**Territory: Spatial Reification of Power**

Instructor: Gabriel Kozlowski

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Office Hours: W 2-4 R 10-12

Credit Units: **3-0-6**

Meetings: **W 10-1**

Room: **5-232**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The simple differentiation between “inside” and “outside” has politically configured the world as we see it today.

Increasingly, architectural thinking has addressed large-scale systems, such as those of cities, landscapes, regions, and even the world. With this increase in scale, the distinctions between architecture and geography get blurred and many aspects of those disciplines become interchangeable. However, although architecture claims agency in addressing geographical questions, there seems to be little understanding of one of the most fundamental aspects of large-scale spatial systems, the concept of “territory.”

To discuss “territory” is to move away from an apparent ordinary neutrality of the term to incorporate all the complexities inherent in the relation between place and power. What is usually taken for granted, imagined as natural, is in fact a highly articulated, historically defined social construct. Far from being an object, “territory” is a political technology (Elden, 2013), an apparatus of control we have gotten used to.

The course proposes that investigating the ways in which territory is produced, maintained and strategized, and generates conflicts, establishes divisions and build identities can lead to a more critical understanding of architecture’s role in society. Architecture, especially because it is always political – even in a rudimentary level it expresses ideological positions by limiting and separating one part from another – can be seen as a form of reproducing territorial logics into a smaller scale context. The overlap between architecture and “territory” are many, from concerns with the way the interplay of social and political forces gets spatialized, to more general issues such as struggles over land division, property rules, private vs. public realms, dominance vs. resistance, definition of borders, and the reification of power as space.
The course is designed to expand the student's literacy in the concept of territory and its relation to the architecture realm. The course is structured as a seminar with a research component to be developed throughout the semester. Students will be asked to engage in a research project to explore territorial relations at a specific scale of their interest, e.g., a scale of a country, a neighborhood, a building, etc. Each project will investigate one specific case, either directly related to architecture or not, in which territorial logic is implemented. Drawing on the fact that the advent of "territory" was dependent on innovations on cartographic and mapping techniques, the research projects are expected to incorporate a strong graphical component to make these territorial logics visible.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**Participation, and Attendance (30%).** Students are expected to engage the course material by completing readings, and participating in the discussions.

**Class Presentation (20%).** Each student is required to produce at least two presentations (with team members), leading and participating in discussion.

**Mapping Exercise (20%).** The mapping is a concise exercise aimed at revealing territorial relations through drawings. It should be structured by the questions raised by the readings and case studies.

**Short Research Paper (30%).** Students may write an individual final paper, consisting of 10-12 double spaced pages, on a topic of their choosing, in consultation with professors and the teaching assistant. Although optional, ideally the paper and the mapping exercise should complement each other.

Notes:

Students missing more than 2 classes will be docked a grade; those missing more than 3 classes during the semester will receive a fail. Persistent lateness will also contribute to a lowered grade for participation.

No incompletes, no late exams. In case of incompletes with official sanction owing to illness or other personal issues, students will be given one additional semester to complete their work. If work is still incomplete at that point, a ‘fail’ grade will be given.

**GRADING AND INTEGRITY**

**Grading Definition:**

A. Exceptionally good performance demonstrating a superior understanding of the subject matter, a foundation of extensive knowledge, and a skillful use of concepts and/or materials.

B. Good performance demonstrating capacity to use the appropriate concepts, a good understanding of the subject matter, and an ability to handle the problems and materials encountered in the subject.

C. Adequate performance demonstrating an adequate understanding of the subject matter, an ability to handle relatively simple problems, and adequate preparation for moving on to more advanced work in the field.
D. Minimally acceptable performance demonstrating at least partial familiarity with the subject matter and some capacity to deal with relatively simple problems, but also demonstrating deficiencies serious enough to make it inadvisable to proceed further in the field without additional work.

F. Failed. This grade also signifies that the student must repeat the subject to receive credit.

**Academic Integrity + Honesty:**

MIT’s expectations and policies regarding academic integrity should be read carefully and adhered to diligently: [http://integrity.mit.edu](http://integrity.mit.edu)

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**CLASS SCHEDULE**

*Feb 3: Introduction*

*Feb 10: Territory, not Land*

*Feb 17: The production of Territory*

*Feb 24: Cartography and Spatial Calculation*

*Mar 2: State & Nation*

*Mar 9: Power & Space*

*Mar 16: Initial Mapping and Research Topic Presentations*

*Mar 23: Spring Break (no class)*

*Mar 30: Reification – Marx, Lukács, and beyond*

*April 6: World Urbanization – Theories*

*April 13: World Urbanization – Architecture Reactions*

*April 20: Boundlessness, or Infinite Extension*

*April 27: The Border*

*May 4: The Envelope*

*May 11: Final Presentations*
CLASS MODULES

1. Territory, not Land


Further readings:


More on Vittorio Gregotti:


2. The production of Territory


Further readings:


3. Cartography and spatial calculation


Further Readings:


More on “calculative spatial projects:”


Literature:


4. State & Nation


Further readings:


5. **Power & Space**


**Further readings:**


6. **Reification – Marx, Lukács, and beyond**


Further readings:


7. World Urbanization – Theories (with Roi Salgueiro)


Lefebvre, Henri. “From the City to Urban Society,” “The Urban Society.” In The Urban Revolution (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003,) 1-23 and 165-188.


Further readings:


8. World Urbanization – Architecture Reactions (with Roi Salgueiro)


Further readings:


9. Boundlessness, or Infinite Extension


Further readings:


Hulshof, Michiel, and Daan Roggeveen. How the City Moved to Mr. Sun: China’s New Megacities. Amsterdam, the Netherlands: SUN, 2011.


**10. The Border**


**Further Readings:**

Mezzadra, Sandro, and Brett Neilson. *Border as Method, Or, the Multiplication of Labor*, 2013.


*Photography:*


11. **The Envelope / The Political**


**Further readings:**


More on Pier Vittorio Aureli:


**Exhibition:**