CULTURAL ENCOUNTER AND IDENTITY IN THE NEO-LATIN WORLD

EDITED BY

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Cover: Albrecht Dürer’s 1502 woodcut illustrates the idea of the *translatio studii* that is so central to this volume. It shows *Philosophia* sitting on a throne, surrounded by medallions with portraits of wise men from many ages and parts of the world: Ptolemy, Plato, Cicero and Vergil (in one) and Albert the Great. The poem above her says: “The Greeks call me *sophia*, the Romans *sapientia*, the Egyptians and the Chaldaeans invented me, the Greeks wrote me down, the Romans translated (or transmitted) and the Germans developed me” (from Conrad Celtis, *Amores*, Nurenberg, 1502, f. avir; source Wikimedia commons).
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The Latin of the German Reformation and the Heritage of Quattrocento Humanism

JOHANN RAMMINGER

Abstract
The norms of Latin developed by Italian humanists in the Quattrocento came to be the framework sustaining the Latin of the German Reformation. Even in the midst of their rejection of the Church of Rome, Protestant writers unwaveringly recognised the importance of the earlier Italian environment for the development of the German intellectual – and linguistic – landscape which led up to the Reformation. Where the humanists had philologically restored ancient texts that were valued in their own right, confessional writers used the philological methods of the Quattrocento to penetrate to the ‘real’ meaning of sacred texts which had been buried under an avalanche of meaningless new interpretive terminology that prevented the faithful from gaining insights important for their salvation. Just like the humanists before them, Protestant confessional writers were averse to the linguistic innovations of medieval scholastic philosophy; they used the same reasoning to identify and roll back language changes that were not part of ‘classical’ Latin. Nevertheless confessional Latin teems with innovative lexical features. One area of innovation was the names of the new confessions themselves, often coined by adversaries so as to delegitimise their adherents. Thus, confessional Latin came to diverge significantly from its humanist ancestor: humanists measured the attractiveness of their Latin in relationship to the classical authors, emulating them or rejecting (some of) them, whereas for confessional writers, the relationship to the classical authors came second, after a concern for universal communicability: Latin was on its way to becoming the unifying koinê of interfaith and international communication, understood (in Melanchthon’s words) “everywhere and by all,” allowing the expression of a common ‘European mindset’ connecting a continent that was split politically and ideologically.

Theoretical premises
Bernd Moeller famously wrote in 1959: “Without humanism, no reformation.”1 This often quoted statement covers a multitude of points of contact between the two, among which the following will focus on one: the application of philological – or more precisely lexical – parameters of Latin developed in Italian Quattrocento humanism in the textual culture of the German Reformation.2 We will look at how the humanist project of controlled language change (with Classical Latin as the point of reference) continued in the texts of the German Reformation.

Mapping the path of the reception of humanist ideas by Reformation authors, I would like to emphasise two complementary aspects of the transfer from Italy to Germany and from humanism to Reformation. The first regards the long-term reception of Italian humanism, beginning in the 1450s, which thoroughly modified the intellectual landscape in Germany. Even

1. Moeller 1959, 59.
if full-blown German humanism under Maximilian I insisted that its intellectual profile was distinct from its Italian forbears (see Susanna de Beer’s contribution in this volume), there was at least one area where continuity was not questioned: the application of the philological methods developed by the Italian humanists concerning language analysis and textual work on sources. Eventually, as many German humanists of the early sixteenth century were touched by the increasing confessional saturation of the intellectual climate, they brought their methodologies to bear on the new problems. On the Protestant side alone, writers as diverse as the praecessor Germaniae Melanchthon, the Swiss reformer Vadian, or the Anabaptist Johannes Denk all had a humanist education (some, like the poet laureate Vadian, had even had a notable humanist career); they were imbued with the tenets of Italian humanism, filtered through the societal and intellectual framework of German humanism.

Secondly, despite the proclaimed translatio artium from Italy to Germany – the German claim, that is, that the liberal arts had migrated from Italy to Germany – and the flaunted new independence, German intellectuals from the early sixteenth century onwards remained in contact with the Italian scene: new Italian writings could with – relative – ease be acquired in print from Italy or were (re)printed north of the Alps. The continuing reception left its traces in confessional writing in numerous mentions of Lorenzo Valla and Angelo Poliziano, and – both from direct use and later from intermediary sources – of Niccolò Perotti’s Cornu copiae.¹ In this context of continuing influence, the achievements of the Quattrocento philological culture of Italian humanism came to exert a profound – if often unacknowledged – role in confessional text production.

Confessionalisation
The Reformation – or rather the religious and societal changes of the sixteenth century – has since the 1980s been discussed under the paradigm of “confessionalisation.” In its “strong” version, confessionalisation theory insisted on a close connection between the development of religious and political authority and emphasised the “imposition of social discipline” in the process. From the 1990s onwards, confessionalisation theory came under criticism, as attention was drawn to social phenomena which either had not or could not become confessionalised at all. This gave rise to a “weak theory of confessionalisation” which “simply defines confessionalisation as the process of rivalry and emulation by which the religions […] built group cohesion and identity.” Besides Church and state authorities, it allowed for a wider variety of community structures as bearers of the development. Importantly, it recognised the role of the individual in the process (in the form of “self-confessionalisation”). It will be this “weak” form of the theory that will form the basis of the following.

There have been disagreements about the time frame of the “Age of Confessionalisation” (especially about its end, which does not concern us here). Most research takes the Peace of Augsburg (1555) as the starting point. Wolfgang Reinhard, one of the fathers of confessionalisation theory, went as far back as the 1520s, labelling the very first period of the Reformation (1517–1525) a “spontaneous Evangelical Movement.” In Latin, confessionalised phenomena appear from early on. To catch the initial stages, the following inquiry will focus on the period starting with Luther’s Theses and ending with Melanchthon’s death (1517–1560).

Reinhard identified seven mechanisms of confessionalisation, of which the last – the regulation of language to achieve confessional conformity – is the topic of the present paper. Reinhard gave two examples of this: one concerning the preference for specific types of first names depending on confession (which in Calvinist Geneva was regulated by the authorities, so that the example thus supports “strong” confession-
alisation theory), the second the naming conventions of the confessions themselves (which will be explored below). "But there is still much research to be done in that field; we in fact do not know very much about how 'confessionalisation' changed patterns of everyday life such as language."10 This assertion of Reinhard’s has often been repeated verbatim, but the situation has not changed much thirty years later.

Reinhard did not focus on a particular language, because the Reformation(s) flourished in a multilingual environment. Since theologians on all sides inherited a large corpus of doctrinal writing in Latin, produced large amounts themselves, communicated internally and across confessional and national divides in Latin (even if often by adversarial statements), and crucially had had a Latin education (though not necessarily a humanist one), Latin has here been chosen as a focus for inquiry into how the development of confessional language identities played out in different areas of confessional communication.

Thus this paper will focus on lexical change in Early Modern Latin.11 At the centre will be Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon: the former, the master communicator of the Reformation, who changed the parameters of Latin and vernacular discourse more and faster than anyone before him; the latter, the theoretician of communication, who devised a sustainable framework for the pastoral tasks of the new denomination(s). The debt owed by both these figures to humanism has been recognised by previous research.12 Nevertheless, neither their own Latin nor their influence on the Latin of their contemporaries has been the object of much attention. In the following, their Latin will be analysed in the context of other Protestant writing and the Catholic reaction to it.

When we speak about language change in Early Modern Latin, we go against a widely held assumption that with the loss of first language-speakers at the end of antiquity Latin also lost the capacity for change – other than deterioration – or evolution.13 The reasoning underlying this notion may be that “when linguists say 'language change' they often mean 'sound change' or, at the most, 'morphological change.'”14 Obviously, such a focus is better suited to explain the comprehensive changes of German in the Early Modern period than those affecting Latin at the same time.15 Still, Latin at this time was undergoing considerable lexical development.16 The rapidly evolving social realities of the Reformation provided an environment rich in possibilities for the formation of neologisms as well as semantic shifts or expansions, and the framework developed by the Italian humanists of the preceding century came to bear fruit in a textual culture very different from its origins.

Linguists have distinguished between innovation and lexical change, where the latter is the generalised form of the former.17 This distinction will not be emphasised in the following for two reasons. The first is a practical one: we still have only a very partial knowledge of written Latin in Early Modern Europe. Also, spoken Latin, still a significant factor in the period discussed here, is largely irrecoverable. Thus some innovations may have been much more broadly disseminated (thus leading to lexical change) than we realise. Secondly, some innovations

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11. "Early Modern" Latin is here used in analogy to the terminology of historical research. It allows us to emphasise the widespread integration of Latin within most domains of Early Modern history (though decreasing in the seventeenth century). See Scott 2015, 1–21 (although he conspicuously fails to take into account Latin as an early modern phenomenon; see p. 21).
13. An often quoted statement is from Baugh & Cable 2002, 2: “Classical Latin is a dead language because it has not changed for nearly 2,000 years” (to make the statement more poignant, in quotations the first word is often left off). Bizarrely, the authors continue: "The change that is constantly going on in a living language can be most easily seen in the vocabulary", a sentence that apparently has been mentally detached from the preceding one by the authors as well as by readers.
15. As is emphasised by e.g. Korenjak 2016, 11. It should be added that in respect to both phonology and morphology, Early Modern Latin in manuscript sources and/or sources closer to orality was considerably more unstable than sanitised modern editions suggest. See e.g. BAV, Vat. lat. 2962 (Mussato’s De gestis Italorum VIII–XIV ed. Padrin 1903) or the countless Latin inventories of the Italian renaissance.
16. For the terminology meaning change/semantic change/lexical change see Koch 2016, 23.
17. E. g. Milroy 2003 (discussing examples of phonological change).
had an astonishingly uneven fortune, and thus would need to be discussed within a larger time frame than is possible here; furthermore, many were conditioned by contact with other European languages – an aspect that can only be touched upon incidentally.

My analysis of confessional language change will use a three-pronged approach adapted from the work of microhistorians within social history. First, I shall be “asking large questions in small spaces,” as a favourite phrase of microhistorians goes, specifically the question given in the title of this paper: What was the impact of the Italian humanists’ language planning on those parts of Latin in the sixteenth century which are confessionally determined?18 Secondly, I will focus on small linguistic phenomena, mostly single words, as markers of the confessionalisation of Latin. And thirdly, I will focus on the agency of individual authors (or its absence) within the process of change. I will contextualise these observations by connecting them to metadiscourse on language and confessional speech in texts by confessional writers and on Latin more generally by earlier humanists.19

In general, when phonological or morphological language change is charted, the micro-changes leading to a macro-change are hardly ever connected with specific names. Lexical change, too, has generally been understood as change from below the level of social awareness, an invisible-hand process borne by people who have no intention of changing language per se, but just want to communicate effectively or follow the norms of their social group etc.20 By contrast, Renaissance Latin writers habitually insisted on individual agency in lexical change, both by equating norms with authors (Cicero) and by relying on specific authorities as mediators of these norms (Valla, Perotti). Reformation writers retained this approach; as a logical conclusion their leading thinkers – in addition to producing authoritative texts – also exerted, as we shall see, a strong influence on the direction of language change. This is “change by design” and partially corresponds to what Labov in respect to phonological changes called “change from above”: the success of the changes depends on the prestige of the innovators, and initial adoption is a highly conscious process. Yet even within this controlled environment, invisible-hand processes continued to play an important role. They had been recognised as such (’avant la lettre’) by humanist theoreticians who had also scrutinised their permissibility.21 The interaction between invisible-hand processes and changes by design in confessional Latin will be a major point of observation in this paper.

The continuum between Italian Humanism and German Reformation

Confessional writers were aware of and took pride in their connection with Italian Quattrocento humanism. This is evident from the occasional reconstructions of literary history found in German writers. A relatively sophisticated version is given by Bullinger’s Of True and False Learning (Von warer und falscher leer, 1527): “Also Latin […] began to wake up, roused by Lorenzo Valla, afterwards by Niccolò Perotti, Ermolao Barbaro, Angelo Poliziano, Filippo Beroaldo.”22 Bullinger notes the contribution of humanism to the study of scripture, starting with Valla’s Collatio Novi Testamenti, and emphasizes the former importance of Italy for students of Latin and Greek: “For some time students from everywhere, also from Germany, travelled to Italy, and learned Greek and Latin well in Bologna, Ferrara and Milan. From then on we have seen learned men of distinction, such as John Reuchlin and Erasmus of Rotterdam, in Germany.” Implicitely, Bullinger made the point that by the early sixteenth century Germany was no longer dependent on Italy for its language learning. As early as 1520, Erasmus had insisted that Latin writers in Germany were at the same level as the rest of the Latinate world when he angrily

18. The quotation is taken from the title of Davis 2014. See also Magnússon 2017; Magnússon & Szijártó 2013, 5. Explicit microhistorical approaches have not been used much in linguistics, but see e.g. Klippi 2013.
19. On the role of humanist metadiscourse in the dissemination of Italian humanism, see den Haan 2016.
22. This and the following quotation are translated from Staedtke 1962, 32 and 34.
defended himself in Rome, as that – as we hear – the Germans dedicate themselves to the letters, that there emerge many men knowledgeable in Greek and Latin letters, and that more of these are laymen than clerics. We shall in time try to counteract this vice and in particular save sophistry which complains that it is being expelled; with its tricks we shall turn the Holy Scriptures to our advantage and profit. It will suit us much better if the Germans as of old celebrate the rites of Bacchus rather than those of Apollo, if they are blind with open eyes, if they lack all knowledge, rather than scoff at us impudently, even if rightly, with the help of letters.

This was satire (and vaguely reminiscent of the Latin of the Obscure Men). But in its irony it was the secret author of the more elegant Latin writings published under the name of Luther, who can write Latin, let alone in the rest of Germany.”

For Pirckheimer, humanist, politician, and early sympathiser with the Lutheran reform, there was a clear linguistic connection between the emancipation of German humanism from Italy and that of the evangelical movement from Rome. He expressed this in a text in the form of a letter, written supposedly by a cleric living in Rome and privy to the innermost dispositions of the Curia:

Also it irritates us in Rome, that – as we hear – the Germans dedicate themselves to the letters, that there emerge many men knowledgeable in Greek and Latin letters, and that more of these are laymen than clerics. We shall in time try to counteract this vice and in particular save sophistry which complains that it is being expelled; with its tricks we shall turn the Holy Scriptures to our advantage and profit. It will suit us much better if the Germans as of old celebrate the rites of Bacchus rather than those of Apollo, if they are blind with open eyes, if they lack all knowledge, rather than scoff at us impudently, even if rightly, with the help of letters.

... and the wisest amongst the eloquent”; the latter’s dialogi would show – upon their imminent publication – “that the leaders of literary culture are still in Rome, and those with interest in the letters are going to imitate and follow them rather than surpass ten Melanchthons.”

Aiming to be “the most eloquent” (eloquentissimus) was not, I believe, among the literary aspirations of Protestant writers. For them eloquentia was a complex value that morphed all too easily into garrulitas (loquaciousness, Melanchthon CR 17, p. 709, 1524). As the Saxon preacher Nicolaus Hausmann observes after listening in the company of Luther to a fellow preacher’s sermon – in Wittenberg, no less – (1538): “He is eloquent and impressively develops [his topics], but I am afraid that this is ostentatious verbal froth, as Augustine says in On Christian Teaching.” The rejection of eloquence as a goal in itself remained an important aspect of Protestant rhetoric, in Latin as well as any other language used in preaching (the sermon mentioned here was likely delivered in German). Thus the Danish theologian Hemmingsen (De methodis, 1555) admonished the prospective preacher to remain “on this side of loquaciousness” (citra garrulitatem) and avoid the sophistic method of “covering the truth in darkness and deceive guileless people” (ueritati tenebras offendendi, et homines incautos decipiendi). Rather, Hemmingsen preferred the so-called didascalic genre of rhetoric introduced by Melanchthon: it was important to avoid the appearance of eloquence and deliver one’s sermon “in plain and accessible speech” (plana et populari oratione).
Luther in a famous letter to Eobanus Hessus considered the contribution of humanism to the Reformation essential; the humanists had, like so many John the Baptists, prepared the way by a "growth and flowering of languages and letters." For himself, though, he seems to have enjoyed the persona of the man of limited erudition, and as late as 1544 took pride in the confessed simplicity of his Latin: "As you can see, I am only moderately proficient in Latin, as I have spent my life in the barbaric company of scholastic theologians." 

No language for compromise: the retreat of ‘Catholic Latin’
The disdain for the language of scholasticism expressed by Luther in this quotation mirrors its absolute rejection by Protestant writers. Recent scholarship, especially by Ann Moss, has provided fine analyses of this phenomenon (Moss’s “Latin Language Turn”). Here I would like to show how this Protestant intransigence seeped into everyday communication. Our material is a memorandum for internal use written in Rome by the sometime papal legate to Germany, Jerome Aleander, in 1523:

In the work that we are in the course of writing with considerable ambition, about Lutheranism in general as well as in detail, we shall (as is fitting) pay much attention to the style, unless we put forward a proof by quoting the bare testimony of others. On the other hand, in the writings at hand, which we dictated to our secretary as an advisory report, we spoke to the point not idly or without attention; still, as far as it concerns the choice of words, we used just what came to the mouth [a phrase taken from Cicero’s letters to Atticus]. Here it did not seem worth the trouble to avoid altogether those words which are barbarous and gothic, but the only ones accepted for many centuries by the discipline of theology and the all around defiled majesty of the Roman legal language.

The key term for our stylistic analysis is the word goticus (“vocabula barbarae et gotticae”). That the Goths had been responsible for the decay of Latin in late antiquity was a commonplace in humanist literature already put forward by Flavio Biondo in 1435 and repeated happily by others, even if the reasons and manner of decay varied. The invasion of the Goths itself was documented for the Latin reader by Bruni’s Latin version of Procopius’s Gothic war (1441). It was Lorenzo Valla who a few years later used goticus metaphorically for the Latin of medieval literature (preface to Elegantiae III):

[Is there any discipline more important than civil law?] Is it, to begin here, the law of the popes, that they call canonical, which is for a large part Gothic? Or the books of the philosophers, that not even the Goths or Vandals would understand? […] Or those of the grammarians, whose aim seems to have been to un-teach the Latin language? Or, finally, the books of the teachers of rhetoric, of which there are many in circulation up to our times, that teach nothing else but to speak Gothic?

The metaphor goticus – “written in medieval Latin” – enjoys popularity for a short period of time with transalpine writers. Lefèvre d’Étapes (1496) diagnoses that after the Goths had dealt a blow to Latin literature, letters as a whole “had suffered something Gothic”; symptomatic of the malaise is for him the terminology of medieval philosophy. An otherwise unknown
Parisian, Claudius Largus (1498), happily announced the removal of the “Gothic pollution” from Latin in a poem accompanying Clichtove’s edition of Negri’s *Grammar*. Some years later, the Spaniard Alfonso Segura drew attention back to Valla, who “forced the Gothic language into exile.” Turning eastward, Heinrich Bebel in 1503 condemned a series of verbs which “are through and through barbaric and Gothic and unworthy to be admitted in the field of Latin.” Beatus Rhenanus (1512), formerly a student of Lefèvre, in a letter to him deplores the Latinity of the translation of Gregory of Nyssa’s *De homine* by Burgundio of Pisa (d. 1193), “everywhere rife with worse than Gothic abuses of language.” Concerning the same edition, the Nuremberg humanist Johannes Cono, who had assumed responsibility for the new Latin text of the *De homine*, proclaimed it unworthy that a text “flowing with Attic charm should be covered by a flood of foreign and Gothic barbarity.” Certainly the text deserved the eloquence of a Livy or the gravity of an Ambrose rather than “this horrible-sounding and Gothic way of speaking.” Only a year later, Martin Dorpius (1513) issued a call to arms to “separate the Gothic pollution from Latin in a poem accompanying Clichtove’s grammar.” Some years later, the Spaniard Alfonso Segura drew attention back to Valla, who “forced the Gothic language into exile.” Turning eastward, Heinrich Bebel in 1503 condemned a series of verbs which “are through and through barbaric and Gothic and unworthy to be admitted in the field of Latin.” Beatus Rhenanus (1512), formerly a student of Lefèvre, in a letter to him deplores the Latinity of the translation of Gregory of Nyssa’s *De homine* by Burgundio of Pisa (d. 1193), “everywhere rife with worse than Gothic abuses of language.” Concerning the same edition, the Nuremberg humanist Johannes Cono, who had assumed responsibility for the new Latin text of the *De homine*, proclaimed it unworthy that a text “flowing with Attic charm should be covered by a flood of foreign and Gothic barbarity.” Certainly the text deserved the eloquence of a Livy or the gravity of an Ambrose rather than “this horrible-sounding and Gothic way of speaking.” Only a year later, Martin Dorpius (1513) issued a call to arms to “separate the Gothic words from the Latin ones and those that bear the stamp of Rome.” Protestant writers were quick to turn the metaphor towards the medieval roots of Catholic teaching. Wolfgang Capito (1518) wished only to be a waymarker on a path away from the “harsh terrain of Gothic doctrine”, Bugenhagen (1518) warned against the “Scotic [i. e. by Duns Scotus], so as not to say Gothic sophistry.” Bullinger (1538) emphasises the damage to language. The blame for the decay of letters and religion could be laid squarely at the door of medieval monks and canons: “At the same time, real learning began to be neglected, the study of languages was abandoned and Gothic barbarity started to enter together with the barbarians.” To give a vernacular example, Rabelais’s Gargantua in his letter to his son considers the period preceding the invention of print “tenebreux et sentant l’in-felicité et calamite des Gothz, qui avoient mis a destruction toute bonne literature” (tenebrous and smack[ing] of the infelicity and calamity of the Goths, who had put to destruction all good literature, *Pantagruel* ch. 8, 1532).

If we now return to Aleanders’s suggestion that *vocabula [...] barbara et gottica* might be allowed for internal use at the curia, but “of course” not for a wider audience, we see that it represents a complete surrender to the demands of humanist style so successfully promoted by Protestant writers. What Northern humanists and their Protestant followers had for decades denounced as barbaric, even the Catholics themselves now found “Gothic”. Their traditional way of speaking had become an embarrassment, suitable only for communications that their opponents had absolutely no chance of reading. It should be added that the “Gothic” metaphor in the North had a rather short shelf-life, since it collided with the growing interest among German humanists in Germanic prehistory and its
positive reappraisal. Already Conrad Peutinger in 1515 absolved the Goths from blame for the decay of Latin; Latin language and Latin order had already collapsed before their arrival. The Goths appear not only to be rehabilitated, but entirely appreciated by Beatus Rhenanus: “Ours are the triumphs of the Goths, Vandals and Francs.” The late example in Calvin’s criticism of the degrees of the Council of Trent (1547) that “smack of the Gothic tyranny of the Roman See” uses “Gothic” metaphorically, but about the despotism of the Church of Rome in general, not its linguistic traditions in particular.

Language change and new words

Much of Melanchthon’s approach to language circulated around two pairs of concepts, proprietas sermonis/perspicuitas and novitas sermonis/ambiguitas. Proprietas is a protean term which for the purposes of this paper is understood as the “real”, i.e. original or classical meaning of a word or a text; its use results in perspicuitas, “clarity” of expression. Opposed to proprietas is novitas sermonis, “newness”, the use of words and concepts not belonging to the classical state of a language (mostly chronologically defined), i.e. lexical shift or extension, which leads to ambiguitas, “equivocation, ambiguity” and prevents correct understanding. Within this vast topic I would like to focus on two connected aspects: first, how Protestant writers used novitas sermonis, lexical shift, to shape a confessional idiom, and second, how – without endangering perspicuitas – a writer could fashion a distinctive voice within the confessional conformity of expression.

Melanchthon defined the relationship between clarity on the one hand and ambiguity due to newness or foreignness (i.e. new words of whatever provenience which are therefore foreign in reference to the classical state of Latin) on the other in his Elementa rhetorices of 1539:

Since therefore clarity earns the biggest praise in speaking, first of all one has to have at one’s disposal a rich vocabulary which expresses things without ambiguity in a precise way. In one’s speech one has to avoid foreignness; that license to invent new speech – which is used in schools without moderation – should not ever be admitted by us.

According to Melanchthon, it was after Quintilian that “everybody invented new words as they wanted.” This was a long-standing complaint of humanists; in the early sixteenth century Paolo Cortesi, the Ciceroian famous for his controversy with Poliziano, had decried verborum parierendorum ... licentiam through which (medieval) philosophers had violated the limits of the classical lexicon. Melanchthon concurred wholeheartedly. There was simply no need for all the words invented later: “all known things can be expressed by known words with a precise meaning.”

New words are initially void of meaning (vocabula nova nihil significantia), and thus lead to obscurity and nonsense. “New words are put together to deceive the uninformed,” since “who understands those who

48. “Scipserunt autem Iornandes et Paulus non florentiibas Italiae biliuis sed eo tempore, quo Latialis lingua una cum rebus ipsis iam interieterat”, PEUTINGER ep 157 (preface to the edition of Iordanes).
49. “Nostri enim sunt Gothorum, Vandalorum Francorumque triumphi”, Rhenanus ep 282 (= Origines Gothicae, 1531). I would like to thank Karen Skovgaard Petersen who emphasised this point in the discussion after my paper. See e.g. Dekker 1999, 39–41 (Gothicism in the Low Countries); Söderberg 1896 (Council of Basel 1434); generally Svennung 1967; Johannesson 1991 (sixteenth-century Sweden); Kliger 1947.
51. The seminal discussion about proprietas verborum is in the preface of Adriano Castellesi’s often reprinted De modis latine loquendi from 1515. Melanchthon was familiar with Castellesi’s work, see e.g. CR 20, 357 (Syntaxis, version of 1529).
52. “Itaque cum summam laudem in dicendo habeat perspicuiitas, in primis adsit copia proprii sermonis, qui res sine ambiguitate, signate exprimat. Fugienda est in
have developed a kind of newspeak (novum sermonis genus), such as Thomas [Aquinas], [Duns] Scotus, and such people.\textsuperscript{56}

Theologians had been exposed to that kind of criticism by humanists ever since Bruni began his fight against medieval translations of Aristotle more than a hundred years earlier; and the interference of humanists in theology was a staple complaint of "professional" theologians for nearly as long. Thus it was a small triumph for the papal legate Stanislaus Hosius when he could report in 1561 that despite this ostentatious aversion to the linguistic patterns of scholasticism, Protestant writers had begun to use a word like ubiquitas, complete with attributes like localis, repletiva, personalis.\textsuperscript{57} Absolute consistency could not be expected in the fractured landscape of Protestant theology, and Hosius would have been even more delighted had he known that the Debrecen confession, written a year later mostly by Péter Melius (Péter Méliusz Juhász, Confessio Catholica Debrecinensis), used the neologism essenter: "[Pater noster] ubiqui praesens essenter, potenter,"\textsuperscript{58} thus reviving the scholastic custom of forming (thoroughly un-classical) present participle forms of esse.

Still, as Valla and other humanists had earlier stated, "new things need new words." Melanchthon grudgingly admitted that the structure of the empire had changed since the time of Cicero, religion had changed as well, and "therefore new circumstanes now and then need new words."\textsuperscript{59}

\textbf{New religions, new words}

One area where the confessional adversaries needed new words was the naming conventions of the emerging denominations themselves. One obvious pattern was formations in -anus, which could designate any identifiable group, based on geographic origin, doctrinal adherence, or party affiliation; thus "Lutheranus" was often used in official Catholic writings as unmarked designation of the opponent (even including Calvinists).\textsuperscript{60} Polemical writers on both sides, however, wanted more than just lexical convenience, and a great deal of ingenuity was used in forming names which could delegitimise the opponent. The most popular inherited model was the formation in -ista. Originally this had been a Greek model of word formation, with loanwords in Latin such as sophista, psalmista or evangelista. The Latin Church fathers expanded this model to doctrinal deviation, naming sects after their founder (Donatistae) or a key doctrine (phantasiastae); this was extended eventually to philosophical doctrines, such as the Thomistae and Scotistae, and political affiliation (papalistae, the papal party at the Council of Constance), not necessarily with derogatory intent.\textsuperscript{61} Still, disparagement was never far from the surface, as when the French humanist Gauguin complained in 1472 to his teacher Fichet that his and Fichet's enemies called him a fichetista for his supposedly unreasonable adherence to his teacher.\textsuperscript{62} Italian humanist lexicography simply ignored that area of Latin;\textsuperscript{63} neither Valla nor Perotti have anything to say about it. Only the early German humanist lexicographers explicitly discouraged the use of such words, except for loans from the Greek.\textsuperscript{64} The long lists of "deprecated" words attest the popularity of the ista model in German Latin. Despite the prohi-
bitions, it had a dazzling success in confessional writers, who used it mostly to put the opponent semantically on the defensive.

Protestants used the *papista* (a word dating from the Great Schism) to put down their opponents, and found themselves under labels like “Lutherista” and “Martinista”. There were many similar formations later; often coined by Protestant writers to denounce doctrinal impurity within their own ranks. The rich terminology thus developed offered a point of attack to Catholic writers, who liked to compose lists of subdivisions of Protestant doctrine to lay bare its intrinsic inanity. The names of the denominations themselves pointed to the doctrinal invalidity of these creeds, as the Catholic theologian Bellarmino pointed out: “Since now some are called Martinists or Lutherans, some Zwinglians, some Calvinists, etc. On the other hand nobody has ever named us after a specific man; clearly ours is the true Church.”

As word formations go, these were rather unsophisticated. There were also some semantically more ambitious attempts to ridicule dogmatically different with the same model. I would like to draw attention to one word which ‘switched sides’ in the fight between the confessions, the word *priapista*. Already in 1520 Luther had located the *priapi* in the *pantheon impietatis* that was Rome. *Priapista* was coined by him in German to emphasise the moral bankruptcy of the Church of Rome (Against the Falsely So-Called Spiritual Estate of the Pope and the Bishops, 1522).

 [...] so that one might call the pope not *pope*, but *Priapus*, and the papists not *papists*, but *priapists*.

But immediately things went wrong semi-technically. In 1523 the Catholic controversialist Hieronymus Emser flat out rejected Luther’s polemic (Against the Falsely Called Ecclesiast):

*Emser* turns the papists into priapists, the priests into stupid gapers, the princes into fops, humans into asses, and St Peter’s letter into magic.

Emser thus accused Luther both of subverting political authority and of turning scripture into superstition. From there it was only a small step to turning the term against the Protestants, taking aim at the marriage of their priests. The Augustinian friar and Luther’s former teacher, Bartholomaeus Arnoldi, was the first to speak

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68. Luther praef Priapias epit p. 147.
69. Engl. translation of the title from Creasman 2012, 70 Wider den falsch genannten spirituellen Stand des Papsts und der Bischöfe: cf, WA 10.2 p. 93 sqq. for the printing history of the German and Latin editions. Luther’s German text had an astonishing distribution, with many reprints already in 1522; the Latin text is printed in 1523 and 1524; the editions say nothing about the translator – if not Luther himself, it might even have been Melanchthon, who gave the German version its definitive form. Luther is certain as the inventor of the word, since our passage is also contained in the Oxford fragment of the very first and otherwise lost version, which Luther had written at the Wartburg, but was dissuaded from publishing by Spalatin and Capito.
70. “das man den Bapst nit Bapst fondern Priapus und die Papisten nit Papisten fondern Priapisten billich nennen moecht”, WA 10.2 p. 122 (1522). The same term appears in the Latin version published the next year, “Quare et Papa non Papa, sed Priapus, et Papistae non Papistae, sed Priapistae merito appellarentur”, Luther op II fol. 315r (Adversus falsa nominatum ordinem episcoporum, 1523).
71. The date of Emser’s pamphlet suggests that he reacted to the German, not the Latin version of Luther’s booklet. Emser’s text was for a large part ready in January 1523, with some additions during printing, which was finished after April of the same year (see Laube & Weiß 1997, 456–483: 456).
about the priapista[e] impudentissim[i] in 1523, by which he meant the runaway monks (exiticii monachi, 1524). The Cologne professor of theology Hochstraten (1524) drew attention to the fact that his adversaries worshipped in the synagoga priapistica of Venus and Priapus. In 1525 Eck marvelled at the priapistae Lutherani who sold their devilish slavery as the freedom of the Gospel to their followers. Such was the success of the new word that the Danish Dominican Helgesen (Paulus Helie) anointed Luther as protopriapistae and the Danish reformer Hans Tausen as “the first of the priapists in the North” when he married in 1527.

Luther did not continue to use his invention, and it rarely turns up subsequently in Protestant texts.

A semantic advantage enjoyed by the Church of Rome (ecclesia Romana) was the attribute Romanus, associating it with the city that had given the Roman empire its name and in the later Quattrocento could again lay claim to the cultural leadership of the Occident. German humanists had long promoted an ideology intended to neutralise this intellectual hegemony under the umbrella term of a new translatio artium. As Johannes Santritter, a Southern German active in the Venetian printing business, saw it in 1492, both Italy and Germany had lost Latin after the Gothic wars. Using the semantic ambiguity of Romanus, he expresses the hope that “our” imperium Romanum will soon regain the lingua Romana which is its propria lingua.

This semantic matrix was adopted by Protestant writers, spearheaded by Luther; they tried to undo the semantic ‘union’ of Roman city and Roman Church by inventing a new word for the members of the latter: Romanista.

The term seems to have started as a private moniker of Luther’s for “those in Rome”. We find the first attestation in a note Luther wrote to himself during the negotiations with Miltitz early in January 1519: a topic of these negotiations was the primacy of the Pope, and Luther may have coined “Romanist” to emphasise the geographical limits of the Roman Church’s authority. As the note is in German, it may well reflect the way Luther referred to his adversaries in private conversations, where his famulus Johannes Lonicer might have picked it up. Lonicer used it as one in a vast arsenal of insults when he got the chance to attack a Leipzig adversary of his master, the Franciscan Augustinus Alved, public lector of divinity at the university – or lictor (police officer), as Lonicer joked. Conceptually, Romanista was not important for Lonicer, though he somewhat clumsily tried his hand at a definition, based on Christ’s “he who is not with me is against me”: A Romanist was somebody (such as Alved) who claimed that “with me” no longer meant ‘with Christ’ but ‘with the Pope’, and consequently believed that the spiritual community of Christ and all believers applied quod post Gotticum bellum: quo tempore barbaries vige- re incepit: ipsa parentis lingue latina Italia suamet [?] ser- mone nedium Germanic carseranter. Sed hec rerum regina oratio spero non diu fore quod apud nostros cumulatissi- me eru: vt nostrum imperium Romanum propria lingua non careat: et lingua Romana letetur suo imperio iungi” (More or less up to our time we lack a more elegant form of speech, because after the Gothic war, when barbarity became strong, even Italy, the parent of Latin, and even more so Germany, lacked its language. I hope that it will not be long before eloquence, the queen of all things, will attain perfection in our country as well. Our Roman empire shall not long be deprived of the language which is its own. The Roman language shall rejoice in rejoining its own empire; Santritter praef astron fol. A3’ (1492), trad. partially from Jensen 1996, 65).

6. “Da mir nun dazumal Gelegenheit und billige Ursach geben war, der Romanisten Geiz anzutasten, hab ich dieselbe nicht wollen vorüber gehen lassen, und das, so vorhin gedruckt, und hernach folgen wird, wider den Abbaß lassen ausgehen”, Luther 1856, 9–10: 10 (a bullet point list for his negotiations with Miltitz, 4 or 5 January 1519). Modernised text in Luther 1951, 89.

7. He was generally attuned to the voice of his master; a marker is his use of the otherwise exclusively “Lutheran” creation, hissepties.
only to Rome.\footnote{80} Despite its peripherality within Lonicer’s text, Romanista figures prominently on the title page (\textit{Contra Romanistam fratrem Augustinum Alueldensem [...]}). In this we may recognise the hand of Luther, who had also supplied his \textit{famulus} with notes and monitored the work’s progress. It was finished at the beginning of June 1520. In the early months of 1520 Luther read Valla’s declamation about the \textit{Donatio Constantini} in Hutten’s second edition of 1519.\footnote{79}

The reading of this humanist \textit{tour de force} contributed to a hardening of Luther’s rejection of the papal authority. Now Luther himself now began to use the term Romanista in earnest. The first object of his scorn was the Roman Dominican controversialist, Sylvester Prierias.

Prierias, after several other works, had in 1519 published his \textit{Epithoma responsionis ad Lutherum}, which reached Luther at the beginning of June 1520. Given the inferiority of the work, Luther felt that the best way to refute it was simply to republish it. Prierias was a \textit{graece barbarus et latinococus} (a barbarian in Greek and a kitchen Latinist).\footnote{80} Luther wrote an afterword to the work to make sure that the readers understood that it had been written by an “organ of Satan” behind whom stood the “Romanists who have long ago gone insane in their impious fury”.\footnote{78}

In October, Luther contrasted the Church fathers and the Church whose centre was in Rome and who – one is tempted to add ‘naturally’ – lacked the most elementary language competence (Luther thus offers a parallel to Valla’s objections regarding the Latinity of the \textit{Constitutum}).\footnote{85} At the end of the decennium, Luther explicitly distinguished between the genuine Romani and Rome’s lesser offspring, the Romanistae:

> In spirit the apostle saw that from Rome and the Romans there would rise some Romanists – they are not worthy of the name “Romans” – who […] would submerge and extinguish all pious doctrine of faith and spirit.\footnote{86}

The spread of the word attests to Luther’s overwhelming impact on the agenda of the confessional debate and the explosive speed with which he reshaped Latin (and German): Melanchthon some weeks later sneered at the “Romanistae quosdam (neque enim digni sunt Romanistas satis potens est)”, \textit{Lutheri capi Balst p. 506}.

\begin{quote}
Dialogus in praesumptius osa Martini Lutheri conclusiones de potestate papae de 1518 (magori [cook] for magistri Sa- ciri Polatti), which gave Luther great joy (see Lauchert 1912, 21).
\end{quote}

81. “Romanae iam dudum iurore impietatis suae insa- nientes”, \textit{Luther WA 6} 6, 347 (June 1520).

82. “legimus in Cypriano, qui unus contra omnes Romani- stas satis potens est”, \textit{Lutheri capt Balst p. 506}.

83. See WA Index p. 304. For \textit{romanista} Lepp 1908, 9–10 (only German examples 67–69).

84. “Scirpsit Romanista quidam Galeritae Moguntinensi […]”. \textit{MBW} 139 (12 May 1521; the \textit{galerita} is Albrecht von Brandenburg, the letter referred to is not known); Luther’s letter is addressed to “Philippo Melanthoni, evangeliaste Vittembergensis ecclesiae”.

85. “[…] das disser Romanist das Abece schir kan bisz auff das B” (that this romanist knows the alphabet throughout, at least to the letter B; \textit{Luther WA 6} p. 290, \textit{Von dem Baptizm zu Rome widder den hochheruppyten Romanisten zu Leipzck}, 1520).

manist muck” (before 3 August 1520), and Hutten in a letter from 11 September 1520 mocked the greed of “that holiest senate of Romanists.” The term reached Erasmus at the latest in October of the same year in the letter of a correspondent (though he, steering clear of confessional controversy, never used it).88 Towards the end of 1520 Petrus Francisci uses it in a letter to Luther (Luther ep 364). In January 1521 we have the first example in a vernacular.89 In May 1521 J. Feynus speaks of the conventiculum Romanistarum (an equivalent to Hutten’s Romanistarum senatus) in a letter to Cranevelt written in Bruges.90 In June of the same year Michael Hummelberg, the Southern German humanist and sympathiser with Luther, explained that it was not to be wondered at that the Romanistae at the Diet of Worms had been able to impose upon the Emperor: “at his age he lacks the experience to understand and defend himself from the wiles of the Romists” (Hummelberg coins the Greek Rômistês, thus giving the new word a veneer of linguistic respectability).91 In the following period the term was adopted by many Protestant writers: by Bucer in 1521, Justus Jonas in 1522, and belatedly in 1539 by Bullinger.92 All – with the exception of Melanchthon – used it repeatedly. Pirckheimer, disgusted by both sides, noted in a letter in 1527 that the evangelical preachers of Nuremberg had picked up Romanist excuses for their licentious conduct.93 Even a Catholic bishop like Johannes Dantiscus used it to complain about a Roman barfly who attempted to deprive him of an ecclesiastical benefice with Romanist wiles (technis Romanistis, 1532).94

Cochlaeus’s sanctimonious preoccupation with the rising incivility in confessionally divided communities has an interesting subtext. His choice of terms first of all implies that it was the Protestants who had started the name-calling (since Romanista and Romanensis were the preferred terms of Luther and Melanchthon respectively). Secondly, it was only to be expected that the Catholics would reply in kind, and “naturally” with a term associated with the long fight of the Church against heresy. The Evangelicals would be identified with the Hussite Utraquists, the heretics whose founder had been burnt at

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87. “Videmus non esse aurum in Germania, nec argentum pene; siquod reliquum vero est, ipsum avarissime ad se trahit novis cottidie inventis artibus ille sanctissimus Romanistarum senatus”, Hutten ep 189 (to the Elector Frederic of Saxony, 1520). “Romanistarum feces nihil metiuimus: Si Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos?” MELANCHTHON ep 88 (1520).
88. Erasmus ep 1154 from Artlebus of Boskowitz, supreme captain of Moravia and a follower of Luther. The letter is dated by the editor Allen “circa October 1520.”
90. FEYNNUS Cranevelt-F ep 54.
91. “per aetatem adhuc simplicior est, quam ut tâvoi Poçtisnon astum dolumque intelligere vel caverse possit”, HUMMEL-
93. “Ad pristas insen Romanistarum confugiant excus- tiones asserentes non tam vitam suam quam sermonem esse considerandum” (they take refuge in the old excuses of the Romanists that one should not look at their life so much as their sermons, Pirckheimer ep 1124 BW 6 p. 381, 1527).
94. DANTISCVS ep 861 (1532).
95. MBW 953 (edited without Cochlaeus’s comments).
96. “Ioret discrepato inter partes discreetae vocabula, vt expanso aut oblitterato Christi nomine hi Romanistae aut Romanenses, illi calixtini aut Lutherani seu Luthe- risci nominarentur”, COCHLAEVS resp Mel August fol. 20r (1530).
the stake at the Council of Constance, was *ca-
liximus* (from *calix*, "chalice"). Cochlæus thus per
petuated, under the guise of decrying it, an accu
sation by Catholics already put into words by Eck at the Leipzig Debate as early as 1519, nam
ely that the Lutherans propagated Hussite heresy. *Lutheriscus* is another attempt to de
normalise the *Lutherani* semantically. Rather quixotically, it seems to have been formed after *basiliscus*, the poisonous serpent mentioned in the Psalms (90, 13) and a common metaphor for "heretic". The new word, invented by Cochlæu
us in the 1520s, never gained traction although he used it repeatedly in his polemical writing; probably its semantic message was too convoluted.

On the Catholic side, Johannes Eck tried to neutralise *Romanista* by co-opting it (1542):

So little do I reject the label *papista*, as they call the Catholics with contempt, that I have dedicated the *Apologies* to Our Holiest Lord [the Pope] and to the Holy College [of Cardinals], so that they can see that I do not scorn the label of *Romanensia* or *Romanista*.98

In the same vein Luther – again combining *papista* and *Romanus* – in 1520 also invented *papanus*. None of Luther's contemporaries took it up; but, strangely enough, it had a long-lasting fortune from the 1570s onwards.

A bigger problem than these ephemeral creations were the basic designations of the con
fessions. The Catholics retained *catholicus* ('universal', already in antiquity denoting also doctrinal orthodoxy) and Protestant attempts to *normalise* the *catholicus* / *evangelicus* / *Christianissimus* as synonymous.99 The new word, invented by Cochlæus in the 1520s, never gained traction although he used it repeatedly in his polemical writing; probably its semantic message was too convoluted.

The opponents of the Catholics annexed the label *evangelicus*, which formerly had signified only anything that "had to do with the Gospel or the Christian religion", but was now shifting to designating those who considered the gospel the sole source of doctrine.99 The new metonymy goes back to the early days of the Reformation and has no known creator. Already in 1522 Melanchthon mentions those "who call themselves partially Lutherans, partially evangelical".100 With many writers there was, as it seems, a slight unease on account of the semantic ambiguity – not every "evangelical" prince had much to do with the Gospel.101 At least initially, the metonymy was also used outside Protestant circles. Besides Arnoldi (quoted above, n. 72), there is also Erasmus, who in 1525 in a letter to Natalis Beda talked about "those evangelical, as they are called".102 Johannes a Lasco, at that point still Catholic, writes in 1528 about "their faith, which they call evangelical",103 and even the opening speech of the mayor of Ham
burg in a disputation of 1528 mentions "the new preachers who call themselves evangelical".104 In 1532 the German mystic Landsperger warned his soul not to be deceived by those who were ensnared by an evil spirit and "called themselves evangelicals".105

Characteristic of the confusing semantic situation created by the competing labels is a comment by the future Emperor Maximilian II in a conversation with the papal legate Stanislaus Hosius in 1560:

> He [Maximilian] continued this conversation [by re-
counting] that somebody had once brought up the fact that he did not openly declare whether he was a papist (*papista*) or a Lutheran; he had answered that he was neither a papist nor, as they called themselves, an evangelical (*evangelicus*), but a Christian.106

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97. An illuminating discussion of the passage is in Honée 1972, 32.
98. "ideo non recuso papistae nomen, quo Catholicos con
temptim appellant, ut 'Apologia' Sanctissimo Domino Nostro ac sacro collegio nuncupaverein, ut aperte vide
ant me non dedignare Romanensium aut Romanistarum nomen", Eck ep 394.
99. Th.LL.V2 col. 997.25–998.3 s. v. evangelicus. – "Euangelicus" as opposed to the activities of the Catholic Church was from the beginning a core concept of Reformation writing, see Luther's 65th thesis "Igitur theraui Euangelici rhetia sunt, quibus olim piscabatur viros divitii
rum". The next step is probably to be seen in the Leip
zig disputation between Luther and Eck in 1519, where Luther still treats *catholicus / evangelicus / Christianissi
mus* as synonymous.
100. "ii se partim Lutheranos, partim evangelicos vocant", MBW 236.
101. cf. "vocavit ad sese nostros tres principes, quos evange
licos vocant", Brexi Melanchthon ep 729 (1530).
102. "isti [...] Euangelici [...] ut vocant", ep 1581.
103. "fidem illorum, ut ipsi vocant, evangelicam", Acta To
niciana X no. 448 p. 432. – WITZEL (ep sig.C1') in 1531
rejected the "new Church [...] which all call evangelical" (noua Ecclesia [...] quan wulgo Euangelicam vocant).
104. This of course assumes that Hamelmann in his Historia ecclesiastica (1587) preserved the nucleus of the origi
nal wording of the mayor's speech (HAMELMANN hist II p. 964).
105. "neque ab ipsis maligno spiritu seductis – qui se evange
licos vocant – falli te sinas", LANSPERGER phar fol. 39v (1532).
106. "tum excepto ille, quendam aliquando secum egisse, quod non se satis declararet, papista ne esset an Luteranus;
How much of the phrase related in Latin by Hosius is from Maximilian or from Hosius himself (esp. the “ut ipsi vocant”), cannot be disentangled; but the story comes with an interpretive history which emphasises the conflicting nuances contained in the semantic field Lutera-nus/Evangelicus, as opposed to papista, and it was bitter for Hosius to hear that the future Emperor followed a Lutheran notion that classified both as sub-genres of Christianus. In the conversation with Maximilian, Hosius could not bring himself to let this pass without comment, but since, as he himself says, he had already acquired a reputation at court for being argumentative, he confined himself to contradicting the main point, just mumbling that being a Christianus was re ipsa being a papista.

This whole story may be a wandering anecdote, since a similar experience is attributed much earlier (1523) to an unidentified dux Holdstattensis (here the terminology is Martinianus / papista / Christianus). In this case it caused the duke to write to Luther to inform himself about papista / Christianus / Martinianus / (here the terminology is stattensis dux Hold- in datt lyff aut heffendt eyck [Leib] phar, viert eyck hundert tayiffel aut abundos (sic) aut cultro moriundo dixit. Sic isto facto pertitus (sic) ad Martinum misit, cui ipse celerrime respondere cogebatur etc.”, Joh. Magenbuch an Wolfg. Richardus, Reichart-W ed ep. Kolde p. 51–52 (1523).


108. Pickheimer 1983, 72. See Scharoun 1993. It should be noted that Scharoun does not claim Pickheimer’s authorship for the Eckius, despite of what the title of his publication may have suggested to subsequent researchers (e.g. Ebnet 2001). Similar phrases are also in Erasmus: “Germani fremunt in me quod aduerser Lutheru; et isthíc, vt video, sum Lutheranus? Ia veluti Mercurius quispiam versatilis alias sum hic, alius isthíc. Nec technis quorundam, nec pollicitis nec odi-is aliorum vnquam perpelli potui, aut potero, vt alius sim quam Christianus”, Erasmus ep 1219 (1521), and Luther’s About receiving communion under both kinds (Von beider Gestalt des Sakraments zu nehmen) from 1522, where he adhorts his readers not to regard themselves as adherents of either Luther or the Pope, but of Christ, who is the one who has redeemed them.


111. See Boehner 1934.

112. For English, the earliest example registered by the Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “protest” under “declare” to “protest” in 1554. The verb, the earliest examples are from 1550, 1579 (both from translations) and 1600. In German we read the phrase “protestiren[,] stende[,]” (protesting estates) from the Reformers (despite the “adversarial” meaning (see Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm, Deutsches Wörterbuch s.v. “protestieren” (URL: http://dwb.uni-trier.de, 20 February 2018).
A style of one’s own
An important part of the Italian humanists’ search for a linguistic identity had been the study of the style of the authors of antiquity for distinguishing characteristics. That their own style fell short of their expectations or, due to various circumstances, deviated from their classical models had been a topic of discussion as far back as Petrarch’s preface to his Familiares. A step further went the realisation that a style of one’s own might not only be unavoidable, but even desirable. Famously, Poliziano took pride in the distinct quality of his epistolary style, which did not aim at expressing Cicero: “for I am not Cicero; at least, as I believe, I express myself”; the readers, though, may react with perplexity.

Perhaps someone will come along insisting that these letters are not Ciceronian. To him I shall say [...] that, regarding epistolary style, we really need to stop talking about Cicero. Another; by contrast, will fault the very fact that I emulate Cicero. But I shall answer that I wish for nothing more than to catch up with even the shadow of Cicero.

Poliziano did not aspire to win the approval of the ‘average’ reader, just as he insisted that it was his readers’ problem if they did not understand him and refused to adjust his lexical choices towards a less rarefied vocabulary to accommodate them.

We meet the idea that an individual style could be a legitimate characteristic of one’s writing even in the sixteenth century. A notable example is Melanchthon. He shared the admiration of many contemporaries for Cicero’s style, turning Poliziano’s proud declaration of independence into a rejection of his style: “I would prefer the dimmest retracing of Cicero’s style to the genuine shape of Politian or Gellius.” Nevertheless, he saw his own style as anything but Ciceronian: “My own style is poor and meagre, nothing flowery (antheron), all narrow and without juice.” Already the insertion of the Greek word for floridus alerts us to the fact that this is not the resigned observation of a theologian bemoaning his lack of style, but a self-assured and sophisticated statement of stylistic autonomy (inspired by, among others, Cicero and Quintilian).

Melanchthon’s stylistic independence manifests itself in several ways, of which the significant presence of Greek is perhaps the most noticeable. A less obvious characteristic is his refusal to adopt confessional semantic innovations uncritically, even those that otherwise enjoyed wide circulation. An example is Romanista, discussed above. The young Melanchthon used the term once when newly coined, probably in a bow to Luther, but never again. If we look at –ista formations which Melanchthon did use, it becomes clear why: some of them are words well attested in antiquity, and amongst new formations Melanchthon prefers words that are regularly formed from Greek components (ana-baptista, theologista). Certainly on this point Romanista did not qualify. When Melanchthon

(1741), a subterranean traveller through Europe declared: “The European religion is split into two denominations, one the Protestants, the other the Romans.”

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115. “Occurret aliquis forsars qui Ciceronianias esse neget: huic ego dicam […] in epistolari stilo silendum prorsus esse de Cicerone. Rursus alius hoc ipsum culpabit, quod aemuler Ciceronem: sed respondent nihil mihi esse magis in votis quam ut vel umbram Ciceronis assequar”, ep 1, 1, translation from Poliziano 2006, 5, with some changes. A reason for the distant attitude of Poliziano towards Cicero is the latitude of the latter’s style, which suggests “that not all of his texts appear to have been written by the same author” (ut non omnia perinde quae scribit, eiusdem prorsus esse autoriusuideantur, Poliziano ep 5.1 to Bartolommeo Scala, 1492).
117. rhet p. 296: “ego uel obscura lineamenta Ciceronis malim, quam natium Politian aut Gelli faciem”. The criticism of both Politian and Gellius may be an allusion to a discussion in Gellius of an error in Cicero (neci. Att. 15,6,1) which in its turn was a topic of Politian’s Miscellanea (“errorem […] Ciceronis manifestissimum”, misc I 53). The passage from Politian was often referred to, e.g. Aldus praef 26 p. 44 (1501/2); Breck Peutinger ep 297 (not before 1538). Also otherwise Politian’s Miscellanea and Gellius are often mentioned together, e.g. Myciianus ep I 117 (1508), Erasmus in nov test p. 62 (op VI-5), Vives praelect Philol. p. 84 (1514).
argues polemically against the Church of Rome, instead of Romanista he uses Romanensis. This was a regular formation, vouched for by Perotti in the Cornucopiae (6, 234); if Melanchthon had looked it up in the index of the Aldine Cornucopiae of 1513/1517, he would also have found a reference to Festus (in Paulus’s Epitome). Its polemic value was guaranteed by Luther, who had used it in the postface to Prierias’s Epitome (the Roman bandits, Romanensibus Nimbrotis), and later attested by Eck’s plaintive reaction quoted above (see n. 97).

Conclusion:

Language change and agency
In Early Modern confessional Latin (or more specifically Lutheran Latin), lexical change operates in two parallel channels.\textsuperscript{120}

First, we have discussed a number of innovations by design: that is, where the innovator is known and enjoys prestige, and the act of innovation is itself part of the communication. By contrast with the microhistorical approach in social history which has inspired me, the agents of these language changes, far from being obscure, are frequently among the leaders in their groups, or prominent in some other way – a prominence which ensured the reception of their works and the diffusion of the language changes they initiated. Innovation and its initial spread were a highly visible process. In a case such as Romanista, early users are unequivocally referring to Luther, and with their adoption of the term are expressing their position on one side of the confessional–linguistic divide. On the other hand, the visibility of this process for a linguistically hyper-aware readership triggered or reinforced several obstacles to language change. One of these was a mechanism of norm control. This may have been occasionally at work in the case of the term Romanista. Since -\textit{ista} formations were deprecated in Humanist Latin, a sophisticated language user such as Melanchthon seems to have preferred a synonym which conformed to the parameters of Humanist Latin (Romanensis).

Another obstacle is the possibility of reanalysis, as a conscious process (\textsuperscript{1}), through which a new meaning can be blunted or even turned against its inventor.\textsuperscript{121} Such attempts were not always successful (cf. Eck’s unconvincing “I like being called a Romanist”), but sometimes worked spectacularly well (priapista). Once the initial, “design” phase of a language change has passed, further spread will mostly take place below the level of social awareness by means of what can best be described as an invisible-hand process, governed more by a mechanism to establish conformity than by a wish to indicate a position in a controversy – all the more so since successful words will eventually lose their cachet and pass into an unmarked semantic state (see protestantes “opposition at the Diet of 1529” > “opposition to the Catholic party in politics” > “one of the religions of Europe”).

Secondly, even in a self-conscious language such as Early Modern Latin, which had extremely effective mechanisms for language control, there were a number of language changes which started from below the level of social awareness, i.e. without a specific, known (at least to the contemporaries) innovator. A case in point is the metonymical use of euangelicus, an innovation which caused considerable consternation among elite speakers of Latin on both sides of the confessional divide (who liked to emphasise their “lack of approval” by adding \textit{ut vocant, “as one says”}). Since this usage initially spread through an invisible-hand process, control mechanisms which acted on changes by design were much less effective. The disapproval of the “arbiters” of confessional language

\textsuperscript{120} Lexical ‘change’ is used as encompassing change of meaning (shifts of meaning as well as extensions) and new formations. In the cases discussed here the result generally is a polysemy, on a scale from predominance of one meaning to a balanced coexistence of old and new. An example of the former is priapista, a new formation meaning ‘licentious Catholic priest’. As I have shown, the meaning is practically displaced at once (although not entirely) by the cohyponymy ‘married [and thus institutionally licentious] Protestant priest’. In the case of semantic extension in Early Modern Latin new and earlier meanings normally coexist (e.g. traducere, see Ramming 2015–2016); in some cases, the continuing polysemy is (at least temporarily) essential to sustain the derived meaning (e.g. euangelicus = “having to do with the New Testament” and metonymically “belonging to a religion which emphasises the importance of Holy Scripture over other religious texts”). A framework for all the phenomena discussed here is provided by Blank 2003.

\textsuperscript{121} For the application of ‘reanalysis’ to lexical change, see Koch 2016, 29sq. Koch’s examples refer to an unconscious process.
did not damage its widespread adoption. As we see in retrospect, the identifier “evangelical” became one of the most pervasive designations of the new denomination(s) in Latin as well as in other European languages.

**The importance of confessional language design**

We have discussed language changes that were confessionally motivated. Language mattered: it irritated the Catholics that the Protestants had claimed the label “evangelicus”, and the Protestants smarted under the designation of their denominations as the Church of Venus and Priapus. When Reinhard mentioned language change as one of the areas affected by confessionalisation, he looked for evidence of collusion between state and religion. The language changes we have seen show a different pattern. Mostly they follow the path of self-confessionalisation: new users adopted changes because they were markers of confessional identity, expressing coherence within a group and demarcation from others. The confessionalisation of Latin did not come without contradictions; the aversion against Italian style, for example, did not prevent Melanchthon from considering Italy the *mater studiorum* (see M. Pade’s chapter in this volume). The insistence on a rigorous return to the Latin of the sources did not prevent further change, and, just as Italian humanists earlier, the writers of the Confessional Age found that a changed world called for a changed language.

One fundamental change in textual culture preceding the Reformation (and this is a well-worn commonplace) was the vastly increased accessibility of texts. In manuscript culture, texts had on account of their expense and rarity unavoidably been restricted in access. The invention of printing with movable type changed this, and the text producers of the age of confessionalisation were the first to take advantage of the scaled-up economy of information flow. Lutheran text producers were crucial in introducing a facet of the emerging “European mindset” (understood as a bundle of cultural expectations common to in other ways diverse identities): while knowledge mediated by texts (understood in a material sense) had existed as far back as the invention of writing, the expectation was now that knowledge mediated by printed texts (in the first phase religious texts) could and would be widely disseminated. Commonly there are mentioned three prerequisites (or rather corollaries) of increasing information flow based on texts in this period: the availability of large numbers of copies of texts, the increasing alphabetisation of the population, and the use of the vernaculars.

It has attracted less scholarly attention that the increase in information flow was not confined to the vernaculars, but also affected Latin. Humanists had long emphasised that some versions of Latin, notably the specialised Latin of medieval scholasticism, had developed so as to be hardly understandable any more, thus drawing attention to the change and diversification that Latin had undergone since antiquity. With dictionaries and handbooks, they had developed methods to roll back that change. They had unremittingly criticised those groups of language users who resisted their linguistic ideals, advocating for a (more) universally valid language norm. Humanists had long pointed to the special status of Latin, which – unlike other languages – had to be learnt from books. They regarded imitative writing of good or even beautiful Latin as an end in itself. Understanding a text (if it was regularly produced) was the task of those who read it, not those producing it. As we have mentioned in the introduction, printed resources played an important role in the propagation of humanist ideas about language norms. As far as Latin was concerned, they began to adapt it to the new “landscape of plurality” of confessional and post-confessional Europe, an undertaking described as follows by Melanchthon:

\[123.\]

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122. This process also played out in public administration, see Hildebrandt 2015, 177–179.
123. The phrase is from Greengrass 2014, 18.
124. “Cum enim hoc tempore tota nobis latina lingua ex libris discenda est, facile judicari potest in hac parte necessariam esse imitationem, ut certum sermonis genus, quod ubique et omnibus aetibus intelligi possit nobis compareremus”, _Melanchthon rhet_ p. 284 (1539).
This article has endeavoured to describe the nascent stage of the Latin “which can be understood anywhere,” the European koinê of the following period, the language that would allow reliable communication within the “pan-European scholarly culture” of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.125

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations for authors and works quoted in the Neulateinische Wortliste (Ramminger 2003–) are not explained here.


ThLL: Thesaurus Linguae Latinae 1900–, Leipzig et al.


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125. I owe the reflection about the later European koinê to an unpublished abstract for the congress of IANLS, Albacete/Spain 2018, kindly communicated to me by D. Nodes. The quoted phrase is from McGrath 2004, 183.


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