



Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations Graduate Students' Association Welcome Package

Message from the Executive Committee

Greetings New Fellow Grad Student,

Welcome to the Department of Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations (NMC) at the University of Toronto! As a graduate student in our department, you are also a member of the Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations Graduate Students' Association (NMC GSA), and I would like to take this opportunity to let you know about some of our functions and activities.

The NMC GSA speaks for the interests of graduate students in the NMC Department, representing you and your peers towards the department, the School of Graduate Studies (SGS), the Graduate Students' Union (GSU), and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). Our representatives participate in meetings with these groups to ensure that our fellow students are well informed and that their concerns are heard.

The NMC GSA helps to foster academic discussion by organizing events and activities throughout the academic year including pub nights, hookah parties, end-of-term socials, as well as information sessions on topics relevant to the MA and PhD programmes of the department. The highlight of the year is the NMC GSA Annual Symposium (scheduled for March 2016), which is designed to provide a forum for graduate students in Near and Middle Eastern Studies, drawing speakers from universities across North America and beyond. This is an excellent opportunity to meet and share ideas with fellow graduate students specializing in the various disciplines represented within our department. We also encourage you to participate and hone your speaking skills by presenting a lecture on your area of research.

The hub of graduate student life in our department is the Grad Lounge, accessible from the 2nd and 3rd floors of Bancroft Hall. There you can chat with friends and colleagues, study, or simply relax on the couch. On occasion we will be in touch with you about upcoming events and meetings, so be sure to check your departmental mailbox and email regularly. Please ensure that Sandra Bremner, nmc@utoronto.ca, the department secretary, and Anna Sousa, anna.sousa@utoronto.ca, the graduate administrator, have your current email address. Also, you can contact the NMC GSA council anytime at nmcgsa@gmail.com.

To help you find your way and get a feel for your upcoming experience at the University of Toronto, the NMC GSA and the NMC Department will co-host an orientation day at the beginning of the term in September. The SGS also holds an orientation, and we strongly encourage you to attend both of these events, which have been organized to help you make the most of your experience at the University of Toronto. Please visit the NMC GSA Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/nmcgsa> for information and announcements. Additionally, we have implemented a mentoring program in which all new students will be assigned a mentor in their field of study or a related discipline. Please feel free to contact your mentor with any questions or concerns you may have.

The NMC GSA represents a diverse student body with different backgrounds and interests, and we try to reflect these in our activities. However, this requires the active participation of all students, and we want to hear **your** voice! We hope that you find life in the Department of Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations to be both fulfilling and enjoyable. On behalf of the entire NMC GSA executive council, Welcome!

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Fields of Study

Aramaic/Syriac Studies

The NMC department is home to the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies (CSSS), that organizes public lectures and annual symposia, and publishes the *Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies* (JCSSS), a scholarly publication (<http://csss.nmc.utoronto.ca/>). The city of Toronto also has several Syriac-speaking communities and churches that organize cultural events of interest to Syriac Christianity. For students studying Aramaic, the Royal Ontario Museum has a collection of Aramaic incantation bowls. For more information, please contact Amir Harrak, Professor of Aramaic and Syriac (a.harrak@utoronto.ca).

Assyriology and Mesopotamian Studies

The Department of NMC offers full training in Mesopotamian archaeology and Akkadian language and literature at the graduate and undergraduate levels as well as courses in the History of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East. The U of T library system has extensive holdings in those fields and the Department of NMC houses a research library and archives in Assyriology. The Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies, which is based in Toronto and housed in the Department, sponsors various lectures and symposia during the academic year, inviting scholars from Canada and abroad to lecture on various general and specialized topics related to the civilization of Ancient Mesopotamia. Finally the Royal Ontario Museum houses significant collections of artefacts from Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East as well as a research library.

The NMC Department houses the research archives of the Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia (RIM) Project, which contains a variety of publications related to Mesopotamian archaeology. In addition, the Department is home to the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies (CSMS), which organizes a series of lectures of interest to archaeology students, as well as an annual symposium (<http://www.csms-org.ca/>). The CSMS also publishes the *Bulletin of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies*.

Egyptology

The Ancient Near Eastern Studies program in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto offers excellent opportunities for both historical and cross-regional studies. This program is further enriched by several other interesting opportunities for students of Egyptology. The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM; <http://www.rom.on.ca/en>), only a few minutes away from the department, has a great collection of ancient Egyptian material, and houses a fantastic Egyptological research library; some classes are held there and allow students to acquaint themselves with some of the many ancient Egyptian artefacts housed in the ROM's storerooms by actually handling the objects and studying them in detail. Additionally, The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities (SSEA; <http://www.thessea.org/>), housed in the Department, hosts lectures by both senior Egyptologists and Egyptology graduate students throughout the year. Scholarly highlight is the annual symposium, which takes place in November and affords students the opportunities not only to learn about the latest research in the field, but also to establish contact with Egyptologists from North America and abroad. Finally, the Coptic community of Toronto, with its own church, museum, and annual festival is worth a visit to gain insights into the Coptic culture. In the recent years, the Coptic community has sponsored at least one course each year in the department that has to do with Coptic language, history, and culture. Moreover, there is a Coptic symposium held each year that we encourage students to participate in.

The University of Toronto has a well-known Egyptology program and several renowned scholars received their degrees here: J. Anderson (British Museum), M. Ayad (University of Memphis), K. Bard (Boston University, co-director of the Wadi Gawasis Project and the Boston-University-Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli project at Aksum), P. Brand (University of Memphis), J. L. Haynes (MFA in Boston), J. Hoffmeier, director of the North Sinai Archaeological Project (Tel Borg), as well as G. Mumford, director of the El-Markha Plain Project and the Tell Tebilla Project, S. Onstine (University of Memphis), and D.B. Redford (Pennsylvania State University) – just to mention a few.

Hebrew and Judaic Studies

Graduate students in Hebrew and Judaic Studies in NMC have many options in their chosen field and in supplementary fields for the first or second minor. Sarianna Metso covers Hebrew Bible and Dead Sea Scrolls, and is currently working on a critical edition of the book of Leviticus. Harry Fox (harryfox@chass.utoronto.ca) deals with texts in Rabbinics, Aggadic Midrash, Babylonian Talmud and Codes in the early era and Modern Hebrew Literature in the 20th century. His interests include commentary and philology, and he is currently engaged on major research topics on a Yiddish Renaissance manuscript, homosexuality and Judaism and, with Tirzah Meacham, is working on women's spirituality in the Renaissance. He is cross-listed with RLG. Tirzah Meacham (meacham@chass.utoronto.ca) teaches Middle Hebrew in her courses Mishnah and Tosefta and Midreshei Halakha and various dialects of Aramaic in her courses on Babylonian Talmud, Western Aramaic (Jerusalem Talmud) and Targum. Metso and Meacham are chiefly interested in law. Metso's work is connected to ancient law while Meacham's work is largely connected to women, the development of halakha, legal commentary, philology, purity systems and women's spirituality. She teaches a number of half courses using text in translation chiefly on issues of marriage, divorce, levirate marriage, menstruation and spirituality. Robert Holmstedt teaches ancient Hebrew (epigraphic, biblical, Ben Sira, DSS), Phoenician and Punic, Ugaritic, and Ge'ez (upon request). He also offers seminars on Comparative Semitics and Hebrew philology and linguistics. His research focuses on the application of linguistic theory to ancient West Semitic languages. Judith Newman is interested in Wisdom Literature. Hindy Najman's courses in RLG on Prophecy and Second Temple Literature help solidify the offerings in NMC. Courses deal with texts in the original languages and, with cognate areas included, provide one of the broadest selections of courses in this area in North America available in a non-theological setting. Students can expect to take courses with the entire faculty in order to develop solid major and minor areas of study.

Professor's Fox, Meacham and Holmstedt are available to help students worked out coherent majors and minors in NMC. Toronto is blessed with excellent library facilities in Biblical Studies and Rabbinic Literature principally housed in Robarts Library, including original manuscripts. The theological schools on campus, the Jewish Public Library and York University's Library add to Robarts superb collection.

History of the Islamic World & Modern Middle East

The study of the history of the Islamic World is well served at the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations with coursework and seminar series. Coursework covers the history of the Islamic world from its rise in late antiquity to the modern period, while geographically spanning all the way from the Ottoman west to the Eurasian steppe frontier. Courses include Islamic History to the Fall of Baghdad, History of Iran, the Steppe Frontier in Eurasian and Islamic History, Iranian Modernity, Modern Arab History, and Intellectuals of the Modern Arab World. Students are trained in primary source languages for historical research with courses such as readings in Medieval Arabic Chronicles, Biographical Literature, and Legal Documents, readings in Ottoman Historical Texts, Palaeography and Diplomats, and Medieval Persian Historiography, Diplomats, as well as Ethical and Advice Literature. This training in history and philology is complemented by courses on Theory and Method in Middle Eastern Studies and the Anthropology of the Middle East. Finally, students have the opportunity to engage more widely with scholars with regular seminars in Iranian Studies as well as Ottoman and Turkish Studies.

Islamic Art and Material Culture

The department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations offers a number of courses in Islamic Art and Material culture that focus on a wide range of topics including early Islamic and Persianate art and architecture, Islamic urbanism, decorative arts, and manuscript illustrations. These courses complement topics covered in seminars studying medieval Middle Eastern history, literature and texts, and are mostly instructed by professors who are affiliated with the Royal Ontario Museum as curators or researchers in the fields of Islamic art, architecture and material culture.

Islamic Religion and Philosophy/Arabic Studies

The comprehensive, interdisciplinary graduate program for Arabic/Islamic Studies at the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations is enriched by several other interesting opportunities for students of the program. The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), only a few minutes away from the department, has an important collection of Islamic Art; some classes are held there, which take advantage of these valuable artefacts. The Noor Cultural Centre focuses on the scholarly study of Islam at a popular level, organizing different activities and lectures given by international speakers (<http://www.noorculturalcentre.ca/>). Besides the several student groups on campus that cultivate interest in Arab and Islamic-related issues and activities, the graduate classes of the department profit from the multicultural “face” of Toronto offering a great opportunity to discuss topics with fellow students from different social and cultural backgrounds.

Near Eastern Archaeology

There is currently one active field project in NMC that is being conducted in the Near East. The Tayinat Archaeological Project (TAP) is a multidisciplinary project examining the development of early state-ordered societies at a large urban center in the plain of Antioch occupied during the Early Bronze and Iron Ages. The project began conducting surveys at Tell Ta'yinat in the Amuq Plain of southeastern Turkey in 1999 as part of the larger Amuq Valley Regional Project (AVRP), and excavations have been underway at the site since 2004: (<http://sites.utoronto.ca/tap/>). The project director is Professor Timothy P. Harrison.

Dr. Clemens Reichel has helped to direct the Hamoukar Project, investigating a very important site in northeastern Syria (Hassake Province), close to the modern border with Iraq. Large numbers of Halaf sherds found in extrusive context suggest that the site was occupied as early as the 6th millennium B.C. Excavations at Hamoukar have been conducted since 1999 as a joint expedition between the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute and the Syrian Department of Antiquities. Since 2005 work has been directed by Dr. Clemens Reichel (University of Toronto, formerly University of Chicago) and Salam al-Kuntar (Syrian Department of Antiquities, Damascus).

The NMC Department contains an archaeology lab with extensive study and teaching collections of Near Eastern ceramics. The lab also contains a variety of analytical equipment, including a polarized light microscope for petrographic studies, computer terminals and fully networked workstations. The Royal Ontario Museum also possesses substantial archaeological collections from sites throughout the Middle East and Western Asia. The University of Toronto is also home to the Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies (CIMS), which organizes regular lectures and publishes the journal *Scripta Mediterranea* (<http://www.utoronto.ca/cims/>).

CRANE (Computational Research on the Ancient Near East) is an international and interdisciplinary research project that is changing our understanding of archaeology in the Near East (<https://www.crane.utoronto.ca/index.html>). CRANE's goal is to create a framework and provide a platform for data integration and analysis, beginning with several archaeological sites in the Orontes Watershed of southeast Turkey and northwest Syria. CRANE is building an international collaboration of researchers who will use these data to model and visualize connections between social, economic and environmental factors at various spatial and temporal scales. CRANE will provide researchers from around the world with access to a comprehensive dataset about the region and a means to share their work and ideas with each other. CRANE also provides many graduate students with research opportunities and fellowships, as well as holding an annual symposium, along with public and international workshops.

Persian Studies

In recent decades the field Iranian Studies at the University of Toronto's Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations (NMC) has experienced considerable growth. Over the last half-century, the U of T has become a major centre for Iranian Studies in Canada. In the 1960s and 1970s, under the leadership of Prof. G. M. Wickens, U of T emerged as an important center for Iranian Studies and Persian Literature. Supported by various federal government initiatives to strengthen Middle Eastern studies, Prof. Wickens was able to carry out an ambitious acquisitions program for U of T's Robarts Library, creating as a result one of the finest libraries on Middle East and Iranian Studies in North America. Toronto was further bolstered as a center of Iranian Studies with the creation of the West Asian Studies section of what is now known as the Department of World Cultures at the Royal Ontario Museum, which houses a rich collection of miniatures, manuscripts, ceramics, textiles, and other cultural artefacts from Iran and Central Asia.

In addition to the long established programs in Classical Persian Literature, History, and Art, recent expansion in Iranian Studies at U of T has brought the expertise of fine scholars on the History of Zoroastrianism, Shi'i and Isma'ili Islam, Persian Language and Linguistics, and Iranian Modernity and Nationalism. The Toronto Initiative for Iranian Studies (<http://iranianstudies.ca>) has also contributed to the intellectual experiences of students by organizing several international conferences, seminars, and lectures every year. Toronto is the site of a vibrant Iranian community and has earned the nickname "Tehranto" by Iranians as a result. The city offers ample opportunity to experience the authentic Iranian culture, including numerous shops, art exhibits, concerts, festivals, and restaurants

Turkish and Ottoman Studies

The Middle East and Islamic Studies field at the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations of the University of Toronto offers excellent opportunities for Turkish and Ottoman studies. In addition to the faculty and the courses with whom you are already familiar through the department website, every year there are several opportunities to meet scholars who come from near and far to work on projects with our faculty members or to hold seminars relating to their work. In recent years major figures in Ottoman studies such as Suraiya Faroqhi and Colin Heywood have visited the department and not only delivered papers, but also provided opportunities for graduate students to meet with them in an informal setting and discuss research projects. The NMC is one of the founders and homes for the annual Great Lakes Ottomanist Workshop (GLOW). The department is a Full Member of the American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT), which is based in Philadelphia and has research institutes in Ankara and Istanbul. The University of Toronto Library has one of the best collections in the world for Turkish and Ottoman studies (comprising more than 20,000 titles in Ottoman and Turkish and thousands of volumes in the other languages of the Middle East), which is kept up-to-date with large purchases every year. The Royal Ontario Museum's library is also very important for the field and its holdings are open to graduate students.

The School of Graduate Studies offers travel grants on annual basis which facilitate research in archives in Turkey and elsewhere. Apart from this, the students can and are encouraged to apply for special grants to present papers at conferences, such as Annual Meeting of MESA. The university has an active Turkish Student's Association open to all students in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. Toronto is the centre of a vibrant and growing Turkish community (about 20,000). In various parts of the city one can find Turkish cafes, restaurants, and stores. There is a lively scene in Turkish music and other forms of culture. Every year a large Toronto Turkish Festival is held near the city centre.

Graduate Course Timetable, Fall 2015 - Winter 2016

This is a preliminary timetable of courses that will be offered in Fall 2015 - Winter 2016. There may be some changes in the coming weeks. Before registering, please ensure that your ROSI information is up to date.

Course Code	Course Title	Time	Instructor
NMC 1002 Y	Selected Standard Babylonian Texts	TR5-7	H. Baker
NMC 1009 Y	Introduction to Sumerian	R10-1	P-A. Beaulieu
NMC 1020 HF	Ancient Mesopotamia I: Sumerians and Akkadians	W9-12	P-A. Beaulieu
NMC 1021 HS	Ancient Mesopotamia II: Assyrians and Babylonians	W5-7	P-A. Beaulieu
NMC 1100 Y	Introduction to Aramaic	MW4-5:30	A. Harrak
NMC 1106 Y	Syriac Exegetical Texts	T9-11	A. Harrak
NMC 1111 Y	Babylonian Aramaic	R10-1	T. Meacham
NMC 1201 Y	Introduction to Middle Egyptian	MWF11	R.J. Leprohon
NMC 1202 Y	Middle Egyptian Texts	MWF11	R.J. Leprohon
NMC 1203 Y	Late Egyptian Texts	M2-4:30	R.J. Leprohon
NMC 1213 HS	Ancient Egyptian Religious and Funerary Literature	W2-4	K. Goebis
NMC 1306 HF	Scribes, Manuscripts, and Translations of the Hebrew Bible	R12-2	TBA
NMC 1316 HF	Modern Hebrew Poetry	T5-7	H. Fox
NMC 1318 HF	Midreshei Halakha: Purity and Cultic Texts	W1-4	H. Fox
NMC 1400 Y	Introduction to the Archaeology of the Near East	MW3-5	T. Harrison
NMC 1411 HF	Near Eastern Ceramics I	W1-3	T. Harrison
NMC 1412 HS	Near Eastern Ceramics II	W1-3	T. Harrison

NMC 1414 HS	Egyptian Artifacts	T10:30-1	M. Wegner
NMC 1419 YS	Egypt in the Age of the Pyramids	R9:30-1:00	K. Grzymiski
NMC 1423 HF	The Archaeology of Mesopotamia I (8,000–2,000 BC)	T1-4	C. Reichel
NMC 1424 HS	The Archaeology of Mesopotamia II (2,000–330 BC)	T1-4	C. Reichel
NMC 1426 HS	Mesopotamian Material Culture II: Architecture	M1-4	C. Reichel
NMC 1607 HS	Life Cycle and Personal Status Issues in Jewish Law—Biomedical Ethics and Reproductive Technology	W1-4	T. Meacham
NMC 1614 Y	Ancient Egyptian Religion	T2-4	R.J. Leprohon
NMC 1654 HS	Advanced Ancient Hebrew Grammar	T12-3	R. Holmstedt
NMC 2056 HF	Readings in Qur'an and Tafsir	T1-3	W. Saleh
NMC 2080 HF	Theory and Method in Middle Eastern Studies	R5-8	M. Tavakoli-Targhi
NMC 2090 Y	Islamic History to the Fall of Baghdad	MW6	L. Northrup
NMC 2100 Y	Introductory Standard Arabic	MW10-12, F10	A-K. Ali
NMC 2101 Y	Intermediate Standard Arabic I	MW1-3, F12	A-K. Ali
NMC 2102 Y	Intermediate Standard Arabic II	TR10-12	A-K. Ali
NMC 2103 Y	Advanced Standard Arabic	TR10-12	A-K. Ali
NMC 2111 HS	Medieval Arabic Rhetoric for Non-Specialists	M10-1	J. Miller
NMC 2117 HS	Readings in Medieval Arabic Chronicles	T1-4	L. Northrup
NMC 2130 HF	Introduction to Classical Arabic Literary Prose	M10-1	J. Miller
NMC 2131 HS	Introduction to Classical Arabic Poetry	M10-1	J. Miller
NMC 2171 HS	Topics in Modern Arab History II	W1-4	J.A. Reilly

NMC 2173 HS	Intellectuals of the Modern Arab World	R10-1	J. Hanssen
NMC 2201 Y	Intermediate Persian	TR10-12	A. Taleghani
NMC 2202 HS	Modern Persian Poetry	T1-4	A. Taleghani
NMC 2221 HS	Medieval Persian Ethical and Advice Literature	M2-5	M.E. Subtelny
NMC 2223 HF	The Masnavi of Rumi	M2-5	M.E. Subtelny
NMC 2225 Y	History of Iran	W3-5	M.E. Subtelny
NMC 2227 HS	Zoroastrian Cosmic History: From Genesis to Universal Judgment	R1	E.G. Raffaelli
NMC 2230 Y	Ancient Persia: From the Achaemenids to the Sasanians	R10-12	M. Brosius
NMC 2310 Y	Ottoman History to 1800	T6-8	V. Ostapchuk
NMC 2330 Y	Readings in Ottoman Historical Texts	F9-12	V. Ostapchuk
NMC 2340 Y	Studies in Ottoman and Turkish Literature	MW12-2	V. Ostapchuk
NMC 2515 Y	The Islamic City	TR6-8 [S]	E.J. Keall
NMC 2541 Y	Contextualizing Medieval Middle Eastern and Islamic Pottery	R4-6	R. Maso