1. Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Event/Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~14th-12th century BC</td>
<td>Linear B/Mycenaean Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early 8th century BC</td>
<td>adoption of Phoenecian alphabet - earliest evidence for Greek dialects from inscriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(~7th century BC</td>
<td>Homer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th-5th century BC</td>
<td>Archaic dialects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th-4th century BC</td>
<td>The Rise of Attic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd-1st century BC</td>
<td>Koine and the Hellenistic age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~31 BC (defeat of Antony by Augustus)—~330AD (founding of Constantinople)</td>
<td>Roman Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1st century AD</td>
<td>New Testament Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th century AD-15th century AD</td>
<td>Byzantine Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1453 (sack of Constantinople)-18th century</td>
<td>Ottoman Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~19th century</td>
<td>Rise of the Greek State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1880s)</td>
<td>Rise of Καθαρεύουσα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>‘Demotic’ adopted as official language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Prehistory

- Greek a descendant of **Proto-Indo-European**, a sister branch to Latin
- **Proto-Greek** the assumed ancestor of all Greek dialects – no direct evidence
3. First evidence - Linear B

- Tablets found in late 19th century: Arthur Evans
- Mycenaean palaces of the third millennium BC
- e.g. Knossos, Mycenae, Pylos
- Deciphered as Greek in 1952 by Ventris and Chadwick
- Clay tablets – ‘accounts’ of the palaces
- Survived by accident – fired in destruction
- Pictographic and syllabic writing system – doesn’t capture phonology of Greek well

wa-to (place-name in Western Crete), a-ko-ra-jo (ἀγορα-ιος = ‘of the collection’?), 60 male sheep, 60 female sheep, 49 male goats, 130 female goats (damaged), 17 pigs, 41 female pigs, 2 male oxen, 4 female oxen (pers. comm. JPT Killen)

- PY Ta 722 (Horrocks, 2010, p. 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ta-ra-nu</th>
<th>a-ja-me-no</th>
<th>e-re-pa-te-jo</th>
<th>a-to-ro-qo</th>
<th>i-qo-qe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stool (nom)</td>
<td>inlaid (nom)</td>
<td>of-ivory (dat)</td>
<td>man (dat)</td>
<td>horse (dat)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>po-ru-po-de-qe</th>
<th>po-ni-ke-qe</th>
<th>FOOTSTOOL 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>polupódei-</td>
<td>kwe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manyfoot, octopus (dat)-</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>griffin (dat)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'One footstool inlaid with a man and a horse and an octopus and a griffin in ivory'
4. Alphabetic writing – dialects of Archaic Greece

Nikandre inscription (Delos, c. 650 BC)

Νικάνδρη μ᾽ ἄνέθεκεν ἐκηβόλοι ιοχειρη,  
Nikandre me dedicated to-Far-shooting Showerer-of-arrows  
χόρη Δεινοδίκης το Ναξιδ, ξασοξ άληνον  
daughter of-Deinodikes the Naxian exalted of-other-women  
Δεινομένεος δὲ κασιγνέτη Φηράξο δ᾽ άλοχος <νυν>  
of-Deinomenes and sister of-Phraxes and wife now

ϕ = koppa – alternative form of κ; ϋ = eta = h; ζ =

standard capital letters: Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω

5. The evidence for Classical texts

- Most from manuscripts – earliest 10th century, more from 14th century onwards
- Some evidence from papyri preserved in Egypt
6. New Testament Greek

Ἀνέβη δὲ καὶ ἤσοψι ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἐκ πόλεως Ναζαρέτ εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν εἰς πόλιν Δαυείδ ἦτις καλεῖται Βηθλεέμ, διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν ἐξ οἴκου καὶ πατριάς Δαυείδ, ἀπογράφασθαι σὺν Μαριάμ τῇ ἐμνηστευμένῃ αὐτῷ, οὐδὲ ἐνκύψ...

Καὶ ποιμένες ἦσαν ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ τῇ αὐτῇ ἀγραυλοῦντες καὶ φυλάσσοντες φυλακάς τῆς νυκτὸς ἐπὶ τὴν ποίμνην αὐτῶν. καὶ ἄγγελος Κυρίου ἐπέστη αὐτοῖς καὶ δόξα Κυρίου περιέλαμψεν αὐτούς, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν

7. Greek in the Roman Empire

- Widely spoken in Eastern Empire
- Many bilingual texts survive eg Res Gestae discovered in Turkey
- Monumentum Ancyranum the best preserved: Latin + Greek
- Latin only at Antioch, Greek version also found at Apollonia
- Clear influence from Latin to Greek and vice versa

8. Modern Greek

- Essentially two languages for centuries – spoken (demotic) and written (katharevousa) = Atticising
- Only in 1982 was ‘demotic’ Greek allowed to be used as the official language
- Many ancient features remain, pronunciation obscures the similarities (pers.comm. I Sitaridou).
  - Τί θέλεις, ἄνθρωπε;
  - Θέλω τὴν ψήφο σου.
  - Γιατί;
  - Διότι δεν κρύβω τὴν αλήθεια.

9. Romeyka

- Villagers in modern-day Turkey speak a variety of Greek, known as Pontic or Romeyka
- Ancient features like infinitive have survived here much longer

Bibliography

B. Powell, 1991 Homer and the Origin of the Greek Alphabet. (Cambridge.)
Mnamon (ancient writing): http://lila.sns.it/mnamon/
Romeyka: http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/features/against-all-odds-archaic-greek-in-a-modern-world/
Recent BBC programme on Linear B: http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01jz1cb