

Major Differences between Ionic and Attic Greek

Herodotus wrote in an Ionic dialect, and below is a summary of some of the differences that readers will encounter from the Attic dialect that they learned in elementary Greek. Many of these examples are taken from the first pages of Book 1.

	Attic	Herodotus (Ionic)
1. Vowel Changes		
a. $\bar{\alpha} \rightarrow \eta$ after ϵ, ι, ρ	πρᾶγμα ἄγγελία	πρῆγμα ἄγγελίη
b. $\epsilon \rightarrow \epsilon\iota$ before ν, ρ, λ	ξένος ἔνεκα	ξεῖνος, εἴνεκα
c. $ο \rightarrow ου$ before ν, ρ, λ	μόνος ὄνομα	μόυνος οὔνομα
d. $\epsilon\iota \rightarrow \eta\iota$	βασιλεία στρατεία	βασιληίη στρατηήη
d. $\alpha\nu$ or $ο\nu \rightarrow \omega$	οὔν ἑαυτοῦ	ῶν ἑωυτοῦ
2. Consonant Changes		
a. $\tau\tau \rightarrow \sigma\sigma$	θάλαττα τέτταρες	θάλασσα, τέσσερες
b. $\pi \rightarrow \kappa$ in $κοῦ, κοῖος$ etc.	πῶς πότερος	κῶς κότερος
c. $\phi, \theta, \chi \rightarrow \pi, \tau, \kappa$	ἄφικνέομαι αὔθις δέχομαι	ἄπικνέομαι, αὔτις δέκομαι
3. Changes in Declension Endings		
a. First Declension		
1. masc. gen. sg. $-ου \rightarrow -εω$	Καμβύσου	Καμβύσεω
2. gen. pl. $-ων \rightarrow -έων$	Περσῶν	Περσέων
3. dat. pl. $-αις \rightarrow -ησι(\nu)$	Πέρσαις	Πέρσησι
b. Second Declension		
1. dat. pl. $-οις \rightarrow -οισι(\nu)$	ἐκάστοις	ἐκαστοισι
c. Third Declension		
1. endings are uncontracted	βασιλεῖς βασιλῆ γένους	βασιλέες βασιλέα γένεος