

ARCH 4151

History of Urban Form

School of Architecture

Georgia Institute of Technology

Purpose: Cities are the largest man-made artifacts in human history. This course provides an introduction to the city as physical artifact; a collective work of architecture built over time. This course considers the form of the city to be the architectural manifestation of a political association that contains within it economic activity. Thus, the city is distinct from aggregate domestic or pre-political settlements. To that end, this course seeks to

- Build an awareness of the relationship between diverse cultures and the collective representations of urban institutions,
- Develop a fundamental understanding of theories and principles involved in the making of urban form,
- Develop an operational understanding of political and economic policies on the development of the city over time,
- Develop a critical framework and the ability to apply that framework toward intervention in the city as architects, planners, engineers, and as citizens.

The course is organized chronologically from the point of view of the American city at the beginning of the twenty-first century. As such, emphasis is placed upon those ideas and artifacts having the greatest influence on current architectural and city planning thought and practice in North America, with a critical view to the open question of the role of architecture and city planning in the future of the city.

Format: The course meets in lecture format three days per week. Official class communication will be e-mail. You are responsible for checking your e-mail concerning any emergencies or other situations that may arise during the course of the semester. The course also makes extensive use of T-Square, and communication with the class will also occur via announcements posted on the course site. Appointments are welcomed and may be made with the professor via e-mail.

Evaluation: You are expected to attend class regularly, read the material assigned, and participate in class discussions when called upon.

Your grade will be determined by two quizzes and a final examination. Each quiz will count 30% of the final grade. The final exam will be comprehensive and will count 40% of the final grade.

Texts: Three textbooks are used in this course. With a subject as complex as the city, there is no single text of sufficient depth or breadth to adequately cover the subject. Each of the following texts has both positive and negative attributes. In general, these are inadequate for discussions of the contemporary city. To address this deficiency, selected texts have been placed on reserve in the (architecture) library, and additional material has been placed in a course folder accessible through T-Square. These should be used periodically when a subject not adequately covered in the texts needs to be explored in greater depth. In certain cases, the only material available will be in the course folder. These are noted as such on the reading list.

Required 1. A.E.J. Morris, The History of Urban Form Before the Industrial Revolution, Addison-Wesley, New York, 3rd edition, 1994. (required)

Morris is the primary text for the first half of the course. Although tedious at times, this book is the most readable "survey" text available on the subject of urban form. It is not polemical. That is, it does not attempt to advance any specific theoretical position. The diagrams and footnotes are as valuable as the text, if not more so. Its primary problem is that it ends with the Industrial Revolution. Thus, it is incomplete as a comprehensive text.

Strongly 2. Edmund N. Bacon, Design of Cities, Viking/Penguin Press, revised 1976.

Recommended Bacon's book, considered a "classic" since it was first published in 1967, is useful primarily for its maps and illustrations, which are superb. When he is generalizing or searching to connect a particular urban work of architecture to a set of "universal truths", as in pp. 39 through 65, he is at his worst. When he is dealing with specific examples, however, such as the 1585 plan for Rome (pp. 131-157) there is no text clearer, simpler, or better.

Strongly 3. Kenneth Frampton, Modern Architecture: A Critical History, Revised edition,

Recommended Thames and Hudson, London, 1992. (recommended)

Frampton's book has become a "standard" text on the history of Modern Architecture. As such, it is interesting to note the way he treats the city as virtually indistinguishable from a single building as the repository of architectural ideas. At times polemical in the worst sense of the term, the short individual chapters nevertheless make for quick and comprehensive reading. If you are an architecture major, this book will be useful throughout your graduate school education.

Reserve Texts: Portions of the reserve readings are available via electronic reserve. These are accessible via the GT T-Square course management system. T Square is accessible from any computer with an internet connection. Your username and password is all you need to log in.

Readings marked with an asterisk in the syllabus are only on reserve, but may be accessed through the course folder. A number of books have been placed on reserve in the Architecture library. The majority of the lecture material is contained in the T-Square course folders. You may download one copy for your personal use. The material is copyrighted and may not be reproduced for distribution or other publication, in whole or in part, without prior authorization from the publisher or author.

Electronic Notes Each lecture is accompanied by visual materials in power point format. These are also located in the T-Square course folder and may be downloaded and printed. These are not intended to take the place of lecture notes, but should be used as summaries of the lectures and as study guides for the exams. In effect, they are the fourth textbook and should be used in preparation for examinations, quizzes, and papers.

Students with disabilities requiring special accommodations must obtain an accommodations letter from the ADAPTS Office [www.adapts.gatech.edu] to ensure appropriate arrangements.

Course Schedule:

Introduction

Architecture and the City: Constitution and Representation

The City in the Ancient World

Origins of the City: Orient and Occident

The City in the Aegean World

The Polis and the Knowledge of the Good

Agora/Acropolis/Grid

Labor Day Holiday

The Founding of Rome: The City of Ritual Myth

Colonial Cities in the Roman World

Res Publica

Constantinople and the Fragmentation of Empire

Cities in Africa and Arabia

The City of God: Medieval European Cities

The Emergence of the Market

Quiz #1

B. A New World From The Old

The Present in the Past: Villa and Forum

The Idea of the City in the European Renaissance

The Italian Renaissance City: The State as a Work of Art

Baroque Rome: Street, Monument, Piazza

The Renaissance City in France: The Royal Places

Le Notre and the Grand Project

Cities in the Islamic World

London: The Residential Square

The Colonial City in the Americas

Fall Break-No Class

Origins of American Urbanism

Establishing a National Order I

Establishing a National Order II

C. The City in the Industrial Age

The City of the Dreadful Night: Landscape
and Urban Reform

The City in the Enlightenment

The Park and the Town

Territorial Transformations: Paris and Napoleon III

Reactionary Tactics: Parks and Suburbs

Architecture and Urban Reform: City Beautiful

Quiz2

D. The City of Modernity

Sociology and Urban Reform: City Functional

Plan Voisin and the Radiant City

The Vicissitudes of Utopia: Block,

Superblock, and the Space of Flow

Zoning and the Institutionalization of City Planning

Expansion of the Regulatory Framework

Equity, Race, and Place

Thanksgiving Holiday

Edge Cities and the Crisis of the Object

Reactionary Tactics: New Urbanism

Atlanta: Form, Precedent, Policy, Place

No class / Dead Week.

Final Exam