
ARCH 1600

ARCHAEOLOGIES OF THE NEAR EAST



Fall 2017

Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World
Brown University

Syllabus

Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:20

A course with Carl Walsh, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Archaeology, Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World

Carl's Office Hours: Mondays 2-4 and Fridays 2-4

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Course Description and Learning Outcomes

The Near East is an exotic and mysterious concept evoking ideas and images of ancient monuments and forgotten societies, as explored for example in Agatha Christie's famous *Murder in Mesopotamia*. While this concept is largely the result of western orientalism, it cannot be denied that this region, incorporating Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, the Levant, and Iran, is steeped in fabled history and a wondrously rich material, artistic, and textual record. This rich archaeological record has illustrated that the Near East was a nexus of the earliest development of human societies, writing, art, urbanism, agriculture, and imperialism, with cultural and material influences that continue even today. In the recent decades, the Middle East, another concept in itself, has become a place of political instability and unrest, with archaeological field research being overwhelmingly impacted. As such, it has become even more important that we continue to research and protect the cultural heritage of the region, in order to understand how the Near East continues to impact the modern world.

In this course we will explore the archaeological history and current archaeological practice in this region, examining the social and cultural history of the Near East from prehistory to the end of the Iron Age (300 BC). An emphasis is placed on a holistic approach using material, artistic, and textual sources in which to explore themes and theories, giving students the skills to use all of these sources critically in research. To underscore this holistic approach, certain classes will also provide students with the opportunity and training to handle and examine objects and texts from the region. The concept of 'archaeologies' is also explored throughout the semester, where we will investigate some of interpretive approaches and theoretical frameworks used within Near Eastern archaeology. This plurality

of interpretive approaches will provide students with a background in some of the ways archaeologists interpret the archaeological record and how they contribute to the study of humanity in the wider social sciences and humanities. In addition, archaeology in the Middle East is frequently a politicized field, and the contemporary political circumstances have a massive impact on how the ancient past is documented, studied and represented. Using several archaeological case studies in the ancient Middle East, the course intends to unpack the modern scholarly and public context of archaeological discourses. The main goal of the course is to develop a critical understanding of ancient societies and their material culture from an interdisciplinary perspective, in which students learn how they can actively contribute to modern scholarship.

Class Structure and Accessibility

Classes will be run twice a week, with the Tuesday session usually being reserved for lectures, while the Thursday meetings will be used for discussion, object handling, and presentations on weekly selected topics and student presentations. In some cases the handling of certain objects may necessitate a change in venue or swapping round of days, but students will be notified beforehand by Carl of any changes.

Please inform me if you have a disability or other condition that might require some modification of any of these course procedures. You may speak with me after class or during office hours. For more information, contact Students and Employee Accessibility Services at 401-863-9588 or SEAS@brown.edu.

Canvas and Piazza

The Canvas course page will be the main tool for checking on announcements, view set weekly readings, view assignments, and post and respond to questions on Piazza. Please make sure you have set yourself as receiving announcements for the course page and make sure you check it regularly for important information like rooms changes etc. Piazza is a very user friendly and a useful discussion tool for posting questions (anonymously if you want) which both Carl and other students can answer. Piazza can be found on the left hand side of the Canvas course page. You will just need to create an account with Piazza before being able to use it, which only takes a minute.

Reference Books

You are recommended to purchase the following books although all assigned chapters will be posted on the wiki as well (as pdfs). There are also copies of these books on reserve at the Rockefeller Library and some will also be in the Joukowsky Institute Library (but cannot be checked out).

- Bahrani, Z. (2017) *Art of Mesopotamia*. Thames and Hudson: London. (Highly recommended)
- Matthews, R. (2003) *The Archaeology of Mesopotamia: Theories and Approaches*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Van de Mieroop, M. (2004) *A History of the Ancient Near East. ca 3000-323 BC*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Kuhrt, A. (1995) *The Ancient Near East: c. 3000-330 B.C.* 2 Vols. Routledge: London and New York.
- Postgate, J. N. (1992) *Early Mesopotamia: Society and Economy at the dawn of history*. Routledge: London and New York.
- Akkermans, P. and Schwartz, G. (2003) *The archaeology of Syria: from complex*

hunter-gatherers to early urban societies (ca. 16,000-300 BC). Cambridge World Archaeology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Antonio, S. and Zimansky, P. (2009) *Ancient Turkey*. Routledge: London and New York.

Course Requirements and Expectations

Over 15 weeks, students will spend 2 hours 40 mins per week in class (36 hours total). Required reading is expected to take up approximately 5 hours per week (75 hours). In addition, research and writing for the midterm essay and final project is estimated at total of approximately 40 hours over the course of the term.

Each student is expected to do the weekly readings thoroughly, participate in Thursday discussions and take extensive notes during class lectures and discussions. It is strongly recommended that you keep detailed notes as you do your weekly readings and during lectures and class discussions, as well as noting down your own thoughts and ideas on concepts. Remember that this course is meant to encourage you to contribute to scholarship!

Throughout the semester, students will be asked and expected to act as discussants of selected articles and posing relevant discussion questions to the class during the Thursday sessions. There is a small primary source analysis paper which will focus on a particular object of your choice and how it can be related to wider themes and theory, after consulting with Carl, which will be due midterm. This will be followed by a final research project (explained in detail below).

The breakdown of course assessment is as follows:

- **Attendance and participation (25%)**
- **Object Based Poster Project:** Research, design, and discuss a poster around a particular object and your analysis and discussion on how it can be related to wider questions and theories in archaeological (25%)
- **Individual Research Project** (includes proposal, oral presentation, draft, and final paper- the grade is less on the final product but more on the whole process of developing the project) (12-15 pages) (50%)

Object Based Poster Project

The first assignment, due 20th of October, will be to research and design a poster on an object of the student's choice after consulting with Carl. In order to help you design your poster, there will be an out of class workshop organized with the Brown Multimedia lab on how to use Adobe Illustrator to design your poster, and how to use the poster printers in the Multimedia labs. Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop are freely available through Brown Adobe Creative Cloud and you have a yearly allowance on printing through the labs! The poster will need to provide a summary description of the object, but most importantly explore in detail how the object can be related to larger questions and theories in archaeology. As such, it MUST not be entirely descriptive, and should largely be a discussion and analysis of the object in relation to current research and the students own ideas and thoughts. References should also be provided (see below for guidelines on referencing). It is hoped that these can be displayed in the Joukowsky to showcase the objects and students contributions to scholarship, with a poster evening session for students to present their work.

To have a look at the Brown Multimedia service visit:

<https://it.brown.edu/services/type/multimedia-labs>

Research project

The final assignment is to choose a research topic after discussing with Carl and turn it into an individual research project. The final paper should involve a critical discussion of an archaeological case study from the Near East, in the light and with the guidance of a theoretically informed approach. The main aim in the research project is the bridge the apparent gap between theoretical discussions in archaeology and the material evidence. It is essential that you make effective use of the theoretical and material-based readings you will be doing throughout the semester in the final paper.

- The project **must** also use and incorporate in a **substantial way**, some type of media, such as photographs, drawings, videos, podcasts, or models. Have a look at the Multimedia lab for some inspirations on creative options!
- Before final submission, each student will perform an oral presentation on their project at the end of the semester, which will provide an excellent opportunity to get constructive feedback and discussion on your project which can be incorporated into the written paper.
- The final mark will be based on the submission of a 1 page proposal with preliminary bibliography, a 5-8 page draft and a 12-15 page final paper accompanied by any other media (14-20 for the graduate students), as well as on the oral presentation. The emphasis is therefore more on the entire research process and experience rather than the final paper itself.

Referencing and Libraries

The preferred referencing style for both the assignments are Chicago and Harvard, which are the most common styles used in Archaeology and Anthropology. These consist of in text citation (author, date, page numbers) followed by a detailed citation of the publication in the bibliography. Footnotes are not encouraged. Referencing is an essential skill to learn in academic work and it is essential that students properly reference within their written work to avoid plagiarism penalties.

Students are also reminded that using libraries is also an essential skill to learn. While readings will be made available online, it is also important you expand your reading into other works. A useful tip is to use the bibliographies of the provided readings, but be aware of the dates of publications. Students are also warned that older publications, roughly pre 1975, may be quite out of date and to use caution when using the opinions and interpretations of scholars who are the product of their times!

Weekly Schedule

- **Week 1: Introduction: Why study the Near East?**
 - Thursday 7th of September: Introduction: Overview of the syllabus and resources for the course.

- **Week 2 The Near East: Physical and Mental Maps of the Near East**
 - Tuesday 12th September: Landscapes and Environments of the Near East
 - Wilkinson, T. (2003) *Archaeological Landscapes of the Near East*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. 15-32.
 - Kouchoukos, N. and Wilkinson, T. (2006) Landscape archaeology in Mesopotamia: past, present, and future, in E.C. Stone (ed) *Settlement and society: essays dedicated to Robert McCormick Adams*. Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology. 1-18.
 - Thursday 14th September: Near East, Orient, Middle East?
 - Bahrani, Z. (1998) Conjuring Mesopotamia: imaginative geography and a world past, in L. Meskell (ed.) *Archaeology under fire: Nationalism, politics and heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East*. Routledge: London and New York. 159-174.
 - Scheffler, T. (2003) 'Fertile crescent', 'Orient', 'Middle East': the changing mental maps of Southwest Asia, *European Review of History* 10/2. 253-272.

- **Week 3: Emerging Societies and Social Complexity**
 - Tuesday 19th September: Neolithic Societies: Social Complexity, Urbanism, and Cults.
 - Lewis-Williams, D. (2004) Constructing a cosmos: architecture, power and domestication at Çatalhöyük. *Journal of Social Archaeology* Vol.4(1). 28-59.
 - Schmidt, K. (2012) *Göbekli Tepe, a Stone Age sanctuary in South-Eastern Anatolia*. Berlin: Ex Oriente e.V.
 - Wengrow, D. (1998) The changing face of clay: continuity and change in the transition from village to urban life in the Near East, *Antiquity* 72. 783-795.
 - The Göbekli Tepe excavation website has an interesting documentary about the site:
<http://gobeklitepe.info/worldsfirsttemple-com-the-movie-on-gobeklitepe.html>

- Thursday 21st September: The Uruk Period: Writing, Urbanism and Expansion
 - Algaze G. (2013) The End of Prehistory and the Uruk Period, in H. Crawford (ed.), *The Sumerian World*, London. 68-94.
 - Algaze, G. (1993) *The Uruk world system, the dynamics of expansion of early Mesopotamian civilization*. Chicago, Chicago University Press.

- **Week 4: Power and Monumentality: The Early Dynastic Period in Mesopotamia**
 - Tuesday 26th September: The Early Dynastic in Mesopotamia: Kingship and Consumption
 - Garfinkle S. (2013) Ancient Near Eastern city States, in P. Bang and W. Scheidel (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of the State in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 - Marchesi G. (2010) The Sumerian King List and the Early History of Mesopotamia, in M.G. Biga and M. Liverani (eds.) *ana turri gimilli: Studi Dedicati al Padre Werner R. Mayer, SJ da Amici e Allievi*. Rome. 321-48.

 - Thursday 28th September: Early Dynastic Art: Aesthetics and Narratives
 - Hansen, D. (2003) Art of the Early City States, In J. Aruz and R. Wallenfels (eds) *Art of the First Cities, The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus*. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. 21-37.
 - Bahrani, Z. (2017) *Art in Mesopotamia*. London, Thames and Hudson. Chapter 4.
 - Winter, I. (1985) After the battle is over: the stele of the vultures and the beginning of historical narrative in the art of the ancient Near East, *Studies in the History of Art* 16. 11-32.

- **Week 5: The First Empires of Akkad and Ur III**
 - Tuesday 3rd October: Early Empires: The Cases of Akkad and Ur III
 - McMahon A. (2012) The Akkadian Period: Empire, Environment, and Imagination, in D. Potts (ed.) *A Companion to the Archeology of the Ancient Near East*. Malden, Wiley-Blackwell. 649-68.
 - Garfinkle S. (2013) The Third Dynasty of Ur and the Limits of State Power in Early Mesopotamia, in S. Garfinkle and M. Molina (eds) *From the 21st Century BC to the 21st Century AD*. Winona Lake. 153-68.

- Thursday 5th October: Materiality and Writing: Object handling class at John Hay Library.
 - Cartwright, C. and Taylor, J. (2011) The making and re-making of clay tablets, *Scienze dell'antichità* 17. 297-324.
 - Ingold, T. (2007). Materials against materiality. *Archaeological Dialogues*, 14(1), 1-16.
 - Taylor, J. (2011) Tablets as artefacts, scribes as artisans, in K. Radner and E. Robson (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*. Oxford, 5–31
- **Week 6: Urban and Rural: Court Societies in Mesopotamia and Syria**
 - Tuesday 10th: Palaces and Politics: Babylon, Mari and Yamkhad
 - Akkerman, P. and Schwartz, G. (2003) *The Archaeology of Syria, From Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (ca. 16,000-300 BC)*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Chapter 9, 297-326.
 - Larsen, M. (2008) Middle Bronze Age, in J. Aruz, K. Benzel, J. Evans (eds) *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C.* New York, Metropolitan Museum. 13-17
 - Van de Mieroop, M. (2004) *A History of the Ancient Near East*. Malden: Blackwell. 99-112.
 - Thursday 12th: Tribes, Courtiers, and Diplomats: Court Life in the Mari and Babylon
 - Charpin, D. (2010) *Writing, law, and kingship in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. Chapter 7, 97-114.
 - Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations
 - Fleming, D. (2004) *Democracy's Ancient Ancestors: Mari and Early Collective Governance*. Chapter 1 1-4 and 6-13, Chapter 2, 26-43.
- **Week 7: Middle Bronze Age Anatolia and Old Assyrian Trade**
 - Tuesday 17th: Ethnicities and Economics: Kanesh and Assur
 - Larsen, M. (2011) The Archives from Kültepe/Kanesh, in F. Kulakoğlu and S. Kangal (eds.) *Anatolia's Prologue: Kültepe Kanesh Karum*. Kayseri. 74-81.
 - Michel C. (2011) The *Kārum* Period on the Plateau, in S.R. Steadman and G. McMahon (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Anatolia*. Oxford. 313-36.
 - Michel, C. (2014) Considerations on the Assyrian Settlement at Kanesh, in L. Atici, F. Kulakoğlu, G. Barjamovic, and A. Fairbairn (eds) *Current research at Kueltepe-Kanesh: an interdisciplinary and integrative approach to trade networks, internationalism, and identity*. 69-84.

- Thursday 19th: Intercultural Entanglements in the Aegean, Anatolia, and Northern Levant.
 - Mokrišová, J. (2016) Minoanisation, Mycenaeanisation, And Mobility: A View From Southwest Anatolia, in E. Gorogianni, P. Pavúk, L. Girella (eds) *Beyond Thalassocracies, Understanding Processes of Minoanisation and Mycenaeanisation in the Aegean*. Oxford: Oxbow. 43-57.
 - Feldman, M. (2007) Frescos, Exotica, and the Reinvention of the Northern Levantine Kingdoms. 39-66.
- **Poster Project Deadline: 20th October**
- **Week 8: The Late Bronze Age Internationalism**
 - Tuesday 24th October: The Age of Internationalism?
 - Liverani, M. (2001) *International Relations in the Ancient Near East*. Basingstoke, Palgrave.
 - Podany, A. (2010) *Brotherhood of Kings: How International Relations Shaped the Ancient Near East*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. Chapter 8.
 - Sherratt, A. and Sherratt, S. (1991) From luxuries to commodities: the nature of Mediterranean Bronze age trading systems, in N.H. Gale (ed.) *Bronze Age trade in the Mediterranean*. Jonsered: Paul Åströms Förlag. 351-386.
 - Thursday 26th October: Amarna Diplomacy: Social, Bodily, and Material Networks
 - Moran, W. (1992) *The Amarna Letters*. Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press.
 - Feldman, M. (2002) Luxurious Forms: Redefining a Mediterranean "International Style," 1400–1200 b.c.e. *The Art Bulletin Vol.84(1)*. 6-29.
 - Walsh, C. (2013) The high life: Courtly Etiquette in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. In K. Acetta, R. Fellingner, P. L. Gonçalves. S. Musselwhite, and W. P. van Pelt (eds) *Current Research in Egyptology 2013, Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Symposium*. Oxford, Oxbow Books. 201-216.
- **Week 9: The Lost Empire and Catastrophe**
 - Tuesday 31st October: Fortified Cities and Ritual Landscapes: The Hittite Empire
 - Steadman, S. R. (2011) Key Sites of the Hittite Empire. In S. R. Steadman and G. McMahon (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Anatolia*. 10,000-323 BCE. Oxford, Oxford University Press. 1031-1054.

- Schachner, A. (2013) Hattuša, the Capital City of the Hittite State. In M. Doğan-Alparslan and M. Alparslan (eds.) *Hittites, An Anatolian Empire*. Istanbul, Yapi Kredi Yayinlari. 178-195.
 - Schachner, A (2013) On the Development of Hittite Art and Its Social Functions. In M. Doğan-Alparslan and M. Alparslan (eds.) *Hittites: An Anatolian Empire*. Yapi Kredi Yayinlari. 150-177.
 - Thursday 2nd November: The Bronze Age Collapse? When Societies Fall
 - Cline, E. (2014) *1177 BC: The Year Civilization Collapsed*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Prologue, 1-13.
 - Knapp, B. and Manning, S. (2016) Crisis in Context: The End of the Late Bronze Age in the Eastern Mediterranean, *AJA* 120/1. 99-149.
 - A radio discussion on the Bronze Age Collapse <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07fl5bh>
 - *Lecture by Eric Cline on his book, 1177 BC given at the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, 2015* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hyry8mgXiTk>
- **Week 10: The Iron Age: Empires and Traders**
 - Tuesday 7th November: After Collapse: Reorganization and Adaption
 - Yoffee N. (2010) Collapse in Ancient Mesopotamia: What Happened, What Didn't?" in P. A. McAnany and N. Yoffee (eds.), *Questioning Collapse: Human Resilience, Ecological Vulnerability, and the Aftermath of Empire*. Cambridge: 176-206.
 - Killebrew, A. (2013) Introduction to the Levant during the Transitional Late Bronze Age/Iron Age I and Iron Age I Periods, in A.E. Killebrew and M. Steiner (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of the Levant c. 8000-332 BCE*. Oxford. 596-601.
 - Aubet, M.E. (2013) Phoenicia during the Iron Age II Period. In A.E. Killebrew and M. Steiner (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of the Levant c. 8000-332 BCE*. OUP. pp. 707-14.
 - Thursday 9th November: Imperial Menace: The Neo-Assyrian Empire
 - Postgate, N. (1992) The Land of Assur and the Yoke of Assur, *World Archaeology* 23. 247-263.
 - Frahm, E. (2008) The Great City: Nineveh in the Age of Sennacherib. *Journal of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies* 3. 13-20.

- **Week 11: The Late Iron Age: Neo Babylonians and Persia**
 - Tuesday 14th November: Age of Empires
 - Baker, H.D. (2012) The Neo-Babylonian Empire, in D. Potts (ed.) *A Companion to the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*, D. Malden: Blackwell. 914-30.
 - George, A. (2008) A Tour of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, and Ancient descriptions: the Babylonian topographical texts, in I. Finkel and M. Seymour (eds.) *Babylon: Myth and Reality*. London, British Museum Press. 56-61.
 - John Curtis (2005) The archaeology of the Achaemenid Period, in J. Curtis and N. Tallis (eds) *Forgotten empire: the world of ancient Persia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 30-49.
 - Thursday 16th November: Persia and Greece: The Origin of East vs West?
 - Holland, T. (2005) *Persian Fire: The First World Empire and the Battle for the West*. New York: Doubleday.
 - Bahrani, Z. (2017) *Art in Mesopotamia*. London, Thames and Hudson. Chapter 13, 394-321.
- **Week 12: Cultural Heritage of the Near East**
 - Tuesday 21st November: Who Owns the Past? Cultural Heritage in Context
 - Abu El-Haj, N. (1998) Translating truths: nationalism, the practice of archaeology, and the remaking of past and present in contemporary Jerusalem, *American Ethnologist* 25(2). 166-188.
 - No class on 23rd for Thanksgiving Recess
- **Week 13: Cultural Heritage of the Near East and Student Presentations**
 - Tuesday 28th November: Destroying the Past
 - Meskell, L. (2005) Sites of violence: terrorism, tourism and heritage in the archaeological present, in L. Meskell and P. Pels (eds) *Embedding Ethics*. Oxford: Berg. 123-146.
 - Pollock, Susan (2005) Archaeology goes to war at the newsstand, in S. Pollock and R. Bernbeck (eds.) *Archaeologies of the Middle East: critical perspectives*. Malden: Blackwell. 78-96.
 - Thursday 30th November: Student Presentations

- **Week 14: Student Presentations and Reading**
 - Tuesday 5th December: Student Presentations
 - Thursday 7th December: Student Presentations/Roundtable discussions on Student Presentations and Research
- **Final Project Deadline: Tuesday December 12th**