

Language: Arabic

From Scratch to the Qur'an. The course is a 10 ECTS crash course in classical Arabic. It is a demanding language to learn in just one semester, so please be prepared to work at it. The reward is getting to know the basics of Arabic grammar, enough to make sense of difficult texts like the Qur'an. Please make sure not to fall behind. Work through the exercises thoroughly, and only proceed when you grasp an exercise and remember the grammar.

The course is taught in the 'flipped classroom' style, which means that all the basics of the grammar are taught by video, and therefore classroom time can be used for asking questions etc. rather than spending time on grammar lectures. You will have to watch the grammar lessons several times, and pause the video frequently as you digest the compact information given there.

Weekly conference call

We will meet on Zoom video conference on Wednesdays from 15:15-16:45 CET (you will receive a link by email immediately before class; Zoom is easy to install on your computer or smart phone). Students present in Copenhagen are welcome to come to my office for the classes. I will record the classes and share links with you.

Time period

Teaching: Week 6-17, thus the first class will be on 10 February and the last class will be on 28 April. There will be a break for Easter, so there will be no classes on 31 March. Please note further that I will be on holiday in week 12, but I will try to teach on 24 March anyway.

Responsible teacher and institution

Martin Ehrensvärd, Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen

Registration:

E-mail both to Martin Ehrensvärd (meh@teol.ku.dk) and to your local coordinator/tutor.

Week by week

10 February. Your homework for this class is to read the Wikipedia entry on Arabic language: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabic_language. Then watch the first five video lessons on <http://ehrensvard.dk/?Arabic>, or on this playlist <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzuHy4hHnO1HCKQG2E605e32yAE5bKyuY> and complete the accompanying exercises (i.e. exercises 1-3).

17 February. For this class, please watch lessons 6-10 and complete exercises 4-8.

24 February. Watch lessons 11-13 and complete exercises 9-11.

3 March. Watch lessons 14-16 and complete exercises 12-14.

10 March. Watch lessons 17-19 and complete exercises 15-17.

15 March (this is a Monday). Compact seminar; face-to-face Arabic class in Copenhagen, 12:30-14:00. Repetition of grammar, please look over the exercises we have completed so far. Zoom will be available.

24 March. Watch lessons 20-22 and complete exercise 18-20.

7 April. Watch lesson 23 and read, translate and analyze sura 12, verse 1-4; sura 12 is the so-called Joseph sura. Our syllabus consists of the first half of this sura, which is six and a half pages in Brünnow-Fischer's Chrestomathy (full publisher details below). A great thing about it is that it includes a dictionary of just the words used in the book.

14 April. Watch lesson 23 again and read, translate, and analyze sura 12, verse 5-11. Please note, I'm on holiday this week. I will try to teach via Zoom at our regular Tuesday time. If I can't, you must read the text yourselves and send me questions via email.

21 April. Read, translate and analyze sura 12, verse 12-20.

28 April. Read, translate and analyze sura 12, verse 21-25.

Reading Arabic aloud. You will receive mp3 files of Martin Ehrensvärd reading all of the exercises in Arabic. Please refer to these as you practice your own reading.

Literature

TEXTBOOK

The textbook is a work in progress (without much progress lately) and is found on <http://ehrensverd.dk/?Arabic> in the form of a bunch of exercises organized by lesson number; there is also a pdf where all of the small pdf files are combined in one large file.

GRAMMAR

Wolfdietrich Fischer, *A Grammar of Classical Arabic* (Yale University Press 2002; note that the original German version can be used as well).

CHRESTOMATHY

Rudolf-Ernst Brünnow and August Fischer, *Chrestomathy of Classical Arabic Prose Literature* (Harrasowitz 2008 - Older German versions can be used as well).

Syllabus and exam

The syllabus for the exam is the first half of Sura 12, The Joseph Sura, in the Qur'an, pp 132-138 in the above-mentioned Chrestomathy (i.e. Rudolf-Ernst Brünnow and August Fischer, Chrestomathy of Classical Arabic Prose Literature). This book includes vocabulary, so you don't absolutely need a dictionary. However, The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic is a fantastic dictionary, even for classical texts (due to the similarity of the classical and modern written language). Note that the Chrestomathy uses Arabic numerals for the page numbers. You can find the numerals in §25 in Fischer's grammar.

As for the Qur'an, there is a very useful, albeit not always exact word-by-word translation and grammatical analysis found at <http://corpus.quran.com/wordbyword.jsp> It gives you all the relevant info including pronunciation, literal translation, meaning, syntax, morphology. Be careful with it, as the grammatical analysis relatively often is incorrect.

Examination

For the exam you will be asked to transliterate, translate and linguistically comment upon a text from the syllabus. The text will be a few verses long. You will receive the text on May 4 at noon CET and should hand in your paper by email to me on before May 5 at noon CET.