



# NEWSLETTER

**FALL 2023**

## **The Center for Byzantine & Modern Greek Studies of Queens College**



### **Greetings from the Director by Gerasimus Katsan**

A recent article in the Kathimerini newspaper in Athens laments that “the field of Modern Greek Studies is in decline worldwide” (Kathimerini, Oct. 13, 2023). The article goes on to list various causes for this decline: Greece’s integration in the European Union, which “overshadows” its “unique cultural imprint”; the lesser “appeal” of Modern Greece, which does not have the “aura of antiquity” of Ancient Greece for an international audience; reliance on visiting or adjunct faculty, i.e. understaffed programs; lack of funding or interest from universities housing Modern Greek Programs themselves. In the United States, one could add the decline in the numbers of traditional heritage learners – the immigrant community is now in its third, fourth and even fifth generation – as well as the disturbing trend in American institutions of higher learning to de-emphasize the importance of, or even to eliminate, foreign language learning and the humanities as a part of required university curricula.

As bleak as all that may sound, the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies continues to stand as a beacon for Hellenic culture and learning in New York. It contributes to the cultural life of both the Greek Community and the university through its academic and cultural initiatives. We have had wonderful successes this year, including the Psomiades Library project, our academic achievement awards ceremony hosted by the Greek Consulate last Spring, the honor of a visit by President Christodoulides of Cyprus, and the amazing benefit concert made possible by the generous spirit of Manolis Mitsias and the community organizers who donated so much of their time, energy and money to make it happen. But we must redouble our efforts and continue to raise funds for the on-going preservation of the Center. What we have achieved this year is only a beginning; our goal is to create an endowment that will support the Center far into the future. Please consider making a donation to this worthy endeavor!

### **Newsletter Highlights**

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# 45th Annual Certificate of Achievement Awards Ceremony and Harry J. Psomiades Memorial Lecture, 2023

45th Annual Certificate of Achievement Awards Ceremony and Harry J. Psomiades Memorial lecture 2023 from the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, Queens College at Consulate General of Greece in New York.

On May 16, the Consulate General of the Republic of Greece in New York hosted the 2023 Certificate of Achievement Awards Ceremony of The Center for Byzantine & Modern Greek Studies Program of Queens College.

This year's Harry J. Psomiades Memorial Lecture entitled "The Present and the Future of the Modern Greek Studies in the U.S." was offered by Consul General Dinos Konstantinou who spoke of the importance of programs such as these to maintain connections with our roots and our heritage.

Filled to capacity with enthusiastic students and scholarship contributors, the event provided a mutually enriching experience for all. A total of 23 scholarships were awarded, funded by individuals and organizations of the Greek-American community of greater New York. The scholarships were given to the students who chose a Major or minor in Greek and Byzantine Studies, thus encouraging and enhancing their choice. A reception followed where the guests had the opportunity to taste Greek foods, exchange views and set new goals for the longevity of the Byzantine Center.





# Harry J. Psomiades Library Project

The Psomiades Library project has made steady progress since the beginning of 2023. In this first phase, the main task has been to catalogue the existing library collection and incorporate it into the computer-accessible Rosenthal main library system so that the books can be searched online via the College website. So far, Room 1 of the collection (the "Byzantine Room") has been completed except for fragile books that will require some preservation measures and will not circulate. Cataloguing is in progress for Room 2 (the "Literature room"), while Room 3 (the "history/politics room") will be completed in the coming months.

A secondary focus of the project is to sort through the huge amount of stored books that are not currently in the collection itself. Neo Ioannou, our capable staffer, has been working through the stored boxes of material: we are making progress in determining which of these stored books are worth keeping and incorporating in the collection, and which can either be given to other libraries or found other uses.

Finally, we have received a second very generous gift of \$25,000 from our most kind patron, who has asked to remain anonymous. We are extremely grateful for this wonderful gift, which will allow the first phase of the Library Project to be completed and will pave the way for continuing preservation and digitization projects.



## The President of Queens College & the Byzantine Center honor the President of Cyprus

Republic of Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides was honored on September 23 at his alma mater, Queens College, with the President's Medal, the college's highest administrative honor.

This great ceremony was organized by Dr. Gerasimos Katsan and Dr. Maria Athanasopoulou, Director and Assistant Director of the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies.

Queens College President Frank H. Wu presented the award along with Associate Professor and Director of the Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies Department Dr. Gerasimos Katsan in a special ceremony. President Christodoulides had studied Political Science, Economics, and Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies during his years at Queens College.

Queens College President Wu said that Christodoulides is the most distinguished graduate of the College, noting his devotion to public service which was evident from his days as a student, and the pride everyone feels in the progress of his career.

In his remarks, Christodoulides expressed his deep emotion and said, among other things, that it was at Queens College that he first developed a strong interest in the academic field, noting that when he first came to New York to study he very quickly felt at home, due to the people at the Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies Center.



“Looking back, the experiences and knowledge I gained in some of the best years of my life, here at Queens College, have shaped who I am today,” he said, adding that he uses those lessons and experiences in his role as President for the betterment of his country and people.”

Dr. Gerasimos Katsan, shared his greetings at the event and praised Christodoulides' life and work, as did PSEKA and Pancyprian Association President Philip Christopher .

Also present were the members of the Advisory board of the Byzantine Center, the professors Dr. Nicholas Alexiou and Dr. Maria Athanasopoulou, AHEPA Supreme President Savas Tsivicos, Hellenic Lawyers Association President George Zapantis, Greek and Cypriot Students and alumni of Queens College and other leaders and members of the Hellenic community as well as friends of Christodoulides.





## Manolis Mitsias Concert on Sept. 23 to Benefit Hellenic Programs at Queens College

Famous Greek singer Manolis Mitsias impressed the audience with his performance in the concert titled 50 Golden Years, celebrating a half-century of his contribution to Greek music. The program highlighted the beloved Mitsias' greatest hits and his dynamic collaborations with Greece's greatest composers and poets.

The concert was organized under the auspices of the Hellenic Republic, highlighting the importance of Greek culture on an international stage. It was also made possible through the gracious assistance of numerous organizations dedicated to preserving and promoting Hellenism.

All net proceeds from this event were allocated to support two invaluable Queens College programs – Byzantine Studies & Modern Greek Studies and the Hellenic American Project, which play a vital role in preserving and disseminating Greek culture and heritage.

At the conclusion of the concert, Pancyprrian Association President Philip Christopher, HAP Director Professor Nicholas Alexiou, and Director of the Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies Department Dr. Gerasimus Katsan, thanked all the performers, especially Mitsias, and also thanked all the sponsors, benefactors, and everyone for attending, noting the importance of supporting the Hellenic programs at Queens College and at all the universities and colleges across the country.

Florence Koulouris, Queens Community Board 1 District Manager, presented Mitsias with a proclamation from the New York State Senate on behalf of Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris who could not attend.

Consul General of Greece in New York Dinos Konstantinou also shared his greetings, praising Mitsias and noting the academic importance of the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies.



His Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Nazianzos on behalf of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, presented donations for the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies and HAP.

Queens College Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies Department Assistant Director Dr. Maria Athanasopoulou and Director Dr. Gerasimus Katsan also presented Mitsias with an honor certificate from the department.



# FIRST GREEK AND CYPRIOT ALUMNI NETWORKING EVENT

The Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek College of Queens College invites a first-time QC Greek and Cypriot Alumni Networking Event to connect and mingle with fellow alumni from Queens College at The Oasis Cafe for a fun-filled evening of networking, reconnecting, and reminiscing.



**THE CENTER FOR BYZANTINE  
& MODERN GREEK STUDIES  
INVITES YOU TO THE**

**QC Greek & Cypriot Alumni  
Networking Event**

**Thursday, October 19, 2023 from 6:30-8:30 pm**

**Join us for a fun night of food  
beverages & networking**

**THE OASIS CAFE**  
**196-30 NORTHERN BLVD, FLUSHING NY 11358**



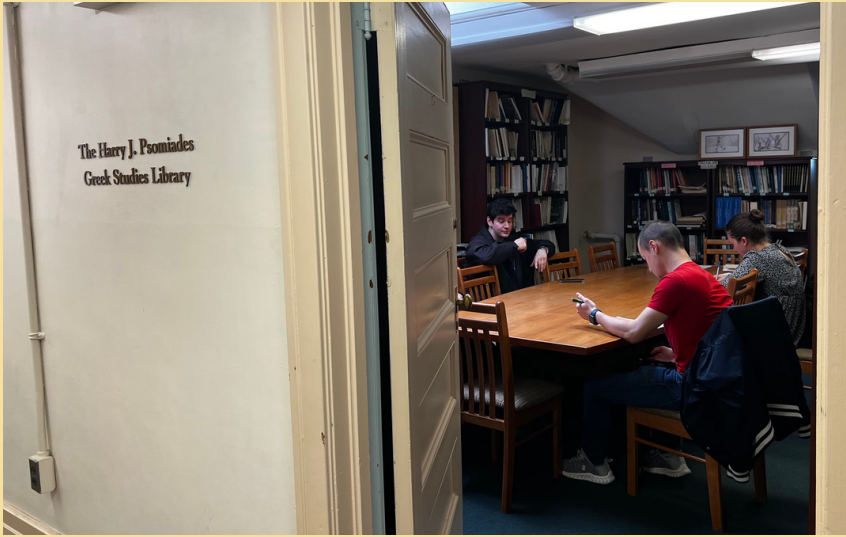
Please scan QR code to RSVP

**Admission: \$20\***  
\*\*Included food & soft drinks





# Why study Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies?



The Major in Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies is a program for students interested in obtaining an understanding of Byzantine Civilizations and Modern Greek Language and Culture. The Center's interdisciplinary BA is unique in that it offers students the opportunity to study the range of Greek history from medieval to modern times. While the Center is invigorated by numerous students of Greek ancestry and its location in the largest Greek-American community in the United States, the program welcomes students from all walks of life and backgrounds.



## Study program Information

The Center's program in Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies offers a structured body of courses drawn from the Division of Arts and Sciences and the Division of Social Sciences, leading to a BA in Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies. It is designed to provide a detailed knowledge of the Greek people's history, language and literature, institutions, customs, and culture. Program offerings are divided into four categories:

### Byzantine Studies

The Program offers courses and seminars on The History of the Byzantine Empire, Byzantine Culture and Civilization, and Byzantine Art.

### Modern Greek Studies

The Program offers courses and seminars on Modern Greek Culture and Civilization, The History of Southeastern Europe, Modern Greek History, The Formation of the Modern Greek State, The Economy of Greece, The Politics of Greece and Cyprus, and Middle Eastern Politics.

### Modern Greek Literature and Culture

The Program offers courses and seminars on the Modern Greek Language, Modern Greek Literature, and Greek Cinema.

### Greek American Studies

The Program offers courses, seminars, and workshops on Ethnic Groups in New York and the Greek-American Community.

# GREEK CLUB IKAROS

Ikaros Hellenic Club has been an integral part of Queens College since the 1970s. It has served as a place of community for Greek, Cypriot, and the entire Queens College Student Body.

## Executive Board Members 2023- 2024:

**President** – Georgia Liotopoulos

**Vice President** – Vicki Tegeridis

**Treasurer** – Kyriakos Katsoudas

**Secretary** – Despina Boudouris



**Where to find Ikaros  
Hellenic Orthodox Club:**

**Student Union Room 219  
Follow on Instagram:  
@ikaroshellenicqc**

## Upcoming Events:

**October 12th and every month**  
Cafe Night at Oasis Cafe

**October 25th**  
OXI DAY Celebration  
Day Free Hour (12:15-1:30 pm)  
Room: Student Union 210

**November (TBA)**  
Visit to Adventure Park at Long Island



**Cafe night with  
Greek Club members**



# The Center for Byzantine & Modern Greek Studies

## Courses Schedule Spring 2024

### Modern Greek Literature in Translation

**GRKMD 41W-01 3h. ; 3 cr. (Prof. Soumakis) M/W 9:15 – 10:30 a.m. (In Person)**

**GRKMD 41W-02 3h. ; 3 cr. (Prof. Soumakis) M/W 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (In Person)**

Surveys modern Greek literature (in translation) from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present. The authors and their works are examined not only for their individual stylistic and thematic elements but also within the context of European literary and cultural movements.

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### Elementary Modern Greek I

**GRKMD 111 4h. ; 4 cr. (Prof. Athanasopoulou) Tu/Th 10:05 – 11:55 a.m. (In Person)**

Designed to establish correct pronunciation, to teach the elements of grammar, to enable students to understand written and spoken Greek, to become familiar with cultural aspects of modern Greece, and especially to establish a good basic vocabulary.

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### Elementary Modern Greek II

**GRKMD 112 4 hr.; 4 cr. (Prof. Ioanna Glava) Tu/Th 12:10 – 2:00 p.m. (In Person)**

Prereq.: GRKMD 111 or equivalent or permission of the department. This course is a continuation of GRKMD 111. A graded reader is introduced to present literary and cultural aspects of Greece, and to offer topics for simple exercises in composition. Class hours include the use of the language laboratory. (LANG)

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### Modern Greek Conversation

**GRKMD 223-001 3h. ; 3 cr. (Prof. Maria Athanasopoulou) Tu/Th 3:10- 4:25p.m (Online Synchronous)**

Intended for students who have an elementary /Intermediate knowledge of Greek and wish to improve their ability to converse. Recommended especially for students in GRKMD 203 or 204 who come from homes where Greek is not spoken.

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### Modern Greek Film and Media

**GRKMD 250 3h. ; 3 cr. (Prof. Gerasimus Katsan) Tu/Th 1:40 – 2:55 p.m. (Hybrid Synch)**

The contributions of Greek filmmakers to the art form of cinema. Students will learn the history of cinema in Greece and will study the forms and genres of Greek film, the terminology associated with film criticism, and how to write a film analysis. The course will examine how Greeks have been portrayed in the cinema of the last half century, both in Greece and in Greek America. Films will also be discussed and analyzed for their specific thematic and film content.

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### The Greek-American Community

**GRKST 102 3h. ; 3 cr. (Prof. Fevronia Soumakis) Friday 9:10 am-12:00 pm (Hybrid)**

An interdisciplinary study of the Greek experience in America, drawing upon works of history, sociology, and literature. The internal structures of Greek communities; the family, religion, culture, education, and economic order; their participation in the decision-making process and their relation to the ideology of the “melting pot” and the rise of “neoethnicity.”

**New Course!**

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**PLEASE see or write to Dr. Katsan regarding placement and/or overriding prerequisites: [gerasimus.katsan@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:gerasimus.katsan@qc.cuny.edu)**

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# Gifts and Donations

The Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies is a community-supported entity. Please support the Byzantine Center for its impact as an essential part of World Heritage. We humbly accept donations of any size: any and all assistance is appreciated.

Thank you for your Ongoing Support

To make a gift or donation, please send a check to:

## **The Queens College Foundation**

Center for Byzantine Center and Modern Greek Studies

Jefferson Hall Room 302

Queens College

65-30 Kissena Blvd.

Flushing, NY 11367

or scan the QR-code





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