Philosophies of the City
Columbia University GSAPP
Architecture A6779
Spring 2017

Tues 11am-1pm
300S Buell Hall

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Office hours: Tues 3pm-5pm
Buell Center, 3rd fl. Buell Hall

DRAFT SYLLABUS

This seminar reads key theoretical texts from the late nineteenth century to the present that address the city and urbanization as objects of critical, philosophical reflection. An important contribution to such thought was made by a variety of German thinkers concerned with the modern metropolis. The seminar begins there and follows the problem forward, to the present, with a particular focus on the interactions of capital and culture, and to the social relations of urbanization, technological development, decolonization, and financialization, including the role of architecture and urbanism therein. The aim is not a philosophical metalanguage but rather, the elaboration of a critical, theoretical discourse. Special attention will be paid to the constitutive role of buildings, space, and infrastructures within this discourse.

Students are expected to participate in class discussion, present at least one reading to the class, and write a research paper on a subject related to at least one set of readings, the subject matter of which is to be determined in individual meetings during office hours.

All required readings are available on Courseworks, except as follows:
Required—are available at Bookculture

** On reserve in Avery Library

Students with reading abilities in languages other than English are encouraged to read translated texts in the original language, when possible.

**Readings**

Week 1: Introduction: Capital and the Housing Question

1/17


Also available here:

https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1872/housing-question/ (Links to an external site.)

And here:

https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_The_Housing_Question.pdf (Links to an external site.)

*Recommended*


http://buellcenter.org/research-programs/house-housing/art-inequality-architecture-housing-and-real-estate-%E2%80%94-provisional-re/

Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin. Wohnungsfrage (The Housing Question): exhibition, publication series, academy


Week 2: The Philosophy of Money

1/24


*Recommended*


Week 3: The “Spirit” of the Metropolis

1/31


Recommended


Week 4: Passages

2/7


Recommended


Week 5: Masses and Publics

2/14


Week 6: Urban Ideologies

2/21


*Recommended*


Week 7: Space

2/28


*Recommended*


Week 8: Worlds

3/7


Recommended

“Johannesburg—The Elusive Metropolis,” a special issue of *Public Culture* edited by Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttal, *Public Culture* 16, no. 3 (Fall 2004).

Michael Watts, “Baudelaire over Berea, Simmel over Sandton?,” *Public Culture* 17, no. 1 (Winter 2005), 181, 184. Watts is replying to the essays collected in “Johannesburg—The Elusive Metropolis,” a special issue of *Public Culture* edited by Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttal, *Public Culture* 16, no. 3 (Fall 2004).


Spring Break
3/14

Week 9: Violence
3/21


Week 10: Heterotopologies
3/28


*Recommended*


Week 11: Apparatuses and the Commons

4/4


*Recommended*


http://search.proquest.com/docview/214344086/fulltext/13BD1F5F9B343D088/1?accountid=10226 (Links to an external site.)


Week 12: Visibility and Enclosure

4/11


**Recommended**


Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Megacity,” *Grey Room* 01 (Fall 2000), 8-23.
Week 13: Neoliberalism

4/18


Recommended


Final papers due

5/6 (by 5pm, PDF by Courseworks Dropbox)