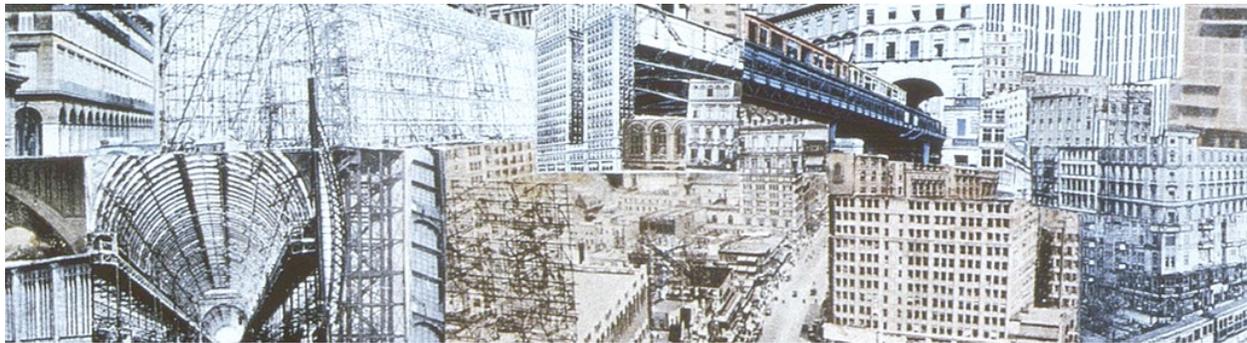


MODERNITY IN ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN CULTUREPaul Citroën, *Metropolis*, 1923

Spring 2017 UN2500 Barnard and Columbia Colleges Architecture Department
Lectures: Mondays + Wednesdays, 2:40-3:55
Instructor: Ralph Ghoche, rghoche@barnard.edu
Office Hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The survey course is composed of two weekly lectures that trace the idea of modernity from the Enlightenment to the present. 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 is focused on the Modern Movement in the pre-war period (The Bauhaus, Russian Constructivism, De Stijl, Le Corbusier, etc.) and post-war period (CIAM, Brutalism, Metabolism, International Style, etc.), although we will also examine pivotal developments in the 19th century and postmodernism.

As this course aims to demonstrate, Modernity, as an idea and as an ethos, is not confined to any one epoch, nor is it restricted to a precise set of norms, codes or beliefs. In fact, if we are to agree with French poet Charles Baudelaire, it is precisely modernity's fleeting and ephemeral quality, its capacity to evade norms, to defy strictures and to shake up static orthodoxies that has made it a lasting and persuasive catalyst for change. However difficult it may be to identify a precise point of origin for this unprecedented cultural transformation, the historical arc of modernity doubtlessly precedes the modern movement (Modernism) in art and architecture, just as it has arguably outlived postmodern culture.

The course begins with a brief introductory lecture on the French Enlightenment, source of ideals that remain foundational even today: reason, universal rights, scientific progress, historical consciousness. We will then shift to the nineteenth century, an epoch that witnessed modernity becoming fact: the emergence of the world image and market, the development of modern infrastructure: railways, sewers, gas lighting, and the rise of the metropolis. We will examine the work of architects who sought to reconcile the very real changes brought on by the industrial revolution with the specific cultural and historical demands of an architectural discipline in rapid flux. Terms such as "avant-garde" and "zeitgeist" made their first appearance here in the visionary imagination of nineteenth-century social reformers and in the wild musings of Romantic poets and artists. Our definition of modernity thus broadened, we will be able to recognize the central assumptions and ideals that underwrite the modern imagination in the tracery of a Neo-Gothic spire as clearly as in the bold platonic forms of a modern factory.

The first three decades of the twentieth-century witnessed the rise of the modern movement in the arts and in architecture. Our analysis of this key period will move from painting and sculpture, where a new,

non-objective abstraction was taking hold, to music (the atonal music of Arnold Schoenberg, for instance), to theatre and film. Architecture held a very special role in the modern movement, understood as it was through the lens of nineteenth-century aspirations for a total work of art. We shall examine the work of the key this period's decisive protagonists: Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, El Lissitzky to Le Corbusier and Theo Van Doesburg.

By the mid-1930s, the modern movement's calcification could be discerned in the attempts to institutionalize its main tenets, whether by the Congrès Internationale de l'architecture moderne (CIAM) or the Museum of Modern Art. What had begun as a movement of "vital disorientation" (to use Ortega y Gasset's term) was increasingly becoming codified as a system of formal traits or packaged to an international clientèle as a marketable style. We will see throughout the semester that a large number of the attacks on modern architecture, whether by the pluralist architects of the 60s and 70s or by postmodernist and post-structuralist architects of the 80s, had in mind a caricatural image of modern architecture that had little relation with its incipient thought and form. Accordingly, one of the main aims of this course will be to examine the theoretical and practical basis of modernism in order to better assess the pertinence of the post-war, postmodernist and post-structuralist critique of it.

Our attention will then turn to post-war architecture. With the dust from the Second World War not yet settled, European architects proclaimed a new era in which the technological prowess of pre-war modernism would be mitigated by a humanistic concern for symbolic expression. Two cities created *ex-nihilo* epitomize the value paid to monumentality in architecture after the war: Le Corbusier's plan for Chandigarh, a city created out of the partition of British India and Lucio Costa and Oscar Neimeyer's design for the Brazilian capital, Brasilia. Despite the architects' best intentions, these cities and the innumerable urban housing projects built on the outskirts of historic European cities in the post-war years, would draw attention to the problems at the heart of the modernist (and CIAM inflected) vision of architectural planning.

The 1960s and 1970s witnessed an extremely wide range of architectural approaches. Some architects (Situationist, Metabolist and architects of the Megastructures) believed in a more flexible and decentralized, albeit highly dramatic resurrection of the utopian project, while others (Venturi, Rossi and later Postmodernists) actively denounced modernist excesses and sought to reconnect architecture to historical and everyday forms and practices. If we are to take the opinion of postmodern architect Charles Jencks, the final blow to modernism came in April 1972 in the form of a widely-televised 1972 demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe housing project, symbol of nearly a century of rapid social, technological and aesthetic reform.

The last series of lectures will focus on architects of the 1980s and 1990s who proposed alternative solutions to the question of the legacy of modern architecture. Despite their diverse perspectives, the architects and theorists examined in the last three weeks (Post-Structuralist, Deconstructivist, Phenomenologist, etc.) demonstrate that in order to come to terms with modernity, one need engage (and for some, "deconstruct") its underlying premises and expose its internal contradictions. In contrast to the postmodern populist and classicist return to pre-modern architectonic forms and archetypes, the architects explored in these sessions often employed modern elements and representational techniques in repetitive, redundant, and often disorienting ways. Finally, we will end the course by briefly looking at contemporary digital architecture and the post-theory (often referred to as post-critical) debates. The claims made by a growing number of post-theory theorists of the digital revolution are provocative. Many argue that the new technological means amount to nothing less than the dissolution of an entire century of modern and post-modern thinking. An entire semester of readings, lectures and discussions on the nature of modern and post-modern theory and architecture will help us identify the stakes and examine the trajectory of contemporary practice.

COURSE SUMMARY

Week 1	INTRODUCTION	Week 9	S P R I N G B R E A K
Week 2	ORIGINS OF MODERNITY	Week 10	L'ESPRIT NOUVEAU
Week 3	INDUSTRIALIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS	Week 11	POST-WAR MONUMENTALITY AND REFORM
Week 4	METROPOLIS AND CAPITAL	Week 12	POST WAR / COLD WAR
Week 5	GLOBALIZATION AND EMPIRE	Week 13	LATE MODERNS
Week 6	THE GARDEN IN THE CITY	Week 14	POSTMODERNISM
Week 7	MODERNISM AND MANIFESTO	Week 15	MODERNISM RECONFIGURED
Week 8	MODERNISM AND MASS PRODUCTION		

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

For this lecture course, students are expected to complete the following requirements:

- 1. Lectures:** Lectures will be given twice weekly, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:40pm-3:55pm. Students are required to turn off all electronic devices with the exception of a laptop for note-taking. Use of the internet during class lectures is forbidden. The slideshows for the lectures will be posted on *canvas*.
- 2. Attendance:** You are expected to come to class having completed your assigned readings. Attendance to all course meetings is mandatory. An attendance sheet will be distributed at each meeting. If you have a good reason for missing class, please inform the professor by email beforehand. You may be asked to provide a doctor's note or a message from a class dean.
- 3. Readings:** There will be approximately 80-100 pages of reading a week. All readings must be completed before the relevant lecture. Students are required to purchase two architectural history survey books listed below. The remaining required readings are available through *courseworks*.
 - Barry Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890*, Oxford University Press, 2000.
 - Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 4th Ed., Thames & Hudson Press, 2007.A number of books can be used to supplement your reading for the course, including: William J.R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900* (3rd edition); Alan Colquhoun, *Modern Architecture*; Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture*; Joan Ockman, *Architecture Culture 1943-1968. A Documentary Anthology*; Harry Mallgrave, *Modern Architectural Theory. A Historical Survey, 1673-1968*
- 4. Writing Center:** I strongly recommend that students visit the Barnard or Columbia Writing Center before handing in assignments. <http://writing.barnard.edu>, <https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-center>

5. Course Assessment and Grading:

Weekly Reading Responses: [20 summaries x 2 points each = 40%]

- There are 25 lectures in this course and you are required to submit reading responses to 20 lectures of your choice. The length of reading responses will be 200-250 word (no less, no more). Use short, succinct sentences.
- Late papers will not be accepted unless a valid reason is accompanied by a note from a doctor or class dean.
- Collaboration on the Reading Responses is not allowed. See the The Barnard Honor Code.
- Weekly reading responses are due at midnight the night before each lecture. I will set up online discussion boards on *canvas* where you will submit your responses. You will be able to see your classmates' responses only once you have added your own response to the forum. Once you have added your response, I recommend that you read some of the other responses on the forum.
- Reading Responses should briefly summarize the main thesis/argument of each reading *except* for the readings from the survey books (Bergdoll and Frampton). Your reading response should begin or end by relating the main thesis of the readings to the broader theme of that lecture as elaborated in the survey books (Bergdoll and Frampton). Summaries in note form will not be accepted.

Mid-Term Take-Home Exam: [30%]

- The take-home exam will be distributed in late February. You will have one week to complete three of the five questions on the exam. The questions will focus on issues discussed in the lectures and will draw on required readings for the course. The exam essays should reflect standard scholarly practice. Use the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th or 17th edition for citations. When citing readings on the syllabus, you may simply use the name of the author, the title of the work, and the date, as noted in the Lecture Schedule portion of the syllabus.
- Format for the Mid-Term Exam: Please use 1 1/2 spacing, 11pt., Times New Roman font. Do not include a cover page. Your Mid-Term Exam should have with your name, week, and date at the top right hand corner of the first page.

Final Exam: [30%]

- The final exam will be written using your laptop or using a pen or pencil. The final exam is open-book and open-notes but you may not use the internet. Your wifi signal must be turned off. Failure to turn off your wifi will result in a failing grade on the exam.
- The exam is based on the material covered over the entire semester, although the second part of the semester's material will be more heavily weighted. The final exam will be based on the required readings for the course AND on the material presented during the lectures. It is therefore essential that all students take notes during class. The date of the final exam will be announced in class as soon as possible.
- Format for the Final Exam: A couple of weeks ahead of the final exam, a list of approximately 6 possible exam themes will be distributed. For the final exam, I will transform a random selection of 3 of these themes and write them as questions. Below each question on the exam will be 3-4 images. 2-3 of these images will be chosen by you and will form the basis of your response. The images you choose will need to be identified by architect, name of building, approximate date (give or take a decade) and location (if built).

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this reading and writing intensive course, the 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 framework.
- gain an understanding of the historical development of modernity in culture and of modernism in architecture and urbanism.
- 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, a midterm exam essay, and a final exam that state a meaningful thesis specific to the various architecturally significant buildings and concepts identified in class and in the readings for the course.

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 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. For more information about available resources:

Barnard Students: <http://barnard.edu/wellwoman>, 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 Statement: If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations, you must visit the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting eligible accommodations in their courses will need to first meet with an ODS staff member for an intake meeting. Once registered, students are required to visit ODS each semester to set up new accommodations and learn how to notify faculty. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to register with 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. Barnard ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 008. Columbia ODS is located in Wien Hall, Suite 108A.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

W 1/17

Introduction

WEEK 2

M 1/22

ORIGINS OF MODERNITY

The Rise of a Scientific Worldview

Raymond Williams, "Modern," in *Keywords*, 1976, pp. 208-209.

Claude Perrault, Preface, *Ordonnance for the Five Kinds of Columns*, 1683, pp. 47-63.

W 1/24

The French Enlightenment

Barry Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890*, pp. 9-20, 23-31, 84-102

Marc-Antoine Laugier, *Essay on Architecture*, 1855, pp. 1-22

WEEK 3

M 1/29

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Historicism and the Challenge to the Academic Ideal

Barry Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890*, pp. 173-184, 189-95, 232-236

Victor Hugo, "This Will Kill That," in *Notre-Dame de Paris*, 1837, pp. 161-176

Gottfried Semper, excerpts from "The Four Elements of Architecture," 1851, pp. 101-111.

W 1/31

Nationalism and Industry: Gothic Revivals in France and England

Barry Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890*, pp. 156-165, 207-232

William Morris, "Art and Socialism," 1884, pp. 1-14

WEEK 4

M 2/5

METROPOLIS AND CAPITAL

Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century

Barry Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890*, pp. 241-257

Karl Marx, "The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof," *Capital* v. 1 (1867),

Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," 1935, pp. 3-14

W 2/7

Vienna and the Fin-de-Siècle Metropolis

Barry Bergdoll, *European Architecture 1750-1890*, pp. 257-261,

Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," 1903, pp. 11-19

WEEK 5

M 2/12

GLOBALIZATION AND EMPIRE

Saint-Simonians

Eric Hobsbawm, "The World Unified," in *The Age of Capital*, pp. 64-87.

Saint-Simonians, "On the Necessity of a New Social Doctrine," 1828-1829, pp. 1-25.

W 2/14

Orientalism and French Colonial Conquest

Alexis de Tocqueville, excerpts from *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, 1837-41, pp. 14-18,

36-37, 59-66.

WEEK 6

M 2/19

THE GARDEN IN THE CITY

Utopian and Progressive Urbanism

Françoise Choay, "The Progressist Model," pp. 31-32, 97-110

Charles Fourier, "The Phalanstery" (1848), pp. 240-245

Ebenzer Howard, "Introduction" in *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, 1898, pp. 41-49.

W 2/21

America, City and Suburb

Frampton, Pt. 2, Ch. 2, 3 (pp. 51-63)

Louis Sullivan, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered," 1896, pp. 1-4

Frank Lloyd Wright, "In the Cause of Architecture," 1908, pp. 1-11

WEEK 7

M 2/26

MODERNISM AND MANIFESTO

Adolf Loos

Frampton, Pt. 2, Ch. 8 (pp. 90-95)
Adolf Loos, "The Poor Little Rich Man," 1900, pp. 18-21
Adolf Loos, "Ornament and Crime," 1908, pp. 167-176

W 2/28

Cubism and Futurism

Frampton, Pt. 2, Ch. 7 (pp. 84-89)
Robert Hughes, "The Mechanical Paradise" in *The Shock of the New*, pp. 9-56
Antonio Sant'Elia and Filippo Marinetti, "Futurist Manifesto," 1914, pp. 49-53

MIDTERM EXAM DISTRIBUTED

WEEK 8

M 3/5

MODERNISM AND MASS PRODUCTION

De Stijl and Russian Constructivism

Frampton, Pt. 2, Ch. 16, 19 (pp. 142-148, 167-177)
Theo Van Doesburg, "Towards a Plastic Architecture," 1924
Kasimir Malevich, "Suprematist Manifesto Unovis," 1924

W 3/7

Deutscher Werkbund and The Bauhaus

Frampton, Pt. 2, Ch. 12, 13, 18 (pp. 109-129, 161-166)
Hermann Muthesius, Henry Van de Velde, "Werkbund Theses and Antithesis," 1914, pp. 28-31
Walter Gropius, "Programme of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar," 1919, pp. 49-53
Walter Gropius, "Principles of Bauhaus Production," 1926, pp. 95-97
Hannes Meyer, "Building," 1928, pp. 117-120

THU 3/8

MIDTERM EXAM DUE / 10PM BY EMAIL

WEEK 9

S P R I N G B R E A K

WEEK 10

M 3/19

L'ESPRIT NOUVEAU

Jeanneret to Le Corbusier

Frampton, Pt. 2, Ch. 17 (pp.149-160)
Le Corbusier, *Towards A New Architecture*, 1923, selected pages
Le Corbusier, "Five Points Towards a New Architecture," 1926, p. 153-155

W 3/21

Le Corbusier and Utopian Urbanism

Frampton, Pt. 2, Ch. 20, 25 (pp. 178-185, 224-230)
Le Corbusier, *The City of To-Morrow and its Planning*, 1927, pp. 163-180, 274-289, 290-302.
CIAM, "Charter of Athens: Tenets," 1933, pp. 137-145

WEEK 11

M 3/26

POST-WAR MONUMENTALITY AND REFORM

Global Modernisms and the New Monumentality

Frampton, Pt. 3, Ch. 1 (pp. 248-261)
Sigfried Giedion, "The Need for a New Monumentality," 1944, pp. 25-51
CIAM 8, "Discussion on Italian Piazzas" & "Summing Up," 1952, pp. 74-80, 159-163

W 3/28

Brutalism and Team 10

Frampton, Pt. 3, Ch. 2 (pp.262-179)
Reyner Banham, "The New Brutalism," 1955, pp. 7-15
Alison Smithson, "How To Recognise and Read Mat-Building," 197, pp. 573-590

WEEK 12

POST WAR / COLD WAR

M 4/2

Organizational Man: Post-War America and Suburbia

Richard Buckminster Fuller, "The Dymaxion House," 1929, pp. 285-288
Henry Russell Hitchcock, Philip Johnson, *The International Style*, 1932, pp. 142-151
Elizabeth Gordon, "The Threat to the Next America," 1953, pp. 286-287

W 4/4

Organizational Man: Skyscraper and City

Frampton, Pt. 2, Ch. 26 (pp. 231-238)
Mies van der Rohe, "Inaugural Address at the Armour Institute of Technology," 1938
Richard Buckminster Fuller, "Accommodating Human Unsettlement," 1978, pp. 51-60

WEEK 13

LATE MODERNS

M 4/9

Pop and Cybernetic Utopias

Frampton, Pt. 3, Ch. 4 excerpt (pp. 280-290)
Guy Debord, "Theory of the Derive," 1956, pp. 50-54
Peter Cook and Warren Chalk, Editorial from *Archigram 3*, 1963, pp. 182-187

W 4/11

American Modern

Kenneth Frampton, "Louis Kahn: Modernization and the New Monumentality," pp. 209-246
Timothy Rohan, "Canon and Anti-Canon: The Fall and Rise of the A + A," pp. 24-31

WEEK 14

POSTMODERNISM

M 4/16

The Many Faces of Postmodern Architecture

Frampton, Pt. 3, Ch. 4 excerpt (pp. 290-313)
R. Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour, Selection from *Learning from Las Vegas*, 1972
Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," 1982, pp. 111-125

W 4/18

FILM: The Pruitt-Igoe Myth

WEEK 15

MODERNISM RECONFIGURED

M 4/23

Post-Structuralism and Deconstruction: Peter Eisenman, Bernard Tschumi

Charles Jencks, "Deconstruction: The Pleasures of Absence," pp. 17-31
Bernard Tschumi, "Parc La Villette, Paris," 1987, pp. 33-39
Peter Eisenman, Descriptions of Projects in the 80s, 2 pages

W 4/25

Rem Koolhaas, Daniel Libeskind

Rem Koolhaas, excerpt from *Delirious New York*, 1978, 20 pages
Daniel Libeskind, "Three Projects," pp. 27-39
Daniel Libeskind, "The Jewish Extension to the German Museum in Berlin," 1990, pp. 62-77

WEEK 16

M 4/30

TBA