Understanding Cities: CITY WORLDS
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Preface:
Different approach: typical approach was to consider Athens, Rome, Venice, Amsterdam through LA and chart history, location, economic viability etc. (But many cities today lie outside that framework and pattern (Calcutta?). They are not queuing up to become like LA. (next in line, but 'backward')   Here we consider cities in context of social relations that stretch beyond the city and within the city.
"the city cannot be thought of as having one geography and one history (and therefore one future). Instead, cities are characterised by their openness: to new possibilities, and to new interactions between people."

Introduction:
More than one half of pop. Live in mega-cities.

CHAPTER ONE: WHAT IS A CITY?
More that just size. Intensity & social significance. Inclusion and exclusion.
Ebenezer Howard utopian social city.1899
Abercrombie Plan for London, green belts and garden cities 1944
Lewis Mumford 1937:-
1. city has a distinct physical form
2. based on social exchanges
3. specific networks for these exchanges
4. networks are geographical spreading without and beyond the city.
City brings people together! Intensifies narratives

2. Chicago History: (Chi-Coug) C. was artificially 'constructed' in 1848 (telegraph & railway boom) by raising it above water table! It was at transport intersection but now became viable gateway city with investment of railway and warehousing.
Yi-Fu Tuan suggests cities are distanced from nature.

Chicago School of Sociology 1920s and 30s. Erenest Burgess 1925 – concentric circles. But rather, it is a bundle of nerves, city of exaggeration and contrasts.

3. Intensity: range and number of people.
Ambiguity –   anonymity = city disorganises social life? Living on surface level.
            Opportunity for new types and variety of connections & associations.
Coexistence of differences – social stratification (ghettoes) and straddling social hierarchies.

CHAPTER TWO: WORLDS WITHIN CITIES
Layer upon layer of social groupings (city street followed through the day and night)
Often the day and night groups do not acknowledge existence of the other yet they overlap (Filipino cleaners and office workers then tourists)
Groups and cultures can collide (east and west Berlin meet – NY needs alternative economy)

3. City Environments: built environment carries signals of power, values and cultures.
Intensities enlarge our senses.

5. <u>Proximity & Difference</u>: Richard Sennett 1971 'purified communities' – gated communities (Sao Paulo) do not see the wild side of city life. But usually more jumbled than this.

CHAPTER THREE: CITIES IN THE WORLD
La Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Mexico City shows pre-Columbian, Hispanic-colonial and modern buildings linking city to worlds beyond. Lefebre (1991) says monuments establish membership by those who recognise them.
1. Cities are places of mixing. (but remember Cultures related round world centuries ago!) Middle class gentrify and use cultures as exotica.
2. Space may make apartheid, ghettos etc.
3. Cities essentially open places.

<u>2. SIZE AND POWER</u>:
Half popn live in Mega-cities! (3,000 million people!)
But big does *not* mean powerful nor successful (cf. Washington DC).

Saskia Sassen The Global City (1991) sees such cities as command posts for world economy, finance, production and markets(NY, London, Tokyo) She sees economy as power. But other international forms of power in cities might be: Religious Rome, Mecca, Jerusalem. Gay Frisco & Sydney. Networks of ideas or design, etc.

<u>Impact of Urban on Rural</u>: a city's footprint may include third world rural where its beans are grown (no longer the connecting hinterland of the city) Pressure on third world to produce for mega-cities but cannot compete so rural migrants to cities. Transport costs and pollution!

Some cities opt out of global network (Islamic) or fall out through decay
To exist, a city has to *use* its connections. Most advertise themselves strongly.
So city is not one story but multiplicity of systems and inter-linkages.

4. <u>Divided Cities</u>
International Networks of music, manufacturing, ethnicity to be found in one city. Some may belong to many or be excluded from all!
Rural migrants from internationally controlled agriculture are still marginalised when they reach cities. (Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*) Castells argues that internationally connected but locally despised (irrelevant) is plight of urban poor – 60% Asian mega-cities in squatter camps.
So the connections are at all levels, but analyse the nature of those connections and see social exclusion!
Urban population of developing countries has grown from 300 million in 1950 to 1.7 billion in 2000. Projected to double in 25 years. Urban India in 40 yrs will be double popn of France, Germany, and UK combined.
Richest 20% control 83% of world's income. 1.2 million on >$1 (67p) per day. 1.3 billion breathing unfit air. Rich cities competion!

CHAPTER FOUR: ON SPACE AND THE CITY

Systematically increasing inequality; enormity of size increase; rich turning backs. And yet excitement and possibilities of city life.

So dynamic that planning cannot proceed on assumption of possibility of attaining a final harmony. Processes not plans.

How are people excluded? (by custom, hostility, access?) and what are power relationships involved?

Are our cities sustainable? Disease or health service? Depends on Human action and political will. This is what 'community' might mean.
National boundaries crumble, but other barriers erected. Who defines 'public good'?