

Arch 025/ Spring Semester, 2004  
Sylvia Shorto

## House and Home: Histories of Domesticity

*“Our house is our corner of the world...it is our first universe.”*

Many writers have emphasized the different ways that domestic architecture, when properly contextualized, embodies social values and hierarchies. For Gaston Bachelard, the experience and the memory of domestic space went deeper still, and was a seminal influence on the formation of experience of the wider world.

This seminar/practicum course will be divided into two interrelated sections.

### PART ONE: UNDERSTANDING HOME

We will begin by reading and discussing literature on architect-designed domestic architecture, focusing on current interdisciplinary methods. We will look at how houses relate to theories about the nature of the public/private sphere; social spatial practices and patterns of settlement; gendering; and the performative aspects of space. We will include analysis of the sequencing of rooms and their furnishings in an attempt to recreate the way a house was used.

Students will select and analyze an individual, architect-designed house from the Renaissance to the present, situating it within a relevant web of cultural and historical contexts. Findings will be presented as short reports to the class, and as short written reports.

40% of the total grade

Thursday, February 12: General Introduction

Tuesday, February 17: Classes cancelled. Make up time will be scheduled during the Field Work sessions

Tuesday, February 24: Lecture: Woman as Patron: Beth of Hardwick and Hardwick Hall

#### READINGS:

E. Ann Kaplan: “Is the Gaze Male?” (Photocopy)  
Friedman, Alice: “Architecture, Authority and the Female Gaze: Planning and Representation in the Early Modern Country House”. Assemblage 18, 1992, p. 41 ff  
Girouard, Mark: Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House (Yale University Press, 1983)

Thursday, February 26:

Lecture: Private Place or Public Space: The Palazzo Borghese in Rome

READINGS:

Patricia Waddy: Seventeenth Century Roman Palaces, MIT Press, 1990, Chapters 1 - 9

Tuesday, March 2:

**Ashoura Holiday. No Class**

Tuesday, March 9:

Palladianism and Neo-Palladianisms

*Presentations:*

Villa Rotunda

READINGS:

Martin Kubelik: "Palladio's Villas in the Tradition of the Veneto Farm." Assemblage, October 1998: 90-110

James Ackerman: "The Typology of the Villa", Chapter 1 and "The Palladian Villa in England," Chapter 6, The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses. (Princeton, 1990), p. 9 ff and p.135 ff.

Dell Upton: "An American Icon", Chapter 1, Architecture in the United States. (O.U.P., 1998), p.17 ff.

Tuesday, March 16

Core to Periphery to Core: The Colonial Continuum

*Presentations:*

Smith House

Sezincote

Lutyens: Viceregal Palace, New Delhi

READINGS:

Henry Glassie: Material Culture.

Robert Grant Irving: Selections from Indian Summer: Lutyens, Baker and Imperial Delhi. (Photocopy)

Sciorra, Joseph: "Return to the Future: Puerto Rican Vernacular Architecture in New York City," in Anthony King, ed., Re-Presenting the City: Ethnicity, Capital and Culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Metropolis. Hampshire: Macmillan, 1996

Tuesday, March 23:

Collecting Houses and Houses for Collections

*Presentations:*

Sir John Soane House

Red House

Brant House

*Assigned Readings for Discussion:*

Martin Heidegger: "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" and "Poetically Man Dwells"

Henri Lefevre: "The Space of Architects." The Production of Space

Tuesday, March 30:

19<sup>th</sup> Century Ottoman Houses in Istanbul

*Assigned Readings for Discussion:*

Prown, Jules, "Mind in Matter," Winterthur Portfolio, 17, (Spring 1982), pp. 1-19

READINGS:

Davie, Michael: La maison Beyrouthine aux trois arcs: une architecture bourgeoise du Levant. Beirut, 2003  
Selections from The Ottoman House

Tuesday, April 6

City and Country: Houses in France

*Presentations:*

Hotel van Eetvelde

House for Josephine Baker

Tuesday, April 13

The Single Family House and the Apartment

*Presentations:*

The Dakota

Robie House

New Gournia Village

The Weissenhofsiedlung

READINGS:

Sylvia Lavin: "Open the Box: Richard Neutra and the Psychology of the Domestic Environment." Assemblage 40 (December 1999) p. 6-25

Beatriz Colomina: "The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism" in Sexuality and Space

Also look at these "pattern books":

Mason, George C.: The Old House Altered. New York, Putnam's, 1878

Moore, Charles: The Place of Houses. New York: Holt, 1974

## **PART TWO: EXPERIENCING HOME**

We will then move on to apply theories, dominant among them directions that have emerged from the study of American material culture, to domestic architecture that we can both experience and study directly in the region. We will use a variety of fieldwork methods - use of local records, oral histories, site analysis, analysis of condition and field recording techniques - to explore some of the typologies of vernacular domestic space in Lebanon and Syria. We will then try and articulate their phenomenological layers as the experience of home.

Students (in groups of three) will select a single domestic house-type or interrelated grouping. They will inscribe the place within a nexus of meanings to try and recreate the memory and the sense of place embodied in this particular home. Findings will be shared in class, and presented in full written form as illustrated papers.

60% of the total grade

### Extra Session:

Weekend of Friday, April 16 to Sunday, April 18: Damascus, Beit Shatta

#### READINGS:

Mathews, Annie-Christine Daskalakis: "A Room of 'Splendor and Generosity' from Ottoman Damascus." Metropolitan Museum Journal v. 32 (1997) p. 111-39  
Al-Kodmany, Khier: "Women's Visual Privacy in Traditional and Modern Neighbourhoods in Damascus." Journal of Architectural and Planning Research 17, #4, Winter 2000, p. 283-303

Tuesday April 20

Paradigms for "Home"

*Assigned Readings for Discussion:*

"Ordering the World: Perceptions of Architecture, Space and Time" in Architecture and Order

Gaston Bachelard: The Poetics of Space

Massimo Cacciari: "Eupalinos or Architecture".

Oppositions 21 (Summer 1980)

Tuesday April 27

Soufar: Donna Maria Palace

Tuesday May 4

WATA Settlement

Tuesday May 11

Expatriates at Home?

Tuesday May 18

Final Presentations – Groups 1 and 2

Tuesday May 25

National Liberation Day Holiday. NO CLASS

Tuesday, June 1

Final presentations – Groups 3 and 4

## House and Home: Histories of Domesticity

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

\* = we have it in our library system (but it may be in my office!)

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\*Ackerman, James S.: The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses. Princeton University Press, 1990

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\*Avcioglu, Nebahat: "A Palace of One's Own: Stanislas I's Kiosks and the Idea of Self-representation." Art Bulletin 2003, December, vol. 85, #4, p. 662 ff.

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- \*Cohen, Lisabeth: “Embellishing a Life of Labour: an Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes, 1885-1915” in Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, eds.: Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture. University of Georgia Press, 1986
- \*Colomina, Beatriz: “The Split Wall” in Sexuality and Space, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992, pp. 73-129
- \*Cromley, Elizabeth: Alone Together: A History of New York’s Early Apartments. Ithaca NY : Cornell University Press, 1990
- \*Davie, Michael, ed.: La maison Beyrouthine aux trois arcs: une architecture bourgeoise du Levant. Beirut, 2003
- \*El-Dahdah, Fares: “The Josephine Baker House: For Loos’ Pleasure.” Assemblage, 26, p. 72-87
- Eleb-Vidal, Monique and Anne Debarre-blanchard: Architectures de la vie privée : maisons et mentalités XVIIe-XIXe siècles. Bruxelles: Archives d’architecture moderne, 1989
- Feray, Jean: Architecture interieur et decoration en France. Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1997
- \*Foucault, Michel: “Space, Knowledge and Power,” Skyline, (March,1982). Reprinted in Neil Leach, ed.: Rethinking Architecture. London: Routledge, 1997, p. 367 ff.
- \*Friedman, Alice T.: “Architecture, Authority and the Female Gaze”. Assemblage 18, 1992, p. 41-61  
Women and the Making of the Modern House: A Social and Architectural History. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998
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