

# “Strangers at Home”

The Give and Take of Life in the Borderlands of Judah

## Professor Ron Tappy

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The near-30-dunam site of Tel Zayit lies in the strategic Beth Guvrin Valley, roughly halfway between Lachish to the south and Tell es-Safi (Gath of the Philistines) to the north. Although this area generally belonged to the lowlands district of ancient Judah, it lay in an often-contested zone wherein cultural and certainly political associations might shift from time to time, primarily between the highlands to the east and the coastal plain to the west. This lecture will outline the enduring status of Tel Zayit's strategic position as a borderland community. The presentation will draw on historical, textual, and archaeological evidence from three different periods in the 3,500-year depositional history of the tell that amply demonstrate the betwixt-and-between nature of daily life that the inhabitants surely understood. The collage includes: (1) Tel Zayit's shifting allegiances during the tenth and ninth centuries BCE, (2) its fate in the wake of Sennacherib's Third Campaign in 701 BCE, and (3) its service to the Romans as a fortified outpost following the reign of Hadrian.

Broadly speaking, **Professor Ron Tappy's** research and publication interests center on the interrelated nature of the cultural, political, and economic histories of Iron Age Israel, as well as the various cultural groups with whom Israel interacted. His teaching method examines ways in which the broader historical context of biblical Israel shaped both the world of the biblical writers and, by extension, their theological outlook. Drawing on his own classroom training and his 23 years of teaching experience in biblical studies, archaeology, and ancient languages, he aims to investigate in a multidisciplinary manner the various factors (ecological, geographical, political, socio-economic, religious) that assumed causal roles in the evolution of society and religion in ancient Israel. He has written articles on a variety of topics in those areas.

Wednesday 6th May  
6.30pm - 7.45pm

Theatre A - Room 106  
Old Arts Building  
The University of Melbourne  
PARKVILLE VIC 3010

**Admission is free.**  
**Bookings are required.**  
**Seating is limited.**

To register visit: <http://alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/strangersathome>

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