**ARCH A4349 Questions** **in** **Architectural** **History 2, Spring 2020  
Faculty: Felicity** **D. Scott  
Teaching** **Fellows (TFs): Yara Saqfalhait (yhs2107@columbia.edu) and Alireza Karbasioun (**[**ak3936@columbia.edu**](mailto:ak3936@columbia.edu)**)**

**Wednesday 11AM-1PM, Buell 300S**

This two-semester introductory course is organized around selected questions and problems that have, over the course of thepast two centuries, helped to define architecture’s modernity. Following Questions in Architectural History 1, the Springsemester similarly treats the history of architectural modernity throughout the twentieth century as a contested, geographicallyand culturally uncertain category, for which periodization is both necessary and contingent. Organized thematically more than chronologically, the Spring semester also situates developments in Europe and North America in relation to worldwide processes including trade, imperialism, nationalism, and industrialization. These historical forces are transformed andcomplicated by new forms of internationalism, post-nationalism and globalization as they encounter the impact of newgenerations of technology and new social, scientific, institutional, and subjective formations. As with QAH1, the courseconsiders specific questions and problems that form around differences that are also connections, antitheses that are alsointerdependencies, and conflicts that are also alliances. The resulting tensions animated architectural discourse and practicethroughout the period, and continue to shape our present.

Objects, ideas, and events will move in and out of the European and North American frame, with a strong emphasis onrelational thinking and contextualization. This includes a historical, relational understanding of architecture itself. Although theWestern tradition recognized diverse building practices as “architecture” for some time, an understanding of architecture as anacademic discipline and as a profession, which still prevails today, was only institutionalized in the European nineteenthcentury. Thus, what we now call architecture was born not long ago, as a discourse and a practice conceived in relation toothers variously described as ancient, vernacular, native, or pre-modern.

Addressed to the twentieth century legacy and transformation of this institutionalization of architecture as a discipline, a discourse and a profession, this course also treats categories like modernity, modernization, and modernism in a relationalmanner. Rather than presuppose the equation of modernity with rationality, for example, the course asks: How did such anequation arise? Where? Under what conditions? In response to what? Why? To what ends? Similar questions pertain to theidea of a “national” architecture, or even a “modern” one. To explore these and other questions, the course stresses contactwith primary sources. Many of the buildings, projects, and texts we will encounter have long been incorporated into well-developed historical narratives, mostly centered on Europe. Others have not. Our aim, however, is not simply to replace thosenarratives with a more inclusive, “global” one. It is to explore questions that arise, at certain times and in certain places, whenarchitecture is said to possess a history.

The course therefore prioritizes discussion and critical reflection. Students will be assigned to one of three seminar-styleclasses, each led by a different faculty member in collaboration with two PhD Teaching Fellows (TFs) who will conduct smallerweekly sessions intended to support and elaborate upon the main class.  Faculty members may present examples of relevantbuildings and projects from among those listed at their discretion.

Overall, the aim is a semester-long dialogue, with active student participation, that unfolds, explores, and contextualizesquestions and problems that inform and challenge the historical imagination and ultimately, enhance historical consciousness.

**Course** **Requirements**

Each week there will be required primary and secondary readings.  In addition to completing the required readings for eachweek and participating actively in class discussions, at the end of the semester students will be required to submit a researchpaper on a topic related to one or more of those covered in the course. All assignments should be uploaded to turnitin.com asMSWord-compatible files (each student will be emailed a link for this at the beginning of the semester).

This semester-long project will be developed in consultation with your discussion section TF.  All assignments will be submitted through Turnitin. Instructions will be provided by TFs.

**Grading**

Grades for the class will be determined as follows:

Class participation       20%  
Paper abstract              10%  
Paper outline                10%  
Final paper                  60%

Students with limited experience in writing research papers or writing in academic English are strongly encouraged to seeksupport at the Columbia College Writing Center:  
[http://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-centerLinks to an external site.](http://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-center)

Students should adhere to standard guidelines regarding academic honesty, such as those described in the GSAS Statementon Academic Honesty, available at:  
[http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/rules/chapter-9/pages/honesty/index.htmlLinks to an external site.](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/rules/chapter-9/pages/honesty/index.html)

**Readings**

All required course materials are available on Courseworks, or elsewhere online if indicated below.

Three types of readings are listed each week: primary source material (required), secondary literature (required), and further reading (not required). At times, additional primary materials or background reading are recommended along with the requiredtexts, again as a guide for research or further reading.