

HEB 4900



# INTRODUCTION TO UGARITIC

WINTER 2005-06

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## ▶ PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES ▶

*I was brave, I was exceedingly strong . . . and I have struggled with the heavens, . . . I have solved the laborious problems of division and multiplication, which were not clear, I read the artistic script of Sumer and the dark obscure Akkadian, which is hard to master, taking pleasure in the reading of the stones from before the flood, now being angered because I was stupid and addled by the beautiful script. This is what was done all of my days*

(Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, from a tablet now in the British Museum [K3050, K2694]).

This course is intended to give the student a working knowledge of Ugaritic. Students will learn the alphabetic cuneiform script used in Ugaritic as well as the syntax and grammar of the language, so as to become functional in translating Ugaritic documents and competent to evaluate the work of others. Competence in Biblical Hebrew is a prerequisite for this course.

## TEXTS

*[Tasmisu] spoke again to Tessub, "[Hear] my words, my lord Tessub. Incline [Your ear] to the words which I speak to you. Come, let us go to Apzuwa, before Ea [ . . . ]. Let us ask for the tablets containing the ancient words"*  
(The Song of Ullikummi §49; Hoffner, *Hittite Myths*, 58).

Gordon, Cyrus H. *Ugaritic Textbook: Grammar, Texts in Transliteration, Cuneiform Selections, Glossary, Indices*. Revised Reprint. AnOr 38. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1998.

other readings to be assigned

## Y REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION Y

*If the body of a man is yellow, his face yellow and black, and the surface of his tongue black, it is ahazu . . . . For such a disease the physician should do nothing: this man will die; he cannot be cured*  
(from an Assyrian medical text, quoted by Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, 369).

- The student will be expected to complete most assignments outside of class, with class meeting times dedicated to a review of the students' work, answering of questions, and introduction of new concepts;
- Class meetings will be conducted in a seminar format, with students presenting their assigned translations (or other work) for the benefit of all other participants;
- Quizzes and examinations will be used to assess the student's competence in dealing with the ancient languages and texts;
- The pace of the course will be determined and specific assignments made according to student progress; this progress will affect final grades through the "subjective evaluation by instructor" component of grading (see below);
- **Grading Components.** The student's grade will be determined according to the following items/percentages:
 

|                                     |       |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Examinations                        | = 40% |
| Translation work (homework)         | = 40% |
| Subjective Evaluation by Instructor | = 20% |
- A ten point Grading Scale will be used.