

Language Choices and Identity Reflections in Hellenistic Pamphylia: A Social Network Analysis of Funerary Inscriptions

This proposal aims to investigate the relationship between language choices and identity reflections within Hellenistic Pamphylian funerary epigraphy using a statistical approach. By employing Social Network Analysis (SNA), this study will focus on funerary epitaphs from the dialect-speaking community of Hellenistic Aspendos in Pamphylia. Through SNA, I will explore which language features were utilized as markers of identity and how language choices interact with other markers of identity.

The multilingual environment of Hellenistic Pamphylia was characterized by the cohabitation of different communities and cultures: Anatolian indigenous groups, who spoke a late form of Luwian, and Pamphylian Greek dialect-speaking communities, both subjected to the pressure of the institutional language of the Hellenistic kingdoms and their officers, the koine. The funerary *stelai* of the dialect-speaking community of Aspendos were inscribed with brief epitaphs (3rd-1st cent. BCE, as per *DGP*). These *stelai* exhibit a remarkable overall continuity in terms of their general appearance and layout, indicating the existence of a distinct epigraphic culture. However, they display various combinations of koine and epichoric linguistic and alphabetical traits (Selvi 2023), which point to the existence of different linguistic choices among the community. Such linguistic choices are particularly significant since we are dealing mostly with personal names, a specific sub-set of linguistic and orthographic evidence: they show phonological and morphological features that are inconsistent with the contemporary state of the language and have a high degree of intentionality (Morpurgo Davies 2000).

Through a SNA, I will examine the distribution of phonological and morphological linguistic features (e.g., the possible conservation of the posterior approximant in *anlaut* or the choice between Pamphylian masculine genitive singular $-\alpha\upsilon$ vs the koine-driven one $-\omicron\upsilon$) in a dataset of roughly one hundred inscriptions, comprising more than two hundred personal names of different linguistic origins, mainly Greek and Anatolian. The SNA focuses on understanding the relationships between individuals or entities within a social system and how those relationships influence the system's behavior (Mills 2017).

The paper will elucidate (1) which linguistic and alphabetical traits were more likely to be intentionally manipulated; (2) the patterns of language choices based on the linguistic origins of the deceased's personal names; (3) how these language choices interacted with other markers of identity, such as the material properties of the funerary *stelai*. Surprisingly, the preference for koine adaptations of epichoric personal names is not correlated with the linguistic origins of the deceased, but rather with conscious choices regarding the alphabet employed or the type of the stele. It becomes evident that linguistic choices played a pivotal role in shaping the position of individuals and the overall community in the multiethnic and multilingual society of Hellenistic Pamphylia, characterized by a constant tension, rather than a linear development, between

particularism and integration in the Hellenistic Greek world, as it was often the case for peripheral Greek (Consani 2017) or non-Greek Hellenized communities (Rizza 2018) in the Hellenistic period. The examination of linguistic and alphabetic features can therefore shed light on the linguistic diversity and identity dynamics of ancient Pamphylian society.

(500 words)

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