Information for those coming up to read Modern Greek at Oxford (beginners and non-beginners).

**Dictionaries.** Bilingual dictionaries tend to be less comprehensive than Greek-Greek dictionaries. *The Pocket Oxford Greek Dictionary* (English-Greek and Greek-English, 1995) by J.T. Pring is small but fairly accurate. *The Oxford Greek-English Learner's Dictionary* (Greek-English only) by D.N. Stavropoulos is larger and more modern. A large number of Greek-Greek dictionaries are available for advanced speakers; the *Νέο Ελληνικό Λεξικό* by E. Kriaras (Ekdotiki Athinon, 1995), the *Λεξικό της Νέας ελληνικής γλώσσας* by G. Babiniotis (Kentro Lexikologias, Athens 1998) and the *Λεξικό της κοινής νέας ελληνικής* (University of Thessaloniki, 1998) are particularly good ones, though be warned that the last two are pretty bulky. The standard dictionary we normally use in courses is the Babiniotis, which has also recently been published in a small, abridged and user friendly format.

**Grammars.** There are two fairly recent grammars of Modern Greek in English by the same authors, D. Holton, P. Mackridge & I. Philippaki-Warburton, and both published by Routledge: *Greek: an Essential Grammar of the Modern Language* (2004), which is suitable for beginners, and *Greek: a Comprehensive Grammar of the Modern Language* (1997, revised 1999), which is a larger reference grammar intended for more advanced students.

**Background reading.**

For an introduction to Modern Greek literature, R. Beaton's *An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature* (Oxford University Press, 1994, revised 1999) is essential. This is a book you will be using during the course of your degree a lot, so perhaps it may be worth buying your own copy [yet copies also exist in our library].

For the history of Greece, chiefly during the last two hundred years, *A Concise History of Greece* by R. Clogg (Cambridge University Press) is recommended. Good and more recent introductions to history that we will also be using are *Greece: The modern sequel*, by John Koliopoulos and Thanos Veremis (Hurst, 2002), and *Modern Greece* by Thomas Gallant (Arnold, 2001).

**Literature.** Before coming to Oxford, you would do well to read some Modern Greek literature in Greek if you are an advanced or bilingual speaker, or in translation if you are a beginner. Ideal for background reading in translation is the anthology *Modern Greek Writing: An Anthology in English Translation*, edited by David Ricks, Peter Owen Publishers, London, 2003. It includes both prose and poetry.

It would also be a nice idea to start exploring the poetry of George Seferis and C.P. Cavafy (their *Collected Poems* are available in good English translations – for Cavafy, prefer the bilingual Oxford University Press paperback edition, transl. by Sachperoglou, intro by P. Mackridge). The literature papers in your first year will contain a series of 20th c. short stories and poems (to be distributed in class), and a number of novels, novellas and collections of short stories, which are listed below [Greek titles in brackets: please try read in Greek if advanced or bilingual]. You don’t have to read all these in advance. But you may perhaps wish to try and check a couple of them before coming to Oxford.

C. Taktis, *The Third Wedding*, various editions [Κώστας Ταχτσής, Το τρίτο στεφάνι]
S. Doukas, *A Prisoner of War’s Story*, University of Birmingham, 1997 [Στρατής Δούκας, Ιστορία ενός αιχμαλώτου]
Further background reading: those of you who would like to develop a better understanding of Modern Greek Literature of the 20th century, could start from some of the following:

N. Kazantzakis, Zorba the Greek (Faber) and/or other novels by Kazantzakis.

E. Fakinou, The Seventh Garment (Serpent’s Tail. 1990) [in Greek: Το Έβδομο Ρούχο].

Y. Yatromanolakis, History of a Vendetta (Dedalus, 1991) [in Greek: Ιστορία].

R. Galanaki, The Life of Ismail Ferik Pasha (Peter Owen, 1996) [Ο βίος του Ισμαήλ Φερίκ Πασά].

R. Galanaki, Eleni or Nobody [Ελένη ή ο Κανένας]

M. Douka, Fool’s Gold (Kedros, Athens 1990) [Η αρχαία σκουριά].


G. Seferis, Complete Poems (trans. Keeley & Sherrard, Anvil Press, 1995) [or any other edition] [in Greek the one volume Ikaros edition of Ποίηματα]


P. Bien, K. Van Dyck et al., A Century of Greek Poetry, 2004 [bilingual collection of 20th century poetry; very good, but also quite expensive].

The first six items listed here are novels. The rest is poetry.

Again, there is no need to read all these books before coming to Oxford. The list is meant as advice to those of you who want to expand your background reading.

Remember: Do not hesitate to contact me (dimitris.papanikolaou@stx.ox.ac.uk) if you have any questions about your preparation and the course.

Dimitris Papanikolaou, July 2019