

# **DIE ALTGRIECHISCHEN DIALEKTE**

## **Wesen und Werden**

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## Macedonian among ancient literary tradition, 19<sup>th</sup> century debates and the new texts

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0. This paper develops further some recent accounts, the aim being to incorporate as much as possible the new evidence in the description of Macedonian and in its interpretation.

1. As is well known, some ancient sources<sup>1</sup> from Plutarch on (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.) commented on a different treatment, by ancient Macedonians of „B in place of the Φ of other regions.” This statement was repeated in several later dictionaries and treatises with some minor changes in the expression, new examples, or precisions like that of Eustathius „κατ’ ἀρχὰς λέξεων”.

This testimony (let’s call it for the sake of convenience „the B-Φ equivalence”) was used mainly by Paul KRETSCHMER to formulate in his *Einführung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache* (1896, pp. 283-288) and in many subsequent studies the authoritative theory about the „Abstammung” of Ancient Macedonians. According to this account, the above mentioned feature excluded Macedonian from the group of Greek dialects, considering that this use reflected the development of the Proto-Indo-European voiced aspirate stops (the so-called „mediae aspiratae”) to voiced stops in Macedonian and Phrygian, among others, contrary to the common Greek voiceless aspirates. The implication of the theory was straightforward: Macedonian was not a Greek dialect. Some of the greatest linguists and historians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century adopted and further developed these conclusions.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> More recently edited by E. KAPETANOPOULOS, „Alexander’s *Patrius Sermo* in the Philotas Affair”, *AncW* 30.2, 1999, pp. 117-128.

<sup>2</sup> See KALLERIS 1954, mainly pp. 20-44; P. CHANTRAINE, „La langue des Macédoniens et leur onomastique”, *BSL* 61, 1966, pp. 157-166 for older bibliography; R. KATČIĆ, *Ancient Languages of the Balkans*, Hague-Paris 1976, pp. 108-112; G. BABINIOTIS, „The

But the debate among local schools of linguists was always in parallel with the political and military context in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe. The question of the ethnicity of Ancient Macedonians was never only a subject of scientific dialogue but part of a general political debate concerning the political future of large areas of the Balkans.<sup>3</sup> This „certainty” thus acquired about Macedonian consonantal subsystem was not disturbed by new linguistic theories. Nor did Linear B decipherment have any impact regarding the discussion on the nature of *mediae aspiratae*.

2. New feedback was given about a quarter of a century ago, after the discovery and scholarly publication of numerous new texts from the region. Partly or completely new elements concerning spread of alphabets and language description and use were published, and abundantly commented upon.

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question of Mediae in ancient Macedonian Greek reconsidered”, in: *Historical Philology: Greek, Latin, and Romance* (B. BROGYANYI – R. LIPP edd.), Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 87, Amsterdam – Philadelphia 1992, pp. 29-40; Cl. BRIxiE – A. PANAYOTOU, „Le macédonien”, in: *Langues indo-européennes* (Fr. BADER ed.), Paris 1994, pp. 205-220 *passim*; O. MASSON, in: *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*<sup>3</sup> (S. HORNBLLOWER – A. SPAWFORTH edd.), Oxford-New York 1996, s.v. „Macedonian Language”; A. PANAYOTOU, „Γλωσσολογικές και φιλολογικές μελέτες για τη γλώσσα των αρχαίων Μακεδόνων. Η νεότερη έρευνα”, in: *Μνήμη Μανόλη Ανδρόνικου* (Παράρτημα Μακεδονικών 6), Thessaloniki 1997, pp. 199-205; VOUTIRAS 1998, pp. 31-32; Cl. HAEBLER, in: *Der Neue Pauly* 7, 1999, s.v. „Makedonisch”; A. PANAYOTOU, „Η θέση της μακεδονικής”, in: *Ιστορία της ελληνικής γλώσσας: Από τις αρχές έως την ύστερη αρχαιότητα* (A.-F. Christidis ed.), [Thessaloniki] 2001, pp. 319-325 and 374-375. Revised and expanded translation under the title „The position of the Macedonian dialect”, in: *A History of Ancient Greek. From the Beginnings to Late Antiquity* (A.-F. Christidis ed.), Cambridge etc. 2007, pp. 433-443 and 507-508.

<sup>3</sup> The interference, or better the interface between politics – such as in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century nation building in Europe – and linguistic scholarship is not, of course, a Balkan oddity. Among many other recent thorough discussions, I would like to mention the excellent analysis of the historical and cultural milieu in which German linguistic theories were developed during the last two centuries by A. GARDT, *Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft in Deutschland. Vom Mittelalter bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, Berlin-New York 1999 and the review by N. MCLELLAND, „Tausend Jahre deutsche Sprachreflexion, Sprachphilosophie und Sprachwissenschaft”, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft* (henceforth BGS) 11.1, 2001, pp. 181-188 or the punctilious discussion on the development of Celtic studies in Germany by J. LERCHENMUELLER, „Keltischer Sprengstoff”. *Eine wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Studie über die deutsche Keltologie von 1900 bis 1945*, Tübingen 1997 and the review by R. SCHMITT, „Die Geschichte der Keltologie – einmal anders”, BGS 8.1, 1998, pp. 165-169.

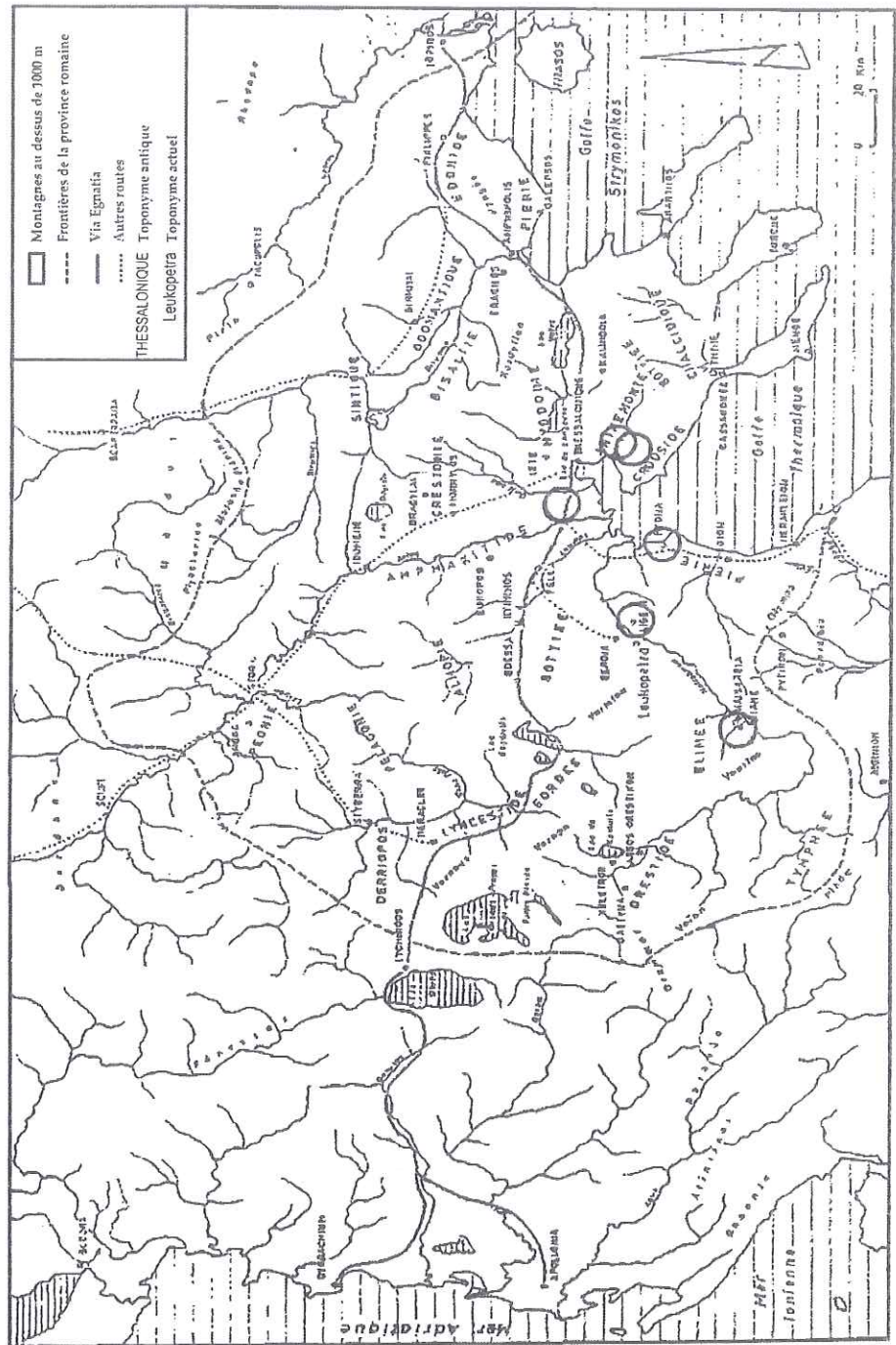


Figure 1. Map of Macedonia [after E. Papazoglou, Les villes de Macédoine à l'époque romaine, Athens - Paris 1983 (carte 20)].

3. I shall focus on Aiane, Elimiotis, West Macedonia (fig. 1), where some early texts have been discovered, trying to take some steps in defining the relations between the language of local inscriptions and „Macedonian”.

Graffito on a fragment of a tile dated by the excavator in the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Thessalian alphabet<sup>4</sup> (fig. 2):

(G. KARAMETROU-MENTESIDE), in: *La civilisation grecque: Macédoine. Royaume d’Alexandre le Grand*, Athens 1993, p. 74, no. 3; *EAD.*, „Excavation at Aiani”, *AEMTh* 4, 1990 [1993], pp. 82-83, fig. 3 (in Greek with English summary); cf. PANAYOTOU 1996, pp. 139, 149 note 37, no. 30, pl. 7/30 (*SEG* 43, 363 E; *SEG* 49, 776).

Cf. M. HATZOPOULOS, *Bull. Épigr.* 1994, 385; *LGN IV*, s.v. „Αρκά-  
πος.

Fig. 2



Aiane

<sup>4</sup> JOHNSTON 1994, p. 82. This is not the only early text from the region written in Thessalian alphabet, cf. the graffito Μαχάρτα (genitive of a known Macedonian masculine personal name) on an Attic *kylix* found in Pontokomi and dated by the excavator in the beginnings of the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. G. KARAMETROU-MENTESIDE, „Kozani Prefecture 1999: Excavations on Roads and by the Wayside”, *AEMTh* (*To Archaialogiko Ergo ste Macedonia kai Thrake*) 13, 1999 [2001], p. 353, fig. 29 (*SEG* 49, 776). The form of *chi* points to neighbouring Thessaly for the spelling of this typical Macedonian name for which see *LGN IV*, s.v. For other archaic and classical inscriptions from Aiane (mod. Aiani), the presumed capital of the kingdom of Elimiotis, see PANAYOTOU 1996, pp. 132, 134-136, 138, 149-150, notes 37-38 and *SEG* 43, 363.

In my opinion, the inscription must be read as follows:<sup>5</sup>

"Αρκαπο-  
ς· ἔρια  
ΗΗΗ ΔΔΔΔΔ  
4. ΔΔ Γ ΙΙΙ (= 378)

Lines 1-2: "Αρκαπος or 'Αρκάπῶς. For the second component of what I consider to be a personal name in the nominative case,<sup>6</sup> it is not clear whether we have -πος (with /o/) or -πῶς (with secondary /o:/, or with /ɔ:/ -πῶς), all these forms being in principle possible for the term meaning „foot”.<sup>7</sup>

For the first component, from a semantic point of view we have three possibilities:

a) *Glossa* ἀρκόν· σχολήν, Μακεδόνες given by Hesychius (= „tardily”)<sup>8</sup> thus „the slow-footed”, the lazy. From ἀργός (< ἀεργός)<sup>9</sup>, with devoicing of the stop in the cluster *rg* > *rk*, reflected in graphemic neutralization between <ΠΓ> on the one hand and <PK> on the other, attested in local onomastic material and sporadically elsewhere.

b) *Glossa* ἀρκής, given also by Hesychius, meaning „quick”<sup>10</sup>, cf. ποδάρκης<sup>11</sup> thus „the swift-footed”, from ἀρκέω (< ἄρκος?)<sup>12</sup> or from *arg*- „swift” (cf. hom. πόδαργος)<sup>13</sup>, with devoicing as in (a) above.

c) A form 'Αρκ- related to ἄρκτος „bear” is attested as a noun from 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. sources, but much earlier (5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) in personal

<sup>5</sup> A different reading ἀρκὰ ποσέρια „plain glasses” was proposed by JOHNSTON 1994 (= *SEG* 43, 363E). The form \*ποσέρια is not attested, as the author himself admits. Moreover, the alleged parallel Ποσειδῶν/Ποτει- is due to the analogy with Ποσι-, resulting from assibilation, see *DELG*, s.v. Ποσειδῶν. In addition, as far as I know, the meaning „plain, flat, swallow” for the adjective ἀρκός is not attested so far.

<sup>6</sup> This function („Plakat-Kasus”) of the nominative is discussed among others by G. SERBAT, „Der Nominativ und seine Funktion als Subjektkasus im Lichte moderner Sprachtheorien”, *Glotta* 59, 1981, p. 120.

<sup>7</sup> *Gr. Gr.* I, p. 565, note 3; *DELG* s.v. πούς.

<sup>8</sup> KALLERIS 1954, pp. 109-110, no. 33.

<sup>9</sup> *LSJ* s.v. ἀργός (B); *DELG* s.v. ἔργον; *DGE* III, s.v. ἀργός 2.

<sup>10</sup> *LSJ* s.v. ἀργός (A).

<sup>11</sup> In the formula ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς, taken to be as equivalent of ποδώκης: *DELG* s.v. ἀρκέω.

<sup>12</sup> *DELG* s.v. ἀρκέω.

<sup>13</sup> *DELG* s.v. ἀργός; *DGE* s.v. ἀργός 1.

names: Ἄρκος, Ἀρκύλος, Ἀρκόλυκος etc.<sup>14</sup> We are dealing with a composite name in *-ā-*, Attic type δρεπανηφόρος, θαλαμηφόρος, Doric διδυματόκος, νοθαγενής, Κλεαγένης<sup>15</sup>. We have also an exact parallel, κυνήπους, attested in Attic. Thus Ἀρκαπος could be „the bear-footed”.

Line 2: Ἐρια is, normally, in plural. The form ἔριον, a derivative of \**werw-*, attested in 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. dialectal inscriptions from Attica and Gortyn<sup>16</sup>, indicates that the dialect of the region ignores compensatory lengthening of *e/-rw-*.

Lines 3-4: „Acrophonic” numeral notation.<sup>17</sup> The numerals, in descending order (i.e. the higher denomination preceding the lower), possibly express a price, although a unit of weight cannot be excluded.

Translation: *Arkapos. Wool (price due? weight?) 378.*

Should we infer from the document that Arkapos was a ποιμήν or an ἐριοπώλης?

4. We should then take a further step comparing the „Arkapos’ inscription” with another graffito from Aiani (fig. 3) dating from the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century;<sup>18</sup> the phrase (...) ἐμὶ τῆς δολίῳ/Δολίῳ,<sup>19</sup> as it is written in Ionic alphabet,<sup>20</sup> gives a possible hint: In the „Arkapos’ inscription” we are probably concerned with a dialect where secondary long vowels /e:/, /o:/ (here EMI), resulting from compensatory lengthening, contrast with primary inherited /ε:/, /ο:/ (here THΣ).<sup>21</sup> With due reservation because of the limited data and the presence of τῆς (and not τᾶς) in

<sup>14</sup> See O. MASSON, „Noms grecs du type Ἀρκολέων «Ours-lion»”, *Ἡδιστον λογόδειπνον. Logopédies. Mélanges de philologie et de linguistique grecque offerts à J. Taillardat*, Paris 1988, pp. 171-177 (= *Onomastica Graeca Selecta* II, pp. 617-623) for this type of personal names (*SEG* 38, 1995).

<sup>15</sup> *Gr. Gr.* I, pp. 438-439.

<sup>16</sup> *DELG* and *DGE* s.v. εἶρος.

<sup>17</sup> See M. TOD, „The Greek numeral notation”, *ABSA* 18, 1911/12, pp. 98-132 esp. p. 101.

<sup>18</sup> PANAYOTOU 1996, p. 139, p. 149 note 37 (no. 29), pl. 7/29; *SEG* 43, 363 A.

<sup>19</sup> I.e. the adjective δόλιος in gen. fem. qualifying the owner, or the personal name Δόλιος, as the patronymic of the owner of the vase. Both *LGN* IV (s.v. Δόλιος) and BRIXHE 1997, p. 43 express a predilection for the second solution.

<sup>20</sup> For the historical framework offering an interpretation for the use of Ionic alphabet in Macedonia during Persian rule see PANAYOTOU 1996, pp. 139-143.

<sup>21</sup> See more recently M. DEL BARRIO VEGA, „Vocalisme mitior, innovation ou archaïsme? État de la question”, *Mnemosyne* 51, 1998, pp. 257-281.



the „Dolios’ inscription”, and despite the reservations expressed by BRI-XHE<sup>22</sup> we could assign in my opinion the document from Aiane in a West Greek dialectal area, as the one from Pella<sup>23</sup> or the other from Arethousa.<sup>24</sup>

Fig. 3



Aiane

Certainly, the „Macedonian (language) question” is not definitely resolved, but there are some new possible issues.

#### Abbreviations<sup>25</sup>

BRIXHE 1997: Cl. BRIXHE, „Un «nouveau» champ de la dialectologie grecque: le macédonien”, in: *Katà diálekton*. Atti del III Colloquio Internazionale di Dialettologia Greca, Napoli – Fiaiano d’Ischia, 25-28 settembre 1996 (A.C. CAS-SIO ed.), Annali dell’Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli (A.I.O.N), Sezione Filologico-letteraria XIX (1997), pp. 41-71.

*Bull. Épigr.* 1994: „Bulletin Épigraphique”, REG 107, pp. 480-620.

DELG: P. CHANTRAINE, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*, Paris 1968-1980.

<sup>22</sup> 1997, p. 43.

<sup>23</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> century love *defixio* from Pella is published and discussed more extensively by VOUTIRAS 1998 (SEG 42, 434; SEG 46, 776; SEG 49, 757).

<sup>24</sup> Judicial *defixio* from Arethousa dated in the late 4<sup>th</sup> century, see S. MOSCHONISIO-TI, A.-Ph. CHRISTIDIS, Th. GLARAKI, „Κατάδεσμος από την Αρέθουσα”, in: *Γλώσσα και Μαγεία. Κείμενα από την αρχαιότητα* (A.-Ph. Christidis – D. Jordan edd.), Athens 1997, pp. 193-200 (SEG 47, 885).

<sup>25</sup> The abbreviations of the periodicals follow throughout *L’Année Philologique*, otherwise the whole title is given.

- DGE: Fr.R. ADRADOS (ed.), *Diccionario Griego-Español*, Madrid 1980 -  
 Gr.Gr.: E. SCHWYZER, *Griechische Grammatik I. Allgemeiner Teil, Lautlehre, Wortbildung, Flexion*, Munich 1953.
- JOHNSTON 1994: A. JOHNSTON, „On some graffiti from Aiani”, *ZPE* 104, pp. 81-82.
- KALLERIS 1954: J. KALLÉRIS, *Les anciens Macédoniens*, I, Athens.
- LGPN IV: P.M. FRASER – E. MATTHEWS (edd.), *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, vol. IV, *Macedonia, Thrace, Northern Regions of the Black Sea*, Oxford 2005.
- LSJ: H.G. LIDDEL, R. SCOTT, H. STUART JONES, *A Greek – English Lexicon*, Oxford 1940<sup>3</sup>; With a Supplement (1968); *Revised Supplement*, P.G.W. GLARE (ed.), Oxford 1996.
- PANAYOTOU 1996: A. PANAYOTOU, „Dialectal Inscriptions from Chalcidice, Macedonia, and Amphipolis”, in: *Inscriptions from Macedonia*. Third International Symposium on Macedonia, Thessaloniki, 8-12 December 1993 [1996], pp. 124-163.
- SEG: *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden 1923-1971, Alphen aan den Rijn 1976, Amsterdam 1979 -
- VOUTIRAS 1998: E. VOUTIRAS, *Διονυσιοφώντος γάμοι. Marital life and magic in fourth century Pella*, Amsterdam.

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- 30: Wolfram Euler: **Indoiranisch-griechische Gemeinsamkeiten der Nominalbildung und deren indogermanische Grundlagen.** 1979. 282 S. € 36.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-550-9.
- 45: Eduard Schwyzer: **Kleine Schriften.** Herausgegeben von Rüdiger Schmitt. 1983. XL, 969 S. Portrait. € 120.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-577-6.
- 50: Leonard R. Palmer: **Die griechische Sprache. Grundzüge der Sprachgeschichte und der historisch-vergleichenden Grammatik.** Aus dem Englischen übertragen von Wolfgang Meid. 1986. 344 S. € 48.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-586-8.
- 56: Oswald Szemerényi: **An den Quellen des lateinischen Wortschatzes.** 1989. 192 S. € 40.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-601-8.
- 64: **Latein und Indogermanisch. Akten des Kolloquiums der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft, Salzburg, 23.-26. September 1986.** Herausgegeben von Oswald Panagl und Thomas Krisch. 1992. 415 S. € 96.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-612-4.
- 70: Anne Potthoff: **Lateinische Kleidungsbezeichnungen in synchroner und diachroner Sicht.** 1992. VIII, 271 S. € 24.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-627-8.
- 72: **INDOGERMANICA ET ITALICA. Festschrift für Helmut Rix zum 65. Geburtstag.** Herausgegeben von Gerhard Meiser unter Mitwirkung von Jadwiga Bendahman, Jón Axel Hardarson und Christiane Schaefer. 1993. 516 S. € 96.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-635-3.
- 74: Jón Axel Hardarson: **Studien zum urindogermanischen Wurzelaorist und dessen Vertretung im Indoiranischen und Griechischen.** 1993. 250 S. € 48.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-637-7.
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- 120: Klaus Strunk: **Kleine Schriften.** Herausgegeben von Peter-Arnold Mumm u.a. 2005. XXXVIII, 1318 S. in 2 Bänden. € 240.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-703-9.
- 125: Carrie Giger-van den Heuvel: **Schwarz und Weiss im mykenischen Griechisch.** 2007. 135 S. € 24.00. ISBN 978-3-85124-709-1.

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