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Dictatorship And Literature Teaching In Modern Greek Secondary Education (1936-1940)



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Lambros Varelas

Centre for the Greek Language
Thessaloniki, Greece
lambrosvar@yahoo.gr

Abstract

The following paper attempts to show how Metaxas's dictatorship took advantage, among others, of textbooks on Modern Greek literature in secondary education, in order to reinforce its authority and impose its basic ideological and political directives on the students.

History of Modern Greek literature textbooks

From 1884 to Metaxas's dictatorship

The teaching of Modern Greek literature in Greek secondary education is introduced for the first time in 1884, thanks to the initiative of the great folklorist and then superintendent of the Ministry of Education [N. G. Politis](#). N. G. Politis himself designated with absolute accuracy the literary texts that would be taught in each grade as well. Thus, [the first textbooks](#) which were published in the same year were simple publications of the Ministry-determined text and not independent anthologies expressing their publishers' will. From the beginnings of the 20th century the process of composing the textbooks for Modern Greek literature teaching (known with the title *Modern Greek Readings*) changed. A competition is announced, always with some directives from the Ministry of Education, and several candidate anthologies are submitted every time, from which one is approved and published as the sole textbook for each grade. The process is modified for the better during the first term of [Eleftherios Venizelos](#) (1917 c.e.), in the context of a broader educational reform. Always with regard to the teaching of Modern Greek literature in secondary education, the system of a sole textbook ceases to be the norm. Now, more than one anthologies are approved for each grade ([Picture 1](#), [Picture 2](#)), and the teachers' associations in each school have the freedom to choose one of the approved textbooks and organize their lesson according to which. This preferential situation lasts for approximately 20 years.

Modern Greek literature school textbooks in the Metaxas years

With the imposition of Metaxas's dictatorship (4.8.1936) the situation in Greek education changes completely toward a more centralized and controlled system, and of course, this situation affects the process of the *Modern Greek Readings*' composition.

Regarding the composition of school textbooks for the teaching of Modern Greek literature, we witness not only the return to the sole textbook for each grade system, but, chiefly, the application of the most singular mode for choosing anthologized texts, in order to give the ability to the state to designate their content. The School Textbooks' Publication Organization (STPO), which is solely in charge of printing and publishing the school textbooks, is founded in 1937 [Laws 952/1937 & 1644/1939](#). In this way, the state gains absolute monopoly for all printed and other kinds of material concerning school [1]. A relevant competition for the authorship of the new textbooks is again announced, with the expected requirements and commitments in



the selection of literary texts: to contribute to the national, religious, and moral education of students and cultivate their aesthetic culture [Tender notices - schoolbooks A-B, C, D](#). Indeed, the competitions take place, several compilations are submitted, and many are rewarded for the textbooks for each grade (the then-Greek secondary education, the Gymnasium, consisted of six grades, however the textbooks that were published were nine, since for the first, second, and fourth grade, two books were published respectively, in order to cover some transitional conditions in the structure of secondary education) [2], but the final selection was appointed to special committees of the Ministry of Education. These committees selected the supposedly best texts from the rewarded compilations, in anticipation of the most complete result, since the selection from rewarded compilations was supposed to lead to a perfect outcome [3]. In reality, however, this system was an ostensible way of controlling the contents of textbooks completely, particularly, the literature textbooks, which are suitable for the shaping of young students' ideology and moral standards [4].

References

[1] Kangalidou 1999, pp. 118-126.

[2] Note here that *Modern Greek Readings* during Metaxas's period were used in Greek education even after World War II, until 1950. In post-war reprintings, the texts of Metaxas himself and all other texts praising directly or indirectly his regime were removed. Six scanned *Modern Greek Readings* are disposed in our portal; from these, the books of D and F Gymnasium grades are arrayed in the post-war, slightly revised 1947 editions.

[3] Toyas, vol. B, p. 537, and Varelas, p. 15.

[4] Kelepouri, passim.



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Modern Greek literature school textbooks and ideological guidance in the years of Metaxas

Propaganda apparatuses of the Metaxas regime

It certainly was not the first time the course of Modern Greek literature and its textbooks were used for the ideological guidance and overall moral instruction of students. Already from the beginning, in the late-19th century, the school literary canon included texts proper for students to become acquainted with Greek history, from antiquity to their era, so that the patriotic sentiment would be reinforced. In the following years, parallel to aesthetic education, ideological guidance was always part of the goals and aspirations of the Modern Greek literature class, as well. [For an illustration of this claim, you can read the fifth chapter (pp. 204-229) of Theophanis Kapsomenis's PhD thesis on "The portrayal of Alexander the Great in 19th and 20th century Greek bibliography", Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2004 (section "Schoolbooks"). From the websites included in the webliography you can access [Archives of the Aristotile University of Thessaloniki/Αρχεία του Α.Π.Θ.](#) The aforementioned PhD thesis is freely accessible online in the following URL: <http://cds.lib.auth.gr/submit/archive/Griza/gri-2004-368.pdf>].

In the Metaxas period, however, the ideological guidance through school textbooks reaches its peak. Besides, the regime stated clearly in its laws that "The National and moral education of the youth is a task of the State," and that "The State aims at this education through National Education and the National Youth Organization of Greece" [Law 1798/1939](#) [1]. In reality, as it will become evident later, school textbooks are used as a propaganda apparatus of the Metaxas regime. Metaxas's dictatorship, as well as the German and Italian Fascist regimes, activated an organized propaganda system, in order to inflict their ideology. The conclusion from Marina Petrakis's study, who examined the issue of Metaxian propaganda systematically, shows the following:

E Tetarti Augoustou (The "Fourth of August") regime (as Metaxas' dictatorship was known after its "birth" date) was an authoritarian regime which owed its existence to King George II and worked towards creating a "New State" based on lost supreme values and ideas. The realisation of this goal necessitated the adoption of many fascist and Nazi features like centralised state, the creation of a powerful youth movement, the suppression of political life, austere censorship and complete control of the means of mass communication. Above all it necessitated the mobilisation of a powerful propaganda machine able to proceed the manipulation of the Greek masses and disseminate to them the themes and ideology fostered by the regime, hoping at the same time to obtain their support [2].

To achieve its goals, the regime used radio, theatre, and cinema propagandistically. We now have at our disposal remarkable studies (Petrakis and Angelis) which examine how Metaxas and his collaborators utilized all these means, in order to shape the profile of a charismatic leader for the Captain (Metaxas), although not in the model of the stately personalities of Hitler and Mussolini (Metaxas had neither their stature, nor their rhetoric ability; he was [aged, short, overweight](#), and a rather mediocre orator) but as a fatherly figure which embraced magnanimously and fondly each social class, especially workers and peasants, as we will see later.

Parallel to the aforementioned means, the regime utilized propagandistically the important institution of education. The course of State Education (which emphasized the contribution of the Fourth of August and Metaxas himself in the country's progress [[Course of State Education](#)], as well as the school textbooks of the already-known humanities courses (literature, history, religion) were completely suitable to the ideological, political, and moral shaping of children, toward the direction the regime desired.



The Modern Greek Readings of Metaxas's dictatorship

The [Modern Greek Readings](http://educmus.ppp.uoa.gr/prothiki/nea4.jpg) (<http://educmus.ppp.uoa.gr/prothiki/nea4.jpg>) were published during the three-year span of 1938-1940, that is, not immediately after the imposition of the regime, but in a "maturation" phase of its propagandistic methods. The opportunity to rearrange the anthologized literary texts was given for the first time, while the anthologists also had the ability to include texts of their own, thus distorting the school literary canon [3]. Some of the anthologists were well-disposed towards the regime and included their own "literary" texts, which were of doubtful aesthetic value and promoted the principles of the regime, or texts of others who praised the regime's commemorative demonstrations. One can find such propagandistic texts by the anthologist Theodoros Makropoulos (Θεόδωρος Μακρόπουλος) in many textbooks of the third and fourth Gymnasium grade. It is true, nevertheless, that the anthologists, no matter whether they liked the regime or not, had little responsibility for the final picture of the *Modern Greek Readings*, since the committees that had undertaken the final selection of texts were not giving account of their actions to anyone except the higher administrative officers. Moreover, the strict censorship that had been imposed left no margin for reactions on the anthologists' part, therefore all reviews for the particular textbooks was flattering [[4 years Metaxas's governing](#)]. Nevertheless, the assignment the textbooks' publication to STPO improved their appearance significantly compared to the past, since their artwork ([vignettes](#)) and portraits of the authors) was assigned to painters. In addition, the textbooks are decorated with paintings by noted 19th century Greek painters (Nikolaos Gyzis, Nikiforos Lytras, Georgios Iakovidis) portraying [scenes from Greek life](#), as well as with Nelly's photos, with themes from [the King's Guard Evzones](#) and from the [Greek country](#)

The youth's ideological guidance

Modern Greek Readings are addressed to Gymnasium students, namely youths of 13-18 years old. Metaxas's interest in the youth's ideological guidance was very intense, since he rested a lot on it for the consolidation of his regime. Historians studying Metaxas's dictatorship claim that his regime was a "conservative dictatorship" and not a Fascist movement, since it lacked a popular basis. Therefore, Metaxas, in order to obtain the required popular appeal that would confirm the king's support and would secure his regime's longevity, hastened, by partially following actions of the Italian and German Fascist regimes, to create the National Youth Organization (Εθνική Οργάνωση Νεολαίας, EON), so that he would influence the young population and obtain the popularity he lacked [[Law 1798/1939](#)]. Again, Petrakis claims that:

The formation and function of EON Ethnik[ī Organosī] Neolaias (National Youth Organisation) Metaxas' "Golden Children" which represented his most systematic effort to built the most popular base he lacked, ensured the assimilation of the regime's ideology and its most successful propagation. The unification of Greek youth under a well controlled organisation which left ample room for exploitation and manipulation guaranteed the dissemination of the themes associated with the regime [4].

In 1938, the regime founds the journal [Youth \(Νεολαία\)](#) ([Picture 1](#), [Picture 2](#)), EON's main organ, through which the ideological guidance of the organizations' members, in reality all the young Greek children, is attempted. The main content of the journal is described by the chief editors as such:

agreeable readings, derived from the most characteristic periods of our history [...] excerpt from the most beautiful pages of our ancient, modern and more recent history, heroic figures, sacred places [...] our fathers' Religion, the Greek land, the Greek sea, the Greek mountains, our manners, our customs [...] encyclopaedic issues and Greek figures that served Art and Letters [...] the great current National and State events [...] special recreational pages [...] the activity of local EON establishments throughout Greece through mail as well [...] In "Youth" even our young correspond each week with the Captain by reading his wise counsel and advice. (16.3.1940 issue) [5].

[From the websites included in the webliography you can access [Historical Archive of the Greek Youth/ Ιστορικό Αρχείο Ελληνικής Νεολαίας](#) and read Eleni Machaira's book: Η νεολαία της 4^{ης} Αυγούστου (The youth of 4th of August), Athens, Ιστορικό Αρχείο Ελληνικής Νεολαίας, 1987]



If one notices the above description of the content of *Youth* and the contents of the Gymnasium's first four grades' *Modern Greek Readings*, he will discover that there are many analogies between the two publications concerning their propagandistic goal. Certainly, they are different means; the one is an official propagandistic organ, while the other is a school textbook; one is filled with crude and unsophisticated didactic texts, while the other is filled mainly with texts from the Modern Greek literature canon; yet there are analogies.

Ideological and philologic goals of *Modern Greek Readings*' literary texts

Let us now see the *Modern Greek Readings* of Metaxas's period closely. [The arrangement of anthologized texts in thematic units \(link to Database 2\)](#) indicates the main ideological goals of these textbooks as well. In the first four grades' textbooks, the contents are arranged in the following thematic units: "From religious life," "From ancient Greek life," "From modern Greek life," "From family and social life," "From Greek landscapes," "From Greek nature and the life within it." In brief: patriotism, religion, family, rustic Greece. The selection and arrangement of texts gets a more obvious philologic aim only in the last two grades' textbooks: in the fifth grade, texts are anthologized in chronological order for the first time, from the fall of Constantinople (1453 B.C.) to the modern era, while in the final grade, texts are selected from various literary genres, so that students will be informed about the diversity of textual genres (short story, narrative, account, prose poem, study, literary review, satirical poetry, verse drama, etc.). Works from foreign/translated literature are also anthologized in fifth and sixth grade textbooks, so that students will become acquainted with classic works and authors of world literature, even though some authors are selected by the yardstick of their philhellenism (Byron, Cervantes, Dante, Goethe, Hugo, Kipling, Mistral, Schiller, Shakespeare, etc.).

Greek fatherland worship

The entirety of anthologized texts shapes a moralist climate in the context of the aforementioned main directives. Texts by ancient didactic writers (Plutarch's biographies of model figures), as well as revisions of anonymous moralist texts from the French, English, and Russian literature are employed towards this goal. Most of these directives did not appear then for the first time. The cultivation of religious sentiment was always within the aims of school textbooks. The same applies for the promotion of familial bonds, the joy of contribution to society, humanitarianism, and charity. As we have already seen, the attempt for the invigoration of patriotism through the inclusion of the age-long Greek history (antiquity, Byzantium, Ottoman conquest) was dominant. However, now there is an important difference in accent, which is explained if we consider that these textbooks were arranged in a period when the clouds of World War II are visible on the horizon. Therefore, it is no surprise that there is an atmosphere of self-sacrifice for the fatherland, characteristic of many anthologized texts, as in the following excerpt, which reminds of ancient Spartan mothers' attitude toward their sons when they left for war:

– Go, my child, with my blessing, said she. Obligation towards the Fatherland is far more important than duty towards father. Seek to do your duty. If I learn that you were killed, I may possibly not die. If I learn that you flinched, I will die of shame. (A Gymnasium grade, p. 73 – from Γ. Τσοκόπουλος text "Προς την Λάρισα")

Even already known patriotic texts reach a higher level of gravity. For example, noted poet Georgios Drosinis's poem "The Soil of Greece," which is praising the fatherland's soil, was anthologized in older school textbooks as well (from 1909 c.e.). I am citing it in a prose translation by C. A. Trypanis [6]:

Now that I am leaving and shall go to foreign lands, and we shall live apart for months and years, let me take with me something from you too, my blue beloved homeland. Let me take an amulet to protect me from all sorrow, from every evil, an amulet against sickness and death, a little, only a little of the soil of Greece.

Soil that the night-breeze, the rain of May moistened; summer gave it fragrance; blessed earth that, if only touched by the heavenly grace of the Pleiades and the warm kisses of the sun, yields the fragrant vine, the golden corn, the green laurel and the bitter olive.



Honoured soil, which was dug for the foundation of a Parthenon; glorious soil, dyed red by the blood of Souli and of Marathon; soil that buried holy relics from Missolonghi and Psara, soil that will give me, a young boy, courage, pride, glory and joy.

I will hang you as an amulet on my breast, and when my heart wears you as an amulet she will take courage, be helped by you, and will not be bewitched by other foreign beauties. Your grace will give me strength; wherever I turn, wherever I stand, you will kindle in me only one desire: to return to Greece.

And should it be my fate –a black desolate fate– to leave and never to return, I will finally ask you to forgive me, and give you my last kiss. So, if I die in foreign lands, the foreign tomb will sweeter if you will be buried with me on my heart, beloved soil, soil of Greece. ([A Gymnasium grade, pp. 76-77](#))

However, when this patriotic poem coexists in the same textbooks with the following appeal by dictator Metaxas to students, it ceases to be simply a love poem for the fatherland and transforms into nationalist frenzy:

When you love Greece, you love yourself. One day, when you grow up, you will have great possessions to give, and the greatest one you have, the best and most beautiful, is your life. If you must give your life, you will give it not only because of enthusiasm, but because this is the nature of things. Because, if you do not give your life one day, those who will come after you will be slaves, they will not be Greeks; they will be slaves...

You must eliminate every tainted person who speaks or will dare to speak to you against the ideals of the Fatherland ([C Gymnasium grade, pp. 65-66](#))

Similarly, other texts gain a special sense of timeliness. The anthologist Th. Makropoulos's text "[The Brave Greek boy](#)" («[Το γενναίο Ελληνόπουλο](#)», pp. 34-37) is included in the C Gymnasium grade's textbook. Makropoulos was not a skilled writer but the law enabled him to include texts of his own. This particular text described the heroic stand of a Greek boy against the Roman conquerors in ancient Corinth. The incident is based on the binary opposition of "noble Greeks" / "uncouth and uncivilized Romans", and it is certain that during the Greco-Italian War (Fall of 1940) it reached another dimension and boosted the Greek boys' morale.

Industry

Texts praising industry and encouraging the young to labour joyfully also gain another dimension. Texts of such thematic content were already included in previous years' school textbooks, but the moment now is different and no longer so innocent. For example, the important writer Stratis Myrivilis's poem "The work song," written in 1939, and recited at the Panathenaic Stadium on the occasion of commemorating the Metaxas regime's third anniversary (4.8.1939), is included in three (!) *Modern Greek Readings*: those of the [third](#) (p. 121), and of the [fourth](#) and [fifth](#) (pp. 204-205) Gymnasium grades. The poem being about "the festival work," connections with Fascist "Kraft durch Freude" festivals/ exhibitions are inevitable. Nevertheless, an overall atmosphere of joy and optimism drives most of the *Modern Greek Readings*' texts, an atmosphere also evident, among others, in the EON members' "Ten Commandments." The EON's Decalogue is also included in *Modern Greek Readings*, and the seventh commandment, which should be obeyed by each member of the organization, was "Always be cheerful, not only in games, but also in the execution of every service" ([B Gymnasium grade, pp. 153-154](#)).

Praise for Metaxas and the National Youth Organization

There is no doubt, however, that *Modern Greek Readings* were also openly used for the promotion of the regime's ideology. Except for the EON's "Ten Commandments" there are also several excerpts from dictator Metaxas's addresses and speeches to school and university students and athletes in the school textbooks ([B Gymnasium grade, pp. 152-153](#), [C Gymnasium grade, pp. 65-66](#), [E gymnasium grade, pp. 172-174, and 174-176](#), etc.). In the same books, *the regime's Anthem* ("Why are people rejoicing and smiling,



father...”) and narrations from EON’s activities are included ([C Gymnasium grade, pp. 70-72, and 118-120](#)). Also included are excerpts from Metaxas’s biography as well as text describing and praising the regime’s commemorative (that is, propagandistic in reality) demonstrations ([C Gymnasium grade, pp. 67-70, 70-72](#)). (see also [pictures](#) of these ceremonies)

[From the websites included in the webliography you can access: Αρχεία της ΕΡΤ/Archives of the Greek Television, and view the following pictures:](#)

[Commemorative photograph of the national team of athletics. Ioannis Metaxas and Konstantinos Kotzias are pictured with the Athletes,](#)

[Athens. Ioannis Metaxas with King George II and prince Paul at the first regiment of foot camp.](#)

[Athens. Prime minister I. Metaxas at the entrance of the parliament](#) during the swearing-in ceremony of the first labour forces (the men of the labour forces are saluting in the fascist way). Among the officials present, K. Mpastias is pictured on the right of I. Metaxas and Al. Kanellopoulos, head of the EON (National Youth Organisation).

In the background, minister of the administration of the capital K. Kotzias.

[Patras. It is a parade in Patras,](#) according to the photographer. Prime minister I. Metaxas is greeting the people that are parading, while the buildings are decorated with flags and banners with the slogans “Long live the chief” and a crown on the side.

Athens. [Commemorative photograph of Ioannis Metaxas](#) with teachers and students of the teachers’ training college, according to P. Poulidis.

You can also access [Ελληνικό Λογοτεχνικό και Ιστορικό Αρχείο/Greek Literary and Historical Archive](#) and view the following pictures:

[4th August 1938. K. Kotzias at the commemoration of 4th of August](#) at the Panathenaic Stadium. EON members can be seen.

[Prize award to the Scout Rifle competitions’ winners,](#) Athens, May 1937.

[4th of August commemorations at the Panathenaic Stadium:](#) traditional dances with dancing groups from all Greece, Athens 1937]

Sympathy for the peasantry

The exploitation of *Modern Greek Readings* for the promotion of the regime’s main political choices is attempted either directly or indirectly. The special emphasis given to the anthologization of texts sympathetic to the peasantry is characteristic in this respect.

The concern of the Metaxas regime and Metaxas himself for the peasantry is great, as with all interwar period’s autarchic regimes. According to researcher Jon Kofas, Metaxas hoped that class conflicts would be absorbed through the peasants’ support:

The peasantry concerned the chief [Metaxas] more than the working class, and he lived under the illusion that he saved it from its devastated condition. He believed that the agrarian sector was the backbone of the country’s economy, and he charged that under the democratic administration it was grossly neglected. He accused the parliamentary governments of burdening the peasants with heavy debts and of being insensitive to the needs of the rural sector. He promised to revive agriculture and alleviate the eternal peasant distress by applying corporative methods to rural economy. He proposed to establish agrarian associations whose objective was to “unify” the landless peasant with the large land owner. In other words, he wanted a peasant-landowner collaboration, in the same respect that he established a worker-employer collaboration, in the urban sector, with the state determining the



relationship of the opposing classes. The state, therefore, and not any particular class was the supreme entity in society [7].

Metaxas's systematic interest in the peasantry is in step with the European (German, Italian) Fascist governments' respective interest. It is no coincidence that Metaxas himself (like Hitler) had been proclaimed the country's "Prime Peasant." The immediate goal of these actions, leaving aside the absorption of class conflicts, was common: the increase of agrarian production, so that the country's self-sufficiency is ensured. In order for this goal to be achieved, the agrarian people had to be aided financially, the urban pull wave had to be contained, and primarily, love for the native land and Greek nature had to become popular ideology.

[From the webliography, you can access [Ελληνικό Λογοτεχνικό και Ιστορικό Αρχείο/Greek Literary and Historical Archive](#) and view the following picture:
[Harvest Festival 1938](#)]

Modern Greek Readings were employed for the achievement of this goal as well. We have already seen that two large thematic units, under which literary texts were assembled in the first four Gymnasium grades' textbooks, were referring to "Greek landscapes" and "Greek nature and the life within it." Texts highlighting the flight from the polluted and sinful capital and praising the pure and redemptive province are anthologized:

The waves kept heading toward the mole; the first wave cooler than the second, the second foamier than the first. They sprinkled and washed my soul, like the Pool of Siloam. And I wished that all those Athenians were there, [I wished that they] let go of their soul's burden and dust, which defiles their labour's sacred sweat. [I wished] that they too were on the Small Island in the early morning" (Αλέξανδρος Μωραϊτίδης, «Εις την Σύρον» / Alexandros Moraitidis, "In Syros," [A Gymnasium grade, p. 150](#))

Parallel to that, texts describing Greek provincial regions are anthologized systematically, so that student's love for their native homeland is boosted. Moreover, texts about the flora and fauna of rural Greece (texts about the country's plants and animals) are included. More importantly, though, texts related to the agrarian cultivation, especially wheat cultivation and bread production (ploughing, sowing, harvest, milling, bread production). This tendency's connection to a respective central political choice is proven by the fact that an unedited circular by Metaxas himself, through which he appeals to EON members by encouraging them to see to land cultivation themselves, is included in the third Gymnasium grade's textbook. This circular was released in September 1939, when World War II had already broken out, and the need to ensure the country's self-sufficiency, chiefly in grains, appeared urgent. The main slogan of the period was "Every inch of Greek land must quickly produce something," as we see in Metaxas's circular, which is anthologized in *Modern Greek Readings*:

I appeal to Greek EON members, and especially to you, male and female phalangites, who live in our rural country, and I invoke your devotion to me and your oath for the faithful execution of my orders, to request from each one of you to offer all your enthusiasm and all of your youthful powers to the complete success of my attempt to give our country full sufficiency of the material means necessary for life.

You, who know that when I request something, it also must be done, because what I require to be done is a national urgency, I am certain that you will embrace this order of mine, to transform Greece quickly into an agricultural camp where no corner will remain uncultivated, with all your enthusiasm and all your strength, and will let not even one moment to go by aimlessly and away from the fulfillment of our goal

I request from all you, men and women, to become the vanguard of the army for the safeguarding of our country's financial longevity. I request from you to fling yourselves high-spiritedly and enthusiastically into the task of cultivating even the last corner of our earth, which is the only one that will bring life's sufficiency to our land.

At home, at church, in the street, at the field, at school, wherever you may be, I request you do not let one moment without reminding this duty to everyone. You first will always give the example for the total success of this national endeavour. With actions and words, you must be convinced and convince that neither your house fence, nor the churchyard, nor your schoolyard must remain uncultivated. Every inch of Greek land must quickly produce something. Even a potato, an oka of grain fruit, a kilo of



wheat. And I demand from you to always the first in this campaign. No male or female phalangite must forget for once this goal from now on. The Greek land's cultivation to the highest level constitutes for each one you, male and female, a national duty, identical to the soldier's duty. And every Greek phalangite, who, as I am firmly convinced, knows to how to execute his national duty, I am absolutely certain, will execute these orders of mine precisely, with that enthusiasm and way, which he has so many times proven to me he possesses. ([C Gymnasium grade, pp. 160-161](#))

Exclusions of writers

It is self-evident that writers such as C. P. Cavafy (1863-1933), with his erotic poems, had no place in such a moralistic and ideologicopolitical context. Indeed, while a number of Cavafy's poems had been anthologized in previous years' *Modern Greek Readings* (around 1930), in the Metaxas period's respective textbooks we find not one poem of his, although several of his historical poems could have easily been included in the ancient / Hellenistic history thematic units. We do not know whether the anthologists had included Cavafy's poems in their rewarded anthologies, it is certain, however, that even if the poems had been anthologized, they were not selected by the Ministry of Education committees that had been assigned with the final arrangement of the textbooks' contents. The important Greek interwar period poet K. G. Karyotakis (1896-1928), whose pessimistic poetry would be in conflict with the cheerful, optimistic, and euphoric atmosphere the regime desired to shape and dominated in the textbooks, is also absent. Finally, the later famous writers, poets and novelists of the 1930s generation (G. Seferis, Od. Elytis, An. Empeirikos, M. Karagatsis, G. Theotokas) are absent, their absence however is expected, since they had just begun publishing their works and gaining fame.

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- [1] Article 1 of Law 1798/1939, Angelis, p. 72.
- [2] Petrakis, p. 1.
- [3] Toyas, vol. B, pp. 540-541.
- [4] Petrakis, p. 4.
- [5] Excerpt from Angelis's study, p. 107.
- [6] *The Penguin Book of Greek Verse*. Edited by Constantine A. Trypanis, Penguin Books 1971, pp. 533-534.
- [7] Kofas, p. 61. Also see Angelis, pp. 214-217.

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