Art History O699  
The Twentieth Century Metropolis: Theory and Representation  
Temple University, Department of Art History  
Spring Semester 2006  
Main Campus  
Tuttleman Learning Center, 307 AB  
Thursday, 3:00-5:00 PM

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Office hours: Tuesday, 2:00-5:00 PM

* E-mail is generally the best method of contact during non-office hours.  
* Please allow 48-hours for an e-mail response.

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

**Topic and Scope of the Course:** The 20th century metropolis has been characterized as a place, both of profound crisis and of creative intensity in the visual arts. By the late 19th century sociologists and cultural critics had begun to identify the large, industrial metropolis as the site of a dramatic break with all previous societies. Not only did the metropolis produce a physical form of unprecedented scale and visual stimulation, it also seemed to produce a new kind of subjectivity, internally fragmented and externally disassociated from traditional social groups. At the same time that the metropolis was being diagnosed in psychological and cultural terms, it was also becoming an object for aesthetic reflection, both among the artistic avant-gardes, who sought to represent its subjective effects, and among architects and urban planners, who sought to reform its physical shape and thus represent its utopian alternative. Through a critical reading of key texts, this course will examine the metropolis as an object, both of theoretical reflection and of aesthetic representation. The course will involve close readings of authors, such as Georg Simmel, Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, Henri Lefebvre, Manfredo Tafuri, Kevin Lynch, Paul Virilio, Fredric Jameson, and Richard Sennett. These authors, spanning all of the decades of the 20th century, have each in different ways problematized the relationship between the metropolis and its visual representations. There are also clear links between these writings and specific artistic and architectural movements, including German expressionism, CIAM functionalism, Situationism, environmental design, and New Urbanism. This course, likewise, will seek to link the theorization of the metropolis with specific examples of artistic and architectural practice.

Readings for the course will be conceived in a double sense: both as theories which may be more or less applied to contemporary art historical problems and as texts which themselves emerged out of particular historical contexts and which may then be contemplated as historical evidence.

**Purpose of the Course:** This course is an advanced graduate seminar, whose purpose is to provide a forum for methodological discussion and the presentation of individual research. The course will allow students to develop familiarity with a key body of theoretical texts, in order thereby to apply these texts to new or ongoing research projects. Students will be expected to develop research projects related to the theme of the course as well as to present their work to the class. Students will also be expected to take an active role in class discussions, including introducing one of the
Class Format: This course will be a lecture course, with opportunities for questions, discussion and independent research. The lectures and readings are intended to provide a broad, historical overview of American architecture in its international context. This historical background will then be supplemented by explorations of the city of Philadelphia, with its 325-year history of building activity. In addition to the required field trips, at least one other optional field trip will be planned, based on availability and class interest.

Required Texts: Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson eds., The Blackwell City Reader, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002); Neil Leach ed., Rethinking Architecture :A Reader in Cultural Theory, (New York: Routledge, 1997); Photocopied articles and excerpts available on e-reserve. All books are available at the Temple University Bookstore. Further readings, in addition to those listed below, may be added to the course at a later date.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 19: Course Introduction

January 26: Subjects of Metropolis in Early 20th Century Germany:
Ferdinand Tönnies, Community and Society, pp. 223-235, George Simmel, “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” City Reader, pp. 11-19; Czaplicka, John, Pictures of a City at Work, Berlin circa 1890-1930 in Haxthausen and Suhr eds., Berlin, Culture and Metropolis, pp. 3-36; Haxthausen, Charles, “’A New Beauty’: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner’s Images of Berlin,” in Haxthausen and Suhr eds., Berlin, Culture and Metropolis, pp. 58-94.

February 2: Cities and the Avant-Garde in the 1920s

February 9: Chicago School Sociology and “Megalopolis”

February 16: CIAM and the “Functional City”

February 23: Phenomenology and the Question of “Dwelling”
Heidegger, Martin, “Building, Dwelling, Thinking,” Rethinking Architecture, pp. 100-124;
March 2: Henri LeFebvre and Situationism

March 9: [SPRING BREAK --- NO CLASS]

March 16: Postwar Planning and Its U.S. Critics

March 23: Semiotics and the City

March 30: The Postmodern Metropolis

April 6: Contested Urban Spaces

April 13: The Body and the City

April 20: Globalism and the New Media

April 27: Student Presentations
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements:
The course is an advanced graduate seminar in art history, with a heavy emphasis on the modern period. Evaluations will be based on class participation, project presentations, a project proposal, and a final seminar project, consisting of a 15-20-page paper arising out of a dialog with the readings in the course. These projects will be presented as 15-minute oral presentations at the last seminar session. Course performance will be evaluated on a combination of class participation, especially close attention to the readings, and independent research, both written and presented to the class.

Relative weight of course requirements:

1) Research Paper Proposal (15%)
2) Research Paper Presentation (15%)
3) Final Research Paper (50%)
4) Class Participation (20%)

Policy on late assignments and class participation:

Extensions and incompletes will only be granted in cases of documented personal emergencies. Since class participation is an essential component of the course, students may normally not miss more than 2 sessions without their final grades being negatively affected.

Exceptional Accommodations:

Any student who has a documented need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should discuss the matter privately with me within the first two weeks of classes. The student should also contact Disability Resources and Services at (215) 204-1280.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

This syllabus is subject to change, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, or in the case that changes will significantly enhance the quality of the course.