Department of Sociology
Faculty of Social Sciences
South Asian University - New Delhi

Urban Anthropology

(Compulsory Course for MA)

Total Credits: 4

Objectives of the Course

This course provides a survey of anthropological studies on space, place and the urban experience, with a regional focus on the cities of South Asia. Its first major objective is to provide an introduction to major anthropological and allied traditions of understanding urban space. Secondly, it seeks at an introduction to the dominant themes that have been specifically been utilized in the South Asian context. Thirdly, the course will attempt to understand South Asian cities as sites of difference, and contestation, as told from the vantage point and perspective of numerous urban actors. Fourthly, there is a focus on the impacts of globalization, new governance, financial, and consumptive arrangements and modalities that undergrid today's urban spaces. The course is also is finally concerned with examining perspectives on everyday life in South Asian cities as a way of opening up myriad research possibilities that remain outside of dominant narratives and paradigms.

Unit 1: Space, Place and the Urban

This module will focus on canonical traditions and perspectives that have historically been utilized to analyze urban space. The module will concentrate on four main paradigms. The first are classical structuralist readings of the city - notably Weber, Simmel and the Chicago school. The second paradigm, coming in the 1970s and 1980s, is driven by Marxist readings (Harvey, Castells, and broadly Latin Americanists). The third paradigm addressed is the postmodern/post structuralist literature on space and place-making which emerged in the 1990s. Finally, the fourth paradigm will be a modern history of urban planning as seen from the 1920s to provide students with a working vocabulary of the globally available possibilities of urban form

Bachelard, G. 1994. *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon Press. Buck-Morris, S. 1989. *The Dialectics of Seeing*. Boston: MIT Press.

Delaney, Carol. 2004. Spatial Locations in Delaney and Kaspin (eds.) *Investigating Culture: An Experiential Introduction to Anthropology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Castells, M. 1977. *The Urban Question*. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press.

DeCerteau, M. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press. Foucault, M 1997. *Discipline and Punish*. New York: Vintage.

Gugler, J. 1988. *The Urbanization of The Third World*. New York: Oxford.

Hall, P. G. 2002. *Cities Of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning And Design In The Twentieth Century*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Harvey. 1995. *The Urban Experience*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Lefebvre, H. 1991, *The Production Of Space*, Translated By D. Nichsolson-Smith, Oxford: Blackwell.

Low, Setha. 1996. Spatializing Culture: The Social Production And Social Construction Of Public Space, *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 861-879.

Massey, D. 1994. *Space, Place and Gender*. Minnesota: University Of Minnesota Press.

Rabinow, P. 2003. 'Ordonnance, Discipline, Regulation: Some Reflections on Urbanism in Setha Low and Denise Lawrence-Zuñiga (eds.) *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp.353-362

Sennett, R. 1969. *Classic Essays on The Culture of Cities New York*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Scott, J. 1988. *Seeing Like A State*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Wilson, E. 1992. *The Sphinx in The City: Urban Life, The Control Of Disorder, And Women*. Berkeley: University Of California Press.

Unit 2: Historical Development of Cities in Modern South Asia:

This module is designed introduce students to the history of the modern South Asian city, tracing the historical evolution of built environments, economic, political, social and cultural urban assemblages in the subcontinent in the modern period, especially since the advent of colonial regimes. The module focuses on the impacts of the colonial order on extant geographies, existing cities and in the fashioning of new kinds of settlements. It addresses the kinds of govern mentalities that came to be invoked and inscribed in managing cities. The module also examines the emergence of the postcolonial urban as cities became key sites of encounter, difference, negotiation, visceral experience and expression of new modernities. Finally, in the post-Independence period, it considers the legacy of the colonial

period for planners and residents of nationalist cities, and how, they in turn attempted to build cities as symbols of Independence and nationalism.

References

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2000. Of Garbage, Modernity and the Citizen's Gaze, in *Habitations of Modernity: Essays In The Wake Of Subaltern Studies*, Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, pp. 65-79.

Daechsel, M. 2011. Sovereignty, Governmentality And Development In Ayub's Pakistan: The Case Of Korangi Township, *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 131-157.

Glover, W. 2005. Objects, Models, And Exemplary Works: Educating Sentiment In Colonial India, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 64:3, pp. 539-566.

Hazareesingh, Sandip. 2001. Colonial Modernism and The Flawed Paradigms Of Urban Renewal: Uneven Development In Bombay, 1900-1925, *Urban History*, 28:2, pp. 235-255.

Joshi, S. 2001. *Fractured Modernity: Making Of A Middle Class In Colonial North India*. New Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press.

Kaviraj, S. 1997 Filth and The Public Sphere: Concepts And Practices About Space In Calcutta, *Public Culture,* Vol.10, no.1, pp. 83-113.

King, Anthony. 1976. *Colonial Urban Development*: *Culture, Social Power, And Environment.* London; Boston: Routledge & Paul.

Oldenburg, Veena Talwar. 1984. *The Making Of Colonial Lucknow*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Perera, N. 2002. Indigenising The Colonial City: Late 19th-Century Colombo And Its Landscape, *Urban Studies*, Vol. 39, no. 9, pp. 1703-1721.

Nair, J. 2005. *The Promise Of The Metropolis : Bangalore's Twentieth Century*. New Delhi, Oxford University Press.

Sundaram, R. 2010. *Pirate Modernity: Delhi's Media Urbanism.* Delhi: Routledge.

Unit 3: Divided Cities: Public/Private, Segregation and the Production of Informality

This module examines three crucial divides witnessed in South Asian cities, as globally. The first divide refers to the differentiation between private and public spaces, most critically mapped onto domesticity and gender roles. The second divide refers to urban segregation as seen on a number of different axes namely caste, class, ethnicity and religion, and finally, the abiding division between formal and informal spaces, including their governance and management.

Benjamin, S. 2008. Occupancy Urbanism: Radicalizing Politics and Economy Beyond Policy and Programs. *International Journal Of Urban And Regional Research*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 719–29.

Caldeira, T. 2000. *City of Walls*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Castells, M and Portes, A. 1989. 'World Underneath: The Origins, Dynamics and Effects of the Informal Economy in Portes and Castells ed *The Informal Economy, Studies in Advanced and Developing Countries*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.

Chatterjee, Partha. 1989. The Nationalist Resolution Of The Woman's Question in Sangari, K And Vaid, S (eds.) *Recasting Women*. New Delhi: Kali For Women, pp. 233–253.

Chatterjee, P. 2006. *Politics of The Governed*. New York: Columbia University Press. Dickey, S. 2000. Permeable Homes: Domestic Service, Household Space and The Vulnerability Of Class Boundaries In Urban India, *American Ethnologist*, no. 27, pp. 462–489.

Hossain, S And Hackenbroch, K. 2012. The Organised Encroachment Of The Powerful—Everyday Practices Of Public Space And Water Supply In Dhaka, Bangladesh, *Planning Theory & Practice*, Vol. 13, no. 3, 2012, pp. 397-420.

Keck, M. 2012. Security: Contested Food Markets In Dhaka, Bangladesh in Mcfarlane, C and Waibel M (eds.). *Urban Informalities: Reflections On The Formal And Informal*. Oxon: Ashgate.

Liechty, Mark. 'Paying for modernity: Women and the discourse of freedom in Kathmandu.' *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 1.1 (1996): 201-230.

Jaffrelot, C And Gayer, L (eds.) 2011. *Muslims In Indian Cities: Trajectories Of Marginalisation*. C. Hurst, Publishers, Limited.

Roy, Ananya. 2005. Urban Informality: Toward An Epistemology Of Planning, *Journal Of The American Planning Association,* Vol. 71, no. 2, pp. 147-158.

Sethi, Aman, 2013. *A Free Man*. Delhi: Random House India

Sen, Jai. 1975. The Unintended City, *Seminar,* April, 1976, 200, pp. 33-40.

Wilson, E. 1992. *The Sphinx In The City: Urban Life, The Control Of Disorder, And Women*. Berkeley: University Of California Press, introduction.

Unit 4: Cities as Sites of Contestation

This module examines the South Asian city, particularly as a site of ethnic conflict, conflicts over citizenship and violence, considered here both in ordinary and extraordinary forms. In particular, the module is concerned with 1) everyday forms of hostility including as linked to economic and political processes and identity formation; 2) the emergence of symbolic regimes and public cultures of dominance, 3) the organization and experience of violence and riots, symbolically, logistically, spatially, and including the state's response.

Das, V. (ed) 1990. *Mirrors Of Violence — Communities, Riots And Survivors In South Asia* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Gayer, L. 2012. Political Turmoil in Karachi: Production and Reproduction of Ordered Disorder, *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 47, no. 31.

Hansen, Thomas Blom. 2001. *Wages Of Violence: Naming And Identity In Postcolonial Bombay*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Holston J and Appadurai, A. 1996. Cities and Citizenship, *Public Culture* 8: 187-204.

Lakier, G. 2007. Illiberal Democracy and The Problem Of Law: Street Protest and Democratization In Multiparty Nepal, in Lawoti, M (ed.), Contentious Politics and Democratization In Nepal. New Deli: Sage, pp. 251-272.

Mehta, D And Chatterji, R. 2007. *Living With Violence: An Anthropology Of Events And Everyday Life*. Delhi: Routledge.

Tambiah, Stanley J. "Friends, neighbours, enemies, strangers: Aggressor and victim in civilian ethnic riots." *Social Science & Medicine* 45.8 (1997): 1177-1188.

Unit 5: Neoliberalism, Globalization and New Aspirational Practices of Space-making

This module focuses on conceptual and ethnographic frameworks used to understand, and define, globalization and its impact on cities. The key question is to understand how new financial, consumptive, and technological capital impacts and restructures urban space. The module also asks how such restructuring frames the aspirations, possibilities, constraints, and uncertainties of contemporary urban life for different classes and communities in the city.

Appadurai, A. 1996. *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions Of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press

Baviskar, A. 2003. Between Violence And Desire: Space, Power And Identity in The Making Of Metropolitan Delhi, *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 55, no. 175, pp. 89-98.

Brenner, N, Peck, J And Theodore, N. 2005. Neoliberal Urbanism: Cities And The Rule Of Markets. Draft Paper, pp. 1-20.

Castells, M. 1996. *The Rise Of Network Society*. Oxford And Malden, Mass.: Blackwell.

Fernandes, L. 2006. *India's New Middle Class: Democratic Politics In An Era Of Economic*

Reform. Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press.

Graham, S and Marvin, S. 2001. *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition.* London: Routledge, introduction.

Goldman, M. 2011. Speculative Urbanism and The Making Of The Next World City, *International Journal Of Urban And Regional Research*, Vol. 35, no. 3, pp. 555-581.

Harvey, D. 1989. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry Into The Origins Of Cultural Change.* New York: Blackwell.

Leichty, M. 2003*. Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture In A New Consumer Society.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Perara, S. 2012. Gated Communities As Packaged Fantasies: A Meeting Of The Local And The Global And The Standardisation Of Taste In Urban Sri Lanka' in Anjaria, J And Mcfarlane, C (eds.), *Urban Navigations: Politics, Space, And The City In South Asia.* New Delhi: Routledge.

Ranganathan, Malini. 2012. Reengineering citizenship: Municipal reforms and the politics of "E-Grievance Redressal" in Karnataka's cities in Desai, R and Sanyal R (eds.), New Delhi, Sage, pp. 109-132.

Sassen, Saskia 2001. *The Global city: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton: University Press.

Zukin, S. 1991. *Landscapes Of Power*. Berkeley: University Of California Press.

Unit 6: Everyday Cities

This final module brings together ethnographies of everyday life in South Asian cities that cannot be categorized within the dominant intellectual narratives of the city. The module provides students with examples of ethnographic work on areas that are little studied, but which point to the large domains of everyday life experience that critically constitute urban life.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2000. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Robinson, J. 2006. O*rdinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development*. New York: Routledge. 2006.

Special Issue on Crowds and Conviviality: Ethnographies of the South Asian City, *Ethnography*, March 2012 Vol. 13, no. 1 3-11.

Stewart, Kathleen. 2005. Cultural Poesis: The Generativity of Emergent Things, in Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 1015-1030.