

A Rough Guide to Romance

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First question

Where do the Romance languages come from?

Romance < Fr. *romanz* < Lat. *rōmānīcē* ‘in the spoken language’ (as opposed to *latīnē* ‘in (written / Classical) Latin’)

→ ‘(verse) narrative’ (written in the spoken language for a readership of nobility who did not use Latin)

→ ‘relating to (courtly) love’ (the usual subject of such compositions)

More particular questions:

When did the spoken forms of language become so different from the written language that they had to be written in a different way?

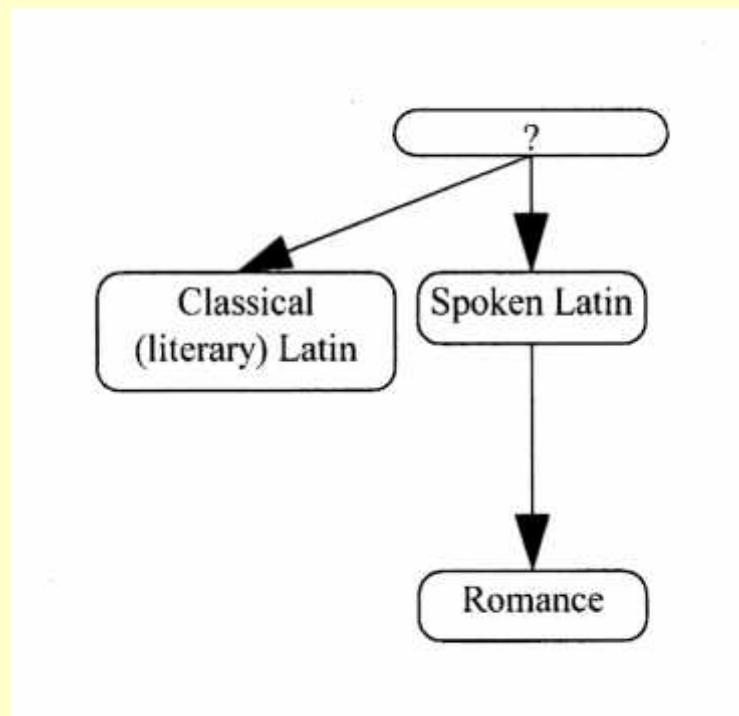
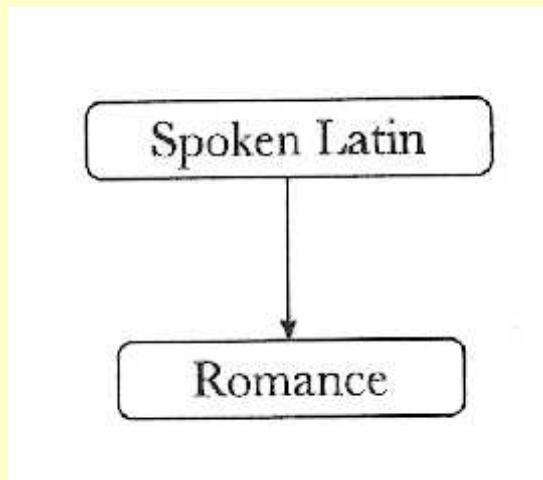
What do we actually know about spoken Latin?

How did the spoken language become suitable for use in courtly literature and more ‘practical’ literary documents?

1 The origins of the Romance languages

Divergence between written and spoken Latin

When did the spoken forms of language become so different from the written language that they had to be written in a different way?



The Strasbourg Oaths, 842 AD

Pro dō amur & p̄ xp̄ian p̄bilo & nr̄o cōmun
saluament̄ dift di ēn auant̄. inquantd̄
ſavir & podir medunat̄. ſiſalvaraieo
cift meon fradre karlo. & in adiudha
& in cad huna coſa. ſicū om p̄ dreit ſon
fradra ſalvar dift. Ino quid il mialtreſi faz&. Et
abludher nul plaid nūquā | prindrai qui
meon uol cift meon fradre Karle in
damno fit.

Pro Deo amur et pro christian poble et
nostro commun saluament, d'ist di in
auant, in quant Deus sauir et podir me
dunat, si saluarai eo cist meon fradre
Karlo, et in adiudha et in cadhuna cosa
si cum om per dreit son fradra saluar
dift, in o quid il mi altresi fazet. Et ab
Ludher nul plaid nunquam prindrai qui
meon uol cift meon fradre Karle in
damno sit.

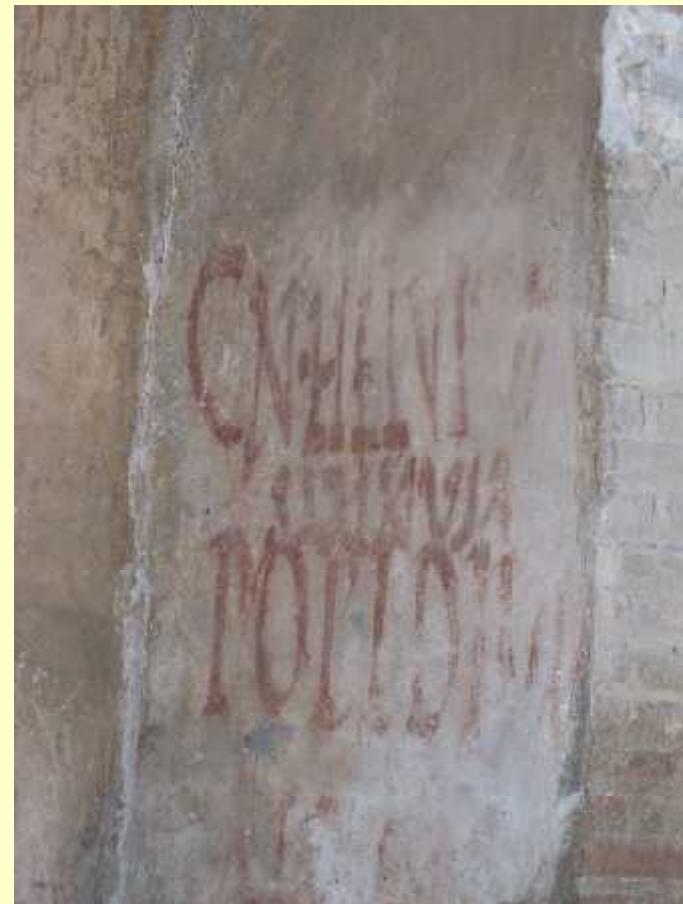
Pro dō amur & p̄ xp̄ian p̄bilo & nr̄o cōmun | ſalvament. dift
di ēn auant. inquantd̄ | ſavir & podir medunat. ſiſalvaraieo. | cift
meon fradre karlo. & in adiudha. | & in cad huna coſa. ſicū om
p̄ dreit ſon | fradra ſalvar dift. Ino quid il mialtreſi faz&. Et
abludher nul plaid nūquā | prindrai qui meon vol cift meon fradre |
karle in damno fit.

What do we actually know about the differences between spoken Latin and written Latin?

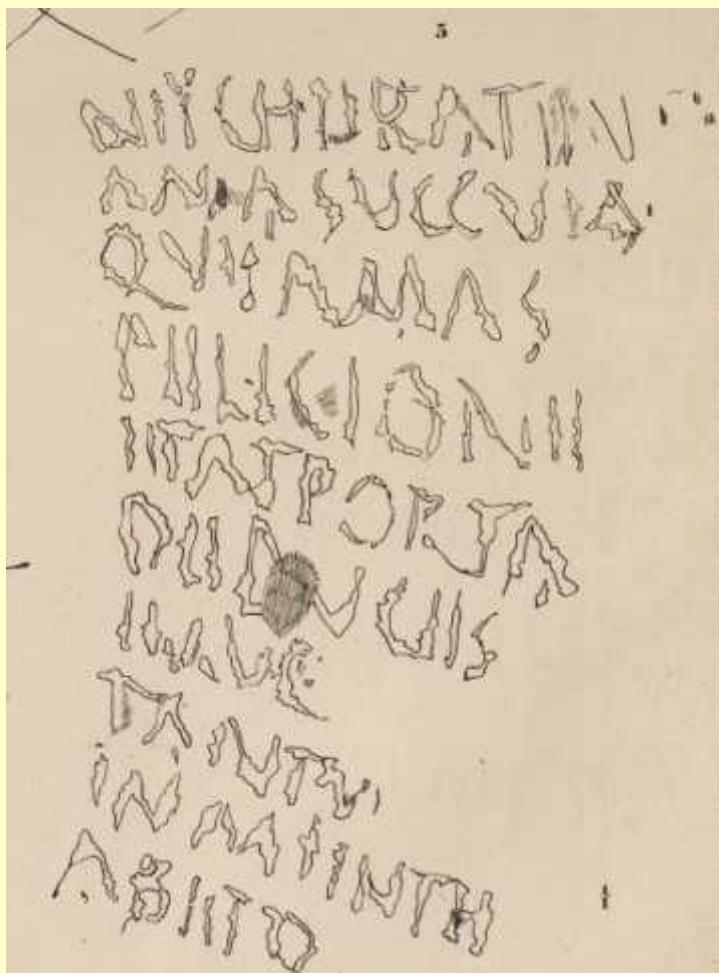
Pompeii, before 79 AD



Pompeii, before 79 AD



Pompeii, before 79 AD



2013 in eiusdem aditus pariete sinistriore,
litteris crassis alte incisis.

NIYCHIIRATII · V
 ANA SVCCVLA
 QVII AMAS
 FIILICIONII
 5 IIT AT PORTA
 DIIDVCIIS
 ILLVC·
 TANTV
 IN MIINTII
 10 ABIITO

Tab. V 5. Descripsi edidique *Bull. Inst.* 1867
p. 56.

Niycherate [pro *Nicerate*], *vana succula*, *qu(ae)*
amas Felicione(m) et *at porta(m)* deduces [pro
*dèducis opinor], *illuc* [pro *illud*] *tantu(m)* in
mente (h)abeto —.*

Scriptor sententiam non terminasse videtur.

Comparative reconstruction of ‘proto-Latin’

Classical Latin word corresponds in form and meaning to Romance.

PANE(M) > Fr. *pain*, Sp. *pan*, Ptg. *pão*, It. *pane*, Rom. *pâine*.

Romance word corresponds to an attested Latin word, though exceptional phonetic development suggests a variant Latin form.

Sp. *pájaro* ‘bird’ < PASSĀRE(M) ‘sparrow’ (*PASSARU(M))

Romance word corresponds to an attested Latin word with morphological modification.

Fr. *mourir*, Sp. *morir*, It. *morire* < MŐRĪ (*MŐRĪRE)

Romance word corresponds to an unattested morphological derivative of an attested Latin word.

Fr. *compagnon*, Sp. *compañero*, It. *compagno* based on roots COM- ‘with’, PANIS ‘bread’.

Comparative reconstruction of ‘proto-Latin’

Romance word corresponds to an attested Latin word with an unattested meaning.

Fr. *aube*, Sp. *alba*, It. *alba* ‘dawn’ < ALBA, feminine of ALBUS ‘white, bright’.

Romance word corresponds to a form attested in a non-Classical (‘Vulgar’) text’:

OFr. *seus*, Sp. *sabueso*, It. *segugio* ‘bloodhound’ < SIGUSIUM (CANEM) ‘dog from Sigusium’ (*Lex Salica*)

Fr. *aveugle* ‘blind’ < AB OCULIS lit. ‘away from the eyes’ (*Actus Petri cum Simone*)

Romance word has a hypothetical Latin origin:

Sp. *callar* < *CALLARE. plausibly < Gk. καλέω ‘to loose, drop, lower’ → ‘to drop (the voice)’.

How did the spoken language become suitable for use in courtly literature and more 'practical' literary documents?

Borrowing from Latin and Greek

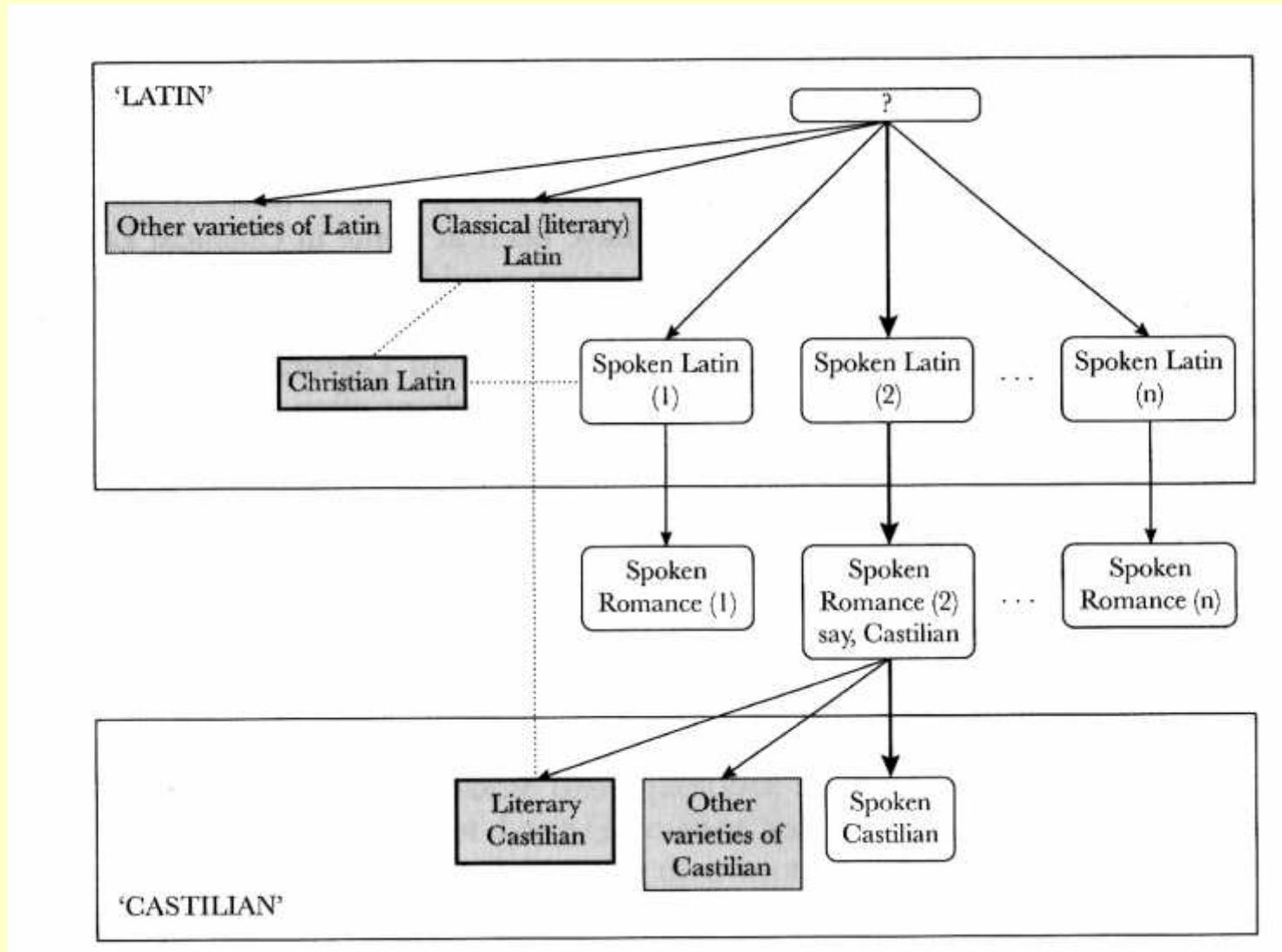
Tengo una **documentación bastante útil clasificada en una forma bien elemental**, porque tampoco tengo **espacio**, pero quizás sea, digamos el prime, la primera semía de una **futura biblioteca de servicio**, ¿no? Ahora, aparte destos, hago el trabajo de **secretaria de...** uno de los **agregados comerciales**. Y... bueno, todo lo quel **secretariado implica lógicamente**, tipear, tomar **dictado**, en fin, toesas pequeñas tareas **despreciadas por los intelectuales**.

'I've got very useful documentation classified in a very elementary fashion, because I haven't got room, but maybe it's the first, the first seed, let's say, of a future library service, mm? Now, besides that, I work as a secretary to one of the commercial attachés. And, well, all that being a secretary implies, of course: typing, taking dictation, in short, all those little jobs which are despised by intellectuals.'

Rocío Caravedo (ed), 1989. *El español de Lima: materiales para el estudio del habla culta* (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú), p.116

cf. **problema** 'problem', **tema** 'topic, question', **interesante** 'interesting'

A revised view of the relation between the Romance languages and Latin



Second question

How many Romance languages are there and where are they spoken?

More particular questions:

What is meant by a language? Status: official, standardised, vehicular, notion of identity and sameness.

Why did some varieties find favour as the basis of the new standardised languages?

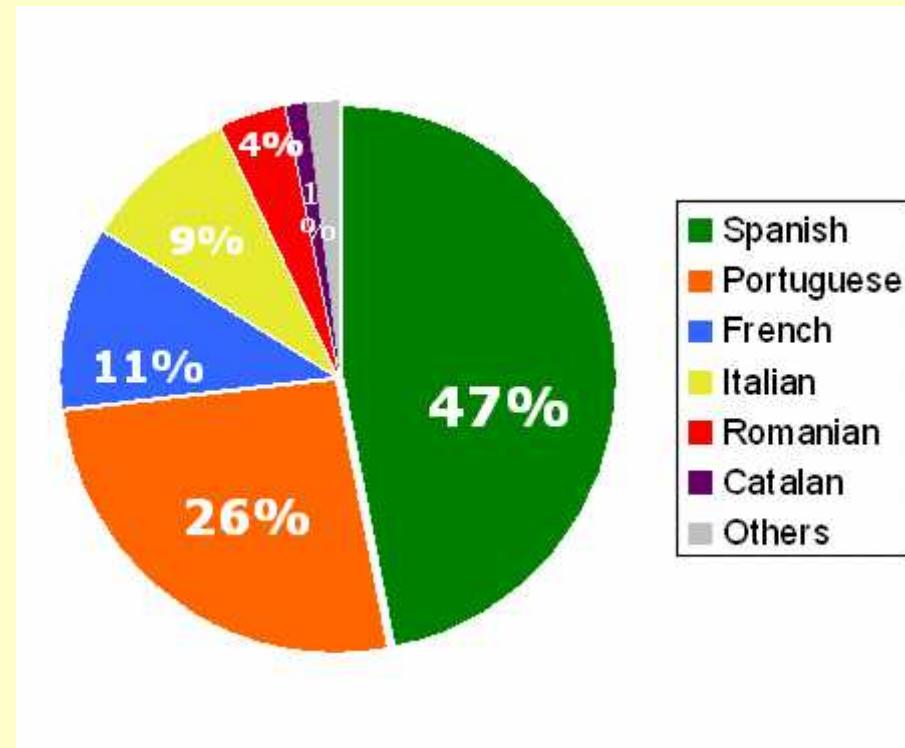
How unified are the modern Romance standard languages?

How many Romance languages are there?

Languages with official status

Spanish
Portuguese
French
Italian
Romanian
Catalan

Romansh
Valencian
Galician
(Aranese)
(Sardinian)
Corsican
Walloon
Papiamentu
Aromanian



How many Romance languages are there?

Wikipedias

Aragonese
Aromanian
Asturian
Catalan
Corsican
Emilian-Romagnol
Extremaduran
French
Friulian
Galician
Haitian (creole)
Italian
Ladino (=Judeo-Spanish)
Ligurian
Lombard
Mirandese

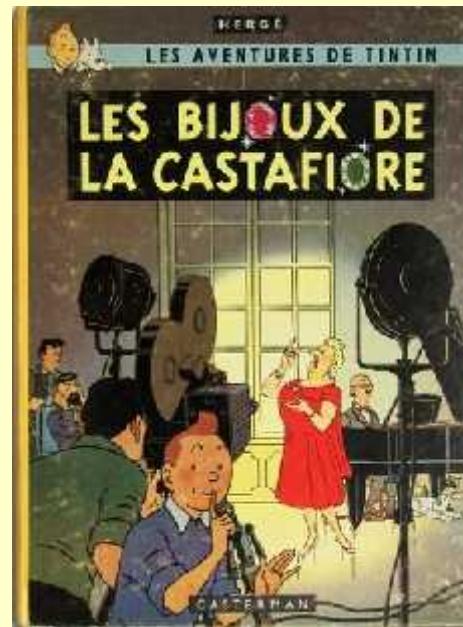
Moldovan?
Neapolitan
Norman
Occitan
Papiamentu (creole)
Piedmontese
Portuguese
Romanian
Romansh
Sardinian
Sicilian
Spanish
Tarantino
Venetian
Walloon
Zamboanga Chavacano (creole)

2 The making of Romance languages How many?

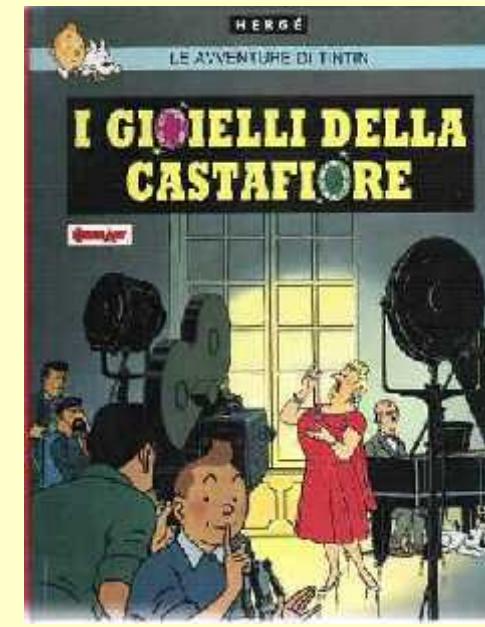
Romance varieties in Tintin



Spanish



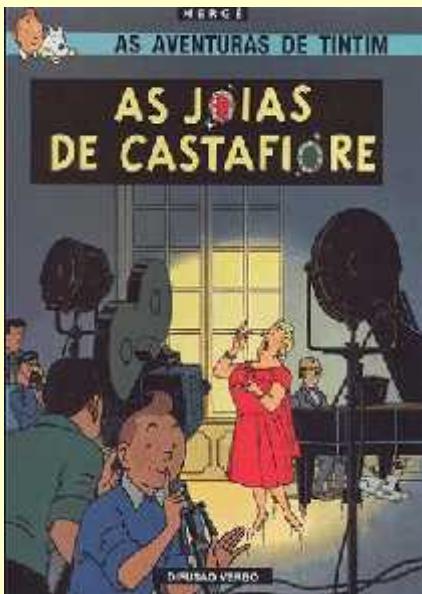
French



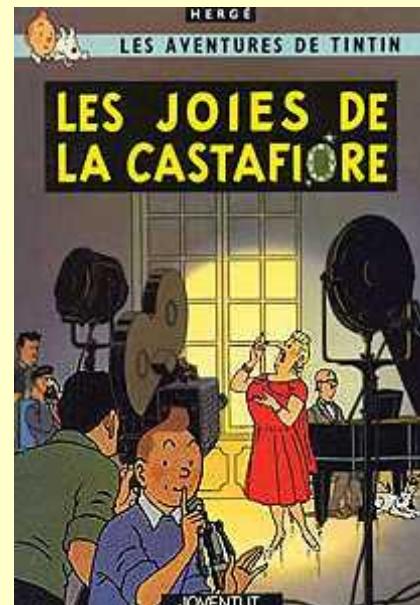
Italian

2 The making of Romance languages How many?

Romance varieties in Tintin



Portuguese



Catalan



Romanian

2 The making of Romance languages How many?

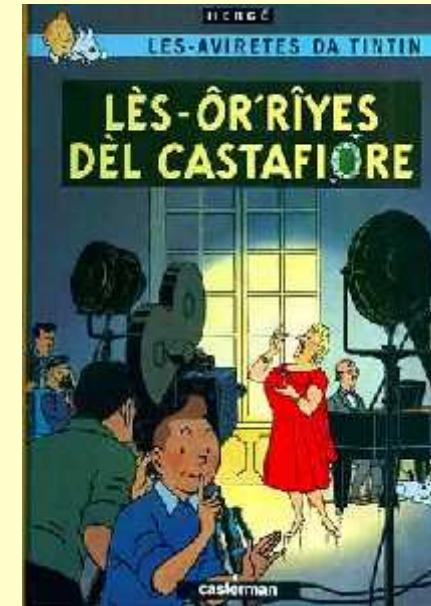
Romance varieties in Tintin



Corsican



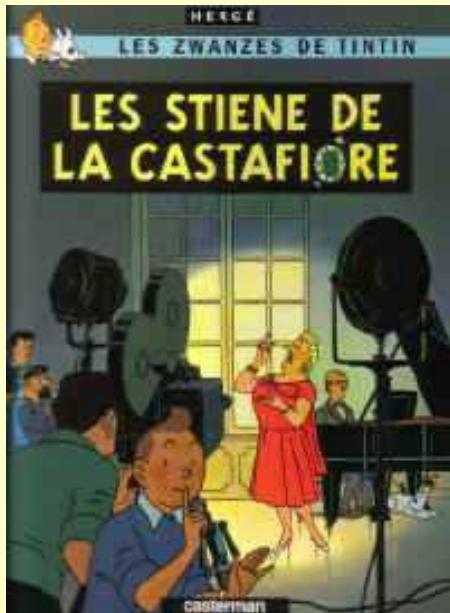
Galician



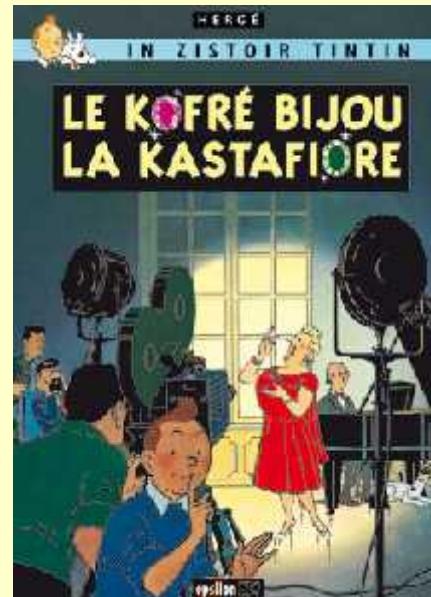
Wallon (Charleroi)

2 The making of Romance languages How many?

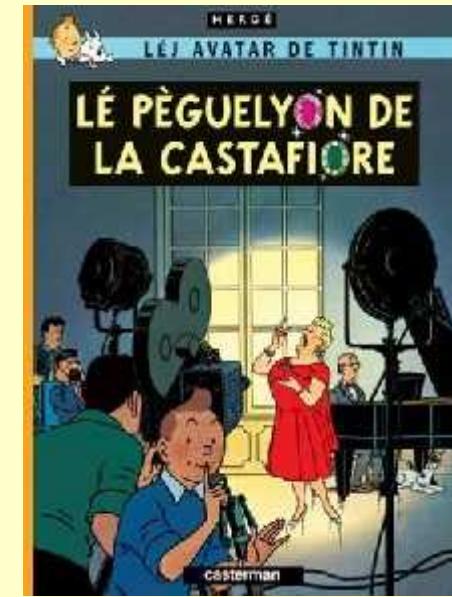
Romance varieties in Tintin



Bruxellois



Réunionnais



Arpitain Bresson

2 The making of Romance languages How many?

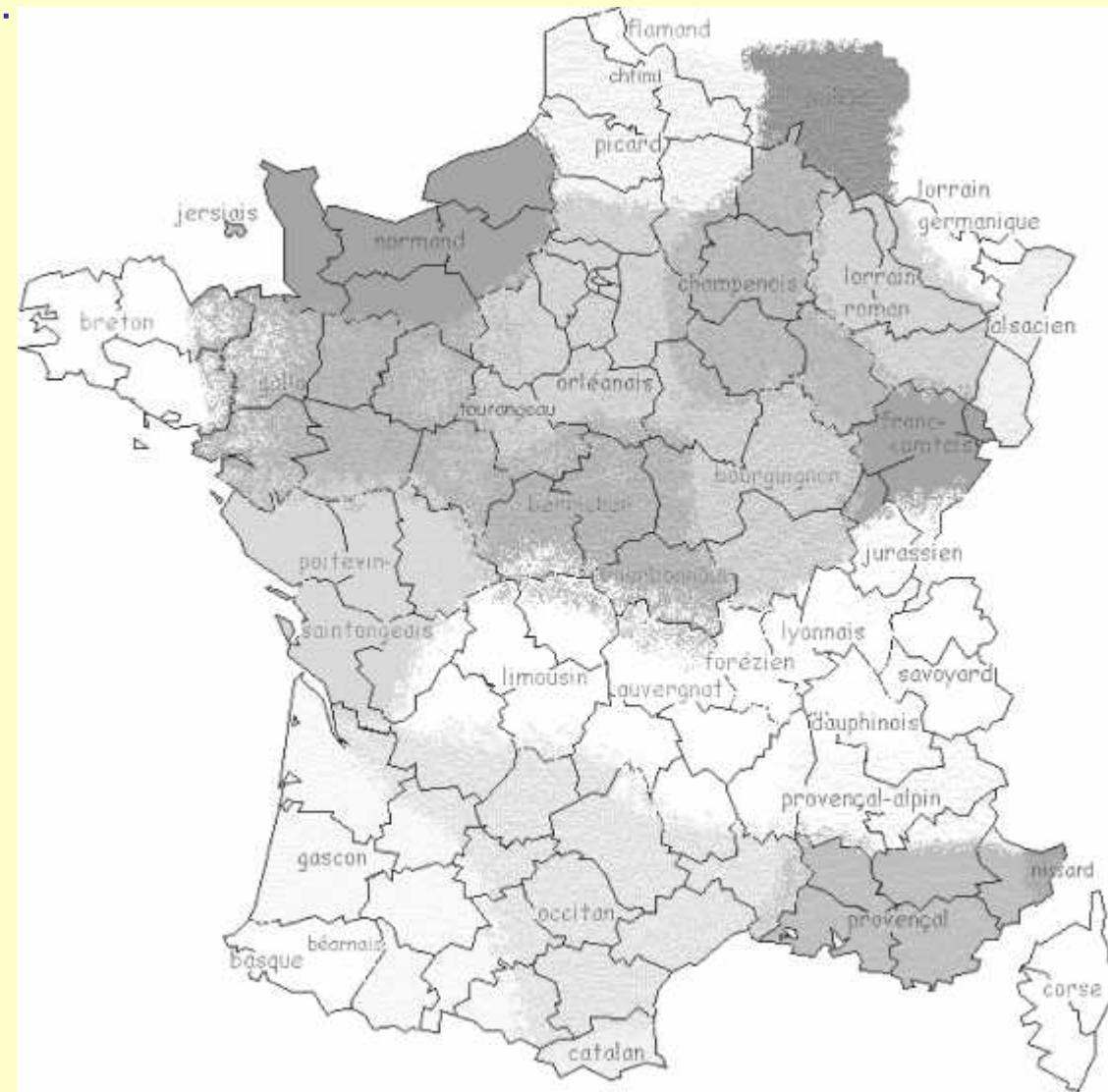
Ethnologue list:

Aragonese or High Aragonese (*Aragonés, Altoaragonés, Fable Aragonesa, Patués*).
Aranese (*Aranés, Aranese, Aranaïs, Gascon, Aranese Occitan*).
Arumanian or Macedo-Rumanian (*Armina*).
Asturian (*Bable*).
Auvergnat (*Auvernhas, Auverne, Occitan*).
Calo or Iberian Romani (*Calão, Gitano*).
Catalan or Catalonian or Catalan-Valencian-Balear (*Catalá, Bacaves*).
Corsican (*Corso, Corsu, Corse, Corsi*).
Emilian-Romagnol (*Emiliano-Romagnolo, Emiliano, Sammarinese*).
Extremaduran (*Extremeño, Ehtremeñu, Cahtuo*).
Fala or Galaico-Extremaduran (*A Fala De Xalima, "Chapurreau"*).
Franco-Provençal.
French (*Français*).
Friulian or Frioulian or Priulian (*Furlan, Frioulan, Friulano*).
Galician (*Galego, Gallego*).
Gascon (*Occitan*).
Istro-Rumanian.
Italian (*Italiano*).
[**Judeao-Italian** (*Italkian*).]
Ladin (*Dolomite, Ladino*).
[**Ladino** (*Sephardic, Judeao-Spanish, Judesmo, Dzhudezmo*).]

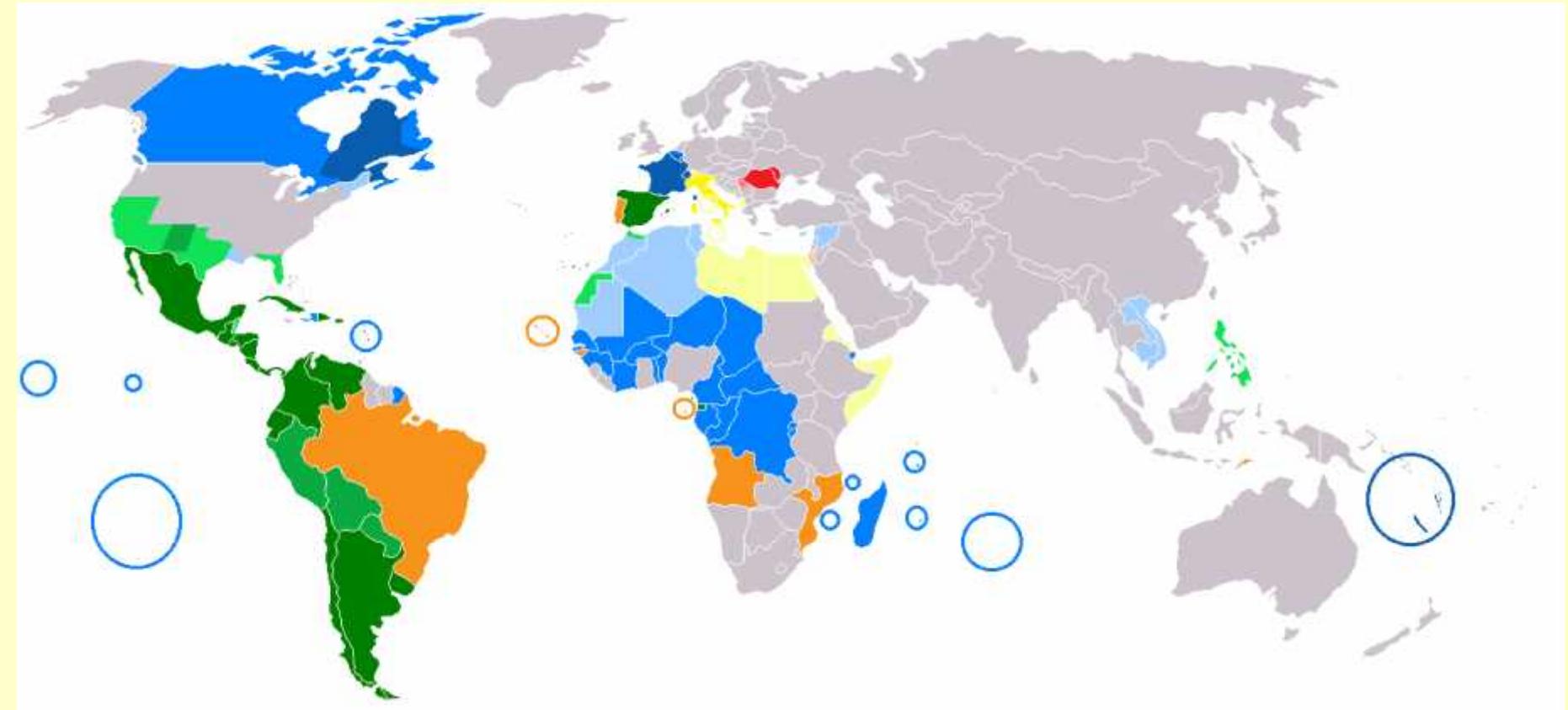
Languedocien (*Lengadoucian, Languedoc, Langadoc, Occitan, Occitani*).
Ligurian (*Ligure*).
Limousin (*Lemosin, Occitan*).
Lombard (*Lombardo*).
Megleno-Rumanian or Meglenitic (*Meglenite*).
Mirandês (*Mirandesa*).
[**Mozarabic** (*Mozárabe*).]
Neapolitan-Calabrese (*Napolitano-Calabrese*).
Occitan (*Provençal, Prouvençau, Occitan*).
Piedmontese (*Piemontese*).
Portuguese (*Português*).
Rumanian or Romanian or Daco-Rumanian (*Român*).
Sardinian (Central) or Logudorian (*Logudorese, Sard, Sardarese*).
Sardinian (Northeastern) or Gallurian (*Gallurese*).
Sardinian (Northwestern) or Sassarian (*Sassarese*).
Sardinian (South) or Campidanian (*Sardu, Campidanese, Campidese*).
[**Shuaudit** or Judeo-Provençal (*Judeo-Comtatine*).]
Sicilian (*Siciliano*).
Spanish or Castilian (*Español, Castellano*).
Venetan (*Vèneto*).
[**Zarphatic** or Judeo-French.]

(http://www.orbilat.com/General_Survey/List_of_Romance_Languages.html)

Romance regional varieties: France



Where are they spoken?



Why did some varieties find favour as the basis of the new standardised languages?

An example: French, based on the *francien* of the Ile-de-France

Paris as a royal, cultural and legal centre in the Middle Ages

- Abbey of Saint-Denis, where the royal court was held
- Foundation of the University of Paris in 1231
- Establishment of the courts of law in Paris in the 13th century

Political dominance of the north (Albigensian crusade of 1213)

Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts (1539) provided for all legal and official business in the Kingdom being conducted in 'langage maternel françois'.

Centralising policies in French Revolution and under Napoleon

How unified are the modern Romance standard languages?

A contrast: Spanish vs. Portuguese, both diasporic languages (languages of empire)

Spanish

One language planning body, the Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española

Recognition of a pluricentric norm. Bello's acknowledgement of the European standard in the mid-19th century with the aim of preserving American unity. Spanish attention to Latin-American usage especially since 1992.

The most comprehensive official orthography, dictionary and grammar of all the Romance languages

Portuguese

No common language planning body

Brazilian perception of difference from European Portuguese. Different publishing norms; BP often deemed to be a different language from EP.

A loosely applied agreement on spelling; no official dictionary or grammar

Third question

How did the Romance languages come to be so different when they had apparently a common ancestor?

Variation in (spoken) Latin results in different lexical choices:

'APPLE'

Fr. *pomme* Lat. **pōma* < *pōmu(m)* 'fruit of any kind'

Sp. *manzana* Lat. *(*māla*) **mattiana* 'apple (etc) of type cultivated by Gaius Matius (a 1st century AD gastronomic expert)'

Pg. *maçã* id.

It. *mela* Lat. **māla* < *mālu(m)* 'apple (and some other kinds of fruit)', with change of gender

Rom. *măr* Lat. *mālu(m)* 'apple (etc)'

How did the Romance languages come to be so different when they had apparently a common ancestor?

Different phonetic changes

Lat. *caballu(m)* 'horse'

Fr. *cheval*

Cat. *cavall*

Sp. *caballo*

Pg. *cavalo*

It. *cavallo*

Rom. *cal*

How did the Romance languages come to be so different when they had apparently a common ancestor?

Different phonetic changes

Lat. *genūcūlu(m)* '(little) knee'

Fr. *genou*

Cat. *genoll*

(O)Sp. *hinojo*

Pg. *joelho*

It. *ginocchio*

Rom. *genunchi*

Reading

Elcock, W.D., ed. John Green, 1975. Romance Languages (London: Faber)

Alkire, Ti, Carol Rosen & Emily Scida, 2010. Romance Languages: A Historical Introduction (Cambridge: University Press)

Herman, József, trs Roger Wright, 2010. Vulgar Latin (Pennsylvania State University Press)

Maiden, Martin & Adam Ledgeway (eds), 2016. The Oxford Guide to the Romance Languages (Oxford: University Press)

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<http://webspace.qmul.ac.uk/cjpountain/schools.htm>