

Beyond Smart Cities

How Cities Network, Learn, and Innovate

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Routledge/Earthscan Publications, Ltd., 2012

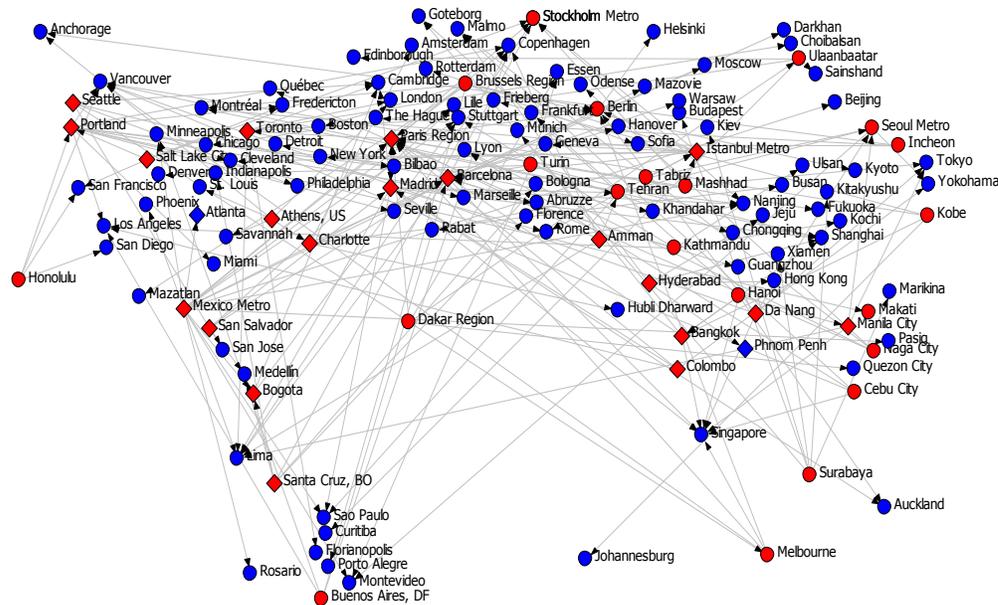
Synopsis

To achieve the real promise of smart cities—that is to create the conditions of continuous learning and innovation that has led cities like Seattle, Barcelona, Ahmedabad and Curitiba to keep pace with economic change—we need to understand what is below the surface of smart and connected places. This book examines the mechanisms that enable open institutions like cities to learn and make the best use of technology to innovate and thrive.

City learning is a blind spot in policy on urban development and city innovation. Few cities and even fewer national institutions give much attention to the civil mechanisms behind innovation. Collective learning is one of them, but it is not only what is learned; a key factor is **how** learning takes place in cities. This book examines these mechanisms at many levels. Some of the findings:

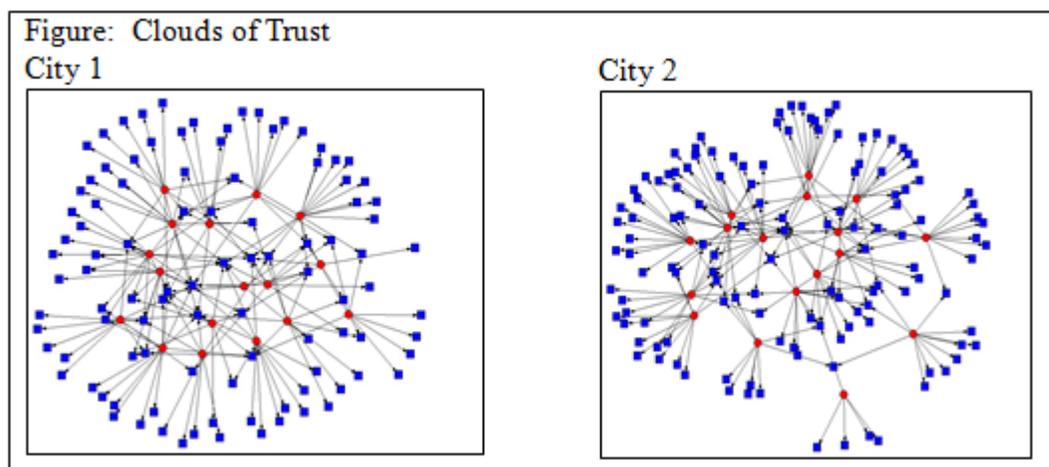
- The book gives evidence that cities of all sizes, levels of wealth and geographic region are on the prowl, often visiting each other to gain knowledge about best policy and latest practice. Their visits number in the thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, each year. (Figure 1 shows directions of travel for a sample year with visitors in red; hosts in blue. Triangles are reformers.)

Figure 1 *Global perspective of city visits*



- At the city level, learning is achieved in many ways. ***Beyond Smart Cities*** provides a typology of learning channels—individuals, binary exchanges, clusters of cities, casual grazing on websites, to name a few.
- Innovative cities are deliberate learners. Nine case studies show that they engage in proactive, systematic, and repeated acquisition of knowledge, using distinct styles and employing most of the learning channels.
- Innovative cities separate themselves from the pack by creating “***clouds of trust***,” consisting of interconnected networks of confidence among public, private, and civic leaders, not just mayors and city officials, who learn and process ideas together. (Figure 2 shows clouds in Turin and Portland. Red dots are interviewees, blue dots are trusted others.) The *clouds* become a critical part of the processing power and floating, but semi-permanent, memory of innovative cities.

Figure Two: Signature “Clouds” in Two Cities



- Innovative cities also create “***tissue of remembering***,” a suite of institutionalized places, documents, and practices that complement the memory in the *clouds* and conduct analysis to weigh options, set direction, and change course when needed.

Cities, nations, corporate partners, and civil society all need to play a role to create the learning city. For cities, learning must be a part of the mission of governance. Cities must choose their own learning style, put in place agencies and practices, and invest in knowledge acquisition. Helping institutions, including nations, NGOs, and corporate partners, can support the hardware and software needs of cities, especially in facilitating a strategy and practice of learning, including knowledge acquisition and processing. The key factor is that the city community must create its own “*ba*,” a learning

environment of trust and open exchange for local partners to discover, process, and absorb knowledge together.

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Table of Contents

15 June 2011

Part and Chapter	Content
Part I. The Changing Place of Cities in the Urban Age	
1. Overview: Urban Renaissance and the Formation of Social Capital	What this book is about. Do cities learn? Brief snippets from learning cities to pose the questions. Short illustrations of the types of learning. A road map ahead.
2. The Long, Messy Struggles of Cities in the Developing World.	The context of learning as a hidden part of urban development. History of city to city contact in the modern age. The rise of cities with globalization and the need to know. An alternate, collective learning, view of institutional development and capacity building
3. Cities as Collective Learners: What Do We Know?	Cities and concentrators of social capital and social capital as information processors. Themes in the literature. Types of collective learning. The literature tells us that milieu and trust are important. The core ideas of learning and learning conditions are created in cities.
Part II Framing a View	
4. Gamut of Learners—the many styles of learning	This chapter discusses the many different styles of learning, and focuses on proactive learners, those cities that aggressively seek knowledge and use it to reform and innovate in policy and practice.
5. Light on a Shadow Economy	Evidence that cities are on the prowl for knowledge. A survey shows some patterns beginning to emerge and that global web-work of connections is under construction. Survey data shows what cities seek to learn and how reformers differ from the pack.
Part III Crucibles of Learning: Proactive Learner-Reformers	
6. Informal Learning—Turin, Portland and Charlotte	Cities learn sometimes without a formal learning strategy. Lessons from guided and unguided learning. Turin, Portland and Charlotte
7. Technical Learning—Curitiba, Juarez and Amman	Cities with adjunct capacity, think tanks, but not always strategy—Curitiba, Juarez and Amman.
8. Corporate Learning—Bilbao, Seattle and Tampere	Dedicated, organized, and strategic learning with elected structures to guide the process—the case of Bilbao, Seattle and Tampere
9. Comparing Learning Styles	Strengths and drawbacks of different styles and how the organizational form affects a city's capacity to be flexible, build stakeholders, draw in new generations.
Part IV. Secrets of a Knowing and Accelerating Change	
10. Taking Stock: Why Some	The small place of learning in urban development and

Cities Learn and Others Do Not	governance. How do encourage cities to become learners and make innovators out of learners
11. Turning the Learning World Right Side Up-- Pathways Forward in Policy, Practice and Research	Policy implications to regulate and support city to city exchange. Who does what. The future of city association and the evolution of leadership in cities
Notes	
Appendices	
References	