CHAPTER 22

Lydian

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1. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

The land called Lydia in Greek sources lay during the first millennium BC on the west central coast of Anatolia, centering on the River Hermos (modern Gediz), with its capital at Sardis (near modern Turgutlu). The indigenous language is attested in graffiti and on coins from the end of the eighth or beginning of the seventh century down to the third, but well-preserved inscriptions of significant length are presently limited to the fifth and fourth centuries, during the period of Persian domination. Lydian texts are thus effectively contemporaneous with those in Lycian.

Extant Lydian texts now number slightly over one hundred, but fewer than thirty of these consist of more than a few words and are reasonably complete. Aside from coins, graffiti, and very short inscriptions on various objects, the overwhelming majority of the inscriptions are on stone. The bulk of these are sepulchral in content, but several of the texts are decrees of one sort or another. Some half-dozen texts are in verse, with a stress-based meter and vowel assonance at line end (see Eichner 1986a and 1993:114ff., with references). All but a handful of the Lydian texts have been found in or near Sardis. For several isolated finds much farther afield see Gusmani 1995:9f. One short Lydian–Aramaic bilingual text helped establish the rudiments of Lydian grammar, but no extensive Lydian–Greek bilingual comparable to the Létôon Trilingual for Lycian (see Ch. 21, §1) has yet come to light.

Lydian shares several characterizing innovations with Hittite and related languages and definitely belongs to the Anatolian subgroup of Indo-European as narrowly defined (see Meriggi 1936, and Melchert 1994a:6f.). Lydian is thus to be derived from an intermediate prehistoric stage we may call Proto-Anatolian. Earlier suggestions that the resemblances between Lydian and the other Anatolian languages are due to convergence are no longer tenable. Nevertheless, the position of Lydian within the Anatolian group is unique and problematic, for at least two reasons.

First, understanding of Lydian remains very limited, comparable to that of Palaic and markedly inferior to that of Luvian or Lycian. The basic grammatical structure of most sentences is clear (aside from some in the verse texts, where unusual word order retards analysis). With rare exceptions, however, grasp of the semantic content ranges from approximate at best to zero at worst. All aspects of the following description should thus be viewed as representing mere hypotheses, of varying degrees of plausibility, not as established facts.

A second difficulty is that Lydian undeniably shows a number of features which are not shared by any other language of the Anatolian group. The limited evidence makes assessment of this fact difficult: are these unique features archaisms preserved only in Lydian, or do

they result from a series of peculiarly pre-Lydian developments? Until a more satisfactory answer to this question is available, the status of Lydian within Anatolian will remain a "special" one.

2. WRITING SYSTEM

The Lydian writing system, which is strictly alphabetic, is related to or derived from that of Greek. The exact relationship remains unclear (see Gusmani 1978 and 1995:12). The direction of writing in the older texts is either left to right or right to left. Later texts show exclusively the latter. Use of word-dividers is variable. Values of individual letters are discussed below in the phonology.

Table 22.1 The Lydian alphabet

Character	Transcription
𐤀	a
𐤁	b
𐤂	g
𐤃	d (/ð/)
𐤄	e
𐤅	v
𐤉	i
𐤊	y
𐤋	k
𐤌	l
𐤍	m
𐤎	n
𐤏	o
𐤐	r
𐤑 𐤒 𐤓	ś (/s/)
𐤔	t
𐤕	u
𐤖	F
𐤗	q (/k^w/)
𐤘 𐤙	s (/ç/)
𐤚	τ (/t^s/)
𐤛	ã
𐤜	ẽ
𐤝	λ
𐤞	ν
𐤟	c (/d^z/?)

3. PHONOLOGY

3.1 Consonants

The Lydian phonemic inventory consists of the following consonants:

(1) Lydian consonantal phonemes

p		t		k	k^w
		ts			
		dz			
f		s	ç		
v	ð				
m		n ν			
		l	r ʌ		

The nasal conventionally transliterated as *ν* (Greek *nu*) is of indeterminate value (see §3.1.3).

3.1.1 Stops

Lydian has a single set of stop phonemes which are probably underlyingly voiceless (for Lydian graphic *b* as /p/ see Gusmani 1965:204ff.). It is very likely that they are realized as voiced allophones in favorable environments, regularly so after nasals (including nasalized vowels), as in Lycian. The name *Alexander* appears as *Aλiksãntru-*, while **éndo* "in(to)" results in [ẽd-] spelled *ẽt-*. There is at least a strong tendency to voicing also next to /r/: note the names *Srkaśtu-* and *Atraśta-* rendered in Greek as Συργάστης and Αδραστης respectively. In rare cases the voiced allophone of the velar /k/ is spelled with a separate letter *g* (e.g., the hapax *qig* for normal *qik* "whatever"), but the allophonic variation is, as expected, not normally indicated in the spelling. Since there is no voicing contrast, there may well be some free variation (note the Greek equivalents of intervocalic /t/ in personal names cited by Gusmani 1988a:191ff.). The place of articulation of /p/ (letter *b*), /t/, and /k/ is undisputed. For arguments that *q* represents a synchronic as well as etymological labiovelar /k^w/ (e.g., in *qi-* "who, which") see Heubeck 1959:1–50 and especially Gusmani 1964:33f.

3.1.2 Fricatives and affricates

The letter transliterated as τ (Greek tau) is certainly a voiceless coronal affricate: see Gusmani 1969 with references to Shevoroshkin and others. The definition as a dental alveolar is based on etymological considerations, and a palatal or palatalized articulation cannot be excluded. Characterization of the letter conventionally transliterated *c* as the corresponding voiced affricate is merely an educated guess, and almost any **voiced** coronal affricate or fricative is possible. The one assured source of the sound is an assibilated **d*: *civ-* "god" < **diw-*.

The synchronic status of the fricatives /f/, /v/, /s/, and /ç/ is clear. The last is the result of prehistoric palatalization of **s*, and obviously a palatalized [s] instead of an alveo-palatal or pure palatal is quite possible. By an unfortunate convention too long established to be changed, the sibilant transliterated as *ś* is the dental-alveolar /s/, while *s* is the palatal /ç/. There is strong evidence that the sound represented by the letter *d* is not a voiced stop: the borrowing of the name *Demeter* as *Lamẽtru-* and internal evidence suggest that Lydian had

no word-initial voiced stops, but *d-* occurs word-initially. The likeliest possibility is a voiced interdental fricative /ð/ (compare Lycian), for which see Melchert 1994c with references to prior works, but some other kind of voiced coronal fricative would also fit the current facts.

3.1.3 Sonorants

The nasals and liquids are mostly straightforward. Synchronic /ʎ/ (transliterated with Greek *lambda*) is the result of prehistoric palatalization of **l*, and once again a palatalized instead of palatal articulation is possible. The value of the nasal transliterated as *ν* (Greek *nu*) is problematic. Its only clear source is **original** word-final nasal (both **m* and **n*): loss of word-final vowels makes it synchronically contrastive with the other nasals. This and other distributional facts point to some kind of weakly articulated nasal consonant, but a precise definition is elusive: see Gusmani 1978:842ff. and Melchert 1994a:339 for discussion. The presence of special letters for nasalized vowels (see below) makes it unlikely that the letter *ν* merely indicates nasalization of the preceding vowel. It seems reasonably certain that the sonorants could function as syllabic peaks in Lydian when occurring between other consonants (or alternatively that such sequences were realized phonetically with inserted [ə]): for /m/ note the sentence-initial sequence *fa=k=m=ś=ad*, for /r/ *caqrla-* and so forth, and for /ʎ/ *bλtarvod*. Examples such as *kśbλta-* and *dctdid* suggest that even fricatives could form syllabic peaks, at least phonologically (see Eichner 1986a:8).

It is noteworthy that Lydian has no glides, unlike all the other ancient Indo-European Anatolian languages.

3.2 Vowels

Lydian probably has a standard five-vowel system /i/, /u/, /e/, /o/, and /a/ plus two contrastive nasalized vowels, though the precise place of articulation of these vowels is open to debate. The vowel transliterated as *y* is in all likelihood merely an unstressed allophone of /i/ (see Gusmani 1983:57ff. and Melchert 1994a:342). Evidence of Greek transliterations of Lydian names and etymological considerations suggest that the mid vowels /e/ and /o/ were relatively high and long phonetically. It is unlikely that vowel length was synchronically contrastive in Lydian. While the status of occasional spellings in *aa* has not been fully clarified, the existence of other inconsistent attempts to indicate allophonic variation (note *g* and *y* above) makes it likely that the length of the /a/ in such cases is likewise merely conditioned lengthening under the accent (see Eichner 1986b:215f., and below).

Eichner (1986b, especially 211, n. 21) has presented compelling arguments that the vowels transliterated as *ã* and *ẽ* represent nasalized vowels, confirming a long-held but occasionally doubted interpretation. The transliteration of *ẽ* is misleading, however, in that it alternates morphophonemically with /a/ (never with /e/): compare *cẽqra-* and derivative *caqrla-*. Etymological considerations (see Melchert 1994a:343) point to a phonetic contrast in length (*ã* = /ã:/, *ẽ* = /ã/), but this is anything but assured, and one may entertain several other possibilities. As there are no glides, there are no diphthongs.

3.3 Accent

Eichner (1986a and 1986b) has convincingly established the essentials of the Lydian accent. While certain details of his analysis may require revision, the skepticism of Gusmani (1988b and elsewhere) of the overall scheme is wholly unjustified. As Eichner demonstrates, the Lydian vowels /e/, /o/, /ã/, and /ẽ/ regularly occur only under the accent. Using this and other

evidence (syncope and meter), he concludes that all simplex Lydian words are marked by a single accent, which is free to appear on any syllable. Aside from obscure and unanalyzable sequences, the only exceptions to this rule are univerbations of preverb and verb, and indeed, virtually all cases involve specifically the preverbs *ẽn-* and *ẽt-* "in(to)." Since metrical evidence suggests that in preverb–verb combinations the accent falls on the verb, the irregular appearance of *ẽ* in these cases is probably due to the influence of the associated free-standing adverb *ẽn*.

3.4 Synchronic variation

Various cases of allophonic variation have already been cited above. Aside from "sandhi-rules" simplifying certain consonant clusters at morpheme boundary (see Melchert 1994a:351), the only known morphophonemic rule is that by which the nasalized vowels *ã* and *ẽ* become *a* when unaccented: note again *cέqra-* versus *caqrlá-* cited above and see Eichner 1986b:211ff.

3.5 Phonotaxis

Lydian phonotactic restrictions differ markedly from those of the other Anatolian languages – in fact, this is superficially perhaps the most striking feature of the language from a comparative point of view. Prehistoric syncope at least as massive as that in Lycian plus regular apocope of original final short vowels combine to produce consonant clusters more typical of Caucasian languages than Indo-European: recall *dctdid* or *kśbλtok-*. For a very preliminary first attempt to describe the syncope see Melchert 1994a:373ff. All Lydian consonants occur word-initially except /ʎ/ and /ν/. Initial /r-/ is rare and surely secondary. Unlike its immediate Anatolian relatives, Lydian permits a wide range of final consonants, including several clusters. As the extreme examples cited above indicate, initial and medial clusters are frequent: for an exhaustive list see Melchert 1994a:352ff.

4. MORPHOLOGY

Lydian inflectional morphology is significantly reduced in comparison with other Anatolian languages or older Indo-European languages in general, but typologically it must still be regarded as belonging to the traditional *inflectional* class. The near-absence of demonstrable derivational morphology is surely also due to our limited understanding of the language.

4.1 Nominal morphology

The Lydian noun and adjective inflect for the expected two numbers (singular and plural) and two genders (animate and inanimate). Alleged examples of a separate feminine gender have conclusively been shown to be instead collective *pluralia tantum* (see Carruba 1969:44ff.). Assured cases include only nominative, accusative, and dative-locative. The inanimate gender naturally does not distinguish nominative and accusative in either singular or plural. One or two examples of the dative-locative plural (which formally represents the PIE genitive plural **-om*) appear to function as an adnominal genitive (*artimuλibśimvaν* "(to) Artemis of the Ephesians"), but this fact hardly justifies positing a distinct genitive case. Possession and appurtenance are regularly expressed in Lydian by a relational adjective which agrees with the head noun in gender, number, and case: for example, *siuvala/i-* "divine, of the

god(s)." This virtually complete replacement of the genitive case by a relational adjective is a characterizing feature of western Anatolian, shared with Luvian, Lycian, and surely also the poorly attested Carian, Pisidian, and Sidetic. The one or two alleged examples of an ablative-instrumental are almost surely false. The absence of evidence for such a case could be accidental, but one must seriously consider the possibility that Lydian expresses such relationships by the use of adpositions with the dative: note *artimuλdãv* probably "from Artemis." The formal markers for number, gender, and case are mostly recognizable as inherited, with the notable exception of the dative-locative singular in -λ, the origin of which is disputed. Noteworthy is the spread of the Proto-Indo-European pronominal neuter nominative-accusative singular ending in *-*d* to the noun and adjective: for example, *śfarvad* "oath."

Lydian shares the feature of "*i*-mutation" described above for Luvian and Lycian (see §4.1), but the phenomenon does not appear to be as widespread: see Starke 1990:82ff. and Melchert 1994b:232ff.

4.2 Pronouns

Lydian *amu* "I, me" shows the peculiar Anatolian *u*-vocalism of the first-person singular pronoun. The only assured deictic pronoun is *es-* "this," of uncertain origin. Decidedly less certain are *os-* "that" (see Eichner 1988) or *ãna-* "this" and *ẽna-* "that" (see Melchert 1991:137f.). The stem *bi-*, cognate with the deictic stem *apā-* "that" of Hittite, Palaic, and Luvian, functions in Lydian only as the stressed third-person pronoun "he, she, it, they." Lydian also has as expected enclitic personal pronouns, some formally straightforward (*-aν* "him, her, it," acc. sg. < *-*om*), others much less so (*-mλ* "to/for him, her," dat. sg.).

4.3 Verbal morphology

The verb has the expected three persons, and two tenses (present-future and preterite). Evidence for a mediopassive beside the active is uncertain, as are possible examples of an imperative contrasting with the indicative. It is tolerably certain that there is a distinction between singular and plural (preterite first singular *-ν* vs. preterite first plural *-νν*), but there clearly is no number distinction in the third person, either in the present or in the preterite (respectively *-t/d* and *-l*). An infinitive in *-l* seems reasonably assured, but the status of various proposed participial formations remains uncertain: see for all of this Gusmani 1964:42f.

5. SYNTAX

5.1 Word order and clause structure

The unmarked word order is SOV (Subject–Object–Verb), but fronting of the verb and other elements for emphasis is not uncommon, and one also finds extraposing of constituents to the right of the verb. These phenomena are by no means limited to the texts in verse. Relative clauses typically precede, with a resumptive pronoun in the main clause, but there are likely examples of postposed relative clauses. Adjectives, including demonstratives and relational adjectives, usually precede their head noun. At least one postposition, *dãv* "from," seems assured, and others are likely. Lydian cognates of the local adverbs found in other Anatolian languages appear to be limited to use as preverbs, and indeed only univerbated with the verb.

The conjunction *ak-* apparently links Lydian clauses prosecutively (cf. Luvian *a-* and functionally Hittite *nu*). The disjunctive conjunction *buk* "or" conjoins both clauses and noun phrases, while *-k* "also, and" apparently links only noun phrases. Putative subordinating conjunctions are all uncertain.

5.2 Clitics

Lydian shows the typical Anatolian use of anaphoric pronouns and sentential "particles" as enclitics to the first accented word in the clause. The function of the various particles is poorly understood, but see Melchert 1991 for the reflexive *-ś/is*.

5.3 Syntactic miscellanea

Lydian attests at least one example of the Anatolian usage of the dative for the direct object of an infinitive: *karola(v)=ś śfẽndav arvol*, literally, "of Karos (dat. pl.)-emphatic particle property (dat. pl.) to steal"; in other words, "to steal the property of **Karos**." The expected accusative is also found.

6. LEXICON

For reasons cited in §1 above, it is impossible to say anything useful concerning the Lydian lexicon.

7. READING LIST

Gusmani 1964 with supplements (1980, 1982, 1986) furnishes grammar, texts in transliteration, and lexicon combined, along with extensive bibliography. The most thorough discussion of the writing system is Gusmani (1978).

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