

CLS-0191  
CLASSICAL ARABIC  
THROUGH THE WORDS  
OF THE PROPHET

عن أمير المؤمنين أبي حفص عمر بن  
الخطاب رضي الله عنه قال سمعت  
رسول الله صلعم يقول إنما الأعمال  
بالنيات وإنما لكل أمرئ  
ما نوى

A vast corpus of the sayings of Prophet Muhammad, Hadith constitutes the second most important source of Islamic learning to which Muslims turn in order to find answers to practically any important question. As a student, you will be introduced to the classical Arabic of this particular corpus, concentrating on the vocabulary, grammar and morphology most relevant to the understanding of Hadith. The course will use a frequency-based reader which will ease you into the Arabic of this particular genre. You will work with original Arabic texts during the entire course and will learn/review the grammar, morphology, and syntax of classical Arabic. Learning will be facilitated by the use of digital reading and studying tools. In addition, you will learn about the place of Hadith and Hadith sciences in the system of Islamic learning.

prerequisites: Arabic 1 & 2 or permission

Where: Eaton Hall 202

When: MW 4:30-5:45

Instructor: Maxim Romanov

email: maxim.romanov@tufts.edu

# Classical Arabic Through the Words of the Prophet Classics (CLS-0192-02); Spring 2015

**Where:** TBA **When:** MW 4:30-5:45

**Instructor:** Maxim Romanov

**Office:** Perseus Project **Office Hours:** TBA

**email:** [maxim.romanov@tufts.edu](mailto:maxim.romanov@tufts.edu)

**Syllabus Version:** 9/12/2014

(NB: The following is a working syllabus and its contents may be added and/or modified as the class goes on)

**Crosslisted with:** Arabic

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## Description

A vast corpus of the sayings of Prophet Muhammad, Hadith constitutes the second most important source of Islamic learning to which Muslims turn in order to find answers to practically any important question. The goal of the course is to introduce you to the classical Arabic of this particular corpus, concentrating on the vocabulary, grammar and morphology most relevant to the understanding of Hadith. The course will use a frequency-based reader which is meant to ease you into the Arabic of this particular genre. You will work with original Arabic texts during the entire course and will learn/review the grammar, morphology, and syntax of classical Arabic. You will also learn about the role of Hadith and Hadith sciences in the system of Islamic learning and everyday life. Learning will be facilitated by the use of digital reading and studying tools. Learning to read *hadiths* you will be also producing research data that will be stored as micro-publications at the Perseus Digital Library and will facilitate learning of other students and further studies of Hadith.

## Course's Main Goals and Workflow Overview

The course has two main goals: first, to introduce you to the Hadith corpus in the most

efficient way; second, to review grammar of the classical Arabic. Studying and learning you will be also producing new data for research and teaching. Each week we'll be going through the same set of routines and assignments:

- working with *hadiths* will include
  - reading and translating *hadiths*;
  - treebanking (graphical representation of syntactic dependencies)
  - translation alignment
- reviewing grammar:
  - reading discussing sections from the two grammars listed below
- written homework assignments will also include:
  - morphology practice will include practicing verbal conjugation paradigms, verbal patterns and their derivatives
  - handwriting practice: you'll be practicing copying new *hadiths* to improve your handwriting, which will also help you to internalize new vocabulary, grammatical constructions and learn entire *hadiths*
- short weekly quizzes will track your progress in learning grammatical concepts, morphological patterns, conjugation paradigms, and new vocabulary
- we'll be also reading two books on the role of Hadith and Hadith sciences in medieval and modern Islamic world that will help you contextualize individuals hadiths that you'll be reading in class and at home
- **Research portfolio:** treebanking Arabic sentences, translating and aligning Arabic text with you English translations you will be creating a lot of valuable research data that will be used in further studies and teaching other students. Attributed to you, your contributions will be stored as micropublications in the Perseus Digital Library (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/>).

## Required Readings & Materials

- [HML] Brown, Jonathan. *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2009 (Available on [Amazon](#))
- [MM] Brown, Jonathan A. C. *Misquoting Muhammad: The Challenge and Choices of Interpreting the Prophet's Legacy*. London: Oneworld Publications, 2014 (Available on [Amazon](#))
- Hadith Reader: frequency-based selections of Prophetic sayings from the Six Collections [will be provided]
- All other materials will be provided in digital format.

**Other resources for the course:**

- **Reference:** [EI2] *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014. Reference. First appeared online: 2012; First Print Edition: isbn: 9789004161214, 1960-2007; Accessible via Tufts Library Catalog: <http://library.tufts.edu/record=b2280429~S1>
- **Grammar:** [Th] Thackston, W. M. *An Introduction to Koranic and Classical Arabic: An Elementary Grammar of the Language*. Bethesda, Md.: Ibex Publishers, 2000.
- **Grammar:** [HN] Haywood, John A., and H. M. Nahmad. *A New Arabic Grammar of the Written Language*. London: Lund Humphries, 2005.
- **Arabic-English Dictionaries Online:**
  - <http://ejtaal.net/aa>
  - <http://revivearabic.blogspot.co.uk/p/using-arabic-almanac.html>

## Assignments & Grading

Attendance & Participation	25%
Homework	25%
Tests	25%
Research portfolio	25%
	100%

## Policies

**The best way to contact me** is via e-mail. I check my email regularly and I will try to respond to your questions within 24 hours. The turnover time, however, will be longer on weekends. Email, however, is not instantaneous and you might be able to find the answer to your question on the syllabus or by talking with your classmates. They are a great resource! Please, include “**CLS-0191**,” or “**Classical Arabic Course**” in the subject line of your email; this will also help me to recognize it and ensure that it does not end up in the junk mail folder.

**Class attendance is required.** Absences for religious holidays, family emergencies, and properly documented medical reasons will be excused. Missed quizzes and exams can be completed upon presentation of proper documentation.

**All assignments must be submitted on time**, unless previously discussed. The grade for a late assignment will be decreased 1/5 of the total grade per day. All assignments must be submitted before the end of the semester.

**Students can make up work** missed for religious holidays if they notify the instructor

in advance. Let me know as early as possible in the semester so that we can make arrangements.

**All necessary accommodations** will be made for students with documented disabilities.

**Students are required** to turn their cell phones and other electronic devices off when in class.

**Students should be aware of the University's policies on academic integrity.**

Plagiarism, submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, any other form of cheating during tests and/or examinations, and personation at tests and/or examinations are all examples of academic dishonesty. Any instances of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with university policy. **NB:** If necessary, consult Tufts University's resources on [plagiarism](#) and [academic integrity](#).

## Syllabus [16 weeks; 24 class sessions]

### Week 1 (Jan 12; W only)

- Introduction: Goals of the Course; Main concepts & Tools
- Hadith Reader (25)

### Week 2 (Jan 19; MLK, W only)

- Hadith Reader (25)
- *Subject Readings:*
  - HML, Ch.1. The Prophet's Words Then and Now: Hadith and Its Terminology (pp. 1-15)
- *Grammar review:*
  - Th§1 The Definite Article; Th§2 Case and State of the Noun;
  - Th§3 Gender of the Noun; Th§4 Adjectives and Adjectival Agreement;
  - Th§5 Predication of Existence;
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### Week 3 (Jan 26)

- Hadith Reader (50)
- *Subject Readings:*
  - HML, Ch.2. The Transmission and Collection of Prophetic Traditions (pp.

15-67)

- Grammar review:
  - Th§6 The Preposition li-; Th§7 The Construct State (Idafa);
  - Th§8 The Dual Number; Th§9 The Plural Number: Sound Plurals;
  - Th§10 Broken Plurals: Triliteral Roots;
  - Th§11 Adjectives and Adjectival Agreement (Strict and Deflected Agreement); Th§12 Pronouns;
  - Th§13 Verbal Inflection: The Perfect Active;
  - Th§14 Verb-Subject Agreement; Th§15 The Attached (Enclitic) Pronouns
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

#### **Week 4 (Feb 2)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - HML, Ch.3. The Methods and History of Hadith Criticism (pp.67-123)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§16 Kull-; Th§17 Demonstratives;
  - Th§18 The “Hollow” Verb: Perfect Inflection;
  - Th§19 The Defective Verb Laysa;
  - Th§20 The “Weak-lam” Verb (C3W/Y): Perfect Inflection;
  - Th§21 Relative Pronouns and Relative Clauses;
  - Th§22 Geminate (Doubled) Verbs: Perfect Inflection;
  - Th§23 Active Participles;
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

#### **Week 5 (Feb 9)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - HML, Ch.4. Prophetic Traditions in Shiite Islam (pp.123-150);
  - HML, Ch.5. The Function of Prophetic Traditions in Islamic Law and Legal Theory (pp.150-173)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§24 Passive Participles; Th§25 Cognate Subjects;
  - Th§26 Circumstantial Constructions;
  - Th§27 Active and Passive Participles (continued);

- Th§28 Verbal Nouns; Th§29 Cognate Accusative;
- Th§30 Verbal Inflection: Imperfect Indicative;
- Th§31 The Five Nouns
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 6 (Feb 16; Presidents' Day; W only)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - HML, Ch.6. The Function of Prophetic Traditions in Theology (pp.173-184)
  - HML, Ch.7. The Function of Prophetic Traditions in Sufism (pp.184-197)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§32 Imru'un; Th§33 Exception; Th§34 Categorical Negation;
  - Th§35 Doubled Verbs: Imperfect Indicative
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 7 (Feb 23)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - HML, Ch.8. The Authenticity Question: Western Debates over the Historical Reliability of Prophetic Traditions (pp.197-240)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§36 Elative Patterns (AF'ALU/FU'LA);
  - Th§37 Imperfect Indicative: Hollow Verbs;
  - Th§38 Cardinal Numbers: 1-10;
  - Th§39 Imperfect Indicative: Weak-lam Verbs;
  - Th§40 Common Broken-Plural Patterns;
  - Th§41 Imperfect Indicative: C1W Verbs, C2W C3Y Verbs;
  - Th§42 Ra'a; Th§43 The Optative with Wadda
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 8 (Mar 2)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:

- HML, Ch.9. Debates over Prophetic Traditions in the Modern Muslim World (pp.240-269)
- HML, Ch.10. Conclusion (pp.269-277)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§44 The Subjunctive; Th§45 The Subjunctive of Weak-lam Verbs;
  - Th§46 The Jussive; Th§47 The Imperative;
  - Th§48 Imperative and Jussive of Doubled Verbs;
  - Th§49 Imperative of Hamza-Initial Verbs;
  - Th§50 The Vocative; Th§51 The Jussive of Hollow and Weak-lam Verbs
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 9 (Mar 9)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - MM, Ch.1. The Problem(s) with Islam (pp.1-15)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§52 The Imperative of Hollow and Weak Verbs;
  - Th§53 The Passive Voice: Perfect; Th§54 Conditional Sentences;
  - Th§55 The Passive Voice: Imperfect; Th§56 The Energetic Mood;
  - Th§57 A Preface to the Increased Forms of the Verb;
  - Th§58 Medio-Passive Verbs: Form VII (INFA'ALA);
  - Th§59 Reflexive/Medio-Passive Verbs: Form VIII (IFTA'ALA)
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 10 (Mar 16; Spring Break - No classes)**

- **No Classes**

### **Week 11 (Mar 23)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - MM, Ch.2. A Map of the Islamic Interpretive Tradition (pp.15-69)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§60 Forms VII and VIII: Hollow and Weak Verbs;
  - Th§61 Optative Constructions; Th§62 Diminutive Pattern (FU'AYL-);
  - Th§63 Cardinal Numbers: 11-19; Th§64 Factitive Verbs: Form II (FA'ALA);



- Th§65 Form II: Weak-lam Verbs;
- Th§66 The Pronominal Enclitic Carrier; Double Pronominal Objects
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 12 (Mar 30)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - MM, Ch.3. The Fragile Truth of Scripture (pp.69-114)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§67 Reflexive/Medio-Passive Verbs: Form V (TAFA‘ALA);
  - Th§68 Adjectival Pattern FA‘IL; Th§69 Form V: Weak-lam Verbs;
  - Th§70 Intensive Noun Pattern FA‘AL-;
  - Th§71 The Arabic Personal Name;
  - Th§72 The Construct of Qualification; The Adjectival Relative Phrase;
  - Th§73 Uses of MA; Th§74 Auxiliary Verbs
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 13 (Apr 6)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - MM, Ch.4. Clinging to the Canon in a Ruptured World (pp.114-161)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§75 Causative Verbs: Form IV ('AF'ALA); Th§76 Form IV: Weak Verbs;
  - Th§77 Reflexive/Medio-Passive Verbs: Form X (ISTAF'ALA);
  - Th§78 Effective Verbs: Form III (FA'ALA)
  - Th§79 Reciprocal Verbs: Form VI (TAFA'ALA);
  - Th§80 Adjectival Pattern of Colors and Characteristics ('AF'ALU);
  - Th§81 Verbs of Colors and Characteristics: Form IX (IF'ALLA) and Form XI (IF'ALLA); Th§82 Other Verbal Forms: XII-XV;
  - Th§83 Patterns of Noun of Place (MAF'AL-)
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 14 (Apr 13)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - MM, Ch.5. Muslim Martin Luthers and the Paradox of Tradition (pp.161-216)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§84 Pattern of the Noun of Instrumentality (MIF'AL-/MIF'AL-);
  - Th§85 Patterns of Nouns of Instance (FA'LAT-) and Manner (FI'LAT-);
  - Th§86 Optative and Assertory Uses of the Perfect;
  - Th§87 Quadriliteral and Reduplicative Verbs (FA'LALA and FAL-FALA)
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 15 (Apr 20)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - MM, Ch.6. Lying about the Prophet of God (pp.216-267)
- Grammar review:
  - Th§88 Impersonal Passives; Th§89 The MA...MIN Clause;
  - Th§90 Higher Numbers; Th§91 Numerals and the Abjad System
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
  - Treebanking, translation & text alignment

### **Week 16 (Apr 27; M only)**

- Hadith Reader (50)
- Subject Readings:
  - MM, Ch.7. When Scripture Can't Be True (pp.267-291) + Appendices
- Grammar review:
  - Th§92 Ordinal Numbers; Th§93 Fractions ;
  - Th§94 Distributives; Th§95 The Islamic Calendar
- HW
  - Morphology & handwriting practice
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