

# The Program in Early Cultures at Brown University

The Program in Early Cultures (PEC) provides opportunities for rich collaboration, critical exploration and lively interdisciplinary scholarship by sponsoring and supporting a wide array of programming. Chronologically, we define “early cultures” as roughly “pre-modern”: the study of antiquity in its broadest sense. Geographically, such study at Brown includes early China and South Asia, West Asia (Mesopotamia, Iran, Anatolia, and the Levant), Egypt, the Mediterranean (especially Greece and Italy), the early Islamic, Byzantine, and western Medieval worlds, as well as the Pre-Columbian American civilizations.



Assyrian Ivory,  
ca. 9th–8th century B.C.  
Metropolitan Museum of Art



BROWN

# Affiliated Faculty and Departments



We have a vibrant, dynamic and productive community, well-supported by Brown's excellent libraries and collections. More than 100 faculty members and graduate students affiliated with Early Cultures teach and conduct research in the following departments and programs:

- Anthropology
- Classics
- Comparative Literature
- Egyptology and Assyriology
- History
- History of Art and Architecture
- Judaic Studies
- Medieval Studies
- Religious Studies
- The Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World.



Devimahatmya Sanskrit Manuscript,  
Nepal 11th century A.D.  
Public domain, Wikimedia Commons

# Reading, Discussion, and Study Groups

Brown University hosts a number of informal study groups whose members meet regularly to read and discuss ancient languages like classical Chinese, cuneiform, and Syriac. PEC supports and publicizes such groups through our website.

Faculty and graduate students also frequently convene discussion groups around topics of mutual interest. PEC provides funding and support for such groups as:

- Cultures and Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean (CRAM), a monthly gathering to promote interdisciplinary dialogue among faculty and graduate students who deal with religion and culture in the ancient Mediterranean world.
- The Brown Digital Archaeology Group (DAG), which organizes hands-on courses and discussion of articles, critically approaches the use of computer applications for archaeological research, explores software and hardware, and conducts ongoing research.
- The Brown Late Antiquity Group (BLAG), which meets monthly for interdisciplinary discussion of scholarship related to the late antique Mediterranean, both east and west.



Maya vessel with ball game.  
ca. 682-701 A.D.  
Dallas Museum of Art.

Parthian door lintel, ca.  
2nd–early 3rd century A.D.  
Metropolitan Museum of Art



# Funding Opportunities

PEC makes funds available each year to support Brown faculty and graduate students who are engaged in research focusing on the study of the ancient past in any culture or society. Examples of projects include: workshops, conferences, reading group support, travel to conferences, travel to archives or on-site research, summer assistance to complete language courses, travel related to research, exam preparation, and dissertation work.



Egyptian gold pendant,  
ca. 1070-712 B.C.  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston

For further information, please visit our website:  
[brown.edu/academics/early-cultures](https://brown.edu/academics/early-cultures)

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