

USC School of Architecture

ARCH 465: The Landscape Imaginary

4 units

Tuesdays 12:00-3:50

Professor: Vittoria Di Palma

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Course Description

This seminar offers a cross-cultural introduction to ideas of nature, landscape, and the environment. For our purposes, "environment" is to be understood its widest sense as that which surrounds us, whether given (by nature) or invented (by culture). By focusing on "the landscape imaginary," this course is primarily interested in excavating the mental constructs and cognitive mappings that have shaped attitudes toward the environment in a variety of cultures (European, Islamic, American) at a number of discrete historical moments, from antiquity to the present. The seminar makes use of primary sources (both written and visual) to analyze, compare, and contrast an array of key concepts including arcadia, paradise, forest, mountain, villa, landscape, wilderness, land, system, ecology, wasteland, and matter. Our aim will be to develop a critical understanding of categories that have shaped and continue to shape the ways in which we perceive, understand, react to, and design our surroundings at a variety of scales, from the local to the global (and beyond).

As a seminar, this course requires the completion of a substantial amount of reading each week. Class meetings will consist of a lecture followed by a discussion of that week's assigned reading. It is very important that you come to class prepared to participate in discussion. Not doing so will affect not only your final grade but also (and much more importantly) your enjoyment of the course.

Course Requirements and Grading

Attendance and Participation: 10%

Presentation: 15%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Paper: 30%

Final Exam: 25%

Students are required to attend class every week and to complete all required reading before each class session. Most readings will be posted on Blackboard. When entire books are assigned, they will either be accessible online through HOMER or be placed on reserve in the library. They will also be available for purchase from the USC Bookstore.

Students will be asked to write one paper (12-15 pages) on a topic related to the themes of the course. Specific information about possible paper topics will be distributed later in the semester.

There will be two essay-based exams: a midterm, and a final.

No late work is accepted--i.e. no partial credit will be given for work that is turned in late. Being absent on a day that an exam, presentation, paper, or final is held or due can lead to a student receiving an "F" for that assignment.

The School of Architecture's attendance policy allows a student to miss the equivalent of one week of class sessions (in our case, that means ONE class session) without penalty. If additional absences are required for medical reasons or a family emergency, a pre-approved academic reason, or religious observance, the situation should be discussed, in advance if possible, with me. For each absence above this number, the final grade may be lowered by 1/3 point (i.e. from A to A- for one unexcused absence, from A- to B+ for two; from B+ to B for three, etc.).

Any student not in class after the first 10 minutes is considered to be tardy. Three late arrivals constitute one unexcused absence. Students who are physically present but mentally absent (whether because they are asleep, or distracted by technology) will be marked as absent. Leaving class before it ends, or taking an extended bathroom or water break that lasts 1/3 of the class time or longer, will be considered as an unexcused absence.

Course Overview

January 13	Introduction: The Landscape Imaginary
January 20	Airs, Waters, Places
January 27	Arcadia
February 3	Paradise
February 10	Mountain and Forest
February 17	A New Atlantis
February 24	Villa
March 3	The Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Picturesque
March 10	MIDTERM EXAM
March 17	SPRING BREAK
March 24	Wilderness
March 31	Land
April 7	System
April 14	Wasteland
April 21	Ecology
April 28	Vibrant Matter
May 12	FINAL EXAM

Schedule of Readings

January 13	<p>Introduction: The Landscape Imaginary</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Raymond Williams, "Nature," <i>Keywords</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983): 219-224</p> <p>Neil Smith, "The Ideology of Nature," <i>Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space</i> (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2008): 10-48</p> <p>Bruno Latour, <i>Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy</i> (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004): 1-52</p>
January 20	<p>Airs, Waters, Places</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Hippocrates, <i>Airs, Waters, Places</i>. Translated by W. H. S. Jones. Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1923)</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Clarence Glacken, <i>Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century</i> (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967): 1-115</p>
January 27	<p>Arcadia</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Virgil, <i>The Eclogues</i>. Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916)</p> <p>Virgil, <i>The Georgics</i>. Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916)</p>
February 3	<p>Paradise</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> D. Fairchild Ruggles, <i>Islamic Gardens and Landscapes</i> (Philadelphia: Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture, 2008): chapter 8</p> <p>The Bible, King James Version [1611], Genesis:1-3</p> <p>John Prest, <i>The Garden of Eden: The Botanic Garden and the Re-Creation of Paradise</i> (London: Yale University Press, 1981): chapters 1 and 2</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Jean Delumeau, <i>History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition</i> (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000)</p> <p>Scafi, Alessandro. <i>Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth</i></p>

	<p>(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006)</p> <p>Scafi, Alessandro. <i>Maps of Paradise</i> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013)</p>
February 10	<p>Mountain and Forest</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Marjorie Hope Nicolson, <i>Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite</i> [1959] (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997): 1-71</p> <p>Edmund Spenser, <i>The Faerie Queen</i> [1590/1596], selections</p> <p>John Manwood, <i>A Treatise and Discourse of the Laws of the Forrest</i> (London: 1598), selections</p> <p>Simon Schama, <i>Landscape and Memory</i> (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1995): 135-184</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Robert Pogue Harrison, <i>Forests: The Shadow of Civilization</i> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992)</p> <p>Clarence Glacken, <i>Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century</i> (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967): chapter 7, esp. pp. 318-351</p>
February 17	<p>A New Atlantis</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Bacon, Francis. "New Atlantis" [1627], <i>Francis Bacon</i>. Edited by Brian Vickers. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996): 457-489</p> <p>Evelyn, John. "Outline of Elysium Britannicum" [1699] <i>The Genius of the Place: The English Landscape Garden 1620-1820</i>. Edited by John Dixon Hunt and Peter Willis. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993: 67-69</p> <p>Merchant, Carolyn. "Reinventing Eden: Western Culture as a Recovery Narrative," <i>Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature</i>. Edited by William Cronon. New York: W. W. Norton, 1996: 132-159</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> John Evelyn, <i>Elysium Britannicum, Or The Royal Gardens</i>. Edited by John E. Ingram. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001</p> <p><i>John Evelyn's Elysium Britannicum and European Gardening</i>. Edited by Therese O'Malley and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1998</p>

February 24	<p>Villa</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Pliny the Younger, <i>Letters</i>, (V.6) in <i>Letters and Panegyrics</i>, 2 vols. translated by Betty Radice, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969): Volume I: 337-355</p> <p>James Ackerman. <i>The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses</i>. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990): 9-34</p> <p>Robert Castell, <i>The Villas of the Ancients Illustrated</i>. [London: 1728] (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1982), available online through ECCO</p> <p>Alexander Pope, "Epistle to Lord Burlington," available online through ECCO</p>
March 3	<p>The Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Picturesque</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Edmund Burke, <i>A Philosophical Enquiry on the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful</i> [1757]. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990: 29-114</p> <p>Sir William Chambers, <i>Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines, and Utensils</i> (London: 1757): 14-18, available online through ECCO</p> <p>William Gilpin, <i>Observations on the River Wye, and several parts of South Wales, &c. : relative chiefly to picturesque beauty: made in the summer of the year 1770</i> [1782] (London: Pallas Athene, 2005): 1-45</p> <p>Uvedale Price, <i>Essays on the Picturesque, as compared with the sublime and the beautiful; and on the use of studying pictures, for the purpose of improving real landscape</i>, 3v. (London: 1810), chapter III, pp. 34-75</p>
March 10	MIDTERM EXAM
March 17	SPRING BREAK
March 24	<p>Wilderness</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> John Muir, "A Near View of the High Sierra", <i>The Mountains of California</i> [1894]. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, n.d.: 48-73</p> <p>Henry David Thoreau, "Walking", <i>Walden and Other Writings of Henry David Thoreau</i>. Edited by Brooks Atkinson. New York: Random House, 1950: 597-632</p>

	<p>William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness, or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," <i>Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature</i>. Edited by William Cronon. New York: W.W. Norton, 1996: 69-90</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Roderick Nash, <i>Wilderness and the American Mind</i> (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967)</p> <p>Oelschlaeger, Max, <i>The Idea of Wilderness</i> (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991)</p> <p>Rebecca Solnit, <i>Savage Dreams: A Journey into the Hidden Wars of the American West</i> [2004] (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014)</p>
<p>March 31</p>	<p>Land</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Aldo Leopold, <i>A Sand County Almanac, and Sketches Here and There</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949)</p> <p>Jacquetta Hawkes, <i>A Land</i> (London: Cresset Press, 1951): chapter 1</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> J. Baird Callicott, <i>Companion to A Sand County Almanac: Interpretive and Critical Essays</i>. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987</p>
<p>April 7</p>	<p>System</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Rachel Carson, <i>Silent Spring</i> [1962] (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2002)</p> <p>Ian McHarg, <i>Design with Nature</i> [1969] (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 1992): 1-41</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Gregory Bateson, <i>Steps to an Ecology of Mind</i> [1972] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000)</p>
<p>April 14</p>	<p>Wasteland</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Wagstaff, Samuel Jr.. "Talking with Tony Smith" [1966], <i>Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology</i>. Edited by Gregory Battcock. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1968</p> <p>Smithson, Robert. "A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey" [1967], <i>The Collected Writings</i>. Edited by Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996): 68-74</p>

	<p>Ignaci de Sola-Morales, "Terrain Vague," <i>ANYplace</i> (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995): 118-123</p> <p>Linda Pollak, "Sublime Matters: Fresh Kills," <i>Praxis 4</i> (2002): 58-63</p> <p><u>Further Reading:</u> Becher, Bernd and Hilla. <i>Typologies</i>. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004</p> <p>Antoine Picon, "Anxious Landscapes: From the Ruin to Rust," <i>Grey Room 1</i> (Fall 2000): 64-83</p> <p>Nye, David E. <i>American Technological Sublime</i>. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994</p>
April 21	<p>Ecology</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Timothy Morton, <i>Ecology without Nature</i> (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007): 1-28</p> <p>Félix Guattari, <i>The Three Ecologies</i>, translated by Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton (London: The Athlone Press, 2000): 19-45</p> <p>Sanford Kwinter, "Notes on the Third Ecology" <i>Ecological Urbanism</i>, edited by Mohsen Mostafavi with Gareth Doherty (Zürich: Lars Müller, 2010): 94-105</p>
April 28	<p>Vibrant Matter</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> Alan Weisman, <i>The World Without Us</i> (New York: Picador, 2007): 1-112</p> <p>Jane Bennett, <i>Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things</i> (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010): 1-122</p>
May 13	<p>FINAL EXAM</p>

Selected Bibliography

Abbey, Edward. *Desert Solitaire: A Season in the Wilderness*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1968

Ackerman, James. *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990

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- Chambers, William. *Designs of Chinese Buildings*. London: 1757, reprint B. Blom: 1968
- Chambers, William. *A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening...second edition, with additions. To which is annexed, an explanatory discourse by Tan Chet-Qua, of Quang-Chew Fu, Gent..* London: 1773, reprinted Los Angeles, 1978, with an introduction by R. E. Quaintance
- Colonna, Francesco. *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, The Strife of Love in a Dream* [1499], translated by Jocelyn Godwin. London: Thames and Hudson, 1999
- Delumeau, Jean. *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000
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Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973

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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 Section II, *Behavior Violating University Standards*<https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7

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Support Systems

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