ARCH 1150 Cities and Urban Space in the Ancient World

Brown University
Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World

Spring Semester 2015

Undergraduate and Graduate Level Seminar
Tuesdays/Thursdays 2:30-3:50 PM

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3pm

Course description

This course investigates ancient cities from a comparative perspective. Using contemporary approaches to cities and the production of urban space, we will explore side-by-side cities of the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean world, with comparisons drawn as well from other regions such as Mesoamerica. We will investigate how cities were planned in the past and their monumental architecture shaped, with a special focus on Egyptian case studies such as the productive prehistoric site of Tell el-Dab^{c}a/Avaris.

Goals

The emergence of urbanism in the Old and New World is a phenomenon related to a multitude of innovations in architecture, technology, art and changes in social structure and directly connected to the rise of early states and complex societies. In this course we will discuss the role of cities in early state societies and define common principles of city life by comparing a wide geographic area from Egypt and the Near East to Greece, Italy as well as examples from Mesoamerica. We will reach an understanding of what cities represented in antiquity and contrast this with our own perspective on cities in the modern world. Following thematic sessions on aspects such as city planning, the social fabric of cities and cities and their hinterlands we will examine these aspects by looking at a specific case study from one region supplemented by readings contributing views from neighboring regions. This course will offer an archaeological perspective on urbanism in antiquity by also engaging with current theoretical debates and new perspectives on the emergence of cities in the Old and New World.

Readings and suggested textbook

Marcus, J.-Sabloff, J.A. (2008) *The Ancient City: New Perspectives on Urbanism in the Old and New World*, Santa Fe: SAR Press

The textbook is available at the bookstore and represents a recent general overview on urbanism in the Old and New World. While different chapters will be included in the readings students should consult this book as a general reading while attending the class. All other readings will be provided as PDF on the course website. If necessary the instructor will exchange readings ahead of time, but page numbers will not substantially increase.

Assignments
For each class students need to prepare the required readings in advance and be able to discuss them in class. The instructor will give a lecture in the first part of class to introduce the topic. For the second part of class, each student will be assigned to lead the discussion of one thematic session. Those assignments will be made in the first meeting according to personal interest and schedule. The student is expected to go through the required readings and get an overview on the respective topic. The discussion leader is expected to come prepared with a personal opinion and critical approach to the respective topic that he or she will be able to present at the beginning of the discussion and thus stimulate a lively debate.

A mid-term exam is scheduled for March 12th. The exam will consist of short answers and essay questions as well as the identification of specific sites or topographical features on maps.

Each student will be assigned a paper topic in the second part of the course. These research topics will be based on personal interest, themes explored during the first part of the course or specific issues and debates in the study of urbanism. Students are required to discuss the topic of their choice with the instructor in mid March and provide a bibliography on the respective topic a week before presentation. Presentations by each student will take place in the last two weeks of the semester and consist of an in-depth assessment of the respective topic using additional literature not provided in the class' bibliography. The presentations should be about 20 minutes long and will be followed by 5 minutes discussion. Discussion points and results need to be incorporated into the final paper. The final paper should have a length of 15 to 20 pages including bibliography.

Grading
Participation and attendance: 15%
Leading a discussion: 15%
Mid-term exam: 15%
Class presentation (20 minutes presentation with bibliography): 25%
Final paper (15-20 pages including bibliography): 30%

Schedule

Class	Date	Topic
1	Thu 1/22	**Introduction** *(case study: Avaris)*
2	Tue 1/27	**Modern and ancient perspectives on cities: what is a city?** Readings: a) Pile, S. (1999) "What is a City," in *City Worlds*, ed. Doreen Massey, Steve Pile and John Allen, London-New York: Routledge, 3-19 and 41-50 b) Marcus, J.-Sabloff, J.A. (2008) "Introduction," in *The Ancient City: New Perspectives on Urbanism in the Old and New World*, Santa Fe: SAR Press, 3-26 c) Childe, V.G. (1950) "The Urban Revolution." *Town Planning Review* 21/1:3-17

3	Thu 1/29	**Ancient city planning: founding a city** *(case study: Uruk)*
		Readings:
		a) Rykwert, J. (1976) "Town and Rite: Rome and Romulus" and "City and Site," in *The Idea of a Town: the Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 27-71
		b) Smith, M.E. (2007) "Form and Meaning in the Earliest Cities: A New Approach to Ancient Urban Planning", *Journal of Planning History* 6/1: 3-47
4	Tue 2/3	**City cosmograms: poetics of the city and ideal order** *(case study: Thebes)*
		(Discussion: Matthew)
		Readings:
		a) Kemp, B.J. (2000) "Bricks and Metaphor," in Viewpoint: Were Cities Built as Images?" *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 10: 335-46
		b) Ashmore, W.-Sabloff, J.A. (2002) "Spatial Orders in Maya Civic Plans," *Latin American Antiquity* 13: 201-15
		c) Smith, M.E. (2003) "Can We Read Cosmology in Ancient Maya City Plans? Comment on Ashmore and Sabloff," *Latin American Antiquity* 14: 221-28
5	Thu 2/5	**Architectural communication and urban identities: shaping of and shaping by cities** *(case study: Rome)*
		(Discussion: Omar)
		Readings:
		a) Van de Mieroop, M. 2003. "Reading Babylon," *American Journal of Archaeology* 107/3: 257–75
		b) Magnoni, A.-Hutson, S.-Dahlin, B. (2012) "Living in the City: Settlement Patterns and the Urban Experience at Classic Period Chunchucmil, Yucatan, Mexico", *Ancient Mesoamerica* 23/2, 313-43
		c) Spencer, N. (2014) "Amara West: Considerations on Urban Life in Occupied Kush". In *The Forth Cataract and Beyond. Proceedings of the 12th International Conference for Nubian Studies*, British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan 1, edited by D.A. Welsby and J.R. Anderson, Leuven: Peeters, 457-86
6	Tue 2/10	**Networks of the city: infrastructure** *(case study: Alexandria)*
		(Discussion: Kaiyi)
		Readings:

		a) Summers, G.-Summers, F. (2006) "Aspects of Urban Design at the Iron Age City on the Kerkenes Dag as Revealed by Geophysical Survey," *Anatolia Antiqua* 14: 71-88 b) Yegul, F. (1994) "The Street Experience of Ancient Ephesus," in *Streets: Critical Perspectives on Public Space*, ed. Zeynep Celik et al., Berkeley: University of California Press, 151-64 c) Stone, E.C.-Zimansky, P. (1992) "Mashkan-shapir and the Anatomy of an Old Babylonian City," *Biblical Archaeologist* 55/4: 212-18
7	Thu 2/12	**Social fabric of the city: administrative and religious centers, neighborhoods and households** *(case study: Teotihuacan)* **(Discussion: Odalmy)** Readings: a) Keith, K. (2003) "The Spatial Patterns of Everyday Life in Old Babylonian Neighborhoods," in *The Social Construction of Ancient Cities*, ed. M.L. Smith, Washington DC, Smithsonian Institute, 56-80 b) O`Connor, D. (1989) "City and Palace in New Kingdom Egypt," *Cahiers de recherches de l`Institut de Papyrologie et d`Égyptologie de Lille* 11: 73-87 c) Smith, M.E. (2010) "The Archaeological Study of Neighborhoods and Districts in Ancient Cities," *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 29/2: 137-54
	Tue 2/17	**No class: President's day weekend**
8	Thu 2/19	**City and technology: writing, recording, manufacturing** *(case study: Amarna)* **(Discussion: Lingyu)** Readings: a) Cahill, N. (2005) "Household Industry in Greece and Anatolia," in *Ancient Greek Houses and Households*, ed. B.A. Ault and L.C. Nevett, L.C., Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 54-66 b) Stissi, V. (2012) "Giving the kerameikos a Context: Ancient Greek Potters' Quarters as Part of the Polis Space, Economy and Society," in *Quartiers artisanaux en Grèce ancienne. Une perspective méditerranéenne*, edited by A. Esposito and G. Sanidas, Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 201-30
9	Tue 2/24	**The city as a ceremonial center** *(case study: Hattusa)* **(Discussion: Matthew)** Readings: a) Wheatley, P. (1971) "The Nature of the Ceremonial Center," in *The*

		Pivot of the Four Quarters, Edinburgh: University Press Edinburgh, 225-43 b) Kemp, B.J. (1972) "Temple and Town in Ancient Egypt," in *Man, Settlement and Urbanism*, ed. Peter J. Ucko, Ruth Tringham and George W. Dimbley, London: Duckworth, 657-80
10	Thu 2/26	**Urban drama: city festivals** *(case study: Athens)* **(Discussion: Omar)** Readings: a) Black, J. A. (1981) "The New Year Ceremonies in Ancient Babylon: 'Taking Bel by the Hand' and a Cultic Picnic," *Religion* 11: 39-59 b) Harmanşah, Ö. (2013) "City and the Festival: Monuments, Urban Space, and Spatial Narratives" in *Cities and the Shaping of Memory in the Ancient Near East,* Cambridge University Press, 102-52
11	Tue 3/3	**Cities' empty spaces: markets, spectacles or meeting places** *(multiple case studies)* **(Discussion: Lingyu)** Readings: a) Cavanagh, W. (2002) "Empty Space? Courts and Squares in Mycenaean Towns," in *Urbanism in the Aegean Bronze Age*, ed. Keith Branigan, vol. 4, Sheffield Studies in Aegean Archaeology, Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic, 119-34 b) Inomata, T. (2006) "Plazas, Performers, and Spectators: Political Theaters of the Classic Maya," *Current Anthropology* 47/5: 805-42 c) Gilibert, A. (2011) "The Urban Setting," in *Syro-Hittite Monumental Art and the Archaeology of Performance*, Berlin-New York: De Gruyter, 99-106
12	Thu 3/5	**Malfunctioning of the city: diseases, pollution, crowding** *(case study: Avaris)* **(Discussion: Odalmy)** Readings: a) Hope, V. M.- Marshall, E. (2000) "Introduction" and Marshall, E. "Death and Disease in Cyrene: a Case Study," in *Death and Disease in the Ancient City*, London and New York: Routledge, 1-23 b) Bartosiewicz, L. (2003) "There's Something Rotten in the State..: Bad Smells in Antiquity," *European Journal of Archaeology* 6/2: 175-95

13	Tue 3/10	**Cities and their hinterlands: urban-rural interactions** *(multiple case studies)*
		(Discussion: Kaiyi)
		Readings:
		a) Falconer, S.E.-Savage, S.H. (1995) "Heartlands and Hinterlands: Alternative Trajectories of Early Urbanization in Mesopotamia and the Southern Levant," *American Antiquity* 60/1: 37-58 b) Wilkinson, T.J. et al. (2010) "The Geoarchaeology of Route Systems in Northern Syria," *Geoarchaeology* 25:745-771
14	Thu 3/12	**Mid-term exam**
		Regional overview
15	Tue 3/17	**Early cities in Mesopotamia: southern origins?**
		Readings:
		a) Yoffee, N. (2005) *Myths of the Archaic State: Evolution of the Earliest Cities, States, and Civilizations. Cambridge UP*, 42-90. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institute: 254-68 b) Ur, J. (2014) "Households and the Emergence of Cities in Ancient Mesopotamia," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 24/2: 249-68
16	Thu 3/19	**Egypt: a civilization without cities?**
		Readings:
		a) Bietak, M. (1979) "Urban Archaeology and the 'Town Problem'," in *Egyptology and the Social Sciences*. *Five Studies*, ed. K.R. Weeks, 97–144. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press b) Kemp, B.J. (2006) "Model Communities," in *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization,* New York: Routledge, sec. ed., 193-244
	3/21-29	**No class: Spring break**
17	Tue 3/31	**The Levant: Syro-Hittite cities in the Iron Age** (guest lecture by James Osborne)
		Readings:
		a) Trigger, B.G. (1990) "Monumental Architecture: A Thermodynamic Explanation of Symbolic Behaviour," *World Archaeology* 22/2, (Monuments and the Monumental): 119-132
18	Thu 4/2	**The Greek polis: an archaeology of equalities?**
		Readings:
		a) Morris, I. (1997) "An Archaeology of Equalities? The Greek City-

		States," in *The Archaeology of City-States: Cross-Cultural Approaches*, ed. D.L. Nichols and T.H. Carlton, Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute Press, 91-105 b) Hölscher, T. (2007) "5. Urban Spaces and Central Places (a) the Greek World," in *Classical Archaeology*, ed. S. Alcock and R. Osborne, sec. ed., London: Wiley-Blackwell, 170-86
19	Tue 4/7	**From Rome to Constantinople: the last ancient city** (guest lecture by Anne Chen) Readings: a) Bauer, F.A. (2001) "Urban Space and Ritual. Constantinople in Late Antiquity," in *Imperial Art as Christian Art, Christian Art as Imperial Art: Expression and Meaning in Art and Architecture from Constantine to Justinian*, ed. J. Rasmus Brandt and O. Steen. Rome: Bardi, 27-61 b) Ward Perkins, B. (2012) "Old and New Rome Compared. The Rise of Constantinople," in *Two Romes. Rome and Constantinople in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. Grig and G. Kelly, Oxford Studies in Late Antiquity, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 53-78
20	Thu 4/9	**Mesoamerica: mapping cities** Readings: a) Millon, R. (1970) "Teotihuacán: Completion of a Map of Giant Ancient City in the Valley of Mexico," *Science* 170 (3962): 1077–82 b) Chase et al. (2011) "Airborne LiDAR, Archaeology, and the Ancient Maya Landscape at Caracol, Belize," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 38: 387-98
21	Tue 4/14	**Student presentations:**
22	Thu 4/16	**Student presentations:**
23	Tue 4/21	**Cross-cultural comparisons: wrap up** Readings: a) Liverani, M. (1997) "Ancient Near Eastern Cities and Modern Ideologies," in *Die orientalische Stadt: Kontinuität, Wandel, Bruch*, ed. G. Wilhelm, Saarbrücken: SDV Saarbrücker Druckerei und Verlag, 85-107 b) Renfrew, C. (2008) "The City through Time and Space. Transformations of Centrality," in *The Ancient City: New Perspectives on Urbanism in the Old and New World*, ed. J. Marcus

		and J.A. Sabloff, Santa Fe: SAR Press, 29-51
	Thu 4/23	**No class: ARCE conference**
	4/27-5/1	**Reading Period**
	Thu 4/30	**Submission of final papers**

Bibliography

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