

12 November 2015

Dear Colleagues,

For the past few years I have been engaged in a project to produce a Modern Greek - English glossary of philosophical terms, consisting simply of a list of verbal (or phrasal) equivalents in the two languages. For many years before that I regretted the absence of such a resource for my own needs in reading and writing in Modern Greek. Gradually the idea for this work crystallized in my mind, as well as the means to achieve it and even to go beyond it, should it prove successful.

Its intended audience is people who know some philosophy -- who know what existentialism and the law of the excluded middle (for example) are and want to learn how those terms are translated into Modern Greek (and correspondingly, those who know what *υπαρξισμός* and *ο νόμος του αποκλειόμενου μέσου* are and want to know their English equivalents) or Anglophones who see the word *υπαρξισμός* in a Greek book or article and don't know what it means in English and correspondingly for Hellenophones. Papagiannakopoulos's *Ελληνο-Αγγλικό Λέξικο Μαθηματικών Όρων* (Athens, 1970) served in ways as a model.

Unlike mathematical terminology, which consists almost entirely of technical vocabulary or ordinary words used in a specifically mathematical sense, philosophical terminology overlaps greatly with ordinary language. Experience has proved that there is frequently no way to draw a sharp line between the philosophical and non-philosophical senses (and corresponding translations) of words, and for this and other reasons it proved impossible to achieve anything like consistency in decisions to include or exclude terms. For example, "virtue ethics" means something specifically philosophical, but the component words are ordinary words. A principle that was invoked in many cases was based on the assumed knowledge of the users of the glossary: if a familiar word is used in philosophy ("dread" and "psychology" for example) it was left out. In any case, such words are found in any dictionary.

Two further guiding principles followed in constructing the present work have been to avoid as far as reasonably possible imposing any particular philosophical perspective on the selection of words for inclusion and not relying on my own limited knowledge of Modern Greek for the translations.

The first principle was implemented by generating an initial list of about 2000 English words by selecting them from the indexes of reputable encyclopedias of philosophy, primarily those published by Macmillan and Routledge). My student Hanna McGinnis was invaluable in this phase of the work, which took place in the first half of 2013. This list was supplemented from indexes in standard texts on logic, aesthetics, and other areas of philosophy and subsequently by filling in gaps where they appeared. The second was implemented in the first place from summer 2013 to fall 2014 by the careful and diligent work of Natasa Gkoztari of the University of Patras, who provided initial translations of the English words. Her translations were initially reviewed by Prof. Pavlos Kalligas and were the basis for all subsequent discussion. Subsequently a committee was formed to discuss the translations provided so far. The committee consisted of Professors Pavlos Kalligas, Stelios Virvidakis, Yiannis Stefanou ( all of M.I.Th.E.), Spyros

Rangos (Patras), Voula Tsouna (University of California, Santa Barbara), Dr. Maria Protopapa and Dr. Doukas Kapantais (Academy of Athens), Nikolas Pilavachi, Natasa Gkoztari and myself. We met several times between December 2014 and August 2015; in addition to the meetings there was frequent discussion by e-mail.

We believe that this will be a useful resource for students and other laborers in the fields of philosophy. It will be made available on the internet in the near future (I hope before the beginning of this coming semester) so as to be freely accessible and easily revised.

I hope that you will be interested in taking a few minutes to look through the two files (Greek-English and English-Greek) and see whether you find them useful. Those of you who teach courses in Philosophy are welcome to distribute the glossary to your students.

My experience in revising the glossary for this preliminary publication has made me aware that it is likely to contain errors. If you find errors of any kind or if you have suggestions for different translations and for new entries, and I will welcome your comments or suggestions. Please send them to me at [rmckirahan@pomona.edu](mailto:rmckirahan@pomona.edu). I will be delighted to send revised versions of the glossary as they appear to anyone who requests them.

In the future, my hope is to expand this bilingual glossary into a multilingual one. Colleagues in Italy, Germany, Spain, Portugal and elsewhere have already expressed interest in supplying translations of the terms into their own languages. What we have here may be just a beginning. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Richard McKirahan