

So You Want To Learn Ancient Greek Or Latin?

Post by “Don” of December 10, 2023 at 7:50 AM

@Nate : Elen sila lumenn' omentielvo!! 😊

The evolution of Greek pronunciation is fascinating. Modern Greek has gone all in on the fricatives βδγφθχ and also collapsed a number of vowels and diphthongs. But the language started back in Classical times with phonemic distinctions like aspirated vs unaspirated stops, pitch accent, phonemic vowel length, and others. I highly recommend Luke Ranieri's Greek Pronunciation Chronology Spreadsheet to see it laid out:

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[Ranieri's Greek Pronunciation Chronology](#)

All Greek w/ Alternative Coaeval Pronunciations All Greek with Alternative Coaeval Phonemes, Luke Amadeus Ranieri's GREEK PRONUNCIATION CHRONOLOGY Spreadsheet... docs.google.com

So, Stratakis uses a reconstructed Classical Attic convention, including all those ancient distinctions; whereas Ranieri provides a spectrum of evolutionary steps. Both are firmly rooted and supported by historical and linguistic research.

I'm a bit of a linguistics nerd and find all this fascinating. I learned the International Phonetic Alphabet in high school, etc. I fully agree with Ranieri when he talks about the importance of pitch accent and vowel length in especially being able to appreciate ancient poetry and to appreciate just the sound of the language. It's an interesting thought experiment to consider

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3507-so-you-want-to-learn-ancient-greek-or-latin/?postID=27980#post27980>

how "evolved" Epicurus's pronunciation was toward fricativization and other features, or Philodemus, or Diogenes of Oenoanda.

Full disclosure: This is a highly controversial topic in some circles but historical evidence is clear, compelling, and definitive in backing up this linguistic evolution. All languages go through it.

Here are some other links on Ranieri's site:

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/80661461>

<https://lukeranieri.com/lucianpronunciation/>