



TRACING TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN LEVANT FROM COLLAPSE TO CONSOLIDATION IN THE MID-SECOND MILLENNIUM BC

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1. Contacts:

Katharina Streit: Mobile: +972-54-9280227 katharin.streit@mail.huji.ac.il

Felix Höflmayer: Mobile: +43-664-1755341 felix.hoeflmayer@oeaw.ac.at

2. Registration process

- a) Fill out the **Tel Lachish Application Form 2020** and send it per email to Katharina Streit and Felix Höflmayer until **1st March 2020**
- b) We will inform you by **15th March 2020** whether you've been **accepted, pending flight booking confirmation** (see below)
- c) **Book your flights** to Israel until **15th April 2020** and provide us with a **booking confirmation, flight number, date and time of arrival and departure**. By providing a booking confirmation you secure your participation. (Since our volunteers don't have to pay for excavations and we had several issues with participants cancelling in the last minute, we have to make sure that people we accepted also show up.) In case you don't provide us with a booking confirmation until 15th April 2019, your spot goes to the next applicant on the list.

3. Packing

Equipment for the field:

- ✓ Closed boots, preferably covering your ankle (VERY important! No open shoes at the site!)
- ✓ Pants for the excavation (even though it will be hot, most archaeologist prefer long pants, because it protects your legs and keeps dirt out of your shoes)
- ✓ Shirts for the dig (random t-shirts are fine, parade your most insane designs)
- ✓ Hat/scarf
- ✓ Sunscreen (get the highest factor, buy it at home, because it's expensive in Israel)
- ✓ Sunglasses
- ✓ Work gloves (cheap work gloves are fine)
- ✓ Trowel
- ✓ Water bottle (ordinary plastic bottle is enough, just have your personal bottle for hygienic reasons), cold drinking water is provided at the site
- ✓ Isotonic drink powder / water flavoring etc. (not a must-have, but some find it makes it easier to stay hydrated)

We are excavating under a shade cloth, which makes a big, big difference. However, UV radiation is still very strong in the shade, thus sunscreen is a requirement.

Equipment off-field: (think camping...)

- ✓ Sleeping bag and/or sheets and pillow
- ✓ Sandals
- ✓ Loose clothes (shorts, shirts etc.)
- ✓ Flip-flops for the shower
- ✓ Flashlight
- ✓ Swimsuit
- ✓ Towel(s)
- ✓ Mosquito spray

Expensive gear:

Minimize expensive equipment. Take as little as possible, preferably only what you take with you to the field.

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY**Insurance:**

You require a **health/travel insurance** for the time you are in Israel. The medical facilities here are at the same high level they are in Europe, even though we highly hope that you will not have to make use of them at any time.

Vaccination:

Please make sure you have a **Tetanus vaccine**. There is no need for a rabies vaccine etc.

Alcohol and drug policy:

Excessive drinking and/or consumption of illegal drugs will lead to immediate exclusion from the project and the accommodation.

Health and safety on the site:

Safety is of uppermost priority at the excavation! Very serious accidents have happened in the past at other projects, and we do the maximum to prevent them. Follow basic rules:

- ✓ **NEVER** work with your **BARE HANDS** in the ground, but only with tools
- ✓ Don't put your hands under or around stones before you checked that there is no **SCORPION** or **SNAKE** hiding
- ✓ Closed shoes are required at the site
- ✓ Only lift what your **BACK** and your **KNEES** can handle
- ✓ Make sure you drink enough **WATER** and consume enough **SALT!**
- ✓ If you start getting a headache, feel **DIZZY OR UNWELL**, sit down and inform your square supervisor, these might be signs of **DEHYDRATION**. Even light cases of dehydration usually lead to a trip to the hospital and feeling really sh** for days.

- ✓ **DO NOT WALK ON BAULKS!** These are the “walls” separating squares. They look solid, but they can collapse. You will see staff walking on them occasionally, but we try to minimize this as much as possible.
- ✓ Be **ALERT** when working with the **PICK!** Make sure nobody stands behind or next to you and your tool is intact!
- ✓ If you find **AMMUNITION** in or around the excavation, **DO NOT TOUCH IT** and immediately inform the staff!

5. FLIGHT & ARRIVAL

The airport you are looking for is ‘Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv’. There are many carriers flying to Ben Gurion, from Vienna, Austrian is usually the cheapest option. If you book El Al, be prepared for extra security, and plan a bit more time at the airport.

Those coming from abroad will receive a letter for the border control, stating what you do and why you are coming to Israel. (A few weeks before the excavation, we will need the **NAME** and **PASSPORTNUMBER** of the passport with which you will be entering Israel.) There might be some questioning. If that is the case, don’t get upset and don’t get intimidated. This is standard security procedure. Today, at Ben Gurion Airport passports do not get stamped any more. Instead, you will receive a small blue paper card with your scanned passport picture. **DO NOT LOSE THIS CARD.** This is your 3-month visa.

6. FROM THE BEN-BURION AIRPORT TO JERUSALEM:

You arrive at Ben Gurion Airport, cross the border (this might take some 30-60 min, depending on how many flights arrived), get your luggage, and exit the airport. After c. 50 m, you come to the drop off/pick up lane. To your right, there will be 2-3 Sherut taxis (service taxis, sort of minibus in yellow) waiting, and someone will be calling “Jerusalem???”. That's what you want. (The ones on the left side go to Tel Aviv.) There is only one company running the service to Jerusalem: Neshet Taxi: <http://www.neshertours.co.il/about-us>

The trip costs c. 65 NIS (this can be paid in Dollar as well), and takes about an hour. This is a fixed price, there is no haggling. You pay when you are getting off the car. They will ask you where you want to go to in Jerusalem (they know the hostels), because according to the address they split customers between the cars, so that they don't have to do the full round every time. They will put your luggage in the trunk and ask you to wait. Within 15-20 min the taxi fills up, and they leave.

Since 2018, there is also new high-speed train services from Ben Gurion Airport to Jerusalem available (<https://www.rail.co.il/en/stations/ben-gurion-airport>). One-way trip costs about 20 NIS and takes about 25 minutes. In Jerusalem, you get off at Yizhak Navon near the central bus station with immediate access to connecting buses and the Jerusalem city light train. Google Maps information is also usually up to date.

We recommend you arrive a few days before the project to get adapted to the environment and get a first impression of Israel, if this is your first travel to the country. Hostels with a good reputation for back packers are the Abraham Hostel and the Jerusalem Hostel, but there are many other options. If you want to spend more money, the Austrian Hospice in the Old City of Jerusalem is highly recommended.

7. GETTING TO TEL LACHISH & ACCOMMODATION

We will be staying in the accommodation of a boarding school in Sheqef (<https://goo.gl/maps/1wcSWLW99nm>). The next city is Kiryat Gat, where we will pick you up from the Central Bus Station between 3pm and 6pm on 12th July (<https://goo.gl/maps/M5TJ7sXTEBN2>). There are busses going to Kiryat Gat from Tel Aviv and Jerusalem and from other cities as well (cf. www.egged.co.il). Let us know when you arrive so we can plan pick-up and shuttle to Sheqef.

Sheqef is a c. 15 min drive from Tel Lachish. The accommodation consists of bungalow-type rooms with 3-4 beds each. Two to three rooms share a living space, a bathroom (with hot water) and in some cases, a small kitchenette. Rooms have a bed with mattress, but no sheets or towels. The shared living space is air-conditioned. There is also a porch to sit outside and socialize in the evening. The accommodation is also available on weekends.

We are not able to pay you a salary. Usually participation on excavations in Israel can be very expensive and prices can go into several 1000 EURs. Our START-grant from the Austrian Science Fund covers accommodation and board for each participant.

8. WEEKENDS

We won't be working on the site on Fridays and Saturdays. While part of the staff returns to Jerusalem, you can explore the country (staying in the accommodation is also a possibility, but you can take the opportunity to visit sites). There are busses between all major cities, which are very cheap and comfortable, running on weekdays. However, please note that there is **NO PUBLIC TRANSPORT** from Friday afternoon until Saturday afternoon (except in Haifa). It is also possible to rent cars if you are 23 or older (depending on the company). We can drop you off at the Kiryat Gat Central Bus Station on Friday morning (between 8am and 10am) and pick you up on Saturday evening (between 6pm and 8pm). We recommend getting a guidebook (e.g. Lonely Planet) to have a rough idea before you arrive about what you might be interested in. The main cities (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa) will keep you busy for a few days with museums, beaches, the Old City etc.

9. LETTER OF PARTICIPATION

After the project, you receive a letter of participation if requested. Please approach us before the project if your university requires an exam/grade for field work participation.