Handbook for the Final Honour School in

Modern Greek

2018-19

For students who start their FHS course in October 2018
and normally expect to be taking the
FHS examination in Trinity Term 2021
This handbook gives subject-specific information for your FHS course in Modern Greek. For general information about your studies and the faculty, please consult the Faculty’s Undergraduate Course Handbook (https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/humdiv:modlang).

**SUB-FACULTY TEACHING STAFF**

The Sub-Faculty of Byzantine and Modern Greek (the equivalent of a department at other universities) is part of the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages and at present is made up of the following holders of permanent posts:

- **Prof. Marc Lauxtermann (Exeter)**
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In addition, the following Faculty Research Fellows, other Faculty members and Emeriti Professors are also attached to the Sub-Faculty and deliver teaching:

- Prof. Constanze Guthenke
- Prof. Elizabeth Jeffreys
- Prof. Peter Mackridge
- Prof. Michael Jeffreys
- Dr Sarah Ekdawi
- Dr Marjolijne Janssen
- Ms Maria Margaronis
FINAL HONOUR SCHOOL

DESCRIPTION OF LANGUAGE PAPERS

Paper I: Translation into Greek and Essay

This paper consists of a prose translation from English into Modern Greek of approximately 250 words and an essay in Greek of about 500-700 words.

Classes for this paper will help you to actively use more complex syntactical structures, acquire a richer vocabulary, enhance your command of the written language, and enable you to write clearly and coherently on sophisticated topics.

Paper IIA and IIB: Translation from Greek

This paper consists of a translation from Modern Greek into English of two texts of about 250 words each.

Classes for this paper will help you expand your vocabulary and deepen your understanding of complex syntactical structures in Modern Greek, as well as improve your translation techniques.

Paper III: Translation from Katharevousa

This paper consists of a translation from katharevousa Greek into English of a prose text of about 500 words.

ORAL EXAMINATION

The Oral Examination consists of a Listening and an Oral Exercise.

1) For the Listening Comprehension, candidates listen twice to a spoken text of approximately 5 minutes in length. After the first reading, candidates are given questions in English relating to the material which must be answered also in English.

2) The Oral exam consists of two parts:
   a) Discourse in Modern Greek: Candidates are given a number of topics from which they must choose one to prepare a short presentation (5 minutes). Preparation time 15 minutes.
   b) Conversation (in Modern Greek) on topics of general interest (10 minutes).

Oral exams take place in week 0 of Trinity Term of the final year.

DESCRIPTION OF LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS PAPERS IN FINALS

LINGUISTICS PAPERS (PAPERS IV AND V)

Paper IV: History of the Greek Language

Topics covered include the major developments in phonology, morphology and syntax in the medieval period and later, and dialectal variation.

Nine texts are set for detailed study:
Digenis Akritis, E 1473-1481 and 1501-1599 (ed. E. Jeffreys)
Chronicle of Morea, H 1030-1167 (ed. J. Schmitt)
Bergadis, Apokopos, A 1-100 (ed. P. Vejleskov)
Leontios Machairas, Chronicle, § 330-333 (ed. R.M. Dawkins)
Rhodian Diplomatic Correspondence, nos. 4, 9 and 15 (ed. J. Lefort)
Vitsentsos Kornaros, Erotokritos, I. 1-146 (ed. St. Alexiou)
Don Kisotis, pp. 44.22-46.19 (ed. G. Kechagioglou)
Merchant Documents from Transylvania, no. A 17a (ed. D.E. Tsourka-Papastathi)

Essential reading is:


Paper V: Contemporary Greek

Topics covered include an examination of the structure of the Greek language as it is spoken and written today and an analysis of spoken and written Greek in terms of its sound system, inflectional system, verbal aspect, syntax and vocabulary.

Useful for introductory reading are:


PERIOD PAPERS (PAPERS VI, VII AND VIII)

Paper VI: Byzantine Greek, AD 324 to 1453

The texts studied in this paper are chosen from those written in the learned form of the language, which corresponds very closely to Ancient Greek. Particular attention will be paid to the middle Byzantine period. Prose authors who will be studied include the historians Theophanes, Psellos, Anna Komnene and Niketas Choniates. Verse by writers such Romanos, George of Pisidia, John Geometres, Christopher Mitylenaios, John Maouropous and Theodore Prodromos will also be read, together with epigrams by a variety of authors from a range of periods.

Suggested background reading:

Paper VII: Medieval Greek Literature to 1669

The literature covered in this paper is written in forms of Greek that correspond more or less to the vernacular. The period falls into two sections, from the eleventh century to 1453 (the Fall of Constantinople) and from 1453 to 1669 (the Fall of Crete). The first period includes texts such as the epic romance *Digenis Akritis*, verse romances and chronicles from French-dominated areas of the Greek-speaking world, and animal fables. The second focuses on works written in Crete-satires, plays, and romances.

Useful background reading:


Paper VIII: Greek literature 1821 to the present

This paper is at the core of literature teaching in Modern Greek. With very few exceptions, it is taken by all undergraduates reading Medieval and Modern Greek. A variety of lecture courses relevant to this paper are regularly given. There is no prescribed syllabus for this paper, and in your tutorials on this period of literature you will have a large amount of freedom to choose, in consultation with your tutor, which authors, texts, and topics you will work on. Although it will give you the opportunity to study the works of poets such as Cavafy and the Nobel laureates Seferis and Elytis, and novelists such as Kazantzakis, this paper (unlike Paper XI) is not based on the study of particular authors, but is intended to cover the development of Greek literature since the outbreak of the War of Independence against the background of the turbulent historical events that have made Greece what it is today: these include the War of Independence, the First World War, the Asia Minor Disaster of 1922, the Axis Occupation during the Second World War, the Civil War, and the Colonels’ Dictatorship (1967-1974).

Paper VIII always involves the study of poetry, novels, and short stories, but plays as well as some key films may be studied too. In the lectures and tutorials associated with this paper you will cover topics such as Romanticism; Symbolism and Post-Symbolism; Demoticism; the Generation of 1880; Ethographia; the Generation of 1930s; Modernism; Surrealism; the Occupation and the Civil War in literature; post-1945 poetry; trends in literature since 1974; representations of childhood; Greek literature in film; sexuality, gender and writing.

Among authors covered in tutorials are Andreas Kalvos, Dionysios Solomos, Yeorgios Vizyenos, Alexandros Papadiantantis, Kostis Palamas, C.P. Cavafy, Nikos Kazantzakis, Angelos Sikelianos, Kosmas Politis, Stratis Myrivilis, Kostas Karyotakis, Yorgos Seferis, Andreas Embirikos, Yannis Ritsos, Nikos Engonopoulos, Odysseas Elytis, Nikos Gatsos, Kostas Taktsis, Yorgos Ioannou, Thanassiss Valtinos, Margarita Lymberaki, Maro Douka, Rea Ghalanaki, Alki Zei and Evgenia Fakinou. But you may choose to deal with some authors outside this list.

The three-hour examination, in which you have to answer three questions, contains questions referring to periods, movements, topics, and genres, although there may also be questions referring to named authors too. There are always questions that can be answered in relation to women writers. At least one question (but no more than two) are on Modern Greek Cinema, with special reference to the relationship between cinema and literature, history and society. Some questions may also refer to the relationship of literature to its larger cultural context.

The following books are recommended for preliminary reading:

R. Beaton, *An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature*, (2nd ed., Oxford: Clarendon, 1999); it is also useful to refer to the relevant pages of this book when working on a specific author or topic.

PRESCRIBED TEXTS (PAPERS IX, X AND XI)

Paper IX: Medieval Texts

You can choose to study EITHER of the following topics:

A. Byzantine texts

The prescribed texts, written between the sixth and eleventh centuries, offer a series of contrasts.


*The Life of St Andreas Salos* (ed. L. Ryden).


Paul the Silentiary’s description of Hagia Sophia is composed in elaborate archaizing hexameters, while the prescribed hymns are in simpler language and meters. Of the two prose texts, the *Life of St Andreas Salos* (Andrew the Fool) uses relatively straightforward language to describe the saint’s at times bizarre existence, while Psellos’s account of life at the imperial court is altogether more artful. You will be asked to consider each text’s purposes, the means by which they are accomplished and possible reasons for the form used.

In the three-hour examination, you will be expected to translate one passage into English, to write a commentary on another, and to answer two essay questions.

B. Medieval vernacular texts

The prescribed texts are written in a language based on spoken forms of early Modern Greek.


*Livistros kai Rodamni* (ed. P. A. Agapitos).


Passages will not be set from:

*Digenis Akritis*, Grottaferrata version, book V.

*Ptochoprodromus*, poem IV.

*Digenis Akritis* is an intriguing mixture of epic and romance: its background lies in the heroic struggles on the Byzantine frontier on the Euphrates in the ninth and tenth centuries, though the form in which it survives owes much to literary fashions of the twelfth century. You will be asked to study the two oldest versions of the poem. The romance of *Livistros and Rhodamni* was probably composed in the thirteenth century; it tells of the hazards encountered by a pair of lovers. The Ptochoprodromic poems exploit the language registers of the twelfth century in a series of lively satires on Constantinopolitan life (nagging wives, drunken husbands, greedy abbots). If you choose this topic you may not offer options 1 and 2 in Paper X. (See the entry below on Paper X, options 1 and 2, for further descriptions of these texts.)

In the three-hour examination, you will be expected to translate one passage into English, to write a commentary on another, and to answer two essay questions.
Paper X: Medieval and Renaissance texts

You choose to study TWO of the following topics. In the three-hour examination you will have to write a critical commentary on a passage from one of the texts included in one of the topics you have chosen, and you will write an essay on each of the two topics chosen.

(1) **Digenis Akritis**

The medieval Byzantine narrative poem of *Digenis Akritis* (scholars disagree as to whether it should be classified as an epic or a romance) emerged around AD 1100 out of a tradition of songs extolling the exploits of the Byzantine heroes who fought against Saracens and brigands. *Digenis Akritis* is in two parts: the first part tells the story of a Saracen emir who invades Byzantine territory and abducts a young Christian woman, but is forced by her brothers to convert to Christianity before marrying her; the second part narrates the life-story of their son Digenes, who after a childhood in which he performs prodigious feats of strength and courage, in turn abducts the woman who is to become his wife; after further feats against monsters and brigands, the couple settle down to a peaceful life near the river Euphrates till death carries the hero away. You will study the two oldest versions of the poem (one in more or less vernacular Greek, the other in a more archaic language). (For more details on this text see the entry on Paper IX above.)

(2) **The late Byzantine vernacular verse romances**

During the last centuries of the Byzantine Empire (14th-15th centuries) a number of charming verse romances were written in a language containing many features of the spoken Greek of the time. Some of these are original works in Greek, while others are translations or adaptations of western European poems. Many of these poems, whose titles consist of the names of the hero and the heroine, concern a young couple who fall in love, become separated as a result of various adventures, and are finally reunited after a series of actions that prove their mutual devotion. You will study especially *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoi*, *Velthandros and Chryssantza*, and at least ONE out of *Imberios and Margarona*, *Phlorios and Platziaphlora*, and *Livistros and Rodamni*. In the examination, passages for commentary will be set only from the first two of these. (For more details on Livistros and Rodamni see the entry on Paper IX above.)

Recommended for preliminary reading:


(3) **Cretan drama, with special study of Chortatsis’ Erophili, Katzourbos, and Panoria** (ed. R. Bancroft-Marcus)

Georgios Chortatsis, a contemporary of Shakespeare who wrote in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, was the leading dramatist of the movement that is nowadays known as the Cretan Renaissance. This literary and cultural movement flourished, under the influence of Italian Renaissance and post-Renaissance culture, in Crete during the last century of Venetian rule, which lasted from 1204 to 1669. The language used by Chortatsis and others was a sophisticated literary version of the Cretan dialect, which they moulded into a subtle and versatile medium of literary expression. You will concentrate on three of Chortatsis’ dramas, each one belonging to a different genre: the tragedy *Erophili*, the comedy *Katzourbos*, and the pastoral tragicomedy *Panoria*. These plays, which you can supplement with other dramas by Chortatsis and other authors, exemplify the range of Chortatsis’ writing, from the exaltation of love and the bloody denouement of *Erophili* to the realism and earthy humour of *Katzourbos*.

(4) **V. Kornaros, Erotokritos**

Kornaros’ romance *Erotokritos* is the best-known work of the Cretan Renaissance (see section 3
above). Probably written about 1610 in fifteen-syllable rhymed couplets, it tells the moving story of a young couple whose pure and steadfast love brings them finally to wedded bliss after a series of ordeals and tribulations (parental opposition, a tyrannical king, exile, prison, and war). The influence of this poem on later Greek literature has been immense.

Recommended for preliminary reading:

(5) Greek oral poetry

The folk songs (δημοτικά τραγούδια) are the finest examples of poetry that were produced in Greece between the fall of Crete to the Turks in 1669 and the outbreak of the War of Independence in 1821. The tradition of Greek folk song, which still survives today, goes back at least to medieval times, and the vast majority of folk songs are composed in the fifteen-syllable line, which was the predominant verse-form in Greek culture for a period of a thousand years. As well as being fine examples of poetry, the Greek folk songs encapsulate traditional Greek attitudes to life, death, love, the family, nature, freedom, heroism and to what it means to be Greek. You will study the texts of the folk songs rather than the music (this is why this topic is called “oral poetry”), using the following collections: N.G. Polites, Εκλογαί από τα τραγούδια του ελληνικού λαού; Academy of Athens, Ελληνικά δημοτικά τραγούδια, vol. 1 (Athens 1962), and G. Saunier, Τίς χρειτίας (Ermis, Athens). In the examination, passages for commentary will be taken only from these three collections.

Greek oral poetry has had such a pervasive influence on written poetry that, whether or not you take this option as an examination subject, a familiarity with the δημοτικό τραγούδι is indispensable for a full appreciation of Greek written poetry, whether it be Διγενής Ακρίτης, the Byzantine verse romances, Cretan Renaissance literature, or 19th- and 20th-century Greek poetry.

Recommended for preliminary reading:

Paper XI: Modern authors

This paper complements the broader sweep of the Modern Period Paper (Paper VIII) by providing the opportunity to concentrate on and study in depth the work of TWO of the most important Greek writers since the War of Independence. You will read widely within the work of the two authors, set them in their intellectual and historical contexts, and study closely some central works with a view to detailed textual analysis.

A number of lecture courses (which coincide with courses on Paper VIII) are given regularly on most of the authors concerned, and you will have four tutorials on each author. In the three-hour examination you will have to do a commentary on a passage from one of the authors you have chosen, as well as an essay on each of your two chosen authors.

The following list specifies the authors available, together with the texts on which you will concentrate. In the examination, commentary passages will be taken only from the texts specified below; the essay questions will not, however, be confined to the named texts, and you will be given credit for referring meaningfully to a prescribed author’s works beyond those specified.

(1) Solomos, with special study of the poems composed between 1825 and 1849 (Ἀπαντά, ed. L. Politis, vol. 1, pp. 139-255), the Διάλογος, and the Γυναίκα της Ζάκυνθος.

Dionysios Solomos (1798-1857), born in Zakynthos, educated in Italy, and later resident in Corfu, is considered to be Greece’s “national poet”, since during the War of Independence he
wrote the *Hymn to Liberty* which became the National Anthem of Greece. Solomos is in fact the leading Romantic poet of Greece. His exploration of freedom continued to develop throughout his career in poems that became increasingly complex and fragmented, as he struggled to achieve perfect expression for his philosophical and metaphysical intuitions concerning man’s place in the physical and spiritual universe. These poems are perhaps the most challenging to have been written in the Greek language since the end of the Classical period. Apart from the texts specified, candidates should make themselves familiar with other writings by Solomos, in particular poems such as the “Σήμανος εἰς τὴν Ἐλευθερίαν”.

Recommended for preliminary reading:


(2) **Palamas**, with special study of *O δωδεκάλογος του Γύφτου* [1907], *Οι χαιρετισμοί της Ηλιογέννητης* [1900], and the following sections of *Ασάλευτη ζωή* [1904]: “Πατρίδες”, “Η φοινικιά”, “Ασκραίος”, “Αλυσίδες”.

Kostis Palamas (1859-1943) was the leading poet in Greece from the late nineteenth century to the First World War. He was the leading member of the “Generation of 1880” and the “New Athenian School” of poetry, and the chief proponent of the demotic language in literature. His poetry was fed not only by his own personal obsessions (in particular, a traumatic childhood) and his passionate attachment to Greece (in terms of its language, culture, history, and landscape), but also by literary currents in Europe such as Parnassianism, Symbolism, and the philosophy of Nietzsche. The prescribed texts date from his most fruitful period, namely the late 1890s to the first decade of the twentieth century. Apart from the poems prescribed, you are advised to make yourself familiar with other writings by Palamas, particularly the rest of his volume *Ασάλευτη ζωή*.


K.P. Kavafis, or C.P. Cavafy as he is known in the English-speaking world, was born in Alexandria, where he spent practically all his life (1863-1933). His short, epigrammatic poems, though influenced by currents such as Parnassianism, Symbolism, and Aestheticism, contain a totally unique blend of history, irony, art, and homoeroticism. Cavafy is the only modern Greek poet to be among the authors every educated person in Europe and America is expected to be familiar with, and poems such as “Waiting for the Barbarians” and “Ithaca” have passed into the common international currency of literature. You are advised to make yourself familiar with other writings by Kavafis outside his “canonical” poems, especially the so-called “unpublished” poems (*Κρυμμένα ποιήματα*, Athens 1993) and “renounced” poems (*Αποκηρυγμένα ποιήματα και μεταφράσεις*, Athens 1983), as well as the “unfinished” poems (*Ατελή ποιήματα*, Athens 1994).

Recommended for preliminary reading:


(4) **Seferis**, with a special study of *Ποιήματα* (Athens, 1972, or later).

George Seferis (1900-1971) was the first Greek poet to win the Nobel Prize. His concise poetry records the reactions and philosophical meditations of an exile—a traveller through the turbulent and violent history of the twentieth century. The speaker of his poems often sees himself as an Odysseus figure struggling to find somewhere or something that he can call “home”. Seferis frequently employs references to ancient Greek mythology both to underline the differences between ancient and modern Greece, and also to show that the violent situations embodied in many of the myths (particularly the story of Agamemnon and his family)
are eternally recurrent. You are advised to make yourself familiar with other writings by Seferis outside his “canonical” poems, e.g. his “unpublished” poems (published posthumously as Τετράδιο γυμνασμάτων, II) and some at least of his essays (published in two volumes as Δοκιμές).

Recommended for preliminary reading:

(5)  Tsirkas, with special study of the trilogy Ακυβέρνητες πολιτείες [1961-1966]
Stratis Tsirkas (1911-1980) was born in Egypt, where he lived till 1963, when he settled in Athens. Ακυβέρνητες πολιτείες is a trilogy of novels, each set in a different Middle Eastern city during the Second World War: Η Λέσχη in Jerusalem, Αριάγνη in Cairo, and Η Νυχτερίδα in Alexandria. The trilogy tells the intertwined stories of a large cast of characters, both Greek and non-Greek (the latter are predominantly British), who are all involved, either as manipulators or as victims, in the political and sexual intrigues that abound in the wartime Middle East. Deeply political as well as psychological novels, these books employ a variety of Modernist narrative techniques, notably an alternation between different narrators, each of whom has only a restricted knowledge of his or her own circumstances, leaving the reader with the fascinating task of building up the whole picture.

(6)  The novels of Kazantzakis, with special study of Βίος και πολιτεία του Αλέξη Ζορμπά [1946] and Ο Χριστός ξανασταυρώνεται [1954]
Nikos Kazantzakis (1883-1957) is the only modern Greek novelist with a worldwide reputation. Three of his novels have been made into successful and often controversial films, while many a Greek man likes to compare himself to Kazantzakis’ larger-than-life hero, Zorbas. In Βίος και πολιτεία του Αλέξη Ζορμπά Kazantzakis presents the meeting of two contrasting characters, the Boss (an intellectual who usually spends his time reading and writing, and who is the novel’s narrator) and Zorbas (a man of action who nevertheless has a thirst for knowledge). These two characters become close friends and go off to an isolated part of Crete, where they mine lignite and discuss the great problems of the world: the existence of God, the place of mankind in the universe, and human relationships. Ο Χριστός ξανασταυρώνεται presents a fictional Greek village whose inhabitants struggle so hard to get into the roles they are to perform in an Easter Passion play that they begin to imitate Christ, the disciples, and the other characters from the Passion Story, in their everyday lives—with disastrous consequences for the established order of the village. You are advised to read other novels by Kazantzakis, as well as his philosophical manifesto, Ασκητική (1927).

Recommended for preliminary reading:

This option focuses on the popular song lyrics written by two of the best known intellectual figures of the Greek twentieth century, Nikos Gatsos and Dionysis Savvopoulos. Even though primary focus will be on the lyrics as poetic texts, issues of performance, cultural taxonomy and cultural politics, as well as the general cultural context, will be part of our study.

We will read Nikos Gatsos’s main published collection, Αμοργός (partially turned into song by Manos Hadjidakis) and his lyrics written for popular songs (as published in his Όλα τα τραγούδια).
In the second part of this option Dionysis Savvopoulos’s songs will be studied, with special reference to the albums published under the dictatorship. Of particular interest will be: Savvopoulos’s status as a ‘literary’ singer-songwriter, his role in the emergence of an intellectual youth culture during the dictatorship, his own critical writings in the 70s, his intertextual ‘dialogue’ with the poetic generation of the 30s, the influence he exerted on the literary generation of the 70s.

Recommended for preliminary reading


**SPECIAL SUBJECTS (PAPER XII) - GREEK**

You may choose one of a long list of final-year Paper XII options available across the whole Faculty; the full list relevant to your final year is published on WebLearn in Week 5 of Trinity Term of your third year. The list below gives the specifically Medieval and Modern Greek options. You should note that not all these options may be available every year: your tutor should be able to tell you at the end of your second year which of them will be available in the year you take Finals. Each of these options is taught by lectures (many of which coincide with lectures for Paper VIII) and a series of tutorials.

**Examination and Methods of Assessment:**

A Three-hour unseen written paper.
B An essay or portfolio of essays (the number in parentheses shows the number of essays required), aggregating to about 6,000 words and not exceeding 8,000 words, to be delivered by noon on the Monday of the tenth week of Hilary Term in the year of the examination.
C An essay or portfolio of essays (the number in parentheses shows the number of essays required), aggregating to about 6,000 words and not exceeding 8,000 words, on a title or titles from a list circulated by the examiners on the Friday of the fifth week of Hilary Term next before the examination, to be delivered by noon on the Monday of the tenth week of Hilary Term in the year of the examination.

(1) **The School of the Ionian Islands 1797-1912**

You would study the literary works (chiefly poetry) of a number of writers from the Ionian Islands (Heptanese) from the date at which the islands were captured from the Venetians by the French, through the period of British rule (1815-1864) and up to the outbreak of the Balkan Wars. Special emphasis will be given to Dionysios Solomos, Andreas Kalvos, Antonios Matesis, Andreas Laskaratos, Aristotelis Valaoritis, and Lorentzos Mavilis. The Ionian Islands constitute a special area of the Greek world, since they were never (apart from an insignificant period) under Turkish rule, and their cultural orientation has been towards Western Europe (primarily Italy). It is no coincidence that the chief poets of the War of Independence, Solomos and Kalvos, were from the Ionian Islands and therefore not subject to Turkish cultural influences. Apart from the poetry and prose of Solomos (see Paper XI above for more details) and Kalvos, you will read the drama *Ο βασιλικός* (1830) by Matesis, the social satires of Laskaratos, the patriotic epic—lyrical poems of Valaoritis, and the sonnets of Mavilis—all written in demotic at a time when most Athenian authors were writing *katharevousa*. In the examination, a non—compulsory commentary passage will be set, not necessarily taken from the works of the authors specified above.

*Method of Assessment B (3)*
(2) The New Athenian School of Poetry, 1880-1912

Around 1880 there emerged a new kind of literature in Athens, based on the demotic language and on rural Greek traditions; this movement is known as the “New Athenian School” to distinguish it from the “Old Athenian School” of writers in the mid-nineteenth century, whose prime literary medium was katharevousa. The writers of the “Generation of 1880”, led by the poet Kostis Palamas, strove to bring about a regeneration of Greek culture based on a fusion of modern Greece’s popular demotic roots with a creative synthesis of features from Greece’s past, chiefly the Classical world, but also Byzantium. Apart from Palamas, you will concentrate on the poetry of Georgios Drosinis, Ioannis Gryparis, Kostas Krystallis, Miltiadis Malakasis, and Konstantinos Chatzopoulos.

Method of Assessment B (3)

(3) The Greek novel 1918-1940

The interwar period saw the birth of a new kind of Greek novel; indeed, many critics during this period saw Greek literature at the time as being dominated by the novel. As well as writing primarily about contemporary life (as opposed to the traditional life presented in most earlier Greek fiction), the novelists of the interwar period, dominated by the so-called “Generation of 1930”, introduced a range of Modernist techniques into their writing (shifting and restricted point of view, non-chronological narration, and various poetic features such as lyricism and symbolism). You will read social novels with an urban setting (by Konstantinos Theotokis, Yorgos Theotokas, M. Karagatsis, and Kosmas Politis), as well as novels dealing with the effects of war (by Stratis Myrivilis and Ilias Venezis), a strange novel set in a leper colony by G.N. Abbott, and perhaps more experimental works by writers such as Melpo Axioti, N.G. Pentzikis, and Yannis Skarimbas.

Method of Assessment B (3)

(4) Greek women writers

There is no list of prescribed texts and candidates who wish to take this option are expected to also familiarize themselves with the wider discussions about women’s literature, and women artists in Greece and Europe since the 19th century. Among the authors that will be discussed are Elissavet Moutzan-Martinegkou, Dora Rosetti, Mano Aravanidou, Margarita Karapanou, Kiki Dimoula, Katerina Anghelaki-Rooke, Maria Laina, Rhea Galanaki, Maro Douka, Margarita Karapanou, Jenny Mastoraki and Maria Mitsora, Loula Anagnostaki as well as filmmakers Athena Rachel Tsangari and Antouanetta Angelidi. Students who wish to take this option will be able to discuss with their tutor the detailed content of the teaching and the precise focus of their essays.

Method of Assessment B (3)

(5) Advanced Modern Greek Translation: Theory and Practice

This paper aims to guide students through some of the important concepts in translation studies and various types of considerations that have to be taken into account in order to produce a piece of quality translation. The students will translate texts belonging to various text types originally written in Greek and/or English and translate them into Greek or English. The translations will be presented, analyzed and discussed in lectures and tutorials and the students will receive exhaustive comments into their translation process and work. In this sense, the students will, besides honing translation skills, continue to further develop their writing skills and competency, learn to adequately use dictionaries and other handbooks, as well as make use of various sources that will come in handy in their future translation work. Students will be required to present a portfolio of three pieces of work:
1. A theoretical essay on a topic agreed with the tutor, on some aspect of translation.
2. Two of:
   a. A detailed commentary on two or more versions of a single passage.
   b. A translation by the student, analysing the strategies and choices involved.
   c. A substantial translation or number of translations, in a domain unlike those addressed for FHS paper II. The nature and dimensions of the exercise should be discussed with the tutor, but students might think under this head of something like a scene from a play, a sequence of film to be subtitled, a series of technical translations, a strip cartoon etc.
   d. A discussion, based on original materials, of the specific problems of some particular field of translation. Again, after discussion with the tutor; students might think here of journalism, subtitling, dubbing, interpreting, abstracting etc.

Recommended for preliminary reading:

Method of Assessment B (3)

(6) Modern Greek Cinema

This option runs alongside the main Special Subject Paper in European Cinema offered by the Faculty (see below, Special Subject 8). The method of assessment is different though, as candidates who decide to take this option will submit a portfolio of essays on Greek films. The aim is to study Greek cinema within the theoretical framework of film aesthetics, but also in the context of developments in Greece in the 20th century (social, historical, cultural context). This option is taught by a series of tutorials, but students are also encouraged to follow the European Film lectures and seminars organized by the Faculty.

Among the directors we will study are: Theo Angelopoulos (esp. The Travelling Players), Pantelis Voulgaris (esp. Anna’s Engagement), Michael Cacoyannis (esp. Stella), Constantine Giannaris (esp. From the Edge of the City), Yorgos Lanthimos (esp. Dogtooth), Panos Coutras (esp. Strella).

Recommended for preliminary reading:

Method of Assessment B (3)

(7) Popular Culture in 20th Century Greece

In this paper we will study a series of topics related to the development of a distinct Greek popular culture (music, theatre and performance, cinema, entertainment industry) in the 20th century. Of special interest will be the relationship between literature and popular culture. Among the topics to be covered:

i. The emergence of Rebetiko and its lasting influence on 20th century Greek culture
ii. Popular culture and the “Asia Minor disaster”
iii. Popular culture and the image of Greece in the 60s
iv. “The Greek Bolywood”: Popular cinema in the 50s and 60s
v. The musical trends of “μελοποιημένη ποίηση” (Poetry set to music) and of “έντεχνο τραγούδι” (Art-Popular song)
vi. Popular culture and the resistance to the Dictatorship
vii. Youth cultures and dissent
viii. Greek television
Method of Assessment B (3)

(8) European Cinema

NB: This Special Subject is organized centrally by the Faculty. The course convener is Dr Reidar Due, who should be contacted for further details (reidar.due@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk)

This paper gives you the opportunity to study major directors and periods of European cinema. The course introduces the basic concepts of film form and presents each film within its historical context.

Please note that it is only possible to take this paper in the final year. The course runs over two terms, Michaelmas and Hilary. ALL LECTURES AND SEMINARS ARE COMPULSORY. (You are also encouraged to attend the screenings since it is better to watch films on a big screen, but if there is a clash between screening times and other lectures you still have the possibility of borrowing the film in question and watching it on their own.)

1. Course Content

The format of the course is as follows. In Michaelmas there are 8 lectures and 8 screenings. In Hilary there are 5 lectures and screenings accompanied by seminars. For the seminars the group will be divided into two and each student is obliged to give a presentation on one of the films that are screened that term. Normally the students give these presentations in pairs. In Michaelmas term, the course outlines some of the main currents in European film history from 1920 to the 1970s presenting the main concepts of film form and introducing each of the chosen films in its historical context. The focus of the lectures and seminars in Hilary term is European cinema from the 1970s until now, often covering countries not discussed in the first term. Students are welcome to write on directors and topics that lie outside of the languages they study. The course is taught by a group of lecturers. Normally each of the seminars in Hilary term is chaired by one person.

2. Exam Essay

Friday of week 5 in Hilary term, a list of exam questions are made public at the Examination Schools. You have four weeks to write a 6000-8000 word essay on one of the questions. The questions are broad and can be answered with reference to a number of different directors, periods and national cinemas. The questions correspond to the theoretical and historical topics that have been covered in the lectures. It is allowed to compare films from different countries and periods. It is allowed to write about films from language areas other than the ones you study. You can quote in the main European languages but it is helpful to translate quotes from Russian. You can also quote dialogue from subtitles since you are not required to know the original language of the film in order to write on it. A minimum of ‘technical’ vocabulary, describing different kinds of shot for instance, is helpful, but the exam is not a test in how many technical words you know. If in doubt you can be guided by the requirements of your argument. You can write about rare or very recent films but should then compare them to films that are more closely related to the topics covered in the course. The films screened are merely examples of periods and types of filmmaking and there are few restrictions on which films you may choose to write about, except that all the films should be European, which in this particular context means continental Europe including Russia.

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When drawing up this handbook we have tried to be as accurate and clear as possible. The
texts prescribed for study for individual papers are now listed in this handbook.

The Examination Conventions, detailing the structure of each examination paper, including rubrics, are also available as a separate document at: https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/humdiv:modlang:modern_greek:fhs

The revised edition of the University’s Examination Decrees and Regulations lists the examination papers and their permitted combination for your degree course. (For further details, refer to the handbook and the examining conventions.) See: http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2018-19/hsofmodelang/studentview/

Courses and regulations are constantly under review, so always check also with your college tutor to confirm what is written here and in the Examination Conventions.

In addition, do not hesitate to ask for clarification about the course from any member of the Sub-Faculty who is lecturing to you or tutoring you; we will always do our best to help.

Revised TT2018