

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL LATIN

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At first Latin was a language of farmers and shopkeepers. Its use was limited to Rome and its environs. Despite this modest beginning Latin gradually came to be a language of high civilization and spread throughout the entire western part of the Roman empire. Few languages have known such remarkable success.

More remarkable still is the history of Latin after the fall of the empire. The spoken Latin, which remained astonishingly stable for a long time, did not die; it changed from one generation to another, branching out in several directions, and this evolution gave birth to the Romance languages. Written Latin continued in use. It provided the means of expression in churches as well as schools where it was written as well as spoken. To be sure, medieval Latin was no longer a national tongue and its use was limited to the learned class of society.

But for the same reason Latin knew no borders. With the spread of Christianity, Latin moved to lands of the Celtic, Germanic, Hungarian and western Slavic languages, and became a common tongue for all western civilization, which it marked with an indelible stamp. During the first centuries of the modern era, the intellectual élite still possessed Latin completely. The practical importance of it did not begin to decrease until after the middle of the seventeenth century. Even in our day, Latin preserves its universality. Schools teach it, even overseas; the Roman Church uses it daily as a liturgical language, science and technology, old and new, have recourse to Latin to develop their vocabulary. This is why whoever desires to understand the unity and complexity of our civilization, cannot ignore the study of this language, which shaped thought for so long. No language possesses a parallel history, no language has played a comparable role.

The period of the history of Latin which we will discuss here embraces about a thousand years. The end of this period is clearly marked by the Renaissance. Its beginning is more difficult to determine. Roman education and civilization did not disappear because the Visigoths sacked Rome or because the last Roman emperor was deposed by Odoacer. The Roman administration ceased to function and people began to live, to think and to express themselves in a new manner. The Latin of the Middle Ages is a continuation of the learned and literary Latin of the late empire. The transformation occurred very slowly, and, in order to understand this development, it is necessary to begin with the linguistic situation before the fall of the empire.

Latin at the End of the Imperial Age

In the third century, the Roman empire experienced violent crises. The Persians, Goths, Alemanni, and other barbarian peoples handed the Romans crushing defeats; internally, perpetual revolts threatened to tear the state apart. When, at last, the barbarians were repulsed and the unity of the empire was reestablished, the world had changed profoundly. Rome was no longer the center of political and cultural life. The emperors lived in Milan, Treves, Constantinople, and even other locations. These cities, especially Carthage and other provincial capitals, frequently offered a setting more congenial to intellectual life than the ancient metropolis, and one could already foresee the future linguistic decline.

The senate no longer held political power. The emperor, who was called *dominus*, was all-powerful, his ministers comprised the *consistorium sacrum*, the functionaries of the court re-

ceived the title *comites*, “companions of the lord, counts.” The emperors imposed on society a caste system according to which all were linked to a certain profession and a certain social class. At the same time a new system of honorific titles was instituted. The emperor could be called *gloriosissimus*, *serenissimus*, *christianissimus*, the functionaries were divided into four classes of which the attributes were *illustres*, *spectabiles*, *clarissimi*, and *perfectissimi*. The emperor was addressed by the words *vestra maiestas*, *vestra gloria*, *vestra pietas*, others were addressed, depending on their rank, *vestra excellentia*, *eminentia*, *magnificentia*, *spectabilitas*, etc. The titles *beatitudo* and *sanctitas* were preserved for ecclesiastical dignitaries. The emperor, speaking of himself, did not say *ego* but *nos*, the subject had to call him *vos*, not *tu*. This use of the plural spread very quickly among all social ranks influenced by the official language, and soon people came to use a plural of respect even for addressing their own colleagues. Imperial administrative cabinets and, after their example, the ecclesiastical chanceries as well introduced other expressions which passed into medieval Latin. For example, the participles *suprascriptus*, *supradictus*, *praedictus*, *praefatus*, *memoratus*, were often used in the place of the anaphoric pronoun *is*. In most European languages the excessive use of words corresponding to *aforesaid*, *aforementioned*, *above-named*, etc. is still a sign of formalism and pedantry. In the same manner, *hic* was replaced by *praesens* and one wrote *praesenti iussione praecipimus*, *scriptis praesentibus adhortamur*, *lator* or *portitor praesentium* (sc. *litterarum*), *praesens portitor*, etc. From these phrases emerge the English expressions: “by the present,” “these presents,” “the present bearer.” Especially desirable were ablative absolutes of the type: *habita distractione* (= *cum distractione*), *excusatione cessante*, *omissa excusatione*, *excusatione postposita* (= *sine excusatione*). Latin had no present participle of the verb *esse*. In its place were used the participles *consistens*, *constitutus*, *positus*, when, for instance, one addressed a letter to a certain functionary *Romae constitutus*. It also appears that in the official language of the empire the development of the abstract substantives arose such as *ministerium* and *imperium* in the place of *minister* and *imperator*. In the acts and charters of late Antiquity and of the Middle Ages we often find *officium*, *obsequium*, *coniugium*, *matrimonium* in the sense of *functionary* and *woman*. *Testimonium* survives in the French *témoïn* (witness), *potestas* in Italian *il podestà*; cf. *Lex Salica* 56.1 *tria testimonia iurare debent* “three witnesses must swear,” *Codex Theodosianus* 3.11.1 *ad magnificam potestatem qui principis auribus hoc possit intimare recurrat* “that he may address a high official who would convey this to the emperor.”

In 313 the emperor Constantine issued his celebrated Edict of Milan, in which he proclaimed freedom of religion, in 392 the emperor Theodosius interdicted pagan cults, and the triumph of Christianity was at last complete. These are two dates of fundamental importance for the west, also from a linguistic point of view. The Christians had led a life apart; despised and often persecuted they had formed a group isolated from the large mass of the population. Their peculiarity had fostered the creation of a new speech which the pagans understood as poorly as their ideology. Eventually, they were the masters of society and they imposed on others their ideas and their language. In the beginning the new religion was practiced in the west by those from the east who spoke Greek, and for nearly two centuries Greek was the language of the church, even at Rome. It follows that a large part of the Christian vocabulary was borrowed from Greek. These include in particular nouns designating the organization and institutions of the church which were Latinized. *Ecclesia* is a very early borrowing, as shown in the accent *ecclésia* and not *ecclesiá* (see below). Other words of this type are *episcopus*, *presbyter*, *diaconus*, *martyr*, *evangelium*, *baptisma* (or *baptismus*).

Through the intermediary of the Bible, certain Hebraisms reached the west, for instance, *sabbatum*, *pascha*, *satanas*, *gehenna*. Speakers of Latin incorporated these words into their own

language so well that they gave them Latin suffixes. They created hybrid formations such as: *episcopatus, episcopalis, baptizator, paschalis*. It is, nevertheless, very interesting to see that, despite the fact that more or less concrete realities were often expressed by borrowed words, Latin words were preferred for expressing abstract ideas of the Christian faith. The old Latin words *credere, fides, gratia, salus, revelatio* and many others with corresponding Greek terms were given a Christian content. In order to formulate the new ideology in Latin, one, furthermore, created a number of new words. With Christianity there appeared, for instance, the words *salvare, salvator, sanctificare, sanctificatio, trinitas, incarnatio, carnalis, passibilis, transgressor*. Pagans accused the Christians of sullyng the purity of the language. But St. Augustine replied (*Serm.* 299.6) concerning *salvator*:

Nec quaerant grammatici quam sit Latinum, sed Christiani quam verum. 'Salus' enim Latinum nomen est. 'Salvare' et 'salvator,' non fuerunt haec latina antequam veniret Salvator. Quando ad Latinos venit, et haec Latina fecit.

[Schoolteachers should not ask how Latin a word is, but the Christians should ask how true it is.

Salus is a Latin word. The Latin words *salvare* and *salvator* did not exist before the Savior came.

When he came to the Latin world, he made these Latin words also.]

At times the western Christians could choose among several Latin words when faced with the task of expressing their ideas. Latin possessed a string of verbs with the sense of “praying,” *obsecrare, orare, petere, precari, rogare*, etc. Of these verbs *orare* was supplanted early by the others in everyday language and was not used except in certain fixed formulas which often had an archaic and solemn tone. This is why it was chosen to designate Christian prayer, and so gave new life to a word on the verge of disappearing from the Latin language. It is very instructive to consider the history of the word *gentes*. In order to render the expression “the pagans” the Christians hesitated at first between the Greek *ethnici* and the Latin words *nationes* and *gentes*. Eventually the last term was chosen. Already in the classical language the word had a pejorative sense because of the custom of contrasting the two expressions *populus Romanus* and *gentes*. The meaning of *gentes*, therefore, owing to this contrast, came to mean “foreign peoples” and “barbarians,” with a nuance of disdain which supported the Christian use of the word and the semantic transformation into “non-initiated, pagans.”

The importance of The Book for the Christian religion has often been emphasized. It is not astounding that Christian Latin was profoundly influenced by the language of the Bible, which everyone heard in church, even the most humble who did not know how to read. The early translations of sacred scripture were very literal, and in this way Hebrew and Greek exercised a certain influence, even in syntax. The two examples which follow illustrate the mechanism and result of this biblical influence.

The first concerns syntax. In vulgar Latin, we can establish a certain tendency to expand the use of the preposition *in*. One does not say only *in manu tenere, in equo vehi* but *offendere aliquem in aliqua re*, etc. The early translators depended on this tendency when they wrote phrases such as *Exod.* 17.5 *virgam in qua percussisti flumen accipe in manu tua* “take in your hand the stick with which you struck the river” and 17.13 *fugavitque Iosua Amalec et populum eius in ore gladii* “Joshua defeated Amalek and his people by the sword.” But they never would have chosen an expression so bold and surprising to Latin ears, if they had not read phrases in the Septuagint where the Greek preposition *en* had the same instrumental sense. This use of the Greek preposition depends itself on the construction of the original Hebrew. The Hebrew example influenced the Greek version and this prompted a tendency which is found in the Latin language. This tendency was, nevertheless, so weak that St. Augustine felt obliged to explain our example by the words *‘in qua percussisti’ dixit pro eo quod dicimus ‘de qua percussisti’*, and he emphasizes that *in* instead of *de* belongs to the language of the Bible. Following

the example of the Bible, the Fathers often use instrumental *in*, which became common in the literary Latin of the Christians.

The other example is perhaps still more instructive. In their translation of the Hebrew text, the translators of the Septuagint often chose one Greek word to render a certain Hebrew word without bothering about the polysemy of the original. The Hebrew *māšāl* “comparison, proverb, discourse, word,” is always translated by *παραβολή*, although the Greek word only possesses the sense of “comparison.” In the Latin versions of the Bible, the translators borrowed very often the Greek word (*parabola*) in all the senses of the original Hebrew, even those of “word,” and “expression.” The use of *parabola* as “word” from the language of the Bible spread to the everyday language of Christians and when Christianity, after the peace of Constantine, spread to all of society, *parabola* became an everyday word. Even a verb *parabolare* appeared, which we meet for the first time in a text of the Merovingian era, the *Visio Baronti*, ch. 1 *ille nihil homini valuit parabolare sed digito gulam ei monstrabat* “he was able to say nothing to the man but with his finger pointed to his throat.” Italian *parlare*, and French *parler* show that in spoken Latin of late Antiquity this verb had already replaced *loqui*, which left not a trace in the Romance languages.

The political, social, and intellectual revolutions of the third and fourth centuries released other forces which inevitably changed the language. Classical Latin had been created and cultivated by a Roman élite. In this era of turbulence Rome and Italy gave way to the provinces, and the upper classes of society were reconstituted. One could no longer preserve a refinement such as quantitative rhythm. In classical pronunciation, accent was musical, that is, it was marked essentially by an elevation of the voice, and the element of intensity was very weak. The Romans had no difficulty perceiving the difference between long and short syllables, and the quantity then had a phonological function: *ānus* “old woman” was different from *ānus* “ring” as well as from *annus* “year.” But in the course of the third century a new pronunciation came into general use. The accent acquired more and more intensity, to become essentially a dynamic accent. The growing intensity of the accent caused utter confusion of the ancient quantitative rhythm. The short vowels stressed by an accent became long and the long unstressed vowels became shortened. Words such as *ānus* disappeared from the spoken language. St. Augustine affirms that his contemporaries no longer understood classical quantity of syllables, and that one said, for instance, *cāno* instead of *cāno*. The grammarian Donatus speaks of the pronunciation *dēōs* instead of *dēōs*. The new rhythm of the language was based on accents, as with the Romance languages today. For versification, the loss of the classical quantity was of capital importance, as we shall see later. As for the phonetic system of the spoken language, the consequences were no less serious.

It is known that in open, accented syllables, short *i* and *u* received the same tone as long *e* and *o*: in the greatest part of Romania *pīram* became *pera*, and a little later, *gūlam* became *gola*, with the same sounds as *tēla* and *sōla* (cf. It. and Sp. *pera*, *tela*, *gola*, *sola*, Fr. *poire*, *toile*, *gueule*, *seule*). At the same time, the early vowels *ě* and *ǒ*, which had a more open tone than *ē* and *ō*, were diphthongized: *fěrum* changed to *fěro* > *fiero*, and (a little later) *nǒvum* to *novo* > *nuovo* (cf. It. *fiero*, *nuovo*, Sp. *fiero*, *nuevo*, OF *fier*, *nuef*). The early diphthong *ae*, which tended to become simplified into an open *e* in the Republican era, was treated in the same manner as *ě*: *caelum*, which had become *cēlu*, was now pronounced *cielo* (cf. It. and Sp. *cielo*, Fr. *ciel*). The monophthongization of *oe* resulted in closed *e*; the accented vowel of *poena*, for example, sounded no differently from the vowel of *vēna* (cf. It. and Sp. *pena*, *vena*, Fr. *peine*, *veine*).

Latin orthography was disturbed by changes in pronunciation. In inscriptions of the Imperial era we find spellings such as *veces*, *menus*, *colomnas* instead of *vices*, *minus*, *columnas*, or

egrotus, eris, Advaentu, Numaerio, amenus, Phebus, instead of *aegrotus, aeris, Adventu, Numerio, amoenus, Phoebus*. Among authors of the High Middle Ages, orthography is often so chaotic that it is with difficulty that one is able to extract the sense of a text and get an idea of the pronunciation underlying the misuse of the letters *i, e, u, o, ae, oe*, as we shall see later. The unaccented vowels tended to become suppressed and this syncope became progressively more frequent as the stress accent developed. In the *Appendix Probi*, a guide to orthography from late Antiquity, we read rules such as *masculus non masclus, vetulus non veclus, frigida non fricda, tabula non tabla, viridis non virdis*. From these syncopated forms come the French words *male, vieil, froid, table, vert*.

Once quantitative rhythm had disappeared, the old rule of the penultimate could not continue. Therefore, words borrowed from Greek came to be treated in a different manner in the classical (or archaic) era and later. In the time of Cicero, a Roman could not, while speaking his mother tongue, keep the Greek accent of the words φιλοσοφία and ἀκαδήμεια. It would have been contrary to the character of the Latin language to place an accent on a short penult or not to accent a long penult. So, Cicero said *philosóphia* and *academía*. But after the disappearance of vowel quantities which were also produced in the Greek language, the Latin speakers were able to adopt the foreign accentuation *philosophía* and *académia*.

In the spoken Latin of the end of Antiquity, there were two methods of accenting Greek words. The loan-words which penetrated the everyday language before the great changes of the third century, were completely Latinized: *καμάρα* and *ἐκκλησία*, for example, became *cámara* and *ecclésia*. Later loan-words kept the position of the Greek accent: *ἔρημος* gave *éremus*, as seen in the Romance forms, It. *gremio* and *ermo*, Sp. *yermo*, OF *erm*. There are even some words which received a two-fold treatment, such as *βούτυρον* and *ἔγκαυστον*, which appeared in Italy in the Latinized forms *butýrum* and *encaústum* (whence It. *butírro* and *incostro* > *inchiostro*), in Gaul with Greek accent *bútyrum* and *éncaustum* (whence OF *burre* > *beurre* and *enque* > *encre*). In the literary Latin of the end of Antiquity and of the Middle Ages, the situation is completely confused. One often follows the classical system learned chiefly through the study of ancient poets and one writes, for example, in metrical verses, *sophía*, but the recent type *philosophía*, *academía*, *abýssus*, *probléma* is more common. Likewise, we find in rhythmic poetry *Antióchia*, *Alexándria*, *Theódorus*, *orthódoxus*, *tyrannus*, *spéleum*, *sarcophágus*, *Christophórus*, according to the Greek words Ἀντιόχεια etc. Only if the model were polysyllabic and oxytone, the Latin speakers could not keep the accent of the original. In this case they heard a secondary accent on the antepenult and in this way words of this type were able to become proparoxytones in Latin: *θησαυρός*, *βαπτισμός*, Ἀγαθά came to be accented at times *thésaurus*, *báptismus*, *Ágatha* in Latin poems.

One must note, moreover, certain accent shifts which occurred in words of Latin origin. In general, the position of the accent did not change; still some exceptions must be noted. The accent of a verb with a prepositional prefix passes from the prefix to the stem, of which the original vowel is often restored. So *contĭnet* was replaced by *conténet* in the spoken language (It. and Sp. *contiene*, Fr. *contient*). Texts exhibit many examples of this recomposition: *depremit*, *displacet*, *incadit*, etc., and versification often confirms the accent on the penult even when the vowel does not change: *indúit*, *invócat*, *retúlit*, etc. The fact that in this case the penult had been short in the classical era does not prevent the accent shift because the quantitative rhythm had disappeared and the rule of the penult had ceased to function.

Another group of words in which accent changed position was where the penult consisted of a short vowel followed by a *muta cum liquida*. Classical accent was of the type *íntě-grum*. In the spoken language, the penultimate syllable was closed early and so was accented: *íntég-rum* (cf. It. *interò* and *intiero*, Sp. *entero*, Fr. *entier*). In the Middle Ages schoolmasters and poets

poorly understood this evolution and the rule of the ancient grammarians. They pronounced *intégrum* but they knew that the word had to be scanned, according to Donatus, *intěgrum*, and in their efforts to restore classical prosody they often changed *arātrum*, *theātrum*, *candelābrum*, *lavācrum*, *dolābra*, *salūbris*, *delūbrum*, words in which the penult is long by nature, into *áratrum*, *théatrum*, *candélabrum*, *lávacrum*, *dólabra*, *sálubris*, *délubrum*.

We note, finally, that in proparoxytones such as *filíolum*, *mulíerem*, *paríetem*, the accent passes from *i* (or from *e*) to the following vowel, which is closed and lengthened, cf. It. *figliuòlo*, Sp. *hijuelo*, Fr. *filieul*, Old Italian *mogliera*, Sp. *mujer*, OF *moillier*, It. *parete*, Sp. *pared*, Fr. *paroi*. As early as late Latin, we often find a long vowel in poetry in the words *viōla*, *lilíōla*, *filíōlus*, *mulíērem*, *pariētem*, etc.

The spoken Latin of the late empire underwent many other phonetic changes. We can only mention here those which have been especially important for medieval Latin.

The vowels *e* and *i* in hiatus become closed resulting in the semi-consonant *y* (so-called *yod*): *vinea* > *vinya* > It. *vigna*, Sp. *viña*, Fr. *vigne*. The author of the *Appendix Probi* cautions his pupils against writing *vinia*, *cavia*, *lancia*, *calcius*, *baltius*, forms which are met thousands of times in Merovingian Latin. Similarly *o* and *u* in hiatus change to a semi-consonant, cf. the *App. Probi*: *vacua non vaqua*, *vacui non vaqui*. Occasionally these vowels simply disappeared. Instead of *quietus*, *Neapolis*, *duodecim*, they said *quetus*, *Napolis*, *dodeci*, a pronunciation reflected in the synzesis of medieval poetry.

Before the initial clusters *sp*, *sc*, *st*, a prothetic vowel develops: *ispiritus* or *espiritus*, *escola*, *estella*, *espectare* (often written *expectare* and confused with the compound verb *exspectare*); conversely, there occurs *Spania* for *(H)ispania*.

At the beginning of the imperial era, intervocalic *b* and the semi-consonant *u* become a bilabial constrictive (β); this gives rise to confusions of the letters *b* and *u* attested, for example, in inscriptions: *devere*, *iuvente* < *debere*, *iubente*, etc., and in the *Appendix Probi* where we find, among other instances, *baculus non vaclus*, *tabes non tavis*, *plebes non plevis*, *alveus non albeus*. Later, the bilabial *u* became labiodental (*v*); the ancient articulation was not kept except after *g* and *q* (*lingua*, *aqua*, *qualis*). At the same time the Germans still possessed a bilabial in words such as *werra*, *wardon*. When the Romans borrowed these words, they tried to produce the initial sound by *gu*: *guerra*, *guardare*.

When we read in the *App. Probi*: *coquus non cocus*, *equus non ecus*, *rivus non rius*, we see examples which show that the sound of *u* between vowels or after a consonant tended to be combined with the following vowel of the same sound. In this manner, *quomodo* is reduced to *comodo* and *como* as early as the inscriptions of Pompeii. The aspiration *h*, on its way out of use from the time before Latin writing, served in the later language only as an orthographic sign, giving rise to much confusion: on the one hand, *ac*, *ortus*, *ordeum*, *aduc*, etc. for *hac*, *hortus*, *hordeum*, *adhuc*, on the other, *habundare*, *perhennis*, *choibere*, *hanelare* (cf. Fr. *haleiner*) for *abundare*, *perennis*, *cohibere*, *anhelare*.

It is not possible to trace in detail the development of the sounds *y*, *dy*, *gy* (= *i*, *di*, *de*, *gi*, *ge* before a vowel), which produced results such as: *iam* > It. *gia*, Sp. *ya*; *diurnum* > It. *giorno*, Fr. *jour*; *radium* > It. *raggio*, Sp. *rayo*, Fr. *rai*, *corrigia* > It. *correggia*, Sp. *correa*, Fr. *courroie*. This development is attested in the imperial era, in inscriptions and texts, by spellings such as: *iosum* or *zosum* = *deorsum*; *baptidiare* = *baptizare*; *Gianuaria* = *Ianuaria*; *azutoribus*, *oze*, *zabolus*, *zeta* = *adiutoribus*, *hodie*, *diabolus*, *diaeta*. The sounds *ty* and *ky* underwent a similar assibilation. In the execration tablets of the second and third centuries we read *Vincentzus*, *Vincentzo* (< *Vincentius*), *ampitzatru* (< *ampitiatru* < *amphitheatrum*); *ci* before a vowel produced a similar result evident from the confusions: *terciae* = *tertiae*, *defenicionis* = *defini-*

tionis, etc., which appeared in inscriptions from the second century. In texts of the Middle Ages, the spellings *gracia*, *spacium*, *contemplacio*, *racionabilis*, are countless, while the erroneous converse (*provincia*, *offitium* etc.) is much less common.

Ge, *gi* and *ce*, *ci* are palatalized and assibilated in the greater part of the Latin speaking world. In this position the fate of *g* was the same as that of *i*; cf. *generum* > It. *genero*, Sp. *yerno*, Fr. *gendre* and *iacere* > It. *giacere*, Sp. *yacer*, Fr. *gesir*, and the spellings *Troga* = *Troia*, *agebat* = *aiebat*, etc. The first examples of the palatization of *ce*, *ci* trace back to the fifth century, when there appeared a form such as *intcitamento*. We will discuss the phenomenon at greater length.

Certain intervocalic groups were simplified. So *-nct-* became *-nt-*: instead of *sanctus* and *cunctus* one occasionally said and wrote *santus* and *cuntus* (cf. It. and Sp. *santo*, while Fr. *saint* suggests the preservation of the palatal). Much earlier, *-ns-* was reduced to *-s-* (observed throughout the Roman world). From the archaic era, *cesor* is attested for *ensor* and the author of the *App. Probi* instructs: *ansa non asa*, *mensa non mesa*, but he also calls attention to false analogies: *formosus non formunsus*, *occasio non occansio*. In the group *-mn-*, the two nasals became assimilated to *-nn-*, at times to *-mm-*. We find, therefore, forms such as *alunus* or *sollemmo* in the inscriptions and, in the Middle Ages, in the texts (cf. It. *danno* < *damnum*, Fr. *somme* < *somnum*). The Romance languages also suggest a tendency toward assimilation in the groups *-pt-* and *-ps-* (producing the spellings *settembris*, *scriserunt*, etc.), and in the groups *-ct-* and *-cs-* (cf. *ottobres*, *autor*, *vissi*, *visit* < *vixit*). *Ks* was also reduced to *s* in various positions within the word, as shown by the spellings *dester*, *iusta*, *conius* < *dexter*, *iuxta*, *coniux* and the advice of the *App. Probi*: *meretrix non meretris*, but on the other hand: *miles non milix*.

As for final consonants, *m* had a very weak articulation from the beginning of Latin writing. In the imperial era the tendency to suppress this sound became general. The *App. Probi* tells us: *numquam non numqua*, *idem non ide*, *olim non oli*. In the proclitic words *haud*, *sed*, *ad*, *apud*, *quod*, *quid*, the final consonant lost its vocalization before a mute consonant early: we find in inscriptions, for example, *at quem*, *apud forum*, *quot scripsi*. This gave rise to a great uncertainty regarding the spelling of these words. The interchange between *apud*–*apud*, *quid*–*quit*, led to the forms *capud*, *reliquid*, among others. But in this regard, we must also consider the disappearance of final *t* in the spoken language, attested already at Pompeii: *quisquis ama valia*, *peria qui nosci amare* = *quisquis amat valeat*, *pereat qui non scit amare*.

In the area of morphology and syntax, spoken Latin knew changes just as remarkable. Sources allow us to confirm the beginning of the decline of the neuter, which was generally replaced by the masculine (*vinum* > *vinus*, *hoc vinum* > *hic vinum*), but, by the same token, the plural in a collective sense was transformed at times to a feminine (*folium* > *folia*, It. *foglia*, Sp. *hoja*, Fr. *feuille*).

Nouns of the Fourth Declension pass to the Second, those of the fifth to the first (*fructus*, genitive *fructi*, as *murus*, *muri*; *glacies* > *glacia*). Based on the model *niger nigra nigrum*, one began to delimit *acer acra acrum*, *pauper paupera pauperum*. When one could no longer distinguish between *os* “mouth” and *os* “bone” the latter noun was replaced by *ossum -i*, a form accepted by St. Augustine. Within the Third Declension, imparisyllabics of the type *bos bovis*, *lac lactis* give way to a leveling tendency and acquire a new nominative *bovis* and *lacte*.

The case system begins to recede. The vocative is in full retreat, replaced by the nominative, and prepositional phrases, chiefly with *de*, *ad*, *per*, *cum* are substituted more and more for genitive, dative, and ablative. After prepositions, the use of the accusative becomes generalized; we find even in the inscriptions of Pompeii *a pulvinar*, *cum discentes suos*. The development of final sounds results in a fusion of accusative and ablative: *portam* > *porta*, *murum* > *muro*,

canem > *cane*. The hesitation of the language between these two cases appears in certain constructions. One no longer distinguishes neatly between *ubi* and *quo*, *in provincia* and *in provinciam*, *in civitatibus* and *in civitates*; the accusative begins to be used as a direct object of the verbs *uti*, *egere*, *maledicere*, *nocere*, *persuadere* and others; it replaces the genitive of price (*vendere aliquid decem solidos*, etc.); an accusative absolute appears in place of the ablative.

As for adjectives and adverbs, we note the confusion of the positive, comparative, and superlative. Among late authors we often find *quam plures* = *complures*, *tam clarissimus* = *tam clarus*, *omnibus maximus* after the model *maior omnibus*, *bonus quisque* = *optimus quisque*, *citius*, *saepius*, *superius* for *cito*, *saepe*, *supra*. The comparative is expressed more frequently with the use of *magis* and *plus*, the adverb by phrases such as *firma mente*.

Pronouns tend toward normalization. We often read *illum* for *illud*, *illae* for *illius*, *illo* and *illae* for *illi*. In the spoken language the relatives *qui* and *quem* supplant the feminine forms *quae* and *quam* and the paradigm is also simplified by the fusion of the forms *quod*, *quid* and *quae*.

The system of demonstratives was too complicated to last. *Is* and *hic*, which survived only in a few traces in the Romance languages, are replaced by *iste*, *ille*, *ipse*, and these are often confused. *Ipse* may also be found in the sense of *idem*. The monosyllables *tot* and *quot* give way before *tanti* and *quanti*. The adverbs *hinc*, *inde*, *unde* and *ibi* are often used instead of *ab*, *ex*, *de* + demonstrative.

A pleonastic reflexive pronoun is often added to a verb: *ambulare sibi*, *vadere sibi* or *vadere se*, *fugere sibi*, etc. (cf. It. *andarsi*, *fuggirsi*, Sp. *irse*, *huirse*, Fr. *s'en aller*, *s'enfuir*).

Note also the use of *toti* for *omnes*, of *quique* for *omnes* and the confusion of the relatives *quisquis*, *quicumque* and of the indefinites *quivis*, *quisque*.

Nearly all the synthetic forms of the Latin future disappeared without a trace in the Romance languages. The beginning of their loss was owed to the growing use of periphrastic expressions shown in the literature of the imperial age. *Debere*, *velle*, *habere* with an infinitive often express not only obligation or volition, but even the purely temporal future; cf. St. Augustine, *In evang. Joh. 4.12 tempestas illa tollere habet totam paleam* "this storm will carry off all the chaff." In final and consecutive propositions, *debere*, *velle*, *posse*, *valere*, often serve to reinforce the notion of the subjunctive; *praecipimus ut hoc facere debeat* became a common phrase in place of *ut hoc faciat*.

Deponent forms were eliminated from the spoken language early; one finds often in the texts *horto*, *uto*, *vesco*, etc. On the other hand, perfects like *mortuus est*, *secutus est* resisted and even served as model for innovations such as *interitus est*, *ventus est*, etc., which are found at times in the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, it appears that it was not until after the fall of the empire that the synthetic passive *laudatus est* = *laudatur* or the perfect *habeo laudatum* = *laudavi* gained ground.

Though the supines fall into disuse, the use of the infinitive is greatly expanded. It becomes common after *facere* in a phrase such as *facere aliquem venire* "have someone come"; Fr. *faire venir quelqu'un*. In the early versions of the Bible we find for the first time an infinitive preceded by the preposition *ad*: *carnem dare ad manducare*, a construction destined for great success in the spoken language of the later Middle Ages. The construction appears to result from conflation of the expressions *dare aliquid manducare* and *dare aliquid ad manducandum*.

The ablative of the gerundive often replaces the present participle to express concomitance: the phrase *redierunt dicendo psalmos*, used in the *Peregrinatio Aetheriae* [= *Itinerarium Egeriae*]

is equivalent to *redierunt dicentes psalmos*, and heralds the Romance usage, “on rentre (en) chantant (< *cantando*) des psaumes.”

The late language of everyday tended to reinforce the sense of adverbs with the use of a preposition: *in simul*, *in ante*, *ab ante*, *a foris*, *de foris*, *ab intus*, *de intus*. Several of these new adverbs also served as prepositions. One also notes the formation of prepositions such as *de ab* (>It. *da*) and *de ex* (Fr. *des*).

A characteristic trait of late Latin is the confusion of conjunctions. So, *nam* at times takes on an adversative force, *autem* is used in the place of *nam*, *seu* and *vel* in place of *et*. Because of this weakening of sense, many conjunctions disappeared from the everyday language, among others *sed*, *autem*, *at*, *verum*, *nam*, *enim*. But in Latin literature, they can always be found, and often in an unexpected way: *nec non etiam et* takes the place of a simple *et*, *ideoque*, *iamque*, *tamquamque*, and other expressions bearing pleonastic *-que* (*-que* had disappeared from the spoken language in the imperial era).

The conjunction *quod* tends to be introduced everywhere. It is found in phrases such as *dico quod* (or *eo quod*, *quia*, *quoniam*), *timeo quod*, *volo quod* (or *quatenus*, *qualiter*, *quo*), *ante quod*, *post quod*, *pro quod*.

There are still several linguistic changes which deserve mention, but as we will have occasion to discuss them later, we will stop here. We add only certain general facts concerning lexicon. Monosyllables were often replaced by words of two or more syllables. *Eo*, *eunt*, which became monosyllables, and *is*, *it* were discarded from the conjugation of the present, which in Late Latin *vado*, *vadis*, *vadit*, *imus*, *itis*, *vadunt*, and we see this in the texts. The diminutives and iterative verbs were more expressive than simple words. One preferred *agnellus* to *agnus*, *cantare* to *canere*. Compound verbs were often reinforced by the addition of a new prefix: *ad-pertinere*, *superrelevare*, etc.

Latin in Pre-Carolingian Gaul

Despite the changes which we are about to note, the spoken language of the late Empire kept as a whole the structure of Latin, and the fall of Roman power did not produce immediate changes. In the new Germanic kingdoms, founded on the ruins of the ancient Empire, barbarian princes were not hostile to Roman culture. The majority passively accepted its existence, and some, such as the great Theodoric, were even patrons of scholarship. Clearly, lands had suffered enormously from the invasion; the invaders had sacked, burned and killed, but once the hurricane had passed, the greatest damage was repaired, and Romans generally continued to live as before. The conquerors, not very numerous, wisely let stand the greatest part of the ancient administrative system. The Roman population continued to live according to the laws, and the grammarians and teachers of rhetoric still taught in the fora of the towns. The barbarians themselves in many cases began to acquaint themselves with Latin culture. They used Latin, for instance, as a language of diplomacy and legislation.

Nevertheless, this did not result in the preservation of ancient culture. In northern Gaul, where the barbarian element of the population was very large, the Franks preserved their national customs, and their prestige with the subject population was so great that these subjects adopted the laws and institutions of the barbarians. From their conquerors the Latin population quickly borrowed words such as *mundboro* “guardianship” (in Latin texts *mundiburdis*), OF *mainbour*; *brunnia*, OF *broigne* “military coat”; *gundfano*, Fr. *gonfanon* “ensign”; *baco*, Fr. *bacon*. The large number of such borrowings attests to the change of outlook among the Romans in the kingdom of the Franks.

In 507, the Franks chased the Visigoths from Toulouse, and in 536 they annexed the kingdom of Burgundy. In this way they extended their influence to parts of Gaul, which, until this period, had faithfully preserved their Roman character. In Aquitaine, Provence, and Burgundy, urban life continued, and the towns appear to have continued to pay professors until the end of the fifth century, and possibly until even later. However, at the time of the Frankish conquest, the economic situation of the towns deteriorated; the new masters brought no cure, and the municipal authorities could no longer bear the expense of a grammarian's or rhetoric teacher's salary. When the schools closed, instruction in classical literature sought refuge at the hearth of the great aristocratic households, where one led an increasingly difficult existence for nearly another century. After the middle of the seventh century, the ancient school system completely disappeared. This system had produced an essentially grammatical and literary culture. For this reason, the ancient school was able to exercise a strong conservative influence on linguistic development. The schools of clerics and monks, the only form of education which remained, arose from completely different origins and with far more limitations. Clerics and monks needed access to sacred texts, and for this, it was enough to know how to read.

After the disappearance of the ancient school, nothing could slow the development of the language. The Latin spoken in Gaul was rapidly transformed into Old French and Provençal. We can form an idea of this development by analyzing certain linguistic phenomena of the spoken language which slipped into Latin texts too often to be accidental.

We know, for instance, that in the first declension, the form *portas* replaced the ancient nominative *portae* in Old French and Provençal, where the difference between the cases of subject and object in other declensions was kept. Authors did not hesitate to introduce the change into texts. At the end of the sixth century, the work of Gregory of Tours may give just one example: *Vit. patr.* 12.1 *cohabitatores bestias avesque illi erant*, but in texts of the seventh century, the number of cases grows steadily, and toward the end of the century, the authors of the Formulas of Angers have altogether abandoned the ancient form *portae*. Similarly, this form did not appear at all in some texts of the eighth century, and it seems possible to conclude that this development was complete by about the year 700, at least in the areas where these texts were written.

Let us consider another example in the area of syntax. Among classical authors, the possessive adjective *suus* refers to the subject of the clause in which it appears, and, in some instances, to the subject of the principal clause; in other instances the demonstrative pronouns *eius*, *illius*, *eorum*, and *illorum* were used. Still, exceptions to this rule can be found even in the classical period, and in late texts the confusion becomes more frequent. However, from the sixth century, a new system begins to take shape in texts written in Gaul. In a document of 573, we read *uxor sua in libertate permaneat* "may his wife remain free" instead of the Latin construction *uxor eius*, and, conversely, *A. et P. cum uxoribus eorum* "A. and P. with their wives" instead of *cum suis uxoribus*. This use of *suus* and of *eorum* and *illorum*, which is the same in French and Provençal, gains ground in texts of the seventh century. This development is fully in place, for example, in the Life of St. Goar, written about 700. There, the new syntactical system is completely standard and surely represents the state of the spoken language.

These two changes, of little importance in themselves, are interesting because they are neither isolated cases nor due to chance. Their number is so great that, taken with other evidence, we may draw very definite conclusions concerning the chronology of their development. Everything leads one to believe that in about 700 the spoken language in Gaul had changed its structure in such way that it must be called Romance rather than Latin.

From the eighth century on, we can also find entire phrases which reflect the spoken language of this period and which allow us to catch a glimpse of the stage reached in this development. An early manuscript from Lyons has preserved a Latin song, to which the following refrain was added, to be sung by the people: *Christi, resuveni ad te de mi peccatore*. The spelling is half-Latin for *Christe, resubveniat te de me peccatore*, but the construction is Romance (Fr. *se ressouvenir de quelque chose*). In Latin, one would have expected *Christe, respice me peccatorem*. Evidently, the scribe took the trouble to commit to parchment a phrase in the vernacular and attempted to Latinize the spelling but had to leave the construction as it was.

More interesting still are the parodistic words added in the eighth century in a manuscript of the Salic Law, where we read the phrase: *ipsa cuppa frangant la tota, ad illo botiliario frangant lo cabo, at illo scanciono tollant lis potionis*, which could be transcribed into Latin words (or semi-Latin): *ipsam cupam frangant illam totam, ad illum butticularium frangant illum caput, ad illum scancionum tollant illas potiones* “let them break the whole drinking-cup, let them break the head of the wine steward, and let them take drinks from the cup-bearer.” Here we find the definite articles *la, lo, lis* (that is *les < las*), the dative of reference and the Romance forms *cuppa, botigliario, cabo*.

Contemporaries were not able to realize the linguistic development in which they were participating nor were they able to analyze its consequences. Before the beginning of the ninth century no one perceived that in northern Gaul the difference between the written and the spoken language had become so great that the written language was no longer understood by those who had not studied it. In 813, in the well-known council of Tours, it was decided “that all bishops, in their sermons, give necessary exhortations for the edification of the people, and that they translate these sermons into *rustica Romana lingua*, or into German, so that all be able to understand what they say.” This is the first time that one mentions expressly the existence of a new language in Gaul. Some years later, in 842, the Oaths of Strasbourg, drafted in Old French, open the literary era of the new language.

Having discussed the historical conditions and the development of the spoken language, we must turn our attention to the literary Latin written in Gaul during the same period.

It is self-evident that the general and progressive decline of education is reflected in the texts. At the beginning of the sixth century, an author such as Caesarius of Arles still expresses himself in a clear and elegant Latin. If the language of his contemporary, St. Avitus of Vienne, appear less attractive to us, it is because the latter knows rhetorical techniques too well and affects the precious and inflated style so dear to the learned of late Antiquity. Toward the end of the century, Gregory of Tours impresses us with his originality and his storyteller’s art in the *History of the Franks*, but every page attests to the decline in the knowledge of grammar. Nevertheless, the Latin of Gregory is excellent in comparison with the chronicle of Fredegarius, the collections of the formulas of Angers or of Sens, Marculf, Defensor of Ligugé, or the other authors who lived around 700. They appear to strive desperately to formulate their thoughts in Latin, though good usage had fallen into disuse much earlier. Let us pause a moment to analyze the various elements of this linguistic barbarism.

Merovingian Latin, in particular, was profoundly influenced by the spoken language. This influence shows two sides: either authors accept the usage belonging to their daily speech, or they fall into error by trying to avoid features of the vulgar tongue. The confusion of *ae* and *e* is a characteristic example. After several centuries the diphthong was simplified in pronunciation and, therefore, nothing is more common in texts than forms such as *que* and *eternus* for *quae* and *aeternus*. But even in the darkest era some idea, though very vague, was preserved of the combination *ae*. In the formulas of Angers, which date from the end of the seventh century, one

finds forms such as *diae*, *aei*, *aemitto*, *prosequere*, *quaem*, etc.; these represent a reaction against the everyday pronunciation and an unsuccessful attempt to write in classical Latin. The correct use of the vowels *e* and *i* was just as difficult. It is likely that the forms *menus* and *se*, which one finds in the same formulas instead of *minus* and *si*, represent actual pronunciation; cf. the discussion above about the development $\check{i} > e$ and OF *se*. Likewise, the Old French forms *fis*, *fist* and *li* appear to attest the popular usage of *fici*, *ficit* and *illi* instead of the classical forms *feci*, *fecit*, and *ille*. However, *viro* for *vero* is surely a spelling error. The confusion between *ae*, *e* and *i* is particularly evident in the incorrect use of endings in which the pronunciation has been weakened in northern Gaul. One can even find, for example, *sancti basileci* instead of *sanctae basilicae* and *vidi* instead of *vitae*.

This last example helps to illustrate another phenomenon of the spoken language. The language knew a vocalization of intervocalic mutes, as the following examples show: *rota* > *roda* > OF *rode*, *roue*; *ripa* > *riba* > Fr. *rive*; *securum* > *seguro* > OF *seür*. Reflecting daily speech the formulas of Angers give *prado*, *nutrido*, *rabacis*, *proseuere*, *seuli* instead of *prato*, *nutrito*, *rapaces*, *prosequere*, *saeculi*. However, the author or authors often did their best to avoid these forms, leading to hyperurbanisms such as *deti* and *coticis* for *dedi* and *codices*, *paco* for *pago*, and *ducas* for *duas*.

We have already mentioned the palatalization of *c* and *g* before *e* and *i* (in the formulas of Angers: *iesta* = *gesta*, *eieris* = *egeris*, *necliens* = *negligens*, *cogiue* = *coniuge*). In northern Gaul, initial *c* and *g* were palatalized even before *a*; cf. *campus* > OF *champs*, *gamba* > Fr. *jambe*, but *corpus* > Fr. *corps*. One must suppose that *causa* first became *chausa* (pronounced *tšausa*) and then Fr. *chose*. For the chronology of this development, it is interesting to note that the reduction of *au* to *o* was already present at Angers in the period of the composition of these formulas. This is how we must explain the reversed forms *austes* for *hostis*, *austiliter* for *hostiliter* and *caus* for *quos* (pronounced *cos*; cf. *condam* and the hyperurbanism *quoequalis* in the same text).

We can note further that the simplification of double consonants in the spoken language led to forms such as *redere*, *nulatenus*, *consignasit* in the formulas of Angers and, conversely, *deffensor* or *summus* for *sumus*.

However, there are other errors which come solely from ignorance of Latin grammar and from the inability to analyze the language. The mechanical assimilation of endings becomes a common tendency. At the beginning of the formulas of Angers, the author wanted to write *pro largitate tua*, but the ending of the noun in *e* influenced the ending of the adjective, which produced *pro largitate tuae*. The same text provides other examples, such as *casa cum curte circumcincte* “a house with a court on all sides,” *in tuae iure* = *in tuo iure*, *annolus valentus* = *anulus valentes*.

The less profound the knowledge of the literary language, the more one depended on fixed formulas when trying to write. In Latin documents, for example, the words *cum aquis aquarumve decursibus* appeared often, and a certain visual note was made, without the ability to analyze the function of the endings. In the formulas of Angers, *aquarumve decursibus* was used as a direct object: *cido* (= *cedo*) *tibi de rem paupertatis meae... pascuas, aquas aquarumve decursibus* “I grant to you from the substance of my poverty... pastures, waters and water-courses.” It would be easy to multiply such examples, but it is unnecessary. It is clear that a mechanical listing of these instances (for example, under the heading *-ibus* = *-us*) would be endless. The only conclusion that we can draw about the spoken language, is that the ending *-ibus* disappeared.

The written Latin of the Merovingian era is an artificial product where recollections of the literary language appear randomly, fixed formulas arise from the preceding periods, features belong to the spoken language, inverse spellings or hyperurbanisms, and errors pure and simple. Toward the year 700, this Latin became completely chaotic. A language in which *vidi, caus, abis, diligo, haec contra*, can have the sense of *vitae, quos, habes, delego, econtra*, in which *se* can have the meaning of *si, sed, sit*, in which *a, ab* and *ad* are confused, in which the forms *murs* and *mur*—the case of the singular subject and object in the paradigm of the spoken language—are rendered by *murus, muros* or *murum, muro, muru, mure, muri*, etc., such a language is no longer adequate to serve as means of communication in the administration or in the religious and educational life of a great realm. A reform was necessary and, theoretically, one could have chosen one of the following two solutions: either systematize the spoken language and create a new literary language, or return to the Latin of Antiquity. Practically speaking, the first alternative was impossible. The creation of a new written language would have demanded of the general culture a very high standard of education and a capacity to analyze the linguistic situation which no one possessed any longer. No one thought of it, and the very idea would have been premature. The prestige of Antiquity was intact, Latin was the sole language of western civilization. The only means of raising the prevailing standard was to resume the study of Latin grammar and literature and to reorganize the schools.

Efforts were made to reform education beginning in the middle of the eighth century. An American scholar, Mario A. Pei, has shown that the first results of such a reform appeared in the charters of Pepin the Short. He compared the language of two groups of royal documents, one dating from 700-717, the other (of exactly the same subject) from the years 750-770. In the earlier group, stressed *e* remains unchanged 202 times, but is written as *i* 175 times. In the second group, the corresponding numbers are 399 and 37, that is, classical spelling was retained, except in 37 cases. In the first group, the ancient diphthong *ae* remains in 81 instances and is replaced by *e* 90 times, in the later group we read *ae* 101 times and *e* for *ae* only 27 times. A considerable improvement in spelling can be noted for the combination *eo/eu*. We find *eo* for *eu* (for example, in the word *seo*) 26 times in the documents from the beginning of the century though *eu* is preserved 40 times. In the later documents *eo* is found 3 times, *eu* 43 times.

Mr. Pei has also compared two original documents of 716 and 768, of which the second was based on the first. In the earlier manuscript one reads, for example, *ad aefectum, habyre, pristetirunt, estipendiis, stabilitate*, words which were changed in the second to *ad effectum, habere, praestiterunt, stipendiis, stabilitate*. The first document gives, among others, the expressions *de caduces rebus presente secolii, impertemus, pars ipsius monastiriae*, which the later scribe replaced by *de caducis rebus praesentis saeculi, impertimur, pars ipsius monasterii*.

Pepin the Short, raised at Saint-Denis, where he appears to have received some level of education, was the instigator of the reform. His son, Charlemagne, who succeeded him in 768, finished the organization of the schools. We shall soon see what his work meant for the purification of the language, but first we must examine the development of Latin in the other western lands.

Latin in Italy: the 6th through the 10th centuries

In Italy the sixth century opened in a climate favorable to education. Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, supported the schools and stayed abreast of the activity of writers. Under his rule the great scholars Boethius and Cassiodorus brilliantly represent ancient Roman learning. However, in the middle of the century, twenty years of war between the Ostrogoths and the Byzantine Greeks exhausted the land. In 568 new invaders appeared, the Lombards; conquer-

ing the Po Valley and the areas of Spoleto and Benevento without significant resistance, they attempted to seize the entire peninsula. The perpetual fighting which followed definitively broke down the ancient structure of society, leaving the great families ruined and the people reduced to indigence. In the beginning of the seventh century, the last of the lay schools disappeared, and the spoken language begins a development similar to the one we described for Gaul. In the seventh-century inscriptions at Rome we find, for example, the Romance future *essere abetis = eritis* (*cod estis, fui, et quod sum, essere abetis* “what you are, I was, and what I am, you will be”), the Italian preposition *da* (< *de ab*) or the pronoun *idipsa* (cf. It. *desso*), colloquialisms which permit us to conclude that the spoken language was about to be transformed into Italian.

Nevertheless, Italian did not develop with the same explosive force as French. In spite of everything, Italy had been the home of Latin learning; the towns had preserved an additional importance, beyond those of Gaul—the area still possessed the considerable remains of the ancient libraries. Ravenna, Rome, the southern peninsula and Sicily belonged to the Byzantine Greeks, and the scholarly contact with Africa and the Greek world had never been broken. Although the grammarians and the rhetors had closed their schools and the only instruction remaining was found in the hands of clerics and monks, in Italy this instruction was deeply marked by the influence of the ancient educational tradition. Moreover, it was quite late when the Italians realized that Latin was no longer their mother tongue. We have no testimony of this awareness before the tenth century. In 915, on the occasion of the coronation of King Berengar I, the senate paid him homage *patrio ore*, “in Latin,” while the people honored him *nativa voce*, “in Italian,” according to the text of a song composed a few years later. In 965, the scholar Gonzo of Novara begs a correspondent to excuse his style because “the everyday language in Italy is found alongside Latin,” *licet aliquando retarder usu nostrae vulgaris linguae quae latinitati vicina est*. Later, Pope Gregory V, who died in 999, was praised by the author of his epitaph for the ease with which he could express himself in French, Italian, and Latin: *Usus francisca, vulgari et voce latina Instituit populos eloquio triplici* (employing French, Italian, and Latin, he addressed the people in a three-fold eloquence). It is also in the tenth century, in 960, that the first attempt is made to write expressly in Italian: the well-known oaths of Capua mark the beginning of the history of Italian literature.

As long as the schools remained, Italian authors wrote in a Latin which was correct, for the most part. The language of St. Gregory the Great is, for example, far more classical than that of his namesake and contemporary Gregory of Tours. Modern scholars have often portrayed Gregory the Great as a man representative of medieval ignorance; they emphasize the passage from the preface to the *Moralia in Iob* where Gregory expresses his contempt for the grammarian Donatus. In fact, the Pope resorts to a commonplace which should not deceive us. It was good form to excuse oneself before one’s readers for linguistic barbarisms, and Gregory is only submitting to custom. He is the last representative of the ancient tradition in Italy. For him, Latin is still a living and natural means of expression. He has no need of Donatus for finding the right forms; he knows how to use the appropriate words without having to rummage through previous authors. He still has the talent, which the Romans had, for expressing himself with a natural ease and an admirable clarity. It is not until after his death, in 604, that the dark period in the literary history of Italy begins. The most learned of all the Italian authors of the seventh century is Jonas of Susa, who received his literary education in the abbey of Bobbio, an Irish foundation; but he also visited Rome, and lived a long time in Gaul. The most important work of Jonas is his *Life of Saint Columban*, where he shows a certain knowledge of ancient literature and of Irish versification. His Latin is full of poetic reminiscences. Instead of the simple expression “the next morning,” he uses, for example, the phrase *postquam sopor*

membra laxavit et caecas mundo surgens aurora pepulit tenebras, “when sleep loosened its limbs and Aurora rising pushed obscure darkness from the earth.” Often he fashions bold coinages, such as *auliga* “court gentleman” (after *auriga* “charioteer”). He likes to provide learned etymologies, so when he explains the word *anas*: *alitem quam a nando anatem vulgo vocant*, “the bird to which people give the name *anas* from the verb *nare*, to swim,” an explanation which is found in Isidore of Seville and can be traced to Varro. He even knew Greek words such as *sofus*, *reuma*, *agapis* (*sophus*, *rheuma*, *agape*). Unfortunately, his knowledge of grammar does not correspond with his ambition to write elegantly. He does not scruple to write, for example, *monumentus* and *curriculus*, but treats, on the other hand, the neuter *scisma* as a feminine (*qua scisma*), in place of *plures* he uses *pluriores*, the ending *-ent* often replaced *-unt* (*accedent*, *compellent*, *dicent*, *poscent*, etc.), the present participle in his work has a passive sense (*loco nuncupante Carantomo*, “in a place called C.”; cf. *reverentissimus*, “very reverend,” *amantissimus*, “well-loved”). Jonas confuses the words *expers* and *expertus*, *limes* and *limen*, among others; he believes that he is conferring the merit of classical style when he writes *copies* instead of *copia*. In fact, the decline of written Latin is manifest in Italy as well as in Gaul; there is only a difference of degree.

However, from the beginning of the eighth century, a renaissance of learning is apparent in the kingdom of the Lombards. At Pavia, the capital, the grammarian Petrus Diaconus teaches the young men, encouraged by the king, Cunincpert, and the bishop Damian, who died in 711, writes letters in the ancient rhetorical style. At Milan, a patriotic cleric delivers a eulogy of his town praising it as the true metropolis of Italy, which seems to be a blow against Rome, Ravenna, and the Byzantines; in the abbey of Bobbio, an interest in profane literature becomes evident from the manuscripts produced in its scriptorium. Later, Charlemagne brought scholars such as Paul the Deacon, Peter of Pisa and Paulinus of Aquileia from Italy to help organize the reform of instruction in France. The Latin of these scholars at times was influenced by the language they spoke. Paul the Deacon, for example, in his *History of the Lombards*, V, 40, writes *erabamus* instead of *eramus* (cf. It. *eravamo*). Nevertheless, in general, their Latin attests to an excellent education, acquired in Italy, but deepened in the new intellectual milieu created by Charlemagne.

The Carolingian reform, however, did not leave many traces in Italy. The area remained politically divided in small parcels and the breakup of the area is shown also in the domain of learning. In the ninth and tenth centuries we find in Italy eminent scholars such as Anastasius Bibliothecarius, Gonzo of Novara and Liutprand of Cremona, but also authors such as Agnellus of Ravenna, Erchempert of Monte Cassino, and the anonymous author of the *Chronicle of Salerno*, who did not succeed in assimilating elements of Latin grammar, and who, perhaps, even disdained doing so, since the mother tongue appeared to be so near the written language.

What interests us most in the study of their Latin, is that the colloquialisms which slip in often have a distinctly Italian color. From the seventh century, Latin texts present local differences at times. In the Italian Latin of this period, we have noted the use of the preposition *da* (It. *da < de ab*); in Gallic Latin we find the preposition *apud* (OF *ab, od*, Prov. *ab*) in the sense of *cum* and a number of nouns in *-or*, *dolor*, *timor*, *error*, etc., as feminines, a phenomenon rarely found in medieval texts from other regions. In the spoken language, the reduction of cases in general resulted in a single form in Italy, in two forms in Gaul, subject case and object case. Therefore, Italian authors often confuse the Latin nominative with the other cases, while the Gauls clearly distinguish between the cases of subject and object. Local traits in unschooled writers become increasingly numerous. In the *Chronicle of Salerno*, there often appear phrases such as *immensam multitudinem* (= *immensa multitudo*) *Agarenorum venerunt* or *princeps ipsa civitas* (= *ipsam civitatem*) *circumdedit*. The *Chronicle* presents many examples of the

type *cum Galli* (= *cum Gallis*) or, for the converse, *referunt multis* (= *multi*) because the final *s* was dropped in Italy. One finds even some traits of dialect belonging to everyday speech of the southern part of the peninsula, such as the metathesis *frabice* for *fabrice* and *frebis* for *febris* (cf. in Neapolitan dialect *frabbica* and *freve*).

The Latin written in Italy after about the year 1000 should be studied with the Latin of other western areas. To be sure, many Italian vernacular elements are still found in texts composed in Latin, especially in charters and diplomas, but a new type of education, organized in the great abbeys and in the towns, becomes widespread in Italy as in other western lands—an education which was European rather than national, and which produced the most outstanding fruits of medieval civilization.

Latin in Africa and Spain: the 6th through the 8th centuries

Educational institutions in Africa were maintained under Vandal rule despite difficulties created by the persecutions of Arian Christians. After the Byzantine reconquest, the emperor Justinian sought to revive scholarship by paying salaries to support two grammarians and two rhetors at Carthage. Africa remained a center of ancient education during most of the seventh century. In Africa, for instance, the young Hadrian appears to have received his education before becoming abbot of a monastery near Naples, which he left in 669 when the Pope sent him, with Theodore of Tarsus, to organize ecclesiastical and educational life in England. There were also close ties between Africa and the Iberian peninsula. Many African monks fleeing the wars or the persecutions traveled to Spain with their manuscripts, where they organized centers of monastic learning, which were important for intellectual activity in the kingdom of the Visigoths. Africa contributed much to the preservation of ancient learning, even though the region itself was seized early from the people of the West. In 670 the Arabs attacked proconsular Africa and in 698 they seized Carthage. This marked the end of Roman institutions and of Latin civilization in an area which had played such an important role in the intellectual history of the Empire.

As other Mediterranean lands, Spain succeeded in preserving its Roman character despite invasions and internal divisions caused by the opposition between the Arian invaders and the Hispano-Roman population which remained Catholic. After the conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism in 589, a period of peace and cultural exchange between the two peoples began, which lasted more than a century. This was a period of prosperity and of a cultural renaissance. While other lands were plunged into decadence, the schools of Seville, Saragossa, and Toledo flourished and produced brilliant results owing to the activity of Isidore, Braulio and the Archbishops of Toledo, Eugenius, Ildefonsus, and Julian, the greatest scholars of the seventh century. The Visigothic kings encouraged writers, and some even composed literary works themselves. The originality of Visigothic culture was reflected in the role of grammar and rhetoric. The ancient educational program had survived there; the learned bishops studied ancient poetry, for instance, without the repugnance felt by many other Christians studying a literature filled with pagan elements.

We do not know much about the spoken language of Spain in the seventh century. The tendency toward a split between written and spoken languages, which we have confirmed in Gaul and Italy, was certainly present in Spain, but it was probably less marked because of scholastic activity.

Because of this activity, written Latin in Spain during the time of Isidore preserves, in general, a thoroughly ancient stamp. To be sure, forms can be noted such as *fraglabit* for *flagrabit*, *pauperum* for *pauperem*, *idem* for *eadem*, *fugire* for *fugere*, *vocitus* for *vocatus*, *capuisse* for

cepisse, coronaturi, remuneraturi for *coronandi, remunerandi*, and there appears *ab haec omnia mala* or an accusative absolute: *hos (exorcismos) explicitos, orat episcopus*. The majority of these phenomena, though, are already present in texts of the imperial period, and in Spain they are very rare. In general, Spanish authors knew their Latin grammar and they present themselves in a much more favorable light than their Gallic or Italian contemporaries. They are even capable of writing in classical meters. Braulio of Saragossa, for example, wrote a hymn in honor of St. Aemilian in iambic senarii which are perfectly classical in meter, and the versification of Eugenius of Toledo is equally remarkable. Toward the end of the seventh century, Julian still vigorously rejects the practice of rhythmic versification, which he calls vulgar, and he writes to a friend: *Tua aetas... rithmis uti, quod plebegis (= plebeis) est solitum, ex toto refugiat* "refuse completely to adopt rhythms, which the unlearned are accustomed to use."

Since instruction in the Visigothic era was organized by the church, the Arab invasion of 711 did not immediately break the educational tradition. The Spanish continued to live in the tradition of Isidore, but, under their new masters, a decline was inevitable. One can see the result of this in two Cordovan authors, St. Eulogius and Paulus Alvarus, who lived in the mid-ninth century, about 150 years after the invasion. Both wrote metrical poems and they are very proud of their knowledge of classical versification. After Julian, Paulus Alvarus opposes rhythmic and popular versification in exclaiming: *pedibus metricis rithmi contemnite monstra*, but he permits himself hexameters such as

*angelicā cū turbā virtute beata
laudibus obsequium solbit fulgenti decore*

where the ancient rules of prosody have been violated several times. Spanish poets of the ninth century even accented in a completely capricious manner words which they only knew by reading, as the following forms show: *sublimat, preconat, refutans, recedat, revelent, explorat, illesus, delibat*. At times it appears as if they are misled by the influence of the spoken language. So the accent *fuéro*, which one finds in Mozarabic hymns, should probably be linked to Sp. *fuera*.

The artificial character of the Latin of the Cordovans appears in other cases as well. They write, for instance, *verbibus, membris, lacertibus*, confusing the endings -ibus and -is, they use adverbs such as *digniter, religiositer, vitiositer* for *digne, religiose, vitiose*, they form new words such as *litterizare* for *litteras scribere*, *macredo* for *macies*, *temerantia* for *temeritas*, *penitudo* for *poenitentia*. But even such bizarre phenomena often have their origins in the Latin of the preceding era. The educated king of the Visigoths, Sisebut, adopts the adjective *anguifer* instead of *anguineus* in the phrase *anguifero morsu*, which Paulus Alvarus and his contemporaries imitated. In their writings the suffixes -fer and -ger lost their proper meaning, and there appeared *somnifera* for *somnia*, *pomifera* for *poma*, *polifera* for *polus* and *florigera* for *flores*. Likewise, we read even in the *Lex Visigothorum* and in other texts of the seventh century *contumelium* and *infamium* for *contumelia* and *infamia*. The authors of the period after the invasion continued and even expanded this usage of neuters by writing *copulum, excubium, and exercitum*.

Because of the heritage of the Visigothic period the literary Latin of the Mozarabic Spanish preserves a certain scholastic and bookish character. The influence of the spoken language is slight. In Spain intervocalic *f* tends to become vocalized. Therefore, the form *versificando* for *versificando* appears in a chronicle of 754, and *revociles* for *refociles*, *reveratur* for *referatur*, *provano* for *profano* in the writings of Paulus Alvarus and his contemporaries, among whom one also finds the reversed forms *deformur* for *devoramur*, *adprofemus* for *adprobemus*, *referentia* for *reverentia*. Likewise, the development *percontare* > Sp. *preguntar*, of which there

are many examples in Spain, seems to indicate that under the influence of the spoken language Isidore wrote *praescrutare* and that later authors admitted *prespicere*, *prespicuus*, *prestrepere*, *presistere*, etc.

In diplomas and charters, however, the situation is completely different. The Latin found in these documents, the earliest of which come from the eighth century, are no different, in principle, from Merovingian Latin: there is a curious blend of school Latin, fixed formulae, and features deriving from the spoken language, hyperurbanisms and errors. For a detailed and penetrating analysis of these documents, valuable observations on the development of the spoken language are available (J. Bastardas Parera, *El latín medieval hispánico*, pp. 269ff.). We know that in the Iberian peninsula, for example, the accusative of the second and third declensions became a single form: in Spanish, *lobo*, *monte* and *lobos*, *montes* function as subject case (*lupus*, *mons*, and *lupi*, *montes*) as well as object case (*lupum*, *montem* and *lupos*, *montes*), while in Gaul a declension with two cases was kept. For this reason, one can find in Spanish documents phrases such as *aras quas dedit mihi domino meo Petro; donatore sum; sumus filios Proelli et Juste*. A characteristic feature of Castilian is the practice of introducing the direct object by the preposition *a*, if the object is personal. From the tenth century, one finds in Spanish documents examples such as: *prendiderunt ad Sancio et a Nunno Gomiz de Septemfniestras pro illo agro qui est in lombra de Sabuco... in iudicio*. There are even very distinct differences between the different parts of the peninsula. In documents in Catalan, the preposition *cum* is often replaced by *apud*; cf. the following phrase taken from a document of San Cugat, of the twelfth century: *omnia concessit ad uxori... ut si in sua viduitate sinceriter permanserit, teneat et possideat apud filios suos*. In fact, *cum* did not remain in Catalan, which, like French and Provençal, used *apud*. On the other side, documents from the west show *eris* instead of *es*, *sedeat* and *sedere* instead of *sit* and *esse*, forms which correspond to Castilian *eres*, *sea* and *ser*.

The glosses which are found in two manuscripts of the tenth century, come from the abbeys of San Millán de la Cogolla and Santo Domingo de Silos, showing that, even in Spain, the written language was not understood by those who had not studied it. After the year 1000 the learned language existed in Spain in practically the same condition as in Italy. Cultural isolation was replaced by fruitful contacts with other lands and the intellectual activity of the Spanish contributed greatly to the formation of medieval Western civilization and to the creation of the new latinity which we shall discuss in the following chapters.

But before taking the common road, we must make a detour through a non-Roman land.

Latin in the Pre-Carolingian British Isles

We have discussed the development of the spoken and written language in Gaul, Italy, and Spain until the various periods when the vernacular languages became distinct. We are now going to consider an entirely new situation. In Ireland and in the Celtic or Germanized areas of Great Britain, Latin was a foreign element unsupported by the mother tongue of the population. With the help of manuals and a knowledge acquired at school, only a few scholars attempted to use Latin.

This was the situation in Ireland from the beginning. Because the island had never formed part of the Empire, the Irish had never known Roman administration, urban life, or organization of schools; rather, they had kept their own traditions and their Celtic language. Still, Latin played a major role in the civilization of this region because of conversions to Christianity at the beginning of the fifth century. In the West Latin was above all the language of the Christian rite and, when Christianity spread beyond the frontiers of the Empire, no one had any intention of

replacing it with a native tongue. Latin was also needed for access to the Bible and to the works of the Fathers of the Church. The conversion of the Irish, therefore, led to the need for instruction in Latin on the island. However, this instruction had a limited beginning: it was not intended to train bureaucrats or teachers of rhetoric, but to provide priests and monks with access to Christian literature. To this end an elementary knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of the new language was necessary, but not a deep investigation of literary texts of the classical era. On the Continent the towns were the centers of culture, where bishops assumed the increasingly greater responsibilities of ancient imperial officials. In Ireland, where there were no towns, ecclesiastical and educational life was concentrated in the great abbeys. The monks studied sacred texts under the direction of the abbot and devoted themselves to the austere asceticism for which the Irish monks were known.

The earliest Latin texts written in Ireland clearly show the result of this peculiar situation. On the one hand, they are full of barbarian and non-Latin features, while on the other, they have a more learned character than contemporary texts written on the Continent. The barbarian side appears, in particular, in the choice of words. Continental authors already possessed a very rich Latin vocabulary in their mother tongue, and, in general, they did not have difficulty choosing the appropriate word. For the Irish, however, all Latin words were equally foreign, and they had to leaf through glossaries to find the desired expression, and, since their reading was limited, the stylistic quality of words escaped them altogether. We find, for instance, in the early hymn *Altus prosator*, attributed to St. Columba of Jona (died in 597) rare words such as *prosator* instead of *creator*, neologisms such as *fatimen* and *praesagmen* derived from *fateor* and *praesagio*, Hellenisms such as *polyandria* in the sense of "sepulchres," Hebraisms such as *iduma*, "hand." The use of Greek and Hebrew did not mean that they knew these languages. They borrowed these words from glossaries in the same manner as Latin. In the seventh century and later, the Irish often sought unusual words for purposes of rhyme, so that in the hymn *Sancte sator*, we read: *A quo creta cuncta freta, Quae aplustra verrunt flustra, Quando celox currit velox*, etc. The unknown author succeeded in collecting an entire series of bizarre forms: *creta* for *creata*, *aplustra* "ships," *flustra* "calm waters," *celox* "sailboat." He even appears to have borrowed from the grammar of a colleague the verb *geo* (derived from *e-geo*, which was considered to be a compound form): *Christo Theo, qui est leo, dicam: Deo grates geo* (= *grates ago*).

The exotic quality of this Latin at times stems from the influence exercised by the mother tongue of the Irish. This must be the explanation of the forms *staitim* for *statim*, *fletus* for *fletus*, *diciabat* for *dicebat*, *manachus*, *Alaxander* for *monachus*, *Alexander*.

But there also existed a learned and conservative counter-current in the Latin of the island. The missionaries who had brought Christianity had learned their Latin in Roman Britain, perhaps in Gaul as well. They knew how to read or, in other words, they had attended Roman schools, and therefore they brought to Ireland the school pronunciation used in England and Gaul in the fifth century. At that time, many of the changes which we have discussed in the preceding chapters had not yet taken place. We must also bear in mind the fact that the pronunciation in the schools is always more pedantic and traditional than that of the people. As Ireland was isolated from the Continent certain features of Latin were preserved which the Latin-speaking peoples had abandoned early.

We have, for instance, remarked above that the sound made by the letter *c* was palatalized before the vowels *e* and *i* in the fifth century on the Continent. This change was not yet produced definitively in Gaul and England, when Christianity was introduced in Ireland. The name of the apostle to the Irish, for example, was pronounced *Patrikius* and not *Patritsius*; the Irish even today still call him *Patrick*. The missionaries, therefore, learned to pronounce the letter *c* as *k*,

even in words such as *caelum* and *civis*. This pronunciation became a school tradition in Ireland. For this reason Irish scribes did not write *ci* instead of *ti* before a vowel as continental scribes often did. Use of alliteration among the Irish is also very significant. They delighted in tying together as many words as possible in this way in a line of verse, and we have accomplished alliterations in verses where the words begin with the letter *c*: *Clara caeli celsi culmina Cinis, cautus, castus diligentia et Caeli conscendit culmina Caritatis clementia*. Even in the twelfth century, the Icelanders visiting Ireland found the pronunciation *kelum* and *kivis*, as shown in the first grammatical treatise on the Edda. In this case, for the longest part of the Middle Ages, on the periphery of the world, in a non-Latin land, a linguistic practice stemming from Antiquity was faithfully preserved.

Just as important is the handling of endings in the rhymed poetry, where the technique of the Irish differs from the Latin-speakers. In the regions where Latin was used, many phonetic and morphological changes were produced in final syllables. We cannot take up here the complicated history of these changes. It is enough to remark that *o* and *u*, *e* and *i* were often confused and that the pronunciation of final syllables was weakened especially in northern Gaul (cf. for example L *vinum* > It., Sp. *vin*, Fr. *vin*; L *sentit* > It. *sente*, Sp. *siente*, Fr. *sent*). When poets began to embellish their verses with monosyllabic assonance, they followed everyday pronunciation and they made short *i* rhyme with *e*, and short *u* with *o*. So Venantius Fortunatus always makes the iambic dimeters rhyme which he uses in *Vexilla regis prodeunt* and *Agnoscat omne saeculum*. We can conclude that for him perfect assonance was formed between the words *concinit* and *carmine*, *protulit* and *tempore*, *praesumeret* and *debuit*, *ordinem* and *ambiit*, *callido* and *invidum*, *redditum* and *prospero*, *cernitur* and *visio*, etc. In the same manner, Eugenius of Toledo rhymes *suspiriis* and *conplacet*, *delectatio* and *solacium*, *recogito* and *transeunt*, and Theofridus of Corbie, for instance, rhymes *principio* with *filium*, *sedibus* with *versiculos*, *geritur* with *gladio*. The popular pronunciation is reflected also in the disyllabic rhymes such as *fides–crudelis*, *Christi–estis*, *adimpleretur–dictum*, which we find in the poetry of the Merovingian period. There is nothing similar in the Latin poetry of the Irish. They never mix vowels in their rhymes, owed no doubt to the fact that they learned their Latin at school as a foreign language, which they pronounced in their own way, and which they used in establishing themselves on school rules.

The exotic, and at the same time conservative, character of Irish latinity is found to some extent in the ancient Roman province of Britannia. The spiritual and linguistic assimilation of this peripheral province was not yet complete by the beginning of the fifth century, when the Romans summoned their troops to defend the Italian border. The Angles, Jutes and Saxons did not hesitate to invade the region, and they exterminated the Romanized population of the towns and drove back the Celtic population of the countryside further and further to the west. In the land occupied by the Germans, Roman civilization completely disappeared. In the small kingdoms of the Bretons of the west, some remains of the ancient civilization found refuge in Celtic monasteries, where instruction seems to have been organized in the same manner as in Ireland. There at the beginning of the sixth century Gildas lived, the author of a work on the conquest of England by the barbarians. The style of Gildas is inflated and precious, and he is believed to be the same Gildas who wrote the poem *Suffragare trinitatis unitas*, where the preciousness is carried to an extreme. In this work, the author seeks to protect himself in accumulating formulas of incantation of pagan rather than Christian inspiration, e.g.:

*Meae gibrae pernas omnes libera,
tuta pelta protegente singula...
Gigram, cephalem cum iaris et comas,
patham, liganam, sennas atque michinas,*

*cladum, crassum, madianum, talias,
bathma, exugiam atque binas idumas...*

There appear here Hebrew words, *senna* “tooth,” *iduma* “hand,” and many Greek words, some of which are easy to recognize, for example *pelta* “belt,” *cephale* “head,” even though others have changed their sense, *perna* “member,” or their form, *patham* for *spatham* “shoulder,” *bathma* for *bathmos* “feet.” Even Latin words appear under a more or less foreign form: *liganam* for *linguam*, *madianum* for *medianum*, *talias* for *talos*. Some words remain unresolved. We find the same exotic language in the *Hisperica famina*, which also appears to have been written in the western parts of Great Britain in the sixth century. Opinion today says that this unusual work consists of school exercises, in which the attempt was made to express oneself in an elevated and rhetorical tone, heaping up rare words placed in an unusual order. If this theory is correct, the “hisperic” style is the last trace of the activity of Roman rhetors in Great Britain, but the transplantation to Celtic monasteries resulted in a grotesque caricature of the original.

The cultural isolation of Ireland and Celtic Great Britain was interrupted by the pilgrimages of the Celts on the Continent. They preserved their school tradition, their grammatical education and their pronunciation of Latin, but they expanded their horizon and began to study classical literature, traces of which are already discernible in the writings of Columban (d. 615).

Before this development, the Celtic and Roman civilizations met and clashed with one another in Germanic England. In the hands of the barbarians the region was Christianized early and was reclaimed for civilization by two groups, monks coming from Ireland and Roman missionaries. At the beginning of the seventh century, the Irish founded several important monasteries, for example, Lindisfarne and Whitby in the north, and Malmesbury in western England. In these abbeys an Irish type of education was given to the Anglo-Saxons, who adopted the Irish pronunciation of Latin, among other things, and preserved it for a long time. It is likely that the Venerable Bede and Alcuin pronounced *ce* and *ci* as *ke* and *ki*. We can draw this conclusion from their use of alliteration. So, Bede regularly uses two alliterations in each line of his hymn which begins with the strophe:

*Adesto, Christe, cordibus,
celsa redemptis caritas,
infunde nostris fervidos
fletus, rogamus, vocibus.*

We have an alliteration between *Christe* and *cordibus* in the first line, between *celsa* and *caritas* in the second, between *in-funde* and *fervidos* in the third, and between *fletus* and *vocibus*, pronounced *focibus*, in the fourth (see below). In his poem *Nunc bipedali*, Alcuin tied Adonic verses two by two with an alliteration of this type:

*Esto paratus ecce precamur
obvius ire omnipotenti
pectore gaudens. Pax tibi semper...*

It is, therefore, likely that he pronounced *kerte* in the same manner as *kurva* in the two lines: *Curva senectus certus propinquat*. The Anglo-Saxons kept this pronunciation into the tenth century. When Abbot Fleury lived in the convent of Ramsay in England between 986 and 988, he composed a little book entitled *Quaestiones grammaticales*, in which he criticizes the pronunciation *ke* and *ki*. He writes: *quod quam frivolum constet, omnibus vera sapientibus liquet*. For him the pronunciation *tsivis*, which he learned in Gaul in his youth, was nice and proper, while *kivis*, which he learned in England, was barbaric. It did not occur to him that, actually,

the barbarians had preserved an ancient usage which the Latin-speaking peoples had abandoned.

Nevertheless, Anglo-Saxon civilization would not have achieved its splendid rise in the time of Bede and Alcuin, without the influence of Rome. In 597, Gregory the Great sent the monk Augustine to Canterbury to preach the gospel to the barbarians, a mission which was to bear extraordinary fruit. The penetration of Roman influence to the north and west brought on a clash of Roman and Irish interests. The conflict lasted some decades. But in 669, Pope Vitalian decided to send Archbishop Theodore, accompanied by the monk Hadrian, to Canterbury, to organize the church in England. Theodore was originally of Tarsus and had received his education in the Greek east. Hadrian, who also knew Greek, came from Africa where the ancient Roman school-system was still active. Both knew profane literature as intimately as Christian, Greek as well as Latin, if one can accept the word of Bede. At the episcopal school and the monastic school of Canterbury, Theodore and Hadrian brought together a coterie of students who learned, among other things, metrics, astronomy, computus and who, according to Bede, pursued the study of Greek and Latin to the point where they spoke these languages as well as their mother-tongues. We can confirm that his judgement is correct as far as Latin is concerned. As for Greek, the knowledge of the language among the English was never profound and disappeared with the students of Theodore and Hadrian.

The first group of Anglo-Saxons taught at Canterbury still had close ties to the Irish tradition. This was the case with the first Anglo-Saxon author, Aldhelm. Before being the student of Hadrian at Canterbury, he had been taught by the Irish Maeldubh, who directed the abbey of Malmesbury in the middle of the seventh century. The Latin of Aldhelm presents a two-fold aspect. Rare words, borrowed from the glossaries, and the inflated style recall the "hisperic" Latin, which we have discussed. On the other hand, the linguistic certainty and the wide reading of Aldhelm come chiefly from his studies at Canterbury.

The following generation brought Latin culture in England to its height, a result of the new contact with classical authors. In the kingdom of Northumbria, Benedict Biscop had founded the great abbeys of Wearmouth and Yarrow between 674 and 685; to these he gave an important library of manuscripts, brought from Rome. In the midst of these books the Venerable Bede grew up, first at Wearmouth, then at Yarrow. Bede is perhaps the greatest scholar of the central Middle Ages. He handled the Latin language with remarkable ease drawing inspiration from ancient authors; his style is clear, simple and easy to understand.

The same humanistic activity animates the episcopal school of York, directed between 686 and 721 by John of Beverley, an early student of Theodore of Tarsus. Alcuin, born about 730, lived there until 781, when he met Charlemagne while on a trip to Italy.

The Carolingian Reform and Latin North of the Alps and Pyrenees Before the Year 1000

Charlemagne discovered the great ability of Alcuin early and persuaded him to come to France to help reform education. The court of the king became the center of intellectual life in this period. He brought together the most eminent scholars of the Western world to discuss questions of theology, literature, language, and science. We find in Charlemagne's entourage, to name a few, the Irish scholars Dungal and Clemens, the Italians Peter of Pisa, a grammarian, Paul the Deacon, the historian of the Lombards, and Paulinus, a theologian and original poet, who became patriarch of Aquileia in 787, and the Spaniard Theodulf, the humanistic poet who became Bishop of Orléans. Intellectual activity at the court extended to all lands under Frankish rule. In every episcopal see and abbey schools were organized by order of the king to teach children

religion and the artes liberales. The aim was not to revive classical Antiquity, and, though this scholarly movement is often called the Carolingian Renaissance, we must avoid a too literal interpretation of this expression. The learned followed the model of Prudentius as well as Vergil; Cicero was no more important than St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Jerome or St. Gregory. Charlemagne wanted to spread and enhance Christian Latin culture. The immediate result of the reform appeared to be modest, but in reality the initiative of Charlemagne is the basis of the flourishing of medieval civilization. The monastic and episcopal schools multiplied, their role became increasingly important, and eventually they gave birth to the universities of the thirteenth century.

It is easy to confirm the success of the school reform in terms of the orthography, pronunciation, morphology, and syntax of the learned language. In the Merovingian period, it was difficult to choose between the letters *e* and *i*, *o* and *u*, because, in a stressed syllable, short *i* was confused with closed *e* and short *u* with closed *o* in the everyday pronunciation. At school, no one said *fede* and *gola* any longer, but *fide* and *gula*. The learned words *titulus* and *dignus* were pronounced with an *i*, *diluvium* and *studium* with a *u*, as shown by the Old French forms *titele*, *digne* and *diluvie*, *estudie*, borrowed from Latin after the reform (cf. It. *degno* and *stogio*, which are inherited words). Consequently, the poets no longer rhyme *e* and *i*, *o* and *u*. Previously, one had followed the spoken language in distinguishing between closed *e* and open *e*, closed *o* and open *o*; the first vowel of *nōbilis*, for instance, did not have the same timbre as that of *scōla*. Later, students gave the same sound to every *e* and *o*; in Old French, there is no difference between the *o* in *noble* and that in *escole*. Likewise, in the schools the pronunciation of intervocalic *b* was restored, having become *v* in the spoken language (cf. *habere* > OF *aveir*, *faba* > OF *fève*). Words such as *habile* and *glebe* were, therefore, borrowed from the academic and learned language after the time of Charlemagne. In all likelihood the Irish and Anglo-Saxon masters brought in this new pronunciation. Their own school tradition had not been disturbed by the rapid development of the spoken language of the Latin-speaking world, as we are about to show.

Nevertheless, the grammarians enjoyed only a limited success. In his manual on orthography Alcuin urged the spelling of *hi* and *his*, with one *i*. But bad habits persisted. Writers continued to write *hii* and *hiis* so often that in the thirteenth century another grammarian, Alexander of Villedieu, acknowledges the forms *hii* and *hiis* in his recommendation that the words be pronounced with a single *i*. The attempt to restore the spelling *ae* was also doomed to failure. It is true that one hesitated a long time, and that many scribes learned to use *e caudata* [ɛ̃], but eventually scribes gave up and abandoned the diphthong altogether. In the early Middle Ages, one called ancient manuscripts *codices diphthongati* because the use of the diphthong was a criterion of antiquity.

The insular masters did not succeed in implanting their learned pronunciation of *ke* and *ki*. The French continued to say *tse* and *tsi*, the usage which Abbo of Fleury describes in his *Quaestiones grammaticales* in the following manner: ‘*vinco, vinci, vince*’, *mutato cum vocalibus sono dicimus, quemadmodum et ‘lego, legi, lege, legam*’. Throughout the Middle Ages, the endings *-cia* and *-tia* were confused, which led to reversed forms such as *platitum* instead of *placitum* (already evident in the formulas of Angers, 9.15). In Old French, it is very late—in the course of the thirteenth century—that *ts* and *dž* are simplified to *s* and *ž* in words such as *cerf*, *geler*, *jeter*. At the same time, the French masters and students changed their school pronunciation of the Latin words *cervus*, *gelare*, *iactare*, so that *tse* and *dž* gave place to *servus*, *želare*, *žactare* (or *džattare*) gave place to *servus*, *želare*, *žactare*. From this period on, errors such as *se-* *si-* for *ce-* *ci-* are countless.

We add two more examples to show that it was not easy to eliminate ancient habits of writing and of pronouncing Latin words. Though Alcuin had counseled: '*hiems*' *sine p scribi debet*, writers continued to insert a transitional consonant between *ms*, *mt*, *mn*, and they pronounced and wrote, for instance, *hiemps*, *verumptamen*, *idemptitas*, *ampnis*, *dampnum*, *alumpnus*, *solempnis*. Similarly, they never mastered the rules governing the classical usage of simple and double consonants. In the Carolingian period, and later, we often find, for example, *annulus* for *anulus*, (cf. Fr. *anneau*), *litera*, *literatura* (cf. Eng. *literature*, Germ. *Literatur*), *cupa* (> Fr. *cuve*) and *cuppa* (> Fr. *coupe*, It. *coppa*), *capa* and *cappa* (Swed. *kapa* and *kappa*), *plata* and *platta* (Swed. *plat* and *platta*).

Words borrowed from Greek posed special problems. From the beginning of our period, *y* was pronounced like *i*, and we often find in the Middle Ages the forms *martir*, *Sibilla*, *sinodus*, etc., but also *ydioma*, *dyabolus*, *Dyonisius* and other reversed spellings. In medieval Greek, η and the diphthongs ει and οι resulted in *i*. This new pronunciation is reflected in the spelling of loan- words in Latin. Alongside *paracletus*, *ceimelion*, *oconomus*, one can often read *paraclitus*, *cimelium* or *cimilium*, *iconomus* or *yconomus*. The Greek aspirates χ φ θ always caused difficulties for Latin-speakers. In the spoken language of Antiquity aspiration was most often suppressed: cf. Gr. θησαυρόν > It., Sp. *tesoro*, Fr. *trésor*; Gr. κόλαφον > It. *colpo*, Fr. *coup*. In the Carolingian period and later one often wrote, for example, *arciepiuscopus*, *scola*, *scedula*, *spera* (= *sphaera*), *diptongus*, *lympa*, *teca*, *Talia*. So the sound of *ph*, which had become constrictive in the imperial period, was often rendered by *f*: *lymfya*, *filomena*, *fantasma*, etc. (whence Fr. *fantôme*). The pronunciation of *ch* appears to have fluctuated considerably: we find *chirographum*, *cirographum*, *hyrographum*, *sirographum*; *chelydrus*, *hilidrus*, *ilidrus*; *archiepiuscopus*, *arci-*, *arhi-*, *arki-*, etc. Evidently, schoolmasters offered different instructions. One can compare their attempts to teach their students the aspiration of the words *mihi* and *nihil*, which had disappeared much earlier in the spoken language. These words appeared in the forms *michi*, *nichil*, *mici*, *nicil*, *migi*, *mizi*, *nizil*, to cite a few of the different spellings.

We draw attention to the use of *sch* and *sc*. *Schedula* and *schema* are often written *scedula*, *scema* or *cedula*, *cema*; instead of *schisma* one reads sometimes *cisma* or *sisma*. Similarly, *sce*, *sci* alternate with *ce*, *ci* or *se*, *si*, phenomena which have not yet been studied in detail. In an abecedarian poem of 871, the strophe *c* begins with the word *celus*, that is *scelus*: *Celus magnum praeparavit*. In other texts we read *silicet* for *scilicet*, *scitius* and *scedulo* for *citius* and *sedulo*. In the new schools of the Carolingian period, the knowledge of Latin morphology was also restored. At times, however, the handbooks misinformed the students. The grammarian Virgil of Toulouse had pretended that corresponding to the perfect *novi* were presents *noro*, *noris*, *norit*. This is the form which an anonymous poet of the ninth century used in a Christmas song ending with the lines:

*Hec est illa dies, dudum quam visere vates
desideraverunt, norit quae pellere morbos,
pellere quae norit tetras de corde tenebras.*

The corresponding subjunctive is found in an edict published at Aix-la-Chapelle in 816: *Custodes praeterea ecclesiae harum horarum distinctiones bene norant, ut scilicet signa certis temporibus pulsant*. The same Virgil of Toulouse teaches that there are two futures in each conjugation: *dicimus enim 'interrogabo' et 'interrogam, -ges, -get'*, '*videbo videam*', '*audibo audiam*', '*agam agebo*'. Following this instruction writers in the tenth century still fashion futures such as *peragram*, *declinam*, *explicam*, *denegam*, *fatigar*, *consiliar*.

In other cases, habits of the Merovingian era were so entrenched that they could not be uprooted. Endings in *-i* and *-e* of the third declension were confused and came to be no longer

distinguished. Alcuin writes a dative in *-e* in the line *vestrae pietate remis* and he is deceived by the form of the ablative when he writes *cum suo abbate... et successor*. An *-i* ending in ablatives of comparatives became common in the Middle Ages. Schoolmasters even formed the expressions *a priori*, *a posteriori*, which survive in the academic style of the modern languages.

There are writers who did not hesitate to create bolder forms. In the sequences composed in France poets strove to rhyme all verses in *-a*. This effort opened the door to many abuses. Feminine nouns were created such as *sollemnia* and *tirocinia*: *in hac sacra sollemnia* and *in recenti tirocinia*. The masculine *ocellus* became a neuter: *clausa ocella... reddens aperta*. The adjectives *principalis*, *sublimis* and the participle *collaudans* were moved to the first declension in the expressions *in arce principalia*, *o lux aeterna sublima* and *virginum quoque collaudantia fortiter mira caterva*. At times one finds forms altogether surprising in the most distinguished writers. Alcuin allows himself *unum sagellum tenuum*, Pope Hadrian I *per anteriores nostras syllabas*, and the blunder *in sacris paginibus* slips into the letter of Charlemagne *De litteris colendis*.

We will borrow just one example in the area of syntax to show the survival of Merovingian usage. Gregory of Tours and Venantius Fortunatus admit a fixed form *Parisius* in expressions such as *Parisius venit* or *sanguine nobilium generata Parisius urbe* (born of noble family at Paris). Later, on the same model, one created *Turonus*, *Treverus*, etc. It is likely that this form was originally an accusative plural, *Parisios venit* (like *Delphos venit*), but was changed to *Parisius* (the ending *-us* often replaces *-os* in Merovingian Latin). One would expect to see such a barbaric form suppressed in the instruction of the learned Carolingians, but there is none of it. *Parisius* continued to be written throughout the Middle Ages. In the ninth century, Abbo of Saint-Germain says *Parisius presul fuerat*, and later Abelard writes in his autobiography *perveni tandem Parisius*, to cite only two examples. Accusatives of place-names often tend to become fixed. This is also attested by the use of *Constantinopolim*, *Neapolim* and other accusatives of this type, which supplant all the cases. In Paul the Deacon *Constantinopolim* has the sense of an ablative in the expression *Constantinopolim egressus*, and *Neapolim* serves as subject *in nunc tamen corpusculum Neapolim retinet*.

The variations which one finds in the Latin of the Frankish Empire in the ninth and tenth centuries do not depend solely on the educational level of the writer himself. It is possible to trace the influence of scholastic traditions from different lands. The style of the Spanish and the Italians is not the same as that of the Franks. The vocabulary of Paul the Deacon has been studied in detail and shows that his Latin is the fruit of the school tradition which the Italian church borrowed from the ancient schools and preserved despite the difficulties of the time. On the other hand, the Franks Nithard and Einhard broke the chain of tradition in seeking their examples in classical literature. The Irish and the Anglo-Saxons often continue to show a preference for unusual words. Their influence was vast and they had many students who imitated their manner. Abbo of Saint-Germain, for example, managed to stock his poem *Bella Parisiacae urbis* with such exotic words that he deemed it necessary to add notes. One can form an idea of his style by the following lines:

*Amphytappa laon extat badanola, necnon
effipiam diamant, stragulam pariterque propomam.*

He commented on his boyish game in this manner: *amphytappa* = *tapete undique villosum*; *laon* = *laicorum, populorum*; *badanola* = *lectus in itinere*; *effipiam* = *ornamentum ecorum*; *diamant* = *valde amant*; *stragulam* = *vestem pictam vel gumfanon*; *propomam* = *claram potionem per linteam*. There was an especially important colony of Irish professors at Laon. Their influence extended even to the authors of the sequences of Limoges, who use, for instance,

sutela (trick), *gerro* (good-for-nothing), *caltudia* (feast), *dindymum* (mystery), *pubeda* (a youth), *sirma* (solemn words), *cephal* (head), *chirrare* or *sirare* (lead by the hand), which appears in Latin texts in the forms *chir*, *hir*, *ir*, *sir*, etc.

Despite the Anglo-Saxon mission and the importance of relations with Ireland, the Germans borrowed their Latin civilization largely from their French neighbors, with whom they formed a lasting political unity. This contact with the French explains their pronunciation of Latin. The word *cellarium* had crossed the Rhine as early as the imperial era, when the Latin-speakers still pronounced the word as *kellarium*, and it retained the sound *k* in Old High German *kel-lari*, which gave rise to *Keller*. The word *cella*, however, penetrated the German area with the monasticism of the Carolingian era. The monks, coming from the west, pronounced the word *tsella*, giving rise to the German form *Zelle*. In the same manner *cruce* became *Kreuz*, *cedula* > *Zettel*, etc. In the schools, the Germans have preserved into our times the pronunciation *tse* and *tsi* for *ce* and *ci*, and they still say *Tsitsero* and *Tsesar*.

During the first centuries of our era the semi-vowel *u* was a bilabial in the language of the Romans as well as that of the Germans. There was no difficulty, therefore, in producing the initial sound of the ancient loan-words *vinum* and *vallum* which, in Old High German, have the forms *win* and *wall*. Later, however, the bilabial became labio-dental in Gaul, and when the Christian priests said *versus*, the Germans heard *fersus*. The same phenomenon occurred in England and Ireland as well. *V* still has the sound of *f* in Germany. In medieval texts written in Germany one finds at times *vero* for *fero*, *victoris* for *fictoris*, *velle* for *felle*, *viet* for *fiet*, etc. [...]

Medieval Latin After the Year 1000

During the latter half of the Middle Ages, the Roman church extended its influence into eastern and northern Europe. Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, northern Germany and the Scandinavian lands entered into the world of Latin culture. Throughout western Europe, whatever one's national language happened to be, the basis of education was Latin. In Italy and Sweden, in Ireland as well as Poland, everywhere students studied the same Latin authors, secular and religious, starting in their first year of school. Since the foundation was the same, nationality was of little importance in the libera litterarum res publica. The Italians, Lanfranc of Pavia and St. Anselm of Aosta, became, one after the other, abbots of the monastery at Bec in Normandy and then archbishops of Canterbury; the Englishman, John of Salisbury, occupied the episcopal see of Chartres; a flood of students from all lands flowed to the universities of Paris and Bologna. Scholars from all over the world spoke the same language, and an intellectual unity, based on shared studies, began to tie all the lands of the West together.

On the other hand, the diversity of underlying languages and of political and social institutions produced many local differences as well as temporal and individual differences in the Latin of this period. It is easy, for instance, to determine that vocabulary varies according to place. Words were borrowed from mother-tongues without hesitation, chiefly in charters and semi-learned documents. In the non-Romance lands, Latin is full of words of foreign origin. In England we find, for instance, *schopa* = shop, *daywerca* = daywork, *laga* = law, *stiremannus* = steersman, in Germany, *hansa* = Hansa (an association of merchants), *burchgravius* = Burggraf, in Poland *cosakus* = latro, *cmetho* = colon. In the lands of Romance languages, scribes often racked their brains trying to provide a Latin form for words from the modern language. To give some examples chosen at random, the Latin word *mansionile* became *mesnil* in Old French. Many scribes divined the correct etymology of the word but others used the semi-learned forms, *mesnillum*, *meisnillum*, *maisnile*, *masnile*, *mansile*, etc. The Latin adjective *medianus* changed into *mezzano* in Italy and into *mejá* in southern France. From these forms there also appear *mezanus* and *meianus* in documents in France. In Catalonia, one finds a verb

acuydare, aquindare, acontare, aquundare, etc. In the spoken and latinized language the Latin *accognitare* was boldly rendered *acuyn dar, acuydar, acundar*. Scholars have shown that Spanish *manzano, mazano*, “apple tree,” derives from *mattianum*. This word of obscure origin was rendered by *mançanum, maçanus* and other forms. It is curious to see that in documents the Latin of the late Middle Ages often appeared under a more bizarre form in Romance lands than in others. For Romance scribes the learned language seemed still very close to their daily speech.

We must, nevertheless, pay attention to the migration of words: that which was current, for instance, at Paris was soon borrowed by students in other lands. We often meet nouns in *-agium* in non-Romance lands, though in the majority of cases this suffix certainly comes from France, where Latin *-aticum* had led to *-age* (*hominaticum* > OF *hommage* > MedLat *hommagium*: cf. also *linguagium, passagium, villagium*, etc.).

The evidence shows that from place to place the meaning of words changed as well. Consul was used at Rome to designate a functionary in the pontifical administration, but in the German towns the term designated a member of the municipal council; *proconsul* can mean “sheriff” in England, “Burgermeister” in Germany; the meaning of *miles* extends from simply “soldier” to “lord” and “knight.”

It is more difficult to grasp the local differences of pronunciation, a problem which has not yet received serious study. Observing the technique of rhymes, one can still form an idea of the school pronunciation. Typically, in twelfth-century France, the words *quondam* and *undam, responde* and *unde, abscondi* and *profundi* rhyme; this proves that the pronunciation of *ondam, onde* and *profundi* was influenced by OF *onde, ont* and *parfont*. In France rhymes such as *antiquus–inimicus, unquam–aduncam, precor–aequor*, or *nescit–reiecit, faece–quiesce, facit–pascit, docens–noscens* were very common; *qu* had lost its labial quality, and before *e* and *i* no distinction was made between *c* and *sc*. The final *t*, which weakened over a long time, disappeared in Old French in about 1200. As a result, poets rhymed *quicquid* and *reliquit, stravit* and *David*, since the final consonants were confused in the speech of the French, as the grammarian Petrus Helias expressly says:

*Sicut profertur d in hoc pronomine ‘id,’ eodem modo pronunciat t cum dicimus ‘legit,’ ‘capit.’
Unde sunt quidam qui maxime nos reprehendunt, ut Hiberni. Volunt enim sic pronunciare t in
‘legit’ sicut in ‘tibi,’ dicentes quod aliter nulla erit differentia inter d et t.*

For pronunciation this had no importance, except that in Classical Latin the accented vowels had been long or short, the consonants double or simple; cf. for instance the rhymes *ignitis–sagittis, extollunt–colunt, vitae–mitte, intercedat–reddat*. The phonetic equivalence of *magni–tyranni, signans–cachinnans*, etc., shows an assimilation of *gn* > *nn*; likewise, the groups *ps* and *ks* have been assimilated to *ss*: *ipsas–remissas, enixa–amissa, dixit–scripsit*, and in Hugh of Orléans 15.41ff. *velox–Pelops–celos*. None of these changes completely agrees with the phonetic development of French. It is particularly surprising to find in France many rhymes of the type *benedicta–vita, peccatum–actum, sancti–creanti, tinctus–intus*, but it may be that the school pronunciation had been influenced by the Italians. The rhyming of *matre* and *deitate, Christum* and *magistrum, ventri* and *furenti* shows a very weak articulation of *r* in a blend with *t*. Even the Old French *dames* can rhyme with *armes, presse* with *averse*, etc.

In the absence of special studies, we cannot yet outline a history of the school pronunciation of Latin in the late Middle Ages. There were certainly other learned “patois” than that which we are about to recall, but they seem to have played a less important role. The influence of French civilization in this era was dominant. After the Norman invasion England became a French province as far as education was concerned, and later the school milieu of Paris attracted the

intellectual elite and the youth of all Europe. The students probably exported, each to his own land, particulars of French pronunciation from the learned language.

In the Carolingian era the most important centers of civilization were the abbeys, but after the tenth century, as a new structure of political, economic, and intellectual life begins to take shape, and as urban life resumes its vitality, at the head of this development stand the episcopal schools. In the freer and more democratic atmosphere of the schools, intellectual activity bore fruit which inspires our admiration.

The study of Latin was increasingly deepened, and the professors, and at times their students, succeeded in possessing thoroughly all the refinements of the learned language. Linguistic mastery is one of the most typical traits of the Latin literature of the twelfth century, which we shall analyze in what follows.

Cicero, Vergil, Ovid and other classical authors have always enjoyed the esteem of professors. At times their styles were imitated, and some succeeded so well in imitation that it is difficult to distinguish the medieval text from the ancient. Gerbert of Rheims, who died in 1003 as Pope Sylvester II and a great admirer of Cicero, writes letters in the humanist spirit which will animate the correspondence of Petrarch three centuries later. The poet Hildebert of Lavardin, who died in 1133 as archbishop of Tours, composed poems in hexameters and elegiac distichs in a Vergilian manner. Others were especially inspired by the style of St. Augustine or St. Jerome, to such an extent that scholars of our own day have been deceived by the authenticity of their works. But these are the exceptions. In general, medieval traits are discernible despite the stylistic elegance of the great authors. Imitation had not yet become a stylistic principle as it would later, during the Renaissance. One still felt altogether free to create a personal style and to adapt the language to the needs of the moment. Grammatical instruction given in the schools provided the linguistic basis on which one built new constructions. It is chiefly in vocabulary that we can follow this development.

We have learned, for instance, that classical poetry liked compound adjectives such as *altisonus*, *altitonans*, *altivolans*. On this model the Carolingian poets had already created, among other forms, *altiboans*, *alticrepus*, *altifluus*, *altiloquus* and continuing with *alticanax*, *alticanorus*, *altifer*, *altipetus*, *altisonorus*, *altitonus*, *altivolus*, etc. The compound verbs *sanctificare*, *beatificare*, *glorificare*, etc., had been popular among the Christians of late Antiquity. These compounds were very useful and on their model one created in the Middle Ages verbs such as *ratificare*, *publificare*, *exemplificare*, which had a great success in modern languages. The diminutives have always formed a favored group.

*Munda cultellum, morsellum quere tenellum,
sed per cancellum, post supra pone platellum,
[clean the knife, seek a little bite,
but with the fork, then put it on your plate,]*

writes a professor, apparently influenced by the French language. Other forms of this type include *fabrellus*, *tortella*, *pompula*, for *faber*, *torta* and *pompa*. In order to teach his students the form and use of inchoative verbs, another schoolmaster composed the following lines:

*Crescit, decrescit, in vita non requiescit,
tandem vilesцит, putrescit, quando senescit,
vultu pallescit, cupidus fore non erubescit,
infans marcescit tacite pariterque liquescit.
[He grows, he becomes smaller, in life he never rests,
at last he declines, he grows spoiled, when he grows old,*

his face becomes pale, he is not ashamed to become wanton,
the infant withers silently, and likewise disappears.]

Similarly, we find *gaudescere*, *movescere*, *calvescere* (to become bald), *stultescere*, etc. Verbs often lost their inchoative sense, as in the proverb:

*Dum Mars arescit et mensis Aprilis aquescit,
Maius humescit, frumenti copia crescit.*
[When March is dry and April is rainy,
May is damp, then food grows in abundance.]

In the archaic era of Latin, writers liked to give elegance to a phrase by accumulating words of similar sound. Ennius, for example, writes *Priamo vi vitam evitare*. In the Middle Ages this etymological figure was widely used, with a preference for the play on the verbal prefix *de-*. So we read in Alan of Lille *defloratus flos effloret*, where *effloret* does not mean “to flourish,” as in the ancient writers, but “to lose its flower.” Other examples can be found in Walter of Châtillon *rosa derosatur*, *mundus demundatur*, *masculos demasculare*, *federa defedere*, in the Carmina Burana *titulum detitulare*, *virginem devirginare*, and in other writers *canonicum decanonizare*, *depuerare pueros*.

A characteristic feature of medieval Latin is the use of personal names to symbolize a certain quality. So Solomon represents wisdom, Paris beauty, Cato morality, Cicero eloquence, Crassus avarice. These names are even declined as adjectives. Henri de Settimello writes *codrior* (Codrus is an indigent poet who appears in Juvenal 3.203), *neronior*, *salomonior* *Salomone*, *platonior ipso*, and other authors have likewise enjoyed these expressions (Hugh of Orléans had already created the type *capto captivior*, *paupere pauperior*). Even verbs were made from personal names: Helena and Tiresias provided *helenare* and *tiresiare*, and from Absalon, Nero, Gualterus, Venus, Satanas come the verbs *absalonizare*, *neronizare*, *gualterizare*, *venerizare*, *satanizare*. In general, these two means of forming verbs, in *-are* and in *-izare*, enjoyed enormous popularity. We can also cite *presbiterare*, *pontificare*, “to ordain a priest, a bishop,” *vitulare*, “to behave as a calf,” *musare*, “to catch mice,” *gulare*, “to stuff one’s face,” *cervisiare*, “to stir up (brasser),” *podagrare*, “to cause someone to have gout,” and also *sillabizare*, “to teach someone to read,” *stultizare*, *puerizare*, “to act silly, behave childishly,” and similarly *eremizare*, *monachizare*, *scholizare*, *harmonizare*, *modulizare*, etc.

[...] But it is time to return to prose, the development of which presents interesting features, especially with respect to rhythm. In classical prose, phrase endings had been arranged to form combinations of long and short syllables which were called *clausulae*. In the Empire, the system of *clausulae* was increasingly simplified until eventually only three types remained:

- (1) $\acute{\cup} \cup // - \acute{\cup} \cup$ e.g. *dúcit ad-vítam*
- (2) $\acute{\cup} \cup // - \acute{\cup} \cup -$ e.g. *vícta desérviat*
- (3) $\sim \sim \sim // - \cup \acute{\cup} \cup$ e.g. *litteris índicáre*

The advantage of this simplification is great. Even the authors of the period of decadence, who no longer mastered the refinements of Latin prosody, were able to arrange the final words of a phrase according to accents. Just as often the accents play the greater role, while the quantity becomes an attendant refinement. Eventually, the quantitative system collapsed into complete disuse, and there remain only three accentual types, which are later called *cursus*:

- (1) $\sim \sim // \sim \sim \sim$ *cursus planus*
- (2) $\sim \sim // \sim \sim \sim \sim$ *cursus tardus*
- (3) $\sim \sim \sim // \sim \sim \sim \sim$ *cursus velox*

At the beginning of the Middle Ages even the accentual rhythms were little used. Authors such as the Venerable Bede and Alcuin did not use clausulae, others such as Paul the Deacon, Paulinus of Aquileia, Walafrid Strabo, Anastasius Bibliothecarius show only a tendency, more or less marked, for ending phrases with a rhythmic cursus. Still, this indicates that the ancient school tradition was not completely extinguished and that the rules of prose rhythm continued to be taught in some schools. In the eleventh century, this tendency was changed to regular practice in the work of St. Peter Damian and Alberic of Monte Cassino. In the celebrated Italian abbey, the study of prose rhythm was especially diligent. From there the monk Johannes Cajetanus was called to Rome in 1088 to reform the Latin style of the papal chancery; he later ascended the throne of St. Peter under the name of Gelasius II.

The practice of rhythmic cursus in the letters of the Popes gave rise to a diligent study of this method of embellishing prose. At Rome, the papal chancellor, Albert of Morra, an elderly monk of Monte Cassino, authored a *forma dictandi* which he published in 1187 after his elevation to the pontifical throne. At Bologna, Paris, Orléans, etc., other *dictatores*, from whom we have many *summae*, taught and expounded the rules of prose rhythm. The Italian masters, in general, recommended the three forms of cursus which we are about to mention. Following their rules, the cursus planus is represented, for instance, by the words *audiri compellunt, confidenter audébo, violári non pótest, operántur in bónum*, the cursus tardus by the words *tímet impéria, óvis ad víctimam*, the cursus velox by the words *gaúdia pervenire, sufficient advolátum, ágere nimis dúre, dábitur regnum Déi, sápias per te múltum*. In the last three examples we find the structure $\sim \sim \sim // \sim \sim // \sim \sim$, where two breaks occur in the same clausula, a structure unknown to the preceding eras. The French masters distanced themselves still further from the ancient models. They regarded as completely acceptable the clausula without break, that is, a clausula consisting of a single word. In their teaching, the word *dámpnationem*, for example, forms a cursus planus. Moreover, to the three established types of clausulae they added a fourth, which they called *cursus trispondaicus*, where there are three unstressed syllables between two stressed syllables. This is the type which we find in a clausula such as *dóna sentiámus*, whose structure is $\sim \sim // \sim \sim \sim \sim$. Here, as well, a single word suffices to form a regular clausula; they cite, among other examples, *cómpositione*.

It is difficult to resolve in a definitive manner the problems posed by the examination of clausulae in a medieval text. It is necessary first to determine where the pauses of speech occur according to the intent of the author. Little is known about the accentuation of certain groups of words. We know that in spoken Latin in Antiquity the relative pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and certain forms of the verb *esse* did not possess an accent and that other words, such as personal and possessive pronouns could be accented, or not, depending on context. In medieval Latin accentuation appears often to have been the same, but in the language of the schools the standard of pronunciation depended especially on the teaching of the master, the details of which escape us. Still, when an Italian professor gives as example of cursus planus the words *bonum non potest* and *operantur in bonum*, it is evident that he has accented them as *non pótest* and *in bónum*, despite the quantity of the accented syllable. On the other hand, a cursus velox such as *rapias per te multum* shows that the professor spoke *pér te*, and treated the two monosyllables as a single word which he accented according to ordinary rules. The *dictatores* observed this phenomenon, which they called *consillabatio*, unfortunately without providing a precise definition of it.

We must consider the problems of method and analyze the texts very closely before drawing up the statistical tables necessary for an examination of prose rhythm. One recent study shows us that in the late Middle Ages, authors widely employed regular clausulae and that exceptions are owed most often to peculiar conditions. So we find in the work of Pierre de la Vigne, who lived

in the middle of the thirteenth century, the following distribution: *cursus planus* 24.9%, *tardus* 2.5%, *velox* 68.9%, *trispondaicus* 2.5%, other types 1.2%. The numbers are close to those for Cola di Rienzo, a century later: *cursus planus* 10.7%, *tardus* 1.6%, *velox* 84.2%, *trispondaicus* 1.9%, other types 1.6%. It is clear that these two authors preferred the *cursus velox*, that they admitted the *cursus planus* but that they tried to avoid the other types. Dante, whose Latin style is still thoroughly medieval, employed the *cursus tardus* frequently. In his work, the corresponding numbers are: *cursus planus* 31.8%, *tardus* 21.1%, *velox* 45.3%, *trispondaicus* 0.9%, other types 0.9%. The three types which the Italian school recommended account for 96.3% of all *clausulae* in the work of Pierre de la Vigne, 96.5% in Cola di Rienzo, 98.2% in Dante. In the work of Petrarch and Boccaccio, the numbers descend to 74% and 68.7%. In the work of Gasparino Barzizza and Enea Silvio, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the numbers decline to 48% and 52.5%. This means that these two, typical representatives of the high Renaissance, have completely abandoned the medieval system and do not concern themselves about end rhythm. Still, it is noteworthy that Enea Silvio, who became Pope, yields to the ancient tradition which was still alive in the papal chancery. There, the use of the *cursus* was preserved until Leo X (1513–1521) who brought to his chancery as secretary, among others, the celebrated humanist Pietro Bembo. With a Latin style distinguished by its Ciceronian elegance, Bembo definitively removed the last traces of the style of the Middle Ages from the papal chancery.

The study of rhythmic *cursus* has carried us across the boundaries of the Middle Ages. However, before finishing our survey, we must add some words about the development of Latin during the last century of this era.

We have stated above that all the episcopal schools were responsible for providing the learned of the eleventh and twelfth centuries with the detailed linguistic preparation which allowed the brilliant flourishing of Latin literature in this period. But from the thirteenth century on the situation rapidly changed. In the universities, which replaced the episcopal schools in ever growing numbers, dialectic surpassed grammar, facts attracted the interest of students much more than elegant form, the classical *auctores* were abandoned in the pursuit of the study of theology, law, medicine, philosophy, and the sciences. The grammarians themselves changed their method. No longer bothering to find correct usage in ancient models, they tried to resolve linguistic problems by their own speculation. The aim of grammar was no longer to facilitate the study of masterworks of Latin literature, but to provide an introduction to the study of logic. It followed that scholastic Latin lost contact with literary works and became increasingly technical.

The new character which Latin presents from the foundation of the universities and the domination of scholasticism is especially evident in vocabulary. The new speculation needed a new terminology to express its analyses and rationales with scientific precision. Many scholastic neologisms had a lasting impact. For example, consider the abstract terms *prioritas* and *superioritas* derived from *prior* and *superior*, verbs such as *organizare* and *specificare* with their corresponding nouns *organizatio* and *specificatio*, a number of nouns in *-alitas* derived from adjectives in *-alis*, such as *actualitas*, *causalitas*, *formalitas*, *individualitas*, *potentialitas*, *proportionalitas*, *realitas*, *spiritualitas*, nouns in *-ista* such as *artista*, *iurista*, *decretista*, *occamista*, *thomista*, *scotista*, *platonista*, *latinista*, *humanista*. We still say *disputare pro et contra* or *a priori*, *a posteriori*, expressions used in the teaching of dialectic. A collection of sermons is still called in German *Postille*, from Latin *postilla*, an abbreviation of the words *post illa verba*, by which one began the explication of a text at this time. Other innovations of scholasticism were more ephemeral or changed the sense of words, for example *quodlibetum*, a general disputation where the auditors could propose any problem whatsoever, *quodlibet*, for the analysis of the professors, or the somewhat fantastic forms such as *haecitas*, *ipseitas*, *tali-*

tas, quiditas, perseitas, velleitas, anitas (a response to the question *an sit aliquid*), etc. The victory of Aristotelianism led to a new influx of Hellenisms. St. Thomas Aquinas, for instance, introduced words such as *epicheia, eubolia, synderesis, theandrica*, and there are underlying expressions in Aristotle which explain the use of Latin words such as *habitus, accidens, forma, materia, intellectus agens*, etc. Many words were even borrowed from Arabic, many of which are still in use: *algebra, algorismus, cifra, alchimia, chimia, elixir, camphora*, etc.

However, above all, it is the simplicity of syntax and the monotony of style which characterize scholastic Latin. One adds new arguments with *item*, an *amplius* or a *praeterea*, repeated *ad infinitum*. Logic required of Latin expressions an impeccable precision, but not the variation consistent with the standards of rhetoric. The use of images to enliven style is forbidden: the austerity of thought demanded complete stylistic dryness. From Old French *ly* was borrowed to designate a citation in order to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding. St. Thomas, speaking of the Son in his treatise on the Trinity, states: *melius est quod dicatur 'semper natus,' ut ly 'semper' designet permanentiam aeternitatis et ly 'natus' perfectionem geniti*.

The Latin of scholasticism is a remarkable creation. The language cultivated for centuries by poets and rhetors possessed great plasticity to be remodeled according to the needs of the new movement and to become an admirable instrument in the service of the thought of logicians and metaphysicians. Those, however, who had accustomed their ears to the music of Ciceronian eloquence, found this Latin offensive. Their reaction was violent. From the fourteenth century on, the friends of literature undertook a relentless struggle against the technical Latin of education in the field of dialectic. In their enthusiasm for the beauty of classical literature, they rejected not only the language of scholasticism, but all that had been created since Antiquity. For Petrarch and his partisans, the ancients alone had provided the model for Latin eloquence. After their era, Latin style had degenerated during a period of unprecedented barbarism, which had to be abandoned as quickly as possible to recall Roman civilization from her long exile.

We cannot follow here this complex interplay, the result of which was the return of literary works and the victory of the ideas of the Renaissance. The penetrating study of ancient sources stimulated intellectual development and delivered the dynamic forces of humanism from their chains. For Latin, however, the success of the Renaissance was disastrous. Literary geniuses ceased to express themselves in a language in which imitation was the highest principle, and a rigorous normativism did not provide much freedom of expression. Scholars later followed their example, when they discovered the limits of usage of the school language. After the Renaissance, Latin ceased to develop and its history presents nothing of further interest from a linguistic point of view. It became what is often called a dead language.

This is an image which leads easily to misunderstandings. The question is often discussed whether the Latin of the Middle Ages is a dead language, a living or a semi-living language, a discussion bearing little fruit. A language is not an organism which is born, grows, ages, and dies. It is a means of communication among people that can work well or not.

If we examine medieval Latin from this point of view, we can immediately state the social limits of its use. From the moment when Latin ceased to be understood by all the people—which varies from place to place—its usage was limited to an exclusive element of the population. Latin was no longer a mother tongue, but a scholarly language whose secrets were inaccessible to the greater part of society. On the other hand, medieval Latin knew no political boundaries. In the Roman Empire, Latin had been a national language, whose diffusion went hand in hand with that of the Roman administration. In the Middle Ages, its success stemmed from the fact that it was the language of western Christianity. It was the learned language not only of the ancient

Roman world, but also of Ireland, England, Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the lands of Scandinavia. In all these lands, the educated used Latin, orally and in writing, for teaching, for the various functions of political and administrative life, and in the monasteries and churches. In these circles, the life of the learned language was not artificial. Latin followed the development of civilization, it incorporated the words necessary to express new ideas, it adopted a simpler structure. This aptitude of medieval Latin to change according to various needs is apparent in two areas, the lyrical and the scholastic. In the very period when the great cathedrals were being built, when Leoninus, Perotinus, and other masters were creating polyphonic music, authors composed Latin poems which, for their achievement in form and their sonority, were epoch-making in western literature. The linguistic revolution of scholasticism was just as imposing, though oriented in another direction, toward logical precision and monotonous exactitude, which university teaching needed. In the one case as in the other, medieval Latin proved its ability to serve as means of expression, artistic or technical, as needed.

The study of the Latin language of the Middle Ages is still in its beginnings. Ever since the Renaissance, Antiquity has been a more popular object of literary research. Now the extant corpus of ancient literature is already the result of critical activity: at the end of Antiquity, only the works judged worthy of preservation and of current interest were transcribed from papyrus to parchment. The literature of the Middle Ages has never been purged. Its breadth is enormous, the major part of it has only been studied superficially, many areas still remain unknown, the artistic products are often submerged by the flood of works of no interest. The task of studying a subject so little explored is urgent and fruitful. One must first, however, develop the indispensable tools, without which any attempt to penetrate this field is bound to fail.