

THE CITY AND CULTURE
Winter 2002
Comparative Studies 531/International Studies 531
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1.30-3.18
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Course Description: Economic, political and cultural shifts have altered the ways in which we understand the boundaries of the city, the region, the nation, and transnational circuits. In contemporary cities, these processes create a complex sense of public space and community and define the ways we understand urban culture.

This course explores themes related to the city and culture through theoretical perspectives from cultural studies, postcolonial studies, area studies, religious studies, sociology and anthropology. Topics include an understanding of the role of the city in history and theory; the place of architectural, cultural and technological practices in defining the city; and religion, media and urban sites. We will look at a variety of places, including Bangalore, Beijing, Istanbul, Lahore, Los Angeles and New York. Students will be expected to generate their own projects on specific cities of their choice.

Objectives: The goal of this course is to analyze the city as a crucial site for studying identity, cultural memory, citizenship, consumerism, public space and globalization. Like other courses in Comparative Studies, it brings together multidisciplinary perspectives in order to help you to achieve greater understanding of urban diversity throughout the world. Through group discussions and written and oral assignments, you will enhance your ability to perform sophisticated analyses of urban affairs.

Requirements: The requirements include two papers and one presentation.

- Paper 1 (5 typed pages, double-spaced), accounting for 25% of the final grade, due in Week 4.
- Paper 2 (5 typed pages, double-spaced), accounting for 25% of the final grade, due in Week 8.
- A presentation based on student research on a theme discussed in advance with the instructor, due in Week 9 and 10. You will present the main issues of the research to the class in one of these two weeks. The oral presentation accounts for 40% of the final grade. An outline at the end of this syllabus indicates how this presentation should be structured.

- Class participation accounts for 10% of the final grade. You will be expected to participate in group activities and generate responses to the films we will view.

Although there will be some lecture components, class meetings will focus on the analysis and discussion of assigned readings and films. It is essential that you review the texts for the weekly meetings, prepare for the class, and raise questions and issues for discussion. The instructor reserves the right to lower the grade of any student who misses more than two classes (5% of the grade for every class missed after two classes).

Texts: The following books, required for the course, are available in the SBX bookstore.

Jan Lin, *Reconstructing Chinatown: Ethnic Enclave, Global Change*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

Robert Orsi ed., *Gods of the City: Religion and the American Urban Landscape*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999.

Caglar Keyder, *Istanbul: Between the Global and the Local*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishing, 1999.

Michael Sorkin ed. *Variations on a Theme Park. The New American City and the End of Public Space*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1992.

Additional articles (marked *) are photocopies, available from Copeez in Tuttle Place.

Week 1: Introduction

January 8: Introduction

January 10: Robert Orsi ed. *Gods of the City: Religion and the American Urban Landscape*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999: Introduction, Chapter 1.

Week 2: Ethnic City

January 15: Robert Orsi ed. *Gods of the City: Religion and the American Urban Landscape*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999: Chapters 2, 3, 4, 7.

January 17: Jan Lin, *Reconstructing Chinatown: Ethnic Enclave, Global Change*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998: pp. 1-54

Week 3: Centers and Margins

January 22: Jan Lin, *Reconstructing Chinatown: Ethnic Enclave, Global Change*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998: pp. 57-146.

January 24: Jan Lin, *Reconstructing Chinatown: Ethnic Enclave, Global Change*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998: pp.147-205.

Week 4: Divided City

January 29: *Earth* directed by Deepa Mehta.

URLs about the movie, background to the partition of India, and the novel by Bapsi Sidhwa on which the film is based:

World Socialist Web Site: <http://www.wsws.org/articles/1999/aug1999/meh-a06.shtml>

Zeitgeist Films: <http://www.zeitgeistfilm.com/current/earth/earthstory.html>

The Partition of India: <http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/Bahri/Part.html>

Partition of India: <http://www.boloji.com/perspective/partition.htm>

India and Pakistan Map:

<http://www.wwnorton.com/nael/nto/20thC/postcolonial/imindiapakmap.htm>

Voices from the Gaps: <http://voices.cla.umn.edu/authors/bapsisidhwa.html>

January 31: * Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000: 3-51.

Class discussion about the movie.

PAPER 1 DUE IN CLASS

Week 5: The Global City

February 5: Caglar Keyder, *Istanbul: Between the Global and the Local*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishing, 1999.

February 7: Caglar Keyder, *Istanbul: Between the Global and the Local*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishing, 1999.

Week 6: The City and Spectacle: Stadiums, Dance Halls, Catwalks and Streets

February 12: Guest lecture on Bangalore and the Indian National Games by Dr James Heitzman, Georgia State University.

February 14: * Les Back, "Nazism and the Call of the Jitterbug." In Helen Thomas ed. *Dance in the City*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997: 175-197.

* Susan Brownwell, "Making Dream Bodies in Beijing: Athletes, Fashion Models and Urban Mystique in China." In Nancy N. Chen, Constance D. Clark, Suzanne Z. Gottschang and Lyn Jeffrey eds. *China Urban: Ethnographies of Contemporary Culture*. Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2001: 123-142.

Robert Orsi ed. *Gods of the City: Religion and the American Urban Landscape*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999: Chapters 6, 8, 9.

Week 7: City as Theme Park

February 19: Michael Sorkin ed. *Variations on a Theme Park. The New American City and the End of Public Space*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1992.

February 21: Michael Sorkin ed. *Variations on a Theme Park. The New American City and the End of Public Space*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1992.

Week 8: Media and the Metropolis

February 26: No Class

February 28: * Allen J. Scott, *The Cultural Economy of Cities: Essays on the Geography of Image-Producing Industries*. London/Thousand Oaks/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000: 113-128.

*Gary W. McDonogh and Cindy Hing-Yuk Wong, "The Mediated Metropolis: Anthropological Issues in Cities and Mass Communication." *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 103, No. 1, March 2001: 96-111.

PAPER 2 DUE IN CLASS

Week 9: Research and Analysis Week

March 5: Student presentations

March 7: Student presentations

Week 10: Research and Analysis Week

March 12: Student presentations

March 14: Student presentations

Outline for Student Presentation

1. Each presentation must focus on one of the themes discussed in the course: religion and the city; ethnicity and the city; centers and margins within the city; divided cities; globalization and the city; the city and spectacle/public spaces; media and the city.
2. The presentation must deal in depth with one city of the student's choice.
3. The presentation must include the following:
 - A description of the city's location with two maps: one map showing its regional location and one map showing its areas and suburbs;
 - A brief history and chief events in its political and economic existence; you may use a timeline to show these events;
 - A section that describes the social composition of the city today and its economic structure.
4. This should be followed by a discussion of your main theme. You may use maps, pictures, photographs, newspaper articles, and so on to supplement your discussion.
5. The presentation should have a bibliography with references written in a standard style. The bibliography must include at least two books and one article; in addition you may include sites from the World Wide Web, but the presentation cannot be based solely on them.
6. You will distribute to the class an outline that includes the maps, the historical timeline, a brief description of the social and economic structure; and references.

Remember that while the presentation is an oral one and you will not need to hand in a paper to the instructor, the full grade will be based on a coherent and well-structured report to the class including the brief outline.