

## **Conflict Urbanism: Aleppo**

**CourseNo:** ARCHA6890\_001\_2016\_1

**Meeting Time:** F 11:00A-01:00P

**Meeting Location:** Studio@Butler

**Tutorials:** Tuesday 7-9pm Studio@Butler

### **Instructor Information:**

Laura Kurgan, Associate Professor, GSAPP

with Avinoam Shalem, Professor, Art History and Archaeology (4 sessions)

Madeeha Merchant, Adjunct Assistant Professor, GSAPP

Grga Basic, Associate Research Scholar, Center for Spatial Research,

TA: Michael Howard, GSAPP

This is the first in a series of multidisciplinary Mellon seminars on the topic of Conflict Urbanism, as part of a multi-university initiative in Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities. This year, we will focus on Aleppo in Syria.

**Conflict Urbanism** is a term that designates that cities are not only destroyed but also built through conflict.

**Conflict Urbanism: Aleppo.** This spring, the seminar focus will be on the city of Aleppo and the places now inhabited by refugees from the city. We will begin with an art historical, and historical survey of one of the most continuously inhabited cities in the world dating back to 10 000 BC. We will examine the urban artifacts of colonialization, the diverse religious and cultural monuments, and the trade routes that have formed the city as it existed until 2011. Then we will look beyond the recent dramatic eruption of state violence and civil war to its antecedents and contexts in rural-urban migration, largely driven by other factors, including poverty and drought. We will examine the time-based destruction of Aleppo at macro and micro levels, analyzing conflict patterns in its social and urban structure. We will then expand what we call "Aleppo" to include the tens of thousands of former residents now sheltered in other cities and in refugee camps in Turkey and Jordan.

**Methods:** Our work will be by necessity multidisciplinary and include the history, architecture, politics, media, culture, literature and contemporary manifestations of particular cities as they relate to the topic of Conflict Urbanism.

Our work will also be multi-media. To study cities today, we have an abundance of data and databases accessible to focus our research. Students will have access to a platform developed by the Center for Spatial Research for their work. It provides students a user friendly framework for navigating, analyzing, and interpreting a series of maps and imagery, characterizing changes resulting from social conflict or natural disasters during the conflict years in Aleppo. The platform can be used in one of two ways: to facilitate navigating and understanding the conflict from a distance, in order to and write about a topic; or, to add to the platform, in a multi-media format on a specific topic or issue, with regard to a specific neighborhood, monument, institution or

network. Assignments and Tutorials will be based on engaging with the platform and creating a series of case studies, which will interrogate the data and imagery out of which the platform is built.

Platform: <http://c4sr.columbia.edu/conflict-urbanism-aleppo/map/index.html>

Case Studies: <http://c4sr.columbia.edu/conflict-urbanism-aleppo/index.html>

Tutorials: <https://github.com/mym2107/CSR-Conflict-Urbanism-Aleppo/tree/master/Tutorials>

**Schedule:**

**Jan 22 Introduction, Aleppo: Conflict Urbanism**

**Jan 29 Aleppo, City of Knowledge, Avinoam Shalem**

Kinney, Dale. "Introduction." In *Reuse Value Spolia and Appropriation in Art and Architecture, from Constantine to Sherrie Levine*, by Richard Brilliant, and Dale Kinney, 1-11. Farnham, Surrey, UK, England: Ashgate, 2011.

Gonnella, Julia. "Columns and Hieroglyphs: Magic Spolia in Medieval Islamic Architecture of Northern Syria." *Muqarnas* 27, edited by Gülru Necipoğlu and Karen A. Leal (2010): 103-120

Flood, Finbarr Barry. 2001. "The Medieval Trophy as an Art Historical Trope: Coptic and Byzantine "Altars" in Islamic Contexts". *Muqarnas: an Annual on Islamic Art and Architecture*. 18: 41-72.

**Jan 30 Workshop 1  
Tutorials 1 + 2: Crowdsourcing, OSM and Webmapping Platform**

**Feb 02 Tutorials 1+2 Help Session**

**Feb 05 The Syrian Civil War**  
Tutorials 1+2 complete this week.

Al Haj Saleh, Yassin. "Syria as a Global Metaphor." *L'Internationale*, April 25, 2015.

Ignatieff, Michael. "Bosnia and Syria: Intervention Then and Now." In *The Syria Dilemma*, Edited by Nader Hashemi and Danny Postel, 45-58. Boston: MIT Press, 2013.  
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/columbia/reader.action?ppg=58&docID=10756185&tm=1454353247799>

Roth, Kenneth. "How to Ease Syrian Syrian Suffering." *The New York Times*, February 8, 2013.

Polk, William R. "Understanding Syria: From Pre-Civil War to Post-Assad." *The Atlantic*, December 10, 2013.

Halasa, Malu, Zāhir ‘Amrīn, and Nawārah Maḥfūd. *Syria Speaks: Art and Culture from the Frontline*. London: Saqi Books. 2014.

Recommended:

Hokayem, Emile. “The Regional Struggle over Syria,” “Syria in the International Context.” Chap. 4 and 5 in *Syria's Uprising and the Fracturing of the Levant*, 105-148, 149-190. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Hokayem, Emile. *Syria's Uprising and the Fracturing of the Levant* (the rest of the book). New York: Routledge, 2013.

**Feb 09            Tutorials 3+4: Basic Static and Interactive Maps  
(help session, complete tutorials in advance)**

**Feb 12            Historic Aleppo: City of Rebels, Avinoam Shalem**

Allen, Terry. *A Classical Revival in Islamic Architecture*. Wiesbaden: L. Reichert, 1986.

Tabbaa, Yasser “Part II: Constructions of Power.” In *Constructions of Power and Piety in Medieval Aleppo*, 51-96. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.

Raby, Julian. “Nur Al-Din, the Qastal al-Shu‘aybiyya, and the ‘Classical Revival.’” *Muqarnas* 21 (2004): 289-31

**Feb 16            Tutorials 5+7: Interactive Historical and Before/After Maps  
(help session, complete tutorials in advance)**

**Feb 19            Conflict Zones, Avinoam Shalem**

Rabbat, Nassar. “They Shoot Historians, Don’t They?” *Artforum* (November 2015)

Toufic, Jalal. “Forthcoming.” In *Forthcoming*, 46-75 (+ Notes). Berkeley, Calif: Atelos, 2000.

Toufic, Jalal. “Credits Included.” In *Over-Sensitivity*, 56-79. Forthcoming Books, 2009.

**Feb 23            Tutorials 6+9: Interactive Cluster Maps  
(help session, complete tutorials in advance)**

**Feb 26            Conflict and Climate Change**

Weizman, Eyal, Liz Jobey, Shela Sheikh, Michael Komem, and Fazal Sheikh. *The Conflict Shoreline: Colonization as Climate Change in the Negev Desert*. 2015.

Kelley, Colin P., Shahrzad Mohtadi, Mark A. Cane, Richard Seager, and Yochanan Kushnir. "Climate change in the Fertile Crescent and implications of the recent Syrian drought". *PNAS* 112, no. 11 (2015): 3241-3246

Fountain, Henry. "Researchers Link Syrian Conflict to a Drought Made Worse by Climate Change." *The New York Times*, March 2, 2015.

Elsheshtawy, Yasser. *The Evolving Arab City: Tradition, Modernity and Urban Development*. London: Routledge, 2008.

**Mar 01            Tutorial 8: Story Based Interactive Map  
(help session, complete tutorials in advance)**

**Mar 04            Aleppo, Patterns of Urbanization**  
Students must have completed **minimum of 4 tutorials**, and take more as their research question dictates.

Kilcullen, Davin, and Nathaniel Rosenblatt. "The Rise of Syria's Urban Poor; Why the War for Syria's Future Will Be Fought over the Country's New Urban Villages." In *Prism* 4, Edited by Michael Mikleucic, 32-41. Washington, DC: Center for Complex Operations, 2014.

**Mar 05            Advanced Workshop 2  
Tutorials 10-12 (optional)**

**Mar 11            Representing Conflict**

Latour, Bruno. "From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik or How to Make Things Public." *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*, by Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, 4-31. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005.

Kurgan, Laura. "Introduction" and "Kosovo 1999: SPOT 083-264." In *Close Up at a Distance: Mapping, Technology and Politics*, 7-36, 113-128. Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 2013.

Weizman, Eyal. "Urban Warfare: Walking Through Walls." In *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, 185-218. London: Verso, 2007.

Herscher, Andrew: *Architecture and Violence*, essay pp.

**Mar 11            Case Study: Topic choice and methodology due.**

**Mar 18**      **Spring Break**

**Mar 25**      **Case Study Presentations: Planning and Preservation**

Watenpaugh, Heghnar Zeitlian. *The Image of an Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture and Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries*. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

Çelik, Zeynep. *Empire, Architecture, and the City: French-Ottoman Encounters, 1830-1914*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008.

Eldem, Edhem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Alan Masters. *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Busquets, Joan. *Aleppo: Rehabilitation of the Old City*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Graduate School of Design, 2005.

Gonnella, Julia. *The Citadel of Aleppo*. Geneva: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, 2008.

**Apr 01**      **Case Study Presentations: Story Telling with Data**

Kurgan, Laura "Million Dollar Blocks." In *Close Up at a Distance: Mapping, Technology and Politics*, 187-204. Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 2013.

Aisch, Gregor, Sarah Almkhatar, K.K. Rebecca Lai, and Tim Wallace. "Inside Raqqa, the Capital of ISIS." *New York Times*, November 21, 2015.

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/11/21/world/middleeast/inside-raqqa-capital-of-isis.html>

Price, Megan, Jeff Klingner, and Patrick Ball. *Preliminary Statistical Analysis of Documentation of Killings in the Syrian Arab Republic*. The Benetech Human Rights Program, commissioned by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). HRDAG, 2013.

**Apr 08**      **Case Study Presentations: Migrants and Refugees**

Agier, Michel. "The Desert, the Camp, the City." In *On the Margins of the World: The Refugee Experience Today*, 39-72 Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2008.

Agier, Michel. "Introduction" and "Part One: A World of Undesirables, a Network of Camps." In *Managing the Undesirables: Refugee Camps and Humanitarian Government*, 1-59. Translated by David Fernbach. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2011.

Herz, Manuel. "The Refugee Camps of the Western Sahara" and "A Brief History of Refugees and Refugee Camps." In *From Camp to City: Refugee Camps of the Western Sahara*, 8-63. Zürich: Müller, 2013.

**Apr 15            Case Study Presentations: Rebuilding During and Post-Conflict**

Leclair-Paquet, Benjamin J. "Beirut Divided: The potential of urban design in reuniting a culturally divided city." DPU working Paper no. 153, UCL Bartlett, 2013.

Cambanis, Thanassis. "A daring plan to rebuild Syria — no matter who wins the war." *Boston Globe*, February 21, 2015.

Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus – Senftenberg. *Aleppo Archive in Exile*. Workshop. 2014.

**Apr 22            Case Presentations: Flexible topics**

**Apr 29            Final review Week, Architecture School**

**May 06            Final review Seminar**

In conjunction with the seminar we are planning a lecture series of three lectures on Thursday night over the course of the Semester titled: "Focus Aleppo: Disrupting Unity, Discerning Ruptures"

Yasser Tabbaa Feb 18<sup>th</sup>  
Heghnar Waterpaugh March 24<sup>th</sup>  
Patrick Ball, March 31<sup>st</sup>  
Sussan Babaie, April 7