History 209: The City in Europe
Spring 2016
Tues-Thurs. 9:30-10:50
Lewis Center 201

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Office hrs: Tu 12-1, Th 11-12:15 and by appt

We see then that the two cities were created by two kinds of love: the earthly city was created by self-love reaching the point of contempt for God, the Heavenly City by the love of God carried as far as contempt of self...In the former, the lust for domination lords it over its princes as over the nations it subjugates; in the other both those put in authority and those subject to them serve one another in love, the rulers by their counsel, the subjects by obedience. The one city loves its own strength shown in its powerful leaders; the other says to its God, 'I will love you, my Lord, my strength.' --Augustine of Hippo, City of God, book XIV, chapter 28

Course Description and Goals

Augustine was not alone, the nature and significance of cities in history have long generated profound disagreement. Were they keepers of culture or dens of iniquity? Creators of a unique political community, or hotbeds of civil discontent? Capitalist havens or polluted victims of industrial growth? This course explores the changing role of cities in Europe, from the rebirth of urban life in the Middle Ages to the creation of capital cities in the eighteenth century and draws on both sociological theories of urbanization and historical accounts. We will examine European cities as units within economic networks and state systems but also as diverse communities whose boundaries shifted over time to embrace some members and exclude others. Trends that are central to our understanding of modernity: the birth of commercial capitalism, the civilizing process, state and empire formation, the gendering of the household and the shaping of the natural and built environment, all arose within European cities and in turn redefined urban populations and their experiences. The course will mainly focus on a few key cities and regions of western
Europe; not that they serve as examples of all others, but that they reflect ideals and problems prevalent in a number of cities at different periods in history.

Over the course of the semester we will encounter a range of primary sources and some important historical literature; it is hoped that these will become tools for your own interpretation of medieval and urban European cities. No background in history or urban studies is required for this course, but you are asked to actively attend to lectures, and above all READ all course assignments in advance of the class meeting. You are also responsible, as part of a group, for one short exhibition project (see below). Written work includes one shorter essay and one research paper on a topic of your own choosing and in consultation with the instructor. There will also be one lecture outside of class time.

**Bring readings to class and be prepared to share your informed findings and your questions.**

**Required texts**

*These texts are available for purchase at the Oberlin Bookstore and also will be on print reserve in the library. Except for these texts, all readings will be available on Blackboard under Course Materials.*


**Recommended texts (also on reserve)**


Other recommended texts: (also on print reserve in the library):


**Course requirements**

All work must be turned in to receive credit for the course. The breakdown of grades is as follows:

- Attendance and participation 15%
- In class writings/quizzes (2) 10%
- 5-7 pp. essay 25%
- Research paper:
  - primary source analysis (10%)
  - literature review (10%)
  - rough draft (5%)
  - Final Paper 10-12 pp. (25%)

Grading based on the following: A+ 100-97; A 96-93; A- 92-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-83; B- 82-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-73; C- 72-70; D 65-69, F below 65.
Details

1. **Attendance and Participation.** Please come to class on time and prepared. Although I will provide weekly lectures with background/historical information, we will have discussion either every class or at least once during the week. During discussion, I expect you to do the lion’s share of the talking, in a meaningful, well-informed way. This means that you have prepared all the reading for that class, brought the reading to class, and have marked any pertinent passages and page numbers that you want to discuss or question. I will check attendance during the semester. If you have 4 or more absences, you risk a 0 for 15% of your grade.

2. **In class writings/ quizzes.** These will be short (20 minutes) writings on the readings for that class. Expect the unexpected timing-wise.

3. **Essay.** The essay, due 3/18, will be a 5-7 pp. piece on an aspect of urban family life. I will hand out guidelines for this assignment two weeks ahead of time, but you will have a choice between an analytic and a creative assignment (for either use material from the class; no outside reading required)

4. **Research paper.** Using a combination of primary and secondary sources, you will complete a 10-12 page research paper with appropriate citations and bibliography on one of the primary cities of the early modern period, which might include Amsterdam, London, Madrid, and Paris, during the period 1500-1800. Your project should begin with an historical question that is related to early modern cities in one or more aspects, such as economy, environment, gender relations, political life, relationship to states, etc. It may be something we discussed in class or another topic that you want to explore and must be analytic rather than descriptive (not just what happened, what does it mean?) Your grade for the entire project is based on the timeliness of each step, your clarity of presentation and your command of the topic, all of which demonstrate that you’ve done your research and assessed its validity. The assignment breaks down into the following components:
   a. **Primary source analysis, due 4/8**
   b. **Literature review, due 4/22.** Just before Spring Break we will work with Cynthia Comer, research librarian at Mudd, to find relevant primary and secondary sources. The literature review will demonstrate that you have located the major articles and books for your given topic and also provide your preliminary assessment of their value for your work.
   c. **Rough draft excerpt (8 pages or more) due 5/5.** The rough draft excerpt will not be graded but if turned in (and in prose), you will automatically get full credit for it.
   d. **Final paper, due 5/12 at 11am.** The essay should have appropriate citations and bibliography

**Guidelines for all written work**

There are only a few simple rules. 1. Be clear in your writing, specific rather than general in your claims, and faithful to the sources themselves. 2. Proofread!! 3. Please, please, please number your pages! 4. Papers should be one and a half or double-spaced, with at least 1” margins but not more. 5. When you are using primary sources and other historians’ work, you will need to include footnotes and a bibliography. To do this, refer to some of the reference guides from the Oberlin History Department that I have posted on Blackboard. When in doubt, get in touch with me.

*I evaluate students’ work on the basis of form as well as content.*
Disabilities
If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to Jane Boomer in the Office of Disability Services in Peters G-27/G-28.

Lateness
Unexcused late assignments will be penalized by dropping 3 points from your grade every day a paper is late.

Plagiarism
All work turned in for this course must be your own. I can’t stress this enough. The College requires that students sign an "Honor Code" for all assignments. This pledge states: "I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment." For further information, see the student Honor Code which you can access via Blackboard>Lookup/Directories>Honor Code. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, especially in the context of group assignments, please see me or raise it in class.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Week 1: Introduction

2/2 The City in Europe

2/4 The Shape of an Ideal
What defines a city (or a medieval city) to these various authors, and on what criteria? To you? Is there an urban archetype?
Readings:

Part I. European cities from 1100-1450

Week 2: The world in 1000 and the rise of the medieval town

2/9 Fairs, Markets and Merchants
Readings:
Frugoni, chapter 1 (all), chapter 3, pp. 45-69 only; Bb. Louis Mumford, “Cloister and Community” in The City in History (1962): 253-261 only; Church Positions on Usury; A Medieval Merchant’s Life (St. Godric), 12th century; Geoffrey Chaucer, The Shipman’s Tale (15th c.)

2/11 Political Movements
Readings:
Bb. David Nicholas, Urban Europe (2003): 92-110; Galbert of Bruges, Murder of Charles the Good (skim intro, read pp. 175-); Lubeck is Made an Imperial City, 1226; Guibert of Nogent, A Commune at Laon
Week 3: **Domestic and Civic Spaces**

2/16 **Walls, Neighbors and Streets**
Readings:

2/18 **Architecture and Identity**
Readings:

Week 4: **Corporations as a Way of Life**

2/23 **Guilds: the organizing principle**
Readings:

2/25 **Universities: Scholars and Drinkers**
Readings:

Optional: Bb. Michael Shank, "A Female University Student in Late Medieval Krakow," in *Sisters and Workers in the Middle Ages*, ed. Bennett et al. (1989), 190-197

Week 5: **In Sickness and Health**

3/1 **Life cycles in poverty and wealth**
Readings:
Frugoni, Chapter 3, pp. 69-80; Chapter 4 (all); Bb. Sharon Farmer, “Adam’s Curse,” in *Surviving Poverty in Medieval Paris* (2002), 60-73 only (introduction and first part of the chapter are included); Gregorio Dati, “Diary,” in Gene Brucker, ed., *Two Memoirs of Renaissance Florence* (1967): 107-141

3/3 **Plague and Pestilence**
Readings:

Week 6: **Changing economy and aesthetics**

3/8 **New orientations and new technologies**
Readings:

3/10 ** Class Visit to the Allen Memorial Art Museum to see The Art of Healing; Q&A with Professor Christina Neilson in Art History who curated the exhibition
Readings:
Ozment, Magdalena and Balthasar, Chapters 4-5 (pp. 89-135)

Week 7: Families and households

3/15 Family relations: discussion
Readings:
Finish Magdalena and Balthasar, Chapters 6-7 (pp. 136-66); Bb. Martha Howell, "Pour l'amour et affection conjugale" in Commerce before Capitalism in Europe, 1300-1600 (Cambridge University Press, 2010): 93-144

3/17 Gearing up for Research. We will meet with Cynthia Comer in Mudd Library

3/18 Due Friday 8pm: Essay, 5-7pp. Topic will be handed out 2 weeks in advance

Week 8: 3/21-3/25 Spring Break!

Week 9: Urban Portraiture and (Un)Civil Society

3/29 Class visit: Robert Tittler, (OC 64; emeritus professor of History, Concordia University)
Readings:
Bb. Robert Tittler, Townspeople and Nation (2001), introduction and Chapter 6 (pp. 1-37, 156-176)

**4:30-5:30PM Lecture by Robert Tittler "Social Aspiration and the Malleability of Portraiture in Post-Reformation England" Wilder 101. This lecture is instead of class on 3/31; attendance required

3/31 NO CLASS

Week 10: Stresses on the Social Body

4/5 Catholic/Protestant
Readings:

4/7 Magic and Witchcraft
Readings:
Bb. Trial of Suzanne Gaudry, 1652; Michael Kunze, Highroad to the Stake: the trial of the Pappenheimer family, selections

4/8 Due Friday 8pm: 2-3pp. Primary Source Analysis for your research paper

Week 11: Cities, states and environment

4/12 New Capitals of commerce
Readings:
David Liss, The Coffee Trader, chapters 1-8

4/14 Ordering the Environment: prince, state and citizen
Readings:
David Liss, The Coffee Trader, chapters 9-13


Week 12: A Taste of the Modern

4/19 Museum Visit on Dutch Culture *Meet at the Allen Memorial Art Museum
Readings:

4/21 Discussion of Capital, Commodities and The Coffee Trader
Readings:
David Liss, The Coffee Trader, finish chapters 25-35

4/22 Due Friday 8PM: 3-5 pp. Literature review of secondary sources for your research paper

Week 13: Sociability and its Discontents

4/26 Enlightenment Sex and Salons
Readings:

4.28 Popular/Elite
Readings:

Week 14: Wrapping Up

5/3 After all this, what is a city, why does it matter? No readings: Work on your rough draft

5/5 Discussion of topics, evaluations

Due in class: At least 8 pages of rough draft. Comments will be returned on Monday 5/9.

*Also 5/5 Christina Neilson, Oberlin College, and Frances Gage, Buffalo State give a lecture titled “The Patient Artist: Illness, Healing, and the Act of Creation in Early Modern Europe,” place TBA

5/12 Due Thursday 4pm Final Paper. Email me your paper at ewurtzel@oberlin.edu. Do not forget the honor code!