

MONIQUE NUIJTEN



My work in development studies from a perspective of political and legal anthropology, has brought me to different places in Latin America. I studied peasant communities and state-peasant relations in the west of Mexico and the Andean highlands of Peru. At a later stage I moved to the field of urban slums, slum upgrading programs and the politics of the poor in Brazil. My current research focuses on “political energy at the grassroots” with a special interest in Spain. I am interested in the variety of initiatives people develop to express their political claims and strive for a better world, often via global networks and through a combination of legal and non-legal means.

BSc: THEMES FOR THESIS

I like to supervise BSc theses on topics related to power, governmentality, governance, participation, citizenship, exclusion and marginalisation, minority groups, discrimination and racism, politics of the poor, brokerage, social movements, protest, insurgency, activism.

Concrete examples:

- The study of social movements, for instance Transition Towns, Occupy.
- Civil society initiatives in Greece, Italy and Spain as a reaction to the crisis.
- The development of 15M in Spain.
- Minority groups in the Netherlands and the role of the media.
- The role of internet and social media in organizing political protests.
- Debates around the politics of the poor.
- The struggle around urban space.
- Urban livelihoods and quality of living.
- Slums and slum-upgrading projects.

MSc: THEMES FOR RESEARCH AND THESIS

I like to supervise MSc research on issues related to new initiatives to fight for a better world, for instance artists and architects with a special philosophy about the role of art and the use of space in the fight against inequality. New civil society initiatives as a reaction to inequality, crisis, etc. in different parts of the world. The variety of political initiatives from small actions to bigger social movements. The study of everyday notions of justice, morality and politics. Political practices. The intricacies of development interventions and participatory procedures.

I especially value thesis research that pays much attention to story-telling and the views and language of situated actors.

Concrete examples:

- Cultura Negra and the construction of the margins in Recife, Brazil
- Social organisation and brokerage in Cochabamba, Bolivia
- Artistic development projects in slums.
- Break dancing by street children in Ecuador.
- The development of the PAH (movement against house evictions) in Spain.
- Dutch-Moroccan youngsters and their holidays to Morocco

DEMAND FOR MSc RESEARCH

At the moment I especially welcome the following MSc students:

- Students who have ideas for studying innovative and creative expressions of political agency at the grassroots anywhere in the world.
- Spanish-speaking students who would like to do research among activist groups in Spain.