

IDIS 291**FALL 2006****Dr. Lalande**

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MODERN URBANIZATION: DESTRUCTION AND RESTORATION OF CITIES AROUND THE WORLD

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

The purpose of the course is to study how modern urbanization, during the 20th century, has drastically transformed many great cities and their cultures throughout the world. To do so we will focus on seven cities worldwide: three (Berlin, Paris and Venice) in western developed countries, one (Kyoto) in a non-western developed country, and three more (Cairo, Beijing and Bangkok) in developing countries. Occasionally a few specific additional examples will be drawn from other well-know western or non-western cities, when necessary (Athens, Dresden, Hiroshima, Istanbul, Warsaw).

The first part of the course will examine the main forces which, in one way or another, have contributed to the significant destruction of many cities' cultural heritage. The second part will concentrate on the variety of the restoration and preservation efforts that have been made to fight those destructive forces.

In the process we will see how destruction and restoration, while being universal, take on various forms depending upon the history, culture, politics and economic development of the cities affected. We will discuss some of the efforts that are made to protect those cities from destruction, their successes and their failures, and we will raise the question of the future of our urban cultures. Will the industrialization of architecture prevail in the near future to the point that all the great cities of the world will look alike, or will people be able to protect the cultural spirit of their cities from the forces of rapid modernization and uniformity?

READINGS:

Anthony M. Tung, *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, Three Rivers Press, New York, New York, 2001, ISBN 0-609-80815, 470p.

A series of hand-outs and of various articles pertinent to the topics studied will be distributed in class as the semester goes on.

A number of reading assignments will also have to be carried out in the library. Various articles will be on reserve there.

COURSE OUTLINE**Monday August 28**

We start with a **presentation and definition of the global issue**, which is the subject of the course, followed by a brief introduction of the meaning of cities with emphasis on the historic relation between urban environments and the cultures of the people who live in them. We comment on the choice of the cities on which the course is going to focus and distribute handouts explaining the function and meaning of some ancient cities worldwide.

Read Tung's, *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, Introduction.

Wednesday August 30

Introduction to the **urban explosion** that characterized the 20th century throughout the world. We look at a few numbers in general and in reference to the cities we chose to focus on. Is this urban expansion in the process of creating a new concept of urban culture? Then we look at the major factors responsible for the destruction of many cities during the last century: a) **Wars, conflicts and political ideologies**, b) **Industrialization and urban expansion**, c) **Industrialization and pollution of the environment** in its various forms, d) **Modernization** whose effects on urban infrastructure clash with traditions, e) **Modernization** whose effects on housing, commercial construction and real estate development pressures are also detrimental to old historical city areas and communities.

Read the two articles distributed in class.

Wednesday September 6

We start with the first factor identified for the destruction of cities worldwide during the 20th century: **wars, revolutions, regional conflicts and political ideologies**. Numerous cities in the developed as well as developing world have been recently destroyed as a result of political conflicts. Although different in nature, **Berlin** and **Beijing** give us two striking examples of such destruction. Before discussing the issue however we must become more familiar with the two cities from a historical and cultural viewpoint.

Introduction to the capital city of the Federal Republic of Germany: **Berlin** and its landmarks: a historical perspective and a survey of the destruction suffered by the city during the 20th century.

Read handout on Berlin distributed in class

Monday September 11

Wars, conflicts and political ideologies (cont.).

Introduction to the capital city of the People's Republic of China: Beijing and its major landmarks: a historical perspective and a survey of the destruction suffered by the city during the 20th century..

Read Anthony Tung, *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, chapter 14, *The City Redeemed*, pp. 389-412.

Wednesday September 13

Discussion of both cities as typical examples of cities destroyed for political reasons in the course of the 20th century. **Berlin** was partially destroyed by the Nazis before WWII, then massively bombed by the Allies during WWII, and further destroyed during the Cold War due to conflicting political ideologies. **Beijing** was also the victim of repeated political violence: first during the Communist Revolution and the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, then during the celebration of the 10th anniversary of Communist rule, then during the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976.

Additional comments on other cities (**Dresden, Warsaw** and **Hiroshima**, for ex.) are briefly discussed.

Read Anthony Tung, *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, chapter 6, *Ideological Conflict with the Past*, pp. 131-168.

Read Eugene Linden, *The Exploding Cities of the Developing World*, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 75, No. 1, pp. 52-65.

Monday September 18

Yet, in spite of all the damage they brought, wars and conflicts of all sorts only account for a small part of the urban destruction that took place during the 20th century. Many urban planners today agree that far more cultural, architectural and artistic history has been destroyed as a result of **industrialization** and of the **modernization** process that came later. Before we look at the various forms those two phenomena took on several continents, we acquaint ourselves with two cities in the developed world: **Paris** in Europe and **Kyoto** in Asia, and two cities in the developing world: **Cairo** in Africa and **Bangkok** in Asia.

Introduction to the capital city of France: Paris and its landmarks, a historical perspective.

Read Anthony Tung, *Preserving the World's great Cities*, chapter 10, *The Comprehensible Urban Visage*, pp.272-317.

Read: Martine Jacot, *Living with Leviathan*, UNESCO Courier, January 1999, pp. 18-23.

Wednesday September 20

Introduction to the former capital city of Japan: **Kyoto** and its landmarks, a historical perspective.

Read Anthony Tung, *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, Chapter 13 *Kyoto, Reversing the Culture of Destruction*, pp. 368-385.

Monday September 25

FIRST TEST

Wednesday September 27 -

Comparative discussion of the nature and consequences of the negative impact of industrialization and modernization on Paris and Kyoto.

Monday October 2

Introduction to the capital city of Egypt: **Cairo** and its landmark: a historical perspective.

Read Anthony Tung, *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, chapter 5, *The tragedy of the Megacity*, pp. 96-130.

Wednesday October 4

The first paper is due

Introduction to the capital city of Thailand: Bangkok and its landmarks: a historical perspective.

Read articles distributed in class.

BREAK

Wednesday October 11

The destructive effects of expansion on urban areas

As industrialization spread around the globe it triggered an urban expansion that brought chaos to the traditional culture of the cities it affected. Depending upon cultural and economic factors, some cities fared better than others. We look at our four cities for examples: two in the developed world: **Paris** and **Kyoto** and two in the developing world: Bangkok and Cairo.

For Kyoto: Read: Alex Kerr, *Dogs and Demons*, Hill and Wang, New York, 2001, pp. 164-173 and 187-189.

Monday October 16

The destructive effect of industrialization on urban areas: pollution of the environment

An introduction to **Venice** and its major landmarks: a historical perspective

Today we become acquainted with the history of **Venice** because, due to special geographical considerations, the city provides a unique example of the extent to which the combined effects of air, soil and water pollution caused by industrial waste can threaten the very survival of one of the greatest cities in the world.

Read Anthony Tung, *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, chapter 11, *Tourism versus the Habitable City*, pp. 318-342.

Wednesday October 18

Continuation and end of our discussion of industrial pollution in Venice.

Industrialization and pollution of the environment – all cities:

Today we discuss another consequence of industrialization and urban expansion: the air and soil pollution which is damaging historical cities worldwide, and oftentimes threatening their very future. The problem reaches catastrophic proportions in the developing world where efforts to clean the environment are too often insignificant for lack of resources and political will. Here our examples are **Beijing, Cairo and Bangkok**, three cities with a different approach to the problem, but no solution in sight yet. In the developed world, where more efforts and more resources are allocated to the clean-up and where the political will is more aggressive, some successes have been achieved as witnessed by **Paris, Berlin and Kyoto** but many problems still remain. A quick detour towards **Athens** and **Istanbul** will prove the point.

Read material distributed in class.

Monday October 23

Modernization of urban infrastructure and its clash with traditions.

As modern needs arise, they always conflict with traditions. Modern cities need modern infrastructures, and the modernization of infrastructures often means destruction or deterioration of what used to be in place. This clash exists worldwide but the way cities address it (or do not) is nuanced by their respective cultural and political background. If ignored, the damage to the traditional culture can be devastating. Today we illustrate our comments with examples from **Cairo, Kyoto and Bangkok**.

Read material distributed in class.

Wednesday October 25

SECOND TEST

Monday October 30

Another problem for most cities in the world: the modernization of housing, commercial construction and real estate development pressures:

These inevitable aspects of modernization could be called the **industrialization of architecture**. They affect cities worldwide and contribute to the deterioration of local communities and their traditional cultures. They may take on different forms depending upon local and national cultural values and economic resources but, in the long run, they threaten all cities of **uniformity**. Here we base our discussion on examples from five cities: **Beijing, Kyoto, Bangkok, Paris** and **Berlin** and we ask ourselves a few questions.

Will **Beijing** (with the on-going destruction of its hutong, “siheyuan” and other courtyard houses) look like Hong Kong in a few years? Will **Kyoto** (with the destruction of so many of its machiya to make space for high-rise buildings) look like Tokyo? Will **Bangkok** (with the destruction of its traditional floating markets and shop-houses) look like any other large would-be modern city in the developing world? Those three cities will give us an idea of the extent of the problem. **Paris** (with the destruction of its old streets) and **Berlin** (with its on-going modernization) suggest some solutions but at the same time emphasize their limits.

Read Anthony Tung, *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, chapter 11, *Tourism versus the Habitable City*, pp. 318-342.

Wednesday November 1

Today we welcome a guest speaker (Dr. Curtis Keim) who will give us a lecture on the problems we have discussed as they affect the African sub-Saharan part of the world.

To be better prepared for the lecture we read beforehand: Amy Otchet, *Lagos: the survival of the determined*, UNESCO Courier, June 1999

Monday November 6

Today we discuss the **need for urban preservation, restoration and reconstruction worldwide.**

Even though each culture approaches the preservation and restoration of its own urban traditions differently, we can distinguish three kinds of approaches: the western approach as exemplified by Notre-Dame Cathedral, the Orsay railways station, and the Pompidou Center in **Paris**, the Ca'd'Oro, Ca'Rezzonico and San Giorgio Maggiore in **Venice**, and the Brandenburg Gate, and Reichstag in **Berlin**; the eastern approach as shown by the Heian Shrine, the Golden Temple (Kinkaku-ji) and the railways station in **Kyoto**, and the Temple of the Sun in **Beijing**; finally, the absent (or disorderly) approach as expressed by most historical landmarks in **Cairo**.

Wednesday November 8

The difficulties and challenges of urban preservation and reconstruction (moral issues)

This is an interesting question to explore and here again we look at **Beijing** and **Berlin** for examples. Preservation of the urban culture of **Berlin** involves preserving memories of the Nazi dictatorship as well as the East German dictatorship. **Beijing** faces the same predicament: the restoration of the major landmarks requires the “necessary” preservation of the “somewhat embarrassing” Maoist heritage and the “silencing”, not to say “cover-up” of the excesses of the Cultural Revolution

Monday November 13

The difficulties and challenges of urban preservation and reconstruction (political issues)

Here we give special consideration to the case of **Venice** to show how political and economic support is indispensable to conduct a politics of restoration. We use additional examples from **Paris**, **Kyoto** and **Cairo** to emphasize the same reality. Then, we see the opposite scenario whereby too much political support may become detrimental when it subjects preservation and reconstruction to ideologies, as shown in **Berlin** and **Beijing**. In **Berlin** the opposition between the Kuffurstendamm and Karl-Marx-Allee is symbolic of the dual nature of the modern city. In **Beijing**, preparations for the upcoming Olympic

Games and preservation of the Forbidden City express the schizophrenic nature of the new city.

Wednesday November 15

The difficulties and challenges of urban preservation and reconstruction (economic issues - tourism)

Tourism, and especially mass tourism, is a recent phenomenon which, at first was limited to western countries (especially the northern shores of the Mediterranean Sea), but which nowadays has quickly spread to the rest of the world. The effect of mass tourism on major cities has been both beneficial and detrimental. It has been beneficial in that sense that, in order to attract tourists, city officials everywhere must preserve some of their unique cultural landmarks to make their city attractive. It has been detrimental whenever an excessive number of people place additional strain on often insufficient city infrastructures and environment. Here again, the western world tends to be in a better position to cope with this problem than the developing world, but it is not always true. We see how **Venice** is particularly exposed to the destructive effects of tourism, how **Bangkok** and **Beijing** are sacrificing a great deal of their traditional features in their haste to attract tourists, how **Cairo** is increasing its efforts to accommodate an increasing number of tourists, and finally how **Paris**, **Berlin** and **Kyoto**, in their own ways, use with tourism

Read: Antonio Paolo Russo, *Venice: coping with culture vultures*, UNESCO Courier, July/August 1999.

Read: Mike Robinson: *Is cultural tourism on the right track?*, UNESCO Courier, July/August 1999.

Read: Roy Malkin, *The pioneers*, UNESCO Courier, July/August 1999.

Monday November 20

The rewards of successful restoration efforts (1)

As a result of all the destruction we have discussed, many cities worldwide have made genuine efforts to preserve their cultural and artistic heritage. Unsurprisingly the success often depends on the financial commitments made. In the developing world many preservation efforts have been genuine but unfortunately mostly limited to specific landmarks such as historical royal residences (**Bangkok**, **Beijing**), religious buildings (mosques in **Cairo**, temples in **Bangkok**). We see examples of successful restorations,

and some not as successful due to the fact that too often restoration is motivated by the desire to attract tourists.

Monday November 27

THIRD TEST

Wednesday November 29

The rewards of successful restoration efforts (2)

In the developed world the same type of preservation and restoration work, as well as reconstruction work, are better integrated into the very texture of the cities but, of course, at higher costs. We look at some accomplishments in **Kyoto, Berlin** and **Paris**.

Also we look at Paris (La Grande Arche) and Berlin (Potsdamerplatz) to see how reconstruction can re-affirm the past while creating its own architectural style for future generations to enjoy.

Monday December 4

The rewards of successful restoration efforts (3)

Today we discuss how restoration in the developed world has gone beyond the restoration of individual landmarks to include entire sections and neighborhoods of cities. Can the “spirit” of a city be preserved? We look at the example of Gion’s corner and Pontocho in **Kyoto**, the “Quartier de Bercy and La Villette” in **Paris**, and Potsdamer Platz, Pariser Platz, Nikolaiviertel in **Berlin**. In conclusion we also look at how **Paris** and **Berlin** give us two very different but at the same time hopeful versions of a possible urban future.

Read Thierry Bruehl, *Berlin, the Island that was*, The UNESCO Courier, October 1999, pp.3-8.

The second paper is due

Wednesday December 6

The rewards of successful restoration efforts (4)

Today we concentrate on the very specific efforts towards preservation in **Venice**. If they are successful, those efforts could become an inspiration and a model for many other cities in the world. Can **Venice** be saved without any further loss of its cultural identity? There is new evidence for hope and the answer is of an economic nature.

Monday December 11

What to expect from the future?

We look at the preservation efforts made in **Kyoto**, another city threatened of cultural extinction. Can **Kyoto** and its cultural identity be protected from further destruction? Like in **Venice**, there is “some” hope, but in **Kyoto** the answer is also of a cultural nature. Also, can **Beijing** and **Cairo** preserve and restore some of their cultural heritage? Here the answer is both economic and cultural. Restoration of an old district in **Cairo** and of the mosque of Ibn Tulun constitutes a couple of hopeful and bright stars in an otherwise dark galaxy. What about **Bangkok**? What can really be saved there besides some historic temples and other landmarks? Can **Bangkok**'s traditional culture survive the appetite of often greedy and unscrupulous developers?

FINAL EXAM

Evaluation

There will be three written tests, two papers and a final exam. All students will have to give at least one oral presentation in class on a topic assigned in advance.

The final grade will be determined as follows:

Presentation(s) 10%	10
Papers 10% for the first and 15% for the second one	25
Tests 10% for the first one and 15% for the 2 nd and 3 rd	40
Final exam 20%	20
Participation in class	5

Class attendance

Class attendance is, of course, obligatory. Each student will be allowed TWO unmotivated absences. In case of a third unmotivated absence the participation grade will be lowered by ONE letter, then by two. In case of five unmotivated absence, the final grade will be lowered by a letter.

One final note

Please avoid eating in class and make sure your cellular phone(s) are off. Avoid looking bored and, if indeed you are, let me know and we will try all together to make the subject matter livelier. I wish you all a good and rewarding semester.