### Course Title

**Architecture: How It’s Done and Why We Do It in Modern Western Civilization**

Western architecture - which since 1800 has become “world architecture” -- is made of heavy, permanent materials - concrete, stone, new sorts of glass nowadays held together with steel. This lasts a long time - in Istanbul one can enter Hagia Sophia and see precisely what Emperor Justinian saw in 538 AD; in Rome, one can walk through the original bronze doors of Emperor Hadrian’s Pantheon and see precisely what he did in 115 AD. In the Mediterranean and North Atlantic world, we have our architecture - whole and with its original secrets.

In order to do this amazingly timeless thing, we have to mobilize huge resources and there has always been a class of people thinking everything out beforehand, already called “architecti” by the Romans. The intricacies of thinking through a masonry building leave architects a strange lot. They develop their ideas using diagrams and models; they explore tiny ornamental matrices, layouts of labyrinthine buildings; they are even asked to design whole cities. Practicing already a many-sided art, they invent original ways of thinking things through and gather strange environments about themselves and are uniquely open to imaging political and environmental utopias.

Just what sort of world these unique contributors to our modern culture envision around them is the subject of this course. We will study the methods of designing and recording buildings - drawings, models, photographs - ways of understanding architecture once it is made, and the worlds architects create around themselves - their clothes, houses, ideal cities and what they think they see around them recorded in their drawings and reimaged in their ideal cities.

### Required Textbooks

**Class readings will be done online.**

### Assessments

**Class participation, presentation and final research paper**