

AKKADIAN LANGUAGE

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Office hours: Wednesday 9-10 and Thursday 11-12 or by appointment

Room and date: to be defined



Course description and objectives

The Akkadian language is the oldest known Semitic language. This fact is of particular importance in the study of Semitic languages in general and Arabic in particular: in fact, Akkadian represents the oldest attestation of a language of the Semitic family, to which the Arabic language also belongs, and its knowledge allows us to better understand a number of features of the Arabic language and to better understand the position of the latter in the family of Semitic languages. Moreover, the study of the languages of ancient Iraq and of the texts in cuneiform writing is extremely important for reconstructing the history of ancient Mesopotamia and the remarkable achievements reached in this part of the ancient world. But the Akkadian language is also interesting in itself, especially in consideration of its long history through several stages:

1. Old Akkadian: the various dialects of Akkadian in use in the III millennium BC.
2. Old Babylon: 2000-1500 BC.
3. Middle Babylon: 1500-1000 BC.
4. Neo-Babylon: 1000-500 BC.
5. Late Babylon: 500 BC – I century AD.
6. Old Assyrian: 2000-1500 BC.

7. Middle Assyrian: 1500-1000 BC.
8. Neo-Assyrian: 1000-600 BC.

Methods

The basic elements of Akkadian grammar will be taught with lectures. Moreover, passages from Akkadian texts of various kinds (especially, letters) will be read in class, either making use of copies or on photos. In order to increase the ability of students to read cuneiform texts, trips to the Iraq Museum in Baghdad will also be organized, so that the students become familiar with original cuneiform tablets.

Bibliography

1. Sulaiman, *The Akkadian language (Babylonian-Assyrian) History, Codification and Rules*, Mosul, 1991.
2. Caplice, *Introduction to Akkadian*, Rome, 2002.
3. Hanoun, *The Cuneiform Dictionary (Dictionary of Akkadian, Sumerian and Arabic Languages)*, Part 1, Baghdad, 2001.
4. Labat, *Cuneiform Sign Dictionary, Arabic Translation*, Baghdad, 2004.
5. Rachid, *Akkadian Language Rules*, Damascus, 2009.
6. Sulaiman, Al-Zeebari, Al-Adami, *Introduction to the Study of Ancient Languages*, Mosul, 1980.
7. Borger, *Babylonische-assyrische Lesestücke*, Roma, 1963.

Book 1 and 5 must be read before attending the course. Further bibliography will be indicated during the course.

Grade

The grade for the Akkadian language will be subdivided as follows:

First exam	Names, pronouns and expressions in Akkadian	10%
Second exam	Verb and tenses	10%
Final exam	Based on the program of the entire course	50%
Paper and Presentation		10%
Attendance and class participation		10%
Quizzes		10%

The grade scale will be as follows:

Excellence	90-95
Very good	80-89
Good	70-79
Average	65-69
Acceptable	60-64

Attendance

There will be two days per week (Wednesday and Thursday), with lessons of 90 minutes. The course will consist of lectures, but also daily preparatory exams and scientific discussions on how to deal with cuneiform texts.

Calendar

Week	Subject
Week 1	Introduction to the Akkadian language.
Week 2	The history of writing and language history in ancient Mesopotamia.
Week 3	General notes on the Akkadian language and its properties.
Week 4	Noun and adjectives.
Week 5	Singular and plural.
Week 6	Vowels and consonants.
Week 7	Phonetic rules.
Week 8	Pronouns.
Week 9	Parsing.
Week 10	Quantity.
Week 11	Verb.
Week 12	Verbal root.
Week 13	Verbal forms.
Week 14	Verbal tenses.
Week 15	Imperative.