

Posted 6th December 2008

Perhaps the contents of the present answer to an inquiry by a doctoral candidate might hold some interest for others as well.

Attic and Demotic

Dear D.,

Your distinction between literary works and such as reflect the spoken language (i.e. demotic) is, of course, correct. You ask about the kind of language used in the following works:

From Apocryphal Texts

Gospel of James (Protevangelium Jacobi) (II A.D.)

From Old Testament and Intertestamental/Pseudepigraphal Literature

Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs (I-II A.D.)

Testament of Solomon (I-III A.D.)

Testament of Abraham (I B.C. - I A.D.)

3 Baruch (Greek Apocalypse of Baruch) (I-III A.D.)

Assumption of Moses (I A.D. ?)

Joseph and Aseneth (I B.C. - II A.D.)

4 Baruch (Paraleipomena Jeremiou) (I-II A.D.)

Apocalypse of Moses (=Life of Adam and Eve) (II-IV A.D.)

1 Enoch (I-II B.C.)

Apocryphon Ezechiel (I B.C. - I A.D.)

Other

Apology of Aristides (II A.D.)

Tatian (II A.D.)

Melito of Sardis (II A.D.)

Justin (II A.D.)

Athenagorus (II A.D.)

Theophilus Antiochenus (II A.D.)

Perhaps I might begin by delineating how I understand the relation between the literary (Attic, Atticistic, classical) form of the language and the demotic or spoken form of the language. I am conveniently citing a passage from a study on the interchange between perfect and aorist (unpublished, because it is reserved for inclusion in a new volume—if I get to finish it!) as well as a part of my paper “Atticism. Agenda and Achievement” (just finished) for the Symposium in honor of A. Jannaris, next June in St Andrews, Scotland. Although there is some overlapping between the two studies, they do complement each other.

From the “Perfect for Aorist” study:

«*Dimorphy*. It is important to remember here that the lofty Attic dialect that meets us in the works of established (sc. classical) authors such as Thucydides and Platon was an artistic language, the language of fine literature. The demands which this language would make on a presumptive speaker would be impossible to maintain. Besides, even if an Athenian had achieved such linguistic proficiency that he could speak *as* he wrote, how many might be those with whom he could converse in it? Is it not self-evident, then, that even the linguistic elites would have to use a simpler form of Attic in their everyday communication with those around them? Moreover, we must think of those Athenians who had a moderate education. Would they be able to converse in the Attic in which Platon and Demosthenes wrote their masterpieces? And finally, what of the great masses, the artisans, the laborers, the womenfolk and the slaves, who generally lacked education? They had no chance to use the delicate and highly complex syntax that we find in the literary works of art. Is it not obvious, then, that the Athenians must have used another form of Attic, non-periodic, much simpler, less elegant, less exact, more vernacular for their daily communicatory needs?¹ The conclusion seems to force itself on us that in the classical age there were two Attic forms, one literary and artistic, the other simpler and more popular.² This *dimorphia* has always existed in Greece. We are able to follow it concretely from the Atticistic revival in I B.C. all the way through Byzantine and Neohellenic times. The latest expression of it was the

¹ This position is shared also by Δ. ΜΑΥΡΟΦΥΔΗΣ, *Δοκίμιον ιστορίας τῆς ἐλληνικῆς γλώσσης*; Γ. ΧΑΤΖΙΔΑΚΙ, *Γλωσσολογικαὶ μελέται*, I, 238, 240, 358, 482,495, and Α. ΜΕΓΑ, *Ἱστορία τοῦ γλωσσικοῦ ζητήματος*, 2 Vols., 1925, rp. Athens: Δοδώνη 1997, I, 16-83 as well as by such non-Greek scholars as H. STEINTHAL; H. PAUL, *Principles of the History of Language*, London 1888, e.g. 1298f.; P. KRETSCHMER, “Über den Dialekt der attischen Vasenschriften” *Zeits. für vergleichende Sprachforschung*, 1888, 381-483; A. QUINN, “The Language Question in Greece” *Advanced Sheets*, Washington 1901, Ch. XXIII, pp. 1297-1319, and Α. MEILLET, *Aperçu d’ une Histoire de la langue Grecque*, Paris, 1920², 94-176;

² Many authors speak of a *diglossia*, though especially with reference to Katharevousa and Demotic. Inasmuch as diglossia strictly means two languages, Greek scholars, who regard Greek as one language, prefer the term *dimorphia*.

situation that obtained, for example, in the XIX and most of the XXth century. Modern Greek literatti such as Voulgaris, Mistriotis, Kontos, Hatzidakis, Jannaris, and a host of others (including academic treatises, learned journal articles and newspapers), wrote in *Katharevousa*, a puristic form of Greek (whose vocabulary is basically Attic), while in their everyday communications, they spoke a simplified form of Greek, a kind of Demotic».

From the lecture on “Atticism. Agenda and Achievement”

«*The language.* As is well-known, the process whereby Attic was reduced to the *Koinê* was a protracted one. It began with the founding of the Athenian Confederacy at the termination of the Persian Wars, in which the member states communicated with each other in the dialect of their leader.³ It received a new impetus when Philip II or his predecessor(s) adopted Attic as the official language of Macedonia in lieu of its own undeveloped Greek dialect.⁴ Already these events resulted in what Albert Thumb has called «Großattisch»,⁵ that is, a form of Greek in which Attic had lost its peculiar *characteristica* and flavor and acquired elements from the other dialects.⁶ The third event was the unification of the Hellenic states by Alexander, which brought about the amalgamation of the various dialects into what is known as *Koinê*,⁷ in which, however, Attic formed the basic understructure.⁸ In Alexander’s empire the great majority of Greeks used a form of Greek that was relatively different in vocabulary, form, and syntax from Attic, especially written Attic.⁹ The situation was further aggravated by the fact that Alexander’s empire had brought under its umbrella countless peoples of diverse cultural and linguistic background and proficiency, who were incapable of speaking and writing Greek

³ On the rise of the Koine, see esp. Thumb, *Die griechische Sprache*, esp. ch. 6. See also Niehoff-Panagiotidis, *Koine und Diglossie*, 197-222.

⁴ For the Greek of Macedonia, see Μπαμπινιώτη (ed.), *Ἡ γλῶσσα τῆς Μακεδονίας*, which contains the standard discussions by G. Hatzidakis, N. Andriotis, M. Sakellariou, and others; Sakellariou (ed.), *Macedonia*, 54-9, and the exhaustive study by Kalleris, *Etude anciens Macedoniens*. For recent archeological evidence, see A. Παναγιώτου, «Ἡ θέση τῆς Μακεδονικῆς», 319-25 and literature, pp. 374 f.

⁵ Albert Thumb, *Die griechische Sprache*.

⁶ Caragounis, *The Development of Greek*, 39 f.

⁷ Jannaris, «The True Meaning of the Κοινή», 92-6, has shown clearly that the term Κοινή is missapplied when used of post-classical Greek, and in particular of spoken Greek. The Greeks themselves applied it to those elements that were common among the various Greek dialects, such as Attic, Doric, Aiolic, Ionic, etc.

⁸ For a detailed examination of the rise of the *Koinê*, see Niehoff-Panagiotides, J., *Koine und Diglossie*, 195-222.

⁹ Caragounis, «Scholarship, Greek and Roman», 1065-86, esp. 1075.

properly.¹⁰ Inevitably, these introduced into Greek elements from their own native speech, as becomes abundantly clear from the barbarous documents of Egypt. It was, therefore, natural that, those who set great store by Attic standards, saw with consternation the demolition of the elegant instrument used so delicately by Platon and Demosthenes, and felt it their duty to put an end to the havoc played with it.

...

Atticism has often been accused of having divided the Greek language into a colloquial or spoken language and a puristic or written language.¹¹ This state of affairs has been termed «diglossia». The Greek term διγλωσσία was used first in 1830 by K. Oikonomou in his book *The Genuine Greek Pronunciation*, written to counteract Erasmianism.¹² Modern linguistics uses the Latinate term «bilingualism» to designate two different languages (as, for example, the situation that obtains in Belgium: French and Flemish) and the Greek term «diglossia» to describe a phenomenon such as the parallel use in Hellas of *Katharevousa* and *Dhimotiki*. The use of “diglossia” along with “bilingualism” causes no problem in European languages¹³ but it is unusable in Greek, because Greek διγλωσσία means the same thing as the Latinate «bilingualism».¹⁴ However, *Katharevousa* and *Dhimotiki* are not two entirely different languages (as e.g. French and Flemish), that is, with different morphology, phonology, vocabulary, and syntax.¹⁵ Therefore, I deem that the more correct procedure when speaking of Greek *Katharevousa* and *Dhimotiki* is to use the Greek term διμορφία—two forms of the one and the same Greek language.¹⁶

¹⁰ Cf. also Caragounis, *The Development of Greek*, 102 f.: «while the Attic dialect was becoming a world language, it also embarked upon a course that would inevitably lead it to its ‘collapse’. The agents to whom it owed its world domination were not the architects who had curved it with feeling and taste, but soldiers, engineers, technicians, physicians and second rate literati from every corner of the Greek world. When the barbarians, too, were in time invited to feast on its sumptuous table, the havoc was complete. All those features that had made it what it had been began to fall away. The precision, the delicateness, the expressiveness, the aesthetic beauty began to wane, to leave behind them the bare structure, imposing though it still was. Stripped of its finest, most intricate and delicate elements, it received the less sensitive equivalents from the other dialects, as well as new patterns that gave it a new appearance. Attic now became Koine».

¹¹ E.g. N. Ἀνδριώτης, *Ἱστορία*, 60, claims that Atticism «γέννησε τὴ διγλωσσία» («gave birth to diglossia»). See also Γ. Κορδάτου, *Ἱστορία*, *passim*, e.g. 25-28.

¹² Κ. Οικονόμου, *Περὶ τῆς γνησίας προφορᾶς*. Cf. also Κουμανούδη, *Συναγωγή*, s.v.

¹³ So it is used by e.g. Niehoff-Panagiotidis, *Koine und Diglossie*, 106 ff.

¹⁴ Niehoff-Panagiotidis, *Koine und Diglossie*, 108, rejects Babiniotis’ view, referring to Herring, p. 129. Unfortunately I could not find this work.

¹⁵ See also Μπαμπινιώτη, *Συνοπτικὴ Ἱστορία τῆς ἐλληνικῆς γλώσσας*, 172.

¹⁶ So, Μπαμπινιώτη, *Λεξικό*, correctly. Demoticists have been particularly prone to exaggerating the differences between *Katharevousa* and *Dimotiki* in order to argue their case.

The other point, namely, that Atticism introduced «diglossia» or *dimorphia* into Greek, must be rejected. This doctrine might be upheld only if we could prove that the maid in the Athenian kitchen or the slave in the stable spoke in the same way as Platon wrote his dialogues. Indeed, we might go further and say that even such masters of diction as Platon, Thoukydides, and Demosthenes did not speak in the way in which they composed their masterpieces. We know, for example, that Platon continually revised the wording of his dialogues, since, at his death, his writing-pad was found with the first eight words of the *Republic* arranged in several different ways,¹⁷ and Isokrates spent ten years improving the wording of his Πανηγυρικός.¹⁸ However, even if the masters of Attic diction had achieved such linguistic facility as to be able to converse spontaneously in the periodic manner in which they wrote their artistic compositions, how many persons would there be in Athens with whom they might converse? Is it not self-evident, then, that also the linguistic elites would have to use a simpler form of Attic in their everyday communications?¹⁹ And what of those Athenians who had a moderate or hardly any education — the great masses of artisans, laborers, seamen, the womenfolk, and the slaves? For all these categories, it is natural to assume, that they must have used another form of Attic, non-periodic, simpler, less elegant, less exact, and less artistic; such as is reflected in the private Attic inscriptions; in fact, lower than that, since spontaneous speech is always less deftly forged than written composition²⁰ ».

This means that the current demotic of a period is correspondingly different from the literary form, and that they go hand in hand. Unfortunately, we do not have any Greek literature, written in purely demotic, that is, in exactly the way in which people spoke, say at the time of the NT. This is, because in Greek tradition the desire to speak and to write the same form of language is modern,—and even this has not succeeded very well, since this is impossible. In previous times it was natural for the Greeks to speak one form but to write another. This has always been

¹⁷ Dionysios Hal., *The Art of Composition*, 25: ὁ δὲ Πλάτων τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ διαλόγους κτενίζων καὶ βοστρυχίζων καὶ πάντα ῥτρόπον ἀναπλέκων οὐ διέλιπεν.

¹⁸ Dionysios Hal., *The Art of Composition*, 25: οὐ γραπτοῖς ἀλλὰ γλυπτοῖς καὶ τορευτοῖς ἐοικότας ἐκφερόντων λόγους, λέγω δὲ Ἴσοκράτους ... τὸν πανηγυρικὸν λόγον. See also Demetrios, *On Style* 204; Quintilian *Institutio oratoria* VIII. 6, 64, and Diogenes Laertios, III. 37.

¹⁹ Cf. Somewhere in his works, Hatzidakis, who always wrote in *Katharevousa*, says that in his daily communications he used the simpler Demotic.

²⁰ A. E. Μέγας, in his *Ἱστορία τοῦ γλωσσικοῦ ζητήματος*, Vol. I, 15-72, has tried to prove «diglossia» in classical times by drawing attention to the many Aeolic, Doric, etc. words used by e.g. Aischylos, Sophokles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Platon *et al.* Now, the fact that the Athenian public understood quotations in other dialects, does not constitute «diglossia». «Diglossia» or what is more preferable, «dimorphia», would occur only if the Athenians used two types of Attic, one simpler, the other artistic. And this was actually the case, only that this cannot be proved from the quoted authors. It is an inescapable conclusion, whose only extant evidence are the popular inscriptions.

the case. And in a sense this is true of all languages. Even in English we do not write in the way in which we speak. The written form is always more carefully formulated, uses words more exactly, it is more artistic, etc. Now the difference between the literary and the demotic (spoken) became in Hellenistic times wider than it had been in classical times, because of the spread of Hellenism. This brought into the language region many non-Greeks, who only spoke a kind of Greek, as e.g. the Jews at Alexandria, evidenced in the LXX. The LXX Greek is not the Greek of the contemporary Greeks, but a kind of foreigner's Greek heavily influenced by OT Hebrew notions and diction as well as Jewish conceptualization. At this time we also have another important factor: the change of religion from paganism to Christianity. This was a very potent factor, because the old, heathen ways of conceptuality in life, worldview, etc. now undergo a radical change. To express the new beliefs a new vocabulary and new thought forms are needed. And since the message is directed toward the simple people, a simpler form of Greek is used (no doubt these writers (usually non-Greek)—even if they desired—had not the ability to write in the periodic manner of classical Greeks). Thus, this entire literature: the LXX, the NT, the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, and the whole early Christian tradition is written in the non-classical, non-literary tradition, which was bordering on the spoken form. We may then say that these writings are much closer to the demotic tradition of the times than they are to the Attic tradition, but they do not constitute purely demotic Greek. The OT thematology, worldview, mentality, expression, diction (carried over into Greek through the LXX) is rife everywhere in this corpus. And no Greek, particularly pagan Greek, would ever express himself in the way things are expressed in the LXX or in the NT. But there is another point to remember: even though the language of this literature is not Atticistic, it may sporadically contain Atticistic elements, because it is written Greek, and written Greek is always more upgraded than spoken Greek. It is, therefore, impossible to demarcate these writings and to subsume them under one category or another, i.e. classicistic, or colloquial, or simply Jewish Greek. A writing may be written in the simpler language, coming close to demotic, and yet contain Attic expressions, vocabulary (and here we need to remember that the Attic vocabulary permeated the entire history of Greek since classical times, even to Neohellenic demotic), phraseology, etc.

I would make, however, one general distinction. While the apocryphal and pseudepigraphic writers followed in the LXX and NT tradition, the Christian apologists and other early defenders of the Christian faith, who often were educated Greeks, lawers, etc., kept closer to a more upgraded language, and thus come closer to Atticistic Greek than the LXX and its followers. This is a rule of thumb, but, obviously, to go into more detail in actual passages, one will have to take up each passage and treat it with scientific meticulousness.

What I have said above concerns the writings you mention as wholes. I have taken on myself to make or or two individual comments on these writings.

The Protevangelion Iakobou

As a whole this writing is nearer the demotic than the literary style.

It is not written in classical Greek. It is, of course, written in simpler demotic Greek, but it does exhibit Semitic elements:

2.10 ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὴν ἔρημον may be Semitic

9.4 Καὶ ἰδοὺ ἤκει Ἰωακεὶμ reflects the Heb. יַיָּקִיִּם (many such construction throughout the book, e.g. 18.3-4)

9.12-13 ἐκρέμασεν αὐτὴν εἰς τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ corresponds to Neohellenic demotic κρέμομαι ἀπὸ τὸν λαιμὸν τινος/κάποιου, κρεμάσθηκε ἀπὸ τὸν λαιμὸν του (λαιμός = τράχηλος)

17.14 καὶ εἵελθε καὶ πρόσευξαι the use of καί is that of Semitic ו. (similarly 19.7-9)

41.4 ἕως ἔρθη is Neohellenic Demotic. Neohellenic Katharevousa should have been ἕως ἔλθη (so, too, 41.4 textus Z)

47.12 καὶ εἶδαν τὸ γεγονός The form εἶδαν is Neohellenic Demotic. The classical and Katharevousa form would have been εἶδον.

Testaments of XII Patriarchs

Semitic elements, e.g. constructions such as:

Test Ruben I, 6 ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ νεότητος, καὶ πορνείας

II.1 περὶ τῶν ἐπτὰ πνευμάτων τῆς πλάνης (cf. Eph. 2:2 υἱοὶ τῆς ἀπειθείας) occur very often. Un-Greek!

V.1 πῶς αὐτὸν πρὸς αὐτὰς ἐπιστάσονται. Here the pronouns are used as in later, demotic. The classical ought to have been: πῶς τοῦτον πρὸς ἑαυτὰς.

There is also here a strange use of ἄνθρωπος in the sense of “man” in contradistinction to “woman” (e.g. V.3-4) (although ἄνθρωπος can stand for ‘man’, when no comparison to a woman is intended). This is unclassical. But even for Neohellenic feeling, this is unacceptable. It should be ἀνὴρ / ἄνδρα.

Test Levi II.7: εἶδον ὕδωρ κρεμάμενον ἀνάμεσον τούτου καὶ ἐκείνου is later (frequent in LXX) and demotic (mediaeval and demotic Neohell. [ἀνάμεσα]). This reflects the Hebrew וְ... וְ... (between ... and ...). In classical Greek the expression

would have used: **μεταξύ**: cf. Platon, *Symposion* 202A: **μεταξύ σοφίας καὶ ἀμαθίας**.

III.9 οἱ οὐρανοὶ καὶ ἡ γῆ ... **ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου** ... σαλεύονται

This expression, too, is Semitic (occurring frequently in LXX). The passage in Xenophon, *Kynegetikos* 4.2 αἱ κύνες, ἔχονται ἰσχυραὶ τὰ εἶδη, ἔλαφραί, κύμμετροι, ποδώκειες, καὶ **ἀπὸ τῶν προσώπων** φαιδραὶ καὶ εὐστομοὶ is no parallel use.

VIII.1 οὐ παντί is the well known Hebrew construction. Totally un-Greek.

Test Judah I.6 καὶ ἐγένετο, ὡς ἠνδρώθη, **καὶ** ὁ πατήρ μου Ἰακώβ ἠύξατο μοι, the use of **καὶ** (= Heb, ו) is typically Semitic and frequent in MT and LXX.

X.3 ἔχειν τέκνα ἀπ' αὐτῆς is demotic Neohellenic (νὰ ἔχει τέκνα ἀπ' αὐτήν), but, I do not recall a classical example.

XIII.2 καὶ μὴ πορεύεσθαι ὀπίσω τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν ὑμῶν ... ἐν ὑπερηφανείᾳ καρδίας ὑμῶν ... ἐν ἔργοις ἰσχύος ... etc. is thoroughly Semitic in structure

Test Naphthali II.7 καὶ ὡς κεχώρισται **ἀνάμεσον** φωτὸς **καὶ** σκότους, ὀράσεως καὶ ἀκοῆς· οὕτω κεχώρισται **ἀνάμεσον** ἀνδρὸς **καὶ** ἀνδρὸς ... is also a Semitic construction.

First Enoch

Its language is steeped in the Semitic way of thinking and expression. Take any sentence (e.g. the simple sentences in C1-10) and compare with e.g. Dion of Prousa or Aelius Aristides' complex diction, who write Atticistically, and you will see the difference.

Joseph and Aseneth

This is a very semitic writing, consisting almost entirely of paratactic sentences. Its use of **καὶ** is so ubiquitous that it must certainly exceed that of Mark's Gospel. ... Now I have actually counted the καί's. It occurs 1045 times in a total vocabulary of 9004 words, that is 1 **καί** in every 8,6 words. Mark's figures are: 1 **καί** in every 13,4 words.

Apocalypsis Barouch

This, too, is a Semitic work, simple, direct style, without ornamentation, brief, paratactic sentences, nothing of the Attic or literary heavily and complexly constructed sentences. An example such as 2.1.1: καὶ ὅπου ἦν ποταμὸς ὃν οὐδεὶς

δύναται περᾶσαι **αὐτόν**, the redundant pronoun reminds us of Revelation, e.g. 2:7: τῷ νικῶντι δώσω **αὐτῷ**. This kind of construction occurs also in Neohellenic (see exx. in *The Development of Greek & NT*)

4 Barouch

Written in the spirit and style of the OT (LXX)

Vita Adam et Eve

This writing, too, is Semitic in character, cf. e.g. 3,1: τὸ μυστήριον ὃ οἶδας μὴ ἀναγγείλης Κάϊν τῷ υἱῷ σου, ὅτι **ὀργῆς υἱός ἐστιν**, containing the well-known Hebrew expression, as above, under *Test Ruben*. Everywhere the diction reflects the Hebrew OT, carried over to the LXX.

Assumptio Mosis

The same relates to this writing. It is as far from classical Greek as can be.

Testament of Abraham

Again clearly Semitic character. The first few pages remind us of Gen 17 f., according to which God ('s angel) visits Abraham, promising him a son and Abraham's hospitality, even though the Genesis account lacks the naive miracle story-telling of the *Testament of Abraham*.

Testament of Solomon

Similar commentary as for *Test of Abraham*.

Apocryphon Ezechiel

This work, too, is written in the Jewish tradition. The theme, the ideas, the diction is similar to the other pseudepigraphical works. All of them draw from the OT thematology, often alluding to the wording of specific OT passages, and are as far from Greek (classical) thinking and expression as can be.

The Apologists

Apology of Aristeides

Aristeides was a philosopher from Athens. In the opinion of Prof Balanos (professor of Church History, Athens Univ.) Aristeides had a mediocre education and authorial talent, though he is a lucid writer. The few fragments of his work we possess show that he writes on another level than the Jewish authors, mentioned above. His diction is Greek rather than Semitic. But he seeks to write a literary Greek rather than demotic.

Tatian

It is interesting that Balanos writes of Tatian:

Σημειωτέον δ' ὅτι στερούμενος λογογραφικοῦ ταλάντου καὶ χάριτος καὶ ἔχων ἔκφρασιν ἀνώμαλον καὶ ἐξεζητημένην, καίτοι οὐχὶ ἄνευ πρωτοτυπίας καὶ δυνάμεως τινος, καθίσταται δυσανάγνωστος καὶ δυσνόητος ἐνιαχοῦ
 (“It must be noted that he lacks authorial talent and gracefulness, has an irregular and far-fetched expression, and although he is not without some originality and power of expression, he becomes at places hard-to-read and hard-to-understand”).

It seems to me that he, too, like Aristeides, seeks to write in Greek style rather than the style of the LXX, although he does include OT quotes. I think that a comparison between his writing and that of any of the Jewish writings mentioned above, will show up the difference in diction, vocabulary, phraseology, and syntax. I would not call his style exactly demotic.

Meliton of Sardeis

This author, too, writes an upgraded form of Greek. It would not be the colloquial of the times, but is patterned after the literary form. Then, there are various degrees of Atticistic diction (this was so even in classical times, e.g. Lysias writes much more simply than Platon or Thoukydides) as there are various degrees of stringency today in Katharevousa (austere Kath., simple Kath.) and Demotic (higher or lower [cf. *malliaros* in *The Development of Gr.*, ch. 1]).

Justin

Justin had studied various philosophical traditions before becoming a Christian. He was particularly fond of Platon, and continued to wear the philosopher's garb even

as a Christian, believing that Christianity was the true philosophy. He undertook to defend Christianity against philosophers and before emperors. It is obvious, then, that such a person was educated. His language is not the demotic of the times, but like the previous apologists, he wrote for an educated pagan audience and tried to express himself in a way that would be acceptable to them.

Athenagoras

He was an Athenian philosopher. He, too, appreciated Platon. He writes in a meticulous manner, has long sentences and often long parentheses, which make reading more difficult. His works cannot be compared to the writings that take their cue from the LXX. He writes an Atticistic Greek.

Theophilos of Antioch

Theophilos received a good Greek education and his diction is judged by Balanos to be “simple and elegant”. He uses short sentences, clear and easy to understand, but expresses himself in a literary fashion.

In conclusion, then, I think that the Greek of the Apologists must be distinguished from the Greek of the Biblical and Apocryphal-Pseudepigraphic authors.

I hope the above is of some help.

With best regards,

Chrys C. Caragounis