Intermission ۹?: The Attic Dialect

Dialects are different versions, or forms, of the same language. While English is spoken in Texas, New York, Boston, and Liverpool, and people from these places can understand each other (as they are speaking the same language), after a careful analysis, you would notice strong divergences in form, diction, and pronunciation between the Texan, the New Yorker, the Bostonian, and the Liverpudlian. These differences can be morphological (2nd person plural pronoun: you, yous, youse, youz guys, y'all, you guys), lexical (hood and trunk in the States, but boot and bonnet for our plucky Scouser; submarine sandwich, sub, grinder, or hoagie in various parts of the country), semantic (cf. the use of ma'am in the South as a respectful form of address to its perceived insult in the Northeast), or even just variations in pronunciation. Review the "Introduction to the Diachronic Linguistics Approach" in Lesson 1 of this book, especially §§2-3.

The various dialectical groups of Ancient Greek also had differences of these types. Each major geographical area of mainland Greece had a distinct way of speaking. Changes arose when pronunciations of words varied from region to region, resulting in both different spellings between the dialectical groups and different patterns of sound change. For instance, consider the 1st person singular present of the verb ἐσ/: ἐσ/μι > εἰμί in Attic-Ionic after the expected loss of sigma before mu (in verbal forms) and the expected resulting stretching. In Doric Greek, the epsilon of the base instead stretches to eta: ἐσ/μι > ἠμί [Dor.]. In the Aeolic group, however, the sigma + liquid or nasal did not result in the loss of sigma, but instead the assimilation of sigma to the liquid or nasal, a change that did not require stretching (as no sound was lost): ἐσ/μι > ἐμμί [Aeol.]. Understanding a few of these changes enables you to switch between texts in various dialects with much more ease. As students of the *Lexis* method, you will be most apt at noticing and handling these kinds of change.

One interesting feature of the use of these dialects was that inscriptions of various kinds (including both public and private dedications) were generally recorded in the dialect of the place where the text was inscribed. If two city-states came to an agreement of some kind, the text was usually inscribed twice—once in each polis in the native dialect of that polis. A treaty between Athens and Argos, then, might be recorded in Attic and placed on the Acropolis, and again in Doric and placed in the Temple of Apollo at Argos.

Intermission ꟼ: The Attic Dialect

Now that we have concluded our formal readings of Herodotus for this course (though you are always encouraged to read as much Herodotus as you can), we will move from the Ionic to the Attic dialect of Greek. While Attic and Ionic are fairly closely related—they are the two main forms of the larger "East Greek" family—they still demonstrate a number of important changes that you will need to learn to recognize. After examining the pair of inscriptions in the exercise immediately below, consult the list of major changes between Attic and Ionic Greek at the end of the lesson.

Exercise: The following pair of dedicatory inscriptions (IGA 492; GFI 5531; Buck I) were found in Proconnesus, an Ionian island, and at Sigeion, an Anatolian city-state long controlled by Athens. The dedicator was a Proconnesan of some standing who offered a mixing bowl (κρητήρ), its stand (ὑποκρατήριον or ἐπίστατον—note this is a lexical dialectical shift) and a wine-strainer (ἠθμόν) to the Prytaneum at Sigeion. Compare these two texts to identify some changes due to the dialectical variance between Ionic and Attic Greek:

A) Recorded at Proconnesus in Ionic:
> Φανοδίκου εἰμὶ τοὐρμοκράτεος τοῦ Προκοννησίου· κρητῆρα δὲ
> καὶ ὑποκρητήριον καὶ ἠθμὸν ἐς πρυτανήιον ἔδωκεν Συκεεῦσιν.

B) Recorded at Sigeion in Attic:
> Φανοδίκου εἰμὶ τοῦ Ἑρμοκράτους τοῦ Προκονησίου· κἀγὼ
> κρατῆρα κἀπίστατον καὶ ἠθμὸν ἐς πρυτανεῖον ἔδωκα μνῆμα
> Σιγευεῦσι.

List of major changes between the Ionic and Attic dialects:

1) **Regular vowel contraction** in verbal forms whose bases end in vowels or after the loss of intervocalic sigma (for more on this topic, see Lesson xxx):
> ποιέω [Ion.] = ποιῶ [Att.]
> ἔτεσ/α > ἔτεα [Ion.] = ἔτη [Att.]

2) **1st Declension Feminine Nouns:** lengthening in the singular forms whose **bases end ε, ι,** or **ϱ:** Ionic -η = Attic: -ᾱ
> χώρη [Ion.] = χώρα [Att.]
> γενεή [Ion.] = γενεά [Att.]
> οἰκίη [Ion.] = οἰκία [Att.]

Note: there are also a few nominal forms (in both Attic and sometimes Ionic) that do NOT lengthen the nominative singular at all. All of these have some form of the -Jα feminine marker in them. We have encountered several of these already and they have given you little trouble.

ἐλθ/ο/ντ/Jα/Z > ἐλθοῦσα

γλωχ/Jα/Z > γλῶσσα [Ion.] = γλῶττα [Att.] (see #3 below)

3) **Velar or Dental + Yod**: Ionic: -σσ- = Attic: -ττ-

φυλακ/J/ω > φυλάσσω [Ion.] = φυλάττω [Att.]

γλωχ/Jα/Z > γλῶσσα [Ion.] = γλῶττα [Att.]

ἡχ/Jον/LZ > ἥσσων [Ion.] = ἥττων [Att.]

4) In a few words, mostly derived from the **root κο/**: Ion. κ = Att. π

κοῦ [Ion.] = ποῦ [Att.]

ὅκου [Ion.] = ὅπου [Att.]

ὀκότερος [Ion.] = ὀπότερος [Att.]

ὅκως [Ion.] = ὅπως [Att.]

5) **Variations in forms of ἐσ/**: Those that incorporate the theme vowel either form without the base (Pres. Ppl.) or lose the base due to contraction (Pres. Subj.) in Attic:

pres. ppl: ἐών, ἐοῦσα, ἐόν [Ion.] = ὤν, οὖσα, ὄν [Att.]

pres. subj.: ἔω, ἔῃς, ἔῃ [Ion.] = ὦ, ῇς, ῇ [Att.]

6) **The Relative Pronoun:** In Ionic, the definite article is used as the relative pronoun throughout the oblique cases. In Attic, the relative pronoun develops from a separate pronoun, which was (like the article) in origin a demonstrative: Jᵒ/α/:

rel. pron.: τοῦ, τῆς, τοῦ, κτλ. [Ion.] = οὗ, ἧς, οὗ, κτλ. [Att.]

7) **Transfer of Aspirates:** Word- or base-initial aspirates rarely transfer to prefixes or preceding words in Ionic. This is due mostly to **psilosis**, the loss of an initial aspirate. While we usually record the rough breathing in Ionic texts, Ionic inscriptions from the Archaic and Classical periods do not use the **heta** (H) to mark these initial aspirates as it the case in other dialects. In Attic, however, the aspirate regularly transfers:

ἀπ/JιJε/ναι > ἀπιέναι [Ion.] = ἀφιέναι [Att.]

κατ/ὁρα/ω > κατοράω [Ion.] = καθορῶ [Att.]

ἀπ᾿ οὗ [Ion.] = ἀφ᾿ οὗ [Att.]

8) **Dative Plural:** As you may recall from the lesson on the dative plural, in Attic the final iota is lost in the first and second declension:

χώρῃσι [Ion.] = χώραις [Att.]
ἀνθρώποισι [Ion.] = ἀνθρώποις [Att.]

9) **ι-stem nouns** decline in many forms as if from base final -ε. This likely began from contraction in the dative singular: πόλι/ι > πόλει, leading to paradigmatic levelling. Compare the following forms of πόλι/:

gen. sing.: πόλιος [Ion.] = πόλεως [Att.]
nom. pl.: πόλιες [Ion.] = πόλεις [Att.]
gen. pl.: πολίων [Ion.] = πόλεων [Att.]
acc. pl.: πόλιας or πόλις [Ion.] = πόλεις [Att.]
dat. pl.: πόλισι [Ion.] = πόλεσι [Att.]

10) Most other changes are **small alternations in vowels**, likely resulting from slight differences in pronunciation. As students of the method, these will likely give you very little trouble. Consider these examples of the major patterns evident in these changes:

ε for ει: ξεῖνος [Ion.] = ξένος [Att.]
ε for η: βασιλήιος [Ion.] = βασίλειος [Att.]
αυ for ω: θῶμα [Ion.] = θαῦμα [Att.]
ο for ου: οὔνομα [Ion.] = ὄνομα [Att.]
α for η: πρήγματα [Ion.] = πράγματα [Att.]
ου for ω: ὦν [Ion.] = οὖν [Att.]
εο > ευ [Ion.], ου [Att.]: ποιεύμενος [Ion.] = ποιούμενος [Att.]

ΘΑΝΟΔΙΚΟ
ΚΟΜΙΟΤΙΜΕ
ΡΑΤΕΟΣΤΟ
ΗΜΜΟΚΟΟΡΠ
ΣΙΟΚΡΗΤΗΡ
ΧΟΠΥΙΑΧ:ΕΔΑ
ΡΗΤΗΡΙΟΝ:Κ
ΠΖΕ:ΜΟΜΟΝΙΑ
ΡΥΤΑΝΗΙΟΝ
ΕΚΥΖ:ΜΕΚΠΔΕ
ΕΥΣΙΝ

ΦΑΝΟΔΙΚΟ:ΕΙΜΙ:ΤΟΗ
ΟΚΟΔΠΟΤ:ΣΟΤΑΡΚΟΜΔΕ
ΜΕΣΙΟ:ΚΑΝΟ:ΚΡΑΤΕΡΑ
ΚΑΙΘΗΙΑΧ:ΜΟΤΑΤΣΙΠΑΧ
ΟΝ:ΕΣΠΡΥΤΑΜΕΙΟΝ:Ε
ΥΕΛΙΣ:ΑΜΕΜΜ:ΑΧΟΔ
ΕΥΣΙ:ΕΑΝΔΕΤΙΠΑΣ+
ΟΘΜ:ΜΕΜΙΑΔΕΝΕΜΟ
ΣΙΛΕΙΕΣ:ΚΑΙΜΕΠΟ
ΙΑΧ:ΣΟΠΟΣΙΑΗ:ΜΕΣΙΕ
:ΗΑΔΕΛΦΟΙ
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