

## Archaeology of Sacred Sites in The Ancient Near East and Jerusalem

AN 387 4 credits

Fall 2016, Thursday 530-850 PM, Dodge Hall 237, Dr. Michael Pytlik: [pytlik@oakland.edu](mailto:pytlik@oakland.edu), Varner 447

---

**This course begins** with a brief overview of how archaeology is done in the Near East (methods, concepts and practices). We will also discuss some theories concerning the archaeology of religion and what it attempts to do, and perhaps cannot do. We will begin by examining a number of sacred sites in the Near East by focusing on the emergence of cultic centers, architecture and associated artifacts ranging from the Neolithic period through the Islamic period. Our primary focus will center on significant sites relevant to the western religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The primary locus of this investigation is Jerusalem.

We will study the Roman conquest of Judea, and how it affected Judaism and early Christianity. We will learn about how Judaism was reshaped after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE. We will look at a few cases in which ancient events affect modern identities. The case studies for these topics include the destruction of the Jewish Second Temple and the ancient site of Masada.

We move on to the history and archaeology of early Christian sites such as Capernaum and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher; here we access ancient pilgrims' accounts and primary archaeological sources.

We will also learn about the history and spread of Islam investigating when, how and why the Temple Mount and the sacred shrine, The Dome of the Rock, became so important among Islamic holy places.

The Crusades left a significant mark on the land and its history. We will study conditions in Jerusalem during this time and how both Muslims and Christians left their imprint on Jerusalem and the region.

Finally, but briefly, a few case studies are brought concerning how archaeology has been used to fuel contemporary identities and modern territorial claims.

---

### **Course Purpose:**

1. To acquaint students with the rich history of Jews, Christians and Muslims in Israel/Palestine by engaging in historical, archaeological and cultural resources.
2. To familiarize students with the development of sacred sites from the Neolithic (c. 9000 BCE) through the period of Islam in the Levant. Most of these sites are found in Turkey, modern Israel, Jordan and Syria. Our case study sites are primarily based in Jerusalem.
3. Students will engage in several case studies about the formation of certain sacred sites through primary and secondary sources, archaeological reports, pilgrim records, and modern perspectives. We will also consider how these sites became so important to a particular social or religious group.
4. Students will engage in some of the problems that the *archaeology of religion* can solve regarding these sites and what its limits may be in this endeavor.
5. Students will be exposed to cultures and ideas that are perhaps unfamiliar to them; through this exposure it is a goal of the course that a deeper appreciation and understanding of the history and social contexts of the traditions will be established.

### **Outcomes:** At the end of the course you should be able to:

- Discuss what the goals of archaeological research and historical archaeology are and what each can tell us about the past. Also, discuss what is involved in the archaeology of sacred sites.
- Discuss sacred sites and place several of them and their associated traditions in a chronological framework.
- Understand Jerusalem's long history and place each western religious tradition (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) in sequence and discuss the major impacts of each tradition on the city and region.
- Be familiar with the establishment and/or recovery of the major sites discussed in the course: Gobekli Tepe, Jericho, Khirbet Qeiyafa, Lachish, Masada, Jewish Jerusalem, Christian Capernaum, The Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Dome of the Rock and Umayyad Jerusalem (Islamic) and the meaning ascribed to each site by each social group.
- Understand key elements of ancient sacred sites and be familiar with the anthropological and archaeological models concerning such sites and demonstrate a deeper appreciation for some of the problems and opportunities involved in studying these sites.

### **Suggestions for Success:**

## Archaeology of Sacred Sites in The Ancient Near East and Jerusalem

AN 387 4 credits

Fall 2016, Thursday 530-850 PM, Dodge Hall 237, Dr. Michael Pytlik: [pytlik@oakland.edu](mailto:pytlik@oakland.edu), Varner 447

- Read the materials before class. I suggest that you form questions as you go, and bring them to class for discussion. I suggest you find what motivates you and plan to learn more about it as we proceed. Take notes during the lectures.
- ✓ There are frequent assignments in the course: these are short-essay, take-home, some are in-class quizzes or short essays or exercises that are dependent on the readings. There may be group exercises, and most of them will focus on the reading or the lectures. I want you to interact with and think about the material, not just report facts and dates. In order to encourage you to read, there will be short in-class assignments that are based on the readings.
  - Attend class: about 20% of the grade is about attendance and participation (discussions/input). I assess after each class if you were engaged, participated and paid attention. If you cannot attend a class, please contact me by email. I want to know if you are having troubles so I can help you do well.
- Writing: any writing that you do should be done well, should be clear and follow proper grammar and style. If you have trouble with writing, please see me for help or see the university writing lab. Style and grammar will make up part of your grade. You can use APA or MLA formats in your submitted writings.

### **Course Text Books: Please bring assigned readings to class each time.**

1. *Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan to Modern Israel*, Cline, (2007). This text presents an historical overview of the city and how archaeology has affected the city as well as how archaeology and interpretations have influenced modern notions of identity and place for Israelis/Jews, Christians and Muslims/Palestinians.
2. *Belief in the Past: Theoretical Approaches to the Archaeology of Religion*, David S. Whitley and Kelley Hays-Gilpin, editors, (2008).
3. *Between Past and Present: Archaeology, Ideology and Nationalism in the Modern Middle East*, Neil Asher Silberman, (1989). This book provides numerous case studies set in Turkey, Greece, the Levant and Egypt concerning how archaeology and interpretation have shaped discussions about the past.
4. *Archaeology of Jerusalem: From the Origins to the Ottomans*, Katharina Galor, (2013).
5. Article uploads to Moodle.

### **Course Requirements/Grading:** Points are listed in each item below.

**A. Class Participation (20%).** This is based on attendance and student input during class. *We will also discuss reading assignments in class.* Students should demonstrate that they have read class materials. **Attendance:** See absence policy on page 2. Please be on time for class. Points for class participation are assigned below.

**B. Assignments (30%).** Several assignments will be given out during the semester. They will either be a short-answer take-home assignment, be based on in-class discussions and course readings or an in-class short quiz (T/F, multiple choice, etc. “In-class on reading” is a short written response to a prompt on the reading assigned for that class session. All assignments are **20 points**.

**C. Research paper based on case study based on a site or a theme relevant to the course - additional details given during the course. 50 points; 25% of grade.**

**D. Final Exam (60 points; 25% of grade).** Exam includes short answer, essay, slide identification and/or multiple choice questions. This exam will be online via Moodle in the given week for our exam.

**WEEK**

**TOPIC**

**SUBJECTS**

**ASSIGNMENTS**

## Archaeology of Sacred Sites in The Ancient Near East and Jerusalem

AN 387 4 credits

Fall 2016, Thursday 530-850 PM, Dodge Hall 237, Dr. Michael Pytlik: [pytlik@oakland.edu](mailto:pytlik@oakland.edu), Varner 447

Week 1: 9/1	Introduction to the course	Course syllabus, books, introduction to the course, geography, terms, chronology, summary of Near Eastern history.	<b><i>Look ahead, and read assignments ahead of time for the next class.</i></b>  <b><i>In-class:</i></b> handout from Archaeology Handbook on religion and archaeology.
Week 2: 9/8	Interpretation is key: archaeology is more than digging	History overview, Early explorers and their motivations, what archaeology can and cannot do	<b>Moodle:</b> article – “Archaeology in the Middle East” from <i>Pioneers to the Past</i> . <b>Moodle:</b> "Introduction to Archaeology of Religion"; <b>Cline:</b> Introduction  <i>In-class reading assignment on role of archaeology for religion, 20 points</i> <i>Take home writing assignment, 20 points, due 9/15.</i>
Week 3: 9/15	Sacred Sites	A brief survey of cultic sites, architecture, from pre-history to the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. Theoretical approaches to the archaeology of religion; Gobekli Tepe and Jericho (Neolithic)	<b>Whitley and Hays-Gilpin:</b> Chapter 1 “Religion Beyond Icon, Burial and Monument: An Introduction”; Chapter 2, “Religion and Archaeology... Materialist Account.”; <b>Moodle:</b> "Gobekli Tepe" by Schmidt. (see Moodle for a link to a video on Gobekli Tepe - reference).  <i>In-class reading assignment on religion and interpretation in archaeology, 20 points.</i>
Week 4: 9/22	Sacred Sites	History of Israelites and formation of state; OU's dig at biblical Sha'arayim & Lachish  Main focus is Renfrew's article - read for participation in class.	<b>Moodle:</b> "Archaeology and Origins of Israelites", Burke <b>Moodle:</b> "Archaeology of Religion" - Colin Renfrew <b>Cline</b> , Chapter 1;  <b>Suggested on Moodle:</b> "Khirbet Qeiyafa...", Garfinkel "Response by a Palestinian archaeologist", news article  <i>In-class reading quiz on readings, 20pts.</i> <i>Take home writing assignment, 20 pts, due 9/29</i>
Week 5: 9/29	Life after the Destruction of the Second Temple; Masada case study	Destruction of Jerusalem; “Yavneh and her scholars”: rabbis, memory and texts; Masada and its use as a modern political statement; early synagogues and ritual space; The idea of the Holy Land; Temple Treasure in bar-Kochba caves - DVD <b>Research paper handout</b>	<b>Galor:</b> Introduction and Chapter 7, “The Roman Period.” <b>Cline:</b> Chapter 4, “First and Second Revolts”... <b>Silberman:</b> Chapter 5, “The Fall of Masada”;  <i>In-class reading quiz – 20 points</i>

## Archaeology of Sacred Sites in The Ancient Near East and Jerusalem

AN 387 4 credits

Fall 2016, Thursday 530-850 PM, Dodge Hall 237, Dr. Michael Pytlik: [pytlik@oakland.edu](mailto:pytlik@oakland.edu), Varner 447

Week 6: 10/6	Christianity and the Byzantines	The rise of Christianity, spread of Christianity in the Levant; <i>terra sancta</i> , The Byzantines, the recovery of early Christian sites; introduction to Capernaum	<b>Moodle:</b> "In the Wake of Queen Helena" Frend; <b>Moodle:</b> "Building a Holy City," Walker <b>Moodle:</b> "Archaeology of Christianity," Turner; <b>Galor:</b> Chapter 8, "The Byzantine Period."  <i>Take home assignment, 20 points, due 10/13</i>
Week 7: 10/13	Early Christian sites	The discovery, recovery and making of important Christian sites; pilgrims, European researches and interpretation; archaeology without excavation	<b>Galor,</b> Chapter 1; <b>Moodle:</b> Edward Robinson and "The Church of the Holy Sepulcher," (1841); <b>Moodle:</b> "The Bordeaux Pilgrim," (333 CE) and "Travels in the Holy Land," Edward Clark (1817)  <b>Moodle: Reference:</b> "Architecture as Relic and the Construction of Sanctity..." Ousterhout; <b>Moodle: Reference:</b> "Historical Jesus"  <i>In-class reading assignment on the history of the Church of Holy Sepulcher, 20 pts. Take home assignment, due 10/20, 20 pts.</i>
Week 8: 10/20	Jesus and the New Testament	Historical Jesus, New Testament archaeology, Jews and Christians in context. Sacred sites at Capernaum – St. Peter's House, the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> century synagogue at Capernaum	<b>Moodle:</b> "The Holy Sepulcher," Dan Bahat; "Capernaum and Jesus," Laughlin, (BAR); "The <i>Insula Sacra</i> ," at Capernaum; "Capernaum Excavations – Early House Church"  <i>In class reading quiz, 20 pts</i>
Week 9: 10/27	Islam Empires and Periods	Byzantine period transition to the Islamic Period, The Dome of the Rock, ideas of holy in Islam  Class discussion on R. Nasser's article	<b>Galor, Chapter 9,</b> "Early Islamic Period"; <b>Moodle:</b> "Meaning of the Umayyad Dome of the Rock," Rabbat Nasser. <b>Cline, Chapter 5,</b> "The 'Holy House'";  <b>Moodle Reference:</b> "The Dome of the Rock"; <i>Take home assignment, 20 points, due 11/3</i>
Week 10: 11/3	Intergroup relations; the Crusades in the Levant	The Crusades, "periodization" and cultures; Crusader sites. Discussion on the "other" among faiths  Topics for term paper should be chosen by this date.	<b>Moodle:</b> Latin Kingdom Map <b>Galor:</b> Chapter 10, "Crusader and Ayyubid..."; <b>Moodle:</b> "Chronicle of Solomon bar Simson"; <b>Cline:</b> Chapter 6, "For God, Gold, Glory...";  <b>Moodle: Reference:</b> "Jewish Christian Symbiosis," Marcus. <i>In-class on reading quiz – 20 points</i>
Week 11:	Islamic Empires,	Ayyubid and Mamluk	<b>Galor, Chapter 11,</b> "The Mamluk Period

## Archaeology of Sacred Sites in The Ancient Near East and Jerusalem

AN 387 4 credits

Fall 2016, Thursday 530-850 PM, Dodge Hall 237, Dr. Michael Pytlik: [pytlik@oakland.edu](mailto:pytlik@oakland.edu), Varner 447

11/10	Jerusalem	periods, Islamic sacred architecture, mosques and shrines; Jewish expulsions and the rise of mysticism/Kabbalah <u>Class discussion on Chapter 8, in Whitley and Hays-Gilpin</u>  <b>Research paper due</b>	(Egypt)”; <b>Whitley &amp; Hays-Gilpin</b> , Chapter 8, “Delegitimizing Religion: The Archaeology of Religion as ... Archaeology”  <i>Take home assignment, due 11/17</i>
Week 12: 11/17	Ottoman Empire	Ottoman Empire, the repair of Jerusalem’s walls, antiquities laws in the Ottoman Empire, and modern antiquity laws. The trade in antiquities – “Who owns the past?”	<b>Galor, Chapter 12</b> , “The Ottoman Period”; <b>Cline</b> , Chapter 7, “The Sultan and the City”; <b>Moodle Article</b> : “Antiquities Laws...”; <b>Moodle</b> : "Changing Legal Landscape..."  <b>Handout on final exam study guide</b> <i>In class reading quiz– 20 points.</i>
Week 13: 12/1	Modern Dilemmas	Modern Issues related to archaeology and interpretation, class summary and final-examination preparation; tunnel tours in Jerusalem; DVD portion William Dever	<b>Cline</b> , Chapter 9, “Jerusalem of Gold: The Arab Israeli Wars”; <b>Cline</b> , Chapter 10, “Speak Tenderly to Jerusalem,” <b>Moodle Article</b> : “Between Temple Mount and Holy Sepulcher,” Avni/Seligman; <b>Silberman</b> , Chapter 13, "Tobacco Pipes..."  <i>In-class on reading about the complexity of Jerusalem regarding history, archaeology, interpretation, 20 points.</i>
Week 14: 12/7 - 12/9	<b>Final Exam</b>	Open online from 12/7 @ 7am through 12/9 @ 10pm	<b>Final is 60 points - online -</b>

### **Additional Resources:**

MOODLE: Check online for the syllabus, glossary of terms, special readings, maps, presentations from class, etc. There are also links to terms relevant for Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

Electronic and Hard Copy Publication Indexes: Be sure to consult with the Oakland University library for article search assistance and interlibrary loan options. The most desirable research tool is “JSTOR” with the ability to access the journal articles relevant to the course.

### **Some internet sites:**

Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Institute of Archaeology: <http://archaeology.huji.ac.il/index.html>

Israel Antiquities Authority: [http://www.antiquities.org.il/modules\\_eng.asp?Module\\_id=1](http://www.antiquities.org.il/modules_eng.asp?Module_id=1)

American Schools of Oriental Research: [www.asor.org](http://www.asor.org)

University of Chicago, Oriental Institute: <http://oi.uchicago.edu/>

Biblical Archaeology Society (publishes Biblical Archaeology Review): <http://www.bib-arch.org/>

The Muslim *Waqf* of the Palestinian Authority: <http://www.crihl.org/content/ministry-islamic-waqf-palestinian-authority>

**The Classroom:** Turn off cell phones, no texting, and please stay off Facebook during class times. If you have to make a call, please dismiss yourself from the class quietly. Texting and/or surfing in class will result in 0 points for

## Archaeology of Sacred Sites in The Ancient Near East and Jerusalem

AN 387 4 credits

Fall 2016, Thursday 530-850 PM, Dodge Hall 237, Dr. Michael Pytlik: [pytlik@oakland.edu](mailto:pytlik@oakland.edu), Varner 447

“participation” score for the class session. Laptops should be shut down, closed, and put away - if you have a legitimate reason to type notes in class on a device, please see me with that rationale.

**Late Assignments:** *unless approved beforehand*, all assignments must be handed in on the due dates published in the syllabus. For any assignment handed in late, a 2 point reduction per day will be deducted. No assignment will be accepted after five days past the original due date and a 0 will be entered for that assignment. Example, if you earned 20 points on an assignment, and it was handed in three days late; 6 points would be deducted (2 x 3 days), which would result in 14 points.

**POLICIES, PROCEDURES:** Attendance is required. I consider you to be in attendance if you come to class on time, stay for the full meeting, and participate in class discussion and activities. I consider you absent if you arrive after 20 minutes late, leave early, sleep or generally appear to sleep during class or fail to participate. I will not accept work-related excuses for missing class or for late papers. If you miss more than one class, the following rules apply, unless you are seriously ill and can document your absence. This course adheres to the OU Excused Absence Policy for OU events and activities: [http://www2.oakland.edu/provost/web/reports/OU\\_Excused\\_Absence\\_Policy\\_Final.pdf](http://www2.oakland.edu/provost/web/reports/OU_Excused_Absence_Policy_Final.pdf).

For absences not covered by the university policy, you are allowed 1 absence without penalty (each Thursday is a "class period". This includes absences due to illness, car trouble, or schedule conflict. Participation in any online activities counts as class attendance. For each absence beyond the 1 allowed, the student's final course grade will be lowered by 0.2 points on the 4.0 scale. Example: If you miss a total of 1 class there is no course penalty. If you miss one additional class after this 1, then your final grade will be lowered by .2; meaning, if you earned a 3.6 in the course otherwise, your grade will then be 3.4 (and so on for any additional missed class(es)).

Students who miss three consecutive weeks of class are not eligible to receive a grade above 0.0. If you do not contact me, I will assume you have dropped the class and will enter a grade of 0.0 for you without exception. You can leave a message for me by email [Pytlik@oakland.edu](mailto:Pytlik@oakland.edu).

If you miss any course material or assignments please contact me regarding the assignment - you must contact me within 24 hours of the class period. After five days of the class in which the assignment was offered, you are not eligible to receive credit for it (unless you arrange with me ahead of time).

**Participation:** You are encouraged to contribute to the class by asking questions, discussing the readings, and offering your input. 20% of your grade involves this participation. I will grade participation for each class in this way:

0 points - did not attend class for any reason or, did attend class or came late to class and texted or spent most time on a PC device clearly not taking notes and contributed nothing, or clearly did not read.

2 points - attended class but said little or nothing, was distracted or uninvolved, read some but not all assigned.

3-5 points (range) - attended class, offered input, was alert, followed the discussion, brought issues to class, asked questions or offered opinions based on the reading or topic.

**Your grade is calculated in this manner:** A given number of points are assigned each assignment. The total of your achieved points for each assignment is calculated for each category, A, B, C, etc. (above). Each category represents a percentage of the total grade (or 100% possible) - “Class Participation” is 20% of the whole. Each category is calculated

## Archaeology of Sacred Sites in The Ancient Near East and Jerusalem

AN 387 4 credits

Fall 2016, Thursday 530-850 PM, Dodge Hall 237, Dr. Michael Pytlik: [pytlik@oakland.edu](mailto:pytlik@oakland.edu), Varner 447

as a weighted percentage of 100%. If you achieved all possible points in the "Various Assignments" category, you would earn 100% of 25% of the total grade. Each weighted category is then extended and calculated as a portion of the 100% possible; added together, this result provides a percentage that gives a percentage of 100%. This final percentage then is calculated against the highest possible grade (or 100%) of the O.U. grading system – or 4.0. Students' grades are calculated on an Excel spreadsheet and are available for student review. The OU grading system is available here: [http://catalog.oakland.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=483#Grading\\_System](http://catalog.oakland.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=483#Grading_System)

**CONTACTING YOU:** I will contact you via your OU email for any updates and information about the class. It is your responsibility to check this email.

**Incompletes:** Incompletes are available only by written request from you on an OU form by the scheduled date of the final. Incompletes will be granted only for documented medical reasons or other documented circumstances beyond your control. See Oakland's policy on Incomplete grades.

**Plagiarism will not be tolerated.** *Always cite sources that you use in any academic work. Do not copy someone else's work (that means a fellow student's or an author's work). For whichever assignment you are caught cheating you will fail that assignment portion, the entire assignment, or the course: subject to penalties from the university:* Academic Misconduct: Cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct may be reported to the Academic Conduct Committee of the University Senate for review and may result in failure for the course, university probation, suspension from the university, expulsion or other penalties. The "Academic Conduct" section of the catalog explains your due process rights and responsibilities. See me if you have questions or doubts.

**Health issues:** You should be aware that you can be seen for an illness at the Graham Health Center on campus for a nominal charge if you do not have health insurance, and if medicine is required, there will be a nominal charge for that as well. The Health Emergency Plan is available to any student on request. The only requirement is that you contribute to this program at some later time if/when you are able to do so.

**Students with Disabilities:** students who require any special arrangements due to disabilities should contact me so that we may resolve the issue with in-classroom alterations, or so that we may take advantage of university offerings. A student with a documented learning or physical disability must contact the Office of Disability and Support Services, 121 North Foundation Hall, (248) 370-3266, and inform the professor of special needs during first week of classes. For more information, visit <http://www.oakland.edu/dss>. Disability Support Services acts as an advocate for students with disabilities.