

## **GEOG 525: Asian Cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

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Fall 2014 meeting times: 8:35 am – 11:25 am

Location: Burnside Hall 429

### **Course Description**

Asia is a rapidly urbanizing region that is home to 16 of the world's 25 largest cities. Between 1990 and 2010, the urban population of Asia increased by over 754 million people, equal to the combined population of the United States and the European Union. Asian Cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century examines this vibrant region and some of the current themes relating to mass urbanization in a range of contexts and how these themes affect the built environment of Asian cities. The course will explore various approaches to understanding Asian cities and current theoretical debates, including those that challenge western-centric approaches to understanding urban change in the region. A variety of themes will be investigated through which students will gain familiarity with some of the major strands relating to urban change in Asia: national identity, neoliberalism, social exclusions, migration, ethnicity and climate change / sustainability. The regions covered include East Asia (China, Japan, South Korea), Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar / Burma), Arab states (United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar), and South Asia (India).

Students interested in urban and cultural geography, cities, architecture, planning and contemporary urban change in Asian cultural contexts will enjoy this course.

### **Goals for this course**

This course will:

- Encourage students to gain a deeper understanding of contemporary Asia through examining contemporary urban change
- Broaden students' awareness of the wide variety of cities in Asia and some of the most pressing issues facing Asian cities today
- Encourage students to develop analytical and critical thinking skills and to gain familiarity with interdisciplinary urban studies methods
- Increase students' understanding of the various scholarly approaches to understanding contemporary Asian cities and to gain familiarity with some of the major areas of enquiry relating to urban change in Asia

### **Assignments and evaluation**

This course will be graded based on written assignments, a presentation and participation.

**10% Participation** – While each class begins with a lecture, the session is dominated by class discussion guided by assigned readings and current events. Students must attend each class and will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of their comments in class. Missing a class will affect your participation mark.

20% - **Weekly critical reflection papers** – Students will write 2-3-page (1.5 spaced, 12 pt, Times New Roman, normal margins) critical reflections on the readings and submit them **at the start of each class**. Of the 12 classes, 10 reflection papers must be submitted. You can choose which two weeks not to submit reflection papers. They are graded out of 3 and must engage critically with the readings and pose several discussion questions. Try to understand the core argument each author is making and how their paper contributes to our understanding of contemporary Asian cities. Is their argument convincing? Why / why not? At the start of your critical reflection paper, please write 5-8 key words that summarize the themes explored in the readings.

20% **Discussion leader** – Students will each sign up for one class in which to act as discussion leader for the assigned readings. In addition to the scholarly readings, students must also find several current newspaper / magazine articles about the topic of the week in order to enrich the discussion and ground the topic in contemporary events and changes in Asian cities. The newspaper articles must be submitted several days in advance so everyone has a chance to read them. A maximum of 2 students may sign up for one week, but it must be a week in which there are four readings. Each student will lead a 30-40 minute discussion on the themes found in the assigned reading and in the newspaper articles they find and provide a set of discussion questions for the class in order to structure the discussion. The questions can be digitally projected in the classroom or written on a white board in the classroom or copied and distributed in class. Students are encouraged to find outside visual material (e.g. marketing material, images, photos, film clips, etc) to supplement the discussion. Start with a 5-10 minute summary of the readings and the topic, following by a guided discussion.

10% **Paper outline, abstract and bibliography** - Students will prepare a detailed outline as well as a 150-200 word abstract and list of references for their final paper. You will be assessed on the quality of the outline, the flow and logic, the relevance and thoroughness of the bibliography, and the quality of the abstract. (Due Monday, Oct. 23)

40% **Final paper** – This final research paper should be around 15 pages (double-spaced, 12 pt, Times New Roman, normal margins). Students can examine a theme examined in this course in depth, either using one case study or several for a more comparative approach (e.g. If a student selects the theme of ‘green’ cities, s/he may wish to examine one city’s ‘green’ efforts or do a comparative paper critically examining several contrasting examples of ‘green’ initiatives). (see detailed assignment sheet) (Due Dec. 5)

\*late assignments will be penalized 10% per day

\*weekly critical reflection papers will only be accepted at the beginning of each class. None will be accepted by email or at the end of class or later.

## **Class schedule and readings** \*readings are all posted on MyCourses!

1. Thurs Sept 4

### **Introduction – Asian cities in an age of change**

In the first class, I will introduce the Asia region and various urbanism trends. We will examine ‘Asian Cities’ as a topic of academic study as well as some of the problems with terms including the ‘global south’. Finally, we will explore several of the main theoretical approaches to understanding urban change in Asia.

#### ***Videos + discussion***

- 1) Why use the term ‘urban global south’? <http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab>
- 2) What do current debates on the urban global south imply for planning?  
<http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab/film-2>

	<p>3) What kind of theory is required for the urban global south? Do we require a new urban theory or the reworking of existing conceptualizations?  <a href="http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab/film-3">http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/dpu60/tab/film-3</a></p>
2. Thurs Sept 11	<p>Bunnell, Tim; Goh, Daniel P. S.; Lai, Chee-Kien; and Pow, C. P. (2012) 'Introduction: Global urban frontiers? Asian cities in theory, practice and imagination', <i>Urban Studies</i> 49 (13): 2785-2793.</p> <p>Chen, Xiangming; Moser, Sarah; and Kundu, Ratoola. (2016) Intro to <i>The Research Handbook on Asian Cities</i>. Edward Elgar.</p> <p>Parnell, Susan and Robinson, Jennifer. (2012) '(Re)theorizing cities from the Global South: Looking beyond neoliberalism', <i>Urban Geography</i> 33 (4): 593-617.</p>
<b>Rethorizing cities in Asia</b>	
3. Thurs Sept 18	<p>Excerpts from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports.</p> <p>Tanner, Thomas, et al. (2009) 'Urban governance for adaptation: Assessing climate change resilience in ten Asian cities', <i>IDS Working Paper</i> 315.</p> <p>May, Shannon. (2011) 'Ecological urbanism: Calculating value in an age of global climate change'. In <i>Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global</i>. Edited by Ananya Roy and Aihwa Ong. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell. pp. 98-126. (ebook available through McGill Libraries)</p>
<b>Sustainability / climate change planning in Asian cities</b>	
4. Thurs Sept 25	<p>Chang, T.C. (2014) "'New uses need old buildings: Gentrification aesthetics and the arts in Singapore', <i>Urban Studies</i> (forthcoming). 1-16.</p> <p>Ley, David and Teo, Sin Yih. (2013) 'Gentrification in Hong Kong? Epistemology vs. ontology', <i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i>.</p> <p>Jou, Sue-Ching; Clark, Eric; and Chen, Hsiao-Wei. (2014) 'Gentrification and revanchist urbanism in Taipei?', <i>Urban Studies</i> (forthcoming).</p> <p>Choi, Narae. (2014) Metro Manila through the gentrification lens: Disparities in urban planning and displacement risks, <i>Urban Studies</i> (forthcoming) 1-16.</p>
<b>Gentrification</b>	
5. Thurs Oct 2	<p>Moser, Sarah. (2011) 'Constructing cultural heritage in new cities in Southeast Asia', <i>International Institute for Asian Studies Newsletter</i> 57.</p> <p>Jacobs, Jessive. (2010) Re-branding the Levant: Contested heritage and colonial modernities in Amman and Damascus, <i>Journal of Tourism and Cultural Exchange</i> 8 (4): 325-336.</p> <p>Tan, Chris K.K. (2014) Rainbow belt: Singapore's gay Chinatown as a Lefebvrian space, <i>Urban Studies</i> (forthcoming) 1-16.</p> <p>Peleggi, Maurizio. (2005) Consuming colonial nostalgia: The monumentalisation of historic hotels in urban South-East Asia, <i>Asia Pacific Viewpoint</i> 46 (3): 255-265.</p> <p>Goh, D. P. (2014). Between History and Heritage: Post-Colonialism, Globalisation, and the Remaking of Malacca, Penang, and Singapore. <i>TRaNS: Trans-Regional and-National Studies of Southeast Asia</i>, 2(01), 79-101.</p>
<b>Heritage, cultural revivalism and the city</b>	
6. Thurs Oct 9	<p>Wong, Kai Wen and Bunnell, Tim. (2006) 'New economy' discourse and space in</p>

<b>Knowledge economy, 'smart' cities</b>	<p>Singapore: A case study of one-north, <i>Environment and Planning A</i> 38: 69-83.</p> <p>Yusuf, Shahid and Nabeshima, Kaoru. (2005) 'Creative industries in East Asia,' <i>Cities</i> 22 (2): 109-122.</p> <p>Beng Huat, Chua. (2011) Singapore as model: Planning innovations, knowledge experts, In Roy, Ananya and Ong, Aihwa (Eds.) <i>Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global</i>. Blackwell: Oxford, 29-54. (ebook available through McGill Libraries)</p>
<p>7. Thurs Oct 16</p> <p><b>Circulating urban policy and inter-referencing</b></p>	<p>Bunnell, Tim and Das, Diganta (2010) 'Urban pulse – A Geography of serial seduction: Urban policy transfer from Kuala Lumpur to Hyderabad', <i>Urban Geography</i> 31 (3): 277-284.</p> <p>Phelps, N. A., Bunnell, T., Miller, M. A., &amp; Taylor, J. (2014). Urban inter-referencing within and beyond a decentralized Indonesia. <i>Cities</i>, 39, 37-49.</p> <p>Ong, Aihwa. (2011) 'Hyperbuilding: Spectacle, speculation, and the hyperspace of sovereignty', In Roy, Ananya and Ong, Aihwa (Eds.) <i>Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global</i>. Blackwell: Oxford, 205-226. (ebook available through McGill Libraries)</p>
<p>8. Thurs Oct 23</p> <p><b>Culture, identity and branding</b></p>	<p>Bageen, Samer. (2007) 'Brand Dubai: The instant city; or the instantly recognizable city', <i>International Planning Studies</i> 12 (2): 173-197.</p> <p>Yeoh, B. S. (2005). The global cultural city? Spatial imagineering and politics in the (multi) cultural marketplaces of South-east Asia. <i>Urban Studies</i>, 42(5-6), 945-958.</p> <p>Lui, Tai-Lok. (2008) 'City-branding without content: Hong Kong's aborted West Kowloon mega-project, 1998-2006', <i>International Development Planning Review</i> 30 (3): 215-226.</p>
<p>*** Paper outline, abstract and bibliography due at the beginning of class, Oct. 23***</p>	
<p>9. Thurs Oct 30</p> <p><b>Mobilities and flows</b></p>	<p>Law, Lisa. (2002) Defying disappearance: Cosmopolitan public spaces in Hong Kong, <i>Urban Studies</i> 39 (9): 1625-1645.</p> <p>Collins, Francis Leo. (2011) 'Transnational mobilities and urban spatialities: Notes from the Asia-Pacific', <i>Progress in Human Geography</i> 36 (3): 316-335.</p> <p>Faier, Lieba. (2012) 'Affective investments in the Manila region: Filipina migrants in rural Japan and transnational urban development in the Philippines', <i>Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers</i> 38 (3): 376-390.</p>
<p>10. Thurs Nov 6</p> <p><b>Accommodating the masses: Emerging housing patterns in Asian cities</b></p>	<p>Roy, Ananya. (2011) 'Slumdog cities: Rethinking subaltern urbanism', <i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i> 35 (2): 223-38.</p> <p>Zhao, Pengjun. (2011) 'Managing urban growth in a transforming China: Evidence from Beijing', <i>Land Use Policy</i> 28 (1): 96-109.</p> <p>Wang, Jun. (2012) 'The developmental state in the global hegemony of neoliberalism: A new strategy for public housing in Singapore', <i>Cities</i> 29 (6): 369-378.</p> <p>Nakamura, Shohei. (2014) Impact of slum formalization on self-help housing construction: A case of slum notification in India, <i>Urban Studies</i> (forthcoming) 1-25.</p>

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11. Thurs Nov 13
- Perpetuating and innovating social exclusions**
- Hogan, Trevor et al. (2012) ‘Asian urbanisms and the privatization of cities’, *Cities* 29: 59-63.
- Pow, Choon-Piew. (2007) ‘Securing the ‘civilised’ enclaves: Gated communities and the moral geographies of exclusion in (post-)socialist Shanghai’, *Urban Studies* 44 (8): 1539-1558.
- Leisch, Harald. (2002) ‘Gated communities in Indonesia’, *Cities* 19 (5): 341-350.
- Pow, Choon-Piew (2009) ‘Neoliberalism and the aestheticization of new middle-class landscapes’, *Antipode* 41 (2): 371-390.
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12. Thurs Nov 20
- ‘Green’ cities**
- Koch, Natalie. (2014) “Building glass refrigerators in the desert”: discourses of urban sustainability and nation building in Qatar, *Urban Studies* (forthcoming) 1-22.
- Hoffman, Lisa. (2011) ‘Urban modeling and contemporary technologies of city-building in China: The production of regimes of green urbanisms’, In Roy, Ananya and Ong, Aihwa (Eds.) *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*. Blackwell: Oxford, 55-76. (ebook available through McGill Libraries)
- Tan, Puay Yok; Wang, James; and Sia, Angelia. (2013) Perspectives on five decades of the urban greening of Singapore, *Cities* 32: 24-32.
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13. Thurs Nov 27
- Emerging ‘global’ cities in Asia**
- Ghertner, D. Asher. (2011) ‘Rule by aesthetics: World-class city making in Delhi’, In Roy, Ananya and Ong, Aihwa (Eds.) *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*. Blackwell: Oxford, 279-306. (ebook available through McGill Libraries)
- Koch, Natalie. (2013) Why not a world city? Astana, Ankara, and geopolitical scripts in urban networks, *Urban Geography* 34 (1): 109-130.
- Moser, Sarah. (2012) ‘Constructing identity in two new Southeast Asian capitals: Putrajaya and Dompak’, in *Rethinking Global Cities*. New York: Routledge. 169-189.
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**\*\*\*Final paper due Dec. 5, geography office (706) mail slot in the door of main office near elevators, Burnside 7<sup>th</sup> floor\*\*\***

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