# AHIS354

## Ancient Israel in its Near Eastern Context

S1 Day 2016

*Dept of Ancient History*

## Contents

**Disclaimer**

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# General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Kyle Keimer
kyle.keimer@mq.edu.au
W6A 538
By Appointment

Credit points
3

Prerequisites
39cp or (6cp in AHIS or AHST units at 200 level)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit looks at the broader Near Eastern context into which ancient Israel fits. This includes discussions of the antecedent societies in ancient Mesopotamia and Syria from which the Israelites descended, from whom they borrowed and adapted cultural aspects, and against whom they ultimately contended. These societies, which range from the 3rd to 1st millennia BCE, include: the Akkadians, Hittites, Canaanites, Assyrians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, and Persians. Understanding of these groups provides the foundational knowledge necessary for placing ancient Israel within its original context and draws upon archaeological, textual, and artistic sources. Special emphasis will be placed upon linguistic transferal between Hebrew and the surrounding languages, artistic borrowing, technological development, burial customs, administrative/writing systems, ideology/propaganda, and comparative religions.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

# Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Knowledge of history of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Anatolia as background for

understanding ancient Israel and the Biblical Texts

Ability to evaluate and use textual and archaeological evidence

Ability to use libraries and internet to gather resources for research

Ability to use the evidence to construct a best-fit hypothesis

Ability to use critical thinking about the past to the present (and vice versa)

Improve oral and written presentation

# General Assessment Information

Submission of Assignments: All assignments are to be submitted in person by their respective due dates and times (which are all listed according to local Sydney time). Access to the internet and the ability to download and/or view unit materials are essential. Any technical issue encountered with accessing unit materials should be directed to the IT department via ask.mq.edu.au. After lodging a complaint/request with them you must also notify me via email concerning the issue as soon as possible after it is discovered.

Assignments will be assessed on their level of completion, coherence, correction, grammar, and comprehension.

Assessment tasks / assignments are compulsory and must be submitted on time. Extensions for assignments can only be granted for medical reasons or on compassionate grounds. Without documentation (medical or counseling certificates) or prior staff approval, if you miss a class session you will not be able to make up the assessment for that day/week. If required, applications for extensions should be made to me before the assignment's due date. No assignments will be accepted after assignments have been corrected and feedback has been provided.

For Special Consideration Policy see under Policies and Procedures.

Note on Assessment - To complete the unit satisfactorily you will need to achieve an overall mark worth 50% or above.

It is highly recommended that you come to all lectures and tutorials. Further, you should complete the readings for any given week before that week's lecture.

# Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Due |
|---|---|---|
| Weekly Summary of a Site/Text | 35% | Every Week |
| Weekly Quiz | 35% | Every Week |
| Ancient Peoples Essay | 30% | By Week 13 |

## Weekly Summary of a Site/Text

Due: **Every Week**
Weighting: **35%**

Every week students will submit a short summary (no more than 250 words in length) of a given

archaeological site or text in order to assess the students' interaction with and comprehension of the readings. These summaries will be uploaded to iLearn each week by the time the class for that week begins.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Knowledge of history of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Anatolia as background for understanding ancient Israel and the Biblical Texts
- Ability to evaluate and use textual and archaeological evidence
- Ability to use libraries and internet to gather resources for research
- Ability to use the evidence to construct a best-fit hypothesis
- Improve oral and written presentation

## Weekly Quiz

Due: **Every Week**
Weighting: **35%**

Every week there will be a short quiz to assess the students' interaction with and comprehension of the readings and class discussions. These quizzes will become available following each class and must be completed via iLearn by 9pm of the Sunday of the given week.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Knowledge of history of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Anatolia as background for understanding ancient Israel and the Biblical Texts
- Ability to evaluate and use textual and archaeological evidence
- Ability to use critical thinking about the past to the present (and vice versa)

## Ancient Peoples Essay

Due: **By Week 13**
Weighting: **30%**

Write a synthetic essay on one of the following people groups--Arameans, Hittites, Philistines, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Amorites, Canaanites. Your essay should weave together the following aspects in order to present a well articulated and balanced history for your chosen group: key sites associated with the peoples, material culture elements, texts composed by your group, your group's relation to Israel, your group's culture, political structure, economy, social structure, and military organization. Additional aspects are welcome but a complete essay will consider at least all of the aforementioned aspects. Your essay needs to have citations, and must include a bibliography with at least 30 sources (books, journal articles, encyclopedia entries, etc--acceptable sources, not Wikipedia or most on-line resources. If you are unsure if a source is reputable/acceptable, send it to me and I will tell you). Your bibliography and citations are NOT included in the word count.

You may submit your essay at any point up until 5pm on 10/6/16 (the Friday of Week 13).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Knowledge of history of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Anatolia as background for understanding ancient Israel and the Biblical Texts
- Ability to evaluate and use textual and archaeological evidence
- Ability to use libraries and internet to gather resources for research
- Ability to use the evidence to construct a best-fit hypothesis
- Ability to use critical thinking about the past to the present (and vice versa)
- Improve oral and written presentation

# Delivery and Resources

This class is offered internally. Students will meet in-class for lectures and tutorials. Every student will need internet access that allows the downloading of large video files and additional resources in order to pass this course. Additionally, access to a library and/or article database such as Jstor will be necessary to complete multiple of the assignments. If individual access to such databases is not possible, access is possible via the Macquarie Library website, although a proxy server may be necessary (for more see the "IT Help" link under the "Policies and Procedures" tab).

Additional resources, including weblinks, any additional directions, and any announcements will appear on the unit's iLearn page.

**Required Textbooks**:

Marc Van De Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East: 3000–323 BC* (2nd Ed.; Blackwell, 2007). [Abbreviated VDM in the unit schedule below]

Andrew George, *Epic of Gilgamesh* (London: Penguin, 1999).

*Bible*. Preferably the NRSV or ESV translation.

**Unit Bibliography (not required for purchase)**:

Aharoni, Y. and M. Avi-Yonah, *Macmillan Bible Atlas* (New York: Macmillan, 1977).

Aldred, Cyril and A. Dodson, *The Egyptians* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998).

Bottéro, Jean, *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

Brewer, D.J. and E. Teeter, *Egypt and the Egyptians* (Cambridge, 2007).

Curtis, J. *Ancient Persia* (London: British Museum, 1989).

Freedman, D.N., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New Haven: Doubleday, 1992).

George, Andrew, *Epic of Gilgamesh* (London: Penguin, 1999).

Grimal, N., *A History of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

Gurney, O.R., *The Hittites* (London: Penguin, 1990).

Hallo, W. and W.K. Simpson, *The Ancient Near East: A History* (New York: Harcourt: Brace, 1998).

Isserlin, B.S.J., *The Israelites* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001).

Jacobsen, T., *The Harps that Once* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

Kovacs, M.G., *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989).

Kramer, S.N. *The Sumerians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).

Kramer, S.N., *History Begins at Sumer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1981).

Kuhrt, A., *The Ancient Near East* (2 volumes; London: Routledge, 1995).

Machinist, P., "Palestine, Administration of," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* volume 5, pages 69-81 (Edited by D.N. Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1992

Macqueen, J.G., *The Hittites* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986).

Meyers, E. (ed), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* (5 volumes; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Oates, J., *Babylon* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979).

Pollock, S., *Ancient Mesopotamia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Porada, E., *The Art of Ancient Iran* (New York: Crown, 1965).

Postgate, N., *Early Mesopotamia: Society and Economy at the Dawn of History* (London: Routlege, 1992).

-------- "The Land of Assur and the Yoke of Assur," *World Archaeology* 23/3 (1992) 247-63

Potts, D., *Mesopotamian Civilization: The Material Foundations* (London: Athlone, 1997).

Redford, D. (ed)., *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford, 2001).

Roaf, M., *Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia* (New York: Facts on File, 1990).

Saggs, H.W.F., *Civilization before Greece and Rome* (New Haven: Yale, 1989).

Sasson, J. et al (eds), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* (4 volumes; New York; Scribner, 1995).

Shaw, I. (ed), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Stern, E., (ed)., *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (5 volumes; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993-2008).

Trigger *et al*, *Ancient Egypt: A Social History* (Cambridge, 1983).

Van de Mieroop, M., *The Ancient Mesopotamian City* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997).

Yon, M., *The City of Ugarit at Tell Ras Shamra* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006).

# Unit Schedule

*This is a Tentative Schedule. A final schedule will appear on iLearn when the Unit begins.

| Week | Topics | Readings |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Introduction and the Rise of Civilization in Mesopotamia (the 4<sup>th</sup> Millennium BC) | VDM 1-40 |
| 2 | Early Mesopotamian History and Literature (Early to mid 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium BC); the Epic of Gilgamesh<br><br>Tutorial: Epic of Gilgamesh | VDM 41-62<br><br>George, "Introduction" and 1-100 |
| 3 | Late 3<sup>rd</sup>-Early 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC: Akkad, Ur III, and the Amorites | VDM 63-105 |
| 4 | Amorites in the Early to Mid 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium BC; Hyksos, Old Hittite Kingdom, the Biblical Patriarchs<br><br>Sites: Mari, Avaris, Hazor, Ashkelon, Jerusalem<br>Texts: Mari Letters, Code of Hammurabi | VDM 106-126 |
| 5 | Internationalism in the Mid-Late 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium; Amarna; Themes<br><br>Sites: Ugarit, Shechem, Lachish<br>Texts: Amarana Letters | VDM 127-148 |
| 6 | Mitannians, Hittites, and Canaanites; the Exodus<br><br>Sites: Bogazkoy,<br>Texts: Battle of Kadesh, Merneptah Stela | VDM 149-170 |
| Break (2 weeks) | | |
| 7 | Babylonians, Assyrians, and Elamites<br><br>Sites: Assur, Babylon<br>Texts: | VDM 171-189 |

| 8 | Late 2nd-Early 1st Millennium BC: Collapse; Israel; Sea Peoples; Joshua and Judges<br><br>Sites:<br><br>Texts: Annals of TPI, Correspondence between Ugarit and Alashiya, Ramesses III's battle against the Sea Peoples, Hebrew Bible as a historical source, Jdg 5, Josh 1-11 | VDM 190-206 |
|---|---|---|
| 9 | Early 1st Millennium: An age of Regional kingdoms; Arameans, Urartians, Philistines, Phoenicians; 1-2 Samuel and 1 Kgs<br><br>Tut:<br><br>Sites: Tell es-Safi/Gath<br><br>Texts: 1 Sam 1-11 | VDM 207-228 |
| 10 | The Rise of Assyria; 2 Kgs<br><br>Tut: Assyrian Propaganda<br><br>Sites: Nimrud, Dur-Sharrukin, Nineveh<br><br>Texts: Zakkur | VDM 229-246 |
| 11 | The Expansion and Administration of Assyria<br><br>Tut: Assyrian Warfare<br><br>Sites: Lachish<br><br>Texts: 2 Kgs 16-21, Sennacherib's Annals | VDM 247-269 |
| 12 | Medes and Babylonians; Jeremiah<br><br>Sites:<br><br>Texts: Jeremiah | VDM 270-285 |
| 13 | The Persians<br><br>Sites:<br><br>Texts: Cyrus Cylinder; Ezra and Nehemiah | VDM 286-301 |

# Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

**New Assessment Policy in effect from Session 2 2016** http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html. For more information visit http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/new_assessment_policy_in_place_from_session_2/

Assessment Policy prior to Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html

Grading Policy prior to Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html

Grade Appeal Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

# Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

# Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/
offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy.
The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

# Graduate Capabilities

## Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be
imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We
want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Ability to evaluate and use textual and archaeological evidence
- Ability to use the evidence to construct a best-fit hypothesis

### Assessment tasks

- Weekly Summary of a Site/Text
- Weekly Quiz
- Ancient Peoples Essay

## Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to
demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement.
They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to
handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing
environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Ability to evaluate and use textual and archaeological evidence
- Ability to use the evidence to construct a best-fit hypothesis

### Assessment tasks

- Weekly Summary of a Site/Text

- Weekly Quiz
- Ancient Peoples Essay

# Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Ability to use libraries and internet to gather resources for research
- Ability to use critical thinking about the past to the present (and vice versa)

## Assessment tasks

- Weekly Summary of a Site/Text
- Ancient Peoples Essay

# Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Knowledge of history of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Anatolia as background for understanding ancient Israel and the Biblical Texts
- Ability to evaluate and use textual and archaeological evidence

## Assessment tasks

- Weekly Summary of a Site/Text
- Weekly Quiz
- Ancient Peoples Essay

# Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate

and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Ability to evaluate and use textual and archaeological evidence
- Ability to use the evidence to construct a best-fit hypothesis

## Assessment tasks

- Weekly Summary of a Site/Text
- Weekly Quiz
- Ancient Peoples Essay

# Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Ability to evaluate and use textual and archaeological evidence
- Ability to use libraries and internet to gather resources for research
- Ability to use the evidence to construct a best-fit hypothesis

## Assessment tasks

- Weekly Summary of a Site/Text
- Weekly Quiz
- Ancient Peoples Essay

# Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Knowledge of history of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Anatolia as background for understanding ancient Israel and the Biblical Texts
- Improve oral and written presentation

## Assessment tasks

- Weekly Summary of a Site/Text
- Weekly Quiz
- Ancient Peoples Essay

# Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcome

- Ability to use critical thinking about the past to the present (and vice versa)

# Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcome

- Ability to use critical thinking about the past to the present (and vice versa)