

Hudita Mustafa  
Anthropology 385  
Global Cities, Local Futures  
Spring 2002

### I. Course summary

Global Cities, Local Futures (ANT 385) examines the relationship between urban and global processes. Through historical and anthropological case studies it demonstrates that the recently emerged paradigm of global cities as strategic, interconnected command centers of global (finance) capital is inadequate. Instead, the course builds through case studies, fieldtrips and creative and analytical projects an appreciation for the way that colonialism, underdevelopment and more recent global processes shape urbanism and urban networks. That is, New York may be networked with London and Tokyo through certain processes of investment, management and culture and with Mexico City or Dakar in other also important ways such as through migrant labor, immigration or popular culture. Fieldtrips, projects and experientially based learning in their own daily environments and the city of Atlanta enable students to situate themselves in these processes.

### II. Proposed Revisions, Spring 2002

I proposed to add readings to the introduction on the global impact and dissemination of environmental processes and problems. I also intended to add a module on air and water pollution and case studies of local struggles over these.

### II. Actual Revisions, Summer 2002

1) For the introductory weeks, I have added readings on problems of (non-) sustainability of urban environments from David Clark and the journal, *Environment and Urbanization*. I have also added a woods walk to the exercises of sociospatial exploration in city streets that I had previously assigned. I expect through encounter with a (more) 'natural' environment they will think more clearly about what building / transforming that environment does.

2) I have revised the discussion of Dakar's urban popular culture to include readings on a spontaneous movement of urban youth during the 1990s. At this time, the city's sanitation services collapsed and youth mobilized to collect garbage, wash streets, educate the residents and paint wall murals. The multifaceted nature of the movement should be of interest to anthropology students. The case shows how world bank economic reform has multiple, immediate and unpredictable effects and how grass roots initiatives, even if fragile, have responded to restructuring.

3) I have changed the final project from a paper on globalization in Atlanta to a design project, collectively researched and done, with individual papers as supplements to small group projects. I will ask small teams to design a recreational, community center in an immigrant neighborhood of Atlanta, perhaps Clarkston. This project challenges them to

think about the multicultural nature of the city, unmet needs for public and green space, the way that space impacts upon social interaction and the way that transforming through building need not destroy the environment.

### III. Reflections

I found the interdisciplinary nature of the workshop very exciting and would enjoy more humanistic commentary on the issues (the relationship of design, sensory perception on sociospatial relations) as well as more international case studies and case studies of actual policy/ political struggles.

The workshop made me think more abstractly about space and the way that we experience it in cities, especially about the relationship between destructive transformation and sustainable, or even commemorative, transformations of natural environments in the context of human settlement. It also made me think about the importance of experiential learning and the need, which I already began to work with last fall, to get out into the city and walk, look, etc. For this reason, I have instituted a final creative design and writing project with a fieldtrip element.

### IV. References

The City Reader      ed. LeGates and Stout  
The City Cultures Reader      ed. Borden, Hall and Miles  
America's Global Cities      Janet Abu-Lughod  
Cities in a World Economy      Saskia Sassen  
Cities and Citizenship      James Holston

Films see esp. Canal Street; Central Station; Reinventing the City: New York and Los Angeles; Bombay, Our City

David Satterthwaite, director of the Human Settlements program at the International Institute for Environment and Development in London, is a leading researcher, author and editor in the fields of urban and environmental issues. He has authored, edited and co-authored numerous works. Including:

Environmental problems in an urbanizing world: finding solutions in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Hardoy, Jorge Enrique, Diana Mittlin and David Satterthwaite  
He is also the editor of a journal to which I have asked the library to subscribe:

Environment and Urbanization.

The journal is international in coverage and its authors are also international in their institutional locations and nationalities. Articles can be printed off the web once our subscription gets going.

website for IIED human settlements program: <http://www.iied.org/human/index.html>