

**Arab Cities in Evolution**

Columbia University GSAPP

Fall 2013

ARCHA6454\_001\_2013\_3

M 11:00A-01:00P

300 Buell North

Instructor: Amale Andraos

[aa3217@columbia.edu](mailto:aa3217@columbia.edu)

Assistant: Rand Abdul Jabbar

[rga2113@columbia.edu](mailto:rga2113@columbia.edu)

At a time of devastating conflict and uncertainty in the Middle East and the Arab World in general, it can seem futile to focus on the evolution of its cities, past and present. And yet, it is precisely because of such violence, that it seems also urgent to turn to the region's history, mining its cities' rich past and complex present to enable the projection of possible, diverse and progressive futures.

In the past decade alone, the MENA (Middle East North Africa) region has fostered a wide array of radical experiments in architecture and urbanism. From leading the wave of 'instant urbanism' to building the first zero carbon city, MENA cities have also witnessed a resurgence of new social housing and institutional buildings, led major reconstruction and preservation efforts as well as re-affirmed for the world the importance of public space through its recent (albeit now repressed) democratic revolutions.

Moving beyond the contemporary production of wildly broadcast 'iconic' projects, this seminar will contrast the region's emerging and struggling cities while also situating the work within a long history of complex exchanges regionally as well as between East and West. Working through specific discursive 'lenses' - accompanied by architectural and urban case studies and focusing in particular on issues of Representation, Post World War II Developmental Strategies, Pan Arabism and Environmental Orientalism - we will build a repertoire of references through which to apprehend the present transformations, as well as inspire other possible trajectories.

While focused specifically on production in the Arab World, the seminar will attempt to both learn from local specificities and move beyond them, considering the issues apprehended, from questions of representation to the challenges posed by globalization, as presenting a wealth of critical opportunities to learn from and point to alternate possibilities, not only for the region's cities but also for our increasingly urbanized world.

**Structure and Assignments**

The seminar is structured around 8 'lenses,' with each class focused on a specific frame through which to read a particular aspect of the region's development. The topics are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive, and comparative analysis between cities within and beyond the region, as well as at different times will be critical to the discussions. Students are expected to be quite familiar with all of the readings and each student will present at least one reading during the semester. A number of classes will host a guest speaker, whose thinking and work will further enrich the class's discussion.

For the Final Assignment, students are asked to choose three variables: a city, a time and a 'lens' and propose a new representation for the city of their choice. The assignment should be a combination of architectural drawings, diagrams and text – with the ratio of drawing to writing dependent on the individual student's interest and skill. The Final Assignment will be split into two parts: two oral research presentations outlining topic and approach followed by a Final 'illustrated paper'. Students' research and various representation investigations will build towards an exhibition and the publication of a book.

## **Schedule**

### **Week 1: Introduction**

**9/9**

Albert Hourani, "The Arab Muslim World", in *A History of the Arab Peoples*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 83-97.

Yasser Elsheshtawy, "The Middle East City, Moving Beyond the Narrative of Loss", in *Planning Middle Eastern Cities: An Urban Kaleidoscope in a Globalizing World*, Ed. Yasser Elsheshtawy (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 1-9.

Fuad K. Malkawi, "The New Arab Metropolis: A New Research Agenda," in *The Evolving Arab City: Tradition, Modernity and Urban Development*, Ed. Yasser Elsheshtawy, (Oxford: Routledge 2008), 27-36

Hasan Udi-Khan, "Expressing Identities through Architecture, From Colonialism to Pluralism," in *World Architecture: A critical Mosaic, Vol 5. The Middle East*, Eds. Kenneth Frampton and Hasan Udi-Khan, (China Editor and Building Press, 2000), XVII-XXXVII

Nasser Rabbat, "The Arab Revolution takes Back Public Space," in *Critical Inquiry* (criticalinquiry.chicago.edu, Spring 2012)

### **Other References**

Yasser Elsheshtawy, "The Great Divide: Struggling and Emerging Cities in the Arab World," in *The Evolving Arab City: Tradition, Modernity and Urban Development*, Ed. Yasser Elsheshtawy, (Oxford: Routledge 2008), 1-26

### **Week 2: Representation**

**9/16**

*Guest: Yasser Elsheshtawy (tbc via Skype)*

Nezar Al Sayyad, "From Modernism to Globalization: the Middle East in Context," in *Modernism and the Middle East, Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Eds. Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 255-266

Nader Naderi, "Max Weber and the Study of the Middle East: A Critical Analysis," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 35, (Regents of the University of California, 1990), 71-88

Zeynep Çelik, "New Approaches to the "Non-Western" City," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 58, No. 3, Architectural History 1999/2000 (Berkeley: University of California Press, Sep 1999), 374-381

Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Random House Inc., 1979), 1-28

Dona Stewart, "Middle East Urban Studies: Identity and Meaning", *Urban Geography*, 22(2), 175-181.

### **Other References**

Max Weber, *The City* translated and edited by Don Martindale and Gertrud Neuwirth (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 1958), 81.

Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi, "Modern Architecture and the Middle East: The Burden of Representation," in *Modernism and the Middle East, Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Ed. Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 3-36

Jack Goody, *The Theft of History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 215-239; 240-266

### **Week 3: The Arab-Islamic City?**

**9/23**

#### ***Preliminary Research Presentations***

Stefano Bianca, *Urban Form in the Arab World, Past and Present* (UK: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2000), Chapter 2

Sami Zubeida, "The Public and the Private in Middle Eastern History and Society" in *Beyond Islam: A New Understanding of the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 157-167

Janet Abu-Lughod, "The Islamic City – Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies Vol. 19, No. 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, May 1987), 155-176

André Raymond, "Islamic City, Arab City: Orientalist Myths and Recent Views," in *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 21:1, (Taylor & Francis, Ltd. 1994), 3-18

### **Other References**

Le Corbusier, *Journey to the East* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007), 100-119; 133-142

R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991)

Janet Abu-Lughod, "What is Islamic about a City? Some Comparative Reflections," in *Urbanism in Islam, The Proceedings of the International Conference on Urbanism in Islam (ICUIT)*, Oct. 22-28, 1989, v. 1 (Tokyo: the Middle Eastern Culture Center, 1989), 193-217

**\*No class on 9/30\***

### **Week 4: Colonialism**

**10/7**

#### ***Preliminary Research Presentations***

Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt*, (Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1-34

Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism*, (The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 53-84

Zeynep Çelik, "An Outline of Urban Structure", in *Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations*, (University of California Press, 1997), 58-86

Yasemin Avci, "The Application of Tanzimat in the Desert: The Bedouins and the Creation of a New Town in Southern Palestine (1860–1914)", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 2009, 45:6, 969-983

### **Other References**

Brian McLaren, "Modern Architecture, Preservation, and the Discourse on Local Culture in Italian Colonial Libya", in *Modernism and the Middle East, Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Ed. Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 61-78

Karim Hadjri and Mohamed Osmani, "The Spatial Development and Urban Transformation of Colonial and Postcolonial Algiers", in *Planning Middle Eastern Cities: An Urban Kaleidoscope in a Globalizing World*, Ed. Yasser Elsheshtawy (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 29-58

### **Week 5: Modernism / Urban Scale**

**10/14**

*Guest: June Williamson (tbc)*

Nathan Citino, "Suburbia and Modernization: Community Building and America's Post-World War II Encounter with the Arab Middle East," *The Arab Studies Journal*, Vol. 13/14, No. 2/1 (Arab Studies Institute: Fall 2005/Spring 2006), 39-64

Panayiota I. Pyla, "Baghdad's Urban Restructuring, 1958: Aesthetics and Politics of Nation Building" in *Modernism and the Middle East, Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Eds. Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 97-115

Ahmed Zaib Khan Mahsud, "Rethinking Doxiadis' Ekistical Urbanism," in *Positions, No. 1, Grand Plans* (MN: University of Minnesota Press: Spring 2010), 6-39

Joyce Hsiang, "The Doxiadis Effect", in *Volume 23: Al Manakh Gulf Continued*, Ed. Ole Boumann, Mitra Khourbou, Rem Koolhaas (Volume/Al Manakh, 2010) 248-253

Mercedes Volait, "Town Planning Schemes for Cairo Conceived by Egyptian Planners in the "Liberal Experimentation" Period", in *Middle Eastern Cities 1900-1950 Public Spaces and Public Spheres in Transformation*

### **Other References:**

Alison Smithson, "How to Recognize and Read Mat-Building; Mainstream Architecture as It Has Developed Towards the Mat-Building," *Architectural Design* 1974, no. 9, September, 573–590

Joe Parssinen and Kaizer Tablib, "The Development of Dhahran (Saudi Camp) as a Community", in *The Arab City, Its Character and Islamic Cultural Heritage*, Eds. Ismail Serageldin and Samir El-Sadek (Arlington,VA: 1982) 177-183

## **Week 6: Modernism / Architecture Scale**

**10/21**

Gwendolyn Wright, "Global Ambition and Local Knowledge", in *Modernism and the Middle East, Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Eds. Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 221-254

Timothy Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity", in *Questions of Modernity*, ed Timothy Mitchell (University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 1-34

Rem Koolhaas Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Takako Tange Noritaka Tange," *Project Japan*, (Spain: Taschen 2009), 551-636

Jad Tabet, "From Colonial Style to Regional Revivalism: Modern Architecture in Lebanon & the Problem of Cultural Identity," in *Projecting Beirut*, Eds. Hashim Sarkis and Peter Rowe (Prestel, 1998), 83-105

Marlene Ghorayeb, "The work and influence of Michel Ecochard in Lebanon" in *Projecting Beirut*, Eds. Hashim Sarkis and Peter Rowe (Prestel, 1998), 106-121

## **Week 7: Modernism / Architecture Scale (contd)**

**10/28**

*Guest: Hisham Munir (tbc)*

Magnus Bernhardsson, "Modernizing the Past in 1950s Baghdad" in *Modernism and the Middle East, Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Eds. Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 81-96

Mina Marafat, "The Universal University: How Bauhaus Came to Baghdad." DC. *Revista de crítica arquitectónica*, 2008, núm. *Ciudad del Espejismo: Bagdad, de Wright a Venturi*, 157-166

Samuel Isenstadt, "Faith in a Better Future: Josep Lluís Sert's American Embassy in Baghdad" *Journal of Architectural Education* Vol. 50, No. 3 (Blackwell Publishing, Feb. 1997), 172-188

Haytham Bahooora, "Development, Architectural Modernism, and the Stage of Modernity" in *Modernism before modernity: Literature and urban form in Iraq, 1950-1963*. Dissertation. New York University, 2010. 71-84

## **Week 8: Pan Arabism/ Regionalism**

**11/04**

Albert Hourani, "The Climax of Arabism", in *A History of the Arab Peoples*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 401-415.

Hassan Fathy, *Architecture for the Poor: an Experiment in Rural Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 1-59

James Steele, *An Architecture for the People: the Complete Works of Hassan Fathy* (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1997), 6-21; 90-123

Panayiota I. Pyla, "Hassan Fathy Revisited: Postwar Discourses on Science, Development, and Vernacular Architecture," in *Journal of Architectural Education*, 60:3, 28-39

Rassem Badran "Reflections on a Regional Narrative" in *Al Manakh: Gulf survey*, Eds. Ole Boumann, Mitra Khourbou, Rem Koolhaas (Volume/Al Manakh, 2007), 248-249

### **Other References**

Kenneth Frampton, "Ten Points on a Critical Regionalism: a Provisional Polemic," *Center 3: New Regionalism* (1987), pp.20-27 Reprinted in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, Ed. Vincent B. Canizaro, (NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 375-385

Kenza Boussora, "Regionalism: Lessons from Algeria and the Middle East," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, Ed. Vincent B. Canizaro, (NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 124-127

Alan Colquhoun, "Critique of Regionalism," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, & Tradition*, Ed. Vincent B. Canizaro, (Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 144-144

### **Week 9: Informal Settlements**

**11/11**

#### **Research Presentations**

Giorgio Agamben, "What is a Camp?," in *Means Without End*, 37-45

Karim Hadjri and Mohamed Osmani, "1945-1962: Housing Shortage and Bidonvilles", in *Planning Middle Eastern Cities: An Urban Kaleidoscope in a Globalizing World*, Ed. Yasser Elsheshtawy ((London ; New York : Routledge, 2004), 40-43.

Albert Hourani, "Rich and Poor in the City", in *A History of the Arab Peoples*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 384-388.

Riem El-Zoghbi, "'Ashwa'iyyat: Dystopias or Liberated Spaces?," *Micro-topias of everyday*, International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments v.236, 35-53

Nezar Al Sayyad, "Squatting, Culture, and Development: A Comparative Analysis of Informal Settlements in Latin America and the Middle East", *Journal of Developing Societies*, 9 (Jan 1, 1993): 139.

Henri Rueff and Alain Viaro, "Palestinian Refugee Camps: From Shelter to Habitat"

### **Other References**

Mahmud Abdel Kareem Rasch, "Tent Towns", in *The Arab City, Its Character and Islamic Cultural Heritage*, Eds. Ismail Serageldin and Samir El-Sadek (Arlington,VA: 1982) 221-229

## **Week 10: Globalization**

**11/18**

### **Research Presentations**

Guest: Ahmed Kanna (tbc via Skype)

Ahmed Kanna, *The City as Corporation* (MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 1-42; 77-194;

Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (MN: Minnesota Press, 1996), 27-47; 48-65

Sulayman Khalaf, "Camel Racing in the Gulf. Notes on the Evolution of a Traditional Cultural Sport," *Anthropos*, Bd. 94, H. 1. /3. (Anthropos Institute, 1999), 85-106

Khaled Adham, "Cairo's Urban Déjà vu: Globalization and Urban Fantasies", in *Planning Middle Eastern Cities: An Urban Kaleidoscope in a Globalizing World*, Ed. Yasser Elsheshtawy (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 134-168.

Yasser Elsheshtawy, "Redrawing Boundaries: Dubai, an Emerging Global City", in *Planning Middle Eastern Cities: An Urban Kaleidoscope in a Globalizing World*, Ed. Yasser Elsheshtawy (London ; New York : Routledge, 2004), 169-199.

Nada Tarbush, "Cairo 2050: Urban Dream or Modernist Delusion?", in *Journal of International Affairs*; 65: 2, 171-186

### **Other References**

Keller Easterling, *Enduring Innocence: global architecture and its political masquerades* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 62-72; 96-97; 134-159

Marisa Bartolucci, "Islamic Revelations" *Metropolis 2*, vol. 17 (NY: Sep. 1997), 62-67

Faith A. Rifki, Amer A. Moustafa, "Madinat Jumeirah and the Urban Experience in the Private City" in *Al Manakh: Gulf survey*, Eds. Ole Boumann, Mitra Khoumbou, Rem Koolhaas (Volume/Al Manakh on the occasion of the International Design Forum organized by Moutamarat, 2007), 23-29

## **Week 11: Environment**

**11/25**

Guest: Yasser Elsheshtawy (tbc)

Diana K. Davis "Imperialism, Orientalism and the Environment in the Middle East" in *Environmental imaginaries of the Middle East and North Africa*, Eds. Diana K. Davis and Edmund Burke III (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011)

Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*, (NJ: University of California Press, 2002), 1-53; 123-152

Federico Cugurullo, "How to Build a Sandcastle: An Analysis of the Genesis and Development of Masdar City", *Journal of Urban Technology*, 20:1, 23-37

Salem K. Al Qassimi, "Tackling the Paradox: Homegrown Solutions to Sustainability" in *Volume 23: Al Manakh Gulf Continued*, Ed. Ole Boumann, Mitra Khoumbou, Rem Koolhaas (Volume/Al Manakh, 2010) 120-121

### **Other References**

Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, *Tropical Architecture*, (Batsford Books, 1964), 12-42

Amale Andraos "Dubai's Island Urbanism" in *Cities from Zero* (London: Architectural Association, 2007)

Amale Andraos and Dan Wood "Why are we still learning from Las Vegas?" in *Bidoun, Issue 04, Dubai Issue* (NY: Bidoun, 2005), 47-48

### **Weekly Sessions**

Each week, a group of 2 students will present the readings to the class, along with images to illustrate the topic. Please make sure that images and projects are comprehensive to help focus the conversation.

### **Illustrated Papers: Presentation Schedule**

9/23: Preliminary Research Presentations (5min/ student)

9/30: Preliminary Research Presentations (5min/ student)

11/11: Final Research Presentations (5min/student)

11/18: Final Research Presentations (5 min/student)

### **Grade**

Final Grade will be based on student participation in class, final presentation and final paper, distributed as follows:

Class participation: 50%

Research Presentations: 15%

Final Paper: 35%



## Arab Cities in Evolution

Columbia University GSAPP

Fall 2013

ARCHA6454\_001\_2013\_3

### Illustrated Papers: Suggested Topics (or similar)

1. Representation of Arab cities/architecture
  - Media: film, populist culture...etc (*See Sulayman Khalaf "Camel Racing in the Gulf..."*)
  - Regional comparison
  - East/West comparison
2. Embassies
3. Doxiadis
  - Proposals for Beirut, Baghdad, Islamabad
  - Comparison with Le Corbusier (Chandigarh)
  - Comparison with Hassan Fathy
4. Cold War Urbanism
  - US vs. USSR struggle for influence / models exported
5. Suburbia as ideological export (*See Nathan Citino "Suburbia and Modernization..."*)
6. Pan-Arab Infrastructural Projects (*Nasser's Egypt, see Timothy Mitchell "Rule of Experts..."*)
7. International Style vs. Regionalism
  - Timeline examining shifts (*For ex. 1970ies Rise of socially conservative states and Regionalism*)
8. Environmental Orientalism
  - See Diana K. Davis "Imperialism, Orientalism and the Environment in the Middle East"*
  - Masdar City
  - Catalogue and/or comparison of "green" projects
9. Public vs. Private
  - See Janet Abu Lughod on Cairo and Nasser Rabbat "The Arab Revolution takes Back Public Space"*
  - Analytical drawings of urban conditions (plan/section/axonometric)
  - Comparison across cities
10. Housing
  - Doxiadis
  - Nasser
  - Current housing projects
11. Informal Settlements
  - Regional or international comparisons
12. Conflict Urbanism (*See writings by Eyal Weitzman*)
13. Circulation patterns (*See Kurose Shigeyuki "A Case Study on Pedestrian Flow System in the Road Network of 18<sup>th</sup> Century Cairo"*)
14. Team X in the MENA Region (*See Allison Smithson on the Arab City as Mat Building, Smithsons Masterplan for Kuwait in Al Manakh, Candillis Mastperlan for Al Khobar in Saudi, etc...*)

### Illustrated Papers Precedents

Work Architecture Company, *49 Cities* (New York, NY: Storefront for Art and Architecture, 2009)

NaJa & de Ostos, *The Hanging Cemetery of Baghdad* (Vienna: Springer Vienna Architecture, 2007)

Adam Frampton, Jonathan Solomon, Clara Wong, *Cities without Ground: A Hong Kong Guidebook* (ORO Editions, 2012)