

Course Outline for 2018-19 1st Term
 Selected Reading of the Hebrew Bible:
 The book of Ezra-Nehemiah and the books of Chronicles

Course Code: THEO5210
Title in English: Selected Reading of the Hebrew Bible: The book of Ezra-Nehemiah and the books of Chronicles
Title in Chinese: 希伯來聖經選讀：以斯拉－尼希米記與歷代志

Course overview:

This course focuses on the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles in the Hebrew Bible, which are important parts of Hebrew Bible Historiography reflecting the situation of the Jews in the Second Temple Period. The scholarship associated with the Second Temple/Persian Period is also soaring in new and exciting frontier which we hope this course can help students to follow such a trend. Issues including textual criticism, authorship and readership, sources, theme and theology will be discussed.

Learning outcomes:

After this course, students should be able to

- recognize and describe the historical context of the composition and readership of the biblical books emerged in the Second Temple Period;
- appreciate the significance and relevance of studying the biblical books emerged in the Second Temple Period;
- analyze the passages from the biblical books emerged in the Second Temple Period using various perspectives;
- theorize the ideology and theology in/of the biblical books emerged in the Second Temple Period;
- reflect and design on the various use of the biblical books emerged in the Second Temple Period in different contexts.

List of topics

| Topic | Contents |
|---|--|
| Second Temple Period | To call the time when the post-exilic Israelites were ruled under the Persian empire Second Temple Period is to highlight the centrality of the rebuilt temple toward the development of the ideologies and theologies in that period. We will investigate why and how the Second Temple Period was a time when Jewish literary activities were most vibrant and the formative period that the early Judaism and Christianity's main ideas emerged. The matter on how to call this important period in the Jewish history will be raised: Second Temple period is better than the term "intertestamental period" which traditionally regards as a time of silent in Divine revelation. |
| Persian colonization and Yehud province | In order to establish the historical and sociological context of the biblical books, the history of Persian empire and its colonization program will be introduced and discussed. Yehud as a province of Persian colonization and its significance in the Jewish self-understand and political make-up will be discussed. |
| Different Social Identities of the Jews: Exclusive and Inclusive Jewish Community | We will look into the different communities in the Second Temple Period, namely the diaspora in different region, the Golah in Babylonian soil, the returnee and "the people of the land"/local population. We will examine how these groups formulated and articulated their ideologies within the Hebrew Bible and their viewpoints on various issues, especially on these communities' manner toward outsiders, either they were inclined toward an exclusive policy or a more inclusive one. |
| Aramaic Sections of the Hebrew Bible | Parts of the Hebrew Bible are written in Aramaic, the <i>lingua franca</i> in the Second Temple Period. We will study the Aramaic section within the book of Ezra and discuss the reason behind this diglossia phenomenon. As a result, we will learn how different scholars reconstruct the history behind these Aramaic texts within the Hebrew Bible. |

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| Temple worship and Temple Personnel in the Persian Period | As a new temple were rebuilt during the Persian period, it resulted in a re-installment of temple worship in the Jewish life. The various topics regarding this theme, from the meaning of temple worship in before and after the exile to the change of importance and activities of different temple personnel in the post-exilic time, will be explored during the course. |
| Prophecy in the Second Temple period | Did prophecy cease during the Second Temple Period? How the old prophecies were interpreted during this time? This part of the course explore the interpretative activities regarding to the divine messages in the Second Temple Period. |
| the new understanding of Historiography and its ideology | The writing of a nation's past can take many forms. We will discuss how the book of Ezra-Nehemiah as a Autobiographical Memoir and the book of Chronicle as a Utopia Literature contribute to the new understanding of historiography in the scholarly world. |
| Ezra-Nehemiah-Chronicles as Christian Scripture | Various themes relating to Christian theology such as Retribution, Restoration, Canonization and the Pastoral aspect of the biblical books concerning our course will be explored. |

Learning activities

This course mainly consists of lectures, student participations through class discussion and research activities. All activities are mandatory.

| Lecture (hr) in class | Class Discussion (hr) /week in class | Web-based teaching (hr) | Course Reading and research (hr) | Written Assignments (hr) / course |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1.5 per week | 1 hr | 0.5 per week | 3 per week | 15 hr |

Assessment scheme

| Task nature | Purpose | Learning Outcome | Weight |
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| 1. Reading Assignment You will be given a reading list for the course. You have to track ALL your reading by filling in the Reading Log and submit them by 27 Nov to the instructor in class. Failure to submit the Reading log on time means no marks for this requirement. | To ensure the student has read the assigned readings | 1. Acquire an overview to the topics relating to the biblical books that will be discussed during class lecture. 2. Comprehend scholar's view point on various topics regarding the biblical books. | 10% |
| 2. Class Participation Students will be graded according to their participation in the class activities. | To give space for the student to reflect and discuss on the critical issues regarding to the biblical books | 1. Reflect on the critical issues on the biblical books. 2. Formulate and articulate the student's viewpoint on critical issues on the biblical books. | 10% |
| 3. Reading Report Writ a reading report not less than 3000 words on one of the following books: | To engage the student with different scholarship regarding to the critical issues on the biblical books. | 1. Describe how scholar formulates the critical issues on the biblical books. | 30% |

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| <p>Becking, Bob. <i>Ezra, Nehemiah, and the construction of early Jewish Identity</i>.</p> <p>Kelly, Brian E. <i>Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles</i>.</p> <p>Schniedewind, William M. <i>The Word of God in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period</i>.</p> <p>Schweitzer, Steven James. <i>Reading Utopia in Chronicles</i>.</p> <p>OR Introduction+ Chapters in:</p> <p>Japhet, Sara. <i>The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought</i>.</p> <p>Japhet, Sara. <i>From the Rivers of Babylon to the Highlands of Judah: Collected Studies on the Restoration Period</i>.</p> <p>Ben Zvi, Ehud. <i>History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles</i>.</p> <p>Kalimi, Issac. <i>The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles</i>.</p> <p>Kalimi, Issac (ed.). <i>New Perspectives on Ezra-Nehemiah: History and Historiography, Text, Literature, and Interpretation</i>.</p> <p>OR any other relevant books (which should be approved by the instructor).</p> <p>Deadline: 4 Dec</p> | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Appreciate the scholarship of the critical issues on the biblical books. 3. Compare and reflect on different viewpoints on how to handle the critical issues on the biblical books. | |
| <p>4. Term Paper</p> <p>Write a term paper not less than 4500 words on a passage from either Ezra-Nehemiah or the books of Chronicles. Students should be able to analyze on the passage by different exegetical methods (Part I Exegetical, 30%) and to respond and comment to critical issues posted by scholars (Part II Critical issues, 20%). The scope and format of the paper will be announced on Class 1</p> <p>Paper MUST be submitted via the Webpage of the Chinese University Plagiarism Identification Engine VeriGuide: https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK by 18 Dec. A soft copy should be post onto the BLACKBOARD <u>and</u> give a hardcopy together with a print out of</p> | <p>To let student showcase their understanding and analysis of the critical issues on the biblical passage in the set texts.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the exegetical methods the student used in the critical handling of the biblical passage 2. Analyze the biblical passage critically. 3. Relate the critical result to the scholarly discussion of the critical issues of the biblical books. 4. Construct implications of the ideas in the biblical passages critically and in a scholarly manner. | <p>50% (30+20)</p> <p>Part I Exegetical</p> <p>Part II Critical issues</p> |

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| <p>receipt and signed Academic Honesty Declaration Statement from VeriGuide (received via e-mail after you have submitted your assignment) to their instructor.</p> | | | |
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Recommended learning resources

- Antony F. Campbell. *Joshua to Chronicles : An Introduction / Antony F. Campbell*. Louisville, Ky.: Louisville, Ky. : Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.
- Becking, Bob. *Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Construction of Early Jewish Identity*. Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
- Beentjes, Pancratius Cornelis. *Tradition and Transformation in the Book of Chronicles*. BRILL, 2008.
- Ben Zvi, Eud. *History, Literature and Theology in the Book of Chronicles*. Routledge, 2014.
- Boda, Mark J. *Praying the Tradition: The Origin and the Use of Tradition in Nehemiah 9*. Berlin ; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1999.
- Brian E. Kelly. *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles / Brian E. Kelly*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series ; 211. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
- Chronicles and Its Synoptic Parallels in Samuel, Kings, and Related Biblical Texts*. Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1998.
- Duke, Rodney K. *The Persuasive Appeal of the Chronicler: A Rhetorical Analysis*. Sheffield: Almod P., 1990.
- Edelman, Diana Vikander. *The Origins of the "Second" Temple: Persian Imperial Policy and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem*. London ; Oakville, CT: Equinox Pub, 2005.
- Eskenazi, Tamara Cohn. *In an Age of Prose : A Literary Approach to Ezra-Nehemiah*. Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1988.
- Grabbe, Lester L. *Ezra-Nehemiah*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Grabbe, Lester L. *Leading Captivity Captive : "The Exile" as History and Ideology*. Sheffield, Eng: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.
- Hoglund, Kenneth G. *Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria-Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Nehemiah*. Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation. Atlanta: Scholars Pr, 1992.
- Japhet, Sara. *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1989.
- . *From the Rivers of Babylon to the Highlands of Judah: Collected Studies on the Restoration Period*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006.
- Johnstone, William. *Chronicles and Exodu : An Analogy and Its Application*. Sheffield England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.
- Kalimi, Isaac. *The Book of Chronicles: Historical Writing and Literary Devices*. Sifriyat Ha-Entsiklopedyah Ha-Mikra'it. Jerusalem: Bialik Inst, 2000.
- . *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles*. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2005.
- . *The Retelling of Chronicles in Jewish Tradition and Literature: A Historical Journey*. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2009.
- Kleinig, John W. *The Lord's Song: The Basis, Function and Significance Of Choral Music in Chronicles*. JSOTSS 156. Sheffield: JSOT, 1993.

- Laird, Donna. *Negotiating Power in Ezra-Nehemiah*. Ancient Israel and Its Literature ; No. 26. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016.
- Min, Kyung-Jin. *The Levitical Authorship of Ezra-Nehemiah*. A&C Black, 2004.
- Moffat, Donald P. *Ezra's Social Drama: Identity Formation, Marriage and Social Conflict in Ezra 9 and 10*. London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013.
- Pakkala, Juha. *Ezra the Scribe: The Development of Ezra 7-10 and Nehemiah 8*. Walter de Gruyter, 2004.
- Raymond F. Person. *The Deuteronomic History and the Book of Chronicles [electronic Resource] : Scribal Works in an Oral World*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010.
- Saysell, Csilla. *According to the Law : Reading Ezra 9-10 as Christian Scripture*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012.
- Schniedewind, William M. *The Word of God in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period*. JSOTSS 197. Sheffield: JSOT, 1995.
- Shaver, Judson R. *Torah and the Chronicler's History Work: An Inquiry Into the Chronicler's References to Laws, Festivals, and Cultic Institutions in Relationship to Pentateuchal Legislation*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989.
- Smith-Christopher, Daniel L. *A Biblical Theology of Exile*. Minneapolis: Fortress Pr, 2002.
- Southwood, Katherine E. *Ethnicity and the Mixed Marriage Crisis in Ezra 9-10 An Anthropological Approach*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Sparks, James T. *The Chronicler's Genealogies : Towards an Understanding of 1 Chronicles 1-9*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008.
- Steven James Schweitzer. *Reading Utopia in Chronicles / Steven James Schweitzer*. New York: New York, 2007.
- Street, James M. *The Significance of the Ark Narrative : Literary Formation and Artistry in the Book of Chronicles*. New York: Peter Lang, 2009.
- Schulte, Lucas L. *My Shepherd, Though You Do Not Know Me: The Persian Royal Propaganda Model in the Nehemiah Memoir*. Louvain: Peeters, 2016.
- Tiemeyer, Lena-Sofia. *Ezra-Nehemiah: An Introduction and Study Guide: Israel's Quest for Identity*. T&T Clark Study Guides To The Old Testament. London; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017.
- Tiño, Jozef. *King and Temple in Chronicles: A Contextual Approach to Their Relations*. FRLANT 234. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010.
- Throntveit, Mark A. *When Kings Speak : Royal Speech and Royal Prayer in Chronicles*. Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1987.
- William Riley. *King and Cultus in Chronicles : Worship and the Reinterpretation of History*. Sheffield: Sheffield : JSOT Press, 1993.
- Williamson, Hugh Godfrey Maturin. *Studies in Persian Period History and Historiography*. Mohr Siebeck, 2004.

Collections of Essays:

- *Second Temple Studies, 1: Persian Period*. Sheffield, England: JSOT Pr, 1991.
- *Second Temple Studies, Vol 2: Temple Community in the Persian Period*. Sheffield, Eng: JSOT Pr, 1994.
- *The Chronicler as Historian*. A&C Black, 1997.
- *The Chronicler as Author: Studies in Text and Texture*. A&C Black, 1999.
- *The Chronicler as Theologian*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2003.
- *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003.
- *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2006.
- *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century BCE*. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2007.

- *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2011.
- Priests, Prophets and Scribes: Essays on the Formation and Heritage of Second Temple Judaism in Honour of Joseph Blenkinsopp*. Sheffield, Eng: JSOT Pr, 1992.
- The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times*. Leiden: E J Brill, 1999.
- The Dynamics of Ancient Empires : State Power from Assyria to Byzantium: State Power from Assyria to Byzantium*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Community Identity in Judean Historiography: Biblical and Comparative Perspectives*. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2009.
- Texts, Contexts and Readings in Postexilic Literature: Explorations into Historiography and Identity Negotiation in Hebrew Bible and Related Texts*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
- Rewriting Biblical History : Essays on Chronicles and Ben Sira in Honour of Pancratius C. Beentjes*. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011.
- New Perspectives on Ezra-Nehemiah: History and Historiography, Text, Literature, and Interpretation*. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2012.
- Chronicling the Chronicler : The Book of Chronicles and Early Second Temple Historiography*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2013.
- Worlds that Could Not Be: Utopia in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah*. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark 2016

Commentary (only author's name cited):

[Chronicles]

Coggins, R. J.

Japhet, Sara

Klein, Ralph

Williamson, H. G. M.

Johnstone, William

Dillard, Raymond B.

Braun, Roddy

Allen, Leslie C.

Knoppers, Gary

McKenzie, Steven L.

McConville, J. G.

Selman, Martin J.

[Ezra-Nehemiah]

Allen, Leslie C.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph

Davides, Gordon F.

Fensham, F. Charles

Grabbe, Lester L.

Levering, Matthew

McConville, J. G.

Myers, Jacob M.

Coggins, R. J.

Throntveit, Mark A.

Williamson, H. G. M.

Other supplement readings will be delivered during class and over Blackboard.

Feedback for evaluation

Feedback for evaluation:

Two course evaluations will be conducted. The first will be done midway through the course which is tailored to facilitate better progress through the course. The second will be conducted by the university wide exercise.

Course schedule

| Week/Class | Date | Topic | Requirements (read before class) |
|------------|---------|--|---|
| Class 1 | 4 Sept | Introduction: The importance of Second Temple Period | “Persia’s Loyal Yahwists” by Kessler |
| Class 2 | 11 Sept | Persian Period: A Survey | “Violence and Exegesis: The History of Exile” (p. 34-45) by Smith-Christopher |
| Class 3 | 18 Sept | Ezra-Nehemiah: Critical Issues | “Composition and Chronology in the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah” by Japhet |
| No Class | 25 Sept | Public holiday – Mid-Autumn Festival | “Traditions from a literary POV” by Grabbe |
| Class 4 | 2 Oct | Ezra 1-6: The Aramaic Section | “Bishalam’s Archival Search Report in Nehemiah’s Archive” by Steiner OR “The Narratological Purpose of Aramaic Prose” by Berman |
| Class 5 | 9 Oct | Ezra 7-10: Memoir of Ezra | “ ‘Purity’ As Nonconformity” (p.150-162) by Smith-Christopher |
| Class 6 | 16 Oct | Nehemiah 1-7: Memoir of Nehemiah | “Prayer as Rhetoric in the Book of Nehemiah” by Boda |
| Class 7 | 23 Oct | Nehemiah 8-13: Restoration and Torah | “Literary and Ideological Aspects of Nehemiah 11” by Lipschits |
| Class 8 | 30 Oct | Chronicles: Critical Issues | “The Book of Chronicles: Another Look” by Ben Zvi |
| Class 9 | 6 Nov | I Chr 1-9: the Genealogy | “1 Chronicles 1-9 and the Reconstruction of the History of Israel” by Braun |
| Class 10 | 13 Nov | I Chr 10- II Chr 9 David, Solomon and the Temple | “The Founding Father” by Wright OR “Hierodules, Priests, or Janitors?” by Knoppers |
| Class 11 | 20 Nov | II Chronicles 10-36: Kings and Prophets | “Retribution’ Revisited” by Kelly OR “Prophets and Prophecy in the Book of Chronicles” by Schniedewind |
| Class 12 | 27 Nov | Ezra-Nehemiah-Chronicles: its place in Canon and in Church | “Several Canon-Related Concepts Originating in Chronicles” by Talshir OR OR “Chronicles and Pastoral Theology” by Allen |
| Class 13 | 4 Dec | Make-up class (if any) | |

Contact details for teacher

| Professor/Lecturer/Instructor: | Lecturer |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Name: | Dr. Li Kwan Hung Leo |
| Office Location: | YCT LG106 |
| Telephone: | 39435720 |
| Email: | khileo@cuhk.edu.hk |
| Teaching Venue: | FYB 405 王福元樓 405 室 |
| Teaching Time: | Every Tuesday, 7:00pm-9:15pm |

Details of course website

Course material will be delivered via course webpage in <http://blackboard.cuhk.edu.hk>

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> .

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

***The Course Outline will be subject to change due to class size and other circumstances; Please see the updated version via the course webpage in <http://blackboard.cuhk.edu.hk>**