PHILIP S. PEEK Ancient Greek I A 21st Century Approach



https://www.openbookpublishers.com

© 2021 Philip S. Peek



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0). This license allows you to share, copy, distribute and transmit the work; to adapt the work and to make commercial use of the work providing attribution is made to the author (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work). Attribution should include the following information:

Philip S. Peek, *Ancient Greek I: A 21st Century Approach*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2021. https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0264

Copyright and permissions for the reuse of many of the images included in this publication differ from the above. This information is provided in the captions and in the list of illustrations.

In order to access detailed and updated information on the license, please visit https://doi. org/10.11647/OBP.0264#copyright

Further details about CC BY licenses are available at http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

All external links were active at the time of publication unless otherwise stated and have been archived via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at https://archive.org/web

Digital material and resources associated with this volume are available at https://doi.org/10.11647/ OBP.0264#resources

Every effort has been made to identify and contact copyright holders and any omission or error will be corrected if notification is made to the publisher.

ISBN Paperback: 9781800642546	ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 9781800642577
ISBN Hardback: 9781800642553	ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 9781800642584
ISBN Digital (PDF): 9781800642560	ISBN Digital (XML): 9781800642591
DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0264	

Cover image: Athenian Fragmentary votive sculpture of Dionysus (?) Greek Ashmolean Museum. Photograph by Mary Harrsch, CC BY-SA. Cover design by Anna Gatti.

Why Learn Accents?

Accents tell you how to pronounce words correctly. They can also assist in identifying hard-to-decipher noun and verb forms. As you improve in reading Greek, you will begin to hear how the syllable sounds and accents work together to create meaning and beauty.

Accent

Most Greek words have one syllable whose musical pitch varies slightly from that of the other syllables of the word. This difference of pitch is called the word's accent ($\tau \acute{o} vo c$). In English, we accent words by increasing stress on the accented syllable—**re**lative, religious—rather than by a difference in musical pitch.

In order to understand pitch better, say the following out loud:

The house is there.

and

The house is there?

Note that when you pronounce the word **house** in the statement the intonation of your voice is neutral but when you pronounce **house** in the question the pitch of your voice raises. When you raise the pitch of **house**, you indicate that you are asking a question.

Unlike English, all Greek words have their accents marked. Marking accents as part of spelling is a later convention, introduced possibly by the Alexandrian scholar Aristophanes of Byzantium in 200 BCE. Before this time the Greeks themselves did not mark their words with accentual notation, and, just like native English speakers, did not require them to know how to pronounce the words of their language. The accent of a Greek word is learned as a part of its spelling.

Accent is indicated in the following way:

- **Acute (ὀξύς) accent:** marked a raising of the musical pitch
- **Grave (βαρύς) accent:** marked a neutral musical pitch
- Circumflex (περισπώμενος) accent: marked a raising and lowering of pitch

Since English speakers accent words by stress not pitch, for the purpose of this course, simply stress the accented syllable like you would in English, ignoring the type of accent. If you wish to hear what a pitch accent in Greek may have sounded like, follow the links found at the end of this module.

Orthography

Note carefully the following orthographical conventions:

- accents occur directly over vowels and over the second letter of diphthongs, as in Ἐλένη, Εἰλείθυια, δρᾶμα, ψεῦδος;
- when an acute (') or grave accent (') and a breathing appear over the same syllable, the breathing is written first: ἄνθρωπος, ὕπνος, ὄν;
- when a circumflex accent (~) and a breathing appear over the same syllable, the breathing is written under the circumflex, as in $\tilde{\eta}\tau\alpha$;
- accents, like breathings, are written before capitalized vowels, including vowels followed by iota adscript, but over the second letter of diphthongs whose first letter is capitalized: ΄Ομηρος, Αἴρεσις, ΄Αιδης;
- the circumflex accent (~) only occurs over long vowels or diphthongs, δρᾶμα, ψεῦδος.

As you read, translate, and write in ancient Greek you will readily internalize these conventions and so there is no need to commit them to memory.

Syllabification

In order to accent a word correctly, you must know how to break it into syllables. A syllable occurs for every vowel or diphthong a Greek word has. To determine the number of syllables, count the vowels and diphthongs:

 A syllable in Greek includes any initial consonants + the vowel or diphthong that directly follows + the first letter of a double consonant following the vowel or diphthong:

Ό-μη-ρος; η Η-τα; Αι Αι-ρε-σις; Α-χιλ-λεύς.

Practice Counting Syllables. Check your answers with those in the second column.

αὐτόνομος	αὐ-τό-νο-μος (4)
Όδυσσεύς	Ο-δυσ-σεύς (3)
οἶνος	οἶ-νος (2)
Είλείθυια	Εί-λεί-θυι-α (4)
φιλοσοφία	φι-λο-σο-φί-α (5)
ἄγγελος	ἄγ-γε-λος (3)
ἄγκυρα	ἄγ-κυ-ρα (3)
Όξύρρυγχος	Ὀ-ξύρ-ρυγ-χος (4)
αἰθήρ	αἰ-θήρ (2)
εἰρήνη	εἰ-ρή-νη (3)

Consider the Greek word, Ei λ είθυια, the goddess of childbirth. We break this word into syllables like so: Ei- λ εί-θυι-α. Each vowel and each diphthong is a syllable. The last three syllables are referred to by their sequence:

Ei-	not named		
-λεί-	antepenult next-to-last)	(before	the
-θυι-	penult (almost last)		
-α	ultima (last)		

The initial syllable Ei- is not named because it is not one of the last three syllables.

Vowel Length

In the paradigms and accenting practice of this text, macrons mark alpha, iota, and upsilon if long. Short vowels and diphthongs are not marked. In authentic texts and in the **Practice Translating** of this text, macrons do not occur. Diphthongs are by definition long with this exception: final **-au** and **-ou** are short for purposes of accentuation except in the optative, a mood learned in Part II of the *21st-Century* series. **-au** and **-ou** are final when they appear as the last two letters of a word, λῦσ**au** but not λύσ**aug**.

Recessive and Persistent Accent

In recessive accent, the accent occurs as far from the ultima as the possibilities of accent allow. Most verb forms have recessive accent. Nouns and other parts of speech have persistent accent, presented in detail in Module 11. In persistent accent, the accent stays on the same vowel or diphthong it is on in the nominative singular form, and does not change unless it has to in accordance with the possibilities of where accents can occur.

Possibilities of Accent

Memorize these two possibilities. As the text progresses, you will learn how to accent adjectives, nouns, pronouns, and verbs. Appendix X offers a complete explanation of accent and contains additional practice exercises.

- 1. An acute accent can appear on the antepenult, penult, or ultima.
- 2. An acute accent can only appear on the antepenult if the ultima is short.

Accenting Verbs of Three Syllables or More

Long vowels are marked with a macron. Short vowels are not marked. Read from top to bottom and apply the first line that meets the criteria:

- If the ultima is short, put an acute on the antepenult. ἕπαυε Stop!
- 2. If the ultima is long, put an acute on the penult. Stop! $\pi \alpha \upsilon \sigma \dot{\alpha} \tau \omega$

Accent διδωμι.

Check the ultima. If the ultima is short, place the accent on the antepenult. Stop! You are finished. If the ultima is long, place the accent on the penult. Stop! You are finished. - The ultima, - ι , is short and so place the accent on the antepenult: $\delta i \delta \omega \mu \iota$.

Accent **ποιεω**.

Check the ultima. If the ultima is short, place the accent on the antepenult. Stop! You are finished. If the ultima is long, place the accent on the penult. Stop! You are finished.

• The ultima, $-\omega$, is long and so place the accent on the penult: $\pi ole \omega$.

Practice Accenting Verbs of Three Syllables or More. Check your answers with those in the Answer Key. Remember that final $-\alpha\iota$ and $-o\iota$ are short for purposes of accentuation, except in the optative, a mood learned in Part II of the *21st-Century* series. There are no optative forms in the below.

- 1. διδωμι, έδιδου, διδομεθα, έδιδουν, διδομεν, έδιδομην, διδοται, διδοσαι
- 2. διδοιης, έδομην, διδοασιν, διδοτε, έδιδους, έδιδοσο, διδοσθαι, διδονται
- 3. διδοιην, διδομεθα, διδοσθε, διδοιημεν, διδοιμην, διδοτω
- 4. τιθημι, έτιθην, έτιθεις, τιθησιν, τιθεμεν, έτιθει, τιθεσαι, τιθεται
- 5. τιθεμεθα, έτιθεμην, τιθεσθε, τιθετε, τιθεασιν, έθεμην, τιθενται, τιθεσθαι
- 6. πραττετε, έπραξα, έπραχθην, έπραττον, έπραχθητε, πεπρāχα, πραττεται, πραττεσθαι
- 7. γενησομεθα, έγενομην, έγιγνου, γεγονα, γεγενησθε, γιγνεται, γιγνεσθαι
- 8. ποιεει, ποιησειν, έποιησα, έποιεον, έποιεου, έποιηθην, ποιεεται, ποιεονται
- δοκεεις, έδοκεες, δοκεειν, έδοξε, έδοχθη, έδοκεομην, δοκεεσθαι, δοκεεται
- 10. όραω, όψομεθα, όραειν, όψεσθε, είδομην, ἑωρακα, όραεται, όραονται

Ancient Greek Pitch Accent

To hear what an ancient Greek pitch accent may have sounded like, follow the links below:

Stefan Hagel, Austrian Academy of Sciences¹

Ίωάννης Στρατάκης, Podium-Arts.²

Anakreon of Teos, Άνακρέων ὁ Τήϊος, c.582–c.485 BCE. Alive during the tumultuous Archaic Age (700–480 BCE), Anakreon was born in Teos, a Greek

¹ https://www.oeaw.ac.at/kal/sh/demodokos.mp3.

² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOvVWiDsPWQ.

city on the border of the Persian empire. In 545 the Persians attacked the Greek city-states lying on and off the coast of Asia Minor. Anakreon fought against the invaders, though, he says, he did nothing noteworthy in the battle. Anakreon eventually fled Persian rule and found refuge at the court of Polykrates, tyrant of Samos. After the assassination of Polykrates, Hipparkhos, tyrant of Athens, brought Anakreon to his court. When Hipparkhos was murdered in an uprising against him, Anakreon left Athens, returning to his native Teos, where he spent the rest of his days. Considered one of the best of the lyric poets, in his poetry Anakreon employs a deceptively simple style with subtle wit, humor, nuance, irony, and complexity.

Module 3 Practice Reading Aloud. Practice reading aloud this poem by Anakreon; pay attention to the sound each syllable makes and the rhythm of the words.

πῶλε Θρῃκίη, τί δή με λοξὸν ὄμμασι βλέπουσα νηλέως φεύγεις, δοκεῖς δέ μ' οὐδὲν εἰδέναι σοφόν; ἴσθι τοι, καλῶς μὲν ἄν τοι τὸν χαλινὸν ἐμβάλοιμι, ἡνίας δ' ἔχων στρέφοιμί σ' ἀμφὶ τέρματα δρόμου· νῦν δὲ λειμῶνάς τε βόσκεαι κοῦφά τε σκιρτῶσα παίζεις, δεξιὸν γὰρ ἱπποπείρην οὐκ ἔχεις ἐπεμβάτην.

Verse Translation

Thracian filly, why eye me sidewise? With heartless Glance you flee and see no skill in me. Yet look how Deft I am, I can insert the bit, around the Racecourse post with reins in hand I can ride astride You. For now in meadows you graze, playing, lightly Leaping, lacking any expert guide to ride you.

To listen to Anakreon's poem read by me and performed by Stefan Hagel, follow this link:

Anakreon's Thrakian Filly.³

To listen to the translation set to an original music score by Roshan Samtani, follow this link:

Roshan Samtani's Musical Translation of Thrakian Filly,⁴

Guitarist, composer, and educator Dr. Roshan Samtani graduated with degrees in jazz studies (William Paterson), music history (BGSU), and ethnomusicology (PhD. Brown Univ). He resides in Madrid, Spain, and occasionally takes on dedicated students of the guitar.

³ https://loom.com/share/175738b3a7fb48cbbdd3fee97b96bee0.

⁴ https://loom.com/share/46f05df53e694896b7dade62e9b8d99a

Etymology Corner III by Dr. E. Del Chrol

Etymology to the Rescue

By now you've probably realized the reason why the alphabet is called **the alphabet** it's named after the first two letters of the Greek alphabet, **alpha** and **beta**. But are you having trouble remembering whether an **omicron** or an **omega** is the long one? **O-micron** is the **O** that is **micro** *short*, like in **microscope**. **O-mega** is the **O** that is **mega** *big*, like in **megaphone** or **megabyte**. An **epsilon** is a **psilon** *bare*, *short* **E**, whereas an **eta** is just a plain long **E** sound. Etymology to the rescue

What to Study and Do 3. Before moving on to the next module, make sure you know how to accent verbs of three syllables or more.

Learning Tip 3: Take Note of Two Goals for this Course. This course requires analysis, logic, and memorization. These processes, though difficult to learn, are teachable. This course also attempts to initiate in you a process of deep learning and thinking. Deep learning and thinking involve discontinuity and creativity. They form an approach to learning that goes beyond analysis, logic, and rote memory into the realm of the unknown, which requires a transformation from old ways of thinking to new forms of learning. We humans are naturally creative. Our ability to sing and to communicate brought us out of the trees and on to the plains. We create many things, including words. Throughout the world it is estimated that 5,400 new words are created every year and 1,000 of them are used enough to make it into print (Global Language Monitor).¹ Note that it is easy to connect many English words with their Greek ancestors. In the case of anthropology, biology, and chronology, we created the loan word directly from two Greek words,

ἄνθρωπος, ἀνθρώπου human being βίος, βίου life χρόνος, χρόνου time

and

λόγος, λόγου word, reason, study.

As you memorize sounds and learn new vocabulary, consider coining your own words: **etymophilia**, perhaps? Think about memorizing the facts of this course and about using your creativity to make them live with special meaning inside you.

¹ https://languagemonitor.com/number-of-words-in-english/no-of-words/.