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MOHL ON THE CHRONOLOGY OF POPULAR LATIN.

Introduction à la Chronologie du Latin Vulgaire, étude de Philologie Historique.
Par F. GEORGE MOHL, Lecteur à l'Université de Prague (Bouillon, Paris, 1899, 10 fr.).

THIS is a most interesting and important book. It appeals, in the first place, to all students of Latin as a language, and in the second, to all who are interested in tracing the historical influence of the Roman dominion upon the civilisation of Europe. And if its conclusions or even its general standpoint be made good—and the author has certainly 'rendered it extremely probable'—it marks an epoch, and it may be fairer to say that it creates one, in the whole study of Romance Philology. Even to one who can claim no special knowledge of this latter department it is clear that Dr. Mohl has completely overthrown the current conceptions of the way in which Latin broke up into the Romance tongues. We have generally assumed that Vulgar Latin—though we did not ask ourselves precisely what was meant by the phrase—being planted down in so many different countries, proceeded to 'convert itself, some time between, say, Marcus Aurelius and Charlemagne, into so many different languages. In the light of the criticism which Dr. Mohl has focussed upon various vague statements of this kind, there emerges for the first time a consistent and intelligible theory, or set of theories, which, whether they are finally accepted or not, can at least be rationally discussed. We are no longer beating the air, wrestling with impalpable generalities; but considering definite theses which can be tested, and either confirmed or modified by the ordinary methods of scientific philology. This is a quite enormous gain, as every one will feel who remembers the distressing vagueness on all chronological points of writers like Diez and Brachet¹; or the wise but not less disappointing silences of Meyer-Lübke's great Grammar. However much correction Dr. Mohl's essay may receive in details, and even if no one of his theses should be maintained in its present form—a result which I hardly think likely—he would still deserve our gratitude for the breadth of view, the learning, and the courage he has shown in grappling with a

Lernaeon tangle of problems. Other enquirers must follow the lines he has laid down, and his exploration will do a great deal to stimulate further research. *De l'audace, toujours de l'audace* is the only motto by which a road-maker can accomplish his task; and considering its magnitude, the reader will look leniently upon errors in particular points, and even upon an occasional lapse from sound methods of reasoning. When all these are pointed out and corrected the book still remains a great achievement.

The high-water mark of previous speculation is represented by Gröber's canons (*Archiv. Lat. Lex.* 1. p. 213), which were the first attempt to connect with Romance philology the different dates at which Latin was introduced by Roman conquest into the different provinces. The Romance languages, excluding Italian, fell into a kind of order of seniority, thus,

1. Sardinian.
2. Spanish.
3. Portuguese.
4. Catalanian.
5. Provençal.
6. French.
7. Romansch (Rhaeto-romanian).
8. Roumanian.

This order is still one of the most important conditions of the problem, but by no means the only one, as Gröber was inclined to assume. His doctrine formed a series of steps, of which the first was that the agreement of all these eight branches in any particular with Italian and Classical Latin proved that that particular form or use was common to Classical Latin and Vulgar Latin; the second, that agreement between all save Italian and Classical Latin proved that the form or use existed in Vulgar Latin at least as early² as 100 A.D., and so forth, until finally we arrived at elements common only to Sardinian and Spanish, and these, it was concluded, must have existed in Vulgar Latin as early² as 200 B.C.

It will be seen at once that this was an application of Schleicher's 'Stammbaumtheorie' in almost its crudest form, and was open to all the criticisms which have caused

¹ Bourciez's admirable *Précis de Phonétique Française* (New Edn. 1900) gives many valuable points, within a very small compass.

² Gröber writes 'as late as' ('belegt die Existenz einer Wortform bis nach 100 n. Chr.'). As Dr. Mohl's French phrase ('jusqu'à') is ambiguous, I have expressed what seems to me the more important aspect of the date.

that theory to disappear from our text-books of Philology: for example, we have absolutely no right to assume, without special evidence, that some word common to Sardinian and Spanish was not introduced into both either from Latin itself or some neighbouring form of it at some date far later than 200 B.C. This consideration alone was enough to bring Gröber's edifice to the ground; but even he left us to enquire what he precisely meant by Vulgar Latin, why he distinguished it so sharply from Classical Latin, and how far he meant to regard it as one and the same language all over the Roman world from 200 B.C. till 400 A.D. On these points there has been much cry and little wool; and even Dr. Mohl, in his opening chapters, does not altogether escape from the depressing atmosphere of unsupported generalities from which his book as a whole may be said to have delivered us. His main theses may be stated as follows:

1. Starting (p. 23) from the principle laid down by Meyer-Lübke that Vulgar Latin was (at one time) an actual single spoken language and that dialectic variations within it (during that time) must not be assumed except where the evidence is conclusive, Dr. Mohl ends (p. 276 ff.) by enumerating several such variations which he regards as proved, e.g. 'en Afrique, *si nos souvenirs sont exacts*,¹ il n'y a pas d'exemples de la réduction' of *au* to *o*.

2. The origin of this language is not to be sought in any of the Provinces, but in the Latin spoken in Italy generally, i.e. the language which resulted from the gradual superimposition of Latin, especially after 89 B.C., upon all the tribes of the peninsula, who till Latin reached them had been speaking different languages,—Etruscan, Celtic, Venetic, Greek, Messapian, as well as the Italic dialects in the strict sense—Oscan, Umbrian, Volscian, and the rest.

This resultant language which we may call Italicised Latin or 'Italo-Latin,' differed in many respects from the language of the cultured class at Rome, but it was by no means unintelligible to them; there was no break in continuity between the two. The fusion is admirably illustrated (p. 50) by the fact that Augustus, born at the Volscian Velitrae, always declined *domus*

with a good Volscian Genitive, *domos* (Suet. *Oet.* 87), and by other hardly less striking features.² And I may add that actual examples of insc. in this Italicised Latin may be found appended to nearly every section of my 'Italic Dialects.'³

3. It follows that the peculiarities of this pro-ethnic Romance are all ancient and must be studied in their historical connexion with the peculiarities of the Dialects from which they were introduced into Latin.

Thus the palatalisation of the gutturals in Romance is put into fruitful connexion with the partial appearance of the same phenomenon in Umbrian and S. Oscan:—and I should add Marsian (*Marsi* = pure Lat. *Martii*) Paelignian (or N. Oscan),⁴ and also Etruscan to the list. And some striking divergences between the Romance languages are explained as due to changes in the parent Italo-Latin which did not spread to particular areas of Romance. Thus (p. 27) the It.-Lat. forms *illui*, *iluius*, and their derivatives are strange to Spain because *huius*, *hui(c)* on the pattern of which they were formed had gone out of use with all other cases of *hic* in the greater part of Spain at an early date. Seneca and Lucan do not use *hic*, but *iste* in its place.

But this is only half of the story. Perhaps the most important of all Dr. Mohl's conclusions is the following.

4. Upon this popular stratum of spoken, colloquial Italo-Latin, was continually imposed the usage (in vocabulary, morphology, and idiom) of literary Latin. The civil authorities, the military authorities, the schools endowed by government, and last but not least the Church, all enforced upon the provinces the standard literary idiom,

² Mohl hesitates to recognise non-Latin Nominatives in *Samnis*, *Arpinas*, etc. (Brugmann, *Grundr.* i.¹ p. 551). But Brugmann seems to me certainly right, though he has removed the remark from his second edition. The whole formation in *-ti* is non-Latin, as I hope to show in a forthcoming paper on the Ethnica of Italy.

³ They were so frequent that, with a few similar documents, they seemed to call for a special numeration, see the 'Notes' (i-xliii) *passim*.

⁴ But not the Latin of the *Duenos*-insc., as to which Dr. Mohl seems under some strange delusion (pp. 304-5). The sign *o* (i.e. *c* in retrograde script) appears only in *uirco*, *cosmis*, *pacari*, *feced*; and it is probable in *feced*, possible in *pacari* that we should read *k* instead of *c*; *k* occurs nowhere else. What could be further from the facts than to say that we have here a distinction of '*k* velaire, *c* palatal'?

¹ The italics are mine. The phrase recurs on p. 246; Dr. Mohl avows rather frankly the weak joints in his armour.

which never died out, and which remained in living contact with colloquial speech until the break-up of the Empire.¹ Then, but not till then, the old bond was loosed, and the countries of Europe, with their languages, plunged into the isolation of the Middle Ages.

The results of this perpetual fusion between a standard language and popular idiom are of vital importance to Philology. Nowhere else have we such ocular demonstration of an external interference with Phonetic change, and nowhere was the light it throws on such changes more urgently needed. Thus we see how it was that Fr. *chose* came by its *ch*. Had it sprung directly from *cōsa*, the colloquial Italo-Latin form of the Republic, it would have retained its *c* as much as *coŭter* from *constare* or *col* from *collum*; as it was, the schools inculcated *causa* as the correct pronunciation and so exposed the word to the change which made *carum* into *cher*, *cambiare* into *changer*. But the word *causer* again, from *causari*, shows a new introduction of a literary form at a far later epoch. Mohl declares with literal truth, 'there was no epoch at which a literary form could not pass directly into colloquial language.' The attractive explanation (p. 248) of the curious prohibitive Infinitive (Fr. *ne pas fumer*, Ital. *non dimenticarsi*, etc.) as derived from the (Oblique) Impf. Subjunctive of Classical Latin (cf. Roum. *nu lăudă* 'ne lauda,' beside *nu lăudareți* 'ne laudate') is another more recondite example of the same principle.² In just the same way, at a far earlier epoch, the influence of Greek schoolmasters gave to cultured Latin the Nom. in *-us* (identical in sound with Gr. *-ος* of the *κῶν*) in place of the mere *-o* to which the orig. *-os* had sunk in spoken Latin by 150 B.C. On this long-debated point I venture to think Dr. Mohl (p. 183 ff.) has said the last word.

Finally 5. Peculiarities due to the ancient dialects of Italy, from which Italo-Latin received its native colour, are fairly frequent in Italian and its modern dialects; (e.g., the complete loss of

final *-t* (p. 254); Italian has no *-t* form like Fr. *parle-t-il*; contrast, e.g. *come sta ella?*); but they occur only sporadically elsewhere; more often in Sardinian and Spanish than in the younger branches (pp. 55, 117, 254 ff.).

6. The result of these principles is to establish four great periods in the history of Latin (Ch. vi.):

(a) The formation of the Italic Dialects. This lasted down to the Hannibalic War in some parts of Italy; down to Sulla in others.

(b) The Constitution of the general Latin of Italy (Italo-Latin, as I suggest it be called). From Hannibal, or Sulla, down to Augustus and later. It is to this period that Mohl refers, with great probability, some of the most striking changes in Romance, such as the palatalisation of the gutturals.³

(c) The Unification of Imperial Vulgar⁴ Latin; from the Caesars to the beginning of the fourth century.

(d) The Decomposition of Imperial Vulgar Latin. From the beginning of the fourth century (e.g., 329 A.D.⁵ when Constantine moved to Constantinople) to the fall of the Empire and later.

I have happily but little room left for the thankless task of pointing out defects. In the first half of the book, and sometimes later, Dr. Mohl gives far too few examples of his general statements; for instance one would gladly sacrifice many pages of graceful rhetoric for half-a-dozen insec. to illustrate the essential unity of Imperial Latin (p. 39); and at least one or two of the Romance treatment of German *ki, ke* as distinct from Latin *ci, ce* (p. 291). The points seem to be admitted and the reader could probably hunt examples elsewhere, if he had time; but it is really not his share of the work. Akin to this is the natural but fatal weakness of unverified references. On p. 113 we are astonished to learn 'd'après le témoignage' of Livy (ix. 36), that the Roman youth of the fifth century B.C. was regularly trained in Etruscan. Livy expressly rejects this theory and

¹ I do not think Dr. Mohl quotes the very important remark of Suetonius (c. 88) about Augustus' bad spelling.

² Mohl does not explicitly mention the point which seems to me to place this explanation almost beyond doubt, namely that this Inf. is especially regular in quasi-public documents, street-warnings and the like; where the legal Impf. Subj. in Latin (e.g. in *Senatus Consulta*) was regular.

³ I do not wish to be understood as accepting more than the general principle of this theory. For example (p. 311) the spelling *Iiovina* is the merest freak of priestly etymology, as I have shown in *Ital. Dial.* p. 405 footn.

⁴ The title is perfectly sound, in spite of the curious (and suggestive) juxtaposition.

⁵ So Mohl. On the precise date see Bury, in his Edition of Gibbon, II. 157, footn. 65.

gives a convincing reason for so doing. The same author in xxv. 3 makes no reference whatever to the subject in hand on p. 96. The reference to Gellius 11. 7. 5 on p. 62 does not quite justify the 'témoignage formel' ascribed to him that 'Etruscan was still generally spoken in the country.' One might refer to 'Manx or Anglo-Saxon' to-day in precisely the same way as Gellius does to 'Etruscan and Gallic.' The authority from whom the statement as to Ovid is taken on p. 177 must have said something more intelligible than that '*gaudia* pour *gaudium* apparait régulièrement à l'épélision,' seeing that no Case of *gaudium* could appear at any other place in either of the metres that Ovid uses, and probably none appears at all. A reference to an article (Idg. Forsch. 2, 157), of the present writer's to which Dr. Mohl alludes on p. 320 would have supplied him with fresh evidence for several of his strongest contentions (e.g., in regard to *Digentia*) and at the same time have saved him from an unhappy confusion between the real Sabine change of *d* to *l*, and the (utterly fictitious) 'change of *l* to *d*,' which Dr. Postgate disposed of long ago. It would be worse than absurd to complain that a scholar who has so thoroughly mastered Von Planta's great Grammar of the Italic Dialects felt it unnecessary to secure access to any other recent edition of their remains: but I may be pardoned for rejoicing that on very many chronological points Dr. Mohl's conclusions tally closely with those of my own edition, and that on others the scrutiny of the epigraphic and alphabetic data which I attempted throughout will furnish him with a good deal of definite chronological evidence whose absence he more than once deplores (e.g. p. 106). There too he will find deliverance from the phantom form '*aurunkud*' (not, as he tacitly emends (p. 102), '*aurunkad*') which was never anything but a false conjecture as to the reading of a coin of Naples (I. D. no. 145). Into other points of this nature I will not enter; but I should

perhaps note that Beloch's *Italischer Bund unter Römischer Hegemonie* supplies many valuable data which Dr. Mohl had not yet laid under contribution.

Here and there Dr. Mohl evinces a certain laxity in the handling of phonetic questions which betrays a pupil of the light-hearted Bréal. He conjectures (p. 253), that a form **plusiores* defied rhotacism in the first syllable because '**plurores* faisait difficulté'; why, pray, did not *maerores* from **maesores* (cf. *maestus*) do the same? And there is a painful obscurity about the alleged 'utilisation' of the dialectal doublets mentioned on p. 273. Such slips, however, are exceptional; in the essay as a whole the reader will recognise with gratitude the soundness of the author's method in complex questions of Phonology. It could not indeed be otherwise; for without the stricter canons of the Neugrammatiker no such book could have been even conceived. Most of the problems with which it wrestles were, in the days of Corssen, no problems at all. How could any weary mortal be asked to vex himself with the chronology of Grammar when it was well understood that any odd sound might become any other odd sound in any odd form in any odd language at any odd moment it chose?

Dr. Mohl has given us a typical and exemplary picture of a language, the Imperial Vulgar Latin, in growth, in being, and in decay, a study of the highest value for science and for education. Reams of generalities on the Theory of Language will teach us far less; and his Essay deserves a most respectful and cordial welcome.

R. S. CONWAY.

CARDIFF, Oct. 3, 1902.

[The delay in the appearance of a notice of Mr. Mohl's book is due to a misapprehension for which Prof. Conway is in no way responsible.—Ed. C.R.]

BRIEFER NOTICES.

Hippocratis Opera quae feruntur. Vol. II. Ex codicibus Italicis edidit HUGO KUEHLEWEIN (Bibl. script. Graec. et Rom. Teubn.). Lipsiae 1902. Pp. xvi. 279. Mk. 5.

It were ungracious to complain of the devotion of the time and toil of the editor of this

new text of Hippocrates, and unkind to draw attention too querulously to the date (1895) of the first volume of his *opus aeternum*. Of the first volume, as well as of the intention of the Editor, and of the sources upon which he would rely, I gave a brief account in the *Classical Review* in 1897 (Vol. xi. p. 162); I have now only