



CCSS3700/CHES3007/CHES5155 Urban China\*

2020-21, Term 2

Mon 14:30-16:15; Wed 13:30-14:15

Venue: MMW\_710; ELB\_206

Instructor: Professor LING Minhua (email: [mhling@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:mhling@cuhk.edu.hk))  
Office Hours: Tues 14:30 - 17:00; by appointment via email  
Office: Room 1106, 11/F, Yasumoto International Academic Park, CUHK  
TA: TBD  
TA Office: Room 1117, 11/F, Yasumoto International Academic Park, CUHK

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This English-taught, upper-level seminar will examine the socioeconomic, political, and cultural facets of urbanization with a regional focus on China, probably the best living laboratory to study urban development in today's world. The goal of this course is to introduce students to urban studies, and help students develop critical observation and analysis regarding the process of urbanization and its lived experiences in the Chinese context. This seminar will also draw comparative lessons from other regions to encourage a comparative understanding of the complex processes of urbanization across the globe.

Students will be guided to investigate critically urban issues ranging from land politics, urban planning, urban governance, to citizen rights, urban space, and urban culture. Two sets of readings will be introduced: classic writings in the field of urban anthropology/geography/sociology, and empirical studies specific on China. After offering an overview of China's quest for modernity and its urban transformation since the late imperial era, this course takes an interdisciplinary approach to examine in details China's unprecedented urban development in the post-reform era. Readings and in-class discussion will be supplemented by a hands-on field trip in Hong Kong, taking full advantage of Hong Kong as a global city with some most intriguing urban landscapes.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the semester, students should:

- be familiar with key concepts and social theories in urban studies
- be able to comprehend the main issues of urbanization in the Chinese context
- grasp the basic of literature research on a chosen topic
- improve analytical skills and academic writing in English
- develop oral skills to present coherent and succinct analysis collaboratively

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Class Participation (20%)** will be assessed on the basis of regular attendance and active engagement in class discussions (including short field trip). Students are expected to come to class **on time, having done the required readings, and ready to ask questions or offer comments**. Students will earn a weekly participation grade of up to 100 points, with 70 of these points from attendance and the other 30

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\* This is a working syllabus. Contents and readings are subject to change upon notification. For MA students who take this class, please refer to the CHES5155 version of the syllabus as there is different requirement regarding the term paper.

from participation in classes. Students with more than two unexcused absence after the first two weeks will lose half of their participation points.

**Group Project (20%):** Students will take on projects in the form of presentation or debate in small groups (in general three to four people per group) on assigned urban issues. A sign-up sheet will be circulated in class in Week 3. Each group will use present or debate over a case study to elaborate on the issues in class. A detailed guideline and grading criteria for the group project will be distributed in class.

**Fieldtrip and Mapping Exercise (20%):** Students will participate in a short fieldtrip in Hong Kong to explore the city's urban space while learning to take fieldnote. Students will also make and submit their own maps to represent an urban neighborhood in Hong Kong or mainland China. Students can hand-draw the map, or use some sort of base map and add their own specificities. Students are asked to define the boundaries of the space on their own terms, and show how they see the place and its spatial configuration and reflect upon the built environment and its people interact. Students may use pictures, captions, notes or other creative means for illustration. Assignment specifics will be discussed in class.

**Term Paper (40%):** Students should write a paper in the format of policy memo on a specific urban issue, providing informed argument and policy recommendation while synthesizing and applying some of the theoretical arguments taught in class. The memo should be about **2000** words (no less than 2300 and no more than 3000 words, in **12-point Times New Roman** font, **1-inch margin** at all sides, **1.5-spaced, page numbered**, with **word count** in the end of the essay), with a **reference list in the end** in **APA** bibliographic format. **NO title page** is needed. Paper expectations and grading guidelines will be disseminated in class.

An **e-copy** of the term paper (Word or PDF file) must be submitted to the **Blackboard** together with a signed **Veriguide** receipt no later than **5pm on April 26, 2021**. **NO** late submission will be accepted.

Students should submit the papers to the **Veriguide** system and sign the **Veriguide receipt**. See the website: [https://services.veriguide.org/academic/login\\_CUHK.jspx](https://services.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.jspx). Any cases of **plagiarism will be severely penalized and reported** to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, which could result in failure or expulsion from the University.

## **Readings**

- All required readings (as listed below) will be provided in PDF format via CUHK's eLearning system (downloadable on Blackboard).
- Some recommended readings are listed here, and students are encouraged to check out the additional readings for references while conducting group projects and writing term papers.

## **SEMINAR SCHEDULE & READING LIST**

### **Week 1 Introduction: Urbanization and Globalization**

January 11 & 13

Required Reading:

- Friedmann, John. 2006. "Four Theses in the Study of China's Urbanization." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30 (2):440-451.

Recommended Reading:

- Sassen, Saskia. 1996. "Whose City Is It? Globalization and the Formation of New Claims." *Public Culture* 8 (2):205-223.
- Smart, Alan & Smart, Josephine. 2003. "Urbanization and the Global Perspective." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 32, 263-285.

**Week 2 Understanding the Urban**

January 18 & 20

Required Reading:

- Simmel, Georg. 2013 (1903). "The metropolis and mental life." In *The Urban Sociology Reader: Second Edition*. Eds. Lin, Jan & Christopher Mele. Routledge: London & New York: 23-31.
- Wirth, Louis. 1938. "Urbanism as a way of life." *The American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. no. 44: 1-24. (Also available in *The City Reader*, pp. 97-104)

Recommended Reading:

- Engles, Friedrich. 2011 (1978). The great towns. [Originally published in *The Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844*]. *The City Reader*. Eds. LeGates, R. & Stout, F. Oxford: Routledge: 46-54.
- Castells, Manuel. 1977. *The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach*. English-language ed, *Social structure and social change*. London: E. Arnold.
- Low, Setha M. 1996. "The Anthropology of Cities: Imagining and Theorizing the City." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 25:383-409.
- Brenner, Neil. 2013. "Theses on Urbanization." *Public Culture* 25 (1):85-114.

**Week 3 Urban Development in Late-Imperial China**

January 25 & 27

Required Reading:

- Rowe, William T. 1989. "City People." In *Hankow: Conflict and Community in a Chinese City, 1796-1895*. 15-63. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Recommended Reading:

- Skinner, G. William. 1977. "Introduction: Urban Development in Imperial China." In *The City in Late Imperial China*, edited by G. William Skinner, 3-32. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Brook, Timothy. 1998. "Summer: The Last Century." In *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China*. Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press.

**Week 4 Modernity and Urban Transformation**

February 1 & 3

Required Reading:

- Rogaski, Ruth. 2000. "Hygienic Modernity in Tianjin." In *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900-1950*, edited by Joseph Esherick, 30-46. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Zhang, Jun. 2017. "Materializing a form of urban governance: When street building intersected with city building in Republican Canton (Guangzhou), China." *History and Technology* 33 (2):153-174.

Recommended Reading:

- Esherick, Joseph, 2000. "Modernity and Nation in the Chinese City." In *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900-1950*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Lu, Hanchao. 1995. Away from Nanking Road: Small stores and neighborhood life in modern Shanghai. *Journal of Asian Studies*. 54 (1): 93-123.
- Carroll, Peter J. 2006. Introduction and Ch1 "Industry and vice along the horse-road." In *Between Heaven and Modernity: Reconstructing Suzhou, 1895-1937*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

## **Week 5          Urbanization in PRC**

February 8 & 10

Required Reading:

- Gaubatz, Piper. 1998. "Understanding Chinese Urban Form: Contexts for Interpreting Continuity and Change." *Built Environment* 24 (4):251-270.
- Feng, Jian, Fulong Wu, and John Logan. 2008. "From Homogenous to Heterogeneous: The Transformation of Beijing's Socio-Spatial Structure." *Built Environment* 34 (4):482-498.

Recommended Reading:

- Gaubatz, Piper R. 1995. "Urban Transformation in Post-Mao China: Impacts of the Reform Era on China's Urban Form." In *Urban Spaces in Contemporary China: The Potential for Autonomy and Community in Post-Mao China*, edited by Deborah S. Davis, Richard Curt Kraus, Barry Naughton and Elizabeth J. Perry, 28-60. Cambridge; New York: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Cambridge University Press.

## **Week 6          Urban Development and Land Politics**

February 15    NO CLASS (Lunar New Year Holiday)

February 17

Required Reading:

- Molotch, Harvey. 1976. "The city as a growth machine: Toward a political economy of place." *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 82, No. 2: 309-332
- Hsing, You-tien. 2006. "Land and Territorial Politics in Urban China." *The China Quarterly* (187):575-591.

Recommended Reading:

- Chan, Roger C. K., and Lingyue Li. 2017. "Entrepreneurial city and the restructuring of urban space in Shanghai Expo." *Urban Geography* 38 (5):666-686.
- Shieh, Leslie. 2011. "Becoming Urban: Rural-Urban Integration in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province." *Pacific Affairs* 84 (3):475-94.

## **Week 7          Urban Process in Global Capitalism**

February 22 & 24

Required Reading:

- Kipnis, Andrew. 2016. Ch3 "Recombinant Production." *From Village to City: Social Transformation in a Chinese County Seat*. University of California Press. pp 66-95.
- Hessler, Peter. 2007. "China's Instant Cities." *National Geographic*.
- Pun, Ngai & Lu Huilin. 2010. A Culture of Violence: The Labor Subcontracting System and Collective Action by Construction Workers in Post-Socialist China. *The China Journal* (64), 143-158.

Recommended Reading:

- Harvey, David. 1978. "The Urban Process under Capitalism: A Framework for Analysis." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 2, No. 4: 101-31.
- Wu, Fulong. 2004. "Urban Poverty and Marginalization under Market Transition: The Case of Chinese Cities." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 28(2): 401-423.
- Shao, Qin. 2013. Ch2 "Nightmares: Old and New." In *Shanghai Gone: Domicide and Defiance in a Chinese Megacity*.

## **Week 8 Urban Citizenship and Space in Hong Kong**

March 1 & 3 Short field trip in small groups in Yau Ma Tei, Hong Kong  
Time and Venue: TBD

### Required Reading:

- Ho, Chui-ming. 2001. Introduction on YMT. "Negotiating Marginality in Urban Milieu: The Resistance of the Street Sleepers in Yaumatei." PhD Thesis in Sociology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Cochrane, Graham. "Living in Yaumatei in the 1950s." In *Outsiders in Old Yaumatei: Reminiscences of Europeans Living and Working in Old Yaumatei*. Hong Kong.
- Mathews, Gordon. 2011. "Place" & "People." *Ghetto at the Center of the World: Chungking Mansions, Hong Kong*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### Recommended Reading:

- Siu, H. F. 2009. Positioning "Hong Kongers" and "New Immigrants". In *Hong Kong Mobile*. H. F. Siu and A. S. Ku. Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press: 117-147.
- Cheng, Christopher. 2012. Chapter 2 in *Sham Shui Po: A Marginal Neighbourhood in the Centre of Hong Kong*. Thesis. Department of Anthropology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

## **Week 9 Urban Planning and Infrastructure Building**

March 8 & 10

### Required Reading

- Le Corbusier. 2011 (1929). "A Contemporary City." In *The City Reader*, 336-344. London; New York: Routledge.
- Kipnis, Andrew. 2016. Ch2 "Recombinant Planning." *From Village to City: Social Transformation in a Chinese County Seat*. University of California Press. pp 31-65.
- Abramson, D., & Qi, Y. 2011. 'Urban-Rural Integration' in the Earthquake Zone: Sichuan's Post-Disaster Reconstruction and the Expansion of the Chengdu Metropole. *Pacific Affairs*, 84(3), 495-523.

### Recommended Reading:

- Wright, Frank Lloyd. 2011 (1935). "Broadacre City: A New Community Plan." In *The City Reader*, edited by Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout, 355-350. London; New York: Routledge.
- Jacobs, Allan & Donald Appleyard. 1987. "Toward an urban design manifesto." *The City Reader Fifth Edition*. Eds. LeGates, R. & Stout, F. Routledge. Pp. 518-529
- Bray, David. (2005). Introduction & Ch4. *Social Space and Governance in Urban China: The Danwei System from Origins to Reform*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Chen, Chia-Lin, and Biao Wei. 2013. "High-Speed Rail and Urban Transformation in China: The Case of Hangzhou East Rail Station." *Built Environment* 39 (3):385-398.
- Zhang, Jun. 2016 "Taxis, Traffic, and Thoroughfares: The Politics of Transportation Infrastructure in

China's Rapid Urbanization in the Reform Era." *City & Society*, 28(3), pp. 411–436.

➤ **Mapping exercise due in class on March 10, 2021.**

**Week 10 Urban Space and Sociality**

March 15 & 17

Required Reading:

- Jacobs, Jane. 1992 (1961). "The use of sidewalks: Safety." In *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Vintage Books. Pp.29-54
- Yan, Yunxiang. 2000. "Of Hamburger and Social Space: Consuming McDonald's in Beijing." in *The Consumer Revolution in Urban China*, edited by Deborah Davis. Berkeley: University of California Press

Recommended Reading:

- Tomba, Luigi. 2005. "Residential Space and Collective Interest Formation in Beijing's Housing Disputes." *The China Quarterly* (184):934-951.
- Read, Benjamin L. 2012. Introduction. In *Roots of the State: Neighborhood Organization and Social Networks in Beijing and Taipei*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Flock, R. and W. Breitung. 2016. "Migrant Street Vendors in Urban China and the Social Production of Public Space." *Population, Space and Place* 22(2): 158-169.

**Week 11 Urban Governance**

March 22 & 24

Required Reading

- Bray, David. 2008. "Designing to Govern: Space and Power in Two Wuhan Communities." *Built Environment* 34 (4):392-407.
- Tomba, Luigi. 2014. Chapter 2 "Micro-Governing the Urban Crisis". *The Government Next Door: Neighborhood Politics in Urban China*. Ithaca; London, Cornell University Press.

Recommended Reading:

- Harvey, David. 1989. "From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The transformation in urban governance in late capitalism." *Geografiska Annaler*. 71B, no. 1: 3-17.
- Hoffman, Lisa M. 2013. "Decentralization as a Mode of Governing the Urban in China: Reforms in Welfare Provisioning and the Rise of Volunteerism." *Pacific Affairs* 86 (4):835-855.
- Wang, June, and George S. M. Li. 2017. "State territorialization, neoliberal governmentality: the remaking of Dafen oil painting village, Shenzhen, China." *Urban Geography* 38(5):708-728.

**Reading Week NO CLASS**

**Week 12 Urban Citizenship**

April 12 & 14

Guest talk: John Tam on HK's citizenship and asylum system

Required Reading:

- Holston, J. and A. Appadurai. 1999. "Cities and Citizenship." *Public Culture* 8:187-204.
- Vecchio, Francesco, and Julie Ham. 2018. "From subsistence to resistance: Asylum-seekers and the other 'Occupy' in Hong Kong." *Critical Social Policy* 38 (2):201-221.

Recommended Reading:

- Purcell, Mark. 2003. "Citizenship and the right to the global city: Reimagining the capitalist world order." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27 (3):564-590.
- Chan, Kam Wing, and Li Zhang. 1999. "The Hukou System and Rural-Urban Migration in China: Processes and Changes." *The China Quarterly* (160):818-855.
- Chen, Chuanbo & Fan, Cindy. C. 2016. "China's *Hukou* Puzzle: Why Don't Rural Migrants Want Urban Hukou?" *China Review*, 16(3), 9-39.

**Week 13 Sex, Gender, and the City & Course Wrap-up**

April 19 & 21

Required Reading:

- Hanser, Amy. 2005. "The Gendered Rice Bowl: The Sexual Politics of Service Work in Urban China." *Gender and Society* 19(5):581-600.
- Farrer, James, and Andrew David Field. 2015. Ch3 "The Fall and Rise of Social Dance," In *Shanghai Nightscapes: A Nocturnal Biography of a Global City*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Recommended Reading:

- Guang, Lei. 2003. "Rural Taste, Urban Fashions: The Cultural Politics of Rural/Urban Difference in Contemporary China." *positions* 11 (3):613-646.
  - Schein, Louisa. 2001. "Urbanity, Cosmopolitanism, Consumption." In *China Urban*, edited by Nancy N. Chen, Constance D. Clark, Suzanne Z. Gottschang and Lyn. Jeffery, 225-241. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
  - Zhang, Li. 2008. "Private Homes, Distinct Lifestyles: Performing a New Middle Class." In *Privatizing China: Socialism from afar*, edited by Li Zhang and Aihwa Ong, 23-40. Ithaca, N.Y.: University of Cornell Press.
  - Notar, Beth E. 2012. "'Coming Out' to 'Hit the Road': Temporal, Spatial and Affective Mobilities of Taxi Drivers and Day Trippers in Kunming, China." *City & Society* 24 (3):281-301.
- **Term paper due by 5pm on April 26, 2021. Please submit the e-copy with signed Veriguide receipt to the Blackboard.**