

Courses in English, Università di Firenze

Spring 2020

HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM

Teaching - and attending - a course on the History of Contemporary Architecture and Urbanism in Florence implies a deep investigation into, and a specific interest in, the origins of Western culture, its theories and fortunes. Issues of intellectual freedom and artistic creativity, colonialism and cultural predominance, cross-fertilization and globalization are essential to define our modern ideas on architecture, cultural heritage, preservation and marketing strategies of historic sites, urban centres, and man-made landscapes. Addressing the role of style, technology and sustainability in contemporary design and urban planning is therefore approached within a wider historical context. The course focuses on the development of architectural languages and urban forms in Italy, emphasizing the role of major monuments and centres, outstanding architects, and issues of cross-relations in Western European culture. A multidisciplinary approach emphasizes different interpretations of architecture, and their development over the centuries from the birth of the discipline to our days. Special attention is dedicated to the role of Italian and Western models in 19th and 20th century design and urban planning. The course includes lectures, guided readings, on-site visits in Florence and other Italian centres.

ECONOMIC HISTORY OF TOURISM

Introduction the economic phenomena and their development through time. Travel, travellers and the expanding world. Economic history of tourism as a new discipline. Proto-tourism. Hospitality and accommodation. Thermalism from the Antiquity to the Modern Age. The Grand Tour. Modern tourism. Destinations and tourism infrastructures. Mass tourism. The development of tourism from the origins to the present day. Tourism phenomena will be analysed both from the point of view of the traveller and from the point of view of the host community. Emphasis will be placed on infrastructures and on the related public policies. of historic sites, urban centres, and man-made landscapes. Addressing the role of style, technology and sustainability in contemporary design and urban planning is therefore approached within a wider historical context. The course focuses on the development of architectural languages and urban forms in Italy, emphasizing the role of major monuments and centres, outstanding architects, and issues of cross-relations in Western European culture. A multidisciplinary approach emphasizes different interpretations of architecture, and their development over the centuries from the birth of the discipline to our days. Special attention is dedicated to the role of Italian and Western models in 19th and 20th century design and urban planning. The course includes lectures, guided readings, on-site visits in Florence and other Italian centres.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The course covers theories, objectives and instruments as well as the analysis of the economic and social effects of international cooperation programs, economic aid and development projects. The course is structured into four parts. Following some introductory lectures on the changing landscape of international cooperation and general theoretical and descriptive data analysis, the course examines theoretical models and empirical issues regarding international aid for development will be presented (part A,B), then the course addresses the key elements the of the Human Development Paradigm and Amartya Sen's capability approach (part C). The last part (D) is devoted to research methods, impact evaluations and case studies. Several seminars will also be held during the course.

ECONOMIC HISTORY OF GLOBALIZATION

The course aims to offer a general overview of the new international economic order following the end of Cold War. This period is frequently associated with the concept of globalization. The mainstream affirms that this process has been possible because of liberalization, deregulation and in general thanks to a massive reduction of the state intervention. This course will challenge this vision, offering a completely different image of the reasons and the instruments that permitted the transformation of the world economy in the last 25-30 years. Recent political and economic trends in the world economy are challenging even the idea of globalization, proposing unpredictable alliances between European countries and China, and surprising retrenched attitudes by the USA. However, globalization does not mean only liberalization. It is asking for more but also for a different state intervention as well. Emerging economies are building their future both on very old economic policies such as trade tariffs and on the support of the state in implementing the most advanced technologies in their economic structure. Transnational companies are sometimes bigger than the countries where they invest in, but national or supranational institutions try to limit their power. China economic reforms and modernization appears to some extent a new form of state (authoritarian) capitalism. Russia more controversial transition to market economy did create a very similar model. Capital markets are more and more powerful, but national and international institutions work every day to increase levels of regulations and to make more efficient those already existing. Producer, consumers and traders of raw materials and commodities are acting as a sort of "hidden" power that states are trying to counterbalance and to regulate in order to keep a balance in this framework, where economic and financial aspects are continuously interfering and sometimes conflicting with the social dimension of the market.

The course will merge different methodological and theoretical approaches. The international political economy will offer the main instrument to understand the complex dynamics among national, supranational and international private and public institutional actors. Business history approach will permit to understand the strategies of big firms. Understanding world politics and economy implies also using a set of other tools coming from social and human science (sociology, political science, economic theory, history).

The interaction of all these factors and methodologies will permit students to familiarize with the complexity of a changing world, where old hierarchies are continuously challenged, and apparently, unexpected results are frequently the concrete effect of the new balance of power in the world economy.

AGRICULTURE, DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY

The overall objective is providing the theoretical and methodological foundations for quantitative evaluation of policy impacts on poverty and food security in rural areas in LDCs. The course approach is based on two coordinated sets of contents, namely: (i) critical review of theories and models, and (ii) empirical analysis of case studies. The contents of the lectures are the following: Policy impact evaluation, The profit function approach, Agricultural supply response, Food security, Farmer behaviour and welfare under risk, Agricultural household models, Partial equilibrium analysis of price distortions, Sectoral impacts of macroeconomic policies, The real exchange rate, Transaction costs and agrarian institutions, Input-output tables, Social accounting matrices, CGE models.

URBAN POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

The course investigates the city as a political space: as place for politics and as context for urban policies. It first deepens the very concept of "city", with particular focus on the concepts of public space, right to the city and quality of life; it then discusses methodologies for researching and planning the city, with case-studies from the Global North and South

The course focuses on the following topics:

- Theories of urban politics
- Urban and spatial policies
- Urban movements and the right to the city
- Urban public space and the quality of life
- Research methods in urban studies.

URBAN THEORY

The course consists of two sections: an introductory section and a monographic section. The introductory section focuses on the main theories and models with which the city has been thought and conceptualized in the last two centuries. The second section investigates in more depth a specific topic which may change from year to year. This is aimed to deepening and understanding in more depth the main problems related to urban theory. The first part of the course is dedicated to deepening the main theories; the second part examines urban theory through the 'lens' of the debate on modernist architecture and planning; the third part focuses on a case study.

WORLD HISTORY

The course provides a non-Eurocentric overview of the historical backgrounds of the main polities and their international relations in today's globalized world. It introduces important issues in world history including methodology and main trends, convergences and divergences. It will analyse the main themes / processes of global history: trade networks, cultural connections, diasporas and migrations, empires and informal powers in a global perspective from the 15th to the 20th century.

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The second part will focus on the public use of history through a series of case studies.

1. Methodology and introduction to World History
2. Periodization (I): Forging New Networks in the Early Modern World; Global connections: empires and exchanges.
3. Empires, Global Exchange and Slave Trades: International Markets and Global Exchange Networks; Systems of power and domination across the Americas, Europe and Africa: circulation of goods, people, ideas; Africa and forced labour across the Atlantic Ocean; Other slave trades from the Indian to the Pacific Ocean.
4. Periodization (II): Revolutions and divergences and the age of Western predominance; Globalization in World History.
5. Migration, Racial categories, Segregation and Discrimination: Mobility in the early modern world; 19th century migrations and trans-national ideas about race; A global revolution? Nation, race and western colonialism.
6. Periodization (III): The post-colony: new histories and methodological perspectives; Global System: Interdependence and Conflict in the Contemporary World
7. Global History and Narratives of the past (I): Introduction to Public History and case studies.
8. Global History and Narratives of the past (II): From UNESCO's 'History of Mankind' to Intangible Heritage, case studies.