Chapter 3 Questions and Exercises

The Economic Roles of Early US Cities and Towns

1. Consider the city or town in which you live (or where you grew up). Using the official website of the municipality or the community’s historical society, identify the products (goods or services) that seem to have contributed most to the early growth of this area. What connection, if any, can you make between these early economic activities and Weber’s theory linking business location and transportation costs?
2. Was the city or town you studied in question 1 famous nationwide for a particular product (good or service) produced there? Were there many companies producing this product in your city or town? Does this represent agglomeration economies?

Immigration and Internal Migration

1. Using <http://data.census.gov>, explore the size of the foreign-born population in the city closest to your home and two other cities. For each of your selected cities, in which decade was the fastest growth in population experienced? Does the population boom for each of those cities seem to have been most strongly caused by an increase in immigration or an increase in internal migration?
2. For the three cities you chose in question 3, take a look at the city’s website, the local historical society’s website, or some other source giving the history of the city. Which economic pull factors stimulated migration to those cities during the periods of peak population growth?