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AUGUSTA TREVERORUM VULGARIS:
LINGUISTIC CHANGE AND CULTURAL INTEGRATION
IN THE VULGAR LATIN INSCRIPTIONS
OF TRIER (GERMANY)

Summary: The copious corpus of deviations from standard Latin from Trier spans more than 800 years (50 BC–800 AD) and comprises both pagan and Christian inscriptions, the latter exclusively on tombstones. This paper points out the most salient non-standard features in the categories of phonetics, morphology, syntax and vocabulary. Most of them conform to standard Vulgar Latin, but some yield features of the inscriptions' area, such as Western Romance (preservation of final *-s*, voicing intervocalic stops), Gallo-Romance (*qui* instead of *quae*, nasalisation), and the extinct Moselle Romance. A few features might reflect Gaulish substrate influence ([u] > [y], *e* before nasals > *i*, $\bar{e} > \bar{i}$, $\bar{o} > \bar{u}$, *-m* > *-n*). Clues for palatalisation and the raisings $\bar{e} > \bar{i}$, $\bar{o} > \bar{u}$ are the most prominent phonetic features, the latter supporting, combined with the preservation of final *-s*, a renewed paradigm of nominal inflection. Morphosyntactic changes are driven by analogy and regularisations. Starting at the fringes, the erosion of case syntax ended up in a complete breakdown. Christianity fostered the recording of previously undocumented substandard features, completed the assimilation of Celtic (which pagan polytheism and the upwards mobility of Roman society had initiated) and supported the cultural integration of Germanic immigrants.

Key words: Trier, Inscriptions, Vulgar Latin, Christianity, Celtic, Germanic

Piae memoriae Henrici Heinen, viri doctissimi

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of Vulgar Latin has increasingly focused on geographically defined corpora and their specifics, such as an area and city.¹ In this wake, my paper searches to establish a grammar of the Vulgar Inscriptions of Trier, one of the residencies of the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity. The starting point of my analysis is the 551 entries

¹ VÄÄNÄNEN, V.: *Le latin vulgaire des inscriptions pompéiennes*. Berlin 1966; GALDI, G.: *Grammatica delle iscrizioni latine dell'impero (province orientali). Morfosintassi nominale*. Rome 2004.

of non-standard deviations, recorded for *Augusta Treverorum* by the Budapest based *Computerized Historical Linguistic Database of the Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age* (=LLDB, <http://lldb.elte.hu/>), which also provides classifications for the deviations. Using the same categories in which Diehl arranged the Vulgar Latin Inscriptions of his anthology² I shall systematise these deviations in chapters on phonetics, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. Due to space limitation, I can include only the most salient features in this paper: those that attest to a prominent or rare linguistic phenomenon or are regionally pertinent, such as Western Romance, Gallo-Romance, and the extinct Moselle Romance. This Gallo-Romance language³ was spoken at the banks of the Moselle by the Romance population which chiefly stayed after the downfall of the Roman Empire⁴ and was assimilated to German about 1200.⁵

The non-standard Latin inscriptions from Trier – including both pagan and Christian inscriptions – document language change over more than 800 years (c. 50 BC–800 AD).⁶ The Christian inscriptions (first half of the 4th cent. – c. 800) occur exclusively on tombstones and provide the overwhelming majority of the Trier Vulgar Latin inscriptions.⁷ The pagan inscriptions are multifunctional, comprising one official document,⁸ curse tablets on lead with a very vulgar make-up and craft objects (gold rings, a gem, a glass flask, a lamp, pottery). A number of pagan funeral inscriptions also record the deceased's social position and achievements.⁹ A few inscriptions document the sponsorship of building restoration,¹⁰ one of a sanctuary for Mars.¹¹ A considerable group are votive inscriptions for pagan gods and goddesses such as Mars,¹²

² DIEHL, E.: *Vulgärlateinische Inschriften*. Bonn 1910.

³ Cf. JUNGANDREAS, W.: *Zur Geschichte des Moselromanischen*. Wiesbaden 1979, 1; KRAMER, J.: *Das Französische in Deutschland*. Stuttgart 1992, 40.

⁴ KRAMER (n. 3) 28.

⁵ KRAMER (n. 3) 36.

⁶ All inscriptions are Christian, private, prose, stone unless marked differently. *ceteris paribus* examples are listed in a chronological order. From extensively documented phenomena only the most representative instances are included. The dating of the inscriptions follows the LLDB, with some corrections from the Landesmuseum in Trier. If the LLDB indicates that the date is unknown no date will be given at all. All dates are AD or CE unless otherwise indicated.

⁷ Totalling 1,300, the extant early Christian inscriptions from Trier far outweigh those from the remainder of the North and West of the Gauls and Germanies (Cologne and Bonn together: 50 inscriptions, the Middle Rhine between Andernach and Boppard: 60, Mainz: 50, Metz: 20, Lyons: 150 [MERTEN, H.: *Frühchristliche Grabinschriften in Trier*. Stand der Bearbeitung. In CLEMENS, L. – MERTEN, H. – SCHÄFER, C. (eds): *Frühchristliche Grabinschriften im Westen des Römischen Reiches*. Trier 2015, 29–36, here 29]).

⁸ TRIBUNICIE (*CIL* XVII.2 550). Except for *Fuchs* = FUCHS, R.: *Die Inschriften der Stadt Trier I (bis 1500)*. Wiesbaden 2006, the abbreviations of the inscription editions and their complete bibliographical references can be found in Claus / Slaby (<http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/hinweise/abkuerz.html>). The last numbers mark the number within the inscription editions, not the page.

⁹ E.g. *Ness-Lieb* 4. 151–300 (IIIIIVIR AUG(ustalis)); *AE* 1928,183, *CSIR-D* IV.3 426. 251–300 (MILES CLASSIS GERMANICE ... NEGOTIATOR CERVESARIUS).

¹⁰ *CSIR-D* IV.3 121, *CIL* XIII 3647 (ARCVM CVM OSTIS instead of *ostiis*, but TI is written with a cross-like sign); *CSIR-D* IV.3 118, *CIL* XIII 3650. 191–210 (CVLINAM () CONLABSAM).

¹¹ *CSIR-D* IV.3 178, *CIL* XIII 3653.

¹² *CSIR-D* IV.3 185, *Finke* 15.

Diana,¹³ Minerva,¹⁴ and the Celtic goddesses Visucia,¹⁵ Ritona,¹⁶ and Sirona¹⁷ whose presence attests to the integration of the Celtic population. One inscription provides linguistic evidence for this process,¹⁸ its deviations from Classical Latin being explained by the influence of a Celtic substrate.¹⁹ Besides Celtic and Christian influences, the Germanic element as evidenced by personal names (chiefly on Christian inscriptions) is the third major cultural and ethnic factor which these local inscriptions document and which deeply influenced the history of Europe and also of Latin.

2. PHONETICS

2.1 Vocalism

The abundant evidence of monophthongisation of *ae* to [ɛ] offers two peculiar features. First, the hypercorrect use of *ae* instead of *e* from the middle of the 4th century onwards in Christian inscriptions²⁰ attests to the total ignorance of the diphthong. And second, the spelling DAE instead of *deae* in pagan inscriptions²¹ is best explained by a scenario in which the *ae*, after being monophthongised to *e* [ɛ] was contracted with the preceding homophonous *e* to a (long) [ɛ:]. This sound was graphically represented by *ae* that, due to its origin as a diphthong, kept some idea of length.

Two later inscriptions might feature the Gallo-Romance and Moselle Romance²² loss of all posttonic vowels except for *a* also in endings.²³ One of them matches perfectly the Old French *cas régime* (*Albinus* > ALBINS²⁴ ~ *filius* > OFr *fil*s).

The Trier inscriptions offer a striking number of vowel changes that are not covered by the classical scheme of the loss of distinctive length and near-close mergers (Quantitätenkollaps), as established for the standard languages of the West.²⁵ Among

¹³ *CIL* XIII 11340d, pagan, lead, defixio.

¹⁴ *Nesselhauf* 10. 151–700.

¹⁵ *CSIR-D* IV.3 402, *CIL* XIII 3665. 151–300.

¹⁶ *CSIR-D* IV.3 301, *Finke* 30. 151–300.

¹⁷ *CSIR-D* IV.3 320, *CIL* XIII 3662. 151–200 (here written DIRONA).

¹⁸ *RICG* I 75, *CIL* XIII 3909. 501–750.

¹⁹ MIKHAILOVA, T.: “A true stroke of good luck”: The Inscription # *CIL* XIII 3909 as a Monument of Gallo-Roman language and cultural contacts during the Late Empire. Forthcoming in BRODERICK, G. – KLOSS, G. – WILLMS, L. (eds): *Kelten, Römer, Griechen – Sprach- und Kulturkontakte im Römischen Reich und seinem Umfeld*. Berlin, 6 (here cited by page numbers of the pdf submitted for publication).

²⁰ AEIVS instead of *eius* (*RICG* I 68. 350–400), AEORVM instead of *eorum* (*RICG* I 68. 350–400), SA[E]NIOR instead of *senior* (*RICG* I 97, *Finke* 52. 590–700), IN PACAE instead of *in pace* (*RICG* I 124, *CIL* XIII 3827. 330–400, *RICG* I 38. 401–500).

²¹ *CSIR-D* IV.3 324, *CIL* XIII 3664. 151–200; *CSIR-D* IV.3 320, *CIL* XIII 3662. 151–200; *CSIR-D* IV.3 403, *AE* 1989,550, 151–300; *CSIR-D* IV.3 402, *CIL* XIII 3665. 151–300.

²² KRAMER (n. 3) 38.

²³ As *Idus* > EDS (*RICG* I 72, *CIL* XIII 3907. 501–600) is surrounded by abbreviations the absence of *u* is probably due to an abbreviation as well (cf. *RICG* I 109 ID(us)).

²⁴ *RICG* I 123, *CIL* XIII 3825. 430–600.

²⁵ KIESLER, R.: *Einführung in die Problematik des Vulgärlateins*. Tübingen 2006, 42–44.

them, I shall focus on the most spectacular of the numerous raisings of *e* and *o* to *i* and *u*. Raisings of short vowels are rare and happen mostly in Merovingian inscriptions. Those of *ǒ* to *ǔ* occur exclusively in the immediate context of *p*²⁶ suggesting an assimilation to the neighbouring labial, which is not uncommon in Moselle Romance (VLat **bove campo* > PN *Bukamp*)²⁷ whereas any raising of *ǒ* to *ǔ* is extremely rare in Vulgar Latin both in tonic²⁸ and atonic position.²⁹

There are many more instances of the raising of long *ē* and *ō* to *i* and *u*. The shift of a long *ē* to *i* in a stressed position, chiefly attested in both open and closed syllables in Gaul,³⁰ sometimes occurs in Spanish³¹ and French.³² In all cases (except for *tēcum* > TI|CVM) – as in *iacit*,³³ the only instance of raising *ē* to *i* – the long *ē* is immediately preceded or followed by *-(s)c*-³⁴ that would have been palatalised at that time. The posttonic shift occurs exclusively in the nominative³⁵ and accusative³⁶ plural of nouns of the consonant and *i*-declension.³⁷ As some nouns of the *i*-declension yield a nominative singular in *-es*³⁸ instead of *-is* which reflects the default phonetic shift *ī* > *e*, the shift *ē* > *i* might be involved in an attempt to re-establish a vowel supported morphological distinction between singular and plural. This means of differentiation was almost necessary as the Trier Vulgar Latin had systematically kept the final *-s* like the other Western Romance languages.

²⁶ PVSVERVNT instead of *posuerunt* (RICG I 18, CIL XIII 3820. 480–580), PVPVLO instead of *populo* (RICG I 135, CIL XIII 3683. 701–800, verse).

²⁷ JUNGANDREAS (n. 3) 30–31.

²⁸ GAENG, P. A.: *An Inquiry into Local Variations in Vulgar Latin as Reflected in the Vocalism of Christian Inscriptions*. Chapel Hill 1968, 74–79.

²⁹ GAENG (n. 28) 184–189.

³⁰ GAENG (n. 28) 53–55.

³¹ *tēcum* > TI|CVM (cf. Span. *contigo*) (RICG I 55, CIL XIII 3887. 450–500).

³² *fēcit* > FICIT (cf. French *fit*, Span. *hizo*) (RICG I 147, Nesselhauf 31. 601–800), *fēcerunt* > FICIRV[NT] (cf. French *firent*, Span. *hicieron* vs. Ital. *fecero*) (RICG I 164. 313–700).

³³ RICG I 45. 390–440; RICG I 3. 450–520. The shift *-et* > *-it* is quite frequent in verbal endings (GAENG [n. 28] 127–8).

³⁴ In addition to the examples listed two footnotes above: *ado/ulescens* > ADOLISCENS (RICG I 147, Nesselhauf 31. 601–800), *recēpit* > RECIPIT (RICG I 194A. 601–800), *quiēscit* > QVIISCIT (RICG I 50, CIL XIII 3872. 390–440), QVIISCI[T] (RICG I 29. 390–440), *requiēscit* > REQVIISCIT (RICG I 33, CIL XIII 3858. 450–500).

³⁵ PARENTIS (instead of *parentes*) (RICG I 48. 390–440; RICG I 25, CIL XIII 3842. 410–490), PATRIS (instead of *patres*) (RICG I 35, CIL XIII 3860. 350–400; RICG I 61. 380–420), + many other instances.

NVTRI|[C]IONIS (instead of *nutriciones*) (RICG I 67. 390–450), INOCENTIS (instead of *inno-centes*) (RICG I 70, CIL XIII 3904. 450–750).

³⁶ INTER () SENIORIS (instead of *seniores*) (RICG I 71, CIL XIII 3687. 400–420), CAL NOVEMBRIS (instead of *novembres*) (RICG I 104, CIL XIII 3696. 450–500).

menses > MENSIS (RICG I 124, CIL XIII 3827. 330–400; + 4 later ones), MESIS (RICG I 60, CIL XIII 3893/4. 350–400; + 4 later ones), NESIS (RICG I 62, CIL XIII 3899. 450–500).

³⁷ These two particular shifts pervade Vulgar Latin, except for the Iberian Peninsula (GAENG [n. 28] 137–140).

³⁸ FIDELES (RICG I 117, CIL XIII 3816. 401–500), PRINCIPALES (RICG I 104, CIL XIII 3696. 450–500), VENERA|BILES (RICG I 29A, Nesselhauf 23. 701–800).

We might invoke this motivation also for the posttonic raising of \bar{o} to u which is common in Vulgar Latin inscriptions³⁹ and occurs in the Trier corpus exclusively in examples of the accusative plural *annus* instead of *annos*.⁴⁰ One tonic raising of \bar{o} to u occurs before r (as does also one instance⁴¹ of the pretonic raisings⁴²) and matches the same word's form in the Oaths of Strasbourg (*Pro Deo amur ~ AMVRE*⁴³). Two of the tonic raisings occur before n and m , both of which would have had a nasalising effect on the preceding vowel.⁴⁴ This tendency is prominently observed in Moselle Romance (PN *Thurun* [a. 1198] < VLat. **urrone*)⁴⁵ and matches perfectly the Eastern Old French dialects where o < Latin [o] surfaced as u in open syllables (*meillur* instead of *meillor* 'better') and before nasals (*num, tuz, dunt* instead of *nom, toz* 'all', *dont*).⁴⁶ Fittingly, already in Vulgar Latin inscriptions from Gaul and Italy, \bar{o} was raised to u before r ; in those from Rome, it was also raised before $n(s)$.⁴⁷ József Herman has pointed out that the spelling u instead of o in these and other cases is typical of Gallo-Roman inscriptions.⁴⁸ The raising of \bar{e} to \bar{i} and of \bar{o} to \bar{u} (in final syllables) is also found in Celtic⁴⁹ and thus is likely a substratum phenomenon, at least in part. Fittingly, the raising of \bar{o} to \bar{u} starts also in the Trier inscriptions with the final syllables of the o -declension and predates that of the stressed vowels by roughly one century.

2.2 Nasalisation

The loss of $-m-$ before b in *Noveb* as well as the spelling NOVIIMB (the M is upside down) instead of *novembres* in one inscription⁵⁰ and QUIESCINT instead of *quiescent* in another one⁵¹ suggest nasalisation also in the middle of the word, as also observed in French. The raising $e > i$ before a nasal finds a match in Latin inscriptions,

³⁹ GAENG (n. 28) 201–209.

⁴⁰ *Nesselhauf* 41d. 380–800, *FITrier-1990* 109. 390–410, *RICG* I 119, *Finke* 54. 420–500, *RICG* I 33, *CIL* XIII 3858. 450–500: ANVS), *RICG* I 134, *FITrier-1990* 8. 670–720, *verse*, *RICG* I 135, *CIL* XIII 3683. 701–800, *verse*, + many other instances.

⁴¹ *Victorinus* > VICTVRIN[V][S] (*RICG* I 184. 450–700).

⁴² *Adeodatus* > ADEV DATVS (*RICG* I 96. 390–440), *ostiarus* > VSITARIVS (*RICG* I 165, *CIL* XIII 3789. 501–700).

⁴³ *RICG* I 147, *Nesselhauf* 31. 601–800.

⁴⁴ *matronae* > MATRVNE (*RICG* I 138, *CIL* XIII 3690. 501–600), *nōmine* > NV[MINE] (*RICG* I 147, *Nesselhauf* 31. 601–800).

⁴⁵ JUNGANDREAS (n. 3) 34–35.

⁴⁶ GROSSE, E. U.: *Altfranzösischer Elementarkurs*. Munich 1986, 50.

⁴⁷ GAENG (n. 28) 194–95.

⁴⁸ HERMAN, J.: *Le latin vulgaire*. Paris 1975, 40–41.

⁴⁹ PIE **Hrēg-* 'king' > PCelt. **rīg-* (OIr. *rí*), PIE **kwōn* 'dog' > PCelt. **kwū(n)* (OIr. *cú*, *W ci*), PIE **g^wedh-iō* > *uediuu* 'pray' (MATASOVIĆ, R.: *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Celtic*. Leiden 2009, 8; LAMBERT, P.-Y.: *La langue gauloise*. Paris 1994, 41–42).

⁵⁰ *RICG* I 227, *CIL* XIII 3949. 480–800.

⁵¹ *RICG* I 222, *CIL* XIII 3868. 501–600.

where MONIMENTON and MONIMINTO instead of *monumentum* ‘funeral monument’ are assumed to reflect Celtic influence.⁵²

2.3 Western Romance Consonant features

Some phenomena are features of Western Romance languages in general, such as the preservation of final *-s*,⁵³ the degemination of double consonants⁵⁴ and the voicing of intervocalic stops (*domesticus* > DOMESTIGUS,⁵⁵ *sacratu*s > SAGRA/[TUS],⁵⁶ *ad-ditisque* > ADDIDISQUE⁵⁷). *Qu* is sometimes spelled without its labial element. As in Gallo-Romance, this phenomenon is observed before both *i*,⁵⁸ *e*⁵⁹ and *a*,⁶⁰ whereas Italian and the Ibero-Romance languages normally drop the labial element, but preserve it before *a* (Ital. *quando*, Cat. *quan*, Span. *cuando*). The shift of final *-m* > *-n*⁶¹ is occasionally attested in Vulgar Latin and recurs throughout the Romance languages,⁶² including Moselle Romance (PN *Massenbreth* (a. 1051) < Lat. *maximum pratum*).⁶³ It might be tracked back earlier to Gaulish where it is pervasive.⁶⁴

2.4 Palatalisation and mouillement

Assibilation,⁶⁵ which is attested for Moselle Romance (Lat. *palatium* → PN *Palacium* [a. 690] > *Pfalzel*)⁶⁶ and a palatalisation of *-i-* [j] > [dʒ] similar to Italian

⁵² DUVAL, P.-M.: *La vie quotidienne en Gaule pendant la Paix Romaine*. Paris 1952, 49; MIKHAILOVA (n. 19) 5.

⁵³ There is only one Late Antique instance of the drop of final *-s* (VIXIT DIE XV instead of *vixit dies XV* [RICG I 36, CIL XIII 3862. 350–400]). An earlier instance is epigraphically dubious (VIVA|| instead of *vivas* [CIL XIII 10024/257, pagan, gold ring]).

⁵⁴ *nummularius* > NV|MVLARIS | (CSIR-D IV.3 48, CIL XIII 11311. 268–271, pagan), *annum* > ANVM (FITrier-1990 15. 401–500), INOCENTIS (RICG I 70, CIL XIII 3904. 450–750), *dulcissimae* > DVLCESI|ME (RICG I 138, CIL XIII 3690. 501–600), + 4 instances.

⁵⁵ RICG I 1/5, CIL XIII 3682. 351–400.

⁵⁶ *Fuchs* 13 (7/8th cent.), FITrier-2018 56 (pre-Carolingian), verse.

⁵⁷ RICG I 194A. 601–800. The voicing might also be due to an assimilation to the preceding *-dd-* or the analogy of the perfect *addidi*.

⁵⁸ *qui* > QI (Kropp 4.1.3/11, CIL XIII 11340e, pagan, lead, defixio; RICG I 207. 501–800; RICG I 23, CIL XIII 3837. 501–700), *quiesce* > QI|ESCE (RICG I 24, CIL XIII 3838. 440–470).

⁵⁹ *quae* > QE (Kropp 4.1.3/11, CIL XIII 11340e, pagan, lead, defixio), QAE (RICG I 61. 380–420).

⁶⁰ *quarta* > QARTA (FITrier-1990 11, RICG I 142A. 391–410).

⁶¹ *quem* > QVEN (Kropp 4.1.3/15, CIL XIII 11340, pagan, lead, defixio), TETOLVN POSVE|RVNT instead of *titulum posuerunt* (RICG I 50, CIL XIII 3872. 390–440), *annorum* > ANNORVN (Finke 52, RICG I 97. 590–700).

⁶² VÄÄNÄNEN, V.: *Introduction au latin vulgaire*. Paris 1967, 167.

⁶³ JUNGANDREAS (n. 3) 27.

⁶⁴ LAMBERT (n. 49) 43.

⁶⁵ *depositio* > DE|POSICIO (RICG I 29A, Nesselhauf 23, 701–800), *Martias* > MARC(ias) (RLM Trier Inv. Reg. C 93, CIL XIII 499*, 8/9th cent.).

⁶⁶ JUNGANDREAS (n. 3) 17.

(MACIAS⁶⁷ and MAD⁶⁸ instead of *maias*, cf. Ital. *maggio*)⁶⁹ are four times reflected in spelling.

In five instances (admittedly heteroclite and requiring subtle interpretation), the loss of *n* and *l* (or their representation by *i*) or the unexpected emergence of the letter *i* suggest phenomena similar to what is called *mouillement* in French, i.e. the palatalised pronunciation of *n* and *l* before an originally palatal vowel. If the isolated spelling MATRIMOII instead of *matrimonii*⁷⁰ is not just due to dropping a letter it might reflect a *mouillement* that produced, as in French and Moselle Romance (PN *Centweigne* [a. 1295] < *centum vineae*),⁷¹ the relatively tiny sound [ɲ] which would have dropped from perception or been represented by one of the two *i*. Other peripheral idioms evidence that [ɲ] can end up as *i*⁷² and that intervocalic *n* can be dropped completely (Lat. *corona* > Portuguese *coroa*).

In three instances *l* after *u* and before another dark vowel is written *i*. Two of them⁷³ occur in an inscription where Celtic elements suggest substratum influence and have been identified also in one of the words yielding *l* after *u*.⁷⁴ Still, the form VRSVIVS that matches VRSVIA from the Celtic influenced inscription appears in another inscription which yields a very substandard language (TETOLVM instead of *titulum*).⁷⁵ In addition to such an intervocalic vocalisation, TVI instead of *tulit*, if not just a misspelling,⁷⁶ might reflect a *mouillement* of the *l* [ʎ], provoked by the subsequent *i*, which, like in the case of MATRIMOII, weakened the phonetic volume of the new sound to be dropped or co-represented by *i*.

3. MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX

The Trier corpus of Vulgar Latin inscriptions provides noteworthy illustrations that changes in phonetics often affect a language's morphological system and syntax as previously distinct categories become indistinguishable. The nasalisation or loss of *-m* produced interchangeability between the accusative and ablative which can be noted already on a curse tablet⁷⁷ and is reflected in the inappropriate combination of *pro*⁷⁸

⁶⁷ RICG I 21, *Schillinger* 13. 501–600.

⁶⁸ *Fuchs* 19 (first half 7th cent.), *Binsfeld-2015* (n. 7) p. 54.

⁶⁹ This limited evidence might be due to the vicissitudes of transmission and spelling as *g* > [ʒ] before *i* and *e* is well attested in Moselle Romance (*JUNGANDREAS* [n. 3] 17).

⁷⁰ RICG I 217, *CIL* XIII 3836. 501–800.

⁷¹ *JUNGANDREAS* (n. 3) 31, *KRAMER* (n. 3) 39.

⁷² Lat. *cuneus* > Romanian *cuiu* 'nail', Lat. *cotoneus* > Romanian *gutuiu* 'quince tree'.

⁷³ RICG I 75, *CIL* XIII 3909. 501–750: VRSVIA instead of *Ursula*, TITI|VIVM instead of *titulum*.

⁷⁴ MIKHAILOVA (n. 19) 6 suggests that TITI|VIVM instead of *titulum* represents a pronunciation [titylum] and reflects the Celtic shift [u] > [y].

⁷⁵ RICG I 105, *CIL* XIII 3801. 401–500.

⁷⁶ RICG I 37, *CIL* XIII 3691. 330–400.

⁷⁷ FRAVDE FE| instead of *fraudem fecit* (*Kropp* 4.1.3/11, *CIL* XIII 11340e).

⁷⁸ PRO CARITA|TEM instead of *pro caritate* (*RICG* I 30, *CIL* XIII 3855. 450–500), PRO CARITATEM instead of *pro caritate* (*RICG* I 55, *CIL* XIII 3887. 450–500; *RICG* I 62, *CIL* XIII 3899. 450–500).

and *propter*⁷⁹ plus case of *caritate(m)*. The confusion and conflation of *pridem* and *pridie* in the date formula PRIDEM IDVS IA|NVARIAS instead of *pridie Idus Ianuarias*⁸⁰ is suggested by the analogy of an additional phonetic development, namely the drop of *i* in DES instead of *dies*.⁸¹

Moreover, the pagan inscriptions from Trier illustrate that case syntax starts eroding in special cases independently from phonetic evolutions. In a noun phrase, the second noun keeps the nominative.⁸² Congruence might have been redundant as the first element indicates the function of the noun phrase.⁸³ In a mutilated inscription for Mars Iovantucarus,⁸⁴ the form *sacro* instead of *sacrum* might not necessarily reflect the change *-um* > *-o* (or, more likely, attest the use of the dative or ablative instead of the accusative⁸⁵), but might rather be a *dativus finalis*, inspired by the similar formula *dono dedit*. Given the late date and the non-standard phonetics, this explanation is rather unlikely for the expressions TITOLO | POSVIT⁸⁶ and TITVLO POS|VERVNT⁸⁷ instead of *titulum posuit* / *posuerunt*. They rather document the phonetic merger of *-um* and *-o* which is firmly attested by the late Merovingian AD DOMINO instead of *ad Dominum*.⁸⁸

These are the relatively few cases in which phonetic changes affected the morphological system as they blurred the differences between two categories. The majority of morphological changes, however, are accounted for by analogy or more generally the tendency to eliminate exceptions from the language. DIBVS⁸⁹ instead of *Dis* followed the example of *deabus*.⁹⁰ DIA⁹¹ instead of *die* matches Span. *dia* and avoids the rare *e*-declension. QVA instead of *quae*⁹² brings the regular feminine ending of

⁷⁹ PROP|TER CARITATE instead of *propter caritatem* (RICG I 1, CIL XIII 3790. 590–670).

⁸⁰ RICG I 153, CIL XIII 3882. 450–520.

⁸¹ RICG I 142, CIL XIII 3856. 401–600.

⁸² PRO SALV|TE MERCVRIALIS | FILIVS SECVND|IVS SECVNDINVS instead of *pro salute Mercurialis filii Secundius Secundinus* (CSIR-D IV.3 183, AE 1924,17). LLDB-24140 consider that the nominative might have been right, but CSIR-D IV.3 p. 156 offer three convincing reasons for relating FILIVS to the genitive MERCVRIALIS. A second instance, DAE DIRONA instead of *Deae Dironae* (LLDB-20172, CSIR-D IV.3 320, CIL XIII 3662. 151–200), remains dubious since the final *e* of *Dironae* most probably was on a part of the inscription that has been lost (cf. the reproduction in CIL XIII 3662).

⁸³ By the same principle of economy, OCTAVM DECEM instead of *octavum decimum* (RICG I 138, CIL XIII 3690. 501–600) keeps only the ordinal of the numerically smallest part (cf. Engl. *twenty first*). – CSIR-D IV.3 p. 156 offer an alternative type of explanation: the stone mason would have mistaken MERCVRIALIS for the homophonous nominative.

⁸⁴ [MARTI IOVANTVCA]RO SACRO instead of *Marti Iovantucaro sacrum* (CSIR-D IV.3 185, Finke 15).

⁸⁵ Cf. LLDB-20131.

⁸⁶ RICG I 181. 401–700.

⁸⁷ RICG I 225, CIL XIII 3919. 501–600.

⁸⁸ RICG I 134, FITrier-1990 8. 670–720, verse; RICG I 193, CIL XIII 3914. 601–800.

⁸⁹ CSIR-D IV.3 42, AE 1925,80, pagan.

⁹⁰ Cf. CSIR-D IV.3 404, CIL XIII 3638 [DIBVS ET | DEABVS], DIEHL (n. 2) 1047. 151–300, pagan.

⁹¹ FITrier-1990 65. 1, RICG I 203. 450–710.

⁹² QVA| (RICG I 111. 380–500), QVA (RICG I 117, CIL XIII 3816. 401–500; RICG I 154, CIL XIII 3885. 501–600).

the *a*-declension to the relative pronouns. The pervasive use of the masculine *qui* instead of the feminine *quae* in the nominative singular⁹³ (cf. the French unisex nominative *qui*) is a similar analogic simplification. PIENISSIMVS instead of *piissimus*⁹⁴ draws on the analogic formation *benevolus* : *benevolentissimus*.⁹⁵

Two late Merovingian verse inscriptions documenting the use of the neuter accusative plural in *-a* instead of a dative⁹⁶ provide a clue for a new obliquus.⁹⁷ The non-classical use of the neuter accusative singular (SEPVLCRVM instead of (*in*) *sepulcro*) in one of them adds to the idea of the complete breakdown of case syntax. The author seems to have gathered some nouns suggested by the funeral situation without being able to arrange them in appropriate cases. This collapse might be due to the late date, but also to the verse form which the author obviously did not master.

4. VOCABULARY

Words with new meanings like *fidelis* ‘faithful’⁹⁸ and *pious* ‘pious’ as well as borrowings from Greek like *presbyter* ‘priest’⁹⁹ are neologisms that reflect the spread of Christianity. The most common lexical features are the substitution of *patres* (often featured as *patris*)¹⁰⁰ for *parentes* ‘parents’ (which is a lexical simplification as it eliminates the term *parentes* from the lexicon) and of *pausare* for (*re*)*quiescere* ‘rest’ in the funeral inscriptions.¹⁰¹ The regular verb *pausare* avoids many of the difficulties which inscriptions document for the phonetics of (*re*)*quiescere*.¹⁰²

5. SUMMARY AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC OUTLOOK

In addition to the standard phonetic features of Vulgar Latin, such as monophthongisation (abundant evidence for *ae* and one for *oe*¹⁰³), the Latin inscriptions of Trier provide strong clues for assibilation and palatalisation (esp. *mouillement*) which

⁹³ VRSICINA QVI (*RICG* I 73. 350–400), AMANTI|A QVI (*RICG* I 100. 390–440) and many other later ones.

⁹⁴ *Finke* 46, pagan; *RICG* I 9. 330–400; *RICG* I 36, *CIL* XIII 3862. 350–400.

⁹⁵ LEUMANN, M.: *Lateinische Laut- und Formenlehre*. Munich 1977, 499.

⁹⁶ QVI MERV I SANCTORVM SOCIARI SEPVLCRA instead of *qui meruit sanctorum sociari sepulcris* (*RICG* I 170. 701–800), HIC REQVIES DATA HLODERICI MEMBRA SEPVLCRVM instead of *Hic requies data Hloderici membris in sepulcro* (*RICG* I 135, *CIL* XIII 3683. 701–800).

⁹⁷ Cf. LLDB-8199 on *RICG* I 135.

⁹⁸ FEDELIS (*FITrier-1990* 9. 313–450; *RICG* I 101, *Finke* 51. 420–500), + many further instances.

⁹⁹ PRESBITER (*FITrier-1990* 11, *RICG* I 142A. 391–410; *RICG* I 214, *CIL* XIII 3784. 701–800).

¹⁰⁰ See note 35.

¹⁰¹ *Finke* 56, *AE* 1923,37. 313–700; *RICG* I 176, *CIL* XIII 3900. 401–500, and 14 further instances.

¹⁰² Cf. QVI VIXIT instead of *quiescit* (*RICG* I 40. 450–500).

¹⁰³ *Foedula* > *FEDOLA* (*RICG* I 21, *Schillinger* 13. 501–600; *RICG* I 125, *CIL* XIII 3726. 600–720).

invites further investigation by comparison with other Vulgar Latin inscriptions. Moreover, the diatopical Romance features which could be identified in the inscriptions belong to Western Romance¹⁰⁴ and North-Gallo-Romance.¹⁰⁵ They are thus consistent with the inscriptions' geographical position at the North-Eastern fringes of Gallo-Romance of which they can be considered to represent an extinct idiom. Due to the early chronological range, there are no signs of the diphthongisation that is prominent in Old French and Moselle Romance.¹⁰⁶ This is the most salient (and chronologically plausible) feature that delineates the Vulgar Latin inscriptions from Moselle Romance.¹⁰⁷ The two idioms share, though, so many early features that the Trier Vulgar Latin inscriptions can be deemed to document an early stage of Moselle Romance which later on developed further features not reflected in the inscriptions.

The morphological evolution largely documents analogic regularisation, especially in the earlier pagan inscriptions, but also the impact of the advanced phonetic changes that blurred grammatical categories and partly helped to re-establish them (vowel based difference between singular and plural). Likewise the erosion of case syntax started in pagan inscriptions at the margins (proper nouns, noun phrases), broke up completely in the Merovingian era under phonetic influence and brought up a new obliquus for the neuters.

A sociolinguistic and cultural outlook can conclude this paper. The rise of Christianity documented the substandard usage of less educated lower classes which hitherto had been excluded from literary expression. Poorly carved Late Antique inscriptions that had probably been executed by a relative without the aid of a professional stone mason and yield substandard language¹⁰⁸ provide neat evidence for this assumption. The primacy which Christian identity granted to faith and submission to God most likely went along with a nonchalant attitude towards the norms by which the old pagan elite had defined itself. Trier pagan inscriptions are eager to detail a person's social status and achievements and to document personal upwards mobility. Christian humility, on the contrary, suggested dropping the profession from tombstones¹⁰⁹ and focused on the personal (*fidelis*, *pientissimus*) or clerical (priest, monk) affinity to God. Christianity also completed the assimilation of Celtic that had been started by the polytheistic pagan religion and that might have left some substrate traces in the inscriptions¹¹⁰ and favoured the integration of the Germanic immigrants.

¹⁰⁴ Degemination of consonants, voicing of intervocalic consonants, raising of a long *ē* to *i*.

¹⁰⁵ Nasalisation, pervasive loss of the labial element in *qu-*, loss of all posttonic vowels except for *a* and *cas régime* in *-s*, new obliquus, *qui* as unisex nominative of relative pronouns.

¹⁰⁶ JUNGANDREAS (n. 3) 28–29; KRAMER (n. 3) 38.

¹⁰⁷ Others are the prothesis, absent from Moselle Romance (JUNGANDREAS [n. 3] 54–55; KRAMER [n. 3] 39), but twice attested in the inscriptions (*Psychius* > IPSYCHIVS (RICG I 139, CIL XIII 3826. 370–500), *Scupilio* > ESCVPILIO (RICG I 18, CIL XIII 3820. 480–580)), and the lack of evidence for *au* > *o* in the inscriptions which is common in Moselle Romance (JUNGANDREAS [n. 3] 28).

¹⁰⁸ E.g. RICG I 75, CIL XIII 3909, 501–750, cf. MIKHAILOVA (n. 19) 1; RICG I 3, 450–520.

¹⁰⁹ CLAUSS, M.: Jenseitsvorstellungen in frühchristlichen Grabinschriften. In CLEMENS et al. (n. 7), 17–27, here 27.

¹¹⁰ [u] > [y], *e* before nasals > *i*, *ē* > *ī*, *ō* > *ū*, *-m* > *-n*.

No longer just the bodyguards they had been in Late Antiquity (Hariulfus, see n. 55), they were ordinary people who, lacking pretentious social attributes and characterised only by their names (Francola¹¹¹) and sometimes in addition by their age,¹¹² lived side by side with the remaining Romance populace and ended up as vice-counts (Hlo-dericus, see n. 96) and priests (Amulricus¹¹³) in the late Merovingian and Carolingian era.

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¹¹¹ *RICG* I 54, *CIL* XIII 3880, 501–590.

¹¹² E.g. Merobaudes, written MERABAVDIS, a toddler, aged one year and 11 months (*RICG* I 40, 450–500).

¹¹³ RLM Trier Inv. Reg. C 93, *CIL* XIII 499*, 8/9th cent.