Course Syllabus

Slums, as considered by United Nations' Millennium Development Goals, are the physical manifestation of urban problems related to poverty and/or inequality. Yet, little effort has been placed on the historical sequence of urban planning programs and design practices that emerged in the 19th Century and have since evolved in methods and practices to address the challenges of informality. This lack of emphasis in historical precedents – in their success and failures – has weakened the consistency of some contemporary urban programs, which are often viewed as epitomes of the Modernist Project's aim to House the Masses. Furthermore, the very controversies around the characterization of slums and informal settlements question how spatial practices can address social problems.

This seminar will portray a historical sequence of urban planning and design programs, and architectural projects developed at precarious settlements. Policies and programs include eviction laws; Poor Laws in (Ireland and UK); Housing Acts (US), Social Housing (Brazil, Germany, Mexico, and Spain); Land titling (Latin America); Incremental Housing (Peru and Chile); urban upgrading (Brazil, India, Indonesia, Kenya and Venezuela); and building rehabilitation (Spain, Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Canada.) The seminar will propose the aforementioned sequence as suitable to encompass the physical and social nature of informal settlements. Also, it will link the history of urban planning with real estate, politics, and migration events to question the characterization of definitions such as "informality," "housing deficit," "sub-standard living," or "slums." The seminar aims to build a thread of historical precedents that link urban informality with mainstream urban planning and design history; and seeks defining the role of spatial strategies in proposing accurate solutions to urban poverty and inequality.

Rationale

This seminar departs from the epistemological premise that urban projects and programs responding to informality are arguments structured similarly to research projects, in the sequence:

Premises   Existing Urban Problem

Hypothesis   Urban Program Design and Implementation

Thesis   Program Assessment

This characterization is intended to allow students not only to learn about a particular policy or design proposal but most importantly, to problematize the epistemological structure of urban programs. The analysis of cases during the semester will go beyond the soft information that has been published, to face the hard facts that reveal structural conditions of those urban problems and programs - and which that are not fully evident in self-sponsored publications.

Sessions

I Defining Urban Problems

1 Introduction

In this class the instructor will present the outline of the seminar, and will discuss about its overall theoretical framework.

2 The Problem of Demarcation

"What are slums?" remains a controversial and disputed question. During this session we will review the different characterizations of this concept, and the assumptions that these terms carry.

<u>II Slums</u>

3 The Great Transformation: from the English *Poor Laws* to the US *Housing Reform*

This class will explain the origins of slums in 19th century Great Britain, linking the rural enclosure laws with the urban overcrowding of its industrial cities. It will also look at two early design-related solutions to respond to slums: model houses (in the UK) and tenements (in the US). It will explore two conceptual frameworks for understanding slums as physical and social issues: the one situating its cause as poverty, and another situating it in inequality.

4 Addressing Slums' Urban Scale: Urban Renewal Programs in the UK & US

This session will situate the main slum clearance strategies produced during the first half of the 20th century in the US and the UK. It will also look at other design and planning strategies existing at that time: neighborhood rehabilitation, building renovation and slum prevention as alternative options to clearance. Finally, we will look at the dispute between the public and private agencies to take control over the debate on slums.

5 The Paradox of Squatting and Segregation at Model Housing Developments

US federalized slum clearance policies during the 1940s linked eviction and redevelopment, and lead to fully subsidized social housing developments that carry with the figure of the Master Plan. During this session we will overview some of the most significant projects of this period, as well as some drawbacks that lead to abandonment and squatting of these formally built settlements.

<u>III Squatting</u>

6 Shelter in an Urbanizing World: Housing and Habitat from the CIAM to the UN

This class will discuss the shift in problems, strategies, and professional models that underwent at the aftermath of the WWII, when the problem of human settlements expanded from the developed to the developing world. At this time, the dispute between re-discovered self-help housing by John Turner, and the modernist architecture and planning of the CIAM conferences, lead the meetings and negotiations that lead to the creation of United Nations Habitat in 1976.

7 The Implementation of the *Enabling Strategies*

In the early 1970s the World Bank launched the "sites and services" program, a financing product to urbanize self-help like, poor areas at developing countries. In our class we will look at some instances of this program in Indonesia and India, and will discuss about the consequences of internationalizing, in political and economic terms, the discussions and proposals about shelter.

8 The Third Sectors: From Housing Provision to the Right to the City

Particularly since the HABITAT I conference, pro-shelter international organizations have spread to respond to housing and humanitarian crisis, yet it is unclear their overarching significance to resolve some of the root causes of slums beyond the provision of charitable support. In contrast, other grassroots and international institutions have advocated for the right to the city and the enactment of participatory, place-making processes. In class we will look at these two modes of interpreting citizenship and in their outcomes, and will analyze the disjunction between different forms of understanding the role of the "Third Sector" in regards to slums and squatter settlements.

9 Land Titling and Regularization

Despite public and third-sector efforts, the increasing growth of informal settlements lead in the late 1970s to the popularization of strategies that legalize and incorporate slum dwellers into formal city fabrics. In this class we will look at the controversial proposal made by Hernando de Soto, and will look at other examples of financial and legal action that attempt to integrate formal and informal city fabrics.

10 Physical Upgrading

Starting in the late 1970s, slum upgrading programs with a strong physical, visible component, spread from Taiwan to Brazil to Colombia, and reflect the relevance of the urban design physical approach to city making. In class we will look at some of these projects, and analyze their outcomes and assumptions. We will also discuss the concept and implementation of recent "integral projects" developed worldwide.

11 The Sustainable Turn

Slums and their consequent reactions have not fully explored the incidence of sustainability in urban policy making and design standards. In this session we will look at some perspectives analyzing the environmental consequences of formal urbanization, and the controversies and potentials of informal settlements vis-à-vis sustainable urban development.

13 The representation of the social

The last class of the semester will deepen on the complexities of the production of design and planning knowledge. The topics discussed will include the aesthetics of poverty in mass media, and the embedding of uncharted rhetoric into visual argumentation.

Class Paper

During the semester you will evaluate if and how implemented urban programs at slums respond to the social and physical urban problems that they address. To do so, you will first need to identify the set of urban problems that are stated and presumed in the program of study, to then evaluate how the design provides a solution to that problem.

The final outcome of this evaluation will be a paper, and encompasses the following deliverables:

A Bibliography Background Research

This list of bibliography that is related to your case study is an important base for the development of your research paper during the rest of the semester. It will be expected that you search for bibliography not only online, but also through Columbia University libraries. After your submission, the instructor will suggest additional sources of information or, if sources are too scarce, adapting your paper topic to them.

B Short Class Presentations (2)

During the semester you will make two short presentations (7') related to your case study:

- At the first one you will conceptualize the urban problem that has been declared or presumed at your case study
- At the second one you will describe one concrete outcome that the urban program under study uses as a solution.

The presentations are an effort of synthesis that require to sharply describe, through words and visuals, the evidences to:

WHAT is the problem/solution that you identify

WHEN has the problem/solution occurred

WHERE has the problem/solution occurred

HOW is the problem/solution being characterized

WHO suffers/solves the problems

WHY has the problem/response occurred

C Midterm Progress Report

This document is an outline of the argument that you are preparing for your final paper. It should schematically describe and analyze the problems and solutions embedded in your case study. Additionally, your report should outline a tentative assessment of the program, vis-à-vis the problem identified.

While there is no predetermined length established for your midterm progress report, it will need to include graphic evidence (photos, plans, sections, renderings, tables, diagrams, etc) of the program that you are evaluating. In this sense it is important that the relevance of the image is explicated in the text, and that the size that the size and quality of images allow easily understanding its relevant components.

D Final Paper

Your final paper will use your research findings to formulate your own assessment of an urban program dealing with slums, and provide suggestions for its improvement. Final papers should be at least 3000 words. (Arial 11pt, line spacing 1.5) and must include illustrations (diagrams, drawings, photos, charts, texts, tables) at the right size and quality; they should be sent by email.

Your paper will be evaluated based on the use of a clear structure; a convincing argument with warranted conclusions; and correct and appropriate referencing. For additional information and suggestions about your paper and urban programs to choose, please read the "Evaluation Layout" and "Case Studies" below; and feel free to ask me.

Participation

In addition to paper requirements, participation in class discussions will be evaluated. Indeed, class discussions are the base of our seminar.

E Readings

Each Thursday by 8pm before class, students will upload to Canvas at least one question or comment addressing the discussion created by assigned readings. The student(s) leading that week's class discussion will review the comments made by their peers and use them, along with class readings, as the basis for class discussion; this will include responding to questions posted on Courseworks and adding new questions raised by the comments. To upload questions and comments, please go to the "Discussion Board" label in

Courseworks. There, click "Start a New Conversation" or "Reply to Initial Message" on the week label on discussion.

F Punctuality

Please arrive sharp in time to class. Punctuality is not just required to cover all instructional materials, but also shows consideration to professor and peers.

G Office Hours

Students are encouraged to attend office hours at least twice during the semester to discuss the midterm progress report and the final paper. These one-to-one sessions intend to help you structuring your argument, finding the right bibliography, and commenting your midterm report progress.

Grading

20% Participation, Readings & Punctuality

20% Class presentations (2)

20% Bibliographical Research + Midterm Progress Report

40% Final Research Paper

Schedule

Each session will be divided in three or four parts:

30' Instructor introduces the topic of the class

20-40' Students present their ongoing research (7' each)

40' Students and instructor lead a group discussion about the readings assigned for class, with Q&A

During the semester, we will also have:

- Two guest speakers presenting in class
- Two to three guest speakers presenting during the lunch break. In the first and second week of the semester we will discuss the class availability to attend these meetings.

Case Studies (Suggested, list not comprehensive)

Workhouses, the Building Reform and Slum Clearance 1800s

Parsontown workhouse

The Hull House (working house), Chicago

Dumbbell Housing tenement competition

New York State Tenement House Act of 1901

Clearance Plan, Kowloon City, Hong-Kong, 1990s

Slum Clearance and Urban Renewal, 1930s-1960s

First Houses, NYCHA, 1930s

Harlem River Houses

The Williamsburg Houses, Brooklyn

Queensbridge Houses, NYC

Neighborhood Gardens, St. Louis, 1950s

Pruitt-Igoe Housing Development, St. Louis

Cabrini-Green Housing Project, Chicago

The Magnolia Projects, St. Louis

Robert Taylor Homes, Chicago

Self-Help and Mutual-Help

Architecture for Humanity early projects

UN PREVI Competition, Lima

UN Tondo Competition, Philippines

Kampung Improvement Programme (KIP I, II, and III), Indonesia

Housing Micro-Loans, various locations

World Bank Site and Services Programs

Slum and Urban Upgrading

Slum Network in Indore, India, 1980s

Favela Bairro & Morar Carioca Programs, Rio de Janeiro.

Demetre Anastassaskis, Housing in Nova Maré, Rio de Janeiro

Urbanização de Favelas, São Paulo

Edson Elito, Housing Block in Paraisópolis, São Paulo

Praca Cantao, Favela Painting Project, Rio de Janeiro

Urban Think-Tank: Metro Cable in Caracas

Kibera-Soweto pilot project, Kenyan Slum Upgrading Programme

Metrocable Urban Think-Tank, Caracas

Giancarlo Mazzanti: Biblioteca Parque España, Medellin

Renovation and other Programs

Programa Novas Alternativas (Brazil-Present)

Slum redevelopment project & Recycling Program (Dharavi), 2000s

Programa Mananciais (São Paulo)

Program Renova Centro (São Paulo)

Micasa, Progressive VOnstruction of Low-Income families, Peru

Incremental Project in Iquique, Elemental, Chile

Minha casa, Minha vida Mass Housing Program, Brazil

UPP's unidades policiais de pacificacao, Brazil

Mapping and upgrading process in Mathare, Nairobi

INFONAVIT Mass Mexican Housing

Carriere Centrale housing development, Casablanca

Course Summary: