AL8006W Introduction to Syriac Language

Offered: 2017: Intensive – January/February

This subject is an introduction to the grammar and reading of classical Syriac, a dialect of Aramaic, the language spoken by Jesus and his disciples. It covers grammatical concepts and paradigms, sentence formation and translation and reading simple texts, particularly the Gospels. Background information on the cultural and literary context in which Syriac was a living language is woven into the subject matter.

Upon successful completion of this unit, it is expected that students will be able to:
1. Explain the elements of the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary of classical Syriac.
2. Read elementary Syriac literary texts.
3. Translate a simple story from English into Syriac.
4. Evaluate the Syriac Gospels as an oral, literary and poetic tradition.
5. Describe and discuss the contribution of the poetry of Ephrem in the Syriac tradition.

Prerequisites: Nil

Class Time: Intensive: 12 x mornings, including exam

Assessment: 8 x daily assignments (total 3,000 words) (50%)
Final examination (3 hours) (50%)

Faculty: Terry Falla, Beryl Turner

Recommended Reading:
* = set texts recommended for purchase
*Verbal Paradigms in Syriac* by George Kiraz (from Gorgias Press) $US35
*Course book prepared by lecturer
Relevant pages are included in the course book.
Multiple copies of various Syriac lexicons, and grammars by Nöldeke and Muraoka will be made available for student reference during the course.