Aramaic
HEBRW 211
Spring 2013 Syllabus

Instructor
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Office hours by appointment

Course Texts

M. Jastrow, _A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature_ (there are many printings; the most recent, with relatively large print, is Hendrickson, 2005)
(Optional) Y. Frank, _Grammar for Gemara and Targum Onkelos: An Introduction to Aramaic_ (Ariel, 2003)

Course Description

In this course we will study the Aramaic of the Babylonian Talmud (Babylonian Jewish Aramaic, or “BJA”). Our approach will be to build on the students’ pre-existing knowledge of Hebrew and to contrast features of Aramaic with corresponding features of Hebrew.

You will be asked to prepare texts in advance of class. In your preparation you are welcome to use vocalized texts, such as in the Steinsaltz editions of the Babylonian Talmud. In class, however, you will be expected to work from the texts that you have been provided.

Your performance in the class will be assessed based on preparation for class, class participation, performance on periodic quizzes, and a final project.
Week 1
- Overview of Aramaic
- Phonological features of Aramaic

Week 2
- Nouns and adjectives
- Pronouns
- Basic verb forms: pe’al perfect, active participle and passive participle

Week 3
- Pronoun suffixes
- Binyanim (stems)

Week 4
- Verbs
  - Perfect and imperfect affixes
  - “Sound” roots in pe’al

Week 5
- Verbs (cont’d)
  - “Sound” roots in pa’el, af’el and the passive binyanim

Week 6
- Verbs (cont’d)
  - The use of auxiliaries with the participle
  - Common “weak” roots

Week 7
- Verbs (cont’d)
  - Common “weak” roots
  - Ambiguous forms

Weeks 8–10
- Additional text reading

Weeks 11-13
- Non-Talmudic texts:
  - Dan. 2:4–17
  - קדיש רבנו
  - ה רבנו
  - Ketubbah
**Additional Bibliography**

**Overviews**


**Dictionaries**


**Grammars**


**General**

G. Deutscher, *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind’s Greatest Invention* (Metropolitan, 2005)

**Additional Instructional Material**

I. Jerusalmi, *The Talmud is in Aramaic: Non-Halakhic Passages in Aramaic Selected from the Babli, Vocalized and Explained* (HUC-JIR, 1982)