

HISTORY OF THE GREEK LANGUAGE

From the beginning to Alexander the Great

The history of the Greek language is a long and complex one, with many different stages and variations. Here's a brief overview of the key stages in the development of the Greek language up to the Koinè, biblical variant:

Proto-Greek: The earliest stage of the Greek language is known as Proto-Greek, and dates back to around 2000 BC. This was a very early form of Greek that was spoken by the Mycenaean civilization, which existed in the area that is now Greece.

Ancient Greek: Around 750 BC, the Greeks developed a written alphabet and began to write down their language. The earliest form of written Greek is known as Ancient Greek, and it is the language of some of the most famous works of Greek literature, such as the Iliad and the

Odyssey. Ancient Greek is also the language of Greek philosophy, including the works of Plato and Aristotle.

Koinè Greek: By the fourth century BC, the Greeks had begun to use a new form of the language that was simpler and easier to understand than Ancient Greek. This new form of the language was called Koinè Greek, which means "common" or "shared" Greek. Koinè Greek became the language of trade, commerce, and everyday communication throughout the Mediterranean world.

Hellenistic Greek: During the Hellenistic period, which began with the conquests of Alexander the Great in the late fourth century BC, Greek culture spread throughout the known world, and the Greek language continued to evolve. This new form of the language is known as Hellenistic Greek, and it is characterized by a greater degree of flexibility and fluidity than the more rigid forms of Ancient and Koinè Greek.

Biblical Greek: The New Testament was originally written in Greek, in a variant of the Koinè dialect known as Biblical Greek. This form of the language is sometimes called "Holy Greek" or "ecclesiastical Greek," and it is notable for its use of Semitic loanwords and its distinctive syntax and vocabulary.

Today's modern Greek is descended from the Koinè dialect, although it has undergone significant changes over the centuries. Despite these changes, however, the Greek language remains one of the most important and influential in the world, with a rich cultural and intellectual legacy that spans thousands of years.

Alexander the Great and Hellenism

Alexander the Great was a renowned king and military commander of ancient Greece who lived in the 4th century BC. He was born in 356 BC in Pella, Macedonia, and was the son of King Philip II of Macedon.

At the age of 20, Alexander inherited the throne from his father and embarked on a campaign of conquest that lasted for over a decade. His conquests included the Persian Empire, Egypt, and parts of India, making him one of the most successful military commanders in history.

Following his conquests, Alexander sought to spread Greek culture and ideas throughout his empire, a process known as Hellenization. He founded many new cities, which were designed in the Greek style and served as centers of learning, commerce, and culture. He also encouraged the spread of Greek language and literature,

and promoted the adoption of Greek customs and traditions.

The Hellenistic period, which followed Alexander's death in 323 BC, saw the continued spread of Greek culture throughout the Mediterranean world. Greek became the dominant language of commerce, scholarship, and culture, and Greek ideas and traditions had a profound influence on the development of Western civilization.

In addition to his military conquests and cultural achievements, Alexander is also remembered for his philosophical and intellectual interests. He was a student of the philosopher Aristotle and is said to have carried a copy of the Iliad with him on his campaigns.

Overall, Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic period that followed his conquests were pivotal in shaping the course of Western civilization, spreading Greek culture and ideas throughout the world and laying the foundations for the development of many aspects of Western art, literature, philosophy, and science.