

Cities of Connection and Disconnection



Outline

- Discussion Questions
- Relational View of a city
- Ambivalent Tensions in a city
- Key Aspects of a city



Discussion Questions

1. How is city (or **urbanism** according to Luis Wirth) re-defined by flows? In other words, how are the key features of a city defined by this chapter related to Wirth's urbanism as a way of life?
2. G7: How is this chapter connected to *Incendies*? **Where is the "point/place" of connection?**
3. G4: Can you find examples to support and illustrate the chapter's concepts (gated community & its connections with its surroundings, city vanishing or multiple time-space, call centers, multiple networks of relations, etc.)
4. *G 3-- Incendies*: Analyze the filmic transitions of scenes and its opening and ending

Relational Views of Space

A background image of a suspension bridge, likely the Manhattan Bridge, spanning a body of water at dusk. The bridge's tall towers and cables are visible against a dark blue sky. The water in the foreground is calm, reflecting the bridge and the sky.

1. social relations and institutions have become **stretched** across space.
2. Intensification of connection between places
3. e.g.
 - A. **Stretched Relations:** call centers and single office
 - B. **Disconnection:** Wall Street and Lower East Side Manhattan
 - C. **Mixed Culture:** High-end restaurant

Examples of Spaces of Flows

- Telephone call centers (forming a map) → virtual single office

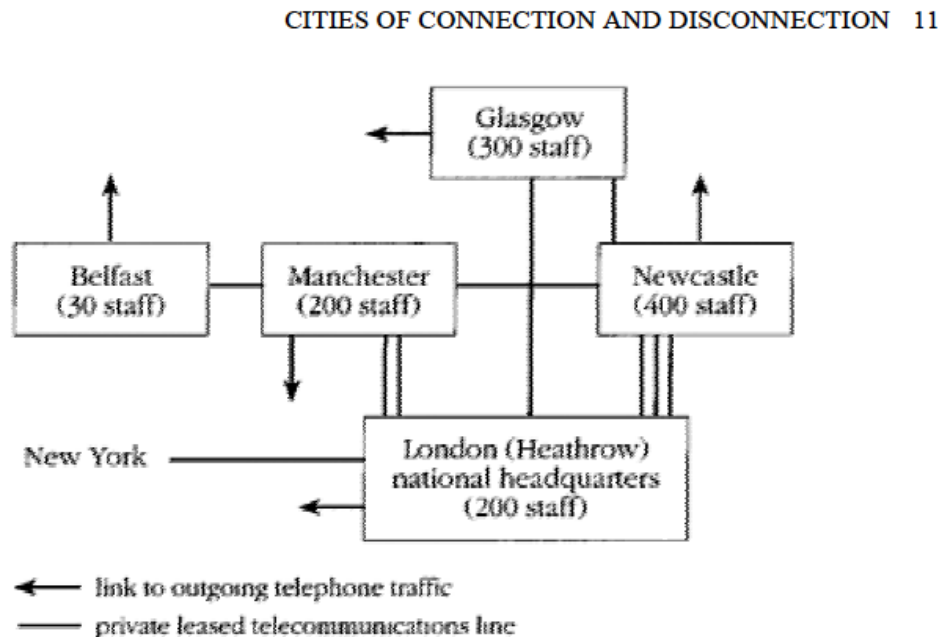
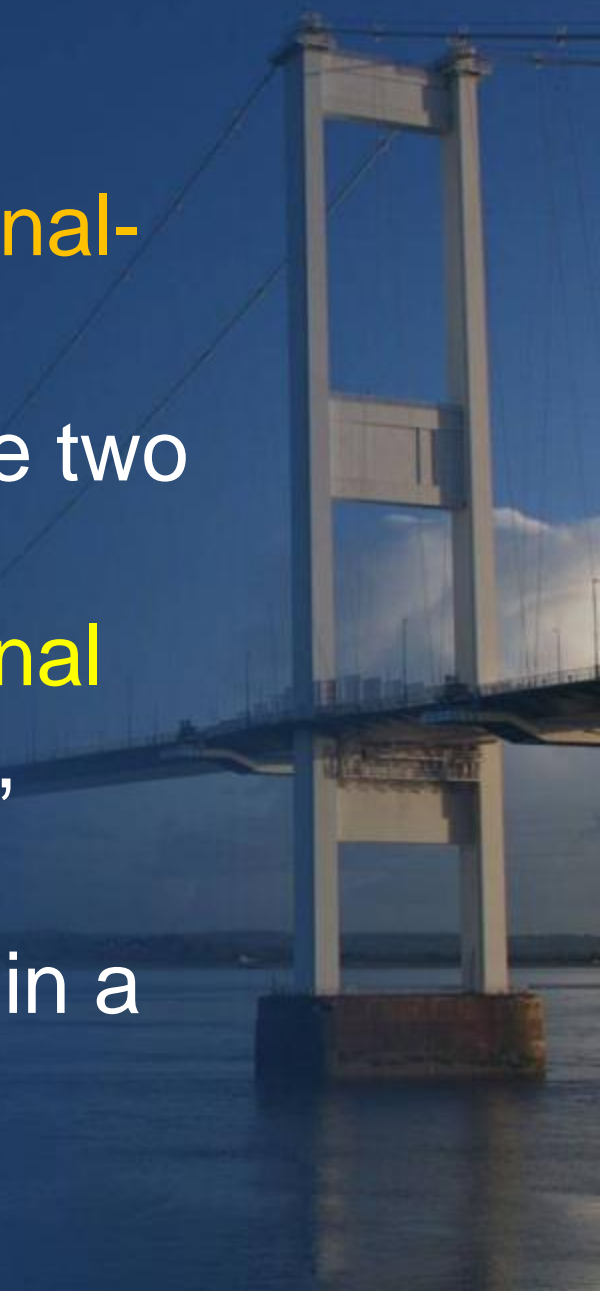


FIGURE 1.1 *An example of the interconnection of cities by instant systems of electronic communication: British Airways' 'virtual single office'*

Relational Perspective

- Sees the **global-national-regional-local** interconnections
- Sees the **distance** between the two areas in one city (places with “**physical proximity and relational distance**”; e.g. Sao Paulo, Rio, Mumbai, Manhattan, etc.)
- Sees the **ambivalent tensions** in a city



Ambivalent Tensions in a city

- 1) Public spaces becomes spaces of surveillance;
- 2) more gated communities appear
- 3) No place can be completely sealed off from its surroundings



Ambivalent Tensions in a city (2)

A large suspension bridge, likely the Bixby Creek Bridge, is visible in the background. The bridge has two tall, white, rectangular towers and is supported by cables. It spans a body of water, and the sky is a deep blue with some light clouds. The overall scene is serene and atmospheric.

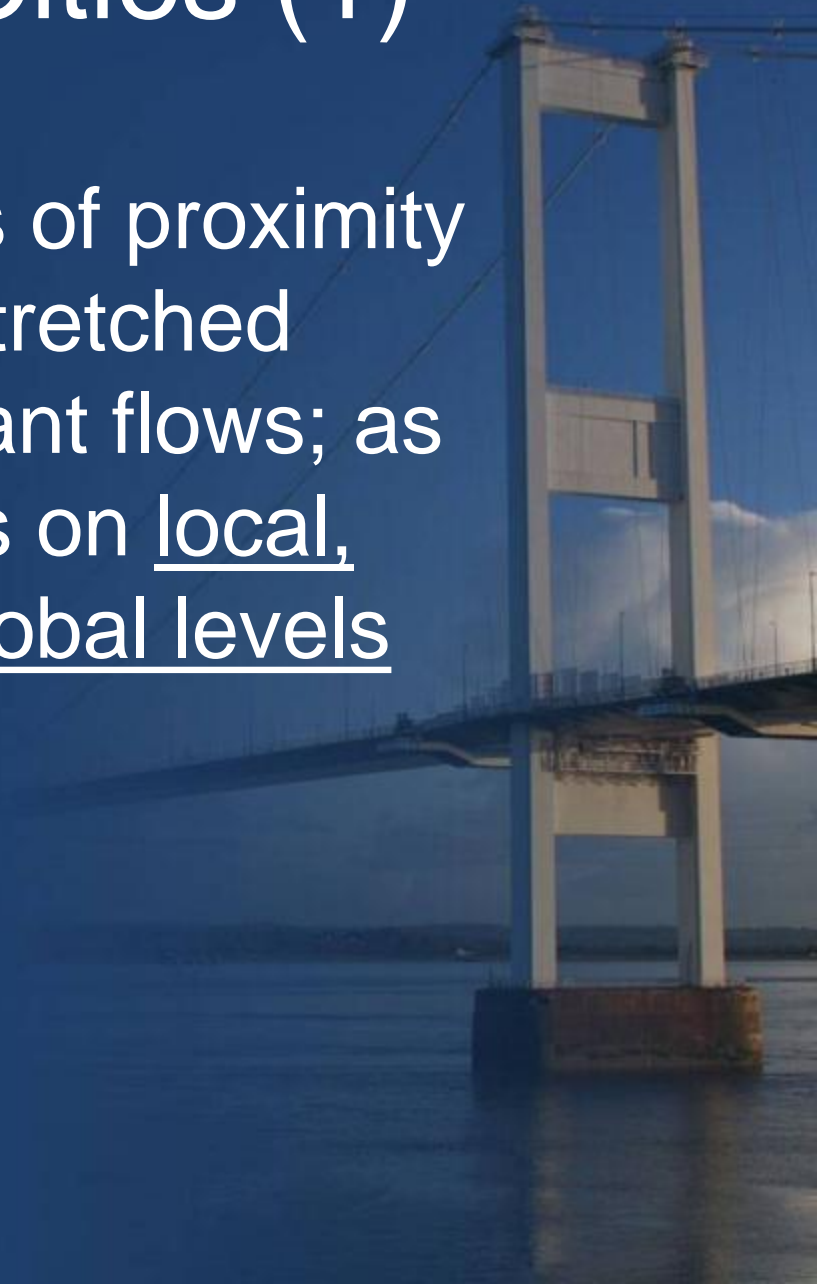
1) **Public spaces**-- setting of contested uses and aspirations, a space for carnivalesque

2) Two Positions:

- **Telecommunication** –destroys the place-based meanings of a city; the city vanishes?
- OR Electronic and the place-based relations **interact and complement one another**

Modern to Global Cities (1)

- **Density** → cities as sites of proximity and co-presence; with stretched connections and incessant flows; as nodes of incessant flows on local, regional, national and global levels

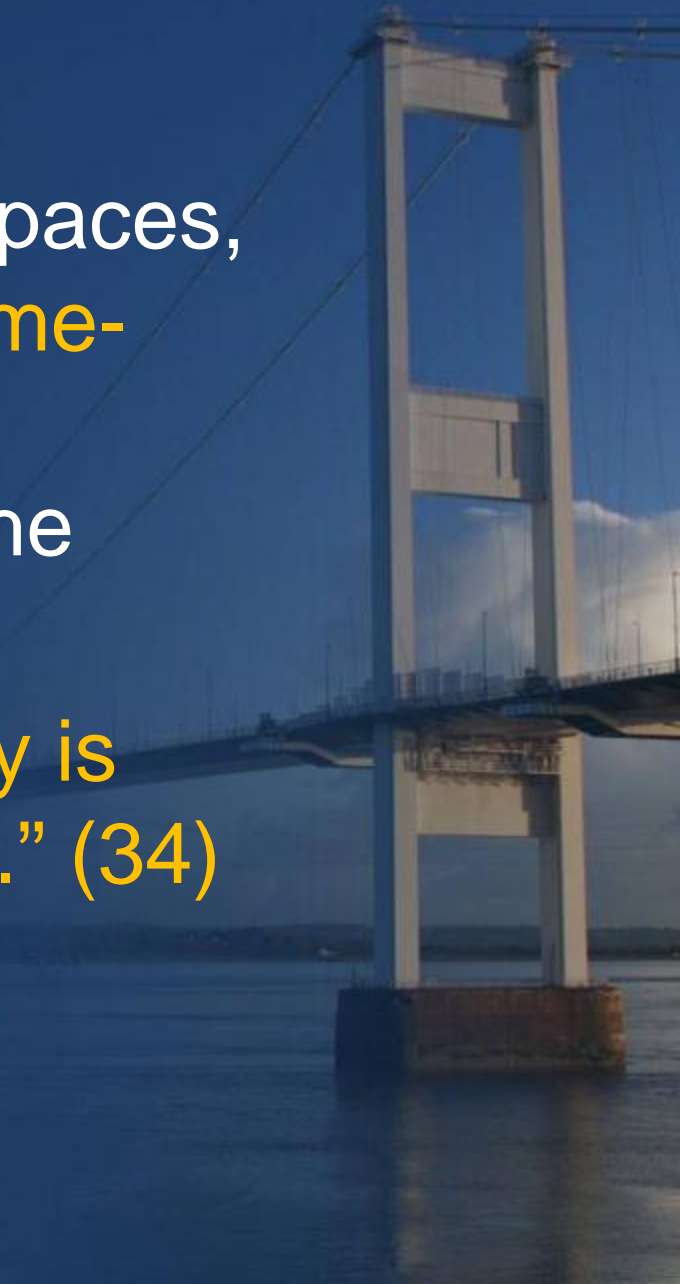


Modern to Global Cities (2)

- **Population Size** → cities as a mix of space/times; → **history**
- “it would be wrong to see contemporary cities only as **places of very fast and fleeting interchange**, associated with their rapid access to virtually all parts of the world. It would ignore the spaces and the people, such as the poor areas or the homeless, that are by-passed by these global flows” (e.g. “**enTAIPEItrance**”; **When Yesterday Comes, Super Citizen Ko**)
- “It would also ignore those people who integrate these flows (for example the experience of overseas travel or surfing on the Internet) into a wider set of everyday time-space experiences such as local shopping, travel to work, domestic activity, or arranging to meet friends.

Multiple Time-Space

- “cities, and their individual spaces, are places where **multiple time-spaces** become intensively superimposed. In terms of the experience of urban life, **the**
- **negotiation of this multiplicity is perhaps what really matters.” (34)**



Multiple Time-Space

- “...as at any crossroad there are permutations (排列組合) of existence. People turn into other people imperceptibly..., all the lives they’ve hoarded, all the ghosts they’ve carried, all the inversions they’ve made for protection, all the scars and marks and recognition—the whole heterogeneous baggage falls out with each step on the pavement. There’s so much spillage..”
(*What We All Long for*, Dionne Brand)

Modern to Global Cities (3)

- **Heterogeneity** → cities as meeting places, as networks which are hierarchical
- City as the **multiple webs** of relations which weave to constitute urban life are characterized by complex encounters where different lives meet and intersect. Through these, individuals and communities seek to enact their lives **within the multiple choices, demands, constraints and meanings of the 'urban'....** challenging the inherited physical 'settlement' of cities at any one point in time.



LABANESE CIVIL WAR (ref. [Wikipedia](#))

- 1960's – Black September Palestinians expelled from Jordan into Lebanon, forming “a state within the State”
- 13 April 1975 Battles between the PLO and the Kataeb Christian militia spread to parts of Beirut, especially the downtown area which is totally destroyed leading to the demarcation line between the two parts of the city. Many militias are formed on both sides and hundreds of civilians are killed or taken hostage. The government divides and the army is split. The militias usurp many functions of the state.
- January, 1976 The Karantina massacre and the Damour massacre.



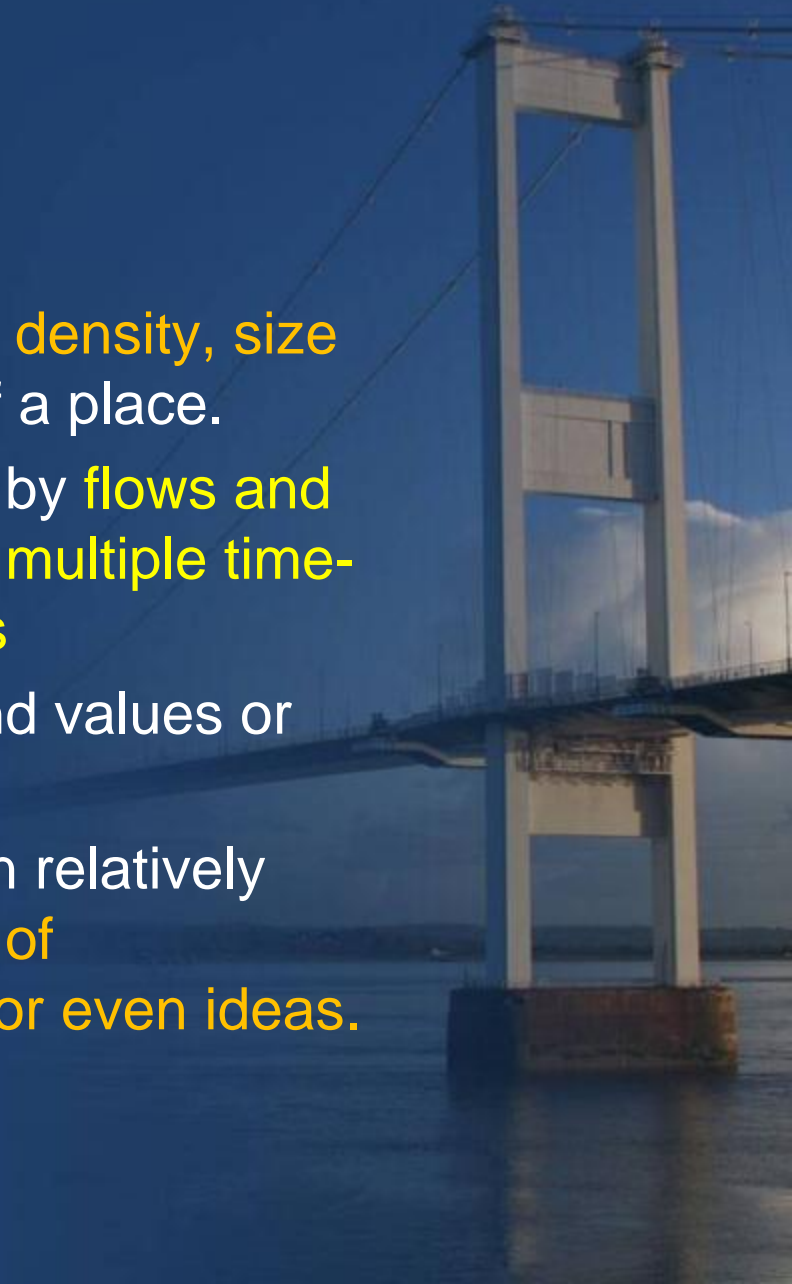
Main Themes

- Postmodern City & Globalization
- Urban Flows & Dis/Connections
 - 【Urbanism as a Way of Life】
 - vs. 【History】 in Spaces and Places
 - 【Time-Space Compression & Family】 in Flows
- Global Flows &
 - 【Flâneurism】
 - 【Risk Society, Global Strangers & Connectivity】

【*Photo-Project PROPOSAL due—10/22*】

Glossary

- Postmodern City: 3 G's and 1 P
- Globalization: 3 Theses
- Urbanism: A way of life caused by the density, size and heterogeneity of the population of a place.
- How these three terms are intensified by flows and turned into multiple layers of network, multiple time-spaces, and multiple webs of relations
- **Anomie**: a breakdown of standards and values or from a lack of purpose or ideals.
- Flow: A name for movements between relatively fixed nodes in networks, flows can be of commodities, money, people, energy or even ideas.
- Space of Flows vs. Space of Place



Work Cited

- Amin, Ash and Stephen Graham. “Cities of Connection and Disconnection.” *Unsettling Cities: Movement/Settlement*. Eds. Allen, John, Doreen B. Massey and Michael Pryke. Psychology Press, 1999. (T4)

