Remarque
Inscription faite par la section

Summary
This course teaches a cartographic method for reading and representing systems of environmental relations in architecture.

Content
The ongoing ecological crisis reframes the common binary opposition between architecture and landscape. The environment is not a scenery or a container of natural resources, and architecture is not a collection of objects floating in a vacuum. Buildings and landscapes construct each other dialectically.

Maps are technologies of land occupation, management and subdivision. They shape scientific hypotheses, organize political and military power, limit the boundaries of private property, and reflect mental conceptions about landscape and non-human nature. Throughout Western modernity, land surveys mediated the capitalist production of environment, its uneven geographies, and the global distribution of accumulation and dispossession.

Lingering in the “trauma” of modern “totalitarianisms”, architecture has provided little more than isolated solutions for the environmental question, often stated in purely technical or aesthetic terms. Expanding commodification to the deepest recesses of life, capitalism has largely subsumed spatial production to the realization of profit, and architecture to the creation of self-referential objects. In reaction to this, UE U: Cartography proposes a mapping method for reembedding buildings within their environments.

The main assignment of this course will be to map an existing housing project. This map should reveal the territorial structures, social relations, and ideological constructs mediated by that building, seen as an environmental totality.

Sessions
(subject to changes due to the coronavirus pandemic)

1_18/09: The Production of Environment
Cartography and the Inside/Outside Divide

2_25/09: Drawing Methods I
Line, Surface, Dot, Color

3_2/10: Drawing Methods II
Field trip to the Geneva botanical gardens
4_9/10: Mapping Methods
Frame, Layer, System, Figure

5_16/10: Environmental Figures
Gardens, Grids, Ecosystems

6_23/10: Environmental Thresholds
Body, Architecture, Territory

7_30/11: Environmental Politics
Class, Race, Gender, Species

8_6/11: Mid-term Pin-Up

9_13/11: Guest Lecture with Faiq Mari, ETHZ
Stone Geographies in Palestine

10_20/11: Guest Lecture with Nitin Bathla, ETHZ
Cinema as Sensory Cartography

11_27/11: Roundtable Discussion

12_4/12: Final Pin-up

Keywords
Cartography, architecture, drawing, environmental aesthetics, political ecology.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, the student must be able to:
• Identify territorial figures from hierarchies of landscape systems.
• Formalize environmental totalities from the selection of those figures.
• Critique the politics of historically specific modes of environmental production.

Teaching methods
Theoretical content will be provided through a series of lectures, and practical assignments will be assisted by weekly desk critiques and intermediate reviews. Classes will occasionally include the close reading of historical maps and the analysis of texts and films on cartography, landscape and environmental politics. Special focus will be given to hand drawing, and AI, CAD and GIS assistance may happen upon request. The final submittal will consist of all the work produced during the semester.

Assessment methods
Continuous assessment.
Intermediate exercises and desk critiques: 40% of grade.
Review of final work: 50% of grade.
Visual Journal: 10% of grade.

Supervision
Office hours: Yes
Assistants: No
Forum: No

Resources
Bibliography

Ressources en bibliothèque
• Land, terrain, territory / Elden

Websites
• http://ueucartography.tumblr.com/

Moodle Link
• https://moodle.epfl.ch/enrol/index.php?id=14796