GSEM 651: Public Space

Fall 2006

Thursday 2-4 pm, Carpenter 15

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Description: Political, economic, religious and cultural forces govern cities. These powers and their desires translate into the form and function of public spaces. This interdisciplinary graduate seminar first examines public space from a theoretical perspective through lecture classes and student presentations. It will then investigate case studies throughout history and across the world. Finally, it will concentrate in depth on specific ancient and modern cities.

Students in the class come from different backgrounds. In order to make the topic approachable for all and to give an interdisciplinary perspective, we have selected a large range of readings and will comment them in class prior to the day of discussion. We will comment on the readings prior to the class for which they are assigned.

Requirements: Students will give presentations on assigned topics during the course and assign readings on their topic from the general bibliography as well as from other texts. You will post abstracts and bibliographies on Blackboard. For the final paper, you will develop your special area of interest in a research projects, assign readings for the day of your presentation. Post your bibliography as well as an abstract and the final paper on blackboard.

Please check the syllabus throughout the semester as supplementary readings will be assigned.

Syllabus:

Week 1 (September 7th)
Introduction: Brainstorming about definitions of public and private, students' interest in the class, first definitions, main themes
Readings:
Wright (See Reading Guide for Week 1 on Blackboard)—
Aristotle, Politics; Vitruvius I praef. 2; I. 2; VI.5.1; Severy 2003, 1-6; Geuss 2002;
Arendt 1987; Habermas 1974; Aries 1978; Scruton 1987; Sennet 1987; Weintraub 1997;
Connerton 1999.

Hein—

Week 2 (September 14th)
Discussion of definitions and themes of public space

Readings:
2000, Hayden 1995 (p. 1-78), Steiner 2000, Swanson 2000 (Ch. 4 and 8), Sypnowich

Wright (See Reading Guide for Week 2 on Blackboard)—
Hall 1966. chapter X.
Connerton 1989.

Week 3 (September 21nd)
Themes of public space in Europe

Readings:

Week 4 (September 28th)
Themes of public space in the Old World, the New World and in Asia.

Readings
Wright—
Egypt: Baines 2006; Baines and Yoffee 1998;


Mesoamerica: Ashmore 2005; Sanders and Webster 1988

Recommended for background: Trigger 2003, esp chs. 6-10,
Coaldrake 1996 (Ch. 3, 4, 5), Bianca 2000, Hein 2002, Low 2000 (Ch. 3, 4, 5, 8), Wang, Yoneyama 1999 (Ch. 2).

**Week 5 (October 5th)**
Public space in “city-states” and Mediterranean empires: Late Bronze Age polities of the Eastern Mediterranean (Levant, Aegean), Greece and “colonies”, Etruscans and early Rome, Roman empire

Hansen 2000
Aristotle on Hippodamos of Miletos
Hölscher 1991
Richardson 1991
Anderson 1997, chs. 4-6 (pp. 241-336).

**Week 6 (October 12th)**
Student presentations: Old World.

**Week 7 (October 19th) Fall break**

**Week 8 (October 26th)**
Student presentations: Old World.

**Week 9 (November 2nd)**
Public space from medieval times until today

*Readings*

**Week 10 (November 9th)**
Student presentations: Public space from medieval times until today

**Week 11 (November 16th)**
Student presentations: Public space from medieval times until today

**Week 12 (November 23rd) Thanksgiving vacation**

**Week 13 (November 30th)**
Paper presentations

**Week 14 (December 7th)**
Paper presentations

**Week 15 (alternative date for fieldtrip downtown)**
Public Conference with presentation of revised papers during spring semester

**Assigned texts on blackboard:**


Low, Setha M. "Lessons from Imagining the World Trade Center Site: An Examination of Public Space and Culture." *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (2002): 395-405.


