Conflict Urbanism: Aleppo

Course No: 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
Grgea 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 colonization, 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.


**Schedule:**

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

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


**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.


Recommended:


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


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)


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

Feb 26 Conflict and Climate Change


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**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.


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

**Mar 11**  
Representing Conflict


**Mar 11**  
Case Study: Topic choice and methodology due.
Mar 18    Spring Break

Mar 25    Case Study Presentations: Planning and Preservation


Apr 01    Case Study Presentations: Story Telling with Data


Apr 08    Case Study Presentations: Migrants and Refugees


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


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 18th
Heghnar Waternpaugh March 24th
Patrick Ball, March 31st
Sussan Babaie, April 7