

University of Roehampton International Summer School

Department of Humanities**Module Title: Modern Greece: Language and Culture****Module Code: HSA020C903H****Module Tutor: Dr Katerina Volioti****Module Rationale**

This module introduces students to the study of Modern Greece. It is open to all interested parties with or without prior knowledge of the language and the country. The module consists of two parts, each of equal weight in terms of teaching and assessment (50%). Half of the module offers an intensive course in Modern Greek for absolute beginners. By the end of the course, participants will be able to hold a basic conversation, to read signs, advertisements, and other brief texts, and to write some phrases about themselves and their interests. The other half of the module covers topics that pertain to Greek culture, including but not limited to: (1) History; (2) Literature; (3) Antiquities; (4) Music; and (5) Cuisine.

The historical overview will familiarize learners with the socio-political trajectory of the Greek state, from the War of Independence in the 19th century, the two World Wars in the 20th century, to the economic prosperity and crisis in recent times. We shall study literature in translation, including the world renowned poetry of Constantine Cavafy. In our critical appraisal of Antiquities we shall discuss the style of iconic works of Classical art—buildings, sculptures, and vase paintings—as well as the reception of Greece’s past in modern culture and imagination. We shall examine, moreover, the sustainable development of highly visited museums and archaeological sites, also in view of forecasts for skyrocketing revenue from tourism in Greece in the coming years. Our exploration of popular music will include a discussion of folk songs (*rebetika*, that is, songs accompanied with a *bouzouki*) and of film scores by famous composer Mikis Theodorakis. Finally, in our study of Greek cuisine, we shall study how recipes from different regions of the Greek mainland and the islands relate to the geography, economic context, and distinct culture of each area. In addition, we shall consider the medical benefits of a Cretan diet. With an emphasis on olive oil, pulses, and fresh fruit and vegetables, Cretan cuisine resonates with contemporary global initiatives for a healthy lifestyle.

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this module will be able to:

- Acquire communication skills to help with travel arrangements in Greece
- Converse in Greek when shopping for food, ordering in a restaurant, and buying stamps
- Understand the meaning of many academic and scientific terms in English (around a third of the English vocabulary has words of Greek origin)
- Enhance their memory and analytical skills in learning a foreign language
- Gain an understanding of Modern Greece, the country and its people
- Think critically about another culture, and draw comparisons/contrasts with their own cultural background
- Learn about the cultural and socio-economic politics of Modern Greece
- Develop an understanding of Greek prose and poetry (in translation), and assess its overlaps with western literary production (especially French literature)
- Find out about Greek food and cooking, and try some recipes

- Enjoy Greek songs and music, and understand their public appeal
- Develop skills in the stylistic analysis of works of art, e.g., Neoclassical buildings
- Think responsibly about the sustainable development of archaeological sites and other tourist destinations
- Develop a critical understanding of a language and culture that could be valuable in future research, especially in History, Art, and Archaeology

Syllabus

The module begins with an introduction to the language, which includes learning the alphabet, keywords, and greetings. In our first week, moreover, we shall examine the construction of Modern Greece in western thought and imagination from the 18th century onwards. In particular, we shall discuss the legacy of German art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann, and the western fascination with Greece's Classical past. After this, the language classes are structured around increasing the level of language acquisition, with an emphasis on both written and oral communication. Our lectures and seminars will aim to develop a critical understanding of Modern

Greece through a discussion of distinct topics of the country's history, literature, antiquities, music, and cuisine. We shall engage closely with the latest scholarship about Greece's cultural output, and we shall learn about academic centres worldwide that promote the study of Modern Greece. Our aim shall be to develop skills to analyse select works of literature and culture, and to contextualise these also within contemporary global agendas, e.g., about intercultural understanding, migration of skilled labour, leisure and tourism, sustainable development, and nutrition and exercise. Our fieldtrips to London will involve teaching off campus, the opportunity to apply stylistic analysis on pieces of Classical art in the British Museum, and the chance to enjoy Greek food (outside Greece). During our fieldtrips, students can collect material for their reflective blog entries.

Cultural topics in this module may include:

- European travellers to Greece and the intellectualisation of Classical sculpture and architecture
- German Philhellenism and its reception in crisis-ridden Greece
- Coming to terms with the past: the Balkan Wars, the Nazi occupation, the civil war, and the junta regime
- Geopolitics and power alliances in public imagination
- The Greek Diaspora in Australia, Canada, Germany, the UK and the US
- An anthropology of the *Sarakatsani*
- The poetry of Giorgos Seferis, Odysseas Elytis, Constantine Cavafy, and Kiki Dimoula
- 'Zorba the Greek' by Nikos Kazantzakis and its adaptation for cinema
- Urban life in 'Never on Sunday': Jules Dassin, Melina Mercouri, and Manos Hadjidakis
- Subversive musicologies: content and style in the *rebetika*
- Agro-tourism: case studies from mountainous and island Greece
- Feta wars: Greek goat's cheese with protected designation of origin and its imitations
- Virgin olive oil: Greek, Italian, Spanish

Teaching and Learning Methods

The module will be taught through a series of classroom-based lectures, seminars, and group exercises. Students will need to complete some set homework and reading before coming to class. We shall have the opportunity to make two fieldtrips in London, to visit the British Museum, the Hellenic Centre,¹ and a Greek restaurant.

Assessment

- A seen exam paper in Modern Greek language, to be taken online [50%]
- A 2,000-word reflective blog entry closely related to the main thematic units of the module [50%]

Primary Bibliography

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Further Reading

¹ <http://helleniccentre.org/about/>

Eran Almagor & Lisa Maurice, eds., *The reception of ancient virtues and vices in modern popular culture: Beauty, bravery, blood and glory* (Metaforms; volume 11), 2017.

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Katherine Harloe & Alexandre Farnoux, eds., *Hellenomania* (British School at Athens - Modern Greek and Byzantine studies; volume 5), 2018.

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Eleni Kallimopoulou, *Paradhsosiaka: Music, meaning and identity in modern Greece* (SOAS musicology series), 2016.

Konstantinos Kalantzis, 'Crete as Warriorhood: Visual Explorations of Social Imaginaries in 'Crisis', *Anthropology Today* 28 (2012), 7–11.

George Stergiou Kaloudis, *Modern Greece and the diaspora Greeks in the United States*, (Lanham: Lexington Books), 2018.

Dimitrios Kanellakis, 'Aristophanes in Greek shadow theatre: Codification and adaptation of Peace and Frogs performed by Evgenios Spatharis,' *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 42 (2018), 151–171.

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Eleni Papargyriou, Preliminary remarks on George Seferis' visual poetics, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 32 (2008), 80–103.

Risto Pekka Pennanen, 'The development of chordal harmony in Greek *rebetika* and *laika* music, 1930s to 1960s, *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 6 (1997), 65–116.

Eleni Phourarake & Zinon Papakonstantinou, *Sport, bodily culture and classical antiquity in modern Greece* (Sport in the global society. Historical perspectives) (London: Routledge), 2011.

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