

# **Digital resources for the study**

## **of Medieval Greek: achievements and limitations**

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Digital Philology –  
Problems and Perspectives  
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# **"Grammar of Medieval Greek (1100-1700)"**

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- 5 year AHRC founded project at the University of Cambridge with the aim of producing a comprehensive Grammar of Medieval Greek in book form
- Project leaders: David Holton (principal), Geoffrey Horrocks *from*
- Research team: Tina Lendari, Notis Toufexis
- Consultant: Io Manolessou
- <http://www.mml.cam.ac.uk/greek/grammarofmedievalgreek>

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# “Medieval Greek”

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- The closest approximation to spoken Greek of the period as this can be reconstructed based on textual sources
  - Combination of philological and linguistic methodology
  - Use of literary and non-literary sources
  - Integrated database system

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# **“Medieval Greek”: multi-layered system**

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- Archaic / learned vs. vernacular
  - Register & linguistic variation
- Koine vs. dialect
  - Linguistic variation
- Foreign vs. native *from*
  - Romance, oriental elements

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# Lack of digital resources: a major problem for the Grammar of Medieval Greek

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- An electronic corpus would facilitate linguistic description and analysis, but
  - Special features required (encoding of linguistic and textual variation etc.)
  - Non literary sources available in diplomatic transcriptions need to be analysed manually (cf. Athos acts@TLG)
  - No such corpus available
- A definitive list of authors and works is not available (but will be provided by our project)

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# What is available 1

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- Achievements of others so far:
  - The Sydney project (as yet largely unpublished and undocumented)
  - The digitisation of the “Kriaras”-lexicon (<http://www.komvos.edu.gr>)
    - Of relative little use since the lexicon itself is still incomplete
  - The *Ellinomnimon* project: A digital library (facsimile) with early editions of scientific texts from 1600-1821
    - <http://efessos.lib.uoa.gr/hellinomnimon/main.htm> and as part of the ECHO project  
<http://echo.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/home>

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# What is available 2

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- *Erotokritos* on CD-ROM: Dia Philippidi & D. Holton
  - Hypertext-edition of the Cretan poem with concordances, word lists etc.
    - To appear 2006, the first “true” electronic edition of a Medieval Greek text
- The *TLG* contains a considerable amount of Medieval Greek texts
  - Lack of apparatus criticus, problems with text classification

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# Much needs to be done

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- Electronic resources of all kinds in the field of Medieval Greek studies are less than satisfactory
  - Much needs to be done in the area of electronic texts, bibliographical & primary sources databases
- How can we combine solid philological training and methodology with cutting edge electronic resources?

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# Creating digital philological resources: key issues

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- Choosing the right model of digital representation of structured information
  - Hierarchy for presentation
    - Models some kind of publication
      - TEI markup (body, div, p etc.)
  - Hierarchy for interpretation
    - Models a conceptual model
      - » PBW database, “factoids”
      - » GMG database, “excerpts”

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# Key issues

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- Facsimile digitisation vs. transcription & markup
  - Nature of material & expert knowledge
    - Some kinds of manuscript material readable only by a few experts
  - Different kinds of markup for different tasks
    - Needs of researchers, educators, general public
      - How complex do we allow our markup to be?

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# Some examples for illustration

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- Examples from my own experience and field
  - All relate to research questions of the Grammar of the Medieval Greek project
    - Pose questions about digitisation of manuscript / early prints and their exploitation for research

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# Why digital images & transcription?

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- Crusius's notebook is the only direct evidence of spoken Greek in the 16<sup>th</sup> c.
  - The constellation of his transcription and other linguistic factors allow for multiple interpretations
  - Diplomatic transcription needed for researchers with no knowledge of palaeography
  - Digital images needed for verification of diplomatic transcription and linguistic interpretation
- Interdisciplinary aspects

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# Johannes Meursius's *Glossarium Glossarium Graeco-Barbarum*

- The Wolfenbüttel exemplar with emendations by Matthias Bernegger and Mitrophanis Kritopoulos
- Needed: structural markup, search facility
- Linking to other lexica

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# Why digitise?

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- Filling the gaps of Early Modern Greek lexicography
- Further 17th & 18th c. lexicographical works available
  - DuCange
  - Somavera

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# Theodosius Zygomalas's *Thematoepistolae* (Cod. Tyb. Mb 19)

- Parallel text: Vernacular Greek on the left, learned Greek on the right, autograph
- Exact nature of material not yet fully explored
- Needed: "Aligned" diplomatic and normalised transcription, wordlists, linguistic annotation (work in progress)



# Why digitise?

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- Explore in detail the register of a important author of the 16th c.
  - Analyse his attitude towards the learned and the vernacular language
  - Investigate the development of the vernacular in relation to Byzantine rhetoric tradition

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