

J. N. ADAMS

The Regional Diversification of Latin, 200BC - AD 600



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THE REGIONAL DIVERSIFICATION OF LATIN 200 BC–AD 600

Classical Latin appears to be without regional dialects, yet Latin evolved in little more than a millennium into a variety of different languages (the Romance languages: Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese etc.). Was regional diversity apparent from the earliest times, obscured perhaps by the standardisation of writing, or did some catastrophic event in late antiquity cause the language to vary? These questions have long intrigued Latinists and Romance philologists, struck by the apparent uniformity of Latin alongside the variety of Romance. This book establishes that Latin was never geographically uniform. The changing patterns of diversity and the determinants of variation are examined from the time of the early inscriptions of Italy, through to late antiquity and the beginnings of the Romance dialects in the western Roman provinces. This is the most comprehensive treatment ever undertaken of the regional diversification of Latin throughout its history in the Roman period.

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DIVERSIFICATION
OF LATIN 200 BC–AD 600

J. N. ADAMS



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- Heft 4 (München, 1954). Reproduced by permission of the Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. 744
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Preface

No reader of Cicero and Martial, however attentive and learned, could possibly tell from their Latin that the one came from Arpinum in the Volscian territory and the other from Spain. It has sometimes been thought paradoxical that Latin of the Roman period seems to lack regional variations yet was able to generate in little more than a millennium a diversity of Romance tongues that are usually classified as different languages. Was the language at first uniform but subject in late antiquity to some catastrophic event that caused it to split up into numerous varieties? Or was regional diversity there from the beginning, obscured perhaps by standardised forms of writing? These questions have long been of interest, particularly to Romance philologists keen to identify the genesis of the different Romance languages. The study of regional variation by Latinists suffered a setback more than a hundred years ago when the supposed discovery of African features in certain African literary texts was exposed as misguided, but even among Latinists an interest in the subject has never entirely faded away. Several of the great names in Latin philology have addressed the subject, not infrequently lamenting its difficulty, and expressing frustration that the variations that common sense and their experience of other languages told them must be there, could not be found.

In this book it will be shown that Latin had regional variations from the earliest period, first within Italy itself and later across the provinces. The pattern of variation changed as the Romans increased their influence in Italy and came into contact with different vernacular languages in the provinces, though it is by no means only language contact that determined the variations that can be detected. It is African Latin that will emerge as the most distinctive regional variety, and that is a curiosity, given the weight of criticism that has fallen on the concept of *Africitas*.

Two main types of evidence lie behind Chapters III–IX. Chapters III and IV deal with the comments made by Latin speakers themselves about the local variations that they heard around them. The remaining chapters

down to IX seek to find regional usages embedded without comment in literary and some other texts. The book has two complementary aims. I have, first, tried to identify stages in the diversification of the language, from the earliest period through to about AD 600, and the causes of any such diversity. I should stress that a neat history of regional variation in Latin, accompanied by maps showing territorial divisions of the language, cannot be written. Latin writers did not write in dialect, and any regional variation that there might have been is buried under the uniform standard language. Much effort must be expended in groping around trying to unearth mere snippets of information. My second aim has been to address a question that has long bothered scholars. Can literary texts ever be assigned a place of composition on linguistic grounds, and if so what are the criteria that might be used?

Such evidence as I have been able to find for regional variation in Latin has been set out in considerable detail, and for a good reason. Those investigating the diversity of Latin do not have the abundance of material available to students of dialects in modern languages, and signs of diversity have to be extracted from unpromising sources and carefully assessed. One must be wary of reading too much into the sketchy evidence, and I have had to reject many optimistic claims that have been made on behalf of this or that usage as a regionalism. After sifting there remains a core of material, and I have used this as the basis for addressing such general issues as the determinants of variation, provincial archaism, the relationship between variation in Latin itself and that in the Romance languages, attitudes to regional diversity and to provincial speakers, the effects of such language attitudes, the influence of Rome, the role of regional Latin in literary texts, and the interaction between the standard language ('classical Latin') and local forms. These general sections are mainly found at the ends of chapters and in the first and last chapters, but a few are placed within chapters. The most detailed methodological discussion is in Chapter X, where I have considered the question whether misspellings in imperial inscriptions reveal dialect variations across the Empire or merely variations in the literacy levels of stonemasons. Criteria for localising texts are considered mainly in Chapter V, but come up in the following chapters as well.

I have been interested in the subject for many years but had not had time to write anything up. All Souls College provides perfect conditions for anyone fortunate enough to be elected into its fellowship. This book could not have been completed anywhere else, at least in the time that it took at All Souls.

I owe a particular debt to Eleanor Dickey. She read the whole manuscript with great attention to detail and commented bluntly on its shortcomings. I had to make numerous changes in response to her criticisms. James Clackson read a good part of the work, and made many telling observations and provided information about bibliography. Wolfgang de Melo, Peter Kruschwitz and John Penney read the second chapter, and all suggested significant changes.

Many others have given me help in different ways, and I am grateful to them all: Peter Brennan, John Briscoe, Anna Chahoud, Anna Davies, Trevor Evans, Klaus-Dietrich Fischer, Manfred Flieger and Friedrich Spoth of the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, David Howlett, Tony Hunt, Robert Hastings, John Hines, Geoffrey Horrocks, Nicholas Horsfall, Nigel Kay, Robert Kerr, David Langslow, Michael Lapidge, John Lee, Martin Maiden, Paolo Poccetti, Patrick Sims-Williams, Roger Tomlin, John Peter Wild, Andrew Wilson, Roger Wright.

The copy-editing of this book posed peculiar problems. The task was carried out by Iveta Adams with remarkable sharpness, diligence and learning. Countless errors were eliminated by her. Those that remain are entirely my own fault.

Abbreviations

<i>Barrington Atlas</i>	R. J. A. Talbert (ed.), <i>Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World</i> (Princeton and Oxford, 2000).
CAH	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i> (Cambridge, 1923–).
CC	<i>Corpus Christianorum, series Latina</i> (Turnholt, 1954–).
CE	F. Bücheler, A. Riese and E. Lommatzsch (eds.), <i>Carmina Latina Epigraphica</i> , 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1897–1926).
CEL	P. Cugusi, <i>Corpus Epistularum Latinarum papyris tabulis ostracis servatarum</i> , 3 vols. (Florence, 1992–2002).
CGL	G. Goetz et al. (eds.), <i>Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum</i> , 7 vols. (Leipzig and Berlin, 1888–1923).
CHG	E. Oder and C. Hoppe (eds.), <i>Corpus Hippiatricorum Graecorum</i> , 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1924–7).
CIE	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Etruscarum</i> (Leipzig etc., 1893–)
CIG	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> , 4 vols. (Berlin, 1828–77).
CIIC	See Macalister (1945–9).
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> (Berlin, 1862–).
CL	Classical Latin
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> (Vienna, 1866–).
DML	<i>Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources</i> (Oxford, 1975–).
FEW	W. von Wartburg, <i>Französisches etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> (Bonn, 1928–).
FIRA	S. Riccobono (ed.), <i>Fontes Iuris Romani Antejustiniani</i> , 2nd edn, 3 vols. (Florence, 1940–1).
GGM	C. Müller (ed.), <i>Geographici Graeci Minores</i> , 2 vols. (Paris, 1855–61).

GL	H. Keil (ed.), <i>Grammatici Latini</i> , 8 vols. (Leipzig, 1855–80).
ILCV	E. Diehl (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres</i> , 3 vols. (Berlin, 1925–31).
ILLRP	A. Degrassi (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae</i> , 2 vols. (I 2nd edn 1965, II 1963).
ILS	H. Dessau (ed.), <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> , 3 vols. (Berlin, 1892–1916).
IRT	J. M. Reynolds and J. B. Ward Perkins (eds.), <i>The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania</i> (Rome and London, 1952).
KAI	See Donner and Röllig (1966–9, 2002).
LEI	See Pfister (1979–).
LL	Late Latin
LSJ	H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> (revised and augmented by H. S. Jones, with a revised supplement, 1996) (Oxford, 1996).
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i> .
OCD	<i>Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> , 2nd edn (Oxford, 1970), 3rd edn (Oxford, 1996).
OLD	<i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> (Oxford, 1968–82).
PG	<i>Patrologia Graeca</i> (<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne) (Paris, 1857–).
PL	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> (<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne) (Paris, 1844–).
PLRE	A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale and J. Morris, <i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> , 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1971–92).
REW	W. Meyer-Lübke, <i>Romanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> , 3rd edn (Heidelberg, 1935).
RIB	<i>The Roman Inscriptions of Britain</i> (Oxford, 1975–).
RLM	K. Halm (ed.), <i>Rhetores Latini Minores</i> (Leipzig, 1863).
SB	F. Preisigke (ed.), <i>Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten</i> (Strassburg, 1915–).
TLL	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> (Leipzig, 1900–).
VL	Vulgar Latin

CHAPTER I

Introduction

In this chapter I set out some aims and findings of the work, define some terms, and state some of the questions that will be addressed later. The types of evidence that will be used are described. I will also comment on methodology, but that will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters. Dialectal variation in other languages has been extensively investigated in recent years (and earlier as well), and I consider here the issues that have emerged in dialect studies and relate them to the Roman world. Most of these issues will come up later.

I AIMS, METHODS AND FINDINGS

The attentive reader of Latin texts written between 200 BC and AD 600, the period to be covered here, will probably have a sense that the language changes in time, but no sense that texts could be assigned a place of composition on linguistic evidence alone. There have even been those who have taken the texts at their face value and argued that the language was a unity which did not begin to develop regional variations until the medieval or proto-Romance period (see also below, [XI.1](#)).¹ But if so it is surely paradoxical that Latin should have spawned a diversity of Romance

¹ For a general discussion of the ‘thèse unitaire’, see Väänänen (1983: 486–90); also the remarks of Gaeng (1984: 7 n. 11) and Banniard (1992: 24–32). The thesis is associated particularly with Muller (1929), who stressed the sameness of later Latin and argued for a sudden radical change in the eighth century. See e.g. Muller (1929: viii): ‘in the fourth quarter of the eighth century, . . . , a rather sudden shifting of the linguistic forces takes place: the new speech is born. And now, whatever heterogeneous, outworn, unsuitable material has been left, is rapidly eliminated. The new being rejects it according to its instinctive standard’; also (1929: 7): ‘Starting from the general opinion that there was a Koinê or Vulgar Latin spoken about the same everywhere so that inhabitants of the Roman empire understood each other, it is my purpose to endeavor to demonstrate that the cessation of the existence of that Koinê is not at all coincident with the fall of the Roman empire, or directly connected with it; that this Vulgar Latin common to Western Romania continued its existence up to and in the VIIIth century; that the rise of dialects is due to positive and not to negative causes, viz: the social conditions prevalent in the West after the VIIIth century.’ Muller was well aware of some of the evidence for earlier variations by region (see his Introduction), but he played down its significance and insisted

languages and dialects and yet had no regional varieties itself. The paradox has long puzzled scholars. The unitarian argument is at variance with all that is known about the behaviour of geographically widespread languages over time.² It seems inconceivable that the language spoken by the Latini for many centuries before the appearance of the earliest literary texts in the third century BC should not have acquired regional varieties. Quite apart from the length of the period during which Latin was transmitted only in spoken form, with no possibility of the standardisation that may come with literacy and schools, and quite apart from the scattered character of Latin-speaking communities, the Latins were in contact with speakers of other languages, such as Greek, Etruscan, Oscan, Umbrian, Marsian and Faliscan, and these contacts had the potential to influence Latin in different regions.

Several main arguments concerning the regional diversity of Latin will be gradually advanced in the book.

First, whatever the impression given by most texts, there was indeed regional variation in Latin, not only in the late Empire but even in the Republic. Already in the last centuries BC in literary texts we find a concept of regional variation well developed (see Chapter III), along with a view that the Latin of Rome had prestige whereas the Latin of non-Romans such as rustics might even be comical. There were literary genres during this period (comedy and Atellan farce: see III.3, 6.1) using linguistic means to portray certain stage characters as outsiders to Rome. Evidence for usages distinctive of particular regions is available throughout recorded Latin.

Second, such variation shows up in different parts of the language system, most notably in the lexicon but also in phonology and to a limited extent

on a sudden violent change in about the eighth century. A useful discussion of the question is to be found in B. Löfstedt (1961: 207–13), who stresses the failure of scholars to locate texts geographically with linguistic evidence, and suggests that late Latin across the provinces was a sort of koine (210; see also below, 6). For another discussion of the paradox of the unity of (written) Latin alongside the diversity of the Romance languages, see B. Löfstedt ([1973] 2000: 101–5). In this second discussion Löfstedt is not entirely pessimistic about the possibility of finding regional variations in written texts. He writes ([1973] 2000: 105) of the need to refine methods of using written texts as evidence for speech, and of the need for more synchronic study of late Latin texts. On early theories concerning the relationship between Latin and Romance see also Meier (1996: 62). For a recent brief overview of the problem of the regional diversification of Latin see Herman (1996: 49, 56–8).

² As Herman ([1985a] 1990: 67) puts it, faced with a lack of evidence in texts for the regional diversification of the language one can draw one of two conclusions. Either Latin was a unity during the Roman period, or the texts give a false impression. Only the second conclusion is tenable, as I hope this book will make clear. There is a wide-ranging review of the state of the question by Poccetti (2004), who brings out the diversity of the language and touches on many of the themes of this chapter (and other parts of the book).

in morphology. Finding localised syntactic variation has proved far more problematic (see below, 2 and XI.5.3).

Third, the best evidence for variation is found not in the inscriptions that have traditionally been investigated for this purpose, but in literary *testimonia*, non-epigraphic documentary corpora and even some literary texts. I will return shortly to the types of evidence that will be used in the book.

Fourth, the diversification of the language cannot be attributed to a single factor but had multiple causes. These will emerge chapter by chapter and will be summarised at the end of several chapters. In the concluding chapter I will offer an overview of the causation of regional variety (XI.4) and will comment on the relationship between Latin and the Romance languages.

Since Latin developed into the Romance languages,³ these will inevitably often come up. Sometimes it is possible to find a continuity between an early regionalism and the geographical distribution of its reflexes in Romance (see XI.3.5), but more often than not localised usages in the Latin period are simply not relevant to the Romance languages. In the expanses of the Roman Empire regionalisms came and went under diverse influences, or spread in time from their place of origin, such that a usage confined to an area in, say, the early Empire need not have been so a millennium later. I will not restrict myself merely to anticipations in Latin of Romance features. A primary aim of the book will be to present the evidence for variety region by region. The focus will be on regions in which Latin took root and had native speakers, most notably Italy, Spain, Africa, Gaul and Britain. The eastern provinces are of less significance in a study of this type (see below, 13). In much of the eastern Roman Empire Greek was the main language used by the Romans, and the scanty remains of Latin (for the most part inscriptions on stone, and also some papyri and ostraca) were left either by incomers from the west, or by learners of Latin as a second language, as distinct from Latin-speaking populations native to the region. The western provinces by contrast produced an abundance of literary texts as well as non-literary writing.

³ The Romance languages have been called a linguistic consequence of the Roman Empire (Elcock 1960: 17). They are the languages that developed directly out of Latin in the former provinces of the Roman Empire. For an overview see e.g. Harris (1988). The main branches are Ibero-Romance (Spanish [i.e. Castilian], Portuguese, Catalan), Gallo-Romance (French, Occitan, Franco-Provençal), Italo-Romance (standard Italian and the Italian dialects), Sardinian, Rheto-Romance (Romance forms spoken in the eastern part of Switzerland and north-eastern Italy) and Balkan Romance (mainly Rumanian, or Daco-Rumanian, since it derives from the Latin of the province of Dacia). The location of the main Romance dialects that will come up in this book can be seen in maps 4–6.

Accounts of the diversification of Latin have often taken the form of models not necessarily based on much evidence from Latin itself.⁴ This book probably collects more evidence than has ever been assembled by those discussing the regional variety of the language. The presentation of the Latin evidence has been my primary aim, and only after that have I explicitly addressed general issues, though I would contend that even a single item of evidence may have wider implications that are obvious at once. I have stressed that point constantly as the evidence is set out. It is not enough merely to ‘collect’ evidence. Evidence is easily misrepresented or misused, and I have tried to assess the reliability and relevance of every single item discussed.

I will be dealing in this book with five categories of evidence. First, there are inscriptions of the early period, Latin, Italic (where appropriate) or of mixed character. The inscriptions of *CIL* I² have sometimes been used to suggest dialect differences between the Latin of Rome and that of various areas outside Rome, such as Latium and Campania. I find methodological shortcomings in some of the discussions of this kind. I will review many of the claims that have been made and attempt to determine what substance they may have (Chapter II). Since Oscan has often been asserted to have played a part in the differentiation of the Romance languages (see VI.4), I will consider the question whether there is evidence for an Oscanised form of Latin that might have left its mark at a much later date.

Second, subliterate Latin written on materials other than stone, such as curse tablets, usually on lead, and writing tablets on wood, papyri and ostraca, have been turning up in recent decades in such places as Britain, Egypt, Africa and Gaul. These documents tend to be the work of poorly educated writers, and are full of phonetic spellings and other non-standard features rooted in ordinary speech. They do, it will be suggested, provide some information about regional varieties of Latin. The most important corpora are the ostraca of Bu Njem and the Albertini tablets, both from Africa, curse tablets from Britain, and the graffiti of La Graufesenque in Gaul. I will deal with the first two corpora at VIII.6 and VIII.7, the first three corpora together in Chapter X, and the texts from La Graufesenque at V.2.

Third, *testimonia* abound in literature offering information about regional varieties. Literary authors sometimes comment on this or that usage as current in a particular town or region. There is a long tradition, not least in Romance philology, of noting such evidence, but a comprehensive

⁴ Even the admirable recent discussion by Stefenelli (1996) contains little evidence.

collection of data is lacking. That will be provided in Chapters III (on the republican *testimonia*) and IV (on the imperial). This material brings out changing views of regional diversity (see XI.2). There is often a rhetoric to ancient observations, and such evidence cannot be used uncritically. In a recent book on regional variation in contemporary British English based on the BBC's nationwide *Voices* survey it is remarked (Elmes 2005: 97–8) that people in the regions today like to claim words as their own regionalisms when in reality such terms may be scattered much more widely, even across the whole country.⁵ This is an observation that should be kept in mind as one assesses ancient *testimonia*. Communications were poor in the ancient world, and there is no necessary reason why someone asserting the regional character of a usage should have had any knowledge of linguistic practices much beyond his own *patria*. Nevertheless various writers moved about a lot and seem to have been reliable observers of ordinary speech. The accuracy of some ancient comments can be confirmed from other evidence (cf. III.1). Even an inaccurate remark may have a certain interest, as revealing for example a concept that the language varied geographically in certain ways.

Fourth, there are later literary texts. Can such works ever be placed geographically on internal linguistic evidence alone? A secondary aim of the book will be to address this question. After the chapters referred to above about explicit *testimonia* I will turn to implicit evidence (Chapters V–IX), by which I mean evidence embedded without comment in a text that might give a pointer to its provenance. There has been widespread pessimism about the possibility of extracting such evidence from literary texts, which by their very nature are written in versions of a literary standard (for this term see below, 4), and standard varieties of a language by definition obscure local dialects. Some often cited pages of E. Löfstedt's *Late Latin* (1959: 42–50) are an eloquent expression of this pessimism (see below, V.1).⁶ I will consider the question what features a usage must have if it is to play a part in locating a text geographically (see V.7.2), and will present some case studies of texts along with discussions of methodology. It will be argued that even as early as the fourth century there are texts (or parts of texts) which can be given a place of composition from an examination of their language.

Finally, there are the vast numbers of inscriptions of the Roman Empire, published mainly in the volumes of *CIL*. A chapter (X) will be devoted to the

⁵ Elmes repeats the point from time to time (2005: 113, 115).

⁶ See also B. Löfstedt (1961: 208).

problems of using the spellings and misspellings found in inscriptions from different parts of the Empire as possible indications of the diversification of the language. There is no reason in principle why a study of misspellings should not reveal signs of dialectalisation. A misspelling may be phonetic, and betray a feature of a local dialect. Consider, for example, the following trade card of Peter Lynch, cabinet-maker, of Cork, dated 1890:

PETER LYNCH Bridewell Lane Cabinet Maker & Upholsterer (sine of the Mahogny Bedsted) Humbly takes lave to petition the patronage of the auristocracy and public in particular (who dont want to waist their mones) in regard of the 1st quality of his work in the abuv line. P. Lynche defies computation for cheapness and dacent tratement over and abuv any other workshop in Cork.⁷

Here the spellings underlined represent a recognisable feature of the southern Irish vowel system. It is not, however, in the nature of Latin inscriptions that they throw up misspellings confined to particular regions. The same banal misspellings turn up in varying degrees right across the Empire. Many such misspellings are indeed phonetically determined, but the problem is that they are widespread and do not serve to differentiate one region from another. Herman (in various papers), Gaeng (1968), Barbarino (1978) and others have sought to refine the unpromising data by establishing that certain errors, though found all over the Empire, are of unequal frequency in various places. Detailed statistical tables have been compiled showing the incidence of particular misspellings in different parts of the Empire. If misspelling X is common in one place but rare in another the assumption is made that the underlying linguistic change was more advanced in the first place than in the second. I am not the first to find this assumption unsatisfactory. Schmitt (1974b: 42), for example, commenting on Herman's (and Gaeng's) approach to the evidence of misspellings in inscriptions, remarks:

Il est évident que la fréquence des phénomènes est due avant tout au niveau économique de chaque région . . . et que ces phénomènes ne reflètent le caractère d'un parler que d'une façon très limitée.

The degree of spelling correctness or, conversely, the degree of error in a corpus of inscriptions may reflect the educational level of those who composed the inscriptions that happen to survive. If an error occurs 30 per cent of the time in a corpus from one region but only 10 per cent of the time in a corpus from another, we cannot safely conclude that thirty speakers out of every hundred in the first place had adopted a new pronunciation,

⁷ For this text see The Knight of Glin, 'Dublin directories and trade labels', *Furniture History* 21 (1985), 260.

but only ten out of every hundred in the second. Even bad spellers do not spell phonetically all the time. The variation in the frequency of the error would be consistent with a conclusion that in both places a phonetic change was widespread, but that those responsible for the second corpus were of higher cultural level than those responsible for the first, and better able to avoid phonetic spellings. There would not necessarily be any difference in the speech of the two regions. In Chapter X I will not review a wide range of spellings but will consider the methodology of extracting regional variations from inscriptions. Some signs of regional variation will emerge from the data. However, it remains true that, of the evidence that might be called on in investigating the regional diversity of Latin, inscriptions, with their uniformity right across the Empire, are the weakest.⁸ Indeed, if inscriptions are all that we have to go on for a region (and one thinks, for example, of the Balkans), the search for localised features is futile. There is no point, for example, in attempting to find anticipations of Rumanian in the Latin record. Moreover in this section I have merely touched on the difficulties of inscriptional evidence; more will be said in Chapter X.

It was implied above that regional variations in Latin do not necessarily correspond to those found in the Romance languages. It is probably true to say that in the study of the regional diversification of Latin the running has been made by those looking backwards from the Romance languages, as distinct from those who have scoured the remains of Latin itself for regional variations in the period from, say, the third century BC to the sixth century AD. I will often draw on Romance philology (and not least on the etymological dictionaries of Meyer-Lübke, von Wartburg and Corominas, and on the unfinished *LEI*), but will be focusing mainly on the Latin evidence itself, and writing from the perspective of a Latinist. Not that Latinists have neglected the question whether Latin had regional forms. Some distinguished scholars have written on the subject. E. Löfstedt, for example, devoted a judicious chapter (III) to 'local variation in Latin' in *Late Latin* (1959). Väänänen (1987) included a chapter on 'la controverse des variations régionales' (X) in his book on the *Peregrinatio Aetherae*, and also surveyed (1983) the main theories that have been put forward to explain the regional diversification of Latin and the Romance languages. Many of the papers in the collected works of Herman (1990) deal with the Latin of the provinces, particularly through inscriptions. There was a keen interest in the subject at the end of the nineteenth century, some of it inspired by an obsession of the time with alleged peculiarities of African Latin (*Africitas*).

⁸ See already Kroll (1897: 573) on the inadequacy of inscriptions.

All three of the scholars just named were concerned with the later period, but it has often been argued (with good reason) that even in the early Republic Latin was not a unity. The linguistic diversity of early Italy, the consequent contact between speakers of Latin and of other languages (not all of them Indo-European), and the fluidity of spelling at a time when grammarians hardly existed to impose a standardised orthography, are all factors that have encouraged the search for regional variation in early Latin, and particularly for variations between the Latin of the city of Rome and that of rural areas.

What is attempted in this book is a systematic account of the whole field, from the earliest period to late antiquity, dealing with the Latin evidence itself rather than the theories that have been advanced from a Romance perspective, and with the methodological problems raised by the interpretation of that evidence. I will not go beyond about AD 600 into the medieval period. The regional diversification of medieval Latin is a subject in its own right, with its own special problems, which I leave to others.

2 SOME DEFINITIONS: ‘DIALECT’ AND ‘ACCENT’

Any book with a title like that of the present one is bound to create the expectation that it is about ‘Latin dialects’, just as a book about the regional diversity of Greek would be expected to be about Greek dialects. I largely avoid the word ‘dialect’ in the book, except in the collocation discussed in the next section. I must say something at the start about conventional views of the term, and also about my reluctance to use it. This reluctance will be further explained in the final chapter (XI.5.2). Overlapping with ‘dialect’ is ‘accent’, and that is a term which I freely use. I first distinguish between ‘dialect’ and ‘accent’.

‘Dialect’ has been given many senses.⁹ Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (2005: 1) employ the term to refer to ‘a language variety which is used in a geographically limited part of a language area in which it is “roofed” by a structurally related standard variety; a dialect typically displays structural peculiarities in several language components’. They go on to refer to ‘accent’ as embracing ‘phonetic features’. This definition of dialect might be applied, for example, to English, but there is no reason why there should always be a ‘roofing’ standard variety (see further Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill 2005: 30–1). Davies ([1987] 2002: 156) points out that when the ancient Greek

⁹ On this point see Berrato (2005: 82). For some interesting remarks on the problems of definition see Davies ([1987] 2002: 154 with n. 3, 155).

dialects flourished, ‘there does not seem to have been a standard language of which those dialects could be dialects. Attic, Boeotian, etc. had equal status.’¹⁰ The koine was a later development. Berrato (2005: 82–3) notes that the Italian dialects, which he calls ‘primary’, ‘all came into being at the same time through the transformation of Latin’. It was only later that one of them, the Florentine dialect, became the national language.

Once there is a standard variety (or ‘national language’) the way is open for the formation of regional varieties of that standard, largely through contact between the primary dialects and the standard (see further below, 4, 7). Regional forms of the standard language might be called ‘secondary’ dialects.¹¹ Such regional variants, according to Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (2005: 25), ‘can result from deliberate, but only partly successful, attempts by dialect speakers at learning the standard variety’. The BBC *Voices* survey referred to above has repeatedly observed dialect speakers modifying their speech in the direction of the standard.¹² But probably more common, at least in present-day Europe, ‘is the situation in which the standard picks out (regional) dialect features, often of a phonetic nature’ (Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill 2005: 25). A case in point in Britain is the rise of ‘Estuary English’, ‘which contains much London regional phonology combined with standard morphology and syntax’ (Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill 2005: 26) (see below, 7).

Chambers and Trudgill (1980: 5) distinguish between ‘accent’ and ‘dialect’ as follows:

‘Accent’ refers to the way in which a speaker pronounces, and therefore refers to a variety which is phonetically and/or phonologically different from other varieties. ‘Dialect’, on the other hand, refers to varieties which are grammatically (and perhaps lexically) as well as phonologically different from other varieties.

This definition of dialect is a slightly more specific version of that given by Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (see above). Both accounts agree that accent refers to the phonetic or phonological features of a dialect, and that dialect embraces a variety of features, but Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill have preferred to leave unspecified what those features might include. Wells (1982: 1), dealing exclusively with English, is along much the same lines:

¹⁰ Davies does however go on to suggest that the matter was not quite so straightforward. She argues convincingly that, ‘even though there was no standard language in Greece before the koine, an abstract notion of Greek as a common language which subsumed the dialects was present among Greek speakers at a relatively early stage, i.e. from the fifth century B.C. onwards’ (156; see also 168).

¹¹ Berrato (2005: 82–3) refers to primary, secondary and tertiary dialects, without making himself entirely clear.

¹² See Elmes (2005: 8–9, 37, 41, 66), and below, 7.

By the term ‘accent’ . . . I mean a pattern of pronunciation used by a speaker for whom English is the native language or, more generally, by the community or social grouping to which he or she belongs. More specifically, I refer to the use of particular vowel or consonant sounds and particular rhythmic, intonational, and other prosodic features; to the syntagmatic (structural) and paradigmatic (systemic) interrelationships between these, and to the more abstract (phonological) representations which can be seen as underlying the actual (phonetic) articulations, together with the rules which relate the one to the other.

Wells (1982: 3) states that he will avoid the term ‘dialect’ because it causes confusion, and use the term ‘variety’ instead. I share his reservations about ‘dialect’ (see the end of this section, and [XI.5.2](#)), but it has to be said that the distinction which he makes between ‘variety’ and ‘accent’ is very similar to that made in the sources quoted above between ‘dialect’ and ‘accent’:

A difference between varieties . . . may involve any or all of syntax, morphology, lexicon, and pronunciation . . . A difference of **accent** . . . is a difference between varieties of General English which involves only pronunciation.

If we are to identify regional variations in Latin, it would not do to insist that ‘grammatical’ variations (see the definition of Chambers and Trudgill) are a necessary marker of different varieties. There are diachronic variations in Latin syntax, and social variations determined mainly by the educational level of the writer, but localised syntactic variations are hardly to be found in the record (see [XI.5.3](#)), and for a good reason. In so far as regional varieties of Latin have shown up in writing, they represent for the most part momentary regionalisations of the standard language, with the same standard syntax, or the same social/educational deviations from that standard, found across all the areas in which Latin was written (see below, [4](#)). In written texts it is lexical variation from place to place that is most obvious, whereas the significance of the lexicon is downgraded in the definition of dialect quoted above from Chambers and Trudgill.¹³

Some of the metalinguistic evidence (by which I mean comments in ancient writers about aspects of language) used in this book has to do with accent, a term which I will take to refer to just one aspect of a dialect, namely its phonetics and phonology. Dialects, we have just seen, are typically said to have other features as well, morphological, syntactic and lexical, and I will aim to go beyond accent as far as the evidence allows. Latin commentators were interested in the lexical peculiarities of regional speech as well as accent, but they do not offer a comprehensive view of all the features of the speech of any one place (on the meaning of ‘place’ see below, [9](#)).

¹³ On the limitations of lexical evidence see also Trudgill (2004: 10).

Where phonetics and phonology are concerned, it may be argued that structural (phonological) variations from area to area are more profound than differences of articulation (phonetics). Two varieties may, for example, have a phoneme /r/ which has a different articulation in the two places, but turns up in exactly the same phonetic environments; there will be a difference of sound between the two varieties but no structural difference. On the other hand one variety may have, for instance, a five-vowel system (so Sardinian, and possibly African Latin) and another a seven-vowel system (so Italian, and possibly Gallic Latin). The distinction is one of structure, or phonology. Some of the evidence concerning accent which will be presented in this book has to do with phonetics, but sometimes it is possible to move beyond sounds to the underlying structures which they form (III.4.5, IV.4.2, X.5.1.2.4).

Classicists may be familiar with dialects primarily through the study of the Greek dialects, which are named. This fact creates an expectation that if Latin had regional varieties they too would have names, and may induce scepticism about the very existence of regional variation in Latin if names cannot be found. Some ancient commentators do indeed attach geographical names to regional practices in Latin, as we will see ('Praenestine' Latin, for example, comes up several times), but in reality the absence of named varieties is insignificant. It is Greek that is exceptional in its precise designations of the dialects. I quote Janson (1991: 22) on the prevalence of unnamed varieties of speech:

[I]t is a fact that users of speech forms with low prestige and no established written form may well lack an established name for their particular way of speaking. This is true, for example, for many of the creole languages of the world: the names found in the linguistic literature are very often late inventions by linguists.

Language- or dialect-naming is inspired by the prestige of the variety and by its acquisition of a written form. If a variety is stigmatised and not represented in writing it may be nameless. Its speakers if pressed may refer to the speech of their town or locality, but it may take an inspired individual to come up with a name that sticks for a spoken variety of low prestige. 'Estuary English', for example, was coined by David Rosewarne in an article in the *Times Educational Supplement* on 19 October, 1984,¹⁴ and it eventually caught on. It is a remarkable fact that the emergent Romance languages were very slow to acquire names in the medieval period. 'Latin', or 'Roman language' (for which see IV.1.2, 1.2.6, 3.2), long went on being used. As Janson (1991: 26) puts it,

¹⁴ See Elmes (2005: 48–9), Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (2005: 26).

We can say that all through the Early Middle Ages, there was only one language name, that of Latin, despite considerable linguistic diversity, for no one needed any other name. Only when there existed significant new entities to talk about, namely the new written standards, did new names appear.

The Greek dialects, by contrast, did have written forms, and there was a time when they were of equal status (see above). They were of sufficient standing to enter high literature. In the [final chapter](#) I will return to the naming of Latin varieties in the Roman period, and collect the evidence that will be scattered about in the book (see [XI.2](#)).

In the same chapter ([XI.5.2](#)) I will also express some reservations about the conventional definition of dialect that are prompted by the Latin data. ‘Dialect’ in popular usage implies a distinct type of speech tied to a precise locality, whereas the reality may be far more complex, with the boundaries, regional and linguistic, far more blurred. There is something to be said for terms vaguer than ‘dialect’, such as ‘variations, variety, diversity’. In using such terms throughout this book I am acknowledging that we could never from the Latin record determine the full range of local usages of any precisely demarcated region, even if precisely demarcated linguistic regions ever existed. The point will also be made below, 4, p. 14 that there is a difference between ‘regionalised standard language’, an entity that may be identified in Latin, and a ‘primary dialect’, something impossible to find in Latin. The lack of evidence for the latter is a good reason for avoiding the term ‘dialect’.

I am, however, happy with the expression ‘dialect term’, to which I give two different meanings (see the next section).

3 ‘DIALECT TERMS/WORDS’

I use this expression later in the book in both a strong and weak sense (see e.g. [IV.5.4](#), [V.7.3.1](#)). By ‘strong’ dialect terms I refer to words restricted geographically in distribution which had synonyms in use either in other areas or in the standard language. ‘Weak’ dialect terms are those that are restricted geographically but do not have obvious synonyms in other places. They may, however, have a distinct local colour in that they refer to activities or objects associated with a particular locality. For example, there are distinctive Cornish terms relating to tin mining,¹⁵ and terms and expressions in Welsh English to do with coal mining.¹⁶ Speakers tend to see such terms as marking their local variety of speech. Strong dialect terms are the

¹⁵ See Elmes (2005: 13–14).

¹⁶ See Elmes (2005: 96).

more important, and I will produce statistics (at V.7.3.1) that will bring out their significance in at least one regional variety of Latin. I will not neglect the other type, not least because we cannot be certain that the standard language could not have named the activity or object in some mundane way if there had been a need to do so. Thus, for example, the mining term *gobbings*, used by a miner from Eastwood in the Midlands in the BBC *Voices* survey, was given a dictionary meaning in a treatise on mining in 1867 ('coal-mining refuse').¹⁷

Trudgill (2004: 1; cf. 3, 4) notes that English in the former British colonies has had to adapt to 'new topographical and biological features unknown in Britain', by borrowing, neologisms and semantic change. This process of adaptation he lists as one of the factors causing colonial varieties of English to differ from the English of Britain (see below, 11). Terms falling into this category would often be 'weak' dialect terms in my sense, but are nevertheless particularly distinctive of certain localities and may be helpful in placing a text geographically (see above, 1, p. 5 on what I refer to as a 'secondary' aim of this book).

4 'STANDARD' VARIETIES AND 'LANGUAGE STANDARDISATION'

It may be deduced from what has been said already that in recent discussions of regional dialects there is frequent mention of the relationship of dialects to the 'standard language', the 'standard variety', the 'national language', the 'standard', and so on. We saw above (2), for example, that Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (2005) spoke of dialects as roofed by a 'structurally related standard variety'. New varieties, we are told, are constantly being formed which reflect the interaction between a standard variety and regional varieties.¹⁸ Regional varieties, it was noted above (2), may move in the direction of the standard and show a mixture of the two elements (see also below, 7). A Cornish group from Bodmin, for example, when interviewed by the BBC *Voices* survey, admitted to diluting their regional speech and adopting features of the standard when dealing with outsiders (see Elmes 2005: 8–9). The act is even given a name locally ('cutting up'), and it is an obvious form of convergence through accommodation. Alternatively a provincial user of a standard variety may import some local features from time to time, possibly to mark his local identity. Pedersen (2005)

¹⁷ See Elmes (2005: 115).

¹⁸ See in general Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (2005: 24–5).

is a detailed discussion of the relationship between standard varieties and dialects in Scandinavia.

The distinction referred to earlier (2) between ‘primary’ dialects and those arising from the ‘regionalisation of the standard’ is relevant to the history of Latin. Before Rome rose to power and the city variety acquired prestige as the ‘best’ form of Latin (see further below, this section) there is some evidence for regional variations in the Latin spoken around Latium, and these, if the word ‘dialect’ is appropriate, would have constituted primary dialects (see the whole of III.6). Much later, educated users of literary Latin were capable of ‘regionalising’ the standard by introducing local features. That practice was sometimes deliberate, as when Virgil admitted Italian regional usages in the *Georgics* (VII.3), or Ausonius used local fish names in a catalogue of epic style in the *Mosella* (V.3.5), and sometimes a reflection of local developments that had affected the educated classes without their necessarily being aware of them. The African medical writer Mustio, who almost by definition wrote an educated variety of the language, used in his gynaeological treatise certain African botanical terms with Latin (or Greco-Latin) equivalents quite unaffectedly (VIII.4.1), because they had found their way into educated African Latin. The idea that a regional dialect may consist of a partly regionalised variety of the standard is an important one in relation to Latin. The Latin that survives, being by definition written, consists almost exclusively of forms of the educated standard, and one is not likely to find much sign of primary dialects in the literary language.

But what exactly is a ‘standard variety’,¹⁹ particularly in the context of Rome? If any language may be said to have had an educated standard it is Latin. The Latin that most learners of the language know today is a standardised form, and almost the whole of Latin literature is composed in stylistic variants of the standard. There are conventions of spelling and morphology, and notions of syntactic correctness can be deduced from high literary texts. That said, the concept of a standard language is idealised and difficult to pin down, and even those who set themselves up as arbiters of correctness may be vague and inconsistent in their pronouncements.

‘Language standardisation’ in any language is an ongoing process that seeks to impose standard (or ‘correct’) forms, most obviously of spelling but also of morphology, word use, pronunciation and syntax. Those who set out to codify the correct forms may be grammarians, educationalists or other, often self-appointed, purists, such as those who write letters to

¹⁹ For recent discussion of this question see e.g. Milroy and Milroy (1999: 18–23), Pedersen (2005: 172–5). Lodge (1993: 85–117) describes the move to standardisation in France.

The Times or the BBC castigating departures from their idea of correctness and lamenting the decline of English. There was a strong grammatical tradition at Rome, and it was mainly grammarians and some of their pupils who acted as ‘guardians of the language’. This phrase forms the title of a well-known book by Kaster (1988). Augustine, for example, at *De musica* 2.1.1 refers to the grammarian as a ‘guardian of tradition’ (*custos ille uidelicet historiae*), who will seek to inculcate the old vowel lengths in his pupils against current trends in the language. The activities of grammarians at Rome go back as far as Latin literature itself, since the earliest teachers, according to Suetonius (*Gramm.* 1.2), were the first poets, Livius Andronicus and Ennius, who are said to have taught both in Greek and Latin and to have clarified the meaning of Greek authors and to have engaged in the *praelectio* of their own Latin compositions.²⁰ Subsequent *grammatici* are by implication presented as using Latin only.²¹

The effects of the grammatical tradition are soon to be seen. In the second century we find Lucilius, for example, stating the difference (1215–18) between the adverbs *intro* (with verbs of motion) and *intus* (with static verbs), a distinction which had been disregarded by Cato, who was happy to use *intro* with static verbs (*Agr.* 157.7, 15), and went on being disregarded by those untouched by the purist movement. Some centuries later Quintilian was moved to restate the rule (1.5.50). There are other linguistic precepts in Lucilius. At 356 and 357 he advocates *feruo* as the correct form of the verb for ‘boil’, not *ferueo*. At 364–7 he advises that the nominative plural of *puer* should have the ending *-ei* whereas the genitive singular should have *-i*. This recommendation must be an attempt to counter the spread of *-i* to the nominative plural, either as an alternative to the earlier *-ei* or as a replacement of it. Another fragment (1100) seems to have introduced a list of a hundred solecisms.

A typical feature of standardisation movements is that an attempt is made to eliminate optional variation,²² and some of the recommendations of Lucilius can be interpreted in this way. *Intus* and *intro*, for example, were in free variation in combination with *sum*, and Lucilius and later Quintilian sought to eliminate one of the alternatives from the syntagm. Some of the morphological changes discernible between the time of Plautus and Cicero can be seen as reductions in the amount of optional variation. There were several genitive singular forms of fourth-declension nouns such as *senatus* available in the early period, but most of the alternatives had been all but

²⁰ See Kaster (1995: 52–4) on these activities.

²¹ See Kaster (1995: 51) on this point.

²² See Milroy and Milroy (1999: 22).

eliminated by the late Republic in favour of *-us* (see II.18 and VII.2 for two of them; another is *senati*). Sigmatic futures such as *faxit* = *fecerit* and *mulcassitis* = *mulcaueritis* were in decline over a long period and are virtually non-existent in the late Republic except in archaising legal style.²³ The future tense of fourth-conjugation verbs in Plautine Latin offered a choice of forms (*audibo*, *audiam*), but the first had been eliminated by the time of Cicero. On Asinius Pollio as a purist see below, III.5.

Language standardisation movements may be influential, but their impact is bound to be limited. In English full standardisation has only been achieved in the spelling system,²⁴ but even spelling among those considered to be educated is often described as substandard these days. There are many reasons why standardisation tends to fail. Languages move on inexorably, and those attempting to codify correct forms may be unable to keep up with developments. Purists cannot always agree among themselves about what is acceptable. At Rome those described as ‘anomalists’ had different ideals from those called ‘analogists’, with the former accepting irregularities that might be justified by usage and the latter seeking to impose regularities.²⁵ Those who did not attach such labels to themselves might be moved to follow now the authority (*auctoritas*) of some respected old author whose usage was out of line with current practice, now current practice itself (*consuetudo*). But even *consuetudo* is a complicated model: whose *consuetudo*? The complexities are well set out by Holford-Strevens (2003: 172–92). Again, some writers who had been highly trained by *grammatici* were indifferent to their rules. Varro, for example, often departs from accepted late republican educated usage as that emerges from the practice of Cicero and Caesar.²⁶ But it was above all the emperor Augustus who disregarded the prescriptions of the *grammatici*.²⁷ According to Suetonius (*Aug.* 88) he did not consistently observe the spelling rules of grammarians but seemed to follow the opinions of those who thought that one should write as one spoke. He used prepositions with the names of towns for clarity (*Aug.* 86.1), though this was a practice classed as solecism by grammarians over a long period (see Quint. 1.5.38, Pompeius *GL* V.252.21–2). He admitted a form *domos* as the genitive singular of *domus* (*Aug.* 87.2), possibly a regional variant from the place of his birth.²⁸ Several times he is reported as castigating others for the use of pretentious (i.e. learned)

²³ See de Melo (2002). ²⁴ See Milroy and Milroy (1999: 18).

²⁵ A notable work on analogy was the *De analogia* of Caesar, of which there are some revealing fragments. The fragments are collected by Funaioli (1907: 143–57).

²⁶ See e.g. Adams (2005b: 78, 81, 90, 95). ²⁷ See the brief remarks of Adams (2005b: 78).

²⁸ But see Sommer (1914: 388).

words or word forms (Quint. 1.6.19, Charisius p. 271.16–18 Barwick). Another factor undermining any standardisation movement was the inability of some writers to put rules into practice consistently.²⁹ Vitruvius, in a remark that looks to be more than an empty topos, pleaded for indulgence if he had not abided by the rules of the grammatical art (1.1.18), pointing out that he was merely an architect and not a grammarian trained to the highest level.

Latinitas, ‘correct Latinity’, the nearest equivalent the language has to ‘standard language’, and itself based on the Greek Ἑλληνισμός,³⁰ is therefore a vague and shifting ideal, not a reality that may be fully defined in objective terms. Some linguists speak of standard language as an ideology.³¹ Milroy and Milroy (1999: 22) comment as follows on the label ‘Standard English’, and the remark could also stand if ‘Classical Latin’ were inserted in place of ‘Standard English’:

What Standard English actually is thought to be depends on acceptance (mainly by the most influential people) of a common core of linguistic conventions, and a good deal of fuzziness remains around the edges. The ideology of standardisation . . . tends to blind us to the somewhat ill-defined nature of a standard language.

There is a common core of linguistic conventions in classical Latin (a phrase I use here to denote the standard language in the late Republic and early Empire), but our view of what was acceptable to the educated in written form in the last century of the Republic has probably been shaped to some extent by the chance survival of so much Cicero.³² If more prose by other writers had survived the fuzziness referred to by Milroy and Milroy above would no doubt appear the greater, and even as it is the works of Varro and the anonymous *Bellum Africum* display departures from the norms we are used to in Cicero (see Adams 2005b). Nevertheless ‘correct Latin’ remained a recognisable entity over many centuries, with variations determined by such factors as the date of writing, the genre of the work and the skill of the writer. Its persistence on the one hand obscures regional variations, yet paradoxically opens the way, at least in theory, to the identification of a special type of regional Latin, namely regionalised standard language (see further below, 7).

²⁹ See Mayer (2005).

³⁰ Note the definition of *Latinitas* at anon. *Ad Herennium* 4.17: *Latinitas est quae sermonem purum conseruat, ab omni uitio remotum* (‘correct Latinity is what keeps language pure and free from every vice’).

³¹ See e.g. Pedersen (2005: 172), referring to an early paper by Milroy and Milroy.

³² This is a theme of Adams, Lapidge and Reinhardt (2005).

5 CITIES AND FORMS OF DIALECT DIFFUSION

It is generally agreed that '[u]rban centres play a prominent part in the spatial diffusion of linguistic phenomena' (Taeldeman 2005: 263).³³ This observation is relevant to the situation of Latin, given the power of Rome. Latin spread from Rome all over the peninsula, ousting in time numerous vernacular languages. On a smaller geographical scale, Roman Latin was invested with prestige by its speakers, who tended to stigmatise rural varieties in the environs of Rome (II.6, III.3), and as a result there is reason to think that Roman Latin influenced, or overwhelmed, varieties of the language spoken in Latium (see XI.2, 3.2, 4.5). I dwell here on diffusion from urban centres, drawing particularly on Taeldeman's recent paper (2005), in which he expresses some reservations about the usual account of urban influence that are again applicable to Rome.

Taeldeman (2005: 263) notes that two patterns have emerged as the most common types of diffusion. First, there is contagious diffusion, whereby innovations spread locally via social networks. Features are passed on by personal contact. Those in the rural periphery of Rome might have been subject to the direct influence of Roman Latin, particularly if they felt that city Latin was superior or that they were represented as yokels because of their country speech.³⁴ This pattern is referred to by Chambers and Trudgill (1980: 192) as the 'neighbourhood effect', defined as the 'gradual spreading of features from one place to the next'. Taeldeman (2005: 277) notes that Antwerp, the largest city in Flanders, exports the most striking features of its dialect to the whole of its hinterland. This type of diffusion is also referred to as 'wave theory' (see below X.8.1; also XI.4.5).³⁵ Second, there is hierarchical diffusion, whereby features leap (sometimes called 'parachuting': see Taeldeman 2005: 263) from an influential urban centre across rural space to a lesser town or towns. Chambers and Trudgill (1980: 198) state that 'all linguistic innovations occurring in Norwich English are derived from London speech, and not from anywhere else'. Chambers and Trudgill (1980: 187–9) describe a classic case of this 'jumping', as they call it, namely the spread of the European uvular /r/ even across language frontiers from its starting point in Paris, probably in the 1600s. They conclude (189) that 'the diffusion has taken the form of "jumping"

³³ See also Chambers and Trudgill (1980: 189–92).

³⁴ Many regional English speakers are sensitive about their dialects and feel that they are branded with a rural slowness: see e.g. Elmes (2005: 7, 24, 89, 102).

³⁵ See Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (2005: 8).

from one urban centre to another, especially The Hague, Cologne, Berlin, Copenhagen, Kristiansand and Bergen'. In this case hierarchical diffusion was complemented by contagious diffusion, in that there was also a gradual spread of the feature over large parts of France into neighbouring areas of Belgium, Switzerland and south-western Germany (Chambers and Trudgill 1980: 189, 192). Chambers and Trudgill (1980: 197–202) discuss what they call a 'gravity' model as an explanation of hierarchical diffusion, a model which is 'designed to account for the linguistic influence of one urban centre on another, based on the assumption that the interaction of two centres will be a function of their populations and the distance between them, and that the influence of the one on the other will be proportional to their relative population sizes' (Chambers and Trudgill 1980: 197). We will see that 'Romanness' of Latin was held up as a model in distant centres in the Empire (IV.1.2), and no doubt had an influence on the Latin at least of the educated classes in provincial cities.

But it would be wrong to think that the direction of the traffic was one way, from Rome outwards to neighbouring areas and more distant towns. There is evidence that some innovations started outside Rome and made their way inwards. A case in point is the monophthongisation of *ai/ae* (II.11). On words showing non-urban phonological features that had entered standard Latin see VII.1. Nor is it surprising that outlying places should have influenced the city (see XI.4.4). For one thing, the city attracted outsiders who might have achieved sufficient numbers to have some influence at least among some of the urban classes. There is also the matter of attitude (on which see below, 7, and also n. 34). The Roman upper classes had an attitude to 'rustics', the rustic life and rustic speech that was by no means straightforward. Many families traced their origins to worthy rural types who were accorded a moral uprightness that contrasted with slippery urban ways. The Latin language had two words for 'rustic', *rusticus* and *agrestis*, of which one evaluated the country negatively (*agrestis*), the other positively or at worst neutrally (III.4.4). *Rusticus* was often used as a term of praise. On the one hand country speech was stigmatised (not least by some outsiders to the city such as Cicero himself and Lucilius: III.3, 4), but on the other hand we hear of a prominent urban figure (L. Cotta) who deliberately affected a rustic manner of speech, apparently to give himself an aura of antiquity, since rustic ways were associated with morally upstanding early Romans (III.4.3). Not all incomers to the city disparaged country Latin in the manner of Cicero. Varro, who possibly came from Reate, was proud to hang on to a term which he had heard from his ancestors

(*aeditumus*, *Rust.* 1.2.1), and he reported regional usages from Latium with the detached interest of a linguist (see the whole of III.6). An oddity in his own Latin may be a retention from his provincial childhood (VII.2). It may be conjectured that there were other speakers in the city who were receptive to country ways of speech, at least in the Republic; Cicero implies that Cotta was not unique (III.4.3). Taeldeman (2005: 278) too speaks of the importance of attitudinal factors in determining the relationship between the speech of a city and its rural periphery: ‘The social-psychological relation between a town and its rural hinterland can vary enormously, ranging between a very positive and a very negative relation.’ For the most part, as Taeldeman (2005: 279) puts it, urban centres will function more strongly as spearheads of regional identity than rural places; but against that it has to be said that city dwellers at Rome sometimes wished to maintain a rural identity, and that may have had some effect on their speech. Taeldeman (2005: 282–3) questions the validity of the ‘gravity’ model on two grounds. One of these has just been alluded to: ‘the spatial diffusion of linguistic phenomena is . . . influenced . . . by . . . the attitudinal relation between the urban centre and its hinterland’ (283),³⁶ and that attitude may be complex and even inconsistent.

There is also more to be said in the Roman context about parachuting or jumping. As this phenomenon has been presented above the taking-off point for the leap is a powerful urban centre which is able to transmit its influence across space because of its prestige. But from the Roman period we know of usages that jumped across space not from Rome or another city but from outlying rural or provincial places to other non-urban areas (see IV.1.3.6 on a name for a wind, XI.4.5 for some medieval and Romance evidence, VIII.3 on the spread of *buda* from Africa). This phenomenon has to be put down to movements of population, either through colonisation or on a smaller scale through the effects of trade. Dialect terms often move about in this way. For example, in non-standard Australian English the second-person pronoun has a plural form *youse*. This is common in Ireland but almost unknown in England, except in Liverpool and Newcastle, where Irish influence has been strong. It is found in Glasgow for the same reason. It was taken to Australia by Irish immigrants.³⁷

³⁶ On the part played by language attitudes in language variation and change see in general Kristiansen and Jørgensen (2005). They speak (295), for example, of a positive correlation between the spread of a linguistic feature and ‘positive evaluation at the subconscious level’ of that feature. We may generalise and say that if speakers in, say, a city, have a positive view of the countryside and its ways they may be receptive to features of its speech, a view which seems to hold for some but not all Romans and is at variance with the gravity model.

³⁷ See e.g. Trudgill (2004: 19).

6 DIALECTS AND COLONISATION

What is the linguistic outcome when substantial numbers of people migrate from an imperial centre with a dominant language to a distant settlement or colony where there are no other speakers of that language? History is full of such movements of population. One thinks of the colonisation of America, Australia and New Zealand from Britain, French colonies in parts of North America, Spanish colonies in South America, and the establishment of German 'language islands' (for the term see below) in parts of Europe. Another case is the occupation of Western Europe (Spain, Sardinia, Gaul, Britain) and Africa by the Romans, mainly during the Republic. Typically such immigrants speak a diversity of dialects of the language that is transported, and these dialects are thrown into close contact for the first time. The linguistic results in the British colonies and the German language islands have been closely studied by linguists, but their researches have passed almost unnoticed by students of the Roman Empire, among whom a now unorthodox view of the linguistic consequences of colonisation (a term I use loosely in the Roman context to refer to the establishment of a presence, of whatever sort, in places outside Italy) has long held sway.

There is a view of the splitting up of Latin into dialects in the provinces that has been influential among Latinists since the late nineteenth century and is still going strong. Yet it is out of line with dialect research as well as with common sense. I refer to the idea that the differences between the Romance languages (and, earlier, between the provincial varieties of Latin) can be traced back to the date of occupation of the different Roman provinces. A region that was occupied early by the Romans, such as Spain, will maintain (we are told) features of the Latin of 200 BC, whereas another, to which the Romans came later, such as Britain, will reflect a later stage of the Latin language. Reference is made to Sicily or Sardinia as preserving the Latin of Plautus, Spain that of Ennius, Africa that of Cato, Gaul that of Caesar and Dacia that of Apuleius (see VI.2). This theory has been particularly influential in Spain but has had its adherents all over Europe. It is the theme of a recent book by Bonfante (1999), and is accepted by Petersmann (1998). It has survived into the twenty-first century, in one of the papers in Cooley (2002). It is a theory with an ideological dimension and is partly connected with notions of national identity. It has suited the Spanish sense of identity to hold that Spanish Latin had an archaic, even 'Oscan', character to it, and the British, though without their own Romance language, have not been immune from feeling that there was a

particular ‘correctness’ or upper-class quality to the Latin once spoken in Britain.

The idea that Latin could be largely fossilised in a province at the moment of occupation is implausible.³⁸ The provinces once established were not closed but went on receiving new settlers. Dialects are rarely static but are constantly changing, dying and being replaced. Recent dialect studies have dealt with new dialects as well as old, and I will comment further below on the distinction (7). The study of the regional diversification of Latin will turn out to be not primarily about the preservation of archaic features in remote regions but about younger regional varieties. For example, the distinctively African features of the Albertini tablets, which are dated to the period 493–6, and of late medical texts such as the gynaecological treatise of Mustio, are not hangovers from the second century BC but late innovations (VIII.4.1, 6). In a later chapter (VI.2) I will discuss the question whether there is any concrete evidence that Ibero-Romance has preserved features of archaic Latin, and will also consider alleged Oscan influence on Spanish (and Italian dialects) (VI.4).

The theory referred to above is of the type called by Trudgill (2004: 7–11) ‘monogenetic’. Adherents of a monogenetic theory attempt to account for the dialects found in different colonies of imperial powers by seeking out a single source for each dialect. Features of the source dialect may become defunct in the homeland (so the theory often goes) but still live on in the colony. The colonial dialect is thus ‘archaic’. For example, a theory was once current among Hispanists that Latin American Spanish was ‘in origin basically a form of transported Andalusian Spanish from the Iberian peninsula’ (Trudgill 2004: 8). It has also been held in the past that Australian English was brought to the country as a ready formed English dialect.³⁹ Similar ideas are to be found in discussions of American English. D. H. Fischer, for example, to a considerable extent derives Massachusetts speech from East Anglia (1989: 57–62), that of Virginia from dialects spoken throughout the south and west of England during the seventeenth century (1989: 259), that of Delaware from the dialect of the North Midlands (1989: 470–5) and that of the Appalachian and Ozark mountains, the lower Mississippi Valley, Texas and the Southern Plains from ‘Scotch-Irish

³⁸ That is not to say that many lexemes could not have arrived in the different provinces early in the Romanisation. Schmitt (1974a, b) argues that the southern regions of Gallo-Romance preserve more terms of relatively early Latin than parts further north, and puts this down to the earlier Romanisation of the south. There may be some truth in this, but I will suggest below (V.1 n. 2, VI.2.13) that some of his lexical evidence may be open to other explanations.

³⁹ See Trudgill (1986: 130), and the discussion that follows to 137.

speech' (1989: 652–5), otherwise referred to (1989: 654) as the northern or Northumbrian English spoken in the lowlands of Scotland, the north of Ireland and in the border counties of England during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Fischer is not an extremist insisting that British varieties were completely fossilised early on in America, but he does place stress on archaic elements that have survived there after being carried from Britain. Caution is needed in such matters, since local pride may induce observers to be over-enthusiastic in uncovering fossils that establish the ancient pedigree of local varieties of speech. Trudgill (2004: 2) by contrast takes a different view of dialectalisation on the east coast of America. He points out that none of the early anglophone settlements on the east coast was settled from a single location in England. Contacts took place between different British dialects, and new mixed dialects emerged which were not precisely the same as any dialect spoken in the homeland. He concludes:

The fact of modern regional variation along the east coast of the USA is thus explained not only in terms of different linguistic changes having taken place in different areas during the last 400 years, but also more crucially by the fact that the initial [dialect] mixtures – and, therefore, the outcomes of these mixtures – were different in the different places from the very beginning.

It is the idea of dialect mixing that is important here. It is now widely held that migration from an imperial centre to a distant colony usually has a quite different effect from the mere transfer of a variety unchanged to the colony. 'Emigration, and especially the founding and settling of new colonies overseas, is one of the possible routes leading to new-dialect formation' (Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill 2005: 35). When a disparate group of settlers is established in a colony 'koinisation' is the usual result, that is the emergence of a koiné that is a composite (reflecting convergence) of the dialects of the settlers, and a new dialect in itself. The Australian settlements were made up of speakers of a variety of dialects. Australian English is a recognisably distinct form of English and is new, not a replica of an earlier English dialect. It has social but not regional varieties.⁴⁰ It can be seen as a mixed dialect which came into being in the colony itself.⁴¹ The same is true of New Zealand English,⁴² and of the dialect of new towns such as Milton Keynes (see Kerswill and Trudgill 2005). Immigrants to New Zealand

⁴⁰ See e.g. Trudgill (2004: 21) on the remarkable geographical uniformity of Australian English.

⁴¹ For a detailed discussion of the mixed character of Australian English and of the various theories about its origins see Trudgill (1986: 129–42).

⁴² New Zealand English is now the subject of a detailed study by Trudgill (2004).

arrived from England, Scotland and Ireland roughly in the proportion 50:27:23.⁴³ There is remarkable early evidence for New Zealand speech in the form of recordings made for the National Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand between 1946 and 1948, of pioneering reminiscences by about 325 speakers born between 1850 and 1900 who were mostly the offspring of the first European settlers in New Zealand.⁴⁴ These have been exploited by Trudgill (2004). None of the speakers sounds like a modern New Zealander; they retain British accents of one sort or another or speak in individualistic ways.⁴⁵ The uniform New Zealand speech emerged in a later generation through dialect mixing.⁴⁶

Kerswill and Trudgill (2005: 200) argue that koineisation occurs in three stages. First, among adult immigrants (the first generation) of different linguistic backgrounds no more than rudimentary levelling of speech takes place. Second, the speech of the children of the immigrants shows great variation from individual to individual, and ‘there is also much greater intra-individual variation than we would normally find in an established community’ (Kerswill and Trudgill 2005: 201). It is in the third stage (representing the speech of subsequent generations) that the new dialect appears. The koineisation is the product of mixing (of dialect features), levelling and simplification (Kerswill and Trudgill 2005: 199). The Origins of New Zealand English (ONZE) Project drawn on by Trudgill (2004) suggests, similarly, that it takes two generations for all the speakers in a colonial community to end up speaking as the others do (Trudgill 2004: 28). Trudgill (2004: 27) concludes, after a wide-ranging survey of different cases of colonisation, that ‘colonial dialect mixture situations involving adults speaking many different dialects of the same language will eventually and inevitably lead to the production of a new, unitary dialect’. If the dialects of different colonies differ one from another, that is because the dialect mixtures that went into their formation will differ from case to case. That is the point made by Trudgill (2004: 2), quoted above, about American varieties of English. Another factor that has to be taken into account in America, as Trudgill notes in the same place, is that there have been 400 years for further localised internal changes to take place. Other English-language colonies (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, The Falkland Islands) are much younger and much more uniform in speech. Trudgill (2004: 22) does, however, cite comments by observers in the 1700s to the effect that American English was very ‘uniform’. This probably means, he

⁴³ See Trudgill (2004: 13).

⁴⁴ See Trudgill (2004: x).

⁴⁵ See Trudgill (2004: xi).

⁴⁶ There is another recent discussion of the New Zealand case by Hickey (2003).

suggests, that European visitors of the time were already failing to find the great variability of dialects that they were familiar with at home.

Also relevant to the linguistic effects of Roman colonisation are developments in the German language islands mentioned above. The phrase refers to the colonies of German-speaking settlers in Eastern, Central and South Eastern Europe, founded in the late Middle Ages and in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Rosenberg 2005: 221). For a long time the settlers did not mix with local populations. They spoke different German dialects but lacked the German standard language, which existed only among elites. The outcome of this dialect mixing mirrors that which has been observed in similar circumstances in other parts of the world. Rosenberg (2005: 221) states that the 'dialects of these language islands are . . . more or less mixed or levelled dialects'. This fact was observed, he notes, as long ago as 1930. Only a relatively closed group is likely to preserve an old German dialect intact. Rosenberg (2005: 234) notes that the Mennonites in a village in the Altai region, West Siberia, speak Russian with non-Mennonites but their low German dialect among themselves. The German dialect is protected from interference from other German varieties, and 'dialect convergence is not very likely'.⁴⁷ By contrast, Rosenberg (2005: 225) says, the 'higher the degree of [dialect] heterogeneity within the linguistic community [of German speakers], the lower the effect of group norms and the faster the linguistic change'.

Rosenberg's remarks (2005: 222–3) about earlier studies of the language islands strike a chord and illustrate a recurrent theme of this book. Traditionally in German dialectology language islands were investigated as relics of the past. Small communities with restricted external communications were sought out, and treated as offering access to linguistic elements that had died out in the main German language area. The aim was to discover archaisms lost at the centre. There were indeed archaic features to be found in some small detached communities (Rosenberg 2005: 222 with n. 3), but a far more prominent feature of language islands as a whole was dialect levelling in different degrees whenever settlers spoke a mixture of dialects (Rosenberg 2005: 223). The interest of dialect islands to traditional seekers after archaisms, as Rosenberg (2005: 222–3) puts it, 'was built on a

⁴⁷ Trudgill (2004: 7) also notes a few small-scale English-speaking colonies the settlement of which was derived from a single location with a single dialect, which was not exposed in the new location to contact with other dialects. For example, 'rural dialects of Newfoundland English (i.e. not that of the dialect of the capital, St John's) are derived more or less directly either from the English southwest or the Irish southeast', and the English of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, is a 'variety that is more or less identical with the English of the Scottish Highlands'.

myth of purity and homogeneity'. Such dialectologists 'were archivists of linguistic fossils' (2005: 222). It has proved difficult for scholars, not least classicists, to get away from the idea that when a language is transported to a colony it may be fossilised in the state it had achieved at the time of the first settlement.

I would not suggest that there is any clear evidence that such koineisation took place in, say, Roman Spain, but merely that comparative data such as those provided by Trudgill, Rosenberg, and Kerswill and Trudgill, make it more likely that koineisation occurred over the first few generations than that the Latin of the immigrant soldiers and traders was to any extent fossilised there and then (on possible koineisation in Roman Africa see [XI.3.4, 3.8](#)). One might expect to find in the Latin of colonies founded early the odd archaism (though the term 'archaism' is problematic: see below, [8](#) and [VI.2.12–13](#)) that had survived later developments (for discussion of this matter see below, [VI.2, 4, XI.4.1](#)). Certainly early settlers in the earliest foundations will have brought features of Latin that were later archaic; a case will be seen in the [next chapter \(II.5\)](#) in a graffito from Tarraco, which is the earliest piece of Latin extant from Spain. Nevertheless, archaic survivals are unlikely to be the primary determinant of the character of the Latin (or Romance) of any region. It is also misleading to talk of the 'Latin of Ennius, Plautus or Cato', as if the language at the time of any of the three was a unity. The early regional (and social) mixtures that contributed to the formation of the Latin of Spain, Africa, Gaul and so on must have differed, though unfortunately we do not have precise information about the origins of the Roman/Italian incomers to provincial regions in the early days of occupation,⁴⁸ or about their numbers, which may have been low in some places, particularly if one leaves aside soldiers coming and going. There is also the occasional piece of misinformation to contend with, as for example Brunt's remark (1971: 218) that 'in the Ebro valley there is evidence for the presence of men of Osco-Umbrian speech'. The ultimate source for this claim (see n. 4) is Menéndez Pidal, but his views on the matter have now been discredited, as we will see later ([VI.4](#)). I conclude that the date of colonisation of the different regions might in theory only have been an influence on dialectalisation in the provinces in the sense that at different times the dialect mix that lay behind the posited koines would have differed.

I stress a major difference, with linguistic consequences, between Roman colonies abroad and those of the British. Varieties of colonial English are relatively young. The language has been in place for a mere 200 years or so

⁴⁸ Some discussion will be found in Chapters XIV (e.g. 214–20) and XXIII of Brunt (1971).

in the southern hemisphere and for only about twice that in America (see above). But later in this book we will look at specimens of provincial Latin written many centuries after the foundation of the provinces to which they belong. For example, the Albertini tablets from Africa are dated to more than 600 years after the Romans occupied Africa. Even more recent provinces, such as those in Gaul, turn up inscriptions (to be used in a later chapter) that were written a good 500 years after the coming of the Romans. In Britain curse tablets, which will also come up later, are dated to the fourth or fifth century, again 300 or 400 years after the occupation. Latin has a very long history in the provinces of the Roman Empire, a history that is still continuing. In the extensive periods between the establishment of various provinces and the composition there of the texts, inscriptions and tablets considered in this book the language had time to develop independently in response to a variety of local influences. It is a mistake to inflate the significance of a factor such as the date of colonisation as a determinant of regional speech. Even koineisation, if it can be allowed to have occurred in the early generations of the history of some provinces, must have faded into insignificance as the centuries passed and new dialects developed.

I am not the first to refer to koineisation in the context of the Latin of the provinces. B. Löfstedt (1961: 210) argued that the uniformity of late Latin writing was not due simply to a generalised literacy but reflected a genuine uniformity of the language in the provinces. He pointed out that uniformity is a feature of languages that have been transported to different territories, citing the cases of koine Greek, described as the ‘world language of Hellenism’, English in America, Dutch in South Africa, Portuguese in Brazil and Spanish in South America.⁴⁹ The argument is not entirely convincing. It is one thing to suggest that koineisation took place in a certain form in a particular province, but another to say that it had the same form in a diversity of provinces of the same empire established at widely different times. American, South African and Australian English, for example, differ perceptibly from one another. Moreover a koine will itself in time develop dialects (see the previous paragraph). We will see below (7 with n. 56) that koine Greek itself had dialects.

7 OLD AND NEW DIALECTS

Dialect features may be remarkably tenacious over time. The BBC *Voices* survey turned up in the early twenty-first century local pronunciations that had been recorded in the same form and same places centuries before,

⁴⁹ See also Väänänen (1983: 489).

usually in literary parodies. For example, Edgar in Shakespeare's *King Lear* is given a West Country accent marked by the voicing of initial *f* and *s* (*volk, vortnight, zo, zwagger'd*) that may still be heard today.⁵⁰ Thomas Hardy in *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) incorporates the same feature in a piece of Wessex dialogue (*voot* for *foot*), along with the pronominal form *en* for *him* which is also still alive.⁵¹ The *Voices* survey in 2004–5 was able to parallel features of a Midlands dialect used by a Derbyshire miner, in snatches of Midlands speech put into the mouth of the miner Walter Morel by D. H. Lawrence in *Sons and Lovers* in 1913.⁵² Similarly aspects of the dialect of the Potteries as transcribed by Arnold Bennett in *Anna of the Five Towns* can still be heard in the same region.⁵³ Regional features of Latin were also sometimes long-lived. We will see regionalisms that survived into Romance in the same areas in which they are attested in the Latin period a millennium or so earlier (see e.g. IV.1.3.1 on *pullus*, and in general XI.3.5).

There is, however, a popular view that dialects existed mainly in the past, and that, if some old dialect elements have survived today, they are on the verge of extinction and are likely to be heard only from the mouths of the elderly. That is why traditional dialectologists always looked for old people to interview in their quest for regional speech. Wells (1982: 36) describes their activities as follows:

Before Labov, dialectological research in England typically proceeded as follows. The fieldworker would select a village of suitable size, i.e. about 500 inhabitants. There he would seek out old people who were natives of the village, with local-born parents . . . The fieldworker would work through a questionnaire [with the old persons] . . . In a given locality, perhaps some three or four such informants would be interviewed.⁵⁴

But there is now a greater awareness that, whether old dialects really are surviving strongly in some regions⁵⁵ or are under threat of dying out, new dialects are constantly being formed and regional diversity is being maintained in different ways. Nor is this a new insight. As Sapir put it long ago (1921: 162), 'old dialects are being continually wiped out only to make way for new ones'. The example he gave, from the history of Greek, is a good one. First, Attic spread at the expense of the other early Greek dialects until the koine emerged. Sapir observes (162):

During the two millennia that separate the Greek of to-day from its classical prototype the Koine gradually split up into a number of dialects. Now Greece is

⁵⁰ See Elmes (2005: 26). ⁵¹ See Elmes (2005: 27–8). ⁵² See Elmes (2005: 118–19).

⁵³ See Elmes (2005: 111). ⁵⁴ See also Elmes (2005: xiii).

⁵⁵ Elmes (2005: 116–19) stresses particularly the tenacity of the old Midlands dialects today.

as richly diversified in speech as in the time of Homer, though the present local dialects, aside from those of Attica itself, are not the lineal descendants of the old dialects of pre-Alexandrian days.⁵⁶

This example is an interesting one, because the changes noted concern the interaction of regional dialects and a standard language. First the old dialects converged into a standard, and then the standard was regionalised into new regional dialects.

It has already been pointed out (4) that a source of new forms of speech lies in the interaction between a standard variety and regional forms. It may on the one hand be true that a powerful urban centre with a standard variety (e.g. Rome) will impose its influence on the regions and cause a levelling of local forms of speech. But on the other hand it has to be allowed that levelling is only part of the story. There may occur not a wholesale and uniform swamping of the regional dialects but a mixing of the standard and the dialects in different ways.

The classic case in recent times in Britain has been 'Estuary English', which was briefly defined above (2). Estuary English is a modified standard English, showing on the one hand standard grammar but on the other Cockney features of pronunciation.⁵⁷ It is not restricted to the inner-city metropolis but is more generally south-eastern, according to the *Voices* survey.⁵⁸ Its spread, it may be argued, has been due not merely to contact between Cockney speakers and speakers of standard English but to certain attitudes that have gained currency. With the collapse of the 'Respect Society',⁵⁹ Received Pronunciation (RP), traditionally the speech of the Establishment, tends to be not so much respected as ridiculed. On the other hand the cult of 'celebrities', the admiration inspired by successful London entrepreneurs and City workers, and the influence of characters in television programmes set in the East End, are factors that have caused a rise in the status of London speech in the eyes of young persons who might in the past have been straightforward RP speakers. I stress the influence of attitudes (see also above, 5, and n. 34). Auer and Hinskens (2005) have emphasised that linguistic change in a community takes place not merely because speakers of one dialect mix with speakers of another and engage in accommodation, but because speakers attempt to assimilate their speech to that of a group to which they want to belong (see e.g. Auer and Hinskens 2005: 356).

⁵⁶ On the regional diversification of the koine see Horrocks (1997: 60–4).

⁵⁷ See Elmes (2005: 48–9, 57). ⁵⁸ See e.g. Elmes (2005: 62).

⁵⁹ I refer to an earlier society in which anyone in a position of authority was automatically accorded respect, particularly if he spoke with the accent of the Establishment.

Estuary English is unusual, in that it is a variety of English that was once stigmatised which now serves as a model. ‘Broad’ rural speech, stigmatised by many, was imitated at Rome by L. Cotta, and there are hints in Cicero that he was not alone in this.

Perhaps more common than institutionalised new mixtures of a standard with a regional variety is the ad hoc diluting of the standard with the odd regional usage, or of a regional variety with features taken from the standard. Cotta presumably fell into the first class. Cases of both types come up in the *Voices* survey. On the one hand there was a group of sixth-formers from Bradford-on-Avon in Wiltshire who spoke the standard without much trace of a regional accent but admitted the occasional West Country word.⁶⁰ On the other hand there was the group from Bodmin, Cornwall who spoke broad Cornish dialect but could accommodate their speech up to a point to that of outsiders by ‘speaking posh’, i.e. drawing on the standard (above, 4). It is to be assumed that both groups knew what they were doing, as no doubt did Cotta. Others may not be aware that their speech has a mixture of elements, such as two sisters from Swindon whose accent had a mixture of West Country rural elements and London features.⁶¹ The mixing of a standard with a regional variety may harden into a widely used dialect, but before that stage is reached there may be dynamic, even self-conscious, mixing which might be represented at different points on a continuum ranging at one extreme from the standard to the broad dialect at the other. In the Roman period interaction between the standard and regional forms of language shows up merely in occasional diluting of the standard with dialect terms; the mixing is at the standard end of the continuum. Some examples have been given earlier (see above, 4); another is the insertion of an Hispanic word *paramus* into an epigraphic poem set up by a soldier in Spain (VI.5.2); again, a late Faliscan Latin inscription has a mixture of urban Latin *officiales* and a few features from early Faliscan (II.18).

I should point out finally that new dialects are not formed only by the mixing of elements from a standard and a regional variety. Different regional dialects may be in contact in various ways, and mixing may occur. This phenomenon is the subject of the second chapter of Trudgill (1986). For example, in southern East Anglia young urban speakers have adopted London (i.e. Cockney, non-RP) features while retaining a number of non-London, East Anglian features.⁶² The mixing cannot in this case simply be put down to face-to-face interaction, and may in part be due to the influence of admired Cockney characters in television programmes.⁶³

⁶⁰ See Elmes (2005: 40–2).

⁶¹ See Elmes (2005: 37).

⁶² See e.g. Trudgill (1986: 52).

⁶³ For discussion of the matter see Trudgill (1986: 54–5).

8 'SHRINKAGE', ISOLATION AND ARCHAISM

'Isolation' often comes up as an influence on linguistic diversity, but a recent survey of the way in which the concept has been used in dialect studies (Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill 2005: 21–5) stresses the 'disparate' quality of the insights that have been offered in its name.⁶⁴ I start with Jones (1988: 314–15), who comments on the conservatism of Sardinian and its 'preservation of many archaic features of Latin which are not found in other Romance languages'. This conservative or archaic character is put down to the early occupation of Sardinia and to 'its early isolation from the rest of the Romance-speaking community'. By contrast Samuels (1972: 90), quoted by Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (2005: 21), sees isolation as a source of diversity and innovation: 'separation . . . may result in dialects being no longer mutually intelligible', and may cause new languages to come into being. Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (2005: 23) refer to an unpublished manuscript (by Bolognesi) which even appears to question the truth of the claim that Sardinia preserves many archaic Latin features. I will myself later (VI.2.13) show how evidence has been misrepresented to support the archaism of Sardinian, and will also give some lexical examples of Sardinian innovation (VI.2.12 with n. 144; see also V.1. n. 2 on *sanguisuga*, and the list of usages shared with Italy at XI.3.7, p. 707, most of them innovations). Here I merely introduce the notion of lexical 'shrinkage', which will come up often in later chapters, and can be used to cast doubt on assertions made about the archaism of the Latin or Romance of this or that place. I will explain briefly what I mean by 'shrinkage', and allude to a single example (to be discussed at VI.2.12) that is relevant to the meaning (or misuse) of 'archaism'.

It often happened that a word or usage that was once current in all or many varieties of Latin suffered shrinkage, such that it fell out of use in most places and remained current in just one or two (cf. the factors discussed at XI.4.3). The shrinkage shows up in the passage of Latin to Romance. *Cras* was once the standard Latin term for 'tomorrow', but it lived on only in Sardinian, having receded everywhere else before *mane*, *demane* or **maneana* (see map 17). *Cras* was the old Latin word with this meaning, but it was never in any meaningful sense an archaism in Sardinia. When it reached Sardinia it was current everywhere, and it never fell out

⁶⁴ Hornsby (2006: 127) stresses that a 'nationally peripheral position need not of itself imply isolation'. On the other hand he observes (2006: 126–7) that some of the old languages (as distinct from dialects) of France and the United Kingdom and Ireland 'occupy outlying or border zones'. It seems possible that isolation has different results in different places, and one ought to treat each case as a special case. See further below, XI.4.7.

of use there. It was simply a word in unbroken currency rather than some relic that was already becoming archaic elsewhere when it was established on Sardinia. Could the failure of the new, rival terms to reach Sardinia be put down to the isolation of the island? The answer is no. That could only be maintained if shrinkage constantly left Sardinia with old terms that had been replaced elsewhere. But shrinkage operated haphazardly across the Empire. Places which alone came to possess terms once widely current can be found virtually everywhere. And that is to say nothing of the fact that Sardinia often adopted innovations.

9 ‘REGIONS’, ‘AREAS’ OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The existence today of standard varieties of the Romance languages with names based on the names of nation states (Italian, French, Spanish etc.) may create false ideas of what is to be expected from the data of the Roman period. Even in modern times Italy, for instance, has not presented a linguistic unity, and there is no reason to think that in antiquity there would have been an ‘Italian’ variety of Latin, as distinct from a ‘French’ or ‘Spanish’ (see further [XI.2](#), [5.2](#)). In rural, pre-industrial societies variations may be perceptible from village to village and even within villages. Even in the relatively small area of Latium there are bound to have been local variations in the early period, and we will see some evidence for this. In the pre-Roman period Italy was the home of numerous languages, never mind dialects. As Latin became dominant outside the region that was originally Latin-speaking localised forms of the language would have been heard at least in the short term in these non-Latin areas, showing input from the earlier vernacular languages (see [XI.3.1](#)). Even in Gaul, a region that was occupied fairly late, it would be wrong to imagine that there was a single local variety which might justifiably be named ‘Gallic Latin’ or the like. The records from the pottery of La Graufesenque in southern Gaul have thrown up evidence for a small community of bilingual potters whose Latin shows the influence of Celtic (see [V.2](#); also [XI.3.6.1](#)). I will be dividing the material dealt with in this book into chapters on Italy, Gaul, Spain etc., but that is merely for convenience, and should not be taken to mean that I subscribe to a view that linguistically the Roman Empire was like a proto-modern Europe, containing regional forms of Latin spoken in the major provinces that might be labelled ‘Gallic’, ‘Spanish’ and so on. I prefer to see regional variation as showing up on a small scale from community to community, at least across areas with long-established Latin-speaking populations. These varieties would not have been static, but in the manner of regional forms of

speech investigated in recent times would have been constantly converging and also diverging. We can only hope to catch the odd glimpse of such diversity, not to classify it in strict geographical and chronological terms. Even to speak of variation from community to community is to oversimplify. The existence in many of the provinces of educated classes living in the cities and looking to Rome for their linguistic model complicates the picture. For a description of the different types of linguistic ‘areas’ in the Roman world see [XI.3.6–8](#).

IO RECAPITULATION: THEMES APPLICABLE TO ROME THAT HAVE COME UP SO FAR

I here highlight some of the most significant themes of this chapter in relation to the Roman world.

Given the dominant position of Rome throughout much of the period covered by this book and the widely expressed admiration for Roman Latin (see [IV.1.2](#), [XI.3.2](#)), we should have no expectation that regional forms bearing geographical names will emerge from the sources. Non-standard forms were stigmatised, and stigmatised varieties often do not attract names. I will return to naming in the [final chapter](#) ([XI.2](#)).

An expected consequence of the power of Rome would be a levelling of speech outwards from Rome in Latium and beyond ([XI.2](#)).

While contagious diffusion of linguistic features from Rome into adjacent parts probably took place, parachuting is also likely to be in evidence, caused by admiration for Rome in distant urban centres and by movements of people over long distances, through trade or colonisation (see [XI.4.3](#)).

A standardised variety of Latin is all-pervasive in the written sources. Metalinguistic evidence may allow us to get at regional dialects in the strict sense, but we should not expect to find a literary text written in dialect, at least after the time when the standardising influence of grammarians began to be felt. What we might hope to find are signs of the regionalising of the standard. Some subliterate Latin written on materials other than stone takes us closer to speech, including regional speech, but even the scribes responsible for such texts had had some training in literacy, and had acquired at least a rudimentary notion of the standard.

Latin was carried from Rome to numerous distant provinces. Even in those in which it was eventually replaced, such as Africa and Britain, it had a long life, exposed to many influences. We should not expect archaisms preserved from the first colonisation of any place to be the decisive determinant of the Latin of that place ([XI.4.1](#)). That said, regionalisms often

had a very long life (XI.3.5), and innovation (XI.4.2) is unlikely to be the only source of regional peculiarities.

II A RECENT ACCOUNT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DIVERSITY OF COLONIAL SPEECH

The spread of Latin from Rome was the consequence of imperialism. The Romans eventually controlled Italy, taking their language with them throughout the peninsula, and also large parts of Europe, Asia and the Mediterranean. There is a similarity to more recent empires that have imposed their language over a wide area. If the regional diversity of Latin is a reality, that diversity was largely due to the spread of the language over a vast area and its exposure to new influences. The factors contributing to the regional diversification of Latin will occupy a considerable part of this book (see the summary at XI.4). But at the outset it may be worthwhile to mention a recent attempt to explain why varieties of colonial (particularly American) English differ from those of Britain itself. There are such obvious parallels between the empire building of the British and of the Romans that one cannot but learn from the detailed studies of colonial English undertaken in recent times. I would not wish to suggest that the linguistic parallels are exact (on this point see above, 6, pp. 26–7), but it will be useful to keep in mind the influences that have been identified, if only to distinguish them later from the influences acting on Latin.

Trudgill (2004: 1–3) lists six factors causing colonial forms of English to differ from British English. I set out five of these (one is not relevant to the Roman world) in general form, instead of relating them exclusively to the history of English abroad:

- (1) A provincial variety has to adapt to new topographical and biological features unknown in the homeland.
- (2) After the establishment of colonies linguistic changes may take place in the homeland which do not take place in the colonies.
- (3) Linguistic changes may take place in the colonies (or some of them) which do not take place in the homeland.
- (4) Provincial varieties may come into contact with vernacular languages. Language contact is an influential factor in dialectalisation. There are, for example, many Welsh words in Welsh English.⁶⁵ In the Roman provinces Latin speakers were in contact with (e.g.) Celtic, Punic and forms of Germanic. Regional forms of Latin are often marked as such

⁶⁵ See e.g. Elmes (2005: 86–7, 91, 103–5).

by the intrusion of words from a local language. If a contributing language is of low status (as were the vernacular languages of the Roman Empire), the borrowings taken over from it may never move beyond the area in which they entered the recipient language. Whereas Greek words coming into Latin were often literary terms and therefore mobile, borrowings from vernacular languages were not. A cluster of vernacular borrowings in a Latin text may point to the place of composition.

- (5) Finally, there is dialect-, as distinct from language-, contact. Speakers of different dialects of the imperial language may be thrown together in the colonies, as we saw above (6).

12 FINAL QUESTIONS

I list finally some of the questions that will have to be addressed in this book:

- (1) Is there satisfactory evidence for the regional diversification of Latin? If so, what patterns, regional or chronological, can be discerned?
- (2) What factors might have contributed to regional variation?
- (3) Can texts ever be assigned a place of composition on linguistic evidence alone?
- (4) Is there any evidence from the Roman period that is relevant to the formation of the Romance languages?
- (5) What attitudes to regional varieties can be identified? Did these influence the language in any way?

13 PLAN AND SOME LIMITATIONS

Inscriptional evidence is dealt with in the second and second last chapters. In the second I consider the republican inscriptions and in X the imperial. Problems of methodology are addressed in both. In Chapters [III](#) and [IV](#) I discuss ancient comments on regional diversity, treating the material as far as possible chronologically. There follow chapters on Gaul, Spain, Italy, Africa and Britain, in which an attempt is made to identify in texts regional elements that are not flagged as such. General issues come up throughout and are usually discussed at the ends of chapters. A concluding chapter summarises findings and the most important themes of the book.

It will become clear that I do not find inscriptions, particularly of the Empire, satisfactory as evidence for the regional diversity of the language (see above, [1](#)). Partly for that reason I have excluded the eastern Empire, for the Latin of which one is largely dependent on inscriptions (see also [1](#)).

Other difficulties have to be faced in the east. The Romans used mainly Greek there. Established Latin-speaking communities in which the language had time to take root and develop over several generations are difficult to find. No Romance languages emerged from which the Latin data might be checked. Inscriptions were often set up not by members of a local population but by soldiers and administrators from other parts of the Empire who were merely visiting. There are regionally restricted usages (Greek loan-words) found in Latin papyri and ostraca from Egypt,⁶⁶ but these are ‘regionalisms’ in a very limited sense. They are words picked up from local Greek by outsiders rather than dialect terms current among an established Latin population.⁶⁷ I have concentrated on areas where Latin was a long-standing presence, where Romance languages developed, and from where we have substantial literary corpora as well as inscriptions.

⁶⁶ See Adams (2003a: 443–7).

⁶⁷ See Adams (2003a: 447).

CHAPTER II

The Republic: inscriptions

I INTRODUCTION

It has been said that as many as forty languages or language varieties have been identified in Italy of the period before Rome spread its power over the whole peninsula.¹ Problems of definition and identification are considerable, but the linguistic diversity of republican Italy was on any account marked. Latin, spoken originally in the small area of Latium Vetus, which contained Rome, was just one of numerous languages.² The first traces of habitation at the site of Rome date from the end of the Bronze Age (c. 1000 BC), and these communities 'were similar to other hilltop settlements that have been identified throughout Latium Vetus, whose cemeteries provide evidence of a distinct form of material culture known as the *cultura laziale*' (T. J. Cornell, *OCD*³, 1322).³ The people of Latium Vetus are generally known as the Latini, who from 'very early times . . . formed a unified and self-conscious ethnic group with a common name (the *nomen Latinum*), a common sentiment, and a common language' (Cornell, *OCD*³, 820). The Latin that they spoke begins to turn up in fragmentary form around 600 BC,⁴ but it is not until the end of the third century BC that literary texts appear. Already in the plays of Plautus, however, there are represented numerous registers which show that, even if writing had had little place in Latin culture hitherto, the language had evolved a considerable variety, with different styles appropriate to different circumstances already well established.⁵ In Plautus we find, for example, a mock speech of the type that might have been delivered by a general to his troops before battle

¹ A survey with bibliography of the early languages of Italy along with the archaeological background may be found in Cornell (1995: 41–4, 48–57). See also for greater linguistic detail Coleman (1986).

² A map of early Latium may be found in Cornell (1995: 296).

³ For more detail about these sites see Cornell (1995: 48).

⁴ For collections of early material, see Wachter (1987: 55–100), Meiser (1998: 4–7).

⁵ For what follows see Adams (2005b: 73–4).

(*Mil.* 219–27);⁶ an extended piece of military narrative (*Amph.* 188–96, 203–47, 250–61) that must have had its stylistic origins in such spoken genres as military reports to the senate and generals' prayers of thanksgiving after battle,⁷ as well as in battle descriptions in early tragedy and epic;⁸ legal discourse,⁹ such as edict style (see *Mil.* 159–65, and particularly the utterances of Ergasilus at *Capt.* 791–823, described by another speaker at 823 as *edictiones aedilicias*);¹⁰ a parody of a general's prayer of thanksgiving (*Persa* 753–7); a parody of the language that might have accompanied a religious dedication (*Mil.* 411–14); *flagitationes* with features of popular rhetoric;¹¹ and sacral language of various types (e.g. *Cas.* 815–23, from the Roman marriage ceremony).¹² All these passages have stylistic characteristics that testify to the sophistication and variety that the language had achieved over a long period without much help from writing.¹³ That there was, for example, a well-established concept of 'archaism' as a stylistic device is easy to see from Ennius,¹⁴ Plautus¹⁵ and Livius Andronicus.¹⁶ There is also, as we will show in the next chapter, a concept of regional diversity in the plays of Plautus.

There is a hazard to be faced by those attempting to find regional variation in early Latin. One must be wary of ascribing to a region or regions usages that belong rather to special registers. I illustrate this point below, 3 and 5.

Conditions were ideal for the development of regional forms of the language in the early period. The history of Latial culture, which seems to have existed for some 800 years before the time of Plautus, was long enough in

⁶ For the assignment of roles in this passage see Fraenkel (1968: 231–4).

⁷ On the latter see Fraenkel (1960: 228–31, 428–9); also Laughton (1964: 102).

⁸ On similarities between the passage and battle descriptions in Ennius see Fraenkel (1960: 334–5), and particularly Oniga (1985).

⁹ See e.g. Karakasis (2003).

¹⁰ See also 811 *basilicas edictiones* and Ergasilus' use of *edico* at 803. See further Fraenkel (1960: 126).

¹¹ See Fraenkel (1961: especially 48–50), discussing *Most.* 532ff. and *Pseud.* 357ff. Note particularly the refrain (*Most.* 603) *redde faenus, faenus reddite*, with reversal of word order, clearly an old popular feature, as it reappears in the *flagitatio* of Catullus (42.11–12 *moecha putida, redde codicillos, / redde, putida moecha, codicillos*). See Fraenkel (1961: 48, 50).

¹² See further Fraenkel (1960: 343, and the discussion from 342–5).

¹³ Some of the high-style features to be found in Plautus may be more Italic than specifically Latin, such as the double dicola at *Amph.* 1062 *strepitus crepitus, sonitus tonitrus*. See Fraenkel (1960: 342), citing as a parallel *Tab. Ig.* VI B 60; cf. Fraenkel (1960: 138 n. 2).

¹⁴ See for example Skutsch's discussion (1985: 61) of Ennius' use of the *-ai* genitive-singular form as a stylistically marked variant for the normal *-ae*.

¹⁵ Plautus, for example, uses *duellum* for *bellum* and *perduellis* for *hostis* only in special contexts. On his use of sigmatic futures (other than the banal *fāxo*) in passages of heightened style suggestive of its archaic character, see de Melo (2002: 79–80).

¹⁶ The *-as* genitive singular, which abounds in the fragments, was archaic at the time when Andronicus was writing.

itself to have generated linguistic diversity. In its earliest phases communities seem to have been small villages, and small villages in non-urbanised societies are famously the location of local forms of a language.¹⁷ That at Osteria dell'Osa, for example, has been estimated at only about a hundred persons.¹⁸ These Latial communities were scattered about, and Rome itself probably had separate habitations on several hills.¹⁹ The 'evidence suggests a subsistence economy based on the cultivation of primitive cereals and legumes, supplemented by stock-raising' (Cornell 1995: 54). Historically isolation (on which see I.8, XI.4.7) is a feature of agricultural communities. Contacts beyond the borders of villages 'grew with the demise of the economic role of agriculture' (Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill 2005: 23). There are signs that groups of villages in Latium Vetus gradually began to coalesce, but contact as well as isolation is a force in generating localised linguistic diversity. Hypothetical speakers of 'Latin' in the early period will have had contacts with speakers of different linguistic varieties.

There was another factor conducive to regional diversity in the later centuries of the Republic. It was seen in the last chapter (I.5) that a dominant city may impose features of its dialect on surrounding regions. Rome influenced its neighbours in this way. There is specific evidence of this type from Faliscan (see below, 18).

2 INSCRIPTIONS

I consider in this chapter the most problematic type of evidence with a bearing on early regional variation. The republican inscriptions published in the second edition of *CIL* I have been used as the basis for discussions of regional diversification. Some of the inscriptions come from Rome, others from outside, and they seem to offer the chance of morphological and phonological comparisons between Latin at Rome and that in some regions. Spelling had not been standardised in the early period before grammarians became influential, and there is the possibility that linguistically significant spelling variations may be identified. The non-Roman inscriptions tend to come from areas where Oscan or other Italic languages were spoken (perhaps most notably Marsian), and apparent morphological and orthographic correspondences between features of these Latin texts and of the local Italic language have sometimes been exploited to argue for Italic influence in local forms of Latin. This chapter will be about both the use of inscriptions in the

¹⁷ See for example Hinskens, Auer and Kerswill (2005: 32) on the old type of Faroese communities of some 150 persons, with linguistic differentiation between villages.

¹⁸ See Cornell (1995: 54). ¹⁹ See Cornell (1995: 54).

republican period as evidence for regional variation, and the possibility that some of that variation, if established, may be a consequence of language contact. I believe, however, that there are deficiencies of methodology in the use that has been made of statistics from *CIL* I² (henceforth referred to in this chapter simply as *CIL*, or by number of inscription alone).

I will aim to establish the following points.

First, it will be suggested that some of the distinctions that have been found between the city and outside areas disappear when the distribution of an ‘aberrant’ form (that is, an apparent abnormality which is taken to be dialectal) is compared with that of its ‘regular’ correspondent (that is, the classical form which is taken to be urban not regional). There may be more attestations not only of the aberrant but also of the regular form outside Rome than at Rome itself. If only the attestations of the aberrant form are reported, an impression will be created of its provincial character when in reality the data do not establish a distinction between the usage of Rome and that of the regions at all.

Second, some aberrant forms are not so much non-urban regionalisms as religious archaisms.

Third, establishing that an aberrant form reflects substrate influence may be more difficult than has sometimes been assumed.

Fourth, once dubious claims, based on a misleading use of statistics or on a failure to appreciate the character of a usage, are excluded, there remains some evidence for the regional diversity of Latin within Italy. Falerii Novi stands out as the domicile of some distinctive usages.

I am not suggesting that there was little or no regional variation within republican Italy, but only that the inscriptional evidence is less than satisfactory.²⁰

I take first a morphological case to illustrate the false impression that the selective use of statistics may give.

3 THE GENITIVE IN *-us*

In some early inscriptions there is a *-us* genitive-singular form in third-declension words (deriving from the inherited *-os* which survived in Greek and Faliscan,²¹ but not Oscan or Umbrian), as for example in names such as *Venerus*, *Cererus* and *Salutus*. Coleman (1990: 8), stating that the majority

²⁰ Cf. the remarks of Wachter (1987: 477).

²¹ See e.g. Joseph and Wallace (1991: 167), Baldi (1999: 172).

of such genitives are in dedications or religious contexts,²² says that they 'are relatively far more frequent in this register [i.e. the religious] outside Rome than they are inside', and thus implies that the morpheme was a non-city regionalism, if also religious in character. Earlier (same page) he had been more explicit in assigning *-us* to various 'Latin dialects' (Volscian, Hernican and Dalmatian). Others who have seen the ending as dialectal are Campanile (1961: 18, 1993: 17–18) and Petersmann (1973: 88 n. 40). Leumann (see n. 22) takes a different view of the evidence: the form is not dialectal Latin but belongs to priestly language.

Attestations of the ending are set out by Blümel (1972: 63–4).²³ There are twenty-three examples,²⁴ only one of which is explicitly stated by Blümel to be from Rome (730 *regus*); others are from Capua, Praeneste, Norba, Puteoli, Amiternum, Naronia, Anagnina and Casinum. But there are also various other instances to which Blümel does not assign a provenance. Three examples are in the *Lex agraria* of the late second century BC (*CIL* 585 *hominus* twice, *praeuaricationus*), a fourth in the *S. C. de Bacchanalibus* of 186 BC (581 = *ILLRP* 511 *nominus*), a fifth in the *Epistula praetoris ad Tiburtes* of the mid-second century BC (586 = *ILLRP* 512 *Kastorus*)²⁵ and a sixth in the *Lex Latina tabulae Bantinae* (582 *Castorus*). All these legal texts were found outside Rome (at Urbino, Tiriolo in the territory of the Bruttii, Tibur and Oppido Lucano respectively),²⁶ but they would originally have been drafted at Rome,²⁷ where copies of some at least of them would have been kept in the *aerarium*. We cannot know the origins of those who did the copies for display in the provinces,²⁸ but it would be unsafe to assume that local copyists had imported morphological regionalisms willy nilly into what were authoritative texts.²⁹ It is also worth remembering that, even if some of these documents were copied in Oscan-speaking areas,³⁰ Oscan did not have the *-os/-us* ending in nouns of this type (see above),

²² Cf. Leumann (1977: 435). ²³ Cf. Joseph and Wallace (1991: 167).

²⁴ The index to *CIL* I (819) lists twenty examples.

²⁵ On this text and its date see Courtney (1999: 101). ²⁶ On the last see Crawford (1996: I, 194).

²⁷ Similarly Joseph and Wallace (1991: 173), themselves playing down the alleged non-Roman character of the *-us* ending, cite *nominus* from the *S. C. de Bacch.* as 'Roman'. See also Wachter (1987: 452).

²⁸ On this process note the remark of Lintott (1992: 8): 'other communities might be sent or encouraged to take for themselves copies [of legal texts] to be displayed in their own forum'.

²⁹ On the activities of the southern Italian copyist of the *S. C. de Bacch.* see Fraenkel ([1932] 1964: II, 469–75).

³⁰ Fraenkel ([1932] 1964: II, 470) speculates that the copyist of the *S. C. de Bacch.* might have had Oscan or Greek as his mother tongue, without commenting on this form.

and the supposed regionalism could not be from the substrate.³¹ It will be seen that seven of the twenty-three examples of *-us* listed by Blümel are either Roman or have Roman connections, and such a statistic cannot justify the conclusion that the ending was a non-urban regionalism, given that a preponderance of early inscriptions comes from outside Rome.³² The cluster of examples in republican documents is more suggestive of an archaism, legal as well as religious, than of a regional usage.

There is another statistical inadequacy in the discussions of the distribution of *-us*. Neither Coleman nor Blümel provides comparative statistics showing the incidence in different regions of the alternative ending in *-is*. Ten of the twenty-three examples of *-us* are in just four divine names, *Cas-torus*, *Cererus*, *Salutus* and *Venerus* (the last of which is attested five times), and it is interesting to note the geographical distribution of the *-is* form in these same names. In the index of *CIL* I there are twelve examples of the genitive in *-is* in the names, only two of which are at Rome (973, 974 *Cereris*).³³ It follows that in these names there is no worthwhile contrast to be found between Roman and non-Roman practice. Most of the evidence for the use of the names in the genitive, of whatever form, comes from outside the city. It cannot be determined from evidence of this quality whether

³¹ It is awkward for anyone who would ascribe as many variations as possible in Latin to the influence of local Italic languages that there are inscriptions from regions in which Oscan was spoken that have aberrant forms, by normal Latin standards, which cannot be related to the substrate. The *-e* ending of the dative in the third declension is found at e.g. Capua as well as elsewhere (see 6.3), but it too is not Oscan. See also below, 21, p. 110 on the name *Mesius*. So Wachter from time to time comments on the absence of Oscan features in particular Latin inscriptions from Oscan areas (e.g. 1987: 397, 473).

³² Wachter (1987: 101–476) goes through the early inscriptions of Italy (those down to the middle of the second century BC) systematically, and some idea of the geographical spread of this material can be obtained by counting the inscriptions he cites area by area. For Rome there are nineteen dated inscriptions falling within this period (see 277–80, 301–2) and a further eighteen that probably belong to the period but are not dated (342–7). This corpus of thirty-seven items is far from substantial. For Praeneste Wachter (112–72, 212–47; cf. the contents pages xi, xii for more convenient lists) cites seventy-eight inscriptions, and there are also the numerous *cippi Praenestini* (*CIL* 64–357; cf. Wachter's discussion, 178–211). Finally (see the contents pages xv–xvii) Wachter lists first a small number of particularly early items classified according to whether they are from outside or within Latium, and then later material (third century and first half of the second) from Latium, Latium Adiectum, Campania, Lacus Fucinus and surrounds, the Sabine territory, Samnium and southern Italy, Umbria and the northern part of the east coast, Etruria and places outside Italy. I count about 123 items in this collection. There are thus well over 200 items from outside Rome against the thirty-seven from the city itself. One or two of the Roman inscriptions (such as the *S. C. de Bacch.*) are fairly substantial, but it is clear enough that Rome is less well supplied with evidence than are the regions, if it is permissible to lump all the provincial material together and set it against the Roman.

³³ For *Veneris* see 451 (Tarquinii), 1774, 1775 (both from Sulmo in the territory of the Paeligni), 2495 (Caere), 2540c (Pompeii); for *Castoris*, 1506 (Cora); for *Cereris*, 973, 974 (both Rome), 1774, 1775 (both Sulmo: see above); and for *Salutis*, 450 (Horta), 1626 (Pompeii). See the index to *CIL* I, 809–10.

at a particular period it would have been possible to distinguish city Latin from rural in this respect. I conclude that *-us* can best be described as a religious and legal archaism in the period represented by extant inscriptions.³⁴ It is a mark of a register, not of a region (for the distinction, see above, 1).

The principle that emerges from this case is as follows. It is not justifiable to list in isolation from *CIL* I aberrant forms (words showing morphemes or spellings that may be taken, rightly or wrongly, as non-standard for Latin: see above, 2)³⁵ that happen to predominate outside Rome, and to conclude therefrom that the usage of the regions (I use a vague term here; the 'regions' may vary from case to case) differed from that of Rome. It is necessary to know what the usage of Rome was at the same time. If the genitive *-us* were attested only outside Rome, that need only be significant if the alternative form *-is* was preferred at Rome. It is a problem of the early republican inscriptional material that so much of it is found in the Italian regions (see n. 32), and we often cannot determine what Roman practice was at the same period; the assumption tends to be made that, if there is no evidence for Rome, Rome was using the forms that had become standard by the time when the literary language had developed.

There are several other methodological points that may be made. The first is chronological. Many of the 'early' inscriptions are not dated. In attempting to set up dialect differences it is not satisfactory to lump together spellings that might have been perpetrated at very different periods. If for argument's sake in two inscriptions, one of urban, the other of non-urban origin, a particular spelling (say *i*, as in the ending of *plurimi*, < **plourumei* < *plourumoi*) in the one contrasts with a different spelling (say *e*, as in *plourume*) in the other, that divergence need signify nothing about dialect variation if the two forms are in inscriptions separated in time; a non-urban *e*, for instance, may antedate an urban *i*, and it is theoretically possible that if we had a non-urban inscription of exactly the same date as our urban example it too would have shown *i* because a general change had taken place in the language over time.

Second, forms that are innovative reveal more about the state of the language in a place than forms that are traditional. By 'innovative' I mean spellings (usually phonetic) that depart from an expected norm (usually inherited). Thus, for example, while the digraph *ai* (> *ae*) is traditional, *e*, a phonetic spelling once the diphthong had changed into a monophthong, is innovative. Good spellers, and even those without much education who

³⁴ See also De Meo (1983: 96–7), accepting its 'dialectal origin' but seeing it as an archaism maintained in juridical texts.

³⁵ What is non-standard in Rome or elsewhere at one period might once have been standard.

have noticed features of old writing, are capable of using a traditional spelling long after that spelling has ceased to represent a sound of the language. Thus, for example, if the digraph *ai* (or *ae*) is proportionately more common in one place (say, the territory of the Paeligni, Vestini and Marrucini) than another (say, the region of the Fucine lake: see below, 6.5, 11.5), that need not indicate that the diphthongal pronunciation was more persistent in the one place than the other. It may only mean that the traditional spelling was favoured in one place. Even a single example of the monophthongal spelling against numerous of the digraph in a corpus may be enough to hint at what was happening in speech in the region, with spoken developments obscured by the correctness of the local orthography. In the Vindolanda tablets, for example, *e* is hardly ever written for *ae*, but the limited attestations of *e* point to the state of the spoken language.³⁶ The military scribes are notable for the correctness of their writing, but the odd text from the hand of outsiders to the military establishment gives the game away. Those discussing early inscriptions have a habit of taking traditional spellings at their face value.

Sometimes evidence is presented only selectively, and appears to support a case. I take one example.

4 THE DIGRAPH *oi* AND LONG *u*

Coleman (1990: 7–8), noting that Oscan retained inherited diphthongs, drew attention to spellings such as *loidos* and *moiros* (i.e. showing *oi* for the long *u* which was to develop in standard Latin) in Latin inscriptions from Oscan areas such as Capua (675) and Aeclanum in the territory of the Hirpini Samnites, not far from Beneventum (1722), and concluded that we ‘may reasonably infer . . . the conservative influence of the local language’. The second inscription is rather late (towards the middle of the first century BC: see e.g. *ILLRP* 523) and archaising in orthography.³⁷ It can establish nothing about local pronunciation or the influence of a substrate. The first inscription has the nominative plural *heisce magistreis*, but this is not distinctive of any one region (see further below, VI.4.3, VII.6, p. 445).³⁸

Examples of *oi* for long *u* in *CIL* I are listed in the index, 815. There is a separate entry for *coirare* (index, 769),³⁹ which is common (some forty-eight

³⁶ See Adams (1995a: 87–8).

³⁷ See Wachter (1987: 303 with n. 726).

³⁸ See Bakum (1994).

³⁹ Cf. Paelignian *coisatens* (Vetter 1953, 216). The verb was possibly borrowed from Latin (see Untermann 2000: 407). It is a denominative of a noun **koisa-*. The form *courauerunt*, which is intermediate between OL *coi-* and CL *cu-*, is also attested (1806, 1894).

examples on a quick count), and cannot be pinned down to a particular area; in the republican period it turns up e.g. at Capua, Delos, Rome, Toulouse etc. As for the words cited by Coleman, *moiros* is probably found as well at 1491 (Tibur), and *loid-* is not confined to inscriptions from Oscan regions (see *TLL* VII.2.16ff., citing e.g. a case from the Faliscan cooks' inscription from Falerii Novi, *CIL* 364 = *ILLRP* 192 = *CE* 2).⁴⁰ Of the miscellaneous items collected at *CIL* I, 815, it is true that some come from Oscan regions (e.g. 675–7, Capua), but that is far from the whole story. Both *oino* and *plorume* occur in one of the Scipionic *elogia* (9), from Rome. *Oitile* is in the *Epistula praetoris ad Tiburtes* (586.9). There are various such forms in the *Lex agraria* (585.21, 31), one in the *S. C. de Bacch.* (581.19 *oinuorsei*) and another on a Praenestine *cista* (566). The distribution of the forms is too varied to justify Coleman's conclusion. I refer to the second principle stated in the last section. *oi* is not an innovation, but a traditional spelling. Once it came to be regarded as archaising, it could turn up anywhere, regardless of substrate influence. The various examples cited here from republican legal documents are to be treated as archaising forms suited to the language of law, with no relevance to regional variation.

I add a complication. It is theoretically possible that a spelling or morpheme may be dialectal or determined by a substrate in one inscription, but have a different motivation in another. To take the present material, it may be that in an inscription from Capua the odd spelling in *oi* reflects local Oscan orthographic practices (or a local pronunciation shared with Oscan), whereas in another from, say, Rome, the spelling dates from a time when the digraph had the status of an archaism in Latin writing, its relationship to Oscan orthography coincidental. The evidence available (about, for example, the date of an inscription and the background of its writer) is usually not sufficient to allow one to opt for one determinant against another, and if so sound practice can only be to collect all examples of a form and of its substitutes, and if there is not a distinction between the distribution of the two to reach a negative conclusion about the possibility of regional variation. Sometimes, however, an inscription will have more information than usual to impart about its background, and it may be possible to identify a form that was in use in a region, particularly if that form is innovative. There is nothing special about the inscriptions from Capua and Aeclanum cited by Coleman to give one any confidence in saying that their spelling reflects Oscan influence.

⁴⁰ On the last text see now the discussion of Kruschwitz (2002: 127–38). The inscription is also published with a translation and commentary by Courtney (1995), 2.

I now deal with a case that shows up even more clearly the unsatisfactory methodology that may be found in work on early regional variation in Latin.

5 THE FIRST-DECLENSION DATIVE IN *-a*

The monophthongised dative ending *-a* in the *a*-declension looks at first sight to have a regional character, but the matter turns out not to be straightforward.⁴¹ I start with the distribution of the form, and, first, with Blümel's account of it.

Attestations of the ending are set out by Blümel (1972: 42–4), who gives a table of geographical distributions at 44.⁴² This shows (e.g.) that eighteen examples of the ending (spread over fourteen inscriptions) are found in Latium, but only two in Rome. There are small numbers of examples in a variety of other Italian areas, most notably (numerically) Etruria (four) and Pisaurum, on the Adriatic coast in the ager Gallicus (five). Such figures are meaningless in isolation, but Blümel also provides statistics for the alternative early dative form *-ai*. The table (42) shows that at Rome *-ai* occurs twelve times, in Latium only four.⁴³ There seems to be a hint that the ending in *-a* was better established in Latium than in the city. This view has been widely accepted. Meiser (1998: 130), for example, remarks (3 c): 'Ausserhalb Roms begegnet häufig *-ā*'. Lazzeroni (1965: 82) speaks of the ending as an innovation irradiating from Latium. He had earlier (81) described it as belonging to the 'Latial tradition, not the urban'. He had in mind a 'wave theory' (for which idea see above, I.5; also IX.4.5). Petersmann (1973: 84) refers to the loss of *i* in the feminine dative singular 'in dialects outside Rome'. Campanile (1961: 15) cites just a few selected examples from outside Rome without much comment but in a paper of which the title (on 'dialectal elements' in Latin) carries its own interpretation. Poccetti (1979: 172, no. 226) edits an inscription containing the form from Lucus Feroniae on the edge of the Faliscan territory under the heading 'Latino dialettale'. Leumann (1977: 419) states that the *-a* ending is frequent outside Rome. Wachter (1987: 258, 471) says that it occurs at Rome, but rarely. Vine (1993: 349) says that the form is 'generally

⁴¹ On the origin of this dative see the discussion of Wachter (1987: 483–4); also Villar (1986: 52–60, 1987, especially 156). For the conventional view see Leumann (1977: 420).

⁴² A table can also be found in Lazzeroni (1965: 80), which may differ slightly, but not in substance, from that of Blümel. I will not attempt a comparison of Lazzeroni's statistics and those of Blümel, as the table of Villar, to which I will shortly come, is more up to date than either of the other two.

⁴³ See too Lazzeroni (1965: 82), who also provides a table showing the distribution of *-ai*.

thought to be a “rustic” feature’, and plays down the significance of the two Roman cases. Although, Vine states, both Roman examples have been cited to suggest that *-a* may have belonged to some Roman sociolects,⁴⁴ ‘this may well be illegitimate, in the strictest sense of the term “urban Latin”’ (349–50 with n. 13). The implication (see n. 13) is that the objects on which the dative appears at Rome may have been brought in from outside.

Blümel’s figures for *-a* are not complete. Villar (1986: 45–7) offers a rather longer list, divided into cases of the republican period and those of the imperial. The second category is of no interest here. The ending acquired the status of an archaism (perhaps sooner rather than later: see further below), and its later use certainly was stylistically motivated and had nothing to do with any currency in regional dialects. Villar’s republican list has forty-eight items, but a number of these have to be rejected; Villar himself has a long discussion (47–9) of items regarded as uncertain. First, five of the additional examples in Villar’s list had been placed in a separate category by Blümel (43) as ‘unsicher’, and are discussed as such by Villar too. Another three cases (*Coera*, *Nomelia* and *Erucina*) are acknowledged as uncertain by Villar. There remain seven additional cases to go with Blümel’s. I list these.

There is a Spanish example (*Menrúa*), which turned up after the publication of Blümel’s book. It will be discussed below. Two examples from Delos (*CIL* 2233 *Minerua*, 2239 *Maia*) were excluded by Blümel because he restricted himself to Italy. The *negotiatores* on Delos in the last centuries of the Republic were *Italici* and *Romani*,⁴⁵ and these cases can be loosely classified as ‘Italian’. A cippus found at Tor Tignosa about 8 km inland from Lavinium has the dedication *Lare Aineia d(onom)*, where the first two words should be taken as datives, with the implication that Aeneas was called Lar.⁴⁶ *Aeneas* had a nominative form *Aenea* in early Latin (Naevius *Bellum Punicum* 23.1 Strzelecki), and it could be assigned to the *a*-declension. Villar also includes *Menerua* (*ILLRP* 54), from Calabria. Finally, Blümel failed to include two cases of *Tuscolana* from Capua (*CIL* 1581, 1582), both of them epithets of Lucina. None of these additional cases is from Rome.

Villar (1986: 51) lists a further six examples of *-a* datives from Paelignian inscriptions and another from the area of the Marrucini (all from Vetter 1953: 203, 204, 206, 207, 208, 211, 218). The Paeligni, along with the Marsi, Marrucini and Vestini, all located to the east of Rome in the

⁴⁴ See Peruzzi (1990: 182–3, 186). ⁴⁵ See e.g. Adams (2003a: Chapter 6).

⁴⁶ On this text see Weinstock (1960: 114–18), and especially 116 on its interpretation.

mountainous central region of Italy, are usually classified as speakers of the ‘minor’ Italic dialects. These dialects ‘have generally been classified in terms of their closeness to Oscan or Umbrian’ (Penney 1988: 731).⁴⁷ For the Paelignian examples of *-a* see also (as well as Vetter above) Zamudio (1986: 151), and the whole discussion of Lazzeroni (1965, with a list at 72). If these cases were accepted according to their usual interpretation they would all be dative of divine names or epithets (*Minerua*, *anaceta*, *anceta*, *ceria*, *cerria*),⁴⁸ but there are uncertainties about them. It has been argued that *anaceta* and *cerria* are nominatives, and that the reference is not to the goddess Angitia but to priestesses of the goddess Ceres.⁴⁹ To be sure, since the *-a* dative is unknown to Oscan and Umbrian its appearance in Paelignian would be of some interest (as a Latinism?),⁵⁰ but these examples should probably be left out of the discussion. Lazzeroni (1965) accepted without question the dative interpretation of the Paelignian forms (see below, n. 50). Since he also believed that the *-a* dative was a rural regionalism originating in Latium, he was able to propose that the Latinisation of the Paeligni proceeded from a non-urban variety of Latin (1965: 83). This would be a manifestation of contagious diffusion or a wave effect (see above, p. 46, with a rural area rather than a city exercising an influence on its neighbours, but both of Lazzeroni’s assumptions (that the form is attested in Paelignian, and that it belonged to regional not urban Latin) are questionable (on the second, see the discussion that follows).

Blümel (1972: 42–3) lists thirty-three instances of *-a*,⁵¹ and the total with Villar’s examples above (excluding the Paelignian) therefore rises to forty. Of these thirty-eight are from outside Rome, on the face of it a striking proportion. But it is necessary to take into account the types of words in which *-a* and *-ai* are attested. Of Blümel’s thirty-three cases of *-a*, thirty-two are in names of (female) deities or in epithets of deities.⁵² The one exception, *Flaca* = *Flaccae* (CIL 477), is classified as Roman by Blümel.⁵³ All seven cases added by Villar are also in names of deities and heroes (the example

⁴⁷ See the discussion, along these lines, of Coleman (1986).

⁴⁸ On *anaceta* as supposedly representing the theonym *Angitia*, and *ceria*, supposedly equivalent to *Ceriali*, see Zamudio (1986: 9, 217). For a different interpretation see the text following and the next footnote.

⁴⁹ See Poccetti (1981, 1982b, 1985); also Nieto (1988: 341–2) and Zamudio (1986: 9) on the problem of the interpretation of the last four. On *Minerua* see Zamudio (1986: 151). Poccetti (1983) notes a new Paelignian case of a dative in *-ai*.

⁵⁰ Lazzeroni’s paper (1965) is largely about the Latinisation of Paelignian (see especially 75–8), and he includes among Latinisms the *-a* dative (see e.g. 78–9, 83). See further Meiser (1987: 111, 114).

⁵¹ I reject *matrona* (CIL 378), which Blümel includes (see Villar 1986: 49).

⁵² On *Mursina* at CIL 580 see Wachter (1987: 369) (*Mater* Μῦρσινη).

⁵³ On this curious text see Wachter (1987: 348), Vine (1993: 345).

from Tor Tignosa is associated with the cult of the hero Aeneas) or in divine epithets.⁵⁴ Of the forty instances of the *-a* dative in the Republic, thirty-nine are in the names of deities or associated terms (and the one exception, *Flaca*, is in fact Roman). If there is one certainty therefore about the *-a* ending it is that it was established in divine names or epithets. It follows that if a convincing 'dialectal' difference were to be established between Rome and other parts of Italy in the Republic, it would have to exist on this evidence in the religious register, with, say, the Italian regions preferring the form *-a* in divine contexts but Rome *-ai*. There is no reason in principle why one should not set up a category of 'religious regionalism', comprising terms or morphemes of the religious register restricted in their geographical distribution to an area and contrasting with equivalent religious terms or morphemes restricted to other areas. But is a distinction observable between the Italian regions and Rome in the use of dative forms in religious language? The answer is no.

There are thirty-two examples of *-ai* listed by Blümel (1972: 41–2). Of the twelve examples at Rome, nine are in personal names or other types of words that are non-religious. The remaining (religious) examples of *-ai* at Rome are *CIL* 34 *Meneruai*, 995 *terrai* and 805 [*Vict*]or*iai*. Of these the second should be excluded from consideration, as the date of the inscription may be Claudian (see the note in *CIL*; it is not included by Degraffi in his collection [*ILLRP*] of republican inscriptions). The third is in a restoration. There are thus only two republican instances of *-ai* in divine names at Rome (just one of them absolutely certain), compared with one of *-a* (460 [*Me*]nerua). Divine names and epithets of the type that might show up the dative singular are thus overwhelmingly found outside Rome, and the material from Rome itself is so paltry as to justify no conclusions about practice there.

The contrast between Rome and provincial Italy in the use of the feminine dative singular of the first declension thus evaporates. Joseph and Wallace (1991: 165) may be mentioned for their presentation of the Roman situation. They record a Faliscan Latin dative *Menerua* (*CIL* 365: see below, 18) (though playing down later [168–9] its significance), and then state 'cf. Roman Latin *meneruai*'. The implication is that the *-ai* form is the norm for Rome, when we have seen that there is just one instance of *Meneruai* there, along with one of *Menerua*. The infrequency of an aberrational form at Rome is of no significance if the normal form is also rare there. Such a

⁵⁴ It might be added that if the Paelignian forms above were accepted as datives, they too on the usual interpretation would be in divine names and epithets.

pattern would merely show that there is no worthwhile evidence for usage at Rome.

In theory an alternative way of supporting a dialectal distinction between Rome and the rest of Italy would be to find a different distribution of the two dative forms in the two regions in secular terms. We have just seen (in the last paragraph but one) that *-ai* is well attested in such terms at Rome, but a distinction cannot be established between Rome and the regions because Italy throws up no cases of *-a* outside religious contexts. In non-Roman inscriptions, however, there are seven cases of *-ai* listed by Blümel in non-religious words (358, 573, 723, 1888 twice, 1892 twice).

Thus no meaningful comparison can be made between Rome and other parts of Italy in the use of the feminine singular dative. The evidence supports the conclusion that the *-a* ending belonged to the religious register, but that *-ai* was the usual form in non-religious words both at Rome and elsewhere in Italy. *-ai* was in rivalry with *-a* in divine names, with perhaps a chronological distinction between the two forms that I will not attempt to investigate here, but there is no geographical distinction to be elicited from the evidence.

Something must be said about the literary language at Rome. By about 200 BC literary texts composed at Rome start to turn up, such as the comedies of Plautus and the works (in fragmentary state) of Livius Andronicus and Ennius. In these, if manuscripts are to be trusted, the feminine dative form is already *-ae*. Since some of the inscriptions considered above may be dated to about the same time or later, and since these mostly come from outside Rome and sometimes have the dative *-a*, could it not be said that here is evidence establishing a dialectal difference between parts of Italy and the city? This conclusion would not be justified. Literary texts and short religious dedications belong to different genres, and one would not be comparing like with like in contrasting, say, the morphology of Plautus with that of an inscriptional dedication to a deity. The prayers in Cato's *De agricultura* do not inform us about Cato's everyday morphology. Dedications to female deities a few words long are formulaic and fall into a limited number of patterns. They do not display a creative use of everyday language but must often have been copied by the drafter from another specimen that he had seen. It would be unreasonable to argue that those admitting the *-a* dative in dedications in, say, the second century BC would ever have used the morpheme in their ordinary speech. Formulaic language of this type is unsatisfactory as evidence on which to base assertions about dialectal variation. All that we can say with confidence is that the *-a* ending belonged to the religious language. The best we might hope to establish

about regional variation would be that religious language at Rome differed from that, say, in Latium. But such a distinction cannot be sustained, because there is hardly any Roman evidence of the required sort.

There is a little more to be said about the form *-a*. There is now an example in a graffito from Tarraco in Spain, which is the oldest Latin inscription from the Iberian peninsula. The archaeological background and date of the graffito are expounded by Alföldy (1981), who reads the text as *M'. Vibio Menrua*. The first word is taken to be a masculine nominative name without final *-s*, and the divine name to be a dative. The form of the name of Minerva, Alföldy notes (1981: 6), is that which it has in Etruscan. The name *Vibios* was originally current among the Sabelli and Oscans, but can also be found in Etruscan inscriptions. It became widespread in Italy from the third century BC.⁵⁵ Alföldy (1981: 4) dates the text to the earliest phase of Roman rule, during the Second Punic War or soon afterwards. The dedicator was obviously not a local but a Roman or Italian (Alföldy 1981: 8). In view of what was said in the [previous chapter](#) (I.6) about the possible transportation of archaisms to the provinces that were occupied early, the example has a certain interest. Here is a form that was to fall out of use in Italy. It had been carried to a distant provincial region. If it had taken root in its new home it might have constituted just the sort of evidence which seekers after archaisms in the provinces want to find. But there is no evidence that it did take root; it was a religious usage with the same restricted currency that it had back in Italy. This is, however, a case that highlights, by a contrast, the characteristic that a provincial archaism contributing to a local variety of Latin would have to have. Such a term would reach the province early and then fall out of use back at the centre.

Alföldy's attempts to localise the language of the text are less convincing. He notes (1981: 5) that all twenty-nine epigraphic examples that he has found (a list is given at 11–12) of the dative form are from Italy, particularly central Italy, but does not refer to the distribution of the alternative form. He also stresses (1981: 5) the Italian, particularly central and southern, character of the ending *-io* for *-ios*, and its comparative rarity at Rome. A table (1981: 9–11) lists the eighty-six examples of *-io* in names in the republican inscriptions published in *ILLRP*. Of these only about eleven are from Rome, but enough has been said above to make it obvious that such figures, when no comparison is offered with the figures for the full spelling *-ios*, establish nothing about the incidence of *-io* at Rome in relation to other places. On the omission of final *-s* in the early period, a phenomenon

⁵⁵ See Alföldy (1981: 8).

by no means restricted to non-urban areas, see further below, 18 with n. 319.

I conclude that, as the evidence for *-a* stands at the moment, the form can only be classified as a feature of a register (that of religious dedications), not of a regional dialect; nor is there evidence for regional variation across Italy within this register. It was seen above (1) that already by the time of Plautus Latin was richly supplied with register variations. It is easy to confuse special registers with local dialects.

6 *e* FOR *ei*

The diphthong *ei*, whether original, or deriving either from earlier *oi* in certain environments (in final syllables and after *u* [w] or *l*)⁵⁶ or from *ai* in medial and final syllables (as e.g. in the feminine dative/ablative plural),⁵⁷ developed to the monophthong long *i* by the time of classical Latin (thus *deico* > *dico*, *plourumoi* > *plourumei* > *plurimi*). But there was a variant treatment showing the grapheme *e*, which must have represented a long close *e* [ē] (e.g. *plourume*, nominative plural, in one of the Scipionic *elogia*, *CIL* 9).⁵⁸ This is generally seen as an intermediate stage in the development *ei* > *i*. It is possible that in some areas this intermediate long close *e* became dialectal, in that some dialects failed to make the final shift to *i*.

Certainly from the late Republic and possibly as early as Plautus there is evidence that long close *e* was considered rustic. Varro refers in one place (*Rust.* 1.2.14) to a rustic pronunciation of *uilla* as *uella*, and in another (*Rust.* 1.48.2) to the pronunciation by *rustici* of *spica* as *specā*. And in Cicero's *De oratore* (3.46) one of the speakers is rebuked for talking in the manner of *messores* by replacing the 'letter' *i* by *e plenissimum* (on these passages see further below, III.4.3, p. 138). The passage of Plautus, however, is more problematic. It is a joke about the regional speech of Truculentus (*Truc.* 262–4):

AS. comprime sis eiram. TR. eam quidem hercle tu, quae
solita's, comprime,
inpudens, quae per ridiculum rustico suades stuprum.
AS. eiram dixi: ut excepisti, dempsisti unam litteram.

AS. Just check your anger. TR. You fondle her yourself as
you have been accustomed,

⁵⁶ See Leumann (1977: 61, 427, 428). ⁵⁷ See Leumann (1977: 421) and below, 6.5.

⁵⁸ See in general Sturtevant (1940: 114–15), and, for *testimonia*, Müller (2001: 30–5).

you shameless woman, urging a rustic in mockery to
commit a misdemeanour.

AS. I said *eiram* 'anger' [not 'mistress']. As you took it, you
removed one letter.

The girl Astaphium orders Truculentus to check his anger, with *eiram* undoubtedly written in the original text for *iram* (see below). Truculentus is made to hear the order as a command to fondle his mistress (*eram*). The girl explains that she said *eiram*, and tells Truculentus that he has 'taken away' one letter, that is the *i*. This is a remarkable joke because it is based on the assumption that the audience is literate and will understand the point of the remark about the omission of the letter.⁵⁹ The word *eiram* has to be visualised in its written form.

On the face of it (if the joke is to be explained strictly from pronunciation: see below) Astaphium might seem to have pronounced *ei* as a monophthong, that is as a long close *e*, such that the word could be confused with *eram*, which has a short *e*.⁶⁰ The difference of vowel length would be immaterial, as Latin jokes and puns often require the length of two vowels with the same graphic form to be disregarded.⁶¹ On this view the Roman pronunciation of *ira* would have shown long close *e* at this period (see below, 6.2).

But the joke is at Truculentus' expense, who is presented in the play as rustic in speech, and one might have expected the point to be that only a character such as he would have been capable of such a misunderstanding. He is the one who has 'taken away' the letter. The speech of Astaphium is not at issue. One possibility is that Plautus was suggesting that Truculentus was the sort of rustic who would have written original *ei* as *e*, and was capable of hearing the diphthong (or long *i*) as a form of *e* because that was the way he would have pronounced it himself. Since the one certainty about the passage is that *iram* must have appeared in the text as *eiram*, the actor may have pronounced the word with an exaggerated (and perhaps old-fashioned) diphthong⁶² such that both elements were clearly heard by the audience, but not by Truculentus, who, accustomed to articulating original *ei* as a long close *e*, was made to pick up only the *e* element. If the joke is to be interpreted in strictly linguistic terms, it is hard to see any point to it unless there is an implication that Truculentus would have

⁵⁹ An interesting paper by Slater (2004) on jokes to do with literacy in Plautus misses this passage.

⁶⁰ See Wachter (1987: 314 n. 743); also Leumann (1977: 64).

⁶¹ See Adams (1981: 200 n. 3). On Varro's disregard for differences of vowel length when making etymological connections between words, see Kent (1958: I, 21 n.).

⁶² Cf. Müller (2001: 31 n. 3).

pronounced the word differently from the way it was pronounced by the Roman audience. If he used a variety of *e* it would follow that the audience did not.

But doubts linger over any attempt to explain the joke as based purely on pronunciation. The indecisive speculations of the last paragraph do at least show that any linguistic explanation must be so convoluted that it is difficult to see how an audience might have got the point. The point may be rather more crude, that rustics are so careless with language that they ‘take things away’ (as in *(ar)rabonem* and *(ci)conea*: see below, 9). On any account the joke throws light on literacy in the early Republic.

The question now arises whether the distribution of the *e*-forms in the inscriptions of *CIL* I has anything to reveal about the regional distribution of the monophthong [ē] in the early period. According to Coleman (1990: 6) the monophthongal spelling *e* for *ei* is ‘much more widespread outside Rome’. As evidence for the remark Coleman (1990: 21 n. 20) refers the reader to Blümel (1972) ‘for full lists of *-e* forms and their distribution’, but Blümel (16) cites only three examples, one from Rome, another from Lacus Fucinus (in the Marsian territory) and a third from the *S. C. de Bacch.* For a fuller collection of cases of *e* for *ei* it is necessary to go to the index of *CIL* I at various places: 749 (s.v. *uicus*), 809–10 (under various gods’ names), 814 (the incomplete section on *e* for long *i* or *ei*), 819 (under second-declension nominative, dative and ablative plurals, and the third-declension dative singular). I take various regions in turn.

6.1 The territory of the Marsi

There is evidence that such *e*-forms were heard here, particularly around the Lacus Fucinus (located roughly in the centre of Italy: see map 2b), but that is not to say that they would necessarily have been distinctive regionalisms of that area. We need to know as well about the extent of the *e* elsewhere in Italy. In the Marsian territory it seems possible to relate the form of at least one word to the substrate.

I start with one class of spellings from the index to *CIL* I, namely those of the dative forms of the divine name *Iuppiter* (see the index, 819). *Ioue* (*Dioue*) is more common outside Rome, by 5:1 (*CIL* 20; cf. 366, 386, 393, 2101, 2630; for the provenance of the examples listed here, see below), but the significance of this statistic seems to be undermined by the fact that the alternative spelling *Iouei* (*Diouei*) also predominates in a similar proportion outside the city (by 8 or 9:2: 725, 802; cf. 39 Latium, Alban Mount,

364 Falerii Novi,⁶³ 366 Spoletium, Umbria, 683, 688 both Capua, 1838 Reate, Sabine territory, 2233, 2236 both Delos; 551 may also belong here, but it does not seem to have a provenance). *Ioui* for its part occurs at Rome (990), Ostia (1423), Puteoli (1619), Furfo in the territory of the Vestini (756), and three times in the *Lex Vrsionensis* (594). The figures suggest only that in extant inscriptions Jupiter is more often referred to in the dative outside Rome than within, and that the various spellings are found in both regions (and I here again use the term ‘region’ in a loose sense to make a statistical point).

The statistics thus appear not to reveal anything about this variety of *e* as a possible regional variant for *eili*. But a closer examination of the name is at least suggestive. I will look in greater detail at the distribution of the various forms to see if there might be an underlying regional significance to any of them. My conclusion will be negative, but the facts ought to be stated.

I take first the spellings with the ending *-e*. Two of these are from Umbria (366 Spoletium, 2101 near Ameria). In Umbrian the dative singular in consonant- and *i*-stems was *-e*, *-e*,⁶⁴ against Oscan *éi*, as in *Diúvéi*.⁶⁵ Two further examples are from the region of the Marsi (386 *Iue* Lacus Fucinus, 393 *Ioue* Aschi). There remains only 2630 (*Iue*), from Veii, not far to the north of Rome in the Etruscan territory. Not much is known about Marsian, as the Marsi were Romanised early,⁶⁶ but they seem to have spoken a variety of Italic that shared features with both Oscan and Umbrian (see above, 5, p. 48). But as it happens the Marsian dative ending of this name is known. The evidence is in an inscription from Ortucchio in the Marsian territory, originally published as Vetter (1953), 224, but re-read by Letta and D’Amato (1975: 176–83) (cf. Letta 1976: 277–8, Poccetti 1979, 222 and Rix 2002: 66, VM 4). I print the text of Rix:

pe. uip[-?] -o.po.p[-?]
ioue.-[-?]i]ouies.pucle[s].

Whatever is to be made of the first line (which is irrelevant here), the second line is pure Italic. *Pukl-* is the Italic word for ‘son’,⁶⁷ and the phrase is a rendering of the Greek Διὸς κούροις = ‘DioscURI’.⁶⁸ This calque was a standard Italic designation for the DioscURI. It also occurs in an Italic inscription from the territory of the Paeligni (Vetter 1953, 202 = Rix

⁶³ The Faliscan cooks’ inscription: see above, n. 40 for bibliography.

⁶⁴ See Buck (1904: 124). ⁶⁵ See Buck (1904: 124, 44–5).

⁶⁶ On the Romanisation of the Marsi see Peruzzi (1961) and the remarks of Marinetti (2000: 72).

⁶⁷ See Untermann (2000: 599). ⁶⁸ See Vetter (1953: 141), Untermann (2000: 599).

2002: 73, Pg 5 *iouiois.puclois*). The *-es* ending of the dative plural in the second line of the above Marsian inscription also corresponds to that of Umbrian (*-es*), against Oscan *-úís*.⁶⁹ But it is *Ioue* that is of importance here: the ending is again of Umbrian type (*-e*).

The interest of *Ioue* lies in the fact that it establishes the Marsian form of the dative of the name,⁷⁰ and hints at the significance of the form in the other, purely Latin, inscriptions from the Marsian region cited above.⁷¹ *-e* looks like a morpheme (though its origin probably lies in a phonetic development: see further below, 21, p. 111) that Marsian shared with Umbrian against Oscan, and it would seem justifiable to allow that the local Italic dative of the divine name was sometimes retained in Latin texts of this region. It would not, however, follow from this evidence alone that the Marsi at this date (whatever that might be) regularly used *-e* as the dative of such third-declension nouns in their Latin. *Ioue* might (e.g.) have been an isolated archaism of the religious register.

The regional character of the *-e* ending in this divine name might seem to be further supported by the distribution of the alternative endings (for which see the second paragraph above). With the exception of *-ei* in 366 from Spolegium in Umbria (a text which, as we saw above, also has an instance of the *-e* form), all the examples of *-ei* and *-i* are either from Latin-speaking regions or regions with an Oscan substrate, as distinct from an Umbrian or Marsian. Whatever is to be made of the inconsistency of 366, the *-e* ending in this name seems to have been restricted geographically. However, the extant examples are very few. Nor would it do to consider the spelling of just one name in isolation. There are other divine names that admit of the same dative forms, and these must also be brought into the discussion (see further below, 6.4). Moreover of the various forms, that in *-ei* is an old spelling, which by definition tells us nothing about pronunciation: an archaising speller might have used it to represent a long close *e* of speech or a long *i*. It would be rash on the strength of such inadequate attestations to read too much into the distribution of *Ioue*. I pursue the matter further.

Whether the ending of *Ioue* is taken to be morphologically or phonetically determined (see below, 21, p. 111), this name in the dative is not the only evidence for the monophthong *e* in the territory of the Marsi. An interesting item is the form *uecus* for *uicus* (originally with *oi*, > *ei*).⁷² This is found at *CIL* 391 = *ILLRP* 267 from Castelluccio di Lecce near

⁶⁹ See Buck (1904: 116, 118).

⁷⁰ Perhaps one should say that it establishes one form of the Marsian dative. It cannot be ruled out that the spelling of the dative of the name in the local Italic was variable.

⁷¹ See Letta (1972: 112 with n. 27), Vine (1993: 115 with n. 84).

⁷² For examples see *CIL* index, 789; also Wachter (1987: 313 n. 740), Leumann (1977: 61).

the Lacus Fucinus.⁷³ Another example (*CIL* 388 = *ILLRP* 286) is from near the town of Trasacco, again in the region of the Lacus Fucinus. Two examples are found on a bronze tablet also from the Lacus Fucinus (*ILLRP* 303).⁷⁴ All these instances seem to fit in with the evidence for *Ioue* from the same region. But *CIL* 416 = *ILLRP* 1217 is from Cales in Campania, a Latin colony. Though the area was originally Oscan, the inscriptions on Cales ware do not display Oscan influence,⁷⁵ and Marsian influence is also out of the question. This example suggests that the monophthongisation in this word had occurred in at least one other variety of Latin. *CIL* 1806, finally, is from the region of the Vestini, but may be quite late;⁷⁶ the Latin of the Vestini has been said to have preserved diphthongs better than that of the Marsi around the Lacus Fucinus (see above, 3, p. 44; also 6.5, 11.5), but in this case the same monophthongised form occurs in both places. The form *uicus* is listed eight times by the index of *CIL* I, never from the territory of the Marsi (585.5 *Lex agraria*, 627 [twice] Trebula Mutuesca in the Sabine territory, 721 Rome, 777 Pompeii, 1002 Rome, 2285, 2286 Nauportus; some of these inscriptions are fairly late); I disregard *ueicus*, in which the digraph could represent long close *e* or long *i*.⁷⁷

Note too the following spellings, all from the Marsian territory: *CIL* 385 *patre* (dative), from Alba Fucens to the north-west of the Lacus Fucinus,⁷⁸ 390 and 391 *Valetudne* (dative), from Castelluccio di Lecce,⁷⁹ 392 *Erine patre* (dative),⁸⁰ from Ortona, east of the Lacus Fucinus,⁸¹ and Poccetti (1979), 218 *Aplone* (Trasacco near the Lacus Fucinus).⁸²

There is good evidence then that in the area of the Marsi in the early Republic the long close *e* originating from the *ei* diphthong was well established. That does not, however, establish that the *e* was peculiar to the region. I now look at evidence from other parts of Italy, and at 6.4 below return to divine names and present some conclusions.

⁷³ See also Wachter (1987: 409).

⁷⁴ On this document, which seems to present two versions of the same text on the two sides of a bronze tablet, see Wachter (1987: 407–8) and Marinetti (2000: 70–3). Marinetti (whose earlier discussion of the tablet I have not seen) offered some restorations to the text and argued that side A is more ‘urban’ in language, side B more ‘local’. *Veci* appears in both versions.

⁷⁵ See Wachter (1987: 400). ⁷⁶ Second/first century: see Wachter (1987: 313 n. 740).

⁷⁷ The index to *CIL* I lists six instances of the spelling *ueicus*, which tend to be in archaising inscriptions. Two examples are in 756 (9, 15), an inscription from Furfo (territory of the Vestini) of 58 BC. The inscription is archaising in orthography (there are several cases of *ei*-spellings); for this inscription see also below, 10.1. There are two examples in 809, another formal inscription (from Rome) in which the spelling *ei* occurs repeatedly. The remaining examples are at 1828 (Aequiculi) and 2514 (from near Rome, but late republican). The form belonged to artificial archaising orthography.

⁷⁸ See Wachter (1987: 405–6). ⁷⁹ See Wachter (1987: 409).

⁸⁰ Note *ILLRP* 283 n. ‘Erinis Pater aliunde ignotus’.

⁸¹ See Wachter (1987: 407) on *Erine*. ⁸² See Wachter (1987: 402; also 397).

6.2 Rome

On one interpretation the joke in Plautus discussed above (6) could be taken to indicate that a word spelt with *ei* might have been pronounced with a long close *e* on the Roman stage, but it was suggested that the point of the joke remains obscure. Nevertheless the *e*-spelling is well represented at Rome.⁸³ The nominative plural *plourume* is in one of the Scipionic *elogia* (CIL 9), as was noted above (6). *Faleries* ‘at Falerii’ (from original *Faleriois*, > *Falerieis*) occurs in a recently published Roman inscription on a bronze breastplate, dated to 241 (the date of the destruction of Falerii).⁸⁴ One of the *ollae* from the graveyard of the *Vinea S. Caesarii* generally dated to the second century BC⁸⁵ has the abbreviation *ed* for *eidus* ‘Ides’ (CIL 1048). *Frugis* is at CIL 1349 (ILLRP 943). *Compromesise* is in the *S. C. de Bacch.*⁸⁶ and *deuas* is at CIL 975 (ILLRP 69). In the Roman legal language *iure* (dative) is attested in certain formulae.⁸⁷ See further CIL 30 (ILLRP 123) and 981 (ILLRP 126) *Hercole*, 31 (ILLRP 157) *Honore*, 361 (ILLRP 161) *Iunone* (?), 2675c (ILLRP 45) *esdem* (nominative plural),⁸⁸ 802 (ILLRP 187) *uictore*.

6.3 Elsewhere

(i) Pisaurum (ager Gallicus)⁸⁹

CIL 370, 378 *Iunone*

373 *Salute*

379 *Matre*

381 *Lebro*

(ii) Picenum (east of the Apennines)⁹⁰

384 *Apolene*⁹¹

1928 *Apoline*⁹²

(iii) Latium

61 *Hercole* (Praeneste)

62 *Hercole* (Praeneste)

47 *Marte*, twice (Tibur)⁹³

⁸³ See the remarks of Wachter (1987: 314).

⁸⁴ For the full text see Meiser (1998: 5); cf. Wachter (1987: 313 with n. 739).

⁸⁵ See e.g. Degraßi ILLRP II, p. 221. ⁸⁶ See however Courtney (1999: 97) on the text.

⁸⁷ See Ernout (1909a: 56), TLL VII.2.1.679.2ff. ⁸⁸ See Wachter (1987: 344).

⁸⁹ See Wachter (1987: 433). ⁹⁰ The location of the Italic inscriptions known as ‘South Picene’.

⁹¹ See Wachter (1987: 438). ⁹² See Wachter (1987: 437). ⁹³ See Wachter (1987: 376–7).

- 49 *Maurte* (Tusculum)⁹⁴
 359 *Iunone* (Norba)
 1427 [*Herc*]ole (Lanuvium)
 1429 *Hercole* (Lanuvium)
 1430 *Iunone* (Lanuvium)
 1440 *Venere* (Tusculum)
 1458 *Hercule* (Praeneste)
 2659 [*H*]ercle (Lacus Albanus)
JRS 50 (1960), 114–18 *Lare* (Lavinium)⁹⁵
- (iv) Faliscan cooks' inscription, Falerii Novi
 364 *Falesce* (nominative plural)
- (v) Sardinia
 2226 *merente*
- (vi) Sabine territory
 1861 *que* (Amiternum) (but reading uncertain)⁹⁶
 2675a *Hercole* (Cantalupo in Sabina)
- (vii) Campania
 399 *Apolone* (Cales)⁹⁷
 1581 *Iunone* (Capua)⁹⁸
 1582 [*Herc?*]ole (Capua)
- (viii) Etruria
 1993 *Iuno*]ne (Visentium)
 2628 *Apoline* (Veii)
 2630 *Iue* (Veii)⁹⁹
- (ix) Sicily
 2219 *Apoline*¹⁰⁰
 2222 *Vene*]re
- (x) Delos
 2233 *Apolline*

⁹⁴ See Wachter (1987: 377–8).

⁹⁵ For this text see above, 5, p. 47.

⁹⁶ See Wachter (1987: 416).

⁹⁷ See Wachter (1987: 397).

⁹⁸ See Wachter (1987: 401).

⁹⁹ For the last two texts see Wachter (1987: 439).

¹⁰⁰ See Wachter (1987: 398).

6.4 Conclusions

The evidence above is not complete (second-declension nominative plurals in *-es* deriving from *-eis* might, for example, be taken into account),¹⁰¹ but it is revealing in some ways. It may be right to say that *e* < *ei* looks better attested outside Rome than within, but it would not be right to maintain that this distribution is relevant to the dialectalisation of Latin. In the early Republic there is more inscriptional material extant from outside the city than from within, and any phenomenon is bound to be better attested in the Italian regions (see n. 32 above).¹⁰² This point was illustrated above (6.1, second paragraph) by the distribution of the dative forms of the name of Jupiter. It is not only *Ioue* that occurs more often in the provinces than at Rome; dative forms of the name as a whole turn up more frequently outside the city. Dative forms of the name *Hercules* could be used to make the same point. The *e*-form is indeed more common (by 8:2) outside the city, but similarly both the *ei*-form and that in *-i* are more numerous outside than within (by 13:2 and 2:1 respectively).

It is worth dwelling on the dative of *Hercules* to highlight the inadequacy of the statistics. The dative forms turn up a more confused picture than that adumbrated above for *Ioue* and variants (6.1, pp. 55–6). The *-e* spellings cannot be related to a substrate; almost all are from Rome and Latium (see 30 and 981 for Rome; for the six examples from Latium see above, 6.3 [iii]; for two further examples elsewhere see [vi], [vii]). The *-ei* spellings for their part are scattered all over the place, including again Rome and Latium (607, 985 Rome, 1827 Aequiculi, 1482 Tibur, 1531 Sora, 1503 Signia, 1697, 1698 Tarentum, 2220 Agrigentum, 2486 Superaequum, territory of Paeligni [see below, 10.5 for this text], 687, 1579 Capua, 1617 Puteoli, 1815 Alba Fucens, 2504 Delos). The form with *-i* is at Rome (982), Lanuvium (1428) and possibly in the territory of the Vestini (1805, text doubtful). No deductions can be made from these distributions about regional variations. This is a salutary case, and it might be interpreted as undermining the attempt made above to find a more subtle significance to the distribution of *Ioue* and its alternatives (pp. 55–6).

I now consider the distribution of the various dative forms of three other divine names in the material collected in 6.3.

There are seven instances of the dative *Iunone* listed in the index to *CIL* I (809), all of them cited above. Only one is from Rome. But the distribution again turns out not to be significant. There are four examples

¹⁰¹ See the evidence set out by Bakkum (1994).

¹⁰² Cf. the remarks of Wachter (1987: 313–14).

of the old diphthong spelling *Iunonei* listed, none from Rome (360 Norba, 362 Pomptine marshes, 364 Falerii Novi, 396 Beneventum, Campania). Here is the familiar pattern: religious dedications in the early period are mainly from outside Rome, and it is not possible to set up a distinction between Roman practice and that outside. Nor do the six examples of *Iunoni* cited in the index help in establishing dialectal differences. Three are in the *Lex Vrsionensis* (594), which is so late as to be irrelevant. An example from Rome (987) is of uncertain date, and is not included in *ILLRP*. The one example that is in *ILLRP* (*CIL* 1573 = *ILLRP* 168) is from Teanum Sidicinum in Campania. Finally, the interpretation of 1816 (territory of the Aequi) is uncertain.

Six cases are cited above (6.3) of the name of Apollo spelt with *-e* in the dative, none of them from Rome. But both instances of the ending *-ei* are also from outside Rome (693 Delphi, 1991 Falerii). Similarly the only two instances of *Apollini* listed are from Delos (718, 2232; for the text of the latter see *ILLRP* 750a: the ending of *Apollini* can be read but the rest is a restoration from the Greek version).

There are just three certain cases of the dative *Marte* listed in the index to *CIL* (810), none from Rome (see 6.3). The CL form *Marti* does not appear in the index. Three instances of the form *Martei* (*Mauortei*) are listed, two from Rome (609 = *ILLRP* 218, 991 = *ILLRP* 217) and one from outside (1720 = *ILLRP* 223, Prata di Principato). Attestations are so few that generalisations cannot be based on the distribution of the forms.

The evidence from the region of the Marsi seems to be the most telling. *e* for *ei* is well represented there, not only in the dative ending but also within the word. In the dative the *e*-ending of Marsian Latin matches that of the local Italic, and the same could be argued for *e*-spellings elsewhere in the word, because in Umbrian (with which Marsian shared features) the original *ei* diphthong regularly appears as *e*, *e*.¹⁰³ But these correspondences between the Latin of the Marsi and the Italic substrate may be coincidental, because *e*-spellings are widely spread in Latin from other areas. Can the datives *Iue* and *Ioue* legitimately be called 'Marsian' when comparable datives such as *Hercole* are scattered about outside the territory of the Marsi, including Rome and Latium? It may be tempting to fall back on the theoretical possibility raised above at 4, namely that the same form may have different motivations in different places, but it would be an extreme position to argue that the substrate determined the *-e* datives around the Lacus Fucinus but that the same forms in Rome, Latium and elsewhere reflect internal

¹⁰³ See Buck (1904: 44–5).

developments within Latin itself. Moreover while we may know (or think we know, on the basis of two examples) how the Marsi in Latin wrote the dative of *Iuppiter*, we do not know the full geographical extent of that form, or its determinants in different regions, or the exact chronology of long close *e*. Many of the examples of such spellings cited above are, however, early (i.e. found in the inscriptions dated to before 150 by Wachter: see n. 32), and that might be taken to suggest that *e*-spellings in the early period reflect the date, not the region, of the inscriptions in which they occur. The language as a whole in all its regional forms may have gone through a stage in which a transitional *e* [ē] was in use before the further shift to long *i* took place. Later the long close *e* may have lingered on only in certain dialects: by the time of Varro *e*-forms seem to have been accorded a rustic flavour at Rome (6). The evidence available does not allow the setting up of dialectal variations in this matter in the earlier period.

6.5 *e* for *ei* again

The problem of interpretation raised by such *e*-spellings in Marsian inscriptions comes up again in another text. In the Marsian inscription quoted at 6.1 there seems to be an Umbrian-style dative plural in a second-declension adjective (*iouies*). I consider now a similar (ablative) plural (in a first-declension adjective), also from the Marsian territory. *CIL* 5 (= Vetter 1953, 228a, *ILLRP* 7; also Wachter 1987: 370) is an inscription from Lacus Fucinus, the so-called Caso Cantovios bronze. It appears to be in Latin or in a language close to Latin¹⁰⁴ on the conventional interpretation. Vetter (1953: 161) includes it in a section ‘Lateinische Inschriften mit dialektischem Einschlag. Aus dem Gebiet der Marser’, and Rix (2002) does not print it in his *Sabellische Texte*. It probably dates from early in the Latinisation of the Marsi. The text of Wachter (without his capitalisations) is as follows:

caso.cantouio
s.aprufclano.cei
p.apur()fine.e
salico.menur
bid.casontoni/a¹⁰⁵
socieque.doiuo
m.atoiεr[.]actia
pro.l[---]nibus mar
tses.

¹⁰⁴ See Wachter (1987: 371, c).

¹⁰⁵ The final *-a* is written between lines 5 and 6 (see Degraffi *ILLRP* ad loc.).

There are discussions of the text by Peruzzi (1961), Wachter (1987: 370–2) and del Tutto Palma (1997). Many problems of interpretation and reading remain. *Martses*, the item of interest, is taken as a feminine adjective in the ablative (= CL *Martiis*), dependent on *pro*, agreeing with the conjectural *[l]ecio[n]ibus*.

A question arises about the ending of *Martses*. The original dative–ablative feminine plural ending was **-ais*.¹⁰⁶ The diphthong *ai* in final syllable in Latin developed to *ei*,¹⁰⁷ and then to long *i*; *-ei(s)* dative–ablative forms, prior to the monophthongisation to *-i(s)*, are well attested in Latin.¹⁰⁸ Thus *-e(s)* might represent a monophthongisation of the intermediate stage *-ei(s)*, showing the long close *e* dealt with earlier. As it happens the *-es* ending is paralleled in Umbrian, where in the first declension *-es* corresponds to the *-ais* of Oscan.¹⁰⁹ Could this then be the Umbrian (i.e. Marsian) morpheme retained after Latinisation of the area, a possibility that was raised above in the case of *Ioue*? Should one explain the form phonetically (as a monophthongisation that had taken place in Latin) or morphologically (as the adoption of an Italic morpheme into Latin at a time when the area was not fully Latinised)?

It would not be convincing to adopt the second explanation. It is possible that *socie* in the same document is a nominative plural (i.e. *socioi* > *sociei* > *socie*),¹¹⁰ and if that were so the ending would not correspond to either the Oscan or Umbrian nominative plural endings of the second declension, and could only be explained phonetically; once one (Latin) monophthongisation to *-e* [ē] were allowed it would be implausible to explain the other *e* differently. Even if *socie* is excluded from consideration because of its ambiguity, it remains true that the *-es* ending is found elsewhere in Latin where Umbrian-type morphological interference would be out of the question. Note the inscription at Capua in the name of a Roman consul, *CIL* 635 = *ILLRP* 332 *Ser. Fulvius Q. f. Flaccus cos. muru(m) locauit de manubies* ('Ser. Fulvius Flaccus, son of Quintus, consul, set up the wall from his share of the booty'); cf. *CIL* 1861 (*CE* 361, *ILLRP* 804, *ILS* 5221) *plouruma que[i?] fecit populo soueis gaudia nuges* ('who provided the people with many delights by his trifles'; Amiternum in the Sabine territory, not much later than the time of Ennius, according to Bücheler on *CE* 361).¹¹¹

The ablative form *Martses* is not a straightforward Latin regionalism. It might be another matter if the word could be unequivocally interpreted as

¹⁰⁶ See e.g. Leumann (1977: 421).

¹⁰⁷ On *ai* in final syllables in Latin see e.g. Buck (1933: 88). ¹⁰⁸ See Leumann (1977: 421).

¹⁰⁹ See e.g. Buck (1904: 113), Poultney (1959: 103), Leumann (1977: 421).

¹¹⁰ This is only a possibility; an alternative interpretation would be that it is a feminine dative singular (see Wachter 1987: 370).

¹¹¹ See also Wachter (1987: 416–17).