

Doric forms in Macedonian inscriptions¹

By JAMES L. O'NEIL, Sydney

There has been a long, and indecisive, controversy over whether the Macedonians had originally spoken a form of Greek, or of some other language. Some writers, such as N.G.L. Hammond have argued that Macedonian was a dialect of Greek,² while others, like A.B. Bosworth, have concluded that it was a separate and alien language to Greek.³ Kapetanopoulos argues that the literary evidence for a distinct form of Macedonian was created in the Roman period, although it may have depended on some evidence from Alexander's time,⁴ and Borza reaches the conclusion that there is insufficient evidence on which to base a conclusion as to whether the original language of the Macedonians was a form of Greek or not.⁵

From the late fourth century B.C., the Macedonians did definitely write in Greek, but the form of Greek in which they wrote was standard Attic,⁶ as can be seen from inscriptions, whether of Alexander writing to Greeks outside the kingdom (as for example in Tod *GHI* 183-5, 192) or kings writing to Macedonians, as in Alexander's decrees about land at Kalindoia,⁷ and

¹ I would like to thank the auditors at earlier presentations of this paper at ASCS XXVI in Dunedin and at Sydney University 2005 for their comments. Any flaws which remain are my responsibility.

² Hammond, & Griffith (1979) 39-54; Hammond, N.G.L., 'Literary Evidence for Macedonian Speech' *Historia* 43 (1994) 131-142.

³ Bosworth, A.B., 'Eumenes, Neoptolemos and *PSI* XII 1284' *GRBS* 19 (1978) 227-237.

⁴ Kapetanopoulos, E., 'Alexander's *Patrius Sermo* in the Philotas Affair' *AncW* 30 (1999) 117-128.

⁵ Borza (1990) 94.

⁶ Brixhe & Panayotou (1988) 245-260. Hammond & Griffith (1979) 54; Borza (1990) 94.

⁷ Hammond, N. G. L., 'The King and the Land in the Macedonian King-

the donations of land by Cassander and Lysimachus.⁸ None of this material is evidence of what form of language was originally spoken by the Macedonians, since Attic Greek must have been imported into Macedon, whether it replaced a previous Greek dialect or a different language. However, Prof. Hatzopoulos has argued that we do now have enough inscrip-tional evidence for non-Attic Greek in Macedon to conclude that the Macedonians spoke a different dialect of Greek before they adopted Attic.⁹ The most important of these inscriptions is a curse tablet from Pella, (SEG 43 [1993] 434), which was written in the years between 380-350 B.C. and excavated by I.M. Akamantis in August 1986.¹⁰ It seems worthwhile, therefore to examine the evidence for non-Attic Greek, primarily, as we shall see, Doric in form, from the Macedonian inscriptions to see what light it throws on the original speech of the Macedonians.

The curse tablet runs as follows:

[Θετί]μας καὶ Διονυσοφῶντος τὸ τέλος καὶ τὸν γάμον καταγράφω καὶ
τῶν ἄλλων πασῶν γυ-
[ναικ]ῶν καὶ χηρῶν καὶ παρθένων, μάλιστα δὲ Θετίμας, καὶ
παρκαττίθεμαι Μάκρωνι καὶ
[τοις] δαίμοσι· καὶ ὅποκα ἐγὼ ταῦτα διελέξαιμι καὶ ἀναγνοίην πάλειν
ἀνορόξασα
[τόκα] γάμαι Διονυσοφῶντα, πρότερον δὲ μή· μή γὰρ λάβοι ἄλλαν 4
γυναῖκα ἄλλ' ἢ ἐμέ,
[ἐμὲ δ]ε; συνκαταγρηῶσαι Διονυσοφῶντι καὶ μηδεμίαν ἄλλαν. ἰκέτις ὑμῶ(ν)
γίνο-
[μαι ...]αν οἰκτίρετε δαίμονες φίλ[ο]ι, ΔΑΓΙΝΑΓΑΡΙΜΕ φίλων πάντων καὶ
ἐρήμια· ἀλλὰ
[ταῦτα] φυλάσσε τε ἐμὶν ὅπω μή γίνηται ταῦτα καὶ κακὰ κακῶς Θετίμα
ἀπόληται.

dom' *CQ* 38 (1988) 382-391. Apart from Doric proper names, the forms are standard Attic.

⁸ Hatzopoulos, M.B., *Une Donation du Roi Lysimache* (Athens, 1988) 17f., 28.

⁹ Hatzopoulos (1999) 227.

¹⁰ Voutiras (1992/93) 43.

[---], ΑΛ[---].ΨΜΝ...ΕΣΠΙΛΗΝ ἐμός, ἐμὲ δὲ εὐδαίμονα καὶ μακαρίαν 8
 γενέσται
 [---]τψ.[---]...Ε.Ε.ΩΑ...ΜΕΤΕ[---]

Apparatus criticus:

6 [Φίλ]αν read by Voutiras; *exempli gratia* in SEG XLIII (1992) 434.
 δαπ(ε)ινὰ γὰρ ἴμε (= ταπεινὴ γὰρ εἶμαι) conjectured Dubois

I translate the inscription as follows:

I forbid by writing the ceremony and the marriage of Dionysophon and Thetima, and of all other women, and widows and virgins, but especially Thetima, and I assign them to Makron and the daimones. And whenever I shall unroll and read this again, after digging it up, then Dionysophon may marry, but not before. May he not take any wife but me, and may I and no other woman grow old with Dionysophon. I am your suppliant; pity me, dear daimones, for I am weak and bereft of all friends. But protect me so this does not happen and evil Thetima will perish evilly. [undecipherable] mine, but may I be fortunate and blessed. [undecipherable].

I will comment on points which throw light on the dialect of the curse tablet as well as on those needed to understand its meaning.

line 1: Θετί]μας loss of the omicron from θεο- is common in Doric, especially in Megarian. Final long alpha instead of eta shows this is not Attic-Ionic.¹¹

καταγράφω is a Dorian form. Attic uses other verbs for this purpose.¹²

τᾶν ἀλλᾶν πασᾶν. -ᾶν is the regular first declension plural form in Doric and Aeolic, which contract long alpha and omega differently from Attic-Ionic.¹³

¹¹ Buck (1955) 41; Dubois (1995) 191.

¹² Dubois (1995) 192. see IG XI 1.977.8f (Corcyra) for another example.

¹³ Buck (1955) 37.

line 2: *παρκαττίθεμαι* (= Attic *παρακατατίθεμαι*) apocope of prepositions is common in Doric, and even more so in Aeolic dialects.¹⁴

Μακρον is the deceased, with whom this defixio was buried.¹⁵

line 3: *δαίμοσι* is the standard Greek form. The neighbouring Greek dialects, Thessalian and Northwest Greek would have *δαιμόνεσσι* and *δαιμόνοις* respectively.¹⁶

ὄπόκα is Doric, corresponding to Attic *ὄποτὰν*. Doric regularly has *κά* in place of Attic *ἄν*.¹⁷

Optatives in place of subjunctives are also found in Doric.¹⁸

διελέξαιμι corresponds to Attic *διελίξαιμι* "unroll". It may be an error, or the substitution of epsilon for iota may show a more open pronunciation of the vowel. This is found twice in SEG 38 (1988) 649,¹⁹ a late fourth century B.C. epitaph from Pella, which reads *ἔσστέ* for *ἔστί*, and *Ἰφεκράτης* for *Ἰφικράτης*.

πάλειν for Attic *πάλιν*. Confusion of long iota and the diphthong *-ei* is also found as early as the fourth century in Attic.²⁰ Voutiras reads *πάλ{L}ιν*, which he explains as the writer starting to write an E, recognising it as an error, but failing to erase it.²¹

ἀνορόξασα corresponds similarly to *ἀνορύξασα*, just as in the case of *διελέξαιμι* above. There are some parallels in the Macedonian glosses for the substitution of omicron for upsilon.²² Confusions of upsilon and omicron are found extremely rarely

¹⁴ Buck (1955) 81. cf Voutiras (1992/3) 46.

¹⁵ Voutiras (1992/3) 45 n.5.

¹⁶ Buck (1955) 89, Brixhe quoted in SEG XLIX (1999) 757.

¹⁷ Buck (1955) 24f.

¹⁸ Dubois (1995)193; Dickie (1999) 62; cf Buck (1955) 138f on the interchange of subjunctive and optative in the dialects.

¹⁹ Dubois (1995)194.

²⁰ Threatte (1980)137, 190-199.

²¹ Voutiras (1996) 630.

²² Hoffmann (1906) 242. cf. 44. Dubois (1995)194. Brixhe says there are parallels in koine inscriptions from Macedonia.

in Attic inscriptions.²³ Without more examples we cannot be sure these cases are typical of Macedonian, or rare errors like the Attic examples. The writer of the curse is not weakening it by this exception, but confirming it will not be reversed. Similar examples of reinforcing a curse by an impossible alternative can be found, but there is no precise parallel for using the impossibility of the curser changing their mind.²⁴

line 4: γᾶμαι aorist infinitive with -ms- to -m-. Aeolic would have -mm-, so this cannot be Thessalian.²⁵

line 6: ...|ων feminine name of three letters plus -an is probably not an Attic form. The Macedonian name Phila, read by Voutiras, would fit, but so would other short names.²⁶ If the conjecture of Phila is correct, it is unfortunate that we do not have the name in full, so we could see whether the aspirate was written as voiced.²⁷

line 7: ἐμὶν is a West Greek form of the pronoun.²⁸

ΔΑΓΙΝΑΓΑΡΙΜΕ: Dubois suggests pi should be read for the first gamma, and that the initial delta is a voiced tau. Aspirates are more commonly voiced in Macedonian than unaspirated unvoiced plosives but the latter are occasionally found voiced.²⁹

The two iotas may represent the diphthongs -ei, and the epsilon the diphthong -ai, the reverse of the case of πάλειν above. The passage would then read ταπεινὴ γὰρ εἶμαι on Dubois' interpretation ταπεινὴ "weak" makes good sense in the context.

line 8: γενέσται is a Northwest Greek form corresponding to Attic γενέσθαι.³⁰

²³ Threatte (1980) 217f.

²⁴ Dickie (1999) 59ff. cf. Brixhe quoted in SEG XLIX (1999) 757.

²⁵ Brixhe quoted in SEG XLIX (1999) 757. cf. Buck (1955) 65.

²⁶ Dubois (1995)195. Voutiras (1996) 651 now accepts that the reading Phila is doubtful.

²⁷ See Plutarch Quaestiones Graecae 292E on the voicing of aspirates in Macedonian, cf. Hoffmann (1906) 232.

²⁸ Buck (1955) 98; Voutiras (1992/3) 46; Dubois (1995)195f.

²⁹ Hoffman (1906) 246, Hatzopoulos (1999) 235 ff; Hatzopoulos, M.B., 'Artemis Digaia Blaganitis en Macédon' *BCH* 111 (1987) 397-412.

³⁰ Buck (1955) 72, Voutiras (1992/3) 46, Dubois (1995) 196.

ΨΜΝ is not a possible combination of consonants in Greek. Voutiras reads ΥΜΝ, but this still cannot be read to give meaningful Greek in this context.

line 9: τψ is also not a possible combination of consonants in Greek. It may be that the curse tablet had words which could not be read as Greek as some kind of magic. Unfortunately these occur where the tablet is damaged, and there are no signs of such "magic words" where we can read it clearly.

The curse tablet can definitely be seen to be in some form of West Greek, with forms corresponding to Doric and Aeolic dialects, but quite clearly differing from Attic-Ionic. It does seem in its use of the form δαίμοσι to be distinct from either of the known West Greek dialects spoken in the areas to the south of Macedon, Thessalian and Northwest Greek. So it seems unlikely that its use at Pella is due to the migration of an individual from the areas immediately to the south of Macedon, or to the adoption of one of the dialects spoken in those areas by a Macedonian native. On the other hand, the form ἀνορόξασα, with its omicron in place of the regular upsilon, does have parallels with attested Macedonian glosses and there is reason to think Macedonian may have had more open pronunciation of short upsilon and iota. The simplest explanation for the dialect forms in the curse tablet is that it has been written in the original Macedonian dialect, and that that dialect is a West Greek one, related to, but distinct from its more southern neighbours, Thessalian and Northwest Greek. The curse may well have been composed by a travelling magician (see Plato *Republic* 2.364b5 for such people), rather than the wronged lady,³¹ but it seems to be the case that it was composed in the local dialect, even though the curse is in a traditional form used throughout the Greek world.

There are a few other early inscriptions from Macedonia which are in Doric (and definitely not in Attic), but all three of them are brief and they provide little additional information on

³¹ Voutiras (1992/3) 47, Dickie (1999) 63.

the Macedonian dialect. The earliest is written on a silver phiale found in a burial from Upper Macedon in the early part of the fifth century.³² It reads:

Ἄθαναίᾱς ἱερά· τῶς Μηγαροῖ.
Sacred to the Athena (who is) at Megara.

The name Athanaia is the old poetic form of the goddess's name and could be Attic or Doric (or anything but Ionic). The word ἱερά is definitely Doric and τῶς may be any dialect other than Attic-Ionic. The form Μηγαροῖ, with mh- from original sm- is not diagnostic of the dialect in use. While such forms are found quite often in the Dorian city of Megara, they are also found elsewhere, including in early Attic.³³

However, it remains possible that this inscription is not an example of Macedonian at all, but that the phiale had been imported from somewhere else, most probably from Megara on the Isthmus.³⁴ Hammond points out that another inscription reported from Upper Macedonia indicates that there was a town called Megara in that area as well,³⁵ and the absence of any mention of the early form for epsilon used in Megarian inscriptions, which would normally be expected at the beginning of the fifth century,³⁶ suggest that this was, in fact, written in Macedon and not in the Doric from the Isthmian Megara. If this deduction is correct, we have another inscription from Macedonia in classical times which is clearly in Doric.

Two more inscriptions, both from Vergina (ancient Aegae) complete the evidence for a form of Doric dialect in Macedon. Both are statue bases and both honour Eurydike, daughter of

³² Rizakis, Th., Touratsoglou, G., *Επιγραφές Ἀνω Μακεδονία* Athens (1985) #2; Hammond & Griffith (1979) 2.96

³³ Buck 66.

³⁴ Brixhe & Panayotou (1988) 247. For a fragment of pottery, found in Macedonia, with an inscription in the Megarian alphabet, see SEG XLIII (1999) 363 D.

³⁵ Hammond & Griffith (1979) 96.

³⁶ Jefferey, L., *The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece* (Oxford, 1961) 132f.

Sirrhas, who was the mother of Philip of Macedon. The first one reads:

Εὐρυδικὰ Σίρρα Εὐκλείαι (SEG 28 [1983] 556)

and the second, shorter one:

Εὐρυδικὰ Σίρρα (SEG 42 [1992] 470)

Both show non-Attic forms with the long alpha in the name Eurydike (which would have an eta in Attic-Ionic) and in the form of the genitive of a first declension masculine noun, with long alpha contacted from -ᾶο. This form of the first declension masculine genitive is also shown for Macedon on the coins, where we find ΠΑΥΣΑΝΙΑ, ΑΜΥΝΤΑ and ΠΕΡΔΙΚΚΑ.³⁷ The name of the divinity to whom the first statue is dedicated, Eukleia, also shows a non-Ionic long alpha. None of this evidence tells us whether we have a Doric or an Aeolic dialect, but the two statue bases are further evidence for a non-Attic dialect in use in Macedon in the early part of the fourth century.

Eurydike was more probably from Upper Macedonia than from Illyria³⁸ (though her father's name Sirrhas does not seem Greek³⁹) but in either case she was unlikely to have been using a dialect of Greek which came from outside Macedon. Plutarch calls her a thrice barbarian, Illyrian, but in the antigramma he cites, Eurydike identifies herself as a Hierapolitis,⁴⁰ which indicates that she thought of herself in Greek terminology. If she were an Upper Macedonian, she would be writing in her native dialect, or one in use at the court, while if she were an Illyrian,

³⁷ Head, B.V., *Historia Numorum*² (1911) 221f. Brixhe & Panayotou (1988) 251.

³⁸ Kapetanopoulos, E., 'Sirras' *Ancient World* 25 (1994) 9-14 argues she was more likely to be Lynkestian in origin.

³⁹ Hoffmann (1906) 163.

⁴⁰ There is no Hierapolis in Macedonia or Illyria in Pauly-Wissowa or the indices of any of the three volumes of N.G.L. Hammond's *History of Macedonia*.

Greek would not be her native language and we would expect that she had picked up Greek while living in Macedon.

These four inscriptions do show that a non-Attic form of Greek was used for inscriptions in Macedon before the standard form of Attic came to be used in the middle of the fourth century. The one moderately long inscription, the curse tablet, shows a dialect which is definitely West Greek, but seems to have some features distinct from the dialects found to the south of Macedon, Thessalian and Northwest Greek, as well as features in common with them. It also shares some features with the Macedonian glosses preserved in late authors and with a few inscriptions in standard Greek from Macedon. Unfortunately, the amount of surviving material is not sufficient to establish beyond all reasonable doubt, that this dialect was the common spoken language of Macedon at the time, or to demonstrate the precise relationship of this dialect to other, better known ones. It does seem probable that it was closer to Doric dialects than others, and this is hardly surprising. Greek names found in Macedon in the classical period tend to be Doric in their formation and these four inscriptions suggest this was because a Doric dialect was spoken in Macedon, rather than because Greek names had been borrowed from a Doric milieu.

Nevertheless, written Doric disappeared from Macedonian inscriptions and from the mid-fourth century, we find standard Attic and koine forms of Greek,⁴¹ with virtually no signs of Doric influence at all. This seems surprising if the Doric dialect attested in the four meagre inscriptions had been the normal Macedonian speech, as we would expect it to have survived, at least partially, as a spoken dialect alongside the written Attic and koine, and to have influenced the written Macedonian, if only in the way of mistaken use of substandard forms from the spoken language. Yet Macedonian inscriptions from the late fourth century onwards have very little material which can be ascribed to the influence of a spoken Doric or Macedonian dialect.

⁴¹ See Brixhe & Panayotou (1988) 245, and (1994) 205.

The absence of the Doric form for “sacred”, ἱερός, is not surprising. This form had tended to vanish from Doric forms of koine in the course of the Hellenistic period.⁴² As inscriptions from Macedonia are largely Roman imperial in date, it is likely that the distinctive Doric form had been replaced by the standard Attic one in the spoken as well as the written Greek of Macedon. However, this does not seem to have been the case with the genitive singular of first declension masculine nouns. The form with long alpha (as well as an analogous form with eta from nouns in -ης) is found in papyri from the first century A.D.⁴³ It has even penetrated into literary Greek by the time of Plutarch, at least for the genitives of Dorian names. In his *Lives of Agis and Kleomenes*, Plutarch uses the Doric form four times (Εὐδαμίδα, A3.2,3, Λυδιάδα K6, Εὐρυκλείδα K8), as against the standard Attic form only once (Λεωνίδου A17). This form of the first declension masculine genitive has become standard in modern Greek. It seems likely that this form would have survived in spoken Macedonian.

However, I have found only a few examples of it in the Macedonian inscriptions. In SEG XXX (1980) 568 the name of the honorand is given in line 2 as Ἀλεξάνδρου Λεωνίδα, while in line 41 the standard form, Ἀλέξανδρος Λεωνίδου, is used. Clearly the writer knew the correct form to write, but used the Doric form in the first case, probably because it is what he would normally have said. Yet this is very rare in the published Macedonian inscriptions in koine, which are now quite numerous.

An ephobic inscription from Stuberra has two examples of a Doric genitive, both for the name Λύσια, although elsewhere in this set of inscriptions the Attic form in -ου is found.⁴⁴ The genitive Καλλία is reported in SEG 24.548, in a late third century B.C. gravestone from Pella. However, other readings,

⁴² Buck 177.

⁴³ Horrocks (1997) 217f.

⁴⁴ Papazoglou (1988) no. 5, lines 26 and 40.

Καλλίαο⁴⁵ and Καλλίου⁴⁶ have also been reported. Inspection of the illustration in the original publication⁴⁷ shows that a serious crack covers all but the first two letters of the name. Traces can be seen of its last two letters, but these are consistent with alpha and upsilon, and so, not with any of the proposed readings. A form Καλλίαυ could be explained as a mistake, possibly with a Doric genitive being inadequately corrected to an Attic form, but whatever we are to make of this case, it seems unwise to use it as evidence for the Macedonian dialect.

A final example of the non-standard genitive for a first declension masculine noun from the later Macedonian inscriptions is IG X 2.1.789, an inscription with both Hebrew and Greek from the fourth century A.D., which contains the words

μετὰ Μούση λέγων "speaking with Moses"

Clearly this is not Doric influence, but written by a Jew whose koine has been influenced by that written elsewhere. It seems that the Doric masculine first declension genitive singular in long alpha was known to the Macedonians, but not considered a form which was proper to use in written Greek. In that case, we have another example of Greek diglossia, where two different forms of the language are in use simultaneously by the same population for different purposes.

In fact Doric forms are largely absent from written Macedonian of the post-fourth century. The one area in which Doric forms can still be found is in the use of proper names. The correct forms of standard Greek were less likely to impose themselves in onomasties, in the case of a person's own name, or in the name of a divinity. The goddess Pasikrata has her name with a Doric long alpha on both occasions she appears (SEG XXXII [1982] 636 & IG X 2.2. 18A-C). The preservation of a

⁴⁵ Brixhe & Panayotou (1988) 252.

⁴⁶ An alternative reading in the first publication: Petsas, P.M., 'A few examples of Epigraphy from Pella' *Balkan Studies* 4 (1963) 164.

⁴⁷ Petsas, Plate III, 3.

god's name in its original form is hardly surprising, as religious respect may well have demanded that no change be made in the divinity's name. However, this goddess is also found at Demetrias, where her name has the Attic form, Pasikrate.⁴⁸

In the case of personal names, standard Greek forms are more frequent. In the name index in IG X 2.1, thirty-five names have an eta, where Doric would have a long alpha. They are Ἄδμητος, Ἀθηνογένης, Ἀνδρονίκη, Ἀρετή, Διδυμή, Διοσκορίδης, Εἰρηνή, Ἐλένη, Ἐπιγόνη, Ἐπικτητός, Ἐρατονίκη, Ἐρμῆς, Εὐκτημών, Εὐρυδίκη, Εὐτυχίδης, Εὐφροσύνη, Ζοήσιμος, Ζωσιμή, Καλύβη, Καρπιμή, Κλεονική, Λύδης, Μεγιστή, Μελιτίνη, Μενέδημος, Νικόδημος, Παρασκεύη, Πολίτις (= Πολίτης), Πολυνείκη, Ῥητορική, Στρατονείκη, Συντύχη, Σωζομενή, Ὑαρίνη, Ὑλη.

In contrast, only twenty seven names have the Doric long alpha Ἀκύλας, Ἀλκιδάμας, Ἀμύντας, Ἀπελλᾶς, Ἀρτεμᾶς, Ἀσκληπᾶς, Δαμᾶς, Ἐλλανίκα, Ἐρμᾶς, Εὐνόστα, Ζίπας, Ζωσᾶς, Λεωνίδας, Λύκα, Μακέτα, Μενέλαος, Μενόιτας, Μύστα, Νεικόλαος, Παραμονά, Περειτᾶς, Πιννᾶς, Πριμιγᾶς, Πρώκλα, Πρωτᾶς, Πυρούλας, Σεραπᾶς. While two others, Ἀθηναγόρας, Δημᾶς, split the difference and have one alpha and one eta each. The presence of Doric onomastics in inscriptions of later (often Roman imperial) date does not prove that a Doric dialect was still being spoken at that time,⁴⁹ since the names could have been preserved for purely historical reasons.

In fact, Attic forms of such names are relatively common even in the historical records of Alexander's associates, though there Doric forms of the names are more common. In Berve's lists, thirty names have the doric long alpha, as against fourteen with the Attic eta.⁵⁰ Some of these Attic forms of names may be due to later writers substituting a more familiar form for the one they read in their sources, but it seems likely that the standard

⁴⁸ Türk, C., 'Pasikrate' RE 18 (1949) 2061.

⁴⁹ Brixhe & Panayotou (1988) 255.

⁵⁰ Berve, H., *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage* (Munich, 1926) vol 2.

form of Greek names had already started encroaching on the Doric ones at least as early as the time of Alexander.

While Doric forms of names are less common than standard Attic ones in the later Macedonian inscriptions, they are at least preserved in fair numbers. This is a marked contrast with names where Macedonian has voiced plosive in place of the standard Greek unvoiced aspirate. All such names listed in the Index to IG X 2.1, have the standard, and not the Macedonian form: Θεοδοτή, Θεοτείμα, Θυμέλη, Μαχάτας, Τελέσφορος, Τρυφῆνα, Φίλα, Φίλινα, Φιλουμένη, Φοίβη, Φυλακίδης, Χρηστή, Ὠφελίμα. The only example of a Macedonian name with a voiced stop instead of an aspirate known to me in inscriptions from Macedon is Βίλιστος, found twice in the ephobic lists from Stuberra.⁵¹ Papazoglou, publishing the Stuberra inscriptions, comments on the small number of Macedonian names which have the anomalous voicing, in contrast to the frequency of names such as Philip, which always have the standard Greek aspirate, and concludes that the voicing was not a normal Macedonian phenomenon, but applied only to some minority group.⁵² Such a minority group could have been speakers of Illyrian (since the Macedonian voicing has been taken as evidence that the Macedonians spoke Illyrian) or even of Phrygian,⁵³ since both these languages, which were spoken on the borders of Macedon, and could easily have been spoken within its territory,⁵⁴ deaspirated original PIE *bh etc to b etc.

Yet the Macedonian forms are attested in the literary material, though quite rarely,⁵⁵ and are present in the Greek

⁵¹ Papazoglou (1988) no. lines 72 and 77.

⁵² Papazoglou (1988) 251.

⁵³ Bonfante, G., 'Il Macedone' *RAL* 42 (1987) 83 for Illyrian; Brixhe 'Le phrygien' in Bader (1994) 171.

⁵⁴ See Borza (1990) 94 for the fact that the population of Macedon was not homogeneous.

⁵⁵ Only six examples, of two names (Balakros, 199-203, and Berenike, 211) as against 51 with unvoiced plosives in Berve.

names found on tombstones from Vergina,⁵⁶ so they were once used more widely than the koine inscriptions suggest. Moreover Plutarch *Quaestiones Graecae* 292E indicates that Macedonians still voiced their aspirates in his own time:

οὐ γὰρ ἀντὶ τοῦ φ τῷ β χρῶνται Δελφοί, καθάπερ Μακεδόνες Βίλιππον καὶ Βαλακρὸν καὶ Βερονίκην λεγόντες, ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τοῦ π.

“but the Delphians don't use beta in place of phi, as the Macedonians do, saying ‘Bilip’, ‘Balakros’ and ‘Beronike’, but in place of pi.”

Plutarch's impression that Macedonians were making this change in his own time could be misleading, as he might have picked up the information in his reading. But as the name Philip does not seem to be rendered with an initial beta in the surviving literary work, any more than in the inscriptions) at the most Plutarch may be reporting the observations of an earlier writer on spoken Macedonian.

Scholars have tended to conclude that Macedonian names and words which had a voiced stop in place of a standard Greek aspirate, show that in Macedonian the original aspirates had fallen in with the original voiced stops.⁵⁷ But the fact that Macedonians seem to have represented these sounds by both voiced and aspirated stops from the earliest recorded times,⁵⁸ should be taken to show that the Macedonians heard them as something distinct from both the voiced stops and the standard Greek aspirates. It seems likely that Macedonians still kept the voiced aspirates as separate phonemes from the voiced plosives, preserving the original PIE voiced pronunciation, but these were heard by other Greeks as voiced plosives. This distinctive pronunciation could have continued into Roman imperial times, but the development of the voiced stops to voiced fricatives,

⁵⁶ Saatsoglou-Paliadeli, C., ‘In the Shadow of History: the Emergence of Archaeology’ *BSA* 94 (1999) 368; Brixhe & Panayotou (1988) 255.

⁵⁷ Hoffman (1906) 232, Brixhe & Panayotou (1994) 216.

⁵⁸ Hoffman (1906) 233.

which seems to have taken place by the fourth century A.D.,⁵⁹ is likely to have eliminated any such distinction in spoken Macedonian.

I have found a single instance of an unvoiced plosive being voiced in the Macedonian inscriptions. In SEG XVIII (1962) 269 - an inscription of Roman imperial date, we find

Τίς τίνος οἰσεα γυνή σὺ βαρή ὑβὸ κίονα κίσε.

Now the writer of this inscription does seem to be prone to errors, and perhaps the beta instead of pi in ὑβὸ should simply be taken as another mistake, (and similar mistakes are attested in Attic inscriptions, though they seem determined by context⁶⁰) but it seems possible that the writer spoke pi more like beta than was normal,⁶¹ and erroneously wrote down beta instead of the standard written pi. This would be a parallel to *δαπεινά which we seem to have in the curse tablet, with the less frequent voicing of an unaspirated plosive. Once again, we should not assume that the voiced and unvoiced plosives had fallen together in spoken Macedonian, but rather that the Macedonians spoke pi, tau and kappa with a more lax pronunciation which could more easily be confused with the voiced equivalents.⁶²

This evidence is limited, but it does seem possible that a spoken Macedonian dialect with features common to Dorian dialects and unusual voicing of plosives did survive in Macedon alongside the standard written form of Greek, or at least some features of this dialect survived. Such diglossia is by no means unusual in the history of the Greek language and is well attested for the Hellenistic period.⁶³ What does seem unusual about the Macedonian situation is the very small influence the spoken form had on the written one. In fact, its major influence seems to

⁵⁹ Horrocks (1997) 112.

⁶⁰ Threatte (1980) 434ff.

⁶¹ As taken by Dubois, (1995) 196.

⁶² Cf. Threatte (1980) 436 for possible examples in Attic.

⁶³ Horrocks (1997) 37ff.

have been to block developments in the written language which were occurring elsewhere because they corresponded to the spoken language and were consequently seen as inappropriate to use in writing. It is not the case that Macedonian koine did not develop its own particular forms of language. For example, Macedonian inscriptions commonly use a formula for the decisions of an assembly, *κατὰ τὸ δόξαν τῆ βουλῆ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ*,⁶⁴ which I have not seen elsewhere. The Macedonians do not seem to have been anymore conservative in their usages than other writers of koine, so the avoidance of the new first declension masculine singular in long alpha, and of words with Macedonian voicing seems likely to be avoidance of the spoken language. This does suggest that there was a considerable gap between the spoken and written languages in Macedon.

This would correspond to what we expect from Philotas' remarks, reported in Curtius 6.9.35 that ordinary Greeks could understand spoken Macedonian only with difficulty.⁶⁵ However, the dialect of the curse tablet does not seem to be so greatly different from other forms of Greek. It does not seem to differ so strongly, for example, as does Cretan, with its assimilation of adjacent consonants, its metathesis of R plus vowel and its strikingly different vocabulary, to take the most notable differences.⁶⁶ Pamphylian, with its mixture of features matching Arcado-Cypriot, Aeolic and Doric dialects (especially Cretan)⁶⁷ would also have been hard for a speaker of standard Attic to follow.

The curse tablet does not seem so hard for a speaker of standard Greek to follow. However, we should allow that the written form may hide, at least in part, some of the differences. The evidence does not show whether the curse tablet had voiced

⁶⁴ E.g. IG X 2.1. 198 & 200 etc.

⁶⁵ *plerique adsunt, quos facilius quae dicam percepturos arbitror, si eadem lingua fuero usus qua tu egisti non ab aliud, ... quam ut oratio tua intellegi posset a pluribus.*

⁶⁶ Buck (1955) 169ff.

⁶⁷ Buck (1955) 147.

or unvoiced plosives. If it is a Macedonian dialect, we would expect them to be voiced, though the spelling might not show that, since Macedonians seem to have used both voiced stops and aspirates to write their voiced aspirates. Certainly we seem to have a voiced delta corresponding to a standard tau in the curse tablet. The curse tablet also suggests that iota and upsilon (or at least the short vowels) were more open than in standard Greek, and might be heard as epsilon and omicron respectively. When spoken, the curse tablet may have sounded less like standard Greek than it looks in written form.

Moreover, since Macedonian preserves the proto-Indo-European voiced aspirates, as against all other Greek dialects changing them to unvoiced aspirates,⁶⁸ Macedonian must have started to differentiate itself earlier than any of the better known dialects. So that even though it had some developments in common with neighbouring Greek dialects, such as the infinitive in *-σται* shared with Northwest Greek, more changes of vocabulary are likely to have occurred in Macedonian even than was the case in Cretan, and this is supported by the number of unusual words preserved as "Macedonian" in the glosses. It may well be the case that spoken Macedonian was sufficiently different from the standard Greek based on Attic to seem incomprehensible to those who knew only the latter, while the Macedonians who needed contact with Greeks in the world outside Macedon developed a form of diglossia, where they used Macedonian or standard Greek in the appropriate circumstances, and standard Greek became the normal form to be used in writing, even within Macedon, from the second half of the fourth century B.C. Speakers of Doric dialects, or even an Aeolic one like Thessalian, may have found Macedonian less difficult to follow, since it shared many features with them as against Attic-Ionic.

⁶⁸ And that change had occurred before several other developments common to the Greek dialects: Palmer, L.R., *The Greek Language* (London, 1980) 230ff.

The question of whether this Doric-related form of Macedonian should be classified as a dialect of Greek, or a different, though closely related language is a hard one to answer. Not only do we have far too little material to determine whether speakers of standard Greek could understand it (though I would think they could have read the curse tablet without much difficulty), we cannot know, without actual speakers and readers to consult, what problems they would have had and how far these would have affected their understanding. Even when there is adequate evidence, it may prove hard to determine whether two forms of speech should be classified as different dialects or separate languages. If ability to understand another form of language is the test, there is a stronger case to regard standard Italian and standard Spanish as one language than to regard the Venetian and Sicilian dialects of Italian as forms of the same language.⁶⁹ We should allow for the possibility that spoken Macedonian was as far from standard Attic as Sicilian is from Venetian, and that it may have been difficult to determine whether there were two separate languages or just two dialects, even if we had better evidence.

The inscriptional evidence from Macedon, limited though it is, shows that a Doric form of Greek was written in Macedon before standard Greek was adopted around the mid-fourth century B.C. This form of Greek has parallels with its closest neighbours, Northwest Greek and Thessalian, but also has differences from both. There is also some reason to think that it shares some features with the Macedonian recorded in the glosses and perhaps with some exceptional uses in inscriptions from Macedon in standard Greek. After the middle of the fourth century, this Doric Macedonian was replaced by standard Attic and koine for the purposes of writing. These later inscriptions show virtually no sign of influence by the earlier form. Other evidence does indicate that some form of Macedonian continued

⁶⁹ Pei, M., *The Story of Latin and the Romance Languages* (New York, 1976) 154.

in spoken use alongside standard Greek but the Macedonians kept the two quite separate.

Bibliography

- Bader, F. (1994): *Langues Indo-européennes* Paris, CNRS Editeurs.
- Borza, E. (1990): *In the Shadow of Olympus* Princeton, University Press.
- Brixhe, Cl./Panayotou, A. (1988). 'L'Atticisation de la Macedoine' *Verbum* 11, 245-260.
- (1994) 'Le macédonien' in Bader (1994).
- Buck, C. D. (1955): *Greek Dialects* (revised edition) Chicago, University Press.
- Dickie, M. W. (1999): 'Varia magica' *Tyche* 14, 57-65.
- Dubois, L. (1995): 'Une Tablette de Malediction de Pella: S'Agit-il du Premier Texte Macédonien' *REG* 108, 190-197.
- Hammond, N. G. L./Griffith, G. T. (1979): *A History of Macedonia* vol. 2, Oxford, Clarendon Press.
- Hatzopoulos, M. B. (1999): 'Le Macédonien: Nouvelles Données et Theories nouvelles' *Archaia Makedonia* VI Thessalonike, Institute for Balkan Studies 225-232.
- Hoffman, O. (1906): *Die Makedonen: ihre Sprache und ihr Volkstum* Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Horrocks, G. (1997): *Greek: A History of the Language and its Speakers* London & New York, Longmans.
- Papazoglou, F. (1988): 'Les stèles éphébiques de Stuberra' *Chiron* 18, 233-259.
- Threatte, L. (1980): *The Grammar of Attic Inscriptions* I, Berlin & New York, Walter de Gruyter.
- Voutiras, E. (1992/3): 'Ένας διαλεκτικός καταδέσμος απο την Πέλλα', *Ελληνική Διαλεκτολογία* 3, 43-48.
- (1996): 'A propos d'une tablette de malédiction de Pella' *REG* 109, 678-682.