

CHAPTER 14

Archaic and Old Latin

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The earliest remains of Latin are dated to the seventh century BCE; by the middle of the first century BCE, Classical Latin had become established as the dominant prestige variety. The language of the six pre-Classical centuries is sometimes labelled as a whole “Archaic Latin” or “Early Latin” or “Old Latin”, and a single term has the advantage of acknowledging that there is a continuum, but a division into periods has also been proposed by some scholars and these same labels (and others) may then be applied in narrower senses, which may unfortunately vary from author to author. For instance, Meiser (1998) 2 distinguishes between *Frühlatein* (“Early Latin”), from the first attestations down to 240 BCE and the first literary productions, and *Altlatein* (“Old Latin”) from 240 down to the first half of the first century, and is happy to use *Archaisches Latein* (“Archaic Latin”) as an all-embracing term. Weiss (2009) 23 makes a similar division between “Very Old Latin” (down to the third century and the first literature) and “Old Latin” (third and second centuries). Clackson and Horrocks (2007) adopt an alternative division between the language of the first inscriptions, down to *c.* 400, which is labelled “Archaic Latin”, and the language from *c.* 400 to the first century, which is labelled “Old Latin”; there is virtually no evidence for Latin in the later fifth and early fourth centuries which makes 400 a convenient dividing point. The usage of Clackson and Horrocks will be broadly adopted in this chapter, out of deference to the editor, but the terminological divergences and disagreements should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the development of the language continues seamlessly throughout the whole period, and indeed on into Classical Latin.

Sources

The best evidence for Archaic Latin comes from inscriptions, few and brief though these are. Most of them are dedications or indications of ownership; the text on a badly mutilated cippus from the Roman forum (*CIL* I².1, from the early sixth century) seems to be a more public document but it is too broken to be readily comprehensible. Only two or three inscriptions containing more than a few letters come from Rome itself, the rest from other parts of Latium, which raises questions about the possibility of dialectal variation that the scanty evidence does not suffice to answer. The dating of these inscriptions is not always easy – for many of them there is no archaeological context – but diachronic variations in letter shapes provide some help (see Hartmann (2005)). The only other available material for the Archaic period comes from fragmentary texts cited in later authors: prominent amongst these are the *Laws of the Twelve Tables*, traditionally dated to the mid-fifth century BCE, but preserved in a spelling that certainly does not reflect the original orthography.

Inscriptions remain important for Old Latin too, even after the appearance of the first literary texts, since they have the enormous advantage of being contemporary documents, and they provide essential evidence for tracking orthographical and phonological changes. Literary texts, or old documents and texts preserved in later authors, were to a large extent subject to modernisation in these respects from antiquity onwards; that is to say they were adjusted to conform more closely to the Classical norms. The epigraphic evidence must, however, be used with some caution: ingrained spelling habits are hard to shift and there is often a marked delay in the acceptance of new spellings that reflects changes in pronunciation, especially in bureaucratic circles (it is noticeable that private inscriptions often lead the way in representing phonological changes). Old Latin inscriptions have been found throughout Italy, in Spain, on Delos and elsewhere: the distribution mirrors the expansion of Roman power. There are funerary inscriptions, which include a number of epitaphs in verse; numerous dedications to various deities by individuals, magistrates or guilds; building inscriptions; ownership marks and makers' signatures; etc. There are also a number of longer texts: a few documents regulating behaviour at religious sanctuaries (*leges sacrae*), some public edicts (pride of place goes to the *Senatusconsultum de Bacchanalibus* of 186 BCE (*CIL* I².581), laying down restrictive rules for the conduct of Bacchic worship), and legal documents such as the lengthy record of the resolution of a dispute over land between two communities in north-west Italy, the *Sententia Minuciorum* of 117 BCE (*CIL* I².584). It is possible to date a certain number of Old Latin inscriptions from historical circumstances (consul dates or the career of named magistrates, for instance), but for many others the only clues are palaeographical or linguistic, with the attendant danger of circularity if linguistic changes are dated according to when they first appear in inscriptions and inscriptions are dated according to whether or not a given linguistic change seems to have taken place. Fortunately there are enough inscriptions with a secure date to allow the establishment of a reasonably reliable relative chronology. The question of dialectal diversity arises again, all the more forcefully given the wider spread of evidence in this period, and there are some signs of this: for instance, the change of the diphthong [ai] to a long vowel,

written E, seems to have taken place quite early outside Rome and so shows up in second-century forms like CEDITO (Class. *caedito*) “he is to cut” at Spoleto (*CIL* I².366) or FORTVNE “to Fortune” (dat. sg.) at Tusculum (*CIL* I².48), and this fits well with Varro’s statement (*L.* 5.97) that in rural Latium the form *hedus* is used for “kid” but *haedus* at Rome. (A full discussion of all the possible evidence for regional diversity in this period, both from inscriptions and from Roman authors, can be found in Adams (2007) 37–113.)

From 240 BCE, the onset of the career of Livius Andronicus, there are literary texts to enrich our knowledge of Old Latin, but many of these are only known from citations in grammarians or other ancient authors. Some early verse texts are in the Saturnian metre, the translation of the *Odyssey* by Livius Andronicus and the narrative poem on the First Punic War by Naevius, from both of which we have only stray lines; the only complete Saturnian poems, but very much shorter, are found in inscriptions, such as epitaphs of the Scipio family from the third and early second centuries or some mid-second century dedications (see Kruschwitz (2002) for a complete collection of the epigraphic material). When so few lines survive to be analysed, it is perhaps not surprising that the nature of the metre is still a matter for debate (for recent discussion see Parsons (1999); Clackson and Horrocks (2007) 132–138; Mercado (2006b)), and the evidence that it might provide for early Latin phonology remains tantalisingly elusive.

Dramatic works in Latin, based on Greek models and using Greek metres, were first composed by Livius Andronicus, but again we have only fragments, as is the case also for the slightly later authors Ennius, Accius and Pacuvius. The only complete texts to survive are the comedies of Plautus and Terence, and the language of these authors, especially Plautus, provides the fullest representation that we have of Old Latin at the close of the third century and in the first half of the second (see de Melo, chapter 19 of this volume). The Homeric dactylic hexameter was introduced into Latin verse by Ennius in the early second century in a long narrative poem, the *Annals*, but despite the importance of this work as a model for later poets, especially Virgil, only some 600 lines have come down to us in citations. The meagre fragments of all these early verse compositions, however, are not without value for the history of Latin: very often a line is cited because it contains an unusual grammatical form or an obsolete item of vocabulary and this can make a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the early language.

Latin literary prose begins with Cato (234–149 BCE). He was a renowned orator and many of his speeches were still available to be read with admiration in Cicero’s time, though we now have only fragments attested in citations. Likewise fragmentary are the remnants of Cato’s *Origines*, a ground-breaking historical work, the first of its kind in Latin. Other early orators and historians have fared no better, and the only complete prose work to have survived from the Old Latin period is Cato’s *de Agri Cultura*, a book of instruction and advice for owners of estates. The generally plain style of this work seems to have been determined by the subject matter, for the fragments of the speeches show a more elaborate and elevated style, influenced by Greek rhetorical teaching, and it is clear that already differences in language according to literary genre can be recognised (see Courtney (1999) 41–91).

Orthography and Phonology

The Greek historian Polybius, writing in the second century BCE, famously remarked (3.22.3) on the difficulty of understanding early Latin texts (in particular a treaty between Rome and Carthage from 509 BCE) because the language was so different from contemporary Latin. Certainly the Latin of the earliest inscriptions can have a bafflingly unfamiliar appearance, largely due to the different orthographic conventions adopted and to the appearance of forms that have not yet undergone later phonological changes, although allowance must also be made for morphological developments and the use of vocabulary that later dropped out of the language. The following selection of orthographic and phonological divergences ranges beyond Archaic Latin in order to illustrate that the processes of change continued across the different periods.

Spelling conventions

One of the most striking orthographic features of Archaic Latin is the use of the so-called *c/k/q*-convention. This was a spelling convention (taken over from the Etruscans) according to which the sound [k] was written with different letters according to the following vowel: *c* before [e] and [i], *κ* before [a], *q* before [o] and [u]. This convention was never very faithfully followed but there are clear examples such as sixth-century *KAPIAD* for Classical *capiat*, and it has left later traces in the letter names *cē*, *kā*, *qū*, in fossilised Classical spellings like *kalendae* “kalends” and in the restriction of the use of *q* to the sequence *qv*. In most environments *c* was generalised very early, whence Classical *capiat*.

The letter *c* continues the Greek letter *gamma*, whose original value was [g]. In Etruria this had been pressed into service as part of the convention for writing [k], and this had been possible because in Etruscan there was no phonological distinction between [g] and [k]. Latin does make such a distinction but once the *c/k/q*-convention had been adopted, there was no longer a separate sign for [g], a deficiency not remedied until the third century BCE when the letter *g* was invented (for details see Wachter (1987) 324–333). So, for instance, in the sixth century we find *RECEI* as the dat. sing. of “king”, Class. *rēgī*, and *EQO* for “I”, Class. *ego*.

The earliest form of the Latin alphabet (reflecting its Greek origins) had no letter for the sound [f]; the Romans took over from the Etruscans a digraph spelling for the sound, *FH* (as it were [w] + [h], where *F* continues the Greek digamma), and this is found in two seventh-century inscriptions. After this time, *F* alone was used – with the consequence that the sound [w] now had to be written with *v*, originally just a sign for a vowel.

Some other orthographic peculiarities persist into the Old Latin period. Geminates (double consonants) are not represented in writing in early inscriptions, so e.g. *esse* “to be” is written *ESE*. Double spellings do not appear until the very end of the third century and do not become the universal norm for another century or so. At most periods in the history of Latin vowel length is not indicated in writing. There was a short-lived attempt (c. 135–75 BCE) to introduce a marker for long vowels by writing

the vowel twice (e.g. AARA for *āra* “altar”, EEMIT for *ēmit* “he bought”) but it was never consistently applied (see Vine (1993) 267–286).

Phonological changes

Amongst the phonological developments that took place in the Archaic Latin and Old Latin periods a special importance attaches to the question of the accent and its influence on unstressed vowels. In Classical Latin the word accent normally fell on the penultimate syllable if this was heavy (e.g. *dīcātur*, *Rōmānōrum*, *honéstās*, *capīēbantur*) and on the antepenultimate syllable if the penultimate was light (e.g. *dīcitur*, *altissima*, *reficere*). In the first stages of Archaic Latin, however, there was a strong stress accent falling on the first syllable of each word, which had the effect of preserving the vocalism of the stressed initial syllables pretty well but eventually causing weakening of short vowels in other syllables, the outcome being determined by the phonetic environment. The results of this are still apparent in Classical Latin, even after the later shift in the position of the accent, for instance in compound verbs like *reficiō* beside *faciō*, *percipiō* beside *capīō*, *desiliō* beside *salīō*, *abluō* beside *lauō*, *atingō* beside *tangō*, etc. In the case of open syllables (those ending in a short vowel), the weakening could take the form of actual loss of the vowel (this is known as syncope), although it is hard to frame consistent rules for the occurrence of this: examples of syncope are *ualdē* “greatly, very” beside adj. *ualidus* “strong” and *propter* “near by” < **propiter*, derived from *prope* “near”.

The initial stress accent of Archaic Latin is not inherited from Indo-European but finds parallels in other languages of central Italy, such as Etruscan, Oscan and Umbrian, languages that show extensive syncope of internal syllables, and is probably a regional feature that spread through contact. Vowel weakening in Latin seems to have taken place during the fifth century: there are still unweakened forms in the earliest inscriptions (e.g. FHEFHAKED “he made” from the seventh century) but by the time that inscriptions start to become more plentiful at the end of the fourth century the familiar forms with weakened vowels are found. The dating fits well with the fact that early borrowings from Greek – perhaps mainly sixth century – are affected by the process, cf. (Doric) *mākhanā* becoming *māchina*, *talanton* becoming *talentum*, etc. The shift to the Classical pattern of accentuation is thought to have occurred during the fourth century, and we can thus recognise here a major difference between Archaic Latin and Old Latin.

Another fourth-century change marking the transition from Archaic to Old Latin is rhotacism, the change of intervocalic [s] to [r]. This resulted in numerous alternations between related forms that still survive in Classical Latin as evidence for the rule, e.g. *queror* alongside *questus*, *erat* and *est*, *fūneris* and *fūnestus*. The change took place in the fourth century (this is in part known from the fact, reported by Cicero, *Fam.* 9.21.2, that L. Papirius Crassus, dictator in 340, was the first to spell the family name *Papirius* rather than *Papisius*). There are examples of unrhotacised forms in early inscriptions such as NUMASIOI (Class. *Numeriō*) from the seventh century, IOVESAT (Class. *iūrat*) from the sixth century, VALESIOSIO (Class. *Valerīū*) from c. 500; some other archaic forms are cited by Roman grammarians, e.g. *fesias* for *fērias* (Paul. *Fest.* 76).

A number of other developments must be dated later, to well within the Old Latin period. Prominent amongst these is the treatment of the diphthongs that had remained

unchanged throughout the Archaic Latin period but eventually became long vowels; cf. from a sixth-century dedication to the Dioscuri the case-endings in *CASTOREI* (dat.) beside Classical *Castorī* and *QVROIS* (dat. pl.) “youths” – a Greek loan – beside the Classical second-declension ending *-īs*. In the course of the third century [ei], [oi] and [ou] all underwent this process of monophthongisation.

The diphthong [ou] became [ū]. The earliest evidence for the change seems to be acc. sg. *LVCIOM* (the praenomen) from original **Loukiom* in one of the Scipio epitaphs from the second half of the third century (*CIL* I².9). Instances of spellings with *ov*, however, are still found in the second century, either from old-fashioned habit or as a convenient notation for [ū], cf. *LOVCOM* (acc. sg.) “sacred grove”, Class. *lūcum* (*CIL* I² 366), with an etymological diphthong, and *POVBLILIA* (*CIL* I².42) for *Pūblilia* which may always have had [ū] not a diphthong.

The treatment of [oi] varied according to its position in the word. In initial syllables it normally gave [ū], cf. **oīnos* > *ūnus* “one”. The diphthong may still be represented in *OINO* (acc. sg.) from the third century (*CIL* I².9) but *LOIDOS* for acc. pl. *lūdōs* “games” in the latter part of the second century (*CIL* I².364) is an old-fashioned spelling that almost certainly no longer reflects pronunciation. In final syllables [oi] fell together with [ei] quite early on and the only evidence for it comes from sixth-century *QVROIS* noted above and perhaps a nom. pl. *pilumnōe poploē* (Paul. *Fest.* 224) cited from the ancient *carmen Saliare* but clearly already opaque in meaning to the grammarians.

The treatment of [ei] is worth examining in detail, since it brings out the complex links between spelling and pronunciation and illustrates the care needed in the interpretation of the written forms. Around the middle of the third century, the diphthong [ei] first became a close long vowel [ɛ:]: this is indicated by spellings with *E*, e.g. *FALERIES* “at Falerii” (Class. *Faleriīs*), *PLOIRUME* (nom. pl.) “very many” (Class. *plūrimī*) – both endings originally contained [oi] > [ei] > [ɛ:]. This spelling was in competition with the retained spelling *EI*, a sequence that could now simply be read as a digraph notation for [ɛ:] (and this seems to have been the preferred spelling in bureaucratic circles to judge from the consistent *EI* spellings of the *Senatusconsultum de Bacchanalibus* of 186 BCE). Around the middle of the second century [ɛ:] merged with [ī], the change being signalled by the appearance of spellings with *I*: but as an alternative the traditional *EI* spelling was still kept, now standing for [ī], and as a notation simply for a long vowel it was used for any instance of [ī], even where there was no original diphthong, so that, for instance, whereas the *Senatusconsultum de Bacchanalibus* carefully distinguishes in second-declension forms between the nom. pl. in *-EI* and the gen. sg. in *-I*, late Republican inscriptions can have *-I* for both or *-EI* for both.

The diphthongs [ai] and [au] survived longer: [ai] was originally written *AI* but around the end of the third century began to be written *AE* (the Classical spelling) but this probably still represented some form of diphthong, at least in urban circles, down to the imperial period; [au] also remained a diphthong except in popular speech (note *Clodius* as the plebeian form of *Claudius*).

The third century also saw another sound change, the disappearance of final [-d] after a long vowel. This principally affected ablative singulars, cf. sixth-century *FILEOD* “son” beside Class. *fīliō*, and the future imperative in *-TOD*, Class. *-tō* (*facitō*, etc.). The change had certainly taken place by the middle of the century, when spellings without *-D* first

appear, but final -D continued to be written well into the second century, e.g. in the conservative orthography of the *Senatusconsultum de Bacchanalibus* (ablatives SENTENTIAD, POPLICOD, MAGISTRATVD, etc.).

A similar date seems likely for the change of final [-os] to [-us] (e.g. in the nom. sg. of second-declension nouns) and slightly later, to judge from the inscriptional evidence, of [-om] to [-um], e.g. in the acc. sg. of the same declension. There is a complication here in that final [-s] and [-m] were clearly very weakly sounded in early Old Latin (though not Archaic Latin), as shown by the fact that they were often omitted in writing (cf. third-century OPTUMO “best”, acc. sg.; Class. *optimum*). In the case of [-m], it may simply be the case that the preceding vowel was nasalised (which would explain why in verse elision over a final [-m] remains possible in the Classical period), and the regular spellings with -M from the second century on may not necessarily imply the restoration of a full consonant. With [-s] things are different: neglect of final [-s] after a short vowel for the purposes of scansion is condemned by Cicero (*Orat.* 161) as *subrusticum*, and it looks as though a proper [-s] was restored in speech as well as in writing (from the early second century onwards).

Selected Morphological Features

Verbal morphology

Archaic Latin and Old Latin inscriptions show certain verbal forms that are not found in the Classical language. For instance, a distinction is made in Archaic inscriptions between a third sg. ending -T, found in the present, and a third sg. ending -D, found in past tenses and the subjunctive, hence present IOVESAT but subjunctive KAPIAD. These endings have their origins in Indo-European where there was distinction between so-called primary *-ti in the present and secondary *-t elsewhere. At the end of the fourth century BCE -T is found as an alternative to -D and by the early third century it has become the only third sg. ending for all active moods and tenses, whence Classical -t.

Well attested in early Latin are sigmatic futures and subjunctives of the type *faxō* and *faxim* to *faciō* “I make, do” (on their function in comedy see de Melo, chapter 19 of this volume). These are by no means confined to literature and must have been standard at one time, cf., from the *XII Tables*, *si im occisit* “if he shall have killed him”, *qui malum carmen incantassit* “whoever shall have cast a magic spell” and from inscriptions SEIQVIS VIOLASIT “if anyone shall have done damage” (*CIL* I².366, early second century). Later these futures were clearly perceived as hallmarks of legal language, as shown by Cicero’s use of them in his *de Legibus*. There are in addition several other subjunctive formations, of rather limited attestation, that do not survive into Classical Latin (*duim*, *crēduās*, *attigās*, etc.). It may be that all of these unusual forms represent the débris of an originally distinct aorist system, generally lost in the merger with the perfect. (For a full discussion of the forms, their distribution and possible origins, see de Melo (2007b).)

Another form that points in the same direction is Archaic FHEFHAKED “he made” (or “he had made”) on the Praenestine fibula (see below) from the seventh century: this is a reduplicated perfect of *faciō*, standing alongside FECED in the sixth-century Duenos

inscription (see below), which continues an old aorist form. By Classical Latin the inherited perfect and aorist have completely merged as the Latin perfect, with the selection of just one of the two original stems, but here there seems to be evidence for an indeterminacy that may be an indication that the two categories had not long been combined.

Levelling of a different kind took place in the verb “to be” where it seems that there were once parallel sets of stressed and unstressed forms (Meiser (1998) 221), for instance stressed third sg. *est* v. unstressed *st*, seen in forms like *inauguratumst* for *inauguratum est* “omens have been taken” (Pl. *As.* 259). Such forms are extremely common in the manuscripts of Plautus and Terence (and indeed later authors) and there are similar forms in Oscan, which points to a common Italic development. For the first sg. Varro (*L.* 9.100) cites an ancient form *esum*, which can be explained as the original stressed form beside: an inscription on a pottery bowl, known as the Garigliano bowl (Cristofani (1996)), dated to between the mid-sixth and mid-fifth centuries BCE, begins *ESOM KOM MEIOIS SOKIOIS ...* “I am, together with my companions [presumably the rest of a set of bowls], (the property of...)” and this confirms Varro’s report and establishes the Latinity of the form.

Nominal morphology

There are perhaps fewer peculiarities in the nominal morphology of early texts, but one remarkable form is the gen. sg. ending *-osio* of the second declension. A dedication to Mars from Satricum (*CIL* I².2832a), dated to the end of the sixth century, records that the dedicators were *POPLOSIO VALESIOSIO SVODALES* “the companions of Publius Valerius”. The ending *-osio* is inherited from Indo-European and is attested also in early Faliscan; a later form of it is no doubt to be recognised in *TITOIO* “of Titus” on a third-century dish from Ardea (Ve. 364a). The familiar Classical ending *-ī* is first attested in the early third century, but it is also found in Faliscan and is also inherited from Indo-European, so there can be little doubt about its antiquity. The Latin evidence does not allow more than speculation about the original function and distribution of the two endings.

From the second century come numerous instances of a second-declension nom. pl. ending *-eis* (also found in pronouns) e.g. *MAGISTREIS* “magistrates” in several inscriptions or *Q. M. MINVCIEIS* “Quintus and Marcus Minucius” (*CIL* I².584, 117 BCE), the names of two brothers with their family name in the plural (see further below under “Some syntactic patterns”). The origin of this ending has been much discussed and among the preferred explanations are contamination with the third-declension ending *-ēs* or influence from Oscan, where the ending is *-ūs*, but there is no obviously correct solution. (For a full collection of the evidence, and a quite different explanation, see Vine (1993) 215–239.)

In several Old Latin inscriptions there are third-declension forms with a gen. sg. ending *-vs* or *-os*. This will continue **-os*, which can readily be explained in Indo-European terms as a regular variant of the **-es* that gives the normal Classical ending *-is*. Second-century examples include *VENERVS* “of Venus”, *NOMINVS LATINI* “of the Latin name”, *DIOVOS* “of Jupiter”, *KASTORVS* “of Castor”. Unfortunately the evidence is not sufficient to allow us to determine the original distribution of the variant ending or to make any secure claim for it as a dialectal feature (see the stern remarks of Adams (2007) 40–43).

Lexicon

The limited material from the Archaic period cannot give more than a glimpse of the vocabulary in use at the time, but it is at least possible to identify one or two items that later fell out of use, including two verbs. In two sixth-century inscriptions, including the Duenos inscription (see below), a third sg. form MITAT occurs, from the context obviously meaning something like “gives, presents”. It may be related to Classical *mittō* “send” but because it belongs to a different conjugation it would have to be a separate formation from the same root (it cannot be subjunctive like Class. *mittat* because the context requires an indicative and also because the ending for a third sg. subjunctive would be written -D). Also from the Duenos inscription comes a future imperative TATOD, probably “may he steal”: a verb *tā-* is otherwise unknown in Latin, but it will be an Indo-European inheritance, with cognates in Old Irish, Hittite, etc.

Evidence for the Old Latin period is far more plentiful, and here the picture is very different. This seems to have been a time of exuberant creativity, with new coinages arising at a remarkable rate. Categories that enjoyed particular expansion included denominal adjectives (Rosén (1999) 53–56) and substantival nominalisations, or abstract formations, where the older language shows an abundance of choice that is severely curtailed in Classical Latin (Rosén (1999) 62–70). For instance, “dirtiness” in older texts may be *squālitās*, *squālitūdō*, *squālēs* or *squālor* but only the last survives in normal Classical usage; similarly for “leanness”, from amongst the options *macor*, *macritūdō* and *maciēs* in older Latin the Classical language selects just *maciēs*.

Vigorous variety gave way to Classical purity and precision, but the price paid was perhaps rather high.

Some Syntactic Patterns

Relative clauses

There are scant traces of an early construction in which the relative pronoun functions simply as a determiner of the noun in a nominal phrase. The best examples come from citations: cf. *qui patres, qui conscripti* (Paul. *Fest.* 304) with reference to senators; *dīni qui potes* (Varro, *L.* 5.58) “powerful deities”, taken from the books of the augurs. This usage is thought to continue an Indo-European pattern (Benveniste (1958)) since there are striking parallels in Greek and Sanskrit. An Old Latin literary example may be *salvete, Athenae, quae nutrices Graeciae* “hail, Athens, nurse of Greece” (Pl. *St.* 649), though some would prefer to see here, and certainly elsewhere in Old Latin a simple ellipse of the verb “to be” (so Lavency (1998) 112–113).

Likewise inherited is a more widely attested Old Latin pattern in which the relative clause, nearly always a restrictive (or defining) relative clause, precedes the main clause, with the nucleus (or head) incorporated into the relative clause and taking its case from its function

within that (Lehmann (1979); Hettrich (1988) 467 ff.). The nucleus may be repeated in the main clause, or an anaphoric pronoun may be employed, as in the following examples:

IN AREA TRANS VIAM PARIES QUI EST PROPTER VIAM, IN EO PARIETE MEDIO OSTIEI LVMEN APERITO
 in the area across the road, the wall which is near the road, in the middle of that wall he shall
 make an opening for a door. (*CIL* I².698. 9–11, 105 BCE)

ab arbore abs terra pulli qui nascentur, eos in terram deprimito
 the shoots that grow from the tree from the ground, those one should push down into the
 ground. (Cato, *Agr.* 51)

It is possible to see a further development of this pattern in examples like:

agrum quem Volsci habuerunt campestris plerumque Aboriginum fuit
 the land that the Volsci occupied, the level land mainly belonged to the Aborigines.
 (Cato, *Orig.* fr. 7 Peter)

ostium quod in angiporto est horti, patefecit fores
 the entrance to the garden in the alley, I have opened (its) door. (Pl. *Mos.* 1046)

patronus qui vobis fuit futurus, perdidistis
 you have lost the man who was going to be your patron. (Pl. *As.* 621)

eunuchum quem dedisti nobis, quas turbas dedit!
 the eunuch you gave us, what a disturbance he made! (Ter. *Eu.* 653)

These could, however, also be classified as instances of attraction (*attractio inversa*), with regular antecedents taking on the case of the relative pronoun, and this is especially likely to apply in the rare instances of appositive relative clauses following the pattern, e.g.

Naucratem quem conuenire uolui, in nauis non erat
 Naucrates, who I wanted to meet, wasn't on the ship. (Pl. *Am.* 1009)

or where the nucleus is determined by a demonstrative pronoun, e.g.

istos captiuos duos, heri quos emi ... is indito catenas singularias
 those two captives that I bought yesterday ... put light fetters on them. (Pl. *Capt.* 110–112)

and the rare examples from Classical times are probably best explained as instances of attraction rather than as survivals of the earlier usage. In Late Latin the construction with *attractio inversa* is common and is generally regarded as a colloquial feature. In Old Latin it does not obviously have any such connotation, which it no doubt acquired as a consequence of the strong preference in the Classical language for the regular construction in which the relative clause immediately follows the antecedent (even in Plautus preposed relative clauses are less frequent than other patterns), and often serves simply as a way of marking the main topic of a sentence, as can be seen from several of the examples above. Traditionally the Old Latin relative clauses have been viewed with hindsight from the

point of view of the Classical language, but if one takes into account the probable Indo-European inheritance a more illuminating account of the early stages becomes possible, and at all events there is a marked development through time ((Lehmann (1979); Hettrich (1988) 467 ff.; Rosén (1999) 33–35, 164–173).

Genitive and adjective

Another characteristic feature of early Latin that survives in later popular language but was originally probably unmarked for register is the employment of an adjective where Classical Latin prefers an adnominal genitive (see in general Wackernagel (2009) 487–490; Löfstedt (1942–1956) I.107–124). A classic instance is *nostra erilis concubina* “our master’s concubine” (Pl. *Mil.* 458) as opposed to *concubina nostri eri*. This usage occurs frequently in Plautus (cf. *erile scelus* “my master’s crime” (*Rud.* 198), *seruiles nuptiae* “a slave’s wedding” (*Cas.* 68), *facinus muliebre* “the woman’s shameful deed” (*Truc.* 809), etc.) but can be found in a wide range of texts. This helps to account for the great productivity in Old Latin of denominal adjectives with purely relational meaning: alongside formations with specific meanings such as *-ōsus* “full of” or *-ātus* “endowed with”, which remain productive in Classical Latin, there are countless adjectives in *-āl/ris*, *-ārius*, *-icus*, etc. that simply indicate an adnominal relation, and these types lose ground in the Classical period in favour of the genitive (Rosén (1999) 53–56).

The antiquity of this use of the adjective is shown by established titles like *flāmen Diālis* “priest of Jupiter” and *uirgō Vestālis* “virgin of Vesta, Vestal virgin”. Temples, on the other hand, are standardly referred to with the deity’s name in the genitive, so *aedes Iouis* “the temple of Jupiter”, *aedes Vestae* “the temple of Vesta”, *SVB AEDE KASTORVS* “in the temple of Castor” (*CIL* I².586), which may perhaps be explained as an indication of a truly possessive relationship (Löfstedt (1942–1956) I.111–112). A certain fluidity of usage can be found: Plautus in the *Rudens* uses *sacerdōs Veneria* “priestess of Venus” three times (329, 350, 644) but also once *sacerdos Veneris* (430). Other survivals include month names such as *mēnsis Martius* “March, the month of Mars” and place-names at Rome such as *collis Quirīnālis* “the hill of Quirinus” and *campus Martius* “the field of Mars”.

One use of adjectives that may aspire to be an Indo-European inheritance, given that there are convincing parallels in Greek, Venetic and elsewhere, is the formation of patronymic adjectives. This process is no longer in evidence as such in Latin (it survives in Umbrian) but it underlies a large number of *gentilicia* or family names. *Tullius*, for instance, was originally an adjective derived from the personal name *Tullus* and meant “son of Tullus”, but it came to be applied to descendants in the next generation too and thus became a family name (just as in English *Johnson* ceased to mean literally “John’s son” and became a surname to be passed on down the family).

It is interesting to note that in early Latin a *gentilicium* still behaved as an adjective. This explains why the road built on the instructions of someone called Flaminius is known as the *uia Flāminia*, and why a law proposed by someone called Sulpicius is known as a *lēx Sulpicia*. These are old patterns that remained as a model for later times. The adjectival nature of the *gentilicium* is also manifest in one or two Old Latin inscriptions mentioning brothers, e.g. the following from Praeneste, probably early second century BCE (*CIL* I².61):

Q. K. CESTIO Q. F. HERCOLE DONV DEDERO

Quintus and Kaeso Cestius, sons of Quintus, gave this as a gift to Hercules

The form CESTIO here is a nominative singular that has lost its final [-s]; it is singular because of the rule that when an adjective qualifies a number of preceding nouns it agrees with the last of them. In the course of the second century, the grammatical status of the *gentilicium* changed and it became a noun, and this is reflected in another inscription mentioning brothers, this time from the second half of the century (*CIL* I².1531) where we find M. P. VERTVLEIEIS C. F., with the family name in the nominative plural (in -EIS, see above) because it is now in apposition to *Marcus* and *Pūblius* as a noun (Meister (1916) 81–112).

Nominalisations with verbal syntax

The productivity of nominalisations in Old Latin was noted above, but their syntactic behaviour also deserves comment. In this period there are several examples of deverbal nominalisations behaving like verbs in taking direct objects or other complements. Some examples:

quid tibi hanc digito tactio est?

How come you are touching this girl here with your finger? (Pl. *Poen.* 1308)

quid tibi hanc curatiost rem?

How is this matter any concern of yours? (Pl. *Am.* 519)

eius crebras mansiones ad amicam

his frequent stays at his girl-friend's (Turpil. 171–172 com.)

manum iniect[i]o

“casting on of hands”, i.e. “arrest” (*CIL* I².401)

In the Classical language an objective genitive replaces the accusative, though other forms of complement linger on, cf. Cicero, *Att.* 9.5.1 *mansio Formiis* “staying at Formiae”.

Archaic Latin

The language of the XII Tables

Although attested only in citations that have been modernised in their spelling and phonology, the *XII Tables* (for which see Crawford (1996) II. 555–721) nonetheless preserve a certain number of Archaic morphological, lexical and syntactic features. For instance the preposition *endo*, attested also in a sixth-century inscription: this is an enlarged version of **en* (Class. *in*) which appears in nominal phrases such as *endo dies*

“per day” and as a preverb in *manum endo iacito* “let him lay hands on (him)” i.e. “let him arrest (him)”. This form is later used to provide archaic colouring by Cicero in his deliberately archaising legal language in the phrase *endo caelo* (*Leg.* 2.19); but the usual form in Old Latin is *indu*, cf. Ennius’ *induperator* for *imperator* – such alternative forms being especially helpful in dactylic verse but already to be classified as artificial poetic creations.

One instance of *endo* is in *endoque plorato* “and he is to call out” (Class. *implorato*), where the preverb appears in tmesis, separated from its verb by an enclitic conjunction; cf. also *transque dato* “and he is to hand over” (Class. *tradito*). Tmesis of preverbs is a pattern inherited from Indo-European, where the elements that later became preverbs were essentially independent adverbs, but only one or two other examples survive in citations from old prayers: *sub uos placo* for *supplicio uos* and *ob uos sacro* for *obsecro uos*, both meaning “I beseech you” (Paul. *Fest.* 402). It is unclear whether later instances such as *de me hortatur* “dissuades me” in Ennius (*Ann.* 371 Skutsch) represent archaic survivals or imitations of Homeric practice (Leumann (1977) 562; Weiss (2009) 463–464).

A striking syntactic characteristic of the *XII Tables* is the absence of any indication of the frequent changes of subject, which makes for a certain rugged concision: the most famous example (I.17 in Crawford’s edition) is *si nox furtum fa<x>it, <ast> im occisit, iure caesus esto* “if he (A) shall have committed theft by night (and) he (B) shall have killed him (A), he (A) is to be lawfully killed”. To be noted here also are the archaic verbal forms in *-s-*, still used in conditional clauses in Plautus but only as deliberate archaisms thereafter (see de Melo (2007b) 171–190) and the future imperative, which became a regular feature of legal language, as Old Latin inscriptions and Cicero’s archaising legalese make clear.

Samples of Inscriptions

To illustrate how features such as those selected for comment above combine to give Archaic Latin a distinctive appearance, two short inscriptions may be cited in full.

The earliest Latin inscription (probably from Praeneste) is on a gold brooch and is dated to the seventh century BCE (*CIL* I².3): this is the *Fibula Praenestina* (see Figure 2.2, p. 13). Its authenticity has been challenged, but there are good arguments for accepting it as genuine (see Hartmann (2005) 67–106; Poccetti (2005)).

MANIOS: MED: FHE:PHAKED: NUMASIOI

(*Manius me fecit Numerio*)

Manius made me (or “had me made”) for Numerius

Noteworthy are the following points:

- nom. sg. [-os] remains unchanged
- MED for acc. sg. “me” beside Classical *mē*, shows a final [-d] intact after the long vowel (the source of the [-d] is not altogether clear, but it is the standard archaic form)

- FHE:FHAKED provides the best example of the FH spelling for [f], with punctuation of the reduplication that can be paralleled in an early Faliscan inscription (PE:PARAI), and with the expected final -D in a past tense; for the stem, see under “Morphological Features” above
- NUMASIOI, dat. sg., shows no internal vowel-weakening and no rhotacism, in contrast to the Classical equivalent *Numeriō*, and has a final diphthong, probably [-ōi] eventually becoming Classical [-ō].

More puzzling in content, at least in part, is an inscription written round the outside of a group of three small conjoined pots, found at Rome and to be dated probably to the mid-sixth century (*CIL* I².4), the *Duenos* inscription (see Figure 2.4, p. 16). There have been claims that the inscription is in verse.

IOVESATDEIVOSQOIMEDMITATNEITEDENDOCOSMISVIRCOSIED
 ASTEDNOISIOPETOITESIAIPACARIVOIS
 DVENOSMEDFECEDENMANOMEINOMDVENOINEMEDMALOSTATOD

The inscription does not mark division into words, but there is broad agreement amongst modern scholars on the analysis of the first and third lines, the second being almost entirely unintelligible; the meaning of the phrase EN MANOM EINOM in the third line is disputed. Most of the forms have Classical equivalents:

IOVESAT DEIVOS QOI MED MITAT NEI TED ENDO COSMIS VIRCO SIED
iūrat deōs quī mē (dōnat), nī tē in cōmis uirgō sit
 ...
 DVENOS MED FECED EN MANOM EINOM DVENOI NE MED MALOS TATOD
bonus mē fēcīt in (...(um) (...)um) bonō, nē mē malus (clēpi)tō
 He who gives me swears by the gods, if the girl is not affable towards you ...
 a good man made me ... for a good man: let not a bad man steal me”

Noteworthy points that have not already been addressed:

- ENDO (see above) seems here to be used a postposition, governing acc. sg. TED
- SIED, with third sg. -d in the subjunctive, conforms to the original pattern of vowel alternation between singular and plural in this paradigm, with e.g. second sg. *sīēs* but second pl. *sītis*, the plural stem eventually being generalised to give Classical *sim*, *sīs*, *sīt* (the usual forms in Plautus except in certain metrical positions)
- DVENOS is the direct ancestor of *bonus* with regular sound changes.

Old Latin: On the Threshold of the Classical Language

In marked contrast with these Archaic texts, we may consider an inscription securely dated by its content to 241 BCE: it is on a bronze cuirass that was part of the booty from the capture of Falerii in that year (Zimmermann (1986)):

Q. LVTATIO. C. F. A. MANLIO. C. F.

CONSOLIBVS. FALERIES. CAPTO

Captured at Falerii under the consuls Q. Lutatius C. f. and A. Manilius C. f.

This shows a number of changes that herald the Classical norms:

- final [-d] has been lost from the ablative singulars
- [-os] has become [-us] in the ending -IBVS
- the spelling CONS- has replaced the COS- that was standard a little earlier (whence the abbreviation *cos.* for *consul* that survived into the Classical period), presumably with nasalisation of the vowel
- rhotacism has taken place in FALERIES < **Falasiois*, cf. *Falis-cī*.

Residual early features are:

- the second o of CONSOLIBVS (Class. *cōnsulibus*), cf. also TABOLAM (Class. *tabulam*) “tablet”, acc. sg. in the *Senatusconsultum de Bacchanalibus*
- the e in the ending of FALERIES (a definite change from Archaic Latin but not yet the Classical vocalism – see above)
- the spelling CAPTO, with no indication of the final nasal and no change to the vowel of the final syllable (Class. *captum*).

One can see from this inscription that by 240 Latin was rapidly approaching its Classical state, at least as regards orthography and pronunciation. The changes to come were relatively minor, e.g. the regular change of vowel in *uoster* to *uester* “your (pl.)”, *uorsus* to *uersus* “towards”, *uotō* to *uetō* “forbid”: this took place around the middle of the second century, the older forms remaining well enough known to be used as deliberate archaisms by later authors. The voiceless aspirates of Greek ([th], [ph] and [kh]) were at first ignored in Greek loanwords and these sounds were represented in inscriptions with T, P and C just like the unaspirated stops, cf. BACANAL in the *Senatusconsultum de Bacchanalibus* of 186 BCE as opposed to Class. *Bacchānal*; but around the middle of the second century greater care was taken to represent the aspiration in writing, and no doubt in pronunciation too, since aspiration seems then to have spread to some purely Latin words, perhaps initially as an affected pronunciation, e.g. *pulcher*. The transition may be seen in a dedication by L. Mummius following his destruction of Corinth in 146 BCE which contains both the phrase ACHAIA for Greece (perhaps the first example of the new spelling style) and abl. sg. CORINTO for Corinth with the older neglect of the aspiration.

FURTHER READING

This period in the history of Latin is well covered in chapters 4 and 5 of Clackson and Horrocks (2007) 90–182. On the origin and development of the Latin alphabet see Wachter (1987) esp. 7–54, 324–333 (on the date of the invention of the letter G); Wallace (1989). The most convenient collection of early Latin inscriptions is *ILLRP*; Warmington (1940) offers a wide selection with English translations; Wachter (1987) is indispensable for discussion of epigraphical matters and

also linguistic features; Vine (1993) deals with one or two individual inscriptions and has chapters on various points of orthography, phonology and morphology, with many acute observations; Flobert (1991) gives an overview of what the earliest inscriptions contribute to our knowledge of the history of Latin; the limited evidence for dialectal variety in the inscriptions is treated by Adams (2007) 37–113. A good selection of prose texts, mainly literary, with a helpful commentary, can be found in Courtney (1999). (For the language of comedy, see de Melo, chapter 19 of this volume.) Phonological and morphological changes during this period are presented within the general context of the history of Latin in various handbooks, notably Leumann (1977), Sihler (1995), Meiser (1998), and Weiss (2009). Rosén (1999), showing how Classical Latin developed out of the older language, discusses numerous points of morphology and syntax.