Course code: HIST BC 2408
Instructor: Prof. Gergely Baics (gbaics@barnard.edu); office hours: Th 3-5PM @ 217 LeFrak

Teaching assistant:
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Course description (short):
Urban history of 19th-century cities in Europe and the Americas. First, we study the economic, geographic and demographic changes that produced 19th-century urbanization in the Western world. Second, we examine issues of urban space: density, public health, housing conditions, spatial reforms, and the origins of modern city planning.

Course description (long):
This lecture course introduces students to the urban history of the Western world during the long 19th century, focusing on Europe and the Americas. The first part of the course examines the underlying economic, geographic and population changes that produced 19th-century urbanization. The second part examines how contemporaries made sense of and responded to the challenges of their new urban environments. We study the ways in which modern urbanization and its attendant qualities of growing population densities, rising social inequalities, worsening housing conditions, and deteriorating public health environments generated a wide range of social responses, including sanitary reforms, the construction of modern urban amenities, and the large-scale transformations of modern urban space. One central argument of the course is that 19th-century urban reforms concerned chiefly with spatial interventions; therefore we pay particularly close attention to issues of urban space. Readings draw on cities in Europe and the Americas, emphasizing linkages between major urban centers, while also pointing out similarities and differences between their developments. In addition, students will be exposed to readings, concepts and methods from a wide range of urban historical traditions, including economic, social, and planning histories.

Prerequisites:
It is recommended to have previous experience with 19th-century American AND/OR European history.

Learning objectives:
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the central problems and debates of modern urban history. Understand and apply key concepts and methods of urban historical analysis.
2. Explain the underlying economic, social and geographic processes that produced 19th-century urbanization in the Atlantic world. Describe how contemporaries perceived and responded to the
challenges of modern urban growth. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of spatial relations in modern urbanization and urbanism.

(3) Demonstrate a critical understanding of comparative and transnational historical thinking.
(4) Understand and apply the key components of historical research: how to formulate historical questions, use documentation, and develop historical arguments.
(5) Demonstrate basic skills of empirical reasoning: engage in close reading and critical interpretation of important texts; present cogent arguments and well-documented analysis in writing and speaking.

Course requirements and grading:
1) Midterm exam (30% of final grade)—Oct 19
The midterm evaluation will consist of an in-class exam, which will be comprised of short-answer identifications and essays. The midterm will cover material through lecture 12. There will be a review session prior to the exam on Oct 17.

2) Film essay (20% of final grade)—Nov 9
You will be required to write a film essay (1,200-1,500 words) based on Roman Polanski’s “Oliver Twist.” You will need to use the Mediathread platform to complete this assignment. On Mediathread, you can watch the film, make short clips to support your analysis, and embed these clips into your essay. More detailed instructions about the film essay assignment will follow.

The film essay will be graded on the basis of four criteria:
   (1) Thoroughness of evaluation of the film as an interpretation of mid-19th-century London: urban society, urban space, poverty, social problems, etc.
   (2) Overall argument about the film (e.g. does the review have an insightful and credible thesis?)
   (3) Organization of the paper (e.g. is the paper easy to understand? Does it flow logically?)
   (4) Writing style (e.g. word choice, grammar, and basic writing style)

3) Final exam OR research paper (40% of final grade)—on official exam date
Final exam:
The in-class final exam will consist of short-answer identifications and essays. It will cover material for the entire semester. There will be a review session prior to the exam on Dec 7.

Research paper option—due same time as final exam
As an alternative to the final exam, students may choose to write a 15-page research paper on a relevant topic in 19th-century urban history in the Americas or Europe. Students are free to decide what topic they want to work on, but they must consult with the instructor or TA prior to pursuing their topic. The research paper option will be accepted as an alternative to the final exam ONLY if the topic has been approved by the instructor or the TA.

4) Participation (10% of final grade)
Attendance at both lectures and discussion sessions is required. Your participation grade will be based on your active participation in both. As a rule of thumb, you are expected to come to each and every lecture
and discussion session with thoughtful questions and well-reasoned arguments based upon the assigned readings.

Important: Failure to complete ANY one of the course assignments (exams, film review, and regular class attendance) will result in an overall F in class.

Attendance:
1) Lectures
Attendance at lectures is assumed. Lectures and readings are complements, not substitutes. Students need to read the assigned texts prior to the lecture.

2) Discussion sessions with TA
Your TA will conduct six discussion sessions over the course of the semester. These sessions are intended to help students in processing the readings and lectures. They will cover material for about 3-4 lectures, concluding a specific section of the course, as indicated on the syllabus. Attendance in discussion sections is required, and your active contribution will be part of your participation grade. In addition, your TA will hold regular office hours to assist you with lectures and readings.

Readings:
(1) Books to purchase

(2) Most of the readings for this class come from articles and book chapters. All of these materials will be posted on Canvas in PDF format. You are responsible for downloading and printing the material.

Please note: changes to the reading list may be made via email or announcements in class. You will be responsible for any such changes.

Honor code:
We will use as a guide the Barnard College Honor Code, established 1912, updated 2016. The Code states:

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will
respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.

**Disabilities:**
Students with disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. Students who need test or classroom accommodations must be registered in advance with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in 008 Milbank.
INTRODUCTION (lectures 1-5)

(L1/Sept 5) Course introduction

(L2/Sept 7) What is the modern city?
Readings:

(L3/Sept 12) Cities before the industrial age (1): European cities, 16th-18th century
Readings:

(L4/Sept 14) Cities before the industrial age (2): Latin American cities in the colonial era
Readings:
Recommended reading:

(L5/Sept 19) Cities before the industrial age (3): American cities in the colonial era
Readings:

Textbook:

Recommended films:
Cahokia; Slave conspiracy of 1741

(TBA) TA—Discussion session: Cities before the industrial age (lectures 3-5)
PART I (lectures 6-14): MAKING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE: ECONOMY, GEOGRAPHY, POPULATION

(L6/Sept 21) Urbanization (1): industrial regions and urban systems in Europe, the long 19th century
Readings:

(L7/Sept 26) Urbanization (2): United States—transportation and urban expansion, 1780-1860
Readings:
Textbook:
Chudacoff: 32-75.
Recommended reading:
Recommended films:
The Erie Canal; Rise of NY port; NYC grid

Readings:
Textbook:
Recommended reading:
Recommended film:
Charles Chaplin: Modern Times (1936) (selection)

(L9/Oct 3) Urbanization (4): selective urbanization in Latin America, the long 19th century
Readings:

(TBA) TA—Discussion session: Urbanization in the long 19th century (lectures 6-9)
(L10/Oct 5) Population history (1): demographic systems
Readings:

Readings:
Recommended reading:

Readings:

Textbook:

Recommended reading:

Recommended films:
Irish immigrants; "New" immigrants; Immigrant NYC; Migration of millionaires

(TBA) TA—Discussion session: Population history (lectures 10-12)

(L13/Oct 17) Review for midterm exam: 19th-century urbanization as process

(L14/Oct 19) MIDTERM EXAM

PART II (lectures 15-25): SOCIAL IS SPATIAL: THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF DENSITY AND SPATIAL REFORMS

(L15/Oct 24) Glimpses of urban poverty: social disorder, dangerous classes, prostitution
Readings:

Recommended reading:

Recommended films:
Urban chaos; Walt Whitman; NYC Draft Riots

(L16/Oct 26) **Public health (1): urban disease environments**

Readings:

Recommended GIS websites:
• Sonia Shah: “Mapping Cholera”
• Stanford Spatial History Project: “Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1850: Scale, Time and Space”

(L17/Oct 31) **Public health (2): sanitary reform and urban metabolism**

Readings:

Recommended readings:

(L18/Nov 9) **Public health (3): housing reform**

FILM ESSAY DUE

Readings:
In the sanitary condition of the city (New York, 1866): table of contents, 43-65, 73-83, 116-125.


Recommended films:
Jacob Riis; Triangle Factory

(TBA) TA—Discussion session: Public health (lectures 16-18)

(L19/Nov 14) Mastering the city: maps, directories, censuses, social surveys
Readings:

Recommended reading:

(L20/Nov 16) Amenities of urban life: assessment of 19th-century city governance
Readings:

Recommended reading:

Recommended films:
Walter Ruttman: “Berlin: Symphony of a Metropolis” (1927); Motion Picture

(TBA) TA—Discussion session: Managing the city (lectures 19-20)

(L21/Nov 21) Cities reshaped (1): European planning models
Readings:

Recommended reading:

(L22/Nov 28) Cities reshaped (2): European planning models
Readings:

**Recommended reading:**
Hall: 126-143.

(L23/Nov 30) *Cities reshaped (3): Atlantic crossings*

**Readings:**

**Recommended reading:**

(L24/Dec 5) *Cities reshaped (4): Atlantic crossings*

**Readings:**

**Recommended reading:**

(TBA) *TA—Discussion session: Cities reshaped (lectures 21-24)*

(L25/Dec 7) *Review for final exam*