Cities and Citizenship: Readings in Global Urbanism

Gallatin School of Individualized Study
New York University

Professor: Rosalind Fredericks
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Course: IDSEM-UG1880
Semester: Fall 2016
Time: Thurs. 2:00-4:45pm
Location: Silver, Room 515

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Cities have long been viewed as crucibles of citizenship. But over the last few decades, the rapid urbanization of the global South has recalibrated Western derived models of cities and citizenship. This course draws on interdisciplinary readings from urban studies, geography, anthropology, and history to grapple with this global “urban revolution.” Instead of “applying” urban theories grounded in the history of North American and European cities like London, Paris, Chicago, and Los Angeles to the global South, it centers its inquiry on cities such as Singapore, São Paulo, New Delhi, and Dakar. In so doing, it rejects the language of crisis, chaos, and exception that is so often used to characterize cities in the global South as dysfunctional urban dystopias and draws lessons for how these cities reconfigure conventional understandings of being a citizen in the city anywhere.

The course provides theoretically informed perspectives on social, cultural, and political life in urban contexts throughout the postcolonial world through attending to histories and legacies of colonialism and development alongside novel forms of governance and claims to the city.
Along the way, it will unpack different elements and understandings of citizenship, viewed at multiple geographical scales—from the neighborhood to the transnational. We will pay particular attention to the role of global economic processes in producing of urban space, technologies of government and planning, insurgent modes of claiming space and rights, the politics of difference and belonging, and the role of built form and infrastructural technologies. Though focused primarily on cities in the global South, the class will also examine the global South within the “North.” Weekly topics will include: “world city” modeling, gentrification, fortified enclaves, political infrastructures, refugee camp urbanism, and transnational migration.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• To grapple with different understandings of citizenship, including its social, economic, political, and cultural dimensions, as well as different scales of analysis ranging from the local, urban, national, and international scales

• To critique simplistic mainstream representations of Southern cities as chaotic, incomplete, or dysfunctional and instead examine how they work and with what real implications for urban citizens

• To examine the legacies of colonialism in global urban development processes—both in the South and North

• To interrogate the impacts of neoliberal globalization and international development regimes on the development of cities all over the globe

• To examine the forms of power enacted by states and other governing bodies in managing urban growth and how these “technologies of rule” become contested and or consolidated in practice by citizens

• To interrogate the role of built form, urban ecologies, and infrastructural technologies in the distribution of the rights and rewards of the city

• To analyze the role of forms of sociality around different cleavages like class, gender, and race that bond or divide urban residents

• To compare and contrast these different urban dynamics observed in different parts of the global South as well as between Western and Southern cities

REQUIREMENTS

• Class attendance, reading responses, and discussion
  o You are expected to read all assigned materials, attend all classes, and participate actively in discussions. If you are unable to attend class, you must let me know and come to my office hours that week. If you miss a film screened in class, you must view it in your own time. You will only be allowed one
unexcused absence during the semester without penalty. Consistent lateness will be penalized as well.

○ You are expected to post five (5) reading responses of approximately 1 page to the discussion page on NYU Classes on the weeks of your choice. The posting should be uploaded no later than 8pm the evening before class (Wednesday). It should: summarize the thrust of the readings, provide specific critical reflection drawing closely from the texts, and raise questions for class discussion. You are expected to follow your classmates’ posts each week. Please aim to distribute your posts throughout the semester.

• Writing Assignments

The course will be centered on two short writing assignments and a final research paper. Specific assignments TBA.

Course Grades:

| Attendance/Participation/Responses | 25% |
| Short paper 1:                     | 20% |
| Short paper 2:                     | 20% |
| Final Paper:                       | 35% |

OFFICE HOURS and CONTACT

I will hold office hours on Wednesdays from 12-4pm, in my office by appointment. You can sign up for office hours here: http://goo.gl/5i46R. If you are unable to meet during my office hours, email me to schedule a separate meeting.

Email: I am best reached by email at rcf2@nyu.edu. Although I do encourage you to stay in touch with issues of concern, I also urge you to be considerate with your emails. I will do my best to reply within 24 hours.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website [www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html] for a full description of the academic integrity policy.

READINGS and FILMS

Required readings for the course are listed in the weekly syllabus. All readings are either available through NYU Classes or in the library’s electronic resources (with a link on NYU Classes). Additional readings are listed as a starting place for further research for the papers and class discussion. Films listed on the syllabus will be screened in class unless noted otherwise.
CITIES AND CITIZENSHIP:
Readings in Global Urbanism

COURSE SYLLABUS

Week 1.  Introductions
(September 8)
Film: Welcome to Lagos

Week 2.  Theorizing Global Urbanism and Citizenship
(September 15)

Additional Reading:

Week 3.  Making the “Third World” City: Colonialism to Neoliberal Development
(September 22)

*Additional Reading:*

**Film:** *Borom Sarret*

**Week 4. Rethinking Slums: Planning and Anti-Planning (Lagos) (September 29*)

“Lagos shows how a city can recover from a deep, deep pit”: Rem Koolhaas talks to Kunle Adeyemi. The Guardian, February 26, 2016.
https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/feb/26/lagos-rem-koolhaas-kunle-adeyemi

*Additional Reading:*

**Week 5. Modeling “World Cities” (Singapore) (October 6*)


*Additional Reading:*
Week 6. Gentrification, Slum Demolition, and Aesthetic Rule (New Delhi)  
(October 13)


*Additional Reading:*

Week 7. Fortified Enclaves (São Paulo and Johannesburg)  
(October 20)


Week 8. Urban Informality and Insurgent Citizenship (Brazil)  
(October 27)


*Additional Readings:*

Week 9. The Quiet Encroachment of the Ordinary (Middle East)  
(November 3)


*Additional Reading:*

Film: *No One Knows about Persian Cats* (2009)
Week 10. Political Infrastructures and Sanitation (Mumbai)  
(November 10)

Additional Readings:
McFarlane: https://www.opendemocracy.net/openindia/colin-mcfarlane/everywhere-of-sanitation-violence-oppression-and-body

Film: *Q2P*

Week 11. The Architecture of the Camp: Refugee Urbanism (Dadaab, Kenya)  
(November 17)
Guest Lecture by Anooradha Siddiqi (Assistant Professor/Faculty Fellow, Gallatin).

Readings TBA

NOVEMBER 24th—THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 12. Global Imaginaries and Transnational Citizenship (Dakar and New York)  
(December 1)

Films: *Little Senegal, La Pirogue*

Additional Readings:


Week 13. The Edge of Empire: Postcolonial London

(December 8)

Jacobs, Jane. 1996. Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism in the City. London: Routledge. [Chapter 2: “Postcolonial Spaces” (pp.13-37); Chapter 4: “Eastern Trading: Diasporas, Dwelling, and Place” (pp. 70-102).]”

Film: Bricklane

Week 14. Wrap up

(December 15)