



ARCH 566: Cross Cultural Topics in Landscape Architecture: Trans-national Urbanities and Urbanisms

Units: 3

Term – Fall 2019

Day - Tuesday

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Location: Harris 115A

Instructor: Vinayak Bharne

Office Hours: Monday & Friday, between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Contact Info: **Email:** bharne@usc.edu; **Phone:** 323-252-7145; **Skype:** [vinayak.bharne](https://www.skype.com/people/vinayak.bharne); **Timeline for replying to emails/calls:** within 48 hours

Course Description

This graduate semester-long course has been specifically designed to expose students to issues of landscape architecture and urbanism beyond North American and European boundaries. This course is also open to students from other disciplines.

The physical and ecological constitution of urban landscapes across the world consists of a finite and identifiable series of elements – from rivers and natural terrains, to streets, buildings, and infrastructural components. However, the specific form of, intervention with, sustenance of, and attitudes towards these elements, is shaped by deeper phenomenological forces and circumstances that create distinct identities and signatures of people, place and culture. Different histories, growth patterns, governance structures, cultural beliefs and aspirations all ultimately create different embodiments of what the urban landscape is in the first place. This has serious implications to the practice of landscape architecture and urbanism. How do we gauge the appropriateness of our interventions in a specific culture? How do we negotiate between our personal biases on what a landscape ought to be, versus reading it for what it is? How do we understand the practice of landscape design beyond physical amelioration and ecological conservation, as a deeper reflective engagement with cultural complexities, towards deeper change?

The examination of the contemporary urban landscape as an enmeshed duality of parallel culture-specific *urbanities* and *urbanisms*, forms the basis of this class. The term *urbanities* is used here to describe the myriad phenomenological traits and processes of urban life and cultural experience – from polarizations of poverty and wealth, to the rapid urbanization of cities. The term *urbanisms* in turn is used here to describe the diverse physical products and characteristics of the urban landscape – from the riverine territories of Central Asia and the rice terraces of Bali, to the psychedelic streetscapes of Tokyo, and the slums of Dacca. Moving across geo-political terrains, this course will offer comparative perspectives on contemporary attitudes to the nature and the city. Where do they overlap? Where do they separate? How do their cross-influence one another?

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

1. To provide a solid, comparative, exploration of the nexus of landscape and urban design in multiple contexts.

2. To enable students to read the formal characteristics of the ecological and urban landscape as the evolving result of multiple socio-cultural forces - culture, equality, citizenship, marketability.
3. To expose students to culture-specific attitudes and methodologies of landscape architecture, urban design and intervention.
4. To allow students the opportunity to critique existing projects and efforts through case studies and best practices, and develop arguments and positions that support their analysis.

Prerequisite(s): None

Co-Requisite(s): None

Concurrent Enrollment: None

Recommended Preparation: None

Course Notes

The course will be structured around 11 topical themes, each examined through a lecture, discussion or reading/s. These themes have been carefully crafted to offer a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary urban landscape. The lectures in turn been carefully choreographed to include case studies and examples from Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe as well the Americas, and span a diverse array of geographic contexts, from deserts to tropics.

The course reader will focus on Asia as an intellectual springing point. Focused case studies from Asia will thus compliment the broader and globally-oriented lectures simultaneously offering comparative discussions.

Each class will consist of a 1 hr lecture, followed by 30 minute q & a, and a 30 minute discussion on the required weekly readings. The remaining time will be given to the development of the class assignment. Mid term, and final student assignments will be reviewed by an invited jury.

Copies of lecture slides and other class information will be posted on Blackboard, or sent to students via email before the first day of class.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students are expected to have basic graphic and softwares such as ADOBE. 3d modeling softwares are encouraged. WORD or other text software is essential.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

The Class Reader is, "The Emerging Asian City: Concomitant Urbanities & Urbanisms," edited by Vinayak Bharne (Routledge 2012). This 24-chapter volume is a comprehensive survey of the multi-faceted forces and confluences – ecological, social, political, historic – that are shaping various cities across Asia today. Students will read selected chapters each week as outlined in the class calendar. A pdf of this volume will be provided to students via Blackboard or email by the Instructor at the beginning of class.

For every class each student will submit, based on the readings:

1. One sentence on something that stood out for them, or they felt strongly about.
2. One sentence on something they disagreed with.
3. One sentence on something that they did not understand (OPTIONAL)

This weekly submission will be tracked, and will count towards the grade for class participation.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

The assignment for this class will seek to create a strategic landscape and urban design framework for a selected study area beyond the Euro-American context. Since this is not design studio, the study and ideas are expected to be broad as opposed to detailed – as if students were submitting ideas for an ideas design competition.

Students are free to select study areas/places based on their interest so long as they can obtain enough base material for research. Alternatively, students can choose a study area and “client” from a list of selected places provided by the Instructor. The client will serve as the resource bank to obtain all base material and necessary information related to the study area. The client will also serve as an advisor to the project throughout the semester. Students will work with the instructor to craft a design-based hypothesis for the study area and explore it throughout the semester.

Mid Term: The Mid Term assignment will be an analysis of the ecological, morphological, phenomenological issues of a chosen city, place or landscape for example: The Capitol Complex in Chandigarh, India. Students will collect base data research existing literature, and create a diagrammatic compendium on their chosen area of study. 12 different interrelated diagrams and mappings will reveal the identified issues and diagnosis. This assignment will be due on the Final Assignment date - October 8, 2019

Final: The Final assignment will be a design “provocation” on transforming the specific place or issue within the chosen area of study. The intent is to create hypothetical and semi-theoretical propositions based on the analysis, collected data and understood issues and needs. For example: Transforming Chandigarh’s Capitol Complex into a water harvesting Landscape. This assignment will be due on the Mid-Term date - December 17, 2019

Grading Breakdown

| Assignment | Points | % of Grade |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Mid Term | 3 | 30 |
| Final | 5 | 50 |
| Attendance/Participation | 1 | 10 |
| Responses to Readings | 1 | 10 |
| TOTAL | 10 | 100 |

Grading Scale (Example)

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

| | |
|----|--------|
| A | 95-100 |
| A- | 90-94 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 73-76 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 63-66 |

D- 60-62
F 59 and below

Assignment Rubrics

None

Assignment Submission Policy

Mid Term and Final assignments each must be submitted as a SINGLE pdf file (no multiple sheets) 8.5 x 11 size portrait. There is no limit to page numbers.

They should be submitted in person directly to the Instructor in class on the day of the final exam. Any absences must be excused in writing by the Instructor at least two weeks prior to the final exam.

Grading Timeline

The standard timeline for grading and feedback is 1 week.

Additional Policies

Late assignments will only be accepted within the first 24 hours of the mid term and/or final exam. Late assignments will be penalized by 1 letter grade.

Instructor will take attendance in each class. Students entering the class beyond the first 15 minutes will be marked absent.

More than two unexcused absences, that is, not being present in the entire class, will be reported to the Program Director.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

1 - August 27: The Invisible Forces behind the Visible City – A Trans-national Perspective

This introductory lecture will overview the socio-cultural phenomena and issues that change the modes of engagement with urban landscapes in different parts of the world? Who are the actors and decision-makers that create and sustain cities in various parts of the world? How do cities actually work in various parts of the world?

This introductory lecture will also overview the 10 thematic lectures that follow and identify their overlaps and differences, and spell out their relevance and reasons for selection.

Class Readings: Introduction: Framing the Asian City, pp. 1-12
Epilog: Engaging the Asian City, pp. 265-266
Chapter 24 – The “Dubai Effect,” pp. 254-264

2 – September 3: Research Topic Selection

This lecture will present the work done by previous students in this class, and present the various places and possibilities for assignment selection (listed in the ASSIGNMENT section of this syllabus.) Students will be expected to either pick one of these cases or be responsible for discussing a chosen place/topic with the Instructor within a week of this class.

3 - September 10: Situating the City

Across urban history, the specific location of an urban habitat and its relationship to existing geographic and ecological elements has been as much the result of practical considerations as cultural attitudes and beliefs. Some cities emerged through their fortuitous location along important trading routes – such as the Silk Route, other cities like Changhan and Kyoto were situated with intricate relationships to mountains and rivers based on both climatic as well as religious beliefs. Others like Tokyo and Los Angeles find themselves on fragile terrains or what Mike Davis has called “Ecologies of Fear.” This lecture will overview the diverse relationships of city and nature through a cultural lens.

Class Readings: Chapter 11: The Changing Face of Chandigarh’s Capitol, pp. 119-128
Chapter 20 – Reshaping Hong Kong, pp. 213-224

4 - September 17: Publicness and Public Space

Public life and its urban manifestations are profound barometers of a culture. The plaza, for instance, that originated from the Greek democratic ideal of the agora, was largely absent in the non-Western world until colonial times. Public life was largely centered on streets, temple and mosque grounds, markets and water tanks, reflecting a non-democratic and non-egalitarian social structure. Many such patters thrive to this day, particularly in smaller towns in the non-Western world, expanding the rubric of what we typically consider “contemporary.” This lecture will offer a comparative analysis of traditional public spaces, such as the plaza, the square and the street and trace their formal and behavioral differences from Europe to Asia.

Class Readings: Ch 15: Public Space and the Search for Identity in Post-War Japan, pp. 158-167

5 – September 24: The Land-Water Interface

From the Rialto of Venice and the Ghats of Varanasi, and from Shanghai’s Bund to Mumbai’s Marine Drive, the city to water interface has merged urban and ecological design with cultural expressions and

statements. This lecture will survey this land-to water nexus simultaneously as an urban design and social catalyst.

Class Readings: Chapter 3 – Rereading Taj Mahal and its Environs, pp. 36-45

6 – October 1: The Agency of Water – Scarcity, Abundance & Urbanism in Dialogue

The looming water crisis is one of the most pressing challenges facing planners and urbanists today. While arid desert megacities such as Tehran and Riyadh grapple with the issues of water paucity, other metropolises like Mumbai, despite an annual monsoon flooding, still face a water shortage due to inadequate harvesting and bad infrastructure. The issue of water stress in many parts of the world is not so much an issue of water availability, but inadequate distribution and weak policy. This lecture will overview the subject of urban water from a historical perspective, while tracing their physical embodiments – from the aqueducts and fountains of Rome, and the water tanks of Khiva to the acequias of New Mexico - provoking reflections on their implications to landscape design and community development.

Class Readings: Ch. 8 – The Death and Life of Traditional Aquatic Settlements in Thailand, pp. 85-94

7 – October 8: Mid Term presentations and submission of assignments

8 – October 15: The Transportation Palimpsest

The cultural differences in urban mobility are some of the most decisive yet undermined aspects of urban design. In India, while two-wheelers still remain the dominant mode of transportation, the very patterns of non-lane driving in itself is a significant contrast to normative European and American trends. Meanwhile, even as cities across the US now promote walkability as their overarching agenda, cities in emerging economies like India and China produce and sell close to 20,000 cars per day. This lecture will examine this dichotomy as well as ongoing efforts in both worlds towards balancing the aspirations of a rising middle-class with the making of a liveable city.

Class Readings: Chapter 5: Axes & Alleyways, pp. 56-65

9 – October 22: Sacred Texts and Sub-texts

In many cities, particularly in Asia and South America, the two conventional dimensions of urbanity – the public, and the private – are intersected, even superseded at times, by a dominant sacred dimension. Across India, for instance, innumerable, anonymous wayside shrines illegally encroach the public realm, marking points of solace for the millions of underserved that simply want a stake in the city. These shrines eventually become the centres of micro-communities, and eventually even the centres of entire towns. This lecture will focus on this phenomenon, discussing issues of populism, appropriation and inclusiveness in the practice of landscape design.

Class Readings: Ch. 1: Anointed Cities – The Incremental Urbanism of Hindu India, pp. 17 - 26

10 – October 29: Imported Landscapes & their Legacies

This lecture will examine the legacies of collisions and infusions of Western paradigms in the non-Western urban landscape. The most obvious is Colonialism: Panaji became the first gridded city in India; Galle replicated the bastide town in the tropical landscape of Sri Lanka, and the plan of Manila manifested the Law of the Indies town-making principles laid down by King Phillip II of Spain. The second dimension of this East-West dialectic happened between the 1930s-60s when new sovereign domains became the canvas for the most eminent Modern Western architects and planners, with entire cities – such as Chandigarh and Islamabad - designed to embody the latent desires of these new-born nations. Have these seemingly hegemonic places been assimilated, critiqued, or rejected by the generations that have followed?

Class Readings: Tensions pp. 95-98

Chapter 10: Macau Paradox pp. 110-118

Chapter 13: An (almost) all American City, pp. 139-147

11 – November 5: Parallel Ecologies - Landscapes of Informality

This lecture will focus on the landscapes of impoverishment, poverty, illegality and informality as alternative cultures to the franchised city. Discussions will include ongoing efforts and interventions and their methods, successes and failures. Places will range from Dharavi - one of Asia's largest slums, spread over 0.67 square miles in Mumbai, with over 600,000 people, with rents as low as four US dollars per month, and Torre David, the 700-family possessed and appropriated skyscraper in Venezuela, to the emerging syndrome of homelessness in Japan.

Class Readings: Chapter 7 – Nostalgia, Representation & Gentrification in historic Damascus, pp. 75-84

Chapter 10: Making Way for a Global Metropolis, pp. 193-202

12 – November 12: Emerging Notions of the Ecological City

Numerous emerging post-industrial urban models are now emphasizing prerogatives of sustainability, pedestrian dominance, incrementalism, non-utopian planning and cultural appropriateness. Putrajaya, Malaysia's 11,300-acre built-from-scratch "environment-friendly" administrative capital was developed to both alleviate Kuala Lumpur's congestion as well as become a new-nationalistic manifestation. The American anti-sprawl movement - New Urbanism – and its interconnected streets grids and figural open spaces are manifested in new towns such as Lavasa in India and Dos Rios in the Philippines. The 700-hectare new city of Masdar in Abu Dhabi's is designed to supposedly achieve Carbon Neutrality and supply all of its energy needs using state-of-the-art renewable technologies. This lecture will discuss the efficacy and promise of such models and ideas.

Class Readings: Chapter 21: China's Emerging New Town Movement, pp. 225-233

Chapter 22: Vertical Urbanism, Horizontal Urbanity, pp. 234-243

13 – November 19: Guest Lecture and Discussion

14 – November 26: Class Assignments Discussion

15 – December 3: Class Assignments Mock Review (No external jury)

16 – December 17: Final Presentations (with external jury)

Bibliography & References

Bharne Vinayak (Editor), **The Emerging Asian City: Concomitant Urbanities & Urbanisms**, Routledge, 2012

Bharne Vinayak, **The Qanats of Yazd: The Dilemmas of Sustainability & Conservation**, published in *Aesthetics of Sustainable Architecture*, edited by Sang Lee, 010 Publishers, 2011

Cremer R.D, **Macau : City of Commerce and Culture**, Hong Kong: UEA Press, 1987

Eck Diana, **Benaras: City of Light**, Columbia University Press 1998

Jumsai S., **Naga: Cultural Origins in Siam and the West Pacific**, DD Books, 1997

Koch Ebba, **The Complete Taj Mahal**, Thames & Hudson, 2006

Prakash Vikramaditya, **Chandigarh's Le Corbusier: The Struggle for Modernity in Post-colonial India**, University of Washington Press, 2002

Salamandra Christa, **A New Old Damascus: Authenticity & Distinction in Urban Syria**, University of Indiana Press, 2004

Silva, Kapila, Neel Kamal Chapagain (Editors), **Asian Heritage Management: Contexts, Concerns, and Prospects**, Routledge, 2013

Steele James, **An Architecture for People: The Complete Works of Hassan Fathy**, Watson Guptill, 1997

Tambling Jeremy and Lo Louis, **Walking Macao, reading the Baroque Hong Kong**, Hong Kong University Press, 2009

Zhongjie Lin, **Kenzo Tange & The Metabolist Movement: Urban Utopias of Modern Japan**, Routledge, 2010

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

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National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421

studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

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USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

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USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.