

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

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readings during the semester.

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

Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire" and "Paris, Capital of the 19th Century" *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 25-40; Siegfried Kracauer, "The Hotel Lobby" and "On Employment Agencies," *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 53-64; David Frisby, "Social Theory, the Metropolis and Expressionism," in Benson ed., *Expressionist Utopias*.

February 9: Chicago School Sociology and "Megalopolis"

Burgess, Ernest, "The Growth of the City," *City Reader*, pp. 244-50; Wirth, Louis, "Urbanism as a Way of Life"; Mumford, Lewis, "Introduction" and "The Rise and Fall of Megalopolis," from *The Culture of Cities*, pp. 3-12, 223-299; Barnes, Djuna, "The Hem of Manhattan," *City Reader*, pp. 71-75.

February 16: CIAM and the "Functional City"

Le Corbusier The City of Tomorrow and Its Planning (excerpt), *City Reader*, pp. 20-38; Adorno, Theodor, "Functionalism Today," *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 6-19; Tafuri, Manfredo, *Architecture and Utopia*, Chapters 4 and 5, pp. 78-124; Hays, K. Michael, "Groszstadtarchitektur and Weimarstimmung: The Construction of the Paranoid Subject," from *Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject*, pp. 241-277.

February 23: Phenomenology and the Question of "Dwelling"

Heidegger, Martin, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 100-124;

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Bachelard *The Poetics of Space* (excerpt), *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 86-97; Dal Co, Francesco, "Dwelling and the Places of Modernity," in *Figures of Architecture and Thought*, pp. 13-79.

March 2: Henri LeFebvre and Situationsism

LeFebvre, Henri: "The Right to the City," *City Reader*, pp. 367-74 and *The Production of Space*, pp. 1-67; Viouleau, Jean-Louis, "A Critique of Architecture: The Bitter Victory of the Situationist International," in Goldhagen and Legault eds., *Anxious Modernisms*, pp. 239-59.

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

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

Lynch, Kevin, (excerpt), *City Reader*, pp. 30-38 and "Introduction," *The Image of the City*, pp. 1-13; Jacobs Jane, "Introduction," *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, pp. 5-34 and (excerpt) *City Reader*, pp. 351-56; Sennett, Richard, (excerpt), *City Reader*, pp. 342-50; Holston, James, "The Modernist City," *City Reader*, pp. 513-23

March 23: Semiotics and the City

Barthes, Roland, "Semiology and the Urban," and "The Eiffel Tower," *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 166-80; De Certeau, Michel, "Walking in the City," *City Reader*, pp. 383-92; Foucault, Michel, "Of Other Spaces" and "Panopticism", *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 350-67

March 30: The Postmodern Metropolis

Jameson, Fredric, "The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" and "Is Space Political?," *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 238-47, 255-69; Lyotard, Jean-François, "Domus and the Megalopolis," *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 271-79; Baudrillard, Jean, "The Beaubourg Effect" and "America", *Rethinking Architecture*, pp. 210-24; Virilio, Paul, "The Overexposed City," *City Reader*, pp. 440-48.

April 6: Contested Urban Spaces

Zukin, Sharon, "Landscapes of Power," *City Reader*, pp. 197-207 and "Whose Culture? Whose City?" in *The Cultures of Cities*, pp. 1-47; Davis, Mike, "City of Quartz," *City Reader*, pp. 323-31; Deutsche, Rosalyn, "Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics," *City Reader*, pp. 401-09.

April 13: The Body and the City

Grosz, Elizabeth, "Bodies-Cities," *City Reader*, pp. 297-303; Vidler, Anthony, "Bodies in Space / Subjects in the City," *City Reader*, pp. 46-51; Sennett, Richard, "Civic Bodies: Multi-Cultural New York," *Flesh and Stone*, pp. 355-76; Young, Iris, "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference," *City Reader*, pp. 430-39.

April 20: Globalism and the New Media

Mitchell, W.J., "City of Bits: Space, Place and the Infobahn," *City Reader*, pp. 52-59; Castells, Manuel, "An Introduction to the Information Age," *City Reader*, pp. 125-34; Sassen, Saskia, "Globalization and Its Discontents," *City Reader*, pp. 161-70; Soja, Edward, "Six Discourses on the Postmetropolis," *City Reader*, pp. 188-96.

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.