**CL3500: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE ROMAN NEAR EAST**

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Here is some reading to get you off to a good start in September. If the region and its history is not familiar to you, this will help you feel more comfortable with the names of places and people etc during the course. I have also suggested some museums to visit as well and some films to watch.

**Key reading**

These are the three best overviews of the region in the Roman period:

Millar, F 1993 *The Roman Near East 31 BC- AD 337*, Harvard University Press – an unparalleled history of the region

Butcher, K 2003 *Roman Syria and the Near East*, British Museum Press – a great, thematic approach to the region and its archaeology

Ball, W 2000 *Rome in the East: the transformation of an empire*, Routledge – reappraisal of the region that challenges the superiority of Rome and emphasises (sometimes overmuch) the home-grown influences; some of his theories are not always reliable

The course is designed to give you some background before the Romans arrive, so for the earlier periods:

Kuhrt, A 1995 *The Ancient Near East c. 3000 BC – 330 BC*, Routledge, 2 vols

Reade, J 1983 *Assyrian Sculpture*, London – at least look at the pictures!

Leick, G 2001 *Mesopotamia: the invention of the city*, Penguin

I recommend trying to become familiar with the following key sites:

* Ur
* Babylon
* Nineveh
* Nimrud
* Antioch
* Apamea
* Palmyra
* Dura Europos
* Jerash (Gerasa)
* Jerusalem (Aelia Capitolina)
* Caesarea Maritima
* Petra
* Beirut (Berytus)
* Masada
* Jericho

**Online resources**

<http://www.manar-al-athar.ox.ac.uk> - image database

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/cbarl_2015/> - Council for British Research in the Levant monographs

<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/nimrud/ancientkalhu/thecity/index.html> - Nimrud

<http://monumentsofsyria.com> - Monuments of Syria, includes updates on current situation

<http://www.bisi.ac.uk/content/book-catalogue> - free downloads of all British Institute for the Study of Iraq publications

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/apaame/collections> - aerial photography

<https://rememberingromans.wordpress.com> - Dr Kamash’s ‘Remembering the Romans in the Middle East and North Africa’ project #RetroProject

**Twitter**

@RomanMiddleEast

@BISI1932

@BIA\_CBRL

@PalExFund

**Societies**

Council for British Research in the Levant

British Institute for the Study of Iraq

Palestine Exploration Fund

**Museums**

Most major world museums have good Near Eastern collections. Generally, these are for the earlier periods, but there are often small collections of Roman Near Eastern material as well.

*UK*

British Museum, London

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Great North Museum, Newcastle (small display upstairs)

Petrie Museum, London – mostly Egypt, but some material from the Middle East

*Outside of the UK*

Met Museum, New York

Penn Museum, Philadelphia

Louvre, Paris

Pergamon Museum, Berlin

**Films**

Ben Hur

Monty Python’s Life of Brian

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

Lawrence of Arabia (not strictly archaeological, though Lawrence was an archaeologist, but good for landscape, esp of Jordan)

Agatha Christie adaptations: *Appointment with Death*; *Murder in Mesopotamia*

Alexander (esp scenes in Babylon)

There is also a film on Gertrude Bell coming out soon.