

Course: Archeology and History of the Near East (1st millennium BC)

Code: ADVSV0016

Instructor: Prof. Heather Baker (University of Toronto)

Course Dates: see below

Assyria and Babylonia in the First Millennium BC

This lecture series presents an introduction to the history and archaeology of Assyria and Babylonia in the first millennium BC. It traces the history of imperialism, beginning with the rise of Assyria in the 9th century BC and ending with the Persian conquest of Babylonia, which saw Mesopotamia ruled for the first time by an external power. The series focuses on the nature of imperial organization and governance, including the role of the king, his officials, the major institutions (palace and temple), the judicial system, and the military. It also addresses the footprint of empire by examining the urban landscape, including not only the major cities but also settlement patterns and the agricultural hinterland. Finally, the lectures address social structure and economic life, including: family and household; the role of women; slavery; the workforce; entrepreneurs and traders; the priesthood; taxation and tribute, and land ownership and tenure.

Thematic areas/Dates:

Assyria in the 1st Millennium BC (911-c. 612 BC)

1. Formation and Government of an Empire (Monday, 13 May, 10:50-12:25, C426)
2. Landscapes of Empire: City and Countryside in Assyria (Tuesday, 14 May, 9:10-10:45, C102)
3. Assyrian Society and Economy (Tuesday, 14 May, 10:50-12:25, C102)

The Neo-Babylonian Empire (626-539 BC)

4. Palace and Province: the Neo-Babylonian Kings and their Domain (Wednesday, 15 May, 9:10-10:45, C102)
5. The Urban Landscape of Babylonia (Wednesday, 15 May, 10:50-12:25, C102)
6. Society and Economy in First Millennium Babylonia (Thursday, 16 May, 9:10-10:45, C102)

A. Assyria in the 1st Millennium BC (911–c.612 BC)

Class 1. Formation and Government of an Empire

1.1. **Frahm, E.** 2017. “The Neo-Assyrian Period (ca. 1000-609 BCE).” In *A Companion to Assyria*, edited by Eckart Frahm, 161-208. Wiley-Blackwell.

1.2. **Radner, K.** 2014. “The Neo-Assyrian Empire.” In *Imperien und Reiche in der Weltgeschichte. Epochübergreifende und globalhistorische Vergleiche. Teile 1: Imperien des Altertums, Mittelalterliche und frühneuzeitliche Imperien*, edited by Michael Gehler and Robert Rollinger, 101–119. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Further Reading

- Fales, F. M.** 2017. "Assyrian Legal Traditions." In *A Companion to Assyria*, edited by E. Frahm, 398-422. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Fuchs, A.** 2011. "Assyria at war: Strategy and Conduct." In *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*, edited by K. Radner and E. Robson, 380–401. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Postgate, J. N.** 1995. "Assyria: the home provinces." In *Neo-Assyrian Geography*, edited by M. Liverani, 1-17. Rome.
- Postgate, N.** 2007. "The invisible hierarchy: Assyrian military and civilian administration in the 8th and 7th centuries BC." In *The Land of Assur & the Yoke of Assur. Studies on Assyria 1971-2005*, 331–360. Oxford.
- Radner, K.** 2003 [2007]. "The trials of Esarhaddon: the conspiracy of 670 BC." *ISIMU. Revista sobre Oriente Próximo y Egipto en la antigüedad* 6: 165–184.
- Radner, K.** 2005. "The reciprocal relationship between judge and society in the Neo-Assyrian period." *Maarav* 12 (12): 41–68.
- Radner, K.** 2008. "The delegation of power: Neo-Assyrian bureau seals." In *L'archive des Fortifications de Persépolis. État des questions et perspectives de recherches. Actes du colloque organisé au Collège de France par la Chaire d'histoire et civilisation du monde achéménide et de l'empire d'Alexandre et le Réseau international d'études et de recherches achéménides (GDR 2538 CNRS), 34 novembre 2006*, edited by Pierre Briant, Wouter F. M. Henkelman and Matthew W. Stolper, 481–515. Paris: de Boccard.
- Radner, K.** 2010. "Assyrian and non-Assyrian kingship in the first millennium BC." In *Concepts of Kingship in Antiquity. Proceedings of the European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop held in Padova, November 28th December 1st, 2007*, edited by Giovanni B. Lanfranchi and Robert Rollinger, 25–34. Padua: S.A.R.G.O.N. Editrice e Libreria.
- Radner, K.** 2011. "Royal decision-making: kings, magnates, and scholars." In *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*, edited by K. Radner and E. Robson, 358–379. Oxford: OUP.
- Radner, K.** 2014. "An Imperial Communication Network. The State Correspondence of the Neo-Assyrian Empire." In *State Correspondence in the Ancient World. From New Kingdom Egypt to the Roman Empire*, edited by K. Radner, 64-93. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Radner, K.** 2015. *Ancient Assyria: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Radner, K.** 2015. "Royal Pen Pals: The Kings of Assyria in Correspondence with Officials, Clients and Total Strangers (8th and 7th Centuries BC) " In *Official Epistolography and the Language(s) of Power. Proceedings of the First International Conference of the Research Network Imperium & Officium. Comparative Studies in Ancient Bureaucracy and Officialdom, University of Vienna, 10-12 November 2010*, edited by S. Procházka, L. Reinfandt and S. Tost, 61-72. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Class 2. Landscapes of Empire: City and Countryside in Assyria

2.1. **Russell, J. M.** 2017. "Assyrian Cities and Architecture." In *A Companion to Assyria*, edited by Eckart Frahm, 423-452. Wiley-Blackwell.

2.2. **Ur, J.** 2017. "Physical and Cultural Landscapes of Assyria." In *A Companion to Assyria*, edited by Eckart Frahm, 13-35. Wiley-Blackwell.

Further Reading

Baker, H. D. 2016. "Urban craftsmen and other specialists, their land holdings, and the Neo-Assyrian state." In *Dynamics of Production in the Ancient Near East 1300–500 BC*, edited by Juan Carlos Moreno García, 53–73. Oxford: Oxbow Books.

Curtis, J. E., McCall, H., Collon, D., and al-Gailani Werr, L. (eds) 2008. *New Light on Nimrud. Proceedings of the Nimrud Conference, 11th-13th March 2002*. London: British Institute for the Study of Iraq in association with The British Museum.

Fales, F. M. 1990. "The rural landscape of the Neo-Assyrian empire: a survey." *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 4 (2):81–142.

Nováček, K., Amin, N.A.M., and Melčák, M. 2013. "A Medieval City within Assyrian Walls: The Continuity of the Town of Arbīl in Northern Mesopotamia." *Iraq* 75:1-42.

Oates, J., and D. Oates. 2001. *Nimrud. An Assyrian Imperial City Revealed*. London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.

Parpola, S. 1995. "The Construction of Dur-Šarrukin in the Assyrian Royal Correspondence." In *Khorsabad, le palais de Sargon II, roi d'Assyrie. Actes du colloque organisé au musée du Louvre par le Service culturel les 21 et 22 janvier 1994*, edited by A. Caubet, 47–77. Paris.

Postgate, J. N. 1989. "The ownership and exploitation of land in Assyria in the 1st millennium B.C." In *Reflets des deux fleuves: volume de mélanges offerts à André Finet*, edited by M. Lebeau and P. Talon, 141–152. Leuven.

Radner, K. 2000. "How did the Neo-Assyrian king perceive his land and its resources?" In *Rainfall and Agriculture in Northern Mesopotamia (MOS Studies 3). Proceedings of the Third MOS Symposium (Leiden 1999)*, edited by R. M. Jas, 233–246. Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul.

Radner, K. 2011. "The Assur-Nineveh-Arbela triangle. Central Assyria in the Neo-Assyrian period." In *Between the Cultures. The Central Tigris Region from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC. Conference at Heidelberg, January 22nd-24th, 2009*, edited by Peter A. Miglus and Simone Mhl, 321–329. Heidelberg: Heidelberg Orientverlag.

Reade, J. E. 1998–2001. "Ninive (Nineveh)." *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 9: 388–433.

Ur, J. A. 2005. "Sennacherib's Northern Assyrian Canals. New Insights from Satellite Imagery and Aerial Photography." *Iraq* 67:317-345.

Ur, J. A. 2013. "The morphology of Neo-Assyrian cities." *Subartu* 6–7:11–22.

Wilkinson, T. J., Ur, J., Barbanes Wilkinson, E., and Altaweel, M. 2005. "Landscape and Settlement in the Neo-Assyrian Empire." *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 340:23–56.

Class 3. Assyrian Society and Economy

3.1. **Radner, K.** 2017. "Economy, Society, and Daily Life in the Neo-Assyrian Period." In *A Companion to Assyria*, edited by Eckart Frahm, 209–228. Wiley-Blackwell.

3.2. **Postgate, J. N.** 1979. "The economic structure of the Assyrian empire." In *Power and Propaganda. A Symposium on Ancient Empires*, edited by M. T. Larsen, 193–221. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag.

Further Reading

Baker, H. D. 2017. "Slavery and personhood in the Neo-Assyrian empire." In *On Human Bondage: After Slavery and Social Death*, edited by J. Bodel and W. Scheidel, 15–30. Chichester: Wiley & Sons.

Gaspa, S. 2014. "Silver Circulation and the Development of the Private Economy in the Assyrian Empire (9th–7th centuries BCE). Considerations on Private Investments, Prices, and Prosperity Levels of the Imperial Élite." *Studia Mesopotamica. Jahrbuch für altorientalische Geschichte und Kultur* 1: 85–136.

Parpola, S. 2004. "National and Ethnic Identity in the Neo-Assyrian Empire and Assyrian Identity in Post-Empire Times." *Journal of Assyrian Academic Studies* 18 (2): 5–22.

Postgate, J. N. 1989. "Ancient Assyria: A multi-racial state." *ARAM* 1 (1): 1–10.

Radner, K. 1999. "Money in the Neo-Assyrian empire." In *Trade and Finance in Ancient Mesopotamia (MOS Studies 1). Proceedings of the First MOS Symposium (Leiden 1997)*, edited by J. G. Dercksen, 127–157. Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul.

Radner, K. 1999. "Traders in the Neo-Assyrian period." In *Trade and Finance in Ancient Mesopotamia (MOS Studies 1). Proceedings of the First MOS Symposium (Leiden 1997)*, edited by J. G. Dercksen, 101–126. Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul.

Radner, K. 2007. "Hired labour in the Neo-Assyrian empire." *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 16: 185–226.

B. The Neo-Babylonian Empire (626–539 BC)

4. Palace and Province: the Neo-Babylonian Kings and their Domain

4.1. **Jursa, M.** 2014. “The Neo-Babylonian Empire.” In *Imperien und Reiche in der Weltgeschichte - Epochübergreifenden und globalhistorische Vergleiche*, edited by M. Gehler and R. Rollinger, 121–148. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

4.2. **Da Riva, R.** 2013. “Nebuchadnezzar II’s Prism (EŞ 7834): A New Edition.” *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 103 (2): 196–229.

Further Reading

Jursa, M. 2014. “The lost state correspondence of the Babylonian empire as reflected in the contemporary administrative letters.” In *State Correspondence in the Ancient World. From New Kingdom Egypt to the Roman Empire*, edited by K. Radner, 94–111 with notes pp. 226–8. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Class 5. The Urban Landscape of Babylonia

5.1. **Baker, H. D.** 2012. “The Neo-Babylonian empire.” In *A Companion to the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*, edited by D. T. Potts, 914–930. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

5.2. **Baker, H. D.** 2007. “Urban form in the first millennium BC.” In *The Babylonian World*, edited by G. Leick, 66–77. New York and London: Routledge.

5.3. **Baker, H. D.** 2011. “From street altar to palace: reading the built environment of urban Babylonia.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*, edited by K. Radner and E. Robson, 533–552. Oxford: OUP.

Further Reading

Baker, H. D. 2014. “The Babylonian Cities: Investigating Urban Morphology Using Texts And Archaeology.” In *The Fabric of Cities: Aspects of Urbanism, Urban Topography and Society in Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome*, edited by N.N. May and U. Steinert, 171–188. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

Larsen, M. T. 2000. “The city-states of the early Neo-Babylonian period.” In *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures. An Investigation Conducted by the Copenhagen Polis Centre*, edited by M. H. Hansen, 117–127. Copenhagen.

Pedersén, O., Sinclair, P. J. J., Hein, I. and Andersson, J. 2010. “Cities and Urban Landscapes in the Ancient Near East and Egypt with Special Focus on the City of Babylon.” In *The Urban Mind: Cultural and Environmental Dynamics*, edited by P.J.J. Sinclair, G. Nordquist, F. Herschend and C. Isendahl, 113–147. Studies in Global Archaeology 15. Uppsala: African and Comparative Archaeology, Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University.

Pedersén, O. 2014. “Waters at Babylon.” In *A History of Water: Waters and Urbanization: Series III, Volume 1*, edited by T. Tvedt and T. Oestigaard, 107–129. University of Bergen.

Class 6. Society and Economy in First Millennium Babylonia

6.1. **Jursa, M.** 2007. “The Babylonian Economy in the First Millennium BC.” In *The Babylonian World*, edited by Gwendolyn Leick, 224–235. Routledge.

6.2. **Baker, H. D.** 2015. “Family Structure, Household Cycle, and the Social Use of Domestic Space in Urban Babylonia.” In *Household Studies in Complex Societies. (Micro) Archaeological and Textual Approaches*, edited by Miriam Müller, 371–407. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

Further Reading

Baker, H. D. 2001. “Degrees of freedom: slavery in mid-first millennium BC Babylonia.” In *The Archaeology of Slavery*, edited by P. Mitchell, 18–26.

Baker, H. D. 2014. “House size and household structure: quantitative data in the study of Babylonian urban living conditions.” In *Documentary Sources in Ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman Economic History: Methodology and Practice*, edited by H. D. Baker and M. Jursa, 7–23. Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow.

Jursa, M. 2005. *Neo-Babylonian Legal and Administrative Documents. Typology, Contents and Archives, Guides to the Mesopotamian Textual Record*. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

Jursa, M. 2015. “Labor in Babylonia in the First Millennium BC.” In *Labor in the Ancient World vol. 5: A Colloquium Held at Hirschbach (Saxony), April 2005*, edited by P. Steinkeller and M. Hudson, 345–396. Dresden: Islet Verlag.

Jursa, M. 2016. “Silver and Other Forms of Elite Wealth in Seventh Century BC Babylonia.” In *Silver, Money and Credit. A Tribute to Robartus J. van der Spek on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday on 18th September 2014*, edited by K. Kleber and R. Pirngruber, 61–71. Leiden: NINO.

Nielsen, J. P., and Waerzeggers, C. 2016. “Interactions between Temple, King and Local Elites: the Hanšû Land Schemes in Babylonia (8th–6th Centuries BC).” In, edited by Juan Carlos Moreno Garcia, 331–344. Oxford: Oxbow Books.

Roth, M. T. 1989-1990. “The Material Composition of the Neo-Babylonian Dowry.” *Archiv für Orientforschung* 36-7: 1-55.

Roth, M. T. 1991–93. “The Neo-Babylonian Widow.” *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 43-45: 1–26.

Waerzeggers, C. 2011. “The pious king: royal patronage of temples.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*, edited by K. Radner and E. Robson, 725–751. Oxford: OUP.

Wunsch, C. 2007. "The Egibi Family." In *The Babylonian World*, edited by G. Leick, 232–242. New York and London: Routledge.

Wunsch, C., and Magdalene, F. R. 2014. "Freedom and dependency: Neo-Babylonian manumission documents with oblation and service obligations." In *Extraction and Control: Studies in Honor of Matthew W. Stolper*, edited by Michael Kozuh, Wouter F. M. Henkelman, Charles E. Jones and Christopher Woods, 337–346. Chicago: Oriental Institute.