

## **AN 386 The Archaeology of Israel**

**Dr. Michael Pytlik, Instructor in Anthropology, Director Judaic Studies: [pytlik@oakland.edu](mailto:pytlik@oakland.edu), office: Varner 447**

*The Archaeology of Israel* acquaints students with the archaeological methods, history, social conditions and material culture of the ancient Near East, specifically focusing on Israel. We will examine the periods from the Neolithic (c 9000 BCE) to the early Roman period in the region (c. 63 BCE- 100 CE). We will examine how archaeology developed in Israel and the region (Troy, Egypt, Jordan) and how archaeology informs us about ancient history. We will learn key concepts and methods of archaeology, study how the historical periods developed and how new ones began, examine how culture changed or drove change in relation to the periods of history. A major anthropological problem in the course is the development of the ethnic identities and the problems inherent in that research. We also focus significantly on the development of ancient kingdoms and states and the motivators those processes. We will investigate the rise of civilizations in and around ancient Israel by focusing on case studies from key sites. In this area we consider trade, luxury items, social models such as chiefdoms and kingdoms, and the use or misuse of the environment, and more. Since this class can be used in part to prepare students to participate in a field school of archaeology in Israel, we will focus on key concepts relevant to the archaeology of Israel; significant among these is the development of distinct ancient ethnic groups such as the Israelites, Canaanites, Philistines, and Egyptians. Students will gain some experience in how archaeologists date materials. To this end, students will work with pottery from the region as a primer for possible fieldwork, but otherwise to understand how crucial pottery is to the archaeology of the region. One is not required to travel to Israel to take this course.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- 1.** To acquaint students with the archaeological methods, history, social conditions and material culture of the ancient Near East, specifically focusing on Israel. Where it is relevant other Near Eastern cultures are also studied. We will examine the periods from the Neolithic (c 9000 BCE) to the early Roman period (ending c. 100 CE).
  - 2.** We will learn key concepts and methods of archaeology, study how the historical periods developed and how new ones began in ancient Israel, examine how culture changed in relation to the periods of history (Early Bronze to Middle Bronze to Late Bronze Ages, etc), and how archaeology provides clues about the daily life, religious practices and ethnic identities of the people who inhabited ancient Canaan/Israel/Judah. Another major element of the course is the development of the ethnic identities; we also focus significantly on the development of ancient kingdoms and states and the motivators those processes.
  - 3.** Investigate the rise of the Israelite kingdom by focusing on case studies from key sites, some of which Oakland has excavated in Israel. In this area we consider trade, luxury items, social models such as chiefdoms and kingdoms, and the use or misuse of the environment, cultic materials and more.
  - 4.** This class can be used in part to prepare students to participate in a field school of archaeology in Israel.
  - 5.** Students will have gained some experience in how archaeologists date materials. To this end, students will work with pottery from the region as a primer for possible fieldwork but otherwise to understand how crucial pottery is to the archaeology of the region.
  - 6.** Students are exposed to a number of different viewpoints concerning archaeological interpretations. We therefore will engage with some of these views, specifically relating to “minimalists” and “maximalists” regarding the use of texts, including the Bible.
- C.** Provide students the opportunity to write on a number of different topics throughout the course.

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

- 1.** Discuss what archaeology is, how it is done, and what it cannot do in this region of the world, how pottery is used for dating, and how the discipline developed over time in the region.
- 2.** Be familiar with the development of archaeology conducted in Israel since 1838.
- 3.** Be familiar with the early periods of Canaan’s history, including identifying key sites, cultures and chronology as set in the course goals.

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4. Be fluent in how archaeological data and knowledge is acquired and interpreted to reconstruct ancient Near Eastern prehistory and history.
5. Be familiar with resources relevant to the field, and recognize the basic tensions that exist in some cases between texts and archaeological data.

### **Suggestions for Success:**

Read the materials before class. Highlight the book or article and recognize the main points. Then, write out the highlighted materials in note form in your own words, capturing the main points. 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. Themes will repeat, and this is on purpose. **Take notes during the lectures:** anything covered is fair game for an assignment or for an exam. You should plan on up to 4-6 hours per week in study outside of class per week.

**Writing:** any writing that you do should be done well, with purpose and clarity and should be grammatically correct. 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 on any assignment. You may use MLA or APA for citations.

### **Grading:**

- A.** Class Participation (**20%**): based on attendance and student input during class. *We will discuss reading assignments in class. See expectations below. (0, 2 or 5 points per on-campus meeting).*
- B.** Various Assignments, in-class reading quizzes, take home assignments. (**30% of grade**). In-class reading quizzes cannot be made up if you are absent without valid documented waiver. Take home assignments must be turned in by the due date; **any late assignment will be penalized - see below. Each assignment is worth 20 points.**
- C.** Research paper – approved topic, at least five sources on a particular site, length 10-12 pages. See due date on chart below (**50 points, 25% of grade**). (Details about this paper will be handed out during the semester)
- D.** Final Exam is cumulative. Exam includes short answer, essay, and multiple-choice questions, T/F. (**50 points, 25% of grade**).

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 as a weighted percentage of 100%. If you achieved all possible points in the "Various Assignments" category, you would earn 100% of 30% 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 percentage earned is applied to the OU grading scale, which is the following: 3.6-4.0 — A; 3.0-3.5 — B; 2.0-2.9 — C; 1.0-1.9 — D; 0.0 — no credit

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)

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### Course Texts:

1. **Moodle:** Several articles on Moodle have been posted for you. Please download and read these articles before class and please bring them to the class for which they were assigned.
2. Suzanne Richard, *Near Eastern Archaeology: A Reader*, (2003).
3. Hershel Shanks, editor, *Ancient Israel, From Abraham to the Roman Destruction*, (1990) or newer.
4. Michael Roaf, *Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East*, (1990).

### Recommended:

Ann E. Killebrew: *Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity: An Archaeological Study of Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines and Early Israel 1300-1100 BCE*, (2005).

Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn, *Archaeology Essentials: Theories, Methods and Practice*, (2007).

WEEK	TOPIC	SUBJECTS	ASSIGNMENTS
Week 1: 1/5 & 1/7	Introduction	Course syllabus, books, introduction to the field, geography, terms, chronology, Early Archaeologists and their Methods, pt. I;	<b>Look ahead, and read assignments ahead of time for the next class.</b> <b>1/7: Moodle:</b> "Geographic Setting" and <b>Moodle:</b> "Shifting Sands - the Beginnings"
Week 2: 1/12 & 1/14	Excavations / Neolithic Period	How we dig, <i>tels</i> , Early Archaeologists and their Methods, pt. II;  Neolithic period overview: case studies Jarmo (Mesopotamia), Jericho (Israel).	<b>1/12 - Richard:</b> "Introduction," "Part I: pp. 3-10; "Method and Theory in Syro-Palestinian Archaeology," pp., 33-47.  <b>1/14:Richard:</b> "The Neolithic Period," pp., 238-247. <b>Roaf</b> , pp., 24-48.  <b>Assignment (20)</b> given out due 1/19
Week 3: 1/19 & 1/21	Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Ages	Period overview, pottery introduction. Rise of urbanism, international relations, "cult" as a social indicator – case studies Gilat (Israel), Çatalhöyük (Turkey) and Teleilat Ghassul (Jordan). DVD on "how we dig".  Mesopotamian city states, the Pyramids in Egypt (overview).	<b>1/19 - Richard:</b> "The Chalcolithic in the Southern Levant," pp., 257-267; "The Nahal Mishmar Hoard from the Judean Desert," pp., 268-271. <b>Roaf</b> , pp., 48-68. <b>Moodle:</b> "Gilat Woman" article.  <b>1/21 - Richard:</b> "The Early Bronze Age in the Levant," pp., 280-296; <b>Roaf</b> , pp., 69-93 <b>In-class assignment on reading (1/21).</b>

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Week 4: 1/26 & 1/28	Early Bronze to Age IV to Middle Bronze	EBA overview, problems in transition from EBA to MBA. Who were the Hyksos? Egypt's second intermediate period, texts and inscriptions from Karnak Temple, Egypt. Textual references for the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt and abrupt change in culture in the Levant.	<b>1/26 – Richard:</b> "Theory in Archaeology: Culture Change at the End of the Early Bronze Age," pp., 298-312.  <b>1/28 – Richard:</b> "Middle Bronze Age," 325-336; <b>Moodle:</b> Hyksos Rule & Finkelstein on Exodus. Assignment (20 pts), due 2/1
Week 5: 2/2 & 2/4	Middle Bronze Age to Late Bronze Age	LBA transition, Egypt, Sea Peoples, ethnic identity, emerging Israelites and textual sources.  Canaanite cult and pantheon, Hammurabi's law code (Mesopotamia). Discussion of the thesis by Eric Cline for the upheaval in the Near East and massive social change (from <i>1177 BC – The Year Civilization Collapsed</i> ).  Discussion of term paper on an archaeological site.	<b>2/2 – Richard:</b> "The Late Bronze Age," pp., 343-350; "Tel el-Amarna Texts," (Egypt) pp., 351-353; <b>Roaf</b> , pp., 121-130. <b>Handout</b> – sources from <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts</i> .  <b>2/4 – Richard:</b> "Religion and Cult in the Levant: The Archaeological Data," pp., 377-384. <b>Shanks</b> chapters 1-2.  <b>In-class on reading (2/4).</b>
Week 6: 2/9 & 2/11	Iron Age I	From nomads to the Israelite monarchy, The use of the Bible in Near East archaeology. Response by Palestinian archaeologist Nur el-Din, Al Quds University.  Class discussion about Palestinian archaeology in the West Bank and in Israel/Jerusalem.	<b>2/9 - Shanks Chapter 3.</b> <b>Moodle</b> article: Mazar, "Excavate David's Palace!"  <b>2/11 – Moodle</b> link to Nur el-Din's response to the archaeology of Jerusalem; <b>Richard:</b> "Writing," pp., 74-77; "Northwest Semitic Epigraphic Sources," pp., 78-81. <b>Roaf:</b> pp., 150-151. <b>Assignment (20)</b> given out, due 2/16
Week 7: 2/16 & 2/18	Iron Age Part II	Continuation of Iron Age in the Levant. The Rise of kingdoms in Israel and Jordan. The rise of Assyria (Mesopotamia), and its empire. Lachish introduction (OU's second excavation site in Israel) – the Assyrian campaign against the site, the famous Assyrian stone reliefs at the Palace of Nineveh – Assyria. Khirbet Qeiyafa case study, associated to the time of David (OU's first excavation).	<b>2/16 – Shanks:</b> Chapter 4.  <b>2/18: Moodle:</b> Kh. Qeiyafa article; <b>Moodle:</b> Article on the inscription from K.Q. <b>Moodle</b> article "Why Excavate Lachish?"  <b>In-class on reading covering all reading this week (20 pts).</b>
<b>Week 8: 2/23 &amp; 2/25</b>		<b>WINTER BREAK</b>	

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Week 9: 3/1 & 3/3	Babylonians	<p>Assyrian and Babylonian Conquests – Destruction of First Temple in Jerusalem. , Babylonian conquests and written sources, Lachish continued. The site of ancient Babylon.</p> <p>DVD portion from “The Bible Unearthed” by Israel Finkelstein.</p> <p><b>Term Paper idea due on 3/10 - a brief sketch of your methods/aims (1 par.).</b></p>	<p><b>3/1 - Shanks</b> Chapters V. <b>Roaf</b>, pp., 192-202 (Assyria and Babylon); <b>Moodle</b> - Article on Lachish</p> <p>In-class on reading (3/1).</p> <p><b>3/3 – Shanks</b> chapter VI.</p> <p>Take Home assignment (20) - due 3/8</p>
Week 10: 3/8 & 3/10	Persian/Hellenistic periods	<p>Persian and Hellenistic Periods overview. Economy, coinage and presentation on the earliest coins minted in the region at Gaza. Primary sources from excavations at Kh. Qeiyafa (OU’s former site). Alexander and Hellenism – the broad influence of Hellenism in the Middle East (on secular and religious groups and institutions). Art and architecture and its influence on Judaism and Christianity.</p>	<p><b>3/8: Richard:</b> “Syria-Palestine in the Persian Period,” pp., 392-406. <b>Roaf</b>, pp., 203-219</p> <p><b>3/10 – Richard:</b> “The Hellenistic Period,” pp., 412-427. <b>Moodle:</b> “Challenge of Hellenism” – Meyers.</p> <p>In-class reading quiz - (3/10).</p>
Week 11: 3/15 & 3/17	Pottery and its importance	<p>Pottery analysis and dating, relative chronology, absolute chronology, in-class working with pottery, Greek to Roman transition in the Near East.</p> <p>The Nabateans and Petra (Jordan) – trade routes, art and architecture, cultural influences</p>	<p><b>3/15: Moodle:</b> Chronology article; <b>Moodle:</b> Excerpt from Josephus; <b>Moodle:</b> Gamla pottery article.</p> <p>Please bring a few pages of graph paper (1:4) for pottery drawing. Turn in work as in-class assignment (20).</p> <p><b>3/17: Richard:</b> “The Nabateans,” pp., 428-434.</p>
Week 12: 3/22 & 3/24	Jerusalem and the rise of Monotheism	<p>Bible’s Buried Secrets: the rise of monotheism DVD. Jerusalem archaeology, the Temple Mount and its importance to Judaism and Islam.</p> <p>Controversies concerning archaeology and the Temple Mount. The Muslim <i>Waqf</i> – overseers of the Temple Mount and its concern about Israeli research near the Mount.</p>	<p><b>3/22: Moodle</b> - Jerusalem in the Herodian Period.</p> <p><b>3/24: Moodle:</b> two articles relating to the Temple Mount – Israeli and Palestinian sources.</p> <p>Take Home Assignment – 20 points, due 3/29.</p>
Week 13: 3/29 & 3/31	Roman Period / synagogues	<p>Roman period overview, ritual purity and archaeology, art and symbols, Beth Alpha synagogue, Hellenistic influences.</p>	<p><b>3/29: Shanks</b> chapter VIII</p> <p><b>3/31: Richard:</b> “Synagogues in the land of Israel,” pp., 449-458.</p> <p>Assignment (20 pts) given, due 4/5.</p>
Week 14: 4/5 & 4/7	Herod and the Temple	<p>The rise of Herod: Masada, Herodium, Herod’s tomb, Caesarea, DVD.</p> <p>The importance of Egypt, relations with Rome, effects on the Levant.</p>	<p><b>4/5: Moodle</b> article on Herod;</p> <p>In-class quiz on reading (4/5).</p> <p><b>4/7: Richard:</b> “Early Christian</p>

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		The emergence of Christianity, identities, earliest pilgrim records at significant sites.  <b>Term Paper is due next week on 4/14</b>	Iconography," pp., 467-472; "Early Christian Churches in Israel," pp., 473. <b>Roaf</b> , pp., 222-223.
Week 15: 4/12 & 4/14	Roman Destruction of Jerusalem, the earliest Christians	Destruction of Jerusalem, Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls; What happened after the destruction?  Course summary & final info.	<b>4/12: Moodle:</b> 2 articles about Qumran and its importance. In-class on reading (4/12).  <b>4/14: Term Paper due by 4/14 (50 pts).</b>
4/20-4/21	<b>Final Exam</b>	The exam is held online Moodle. It will be open from 7am 4/20 through 8pm 4/21 - you will have three hours once you begin	50 points.

### **Additional Resources:**

The Kresge library has numerous new books on the archaeology of Israel. Of note is the *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*. It contains entries on all excavations in Israel.

**MOODLE:** Check online for the syllabus, glossary of terms, special readings, maps, etc.

**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)

Jewish Virtual Library (archaeology page):

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Archaeology/archtoc.html>

American Schools of Oriental Research: [www.asor.org](http://www.asor.org). Schools include those in Cyprus, Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, Egypt, Amman.

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

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

**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 surfing in class will result in 0 points for "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.

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**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 two classes, 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 2 absences without penalty (T/R are each 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 2 allowed, the student's final course grade will be lowered by 0.1 points on the 4.0 scale. Example: If you miss a total of 2 classes there is no course penalty - that means any T or R session (not the full week). If you miss two additional classes after these 2, 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.

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 strongly encouraged to contribute to the class discussion by asking questions, discussing the readings, and offering your input. 20% of your grade involves this participation. Just attending class does not satisfy the full 5 points potential for each class - I will grade participation for each class period in this way:

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

**2 points** - attended class but said nothing, was distracted or uninvolved, read some but not all according to class participation.

**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.

**CONTACTING YOU:** I will use your official OU email or through Moodle for any updates and information about the class. It is your responsibility to check this email.

**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, but you may be subject to penalties from the university: Academic Misconduct: Cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct will 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.

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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.*

**Disability Support Services:**

Disability Support Services acts as an advocate for students with disabilities and works with 500-600 students per semester. In addition to helping students understand university policies and practices, we assist students in addressing personal and academic concerns. We supply referrals to other university offices when appropriate. To receive accommodations, students must make an appointment to register with the Office of Disability Support Services at <http://www.oakland.edu/dss>

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>.