

This paper attempts to track the history of western urban sociology from its early beginnings to Louis Wirth (1897-1952), a member of the third generation of Chicago School of Urban Sociology. It focuses on famous European founders of sociology and their ideas and works regarding the city phenomenon. The author aims to explain why their works with the subject of city are not so relevant for urban sociology as the two texts central for this paper - Georg Simmel's essay *The Metropolis and Mental Life* and the Wirth's article *Urbanism as a Way of Life*. The paper opens a chapter devoted to early European sociologists and their reflection of cities in their works. Friedrich Engels, Karl Marx, Ferdinand Tönnies, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber are in the main scope of the chapter. The following section is dedicated to Georg Simmel and analyses his text about metropolis. Next chapter considers the Chicago School of Urban Sociology, to certain extent inspired by Simmel's work, further elaborating the theory of urban sociology. The section focuses among others on Robert E. Park and the approach of human ecology crucial for early urban sociology. The next chapter presenting Louis Wirth and his famous article points out the sources of inspiration and the criticism raised by the article. The paper concludes by a chapter describing the main criticism of Chicago School of Urban Sociology and its gradual decline. It also shortly drafts out the following development of urban sociology.