

# NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES AND CIVILIZATIONS

Humanities Quadrangle, 203.432.2944

<http://nelc.yale.edu>

M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

## **Chair**

Nadine Moeller

## **Director of Graduate Studies**

Kevin van Bladel

**Professors** John Darnell, Benjamin Foster, Eckart Frahm, Nadine Moeller, Shawkat Toorawa, Kevin van Bladel, Harvey Weiss

**Senior Lecturers and Senior Lectors** Sarab Al Ani, Muhammad Aziz, Gojko Barjamovic, Jonas Elbousty, Shiri Goren, Randa Muhammed, Dina Roginsky, Farkhondeh Shayesteh, Kathryn Slanski, Orit Yeret

**Lecturers and Lectors** Ozgen Felek, Agnete Lassen, Gregory Marouard, Jane Mikkelsen, Vincent Morel, Klaus Wagensohnner, M. Ezgi Yalcin

## **FIELDS OF STUDY**

Fields include Arabic Humanities, Assyriology, the Classical Near East, and Egyptology.

## **SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants should state their specific field of study and intended specialization. Evidence of reading knowledge of both French and German is required of all Ph.D. students. Proficiency in one of these languages is normally a prerequisite for admission and is demonstrated by passing a departmental examination upon registration at Yale. Proficiency in the second language must be achieved before admission to the second year of study. Ph.D. students admitted with only one of the two required languages or who fail the departmental examination are expected to enroll in an appropriate course given by the French or German department at Yale (or the equivalent elsewhere, with the approval of the director of graduate studies [DGS]). Completion of such a course with a grade of A or B will be accepted as fulfilling the proficiency requirement in either language; exceptions, for instance, for native speakers of French or German, may be made by the department upon recommendation of the DGS. For students in the M.A. program, evidence of reading knowledge of either French or German is sufficient.

## **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE**

### *Coursework*

The department normally requires that students take a minimum of twenty to twenty-three courses over three years. The minimum number depends on the area of specialization as follows: Arabic Humanities and Egyptology, twenty courses; Assyriology and Classical Near East, twenty-three courses. For all students, this normally means five semesters of full course load (four courses per semester)

followed by a sixth semester of reduced course load in preparation for the qualifying examinations. Normal progress in course work is considered to be consistent achievement of grades of High Pass or better, and at least four term courses or two yearlong courses with Honors per year. Students entering the program with an M.A. may ask that up to three graduate courses they took before arrival at Yale be counted toward the course requirement. If the request is approved by their adviser and the DGS, they can meet the requirement within two and a half years.

Of the required courses for graduate study, at least three quarters should be taken within the department, usually within the student's primary field of study. Courses taken outside of the department should be clearly related to the student's primary field or constitute a coherent second field. For students who take no courses outside of the department, minimum competence in a second field within NELC is required, defined as follows: at least two terms of a Near Eastern language, to be evaluated either by examination or a course grade of High Pass or better, or at least two terms of nonlanguage courses outside the area of specialization.

### *Committees*

While doing coursework, students are mentored by a faculty adviser from their field and by the DGS. Students writing dissertations may, if they so wish, be mentored by a committee headed by a primary adviser from NELC (not necessarily the faculty adviser from the course work years) and staffed with one, two, or more additional members, from either inside or outside the department, depending on the student's specific needs. Committees are to be approved by the DGS. Interested students are encouraged to seek out suitable and willing faculty to serve on their advisory committees.

### *Special Language and Course Requirements*

Course work should be planned to meet two departmental general standards: core languages for the primary fields of study, and minimum competence in a secondary field. The core languages in each of the major fields of study are as follows:

**Arabic Humanities** Arabic and one other Near Eastern language, typically Hebrew, Persian, or Turkish.

**Assyriology** Sumerian and Akkadian.

**Classical Near East** Arabic and at least two of the following: Armenian, Aramaic (Babylonian or Syriac), Coptic, Greek, Hebrew, Middle Persian, New Persian, or Sanskrit.

**Egyptology** Egyptian and at least four terms of Demotic or Coptic.

Minimum competence in a secondary field of study is defined as follows: at least two terms of a Near Eastern language to be evaluated either by examination or with a course grade of High Pass or better, or at least two terms of nonlanguage courses outside the area of specialization. A minimum grade of High Pass in these courses will be considered successful fulfillment of this requirement.

In Arabic Humanities, the minimum competence can be extended to an interdisciplinary course of study in a minor field. Minors may include six to eight term courses in such departments and programs as Comparative Literature, French, History, History of Science and Medicine, Italian Studies, Judaic Studies, Linguistics,

Medieval Studies, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Spanish and Portuguese, or others as applicable.

Students in all four fields of the department will be expected to declare their choice of a secondary language or area, or a minor field, by their third term of study.

### *Training in Teaching*

NELC students normally acquire four terms of teaching experience, between their second and fourth years in residence. Teaching Fellow assignments will be made by the DGS in consultation with the relevant faculty and will, whenever possible, take student preferences into account.

### *Examinations and the Dissertation*

The qualifying examination is normally taken at the end of the third year of study or no later than the beginning of the fourth year of study. Students meeting the course requirement after five semesters may take the qualifying examination at the end of the fall term of their third year. Qualifying examinations normally include three written and one oral examination, including language, literature, history, and other topics to be determined by the DGS in consultation with the student and the relevant faculty. Qualifying examinations may be based in part on reading lists of primary core texts and secondary literature compiled in advance by the student and the relevant faculty. Primary texts and secondary literature from course work may also be topics of the examination. For language examinations, unseen texts may also be included. In the case of the program in Arabic Humanities, for students electing to do a minor, the written portion will consist of two language examinations and one subject in the minor field, and the oral will consist of two subjects in Arabic studies and one in the minor field. Written examinations are set by the individual faculty members responsible for particular areas of study, but the oral portion may be conducted by the full staff of the department. The dissertation proposal is normally submitted one month after completing the qualifying examination.

In their final term of course work, students may, with the permission of the DGS and the relevant faculty, enroll in a directed readings course related to the general field of the prospective dissertation topic. Coursework should include preparation of a comprehensive, annotated bibliography for the prospective topic and exploration of selected aspects of the topic in a research paper. Students availing themselves of this option may present some of their work at the NELC Roundtable.

The dissertation prospectus may comprise up to thirty pages, excluding the bibliography. A two-page summary of the prospectus will normally be circulated among and voted upon by the faculty, though the full prospectus will be available for consideration.

Successful completion of the comprehensive examination and submission of an acceptable prospectus will qualify the student for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. After completion of the dissertation, the candidate may receive a final examination concerned primarily with the defense of the thesis.

## ARCHAIA GRADUATE QUALIFICATION

Students can participate in the Yale Program for the Study of Ancient and Premodern Cultures and Societies (Archaia) and receive a graduate qualification by fulfilling the necessary requirements. For further information, see Archaia, under Non-Degree-Granting Programs, Councils, and Research Institutes.

## MASTER'S DEGREES

**M.Phil.** See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

**Terminal Master's Degree Program** The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations occasionally admits students to pursue a terminal M.A. degree. No financial aid is available. Students enrolled in the M.A. program must complete a minimum of twelve term courses, with an average of High Pass and at least two grades of Honors.

Students in the Ph.D. program who leave the program prior to completion of the doctoral degree may be eligible to receive the terminal M.A. degree upon completion of a minimum of twelve courses, with an average of High Pass and at least two grades of Honors. Automatic petition for the M.A. degree is not available to students in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.

## COURSES

### **AKKD 500a, Elementary Akkadian I** Staff

Introduction to the language of ancient Babylonia and its cuneiform writing system, with exercises in reading, translation, and composition.

### **AKKD 501b, Elementary Akkadian II** Staff

Introduction to the language of ancient Babylonia and its cuneiform writing system, with exercises in reading, translation, and composition.

### **AKKD 502a, Intermediate Akkadian** Gojko Barjamovic

Close reading of selected Akkadian texts; introduction to Akkadian dialects, cuneiform epigraphy, and research techniques of Assyriology.

### **ARBC 500a, Elementary Modern Standard Arabic I** Staff

A two-term course for students who have no previous background in Arabic. Students learn the Arabic alphabet, basic vocabulary and expression, and basic grammatical structures and concepts, and concentrate on developing listening and speaking skills. The course aims at developing the following skills: reading to extract the gist of written Modern Standard Arabic texts; speaking with increased ease, good pronunciation, sound grammatical forms, and correct usage; writing to respond to simple daily life issues; forming and recognizing grammatically correct Modern Standard Arabic.

### **ARBC 501b, Elementary Modern Standard Arabic II** Staff

A two-term course for students who have no previous background in Arabic. Students learn the Arabic alphabet, basic vocabulary and expression, and basic grammatical structures and concepts, and concentrate on developing listening and speaking skills. The course aims at developing the following skills: reading to extract the gist of written Modern Standard Arabic texts; speaking with increased ease, good pronunciation, sound grammatical forms, and correct usage; writing to respond to simple daily life issues; forming and recognizing grammatically correct Modern Standard Arabic.

**ARBC 502a, Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic I** Staff

A two-term course for students with previous background in Arabic. It is designed to improve proficiency in aural and written comprehension as well as in speaking and writing skills. The course aims to develop the following skills: reading to extract the gist as well as key details of written Modern Standard Arabic texts on a variety of academic, social, cultural, economic, and political topics; speaking with greater fluency and enhanced engagement in conversations on a variety of topics; mastering writing, easily forming and recognizing grammatically correct Arabic sentences. Prerequisite: ARBC 501 or successful completion of a placement test.

**ARBC 503b, Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic II** Sarab Al Ani

A two-term course for students with previous background in Arabic. It is designed to improve proficiency in aural and written comprehension as well as in speaking and writing skills. The course aims to develop the following skills: reading to extract the gist as well as key details of written Modern Standard Arabic texts on a variety of academic, social, cultural, economic, and political topics; speaking with greater fluency and enhanced engagement in conversations on a variety of topics; mastering writing, easily forming and recognizing grammatically correct Arabic sentences. Prerequisite: ARBC 501 or successful completion of a placement test.

**ARBC 504a, Advanced Modern Standard Arabic I** Muhammad Aziz

Focus on improving the listening, writing, and speaking skills of students who already have a substantial background in the study of modern standard Arabic. Prerequisite: ARBC 503 or permission of the instructor.

**ARBC 505b, Advanced Modern Standard Arabic II** Muhammad Aziz

Focus on improving the listening, writing, and speaking skills of students who already have a substantial background in the study of modern standard Arabic. Prerequisite: ARBC 503 or permission of the instructor.

**ARBC 509a, Beginning Classical Arabic I** Staff

Introduction to classical Arabic, with emphasis on grammar to improve analytical reading skills. Readings include Qur'anic passages, literary material in both poetry and prose, biographical entries, and religious texts. Prerequisite: ARBC 501 or permission of the instructor. May be taken concurrently with ARBC 502 or ARBC 504.

**ARBC 510b, Beginning Classical Arabic II** Staff

Introduction to classical Arabic, with emphasis on analytical reading skills, grammar, and prose composition. Readings from the Qur'an, Islamic theology, and literature and history of the Middle East, as well as Jewish and Christian religious texts in Arabic.

**ARBC 511a, Intermediate Classical Arabic I** Staff

A course on Arabic grammar and morphology that builds on the skills acquired in ARBC 146/510, with emphasis on vocabulary, grammar, and reading skills and strategies. Readings drawn from a variety of genres, such as biography, history, hadith, and poetry. ARBC 146/510 or permission from instructor.

**ARBC 512b, Intermediate Classical Arabic II** Staff

A continuation of Intermediate Classical Arabic grammar and morphology that builds on the skills acquired in ARBC 156/511, with emphasis on vocabulary, grammar, and reading skills and strategies. Readings drawn from a variety of genres, such as biography, history, hadith, and poetry. ARBC 156/511 or permission from instructor.

**ARBC 520a, Egyptian Arabic** Randa Muhammed**ARBC 522a, Modern Standard Arabic for Heritage Learners I** Sarab Al Ani

This course is designed for students who have been exposed to Arabic—either at home or by living in an Arabic speaking country—but who have little or no formal training in the language. The main purpose of the course is to build on the language knowledge students bring to the classroom to improve their skills and performance in the three modes of communication (interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive) to fulfill various needs. Particular attention is paid to building, controlling, and mastering language structures. Effective study strategies are used in this course to strengthen writing skills in MSA. Various assignments and tasks are designed to improve the learner's understanding of several issues related to culture in various Arabic speaking countries. Prerequisite: Students must take the placement test or have permission of the instructor.

**ARBC 527b, Hunger in Eden: Mohamed Choukri's Narratives** Jonas Elbousty

A survey of the work of Mohamed Choukri, one of the most prominent Moroccan, if not Arab, writers to have shaped the modern Arabic literary canon. His influence has been instrumental in forming a generation of writers and enthusiastic readers, who cherish his narratives. Students dive deeply into Choukri's narratives, analyzing them with an eye toward their cultural and political importance. The class looks to Choukri's life story to reveal the roots of his passion for writing and explores the culture of the time and places about which he writes. Through his narratives, students better understand the political environment within which they were composed and the importance of Choukri's work to today's reader regarding current debates over Arab identity. This class surveys the entirety of his work, contextualizing within the sphere of Arabic novelistic tradition. Prerequisite: ARBC 505 or permission of the instructor.

**ARBC 532b, Modern Standard Arabic for Heritage Learners II** Sarab Al Ani

Continuation of ARBC 122, MSA for Heritage Learners I. This course is designed for students who have been exposed to Arabic—either at home or by living in an Arabic-speaking country—but who have little or no formal training in the language. The main purpose of the course is to build on the language knowledge students bring to the classroom to improve their skills and performance in the three modes of communication (Interpersonal, Presentational, and Interpretive) in MSA to fulfill various needs. Particular attention is paid to building, controlling, and mastering language structures. Effective study strategies are used in this course to strengthen writing skills. Various assignments and tasks are designed to improve the learner's understanding of several issues related to culture in various Arabic speaking countries. Prerequisite: ARBC 122, successful completion of placement test, or instructor permission.

**ARBC 560a, Graduate Arabic Seminar: The Qur'an** Kevin van Bladel

Study and interpretation of classical Arabic texts for graduate students. The focus this term is on the Qur'an.

**ARBC 561b, Graduate Arabic Seminar** Shawkat Toorawa

Study and interpretation of classical Arabic texts for graduate students.

**ARBC 578a, Yemeni Literature and Culture** Muhammad Aziz

This course introduces students to a variety of Yemeni novels, short stories, poetry, history, movies, songs, and culture. We delve deeply into the major Arabic literary

styles, in their forms of poetry, prose, movies, and series, and gain a general sense of the transitional period between past and present in the modern era. Students are expected to read the material at home and prepare for class discussions. Students grasp some sense of Yemeni history as well as literature in general. Yemeni series and films are an essential part of the course. Evaluation is based on participation, a midterm paper, and a final project. Prerequisite: ARBC 503.

**EGYP 500a, Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian I** John Darnell

A two-term introduction to the language of ancient pharaonic Egypt (Middle Egyptian) and its hieroglyphic writing system, with short historical, literary, and religious texts. Grammatical analysis with exercises in reading, translation, and composition.

**EGYP 501b, Introduction to Classical Hieroglyphic Egyptian II** John Darnell

A two-term introduction to the language of ancient pharaonic Egypt (Middle Egyptian) and its hieroglyphic writing system, with short historical, literary, and religious texts. Grammatical analysis with exercises in reading, translation, and composition.

**EGYP 512b / RLST 658b, Egyptian Monastic Literature in Coptic** Stephen Davis

Readings in the early Egyptian classics of Christian ascetism in Sahidic Coptic, including the Desert Fathers and Shenoute. Prerequisite: EGYP 510b or equivalent.

**EGYP 514a / RLST 653a, Gnostic Texts in Coptic** Ramona Teepe

The course reads selected portions of important texts from the Nag Hammadi collection, including the Apocryphon of John, the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Truth, Thunder, the Treatise on Resurrection, the Tripartite Tractate, as well as other noncanonical texts preserved in Coptic, including the Gospel of Mary and the Gospel of Judas. Prerequisite: EGYP 510 or equivalent.

**EGYP 533a, Intermediate Egyptian I: Literary Texts** John Darnell

Close reading of Middle Egyptian literary texts; introduction to the hieratic (cursive) Egyptian script. Readings include the Middle Kingdom stories of “Sinuhe” and the “Eloquent Peasant” and excerpts from wisdom literature. Prerequisite: EGYP 501.

**EGYP 541b, Intermediate Egyptian II: Historical Texts** Staff

Close reading of Middle Egyptian historical texts in original hieroglyphic and hieratic script. Initial survey of ancient Egyptian historiography and grammatical forms peculiar to this genre of text. Prerequisite: EGYP 501.

**EGYP 560a, Abydene Texts** John Darnell

This course engages in close reading of a selection of the many texts deriving from and describing the ancient city of Abydos. The course provides an overview of material ranging in date from the Protodynastic through the Ramesside Periods, covering over two millennia of ancient Egyptian history. This class is intended for students who have completed at least an intermediate level course (L-3 or L-4). This course fulfills the L-5 requirement. Students who have not completed an intermediate level course (L-3 or L-4) need permission from the instructor.

**EGYP 599a, Directed Readings: Egyptology** Nadine Moeller

**HEBR 500a, Elementary Modern Hebrew I** Dina Roginsky

A two-term introduction to the language of contemporary Israel, both spoken and written. Fundamentals of grammar; extensive practice in speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension under the guidance of a native speaker. No previous knowledge required. Successful completion of the fall term required to enroll in the spring term.



**HEBR 501b, Elementary Modern Hebrew II** Orit Yeret

A two-term introduction to the language of contemporary Israel, both spoken and written. Fundamentals of grammar; extensive practice in speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension under the guidance of a native speaker. No previous knowledge required. Successful completion of the fall term required to enroll in the spring term.

**HEBR 502a, Intermediate Modern Hebrew I** Orit Yeret

A two-term review and continuation of grammatical study leading to a deeper comprehension of style and usage. Focus on selected readings, writing, comprehension, and speaking skills. Prerequisite: HEBR 501 or equivalent.

**HEBR 503b, Intermediate Modern Hebrew II** Orit Yeret

A two-term review and continuation of grammatical study leading to a deeper comprehension of style and usage. Focus on selected readings, writing, comprehension, and speaking skills. Prerequisite: HEBR 502 or equivalent.

**HEBR 505a, Contemporary Israeli Society in Film** Shiri Goren

Examination of major themes in Israeli society through film, with emphasis on language study. Topics include migration, gender and sexuality, Jewish/Israeli identity, and private and collective memory. Readings in Hebrew and English provide a sociohistorical background and basis for class discussion. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 502, placement test, or permission of the instructor.

**HEBR 510a, Conversational Hebrew: Israeli Media** Shiri Goren

An advanced Hebrew course for students interested in practicing and enhancing conversational skills. The course aims to improve the four language skills while stressing listening comprehension and various forms of discussions including practical situations, online interactions, and content analysis. Prerequisite: HEBR 502 or permission of the instructor.

**HEBR 511a, Elementary Biblical Hebrew I** Dina Roginsky

A two-term introduction to Biblical Hebrew. Intensive instruction in grammar and vocabulary, supplemented by readings from the Bible. No prior knowledge of Hebrew required.

**HEBR 512b, Elementary Biblical Hebrew II** Eric Raymond

A two-term review and continuation of instruction in grammar and vocabulary, supplemented by readings from the Bible. Prerequisite: HEBR 510 or equivalent.

**HEBR 516b, Israeli Popular Music** Dina Roginsky

Changes in the development of popular music in Israel explored as representations of changing Israeli society and culture. The interaction of music and cultural identity; the role of modern popular music in representing, shaping, challenging, and criticizing social conventions; songs of commemoration and heroism; popular representation of the Holocaust; Mizrahi and Arab music; feminism, sexuality, and gender; class and musical consumption; criticism, protest, and globalization. Prerequisite: HEBR 502 or equivalent.

**HEBR 563b / JDST 695b, From Biblical to Modern Hebrew** Dina Roginsky

This course aims to support students who have reading knowledge of Biblical Hebrew but cannot read or converse in Modern Hebrew. The course concentrates on reading and aims at enabling students to use Modern Hebrew for research purposes. The texts chosen are tailored to students' particular areas of interest. Prerequisite: two years



of Biblical or Modern Hebrew studies, or permission of the instructor. Conducted in English.

**MESO 578a, Mesopotamian Lexical Lists** Klaus Wagonsonner

The cuneiform writing system emerged in southern Mesopotamia roughly in the last third of the fourth millennium BCE. The early engineers of writing used the script to keep track of incoming and outgoing commodities and for other administrative purposes. A quite substantial number of the early texts inscribed with this script, however, are scholarly: lists of items such as terms for occupations, animal species, materials, etc. Some of these lists were standardized and spread to other places in Mesopotamia and beyond, where they were faithfully copied throughout the third millennium BCE. Other lists were added to the corpus. Many of these lists eventually faded, but new lists emerged, which were appended and translated. The Mesopotamian lexical corpus spans from the earliest periods until the latest attestation of cuneiform in the first century CE. This course provides an overview of the most important developments in the lexical corpus, its use in the education of scribes, the concepts of knowledge organization, and its importance for modern philological work on the ancient languages of Mesopotamia. The course is designed as part lecture, part student presentations. The short presentations focus on certain aspects of lexical texts or highlight specific lexical compositions. Some familiarity with Sumerian and Akkadian is desirable. The lectures, however, can be followed by individuals without prior in-depth knowledge of these languages.

**NELC 500a / ARCG 500a / CLSS 808a, Environmental Archaeology of West Asia, Egypt, and the Mediterranean** Harvey Weiss

The new linkages of high-resolution paleoclimate and archaeological and epigraphic records revise earlier historiography for the major disjunctions, including societal genesis, collapse, habitat tracking, and technological and ideological innovations, from 4000 to 40 BCE across west Asia, Egypt, and the Aegean. The seminar synthesizes speleothem and lake, marine, and glacial core records for abrupt climate changes and coincident societal adaptations previously unexplained.

**NELC 515b, The Bible in Its Ancient Near Eastern Setting (Seminar)** Eckart Frahm  
History of the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires of the first millennium BCE, and how their rise and fall influenced the politics, religion, and literary traditions of biblical Israel. Topics include the role of prophecy and (divine) law, political and religious justifications of violence, the birth of monotheism, and the historical reliability of the Hebrew Bible.

**NELC 517a, Beginnings of Business: A History of Early Trade** Gojko Barjamovic  
When did trade begin? When did business go global? How has the organization of commerce changed through time? What are our fundamental financial instruments and how and in what order where they developed? Are there fundamental rules behind the way in which humans conduct business? What roles have states and institutions historically played in facilitating or restricting trade? What sources and approaches are available to study trade in pre-modern times? Can business innovations from the past help us think about business in the present? To explore all these questions, this course draws upon data and case studies drawn broadly from the ancient world but with focus on evidence from ancient Mesopotamia. With the benefit of a giant canvas of history we paint a detailed picture of how business developed through time. We look at examples where business was strictly regulated by state-controlled institutions as well

as examples entrepreneurs would have to rely on informal enforcement mechanisms, such as kin-relationships and reputation in repeated interactions. We dive into the effects of shock on individuals and systems, from production shortages to pandemics. And we ask what happens when systems collapse or value becomes immeasurable (as people have claimed for the 2008 crash). We study family-controlled business groups as an alternative to integrated and professionally managed corporations. And we observe how entrepreneurs adapted to face the financial challenges of states and dawning globalization. Beginnings of Business immerses students in the history of trade and draws on guests from widely different fields and disciplines to showcase the variety of approaches with which scholars address questions of business history. Meetings are built around lectures but emphasize participation and discussion. We run business simulations and make visits to institutions and collections to provide as broad and engaging a learning experience for students as possible about the practice of trade since the dawn of history.

**NELC 528a, From Gilgamesh to Persepolis: Introduction to Near Eastern Literatures**

Kathryn Slanski

This course is an introduction to Near Eastern civilization through its rich and diverse literary cultures. We read and discuss ancient works, such as the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, *Genesis*, and “The Song of Songs,” medieval works, such as *A Thousand and One Nights*, selections from the *Qur’an*, and *Shah-nama: The Book of Kings*, and modern works of Israeli, Turkish, and Iranian novelists and Palestinian poets. Students complement classroom studies with visits to the Yale Babylonian Collection and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, as well as with film screenings and guest speakers. Students also learn fundamentals of Near Eastern writing systems, and consider questions of tradition, transmission, and translation. All readings are in translation.

**NELC 531b, Magical and Medical Texts from Mesopotamia** Eckart Frahm

The course focuses on the study of magical and medical texts from Mesopotamia.

**NELC 533a / ANTH 531a / CLSS 815a / EALL 773a / HIST 502a / HSAR 564a / JDST 653a / RLST 803a, Archaia Seminar: Law and Society in China and Rome**

Noel Lenski and Valerie Hansen

An introduction to the legal systems of the Roman and post-Roman states and Han- and Tang-dynasty China. Emphasis on developing collaborative partnerships that foster comparative history research. Readings in surviving law codes (in the original or English translation) and secondary studies on topics including slavery, trade, crime, and family. This course serves as an Archaia Core Seminar. It is connected with Archaia's Ancient Societies Workshop (ASW), which runs a series of events throughout the academic year related to the theme of the seminar. Students enrolled in the seminar must attend all ASW events during the semester in which the seminar is offered.

**NELC 536b, Astrology in India** Christopher Minkowski

An introduction to the theory and practice of astrology in India, with emphasis on horā or horoscopy, one of the exact sciences in Sanskrit. Students learn the rudiments of three main forms: jāta (genethliological or natal horoscopy), muhūrta (catarthic or electional astrology), and pra#na (interrogational astrology). The themes of the course include the relationship of Indian astrology to a larger Eurasian history of science; its interactions with other forms of divination practiced in India in the past and today; philosophical and theological arguments for and against divination; the social worlds of

astrologers and their clients; and the study of astrology as a problem in the history and philosophy of science.

**NELC 569a, Visible Language: The Origins of Writing in Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt** Klaus Wagensonner

Exploration of writing in the ancient Near East and the profound effects this new method of communication had on human society. Focus on Egypt and Mesopotamia, where advanced writing systems first developed and were used for millennia.

**NELC 609b, Old Persian** Staff

Study of the ancient Iranian language, Old Persian, in its historical and material context in the Achaemenian Empire, with intensive philological investigation of the inscriptions of the Achaemenid kings. Students learn to read the language in the original cuneiform script and cover almost the entire corpus of texts. They also study the place of Old Persian in Indo-European linguistics and within the Iranian languages as a family. Permission of instructor is required.

**NELC 619a / CPLT 552a / MDVL 619a, The Medieval Court** Shawkat Toorawa

What are the features of the medieval court? To answer this, we look at courts in Western Europe, Byzantium, the Islamic world, and East Asia to learn about courtly culture, court poetry, and court society. Readings include van Berkel et al., *Crisis and Continuity in the Caliphate of al-Muqtadir*; Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*; Duinden, *Vienna and Versailles*; Elias, *The Court Society*; Maguire, *Byzantine Court Culture*; Miner, *Introduction to Japanese Court Poetry*; al-Washshā, *al-Muwashshā*. Knowledge of French desirable.

**NELC 632a / MDVL 802a, The Islamic Near East from Muhammad to the Mongol Invasion** Kevin van Bladel

The shaping of society and polity from the rise of Islam to the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in 1258. The origins of Islamic society; conquests and social and political assimilation under the Umayyads and Abbasids; the changing nature of political legitimacy and sovereignty under the caliphate; provincial decentralization and new sources of social and religious power.

**NELC 668a / RLST 667a, Arabic Bible and Biblical Interpretation** Stephen Davis

This graduate seminar focuses on the ways the Bible was transmitted and interpreted in the medieval Arabic-speaking world. *The topic for fall 2024 is the Book of Psalms, with a focus on the Psalms' use and interpretation in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim contexts.* Students who have completed the equivalent of three terms of Arabic instruction, including Classical Arabic, are eligible to enroll in the course with permission of the instructor.

**NELC 689b, Edward Said as Public Intellectual** Robyn Creswell

This seminar focuses on Edward Said's reflections on the role and responsibilities of the intellectual, paying particular attention to his writings on Palestine, the politics and culture of the Arab world, and the discourse of expertise. We also examine the reception of Said's ideas and example among Arab thinkers. Texts include *Orientalism*, *The Question of Palestine*, *After the Last Sky*, *Representations of the Intellectual*, and numerous essays.

**NELC 709b, The Age of Akhenaton** Nadine Moeller and John Darnell

Study of the period of the Egyptian pharaoh Akhenaton (reigned 1353–1336 BCE), often termed the Amarna Revolution, from historical, literary, religious, artistic, and

archaeological perspectives. Consideration of the wider Egyptian, ancient Near Eastern, African, and Mediterranean contexts. Examination of the international diplomacy, solar theology, and artistic developments of the period. Reading of primary source material in translation.

**NELC 725b, New Kingdom Archaeology** Nadine Moeller

The New Kingdom period of ancient Egypt (1550–1069 BC) is one of the most vibrant and culturally diverse time periods. Egypt had its first empire and became a major political and economic player within the ancient Near East. Egyptian culture and society was exposed to foreign influence but also evolved internally with its elaborate funerary architecture, royal and private, and saw the emergence of impressive royal cities. This course has the aim to investigate the archaeological data, architecture and corresponding material culture of New Kingdom Egypt (ca. 1550–1069 BCE). We discuss funerary and settlement evidence and the readings are selected according to their overall significance for current research. The aim is to provide a comprehensive overview of the available data and include recent discoveries such as Amenhotep III's "Golden City" on the Theban West Bank and the royal burials along the wadis of the Western Desert. Egypt's contact and influence in the Levant and Nubia are addressed as well, with the aim to achieve a more balanced perspective of these two regions and their populations interacting with Egyptian society.

**NELC 743a / ARCG 645a, Archaeology of Ancient Egypt: An Introduction** Nadine Moeller

This seminar examines in detail the archaeology of ancient Egypt following the chronological order of Egyptian history and covering almost 4,000 years, from the late Neolithic period to the end of the Greco-Roman period. The aim is not only to give a comprehensive overview of major sites and discoveries but also to use as much as possible information from recent excavations, discuss problems and priorities concerning this field, and offer an introduction to new fieldwork methods and approaches used in Egypt as well as a short history of this discipline.

**NELC 807b, Sasanian Seminar** Kevin van Bladel

This is an intensive introduction to the primary sources for the study of the Sasanian Persian kingdom (third–seventh century CE) and the state of research on the topic.

**NELC 809b / CLSS 829b / HIST 507b / LING 668b, Historical Sociolinguistics of the Ancient World** Kevin van Bladel

Social history and linguistic history can illuminate each other. This seminar confers the methods and models needed to write new and meaningful social history on the basis of linguistic phenomena known through traditional philology. Students learn to diagnose general historical social conditions on the basis of linguistic phenomena occurring in ancient texts. Prerequisite: working knowledge of at least one ancient language.

**NELC 843b, Classical Persian Epic** Jane Mikkelsen

This course acquaints students with some of the most famous epics of classical Persian literature. A remarkably capacious literary form, the Persian *masnavi* (long narrative poem) can be heroic, historical, religious, philosophical, didactic, or popular. As we attend minutely to matters of grammar, form, prosody, and style, we also keep in view relevant literary, cultural, historical, and intellectual contexts. An essential objective of the course is to introduce students to some of the ways in which the premodern Persian tradition thinks about itself. To that end, primary readings are supplemented with

short extracts from works by medieval and early modern theorists, critics, philosophers, and literary historians. Achieving a fine-grained view of the tradition from within illuminates our discussions as we consider the distinctiveness of the epic genre and its ability to foster creative conjunctions across myth and history, philosophy and allegory, religion and entertainment, and oral and written literary cultures. Thinking critically about the scope, history, and exportability of terms like *masnavi*, *epic*, and *romance* leads us into broader conversations about how best to situate classical Persian literature within (or against) world literature—and what that might mean for comparative, entangled, and multifocal histories of the epic form. Prerequisite: intermediate-level reading competency in Persian.

**NELC 844a, Classical Persian Lyric** Jane Mikkelson

This course acquaints students with some of the most extraordinary lyric poets of classical Persian literature. We read famous medieval figures and early modern luminaries. As we attend minutely to matters of grammar, form, prosody, and style, we also keep in view relevant literary, cultural, historical, and intellectual contexts. An essential aim of the course is to introduce students to some of the ways in which the premodern Persian tradition thinks about itself. To that end, primary readings in poetry and literary prose are supplemented with short extracts from works by medieval and early modern critics, rhetoricians, theorists, and literary historians; these texts supply concepts and skills that are indispensable for reading, appreciating, and researching Persian literature. Achieving a fine-grained view of the tradition from within illuminates our discussions as we consider the distinctiveness of the lyric form; probe various entanglements between literature, philosophy, and religion; and situate the premodern Persian literary tradition against broader comparative horizons that stretch across the Islamicate world and beyond. Prerequisite: intermediate-level reading knowledge of Persian.

**NELC 859a, Directed Readings in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations**

Shawkat Toorawa

The texts and subjects studied vary based on the focus selected by the faculty to adjust to the graduate students' research.

**OTTM 561a, Ottoman Text Reading I** Ozgen Felek

An introduction to Ottoman Turkish. Students develop skills that will enable them to read basic Ottoman Turkish texts and pursue independent work in Ottoman studies. We read and analyze excerpts from original Ottoman texts, such as chronicles, heroic narratives, advice books, physiognomy texts, travel accounts, and hagiographical stories. The principles of Turkish grammar, syntax, and textual criticism are covered as well.

**OTTM 562b, Ottoman Text Reading II** Ozgen Felek

A continuation of Ottoman reading series. Students will develop skills that will enable them to read basic Ottoman Turkish texts and pursue independent work in Ottoman studies. We read and analyze excerpts from original Ottoman texts, such as chronicles, heroic narratives, advice books, physiognomy texts, travel accounts, and hagiographical stories. The principles of Turkish grammar, syntax, and textual criticism are reviewed as well.

**OTTM 567b, Islamic Manuscript Illumination: History, Theory, and Practice** Ozgen Felek

This course is focused on the history, theory, and practice of Islamic manuscript illumination.

**OTTM 692a, Nineteenth-Century Jerusalem in Ottoman Archives** Ozgen Felek

This course is focused on texts related to Jerusalem in the nineteenth-century Ottoman archives. Permission from instructor.

**PERS 500a, Elementary Persian I** Farkhondeh Shayesteh

A two-term introduction to modern Persian with emphasis on all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The objective is to allow students to develop the foundational knowledge necessary for further language study. Designed for nonnative speakers.

**PERS 501b, Elementary Persian II** Farkhondeh Shayesteh

A two-term introduction to modern Persian with emphasis on all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The objective is to allow students to develop the foundational knowledge necessary for further language study. Designed for nonnative speakers.

**PERS 502a, Intermediate Persian I** Farkhondeh Shayesteh

This two-term course is a continuation of PERS 501 with emphasis on expanding vocabulary and understanding of more complex grammatical forms and syntax. Designed for nonnative speakers. Prerequisite: PERS 501 or permission of the instructor.

**PERS 503b, Intermediate Persian II** Farkhondeh Shayesteh

This two-term course is a continuation of PERS 501 with emphasis on expanding vocabulary and understanding of more complex grammatical forms and syntax. Designed for nonnative speakers. Prerequisite: PERS 501 or permission of the instructor.

**PERS 561a, Persian Culture and Media** Farkhondeh Shayesteh

Advanced study of Persian grammar, vocabulary, and culture through the use of authentic Persian media. Examination of daily media reports on cultural, political, historical, and sporting events in Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and other Persian-speaking regions. Designed for nonnative speakers. Prerequisite: PERS 140 or permission of instructor.

**SMTC 513a / RLST 838a, Elementary Syriac I** Jimmy Daccache

Syriac was an Aramaic dialect that developed its own written tradition in the northern Levantine city of Edessa in classical antiquity. It became (and remains to this day) the liturgical language of Eastern Christianity in its various manifestations. This course provides students with a basic working knowledge of the language, namely, the three principal scripts (Estrangela, Ser#o, and "Nestorian"), verbal morphology, and the fundamental rules of syntax. Extracts of several Syriac texts are studied for purposes of application. At the end of the course, students are able to read, translate, and analyze simple texts.

**SMTC 514b / RLST 839b, Elementary Syriac II** Jimmy Daccache

Syriac was an Aramaic dialect that developed its own written tradition in the northern Levantine city of Edessa in classical antiquity. This course provides students with

a basic working knowledge of the language, namely, the three principal scripts (Estrangela, Ser#o, and “Nestorian”), verbal morphology, and the fundamental rules of syntax. The course completes the introduction to the Syriac language. Extracts of several Syriac texts are studied for purposes of application. At the end of the course, students are able to read, translate, and analyze simple texts. Prerequisite: RLST 838/SMTC 513.

**SMTC 523a / RLST 848a, Intermediate Syriac I** Chris Mezger

This two-term course is designed to enhance students’ knowledge of the Syriac language by reading a selection of texts, sampling the major genres of classical Syriac literature. By the end of the year, students are familiar with non-vocalized texts and are capable of confronting specific grammatical or lexical problems. Prerequisite: RLST 839/SMTC 514 or knowledge of Syriac.

**SMTC 524b / RLST 868b, Intermediate Syriac II** Chris Mezger

The goal of this course is to enable students to gain proficiency in the Syriac language at a higher level. We continue readings in the major genres of classical Syriac literature, with special emphasis on texts from the ninth century onward. By the end of the term, students will have mastered complex grammatical structures. Prerequisite: RLST 848/SMTC 523 or knowledge of Syriac.

**SMTC 546a / RLST 834a, Northwest Semitic Inscriptions: Phoenician and Punic**

**Epigraphy** Jimmy Daccache

This course completes the introduction of Phoenician epigraphy. It is designed to study the Phoenician and Punic inscriptions found in the western Mediterranean basin. The chronological span stretches from the eighth century BCE to the Roman period. The study of inscriptions—examined from photographs and drawings—follows a chronological order: Phoenician inscriptions from the eighth and seventh centuries BCE (Italy, Iberian Peninsula); Punic and Late Punic inscriptions between the sixth century BCE and the first century CE (Italy, Iberian Peninsula, North Africa [Carthage, Maktar, etc.]). At the end of the term, students have a firm grasp of the Phoenician language and script and its evolution toward Punic and Late Punic.

Prerequisite: RLST 832.

**SMTC 553a / RLST 874a, Advanced Syriac I** Jimmy Daccache

This course is designed for graduate students who are proficient in Syriac and is organized topically. Topics vary each term and are listed in the syllabus on Canvas.

**SMTC 554b / RLST 875b, Advanced Syriac II** Jimmy Daccache

This course is designed for graduate students who are proficient in Syriac and is organized topically. Topics vary each term and are listed in the syllabus on Canvas.