

**COLLEGE OF THE HUMANITIES
RELIGION PROGRAM: RELI 4850A & 5850W**

Re-Constructing Religion: The Integration of Archaeology & Text in Studying Biblical Israel

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Office hours: Tu/Th 10:15-11:15am (or by appointment), Paterson 2a60 **Office Phone:** 520-2600 ext. 7029

The study of ancient religions relies on information derived from textual and material remains. However, these records tend to be incomplete and fraught with interpretive difficulties. This course will examine various methodological and interpretive frameworks that have been used to write the religious history of ancient Israel based on the biblical text in combination with – and sometimes in opposition to – the findings of archaeology. Additional focus will be on the biases at work in a variety of theoretical approaches, including theological, feminist, literary, anthropological, and historical perspectives, and how to integrate them in a cross-disciplinary methodological strategy that combines text and archaeology toward reconstructing and understanding ancient Israelite religious experience. Essentially, this is a course about critical thinking in the reconstruction of religious history. How do we know what we know?

Evaluation

4850 students:

1. 8 weekly reflection papers on the readings, approximately 2 pages in length, worth 5% each for a total of 40%
2. presentation (15-20 minutes) of conclusions re integration of archaeology & text (each with a specific focus TBD), worth 10%
3. term paper proposal worth 5% (due March 5, beginning of class)
4. term paper annotated bibliography worth 5% (due April 9, beginning of class)
5. term paper expanding on the presentation topic, based on research and reflection, worth 20%
6. attendance & participation 20%

5850 students:

1. 8 weekly reflection papers on the readings, approximately 3 pages in length, worth 5% each for a total of 40%
2. 1 individual presentation (1 hour and 20 minutes) combining lecture and discussion leadership, worth 15%
3. Annotated bibliography, due the date of presentation, worth 5%
4. term paper write-up of presentation research, worth 20%
5. attendance and participation 20%

A note on attendance:

The seminar format depends on student preparedness and attendance. More than 2 absences over the course of the semester will result in a grade of F for the course. (Note: leaving after the break, arriving to class at the break, or engaging socially on your phone or computer (yes, I can see when you are doing that) count as absences from class.)

A few notes on written work:

*Late reflection papers or term papers will not be accepted.

*Late proposals or annotated bibliographies will be assessed a penalty of 1% per day. If they are more than 5 days late they will receive a grade of zero; however if they are not handed in at all, your final paper will not be accepted.

*Please review the note on plagiarism on the “Regulations” page at the end of this course outline. Plagiarism, of any extent, will be prosecuted to the fullest possible extent and can result in an F for the course.

Schedule

Jan. 8 Introduction to the course

Defining terms: “history” and “religion”

Are all biases bad? Is scholarly objectivity possible?

Theory and method in archaeology, history, & religious studies

Jan. 15 Israel in its Ancient Near Eastern Context

Before class: watch 2 hr documentary at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/ancient/bibles-buried-secrets.html>

READ: “Syria-Canaan” and “Israel” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Near Eastern Religions* (on CULearn)

READ: Brandfon, “Archaeological Views: Digging a Hole and Telling a Tale” (on CULearn)

READ: Nadav Na’aman “The Trowel vs. the Text” (on CULearn)

Reflection paper: Assess and critically evaluate scholarly methods, goals, and assumptions at work in integrating archaeology and text to reconstruct ancient Israelite religious history in the NOVA documentary and scholarly articles.

Jan. 22 Methods in Reconstructing Israelite Religion

READ: Z. Zevit, “Surveying Paths: An Essay about Humanities, Religion, History, and Israelite Religions” (on CULearn)

Reflection paper: Summarize and assess Zevit’s approach to reconstructing Israelite religion.

Jan. 29 Genesis: The World of the Patriarchs and Its Authors

READ: Robert Miller, “Israelite Life before the Kings” (on CULearn)

READ: http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/mcnutt_ancientIsrael.shtml

READ: Genesis (all); Proverbs 31

Reflection paper: What does it mean to reconstruct biblical society with a “social science method”? Apply McNutt’s method to your reading of Genesis – what conclusions might you draw about ancient Israelite society in reading the biblical text from a social science perspective?

Feb. 5 The Historicity of the Exodus

READ: Exodus (especially ch 1-20)

READ: B. Halpern, “The Exodus from Egypt: Myth or Reality?”

READ: B. Malamat, “Let My People Go and Go and Go and Go - Egyptian records support a centuries-long Exodus”

READ: R. Hendel, “The Exodus in Biblical Memory”

READ: B. Halpern, “Eyewitness Testimony”

Reflection paper: If we had only the archaeological evidence and no biblical story, would anyone postulate a historical exodus? If not, is the enterprise of trying to bring archaeology and text together to reconstruct a historical exodus, as some scholars do, fraught with methodological difficulty from the outset? Why or why not?

Feb. 12 The Emergence of Israel in Canaan

SKIM: Joshua, Judges

READ: “From Wilderness Wandering to the Promised Land” on CULearn

READ: Amnon Ben-Tor, “Who Destroyed Canaanite Hazor?” on CULearn

READ: William Dever, “The Search for History in the Bible” on CULearn

Reflection paper possibilities (please note that all of the above readings are required in order to do a thorough job on any of the questions below):

1. Do you agree with the “Wilderness Wandering” author’s conclusions? What might you change, or add to them? Do you think anything more definitive can be said about the origins of Israel?

2. Why is it important to understand the historicity of the exodus and Israel’s origins in terms of reconstructing Israelite religion? How might perspectives on the historicity of the exodus affect one’s reconstruction of Israelite religion from both text and artifact?

3. Critically evaluate Dever’s model for the emergence of Israel, and the methods by which he developed it.

Feb. 19 BREAK WEEK

Feb. 26 The United Monarchy

READ: 2 Samuel (all)

READ: N. Na'aman, "The Interchange Between the Bible and Archaeology" (on CULearn)

READ: Y. Garfinkel, "The Birth and Death of Biblical Minimalism" (on CULearn)

READ: "Kings of Controversy" (on CULearn)

READ: "A Centrist" (on CULearn)

READ: "Dever vs. Finkelstein" (on CULearn)

READ: Philip Davies <http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/dav358019.shtml>

And for fun (**optional**, but if you read it check the comments @ bottom too) -

<http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/gar368025.shtml>

And B. Halpern "Erasing History" (on CULearn)

Reflection paper: What are the issues involved in the debates over the existence and potential dating of the united monarchy? What place does methodology have here? Whose methods seem the most sound to you, and why?

Mar. 5 Israelite Religion

Grad Presentation & Discussion Leadership: on distinguishing ethnicity in the archaeological record (extra readings for presenter TBD)

READ: Lev 1, 6-7, 10-20, 22, 25; Deut 1-7, 10-14, 17-18, 22, 26-32

READ: Ephraim Stern, "Pagan Yahwism" (on CULearn)

READ: Jeffrey Tigay, "What's in a Name?" (on CULearn)

READ: Uzi Avner, "Sacred Stones in the Desert" (on CULearn)

READ: William Dever, "A Temple Built for Two" (on CULearn)

READ: <http://bibleodyssey.org/people/related-articles/monotheism-in-the-hebrew-bible>

PAPER PROPOSAL DUE (4850), BEGINNING OF CLASS

Reflection Paper: What can archaeology tell us about the religion of ancient Israel? Does it correct an idealized (yet never realized) biblical picture, or add to our knowledge of real religion as it was practiced and described in the Bible?

Mar. 12 The Jerusalem Temple

Grad Presentation & Discussion Leadership: The politics of archaeology in the land of the Bible (extra readings for presenter TBD)

READ: 1 Kings 1-8

READ: <http://bibleodyssey.org/people/related-articles/prophets-and-the-temple>

READ: Michael Homan, "The Tabernacle and the Temple in Ancient Israel"

READ: Shanks, "Under the Microscope at the Israel Museum"

READ: Scott Noegel, "The Egyptian Origin of the Ark of the Covenant"

READ: Henry Pelgrift, "10th Century Seal at Temple Mount"

ALSO: peruse this site <https://templemount.wordpress.com/> and read

<https://templemount.wordpress.com/2016/10/14/archaeological-proof-of-the-jewish-temples-on-the-temple-mount/>

Reflection Paper: The fraught nature of Temple Mount discussions is due to political and religious tensions. How is this like, and unlike, the discussion of the historicity of the Exodus?

Mar. 19 Official vs. Popular/Household Religion

Grad Presentation & Discussion Leadership: on categorizing ancient religion via archaeology (extra readings for presenter TBD)

READ: H. Shanks, "The Persisting Uncertainties of Kuntillet 'Ajrud" (on CULearn)

READ: H. Shanks, "Idol Pleasures" (on CULearn)

READ: H. Shanks, "Is the Bible Right After All? BAR interviews William Dever, Part II" (on CULearn)

READ: S. Ahituv, "Did God Have a Wife?" (on CULearn)

READ: J. G. Taylor, "Was Yahweh Worshiped as the Sun?" (on CULearn)

Reflection Paper: on presentation topic above

Mar. 26 Gender and Religion

Grad Presentation & Discussion Leadership: on reading gender into the archaeological record (extra readings for presenter TBD)

READ: S. Ackerman, “Digging up Deborah: Recent Hebrew Bible Scholarship on Gender and the Contribution of Archaeology” (on CULearn)

READ: C. Meyers, “Engendering Syro-Palestinian Archaeology: Reasons and Resources” (on CULearn)

READ: A. Faust, “Pottery Talks: What Ceramics Tell Us About the Social World of Ancient Israel” (on CULearn)

READ: J. A. Hackett, “Can a Sexist Model Liberate Us?” (on CULearn)

Reflection Paper: on presentation topic above

Apr. 2 Goddesses & The Interpretation of Religion

Grad Presentation & Discussion Leadership: on interpreting “religious” artifacts (extra readings for presenter TBD)

READ: R. Hestrin, “Understanding Asherah – Exploring Semitic Iconography” (on CULearn)

READ: S. Ackerman, “Asherah, the West Semitic Goddess of Spinning and Weaving?” (on CULearn)

READ: Conkey & Tringham, “Archaeology and the Goddess: Exploring the Contours of Feminist Archaeology”

READ: S. Dolansky, “Re-Figuring Fertility Figurines: Fetishistic Functions of the Feminine Form”

Reflection Paper: on presentation topic above

Apr. 9 Conclusions: The Integration of Archaeology and Text

Undergraduate Presentations (15 min each): on method in the study of ancient religions – each student will select a topic covered during one of the previous weeks and explore in more depth (extra readings TBD in consultation with prof), presenting the various arguments, perspectives, evidence, and methods of interpretation brought to bear on the subject, and some conclusions about the integration of archaeology and text in the topic s/he has explored.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (4850) DUE BEGINNING OF CLASS



University Regulations for All Humanities Courses

Copies of Written Work Submitted

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

Academic Integrity at Carleton

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the internet. More information can be found on <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/#AIatCU>.

Academic Accommodation Policy

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to the instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Religious obligation: write to the instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at

613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Grading System at Carleton University

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points and the percentage conversion is below. Grade points indicated are for courses with 1.0 credit value. Where the course credit is greater or less than one credit, the grade points are adjusted proportionately.

[Grading System Chart](#)

Course Sharing Websites and Copyright

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

Statement on Class Conduct

The Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures affirm that all members of the University community share a responsibility to:

- promote equity and fairness,
- respect and value diversity,
- prevent discrimination and harassment, and

preserve the freedom of its members to carry out responsibly their scholarly work without threat of interference.

Deferred Term Work

In some situations, students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, which forces them to delay submission of the work.

Students who claim illness, injury or other extraordinary circumstances beyond their control as a reason for missed term work are held responsible for immediately informing the instructor concerned and for making alternate arrangements with the instructor and **in all cases this must occur no later than three (3.0) working days after the term work was due.**

The alternate arrangement must be made before the last day of classes in the term as published in the academic schedule. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of term. More information is available [in the calendar](#).

Deferred Exams

Students who do not write/attend a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply to write a deferred examination.

1. be made in writing to the Registrar's Office **no later than three working days after the original final examination or the due date of the take-home examination;** and
2. be fully supported by appropriate documentation and in cases of illness by a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or by appropriate documents in other cases. Medical documents must specify the date of the onset of the illness, the (expected) date of recovery, and the extent to which the student was/is incapacitated during the time of the examination. The University's preferred medical form can be found at the Registrar's Office [forms and fees page](#).

The granting of a deferral also requires that the student has performed satisfactorily in the course according to the evaluation scheme established in the Course Outline, excluding the final examination for which deferral privileges are requested. Reasons for denial of a deferral may include, among other conditions, a failure to (i) achieve a minimum score in the course before the final examination; (ii) attend a minimum number of classes; (iii) successfully complete a specific task (e.g. term paper, critical report, group project, computer or other assignment); (iv) complete laboratory work; (v) successfully complete one or more midterms; or (vi) meet other reasonable conditions of successful performance.

More information can be found [in the calendar](#).

Any questions related to deferring a Final Exam or Final Assignment/Take Home Examination should be directed to: [Registrar's Office](#)

Withdrawal From Courses

Withdrawn. No academic credit, no impact on the CGPA.

NEW FALL 2017: WDN is a permanent notation that appears on the official transcript for students who withdraw after the full fee adjustment date in each term. Students may withdraw on or before the last day of classes.

Dates can be found here: <http://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>

Department Contact Information

College of the Humanities 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for CLCV, HUMS LATN GREK Term Papers and assignments is outside 300 P.A.

Greek and Roman Studies 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop Box is outside of 300 P.A.

Religion 2A39 Paterson Hall (613)520-2100

Religion@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for RELI Term Papers and assignments is outside of 2A39 P.A.

Registrar's Office 300 Tory (613)520-3500

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/>

Student Resources on Campus

[CUKnowHow Website](#)