



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
FIRENZE

DIDA
DIPARTIMENTO DI
ARCHITETTURA



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

Sem. 2 - A.Y. 2016/2017

Cross-disciplinary Perspectives on Urban Space URBAN SPACE AND THE 'OPEN SOCIETY'

AN INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

Seminar (6 credits – 48 hours)

Code: B020765

March 1st-June 14th 2017

Prof. Giulio Giovannoni (principal organizer)
Prof. Silvia Ross, University College Cork (co-organizer)
Dr. Maria Pia Arpioni, University of Cà Foscari
Prof. Luisa Bravo, Queensland University of Technology
Prof. Paola Briata, Polytechnic of Milan
Prof. Marco Cenzatti, UC Berkeley
Prof. Leonardo Chiesi, University of Florence
Prof. Francesco Chiodelli, Gran Sasso Science Institute
Prof. Richard Ingersoll, Syracuse University of Florence
Prof. Mirella Loda, University of Florence
Prof. Annalisa Metta, Roma Tre University
Prof. Stefano Moroni, Polytechnic of Milan
Prof. Davide Papotti, Università di Parma
Prof. Matteo G. Puttilli, University of Florence

1-DESCRIPTION

Current society is characterized by a widespread loss of faith in globalization and by the will to erect new boundaries, both physical and symbolic, between different countries and cultures, peoples and lifestyles. In the most extreme cases the widespread sense of uncertainty and fear is accompanied by the growth of xenophobic and racist political movements, which seem to shake the deepest values of Western societies. The 'open society' is under attack. There is no doubt that we need new grand narratives, new frameworks that can at least counterbalance the dominant discourses of fear and hatred, and accompany the inexorable repositioning and resizing of the West in the global world.

In these complex dynamics the discourse on urban space can play an important role. Although urban space is inherently conflictual, by focusing our attention on it we can bring back to reality a battle that is mostly fought on the symbolic level. Urban space is in fact the physical continuum on which human existence and social life unfold, with their complexities and contradictions, passions and needs. However, urban space is not a simple container for human and social life, neutral like an empty theatrical scene which waits to be used by actors and performers. Although inert and difficult to transform, urban space has a natural tendency to form an indistinguishable whole with the society which inhabits and shapes it. Social structures, as well as power relations, inhabiting cultures, and modes of production, are variously encoded in it. Spatial transformations signify social dynamics and changes which are often conflictual and contradictory. Urban planners and designers tend to ignore their controversial and problematic role, hiding themselves behind the supposed neutrality of technical expertise. This is one of the reasons why it is important to reconsider critically the notion of urban space from different disciplinary perspectives, in order to gain a better awareness of the many implications of urban design.



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The seminar, organized by Giulio Giovannoni and Silvia Ross, is conceived as an opportunity for critical discussion on the topic of urban space from different disciplinary perspectives. It aims to bring together scholars from disciplines ranging from urban design, literary studies, geography, urban and architectural history, urban sociology, urban economics, and aesthetics. The seminar is intended to be an open project to be further developed in the future.

2 - GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The "Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Urban Space" seminar has three major goals:

- 1) To introduce students to cross-disciplinary research methods in the field of urban studies;
- 2) To develop critical awareness about the highly complex and problematic (political, social, economic, etc.) effects of architecture and urban design;
- 3) To acquire and practice research and writing skills.

3 – WEEKLY LECTURES AND ACTIVITIES

Urban space and the open society: a call to action (3 hours)

Giulio Giovannoni, University of Florence

Wednesday March 1st 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Urban space and pluralism (3 hours)

Stefano Moroni, Polytechnic of Milan

Wednesday March 8th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

How open is the city? Contemporary literary portraits of Italian urban contexts (3 hours)

Davide Papotti, University of Parma

Wednesday March 15th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Design for engagement. Architecture as social activator (3 hours)

Leonardo Chiesi, University of Florence

Wednesday March 22nd 2017 – 9.30-0.30am, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Coexistence. Bodies, actions and hybrid spaces in the contemporary city (3 hours)

Annalisa Metta, University of Roma Tre

Wednesday March 29th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Open-minded "public". Shaping urbanity on a wave of change (3 hours)

Luisa Bravo, Queensland University of Technology

Wednesday April 5th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Urban space and literature studies - literature, gender & space (3 hours)

Silvia Ross, University College Cork

Wednesday April 12th 2017 – 9.30-12.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Urban space and literature studies - alterity & urban space (3 hours)

Silvia Ross, University College Cork

Wednesday April 12th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Words matter! Lexicon for a multicultural society (3 hours)

Paola Briata, Polytechnic of Milan

Wednesday April 19th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2



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Urban walls and bridges between reality and literature (3 hours)

Maria Pia Arpioni, Università Ca' Foscari

Wednesday April 26th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Beyond public space. The spatialities of 'dehors' in Florence (3 hours)

Mirella Loda and Matteo G. Puttilli, University of Florence

Wednesday May 3rd 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

9 ways to enjoy global warming (3 hours)

Richard Ingersoll, Syracuse University of Florence

Wednesday May 10th 2017 – 3.30-6.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Religious pluralism and the city: The spatial regulation of an open urban society (3 hours)

Francesco Chiodelli, Gran Sasso Science Institute

Wednesday May 17th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Urban space as heterotopia (3 hours)

Marco Cenzatti, University of California at Berkeley

Wednesday May 24th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Can urban design promote an open society? (3 hours)

Giulio Giovannoni, University of Florence

Wednesday May 31st 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

Final presentation of student papers (3 hours)

Wednesday June 14th 2017 – 2.30-5.30pm, Room 7M, Palazzo di San Clemente, Via Micheli 2

5 – ADMISSION

The course is open to students from all departments which are enrolled in master's programs and in Phd programs at the University of Florence. Erasmus students enrolled at the University of Florence are also well accepted. **Applications from phd students and master's programs students from other universities will also be evaluated.** Only 10 students will be admitted. The form downloadable at <http://crossdisciplinaryurbanspace.com/call-for-applications/> should be filled and sent by **February 15th 2017** to course@crossdisciplinaryurbanspace.com in order to apply. **The application deadline is extended to February 22nd only for Erasmus students.** Notification of admission will be received by February 24th.

6 – ASSESSMENT AND REQUIREMENTS

Each student will: participate in class discussion of readings on a weekly basis; write a 5000-word research paper on the seminar topics. The paper can be written in English or in Italian. Good English reading skills are required.

7 -EVALUATION AND GRADING SYSTEM

Passing the seminar requires:

- 1) Participating actively in class discussion of readings (attendance is mandatory);
- 2) Writing a 5000 words research paper on the seminar topics.

8 -ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR

Class participation is mandatory.



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9 –ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Should issues of academic dishonesty arise (plagiarism and so on), the teacher will refer to the Degree Course Director and to the Degree Course Council, which will adopt appropriate measures.