

Political Theory and Architecture

Lent 2023

Course organiser

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Course Outline

This class will examine some of the ways in which politics and architecture intersect. Although this is a popular topic of analysis in a variety of scholarly fields, including geography, sociology, and urban studies, political theorists today rarely address it. This is a major intellectual gap. During the twentieth century and into our own times – the main historical focus of the course – architecture and politics have been deeply interwoven, though in often complex and unpredictable ways. Architects have frequently sought to shape (or even radically transform) social and political life, and studying architecture involves grappling with many of the central concerns of political theory: power, democracy, rights, citizenship, and justice, to name but a few.

The course opens with some general writings on the relationship between space, building and politics. Seminar II introduces three theoretical approaches that are often employed for thinking about the relationship between architecture and power. The next three seminars address the political inflections of architectural modernism. Thus, Seminar III looks at three classic analyses of the rise of the modern city, Seminar IV explores the utopian dimensions of modernism, and Seminar V looks at some criticisms of the modernist project. The final two Seminars explore how we might think about the built environment in relation to questions of justice, rights and democracy.

Teaching

The course comprises 7 seminars. Students are expected to read the set texts for each session and to participate actively in the discussion.

Sessions

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| <i>Topics</i> |
| Building Worlds: Space, Power, Architecture |
| Three Models: Arendt, Foucault, Lefebvre |
| The Shock of the New: Thresholds of Modernity |
| Brave New Worlds: Modernism, Ideology, Utopia |
| Incipient Totalitarianism? Some Critiques of Modernism |
| Architecture and Democracy |
| Rights and Citi-zenship |

Assessment

The course will be assessed by a 3,000-word essay that explores a question of relevance to the core themes and topics of the course. Questions will be set by the seminar leader and released in January. Please ensure that essays are appropriately formatted, citations are consistent, and bibliography attached. The essay is due in March, on a date to be confirmed by the MPhil Director.

Readings

Set texts will form the main basis for discussion in the seminars. *Further readings* are provided as a guide for students who wish to explore topics in greater depth.

All set texts should be accessible on-line. Journal articles can be accessed through the university electronic systems. Chapters in books will be made available on the course Moodle site.

Seminar I: Building Worlds: Space, Power, Architecture

Set Texts

Margaret Kohn, *Radical Space: Building the House of the People* (Cornell, 2003), “Introduction” and ch. 1: “Space and Politics”

William Whyte, “How Do Buildings Mean? Some Issues in the Interpretation in the History of Architecture,” *History & Theory*, 45 (2006)

Bernardo Zacka, “What is Public Space For? Political Imaginaries and Policy Implications” in Annabelle Lever and Andrei Poama (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Ethics and Public Policy* (Routledge, 2019)

Further Reading

Aggregate, *Governing by Design: Architecture, Economy, and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012)

Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans Maria Jolas (Beacon Press, 1994 [1958])

Duncan Bell and Bernardo Zacka (eds.), *Political Theory and Architecture* (Bloomsbury, 2020)

Kim Dovey, *Framing Places: Mediating Power in Built Form*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2008)

Keller Easterling, *Enduring Innocence: Global Architecture and its Political Masquerades* (MIT Press, 2005)

Raymond Geuss, *A World Without Why* (2014), ch. 8: “Politics and Architecture”

Deyan Sudjic, *The Edifice Complex: How the Rich and Powerful Shape the World* (Penguin, 2005)

Albena Yaneva, *Five Ways to Make Architecture Political: An Introduction to the Politics of Design Practice* (Bloomsbury, 2017)

Sharon M. Meagher, Samantha Noll, Joseph S. Biehl (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy and the City* (2019)

Seminar II: Three Models: Arendt, Foucault, Lefebvre

Set Texts

Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1998), ch. 2, sec. 7: “The Public Realm: The Common”

Michel Foucault, “Space, Knowledge and Power,” [1982] in Foucault, *Essential Works*, Vol 3: Power

Henri Lefebvre, “Reflections on the Politics of Space” (1970) in Lefebvre, *State, Space, World: Selected Essays*, ed. Neil Brenner & Stuart Elden (Minnesota, 2009)

Further Reading

Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (Penguin, 2006 [1963]), ch. 6: “The Revolutionary Tradition and its Lost Treasure”

Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, ed. Miran Božović (Verso, 2010)

Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Polity, 1989 [1962]), esp. sec. II: “Social Structures of the Public Sphere”

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Penguin, 1977 [1975]), Pt. 3, ch. 3: “Panopticism”

Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Blackwell, 1991), ch. 2: “Social Space”

Paul Hirst, *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture* (Polity, 2005), ch. 8: “Foucault and Architecture”

Gabriel Rockhill, “The Forgotten Political Art par Excellence: Architecture, Design and the Social Sculpting of the Body Politic” in Nadir Lahiji (ed.), *The Missed Encounter of Radical Philosophy with Architecture* (Bloomsbury, 2014)

Lukasz Stanek, *Henri Lefebvre on Space: Architecture, Urban Research, and the Production of Theory* (Minnesota, 2011)

Seminar III: Brave New Worlds: Modernism, Ideology, Utopia

Set Texts

The following brief texts:

- Antonio Sant'Elia/Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, "Futurist Architecture" (1914), pp. 34-8
- Oskar Schlemmer, "Manifesto for the First Bauhaus Exhibition" (1923), pp. 69-70
- Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, "Working Theses" (1923), pp. 74-5
- CIAM, "La Sarraz Declaration" (1928), pp. 109-113 - El Lissitzky, "Ideological Superstructure" (1929), pp. 121-22

All in: Ulrich Conrads (ed.), *Programs and Manifestos on 20th Century Architecture* (MIT Press, 1971)

Jürgen Habermas, "Modern and Postmodern Architecture" in Habermas, *Critical Theory and Public Life*, ed. John Forester (MIT Press, 1987)

Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, trans. John Goodman (Getty, 2007 [1928]), Sec.: "Architecture or Revolution" (291-307)

Felipe Loureiro, "The Revolutionary Mind of Walter Gropius: Architectural Utopias for the Machine Age," *Utopian Studies*, 25/1 (2014)

Further Reading

Nathaniel Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture* (Routledge, 2005)

Nathaniel Coleman (ed.), *Imagining and Making the World: Reconsidering Architecture and Utopia* (Peter Lang, 2011)

Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique* (MIT Press, 1999)

Owen Hatherley, *Militant Modernism* (Zero, 2009) "Forwards" & "The Brutishness of British Modernism"

Robert Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century: Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier* (MIT Press, 1982)

David Pinder, *Visions of the City: Utopianism, Power and Politics in Twentieth Century Urbanism* (Routledge, 2006)

Utopian Studies, 25/1 (2014), Special Edition: "Architecture and Utopia"

Mauro F. Guillen, *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical: Scientific Management and the Rise of Modernist Architecture* (Princeton, 2006)

Seminar IV: Incipient Totalitarianism? Some Critiques of Modernism

Set Texts

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Random House, 1993 [1961]), "Introduction"

David Milne, "The Artist as Political Hero: Reflections on Contemporary Architectural Theory," *Political Theory*, 8/4 (1980)

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (Yale, 1998), ch. 4: "The High Modernist City: An Experiment and a Critique"

Further Reading

Robert Adam, "Architecture and Globalization," *Architectural Review*, 223 (2008)
<http://www.adamarchitecture.com/images/PDFs/RA-Globalisation.pdf>

Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, & Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form*, rev. ed. (MIT Press, 1977)

Frederic Jameson, "Architecture and the Critique of Ideology" in Jameson, *The Ideologies of Theory* (Verso, 2008)

Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, *Collage City* (MIT Press, 1978)

Simon Sadler, *The Situationist City* (MIT Press, 1998)

Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development* (MIT Press, 1976)

David Watkin, *Morality and Architecture Revisited* (John Murray, 2001)

Seminar V: Architecture and Democracy

Set Texts

Jan-Werner Müller, "What (if Anything) is 'Democratic Architecture'?" in Bell and Zacka (eds.), *Political Theory and Architecture*

Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, 1990), ch. 8: "City Life and Difference"

Bernardo Zacka, "What's in a Balcony? The In-Between as Public Good" in Bell and Zacka (eds.), *Political Theory and Architecture*

Joan Ockman, "What is Democratic Architecture? The Public Life of Buildings," *Dissent*, 58/4 (2011), 65-72

Further Reading

Charles T. Goodsell, *The Social Meaning of Civic Space: Studying Political Authority Through Architecture* (University of Kansas Press, 1988)

John Parkinson, *Democracy and Public Space: The Physical Sites of Democratic Performance* (Oxford UP, 2012)

Marcel Hénaff and Tracy Strong (ed.), *Public Space and Democracy* (Minnesota UP, 1996)

Loren King, "Democracy and City Life," *Politics, Philosophy, and Economics*, 3/1 (2004)

Elizabeth Purcell, "Iris Young's City of Difference" in Meagher, Noll & Biehl (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy and the City*

Seminar VI: Rights & Citi-zenship

Set Texts

Susan Bickford, "Constructing Inequality: City Spaces and the Architecture of Inequality," *Political Theory*, 28/3 (2000)

Margaret Kohn, "Privatization and Protest: Occupy Wall Street, Occupy Toronto, and the Occupation of Public Space," *Perspectives on Politics*, 11/1 (2013)

David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (Verso, 2012), ch. 1: "The Right to the City"

Paul C. Taylor, "Black Lives Matter and the Ferguson Moment: Toward a Philosophy of Urban Relegation" in Meagher, Noll, and Biehl (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy and the City* (2019)

Further Reading

Daniel A. Bell and Avner de-Shalit, *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age* (Princeton, 2011), Introduction: "Civicism"

David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (California, 2000), Part IV: "Conversations on the Plurality of Alternatives"

Benjamin Hoffmann, "Whose Right to the City? Lessons from the Territorial Rights Debate" in Bell and Zacka (eds.), *Political Theory and Architecture*

Henri Lefebvre, "The Right to the City" in Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, ed. Eleonore Kofman & Elizabeth Lebas (Blackwell, 1995)

Lukasz Stanek, *Henri Lefebvre on Space: Architecture, Urban Research, and the Production of Theory* (Minnesota, 2011)

Loren King, "Henri Lefebvre and the Right to the City" in Meagher, Noll & Biehl (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy and the City*

Seminar VII: Justice

Set Texts

Susan Fainstein, "The Just City," *International Journal of Urban Sciences*, 18/1 (2014)

Mihaela Mihai, "Architectural Transitional Justice? Political Renewal within the Scars of a Violent Past," *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, 12/3 (2018)

Fonna Forman and Teddy Cruz, "Global Justice at the Municipal Scale: the Case of Medellín, Colombia" in Luis Cabrera (ed.), *Institutional Cosmopolitanism* (Oxford UP, 2018)

Michael Blake & Loren King, "Global Cities, Global Justice," *Journal of Global Ethics*, 14 (2018)

Further Reading

Susan Fainstein, *The Just City* (Cornell University Press, 2010)

Clarissa Rile Hayward and Todd Swanstrom (eds.), *Justice and the American Metropolis* (University of Minnesota Press, 2011)

Clarissa Rile Hayward, *How Americans Make Race: Stories, Institutions, Spaces* (Cambridge University Press, 2013)

Thad Williamson, *Sprawl, Justice, and Citizenship: The Civic Costs of the American Way of Life* (Oxford University Press, 2011)

Margaret Kohn, *The Death and Life of the Urban Commonwealth* (Oxford University Press, 2016)

Background Reading: Overviews of Modern Architectural Theory and History

Harry Francis Mulgrave, *An Introduction to Architectural Theory, 1968 to the Present* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011)

Jean Louis Cohen, *The Future of Architecture since 1889* (2012)

Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 4th ed. (2007)

Kate Nesbit (ed.), *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory, 1965-1995* (MIT Press, 2000)