

## MPhil and MSt in General Linguistics and Comparative Philology, 2016

### 1. Examination Arrangements

A total number of 34 candidates sat for this year's examination; the breakdown was as follows: 10 MSt, 10 MPhil 2nd year, 14 MPhil 1st year. The MPhil 1st year candidates sat only for the Theoretical Paper (Paper A). The final Examiners' meeting was held on 5th July 2016. One candidate sat their examinations in college.

#### *Examiners*

Prof Aditi Lahiri (Somerville College) (Chair)  
 Dr Ash Asudeh (Jesus College)  
 Professor Andreas Willi (Worcester College)  
 Prof. Kersti Börjars (University of Manchester, External)

<b>Papers</b>		
Paper A: Linguistic Theory (MSt & MPhil 1 <sup>st</sup> year)	24	
	<b>MPhil 2yr</b>	<b>MSt</b>
B(i) Phonetics and Phonology	3	1
B (iv) Historical and comparative linguistics	2	
B (vi) History and structure Japanese		1
B(vi) History and structure of English		1
B (vi) History & Structure of German		1
B (vi) History & Structure of Russian	2	
B (xi) Comparative Romance Linguistics		1
B(xi) Morphology	3	
B(xi) Translation from & linguistic comment upon texts in Russian	1	
C(i) Comparative Grammar of Ancient Greek & Hittite	1	
C(i) Comparative Grammar of Greek & Sanskrit	1	
C(i) Comparative Grammar of Latin and Sanskrit	1	
C(ii) Historical Grammar of Ancient Greek & Hittite	1	
C(ii) Historical Grammar of Greek & Sanskrit	1	
C(ii) Historical Grammar of Latin and Sanskrit	1	
C(iii) Translation of Ancient Greek & Hittite	1	
C(iii) Translation of Greek & Sanskrit	1	
C(iii) Translation of Latin and Sanskrit	1	
D(i) History of French		1
D(i) History of Italian		1
D(ii) Structure of French		1
<b><i>Written submissions</i></b>		
B(ii) Syntax	4	2
B(iii) Semantics		2
B(v) Psycholinguistics	1	1
B(vii) Experimental Phonetics	2	2
B(viii) Sociolinguistics <sup>+</sup>		4
B(ix) Computational Linguistics (ComLab)*	1	1
B(xi) Special <i>Genetic Basis of Language</i>	1	

+ 1 MPhil 2 <sup>nd</sup> year student completed this option before suspending		
* 2 MPhil 1 <sup>st</sup> year students also completed this option		

## Theses topics

<b>MPHIL</b>
Morphophonology of Manx
The Sound of Social Mobility: Investigating New Middle Class Speech in Edinburgh
Syntactic phrase, syntactic compound, or morphological compound?: An exploration of the 'indeterminacy' of the Mandarin VO forms, its morphological representation , and its nature
Decomposing the Faculty of Language and Modelling Protolanguages
From Latin to Old English: Loanwords, Loan Translations and Loan Formations
The relationship between attributive participles and relative clauses in Homeric Greek
Processing Scalar Implicatures: Scalar Adjectives in (Non)-Downward Entailing Contexts
Borrowed relativising strategies: the structure and status of nominalised relative clauses in Tajik
Typological Trends of Habitual Aspect in NonStandard Englishes
Comparing comparisons: Linguistic means of expressing sameness and difference in Hesiod and Homer
<b>MSt</b>
A Study of the Hittite Verbs <i>suhha-</i> and <i>ishuwa(i)-</i>
A Phonological Analysis on Taliu

## Results (General Comments)

Marking was unproblematic; as in previous years, assessors were provided with mark sheets for theses and papers. The external Examiner looked at all the scripts and theses and gave an opinion on a selection of them; in all cases her opinions fell within the range of the other markers.

Four MSt candidates and four MPhil candidates were awarded distinction. One MPhil candidate's marks received minor adjustment in the light of special circumstances. Although two candidates achieved an average of 70 on their papers, they could not attain a distinction since their thesis mark was not high enough.

## Theses

Six MPhil theses obtained a mark in the distinction range, with one mark of 80. One MSt thesis also obtained a distinction mark.

## Vivas & Failures

One MSt candidate failed all the papers including Paper A. The examiners recommended that the candidate resat all the papers next year.

One MPhil 1st year candidate was called in for viva on Paper A. The candidate successfully responded to examiners' questions and the mark was raised to a pass mark.

Two 2nd year MPhil candidates were also called in for viva. One had had received distinction marks on the thesis but had a negative performance in two option papers. The other had received near high pass on the thesis but had poor marks in one option paper. During the viva, both candidates successfully responded to examiners' questions and they received an overall pass mark.

The candidate who had failed Paper A last year was successful on the resit.

The George Wolf Prize in Linguistics and Philology was awarded to the best MPhil candidate, who had achieved distinction marks in all the papers and an exceptionally high mark in the thesis. This candidate's performance in the taught modules as well as in the thesis amply deserved special recognition.

### **3. General remarks**

Overall, the entire examination process went smoothly. This was the second year Paper A was sat by MPhil 1st year students and the structure of the paper had altered. Although the marks were not outstanding (two received a mark above 70 and three in the high 60s), the Paper A marks were not especially different from the MSt students (who sat the same paper and two received a mark over 70, with another two in the high 60s).

Aditi Lahiri  
Chair of Examiners

August 2, 2016