

# HA2F7-30 Modern Architecture and the Historic City

**20/21**

**Department**

SCAPVC - History of Art

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 2

**Module leader**

Otto Saumarez Smith

**Credit value**

30

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

This module looks at the relationship of modernist architecture to tradition and historic cities.

### Module aims

The aim of this module is to examine the way that modernist architects and planners were not just engaged in a wholesale rejection of tradition, but thought in various ways about the historic legacies of cities. The module is taught through lectures, seminars and site visits, in either Venice and its region or Coventry and its region (or a mixture of the two) – taking both urban areas as case studies to be considered in conjunction with pertinent texts about the contested legacies of architectural modernism, in issues ranging from conservation to town planning. The primary focus will be on c.1920-1970, but, especially when taught in conjunction with the Venice Architecture biennale, it will relate these issues to contemporary architectural practice.

### Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. Introduction: Modernism and its discontents
2. The International Style versus national modernisms
3. Conservation from SPAB to Carlo Scarpa
4. Conservative surgery and the Townscape movement
5. Housing form and the creation of community
6. Universities and New Towns
7. Traffic and Towns: Planning the Postwar City
8. The conservation movement
9. Modern Churches: Coventry Cathedral and Vatican II

## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the contested place of history and tradition within modern architectural practice
- Demonstrate an understanding of the stylistic and national varieties of architectural modernism(s)
- Relate the urban history of the Veneto or the English Midlands in the twentieth century to wider trends and ideas in international architectural culture.
- Command a working knowledge of the architectural history of the period.
- Read and interpret maps and architectural plans.
- Demonstrate knowledge of relationships between architectural form and function.
- Situate buildings and urban developments within their historical, social and political contexts.
- initiate and sustain group discussion through intelligent questioning and debate at an appropriate level
- ability to undertake research and to write up the results in the form of a well-structured argument at an appropriate level
- familiarity with essential ICT skills
- ability to collaborate effectively with others
- show understanding of diverse viewpoints
- ability to find, select, organize and synthesize evidence
- ability to formulate a sustained argument
- think conceptually and independently at an appropriate level
- Demonstrate bibliographical skills at an appropriate level
- Produce critical analysis of cultural artefacts in their context

## **Indicative reading list**

Nicholas Bullock, *Building the Post-War World Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Britain* (London and New York, 2002).

Louise Campbell, *Coventry Cathedral*

Forty, Adrian, *Concrete and Culture: A Material History* (London, 2012).

Diane Yvonne Ghirardo, *Italy: Modern Architectures in History*

Miles Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement: a History of Architectural Preservation* (2013)

Caroline and Jeremy Gould, *Coventry: The Making of a Modern City, 1939-1973* (London, 2016)

Goldhagen, Sarah, 'Something to Talk About: Modernism, Discourse, Style', *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 64.2 (2005), pp. 144-167

Peter Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow – an Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design since 1880*

Stefan Muthesius, *The Postwar University: Utopianist Campus and College* (Yale University Press, 2000)

Aldo Rossi, *Architecture of the City* (1966)

Colin Rowe and Fred Koester, *Collage City* (1978)

Colin St John Wilson, *Other tradition of modern architecture: The uncompleted project* (2007)

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

## **Subject specific skills**

By the end of the module students should be able to

- Demonstrate an understanding of the contested place of history and tradition within modern architectural practice
- Demonstrate an understanding of the stylistic and national varieties of architectural modernism(s)
- Relate the urban history of the Veneto or the English Midlands in the twentieth century to wider trends and ideas in international architectural culture.
- Command a working knowledge of the architectural history of the period.
- Read and interpret maps and architectural plans.
- Demonstrate knowledge of relationships between architectural form and function.
- Situate buildings and urban developments within their historical, social and political contexts.

## **Transferable skills**

By the end of the module students should be able to

- initiate and sustain group discussion through intelligent questioning and debate at an appropriate level
- ability to undertake research and to write up the results in the form of a well-structured argument at an appropriate level
- familiarity with essential ICT skills
- ability to collaborate effectively with others
- show understanding of diverse viewpoints
- ability to find, select, organize and synthesize evidence
- ability to formulate a sustained argument
- think conceptually and independently at an appropriate level
- Employ sophisticated conceptual and visual analysis
- Demonstrate bibliographical skills at an appropriate level

- Produce critical analysis of cultural artefacts in their context
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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	20 sessions of 2 hours (13%)
External visits	1 session of 2 hours (1%)
Private study	258 hours (86%)
Total	300 hours

### Private study description

Required and recommended reading for seminar presentations, research for written assessments and revision for examinations.

### Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

### Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time
Workbook	60%	
Workbook covering development		
Slide Test	30%	
Timed image identification and analysis		
Spoken engagement	10%	
Spoken Engagement		

### Feedback on assessment

Written feedback and dedicated feedback tutorials

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## Availability

### Courses

This module is Optional for:

- THAA-V4P3 History of Art (Diploma)
  - Year 1 of V4P3 History of Art (Diploma)
  - Year 1 of V4P3 History of Art (Diploma)
- Year 2 of UHAA-V401 Undergraduate History of Art
- Year 2 of UHAA-V41P Undergraduate History of Art
- Year 2 of UHAA-V402 Undergraduate History of Art with Intercalated Year
- Year 2 of UHAA-V3R3 Undergraduate History of Art with Italian
- Year 2 of UHAA-V3R4 Undergraduate History of Art with Italian with Intercalated Year