



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Greek into Arabic - 28807

Last update 23-09-2023

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Classical Studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Donna Shalev

Coordinator Email: donna@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Staff:

Prof Donna Shalev

Course/Module description:

The exciting study of the translations of Greek texts into Arabic is attracting increasing attention among Classicists, as well as Arabists, not only in order to learn more about lost witnesses of the transmission of the Greek texts, but as part of a richer assessment of their reception and broader cultural impact. This line of research is pivotal for addressing questions in fields ranging from philosophy, history, ancient science, philology, Arabic language, and the dynamics and techniques of the process of translation of texts and of transmission of culture. The course will cover the scope and types of texts and knowledge involved, scholarship of the field, the current research, and open questions for trained Classicists and Arabists, as well as for those thinking of entering into this highly rewarding specialty. Emphasis will be given to language and form.

Course/Module aims:

The basic aim of this seminar is to introduce the academic field of the research of passage of Greek texts into Arabic language and culture, opening it up to Classicists, Arabists and others interested in translation and transmission in antiquity, in linguistics and translation technique, in the survival and Nachleben of specific Classical authors, and of bodies of knowledge (philosophy, medicine, or other scientific areas) – through the prism of textual transmission and translation. The ultimate aim is to offer students of different fields with a more integrated picture of the background, scholarship, scope, themes, open questions, and avenues of collaboration in a field offering valuable opportunities for crucial groundbreaking research. This includes equipping students with tools for research, and hands-on experience of collaborative philological work on texts and their translations.

(Those without the philological prerequisites will explore questions revolving around bridging cultures, and cultural phenomena which evolve in the process of translation from Greek into Arabic.)

Aiming for collaboration, the course will drill skills of academic discussion geared at informing the work of peers from other disciplines.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

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-possess an overview of the trajectory of Greek into Arabic translation (the various waves of translation including the Syriac precursors and the onset of derivative

works and commentaries).

-map the scope of (a) Greek authors whose works were translated, and which translations survived, vs. those for which there are merely testimonia for translations; of (b) the waves and schools of Arabic translation, and the individual translators.

-be familiar with a selection of pre-modern (mostly Arabic) sources attesting to narratives of translation, techniques of translators, controversies and attitudes.

-be familiar with select modern scholarship on narratives of translation, and techniques and identities of specific translators; on the value of medieval Arabic translations as (early) witnesses to Greek texts; and on other aspects (retro-translation, survival via translation, acculturation, etc.).

-be versed in bibliographical and online resources.

-recognize (a) features of terminology, format, patterns, grammar; (b) challenges and compromises in transitions of texts from one language type and cultural convention of philosophical and technical writing to another; (c) the scalar nature of translation, vis-à-vis other strategies in cultural transfer of textual material (e.g. paraphrase, exegesis, transliteration, substitution, omission).

-identify and approach open problems, manuscripts of translations of Greek texts, state-of-the art lexicographical and DH projects.

-formulate research questions in a rich open field; produce oral and written academic presentation; pursue meaningful collaborative work with students/scholars outside one's field.

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: ONLINE IN ENGLISH

(a) The meetings involving the history of the field, background and scholarship, tools, state of the art questions and challenges will be delivered as lectures, with a strong interactive element.

(b) After the first or second meeting students will be paired across fields (e.g. Classicists with Arabists) for preparing their collaborative interlinear analyses and presenting them.

(c) After the meetings in lecture format in (a), the first presentation of an interlinear Greek and Arabic analysis (with English translations for the benefit of all) will be delivered by the teacher, with time both for discussing the content, and highlighting the methods used, as a guide for the students' collaborative presentations.

(d) Subsequent meetings will be devoted principally to presentations of teamwork, interspersed with manuscript inspections, and detailed study of select philological or linguistic phenomena in translation technique.

Students will be expected to distribute a handout of the text they are presenting ahead of their session, for classmates to prepare in the language they are studying, in order to participate in the discussion.

Course/Module Content:

-Background of the academic discipline of Graeco-Arabica, including intermediary stations (e.g. Syriac).

-Scope: (a) Greek authors and works translated; (b) Translators/ translation waves and schools.

-Pre-modern Arabic (and other) sources (doxographical, biobibliographical, etc.) with narratives and testimonies to the process and praxis of translation. Time constraints may limit us to a minimal sample of sources.

-Modern scholarship on (a) narratives, techniques and identities of specific translators and translations; on (b) the value of medieval Arabic translations as (early) witnesses to Greek texts; and, time permitting, on (c) other aspects and phenomena, (e.g. retrotranslation, survival through translation, cultural adaptation).

-A bibliographical and online resource survey.

- The scalar nature of translation and strategies in cultural transfer of textual material (paraphrase, exegesis, transliteration, substitution, omission, etc.).

-Themes in translation technique to be covered: terminology, grammar, syntax, text structure, phraseology, idiosyncrasy of authors and translators, style and generic convention, rhetoric tact and irony, embedded quotations, discourse analysis, accommodation of culture-specific terms and notions.

Due to time constraints, a selection of themes may be made based on student preferences.

- Research skills: (a) sketch of open problems; (b) guide to unpublished manuscripts with Arabic translations of Greek texts; (c) state-of-the-art lexicographical and DH projects; (d) formulating research questions in a rich open field; oral and written academic presentation; meaningful collaborative work with students/scholars outside one's field.

Required Reading:

To be distributed during sessions and on moodle.

Additional Reading Material:

To be distributed during sessions and on moodle.

Grading Scheme:

Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 60 %

Active Participation / Team Assignment 5 %

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 15 %

Presentation / Poster Presentation / Lecture 15 %
Attendance / Participation in Field Excursion 5 %

Additional information:

Requirements include (1) an individually tailored literature review, relevant to the student's specific research interest – 15% of grade; (2) preparing a parallel or interlinear Greek-Arabic synoptic text of a short passage, with analysis, to be presented to classmates – 15% (the teacher will pair Arabists with Graecists. Latinists/Syriac scholars will not be excluded); (2') an alternative assignment will be arranged for those without language proficiency – 15%; (3) a short individual essay on a chosen aspect or theme of text translation or cultural transfer raised in class or in the readings, with emphasis on formulating a research question or topic in this field. – 60% of final grade

All requirements will be fulfilled through ongoing coordination with the teacher.