

Notes on the Redesign of the Urban History Lab

From focus group convened on 28 May 2015 by Joseph Heathcott. Participants included Nora Elmarzouky, Nadia Elokdah, Gamar Markarian, Sinead Petrasek, Walter Petrichyn, Ravi Govada, and Masoom Moitra. Fadi Shayya, Travis Bostick, and Drew Tucker could not make it, but offered feedback through email and subsequent meetings.

Framework issues that arose from focus group

In order to improve the Urban History Lab, I invited a group of students from both graduate programs to gather together for a focused discussion of all aspects of the course. The focus group proved incredibly useful in obtaining feedback and suggesting revisions. Members of the focus group were not always in agreement on the elements of the course; sometimes these disagreements emerged from the different emphases of the programs, however they often cut across programs as well. In any case, the disagreements were ultimately productive and helped to shape the program for revision. The following points emerged from the discussion, and will serve as a framework for improving the course for the fall of 2015:

- The Urban History Lab should lift up and more forcefully articulate its principal purpose: exploring the nature of temporality in urbanism and design.
- The course needs a better balance between content and skills, i.e.--more skill-based work related to historical study and temporal analysis.
- The course would be improved by a stronger organization; the flow of weekly themes is not always clear, and occasionally seems repetitious.
- Reading list might be trimmed, but should retain emphasis on wide range of voices; this is the only opportunity in the curriculum of both programs for exposure to this kind of material.
- Transnational scope is vitally important, and should be increased to include more scholarship on Sub-Saharan Africa and East / South Asia.
- The course needs more purpose-driven exercises linked more closely to the course materials; it was not always clear why certain texts were chosen.
- Students want to hear more from the instructors in recitation. Student-led discussion is important, but instructors should weigh in more frequently, and help to frame issues.
- The production of a magazine as a final project is a useful exercise; however, it should take up more of the course, unfold in stages with well-defined 'deliverables,' and allow higher word count / space.

Revised Outline for the Urban History Lab

The course will revolve around five core themes that build on one another toward a cumulative knowledge and understanding of temporality, urbanity, and design. This is NOT a classic urban history course based on the construction of a master narrative and it's filling with content. Rather, it is an effort to develop analytic capability around the temporal conditions of urbanism for students interested in intervention. Thus, the emphasis is on temporal and spatial theory, the multiplicity of historical narratives, history as a futurist proposition, and skills necessary to examine the presence of the past.

I. Temporalities

- Week 1. Introduction and orientation. Discussion of time, space, and design
- Week 2. History and its (dis)contents
- Week 3. Urbanism, design, and collective memory

II. Forms

- Week 4. Urban form and meaning over time
- Week 5. Cities and the diagramming of power
- Week 6. Urban change from spectacular to mundane

III. Multiplicities

- Week 7. Identities
- Week 8. Performances
- Week 9. Representations

IV. Networks

- Week 10. Channels of movement
- Week 11. Infrastructures and cyborgs
- Week 12. Ecologies and regions

V. Palimpsests

- Week 13. Resiliencies -- the City at 10,000 years old
- Week 14. Historic layers of globalization

VI. Future Pasts

- Week 15. Final project work week
- Week 16. Final project work week and presentations

Skills to develop in the course

This course will introduce students to a range of skills and capacities necessary for reading historical scholarship and engaging in temporal analysis. *The goal is not to produce finished historians, but rather to deepen the sensitivities of urbanists to change over time.* Students interested to develop any of these skills in greater depth can take advantage of elective courses at NSSR, particularly those offered by Historical Studies and Anthropology, or in Media Studies at NSPE.

- Temporal theory - time in space and space over time / history as a futurist proposition / time as a discursive condition / alternative visions and embodiments of time
- Historiography - devising a useful bibliography of scholarly sources on the history of specific times / places (connected to final projects)
- Archival method - reading and interpreting primary sources, historic documents as literary artifacts, the archive as a condition of knowledge
- Critical cartography - maps as arguments about time and space, maps as visual evidence, subversive mapping
- Visual analysis - form, meaning, and discourse in varied modalities of imagery over time, such as photographs, maps, drawings, plans, film

Student Work and Evaluation

The assignments in the course will be linked more closely to the stepwise development of a skill set, culminating in a final project undertaken in small groups. Evaluation of student work will make use of a thoroughly devised matrix of criteria. In addition to class participation, student work in the course will consist of the following exercises:

- Weekly brief, one page only, with five points and five questions for discussion
- Two primary source reports (document / image or map), 3-5 pages each
- Final project with the following elements
 - Exploration of a specific urban condition or phenomenon over a delimited time frame (building, street, intersection, campus, district, neighborhood, network, corridor, facility)
 - Production of an essay not to exceed 2500 words
 - Bibliography of primary and secondary sources
 - Accompanying maps and images, properly captioned and interpreted

Matrix for evaluation student outcomes in the course:

Outcome	Spectrum of development			
	4	3	2	1
Participation Measured through attendance and contribution to discussions.				
Conceptual rigor Measured through the weekly response assignments (briefs).				
Facility with methods --documents Measured through the primary source reports.				
Facility with methods --images or maps Measured through the primary source reports.				
Historiography Measured through the bibliography and sourcing for the final project.				
Critical and analytic capacity Measured through the argument, presentation, and overall quality of the final project				

Readings to Drop

These readings will not be required, but may appear on the syllabus under the 'recommended reading' section.

- Spiro Kostof, *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings through History* (Boston: Bulfinch Press, 1991), Introduction, pp. 9-41.
- Peter Hall, *Cities in Civilization* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998), Chapter 1: Great Cities and their Golden Ages, pp. 3-23.
- Besim Salim Hakim, *Arabic-Islamic Cities: Building and Planning Principles*, (KPI Limited, 1986), Introduction and Chapter 1: Islamic Law and Neighborhood Building Guidelines, pp. 11-54.
- Spiro Kostof, *The City Assembled: The Elements of Urban Form Through History*, (Boston: Bulfinch Press, 1991), Chapter 5: Urban Process, pp. 245-298.
- Larry Ford, "The Downtown Frame: Buildings in Transition," in *Cities and Buildings*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, 1994, pp. 64-94.
- Mike Royko, ch. 1, in *Boss* (New York: Plume, 1988), pp. 1-22.
- Marina Areli, "From the Myth to the Margins: The Patriarch's Piazza at San Pietro di Castello in Venice", *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (Summer 2011), pp. 353-429.
- Joseph Heathcott, "Ephemeral City: Design and Civic Meaning at the 1904 World's Fair," *Journal of Design History* 26, 1 (2013), pp. 25-46.
- H. C. Kiang, "Kaiefeng and Yangzhou: The Birth of the Commercial Street", in *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 45-56
- Richard Ingersoll, "Piazza Di Ponte and the Military Origins of Panopticism," in *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 177-188.
- Aseem Inam, "Tensions Manifested: Reading the Viceroy's Palace in New Delhi" in *The Emerging Asian City: Concomitant Urbanities and Urbanisms* (Routledge, 2013), pp. 99-109.
- Wang Jun, "The People's City", *AD Magazine: Special Issue: New Urban China*, September/October 2008, pp. 44-51.
- Diane Favro, "The iconiCITY of ancient Rome," *Urban History*, vol. 33, (2006), pp. 20-38.
- Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), Chapter 1, Maps and Sewers, pp. 14-26.
- Matthew Gandy, "Planning, Anti-Planning, and the Infrastructure Crisis Facing Metropolitan Lagos," in *Cities in Contemporary Africa*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 247-265.
- Takashi Machimura, "Symbolic Uses of Globalization in Urban Politics in Tokyo," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 22, 2 (1998), pp. 183-194.
- M. Elen Deming, "Gardens and the Working Body in the British Utopian Project," in Annette Giesecke and Naomi Jacobs, eds. *The Good Gardener?* (Artifice, 2014), pp. 188-201.
- Janet Abu-Lughod, "Tale of Two Cities: The Origins of Modern Cairo," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 7, 4 (1965), pp. 429-457.

Anthony King, "Actually Existing Postcolonialisms," in R. Bishop et al, eds. *Postcolonial Urbanism*, (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 167-186.

Elizabeth Wilson, "The Invisible Flâneur," *New Left Review* 191 (1992).

Jerry Herron, "Three Meditations on the Ruins of Detroit," in *Stalking Detroit* (Barcelona, Actar, 2001).

Howard Spodek, "Local Meets Global: Establishing New Perspectives in Urban History-Lessons from Ahmedabad," *Journal of Urban History* December 21, 2012.

Austin Zeiderman, "Cities of the future?: Megacities and the space/time of urban modernity," *Critical Planning*, Summer 2008, pp. 23-39.

Nezar AlSayyad and Ananya Roy, "Medieval Modernity: On Citizenship and Urbanism in a Global Era." *Space and Polity*, 10, 1 (2006), pp.1-20.

Maya Marx, "A Shanghai Slaughterhouse Reborn," in *Interventions/Adaptive Reuse* (2011), pp. 20-27.

Readings to Retain

These readings will be part of the required content of the course.

AbdouMaliq Simone, "On the Worlding of African Cities," *African Studies Review* 44 (2001), pp. 15-41.

Vyjayanthi Rao, "Embracing Urbanism: City as Archive," *New Literary History* 40, 2 (2009), pp. 371-383.

Michael Smith, "Form and Meaning in the Earliest Cities: A New Approach to Ancient Urban Planning", *Journal of Planning History*, Feb. 2007.

Hassan Radoine, "Planning Paradigm in the Madina: Order in Randomness," *Planning Perspectives* 26:4, pp. 527-549.

Keller Easterling, "Subdivision Products," in *Organization Space: Landscapes, Highways, and Houses in America*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999, pp. 129-135.

Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (Verso, 2006), Chapter 1: The Urban Climacteric, pp. 1-26.

Vinayak Bharne, "Anointed Cities: The Incremental Urbanism of Hindu India," in *The Emerging Asian City: Concomitant Urbanities and Urbanisms*, (Routledge, 2012), pp. 17-26.

Angel Rama, "The Ordered City," in *The Lettered City* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), pp. 1-15.

M. Christine Boyer, *Dreaming the Rational City: The Myth of American City Planning* (MIT, 1983). Chapter 2, "The Quest for Disciplinary Control." pp. 9-32.

Yasser Elsheshtawy, "Arabian Tabula Rasa: Abu-Dhabi's Urban Imaginary," *After Zero* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2009), pp. 98-110.

Robin Adèle Greeley, "The Performative Politicization of Public Space: Mexico 1968-2008-2012," *thresholds* 41 (Spring 2013), pp. 18-31.

H. C. Kiang, "Kaiefeng and Yangzhou: The Birth of the Commercial Street," in *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 45-56.

Suzi Hall, Chapter 2 "The Boundaries of Belonging," in *City, Street and Citizen: The Measure of the Ordinary* (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 31-51.

Dominique Malaquais, "Douala/Johannesburg/New York: Cityscapes Imagined" in *Cities in Contemporary Africa*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp.31-53.

Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), Chapter 1, Maps and Sewers, pp. 14-26.

Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism* (London: Routledge, 2001), Chapter 2, Constructing the Modern Networked City, 1850-1960, pp. 39-89.

Edward Soja, "Metropolis in Crisis," in *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*, (Oxford, Blackwell, 2001), pp. 95-116.

Achille Mbembe, "Aesthetics of Superfluity," in *Public Culture* 16, 3 (2004), pp. 373-405.

William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991). Chapter 4, "The Wealth of Nature: Lumber," pp. 148-206.

Eric Swyngedouw, "The City in a Glass of Water," in *Social Power and the Urbanization of Water* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 27-50.

Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (Alfred A.Knopf, 1993), Introduction, pp. xi-xxvii.

Giorgio Agamben, "What is a Camp," in *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, (California, Stanford University Press, 1998).

Xavier de Souza Briggs, "After Katrina: Rebuilding Places and Lives," *City & Community* 5 (2006), pp. 119-128.

Justin Jennings, "Cities and the Spread of the First Global Cultures," in *Globalizations and the Ancient World*, (Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 35-57.

Aihwa Ong, "Worlding Cities, or the Art of Being Global," in Ananya Roy and Aihwa Ong, eds., *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

Joseph Heathcott, "Historic Urban Landscapes of the Swahili Coast: New Frameworks for Conservation," in *UNESCO, Swahili Historic Urban Landscapes* (Paris: UNESCO, 2013).

Pool of Readings for Possible Addition

A selection of the readings listed below will be incorporated into the syllabus.

~~Barbara Adam, "Time," *Theory, Culture, Society* 23 (2006): 119-126.~~

~~Hayden White, "The Historical Document as Literary Artifact," in *Tropics of Discourse* (Johns Hopkins, 1986).~~

~~Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak," Charles Merewether, ed., *The Archive* (MIT 2006).~~

~~Nancy Stieber, "Microhistory of the Modern City: Urban Space, Its Use and Representation," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58: 3 (Sep. 1999): 382-391.~~

~~Jennifer Robinson, "Reimagining the City through Comparative Urbanism," in *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development* (Routledge, 2006), pp. 41-64.~~

~~Pedram Dibazar et al, "Questioning Urban Modernity," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16, 6 (2013): 643-658.~~

~~Shibu Raman and Nicola Dempsey, "Cultural Diversity and Spatial Structure in the Indian Urban Context," *Journal of Urban Design* 17, 3 (2012), 425-447.~~

- Margarita Gutman, "The power of Anticipation: Itinerant Images of Metropolitan Futures in Buenos Aires 1900-1920," in Javier Monclus and Manuel Guardia, eds., *Culture, Urbanism and Planning* (Ashgate, 2006).
- Matthew Gandy, "Cyborg Urbanization: Complexity and Monstrosity in the Contemporary City," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29, 1 (2005), pp. 26-49.
- Li Shiqiao, "The City of Maximum Quantities," in *Understanding the Chinese City* (Sage 2014), pp. 28-54.
- Andreas Huyssen, "Memory Sites in an Expanded Field: The Memory Park in Buenos Aires," *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford 2003).
- James Scott, "Cities, People, Language," in Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta, eds., *The Anthropology of the State* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2006).
- Ambe Njoh, "French Colonial Urbanism in Africa, in Urban Planning," in Carlos Nunes Silva, ed., *Subsaharan Africa* (Routledge 2015), pp. 95-108.
- Javier Monclus, "International Exhibitions and Urban Design Paradigms," in *Exhibitions and the Development of Modern Planning Culture*, eds. Robert Freestone and Marco Amati (Ashgate 2014), pp. 225-242.
- Tanis Hinchcliffe, "The Synoptic View: Aerial Photography in Twentieth-Century Urban Planning," in Andrew Higgot and Timothy Wray, eds., *Camera Constructs: Photography, Architecture, and the Modern City* (Ashgate 2011), pp. 136-146.
- Zahid Chaudhary, "Sensation and Photography," in *Afterimage of Empire: Photography in Nineteenth-Century India* (University of Minnesota Press, 2012), pp. 1-36.
- H. C. Kiang, "Kaifeng and Yangzhou: The Birth of the Commercial Street," in *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 45-56.
- Teresa Caldeira, "Imprinting and Moving Around: New Visibilities and Configurations of Public Space in São Paulo," *Public Culture* 24(2): 385-419.
- Yukiko Koga, "The Architecture of a Foreign Country: Harbin's Architectural Inheritance," in Anne Cronin and Kevin Hetherington, eds., *Consuming the Entrepreneurial City: Image, Memory, Spectacle* (Routledge, 2008), pp. 221-253.
- Ole Jensen, "Flows of Meaning, Cultures of Movements: Urban Mobility as Meaningful Everyday Life Practice," *Mobilities* 4:1 (2009): 140-141.
- Robert Churchill, "Urban Cartography and the Mapping of Chicago," *Geographical Review* 94, 1 (2004), pp. 1-22.
- David Scobey, "The Anatomy of the Promenade: The Politics of Bourgeois Sociability in Nineteenth-Century New York," *Social History* 17 (1992): pp. 203-227.
- Duanfang Lu, "Introduction: Architecture, Modernity, and Identity in the Third World," in Duanfang Lu, ed., *Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity* (Routledge, 2010), pp. 1-28.
- Joan Aruz, ed., *Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003).

- Brent Ryan, "Reading Through a Plan," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 77, 4 (2012): 309-327.
- Orhan Pamuk, "Introduction," in *The Innocence of Objects* (Abrams 2012).
- Kathryn J. Oberdeck, "Archives of the Unbuilt Environment," in Antoinette Burton, *Archive Stories*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), pp. 251-273.
- Michael Balter, "Why Settle Down? The Mystery of Communities," *Science*, 20 November, 1998, pp.1442-1445.
- Ranjani Mazumdar, "Urban Allegories," in *Bombay Cinema: An Archive of the City* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007), pp. xvii-xxxvii.
- María Carrascal Pérez et al, "Housing Development in Urban Peripheries: The Hispanic-African Colonial Territories, 1912–1976–2013," in Carlos Nunes Silva, ed., *Subsaharan Africa* (Routledge 2015), pp. 180-200.
- Louise White, "Prostitution in Comparative Perspective: Casual Sex, Casual Labor," in *The Comforts of Home* (University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 1-28.
- Zeynep Çelik, "The Indigenous House," in *Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontations* (University of California Press, 1997), pp. 87-112.
- Amitava Kumar, *A Matter of Rats: A Short Biography of Patna* (Duke University Press, 2014).
- Arjun Appadurai, "Spectral Housing and Urban Cleansing: Notes on Millennial Mumbai," *Public Culture* 12(3): 627-651.
- Duanfang Lu, "Socialist Space, Postcolonial Time," in *Remaking Chinese Urban Form: Modernity, Scarcity and Space, 1949-2005* (Routledge, 2006).
- Ramón Gutiérrez, 'Buenos Aires, a Great European City', in Arturo Almandoz, ed., *Planning Latin America's Capital Cities, 1850-1950* (London: Routledge, 2002).
- Chiu-Shui Chan Ying Xiong, "The Features and Forces that Define, Maintain, and Endanger Beijing Courtyard Housing," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 24, 1 (2007), pp. 42-64.
- Jay Edwards, "Shotgun: The Most Contested House in America," *Buildings & Landscapes* 16, 1 (2009), pp. 62-96.
- Vikramaditya Prakash, "Third World Modernism or Just Modernism: Toward a Cosmopolitan Reading of Modernism," in Duanfang Lu, ed., *Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity* (Routledge, 2010), pp. 1-28.