

# Cultural Constructions of Asian Cities

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## Description

Virtually all of the world's expected population increase between now (6.3 billion) and the anticipated leveling off around 2100 (9.5 billion) will be in the cities of the developing world, mostly in Asia. China, India and Indonesia are already the first, second and fourth largest nations by population. Together with their neighbors, Asia is home to a majority of humanity and is becoming the most significant economic and environmental field of action. As the global center of gravity shifts to Asia, the ongoing negotiations of collective concerns (climate change, resource scarcity, violent conflict) are increasingly dependent upon a more inclusive perspective. The rapid urbanization occurring in the cities of Asia has taken place under conditions of extreme cultural diversity, vast demographic pressures, and unprecedented speeds of social change. The study of Asia from colonialism to nascent nationalisms, to more recent speculations on global phenomena has long provided vivid grounds for investigating important questions about the relationship between human societies and their built environments: What forces operating in the west account for the shifting definitions of "Asia" over time? How have visual and spatial representations played a role in this process? How has the design of the built-environment been used as an instrument for reproducing power relations? How have images and mythologies of the developed west played a role in the construction of space in Asia's cities?

An important premise of the course is that the special relationship between cultural forces and the built environment is more vividly revealed in the recent histories of architectural and urban formation in Asia than commonly found in other places and times. Of particular interest are the methodologies emerging in recent decades around the changing conceptions of "culture." The literatures associated with the so-called "cultural turn" are developed and applied to our cases to critique and supplement the more familiar analytical tools of political-economy. Even for students never intending to operate in an Asian context, this course offers the opportunity to step outside of their own world long enough to look back and see it with a critical clarity otherwise difficult to attain.

The sequence of topics is designed to posit a series of theoretical framings juxtaposed with relevant case studies drawn from the historic and contemporary accounts of specific contexts offered by the region. Class discussions will build upon the readings to test the various methodologies for their power to account for phenomena presented in each case study. In each case, we will examine the cultural operation of architecture and urban form within a specific context and how this operation relates to contemporary challenges in architecture and urbanism. Some of the issues examined include the concept of "development," religious identity, colonial power structures, postcolonial nationalisms, the role of women, the rise of civil society, heritage conservation, national housing and "new town" efforts, tourism, mega-projects, globalization/counter-globalization, social dualisms, critical regionalism, and various phenomena of hybrid cultural formation.

Each participant is required to develop an individual research project employing some aspect of the methodologies explored in the seminar. These projects may or may not be sited in Asia but should demonstrate the capacity for some methodology of cultural analysis to extend understandings of key phenomena.

## **Content**

Your responses are *not* a summary of the readings. Instead, they should be your own personal, analytical, and/or critical responses to them.

- What are the implications of what the author is expressing?
- How are the ideas expressed manifested in the built environment?
- What connections can you make to other issues you have studied?
- What connections can you make to aspects of your own life experience?
- What is useful (and what is less useful) in what the author is expressing?
- Do you agree with the point of view expressed in the piece?
- If not, how would you counter the author's points with your own views?

## **Introduction: Cultural Construction of Jakarta Term Project Assignment given**

- Suggested: Howard W. Dick and Peter J. Rimmer, "Beyond the Third World City: The New Urban Geography of South-east Asia," *Urban Studies* 35, no. 12 (1998) 2303-21.
- Melvin Webber, "The Joys of Spread-City," *Urban Design International* 3, no. 4 (December 1998) 201-206.
- Robert Cowherd, "Cultural Construction of Jakarta: Design, Planning and Development in Jabotabek, 1980-1997," (Ph.D. diss., MIT, 2002).

## **What is "Asia"? Discourse Theory from Foucault to Saïd**

- Hayden White, "Afterword," *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) 315-24.
- Edward Saïd, "Politics of Knowledge," *Raritan* 11, no. 1 (Summer 1991) 17-31.
- Edward W. Saïd, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993) xixviii, 1-15, 50-72.
- Richard A. O'Connor, *A Theory of Indigenous Southeast Asian Urbanism*, Research Notes and Discussions Paper No. 38 (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1983) 1-12, 114-19.
- Suggested: Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977).
- Paul A. Bové, "The Foucault Phenomenon: The Problematics of Style," foreword to Gilles Deleuze's *Foucault* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1988) vii-xl.
- Hayden White, "Tropology, Discourse, and the Modes of Human Consciousness," introduction to *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).
- Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
- Linda Nochlin, *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-century Art and Society* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989).

## **Design and the Colonial Project: Norm Follows Form**

- Anthony D. King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power and Environment* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976) 2-40, 123-55.
- Brenda S. A. Yeoh, "Power Relations and the Built Environment in Colonial Cities," chapter 1 *Contesting Space: Power Relations and the Urban Built Environment in Colonial Singapore* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) 127.
- Suggested: Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).
- Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
- T.G. McGee, *The Southeast Asian City: A Social Geography of the Primate Cities of Southeast Asia* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1967).
- Peter J. M. Nas, "The Early Indonesian Town: Rise and Decline of the City-State and Its Capital," *The Indonesian City: Studies in Urban Development and Planning* (Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 1986) 18-36.
- Paul Wheatley, *Nagara and Commandery: Origins of the Southeast Asian Urban Traditions* (University of Chicago Department of Geography Research Paper Nos. 207-208, 1983).

## **World Systems Theory from Marx to Wallerstein**

- David A. Smith and Roger J. Nemeth, "Urban Development in Southeast Asia," *Urbanisation in the Developing World* (London: Croom Helm, 1986) 121-40.
- Anthony D. King, "Viewing the World As One (1): Urban History and the World-System," chapter 4 *Urbanism, Colonialism, and the World-Economy: Cultural and Spatial Foundations of the World Urban System* (London: Routledge, 1990) 68
- Warwick Armstrong and T.G. McGee, *Theatres of Accumulation: Studies in Asian and Latin American Urbanization* (London: Methuen, 1985) 1-40.
- David A. Smith, *Third World Cities in Global Perspective: The Political Economy of Uneven Urbanization* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996) 1-25.
- Suggested: Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).
- Robert B. Potter, "Cities, Convergence, Divergence and Third World Development," chapter 1 in *Cities and Development in the Third World* (London: Mansell, 1990) 1-11.
- T.G. McGee, "The Emergence of Desakota Regions in Asia: Expanding a Hypothesis," chapter 1 in *The Extended Metropolis: Settlement Transition in Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991) 3-26.
- John Friedmann and Robert Wulff, *The Urban Transition: Comparative Studies of Newly Industrializing Societies* (Los Angeles: School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of California, Los Angeles, 1975).

## **National Identity Construction: Imagining Culture**

- Sibel Bozdogan, "Modernism on the Margins of Europe," *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001) 3-15.
- Lawrence J. Vale, "Designing National Identity: Post-Colonial Capitols as Intercultural Dilemmas," chapter 13 in *Forms of Dominance: On the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise*, ed. Nezar AlSayyad (Aldershot: Avebury, 1992), 315-38.
- Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991 (1983)) 1-46.
- John Pemberton, *On the Subject of "Java"* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) 1-28.
- Suggested: Frantz Fanon, "On National Culture," *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991 (1963)).
- Hobsbawm, E.J., ed., *Nations and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

## **Culture and Critical Regionalism: Form-Identities**

- Paul Ricoeur, "Universal Civilization and National Cultures," *History and Truth* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1965) 271-84.
- Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend, Wash.: Bay Press, 1983) 16-30.
- Kenneth Frampton, "The Status of man and His Objects: A Reading of The Human Condition," *Architecture Theory Since 1968* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000) 358-77.
- Suggested: Kenneth Frampton, "Prospects for a Critical Regionalism," *Perspecta* 20 (1983) 147-62.
- Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, "Why Critical Regionalism Today?" *Architecture + Urbanism* (May 1990).

## **Regime Theory: Power and Markets**

- John Logan and Harvey Molotch, "The City As Growth Machine," chapter 3 *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 50-98.
- Robert Cowherd and Eric J. Heikkila, "Orange County, Java: Hybridity, Social Dualism and an Imagined West," chapter 9 in *Southern California and the World* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002) 195-220.
- James C. Scott, "The High-Modernist City: An Experiment and a Critique," chapter 4 *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998) 103-31.
- Suggested: Clarence N. Stone, *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1989).

- Mickey Lauria, ed., *Reconstructing Urban Regime Theory: Regulating Urban Politics in a Global Economy* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1997).
- Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996).
- Neil Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1984).
- Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, "Singapore Songlines: Portrait of a Potemkin Metropolis ...or Thirty Years of Tabula Rasa," *Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large: Office for Metropolitan Architecture* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1995) 1008-89.
- Joseph B. Tamney, *The Struggle Over Singapore's Soul: Western Modernization and Asian Culture* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996).
- Ole Johan Dale, *Urban Planning in Singapore: The Transformation of a City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

## **Islam and Modernity**

- Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Architectural Transformation of the Urban Environment in the Islamic World," *Traditional Islam in the Modern World* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1987) 227-50.
- Mohammed Arkoun, "The Metamorphosis of the Sacred," chapter 16 in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development & Regional Diversity* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994) 268-72.
- Robert W. Hefner, "Islam and Nation in the Post-Suharto Era," chapter 3 in *The Politics of Post-Suharto Indonesia* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999) 40-72.
- Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson, "Redefining Muslim Publics," chapter 1 in *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003) 1-18.
- Suggested: Robert W. Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- Georg Stauth, *Politics and Cultures of Islamization in Southeast Asia: Indonesia and Malaysia in the Nineteen-Nineties* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2002).
- Anthony King, "Culture, Space and Representation: Problems of Methodology in Urban Studies," chapter 6 in *Urbanism in Islam: Proceedings of the International Conference*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Middle Eastern Culture Center, 22-28 October 1989) 167-94.
- Robert W. Hefner and Patricia Horvath, eds., *Islam in an Era of Nation-States: Politics and Religious Renewal in Muslim Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997).
- Saleh Al-Hathloul, "Continuity in a Changing Tradition," *Legacies for the Future: Contemporary Architecture in Islamic Societies* (London; Geneva: Thames and Hudson; The Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 1998) 18-31.

## **Mega-Projects and Identity: Sukarno & Mahatir**

- Abidin Kusno, "Modern Beacon and Traditional Polity: Jakarta in the Time of Sukarno," chapter 2 *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space and Political Cultures in Indonesia* (London: Routledge, 2000) 49-70.
- Marc Boey, "(Trans)national Realities and Imaginations: The Business and Politics of Malaysia's Multimedia Super Corridor," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 30, no. 1 (March 2002) 28-52.
- Piper Gaubatz, "Globalization and the Development of New Central Business Districts in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou," chapter 6 in *Restructuring the Chinese City: Changing Society, Economy and Space* (New York: Routledge, 2005) 98-121.
- Kris Olds, "Globalization and the Production of New Urban Spaces: Pacific Rim Megaprojects in the Late 20th Century," *Environment and Planning A*, no. 11 (November 1995) 1713-1743.
- Suggested: Kris Olds, "Globalizing Shanghai: The 'Global Intelligence Corps' and the Building of Pudong," *Cities* 12, no. 3 (1997) 109-23.
- Tim Bunnell, "Cities for Nations? Examining the City-Nation-State Relation in Information Age Malaysia," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26, no. 2 (June 2002) 284-98.
- Richard Marshall, *Emerging Urbanity: Global Urban Projects in the Asia Pacific Rim* (London: Spon Press, 2003).

## **Media and the Imagined West: Occidentalism**

- David Fraser, "Inventing Oasis: Luxury Housing Advertisements and Reconfiguring Domestic Space in Shanghai," chapter 2 in *The Consumer Revolution in Urban China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000) 25-53.
- Stuart Hall, "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity," chapter 2 in
- Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity, ed. Anthony D. King (Binghamton, New York: Department of Art and Art History State University of New York at Binghamton, 1991) 19-40.
- Anthony D. King, "Villafication: The Transformation of Chinese Cities," chapter 7 *Spaces of Global Cultures: Architecture, Urbanism, Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2004) 186-209.
- Richard Robison and David S.B. Goodman, "The New Rich in Asia: Economic Development, Social Stauts and Political Consciousness," chapter 1 in *New Rich in Asia: Mobile Phones, McDonalds and Middle-class Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 1996) 1-16.
- Suggested: Daniel Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1987).
- Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003).
- Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 2005).
- Mark Gottdiener and Ray Hutchinson, *The New Urban Sociology* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1994).
- Anthony Giddens, *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives* (London: Routledge, 2000).

## **China: The Next Global Order**

- Helen F. Siu, "The Cultural landscape of Luxury Housing in South China: A Regional History," chapter 3 in *Locating China: Space, Place, and Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2005) 72-93.
- Fulong Wu and Laurence J.C. Ma, "The Chinese City in Transition," chapter 14 in *Restructuring the Chinese City: Changing Society, Economy and Space* (New York: Routledge, 2005) 260-79.
- David Bray, *Social Space and Governance in Urban China: The Danwei System From Origins to Urban Reform* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2005) [being cataloged].
- Jared Diamond, "China, Lurching Giant," chapter 12 *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (New York: Viking, 2005) 358-377.
- Suggested: Li Zhang, *Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks within China's Floating Population* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001).
- Peter G. Rowe and Seng Kuan, *Architectural Encounters with Essence and Form in Modern China* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002).

## **New (Built) Form of Social Dualism**

- Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, "The Collapse of the Integrated Ideal: The Modern Networked City in Crisis," chapter 3 *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition* (London: Routledge, 2001) 90-136.
- Mike Davis, "Planet of Slums: Urban Involution and the Informal Proletariat," *New Left Review* 26 (March-April 2004) 5-34.
- David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City* (Cambridge, Mass.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988 (1973)) 274-84.
- Suggested: Herman E. Daly, *Beyond Growth: The Economics of Sustainable Development* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997).
- Robert Neuwirth, *Shadow Cities: A Billion Squatters, A New Urban World* (New York: Routledge, 2005).
- Paul Krugman, "For Richer," *New York Times Magazine*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/20/magazine/20INEQUALITY.html> (20 October 2002) 62-67, 76-77, 141-142.
- Peter Marcuse and Ronald van Kempen, eds., *Globalizing Cities: A New Spatial Order?* (London: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).
- Marc Askew, "Bangkok: Transformation of the Thai City," 4 in *Cultural Identity and Urban Change in Southeast Asia: Interpretative Essays* (Geelong, Australia: Deakin University Press, 1994) 85-115.
- Lea Jellinek, *The Wheel of Fortune: The History of a Poor Community in Jakarta* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991).