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instructor: Marta Gutman
course title: Twentieth-Century Architecture and Urbanism
institution: City College of New York
date offered: Fall 2007

posted date: June 2008
stable URL: www.vafweb.org/resources/syllabi/gutman3.pdf

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This draft: August 6, 2007

The City College of New York
School of Architecture, Urban Design, and Landscape Architecture

Arch 732.00. Twentieth-Century Architecture and Urbanism

Fall 2007

Graduate Seminar in History, Theory, and Methods
Instructor: Prof. Marta Gutman

Seminar: Monday, 10:30-11:45 am, S-206

Credits: 3 (lecture and seminar)

Office hours: Wednesday, 10:30 am-12:30 pm, 301A Shepard Hall or by appointment

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Course description

This graduate seminar is the third in a four-semester sequence, taught in conjunction with required lecture courses in architectural history (Survey I, Survey II, Modern Architecture, and World Architecture). For the lecture portion of this class, see the syllabus for Arch 352.01.

This seminar is designed to enrich your understanding of material discussed in the lectures and readings and to hone research, writing, and presentation skills. In keeping with the mission of the City College, the seminar stresses the politics of architecture and culture, a theme especially well suited to the broad topic of the course, modern architecture and urbanism. It is one you will need to address in your seminar presentations and term project--an entry for Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia.

To facilitate discussion in seminar and research and writing of the encyclopedia entry, two students will make 10-minute presentations to the seminar each week, applying to their buildings questions raised by the readings and material under consideration that week. The presentation must be comparative and should get to and make the main points; a dry run is encouraged to keep to the time limit (be prepared: a clock will be running!). Each student will make two presentations; study questions are included to prompt your thinking.

The encyclopedia entry should discuss an important building or place, not posted on Wikipedia. All topics must be approved by the instructor. You will write the entry in stages; see due dates below for your topic, bibliography and introduction, first draft, and final draft. Your entry is required to include one or two illustrations, bibliography, and links to other relevant sites, in addition to clear-headed succinct text.

Requirements

- Attendance; more than two unexcused absences will result in failure of the entire course
- Midterm exam: October 17, 2007
- Final exam: TBA
- Bibliography, 2 presentations, plus 2 short papers, due on the day of your presentation.
- Wikipedia entry due 2 days after the final exam. The late clock starts running at 9:30 AM.

Readings and Resources

Required texts:

William J. R. Curtis Modern Architecture Since 1900, 3rd edition (1996).

Abigail Harrison-Moore and Dorothy C. Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design in Europe and North America, 1750-2000 (2006).

Additional readings will be placed on electronic reserve (through the SAUDLA library). The books are available for purchase at Labyrinth Books, 536 West 112th Street, New York, NY 10025.

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The College subscribes to a variety of digital databases, including Grove Art Online, AccuNet/AP Multimedia Archive, and ARTstor. The Architecture Slide Library has also built an extensive image database, “Art and Architecture Image Collections.” To find these and other resources go the CCNY Library home page, click on “Quick Links to Selected Resources,” and scroll through the links.

Grading

- Midterm exam: 20%
- Final exam: 30%
- Presentations: 20%
- Term project, including bibliography and drafts: 25%
- Participation: 5%

Late work will be penalized; the grade will drop one step (A- to B+) for each meeting the work is late.

Take heed!

Attendance is required; come to class on time and prepared to discuss the material at hand. More than two unexcused absences from seminar will result in *automatic failure* of the entire course. Incompletes will not be granted except in the case of an extreme medical or family emergency, supported by a doctor’s note or other written proof of the seriousness of the situation at hand. Please inform me about personal emergencies before they escalate. All discussions of personal matters will be held in strict confidence.

All written assignments must be your original work. Any copying, including short excerpts from a book, article, and Internet source, published or unpublished, will result in *automatic failure* of the entire course. In your papers, cite all sources, using footnotes, endnotes, or in-text citations, and include a bibliography. For the correct format, see the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) or the instructor. Be cautious about information posted online; make sure it has been written or vetted by recognized scholars. *Do not plagiarize.*

Learning Objectives

This course seeks to deepen students’ grasp of the history of built form and the formation of landscape and urban design in the twentieth century, and to hone their analytic skills, both as regards the form and meaning of monuments. It seeks to make students alive to the implications of architectural forms within society, and the responsibility of those who design them.

NAAB Performance Criteria Fulfilled

1	Verbal and Writing Skills	10	National and Regional Traditions
2	Critical Thinking Skills	11	Use of Precedents
8	Western Traditions	13	Human Diversity
9	Non-Western Traditions	34	Ethics and Professional Judgment

Seminar Outline and Assignments

Assignments in Harrison-Moore and Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design in Europe and America, 1750-2000 are noted below, along with additional readings. You are expected keep up with assignments in Curtis, Modern Architecture Since 1900; we will refer to them in class. All readings are *required*; be prepared for questions on the midterm and final exams.

PART I: INTRODUCTION AND FORMATIVE STRANDS

(Week 1) Mon., Aug. 27. Introduction to the course

(Week 2) Mon., Sept. 3. No class (Holiday)

Friday, Sept. 7. Library sessions

(Week 3) Mon., Sept. 10. Frank Lloyd Wright and the Robie House

Assignment: Compare your building to the Robie House. What does Wright mean by “plasticity,” the “nature of materials,” and “form follows function”? How does he define the role of the architect? Are these concepts useful in explaining the Robie House? Be sure to assess arguments offered by Cronon and Upton, especially with respect to plan and use.

Read:

Harrison-Moore and Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design, chapter 28, 29 (review 31, 34).

William Cronon, “Inconstant Unity: The Passion of Frank Lloyd Wright,” in Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect, edited by Terence Riley (1994), 8-31.

Dell Upton, “An American Icon,” in Architecture in United States (1998), chapter 1, especially on the Robie House.

Wikipedia entry: topic due!

(Week 4) Mon., Sept. 17. The Deutscher Werkbund

Assignment: Compare your building to the AEG Turbine Factory. Make sure to engage these concepts, type, *heimat*, and globalization, as you consider ornament and decoration.

Read:

Harrison-Moore and Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design, chapter 38, 41 (review 36, 37).

Maiken Umbach, “The Deutscher Werkbund, Globalization, and the Invention of Modern Vernaculars,” in Vernacular Modernism, Heimat, Globalization, and the Built Environment, edited by Umbach and Bernd Huppauf (2005), 114-140.

Friday, Sept. 21. Library sessions

PART II: EUROPEAN AVANT-GARDES, 1900-1930

(Week 5) Mon., Sept. 24. Le Corbusier and the Villa Savoye

Assignment: Compare your building to the Villa Savoye. Does your building have a *promenade architecturale*? Does it offer a new design for living? New visions of gender and other social relationships? You will need to address the buildings in section.

Read:

Harrison-Moore and Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design, chapter 51, 52, 55.

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Mary McLeod, "New Designs for Living: Domestic Equipment of Charlotte Perriand, Le Corbusier, and Pierre Jeanneret, 1928-29," in Charlotte Perriand: An Art of Living, edited by McLeod (2003), 36-67.

Wikipedia entry: bibliography and description (one paragraph) due

(Week 6) Mon., Oct. 1. Modernism in Germany in the 1920s

Assignment: Compare your building to the Bauhaus, at Dessau. Is your building shaped by utopian values? Consumer culture? Apply Schwartz's concept, "a culture of newness." Does your building appeal to a class-specific market niche? How? Be specific in your analysis, especially of elevations and style.

Read:

Harrison-Moore and Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design, 43, 44, 48, 49.

Frederic J. Schwartz, "The Bauhaus and Weimar Germany's Consumer Culture," in Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War, edited by Kathleen James-Chakraborty (2006), chapter 6.

(Week 7) Mon., Oct. 8. No class (Holiday)

(Week 8) Mon., Oct. 15. Review for midterm exam

PART III: MODERNISM IN THE UNITED STATES, 1920-1950

(Week 9) Mon., Oct. 22. Architecture in the 1930s

Assignment: Compare your building to the Casa del Fascio. What kinds of communities are envisioned and represented in each case? How is modernism used to express inclusion or exclusion, as the case may be? Be sure to consider structure and technology in your answer.

Read:

Review statement by Giuseppe Terragni, excerpted in Peter Eisenman, Giuseppe Terragni: Transformations, Decompositions, Critiques (2003).

Lewis Mumford, "The New Order" (1938), in Sidewalk Critic: Lewis Mumford's Writings on New York, edited by Robert Wojtowicz (2000), 209-212.

Margaret Kohn, "The House of the People," Radical Space (2003), chapter 6.

(Week 10) Mon., Oct. 29. Corporate Modernism

Assignment: Compare your building to the Seagram Building, applying concepts offered by Koolhaas and Willis. What is "economic height"? The "culture of congestion"? Are these ideas opposed? Or two sides of the same coin? Why or why not? How do these ideas help you understand massing and site?

Read:

Rem Koolhaas, "The Skyscraper Theorists," and "The Lives of a Block," Delirious New York: A Retrospective Manifesto for Manhattan (1978), 93-109, 110-126.

Carol Willis, "Form Follows Finance: The Empire State Building," in The Landscape of Modernity: New York, 1900-1940, edited by Ward and Zunz, 160-187.

PART IV: POSTWAR MODERNISM AND TRANSNATIONAL CONTEXTS, 1950-1970

(Week 11) Mon., Nov. 5. Modernism and Transnational Cultural Exchange

Assignment: Compare your building to one in New Gourna. Why do architects become interested in monumentality in the postwar period? In nonwestern vernacular architecture? Is it possible to create an

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“authentic” regional architecture in a global society? Desirable? Select the aspect of the building’s form that helps you make your point.

Read:

Harrison-Moore and Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design, chapter 56, 57.

Hana Taragan, “Architecture in Fact and Fiction: The Case of the New Gourni Village in Upper Egypt,” Muqanas 16 (1999), 169-179.

Zeynep Çelik, “Cultural Intersections: Re-visioning Architecture and the City in the Twentieth Century,” in At the End of the Century: One Hundred Years of Architecture, Richard Koshalek and Elizabeth A.T. Smith (1998), 190-227. Read at least through p. 215.

(Week 12) Mon., Nov. 12. The High-Modernist City

Assignment: Compare your building to the Museu de Arte de São Paulo by Lina Bo Bardi. How are they disassociated with the past? Why? Assess political, as well as aesthetic objectives, applying insights offered by Scott and Çelik. Select the aspect of the building’s form that helps you make your point.

Read:

Harrison-Moore and Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design, chapter 53, 58.

James C. Scott, “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), chapter 4.

Finish Çelik, “Cultural Intersections,” if you haven’t already done so.

Wikipedia entry: review draft due

PART V: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE, 1970-2000

(Week 13) Mon., Nov. 19. Critiques of Modernism

Assignment: Compare your building to Centraal Beheer. Apply Crinson’s definition of nostalgia. Is association with the past desired? Why or why not? Select the aspect of the building’s form that helps you make your point.

Read:

Harrison-Moore and Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design, chapter 59.

Alison Smithson, ed., “Team 10 Primer,” “Doorstep,” in Team 10 Primer (1968), 20-33, 96-105.

Mark Crinson, “The Uses of Nostalgia: Stirling and Gowan’s Preston Housing,” Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 65 no. 2 (June 2006): 216-237.

(Week 14) Mon., Nov. 26. Architecture and History

Assignment: Come to class prepared to discuss the relevance of this week’s readings to your project.

Read:

Harrison-Moore and Rowe, ed., Architecture and Design, chapters 60, 61, 62, 63.

Marshall Berman, “Modernity: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow,” in All That Is Solid Melts Into Air (1982), introduction.

Susan Stanford Friedman, “Definition Excursions: The Meanings of Modern, Modernity, Modernism,” Modernism/Modernity 8 no. 3 (2001): 493-513.

(Week 15) Mon., Dec. 3. Wrap up

Review for final exam: TBA

Final Exam: TBA

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Wikipedia entry: due two days after the final exam, 9:30 am. No exceptions.