

**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**THE BIBLE AND ITS CONTEXT**  
**THEO-393**

**PLACE:** Southern Plain of Akko, North of Israel

**TIME:** Intensive course during the month of July (Summer Season II)

**CURRICULUM:** 2 or 3 credits (to be determined with the Professor)

**PROFESSOR:** Dr. Carolina A. Aznar. E-mail: [caznarsa@slu.edu](mailto:caznarsa@slu.edu) (Please write “The Bible and the Holy Land” as subject title)

**OFFICE HOURS:** by appointment with Dr. Aznar (at the camp base in Israel)

**REQUIRED BOOKS**

- Ben-Tor, Amnon (ed.) *The Archaeology of Ancient Israel* (New Haven: Yale University Press: 1992) (= *AAI*).

- A reference Bible. For study purposes I recommend *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, but any translation is fine.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Participation in an archaeological project in the Southern Plain of Akko (Israel), paying special attention to the relation between the Holy Land and the biblical texts. Students will be able to focus on a topic related to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament or the New Testament. The course combines theoretical classes in the classroom with practical classes in the field.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the semester students will understand the role of archaeology in the study of the Middle East in general and in the study of the past of the peoples mentioned in the Bible in particular. They will know the history of the Southern Levant and be familiar with the most important archaeological discoveries related to it. They will be able to evaluate how appropriately (or inappropriately) archaeological data are used in the current debates related to some biblical texts according to the methodology presented in class.

**SKILL ACQUISITIONS**

By the end of the semester students will be able to do good, creative research on a topic that attempts to understand a biblical text by using archaeological evidence and will be able to present the results of their research in writing. They will be able to read both scholarly and media articles critically. They will understand the value given to archaeology by the different communities living in the region. They will understand the importance of protecting all cultural heritages and of detecting and criticizing the manipulation of archaeological evidence for ideological goals. They will have become aware of the richness and challenges of working in the Holy Land with team mates from different religious, ethnic, and/or cultural traditions.



## REFERENCE BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Works on the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

- Barton, John. *Reading the Old Testament. Method in Biblical Study*. (Louisville, Kentucky, Westminster John Knox Press: 1996).
- Coogan, Michael D. *The Old Testament. A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*. (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2006).
- Friedman, Richard Elliott. *Who Wrote the Bible?* (San Francisco, HarperSanFrancisco: 1997)

### Works on the New Testament

- Harris, Stephen L. *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction*. (McGraw-Hill: 2008), 6<sup>th</sup> edition.
- Porter, J.R. *Jesus Christ. The Jesus of History, the Christ of Faith*. (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1999).

### Works on Archaeological Principles and Methodology

- Renfrew, Colin and Paul Bahn. *Archaeology: Theories, Methods, and Practice*. (New York: Thames and Hudson: 2000).

### Works on History and Archaeology of the Region

- Armstrong, Karen. *Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths*. (New York: Ballentine Books 1996).
- Coogan, Michael D. (ed.) *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*. (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1998).
- Levy, Thomas E. *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*. (New York, Facts on File: 1995).
- Murphy-O'Connor, J. *The Holy Land. An Oxford Archaeological Guide from Earliest Times to 1700* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1998), 4<sup>th</sup> edition revised and expanded.
- Rainey, Anson F. and R. Steven Notley. *The Sacred Bridge*. (Jerusalem, Carta: 2006).

### Works on Archaeological Remains of the time of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

- Dever, William. *What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did they Know It? What Archaeology Can Tell Us about the Reality of Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans: 2001).
- Finkelstein, Israel and Neil Asher Silberman. *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of its Sacred Texts* (New York: Shimon and Schuster: 2002).
- Keel, Othmar and Christoph Uehlinger. *Gods, Goddesses and Images of God in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press: 1996)
- King, Philip J. and Lawrence E. Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*. (Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press: 2001).
- Mazar, Amihai. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10,000-586 B.C.E.* (New York, Doubleday: 1990).
- Zevit, Ziony. *The Religions of Ancient Israel. A Synthesis of Parallax Approaches*. (New York, Continuum: 2001).

### Works on Archaeological Remains of the time of the New Testament

- Charlesworth, James H. *Jesus and Archaeology*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans: 2006).
- Crossan, John Dominic and Jonathan L. Reed. *Excavating Jesus. Beneath the Stones, Behind the Texts. The Key Discoveries for Understanding Jesus in His World*. (New York, HarperCollins: 2001).
- Reed, Jonathan L. *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus. A Re-examination of the Evidence* (New York, Continuum: 2002).
- Rousseau, John J. and Roni Arad. *Jesus & his World*. (Minneapolis, Fortress: 1995).

### Encyclopedias and Dictionaries

- Friedman, David Noel (ed.) *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York, Doubleday: 1992)
- Sasson, Jack M. (ed.). *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. 2 vols. (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers: 2000).
- Stern, E. (ed.). *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*. 5 vols. (Jerusalem, Carta: 1993, 2008).

## **THE SOUTHERN PLAIN OF AKKO: DESCRIPTION AND COSTS**

The ‘Southern Plain of Akko’ Project, the archaeological research project this course is based on, is a project of St. Louis University (Madrid Campus) and the University of Haifa, in collaboration with the Universidad Internacional SEK-Ecuador, the Instituto Bíblico y Arqueológico Español en Jerusalén (‘Casa de Santiago’), the Facultad de Filología Cristiana y Clásica ‘San Justino’, and the Universidad CEU-San Pablo, which aims at improving our understanding of the Cananites (in the Late Bronze Age) and the Phoenicians and the Israelites (in the Iron Age) in the area around the Kishon River in Israel. In 2011 the project will include an archaeological excavation season as well as a field school for the participants.

To calculate a volunteer’s participation **cost**, the following costs must be taken into account:

- Project participation (includes room, board, and transportation in Israel, as well as the entrance tickets for the Field School visits during the weekends) 1600 €

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- Airticket from the volunteer’s point of departure to Tel Aviv and back—Iberia airtickets from Madrid to Tel Aviv are selling at ca. 550-750 €

- Medical insurance—compulsory, to include medical treatment in Israel during the month of July in case of need ca. 40 €

- Money for the students’ three nights out of the Reut during the guided visits on weekends ca. 150 € altogether

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- Pocket money and emergency money

- Summer school tuition, for those who want to earn credits (optional): - 2 credits = 860 €

- 3 credits = 1290 €

For additional information on the project, please read the following file:

[http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic\\_trips/docs/SPAP2011\\_ProjectDescription.pdf](http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic_trips/docs/SPAP2011_ProjectDescription.pdf)

## CLASS ATTENDANCE, EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND PENALTIES

Taking this class involves:

1. Attendance and participation in the regional survey (5am – 1pm M-F during the month of July)
2. Attendance and participation in pottery washing and reading (4:30 pm – 6 pm, M-F during the month of July)
3. Attendance and participation in the theoretical classes (6 pm – 7 pm, M-R during the month of July). Classes will include a survey of the local geography and history, an overview of the ethnic and religious communities living in the region, principles of archaeological methodology, topics related to the project, etc.
4. Attendance and participation in the visits to local historical and archaeological sites led by the project directors on the weekends of July (according to the schedule proposed)

The students' evaluation will be based on:

1. **Three quizzes** (all students)
2. **An eight- to ten-page research paper (students taking the course for 2 credits) or a ten- to twelve-page research paper (students taking the course for 3 credits)** on a topic which evaluates the archaeological information related to a debated issue in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament or the New Testament. For this paper, students will need to submit an abstract with a short bibliography (5 references or more) on July 13th, and a detailed outline and a longer bibliography (15 references or more) on July 26th. **The final paper will be sent by e-mail to Prof. Aznar on or before August 15<sup>th</sup>.**
3. **Each student's overall participation in the project.** This part of the grade will be based on how involved the student was in the project (based on readiness in doing what is asked from him/her to do, the ability to discuss topics examined in class, and punctuality).

The final grade will be based on the following percentages:

Three quizzes (10% each):	30%
Research paper:	50%
Overall participation in the project grade:	20 %

Please, notice:

All written assignments must be submitted double-spaced, page-numbered, typed and printed. In the papers, bibliography and attachments will be placed at the end and they will not count towards the page account. Cover pages are not needed.

For delays not excused before the due date, if the missing assignment is submitted within three days from the due date one full letter of the related part of the grade will be decreased. After three days no late assignments will be accepted and the assignment will be graded as 0 (= F). Students should note that although the paper outline and draft will not be graded; their submission is compulsory. Not submitting them at all will decrease the final paper grade--one full letter for each not-submitted part.

All students in this class have a *slu* e-mail account (i.e. an e-mail address ending in *slu.edu*). Therefore, all e-mail communications between the Professor and the students will be done by using the *slu* e-mail system. **It is the student's responsibility to get to know his/her *slu* e-mail address, to check it regularly, and to speak with the people at the Registrar's Office (in Manresa Hall) if there are any problems with his/her e-mail account.**

For bibliography for the paper, please make sure you check the SLU book catalogue (at <http://spain.slu.edu/academics/library/index.html>) as well as the **ATLA**, **JSTOR** and **WorldCat (FirstSearch)** databases (at <http://libraries.slu.edu/databases/databases.php#dbname>). To use the latter, you will need your SLU-Madrid login and password. If you do not know or have them yet, go to the Registrar's Office at Manresa Hall and ask about them.

Keep in mind that many of the articles and books found in the ATLA and WorldCat (FirstSearch) Database may be retrieved at the University of Haifa, where we will spend some time during the project. But for saving time, look for bibliographic resources on the internet first.

You can also find useful articles at: *Bible Review*, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, and *Archaeology Odissey* (<http://www.basarchive.org>). These are not a scholarly journals but popular magazines. However, many of the authors who write in them are scholars and many of the articles are summarized versions of similar, more detailed articles in scholarly journals. So you can use their articles for your papers, especially when you do not have access to the scholarly journals where the original articles are published.

## GRADING SCALE

The grading scale is as follows:

93-100	= A	- Excellent understanding of subject matter and mastery of the skills of the course
90-92	= A-	
87-89	= B+	
83-86	= B	- Good understanding of the subject matter and deployment of the skills of the course
80-82	= B-	
76-79	= C+	
71-75	= C	- Minimally satisfactory understanding of the subject matter and deployment of the skills of the course
68-70	= C-	
60-67	= D	- Less than satisfactory understanding of the subject matter or less than satisfactory deployment of the skills of the course
0 -59	= F	- Basic failure in understanding of the subject matter or basic inability to deploy the skills of the course

The following are general principles concerning grading standards and criteria at SLU:

**A range** = *Superior, exceptional, outstanding* with evidence of critical, informed, and creative inquiry that deepens their understanding of essential concepts. This means the student demonstrates depth of insight beyond what is normally expected. Carefully nuanced reasoning and writing, free from material, structural and grammatical error are presupposed in this grade.

**B range** = *Good*, ready command of full range of concepts and shows some critical, informed, and creative inquiry that deepens their understanding of essential concepts. This means the student has produced an assignment that is free from material, structural and grammatical errors.

**C range** = *Acceptable*, satisfactory ability to describe overall picture and essential concepts. This means the student has completed the assignment in a manner involving no significant errors. Material may not be free from structural and grammatical errors. Nuanced reasoning is not demonstrated.

**D range** = *Below normal expectation*. Reasoning is neither carefully nuanced nor coherently presented; writing is insufficient in depth of insight and/or use of texts; presentation is not free from material error in structure, spelling and grammar. This means that the student failed to respond adequately to the assignment and its intentions.

**F** = *Unsatisfactory*. The student failed to respond to the assignment: 1) failed to turn in the assignment; 2) did not respond to the assignment as given; 3) submitted work so thoroughly flawed as to indicate that the student did not make a serious effort, 4) plagiarism or cheating involved.

## ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS

Any student who qualifies for special accommodations due to a learning disability or physical handicap should contact Counseling/Disability Services. Please phone the office at 91 554 5858 (ext. 230), or send an e-mail to [vandrew1@slu.edu](mailto:vandrew1@slu.edu). Students may also stop by the Counseling/Disability Services office in the Manresa building. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

## **POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY AT SLU**

The destructive effects of academic dishonesty are many. Not only does it undermine the grading process, robbing teachers of their ability to assess the accomplishments of their students and to give proper responses and rewards, but it also impairs the ability of the University to certify to the outside world the skills and attainments of its graduates. Such dishonesty allows students to take unfair advantage of their peers and undermines moral character as well as self-respect. It also damages the bonds of academic trust upon which the entire University rests. Since the College of Arts and Sciences seeks to prepare students for lives of integrity and for occupations of trust, it regards all acts of academic dishonesty as matters of serious concern.

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### **Definitions**

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the kinds of misconduct listed below. Such dishonesty may involve written or spoken communications or those conveyed in electronic form.

#### A. Cheating

Cheating involves the use of unauthorized or unethical assistance to gain an unfair advantage over other students. Instances include the following:

1. Use of unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes or examinations;
2. Use of resources beyond those authorized by the instructor in solving problems or in carrying out other assignments such as writing papers, preparing reports, or giving oral presentations;
3. Acquisition, dissemination, or use of tests or other academic materials belonging to an instructor or a member of the staff without prior approval;
4. Hiring or otherwise engaging someone to impersonate a student in taking a quiz or examination or in fulfilling other academic requirements.

#### B. Falsification

Falsification involves misrepresentations of fact for academic gain. Instances include the following:

1. Lying to or deceiving an instructor;
2. Fabrication or misrepresentation of the documentation or the data involved in carrying out assignments;
3. Fabrication, misrepresentation, or unauthorized alteration of information in academic records belonging to an instructor or to any academic department or administrative unit within the College.

#### C. Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves the intentional representation of someone else's thoughts or words as if they were one's own. Instances include the following:

1. Quoting directly from someone else's work without using quotation marks and without giving proper credit to the author;
2. Paraphrasing someone else's ideas, concepts, arguments, observations, or statements without giving proper credit;
3. Submitting as one's own work a paper or other assignment that has been prepared, either wholly or in large part, by another person, group, or commercial firm.

(...)

(Source: <http://www.slu.edu/x16363.xml>)

As a student in this course, you are required to adhere to the university's Academic Honesty Policy. **Any violation of this policy will result in an F for the pertinent academic exercise.** A detailed statement of the policy in the Madrid Campus may be found at: [http://spain.slu.edu/academics/policies\\_&\\_procedures/docs/Academic\\_integrity.pdf](http://spain.slu.edu/academics/policies_&_procedures/docs/Academic_integrity.pdf)

## **COURSE TOPICS AND TENTATIVE SCHEDULE \***

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

#### **July 4<sup>th</sup>, Monday**

1. Introduction. The Southern Plain of Akko Project. What are we doing here?
2. Geography of the lands of the Bible and of the Southern Plain of Akko

#### **July 5<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday**

3. What is archaeology? What is an archaeological survey? Principles of archaeological methodology

#### **July 6<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday**

4. What is the Bible? How was the Bible put together? What is the relation between archaeology and the Bible?

### **II. REGIONAL BACKGROUND**

#### **July 7<sup>th</sup>, Thursday: 1<sup>st</sup> Quizz**

5. History of the region I – The time of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

#### **July 11<sup>th</sup>, Monday**

6. History of the region II – From the time of the New Testament to the Byzantine Period

#### **July 12<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday**

7. History of the region III – From the Early Islamic Period to 1948

#### **July 13<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday: Paper abstract and short bibliography due**

8. History of the region IV – From 1948 to the present

#### **July 14<sup>th</sup>, Thursday**

9. The human communities in the region and their Holy Places I

#### **July 18<sup>th</sup>, Monday**

10. The human communities in the region and their Holy Places II

### **III. STUDY OF THE MAIN PERIODS AND CULTURES TARGETED IN THE EXCAVATION**

#### **July 19<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday**

11. The Cananites and their cities in the Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age (ca. 1800-1500, 1500-1200 BCE)

#### **July 20<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday: 2<sup>nd</sup> Quizz**

12. The emergence of the Israelites. Who were they? The early Israelite villages in the Iron Age I (ca. 1200-1000 BC)

#### **July 21<sup>st</sup>, Thursday**

13. The Sea Peoples and the emergence of the Philistines in the Iron Age I (ca. 1200-1000 BCE)

#### **July 25<sup>th</sup>, Monday**

14. Are there archaeological remains that can be attributed to King David and King Solomon? The United Monarchy of Israel and the current problems with the chronology

#### **July 26<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday: Paper detailed outline and longer bibliography due**

15. The 9<sup>th</sup> Century BCE

#### **July 27<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday:**

16. The 8<sup>th</sup> Century BCE

#### **July 28<sup>th</sup>, Thursday**

17. The 7<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> Centuries BCE

### **IV. SYNTHESIS**

#### **July 29<sup>th</sup>, Friday: 3<sup>rd</sup> Quizz**

18. What have we learnt with the project this season?

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## **TENTATIVE VISIT SCHEDULE**

**July 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>th</sup>, Friday-Sunday:** Jerusalem

**July 9<sup>th</sup>, Saturday:** Megiddo, Tiberias, places around the Sea of Galilee

**July 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>:** Dead Sea, Masada, and Qumran

**July 23<sup>th</sup>:** Akko (ancient St. John of Acre)

\* The class structure and schedule as well as the visit schedule are tentative. They may change depending on the excavation progress and other factors such as a scholar coming to give a lecture or us being given a special tour somewhere, among others.