GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
OT 581 History and Archaeology of the Ancient Near East
Fall 2011

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Egypt and the Levant from the rise of cities (ca. 3000 B.C.) to the Achaemenids (ca. 330 B.C.). Relevant points of connection with biblical events and peoples will be highlighted with a view to situate the biblical text within its larger socio-historical and theological framework for the period under consideration.

Notes:
- Course documents (handouts, Powerpoints, etc.) will be available on Cams. It is the student’s responsibility to check Cams for announcements, handouts, etc.
- INTERNET USAGE
  Students are asked to refrain from accessing the internet at any point during class sessions, unless otherwise instructed by the professor. “Surfing the web,” checking email, and other internet-based activities are distracting to other students and to the professor, and prevent the student from fully participating in the class session.

II. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- Amihai Mazar, Archaeology of the Land of the Bible (Anchor)
- NIV Archaeological Study Bible (Zondervan)

Note: there may be additional weekly readings placed on reserve

III. RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

- Jack Sasson, ed. Civilizations of the Ancient Near East (Hendrickson)
- James Hoffmaier, The Archaeology of the Bible (Kregel)
- Jeffrey Niehaus, Ancient Near Eastern Themes in Biblical Theology (Kregel)

Useful links can be found at: http://www.utoronto.ca/ncm/links/index.html
IV. Course Requirements

Mid-Term Exam (40%):
  Part I: Identification (for ex., geography)
  Part II: Short-answer questions (that is, one paragraph or two at the most)

Final Exam (40%):
  Part I: Identification
  Part II: Short-answer questions

Note: review sheets will be provided for both exams.

Comparative Timeline (20%)
Each student will design a timeline of the Near East with a particular focus on connecting biblical events to the dominant cultures of the Near East during the Biblical period (from the time of Abraham to the post-exilic period). Additional information will be provided in class. Due December 16, 2010

Readings: A reading report will need to be submitted. Due December 16, 2010

Class Participation: Lack of preparation and attendance will affect course grade.

V. Class Schedule

PART ONE: Third Millennium Civilizations
Week 1 “Sumer” Sept 12
  • Mazar 1-34; Kuhrt 1-73

Further suggested readings:
G. Roux, Ancient Iraq
Related essays in CANE
S. N. Kramer, The Sumerians

Week 2, “Early Dynastic/Old Kingdom Egypt and Early Bronze Age Palestine” Sept 19
  • Mazar 91-173; Kuhrt 118-160

Further suggested readings:
Mazar 35-90
B. Trigger, *et al.*, *Ancient Egypt, A Social History*
N. Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*

**PART TWO: Second Millennium Civilizations**

**Week 3, “Old Assyrian and Old Babylonian periods”**
Sept 26
- Kuhrt 74-116
- Read the code of Hammurabi (in *Context of Scripture* [on Reserve])
- Jean-Claude Margueron, “Mari: A Portrait in Art of a Mesopotamian City-State” in *CANE* [on Reserve]

**Week 4 “Middle Kingdom Egypt and Middle Bronze Age Palestine”**
Oct 3
- Kuhrt 161-182; 283-317; Mazar 174-231
- R.M. Whiting, “Amorite Tribes and Nations of Second-Millennium Western Asia” in *CANE* [on Reserve]

Further suggested readings:
B. Kemp in *Ancient Egypt, A Social History*
P. Day “Ugaritic” in *Beyond Babel; A Handbook for Biblical Hebrew and Related Languages*

**Week 5 Oct 10 (Reading Week)**
Assignment: first draft of Timeline

**Week 6, Greater Mesopotamian Civilizations in the 2nd Half of the 2nd Millennium**
Oct 17

**Hittites**
- Kuhrt 225-282
- H.A. Hoffner, “Legal and Social Institutions of Hittite Anatolia” in *CANE*

**Hurrians/Mitanni**
- Kuhrt 283-300
- G. Wilhelm, “The Kingdom of Mitanni in Second-Millennium Upper Mesopotamia,” in *CANE* [on Reserve]

**Ugarit**
- Kuhrt 300-317
- Read “Baal Cycle” in *Context of Scripture* [on Reserve]
- W.H. Van Soldt, “Ugarit: A Second Millennium Kingdom on the Mediterranean Coast” in CANE

Kassites/Elamites
- Kuhrt 332-381

Recommended text:
D.T. Potts, *The Archaeology of Elam*

**Week 7, MIDTERM EXAM (90 minutes)**
**New Kingdom/ Late Bronze Age**
Oct 24
- Kuhrt 185-224; 317-331; Mazar 232-294
- J. Walton, “Exodus, Date of” in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* [on Reserve]
- G. Schwartz, “Pastoral Nomadism in Ancient Western Asia” in CANE [On Reserve]

Further Suggested reading:
S. Bunimovitz, “On the Edge of Empires-Late Bronze Age (1500-1200 BCE) in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*

**PART THREE: First Millennium Civilizations**

**Week 8, “Iron Age Israel and Neighbors”**
Oct 31
Iron I
- Mazar 295-367; Petter 1-23 [on reserve shelf]; Kuhrt 385-416

Iron II
- Mazar 368-462

Further suggested reading:
T. Petter, *Diversity and Uniformity on the Frontier: Ethnic Identity in the Central Highlands of Jordan during the Iron I* [on reserve]
J. Holladay, “the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah: Political and Economic Centralization in the Iron IIA-B” in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, ed. T. Levy
Week 8 (Reading Week)
Nov 7 Assignment: Complete Timeline

Week 9, “Neo-Assyrian Empire”
Nov 14

• Mazar 463-530; Kuhrt 458-572

Further suggested reading:
G. Roux, Ancient Iraq
Related readings in CANE

Week 10 “Neo-Babylonian Empire”
Nov 21

• Kuhrt 573-622; Mazar 531-550
• Select readings in Neo-Babylonian texts (TBD)

Week 11 “Achaemenids and Egypt”
Nov 28

• Kuhrt 623-702
• M.C. Root, “Art and Archaeology of the Acheamenid Empire” in CANE
• E. Yamauchi, Persia and the Bible 1-92 [on Reserve]

Further suggested reading:
K. Kitchen, The Third Intermediate Period
P. Briant, From Cyrus to Alexander: A history of the Persian Empire

Week 12 “The Bible and the Ancient Near East”
Dec 5

• Readings to be announced

Week 13
Final Exam
Dec 12

Timeline and reading report are due on Friday December 16 (outside my office)