The Global Turn: Modern Architectures and Movements Since 1851

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This course proposes to analyze the global turn as it relates to the industrial revolution and the new regimes of circulation of goods and commodities, knowledge, experts, techniques, people, and labor that it introduced and supported. We contend that these regimes posed new challenges to the discourse and practices of modern architectures that yielded substantial innovations during the mid nineteenth century that changed and consolidated in the second half of the twentieth century to the present. Each of the six modules focuses on a particular regime of circulation and thus provides the epistemological framework with which to engage with phenomena and buildings that are grouped thematically and chronologically.

Key words and concepts: modern architecture, circulation, goods and commodities, knowledge, experts, techniques, people, and labor

General Bibliography:
Markus Krajewski, Global Information Before World War I (2006)

Module 1: Circulation of Goods and Commodities

Global Production and Consumption – From World Exhibitions and Fairs to Department Stores, Shopping Malls, and E-Commerce

Objective: We identify and discuss the contribution of world exhibitions and fairs to global production and consumption of goods and commodities as it relates to the emergence of new spaces of display and commercial
collectivity. Case studies range from the Crystal Palace at the Great Exhibition of London (1851) to the urban department stores of Europe (Innovation by Victor Horta in Brussels and Schocken by Erich Mendelsohn in Germany) and suburban shopping malls in the post world war two USA (Southdale by Victor Gruen) and more recently in the middle east and Asia (Makkah Shopping Center in Mecca, Saudi Arabia).

**Key words and concepts:** Capitalism, Goods, Commodities, Industrialization, Colonialism, Mass Consumption and Production, Infrastructure (cars, trains, airplanes), Exhibitions, Fairs, Departments Stores, Shopping Malls

**Readings (primary and secondary sources):**

**Discussion questions:**

1. How has the circulation of goods (and architecture) changed in response to different political and economic frameworks promoted by colonialism, nationalism, and globalism?
2. Is the shopping mall the most emblematic type of global architecture? what other activities or types of buildings or environments might share significant similarities?

**Module 2: Global Discovery and Dissemination**
*From the Grand Tour to Plaster Casts and Periodicals*

**Objective:** We identify modes of knowledge creation and dissemination in different media over time. Whereas travel was the most important source of direct learning during the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century, the proliferation of printed matter and photography expanded the
possibilities of learning from afar and was eventually even more radically transformed by the advent of the digital revolution. When travel was not possible, the plaster cast functioned as a surrogate, as did photographs, and folios.

**Key words and concepts:** Education, Travel, architecture museums, plaster casts, models, periodicals and journals, books, mass media.

**Readings:**
- Jilly Traganou & Miodrag Mitrašinović eds., *Travel, space, architecture* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009)

**Discussion questions:**
1. How did education (broadly considered) contribute to the global exchange of knowledge?
2. How did the nature of different media (print, photography, digital) accelerate the rate of exchange of global knowledge?

**Module 3: Global Collaborations**
*From International Competitions to the Transcultural Classroom*

**Objective:** As education moved from in-situ learning to spaces of collectivity, so too did opportunities for architects and students of architects to converge into the transcultural classroom. If colonialism promoted exchanges between nations, it was not until nationalism asserted itself that institutions began to formalize education. Together with the increased media, this led to the rise of greater networks of collaboration and therise
of the international competition.

**Key words and concepts:** Competitions, Summer School, Pedagogy, Conferences, Organizations

**Readings:**

**Discussion questions:**
1. What challenges can language and translation present to the circulation of ideas globally?
2. How can politics facilitate (or restrict) transcultural learning opportunities?

**Module 4: Global Construction**

*Global Construction Methods – From Travelling Concrete Systems to Accumulative Tall Buildings*

**Objective:** Here, the question is: How can construction practices be regarded as global processes? We identify and analyze a series of producers of products alongside the emergence of new construction techniques and technologies. This module aims at illustrating the increasingly complex circulation of different materials and methods that go against the grain of the traditional vernacular ideal of sourcing local materials that has recently re-gained momentum within the ‘green’ and environmental movements.

**Key words and concepts:** materials, construction techniques, patents, systems, distribution networks.
Readings:
Adrian Forty, *Concrete and Culture: A Material History* (2012)

Discussion questions:
1. What are the advantages of deploying construction materials that are both local and global?
2. What are the sustainability implications for global exchange of building products?

Module 5: Global Transportation

*Global Transportation – From Railway Cathedral to International Airport*

Objective: Dramatically increased mobility throughout the last century has generated both increased dialogue and new types of buildings that have accommodated new forms of transport ranging from air and train to automobiles. This phenomenon has given way to a number of diverse types of buildings including the Motel, Hotel, Airport, and Train Stations.

Key words and concepts: motel, hotel, airport, train station

Readings:

Discussion questions:
1. Building types associated with travel tend to be ‘hybrid’ (mo-tel= motor hotel). Explain why?
2. In what ways do physical places of exchange (airports) differ from virtual spaces of exchange (web)?

Module 6: Global Inequities

From Tenements to Bidonville

Objective: The building industry has increased relied upon labor moved across geographies that reveals the economic disparities between regions and cities of the global north and south. These exchanges reveal the paradoxes between the virtual and real insofar as the needs of actually building in specific places go counter to the global circulation of ideas and capital.

Key words and concepts: capitalism, migration, building industry

Readings:
Peggy Deamer, Architecture and Capitalism: 1845 to the present (2014)

Discussion questions:
1. How has global capitalism accentuated inequality as it manifests itself in the built environment?
2. How has globalism accentuated the divide between high and low-tech building?