The city metaphor and pluralism in Genesis: Institutional economics between pre-modern and modern urbanism

Research and Working Paper, School of Management, University of Leicester, UK.

13th May 2013

Dr. Sigmund Wagner-Tsukamoto,

School of Management,

University of Leicester,

University Road

Leicester LE1 7RH, UK.

Email: saw14@le.ac.uk

The city metaphor and pluralism in Genesis: Institutional economics between pre-modern and modern urbanism

Abstract: The paper traces changes to the city metaphor in Genesis. Special attention has been given to pluralism as an interaction condition. A key thesis here is that 'the city' described in Genesis ultimately reveals a *modern* understanding of urbanism, with pluralism as a key interaction condition and urban features emerging, such as crowded, large-scale group interactions; bureaucracy; technical order; industrial contexts; etc.

The paper projects the analysis of the city metaphor and pluralism to questions of the institutional economic organization of societal interactions: Did the parallel rise of the modern city and pluralism in Genesis reflect the switch from low level economized modes of institutional organization to highly economized ones? The paper examines various cost effects in this regard, i.e. attack/defense costs and transaction costs, which could explain in economic terms a switch in the micro-organization of the society depicted in Genesis, at the city level.

Key words

City metaphor in Genesis, modern urbanism, pluralism, institutional economic organization, costs of institutional economic organization

The city metaphor and pluralism in Genesis: Institutional economics between pre-modern and modern urbanism

These shifts are indicative of deep-going transitions in political organization as well as military structure. In the historical tradition, the single Israelite tribe is to be found in all stages of transition from quasi-Bedouinism to quasi-nomadic small-stock-breeding and from both through the intermediary stage of occasional agriculture … to urbanization as ruling sibs, as well as to settled agriculture as free and corvée-rendering peasants. The almost universal transition to urbanism appears complete in the political geography of Palestine as given in the Book of Joshua.

(Weber 1952: 42-43)

In *Ancient Judaism*, Weber (1952: 42-43) claimed that it was only in the Book of Joshua that the concept of the city came into full bloom in the Old Testament or *Hebrew Bible*. The paper critically reviews this thesis by tracing the city concept in the Book of Genesis. In this way, the paper further questions and deepens Weber's analysis of the emergence of urbanism in the Old Testament.

The paper analyzes the city metaphor in Genesis in new terms and – textually – the city in the Old Testament is seen to be emergent much earlier than Weber envisaged. The key thesis of the paper is that Genesis, which is one of the oldest and best known parts of the Old Testament, advises on the institutional governance of society, and it does so – and the more so with advancing storytelling – through concepts of (modern) urbanism, pluralism, and eventually distinctively economic modes of governing society. The paper reconstructs

social ordering in the city which reveals in this respect that cooperation conflicts were in the end handled quite adeptly in Genesis – in economic terms.

In the first part, the paper draws together key ideas on urbanism. I review concepts from the sociological literature, starting with early publications on the city, such as Weber's *The City*. From there, I move on to more recent works. As such, this review cannot be representative and comprehensive in any sense. Instead, its purpose is to selectively provide theoretical dimensions for analyzing the specific research questions of the present paper – for differentiating pre-modern urbanism from modern urbanism, and then projecting this debate to Genesis and questions of pluralism and institutional economic organization. Future studies would be required to broaden this research on the city concept in the Old Testament.

The paper traces, in its second part, the emergence of the city metaphor in Genesis. Key examples of stories that draw on the city metaphor were the stories of Enoch, Babel, Sodom and Gomorrah, Bethel, Beersheba, Shechem, and ultimately the anonymous cities in the Joseph stories. The city metaphor is reconstructed from pre-settlement nomadic modes of social interactions to the small-scale, semi-tribal, semi-rural, 'pre-modern' city, and subsequently to the large-scale, bureaucratic, commercial, 'modern' city. In the latter type of city, conflict with 'old', religiously grounded, monotheistic culture arose and religious pluralism became an issue, so my argument contends for the Genesis text.

The key thesis is in this respect that Genesis advises on the organization of societal interactions: It does so by inter-relating the ultimate emergence of modern urbanism with explicitly pluralistic interaction contexts. Pluralism then becomes – as we normally expect it

to be in modern urbanism – a defining feature of the city, and is already seen in Genesis. An accompanying change in patriarchal value dispositions can be observed while progressing through the storytelling.

In the third part, the paper inter-relates changes to the city metaphor in Genesis with changes to the institutional economic organization of the city – from less economized modes to more economized ones. On the one hand, this switch can be traced to a re-orientation and increasing 'economization' of the covenant relationship between God and the patriarch – which happened, so a key argument of the paper explains, against the backdrop of the rising pluralistic city, and which mirrored changes to value dispositions of the patriarchs. On the other hand, a switch from less economized modes of institutional organization to more economized ones is linked to specific cost effects which the increasing economization of societal organization had in the pluralistic city. Savings in attack/defense costs and in transaction costs are evaluated. The paper explains these types of costs in more detail later on.

In consequence, the paper argues that Genesis can be understood as having successfully handled the 'city problem' in economic terms (exemplarily so, in its conclusion, from the stories of Joseph), and this happened in a way which we would conventionally associate with modern urbanism. As noted, this argument is built on the institutional economic reconstruction of the conceptual role of the city in Genesis.

On a methodological note, the paper develops its arguments through textual, non-historiographical analysis. This methodological approach has been set out in more detail elsewhere (Brett 2000a, 2000b; Clines and Exum 1993; Wagner-Tsukamoto 2009a: 12-18;

Wagner-Tsukamoto 2009b: 149-152). I treat the stories of Genesis as prose fiction. Arnal (2010: 556-557, 561-564) develops comparable arguments on the textual nut not necessarily factual or archaeological relevance of the New Testament. As he sharply puts it: ' "Christianity's" foundational gesture is not to be found in Jesus, but in the story of Jesus.' (Arnal 2010: 557, emphasis as in original) Still, such textual analysis can be projected in historic, normative perspective by asking what political purpose can be attributed to the Genesis text regarding the specific, societal contexts in which these stories emerged circa 2000 years BC. It is difficult to imagine that these stories did not have some historic, political rationale regarding the governance of society at the time.

Conceptual dimensions of pre-modern urbanism and modern urbanism

The institutional problem of organizing societal interactions in a modern urban context is markedly different to that of pre-modern urbanism. Also, the institutional problem of pre-modern urbanism is dramatically different from one of the smaller, 'older' social units, such as villages (Parker 2011: 14; see also Mumford 1961: 30). Differences are even more pronounced for pre-settlement modes of social and economic interactions, such as nomadic group behavior or hunter-gatherer behavior (Parker 2011: 16; see also Mumford 1961: 10-15, 19-25).

In the present paper, I focused on comparing and contrasting the emergence of pre-modern urbanism and modern urbanism. From one perspective, when discussing pre-modern urbanism, a demarcation to pre-settlement modes is necessary since they do appear in the

Genesis text, for instance when nomadic tent dwellings are described. Some exploration of these contexts would seem to be necessary in order to understand the emergence of pre-modern urbanism. From the opposite perspective, a discussion of modern urbanism in relation to post-modernity is clearly desirable. For reasons of focus and because of the constraints of writing a journal article, this does not receive further analysis in this paper.

Table 1 summarizes my classification of *pre-modern versus modern* urbanism. It has conceptual dimensions (and also literary references) through which I distinguished pre-modern urbanism from modern urbanism. *Pre-modern urbanism*, for the purposes of this paper, is interpreted with respect to the small city; the semi-rural city; the city as a religious center, with the city being governed by moral order, or what Buchanan (1975: 117) termed the 'moral precepts' approach to institutional governance; the city being potentially close to feudal order; and the city reflecting pre-industrial work patterns, with economic growth not being fostered by the city.

Table 1
Key Features of Pre-modern and Modern Urbanism

Pre-modern Urbanism	Modern Urbanism
• Crowded settlement, wall-by-wall, yet: small cities (Davis 1969, pp. 8-11; Gallion and Eisner 1975, p. 19); semi-rural city (Weber 1958, p. 74)	• Crowded settlement, wall-by-wall, large cities (Davis 1969, pp. 8-11; Gallion and Eisner 1975, pp. 43, 215); at the extreme: 'metropolitan' (Breese 1966, p. 50, Gallion and Eisner 1975, pp. 215-216)
• City of a moral order: 'orthogenetic city', drawing and developing an old culture (Breese 1966, p. 49; Redfield and Singer 1954, pp. 56-57); city as religious center (Weber 1978, p. 1292; Breese 1966, p. 50; Mumford 1961, pp. 49, 59)	• City of a technical order that potentially conflicts with old cultures: 'heterogenetic city' (Breese 1966, p. 49; Redfield and Singer 1954, pp. 56-57); religious pluralism (Weber 1958, pp. 102-103); bureaucratic, administrative, planning order (Weber 1978, pp. 1325-1328; Gallion and Eisner 1975, p. 203-206; Weber 1958, pp. 74, 84)
	• City of an economic order: economic policy and economic regulation, 'commercial city' (Weber 1978, p. 1328-1330; Gallion and Eisner 1975, pp. 88-89; Weber 1958, pp. 73-74, 104); entrepreneurship (Weber 1978, pp. 1295-1296)
• 'Parasitic city' that does not create economic growth (Breese, p. 46; Davis 1969, p. 8); pre-industrial work patterns (Breese 1966, pp. 50, 53)	• 'Generative city' that creates economic growth (Breese, p. 46; Davis 1969, p. 8); city as manufacturing center with industrial work patterns (Breese 1966, p. 50; Gallion and Eisner 1975, p. 72-73); extensive trade relationships outside the city (Gallion and Eisner 1975, p. 43; Parker 2011, p. 15)
• Feudal government (Weber 1978, pp. 1292, 1315-1317; Gallion and Eisner 1975, p. 43; Mumford 1961, p. 59; Weber 1958, pp. 82, 84, 100, 112, 133-134, 152, 163, 174, 176, 190)	• Democratic government, 'citizenship' (Weber 1978, pp. 1311, 1335; Weber 1958, pp. 81, 102, 104-112, 121, 158-159, 170, 190)

In contrast, *modern urbanism* reflects the large or even metropolitan city; the city of

technical and bureaucratic order, which potentially conflicts with religious 'old' cultures; the

city as manufacturing center with industrial work patterns and extensive trade relationships

outside the city; and the commercial city, which creates economic growth and mirrors

economic policy and economic regulation.

As noted, the key theses of my subsequent analysis are that the rise of pluralism as an interaction condition in the course of Genesis mirrored a switch from pre-modern urbanism to modern urbanism; and that this switch reflected the increasing economization of the covenant relationship as well as changes in attack/defense costs and transaction costs which were yielded by different types of institutional order in the pre-modern city in comparison with the modern city.

The emergence and rise of the city metaphor in Genesis

Cain's city: Enoch

Issues of settlement became an instant issue after the Paradise story. Shepherding and agriculture were raised as topics in Genesis (4: 2): Abel keeping 'flocks' and Cain 'working the soil'. Genesis (4: 17) then for the first time invoked the idea of the 'city', which Cain built, and which he named after his son Enoch. This early reference to the city, as well as to agriculture, was however still closely associated with semi-nomadic, rural, pre-settlement modes of societal interactions rather than city dwelling in the spatial context of actual physical structures such as houses: Genesis (4: 20) speaks in this connection, when it invokes the 'city', of 'those who live in tents and raise livestock', and Cain had earlier been depicted by Genesis (4: 12) as the 'restless wanderer who works the ground.' Yet, the city begins to emerge.

Genesis 6 discussed various issues which shed light on societal interactions and societal organization: a large increase in the number of people was referred to, which the lengthy account of genealogies in Genesis 5 prepared; 'large size' of social interactions now became an issue (Genesis 6: 1); the institution of marriage was mentioned for the first time (Genesis 6: 2); and 'wickedness', 'corruption' and 'violence' were raised as social problems (Genesis 6: 5, 11-12). The idea of the 'city' as such was not mentioned at this point – Genesis 6 speaks of all 'earth' – but the earlier reference to the city which Cain had built, together with Cain's curse from God and increasing population size illustrate why Cain's cities experienced wickedness, corruption and violence: Through Cain (having killed Abel) wickedness is personified and projected onto the 'city' (of Enoch). The image of an anarchic, wicked, corrupt, and lawless society loomed large, with this society suffering under value decay, and worse.

Personal character dispositions of the patriarchal son (Cain) and the setting of the city of Enoch clearly inter-relate even at this early point of Genesis. Cultural conflicts within the city arose, the city already facing a challenge over its status as a religious center. Although Genesis did not invoke religious cities as opposites to the city of Enoch at this point, such religious conflict in the city is at least implicitly suggested by the counterparts of Cain (and Enoch): Adam, Abel, and Seth, who were (comparatively) religious figures. Regarding the personification of cities, this argument finds support if we look at the explicit approach Genesis employed to personifying cities, such as Enoch and Shechem.

Noah: Enoch, Ham's cities, Babel

The scene for organizing societal interactions started afresh following the great flood, which destroyed Cain's cities (specifically, Enoch). The descendants of Adam survived only through Noah. As for the Cain story, the same type of rural, semi-nomadic, pre-settlement type of societal organization was still implied in the immediate aftermath of the flood: Genesis (9: 20) characterized Noah as a 'man of the soil' who lived in 'tents' (Genesis 9: 21). Even Genesis 10, *The Table of Nations*, may have to be largely read in this same manner, when for instance the 'mighty hunter' was referred to (Genesis 10: 9). Nevertheless, qualifications apply: 'nations', 'clans', ' territories' and 'kingdom' were explicitly referred to for Noah's sons, and 'cities' were explicitly mentioned by Genesis (10: 10-12, 19).

It is interesting in this connection that Genesis again personifies personal wickedness, curses the perpetrator, and projects this to the city: In Genesis (9: 22, 24), Ham physically violates his father Noah, and was cursed by Noah for this deed (Genesis 9: 25-27). Noah, of course, was one of the archetypical role models of the God-fearing and God-loving, religious patriarchal figures found in Genesis. Ham's cities include Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 10: 19), which in subsequent chapters evoked some of the most powerful metaphors for value diverse and 'wicked' cities even today; cities where moral order seemingly collapsed – and which therefore, like the cities of Cain (Enoch), subsequently attracted God's wrath.

The story of the city of Babel offers a first brief episode which invokes settlement in relation to brick making, the use of mortar and an apparently large number of people, who live in the city (Genesis 11: 2-4): The image of building a huge tower was drawn upon. A large city was implied, and it can be assumed, in a Weberian sense, that city planning and some kind of administrative, bureaucratic order drove the Tower project. This ambition, however, of striving towards heaven and possibly reaching and even becoming like God – divine, moral

order being challenged through technical administrative order that was created by humans –, was thwarted: Diversity in languages was imposed by God. The resulting inability to understand each other undermined human efforts towards city building and administrative technical planning in Babel. Pluralism and diversity (specifically so, in languages) was not mastered as an interaction condition. Rather, it was 'actively' used by God to prevent successful societal organization.

Abraham: Bethel, Hebron, Sodom and Gomorrah, Zoar, Beersheba

In the stories of Abraham, we see a return to a rural, semi-nomadic lifestyle with shepherding and living in tents being the dominant feature. Abraham moved to and camped in the countryside outside the city of Bethel after closing the covenant with God (Genesis 12: 2-3, 7-8). At Bethel, he built an altar for God. Abraham here was still 'outside' the city, even outside Bethel. This represents a pre-modern, semi-nomadic and value-homogeneous, anti-pluralistic setting of the Abraham stories, where potentially even small cities could be viewed as a threat to moral order. Nevertheless, the 'small' city of Bethel also symbolizes the religiously infused and monotheistic contract closed between Abraham and God. At this city, Abraham erected an altar for God, to honor his belief and reverence to God. Bethel, therefore, mirrors a city of a moral order and a religious center. The city of Hebron conveys similar connotations (Genesis 13: 18; 23: 2; 23: 19; see also 'Mamre', Genesis 18: 1).

Potentially pluralistic features of different ethnic groups mixing are raised in the story when Abraham traveled to Egypt. His wife was then given, as 'Abraham's sister', to the pharaoh (Genesis 12: 15). An economic exchange was set up, with Abraham receiving livestock and

servants in return. In Egypt city dwelling can be deduced from the story's reference to a 'palace' in which the pharaoh lived (Genesis 12: 15), and Egypt was generally depicted as a rich land where famine was not a major issue.

A nomadic, rural, pre-settlement context continued to set the scene once Abraham, together with Lot, returned from Egypt to land near Bethel. Shepherding and living in tents was still mentioned (Genesis 13: 7, 12, 18; similarly Genesis 18: 2, 6-7, 9-10). When Lot decided to leave for the fertile land of the Jordan valley, the city of Sodom was referred to, this time already being explicitly characterized as 'wicked' and 'sinning' (Genesis 13: 13). Abraham, in contrast, stayed away from Sodom (in Genesis 13 and 14), and also rejected outright any presents from the King of Sodom (Genesis 14: 23) for having helped the King to recover goods and people. At least figuratively (but also 'physically'), Abraham remained near Bethel, the monotheist religious center (Genesis 13), while Lot entered wicked Sodom, Ham's city.

With the story of Sodom, the situation changed dramatically. As for Babel, living in houses was discussed (Genesis 19: 3-4, 10). Positively evaluated, the city of Sodom reflected value diversity and liberty (Davidson 1979: 73), but – more conventionally assessed, was also portrayed negatively (e.g. Westermann1986: 297-299; Kugel 1997: 185-189) , - issues of abuse, rape, and sexual assault could be linked to the city inhabitants (Genesis 19: 5-8). Lot was completely immersed in this culture, but was not captivated by such value diversity and even value decay: He remained an 'alien' in Sodom (Genesis 19: 9). In this respect, the city metaphor was explicitly infused with pluralism (which can be both negatively and positively evaluated) and, importantly, it was *not* projected on Lot, the 'alien'. Lot's life and the lives of those who were in his family were subsequently spared for exactly this reason, for having

refused to participate in the liberal practices and potentially decaying culture of Sodom. Due to its too 'liberal' or wicked culture, Sodom was then eradicated by God: 'The city is punished' (Genesis 19: 15).

Genesis further played on the value diverse metaphor of the city of Sodom by letting Lot and his family escape to the 'small town' of Zoar (Genesis 19: 20, 22). Zoar was here, at least to some extent, positioned as a polar opposite to Sodom: It was, like Bethel, 'small' when compared to Sodom, and we can assume that problems of value diversity and decay had infiltrated Zoar to a much lesser degree. Even so Lot remained afraid of Zoar too (Genesis 19: 30). Still, to a considerable degree city size was in this way explicated by the Genesis text as a source of rising pluralism.

The story of the destruction of Sodom concluded by invoking Abraham again: 'So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham, and he brought out Lot of the catastrophe' (Genesis 19: 29). Abraham, as patriarch, had closed a value-centered contract with God, Abraham being a just, right, God-fearing and God-loving figure. These monotheistic, and potentially anti-pluralistic or at least lesser pluralistic connotations are, through the figure of Abraham, projected as an opposite onto the city of Sodom and to the reasons why Sodom suffered its ill fate. Sodom was not the kind of place which Abraham would have chosen to live in. As discussed, Abraham figuratively and physically remained near Bethel, the city where the covenant had been initially closed. Through the person of Abraham, we therefore find the city of Bethel was also positioned as an opposite to Sodom. And Genesis (19: 29) makes it clear that it was exactly these dispositions (of Abraham and the kind of city which Abraham's choices reflected) that helped Lot to escape from Sodom.

In the aftermath of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, another city surfaced which reaffirmed the religiously infused contract of Bethel: Beersheba (Genesis 21: 14, 22, 31-32). Contracting among humans over pasture rights sets in between Abraham and Abimelech (Genesis 21: 27, 31). Yet, contracting was grounded in a largely religiously infused moral frame of social ordering: To confirm the contract, 'Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there he called upon the name of the Lord, the Eternal God' (Genesis 21: 33).

Isaac: Hebron, Beersheba

In the stories of Isaac, tent dwelling and cattle breeding continued; crop planting then appears (Genesis 26: 12, 25). The way of life of the patriarch gradually moved away from a semi-nomadic one but it remained rural and closely associated with the city as a religious, culturally homogeneous center: Mamre (Hebron) is referred to again (Genesis 25: 9), as is Beersheba (Genesis 26: 23, 25, 28, 31, 33). The latter had come to symbolize the beginning of contracting over pasture rights among humans, between Abraham and Abimelech (Genesis 21: 27, 31).

Still, in the stories of Isaac, Beersheba was anything other than a metaphor for the on-set of pluralistic tendencies in Genesis. It continued to reflect symbolically infused religious contracting between the patriarch and God: As Abraham had built an altar for God outside Bethel to honor his covenant with God, so too Isaac erected an altar for God outside Beersheba. Cross-references between Isaac's and Abraham's God-revering behavior were made explicit in this way by Genesis (25: 9; 26: 23-25). In this manner, Bethel, Hebron and

Beersheba were symbolically drawn closer together as places of religious worship and cities of a monotheistic, moral order. These latter purposes infused the city concept at this point.

Jacob: Bethel, Peniel, Shechem, Hebron

With Jacob, the situation changed – to some degree. Shrewdness, even deceit, which has been explored as homo economicus behavior elsewhere (Wagner-Tsukamoto 2013), entered patriarchal interactions not only with other humans but also with God.

Although Jacob acquired through deceit the blessing from Isaac, no major discontinuity in the patriarchal value tradition resulted. Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the deception of Isaac, a value-based covenant between Jacob and God was re-affirmed (Genesis 28: 12-13), explicitly invoking Abraham and Isaac. Spatially, this place was re-discovered by Jacob as the city of Bethel, which was introduced, in Genesis (12: 8, 13: 3), as part of the Abraham stories: '[Jacob:] "Surely the Lord is in this place … How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven" … He called that place Bethel.' (Genesis 28: 16-19) And like Abraham and Isaac, Jacob physically remained outside the city, even outside the small city building, again mirroring the actions of Abraham and Isaac by creating an altar for God in proximity to the city (of Bethel). The contract with God remained monotheistic and comparatively anti-pluralistic. The already well-established city metaphor of Bethel poignantly reflects this at this moment of the Jacob stories.

Still, in various respects an emancipation of the God-humans relationship can be observed, for instance with Jacob promising a reward to God ('a tenth' of everything that God gave Jacob; Genesis 28: 22). This attitude of compensations, rewards, of taking-and-giving, of 'tit-

for-tat' became a regular occurrence throughout the Jacob stories (Wagner-Tsukamoto 2009a, 2013a). It indicated a change in value dispositions on the side of the patriarch, the patriarch being 'economized' in his character. This transformed not only the human counterparts of Jacob (Esau, Isaac, Laban), who were disadvantaged and subsequently compensated by Jacob, but also, as noted, God as an interaction partner of Jacob, in Genesis (28: 22).

This change in attitude in the patriarch-God relationship was most dramatically depicted in the nightly fight between Jacob and God, when God became human and wrestled Jacob, and was pinned by Jacob, who demanded terms in exchange for releasing God: In this moment Jacob extracted the blessing from God (Genesis 32: 26). This signaled a break in the patriarchal tradition of how the blessing was conveyed – Noah, Abraham, and Isaac being *gifted* by God with the blessing. This is in stark contrast with Jacob's forced approach which would have been unthinkable in the earlier stories. The place of Peniel made its first appearance here (Genesis 32: 30), potentially symbolizing a move away, at least at this point in the storytelling, from Bethel.

Another challenge to Bethel and the monotheistic, moral order it reflected followed in the aftermath of Jacob's fight with God (in Genesis 33: 18-20): In a rather economized manner, Jacob purchased a plot of land from the Shechemites – in order to erect an altar for God. The city of Shechem here received its first mention, Jacob camping 'within sight of the city' of Shechem (Genesis 33: 18). Up to this point in Genesis (33), a new pluralistic vision of a contract between God and humans, and among humans was still feasible. Now however, this announced distinctive differences in the covenant relationship as compared with the covenants of the early patriarchs. Yet, the biggest challenge which now awaited Jacob (in

Genesis 34) was whether pluralism could fully emerge and ultimately survive, at the city of Shechem.

In Genesis 34, the Israelites encountered the Hivites. A 'love-hate' story (Wolde 2003) between Dinah, Jacob's daughter, and Shechem, the son of the ruler of the city of Shechem, developed: Shechem fell in love with Dinah and asked Jacob for permission to marry her (Genesis 34: 4, 8, 12). Shechem offered an unconditional bride price to Jacob and his sons (Genesis 34: 12). However, the price Jacob's sons exacted marked the beginning of both anti-pluralism and deceit: The circumcision of all males of the city of Shechem was requested (Genesis 34: 13-17). The price in itself asserted monotheism and anti-pluralism, the Hivites being forced to convert to the religion of Israel. And the price stated was with deceit in mind, as Genesis (34: 13) made clear: Posed as a trick to physically weaken the Shechemites. Once the male Shechemites were circumcised, Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, attacked the city of Shechem and killed all the male inhabitants, plundering and enslaving the rest of the city (Genesis 34: 25-29).

That anti-pluralism won the day in an overwhelming fashion at Shechem (in Genesis 34) was re-affirmed in Genesis 35: God asked Jacob to return to Bethel and (re-)build an altar at Bethel. The city of Bethel and the monotheistic moral order and the comparatively anti-pluralistic, patriarchal value dispositions it had come to symbolize previously were positioned very deliberately in this way, as direct opposites to the city of Shechem and the potentially pluralistic way of life it would have heralded – had the marriage between Dinah and Shechem succeeded. The latter would have initiated inter-cultural shared lives and intermarriage between the Israelites and the Hivites. The final departure from this pluralistic vision is explicated by Genesis (35: 2-4):

So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, 'Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes. Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I build an altar to God … ' so they gave up all the foreign gods they had and the rings in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the oak at Shechem.

This section is remarkable in a number of respects. Jacob, as patriarch, de facto sanctioned the genocidal behavior of his sons Simeon and Levi; Bethel resurfaced again as one of Genesis' most potent city metaphors of the monotheistic, moral city that reflected comparatively anti-pluralistic dispositions and reaffirmed the value-based covenants of the early patriarchs Noah, Abraham, and Isaac; and literally and metaphorically, religious pluralism was 'buried under the oak at Shechem.' Therefore, in the conclusion of this story, 'Shechem turns out to be the opposite of Bethel' (Wolde 2003: 445). Or more dramatically, we can draw on Pinder (2005: 8) and Timms (1985: 7) and extrapolate to Shechem their contemporary research on the 'unreal city': which is caught up between a 'distant utopia' and an 'imminent apocalypse'.

So, the stories of Jacob offer re-orientations regarding the loosening of stringent value-based character dispositions of the patriarch, especially so through the 'economizing' of the character and attitudes of Jacob, through Jacob challenging God in their nightly fight, and also in regard to the city metaphors of Peniel and Shechem that emerged in the immediate aftermath of the fight. Up until this point, at least some hope had surfaced for a new, more pluralistic covenant with God, and also among humans. However, this hope was brutally crushed at Shechem (in Genesis 34): In the end, Jacob had gone full circle and was back where he started, at Bethel.

At this point in the storytelling the city of Hebron was referred to as a further destiny of Jacob (Genesis 35: 27). However, like Bethel, Hebron once again was one of Abraham's and Isaac's holy places (Genesis 13: 18, 23: 2, 23: 19). The ultimate message of the Jacob stories is in these respects not a comforting one regarding the manifestation of pluralism, pluralism not being successfully mastered as an interaction condition. Eventually, it would only be through his son Joseph that Jacob could enter modern urban contexts with pluralistic settings.

Joseph: Hebron, Shechem, Egypt's cities

From the outset, the stories of Joseph signaled a reorientation in value dispositions and the coming of more pluralistic contexts: Hebron was mentioned as the place from which Joseph was *sent off* by Jacob, and at the same time, Shechem was referred to as his first destiny to meet his brothers, who were shepherding flocks at Shechem (Genesis 37: 12-14). With the connotations in mind which these places had acquired in earlier stories, as less favorable and more favorable metaphors for pluralistic cities, changes in the social organization of life could be expected. The storyline then instantly intertwined with Egypt as Joseph's destiny, when Egyptian merchants were referred to, to whom Joseph was sold as a slave by his brothers (Genesis 37: 25, 28, 36).

In Egypt, a different organization of social life was prevalent: Genesis (41: 48) referred to 'cities' in their plurality. Apparently, a capital city – the pharaoh's city – was referenced in Genesis (44: 4, 13) when the singular term of 'the city' was repeatedly invoked. Agriculture and crop farming were prevalent (Genesis 39: 5; 41: 48; also 47: 20), also house dwelling

and the management of households. Furthermore, the society was bureaucratically stratified, with highly differentiated occupational functions such as palace guards, prison wardens, cupbearers, bakers, stewards, magicians, wise men, (crop) farmers, shepherds, priests, physicians, etc. (Genesis 39: 1, 20; 40: 2-3; 41: 8; 43: 19; 48-49; 47: 5-6, 22, 26; 50: 2). Mumford (1961: 29-30) might here speak of the 'urban mixture of occupations' which characterizes cities and which signals progressing division of labor (Mumford 1961: 102-105).

A state system and therefore a more comprehensive polity which governed these cities is implied, and explicit manifestations of this are, for example, a taxation system, a property rights system, or the pharaoh's military apparatus, which protected members of this society, ultimately the Israelites even when *outside of* Egypt (Genesis 50: 7-9). In these latter respects, the ancient state, as portrayed by the Genesis text, may have been militarily motivated in certain areas, but not the Egyptian city as such, and this is contrary to some of Weber's (1958: 212) suggestions on the military nature of cities.

When Joseph set up his barter tax system for crop production (Genesis 41: 34, 47-49) and his property rights reform for the organization of crop farming and livestock breeding (Genesis 47: 13-21), the Old Testament (i.e. the original Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible) spoke of 'Joseph moving the people to the cities' (Genesis 47: 21). This is very different to later translations of this issue, for instance in the Septuagint, which phrased it such that 'Joseph reduced the people to slaves'. A 'move of people to the cities' could be directly linked to rising urbanization and the securing of agricultural and other economic surpluses that are facilitated by city organization (abstractly on this issue, see Breese 1966: 39-44). Furthermore, references to 'cities' in their plurality indicate that the Egyptian cities were not

'primate cities' in a developing country (Breese 1966: 48) and neither were these cities in the Joseph stories 'parasitic cities' (Breese 1966: 49; Davis 1969: 8). Rather, these were 'generative' cities in an economically, comparatively highly developed country that reflected modern, technical, bureaucratic order. We encounter features of the commercial city, such as the generation of agricultural surpluses and specialization of labor (Parker 2011: 14-15). Apparently, Egypt was wealthy.

The Egyptian society depicted in Genesis implies high degrees of urbanization: through the bureaucratic structures and systems that were in place for governing this society, and through the social stratification that was explicitly discussed for Egypt (In historic perspective, see Weber 1952: 253-254). Urbanization clearly advanced in the Joseph stories as compared to the earlier stories, and the city metaphor was affected by this, being de-personified, and moving away from the image of the religious city that dominated the earlier patriarchal stories. Contemporary empirical research on interrelationships amongst urbanization, economic development and religiosity argues along similar lines (McCleary and Barro 2006: 152, 167-168; Inglehart and Baker 2000: 29-31).

The open, technically oriented and bureaucracy-oriented nature of the Egyptian society can be further illustrated through the reward and promotion system in place: It was solely because of his skills (for interpreting the pharaoh's dreams) that Joseph became the chief official of Egypt, answerable only to the pharaoh (Genesis 41: 39-40). This diagnosis coincides with Weber's (1978: 223, 225) analysis of bureaucracy and the recruitment of organization members in terms of technical knowledge and technical competence alone. In other respects, we can question Weber: Joseph's promotion to the top of Egypt's hierarchy implied delegation of power; it undermines the suggestion, as made by Weber (1958: 100)

in historic perspective, that in ancient Egypt an 'Egyptian prince was the absolute master of the city [or state].' Genesis (47: 6) re-affirmed this de-personifying, skills-based approach for all Israelites, who then had immigrated to Egypt.

This also suggests the presence of pluralism rather than merely the presence of tolerance as an interaction condition, a distinction abstractly made by Hare (1982: 178) and Sagi (2009: 11-13). An explicit instance is here in Genesis (41: 38-39), after Joseph had interpreted the pharaoh's dreams. The pharaoh then respects the very substance of Joseph's value system by acknowledging that Israel's God had revealed truth to Joseph. Therefore, Joseph was not merely tolerated as a stranger in the pharaoh's world view, but the very nature of his religiously differing views received respect. Again, Following Hare's (1982: 178) and Sagi's (2009: 11-13) abstract distinction, we can diagnose pluralism: At this point in the Joseph stories, religion as a discriminatory force among people lost its impact (abstractly, Sternberg 2010: 354 too) and in this sense, we see a modern society emerge.

Furthermore, the open hierarchies of Egypt implied freedom and free movement (for example, within state hierarchies, or, in a spatial sense, across territory) in a very basic sense: This could contest historical suggestions that these ideals predominantly only emerged in the cities of the Middle Ages (e.g. Parker 2011: 24-25). This argument can be put forward both in non-historiographical, textual terms and in historic ones.

Already at this point we can refute a point made by Weber (1958: 212) in historic terms: In the ancient cities depicted in Genesis there were, to use a phrase of Weber's, 'citizens as economic men', and they could be found side-by-side with 'citizens as political men'. The land reform and tax systems introduced by Joseph and the skills based promotion system

23

that was in place in Egypt can indeed be interpreted in institutional economic terms, or what Weber (1978: 223) called bureaucratic organization structures of 'the modern Western state' – and which he contested for ancient societies (also Weber 1976: 67). The discussion in the next part of my paper, which focuses on cost considerations for institutional change to city organization in Genesis, further substantiates this claim.

Summing up, pluralistic conditions of urban interaction contexts were mirrored by various issues: First, by not invoking specific names for cities in the stories of Joseph, the city metaphor as such was kept in anonymity. This reflects on the large-scale and predominantly anonymous nature of social relationships in these cities.

Second, the personal attribute of skills determined promotion in Egyptian society instead of tribal, ethnic, or national identity. Joseph was the prime example (Genesis 41: 39-44), but so were the Israelites (see above), as exemplified by their shepherding skills: Once they had relocated to Egypt, the pharaoh invited them to look after his herds too – should they possess special shepherding skills (Genesis 47: 6). Also, the pharaoh offered the best land to the Israelites, once they relocated to Egypt (Genesis 47: 6, 11, 27). Therefore, Egypt functioned as an open society, both regarding the influx of foreigners and how foreigners were promoted in this society.

Third, intermarriage and cultural assimilation were raised as topics, with Joseph marrying the daughter of a high priest of Egypt (Genesis 41: 45). The value dispositions of the patriarchal son, who may have to be considered as the chosen new patriarch – or at least so after Jacob's blessings (see below) – here differ dramatically from the earlier patriarchs.

Ultimately, in Genesis (50: 11) even the Israelites themselves were regarded by the Canaanites as 'Egyptians' when they went to Canaan to bury Jacob. In various degrees, we find the inter-cultural, transnational society and not 'merely' a multi-cultural one (Regarding Trans nationality as a concept, see Krätke et al. 2012).
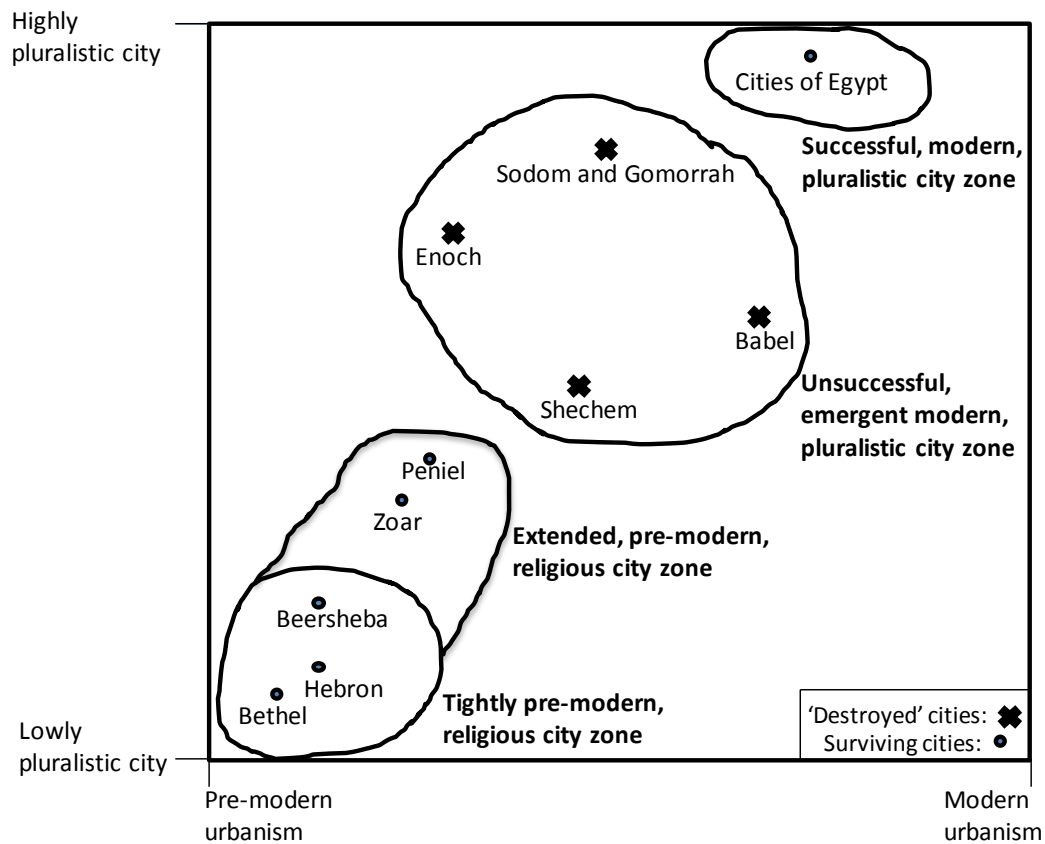
Fourth, all Egypt mourned once Jacob died, and also accompanied and protected the Israelites on their journey to Jacob's homeland to bury him (Genesis 50: 3, 11).

Fifth, value decay, or what Genesis earlier described as wickedness and corruption, was openly relegated in the Joseph stories to the private level. Key examples were the betrayal of Joseph by his brothers at the outset of the Joseph stories (Genesis 37: 18-20, 26-28), as well as the attempt of Potiphar's wife to seduce Joseph (Genesis 39: 7-18). Private betrayals were separated, and in degrees even healed through the systemic institutional structures that were running the Egyptian society. For example, in the case of the story of Potiphar's wife, Joseph recovered quickly (from being wrongfully imprisoned) through the new occupational responsibilities he acquired as prison warden (Genesis 39: 21-23; Genesis 41: 9-14); in the case of the betrayal through his brothers, ultimately the Israelites shared the benefits derived from the crop storage system, silver treasure 'allocations', and the farming system of Egypt (Genesis 42: 19, 35; 43: 21; 45: 10-11; 47: 11-12). Therefore, these economic institutions could be interpreted as having systemically resolved the social dilemmas caused by the 'war of all', 'wickedness', 'corruption' or 'violence' or however else such threats to cooperation could be termed (Wagner-Tsukamoto 2009a, 2010).

In conclusion, we find in the Joseph stories cities of a 'technical' modern order rather than cities of a 'moral' pre-modern order (See Table 1). The latter, pre-modern type of order can

be related to the cities of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and to a considerable extent Jacob too (up to Genesis 35). These early cities were also more likely to reflect a predominantly pre-industrial, 'rural' order with rurally-inclined institutions still in place – which in the early stories of Genesis mirrored the religiously grounded covenant. This is quite different to the Joseph stories where we find an altogether different institutional order. We can project (at least indirectly) modernization and secularization hypotheses, in textual terms, to the society depicted at the end of Genesis (For contemporary societal and religious research on such theses, see McCleary and Barro 2006; Inglehart and Baker 2000). Figure 1 provides a conceptual map, which can be both positively and normatively read.

Figure 1: Emergence of the modern, pluralistic city in Genesis

Highly pluralistic city

Cities of Egypt

Successful, modern, pluralistic city zone

Sodom and Gomorrah

Enoch

Babel

Unsuccessful, emergent modern, pluralistic city zone

Shechem

Peniel

Zoar

Extended, pre-modern, religious city zone

Beersheba

Hebron
Bethel

Tightly pre-modern, religious city zone

'Destroyed' cities: ✖
Surviving cities: ⦿

Lowly pluralistic city

Pre-modern urbanism

Modern urbanism

From a textual approach to Old Testament analysis, Weber's (1952: 42-43) suggestion that only *with the Book of Joshua* was urbanization fully realized in the Old Testament now looks questionable. We can even sharpen this critique by having explicated *modern* urbanism for the Joseph stories.

Further to this we can, at least to some degree, question historic economic research on urbanization, for example, for the early and mid-twentieth century, and research claims that changes in modern urbanization are '… so recent that even the most urbanized countries still exhibit the rural origins of their institutions.' (Davis 1969:6; similarly Pinder 2005: 7-8)

Textual evidence to the contrary is provided by the Joseph stories (and the Solomon stories too; see Wagner-Tsukamoto 2013b) with their urbanized, religiously pluralistic contexts and 'non-rural', economic institutions. From the existence of such textual counter-evidence, the question arises regarding the actual historic situation of the specific societies from which these stories emerged circa two thousand years BC.

Here, and coming back again to Weber, we can fundamentally question historic research on the emergence of pluralistic cities:

> The further back one shifts [historic] attention, the more similar appears the economic position of the temple in Antiquity to that of the [monotheistically dominating] church and especially of the monastery in the early Middle Ages. … However developments in Antiquity did not take a course similar to that of the Middle Ages, towards an increasing separation of state and church and mounting autonomy of the area of religious dominion. (Weber 1958: 194; similarly Weber 1978: 1335; Weber 1976: 67; see also Wagner-Tsukamoto 2012)

Not only textually as has been noted, but also historically, we can question this for the Joseph stories (and the Solomon stories too), by asking about the political, normative purpose for societal governance the Joseph stories were tailored to.

So, for Joseph and his way of life in Egypt, later even being joined by the Israelites, we can suggest that the pluralistic vision of Shechem was finally realized. Genesis (37) announced this at the outset of the stories of Joseph when Shechem was repeatedly invoked. Also, in Genesis (46: 5), Jacob 'left Beersheba' to travel to Egypt. In this regard, it has to be kept in mind that Beersheba symbolized in Genesis a similar kind of city as Bethel, being of a largely

value-homogeneous, small-scale nature and reflecting pre-modern, semi-rural, religiously infused urbanism (See Genesis 21: 27, 31; 26: 23-25, 28, 31, 33; see also above). In contrast, a comparatively modern, pluralistic city metaphor set the tone for storytelling throughout the stories of Joseph, and in varying shades and degrees, pluralism as an interaction condition is successfully explicated throughout these stories.

In the end, Joseph received the most favorable blessing from Jacob (Genesis 49: 22-26), despite not being the first-born son. If any patriarchal successor can be said to have emerged in the wake of Jacob's blessings and his subsequent death, it has to be Joseph. Interestingly, at the point of the blessings (Genesis 49: 5-7), Jacob now openly distanced himself from Simeon and Levi (which also has significant interpretative implications for later books, especially Exodus, since Moses is then born from Levi's tribe; see Wagner-Tsukamoto 2009a: 151, 158, 217, 231). Reasons behind this deselection of Simeon and Levi can be linked to the events in the stories of Joseph, which in a sense healed the atrocities from the story of the city of Shechem.

Genesis ends with the death of Jacob, Jacob being buried by the Israelites and Egyptians at Hebron (Mamre), and Genesis ultimately closed with Joseph and the Israelites returning to the un-named cities of Egypt. Figuratively at least but in certain respects literally as well, the stringently religious social contract, as symbolized by the cities of Bethel, Hebron, and Beersheba, was here, with the burial of Jacob, laid to rest too, and the 'big', pluralistic, and at least quasi-modern city prevails at the end of Genesis.

Economic considerations: Attack/defense costs and transaction costs as analytical drivers for changes to the city concept in Genesis

In the following, the paper inquires in what respects changes to the city metaphor in Genesis can be projected to economic considerations: from the endorsement of the small-scale, value homogeneous, religiously infused cities of Bethel, Hebron and Beersheba in the early patriarchal stories, and the parallel rejection of the cities of Enoch, Babel, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Shechem, to the emergence of the large-scale, more pluralistic and anonymous cities in the stories of Joseph.

On the one hand, I discussed an increasing economization of the covenant relationship between God and the patriarch in the course of Genesis as a conceptual issue that was mirrored by changes to the city metaphor. On the other, I deepened this analysis by projecting it to economically motivated changes to city organization (from small-scale, value homogeneous, religiously infused city settings to large-scale, pluralistic, anonymous city settings). I did so with regard to savings in attack/defense costs and transaction costs yielded by those different types of city organization. The key thesis is in this respect that the small-scale, value homogeneous, religiously infused approach to city organization was potentially more cost effective in the early stories of Genesis when predominantly tribal, rural, 'pre-modern' settings were met. There were dramatic changes to such contexts, such as increasing size, rising pluralism, and rising anonymity in inter-tribal, inter-national settings. The institutional economic structures that reflected different institutional organizations and the more hierarchical, bureaucratic structures began to outperform – on cost grounds – the predominantly behavioral, institutional structures of the small-scale, tribal city. Weber (1958: 169-170) reckoned such historic changes in institutionalization

were an important factor that influenced city organization – but did not project such changes to cost considerations that different types of city organization yield.

In general, city organization (as with any other type of social organization reflecting polities, including state formation and nationhood) can be interpreted as a cost effective solution to resolving and preventing the problem of (self-) destructive anarchy. Hobbes referred to this problem as the 'war of all', or Buchanan (1975), connecting to Hobbes, specified it as the 'natural distribution state'. In this sour state; predation and constant attack loom regarding property claims of interacting parties. Mumford (1961: 24) here explicitly rejects Hobbes' 'bellicose primitive man' but then historically dates the natural distribution state for the ancient Middle East as the process when 'war became fully established and institutionalized' (Mumford 1961: 24; also Mumford 1961: 50-54) – and the first emergence of cities could be observed (see also Mumford 1961: 46).

Weber (1958: 163) similarly notes in historic perspective that in the feudal, pre-modern city, the 'gangster-like threats of the populace by the militarily superior nobility were effective in denying them their rights' – although certain benefits for the populace existed, namely the 'protective domination of a prince' providing 'protection against external threats.' (Weber 1958: 176; see also Olson 1993: 667-671; Mumford 1961: 49, 59) Historically this only changed, for instance in many parts of medieval Europe, with the populace taking charge of the cities, acquiring democratic governance and 'citizenship' rights, and discarding of or at least severely restricting the nobility.

On the grounds of economic considerations, namely *to save on attack/defense costs* regarding claimed property, Buchanan's (1975) constitutional economics outlined that a process gets under way in which institutional structures emerge that resolve the constant attack/defense problems which the natural distribution state gives rise to. As Buchanan (1975: 117, emphasis as in original) put this: 'When conflict does emerge, however, anarchy in its pure form fails, and the value of order suggests either some social contract, some system of formal law, *or* some generally accepted set of ethical-moral precepts.' His reference to a set of ethical-moral precepts can be projected to Genesis' early approach to solving problems of cooperation conflict through the religiously infused and comparatively monotheistic covenants. His references to 'social contract' and 'systems of law' mirror a different type of institutional order, through institutional economic structures, such as property rights regimes. Neither approach to institutional regulation is optimal all the time: Context factors have to be acknowledged – which this paper specifically projected to pluralism as an interaction condition for city organization, and factors that interrelate with and specify urbanism (such as the scale of urban contexts; patterns in settlement / habitation; technical / bureaucratic order; patterns in work organization; etc.).

The small city, grounded in a tight behavioral religious consensus, can be interpreted in this respect as one of or a 'first' cost effective solution to the institutional problem: By sharing religious values, the possibility of the war of all is prevented through a behavioral approach (possibly combined with military, feudal set-ups; see also Mumford 1961: 48-49). Therefore, for the small, quasi-tribal, 'pre-modern' city, a religious consensus and a behavioral approach to city organization can be reasoned to minimize attack/defense costs.

In Genesis, we still find such comparatively tight religious social contracting with regard to the city metaphor for the early patriarchal figures and their covenants with God. Noah, Abraham, and Isaac were highly religious, quasi-holy, non-economized figures. This can be seen not only by the type of covenant God closed with them but also poignantly so, by the city metaphors we encounter then, specifically Bethel, Hebron and Beersheba. They reflected lowly pluralistic (quasi-tribal, small-scale, rural) and comparatively pre-modern urban settings.

 'Pre-modern' city organization can also be suggested to be more *transaction cost efficient* under certain conditions: Transaction costs reflect costs of communication and of coordinating social interactions. It can be proposed that for the small, rural, monotheistic city, the use of informal face-to-face coordination, grounded in a religious behavioral contract, yields low transaction costs. In this situation, a strongly bureaucratic approach that reflected tall hierarchies would be less transaction cost efficient. Williamson's (1975, 1985) and North and Weingast's (1989) institutional economic research can be extrapolated in this respect with regard to textual, biblical research. Weber's (1978) bureaucracy approach holds certain insights here too.

For instance, the commons dilemma (Hardin 1968), wherein a group faces the problem of sharing a communal meadow for grazing sheep that are owned by individual farmers, is comparatively trivial or even non-existent when strong social, behavioral bonds exist within a group, as potentially mirrored by villages or the small-scale, lowly pluralistic city. In

Genesis, we find early roots of this dilemma in the land separation problem of Abraham and Lot, and the interactions between Abraham and Abimelech (Wagner-Tsukamoto 2009a: 84-85, 95-96).This dilemma, however, cannot be seen to be non-trivial when large scale, anonymity and pluralism arise together as interaction conditions. This leads to resulting cost advantages for tall bureaucratic structures, for new tax systems and for new property rights systems that govern city organization in a different way. The 'war of all' is then systemically, bureaucratically prevented, though a social contract that mirrors the constitutional and institutional economic approach (as Buchanan, North, or Williamson imply), rather than religiously, through a behavioral, moral precepts-type approach.

In Jacob, the patriarchal model begins to be economized: Jacob was anything but the quasi-holy figure that was presented by the early patriarchs. This was reflected in his interactions with Esau, Isaac, and Laban, and ultimately by his fight with God, in which he forcefully extracted the blessing and a new covenant. The Jacob stories (prior to Egypt) in this way made it quite clear that the city concept, as a personified representation of the patriarch, was undergoing challenges (similar to the earlier stories of Enoch, Babel, and Sodom and Gomorrah). However, unlike these early stories, Genesis now 'accepted' that the concept of urbanism was at a turning point – as indicated by the increasing depiction of pluralism, and inter-tribal encounters (e.g. Israelites vs. Hivites / Shechemites), and of the economization of social interactions themselves (the latter being directly reflected by the figure of Jacob). Figure 2 chronologically differentiates this issue by identifying (an 'outbreak' of) the natural distribution state for Enoch, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Babel as well as for Shechem, which hints, in varying degrees, at modernism.

Figure 2: Textual chronology of city appearances In Genesis
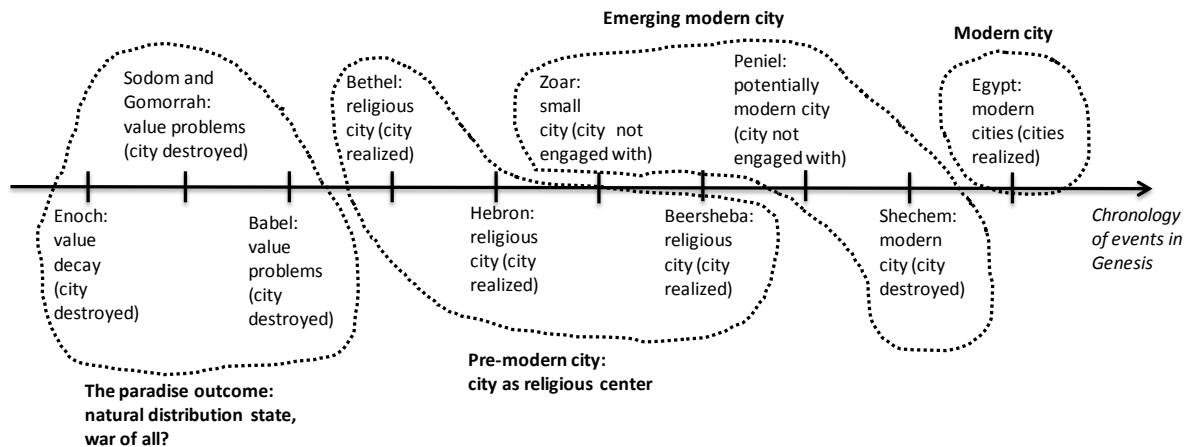
In such changing contexts, with the scale of social interactions increasing and diversity in values and religion becoming an issue, the religious city model of early Genesis was beginning to look ineffective and inefficient, especially so on grounds of cost considerations relating to attack/defense costs and also in relation to transaction costs.

The possibility of a new city concept emerged, of Peniel and Shechem. This would have signaled, if fully realized, a new type of city and the manifestation of pluralism as an interaction condition. However, in the Jacob stories this more modern city is confined to a vision of things to come.

Only in the Joseph stories do we fully meet the modern city and a totally different social context: Geographically this is mirrored by locating the Joseph stories outside Israel's homeland and far away from its religiously grounded cities: Egypt being the opposite of a tribal society. Egypt was very large scale in the biblical context described in the Old Testament; there was a high ethnic mix, Egypt being an open society with a constant influx

of foreigners; it entertained international trade relationships; it reflected a settled society with a high degree of work specialization; attributes like personal ability alone determined promotion in Egypt's stratified, bureaucratic hierarchies; and anonymity in social interactions arose. In this situation, different institutional structures were more cost efficient to prevent the 'war of all.' We then find institutional and constitutional economic structures (property rights systems, tax systems, hierarchies, etc.) which Buchanan's, North's, and Williamson's research implied for modern contexts to be more cost-efficient.

The emergence of these new systems can be projected, on cost grounds, to changes in context factors which were previously analyzed in regard to changes to the city metaphor.

Figure 3 projects such economic considerations to questions of pluralism and modernity in the biblical city.

Figure 3: Economic organization and the modern, pluralistic city in Genesis
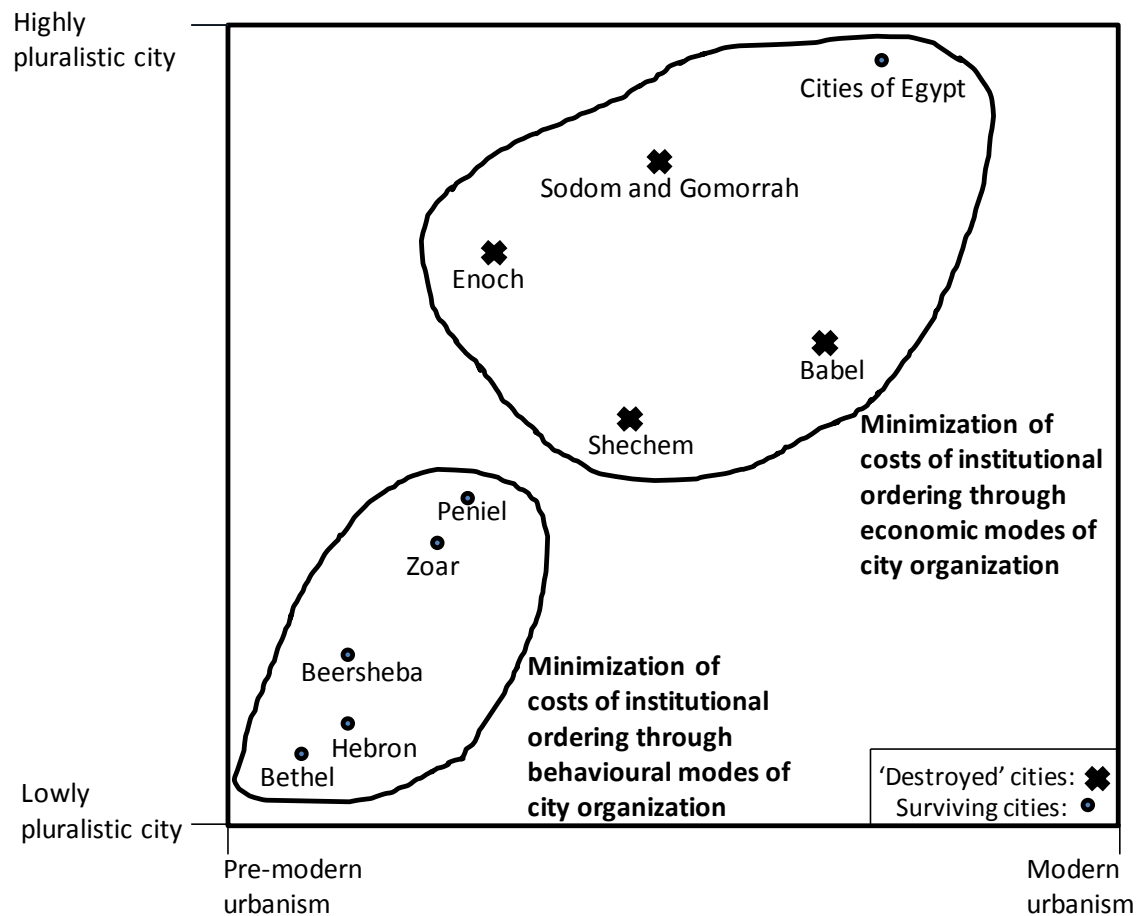
Conclusions

Cities and urbanization are the fascinating historic and conceptual microcosm through which

the evolution of polities and here especially, the emergence of states and nations, can be

understood and conceptualized (Parker 2011: 18). Through the emergence of both 'pre-modern' and 'modern' cities, processes of state formation get under way, developing institutional state structures that ultimately evolve to the point of outgrowing cities and city states. As Breese noted, '… it is in the cities that the political future of a country may well be determined. Here will be found the theater for the working out of the drama of nationhood.' (Breese 1966: 145) Concepts such as 'citizenship' and the way we interpret and understand this very idea with regard to basic democratic and human rights in the modern state and nation historically evolved as a consequence of the institutionalization of city organization for its members – and also from how this process was rationalized by those who drove institutionalization. As the paper outlined, Genesis can be interpreted in this regard as a prime conceptual resource.

In Genesis, we can textually trace the process of city formation: from semi-nomadic, rural ones, to dwelling in cities which we would consider from today's perspective as 'pre-modern' ones, to ultimately distinctively modern arenas of city organization. For Genesis, the paper here successfully reconstructed interrelationships between the city metaphor, patriarchal value dispositions, pluralism in social interactions, and changes in institutional costs for organizing societal interactions (Figures 1 and 3 provided conceptual maps, and Figure 2 set out a textual chronology of how the modern city emerged in Genesis). No simplistic, mono-causal interpretations can be put forward in these respects that could explain all these developments in a straightforward way. Rather, the paper cautiously explored positive and normative patterns of interrelationships, changes to such patterns, and how they interrelated across different conceptual dimensions.

For the early patriarchs, Noah, Abraham, and Isaac, their God-fearing and God-loving characters and religious value dispositions were reflected by the way they stayed away from the modern and potentially pluralistic cities, specifically Enoch, Babel, and Sodom and Gomorrah. Their lives were largely defined by a semi-nomadic, pre-settlement way of life, and one could argue that the rural, 'bucolic Garden of Eden' (Claeys 2011: 7) sets the starting point. For the early patriarchs, the modern city remained an agonizing, dystopian opposite. At best, they associated with the small pre-modern city, the city then being a vision of anti-pluralistic, monotheistic, social life (especially so were Bethel, Beersheba and Hebron). In this regard, pluralism was discarded from a conceptual frame of reference of Genesis. Regarding its successful institutional governance, Mumford (1961: 49) might here diagnose the 'religious potencies of the [pre-modern] city'. The present paper specified such 'potencies' with regard to low attack/defense costs and transaction costs of pre-modern city organization, as they are exemplified by its specific interaction contexts.

These patterns began to change for Jacob. His value profile moved away from the quasi-holy, religious depictions of Noah, Abraham and Isaac, primarily so in his interactions with Esau, Isaac, and Laban, and especially so in his fight with God. Even so, Jacob's profile does not fully align with a truly pluralistic, modern, urban context. In terms of his city metaphors he was caught up somewhere between 'pre-modern' Bethel and 'modern' Shechem. When Jacob encountered pluralistic city contexts, i.e. his daughter Dinah wishing to marry the non-Israelite Shechem, as symbolically mirrored by the city of Shechem (where the interactions took place), the outcome was disastrous: Jacob chose to return to Bethel and sanctioned the brutal elimination of any pluralistic, poly-theistic, modern developments. Pluralism was then literally buried by Jacob 'under the oak at Shechem' (Genesis 35: 4). The

outcome of this story was reminiscent of the comparatively anti-pluralistic city settings of the early patriarchs.

Pluralism was subsequently realized in Genesis in the stories of Joseph, but was still at this time found only *outside Israel*, in the large cities of Egypt. Joseph rose to the top of Egypt's hierarchies; the pharaoh fully respected his religion; and there was ethnic mix, an open society, and international trade. In the Old Testament, Israel *itself* also successfully created such modern, pluralistic arenas of city organization and also of state formation but at a much later date in the Solomon stories, and possibly to some degree in the David stories as well (Wagner-Tsukamoto, 2013b). The Joseph stories foretold such a comparatively utopian city (state). Again, savings in attack/defense costs and transaction costs were analyzed by the present paper to shed light on reasons as to why, in relation to rising pluralism, such comparatively modern city organization replaced the institutional structures of the pre-modern city of early Genesis.

The paper revealed that the blood line of patriarchal descendants was repeatedly cleansed in Genesis in relation to issues of pluralism, i.e. value diversity/value decay, and cities that had been founded or contaminated by 'wicked' patriarchal sons. Cain's cities (Enoch) and Ham's cities (Sodom and Gomorrah) are prime examples. The city of Shechem was similarly cleansed but this occurred in an inter-tribal context where value diversity was eliminated through the Israelites. This trend of eradicating cities with problems in value inhomogeneity continued after Genesis, prominently so amongst the Israelites, in relation to Moses' tribe, the Levites. Their cities, and with them the influence of the Levites on societal organization, ultimately disappeared – after the Levites, as the priestly leaders of Israel, had been corrupted and were then discredited and replaced (in 1 Samuel; also, 2 Samuel, and 1

Kings). This could contest some of Weber's historic expectations on the power and wealth of the priesthood in antiquity (Weber 1978: 78-79). Joseph's and Judah's tribes, which already had received some of the most favorable blessings from Jacob in Genesis, then replaced the Levites and assumed center stage from the Book of Joshua onwards, most poignantly so in the stories of David and Solomon when state formation beyond city settings was discussed for Israel's homeland, and pluralism was mastered as an interaction condition.

Pluralist separation of 'church' and (city) 'state' was then achieved again in the Old Testament, as it had been earlier in the Joseph stories. Such separation was analyzed and advocated by modern philosophy in the tradition of Locke (1963) (see also Waldron 1991). This is markedly different to the city metaphors of Bethel, Hebron or Beersheba, which represented the 'religious city' and the close integration of 'church' with (city) 'state'. Whether such separation yields a more utopian city rather than a dystopian one depends on the onlooker's world view, but at least utopian-dystopian opposites can be traced in the Genesis text (abstractly on this issue, Eaton 2002: 12, 239-241; also Claeys 2011: 12).

Contemporary research that draws on modernization theory and the secularization hypothesis empirically re-discovered these textual insights from the Old Testament – specifically, that apparently positive interrelationships exist between economic development, urbanization and secularization (McCleary and Barro 2006: 149-152, 167-168; Inglehart and Baker 2000: 29-31).

The scope of *economic* reconstruction of Genesis in relation to the city metaphor had to remain partial in this paper. I focused on concepts of attack/defense costs and transaction costs in relation to economic institutions. Other 'economic lenses' could be conceptualized

and employed in future research to complement this focus by looking specifically at factors that interrelate with and drive capital exchange, economic growth, efficiency gains, mutual gains and production cost effects in modern urban contexts. Likewise, the scope of *sociological* analysis in relation to the city concept was partisan and rudimentary. Future research is needed to develop, re-focus and enhance such analyses.

References

Arnal W (2010) What branches grow out of this stony rubbish? Christians Origins and the Study of Religion. *Studies in Religion* 39(4): 549–572.

Breese G (1966) *Urbanization in Newly Developing Countries*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Brett MG (2000a) Reading the Bible in the context of methodological pluralism: The undermining of ethnic exclusivism in Genesis. In Carroll MDR (ed.) *Rethinking Contexts, Rereading Texts: Contributions from the Social Sciences to Biblical Interpretation*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press (JSOT Supplement 299), 48–78.

Brett MG (2000b) Canonical criticism and Old Testament theology. In Mayes ADH (ed.) *Text in Context*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 63–85.

Buchanan JM (1975) *The Limits of Liberty. Between Anarchy and Leviathan*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Claeys G (2011) *Searching for Utopia: The History of an Idea*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Clines DJA and Exum JC (1993) The New Literary Criticism. In: Exum JC and Clines DJA (eds.) *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*. Sheffield: JSOT Press (JSOT Supplement 143), 11–25.

Davidson R (1979) *Genesis 12–50.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Davis K (1969) The urbanization of the human population. In: Breese G (ed.) *The City in Newly Developing Countries*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 5–20.

Eaton R (2002) *Ideal Cities: Utopianism and the (Un)Built Environment*. London: Thames and

      Hudson.

Gallion AB and Eisner S (1975) *The Urban Pattern*. New York: D Van Nostrand.

Hardin G (1968) The tragedy of the commons. *Science* 162: 1243–1248.

Hare RM (1982) *Freedom and Reason*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Inglehart R and Baker WE (2000) Modernization, cultural change, and the persistence of

      traditional values. *American Sociological Review* 65: 19–51.

Krätke S, Wildner K and Lanz S (2012) The transnationality of cities. Concepts, dimensions,

      and research fields. In: Krätke S, Wildner K and Lanz S (eds.) *Transnationalism and*

      Urbanism. London: Routlege, 1–30.

Kugel JL (1997) *The Bible as It Was*. London: Belknap/Harvard University Press.

Locke J (1963) *A Letter Concerning Toleration*. Ed. Montuori M. Hague: M Nijhoff.

McCleary RM and Barro RJ (2006) Religion and political economy in an international panel.

      Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 45: 149–175.

Mumford L (1961) *The City in History*. London: Secker & Warburg.

North DC and Weingast BR (1989) Constitutions and commitment: The evolution of

      institutions governing public choice in seventeenth-century England. *The Journal of*

      Economic History 49: 803–832.

Olson M (1993) Dictatorship, democracy, and development. *American Political Science*

      Review 87: 567–576.

Parker S (2011) *Cities, Politics and Power*. London: Routledge.

Pinder D (2005) *Visions of the City. Utopianism, Power and Politics in Twentieth Century Urbanism*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Redfield R and Singer M (1954) The cultural role of cities. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 3: 53–73.

Sagi A (2009) *Jewish Religion after Theology*. Boston: Academic Studies Press.

Sternberg Y (2010) Religion, territory and multiculturalism. In: Ben-Rafael E and Sternberg Y (eds.) *World Religions and Multiculturalism*. Leiden: Brill, 353–366.

Timms, E (1985) Introduction: Unreal city – Theme and variations. In Timms E and Kelley D (eds.) *Unreal City: Urban Experience in Modern European Literature and Art*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1–12.

Wagner-Tsukamoto SA (2009a) *Is God an Economist? An Institutional Economic Reconstruction of the Old Testament*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wagner-Tsukamoto SA (2009b) The Paradise story: A constitutional economic reconstruction. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 34(2): 147–170.

Wagner-Tsukamoto SA (2010) Out of a slave contract: The analysis of pre-Hobbesian anarchists in the Old Testament. *Constitutional Political Economy* 21: 288–307.

Wagner-Tsukamoto SA (2012) Questioning the Weber thesis: Capitalist Ethics and the Hebrew Bible? *Sociology Mind* 2(1): 1–11.

Wagner-Tsukamoto SA (2013a) Homo Economicus and the stories of Jacob: On the methodological relevance of rational choice theory for studying the Hebrew Bible. *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 25: 78–100.

Wagner-Tsukamoto SA (2013b) State formation in the Hebrew Bible: An institutional economic perspective. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 37(4) (in press).

Waldron J (1991) *John Locke: A Letter Concerning Toleration in Focus*. New York: Routledge.

Weber M (1952) *Ancient Judaism*. London: Allen and Unwin/Free Press.

Weber M (1958) *The City*. New York: Free Press.

Weber M (1976) *The Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations*. London: NLB.

Weber M (1978) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press.

Wolde EJ van (2003) Love and hatred in a multiracial society: The Dinah and Shechem story in Genesis 34 in the context of Genesis 28–35. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series* 373: 435–449.

Westermann C (1986) *Genesis 12–36. A Commentary*. London: SPCK.

Williamson OE (1975) *Markets and Hierarchies*. New York: Free Press.

Williamson OE (1985), *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism*. New York: Free Press.