# AHIS354
Ancient Israel in its Near Eastern Context
S1 Day 2016

Dept of Ancient History

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**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)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Summary of a Site/Text</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Every Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Quiz</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Every Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Peoples Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>By Week 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 online 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:


Bible. Preferably the NRSV or ESV translation.

Unit Bibliography (not required for purchase):


### Unit Schedule

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction and the Rise of Civilization in Mesopotamia (the 4th Millennium BC)</td>
<td>VDM 1-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Early Mesopotamian History and Literature (Early to mid 3rd Millennium BC); the Epic of Gilgamesh</td>
<td>VDM 41-62, George, “Introduction” and 1-100</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutorial: Epic of Gilgamesh</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Late 3rd-Early 2nd Millennium BC: Akkad, Ur III, and the Amorites</td>
<td>VDM 63-105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Amorites in the Early to Mid 2nd Millennium BC; Hyksos, Old Hittite Kingdom, the Biblical Patriarchs</td>
<td>VDM 106-126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sites: Mari, Avaris, Hazor, Ashkelon, Jerusalem</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texts: Mari Letters, Code of Hammurabi</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Internationalism in the Mid-Late 2nd Millennium; Amarna; Themes</td>
<td>VDM 127-148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sites: Ugarit, Shechem, Lachish</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texts: Amarna Letters</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mitannians, Hittites, and Canaanites; the Exodus</td>
<td>VDM 149-170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sites: Bogazkoy,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texts: Battle of Kadesh, Memepthah Stela</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Break (2 weeks)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Babylonians, Assyrians, and Elamites</td>
<td>VDM 171-189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sites: Assur, Babylon</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texts:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Unit guide: AHIS354 Ancient Israel in its Near Eastern Context

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Texts</th>
<th>Page Range</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Late 2nd-Early 1st Millennium BC: Collapse; Israel; Sea Peoples; Joshua and Judges</td>
<td></td>
<td>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</td>
<td>VDM 190-206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Early 1st Millennium: An age of Regional kingdoms; Arameans, Urartians, Philistines, Phoenicians; 1-2 Samuel and 1 Kgs</td>
<td>Tell es-Safi/Gath</td>
<td>1 Sam 1-11</td>
<td>VDM 207-228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Rise of Assyria; 2 Kgs</td>
<td>Nimrud, Dur-Sharrukin, Nineveh</td>
<td>Zakkur</td>
<td>VDM 229-246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The Expansion and Administration of Assyria</td>
<td>Lachish</td>
<td>2 Kgs 16-21, Sennacherib’s Annals</td>
<td>VDM 247-269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Medes and Babylonians; Jeremiah</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jeremiah</td>
<td>VDM 270-285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The Persians</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cyrus Cylinder; Ezra and Nehemiah</td>
<td>VDM 286-301</td>
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### Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://policy.mq.edu.au/). 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


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
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)