Latinitas, Ἑλληνισμός and Standard Languages

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Abstract

In this paper, I ask whether we can usefully relate the terms *Latinitas* and *Hellenismós* with the modern concept of 'Standard Languages', and I examine the similarities and differences between ancient and modern notions of 'correct' language. The Greek term *Hellenismós* is recognized to have covered a wider range of linguistic varieties than encompassed under modern standard languages, and I argue that in the late Republic and the first century of the Roman Empire *Latinitas* was a similarly elastic concept. Through the example of variant orthographic practices in epigraphically attested legal texts, I show that there was considerable variation in written Latin texts throughout this period. Latin was not yet fully standardized (in the modern sense of the term) in the year 100 AD.

Keywords: *Latinitas*, *Hellenismós*, language standardization, Latin orthography.

1. *Introduction*

In recent years it has become a commonplace to discuss certain developments in the Classical languages in terms of the modern concept of linguistic standardization, and to describe Classical Latin and *koiné* Greek as, in some sense, 'standard languages'. Thus (to take just a few examples from many) Horrocks (2010: 84) describes *koiné* Greek as «the standard written and spoken language of the upper classes» and Colvin (2014: 69) describes the *koiné* as «the first common standard language in the history of Greek» (see also Colvin, 2009). For Latin, Clackson and Horrocks (2007) tellingly entitle a chapter of their book *The Background to Standardization*; Adams (2007: 13-19) discusses the emergence of Classical Latin in terms of modern sociolinguistic theory as do Clackson (2011: 242-243; 2015: 37-41) and Leonhardt (2013: 58). Indeed, one of the most influential books written about standard languages and language standardization, Joseph (1987), cites *koiné* Greek and Classical Latin as proto-types of later standard languages:

Greek in the Alexandrian period became the proto-type for the standard language. [...] Classical Latin, a language which, having been formed in superposition, comes

closer than Greek to being the first "standardized" language. For over a thousand years Latin was the only language employed in what we would identify as standard-language functions throughout Europe [...]. (Joseph, 1987: 50)

Despite the common recourse to the terminology of standardization and standard languages, it is true to say, in the words of Colvin (2009: 34), that «Western Classical tradition has not, on the whole, dealt in a satisfactory way with the notions of linguistic diversity and standard language in the ancient world». Colvin also stresses the problems of relating ancient grammatical terminology to modern concepts, and in this regard it is worth looking particularly closely at the terms *Hellenismós* (Ἑλληνισμός) and *Latinita*s. In an influential paper, Versteegh (1987) suggested that these terms were used by grammarians to denote the correct form of language taught in schools, the standard written language of their time: «there is no contrast between this standard and the ἑλληνισμός» (1987: 266). In Versteegh's view, Greek and Roman grammarians viewed *Hellenismós* and *Latinitas* as unchanging, and were uninterested in the spoken popular forms: «grammarians were solely concerned with the standard language, the language of written text, and their conception of the *latinitas* did not extend beyond the confines of this standard language». Adams (2007) upholds the connection between *Latinitas* and a standard language, but extends the comparison to take in a wider conception of 'standard language' than that envisaged by Versteegh (1987):

Latinitas, 'correct Latinity', the nearest equivalent the language has to 'standard language' and itself based on the Greek Ἑλληνισμός, is therefore a vague and shifting ideal, not a reality that may be fully defined in objective terms. (Adams, 2007: 17)

Adams goes on to compare how writers on Standard English have emphasized that the standard is an 'ideology' (for which see further below) something accepted by the majority of speakers and writers on the basis of a common core of linguistic conventions with a lot of 'fuzziness' around the edges (Milroy and Milroy, 2012: 22).

The purpose of this paper is to revisit the connection between standard languages and the ancient notion of *Latinitas* (and inevitably the associated term *Hellenismós*). In particular, I want to answer the following two questions: Can we usefully relate the term *Latinitas* with processes of standardization or ideologies of the standard language? In what ways was Latin different from a modern standard language? I shall examine first the mod-

ern sociolinguistic notion of standard languages and standardization before turning to the ancient evidence.

2. *Standard languages and Standardization*

The sociolinguistics concept of a standard language is inherently bound together with the notion of standardization: a standard language is by definition one that has been through a process of standardization. Before 1966 linguists had written about standard languages and defined them in terms which are still serviceable today; thus, for example, the definition given by Garvin (1959: 29, also at Garvin and Mathiot, 1960: 783) is cited in Mesthie *et al*. (2000: 20): «a codified form of a language, accepted by, and serving as a model to, a larger speech community». In 1966, however, a paper by Einar Haugen (Haugen, 1966) succinctly encompassed all the elements of language standardization within a simple schema, and this has since become generally accepted and widely repeated as comprising the essential features of linguistic standardization (see also Stein, 1994: 1-4, for other views on standardization). In Haugen's original schema, four elements constitute a grid as follows (Haugen, 1966: 933):

	Form	*Function*
Society	Selection	Acceptance
Language	Codification	Elaboration

In the *Form* column, Haugen separated out 'codification', the process whereby norms of language were developed and recorded in dictionaries, grammars and educational practice, from 'selection', the choice of one variety of language as the basis of the standard, through its association with a particular group of speakers, privileged by their social position or their location. In the *Function* column 'acceptance' refers to the process whereby the standard variety comes to be seen as the 'correct' form of language by the whole speech community, and privileged above other varieties, which in contrast are viewed as inferior or deficient in some way. 'Elaboration' (sometimes also called 'elaboration of function') describes the development of special vocabularies and even syntactic structures through which the standard language is able to serve as the vehicle for various types of official, formal or bureaucratic communications, as well as for scientific and technical discourses, to the exclusion of other varieties. The development of new vocabularies may

lead to further adjustments in phonology and morphology; Latin provides examples of newly phonemicized sounds (for example the vowel represented by the letter *y*) and new paradigms created from the incorporation of Greek words into Latin technical vocabulary (see Joseph, 1987: 93-104, for discussion of the treatment of Greek paradigms in Latin in terms of 'elaboration').

According to Haugen, codification and elaboration were the «ideal goals of standard language»; he defined codification as «a minimal variation in form» and elaboration as «a maximal variation in function» (Haugen, 1966: 931). Subsequent to Haugen, definitions of a standard language usually take on board all four of his proposed features of standardization, sometimes adding extra qualifications. Thus, for example, Versteegh (2002: 55) notes that the standard can either be used to refer to «the codified norm of a language» or «the target of the speakers in a speech community»; Auer (2005: 8, following Joseph, 1987: 6) defines the standard as a variety of language which follows a set of *norms*, and which is also «oriented to by speakers of more than one variety»; «looked upon as an H-variety»; used for writing; and subject to at least some codification and elaboration. Joseph (1987: 108-126) and Milroy and Milroy (2012) further stress the multiple ways in which the standard is policed and maintained. All of these definitions and discussions emphasize the fact that standard languages have written forms, something tacitly assumed but not explicitly mentioned by earlier scholars such as Garvin and Haugen. Codification in writing seems to be an essential feature for a standard language (Milroy and Milroy, 2012: 18), and the codified written form may then spawn new spoken varieties (Auer, 2005).

Some linguists have attempted to further specify different types of standard languages, placing them on a continuum of standardization (Garvin, 1959: 30, followed by Joseph, 1987: 19). An attempt to schematize these different stages is provided by Mesthrie *et al.* (2009: 372, following Cobarrubias, 1983: 43-44, who in turn followed Kloss, 1968), who distinguish the following stages:

(i)   'partly standardized' languages, with a written form but whose use is largely limited to primary education;
(ii) 'young standard' languages, not yet used in science or technological writings for research or tertiary education;
(iii) 'archaic standard' languages, including Latin and Greek, which «lack vocabulary and registers for modern science and technology»;
(iv) and finally the 'mature modern standard' which can be employed in all areas of communication.

This list shows that the category 'standardized language' can become so loose that it really serves no useful purpose any more, but simply acts as a substitute for 'written language'. It makes little sense to think of a language only used in primary education, with variation in the morphology, syntax and vocabulary and based on no single variety as standardized at all. It is worth noting in passing here that the definition of the 'archaic' standard language as given by Mesthrie *et al.* is also problematic. Latin and Greek may not have developed terminology for 'modern science and technology', but the standard English or Italian of today could be viewed in the same way by a linguist two-hundred years in the future, by which time science and technology may have developed a whole new vocabulary. Classical Latin and *koiné* Greek did have separate technical registers, with developed vocabulary and syntax appropriate for the scientific developments of their day, see Langslow (2000) for an excellent analysis of the creation of a Latin medical register and Schironi (2010) for the development of Greek technical languages. These shortcomings in the list of different sub-types of standard languages reveal the futility of the enterprise. Rather than try to place standard languages at various points along the scale, depending on a check-list of features, Milroy and Milroy (2012: 150) argue that it makes better sense to investigate standardization as an on-going process, and explain differences between languages through understanding how advanced the process is, and what mechanisms are employed to re-enforce the process of standardization.

As we have already seen, scholars agree that standard languages are 'High' (or 'H') languages in diglossia with spoken 'Low' (or 'L') languages (in the terminology of Ferguson, 1959). Standard languages are also «oriented to by speakers of more than one variety» (Auer, 2005: 8). What this means in practice is that the written standard is contrasted against spoken dialects, which generally have no written form, and which exhibit variation where there is none in the standard. The codified form of the standard language becomes the focus of a literate education and non-standard forms singled out for comment or 'correction'. The maintenance of the standard language is dependent on what Milroy and Milroy (2012: 1) refer to as an 'ideology' or set of beliefs concerning language which «requires that in language use, as in other things should be done in the 'right' way». The standard language is viewed as the only correct form, and other varieties as incorrect or inferior deviations from it, and may be stigmatised as 'ugly', 'illogical', 'lazy' or 'ignorant'. Furthermore, this ideology of the standard language is not just limited to a certain sector of society, but is generalised among all speakers,

who internalise the judgement that non-standard forms as incorrect and inferior. Scholars working on language variation and change since Labov (1966) have found that speakers in certain social positions will adjust their speech towards the standard in certain social situations, in order to acquire the prestige or cachet endowed by the standard language, in the belief that 'correct' language is a mark of education, wealth and higher social class. In other circumstances, speakers may move their language away from the standard to signal closer membership of a group.

Haugen's 'acceptance' is therefore at the core of what constitutes a standard language, and for the historical linguist investigating the written remains of a speech community it is essential to know whether there was a 'standard language culture', that is a generalised consciousness of certain written norms and the acceptance of these by the majority of speakers (Milroy, 2001: 530). If there was a standard language culture in the speech community under study, deviations from the written norms can be identified and explained, and may be indicative of linguistic change underway. Variation in the written records of a speech community without a standard language culture may also reflect different spoken variants, but they may also indicate different spelling conventions or traditions of writing, and not have the same significance as deviations from a written norm.

In order to assess the standard language in the ancient world the next two sections of the paper I shall undertake a closer examination of the Greek concept of *Hellenismós*, and the Latin term *Latinitas*. Discussions of these terms often view them in terms of 'correctness' (or *Sprachrightigkeit* in the terms of Siebenborn, 1976 and Fögen, 1998). *Hellenismós* is accordingly frequently translated "correct Greek" (for example, Versteegh, 1987: 264) and *Latinitas* "correct Latinity" (thus Adams, 2007: 17 cited above). The notion of 'correctness', from a modern perspective, implies that these are the standard forms of Greek and Latin, from which other forms deviated. In order to assess this claim, we need to look more closely at the first attestations and uses of the terms.

3. *Hellenismós*

The Greek term *Hellenismós* (ἑλληνισμός) is derived from the verb ἑλληνίζω "speak Greek" standing in opposition to the verb βαρβαρίζω (Versteegh, 1987: 264; Casevitz, 1991: 14). Already in the works of Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1407a19) and his pupil Theophrastus the verb ἑλληνίζω is said to have

developed a technical sense of "speaking correctly" (Siebenborn, 1976: 24; Fögen, 1998: 206). It is possible that Theophrastus used the word ἑλληνισμός in a passage known to Cicero, but lost to us (Siebenborn, 1976: 25); the earliest instance of the term that has survived occurs in a citation of the second-century BCE Stoic grammarian Diogenes of Babylon. Diogenes of Babylon, quoted by Diogenes Laertius in his life of Zeno (D.L. 7.59), gives *Hellenismós* as one of the five "virtues of speech" (ἀρεταὶ λόγου) and defines the term more exactly as φράσις ἀδιάπτωτος ἐν τῇ τεχνικῇ καὶ μὴ εἰκαίᾳ συνηθείᾳ "language without flaw in systematic and careful usage" (for the translation, see Fögen, 1998: 207). In keeping with the opposition between the verbs ἑλληνίζω and βαρβαρίζω, Diogenes of Babylon opposes Hellenismós to barbarism (βαρβαρισμός), as well as another class of error known as solecism (σολοικισμός). Siebenborn (1976) traces the occurrences of *Hellenismós* in writers after Diogenes of Babylon: a number of treaties on *Hellenismós*, now all lost, were written by grammarians in the first century BCE: Ptolemaios of Askalon, Philoxenos, Tryphon, Seleukos and Eirenaios (Siebenborn, 1976: 33). A surviving short tract on *Hellenismós* is preserved in the London scholia to Dionysios Thrax (*Grammatici Graeci* I.3 446.6- 447.28), and may be the work of an otherwise unknown grammarian named Heliodoros (Siebenborn, 1976: 33).

As we saw above, Versteegh (1987: 264) was of the view that the meaning of *hellenismós* is approximately "the correct use of the Greek language", but we should be wary of imposing a modern sociolinguistic framework around the concept. Ancient writing on language and grammar intermeshed with ideas about rhetoric and literary criticism, just as modern non-academic writing does (Colvin, 2009: 34). The other virtues of speech identified by Diogenes of Babylon, clarity, concision, appropriateness and distinction (σαφήνεια, συντομία, πρέπον, κατασκευή), are stylistic features rather than linguistic (and descend from the literary criticism and rhetorical works of Aristotle and Theophrastus, Siebenborn, 1976: 24-25). *Hellenismós* was a criterion used by Alexandrine scholars in their judgement of Homeric verse (Fögen, 1998: 209-210), and in this they had a much wider view than can be conveyed by the English phrase of "correct use of the Greek language". Homeric Greek contains a wide variety of forms not found in later Greek authors, and a vast amount of internal variation, in orthography, morphology and syntax.

Furthermore, the concept of *Hellenismós* originally encompassed a tolerance of regional and generic variation in a way unfamiliar from modern notions of 'correctness' in language. This is explicitly stated in the defini-

tion found in the short work on *Hellenismós* found in the London scholia to Dionysios Thrax (*Grammatici Graeci* I.3 446.12-14; the first part of the definition is also given in Περὶ σολοικισμοῦ καὶ βαρβαρισμοῦ attributed to Herodian, Nauck, 1867: 309.1-2):

ἔστι δὲ ἑλληνισμὸς λέξις ὑγιὴς καὶ ἀδιάστροφος λόγου μερῶν πλοκὴ κατάλληλος κατὰ τὴν παρ' ἑκάστοις ὑγιῆ καὶ γνησίαν διάλεκτον.

"*Hellenismós* is appropriate speech and correct in the congruent construction of the parts of speech, according to the appropriate and native dialect respectively."

The treatise on *Hellenismós* proceeds to gloss this definition, explaining that the first part refers to the avoidance of barbarism, which came to refer to mistakes in vocabulary choice (λέξις ὑγιής) and solecism, which came to mean faults of syntax or inappropriate conjunction of words (ἀδιάστροφος λόγου μερῶν πλοκὴ κατάλληλος). The second part, κατὰ τὴν παρ' ἑκάστοις ὑγιῆ καὶ γνησίαν διάλεκτον, is glossed in the treatise with the words πρὸς τὸ παρὰ τὴν παρ' ἑκάστοις ἀκολουθίαν τῆς ἐπιχωριαζούσης συνηθείας "as regards the respective conformity with local usage" (see Versteegh, 1987: 261-264, for discussion of what was meant by συνηθεία in grammatical writers). In other words, 'correctness' was a relative concept: what was correct in one locality (or generic context) might be incorrect in another.

Diogenes of Babylon seems also to have had a tolerant view of what counted as Greek, since another fragment of his cited in Diogenes Laertius (7.56) draws attention to the different dialectal terms θάλαττα "sea" (the Attic word in place of the koiné's θάλασσα) and Ionic ἡμέρη "day", in place of ἡμέρα. Diogenes of Babylon mentions these words without stigmatising them, or barring either form from being Greek. Under this reading of Diogenes of Babylon, *Hellenismós* encompassed different dialects of Greek from its earliest occurrence, and he acknowledged that varieties were acceptable provided they fulfilled acceptable generic or local conventions. The Ionic Greek of a Homeric poem, the Attic forms found in the orators and Plato, and the Doric of a tragic chorus, were equally good Greek.

Although she did not discuss Diogenes of Babylon, or mention the term *Hellenismós* explicitly, Morpurgo Davies (1987) came to a similar conclusion in her discussion of the Greek notion of dialect. She argued that the fact that some Greek grammarians included the *koiné* as a fifth dialect of Greek, alongside Attic, Ionic, Doric and Aeolic, showed that the grammarians conceived of these different forms as of equal status, and did not see

the *koiné* as superordinate to other dialects: «Greek, for some grammarians at least, remains an abstract concept which can subsume the *koiné* as well as the dialects» (Morpurgo Davies, 1987: 18). Morpurgo Davies goes on to contrast this ancient view with the modern conception of dialect, which is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as «a variety of speech differing from the standard or literary language». In Morpurgo Davies's view the Greeks «did not at first have a standard or literary language and later failed for a while to equate the newly created koiné with the standard language» (Morpurgo Davies, 1987: 18). Hintzen (2011) has recently looked in more detail at the definition of *Hellenismós* in first century BCE grammarians, particularly Philoxenos and Tryphon and she has demonstrated that they also have a tolerant and inclusive attitude to dialect forms. In conclusion, the Greek notion of *Hellenismós* and 'correct language' encompassed variation, certainly in the first centuries BCE, in a way that is not paralleled by modern standard languages.

4. *Latinitas*

The Latin term *Latinitas* has been discussed in connection with *Hellenismós* at least since Smiley (1906). Although there is no simple Latin verb meaning "speak Latin" corresponding to Greek ἑλληνίζω, the Latin word seems to be a straightforward calque from the Greek, no doubt based on the similarity between, for example Latine "in Latin" and ἑλληνιστί "in Greek". Roman writers on language were certainly familiar with Greek thought. Furthermore, it is striking that all of the Greek grammarians who are known to have composed treatises on *Hellenismós* were at at some time in their careers resident or teaching in Rome. Diogenes of Babylon lectured in Rome in the period 156-155 BCE, and Philoxenos and Tryphon were both in Rome at some time in the following century (Hintzen, 2011), as were Ptolemaios of Askalon (*Suda*, *s.v.*) and Seleukos (Suetonius *Tiberius* 56). Eirenaios also probably taught at Rome under the Latin name Minucius Pacatus (Cancik and Schneider, 1997: *s.v.*).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Roman writers on language in the first century BCE, framed *Latinitas* in almost exactly the same terms that the Greek authors had done. The earliest surviving definition of *Latinitas* occurs in the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.17, and, like Diogenes of Babylon's definition, contrasts pure speech (*sermo purus*) with the vices of *soloecismus* and *barbarismus*. A fragment of Varro (*fr*. 268 Fun.) also stresses

the uncorrupted nature of Latin: *Latinitas est incorrupta loquendi obseruatio secundum Romanam linguam*. From its relatively infrequent attestations in Republican Latin, the term *Latinitas* was to become more frequent in later writers (see further Smiley, 1906, Diaz y Diaz, 1951 and Desbordes, 1991, on the use and extensions of meaning of the Latin word). Roman grammarians and writers on language, however, generally used the term with one eye on the Greek grammarians.

In contrast with Greek, there was no Roman tradition of literary dialects. The Roman concept of the Latin language did not therefore subsume other literary dialects underneath it, in the way that *Hellenismós* comprised Attic, Ionic, Doric, Aeolic and the *koiné*. Where Latin authors mention what appear to be dialectal forms of Latin, the tone is usually disparaging or dismissive (see Adams, 2007, especially 114-118). Note, for example, the following passage from Quintilian's discussion of barbarism and solecism (1.5.56), which reveals attitudes towards non-Roman Latin in the later Republic and early Empire:

Taceo de Tuscis et Sabinis et Praenestis quoque (nam ut eorum sermone utentum Vettium Lucilius insectatur, quemadmodum Pollio reprehendit in Liuio Patauinitatem)
"I say nothing of Tuscan and Sabine (words) and Praenestine too; Lucilius rebukes Vettius for using their language, just as Pollio finds fault with 'Patavinity' in Livy." (translation from Adams, 2007: 122; see also Adams, 2007: 122-123 and Ax, 2011: 205-207 for discussion of this passage, and Adams, 2007: 147-153 for Livy's alleged Patavinity)

Does this lack of a literary tradition in Latin dialects therefore mean that the Romans did not take over the same attitude of linguistic tolerance to variation in Latin, which I have argued was a feature of the early Greek use of *Hellenismós*? That would be one possible interpretation, and it would appear to be supported by other sources where we find categorical statements of what is and what is not 'Latin'.

Consider, for example, the case of the first line of Vergil *Eclogue* 3:

Dic mihi, Damoeta, cuium pecus? an Meliboei?
"Tell me, Damoetas, whose flock (is this)? Does it belong to Meliboeus?"

Donatus records in his life of Virgil (43) that this line was parodied by an otherwise unknown Numitorius in a work *Antibucolica*:

Dic mihi, Damoeta, cuium pecus? anne Latinum?
non, uerum Aegonis nostri, sic rure loquuntur.

"Tell me, Damoetas, *cuium pecus* – is that Latin?
No, it is the Latin of our Aego; that's the way they speak in the country."

Virgil's *cuium*, a declined form of *cuius* "whose", is thus classed as not *Latinus*, despite the fact that it also occurs in Terence, Lucilius, Cato and in the formulaic phrase *cuia res sit, cuia periculum* "whose is the property, whose the risk" in a speech of Cicero (*Verr.* 2.1.142). Certainly the declined forms of *cuius* do seem to have been «eliminated in the high literary language» (Wackernagel, 2009: 500), although they must have continued in spoken registers, at least dialectally, since they survive in Sardinian and Ibero-Romance (Adams, 2007: 380). Numitorius's use of *Latinus* in this passage would tie in with a narrower concept of *Latinitas*, in which only the forms which were present in high literary style were reckoned to be under its umbrella. In this is more generally true, then *Latinitas* would have approached closer to the modern idea of a 'standard language' than the Greek term *Hellenismós* did, at least in the Hellenistic grammarians.

Numitorius's parody of Virgil probably did not, however, represent the general view of what counted as *Latinitas*. Indeed, the declined forms of *cuius* are mentioned by Priscian and other grammarians (see Priscian *Institutiones* 17.143 = *Grammatici Latini* III 179), who cite instances of them from earlier comedy and Virgil; these forms are nowhere stigmatised or classed as barbarisms or non-Latin in Priscian or other grammatical works that mention them. Literary Latin authors in the generations after Virgil can still use *cuia* if it is in an appropriate context; thus Pliny employs the juristic phrase *cuia uxor fuit* "whose wife she was" (quoted by Gellius 9.16.5; Wackernagel, 2009: 500), and other archaising writers of the second century CE reintroduce the forms in their prose. Numitorius's definition of what counts as *Latinus* (and hence what counts as *Latinitas*) therefore cannot be thought to be the *communis opinio*, any more than we should accept the verdict of Asinius Pollio that Livy's prose deviated in some way from *Latinitas* as being widespread. When disparaging another author's work or another speaker's words, criticism of language was one possible avenue of attack, and we should be wary of taking to much notice of individual statements about what was or was not acceptable (see Clackson, 2015: 40, for discussion of Cicero's criticism of Mark Anthony's *contumeliam facere* at *Philippics* 3.22).

In defence of this view that *Latinitas* was initially constructed along similar lines to *Hellenismós*, and included a broader ranger of forms permis-

sible in appropriate contexts than might be apparent from restricting our view to texts written in a high literary style, we might also consider further pieces of evidence. Grammarians and other writers on language sometimes include forms or constructions that might have been features of spoken language without castigating them as non-Latin. Note for instance the example of the use of indicatives in indirect questions, cited by Diomedes (*Grammatici Latini* I 395), in a passage discussed by Probert and Ferri (2010: 31). As Probert and Ferri (2010) observe «Diomedes does not condemn the use of the indicative for subjunctive as *non Latinum*, but recommends the other construction as *eruditius*». Desbordes (1991: 43) further cites a number of passages where the grammarians declare that the same word or construction can be classed as a solecism or barbarism in one context, but a figurative use in another, for example, Servius (*Grammatici Latini* IV 444.8-10) *si in prosa oratione fiat, tunc barbarismus dicitur; si autem in poemate, metaplasmus uocatur* "if it occurs in prose, it is called a barbarism, if in poetry, a metaplasm".

The language used in educational texts and schoolbooks also contained forms avoided in the higher stylistic registers, some of them archaic, others probably colloquial (Ferri, 2008; Dickey, 2012: 48). Colloquial and archaic forms, some of which were perhaps appropriate for everyday conversation but inappropriate in a law-court or in a literary work, also feature in passages cited in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, principally in the citation of the "simple style", *infimum et cotidianum sermonem* at 4.14 (Probert and Ferri, 2010: 18-22), but also in the specimen of character delineation or *notatio* at 4.63-64 (Adams, 2007: 378-379), including a declined form of *cuius*: *reperiunt cuia domus sit* "they find out whose house it is" (4.64).

Latinitas clearly had a shifting range of meanings in grammatical writings. Desbordes (1991) argued that this was a result of the different oppositions in which it (and associated terms such as *Latinus*, *Latine*) featured (see Versteegh, 2002: 68, for discussion of a similar range of uses of the Arabic term *ʿarabiyya* "Arabic language"). When opposed to *barbarismus* or *rusticitas*, *Latinitas* could have the restricted meaning of "correct Latin"; in the absence of any other word for the Latin language, *Latinitas* could be used in the wider sense of just "Latin", when opposed to Greek or other languages. The range of meaning of the terms together with the ancient debates over which words were barbarisms reveal an important difference between both *Hellenismós* and *Latinitas* and modern standard languages such as English and French. For modern standard languages, the agreed notion of what constitutes the standard language and the corresponding set of norms is relatively clear-cut, and there is general agreement over the codified versions of

the language. In the ancient world, the very notion of what grammars and lexica were attempting to codify was much more fluid and more context-dependent. If there is any 'fuzziness' around the notion of Standard English (Milroy and Milroy, 2012: 22), it is negligible compared to the ancient languages. It took centuries for a consensus to emerge that there was a single correct form of Greek or Latin, and what this might look like.

In summary, a simple equation of either *Hellenismós* or *Latinitas* with the notion of a 'correct' or 'standard' is overly simplistic and distorts the complexity of the ancient terms. From the Hellenistic period on, grammarians, scholars and members of the educated elite paid increasing attention to the Greek and Latin language, and it is possible to link much of the intellectual activity with the four stages of standardization identified by Haugen (1968) (see Clackson, 2015: 37-58, for discussion). The process of standardization was, however, to take centuries, and neither language progressed as far as a modern standard language. For Greek, the *koiné* never gained the general 'acceptance' that is a feature of modern standards, and for Latin debates over what forms were *Latinus* were to continue for centuries. In the final section of the paper, I will illustrate this point more fully from Latin epigraphical material, and show some of the consequences for how we view orthographic norms in Roman inscriptions in the late Republic and Early Empire.

5. *Orthographic and morphological variation in Roman 'official' documents*

Standardization has been most successful in modern languages in the domain of orthography: «It is only in the spelling system that full standardisation really has been achieved, as deviations from the norm (however logical) are not tolerated there» (Milroy and Milroy, 2012: 18). Orthography is codified in dictionaries and spell-checkers, and for some modern languages, such as German, there are national committees in place to decide and enact spelling reforms. There are a number of ancient grammatical works entitled *De orthographia* (Siebenborn, 1976: 37-48), and it is clear that some debates about the correct spellings were still alive after the end of the Roman Empire. Thus, for example, Bede, writing in the eighth century after Christ, gives guidance about whether to write *impono* or *inpono*, *irrito* or *inrito* (*Grammatici Latini* VII 276.19-21). Bede was not just rehearsing a stale grammarian's rule, since the disfavoured forms *inpono* and *inrito* occur in inscriptions and manuscripts (Neue, 1892: 905, 907).

In Latin inscriptional material from the Republic and early Empire we consequently find a tolerance for variant forms, and also some evidence for choice of a feature from a set of possible alternatives appropriate to a particular genre. The use of particular spellings for different contexts is mentioned by Cicero, who states that the preposition *af* (in place of *ab*) is limited in occurrence to denoting receipts in accounts, and is not universal there (*una praepositio est af, quae nunc tantum in accepti tabulis manet ac ne his quidem omnium*, *Orator* 158). In order to explore both the existence of norms for particular types of document, and the scope for variation, I shall look more closely at a few specific orthographic and morphological 'norms' in Roman laws and 'official' documents attested epigraphically (in the following section I have benefited from the work of Robrecht Decorte, PhD student at the University of Cambridge).

Archaism is a characteristic feature of legal language everywhere, and archaic features are found in Roman laws and legal formulae. The use of archaisms in Latin legal language was also noted by the Romans themselves: Cicero comments that the laws employ words that are dated in comparison with current speech (*De legibus* 2.18) and a speaker in Tacitus *Dialogus* (23.3) recounts how the archaic language of lawyers in court led to general incomprehension. Crawford (1996) has gathered together most of the Roman statutes surviving epigraphically (with the omission of several important recent discoveries from Spain), and these texts show some particular spellings, which are scarcely found in other genres. For example, legal inscriptions of the Republican period regularly spell *pecunia* as *pequnia*, using *q* before the vowel *u* in accordance with a convention that appears to date from the earliest Latin inscriptions (Hartmann, 2005: 424-425). The spelling of *pecunia* with *q* is also found outside legal texts in the formula *de sua pequnia* (e.g. *CIL* 1².3011a, 3032 etc.), but in Republican documents outside laws the *c*-spelling predominates over the *q*-spelling by a ratio of 18:7, within Republican laws the ration of *c*-spellings to *q*-spelling is 0:53 (data from Decorte, forthcoming; the figures include also instances of *peculium, peculatus,* and *pecus*, which also show *q*-spellings).

In the imperial period, the spelling *pequnia* is dropped, but a number of other archaic spellings remain into the Flavian period. Fischer (1995) undertook a comparison of certain orthographic and morphological features in a selection of official documents and laws from the Imperial period, including the *Res Gestae* of Augustus, the *Tabula Lugdunensis* of Claudius (*CIL* 13.1668) and from Spain, the *Lex Salpensana* (*CIL* 2.1963), *Lex municipalis Malacitana* (*CIL* 2.1964) and the recently discovered *Tabula Siarensis*

(Gonzalez, 1984) and *Tabulae Irnitanae* (Gonzalez and Crawford, 1986; Lamberti, 1993). The *Tabula Siarensis* is of Tiberian date, as is another bronze in Fischer's corpus, the *Tabula Hebana*, which was found in Etruria. The other Spanish texts are from the time of Domitian. Fischer (1995)'s collection of noteworthy orthographic features include the first two features in the following list:

i)   *u* for *i,* before labial consonants, particularly in superlatives such as *proxumus* for *proximus* and in ordinals. Cassiodorus (*Grammatici Latini* VII 150.11-2) attributes to Varro the statement that Julius Caesar always used the *i*-spelling, and Velius Longus (*Grammatici Latini* VII 49.22) states that the *u*-spelling was already antiquated and classed as *rusticanus* by Cicero. The *Res Gestae* normally has the *i*-spelling, with 16 examples against only one of *u* (*septuagensu*[*mum*, Fischer, 1995: 470). In the Spanish laws the *u*-spellings are widely attested, and alternate with *i*-spellings. Thus *proxumus* occurs in the *Tabula Siarensis*, the *Lex municipalis Malacitana* and three times in the *Lex Salpensana*, against *proximus* four times in the *Lex municipalis Malacitana* (Fischer. 1995: 474);

ii)   *uo* (the original spelling) for *uu*. Quintilian cites the forms *uulgus* and *seruum* as the current spelling in his day (1.4.11), and this is the spelling found in the *Res Gestae*. In the other laws the forms *diuom* and *diuum* both occur. Indeed, the spelling *diuom* is preferred to *diuum* in the *Tabulae Irnitanae* at the ratio of 24 to 2 (Fischer, 1995: 476). The maintenance of the form *diuom* is particularly connected with its role in imperial titles, but other words spelt with *uo* include *equom*, *seruom* and *uacuom* (Fischer, 1995: 474);

iii)   double *ii* in words such as *maiior* and *eiius*. Quintilian (1.4.11) says that this was the spelling used by Cicero in *aiio* and *Maiiam*; the spelling is frequent in the laws and tables of Flavian date, but avoided in earlier documents. The *Lex municipalis Malacitana* has 18 examples of *eiius* against 10 of *eius*.

Note that all of these features are most likely to have been solely orthographic, and probably do not correspond to any difference in the spoken language (see Quintilian 1.4.8, on the vowel in words such as *proximus*). In all of these examples, the *Res Gestae,* although the earliest text, presents the most 'modernised' spelling, and the chronologically most recent texts present many instances of 'archaic' orthography (although this impression may

be partly due to the choice of features: the *Res Gestae* has the archaic *caussa*, whereas the Spanish laws uniformly have the more modern *causa*). It seems to me to be misjudged to account the archaic features in the Spanish legal texts as a straightforward «affectation d'archaïsme» (Fischer, 1995: 480). It is perhaps better to think of the strictly legal texts preserving certain conservative practices, and the *Res Gestae* favouring more innovative spellings, perhaps deliberately echoing orthographic practices of Julius Caesar (extrapolating from the statement attributed to Varro by Cassiodorus, *Grammatici Latini* VII 150.11-2, cited above). Equally striking with the variation over time is the fluctuating spelling within each text: no text is completely consistent internally and all texts show some variation in spelling.

The orthographic variation is mirrored in the Latin morphology of the official documents and law-codes. Fischer (1995) also examined the following morphological features:

i)   gerunds and gerundives formed to verbs of the third conjugation in *-undum* and *-endum*. The *Res Gestae* and *Tabula Lugdunensis* omit the more archaic forms in *-undum* as do the Tiberian laws, but these survive in the Flavian documents. The *-undum* ending is most frequent in the formula *iure dicundo*, but is also found in other words; the *Lex municipalis Malacitana* has *demoliundum* and *uendundis*.

ii) forms of the genitive singular and nominative plural of *-io-* stems in *-i* (which I shall call 'short forms') and *-ii*, and dative / ablative plurals in *-is* and *-iis* from stems in *-io-* and *-ia*. The *Res Gestae* has only the short forms of the genitive singular, but roughly equal numbers of the endings *-iis* and *-is*; the *Tabula Lugdunensis* has only short forms of both genitive singular and dative/ablative plural. In the other texts, the short forms are more frequent, but long forms are also found. The legal texts from Spain are the only ones to supply examples of the nominative plural of *-io-* stems, where, in Fischer's words (1995: 475) «une indifférence totale règne» between long and short forms.

Fischer's findings can be paralleled by other morphological variation from other official documents: the fragment of the *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani* from Rome (*CIL* 6.930) has two different forms of the genitive of *plebs/plebes*, *plebis* four times and once *plebei* at line 22.

This fluctuation from text to text in orthography and morphology is not something limited to official documents and law-codes, but is also found in shorter epigraphical texts. However, in short texts it is less easy to separate out

variation caused by carelessness of the stone-cutter or scribe, or which might be an *ad hoc* choice of an individual or a local peculiarity. There are few examples of literary texts surviving in copies contemporary with their production from the late Republic and early Empire, but one such text, a papyrus fragment of the poetry of Cornelius Gallus, shows a mix of older and newer forms (see the discussion at Clackson, 2011: 246-247). Letters and documents from the Roman fort at Vindolanda, dating from the beginning of the second century CE, also exhibit a mixture of old-fashioned and more modern spellings (such as *missi* and *axses* alongside *misi* and *axes*, Adams, 1995).

With so much variation in surviving documents, it is only possible to say which spellings are 'correct' and which are 'incorrect' with the benefit of hindsight. Spellings which were endorsed by later grammarians and became current in educational texts appear to us now to be the 'correct' spellings, and pass without comment. A Roman of the first century CE, however, may well have had different views, or may not have recognised a single 'correct' form, just as Cicero was able to contemplate different forms of the preposition *ab*: *af*, *ab*, *a*, and *abs* (*Orator* 158). Quintilian is certainly aware that different spellings were possible, and is able to defend one spelling against another, but we must be wary of any idea that the spellings which are recommended by Quintilian, or indeed those found in the *Res Gestae*, are already 'standardized' at the date they are written. If the autograph manuscripts of Cicero had survived, we might have different views about what was considered 'correct'. Writers, including the drafters of authoritative law-codes, did not yet share a set of codified norms, nor was any such set universally accepted. At the end of the first century CE, the process of standardization, at least in orthography, was not yet complete.

6. *Conclusion*

In the introduction to this paper, I posed two questions: Can we usefully relate the ancient conceptions of *Hellenismós* and *Latinitas* with processes of standardization or ideologies of the standard language? In what ways were Latin and Greek different from modern standard languages? The answers to these questions have been sought both in a discussion of the terms *Hellenismós* and *Latinitas*, and in a brief examination of some Latin spellings mainly in first century CE texts emanating from official bodies or in some way associated with the person of the Emperor. The two different investigations give a largely complementary picture.

The first uses of *Latinitas* were closely modelled on the Greek term *Hellenismós*, which, in the Hellenistic grammarians at least, referred to a more abstract conception of 'Greek', encompassing within it variant forms from different dialects. Roman writers on language could also sometimes have a more tolerant view of what was subsumed under *Latinitas*, and included colloquial forms and varieties associated with particular registers. In the late Republic and early Empire, the allowance of variant spellings in official inscriptions suggests that the processes of 'codification' of a standard orthography were not yet complete. Rather than a single system of language 'norms' there were many competing norms, some of which may have had particular associations with particular genres, or even with particular words. Furthermore, different spelling conventions may have come in and out of fashion: compare the vogue for double *ii* spellings in words such as *eius* and *maior*, which Quintilian associated with Cicero but which re-emerges in the Flavian municipal law-codes. During this period, Latin is clearly on the road to standardization, but state institutions and educational practices have yet to effectively agree on and maintain a single set of standard forms, in orthography at least, and possibly also in morphology. With codification still taking place, there was no common acceptance of which forms were 'correct'. Some members of the Roman elite did have what Milroy and Milroy (2012) refer to as a 'complaint' tradition with respect to language, that is to say they were ready to criticise the speech of others or declare words or phrases *non Latinus* "not Latin", but in the absence of a codified standard such complaints belong in the realm of rhetoric rather than linguistics. The range of variation possible, and the fact that the majority of speakers were not both conscious and accepting of a single set of agreed written 'norms' means that there was not yet developed a 'standard language culture' in Rome in the late Republic and the first century of Empire. There are parallels from other languages of the process of standardization taking place over centuries (see Milroy and Milroy, 2012, on English), and the slow pace of Latin standardization is unsurprising for a society without printing or mass media and without the bureaucratic apparatus of a modern state.

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