seaboard. The origin, function, landscape, and morphology of these colonial cities differed from contemporary American cities, and the city distribution was also altered over the course of time. Moreover, modern cities on the eastern seaboard differed not only from the inland cities of the Great Plains but also from the cities on the Pacific coast, reflecting the regional development process.

Why and how did cities appear and what role have they played in the development of the United States? In fact, there may be many approaches to these questions. What I intend to present in this paper is a geographic interpretation of the development of the Americas as a whole and the nature of southern Californian cities. Geographers analyze the characteristics of regions on various scales, from the micro to global level, assuming that a region consists of various human and physical factors. It is also important to emphasize that regions are interconnected so that people, ideas, and commodities diffuse freely over the earth's surface to shape regional characteristics; regions are dynamic entities where change occurs due to both internal and external forces.¹ Although there are different approaches to analyzing the urban geography of the United States,² I attempt to interpret the origins of cities and urbanization in the broader context of the Americas since the beginning of the post-Columbian period.

In this paper, my focus is the origin of cities and urbanization in southern California in the nineteenth century. Rather than scrutinizing individual cities, I intend to elucidate the context of regional changes in order to verify that southern Californian cities in the nineteenth century reflected the overall transition taking place in the economic-cultural structure in the Americas. In order to clarify the development of the Americas as a whole from the beginning of the Columbian Exchange, I will begin my argument by proposing three economic-cultural regions: the northwestern European peasant economic-cultural region, the plantation economic-cultural region, and the Iberian cattle ranching economic-cultural region. Next, I will interpret the development of the United States in the context of these three economic-cultural regions as a

process in which one economic-cultural region encroaches on another and eventually expands across the entire territory. A discussion of the overall transformation of southern California in the nineteenth century follows; the origin of cities and urbanization are examined in order to substantiate my argument that the changing characteristics of cities reflected a transition from one economic-cultural region to another.

THREE ECONOMIC-CULTURAL REGIONS IN THE AMERICAS

The process of development and formation of regional characteristics in the Americas since the arrival of Columbus may be better explained by proposing three economic-cultural regions and examining their dynamics: the northwestern European peasant economic-cultural region, the plantation economic-cultural region, and the Iberian cattle ranching economic-cultural re-

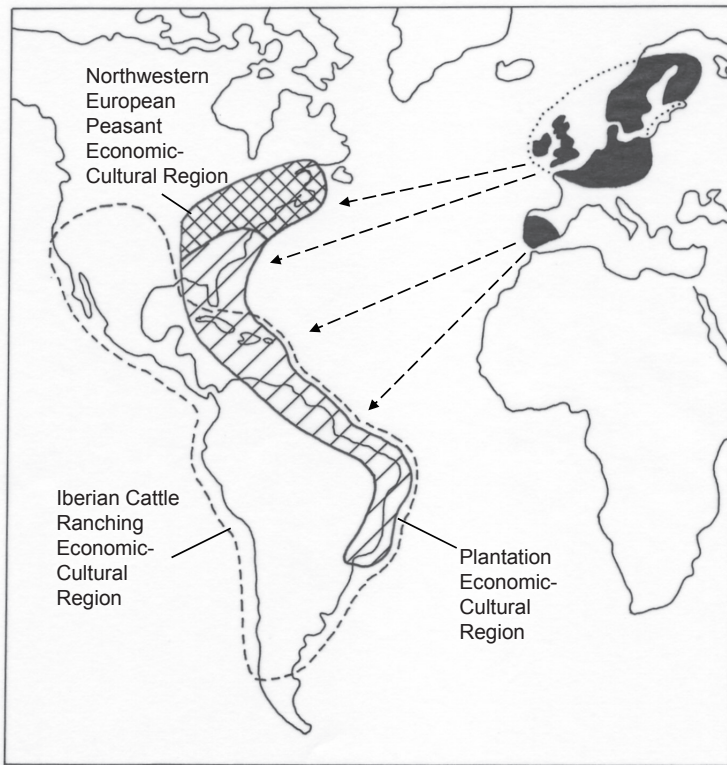


Figure 1. Three Economic-cultural Regions in the Americas and their Origins

gion.³ These three regions differed in terms of method of colonization, nature of colonial economy, social-cultural tradition, and population composition, which directed subsequent development and defined the regional characteristics of the Americas. Many of the geographic features that we observe in the present-day Americas are rooted in these three economic-cultural regions, whose structures were originally transplanted from northwestern Europe and the Iberian Peninsula. Figure 1 illustrates these regions and their economic-cultural origins.

The northwestern European peasant economic-cultural region was formed on the Atlantic seaboard and inland, east of the Mississippi River in North America. Immigrants from northwestern Europe introduced the basic concept of colonization in the New England and Middle Colonies, which were characterized by European farmers engaged in small-scale family farming and mixed farming combining feed crops and livestock, with a tradition of forest clearing, construction of wooden houses including log cabins, and isolated farmsteads. Many of the basic characteristics of the United States were shaped in this economic-cultural region.

The plantation economic-cultural region was established on the Atlantic seaboard of North America, including Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, as well as the Caribbean and the Atlantic coast of South America, including northeastern Brazil and São Paulo. This region was characterized by tropical and sub-tropical climates, large-scale landholdings, class society, slavery and a cheap labor force, and tropical crops such as sugar cane, tobacco, cotton, rice, and coffee, which were oriented to the European market. Cities prospered as the wealth garnered by the plantations accumulated and was consumed.

The Iberian cattle ranching tradition was transplanted from the southern Iberian Peninsula as the Spaniards colonized South, Middle, and western North America, and the Portuguese colonized eastern South America. This economic-cultural region was characterized by the following: grassland and sparse wood, large-scale landholdings, resident workers and cowboys, class society, and an extensive method of cattle ranching. The Iberian cattle ranching economic-cultural region occupied a vast territory, including the areas that were highly populated by Native Americans. In the Caribbean and northeastern South America, the Iberian cattle ranching and plantation economic-cultural regions overlapped, but the latter was more influential.

Following Columbus' voyages to the Americas toward the end of the fifteenth century, these three economic-cultural regions were established, imposing various changes on the world inhabited by Native Americans. Differ-

ent economies and societies were formed in these regions. The historical geography of the Americas may be better explained by clarifying these economic-cultural regions and following the process of change up to the present.

In the territory of the present-day United States, all three economic-cultural regions were established by the early nineteenth century: northwestern European peasant, plantation, and Iberian cattle ranching regions. The peasant tradition was transplanted from northwestern Europe to the northern seaboard of the Atlantic Ocean. The Middle Colonies became the heart of American agriculture, where European mixed farming was enforced through the clearing of the original forest. Native corn, an excellent source of hog and cattle feed, enriched the mixed farming system. As settlers migrated westward, this American tradition of corn-based mixed farming was also diffused. Plantations prospered in the southern coastal regions of the Atlantic seaboard: in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Tobacco, rice, cotton, and indigo, which were all exported to Europe, were major sources of wealth. Slavery provided the foundation of the labor force that was used to manage the large-scale plantations. To the west, from the Great Plains

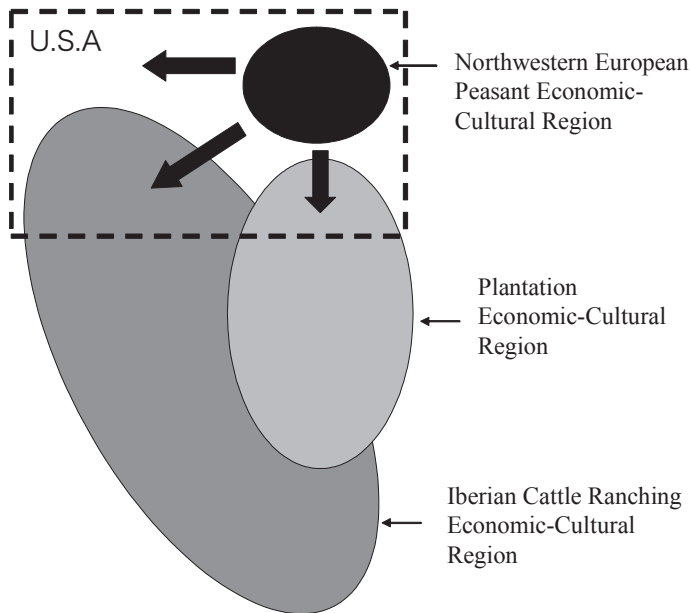


Figure 2. Three Economic-cultural Regions and the Development of the United States

to California, in the semi-arid environment, cattle ranching on the range became a significant economic activity. Cattle were also introduced from the Iberian Peninsula as a means of animal husbandry.

The development of the United States may be interpreted as a process of expansion of the northwestern European peasant economic-cultural region, as is schematized in Figure 2. It expanded to the south, where the plantation economic-cultural region was prevalent, and to the southwest, where the Iberian cattle ranching economic-cultural region dominated. It also expanded northwestward, which was less developed, devoid of plantations or Iberian cattle ranching.

The federal government's development policy in the nineteenth century accelerated settlers' westward movement by granting or selling quarter sections to facilitate family farming. Thus, after cowboys and settlers fought fence wars during the 1880s, the Great Plains were transformed from a world of Texas Longhorn cattle managed by cowboys into a farming frontier populated by settlers. This process signified the expansion of the economic-cultural characteristics of the northeastern United States, i.e., the northwestern European peasant economic-cultural region. California also altered from an Iberian cattle ranching economy to a small-scale family farming economy during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The plantation south also began to change as the plantation-based economy and society was modified under the influence of northeastern United States following the end of the Civil War. Hence, the northwestern European peasant economic-cultural region spread across the national territory of the present-day United States.

The changes that occurred in each region during the nineteenth century may be understood as a shift either from a plantation economic-cultural region to a northwestern European peasant economic-cultural region, or from an Iberian cattle ranching economic-cultural region to a northwestern European peasant economic-cultural region. In order to verify this thesis, carefully conducted case studies should be accumulated. In this paper, I will examine the case of southern California.

Figure 3 schematically illustrates the overall changes that developed in southern California in the nineteenth century, as it transitioned from Iberian California to American (northwestern European) California. The changes must be analyzed in five areas: the land tenure system, type of agriculture, type of cities and urbanization, composition of the population, and perceived regional image. Large-scale landholdings, originally known as *rancho*, granted during the Spanish-Mexican period, became subdivided into small-scale landholdings. This was accompanied by a change in farming methods,

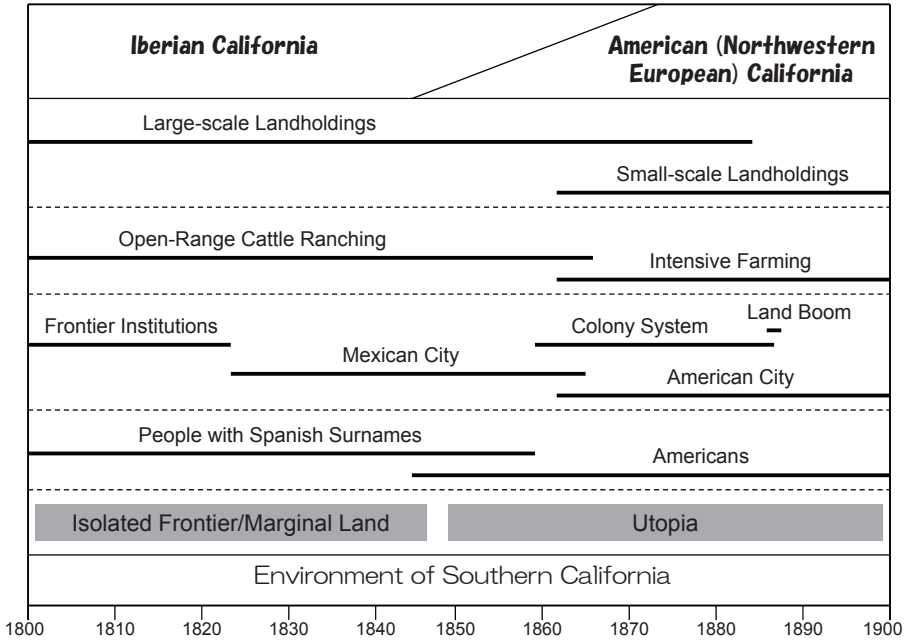


Figure 3. Geographic Transformation from an Iberian California to an American California

from open-range cattle ranching to intensive farming. The composition of the population also altered from those with Spanish surnames, mainly from northern Mexico, to those with northwestern European origins. Although southern California was perceived by people in Mexico as an isolated frontier and marginal land during the Spanish-Mexican period, Americans came to perceive this region as a health utopia and an ideal environment for invalids and health seekers. The environment of southern California remained unchanged throughout the entire period. The intention of this paper is to present a frame of reference to examine the economic-cultural structure of southern California and to scrutinize one of the five areas: that type of changing cities and urbanization.

DISTRIBUTION OF URBAN SETTLEMENTS IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Southern California is one of the most urbanized parts of the United States, with diversified economic activities. The 2000 Census of Population lists over 16 million people in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area. Although their

rapid population growth, accelerated urbanization, and industrial development all arose at the beginning of the twentieth century, the cities themselves were founded during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, despite the fact that southern California is disadvantageously far from the urbanized Atlantic seaboard, it is blessed with an ideal climate for invalids and health seekers. Migration to southern California during the latter half of the nineteenth century was substantially motivated by its healthy climate on the basis of medical climatology and the image of an arcadia, despite the fact that the economy and infrastructure had not yet developed to accommodate migrants from the eastern United States.⁴

The region covered in this study is coastal southern California, including the present counties of Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, and San Diego. It is intended to map the historic-geographic process of urbanization and to examine the driving force behind the establishment of cities. Figure 4 shows the distribution of ninety urban settlements that existed in southern California in the late nineteenth century. It is based on a map entitled "Southern California 1887," included in Dumke's

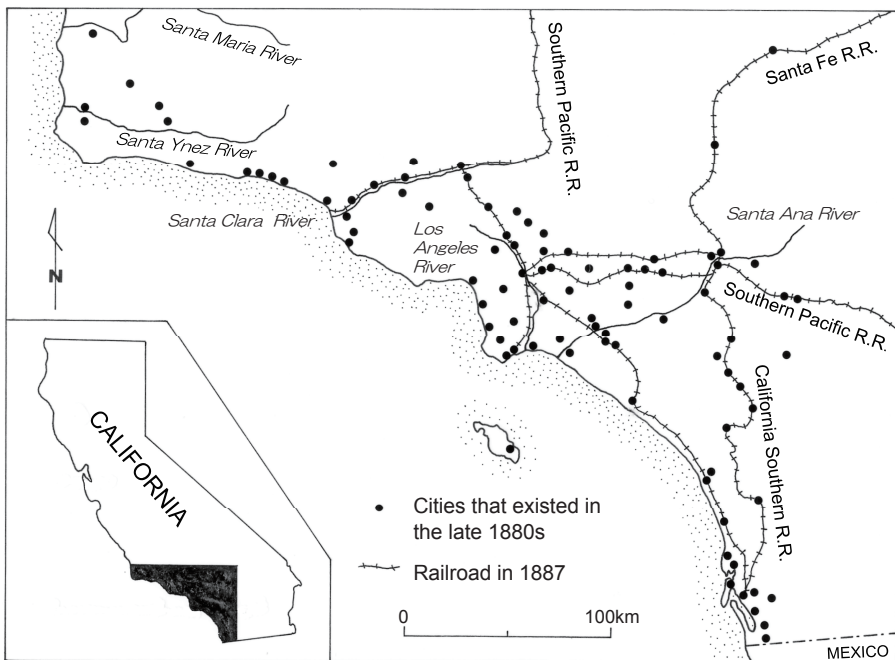


Figure 4. Distribution of Cities in Southern California in the Late Nineteenth Century

The Boom of the Eighties in Southern California,⁵ to which some additions were made using other maps and literature sources. All of these cities were surveyed in order to determine when and how they were founded. Gudde's *California Place Names: the Origin and Etymology of Current Geographical Names* was used as the main reference, supplemented by *Los Angeles A to Z: An Encyclopedia of the City and County* and other publications on local history.⁶

Figures 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11 show the distribution of urban settlements during the Spanish-Mexican period and during the American period from the 1850s through to the 1880s. The urbanization of southern California may be divided into the following periods: (1) the Spanish-Mexican period, (2) the emergence of American cities (1850s and 1860s), (3) the steady increase of planned cities (1870s to mid-1880s), and (4) the boom of the late 1880s and rapid urban development. Each period was characterized by different types of urban settlements and different processes of urbanization. The following sections elucidate the origin of cities and urbanization on the basis of the distribution maps.

FRONTIER SETTLEMENTS DURING THE SPANISH-MEXICAN PERIOD

Some of the cities in southern California originated during the Spanish colonial period. Native Americans in California did not build urban centers, unlike in Mesoamerica and the Andes, where large administrative and ceremonial centers were founded, including Tenochtitlan and Cuzco. Therefore, urban settlements began to appear with the advent of the Spaniards.

When the Spaniards colonized "Alta California," or present-day California located north of the Baja California Peninsula, frontier institutions such as *missions*, *presidios*, and *pueblos* were established. Missions were religious settlements established to house and evangelize Native Americans, while presidios were military bases that provided security. Pueblos were planned colonies designed to settle civilians on the frontier. Among the twenty-one missions built along the coast of California, nine were in southern California: San Diego (established in 1769), San Luis (1798), San Juan Capistrano (1776), San Gabriel (1771), San Fernando Rey (1797), San Buenaventura (1782), Santa Barbara (1786), Santa Ynez (1804), and La Purisima (1787). Southern California had two presidios, San Diego (1769) and Santa Barbara (1782), among the four presidios along the entire California coast, and the pueblo of Los Angeles (1781).⁷ These settlements, planned and founded in order to manage and develop the northern frontier, had urban characteristics

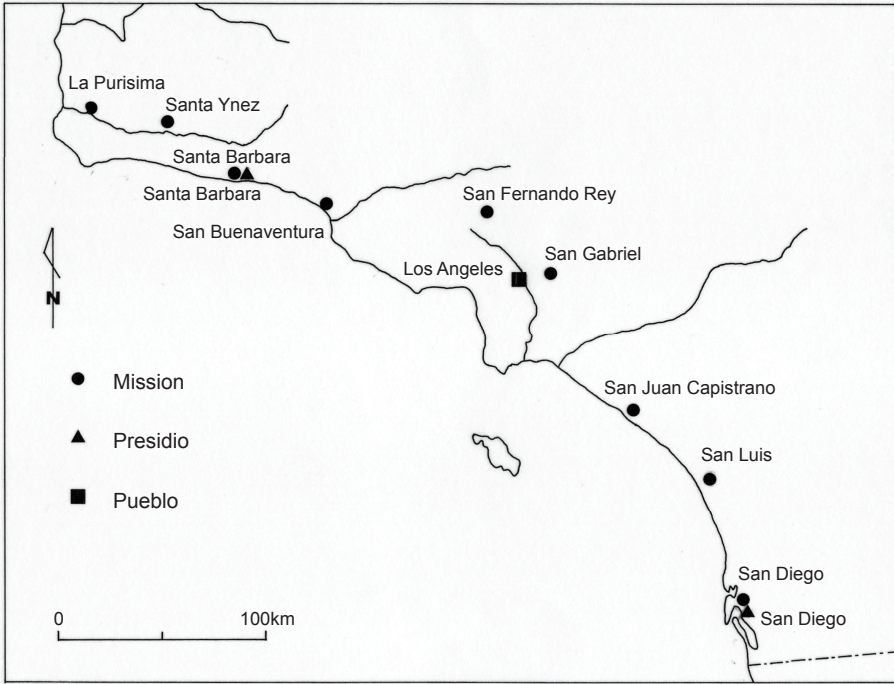


Figure 5. Frontier Institutions in Southern California during the Spanish Period

and provided the nuclei for later urban development (Figure 5).

Another important feature was the *rancho*, or land grant system. During the Spanish colonial period, large stretches of pasture land called ranchos were granted to veterans. During the Mexican period, when granting ranchos was considered a method to populate and develop California, a settler who petitioned with a *diseño*, a rough sketch or map of the property, was able to obtain a rancho land grant. When California became a part of the United States in 1848, the prime land on the coast had already been privatized.⁸ Thus, in terms of land tenure, California stood in marked contrast with other western frontiers, where the Federal Government promoted small-scale family farming by granting or selling small properties. Individual ventures into small-farm development were hindered due to the existence of large private properties. From the viewpoint of urban development in the late nineteenth century, ranchos provided large reserves of land to be purchased collectively and divided for the construction of cities.

EMERGENCE OF AMERICAN CITIES DURING THE 1850S AND 1860S

The population of southern California stood at less than 6,000 in 1850, and subsequently increased to 25,000 by 1860. Although population increase was slight during the 1860s, southern California's population doubled between 1870 and 1880, and tripled between 1880 and 1890. Despite the fact that the economy of southern California largely depended on ranching and farming, new cities were born to accommodate the steadily increasing population.

Figure 6 shows the distribution of cities during the 1850s. Los Angeles, the largest urban settlement in California by the 1840s, had the plan of a Spanish colonial town. When the pueblo was founded in 1781, land with good access to the Los Angeles River was selected. Water was then delivered by way of irrigation canals called *zanjas*. Furthermore, grid-pattern roads were laid for the residential quarters. Figure 7 shows the land use of Los Angeles, which I drew based on the "Plan de la Ciudad de Los Angeles" surveyed by Lieutenant E. O. C. Ord in August 1849. Los Angeles at the beginning of the Amer-

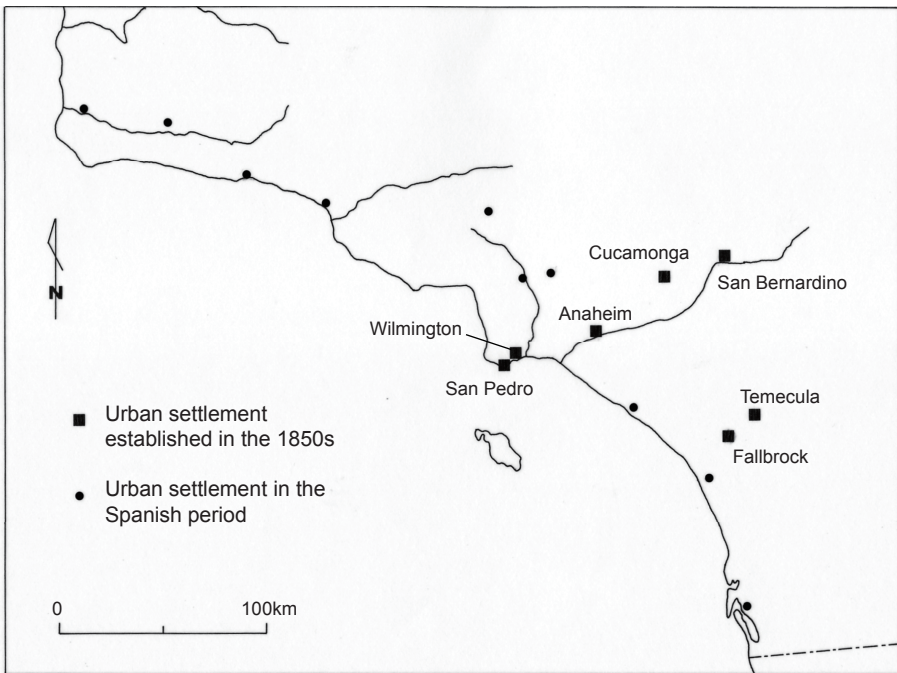


Figure 6. Urban Settlements in Southern California during the 1850s

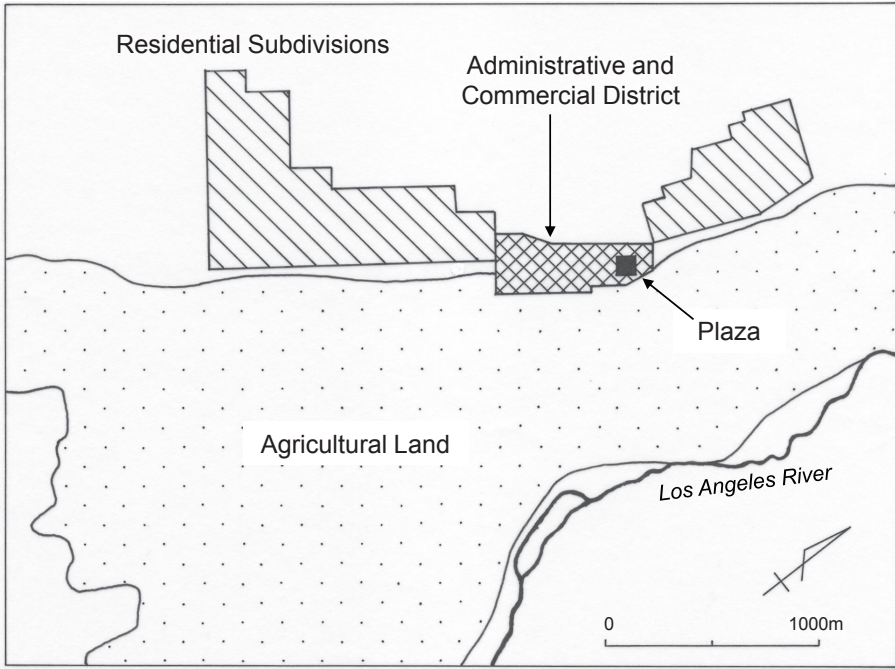


Figure 7. Urban Land Use of Los Angeles in 1849

ican period consisted of the central plaza, the administrative and commercial district adjoining the plaza, the residential subdivisions, and the agricultural land mainly for corn, vineyards, and gardens. Although Los Angeles was incorporated as city in April 1850, during the 1850s it retained the typical morphology of a new town founded in the New World under Spanish rule: the urban landscape, economy, and residents were also Spanish-Mexican.⁹ As Los Angeles expanded during the following decades, the central business district moved to the southwest along Main Street away from the central plaza.

Besides the urban centers that existed during the Spanish-Mexican period, seven new cities appeared: San Bernardino, Anaheim, Temecula, Fallbrook, Wilmington, San Pedro, and Cucamonga (Figure 6).

The first American city was San Bernardino in the eastern suburbs of Los Angeles. It was planned and settled by the Mormons in 1851 under their scheme for the "State of Deseret." Former rancho land was purchased by the Mormon Church in 1851, where San Bernardino was built as a Mormon out-

post on the western frontier. However, due to frequent conflicts with non-Mormons in various localities, the Mormon Church forsook its expansive colonization scheme.¹⁰ Thus, the town of San Bernardino was only short-lived, having little impact on the subsequent development of cities; however, San Bernardino represents an episode in the historical geography of the development of cities in southern California.

The late 1850s also saw a unique attempt at urban development by a group of Germans to settle cooperatively in Anaheim. The Los Angeles Vineyard Society, a joint stock company, was formed by Germans in San Francisco. Through hired agents, land for development was purchased along the Santa Ana River in Rancho San Juan Cajon de Santa Ana. The land was then divided into farming and housing lots, irrigation canals were constructed to deliver water from the Santa Ana River to the fields, and grape vines were planted; these preparatory arrangements led to the arrival of German settlers, who established vineyards and wineries as part of a carefully planned cooperative project to promote viticulture. Although the German character of the

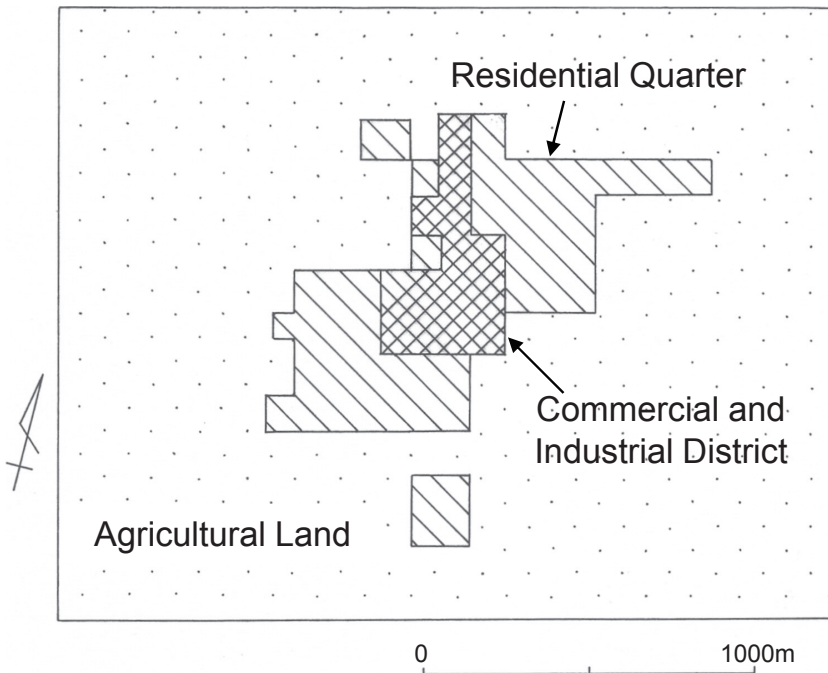


Figure 8. Urban Land Use of Anaheim in the 1880s

community soon faded, it provided a model for building communities in southern California.¹¹

Anaheim typified the urban morphology of American cities in southern California. The land use of Anaheim in the late 1880s is shown in Figure 8, which I prepared with reference to the map of Anaheim in 1887 published by the Sanborn Map & Publishing Company and the land use map of 1888 that appeared in Raup's study on Anaheim.¹² Commercial and industrial functions, including wineries, occupied the center of the community, which was adjoined by the residential quarters. The agricultural land, mainly planted in vines, surrounded the commercial-industrial and residential quarters. Unlike Los Angeles, no plaza was built in Anaheim.

Seven cities were founded in southern California during the 1860s (Figure 9). New cities were built by dividing former ranchos and constructing town lots. John G. Downey, the governor of California from 1860 to 1862, divided Rancho Santa Gertrudis and built a new town in 1865, which was later named Downey. Rancho de la Nacion, near San Diego, was plotted as a new town in 1868 and named National Ranch, later renamed National City. Santa Ana

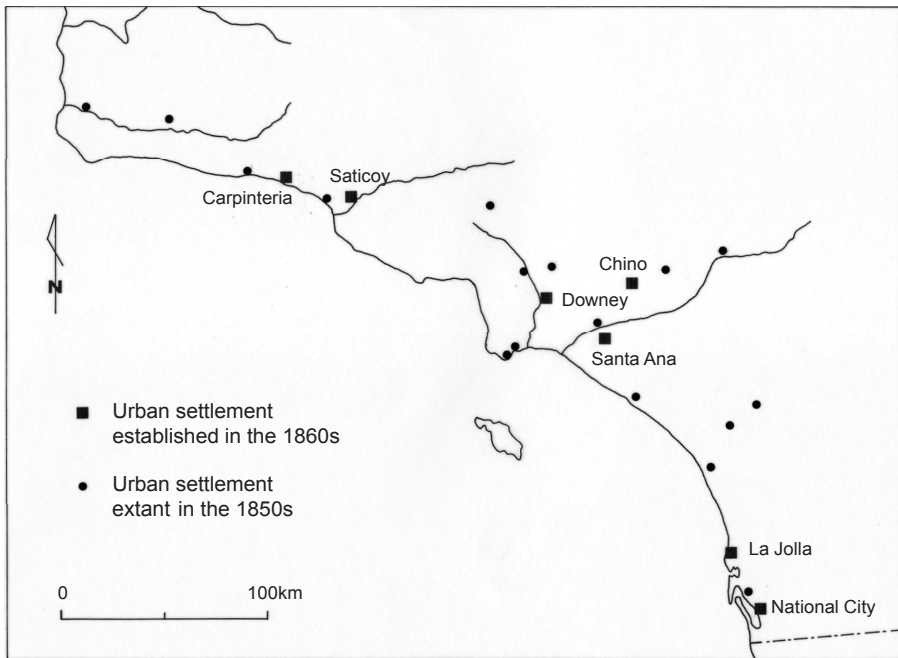


Figure 9. Urban Settlements in Southern California during the 1860s

was established in 1869 in Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana.¹³ Other cities constructed during the 1860s were La Jolla, Chino, Saticoy, and Carpinteria.

Southern California during the 1850s and 1860s retained the characteristics of the Spanish-Mexican period in terms of the economy, landscape, and morphology of its cities.¹⁴ It differed sharply from northern California, where the Gold Rush triggered economic development and population increase. Among the twenty-four urban settlements existing in southern California at the end of the 1860s, eleven originated during the Spanish-Mexican period as missions, presidios, and pueblos. At the same time, new attempts to divide rancho land and to build new urban centers were initiated for various purposes, which led to further urbanization in the following decades.

INCREASE OF CITIES IN THE 1870S AND 1880S

Urban settlements increased rapidly during the 1870s and 1880s in southern California. Figures 10 and 11 show the distribution of cities in the 1870s and 1880s, respectively. Eighteen cities were built during the 1870s, while thirty-four were added during the 1880s. This urbanization was promoted by organized attempts to plan and build cities; some were cooperative settlement projects, which may be termed the “colony system.”¹⁵ Those cities founded by cooperative colony projects are italicized in Figures 10 and 11. The real estate boom of the late 1880s in Los Angeles and its vicinity fueled the urbanization process in southern California.¹⁶ The cities established during the real estate boom (1886–88) are underlined in Figure 11. Some examples of the building of new cities may well represent the degree of urbanization during this period.

It was Riverside—located in the eastern suburbs of Los Angeles on the Santa Ana River—that pioneered the cooperative project of colony development during the 1870s. As a leader was necessary in promoting colony projects, Judge John Wesley North played an important role, while the actual building of the city was overseen by the Southern California Colony Association. North’s plan was to organize a cooperative to purchase land sufficient to settle 10,000 people, and to distribute small plots to members at affordable prices. The people of the state of Michigan participated in an “excursion,” which was organized to accumulate capital for the colony project and to recruit settlers. A property of 8,000 acres in a former rancho was chosen and purchased for colony development: Irrigation canals were built from the Santa Ana River. Town lots were laid, while the surrounding areas were divided into ten, twenty, and even larger-acreage farming plots. North intended

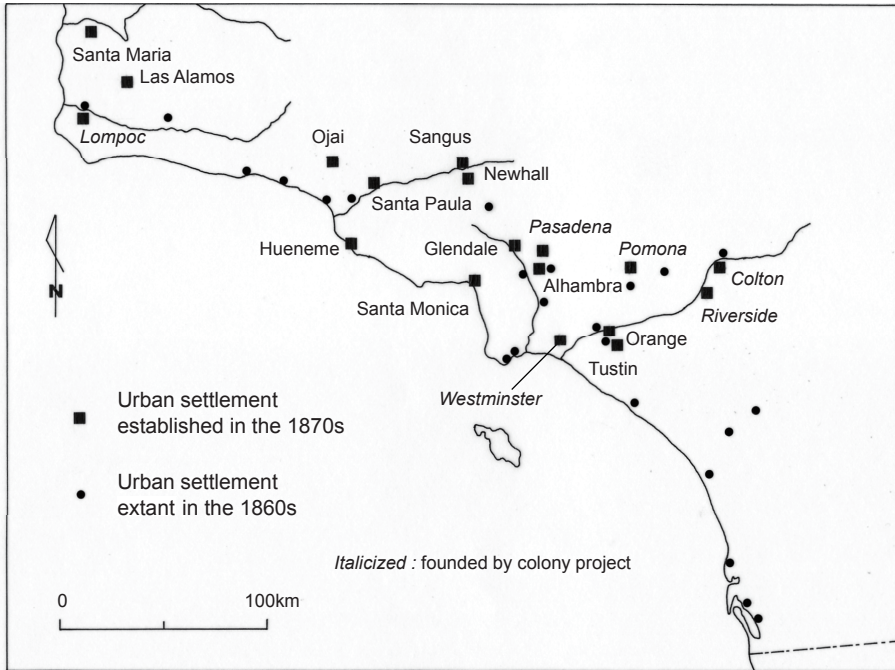


Figure 10. Urban Settlements in Southern California during the 1870s

to build a “colony of intelligent, industrious and enterprising people.”¹⁷ The Washington navel orange was introduced to Riverside around 1873, and the colony developed as a center of orange culture in California.¹⁸

With the advent of railroads into southern California, the establishment of colonies came to attract capitalists. John G. Downey, former governor of California, and capitalists from San Francisco organized the Cucamonga Homestead Association of Los Angeles County in 1872. Eight thousand acres of Cucamonga rancho land was purchased and subsequently divided into plots ranging from ten to eighty acres along with the development of water supply systems. The good climate and fertile farming land was advertised.¹⁹

Pasadena, another interesting example, was founded as a cooperative settlement established by people from the state of Indiana. Under the leadership of Thomas B. Elliott and Daniel M. Berry, an attempt was made to establish Indiana Colony in southern California in 1873. The California Colony of Indiana was organized in Indiana by Elliott, a medical doctor, and Berry, who

suffered from asthma. The San Gabriel Orange Grove Association was officially organized in California and purchased some 4,000 acres in Rancho San Pasqual in 1873. Along Orange Grove Avenue, which runs north-south, land was subdivided into lots. Moreover, a reservoir was constructed and underground water pipes were installed in 1874. Each stockholder was assigned a two-acre town lot and a farm lot of less than 160 acres. When stockholders obtained the land, water was readily available, allowing them to start constructing houses and initiate farming. Being located at the foot of the San Gabriel Mountains, Pasadena developed as a resort town with notable hotels such as the Sierra Madre, the Raymond, and the Green.²⁰

The establishment of other cities was also brought about through cooperative colony projects. The Slover Mountain Colony Association built Colton in 1873. The Los Angeles Immigration and Land Cooperative Association, organized by speculators in Los Angeles, purchased 5,600 acres of Rancho San Jose and built Pomona. The Lompoc Valley Land Company purchased 33,000 acres of Lompoc Rancho, which was divided into forty-acre lots.

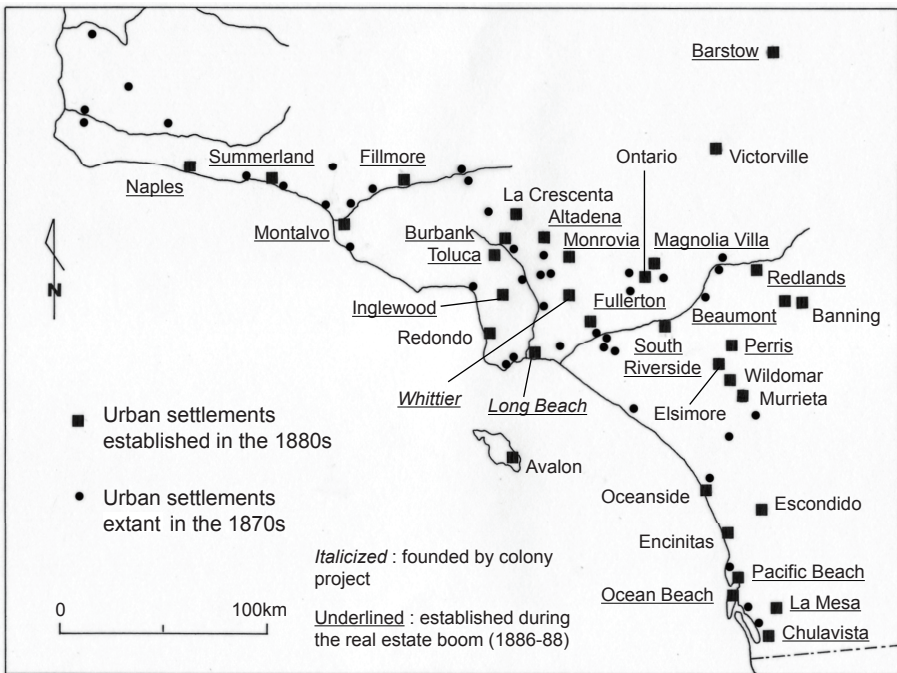


Figure 11. Urban Settlements in Southern California during the 1880s

Lompoc was modeled after the temperance colony in Vineland, New Jersey.²¹ Westminster, a colony founded by a Presbyterian minister, developed during the 1870s.²² Other planned cities during the 1870s included the following: Santa Maria in the 1870s, Hueneme in 1870, Santa Paula in 1872, and Ojai in 1874.

Even more cities were founded during the 1880s, as is shown in Figure 11. Among the thirty-four cities added during the 1880s, only two were built by cooperative settlement projects. Long Beach was founded by William F. Willmore as American Colony in 1882 by dividing the land in Rancho los Cerritos. The Long Beach Land and Water Company purchased the property and changed the name to Long Beach.²³ The other was Whittier, founded in 1887 by the Pickering Land and Water Company, and owned and operated by Quakers from Indiana, Iowa, and Illinois.

In the 1880s, when southern California was linked to the eastern United States by way of the transcontinental railroad and its population increased substantially, cities were planned and founded in even greater numbers. The establishment of cities became a profitable business for both local capitalists and real estate agents. The railroad played an important role in locating new cities: Barstow and Victorville were founded in the inland Mojave Desert, along the Santa Fe Railroad. Along the Southern Pacific Railroad to Yuma, Arizona, Beaumont and Banning were established. Along the California Southern Railroad to San Diego, Perris, Elsinore, Wildomar, Murrieta, and Escondido appeared. Along the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Santa Clara River, Fillmore and Montalvo were founded.

Urbanization was accelerated in the eastern suburbs of Los Angeles in San Gabriel Valley, where the Santa Fe Railroad and the Southern Pacific Railroad ran parallel to each other; Monrovia, Whittier, Magnolia Villa, and Ontario were founded there. George B. Chaffey obtained land in Cucamonga Ranch and built Ontario, naming it after his native province in Canada.²⁴

In addition, many cities appeared on the coast as well. A typical example is Redondo, which was founded in 1881 in Rancho San Pedro. The Santa Fe Railroad reached Redondo in 1888, and it developed as a seaside resort with hotels and a large indoor swimming pool.²⁵ Other coastal cities included Naples, Summerland, Oceanside, Pacific Beach, and Ocean Beach.

Looking at the year of establishment of these cities, there appears to have been a city-building rush in the late 1880s. Although two cities were founded each year from 1881 through to 1884 and three were founded in 1885, six cities were founded in 1886, twelve in 1887, and four in 1888. This reflects the real estate boom from 1886 to 1888, which reached its peak late in the

summer of 1887. The boom was directly caused by the price war between the Southern Pacific Railroad Company and the Santa Fe Railroad Company, and the reduced fares accelerated the migration flow to southern California. Among the thirty-four cities founded in the 1880s, half appeared during this real estate boom. Although the center of the boom was Los Angeles and its outlying areas, it accelerated urbanization in the coastal areas as well as in the inland valleys (Figure 11).

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO URBANIZATION

The growth of cities in southern California reflected the population increase in the late nineteenth century. According to the United States Census, the population of southern California was 5,513 in 1850, but it later increased to 24,751 in 1860, 32,032 in 1870, 64,371 in 1880, 201,352 in 1890, and 304,211 in 1900; the increase in the 1880s was phenomenal. This population increase was brought about by the continuous flow of migrants from the eastern United States. Thus, it is necessary to analyze the “pull factors” accelerating transcontinental migration in the late nineteenth century.

The face of the United States changed radically during the nineteenth century as people migrated to the West. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, in particular, the Pacific Coast became an important destination. While forces that pushed people out to the West continuously functioned in the East, where the opportunities for success were considered limited, the imagined economic success in the western frontier provided the pull factor.

In addition to the economic opportunities, climate was an important factor for westward migration, especially to southern California. As modern medicine was still underdeveloped and environmental factors such as miasma were considered major causes of illness, medical climatology experts designated the dry and temperate climate ideal for the sick; furthermore, among the health arcadia in the West, southern California was considered particularly ideal for health seekers, including tuberculosis patients. Considering that the economy of southern California was predominantly agricultural, the ideal climate was the most important pull factor in the late nineteenth century; in fact, many Easterners migrated to southern California not because of the economic opportunities but for uneconomic reasons—the climate.²⁶

This utopian image of southern California was magnified by writers such as Charles Nordhoff. His publication of *California: For Health, Pleasure, and Residence* in 1873 provided those in the East with geographical information about California as well as practical information for moving and settling

there.²⁷ The completion of the transcontinental railroads further facilitated movement to southern California. Sunbelt migration, which attracted major social attention in the 1970s, had already begun in the late nineteenth century.

The most practical method of settling in southern California was the colony system of cooperative settlement projects such as Anaheim, Riverside, and Pasadena, as described above. Southern California provided conditions conducive to the development of planned cooperative settlements, and both the settlers and the local host society reaped the benefits of the system.

Although the land in southern California was fertile and inexpensive and the climate was ideal, it was geographically far from the populated East; moreover, only limited information was available, and the expected costs for migration and settlement were a burden to prospective settlers. Many people in the East hesitated to migrate to the unknown world across the continent, where they had no friends or family. Thus, cooperative colony projects were able to reduce the cost as well as the risk involved in migration and settlement. Hence, community life was secured through cooperative settlements, thereby overcoming the fear of isolated frontier living.

The dry climate was also a factor in promoting cooperative settlement projects. Unlike the humid Midwest and East, irrigation was inevitable for farming in southern California, while water also had to be supplied for urban consumption. In order to secure a steady water supply, water rights had to be obtained, irrigation canals had to be constructed, and irrigation pipes had to be installed in the fields. All of these, requiring substantial capital investment and construction work, would have been impossible for an individual; cooperative colony settlement addressed all of these problems. In this sense, cooperative projects of colony settlement in southern California differed from the earlier utopian colonies in California—economic benefits rather than cultural and religious ties were important.²⁸

Thus, the increasing numbers of migrants and the development of cities brought economic benefit to the local host society. As southern California had ample land to accommodate the new migrants, Californians established various organizations to promote urbanization. The California Immigrant Union, established in 1869 in San Francisco, promoted migration to California by providing information about available land for settlers. The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce was established in 1873 and played an important role in welcoming migrants. Local real estate agents also contributed to promoting colony projects by providing information on the available land in southern California, as cooperative settlement projects were ideal for dispos-

ing large tracts of land.

The railroad companies, in turn, also welcomed the settlers from the East and the rapid urban development. In addition to the fares collected from the increasing number of passengers, the railroad companies owned large stretches of land awarded to them through the Pacific Railroad Act, which they were able to dispose of as the number of settlers increased.

CONCLUSION: FROM AN IBERIAN CALIFORNIA TO AN AMERICAN CALIFORNIA

The origins of cities and the urbanization process examined in the preceding discussion reflect the overall transformation of southern California in the nineteenth century from an Iberian California to an American California; other changes were observed in the land tenure system, type of agriculture, composition of population, and perceived regional image, as is represented in Figure 3. The overall transformation may be summarized as follows.

During the Spanish colonial period, the system of open-range cattle ranching on large-scale landholdings was introduced from the southern Iberian Peninsula to the Caribbean. As the Spaniards colonized the Americas, cattle ranching and large-scale landholdings also spread over the North and South American continents. California constituted the northern frontier of the Iberian cattle ranching economic-cultural region.²⁹ The Iberian tradition of cattle ranching and large-scale landholdings was sustained up to the late nineteenth century, while small-scale irrigation farming of fruits, vineyards, and vegetables began to change the face of southern California by subdividing the former rancho land. Small-scale family farming, which originated in northwestern Europe, was transplanted in the Middle Colony on the eastern seaboard and prospered in the Midwest; this system of agriculture was introduced in southern California and eventually replaced Iberian cattle ranching in the late nineteenth century.

During the Spanish colonial period, urban settlements were planned and established as frontier institutions to manage and exploit the marginal areas; the tradition continued during the Mexican period. But as the American period began in the mid-nineteenth century, cities appeared spontaneously without governmental planning by those from the eastern United States. The establishment of cities, whether through private efforts or cooperative projects, became a profitable business during the late nineteenth century: the basic urban plan was transplanted from the East. Thus, in terms of urban morphology and landscape, the Iberian influence faded.

Furthermore, the perception of California as an unattractive marginal land

also changed to that of a climatic arcadia. People in Mexico, in the cultural and economic center, had viewed California as an unproductive frontier during the Spanish and Mexican periods. On the other hand, for those who migrated from the eastern United States, characterized by humid and cold climatic conditions, California was perceived as a climatic utopia. Moreover, the American tradition of perceiving the environment and creating a regional image that developed on the eastern seaboard was obviously inherited from the traditions of northwestern Europe through Atlantic migration; while the Spanish-Mexican manner of viewing nature came from the Iberian Peninsula.

The origins of cities and urbanization in southern California may well be understood in this broader context of the Americas, where both Iberian tradition and northwestern European tradition were transplanted.

NOTES

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⁴ James E. Vance, Jr., "California and the Search for the Ideal," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 62 (1972): 185–210; Noritaka Yagasaki, "19 Seiki ni okeru Kariforunia no Imeji to Chiikisei [The Image and Regionality of California in the Nineteenth Century], *Gakugeichiri* 54 (1999): 2–20.

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¹² Raup, *op.cit.*, footnote 11.

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¹⁷ Winther, *op. cit.*, footnote 15.

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