

Πάθη/Passions: a latent poetic collection by Cavafy

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The present article is an annotated version of a lecture delivered in January 2009 at Cambridge, in which I discussed a latent poetic “collection” by Cavafy, entitled “Passions”.¹ Before proceeding to

In the notes that follow I have adopted the following abbreviations:

<i>Unpublished</i>	C. P. Cavafy, <i>Ανέκδοτα ποιήματα 1882-1923</i> Φιλολογική επιμέλεια Γ. Π. Σαββίδη (Athens: Ikaros 1968)
<i>Unfinished</i>	C. P. Cavafy, <i>Ατελή ποιήματα 1918-1932</i> , Φιλολογική έκδοση και σχόλια Renata Lavagnini (Athens: Ikaros 1994)
<i>Cavafy, Introduction</i>	<i>Εισαγωγή στην Ποίηση του Καβάφη. Επιλογή κριτικών κειμένων</i> . Επιμέλεια Μιχάλης Πιερής (Heraklion: Panepistimiakes Ekdoseis Kritis 1994)
<i>MK, A</i>	G. P. Savidis (Γ. Π. Σαββίδης), <i>Μικρά Καβαφικά. Α΄</i> (Athens: Ermis 1985)
<i>MK, B</i>	G. P. Savidis, <i>Μικρά Καβαφικά. Β΄</i> (Athens: Ermis 1987)
<i>Prose</i>	C. P. Cavafy, <i>Τα Πεζά (1882;-1931)</i> . Φιλολογική επιμέλεια Μιχάλης Πιερής (Athens: Ikaros 2003)
<i>Poems I-II</i>	C. P. Cavafy, <i>Ποιήματα. Α΄</i> (1896-1918), <i>Β΄</i> (1919-1933). Φιλολογική επιμέλεια Γ. Π. Σαββίδη (Athens: Ikaros 1963)
<i>Passions & Ancient Days</i>	C. P. Cavafy, <i>Passions and Ancient Days</i> , New Poems translated and introduced by Edmund Keeley and George Savidis (New York: The Dial Press 1971)
<i>Savidis 1966</i>	G. P. Savidis, <i>Οι Καβαφικές Εκδόσεις (1891-1932)</i> . Περιγραφή και σχόλιο. Βιβλιογραφική μελέτη (Athens: Tachydromos 1966)

¹ I would like to thank Prof. David Holton again here for his invitation to give the lecture and his hospitality. I am also grateful to Mr Manuel Savidis, Director of the Centre for Neo-Hellenic Studies, for giving me

a presentation of the archival material that concerns this “collection”, i.e. the titles of all poems, which, at one point or another, we may assume Cavafy had considered arranging under the title “Passions”, I shall summarise here some general comments on Cavafy’s practice of compiling catalogues and lists – comments which served as an introduction to my Cambridge lecture.

1

“Almost all work of art is done with emotion. I was in emotion in all my poetry’s making”,² Cavafy once wrote, and hence it would be safe to assume that an undiluted expression of some personal experience is to be found in each of his poems.

In his well-known poem “Theodotos”, created in 1915, Cavafy wrote:

And do not be too sure that in your life –
restricted, regulated, prosaic –
spectacular and horrible things like that do not happen³.

Since this poem belongs to the philosophical/didactic area of Cavafy’s oeuvre, and hence is addressed “to everyone”,⁴ *ad*

permission to study and publish the contents of the unpublished folder “Passions”, as well as for authorising the publication here of four photographs of unpublished manuscripts from the Cavafy Archive. Finally, I thank philologist Irena Alexieva for translating the present article into English.

² The quote is taken from a comment in English by Cavafy on the poem “Sculptor of Tyana”, which was transcribed and discussed by Diana Haas; see C. Th. Dimaras, “Cavafy’s technique of inspiration”, *Grand Street* 2.3 (Spring 1983) 156. For more on the personal experiences that underlie each of Cavafy’s poems, see C. Th. Dimaras, “Μερικές πηγές της καβαφικής τέχνης”, first published in the 1932 special issue of the literary journal *Κύκλος* dedicated to Cavafy, and re-published several times elsewhere (now in: Cavafy, *Introduction*, p. 76-8).

³ Unless otherwise stated, all poems are quoted in the translation of Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard in: C. P. Cavafy, *Collected Poems*. Edited by G. P. Savidis. Revised ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1992).

orbem so to say, it had never crossed my mind that these verses could reflect, along with others, some intense emotional *occurrence* in a life “restricted, regulated and prosaic”, which was only occasionally interrupted by a spectacular or horrible event, such as for instance some “terrible news”⁵ or the unexpected privilege of an accidental encounter with love.⁶

However, as I was researching the contents of the Cavafy Archive relevant to the thematic division “Passions”, I realised that the poet had a pronounced tendency towards organising both the prosaic and the poetic aspects of his life. We knew already, from G. P. Savidis, that Cavafy’s papers were found in an “exemplary order”;⁷ we know also, from in-depth philological studies, such as Renata Lavagnini’s study of Cavafy’s unfinished poems, that “Cavafy’s work manner is [...] quite organised and systematic”.⁸ This persistent daily control and organisation involved the fastidious recording of large and small expenses, of major and minor household repairs, daily chores, etc., which produced the various lists and catalogues that, as we know, Cavafy was particularly inclined to keep.⁹

This practice was perhaps an inherited habit, or as Savidis more aptly put it, “[Cavafy’s] innate instinct and the conditions of his life had taught him early on to keep proper accounts”.¹⁰ Or

⁴ The concept of a poem addressed “to everybody” has been used by Cavafy himself. See G. Lechonitis, *Καβαφικά Αυτοσχόλια. Με εισαγωγικό σημείωμα Τίμου Μαλάνου* (Athens ²1977), p. 30.

⁵ “When I heard the terrible news, that Myris was dead” (see *Poems*, II, p. 74, line 1).

⁶ “He saw a face inside there, saw a figure/that compelled him to go in” (see *Poems*, II, p. 83, lines 16-18).

⁷ See G. P. Savidis, “Για δυο νέες εκδόσεις του Καβάφη”, *Εποχές* 1 (May 1963) 55 and *Poems*, I, p. 9.

⁸ See *Unfinished*, p. 24.

⁹ As early as 1963, in his first informational presentation of the Cavafy Archive, G. P. Savidis notes that a major part of the Archive consists of “lists: a) bibliographical, b) chronological, c) thematic, d) generic – of the poems he either wrote or intended to write – as well as of the names of the recipients of each of his poetic collections”. See *MK*, A, p. 41.

¹⁰ *MK*, A, p. 19.

maybe it was the result of some fear that he might be ruined financially – a logical concern, given the sudden turn for the worse, which the economic situation of the family took after the death of the poet's father; or maybe it was his almost obsessive (I would say English-style) mindset that drove him to control so methodically all practical details of a lonely everyday life. The life of a man who in 1908, at the age of 45, chose to live alone,¹¹ trying hard, on the one hand, to preserve a certain lifestyle in the face of financial constraints, and on the other hand, to practise his art without compromising in any way with his artistic principles and ideas, as they had been shaped over the years. Or maybe it was none of the above and the explanation is much simpler: the fact that Cavafy lived in a time when the concept of orderliness and of “household economy” was a self-evident routine, at least for those who belonged to a certain social class.

The various catalogues and lists in the Cavafy Archive may fall into different categories but they all share one common feature: they are detailed and precise, no matter whether it concerns everyday matters, or the way Cavafy organised his work, i.e. into chronological and thematic catalogues of his poetry.

The practice of recording and cataloguing all kinds of activities seems to have helped Cavafy put his daily affairs in order. Thus, we have for instance: (a) catalogues detailing household tasks; (b) catalogues describing preparations for various trips;¹² (c) catalogues of monthly expenses;¹³ (d) genealogical catalogues;¹⁴ (e) catalogues of recipients of his poetic works.¹⁵

¹¹ On Cavafy's life, see the most well-founded biographical study so far, by Dimitris Daskalopoulos and Maria Stasinopoulou, *Ο Βίος και το Έργο του Κ. Π. Καβάφη* (Athens: Metaichmio 2002).

¹² One such catalogue has been published by G. P. Savidis in his study “Ένδυμα, ρούχο και γυμνό στο σώμα της καθαφικής ποίησης”. See *MK, A*, pp. 222-3.

¹³ Cavafy kept such records for the last 40 years of his life (1893-1933), but unfortunately most of them have been lost, according to information given to G. P. Savidis by Alekos Sengopoulos. See: *MK, A*, p. 35. The researcher who saw this archival material before most of it perished was Michalis Peridis, who used the information that had come to his

Apart from practical or genealogical catalogues, Cavafy also compiled chronological and thematic lists of his poems, such as, for instance: (a) a bibliographical catalogue of rejected poems; (b) the catalogue of 29 unfinished poems;¹⁶ (c) a catalogue of poems in French; (d) a catalogue of poems written in *katharevousa*; (e) chronological lists of poems by composition date; and (f) thematic lists of poems.

From this second group, G. P. Savidis carefully researched and published all chronological catalogues that have to do with the composition of Cavafy's poems, making partial use of the generic and thematic catalogues and providing some information on their appearance and contents.¹⁷ As a result of G. P. Savidis's systematic and research efforts over many years, an essential aspect of Cavafy's publishing system was recognised and documented – namely, that the poet aimed at a more complex reception of his work, and believed that this could be achieved primarily through a *thematic* arrangement of his poems.¹⁸

knowledge for his book *Ο Βίος και το Έργο του Κωνσταντίνου Καβάφη* (Athens: Ikaros 1948); see pp. 55-61.

¹⁴ See Vangelis Karagiannis, *Σημειώσεις από την Γενεαλογία του Καβάφη και ομοίотη αναπαραγωγή του χειρογράφου της "Γενεαλογίας"* (Athens: ELIA 1983). Part of the Genealogical Table, compiled by Cavafy and translated into English by his brother John, has been published in the catalogue of the C. P. Cavafy Exhibition organised by the Hellenic Foundation for Culture, the Centre for Neo-Hellenic Studies and the Cavafy Archive; see the catalogue edited by Katerina Gika (Athens: Centre for Neo-Hellenic Studies 2008), pp. 20-1.

¹⁵ See Savidis 1966: 215-83.

¹⁶ These poems have been published by Renata Lavagnini (*Unfinished*).

¹⁷ See *MK*, A, pp. 49-85.

¹⁸ This complex issue has been thoroughly analysed by G. P. Savidis in a series of studies and in his lectures at the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki, and has been substantiated in his now classic two-volume edition of Cavafy's *Poems* (1963 and new edition 1991). Savidis's findings and views on the editorial issue in Cavafy have been challenged by Anthony Hirst. See primarily the study "Philosophical, historical and sensual: An examination of Cavafy's Thematic Collections", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 19 (1995) 33-93, as well as the joint article by Anthony Hirst and Sarah Ekdawi "Hidden Things: Cavafy's thematic catalogues", *Modern Greek Studies* (Australia and New Zealand) 4

This aspect relates to another major issue in Cavafy's poetic practice, which the poet himself defined as "great attention to poetic balance" – a balance that he sought to achieve in his entire poetic oeuvre. Cavafy clearly realised the dynamic internal coherence among his poems (underpinned by thematic circles), and perceived his poetry as "work in progress". It is worth recalling here a well-known note by the poet, published in the journal *Αλεξανδρινή Τέχνη*, which is particularly illuminating for the way he worked: "light in one poem, half-light in the other – not haphazardly, but with great attention to poetic balance".¹⁹ In this regard, there is no doubt that the thematic catalogues, along with the chronological ones, are the most important of all catalogues that Cavafy used to compile.

2

The first mention of the existence of thematic catalogues in the Cavafy Archive was made by G. P. Savidis in 1963, in his study "The C. P. Cavafy Archive".²⁰ Subsequently, although Savidis did not delve into this subject, having focused his research efforts in other directions he considered a priority, he also provided quite a few useful comments on the thematic division of Cavafy's poetry.

One of these divisions bears the title "Passions" and constitutes one of the nine "thematic headings", as the poet himself called the thematic categories into which he attempted to classify

(1966) 1-34. Hirst has in fact applied some of his erroneous conclusions in a new English edition of Cavafy's poetry. See C. P. Cavafy, *The Collected Poems*. Translated by Evangelos Sachperoglou, Greek text edited by Anthony Hirst, with an Introduction by Peter Mackridge (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007).

¹⁹ See Savidis 1966: 209-10. The unsigned note attributed to Cavafy, published in *Αλεξανδρινή Τέχνη* (May 1927), is quoted here in the translation of Edmund Keeley in his: *Cavafy's Alexandria. Study of a myth in progress* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 186-7.

²⁰ See G. P. Savidis, "Το Αρχείο Κ. Π. Καβάφη", *Νέα Εστία* 74 (872) (1 November 1963) – issue dedicated to Cavafy. Now in *MK*, A, p. 41.

his poems based on a central and particularly prominent feature.²¹ This feature had to do with either the concept of history (“Ancient Days”, “Byzantine Days”, “The Lord of Epirus”), or the concept of religion (“The Beginnings of Christianity”), or the notion of fleeting time and the attrition it brings (“Years Fly By/Anni Volant”), or the idea of confinement (“Prisons”), or the concern about poetics and poetic practice (“Our Art”) or about a specific aspect of poetic art (such as the development of a Parnassian subject in the thematic heading “Three Images”), and last but not least, the heading with the most provocative, and certainly, in my opinion, the most interesting title with regard to the overall understanding of Cavafy’s art: “Passions”.²²

²¹ For more on thematic headings and thematic catalogues see Savidis 1966: 136, 137, 138, 139, 169, 177, and 194; and Cavafy, *Unpublished*, pp. 236-9, 241-5, 248-9. See also Diana Haas, “Αι αρχαί του Χριστιανισμού. Ένα θεματικό κεφάλαιο του Καβάφη”, *Χάρτης* 5/6 (April 1983) 589-608; Haas, “«Στον ένδοξό μας βυζαντινισμό»: σημειώσεις για ένα στίχο του Καβάφη”, *Διαβάζω* 78 (5 October 1983) 76-81; Haas, *Le Problème religieux dans l’oeuvre de Cavafy. Les Années de Formation (1882-1905)* (Paris: Sorbonne 1996), pp. 29, 33-70, 72, 85, 140, 142-3, 147-75, 199, 201, 213, 217, 275-6, 279, 317, 345, 419-20, 422.

The thematic collections and more specifically the archive file “Passions” have been discussed with particular eagerness by Sarah Ekdawi, who, in an unpublished Master’s degree thesis (“The Passions File: A study of eleven poems by C. P. Cavafy”, M.Phil. in Applied Linguistics, Trinity College, Dublin 1995), a research paper (“The Passions File: Cavafy’s private collection?”, *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook* 16/17 (2000/2001) 159-75), and an article co-authored with Anthony Hirst (see note 18 above), has engaged in the study of Cavafy’s thematic organisation and thematic collections. Unfortunately, her research papers, not unlike Hirst’s, leave much to be desired from a methodological point of view and base a number of their arguments, as well as some conclusions, on misconceptions.

²² In the present article, I will not comment on the remaining “thematic headings”, the basic information on which is to be found in an archival document, marked F82; it requires a separate examination, since it poses quite a few challenges, both in deciphering its content and in grasping all the aspects of its compilation and use by the poet. A partial photograph of this document has been published in Lena Savidis, *Λεύκωμα Καβάφη 1963-1910* (Athens: Ermis 1983), a commemorative edition marking the 50th anniversary of Cavafy’s death. Dr Ekdawi studied this photograph

The arrangement of poems under these “headings” began ca. 1891 (for some thematic headings) and was abandoned around 1898, although in some cases it persisted until 1903/1905, while two headings (“Ancient Days” and “Passions”) continued to occupy Cavafy up to 1923/24, albeit undoubtedly at a different level. From a certain point on, it seems that the poet contemplated the prospect of compiling two collections under these titles (or “headings” as he used to call them).

It is worth reiterating here a principal conclusion of Cavafian scholarship, namely that the attempt to organise poems into “thematic headings” does not correspond, in terms of the logic behind it, to the creation of thematic collections in which the poet arranged his acknowledged poems, where an explicitly different (and certainly much more complex) system was followed.

The arrangement of poetic works under “thematic headings” is an attempt to group certain poems under a common title and should not be confused with Cavafy’s subsequent attempts to compile thematic collections founded on a close or remote correlation between two adjacent poems in a collection. In the second case, the degree of correspondence varies: sometimes the similarities are immediately visible, while other times a theme, a pattern or a certain mood simply extends from one poem to the other, and the coherence between the two requires advanced reading to be discerned. As G. P. Savidis observed – he was the first to realise the importance of the thematic arrangement of poems in some of Cavafy’s poetic collections and in his two bound booklets – the poet did not divide his works the way he did in compiling the thematic catalogues (thematic headings), but grouped

almost as if it was a first-hand examination of the manuscript itself, and transcribed its content, overlooking the fact that next to the last entry there is a reference mark, which suggests (to those who are familiar with Cavafy’s practice of organising such documents) that the catalogue continues somewhere else within the same manuscript.

them “into a much more subtle thematic sequence”;²³ one “that would clearly reveal the train of his poetic thought”.²⁴

It should be noted also that the nine thematic headings do not have the same quantitative weight and value, nor do they possess the same dynamics that can be identified in the evolution of Cavafy’s poetry. Two of the nine headings, for example (“The Lord of Epirus” and “Three Images”) seem to be the result of an ad hoc grouping of a specific and very small number of poems, which the poet could not include elsewhere. These headings were never updated afterwards and obviously concern some extremely narrow thematic areas, which Cavafy abandoned, as his poetic pursuits led him to delve deeper and extend the scope of some of the remaining six headings.

Out of these remaining six headings, only two seem to go beyond the early thematic contemplations of the poet, and continue to occupy him up to the last decade of his creative life. These two headings are “Passions” and “Ancient Days”, which differ from the rest in that Cavafy continues to update them until the last decade of his life. The most recent addition to the thematic heading “Passions” (the poem “From the Drawer”, left unpublished by the poet) was written in 1923. The most recent addition to the thematic heading “Ancient Days” is the poem “In Alexandria, 31

²³ Savidis 1966: 177.

²⁴ *Poems* I, p. 11. Ekdawi’s approach to this issue is misleading, since in presenting Cavafy’s thematic collections, she includes not only those entitled “Poems”, but also the two private collections, which the poet gave as a present to Malanos and to Sengopoulos, as well as the two prospective thematic collections “Ancient Days” and “Passions”. See S. Ekdawi, “The Passions File: Cavafy’s private collection?”, pp. 170-1. However, the thematic collections were produced following “thematic and generic” criteria, as Savidis notes as early as 1964 (for instance, the epitaphs and the dramatic monologues constitute a “generic division”, see: *MK*, A, pp. 59-89), while the incomplete “collections” “Ancient Days” and “Passions” were compiled according to quite different criteria, having originated as “thematic headings”, i.e. lists of poems that can be grouped under a thematic title (such as “The Beginnings of Christianity”, “Prisons”, “Years Fly By/Anni Volant”, etc.).

B.C.” which was probably written in 1917 and was published in a single broadsheet in June 1924.

In 1968, studying the publication history of Cavafy’s “feuille volante” entitled *Ancient Days*,²⁵ Savidis arrived at the conclusion that “in 1897-1898, Cavafy had planned to publish a thematically arranged collection [...] which either in its entirety or in part would have had the title: *Ancient Days*”.²⁶

In 1983, in his study “Seven Stages of a Cavafy Poem” («Επτά στάδια ενός ποιήματος του Καβάφη»), while examining the composition and publication history of the poem “The Funeral of Sarpedon”, Savidis referred to the contents of the folder marked “Ancient Days” (F11) and transcribed the titles of the poems, which Cavafy had included in this thematic sequence (or potential collection?), as they were written on the second, third and fourth page of the folder.²⁷

A detailed examination of the documents in the Cavafy Archive related to the thematic heading “Passions” underpins Savidis’s argument that at some point of his creative life Cavafy might have contemplated publishing a thematic collection entitled “Ancient Days”.

First of all, there are obvious similarities in the appearance of the two folders in which the poet kept manuscripts assigned to these two thematic divisions, “Ancient Days” and “Passions” (see Appendix, Plates 1 and 2). One could indeed argue that we are dealing with a thematic pair, which exhibits quite a few common features: (a) similar cover/jacket; (b) similar layout of titles on the

²⁵ We may recall that in his lifetime Cavafy published five pamphlets or “feuilles volantes” (one of which is “Ancient Days” printed in 1898), two bound booklets and ten collections. The pamphlet “Ancient Days”, the thematic heading “Ancient Days”, and the intended but never published thematic collection “Ancient Days” differ and should not be confused. All issues related to Cavafy’s practice of circulating his works are thoroughly researched and clarified in G. P. Savidis’s doctoral dissertation (Savidis 1966). On the pamphlet “Ancient Days”, see specifically pp. 136-142.

²⁶ See Savidis 1966: 138.

²⁷ *MK*, A, p. 277, note 18.

cover of the folder; (c) similar organisation of the table of contents, i.e. poem titles written on the two inside pages of the folders/jackets (in the case of “Ancient Days”, because of limited space, the list continues on the back cover); (d) similar preliminary numbering of the titles (every fifth one in the list), as evidenced by traces in both documents;²⁸ (e) the two folders related to these two thematic collections were kept close to one another in the poet’s Archive (“Ancient Days” in F11, “Passions” in F12).

Such deliberate organisation of the archival material suggests that, from a certain point onwards the poet approached these two thematic headings differently from the rest. Having abandoned the remaining seven thematic headings, Cavafy probably intended to proceed with these two divisions (“Ancient Days” and “Passions”) with a view to producing autonomous editions.

Herein lies the most important contribution of G. P. Savidis to our understanding of Cavafy’s concern with the “thematic headings”. The conception and publication in English, with the collaboration of Edmund Keeley, of the poetic collection *Passions and Ancient Days* is a publishing act which (with the organisation of its contents) substantiates that Savidis had recognised the most essential outcome of Cavafy’s earlier attempt to arrange his poetic works under thematic headings: that the poet at some point abandoned his initial divisions, singling out only two of them to which he accorded a different treatment, beyond simple classification. He regarded them as divisions that had the potential of evolving into autonomous thematic collections.

Why this effort was never brought to fruition remains unclear. However, the traces of this endeavour, which have been preserved in the poet’s Archive, can still provide valuable insights to a variety of issues that have to do with the way Cavafy planned and organised the circulation and reception of his oeuvre.

²⁸ See note 32 below.

3

I shall now focus on the folder in file F12 of the Cavafy Archive, which reflects the poet's attempt to compile a poetic collection under the title "Passions", along the pattern established with the thematic heading "Ancient Days".

F12

The archival item in question is a makeshift folder (33.7 x 21.5 cm), made of grey cardboard, which bears on its front page, i.e. the cover/jacket of the presumed poetic collection, the handwritten title "Passions" (see Appendix, Plate 1).

The title "Passions" on the cover is written in ink in Cavafy's hand and crossed out in pencil in the hand of Rika Sengopoulou, who classified the contents she found inside as "Unknown poems, good" (as she noted in pencil above the title).

The folder today does not contain manuscripts of poems, since those that existed inside, a total of eleven poems,²⁹ were removed by G. P. Savidis and together with other previously unpublished works found in various files of the Cavafy Archive, were published in 1968 as *Unpublished Poems (1882-1923)*.³⁰

Let us now see the titles of the poems included in the handwritten list, inscribed on the makeshift folder "Passions"

²⁹ Here lies the fundamental misconception of Sarah Ekdawi, who assumed that the collection "Passions" comprised eleven poems, i.e. only those that remained unpublished by the poet and were, hence, discovered by Savidis in manuscript in the folder "Passions". It is quite obvious however, that Cavafy's deliberations on the possibility of publishing a collection entitled "Passions" encompassed a larger number of poems.

³⁰ According to information provided by Savidis in his notes to this edition, the eleven poems, the manuscripts of which existed in the folder "Passions", were: "September, 1903", "December, 1903", "January, 1904", "On the Stairs", "At the Theatre", "On Hearing of Love", "Thus", "And I Leaned and Lay on Their Beds", "Half an Hour", "The Bandaged Shoulder", and "From the Drawer". As for "Invigoration", Savidis notes that two poems with this title were recorded in Cavafy's chronological catalogues, one of which was filed "under the heading 'Passions', together with: 'On Hearing of Love', 'Far Away', 'On Beautiful Things' (= 'I've Looked So Much'), 'Thus', etc.)". See *Unpublished*, pp. 236-7.

(F12),³¹ which, I believe, constitutes an earlier version of the table of contents for the intended poetic collection “Passions”, if indeed it was ever meant to reach the printing press (see Appendix, Plates 3 and 4).

Ὁ Σεπτέμβριος τοῦ 1903	
Ὁ Δεκέμβριος τοῦ 1903	
Ὁ Γενάρης τοῦ 1904	
Ἡ φωτογραφία	
Σταῖς Σκάλαις	[[5]] ³²
[[Χθὲς Νύχτα]]	
Στὸ Θέατρο	
Ἄπ' τὰ χέρια τοῦ Ἔρωτος	
[[Μεθυσμένος]]	
[[Ποίημα]]	[[5]]
Ἐπήγα	
[[Λαγνεία]] Ὀμνύει	
Ἐνα βράδυ μου	5
[[Στοὺς δρόμους]]	
Τὸ Κλεισμένο Ἀμάξι	5
Ἐκφυλισμένος Ἔρωτος	5
[[Μάρτιος 1907]] Μέρη τοῦ 1903	
Πολυέλαιος	
[[Γ.]]	
Ἔρωτος ἄκουσμα	

³¹ In the list in Greek that follows, the titles are transcribed as entered by Cavafy, along with all subsequent deletions, insertions, repetitions, and markings, while in the numbered list in English I have attempted to produce a more advanced version of the catalogue, omitting repeated entries and adding, where appropriate, subsequent changes to the titles listed.

³² The numerical index 5 appears five times in the document (twice it is crossed out). As far as I could figure out, the poet initially tried (soon abandoning this idea) to number every fifth poem (for what purpose, I can only guess). Thus, the first index marks the fifth poem, the second the tenth, while the third also follows this pattern (i.e. it again marks the tenth poem if we omit the deleted titles above it). The fourth index, probably an earlier insertion, marks the fifteenth poem (if we number them without omitting any deletions), while the logic behind the last, fifth, index is obscure.

Ἐπέστρεφε
 [[Γιὰ τὰ ὠραία]] Ἔτσι πολὺ ἀτένισα
 [[Ἐνδυνάμωσις]]
 Ἔτσι
 [[Μισομεθυσμένοις]] Ἐν τῇ Ὄδῳ
 [[Τὰ πολύτιμα]] Ὅταν διεγείρονται
 Ἡδονῇ
 Μακρὰ
 Ἡ Ἀρχὴ των
 Κι ἀκούμπησα καὶ πλάγιασα στὲς κλίνες των
 [[Ἀγάπησέ την Πιότερο]] Ἴμενος
 Ἐν Ἐσπέρα
 [[Ἀλεξανδρινόν]]
 Θυμῆσου Σῶμα
 Μισὴ ὦρα
 Γκρίζα
 Κάτω ἀπ' τὸ Σπίτι
 Δώδεκα καὶ μισή
 Τὸ διπλανὸ Τραπέζι
 Νόησις
 Νὰ Μείνει
 Ὁ Δεμένος Ὄμος
 Τὸ 23^{ον} ἔτος τοῦ βίου μου τὸν Χειμῶνα
 Ὁ Ἥλιος τοῦ Ἀπογεύματος
 Ἴμενος
 Τὸ Ἴόνιον Πέλαγος
 Τὸ καλοκαίρι τοῦ 1895
 Ἀπ' τὸ Συρτάρι

1. September, 1903
2. December, 1903
3. January, 1904
4. The Photograph
5. On the Stairs
6. [[Last Night]]
7. At the Theatre
8. From the Hands of Eros [= At the Café Door]
9. [[Inebriated]]
10. [[Poem]]

11. I Went
12. [[Lust]] Vow
13. An Evening of Mine [= One Night]
14. [[In the Streets]]
15. The Closed Carriage [= The Window of the Tobacco Shop]
16. Failing Love [= A Young Poet in His Twenty Fourth Year]
17. [[March 1907]] Days of 1903
18. Chandelier
19. [[Γ.]]
20. On Hearing of Love
21. Come Back
22. [[On Beautiful Things]] I've Looked So Much
23. [[Invigoration]]
24. Thus
25. [[Half-Drunk]] In the Street
26. [[The Precious Ones]] When They Come Alive
27. To Sensual Pleasure
28. Far Away
29. Their Origin
30. And I Leaned and Lay on Their Beds
31. [[Love Her More]] Imenos
32. [[Alexandrian]] In the Evening
33. Body, Remember
34. Half an Hour
35. Grey
36. Outside the House
37. Half past Twelve [=Since Nine O'clock]
38. The Next Table
39. Understanding
40. Has Come to Rest
41. The Bandaged Shoulder
42. In the 23rd Winter of My Life
43. The Afternoon Sun
44. The Ionian Sea [= On Board Ship]
45. The Summer of 1895 [= Days of 1908?]
46. From the Drawer

A preliminary examination of the document in F82, which refers to all thematic headings, as well as to other grouping of poems,

reveals that the thematic sequence “Passions” in F82 includes forty poetic compositions, eleven of which are not listed in the catalogue of the F12 folder. These eleven poems are:

Ἡ μάχη τῆς Μαγνησίας
 Μαρ[ικοῦ] Τ[ά]φ[ος]
 Πέρ[ασμα]
 Φυγάδες
 Ἐπάνοδος ἀπὸ τὴν Ελλ[άδα]
 Ἡ Σημ[αία]
 Πρὸς τὴν Πτῶσι
 Τοῦ 5^{ου} ἢ τοῦ 6^{ου} αἰῶνος
 Ἱερ[ωνύμου] Τ[ά]φ[ος]
 Πλὴν Λακ[εδαμονίων]
 Χαρ[μίδης]

1. The Battle of Magnesia
2. Tomb of Marikos [= Kimon, Son of Learchos?]
3. Passage
4. Exiles
5. Going Back Home from Greece
6. The Flag
7. Towards a Fall [= Nero’s Deadline]
8. Of the 5th or 6th Century [= Of the Sixth or of the Seventh Century]³³
9. Tomb of Hieronymous [= Tomb of Ignatios]
10. Except the Lacedaimonians [= In the Year 200 B.C.?)
11. Charmidis [= In a Town of Osroini]

These eleven poems, in my opinion, exhibit a common feature which could provide some insights to the reasons for which Cavafy chose not to include them in the prospective collection evidenced in F12. It is quite obvious that all eleven poems (with the sole exception of “Passage”) are historical or pseudo-

³³ Now in *Unfinished*, pp. 251-5.

historical.³⁴ They do elaborate on the topic of “passions” (the two “Tombs”, “Passage” and “Charmidis” in particular), but their historical setting (with the exception of “Passage”) is quite pronounced and this was probably the reason that led Cavafy to reconsider their inclusion in a collection entitled “Passions”.³⁵ On the other hand, the 47 poems included in the table of contents of the prospective thematic collection “Passions” all belong more or less to the erotic/sensual area of Cavafy’s poetry.³⁶

4

The details provided so far were meant to give a general idea of the poet’s attempt to compile, at some point of his creative life, a thematic collection entitled “Passions”. To conclude, I would like to add some comments which might hopefully contribute to a more developed interpretation.

From the early arrangement of his works into “thematic headings”, Cavafy kept only two categories that he found useful for the thematic organisation of his mature poetry. These were the categories “Passions” and “Ancient Days”. This suggests that at some point the poet must have realised the fundamental importance of these two thematic categories (the sensual and the historical or political Cavafy) for the perception and in-depth reception of his poetry. It is worth recalling that in 1918 Cavafy wrote a lecture, delivered by Alekos Sengopoulos at the hall of the Greek Scientific Society “Ptolemy I” in Alexandria, with which he sought to steer the reception of both critics and readers towards the most daring aspect of his poetry, the sensual one.³⁷

³⁴ On the terminology related to Cavafy’s historical poems, see Michalis Pieris, “Καβάφης και Ιστορία (Θέματα ορολογίας)”, in: Cavafy, *Introduction*, pp. 397-411.

³⁵ I noticed, for instance, that eight of these titles are also included in the intended (but also never published) collection “Ancient Days”.

³⁶ The solution I have opted for in the forthcoming edition of this collection is to publish these 11 poems separately, in an appendix.

³⁷ For a more recent publication of this lecture, see Cavafy, *Introduction*, pp. 47-56.

What emerges from the present discussion is that at some point Cavafy had selected a total of 46 (or 57) poems with a view to compiling a thematic collection entitled “Passions” (regardless of whether he eventually fulfilled these intentions or not).

One is tempted to ask, is there anything new to be learned from this latent poetic collection as it is preserved today, i.e. as an incomplete catalogue of 46 or 57 titles? Incomplete because we have no way of knowing, what the final composition of this thematic collection would have been, had the poet continued to update it until he was satisfied. I believe that even to the extent to which we can recover it, based on the fragmentary evidence found in the poet’s Archive, this collection could lead us to certain valuable conclusions that transcend the mere quantitative aspects (the 57 poems constitute approximately 37 per cent of the 154 titles in the Cavafy canon).

The most important conclusion is that the poetic expression of the erotic in Cavafy is a far more complex affair than some people might assume, especially those who have tried to anthologise the erotic Cavafy, giving weight to only one dimension, that of homosexual love.

This is certainly not the case. Many of the poems catalogued here reveal the importance which Cavafy gave to other passions, such as: the passion for solitary erotic experience, which is embodied in the poem “Chandelier” and seems to symbolise the passion for masturbation;³⁸ the passion for alcohol, as revealed in poems such as “Half an Hour”;³⁹ the passion of lust or of erotic delusion, which is associated with the “hypothetical experience”;⁴⁰ the passion that bridges pleasure and knowledge, as sug-

³⁸ The first scholar who identified this passion in Cavafy’s poetry was C. Th. Dimaras who referred to it as “lonely repetition of the erotic act”. See “Μερικές πηγές της καθαφικής τέχνης”, in Cavafy, *Introduction*, p. 91.

³⁹ On the subject of alcoholism in Cavafy’s poetry, see Savidis 1966: 182, note 106, which refers further to Malanos, Saregiannis and Tsirkas.

⁴⁰ Or “Guess work” as Cavafy himself calls it in his essay “Philosophical Scrutiny”, which Michalis Peridis, somewhat arbitrarily, entitled “Poetics”; see: C. P. Cavafy, *Ανέκδοτα πεζά κείμενα*. Εισαγωγή και μετά-

gested by the didactic tone of poems such as “Invigoration”; the passion for poetry implied in the poem “Understanding” (and probably in the lost poetic composition named “Poem”); the passions kindled by political prejudice and historical consciousness, as in the poem “The Battle of Magnesia”; the passions fed by ethical and political amorality, as in the poem “Towards a Fall” (= “Nero’s Deadline”); the passionate rejection of hypocrisy when it comes to ethnic self-awareness, as in the poem “Going Back Home from Greece”. We can also discern an elegiac feeling of time gone by, as in the poem “Half past Twelve” (= “Since Nine O’clock”) where we have the pair “πάθη”/“πένθη”, i.e. “Passions” are coupled with “Bereavements”.

A more in-depth interpretative approach to the poems included in the thematic division “Passions” would certainly reveal many other strong emotions. Hence, what we can learn from this latent collection is that the erotic and the sensual in Cavafy is not limited to *one passion*, that of homosexual erotic experience, but has to do also with the *passions* of a great poet, a conscious craftsman who was concerned about the quality of his work, about issues of political and artistic ethics, about aestheticism and sophistication, which he had an empathy for.

That the concept of *erotic passion*, which in Cavafy rather relates to a hypothetical experience, underlay his entire poetic practice in terms of both manner and ethics, is clearly revealed in the following excerpt from a note written in June 1910:

My life passes through sensual fluctuations, through fantasies –
occasionally fulfilled – of an erotic nature.
My work veers towards the intellect.

φραση Μιχάλη Περίδη (Athens: Fexis 1963), pp. 36-7. G. P. Savidis’s translation of the title is more accurate, “Φιλοσοφικός Έλεγχος” (Savidis 1966:144 and passim), while in the recent edition of Cavafy’s *Prose*, Manuel Savidis rendered it as “Φιλοσοφική Εξέταση” (*Prose*, pp. 256-60, 329). On the concept of “hypothetical experience”, see also Michalis Pieris, *Χώρος, Φως και Λόγος. Η διαλεκτική του “μέσα”-“έξω” στην ποίηση του Καβάφη* (Athens: Kastaniotis 1992), pp. 55-9, 333-4, 339-44, 422. On the topic of lust, see the related poetics and ethics note by Cavafy (*MK*, B, p. 103).

[...]

I work like the ancients. They practised philosophy, they wrote history, dramas of mythological tragedy – love-struck, so many of them – just like me.⁴¹

* * *

A central subject in the thematic collection “Passions” (as it emerges from the table in F12) is the duality of sensual pleasure and lust, which seems to have concerned Cavafy quite a lot, judging by his strong disagreement with Baudelaire’s treatment of it:

I was reading tonight about Baudelaire. And the writer of the book I was reading was somehow épaté with the *Fleurs du Mal*. It has been a while since I re-read the *Fleurs du Mal*. From what I remember, they were not so épatants. And it seems to me that Baudelaire was constricted within a very close sensual circle. Last night, suddenly; or last Wednesday; and so many other times I experienced, and acted upon, and imagined, and silently fashioned stranger pleasures yet. (22.09.1907)⁴²

Cavafy’s “sensual circle” is much broader, as we can see from the poetic compositions included in the folder “Passions”, and this is probably best evidenced in the poem “Half an Hour”.

HALF AN HOUR

I never had you, nor I suppose
will I ever have you. A few words, an approach,
as in the bar the other day – nothing more.

⁴¹ See *MK*, B, p. 122. It is quoted here in the translation of Manuel Savidis, from C. P. Cavafy, *Notes on poetics and ethics*, available in English on the Cavafy Archive website:

<http://www.cavafy.com/archive/texts/content.asp?id=24>

⁴² See *MK*, B, p. 117. This translation, by Manuel Savidis, is taken from the Cavafy Archive website:

<http://www.cavafy.com/archive/texts/content.asp?id=19>

It's sad, I admit. But we who serve Art,
sometimes with the mind's intensity,
can create – but of course only for a short time –
pleasure that seems almost physical.
That's how in the bar the other day –
mercifully helped by alcohol –
I had half an hour that was totally erotic.
And I think you understood this
and stayed slightly longer on purpose.
That was very necessary. Because
with all the imagination, with all the magic alcohol,
I needed to see your lips as well,
needed your body near me.

Written in January 1917, this poem constitutes a rare example of liberating passion, which shows us that with the vigour of fantasy and the power of thought, as well as with the help of certain magical ingredients (such as alcohol), the poet had finally managed to silently fashion stranger pleasures. That is, to join the two facets of his erotic passion, to prove as only a poet can do (with a poetic occurrence rather than an abstract assertion) that for him, *lust* and *sensual pleasure* were not two separate conditions. Because intellectual lust – enforced by fantasy and some magical ingredient (the light of a candle, some half-light, a merciful drink, moonlight, a heavenly noon, a magical afternoon, a divine July, a brilliant night, etc.) – could indeed be transformed, albeit “only for a short time”, into physical pleasure.

APPENDIX

- Plate 1: Cover of the folder “Ancient Days” with the title written and crossed out in Cavafy’s hand, and with a note “Poems marked not for publication”, added by Rika Sengopoulou. The Cavafy Archive, F11.
- Plate 2: Cover of the folder “Passions” with the title written in Cavafy’s hand and with a note “Unknown poems, good”, added by Rika Sengopoulou. The Cavafy Archive, F12.
- Plate 3: Left inside page of the folder “Passions”. The Cavafy Archive, F12.
- Plate 4: Right inside page of the folder “Passions”. The Cavafy Archive, F12.

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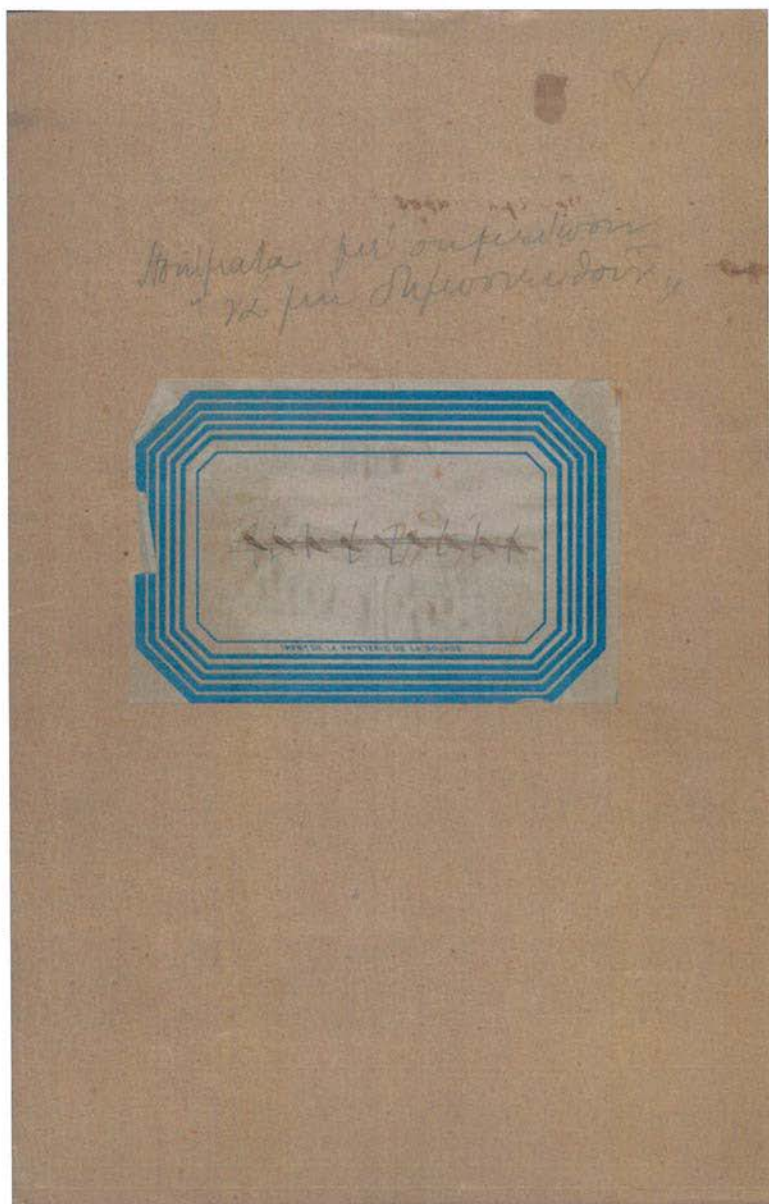


PLATE 1

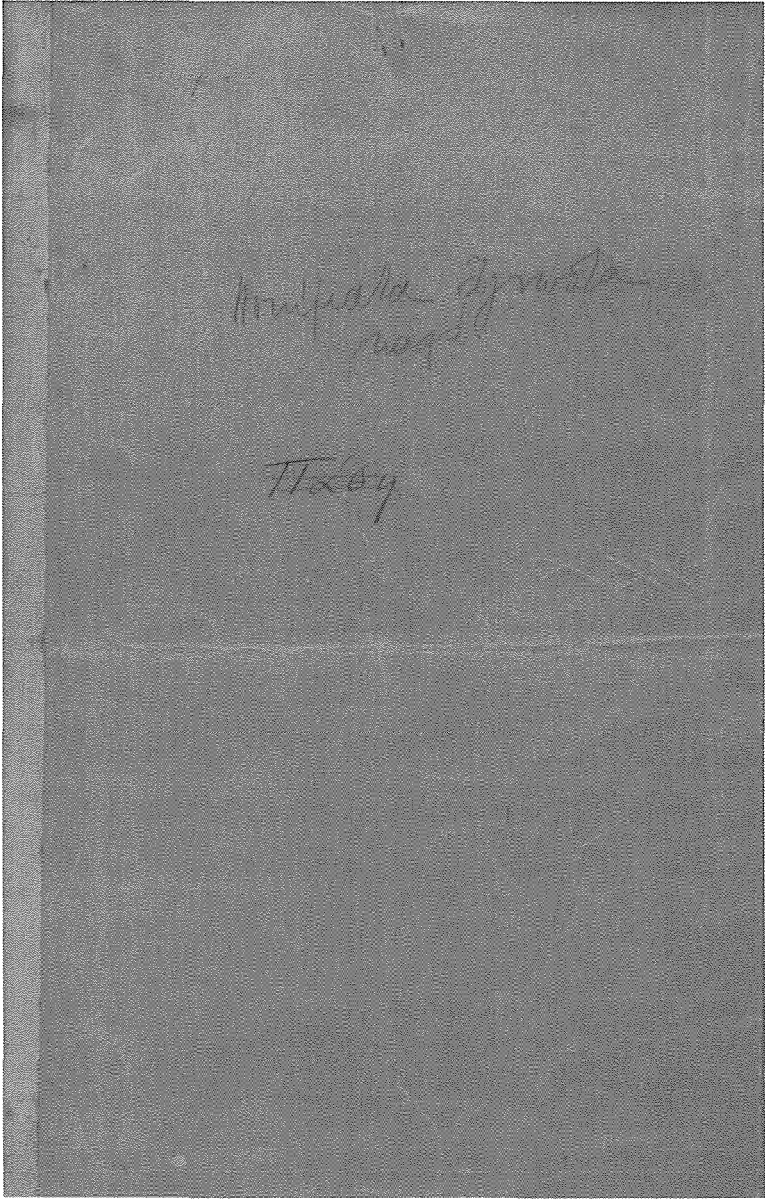


PLATE 2

Ο' Σελήνης εν 1902
 Ο' Δευτέρης εν 1902
 Ο' Τετάρτης εν 1902
 Η' Ευφορέια
 Ζησίος Σκάγκις ✕
~~Χρ. Χ. Χ.~~
 Στο' Θέλιο
 Άσπ'ά χ'ίρα εν 1902
~~Χρ. Χ. Χ.~~
 Παιψ ✕
 Ήρα
~~Χρ. Χ. Χ.~~ ούρα
 Ένα Βραδύ εν 5
~~Χρ. Χ. Χ.~~
 Το Κρησίου Άρξ' 5
 Ευφορέια εν 5
~~Χρ. Χ. Χ.~~ 1902 ✕ Μάρις εν 1902
 Πουρπύρας
 ✕

PLATE 3

The year 2008-9 at Cambridge

Students

In Part II of the Modern and Medieval Languages Tripos, Madelaine Edwards took a full range of language and literature papers in Modern Greek, including a year abroad dissertation, and graduated with a II.1, and a mark of special excellence in the oral examination. Carleen Sobczyk and Katharina Walsh each offered one paper in Modern Greek; both were placed in the First Class. Carleen Sobczyk was also awarded a Distinction in the separate examinations for the Diploma in Modern Greek.

Richard Thompson spent his year abroad in Athens, attending lectures at the University.

Matthew Jones achieved a II.2 and Carl Svasti-Salee a First in Part IA of the Tripos.

This was the first year of the new paper “Introduction to Modern Greek language and culture”, which can be taken by MML students in their second year and by final-year Classics students. Four students took the course (three from MML, one from Classics) and all achieved creditable results.

Two students passed the examinations for the Certificate in Modern Greek: Edward Pulford (with Credit) and Katherine Poseidon.

At postgraduate level, Foteini Lika and Stratos Myrogiannis have submitted their PhD dissertations and await examination. The A. G. Leventis Foundation Studentship has been awarded to Eleni Lampaki, a graduate of the University of Athens. She begins her research for the PhD, in the field of Cretan Renaissance literature, in October 2009.

Teaching staff

Following the resignation of Ms Eleftheria Lasthiotaki (who was seconded by the Greek Ministry of Education), Dr Regina Karousou-Fokas continued to teach the full range of courses in Modern Greek language. She also taught the synchronic part of

the paper on “The history and structure of Modern Greek”. Dr Notis Toufexis also contributed to this course, in addition to teaching advanced translation into Greek. Mr Kostas Skordyles gave an introductory course on modern Greek history. A number of other people contributed to the teaching programme, particularly during the Lent Term 2009, when Professor Holton was on sabbatical leave. Thanks are due to: Dr Liana Giannakopoulou, Dr Anthony Hirst, Ms Marjolijne Janssen, Ms Foteini Lika and Mr Stratos Myrogiannis.

Visiting speakers

The 2008-9 programme of lectures by invited speakers was as follows:

- 23 October. Professor Georgia Farinou-Malamatari (University of Thessaloniki): *Aspects of modern and postmodern Greek fictional biography in the 20th century*
- 6 November. Dr Anthony Hirst (Queen’s University, Belfast): *Truth, lies and poetry: Kalvos, Solomos and the War of Independence*
- 20 November. Dr Lydia Papadimitriou (Liverpool John Moores University): *Greek film studies today: in search of identity*
- 22 January. Professor Michalis Pieris (University of Cyprus): “Πάθη”/ *“Passions”*: a latent poetic collection by Cavafy
- 27 January. Professor Gunnar De Boel (Ghent University): *Psycharis: the conflict between the neogrammmarian linguist and the language reformer*
- 19 February. Professor Roger Just (University of Kent): *Marital failures: glimpsing the margins of marriage in Greece*
- 5 March. Professor Kevin Featherstone (London School of Economics): *The enemy that never was: the Muslim minority in Greece in the 1940s*
- 30 April. Dr Victoria Solomonidis (Greek Embassy, London): *“Thou shalt not translate”: the 1901 Gospel Riots in Athens*
- 7 May. Dr Maria Athanassopoulou (University of Cyprus): *Re-considering Modernism: the exile poems of Giannis Ritsos*