Klaas Bentein, Mark Janse (Eds.)
Varieties of Post-classical and Byzantine Greek

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Varieties of Post-classical and Byzantine Greek

Edited by
Klaas Bentein and Mark Janse

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The Greek Alphabet

The Greek alphabet is used throughout this volume, because the actual pronunciation varies enormously, both diachronically and diatopically, which would have resulted in different transcriptions for same or similar words from different periods. For the benefit of readers who are unfamiliar with the Greek alphabet or unfamiliar with either the ancient (5th–4th c. BC) or the modern pronunciation we provide here a comparative table of both. The modern pronunciation is basically the same as that of the LMedGr, barring diatopic variation. The successive changes in the pronunciation of the Greek vowels and diphthongs are the most complex. For detailed information on these changes with further bibliographical references we refer the interested reader to Horrocks (2010).[1] The following tables are based on Horrocks (2010: xviii–xx).

Greek letter			Ancient pronunciation	Modern pronunciation
Α	α	alpha	[a], [aː]	[a]
Β	β	beta	[b]	[v]
Γ	γ	gamma	[g]	[ɣ], [j]
Δ	δ	delta	[d]	[ð]
Ε	ε	epsilon	[e]	[e]
Ζ	ζ	zeta	[dz], [zd]	[z]
Η	η	eta	[ɛː]	[i]
Θ	θ	theta	[tʰ]	[θ]
Ι	ι	iota	[i], [iː]	[i]
Κ	κ	kappa	[k]	[k], [c]
Λ	λ	lambda	[l]	[l]
Μ	μ	mu	[m]	[m]
Ν	ν	nu	[n]	[n]
Ξ	ξ	xi	[ks]	[ks]
Ο	ο	omikron	[o]	[o]
Π	π	pi	[p]	[p]
Ρ	ρ	rho	[r]	[r]
Σ	σ, ς	sigma	[s]	[s]
Τ	τ	tau	[t]	[t]
Υ	υ	upsilon	[y], [yː]	[i]
Φ	φ	phi	[pʰ]	[f]

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1 Horrocks, Geoffrey C. 2010. *Greek: A history of the language and its speakers*, 2nd ed. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

X	χ	khi	[kʰ]	[x], [ç]
Ψ	ψ	psi	[ps]	[ps]
Ω	ω	omega	[o:]	[o]

Digraphs	Ancient pronunciation	Modern pronunciation
αι	[aɪ]	[e]
αυ	[aυ]	[af], [av]
ει	[e:]	[i]
ευ	[eυ]	[ef], [ev]
οι	[oɪ]	[i]
ου	[u:]	[u]
ᾳ	[a:ɪ]	[a]
ῃ	[ɛ:ɪ]	[i]
ῳ	[o:ɪ]	[o]
γγ	[ŋg]	[(ŋ)g]
γκ	[ŋk]	[(ŋ)g]
γχ	[ŋkʰ]	[ŋx], [ŋç]
μπ	[mp]	[(m)b]
ντ	[nt]	[(n)d]

Diacritics		Ancient pronunciation	Modern pronunciation
’	smooth breathing	Ø	Ø
‘	rough breathing	[h]	Ø
´	acute accent	[rise + fall on next syllable]	[stress]
`	grave accent	[absence of rise]	[stress]
˜	circumflex	[rise-fall]	[stress]

List of abbreviations

Abbreviations in interlinear glosses are in accordance with the Leipzig Glossing Rules

APIS	Advanced Papyrological Information System: quod.lib.umich.edu/a/apis
BDAG	Montanari, Franco. 2015. *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*. Leiden: Brill.
CGCG	Emde Boas, Evert van, Albert Rijksbaron, Luuk Huitink & Mathieu de Bakker. 2019. *The Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
CGMG	Holton, David, Geoffrey Horrocks, Marjolijne Janssen, Tina Lendari, Io Manolessou & Notis Toufexis. 2019. *The Cambridge Grammar of Medieval and Early Modern Greek*. Vol. 1–4. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
DBBE	Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams: www.dbbe.ugent.be
DDbDP	Duke Database of Documentary Papyri: papyri.info
DGE	Adrados, Francisco Rodríguez. 1980–. *Diccionario Griego-Español*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científica
EAGLL	Giannakis, Georgios (general ed.). 2014. *Encyclopedia of Ancient Greek Language and Linguistics*. Leiden: Brill: brill.com/view/db/eglo.
HGV	Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der Griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens: aquila.zaw.uni-heidelberg.de
LBG	Trapp, Erich (ed.). 1994–2017. *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität: besonders des 9.-12. Jahrhunderts*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lbg
LME	Kriaras, Emmanuel. 1968–. *Λεξικό της μεσαιωνικής ελληνικής δημώδους γραμματείας, 1100–1669*. Thessaloniki: Κέντρο Ελληνικής Γλώσσας.
LSJ	Liddell, Henry Georg & Robert Scott. 1940. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. Revised and augmented throughout by Henry Stuart Jones with the assistance of Roderick McKenzie. Oxford: Clarendon Press: stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsj
Mayser	Mayser, Edwin. 1926–1938. *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit mit Einschluss der gleichzeitigen Ostraka und der in Ägypten verfasten Inschriften*. Bd. 1: *Laut- und Wortlehre*. 2. Teil: *Flexionslehre*, 2nd ed. 3. Teil: *Stammbildung*, 2nd ed. Bd. 2: *Satzlehre*. 1. Teil: *Analytischer Teil: Erste Hälfte*. 2. Teil: *Analytischer Teil: Zweite Hälfte*. 3. Teil: *Synthetischer Teil*. Leipzig: Teubner (1970 reprint Berlin: de Gruyter).
Mayser-Schmoll	Mayser, Edwin & Hans Schmoll. 1970. *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit mit Einschluss der gleichzeitigen Ostraka und der in Ägypten verfasten Inschriften*. Bd. 1. *Laut- und Wortlehre*. 1. Teil. *Einleitung und Lautlehre*, 2nd ed. Berlin: de Gruyter.
OCD	Whitmarsh, Tim. 2020. *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford UP: oxfordre.com/classics
ODB	Kazhdan, Alexander. 1991. *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

PGL	Lampe, G.W.H. 1961. *A Patristic Greek lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
PN	Papyrological Navigator: papyri.info
TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae: stephanus.tlg.uci.edu
TM	Trismegistos: trismegistos.org
TM Archives	Trismegistos Archives: www.trismegistos.org/arch
TMTI	Trismegistos Text Irregularities: www.trismegistos.org/textirregularities

Klaas Bentein and Mark Janse

1 Varieties of Post-classical and Byzantine Greek: Novel questions and approaches

Abstract: This chapter draws attention to the importance of studying not only linguistic variation in language, but also the patterned heterogeneity that can be related to it – in other words, linguistic varieties. Whereas the presence of varieties such as foreigner talk, female speech, colloquial language, etc. in the Classical period has received considerable attention, much less work has been done on the Post-classical and Byzantine periods, a situation which this edited volume hopes to remedy. Before outlining the contributions to the volume, we address a couple of central theoretical questions to research on linguistic varieties, such as the relationship between concepts like 'variant', 'variety' and 'variation', the modeling of varieties in terms of a 'variational space', the relationship between varieties, and the different methodologies that can be adopted to study linguistic varieties.

> "The most novel and difficult contribution of sociolinguistic description must be to identify the rules, patterns, purposes, and consequences of language use, and to account for their interrelations." (Hymes 1974: 75)

1 Introduction

For a long time, linguistic variation was conceived of as a problem, rather than a topic worthy of scholarly attention. Under the impulse of William Labov and others, however, scholars came to recognize the central importance of heterogeneity in language, which in turn led to the establishment of sociolinguistics as a discipline. Scholars working within this discipline have investigated the correlation between linguistic variants and contextual variables such as age, gender, social class, social distance, etc. Of course, in actual language use, variants (and to some extent, variables) do not occur in an isolated fashion; rather, there is patterned heterogeneity. In this spirit, scholars have turned their attention to the description of linguistic varieties or "lects", such as chronolects, dialects, idiolects, ethnolects, genderlects, regiolects, sociolects, technolects, etc. in a great number of languages.[1]

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[1] For good introductions to linguistic varieties see Kiesling (2011), Sinner (2013); for an encyclopedic overview see Ammon et al. (2004–2006).

The main aim of this volume is to explore varieties of Post-classical and Byzantine Greek. When it comes to Classical Greek, varieties have received quite some attention: scholars have discussed varieties such as scientific and medical language, female speech, foreigner talk, religious language, colloquial language, profane and obscene language, etc.[2] Studies have also been written on individual authors and linguistic features, such as Thesleff (1967) on registers in Plato, Trenkner (1960) on paratactic structuring, and Dickey (1996) on forms of address. In comparison with Classical Greek, relatively little research has been done on Post-classical and Byzantine Greek, with the exception of Biblical Greek.[3] This is rather remarkable, since, as one of us has written in the past, "the situational characteristics of our Post-classical textual witnesses diverge to a much greater extent than what is the case for Classical Greek, making Post-classical Greek more suitable for diachronic (register-based) research" (Bentein 2013: 35).

In recent years, a number of edited volumes have appeared, which have started to rectify this situation: these include Evans and Obbink's (2010) *The language of the papyri*, Leiwo et al.'s (2012) *Variation and change in Greek and Latin*, Hinterberger's (2014) *The language of Byzantine learned literature*, and our own *Variation and change in Ancient Greek tense, aspect and modality* (Bentein, Janse & Soltic 2017). The present book is intended to complement these volumes, which mostly deal with linguistic features, rather than patterns of linguistic features, that is, linguistic varieties. In addition to the discussion of specific varieties, this book explores a number of key research questions:

– Which linguistic models can be used for the description and analysis of varieties?
– What is the relationship between different dimensions of variation, for example between the diachronic and the diastratic dimension?
– What role do idiolects play for the description of language variation?
– To what extent do non-congruent features (i.e. features belonging to different, or even opposed varieties) occur in texts?
– What is the relevance of and relationship between documentary and literary texts as sources of variation?
– At which linguistic levels (phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical) can varieties be described?

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2 See, e.g., Bain (1984), Lopez Eire (1996), van der Eijck (1997), Willi (2003), Fögen (2009), Schironi (2010), Janse (2014) and corresponding entries in *EAGLL*; for general overviews see Clackson (2015), Janse (2020).

3 On the Greek of the New Testament see e.g. Janse (2007). On the Greek of the Fathers, see e.g. Bentein (2015).

2 Theoretical background

Space does not permit us to fully discuss the broad topic of linguistic variation, more specifically linguistic varieties, but we do want to briefly outline some of the key issues which are immediately relevant to the contributions to this volume, and which will remain essential for future students of linguistic varieties. In what follows, we address the following four questions: (i) how do the notions of (linguistic) "variant", "variety" and "variation" relate to each other?, (ii) can the notion of variety be theorized in a more precise way?, (iii) how do varieties relate to each other?, and (iv) what methodology should one adopt when studying linguistic varieties?

2.1 Variant, variety, variation

Our first point concerns the key notions (linguistic) "variant", "variety" and "variation". As scholars have argued, both variants and varieties are indicative of linguistic variation, that is, "differences in linguistic form without (apparent) changes in meaning" (Walker 2010: 16). As Hudson's (1996: 22) definition of linguistic variety indicates, however, variety forms a more global category, which generalizes over individual speakers and individual linguistic items: "we may define a variety of language as *a set of linguistic items with similar social distribution*" (Hudson 1996: 22). Well-known in this regard is Halliday's (1978) distinction between two major types of varieties, that is, varieties according to user ("dialects") and varieties according to use ("registers").

Many questions surround the two key notions of linguistic variety and linguistic variation: for example, scholars have discussed whether there are sufficient criteria to be able to speak about a variety, and how to draw boundaries between varieties, questions well known from dialectology. The distinction between dialects and registers, too, does not seem absolute: several scholars have proposed to recognize "social dialects". These and other difficulties have led Hudson (1996: 68) to even completely deny the validity of the notion "variety": "we have come to essentially negative conclusions about varieties. . . We have suggested that the only way to solve these problems is to avoid the notion 'variety' altogether as an analytical or theoretical concept." Hudson (1996: 48–49) opposes an "item-based" approach (focusing on linguistic variants) to a "variety-based approach" (focusing on linguistic varieties), heavily favoring the

first type of approach.[4] Evidently, we do not support Hudson's (1996) proposal to completely abandon varieties, and to focus on an item-based approach.

Linguistic variants are not without difficulty either: for example, sociolinguistic studies typically posit as a working principle the semantic equivalency of the variants that together make up a variable, but scholars have questioned the existence/possibility of complete semantic equivalency.[5] We feel it is important to be aware of these and other theoretical difficulties, and to combine both types of approaches as much as possible.

2.2 Variational space

The second issue which we want to address here is how we can theorize varieties and the situational dimensions that go behind them in a more precise way. A useful starting point in this regard is the German notion of *Variationsraum* or "variational space". Klein provides the following definition:[6] "Diese Dimensionen [der Variation] können sehr unterschiedlicher Art sein; sie bilden insgesamt so etwas wie einen Raum, in dem sich die sprachliche Variation bewegt; diesen Raum bezeichne ich als Varietätenraum" (1976: 29) .

Sociolinguistic research has attempted to define language's variational space more precisely: since the 1960s, various proposals have been made by scholars such as Coseriu (1969), Halliday (1978), Dittmar (1997) and Berruto (2004). According to the model first introduced by Coseriu (1969), four general dimensions can be distinguished: (a) the "diachronic" dimension (variation in time), (b) the "diatopic" dimension (variation in space),[7] (c) the "diastratic" dimension (variation according to the speaker's social status), and (d) the "diaphasic" dimension (variation in communicative settings).[8] If and how these general dimensions can be further

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4 So e.g. Hudson (1996: 49): "the notion 'linguistic variety' is an optional extra, available when needed to capture generalisations that apply to very large collections of linguistic items, but by no means the only mechanism, or even the most important mechanism, for linking linguistic items to their social context".

5 Lavandera (1978: 181), for example, has proposed to relax the condition that the referential meaning of all variants must be *identical*, and has suggested to replace it with a condition of "functional comparability".

6 See more recently Lange, Weber & Wolf (2012: 1) "a variational space depicts the sum total of all varieties of a single language."

7 This is probably the best studied dimension; see now Auer & Schmidt (2010).

8 Other scholars have proposed to add a "diamesic" dimension.

subdistinguished[9] is a matter of discussion, especially when it comes to the diastratic and diaphasic dimensions. Some scholars have attempted to do so by referring to the notion "lect", which stems from dialect, and offers a convenient way of describing varieties. Berruto (1987: 21), for example, specifies different types of varieties by positing them along three axes (diaphasic, diamesic, and diastratic).

Berruto's (1987) model has often been referred to in variationist studies. Whether it could be applied to Ancient Greek (Post-classical and Byzantine Greek in particular) remains to be seen. Future scholarship will need to be wary of simply applying a model developed for one language to another language. As Lüdtke and Mattheier (2005) have noted, certain variationist dimensions are more important in one language than the other:

> So kann mann etwa zeigen, dass die französische Spracharchitektur wesentlich deutlicher durch die diastratische und die diaphasische Dimension geprägt ist als die deutsche, bei der (immer noch) die diatopische Dimension im Vordergund steht. Im britischen English wäre ähnlich wie im Französischen die diastratische und die diaphasische Dimension und ähnlich wie im Deutschen die diatopische Dimension zu berücksichtigen (Lüdtke & Mattheier 2005: 34)[10]

Another issue that needs to be sorted out is the role of the notion "idiolect". Berruto (1987) does not take this type of lect into account, even though modern-day studies have claimed a central role for it.[11] In recent years, scholars working on the language of Ancient Greek documentary sources, too, have come to stress its central importance.[12]

2.3 Varieties and variants: Interrelationships

Our next point concerns the relationship between linguistic varieties, and the social dimensions that go behind them. Coseriu (1980), among others, confronted

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9 Cf. Berruto (2004: 193): "weiter gibt es diesen Dimensionen untergeordnete, spezifischere Faktoren, die für detailliertere Klassifikationen zu berücksichtigen sind." ["Furthermore, there are subordinate, more specific factors to these dimensions that must be considered for more detailed classifications."]

10 "So, for example, one can show that the linguistic architecture of French is much more clearly characterized by the diastratic and the diaphasic dimensions than that of German, where the diatopic dimension is (still) in the foreground. In British English, one would have to take into account the diastratic and the diaphasic dimension, similar to French, and the diatopic dimension, similar to German."

11 Cf. Oksaar (2000).

12 See e.g. Evans (2015), Nachtergaele (2015), Leiwo (2017).

this problem by arguing for a hierarchical relationship between three types of varieties, which he calls *Dialekt* (a "syntopic" unit), *Sprachniveau* (a "synstratic" unit [also called "sociolect"]) and *Sprachstil* (a "synphasic" unit [also called "register"]). Berruto (1993: 11) subsequently elaborated Coseriu's model, by arguing that diatopic varieties can also serve as diastratic varieties, diastratic varieties as diaphasic varieties, and diaphasic as diamesic varieties, but not the other way around (cf. Sinner 2013: 73).

As one can see, Coseriu's (1980) and Berruto's (1993) treatments do not take into account the diachronic dimension, which is not uncommon, as noted by Sinner (2013: 231):

> Die diachrone Perspektive wurde in vielen varietätenlinguistischen Arbeiten und Darstellungen von Varietätengefügen lange Zeit nur am Rande erwähnt. Manchmal wird dies damit begründet, dass die historische Perspektive ein zu umfangreiches oder ein zu komplexes Thema darstelle, manchmal wird deutlich gemacht, dass der Grund darin liegt, dass die diachrone Perspektive mit den anderen Varietätendimensionen nicht vergleichbar sei, weil es nicht um Varietäten, sondern ihren Wandel gehe.[13]

Clearly, future studies need to better integrate diachronic change in their modelling of varieties. Nabrings (1981: 38) has suggested that this can be thought of in terms of the succession of "zeitlich aufeinanderfolgende 'homogene' sprachliche Systeme",[14] but whether the distinction between diachronic layers is so simple is questionable.[15]

Next to the interrelationship of varieties, one can also inquire about the interrelationship between the linguistic features that characterize varieties: at which levels can these features be found, and to what extent do they co-occur? Is it true that the morpho-syntactic dimension is the least characterizing for linguistic varieties, as scholars have claimed?[16] Do we posit "co-textual congruence" as a prerequisite, or can we also allow for "non- or fractional congruence"?[17] James (2014: 14) has noted that non-congruence is often the case between the orthographic/phonological and syntactic level, but perhaps similar observations can be made inside one and the same level, as suggested by Halla-aho (2010: 172): "even within one

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13 "The diachronic perspective has long been mentioned only marginally in many variationist-linguistic works and representations of varieties. On some occasions this is justified by the fact that the historical perspective is too extensive or too complex a topic, whereas on others it is made clear that the reason is that the diachronic perspective is not comparable with the other variational dimensions, because it is not about varieties, but about their change."

14 "Chronologically successive 'homogeneous' linguistic systems."

15 Cf. Sinner (2013: 232).

16 Cf. Hudson (1996: 43–45), Berruto (2004: 193), Bentein (this volume).

17 Cf. Agha (2007).

level, e.g. syntactic, it may be possible to identify different registers occurring next to each other, for example typical letter phrases and colloquial syntax". How problematic this is for the study of varieties remains to be studied.

2.4 Methodology

To conclude this discussion, we briefly want to go into methodology. Two main approaches are typically distinguished, referred to as "quantitative" vs. "qualitative". Whereas William Labov is generally acknowledged to be the main proponent of the quantitative approach, known as "variationist sociolinguistics",[18] John Gumperz has formed the leading figure of the qualitative approach, known as "interactional sociolinguistics".[19] When it comes to Ancient Greek, some attempts have been made for a quantitative approach to the study of variation and varieties, but by and large scholars tend to adopt an interpretative, qualitative approach, among others because creating statistics is a hugely time-consuming task, and it is not always clear what it contributes.

Horrocks (2007: 630–631), for example, has proposed a classification of writing styles in Post-classical Greek, distinguishing between three major styles, called "basic/non-literary"[20], "official and scientific/technical"[21], and "literary"[22]. We both find this an original and impressive proposal, but we can't help wondering what the classification would look like if we let the data speak for themselves, that is, when we ask the computer to analyze which features most often accompany each other. This is the approach propagated by Biber (1994), which has had very few followers in Greek linguistics so far.

Another methodological point that is worth considering is which sources to use for our investigations, and how to approach them. Ancient Greek is a corpus language, so out of necessity we have to work with texts. This does not mean that we do not have choices, however: older works, such as Browning's (1983) *Medieval and Modern Greek*, limit themselves to texts that are "spoken-like" – "authentic",

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18 E.g. Labov (1994–2010).

19 E.g. Gumperz (1982).

20 Characterized, for example, by the use of ἀπό to mark the agent in passive constructions, the use of ἵνα after verbs of commanding, the use of the genitive articular, infinitives in a final sense, etc.

21 Characterized, for example, by the frequent use of τυγχάνω in the sense of 'to be', the use of φημί with an accusative and infinitive, the use of ὅτι after verbs of thinking, etc.

22 Characterized, for example, by the use of the optative in subordinate clauses after past-tense main verbs, the personal passive construction, a general effort to preserve the classical future and the perfect in all their forms, etc.

to use a term introduced by Joseph (2000) – such as documentary sources, hagiographical texts, etc. More recent works, on the other hand, such as Horrocks (2010), have argued for the importance of an inclusive approach, taking into consideration higher-register works as well. For the study of varieties, this definitely seems the best way to go.

A second, perhaps even more important methodological distinction is that between texts which report directly on the social value of linguistic features, such as stylistic manuals, scribal corrections, manuscript additions, etc., and texts which merely testify to actual language in use. Do we consider the first type of testimonies to be worthy of study? Or do we agree with modern-day observations that speakers form bad observers of social distinctions?[23] Recent research has explored the value of the first type of source for both Post-classical and Byzantine Greek,[24] and has come to some very interesting findings.

3 Outline of the volume

Linguistic varieties in Post-classical and Byzantine Greek constitute a very broad topic, which can be approached from many different angles. This is reflected by the contributions to this volume, which deal with different time periods, different dimensions and domains of variation, and use different methodologies. Broadly speaking, however, one can say that this volume consists of two main parts.

The first part of the volume (chs. 2–8) deals with linguistic varieties more narrowly speaking. Many of the contributions to this part deal with Greek in Egypt. Martti Leiwo (ch. 2) takes a broad approach, and investigates which varieties or "lects" can be distinguished. Focusing on the Roman period, Leiwo zooms in on a couple of geographical areas, in particular the Eastern desert, where the context of writing was quite different than for example in the Fayum, with a strong presence of the Roman army, the absence of scribes, and *ostraca* forming the standard writing material. Leiwo characterizes what he calls the "ostraca variety" as a mix of different varieties and registers, including ethnolects, idiolects, and doculects. Marja Vierros (ch. 3) specifically looks into one

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23 Cf. Sinner (2013: 127–8): "es ist auch zu bedenken, dass trotz anderslautender ansichten in der sprachwissenschaft sprecher wohl i.d.r. nicht wissen, wass sie selbst – in sprachlicher hinsicht – tun oder nicht tun, und normalerweise nicht einmal in der Lage sind, von ihnen selbst Gesagtes im genauen Wortlaut zu wiederholen." ["One must also consider that, despite different views in linguistics, speakers usually do not know - in linguistic terms - what they are or are not doing and are usually not even able to accurately repeat what they have said themselves."]
24 See e.g. Luiselli (2010), Cuomo (2017), Bentein (this volume).

of the varieties mentioned by Leiwo, namely idiolect. Focusing on the archive of the Katochoi of the Sarapeion, she draws attention to several documents that are written in the own hands of the brothers Apollonius and Ptolemaeus, the archive's main figures. Vierros investigates whether it is possible to identify the idiolects of the two brothers through these autograph texts. Aikaterini Koroli (ch. 4) asks whether it is possible to speak of an "ecclesiastical" style of letter writing. She focuses on a corpus of request letters from the Late Antique period, and analyzes which strategies people use to achieve their communicative goal, that is, the satisfaction of the request. She concludes that although there are clear differences between the writers of the letters, politeness in general seems to be a priority. Victoria Fendel (ch. 5) discusses whether it is possible to identify features in the areas of verbal, nominal and discourse syntax that can be qualified as characteristic of Egyptian Greek. She argues that two of the three constructions investigated, the support verb construction χάριν ὁμολογέω 'to be grateful' and the predicative possessive pattern with ὑπό 'by', can be qualified as regionalisms. Multifunctional καί 'and', on the other hand, is better qualified as a "colloquialism". Sofía Torallas Tovar (ch. 6) also deals with Egyptian Greek, attempting to define more accurately the Egyptian Greek lexicon. Torallas Tovar extensively discusses the sources available for such a definition, distinguishing between documentary papyri and literary sources, and outlining some of the difficulties associated with these sources. The last three contributions to the first part of the volume deal with Byzantine Greek. Geoffrey Horrocks (ch. 7), addresses the question of how Byzantine writers used "Classical" Greek. Focusing on expressions of futurity and modality, Horrocks argues that these writers were subject to interference from their natural speech, especially in more abstract areas of grammar such as syntax and semantics. He concludes that high-register Byzantine Greek should be considered a variety of its own, rather than an exact copy of Classical Greek. Martin Hinterberger (ch. 8) also explores the question of high-register classicizing Greek, but from a different angle. He juxtaposes Nicetas Choniates' (XIII CE) *History*, which was written in high-register classicizing prose, with its *metaphrasis*, which is composed in a much simpler variety of Greek, sometimes called "Byzantine written koiné". Hinterberger explores the differences between these two texts at different linguistic levels, but also notes that there are shared linguistic characteristics, which leads him to question how these varieties can be accurately defined and distinguished. Mark Janse (ch. 9) analyzes the linguistic differences of two variants of a traditional medieval song from Cappadocia as evidence for diachronic variation in Medieval and Cappadocian Greek. He shows how the largely formulaic language of such traditional songs allows for the retention of archaisms as well as the insertion of innovative forms. Apart from loanwords and grammatical patterns borrowed

from Turkish, the so-called 'Byzantine residue' of Cappadocian offers a unique and hitherto unexplored glimpse of language variation in Medieval Greek.

The second part of the volume (chs. 10–16) addresses the linguistic features that are indicative of varieties of Post-classical and Byzantine Greek, taking into consideration different linguistic levels. Carla Bruno (ch. 10) discusses tense variation in a small corpus of Ptolemaic private papyri, focusing on the use of the present, aorist and perfect indicative, framing her observations in the concept of the "epistolary dialogue" and noting that the deictic center of the statement cannot only be anchored to the time of writing (the addressor's perspective) but also to the time of reading (the addressee's perspective). Jerneja Kavčič (ch. 11) also goes into tense usage, but in a different context: she studies expressions of anteriority and posteriority in infinitive clauses, and analyzes to what extent official papyrus texts reflect the "Attic" norm (that is, Classical Greek). Whereas the frequent use of the perfect infinitive in official papyrus texts cannot be called an influence of Classical Greek, that of the future infinitive may be. Joanne Vera Stolk (ch. 12) concentrates on orthographic variation in documentary sources, which she tries to relate to the register of the text. After proposing a general classification of the different types of documentary sources, she shows that there seem to be convincing correlations between orthography and social context. She argues, however, that there may also be conflicts between orthography and social context, for which the *Sitz im Leben* of the document needs to be taken into account. Emilio Crespo (ch. 13) also studies orthographic variation, but on a much smaller scale, focusing on a single archive, that of the tax collector Nemesion. Crespo poses the question whether the orthographic variation in this archive is best interpreted in terms of idiolect, register, dialect, or sociolect. He argues that we are most likely dealing with a sociolect of Koinè Greek which is characterized by a pronunciation with interference from Coptic. Julie Boeten (ch. 14) discusses metrical variation in a hitherto completely ignored corpus of texts, Byzantine poetic colophons or book epigrams. Focusing on the ἡ μὲν χεὶρ ἡ γράψασα colophon, she argues that metrical variants do not simply represent mistakes by the scribe. Referring to the notion of "information unit", she suggests that the stringing together of units was, perhaps, deemed more important than the resulting number of syllables. Staffan Wahlgren (ch. 15) takes into account different types of syntactic variation, concerning verb forms, subordination, particles and case syntax. Focusing on the oeuvre of Symeon the Logothete (X CE), Wahlgren analyzes and compares the use of these different linguistic features in descriptive, narrative and argumentative sections. In the final chapter to this volume, Klaas Bentein (ch. 16) also takes a broad approach, by investigating whether variation at the syntactic level should be considered distinct from variation at other linguistic levels. For this purpose, he compares different types of sources

from different time periods, proposing a distinction between "user-centered sources" and "observer-centered sources".

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Part I: **VARIETIES OF POST-CLASSICAL AND BYZANTINE GREEK**

Martti Leiwo
2 Tracking down lects in Roman Egypt

Abstract: This paper deals with different varieties of Greek in Egypt setting them in their social and linguistic context and identifying their distinctive characteristics. It offers a description of chosen varieties in a given context explaining the language usage and common features of the variety. In addition to this, the paper combines extra-linguistic contextual information with language usage.

The scribes had diverse educational backgrounds and the documents had different functions, which had an impact on the linguistic output. Different educational background produced variation even inside the same genre and register. The overall analysis ultimately seeks to illustrate and understand the rate of language change in various linguistic situations. The main areas of study are the Oxyrhynchites and the Fayum area on the one hand and the Eastern Desert on the other, which represent very different linguistic areas. The Fayum with the nearby Nile valley was the most Hellenized area in Egypt, with many L1 Greek speakers. Thus, it is an area where we might expect to meet the highest number of professional Greek L1 scribes. The second area differs both linguistically and contextually from the Fayum and the Nile Valley. The Eastern Desert included a caravan route from the south to the Nile Valley, but there were also military routes with numerous *praesidia,* Roman forts, between the Red Sea and the Nile. The crucial difference between these two areas was the availability of professional scribes. The residents of the *praesidia* either had to write themselves or use anyone who had some writing skills. These Roman forts were lodged by many L2 Greek speakers, for whom their L1 produced contact-induced effects when writing L2 Greek.

> "It is useful to have a term for any variety of a language which can be identified in a speech community – whether this be on personal, regional, social, occupational, or other grounds" (Crystal 1997: 24)

1 Introduction

I will deal with different varieties of Greek in Egypt, and set them in their social and linguistic context, identifying their distinctive characteristics, and, ultimately,

giving them a label, using the concept of "lect".[1] By choosing to name them lects, however, I do not mean to take a stand on methodological or terminological discussions, but rather to offer an easy description of a variety, if that seems reasonable in a given context, thus explaining the language usage and common features of the variety.[2] In addition to this, the paper aims, as far as possible, to combine extra-linguistic contextual information with situated and dynamic language usage.[3] The scribes working in the speech communities had diverse educational backgrounds and the documents written in the communities had different functions, which means that all of this had an impact on the linguistic output. Different educational background produced variation even inside the same genre and register. The overall analysis ultimately seeks to illustrate and understand the rate of language change, proceeding from individual to general language usage. I am interested in all linguistic levels, but my focus is on phonology and morphology, especially seen through the lens of orthography.

In the study of variation and ongoing changes of Greek in Egypt, the existence of a special Egyptian variety of Greek has been suggested.[4] Following this idea, Sonja Dahlgren (2016) has investigated the phonology of Greek in Egypt, where she indeed has found evidence for an Egyptian Greek variety. As a side path of my main topics, I will also try to find additional support for this in my data. As a whole, I will focus on documentary varieties, combining linguistic analysis with extra-linguistic context. The main areas are the Oxyrhynchites and the Fayum area on one side and the Eastern Desert on the other, which represent very different linguistic areas.

My starting point is the assumption that individuals are essential in a sociolinguistic study of language, as their language use may uncover practices which cannot be seen to happen systematically in every register. But at the same time "this unique object, the individual speaker, can only be understood as the product of a unique social history, and the intersection of the linguistic patterns of all the social groups and categories that define that individual . . . However, each individual shows a personal profile of the comparative use of resources made available by the speech community." (Labov 2001: 34).

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2 I am unwilling to participate in the terminological discussion, but I am well aware of it. My aim is to use such terminology that does not need special knowledge of any specific linguistic theory. More information can be obtained from, e.g., Trudgill (2003, 2011), Eggins (2004), Bentein (2015); see also Willi (2017) for register variation in Greek.
3 See also Bubenik (2014: 1.a).
4 Horrocks (2010: 111–113).

There is no doubt that ancient authors knew and understood sociolinguistic registers,[5] and as evidence we can quote, e.g. Aristotle and Isidorus. Aristotle commented, among others:[6]

(1) οὐ γὰρ ταὐτὰ οὐδ᾽ ὡσαύτως ἀγροῖκος ἂν καὶ πεπαιδευμένος εἴπειεν

'for the uneducated man would not say the same things and in the same way as the educated'
(Aristot., *Rh.* 1480a; IV BCE)

More than nine hundred years later Isidorus (ca. 560–636 CE) used almost the exact words with which Lasswell (1948) and Fishman (1965) brought social context into the study of communication and linguistics:

(2) *In quo genere dictionis illa sunt maxime cogitanda, quis loquatur et apud quem, de quo et ubi et quo tempore.*

'In all kinds of speech, one has to observe especially these things: *who speaks and in what situation, about what, where and when.*'
(Isid., *Orig.* 2.14.1–2)

Compare Isidorus' comment on the maxims of the first modern communication theory by Lasswell (1948): "Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?" and to Fishman's legendary paper (1965): "Who speaks what language to whom and when?" Isidorus (together with earlier rhetoricians) knew, it seems, almost exactly the role of communication and its sociolinguistic aspects. Thus, from the late fifth century BCE onwards, in advanced rhetorical teaching, registers were indeed appreciated. This can also be seen in various corrections that scribes themselves made to their text.[7] In the examples below the corrections above the line are marked like this: \ὅλως/. Therefore, we can obtain more linguistic information if we are able to observe and take into account several questions before tackling linguistic analysis or any kind of theoretical approach. Among the most important questions are, in my opinion, the following:

– Who was responsible for the language of the document?
– What is the standard with which a given document is written and to what should it be compared?
– What deviations from the (pre-defined) standard exist and what are the potential reasons behind nonstandard variants (apart from simple faults)?

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5 Cf. Müller (2001: 17–18); Willi (2017: 261–262).

6 Translations are mine, if not otherwise stated.

7 See e.g. Luiselli (2010: 72).

– Is there an internal change in process, or can the variation be contact-induced, or both at the same time?
– If contact-induced variation can be observed, what is the native language of the writer and could the variety in question be characterized as an ethnolect?
– What linguistic clues directly point to general scribal usage – a doculect – versus individual usage – an idiolect?
– Can we make a typology of identified hands and their linguistic identities?
– And, finally, are there significant differences between drafts, copies and originals, and if so, can these be traced?

It is obvious that not all of these questions can be answered in the course of the study, but in my view they should be considered on every single occasion. It must be also emphasized that many editors provide a great deal of useful information in their editions about papyri, ostraka and tablets. Below I will, at first, outline the social setting in Egypt regarding linguistic attitudes, writing and language use.

2 Ethnic practices and attitudes

2.1 Egyptian or Greek scribes?

In early documents Greek written with a typical instrument for Demotic writing, a brush-like rush, meant that the writer was Egyptian. However, after 230 BCE, the use of a brush in writing Greek was quickly abandoned.[8] This signified that even Egyptians used the *kalamos* in writing Greek, so there was no external difference in writing anymore, and the L1 of the scribe could not be surmised from the strokes of the letters. But even if technical equipment was standardized, prejudice and discrimination seemed to prevail in social and political discourse. The attitudes set up ethnic stereotypes, as we can see by Aristophanes of Byzantion: ἐθνῶν μὲν οἷον κιλικίζειν καὶ αἰγυπτιάζειν τὸ πονηρεύεσθαι, καὶ κρητίζειν τὸ ψεύδεσθαι 'of ethnic names, for example "to Cilicize" and "to Egyptianize" mean "to be a crook", and "to Cretanize" is "to lie"' (*fr*. 24).

Imperfect command of Greek combined with foreign looks were also reasons for discrimination, at least during the Hellenistic period. A famous example of discrimination is a complaint of racist treatment:

(3) ἀλλὰ κατεγνώκασίμ μου ὅτι εἰμὶ βάρβαρος. δέομαι οὖν σου \εἴ σοι δοκεῖ/ συντάξαι
     αὐτοῖς ὅπως τὰ ὀφειλόμενα κομίσωμαι καὶ τοῦ λοιποῦ εὐτάκτωσίν μοι ἵνα μὴ τῶι

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8 Clarysse (1993: 190, 193).

λιμῶι παραπόλωμαι ὅτι οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι ἑλληνίζειν. σὺ ο\ὖ/ν καλῶς ἂν ποιήσαις ἐπιστροφήν μου ποιησάμενος.

'They have treated me with scorn *because I am a foreigner*. I beg you therefore, if it seems good to you, to give them orders that I am to obtain what is owing and that in future they pay me in full, in order that I may not perish of hunger, *because I do not know how to act the Hellene*. Please, therefore, kindly cause a change in attitude toward me.'
(P.Col. IV 66 = Zenon papyri; 256–255 BCE. [Editors' translation])

The editors, Westermann, Keyes and Liebesny (1940: 16–17), comment on this passage: "his connection with the camels suggesting he was an Arab . . . In its grammatical structure the letter is not bad, and the writer certainly had some knowledge of an official complaint (*enteuksis*). Nevertheless, the letter cannot be that of a scribe, who would have followed a better word order and would have avoided the repetition of simple phrases which is here so noticeable." I agree with the editors that the letter is not written by a professional scribe, but if the sender wrote it himself, he had quite a good command of the register needed for such a document. A few corrections made by the writer, e.g. awareness of expressions of politeness adding εἴ σοι δοκεῖ 'if it seems good for you' above the line as well as correcting an incorrect spelling from ον to ο\ὖ/ν 'so', in basically a good standard style of complaint clearly show that the variety is not an "ethnolect", even if the writer may be writing in his L2.

2.2 Varieties at Oxyrhynchites and the Fayum

The Fayum with the nearby Nile valley was the most Hellenized area in Egypt, with many L1 Greek speakers.[9] Thus, it is an area where we might expect to meet the highest number of L1 Greek speakers as well as good professional Greek scribes. This, in fact, can be clearly seen in the documents. In this area, we can identify a great deal of variation between formal, informal and "colloquial" registers.[10] All registers show, it would seem, little effect of language contact unlike areas further south and east, but there are marks of internal

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9 See e.g. Lewis (1983).
10 For concepts such as "formal" or "colloquial" see Dickey (2010: 3–6), Clackson (2010: 7–11). I use the term "colloquial" here to denote a variety that shows signs of phonetic spellings and obvious uncertainty with Classic Attic orthography.

ongoing changes, especially vowel-raising. An example of a very refined bureaucratic variety, real officialese, is (4), a proclamation of a *strategos*:

(4) Αὐρήλιος Ποσειδώ-
νιος στρα(τηγὸς) Ὀξυρυγχ(ίτου)·
παραγγέλλεται τοῖς
ἀπὸ τῶν μελλόντων
λειτουργεῖν τῷ εἰσιόν-   5
τι ἔτει ἀμφόδων συν-
ελθε[ῖ]ν σήμερον ἐν
τῷ συνήθει τόπῳ κα[ὶ]
ὀνομάσαι ὃν ἐὰν αἱρῶν-
ται φύλαρχον ὄ[ν]τα   10
εὔπορον καὶ ἐπιτήδει-
ον κατὰ τὰ κελευ-
σθέντα ὑπὸ τῶν τὸ
ἀπότακτον συστη-
σαμένων, πρ[ὸ]ς τὸ   15
δύνασθαι αὐτὸν
τοῦ χρόνου ἐνστάν-
τος ὑγιῶς καὶ πιστῶς
ἀντιλαβέσθαι τῆς
λειτουργίας.   20

‘From Aurelius Posidonius, strategus of the Oxyrynchite nome. Notice is given to the inhabitants of the quarters about to serve in the coming year to assemble today at the accustomed place and to name whomever they choose as phylarch, being a person of means and suited for the post in accordance with the orders of those who constituted the appointed office (?) in order that when the time comes he may be able to perform the duty honestly and faithfully. . .’
(P.Oxy. IX 1187, Oxyrhynchus; 254 CE) [tr. A. Hunt]

This is typical officialese, which is orthographically immaculate. The notice consists of one syntactically well-governed sentence. It is constructed around the only finite verb, παραγγέλλεται 'it is announced', with well-built but rigid syntax. When compared to the common unofficial letter register, the difference is considerable as can be seen in examples (5), (6) and (7).

Example (5) is a letter dated to the reign of Tiberius.[11] The sender was Hermogenes, who addressed his letter to a prophet called Haryetes. The letter shows phonetic spellings with internal vowel change typical of many private documents, basically with variation in spelling the phonemes /i/ and /e/ as well

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11 Cf. Grenfell & Hunt (P.Oxy. XII, 1916: 238): "An incorrectly spelled letter, written in the reign of Tiberius to a prophet by a friend."

as preferring the Attic variant ποέω rather than ποιέω 'I do'.[12] A very typical variation in this area is uncertainty in writing the phoneme that was depicted by the letters υ <y> and οι <oi>. This graphic uncertainty is due to the merger of the phonemes represented by these letters, thus creating a sound that did not have its own letter.[13] The phoneme behind these letters is not of interest here, but it produced serious difficulties to many scribes in this area.[14]

Above some lines the writer has also corrected a few misspellings, e.g. Τιβερoω to Τιβεριου 'of Tiberius', thus revealing that correct spelling was important for the scribe. The letter was written more than two hundred years earlier than (4), clearly indicating that the date alone is not always a useful criterion for analysing the rate of linguistic change from Greek documents. The scribe, the social context, the register and the genre all play a crucial role in the analysis, whereas the date often has more to do with phraseological than with grammatical changes:

(5) Ἑρμογένης Ἀρυώτῃ
τῷ προφήτῃ καὶ φίλ-
τάτῳ πλῖστα χαί(ρειν)
καὶ διὰ παντὸς ὑγιε(νειν).
οὐκ ἠμέλησα περὶ   5
οὗ μοι ἐπιτέταχας.
ἐπορεύθην πρὸς
Ἑρμογένην τὸν κω-
μογρ[α]μματέαν, καὶ
ὁμολόγησέ μοι ποῆσε   10
τὴν ἀναβολήν. πεπόη-
τε εἰς τὸν ἐκλογιστήν.
λυπὸν ἠὰν δύνη ἐ[π]ισ-
τολὴν λαβῖν παρ' αὐ-
τοῦ τοῦ ἐκλογισ[τοῦ]   15
ὡς Ἑρμογένει, ἵν[α]
μὴ σχῇ τ[. . .]..[. . .]

'Hermogenes to Haryotes the prophet, my dear friend, greeting and best wishes for your continual health. I did not neglect your instructions: I went to Hermogenes the komogrammateus, and he consented to make a delay. He has made it as far as the eklogistes is concerned (?). For the rest, if you can get a letter from the eklogistes himself for Hermogenes, in order that he may not keep the . . .'
(P.Oxy. XII 1480 = White 1986: no. 81; Oxyrhynchus; 32 CE) [tr. Grenfell]

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12 Cf. Mayser-Schmoll (87–88); see also Clarysse (2010: 40–41).

13 Cf. Mayser-Schmoll (89–90); Horrocks (2010: 162–163); Bubenik (2014: 3b); Dahlgren (2016: 81–82).

14 Cf. ex. (5) l. 13 λυπόν ~ λοιπόν. For the phoneme, see Horrocks (2010: 167), Dahlgren (2016: 81–82).

I continue with the same genre, a letter, but in a different register. A competent scribe wrote (6), which is a letter written in familiar register from a son, Theonas, to his mother, Tetheus.[15] The scribe has copied the lively and casual style of the son, although taking care that the letter is otherwise formally correct although it has some spelling variation, such as, for example, ἤμι (εἰμι) 'I am', λοιποῦ (λυποῦ) 'do not grieve' and ἐλοιπήθην (ἐλυπήθην) 'I was grieved':

(6) Θεωνᾶς Τεθεῦτι τῆι μητρὶ καὶ κυρίᾳ πλεῖστα χαί(ρειν).
γεινώσκειν σ[ε] θέλω ὅτι διὰ τοσούτου χρόνου οὐκ ἀ-
πέσταλκά σοι ἐπιστόλιον διότι ἐν παρεμβολῇ ἤμι κα̣ὶ̣
οὐ δι' ἀσθένε[ι]αν, ὥστε μὴ λοιποῦ. λείαν δ' ἐλοιπήθην
ἀκούσας ὅτι ἤκουσας. οὐ γὰρ δειγῶς ἠσθένησα. μέμ-   5
φομαι δὲ τὸν εἴπαντα σοι. μὴ ὀχλοῦ δὲ πέμπειν τι ἡ-
μῖν. ἐκομισάμεθα δὲ τὰ θαλλία παρὰ τοῦ {τοῦ} Ἡρακλεί-
δου. Διονυτᾶς δὲ ὁ ἀδελφός μου ἤνεγκέ μοι τὸν θαλ-
λὸν κα[ὶ τὴν] ἐπιστολήν [σου] ἐ̣[κο]μισά[μ]ην.

'Theonas to Tetheus his lady mother, many greetings. I would have you know that the reason why I have been such a long time without sending you a letter is that I am in camp, and not that I am ill; so do not grieve about me. I was much grieved to hear that you heard about me, for I was not seriously ill; and I blame the person who told you. Do not trouble to send me anything. I received the presents from Heraclides. Dionytas my brother brought me the present, and I received your letter.'
(P.Oxy. XII 1481 = White 1986: no. 102; Oxyrhynchus; II CE) [tr. Grenfell]

The scribe has unquestionable improved the syntax of this letter, twice with participles in lines 5 and 6, ἀκούσας 'having heard', τὸν εἴπαντα 'the one who has told' (see also Vierros, this volume). The accusative singular of the latter participle is a Great Attic Koiné innovation and has been levelled to the paradigm of the aorist 1 (weak aorist) with the vowel /a/ instead of /o/, creating εἴπας (Nom.), εἴπαντα (Acc.) rather than εἰπών, εἰπόντα.[16] The editors did not comment on the form at all. There are a few similar examples of this verb, all from Oxyrynchites. P.Mich. XVIII 774 is a very early complaint (193/4 BCE) that has a participle εἰπάντων, showing that paradigm levelling was going on during the Hellenistic period. A later, but even more interesting example is P.Alex. 28, l. 22 (III CE), which has the aorist indicative 1st person εἶπαν (standard εἶπον) with the letter η <ê>, but the vowel /a/ by analogy to the sigmatic aorist -σα 'I said', as well as a levelled ἡμῆν (standard Attic ἦν) 'I was' with the regular ending -μην of the imperfect 1st

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15 See also Clarysse (2017: 67) about the expression of emotions in this letter.
16 See e.g. Bubenik (2014: 1c–d, 2c).

person. The last example is in a collection of four *Hypomnematismoi* (SB XIV 12139; II–III CE), in this case briefings for a judge offered as precedents supporting a desired judgment. Their register is official and the orthography is quite good, but the aorist indicative, third person plural, is εἶπαν (standard εἶπον) 'they said'. In this case the form is corrected to εἶπον in the apparatus.

Another interesting form is ἤμι (l. 3) for εἰμι. Through a search with Paratypa[17] I found only three other examples of this spelling, of which two were in the same letter (P.Tebt. II 420, l. 4 and l. 26; III CE) and one was in an account of property of a woman (BGU IV 1069, l. 8; 243/4 CE), both from the Fayum area. As these four attestations are geographically close with each other, there is a slight possibility that the spelling reflects a dialectal pronunciation.

An example of a private letter that has probably been written by the sender himself is example (7). The sender is obviously not a professional scribe, as can be seen from the spelling. The editors, Grenfell and Hunt (1916: 241), comment: "On the verso is a letter to the same Epimachus from a friend called Morus, who together with Panares had been winnowing some barley under difficulties caused by the weather. The script is the rude uncial of an illiterate writer, who makes numerous mistakes of spelling in spite of several corrections." This comment is typical of many early editions, but here we should be more accurate and analytical. First, the writer is not illiterate, quite the opposite in fact, as he is quite expressive in lines 6 and 7. He also knows how to write quite fluently, having minor difficulties though in combining phonology/phonetics and accurate spelling. Accordingly, he has made several corrections above the line aiming at standard Hellenistic Koiné. This ambition to correct spellings is a clear sign that the writer is conscious of the importance of orthography:

(7) Μῶρος Ἐπιμάχῳ τῶι κυρίωι μου
   χαίρειν.
   γράφω σοι ἵν᾽ ἰδῆς ὅτι λελικμήκαμεν
   τὴν κριθὴν τοῦ Αὐασίτου τῇ η, καὶ οὐ
   οὕτως αὐτὴν λελικμήκαμεν μετὰ   5
   κόπου. ὁ Ζεὺς γὰρ ἔβρεχε καὶ ἀμάχητος
   ἦν ὁ ἄνεμος, καὶ Πάρες οἶδε ὅσα πεποκα-
   μεν \ἱ/να εἰσχύσωμεν \ὅλως/ μετενέγκαι τὰ ἄλλα
   σὺν θεοῖς. ἐξέβησαν δὲ \τοῦ ὅλου/ ἀρτάβαι λη χυνικε δ·
   τ<ο>ύτων κατέφθακα ἀρτάβας ιβ χύνικα(ς) η.   10

ἐξήτασα δὲ περὶ τῆς θειμῆς τοῦ χόρτου
τοῦ ἐφετινοῦ, ἐπράθη δ\ὲ/ ἐν τῇ κώμῃ ἐξ
ἐπτὰ δραχμῶν τὸ ἀγώγιν. καὶ Πάρες δὲ
οἶδε. πολλὰ δὲ ἐκξετάσας εὗρον ξη[ρὰ]
καὶ οὐκ εὐθύχαλκα, ἀλλὰ μετὰ τετρά-   15
μηνον. δοκιμάσις δὲ [σὺ] πῶς σε βαστα-
ζι καὶ ἂν σύ δοκῇ γράψις μοι περὶ τούτων,
καὶ πόστον μέρος καταφθάνω τοῦ μεγάλου
κληρου\ς/, καὶ ἡ θέλις μεῖξαι [αὐ]τὰ τοῦ Αὐασί-
του μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων. ἐν τῷ δὲ τόπῳ πα-   20
τρός σου ἀποτέθεικα τὴ\ν/ μερίδαν μου.
τὸ προσκοίνημά συ ποιῶ καὶ τῶν τέκνων
σου π[ά]ντων [καὶ] τῶν ἀδελφῶ[ν] σου [πάντων]

'Morus to my lord Epimachus, greeting. I write to inform you that we have winn-
owed the barley of the man from the Oasis on the 8th, and we never had so much
trouble in winnowing it; for it rained and the wind was irresistible, and Panares
knows how we worked to succeed in transferring all the rest with the help of the
gods. The total result was 38 artabae 4 choenices; of these I have disposed before-
hand of 12,5 art. 8 choen. I made inquiries about the price of annual grass: it was
sold in the village at 7 drachmae the load, as Panares too knows. After many inqui-
ries I found some that was dry, and not to be paid for in ready money, but after
four months. You will examine the question how you are to transport it, and, if
you please, write to me about this, and say what proportion I am to dispose of be-
forehand from the large holding, and whether you want me to mix what belongs to
the man from the Oasis with the rest. I have stored my share in the room belonging
to your father. I supplicate on behalf of you and all your children and all your
brothers'
(P.Oxy. XII 1482, Oxyrynchus; 120–160 CE) [tr. Grenfell]

In addition to the corrections marked above the line, there are several others
made on the letter, as well as deletions (marked as ⟦ ⟧); for example ω is cor-
rected from o, in line 8: εἰσχύσομεν to εἰσχύσωμεν '(in order to) succeed' and
the name from Πάρας to Πάρες (of which the correct form is Πανάρης). In addi-
tion, εκζητησας 'after many inquiries' (l. 14) is corrected to ἐκξετάσας, and
μέρον 'proportion' (l. 18) to μερος, and in line 16 σύ is deleted as well as αυ in
the word αὐτά in line 19. We can see that, in addition to corrections, the writer
had difficulties even with common spellings, as for example the ει-ι, οι-υ varia-
tion, where the writer preferred to choose ει and υ. This latter variation might
give a false assumption that the writer did not always use the dative case ac-
cording to the standard, for example συ = σοι 'to you' with δοκῇ '(if) it seems'

in line 17.[18] Also, the second singular personal pronoun συ in line 22 τὸ προσκοίνημά **συ** ποιῶ καὶ τῶν τέκνων σου π[ά]γτων 'I supplicate on behalf of you and all your children and all your brothers' should be analysed as the dative (=σοι, just as in line 17) rather than the genitive σου, even if the genitive is the standard.[19] As we can see, the dative is used without problems in the letter in line 9 σὺν θεοῖς 'with the help of the gods', line 12 ἐν τῇ κώμῃ 'in the village', and line 20 ἐν τῷ δὲ τόπῳ 'in the room'.

In line 11 the writer has written θειμης instead of τειμης (=τιμῆς) '(of) the price', but although this is typical of Egyptian speakers' L2 Greek, I cannot find other clues of Egyptian Greek variety in the letter. On the contrary, the variety seems to be that of an Egyptian L1 Greek speaker,[20] although not a real expert in style and syntax. However, the writer has good knowledge of verbal morphology, his syntax is fluent, if not even better than many other letter writers. In his linguistic competence, we may note the interchange of the imperfect, the perfect and the aorist indicative, the use of the infinitive (line 8 μετενέγκαι 'to transfer', line 19 μεῖξαι 'to mix') and the use of the subjunctive. One can, finally, note the levelled accusative singular μερίδαν (= μερίδα) 'share' (l. 21) typical of the period.[21]

3 The Eastern Desert and "ostraka culture"

The second area in my analysis differs both linguistically and contextually from the Fayum and the Nile Valley. The Eastern Desert included a caravan route from the south to the Nile Valley, but there were also military routes between the Red Sea and the Nile. Because of the mineral riches in these parts, it was in the Emperor's personal interest to keep the routes safe and, therefore, the

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18 The line has the dative μοι, and the writer knows that μοι is different from the nominative (ἐγώ), whereas there seems to be no difference in pronunciation between συ and σοι, which makes the confusion obvious.

19 The standard is τὸ προσκύνημά σου ποιῶ, but the writer does not seem to confuse ου <oυ> and υ <y>. The editors correct συ to the genitive σ<o>υ, but that seems improbable to me. The dative σοι with the *proskynema* phrase seems to be mostly used in the ostraka of the Eastern Desert, where the speech communities were multilingual (Leiwo 2018), see, for example, O.Claud. II 278; 302 and O.Did. 379; 382 (both by Filokles, see below). Unfortunately, the genitive σου in τῶν τέκνων σου is not very legible, and has dots under the letters.

20 For example οι <oi> for υ <y>, ἐξήτασα for ἐκζήτασα; cf. Horrocks (2010: 111–113), Dahlgren (2017).

21 Cf. Bubenik (2014: 2c).