Ancient Israel and Palestine

History 4005
Prof. Bradley J. Parker
Department of History

This course will provide an illustrated overview of the archaeology, history and culture of ancient Israel and Palestine from the Neolithic period to the Roman period. Emphasis will be placed on archaeological sites, material remains and texts. Analysis and discussion will focus on how these data can be used to address the larger questions of historical and social development. Lectures will also include a discussion of the affect that neighboring states such as Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia had on the history, society and religion of the region.

Format
Most of this class will be in lecture format. Lectures will be arranged chronologically and are illustrated using PowerPoint. A few days during the semester will be reserved for discussion. Discussions will focus on particular texts. I will upload copies of the texts to WebCT and announce discussion days one week ahead of time.

Textbooks
There are two textbooks for this class:


These books will be available at the University Bookstore. Copies of all of the reading materials will be on reserve in the Marriot Library. A number of other books are also on reserve to help you with studying.

Exams
There will be two exams: a midterm and a final. Exams can include any of the following formats:

1) Map: The map will include any modern place names including countries, cities, rivers, lakes, mountain ranges, etc. It can also include any of the ancient places discussed in class. Students are expected to know the modern geography of the Middle East. In addition to this you should be able to place important archaeological sites on the map.

2) Identification Questions: This will consist of a word or phrase. Students are expected to write what it is, when it dates to, where it is from, and why it is important. You must be concise and limit your answer to one paragraph.
3) **Visual IDs:** Tests (quizzes and exams) may include images. Students will be required to identify the image explain what it is, when it dates to, where it is from, and why it is important. Be concise. Limit your answer to one paragraph.

4) **Matching Identifications:** You will potentially be given two columns of terms or phrases (Columns A and B). You must choose an item from Column A and find one or more items in Column B with which you think your choice from Column A has some significant historical connections. You must then explain the connections in four or five sentences that describe the items, situate them in time and place, and define the importance of the connection.

5) **Primary Source Identifications:** Tests may include quotes from primary sources handed out in class. Students will be required to identify the passage and write a short explanation of its significance.

6) **Essays:** You will be allowed to choose from a list thematic essay questions. You must then write a three to four page answer to the question.

**Assignments**

**Map Assignment:** Students are expected to know the names and locations of all countries, important cities and major geographic features of the region. Students will access blank map of the region and a list of place names on Canvas. They will be expected to label the map (neatly and clearly) with the place names given on the list. During the course of the semester many ancient place names will be discussed. The most important of these will be included in the map section of the midterm and final. Students should research this topic by consulting atlases, books and maps. A copy of The Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia is on reserve in the Marriot Library to aid you in this assignment and for the purpose of studying for the map sections on the midterm and final.

**Writing Assignments:** Two times during the semester students will be responsible for preparing a four- to five-page thoughtful response to a specific reading. The readings will be available on electronic reserve.

**The first paper will be a critical review of:**

**The second paper will be a critical review of one of the following two articles:**


**Directions for the writing assignment:** The writing assignments consist of a critique of an article or chapter. Students must clearly address the following issues:
1) What is the author’s thesis?
2) What data did the author use to construct his or her thesis?
3) Is the thesis supported by the data?

Each of the papers should consist of at least three parts;
1) a summary of the article or chapter
   -this section should clearly spell out what the article is about and what issue or issues it is trying to address and
2) a discussion of the argument proposed in the article
   -this section should clearly spell out that the author’s thesis is
3) a discussion of the data used to support the thesis
   -this section should critically evaluate the data used to construct or support the author’s thesis
4) a critical evaluation of the article.
   -this section should evaluate the thesis, the data and the logic used to construct the argument.

Discussion Days
Several days during the semester will be dedicated to the discussion of primary sources. Discussion readings will be uploaded to Canvas. I will make an announcement about the discussions one week ahead of time. Students must come to class prepared to discuss the material. All students are expected to participate in the discussions.

Grading
Map = 5%
Quizzes = 10%
First Paper = 20%
Midterm = 20%
Second Paper = 20%
Final = 25%