

University of Roehampton  
International Summer School

Department of Social Sciences

Module Title: Londonopolis – exploring the global city

Module Code: SOC020N216H

**Module Rationale:**

This module will combine contemporary theories and debates on the condition of urban life in a global city with hands-on ethnographic, street level perspective experienced and then conceptualized by students. The idea is to continuously relate theories from urban anthropology, sociology and urban studies with dynamic reality 'out-there' directly confronted by students. The aim of the module is to generate discussions on the interplay between culture and structure, economy and society, urban landscape and human behaviour using phenomena, data, images, observations gathered by students during fieldtrips which are the integral part of the teaching tool.

The methodological assumption behind the module is strictly anthropological - that students need to be 'immersed' in various aspects of London life, see things with their own eyes, analyse and critically evaluate their own assumptions against the backdrop of chaos and order of urban life in London.

This means that students should not expect a traditional, lecture-based teaching format, but be prepared to critically engage with the urban reality experienced by themselves as well as their peers on the module. In this course the source of inspiration would equally be the classic readings of sociologists and anthropologists as well as observations on the street, a random conversation with a stranger on a bus or a chat with a street-food seller in Southall.

London is undoubtedly one of the global cities that offer a unique experience of social diversity. For many international students life in London is part of their education trajectory *per se* and this module aims at deepening this assumption through a study exploring various aspects and trends in contemporary global city. The proposed structure of the module will be divided between lectures/seminars/ethnographic debriefing sessions and field trips. Class sessions will be divided into a taught part and an ethnographic debriefing session where notes, pictures, impressions from fieldtrip will be discussed and analysed.

**Learning outcomes:**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- 1) be familiar with various aspects of contemporary social life in London beyond mere visitor's gaze
- 2) critically reflect on various theoretical debates within urban studies using their own experience of living in London
- 3) reflect on various methodological, ethical and political aspects of urban ethnography
- 4) apply their critical reflections in their own interpretations of social life of London
- 5) familiarize themselves with various qualitative methods of urban research like interviews, visual ethnography, participant observation, discourse analysis, auto-ethnography
- 6) Be aware of effective writing strategies

### Syllabus and main themes of the module

- Introduction to urban theory and research methods
- Art and the city
- City, capitalism and urban inequalities
- Social resistance and urban politics
- Super-diversity, migration and the city

**Teaching and learning methods:** Lecture, debriefing seminar and fieldtrips

**Assessment:** Ethnographic essay from fieldtrip/s

### Timetable

(please note that some details related to fieldtrips may change)

All class sessions will run 9am – 1pm

#### Day 1

**Class session. Introduction to and description of the module; assessment; fieldtrips details, methods of data gathering. Introduction into the 1<sup>st</sup> session – London’s diversity.**

### Required general reading:

- L. Wirth “Urbanism as a way of life”. [in]: *The City Reader*, edited by R. LeGates, F. Stout; Routledge
- L. Mamford “What is a City”. [in]: *The City Reader*, edited by R. LeGates, F. Stout; Routledge
- Jane Jacobs “The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety” in: *The City Reader*, edited by R. LeGates, F. Stout; Routledge 1996
- Gupta, Akhil James. Ferguson 1997. Culture, Power, Place. Ethnography at the End of an Era. [in:] *Culture, Power, Place, Explorations in Critical Anthropology*, red. Gupta A., J. Ferguson, Durham Press
- J. Eade. 1997. *Living the Global City. Globalisation as a Local Process*. Routledge

### Required fieldtrip reading:

- S. Vertovec. 2007. New Complexities of Cohesion in Britain. Superdiversity, Transnationalism and Civil Integration. Available at: [http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/files/Publications/Reports/Vertovec%20-%20new\\_complexities\\_of\\_cohesion\\_in\\_britain.pdf](http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/files/Publications/Reports/Vertovec%20-%20new_complexities_of_cohesion_in_britain.pdf)
- S. Huntington. 1993. ‘The clash of civilizations?’, full text available at: <http://www.polsci.wvu.edu/faculty/hauser/PS103/Readings/HuntingtonClashOfCivilizationsForAffSummer93.pdf>

- N. Glick Schiller, A. Caglar, T. C. Guldbrandsen. 2006 “Beyond the ethnic lens: Locality, globality, and born-again incorporation”; *American Ethnologist* Vol. 33, No. 4, pp. 612–633
- G. Baumann. 1996. *Contesting culture: discourses of identity in multi-ethnic London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Patrick Sturgis, Ian Brunton-Smith, Jouni Kuha & Jonathan Jackson (2014) Ethnic diversity, segregation and the social cohesion of neighbourhoods in London, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37:8, 1286-1309, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2013.831932

**Day 2**

**First fieldtrip (4/5 hours)**

**Southall – visit to West London suburb, with large number of South Asian population, visit to several places of worship, local bazaar, curry restaurant etc.**

**Day 3**

**Class session – debriefing session and feedback from tutor; discussion over notes/photos/data. Introduction to second fieldtrip**

**Required Reading:**

- S. Sassen. 1999. “The Global City”. [in]: *Readings in Urban Theory*; edited by Susan S. Fainstein and Scott Campbell; Blackwell
- <http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/joris-luyendijk> (this is a blog of a social scientist looking at people employed in London financial sector)
- Tosi A. 2007. Homelessness and the control of public space: Criminalizing the poor?, *European Journal of Homelessness* 1: 224-36 (available on Moodle)
- M. Garapich. 2011. “It’s a jungle out there. You need to stick together”: Anti-institutionalism, Alcohol and Performed Masculinities among Polish Homeless Men in London “*Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* Vol. 7, No. 3, Autumn. (available on Moodle)

**Day 4**

**Second fieldtrip – Global city – inequalities and capitalism (4/5 hours – 1pm-6pm)**

**Day 5**

**Class session – debriefing and feedback from tutor; discussion over notes/photos/data. Introduction to third fieldtrip**

**Required Reading:**

- C. Duncan 1995. *Civilizing Rituals – inside public art museums*. Routledge. (Introduction and chapter 1)
- N. Whybrow, 2011. *Art and the city*. Tauris&Co – e-book available at RU library

Also look at web resources related to street art and graffiti; for example:

<http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/exhibitions/streetart/>

<http://streetartlondon.co.uk/>

<http://www.ukstreetart.co.uk/>

**Day 6**

**Third fieldtrip – Art and the city (4/5 h, 5pm-9pm)**

**Day 7**

**Class session – debriefing and feedback from tutor; discussion over notes/photos/data. Introduction to fourth fieldtrip**

**Day 8**

**Class session**

**Fourth fieldtrip – social resistance and urban politics – time, tbc.**

**Day 9**

**Class session – debriefing and feedback from tutor; discussion over notes/photos/data.**

**Day 10**

**How to write a good ethnographic essay and get a first – a class session on essay writing and what is expected from you. Preparation of your essay topic/title**

**Day 11**

**Drop in session – the tutor will run a whole day session when students can come over to discuss their essay ideas on one-to-one basis**

**Day 12**

**Class session – essay ideas presentations. This is not marked but a compulsory activity aimed at helping students prepare their essay idea.**

### Further readings

- M. Savage, A. Warde 1993. *Urban Sociology, Capitalism and Modernity*. MacMillan Press
- W.G. Flanagan. 1990. *Urban Sociology. Images and Structures*. Allyn and Bacon
- A. Giddens. 1991. *Modernity and Self-Identity*. Cambridge Polity
- U. Beck. 1992. *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. Sage
- N. Coleman. 2005. *Utopias and Architecture*. Taylor&Francis
- D. Higgs. 1999. **Queer Sites : Gay Urban Histories since 1600** Routledge
- C. Heap. 2009. **Slumming : Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940.** University of Chicago Press
- J. Schneider and I. Susser (eds.) 2003. *Wounded cities: Destruction and reconstruction in a globalized world*. Oxford: Berg
- S. Hall 1993. 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', [in] P. Williams and L. Chrisman (eds.) *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory*, Hemel Hempstead, p. 392-403.
- S. Castles and M. Miller. 2006. *The Age of Migration*. Basingstoke: Macmillan
- J. Friedman, J. 1992. 'The past in the future: history and the politics of identity'. *American Anthropologist* 94:4, 837-59.
- M. Castells. 1999. "The Informational Mode of Development and the Restructuring of Capitalism" [in] *Readings in Urban Theory*; ed. by Susan S. Fainstein and Scott Campbell; Blackwell
- J. Eade. 1997. *Living the Global City. Globalisation as a Local Process*. Routledge
- G. Baumann. 1996. *Contesting culture: discourses of identity in multi-ethnic London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### Required reading on methodology

- P. Atkinson. 2007. *Handbook of ethnography*. Sage Pub.
- M. Hammersley, P. Atkinson. 2007. *Ethnography: principles in practice*. Taylor&Francis

Additional resources:

<http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/anthropology-in-practice/>

[http://www.visualanthropology.net/riviste/visualanthropology23\\_2.php](http://www.visualanthropology.net/riviste/visualanthropology23_2.php)

<http://anth2350.blogspot.com/2011/10/street-art.html>

## Module assessment

### 1. Ethnographic essay – 3000 words

#### 100% of the entire mark

This module is an exercise in urban anthropology and students are tasked with briefly ‘becoming’ anthropologists/ethnographers during fieldtrips. Ethnographic essay is a small project applying what students read to what they saw, observed, heard and made of fieldtrips. Fieldtrips are not just tours – they are the data sources for your essay. The essay needs to take one particular issue you are interested in or was struck by during fieldtrip and analyse it using relevant literature/theory. The main criteria for choosing a particular theme is its relevance to our fieldtrips and the sociological and anthropological issues discussed in class. The data for the essay can be: visual (photos) or textual (notes from a conversation, notes from your own observations, self-reflection during fieldtrip) but it is vital to include it to make your point. There are three topics of the essay to choose from. The topics are deliberately broad as you need to engage it using details observed/heard/learned during fieldtrips. These are:

1. Global centre of wealth and London poor – compare and contrast two social spaces we visited. What differences and what similarities do you see?
2. What is art for? Reflect sociologically and anthropologically on the social and cultural functions and roles the art world plays in London.
3. Multiculturalism – how does it work? Using readings for this session and your experience during fieldtrip try to answer the question whether London super-diversity is socially functional.
4. Social resistance in a global city – what is resistance and is change possible?

The work needs to present the background and relevant data concerning the issue and its analysis using appropriate literature as well as themes emerging from our de-briefing sessions. In terms of data, the essay first has to use data gathered during fieldtrips. The essay additionally can use available secondary data and previous sociological and anthropological scholarship.

The essay needs to demonstrate:

- Familiarity with theoretical concepts and debates relating to particular urban issues
- Ability to relate these concepts to real life phenomena and empirical data gathered during fieldtrip and through independent research
- Independent thinking and ability to form and express own interpretations over the issue
- Ability to express oneself in a clear and cohesive manner
- Ability to reference work properly (using Harvard)

A brief version of the essay needs to be presented in class day before the submission. Every student will have 5 minutes to present his/her work with the help of visual media. This is a required task but it is not marked.