

Greek Aspirates in Latin

1. Appearance of Aspirates

- a. “The aspirates are almost wholly confined to words borrowed from Greek” (AG, 4.1 fn)
 - i. These are ‘**ph**’ (cf. φ), ‘**ch**’ (cf. χ) and ‘**th**’ (cf. θ)
- b. Because words containing aspirates are nearly always Greek, consider aspirates a marker of caution for the dreaded Greek declensions of Latin nouns

2. Pronunciation of Aspirates

- a. The word ‘aspirate’ is from the Latin **aspīrāre** (**ad** + **spīrāre**, to breath on)
- b. The sound we ‘breath onto’ these letters is an ‘h’
- c. The aspirates, in Latin (**ph**, **ch** and **th**) are pronounced **p+h**, **c+h**, and **t+h**
- d. In late antiquity, **ph** began to approach **f**, to distinguish it from **p**

3. Quick Sample of Some Greek Nouns with Aspirates

- a. I’ll review these declensions more fully later on:
- b. **Anchīsēs**, **Anchīsae**, **Anchīsae**, **Anchīsēn/am**, **Anchīsā** (first declension)
- c. **Panthūs**, **Panthī**, **Panthō**, **Panthūn**, **Panthō** (second declension)
- d. **Xenophōn**, **Xenophontis**, **Xenophontī**, **Xenophonta/em**, **Xenophonte** (third declension)

Famous Phrase: **ad usum Dauphin** (for the use of Dauphin)

[used to demarcate works banned or edited for improper passages; originally used on special editions of Greek and Roman classics which Louis XIV gave to his heir apparent, the Dauphin of France]