

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL  
WORKSHOP ON  
COMPUTATIONAL LATIN  
DIALECTOLOGY



7<sup>th</sup> July – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Conference Room  
Hungarian Research Centre for Linguistics (HRCL)  
Benczúr utca 33  
1068 Budapest  
Hungary



## PROGRAMME

*Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> July*

09:00–09:15 Opening remarks (CSER A. — BAKRÓ-NAGY M.)

FIRST SESSION (chair: ODRÓBINA L.)

09:15 The transformation of the vowel system in Gallic Latin as evidenced in inscriptions, and the problem of dialectal positioning of Roman Gaul (ADAMIK B.)

09:50 The use of <Y> in the Latin Inscriptions of the Roman Empire (TANTIMONACO, S.)

10:25 *Sic iace[at] / +++ micto*: A performative formula in a curse tablet from ancient *Centum Prata* at Lake Zürich (URBANOVA, D.)

11:00–11:30 Coffee break

SECOND SESSION (chair: CSER A.)

11:30 Latin in Egypt – The linguistic data in wider context (HONZL, J.)

12:05 Some remarks on the Latin of the ostraca of Didymoi (BARCHI, S.)

12:40 *Varios habent sonos*. On the merger of the front and back vowels in Latin inscriptions from Rome (BC 250 – AD 600) (PAPINI, A.)

13:30–15:00 Lunch break

THIRD SESSION (chair: ADAMIK B.)

- 15:00 New developments in the Computerized Historical Linguistic Database of the Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age (FERENCZI Zs.)
- 15:25 Did address influence whether gods answered prayers? Vulgar Latin names of deities in the Roman Empire (VÁGÁSI T.)
- 15:50 Substandard linguistic phenomena in the *Tabulae Pompeianae Sulpiciorum* (NEMES Sz.)

Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> July

FIRST SESSION (chair: ADAMIK T.)

- 09:00 Expressing pain from the Antiquities to the Middle Ages: The role of interjection *heu* as a Part of Speech and in Latin epigraphy (COTUGNO, F.)
- 09:35 The Latin redundant forms (epigraphic data) (KUNČER, D.)
- 10:10 Vulgar and Classical Latin in Africa: Is labdacism an africanism? (BOHACSEK D.)

10:45–11:15 Coffee break

SECOND SESSION (chair: ITTZÉS M.)

- 11:15 Lat. *ploxenum* reconsidered (SIMON Zs.)
- 11:50 The transformation of the gender system in Late Latin as evidenced by inscriptions (SZLOVICSÁK B.)
- 12:25 Copper and iron, or Stars in the darkness? Possible interpretations of a gold lamella (BARTA A.)
- 13:00–13:10 Closing remarks (BAKRÓ-NAGY M. — ADAMIK B.)

OPENING REMARKS – 7<sup>th</sup> July, 09:00–09:15

CSER András (Director, IHLUS<sup>1</sup>, HRCL, Budapest)

BAKRÓ-NAGY Marianne (IHLUS, HRCL, Budapest)

FIRST SESSION – 7<sup>th</sup> July, 09:15–11:00

*Chair:* ODRÓBINA László (University of Szeged)

ADAMIK Béla (RGLHLD<sup>2</sup>, HRCL, Budapest)

**The transformation of the vowel system in Gallic Latin as evidenced in inscriptions, and the problem of dialectal positioning of Roman Gaul**

Although Adams (2007) has already discussed some of the (mainly lexical) regional features of Gallic Latin through the analysis of non-epigraphic corpora, Herman's work (1983 = 1990) continues to be decisive for the linguistic, dialectological characterization of the Gallic Latin sound system as evidenced in inscriptions.

Herman (1983 = 1990: 158-159), with the intention of exploring the intrinsic features of late Gallic Latin language (and at the same time summarizing the results of his earlier research), described the specific features of the area's sound system as follows. In the Christian period, Gaul was characterized by mobile vocalism and stable consonantism.

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<sup>1</sup> IHLUS = Institute of Historical Linguistics and Uralic Studies

<sup>2</sup> RGLHLD = Research Group for Latin Historical Linguistics and Dialectology

In the development of vocalism, particularly with regard to the merger of *ī* and *ē*, Gaul was more advanced than the other provinces, but the fusion of *ī* and *ō* was also occurring at the expected frequency. Gaul also outperformed the other Western provinces in that these vowel mergers (according to the general frequency of the vowels in question) occurred in equal proportions in stressed and unstressed syllables, whereas in other provinces the stressed syllable continued to resist these mergers. Concerning the emergence of preroman vocalism, Gaul overtook Italy itself (including Rome), where only Italy's *Regio X* (Aquileia and its close vicinity) could keep pace with it. As far as conservative consonantism is concerned, only negative statements can be made, such as that the so-called *b-v* merger, which is so common in Rome, southern Italy, Calabria, and Dalmatia, does not exist in Gaul (“pratiquement absente”).

Since the provinces that Herman included in his analysis are well-processed in the LLDB-database, I aimed to review Herman's conclusions and, where necessary, supplement and revise them. In addition to the four Gallic provinces (Aquitania, Belgica, Lugudunensis and Narbonensis), I included Venetia et Histria (*Regio X*) from northern Italy, Apulia et Calabria (*Regio II*) from southern Italy, the city of Rome from central Italy, Dalmatia from Illyricum and Lusitania from Spain. I also included the two Germanic provinces, Germania Inferior and Germania Superior, with the question of whether or not these provinces (co-administered with Belgica for financial administration) belong dialectologically to the Gallic provinces. Furthermore, since Herman treated Gaul as a substantially homogeneous dialectological area and thus compared Gaul's developmental trends to other areas, I wish to examine whether there are internal territorial differences between the four Gallic provinces in the development of vocalism.

Preliminary results from this study suggest that, with respect to the general tendencies of large linguistic subsystems (such as vocalism and consonantism), the four Gallic and even the two Germanic provinces can be dialectologically grouped in a manner clearly distinguishable from the development tendencies of the other selected control provinces, roughly the way Herman stated. Fine-grained structural analysis, however, that includes a detailed examination of the E/I to O/U ratios and of the incidence of these confusions in stressed and unstressed syllables, can reveal the territorial and/or chronological differences in the development of the four Gallic provinces with regard to vocalism, especially regarding the course of vowel mergers.

#### **References:**

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- Adams, J. N.: *The Regional Diversification of Latin 200 BC–AD 600.* Cambridge 2007.

Silvia TANTIMONACO (University of Lisbon)

### **The use of <Y> in the Latin Inscriptions of the Roman Empire**

Letter Y was added to the Latin alphabet in order to transcribe Greek borrowings which included the sound [y]. As such, this letter is frequently attested in the Latin inscriptions of the Roman Empire. However, some deviant usages of Y can be observed as well, which have not been the object of any systematic investigation so far: (1) the replacement of Y by means of I or V in terms of a Greek

origin (Hellenisms); (2) the equivocal use of Y in Hellenisms; (3) the presence of Y in other foreignisms; (4) the presence of Y in Latin terms. Special attention will be paid in this paper to misspellings belonging to groups (1) and (4), which will be examined in both diachronic and diatopic perspective by using the informatic tools of the *Computerized Historical Linguistic Database of Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age* (lldb.elte.hu/en). The aim of this study is to provide an answer to the following question: Do the above-quoted spellings have a mere graphic explanation or do they also have a plausible phonetic background?

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Daniela URBANOVÁ (Masaryk University Brno)

***Sic iace[at] / +++ micto: A performative formula in a curse tablet from ancient *Centum Prata* at Lake Zürich***

Five lead curse tablets were found in the remains of a Gallo-Roman sanctuary complex, during archaeological excavations conducted in 2009–2013 at Kempraten (Rom. *Centum Prata*) at the shore of Lake Zürich in the municipality of Rapperswil-Jona. One of these tablets (DTK 1), fashioned in the shape of a *tabula ansata*, found in 2009 and published as an *editio princeps* in 2015, contains a prayer for justice directed to *Mater Magna*. In this contribution a new reading of the tablet's simile-formula and new interpretation supported by the data available in the Computerized Historical Linguistic Database of Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age are provided and compared with other explicit mentions of depositions of curse tablets in Graeco-Roman sanctuaries.

**References:**

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Franek, J. – Urbanová, D.: ‘As Isis Loved Osiris, So Let Matrona Love Theodoros...’ Sympathetic Magic and Similia Similibus Formulae in Greek and Latin Curse Tablets II. *Philologia Classica* 14, 2, 2019, 177–207.

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COFFEE BREAK – 7<sup>th</sup> July, 11:00–11:30

SECOND SESSION – 7<sup>th</sup> July, 11:30–13:15

*Chair:* CSER András (Director, IHLUS, HRCL, Budapest)

Jiří HONZL (Charles University, Prague; National Museum, Prague)

### **Latin in Egypt – The linguistic data in wider context**

Egypt always stood on the very margin of the Latin speaking world. Although Latin was attested there from at least 116 BCE (CIL I, 2937a), it was properly introduced into everyday use only after the definitive conquest of the Ptolemaic Kingdom by Caesar Octavianus in 30 BCE. Even after that, the use of Latin was in overall rare and mostly associated with specific social groups (e.g. the army, highest levels of administrative) and occasions (e.g. the field of law). It is estimated that Latin texts represent only a few percent of the mass of textual evidence recovered from the period, during which Egypt was part of the Roman and later the Byzantine Empire. From more than 1400 texts containing at least some Latin features, there are only several hundred Latin inscriptions, which fall into the scope of the Computerized Historical Linguistic Database of Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age. The spatial, chronological, and social distribution of Latin inscriptions in Egypt is very uneven. Remarkably, their typology is dominated by visitors' graffiti, followed in descending order by funerary inscriptions, various dedications and building inscriptions. The specific context of the usage of Latin has its impact also on the character of collected linguistic data as a whole.

In this paper, these linguistic data are confronted with other contextual aspects of the corpus of Latin texts from

Egypt, which were analysed by the author in course of the research carried out as part of his dissertation project. The main focus of this paper are especially the aforementioned spatial, chronological and social distributions. Confrontation of the linguistic and various other sets of data allows us to better understand the inner structure of the former, and the background of linguistic development of Latin language, as it was attested in inscriptions from Egypt. It also brings forth new pieces of evidence about the use of Latin and its evolution in the Roman Egypt.

### **References:**

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Serena BARCHI (University of Pisa)

### **Some remarks on the Latin of the ostraca of Didymoi**

Latin papyri and ostraca, as is known, deserve a particular attention for the reconstruction of Vulgar Latin (cf. e.g. Campanile 1971; Adams 1977, 2013; Fournet 2009). This notwithstanding, a systematic analysis providing a synopsis of the characteristics of such texts, which are scattered in different editions, is still needed (cf. Adamik 2019). However, databases such as papyri.info (<http://papyri.info>) and HGV (<https://aquila.zaw.uni-heidelberg.de>) constitute a precious tool for the recognition of Latin texts written on papyrus and ostracon.

This paper will focus on a group of ostraca from Didymoi, in the Eastern Egyptian desert, edited by H. Cuvigny (*O. Did.*). This corpus is composed of approximately 470 texts,

most of which are in Greek. Latin texts are overall 49, distributed in the following textual typologies: 2 official inscriptions, 4 administrative documents, 31 *instrumenta inscripta* and 12 private letters. Although such Latin texts, especially private letters, contain many non-Classical forms and Latin-Greek interference phenomena, they have not received much attention so far. Therefore, an overall analysis is still needed, and their recent annotation within the LLDB (<http://lldb.elte.hu>) is an essential instrument in this regard.

After a general overview on the history of Roman settlements in the Eastern desert, I will dwell especially on the analysis of the 12 Latin private letters from Didymoi, which contain the most interesting phenomena. Each letter will be analyzed by paying attention to different elements, namely (1) phonological processes which are very spread in these texts, such as epenthesis and anaptyxis within the *muta cum liquida* cluster (e.g. FRATERI, MAGISTERI, SCIRIBE); (2) morpho-syntactic phenomena such as the *appositio partitiva* (e.g. PALMVLAS MATIV instead of *palmularum matium*), which is common in Rustius Barbarus' epistolary as well; (3) Greek influence on Latin, which emerges at different levels of analysis, i.e. in morphology and morphophonology (cf. the dative TARVLA for *Tarulae* and the second declension nominative ending -IS for *-ius*), in syntactic calques (cf. the construction SALVTARE + dat., which reflects the construction of χαίρειν, or the use of SVPRA instead of DE to introduce the topic, which calques Greek ὑπέρο), in lexicon (cf. ESABARIO, which is probably an adaptation of Greek σαμβάριον / σανδάριον), as well as in the *ductus* of Latin letters. Finally, these data will be further compared with those emerging from other corpora edited in CPL and CEL, some of which have been recorded in the LLDB and CLaSES (<http://classes-latin-linguistics.fileli.unipi.it>) (cf. Barchi 2016).

## References:

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Alessandro PAPINI (Ghent University)

### ***Varios habent sonos. On the merger of the front and back vowels in Latin inscriptions from Rome (BC 250 – AD 600)***

This paper aims at investigating the sociolinguistic dynamics that characterised the merger of the “Classical” Latin mid long and short high vowels (that is, /eː, i/ and /oː, u/) into the closed vowels /e/ and /o/ that appear in most of the

Romance Languages (cf. ADAMS 2013 and LOPORCARO 2015). To do so, I have performed a detailed qualitative, quantitative (and statistical) analysis of all the tokens which pertain to both the <e>/<i> and the <o>/<u> spelling variation, as appearing in a sociolinguistically relevant corpus of ca. 7.000 inscriptions from the city of Rome. For these tokens may bear testimony for an anticipation of these two mergers already in the vowel system of the so-called “spoken” Latin. All the inscriptions considered in this study have been grouped in six different periods according to their dating: 1) the “mid-Republic” (ca. BCE 250 – ca. BCE 120), 2) the “late Republic” (ca. BCE 119 – ca. BCE 1), 3) the “early Empire” (ca. CE 1 – ca. CE 150), 4) “the mid Empire” (ca. CE 151 – ca. CE 300), 5) “the late Empire” (ca. CE 301 – ca. CE 450) and 6) the “Christian period” (ca. CE 451 – ca. CE 600). Such a periodisation aims at mirroring the most important turning points which emphasised the (sociolinguistic) history of the Latin Language, from the so-called “Old Latin” period, up to the “Christian era” (cf. MANCINI 2005, CLACKSON 2011, ADAMS 2011 and ADAMIK 2015). In order to work with as coherent a corpus as possible, all inscriptions included in each period have been further divided into three sociolinguistic groups, namely “formal” (e.g. *tituli honorary* and *tituli sacri publici*), “informal” (e.g. private funerary inscriptions) and “diaphasically low” texts, such as *instrumenta inscripta* and *tabellae defixionum* (cf. MANCINI 2012; 2014 and PAPINI in prep.).

The obtained results may shed new light on several problems that challenge the study of the Latin vowel system during the so-called “Latin-Romance” transition (HERMAN 2000). First, they may help better defining the relative chronology of the two vowel mergers which were just mentioned (that is, /e:/, i/ > /e/ and /o:/, u/ > /o/). Second, they may illustrate that both these two mergers actually

evolved in the form of a “change from below” (LABOV 1994).

### References:

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LUNCH BREAK – 7<sup>th</sup> July, 13:30–15:00



THIRD SESSION – 7<sup>th</sup> July, 15:00–16:15

*Chair:* ADAMIK Béla (RGLHLD, HRCL, Budapest)

FERENCZI Zsanett ('Sipőcz és Ferenczi' Ltd.)

### **New developments in the Computerized Historical Linguistic Database of the Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age**

Many new functions have been built and developed for the Historical Linguistic Database of Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age in the last few years. These new developments also affect the database and hence, facilitate the work of data collectors. There are some major changes that are more prominent to the every-day user of the database, such as the linking of inscriptions between LLDB and EDCS, and the one-click lookup of data forms that share the same bibliography, while minor changes include scripts that support the automatic correction of anomalies, which would be tedious and time-consuming without the help of such scripts and queries.

VÁGÁSI Tünde (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

### **Did address influence whether gods answered prayers? Vulgar Latin names of deities in the Roman Empire**

This lecture offers a linguistic analysis of votive texts with particular reference to their use of and variation in Latin. The aim of the linguistic analysis is to identify linguistic variation in the context of votive texts. On those votive inscriptions which contained a request, precise wording was considered crucial for the request to reach the gods. Therefore,

schematic, formulaic wording is common. The epigraphic corpus under study shows various Vulgar Latin traits. The incorporation of non-Roman cults into Latin caused the greatest problems, with most variations occurring in the names of such gods. Since the names of these gods are not included in literary sources, our primary sources for these cults are inscriptions. I would like to demonstrate the differences in the spelling of the name of the gods worshipped in the Roman Empire, and how they show characteristics of Vulgar Latin.

NEMES Szilvia (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

### **Substandard linguistic phenomena in the *Tabulae Pompeianae Sulpiciorum***

In 1999, the collection of *Tabulae Pompeianae Sulpiciorum* (*TPSulp*) was published by G. Camodeca which was reedited under the name *Tabulae Pompeianae Novae* (*TPN*) by J. G. Wolf. *TPSulp* as a collection of the archive of the Sulpicii banker family consists of 127 legal inscriptions on wax tablets according to the edition of Camodeca. These inscriptions contain 278 data, i. e. deviations from the classical norm recorded by me in the Computerized Historical Linguistic Database of the Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age (LLDB: <http://lldb.elte.hu/>). In my presentation, I would like to analyse these data recorded from *TPSulp* in the LLDB database.

A significant part of the recorded data demonstrates phonological changes (84%), with the majority being consonantism (53%) compared to the vocalism (31%). However, the morpho-syntactical data are not well attested

in this corpus (only 6%), just like non-grammatical errors, as purely orthographic misspellings (only 10%).

Nevertheless, what makes these linguistic data notable is the peculiar distribution of the linguistic changes in these documents. Out of the 278 data, the majority, namely 192 data, comes from five documents: 54 data from *TPSulp* 52; 52 data from *TPSulp* 51; 48 from *TPSulp* 68; 20 from *TPSulp* 67; and 18 from *TPSulp* 45. These documents also have a common feature, they all belonged to a group of legal submissions written by certain clients of the banker Sulpicius. The data always appear on the part of the document, which was definitely written by the parties. This position of the data may indicate that the distribution of the linguistic phenomena in the documents of *TPSulp* is related to certain features of the social background of these clients of the Sulpicii. These phenomena of *TPSulp*, to the best of my knowledge, were never examined in detail so far (despite Adams 2013). Therefore, I would like to focus on this issue in my presentation analysing the linguistic changes in the light of the data in the LLDB database.

### **References:**

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FIRST SESSION – 8TH JULY, 09:00–10:45

*Chair:* ADAMIK Tamás (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

Francesca COTUGNO (University of Verona)

**Expressing pain from the Antiquities to the Middle Ages: The role of interjection *heu* as a Part of Speech and in Latin epigraphy**

Interjection was recognised as a part of speech by the Latin grammarians, replacing the article class of the Greeks since Latin did not have an article and maintaining unvaried the system of “eight parts of speech”.

Starting from Varro and Quintilian and comparing the Latin grammatical scholarship with epigraphic data it is noticeable how the use and the definition of interjection is not stable. On the one hand it is possible to analyse the interjection according to different perspectives, ending up to the *Summa de modi significandi* written by Michael de Marbais in which the author, after a summary of the whole previous scholarship, emphasizes (Summa 180, 69) how the interjection comes from *impositio* like the other Parts of Speech even though its purpose consists in modifications of the emotionality of the soul.

According to the inscriptions considered for this analysis which have been selected from different area of the Roman Empire (Gallia Narbonensis, Gallia Lugdunensis, Hispania Citerior, Germania Inferior, Germania Superior), it is noticeable the holophrastic function of interjections, as they may convey the meaning of a whole utterance and they can represent by themselves a communicative act.

## References:

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Dragana KUNČER (Institute of History, Belgrade)

## **The Latin redundant forms (epigraphic data)**

Having its origins in the theory of information, redundancy is a principle of bringing more units of information to the original message than are theoretically needed. As a consequence, the message successfully – complete and undamaged – reaches the addressee. In linguistics it is usually defined in a twofold manner: as a principle which is intrinsic to the language itself and part of its structure (obligatory, systemic redundancy), and as a principle which is added intentionally by the sender (voluntary, enunciative redundancy). This division is, however, not absolute and the two categories are intertwined. In the diachronic view this switch of categories (from voluntary to obligatory) is one of the vehicles of linguistic change. This is of relevance for Vulgar Latin. For instance, regarding redundancy at the

lexical level, it is the “pleonastic strengthening” which was the first expression of “ad hoc creations” and of the “powerful undercurrent of popular spoken language” that has become part of standard Latin (or Romance) in later times.

The aim of this paper is to start a list of examples of redundant Latin forms – at the lexical level – in a selected corpus of inscriptions (*Inscriptions de la Mésie Supérieure*). It will be demonstrated that the epigraphic data and their computational analysis can be successfully applied in the research on redundancy showing the role it played in the development of Latin.

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BOHACSEK Dóra (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

### **Vulgar and Classical Latin in Africa: Is labdacism an africanism?**

The continuous expansion of the Roman Empire made the Latin language the mediation language of a vast territory. The linguistic romanization of the conquered provinces was a

slower process than the political one, and can not be by any means called homogenic. Besides classical Latin, we also need to take a look at the spoken and widely used variety of the language, the *sermo vulgaris*, which already in the time of the Roman Empire developed into different local variants. The differences between the classical and the vulgar Latin have already been noticed in antiquity: we can find texts and notes from several grammarians of the late antiquity, which were dealing with the different uses and misuses of the language, when compared to classical Latin. Some of these sources also mention specific territorial specialties, like comments on the variety of Latin spoken and written in the provinces of Africa.

In my presentation I am examining one of the so-called „africanisms“, namely the phenomenon of labdacism, which has been a discussed topic since antiquity. In this examination I am analysing texts from ancient grammarians and comparing them to the regions' (African and Roman) epigraphical material from the LLDB-database.

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COFFEE BREAK – 8<sup>th</sup> July, 10:45–11:15

SECOND SESSION – 8<sup>th</sup> July, 11:15–13:00

*Chair:* ITTZÉS Máté (Eötvös Loránd University Budapest)

SIMON Zsolt (IHLUS, HRCL, Budapest)

### **Lat. *ploxenum* reconsidered**

According to the standard handbooks, the Catullian word *ploxenum* ‘a carriage-body’ is a Celtic loanword. Dissenting views are rare and they are either obsolete (e.g., internal derivation or Venetic etymology) or assume an *ad hoc* creation by Catullus. In this talk I will argue that (a) Quintilianus did not attribute a Celtic origin to this word as it is still widely claimed and (b) none of the several Celtic etymologies (e.g., “\**qlaug-*”, “\**plose-*”) can be upheld on phonological grounds. Instead, we are dealing with an inherited word (on contextual and methodological grounds) and I will propose an Indo-European etymology with a semantic change known from the history of Germ. *Wagen*.

SZLOVICSAK Béla (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

### **The transformation of the gender system in Late Latin as evidenced by inscriptions**

It is well known that in Classical Latin (Adamik 2015) there was a distinction between three grammatical genders, and that that in the majority of Romance languages there is a distinction between only two genders. This, according to previous authors such as Väänänen (1981), can be attested to the fact that the contrast between the *masculine* and the *neuter* gender has weakened, which lead to the complete



extinction of the *neuter* gender. However, after thorough investigation it becomes evident that a more detailed description is necessary in order to account for this phenomenon.

The problem of this transformation is mostly discussed in works with the objective of providing a broader description of Late Latin without focusing explicitly on the grammatical gender system (Väänänen 1981). In other works (e.g., Löfstedt 1961, or Loporcaro 2018) the transformation is examined in depth but without using inscriptions as the main *corpus* for interpreting these changes. In inscriptions, however, one can find many occurrences of mixing the different genders, which might be due to the writer's flawed distinction between different genders. In this paper I will use the LLDB-database to examine the changes in the gender system, and its main features in Late Latin. This *corpus* allows me to display the change that took place from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> century regarding the gender system and it is also possible to discover two dialectically distinct regions of the Empire regarding the behaviour of the grammatical genders. I will also re-evaluate the statements of previous authors regarding the examined system.

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BARTA Andrea (RGLHLD, HRCL, Budapest)

## **Copper and iron, or Stars in the darkness? Possible interpretations of a gold lamella**

In April 2019, a gold lamella, once folded several times turned up in a private collection in Hungary. Due to its physical appearance and the layout of the text, the auction catalogue identified it as a foil with a Greek magical inscription. However, at first glance it became obvious that the text had been written in Latin letters and in Latin language. Thus, even by this fact, the lamella seems to be unique, since except for a few pieces, most of our extant magical papyri, gems, and amulets, are all written in Greek (Kotansky 2019, 539).

Nevertheless, the 13-line text is abound of words which were used both in Latin and Greek: *pater* - πατήρ, *taurus* - ταῦρος, *draco* - δρακόν, *daemonium* - δαιμόνιον. Morphologically their non-standard forms can be explained only if we suppose vulgar Latin features which might have affected them similarly to other magical text.

The scope of this study is limited to the introductory part that offers at least two distinct interpretations based on the two languages we can read it in. On one hand, if we consider the vulgar Latin writing mistakes, the conjectures suggest that the lamella was made against an illness. On the other hand, if we look on it as a Greek line written in Latin letters, it reminds us either of magical recipes or Totenpasses. While parts of the entire text lead to Greek and Latin Christian apologists' works, the apotropaic language of the amulet is evident throughout. However, the whole text proposes a major impact of Greek origins and social context on this Latin text.

This study contributes to the ongoing discussion of bilingualism, language mixing and code-switching in the field of magic. The aim of this research is to find the context and approach the question of time and space when and where the golden leaf was produced. The paper offers a reading and linguistic interpretation as complete as possible.

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CLOSING REMARKS – 8<sup>th</sup> July, 13:00–13:10

BAKRÓ-NAGY, Marianne (IHLUS, HRCL, Budapest) and  
ADAMIK Béla (RGLHLD, HRCL, Budapest)

## NOTES



The Workshop is organized in the framework of the project “Computerized Historical Linguistic Database of Latin Inscriptions of the Imperial Age” (National Research, Development and Innovation Office, NKFIH, No. K 135359) to be realized with the collaboration of the Research Group for Latin Historical Linguistics and Dialectology (former ‘Momentum’ Research Group for Computational Latin Dialectology) of the ELKH (former MTA) Research Centre for Linguistics and of the Latin Department of the Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest (cf. <http://lldb.elte.hu/>)

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