MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN THE WORLD

Spring 2022  UN3117
Lectures:  Tues. 4:10-5:25 / Diana Center #504
Seminars:  Thurs. 4:10-5:25 / Diana Center #504 + #501, Milstein Center #113
Instructor:  Ralph Ghoche, rghoche@barnard.edu / Click here to schedule meeting
TA:  Tianyu Yang, ty2259@columbia.edu / Click here to schedule meeting
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Preceptor:  Juna Kawai-Yue, jk4141@barnard.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Modern Architecture in the World is a thematically driven course relating to architecture and urbanism across multiple geographies over the past two centuries. It examines modernity as an aesthetic imperative in architecture, the visual arts and urban culture, and as a set of cultural transformations affecting society at every level: social mores and beliefs, philosophical inquiry, scientific impulse and technological innovation.

The course presents modern architecture in relation to a wider set of global developments that have tended to be neglected from conventional accounts of its rise. Indeed, the history of modern architecture is a history of geographic conflicts and convergences, it consists of transferences, appropriations, displacements and erasures. Each class lecture is focused on a specific theme that is traced across historical and geographic boundaries in order to account for the global entanglements that characterize modern architecture. For example, fin-de-siècle metropolises like Paris, London or Brussels are explored in relation to the mutually constituted colonial cities they administered. Similarly, operative theories of the digital in architecture are considered in relation to the logic of late capitalism and globalized markets.

Not withstanding the European roots of the term, the ideas underlying the “modern” (democratic governance, rationalization, emancipation, etc.) are presented in this class with an awareness of the geographic ambiguities and pluralities leading to their emergence and with the recognition of the pivotal role that non-West actors and movements have played in defining and extending modernizing ideologies.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites
This class is open to students at all levels. There are no prerequisites for the class.

Attendance
Attendance to all course meetings is mandatory. An attendance sheet will be distributed at each meeting. Unexcused absences, late arrivals, or early departures from class may adversely affect your grade under “participation and attendance.” Three consecutive absences or four non-consecutive absences will adversely affect your final grade. Absences due to acute illness, a personal crisis (e.g. a death in the family), religious observance, or for other reasons of comparable gravity may be excused. In all such cases, students must promptly email their instructor to communicate the reason for their absence and to arrange an opportunity to review any important information they may have missed. Students who know they will miss one or more scheduled classes due to a religious holiday should contact their instructor during the first week of classes to discuss their anticipated absences.

Readings
There are no textbooks in this class. There will be approximately 50-80 pages of reading a week. All readings will be posted online. All readings must be completed the night before the relevant lecture.

Supplementary Readings
A number of books can be used to supplement your reading for the course, including:

Global surveys:
- Kathleen James-Chakraborty, Architecture since 1400 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

Western-focused surveys:

Surveys of Specific Geographic Regions
- Richard John Williams, Brazil, Modern Architectures in History (London: Reaktion books, 2009).

Course Assessment and Grading
Participation and Attendance ................................................................. = 10%
Weekly Reading Responses ................................................................... = 20%
Class Presentation .................................................................................. = 10%
Assignment 1 ......................................................................................... = 15%
Assignment 2 ......................................................................................... = 20%
Assignment 3 ......................................................................................... = 25%

Discussion Participation
Students are expected to attend all Tuesday and Thursday meetings, to do all readings, and wisely and consistently contribute to the class discussions. Discussions will cover explicit and implicit questions concerning architecture and built space in modern culture, and should be used as an open forum for questioning. The discussions are also intended to foster student responsibility for self-directed learning.
Weekly Reading Responses
Weekly reading responses are due on Wednesday nights at midnight. I will set up online discussion boards on Canvas for each week. You will be able to see your classmates' responses only once you have added your own. Once you have added a response, I recommend that you read the other responses on the forum.

You are required to submit a total of 10 reading responses over the course of the semester. You may choose the specific weeks for which you submit reading responses. You should not submit a reading response for the week that you are presenting in seminar.

Note: Reading responses written in note form will not be accepted.

For each of the 14 weeks of the course (with the exception of week 8 in Avery Library and the week that you are chairing the seminar), you are asked to:

- write a 200-300 word response (no less, no more) to issues and polemics encountered in the readings for that week. In responding to the readings, you will need to briefly summarize the arguments in the readings that you feel are central to the week's theme.
- End your response with one question. The question should not seek a factual answer (how much..., when did.... etc.) but should address what you see as the main points of debate in the readings.

The purpose of weekly responses is:
- to demonstrate that you've read the assigned readings for the week.
- To show that, beyond simply reading the texts, you've thought about the central arguments and themes, that you've been able to draw connections between that week's various readings (and possibly, the readings from previous weeks), and finally, that you've been able to scale-up your thinking and consider some of the larger social / political / personal ... stakes involved.
- To prepare you for class discussions. This is especially the case for the questions that you will include at the end of your reading response. In seminar, I may ask you to read your questions to the class.

The responses will be given a letter grade on a total of 2 points. In order to get a full marks, your response needs to demonstrate that you've read the readings and been able to focus on the main issues and arguments they present. For summaries that are poorly written, incomplete or do not demonstrate an adequate grasp of the material, students will get an R, meaning that they'll be able to resubmit the response within a week's time.
Late responses cannot be accepted.

Class Presentations / Seminar Chair
Students will be grouped into pairs (referred to here as "seminar chairs") and the pair will be required to give a presentation and lead the discussion for one seminar. Seminar chairs are required to present all of the required readings and can divide them up as they see fit. Seminar chairs are also encouraged to consult some of the additional readings at the end of the syllabus. Seminar chairs are required to submit their presentation notes by email at the end of the seminar.

Seminar chairs should make sure to include these elements in their presentations:

i. **Background information on the author**: Be sure to open your close reading by telling us a little about the author. What was the author's formation (an architect, philosopher?). Is the author an import figure? Why? What particular works or ideas is the author remembered for? Did the author have significant political or intellectual affinities? When did the author write their significant works? What context is the work reacting to? What debates was the author embroiled in?

ii. **A close reading of the texts**: Pull out 3-5 important passages from the texts, explain them and describe how they fit within the larger argument put forth by the author. A great presentation will have clearly stated the main themes, arguments and will have identified the stakes of such arguments (Why is this important? What is the context? How does this argument/idea differ from other possible interpretations?)

iii. **Visual presentation**: If appropriate for the reading you are presenting, illustrate the ideas with images of the geographic context, relevant buildings, infrastructural projects, etc.

iv. **Chairing the discussion**: The seminar chairs are responsible for leading the seminar discussion. Prepare a set of questions or discussion points to get the conservation started.

v. **Prepare only one slideshow**: You should combine your images into one slideshow which you'll present as after the close reading on the texts. You may need to consult with your professor a week before your presentation to determine what might be appropriate projects to present.
Assignments:

Assignment 1: Post-Occupancy / Due Date: Friday, February 11
Take a photo of a building (or part of a building) that displays a form of occupancy that appears to counter the architect’s original intention of how the project ought to be used. Write a 500-600 word essay describing the activity you have captured in the photo. Describe the building, the architects (if known) and their intentions, and the nature and quality of the space figured in your photo. In your view, what does the image say about the architect’s role in constructing environments and accommodating programmatic requirements. What does your photo say about the limits and possibilities of architecture’s role in society?
Note: The building should not be on or near the Columbia or Barnard campuses.
Please make sure to use footnotes following the Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition.

Assignment 2: Exhibition Review
Due Date: Friday, March 11
Option between two exhibits:
• Center for Architecture: Cairo Modern / closes March 12
Write a 600-700 word review of the exhibit. Essays should include images of the show, or photographed details of the exhibited projects. You may want to read reviews of other shows on architecture to get a sense of the format and tone. The New York Times is a good place to start for these. You should also make sure to read all of the available material and documentation included in the show and refer to it in your review.
Please make sure to use footnotes following the Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition.

Assignment 3: Architecture and Cultural Translation
Due Date: Monday, May 9
Write an 1500 word essay about an architect-designed building, monument or urban scheme in the 19th, 20th or 21st centuries that was conceived for a location beyond the architect’s known geographic sphere.
Note: You may not choose a project that was discussed in class lectures, seminars or readings.
See “Supplementary Readings” list on page 2 of the syllabus for a list of books providing possible examples of projects.
You are also encouraged to meet with Barnard’s personal librarian for Art and Architecture: Meredith Wisner: https://library.barnard.edu/profiles/meredith-wisner
Please make sure to use footnotes following the Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition.

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course, student will be able to:
• identify, analyze and explain the major nineteenth and twentieth-century architectural and urban movements, theories and projects in relation to their cultural frameworks and in relation to global circulations of knowledge, materials and labor.
• gain an understanding of the historical development of modernity in culture and of modernism in architecture and urbanism in relation to global circulations of knowledge, materials and labor.
• become familiar with visual and verbal vocabularies of modern architecture and urbanism and coherently communicate these architectural and urban ideas in written form and oral forms.
• further develop research, writing, and critical thinking skills through the research and writing of a series of reading summaries and assignments that state a meaningful thesis specific to the various architecturally significant buildings and concepts identified in class and in the readings for the course.
W1/ MULTIPLE MODERNITIES

[ Non-West sources of Modernity: China, India, Middle East, North Africa; Scientific Revolution: Bacon, Kepler, Newton; Christopher Wren and Claude Perrault; Enlightenment and its contradictions: Haiti; how universal are universals; colonialism and modernization; modernity and tradition, are modernity and westernization identical? ]


W2/ THE ARCHITECT

[ who was the architect? what do architects mean when they speak of theory?; architectural tools and treatises from east to west; about the word design; differentiation of architects from craftsmen; when drawings are and are not necessary; product over process; architecture vs mere building; gender, race and diversity in the profession; who builds your architecture? ]


W3/ THE COMMODITY

[ Arcades to Department Stores, World Exhibitions; Ornament, Décor and Fashion; Marx and the Commodity Fetish; Colonial extraction; Labor; William Morris and Arts and Craft movements; Werkbund, Werkstatte, Bauhaus; Ornament and Crime; Surrealism; Post-war America; Prefab and Mass Fab houses, Monstanto House, Victor Lebow and Planned obsolesce, Archigram; Nakagin Capsule Tower, Habitat ’67; Archizoom No-Stop City, Post-Fordism, Lever Corporation and Lever House ]


W4/ THE METROPOLIS

[ Paris and the emergence of the modern metropolis; city as circulatory organism; railway space and time; Haussmann; urban spectacle and the Opéra Garnier; flaneur; blasé individuals; schisms between public and private spheres; Haussmannization: Vienna, Cairo, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro ]

CLASS SCHEDULE

02/15
02/17
W5/ THE COLONY

• Alexis de Toqueville, “Second Letter on Algeria, 22 August 1837” and “Notes on the Voyage to Algeria in 1841,” in Writings on Empire and Slavery, pp. 36-37, 59-66.


02/22
02/24
W6/ EUROPEAN AVANT-GARDE
[ European Avant-Garde: Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Internation Style Exhibition, MoMA ]


03/1
03/3
W7/ MODERNIST PLANNING


03/8
03/10
W8/ ARCHITECTURE IN PRINT
[ Visit to Avery Classics and Avery Drawings and Archives ]

03/15
03/17
W9/ SPRING BREAK

03/22
03/24
W10/ NATIONAL IDENTITY
[ Le Corbusier and CIAM, Algiers, ATBAT in Morocco; Brazilia, Chandigarh, Aldo van Eyck, ]

• Jun’ichirō Tanizaki, In Praise of Shadows [1933], pp. 1-42.


CLASS SCHEDULE

W11/ PARTICIPATION
03/29
- Functionalism and Biology; Corridors, Open plans; Hugo Haaring's Gut Garkau; Bauhaus under Hannes Meyer; Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky's Frankfurt Kitchen; Team X, Situationists and New Babylon; Cedric Price, “Fun Palace; Hasan Fathy, New Gourna; Architecture without Architects; PREVI housing in Lima; DIY and Self-Build; Lloyd Kahn and Shelter; Post-Occupancy; Bernard Tschumi Rem Koolhaas, Rural Studio; Estudio Teddy Cruz


03/30

W12/ ENERGY
04/5
- Colonial and tropical architecture; modernism and climate; brise soleil, geopolitics of oil; solar houses, earthen architecture, off-the-grid; appropriate technologies; passivhaus standard; mass timber


04/7

W13/ DIVIDING LINES
04/12
- Panopticon prisons, South African apartheid, redlining in America, camps de regroupement in Algeria; West Bank settlements; Harlem and Columbia University

- Visit exhibit: Undesign the Red Line on the ground floor of Milstein Center at Barnard College.


04/14

W14/ RADICAL PEDAGOGIES
04/19
- Sharon Egretta Sutton, “1968-1971 Experimentation,” in When the Ivory Towers were Black: A Story about Race in America’s Cities and Universities, pp. 74-98.


04/21

W15/ DIGITALIZATION
04/26
- Post-War Cybernetics; Digital Technologies Late Capitalism / Smooth Space / The internet / globalization / free trade / Outsourcing / Surveillance and Privacy / Manuel Castells, “The Space of Flows,” / Morozov


ADDITIONAL READINGS:

MULTIPLE MODERNITIES

• Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (1784)

THE ARCHITECT

• Avery Library, Catalogue of the Andrew Alpern collection of drawing instruments (NY: W.W. Norton, 2010).
• Despina Stratigakos, Where are the women architects? (Princeton University Press, 2016).

THE COMMODITY

• Daniel Abramson, Obsolescence: An Architectural History (2016).
• Greg Castillo, Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).
• Whiteley, "Toward a Throw-Away Culture. Consumerism, 'Style Obsolescence' and Cultural Theory in the 1950s and 1960s".

**THE HOUSE**
- Forty, “Primitive The word and concept,” in Primitive: Original Matters in Architecture
- Cheryl I Harris, “Whiteness as Property,” 2020

**THE METROPOLIS**
- Jacob Riis, “The Bend,” chap. 6 in How the Other Half Lives (1890).

**THE COLONY**
- Kathleen James-Chakraborty, “Empire Building,” in Architecture since 1400


**THE AVANT-GARDE**


**MODERNIST PLANNING**


• James C. Scott, “The High Modernist City: An Experiment and a Critique” in Seeing like a State, pp. 103-146.
• Xiaobo Lü & Elizabeth J. Perry, Danwei: the Changing Chinese Workplace in Historical and Comparative Perspective (Routledge, 1997).

MODERNISM AND NATIONAL IDENTITY
• Adrian Forty, “The Geopolitics of Concrete,” in Concrete and Culture
• James C. Scott, Ch.4 “The High-Modernist City: An Experiment and a Critique.” In Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed (1998), pp. 103-146.
• Kathleen James-Chakraborty, “Postcolonial Modernism and Beyond,” in Architecture since 1400, pp. 424-438.

PARTICIPATION
ENERGY

DIVIDING LINES
• Sharon Rotbard, White City Black City: Architecture and War in Tel Aviv and Jaffa (London: Pluto, 2015).

RADICAL PEDAGOGIES …tba…

DIGITALIZATION
POLICIES AND STATEMENTS

The Barnard Honor Code:
The Barnard Honor Code applies to all students in this class regardless of academic affiliation. Approved by the student body in 1912 and updated in 2016, the Code states:
We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.
The Columbia College Honor Code and the Columbia College Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity can be viewed here: https://www.college.columbia.edu/honorcode
https://www.college.columbia.edu/faculty/resourcesforinstructors/academicintegrity/statement

Barnard Wellness Statement:
It is important for undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We as a community urge you to make yourself—your own health, sanity, and wellness—your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:
Barnard Students: https://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about
Columbia Students: http://www.college.columbia.edu/resources Click on Health-Wellness
Columbia GS Students: https://gs.columbia.edu/health-and-wellness
Columbia SEAS Students: http://gradengineering.columbia.edu/campus-resources

Academic Accommodations:
If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations in this course, you must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting accommodations will need to first meet with an ODS staff member. Once registered, students are required to request accommodation letters each semester to notify faculty. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to contact ODS early each semester to access your accommodations. If you are registered with ODS, please see me to schedule a meeting outside of class in which you can bring me your faculty notification letter and we can discuss your accommodations for this course. Students are not eligible to use their accommodations in this course until they have met with me. ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 009/008. Columbia ODS is located in Wien Hall, Suite 108A.