

DISCIPLINE SHEET

Discipline name: The Study of Syriac Manuscripts

The holder of course activities: Dr. habil. Cătălin-Ștefan Popa

Year of study: I

Number of hours per week/Assessment/Credits		
Course	Form of examination	Credits
	Oral exam	10

A. COURSE OBJECTIVES (The objectives are formulated in terms of professional skills):

The general objective of the discipline	Acquisition of theoretical and practical knowledge about the Syriac manuscript heritage.
Specific objectives	- Understanding the significance of manuscripts and ancient texts in preserving the traditions and cultural identity of Syrian communities, as well as their role in the transmission of science and knowledge. - Gaining familiarity with centers and collections of Syriac manuscripts in both the Middle East and the West, through the study of catalogs, bibliographies, and specialized research. - Acquiring knowledge of the techniques used in the production, preservation, and analysis of Syriac manuscripts, with a focus on the methodologies of codicology and paleography.

B. TERMS (where applicable)

of the course	
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C. Specific Competencies Acquired (referring to the competencies developed through the study program to which this discipline belongs)

Professional skills	- Ability to understand the cultural context of the monastic centers in the Middle East, where Syriac manuscripts were produced and preserved. - Enhanced capacity to comprehend the processes involved in the production and conservation of ancient texts, which hold major significance for the history of Christianity. - Competence in conducting comparative analyses of Oriental manuscripts, paying particular attention to their unique characteristics such as script, ornamentation, illuminated manuscripts. - A thoughtful approach to both the material and immaterial aspects of religious heritage, with a focus on the need for its preservation and transmission to future generations. - Proficiency in resolving various challenges through dialogue, consensus, and tolerance, informed by historical examples identified in specialized literature.
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	• Ability to critically interpret research findings and effectively communicate them to a broader audience. • Capacity for the rapid assimilation and accurate evaluation of new concepts and information. • Skill in formulating hypotheses and identifying alternative solutions, while demonstrating their relevance.
Transversal skills	• Teamwork skills • Proficiency in language and communication • Commitment to the respect, development, and promotion of professional values and ethics • Adaptability to new technologies and a focus on professional and personal growth through continuous learning

D. CONTENT OF THE COURSE

a) Course

Chapter	Content	No. hours
1.	Introduction to the Study of Syriac Manuscripts: Categories of Codices	2
2.	Manuscript Centers in the Middle East: Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Syria, and Iraq. The Significance of Manuscripts in Society	2
3.	The History of the Establishment of Syriac Manuscript Collections in the West	2
4.	Production, Copying, and Preservation Techniques of Syriac Manuscripts: Internal Features and Cultural Context	2
5.	Digitization: A Tool for Preserving, Valorizing, and Disseminating Syriac Manuscripts	2
Total hours		10

E. EVALUATION (The methods and forms of evaluation, along with their respective weightings in determining the final grade, are specified. Minimum performance standards are outlined in relation to the competencies defined in section A: **Objectives of the Discipline**)

Type of activity	Assessment criteria	Methods of assessment	Weight of the final grade
Course	• Acquisition of knowledge gained from the course. • Accuracy and quality in addressing examination topics. • Proficiency in analysis and synthesis. • Creativity and originality: the ability to comprehend and articulate transversal themes and their potential connections to the doctoral subject.	Verification by: -Oral exam	100 %

The results of the subject evaluation are categorized into the following qualifications: “Very Good,” “Good,” “Satisfactory,” and “Unsatisfactory.” The grades of “Very Good,” “Good,” and “Satisfactory” enable the doctoral student to earn credits.

F. METHODOLOGICAL REMARKS

Integration of lectures with interactive dialogue, utilization of contemporary teaching aids such as PowerPoint, and provision of comprehensive course support

G. ALIGNMENT OF THE COURSE CONTENT WITH THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE EPISTEMIC COMMUNITY, PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, AND KEY EMPLOYERS IN THE RELEVANT FIELD

- This discipline offers a theoretical framework that emphasizes the significance of Syriac Christian manuscript collections for understanding the history of religious communities in the Middle East, as well as the diversity of beliefs and the transmission of knowledge through these invaluable historical sources.
- Situated within the broader fields of historical sciences and cultural studies, this discipline equips doctoral students with essential concepts to comprehend the processes of production, preservation, and transmission of Syriac manuscripts, employing contemporary methodologies.

H. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Lucas Van Rompay, “Past and Present Perceptions of Syriac Literary Tradition,” *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 3, no. 1 (2000): 71–103.

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David Michelson, “Mixed Up by Time and Chance? Using Digital Methods to ‘Re-Orient’ the Syriac Religious Literature of Late Antiquity,” *The Journal of Religion, Media and Digital Culture* 5, no. 1 (2016): 136–82.

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Robert Curzon, *Visits to the Monasteries of the Levant* (London: J. Murray, 1850).

Maja Kominko, “Crumb Trails, Threads and Traces: Endangered Archives and History,” in *From Dust to Digital: Ten Years of the Endangered Archives Programme*, ed. Maja Kominko (n.p.: Open Book Publishers, 2015), 49–68.

Christopher D.L. Johnson, “‘He Has Made the Dry Bones Live’: Orientalism’s Attempted Resuscitation of Eastern Christianity,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 82, no. 3 (2014): 811–840.

E.A. Wallis Budge, *Nile and Tigris: A Narrative of Journeys in Egypt and Mesopotamia on Behalf of the British Museum Between the Years 1886 and 1913* (London: Murray, 1920).

Peter N. Miller, “The “Antiquarianization” of Biblical Scholarship and the London Polyglot Bible (1653-57)”, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 62 (July 2001), 463–482.

A.I. Barsoum, *The Scattered Pearls: A History of Syriac Literature and Sciences*, trans. Matti Moosa, 2nd revised edn. (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2003).

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Jules Leroy, *Les manuscrits syriaques à peintures conservés dans les bibliothèques d’Europe et d’Orient. Contribution à l’étude de l’iconographie des églises de langue syriaque*, 2 vols. (Institut français d’archéologie de Beyrouth. Bibliothèque archéologique et historique. Tome LXXVII; Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1961, 1964).

Stephen Emmel, “Robert Curzon’s Oriental Manuscripts in Coptic, Arabic, Ethiopic, Syriac, and Persian Collected in Egypt in 1837–1838,” in *Pharaonen, Mönche und Gelehrte. Auf dem Pilgerweg durch 5000 Jahre ägyptische Geschichte über drei Kontinente, Heike Behlmer zum 65. Geburtstag*, edited by Dilia Atanassova, Frank Feder, and Heike Sternberg el-Hotabi (Texte und Studien zur Koptischen Bibel / Texts and Studies on the Coptic Bible, vol. 4. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2023), 233–301.

Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies: An Introduction, Ed. Alessandro Bausi et al., (Hamburg: Tredition, COMSt, 2015)

MANUSCRIPT CATALOGS, online at <https://syri.ac/manuscripts>

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