

**THE CITY & WHAT IT IS NOT:** Design in a milieu of *othering*  
ARCHA6830, Fall 2018, Friday 9-11 AM

Dilip da Cunha

Designing the city requires knowing not only what it is, but also what it claims not to be. This is because its negations—country, nature, wildness, to name the most prominent—are not simple exclusions. They are ‘inclusions beyond the margins’ defined in the process of clarifying the city as an object of design. These ‘marginalized inclusions’ or ‘others’ eventually find a voice in the city. It is the way the city has evolved, namely, by growing deep roots beyond its margins in a process of ‘othering’ that has ensured its own survival and facilitated its remarkable spread and complex identity. Understanding this process as the way of the city makes designing it a particularly challenging task, requiring as much intervention beyond its margins as within. It also requires foreseeing the city’s next ‘other’.

This seminar class will look at six ‘others’ that have eventually found a voice in the city primarily through design discourse: *flows, country, space, nature, difference, and wetness*. Each has had a profound impact on the experience, infrastructure, argument, imaging, and design of the city. We will cover each of these ‘others’ in two sessions. The first will look at how the city creates an ‘other’; the second will see how it absorbs, morphs, and even becomes the other.

**Week 1: Introduction: The city and the ‘others’ it grows from**

**I. Flows and the city’s bid to be settled**

Week 2: the alluvial roots of the city and the river

Week 3: settling flows: nomadic city, city of flows, . . .

**II. Country and the city’s bid to be whole**

Week 4: the urban roots of the city and nature

Week 5: cultivating country: the garden city, suburbs, edge city, . . .

**III. Space and the city’s bid to be articulate**

Week 6: the geometric roots of the city and the organic

Week 7: urbanizing space: informal city, planetary urbanism, . . .

**IV. Nature and the city’s bid to be ecological**

Week 8: the ecological roots of the city and the system

Week 9: including nature: eco city, new urbanism, landscape urbanism, . . .

**V. Difference and the city’s bid to be universal**

Week 10: the civilizational roots of the city and empire

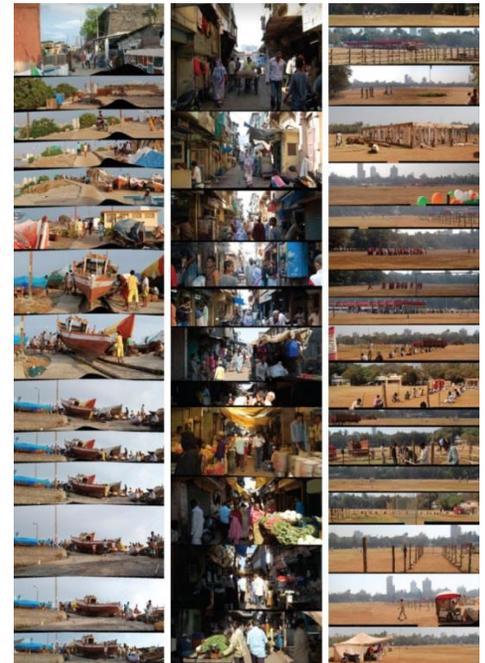
Week 11: civilizing difference: postcolonial city, city of difference, . . .

**VI. Wetness and the city’s bid to be dry**

Week 12: the landcentric roots of the city and water

Week 13: accommodating wetness: soak, hold, seep, grow, transpire

**Week 14 Conclusion: Othering and Design**



**Assignments**

**1. Project (60% grade)**

Students will investigate a city in the context of the river it is on and the watershed it is in. (A list of cities/ivers will be provided) They will construct a ‘plot’ that draws out the design language of this context. A plot uses images (maps, notations, photo-works), words, and numbers strategically. Unlike a chart where the meaning of the whole precedes or dictates the layout of the parts, a plot is emergent, open to ‘thickening’, ‘re-contextualizing’, and a multiplicity of readings. Students will share their work-in-progress with the class on a regular basis. 45 mins to an hour will be set aside every two weeks for project discussions.

**2. Paper (25% grade)**

Students are required to write a 5-7-page critical paper on a topic from the class readings (to be discussed).

**3. Class Participation (15% grade)**

Students are required to do the readings and participate in class discussions.

## READINGS

*Week 1: Introduction: The city and the 'others' it grows from*

### I. Flows and the city's bid to be settled

*Week 2: the alluvial roots of the city and the river*

Lecture: critical inquiry and the phenomenon

Gordon Childe, "The Urban Revolution," in *The Town Planning Review*, 21:1, April 1950, 3-17

T. S. McMillin, "What do Rivers Mean?" in *The Meaning of Rivers: Flow and Reflection in American Literature* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2011), xi-xviii

Dilip da Cunha, "River Literacy" and "Ocean of Rain," *The Invention of Rivers: Alexander's Eye and Ganga's Descent* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 1-20, 205-224

Suggested reading

Wyman H. Herendeen, *From Landscape to Literature: The River and the Myth of Geography* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1986)

Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Aubrey de Sélincourt (London: Penguin, 2003)

Lewis Mumford, *City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformation, and Its Prospects* (Mariner Books, 1968)

*Week 3: settling flows: nomadic city, city of flows, . . .*

Thaisa Way, "River Cities, City Rivers," *Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on Landscape*, Vol. 39, 2018, 1-12

David Pinder, "Nomadic Cities," Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (eds.), *The New Blackwell Companion to the City* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 221-234

Alexandra Boutros and Will Straw, "Introduction" and Jenifer Gabrys, "Telepathically Urban," in Alexandra Boutros and Will Straw (eds.), *Circulation and the City: Essays on Urban Culture* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill and Queen's University Press, 2010), 1-20, 48-63

Suggested reading

Stephane Castonguay and Mathew Evenden (eds.), *Urban Rivers: Remaking Rivers, Cities, and Space in Europe and North America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012)

Michael Weinstock, *System City: Infrastructure and the Space of Flows* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2013)

Manuel Castells, "The Space of Flows," in *The Rise of the Network Society* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010)

### II. Country and the city's bid to be whole

*Week 4: the urban roots of the city and nature*

Lecture: geographic inquiry and the view from above

Raymond Williams, "Cities and Countries," and Appendix in *Country and City* (Oxford University Press, 1975), 289-307

John Dixon Hunt, "What on Earth is a Garden," "The Idea of Garden and Three Natures," *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 14-31, 32-75

Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *The American Journal of Sociology* 44:1 (July 1938), 1-24

Suggested reading

Peter Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century* (Wiley Blackwell, 2014)

William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1991)

*Week 5: cultivating country: the garden city, suburbs, edge city, . . .*

Stephen Ward, "The Garden City Introduced," Denis Hardy, "The Garden City Campaign: An Overview," in Stephen Ward (ed.), *The Garden City: Past, Present and Future* (London: Spon Press, 1992), 1-27, 187-209  
M.K. Gandhi, *Village Swaraj* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1962), 22-42

Suggested reading

Ebenezer Howard, 1946 (1902), "Author's Introduction," "The Town-Country Magnet," "A Unique Combination of Proposals," "Social Cities," *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd)  
Robert A. M. Stern, David Fishman, and Jacob Tilove, *Paradise Planned: The Garden Suburb and the Modern City* (Monacelli Press, 2013)  
Joel Garreau, *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier* (Anchor Books, 1992)

### III. Space and the city's bid to be articulate

*Week 6: the geometric roots of the city and the organism*

Lecture: dialectical inquiry and the other

Spiro Kostof, "Introduction," and "Organic Patterns," *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History* (New York: Bulfinch Press, 1991), 9-93  
Sergio Lopez-Pineiro, "The Whiteout Effect," in *A Glossary of Urban Voids* (manuscript for publication)  
Mike Davis, "Prevalence of Slums," "Hausmann in the Tropics," "Slum Ecology," *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006), 20-49, 95-120, 121-150

Suggested reading

Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), 46-115  
Edmund Bacon, *Design of Cities* (New York: Penguin Books, 1974)  
William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989)

*Week 7: urbanizing space: informal city, planetary urbanism, . . .*

Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, "Utopia: Decline and Fall?" "Crisis of the Object: Predicament of Texture," and "Collision City and the Politics of Bricolage," *Collage City and the Reconquest of Time*, *Collage City* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1978), 9-31, 50-85, 86-118, 119-149  
Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 91-110  
Neil Brenner, "Planetary Urbanization," "Urban Revolution?" *Critique of Urbanization: Selected Essays* (Basel: Birkhauser, 2017), 186-191, 192-211

Suggested reading

Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003)  
Simon Sadler, *The Situationist City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998)  
Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961)

### IV. Nature and the city's bid to be ecological

*Week 8: the ecological roots of the city and the system*

Lecture: environmental inquiry and wilderness/ wildness

Patrick Geddes, 1925, "Cities and the Soils They Grow From," "The Valley Plan of Civilization," "The Valley in the Town," *Survey* 54.  
Kostas Vlassopoulos, *Unthinking the Greek Polis: Ancient Greek History Beyond Eurocentrism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 55-63, 156-189  
Arjen Mulder, "TransUrbanism," Andreas Ruby, "Transgressing Urbanism," and Mark Wigley, "Resisting the City," in *TransUrbanism* (Rotterdam: V2 Publishing, 2002).

Suggested reading

Melvin M. Webber, "The Post-City Age," *Deadalus*, 1968

Tai-Chee Wong and Belinda Yuen, "Understanding the Origins and Evolution of Eco-city Development: An Introduction," in *Eco-city Planning: Policies, Practice and Design* (Springer, 2011), 1-16

*Week 9: including nature: eco-city, new urbanism, landscape urbanism. . .*

Ian McHarg, "The World is a Capsule," "The Naturalists," "Process and Form," "Prospect," *Design with Nature* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1992), 95-101, 117-125, 163-185, 196-197

S.T.A. Pickett, M.L. Cadenasso, and Brian McGrath, "Ecology of the City as a Bridge to Urban Design," *Resilience in Ecology and Urban Design: Linking Theory and Practice for Sustainable Cities* (Springer, 2013), 7-28

James Corner, "Terra Fluxus," and Charles Waldheim, "Landscape as urbanism," in *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, ed. Charles Waldheim ((Princeton Architectural Press, 2006), 23-33, 37-53

Emily Talen (ed.), *Charter of the New Urbanism: Congress for the New Urbanism* (New York: McGraw Hill Education, 2013), 26-55

Suggested reading

Emily Talen (ed.), *Charter of the New Urbanism: Congress for the New Urbanism* (New York: McGraw Hill Education, 2013)

William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995).

Graham Shane, *Recombinant Urbanism: Conceptual Modelling in Architecture, Urban Design, and City Theory* (Academy Press, 2005)

## V. Difference and the city's bid to be universal

*Week 10: the civilizational roots of the city and empire*

Lecture: urban inquiry and the maidan/void // temporal inquiry and notation

Joel Kotkin, "Europe's Urban Renaissance," "Cities of Mammon," "The Postcolonial Dilemma," "The Urban Future," *The City: A Global History* (New York: The Modern Library, 2005), 65-82, 126-136, 147-160

Brett Bowden, "The Ideal of Civilization: Its Origins, Meanings, and Implication," and "The Burden of Civilization and the 'Art and Science of Colonization'" *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 23-46, 129-158.

Suggested reading

Ania Loomba, *Colonialism / Postcolonialism* (New York: Routledge, 2005)

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978)

Paul Ricoeur, "Universal Civilization and National Cultures," *History and Truth* (Northwestern University Press, 1965)

*Week 11: civilizing difference: postcolonial city, city of difference. . .*

Anthony King, *Writing the Global City: Globalization, postcolonialism, and the urban* (London: Routledge, 2016), 66-74, 117-128

Rashmi Varma, "A Postcolonial Itinerary," in *The Postcolonial City and its Subjects: London, Nairobi, Bombay* (Routledge, 2012), 1-35

Kurt Iverson, Ruth Fincher, "'Just Diversity' in the City of Difference," *The New Blackwell Companion to the City* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 407-418

Suggested readings

Henri Lefebvre, "The right to the city," in Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (eds.), *Writings on Cities* (Cambridge MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996)

Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 1996), 27-47

Tim Edensor and Mark Jayne (eds.), *Urban Theory Beyond the West: A World of Cities* (London: Routledge, 2012)

Liora Bigon and Yossi Katz, *Garden Cities and Colonial Planning: Transnationality and Urban Ideas in Africa and Palestine* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014)

## **VI. Wetness and the city's bid to be dry**

*Week 12: the landcentric roots of the city and water*

Lecture: hydrological inquiry and wetness

Mathew Gandy, *The Fabric of Space: Water, Modernity, and the Urban Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014), 1-25

Jamie Linton, "Fixing the Flow," *What is Water: A History of a Modern Abstraction* (UBC Press, 2010), 3-23

Maria Kaika, "The Urbanization of Nature," in *City of Flows: Modernity, Nature, and the City* (Routledge, 2006), 11-26

Suggested

Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957)

Sandra Postel and Brian Richter, *Rivers for Life: Managing Water for People and Nature* (Washington DC: Island, 2003), 2, 199, 204.

*Week 13: accommodating wetness: soak, hold, seep, grow, transpire*

Ivan Illich, *H<sub>2</sub>O and the Waters of Forgetfulness: Reflections on the Historicity of Stuff* (Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, 1985)

Dilip da Cunha, "River Colonialism," *The Invention of Rivers: Alexander's Eye and Ganga's Descent* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 273-294

**Week 14: Conclusion: Othering and Design**