

*This syllabus courtesy of the*

## Vernacular Architecture Forum Syllabus Exchange



*A collaborative project of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*  
[www.vafweb.org/resources/syllabi.html](http://www.vafweb.org/resources/syllabi.html)

---

**instructor:** Preeti Chopra  
**course title:** Cities of Asia  
**institution:** University of Wisconsin-Madison  
**date offered:** Fall, 2007

  

**posted date:** November, 2011  
**stable URL:** [www.vafweb.org/resources/syllabi/chopra1.pdf](http://www.vafweb.org/resources/syllabi/chopra1.pdf)

---

*This document is provided for non-commercial, informational purposes only.*

**Fall 2007**

**LCA/AH 379, Section 1. Cities of Asia**

*Preeti Chopra*

**Instructor's office hours:** Tuesdays 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. in 1250 Van Hise.

**Instructor's e-mail:** chopra@wisc.edu

**Course meets Tuesday/Thursday 1:00-2:15 in 104 Van Hise**

This semester long survey course, presents a historical overview of the built environment of the cities of Asia from antiquity to the present. Most surveys of the city focus on the West, even though the earliest neolithic settlements are found in western Asia, and the first true cities were constructed between the Tigris and Euphrates around 3500 B.C. Max Weber's work on the City was influential in drawing a contrast between Western and non-Western cities, arguing that 'urban communities' and hence 'true cities' were only found in the West. This course seeks does not seek to essentialize Western or non-Western cities. Instead, it seeks to explore and tease out common themes that thread through the diverse geographical regions and cultures of Asia.

The aim of this course is to examine the architectural and urban legacy of the past and present in its social and historical context. In this course, we will look at the rise of cities in Asia, study the influence of Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman planning traditions on their colonies in Asia, examine debates surrounding the Islamic city, explore the role of religious ideas and practices in shaping the city, and discuss the relationship between sovereign power and the city. We will then move on to see the ways in which colonial ideologies-French, British, Dutch-were used to reshape existing cities and build new ones. In the postcolonial context, this course will analyze the rise of nationalism and the influence of western architects and planners such as Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn in introducing "modernization" and shaping a vision of architecture and urbanism appropriate to the newly independent states of Asia. As the world becomes increasingly integrated into a global network, we see the emergence of world cities in Asia. At the same, a large majority of the population in many Asian cities lives in slums. Are these spaces of despair or can they also be seen as vibrant settlements? This course will also highlight the role of violence in reshaping the city. Finally, we will explore how migrants from Asia

influenced cities in Asia and other parts of the world. We will look at both the origins of cities and their transformation over time, and examine the physical city in order to understand the texture of urban life.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- Regular attendance at **lectures**
- **Active** participation in **class discussions**.
- Completion of all **reading assignments**.

The readings present important information, methods, and interpretations not contained in the lectures (and vice versa).

- Completion of all assignments and exams on or before their due date
- In addition, the following assignments

Assignment #1: A 2-3 page essay. The assignment will be handed out in class or sent to you via email.

**DUE IN CLASS ON OCTOBER 25**

Assignment #2: A 4-5 page essay. The assignment will be handed out in class or sent to you via email.

**DUE IN CLASS ON NOVEMBER 29**

- **Exam #1**, to be held in class October 11
- **Exam #2** to be held in class December 13

*No extensions or make-ups will be granted except for a written medical excuse presented in a timely manner.*

Grade break-up:

1.	Exam #1	25%
2.	Assignment #1	20%
3.	Assignment #2	30%
4.	Exam #2	25%

**Note:** If you do not attend class, arrive late, or leave part-way (only if you have good reason to), you are expected to complete any missed assignments and find out from your classmates of any changes in deadline or assignments which are announced during class.

Before each lecture, other than the discussion sessions, you should print out a **study aid** containing an outline of the day's lecture, which will be mailed to you no later than at midnight, the night before class. The study aid will not substitute for your own notes but it will help you follow the structure of the lecture and give dates and the proper spelling of unfamiliar words. Each study aid will have a specific title that may be different from the general topic titles listed below but related in subject matter. The schedule is likely to change over the course of the semester. Please refer to the illustrations in your reader for maps or images of important cities covered in class.

### **READER:**

- There is no text book for this course. The course reader is available at Bob's Copy Shop, 1401 University Avenue, Suite C, tel: 608-251-2936.
- The reader also contains selected images from the lectures.
- Students are encouraged to purchase a world map for their convenience.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

I expect to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. Please let me know immediately if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction or assessments of this course to enable you to fully participate. I will try to maintain the confidentiality of the information you share with me. Please be prepared to make available any documentation I might need to ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided.

## **Schedule of Meetings, Readings, and Assignments**

Sept. 4. INTRODUCTION

Sept. 6. BEGINNINGS OF URBAN CIVILIZATION

**Reading:** Spiro Kostof, *City Shaped* [hereafter *CS*], 9-45

Shereen Ratnagar, Understanding Harappa Civilization in the Greater Indus Valley [2001], chap. 6, "Material Culture III: Urban Form and Architecture," 85-102.

Sept. 11. GREEK URBANISM (ATHENS, HIPPODAMIAN PLANNING TRAD)

**Reading:** CS, 52-69

James E. Vance, Jr., *The Continuing City: Urban Morphology in Western Civilization* [1990], chap. 2, "The Gods Look Down: The Classical City," 42-77

Sept. 13. HELLENISTIC ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM (PERGAMON)

**Reading:** CS, from chap. 4, "The Grand Manner," 209-230

Sept. 18. ROMAN SPACES (ROME, TIMGAD)

**Reading:** CS, chap. 4, "The Grand Manner," 230-277

Sept. 20. DURA EUROPOS: MULTIPLE CULT CENTERS, MULTIPLE COMMUNITIES

Sept. 25. BYZANTIUM & CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH: JERASH & CONSTANTINOPE

**Reading:** Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul*, chap. 1, "An Architectural Survey of the City," 10-22

Sept 27. FROM FREE-STANDING TEMPLE TO TEMPLE TOWN (MADURAI, CHIDAMBARAM, SRIRANGAM)

**Reading:** Susan Lewandowski, "The Hindu Temple in South India," in Anthony D. King ed., *Buildings and Society: Essays on the Social Development of the Built Environment* [1980], 123-150

Oct. 2. LANDSCAPE & LINEAGE IN IMPERIAL CHINA (CHANG'AN)

**Reading:** Heng Chye-Kiang, "Kaifeng and Hangzhou: The Birth of the Commercial Street," in *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Urban Space* [1994], ed. Zeynep Çelik, Diane Favro, & Richard Ingersoll, 45-55

- Oct. 4. CHINESE URBANISM: CHANG'AN, KAIFENG, & BEIJING  
**Reading:** Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), intro, chap. 1, "Tiananmen Square: A Political History of Monuments," 1-50.
- Oct. 9. SLIDE COMP/DISCUSSION/COMPLETION OF LECTURE
- Oct. 11. **EXAM #1**
- Oct. 16. JAPANESE TRADITIONS & TRANSFORMATIONS 1(NARA & KYOTO)  
**Reading:** William H. Coaldrake, *Architecture and Authority in Japan* [1996], chap. 3, "Great Halls of Religion and State," 52-79
- Oct. 18. JAPANESE TRADITIONS & TRANSFORMATIONS 2: EARLY MODERN JAPAN (KYOTO, EDO/TOKYO)  
 BEGIN MOVIE *HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR*  
**Reading:** Jinnai Hidenobu, *Tokyo: A Spatial Anthropology* [1985/1995], introduction, chap.1, "The High City: Surface and Depths," 1-65
- Oct. 23. WAR AND DESTRUCTION, REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING  
 MOVIE *HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR* (1960), DIRECTED BY ALAIN RESNAIS, STARRING EMMANUELLE RIVA, ELJI OKADA
- Oct. 25. THE "ISLAMIC" CITY  
**Reading:** CS, 46-51

Nezar AlSayyad, *Cities and Caliphs: On the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism* [1991], chap. 2, “The Typical Muslim City: A Historiography of a Concept,” 13-41

### ASSIGNMENT # 1 DUE IN CLASS

Oct. 30. FROM CONSTANTINOPLE TO ISLAMBOL & ISTANBUL  
(OTTOMAN TURKEY)

**Reading:** Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul*, chap. 1, “An Architectural Survey of the City,” 3-30

Nov 1. SAFAVID IRAN (ISFAHAN)

**Reading:** Stephen P. Blake, *Half the World: The Social Architecture of Safavid Isfahan, 1590-1722* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda, 1999). Chapter 3, “Cityscape,” pp 29-51.

Nov. 6. SHAHJAHANABAD/NEW DELHI

**Reading:** Jyoti Hosagrahar, *Indigenous Modernities: Negotiating Architecture and Urbanism* (London: Routledge, 2005), map of Delhi, c. 1850 and chap. 3, “Negotiating Streets and Squares: Spatial Culture in the Public Realm,” 16, 47-81, notes to chap, 205-210.

Nov. 8. CONTEMPORARY CITY IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD: FILM “DUBAI 24 HOURS,” DIRECTED BY MICHAEL TOBIAS (70 MIN.)

**Reading:** Anthony D. King, *Global Cities: Post-Imperialism and the Internationalization of London* [1990], chap. 3, “World Cities, Colonial Cities: Connections and Comparisons,” 33-52

Nov. 13. HOLY CITIES (JERUSALEM, BANARAS)

**Reading:** Spiro Kostof, *The City Assembled: The Elements of Urban Form Through History* [1992], “God in the City,” 82-91

Nov. 15. HOLY CITIES, HOLY PLACES: CITIES AS SACRED SPACES  
(ANGKOR THOM, BHAKTAPUR)

**Reading:** Jan Pieper, “Three Cities of Nepal,” in Paul Oliver ed.  
[1975], *Shelter, Sign & Symbol*, 52-69

Nov. 20. DISCUSSION/DESIGNING COLONIAL CITIES

**Reading:** Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French  
Colonial Urbanism* [1991], chap. 4, “Indochina: The Folly of  
Grandeur,” 161-233

Nov. 22. **THANKSGIVING**

Nov. 27. COLONY & EMPIRE

**Reading:** Norma Evenson, *The Indian Metropolis: A View toward  
the West* [1989], chap. 4, “Modern Planning and the Colonial  
City”

Nov 29. ONE CITY, TWO WORLDS, AND SLUMS

“ONE CITY, TWO WORLDS: A FILM ON BOMBAY,” CONCEIVED BY  
CYRUS GUZDER AND RAHUL MEHROTRA, DIRECTED BY  
ZAFAR HAI (23½ MINUTES). NOTE: BOMBAY (LOCATED IN  
WESTERN INDIA, IS NOW KNOWN AS MUMBAI) PART OF  
FEATURE FILM “DHARAVI,” DIRECTED BY SUDHIR MISHRA.  
NOTE: DHARAVI IS LOCATED IN BOMBAY/MUMBAI

**Reading:** Kalpana Sharma, *Rediscovering Dharavi: Stories From  
Asia’s Largest Slum* [2000], map, preface, introduction, and  
chap. 1, “What is this ‘Dharavi’?” ix-xxxviii, 1-32

**ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE TODAY**



Dec 4. REPRESENTING & REWORKING NATIONAL IDENTITY  
(SINGAPORE)

**Reading:** Brenda S. A. Yeoh, *Contesting Space: Power Relations and the Urban Built Environment in Colonial Singapore* [1996], chap. 4 “Shaping the Built Form of the City: From the Regulation of House Form to Urban Planning,” 136-174

Dec. 6. REPRESENTING NATIONAL IDENTITY

**Reading:** Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power, and National Identity* [1992], chap. 9, “The Acropolis of Bangladesh,” 236-271

Dec. 11. DISCUSSION/EXAM PREPERATION

Dec 13. **EXAM #2**

**NOTE: SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE**