



N J SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE @ NJIT: SIENA SUMMER STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM

ASPECTS OF URBAN FORM

INTRODUCTION

Nowhere in human history is the story of collective endeavor so forcibly evidenced as in the life of the city. Within the complex social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of the city is a fluid and organic architectural fabric where human creativity and invention are entangled with the forces of nature. Each city is a living testament to a people, to a community, to an ideal, but the many layers of fabrication and abandonment, of expansion and contraction defies a classical Darwinian reading: cities are messy landscapes that resist neat recapitulations. Cities function as unpredictable time machines through which present day travelers can keep only tenuously to their course. Mumford, writing in the *Culture of Cities* observed that "... by the diversity of its time structures, the city in part escapes the tyranny of a single present and the monotony of a future that consists in repeating only a single beat heard in the past." (*Culture*, 4).

Unless, as Mumford observed sardonically, the city was made into a "Museum."

SCOPE

The Italian city is a particularly fascinating, though somewhat shifty site for urban study. For over four centuries people have returned to the Italian city to understand its genesis, in an attempt to ensnare the mythic aura of its ancient origins. The Italian city has acquired over much time and musings an iconographic identity. Yet its "veracity" as an artifact remains highly questionable. Some of Italy's most authentic views have been renovated, if not entirely reconstituted, over the last hundred years.

Italy offers a particularly rich collection of urban typologies that reflect the diversity of Mediterranean culture. Greek trading colonies prospered along southern Italy's coastline; Etruscan city-states spread across the hilltops along the Apennines; and in time Rome grew into one of the largest capital cities of the ancient world. These two typologically different city organizations can be understood within an urban dialectic that plays between monumental and regional scales.

This course will consider the evolution of the two urban models: the city-state and the administrative capital. The first model includes the forerunners of the regional center the Etruscan settlements and later medieval cities. The second model deals with the bureaucratic and administrative capitals. The course will also consider social, cultural, and geographic issues that have contributed to the shaping of the Italian city. Cities can exist heterotypically as marketplaces and ritual theaters; just as they also emblemize elite power centers or enforce the rule of absolute law through public discipline. But other considerations will be introduced as well, related to the human quest for building utopian communities and recreating the divine landscapes of nature. Finally, cities are also objects on the horizon, existing as finite markers on an infinite landscape. The spaces between cities, the agricultural and forest hinterlands, and coastlines that surround cities, that connect cities, are tied to earliest Homeric legends and occupy a fascinating realm reserved for wanderings, nomadic adventures, conquests and exile.

COURSE OUTLINE:

The Reader Parts are available on-line through the Library website:

<http://www.library.njit.edu/archlib/class-materials/siena/reader/>

Username: **Siena09**

Password: **2009**

theSIENAstudio aspects of urban form cont'd

WEEK ONE SEMINAR 1 - Thursday 25 May

Part 1./ *Introduction to the Italian context: general issues in urban history.*

"Re-examining the Public Realm", *Civic Realism*, Peter G. Rowe, MIT Press, 1997.

Part 2./ *Siena Home Base: The road from France to Rome: three hills and a market.*

"Medieval –Siena", "The Rule of the Nine," "The Cathedral," "The Campo," *Siena: a City and its History*, Judith Hook, Hamish Hamilton, 1979.

WEEK TWO NO SEMINARS - Studio Review/Exercises 1 & 2 Tuesday 30 May

WEEK THREE SEMINAR 2 - Tuesday 6 June

Part 3./ *Greek colonial Cities: Coastal development of Greek colonial towns in Southern Italy and their military and economic weaknesses.*

"Etruscan Architecture." *Etruscan and Early Roman Architecture*, Alex Boethius, Penguin Books, 1981.

The Rise of the Etruscan City State. The benefits of living on the hilltops of the interior, while trading with the coastal towns.

The importance of Greek and Etruscan cultural exchanges in the early development of the Italian city.

"Hellenized Rome 'Consuetudo Italia' ", *Etruscan and Early Roman Architecture*, Alex Boethius, Penguin Books, 1981

WEEK THREE SEMINAR 3 - Thursday 8 June

Part 4./ *Early Republican Rome. The Roman conquest of Etruria, and Etruscan Diaspora. Etruscan influence on Roman urbanism, and the enclosing of public space.*

"Materials and Methods." *Roman Imperial Architecture*, J.B. Ward-Perkins, Penguin Books, 1981.

Part 5./ "The Physical City", "Planning: The Overall View", "Building Controls", *Ancient Rome*, O.F. Robinson, Routledge Press, 1992.

WEEK FOUR NO SEMINARS - Studio Mid-Review Tuesday 13 June

Midterm Exam Thursday 15 June

(Papers Assignment)

WEEK FIVE SEMINAR 5 - Tuesday 20 June

Part 6./ *The House as an extension of the city and society:*

"Space and Ritual in Domus, Villa, and Insula, 100 BC-AD 250" *Houses of Roman Italy*, John R. Clarke., University of California Press, 1991

Part 7./ "The Household and its Freed Slaves." *A History of Private Life*, Philippe Aries and Georges Duby (Editors), Harvard University Press, 1987

WEEK FIVE SEMINAR 6 - Thursday 22 June

Conclusion: What is a Mediterranean Architecture?

Part 8./ "Divisions of Space & Time in Europe", *The Perspective of the World (Civilization & Capitalization 15th – 18th Century, Volume 3)*, Fernand Braudel, Harper & Row, 1984.

Discussion on modern Italian architecture.

Part 9./ "The Museum, History & Metaphor 1951-1967", *History of Italian Architecture*, Manfredo Tafuri, MIT Press, 1990

"For Modernism & History as its Instrument", *Bruno Zevi on Modern Architecture*, A.O. Dean, Rizzoli, 1983

"Carlo Scarpa & the Adoration of the Joint", *Studies in Tectonic Culture*, Kenneth Frampton, MIT Press, 1998

WEEK SIX NO SEMINAR - Tuesday 27 June

Individual Papers Discussions

WEEK SEVEN PAPERS DUE – Wednesday 5 July