Lecture 2: The Dialects

1. Introduction
   - Homer's language a very odd mixture of dialects and time-periods
   - Explanation given by Parry and Lord: he was an oral poet
   - Oral poetry has different constraints from written poetry: poetry has to be comprehensible, but poet has to re-use material from the previous tradition
   - Keeps traces of all the different dialects it has been performed in
   - Elements of Arcado-Cypriot, Ionic, Aeolic and Attic in the poems
   - Arcado-Cypriot could be more ancient ie Mycenaean
   - Aeolic and Ionic elements are more recent
   - Still debated whether there was a continuous Ionic tradition or one with a gap
   - Attic elements = superficial – spelling added after the text was stabilised

2. Dialect map
3. Dialect relationship

![Dialect relationship diagram]

Common Greek

West Greek | East Greek
Doric | Aeolic | Arcado-Cypriot | Attic-Ionic

4. Attic
- Previously many Atticisms claimed to be in the text
- Now reduced to a few, which do not affect the metre – aspiration and ā for ἐ
  ἀγξηράνῃ (cf Ionic ἀγξηρήνῃ)
  ἐνταῦθα (cf Ionic ἐνθαῦτα)
- Some aspiration unetymological e.g. ἡμα, ἡμβροτε

5. Aeolic
- West Greek
- Usually have an Ionic equivalent
  ἄμμες (ἡμεις)
  ἐμμεν/ἐμμεναι (εἶναι)
  πισυρες (τέσσαρες)
  ὅππως, ὁπποτος (by analogy with ὅττι)
  ζα- for dia in ζαθεος

- Dative plural in -εσσι
- Found on Aeolic stems but also Ionic stems (νέσσι) and artificially lengthened
  stems (ἐπέσσι) - mixture
6. Ionic

- Ionic = main ingredient in the Homeric language
- Ionic an East Greek dialect
- Differences between West Greek and East Greek

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>West Greek</th>
<th>East Greek</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd person singular</td>
<td>keeps τι</td>
<td>τι &gt; σι</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural article</td>
<td>τοι</td>
<td>οί</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st person plural</td>
<td>μες</td>
<td>μεν</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>athematic infinitive</td>
<td>μεν</td>
<td>ναι, εναι</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Attic-Ionic features:
  1. Eta for original long alpha
  2. ν-mobile (ἐλυσεν)
  3. Quantitative metathesis
     e.g. gen. sg. of a-stems: Epic Μενέλαος, Attic Μενέλεως
  4. ἄν for κε
  5. ἤμεις
  6. Imperfect of verb to be: ἦν he was
                                    ἤσαν they were

- Ionic features
  1. Absence of Attic contraction
  2. Compensatory lengthening (e.g. ξεῖνος, κούρη)
  3. Psilotic – but this mainly corrected in text – see above
  4. σσ for ττ
  5. Diectasis
     Contract verbs show many peculiarities
     ἡγάσαθε for ἡγάσαθε; μνᾶ for μνάνη
     όραω for ὀραώ; μνῶντο for μνᾶοντο; ἡβῶσα for ἡβῶσα
     Variations not unusual eg ὕροω
     Vowel assimilation – cf ἐτερος for ἄτερος?
     Would expect it to be more common
     Wackernagel’s solution: diectasis
     Original form αἰταεσθαι develops to αἰτιᾶσθαι
     α covers 3 morae – needs to be stretched
     = Ionic: ἀστυβωτην > ἀστυβοωτην
     Attic = ἀστυβοητην
7. Development

- Aeolic and Ionic elements clearly organic: epics composed in both dialects
- Continuous Ionic tradition with borrowing versus the phase argument

- Evidence for phases:
  Genitive of a-stem nouns.
  Parry’s theory: latest form which fits the metre will be used.
  Ionic development of the genitive of a-stem nouns: -αο, -ηο, εω.
  We find the –αο (the common Greek form)
  and –εω (the Ionic form with quantitative metathesis).
  If we had continuous tradition we would expect to find –ηο.

- Evidence against phases:
  Heavy preponderance of Ionic elements suggests that the Ionic part of
  the development was very long.
  Forms could have entered the language in various ways

- Conclusion: evidence on both sides – disagreement in the literature
  Professor Horrocks against phases (‘Homer’s dialect’ in Morris and
  Powell (edd.) A new companion to Homer)
  See http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/bmcr/1998/98.5.20.html for the opposite
  view from Janko
8. Arcado-Cypriot/Mycenaean

- Earliest form of Greek = Mycenaean, from palaces destroyed about 1200 B.C.

- Many of the words claimed to be Arcado-Cypriot found on the Mycenaean tablets:
  - ἀμφιφορεύς a-pi-po-re-u
  - κόρυς ko-ru
  - ξίφος qi-si-pe-e
  - φάσγανον pa-ka-na

- Not all found (e.g. αἶσα, ἠπυω), but this could be due to the nature of the texts.
- Dialect knowledge of the time restricted – could be from another ancient dialect
- But Mycenaean elements appear in formulas:
  - φάσγανον ἀργυροήλον or
  - ξίφος ἀργυροήλος 19 times
  - #ἀσπίδος ἀμφιβρότης 3 times
  - σάκος ἡὔτε πύργον# 3 times

- Dactylic formulae are as old as the weapons they describe?
- Also digamma – see next lecture
9. **Pre-Mycenaean**

- Clear linguistic evidence for elements earlier than Mycenaean.

**Tmesis**

- In Homer ‘preverb’ is often separated from its verb
  
  e.g. II. 6.496 θαλεφόν κατὰ δάκον χέουσα ‘pouring down fruitful tears’

- In Classical Greek these are ‘univerbated’ e.g. καταβαίνω

- In Homer, always in certain positions:
  
  e.g. first in clause
  
  II. 12.335 ἐς δ’ ἐνόησ’ Αἴαντε δύω
  
  just before direct object as in II. 6.496

- This pattern is seen also in Sanskrit
  
  e.g. 10, 34, 2d ánuvratām āpa jāyām arodham
  
  devoted away wife I-have-driven

- In Mycenaean the univerbation seen in Classical Greek has already happened
  
  e.g. PY Fr 1184 ko-ka-ro a-pe-do-ke e-ra3-wo (=ἀπεδώκε)
  
  PY Ad 686 … ko-wo o-u-pa-ro-ke-ne-to (=παρογένετο)

- In some lines, the preverb and verb are written as separate words.
  
  e.g. PY Ta 641 ti-ri-po…a-pu ke-ka-u-me-no ke-re-α2 (= ἀπὺ κεκαυμένος)

- Mycenaean at the final stage of univerbation. Almost fully compounded

- Tmesis in Homer shows that tradition started pre-Mycenaean

- Not all formulas with tmesis are necessarily archaic – possibility could be exploited by bards

**Syllabic r –next lecture**

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**Reading List**

Chantraine, 1974  *Grammaire Homérique* (5th ed.) vol. 1 Introduction

J. Chadwick, 1990  ‘The descent of the Greek epic’ *JHS* 110, 175-177

Shipp, 1961  ‘Mycenaean evidence for the Homeric dialect?’ *Essays in Mycenaean and Homeric Greek*, 1-14

G. Horrocks, 1997  ‘Homer’s dialect’ in Morris and Powell (edd.) *A new companion to Homer*