

J. N. ADAMS: *The Regional Diversification of Latin 200 BC–AD 600*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2007. ISBN 978-0-521-88149-4. XIX, 828 pp. GBP 110.

One thing is conspicuous in the previous scholarship on the regional variation of Latin. Scholars who have studied the subject, especially from inscriptions, usually lacked understanding of either general linguistics or statistics, or both, even if they may have been excellent philologists and epigraphists. With his colossal new book, J. N. Adams (A.) now fixes this overall unsatisfactory state of affairs. The book starts with an important methodological introduction (1–36). The central question is not whether there was geographical variation in Latin, but how that could or can be traced in the written corpus of the highly standardized Latin language. As linguists well know, there is not a single documented language in the world that does not have social or regional variation. This observation makes it most unlikely that Latin would have been different from all other languages. But due to the heavy standardization of Latin, the question remains, whether regional variation can be detected in the written corpus of Latin, i.e. in the literature, in the inscriptions, in the papyri, in the ostraca, in the curse tablets.

A. brings forth innumerable observations on what cannot or what can be considered regional variation or diversification of Latin. The presentation of all Latin evidence is his main scope, and the book is accordingly well-documented. As the book is full of various observations, one can sometimes disagree on a detail or two, but due to A's exceptional expertise his argumentation normally seems absolutely convincing and can in any case never be ignored in future research.

The focus of the introduction is on definitions such as those of dialects and accents, standard varieties and standardization, isolation and archaisms and regions or areas of the Roman Empire. The main questions are listed as follows: 1) Is there satisfactory evidence for the regional diversification of Latin? 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, and 5) What attitudes to regional varieties can be identified? Did these influence the language in any way? The introduction ends with a research plan and observations on its limitations.

Chapters II and X deal with the republican and the imperial epigraphy, respectively. In Chapters III and IV explicit evidence on the volume's subject is chronologically discussed. Then follow chapters on Gaul, Spain, Italy, Africa and Britain (V–IX). A concluding chapter (XI) summarizes the results admirably.

The problems of literature as evidence for local variation cannot be ignored. The fact that the literary sources are based on manuscript tradition makes the appraisal of what the ancient authors actually wrote somewhat inaccurate. For instance, editors (cf. *tacite correxi* in older editions) may have "corrected" readings of mss. considered as "wrong" to more approved ones. We really can thus not be certain what the original variant of the dative ending *-ae* of the earliest writers Livius Andronicus, Plautus Ennius was (see p. 50).

A. tells us that he generally does not find imperial inscriptions satisfactory as evidence for the regional diversity of the language. The inscriptions are, however, discussed in detail; A. has chosen to exclude the Greek-speaking East from the data as he does not think that the area can be statistically informative as regards Latin and its local features. It is true, as A. emphasizes, that the same banal misspellings turn up right across the Empire.

The problems with statistics are obvious. Consider that the Roman Empire has N surviving inscriptions overall and a certain area P seems to have more of the linguistic feature x , which is a variant of the feature y , than appears to be the case in N . Thus we suspect that x is a dialectal or local feature at P . We start by counting the frequency of x at P and find that there really exists a fair number of x , and because of this we claim that x really is a local feature at P . We usually do not compare the result with the frequency of x in the whole N ; but even if we do, it is not statistically meaningful to count the frequency of x at P without at least counting the frequency of y , the variant of x , at P as well. However, even that would not give statistically reliable evidence about x being a local feature, since we should count the relation of x to y both at P and in N as a whole, to start with.

This still is not enough, however. Even if this comparative analysis is much more advanced as regards the possible results in detecting local variation, it still has a weakness, though it can give us hints that x is a local variant of y at P . However, as the survival of the archaeological material is not random, but depends on complex patterns that are affected by many factors at the same time, the odds should be tested with more refined methods. They could be tested, for example, with the Yule's Q that is based on the odds ratio and a symmetric measure taking on values between -1 and $+1$, where one implies perfect negative or positive association and zero no association.

Using the more simple comparative analysis (see above) A. is able to show severe weaknesses in the analyses of epigraphic data by previous scholars, especially by J. Herman and P. Gaeng. He focuses basically on the variation of e for i and b for v and gets ratios that can be considered significant. Thus it seems, for example, that the Latin in Africa (for the literary evidence, see p. 259–70) really differed from that in, for example, Gaul. Africa seems to have had a five-vowel system corresponding to that of Sardinia, where five long vowels merged with the corresponding short ones. Even the more simple comparative analysis of inscriptions seems thus to show that the merger of, for example, e for i had not taken place in Africa.

A. is very thorough in analyzing the details and he also reminds the reader about multi-causality although he sometimes rejects the possibility of it (p. 63). As it is, the same linguistic feature can have different origins. The reasons for one feature existing in P and the same feature in Q can be various (see for example e for i , p. 71, and the nominative plural $-as$, p. 675) and what in one place can be due to a language contact, can in another place be due to internal variation and diachronic change. The variation can also be very local, especially in places that are geographically difficult to access. A. concludes plausibly that "innovations are constantly taking place locally. It is as well to get away from the idea that regional features necessarily show up over extensive areas ..." (p. 701). On the other hand, if an object is said to be made in Rome, the inscription on it still may not represent a typical Roman variety at all, since the writer/cutter may have his origin elsewhere, see, for example, p. 69 on *CIL* I² 561 (= *ILLRP* 1197). The cist was evidently made in Rome but found at Praeneste and has a variety not typical of Rome: *Novios Plautios med Romai fecid. / Dindia Macolnia fileai dedit*. A. rejects the inscription as evidence of Praenestan local variety (*fileai*) on the grounds that it was made in Rome and both lines of the text are written by the same cutter.

I have here had the opportunity to highlight only some aspects of this extremely rich book. One cannot but admire the achievement and conclude that A.'s research has been carried out taking account of all existing sources and that it does not seem possible to find a piece of evidence not dealt with by A. In analyzing his sources A. does unveil the problematic nature of

inscriptions as evidence for local variation, but he also, e.g., discusses the question of whether a literary work can be placed geographically on internal linguistic evidence alone. The answer to the latter question is that this is possible, but only seldom and certainly not in a very accurate way.

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AXEL SCHÖNBERGER: *Die Ars maior des Aelius Donatus: Lateinischer Text und kommentierte deutsche Übersetzung einer antiken Latein Grammatik des 4. Jahrhunderts für den fortgeschrittenen Anfängerunterricht*. Bibliotheca Romanica et Latina 7. Valentia GmbH, Francofurti Moenani 2009. ISBN 978-3-936132-32-8. 422 S. EUR 198.

Donatus' two grammars, the *Ars minor* and *Ars maior*, are the most famous grammars of the Roman world. They were in continuous use up to the sixteenth century, and provided a model for a large number of other works well into the early modern period; the *Donatus minor* was one of the first books printed by Gutenberg. The *Ars minor*, designed for beginners, deals only with the parts of speech, in question-and-answer form, in eleven pages in Keil's edition. The *Ars maior*, a more advanced work, is divided into three books, the first dealing with items smaller than the word, the second with the parts of speech and the third with stylistic issues. The last section began to circulate as an independent stylistic manual in the Middle Ages, known as the *Barbarismus*. Thus, we are dealing with texts of enormous importance not only for the teaching of grammar but also for literary studies. To my knowledge, Schönberger's German translation of the *Ars maior* is the first translation of Donatus' more advanced grammar into any modern language. The author had already translated the *Ars minor* into German in 2008.

Schönberger points out that for centuries there was no need for translations since Donatus' Latin is quite straightforward, and students had a sufficient knowledge of Latin. Today, however, knowledge of Latin has declined, and therefore it is important to render these seminal texts of Western grammar more accessible to modern students. The book consists of a foreword, the Latin text and German translation, commentary to the text and the translation, and a bibliography. There are no indices. The Latin text is based on Keil's edition, with minor modifications (p. 338), and Keil's text is scanned in the Appendix. The more recent edition by Louis Holtz is protected by copyrights and could therefore not be used. A separate chapter, "Zur Begrifflichkeit und Definitionen", surveys the salient features of each section on the parts of speech.

Donatus' text requires interpretation and commentary for several reasons, one of them being its telegraphic brevity. His work is so concise that it can indeed be called a *compendium* (p. 337), and he is often content to introduce a grammatical concept by merely quoting one or two examples. Because of this, Donatus' grammars required commentary even in his own time. Servius wrote the first commentary on Donatus in the late fourth century and henceforth every generation of grammarians until the early modern age reworked this concise manual for their own ends or wrote commentaries on it. The work also requires explanation because of its many references to Classical literature, including names of gods, mythological figures, historical places and so on. Moreover, some ancient grammatical terms have since fallen out of use, and need to be explained. Such is the case with *epikoinon*, for instance. Here translating