

SPORADIC DIALECT

A “sporadic dialect” is any dialect attested by one or more texts that, while certainly idiolectal, are of a “transparent” IDIOLECT, allowing one to see clearly the greater part of the essential dialectal [characteristics](#) of the idiom; however, throughout the document(s), these characteristics are rivaled by those of another dialect that is continually more strongly attested.

A sporadic dialect may be known only from almost pure witnesses that are not idiolectal, but are (like Husselman, 1947, and Quecke, 1974, for *B4*, a subdialect of *B*; cf. DIALECTS) probably (and unfortunately) too brief to provide a truly exhaustive description of most of its principal phonological and other characteristics.

Such was the case with *M* when Kahle (1954, pp. 120-27) described it before the discovery of the four great manuscripts known today: the Psalms (in rather good condition, but unpublished), the [Gospel](#) of Matthew (in perfect condition and carefully edited by Schenke, 1981), the first half of Acts (in perfect condition, but unpublished), and the Pauline epistles (with many lacunae, and rapidly published by Orlandi, 1974).

Such was also the case with *B74* (a southern [?] and slightly archaic [?]) subdialect of *B*; cf. DIALECTS), which forms one of the components of the idiolect P. [Bodmer](#) III (first hand), before the discovery of Vat. Copto 9, a [papyrus codex](#) of the [Minor Prophets](#) now in the Vatican Library but still unpublished (cf. Kasser 1958, and 1966, p. 66-76).

So it is, and even more evidently, with DIALECT , a PROTODIALECT of *L*, for in , where may appear for /ç/ (60 percent of the cases), it is strongly rivaled by *s*, (40 percent; cf. Kasser, 1979; 1980b, pp. 83-84; 1981, pp. 112-13).

A partially sporadic dialect (or PROTODIALECT, METADIALECT, or

subdialect) will, like *P*, for example, have some of its essential phonemic [characteristics](#) fully attested by orthography (thus =/ç/, q = /x/), while others will be attested only in sporadic fashion (thus = // in a primitive state of evolution only [graphic vocalic duplication in a secondary state, as in *S*, but also frequently omitted], and so on; cf. Kasser, 1980a).

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