SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Voyage: Fall 2013  
Discipline: Architecture  
Course Title: ARCH 2500: Sacred Places  
Lower Division  
Faculty Name: Phoebe Crisman

Pre-requisites: none

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This introductory course employs a global comparative perspective to study sacred buildings, cities and landscapes, with a focus on the rich diversity of places encountered during our voyage. We will examine the formal, spatial, structural, aesthetic and symbolic aspects of each building and consider how it reflects the rituals in that culture. The study of different religious, cultural, technological and political developments will bring light to the overall conception, significance and use of the architecture in context. By directly experiencing specific sacred spaces in port, students will learn to effectively evaluate the design intentions and their ultimate realization.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

• Encourage a deeper analysis of the major sacred sites that students will encounter on the voyage. Sites marked with a “*” are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

• Gain a sound understanding of sacred architecture as an expression of both secular culture and faith in the world’s wisdom traditions.

• Understand the relationship between the perceptions of certain forms, spaces and design features and the concept of sacredness.

• Develop skills to understand physical form and space and communicate those perceptions in verbal and written expression.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

AUTHOR: Spiro Kostof  
TITLE: A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals  
PUBLISHER: Oxford University Press  
ISBN #: 9780195083798  
DATE/EDITION: 1995, 2nd ed.
TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE  (B day, 10:50 – 12:05)

B1- Aug 27: Architecture as a Reflection of Culture
Assignment: One-paragraph description of a sacred place that you have experienced. Due 9/2.

St. Petersburg: August 29-September 1

B2- Sept 2: The Sacred and the Profane
Lascaux Caves,* Stonehenge,* Avebury,* Grange Stone Circle.

B3- Sept 4: Global Comparisons around 12 Course Themes:
Space | Time | Matter | Gravity | Light | Silence | Dwelling | Room | Ritual | Memory | Landscape | Place

Hamburg: September 5-8

B4- Sept 10: Case Study | Antwerp Cathedral and the Gothic Expression of Christian Faith
St. Denis Abbey church choir (1144), Notre-Dame de Paris* (1163-1345), Chartres Cathedral* (1194-1260), St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin (1191-1270), Amien Cathedral* (1220), Salisbury Cathedral (1220-58), (Cathedral of Our Lady* Antwerp (1352)

ANTWERP FIELD LAB: September 12 (description below course outline)

Antwerp: September 12-14 / Le Havre: September 15-16

B5- Sept 17: SPACE: Volumetric Complexity and Spatial Qualities

B6- Sept 19: TIME: Is Architecture Frozen Music?

Dublin: September 20-23

B7- Sept 25: Case Study | Mezquita de Córdoba and the Mosques and Gardens of Islam
Mezquita/Cathedral* Córdoba (785), Alhambre* Granada (889), Mosque of Ahmad Ibn Ṭūlūn* Cairo (879), Süleymaniye Mosque* Istanbul (1557), Taj Mahal* Agra (1648)

Lisbon: Sept 27-28 / transit / Cadiz: Sept 30-October 1
October 2: Study Day/Conferences

Casablanca: October 3-6

**B8- Oct 7: RITUAL + MEMORY: Pyramids, Temples and Obelisks**

**B9- Oct 9: MATTER: Material and Form**

October 10: Study day

**B10- Oct 12: GRAVITY: Arches, Domes and other Gravity-Defying Acts**

**B11- Oct 14: Case Study | The Rock, Hewn and Mud Architecture of Africa**
Rock-Hewn Churches* Lalibela, Ethiopia (13th c); Larabanga Mosque, Ghana; Great Mosque* Djenne, Mali (1906); Forts and Castles* Ghana (1482-1786)

Takoradi and Tema: October 15-18

October 19: Study day

**B12- Oct 21: LANDSCAPE: Magic Mountains and Inaccessible Islands**

October 23: Study day

**B13- Oct 24: PLACE: Courts and Gardens**

Cape Town: October 26-30

October 31: Study day

**B14- Nov 1: LIGHT + SILENCE: Technology as Problem and Opportunity**

**B15- Nov 3: DWELLING + ROOM: Supporting Human Inhabitation**
November 4: Study day

**B16- Nov 6: EXAM**

November 8: Study day

**B17- Nov 9: Case Study | Mesoamerican Pyramids and Temples**

**B18- Nov 11: Case Study | Spanish Colonial Towns and Churches**

**Buenos Aires: November 12-16**

**B19- Nov 18: Civic Spaces: Plazas, Piazzas and Public Squares**

**Rio de Janeiro: November 20-22**

November 23: Study day

**B20- Nov 24: Ritual at the Meeting of Land and Water**

**B21- Nov 26: Utopian Cities + Symbolic Expressions: Brazilia, New Delhi + Washington**

November 27: Study day

**B22- Nov 29: Student presentations**

December 1: Study day

**Manaus: December 2 -5**

December 6: Study day

**B23- Dec 7: Student presentations**

**B24- Dec 9: Concluding Discussion / Last day of Class**
FIELD WORK

FIELD LAB: Attendance and participation in the Field Lab is MANDATORY. Please do not book individual travel plans or a SAS sponsored trip on the day of our field lab.

Investigating the Historic and Contemporary Sacred Places of Antwerp

We will investigate sacred places amidst the rich mix of Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque and Contemporary architecture within Antwerp’s city center. Our walking excursion will include both religious and non-religious places of cultural significance. We will study two significant spaces of civic gathering: the Grote Markt, an historic town square bounded with 16th- and 17th-century guild houses, and the Groenplaats, a tree and cafe-lined square that foregrounds the Cathedral of Our Lady (1352). We will study this excellent example of Northern Gothic architecture and visit two other churches of differing periods for comparison. The St. James’s Church (1491-1656) is a Brabant Gothic-style church and the St. Charles Borromeo Church (1615-21) is Baroque and built for the Jesuit Order.

In addition to these churches, we will explore the extraordinary Centraal Station main hall with its enormous dome and glass-covered train hall. During the industrial revolution, train stations, exhibition halls and other cultural venues replaced the predominance of the church in social life. Today public museums are a type of sacred place. We will examine the newly built Museum aan de Strom, or MAS, which is an iconic example of contemporary architecture in the restored old port area Het Eilandje. We will visit the museum’s historical exhibits and travel along a massive glass façade from the ground to a ninth floor roof deck. Panoramic views of the city, the port and the river will help us to reflect on the history and ongoing physical transformation of the city and her sacred places.

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS: Sacred Places Journal + Field Reports

• Sacred Places Journal: Students will incorporate shore experiences into the course curriculum by maintaining a semester-long Sacred Places Journal. They will compare and contrast diverse settings by documenting personal visits to sacred places during the voyage. Journals will be submitted during class on B24, graded and returned on B25. Journal grading rubric: course concepts applied, level of detail and insight, completeness of entries (one per port minimum).

• Field Report: Select two Sacred Places from your journal to examine in greater detail within each report. Compare and contrast these two places using text and images (photos and/or drawings) in a concise, four-page report that conveys your personal perceptions of the place in relation to course readings and lectures. Each report should include:
  o brief summary of the student’s field notes
  o written analysis of relationships between readings and the student’s experiences
  o photographic or drawn analysis
  o conclusions about ways in which the physical form and space of the city manifests the climate, geography, culture, commerce, aesthetics and technology of the place.
Field reports grading rubric: course concepts applied, level of detail and insight, clarity of organization and effectiveness of illustrations. More details will be distributed in class.
METHODS OF EVALUATION / COURSE GRADING RUBRIC

Sacred Places Journal ............................................................................................................... 20%
Field Reports (2 at 20% each)................................................................................. 40%
Midterm Exam .......................................................................................................................... 20%
Class Attendance, Participation and Final Presentation (5 minutes) ................................. 20%

Individual Participation and Contribution to Classroom Learning
Each student is expected to attend class, fully engage with the readings, visual materials and
lectures, and contribute to the learning of others. Please think of class participation as your
responsibility to add energy and insight to our discussion and to share your perspectives. Course
readings and sacred places may be interpreted in a variety of ways and students should formulate
initial positions and questions to offer in the class discussion.

RESERVE LIBRARY LIST

AUTHOR: Francis D. Ching, Mark Jarzombek, Vikramaditya Prakash
TITLE: A Global History of Architecture
PUBLISHER: Wiley
ISBN #: 0470402571
DATE/EDITION: 2nd ed., 2011

AUTHORS: Caroline Humphrey and Piers Vitebsky
TITLE: Sacred Architecture
PUBLISHER: Thorsons / Harper Collins
ISBN #: 9780007662401
DATE/EDITION: 2003

AUTHOR: Martin Gray
TITLE: Sacred Earth: Places of Peace and Power
PUBLISHER: Sterling
ISBN #: 9780641929687
DATE/EDITION: 2007

AUTHORS: John Esposito, Susan Tyler Hitchcock, Desmond Tutu, et. al.
PUBLISHER: National Geographic Society
ISBN #: 0792259106
DATE/EDITION: 2006

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
1. Digital Camera, for documenting images for field reports.
2. Sketchbook: Moleskine Folio A4 Plain Notebook (12” x 8.5”): if not available, one of similar
   size, plain paper without lines or grid, and flat-lying
3. Mechanical Pencil – ideally 7mm lead size, HB weight and smooth white eraser
ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

AUTHOR: Eliade, Mircea
CHAPTER: Sacred Space and Making the World Sacred
BOOK TITLE: The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion
PUB/DATE: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1987
PAGES: 20-65

AUTHOR: Esposito, John, et. al.
CHAPTER: Origins (Ch. 1)
PUB/DATE: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1987
PAGES: 17-69

AUTHOR: McCarter, Robert and Juhani Pallasmaa
CHAPTER: Architecture as Experience
BOOK TITLE: Understanding Architecture. A Primer on Architecture as Experience
PUB/DATE: Phaidon, 2012
PAGES: 4-7

AUTHOR: Clark, Emma
CHAPTER: History, Symbolism and the Quran
BOOK TITLE: The Art of the Islamic Garden
DATE: 2004
PAGES: 22-35

AUTHOR: Blier, Suzanne, et.al.
BOOK TITLE: Butabu: Adobe Architecture of West Africa

AUTHOR: Bernbaum, Edwin
CHAPTER: Introduction
BOOK TITLE: Sacred Mountains of the World
DATE: 1977
PAGES: xiii-xxiii

AUTHOR: Shackley, Myra
ARTICLE: Potential Futures for Robben Island: Shrine, …
JOURNAL: International Journal of Heritage Studies
PAGES: 355-363

AUTHOR: Moore, Charles, et. al.
CHAPTER: The Genius of the Place (Ch. 1)
BOOK TITLE: The Poetics of Gardens
PUB/DATE: MIT Press, 1988
PAGES: 1-10
HONOR CODE
Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University’s honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager’s Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: “On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment.” The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed “[signed].

AUTHOR: Hayakawa, Masao.
CHAPTER: The Essence of the Japanese Garden
BOOK TITLE: The Garden Art of Japan
PUB/DATE: Weatherhill, 1973
PAGES: 9-15

AUTHOR: Bacon, Edmund
CHAPTER: The Genius of the Place (Ch. 1)
BOOK TITLE: Design of Cities
PUB/DATE: MIT Press, 1988
PAGES: 93-119

AUTHOR: Low, Setha
CHAPTER: Indigenous Architecture & the Spanish American Plaza in Mesoamerica
PAGES: 748-762

AUTHOR: Lencek, Lena and Gideon Bosker
CHAPTER: Beach: The History of Paradise on Earth
BOOK TITLE: No Man and the Sea (Ch. 1)
DATE: 1998
PAGES: 1-24

AUTHOR: Mitchell, George
BOOK TITLE: Banaras: The City Revealed
DATE: 2006
PAGES: tba

AUTHOR: Batista, Geraldo et al
CHAPTER: Brasilia: A Capital in the Hinterland
BOOK TITLE: Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities (David Gordon, ed.)
DATE: 2010
PAGES: 164-181