Politics of Public Space

Focusing on architecture, urbanism, and in one case comic strip and photography, the course examines the politics of public space in varied regions of the world starting from the International Exposition in 1851 to mega-projects in the oil-rich Gulf states to the dystopias of Second Life and Abu Ghraib. The various implicit and explicit political uses of cities, structures, images, and signs is explored through historical and theoretical analysis of the following sites and events: ancient and Renaissance Europe, Iran from nationalism to revolution; Saddam’s Iraq and Taliban’s Afghanistan; Ground Zero; Abu Ghraib; Disneyland(s); oil-architecture; Facebook and Second Life. By contextualizing each case in its specific sociopolitical history, the course examines as to how are edifices used as a site of power and resistance in politically charged societies? Why are images-as-representation so central to the making of narratives about modern identities and civil order? How do these shifting uses of the public texts leave their imprint on form, function, and meaning? Our aim is to understand how art both endorses political discourse and, by contrast, sustains social resistance.

Class lectures, class discussions, films viewing, class debates, case study projects led by students, a model building project, and a field trip to Cambridge-Boston will complement the interactive nature of this critical and analytic course. Active student participation and critical thinking during the various projects, pin ups, class discussions, and field trips are central to the experience and expectation of this class.
REQUIREMENTS

Exam
There is only one exam on the last day of this course. It must be taken when scheduled. The exam will have multiple parts: comparisons, a collage, and two essay questions. A review session prior to the exam, during which details will be provided, will give you a very good idea of what to expect and how to prepare.

Model Project
For this project, you/your team will be asked to design a public space, a public monument. A research paper (1,500 words), accompanied by a three-dimensional model will be displayed and examined in class. Each group will speak about its project and paper. Papers much be uploaded on LATTE on time. Models have to fit into a 20x20 inch format. You are free to choose the material. Handwritten, emailed, or incorrectly formatted papers will be disregarded.

Case Study
Student teams are to present to the class the history and design concepts of specific buildings from the list provided below by the instructor. These will include telling examples of various public spaces and will serve as case studies to closely examine and analyze the readings.

Grading
Grading scale follows standard Brandeis scale. All grades will be posted on LATTE. I cannot pass out grades nor discuss your grades in public. Please come to my office hours.

Participation
This is a reading intensive as well as hands-on course in which you are expected to spend a lot of time reading and discussing books and articles. Readings assigned must be done prior to the start of the session under which they appear in the syllabus. The books listed below are highly recommended; I encourage you to buy and keep these books. If you do not buy them, then borrow them from libraries, etc. Some of them will not be posted on LATTE. However, other articles and book-chapters outside these recommended books are posted on LATTE under ‘Readings’ file. Class notes under ‘Notes’ and other instructions are also posted on LATTE under the appropriate files. Because of large size and other considerations, lectures will NOT be posted on LATTE.

Recommended Books
Baudrillard, Jean. The Conspiracy of Art (Semiotext(e), 2005)
Baudrillard, Jean, Simulacra and Simulation (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1994)
Grigor, Talinn. Building Iran (New York: Prestel, 2009)
Mitchell, Timothy. Colonising Egypt (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1991)

My Availability
Office Hours: Thursdays 11:00-1:30, in my office Mandel 207. Make sure you let me know that you are coming before passing by [tgrigor@brandies.edu]. I will be available to answer your questions. We can also arrange an appointment. I encourage you to speak to me right before and after lectures in class for short answer questions. If you think that your question might interest other students, ask it during class.

Miscellaneous
I expect my students to abide by the academic honor code. I count on their integrity, honesty, and hard work to create a productive and an intellectually stimulating environment. Students with special needs, see me at the beginning of the semester. This syllabus, the schedule of courses, and requirements for the class will be followed; in the case of unforeseen exceptions, these are subject to change at my discretion.
Aug 29  Space: Introductions

Sep 2  Debate: Definitions
Hein, Hilde. ‘What is public art?: Time, place, and meaning,’ Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism 54/1 (Winter 1996) 1-7

Each student must bring to class a paragraph of a definition of public space along with an image of such a public space, to be discussed in class

Sep 5  City: Histories
Ackerman, James. ‘The Capitoline Hill,’ The Architecture of Michelangelo (1986) ch. 6
Krautheimer, Richard. The Rome of Alexander VII (1985) 3-14, 47-73, optional
Connors, Joseph. ‘Alliance and enmity in Roman Baroque urbanism,’ Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana 25 (1989) optional

Sep 9  Debate: Definitions
Habermas, Jurgen. ‘Introduction,’ The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (1991) 1-26

Each student must bring to class a paragraph of a re-definition of public space along with an image of such a public space, to be discussed in class

Sept 12  Case 1: International Exposions in London 1851, Paris 1889, Chicago 1893
Barthes, Roland. ‘The Eiffel Tower,’ The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies (1979) 3-17
Wildman, Stephen. ‘Great, Greater, Greatest?: Anglo-French rivalry at the Great Exhibitions of 1851, 1855 and 1862,’ RJA Journal 137/5398 (Sep 1989) 660-64
Mitchell, Timothy. ‘Egypt at the exhibition,’ Colonising Egypt (Cambridge, 1988) ch. 1
Çelik, Zeynep & Leila Kenney. ‘Ethnography and exhibitionism at the Expositions Universelles,’ Assemblage (Dec 1990) 35-58

Sep 16  Tomb
Grigor, Talinn. Building Iran (New York, 2009) 46-81

Sep 19  Ruin
Grigor, Talinn. ‘Preserving the modern antique: Persepolis ‘71,’ Future Anterior 2/1 (Summer 2005) 22-9

Sep 23  Brandeis day, no class
Sep 26  University holiday, no class

Sept 30  White
Grigor, Talinn. ‘Of metamorphosis,’ Third Text 17/3 (Sept 2003) 207-25
Oct 3  Park

Sorkin, Michael. ‘See you in Disneyland,’ Design Quarterly 154 (Winter 1992) 5-13

Oct 7  Replacement of field trip, no class

Oct 10  Case 2: California Plaza and Piazza d'Italia, Los Angeles, California, USA

Doherty, Killian. ‘The re-feudalisation of public space,’ Building Material 19 (Autumn 2009) 98-103

Oct 14  Museum


Oct 17  Case 3: Surprise me

Sun TBA  Public Space in Boston & Cambridge Field Trip

Meet me in front of the metro entrance at Harvard Square
Harvard Square, Cambridge
Harvard’s Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Le Corbusier, Cambridge, 1964
MIT’s Brain and Cognitive Sciences Complex, Charles Correa, Cambridge, 2005
MIT’s Stata Center, Frank Gehry, Cambridge, 2004
MIT’s Kresge Auditorium, Eero Saarinen, Cambridge, 1955
MIT’s Kresge Chapel, Eero Saarinen, Cambridge, 1955
MIT’s Baker Dormitory, Alvar Aalto, Cambridge, 1947
Boylston Tower Records, Frank Gehry, Back Bay, 1989
Public Library Addition, Philip Johnson, Back Bay, 1969
Hancock Tower, I. M. Pei, Back Bay, 1977
Copley Square, Boston

Oct 21  Monument

Al-Khalil, Samir. The Monument (London, 1991) 68-77 & 116-34

Oct 24  Case 4: The Wall(s), Jerusalem, Mini-Israel and Exhibition, Latrun, Israel

Loshitzky, Yosefa. ‘Shchur: the orient within,’ Identity Politics of the Israeli Screen (Austin, 2001) 72-89
Nitzan-Shiftan, Alona. ‘The Walled City and the White City: The construction of the Tel Aviv/ Jerusalem dichotomy,’ Perspecta 39 (2007) 92-104
* Find further relevant articles in media on the topics in particular on the new wall
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<th>Date</th>
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| Oct 31 | Case 5: Tahrir Square, Cairo, Egypt | Scott, James. ‘Authoritarian high modernism,’ *Seeing like a State* (New Haven, 1998) 87-132  
Rabbat, Nasser. ‘The Arab revolution takes back the public space,’ *Critical Inquiry* 39/1 (Autumn 2012) 198-208  
Rabbat, Nasser. ‘Circling the square,’ *Artforum* (Apr 2011) 182-91  
|        |                                | * Find further relevant articles in media on the topics |
| Nov 4-7 | Model Project                  | In-class Display & Presentation  
A research paper (1,500 words), accompanied by a three-dimensional model will be displayed and examined in class. Each group will speak about its project and paper.  
Papers must be uploaded on LATTE on time.  
Models have to fit into a 20x20 inch format. You are free to choose the material.  
Handwritten, emailed, or incorrectly formatted papers will be given no grade. |
| Nov 11 | Prison                         | Eisenman, Stephan. ‘Stage of cruelty,’ ‘Orientalism,’ ‘What is Western art?’  
Sontag, Susan. ‘What have we done?’ *The Guardian* (May 2004) |
Westlake, E.J. ‘Friend me if you Facebook: Generation Y and performative surveillance,’ *TDR* 52/4 (Winter 2008) 21-40  
El-Husseiny, Momen. ‘Deconstructing the myth of “Tahrir” and “the Facebook Revolution”,’ *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 24/1 (Fall 2012) 78  
|        |                                | * Find further relevant articles in media on the topics |
| Nov 18 | Casino                         | Chase, John. ‘The garret, the boardroom, and the amusement park,’ *Journal of Architectural Education* 47/2 (Nov 1993) 75-87 |
| Nov 21 | Tower                          | Huyssen, Andreas. ‘Twin memories: Afterimages of 9/11,’ *Grey Room* 7 (Spring 2002) 8-13 |
| Nov 25 | Exam Review                    | |
| Nov 28 |                                | University holiday |

**Grigor . Syllabus 5**
Dec 2
Case 7: 9/11 Site, Memorial, and Museum, New York, New York, USA
  Glanz, James and Eric Lipton, ‘Towering ambitions: The rise of the World Trade Center,’
  New York Times Magazine (8 Sep 2002) 32-58
  [also check their website: http://www.renewnyc.com/]
  Edelman, Susan. ‘The 9/11 museum’s absurd giftshop,’ New York Post (18 May 2014)
  Herscher, Andrew. ‘The language of damage,’ Grey Room 7 (Spring 2002) 68-71
  Easterling, Keller. ‘Enduring innocence,’ Grey Room 7 (Spring 2002) 106-13
  Baudrillard, Jean. ‘The conspiracy of art,’ ‘Art contemporary…of itself,’ ‘Towards a vanishing
  point of art,’ & ‘War porn,’ The Conspiracy of Art (2005) 25-9, 89-110, 205-12
  * Find further relevant articles in media on the topics

Dec 5
Exam