

Epitelous! Modern Greek returns

AUSTRALIA'S universities have become tongue-tied over the past decade, with the number of languages on offer falling from 66 to 29 and demand for those courses falling. Now, in a small step against the tide, modern Greek will make a comeback to Monash University after a 10-year hiatus.

The move brings Monash in line with major Victorian universities such as La Trobe, which is the main institution teaching modern Greek in Victoria.

Evangelia Anagnostou-Laoutides, from Monash's classical studies department, says a 2½ year push from the Monash Hellenic Student Society prompted the move.

She says the course, which begins next year, will be funded by the the Greek Government to promote the language in the Greek-Australian community. Melbourne is home to the biggest Greek-speaking population outside Greece – with almost 47 per cent of Greek Australians living in

Melbourne.

A restructure of the Monash arts faculty in 1999 and a lack of demand meant modern Greek was dropped from the curriculum.

The decline in tertiary language studies is also reflected in high schools. Despite a greater emphasis on globalisation within schools, languages are becoming a less popular choice for year 12 students. Only 12 per cent of year 12 students learn a foreign language.

In contrast, in the 1960s about 40 per cent of year 12 students undertook a language. Figures from the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority show 292 year 12 students learnt modern Greek in 2008, compared with 643 a decade earlier.

However, Dr Anagnostou-Laoutides says a student survey showed there was strong demand for the Greek program to be restored at Monash.

"We had to ask ourselves before

starting the whole process why it was important to have modern Greek ... there is a large Greek community here and we are already in the second and third generation of people here with Greek background," she says.

"Most of them don't have any connection whatsoever with the metropolis, with Greece, and they have a vague idea about their Greek background and Greek past.

"We have an ageing population of Greek immigrants and they need all sorts of services: nursing services, legal services, so there is a need for Greek speakers in the community."

The school of languages, cultures and linguistics is already offering a short course in modern Greek for beginners with little or no prior knowledge of the language, and for students who have completed VCE Greek.

Next year, Monash will offer sequential units in an undergraduate program

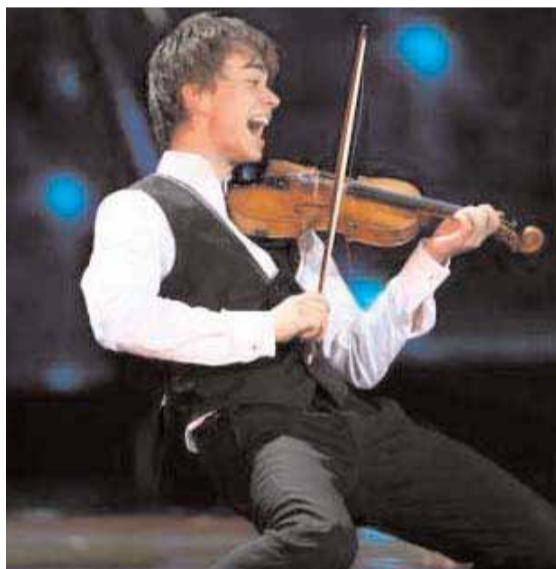
in modern Greek studies. It is planned that students who complete the course will be eligible for enrolment in a masters of translation.

Simon Angelopoulos, a committee member of the 500-strong Monash Hellenic Student Society, welcomed the move.

"It is a big hurdle, a big accomplishment, and there is a lot of pride in that because a lot of work to reinstate this was done by the student body," he says.

"When Monash cut modern Greek roughly 10 years ago, the only opportunity one had to study it was if they were doing an arts degree or a double degree with arts and they had to travel to La Trobe. So someone like myself doing engineering/commerce had no opportunity whatsoever. Now I can do it as an elective, or I could look into doing a diploma in languages."

Article from The Age



Norway celebrates Eurovision victory

The full list of contests is below.

Place	Country	Performer	Song	Points
01	Norway	Alexander Rybak	Fairytale	387
02	Iceland	Yohanna	Is It True?	218
03	Azerbaijan	AySel & Arash	Always	207
04	Turkey	Hadise	Dóm Tek Tek	177
05	United Kingdom	Jade Ewen	It's My Time	173
06	Estonia	Urban	Symphony Rõndajad	129
07	Greece	Sakis Rouvas	This Is Our Night	120
08	France	Patricia Kaas	Et S'il Fallait Le Faire	107
09	Bosnia & Herzegovina		Regina Bistra Voda	106
10	Armenia	Inga & Anush	Jan Jan	092
11	Russia	Anastasia Prikhodko	Mamo	091
12	Ukraine	Svetlana Loboda	Be my Valentine!	076
13	Denmark	Brinck	Believe Again	074
14	Moldova	Nelly Ciobanu	Hora	069
15	Portugal	Flor-de-lis	Todas	057
16	Israel	Noa & Mira Awad		053
17	Albania	Kejsi Tola		048
18	Croatia	Igor Cukrov	feat.	045
19	Romania	Elena		040
20	Germany	Alex Swings	Oscar Sings!	035
21	Sweden	Malena Ernman		033
22	Malta	Chiara		031
23	Lithuania	Sasha Son		023
23	Spain	Soraya		023
25	Finland			022

OSLO, May 17 (Itar-Tass) - Norwegians will mark a double holiday on Sunday – the victory of their compatriot Alexander Rybak in the Eurovision-2009 song contest and Norway's National Day.

Alexander Rybak, a young singer of Belarusian origin, has become a hero of this small Scandinavian country. He gained 387 points.

During celebrations in the streets of Oslo, the Prime Minister of Norway Jens Stoltenberg, who is currently on a visit in Spain, addressed the nation. He congratulated Alexander on his victory. "It's a great holiday and I should say that it will be particularly pleasant for me now to visit Moscow next Tuesday," the prime minister said. The Norwegian culture minister joined the greeting: "It's simply fantastic. We are already thinking where to hold the event next year."

Norway adopted its first constitution 195 years ago as the first step to its independence. The event is marked every year on May 18th as a national day. By tradition, the residents of this Scandinavian country put on

their national costumes. School orchestras march along streets. It's easy to guess what melody will be the most popular this year.

Alexander turned 23 on May 13.

Alexander Rybak was born in Minsk, the capital of Belarus, on May 13, 1986. His family moved to Norway when he was four. Alexander grew up in the Norwegian town of Nessoden near Oslo. Alexander comes from a musical family. His parents are musicians. At the age of five Alexander began playing the violin and the piano. He wrote his own songs and sang them. In 2006, he took part in the Norwegian show of talents "Kjempejansen" with his own song titled "Foolin". Alexander also performed together with one of the most famous violinists –Pinchas Zukerman.

He has won the Anders Jahres Prize in the field of culture and is a concertmaster in the biggest Norwegian symphony youth orchestra, Ung Symfoni, in Bergen. He also played a violinist in the Fiddler on the Roof play in the Oslo Nye theatre in 2007. In August 2009, Alexander will shoot in a film titled "Yohan-Child Wanderer".

Alexander's music idols are Stings, the Beatles and Mozart.