

Greek

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## 1. The identity of Greek<sup>(2)</sup>

### 1.1. The name

The national/official name of the country, the people and the language are respectively *Ελλάδα*, *Έλληνας*, *ελληνικά* ([eláda, élinas, eliniká]), derived from Ancient Greek *Έλλάς*, *Έλλην*, *έλληνικός* ([hellás, hélien, hellenikós]) ‘Greece, Greek (noun), Greek (adj.)’, which are also to be found in most European languages as *Hellas*, *hellenic*, *hellénique* etc.; *Hellenic Republic* is the official name of the country in the European Union. The etymology of these words is uncertain. They first occur in the *Iliad* of Homer (2.683-4) as a designation of a small area in Thessaly, the homeland of Achilles, and its people.<sup>(3)</sup> Also in Homer, it is possible to find the compound *πανέλληνες* ([panhellenes]) denoting all Greeks (from adjective *pan* ‘all’ + noun *hellen*), and it is again uncertain under what historical circumstances this local appellation spread to the totality of the Greek nation, although various theories have been proposed (see Babiniotis 2002). In classical times,

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(3) «Οἱ τ’ εἶχον Φθίην ἢδ’ Ἑλλάδα καλλιγύναικα, Μυρμιδόνες δὲ καλεῦντο καὶ Ἑλληνες καὶ Ἀχαιοί» ‘And they possessed Phthia or Hellas with the beautiful women, and were called Myrmidons and Hellenes and Achaeans’.

the words *Hellas* and *Hellen* stood for Greece and Greeks in general, as opposed to members of one of the Greek dialectal groups, and in contradistinction to *βάρβαρος* ‘barbarian’. With the advent of Christianity, the words *Hellen* and *hellenikos* acquired negative connotations, being connected with Greek classical culture and Greek religion; hence, they took on the meaning ‘gentile, pagan’ and it is only after several centuries, well into Byzantine times, that they began to be used again as an ethnic/linguistic designation.

The “replacement” term during the medieval and early modern times was *Ρωμαίος* [roméos] (and with a later phonetic evolution *Ρωμῶς* [romjós]) ‘Roman (n.)’ for the people, and *ρωμαϊκός/ρωμέικος* [romaikós/roméikos] ‘Roman (adj.)’ for the language, adopted by the Greeks as subjects of the Eastern Roman Empire, i.e. Byzantium. Indeed, the terms ‘Byzantium’ and ‘Byzantine Empire’ are a 16<sup>th</sup> c. Western coinage, unknown to its bearers, who viewed themselves as the true continuators of the Roman Empire. The terms *ρωμῶς/ρωμέικος* remained in use until the 19<sup>th</sup> c., in order to differentiate the modern form of the language from the ancient one, for which the term *hellenic* was reserved (Psycharis 1929).

The internationally-used appellation for the Greek language and nation, *Greek/grecl/grecol/Griechisch* etc. is also of unknown etymology, although its immediate provenance is obvious: it comes from the Latin *Graecus* [graékus], the name by which the Romans called the Greeks, itself an adaptation of Greek *γραικός* [graiкос]. Tradition has it that it was the local ethnic name of the inhabitants of the city of *Γραία* [graiá] in Euboea or Boeotia, who founded the first Greek colony in Italy in the 7<sup>th</sup> c. BC, and therefore were the first Greeks whom the Romans contacted. The term *Γραικός* appears first in a 4<sup>th</sup> c. BC inscription, and occurs once in classical literature, mentioned by Aristotle (*Meteorologica* 1.352a), both sources attributing it to the inhabitants of Dodone in Epirus. It is again unknown how/when this term broadened to encompass all Greeks; it was in wide use in the medieval and early modern period, but is never used nowadays. Note that due to the extraordinary prestige of classical Greece, the term *Greek* without qualification usually denotes, in scholarly publications, Ancient Greek, while the modern form of the language is referred to as *Modern Greek* (hereafter MG) This in contrast to all other European languages, where the unqualified language name denotes the modern language, while past forms are referred to with the adjective old/ancient (*ancien français, Old English, Althochdeutsch, italiano antico* etc.).

## 1.2. The family affiliation

### 1.2.1. Origin

Greek belongs to the Indo-European family of languages, of which it forms a separate sub-branch, without immediate relatives. Several scholars believe that it originally shared a closer relationship with the Indo-Iranian branch, the Armenian and the (now extinct) Phrygian languages, due to a number of common phonological and morphological innovations (e.g. the verbal augment), as well as several cognate words not found in other branches.

However, after a time-span of several thousand years of separate history, this relationship is hardly apparent in the modern languages.

### 1.2.2. *Substratum/adstratum*

Both archaeological and linguistic evidence shows that the geographical area currently known as Greece was in prehistoric times, before the arrival of the Greeks, inhabited by populations speaking a number of different languages. These languages, of unknown origin and structure, are usually referred to as Pre-Greek. The newcomers merged with the native population, and this merger left profound marks on the Greek language.

Direct evidence of substratum languages is adduced by undeciphered inscriptions found in Greek-speaking areas, mainly Crete and Cyprus. These are a) Cretan hieroglyphic script (ca. 2000-1500 BC), b) Linear A script (ca. 1700-1400 BC), c) The Phaestos Disk (if not a hoax, ca. 1800 BC), d) Cypro-minoan script (ca. 1600-1000 BC). There is also a small number of inscriptions of an unknown language written in the Greek alphabet, found in Crete, and conventionally termed Eteocretan, and a larger body of inscriptions of an unknown language written in the Cypriot syllabary, found in Cyprus, and conventionally termed Eteocypriot.

Indirect evidence of substratum languages is provided by the Ancient Greek toponymy and anthroponymy. It has been calculated that more than 40% of the archaic Greek vocabulary is of unknown (possibly non Indo-European) etymology and has no known cognates in other branches of the family. Interestingly enough, the majority of these vocabulary items denote flora and fauna native to the South-Eastern Mediterranean (most of them survive in MG), place names, or cultural terms and artifacts characteristic again of the local civilization.

## 1.3. *The distinctive features of Modern Greek*

### 1.3.1. *Phonetics, phonology and prosody*

The basic segmental phonological units of MG are simpler compared to those of Ancient Greek (see chapter 2). There are twenty five phonemes, five vowels (/i/, /e/, /a/, /o/, /u/) and twenty consonants (/p/, /t/, /k/, /b/, /d/, /g/, /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /x/, /ɣ/, /s/, /z/, /ts/, /dz/, /m/, /n/, /l/, /r/) (cf. Nespou 1999). On the suprasegmental level, the MG accentual system is stress based. Stress is characterized by intensity and duration, has a distinctive phonological function<sup>(4)</sup>, and stress placement is not predictable but lexically marked. A metrical stress appears in structures with clitics (weak pronouns), as in the example *δώσε μου το* [dóse mú to] 'give it to me' (lit. give-me-it). The optimal syllabic structure is CV and prosodically there is a preference for the trochee (cf.

(4) In minimal pairs, it may constitute the only phonological difference, as in the pair *νόμος* [nómos] 'law' and *νομός* [nomós] 'county'.

Malikouti-Drachman & Drachman 1988). Generally, the difference in the grammatical type of sentences (e.g. affirmative vs. interrogative) is not given structurally, but by a difference in pitch accent, which is related to intonation.

As far as phonological phenomena are concerned, assimilation is very frequent. It is mostly observed in the following cases: a) Palatalization of velar consonants in front of a front vowel, /i/ and /e/. E.g. /keros/ → [ceros] ‘weather’, /kipos/ → [cipos] ‘garden’. b) Voicing of unvoiced stops after a nasal and change of the articulation position of the nasal, depending on the features of the stop. E.g. /sin+pono/ → /simbono/ ‘sympathize’. The deletion of a segment generally results into an optimal CV syllabic structure. There are cases where a segment is deleted within the limits of a word and cases where deletion affects two adjacent words. A typical example of the first case is the deletion of the last vowel of a prefix, in front of a word beginning with a vowel. E.g. /anti+εγραψε/ > /andeγραψε/ ‘he copied’. The second case can be illustrated by an example containing a vowel-ending clitic and a vowel-beginning verb. E.g. /ta exo/ > /taxo/, lit. them-have ‘I have them’. Vowel deletion is constrained by a vowel hierarchy (Hatzidakis 1905-1907, Mirambel 1959), where strong vowels (at the top of the hierarchy) trigger the erasure of weak vowels that are situated towards the bottom. As opposed to deletion, epenthesis of a segment is generally rare in natural languages. However, MG displays vowel epenthesis in verb conjugation, most often in the third person plural of the present tense. E.g. /fernun/ → /fernun-e/ ‘they bring’. Many phonological phenomena are not entirely phonologically motivated but occur in a specific morphological environment (e.g. the /e/ epenthesis in the third person plural).

### 1.3.2. Morphology

MG is a fusional inflecting language, the relevant morphosyntactic information of which is usually indicated on the endings of inflected words. Each ending encodes several morphosyntactic values. Nouns and adjectives are inflected for the morphosyntactic features of gender (masculine, feminine, neuter), number (singular and plural), and case (nominative, genitive, accusative, vocative), and are distributed into inflection classes (declensions). A similar inflectional pattern is also displayed by a certain number of pronouns (e.g. demonstratives *αυτός* [aftos] ‘this’, *εκείνος* [ekinos] ‘that’, etc.), while other pronouns show an uninflected form (e.g. the relative pronoun *που* [pu] ‘who/which’). The verbal system encodes many more categories than the nominal system (aspect [perfective, imperfective, and perfect], voice [active, passive], tense [present, past, future], person [first, second, third], and number [singular, plural]). Verbs are distinguished into two basic inflection classes (conjugations). Within the second class, there is a further distinction into two subclasses (cf. Ralli 2005). Crucially, the verbal system is built on a two-way [ $\pm$ perfective] aspectual feature, which cuts across the feature of tense. For instance, there are two different paradigms for both the future (i.e. future continuous [-perfective] vs. simple future [+perfective]) and the past (i.e. aorist [+perfective]) and imperfect [-perfective]), while a third aspectual value [perfect] is expressed by the periphrastic tenses of perfect, plus-perfect,

and future perfect. In morphological terms, a typical inflected word combines a stem and an ending. For instance, the word forms *άνθρωπος* [anθropos] ‘man’ and *τρέχω* [trexo] ‘run’ can be decomposed into the stems *ανθρωπ-* [anθrop-] and *τρέχ-* [trex-], and the endings *-ος* [os] and *-ω* [o], respectively. As far as the periphrastic tenses are concerned, it is worth mentioning that the invariable particle *θα* [θa] marks the future tense, while a finite form of the auxiliary verb *έχω* [exo] ‘to have’ is used to form the perfect, the plus-perfect and the future perfect, in combination with a non-finite form of the main verb (e.g. *έχω τρέξει* [exo treksi] ‘I have run’, *είχα τρέξει* /ixa treksi/ ‘I had run’ *θα έχω τρέξει* [θa exo treksi] ‘I shall have run’). Finally, although there is no particular mark for the expression of mood, as opposed to Ancient Greek, a particle *να* [na] is combined with a set of finite verb forms inflected for aspect, person and number to denote the subjunctive value, while there is no specific morphological mark for the indicative mood.

Combinatorial derivation is used by MG morphology to create words. Prefixes are fewer than suffixes and do not change the grammatical category of the base (e.g. *άγνωστος* [agnostos] ‘unknown’ < *α-* [a] ‘un’ + *γνωστός* [gnostos] ‘known’ vs. *χορεύω* [xorevo] ‘to dance’ < *χορ-* [xor] ‘dance’ + *-ευ(ω)* [ev(o)]). MG is fairly complex in derived words, in that derivational suffixes can be cumulated within the same item, but their combinability is subject to restrictions which are of semantic and structural nature (e.g. *χαρισματικότητα* [xar-iz-mat-ik-otita] ‘property of being charismatic’). Two of the richer domains of Greek derivation are diminution and deverbal suffixation. Diminution shows a range of suffixes, of all gender values, the most frequent of which is the neuter suffix *-aki* (e.g. *παιδάκι* [ped-aki] ‘little child’). In deverbal suffixation, there are several suffixes which can be added to a verbal base, some of them to the same base (e.g. *-μα* [-ma]: *χώρισ-μα* [xoriz-ma] ‘division’ vs. *-μός* [mos]: *χωρισ-μός* [xoriz-mos] ‘separation’).

Compounding is extremely rich in the modern language, and more developed than its corresponding process in Ancient Greek (cf. Ralli 2007, 2009, 2013). The vast majority of Greek compounds are built on the basis of two stems, which are linked together by a vowel *-ο-*, the so-called ‘compound marker’ (Ralli 2008). They belong to the three major grammatical categories, nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Verbal formations are common, as opposed to compounds of the other European languages, where they are either few or completely absent (e.g. N: *χιονάνθρωπος* ‘snowman’ [xionanθropos] < *χιον-* [xion] ‘snow’ + *ανθρωπ-* [anθrop] ‘man’ (ος [os]), A: *ασπρόμαυρος* [aspromavros] ‘black (and) white’ < *ασπρ-* [aspr] ‘white’ + *μαυρ-* [mavr] ‘black’ (ος [os]), V: *χαρτοπαίζω* [xartopezō] ‘play cards’ < *χαρτ-* [xart] ‘card’ + *παίζ-* [pez] ‘to play’ (ω [o]). The compound constituents are either in a dependency relation (e.g. *ψαρόβαρκα* [psarovarka] ‘fish boat < *ψαρ-* [psar] ‘fish’ + *βάρκα* [varka] ‘boat’), or in a coordinative one (e.g. *αλατοπίπερο* [alato Piperō] ‘salt (and) paper’ < *αλατ-* [alat] ‘salt’ + *πιπέρο-* [piper] ‘pepper’ (ο), *αναβοσβήνω* [anavozvino] ‘switch on and off’ < *αναβ-* [nav] ‘switch on’ + *σβήνω* [zvino] ‘switch off’). Greek compounds are typically one-word. However, there is an increasing tendency, mostly in scientific terminology, to create multi-word units, which are exempted from the strict requirements of the stem-based one-word formations, and are thus called ‘phrasal compounds’ (Ralli to appear). These multi-word units display two systematic patterns:

adjective-noun (e.g. *δημόσιος υπάλληλος* [dimosios ipalilos] ‘civil servant’) and noun-noun in genitive (e.g. *ζώνη ασφαλείας* [zoni asfalias] ‘safety belt’).

### 1.3.3. Syntax

A major characteristic of MG sentences is that they allow null subjects for all persons, numbers, and tenses. E.g. *έφυγε* [efije] left.3SG ‘(s)he left’. The basic assumption is that a null subject corresponds to a null pronominal whose features are morphologically realized on the verbal inflectional ending. However, the subject is also overtly realized if it is an indefinite pronoun: E.g. *Έφυγε κάποιος* < *έφυγε* [efije] ‘left.3SG’ + *κάποιος* [kajjos] ‘someone’ ‘someone left’.

In sentences, the order of major constituents is generally flexible, so that both Subject-Verb and Verb-Subject orders are found:

(1) (Ο Κώστας) διάβασε (ο Κώστας) το βιβλίο (ο Κώστας)

[(o Kostas) djavase (o Kostas) to vivlio (o Kostas)]  
the Kostas read.3SG the book = ‘Kostas read the book’

In (1), the subject *o Kostas* can precede the verb and the object (SVO), follow the verb but precede the object (VSO), or appear in final position (VOS). The free distribution of the subject is a property which is partly linked to the availability of null subjects. The object may also appear in clause initial position, but it is either focused (emphasis) or connected to a weak pronoun (clitic):

(2)a. Το βιβλίο διάβασε (ο Κώστας) [to vivlio djavase (o Kostas)]  
the book read.3SG (the Kostas) ‘It was the book that Kostas read’

b. Το βιβλίο το διάβασε (ο Κώστας) [to vivlio to djavase (o Kostas)]  
the book it read.3SG (the Kostas) ‘Kostas read the book’

The other constructions where clitics participate is that of Clitic doubling, where a noun phrase in object position is doubled by a clitic:

(3) (Ο Κώστας) το διάβασε το βιβλίο [(o Kostas) to djavase to vivlio].  
the Kostas it read.3SG the book = ‘Kostas read the book’

Generally, clitics occur before the verb (proclisis), but in some contexts, as in imperatives and gerunds (-*ontas* forms), they follow the verb (enclisis):

(4)a. Διάβασέ το! [djavase to]

Read.2SG it = ‘Read it!’

b. Διαβάζοντάς το θα καταλάβεις [djavazontas to tha katalavis]  
reading it will understand.3SG = ‘Once you read it, you’ll understand’

MG does not have morphologically realized infinitives. Thus, all complement clauses are necessarily finite, introduced by any of the complementizers *ότι/πως* [oti/pɔs], *που* [pu], *αν* [an], *να* [na]. The complementizer *pu* typically introduces factive complements (i.e. complement whose truth is presupposed, e.g. *Λυπάμαι που έφυγες* [lipame pu efijes], ‘I am sorry that you left’) but may also introduce relative clauses (e.g. *Ο φοιτητής που είδες είναι φίλος μου* [o fititis pu ides ine filɔs mu] ‘The student that you saw is a friend of mine’); *oti/pɔs* introduces non-factive complements (e.g. *Νομίζω ότι έφυγε* [nomizo oti efije] ‘I think that he left’); *an* introduces embedded interrogatives (or conditionals, e.g. *Ρώτησα αν έφυγε* [rotisa an efije] ‘I asked if he had left’); finally, *na* introduces complements to future-referring predicates (e.g. with *θέλω* [thelo] ‘want’, as in *Θέλω να φύγει*



[θelo na fi:] ‘I want him/her to leave’). The *na*-complement is used like the infinitives in the Romance and Germanic languages. However, *na* may also appear in matrix clauses with the syntactic function of the ‘subjunctive’, since there is no morphological subjunctive, e.g. Να φύγεις [na fi:] ‘You should leave!’). MG has pronominal modifiers (e.g. Ο καλός φοιτητής [o kalos fititis] ‘The good student’). The adjective may follow the modified noun on condition that the definite article appears with both the noun and the adjective. Generally, these constructions are associated with emphasis (e.g. Ο φοιτητής ο καλός [o fititis o kalos] ‘The student who is good’). The reverse construction, i.e. repetition of the article with a pre-nominal adjective, is also possible (e.g. ο καλός ο φοιτητής [o kalos o fititis]). Note that the definite article is obligatory with proper names, but with no semantic contribution (e.g. Ο Κώστας [o Kostas] ‘Kostas’). Moreover, the definite article in its neuter singular form may introduce clauses, or participate in various instances of nominalizations.

Regarding the structure of the noun phrase, the possessor (genitive) typically follows the possessee (e.g. Το βιβλίο του Κώστα [to vivlio tu Kosta] ‘Kostas’s book’). The possessor may also be expressed with a genitive clitic, which is necessarily enclitic (e.g. Το βιβλίο του/της [to vivlio tu/tis] ‘His/her book’). When the possessor precedes the noun phrase, it bears emphatic stress (e.g. ΤΟΥ ΚΩΣΤΑ το βιβλίο [TU KOSTA to vivlio] ‘Kostas’s book’).

#### 1.3.4. Alphabet and spelling system

The Greek alphabet was originally conceived between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC (Christidis 2001). It was based on the North-Semitic Phoenician writing system, which had symbols only for consonant sounds, while the Greek alphabet represented both vowels and consonants in a broad 1:1 correspondence between graphemes and phonemes. Today, this correspondence is lost due to historical evolution and from the Hellenistic period the actual spelling system follows historical orthography. It uses six different signs for the sound /i/ (ι, η, υ, ει, ου, υι), two signs for /e/ (ε, αι) and /o/ (ο, ω), and a combination of signs for the notation of /u/ (ου), /b/ (μπ), /d/ (ντ), and /g/ (γκ). Two more signs, ‘ψ’, ‘ξ’, do not represent phonemes, but the phonemic combinations /ps/ and /ks/. The basic correspondences between sounds and Greek graphemes are the following: α: /a/, β: /v/, γ: /γ/, δ: /δ/, ε: /e/, ζ: /z/, η: /i/, θ: /θ/, ι: /i/, κ: /k/, λ: /l/, μ: /m/, ν: /n/, ξ: /ks/, ο: /o/, π: /p/, ρ: /r/, σ: /s/, τ: /t/, υ: /i/, φ: /f/, χ: /x/, ψ: /ps/, ω: /o/.

It should be noted that the alphabet was not the first writing system of Greek. Before the 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC a syllabary with about 90 signs representing syllables was used to transcribe the language of the Mycenaean civilisation. It is known as ‘Linear B’ (Hooker 1980) and was discovered on clay tablets, mostly in Pylos (Peloponnese) and Knossos (Crete). A different syllabary was also in full use in Cyprus during the first millennium BC, mainly between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.



## 2. History

### 2.1. The emergence

Greek has the longest attested history of all the Indo-European languages, spanning a period of more than 3500 years (Kopidakis 1999, Christidis 2001). Its first Mycenaean civilization documents, the clay tablets in Linear B, date ca. 1400-1200 BC. After the collapse of this civilisation, four centuries without written documents intervene (with the exception of a single one-word inscription from Cyprus, of the 11th c.), until the 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC first inscriptions in the Greek alphabet from the island of Ischia in Italy. The precise date of the arrival of the Indo-European Greeks to Greece is unknown, and the form it took (peaceful gradual migration vs. conquest, separate waves vs. a single movement) is controversial. There are no written documents from such an early period, and all theories are based on archaeological arguments (evidence of destruction of sites, new architectural/ceramic styles, changing burial practices etc.), the most widely accepted one placing ‘the coming of the Greeks’ around 2300 BC (Mallory 1989).

### 2.2. Periodization

There is no unanimously accepted periodization for the history of Greek, as different criteria (archaeological, historical, sociological, linguistic, literary) lead to different divisions. Roughly, we may distinguish the following periods (Charalambakis 1996, Babinotis 2002):

<b>PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD</b>	<i>Proto-Greek</i>	ca. 3000-1500 BC
<b>HISTORIC PERIOD</b>	<i>Ancient Greek</i>	ca.1500-300 BC
	Mycenaean	ca.1400-1200 BC
	Dark Ages	ca.1200-800 BC
	Archaic	ca.800-500 BC
	Classical	ca.500-300 BC
	<i>Koine Greek</i>	ca.300BC-500 AD
	Hellenistic	ca.300BC-100 BC
	Imperial/Late antique	ca.100BC-500 AD
	<i>Medieval Greek</i>	ca.500-1500 AD
	Early Medieval	ca.500-1100 AD
	Late Medieval	ca.1100-1500 AD
<i>Modern Greek</i>	ca.1500-2000 AD	
Early Modern Greek	ca. 1500-1800	
Modern Greek	ca. 1800-	

The Prehistoric period encompasses the first period in the history of Greek, which is sketchily known due to the lack of written attestations. It starts from the separation of Greek from the rest of the Indo-European languages, an event supposed to have taken place outside Greece proper, and ends with the appearance of writing, in the form of Linear B. *Proto-Greek* is generally supposed to be a unified form of language, not yet split into

the various Ancient Greek dialects of the historical period. However, there are several scholars who believe in a primary dialectal division before the arrival of the Greeks to Greece, mainly between East Greek (the first wave of advance into Greece) and West Greek (a later wave, arriving ca. 1200 BC). Proto-Greek must have changed considerably with the coming to Greece and the mixture with the local Pre-Greek population.

Characteristic phonetic changes leading from Indo-European to Greek are: a) the change of the IE voiced fricatives \*/b<sup>h</sup>/ \*/d<sup>h</sup>/ \*/g<sup>h</sup>/ to voiceless fricatives /p<sup>h</sup>/ /t<sup>h</sup>/ /k<sup>h</sup>/ (e.g. Sanskrit *b<sup>h</sup>ratar* – English *brother* Greek *p<sup>h</sup>rate:r*); b) the change of prevocalic and intervocalic \*/s/ to /h/ (e.g. Latin *sex* English *six* Greek *heks*); c) the reduction of permissible final consonants to only three (/n/, /r/, /s/); d) the limitation of the position of the accent to the last three syllables.

The Historic period starts with the discovery of the first inscriptions in Greek, in the dialect form known as Mycenaean. However, the dialect situation of the 2nd millennium BC is unknown in its details, as there are no comparative data from any other dialect.<sup>(5)</sup> Mycenaean displays archaic characteristics which have disappeared from all later forms of Greek, such as the retention of the IE labiovelar stop series /k<sup>w</sup>/ /g<sup>w</sup>/ /g<sup>wh</sup>/, which were replaced by labial, dental or velar stops in later Greek (e.g. Latin *quid* vs. Greek *τί* [ti] ‘what’) and the absence of vowel contraction. It also retains many morphological features and vocabulary items found otherwise only in the Homeric epics. Mycenaean has no direct descendants in later Greek, but the dialect closest to it is Arcado-Cypriot.

When written evidence of Greek reappears in the course of the 1st millennium BC, in the Archaic period, the Ancient Greek dialects (The ‘East-Greek’ group: Attic-Ionic, Aeolic, and Arcado-cypriot, and the ‘West-Greek’ group: Doric and Northwest Greek) are already fully formed. This period also sees the expansion of the Greek language outside the Greek peninsula, with the two massive waves of colonization first to Asia Minor and then to South Italy (and with a few isolated settlements in Southern France and Spain).

In the Classical period, Athens achieves supremacy over all other Greek city-states, thanks to the central role it played in the defensive wars against the Persian Empire, and its local dialect, Attic, acquires an overwhelming prestige. Attic Greek, usually referred to as Classical Greek, is a dialect closely related to Ionic. Some of its main distinguishing characteristics are: the change of Indo-European long /a:/ to long /e:/ (cf. Latin *māter* vs. Greek *μήτηρ* /me:te:r/ ‘mother’), the early loss of the semivowel /w/ (cf. English *work* vs. Greek *ἔργον* /erg-on/ < /werg-on/) and specific nominal and verbal inflectional endings.

The greatest period of expansion of the Greek language is the Koine period, during which it becomes the official language of the Macedonian kingdom of Philip II and his son Alexander ‘the Great’, the local Macedonian language (an archaic dialect of Greek or, according to others, an archaic

(5) It is indeed curious that although Mycenaean is attested from many different areas of Greece (Crete, Peloponnese, Central Greece), and for a time span of about 200 years, it shows minimal dialectal differentiation.

language closely related to Greek) being unsuitable for this role, due to its low prestige and lack of literary elaboration. The military conquests of Alexander created an enormous empire, encompassing Greece, Egypt, Asia Minor, and the Near and Middle East, up to the borders of India. Attic Greek, therefore, became the second language of several million speakers, both of Greek and non-Greek origin, and the main language used for administration, commerce and literature in the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean. Even the conquest of Greece and the various Greek ('Hellenistic') kingdoms of Alexander's successors by the Romans, the primary role of the Greek language in the area did not cease, as the Romans felt a great admiration for the literary and cultural achievements of the Greeks. Inevitably, such extensive use of the language for such a long period of time had serious repercussions on its evolution. First of all, the Ancient Greek dialects disappeared under the pressure of Attic, the official language of the empire. Secondly, Attic itself went through considerable changes in order to become a language common to all (the term *Κοινή* [Koine], comes from the adjective *κοινός* [koinós] 'common'): it picked up a few elements from other dialects (mainly Ionic), and, especially during the Roman period, it underwent radical phonological, morphological and syntactic changes. These include: the loss of quantity distinctions in the vowel system (thus, reducing the Attic system of seven long and five short vowels to a system of six isochronous vowels /a e o i u y/), the change of the accent from a pitch-based to a stress-based one, the change of voiced and aspirated stops to fricatives (thus /b d g/ > /v ð γ/ and /p<sup>h</sup> t<sup>h</sup> k<sup>h</sup>/ > [f θ x]), the loss of the dual number and the optative mood, the replacement of the future and the perfect tenses through analytic periphrases, the limitation in the use of the infinitive and the participle, the influx of hundreds of vocabulary items from Latin, etc. These radical changes away from the classical language, which never ceased to be an ideal model, combined with the complex and insecure social and ideological situation of the period led to a very strong reactionary movement towards the adoption of Classical Attic Greek as the language of literature ('Atticism'), and the denigration of the everyday spoken language as incapable of being used as a vehicle of culture. From this period onwards, until modern times (the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. AD), there existed within the Greek language a gradually widening gap between written and spoken, or 'high' and 'low' language, a situation known as 'diglossia'.

During the Medieval period, the diglossic situation continued. Greek soon (around the 6<sup>th</sup> c. AD) replaced Latin as the official language of the Eastern Roman Empire, whose new capital, Constantinople, was destined to be the political, cultural and religious center of Greek-speaking civilisation for several centuries. In the early Medieval period, only about one third of the population of the East Roman or Byzantine empire spoke Greek as a first language. However, Greek was a necessary second language for administration, commerce and literature. This language approached and imitated Attic Greek to varying degrees (depending on the education of the author, the genre of the work etc.), and therefore distanced itself from the spoken language. By the end of the early Medieval period, several of the changes differentiating Modern from Ancient Greek must have been completed, such as the falling together of /y/ and /i/ which resulted in the Modern five vowel

system /a e o i u/, the loss of the dative case, the restructuring of the nominal system through the levelling of the Ancient '3rd declension', and the change of the active participle into an uninflected gerund.

In contrast to the previous period, during Late Medieval times, we are again in a position to observe the evolution of Greek more closely, due to the re-appearance, from the 12<sup>th</sup> c. onwards, of works written in linguistic forms approaching the spoken language. This turn was facilitated by the disintegration of the Byzantine Empire after its conquest by the Franks, which destroyed central administration and introduced Western models of language use: in the West, the use of vernacular at the expense of an archaic language (Latin, in their case) was much more extensive. Most scholars place in this period the birth of the Modern Greek dialects, although sufficient evidence is lacking. There are no major phonological changes in this period, except for the process of 'synizesis' in vowel sequences, where a front vowel is followed by a back one (e.g. [roméos] > [romjós]), and for the rise of dialectal phenomena, such as unstressed high-vowel raising and unstressed mid-vowel deletion which characterize the northern dialects (3.2.1). In the morphological domain, most inflectional paradigms found in MG are already apparent, i.e. a nominal system largely based on gender distinctions and a verbal system based on the difference between vowel and consonant stem forms, instead of the differentiation between thematic and athematic inflection which characterized Ancient Greek nominal and verbal morphology. In syntax, we observe the reduction of the infinitive and the wide use of clitic pronouns with complex word-order patterns. Finally, in the vocabulary, it is worth noticing the introduction of loanwords from the Romance languages, mainly from French and Italian.

The Medieval period conventionally ends with the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks (1453), which ushers in the Modern Period, consisting of about four centuries of Turkish occupation, followed by the first two hundred years of the modern independent Greek state (1831- ). During the Turkish occupation, the standard of living and education fell sharply, and thus the literary production from this period is quite poor. Linguistic evidence for the history of Greek comes almost exclusively from areas which did not become parts of the Ottoman Empire (or did so much later than others), remaining under Venetian rule: Crete, Cyprus, the Dodecanese, the Cyclades, and the Ionian islands. In Turkish occupied areas, the main factor of cohesion and culture was the Orthodox Church, which had as its preferred mode of expression the archaising language of previous periods (with a certain degree of adaptation to later evolutions). In this period again, the most important phonetic changes are dialectal ones, such as the palatalization of velars followed by front vowels characterising many southern and island dialects. In morphology and syntax, we note the appearance of the Modern Greek periphrastic perfect and future and the total disappearance of the infinitive. In the vocabulary, the very obvious change is the influx of an enormous amount of Turkish vocabulary, some part of which survives until today.

After the creation of the modern Greek state in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. (following the liberation war against the Ottoman Empire), there was a long struggle (the 'Language Question') between the written and spoken language, termed respectively *καθαρεύουσα* [katharévusa] 'purist' and *δημοτική* [ðimotikí]

‘demotic, popular’ (see 4.1), as to which would become the official language. Standard Modern Greek (officially established in 1976) is based mainly on demotic but has received a very strong influence from *katharevousa*, which resulted in the ‘cleaning out’ (hence the term ‘purist’) of the greatest amount of foreign loanwords, and the retention of some archaic inflectional patterns. The dialectal basis of Standard Modern Greek is usually assumed to be the local dialects of the Peloponnese and the Ionian islands (which formed the core of the first Greek state), although the influence of the language of Constantinople should not be disregarded.

### 3. Geography

#### 3.1. *Expansion-pluricentrism*

Greek in its earliest attested form was spoken in the southern Balkan peninsula and on the territory that is now Modern Greece. Early in the first millennium BC, Greek was spoken in all the Aegean islands, Cyprus, the Greek-speaking colonies of Asia Minor (today’s West Turkey), South Italy, parts of the West Mediterranean area (e.g. Marseille), and in the Black Sea. Under the Macedonian Empire of Philip II and his son Alexander the Great (4<sup>th</sup> c. BC), Greek spread all over Asia Minor, Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, extending as far as India.

Today, Standard Modern Greek is spoken in Greece and Cyprus (together with the Cypriot dialect). Greek can also be traced in the following countries, but mainly in dialectal form: a) South Albania (in the so-called *Βόρειος Ήπειρος* [vorios ipiros] ‘North Epirus’ area), b) South Italy (Griko in Puglia and Grekanico in Calabria), c) Ukraine (Azof area), d) Syria (Cretan of Hamidie), e) Turkey, and f) Corsica.

In South Italy the first Greeks settled around the 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC, following the establishment of Greek colonies, while the Ukraine settlement took place in the 18<sup>th</sup> c., when Catherine the Great transported there the Greek speakers from Crimea. Today, there are only nine Griko-speaking villages in Puglia, and five Grekanico-speaking ones in Calabria, while in the Ukraine Greek speakers can be located in 59 villages. Research conducted by Rohlfs (1949) and other scholars indicates that the dialect is a descendent of the language of the Greek colonists of Magna Grecia. However, it has been enriched with features of a language form that was spoken by the Byzantine immigrants that settled in the area in various periods. In Syria, Cretan-speaking Muslims were deported from Crete to Hamidie by Sultan Abdul Hamit, in 1890, following an insurrection in Crete. Few of their descendants still speak a form of Cretan. There are still enclaves of Greek speech in Turkey, but before 1922 they extended to a much larger area. Greek is currently spoken by Greek minority communities in Istanbul (Greek of Constantinople) and the islands of Imbros and Tenedos, but also by Greek-speaking Muslims in the Trebizond area (Ophitic Pontic), and the Turkish West coast (Cretan of Izmir and the towns of Cunda and Ayvalik). Although there are no exact figures, the Greek-speaking community of Istanbul numbered about 100.000 people around the end of the first half of the twentieth century, but today there are

only 5.000 left. The Greek of Constantinople has never been very different from the actual standard form. In fact, during the last half of the eighteenth century and the first part of the nineteenth century, this language form has significantly contributed to the development of the national language. The language of the Greek minority community of the Aegean islands of Imbros and Tenedos belongs to the northern group of Greek dialects, and is similar to the dialect of the islands of Lesbos and Lemnos. Ophitic Pontic is a variant of the old Pontic dialect that was spoken in Pontus (Northern Turkey) before 1919. Nowadays, there are still speakers spread in a number of villages around Trebizond (Mackridge 1987). Cretan Greek is spoken along the Aegean coast of Turkey by Cretan Muslims who were deported from Crete, after the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey in 1923. As for Corsica (Maniot Greek), a handful of Greek speakers may still be found in the village of Cargese, where their ancestors emigrated from western Peloponnese in the eighteenth century (Blanken 1951).

Nowadays, Greek can also be heard in some other parts of the world, most notably in Australia, Canada, U.S. and Germany, where Greeks emigrated, mostly in the last century. In these communities, Greeks have not developed a language of their own, but generally speak the standard form, with more or less heavy lexical borrowings from the language of the local population.<sup>(6)</sup> Recent studies have shown that the Greek community in the United States tends to become assimilated and lose its language, as opposed to those in Australia, Canada and Germany, where Greek is still in use, even by children.

### **3.2. Greek in contact**

#### *3.2.1. The language of the “insiders”*

##### a) THE DIALECTS

In the classical period, the Greek language was divided into five major dialectal groups: Attic/Ionic, Aeolic, Doric, Northwest Greek, and Arcado-Cypriot. As already stated (2.2), ancient dialectal differences were gradually erased, and dialects were replaced by a common language form, called Koine, which was mainly based on the Attic dialect. In the Medieval period, it split into several dialectal groups that gave rise to Modern Greek dialects. Our first dialectal texts come from Cyprus, around the 12<sup>th</sup> c., which was cut off earlier than other areas from the body of the Byzantine Empire.

The Modern Greek dialects are usually divided into groups on the basis of phonological criteria (Contossopoulos 2001, Trudgill 2004). A basic distinction is between “northern” and “southern” dialects, strongly differentiated by the following phenomenon: unstressed /i/ and /u/ are deleted and unstressed /e/ and /o/ become /i/ and /u/, respectively, in the so-called “Northern Greek Dialects” (spoken in Sterea Ellada (except Attica), Thessaly, Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace, Lefkada, Northern Euboea, Northern Sporades, Thassos,

(6) This was also true for the large Greek community of Odessa before 1917, and the even larger communities of Alexandria and Cairo of the first half of the twentieth century.



Samothraki, Lesbos, Limnos, Samos, Imbros, Tenedos, areas of Asia Minor), but remain unchanged in the south (Peloponnese, Cyclades, Dodecanese, Crete, Cyprus, Ionian Islands, Attica, Southern Euboea). Other phonological isoglosses lead to the division of further sub-groups: a) Peloponnesian-Ionian, the closest to Standard Modern Greek); b) Old Athenian, an almost extinct dialect spoken in Attica and Southern Euboea, with a still living branch in the Peloponnese (Mani); c) Cretan-Cycladic, spoken in the Southern Aegean and characterised by phenomena such as palatalization of velars when followed by front vowels ([k] > [ts]); d) South-Eastern, including Cyprus, the Dodecanese, part of the Cyclades and the southern Asia Minor coast, the most conservative group maintaining features, such as geminate consonants and final -n, which have disappeared from most other dialects, together with innovations such as velar palatalization; e) Pontic, another isolated conservative dialect spoken extensively until 1922 on the southern coast of the Black Sea; f) Cappadocian, spoken until 1922 in central Anatolia; g) South Italian (Griko and Grekanico), surviving vestigially in Puglia and Calabria; h) Ukrainian-Mariupolitan Greek in Southern Ukraine; i) Tsakonian, spoken in Southern Peloponnese and two enclaves in Asia Minor, a unique dialect, not descended from the Koine, as all others, but from a Koine-influenced ancient Doric.

Since 1922, communities speaking Pontic, Cappadocian, and other Asia Minor dialects (e.g. the dialect of Kydonies (Aivali) and Moschonisia) can be traced in various parts of Greece that have accepted refugees from the former Ottoman areas of Asia Minor and Pontus.

Modern Greek dialects have never become the focus of linguistic research. This attitude was mainly due to the official policy of the Greek State, which dates back to early 19<sup>th</sup> century (after the liberation war against the Ottoman Empire), to erase linguistic differences, and promote a common language as a sign of national unity and identity. With some exceptions (e.g. the *Research Center for Modern Greek Dialects* of the Academy of Athens and recently the *Laboratory of Modern Greek Dialects* of the University of Patras (see 4.1), for almost two centuries there was no systematic dialectal research within the Greek academic world, and Greece is one of the few European countries with no dialectal atlas. There are entire geographic areas with no dialectal description, excepting certain amateur vocabulary collections and sketchy grammars.

#### b) MINORITY LANGUAGES

The typical minority languages spoken in Greece are Turkish, Pomak, Vlach (or Arumanian), Arvanitika, Slavomacedonian, Armenian, Ladino and Romani. Turkish is located in Thrace (prefectures of Xanthi and Rodopi) and the island of Rhodes. It is used by circa 60.000 people, and is taught in bilingual (Greek and Turkish) schools. In Thrace, there are also about 40.000 Pomak and 22.000 Muslim Gypsies who are trilingual, that is, they speak their native tongue (Pomak or Romani), Turkish, and Greek. Pomak is of South-Slavic origin, close to Bulgarian, while Romani originates from the Indo-European languages of India. Arvanitika is related to South-Albanian, and is found in the regions of Sterea Ellada and Peloponnese. According to Tsitsipis (1998) the speakers of Arvanitika moved to Greece during the Turkish occupation. Vlach or Arumanian, a Latin-based language related



to Rumanian, can be found in the region of Pindos, between Epirus, Thessaly and Macedonia, and its roots go back to the Roman period (Beis 2000). Slavomacedonian is almost identical to the language of the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), and is spoken in certain areas of Macedonia (Florina, Kastoria, Kilkis, Pella and Imathia). Its roots go back to the 7<sup>th</sup> c. AD, when the first settlement of Slavic populations took place. Ladino is the language of Sephardic Jews who settled in Greece after their expulsion from Spain, at the end of 15<sup>th</sup> c. The language is heavily influenced by Spanish and is used by a small amount of today's Greek Jewish population (5500 people) who are taught Hebrew at school. Finally, Armenian is taught in three Armenian private schools, and is spoken by almost 11500 people of the Armenian community who moved to Greece after the end of the nineteenth century, following their persecution from Turkey. With the exception of Turkish, Armenian and Romani, the other languages are disappearing, and are confined within the communities of elderly people.

### 3.2.2. *The language of the “outsiders”*

Greek shows a long history of contact with other languages. It has exercised an influence on these languages and has been influenced by them. To begin with, some words in the vocabulary (e.g. *ελαία* [elaia] ‘olive’) originate from a “pre-Greek” period, and are attributed to an indigenous language (often called ‘Pelasgian’) spoken in the south of the Balkan peninsula and the Aegean islands before the coming of the Greeks (see also 1.2.2). A considerable contact of Ancient Greek with the Semitic languages is attested as early as in the Mycenaean period of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. BC (Masson 1967), and is traced in the names of cities and some trade goods. As expected, a contact between Greek and other Balkan languages of Indo-European origin, namely Thracian (Southeast Balkans) and Illyrian (West Balkans, Christidis 2001), is also accurate, in spite of the fact that these languages had no written tradition, and very few words of the Greek vocabulary can be attributed to them, most notably names of places and things from every-day life. During the classical period (2.2), a number of loanwords, mostly cultural loans, entered the language through the contact of Greeks with people from their Asia-Minor colonies and Persia following the Greek-Persian wars. Certain Phrygian words can be attested in about 300 inscriptions, but also in the works of Greek writers (e.g. Hesychius of 5<sup>th</sup> c. AD). Fewer words are attributed to contact between Greeks and other Asia-Minor people (e.g. Lydians, Lycians, and Carians), although most of these people had adapted their writing system on the Greek alphabet. According to Christidis (2001) there is no significant evidence of a linguistic contact between Greek and Persian, except for a few proper names, place names and technical terms.

In the later Hellenistic period, during the Roman Empire and in the first centuries of the Byzantine Empire, Greek Koine became the ‘lingua franca’ of a world which extended from mainland Greece to Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and as far as the Iranian world. It gradually ousted the old Greek dialects (3.2.1), but also underwent borrowing from other languages, mainly from Latin, especially with respect to military and administrative

terms (Browning 1983). Many of these words are still in use (e.g. *σπίτι* [spiti] ‘house’ < Latin *hospitium*). The mutual influence between Greek and Latin is also evident on the level of derivational morphology. On the one side, Greek has adopted a number of Latin-based suffixes, such as *-ατος* [-atos] < Latin *-atus*, e.g. *αμυγδαλάτος* [amiγδαλatos] ‘almond-like’), *-πουλο* [-pulo] < Latin *pullus*, e.g. *βασιλόπουλο* [vasilopulo] ‘king’s son’). On the other side, Latin has borrowed certain Greek suffixes, such as *-ιστης* [istis] ‘-ista’, e.g. Latin *evangelista* Greek *Ευαγγελιστής*. Greek Koine had also embodied certain Hebraisms encountered in the religious vocabulary (e.g. Greek *αμήν* [amin] < Hebrew *amen*) of the Septuagint (the translation of the Old Testament) and the New Testament (cf. Blass and Debrunner 1961).

In the second millennium AD, borrowing from Romance languages occurred, most notably in areas under Italian rule which laid outside the Ottoman Empire, at least in its first centuries. In Cyprus, Peloponnese, certain Aegean islands (e.g. Lesbos), Rhodes, and Crete, French and Italian linguistic features appear in the language, following an Italian (Venetian, Genoese and Amalfitan) or Frankish domination after the fourth Crusade. Particularly in the Ionian islands, held by Venice until the Napoleonic wars, a heavy Italian influence is manifested in the local speech. Moreover, there are also sporadic cases of words of Slavic, Arumanian, and Albanian origin that are detected in the Greek vocabulary, mostly with respect to proper names, place names and cultural loans. Greek has also influenced these languages, particularly during the Byzantine Empire. For instance, a considerable number of Greek loans exist in Slavic languages (Slavomacedonian, Serbian, Croatian, Russian, Bulgarian), as well as in Albanian, Armenian, and Arabic (cf. Adrados 2005).

In the centuries under the Ottoman empire (15<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> c.), Greek and Turkish had influenced each other. A considerable number of Turkish words entered the Greek vocabulary (e.g. Greek *γιαούρτι* [jaurti] < Turkish *yoğurt*), and Greek words and expressions were adopted by Turkish (e.g. Turkish *Istanbul* < Greek *εις την Πόλιν* [is tin (Constantinu)polin] ‘to Constantinople’)<sup>(7)</sup> In the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, Greek adopted a considerable number of French words expressing cultural and technological concepts. Some of them kept more or less their French morphology (e.g. *μανεκέν* [maneken] ‘mannequin’ *σωφέρ* [sofer] ‘chauffeur’, while others were adapted to the Greek morphology (e.g. *ζαροντινιέρα* [jardiniera] ‘jardinière’), by acquiring inflectional endings. The influx of French words stopped in the second half of the twentieth century, when English loans started being abundantly introduced, especially in scientific and cultural terminology. Again, a great number of these words were phonologically and morphologically hellenicized (e.g. *κέρσορας* [kursoras] < English *cursor*).

Finally, emphasis should be given on the contribution of Greek to the formation of the vocabulary of European languages, which has been enriched with hundreds of Greek words. For instance, many abstract concepts are expressed by Greek words, such as *theory* (θεωρία), *democracy* (δημοκρατία),

(7) Turkish-based suffixes have also entered Greek morphology (e.g. *-τζης* [-dzis]: *φορτηγατζής* [fortiyadzis] ‘truck-driver’).

*politics* (πολιτική), *philosophy* (φιλοσοφία), *criterion* (κριτήριο), *method* (μέθοδος), *problem* (πρόβλημα), *analysis* (ανάλυση), *synthesis* (σύνθεση). Even the name of *Europe* is Greek (Ευρώπη).<sup>(8)</sup> It is to be noted that scientific terminology relies heavily on the use of Greek formatives (roots, suffixes, prefixes), which cover the demands of new scholarly disciplines (e.g. informatics, theoretical physics) and currents of thought. They constitute a boundless source for the creation of new words (neologisms) and tend to be international, with slight differences in form. It is not always clear where and how these words are invented. Crucially, a great number of them are compounds (usually called ‘neoclassical’ compounds), and some times enter again the Greek vocabulary as translation loans (calques), in order to express the new concepts which they were created for (e.g. Greek *aste:r* ‘star’ + *naute:s* ‘sailor’ > English *astronaut* > Gk. *αστροναύτης*).

### 3.3. *The Greek speakers*

Greek is spoken by about 11 million people in Greece (census 2001), and circa 6 million (high estimate) persons within the European Union and elsewhere throughout the world. In Europe, the geographic area of Greek includes Greece, Cyprus (Cypriot Greek), adjacent areas in South Albania and FYROM, as well as in Ukraine (Azof area). Indigenous Greek speaking communities are also found mainly in Turkey, namely in Istanbul (Constantinople), the islands of Imbros and Tenedos, the towns and the surroundings of Cunda (Greek Moschonisia), Ayvalik (Greek Kydonies or Aivali) and Izmir (Smyrna), as well as in certain villages in the Pontic area of Trebizond, and to a lesser extent in Syria, and Egypt.

Greeks in emigration throughout the world live especially in Germany, Sweden, Belgium, United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South America (mostly in Argentina and Brazil), and Africa (particularly South Africa). Language maintenance varies among these populations, which are subject to pressure from the local language, especially from English.

## 4. *Auxiliaries*

### 4.1. *Institutions and language planning*

Since the constitution of the first Modern Greek State, the educational system has adopted four different forms of Greek, which coincide with the following periods (Mitsis 1996): a. 1831-1880: The first years which followed the independence are characterized by a tendency to establish Ancient Greek as the national language and impose it in all education levels. b. 1880-1917. Following serious protests and reactions to the teaching of Ancient Greek even in elementary schools, an artificial form, the so-called ‘*καθαρεύουσα*’ [kaθarevousa], becomes the national tongue, which may be closer to the

(8) Up to the sixteenth century, Greek-based words (‘hellenisms’) entered the vocabulary of European languages via Latin.

spoken form (*δημοτική* [dimotiki] ‘demotic’)<sup>(9)</sup> but is full of archaisms and hypercorrect forms. The use of katharevousa required a good knowledge of Ancient Greek, thus, its teaching proved to be ineffective and a sort of diglossia was created, in that educated people tried to write in katharevousa but used dimotiki in their everyday communication. In those years, the language question became a matter of political controversy. Dimotiki became the language of literature, and an Educational Association (*Εκπαιδευτικός Όμιλος* [ekpedeftikos omilos]) is founded in 1910 in order to introduce it in school. c. 1917-1976: This is a period of linguistic rivalry between katharevousa and dimotiki. Under the Eleftherios Venizelos government in 1919, the first books of dimotiki, written by M. Triantaphyllidis were introduced in the elementary school. However, this educational reform was abruptly interrupted in 1920, following a change in government, and katharevousa was restored in schools. From 1923, with brief intervals, dimotiki was basically the language of literature and the lower grades of elementary schools, while katharevousa was taught in the higher grades, and continued to be the vehicle of official transactions, public announcements, and technical and scientific writing. Gradually, a mixed linguistic form developed, particularly in the language of newspapers. 1941 sees the composition of the first complete grammar of Modern Greek by M. Triantaphyllidis, which still serves as the basis for the teaching of grammar in elementary and secondary schools. d. 1976-: This period starts with the historical decision to establish Standard Modern Greek as the official language in all levels of education and administration. This reform was completed in 1982, with the elimination of the Ancient Greek accentual symbols and spirits from the spelling (including three “accents” and two “spirits”, see chapter 2). Today, Standard Modern Greek (*Κοινή Νεοελληνική*) is based on dimotiki, but it is enriched with a considerable number of archaic words and expressions, resulting from the long use of katharevousa in science and administration. In fact, learned roots and affixes are productively employed in scientific terminology.

The following are the main institutions which deal with the research and study of the Greek language:

1. **Centre of Greek Language** ([www.greeklanguage.gr](http://www.greeklanguage.gr) and [www.komvos.edu.gr](http://www.komvos.edu.gr)) Founded in Thessaloniki, it serves as a focal point of information on topics pertaining to Greek, and coordinates communication among organizations in Greece and abroad. It acts as a strategic institution of the *Greek Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs* on matters regarding language, education and policy and offers on-line dictionaries and teaching aids for Modern Greek.

2. **Institute of Modern Greek Studies (Manolis Triandaphyllidis Foundation)** (<http://ins.phil.auth.gr>). It was established in 1959 and belongs to the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Its main mission is the promotion of Dimotiki, and Modern Greek Philology. It has published a series of books on Greek language and literature.

<http://www.academyofathens.gr/ecportal.asp?id=612&nt=109&lang=23>.

(9) For clarity reasons they will be called katharevousa and dimotiki.

3. **Research Centre for Modern Greek Dialects** ([www.academyofathens.gr/ksil/](http://www.academyofathens.gr/ksil/)). It was founded in 1908 by Georgios Hatzidakis, and came under the jurisdiction of the Academy of Athens in 1926. Its aims are the study of the Greek dialects, and the compilation of a historical dictionary. It houses the largest and oldest archive of dialectal documents in Greece.

4. **Research Center for Scientific Terms and Neologisms** ([www.academyofathens.gr/](http://www.academyofathens.gr/)). Established in 1966 by the Academy of Athens, this center deals with the study of neologisms, and proposes the formation of terms in scientific sublanguages.

5. **Institute of Language and Speech Technology (ILSP)**, ([www.ilsp.gr](http://www.ilsp.gr)). Based on the EUROTRA program, this institute was founded in Athens in 1991, by the Ministry of Development with the purpose to promote language and speech technology in Greece. It conducts research in speech synthesis, natural language processing, and computer-assisted language teaching.

## 4.2. Linguistic resources

### 4.2.1. Language and culture

We have no evidence of literature from the Mycenaean period (see section 2.2), since all Linear B documents are lists and inventories connected with the economics of the central Mycenaean palace administration. It is generally accepted that oral poetry in the Greek language was already in existence. During the archaic period, the first major representatives of Greek literature appear first of all with the epic poetry of Homer and Hesiod, and later with the lyric poetry of Archilochus, Sappho, Alcaeus and many others. No specimen of Greek in the form of a full-bodied text antedates the Homeric epics (*Iliad* and *Odyssey*) which are generally believed to have been composed in the 8<sup>th</sup> c. BC. These epics do not reflect a language that was ever spoken for the sake of practical communication. They are constructed basically or exclusively for literary purposes and excluded words, endings and locutions which were clearly in use at the time, because they did not conform to the dactylic metre ( \_ υυ) employed there. Archaic inscriptions shorten the gap of our knowledge about the spoken language but do not fill it, since they are mostly official texts composed by literate people with meticulous care.

From the beginning of history proper, Greek enters the stage fragmented in numerous local dialects (see section 3.2.1). Due to the nature and provenance of our evidence, little is known of most dialects, except those in which literature was composed, and even less about actual speech. The situation is further complicated by the fact that both prose literature and poetry continued for long to be composed in those dialects in which the corresponding literary genres were first invented, irrespective of the origin of the particular composer. So, for instance, iambic and elegiac poetry is composed in Ionic, choral poetry in Doric, and melic poetry in Aeolic. Even in such a specifically Athenian invention as tragic drama, it is only the dialogues which are composed in the Attic dialect, the lyric parts being basically in some mild version of Doric. Nevertheless, poets like Hesiod, Archilochus, Alcman, Sappho and Pindar are still sources for our knowledge

of Boeotian, Parian, Spartan, Lesbian, and Theban Greek, respectively. The best documented dialect is, no doubt, Attic. It is in this dialect and in the classical period that some of the greatest works of literature ever written were composed: the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, the comedies of Aristophanes, the historical narratives of Thucydides and Xenophon, the philosophical works of Plato and Aristotle, the orations of Demosthenes and Isocrates, and countless others. Apart from what is found in numerous state inscriptions, informal cell-incisions and personal graffiti, our main informants for the spoken forms are the comic poet Aristophanes, the philosopher Plato, and Xenophon who wrote dialogues.

Interest in a theoretical understanding of the Greek language begins with the Sophists in the 5<sup>th</sup> c. BC. They showed a keen interest in the workings of language, far surpassing the piecemeal knowledge of an actual user, even if he is as competent as Homer, Aeschylus or Pindar. Real progress was made during the following century in Athens. Plato's *Cratylus* is the first extant work which is devoted primarily, though not exclusively, to the study of language. Aristotle followed his teacher's lead. Seminal intuitions, like the clear-cut distinction between nouns/subjects which denote things and verbs/predicates which refer to activities or states can be found scattered in works such as the *Poetics* and the *De Interpretatione*. Theoretical understanding of language was enhanced by Stoicism as well as by the grammarians of Alexandria in the following three centuries.

Our evidence of spoken Greek from the Koine period comes from the inexhaustible quantity of non-literary papyri, preserved by the dry climate of Egypt, and from early Christian texts such as the *Septuagint* (Translation of the Old Testament), the New Testament, and the apocryphal Gospels, which were written in everyday Greek in order to appeal to the masses. We are better informed about the evolution of actually spoken Hellenistic Greek than of earlier dialects thanks to numerous non-literate papyri found in Egypt, which include vernacular documents of barely literate people ranging from personal letters and magical curses to commercial and shop-keeping accounts.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, Dio Chrysostomus, Aelius Aristides and Philostratus are some prominent representatives associated with the Atticist movement (see section 2.2), which widened the gap between the written and the oral language. For centuries to come, the use and knowledge of the Attic dialect, though long dead as a medium of oral communication, became the sign par excellence of the educated aristocracy. Grammars ceased to be descriptive and became, for the most part, prescriptive. However, under the impetus provided by the widespread admiration for classical Greece, lexicography flourished for both antiquarian and educational purposes. Thus Pausanias of Syria (1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD.) wrote a *Dictionary of Attic words*; Harpocration (2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD.) composed a *Dictionary of words found in the 10 Attic orators* classified in alphabetical order; Pollux, at around the same time, wrote a work on the specialized vocabulary of various disciplines; centuries later, Hesychius (6<sup>th</sup> c. AD) composed a very precious dictionary which interprets extinct, rare and unintelligible words; from the Byzantine era we possess an extended dictionary known as the *Suda* which contains, besides short lemmas, long stretches of text with a variety of biographical, doctrinal, historical and other information. Of the numerous grammars produced by



Alexandrian scholars like Aristarchus and Didymus, a single specimen survives: the 15-page-long *Τέχνη Γραμματική* [Techne Grammatike] ‘Grammatical Art’ of Dionysius Thrax (ca. 100 BC.). It remained a standard work for thirteen centuries and was translated into Armenian and Syriac. Its main omission from the point of view of modern linguistics is the part of syntax. Syntax was extensively dealt by Apollonius Dyskolus (2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD) who wrote a large number of books, only a few of which survive.

After the Hellenistic period and till the 6<sup>th</sup> c. AD, there is a considerable movement of populations, and basic struggle for existence. Inscriptions are few and papyri in Greek become less important (they stop by the middle of the eighth century). Our linguistic sources are limited: popular chronicles, lives of saints and certain types of inscriptions exhaust the list. On the other hand, we possess high quality historiography, rhetoric, religious poetry and other forms of literature written in archaising forms of language.

Our knowledge of Greek during the period between 600 and 1100 AD depends almost entirely upon literary and some sub-literary texts, the latter representing a balance between the purist ideal and the speech of people (e.g. the *Chronography* of Theophanes, the *Breviarium* of the Patriarch Nicephorus, as well as certain of the works by the Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus).

Evidence of the spoken language is much more copious in the later middle ages. We possess various literary forms written in vernacular Greek, such as satirical poetry, romances of chivalry and verse chronicles, as well as an enormous production of literature and historiography written in (various degrees of) archaising Greek. The Escorial version of the epic poem of *Digenis Akritas* (originally composed around the eleventh century) shows many traits of the vernacular language, but the first substantial evidence of it comes from the poems of Theodore Prodromos and Michael Glykas of the twelfth century. The extensive verse *Chronicle of the Morea* (around 1300) is composed in spoken Greek, but with scattered literary words and phrases. The knightly novels of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. are also in vernacular Greek, but for the most part, they cannot be attributed to any particular area (e.g. *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*, *Belthandros and Chrysantza*). Few chronicles appear in Cyprus, most of them in a literary language, with the exception of the *Chronicles* of Machairas and Boustronios (15<sup>th</sup> c.) which are written in the Cypriot dialect (see Appendix).

Under the Turkish domination, most vernacular texts show extensive borrowings from the archaic learned language, which enjoyed the prestige of the Ancient Greek culture, and was supported by grammarians, the Orthodox Church hierarchy and the upper class. In this period, a flourishing oral poetry, the ‘kleptic’ ballads (or demotic songs) is composed, whose authors are unknown (cf. Politis 1914). Outside the Ottoman Empire, dialectal features appear in the vernacular literature of several centres. The Cypriot *Chronicle* of Boustronios (15<sup>th</sup> c.), the Rhodian poems of Emmanuel Georgillias (16<sup>th</sup> c.), are some examples.<sup>(10)</sup> By the end of the sixteenth century, there is an important literary production (tragedy, comedy, verse romance) in Crete, which

(10) Cyprus was conquered by the Ottomans in 1571 and Dodecanese in 1522.



remained under Venetian rule until 1669. It is written in the local dialect and is strongly influenced by Western models. It includes the tragedies *Erophile*, *Rodolinos*, the *Sacrifice of Abraham*, the comedy *Fortunatos* and the long romantic poem *Erotokritos* (cf. Dimaras 1967). In the Ionian islands, which were held by Venice until the Napoleonic wars and never became subject to the Ottoman Empire, we find poems in semi-vernacular Greek around the sixteenth century. Beside literature, we have grammatical descriptions of the spoken language from this period, which display certain dialectal features, as well as some elements of the learned language. The earliest is the grammar by Nikolaos Sophianos of Corfu (first half of the sixteenth century, cf. Legrand 1874). There are also grammars by Girolamo Germano (1622, cf. Pernot 1907) and Simon Portius (1632, cf. Meyer-Lübke 1889). Furthermore, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Alessio da Somavera published the first dictionary of vernacular Greek (cf. Legrand 1918).

During the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth several books are published in Greece and in the prosperous Greek communities in Russia and Western Europe. They were composed either in a spoken language form, without any marked dialectal features, or in a rather atticising Greek. The utopian position of going back to Ancient Greek was advocated by scholars such as Evgenios Voulgaris (1716- 1806) and Neophytos Doukas (1760-1845). A moderate position on the language question advocating the purification of the spoken language by rejecting Turkish loan words and dialectal features, was proposed by the leading scholar Adamantios Korais (1743-1843). The third position, inspired by the belief that a national language should be based on the ‘upurified’ vernacular speech is found among writers such as Katartzis (1720-1807), and certain Ionian poets of the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, particularly Dionysios Solomos (1798-1857) who wrote the national anthem for the first Greek state. The first government set up in Nauplion in 1828 adopted a new common language, which was based on the Peloponnesian dialect, enriched with many Ionian features. In fact, when Athens became the capital of the new Greek state in 1833, this language was used in the ordinary intercourse of its citizens, but not in the administration and education, swamped under the influence of archaism (see section 4.1). Extreme archaisers like the novelist and grammarian Panayotis Soutsos wanted to restore Attic Greek. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, most prose and poetry are written in the spoken language, while some writers, such as Grigorios Xenopoulos and Ioannis Polyas, try to compromise between dimotiki and katharevousa. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a tendency to adopt a spontaneous spoken expression is detected in almost all authors. In prose, Stratis Mirivilis (e.g. *Η ζωή εν τάφω* [Life in tomb], 1924) Stratis Doukas (e.g. *Η ιστορία ενός αιχμαλώτου* [The Story of a prisoner], 1929), Ilias Venezis (e.g. *Το νούμερο 31328* [The number 31328], 1931), and Melpo Aksioti (e.g. *Δύσκολες νύχτες* [Difficult nights], 1938) are the best representative cases. Moreover, certain authors adopt various dialectal features, depending on their origin, Nikos Kazantzakis, the author of *Alexis Zorbas*, being one of them. In poetry, a considerable number of well-known poets choose to express themselves in the language of common people, with the exception of Konstantinos Kavafis (e.g. *Μύρης· Αλεξάνδρεια του 340 μ.Χ.* [Myris; Alexandria of 340 AD], 1929) whose writings display many words from katharevousa. Suffice to mention

Kostas Kariotakis (e.g., *Ελεγεία και Σάτυρες* [Elegy and satires], 1928) and the Nobel-prize winner Giorgos Sepheris, (e.g. *Στροφή* [Turning Point], 1931). In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Standard Modern Greek is used in all literary works. It is the period where the written expression tends to identify with the oral one, and authors avoid lyric effusions. Giorgos Ioannou (e.g. *Για ένα φιλότιμο* [For honour's sake], 1964) and Manolis Anagnostakis (e.g. *Τα ποιήματα* [The poems], 1941-1976) are two of the best examples of this period. At the same time, their contemporary Odysseas Elytis (e.g. *Axion Esti*, 1930), the other Nobel-prize winning poet, handles actual language in an admirable manner, and intersperses his poems with numerous neologisms.

#### 4.2.2. Conventional resources

The list of dictionaries, grammars and books of historical linguistic interest dealing with Ancient Greek, Mycenaean and Hellenistic Greek is particularly long. By general consent among linguists and philologists the following represent some of the key publications: *a) Dictionaries:* Liddell, Scott et als. (1940), Chantraine (1968-1980), Frisk (1960-1972), Hoffmann (1949). *b) Grammars:* Blass and Debrunner (1961), Gignac (1981), Kühner et als. (1898-1904), Schwyzer et als. 1939-1971). *c) Resources of historical linguistic interest:* Buck (1955), Chadwick and Ventris (1973), Christidis (2001), Hoffmann et als. (1969), Jannaris (1897), Jeffery (1990).

For a grammatical and syntactic account of Modern Greek the works by Triantaphyllidis (1941), Tzartanos (1946) and Mirambel (1959) remain classic, and are still widely used. Several grammatical descriptions and reference grammars have appeared in the last two decades of the twentieth century. The most complete ones include the books by Mackridge (1985), Joseph and Philippaki-Warburton (1987), Holton et als. (1997), Clairis & Babiniotis (2005). It is worth mentioning the nine-volume dictionary by Dimitrakos (1950) and the etymological dictionary by Andriotis (1951). Three very good dictionaries have appeared in the last decade: 1. *Λεξικό της Νέας Ελληνικής Γλώσσας* [Dictionary of Modern Greek] by Babiniotis (1998). It has over 150.000 common words, scientific terms and acronyms. Every entry displays grammatical, and semantic information, etymology, synonyms – antonyms, as well as examples of the different usages. 2. *Λεξικό της Κοινής Νεοελληνικής* [Dictionary of the Modern Greek Koine] of the *Institute of Modern Greek Studies* (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Manolis Triantaphyllidis Foundation, Thessaloniki 1998). There is information on the pronunciation of each entry (according to the International Phonetic Alphabet), its morphological and semantic features, its etymology, the various usages, as well as information on the specific register of its use. 3. *Αντίστροφο Λεξικό της Νέας Ελληνικής* [Reverse Index Dictionary of Modern Greek] (Thessaloniki 2002), by Anna Anastassiadi-Symeonidi. It contains over 180.000 entries and is also published by the *Institute of Modern Greek Studies* of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

As already stated, Modern Greek dialects have never been subject to a systematic study. Most of the existent works focus on the phonology or the morphology of the particular dialects, while giving only scarce observations

regarding syntax. To name a few, it is worth mentioning the works for the Asia-Minor Dialect of Kydonies (Aivali, Sakkaris 1940), Lesbian (Kretschmer 1905), Imbriot (Andriotis, 1930), Cappadocian (Dawkins 1916, Janse forthcoming), Cretan (Pangalos 1955, Contossopoulos 1994), Cypriot (Newton 1972), Greek of South Italy (Rohlf's 1949), Chiot (Pernot 1907-1946), Maniot of Corsica (Blanken 1951), the Northern Greek Dialects (Papadopoulos 1927), Pontic (Drettas 1997), Roumeic of the Azof sea (Symeonidis and Tobaidis 1999), and Tsakonian (Pernot 1934).

Finally, an excellent picture on the evolution of Greek with respect to its culture and political situation, with particular emphasis on the obscure and less studied medieval period, are given by Browning (1983) and Horrocks (1997). Considerable information on Medieval Greek and dialectal forms can also be found in Hatzidakis (1905-1907) and Triantaphyllidis (1938). The main dictionary of Medieval Greek is that by Kriaras (1969-1997).

#### 4.2.3. *Electronic resources*

a) [www.komvos.edu.gr](http://www.komvos.edu.gr): this is one of the sites of the *Center of Greek Language* ([www.greeklanguage.gr](http://www.greeklanguage.gr)), where one can find on-line dictionaries and educational material, especially for teaching Greek as a foreign language.

b) [www.ins.phil.auth.gr](http://www.ins.phil.auth.gr): through the site of the *Institute of Modern Greek Studies (Manolis Triantaphyllidis Foundation)* one can have access to an updated bibliography of Modern Greek, as well as to the list of publications of the Institute.

c) *Research Center for Modern Greek Dialects* of the Academy of Athens

d) [www.philology.upatras.gr/LMGD/en/index.html](http://www.philology.upatras.gr/LMGD/en/index.html): Important information about the range of Modern Greek Dialects, their geographical location and their major features can be found at this website of the *Laboratory of Modern Greek Dialects* of the University of Patras.

e) [www.elia.org.gr](http://www.elia.org.gr): it belongs to the *Center of Greek Literary and Historical Archives*, and displays a large collection of books from all periods.

f) [www.ilsp.gr/hnc\\_gr.html](http://www.ilsp.gr/hnc_gr.html): the *Institute of Language and Speech Technology (ILSP)* has built a collection of electronic corpora consisting of 20.000.000 words. It has also developed tools for the computational treatment of Modern Greek.

f) [www.tlg.uci.edu](http://www.tlg.uci.edu): the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (TLG)* contains a comprehensive digital library with most literary texts written in Greek from Homer (8<sup>th</sup> c. BC) to the fall of Byzantium in 1453 AD.

g) [www.perseusw.tufts.edu](http://www.perseusw.tufts.edu): this is an evolving digital library, displaying a considerable collection of Ancient Greek works.

## 5. Present and future role

### 5.1. *In countries where Greek is an official language*

In Greece and Cyprus, where Greek is the official language, it is spontaneously spoken by the population, and is daily employed by the media. Moreover, there is an extensive production of literature, and most importantly,

Greek is learned by children as a first language. In addition, it is used by all new immigrants, and tends to become the first language of their children who are born and educated in Greece. Therefore, in spite of the increasing number of English words and expressions which are introduced to Greek, it cannot be characterized as an endangered language.

### **5.2. In other countries**

Outside Greece and Cyprus, Greek is taught in about 60 countries of the five continents, especially in those where there are large Greek communities, such as Germany (391 school units), Australia (100 school units), and the United States (338 school units). These school units run under the supervision of the Greek Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs and employ about 4500 teachers. Most of them are integrated in the education system of the host country, while few follow the Greek curriculum (mainly in Germany, but also in Brussels, London and Naples). It is important to note that there is a continuous increase of candidates for the examinations to obtain the Certificate of the Greek Language. In 2005, 2500 candidates were presented in 74 language-examination centers all over the world.

### **5.3. In international circles and institutions**

For more than 25 centuries Greek conveys internationally the basic concepts of philosophy, theology, science and politics, and is positively associated with ideas such as “democracy”. As Robins (1967: 10) observes, “the intellectual life of Europe as a whole finds its origin in the work of Greek thinkers”. With respect to linguistics, it is the work of these thinkers and the issues raised by their investigations which initiated in Europe the linguistic science.

Today, Greek roots and affixes belong to a dynamic and flexible source, an indispensable part of the international vocabulary. By providing the basic means for the creation of terms in science and culture they contribute to the development of European languages.

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