Syllabus for NEJS 201B: Advanced Akkadian (Spring 2019)
Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions

Instructor: Jared Pfost
Email: jpfost@brandeis.edu
Office: Lown 311
Office Hours: Mondays 3–5 p.m.

Learning Goals

- Increase overall knowledge of the Akkadian language and script.
- Understand the genre of Neo-Assyrian royal inscription and be able to identify its literary techniques and purposes.
- Identify literary allusions to other Akkadian texts and genres.
- Investigate how Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions can be utilized in modern historiography and what principles modern historians use in their historical reconstructions of events.

Course Readings: All course readings will be provided on LATTE.

Academic Integrity: All of your work for this class is expected to be your own. If you have any questions concerning academic honesty, please see me to discuss the situation.

Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability at Brandeis University, and if you wish to request a reasonable accommodation for this class, please see me immediately. Please keep in mind that reasonable accommodations are not provided retroactively.

Homework Time: Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that you will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, homework, preparation for exams, etc.).

Class Pass: Students will be allowed one pass from class session evaluation. This means that a student may, on one occasion, attend a class session but will not be responsible for answering any questions or reading text during that session.

Course Requirements/Grade Breakdown

- Preparation, Attendance, and Participation: 75%
  --Preparation for class includes carefully studying any assigned readings and thoroughly preparing the assigned text (i.e., memorizing the cuneiform, making your own transcription and translation of the text, using grammars and dictionaries to investigate unusual vocabulary or grammar, and analyzing the text from literary and historical perspectives). You may have one unexcused absence without any effect on your grade (excused absences will be granted on a case-by-case basis—please let me know in advance if you are unable to make it to class).
• Final Exam/Paper: 25%
  You have two options for the class final:
  1. Take-home Final Exam: Will consist of translating and providing commentary for a passage from a Neo-Assyrian royal inscription that we have not read in class. Your commentary should include notes on linguistic, literary and historical considerations. You may use any and all resources at your disposal for this exam.
  2. Final Paper: Write a short (5–10 page) paper dealing with a topic related to Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions. This option is designed to motivate you to further investigate topics that interest you in the texts we read.

Tentative Course Schedule

Key for the Texts to be Read: C= Cuneiform; E= Edition; T= Translation

**Classes 1–7 (1/22 [Brandeis Monday]; 1/28; 2/4; 2/11; 2/25; 3/4; 3/11)**

- Class 4 (2/11): Prepare lines 148–166; Read Fales, “Narrative and Ideological Variations.”

**Classes 8–9 (3/18; 3/25)**

- Class 8 (3/18): Read col. ii 37–72 in translation for context; Prepare col. ii 73–iii 17; Read 2 Kings 18:13–19:37 in translation (Optional: also read in Hebrew); Read Cogan
and Tadmor’s commentary on this passage (II Kings, 223–51) for analysis of the biblical material; Read Laato, “Assyrian Propaganda.”


**Classes 10–11 (4/1; 4/8)**
Sennacherib: Text 22 (Chicago/Taylor Prism)—Eighth Campaign col. v 52b–col. vi 35 (C: Borger, 333–4; E/T: Grayson/Novotny Part 1, 182–4; T: Chavalas, 348–9)

**Class 12 (4/15)**
Esarhaddon: Text 34—Tenth (Egyptian) Campaign (C: Budge, 114–23; E/T: Leichty, 86–88; T: Cogan, 143–7; T: Radner, 305–7 [lines obv. 6–rev. 12])
- Prepare the entire text (c. 36 lines); Read Radner, “Esarhaddon’s Expedition”; Read Baruchi-Unna, “Crossing the Boundaries” for discussion of allusions to the *Epic of Gilgamesh*.

**Class 13 (4/29)**
Ashurbanipal: L¹ The School Days Inscription col. i 1–28 (C/E/T: Novotny 2014, text 18; T: Livingstone, 100 [lines 10–18]; T: Zamazalová, 314–6 [lines 1–30])
- Prepare the selected passage; Read Livingstone, “Ashurbanipal: literate or not?” and Zamazalová, “Education of Neo-Assyrian Princes”; Skim through Frahm, “Keeping Company with Men of Learning.”

**Selected Bibliography**

**General Resources for the Study of Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions**


*Tiglath-pileser III (Tukultī-apil-Ešarra III “My Help is the Son of Ešarra”)*


*Sargon II (Šarru-kēn II “The King is Legitimate”)*


*Sennacherib (Sin-ahhē-erība “Sin Has Supplied Brothers”)*


Esarhaddon (Aššur-ah-iddina “Aššur Has Given a Brother”)


Ashurbanipal (Aššur-bāni-apli “Aššur is the Creator of an Heir”)


Novotny, Jamie. Selected Royal Inscriptions of Assurbanipal L³, L⁴, LET, Prism I, Prism T, and Related Texts: Introduction, Cuneiform Text and Transliteration with a Translation,