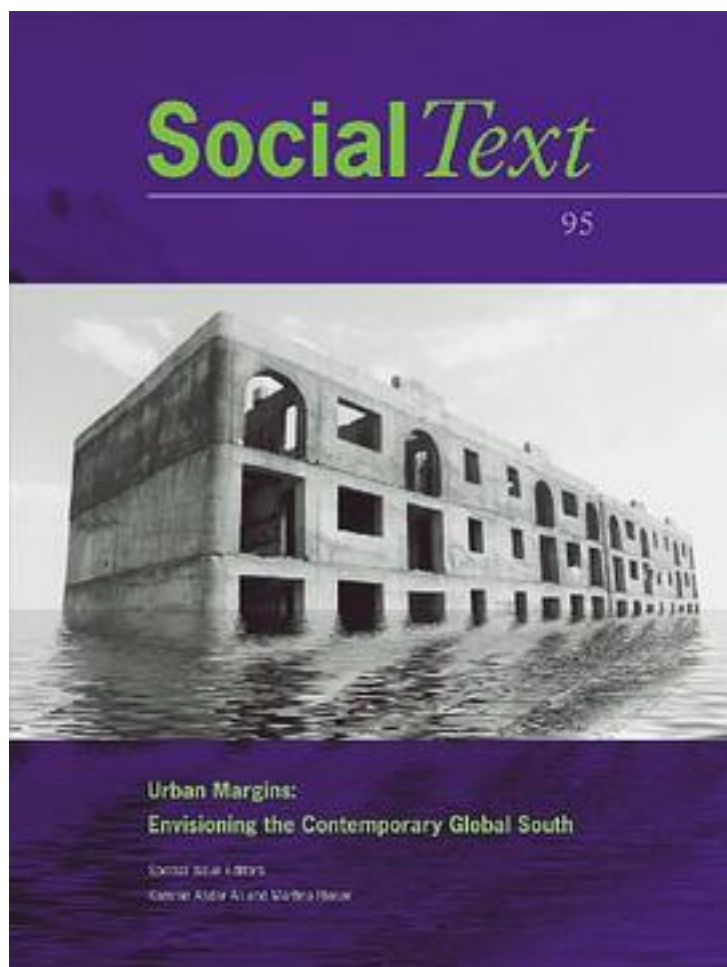


Urban Margins



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出版者:

出版时间:2008-10

装帧:

isbn:9780822366973

Urban studies of the global South have paid particular attention to megacities, such as Mumbai or Johannesburg, while more peripheral urban landscapes - including small

and medium-sized towns as well as the margins of megacities themselves - remain overlooked. Emerging from the work of the Shehr Comparative Urban Landscapes Network, an academic initiative that seeks to further a social-historical and critical understanding of contemporary cities and urban practices, this special issue of "Social Text" takes up the question of marginality in contemporary urban cartographies in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. "Urban Margins" explores the complex processes through which citizens produce and negotiate these marginalized landscapes and in turn are informed by them. Focusing on Douala in Cameroon and Dakar in Senegal, one essay discusses how the state's failure to provide for its citizens has led many to turn to informal networks and affiliations - whether kin-based, local, translocal, gendered, religious, or secular - for survival. Rendering the urban landscape of these cities in terms of these networks and the ways that they shape a citizen's interaction with the city, the essay considers the political possibilities for African cities where diverse multilingual and ethnic populations face the challenges, pitfalls, and compromises of coexistence. Examining how female migrant workers negotiate various spaces within the urban landscape of the free trade zone outside of Colombo, Sri Lanka, another essay details how the city represents a site of personal autonomy and political possibilities for both women and men. One contributor addresses the city of Ramallah in the embattled West Bank - the de facto Palestinian capital and the only cosmopolitan space within the occupied territories - to consider how the Palestinian urban middle class remains haunted by the 'unmodern' within its own history and present. Another surveys changes in the cultural significance of roads, forts, and town walls in Bahla, Oman, in the aftermath of the country's 1970 coup d'etat. The contributors include: Kamran Asdar Ali, Allen Feldman, Sandya Hewamanne, Mandana E. Limbert, Rosalind Morris, Martina Rieker, Abdou Maliq Simone, and Lisa Taraki.

作者介绍:

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