

ONE, TWO, MANY LATINIS: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE PRONUNCIATION OF LATIN AND LATIN-ROMANCE DIGLOSSIA

by

KEVIN RICHARD ROTH

(Under the Direction of Jared Klein)

ABSTRACT

From the modern perspective the divide between Latin and the Romance Languages is so well established that one is tempted to regard such a development as inevitable. The terms “Vulgar Latin” and “Classical Latin” are so familiar that it is easy to imagine that the former changed over time into the Romance Languages while the latter remained the same. This scenario, however, does not take into account the ability of languages to be sufficiently elastic that the written form can retain archaic grammar and vocabulary while the spoken form advances. The preponderance of surviving evidence supports the view that Latin and forms of Romance were not consciously distinguished from one another until the Carolingian Renaissance c. AD 800. This eventual dichotomy seems to have been prompted, not by natural development, but rather by a reform in the pronunciation of Latin that was promoted at this time by the monk Alcuin. The new pronunciation eventually occasioned written forms of the Romance Languages.

INDEX WORDS: Latin, Romance Languages, Diglossia, Bilingualism, Alcuin of York, Carolingian Renaissance, Vulgar Latin, Medieval Latin, Latin grammarians

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my mother, Frances Roth, who first encouraged me to pursue foreign languages and who bought me my first Latin textbook in 1998 (when I was in 9th grade), and to my future wife, Katie McLean, who has provided me with comfort and care throughout the entirety of my graduate study in Athens.

Quod scripsi, scripsi.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Of the many languages of the world that are written with alphabetic scripts, some use more phonetic systems than others, and Latin, as studied today, is generally considered to be a language whose orthography displays a close correlation between sound and symbol. There are no silent letters, the bane of students of English and French. For the most part each discreet sound is represented by only one symbol. Since Latin is today taught and studied with a phonetic orthographic system, it is easy to assume that it has had a continuous history of spoken usage in which speakers, ideally, pronounced words more or less as one would expect from spelling, as is done today (insofar as Latin continues to be spoken). There is a great deal of evidence, though, that Latin as we know it today is an artificial construct. The true Latin language evolved over time into the various modern Romance languages: French, Spanish, Italian, etc. Latin survived as a distinct and actively used language into modern times, alongside the Romance languages, because of a reformation that occurred at the court of Charlemagne during the Carolingian Renaissance around the year AD 800. Orthographic reforms are common phenomena, which strive to update spelling to reflect prevailing current pronunciation, but the reformation that Latin underwent at that time was an alternation in pronunciation based on spelling. Prior to this, as is clear through historical Romance linguistics, the ancient Latin language had changed sufficiently that it could more properly be called Romance. What we identify as Latin, though, remained in use as the written form of the language. The norms of written composition (in the form of syntax, vocabulary, etc.) as specified in the works of grammarians, were largely maintained as before, despite the ever-increasing discrepancy

between the written and spoken forms of the language. Such situations, though, are common, even among modern languages. The conceptual difference, within the minds of speakers between Latin and Romance did not emerge until a second, reformed pronunciation came into use. This change also gave rise to the need to have some way of indicating the pronunciation of the vernacular. Thus, written Romance came about when the phonetic principle, which had earlier been applied to pronunciation of the written language (thus creating Latin as a distinct written *and spoken* form), was applied in turn to the writing of the standard spoken vernacular (thus begetting the various Romance languages as distinct spoken *and written* forms). In this way, the unitary nature of Latin first evolved into a relationship of diglossia between formal and colloquial registers of Latin, and then was transformed into the status of bilingualism between Latin and the local forms of Romance, some of which eventually became literary languages in their own right, the modern Romance languages.

CHAPTER 2

DIGLOSSIA

The reign of Charlemagne (768-814), a period which is often called the “Carolingian Renaissance” because of the reformation of education and revival of the study of ancient Latin literature, is a liminal era in the history of Latin and the Romance languages. It was during this period that we have the first clear contemporary reference to Latin-Romance diglossia. We must first establish what is meant by “diglossia,” since the term has acquired various meanings over time. In the eponymous 1959 article that introduced the term “diglossia,” linguist Charles Ferguson of Stanford University defined it thusly:

A relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. (Wei, 2000: 75).

In this article, Ferguson used the example of four languages, each of which was dichotomized into high (H) and low (L) varieties: Classical vs. Egyptian Arabic; Standard vs. Swiss German; French vs. Haitian Creole; and Katharevousa vs. Demotic Greek. Near the end, he explicitly makes reference to “Latin and the emergent Romance languages during a period of some centuries in various parts of Europe” (*ibid.*, 77) as a further example of diglossia, though he does not elaborate on this point.

According to Ferguson’s original definition, there are two defining traits of diglossia: (1) differentiated, complementary usage of varieties of (2) the same language. Scholarly usage of

the term, especially in sociological and anthropological contexts, began to place more emphasis on the former characteristic and to ignore the second. Thus, the label “diglossia” began to be applied to the linguistic states found in places such as Malta, where Maltese (a form of Arabic written with the Latin alphabet), English, and Italian (which are quite patently not varieties of the same language) are all widely spoken, and Paraguay, where Spanish co-exists with Guaraní in the capacity of many speakers. Eventually, the term effectively subsumed, if it did not become completely synonymous with, “bilingualism,” since in any situation where a speaker commands two languages, their usage is almost inherently in complementary distribution (Winford, 1985: 346). That is to say, rarely does a speaker use two languages interchangeably in a single context or situation, and thus any situation of bilingualism inherently also includes the first (1) characteristic of diglossia ([2] having been disregarded).

For the purposes of this investigation, Ferguson’s original understanding of “diglossia” will be utilized. It will be differentiated on the one hand from bilingualism, in which two idioms are kept conceptually distinct as languages, and on the other hand from the normal differentiation of a single language into varying dialects and registers that are used distinctly, which is a universal characteristic of languages. Diglossia is a midway point between the two situations. As with all attempts to categorize types of speech with the label “language” or “dialect”, it is impossible to specify objective criteria that can clearly differentiate the varieties of a single language from diglossia, and diglossia from bilingualism. The only standard that can be used is the attitude of the speakers themselves. In the case of Latin and Romance, we must make use of the written evidence to determine that attitude.

CHAPTER 3

PHONETIC WRITING SYSTEMS

Although languages are often described as “phonetic” or otherwise, strictly speaking the term “phonetic” applies only to writing systems. In describing Latin as a language with phonetic orthography, it must be kept in mind that any writing system is only an approximation of spoken forms. There are even shortcomings within the orthography of languages famous for the close correspondence maintained between sound and symbol. Italian does not indicate in writing any differences between open and closed *e* and *o*, even though the difference is phonemic and not allophonic. Spanish maintains *b* and *v* as distinct graphemes, even though both letters represent the phoneme /b/ (which has the allophonic value [β] intervocalically). Nor does Spanish indicate that syllable-final *-s* is very often dropped in speech, or that intervocalic *d*, which is regularly a fricative rather than a stop in this position, is very frequently reduced to nothing (a common phenomenon diachronically in Romance languages). The Spanish digraph *ll* has at least three distinct pronunciations, depending on the country. In Russian, word accentuation is unmarked and unpredictable, even though it is critical for correct pronunciation, since many unaccented vowels are reduced. The value of the symbols *o* and *e* in Catalan vary, when accented, between open and closed versions (just as in Italian and Portuguese), but additionally the value of the former is raised to *u* and the latter is reduced to *ə* in all unstressed positions. Additionally, many (but not all) instances of word final *-r* are silent, but not in any systematic way (Yates, 1975: 15-16). Such examples of the limits of letter-sound correspondence in “phonetically” written languages are legion.

At the same time, though, it must be recognized that some orthographic systems are much

more phonetic than others. When asked for the spelling of a word, Italians will pronounce the word slowly, rather than indicating each individual letter (Aski, 2010: 8). This approach would obviously not work very well in, say, English or French, let alone Chinese. Therefore, when Latin is described as having a “phonetic” writing system, it is to be understood that in this way Latin is grouped together with languages such as Spanish and Italian that have more phonetic orthographies, and differentiated from tongues like English and French, with their systematically or unsystematically unphonetic systems. This distinction has important ramifications, since the degree to which a language’s writing is phonetic greatly affects the manner by which one learns to read and write it. Finally, it must be remembered that people are equally capable of learning phonetic and unphonetic writing systems. The latter are, perhaps, more complicated and difficult initially to learn, but this is by no means an insurmountable obstacle.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEMPORARY PRONUNCIATION OF LATIN

Before we can address the issue of the ancient pronunciation of Latin, we must have a clear understanding of how the language is orally articulated today. The discussion of the current pronunciation of Latin is complicated, however, by the fact that there is no single system that is used throughout the world. This is due to the fact that Latin today has no native speakers and that there is only a very small body of people who are able and willing to use Latin as an active means of oral or written communication (as opposed to the much larger group of individuals who have a basically passive understanding of Latin, that is to say that they can read it). The current status quo is quite in contrast to the situation that prevailed in the past. Even if Latin has had no native speakers for centuries, until recently it was very widely used in writing and aided international communication as an auxiliary language. At any rate, the role of oral Latin today, spoken in any of a series of varying pronunciation schemata, is largely confined to reading aloud written material and to facilitating the learning of the language, the goal of which instruction is largely directed toward the understanding of texts. Even proponents of a larger use of spoken Latin in the classroom view it as a means of better understanding writings. What unites all the modern ways of pronouncing Latin is that they are based on the understanding that the writing system is almost totally phonetic, and so much more akin to Italian than French in this respect.

The form of Latin nearly always taught today is the literary language, usually called “Classical Latin,” that was utilized in the composition of the great works of the Golden and Silver Ages of Latin literature. What the designation “Classical Latin” entails will be further

elaborated below, but it is commonly assumed that its orthography is a very close guide to the pronunciation of that version of the language. “It is easy to learn to pronounce Latin correctly, since the written symbols of the language – the letters – correspond each to a single sound (more or less)” (Solodow, 2010: 78). “In Classical Latin, where the letters still corresponded closely to the sounds, a spelling error was almost certain to reflect an error in pronunciation” (*ibid.*, 115).

Given the central role that Latin has played in the Roman Catholic Church, it is not surprising that the pronunciation favored by the Church has enjoyed wide acceptance as the correct form. It is well known that this pronunciation is reminiscent of Italian. In fact, it could be said that the official pronunciation is simply Italian phonetics grafted onto Latin. A word of Latin is pronounced as a similarly-spelled word would be in Italian. The sound changes, of course, that were originally responsible for the differences between Latin words and their Italian successors are no longer operable. For example, in Italian the consonant cluster *ns* was simplified to *s*, and atonic *ŭ* was lowered to *o*. Thus, Latin *insula* became Italian *isola*. These are quite obviously the same word diachronically, the latter the product of sound changes that all words were subject to.

The method favored by the Catholic Church is laid out in the book *Latin Pronunciation According to Roman Usage*, first published in 1937 and reprinted in 1971. In this case, “Roman” refers to the Roman Catholic Church, and not ancient Rome. The book’s purpose was “correcting commonly mispronounced vowels and consonants” due to “a general demand on the part of teachers, choir directors, organists, and singers” (Hall, 1971: 2). Although the introduction specifies that the guide presented in the book is the correct “*Roman*” pronunciation, it does not make clear what alternatives this version is contrasted to. The assumption of the term “Roman” makes implicit the understanding that this pronunciation schema is valid for the

entirety of the Catholic Church, and not just for the singing of songs and hymns in Latin. The key features of the guide are the following:

1. Each vowel has only one value. In the case of *e* and *o*, these are the open pronunciations of Italian. In this way the system departs from Italian usage, since in that language those two vowels have both open and closed values, neither of which is indicated in writing.
2. The digraphs *ae* and *oe* are both pronounced as *e*. *Y* has the same value as *i*.
3. The digraph *ei* is treated as two separate vowels, rather than as a diphthong.
4. The consonants *g* and *c* have both hard and soft versions, depending on the following vowels. *E*, *i*, *y*, *ae*, *oe*, and *eu* all signal the soft version, respectively the affricates [dʒ] and [tʃ]. The hard values are [g] and [k], as in Italian.
5. The digraph *gn* is a palatalized *n*, as in Italian.
6. *H* is silent. Originally Greek digraphs with *h* as the second element are pronounced in this way: *ph* [f], *ch* [k], *th* [t]. These digraphs are generally replaced with their phonetic equivalents in Italian (e.g. *telefono*).
7. *S* is always devoiced. It is never voiced, even intervocalically.
8. The digraph *sc* has the value [ʃ] before the set of vowels enumerated above that generate the soft versions of *c* and *g*, as in Italian.
9. *J* (i.e. consonantal *i*) has a palatal value, to which the vocalic value [i] is added, either before (if *j* begins a word) or after.
10. The digraph *qu* is pronounced [kw], as in modern Italian.
11. The combination *ti*, when followed by a vowel and preceded by a letter other than *s*, *t* or *x* is pronounced as the affricate [ts]

12. Z is pronounced as the affricate [dz]. In Italian, this value can be either unvoiced [ts] or voiced [dz]. The correct form must be learned, since it is not indicated in spelling.

All other letters are pronounced the same way as in Italian and English. As this listing makes clear, the system is largely, but not completely, based on Italian. Most notably, the sequence *ti*, in the environments described above, has the value which it assumed in Italian, though in Italian today it is written with a different letter. Underlying Latin *ti* has become *z* in Italian today.

In the United States today the pronunciation of Latin taught in schools (to judge from the preponderance of textbooks) could be described as a reconstructed ancient version. During the 19th century, discoveries in the field of Romance philology made it clear that in ancient times Latin was pronounced differently from the manner then prevalent in education. The current system was known at least as early as 1851, when S. S. Haldeman of the University of Pennsylvania described it in detail in his book *Latin Pronunciation*. This led some scholars to propose that this reconstructed version be used in education. During the later decades of the 1800s, whether to use the new or traditional pronunciation prompted serious debate within academia.

In 1879 Prof. M. M. Fisher of the University of Missouri published a book on the subject of the various manners of pronouncing Latin, which he grouped into three categories: the Continental, English, and Roman methods. The first named was not so much a particular system as a collection of versions: those practiced among the countries of Europe, in all of which the pronunciation of Latin was guided by the phonology of the local language (Fisher, 1885: 23):

French: c = s before e, i, and y
 g = s in *pleasure*, before e, i, and y
 j (consonantal i) = z in *azure*
 v = v, as in English

Italian: c = ch in *cherry*, before e, i, and y
 g = g in *gem*
 j = ee in *fee* (a vowel)
 v = v in English

Portuguese: c = s, as in French (see above)

g = s, as in French

j = z, as in French

v = v, as in French

Spanish: c = th in *pith*, before e and i

g = *ch* guttural

j = *ch* guttural, before all vowels

v = v, as in French

German: c = ts before e and i

g = g in *go*

j = y

v = f

(the formulation of the rules

converting orthography to phonetic

realizations are Fisher's)

Fisher's presentation of the variations is probably inaccurate in some details. If the pronunciation of Latin were otherwise the same as Spanish, it is difficult to imagine that Latin *v* would be pronounced [v] rather than [β], or that intervocalic *b* would be produced as [b] rather than [β] in Hispanophone countries. Nevertheless, the main point is clear: on the continent, Latinists pronounced the language according to the same orthographic rules as their own. The English method was largely the same as the Continental: that is, Latin words were pronounced according to English phonetics, as seen in the normal rendering of the medical term *angina*.

The so-called Roman method, also known as the Latin or Reformed method, had been introduced by Haldeman in 1851 (Fisher, 1885: 30). By 1876, American colleges and universities were approximately evenly split between the three schemata (*ibid.*, 108-117). Fisher himself, though he acknowledged the historical accuracy of the Roman method, opted to strongly recommend the use of the English method, largely because of the number of Latin terms and expressions in English whose normal pronunciation was according to that method, and which would sound quite unusual and foreign if pronounced in the Roman style. Fisher had a valid point. Quoting Caesar's famous line *veni, vidi, vici* according to the Roman method renders the phrase almost comical to those familiar with it in the Italianate pronunciation usually assigned to it.

Despite Fisher's recommendation, he could not prevent the spread of the Roman method.

Charles Bennett, the author of a well-known Latin grammar, and George Bristol, both of Cornell University, writing in 1899, described how the “Roman or quantitative pronunciation of Latin” (i.e. the recreated ancient system) had become widely accepted at schools and universities some twenty years earlier (Bennett, 1903: 66). This was around the same time that Fisher had been writing. They contrasted this version with the English pronunciation, which had been in general use before the introduction of the new way, and the continental, which was actually a series of different pronunciations depending on the norms of the local language. They estimated that at the time of writing, perhaps only 5% of secondary schools and a smaller proportion of colleges still used either the English or Continental system (*ibid.*, 67). After describing in detail the intellectual underpinning of the revised system, they came out in opposition to it, not on account of any perceived flaws in the methodology of its reconstruction, but rather because:

1. It was difficult for teachers and professors, let alone students, to accurately utilize the new system in speech. There was especial difficulty in maintaining a difference in vowel length, remembering correct vowel quantity, pronouncing doubled consonants, and replacing the strong stress accent of English with the lighter kind of Latin. Although the system was beautiful in theory, it was butchered in practice. “Even college professors of eminence often frankly admit their own ignorance of vowel quantity and proclaim their despair of ever acquiring a knowledge of it” (*ibid.*, 76).
2. The potential advantage to be gained in better understanding of Latin versification was lost because of the difficulty of remembering vocalic quantity.
3. It created a competing system of pronunciation for countless well-known Latin quotations, proverbs, technical terms, legal phrases, etc.

The authors admitted that they had been initial enthusiasts for the new system, but eventually came to see its deficiencies and chose to recommend the English system. Despite their indictment of the new system’s shortcomings, they were no more able to prevent its general acceptance in American institutions of learning than Fisher had been.

Bennett and Bristol never specify the details of the traditional English system they favor,

perhaps because they assumed that it was already familiar to their reading audience. The system can be seen in the standard pronunciation of the Latin expression *vice versa*, which basically follows the norms of English pronunciation (insofar as there are any). The origin of the English system lies in the version of Latin brought to England after the Norman conquest. Before 1066, of course, Latin had been widely known and used in England, and its pronunciation was probably influenced by Old English norms, such as the “soft” value of *g*, which was the palatal semi-vowel [j] before front vowels, as in Anglo-Saxon. This method was replaced by the one that was used in France in the 11th century, which itself reflected the then standard pronunciation of French. Soft *g* and consonantal *i* had the value [dʒ], as they did in French at that time. The change from [dʒ] to [ʒ] in French (and in French pronunciation of Latin) did not occur until after the English connection to France had withered and the French-speaking aristocracy had become assimilated linguistically. Soft *c* was originally [ts], but it became [s] under the influence of the change in French in that direction in the 13th century. During the long period of the Great Vowel Shift in English (a phenomenon that began after Chaucer’s day and was largely complete by Shakespeare’s time [Baugh, 2002: 238]), the standard value of the long vowels in English was raised or diphthongized, and this phenomenon affected the pronunciation of Latin *a*, *e*, and *i* along the same lines (Allen, 1989: 105). Latin was pronounced in England according to these norms until the early 20th century (*ibid.*, 106). The system used in the United States was, of course, inherited from England, though here the traditional English system was rejected some decades before it was across the Atlantic.

The English method of Latin pronunciation was described at length by G.J. Adler of New York University in his Latin textbook of 1858. He prefaced his discussion of vowels with the comment, “respecting the proper sounds of these vowels, there is at present no uniformity of

usage, the common custom in vogue among the different nations of Europe being that of following the analogy of their respective vernacular idioms. This has given rise to a diversity of pronunciations, among which the English and the Continental are the most conspicuous” (Adler, 1858: 2). There follows a chart of the values of vowels and diphthongs according to their “English sound” or “German sound.” The former are not specified by representative English words, but rather by Latin words, for which it is remarked, “in the above examples, the learner is expected to sound the vowels as he would under similar circumstances in English words,” though for the diphthong *ui* there is a note that it is pronounced, according to the English system, as “*hīke, kī*” (*ibid.*). The German sounds are compared to the vowels in certain English words (*ibid.*):

a	<i>ā</i> always <i>āh, ă</i> as in <i>am</i>
e	<i>ē</i> like <i>a</i> in <i>fate</i> , <i>ě</i> as in <i>fre</i>
i, y	<i>ī</i> like <i>ee</i> in <i>keen</i> , <i>ĩ</i> as in <i>fin</i>
o	<i>ō</i> as in <i>bōne</i> , <i>ǒ</i> as in <i>shone</i>
u	<i>ū</i> like <i>oo</i> in <i>moon</i> , <i>ů</i> the same sound short
ae	like <i>ā</i> in <i>fate</i>
ai	broader, with the sound of both vowels
au	like <i>ou</i> in <i>house</i>
ei	like <i>i</i> in <i>shine</i>
eu	nearly like <i>oi</i> in <i>foil</i>
oe	like the French <i>eu</i> in <i>feu</i>
ui	like <i>ooi</i> sounded rapidly

Adler's choice to include the German pronunciation of the vowels was, perhaps, the result of the perception of the German ascendancy in classical scholarship. It should be kept in mind that Adler's official position in the university was as professor of German language and literature.

While competing schemata are given for vowels, the value of consonants stated by Adler follows only the English system. *C* and *g* have hard and soft sounds, depending on the following vowel, though in a footnote Adler comments, "it is, however, probable that the Romans once sounded the letter *c* always like *k*, as the Greeks did" (*ibid.*, 3). No such note is assigned to *g*. *S* "has upon the whole the same power as in English," though the distinction between *s* and *ss* is noted among the older Latin authors (*ibid.*). *Z* is *ds*. *Ti* and *ci* are pronounced as *shee* when followed by another vowel, except under certain circumstances. Adler comments about word-final *m*, "when proceeded by a vowel, was not so distinctly pronounced by the ancients. Hence, when the following word commenced with a vowel, the *m* final was either entirely silent (in poetry always so) or regarded as a mere connecting link between vowels" (*ibid.*).

From this description, it seems clear that Adler was aware of some of the new theories about ancient pronunciation, but did not feel obligated to use this information to guide his recommended (and, presumably, his own) pronunciation of Latin. It is interesting to imagine the result of applying the German values to vowels, but the English sounds to consonants. Adler seems to regard this as a legitimate option.

The standard American scholastic pronunciation, what Fisher and Bennett had called the "Roman method," is largely as follows (based on Wheelock, 2000: xli-xlii):

ā as in *father*

a as in *Dinah*

ē as in *they*

e as in *pet*

ī as in *machine*

i as in *pin*

ō as in *clover*

o as in *orb, off*

ū as in *rude*

u as in *put*

y as in French *tu* or German *über*

ae as in *ai* of *aisle*

au as in *ou* of *house*

ei as in *reign*

eu as Latin *e + u*, pronounced rapidly as a single syllable

oe as in *oi* in *oil*

ui as in Latin *u + i*, spoken as a single syllable like Spanish *muy*

bs and **bt** were pronounced *ps* and *pt*

c was always hard as in *can*, never soft as in *city*

g was always hard as in *get*, never soft as in *gem*

h was a breathing sound, as in English, only less harshly pronounced

i (which also represented a vowel) usually functioned as a consonant with the sound *y* as in *yes* when used before a vowel at the beginning of a word

q as in English, is always followed by consonantal *u*, the combination producing *kw*

r was trilled

s was always voiceless as in *see*; never voiced as in our word *ease*

t always had the sound of *t* as in *tired*, never the *sh* as in *nation* or *ch* as in *mention*

v had the sound of our *w*

x had the sound of *ks* as in *axle*; not of *gz* as in *exert*

ch represented Greek *chi* and had the sound of *ckh* in *block head*

ph represented Greek *phi* and had the sound of *ph* in *up hill*, not as in *philosophy*

th represented Greek *theta* and had the sound of *th* in *hothouse*, not of *th* in *thin* or *the*

The Romans quite appropriately treated double consonants as two separate consonants.

The standard reconstructed pronunciation is used in the following introductory Latin textbooks: *Wheelock's Latin* (Wheelock, 2000: xxxix-xliv), *A New Latin Course* (Gould, 1962: xiii-xv), *Modern Latin* (Sadler, 1987: 5-6), *Latin Via Ovid* (Goldman, 1982: xxi-xxiii), *Reading Classical Latin* (Ball, 1987: 1-2), *Traditio* (Johnston, 1988: 3-6), *Phenomenon of Language* (Florian, 1981: 3-4), *Ecce Romani* (Brush, 2000: 287-288), *Latin for Americans* (Ullman, 1960: 383-385), *An Introduction to Latin* (Kirtland, 1977: 1-3). It is also the system found in American grammars of Latin, including those by Bennett (1908: 1-10), Hale and Buck (1903:1-27), and Gildersleeve and Lodge (1895, 1-8). Not surprisingly, the treatment of phonology is much deeper in the grammars than in the textbooks.

One area of difference is with the treatment of Greek letters. Some books (e.g. *A New Latin Course*) recommend pronouncing them as in Modern Greek, which has the benefit of being the way these digraphs are pronounced in English. Others promote the original voiceless aspirated value of the letters: *Latin Via Ovid*, *Traditio*, *Wheelock's Latin*. Finally, some books seem to consider the notion of aspiration too complex for an introductory book, and advise that these transliterations be read as if there were no *h*: *Phenomenon of Language*, *Latin for Americans*. The lack of consensus on this aspect of pronunciation is indicative of problems that Bennett noted more than a century ago: it is difficult to avoid grafting the habits and limitations of English-speakers onto a foreign language. Some texts take the simple route of advocating the modern pronunciation of the Greek digraphs, since these are familiar from English borrowings from Greek thusly spelled. The goal of reconstructing as accurately as possible the spoken language of ancient times gives rise to the recommendation to aspirate the Greek letter combinations. To get English speakers to correctly aspirate *kh*, *ph*, and *th* and to avoid aspirating word-initial *p*, *k*, and *t* would be a difficult task.

There are, though, some discrepancies between the standard pronunciation taught in American schools, and what can be reconstructed of the original pronunciation. Many of the deviations are simply the result of the failure to compensate for allophonic phenomena in English (e.g. reduction of final *-a* to *ə*, aspiration of word-initial unvoiced stops) and for English phonology (e.g. lack of differentiation of doubled consonants). The most prominent example of this is the letter *m*, which clearly even during the Golden Age of Latin literature was not pronounced in word final position before a vowel-initial word, though it probably nasalized and lengthened the preceding vowel (Allen, 1989: 30-1). An attempt to recreate this pronunciation is rarely tried or even mentioned in textbooks, probably for the same reason that Bennett recommended the rejection of the reformed schema: it is simply too hard to accurately reproduce in actual oral practice because it is just too foreign to the familiar phonology of English. For example, one book on the Latin language simply states: “The two Latin nasal consonants are *m* and *n*. The pronunciation of both probably corresponds to that of the equivalent English letters” (Hammond, 1976: 66). Such a pronunciation is universally taught today within the United States. As a result, we imagine that word final *m* was fully realized in speech among the ancient Romans, despite a mass of evidence from the ancient authors that this was not the case. The Romans had a specific term for this phenomenon, *mytacism*, and Cicero mentions that the form *nobiscum* prevailed over the formation *cum nobis* because the latter, liable to *mytacism*, would sound obscene (Sihler, 1995: 227).

The recognition that the ancient pronunciation of Latin was different from the contemporary was hardly a new revelation in the 19th century. As early as the beginning of the 16th century, the Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus was aware that the ancient spoken language undoubtedly differed from the plethora of competing versions that prevailed in his own day. It

seems, though, that his efforts could be better described as outlining aspirational goals than advocating immediate correction, even with himself (*ibid.*, 103). During his years in England (1509 to 1514), he spent some time at Cambridge, where he shared his views on correct Latin (and Greek) pronunciation with the scholars John Cheke and Thomas Smith. Both these men, and Charles Estienne in France, recommended Erasmus's revised system, but their call for reform was unsuccessful in the face of tradition.

CHAPTER 5

ROMANCE PHILOLOGY

Though it is widely known today that the modern Romance languages are all derived from Latin, this fact was not demonstrably proven until the 19th century, during which time the discipline of Romance Philology developed (Paden, 1998: 5). The connection between Latin and the Romance languages had long been obscured by the fact that the Latin which served as the basis for them was quite distinct from the form used to compose the works of ancient literature. This is not at all surprising, in light of the fact that what we identify as Latin was a standardized literary language, and the written form of any language is distinct in numerous ways from the spoken varieties. The Romance languages are derived from the spoken version of Latin. Of course, to dichotomize a language into simply written and spoken forms is to greatly oversimplify the situation. Multiple dialects and levels of register exist within both spoken and written language. Keeping this in mind, we can acknowledge that the vast majority of preserved Latin literature from the Roman period is written in a very standardized highly literary register without noticeable dialectal differences. Other writings (e.g. inscriptions, gravestones, graffiti from Pompeii) were composed in different registers. For obvious reasons, one can only speculate at the forms of the spoken language.

The emergence of Latin-Romance bilingualism (that is, the conscious differentiation of Latin and Romance as different languages) can be documented by the appearance of certain phenomena: 1) compositions written in Romance; 2) references to Romance and Latin as separate entities; 3) Romance translations of Latin texts. The earliest manifestation of any of these three can be used to establish a *terminus post quem* for the conceptualization of Latin and

Romance as distinct languages in a given area. This understanding seems to have arisen in different locations at different times. As an example of the second proof, there is an Occitan poem *P'os de chanter m'es pres talenz*, composed by Guilhem IX of Aquitaine, the first troubadour whose works survive, in either 1111 or 1119:

*Per merce prec mon compaignon;
s'anc li fi tort, q'il m'o perdon,
et il prec en Jezu del tron
en romans et en son latin*
(Paden, 1998: 83)

For mercy I beg my companion;
if ever I wronged him, let him pardon me
and pray to Sir Jesus of heaven
in vernacular and in his Latin.

This shows that by the early 12th century, in southern France the Occitan language had not only achieved literary status, but was also conceptually differentiated from Latin, that it so say, it was not viewed as a low register of Latin. A law enacted in 1246 in Bologna stipulated that notaries had to be able to read in the “vulgar tongue” the documents that they had composed in Latin, for the benefit of those who could not understand that language (Migliorini, 1966: 81). In other instances, even after a variety of Romance achieved written form, it was still equated with Latin for a while, not surprisingly in light of the flexibility of the Latin of the early Middle Ages to assume features of the spoken language from time to time.

CHAPTER 6

VULGAR LATIN

The development of the Romance languages is usually viewed through the lens of Vulgar Latin. In truth, though, understanding Latin-Romance bilingualism and diglossia is complicated by the existence of this concept. This term is as well-established as it is fraught with difficulties. There is no universally accepted definition of what constitutes Vulgar Latin. Instead, a host of competing understandings of the term (no less than 13 by one count) frustrate dealing with the concept (Wright, 1982: 52). At the most basic level, Vulgar Latin is contrasted to Classical Latin. The latter is the literary language in which were composed the majority of the Latin texts of ancient literature. The former is the everyday spoken language of the average Titus, Decius, and Horatius. These simple definitions do not, however, exhaust the range of possible forms of communication and thus beg important questions. Is Classical Latin a reflection of a high register of spoken language, or was it simply a written standard? What are we to make of literary works that display features not found in canonical Classical Latin, such as the early Latin plays of Plautus and Terence and the Vulgate Bible, whose very name indicates a close connection with Vulgar Latin, whatever that may be? Is the orthography used within works composed in Classical Latin an accurate guide to its pronunciation? In answering questions such as these scholars often develop their own understanding of what constitutes Vulgar Latin.

So familiar are the terms Classical Latin and Vulgar Latin that it is easy to forget that no language could be accurately dichotomized into such sweeping classifications, if such a separation excludes other considerations. To reify two forms of a language inherently displaces the understanding that a language is a complex network of layers and types. A concept such as,

say, Vulgar Russian would hardly be insightful or useful for analyzing that language.

The continuing use of the term Vulgar Latin in scholarship today is probably the result of the fact that the ancient Romans recognized it as a distinct category. They called it by various names: *sermo rusticus*, *sermo plebeius*, *sermo cotidianus*, *sermo usualis*, and of course, *sermo vulgaris*. The single entity that was referred to in all these ways was contrasted to the *sermo urbanus*, which educated men of letters strove for in their writing, public speaking, and elevated conversations with fellow sophisticates. They were aware, though, that not all of their writing and conversation followed the prescribed rules. As Cicero confesses in a letter,

Quid tibi eo videor in epistolis? Nonne plebeio sermone tecum agere? ... Causas agimus subtilius, ornatius; epistolas vero cotidianis verbis texere solemus. How do I seem to you in letters? Don't I seem to use the *plebeius sermo* with you? We plead court cases carefully, in a refined manner. We are accustomed, though, to weaving letters in the *sermo cotidianus*. (*Epistolae ad familiares*, 9.21.1)

At the same time, Cicero, even when composing letters to friends and family, seems unlikely to have written in an overly casual fashion, especially since after his death his friend Atticus published his letters as examples of good Latin style.

In making this distinction the ancient Romans were not, of course, analyzing their language on a rigorous, scholarly basis. The recognition that there was a difference between high literary style and everyday speech is hardly an impressive insight, nor by any means is this a phenomenon confined to Latin. Perhaps they were simply recognizing the fact that their literary language was regulated by highly prescriptive rules that allowed for little variation.

The difficulty of defining Vulgar Latin can be seen in the definition formulated by the Hungarian scholar Jozsef Herman in his work entitled *Vulgar Latin*. First of all, his definition is, if not unduly lengthy, certainly not pithy: “the set of all those innovations and trends that turned up in use, particularly but not exclusively spoken, of the Latin-speaking population who were

little or not at all influenced by school education and by literary models” (Herman, 2000: 7). After specifying this definition, Herman then takes another two pages to clarify it. By the end, one longs for the famed simplicity of a Supreme Court justice’s definition of pornography: “I don’t know how to define it, but I know it when I see it.” Certainly, features of Vulgar Latin are quite recognizable, but identifying the role and position of the idiom within the larger existence of Latin is hampered by our complete reliance on the written word in its various forms. We can only imagine and surmise how the Romans actually spoke.

Some scholars view Classical Latin as a high spoken register, in addition to being a literary standard.

Literary Latin is an expression of speech, but a form of speech consciously adapted to a ‘noble style’... The combined result was a cleavage between studied literary style and colloquial conversation, a cleavage perhaps more deeply marked than that which exists in modern languages in Europe: today we are much more subject in our speech to the continued pressure of ‘learned influence’ than was the average citizen of Rome. (Elcock, 1960: 19-20)

...others propose a definition focusing on the social aspect of the problem, Vulgar Latin being conceived of as a language of the middle class, different not only from the refined language of the cultivated strata of society, but also from the coarse and careless speech of the lower classes (Grandgent). (Jensen, 1999: 16)

Other scholars feel inclined to classify Classical Latin as a literary language alone, its spoken analogue being Vulgar Latin.

The word *Vulgar* is derived from the expression *sermo vulgaris* ‘popular speech, the speech of the people.’ Though traditionally accepted for lack of a more accurate label, the term is a misnomer inasmuch as it could be construed as referring solely to the language of the lower classes when, in fact, it is the language spoken by all members of the Roman society. Many scholars explain the difference between Classical and Vulgar Latin in terms of an opposition between written and spoken (Meyer-Lübke, Bourciez, Menéndez-Pidal, Vossler, etc.)... Since Vulgar Latin is most accurately characterized as spoken Latin... (Jensen, 1999: 16)

One problem with this view of the Classical/Vulgar Latin divide is that it implies that the features of Classical Latin were solely literary. It is difficult to imagine that all of the features that differentiate Classical from Vulgar Latin were reserved solely for writing, and never entered into speech, especially during the Golden and Silver Ages of Latin literature (i.e. the first centuries BC and AD). Though we reconstruct Romance as having altered the pronunciation of words, it is conceivable that versions based on literary forms were also spoken. It is common for different pronunciations of the same word to occur within a single language, one's choice thereof often determined by social criteria. In addition, it is recognized that writing does have an effect on speaking (Migliorini, 1966: 457). Classical Latin was, of course, more than just a pronunciation schema; it was also elements of grammar, vocabulary, and style. It is most likely that features of Classical Latin colored the speech of all elements of society, to the highest degree among the educated stratum, but with bits filtering down to the lower classes. The exact nature of the influence of writing on speech certainly changed over time.

When deciding whether Classical Latin has any analogue in speech, it should be kept in mind that many of Cicero's works take the form of speeches or dialogues, which ostensibly were actually spoken, and that the importance placed on refinement in oratory makes it likely that Classical Latin was rooted in an actual way of speaking, as further indicated by the use of the word *sermo* to describe it. Whatever the case may have been, any modern effort to accurately dissect Classical and Vulgar Latin is fraught with so many difficulties that the latter term especially will be eschewed as much as possible, and the former will be reserved to describe the literary language seen in works from Lucretius to Boethius (1st century BC – 6th century AD).

CHAPTER 7

THE IDEA OF EARLY LATIN-ROMANCE BILINGUALISM

One pernicious result of the use and ubiquity of the term “Vulgar Latin” is that it rendered it easy to imagine an early establishment of Latin-Romance bilingualism. Classical Latin served as the basis for what we now call Latin, while Vulgar Latin changed into the Romance languages. At some point the two parted company and went their separate ways. This view negates how broad languages can be. It is conceivable that for a lengthy period there was room for both what we call Classical and Vulgar Latin, and much else, within the broad spectrum of what could be called Latin. Perhaps that period would not have come to an end (or would have ended later than it actually did), were it not for external developments.

Charlemagne’s reign is commonly seen as the point by which Latin and Romance had moved beyond reconciliation into a single language. “When Charlemagne about 800 A.D. sought to re-impose both cultural and political union at least on western Europe except for Spain, the local speeches had already developed into distinct languages” (Hammond, 1976: 240). That is to say, the author clearly implies, languages not only distinct from one another, but also distinct from Latin.

An attempt to church sermons in Latin, even the somewhat sub-Classical Latin of the Vulgate, threw into confusion church audiences that had hitherto been able to understand priests speaking substantially their own tongue and making the necessary adjustments when they read from the Vulgate... The popular language was too far gone along the road to be pulled back into anything resembling a Latin orbit. (Pei, 1976: 86)

“The conscious identification of new types of speech different from Latin was preceded by a long period of unconscious bilingualism” (Elcock, 1960: 448). This concept of “unconscious bilingualism” is quite odd. How can we define two languages as distinct if the speakers themselves do not consciously do so? Elcock seems to be trying to reconcile the facts that 1) the spoken language, insofar as it has been reconstructed, differed markedly from the form we find in surviving texts and 2) this situation seems to have become untenable all of a sudden. After a certain point, people could no longer understand Latin when spoken or read aloud to them. Since, quite obviously, decreasing intelligibility is a phenomenon of extended duration (people do not wake up and find themselves unable to understand what they could the night before), it is unusual that we suddenly find a reference to translation between Latin and Romance, nearly *ex nihilo*, which is what, in fact, we have:

Visum est unanimitati nostrae, ut quilibet episcopus habeat omelias continentes necessarias ammonitiones, quibus subiecti erudiantur, id est de fide catholica, prout capere possint, de perpetua retributione bonorum et aeterna damnatione malorum, de resurrectione quoque futura et ultimo iudicio et quibus operibus possit promereri beata quibusve excludi. Et ut easdem omelias quisque aperte transferre studeat in rusticam Romanam linguam aut Thiotiscam, quo facilius cuncti possint intellegere quae dicuntur. It seems best to our unanimity that each bishop have the homilies containing the necessary admonitions, with which subjects might be educated, that is to say, educated about the Catholic faith, in order that they be able to understand about the eternal reward of good men and eternal damnation of the wicked, also about the future resurrection and the final judgment and by which deeds blessedness may be earned or by which it may be lost. And that each [bishop] openly take pains to translate / interpret the same homilies into the rustic Roman tongue or into German, in order than all might be able to understand what is said. (Wright, 1982: 120)

This text reflects decisions reached in 813 at the ecclesiastic meeting known as the Council of Tours and “a été souvent interprétée comme une manifestation officielle tardive d’un événement

officieux ancien,” it has often been interpreted as a late official recognition of an unofficial earlier development (Banniard, 1992: 38).

CHAPTER 8

THE USUAL NARRATIVE VS. ALTERNATIVE

It is commonly imagined that the emergence of the Romance languages proceeded in this way: 1) the Latin language was largely codified as a literary language during the course of the 1st century BC, and the language in essentially this same form has been continually used in both writing and speech up to the current day on a fairly phonetic basis; 2) while the form we call “Latin” or “Classical Latin” remained the same, the spoken form of the language, common called Vulgar Latin or Romance, as used by the bulk of the population, increasingly changed over time, but remained solely a spoken idiom; 3) by the year AD 800 or so, the difference between the two forms was sufficiently great that testimonials of mutual incomprehension appear; 4) over the next 400 years, Romance begins to appear in writing, slowly at first but with increasingly rapidity; 5) the lack of communication and travel between the different parts of the Romance-speaking world (sometimes called “the Romania,” as distinct from the modern day country of the same name formerly known as Rumania) caused the spoken language to develop differently in different areas, which accounts for the establishment of various Romance forms as written standards, the bases for the modern languages.

An alternative theory posits the following: 1) up to the year 800, the difference between Latin and Romance was not great enough to result in their conceptualization as different entities; 2) Latin was simply the written form of Romance; 3) the differentiation between the two forms was reinforced by a specific event: the decision to promote a standardized pronunciation of the language based on phonetic reading of the written form; 4) creating this new way of speaking the written language in effect gave birth to a new, artificial language: what we identify as Medieval

Latin; 5) over time, the orthographic phonetic principle applied to Latin was used to create written forms of Romance; 6) various written forms achieved predominance and served as the bases for individual Romance languages.

Though the former theory has the weight of tradition on its side and is still widely held today, there is abundant evidence that the latter theory can more easily reconcile the evidence of texts with the reconstructions of Romance Philology.

We can be sure of the following: 1) the spoken form of Latin changed over time in ways that can be reconstructed with a great deal of surety, but which are largely (but by no means entirely) unattested; 2) there is a continuous history of production of documents written for the most part according to the stylistic requirements of Latin grammarians; 3) there is a continuous history, dating from the beginnings of attested Latin, of writings of all sorts (inscriptions, documents, graffiti) that stray from the norms of Classical Latin to a greater or lesser degree; 4) a pronunciation of Latin according to rigid phonetic treatment of its orthography, though differing in particulars from place to place, became standard at some point in time and has continued to this day, insofar as Latin continues to be spoken at all.

The idea that the written form of Classical Latin reflects a spoken register used among at least among a small, educated, elite, who passed it on quite unchanged to the next generation, is thrown into doubt by the fact that at some point this register obviously ceased to be anyone's native language. Though Latin as a whole has had a continuous history of usage, in contrast to languages such as Hittite (which truly are extinct), it seems obvious that a version close to the standards specified by grammarians ceased to be learned from birth. What we know as Latin had to be formally taught, even to the children of the elite. It is likely that, at first, instruction

took the form of learning to read and write one's native language, but at some point Latin began to be studied as a completely foreign language. This is a significant conceptual difference.

CHAPTER 9

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LATIN AND ROMANCE

We must begin by assessing the scope of the difference between the written language (Latin) and the spoken form (Romance). For the purposes of this comparison, we must start from the understanding that the written standard that we recognize as Latin today certainly had its origin in the spoken idiom. The written language was largely standardized in the 1st century BC, and did not vary significantly from that form (in formal literature, at least). The spoken language, as is true of all languages, continued to change, but these changes were not incorporated into the written language, since the written version of any language is inherently more conservative than its spoken form. The standard of Latin, set by the famous works of prestigious authors, proved to be very resistant to change, but we can only be sure that this was the case in writing. We must imagine change as a continually ongoing process. New words are constantly coined, and new grammatical constructions are always coming into use. Some become permanent fixtures in the spoken language, and perhaps eventually become incorporated into the written language. It would be appropriate to envision linguistic evolution as a conflict between new and established elements. What is common in speech and acceptable in writing today was often considered crude in the past. What was common in the vernacular of the past may be confined to writing today or may be considered archaic.

Latin and Romance are the same language, but fall on opposite ends of the range of what was contained within that whole: Latin is the aggregation of the conservative features of the language, fixed to the standard of writing, while Romance is the collection of innovations, which were certainly increasingly common in speech, sufficiently so that traces of them can be found in

writing, and it is these traces (along with the evidence of the modern Romance languages) that allow us to reconstruct what the spoken language was like. The evidence that the written language effectively shunned the incorporation of new features is clear, but at the same time we must not forget that the written language continued to influence speech, especially among the higher echelons of society. The wall that was erected around the written language (and which itself was vulnerable to infiltration) was not mirrored by a similar bulwark set up to defend the spoken language.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the prestige and lasting power of Classical Latin is due to its antiquity. While the beginning of Latin literature can be dated with reasonable certainty to 240 BC, the year which saw the commission and performance of a play written by Livius Andronicus, Classical Latin was not standardized until the 1st century BC. During the intervening period, there was a great deal of literary output. Today all that remains are the plays of Terence and Plautus, Cato the Elder's *De Agri Cultura*, and myriad fragments, but the additional authors who wrote during this period were both numerous and influential. In addition to Livius Andronicus, there were the dramatists Cn. Naevius, Pacuvius, and Accius, the comic playwright Caecilius, the satirist Lucilius, the epic poet and playwright Q. Ennius, and the historians L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, Cato the Elder, and L. Cassius Hemina.

The two men most responsible for the codification of Classical Latin were Caesar and Cicero (Solodow, 2010: 108). Both used the medium of their own writings to offer an example of good style. Cicero attributed the need to fix (in the sense of both repair and specify) the literary language to the social changes that were taking place in Rome at that time (*Brutus* 258):

Mitto C. Laelium, Philum, Scipionem; aetatis illius ista fuit laus tamquam innocentiae sic Latine loquendi – nec omnium tamen, nam illorum aequalis Caecilium et Pacuvium male locutos videmus – sed omnes tum fere, qui nec extra

urbem hanc vixerant neque eos aliqua barbaries domestica infuscaverat, recte loquebatur. Sed hanc certe rem deteriore vestustas fecit et Romae et in Graecia. Confluxerunt enim et Athenas et in hanc urbem multi inquinatae loquentes ex diversis locis. Quo magis expurgandus est sermo et adhibenda tamquam obrussa ratio, quae mutari non potest, nec utendum pravissima consuetudinis regula. I pass by the examples of Gaius Laelius, Philus, and Scipio; the praise of that time was praise of speaking Latin in such a way, just as much as praise of being free from crime. Nevertheless there was not praise for all men, for we see that their contemporaries Caecilius and Pacuvius spoke poorly, but almost all then who had neither lived outside of this city nor did any crudeness of home life contaminate them, spoke correctly. But the passage of time has certainly rendered the situation worse, both at Rome and in Greece. For to both Athens and into this city many polluted speakers have come together from different places. For this reason all the more should our speech be purified and should we adhere to, as though it were the test to determine the presence of gold, a theory of language which cannot change, that one should not use the very faulty rule of usage.

In typical Roman fashion, Cicero recommends a return to the *mos maiorum*, in this case in public speech (and, by extension, in writing). As he imagines it, a “golden age” of pure language had been corrupted by the influx of peasant, provincials, and foreigners into Rome, and their aggregation affected the language, though he confesses that even at that time not everyone spoke so well. Cicero himself, though hardly a supporter of Caesar, praised the man’s efforts to restore good Latin style: *Caesar autem rationem adhibens consuetudinem vitiosam et corruptam pura et incorrupta consuetudine emendat* (Caesar, however, adhering to theory, corrects the ignoble and corrupt usage with pure and incorrupted usage) (*Brutus*, 261).

That Cicero places so much emphasis on correct speaking and does not mention writing, even though he names figures who were primarily known as authors, is a reflection of the fact that at the time much of literary culture was enjoyed through reading aloud in a group, rather than silently. One can comment on the speech of Pacuvius and Caecilius because their plays were known through performances of them. Very few people had written copies of their plays.

Thus, it was easy to conflate their writing with their speaking, because what they wrote was spoken aloud by actors on stage.

The example of Greek would have provided further impetus to their efforts, since the Attic dialect had achieved a place of primacy within the realm of literary creation. The Atticist movement attempted to purify the language of all elements not seen in the language of the Athenian literary achievements produced during the height of the city's fame and fortune (the 5th and 4th centuries BC). Aristophanes was considered a good model of the Attic dialect, and the survival of a number of his comedies can be attributed to the prestige that was attached to the language in which he composed them.

Classical Latin differs from the earlier literary language in the following ways (Solodow, 2010: 109-10):

1. Specification replaces variability in gender, case forms, conjugation, syntax, etc. *Clivus* is fixed as a masculine word, though earlier it also appeared as a neuter. The 1st declension genitive singular ending *-as*, as seen in the word *paterfamilias*, is supplanted by *-ae*. The verb *olere* is specified as belonging to the 2nd, rather than 3rd conjugation. The 3rd principal part of the verb *ponere* is fixed as *posui*, which earlier had alternated with *posivi*. Infinitives are no longer used to express purpose, except occasionally in poetry. The subjunctive mood becomes mandatory for indirect questions. Prior to this, the indicative had also been used. Today, although all the Romance languages retain the subjunctive mood, none use it to express indirect questions.
2. Some words are supplanted by synonyms. The verb *fabulari* falls out of literary usage, though its survival in speech is indicated by its eventual transformation into the Spanish

word *hablar* and Portuguese *falar*. In addition, diminutive and frequentative forms fall out of literary usage.

3. The phone *h* is restored, though with great difficulty and confusion, as Catullus made clear in his poem 84 (1-4):

*Chommoda dicebat, si quando commoda vellet
dicere, et insidias Arrius hinsidias,
et tum mirifice sperabat se esse locutum
cum quantum poterat dixerat hinsidias.*

Arrius, if ever he wished to say *commode*, would say *chommoda*, and *hinsidias* instead of *insidias*, and he hoped that he had spoken so marvelously when he had said *hinsidias* as much as he could.

Changes such as these were not effected by any kind of “Latin academy” along the lines of the modern Academie Française or Real Academia Española, but rather through the prestige of authors who made use of these guidelines in their writing.

We must keep in mind that the aspects of modern society that have resulted in the extinction of smaller languages and greater uniformity in larger ones did not exist during the period under investigation. Even today, after the homogenizing effects of mass education and popular entertainment, languages continue to display a great deal of variation. It is not surprising, then, that we can observe broad variety within Latin.

In the following description of the differences between Latin and Romance, it is to be understood that Latin means “conservative elements” and Romance “innovations.” For something to be recognized as a change, there must be an understanding of what constitutes the starting point. The Latin literary language usually described as Classical is the frame of reference against which innovations can be spotted. It must be understood, though, that at one

point this Latin was itself innovative. A comparison of Classical Latin (in the form that was basically fixed during the 1st century BC) to the remains of earlier Latin (mostly inscriptions and the works of Plautus) reveals that our starting point for observation of change was itself the product of innovations.

CHAPTER 10

SENATUS CONSULTUM DE BACCHANALIBUS

Evidence of ‘Old’ (i.e. pre-Classical) Latin is not at all abundant. Inscriptions are the best source of determining the phonetics of early Latin (since recopying of early literary texts introduced some later spelling practices), and the inscribed copy of the *senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus* (SCB) is one of the most useful. The inscription dates from 186 BC, making it one of the oldest Latin inscriptions with a secure date. For the period down to 150 BC, there are only 17 Latin inscriptions that can be firmly dated (the earliest is from 217), and all but one of these are records of official pronouncements (Clackson, 2007: 131). In 186, the Senate took action to stem the growth of the secret nightly cult worship of the god Bacchus, and news of this decision was disseminated throughout Italy. Our text of the SCB comes from the ancient town of Ager Teuranus in what is now Calabria. The Senate’s communication to the local government consists of the text of the official judgment (*senatus consultum*) and the consuls’ specific orders to the local magistrates about how to inform the local populace. As per the consuls’ instructions, the decree was inscribed on a bronze tablet and put in a prominent public space. This tablet has survived. There are no spaces between separate words, a practice which did not appear in inscriptions until late in Cicero’s lifetime (Harrer, 1931: 13).

When assessing what can be gleaned from the SCB concerning the pronunciation of Old Latin (as distinct from the writing), it must be kept in mind that orthography is not necessarily a secure indication of exact pronunciation. After all, no writing system is completely phonetic. With regard to the inscription, one notable feature of the language that differs from the Classical

standard is the complete lack of doubled consonants, which abound in Classical Latin. Examples include the following (line numbers are from Clackson, 2007: 143-45):

1. de Bacanalibus [Bacchanalibus]... esent [essent]
2. habuise [habuisse]... uelet [uellet]
3. necesus [necessus] ese [esse]
13. iousisent [iussissent]
18. conioura(se) [coniūrasse]

This does not mean that geminated consonants were an innovation that postdates the SCB. Rather, it is certain that at the time of its creation, doubled consonants were not regularly indicated in writing. In fact, doubled consonants did not appear in writing at all until the end of the 3rd century BC (Clackson, 2007: 96, 131), and by 186 their use had not yet become standard. The spelling and phraseology of Roman laws was especially conservative (Sturtevant, 1916: 205). It is possible that the orthographic changes of the 2nd century BC, which produced the standard spelling of Classical Latin, were the result of efforts to facilitate the composition of Latin poetry in Greek meter. Though the earliest Latin verse was written in the native Italian Saturnian meter, which was based on the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables (Clackson, 2007: 135-138), the poet Ennius (239-169 BC) introduced Greek dactylic hexameter into Latin poetry. All subsequent Roman poetic meters were based on Greek models, which were rooted in the distinction between heavy and light syllables. Written indication of long vowels and geminated consonants, which both produced heavy syllables, would have rendered the identification of syllabic quantity easier. It was also in the latter part of the 2nd century BC that the poet Accius introduced the practice of doubling long vowels in writing to indicate length (Durham, 1913: 98). This practice was never incorporated into standard orthography, but the

graphical representation of geminated consonants did become formalized. It was around 150 that the Greek letters ϕ , χ , and θ began to be written as the digraphs *ph*, *ch*, and *th*. Earlier they had been transliterated without the *h*. The earlier practice is utilized in the SCB with the words *Bacanalibus* [Bacchanalibus] (line 1), *Bacanal* (2, 5), and *Bacas* (9).

One of the most obviously unique characteristics of the SCB is the presence of diphthongs in place of long vowels. Examples of this are legion:

1. *quei* [quī] *foideratei* [foederātī]
2. *exdeicendum* [exdīcendum]
3. *sei* [sī]
4. *sibei* [sibī]... *deicerent* [dīcerent]
5. *eeis* [eīs]... *utei* [utī]
6. *ubei* [ubī]
10. *ceiuis* [cīvis]... *nisei* [nisi]
27. *ibei* [ibī]... *uirei* [virī]

The diphthong *ei* becomes a long \bar{i} through the intervening state of long closed \bar{e} , which must have remained distinct from unclosed \bar{e} , which did not undergo the raising to \bar{i} . That the original form of the vowel was the diphthong is indicated by the verb *deicō* [dīcō], which is cognate with the Greek verb δεικνῶμι. This sound change led to instances of inverse spellings, such as *audeire* [audīre], during the period before orthography caught up to pronunciation. Also appearing in the inscription is the diphthong *ou*, which later monophthongized to \bar{u} . Instances of this include:

18. conioura(se) [coniūrasse]

25. iousisent [iūssissent > iussisent]

26, 27. plous [plūs]

The diphthongs *ae* and *oe* are written *ai* and *oi*. Examples of this include:

1. foideratei [foederātī]

30. haice [haece]

36. aikuom [aequum]

The passive infinitive of the 3rd conjugation of verbs appears with the ending *-ier* rather than the classical *-ī*. Instances of this phenomenon include:

36. figier [fīgī]

37. gnoscier [noscī]

Word final *-d* is frequently seen in unexpected (from the point of view of Classical Latin) places, especially the ablative singular ending. Examples include:

11, 24, 29. sententiad [sententiā]

21. (o)quoltod [occultō]

22. poplicod [publicō]

30. couentionid [conventiōnī]

33. ead [eā]... suprad [suprā]

37. facilumed [facillimē]

38. exstrad [extrā]

39. suprad [suprā]

The first datable attestation of the loss of *-d* in the ablative singular occurs in 189, shortly before the SCB, which retains the ablative singular *-d* everywhere (Clackson, 2007: 131). This indicates that the sound change had begun sometime before that date. Therefore, the *-d* spelling of the SCB does not necessarily reflect the pronunciation of the period, given the conservative nature of spelling conventions.

The 3rd person plural of the present subjunctive of the verb *esse* appears as *sient* (line 40), which is the predicted form derived from the Proto-Indo-European etymon: *H₁s-iH₁-ŋt > sient => (via analogy) sint.

A noteworthy feature is the spelling of the word *cosolere tur* (lines 8, 13, 25). This comes from the verb *consulere*, and the reduction of the consonant cluster *-ns-* > *-s-* is widely attested in the history of Latin, and is the outcome in the Romance languages. That later Classical Latin retains *-ns-* was possibly a conscious archaism, since the spelling in the SCB indicates that the reduction had already occurred before the standardization of Classical Latin. As revealed by the outcome in the Romance languages, the later revised spelling could not halt the progress of this sound change. The cluster *-nv-* is similarly reduced to *-v-* in *coventionid* [conventiōnī, later *-ne*] (line 30). In contrast, the perfect infinitive *conspōndise* [con-spo(po)ndisse] (line 19) appears without reduction of the consonant cluster, perhaps because the *-ns-* is anterior to a consonant rather than intervocalic. Intervocalic reduction does not occur, though, in the words *censuere* and *censuit* (lines 13, 36). This perhaps indicates that at the time of the composition of the SCB, the reduction of some *n*-initial consonant clusters, especially *-ns-*, was underway, but was not yet complete. It is possible that at that time the reduction had appeared only in certain environments. It is also possible that the instances of *-ns-* are hypercorrections or deliberate archaisms appearing at this early date.

The *-um* ending of the second declension and elsewhere was derived from an earlier *-om*. This change is attested in the SCB, but the original ending was retained after the labiovelar *qu-* as in *aiquom* [aequum] (line 36), and *quom* [cum] (25).

The genitive singular of the 4th declension noun *senātus* appears twice as *senatuos* (lines 24 and 29), rather than the Classical form *senātūs*.

The present subjunctive of *posse* appears as *potisit* (line 37) rather than the Classical *possit*. Presumably the post-tonic *i* was lost through syncope, and regressive assimilation affected the resulting consonant cluster, producing the change *-ts-* > *-ss-*.

The grammar of the SCB does not differ significantly from the standards of Classical Latin, but shows less variety. The enclitics *-que* and *-ve* are used, to the exclusion of other conjunctions, which is characteristic of early compositions (Frank, 1919: 74). Finite verbs are always clause final. This reflects the standard subject-object-verb word order of Classical Latin, which was, of course, not rigidly adhered to. In the sentence *de Bacanalibus, quei foideratei esent, ita exdeicendum* (lines 1-2) the relative pronoun appears to be in the dative case, the ancestor of the later alternative dative plural form in *qui* (as opposed to the usual *quibus*). In the sentence *deicerent necesus ese Bacanal habere* (lines 4-5), the adjective *necessus* appears in the nominative case instead of the expected accusative for the predicate nominative of an indirect statement.

The *senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus* reveals a great deal about Old Latin, but more about how it was written than how it was spoken. The inscription, though it long predates standard Classical Latin, is nevertheless an official government communication and therefore was presumably written in the contemporary standardized orthography, including non-phonetic spellings and what could be archaisms.

From this examination, it is clear that Classical Latin was itself an innovation at one point. Nevertheless, thanks to the immense prestige of the authors who used it in their compositions in the 1st century BC, it became fixed as a standard. One of the few literary texts whose language can be contrasted with the norms of Classical Latin is Petronius' *Satyricon*. It must be understood that this picaresque 1st century AD novel (the surviving parts of it, at least) is a fully literary work, complete with extended passages of poetry, including a *Halosis Troiae* and a *Bellum Civile*. In the most famous passage, though, there is an extended dialogue among a group of characters, mostly freedmen, who are portrayed as low-class, though clearly not lower-class. An examination of this section, the *Cena Trimalchionis*, reveals some details of how the spoken language diverged from Classical Latin even at that early date.

CHAPTER 11

PETRONIUS

Nero's court favorite Petronius, the *arbiter elegantiae*, who eventually fell victim to Nero's paranoia, is usually credited with the novel known as the *Satyricon*. Only a fraction of the total work has survived, but the longest whole section, known as the *Cena Trimalchionis* since it concerns a dinner party put on by the *nouveau riche* freedman Trimalchio, contains extended passages of direct narration, in which many features can be detected that are odd by the standard of Classical Latin, which was a medium of great literary activity at this time, the middle of the first century AD. An examination of the unusual features of the language of the *Satyricon* reveals the extent to which Classical Latin differed from spoken norms even during the Silver Age.

Latin lacked the article, both indefinite and definite, but all of its successor Romance languages today possess both kinds. It is possible that this was an independent development everywhere, but it is also possible that spoken Latin at some point began to use articles and that this phenomenon was retained as the language developed differently in different areas. The Romance definite article developed from demonstrative Latin adjectives, but there is little trace of this in Petronius. On the other hand, there is at least one apparent indefinite article. At the beginning of the *cena Trimalchionis* episode, Encolpius recounts how *unus servus Agamemnonis interpellavit [nos] trepidantes* (a slave of Agamemnon's interrupted us as we were shaking; 26.8). The focus on the number is so weak here that the *unus* functions in effect like an indefinite article. In all the Romance languages, the indefinite article, not surprisingly, developed from the word *unus*.

One of the most frequently used conjunctions in the *Satyricon* is *autem*. However, the word very often lacks the adversative sense that it usually possesses (giving it the translation ‘however’), or the emphatic conjunctive sense (‘moreover’). In fact, the word often lacks any obvious meaning beyond ‘and.’ This usage is quite reminiscent of *autem* in the *Vulgate* version of the New Testament, where the word is regularly used to translate the Greek particle *de*, which is a very weak conjunction.

The conjunction *ergo* also has a distinctive sense. While it is often used with its normal explanatory value ‘therefore,’ on many other occasions it retains only a resumptive sense (‘so’), with which it returns the discourse to an earlier thought.

The *Satyricon* also reveals the use of the intensive pronoun in a non-intensive sense as a specific term to refer to a slave’s master. When he is examining the house before entering the dining room, Encolpius finds a *pyxis... in qua barbam ipsius conditam esse dicebant* (29.8). This box contains the remnants of Trimalchio’s facial hair from his first shave. This usage of the intensive pronoun is seen also in Catullus: *nam mellitus erat suamque norat / ipsam tam bene quam puella matrem* (3.5-6). In this instance, the neoteric poet relates how his girl’s sparrow knew its mistress better than a girl knows her mother. The *Satyricon* includes other instances of this construction with a slightly modified form of the intensive pronoun: *ipsimus* and *ipsima* (75.11), which Trimalchio uses to describe his master and mistress from his days as a slave. Some manuscripts add the appropriate form of *dominus* and *domina*, but this was most likely the result of a marginal annotation that elucidated the usage of the pronouns, and which was included in the text by a confused monk.

The use of the adjective *grandis* in place of *magnus* is indicative of how the former word survived into the Romance languages (Fr. *grand(e)*, Sp. *grande*) while the latter was lost.

Examples of this word in Petronius are: *obligati tam grandi beneficio* (31.1) and *anulum grandem subornatum* (32.3).

The Romans acknowledged the superior artistic and literary achievements of the Greeks, and fluency in Greek was a necessary skill of anyone with a pretension toward education; nevertheless, the entire Roman population was by no means bilingual. This is indicated in the *cena* by references to translations of Greek into Latin, such as when Encolpius reveals that other diners inform him that Trimalchio is butchering a Greek song (*coepit Menecratis cantica lacerare, sicut illi dicebant qui linguam eius intelligebant*, 73.3). It is possible that here Encolpius is making the point that Trimalchio is singing so badly that he could not understand him, though he could understand Greek spoken by less drunken interlocutors, but then the specific mention of *lingua* becomes quite confusing. Whatever the case with this particular incident, the Greek language permeated society sufficiently to greatly influence Latin. Petronius' work abounds in Greek words, many used colloquially and very few seemingly dropped with the intent of impressing someone (as might be done today by peppering one's conversation with Latin or French phrases). In this way, Latin vernacular was embellished with lexical items drawn from Greek. Several are not, strictly speaking, correct, and others display conflation of Greek and Latin. Examples include:

29.8: *pyxis*; a box in which Trimalchio stores the remnants of his first shave.

28.3: *propin*; a toast, from which Latin derived the verb *propinare*

30.3: *bilychnis*; a lamp with two wicks

31.7: *paronychia*; finger- and toenails

34.7: *tangomenas*; this word, apparently derived from the Greek feminine accusative plural present middle participle, is used with the exhortation *faciamus* in order to express the idea “let’s drink.” The origin is perhaps the verb *τέγωω*, meaning “dip” or “soak” with an implied *epulas* or *potiones* to account for the feminine plural.

37.4: *topanta*: everything, as in Fortunata, his wife, is Trimalchio’s everything. The form is grammatically incorrect, since it should begin with *τά*, the Greek neuter plural definite article.

37.6: *saplutus*; very rich, with the Greek *za-* taking the place of the Latin prefix *per-*, which is used in this way in Petronius several times. The transliteration of the Greek to Latin reveals several interesting points about the changing pronunciation of both languages. In Greek the word begins with *zeta*, which originally was pronounced *zd*. The simplification of this cluster to *z-* occurred later, apparently sometime before the *Satyricon* was written, as the *s-* transliteration of *zeta* indicates its pronunciation as a single sound. It is possible that the *s-* in the Latin was pronounced as *z-*, or that the phonological system of Latin at that time did not allow for that sound, so Greek *z-* became Latin *s-*. Several Romance languages developed the phone *z*, usually as an allophone of *s* rather than as a separate phoneme, but initial *s-* regularly remains pronounced that way, so the use of *s-* to represent *z-* in initial position is unprecedented, though *-s-* as *-z-* in intervocalic position is quite regular (Spanish, which possessed *z-* in medieval times, later lost it).

37.6: *lupatria*; she-wolf or prostitute, with the Latin *lupa* joined to the Greek suffix *-tria*, perhaps on the analogy of the Greek *porne* / *porneutria*. This conflation is not surprising in light of the equivalence in meaning of the words.

37.9: *babae babae*; this interjection conveys surprise and admiration, and is used during a description of Trimalchio's slaves, who are so numerous that only one tenth would recognize their master by sight. The Latin equivalent is the cognate *papae*, which also usually appears doubled, as in this instance.

37.10: *babaecalis*; this word is derived from the above, and in context it must mean 'rich' or 'dissolute.' The *-calis* could derive from *kalos*, or it could simply signal a diminutive. At any rate, the meaning is negative, and could be a way of ridiculing people who use the term *babae*, which is unusual, since the speaker had himself just used that term.

44.8: *schemas*; figures of speech, which in the speaker's mind are symptomatic of poor speaking. The feminine 1st declension version of this word is almost unique to this passage, but the standard neuter third declension form is found at 126.8, used by Encolpius rather than a dinner guest.

45.7: *zelotypos*; this describes the jealous husband who will jeer the slave who was caught fooling around with his master's wife and therefore will be sent to the beasts in the arena.

47.6: *anathymiasis*; exhalation or vapors, which are seen as being hazardous to one's health.

48.4: *bybliothecas*; libraries

48.4: *peristasim*; a technical term from oratory, the Latin equivalent being *circumstantia*

39.9: *cataphagae*; gluttons

In a few instances, the imperfect indicative tense is used with potential force, such as is usually seen only in the subjunctive. The line *longum erat singula excipere* (28.1) can only be understood with potential meaning: *it would be long to reveal every individual thing* rather than

it was long, which would not make any sense in this context. Perhaps the construction is modeled on the Greek present contrary-to-fact condition, which utilizes the imperfect indicative tense, though with the addition of the word *áv*.

The work is full of idioms, expressions whose meaning goes beyond the literal translation. The expression *quid ergo est?* occurs frequently (30.11, 46.2 *inter alia*) and seems to have the meaning *what of it?* or *who cares?* Similarly common is *ad summam* (31.2, 77.5 *inter al.*), with the clear meaning *in short*. This phrase is often used in conversation repeatedly by the same speaker, indicating that even in the ancient world people often could not make a long story short, despite promises to do so.

37.7: *pica pulvinaris*: this phrase, which seems to mean ‘magpie on a couch’ is used to describe Fortunata immediately after she is referred to as *malae linguae*, and so this description probably also refers to her manner of speaking. Pliny the Elder (NH 10.118) describes how the *pica* can mimic what it has just heard, and this attribute probably made them popular pets to have in the house. Even today, to describe someone as a “parrot” is to say that this person either can only repeat what he has heard from others (and therefore has a weak intellect), or that he speaks meaninglessly, as though he does not understand the words that he is saying.

38.8: *cum Incuboni pilleum rapuisset*; an Incubo was a kind of gnome who guarded hidden treasures. Anyone who got hold of his cap could compel him to reveal the location. This legend is remarkably similar to Irish fables about leprechauns.

39.2, 48.1: *vos illud [vinum] oportet bonum faciatis*; the meaning of this idiom is clear: the wine should make you feel good. In Latin, the syntax is the opposite, since you make the wine good. Perhaps the sense is that when you enjoy wine, your enjoyment makes it good.

48.5: *si me amas*; this locution adds politeness to a command, meaning ‘please.’ It is similar to the *amabo te* often found in Roman comedy.

49.4, 49.7, 57.3: *mehercules*; this oath is quite frequently used, and simply conveys emphasis to the statement.

39.7: *qui utrosque parietes linunt*; this expression, literally “they who whitewash both walls” (i.e. both sides of a wall), is the equivalent of the English “fence-sitter,” i.e. someone who prefers not to commit to one side or the other.

39.4, 57.5: *homo inter homines*; this frequent expression seems to have deep meaning for freedmen, since to rise from slavery is to become a person among persons.

44.10: *pro luto*; this is the most common way of describing something as worthless, or worth mud.

The dinner conversations, which usually are so long that they seem to be serial monologues rather than back and forth exchanges, are loaded with pithy expressions, proverbs, maxims, sayings, etc.

39.3: *sic notus Ulixes*; this quote from Virgil (*Aen.* 2.44) shows the popularity of that author. It is used to cast doubt on how characteristic a certain action is of someone. In Virgil, the line is asked by Laocoon, who suspects (correctly, of course) that the Trojan Horse is a trick devised by Odysseus.

43.5: *longe fuit, quisquis suos fugit*; this sentiment is the opposite of our dictum “you can’t go home again.” It reveals the centrality of family in the ancient world.

44.3: *serva me, servabo te*; this wonderful phrase is in sentiment almost equivalent to our expressions “you scratch my back, I’ll scratch your back” and “one hand washes the other.”

A great number of proverbs are said by the diner Echion, who seems to communicate largely through this medium.

45.2: “*modo sic, modo sic,*” *inquit rusticus; varium porcum perdiderat*; now this way, now that way, said the farmer who had lost his spotted pig. This conveys the fickleness of fortune and mutability of human affairs. A farmer who loses prized livestock would do well to reflect on this.

45.4: *tu si aliubi fueris, dices hic porcos coctos ambulare*; if you will be elsewhere, you will say that cooked pigs walk around here. This is quite reminiscent of our own expression “the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.”

45.9: *colubra restem non parit*; a snake does not give birth to rope. This is a formulation of our ideas “the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree” and “like father, like son.”

46.8: *litterae thesaurum est, et arificium numquam moritur*; literature is a treasury, and craft never dies. These noble sentiments are somewhat out of place spoken by the speaker, who had been rather dismissive of his son’s interest in education.

43.7: *Fortunae filius, in manu illius plumbum aurum fiebat*; a son of Fortune, in whose hands lead becomes gold.

45.2: *sic vita truditur*; thus life is trudged out. The pessimism in this view of life seems to have been common in the ancient world, not surprisingly in light of the great difficulty of keeping body and soul together.

45.11: *plenis velis hunc vinciturum*; this idiom, in addition to showing the colloquial form of the fourth principal part of *vincere* (which is regularly *victus* or *victurus* as a future active participle), conveys the idea of someone's going "at full speed" ("with full sails," as it is in Latin).

45.8: *qui asinum non potest, stratum caedit*; he who cannot beat the donkey, beats the saddle. This is a very evocative image of a petty tyrant who lords it over anyone he can. The closest English equivalent is "kiss up, kick down."

45.13: *manus manum lavat*; this is the exact equivalent to our current expression "one hand washes the other" and the same in sentiment to "one good turn deserves another."

This completes the slew of idioms supplied by Echion.

47.8: *in medio clivo laborare*; to labor in the middle of a slope. The idea is the same as our concept of "an uphill battle."

76.8: *cito fit quod di volunt*; what the gods want comes about quickly

77.1: *tu viperam sub ala nutricas*; you nourish a viper under your wing. This seems comparable in meaning to the Latin expression *anguis in herba latet*.

77.6: *assem habeas, assem valeas; habes, habeberis*; if you have a penny, you are worth a penny; as you have, so will you be judged. This understandable sentiment has never been expressed in English in so aphoristic a manner.

Latin, of course, expressed indirect statements with the accusative-infinitive construction. This was in contrast to Greek, which in addition to that method utilized an accusative-participle construction and the subordinating conjunction *ὅτι*, and in contrast to English and all modern Romance languages, which also use a subordinating conjunction (*that* in English, *que* in Spanish

and French, *che* in Italian). That none of the Romance languages preserved the only original construction shows that an alternative system must have sprung up comparatively early, and we see evidence of this in the *Satyricon*, where both *quia* and *quod* can function as subordinating conjunctions. The regular accusative-infinitive construction is also attested, so at the time both constructions must have been in use.

45.10: *sed subolfacio quia nobis epulum daturus est Mammea*

46.4: *et dixi quia mustella comedit*

71.9: *scis enim quod epulum dedi binos denarios*

As an example of metonymy, related concepts are often used to express the idea of gladiatorial fights, which are called “gifts” and “iron.”

45.13: *munus tamen tibi dedi*

45.6: *ferrum optimus daturus est, sine fuga, carnarium in medio, ut amphitheatrum videat*

In place of the preposition *circum*, the alternative *circa* alone appears. This is the form that has survived into Romance languages, e.g. the Spanish word *cerca*.

47.3: *alioquin circa stomachum mihi sonat, putes taurum*

52.6: *ille dimissus circa mensam percurrit*

The word *foras* is used in place of the classical construction *foris* to express the idea of ‘outside.’ The former is the one that survives in Romance, e.g. *afuera* in Spanish.

30.3: *III et pridie kalendas Ianuarias C. noster foras cenat*

44.14: *nunc populus est domi leones, foras vulpes*

There is at least one instance of the present tense being used with future meaning, which becomes common in the Romance languages, especially the notoriously present-tense-loving Italian.

30.3: *III et pridie kalendas Ianuarias C. noster foras cenat*

The letter *h* must have become weak and indistinct by the 1st century BC, since the letter does not make position in Latin poetry. This led to great confusion about which words began with *h* and which with a vowel. *H* was incorrectly left out from some words, and equally incorrectly added to others. In all modern Romance languages, *h* is a silent letter, though in Old French it retained its value in words borrowed from Germanic. In modern French the *h* in even these words is silent, but it prevents liaison between a following vowel and preceding consonant.

34.4: *quales solent esse qui harenam (= arena) in amphitheatre spargunt*

The preposition *de* in all the Romance languages has achieved a variety of important meanings that it originally lacked in Latin. Its use in some of these ways is attested in Petronius.

35.6: *ipse etiam taeterrima voce de Laserpicario mimo canticum extorsit*

72.9: *quicquid enim a nobis acceperat de cena*

Repetition of words for emphasis is seen.

37.3: *et modo modo quid fuit?*

The verb *caveo* appears without the expletive *ne*, without any change in meaning.

38.6: *reliquos autem collibertos eius cave contemnas*

The verb *impropero* is used in place of *improbo*, perhaps as a malapropism.

38.11: *non impropero (= improbo) illi*

Some numbers appear in a slightly unusual form. Perhaps this is the result of conflation of the endings *-ginta* and *-genti*.

38.7: *hodie sua octingenta (= octingenti) possidet*

There are a few instances of the change of *au* to *o*. This transformation occurred in all the Romance languages, and had an early beginning in Latin. Early attestations of the alternation between the two forms are seen in P. Clodius Pulcher's adoption of the plebeian spelling of his *nomen*, normally *Claudius*. Suetonius also records the anecdote of how the emperor Vespasian ridiculed the courtier Florus, who had the affectation of pronouncing *au* instead of *o*, "Flaurus."

39.12: *in aquario copones (= caupones) et cucurbitae*

45.13: *et ego tibi plodo (= plaudo)*

Deponent verbs exist in both Greek and Latin, but they disappeared in all Romance languages. It is not surprising, then, that there are instances in Petronius of deponent verbs' appearing in active form. More confusingly, there are examples of the opposite phenomenon: normal verbs that appear in deponent form. The latter is most likely the result of confusion during this period over which verbs were deponent and which not. Eventually this confusion was resolved by the elimination of some deponent verbs and the conversion of the remaining ones into active form.

46.1: *quia tu, qui potes loquere* (= loqui), *non loquis* (= loqueris)

45.7: *cum dominam suam delectaretur*

64.2: *nihil nos delectaris?*

One great difficulty with the *Satyricon* is the specificity of its vocabulary. In the *cena* many examples of eating ware and utensils are mentioned.

31.9: *promulsidari*; this word is obviously derived from *promulsis*, 'appetizer.' The term *promulsis* itself derives from the custom of serving it before the *mulsum*, 'drink.'

31.9: *bisaccio*; a double-pannier

33.6: *cochlearia*; a spoon with a point at one end and a little cup at the other, used for snails, eggs, etc.

34.3, 50.6: *paropsidem*; a desert-dish

35.6: *clibano*; a vessel in which bread was baked

39.1: *ferculum*; a tray, or by metonymy the course of food which reposed on the tray

39.3: *theca*; this is a generic term for any covering, including that for a tray. Its etymology is obvious, as it is derived from the Greek verb τίθημι (*títhēmi*), 'I place.'

39.3: *respositorii*; a tray

52.2: *capidem*; a one-handled drinking vessel

52.1, 56.8: *scyphos*; a drinking-cup

52.4: *calicem*; a drinking or cooking vessel

Not surprisingly, in a work that largely takes place at a banquet, there are many references to specific foods.

31.11: *tomacula*; a type of sausage

31.11: *glires*; dormice, a famous delicacy for the Romans

31.11: *Syriaca pruna*; plums

31.11: *granis Punici mali*; pomegranates were called “Phoenician apples”

33.8: *ficedulam*: a small, apparently edible bird

35.3: *ficum Africanam*; African fig

35.3: *sterilicum*; a barren sow’s womb. The word itself is the diminutive of *sterilis*, and there is an ellipsis of *vulva de porca virgine*. Additionally, the word *vulva* seems to have been analyzed as a neuter plural rather than feminine singular, thus producing the neuter singular form *vulvum*, which would agree in gender with *sterilicum*.

35.4: *scribilita*; a cake made of flour, groats, and cheese

35.4: *placenta*; another variety of cake, this one made with all of the above ingredients and cheese as well

36.2: *sumina*; sow’s udders

39.15: *apros gausapatos*; robed boars. The boar was wrapped up in something, but the identification of the material is unknown. Modern comparanda are “jacket potatoes” and “pigs in a blanket.”

40.3: *altera caryotis altera thebaicis repleta*; juicy dates and dry Egyptian dates. The Thebes in question is, of course, the one in Egypt and not the one in Boeotia.

47.10: *penthiacum*; a meat hash. The evocative name was derived from the story of Pentheus, as related by Euripides in the *Bacchae*, who refused to worship the new god Dionysius, and was later ripped to pieces by his mother and other women during a Bacchanal.

49.10: *botulis*; a type of sausage

Petronius includes a number of words that appear nowhere else in our surviving corpus of ancient literature. These hapax legomena include:

38.9: *subalapa*; a boaster of sorts. The word is apparently derived from the verb *alapari*, ‘to boast,’ which itself is rare. It does not seem to be related to *alapa*, the box to the ears that was delivered by masters to slaves about to be manumitted.

44.18: *urceatim*; by the bucket. This is the Latin equivalent to the English expression “to rain cats and dogs.” The Latin formulation is reminiscent of the Spanish phrase *llover a cántaros*, which also means “to rain by the bucket.”

45.5: *mixcix*; a man of half-measures

45.11: *burdubasta*; this word is derived from *burdo*, ‘mule’ and *bastum*, ‘stick’ and probably means ‘a stick for beating a mule in order to make it move faster.’ In the context in which it appears, it seems that this item was noted for being thin, and so to compare someone to such a

tool would be to make a comment about their slenderness, much like our expression “as thin as a rail.”

Latin possessed three genders, but all Romance languages have reduced this to two, not surprisingly in light of the similarity of the 2nd declension neuter singular to the 2nd declension masculine accusative singular, and of the 2nd declension neuter plural to the 1st declension feminine nominative singular. The *Satyricon* has many instances of a neuter noun’s having been reworked as a different gender.

41.12: *vinus* instead of *vinum*

42.5, 77.2: *fatus* instead of *fatum*

44.8: *schemas*, from *schema*, *-ae* instead of *schema*, *-matis*

45.9, 69.1: *stigma*, from *stigma*, *-ae* instead of *stigma*, *-matis*

45.4: *caelus* instead of *caelum*

76.11: *intestinas*, from *intestina*, *-ae* instead of *intestinum*, *-i*

78.1: *stragulam*, from *stangula*, *-ae* instead of *stragulum*, *-i*

The opposite phenomenon is less attested.

45.7: *libra* from *librum*, *-i* instead of *libra*, *-ae*

Many Latin words have remained in Romance languages, but with new meanings. This transfer of meaning was very common with body parts.

43.3: *durae buccae fuit*; a man is described as being harsh-mouthed. Originally *bucca* meant ‘cheek,’ but its meaning was shifted to ‘mouth,’ where it remained to serve as the basis for Spanish *boca* and French *bouche*.

44.2: *non mehercules hodie buccam panis invenire potui*; in this case, the meaning of *bucca* has been altered through metonymy to ‘mouthful,’ but this derivation obviously originated with *bucca* meaning ‘mouth.’

One feature of Petronius’ language is the use of the prefix *per-* to mean ‘thoroughly’ or ‘well.’

41.8: *circumeuntem puerum sane perbasiamus*

44.5: *larvas sic istos percolopabant*

52.6: *ille dismissus circa mensam percurrit*

77.4: *habet... ostiarii cellam perbonam*

One interesting feature is that the verb *veto* is often used in the present indicative as *vetuo*, perhaps on analogy with the 3rd principal part *vetui*.

53.8: *in rationes meas inferri vetuo* (= *veto*)

In one instance, the verb *habeo* is used in an auxiliary function to seemingly express obligation. This verb, together with an infinitive, in all the Romance languages became the basis for the future and conditional tenses, but this construction at an earlier date implied necessity rather than futurity. Even today, the Spanish helping verb *haber*, used with the preposition *de* and an infinitive, describes necessity.

54.2: *ne necesse haberent alienum mortuum plorare*; lest they necessarily have another dead person to cry for (i.e. they have to cry for another dead person)

In some instances, the periphrastic perfect passive tenses are constructed with a perfect form of *sum*, without appreciable difference in meaning.

53.8: *quicumque mihi fundi empti fuerint... in rationes meas inferri vetuo*

In at least one instance, the perfect tense of the verb *esse* is used with the meaning ‘go’ rather than ‘be.’ That this was a regular practice, at least in that one tense, is indicated by the fact that in Spanish today the preterite tense of the verbs *ser* (‘be’) and *ir* (‘go’) is *fui, fuiste, fue*, etc, which are derived from the perfect forms of the Latin verb *esse*, rather than *ire*.

42.2: *fui enim hodie in funus*

The word ‘but’ in Latin was *sed*, but this etymon died out and did not give rise to any words in Romance languages. The word ‘but’ in several of those tongues derives from the Latin word *magis*, ‘more.’ There is French *mais*, Italian *ma*, and the archaic Spanish *mas*, which is also the Portuguese form. How the meaning of the word acquired its adversative sense in changing from ‘more’ to ‘but’ is shown in Petronius, where the word frequently accompanies *immo*, which does have an adversative sense. The repeated use of the two words together led to a conflation in their meaning, and the eventual loss of the word that inspired that meaning.

42.5: *medici illum perdiderunt, immo magis malus fatus*

This compilation of the peculiarities of language in the *cena* scene in Petronius’s *Satyricon* is far from exhaustive. Not every occurrence of the words or constructions described above has been catalogued here, and there are other words and phrases worthy of inclusion that

have been excluded through oversight. Nevertheless, it is quite obvious that the changes that eventually distinguished Latin from its successor languages were already evident in classical times. These trends were concealed by their exclusion from the vast majority of literary works and by the standard of education that allowed men to read and write in that learned idiom that was increasingly divorced from actual usage and pronunciation.

CHAPTER 12

ROMANCE INNOVATIONS

The ancient Romans were clearly aware that language changed over time, as most artfully indicated in Horace's *Ars Poetica* (lines 72-75):

*Multa renascentur quae iam cecidere, cadentque
Quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus
Quem penes arbitrium est et ius et norma loquendi*

Many words will be reborn which have already fallen, and many will fall which now are honored, if usage, which the rule and custom of speaking is the judge of, wants it.

The following characteristics of Romance are innovations in Latin that occurred at a sufficiently early date that they affected the subsequent development of all (or most) Romance languages, and thus are Pan-Romance features. From this common foundation, the language began to change in different ways in different places, and these emergent variations eventually became formalized with the establishment of vernacular written standards.

Vowels: Romance simplifies the vocalic phonology of Latin. The starting point are the five basic vowels, each having long and short values, and a few diphthongs. Across the bulk of the empire, this mass was reduced to seven discreet vowels, all differentiated qualitatively. The shift is as follows:

\bar{a} , a > a; e, ae > ε; \bar{e} , i, oe > e; \bar{i} > i; o > ɔ; \bar{o} , u > o; \bar{u} > u

The change in the Balkans, which gives rise to modern Romanian, is just slightly different:

\bar{a} , a > a; e, ae > ε; \bar{e} , i, oe > e; \bar{i} > i; \bar{o} , o, u > o; \bar{u} > u

The most significant difference is on Sardinia, where the only change is the loss of quantity:

\bar{a} , a > a; \bar{e} , e, oe, ae > e; \bar{i} , i > i; \bar{o} , o > o; \bar{u} , u > u

The developments of these vowels in the various Romance languages differ. Portuguese, Italian, and Catalan retained this vocalic system, whereas some vowels were liable to diphthongization in French, Italian, and Spanish.

Consonants: The consonantal phonology of Romance generally shows expansion of the fairly limited range of consonants in Latin. Two changes occurred regardless of the position of the phoneme within a word, while others were conditioned by the environment.

1. [h] is lost. This is apparent from the evidence within Classical Latin, since *h* does not make position in poetry. Later the phoneme was reintroduced through borrowings from Germanic languages. This is the basis of *h aspirée* in French. Whereas most French words that begin with a vowel or *h*, which is silent, allow for liaison with the prior word and elision of a final vowel of that word, the group of nouns that begin with *h aspirée* do not allow for this. Cf. *la hache* (with *h aspirée*), but *l'heure* (without).
2. The letter *v* [w] changes from a labial semivowel to the voiced bilabial fricative [β]. This resulted in a tremendous amount of confusion between *b* and *v* in spelling. It retained this value in Spanish intervocalically, but in other Romance languages the phoneme becomes labio-dental [v].

Word-final consonants:

1. *-m* is lost. As with the loss of *h*, this demonstrably was an early change, since *-m* is elided before a vowel-initial following word in Latin, although the letter continued to

make position in combination with another consonant. In fact, early Latin inscriptions often lack *-m*, including the Scipio epitaphs of the early 3rd century BC (Erasmus, 2004: 19-20).

2. *-s* was lost in some regions. This change has a long history. The loss is a characteristic of early inscriptions and in early poetry (in Plautus 92% of instances of *prius quam* appear as *priu' quam* [Wallace, 1984: 225]), especially when after a short consonant and before a vowel (Gildersleeve, 1895: 14, 446). After Lucretius (e.g. *sanguinis inter se multis coeuntibu' guttis*; 1.838), however, its retention became firmly established in the literary standard. Cicero writes:

*Quin etiam, quod iam subrusticum videtur, olim autem politius, eorum verborum, quorum eadem erant postremae duae litterae quae sunt in optimus, postremam litteram detrahebant, nisi vocalis insequeretur. Ita non erat ea offensio in versibus quam nunc fugiunt poetae novi. Sic enim loquebamur: qui est omnibu' princeps... et vita illa dignu' loque. But even, what now seems rustic, nevertheless once they used to artfully drop the final letter of those words whose final two letters were the same as in *optimus* (i.e. *-us*), unless a vowel followed. Thus, in poetry this was not the offense which the New Poets run away from. For thus they used to say: *qui est omnibu' princeps* ("Who is the chief for all?" Ennius, *Annales*) and *vita illa dignu' loque* ("He is worthy of that life and position). (*Orator* 161)*

Among the Romance languages, *-s* is retained in the Iberian languages and to a much lesser degree in French (where it appears orthographically as the plural marker but is silent, except before a subsequent vowel-initial word), but it is lost in Italian and Romanian.

3. *-t* is lost. Although *-t* appears in the Strassbourg oaths (see below) and continues to appear in the spelling of some verb forms in French, where it is not pronounced except through liaison with a following vowel-initial word (e.g. *viennent-ils?* 'are they

coming?'). Elsewhere within the Romance languages, this phoneme has been lost in this position.

Palatalization: [k],[t] > [ts]/_[j]. Unstressed [e] and [i] in hiatus with a following vowel transforms to yod, which palatalizes a preceding [k] or [t] to [ts].

Intervocalic consonants: *-b-* weakens (fricativizes) to [-β-], which explains the graphic confusion with *v*. In the case of other intervocalic consonants, the Romance languages are divided geographically between the eastern ones (Italian and Romanian) in which unvoiced intervocalic consonants remained such, and the western ones, which underwent voicing of such phonemes.

Consonant clusters: *-ns-* simplifies to *-s-*. *-mn-*, *-ct-*, *-x-* [ks] all undergo regressive assimilation and then degemination, leading to *-n-*, *-t-*, and *-s-*. *-qu-* [kw] simplifies to [k].

Nominal morphology: The most salient feature of Romance nouns and adjectives is the simplification of the Latin case system. The cause for this development was, to a large degree, phonological. The loss of *-m* nullified the difference between several case forms (at least in speech, since *-m* continued to be written). Accusative *puellam* became *puella*, which coincided not only with the nominative singular, but also with the ablative singular *puellā*, since the distinction between long and short *a* was also lost. *Servum* became *servo*, equivalent in speech to the ablative and dative singular. *Regem* was transformed into *rege*, the same as the ablative singular. Under such circumstances, the grammatical functions once performed by distinctive cases were replaced by word order and prepositions. At the same time, though, phonological change does not entirely explain the disappearance of cases (Herman, 1997: 52-3). After all, genitive forms ending in *-i* and *-orum* (and also *-ae* and *-arum*) would not have been lost through sound change. These forms would have remained distinctive, and hence capable of

carrying morphological value.

The simplification of the Latin case system was due to causes beyond phonological change alone. First of all, even in Classical Latin, there was a great deal of ambiguity in case forms. The ending *-i* could be the genitive singular, nominative plural, or vocative plural of second declension masculine nouns. The ending *-ae* was the correct form for the genitive singular, dative singular, nominative plural, and vocative plural of first declension feminine nouns. Even at its most distinctive, the system left much to be desired. The system enshrined in Classical Latin was itself a considerable simplification of the case schema that Latin had inherited from Indo-European.

The expansion of the use of the accusative case seems to have been the result of its increasing identification with the object of prepositions and with direct objects. In this way, the accusative began to be used with prepositions that regularly demanded the ablative and with verbs that took dative, genitive, or ablative complements (rather than the usual accusative direct object). At the same time, the dative case began to convey the function of the genitive case, most likely because the use of the dative of possession had linked the dative with the most prominent use of the genitive. With both these phenomena, evidence does not point in only one direction. There are attestations of the use of the ablative where the accusative would be expected, and of the genitive in the role of the dative, but in general the trend was toward greater use of the accusative and dative. In the second declension, phonological change rendered the accusative and dative homophonous in the singular, and perhaps through analogy this correspondence was spread to the plural, and from there to other declensions. Whatever the process may have been, the Latin case system fell into desuetude. This was not simply the result of ambiguity caused by sound change, since several cases, especially plural ones, would have

remained distinctive even after sound changes had occurred.

A considerably simplified case system did remain in use in some areas. Both Old French and Old Occitan distinguished a nominative from an oblique case, though this distinction was most obvious only in words from the Latin 2nd declension, and entirely absent from feminine 1st declension nouns. This case system also fell out of use eventually. In contrast, to this day Romanian distinguishes between nominative-accusative and genitive-dative cases.

The role of prepositions in conveying grammatical information expanded as the use of cases declined, but this expansion was by no means *ex nihilo*. Even in Classical Latin, many case functions could also be expressed with or without prepositions (e.g. *mittere litteras alicui* vs. *mittere litteras ad aliquem*). This flexibility within Latin is undoubtedly quite old, as it can be seen in Plautus: *quae ad patrem vis nuntiari* (*Captivi* 360) vs. *numquid aliud vis patri nuntiari* (400). Both equally convey the sense of something's being announced **to** the father.

In addition to the effective loss of the case system, the declensional system was simplified. The fourth declension is merged into the second, because of shared endings, and the fifth into the first, attracted to that bastion of feminine nouns by the fact that most 5th declension nouns were also feminine.

The neuter gender has ceased to exist in any modern Romance language, and the process that eventually led to the extinction of this noun classification has a lengthy history. Not surprisingly, most 2nd declension neuter nouns were remade as masculine, since the original difference was confined only to the nominative and accusative cases. In addition, since neuter plurals ended in *-a*, any nouns with collective meaning (and hence often appearing in the plural) became reanalyzed as feminine singulars (e.g. *folium* neut. sg., *folia* neut. pl., > *folia* fem. sg., *foliae* fem. pl.) This was also the case with abstract concepts, usually derived from neuter plural

adjectives (e.g. *forte* neut. sg. “strong”, *fortia* neut. pl. “strong things” > Fr. *force*, Sp. *fuerza*, It. *forza* “power, force”).

Synthetic formations for comparative (in *-ior*, *-ius*) and superlative (*-issimus*) adjectives were lost, though the latter were later re-introduced into Italian and via Italian into Spanish. The comparative came to be formed through a periphrasis with the adverb *magis* (> Sp. *más*, Prtg. *mais*, Rom. *mai*) or *plus* (> Fr. *plus*, It. *più*). The superlative in modern Romance languages is a combination of the comparative and the definite article, which itself did not exist in Latin. Articles, too, come into use, the indefinite derived from the number *unus* and the definite from the distal demonstrative *ille* (“that”). Of the other Latin pronouns, *is* and *idem* are lost everywhere, but *iste* and *ipse* become demonstratives in some languages. Often the interjection *ecce*, combined with a pronoun, gives rise to a new form.

Verbal Morphology: Latin verbal morphology is preserved to a much greater extent than the nominal kind. There is a trend toward simplification, but new forms are also created. The four Latin verb conjugations are maintained in French and Italian, but reduced to three in Iberia, as the *-ēre* and *-ĕre* groups merge. Under both circumstances, though, there is movement of verbs in either direction between conjugations. There is also the regularization of deponent and some irregular infinitives: *velle* > **volere*, *posse* > **potere*, *mori* > *morire*.

The synthetic future forms disappear, to be replaced by periphrastic constructions of the infinitive and a form of *habere* as an auxiliary verb. The loss of the original Latin synthetic future seems to have been occasioned by the merger of *v* and intervocalic *-b-* to [β], which rendered such endings as *-avit* (perfect) and *-abit* (future) homophonous. In the case of the third and fourth conjugations, which formed the synthetic future with endings *-am*, *-es*, *-et*, rather than *-bo*, *-bis*, *-bit*, sound changes made these forms homophonous with the present tense. To

compensate for this auditory ambiguity, the synthetic future forms were replaced by periphrases with *volo*, *debeo*, and *habeo*. The last-named formation originally conveyed a sense of obligation rather than futurity, but all three inherently carried a notion of the future, since what one wants to or must do is obviously something for the future. Of these three, *habeo* became the standard, perhaps because it was the most objective model (Herman, 1997: 74). In speech the forms of *habeo* became contracted into monosyllables, and in Romance languages are now suffixes attached to the end of the infinitive. The first attestation of this development is recorded in a pun. The 7th century historian usually known as Fredegarius relates how, during a conflict between the Byzantine and Persian empires the latter refused to surrender the town of Daras, Justinian replied *daras* (= *dare habes*, cf. Sp. *darás*), “you will give” (*ibid.*). The conditional tense was a total innovation of Romance, formed from the periphrasis of the infinitive and the imperfect (or perfect, in the case of Italian) of *habere*.

In Latin, the passive voice was expressed synthetically for some tenses, and periphrastically with a form of *esse* and the perfect passive participle for the perfect passive tenses. In Romance, the former system is completely lost, and the latter is rearranged to make room for the tenses that formerly had used the synthetic construction. Thus, originally *amor* and *amatus sum* expressed the present tense “I am loved” and perfect tense “I was / have been loved,” respectively. In Romance, *amor* is lost, and *amatus sum* takes over its meaning, since *sum* is the present form of *esse*. The original pluperfect passive *amatus eram*, “I had been loved,” which has the imperfect form of *esse*, assumes the original perfect tense meaning of *amatus sum*. The totally new form *amatus fueram*, with the pluperfect of *esse*, is created to fill the semantic gap left by the transfer of meaning of *amatus eram*. Thus, for each active tense, the equivalent passive is the past participle and the form of *esse* in that same tense.

The modern Romance languages have formed perfect tenses with a periphrasis of the past participle and the auxiliary verb *habere* (or *esse* in the case of reflexive and some intransitive verbs). The origin of this was with transitive constructions in which *habere* governed a direct object which included a perfect passive participle. This construction can be seen in the Classical Latin of Livy: *ubi clausum lacu ac montibus et circumfusum suis copiis habuit hostem*; when he had / held the enemy closed in by a lake and mountains and surrounded by his troops (22.4.5). At the time, this type of construction required a transitive verb, but eventually it spread to intransitive verbs. The actual notion of possession gave way to the idea of a past action that continues to be relevant in the present. In this way, “I have a caught fish” becomes “I have caught a fish,” and the formation spreads to “I have lived...” and other intransitive verbs. The origin of this construction can be seen in the following phraseology from a contemporary American Spanish-language newspaper: *a pesar de que tiene firmado un contrato con la clínica*; although he has signed a contract with the clinic (Pérez, 2010: G4). The English translation does not fully convey the sense of the grammar, since the verb *tener* means “have” as in “possess,” and is not the auxiliary verb *haber* which is used in the present perfect tense (as thus also translated as “have”). Such a construction can also be seen in Catalan (Yates, 1975: 89), e.g. *Ell tenia preparada la seva contesta*, “He had his answer ready,” which is basically synonymous with a version of the same sentence featuring the pluperfect tense: *Ell havia preparado la seva contesta*, “He had prepared his answer.” In the first instance, the participle agrees in gender and number with the direct object. Clearly, the phrasing that originally gave rise to the perfect tenses continues to be in use today, despite the presence of the specific tenses formed to convey the same idea.

In this way, new formations replace the synthetic tenses of the Latin perfect system.

Some of the Latin tenses remain in use with essentially the same meaning, especially the perfect and (to a lesser extent) the pluperfect indicative. Other tenses undergo a semantic shift. In this way the Latin pluperfect indicative (e.g. *cantaveram*) is the origin of the Spanish imperfect subjunctive in *-ra* (*cantara*), while the pluperfect subjunctive (*cantavissem*) becomes the imperfect subjunctive in *-se* (*cantase*). The future perfect indicative (*cantavero*), or perfect subjunctive (*cantaverim*), since the tenses practically correspond in form, though not meaning, becomes the now little-used Spanish future subjunctive in *-re* (*cantare*).

The transformation can be diagrammed as follows (Penny, 2000: 159):

<u>Latin</u>	<u>Romance</u>
pluperfect indicative: <i>cantāveram</i>	* <i>habuī / habēbam cantātum</i>
perfect: <i>cantāvī</i>	<i>habeō cantātum</i>
future perfect indicative: <i>cantāverō</i>	<i>habēre habeō cantātum</i>
pluperfect subjunctive: <i>cantāvissem</i>	* <i>habuissem cantātum</i>
perfect subjunctive: <i>cantāverim</i>	* <i>habeam cantātum</i>

Needless to say, the new constructions were liable to the sound changes that were affecting the language as a whole. In this way, for example, **habeam cantatum* becomes Spanish *haya cantado*, French *aie chanté*, and Italian *abbia cantato*.

CHAPTER 13

MUTUAL COMPREHENSION IN ROMANCE

There is evidence that well into the Middle Ages there was a large degree of mutual comprehension among the speakers of dialects of Romance. Or rather, there is very little evidence of a need for translators or problems in understanding visitors from other places. This is what one would expect if the speakers themselves made no distinction between the oral and written forms of their language, but if the two were at a far remove from each other in any one location, then one would anticipate that the ever-changing spoken form would vary greatly from place to place. Rather than the latter possibility, the situation that prevailed could be described as complex monolingualism, diglossia, or linguistic ensemble. There was certainly much diversity, but not so much that it seriously impeded communication. After all, throughout the Romania there was a dialect continuum, rather than (as today) national borders that separate highly standardized and differentiated languages. In order for there to be contact between speakers of different Romance dialects, they would have to travel, a very slow process in those days, especially when Muslim control of the Mediterranean made sea voyages dangerous for Christians. In going slowly by land, the traveler would pass through many zones of the dialect continuum (Wright, 2002: 177). The zones closest to his native land would have a dialect quite close to his own. The tongue spoken farther away would be more differentiated, but by the time the traveler got there, he would have grown accustomed to the increasing differences through constant exposure to them. At each stage he would be exposed to the local vernacular, which would be fairly similar to what he had come into contact with earlier, and to what he would subsequently move on to. In this way, little by little he could become familiar with even widely

different dialects.

In confirmation of the fundamental unity among Romance dialects of this time, one could compare the language of the Strassbourg oaths of 843, the first Romance composition, to that of the works of the Spanish scholar Eulogio de Córdoba, the most prominent Christian author from Muslim-controlled Spain. One finds that every one of the sixty-three words in the oaths has a cognate attested in the Iberian Romance of the time, with the single exception of the proper name “Ludher” (Wright, 2002: 185). Only six words are not found within the *opera* of Eulogio, and all six are attested in other near contemporary sources. The words, of course, some from Northern France and some from the Iberian Peninsula, do not have exactly the same form, but they are similar enough that it is easy to imagine that a speaker of one version could figure out what a speaker of the other was saying without too much difficulty.

Even in the 13th century, by which time differing Romance vernaculars had already become literary languages, there is evidence of pan-Romance comprehension. This is found in macaronic poetry, which featured passages composed in different Romance languages together in one poem. This shows not only that the poet was familiar with different vernaculars, but that he expected that the audience would understand and enjoy his display of linguistic virtuosity.

An incident in the life of St. Boniface demonstrates the complexity, but conceptual unity, of Latin in the early 8th century. The Anglo-Saxon scholar Wynfreth traveled to Rome in 722 in order to meet Pope Gregory II and ask for his blessing for his planned enterprise of traveling as a missionary to Germanic lands. Pope Gregory first wanted to have Wynfreth submit to an oral examination of his Christian credentials, but the latter petitioned for and was granted the right to, instead, submit a written account of his understanding of Christianity. Wynfreth’s submission met with approval, and after being renamed Boniface he left for Germany. This account comes

from the Latin biography of Boniface written by Willibald, a younger contemporary, who describes the exchange between pope and monk as follows:

Adveniente itaque oportuno conlocutionis eorum die et ad basilicam beati Petri apostoli adventante glorioso sedis apostolici pontifici confestim hic Dei famulus invitatus est. Et cum paucis ad invicem ac pacificis se salutassent verbis, iam de simbulo et fidei ecclesiasiticae traditione apostolicus illum pontifex inquisivit. Cui mox hic vir Dei humiliter respondit, dicens: "Domine apostolice, novi me imperitum, iam peregrinus, vestrae familiaritatis sermone; sed queso, ut otium mihi tempus conscribendae fidei concedas, et muta tantum littera meam rationabiliter adaperiat. And so, when a convenient day for their interview had come, this servant of God was invited at once to the basilica of the Apostle St. Peter, the glorious seat of the Pope. And when they had greeted each other with a few friendly words, the Pope queried him about the beliefs and traditions of the Church's faith. To whom soon this man of God humbly replied, saying: "Apostolic lord, I know that I, now a foreigner, am inexperienced with the speech of your custom, but I seek that you grant me time and the opportunity of writing about the faith, and that silent writing reveal my faith in a thoughtful way. (Wright, 2002: 96-7).

From this passage, and from an earlier account of how Boniface and Gregory had already met and spoken with each other three years before, it is clear that the two men can communicate with each other orally, without need for interpreters. It is equally clear, given that the pope approves of Boniface's written report, that the Anglo-Saxon monk can write well in Latin. He is, though, unsure of his ability to express verbally to the pope the subtleties of the Christian faith. What accounts for this interesting situation is how the two men had learned Latin. For Pope Gregory, a native of Rome, Latin was his native language. Today we would call what he spoke Romance and what he wrote Latin, but he conceived of no difference between the two. He learned Latin as the written form of what he spoke. Boniface's mother tongue, in contrast, was Old English, and he had learned Latin as a second language and he had mostly learned it from books (and from others who had studied it in the same way), rather than from native speakers. The way he had learned to speak the language in England was different from the way that Romans spoke it. The

two forms were not so distinct that the two men could not communicate with each other, but they were sufficiently dissimilar to cause Boniface to feel some lack of confidence in his command of Gregory's spoken form. Both men view Latin the same way, as a single language, but they are confronted with the reality of its various, but not insurmountably different, spoken values. Native Romance speakers from different regions would undoubtedly have found communication to be an experience similar to that of Boniface and Gregory.

CHAPTER 14

LITERACY IN THE DARK AGES

There can be no doubt that the vast majority of people during this period were illiterate, but what is often forgotten is that even they were in contact with literary culture since, despite the small number of people who could write, there was a greater number of people who could read, and nearly everyone could understand a text that was read aloud, especially when it was designed to be read to them. The large corpus of religious writings that were produced was not all for the exclusive use of monks. Many works were explicitly for the spiritual edification of the masses, and were intended to be read aloud to them by priests. Preaching was one of the most important duties of the clergy, but the composition of sermons was not left to the discretion of individual priests, who often had little education. Rather, sermons were composed by higher officials in the ecclesiastical hierarchy and were distributed to clergy to be widely disseminated to the people via preaching, i.e. reading aloud. This is made clear in an educational edict of 789, the *Admonitio Generalis* Canon 82 (education then being an almost entirely ecclesiastical concern):

...ut presbyteros quos mittitis per parrochias vestras ad regendum et ad praedicandum per ecclesias populum Deo servientem, ut recte et honeste praedicant: et non sinatis nova vel non canonica aliquos ex suo sensu et non secundum scripturas sacras fingere et praedicare populo. In order that the priests, whom you send to your parishes for leading and for preaching in churches to the God-serving people, that they truly and honorably preach: and do not allow any of them to create from their own judgment new or non-canonical things not according to Holy Scripture and preach them to the people. (Wright, 1982: 118)

Both Gregory the Great (c. 540-604) and Caesarius of Arles (c. 470-542), among others, expected their sermons to be understood when read aloud to the congregation (Wright, 1994: 3), though Gregory's language has been called "altogether classical" (Pei, 1976: 73). Beyond purely religious writings, it seems clear that the presumption prevailed that all kinds of written texts (letters, laws, instructions, practical documents) would be understood by the interested parties, at least if read aloud. Since these written texts resemble Latin more than any form of Romance, it seems clear that people could understand Latin read aloud, which reveals the unitary nature of the language. There was no conceptual difference between the written and spoken languages. For the encyclopedic 7th century author St. Isidore, who specifically addressed the subject of reading aloud, "la langue parlée tous les jours dans les rues de Séville par l'ensemble de la population est latine; une langue très transformée, sans doute, un latin très vulgaire, comme nous dirions aujourd'hui, mais une langue encore essentiellement latine," the language spoken every day on the streets of Seville by the whole of the population is Latin, a language quite transformed, no doubt, a very vulgar Latin, as we would say today, but a language still fundamentally Latin (Banniard, 1992: 248).

At the same time, though, there is an abundance of evidence that the authors of works designed for a mass audience (i.e. of auditors, not readers) were careful to compose them in a way that they knew would be understood. Ursinus (d. 678), the author of the *Vita* (biography) of St. Leger, confessed as much in a preface to the work: *et forsitan valueram et ego, deo annuente, clausis ac aliquis incognitis verbis enarrare*; and perhaps even I would have been able, with God's approval, to compose in words unknown to anyone and closed off to them; *ideo nolui, ut, quique rustici et illitterati hec audierint, intellegant, et devoti appetant eius imitare exempla, cuius intellegerent audiendo miracula*; so I refused [to write in an elevated style], in order that

all the uneducated, illiterate people who will have heard these things, might understand and devotedly seek to imitate his [St. Leger's] example, whose miracles they understood through listening (Banniard, 1992: 257). These confessions that the authors could have written in a less understandable style do not indicate that they otherwise would have written in a different language, but rather in a more self-consciously literary style that would have been lost on the common folk.

Similarly, St. Audoin wrote a *Vita* about his friend, St. Eligius, probably during the decade 660-70, which was prefaced by remarks which stressed the necessity of (1) preaching to the people (in this case using the example of St. Eligius' life, as described in Audoin's book) in (2) an understandable way (*ibid.*, 260):

Cur nos Christiani salutiferi taceamus miracula Christi, cum possimus sermone vel tenui aedificationis historiam pandere plebi? Quotiescumque ergo sanctorum solemnna anniversarium circulo celebramus, aliqua ex eorum gestis ad aedificionem Christianae plebis convenientia recitare debemus. Quanquam imperito digeram stylo, non leporem sermonis inquirens, sed sancti simplicem vitam simplici sermone. Why should we healthy Christians keep silent about the miracles of Christ, when we can spread the edifying story to the common people even with slender speech? Therefore, however many times we celebrate the holy days of saints on the return of those dates, we must read aloud some suitable things from their deeds for the education of the Christian people. Nevertheless I, not seeking charm of the language, will arrange in an unskilled style the simple life of the saint in simple language.

Once again, public recitation unites the illiterate with the fruit of literate culture.

If we examine these texts, whose authors explicitly stated that they were striving for a simple style that would be easily understood by listeners, we will see that one would hardly hesitate to simply label them "Latin." It may be a less consciously literary form of the language than that found in Virgil, but it is recognizably Latin nonetheless, and unless the authors were insincere in their protestations, a form of Latin that was readily comprehensible when spoken

aloud. This phenomenon has been called vertical comprehension: “un acte de communication par lequel un locuteur s’adresse à un interlocuteur (ou à des auditeurs) d’un niveau culturel et linguistique nettement inférieur au sien,” a communication act by which a speaker addresses himself to an interlocutor or to listeners of a clearly lower cultural and linguistic level than his own (*ibid.*, 38).

Short passages, selected at random in order to be as representative as possible, from various *Vitae* (some called *Passiones*) will be presented below to demonstrate the level of the Latinity manifested in these works. These were biographies of saints that were composed with the express purpose of being read aloud in church services. The *Passio Leudegarii*, concerning St. Léger, was composed probably not long after the eponymous figure’s death in 679. The text comes from a manuscript of the 9th or 10th century (Muller, 1932: 216):

Gloriosus igitur ac praeclarus Leodegarius urbis Augustodunensis episcopus, qui christianorum temporibus effectus est martyr novus, ut terrena generositate nobiliter exortus, ita, divina gratia comitante, dum a primeva aetate in virili robore adcreceret, in quodcumque gradu vel ordine provehebatur, extitit praeter ceteris erectus. So the glorious and famous Léger, bishop of the town of Autun, who was made a new martyr in Christian times, when, having been nobly born in worldly breeding, with divine favor accompanying him, while he grew from an early age into manly strength, into whatever situation he was carried forth by rank or position, he stood out before others.

In this passage there seems to be confusion between the accusative and ablative cases, as seen in the phrase *in virili robore*, which probably should be the accusative *in virilem roborem*.

Fortunatus (d. 600) wrote a *Vita* about his friend and patroness Queen Radegunda, who was the wife of the Merovingian king Clotaire I (Beeson, 1925: 120):

Adhuc monachus omnibus soporantibus calceamenta tergens et unguens, retransmittebat per singulas. Nam et reliquo tempore praeter dies pachales ac summae festivitatis, donec infirmitas permisit, prius se levans ut psalleret quam

congregatio surrexisset. Nam de officiis monasterialibus nihil sibi placuit nisi prima serviret, et ipsa se castigabat si bonum post alteram ageret. While all the nuns were still sleeping, she used to rub and oil their shoes and return them for each nun. For even in the remaining time before the Easter holiday and at the height of the celebration, insofar as her weakness allowed, she would get up before the congregation had risen in order to sing a psalm. For nothing concerning the duties of the convent pleased her except to serve first, and she punished herself if she ever did anything good after another nun had already done it.

There is precious little that one could find fault with in this passage.

The *Vita* of the Irish missionary St. Columbanus (540-615) was written by a monk named Jonas at Bobbio, a monastery in Italy founded by the saint (*ibid.*, 140):

Beatus ergo Columbanus cum vidisset, ut superius diximus, devictum a Theuderico Theudebertum, relicta Gallia atque Germania, Italiam ingreditur, ubi ab Agilulfo Langobardum rege honorifice receptus est. So St. Columbanus, when he saw, as we have said above, Theodebertus defeated by Theodericus, having left behind France and Germany, he enters Italy, where he was honorably received by Agilulfus, the king of the Lombards.

The quality of this Latin is very high.

St. Vandrille (Wandregiselus) died in 672, after having converted Normandy to Christianity. His *Vita* was written around 700, and the manuscript that the following excerpt comes from has been dated to the early 8th century (Muller, 1932: 223):

Non post multis diebus rogatus a parentibus suis, ut sibi aliqua [aliquam] puella [puellam] disponarit [desponsaverit], qui ipsi [ipse] iuxta eorum iussione [iussionem] sublimis parentibus et bene nata [natam] sibi quidem puella [puellam] disponavit [desponsavit]; erat enim a saeculo nobilissima. Porro caepit [coepit] ipsi [ipse] vir tacite in cogitatione sua dicere, quid exinde facere deberit [deberet]. Volebat oblectamina mundi deserere et in Dei servicio [servitio] subiogare [subiungere]. Asked, a few days later, by his parents to marry some girl, he indeed married a girl born well and to lofty parents, in accordance with his parents' order. For she was the most noble of her generation. Later he began to say quietly in his thinking, what he should do next. He wanted to abandon the delights of the world and subject (himself) to the service of God.

This passage reveals the absence of *-m* from the accusative case. This does not seem to be evidence of the presence of a specific oblique case, since the genitive remains quite distinct.

St. Memorius was the deacon of a church in Troyes, when the local bishop ordered him to beg the attacking Attila the Hun to spare the town. This led to his martyrdom, as preserved in the *Passio Memorii*, the manuscript for which comes from the early 8th century (Muller, 1932: 227-8):

Cumquae [cumque] *sanctus Lupus episcopus adquae* [atque] *apostolicus sacerdocium* [sacerdotum] *fungeretur, tunc tempores* [temporis] *adveniens rex iniquos* [iniquus] *nomen* [nomine] *Atthela cum gentem* [gente] *nequisimam* [nequissima], *ubiquae* [ubique] *per totam Galleam* [Galliam] *fortis exercetus* [exercitus] *dommenaret* [dominaret], *tunc sanctus Lupus orationibus et vigiliis instantissimi* [instantissimis] *deprecabat ad Dominum caelestem, ut populus Christianus, qui urbem Tricasium morabantur, magis non inritarintur* [irritarentur]. *Post vigiliam noctis suporem deprehensus, eccae* [ecce], *angelus Domini per visum adparuit ei, dicens: ‘Surge, fidelissime sacerdos Christi, iube perquirere duodecem innocentes et eos baptiza. Transmite* [eos] *una cum Memorio presbitero... Eant cum crucis* [crucibus], *verbo* [verbum] *Dei psallantes.* And when Lupus was in office as the holy bishop and apostle of the priests, at that time an evil king named Attila approaching, everywhere throughout France his strong army was victorious, then holy Lupus prayed to the Heavenly Lord with constant prayers and vigils that the Christian people who inhabited Troyes not be further disturbed. After a night-vigil, having been seized by the sleep of night, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a vision, saying: “Get up, most faithful priest of Christ, order [your servants] to procure 12 righteous people and baptize them. Send them together with Memorius the priest... Let them go with crosses, singing the word of God.”

The Latinity, as judged from the number of errors, of this document is not very high. There is great confusion among vowels. Case distinctions are not maintained exactly. Sometimes the correct case is used (especially with the nominative and genitive), and sometimes not (often with the accusative and ablative). It is easier to identify the mistakes as the result of the author’s insufficient education, rather than view them as a conscious attempt to represent a new two-case

system, as used in speech at the time (within France, at least). In the line *eant cum crucis, verbo Dei psallantes*, the word *crucis* should not be interpreted as the oblique form of the noun, since the word *orationibus* (which appears in the correct case) shows that the endings of the oblique cases of the 3rd declension had not been simplified in the same way. Why would *-ibus* be the oblique ending of some 3rd declension words, but *-is* (= *-es*) for others? Here, *crucis* probably shows the use of the accusative (*cruces*) in place of the ablative, a common phenomenon, and understandable in light of the loss of distinction between the two forms in speech for most nouns. While it is easy to see how the author could have made a mistake, it is difficult to believe that the author is maintaining a conscious differentiation in writing between only two cases, as some have argued. Notwithstanding its peculiarities, this language is more appropriately classified as Latin than as any alternative.

Since it is a *Vita*, it is likely that it was extensively used for the religious edification of the people, to inspire them with the example of St. Memorius (despite the unfavorable outcome of the incident). We can be sure that it was read aloud, but we cannot know exactly how that reading would have sounded. We can be certain, though, that we cannot view the writing as phonetic. The author was aiming for comprehension, but the readers would have to be able to read it, and the easiest way to insure that would be to compose according to the traditional norms, rather than in a way that more closely approximated speaking. A document written in English with the International Phonetic Alphabet would appear tremendously difficult to anyone used to the traditional unphonetic orthographic system of the language. Even if, as was almost certainly the case, the distinction between the accusative and ablative cases had been lost in speech, correct case usage in writing would have facilitated reading. The letter *s* indicates the plural number for most French nouns and adjectives, and is written even though it is usually not

pronounced. A document written without the superfluous *s* would indubitably strike a Francophone as odd and unnecessarily difficult. It is likely that the spoken language had simplified the six Latin cases to two (nominative and oblique) in some areas and one in others, but perhaps passive understanding of the genitive (which had remained distinctive even after sound laws had merged other cases) and the synthetic passive, *inter alia*, was still commanded by the listeners. If other case distinctions were not maintained in speech, they still were in writing, just as in English the plural, genitive singular, and genitive plural forms have distinct written forms, but are homophonous in speech. Many Anglophones today are not always able to maintain the proper distinctions between those three forms in writing, but they are aware that there do exist rules that govern proper usage. In French, the present tense verb forms *aime*, *aimes*, and *aiment* are all pronounced alike, as are *aimer*, *aimé*, *aimée*, *aimai*, *aimais*, *aimait*, and *aimaient* (at least among the large segment of speakers who do not pronounce the final vowel of the last three forms as /ɛ/ [Ayles-Bennett, 1996: 280]), but writers are (usually) able to keep them distinct. Parisian French, the dialect of highest prestige, is also losing the distinction between /a/ and /ɑ/ (as in the words *tache* and *tâche*) and between the nasal vowels *-in* and *-un* (*ibid.*, 280-1), but once again, despite the homophony, most literate people manage to remember the correct forms in writing.

The differentiation between nominative and oblique forms can be found in Old French and Old Occitan. Though it is attested in early texts, both French and Occitan lose this distinction at an early date. Even when fully present, case forms were ambiguous and confined to only certain types of nouns. Most nouns that came from the Latin masculine 2nd declension were marked in the nominative singular and oblique plural with *s*. The nominative plural and oblique singular were unmarked. Thus, there were two different forms for four different

case/number possibilities, which allowed for considerable ambiguity unless the morphological value of the case endings were supplemented by rules of syntax (e.g. word order, use of prepositions). In addition, words derived from the Latin first declension distinguished only between singular and plural, without any regard for case at all. More complexity in forms could be seen in 3rd declension words. For example:

Old French	Singular		Plural	
	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine
Nominative	li bons murs	la bone polle	li bon mur	les bones polles
Oblique	le (lo) bon mur	la bone polle	les bons murs	les bones polles
Nominative	li granz frere	la grant suer	li grant frere	les granz serors
Oblique	le (lo) grant frere	la grant seror	li granz freres	les granz serors
Old Occitan				
Nominative	lo mals jorns	la mala domna	li mal jorn	las malas domnas
Oblique	lo mal jorn	la mala domna	los mals jorns	las malas domnas
Nominative	lo gentils hom	la gentils flors	li gentil home	las gentils flors
Oblique	lo gentil home	la gentil flor	los gentils homes	las gentils flors

The loss of case entirely appears in some regions before others. It is an early development in Anglo-Norman and western dialects (Ayres-Bennett, 1996:51). In instances where there was a distinction between nominative and oblique forms (which was not the case with all nouns), the oblique forms alone survived into Modern French. By the 13th century, adherence to proper case forms was occasional and often incorrect (*ibid.*, 90). The complete loss of cases distinctions (early 14th century) is one of the indications used to separate Old from Middle French (*ibid.*, 105). The instability and ambiguity in case forms led to increasing use of prepositions, which can be seen as early as the Strassbourg Oaths. Of course, increasing usage of prepositions is a phenomenon that can be seen in later Latin as well (Ostler, 2007: 119). Flexibility in word order was limited by the preference for the verb in the second position, resulting in the predominance

of subject-verb-object and object-verb-subject patterns, in which the subject was frequently dropped, if a pronoun (Ayres-Bennett, 1996: 56). The loss of flexibility in word order would have reduced the importance and necessity of case-based distinction between subject and object.

Case distinction has also disappeared from Modern Occitan. It is well attested in Old Occitan, but it is possible that its presence has been over-estimated as a result of emendation of texts that do not display correct case usage. 19th century editors of Old Occitan texts, perhaps influenced by the example of Latin, took it for granted that the language had included the nominative-oblique distinction and accordingly “corrected” texts in which this feature was absent (Paden, 1998: 281). Even in texts which include, for the most part, correct case usage, there are a number of exceptions, i.e. words that regularly do not follow this norm: proper nouns, words followed by subsequent *s*-initial words. The use of the oblique in place of the nominative is more common than the opposite scenario (*ibid.*, 288). This makes sense in light of the fact that in Occitan, as in French, it is the oblique forms alone that survive.

The loss of case distinction is understandable when one takes into account its increasing irrelevance. In Old Occitan word order is predominantly subject-verb-object in both main and subordinate clauses (*ibid.*, 228, 231), which eliminated the necessity of distinguishing subject (nominative) from object (oblique) through separate cases. The most common alternate word order was object-verb-subject, whose rarity marked it as having special significance. The oblique case could function alone (i.e. without preposition) in the role of genitive, but this was more common with proper than with common nouns, and word order (thing possessed precedes possessors) governed this usage, thus making the distinction of the oblique less necessary. The oblique occasionally functioned, like the dative, as an indirect object. This usage was more common with proper nouns. It also served as the object of a preposition. At any rate, case alone

is rarely the key element in determining the grammatical role of a noun.

In the *Séquence de Saint Eulalie*, a brief poem of 29 lines representing the earliest attestation of French after the Strassbourg oaths and dated to the period 880-82, there is abundant attestation of the case system, but its usage shows increasing redundancy. The genitival use of the oblique case, without preposition, is seen only in the case of the word *Deo*, “God,” a proper noun. The dative use of the oblique without preposition is seen only with the name *Maximilien*. In contrast, possession is expressed by means of the preposition *de* in the case of the common noun “dove” in *figure de colomb* (Ayres-Bennett, 1996: 31). In the instances of pronouns, though, which even today retain some distinct case forms, we see the use of prepositions to clarify meaning: *por nos, de nos, a lui*.

One must conclude that, even in the two Romance languages that retained a simplified case system for a time, case was of secondary importance. This is in contrast to Latin, even “vulgar” Latin texts, where case continues to play a more significant grammatical role, though one obviously declining in importance. In the *Vitae* displayed above, we see a greater variety and usage of case forms. There are many instances of errors with regard to case. This was probably not important to the intelligibility of such documents when read aloud (as was clearly done often), since many case forms had become homophonous (but not homographous). The choice of whether to rely on the old case function to convey meaning or to clarify the situation grammatically (e.g. with prepositions or word order) was probably a stylistic decision. Some case forms (especially the genitive) would have remained distinct in speech, but probably were falling out of active usage, though they remained passively understood. An instance of this phenomenon is seen in the mid-11th century Old French poem *La Vie de Saint Alexis* (*ibid.*, 47). Within one stanza (466-470), we see the same word used with a preposition (*entre le dol del*

pedra) and without (*an la maisun tun pedra*). Both instances express possession. Throughout the work as a whole prepositions are used extensively, but the occasional use of the oblique case without a preposition shows that there was at least some passive understanding of this case usage. Such a scenario undoubtedly characterized Latin during the pre-reform period (i.e. 800, see below). The increasing restriction in usage to a limited category of words (proper nouns) of the oblique case unclarified by a preposition is reminiscent of the higher level of Latinity that is seen in some documents in stock phrases than in the body of the text.

An example of the use of literacy in practice is found in the edicts enacted by Charlemagne and then disseminated throughout his realm. These edicts, called *capitularia* because they were divided into *capita* (sections, articles), were entrusted to messengers called *missi dominici*, who read them aloud before assemblies, which then gave consent to them (Sidwell, 1995: 134-5). It must be assumed that many, if not most, of those present at these assemblies had received no formal education at all, let alone special training in Latin. Yet, the Latinity of these documents is very high. This shows that texts written mostly in line with the rules of Latin could be widely understood. The implication is either that Latin was widely known as a second language, or that such documents when read aloud could be widely understood. If the latter possibility seems more likely (given the limited reach of formal education), then one must assume that a Latin text read aloud would have the phonology of the vernacular. If this assumption is valid, it is a good indication that into the reign of Charlemagne there was no distinction made between Latin and Romance. The obvious distinctions that are referenced later in his reign could then be seen as a consequence of a new development (i.e. the reformation of Latin pronunciation).

Learning to write correctly was a difficult task, and it seems that much emphasis was

placed on observing examples of good style. In the 9th century many formularies (*formulae*), collections of model documents concerned primarily with providing models which would be of use to local administrators, were composed, many of which are copies of originals from as early as the Merovingian period (McKitterick, 1990: 64). These would have been important tools for learning to write in a prescribed way. Many documents from this period can be clearly divided into two sections: the formulaic parts and “free” sections that pertain to the specific subject of the document. The quality of Latin is usually much higher in the former than the latter, since the writer could take recourse to *formulae* as examples of what to write (Wright, 1994: 182).

There have been preserved for us many legal documents that explicitly state that the text was read aloud to the interested parties. One such document, from Spain, is the contract for the sale of a vineyard to a monastery, dated to the year 951:

In Dei nomine. Simplicius cognomento Karapele. Vobis frateres [fratribus] de Piasca, id est, Ailoni apatissa vel aliorum multorum fratrum vel sororum. Placuit mici [mihi] et venit voluntas [voluntas] nullis quoque gentis imperio [nullius cogentis imperio] neque suadentis articulo set [sed] propria mici [mihi] accessit et venit voluntas [voluntas] ut vinderem [venderem] vobis iam supradictis cultores [cultoribus] eglesie [ecclesiae] Sancte [Sanctae] Marie [Mariae] de Piasca binea [vineam] in loco prenominato ad illa cauba [cava]; ipsa vinea quem [quam] abui [habui] de filia de Gontrico iusta [iuxta] vestra [vestram] vinea [vineam] per suos terminos. Et vos dedistis mici [mihi] precio [pretium] cebaria [cibaria] et quantum mici [mihi] bene placuit; et de ipso precio [pretio] apud [apud] vos non remansit devitus [debitus]. Ut ex odierno [hodierno] die vel tempore de iuri [iure] nostro sit absterso [abstersum] et in iure vestro sit concesso [concessum], abeatis [habeatis], teneatis adque [atque] vindicetis [benedicetis] vos et posteritas vestra.

In God’s name: I, Simplicius Karapele, to you monks from Piasca, specifically to Ailo, the most suitable of the many monks and nuns. It pleased me and the desire came, what with no force compelling, and not by the intervention of a persuader, but my own desire came to me to sell to the above-mentioned farmers of the Church of St. Mary of Piasca the vineyard in the specified place by those caves, the vineyard which I obtained from my daughter Gontrico, the one next to your vineyard along the boundaries. And you gave to me the price, food, and as much as pleased me. No debt remains of this selling price. From this day or from the

time of our oath let it be removed from our control and conceded into your possession, in order that you and your ancestors have, hold, and bless it.

Ego Karapelle pro ipsa vinea vendicionis [venditionis] quem [quam] fieri volui et relegendo cognovi manu mea [signo] feci et coram testibus roboranda tradidi. I, Karapelle, for the vineyard of the sale which I wanted to take place, I confirmed by re-reading, I made my sign with my own hand, and I handed over confirmation in the presence of witnesses. (Wright, 2000: 17)

Concerning the above document the following facts are beyond dispute: 1) the language looks like Latin (certainly much more than it resembles Spanish), but there are many mistakes; 2) the document was read aloud and understood by the interested parties and by witnesses. How do we envision such a scenario? Do we imagine that all these people spoke Latin as a second language, but a very ungrammatical Latin? Do we imagine that Karapelle hired someone to write up a contract in bad Latin? Some have postulated that all these people spoke (and in at least one case also wrote) Vulgar Latin, as distinct from both Romance and Classical Latin (Wright, 1982: 53).

It seems much easier to understand this document as follows. All the people involved speak Romance, a form of it (one of many dialects) specific to their time and place. The contract was produced by someone with education, as attested by the fact that he could write. The document needed to be understood by the individuals involved in the transaction, so it was written in the language that they spoke and understood. The orthography is traditional, Latinate, because that is how people learned to write then. Regardless of the spelling, the words were pronounced as people spoke them (as in English today). The phraseology and some of the vocabulary are very formal and even archaic, but that was to be expected then just as much as it is now in legal contracts. The departures from normal Latin orthography and grammar are indicative of the level of education of the writer: he was aware of enough of the archaic features of the written standard to be able to produce a document that looked correct, but his education was insufficient to allow him to compose in the highest style (but, for the purposes of his work,

he did not need to). As a result, we see both the genitive case of Latin and the use of the preposition *de* to convey possession. For these people, Latin and Romance are one entity. The same language was spoken by the people, preached by the clergy, read in the book collections of monasteries, and recorded in contracts, but at varying registers, each appropriate to the circumstances. The vast majority of people could not read, let alone write, but they were in contact with literate culture via the reading of documents aloud. What was meant to be read to them was written in such a way that they could understand. If they had difficulty understanding something from, say, the Vulgate, the priests could explain it to them in their own idiom. If they had difficulty understanding the Vulgate (written centuries earlier), it would be no more surprising than the difficulty that contemporary Anglophones often have with Shakespeare.

More detailed analysis of the text allows us to grasp what the spoken language was like, and how people learned to read and write it. The phrase *nullis quoque gentis imperio* is most likely intended to be *nullis cogentis imperio* (“with no one compelling by force”). This is a stock phrase of contracts, and understanding of ablative absolute constructions was probably confined to such stock expressions. The author and, presumably, the listeners have a good understanding of what this phrase means, but perhaps they would have difficulty parsing its individual parts. The author himself knows how to say the phrase, but he is confused as to the words that compose it. Accordingly, the mysterious *cogentis* is replaced by two words that presumably were familiar to him through frequency of use: *quoque* and *gentis*. It is likely that the common Latin word *quoque* was read aloud as [ko], and that the author interpreted the initial syllable of *cogentis* as the word written *quoque*, since he was otherwise unfamiliar with the former word.

The mistakes made in this document are exactly the ones that someone would make if he spoke Romance but were trying to write Latin. If he knew Latin as a second language with a

phonetic basis, presumably he would be able to keep *e* and *i* straight. He obviously fails to do this. In the speaker's language, Latin *ī* and *ē* merged as *e*, and words that included the same sound (*e*) were written alternatively with *e* and *i* for underlying reasons that would have been unknown to the speaker. Whenever he must write a word that includes the sound [e], he knows that the correct spelling could be *e* or *i*. In the case of common words he probably can remember which one is correct, but if he cannot recall, then sometimes he chooses correctly, and sometimes incorrectly. Sometimes he tries to split the difference by spelling the same word in two different ways, as in *iure* and *iuri*. The mistakes that he makes are predictable, if one is aware of the details of how Latin phonology changed into the Romance version.

CHAPTER 15

THE FEASIBILITY OF THE ESSENTIAL UNITY OF LATIN AND ROMANCE IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

It is necessary, then, to reconcile three facts: 1) the spoken language (i.e. Romance) had changed, but the written form (i.e. Latin) had not kept pace with it, but rather was anchored to antiquated norms; 2) written documents occasionally show traces of influence of the spoken on the written language, but these are not sufficiently consistent or common for the writing to be classified as something other than Latin; 3) evidence indicates that documents written in a seemingly antiquated fashion were widely understood when read aloud.

It is, in fact, not very difficult to make sense of these seeming contradictions, once we remember that in all languages writing is a more formal activity than speaking and that orthography is conservative. That is to say, those who can write 1) are likely to use words and constructions that they would avoid in speech, and 2) they write according to the way that they (after considerable effort) learned in school, regardless of how phonetic or otherwise the writing system is.

To demonstrate the first point, we can use the example of Portuguese, though the phenomenon is present in all languages. In Portuguese, there are four ways of expressing futurity: 1) a periphrastic construction of the verb *ir* (to go) and the infinitive of the appropriate verb, similar to the phrase *to be going to* in English; 2) the simple present tense with future meaning; 3) the simple future tense, formed from endings attached to the infinitive; and 4) a periphrastic construction with the verb *haver* (there is/are), the preposition *de*, and the relevant infinitive. Of these the least common is the third (Thomas, 1974: 117). There are also four ways

of expressing conditionality: 1) the conditional tense, also formed from the infinitive; 2) the imperfect indicative tense; 3) the past tense of *ir* plus the infinitive; and 4) the past tense of *haver* plus *de* plus the infinitive. Of these, the actual conditional tense is the least used, at least in Brazil (*ibid.*, 118). In Portuguese it is also possible to place direct and indirect object pronouns between the infinitive and ending of the future and conditional tenses (e.g. *falar-me-á*, He will speak to me), but this construction is becoming unusual even in literary style and is almost totally absent in Brazil, in fact being almost unintelligible to Brazilians if used in speech (*ibid.*, 119). Instead, object pronouns are more commonly placed before verbs. In fact, usage of direct object pronouns as indirect object pronouns and *vice versa* is notable in Brazil (Hutchinson, 2010). In Portugal, the 2nd person singular familiar pronoun is *tu*, which is little used in Brazil, where the formal equivalent *você* is so common that it has become fairly familiar, which has led to the use of the terms *o senhor* and *a senhora* as more formal 2nd person pronouns. Within the plural, *vocês*, *os senhores*, and *as senhoras* function in the same way. In Portugal, *vocês* is commonly used, but *você* is not. Instead, if a single person is addressed in a formal way, either the 3rd person singular of the verb is used without any pronoun, or that person's name, preceded by the definite article *o* or *a* is used (*ibid.*). The original 2nd person singular pronoun *vos* has fallen out of usage in both countries, though the possessive adjective from this form still survives. In these and many other ways, nearly or totally synonymous grammatical constructions continue to coexist in Portuguese. Some are more common than others, some are more literary than others, some are confined to certain areas or countries, and some are in the process of being lost, but synchronically they exist. It is likely that Romance was the same way, possessing a multitude of synonymous words and constructions, some largely confined to the written language (i.e. Latin), but not yet fallen from comprehension.

The case of French further demonstrates how a written language can have features that are essentially completely removed from everyday usage (as opposed to careful, formal speech, which often incorporates elements of the written language). The standard way to negate a verb in French is to place *ne* before it and *pas* after. It is well known, though, that the use of *ne* is disappearing from speech, in the regular process of ellipsis. In Canadian French, the absence of *ne* from speech is almost categorical, being absent in 99.5% of instances in one study (Ayres-Bennett, 1996: 273). While *ne* alone was used for negation as recently as the sixteenth century (*ibid.*, 147), there is evidence that the abeyance of its use in speech has roots that stretch back centuries (*ibid.*, 221). In addition, the verbal tense *passé simple*, derived from the Latin perfect tense (e.g. *amavi* > *aimai*), has largely been supplanted in speech by the *passé composé*, a periphrasis of the past participle of the verb and *avoir* or *être* as an auxiliary. Even in the written language, the 1st and 2nd person plural are regularly found in the *passé composé*.

Le passé simple est un temps littéraire. Il ne s'emploie guère dans le français parlé, qui emploie de préférence le passé composé. Même dans la langue écrite, les deux premières personnes du pluriel sont de nos jours archaïque, et on les évite au profit du passé composé. (Hoffmann, 1995: 15)

The current standing of the *passé antérieur* tense in French is quite similar to that of the *passé simple*, only more limited, since the use of the latter is confined to appearance after certain subordinating conjunctions within the literary language.

Le passé antérieur est un temps littéraire et s'emploie donc généralement avec un passé simple, pour rester dans le style de la langue écrite. Comme le plus-que-parfait, le passé antérieur exprime une action passée qui s'est produite avant une autre action passée. Il s'emploie surtout dans des propositions subordonnées après les conjonctions **quand**, **lorsque**, **après que**, **dès que**, et **à peine**, qui marquent l'antériorité immédiate. (*ibid.*, 21).

Furthermore, there is the tense *passé surcomposé*, which, though it remains in spoken French, is falling into disuse: “qui a tendance à tomber en désuétude” (*ibid.*, 20). All this reveals that the essential disappearance of words or grammatical elements from speech by no means indicates that these forms are no longer understood when read or heard, though perhaps that will be the eventual result at some point in the future. Latin was no different in the early Middle Ages.

In the Spanish language today the future subjunctive tense is almost completely moribund. It is confined in speech to a few set phrases (and even in these the use of the future subjunctive alternates with that of the present subjunctive, which is still very much alive), such as *sea lo que fuere (sea)*, ‘be that as it may,’ and *venga lo que viniere (venga)*, ‘come what may.’ It is somewhat more common in writing, where it appears in documents written at a very high, formal register, such as legal documents and official regulations. It is also occasionally used to convey a sense of very remote possibility. The use of the future subjunctive is also more common than usual in Argentine newspapers (Butt, 1988: 246). In addition, although the imperfect subjunctive has an active existence in contemporary Spanish, it occurs in two forms, one ending in *-ra* and the other in *-se*, the former of which is much more common, the latter being all but absent in Latin America. The form in *-ra* also occasionally appears as a more elegant literary variant of the pluperfect indicative (Butt, 1988: 222). Such a form (derived from the Latin pluperfect indicative) occurs more regularly in Portuguese, with the same pluperfect indicative meaning but without possible use as the imperfect subjunctive. Examples of the pluperfect use of the *-ra* form in contemporary writing can be seen in articles from an American Spanish-language newspaper: *también embrazó a su hijo menor justo antes de que abordara el autobus escolar*, he also hugged his younger son just before he had gotten on the school bus; *justo antes que ella comenzara sus estudios de medicina en la Universidad de Columbia*, just

before she had begun her medical studies at the Columbia University (Guevara, 2010a: G6).

As to the second point (i.e. that literacy does not depend on a phonetic writing system), let us consider English and French, both of which possess notoriously unphonetic orthographies. In learning to read, students learn to identify words as lexical items, totalities rather than collections of letters. They recognize a word and know how to pronounce it, regardless of its spelling. The spelling of a word is, perhaps, more of an indication of how to say it than in logographic writing systems such as Chinese, but the correspondence between letter and sound is considerably less than perfect. Years of schooling allow us to recognize a word from its written form, but that form does not determine our pronunciation, since we learn to speak before we learn to read. Learning to recognize these forms is, of course, easier than learning to reproduce them correctly in writing. There are many people who can read with ease, but have serious problems with spelling, even if otherwise highly educated.

Therefore, during this period there was Latin-Romance monoglossia, in which the archaic orthography and grammar codified centuries earlier served as the writing system for a language that had changed considerably in the intervening time. As with English and French today, it was probably far easier to read the language than to write it. This situation was not necessarily a problem, since a few people who could read could pass on the written content to all the others by reading it aloud to them. The even smaller number of people who could write undoubtedly spent many years learning to do so, and some never learned well enough to avoid making the mistakes that are so obvious in the contemporary documents (as opposed to ones that were copied and corrected years later). Then as now (among speakers of non-phonetically written languages, at least), students would have learned the traditional spelling of words, and would have preferred this familiar form, once learned, even to phonetic alternatives. Imagine the reaction of someone

untrained in phonetics to an example of a text written in IPA. It would be almost unreadable. This attachment to the familiar, combined with general resistance to change, partially accounts for the lack of success that orthographic reform movements have had, especially in English.

Accordingly, someone tasked with reading a document aloud would pronounce the words written according to Latin norms with Romance phonology. The word spelled (correctly) *vita* would be uttered as [βida] or [βiða], if the person were in the Iberian Peninsula. In Northern France the intervocalic stop would be reduced to nothing and the word-final vowel would be lost, as can be reconstructed, resulting in [vi]. The exact pronunciation would depend upon the reader's local dialect. What is least likely is that the word would have been said as spelled, as that would have been as confusing then, especially to an uneducated congregation, as, say, pronouncing the *gh* of English as a velar fricative (or as *f*, as George Bernard Shaw proposed), rather than letting it remain a silent letter, would be to us.

This version of the linguistic status quo helps to explain the form of the documents that appear during this period. Compared to Classical Latin, which is, of course, the variety most often studied today, these texts appear riddled with mistakes. They are, in fact, full of incorrect forms, but that is understandable. After all, the writers were striving to write according to norms of orthography and syntax formalized much earlier. Accordingly, they made mistakes, just as even adult English-speakers very often do, but these earlier men did not have recourse to dictionaries or Spell-check. Not only do we have references to turn to when puzzled about the correct spelling of a word, but we are also surrounded by the written word, and thus we are constantly exposed to the norms of writing and spelling. Even what we hear on television and the radio and in movies was crafted carefully in writing before being spoken. Needless to say, such exposure was lacking in the Dark Ages, and therefore it comes as no surprise that those few

who could write often made mistakes.

The spelling mistakes common in documents from this period can be attributed to the way in which people learned to write. Spelling was difficult, but there were rules of thumb to fall back on when trying to write a word that one had never seen written before. Just as the English expression “*i* before *e* except after *c*” causes as much confusion as it eliminates, the tricks of the trade for writing Latin at that time were probably equally problematic. It seems that the endings *-um* and *-o* were learned as nominal endings. In Romance both were pronounced the same way, [o], and consequently there was a great deal of confusion. Since writers knew that both were said the same way, they sometimes used them interchangeably, and thus *-o* appears instead of the expected accusative ending, and *-um* instead of a dative. This happens only with nouns and adjectives. Although the ending of 1st person singular present tense verbs was also pronounced [o], it is never written as *-um*, because writers at least knew that this ending was only for nominal words, and never for verbs. This reduced the confusion endemic in employing an unphonetic orthography in the era before dictionaries, but did not entirely eliminate it.

Il va sans dire that it is difficult to learn to write an unphonetically written language. Many English-speakers never master the skill even today, in a time of extensive mass education and in a world awash in dictionaries, reading material, and other ways of proofing one’s writing. In the past these aids were either entirely unavailable or rarely obtainable, and so the task of spelling was an adventure. The result is exemplified by forms such as *superinis* and *superino*, found in a document from Galicia, Spain, dated 1191 (Wright, 1994: 187). These words are attempts at the form correctly spelled *sobrinus* (“nephew”). How could someone misspell that word so badly if Latin were taught as a second language with a phonetic basis? Such a scenario is unlikely. A more likely possibility is that the writer was trying to spell a word that he

pronounced in his own language [soβriño]. Given the paucity of written material at the time, it is likely that he had never seen the word written before. He would have been familiar, though, with the sound [soβre], which he knew as the preposition and prefix *super*. He presumably would have known the correct spelling of that word, in light of its frequent usage. It is easy to imagine that the scribe interpreted the first two syllables of [soβriño] as the prefix *super*, which accounts for why he wrote the word with the forms *superinis* and *superino*. In his part of the Romance-speaking world at that time, Latin was the archaic, unphonetically written version of the spoken language. His attempt to write it correctly fell short of the mark, but given the difficulty of the task, we can understand how it happened.

An alternate view is that these seeming mistakes are not actually such, but rather written expressions of the spoken language. In examining documents from northern France composed in the 8th century, primarily between 700 and 717, Mario Pei concluded:

Above all, we do not find in the texts the “growing ignorance” of classical Latin or the “haphazard errors” which are claimed by certain scholars. We find, instead, a slow, gradual development along definite lines of phonology, morphology and syntax, which appears due to the single factor of the progressive and parallel development of the spoken tongue. (Pei, 1932: 362).

This is true to some extent, in that the spoken vernacular undoubtedly had an influence on the written language, especially at times and in places where the standard of education was low, or in situations where comprehension was at a premium, at the expense of good literary style. The assumption, however, that the spelling of non-traditionally written words reflects the pronunciation is false, as Pei himself acknowledges (*ibid.*, 353). After all, the monks who wrote these documents were not trained phoneticians. Nor does it seem that the scribes were conscious of writing something other than Latin. Many other texts show features of Romance, rather than Latin, especially when written for mundane or practical purposes, rather than carefully composed

for posterity. That the same non-standard orthography shows up is not evidence of the pronunciation; rather, it is the result of efforts to write a language lacking a phonetic orthographic system without adequate resources and training. English-speakers often fall back on a set of rules of thumb when trying to spell difficult words, and since these rules of thumb are only valid for some words, the results are predictable mistakes.

Like Pei, Henri Muller of Columbia University believed that the history of Latin was characterized by a period of Vulgar Latin, an intermediary between and distinct from both earlier Classical Latin and later Romance. He defined the period of Vulgar Latin as arising in the mid 6th century and beginning its decline in the 8th century (Muller, 1932: iii-iv). The end of Vulgar Latin, in his view, was brought about by the linguistic, ecclesiastical, and educational reforms of the Carolingian Renaissance. In Muller's opinion, then, the peculiarities of texts written during the period of "Vulgar Latin" are not mistakes caused by imperfect knowledge of Latin, but rather the product of a conscious effort to write in the vernacular (*ibid.*, vi).

There are serious problems with the scenario envisioned by Pei and Muller. First of all, not all texts composed during this period were written in the idiosyncratic form of Latin that they call "Vulgar." Many of the authors of this period composed works following the vast majority of the norms codified by Latin grammarians: St. Isidore, Gregory the Great, Gregory of Tours. Often these men wrote explicitly for an uneducated lay audience, but nowhere did they imply that their words would have to be translated into another language to be understood. They may have made dismissive remarks about their ability to compose, but such statements seem more out of modesty than a true recognition of their limits as writers. St. Isidore gives explicit instructions about how to read aloud to the masses (not too fast or slow, emphasize the proper words, pause at the correct moments, etc.), but he never mentions anything like translating from Latin to their

own idiom (Wright, 1982: 87-88). “Il considère que le latin est la langue de l’Espagne, comme elle fut celle de l’Empire romain d’Occident,” (he considers Latin to be the language of Spain, just like it was the language of the Western Roman Empire) (Banniard, 1992: 206). “Les réflexions du Sévillan sur la pédagogie de la lecture nous apprennent que la langue parlée populaire est une base suffisante pour apprendre à lire, sans qu’il soit besoin d’étudier spécialement la langue écrite,” (the comments of this man from Seville on reading pedagogy teach us that the popular spoken language is a sufficient foundation for learning to read, without their being need to specifically study the written language) (*ibid.*, 236). “Aucune recommandation adressée par la Sévillan à un lecteur ne se réfère à la situation d’un individu mis en présence d’une langue devenue étrangère,” (no advice addressed by the man from Seville to a reader refers to the situation of an individual put in the presence of a language that has become foreign) (*ibid.*, 237). This is not to say that Isidore believed that the language had never changed. He echoes a complaint that goes back as far as Dio Cassius at least (early 3rd century AD), that mixing of races was polluting the language (*ibid.*, 242). There is a considerable difference, though, between a low prestige version of a language, and a completely separate language.

The second problem is that there is no consistency to the unusual features found in some texts from this period. As Muller admits, “these, indeed, could easily, in spite of their manifold barbarisms, be corrected into almost acceptable Latin, by just improving their spelling” (Muller, 1932: 18-19). What we see in these texts is not what we expect Latin to be, but even less does it resemble the spoken language, insofar as we have been able to reconstruct it. For example, although it has been established that the language spoken in France at this time had simplified the Latin 6-case system to two (nominative and oblique), and although there is some evidence that writers used just these two cases in their ostensibly Latin compositions, nevertheless this

two-case system is not consistently maintained. Other cases do appear, sometimes used properly and sometimes not. For example, in the *Historia Francorum* by Fredegarius we find the following line: *consenso senato et militum elevatus est Iustinianus in regnum*; by the agreement of the senate and soldiers, Justinian was elevated to the rulership. Here, the 4th declension noun *senatus* is treated as though it belonged to the 2nd declension. This simplification of the declensional system is a typical Romance development, and here it appears in writing. The form *senato* should be dative or ablative singular, but here the meaning is obviously genitive, which makes sense if one assumes that the noun has only two cases (nominative and oblique) and here it appears in the oblique form, one of whose functions was that of the earlier genitive. That would seem to support the idea that the author is simply writing according to his spoken vernacular. At the same time, however, we must keep in mind that *militum* appears in a specific genitive plural form, and *regnum* in the accusative singular. In fact, apart from *senato*, this sentence is correct according to the norms of Latin. What, then, accounts for *senato*? Perhaps the writer confused himself by first attempting an ablative absolute construction with the perfect passive participle of the verb *consentio* (which is also *consensus*) and the noun *senatus*, but then decided to alter the construction to an ablative of means with the noun *consensus* (also apparently taken from the 4th declension and reformulated as a member of the more common 2nd declension) followed by two genitive nouns. This, perhaps, indicates a lack of familiarity with ablative absolutes on the part of the author, not surprisingly since the construction was presumably rarely used in speech (though an absolute type construction has persisted, or possibly been revived under learned influence from Latin, in the writing of some Romance languages, e.g. Catalan: *Havent-ho negat ell, no podem insistir-hi més*; “With his having denied it, we cannot insist on it any more”). Another possible explanation posits that the author would himself have

said the phrase “of the senate” as *de senato*. The use of the preposition *de* to convey possession (formerly within the purview of the genitive case) is a nearly Pan-Romance development. The speaker’s language would have, by this time, either reduced to two (nominative and oblique) or completely eliminated nominal cases. If it were the oblique form, the usage of this case (in speech) as the object of a preposition would be a reflection of the fact that the oblique case had incorporated within itself the functions of the ablative case. Either way, the object of the preposition *de* would have been followed by a word pronounced roughly as /senato/. This form would not be the ablative case of the noun *per se* (though in Classical Latin *de* governs the ablative), but rather the result of the sound changes and syntactic alterations that the spoken language had undergone. What is envisioned here is that the writer was aware that it was not appropriate in writing (regardless of spoken usage) to use the preposition *de* to convey possession, so he refrained from writing it and tried to remember the correct ending to add to the noun to form the genitive case (now largely vestigial in speech, if present at all, having been made redundant by new grammatical arrangements rather than sound change), but failed to remember *-i* or *-us*. He did manage to remember the correct genitive plural of *miles* in the form *militum*, probably because the word ‘soldier’ is more common than ‘senate.’ One is more likely to commit an orthographic error in writing less commonly-used words. The noun *miles* itself was most likely largely confined to writing (though frequent within that medium), since today the word in most of the Romance languages comes from an obviously different etymon (Sp. *soldado*, Fr. *soldat*, It. *soldato*).

The third problem with the view that “bad Latin” is really an attempt to record the spoken idiom is that Romance linguistics can be used to reconstruct what people were speaking, and by and large it was not what we see in these texts. Many words are used which were present in

Latin, but did not survive in any Romance language. Grammatical constructions (e.g. the synthetic passive) are used which did not survive at all. We do not see evidence of grammar that later became part of most Romance languages (e.g. synthetic future tenses, periphrastic perfect active tenses, periphrastic passive, or passive with *se*). If these writers were using the spoken language as a written medium, they were doing so in a highly selective way.

The seeming consistency in the appearance of these “Vulgar” features could be better attributed, not to the writers’ attempt to write a phonetic version of the spoke idiom (*ibid.*, 5), but rather to the shortcomings of their education, which prevented them from writing according to the grammatical and orthographic norms of Latin, which by this time was the unphonetic written form of their language. The position of Latin as such was by no means unique in the history of language: many writing systems are unphonetic and maintain a slew of archaic elements. No one learns writing as simply the application of phonetic principles to whatever one says aloud, not today and certainly not in the Europe of the early Middle Ages. To write as they spoke would not have been more natural or easier at that time and place than learning the rules of Latin, especially since it is easier to write according to traditional norms, rather than according to a new phonetic system (Wright, 2002: 16). That is why even today orthographic reforms are generally unpopular: people prefer to write in the manner that was taught to them, not according to a new, arguably superior, method. At that time, since case distinction had largely fallen out of use in the spoken language, it is not surprising that writers evidently had great difficulty in using cases correctly in writing. Their frequent failure is not, however, an indication of lack of trying. It is wonderful evidence of how they spoke, but to posit the deliberate usage in writing of a specifically oblique case is as valid as assuming that phrases such as “de flumen” and “de uno latus” were spoken as written (*ibid.*, 56)

Pei concludes his assessment of the texts of early 8th century northern France by posing the following question:

Must we... conclude that the masses of northern France, at the end of the Seventh and the beginning of the Eighth Century were already speaking a sort of proto-Romance tongue of which no written records have survived, and that the Vulgar Latin texts of the period in question are nothing but attempts on the part of the scribes to write in a dead language of which they were woefully ignorant and in which they unsystematically amassed error upon error without rhyme or reason? (Pei, 1932: 355)

One would do well to respond to this rhetorical question with a resounding affirmative. One could, though, object to his characterization of Latin as “dead” in this period. It was very much alive, though its spoken form was Romance, with a large remnant of Latin features that were moribund except in writing. Scribes wrote in what they felt to be their own language. They were not always capable of writing it in a way that met the highest standards, and their spoken language did influence their writing, but simply put their writings are too Latinate and not sufficiently Romance for us to believe that they are a good reflection of how people actually spoke. Undoubtedly at this time people could understand a great deal of what was written whenever it was read aloud, especially if written for a popular audience. To use a modern analogy: imagine if someone were today to attempt to write a passage in English in Shakespearean style. The passage would undoubtedly differ from 16th century norms (unless the individual had been thoroughly educated in how to write in that fashion), but would be passable for that archaic version of the language. A contemporary audience would be able to understand the majority of the passage if read aloud, but would be incapable of writing one themselves (even though today most people can write).

Admittedly, it is easy to imagine that a reader could come to a word written *latus* and

pronounce it [lado] or [laðo] or even [lao], but it is more difficult to envision what he would have done when confronted with words or grammatical constructions that did not exist in Romance: nominal cases, synthetic future and passive forms, etc. Certain Latin words did not give rise to any surviving forms in Romance. The various case usages were largely replaced by word order and prepositions. Passive and future forms came to be expressed periphrastically, although in the latter case this construction contracted to a synthetic form. At any rate, it is difficult to imagine how readers conveyed such forms to the audience. It must be kept in mind, however, that most languages contain words and elements of grammar that are rare in speech, but common in writing. That these words are not common in speech does not prevent them from being understood when read, silently or aloud. The process of linguistic change is a slow one, and it takes a long time for words and constructions to die out completely. First comes a long period of senescence after falling out of regular oral use. This seems to have been the state of many elements of Latin during this period. Though uncommon, they were still understood when read. If they were not understood by everyone, this does not exclude them from the language. Today the vocabulary of every language contains far more elements than its speakers use, understand, or even recognize.

Latin has a highly inflected nominal system, in contrast to the modern Romance languages (all of which lack cases, except for a simplified system in Romanian, perhaps retained because of the influence of Greek and Slavic languages), and therefore it is difficult to imagine understanding a text written according to the standards of Latin, but pronounced in line with Romance norms. After all, the loss of word final *-m* (and in some instances, word final *-s* as well) would result in ambiguity in case for various forms that had become homophonous. One might well wonder how a reader would handle such situation. It must be kept in mind, though,

that even in Classical Latin there was a large element of ambiguity in case forms, with certain endings representing two, three, or even four separate cases. If this kind of ambiguity was comprehensible, then perhaps the addition of more ambiguity would still be understandable in context. After all, Russian maintains a set of six distinct cases, but many foreign words, especially when they do not fit into the usual pattern of Russian nouns (but even sometimes when, by chance, they do), are never declined. Despite the continued importance of case in Russian, the use of endless nouns does not compromise comprehension. Nor does the ambiguity in case form that exists in some declensions.

In the period we are examining (before c. AD 800), it was widely acknowledged that writers had to speak (or compose documents intended to be read aloud) in a certain way, since otherwise they were aware that they would not be understood. Thus, the manner in which they spoke or wrote depended on the known identity of the target audience. All compositions written with a view toward preservation for posterity (e.g. scholarly works, religious or otherwise) would most closely resemble the norms of Classical Latin (or, at least, the style of the Vulgate and other early patristic works). Texts meant to be read aloud would eschew the more archaic features of the language. Much the same phenomenon continues to occur today. A speaker or writer must choose his words and style carefully, depending on the intended audience. That someone like, say, Gregory the Great, could write very formally in a way unmistakably Latin, but also preach in the vernacular to the people, who certainly would have had difficulty understanding his scholarly writings, merely reveals the range of what falls within the classification of one single language.

The example of Katharevousa Greek can help us to imagine what it was like for archaic, superfluous grammatical forms to remain in a language. In this instance, these words and

grammar were reconstructed from ancient models, rather than holdouts that had remained from earlier times but largely fallen into disuse. Nevertheless, after years of learning to write in that fashion, educated people were simply incapable of writing after the manner in which they spoke (Newton, 1960: 126). In Valencia, Spain, Catalan is widely spoken, but the regional government does not promote it nearly as much as the *Generalitat* government of Catalonia (which insists that all public written displays must be in Catalan and Spanish, or Catalan alone), and as a result in Valencia many people who speak the language have great difficulty reading and writing it, because they have never learned how to do so (Mizzi, 2010), despite the fact that Catalan has a largely phonetic orthographic system.

There is evidence that Old English, like Latin, was used as a written form of a language whose spoken form had advanced considerably beyond it. The entries in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle continue until 1154, well into the period that is considered Middle English. Nevertheless, the entries continued to be written with the orthography and grammar of Old English. This is not at all surprising, since writing largely depends upon convention, which tends to be traditional. The monks who wrote the later entries were writing in what even for them was probably an old-fashioned manner, but this was the way they had been taught. They knew nothing about applying phonetic principles to writing in order to keep orthography current with pronunciation. There are some telling mistakes that indicate that the writers were composing the annals in an archaic way different from their own speech. In the Peterborough Chronicle, in the record for the year 449 (the traditional date of the arrival of the Angles in England), the 3rd person plural genitive pronoun is given as *Deora* instead of the usual *heora*. Since this copy of the work was produced long after the original composition of the annals during the reign of Alfred the Great (late 9th century), the spelling mistake was mostly likely caused by the scribe's

own pronunciation of the word, which had been affected by the Old Norse equivalent that eventually replaced the Old English form and became the basis for Modern English *their* and all other forms of *they* (Evans, 2009: 40). The scribe had been attempting to write according to the older norms of the Alfredian period, but in the intervening years the spoken language had changed, which unconsciously influenced his mistakes in spelling.

Admittedly, terms like “archaic” and “old-fashioned” are probably no more appropriate here than they are when discussing the spelling of Modern English. Our current writing system certainly has retained many features from a much earlier period when pronunciation was different, but we today certainly do not think of correctly spelled words as old-fashioned. The spellings that we have been taught are for us the correct versions, regardless of the pronunciation when the orthography became fixed, and we pronounce the word in the way we learned as children, regardless of its spelling.

If the difference between the known form of written Latin and the reconstructed nature of spoken Romance seems too great to classify both as versions of a single language, then perhaps examples that are close to home for English speakers will help to remind us of how wide a spectrum of forms can be classified as a single language. In Thomas Hardy’s novel *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (first published in 1891), the eponymous character is described thusly: “The dialect was on her tongue, to some extent, despite the village school (Hardy, 1965: 12).” Hardy later contrasts the daughter with her mother: “Mrs. Durbeyfield habitually spoke the dialect; her daughter, who had passed the Sixth Standard in the National School under a London-trained mistress, spoke two languages; the dialect at home, more or less; ordinary English abroad and to persons of quality” (*ibid.*, 17). At this point in history, the rise of mass education had increased awareness of the standardized tongue, without yet eliminating the regional variations. Despite

Hardy's characterization of two separate languages, it would be a stretch to classify Tess as bilingual. To do so would imply that in the late 19th century native English citizens not schooled in a foreign tongue were speaking languages other than English within England, which is somewhat difficult to accept. It is easier to understand the obvious existence of different idioms as versions of the same language, that is to say dialects, as Hardy himself refers to the difference at times. In fictional Wessex (which Hardy modeled on an actual region of England), there is diglossic code-switching between the regional dialect and the high-prestige standardized national language (depending on the nature of the conversation), but to posit from this the existence of two distinct languages would be excessive.

Another example from English of the sometimes extensive difference between varieties of conceptualized single language comes from Daniel Defoe's nonfiction account *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, published between 1724 and 1726. While passing through Somersetshire, he came to the town of Yeovil (also more sinisterly spelled Evil), about which he commented: "It cannot pass my observation here, that when we are come this length from London, the dialect of the English tongue, or the country way of expressing themselves is not easily understood, it is so strangely altered; it is true, that is so in many parts of England besides" (Burnely, 1992: 281). Defoe observed the teaching at a local school, and noted one boy's reading aloud from the bible. The boy read the passage in the distinct local dialect, but when Defoe observed the bible he discovered that it was the same version, with the same orthography, that was found throughout England. As Defoe recounts:

His lesson was in the Cant. 5. 3. Of which the words are these, "I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on, I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?" The boy read thus, with his eyes, as I say, full on the text. "Chav a doffed my cooat, how shall I don't, chav a wash'd my veet, how shall I moil'em?" How the dexterous dunce could form his

mouth to express so readily the words, (which stood right printed in the book) in this country jargon, I could not help but admire. (*ibid.*, 281-2).

This anecdote is illustrative of what reading Latin aloud must have been like in the early Middle Ages. The reader pronounced words according to the norms of speech and was not bound to utter them as the spelling dictated, since the idea that spelling could control pronunciation would have been as ludicrous then as it is now for us. Latin includes many words that gave rise to no descendent forms in the Romance languages, and it is possible that readers would have substituted the Romance equivalent when reading a passage that included such words. Defoe's amazement that the boy could read in this way seems rooted in the understanding that a student learns to pronounce individual letters, rather than entire words. This is not the case in English, where words are learned as whole lexical items, rather than as collections of sounds. In this way, the boy had learned that the word spelled *defile*, which might as well have been a logogram, was the equivalent of the word he pronounced *moil*, so he most likely concluded that the word was simply spelled in the way that he had been taught, regardless of its pronunciation. It is easy to imagine a similar scenario's playing out in an elementary school today: a student struggles to pronounce a difficult word, and then gives up and replaces it with a synonym easier on the tongue. At any rate, this anecdote demonstrates the feasibility of reading aloud a document in a way substantially different from the version on the page, and yet conveying the same information.

Even if Latin words that were not utilized in Romance were spoken when reading aloud, rather than replaced with a more common equivalent, this would not have been an insurmountable barrier to understanding. A word lives on in comprehension long after it has ceased to be actively used in speech. Today, the audience for a Shakespearian play would be able to understand a great deal of the language used, despite the four centuries' divide in time,

but would be at a great loss to spontaneously reproduce that species of English. Most people recognize the meaning of, say, archaic pronouns such as *thou*, *thee*, and *ye*, but perhaps a majority would be unable to correctly use those words in speech, matching each with its correct case and number. Furthermore, it is likely that the audience at such a performance would not understand the entirety of the dialogue, but that usually does not preclude comprehension of the gist of what is said.

As envisioned, by the time of Charlemagne, Latin would have been a tremendously unphonetic writing system for Romance. By no means does this situation necessitate the separation of the two forms into distinct languages. Today many languages are written in unphonetic ways. The Chinese and Japanese systems are largely logographic. In the case of Japanese, the *kanji* logograms continue to be used, even though the language has two syllabary systems (*katakana* and *hiragana*) that are very well suited to the phonemic peculiarities of the language. Many alphabetic systems are horribly unphonetic, Irish above all others (Doyle, 2001: 14; Ó Sé, 1993: 6). There are important reasons, though, for the preservation of traditional writing systems, even when unphonetic. Phonetically written English would reveal the large variation in pronunciation from region to region and country to country. These dialectal differences are effectively concealed by the standard orthography.

The modern orthography of Occitan, standardized by Louis Alibert in 1935 and promoted by the Institut des Etudes Occitanes in Toulouse, resembles the spelling of the medieval literary language of the troubadours (Paden, 1998: 336). That language itself was a *koine* with features from differing varieties, rather than the representation of the speech of any one of the dialects that were notable even in the Middle Ages (*ibid.*, 4). Since Occitan pronunciation has changed since then, the standard orthography is unphonetic in various ways, but this is an advantage for

it. Modern Occitan is divided among at least five dialects and multitudinous subdialects. No single one has achieved a position of hegemony over the others in the way that the English of London or French of Paris did. In this way, the modern spelling allows all speakers to pronounce words according to their own norms, without regard to a proper form revealed in the orthography. The modern system of spelling is in contrast to that adopted by Frédéric Mistral during the *Félibrige* movement of the latter half of the 19th century, which sought to revive Occitan as a literary language. Mistral based his orthography on the local dialect of Maillane, his home town, but anchored as it was to the norms of one variety, it never gained acceptance west of the Rhone. The *Félibres*, as the Occitan activists called themselves, recorded instances of how they were not understood by the rural denizens whom they addressed in their new literary idiom (Weber, 1976: 80). Alibert's system was devised in response to this dilemma. At any rate, today Occitan is declining in usage quickly. It has few, if any, monolingual speakers, and is estimated to be used regularly by only 1-2 million people, mostly older men in villages (Paden, 1998: 341). Here, and in the case of the 19th century attempt at creating literary Breton as well, the linguistic and cultural revival was doomed to failure by the gulf between the spoken vernacular(s) and the newly formulated literary language, which seemed more like a dilettante's plaything than a credible challenger to the hegemony of French, the learning of which brought many obvious benefits. Experiments at changing Latin to better imitate spoken usage would probably have been received the same way before the Carolingian Renaissance.

CHAPTER 16

NON-STANDARD FEATURES OF DOCUMENTS

Elements of the spoken language had begun appearing in writing before that time. This phenomenon, though eschewed as much as possible in formal writing, was very common in contexts where the text had to be understood, where good style had to be sacrificed to comprehensibility. Legal contracts constitute one such example. These commonly have a veneer of Latinity, especially in common expressions, but include Romance features in the particulars. This can be seen in a bill of sale from 933 (Wright, 1994: 178):

In Dei nomine Domini. Ego Ermildi. Placuit mici [mihi] bono animo et ispontania [spontanea] nobis benit [venit] bolu[m]tas [voluntas] ut binderem [venderem] tibi Nina et uxori sua [suae] Iuliana erediate [hereditatem] de filia mia [mea] Sendina in Ebas, in Lores bel [vel] in alios lorares binias [vineas], terras, pumares [pomarias] bel [vel] pumifera in monte, in fonte [fontem] acesu [accessum] bel [vel] que [quae] recre [recreat] ab omnia [omne] intecritate [integritate] foras una [unam] binea [vineam] que [quae] comodabi [commodavi] in Taberneio. In the name of the Lord God. I (am) Ermildi. It pleased me in good spirit and of its own accord the desire came to us to sell to you, Nina, and to your wife Juliana the hereditary estate of my daughter, Sendina, in Ebas, in Lores, or in other locations (?), the vineyards, the lands, the orchards or the fruit-trees on the mountain, the access to the fountain or what refreshes from the entirety, outside of the one vineyard in Taberneio which I exchanged.

Texts like this are (from the modern perspective) Latin with Romance (i.e. oral) elements grafted on, most obviously in the use of the preposition *de* to express possession in the phrase *erediate de filia mia*. Since it seems likely that no conscious distinction between the two forms was maintained in the minds of the speakers, the language is both Latin and Romance at the same time, or rather, both are one language. The less common elements of the language are present in

stock expressions (*in nomine dei* is rarely, if ever, written incorrectly), where such archaic features are often preserved. The situation that prompted the writing of such a document also demanded that it be understood, rather than ornate. The language used is at the register appropriate for such a transaction. It is not the spoken language, nor is it the language of books; rather it is something else, the register most suitable for a real estate transaction. All three forms, though, and much else, are elements of the same whole: Latin.

The scribe certainly missed the mark in writing correct Latin, but in at least one instance he tried too hard and produced a hyper-correction. What he wrote as *intecritate* was an attempt at the correct form *integritate*. The likelihood that anyone in that region at that time pronounced the word as the scribe wrote it is effectively zero. The writer, though, was probably familiar with the need to write what he pronounced as [g] with the letter *c*, since intervocalic voicing of non-geminate stops is nearly universal among western Romance languages (including Spanish). This phenomenon, however, did not affect the phoneme [g] when followed by another consonant, as in the case of the word *integritate*. The scribe, though, was no doubt ignorant of these linguistic developments (though they influenced his speech), and thus he applied what was for him the spelling convention that the sound [g] was written with the letter *c*. In this instance, he applied it in an improper place.

CHAPTER 17

GRAMMARIANS' EMPHASIS ON WRITING, NOT SPEAKING

Roman authors produced voluminous writings on the Latin language, most of it prescriptive rather than descriptive, but for the most part their recommendations were confined to spelling, not pronunciation. That their area of concern was confined to writing is indicated by the numerous works entitled *De Orthographia*. Furthermore, many of the comments that actually addressed the issue of pronunciation were acknowledgements that the spoken form did not match the written form. Many of the descriptions of pronunciation match well with the hypothesized reconstruction of Romance.

Velius Longus: This 2nd century AD grammarian composed a work entitled *De Orthographia* in which, not surprisingly, forms of the verb *scribere* appear with monotonous regularity.

1. *Elegantiores et vementem dicant et reppendit... preudo enim dicimus, non prehendit.* Let the more stylish say *vementem* and *reppendit...* for we say *preudo*, not *prehendit*. (Keil VII 68.14-17)

The grammarian clearly recommends a pronunciation distinct from the orthography.

2. *Concedamus talia nomina per u scribere iis qui antiquorum voluntates sequuntur, ne tamen sic enuntient, quo modo scribunt.* Let us grant that they write such forms with a *u* to those who follow the preferences of the ancients, provided, however, that they do not pronounce in such a way as they write. (Keil VII 68.6-7)

3. *Ingrediēti mihi rationem scribēdi occurrit statim ita quosdam censuisse esse scribendum, ut loquimur et audimus. Nam ita sane se habet nonnumquam forma enuntiandi, ut litterae in ipsa scriptione positae **non** audiantur enuntiatae. Sic enim cum dicitur illum ego et omnium optimum, illum et optimum aequē terminat nec tamen in enuntiatione apparet... confitendum aliter scribi, aliter enuntari.* It immediately occurred to me, as I was approaching the manner of writing, that certain men consider that things should be written just as we say and hear. For the form of pronunciation plainly holds itself thus, so that letters placed in writing are not heard pronounced. For thus when we say *illum ego* and *omnium optimum*, the letter *m* concludes both *illum* and *optimum* but it nevertheless does not appear in pronunciation. It must be confessed that it is written one way, and pronounced another way. (Keil VII 54.1-13)

It seems that Velius' frank admission that silent letters existed in the Latin of his day was so strange to latter generations, long since accustomed to phonetic Latin, that the word *non* was excluded from a 1587 edition of the work (Wright, 1982: 55).

4. *Fit ut saepe aliud scribamus, aliud enuntiemus.* It happens that we often write one thing, and say another. (Keil VII 75.15)
5. *Sequenda est vero non numquam elegantia eruditorum virorum, qui quasdam litteras lenitatis causa omiserunt, sicut Cicero, qui fortesia et Megalesia et hortesia sine n littera libenter dicebat.* Truly we should sometime follow the style of learned men, who left out certain letters for the sake of smoothness. Thus Cicero, who willingly used to say *fortesia* and *Megalesia* and *hortesia* without the letter *n*. (Keil VII 78.21-79.5)

It is significant that Velius comments on how Cicero used to drop the *n* when speaking (*dicebat*). The implication is that he wrote those words in the normal fashion, including the letter *n*.

Quintilian: This 1st century AD author composed a multi-volume work on the proper education for a public speaker entitled *Institutio Oratoria*. Needless to say, correct pronunciation of words constituted a *sine qua non* for successful declaimers, and so Quintilian addressed the topic.

1. *Consules exempta n littera legimus.* We read (aloud) the word *consules* with the letter *n* removed. (1.7.29)
2. *Quaeri solet, in scribendo praepositiones sonum quem iunctae efficiunt an quem separatae observare conveniat, ut cum dico optinuit (secundum enim B litteram ratio postulat, aures magis audiunt P) et immunis (illud enim NM quod veritas exigit, sequentis syllabae sono victum, M gemina commutatur).* It is wont to be asked whether it is appropriate, in writing prepositions as prefixes, to maintain the sound which the joined letters produce or the sound which they produce separately, as when I say *optinuit* (for reason requires B as the second letter, but the ears hear P more) and *immunis* (for the NM cluster which truth demands is conquered by the sound of the following syllable and is changed into double M). (1.7.8)
3. *Atqui eadem illa littera, quotiens ultima est et vocalem verbi sequentis ita contingit, ut in eam transire possit, etiamsi scribitur, tamen parum exprimitur, ut multum ille et quantum erat, adeo ut paene cuiusdam novae litterae sonum reddat.* And this same letter [*m*], as often as it is final and is in contact with the vowel of the following word in such a way that it is able to pass through the vowel, although it is written, nevertheless it is so little

pronounced, as in *multum ille* and *quantum erat*, that it almost produces the sound of some new letter. (9.4.40)

Consentius: This individual was a 5th century grammarian from Gaul. *Romanae linguae in hoc erit moderatio, ut exilis eius sonus sit, ubi ab ea verbum incipit, ut ite, aut pinguior, ubi in ea desinit verbum, ut habui, tenui; medium quendam sonum inter e et i habet, ubi in medio sermone est, ut hominem. Mihi tamen videtur, quando producta est, plenior vel acutior esse; quando autem brevis est, medium sonum exhibere debet, sicut eadem exempla, quae posita sunt, possunt declarare.* In this there is the balance of the Roman tongue, so that its sound is slender, when a word begins with it, like *ite*, or fatter, when a word ends in it, like *habui* and *tenui*; it has a certain middle sound between *e* and *i*, when it is in the middle of pronunciation, like *hominem*. It seems to me, however, when it is produced, to be fuller or sharper; when it is short, moreover, it must show the middle sound, just like these examples, which were put above, can show. (Keil V 394.16-22)

These three possible pronunciations of *i*, of course, do not correspond to the original difference between long and short. They do, however, reveal three of the outcomes of this phoneme in Romance (Wright, 1982: 57). Accented \bar{i} becomes *i* in Spanish (*ite* > *id*). Word final *-i* becomes *e* (*habui* > *hube*; *tenui* > *tuve*). Intertonic \check{i} is lost through syncope, but perhaps already in Consentius' time it had been reduced to schwa (*hominem* > *omāne* > *omne* > *hombre*). If this reconstruction is true, this passage is evidence that the pronunciation of Latin was not only changing (and leaving behind the written language), but changing in the predicted fashion.

Sextus Pompeius Festus: This 2nd century grammarian lived in Narbo, Gaul. *O longa sit an brevis? Si longa est, debet sonus ipse intra palatum sonare, ut si dicas orator, quasi intra sonat,*

intra palatum. Si brevis est, debet primis labris sonare, quasi extremis labris, ut puta si dicas obit. Habes istam regulam expressam in Terentiano: quando vis exprimere quia brevis est, primis labris sonat; quando exprimis longam, intra palatum sonat. Is *o* long or short? If it is long, the sound itself must make a sound within the palate, as if you were to say *orator*, it almost sounds inside the palate. If it is short, it must make a sound with the outer lips, almost the edges of the lips, as if you were to say *obit*. This rule has been expressed by Terentianus: when you want to express that it is short, it makes a sound with the outer lips; when you want to express the long form, it makes a sound inside the palate.

From this comment it is clear that by this time the differentiation of long and short vowels was no longer based on vocalic quantity. Pompeius' description of the lips' involvement in the pronunciation of short *o* seems to indicate that the vowel had become a labial diphthong, which is exactly the development seen in Spanish, French, and Italian (though in the latter two languages this development only occurs in tonic open syllables). This kind of development would have been allophonic. Since tonic *o* diphthongized in a predictable fashion, there was no need to write it as anything besides *o* (Wright, 1982: 58).

St. Isidore of Seville: This man (c. 560-636), archbishop of Seville, wrote a work entitled *Differentiae*, in which he sought, in a world without dictionaries, to distinguish words with similar meanings. Examples include:

inter pigrítiam et torporem. Torporem dormitantis est, pigrítia vigilantis. Between *laziness* and *torpor*. *Torpor* is characteristic of someone sleeping, *laziness* of someone awake.

Among the similar words so compared are ones whose connection, in contrast to the semantic link that binds the above examples, is based on near homophony in pronunciation:

inter vivit et bibit. Vivit de vita, bibit de potione. Between he lives and he drinks. He lives is about life, he drinks about a drink. (Wright, 1982: 83)

Obviously, the words *bibit* and *vivit* are not semantically close. Isidore's comment on them is due to the fact that by his time both words were pronounced in a nearly identical fashion. They had become homophones, rather than synonyms. His instructions concern how to differentiate in writing between homophonous words. Had the distinction in spelling been mirrored at that time by a distinction in pronunciation, there would have been no need for the inclusion of such a pair among a list of commonly confused words.

The first chapter of Isidore's work *Origines* is a grammar modeled on Donatus. It includes such passages as:

Nam sicut ars tractat de partium declinatione, ita orthographia de scribendi peritia, utputa ad, cum est praepositio, d litteram; cum est coniunctio, t litteram accipit. Haud, quando adverbium est negandi, d littera terminatur et aspiratur in capite; quando autem coniunctio disiunctiva est, per t litteram sine aspiratione scribitur. For just as the art (of grammar) deals with word endings, in the same way spelling is the skill of writing, as for example *ad*, when it is a preposition, takes the letter *d*, and when it is a conjunction, it takes the letter *t*. *Haud*, when it is a negative adverb, end in the letter *d* and is aspirated at the beginning. When, however, it is a disjunctive conjunction, it is written with the letter *t* and without aspiration. (Wright, 1982: 85)

In this case, Isidore is explaining the difference between *ad* and *at* on the one hand, and *haud* and *aut* on the other. These words have quite different meanings, so it is unlikely that the cause of confusion was there. Had the words been pronounced according to the spelling, they would have been distinct in that respect also. If they were pronounced along the lines of the reconstruction of Romance norms, both sets would have been homophonous, and explanation would have been necessary to use them properly in writing, just as an Anglophone must remember when to use *principal* and *principle* correctly (“the principal of the school is your pal”).

In addition to the ample testimony from grammarians that pronunciation was not dictated

by spelling, there are various anecdotes regarding emperors that make the same point. Augustus reproached one of his grandsons for saying *calidus* rather than *caldus* (Solodow, 2010: 118). The latter form appears in the Appendix Probi, a compendium in the form of “write this, not that” of commonly made mistakes, but the first emperor regarded pronouncing the word as spelled an undesirable affectation. Most likely he would not have disputed the correct spelling of the word (i.e. with the *i*). In much the same way, Vespasian once ridiculed a courtier for pronouncing the diphthong *au* as it appeared in writing, rather than giving it the value /o/. These stories reveal that even in the highest, most educated stratum of society the pronunciation of the language was changing so thoroughly that attempts to preserve the old forms in speech were regarded as eccentric. At the same time, though, spelling, which is inherently more conservative than speech, remained the same (as happened with English).

CHAPTER 18

ALCUIN'S REFORMS

Schemes for various types of language reform have a long history, and Latin has been very much affected by such developments. As recently as 1895, the American Philological Association resolved to standardize Latin orthography for school texts, since “the orthography of Latin... has now been scientifically determined” (Buck, 1899: 116).

One of Charlemagne's goals was to reorganize the church within his realm via standardization, and one of the ways this was brought about was the replacement of the Merovingian Gallican rites with those used by the pope in Rome (Wright, 1982: 104).

Charlemagne's efforts were thwarted by the limitations of the *Hadrianum*, the book sent by the pope in 781 to define the Roman rites, and by the consequent mixing of Gallican and Roman features in church services. In order to eliminate these irregularities, the task of producing standard versions of liturgical works was entrusted to Alcuin of York (c. 735-804), who also took it upon himself to also standardize the pronunciation of those works.

Alcuin's linguistic reforms were a reflection of his own experience. He was a monk from England, where there could be no confusion between Latin and the vernacular (i.e. Old English). In learning Latin, monks in all non-Romance speaking Christian lands (England, Ireland, Germany) had access to the works of grammarians, but these did not discuss pronunciation. It seems that the insular tradition was, in the absence of any connection to the spoken forms on the continent, to create their own schema of pronunciation. They chose the simplest way: to give each letter one distinct sound. Perhaps the system was slightly more complicated, possibly affected by the phonology of Old English, which would palatalize [k] before front vowels into

[tʃ]. At any rate, they learned Latin from books, and to facilitate this learning they needed a way of pronouncing the written words. They, in effect, put Latin on the phonetic basis which it retains to this day. This was in great contrast to the system that had prevailed on the continent (the Latin-speaking part of it, at least), where Latin was taught as the written form of their native language. The pronunciation varied in particulars from region to region. There was no standard in speaking, though there was in writing.

In contrast to the focus of earlier grammarians, Alcuin concentrated on the subject of pronunciation, and it was perhaps only the weight of tradition that gave the title *De Orthographia* to his work. The work begins with an elegiac couplet that perfectly presents the theme: *Me legat antiquas vult qui proferre loquelas / me qui non sequitur vult sene lege loqui;* Let him who wants to speak forth the ancient speech read me, he who does not follow me wishes to speak according to the aged rule (Wright, 1982: 109). Here Alcuin makes a contrast between his restoration of the ‘correct’ ancient pronunciation (i.e. phonetically derived from writing) and the tired, old form of speaking that had prevailed for so long (i.e. Romance). His standardization of pronunciation is in keeping with the standardization of all aspects of the liturgy that Charlemagne had charged him with. Furthermore, Alcuin promoted the use of the Carolingian Minuscule handwriting, which supplanted a dozen or so styles, some cursive and others not, that had prevailed beforehand (Wright, 1981: 352). Writing letters individually and clearly would have been of great assistance to clerics who were attempting to give a distinct phonetic value to each letter. Earlier, whenever they were reading aloud, they would recognize a written word and pronounce it as it was in their own dialect. All they needed to do was to recognize the word, for which task clear letter divisions were hardly necessary, because the spelling in no way determined the pronunciation. In the same way, today the spelling of an English word does not

specify how it should be said aloud. No one pronounces [b] in the word “doubt” simply because that letter is written in the word. We learn the correct pronunciation as we learn to speak, and learning the correct spelling comes later. Thus it was within the Romance-speaking world before Alcuin was put into a post where he could officially impose the Anglo-Saxon way of learning Latin upon native speakers of that language. If his attempt were to change how people spoke, he failed in that endeavor. He succeeded, though, in tearing asunder Latin from spoken Romance.

Alcuin’s education had been influenced by the legacy of the Venerable Bede, the most famous English scholar and Latinist, who had lived about two generations before Alcuin (672-735). Bede in his day had written a book entitled *De Orthographia*, and though it was once widely thought that Alcuin’s work of the same title was simply a digest of Bede’s, an analysis of the former’s book reveals a focus on specifying correct pronunciation that is totally lacking in the latter’s earlier composition (Wright, 1981: 347). While Bede addresses the issue of the semantic difference between *ex* and *ab*, Alcuin ignores that issue in favor of the matter of distinguishing *a*, *ab*, and *abs*, which he does on phonological grounds: *ab saepissime scribitur, cum sequens verbum a vocali incipit, ne dictio multis consonantibus oneratur, ut ab uno; ab* is most frequently written when the following word begins with a vowel, lest the pronunciation be burdened with many consonants, as in *ab uno* (Wright, 1981: 347). Bede mentions the word *alvus* in order to distinguish it from the semantically similar *venter* and *uterus*, while Alcuin contrasts it with the phonetically close *albus*.

Alcuin’s treatment of proper pronunciation is also in contrast to earlier grammarians. Whereas Alcuin, *euphoniae causa*, favors the spellings *quantus* and *tantus* over *quamtus* and *tamtus*, Cassiodorus (c. 485- c. 585) writes:

Tamtus et quamtus in medio m habent, quam enim et tam est; unde quamtitas, quamtus, tamtus. Nec quosdam moveat, si n sonat; iam enim supra docui n

sonare debere, tametsi in scriptura m positus sit. Tamtus and quamtus have an m in the middle, for it is quam and tam. Whence quamtitas, quamtus, tamtus. Let it not trouble anyone, if n is heard. For already I have taught above that n must be heard, even if m is put in writing. (Wright, 1981: 348)

For Cassiodorus the connection between writing and speaking is not absolute. The former does not determine the latter. He is not so much specifying the pronunciation as acknowledging that the spelling must be etymological, not phonetic. Alcuin's primary concern is *euphonia*, and the forms he specifies are often attributed *euphoniae causa*, as in the case of the verbs *differo* and *diffundo*, where the assimilation in pronunciation is mirrored by assimilation in writing, even though the etymological spelling with the prefix *dis-* would be more helpful in understanding the word. Words that recur in Alcuin's work include *dicendum, dici debet, debemus dicere, proferuntur, legitur*, all of which specify pronunciation. Alcuin's opinions are vividly captured by some definitions that he offers: *littera est quasi legitera, quia legentibus iter praebent*: the word "letter" is almost a "read-path," because letters furnish a path to readers; *grammatica est litteralis scientia, et est custos recte loqui et scribendi*: grammar is the study of letters, and is the guard of correct speaking and writing (Wright, 1981: 351-2).

The influence of Alcuin's emphasis on the necessity of correct pronunciation can already be seen in the general education directive of 789 called the *Admonitio Generalis* (Wright, 1982: 112-3):

Consideravimus utile esse ut episcopia et monasteria... etiam in litterarum meditationibus... debeant impendere...ut, qui Deo placere appetunt recte vivendo, ei etiam placere non neglegant recte loquendo. We have come to the conclusion that it is useful that bishoprics and monasteries should place emphasis also in the study of letters... in order that they who seek to be pleasing to God by living correctly not neglect to be pleasing to Him also by speaking correctly.

Alcuin was by no means the first person to address the importance of *recte loquendum*. Both Quintilian and St. Isidore had defined *grammatica* as *scientia recte loquendi*, but their

recommendations on this subject are confined to writing (*ibid.*). Alcuin, in contrast, understood *grammatica* as the *custos recte loquendi et scribendi* (*ibid.*). His formulation is in contrast with the earlier one in specifically mentioning writing, as if to deliberately point out that both writing and speaking are skills based on letters: one must both write (according to tradition) and pronounce (according to a phonetic value given to each) the letters correctly in order to be understood. A great deal was at stake, according to the *Admonitio Generalis* Canon 72: *saepe, dum bene aliqui Deum rogare cupiunt, sed per inemendatos libros male rogant*; often, when some people want to pray well to God, nevertheless they pray badly because of uncorrected books (*ibid.*, 118). The efficacy of one's divine petitions was viewed as dependent upon the correctness of the language used.

Alcuin's reforms had the effect, perhaps intentionally, of reifying Latin as a distinct entity. It had always had a distinct written form, but it had been connected to Romance in its spoken version. Creating for Latin a distinct manner of speaking did not alter the spoken version of Romance; instead, it severed the bond between Latin and Romance. The latter was a natural language; the former an artificial construct. Medieval Latin was invented in a way reminiscent of Esperanto and other entirely artificial auxiliary languages. The liturgical reforms of the Carolingian Renaissance served the purpose of defining orthodoxy, and the linguistic reforms had the effect (perhaps intended) of placing the power to determine orthodoxy in the hands of a smaller, and therefore singularly more powerful, number of individuals.

Carolingian reformers wanted to reassert uniformity of belief and practice, and to impose uniform standards on lay people. By insisting on Latinity, they privileged Romance- over Germanic-speakers; but by insisting on correct Latinity, they highlighted the gap between the written language and the evolving vernaculars. How far were these outcomes intended? The reformers were not interested in accessibility. Operating in an extremely inegalitarian world, they assumed and

exploited differentials in access to power. Latinity's potential for restrictiveness was thus a recommendation. (McKitterick, 1990: 264)

The clergy were, of course, interested in wide accessibility to orthodoxy, but not in such access to determining orthodoxy.

The revised pronunciation that Alcuin succeeded in grafting onto Latin and installing within the education system was the first step along the path to the eventual total differentiation of Latin and Romance. Whereas formerly the two had been the written and spoken versions of the same language, giving a new spoken form to the written variety upset the system, and eventually resulted in the establishment of written forms of the spoken language, though efforts in this direction were timid and slow for the two centuries after Alcuin's death in 804. The new schema of pronunciation quickly produced a reaction. The predictable occurred: the common people could not understand Latin spoken according to the new standard, as was famously acknowledged at the Council of Tours in 813. Let us examine again the relevant passage, the 17th canon:

Visum est unanimitati nostrae, ut quilibet episcopus habeat omelias continentes necessarias ammonitiones, quibus subiecti erudiantur, id est de fide catholica, prout capere possint, de perpetua retributione bonorum et aeterna damnatione malorum, de resurrectione quoque futura et ultimo iudicio et quibus operibus possit promereri beata quibusve excludi. Et ut easdem omelias quisque aperte transferre studeat in rusticam Romanam linguam aut Thiotiscam, quo facilius cuncti possint intellegere quae dicuntur. It seems best to our unanimity that any bishop have the homilies containing the necessary admonitions, with which subjects might be educated, that is to say, educated about the Catholic faith, in order that they be able to understand about the eternal reward of good men and eternal damnation of the wicked, also about the future resurrection and the final judgment and by which deeds blessedness may be earned or by which it may be lost. And that each openly strive to translate/interpret/adapt the same homilies into the rustic Roman tongue or into German, in order than all might be able to understand what is said. (Wright, 1982: 120)

The last sentence was repeated exactly in the 2nd canon of the Council of Mainz in 847, which shows that its importance was clearly recognized (*ibid.*, 122). Just what, then, are the assembled bishops recommending? The crux of the matter is the meaning of the word *transferre*. Very often this word is understood as “translate.” After all, the English equivalent comes directly from the perfect passive participle of that form. In several Classical authors (Cicero, Pliny, Quintilian) the word is used with exactly that meaning. It must, however, be kept in mind that in no modern Romance language does the word “translate” descend from *transferre*. Instead, the verb *transducere* serves as the basis for the word in the Romance languages today (Fr. *traduire*, Sp. *traducir*, It. *tradurre*, Prt. *traduzir*). If we examine post-classical usage of the word *transferre*, we discover that it is often used in contexts that quite clearly do not involve translation from one language to another. As the original meaning of *transferre* was redirected toward *transducere*, a new semantic value began to be applied to the former word: “interpret,” “adapt,” or “use metaphorically.” The last usage was quite clear, since *transfero* is a calque of the Greek μεταφέρω, and was used that way by St. Augustine. For example, the late 4th century writer Caelius Sedulius specified that he first wrote his verse *Carmen* and then later *in rhetoricum me transferre sermonem*, adapted it into prose (*ibid.*, 121). He clearly is not translating from one language to another. By Alcuin’s time, then, the word *transferre* was not used to mean “translate.” The 9th century priests, then, who were instructed to *transferre in rusticam linguam Romanam* were not switching from Latin to another language (though, obviously, they were in the case of German), but from Latin, properly and learnedly pronounced (according to the dictates of Alcuin’s reforms), to the popular version of the language. If there had been, instead of a change in pronunciation that, once effected, immediately and severely compromised intelligibility to the uneducated, rather a long period of progressive lessening of

understanding, then one would expect there to have been some references to this phenomenon, especially since the importance of reading aloud to the masses was strongly felt. In the records of the decisions and pronouncements of all earlier church councils, there is no hint that the faithful were having a difficult time understanding sermons preached to them (*ibid.*, 120). Instead of a trail of evidence of failing comprehension, we find a single, definitive piece that stands out so much because of its uniqueness and unexpectedness.

If an orthographically specified pronunciation of Latin, or at least one akin to that used during the Golden Age of literature, had been maintained from ancient times, this would have violated everything we know about what happens to languages over time. They never remain static, unless they pass into the realm of languages learned not from birth naturally, but taught in schools artificially. If Latin had remained spoken as it was written, while at the same time the vast majority of the population were speaking a form highly evolved in phonetics and grammar, then this fact would have become apparent at a very early date to Church officials, who clearly desired to spiritually edify the people in a way comprehensible to them. That, centuries later, the Catholic mass was performed in Latin, a language clearly different from the vernacular of the faithful, should not cloud our perception of what was happening during the Carolingian Renaissance. Even before the elimination of the Latin mass at the 2nd Vatican Council (1962-1965), the local language had been the vehicle of sermons and preaching. Yet, before 813 there is nowhere to be found any recognition to the effect “The peasants clearly aren’t speaking Latin anymore.” Clearly they were not speaking Latin (as we know it), and equally clearly that was not a new phenomenon. The *lingua Romana rustica* did not just emerge suddenly, since spoken vernacular is a fully functioning system in any community at any time (Wright, 1981: 356). What suddenly happened was that ecclesiastical councils, influenced by Alcuin, recommended

that a new pronunciation be given to Latin, rather than the use of spoken vernacular, which had kept Latin and Romance conceptually linked until that time. The predictable result was that people without the benefit of education (i.e. almost everyone) could not understand this new way of speaking. The ecclesiastical officials quickly recognized this fact and instructed priests to use the former system (called here *lingua Romana rustica*) for certain parts of church services. For the most part, though, the reformed pronunciation became standard.

By no means, though, was this new ecclesiastical policy (i.e. the need to *transfere* sermons to the *lingua Romana rustica*) a recognition that Latin and Romance were different entities. Even after this date there are references to Latin as a native language. In the biography of Charlemagne written by Notker the Stammerer (c. 840-912), it is described how a new method of singing was developed by a monk in the city of Metz, “but the effect of his teaching soon spread throughout all the land of the Franks, to such an extent that in our time church singing is called *Metz chant* by all those in those regions who use Latin. With us who speak the Germanic or Teutonic language, it is called *Mette*” (Thorpe, 1969: 104). In this passage, German, certainly a native language, is compared with Latin in such a way that Latin is implied to also be a native language, rather than a learned ecclesiastical tongue distinct from the vernacular and artificially maintained through formal education.

The artificiality of Medieval Latin was, unwittingly, described by Dante in his work *De vulgari eloquentia*. This work is intriguing in its combination of some important linguistic insights with a failure to recognize others. Dante was aware that languages changed over time:

Nam si alia nostra opera perscrutemur multo magis discrepare videmur a vetustissimis concivibus nostris quam a coetaneis perlonginquis. For if we look carefully at the other creations of mankind, we seem to differ much more from our oldest townmates than from our distant contemporaries. (Elcock, 1960: 457)

Dante was also aware of the kinship between the Romance languages, which he divided into three groups, based on the affirmative particle: *si*, *oc*, or *oïl*. He did not seem to understand, though, that all three forms had descended from a common ancestor: Latin. For him, Latin was *grammatica*, a secondary or acquired speech, in contrast to the various forms of vernacular, which are learned as children: *sine omni regula nutricem imitantes accipimus*; without any rules, we take up (vernacular), imitating our wet-nurse (*ibid.*, 455). For Dante, Latin was defined by its strict adherence to an established norm, as defined by numerous grammatical rules. He views it as an unchanging entity, in contrast to the vernacular, which differs across time and place. It does not seem to have occurred to him that Latin was ever anything else; that it, too, had once been a vernacular language (Ostler, 2007: 176). Not surprisingly for a man who almost single-handedly put Italian on its current footing as a literary medium, Dante extols vernacular as more noble than Latin because it was used earlier, is universal (since all men have it, divided though it is into different forms, while Latin is restricted to the educated), and is natural, in contrast to the artificiality of Latin. This last insight has been largely forgotten today. The contrast between the seeming perfection of Latin and the various forms of vernacular led some scholars to debate whether such a divide had existed even in the days (and in the mouth) of Cicero. As early as the 15th century, Leonardo Bruni believed that Cicero's speeches were literary creations that were not indicative of how he actually communicated with other people (*ibid.*, 237).

The conception of Latin as an elevated, perfect form of language is also seen in the Occitan poem *Ab la dolchor del temps novel*, written by Guilhem (Guillaume) IX of Aquitaine (1071-1126), the first troubadour whose works have been preserved. The poem begins as follows:

*Ab la dolchor del temps novel
foillo li bosc, e li aucel
chanton, chascus en lor lati,
segon lo vers del novel chan.*
(Paden, 1998: 66-7)

In the sweetness of the new season
the woods leaf out, and the birds
sing, each one in its Latin (language)
following the measure of the new song.

In this instance, “Latin” is quite clearly used synonymously with “language,” showing how the two concepts were mentally linked. Latin is the model of language in general. This idea was later echoed in a 13th century Italian poem of the Sicilian School by Bonagiunta Urbiciani:

*Quando appar l’aulente fiore,
Lo tempo dolze e sereno,
Gli ausciulletti infra gli albore
Ciascun canta in suo latino.*
(Ostler, 2007: 177).

When the fragrant blossom appears,
The weather sweet and serene,
The little birdies under the trees
Each sings in his Latin.

CHAPTER 19
MEDIEVAL LATIN

One should be careful in viewing Alcuin's reform as the restoration of Classical Latin. What resulted from his work was Medieval Latin, which is certainly distinctive from the Classical variety, while being unmistakably Latin. Admittedly, "Medieval Latin" is a very broad category that covers countless compositions produced over the course of roughly a millennium and throughout Europe, so it is not surprising that there is much variation within it. By no stretch of the imagination will every Medieval Latin document show all of the innovations and none of the usual earlier features. The range of acceptable writing simply expanded. The peculiarities of Medieval Latin that distinguish it from the Classical literary norm include (Sidwell, 1995: 362-372; Beeson, 1925: 13-26):

1. Some nouns change their declension or gender, and some verbs their conjugation.
2. Some deponent verbs become active.
3. Periphrastic verb forms use forms of *esse* from the perfect system in *fu-*.
saepe fuerat ab eo muneribus honoratus (Beeson, 1925: 96).
4. The future tense is expressed with a periphrasis of the infinitive of the relevant verb and *habere*, which became the basis of the synthetic future through the Romance languages.
5. Modal verbs may be used simply to express tense, without conveying any further semantic meaning.
6. The future infinitive *fore* often conveys the meaning of *esse*.

7. Special adjectives with genitive singular in *-ūs* and dative singular in *-ī* are regularized to match normal nominal declensions.
8. Tense distinctions are not always rigorously observed.
9. Demonstrative and personal pronouns are used without clear distinctions.
10. Use of prepositions increases, often with less concern for proper use of case after a preposition.
11. Some cases are used in new ways.
12. The present participle is used with past meaning.
13. Many elements of Greek grammar are utilized: 1) infinitive for expressing purpose; 2) prepositional phrases used to modify nouns; 3) future participle used to express purpose.
14. In indirect statements, the accusative-infinitive construction is replaced by the indicative or subjunctive after a subordinating conjunction (*quod, quia, quoniam, ut*, less frequently *qualiter, quomodo, quatenus*).
15. The use of moods is blurred, with the indicative in place of the subjunctive and *vice versa*.

This is a very short, incomplete list of all the distinguishing facets of Medieval Latin. Though certainly artificial (in that it was no one's native language), during the Middle Ages and early modern times Latin remained very much a living tongue (in that it was learned and used fluently as a medium of all forms of communication). As a vibrant idiom, it is not surprising that the vocabulary of Latin varied from place to place, reflecting the needs of local conditions. The Latin of the Magna Charta (1215) displays lexical items borrowed from Norman French, such as *vicemos* (sheriff) and *sergenteria* (serjeanty), that more accurately conveyed the meaning than

adapted ancient words would have (Haskins, 1968: 128). The Latin of the time borrowed from the vernacular, just as the vernacular borrowed freely from Latin. This give-and-take relationship of great flexibility came to an end with the revival of ancient learning. It is ironic that the Renaissance period witnessed the high point of non-ancient Latin literature, but also signaled its decline. The authors of the time stressed the need to purify all the non-ancient elements that had become incorporated into Latin over time. In fact, they were eliminating the components of the language that had given it life, and replacing them with substitutions resurrected from the distant past. In striving to perfect the language they cut its connection to life, always tenuous since it had long since ceased to be anyone's native language (Haskins, 1968: 129).

Thus, though the decline in the use of Latin was a long process, paradoxically it seems that one of the primary causes was the interest in ancient Rome that came to the fore during the Renaissance. The rediscovery of Classical Latin literature revealed the scope of the difference between the ancient literary standard and the Medieval variety. Many of the scholars of the period sought to purge Latin of the "impure" elements not found in ancient texts, but in so doing they targeted many of the most functional and relevant aspects of the language: "the elegancies of Latin are destructive of its practical utility: there was no surer way of stunting the capacities of thought than the pedantry which restricted that thought to Ciceronian prose" (Paedow, 1920: 345). In seeking to restore the ancient standard, they succeeded in making Latin less comprehensible, and thus easy prey for the quickly expanding vernacular literatures. In this way, the Renaissance had an effect on Latin similar to that of Alcuin's reforms centuries earlier: the language was made more inaccessible and unapproachable.

The characteristics of Medieval Latin did not totally supplant the norms of Classical

Latin. The use of *quod* as an all purpose subordinating conjunction is one of the most notable features of Medieval Latin, but it did not totally supplant the accusative-infinitive construction, which has even lived on to a limited extent in the Romance languages: *también dijo haber sido estafado de la misma forma*; he also said that he had been defrauded in the same way (Guevara, 2010b: G6).

Despite its name, one should not consign “Medieval Latin” solely to the medieval period. Its use continued into early modern times. One example of a comparatively recent work written in Latin is the 1696 *Grammatica Russica*, the first treatment of specifically Russian grammar (as opposed to “Slavonic,” i.e. Church Slavic), written by Heinrich Ludolf. Many of the characteristics that distinguish Medieval from Classical Latin are readily apparent in this book, which includes not only a description of the language’s grammar and illustrations of paradigms, but also a lengthy collection of sample sentences, arranged thematically, in Russian, Latin, and German. Here we find confusion of *e* and *oe*, in words written *coena* (i.e. *cena*) and *foemina* (i.e. *femina*), as in the examples *sero heri coenavi* (Ludolf, 1696: 49) and *dicunt pulchras foeminas in Gallia esse* (*ibid.*, 60). Admittedly, this confusion was hardly confined to Ludolf. Erasmus himself used the form *coena*, as in the line *ne quis super coenam nisi Graece loqueretur* (Erasmus, 1973: 102). There is similar confusion of *i* and *y*, as in *in Russia hyeme praestat* [peregrinari] (*ibid.*, 62). The letter *t* appears in place of *c* in the 3rd declension noun *dicio* in the phrase *pagus hic in ditone Regis Sueciae est* (*ibid.*, 46).

The work also uses forms of *ipse* as a generic third person personal pronoun, instead of as the intensive pronoun. This is made clear in passage such as *horologia ipsius una intensione totum mensem moventur* (*ibid.*, 63-4), in which the word *ipsius* is translated into Russian as “ebo,” which is a personal, rather than intensive, pronoun (it is also worth noting that the Russian

word is today spelled “ero,” though it is still pronounced as though it were written in the earlier fashion). Other examples of *ipse* used in this fashion include *quodnam ipsi artificium (ibid., 63)*, in which *ipsi* is translated as “ему,” which is another personal, rather than intensive, pronoun. In the expression *consulo ipsis... quoniam cor ipsorum non est purum (ibid., 76)* the first pronoun is translated with “имъ” and the second with “ихъ,” both of which are personal pronouns. In the sentence *quando virum probum invenio, ipsum amo & honoro (ibid., 69)*, *ipsum* is translated as the personal pronoun “его.” In at least one case, though, *ipse* is specifically translated as an intensive pronoun: *ipse mihi dixit quod soror sua tibi nupserit (ibid., 65)*. In this instance, *ipse* is translated as “онъ самъ,” which is the actual Russian intensive pronoun. The Classical Latin distal demonstrative pronoun *ille* is also translated as a personal pronoun. In the sentence *heri ille Novgorodio advenit (ibid., 44)*, the word *ille* appears in Russian simply as “he” (онъ). In the phrase *illa adhuc in colina est (ibid., 44)*, *illa* is translated as Russian “she” (она). Forms of the usual Latin 3rd person pronoun *is, ea, id* are also to be found. In *ad ignes eas corrumpis*, the personal pronoun *eas* is translated as Russian “them” (ихъ). This use of different types of pronouns in largely synonymous ways is typical of Medieval Latin.

Another obvious characteristic of Medieval Latin is the use of *quod* as an all-purpose subordinating conjunction, largely with the value of “that,” in contrast to its Classical Latin meaning, “because.” This usage is very common in the *Grammatica Russica*. E.g. *paenitet me quod nummos non in crumena servaverim (ibid., 64)*; *videbatur mihi quod ab affini tuo esset (ibid.)*; *quomodo scis, quod sororem eius uxorem duxerim (ibid.)*; *diu non est quod hoc feci (ibid., 68)*. At the same time, though, there are instances of the Classical Latin technique of expressing indirect statements with an accusative-infinitive construction: *hoc scio, te semper instar stulti respondere (ibid., 59)*.

Not surprisingly, the word “vodka” (водка) appears in a few expressions, which created the dilemma of how to translate a word for a concept thoroughly unknown to the ancient world. In this instance, the expression *aqua aromatica* was coined, as in the phrase *aqua aromatica non utor* (*ibid.*, 50). Similarly, there seems to have been no Russian word for “wine” at that time (today the word is the borrowing “vinó,” вино), and so the word “renskovo” (ренсково) is used, perhaps because the only wine known in Russia at the time was from the Rhineland.

CHAPTER 20

THE BIRTH OF ROMANCE VERNACULAR WRITING

In a given area of the Romance-speaking world, there is a strong correlation between the introduction of the liturgical reforms enacted during Charlemagne's reign and the beginnings of vernacular composition. This seems to indicate that the introduction of the phonetic principle into the pronunciation of Latin had the following effects, in chronological order: 1) texts read aloud according to the rules of the reformed, phonetic pronunciation were incomprehensible to the lay listeners, thus creating a difference between Latin and Romance, where previously the former had been the written form of the latter; 2) the need to specifically indicate the local pronunciation arose, prompted by (presumably clerical) visitors from another part of the Romania; 3) the phonetic principle was applied to the local vernacular, thus creating a writing system that showcased the regional differences in speech, leading to the establishment of separate Romance languages. What is most surprising is that 1) vernacular writing becomes common (rather than only attested in a few documents) relatively late (especially when compared to the formalization of English, German, and Irish as written languages) and 2) it becomes established suddenly, and at a well-developed level. The 12th century witnessed a veritable explosion in the use of Romance vernacular writing.

Vernacular writing was initially associated with French. This connection was probably the result of the fact that Alcuin's reform had been initiated in France and spread from there, probably carried by French clergymen. Phonetic pronunciation of Latin encouraged the phonetic writing of vernacular. This explains a confusing passage in the Occitan poem *Chanson de sainte Foi*, the second significant attestation of that language, most likely composed in the 11th century.

The passage, “Qui ben la diz a lei Francesca, / Cuig me qe sos granz pros l’en cresca,” has been translated, “I think that great profit will accrue to whomever declaims it [a Latin book] well in the French fashion” (Elcock, 1960: 377-8). Since the poem’s use of rhyme was not typical of contemporary French poetry (which was based on assonance), it is more likely that “a lei Francesca” means “in vernacular, as opposed to in Latin.” The earliest Occitan text shows traces of the vernacular of Limoges, in the northern part of the Occitan-speaking country, i.e. where Alcuin’s innovations would have first penetrated into the region. Alternatively, Elcock attributes the innovation of French vernacular writing to nearby German influence, since Old High German had come to be used for writing at an earlier date (*ibid.*, 379).

French

The first document undeniably written in Romance rather than Latin is the copy of the Stassbourg Oaths, which were sworn by two of Charlemagne’s grandsons, Charles the Bald and Louis the German, in which the two agreed to ally themselves against their third brother, Lothair. Charles, who was to rule France, recited his oath in German to Louis’s army, while Louis did the same in Romance to Charles’s army. Both armies then swore oaths. The text of Louis’s oath is the first clear evidence of what we can call French. These oaths are preserved in a history written by the chronicler Nithard, one of Charles’ vassals (and also his cousin). The swearing of the oaths took place in 842, and Nithard must have committed the account to parchment soon afterwards, as he himself died in battle in 844. The only remaining copy of the oaths is from the late 10th century. The German text is an early (but by no means the earliest) example of Old High German, in this case the Rhenish-Franconian dialect (Elcock, 1960: 336).

*Pro Deo amur et pro christian poblo et nostro commun salvament, d’ist di in
avant, in quant Deus savir et podir me dunat, si salvarai eo cist moen fradre*

Karlo et in ajudha et in cadhuna cosa, si cum on per dreit son fradra salvar dift, in o quid il mi altresì fazet, et ab Ludher nul plaid nunquam prindrai, qui, meon vol, cist meon fradre Karle in damno sit... Si Lodhuuigs sacrament que son fradre Karlo jurat conservat et Karlus, meos sendra, de suo part lo frait [non l'ostanit], si io returnar non l'int pois, ne io ne neuls cui eo returnar int pois, in nulla ajudha contra Lodhuuig nun li iv er. (Louis' oath) For the love of God and for the salvation of the Christian people and our common salvation, from this day forward, so far as God gives me knowledge and power, thus will I succor this my brother Charles with aid and every thing as one ought by right to succor his brother, on condition that he do likewise to me, and never will I undertake any agreement with Lothair which, to my knowledge, may be of harm to this my brother Charles... (Charles' soldiers' oath) If Louis keeps the oath that he has sworn to his brother Charles, and Charles, my lord, for his part breaks it, if I cannot deter him therefrom, neither I nor anyone else whom I can deter therefrom will be of any assistance to him against Louis. (trans. Solodow, 2010: 269-70)

In contrast to the straightforward German, the French passage is problematic in some respects. It has baffled efforts to attribute it to a specific regional dialect. The meaning of certain passages has never been adequately satisfied. Many words do not have the form that we would expect from reconstruction. Perhaps the most intriguing question is why written Romance appears here for the first time. What prompted this innovation?

To answer this question, we must remember that the Romance oath was written for Louis, whose native language, as his eponym implies, was German. Undoubtedly he also knew Latin, but this event occurred long after Alcuin had successfully imposed a new system of phonetic pronunciation on the language. Presumably Louis had learned this method, which would have rendered him unable to communicate with the Romance-speakers in Charles' army, who could make neither heads nor tails of that way of talking, as ecclesiastical officials had recognized long before. Therefore, it was necessary to give him a tool to make himself comprehensible. It is easy to imagine that someone (perhaps Nithard himself, which would explain why he included the passage in his history) composed the text of the oath in Romance, writing it according to the

phonetic principles of Latin, that one sound is represented by one letter. This, then, would have been a guide for Louis, something along the lines of the pronunciation guides that are frequently found in travel and phrase books along with the conventional spelling of a word, whose pronunciation would be unclear to anyone unfamiliar with that language's orthographic norms. At the same time, though, if a pronunciation guide is based on the norms of one language, it is unlikely to accurately represent any phonemes not found within that language. This phenomenon can be seen in the oaths, where what was presumably the mute *e* sound /ə/, a value lacking in Latin, was transcribed as *a*, *e*, and *o*. The text of Charles' soldiers' oath, too, was likely for Louis' benefit, to allow the German to recite to them the oath that they would swear.

It is by no means clear that Nithard considered the language of the oaths to be something other than Latin (Wright, 1994: 279). He mentions that Charles addressed his soldiers in *romana lingua*, but while this is clearly differentiated from the *teudisca lingua* that Louis speaks, it is not clearly distinguished from Latin. The point of specifying *romana lingua* seems to be in order to contrast it with German, rather than with the language that Nithard was using as the medium of his history. To give a modern comparison, the "negro dialect" of the novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885) is certainly distinct from the language of the rest of the work, but one would be hard pressed to argue that the language is not English.

The next document in the French language, and the first work of literature, is the *Cantilène de Sainte Eulalie*. The work is a short hymn (the technical term for which, derived from its place in the service, is *séquence*) of 29 lines, meant to be sung on the eponymous saint's day. *Sequentia* become common in the 9th century, and the pattern of the verse follows the melody of the accompanying tune: that is to say, the words follow the music (Ker, 1958: 142). The hymn describes her martyrdom, and asks that she intercede on behalf of the singers. The

work is dated to the period 880-882 quite securely, since the cult of Saint Eulalie had been revived around this time due to the supposed discovery of her bones in Barcelona, and because the hymn is found in a manuscript that includes a poem written in German (the *Ludwigslied*) to celebrate the victory of Louis III, the French king, at Saucourt-en-Vimeu against the Vikings in 881, in which the victorious king, who died in 882, is described as alive (Elcock, 1960: 345). Though meant to be poetry, the meter is unknown and has defied efforts at scansion.

It is significant that the manuscript was probably written at St. Amand, located in northeastern France, one of the main French centers of scholarship in the late 9th century (Wright, 1982: 128). The location of the monastery was near the border of German-speaking lands, and so perhaps the French version is a phonetic transcription for German singers, who presumably knew the new reformed Latin, but not the local Romance pronunciation. Since it is not easy to simply invent a new, phonetic transcription (even one based on the underlying principle of Latin, since Romance had phonemes that were not found in Latin, and therefore had to be expressed in a novel way), it is not surprising that this innovation comes from a center of learning. It happens that around this time there was in residence there a man named Hucbald, who demonstrated his verbal virtuosity by composing the poem *Ecloga de Calvis*, a work of 146 hexameters, in which every word begins with the letter *c*. Hucbald was also a musician and choirmaster, and a biography written about him states that he composed *cantilenae* (*ibid.*, 134). It seems likely that this creative man was responsible for the sequence

These alphabetical experiments are reminiscent of what is found in an 8th century Chinese document. The work is a Buddhist catechism that is written in Chinese in both the normal script and with the Tibetan alphabet. The purpose of the latter was to help monks whose native language was Chinese, but did not know how to read it (Forrest, 1973: 55). The experiment did

not inspire any further efforts at transcribing Chinese in a phonetic manner.

Two works remain from the 10th century. Although the poems are both preserved in an 11th century manuscript, a mention of the coming end of the world could be a reference to the year AD 1000. The *Passion du Christ* has 516 lines, and the *Vie de saint Léger* includes 240, both written in octosyllabic verse. The language of the poems seems to be a mixture of French and Occitan, perhaps the result of a northern text's being copied in the south.

In addition to the two poems, the *Fragment de Valenciennes* is believed to come from the 10th century (between 937 and 952), but the dating is insecure. The work is a sermon on the prophet Jonah, in which French alternates with Latin, the latter the text of the biblical passage and the former commentary on the passage. The short work was found in the binding of a different manuscript. This reveals the ephemeral nature of most Romance writing at the time. The sermon was obviously not meant to be preserved, and in fact the paper on which it was written was re-used. A formal document would have been carefully composed according to the prescribed rules, i.e. in Latin. Writing Romance vernacular on the phonetic basis of Latin was still an experiment at the time, and those who tried it rarely saved their efforts for posterity.

The poem *Vie de sainte Alexis* has been dated to the mid 11th century. There are six extant copies, the oldest coming from England and written about a century after the presumed date of composition. The poem is quite long, having 125 stanzas, each with 5 decasyllabic lines, there being a caesura after the fourth syllable. This was the meter of the later secular epic. Of the 80 remaining examples of the genre, the most famous is the *Chanson de Roland*, which is probably also the oldest, the handwriting of the oldest manuscript having been dated to the second quarter of the 12 century (Elcock, 1960: 349).

Occitan

The oldest text written in Occitan is believed to be a poem of 257 decasyllables on the subject of the 6th century Roman philosopher Boethius, called *Boecis*. The one manuscript is dated paleographically to the 11th century, and some linguistic features point to a date early in that century (*ibid.*, 372). The features of the language used suggest an origin in the region of Limousin. The next Occitan text (again hagiographical in nature) is the *Chanson de sainte Foi d'Agen*, whose author seems to have been familiar with a Latin work entitled *Liber miraculorum sanctae Fidis*, which has been dated to the decade 1010-1020. The single manuscript, which contains four parts, all Latin except for the *Chanson*, has been dated on paleographical grounds to the period 1030-1070. The poem contains 593 octosyllabic lines, divided into strophes of varying length, but each one having the same rhyme throughout. The linguistic features suggest an origin in the southern part of the Occitanophone area. From the early 12th century there is an abundance of legal documents written in Occitan, even before which time such documents were composed in Latin with Occitan words and phrases interspersed (*ibid.*, 382). This type of vernacular prose appears earlier in the south of France than in the north.

The most notable Occitan contribution to literature is its secular lyric poetry, which begins with the eleven surviving poems by Guillaume de Poitiers, the duke of Aquitaine (1071-1127). Since his earliest works are finished pieces rather than crude efforts, it seems likely that such poetry was composed before his time, but not preserved for posterity until Guillaume's fame and temporal power (he ruled a greater area than the king of France) gave authority and reputability to the genre. Its exact origin perhaps lies in a Latin dawn-song, in which a vernacular refrain is inserted between every three lines of Latin. The refrain is repeated three times but is almost illegible. It appears to run as follows: *Lalba par umet mar atra sol / Poy pas*

abigil miracular tenebras (*ibid.*, 382). This type of composition is reminiscent of similar works in Muslim Spain. Since Occitan lyric arises in a polished, refined form, it is likely that it was preceded by similar works in Latin and by unrecorded efforts in the vernacular.

Franco-Provençal

Although no literary language arose from among the various dialects, some closer to French and others to Occitan, spoken in the isolated valleys of Savoy and Burgundy and the Romance areas of Switzerland, there are some documents that apparently reveal that efforts were made in that direction. One 12th century manuscript includes 105 octosyllables, the so-called Alexander fragment. This is known to be just the beginning of a much larger work, since the theme of the poem is also seen in a Middle High German version of 7302 lines, which was completed in 1130 (*ibid.*, 396). This work about the exploits of Alexander the Great is one of the earliest of the genre of *roman d'antiquité*. Much longer and more important is the *Girard de Roussillon*, a poem of 10,002 lines in the style of the *chansons de geste* of northern France. This work is dated to the decade 1160-1170. That so little writing was done in this dialect is not surprising. “Le plus grand ennemi de la littérature... franco-provençal a été le français” (*ibid.*, 398).

Spanish

The earliest Spanish literature comes from the Muslim-controlled part of the peninsula. Brief four-line passages known as *harġa*'s appear at the tail end of poems called *muwaššah*'s, otherwise composed in either Arabic or Hebrew. This genre demanded that the final strophe be composed in vernacular, rather than the literary language. It is very difficult to accurately transliterate the Romance lines, since they are written in either the Arabic or Hebrew alphabet, neither of which conveys vowels well. Several such works survive from the early 11th century.

These are attestations of Mozarabic, the Romance language spoken in the part of the Iberian Peninsula under Muslim control. There is very little evidence of this dialect, since most speakers of Mozarabic who could write were bilingual and wrote only in Arabic rather than Romance, i.e. in Latin, which reveals little about the spoken language. Latin documents almost completely ceased to be composed in this part of the peninsula by the middle of the 10th century (Wright, 2002: 160). This seems to have been the result of an ill-advised attempt to raise the level of Latinity in the region by the scholar Eulogio, which had the effect of making new Latin compositions incomprehensible to lay audiences. Latin had become so difficult to write (because of the unphonetic nature of its orthography) that Arabic was used instead.

The very earliest attestations of Spanish come in the form of glosses in Latin manuscripts from the monasteries of San Millán (*glosas Emilianenses*) and Silos (*glosas Silenses*) in the La Rioja region of Spain. The former are earlier. Once thought to date from the 10th century, there is now consensus that they were composed well into the following century (Wright, 1994: 209). The glosses are both marginal and interlinear, mostly explanations or definitions of a word or phrase, but there is one instance of continuous prose:

Latin: *adjuvante domino nostro Jhesu Christo cui est honor et imperium cum patre et Spiritu Sancto in secula seculorum* Gloss: cono ajutorio de nuestro dueno, dueno Christo, dueno Salvatore, qual dueno get ena honore, e qual duenno tienet ela mandatione cono Patre, cono Spiritu Sancto, enos sieculos delos sieculos. Facanos Deus omnipotes tal serbitio fere ke denante ela sua face gaudioso segamus. Amem. (Elcock, 1960: 405).

It is understood that textual glosses are the product of the individual knowledge of the glossator, and not the result of reference to collections of glosses (glossaries) compiled from other manuscripts (Wright, 1994: 210). Glossaries were made from manuscripts, but they were not used as tools for glossing other manuscripts. In the days before printing, it is difficult to imagine

an alphabetized glossary, which would have been fairly useless to a monk pondering the meaning of an obscure word, since he would have had to comb through an entire glossary in the hope that the difficult word would be found and explained there. It seems that readers noted words that they imagined might be unfamiliar to others, and added glosses as they read for the help of future readers.

The orthographic system used in the glosses seems not to be fully developed. Non-traditional spellings probably indicate evolved pronunciation, but traditional orthography is no guarantee of conservative pronunciation. The word *repente*, for example, is glossed as *lucco*, from the Latin word *lōcō*, and shows the expected Spanish diphthongization of tonic short *o*, but does not show the predicted devoicing of the intervocalic stop (*c>g*), as seen in the modern Spanish word *luego*. The latter change is known to have been a much earlier development, so it is difficult to believe that the gloss was pronounced as written. The glossator, undoubtedly, was familiar with writing *c* (according to good Latin usage) where he himself said *g*, which complicated the task of writing. There are examples of hypercorrection of this phenomenon (devoicing of intervocalic stops). The word *sapiendo* (written with a *d* in Latin and modern Spanish *sabiendo*, another example of devoicing of stops) appear twice as *sapiento*. There is no chance that the word was ever pronounced that way, since the devoicing of a voiced stop is not a regular development in Spanish. The word was written that way because the scribe had grown used to writing the letter *t* where he heard the sound *d*, and not surprisingly he often wrote *t* where he should have written *d*. This makes it clear that the glosses cannot be taken as phonetic writings of vernacular words.

The existence of these glosses seems mysterious, in light of the fact that the effort at writing in the vernacular inconsistently begun with them was not picked up again for many

years. The explanation could be quite similar to that offered for the Strassbourg oaths and the Sequence of St. Eulalie: assistance with pronunciation for a traveler from abroad versed in Latin but unfamiliar with the specifics of the local vernacular. A visitor to the monasteries would most likely have been a fellow clergyman, who perhaps would have been called upon to fulfill the expected duty of preaching to the people. If so, the glosses would have been valuable to such a person using the Latin manuscript with the superimposed glosses within a church service. There was more traveling to and from Spain in the 11th century than there had been earlier, so it would not be surprising if a visitor from outside shared with the monks the phonetic system that had been applied to Latin (Wright, 1994: 214-19).

The 11th century was a time of increasing contact between the Christians of the Iberian Peninsula and those beyond the Pyrenees, and one result of this was the decision, taken at the Council of Burgos in 1080, to adopt the Roman liturgy that had been standardized during the reign of Charlemagne, in place of the native Visigothic liturgy (Wright, 1982: 208). Aragon had already made the substitution in 1074 and Navarre in 1076. Various popes had been pressing for the change for some time. The reform brought about the need for clergy who were familiar with the new rites, and this deficit was supplied especially by Cluniacs from France. Amongst the innovations they carried to Spain was, presumably, the reformed pronunciation of Latin, which helped distinguish Latin from the vernacular.

The first work of literature in Spanish is the epic *Cantar de mio Cid*, a work of 3735 lines dated to c. 1140. The only surviving manuscript is specifically dated 1207, and it is thought that a C could be missing from the date, which would place the copying of the work in the year 1307. The lines, of widely varying length, are not amenable to scansion. It is of particular interest that the work contains evidence that implies a seeming lack of clear differentiation between Latin and

Spanish. When one character speaks to another in Romance (i.e. the language that the work is composed in), she is overheard by *un moro latinado*, a Muslim who could, at least, understand Romance (Wright, 1994: 281). Here a derivative of the term “Latin” is applied to what we clearly identify as Spanish.

Dated to the end of the 12th century are the remaining 147 first lines of a mystery play known as the *Auto de los Reyes Magos*. The first Spanish poet was Gonzalo de Berceo (d. c. 1250), a priest whose strictly religious poetry includes rhymed versions of earlier Latin “lives” of saints. The earliest prose comes from the mid 12th century, and especially after the turn of the 13th century, mostly legal compositions. The basic legal code, derived from the laws of the Visigothic kings, the *Forum Judicium* (*Fuero Juzgo*) was ordered translated from Latin into Castilian in 1241.

Very instrumental in the promotion of Castilian at the expense of Latin was King Alfonso X of Castile (r. 1252-1284), known as *el Sabio* (“the wise”). Even from his reign there are some indications that the distinction between Spanish and Latin was sometimes seen as one between different registers of the same language, rather than between two separate languages. In one instance, Romance is referred to as “nuestro latin,” and in another the Castilian word *honestad* is said to be Latin (Wright, 1994: 267).

In addition to promoting Castilian at the expense of Latin, Alfonso encouraged the development of a standard literary language without regional variation. This was instrumental in preventing forms such as Leonese and Aragonese from developing into literary languages. The administrative documents of the royal chancellery were carefully edited in order to refine the standardization of the language, in the expectation that these texts would serve as models for other writers. The increased use of Spanish during this period resulted in the rapid expansion of

the language: syntax became more complex and the vocabulary was enriched via borrowings from other languages and exploitation of the language's own derivative potential (Penny, 1993: 17).

Efforts at promoting Castilian in official use at the expense of Latin had not begun, however, with Alfonso X. In 1206 the treaty of Cabrerros was signed between the confusingly named Alfonso VIII of Castile and Alfonso IX of Leon. There are extant today two versions, one from the Castilian chancellery and one from the Leonese, and both are obviously written in Spanish. The spelling of words often differs between the two versions. For example, the diphthong [je] is spelled <ie> in the Leonese version, but <e> in the Castilian copy (Wright, 2000: 79-80). The diphthong [ue] is most often represented as <o> in both versions, but sometimes it does appear as <ue>. The Latin word *nepotem* appears as *neto*, rather than with the modern spelling (and undoubted pronunciation even then) *nieto*. Since writing in the vernacular was a very new phenomenon at this time, the orthography represents a totally new development, free from the weight of tradition. The scribe wrote *neto* not because he had learned to write the word that way (since he had learned to write in Latin), but because he was trying to write his own speech phonetically, and associated <e> with the sound [je], since he had grown accustomed to doing so when writing in Latin. The use of vernacular writing was, however, a phenomenon limited to documents intended for wide distribution rather than private records and confined to the brief stretch 1206-1207, after which documents began again to be written according to Latin norms (*ibid.*, 100). The 1209 Treaty of Valladolid between Castile and Leon, for example, was written in the traditional way (i.e. in Latin). It seems that the innovation was championed by a particular chancellor, and rejected by his successor. Although the rejection seems to us like a step in the wrong direction, it would have made perfect sense at the time: Latin

was a widely-used international language with a fixed grammar and pronunciation and a ready educational establishment. What we call “Spanish” today was certainly closer to popular speech, but had yet to be fully developed as a medium of writing. The return to the official use of the vernacular in writing later in the 13th century was occasioned by King Alfonso X’s desire to unify his realm within, and separate it from others without. The promotion of Castilian was an effective technique to accomplish this goal.

Even at that early date, Alfonso X was not alone in his efforts to develop Spanish. His brother, Don Fadrique, ordered that the collection of stories variously entitled *Libro de los engannos et los assayimentos de las mugeres* (“The Book of the Deceits and Wiles of Women”) or *Sendebär* (named after the wise man who imparts wisdom, mostly about the deceits and wiles of women, to a young prince via stories) be translated from Arabic to Spanish in 1253 (or so says the earliest surviving copy, from the 15th century) (Lacarra, 1996: 19). Fadrique had spent a good deal of time in Seville after his father conquered it from the Muslims in 1247. He was not responsible for the translation of any other works, perhaps because in 1255 he was exiled by Alfonso for involvement in a conspiracy against him. The two were reconciled years later, but a new dispute arose and Fadrique was imprisoned and finally put to death in 1277. His efforts at promoting Spanish, though limited in extent (perhaps due to circumstance rather than lack of interest) are likely tied to his pretensions to royal power. Since Alfonso had ordered works translated from Arabic to Castilian as early as 1251 (Northup, 1938: 80), two years before Fadrique’s command to produce a Spanish version of *Sendebär*, it seems that Fadrique’s efforts were in imitation of his brother’s.

The codification of Spanish was completed when the first grammar of Castilian was written in 1492 by Elio Antonio de Nebrija (1441-1522), who had earlier published a Latin

grammar and bilingual dictionaries of the two languages (Ostler, 2007: 256). This constitutes the first grammar of a modern European language. That Spanish by this point was deemed worthy of grammatical formalization reveals that its status was approaching that of Latin, the grammatical language *par excellence*.

Portuguese

The earliest Portuguese documents cannot be distinguished from the speech of Galicia, and hence are said to be written in Galician-Portuguese. In fact, there are no marked differences between the speech of the two regions until the mid 14th century, after which the dialect of the area between Lisbon and Coimbra became the basis for standard Portuguese and Galicia became increasingly tied to Castile, resulting in the subjection of Galician to Spanish (Elcock, 1960: 428). The first text that appears in Galician-Portuguese is an act of partition dated 1192. In the later Middle Ages the language was used as the medium of lyrical poetry, one of the most famous practitioners of which was King Alfonso X of Castile. At this time (the later 13th century), it was felt that Galician-Portuguese was more suitable for lyric poetry, and Castilian for history and epic. In 1214, King Alfonso II of Portugal had a number of copies of his will drawn up in the vernacular (Wright, 2000: 27).

Catalan

Catalonia had long been closely linked to southern France, and so when Occitan became a prestigious literary standard, Catalonian poets adopted and continued to use it until the end of the 13th century (Elcock, 1960: 438). The two languages are quite similar to each other. Consequently, the first evidence of Catalan is found in prose. The *Homilies d'Organyà* is a fragment of six sermons, reminiscent in form of the *Fragment de Valenciennes* in its use of the vernacular to elaborate on a biblical passage in Latin. It has been dated on paleographical

evidence to the late 12th century. Catalan was formally standardized during the reign of King Jaume I (r. 1213-1276), who himself wrote the first of four “great chronicles,” the *Llibre dels feyts del rey En Jaume*. It is possible that the development of a specifically Catalan written form was spurred on by the political separation of Catalonia from the realms of southern France that occurred after the battle of Muret in 1213, subsequent to which the Kingdom of Aragon pursued interests in the Mediterranean, instead of north of the Pyrenees (Wright, 2000: 27). At any rate, the famous scholar Ramon Llull (c. 1233-1315) wrote all of his many works in Catalan, further establishing it as a literary language.

Italian

Italy, the cradle of the Latin language, was where vernacular writing made its latest debut, but also where the language fragmented into countless dialects. The earliest evidence is the Veronese Riddle, two lines written in the late 8th or early 9th century: *Se pareba boves, alba pratalia araba, / & albo versorio teneba, & negro semen seminaba* (Elcock, 1960: 448). The next attestation comes in the form of four brief legal contracts from Monte Cassino, written during the period 960-3. One such document runs as follows: *Sao cco kelle terre, per kelle fini que tebe mostrai, trenta anni le possette parte sancte Marie*. Other such brief texts with much the same message appear in Latin: *Scio quia illae terrae per ipsos fines et mensuras quas tibi, Paldafrit comes, mostravi, per triginta annos possedit pars sancti Vincencii* (*ibid.*, 450).

The next vernacular document, the *Formula di confessione umbra*, has been dated to the late 11th century. It is an account of the confession of a penitent and his absolution. It has both Latin and Italian features. The first substantial vernacular poem appears in the late 12th century (or possibly later), the *Ritmo Giullaresco Toscano*. This work of 40 lines is not free of lacunae and is difficult to read. The first clear verse passage of Italian comes from a work of the Occitan

troubadour Raimbaut de Vaqueyras, who composed a poem in a number of Romance languages around the last decade of the 12th century. This poem is also the first instance of written Gascon, distinguished by such features as the developments $f > h$ and $-ll- > -r-$ (*ibid.*, 390). His Italian strophe shows the dialect of Genoa. Another multilingual poem by the same author, the *Contraste Bilingue*, features the author's praise (in Occitan) of a Genoese woman who replies in her own tongue, marked though it is with Occitan features (*ibid.*, 453).

Italian literature suddenly takes flight after 1225, the approximate date of St. Francis' composition of the Latin *Laudes Creaturarum*, from which there sprang a tradition of vernacular *Laudi*. Around the same time a school of Umbrian poets began to compose in Italian, the most famous of which was Jacopone da Todi, a Franciscan monk. A combination of Latinisms and vernacular are seen in two long religious poems, probably from this same period: the *Ritmo di S. Alessio* and the *Ritmo Cassinese*.

Secular lyric poetry in Italian first arose in Sicily, at the court of Emperor Frederick II, the *stupor mundi*. There are 29 named poets of this school, and though they came from different places, they wrote in a standardized *koine*, based on the spoken forms of central Italy, that came to be called Sicilian on account of the place of its origin, rather than because of any close connection with the actual vernacular of the island (*ibid.*, 455). The issue of the origin of this form of Italian was addressed by Dante Alighieri in his 1303 work *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, in which he examines various Italian idioms, and concludes that the "Sicilian" form, which he calls "volgare illustre," is a combination of varieties rather than any single entity. Its central Italian characteristics are perhaps due to the fact that many of the poets had studied in Bologna, home to the oldest and one of the most famous universities in Europe, before heading to Palermo to seek the patronage of the most splendid court of that time. One 13th century lyric poem of 66 lines

survives written in actual Sicilian vernacular, composed by Stefano Protonotaro da Messina, although it was only preserved in the 16th century book *Arte del Rimare* (*ibid.*, 459). There is evidence, though, that many of the other surviving lyric poems were first written in true Sicilian vernacular, and later re-composed in the central Italian *kunstsprache* that came to be known as Sicilian. Dante's own prestige caused Florentine Tuscan to supplant so-called Sicilian as the Italian literary language, which development was reinforced in the 14th century by Petrarch and Boccaccio. The production of the *Vocabolario*, the first Italian dictionary, by the Accademia della Crusca in Florence in 1583 further codified the literary language, and served as a prototype for other such efforts abroad (Cracraft, 2004: 28-9).

Other Italian dialects have some attestation, but did not serve as the basis for any literary languages. Piedmontese is seen in a manuscript of 22 sermons from the late 12th century, in which the transalpine elements are more notable than the Italian. Epic poems, adaptations or imitations from the French, are found in a kind of Franco-Italian. Venetian dialect was widely used as a *lingua franca* throughout the eastern Mediterranean, and reached literary form in the 13th century in the works of a group of didactic poets (*ibid.*, 462).

The development of vernacular Romance writing took a different form in Italy than in France and Iberia. Whereas in France we find the development of two literary languages (French and Occitan), and on the peninsula three (Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan), in Italy there was no real challenge to the standard developed by Dante, though the Italian version has always been more amenable to accepting dialectal features than the others (*ibid.*, 461).

The origin of Latin within Italy, and the similarities of Italian to Latin (*vis-à-vis* other Romance languages) resulted in a proprietary attitude toward Latin on the part of Italians. As part of this phenomenon, it seems that a clear conception of Latin as completely distinct from

Italian (as opposed to a separate register) postdates the appearance of written vernacular forms. In 1281 the Florentine historian Ricordano Malespini noted that Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II “seppe la lingua nostra latina e il nostro volgare,” knew our Latin language and our vulgar (Ostler, 2007: 234). By this time, a difference between Latin and vernacular is recognized, but Latin is felt to be as much the individual’s own language as his vernacular idiom, which we would identify as (a variety of) Italian. Normally one would not claim ownership of a foreign language. In 1368, Petrarch took umbrage at a Frenchman’s claim that Latin and Italian were different (*ibid.*). For Italians (and for other Romance speakers in earlier periods) Latin seems to have been conceptualized as the grammatical version of one’s own language, a different (better, more prestigious) form, but not a distinct language. This vision of Latin as the epitome of a language codified by the rules of grammar was a powerful influence on how to approach the topic of language. Horacio Carocho composed his 1645 grammar of the Náhuatl language in Spanish, but made occasional reference to Latin when dissecting the Mexican language into grammatical divisions, apparently only to strew some of the prestige of Latin onto his own undertaking. For example, the preposition *pampa* is defined as *propter*, the meaning of which is then elaborated in (though not translated into) Castilian (Lockhart, 2001: 74). It is worth remembering that in English nearly all grammatical terminology comes from Latin.

CHAPTER 21

THE PERSISTENCE OF NON-STANDARD ROMANCE DIALECTS

It is essential to understand that the development of vernacular Romance writing, based on specific dialects, does not imply that other vernacular forms disappeared. It is clear that these spoken forms proved tenacious. A plethora of dialects strikingly dissimilar from the standard language continue to be widely spoken in Italy. The country of Italy was not unified until 1861, and after this event the Liberal politician d'Azeglio famously said, "We have made Italy; now we must make Italians" (Clark, 1984: 30). At that time, it is estimated that outside of Tuscany and Rome, only 0.6% of the population could speak Italian, making it rare even among the upper strata of society: King Vittorio Emmanuele II, the first king of unified Italy, almost always spoke Piedmontese (*ibid.*, 35). As recently as 1951, 60% of Italians spoke only dialect, not knowing standard Italian, and even today only 30% of Italians claim to be monolingual in *l'italiano nazionale* (Aski, 2010: 404). The remaining portion of the population is either bilingual in Italian and dialect, or monolingual in dialect, though the latter category is presumably small and shrinking. Further complicating the matter is the fact that there are both distinct regional and local dialects (Migliorini, 1966: 457), and an individual's idiolect is likely to contain elements of both in combination with standard Italian. To this day, moreover, dialects continue to influence how people speak Italian. Those who live in the southern Mezzogiorno region are more likely to use the synthetic *passato remoto* tense in speech, whereas northerners echo the French norm of using the periphrastic *passato prossimo* in speech and reserving the other for writing (Aski, 2010: 327). Insofar as a person in the north or south uses the less common tense, the meaning is largely synonymous with that of the predominant tense. In Central Italy both tenses are in use in

writing and speech and are distinguished from one another by specific usage, e.g. the *passato prossimo* is reserved for past events that continue to be relevant in the present (Lepschy, 1988: 228-9). Tuscans are notorious for pronouncing the phoneme /k/ as [h] even when speaking standard Italian.

The linguistic unification of France did not occur until the late 19th century. Official figures indicate that in 1863, of the 37,510 communes in France, 8,381 spoke no French; in 24 of the 89 departments, more than half of the communes were not Francophone (Weber, 1976: 67). The official figures seem to exaggerate the extent of French knowledge, so that perhaps only one half of the citizenry knew standard French at this time. As early as the French Revolution, the desirability or necessity of spreading French to the nation's farthest ends was emphasized as a Republican ideal, the better for ensuring *liberté, égalité, et fraternité*, but this goal remained aspirational for more than a century. By the later decades of the 19th century, French was at least understood, for the most part, throughout France. The spread of the language was due to the same causes that facilitated the establishment of a standardized version of a language in every country: universal education and the expansion of literacy (in French, rather than dialect); mandatory military service; industrialization, which prompted rural exodus to cities, where French served as a *lingua franca*. Ignorance of French began to be a cause of shame. The displacements of World War I largely completed the process: millions of refugees fled from occupied areas, millions of soldiers from all over the country mixed with each other in the trenches.

CHAPTER 22

THE POSSIBILITY OF LATIN AS A MODERN LANGUAGE

It could be argued that the fact that Latin has a unique name (and is therefore viewed as conceptually distinct from the Romance languages) is a consequence of its development into several different languages, rather than because the pronunciation of the language was artificially reorganized during its history. After all, what sense would it make for Latin to be at the same time Old French, Classical Spanish, and Ancient Italian? Would it be any more sensible to speak of modern Hispanic, Gallic, and Italian Latin? Both possibilities seem ludicrous, but this is because we have become used to thinking in terms of the status quo. For us, French, Spanish, and Italian are separate languages, each with its own nation-state, but those developments were neither inevitable nor even recent in every case. It is clear that the recreation of Latin, via the pronunciation reform of the Carolingian Renaissance, spurred on the development of written forms of the vernacular, which differed from region to region. Some versions (e.g. Castilian, Parisian, Tuscan) achieved predominance over others, and thus served as the basis for the various standard languages.

If the pronunciation reform had not occurred, it is possible that today we would consider all speakers of Romance languages to be speaking various dialects of Latin, which would have survived as the literary language, perhaps in a form different from what we know today as Latin. Over time the spoken language probably would have increasingly affected the written form (which is already evident in pre-reform documents), but the written form would also have affected the spoken form (as indeed really occurred within the individual Romance languages). Modern Latin would be different from Classical Latin, and it would be spoken in different ways

from country to country. There would certainly be a form of diglossia between Modern Latin and the local vernacular, just as there is today within the countries where a Romance language is spoken, most notably Italy. This would be a diglossia more of dialect than of language, because of the perceived unity of the language, which would be reinforced by modern mass education.

Ancient Latin literature and even more so the Vulgate and works of the Church Fathers had endowed the Romania with a well-developed literary language. Important works of literature often play an important role in elevating a certain dialect as a standard, to the exclusion of other related forms. Among modern languages, the Koran plays that role for Arabic: preserving a standard from which dialectal forms may diverge widely, but which aspire toward that standard. Luther's translation of the bible established his native idiom as standard German, yet Swiss, Austrian, and Plattdeutsch dialects remain to this day, and can vary considerably from the Hochdeutsch standard. Alessandro Manzoni's 19th century novel *I Promessi Sposi* played an important role in establishing Tuscan as standard literary Italian, even before the unification of Italy in the 1860s. Italian dialects, of course, continue to be widely spoken. This widespread phenomenon begs the question: why did Latin not play the same role for the Romance languages? Why was Latin, already the paragon of a literary language, not able to arrest the development of competing literary standards? The answer cannot simply be that Latin became too different from spoken Romance, since within Romance-speaking countries the creation of individual literary languages did not immediately cause, or has not yet caused, the extinction of vernacular forms, some considerably different from the standard.

The significance of this is that widely-accepted literary languages have the effect of uniting into dialects of a single language what might otherwise become separate languages, even across borders. It is conceivable that Latin could have continued to play this role for spoken

Romance, just as it did before the reformation in pronunciation. The political unity of the Romania ended long before even the fall of the Roman Empire in the west, but it is possible that Latin could have united the speakers of varied Romance dialects across political boundaries, just as so many modern languages do today. There is a standard version of German, though that language is spoken in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and in different ways within those countries. Similarly French is spoken natively not only in France but also in Belgium, Switzerland, Canada and elsewhere, but there is one standard form. Of course, the French spoken in Geneva differs from that spoken in Quebec, but the fundamental fact remains that speakers in both places consider themselves to be speaking the same language, though undoubtedly in different ways. In fact, colloquial spoken French differs so greatly from standard written French that, if the two entities were geographically separate, one would be tempted to think of them as separate languages (to the degree that, say, Portuguese and Galician are separate languages) (Wright, 1994: 281). Monoglossia (or a weak form of diglossia) exists in these examples in much the same way as it did throughout the Romance-speaking world prior to Alcuin's reform.

If such a thing as Modern Latin seems difficult to imagine, it is because we now view the Romance languages as completely separate. At the same time, though, the similarities among the Romance languages are well known. Spanish and Portuguese are mutually comprehensible to some degree (people in Portugal can understand Spanish radio broadcasts [Hutchinson, 2010]), and Italian, too, is quite similar. Occitan and Catalan are also quite close. Admittedly, French and Romanian are more distinct. Nevertheless, even today schemes for promoting intercomprehension among speakers of Romance languages are being promoted, including word-processing programs that can recommend replacing words particular to one language with ones

that are pan-Romance (Benucci, 2005: 11-12). Among the factors (perhaps the most important factor) that prevented the reality of Modern Latin was the realization among Romance speakers that Latin was not their own language, and this realization was not gradual, but the result of the innovation of pronouncing Latin according to its spelling and of the reinforcement of the necessity of restricting the language to established models from earlier periods.

CHAPTER 23

THE UNIQUENESS OF LATIN

Latin is unique insofar as it remained a distinct language that coexisted along with evolving, modern forms. To gauge this uniqueness, one would have to imagine a world in which Old English existed side by side with Modern English. Today, of course, Old English is studied by English speakers in the same manner as any foreign language, because the language has changed so much over more than a millennium. Latin is a dead language only insofar as Old English is similarly deceased. In truth, neither language ceased to exist. They simply changed a great deal over time and continue to be widely spoken in modern forms. No one simply stopped speaking Latin one day and began speaking French (or Spanish, etc.) instead. Latin, as happens with all languages, changed over time. The uniqueness of Latin is that an archaic version of the language was preserved as a distinct entity as well. If even an Italian student studies Latin today, he studies it as a foreign language. The difference between Latin and Old English is that the prestige of the latter was not so great that it was preserved and formalized as an instrument of written and oral communication long after the vernacular had left it far behind, as certainly was the case with Latin until its decline in usage (if not study) in fairly recent times.

The uniqueness of Latin is further indicated by comparison to other languages of great antiquity. Greek, Chinese, and Arabic are all languages with distant origins, but the older versions of these are indicated through adjectival modification (ancient, classical, etc.) rather than a different term. This is not to say that these languages have not changed greatly over the centuries. Certainly the modern versions are quite noticeably different from older forms. The significance is that there never arose a conception of the older language as a unique entity, rather

than simply the more antique version of the current language. In the history of many languages diglossia between standardized and vernacular forms of a language, the former used especially in writing, either existed for a long time or continues even today. Latin, though, moved beyond the stage of diglossia as the Romance languages assumed a place of equality with it as fully-fledged languages in their own right, and not simply spoken dialectal forms of Latin.

Let us now examine the history of various languages in order to compare the course of their development with the progression of Latin.

Russian

In the late 17th century, there were two written languages in use in Russia. The first was Russian Church Slavic (церковнославянский язык), the distinctly Russian version of Old Church Slavic, which had been created in the 9th century by the Byzantine missionaries Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius, based on the Slavic dialects spoken around the city of Thessaloniki. This language, though based on a particular variety of Slavic, seems to have been mutually intelligible in its early years (Cracraft, 2004: 25). It was used not only to translate religious works from Greek, but also to create original compositions, mostly religious in nature but including works such as historical chronicles as well. The literary form that today we consider Old Church Slavic proper is itself not free of dialectal features. The varieties of spoken Slavic continued to evolve and at the same time the features of the local speech affected the writing in that area, which continued to be largely based on the earlier codified norms. Thus arose distinct varieties of Old Church Slavic which today are referred to as Russian Church Slavic, Bulgarian Church Slavic, Serbian Church Slavic, etc. Efforts to eliminate these regional forms led to the publication of “Slavonic” grammars in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

By the middle of the 16th century, in Russia a new written form had arisen, specifically

dedicated to the everyday business of government. This is usually called Russian chancery (приказный, деловой язык). This language, though closer to the spoken variety than Church Slavic, was still a distinct entity, perhaps the written version of legal-judicial norms that had originally been codified in pre-literate times, and consequently its nature was very fixed, rigid, formulaic and not conducive toward original, literary composition (*ibid.*, 31). The boundaries between the two written standards were often flexible, and scribes were often trained in writing a combination of Church Slavic and the chancery language, supplemented by foreign borrowings and vernacular elements (*ibid.*, 34).

The first grammar specifically dedicated to the Russian language (as opposed to “Slavonic”) was published in 1696. It was not an indigenous innovation, but rather it was written in Latin (*Grammatica Russica*) by a German (Heinrich Wilhelm Ludolf) who was then living in London. The work mentions the differences between Russian and “Slavonicum” and gives examples of those differences and of certain sound laws that distinguish the two (Ludolf, 1696: 4-5).

The linguistic situation in Russia was considerably altered during the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725). In addition to the great expansion in printing that he fostered, Peter was also instrumental in simplifying and standardizing the Cyrillic alphabet. The effect of Peter’s westernizing efforts on the alphabet was the simplification of the confusing hodge-podge of the *status quo ante* to diglossia between literary Russian and Church Slavic. The latter, complete with its old-fashioned version of Cyrillic script, continued to be used exclusively for religious works, and often for literary and philosophical compositions (Cracraft, 2004: 295), but this circumscription of its usage condemned it to gradual decline. The former was stripped of such archaic features as simple preterits, the vocative case, and the dative absolute, and enriched by

borrowings from other languages. Church Slavic was, though, used to enrich the vocabulary of standard Russian. This can be seen in the discrepancy between the Russian noun “milk”, *moloko* (молоко) and the term “mammal,” *mlekopitayushcheye* (млекопитающее), “the milk-nourishing one”. The latter is derived from the Church Slavic words.

Latin fell within Peter the Great’s promotion of all things western. Latin was specified as the language of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, at least for its formal proceedings and official publications (*ibid.*, 252). A number of Latin words were incorporated into Russian, but calques and translations of Latin words and concepts remained more common than borrowing, which prevented Latin from achieving the overwhelming presence that it has assumed in English.

Arabic

Arabic is an example of the multiplicity of forms that fall within the category of a single language. A situation of triglossia exists, combining Classical, Modern Standard, and vernacular Arabic. The last-named type varies widely across the large geographical extent of Arabic, which, of course, is divided among numerous sovereign countries. The former two designations are largely uniform (both are called in Arabic *al-fuṣḥa*), but Modern Standard Arabic has a tendency to be influenced by the local vernacular, and thus differ from Classical in style and lexicon, while being similar in syntax and morphology (Alosh, 2005: 2-3). Thus, there is no consensus over whether Classical and Modern Standard Arabic are separate entities, or different registers of the same whole. The latter term is used academically to describe the written language from around the middle of the 19th century (Holes, 1995: 4). Despite attempts to model all writing on the norms found within the Quran, Modern Standard Arabic has emerged as a result of the demands of modern life. It is the official language of all countries that have Arabic as an (or the sole) official language. Education is conducted in Modern Standard Arabic, which

is also the language of literature and the media, and consequently even the least educated person commands some level of comprehension of it. One study of the understanding of the Modern Standard Arabic used in the Arab version of *Sesame Street* found that three and four-year-olds could understand 65.5-91% of what was said (Alosh, 2005: 3). Virtually all writing is done in this idiom. At the same time as more speakers have been exposed, via mass education, to Modern Standard Arabic, that form itself has become increasingly influenced by the spoken vernacular (Holes, 1995: 39). Within the nexus of vernacular and Modern Standard Arabic, there is a nearly endless range of possible combination of elements, the choice of which is determined by the context. Writing allows for less variation, though vernacular does sometimes appear in print in such places as dialogue and in cartoons. Exposure to other regional forms of Arabic comes through popular entertainment (music, movies, television, etc.), which betray their place of origin.

The relationship between Classical and Egyptian Arabic was one of the four examples of diglossia that Charles Ferguson used in the article that first elaborated on the concept in English, in which he described the tentative prognosis of the future path of Arabic as “slow development toward several standard languages, each based on a L[ow register] variety with a heavy admixture of H[igh] vocabulary” (Wei, 2000: 79). This differentiation into separate languages has not yet, of course, happened. In contrast to Classical and Modern Standard Arabic, which are highly standardized (the first grammar was written in the seventh century), there is considerable variety among dialects in phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon (Alosh, 2005: 18-19). The variety in forms is clearly indicated by the plethora of textbooks that treat the subject of specific varieties of colloquial Arabic. If we examine the situation with regard to say, French, we find that French textbooks are legion, whereas guides that deal specifically with

Quebecois are extraordinarily rare. In contrast, while there is no shortage of textbooks that deal with Modern Standard Arabic, a quick look at a few randomly-selected titles reveals how wide is the selection of books about other forms of Arabic: *A Reference Grammar of Syrian Arabic*; *A Reference Grammar of Egyptian Arabic*; *A Basic Course in Moroccan Arabic*; *A Basic Course in Gulf Arabic*; *Spoken Iraqi Arabic*; *Saudi Arabian Dialects*. At the same time, it must be kept in mind that an individual's ideolect will be some combination of Modern Standard Arabic and the local colloquial form.

German

Despite the conception of German as a single language, it is divided into numerous dialects and subdialects. In fact, the history of the German language has been described as the history of its various dialects (Priebisch, 1966: 377). As an example, one division of the language is Low German, one version of which is Low Saxon, which itself is divided into Westfalen, Engrian, Eastfalian, and North Low Saxon. The grammatical differences between dialects can be considerable. While Standard German has four nominal cases and two non-periphrastic indicative tenses, Swiss German has only three cases and one such tense (Wei, 2000: 72).

The basis for the modern literary version of German was the "Luther-Deutsch," based on the Central German dialect that Martin Luther used in his translation of the New Testament (1522) and the entire bible (1534). The language that he used was a combination of the chancellery language of Saxony and his observations of ordinary conversation among the common people that he undertook in order to find *echtes Deutsch* (Priebisch, 1966: 390). This *Standardsprache* gained ready acceptance in the parts of Germany that accepted Lutheranism, thus displacing the *Plattdeutsch* literary language that had developed in towns of the Hanseatic League in the prior two centuries. Today, the pronunciation of German differs markedly from

region to region, even when the speakers know only standard German and not a dialectal form (*ibid.*, 395). The written language has lagged behind the spoken tongue (Pribsch, 1966:436). Anecdotally, the scope of dialectal difference within the German language was revealed on a radio program, which detailed the account of an individual, a German-major in college who had studied in Germany, who was hired as an interpreter (*This American Life*, 2006). During his first job, he discovered to his chagrin that the people for whom he was to translate were from Austria, and he could not understand them at all.

Greek

As was the case with Latin, the phonology and grammar of Greek changed greatly from the form enshrined in literary works, and at a remarkably early date. The Attic-based *koine* of the Hellenistic period was able to supplant all of the myriad earlier Greek dialects (Browning, 1983: 50). It served as the basis for all the current dialects of Modern Greek, with the minor exception of the Doric-based Tsaconic, confined to a small area in the Peloponnese. All of the following changes, mostly in the direction of simplification and regularization, are attested, especially in papyrus manuscripts from Egypt:

1. Simplification of the complex vocalic phonology: The original system of seven long vowels, five short vowels, and numerous diphthongs was simplified to six values: a, ε, i, o, u, ü. The final sound was altered to [i] in the 10th century, thus completing the current quintipartite vocalic system of Greek (Browning, 1983: 57).
2. Fricativization of stops: Ancient Greek contained three varieties of consonantal stops: unvoiced unaspirated, unvoiced aspirated, and voiced unaspirated. The latter two series were transformed into equivalent fricative values: ph, th, kh > f, θ, χ; b, d, g > v, ð, γ.

3. Voiced unaspirated stops remained in the language via allophones and borrowings from other languages.
4. ζ [zd] > z
5. Nouns belonging to less common declensional patterns were supplanted by synonyms: e.g. ναῦς is increasingly replaced by πλοῖον.
6. Some athematic verbs are replaced by thematic variants: e.g. δείκνυμι > δεικνύω
7. 2nd aorist endings are replaced by 1st aorist endings: ἔλαβον > ἔλαβα; non-overtly sigmatic aorists (i.e. 1st aorist forms lacking *s*) and 2nd aorist forms are replaced by sigmatic forms: ἔνειμα > ἐνέμησα
8. Loss of morphological distinction between middle and passive voices.
9. Fusion of aorist and perfect tenses, with loss of the latter.
10. Optative mood is lost, except in some fossilized expressions.
11. Subjunctive forms become largely homophonous with indicative but remain distinct in orthography.
12. Futurity begins to be expressed via periphrasis, rather than through the synthetic future tense.

As was again the case with Latin, the prestige of the literary language prevented many of the features of the spoken language from being incorporated into writing. Towards the end of the 1st century BC there was a backlash against the influence of the spoken language on writing. This was the Atticist movement, which sought to elevate the idiom of 5th century Athens to the model of good composition. Although the New Testament was written in *koine* (with literary artifice more apparent in some books than in others), many early church fathers from the second century decided to write in Attic style in order to increase the prestige of Christianity (Browning,

1983: 49).

In the period 600-1100, most writing done in Greek was according to the norms of the literary style, but there are a number of works written at a lower register that manifest influence from the spoken language (Browning, 1983: 55). These features include:

1. Aphaeresis of atonic word-initial vowels.
2. Development of an enclitic third person pronoun.
3. Disappearance of the temporal augment, except when accented
4. Contraction of εἰς to σ before articles.
5. Formation of new prefixes
6. Re-arrangement of noun paradigms
7. Spread of the verbal suffix -vω

Literature written in a medium that more closely approached the vernacular begins in the mid 12th century with the satirical poems of Theodore Prodromos and Michael Glykas, who also composed in the more formal literary language (Browning, 1983: 72). Even before this, the epic poem *Digenes Akritas* reveals some signs of the spoken language, to such an extent that some have theorized that it was first written in the vernacular, and then improved to better fit the prevailing literary standards. The use of the vernacular for writing was largely confined to works produced for amusement and entertainment (e.g. chivalric and historic romances, satiric poems), while serious literature continued to demand the purist language. During this time prose, too, was written in the formal literary language. The multitude of verbal endings that are used side-by-side in vernacular texts have led some to speculate that the vernacular written form was an amalgam of different spoken varieties (much like Old Occitan), while others have theorized that it was rooted in the spoken language of Constantinople (Browning, 1983: 82).

During the centuries after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Greek vernacular writing was largely confined to those areas inhabited by Hellenophones that lay outside of the control of the Sublime Porte (Browning, 1983: 89-93). On Cyprus vernacular literary output composed in the divergent dialect of the island was produced until the Ottoman conquest in 1571. The conquest of Rhodes in 1522 put an end to the vernacular literature of the Dodecanese. In the two centuries before the capture of Crete in 1669, a great deal of literature was written on that island, and a literary form based on the local dialect was developed. Had the course of history been slightly different, it is not difficult to imagine that Cretan would have emerged as the basis for standard Greek (Loader, 1950: 118). Although the Ionian islands remained free of Turkish rule, Italian served as the prestige language there, which prevented the creation of much Greek vernacular literature beyond a few 16th century works. The 17th century saw the publication of the first grammars of spoken Greek, and the early 18th century the first lexicon of the language.

With the establishment of the independent Kingdom of Greece in 1821, the “language question” came to the forefront, and was not effectively resolved until the late 20th century. The struggle was between those who favored the use of the spoken language (demotic) and those who wanted the official language to be a “purer” variety. The long opposition between demotic and the purified, classicized *katharevousa* conceals the fact that the latter form was initially devised as a concession to the proponents of popular speech (Frangoudaki, 1992: 367). The alternative was a complete restoration (or, at least, an attempt toward that goal) of Ancient Greek, in either the Attic (or Atticist) form of ancient literature or the *koine* of the Greek Orthodox Church. The initial proponent of *katharevousa*, Adamantios Korais (1748-1833), was inspired by the democratic ideals of the French Revolution, and saw a standardized form of Greek as a tool to further democratic equality (Skendi, 1975: 186). In addition, there was the issue of the

multiplicity of spoken dialects. In 1836 D. Vyzantiou wrote a comedy entitled *Babylonia*, in which the characters, speaking various dialects, could not understand each other, with hilarious consequences (*ibid.*). Some standard would have to be either chosen or created artificially, and the latter option was selected. Instead of basing the written language on an amalgam of spoken dialects, it was decided to make use of the resources of the ancient tongue. It would be incorrect to consider *katharevousa* a restoration of any of the forms of ancient Greek. There was never an attempt to resurrect exceedingly antiquated features such as the dual number. Much of the grammar was based on modern practice. Furthermore, there was no effort to restore the considerably different phonology of the ancient tongue. Traditional orthography was used, but the letters were given their modern values. *Katharevousa* was never really created, but rather was an ongoing work in progress, and more and more (and later, fewer and fewer [Browning, 1983: 109]) archaic elements were incorporated into it, sometimes in a sloppy manner that produced false archaisms, hypercorrections, and simple mistakes, and the result was never uniform (Browning, 1983: 104-5). The following ways of writing “if I cannot” all appeared (listed here in ascending order of archaism): ἄν δὲν μπορῶ, ἄν δὲν ἤμπορῶ, ἄν δὲν δύναμαι, ἐὰν δὲν δύναμαι, ἐὰν μὴ δύναμαι, ἐὰν μὴ δύνωμαι. Clearly, *katharevousa* allowed for a great deal of variation, but to use it at all required a certain level of education. It was inherently macaronic, as very few people could write (let alone speak) entirely in *katharevousa*.

The development of Greek can be seen by comparing adaptations of the same text. Since ancient works have been adapted into more modern idioms, but few modern productions have been rendered in the pure classical mold, a passage from Xenophon will be examined (Wesander, 1943: 90-93):

Classical: ὅτε μὲν δὴ ταῦτα ἐνεθυμούμεθα οὕτως ἐγιγνώσκομεν περὶ αὐτῶν ὡς ἄνθρωπῳ πεφυκότι πάντων τῶν ἄλλων ῥᾶον ἢ ἀνθρώπων ἄρχειν.

Byzantine: ὅταν γοῦν ἐφέρομεν ταῦτα εἰς τὸν νοῦν μας συνεπεραίναμεν ὅτι τῷ ἄνθρωπῳ ῥάδιον ἐστὶν ἄρχειν πάντων τῶν ὄντων τῆς φύσεως παρὰ ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων.

Katharevousa: καὶ ὅταν λοιπὸν ἤρχοντο εἰς τὸν νοῦν μας αὐταὶ αἰ σκέψεις κατελήγαμεν ὅτι εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον εἶναι εὐκολώτερον νὰ ἄρχῃ ὅλων τῶν ὄντων τῆς φύσεως παρὰ ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων.

Demotic: ὅταν κάναμε αὐτὲς τὲς σκέψεις φθάναμε στὸ συμπέρασμα πῶς γιὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον εἶναι εὐκολώτερο νὰ διευθύνῃ ὅλη τὴν ἄλλη φύση παρὰ ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους.

Demotic without polytonic accents: ὅταν κάναμε αὐτὲς τὲς σκέψεις φθάναμε στὸ συμπέρασμα πως γιὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον εἶναι εὐκολώτερο νὰ διευθύνῃ ὅλη τὴν ἄλλη φύση παρὰ ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους.

Translation: While we were reflecting on these things, we concluded that it is easier for a man to control all of the beings of nature than to control other men.

The *katharevousa* passage displays features of both the demotic version and the earlier examples.

The modern features include:

1. Use of εἶναι as a finite verb form (3rd sg. pres.), rather than as an infinitive
2. Use of the conjunction νὰ rather than an infinitive
3. Lexical items: εὐκολώτερον, ὅλων, σκέψεις, ὅταν

Among the archaic features are:

1. The full preposition εἰς, rather than its contraction with the following article into στο
2. Retention of word-final ν everywhere. In demotic, the letter is dropped except before words beginning with vowels and certain consonants

Dissatisfaction with the artificiality and archaic artifice of *katharevousa* began in the late 19th century. The French linguist Jean Psichari recommended the use of “common” demotic as a written standard as early as 1888, the year of the publication of his novel *Tò ταξίδι μου*, the first example of serious prose (as opposed to poetry) in demotic (Browning, 1983: 107). One problem was that no such thing as “common” demotic existed. Instead, there were various spoken dialects. Psichari’s efforts met with opposition, since many Greeks felt defensive about their connection to the glories of their ancient forebears, especially after the German scholar Fallmerayer popularized a theory that Slavic inroads into the Balkans had supplanted the original Greeks, though the new-comers had adopted the language of the locals. This is symptomatic of the intimate connection between the language question and national identity.

Efforts to purify a language of foreign influence are by no means limited to the Greek experience. If *katharevousa* sought to replace common borrowings from Turkish and Italian, this was no different from the efforts of Kemal Atatürk to rid Turkish of elements of Arabic and Persian, and to endow the language with a new alphabet. There have been movements dedicated to the recommendation of reducing English to its Anglo-Saxon core.

The level of passion involved in the language question can be gauged by the anecdote that the publication of the first translation of the New Testament into demotic in 1901 sparked riots (Wei, 2000: 70). The translation appeared in the the Athens newspaper *Akropolis*. It had been composed by Alexandros Pallis (1851-1935), who was yet another partisan in the Greek language question who did not actually live in Greece. From 1869 until his death, he lived in either England or India. He also composed demotic versions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The first installment of his translation of the New Testament appeared under the *katharevousa* headline ΤΟ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΓΛΩΣΣΑΝ ΤΟΥ ΛΑΟΥ, “the Gospel in the Language of the

People” (Mackridge, 2009: 248). The translation was preceded by a fiery editorial by the newspaper’s editor, in which he characterized the effort as an attempt, in the tradition of the French Revolution, to improve the life of the lower class. He also explicitly denied the intelligibility of biblical language among the mass of the population: “Who amongst the peasants and the workers, who even among the merchants and the clerks and all those who have not completed secondary education can understand the language of the Gospels? No one” (*ibid.*, 249). The serialization met with protest, and ceased after a month and a half with the final section of the Gospel According to St. Matthew. Shortly after the cessation, however, a number of students broke into the office of *Akropolis* to demand that the publication stop, which it already had. The hubristic youths then marched to the residence of the Archbishop of Athens to demand that biblical translations be banned. Two days later (November 7, 1901), after a night-long sit-in at the university, a large group of students marched again to the archbishop’s residence to demand not merely condemnation of the translation, but anathematization. The next day, eight people were killed in clashes with police while they attempted to march once again to the archbishop’s residence to further their anti-translation demands. This led to the resignation of both the archbishop and the government (*ibid.*, 251).

The legacy of the struggle between the two varieties of Greek is well indicated by the reaction of Greeks to a Turkish textbook of ancient Greek. There were many vocabulary entries that struck Greek readers as humorous. For example, the ancient Greek word ἄμαξα was glossed as the Turkish word *araba*, which is the normal Turkish word for “wagon” or “cart” (it also means “automobile” in a modern context). The word *araba* was long ago incorporated into modern Greek as αραμβάζ, which has a negative connotation. For a Greek today, αμάξι is a very formal, high-register word, while αραμβάζ is the exact opposite. A similar scenario in an

English context would be a dictionary of British English expression, in which the British equivalent of “fatigued” were listed as “knocked up,” which has an entirely different connotation in American English. The different meanings of “dame” in the United Kingdom and United States reveals the same phenomenon. Many Greek words of Turkish origin have a negative, lowly connotation, while the Greek words derived from ancient Greek are almost excessively formal. Other examples include the gloss *πατήρ* = *baba*, since the former is found only in *katharevousa* (i.e. it is very formal), while the stylistically neutral term is *πατέρας* and the informal version, *μπαμπάς* is derived from Turkish. Since normal Turkish words are the basis for informal Greek terms, using those Turkish words as the translation for ancient Greek words, which are the foundation for very high-register communication in Greek today, results in hilarity (Kazazis, 1975: 165).

Criticism of *katharevousa* has often been harsh, especially by outsiders. One scholar described it as “the most damaging result of this exploitation [of “colonial powers and their reactionary allies within Greece”]” and complained that it “greatly assisted [political] reaction, as it cut the ordinary people off from direct contact with officialdom, creating a parasitic class of linguistic and political middlemen” (Sarafis, 1983: 130). It “hindered self-expression and communication... and favored the muddled, the ambiguous and the half-understood” (Browning, 1983: 107). Much of this criticism was the result of the connection between *katharevousa* and political conservatism, which became an increasingly desperate movement in the years before the 1967 coup. It “became a major instrument for exercising power by language, used by public speakers who had no information to impart other than their right to be on the tribune and no other intention than to legitimize through speech their position in the social hierarchy” (Frangoudaki, 1992: 369). Furthermore, it should be remembered that Ioannis Psycharis, one of the first

proponents of demotic, was actually born in Odessa (though of Greek descent), lived most of his adult life in Paris as Jean Psychari, and spent little time in Greece, and therefore one must add nuance to his identity as Greek.

The decline of *katharevousa* was hastened by the association it developed with conservative (or even reactionary) political views, perhaps not surprisingly in light of the conservative linguistic foundation of the language. It was only two years after the fall of the junta of colonels that ruled Greece from 1967 to 1974 that the Greek parliament unanimously changed the official language of the country from *katharevousa* to demotic, although it did not define “demotic” very specifically (Browning, 1983: 110). After the official establishment of demotic, though, the idea that the Greek language is in decline has become common within Greece. In 1987, the minister of education within a socialist administration decided to stem the “evident “impoverishment of the language by the reintroduction of ancient texts into the curriculum (Frangoudaki, 1992: 374). Since a 1964 reform, ancient documents had been studied in school in demotic translation. Today, even 19th and early 20th century texts are sometimes studied in demotic translations (Stamatopoulou, 2010). It has been hypothesized that the concept of the decline of Greek, which has been exploited by current supporters of *katharevousa*, is a reflection of uncertainty about Greece’s role in the European Union and of a sense of inferiority caused by foreign fixation on the glories of the ancient past and the contrast with the perceived disappointing reality of contemporary Greece (*ibid.*, 376).

Today the official language of Greece is referred to as Common Modern Greek (Κοινή Νεοελληνική). This is basically demotic, but includes elements of *katharevousa*, especially in vocabulary: technical words, foreign neologisms, etc. Sometimes a *katharevousa* word is left as it is, and sometimes it is adapted to fit demotic phonology and morphology better (the latter is

more likely with more common words). Sometimes a *katharevousa* calque or neologism is preferred to a demotic borrowing from another language, since words of the latter type often are less adaptable to Greek morphology. The end result is a sometimes lengthy array of synonyms. A parking lot is variously translated as η στάθμευσις, η στάθμευση, το παρκάρισμα, and το πάρκινγκ. This relationship between the type varieties of Greek is, however, hardly a recent development. Many words that originated in *katharevousa* have long since become integral parts of vernacular (Browning, 1983: 114).

The question of how close Modern Greek is to the ancient language is a problematic issue, and there seems to be no consensus among Hellenophones themselves. The author once posed the same question sequentially to two Americans fluent in Modern Greek, one an Orthodox priest and the other a specialist in Byzantine chants. The former described the scope of the differences, while the latter emphasized the similarities. Both were probably right at the same time. In seeking further elaboration of the issue, we can turn to an article from 1960, which describes how “the vocabulary of a Greek newspaper is probably 99% of classical origin and modern Greek has retained much of the cumbersome grammar of the ancient language” (Newton, 1960: 124). In 1960, of course, most of the content of newspapers was written in *katharevousa*. This poses a dilemma for *katharevousa*’s detractors: the “purified” language is the version that shows close affinity to the famous ancient tongue. Some would not see this as a problem. After all, Italians today see no need to write in such a way as to emphasize the connection of their language to Latin.

As in many countries, the rapid urbanization that Greece has undergone since World War II has led to homogenization of the various dialects. Earlier, disdainful attitudes toward dialects (caused by their association with the countryside and lack of education) fostered the loss of

dialectal differences. Today, there is more acceptance of regional variety, and dialects are still very much present (Stamatopoulou, 2010). Some regions, such as Crete, take particular pride in their dialect, which strengthens its preservation. Other notable dialects are found on Lesbos, the Ionian islands, and northern Greece. The vocabulary of Boeotia has been influenced by Arvanitis, the Albanian idiom used by itinerant peoples. The speech of Cyprus is quite distinct, but news broadcasts are read in standard Greek, though with a Cypriote accent. The ancient language can still be heard in Greek Orthodox churches, where only the sermon is conducted in the modern idiom, though many priests formalize their discourse with *katharevousa*.

Chinese

Chinese is the paragon of how vastly different idioms can be regularly viewed as components of one overarching totality. The so-called “dialects” of Chinese are both numerous and sufficiently different from the standard Mandarin form that they would be considered separate languages under other circumstances. What has made this unusual situation possible has been the importance historically placed on the written form of the language, standardized at such an early period that it is often called Ancient Chinese (though it is also known as Literary Chinese), which prevented the rise of one standard spoken form (Forrest, 1973: 214).

The Chinese literary language was standardized at an early date. The foundation of the writing system was definitively formulated in the 3rd century BC. Literary Chinese was well established by the end of the Han dynasty, and the form it reached during the T’ang dynasty (AD 618-907) remained the standard in prose and verse until the decline of the use of Literary Chinese in the 20th century (Forrest, 1973: 163).

It is widely known that Chinese writing is logographic and that the “language” is composed of multiple mutually unintelligible “dialects.” Both of these accurately characterize

the situation, but from this foundation in fact several misconceptions have sprung. It is commonly believed that, since the same non-phonetic writing system is used throughout the country regardless of dialect, a text written in Chinese would be comprehensible to any literate Chinese, though the pronunciation of the written words would vary (considerably) from region to region. This popular image is a misconception. First of all, the grammar of the various dialects differs, and so a text written in one dialect and read in another would appear ungrammatical. Secondly, though Chinese was once a completely monosyllabic language, the progressive simplification of the phonology and tone system of the language has led to the creation of truly polysyllabic words, each syllable of which is written as a distinct character. The polysyllabic words of one dialect are not always formed in the same way as those of another dialect. Consequently, the various dialects of Chinese are united by a common writing system only insofar as most of the languages of Europe are united by a common alphabet.

From linguistic reconstruction it is clear that the phonology and tone system of Chinese has changed considerably over time, mostly in the direction of simplification, and the alterations are most marked in the Beijing version of the Mandarin dialect, which has served as the basis for the modern written version. Whereas ancient Chinese possessed six tones (sometimes reimagined as eight), and while some modern dialects retain the full complement, Beijing Mandarin has only four (Forrest, 1973: 65, 201). The phonological simplification includes: loss of all word-final stops, reduction of word-final nasals from three to two, loss of the glottal stop, loss of medial *-j-* and *-w-*, and the devoicing of voiced stops, fricatives, and aspirates (*ibid.*, 190-6).

Written Chinese based on the spoken language, as opposed to the formalized Classical / Literary variety, appears during the Sung dynasty (960-1279), but becomes more common from

the 14th century, especially in the popular genres of novel and drama (Forrest, 1973: 205). For the most part, though, both the classical and vernacular written forms were pronounced with the same phonology. The style and features of the two were certainly different, but whatever words were held in common by both forms were pronounced the same way. One of the most significant differences between the two is the monosyllabic basis of Classical Chinese, and its stylistic focus on compact and concise writing.

The use of Classical Chinese as a literary form declined in the 20th century. Since the late 1920s, Standard Written Chinese (AKA Vernacular Chinese, *Baihua*), based on the norm of educated speech of the Beijing variety of the Mandarin dialect (*Putonghua*, “Common Speech”), has been the medium of most writing. In this way, first a spoken form was standardized, and then this spoken form was used as the basis for a new written form. Other dialects of Chinese do not have a specifically formulated vernacular writing system. Cantonese, especially in Hong Kong, is a partial exception, but its vernacular writing system is not nearly as fully developed as that based on Mandarin. In this way, Chinese literacy demands a knowledge of at least Mandarin grammar (which differs from that of other dialects), if not the spoken value of Mandarin words. Classical Chinese, though archaic in grammar, united the speakers of the various dialects with a single written standard, whereas the Vernacular Chinese literary language highlights the differences between the spoken forms. Not surprisingly, in the early years of its development, there was vocal criticism that *Baihua* was being inappropriately standardized since it failed to accurately capture actual speech (DeFrancis, 1984: 245). Many of the early proponents and developers of *Baihua* hoped that the use of characters in transcribing this written standard would eventually be replaced by Latinized script.

Today in China, basic ability to read Classical Chinese is common, since the subject

forms part of the educational curriculum. Learning to write the form is not mandatory, rarely taught, and little known. The classical language remains in use to this day, especially as part of a very high, formal written register, one that could be variously viewed as prestigious or pretentious. Classical Chinese continues to be used in poetry (Mao Zedong was a famous practitioner), and in stock phrases often utilized in vernacular writing (DeFrancis, 1984: 244).

Norwegian

The teaching of modern literary standards at school has created more linguistic assimilation within national borders, but has come at the expense of intra-Nordic communication. The history of the region has led to the interesting situation in which Danes and Norwegians can read each other's language fairly well as a result of the long historical connection between the two countries. This has led to a similar lexicon and to spelling conventions that mask differences in pronunciation. But in turn Swedes and Norwegians can more comprehensibly communicate, due to the similar phonological structure of both languages (Haugen, 1976: 61). Thus, Norwegian is often said to be Danish spoken in Swedish.

There are two official written standards of Norwegian: *Bokmål* ("Book Language") and *Nynorsk* ("New Norwegian"). The former is largely based on Danish, owing to the long political unity between the two entities (1397-1814). The spoken version of Danish in Norway over time acquired more Norwegian features, especially with regard to phonology. *Nynorsk* was created in the 19th century to highlight the distinctive features of Norwegian. Today, from 8th grade on students are required to study both languages, but before this point around 86% receive their instruction in *Bokmål*, and a similar percentage use it for their own writing. Radio and television broadcasting are conducted in both forms, but 92% of written publications are in *Bokmål*. Currently, and for some time, the Danish and Norwegian languages have been in a relationship

of *Ausbau*, separation via establishment of different standards (Ford, 2002: 349). One must not confuse Nynorsk with the written version of the vernacular, since it is an artificial compendium of elements from different dialects, chosen based on their similarity to Old Norse. In Norway today, dialect continues to enjoy a high level of prestige as a badge of one's local identity and family background (Wei, 2000: 112-13). In conversation, the choice of whether to use a standard form or a dialect form is governed by the same considerations that determine the use of formal and informal pronouns in languages such as French and Russian that possess such forms (*ibid.*, 127).

Turkmen

The writer's own experience in Turkmenistan has made it clear that Turkmen-Russian bilingualism is very common in that country, as a legacy of Russian (and later Soviet) rule. In fact, dialects of Turkmen can be so distinct that people brought together from different parts of the country often prefer to converse in Russian, rather than their native language, despite its status as a single language. The standard Turkmen literary language (and the overall concept of a Turkmen national identity), moreover, owes its creation and promotion to Soviet theoreticians, who held that a people needed a language in common in order to develop a sense of nationality, after which time it would be possible to overcome the national identity and replace it with Marxist international solidarity. This was also seen as the best way to deal with the multi-ethnic nature of the country and to avoid Russian chauvinism (Edgar, 2004: 3). This explains the origin of ethnically-configured autonomous republics and regions throughout the behemoth country, despite the exceedingly low level of national identity at the time of their formation, in the case of most of these ethnic groups. The focus on fostering national identity was the official government policy for all the union republics, and was referred to as

korenizatsiya (коренизация, “indigenification”). This policy remained in force until the mid 1930s, when Stalin’s fear of local nationalism led to the policy of promotion of Russian.

In Turkmenistan prior to the 1920s, identity had been centered on tribe, religion, and to a lesser extent language, Persian Tajik being differentiated from the mass of Turkic tongues (and Persian-Turkic bilingualism was very common). Among the Turkmen tribes, identity as a Turkmen was based on supposed descent from Oguz Khan, rather than linguistic criteria (Edgar, 2004: 129). Turkic writing was done in a dialect called Chagatay (AKA Old Uzbek), which had been used as a literary language in the region for centuries, along with Persian and Arabic. Governmental intervention in the promotion of certain dialects into national languages was also an effort to prevent the development of a Pan-Turkic identity, and earlier (non-Bolshevik) plans to promote one dialect among all the Turkic speakers of Central Asia were disallowed. Even among the small Turkmen intellectual elite it was feared that the creation of a Turkic standard would reduce Turkmen to the status of dialect. Such a fate was considered extremely disagreeable because the Turkmen language was widely regarded, among Turkmen at least, as the original, and therefore purest, form of Turkic, since the Turkic peoples had originally arisen in Central Asia (*ibid.*, 134-6). The fostering of national consciousness among fairly small, balkanized groups was seen as a way to accelerate the road to socialism, whereas the development of a Pan-Turkic identity was viewed suspiciously as a potential Trojan Horse for Turkish penetration. This threat was made real by the involvement of Enver Pasha, the former Ottoman Minister of War, in Central Asian affairs in the early 1920s, first in support of and then against the Communists (Hopkirk, 1985: 157). In this way Bolshevik ideology, political pragmatism, and local opinion (among the small educated cohort, the only group that had an opinion on the subject) all converged in support of the same policy: developing and promoting

the Turkmen nationality and language.

The Turkmen language has been subject to a number of orthographic changes that one hesitates to call “reforms,” since often the impetus has been ideology completely unrelated to the goal of facilitating learning. During the pre-Soviet period, insofar as the Turkmen language was written or printed at all, the Arabic alphabet was used. The delineation of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic in 1924 led to efforts at creating a single literary standard, one part of which endeavor was the selection of a script for it. Arabic was supplanted by the Latin alphabet in 1928, which was itself supplanted by the Cyrillic alphabet in 1940. The latter decision was motivated by Stalin’s promotion of all things Russians. In 1993, two years after the fall of the Soviet Union, the newly independent government of Turkmenistan decided to replace the Cyrillic script with Latin letters. The 1928 system was not revived, however. Instead, a totally new system was created, which largely replaced each Cyrillic letter with the equivalent Latin one, though it also eliminated specifically Russian characters. Palatalized vowels (ю, я), for instance, ceased to be specific letters. No effort to make the writing system more phonetic was attempted, though Turkmen has been recognized as the least phonetically written Turkic language (Edgar, 2004: xv).

The result of each of these conversions was that people who had learned to read and write according to one system had to learn again. This was evidently a task not taken up with relish by many Turkmen. In the author’s own experience there from 2005 to 2008, there were many middle-aged people who had never bothered or been able to learn the new alphabet, and remained literate only with the Cyrillic script.

Sanskrit

The language most comparable to Latin in terms of historical development is Sanskrit, and the comparison holds true for their current cases. Like Latin in the Vatican City, Sanskrit continues to be an official language, one of 22 in India (and it was one of the original 14 in India's constitution). Sanskrit still has a number of fluent speakers, most likely considerably exceeding the number of people equally conversant in Latin. Some 49,736 people claimed to be fluent in Sanskrit in the census conducted in India in 1991 (Language in India, 2001). Both Latin and Sanskrit are liturgical languages, for the Roman Catholic Church and Hindu religion respectively. Both are languages that are usually learned to be read, but both have movements dedicated to expanding their use as spoken media (www.sanskritabharati.org/sb/; schola.ning.com). These efforts are usually described as “reviving” the language, otherwise assumed to be dead.

Despite much effort, Sanskrit does seem to be dying, if the death of a language is taken to mean its cessation as a medium of creative output. In India today there has been certainly a great deal of promotion of Sanskrit, especially during the tenure in power of the Indian People's Party (BJP) during the 1990s, with its promotion of Hindu identity politics. There are Sanskrit newspapers, magazines, feature films, daily news broadcasts on All-India radio, school plays, poetic competitions, etc, but all of this is promoted and subsidized by the government and does little more than retain Sanskrit in a denaturalized state of semi-animation (Pollock, 2001:393). As early as 1857, the Gujarati poet Dalpatram Dahyabhai composed a work in which he mentioned the death of Sanskrit: all the feast and great donations / King Bhoja gave the Brahmins / were obsequies he made on finding / the language of the gods had died (*ibid.*, 394). Reports made by British colonial officials in the 1830s on the condition of native education found that Sanskrit was widely taught (though only to Brahmins) and that new books were

published in Sanskrit. These works, however, were only on the subjects that were the traditional domain of Sanskrit and which were taught in the Sanskrit schools: grammar, logic, and law. No works were composed in Sanskrit on subjects that were of contemporary relevance (such as the effects of colonial rule). When writers chose to write literature, anti-missionary pamphlets, satire, anything pertaining to the world around them, even scholars of Sanskrit opted to write in the vernacular (*ibid.* 414).

Clearly, both Latin and Sanskrit are similar in their modern decline, but the similarities extend to their origins. Both were models of writing, as much as mediums of literature. This is explicitly the case with Sanskrit, whose very name (*samskr̥ta*- “well formed,” “refined”) reveals its origin in Pāṇini’s highly prescriptive grammar of the 4th century BC. The Latin grammarians (Donatus, Priscian) played much the same role. They laid down rules about forms and syntax (though Pāṇini was much more exhaustive in his cataloging and description); everything else was excluded from their anointed realm of good style. That these languages survived unchanged for so long is due to the fact that they were codified entities more than languages *per se*. Both languages had once, of course, been grounded in the spoken language, but the written forms became enshrined as unchanging but increasingly ossified *vis-à-vis* the continually changing spoken forms. Though considered perfect, they lost the vitality of living speech. Alongside these unvarying standards, the spoken forms continued to change. Sanskrit coexisted with the vernacular Prakrits (which eventually became the modern Indic languages), while Latin lived together with Romance (which served as the basis for the Romance languages). One noteworthy difference, though, is the fact that the pronunciation of Sanskrit, whose phonology differs widely from that of Hindi or any other modern Indic language, was carefully described in ancient phonetic tracts known as *prāṭiśākhya*s, whose meaning is open to some interpretation, but there

is not sufficient ambiguity to cause us to doubt our reconstruction of the pronunciation of Sanskrit. Another difference is that Sanskrit was formalized from one of several dialects that were distinct even at that early point, whereas Latin did not display much regional variation at the time of its literary codification. Classical Sanskrit is based on a more eastern dialect than that of earlier Vedic Sanskrit (Coulson, 2003: xvi). A further distinction is that Indic written standards (Prakrits) different from Sanskrit appeared much more rapidly than the Romance languages did. The inscriptions of the emperor Aśoka date from c. 250 BC. The first texts in Pāli were made in 1st century BC Sri Lanka. Clearly Sanskrit was in a bilingual relationship with vernacular forms from nearly the very beginning of its history. Distinct written forms prevented the conflation of Sanskrit and vernacular into diglossia.

The development of the modern Indic languages from Middle Indic dialects (not from Sanskrit, in contrast to the Romance languages, which all evolved from Latin) reveals grammatical simplification that is reminiscent of that seen in the shift from Latin to the Romance languages. The neuter gender and dual number have been lost, and even the plural is not always differentiated from the singular. The eight cases of Classical Sanskrit have been reduced to three in Hindi: subject, oblique, and (for some nouns) a distinct vocative.

Comparison of Latin to the Above-Profiled Languages

The extent of the difference between Latin and any of the Romance languages, even Italian, is obvious to even the casual student of both. It is, therefore, quite easy to view the independence of the individual Romance languages from Latin as an inevitable development. When one, however, takes into account the linguistic situations described above, one realizes the extent of what can fall within the scope of what is considered by its speakers to be a single language. In the end, it is not so difficult to envision a hypothetical scenario in which Latin-

Romance diglossia continues long after the point when true bilingualism emerged in reality. What kept this possibility within the realm of speculation rather than actual history were the reforms championed by Alcuin during the Carolingian Renaissance. We can, at least, imagine a world in which Latin plays the role that Arabic does today across more than twenty national borders, Italian within Italy today, and French within France in the 19th century: a high-prestige form used in education and culture that complements the local patois.

Instead, Latin fragmented into the different Romance languages and at the same time it itself remained as a distinct tongue. This has not happened with Chinese, even though that “language” is spoken over a wide geographical expanse and includes varieties that are more akin to distinct languages than dialects. It has not happened with Arabic, though the vernacular forms differ from each other greatly and the language is spoken over a large area that is divided into many independent countries. It has not happened with English, though the forms spoken in Biloxi, Edinburgh, and Delhi are by no means the same. Even the history of Sanskrit is different from that of Latin, since the former is not the direct ancestor of today’s modern Indic tongues. Thus, we can see that the development of Latin has been fairly unique, though facets of its diachronic alteration can be seen in the history of other languages. The origin of Latin’s uniqueness lies, at least to some extent, in Alcuin’s reforms. Linguistic reforms of various types have been proposed, tested, and sometimes even adopted, but no other reform has ever attempted to alter the pronunciation of a language to conform to its spelling.

CHAPTER 24

LATINO SINE FLEXIONE

It is hard to keep a good reform down, and the reorganization of the pronunciation of Latin received a new lease on life in the early 20th century, with the proposal to use a simplified version of Latin as an international auxiliary language. The originator of this idea was the Italian mathematician Giuseppe Peano (1858-1932), who first expressed the concept in a 1903 article in the periodical *Rivista di Matematica*. Since Latin was widely known and the basis for a great deal of the vocabulary of modern science, Peano reasoned that it would serve as the basis for an international auxiliary language, though in a simplified form that would render it easier to be learned. The simplification manifested itself in:

1. Elimination of cases: the form of all nouns and adjectives was set at the ablative. Use of prepositions replaces case morphology.
2. Elimination of plural number, when not necessary.
3. Reduction of verbal forms to a basic form (*ama*), infinitive (*amare*), present participle (*amante*) and past participle (*amato*): Expression of tense was via context, or with the preceding particles *e* for the past and *i* for the future. Other aspects of verbal morphology were conveyed with auxiliary verbs, adverbs, or particles.
4. Fixation of accent on the penultimate syllable.

Peano began the article in which he introduced his proposal in grammatically-correct Latin:

Lingua Latina fuit internationalis in omni scientia, ab imperio Romano, usque ad finem saeculi XVIII. Hodie multi reputant illam nimis difficilem esse, iam in

scientia, magis in commercio. The Latin language was international in all scholarship, from the Roman Empire, all the way to the end of the 18th century. Today many people believe that it is too difficult, both in scholarship and in commerce. (Peano, 1903: 74).

The article then examined such issues as case, grammatical gender and number, and conjugation of verbs, each time concluding that none of these are necessary for understanding. As soon as Peano rejects the necessity of one, he begins to dispense with it in his article, and thus by the end of the article the language has been completely transformed according to his recommendations. Several sections are begun with a quote from Leibnitz, who apparently had ideas similar to Peano's back in the 17th century:

Nominum casus semper eliminari possunt substitutis in eorum locum particulis quibusdam. The cases of nouns can always be eliminated, after certain forms have been put in their place.

Discrimen generis nihil pertinet ad grammaticam rationalem. The differentiation of gender is completely irrelevant to grammatical reasoning.

Videtur pluralis inutilis in lingua rationali. The plural seems useless in a rational language.

Personae verborum possunt esse invariables, sufficit variari ego, tu, ille, etc. The persons of verbs can be invariable. It is sufficient that the subject pronoun be changed.

Thus, the grammatical complexity of the language used in the article becomes

progressively simpler: *Lingua latina exprimit nominum casus cum praepositionibus >*

Indicatione de genere evanescit saepe in lingua scientifica > Nos transforma verbo

deponente in activo > Me hic breve loque de magis noto.

The phonology is specified in the article as a combination of ancient features and innovations. The former are regarded as better, but the rationale behind the selections seems haphazard.

Pronuntia de latino non es uniforme in diverso populo. Forma meliora es antiquo:

ce, ci *ut italo* che, chi, *franco* que, qui, *germano* ke, ki

ge, gi *ut italo* ghe, ghi, *franco* gue, gui, *germano* ge, gi

ti *ut italo* ti, *non* zi

ae *ut e aperto*, *franco* è, *germano* ä

oe *ut franco* eu, *germano* ö (hoc es conventione)

th *ut anglo* th, *graeco moderno* θ

ph, *sono producto quando nos suffla flamma. (Deriva ex graeco φ; graeco moderno pronuntia f).*

ch, *ut germano* ch, *etrusco* c

h, *aspirato, ut germano*

rh, *ut franco* r

qu *sona ut cu neolatino; hic duo syllaba es differente et in positione, et in pronuntiatione antiquo.*

Omne alio litera ut in italo. (Peano, 1903: 78-79).

Peano strives to give each letter or digraph a distinct pronunciation, even going so far as to differentiate between *r* and *rh* and between *f* and *ph*, even though the other Greek digraphs are given their modern Greek value (and thus *ph* should simply be *f*). The description of pronouncing *ch* as “etrusco *c*” is a reference to the Tuscan dialect of Italian, which pronounced *c* as [h] or [χ], rather than to the language of the ancient Etrurians.

Here is a sample text:

Latino es lingua internationale in occidente de Europa ab tempore de imperio romano, per toto medio aevo, et in scientia usque ultimo seculo. Seculo vigesimo es primo que non habe lingua commune. Hodie quasi omne auctore scribe in

proprio lingua nationale, id es in plure lingua neo-latino, in plure germanico, in plure slavo, in nipponico et alio. Tale multitudine de linguas in labores de interesse commune ad toto humanitate constitute magno obstaculo ad progressu.

Latin was the international language in the west of Europe from the time of the Roman Empire, throughout the Middle Ages, and in the sciences until the last century. The 20th century is the first that does not have a common language. Today almost all authors write in their own national languages, that is in Romance languages, in Germanic, in Slavic, in Japanese, and others. This multitude of languages in works of communal interest to the whole of humanity constitutes a large obstacle to progress.

The Lord's Prayer:

Patre nostro, qui es in celos,
que tuo nomine fi sanctificato.
Que tuo regno adveni;
que tuo voluntate es factio
sicut in celo et in terra.
Da hodie ad nos nostro pane quotidiano.
Et remitte ad nos nostro debitos,
sicut et nos remitte ad nostro debitores.
Et non induce nos in tentatione,
sed libera nos ab malo.
Amen

This scheme never achieved much success, for fairly obvious reasons. The language is easy to understand if one already has a good command of Latin, the learning of which is notoriously difficult and time-consuming. If one does not know that *voluntate* comes from the 3rd declension nouns *voluntas*, then there is no rationale for its form. Simply put, an *a posteriori* artificial language such as Latino sine Flexione, tied as its vocabulary was to an extant language, could not sufficiently simplify the task of learning a new language. In Esperanto all nouns end in *-o*, whereas in Latino sine Flexione, there are four separate possibilities, depending on the declension of the word in Latin. Peano's creation could not compete with even simpler schemes for a universal language.

CHAPTER 25

LATIN AS A MODERN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

The late 19th century was a fertile period for plans to create a single international auxiliary language, one that would play the role that Latin had played in Europe during the Middle Ages, and so it is not surprising that Latin itself was occasionally considered for that role. The appeal of Latin was considerable. Beyond the empirical example of its historical use in such a capacity, it formed the basis of a great deal of modern scientific vocabulary. Latin words had been extensively incorporated into modern languages, not even taking into account the Romance languages. It was a “dead” language, and therefore would not privilege one modern language over others (though it was usually overlooked that Latin would privilege the West over the remainder of the world, the vast majority of which lacks close cultural affinity to the ancient Classical past). Latin was seriously proposed as such a language as early as 1889 (Oldfather, 1921: 195). In 1903 a congress was convened in Rome in order to consider the use of Latin as an international language, and it was resolved: *ut sermo latinus inter gentes universas communis habeatur, et adhibeatur ad humanitatis commercium fovendum, augendum, tenendum*; that the Latin speech be held in common among all peoples, and that it be employed toward fostering, increasing, and maintaining the commerce of mankind (Peano, 1903: 80). L. J. Paetow of the University of California recommended investigation of what allowed for Medieval Latin to be a successful international language, and answered the charge that Latin was too complex to be successfully learned with the rejoinder that generations of boys during the Middle Ages did not find it unreachably complicated

(Paedow, 1920: 347). This proposal that specifically Medieval Latin be adopted for international language status, because of its narrowing of the meaning of certain words that had a far wider semantic range in ancient times to values seen in the borrowings into modern languages, was echoed by Joseph Pike of the University of Minnesota, who envisioned Latin as a useful option for the publication of academic and especially scientific articles (Pike, 1918: 51). After all, while many Classicists are familiar with modern foreign languages, especially German, French, and Italian, no such knowledge is common among scientists.

An International Congress for Living Latin was held on September 2-6, 1956, in Avignon, France. 250 scholars from 21 countries were present, the largest national contingents coming from France, Italy, and Belgium (Pulgram, 1957: 307). The main medium of communication at the congress was French. The Latin that was spoken was read aloud from texts (printed copies of which were supplied to the attendees), with the exception of one Spanish Jesuit, who communicated in Latin. Among the manifold issues addressed by the congress was the promotion of Latin as an international language. There was a great deal of debate on many subjects, including the proper pronunciation of the language. At one point, a delegate from Italy proposed that the American system be accepted, but without the labiovelar sound *qu* [kw]. In the end, a list of resolutions was passed, but without any formal voting on these decisions. The conference as a whole seems to have been well summed up by Ernst Pulgram of the University of Michigan: “the hospitality of the local organizing committee was wonderful and its work prestigious and admirable, we had an interesting excursion, we were served an impressive banquet (with good food!) in the grandiose Palais des Papes, and everyone seemed happy... But

nothing was done for Latin, really” (*ibid.*).

This affair as a whole seems reminiscent of the final conference that was held in promotion of Volapük, the first proposed artificial language to generate any real enthusiasm. The first two conferences, in 1884 and 1887, had been conducted in German (the language of Fr. Johann Schleyer, its creator), but the third (1889) was conducted in Volapük itself, at which time it was found to be impossible to communicate effectively. This is often considered the beginning of the rapid decline of the movement.

Perhaps the most important cause of the decline of a perceived pressing need for an international language, Latin or otherwise, was the rise of English in that capacity, a rise which was not foreseen by proponents of other schemes on account of its notoriously unphonetic writing system and because of patriotic jealousy among speakers of other languages. It seems, though, that in the status quo these obstacles have not proven insurmountable, and English today plays a role among languages that Latin once did centuries ago.

CHAPTER 26

THE DECLINE OF LATIN IN MODERN TIMES

The decline of Latin as both a subject of study and as a means of communication can be assessed through anecdotal evidence. This phenomenon, though, was gradual. The first lecture delivered at one of the four historic Scottish universities in English rather than Latin was in 1729 (Ganss, 1956: 228). Fully 97% of the dissertations written during the decade 1750-1759 at the University of Uppsala in Sweden were composed in Latin (Pavur, 2010).

A good assessment of the relative health of Latin in a given time and place can be gleaned from assessing the number or percentage of books published in Latin then and there (Ostler, 2007: 296). In France, Latin books outnumbered French ones until the 1560s, but fell to under a quarter of total output by the end of that century, sinking to 5% by 1764. In Italy, the majority of books were published in Latin until the 18th century, except in Rome and Padua, where Latin continued to dominate. Latin remained predominant in Germany until the 1680s, and constituted at least 15% of the total throughout the 18th century. Latin publishing was always lower in England, being on average 10% of the total during the period from 1530-1640, after which there was a sudden drop-off, except at Oxford.

A sense of the status of Latin in the United States in the 18th and 19th centuries can be gained from the biography of Josiah Meigs, the first president of the University of Georgia, written by his great-grandson William Meigs in 1887. Josiah Meigs delivered a “cliosophic [*sic*] oration in Latin” at his graduation from Yale in 1778 (Meigs, 1887: 12), and “pronounced a Latin inaugural address” at the time of his appointment as a professor at Yale in 1794 (*ibid.*, 32).

Although Meigs was not only the University of Georgia's first president (beginning his tenure in 1801), but for most of his tenure also its only professor, the classical languages occupied an important place in the curriculum. As his son Charles, an 1809 alumnus of the university, remarked, "the high sounding song of Homer, the sweet notes of Virgil, the stirring narratives of Xenophon and Caesar, the denunciation, the suasion, and the arguments of Cicero, heard no more in the native land of the philosopher, were familiar sounds on the air of Athens" (*ibid.*, 49). It must be kept in mind that though Meigs was "an excellent Classical scholar" (*ibid.*, 81) scholarship in Greek and Latin was not his foremost interest. He was specifically designated as a professor of "Mathematic, Natural Philosophy, and Chymistry." His familiarity with Latin and Greek seems akin to knowledge of German and French for today's Classics faculty: a necessary tool for pursuit of other subjects. At the same time, though, one should not go too far in imagining the ubiquity of the classical languages among the educated of the 19th century. In describing Meigs' intellectual prowess, his great-grandson explicitly states that "not many men, whose occupation does not specifically call on them to do so, would be competent to make an address in Latin sixteen years after leaving college, as Meigs did upon beginning his professorial career at Yale" (*ibid.*, 80). This seems to imply that competence in Latin oratory was not so thoroughly ingrained in the students of the time that they remained adept at it after graduation. Meigs' ability is clearly presented as something exceptional. The thought of students' speechifying in Latin today is quite unfathomable, so much is modern Latin education geared toward reading and understanding the ancient works, and little more.

By 1884, Latin and Greek had become elective, rather than required, subjects of study at Harvard College, though study of both was a prerequisite for admission (Fisher, 1885: 223-4). This decision prompted a public debate between those who could see no use for Greek and Latin,

and those who defended them as a core component of a liberal education, one which ensures that the recipient will be familiar with a body of expected knowledge. Latin ceased to be an entrance requirement at Yale in 1931 and at the Oxbridge institutions around four decades later (Mead, 2001: 107). By the 1990s enrollment in Latin among American students was lower than that for French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, and Chinese (*ibid.*).

The late 19th century also saw the rise of some criticism of the role of classical languages, at the expense of modern ones, in the scholastic curriculum of England. Captain Frederick Burnaby was an English officer who in 1875 set out on a trip from London to Khiva, a city in Central Asia that had been recently annexed to the Russian Empire. He himself was fluent in several modern languages, including Russian, and commented on the linguistic skill of many upper-class Russians, attributing it to the emphasis placed on study of modern languages from an early age in Russia. He contrasted this system with that found in his native land:

We usually neglect the modern languages, and even omit the study of our own natural tongue. We occupy the whole of our boy's scholastic and college career with the study of Latin and Greek, imagining that we are laying a good foundation for the lad to learn modern languages later on in life, and when he leaves college. But this is a hopeless task; after twenty it is very exceptional to find any one who can tutor himself to a new pronunciation. Lads and men when leaving school or college have generally but little time for further education. The result is that we as a nation are the worst linguists in the world. As it is, our schools are being kept up for the advantage of the masters, who having been trained themselves in a special branch of study, would be ruined if any other system of education were insisted upon by the parents. The masters benefit, the boys suffer. If, at our schools, Latin and Greek were made to change places in relative importance with French and German, many lads on entering life would find that they had built a two-storied house, instead of merely having laid the foundation of an edifice which they will never have time to complete. (Hopkirk, 1997: 170).

It is significant that Latin and Greek are here clearly differentiated from modern foreign languages. This dichotomy of languages as either subjects of study *per se* or means of

communication implies that by this time, the use of Latin as an international language had ceased. The benefit of studying Latin in learning grammar or in preparing for further languages is still commonly stated today. The “special branch of study” that Burnaby criticizes school masters for having could be their emphasis on the classical languages instead of the modern ones, or it could be their manner of teaching the languages, probably according to the now traditional grammar-translation approach. It must be kept in mind, though, that Burnaby does not suggest the elimination of Greek and Latin from the curriculum, but rather a relative reduction of their importance.

Although the sharp decline in the study of Latin in American schools is often said to have been a result of the questioning of received wisdom and hallowed practice that characterized the intellectual climate of the 1960s, there is evidence that the decline actually began in the early part of the 20th century. The following percentages of students enrolled in Latin classes in American high schools reveal the rapidity of the transformation: 1910: 49.05%; 1915: 37.32%; 1922: 27.52%; 1928: 21.99%; 1934: 16.04% (Ganss, 1956: 236).

CHAPTER 27

LATIN (AND GREEK) TODAY

It seems that the “Continental” style of Latin pronunciation, according to which Latin was spoken with the phonology of the local language, has largely disappeared in Europe, just as it did in the United States in the latter decades of the 19th century. The exceptions to this general trend occur where the ancient language is very closely associated with the modern one: Latin in Italy and Greek in Greece.

Italy

The pronunciation of Latin used today is in a state of flux. In schools the traditional pronunciation used by the church continues to be taught, but at the university level there is use of the classical system which dates back at least as far as the 1960s. One would imagine that Latin teachers’ university education with the classical system, coupled with the declining use of Latin by the Catholic Church in Italy (since the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, 1962-65), would have produced a younger cohort of teachers versed in the classical method of pronunciation, but the traditional system seems to be alive and well in schools (Bianchelli, 2010). The overall importance of Latin in Italy and within education was questioned during the 1960s, and the language has not yet reacquired its former prestige and centrality in the curriculum. The most notable difference between the teaching of Latin in Italy and in the US is the age at initiation. Whereas presumably all US colleges that offer Latin at any level include introductory lessons, in Italy Latin is available at all *licei classici*, and since anyone with an interest in Latin has the possibility of beginning it in school, introductory classes are not offered at

universities. Both Latin and Greek can be studied throughout the five years of the *liceo classico*, but instruction in Latin begins in middle school (*scuola media*), in 6th or 7th grade. At both the school and university level, Latin is taught in Italy in much the same way as it is in the US: initial focus on grammar gives way to reading and translation. The emphasis on grammar begins (or, at least, used to begin) even before actual study of Latin. In 5th grade there was a class called *analisi logica*, which was essentially Latin grammar studied through Italian (Mignani, 2010).

Greece

The study of Latin begins in the final year of high school for those students who intend to take the entrance exams, which include Latin components, for the university faculties of law and humanities. The style of teaching is the grammar-translation approach. Though one year of study is insufficient to cover all the important details of Latin grammar, at the university level there are no classes that serve to supplement the introductory lessons learned in high school (Stamatopoulou, 2010). Rather, the study of Latin literature begins immediately. In both high schools and universities the classical pronunciation of Latin, as widely used within the United States, is taught.

In contrast to, perhaps, all other countries where the classical languages are taught, in Greece, not surprisingly, pride of place is given to Greek rather than Latin. The current position of Ancient Greek within the education in Greece is in frequent flux because the matter is connected to politics. In general, the more conservative the political party, the greater the role it advocates for Ancient Greek within the curriculum. At the other end of the spectrum, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) epitomizes the view that Ancient Greek is an irrelevant, elitist discipline. In the last few years, the political fortunes of this party have improved due to disenchantment among immigrants from formerly communist countries who, in their present

plight, look back on the days of communism with nostalgia (Stamatopoulou, 2010). New textbooks usually accompany changes in educational policy.

Having prefaced the discussion of Ancient Greek within education with the observation that the situation is subject to the vicissitudes of politics, let us examine the details. For the rest of this discussion, the unmodified term “Greek” will be used to mean all forms of Greek that are not modern demotic: Attic, koine, Byzantine, etc. Instruction begins in 9th grade. Before that, earlier materials are presented for study in Modern Greek (i.e. demotic) translation. Study of the ancient language is mandatory for all students from 9th to 11th grade, inclusive. The first year of instruction is devoted to grammar, and in the subsequent years there is a combination of readings in the original and further treatment of grammar. Within the final year of high school it is optional, though required for those students who plan to take the national entrance exams to study in faculties of law or humanities at a university. More recently, instruction in Greek has begun in 7th grade, starting with koine, which is viewed as easier than Attic.

The pronunciation used is the same as for Modern Greek, and therefore quite distinct from the Erasmian system used in the study of Greek elsewhere (including in the US). This schema is also used at the university level, although the topic of the ancient pronunciation is addressed in classes on historical linguistics. Modern Greek phonology is, in general, a simplification of the ancient system, though orthography has remained traditional. The result is ambiguity, since multiple letters or digraphs have the same pronunciation. Much the same situation exists in Modern Hebrew, written with an ancient alphabet that does not compensate for the simplification of the phonology. Modern Greek has been written with a monotonic system of accentuation (employing only the acute accent) since the early 1980’s, so the polytonic system of accentuation (together with the distinction between smooth and rough breathings and other

features such as the iota subscript) is a new concept to beginning students. This is quite problematic for those studying Greek, since dictation is often part of the final exam.

Russia

The study of Latin and Greek was quite common in the gymnasias of pre-revolutionary Russia, where education was largely modeled on the German pattern, but was eliminated from the curriculum as early as 1920 by the Bolsheviks (Ostler, 2007: 293). The study of Latin had been introduced by Peter the Great as part of his westernization project. In addition to being completely unavailable in schools during the Soviet period, the subjects were also quite restricted even at the university level. Despite this, works of ancient literature in Russian translation were widely available, and also popular since readability rather than strict adherence to the original language was the goal of the translation. The Philology Faculty of Moscow State University (MGU, Московский Государственный Университет), the premier institute of higher education, was during this period, perhaps, the only place where one could specialize in the study of Latin and Greek (as opposed to taking classes on those subjects as part of the curriculum within a different discipline). For a long time the head of the department was N.A. Fedorov. The department was quite small, admitting only 10 students per year (Koshkaryan, 2010). The old Russian connection to Greek via Byzantium notwithstanding, the focus of the department was on Latin. Despite its small size, the department was well-known for the quality of the education it offered, since it was well known that easier fields of study offered much better job prospects after graduation, and thus the department attracted only serious students. The system of pronunciation used was the classical. It has become easier to study Latin in Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union. The Greco-Latin Cabinet (www.mgl.ru), under the direction of Yuriy Shichalin, was founded in 1990 as a publisher of materials in the classical languages (including

the Russian equivalent of Loeb-editions) and about the classical world. It also functions as a private educational establishment, offering courses in both ancient and modern languages. In 1993 a “Classical School,” which was intended to recreate the curriculum of pre-revolutionary gymnasia in both attention to ancient languages and the Russian Orthodox religion, was opened in Moscow (Museum, 2010).

One textbook, first published in 1979, includes Latin passages composed by Russian scholars of the 17th-20th centuries (Graham, 1920: 392). Some sample sentences were constructed to reinforce the Marxist understanding of ancient history: “*proletarii erant pauperrimi homines in plebe Romana.*” The work includes passages chosen for their relationship to Russian authors: Ovid is frequently quoted, as his exile to the Black Sea is reminiscent of the similar fate that Pushkin endured. The selection of Tacitus’ account of the suicide of Petronius Arbiter was chosen because the work influenced Pushkin’s composition *A Tale of Roman Life*. Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura* is sampled, since his anti-religious tract had been popular with Marx and other revolutionaries.

In another textbook, published for the second time in 1985, the difference between the pronunciation of “Classical” (классический) and “late” / “medieval” (поздний, средневековый) Latin is elaborated with respect to diphthongs: *au* and *eu* are the same, but *ae* changes from [ai] (аэ) to [e] (э), while *oe* moves from [oi] (оэ) to German *ö* or French *æ* (Miroshenkova, 1985: 12). That last value seems to have been used only in Germany. It is also explained that both *c* and *ti* came to be pronounced as [ts]. The value of pointing this out lies, perhaps, in the fact that Latin words (and, especially, personal names) that have come from Latin have undergone this change. Thus Caesar is “Tsesar” (Цесарь), while Cicero is “Tsitseron” (Цицерон). In russifying personal names, nominative declensional endings are lost, and *h* is

replaced by *g*, as is standard in all Russian transliterations of this sound. Thus, Quintus Horatius Flaccus (Horace) becomes “Квint Goratsii Flakk” (Квинт Гораций Флакк). The letter *s* is mentioned as undergoing sonorization intervocalically to [z] in later Latin, as in *casa*, which is transliterated as “kaza” (каза). Among the sounds that do not change between the Classical and later versions are the Greek digraphs *ph*, *rh*, *th*, and *ch*, which are listed as having the sounds [f] (φ), [r] (ρ), [t] (τ), and [kh] (χ). It is noted that vowels come in long and short varieties (which are distinguished with macrons and short marks in the vocabulary sections, but not in the reading passages), but the qualitative distinction between the two varieties is not described. The letters *y* and *z* are specified as occurring only in words borrowed from Greek. Their phonetic values are described as [i] (ι) and [z] (ζ). The letter *v* is evaluated as [v] (β), *qu* as [kv] (κβ), and *su* in some cases as [sv] (σβ). *Quinque* is explained as “kvinkve” (κβινκβε). *L exilis* is transliterated by giving the palatalized equivalent of the following vowel, e.g. *clarus* as “klyarus” (κлярус). *H*, a sound which does not exist in Russian, is described as “German *h*.”

Spain

As recently as twenty years ago, one year of high school Latin was mandatory in Spain, and three years for those in the arts and humanities track (as opposed to science). One year of Greek was also required. In addition, three years of Latin at the university level were a further requirement. Currently, only one year of high school Latin is mandatory for those in the arts and humanities track, and the Greek requirement has been eliminated. The quality of instruction can be very low: grammar-translation with barely any references to culture or even to the biography of the ancient writers (Mizzi, 2010). The result among students has been great difficulty with and dislike of Latin class. Many high school Latin teachers are graduates of other programs.

The pronunciation used at both the high school and college levels is the classical system, as used in the US.

Portugal

In the 1960s, two years of Latin study in high schools were required for those students who were focusing on arts and languages, rather than science. During this time, students were informed of three separate pronunciations of Latin: the ecclesiastical, the restored classical, and the traditional, which utilized Portuguese phonology (Hutchinson, 2010). The textbooks then focused on grammar and translation and excluded discussion of culture and history, on the assumption that students would learn about those subjects in other classes. At that time there was no requirement at the university level, and today Latin is no longer a requirement in Portuguese high schools, and perhaps is no longer offered as an option there. In addition to Latin, during the 1960s study of French was mandatory from age 10, and English from age 13. Since that time, French has become optional.

Germany

Latin was a required course for all *Gymnasium* students (*Gymnasiasten*) until the 1970s. Such students constituted 5-7% of the total student population; the rest attended *Realschule* and *Volksschule* (Breuing, 2010). Until 1893 an essay in Latin was a component of final exams for all *Gymnasiasten*. Until the 1930s, Latin was the first foreign language taught in *Gymnasien*, Greek was the second, and French the third. Latin remained a component of school-leaving exams, though now translation (usually from Virgil or Cicero) rather than composition. Latin's pride of place among foreign languages ended during *das dritte Reich*, when priority was shifted to English on account of its status as a kindred Germanic tongue. After the war students could choose from English, French, and Latin for their first and second foreign languages. Greek was

an option for a third language. Though Latin ceased to be a required subject at the *Gymnasium* level after the educational reforms of the 1970s, it remains a commonly studied subject because many university programs (including law and medicine) require some knowledge of it. The Latin requirement is satisfied by taking a sight translation test known as the “Latinum.” The selections utilized for the exam usually come from Virgil, Cicero, Seneca, or Ovid. Despite Latin’s status as an elective subject, more students than ever before are taking it because more students than ever before now attend *Gymnasien* (as many as 35% of all students). Around 50% of *Gymnasiasten* study Latin from sixth to eleventh grade. Until the 1990s, when the restored ancient version (*lingua restituta*) became popular, the ecclesiastical method of pronunciation was used, and it continues to predominate because most teachers were trained in that method. Sometimes, though, *c* is uniformly pronounced as [k]. The grammar-translation method is the most common form of instruction, but discussion of ancient history and philosophy are included.

The Netherlands

As in many European countries, varied types of high schools offer different program tracks to Dutch students in the last phase of public education. Both Greek and Latin remain mandatory for students in the 6-year college-preparatory gymnasium program. Study of Latin begins in the first year and Greek in the next. Latin is required for at least three years and Greek for two, though both can be pursued until graduation. Lately it has become increasingly difficult to find sufficient numbers of teachers to satisfy all the demand necessitated by a few years of mandatory study for all gymnasium students. The pronunciation system used for Latin is quite similar to the the restored Classical version, but the letter *v* is pronounced as [v] and not as [w]. The Greek pronunciation is also typical, with the exception that *theta* is pronounced as [t], rather than [θ].

CHAPTER 28

SPOKEN LATIN AND PEDAGOGY

In late January and early February 2010, there was a serious debate on the listserv *LatinTeach* concerning the merits of the grammar-translation approach to teaching Latin *vis-à-vis* more holistic methods. The listserv connects Latin teachers across the US (and, to a lesser extent, the world) and through it several emails per day are compiled and mailed to the recipients. Issues addressed cover all aspects of teaching Latin in high schools and at the introductory level at college. The grammar-translation method is very commonly utilized today in teaching Latin, and it achieved centrality long ago. Its basis is heavy emphasis on grammar, taught via translation from Latin. An alternative to this is known as the “reading method,” which not surprisingly focuses on reading at the expense of grammatical parsing. An even newer method is called TPRS: Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling. The last named technique was designed for modern foreign languages, but some teachers have tried to apply it to Latin. Instruction in modern languages, of course, incorporates all methods of communication (listening, speaking, reading, writing), whereas today the focus in teaching Latin is almost exclusively on reading. Claude Pavur of St. Louis University has dichotomized the ways of teaching Latin into the philological model, “which tends to teach morphology and syntax, and how to decode texts accurately,” and the humanistic model, which “seeking a deep appreciation of the language as a medium of communication, is open to conversational and compositional practice” (Pavur, 1996).

Some believe that teaching Latin in the same manner as modern languages would instill

in the students a better understanding of the language, and would therefore facilitate their reading comprehension. It must be admitted that traditional ways of teaching Latin still maintain their hegemony, but new approaches are gaining in popularity, assisted by the notion that in the past Latin was studied as a modern, spoken language, and was commanded better by those who spoke it. It is increasingly recognized that the grammar-translation approach was an innovation of the 19th century, and that what has long since been the customary way of teaching Latin (and Greek as well) is itself, historically, an innovation (Ganss, 1956: 229-30). The increasing development and usage of vernacular languages as literary and scholarly media came at the expense of Latin, which had formerly been the sole or predominant vehicle for such production. One of the factors that prompted the rise of vernacular written forms at this time (the Renaissance) was the promotion of ancient models (often Cicero) as the key to good Latinity. This emphasis on imitation inhibited Latin as the communication medium of new thoughts and ideas, as producing good Latin became an end in itself, rather than the means to an end (Gruber-Miller, 2006: 195). As the need to use Latin declined, the language itself began to be taught and learned less like a foreign language, and more like an academic discipline. Teachers began to emphasize the importance of studying Latin as a way to learn grammar, as a means of facilitating the acquisition of other foreign tongues, and as a gateway into the cultural richness of classical civilization. As the goals of learning Latin changed, so did the methods. Especially after the mid-nineteenth century, the study of Latin assumed the grammar-translation approach that is still paramount today: some hundreds of lines of ancient literature are selected, analyzed, parsed, translated, and discussed.

A good description of frustration with the traditional method was provided by Dr. Robert Patrick, a high-school Latin teacher in Georgia, during the LatinTeach exchange:

At the core of my change from traditional "parse, construe and translate" teaching to an active language approach is my own deep dissatisfaction with how that has worked for me. Even though I am as good as anyone at "parse, construe and translate" it still left me, after so many hours (at the university) and years (of teaching and studying) tediously working over a text with a dictionary. At what point does a student of any language get to simply enjoy picking up anything in that language and reading it? Of course there are levels of registers of language, but really-if the old method was supposed to deliver us at the door of picking up any classical author and reading his works with the ease of one who knows the language, when is that supposed to happen? After 10 or 11 years of teaching this language, I had not arrived at that door, and my students weren't even out of the starting gate. I think every Latin teacher traditionally trained knows what I am talking about, and yet we never talk about it. I was in the midst of that time adding a major in Spanish to my credentials, and the experience was entirely different. (Patrick, 2010)

Critics of the grammar-translation approach have claimed that it produces experts in works of Latin (or Greek) literature, rather than in the Latin language. It is widely recognized that in the past scholars and students were able to read Latin more fluently (and, consequently, more voluminously) than is typical today. At the same time, though, there is evidence that a grammar-heavy approach to Latin is long-standing. In 1540, in his grammar of the Italian language, Francesco Priscianese commented that Greek and Latin were considered more difficult to learn than the modern languages because in classrooms it was grammar *per se* rather than the language itself that was taught (Ostler, 2007: 253). The difference between then and now was, of course, the centrality of Latin, however badly taught, in the curriculum and its omnipresence in society.

Greek, too, is commonly taught in the traditional way that could variously be called the grammar-translation or philological method, but at least one professor (Paula Saffire of Butler University) is applying conversational techniques in the teaching of introductory Greek. After

the initial two weeks, though, she phases it out almost entirely due to time constraints (Gruber-Miller, 2006: 174). The demands of what needs to be taught outweigh the desirability of Greek conversation, though students seem to prefer the latter.

Of course, discontent with the old system is not universal. The foremost criticism is that Latin is a dead language and any effort to speak or write it both ignores that fact and is a distraction from the serious pursuit of developing a reading knowledge of the language based on the texts of ancient literature. Profs. Robert Ball and J.D. Ellsworth of the University of Hawaii described such efforts, in particular the New York State syllabus contained within *Latin for Communication*, as “*hyperreal Latin* or, because it is not actually real but fake, *hyperfake Latin*,” and attribute these new approaches to “the political pressures faced by classicists as they struggle to survive in departments consisting mainly of modern languages” and thus try to make Latin more relevant and *ergo* more attractive to students (Ball, 1996: 80-82). Given this viewpoint, it is not surprising that Ball is the author of a textbook entitled *Reading Classical Latin*, with emphasis duly placed on the learning goal. In opposition to these assertions, the Latin teachers Martha Abbot and Sally Davis counter that “aural, oral, and writing skills are used rather to enhance and promote the ultimate goal of reading” (Abbott, 1996: 85).

In 2010, a joint task force composed of members of both the American Classical League and the American Philological Association released its recommended standards for Latin teacher preparation. Three standards were listed, of which Standard 1 concerned content knowledge. Among the components of Standard 1.a was the requirement to “pronounce Latin accurately and with expression and read poetry with attention to meter” (Standards, 9). Among the ways proposed to measure how well a teacher meets Standard 1 were “performance on oral examinations testing the ability to read Latin aloud with expression and comprehension” and

“samples of written work in Latin” (*ibid.*, 20). Such findings indicate that these organizations believe that competency in Latin includes the ability to write and to read aloud, but apparently not to speak or understand. While the “importance... of speaking and listening to Latin” is mentioned, the necessary minimum of aural and oral communication is specified as using “simple greetings and classroom commands,” the proper pronunciation of which is not specified beyond the injunction to pay “careful attention to vowel quantities and word accent” (*ibid.*, 10). The implication is that there is a correct way to pronounce Latin (and, by extension, incorrect ways). The failure to specify the correct way is a reflection of either the fact that multiple correct schemata are recognized, or that there is no consensus within the organization of what pronunciation standards should be codified. The mention of the importance of distinguishing vowel quantity is, perhaps, a reference to the Classical pronunciation, since in the ecclesiastical standard of the Catholic Church this difference is lost.

Specific instruction in oral Latin is available today at the Annual Workshop for Spoken Latin (commonly called the “conventiculum”) at the University of Kentucky. This weeklong program is led by Prof. Terence Tunberg, who also incorporates spoken Latin into his own regular courses. He writes that, “contrary to what a lot of people seem to be saying these days on listservs and elsewhere, I believe that the utility of active Latin in writing and speaking gets higher as students get more advanced. I don't see it as primarily a tool for beginners or children. I don't know any better way for people to master and make instinctive all the complexities of a language like Latin than simply to use it” (Tunberg, 2009). The pronunciation used is the restored classical version commonly taught in the US.

Today Latin is the medium of instruction in at least one institute of higher learning: the *Accademia Vivarium Novum*. The program began informally, as students gathered on the island

of Vivara near Naples to study with a man who knew Latin fluently. A more formal institution was later established in the town of Montella in southern Italy, led by Luigi Miraglia. The school recently moved to a campus near Rome. Incoming classes are confined to no more than 25 males (since the school is on the grounds of a monastery, *la congregazione dei Legionari di Cristo*) between the ages of 16 and 25, all of whose expenses are covered by scholarships from the Mnemosyne foundation. “The use of Latin (and Greek) as a communication vehicle is not only expected in the daily lessons, but also greatly encouraged during the rest of the time: students speak Latin to their professors and to one another from morning until night” (Accademia English). “*Iuvenes, qui in Vivario Vivo degunt, ardentem et acriter in studia incumbere solent, ut Latini Graecique sermonis, tamquam si essent alter et tertia lingua patria, plenam et absolutam sibi comparent notitiam,*” Youths who attend *Vivarium Vivum* are accustomed to seriously pursue their studies, in order to acquire a full and complete knowledge of Greek and Latin speech, as if they were second and third native languages” (Accademia Latin). The curriculum and the school’s *raison d’être* are entirely humanistic: *Academia c.n. Vivarium Vivum eo consilio est condita, ut consuetudines, mores, rationesque docendi, quae in usu fuerent apud humanistas, iterum redintegrarentur itemque iuvenum animi iisdem fere viis ad humanitatem et ad genus illud acris liberique iudicii informarentur de iis omnibus, quae sunt in usu et vita communi,*” The *Vivarium Vivum* Academy was founded with the plan that the customs, habits, and methods of teaching which were in use among the humanists, again be renewed and that also the spirits of youths be fashioned along nearly the same routes toward humanism and toward that type of sharp and free judgment concerning all those things which are common in practice and life (*ibid.*).

An analysis of early Latin textbooks reveals that in the past the language was studied in

much the same way as modern languages are studied today. One prominent textbook that was translated into many languages was *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, by the Czech scholar Jan Comenius (1592-1670), considered the father of modern education (Bowen, 1967). The book is divided thematically into numerous sections, each headed with a picture in which various objects are numbered. For each picture there is a passage of continuous prose that mentions by number everything depicted in the illustration. The writing is divided into two columns, Latin in one and a translation in the other. No specification of pronunciation is given beyond a comparison of each letter to the sound of a particular animal or event. The letter *u*, for example, is compared to the hoot of an owl. Long and short vowels are not distinguished, except for the long *a* of the 1st declension ablative singular and the long *e* of adverbs. The lack of emphasis on correct pronunciation was, perhaps, attributable to the fact that by this time there was no standard version of Latin phonology. Rather, it seems that the pronunciation depended on the phonology of the speaker's native language. It is perhaps indicative of the lack of consensus concerning Latin pronunciation that the first grammar of Russian, Heinrich Ludolf's *Grammatica Russica* of 1696, even though it is written in Latin, describes the pronunciation of Russian letters in terms of the value of letters in various European languages (German, English, French, Italian), but never by reference to Latin values (Ludolf, 1696: 6-8).

Comenius' book appeared in many translations soon after its original publication in a Latin-German edition in Nuremberg in 1658. Within ten years it was translated into English, French, Polish, and Italian. Its popularity was due not so much to the teaching of Latin parallel with a modern language, or to the use of woodcut illustrations, both of which had been done before, as to the fact that it was the first illustrated book designed specifically for schools (Bowen, 1967: 26). Latin was at the time central to education, since it was the medium of all

serious scholarship. *Orbis Pictus* continued to be published as a textbook until 1845, and it was the obvious inspiration for the book *Orbis Pictus Latinus*, a pictorial dictionary entirely in Latin first published in 1976.

It is also the predecessor to John Traupman's textbook *Conversational Latin for Oral Proficiency*, which is quite unique among contemporary Latin learning materials in its explicit emphasis on speaking. Although Comenius' book takes the form of a series of monologues on certain subjects, whereas Traupman's applies a similar thematic principle to conversations which appear alongside an English translation, both works place emphasis on the vocabulary relevant to topics at hand. In order to be conducive to the instruction of a Latin that is an effective means of communicating information pertinent to contemporary life, both books include vocabulary for items that were not in existence in ancient times. This ability to create or absorb new words is one of the most obvious divisions between a vibrant language and a declining one. By the 17th century, warfare had been revolutionized by the introduction of guns and gunpowder. Within the *Orbis Pictus* the ancient term *tormentum*, which had earlier been applied to ancient forms of artillery such as catapults, was grafted onto the former concept, and the Latin term for the latter, *pulvis tormentarium*, was perhaps a calque from modern languages. Other examples of new technology unknown to the ancient world are listed in the book: turkey, unknown before the discovery of the new world, is *gallopavus*. The modern custom of coining new words from Greek and Latin roots was at this time applied to Latin. A mechanical clock is an *automaton*. The modern terms *telescopium* and *microscopium* are listed among the Latin vocabulary, but apparently at this time the terms had not yet become current in English, as they are translated as "perspective glass" and "magnifying glass." Eyeglasses, known to the ancient world only in the form of gems that certain figures such as Nero looked through, are *perspicilla*. The Chinese and

“other Indians” are *Chinenses* and *Indi alii*. The section on paper making describes papyrus, but contrasts it with the modern technique that originated in China. The craft of printing is described in detail, no hint of which was familiar to the Romans. The Americas are shown on a map, and the modern countries of Europe are delineated and listed. These are just the most obvious examples of ways in which the Latin language was made to accommodate the modern world, but the book in general, of course, deals entirely with the then modern world, rather than simply describing the world as the ancient Romans had known it. Ancient terms are applied in ways that were foreign to classical usage, but these innovations had been standardized. If attempts to modernize Latin to deal with the novelties of modern existence are sometimes ridiculed, it must be kept in mind that *Orbis Pictus* clearly reveals the degree to which Latin, at least in the mid-17th century, was fully capable of expressing both lofty philosophical sentiments and the details of such mundane crafts as butchery and book-making.

The focus that was once placed on learning Latin in the manner of any other spoken language can be seen in the 1858 textbook *Adler’s Practical Latin Grammar*. Despite the title, it is not only a grammar of the language, but a textbook for learning it, complete with “perpetual exercises,” as the book’s subtitle makes clear. There is certainly an abundance of exercises within, but all are of the same type: short English sentences to be translated into Latin, such as “Were they accustomed to write as well as they spoke? – They were accustomed to write better. – Did you speak French when you were in Paris (*Lutetiae*)? – I spoke French and Latin” (Adler, 1858: 274). Given the practical, rather than literary, nature of the practice exercises, it seems from the last mentioned example that Adler believed that one could use Latin as a means of communication in the Paris of the 1850’s. He himself acknowledges that “many of the exercises relate to the familiar talk of daily intercourse” (*ibid.*, vi) and in order to allow for the use of Latin

in describing the facets of 19th century existence unknown in ancient times, he sometimes used new creations (e.g. *coffea*, *tabacum*, marked with asterisks in the vocabulary) or gave a different meaning to ancient words (*calceus* for “shoe,” *pileus* for “hat”). Quotes from ancient sources, which abound in most Latin grammars, are not found within this one. Instead, there are example sentences side-by-side with translations. For example, the Latin *Três horas, sex menses, per triennium cum aliquo habitare* is translated as “To live with any one three hours, six months, for three (entire) years” (*ibid.*, 316). Adler confesses, though, that his textbook is not typical of those that prevailed at the time, in one way by marking the length of vowels (long vowels with circumflexes) and the accent of words, a practice that he found in no other Latin grammar (*ibid.*, vi).

His book also differed from contemporary ones in that the method used within “aims at nothing short of a radical change in the teaching of the language” (*ibid.*, vii). Since Adler does not specify what the *status quo* was within classical education at that time beyond contrasting his method with forcing the student “to lay up barren lists of words or unproductive rules” (*ibid.*, vii), he must have viewed the usual teaching methods as so ingrained as to be almost intuitively obvious and therefore in no need of explanation. It is most likely that what was standard in his day remains that way in our day: the grammar-translation approach. It is telling that Adler began his Latin textbook only after he had completed a German one. The manner in which he presented a modern language probably informed his presentation of an ancient one. He defended his focus on writing in the target language since “methods analogous to this, though unrecorded, must have been employed by those who have used, and who to some extent still use, the Latin as a medium of written communication, and not infrequently with an elegance that reminds us of the ancients” (*ibid.*, vii-viii). This statement reveals that the decline in the use of Latin was

readily apparent by the mid 19th century, and that there was at least some awareness that the decline in written Latin was due to the method of teaching the language. As described above, this idea has recently returned to Latin pedagogy.

CHAPTER 29

LATIN-ROMANCE REGISTERS, DIGLOSSIA, AND BILINGUALISM

How, then, can we accurately characterize the history of Latin and the Romance languages? The first question is whether Latin and Romance accurately meet the criteria that Ferguson specified in his seminal article on Diglossia. We must remember that Ferguson himself came to the conclusion that the relationship between Latin and Romance was one of diglossia. In his understanding, the H(igh status) and L(ow) forms are differentiated by the following criteria (Wei, 2000: 68-76):

1. Function: H is used in formal situations (e.g. sermons, personal letters, political speeches, university lectures, news), while L is utilized in informal settings (conversation with friends, family, and colleagues; folk literature; instructions to servants). It has been memorably said that not even the most classicizing Greek would make love in *katharevousa* (Browning, 1983: 112).
2. Prestige: The H variety is viewed as so much more valuable that native speakers of the language often deny or downplay the existence of the L type.
3. Literary heritage: H is the medium of a large literary tradition, often of long standing.
4. Acquisition: Adults speak L to children, and children speak it to each other. Consequently, L is learned naturally from birth, while H is learned via formal education.
5. Standardization: H is the subject of grammars and dictionaries, while there are varied forms of L.

6. Stability: Situations of diglossia often last for centuries, and the instability inherent in the relationship between the two forms is often eased by the creation of mixed forms and through lexical borrowings from H to L.
7. Grammar: L is usually less complex grammatically than H.
8. Lexicon: The bulk of the vocabulary is shared between L and H. Often formal and informal equivalents exist as doublets.
9. Phonology: The phonological structures of L and H run the gamut from total correspondence to considerable discrepancy. If a certain phoneme is lacking in L though present in H, then a substitute will be found for it among the existing phonemes of L. This substitute will often be used even in H, when spoken, in place of the original value.

The difference between Latin and Romance seems to mirror the H-L relationship very closely. Latin was the medium of writing, through which there was a great deal of communication with illiterate people. The language used, provided the writer held in check his highly literary impulses (which could be instilled in him via the expansive literature in that language), certainly differed from the spoken tongue, but could still be understood when read aloud, since the basis of the vocabulary was the same. Peasants probably did not use the word *tamen* very often, to judge from the fact that it does not survive in any Romance language today, but they could probably still understand it. The spoken language, Romance, was in many ways grammatically simpler, but the archaic grammatical elements had not yet fallen out of comprehension. The common folk almost certainly did not make common use of synthetic passive verbal forms, but they seem to have continued to understand them, and writers, once they learned how to use them accurately, had a tendency to use them to excess, as if to show their verbal virtuosity with this difficult

construction.

Certainly, from a very early point in the recorded history of Latin, its speakers conceived of a dichotomy within the language between what they called *sermo urbanus* and *sermo vulgaris* (among several synonymous designations). This began as a very light form of diglossia, more, in fact, a distinction between everyday speech and the high, educated register that served as the basis for the literary language. The high form became increasingly divorced from actual speech. It is easier to imagine that Classical Latin is an approximate indication of how Cicero spoke in formal settings than it is for, say, how Constantine or Claudian spoke. Nevertheless, it remained the standard in writing, though elements of the spoken language came to affect it, especially under the influence of Christianity, which used Latin as the medium of its message. At some point, Latin crossed the threshold from being a very high register of the spoken language to being in a relationship of diglossia with it. Initially weak, the diglossia suddenly became much stronger when a totally new phonology was applied to the H version.

We must remember that diglossia is not a monolithic entity. As Ferguson himself recognized, there are distinct varieties of diglossia. Most linguists would classify French and Haitian Creole as separate languages. The struggle between *katharevousa* and demotic Greek was eventually resolved in favor of a version of the latter greatly supplemented by the former. Swiss German continues to be widely spoken, but rarely used as the vehicle of writing. The contrast between Classical / Modern Standard Arabic on the one hand and various local vernaculars on the other is moving in the direction of the establishment of separate languages, but that point will probably only be reached in the distant future (if at all) because of the unifying factor of the prestigious H variety. The development of Latin is similar to that of Arabic, and differs only in its further progression. The Romance languages have become independent

entities, and Latin too has remained. Before Alcuin's reforms, Latin-Romance diglossia was of a fairly limited variety, since there was widespread intercomprehension. The educated were aware that they could speak and write in a way that would render them somewhat incomprehensible to lay folk, but this is a common phenomenon. Even today we adjust our way of speaking to match the audience. Our written literary language is less divorced, in most cases, from actual speech than Latin was, but it is similarly unphonetic. In the case of Latin, after Alcuin's reforms there was a much stronger type of diglossia, since now there was a spoken standard that differed from all the spoken vernaculars, which continued until written Romance standards emerged. Up to that point, Latin was the written version of all Romance dialects, regardless of how different it was from them in form. It was not until people began to write in Romance that they realized that Latin was a separate entity.

Ferguson divides diglossia from the "more widespread standard-with-dialects" using the criterion of the medium of ordinary conversation (*ibid.*, 76). How do we imagine people spoke? Did the social elite use Latin among themselves, or did they speak more or less the way everyone did? Clearly Latin ceased to be a language learned naturally from birth at some point. Otherwise, why would it no longer exist in that way? It is difficult to imagine that, before the conscious divide between Latin and Romance, natives of the same area, however high their class or education, used a learned language rather than their colloquial speech among themselves. In Switzerland today, speaking *Hochdeutsch* to a fellow Swiss German constitutes a scorned affectation (*ibid.*).

As Ferguson points out (point #6 above), a relationship of diglossia can continue for a long time. The Latin-Romance diglossia seems to have been established in Roman times, and continued until the early 9th century in France and even longer on the Iberian Peninsula. This

was a long period of time, but Arabic diglossia has continued for an even greater length of time, and is still going strong. It was by no means inevitable, then, that the course of time would replace Latin-Romance diglossia with bilingualism. As presented above, the diglossia seems to have been well-established and fully functioning just before a sudden disruption complicated, and eventually reworked, the system. What we today call Latin was the written standard of the language whose spoken form has been largely reconstructed from the evidence of the modern Romance languages and labelled Romance. There were distinctions between the two, just as with all languages that possess a written form, but the phonology seems to have been the same. It seems likely that the reformed pronunciation of Latin promoted during the reign of Charlemagne by Alcuin was instrumental in making inevitable the differentiation of Latin and Romance into languages conceived of as distinct by the speakers. Since diglossia is a common linguistic phenomenon and since it serves to unify divergent forms of a language, it seems possible that Latin could have continued as a unitary language had external events not intervened to render diglossia untenable and replace it with bilingualism. Somewhat counter-intuitively, the vast extent of the Romance-speaking realm made the preservation of Latin as the H variety more likely. This is due to the fact that a competing standard based on L is necessary to offer an alternative to H, and this is a more likely phenomenon within a small speech community, since it could more easily unite around a single L standard. Large speech communities give rise to multiple regional standards, which compete with one another as much as they rival the H form.

The institutionalization of the reformed pronunciation of Latin did not immediately end Latin-Romance diglossia. The innovation reached some places later than others. Another two centuries were to pass before the Romance dialects began to be formalized with written forms. Occasional experiments in the development of written Romance eventually came to fruition, and

there was in the late 11th and especially in the 12th century an explosion in Romance writing in various standards. It seems that only as Romance writing became common was the lingering association of Latin and Romance severed, and the latter then established itself as the various Romance languages, viewed as such by their speakers.

Part of the uniqueness of Latin is that its diglossia did not end in the expected way. Ferguson stated that diglossia is not perceived as a problem until certain trends emerge (*ibid.*, 77):

1. More widespread literacy (whether for economical, ideological, or other reasons)
2. Broader communication among different regional and social segments of the community
3. Desire for a full-fledged standard 'national' language as an attribute of autonomy or of sovereignty.

Latin-Romance diglossia ended around 1000, after a two century-long decline. At that time, none of the criteria specified by Ferguson were operative. Literacy was largely confined to the clergy, there was not much commerce, trade, or travel, and the development of modern nation states was centuries away. What compromised, and eventually killed, Latin-Romance diglossia was the pronunciation reform of the Carolingian Renaissance.

CHAPTER 30

CONCLUSION

The reformation and standardization of Latin pronunciation during the Carolingian Renaissance was, perhaps, the single most important development in the history of the language, since it allowed for or, at least, facilitated the conceptual distinction between Latin and the Romance dialects that were subsequently codified into languages. Had that event not occurred, by no means was it inevitable that Latin diglossia would have continued, but at least it would have been possible. The development of Latin could, then, have followed the course of Greek, Arabic, English, Spanish, and others: languages that have remained conceptually singular despite a long history or a wide geographic extension. Instead, Latin's course of development is most reminiscent of that of Sanskrit: enshrined as a paragon of literary form, but increasingly supplanted by vernacular alternatives.

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