Remarks on My Pronunciation of the Greek Alphabet
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The question of how to pronounce Greek can lead to real disagreements. The purpose of this presentation is to explain how I pronounce Greek, though I understand that my take on the Erasmian pronunciation is a bit different from that of others. This is how I feel comfortable reading Greek and the way that the sounds work for me. It does not represent standard Erasmian pronunciation, nor does it represent the Restored Koiné of Randall Buth.

Letter	My Pronunciation	Agrees with:	Erasmian	Restored Koiné	Modern
Αα	'a' in *father*		✓	✓	✓
Ββ	'b' in *boy*		✓	-	-
Γγ	'g' in English *girl*		✓	-	-
Δδ	'th' in *this*		-	✓	✓
Εε	'e' in *get*		✓	✓	✓
Ζζ	'z' in *zig*		-	✓	✓
Ηη	'ei' in *vein*		✓	✓	-
Θθ	'th' in *think*		✓	✓	✓
Ιι	'i' in *machine*		✓	✓	✓
Κκ	'k' in *kitten*		✓	✓	✓
Λλ	'l' in *live*		✓	✓	✓
Μμ	'm' in *miss*		✓	✓	✓
Νν	'n' in *not*		✓	✓	✓
Ξξ	'x' in *box*		✓	✓	✓
Οο	'o' in *hope*		-	✓	✓
Ππ	'p' in *stop*		✓	✓	✓
Ρρ	'r' in Spanish *caro* (trilled)		-	✓	✓
Σσς	's' in *say*		✓	✓	✓
Ττ	't' in *tip*		✓	✓	✓
Υυ	'u' in French *salut* or 'ü' in German *tschüss*		-	✓	-
Φφ	'f' in *face*		✓	✓	✓
Χχ	'ch' in German *acht* (like Hebrew ך)		-	✓	✓
Ψψ	'ps' in *tops*		✓	✓	✓
Ωω	'o' in *hope*		✓	✓	✓

Diphthong	My Pronunciation	Agrees with:	Erasmian	Restored Koiné	Modern
αι	'ai' in *aisle*		✓	-	-
ει	'ei' in *vein*		✓	-	-
οι	'oi' in *soil*		✓	-	-
αυ	'ou' in *about*		✓	-	-
ευ	'eh-oo' – two sounds blended together		✓	-	-
ηυ	'ei-oo' – two sounds blended together		✓	-	-
ου	'oo' in *food*		✓	✓	✓
υι	'we' in *weed*		✓	✓	✓

By looking at this table, I am able to make comparisons between my own reading of Greek and how the sounds are represented in the various proposed systems of pronunciation. In terms of the letters of the alphabet, I generally go with the Restored Koiné system. I deviate from it only in how I pronounce β and γ. In terms of the diphthongs, however, I stay complete with Erasmian.

I'm generally convinced that Buth is correct on how the Koiné was generally spoken during the Hellenistic period in Israel. I agree with him that the diphthongs were probably pronounced as he indicates, too. For example, I'm certain that ευ was *ev* or *ef* (according to what followed it), just as it is in Restored Koiné and also in modern Greek. It is because of words like φεύξομαι (the future of φεύγω) that I cannot bring myself to consistently read the combination this way. To me, it is impossible to form *fefksome* in the mouth. It is much more natural to read *feh-ooksomai*, as it is read in the Erasmian system. There are other such examples or words that I simply find impossible to pronounce in the natural Greek system, therefore – for my own comfort – I have elected to stick with the Erasmian pronunciation of this combination (ευ). Since I am staying with Erasmus on ευ, I am consistent in staying with him on the rest of the diphthongs.

One word that makes me want to pronounce αυ as *av* and β as *v* is the name David (from דָּוִד in Hebrew). The texts of the New Testament spell this name as Δαυίδ, Δαβίδ and Δαβείδ. So, it must have been the case that ι = ει and αυ = αβ. Despite this, I distinguish between these combinations (for the sake of more words than this one).

The use of *ü* for υ is very compelling. It explains how υ eventually became ι in sound. It also allows for a distinction between λύω and λούω. I cannot go along with modern Greek's pronunciation of both υ and η as if they were ι. This creates way too much confusion. There would be no way to distinguish between ἡμεῖς ("we") and ὑμεῖς ("you"). Modern Greek doesn't have this problem, since it has developed distinct words for "we" and "you" – εμείς and εσείς, respectively. This had to happen to eliminate the confusion that would have resulted once the η and υ collapsed into the ι vowel sound.

The pronunciation of οι as *ü* in the Restored Koine (identical to υ in the same system) produces confusion for the ear of one who is used to Erasmian. οἱ ἄνθρωποι *ü anthropü* is acceptable for a nominative plural, but τοῖς ἀνθρώποις *tüis anthropüis* sounds way too close to τοὺς ἀνθρώπους *tus anthropus* to maintain comfort. Therefore, again, I stay with Erasmus in the diphthongs.

If we take αι to sound like ε, then we have possible confusion between the forms λύεσθε ("you [p.] ransom") and λύεσθαι ("to ransom"), for example, and between λύσεται ("he ransoms") and λύσετε ("you [p.] will release"). These pairs sound the same in the modern and Restored Koiné systems.

I have essentially kept the Erasmian pronunciation that I learned in college, but I have improved it by removing inconsistencies (ο is always *o* and never *aw*) and matching it to more natural non-English sounds (such as the trilled ρ, the *th*-nature of δ [like in Spanish], the vowel coloration of υ and the aspiration of the χ).

One real problem with Erasmian is that it sounds like English and breaks fluency. I think I've managed to overcome these problems by taking pointers from the Restored Koiné and from modern Greek, where I felt it was appropriate – and the above is the system that I have come up with for my own reading of Greek.

I hope this will help you better understanding my reading and also make your own decisions with regard to how to read the Greek language.