OT 752 Biblical Archaeology

Sandra Richter
OT 752
Biblical Archaeology
Asbury Theological Seminary

Instructor:
Dr. Sandy Richter
sandra_richter@asburyseminary.edu
SPO 1320
Office: BC 336, 858-2032

Office Hours:

Course Description:
Within this century, Biblical Archaeology has proven itself a discipline essential to the serious study of the Old Testament. In many instances, this particular discipline has served to clarify difficult passages, fill in correlative sociological and historical details, and, generally, shed important light on the intent of the biblical narrative. Moreover, archaeology has helped to correct minimalist viewpoints regarding the historical integrity of the text. Recognizing the imperative nature of this still-young discipline, this class seeks to (1) expose the student to the major archaeological and epigraphic discoveries of the biblical world, and (2) to train the student in a sound biblical archaeological method.

Course Objectives:
At the conclusion of this course, the successful student will have gained the following:
1) An enhanced knowledge of the history, sociology, and geography of the peoples of the biblical world.
2) An introductory understanding of the goals and methods of archaeology in the land of the Bible and its application to biblical studies.
3) The ability to interact with scholarship demonstrating the intersection of archaeology (i.e. the remains of material culture) and the Bible.
4) A growing ability to distill from the remains of material culture meaning significant to the interpretation of the Old Testament.

Course requirements:
Method of Instruction:
Slide-presentations, lecture, and class discussion of materials read will dominate the first two-thirds of this class. Students will be responsible to thoroughly prepare for and participate in these class meetings. The last third of this class will consist primarily of student presentations on various topics critical to the discipline of biblical archaeology.
(Course requirements, cont.)

**Required Textbooks:**

**Recommended Textbooks:**

**Class Expectations:**
25% Class Participation. As this is a seminar class, students must come to class prepared to discuss (intelligently!) the topic of the day. Periodically specific discussion/brief presentation topics will be assigned for the following class meeting.

35% Quizzes. Five quizzes will be given on a range of topics central to class content.

40% In-class Student Presentations. Each student will be responsible for a class presentation in which s/he will teach the class for 45 minutes on his/her assigned topic. A visual presentation, a lecture outline, an appropriate reading assignment for the class, and pertinent handouts (map/chart/site survey/etc.) must augment the lecture. Each presentation will be followed by a question and answer session. The student will be provided with an “essential” bibliographic list for his/her topic, but will be expected to go beyond this list in her/his collection of data and visual material. Students will be evaluated by their peers and by the professor.

**Attendance** is essential to a seminar class, and, therefore, it will be recorded. The equivalent of one week’s absence will be waived; following absences will significantly affect the student’s final evaluation.
Class Schedule:

Class Period 1 (2/11):

Introduction to OT 752 and “Biblical” Archaeology
Hershel Shanks, “Is the Bible Right After All? Part II” B.A.R 22/5 (September/October 1996): 30-37, 74-77
Wm. Dever, What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did They Know It?, “What Archaeology Is and What It Can Contribute to Biblical Studies,” 53-95

Recommended: Dever, What & When, "The Current School of Revisionists," 23-52

The Bible in Real Time & Space
LaSor, Hubbard & Bush, “Geography,” pp. 619-631
Atlas, pp. 36-37, 58-59, 132-135 (138)
A. Mazar, Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, pp. 1-10

Class Period 2 (2/18):

The Peoples of the Old Testament World
A.J. Hoerth, The Peoples of the Old Testament World, “read” entire book with the end goal that you can define the locale, era, and major characteristics of each people group discussed in the text. (347)

The Societal Culture of the Old Testament World
(Assuming an introductory knowledge of patriarchal culture, cf. Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel its Life & Institutions, pp. 3-61, “Nomadism & Family Institutions”)

P. King & L. Stager, Life in Biblical Israel, pp. 1-5, 36-68, 363-80

Class Period 3 (2/25): The Basics of Excavation map & people quiz 8%

Currid, pp. 1-118
Mazar, pp. 10-38

Class Period 4 (3/3): Epigraphy

General: Atlas, 60-61; 80-83; Mazar, pp. 514-520; ANET, p. 212; figures 63-82; Dever, What & When, “The Bible as History, Literature, & Theology,” pp. 1-22


Class Period 5 (3/10): The Neolithic Revolution & the Early Bronze Age

Atlas, pp. 10-13
Mazar, pp. 35-144

Recommended:
Class Period 6 (3/17): The Middle Bronze Age  

Genesis 12-17, 24-25:11  
Atlas, pp. 14-21  
Mazar, pp. 151-227  


Dan Fleming, "Genesis in History and Tradition: The Syrian Background of Israel's Ancestors, Reprise"  

**Recommended:** K. Kitchen, “The Patriarchal Age: Myth or History?” *BAR* (Mar 95): 48-57; 88-95


Genesis 37, 39- Exodus 1  
Atlas, p. 34  

*ANET*, pp. 5-12, “The Story of Sinuhe”; pp. 173-175, “The Expulsion of the Hyksos”  

Kevin D. Miller, “Did the Exodus Never Happen?” *Christianity Today* 42/10 [Sept 98]: 44-51  

J. Hoffmeier, “Egypt, Plagues in” *ABD* 2:374-78

March 29-April 2  
**Good Friday & Reading Week**

Class Period 9 (4/7): The Late Bronze Age  

*take-home quiz due 11%*  

Mazar, pp. 232-291  
Atlas, pp. 20-35  

*ABD* III:545-558, Wm. Dever, “Archaeology of the Israelite Conquest”  


Class Period 10 (4/14): The Iron I Age  

Mazar, 295-363 "The Days of the Judges"; 463-491 "General Aspects of the Israelite Material Culture"  


Redford, “The Coming of the Sea Peoples,” 241-56  

*ANET*, p. 209, “The Gezer Calendar” 121  

**Recommended:** Atlas, pp. 42, 44-50; 52-54; L. Stager, "When Canaanites and Phïlistines Ruled Ashkelon," *BAR* Mar/Apr 1991: 24-43; Mazar 531-543 “Israel's Neighbors.”

Class Period 11 (4/21): The Iron II Age  

*quiz 8%*  


Atlas, pp. 62-79
Dever, *What & When*, 159-244 “Daily Life in Israel in the time of the Divided Monarchy”
Malamat, “Caught Between the Great Powers: the Fall of Judah” *BAR* (July/Aug 1999): 34-41, 64 142

**Recommended:**

**Student Presentations**
* Reading assignments will be provided for class members one week prior to each scheduled presentation. Each presentation will be preceded by a brief quiz taken from the assigned reading. The results of this quiz will count toward the student’s class participation grade.