

**HISTORY OF LINGUISTIC THOUGHT
IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES**

**AMSTERDAM STUDIES IN THE THEORY AND
HISTORY OF LINGUISTIC SCIENCE**

General Editor
E. F. KONRAD KOERNER
(University of Ottawa)

Series III - STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE LANGUAGE SCIENCES

Advisory Editorial Board

Sylvain Auroux (Paris); Ranko Bugarski (Belgrade)
H. H. Christmann (Tübingen); Rudolf Engler (Bern)
Hans-Josef Niederehe (Trier); R. H. Robins (London)
Rosane Rocher (Philadelphia); Vivian Salmon (Oxford)
Aldo Scaglione (New York); Kees Versteegh (Nijmegen)

Volume 71

Vivien Law (ed.)

History of Linguistic Thought in the Early Middle Ages

HISTORY OF LINGUISTIC THOUGHT IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

Edited by

VIVIEN LAW
Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge

JOHN BENJAMINS PUBLISHING COMPANY
AMSTERDAM/PHILADELPHIA

1993

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

History of linguistic thought in the early Middle Ages / edited by Vivien Law.

p. cm. -- (Amsterdam studies in the theory and history of linguistic science.
Series III, Studies in the history of the language sciences, ISSN 0304-0720; v. 71)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Linguistics--History. I. Law, Vivien. II. Series.

P65.H57 1993

410'.9--dc20

93-5696

ISBN 90 272 4558 4 (Eur.)/1-55619-366-1 (US) (alk. paper)

CIP

© Copyright 1993 - John Benjamins B.V.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by print, photoprint, microfilm, or
any other means, without written permission from the publisher.

John Benjamins Publishing Co. · P.O. Box 75577 · 1070 AN Amsterdam · The Netherlands
John Benjamins North America · 821 Bethlehem Pike · Philadelphia, PA 19118 · USA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	vi
Vivien Law (Cambridge): The Historiography of Grammar in the Early Middle Ages	1
Vivien Law (Cambridge): Grammar in the Early Middle Ages: A Bibliography	25
Mark Amsler (Newark, De.): History of Linguistics, 'Standard Latin', and Pedagogy	49
Martha Bayless (Eugene, Ore.): <i>Beatus quid est</i> and the Study of Grammar in Late Anglo-Saxon England	67
Rijklof Hofman (Utrecht): The Linguistic Preoccupations of the Glossators of the St Gall Priscian	111
Colette Jeudy (Paris): Fragments carolingiens de la grammaire de Dynamius (ms. Darmstadt 3303)	127
Anneli Luhtala (Helsinki): Syntax and Dialectic in Carolingian Com- mentaries on Priscian's <i>Institutiones grammaticae</i>	145
Marina Passalacqua (Roma): Priscian's <i>Institutio de nomine et pro- nomine et verbo</i> in the Ninth Century	193
Giovanni Polara (Napoli): A proposito delle dottrine grammaticali di Virgilio Marone	205
Vivien Law (Cambridge): Erchanbert and the Interpolator: A Chris- tian <i>Ars minor</i> at Freising (Clm 6414)	223
General Index	245
Index of Manuscripts	253

FOREWORD

As historians of linguistics are all too aware, acceptance into the existing institutional structure is of vital importance if a new subject is to have any chance of becoming established. In this respect the early Middle Ages, the period between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance, labours under multiple handicaps in becoming integrated into the discipline of the history of linguistics. In the English-speaking world the period has no recognised departmental home: classicists want no truck with the 'barbarous' Latin of this 'degenerate' age, whilst departments of modern languages rarely show any interest in the Latin literature read or written at the same time as *Beowulf* or the *Chanson de Roland*. In Britain the situation is exacerbated by the fact that the term 'medieval' is reserved for the period between the Norman Conquest and the Tudors, earlier centuries being described as 'the Anglo-Saxon period' or, pejoratively, 'the Dark Ages'. Consequently, surveys of linguistics in the Middle Ages often begin with the twelfth century, dismissing the preceding six centuries as 'devoid of originality', 'dependent upon Donatus and Priscian', and in any case as 'obscure and uninteresting'. It is therefore very welcome that a collection of articles devoted to this period is being included in a well-established series.

The articles in this volume take up a number of questions, some of them controversial for decades, some of them quite new. The history of linguistic doctrine occupies three scholars from different points of view. Polara, who has made an number of contributions to the interpretation of that enigmatic seventh-century author, Virgilius Maro Grammaticus, here outlines Virgilius's *grammatical* doctrine, separating it out from the extraordinary anecdotes which threaten to distract Virgilius's (modern) readers' attention, and bringing out its affiliations to the teachings of late antique grammarians, in particular Donatus and Isidore of Seville. — The much-disputed question of the originality of the Irish contribution to the analysis of Latin is Hofman's theme, arising out of his detailed study of the glossing in the St Gall manuscript of Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae*. He

analyzes it in hopes of discovering evidence for contrastive analysis of Latin and Old Irish by the glossators. When he finds none, he concludes that the pedagogical preoccupations of the glossators led to their preferring to focus narrowly upon Latin phenomena. Their original contribution is to be sought rather in vernacular calques of Latin grammatical terminology and in the use of construe marks. — Luhtala comes to the defence of another embattled group of grammarians, the Carolingians. Their twin ‘discoveries’, of dialectic and of Priscian’s *Institutiones grammaticae*, had momentous consequences for the subsequent development of linguistic thought, and it is apparent from their own work that they were quick to spot some of the potential that these new areas opened up. Luhtala discusses several instances of linguistic analysis being applied to issues of theology and dialectic, and conversely alludes to dialectical discussions of semantic issues, drawing examples from commentaries on the *Institutiones grammaticae*, and Johannes Scottus’s *Periphyseon*. A remarkable amount of sophisticated commentary on syntactic questions turns out to be embedded in glosses on the *Institutiones grammaticae*, hitherto overlooked as a source for the history of ideas on syntax in the ninth and tenth centuries. — Grammars of the tenth and eleventh centuries are one of the least explored areas in the history of linguistics. In England, the achievement of Ælfric, the author of the first systematic grammar of Latin in a European vernacular, has overshadowed the work of other grammarians. Bayless redresses the balance by editing a previously unpublished grammar from this period, *Beatus quid est*. Its moderately heavy glossing, reproduced here, is of particular interest for what it reveals of pedagogical techniques and the integration of the literary texts in vogue at the time into grammar-teaching. — Amsler also looks outside the boundaries of the history of linguistics proper, not this time to the history of education, but in the direction of cultural history generally, stressing the importance of the history of linguistics within the larger discipline. As he points out, much information may be gleaned from late antique and early medieval grammars about attitudes toward varieties of Latin and its status, and it is arguably incumbent upon the historian of linguistics to be alert to aspects of grammatical texts with implications for other subject-areas, as well as to the development of linguistic ideas *per se*. — The transmission of the grammars of the later Roman Empire to the early Middle Ages is a problem which has preoccupied many scholars, and it is addressed directly by two contributors to this volume. Passalacqua does so by studying the surviving eighth- and

ninth-century manuscripts of one of the most widely read grammars of the early Middle Ages, Priscian's *Institutio de nomine et pronomine et verbo*. The twenty-four extant copies show a pattern of dissemination which can be reconstructed with some precision on the basis of textual affiliations, allowing us to chart its spread through the Carolingian empire. — Jeudy approaches the grammar of Dynamius from a quite different angle. Previously known to us from a single manuscript, Vat. Pal. Lat. 1746, the grammar may now be studied in this edition of the fragmentary copy in Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek 3303. A diplomatic text such as this offers the modern reader an opportunity to confront the text almost as the medieval reader was obliged to, scribal errors and all. But Jeudy facilitates the reader's task by providing a source analysis, from which it emerges that Dynamius was heavily dependent upon Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae*, a fact with implications for the dating of the work and the identification of its author.

As will be apparent from this summary, these articles are remarkably diverse, and are thus fairly representative of the many approaches in use at present. Editions of texts, studies of transmission, source analyses, history of education, historical linguistics, the history of linguistic doctrines — a multiplicity of ways of reading these grammars is demonstrated. Since the background to this diversity is itself of no small historiographical interest, I have prefaced this collection with a study of the historiography of early medieval grammar, together with a bibliography of relevant primary and secondary literature.

It is my pleasant duty to thank the authors for putting up with a sometimes demanding editor, the publishers for coping eventemperedly with an often unresponsive editor, and the series editor for inviting the grammarians of the early Middle Ages to join the many other distinguished linguists by now represented in this series.

Vivien Law

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF GRAMMAR IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

VIVIEN LAW
Cambridge University

Despite the burgeoning of interest in the history of linguistics over the last generation, the early medieval period has so far received very little of that attention. The inaccessibility of the sources and the specialised knowledge needed to interpret them, along with the low esteem in which the 'Dark Ages' were held, all contributed to a vicious circle whereby no one wished to work on the grammars of the period because they contained nothing of interest — and yet no historian of linguistics had been to look. That is not to say that no one at all had taken an interest in this era, however. From the last third of the nineteenth century on, scholars from a great range of backgrounds — classicists, medieval latinists, historians of education and culture, paleographers, specialists in the medieval European vernaculars, librarians and cataloguers — had concerned themselves with grammars and other works on language from the early Middle Ages. Naturally their interests were not those of the historian of linguistics. They asked different questions and found different kinds of answers satisfying. Consequently, when presentday historians of linguistics begin to delve into the existing secondary literature on early medieval grammar, they often find it nearly as difficult to interpret the writings of their contemporaries as those of the scholars of a thousand years ago. This diversity of approach is still very much in evidence in work on grammars of the early Middle Ages, as will be apparent from the contributions to this volume. The intellectual context of these articles — some of which seem at first glance to sit strangely in a journal devoted to the history of linguistics — will become more comprehensible if we survey the main trends in the historiography of early medieval grammatical texts.

Given the volume of published work, this survey cannot claim to be comprehensive, in particular as regards nineteenth-century work. The focus will be upon literature on early medieval Latin grammars narrowly defined, that is, texts dealing with the eight parts of speech. The historiography of early medieval writings on metrics and orthography will not be covered, although some literature on these subjects will be included in the bibliography. Nor will grammatical material in the vernacular be considered, nor the vernacular glosses found in grammatical texts (but see p.19 below), nor that idiosyncratic author Virgilius Maro Grammaticus, the reception of whose writings in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would itself merit a monograph. Reviews too will be excluded, with a few exceptions.

To impose a rigorous chronological structure upon such a survey is difficult in that certain tendencies which were prevalent some seventy or eighty years ago have continued to appear intermittently up to the present day. Indeed, some of the earliest work, most notably Thurot (1868) and Roger (1905a), stand closer to present-day approaches than do many studies from the intervening period. Very few methods of studying these texts can be said to have lost their usefulness in the eyes of all scholars. In part it is a question of training: a paleographer will naturally ask different questions from a literary historian. Partly too it is a matter of the intellectual fashion of the day, and although early medieval grammars have escaped some of the most egregious fads of the recent past (but compare Amsler, this volume p.50), our approach to them is no less coloured by the assumptions and prejudices of the day than is Shakespeare scholarship or syntax. Indeed, the temptation is to fall into the opposite trap and imagine that because our work is so little affected by postmodernism or whatever it might be, we are working in a perfectly neutral and objective way — when in fact our mode of working is one shaped to a large extent in the increasingly remote nineteenth-century past.¹ At any rate, given the persistence of so many currents of research, it seems more appropriate to base this survey on a roughly thematic account of certain trends visible in recent scholarship than to attempt a ruthlessly chronological coverage.

1. *Why study early medieval grammars?*

Unlike literary historians, those scholars who choose to study early medieval grammars have almost invariably felt obliged to justify or even to apologise for their choice of subject. Lacking in “*valeur intrinsèque*” (Roger 1905b:vii), these texts need some other claim upon our attention.

But what might this missing 'intrinsic value' be? Often invoked but never explained, like the most telling key-words of any era, this notion can be exemplified from two adjacent domains: literary history and the Latin language. Whereas the 'intrinsic value' of an Ambrosian hymn, for instance, lies in its effectiveness as a work of literature, independent of its date and cultural context, whilst that of a minor late Antique historical text may be said to reside in what it can tell us both about the events it describes and about the Latin usage of its own time, a seventh- or eighth-century grammar cannot compete on these terms. We cannot use it in our schools, for our children have very different expectations from those of the monastic pupils of a thousand years ago. Textbooks are by definition excluded from the category of 'great literature', normally restricted to *belles lettres* alone. And what can an early medieval grammarbook hope to tell us about the Latin of some eight hundred years earlier? Even those scholars who have opened these works hoping to learn something about seventh- or eighth-century usage come away disappointed and add their voices to the chorus of denigration and apology.

In the absence of 'intrinsic value' some other kind of justification had to be found. The metalanguage of modern scholars is itself rich in clues. The word 'value' ('valeur', 'valore', 'Wert', 'waarde', 'pretium') figures prominently in articles throughout the history of scholarship, signalling an explanation of the study's *raison d'être*. Revealingly, it is often juxtaposed with 'witness' or 'testimonianza'. In other words, since these texts possess no intrinsic value, their worth must lie in what they can tell us about something external to themselves. The grammars are not to be read for themselves (and fair enough, for we possess Latin grammars which are more in keeping with the temper of our age), but only as they shed light on something else, whether as "strumento e fonte" or as "atto e testimonianza di cultura" (Cervani 1979:49). Of course, that wherein their value is said to lie will reflect contemporary fashion, although not infrequently the author simply pays lip-service to the current fad and carries on with what he wanted to do anyway. Consequently, such statements may sometimes be taken at face value, as apologies for the apparently trivial or tedious nature of the texts, or they may more appropriately be read for their hidden message about the priorities and preferences, perceived or actual, of the author's contemporaries. As we shall see, such apologies are to be found in studies of virtually every orientation.

2. *Grammars as evidence for ancient texts*

Classicists have always had an uneasy relationship with the early Middle Ages, and more especially with the grammars of that epoch. Although these works date from far too late an epoch to possess any 'intrinsic value', classical scholars hoped that they might nonetheless prove useful in one area — the preservation of snippets from lost literary texts (e.g. Sabbadini 1903:169; Mariotti 1966; Piacente 1986-1987). In fact, however, most scholars swiftly realised that such extracts as they contained from authors like Naevius and Persius were secondhand, taken over from Late Latin grammarians like Charisius and Priscian. When with the publication of Heinrich Keil's *Grammatici Latini* (1855-1880) reliable texts of the grammarians of the third to sixth centuries became available, these became the object of fitful attention from classicists, and the amelioration of Keil's text became a legitimate goal. Hence, early medieval grammars attracted attention from scholars hoping to publish emendations to Keil's text (e.g. Barwick 1924). When they published the earlier grammars which were their sources, they often selected not the passages which most clearly revealed the unique character of the medieval work, but those portions which were quoted verbatim from an ancient grammar, their motivation being either textual criticism or *Quellenforschung*. Collignon (1883), to take an early example, describes the Nancy manuscript (Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 317) which contains a still unpublished florilegium, and selects those passages for publication which contain new readings or hitherto unknown passages from the already published grammars by Sergius, Charisius and Virgilius Maro Grammaticus, leaving aside those of unknown provenance, which were to attract the attention of a later generation. The very title of the article, "Note sur une grammaire latine manuscrite du VIII^e siècle appartenant à la bibliothèque de Nancy contenant des fragments inédits de Virgilius Maro", betrays his interests — or those he imputed to his readers. Ludwig Traube, the foremost medieval latinist of his day, advised Ambrogio Amelli to 'unlock' Paulus Diaconus's grammar rather than to publish the entire work (Amelli 1899:vii n.2); luckily for us, Amelli decided to print the complete text. Camillo Morelli (1910), confronted with a significantly longer text, the still unedited grammar by Ursus of Beneventum, opted for excerpts, and explained his decision to publish them as follows:

In massima parte sono Trattatelli già noti per altre fonti; e quel che c'è qua e di là di nuovo non è di gran valore. Ma il codice meritava già per la sua 'veneranda vetustas' di esser segnalato agli studiosi di discipline grammaticali; mag-

giore e miglior ragione di renderlo noto è poi l'utilità reale che esso ci può apportare per la critica dei testi (1910:287).

This, the opening paragraph of Morelli's article, encapsulates a number of assumptions. First, the manuscript, rather than the texts it contains, is the initial focus; secondly, the great age of the codex justifies bringing its contents to the attention of specialists, even if such novelties as they have to offer 'are of no great value'; but thirdly, and most tellingly, what the volume can offer for textual criticism is singled out as the most cogent argument for the publication of a study of its contents. In practice, however, Morelli deals more generously with the text than one might have anticipated, outlining its sources section by section so that the reader can piece it together for himself — after a fashion — by following up references to the appropriate parts of Donatus, Priscian, Pompeius, Isidore and other early writers, and despite his low regard for the author ("Ursus aggiunge anche, dicemmo, qualcosa di suo: che non è però molto notevole" [1910:290]) printing the original bits. For his part, Remigio Sabbadini (1903) outlines the contents of the then unpublished *Ars Ambrosiana* and prints its preface, but as for the rest, picks out primarily those passages which demonstrate the author's use of known authors. Lentini (1953a) proceeds along similar lines. After a few remarks on Hildericus, the author of a then unpublished grammar, he continues:

Ma qui intendo limitarmi a segnalare alcuni passi della nostra "ars" che, riportando i testi degli antichi grammatici, ci presentano una lezione più corretta o comunque interessante, ovvero ci permettono la ricostruzione della lezione originale (1953a:240).

The article itself consists of a list of passages borrowed from Late Latin grammars, arranged by source, with remarks on their textual affiliations based entirely upon the critical apparatus in Keil's editions (although the importance of taking into account the readings of manuscripts not accessible to Keil was by that time becoming increasingly recognised). Lentini had already published (1932, 1952) on other aspects of Hildericus's grammar; the edition he eventually brought out (1975) contains, not the complete text, but only extensive excerpts, most of them from identifiable sources. This practice is deplored by Holtz for the reason that it destroys the reader's sense of "le contenu pédagogique" (1974:76 n.2) — a consideration which reveals a totally different set of questions and priorities. This approach is by no means defunct, and as long as the establishing of a 'more accurate' text of the ancient grammarians is regarded as an important activ-

ity, articles excavating fragments borrowed from earlier writers, ignoring the context, will no doubt continue to appear (cf., for studies with varying degrees of awareness of the host text, Mariotti 1966; Barabino 1976; Munzi 1980; Shanzer 1984; Strati 1982, 1984; Taeger 1978; cf. also Kerlouégan 1978:88).

The tradition of publishing extracts, rather than complete editions, is still strong (apart from Lentini 1975, cf. Huygens 1954, Marsili 1954, O'Donnell 1976, Jeudy 1978a, 1990b). The justification given for this procedure naturally reveals the intellectual orientation of their authors. Huygens (1954), for example, who published extracts from a fuller version of Remigius of Auxerre's commentary on Priscian's *Institutio de nomine* than that published by De Marco (1952), explained:

Un certain nombre de scolies est omis ici, surtout parce qu'elles ne sont que des gloses proprement dites qui ne nous donnent aucune idée de "la culture antique de Remi d'Auxerre" (1952:339).

Even though he uses the distancing device of inverted commas for the phrase "la culture antique de Remi d'Auxerre", and ascribes it to Pierre Courcelle, Huygens assumes that his readers are primarily interested in Remigius's knowledge of ancient texts, and not, for instance, in his pedagogical technique or his understanding of linguistic phenomena.

Bengt Löfstedt, who has edited a number of early medieval grammars, rarely makes statements on their 'value', and indeed seldom comments on their contents, as opposed to their latinity; however, he does on one occasion go so far as to explain why the nineteenth-century scholar Hermann Hagen was in his view justified in publishing an edition of the grammar of Asper (Asporius, Asper Minor):

Obleich Keil darin recht hat, dass unser Asper kein sehr gelehrter Mann war, war eine Edition durchaus am Platze. *Erstens* handelt es sich um einen unserer ältesten grammatischen Texte insularer Herkunft... *Zweitens* haben wir überhaupt sehr wenige mittelalterliche Kommentare des Donatus Minor, und es lohnt sich, diejenigen, die überliefert sind, näher zu studieren (1976:132-133).

Why it might be worthwhile to study the surviving medieval commentaries on the *Ars minor* Löfstedt does not explain, and his motivation seems closer to the cataloguer's — "because it's there" — than to the more usual reaction of the historian of education or even the latinist. Indeed, Löfstedt is sometimes scathing about the linguistic competence of the authors he edits: "Malsachanus macht den Eindruck einer 'âme simple', die weder

Kenntnisse noch Scharfsinn genug besass, um die grammatischen Studien seiner Zeit zu fördern" (1965:156); and as for Smaragdus, Löfstedt devotes several pages to a list of his mistakes in order to show "wie leicht er in die Irre geht, wenn er grammatisches Neuland betritt" (CCCM 68:lxviii).

In O'Donnell (1976) the motivation has shifted. It is neither the sources of the text nor the transmission of Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae* that interests him, but Alcuin's working methods:

The texts of Priscian contained in the manuscripts are quite good and very close to the text in H. Keil's *Grammatici Latini*. The most interesting fact, however, is the structure of the work and the manner in which Alcuin excerpted Priscian (222).

With these comments, brief though they are, we glimpse preoccupations which are close to those of a historian of linguistics. It is significant that O'Donnell published largely in the field of late Antique and early medieval intellectual history, rather than in manuscript studies.

* * * * *

Gradually source-hunters shifted their attention away from the text of borrowed passages to the evidence the borrowings provided for the reading of the medieval author. *Quellenforschung*, the mainstay of the medieval latinist for most of the twentieth century, became obligatory for any would-be editor of an early medieval grammar: editions now regularly include not only an apparatus of variant readings, but also an *apparatus fontium* listing in summary form the source of all identifiable borrowings — a chore which may well have deterred potential editors. Why might one be interested in the sources of an early medieval grammar? By establishing which works were known to a given medieval writer at a given monastery and date, researchers hope to be able to make generalisations about the level of culture in, for example, seventh- and eighth-century Ireland (e.g. Herren 1981:119); ninth-century Ireland (Ó Cuív 1981:239); or Europe in the first half of the ninth century (Manitius 1912a:124). Given the relative paucity of information available in other domains in the pre-Carolingian period, grammar has become one of the most important hunting-grounds for such facts. The level of argumentation has become increasingly subtle, in part — though not exclusively — because of the more detailed information about the transmission of ancient grammars which is becoming available. Thus, whereas scholars early in the twentieth century tended to content themselves with recording the presence of a text in a particular library, more recent researchers have often attempted to identify which branch of the

transmission was involved (e.g. De Nonno 1979; Holtz 1981a; Dionisotti 1982; Law 1983:47-50; Biggs et al. 1990:xvii; Hofman 1992; Passalacqua this volume).

The information thus assembled has been applied in several ways. At the most basic level it can be used to help editors to make better informed decisions about the reliability of the manuscripts available to them, and to alert them to the existence of indirect witnesses to the text (e.g. Holtz 1971; 1978). Considering how much work has been done over the last couple of decades on the transmission of ancient grammars, it is disappointing that only one — that by Charisius — was included in Reynolds' survey of the transmission of classical texts.² The patterns of transmission tell us much about the pedagogical preferences of their readers, and may here and there reveal connections between reading preferences and the emergence of new genres (Law 1986a). Most commonly, however, such information is used as the basis for extrapolations about the level of culture in a given region.

3. *Grammars as Literary History and Evidence for Culture*

Many early medieval grammars are anonymous, and even in the case of those ascribed to a named author we are often ignorant of where and when they were written. From the very beginnings of research into early medieval grammars questions of authorship, date and localisation have therefore played a large part. Scholars of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, particularly those trained in the German tradition, contributed many painstaking analyses of the evidence for the external history of the composition of medieval grammars. The links with literary history can be seen particularly clearly in Manitius's *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters* (1911), where grammars are treated in exactly the same way as chronicles, epics, or lyric poetry. On the basis of *testimonia* — references in the grammar or elsewhere to, for example, the king in whose reign the grammar was written, or to the author's teacher — Manitius reasoned his way to as precise a dating and localisation as possible. Given the infrequent occurrence of autobiographical information in early medieval grammars, Manitius and his colleagues were sometimes tempted to attach disproportionate significance to feather-light evidence. To take one case, when attempting to date the anonymous *Ars Bernensis* Manitius interpreted a quotation mentioning one *Flaccus* as a reference to Alcuin, who was known at Charlemagne's court by the name of Flaccus, and proceeded on that basis to date the grammar to the early ninth century

(1911:468-469). In fact the passage in question comes from the grammar of Virgilius Maro Grammaticus, who was active toward the middle of the seventh century. As a *terminus post quem* this piece of evidence is far less significant than Manitius thought, serving only to place the grammar some time later than about 650.

The extent to which this approach dominated the study of medieval grammar in many quarters is apparent not only from the large number of articles devoted to these questions — Lehmann (1931, 1932) and Fickermann (1932, 1935) on the authorship of the *Ars Bonifacii*; Bianchi (1958) replying to Bethmann (1851 [sic! this enormous time-depth is not uncommon in questions of authenticity]) on the authenticity of the *Ars Donati quam Paulus Diaconus exposuit*; Law (1981) on the so-called *Ars Mal-sachani*; Law (1982b) on the methodology of dating and localising early medieval grammars — but also from the series of theses which emanated from the University of Chicago in the 1930s and 1940s under the supervision of Charles Beeson and Blanche Boyer: Kibre (1930), Cobbs (1937), Gebauer (1940), Lane (1941), Clausen (1948). Most of these works follow a uniform pattern: previous scholarship, authorship, *testimonia*, manuscripts and stemma, sources. There is no apparent interest in making use of either the grammar or its sources for anything beyond itself — as evidence for works known at a particular monastic centre, or the level of culture in the region generally, or the history of grammatical pedagogy or grammatical thought, nor even for the nature of the author's own latinity. In other words, the grammar is observed and described externally, as it were, without regard to the network of cultural and intellectual relations within which it was situated: it might just as well be a comedy or a chronicle. The approach is reminiscent of behavioral psychology, which dominated the American intellectual scene during the decades when these theses were produced.

The detachment and objectivity which these young Americans brought to their work in the years around the Second World War contrasts markedly with the more polemical stance adopted by a number of Europeans active since the war (but compare the acrimonious prewar exchange between Lehmann and Fickermann over the *Ars Bonifacii*, and the earlier but equally heated dispute between Lammert and Tolkiehn over the identity of the mysterious *Hieronymus grammaticus*). Over the last generation work of purely literary-historical type, focussing on the external history of texts, has sunk in esteem. Although still acknowledged by most scholars as

the prerequisite for any kind of history or interpretation (for how, after all, can one write about the development of linguistic thought in early medieval Spain without knowing which texts were written in Spain and what their relative chronology is?), such studies tend to be viewed (particularly in North America, though cf. e.g. Biggs et al. 1990; Dutton 1992) as 'arid' and 'old-fashioned'. This is reflected in the fact that articles on these issues now tend to invoke the broader question of 'level of culture' as their justification. Assessing the level of culture at a given monastic centre at a given date has become the professed motivation behind a great many studies of the transmission of texts, sources, and date and provenance. Thus, Barabino prefaces her otherwise very traditional study of quotations from Vergil in the *Ars Malsachani* with these words: "L'operetta... non è originale... ma costituisce un prezioso documento sulla cultura classica e sulla lingua latina dell'ambiente scolastico irlandese nell'alto medioevo" (1976:195-196). Increasingly (though by no means universally) a feeling is emerging that the 'bare facts' by themselves are of relatively little importance in their own right; what matters is how they relate to other facts. The network of relationships becomes the centre of attention.

'Level of culture' is a difficult notion to pin down, and all the more so since just below the surface lurks a value judgement: high or low, better or worse? The confident absolute assessments of the nineteenth century — civilised/primitive — are taboo in an atmosphere pervaded by relativism. The tendency among medievalists is to measure one culture against another, comparing the level of culture in seventh-century Ireland, for example, against that of the rest of Western Europe. The consequences are predictable. Even the allegedly remote, tranquil, dry-as-dust domain of medieval grammar can become an arena of intense chauvinism and ethnic rivalry. How easily literary history can slide in this direction may be seen in Lentini (1952). This article begins with a painstaking analysis of the historical evidence for the identity of the Hildericus who wrote the *Ars Ilderici*, there being three possible candidates. Further information is sought from the grammar itself and from other grammars from the same region, the area of Monte Cassino in southern Italy. Having established a connection with Monte Cassino, Lentini then traces links between the schools of Monte Cassino and Beneventum, and postulates the existence of a Lombard cultural zone: "Ci è dato di scorgere una peculiare estesa area culturale determinata non solo dal fattore politico e razziale, ma anche dal prestigio e dall'autorità del più grande degli scrittori longobardi" (1952:235). Hil-

dericus's grammar lacks any sign of influence, direct or indirect, from the Anglo-Saxon current which lay behind the Carolingian Renaissance, Lentini maintains, and he concludes: "La nostra *ars* ci si rivela dunque come singolare documento d'una tradizione vissuta e fiorita in Italia indipendentemente da ogni influsso d'oltralpe" (236). He then pleads for recognition of the Italian contribution to the Carolingian Renaissance, which he feels has been overshadowed by the reputation of the British Isles, "davvero 'troppo spesso' [echoing De Ghellinck] le Isole Britanniche siano state considerate l'unico asilo delle arti liberali" (237-238). Cultural apologetics or nationalist diatribe? The line is a fine one.

A second and equally instructive case is that of the anonymous grammars believed to be of Insular origin. A romanticised picture of Ireland as the sole repository of culture during the Dark Ages encouraged a tendency to ascribe unattributed grammars of the seventh and eighth centuries to Irish authors on the flimsiest of evidence, despite the fact that most of the grammarians known by name at this date were Anglo-Saxons. When the reasoning behind this procedure was questioned (Law 1982a, 1982b, 1984a) the tone of the reaction was in some quarters more that of injured national pride than of scholarly debate. Despite the fact that the French scholar Louis Holtz, an outsider in terms of national origin, had earlier written of fifth- and sixth-century Ireland "l'Irlande est à cette époque héroïque 'l'île des Saints' et a produit des ascètes et non des savants" (1977b:57), and stressed the importance of contact with the Continent for Irish Latin scholarship, what was intended as a challenge to circular reasoning was interpreted as an attempt to downplay Irish achievements. To learn to appreciate the contribution of each national/cultural/linguistic group to European culture, and the qualitative differences between their various interests and priorities, without imposing a value judgement upon them, is an urgent task confronting all present-day Europeans, not excepting historians of early medieval grammar.

4. *Grammars as Evidence for Latinity*

A modern teacher would not dream of using an eighth-century grammar in the classroom today, since it is so out of keeping with current pedagogical practice and our understanding of children's intellectual development. Such a work might still be able to teach us something about Latin, though, but what kind of Latin? In order to answer this question it is vital that we let the grammarians speak for themselves. That they tell us

nothing new about the Latin of the Classical period was apparent to classicists from the start. Medieval latinists, who might have been expected to take a greater interest in them, ignored them for a long while, presumably because the Latin that these works purported to teach was not that of their own day, but reflected what their authors found in the grammars of late Antiquity and in their religious reading. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that most editors felt obliged to 'correct' the orthography, and sometimes the grammar and syntax as well, of the medieval authors, thereby presenting a strangely distorted picture of both the language taught by the medieval grammarian, and his own usage. As scholars have come to take a greater interest in the dynamic and regionally varied nature of medieval Latin,³ they have come to realise the rich quarry of material which awaits them in medieval grammars. The pioneer in this field is the Swedish scholar Bengt Löfstedt, who in a number of publications (e.g. 1965, 1972a, 1979) drew upon grammars, along with other texts of the early medieval period, for information about the orthography, morphology, syntax and vocabulary current in different parts of Europe. The facts thus amassed are now being pressed into service as an additional localising criterion for works of uncertain provenance, in particular the problematical Virgilius Maro Grammaticus (Löfstedt 1981; 1982:110; Orchard 1987-88:182; but cf. Löfstedt's words of caution [1979:162]). This approach treats grammars as an 'unconscious' source; the fact that grammar is the subject-matter of these works is of little relevance, and indeed Löfstedt has written similar articles on a range of other texts. His profound knowledge of Latin usage and — dare one say it? — of 'correct' Latin style leads him to expect similar preoccupations on the part of the medieval grammarians he edits, and when he fails to find them his comments are unsympathetic (cf. p. 6f. above), recalling the disappointment of theory-oriented historians of linguistics reading these grammars. Wright (1982; 1983) draws heavily upon early medieval grammarians for their perceptions of the Latin of their own time in his attempt to assess the nature of 'Latin' and 'Romance' in the Carolingian era, as does Amsler (this volume).

In fact early medieval grammarians were sensitive to the contradictions in the doctrine of their Late Latin sources, and to the further discrepancies to be found in the usage of ecclesiastical authors. Their decisions as to which prescriptions to include and which to omit can give us some idea not only of their attitude to their sources, but also of the variety of Latin they deemed to be most valuable to their students (Law 1987). Coletti suggests

that it may be possible to extract a little information about pronunciation from grammatical terminology (1982:288, 299).

A question as yet hardly broached is that of the influence of the grammars. To what extent is their choice of forms reflected in the usage of succeeding generations? Norberg (1975-1976) points out that to a medieval writer brought up on Donatus, the archaic form *mis* would have appeared to be a stylistic variant of *mei*, and it is therefore wrong to regard its appearance in a medieval text as an archaism. He insists: "l'histoire du latin médiéval est... l'histoire de l'école médiévale" (63); "c'est de la nouvelle école qu'il faut partir si nous voulons comprendre le latin du Moyen Âge" (56; cf. Löfstedt's reply [1979]). A prerequisite for such research are editions which come as close as possible to letting the manuscripts speak for themselves, for after all it is in the form of manuscripts and not of tidied-up critical editions that their users encountered them. The trend in that direction in the edition of medieval literary texts⁴ is paralleled to some extent in a changing attitude to grammars. To take one example, how are we to trace the spread of such oddities as fifth-declension forms in *-ae*, such as *faciae*, if the editors of grammars and literary texts alike 'correct' them? Such research would necessarily begin on the local level: for example, are the orthographical peculiarities of (one or more of) the rich stock of grammatical texts from Freising also to be found in the writings of Freising authors or in manuscripts transcribed at Freising? From there one might be able to generalise on that difficult subject, the influence of teachers and textbooks, and to make better-founded statements about local linguistic peculiarities.⁵ A striking case is that of Bede, whose orthographical prescriptions are by no means always observed in the earliest manuscripts of his works (Lapidge 1991:32).

5. *Grammars and the History of Education and Literacy*

From an early date scholars observed the interest of early medieval grammars for the history of education. As the eminent French scholar Maurice Roger remarked, "Si les ouvrages de ce genre n'ont pas de valeur intrinsèque, ils présentent un réel intérêt pour l'histoire de l'enseignement grammatical au moyen âge" (1905b:vii).⁶ The outcome he envisaged was that romantic notions about the level of knowledge attained by medieval masters would give way to a more sober appraisal, in the way that he himself felt obliged to revise his opinion of Malsachanus's treatise downwards by comparison with Boniface, Alcuin and Bede on the one hand, and with

Hauréau's (1894) rhapsodizing on the other. In his classic *L'enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin* (1905a), long the standard work on early medieval education, Roger's fundamental point of orientation is explicitly stated — the teaching of classical literature. Grammar slips in as one of “les arts du Trivium qui seuls intéressent directement les lettres classiques” (321). It is what medieval scholars retained of ancient doctrine that interested Roger, not their own contribution, although he was well aware of their different goals. His account of the grammars is to a large extent source-based, but not to the exclusion of an often acute assessment of what they had to offer in their own right (e.g. Donatus and Priscian, 330-331; Boniface, 335-336; Alcuin, 336-341). Nevertheless, his constant focus on the grammars of late Antiquity as the yardstick by which to measure the rest tempted him into making value judgements (both positive and negative): “le traité de Tatwin ne présentait pas un réel progrès” (334); “le traité de Boniface présentait donc les qualités auxquelles on reconnaît un bon livre de classe” (336); and as for Alcuin, it is in Roger's view just as well that he made no attempt to reconcile Aristotle with Priscian: “les grammairiens du moyen âge sont là, pour montrer quel danger il y avait à ne pas établir, entre la logique et la grammaire, une ligne de démarcation très nette” (340; cf. Luhtala, this volume!). Historians of education, and in particular those primarily concerned with pedagogical technique, tend to gravitate readily to such evaluations owing to their concern for teaching practice and the utility of textbooks; but in the case of these medieval works, the situation in which they were designed to be employed differed so radically from our own that the value of such statements is itself questionable. We should always bear in mind the enormous difference between the pedagogical needs of a society where rote learning is the norm and our own.

Roger's eminent successor, Pierre Riché, avoids such judgements, but largely by dint of paying less attention to the grammars than Roger. In his earlier work, *Éducation et culture dans l'Occident barbare VIe-VIIIe siècles* (1962), he devotes particular attention to the organisation of schools, the role of Christianity in their activities, lay and clerical involvement, the upbringing of children and literacy, with ample documentation from the primary sources presented in footnotes. The content of instruction in individual subjects is less of a focus of interest. Significantly, when he asks of the *ars grammatica* in ‘Gaule romaine’ “à quoi correspond-elle exactement?” (238), the answer is in terms not of the content of the grammar-books attested there, but of the controversy over the survival of Latin as a

spoken language, and of the literary texts read in the course of study. For details of the content of the grammars the reader is referred (437) to Roger (1905a). Riché's second major work on medieval education (1979), although it separates the discussion of the curriculum from the historical evidence for schools and teachers, contains if anything less information on the grammars used during this period than the earlier book.

This predominantly French tradition of research into the history of early medieval education finds a worthy continuator in Louis Holtz. The introductions to his editions of medieval grammars show a growing concern for pedagogical issues - clarity and organisation of material, mnemonic features, use of metaphor to transform the level of the discussion, modernisation, Christianisation (*CCCM* 68:xxxv-lviii; compare too the emphasis on education in Holtz 1977a; 1981a; 1989; 1989/1990). But because it was his studies of the grammars which led him to take an interest in medieval education, his appreciation of their contents is correspondingly greater and his discussion is more detailed than either Roger's or Riché's.

Italian scholars too have taken a more than cursory interest in exploring the pedagogical value of the grammars (Lentini 1932, 1952; De Marco 1957, *CCSL* 133; Coletti 1982). In the English-speaking world the problem of literacy has attracted more attention than educational issues as such (e.g. McKitterick 1989, 1990; cf. Bayless, this volume); however, an interesting attempt to unite these two approaches has been made by Herren (1992), who integrates the history of grammar in the early British Isles into its educational context and the orality/literacy debate.

6. *Grammars as Physical Entities*

Paleographers and other manuscript specialists have approached early medieval grammars with a totally different set of questions in mind from those that we have been considering. For the most part they are not greatly interested in grammars as texts; rather, they have tended to look at them in relation to the codex, the physical object in which they have been transmitted to us. How many copies of the work exist? Where were they copied? What is the history of the codices in which they are contained? What other texts occur along with them? It is obvious that such questions are fundamental to anyone concerned with the external history of early medieval grammar, and remarks on the difficulty of carrying out research in this area in the absence of such basic spadework are frequent. Thus, Colette Jeudy's articles cataloguing the extant manuscripts of various ancient grammarians

— Phocas (1974a), Eutyches (1974b), Priscian's *Institutio de nomine* (1972) and *Partitiones* (1971) — Gibson's (1972), Passalacqua's (1978) and Ballaira's (1982) of Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae* (and see also Jeudy 1982a; 1984-85), and Holtz's monumental catalogue of Donatus manuscripts to ca 1100 (1981a) furnish us with an invaluable guide to the surviving manuscripts of those Late Latin grammars which were in circulation in the earlier Middle Ages, the centres which owned copies of these texts, and — to some extent — the other contents of the manuscripts. For the early medieval grammars themselves catalogues are not such an urgent need, for in most cases they survive in only a handful of manuscripts. Here it is usually the editors who compile lists of the manuscripts, especially in the case of the numerous editions published over the last twenty years in *Corpus Christianorum*, although the conventions of the series mean that their descriptions of the manuscripts are regrettably less complete than those to be found in the catalogues just mentioned. A few articles are, however, devoted to cataloguing the known copies of an early medieval grammar (e.g. Löfstedt 1976; Jeudy 1974b; 1977; 1982-1983). The discovery of a new copy of a previously known text may be the occasion for an article (e.g. Jeudy 1978b, 1979, 1982b; Löfstedt 1984, 1986; Neuhauser 1983), and a trip to a lesser-known manuscript collection may provide a rich haul of new material (Keil 1848; Kalinka 1894; Jeudy 1978a, 1982a, and cf. 1982-1983:181). Interestingly, these writers are the only ones who feel no need to justify their activities: there are no comments about the 'value' of early medieval grammars as 'witnesses' to this or that, and no signs of the inferiority complex which seems to afflict so many of the scholars who concern themselves with their content.

Such studies may provide the groundwork for an analysis of the transmission of a text (e.g. Beeson 1927; Holtz 1971, 1981a, 1986), or such an analysis may arise out of a separate project (e.g. Passalacqua, this volume, arising out of her edition of Priscian's *Institutiones de nomine* ⁷). Alternatively, a particular manuscript may offer so many points of interest that a researcher devotes an entire article to it (e.g. Negri 1959; Gavinelli 1985), perhaps stressing transmission and external history (e.g. Law 1979), or the place of the manuscript in the history of the text (Passalacqua 1988) or its interest for the history of education and culture (De Marco 1957; Holtz 1975), or for what it reveals of the intellectual biography of its compiler (Bischoff 1967[1950]). There is room for more work in this area, for by no means all the secrets of such complex manuscripts as Berne, Burgerbib-

liothek 207, St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 876 and 877, Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale IV A 34, or Oxford, Bodleian Library Add. C. 144, have been unlocked.

An area which has as yet hardly been touched is that of the visual presentation of grammatical texts. Layout is acknowledged to be a vitally important element in the design of modern textbooks. In the early Middle Ages different factors were at work, for it is likely that for the most part only the teachers had access to books, dictating portions to students to copy onto perishable media such as wax tablets for subsequent memorisation. In the case of the earliest (and briefest) grammatical works a student would study, notably Donatus's *Ars minor* and Priscian's *Institutio de nomine*, this procedure was no doubt very common, but in the case of the lengthy commentaries and more comprehensive of the elementary grammars it may well have been less frequent (although there is precedent in other parts of the world for the memorisation of very long grammars and even dictionaries). Just how the codices were used is a question which is increasingly attracting the interest of researchers concerned with the history of literacy (e.g. McKitterick 1989, 1990). Grammars, which are fundamental to an understanding of the acquisition of literacy during this period, have as yet barely been glanced at from this point of view (but cf. Holtz 1977c, 1984; Law, this volume). Layout may hold clues to problems of interest to historians of linguistics, such as shifts in ways of thinking about word structure (Law 1990; Bayless, this volume p.77).

As an offshoot of their work manuscript specialists often produce editions. Typically they prefer to pick out what they consider to be the most interesting passages, and they generally opt to print a diplomatic edition (i.e. one which reproduces the text of a particular manuscript as faithfully as possible, mistakes and all) to a full critical edition (i.e. one which compares all available copies in order to establish an idealised text which is as close as possible to what the author wrote — or intended to write). Diplomatic editions of grammar could be a particularly valuable resource to historians of education and linguistics, for medieval teachers and thinkers did not have idealised critical editions in their libraries. They had to make do with the actual copies at their disposal, complete with all the mistakes, misunderstandings and omissions they transmitted. The problems are vividly apparent in the fragmentary copy of Dynamius's grammar edited by Jeudy (this volume). When we first look at this text we are in much the same position as a medieval reader. What are we to make of a statement

such as “Hoc habent infinita, ideo non sunt aspirationes” (“Infinitives have this feature, and for this reason are not aspirations”, p.10)? If we compare this passage with its source, Priscian’s *Institutiones grammaticae*, to which Jeudy refers us, we find that the words *non sunt aspirationes* are a misreading of Priscian’s *non sunt separanda* “are not to be separated off” [sc. from verbs as a separate part of speech]. Other evidence of carelessness and misunderstanding is to be found, as when a list of diphthongs is rendered *AE aut EU OE* (“AE or EU OE” p.6), where the second diphthong in Dynamius’s list, *AU*, has been ‘corrected’ to *aut* “or”; or where the participle is said to derive tense (rather than case) from the noun (p.10). What sense did the medieval reader contrive to find in such passages? By wielding a light editorial pen Jeudy has allowed the text to speak for itself. Those scholars who are interested in the medieval reader’s response to the text are thereby enabled to use such an edition as source material.⁸

7. *Medieval Reception of the Grammars*

As was the case with literary history up until about twenty years ago, the focus of interest amongst those working on early medieval grammars has been largely the text itself and the context of its origin — its author and milieu. Its subsequent use has interested only a very few scholars — those concerned with the transmission of texts, those working on vernacular glossing, and source-hunters analyzing later texts. How contemporary and later readers of these texts actually made sense of their doctrine and applied it outside the immediate domain of grammar are areas of study which are just beginning to attract attention. Naturally occurrences of grammatical doctrine in philosophy, theology and biblical exegesis tend to be investigated by scholars primarily concerned with the host discipline. Specific instances of the use of grammar by Gildas and by exegetes has been investigated by Kerlouégan (1990), Poli (1984), and Lage Cotos (1992; cf. also Amsler 1990:180-181). The way in which Bede sought to subordinate the traditional teaching of grammar to scriptural exegesis has been a subject of intermittent interest for some time (Isola 1976; King 1979; Martin 1984; Clausi 1990). The use of grammar in early medieval theology and philosophy has been signalled by Jolivet (1966, 1977), Marenbon (1983) and Evans (1982). How the grammars of the eighth and ninth centuries were read by grammarians of the tenth and eleventh — what the historian of linguistics would like to know — is a subject which we are hardly able to begin to research as yet, for the basic prerequisite of printed editions with source apparatus is

still lacking for many important texts.

Glosses provide ample evidence for the reception of a text. But for the most part students of glosses have tended to focus upon vernacular glosses alone, ignoring any Latin glosses that might occur along with them; and to investigate them solely for the information they furnish about the phonology, morphology and lexis of the vernacular, without reference to the nature of the text in which they are found — rather like the fossil-hunter who ignores the strata in which his prize specimen is embedded. In a series of articles in *Études Celtiques* Lambert (1981, 1982, 1987a; and cf. also Lemoine 1986; 1989) has begun the work of analyzing both Celtic (Breton and Old Irish) and Latin glosses found in early Breton medieval grammatical manuscripts with a view to discovering how these Breton readers understood the grammars they studied:

Nous avons tenté ici de donner un éclairage différent à l'étude des gloses brittoniques, généralement étudiées uniquement pour ce qu'elles nous apprennent sur les langues brittoniques. Elles nous renseignent aussi sur les méthodes didactiques des latinistes de Bretagne et d'Armorique, sur leur façon d'enseigner le latin et de le commenter... La nouvelle approche que nous proposons ici est certainement celle qui se rapproche le plus de l'intention première de nos glossateurs; par contre-coup, cette approche est la seule qui nous permette de savoir "ce qu'ils voulaient dire", ce qui, on en conviendra, a des répercussions immanquables dans l'analyse linguistique des gloses (1987a:307).⁹

8. *Early Medieval Grammars and the History of Linguistics*

Although one might have expected historians of linguistics to have seen the possibilities of early medieval grammars long ago, this is far from the case. It is partly a question of training, partly a reflection of the relatively recent emergence of the history of linguistics as a discipline in its own right, but most of all a consequence of a line of reasoning which can be summarised thus: these grammars are totally unoriginal and therefore do not deserve our attention. Manitius's comment about Peter of Pisa's grammar is symptomatic of the attitude of his contemporaries and many of their successors: "Manches erscheint als selbständig, aber es fehlen uns wahrscheinlich nur die Quellen für die betreffenden Stücke" (1912b:178). That a source analysis does not exhaust the questions which may be asked of these grammars is an idea which comes hard' to those trained in this exacting discipline, and to those used to a more self-conscious kind of originality. Medieval scholars' well-known hostility to originality for its own sake should not be taken at face value. Rather, innovation was deliberately