ANCIENT CITIES
Urbanism in the Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean World

Fall 2013
Monday 11:00-12:50
405 Barnard Hall
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Professor: Ellen Morris
Office: Milbank 219b
Office hrs: Thursday 12:30-2:30 or by appt.
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This course explores a wide variety of ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean cities, as well as the theoretical frameworks that inform the study of their development, growth, and contraction over time. Cities thrive for different reasons; some are grounded on trade and markets, others on sacred centers or military bases, while others are fashioned as if from scratch to fit a particular political ideology. During the course of the semester, as we examine specific ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean cities, we will explore questions of city-planning vs. organic growth, the position of the city with respect to its hinterland, the relevance of a city’s political status to its form, as well as structural and/or culturally specific aspects of neighborhoods, ethnic enclaves, slums, markets, industries, temples, palaces, memorials, and arenas for showcasing political, sacred, and spectacular performance. In urban environments, peoples of different ethnicities, social statuses, and world-views are forced to interact on a regular basis, and so we will also explore how cities, in forcing such close encounters, become crucibles for social change.

Grading:
Presentation on an ancient city (25 minutes): 25%
Final paper (@5,500-6,000 words—send to me by 12/12): 35%
Weekly 500 word blog-response to the reading (post by 5pm Sunday): 25%
Class participation (occasional discussion leadership as well as regular and informed participation in discussions): 15%

(Because this is a one-day-a-week seminar, regular class attendance is vital. More than one missed class will impact your grade negatively.)

Blog:
The purpose of the blog is to provide a space for composed reflection on the readings and to help stimulate the next day’s discussion. Focus on a point or points in the readings that particularly interested you or that made you draw a connection to something that we haven’t discussed but should. Respond to someone else’s post or draw attention to a point in the readings that you disagree with. Feel free to associate wildly if issues in the readings remind you of others—ancient or modern. Go ahead and link to outside sources (particularly those that don’t add a burden to the reading load). So long as you explain how something is relevant, it’s fair game.

Final paper
For many cities in the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean world there is a wealth of archaeological and sometimes also textual data. But despite the richness of the material, relatively few scholars have brought these cities into dialogue with works written by anthropological archaeologists or urban sociologists and geographers. In your paper you will focus upon one particular well-documented city (this should be a different city than you present on) and discuss one or more aspects of it, bringing it into dialogue with scholarship on ancient urbanism and urban studies more generally.
CLASS SCHEDULE

9/9  Ancient urbanism

9/16  Cities in comparative perspective: setting an agenda
Marcus, J., and J. A. Sabloff.

Smith, M. L.

Southall, A.

Charlton, T. H., and D. L. Nichols

Hansen, M. H.

9/23  Cities in comparative perspective: manifestos
Blanton, R. E.

Butzer, K. W.

Mumford, L.

Soja, E. W.

Yoffee, N.

9/30  The urban revolution & Early Near Eastern Cities
Childe, V. G.

Coward, G.
Smith, M. E.  

Soja, E. W. 

Van de Mieroop, M.  

### 10/7 Near Eastern Cities of the Late Bronze Age & Iron Age

Baker, H. D.  


Harmansah, O.  

Mielke, D. P.  

### 10/14 Pharaonic Egyptian Cities

Bard, K. A.  

Goelet, O.  

Kemp, B. J.  

Wenke, R. J.  

### 10/21 The Greek Polis 1

Hansen, M. H.  
10/28  No class

11/4  The Greek Polis II
Morris, I.

Jameson, M.

Murray, O.

Nixon, L and S. Price

Schmitt-Pantel, P.

11/11  Hellenistic Cities
Billows, R.

Mumford, L.

Wycherley, R. E.

11/18  Imperial Rome
Patterson, J. R.

Stambagh, J. E.

11/25  Italian cities of the Roman world
Laurence, R.

Owens, E. J.

Stambagh, J. E.

Wallace-Hadril, A.
12/2  Other Cities of the Roman World I: Classical & Byzantine Egyptian cities
   Alston, R.

12/9  Other Cities of the Roman World II
   Liebeschuetz, W.
   Perring, D.
   Reece, R.
   Tainter, J. A.