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## ON THE CONCEPT OF *BARBAROLEXIS* IN THE ROMAN GRAMMARIANS\*

RAIJA VAINIO

*Cinnam, Cinname, te iubes vocari.  
non est hic, rogo, Cinna, barbarismus?  
tu si Furius ante dictus esses,  
Fur ista ratione dicereris.*

(Mart. 6,17)\*\*

The conventional definition of the concept of *barbarolexis* – given by later Roman grammarians and modern scholars – is the use of barbarian words in the language. It is related to the concept of barbarism, i.e. impropriety in speech or pronunciation,<sup>1</sup> and by some *barbarolexis* is also included in it.<sup>2</sup> This is almost all that we are able to read about the subject.<sup>3</sup> My intention is to show how this concept became differentiated from *barbarismus*, and for what reason.

In the Stoic list of the virtues of language the most important is ἑλληνισμός, the correct Greek.<sup>4</sup> It can be violated by errors, of which two

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\* I am greatly indebted to the seminar of Classical Philology at Turku University, and especially to Prof. Toivo Viljamaa, Dr.Ph. Anne Helttula, and Dr.Ph. Martti Nyman.

\*\* "Cinnamus, you want to be called Cinna. But isn't that, I ask you Cinna, a barbarism? If your name was earlier Furius, you would, following the same logic, now be called Fur (= Thief)."

<sup>1</sup> The definition is given in the Oxford Latin Dictionary.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik*. München 1960, §476-478.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. L. Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement grammatical: étude et édition critique*. Paris 1981, 137 and 150; H. Mihăescu, *O barbarismo segundo os gramáticos latinos*. Coimbra 1950 (trans. by M. de Paiva Boléo and V. Buescu), 27.

<sup>4</sup> But already before the Stoics there was a treatise on the subject by Theophrastus the Peripatetic (c. 370 – c. 287 BC), of which Cicero (*orat.* 79) informs us. Cf. E. Siebenborn, *Die Lehre von der Sprachrichtigkeit und ihren Kriterien: Studien zur anti-*

are mentioned in particular: βαρβαρισμός and σολοικισμός.<sup>5</sup> This division is found for the first time in Diogenes of Babylon (240-150 BC).<sup>6</sup> G. Calboli<sup>7</sup> thinks he could have got it from Chrysippus, who had dedicated two books to solecisms.<sup>8</sup> Later, this division was adopted by the Romans.<sup>9</sup>

According to Aulus Gellius, the word *barbarismus* was not in use – neither in Latin nor in Attic Greek – before the era of Augustus. Gellius quotes a passage from P. Nigidius Figulus' (d. 45 BC) *Commentarii grammatici*, explaining that the same mistake which in his time was defined as barbarian had been defined as rustic by Nigidius.<sup>10</sup> This implies that the grammarians had no uniform theory of this question.

Contrary to the opinion of Aulus Gellius, in Greek the first occurrence of βαρβαρισμός is found in Aristotle. The meaning is 'unclear speech', caused by the use of rare words (γλωτταί).<sup>11</sup> Also in Dionysius Thrax γλωττα has this meaning.<sup>12</sup> These words had their origin mainly in the dialects of Greek, but J. Lallot thinks they could also come from other

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ken normativen Grammatik. Amsterdam 1976 (Studien zur antiken Philosophie 5), 24.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Lausberg 1960 §470; Siebenborn 1976, 26; Holtz 1981, 71-72; M. Baratin & F. Desbordes, La 'troisième partie' de l'*ars grammatica*. HL 13 (1986) 215-240.

<sup>6</sup> Diog.Laert. 7,59 = Diog.Bab. frg. 24 in *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*.

<sup>7</sup> G. Calboli, *Cornifici rhetorica ad C. Herennium*: introduzione, testo critico, commento. Bologna 1969, 303.

<sup>8</sup> Diog.Laert. 7,192: περὶ σολοικισμῶν α' and περὶ σολοικιζόντων λόγων πρὸς Διονύσιον α'.

<sup>9</sup> L. Holtz is of the opinion (1981, 137-138) that βαρβαρισμός was previously the exact opposite of ἑλληνισμός, and σολοικισμός was the reverse of ἀττικισμός.

<sup>10</sup> Gell. 13,6 tit.: *quod vocabulum 'barbarismi' non usurpaverint neque Romani antiquiores neque Attici*. 13,6,2-4: *quod nunc autem 'barbare' quem loqui dicimus; id vitium sermonis non barbarum esse, sed 'rusticum' et cum eo vitio loquentes 'rustice' loqui dictitabant*. P. Nigidius in commentariis grammaticis: *'rusticus fit sermo,' inquit, 'si adspires perperam.'* Itaque id vocabulum, quod dicitur vulgo 'barbarismus', qui ante Augusti aetatem pure atque integre locuti sunt, an dixerint, nondum equidem inveni. Cf. also 5,20,4-5: *sed nos neque 'soloecismum' neque 'barbarismum' apud Graecorum idoneos adhuc invenimus; nam sicut βάρβαρον, ita σόλοικον dixerunt*.

<sup>11</sup> Poet. 22, 1458a: (sc. ὄνομα) ξενικὸν δὲ λέγω γλωτταν καὶ μεταφορὰν καὶ ἐπέκτασιν καὶ πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τὸ κύριον. ἀλλ' ἂν τις ἅπαντα τοιαῦτα ποιήσῃ, ἢ αἴνιγμα ἔσται ἢ βαρβαρισμός· ἂν μὲν οὖν ἐκ μεταφορῶν, αἴνιγμα, ἐὰν δὲ ἐκ γλωττῶν, βαρβαρισμός.

<sup>12</sup> Dion.T. 1 Lallot = *Grammatici Graeci* 1:1,5-6.

languages.<sup>13</sup> A passage from Sextus Empiricus supports this view (adv. gramm. 1,313); he explains that there is no difference in intelligibility between a foreign and an obsolete word because they sound equally strange. Accordingly, γλωττα also refers to foreign words,<sup>14</sup> and βαρβαρισμός means speaking in a foreign way.

In the Iliad (2,867) we find the word βαρβαρόφωνος referring to the Carians (the word βάρβαρος does not exist in Homer). In Herodotus (5th c. BC) the same adjective occurs in two oracles, referring to Persians (8,20; 9,43). If we derive the adjective from βάρβαρος φωνή, we obtain the meaning 'speaking barbarously'.<sup>15</sup> By the time of Strabo at the latest, who comments on the same passage of the Iliad, the word had developed the meaning 'speaking bad Greek' (14,2,28). Although L. Holtz (1981, 137) regards it as likely that the original sense of βαρβαρισμός is that of *barbarolexis*, an intrusion of a barbarian word into "pure" language, I find the sense deriving from βαρβαρόφωνος more probable.

For the Greeks, anyone who was not a Greek was a barbarian, including the Romans. For a long time this view was accepted by the Romans themselves.<sup>16</sup> But the expansion of the Romans and their subjection of the Greeks strengthened the national spirit in Rome and aroused resistance to the notion that Latin too was a barbarian language.<sup>17</sup> In consequence, there developed a theory that Latin was a dialect of Aeolic. These ideas culminate in the work of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who explains that Latin is not completely barbarian nor really Greek but

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<sup>13</sup> La grammaire de Denys le Thrace. Paris 1989, 77-79.

<sup>14</sup> Already Lausberg (1960, 599 note 1) connects *barbarolexis* with γλωττα.

<sup>15</sup> The original meaning of this word has usually been described as 'speaking a foreign tongue' but E. Lévy is of the opinion that it could have been 'stumbling, stuttering'. E. Lévy, Naissance du concept de barbare. Ktéma 9 (1984) 5-14.

<sup>16</sup> E.g. Paul. Fest. p. 36: *Barbari dicebantur antiquitus omnes gentes, exceptis Graecis. unde Plautus Naevium poetam Latinum barbarum dixit*; Plaut. Trin. 19; Asin. 11; Mil. 211; even Cicero in *Orator* (160): *cum Phrygum et Phrygibus dicendum esset, absurdum erat etiam in barbaris casibus Graecam litteram adhibere aut recto casu solum Graece loqui*. Cf. M. Dubuisson, Le latin est-il une langue barbare? Ktéma 9 (1984) 55-68.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Murethach, an eighth-century commentator of Donatus, who explains that the concept of *barbarismus* originates from that time (*Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis* 40,189): *illi autem subiugati, postquam coeperunt latinam discere linguam, corruperunt eam decretumque est ab illis Romanis illud vitium appellari barbarismum a barbaris nationibus, id est alienationem*.

something in between (ant. 1,90,1).<sup>18</sup> For the Romans, therefore, the word "barbarian" referred to foreign peoples, Greeks excluded.

The Greek language had an exceptional position in the Roman world. It was never regarded as a barbarian language; on the contrary, it had high prestige among the Roman nobility.<sup>19</sup> The use of Greek words in Latin was generally approved of – and inevitable – for the very reason, as Quintilian says, that "Latin is to a great extent translated from Greek". Loanwords could be taken from Greek to denote things for which there were no words of Latin origin, or for which the Greek ones were more suitable; likewise, the Greeks borrowed words from Latin.<sup>20</sup> It is important to keep this in mind when we try to understand the substance of *barbarolexis*.

In Latin literature we find the word *barbarismus* in the *Rhetorica ad C. Herennium*, composed probably between 86-82 or 86-75/70 BC.<sup>21</sup> This is also the first existing passage where *barbarismus* and *soloecismus* are specified by a Roman writer, barbarism as a mistake in a single word, solecism concerning many words, i.e. an error in syntax.<sup>22</sup> This definition was thereafter to be repeated from century to century.

The concept of barbarism is divided into categories by Quintilian in two different ways. This again implies that the linguistic theory was far from fixed. Quintilian states in the first book of his *Institutio oratoria* (1,5,6) that there are some barbarisms which appear in writing and others which arise in speech (could we see here a continuation of βαρβαρόφωνος?). All of them, however, are noticed in speech: if you write a word incorrectly, you are also

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. Dubuisson 1984, 59-60. The first person to formulate this theory was perhaps Philoxenus of Alexandria (1st century BC; fragment in A. Mazzarino, *Grammaticae Romanae fragmenta aetatis Caesariae*. Turin 1955, 396).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. J. Kaimio, *The Romans and the Greek language*. Helsinki 1979 (*Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum* 64), 320-331.

<sup>20</sup> Quint. inst. 1,5,58; also 3,6,97; Gell. 2,26,18: *Vergilius ... maluit verbo uti notiore Graeco, quam inusitato Latino*. On the Greek point of view cf. Sextus Empiricus (adv.gramm. 1,234): it is acceptable to use a foreign (i.e. Latin) word, even if a Greek word is available, if the foreign one has become more common. Cf. also Kaimio 1979, 295-315.

<sup>21</sup> Calboli 1969, 17.

<sup>22</sup> Rhet. Her. 4,12,17 *Latinitas est, quae sermonem purum conservat ab omni vitio remotum. vitia in sermone, quo minus is Latinus sit, duo possunt esse: soloecismus et barbarismus. soloecismus est, cum in verbis pluribus consequens verbum superius non adcommoatur. barbarismus est, cum verbis aliquid vitiose efferatur. haec qua ratione vitare possumus, in arte grammatica dilucide dicemus.*

bound to pronounce it erroneously.<sup>23</sup> Quintilian observes that there are some mistakes which do not appear in writing. According to another, tripartite division (1,5,7-10), *unum genus barbarismi* is the use of a foreign word in Latin speech,<sup>24</sup> an African or Hispanian word like *cantus*,<sup>25</sup> or Gallic like *ploxenum* and *casamo*, or Sardinian like *mastruca*. The last example is taken from Cicero's speech *Pro Scauro* (45), where he uses it – as Quintilian says, again successfully avoiding a criticism of Cicero – to raise a laugh. The *alterum genus* is defined as *barbare loqui*, that is, as a barbarous and uncivilized way of speaking, expression of a vulgar and aggressive temper.<sup>26</sup> Finally, the *tertium genus* is the barbarism caused by the addition (*adiectio*), omission (*detractio*), substitution (*inmutatio*), or transposition (*transmutatio*) of a letter or a syllable.<sup>27</sup>

But the first time we find the term *barbarolexis*, it is not applied to a foreign word. A third-century grammar attributed to Sacerdos<sup>28</sup> regards

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<sup>23</sup> This remark of Quintilian is not to be taken literally; he is well aware of the fact that in Latin every sound did not have a written equivalent, which caused uncertainty in writing (cf. inst. 1,4,7-11).

<sup>24</sup> Diomedes quotes a fragment from Varro, where different kinds of syllables are enumerated (GL 1,428,22-28 = Varro frg. 243 in H. Funaioli, *Grammaticae Romanae fragmenta*. Leipzig 1907). Among them also barbarian ones are mentioned: ... *barbarae sunt, ut gaza; graeculae, ut hymnos Zenon*. This may have something to do with our subject. As usual, Greek is distinguished from barbarian words.

<sup>25</sup> A. Magne thinks that *cant(h)us* is probably Gallic (s.v. in Dicionário etimológico da língua latina. Rio de Janeiro 1953), but A. Ernout & A. Meillet regard it as a loan in Celtic, of uncertain origin (s.v. in Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine: histoire des mots. Paris 1979<sup>4</sup>).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Consentius in the 5th century (gramm. 17,21-18,3 Niedermann): *tendant longius plerique scriptores vitium barbarismi. nam quicquid in habitu, quicquid in gestu, quicquid in motu, etiam quicquid citiore aut tardiore incessu quis peccat, ut id ab elegantia eruditi hominis distare videatur, barbarismum dicunt*.

<sup>27</sup> For a closer discourse, see W. Ax, *Quadripertita ratio: Bemerkungen zur Geschichte eines aktuellen Kategoriensystems (Adiectio – Detractio – Transmutatio – Immutatio)*. HL 13 (1986) 191-214; Holtz 1981, 150-153; Siebenborn 1976, 43-45. These four categories are known to us also from Varro: discussing the origin of words, he shows the ways in which they can be changed (ling. 5,6).

<sup>28</sup> The edition of H. Keil (*Grammatici Latini* 6,415-546, Leipzig 1874) contains three books attributed to Marius Plotius Sacerdos. Two of them survive in a single manuscript, and the author's name is given as M. Claudius Sacerdos. Whether the third book *De metris*, attributed on the basis of the manuscripts to Marius Plotius Sacerdos, really was written by the same person, is uncertain. Cf. M. Baratin, *La naissance de la syntaxe à*

*barbarolexis* as a defect similar to *barbarismus* with the difference that the former occurs in writing, the latter in speech. Therefore, he follows the division of barbarisms already found in Quintilian but gives one of the types a name of its own.<sup>29</sup>

Why is it just a mistake in writing that Sacerdos calls *barbarolexis*? If my view of the original sense of barbarism is right, the new coinage *barbarolexis* would have been needed for the more recent class of mistakes, while *barbarismus* was restricted to the original sense, the errors in speaking.<sup>30</sup>

Sacerdos says that a barbarism can be caused in eight ways, and on the basis of his definition we can say that four of these mistakes can also belong to the category of *barbarolexis*. The four which cannot appear in writing (and are therefore only barbarisms) concern vowel length (a short vowel pronounced long and vice versa) and accent (an accent placed on the wrong syllable or two accents with places interchanged). The four which can be both are: *aspiratio* (an extra aspiration), *lenitas* (a lacking aspiration), *immutatio litterarum* (a substitution or transposition of letters), and – a quite interesting point which I have not found in other grammarians – *immutatio loquellarum*, a replacement of Latin with Greek (and vice versa). He means that you make a *barbarolexis* if you write a Greek word (*philosophus*) as if it were Latin (*filosofus*), or vice versa (*phelix pro felix*).

Sacerdos names two classes of *immutationes*. *Immutatio litterarum* also includes a *transmutatio litterarum*, a change in the order of two letters, to

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Rome. Paris 1989, 509-510; V. Law, *The insular Latin grammarians*. Woodbridge 1982 (*Studies in Celtic History* 3), 13; 25-26.

<sup>29</sup> The treatise on barbarism is part of the first book of his grammar. GL 6,451,4-15: *Barbarismus est vitiosa dictio unius verbi, qui fit modis octo: per productionem, ac si dicas pērnix et per producās, quae correpta est: per correptionem, stetērunt te correpta, quae longa est: per aspirationem, ac si dicas hora vultus, cum ora debeant dici: per lenitatem, ac si dicas oram tempus diei, cum horam debeas dicere: per immutationem litterarum, ac si dicas ohminem pro hominem: per accentum, ac si dicas iste et te acuas, cum is debeas: per immutationem loquellarum, ac si graecum nomen latine dicas vel latinum nomen graece scribas vel dicas, ut puta si philosophum per f scribas, cum per p et h scribere debeas, vel si felix scribas per p et h, cum f ratio exigat: per immutationem accentuum, ac si dicas Cērēs ce longa, cum brevis sit, et res brevis, cum sit longa. haec vitia, cum dicuntur, barbarismi sunt; cum scribuntur, barbarolexis.*

<sup>30</sup> In ancient linguistics barbarism traditionally applies to λέξις (a single word) and solecism to λόγος (a thought which is expressed with several words); λέξις alludes to the form, λόγος to the meaning. Cf. Holtz 1981, 139; Calboli 1969, 302.



which the example *ohminem pro hominem* points:<sup>31</sup> the transposition of letters can be considered to consist of two substitutions. As to the famous question already seen in Quintilian (inst. 1,5,19), whether *h* is a letter or only a mark of aspiration, Sacerdos accepts the first alternative, as his example shows.

*Immutatio loquellarum* must concern sounds, too. Otherwise there would be only seven categories and Sacerdos' list would be deficient, since he says that a barbarism can arise in eight ways. In this context, therefore, the word *loquella* 'word' must also have the meaning 'sound'. Sacerdos does not mean the substitution of any Latin word by any Greek one or vice versa: actually the word itself remains the same.

The example *philosophus* must have been chosen to illustrate both writing and pronouncing although Sacerdos does not use the verb *dicas* in connection with this example. On the other hand, he does not use the verb *scribas* in his definition (*si graecum nomen latine dicas*). The whole structure of his classification points in the same direction. The examples for the other three categories which can be both *barbarolexis* and *barbarismus* always allude to both the written and to the spoken form of the word at the same time. If the word *philosophus* did not, it would be the only exception. Therefore Sacerdos must imply that there was a difference between the pronunciation of *ph* and *f*.

Quintilian suggests the same by saying that the Greeks found the Latin *f* difficult to pronounce.<sup>32</sup> Also his description of *f* in the twelfth book (12,10,29) – that it is hardly a human sound – indicates that there was no such "horrible" sound in Greek. The learned men, who knew that *ph* was the equivalent of the Greek φ,<sup>33</sup> could produce this sound in the right words and did not confuse it with *f*. However, by Sacerdos' time the Greek φ had de-

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<sup>31</sup> Grammarians usually give *olli pro illi* as an example of *immutatio litterarum* (e.g. Don. mai. 654,1 Holtz, Char. gramm. 350,17 Barwick). This is a stock example, while *ohminem pro hominem* is to Sacerdos of current interest, and tells us about regional differences in pronunciation.

<sup>32</sup> Inst. 1,4,14: ...'fordeum' 'faedos'que pro adspiratione velut simili littera utentes: nam contra Graeci adspirare ei solent (the reading by Winterbottom; others read *adspirare f ut φ*, nevertheless the meaning remains the same). Quintilian gives as an example Cicero, who, when delivering his *Pro Fundanio*, had laughed at a witness who could not pronounce the first letter of the name of the defendant.

<sup>33</sup> In classical Greek φ represented an aspirated plosive /ph/, not a voiceless spirant like the Latin *f* (cf. L.R. Palmer, *The Greek language*. London 1980, 207-208).

veloped into a fricative; it begins to be transliterated with *f* in the first century AD.<sup>34</sup> Yet we should bear in mind that as late as the sixth century the problematic nature of *f* still occupies the grammarians, for Marius Victorinus says (gramm. 3,21 Mariotti): *f quidam errantes duplicem dicunt, quia ex p et h composita videatur*. As a guardian of the pure language Sacerdos shows an interest in this problem. Diomedes (GL 1,423,28-30) gives the same advice as Sacerdos about the use of *f* and *ph* in writing: *et hoc scire debemus quod f littera tum scribitur, cum Latina dictio scribitur, ut felix. nam si peregrina fuerit, p et h scribimus, ut Phoebus Phaethon*.<sup>35</sup> Quintilian too discusses the replacement of Greek letters by Latin ones (*z-s* and *y-u*).<sup>36</sup>

Sacerdos' *immutatio loquellarum* means that you make a mistake, both in speaking and in writing, if you take an element – in his example a sound and its written equivalent – from one language and put it into another. There is no evidence to show whether this element could be a whole word. In any case we cannot say that this class of *barbarolexis* would be the same as *barbara dictio*, a barbarian word, because Greek words are discussed.<sup>37</sup> And we must keep in mind that Sacerdos also mentions the alternative: *si graecum nomen latine dicas*, if you violate Greek by a Latin pronunciation. But what we have here is an interference between or rather a confusion of two languages. Neither Latin nor Greek were barbarian languages, but if a word – either a Latin or a Greek one – was corrupted by an element from the other language, this was a *barbarolexis*, a barbarous way of writing the word.

The definition of *barbarolexis* unanimously accepted by later grammarians is the one given by Donatus (in the middle of the fourth century): *in nostra loquella barbarismus, in peregrina barbarolexis dicitur*,

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<sup>34</sup> Palmer 1980, 178.

<sup>35</sup> Also in 1,424,17-18: *pro hac (sc. f littera) in Graecis dumtaxat nominibus p et h utimur, ut Phaethon*.

<sup>36</sup> Inst. 12,10,27-28: *namque est ipsis statim sonis durior, quando et iucundissimas ex Graecis litteras non habemus (vocalem alteram, alteram consonantem, quibus nullae apud eos dulcius spirant: quas mutuari solemus quotiens illorum nominibus utimur; quod cum contingit, nescio quo modo hilarior protinus renidet oratio, ut in 'zephyris' et 'zopyris': quae si nostris litteris scribantur, surdum quiddam et barbarum efficient) et velut in locum earum succedunt tristes et horridae, quibus Graecia caret*. For a discussion of this passage, see R.G. Austin, *Quintiliani Institutionis oratoriae liber XII*. Oxford 1972<sup>2</sup>, 175-176.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Diomedes above, who uses the words *Latina dictio* and *peregrina* (not *barbara*).

*ut siquis dicat mastruga cateia magalia* (mai. 653 Holtz). He gives three examples of *barbarolexis*, and his commentators explain the origin of these barbarian words: *mastruga* is Sardinian (*sagum*, 'cloak'),<sup>38</sup> *magalia* African (*casae*, 'huts')<sup>39</sup> and *cateia* Gallic (*telum*, 'missile weapon').<sup>40</sup> Pompeius (5th c.) adds a Median word *acinaces* (*gladium*, 'sword').<sup>41</sup> Augustine (AD 354-430) mentions a Punic word *dellas* (*carex*, 'sedge, reed-grass') as an example of *barbarum*,<sup>42</sup> his equivalent to *barbarolexis* (GL 5,496,6-12), and provides a further explanation: *si alicuius gentis verbum est non receptum*, if you use a foreign word which is not acceptable. But, he adds, there is no name for the error committed by using a word of jargon, *nullius omnino gentis verbum*, which is not any language at all.

It is less obvious in Donatus but quite clear in Pompeius that not only the use of a barbarian word, but also its use in an erroneous way was called *barbarolexis* (GL 5,284,24-28): *praeterea quaeritur, quem ad modum fiat (sc. barbarismus) in peregrinis verbis. ... in istis verbis siqui peccaverit, non dicitur fecisse barbarismum, non dicitur fecisse metaplasum, sed dicitur fecisse barbarolexin. siqui velit dicere mastruga aut cateia aut magalia, si peccaverit in istis ipsis verbis, non dicitur barbarismus aut metaplasum, sed barbarolexis*. Therefore Murethach, who later explains the subject,

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<sup>38</sup> This example is already found in Quintilian (inst. 1,5,8), cf. above. Pomp. GL 5,284,21-22. The information given by Isidore of Seville in his *Origines* in the sixth century is confused: in 19,23,1 he does say that *mastruca* is a characteristic cloth of the Sardinians, but in 19,23,5 he at first defines it as *vestis Germanica* and then gives a quotation from Cicero, where it is said to be of Sardinian origin. Murethach (189,75-76) causes more confusion by quoting the wrong passage: "according to Isidore *mastruca* is a German garment".

<sup>39</sup> Pomp. GL 5,284,21-23; cf. Isid. orig. 15,12,4: *magalia dicta quasi magaria, quia 'magar' Punici novam villam dicunt, una littera commutata L pro R, magalia, magaria*.

<sup>40</sup> Isid. orig. 18,7,7; Iulian.Tolet. gramm. 1,3 Lindsay; Mur. 190,77. Pompeius (GL 5,284,23) considers it a Persian word. In a fragment from *de commentis Einsidlensibus* (possibly from Remigius of Auxerre, in the ninth century) it is regarded as African (frg. 18a gramm.suppl. cxv). The fragment also gives the examples *mastruga* and *magalia*, to which the word *mapalia* with the same meaning is added.

<sup>41</sup> Consentius gives the same examples (2,6-10 Niedermann). Also Servius (or Sergius) hints at the existence of foreign words which cause a *barbarolexis* (GL 4,444,7-8): *habemus enim multa (sc. verba) et a Gallis et ab Africis et ab aliis gentibus*.

<sup>42</sup> Diomedes (GL 1,449,6-11) has also a definition of *barbarum*; he divides the mistakes in speech into three types: *obscurum inornatum barbarum*. *Barbara oratio* contains solecisms and barbarisms.

could not clarify *barbarolexis* as the usual *barbara dictio*<sup>43</sup> but needed a new term *alienatio* (189,66-68): *quisquis enim propriam corrumpit linguam barbarismum facit, corrumpens autem barbaram non barbarismum sed barbarolexin, id est alienationem*. He also explains why the errors are termed *barbarolexis* as well (190,87-89): *omnia ista, quia latina non sunt, quocumque modo dixeris, barbarolexin facies, quia nescis proprietatem illarum pronuntiationum*. Because you do not know – you are not expected to know – how these words should be pronounced.

From Charisius on *barbarolexis* does not refer to Greek words. The examples given by grammarians, and already those in Quintilian, are words originating in the Roman provinces, where the local languages had influenced the spoken Latin. The grammarians did not want them to spread into the "pure" Latin as well. Consultius Fortunatianus, a rhetorician living probably in the fourth century, instructs his readers to avoid words which are characteristic of certain nations (rhet. 3,4):<sup>44</sup> *gentilia verba: ... quae propria sunt quarundam gentium, sicut Hispani non cubitum vocant, sed Graeco nomine ancona, et Galli facundos pro facetis, et Romani vernaculi plurima ex neutris masculino genere potius enuntiant, ut hunc theatrum et hunc prodigium*.<sup>45</sup> His example *non cubitum sed ancona* shows that he agrees with Quintilian: in his opinion these words – also Greek ones – were to be avoided, if there already was a Latin word which was sufficiently exact.

A *barbara locutio* is distinguished from a *barbarismus* in the *de differentiis liber* (GL 7,526,19-20): *barbara locutio proprie peregrina est, barbarismos fit etiam in latini sermonis locutione*. The definition of *barbara locutio* here is the same as the one given later for *barbarolexis*. Chronologically this is in accordance with the attribution of the treatise to Cornelius Fronto, who lived about AD 100-176.

The term is given in the form of *barbaros lexis* by Cominianus (in Char. gramm. 350,4 Barwick) and Diomedes, probably through Charisius.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> E.g. Char. gramm. 350,4 Barwick; Diom. GL 1,451,30; Audax GL 7,361,21.

<sup>44</sup> But he does not use the term *barbarolexis* – perhaps because he refers to Greek words as well.

<sup>45</sup> We can see here the regional division which led to the development of the Romance languages: Spanish, French, Italian. I am grateful to Prof. Viljamaa for making me aware of this passage.

<sup>46</sup> It is clear from Diomedes that the term must be regarded as two separate words, as he says *barbaros autem lexis* (GL 1,451,30-32).

This could imply that Cominianus – who is known to us only through Charisius (4th century) – lived in the third century, as the term *barbarolexis* had not yet been established.

To my knowledge the only passage in Greek literature where foreign words are included in the concept of barbarism or are even discussed in connection with it, is found in the late *scholia* on Dionysius Thrax (GG 1:3, 447,26-28). It says that it is a barbarism to call a palm-branch βάρβαν,<sup>47</sup> because when speaking of a branch, you should specify the name of the tree (κλάδος τοῦ φοίνικος). Generally speaking, you should not introduce a foreign word into your language, even if it had no suitable word for the concept. I think that this concerns common things only, not for instance technical vocabulary. In any case the theory does not seem to be very ancient, especially when we bear in mind what Sextus Empiricus says (see footnote 20 above). The example is taken from the Septuagint (Maccab. 1,13,51) or from the New Testament (Ev.Jo. 12,13); this implies that ancient Greek grammarians had neither examples on the subject nor even any theory of it. Moreover, in the passage of the *scholia* the word βάρβαρος is not used: the idea is expressed by the words περὶ λέξιν ξένην. If the Romans had adopted the theory of *barbarolexis* from the Greeks, one would expect to find it,<sup>48</sup> whereas now it seems rather to be the opposite.

The Greeks do not seem to have worried about barbarian words as much as the Romans did. Instead, they seem to have been more interested in the different dialects of Greek.<sup>49</sup> In the passage of the *scholia* on Dionysius Thrax where the foreign words are mentioned, another class of barbarism is defined as περὶ διάλεκτον. The passage is unique also in this regard; the divisions given by Herodian, Choeroboscus, Polybius and an anonymous writer discussing barbarisms and solecisms contain nothing of the kind.<sup>50</sup> If an unfamiliar word had found its way into a Greek dialect, its most probable

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<sup>47</sup> According to P. Chantraine, a loan from Egyptian (s.v. in Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque: histoire des mots. Paris 1968).

<sup>48</sup> I have found only two passages in which βάρβαρος is used in the connection of λέξις. Sextus Empiricus (adv.gramm. 1,313) uses them once to refer to foreign words, but not in connection with barbarisms. The other passage (sch. Dion.T. GG 1:3,346,26) does not discuss barbarisms, either, but syllables in barbarian words. Usually expressions such as βάρβαρος φωνή and βάρβαρον ὄνομα are used.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. K. Versteegh, Latinitas, hellenismos, 'arabiyya. HL 13 (1986) 425-448.

<sup>50</sup> J.Fr. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca e codicibus regiis* III, 229-261; Choer. GG 4:1,103-104.

origin was another dialect of the same language. The answer to the question "what is barbarian, what is not?" was more simple for the Greeks than for the Romans. Therefore the Romans also needed a more specific terminology.

Originally *barbarismus* was an all-inclusive term which contained all that was connected with foreign, barbarous behaviour: uncivilized manners, cruelty, aggressive temper, uncultivated speech. Gradually it was limited to indicate an incorrect use of language, and finally it became a technical term referring only to spoken or written mistakes in a single Latin word.

The examples of *barbarolexis* given by Donatus and his commentators are mainly taken from poets.<sup>51</sup> The grammarians used the same source when they discussed barbarisms. They explain that a poet had the right to commit a "barbarism"; but then it was called a metaplasm instead, and was not an error but a virtue. But examples referring to two opposite things were a problem for the grammarians. Consentius points this out; he realizes that examples of barbarisms should not be taken from poets but from colloquial language; expressions which can be heard by everyone ought to be used (gramm. 10,17-11,2 Niedermann). On the other hand, the grammarians taught that a barbarism and a metaplasm arise in the same way. Yet the concept of metaplasm has no equivalent to *barbarolexis*. In my opinion this might be one reason why the Roman grammarians had to specify *barbarolexis* by distinguishing it from *barbarismus*.

I come to the conclusion that the Roman grammarians began to employ the term *barbarolexis* probably around the turn of the 2nd to the 3rd century. The development of the concept would have been from *barbarismus* to *barbara locutio / dictio*, for which the Roman grammarians would have employed a term formed from Greek (βάρβαρος λέξις)<sup>52</sup> and latinized it as *barbarolexis*, because there was no sufficiently accurate term in Latin.

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<sup>51</sup> *Mastruga* Cic. Scaur. 45; *cateia* Verg. Aen. 7,741; *magalia* Verg. Aen. 1,421; *acinaces* Hor. carm. 1,27,5.

<sup>52</sup> It may have been influenced by the Greek definition of barbarism, ἀμαρτάνειν περὶ μίαν λέξιν. Cf. footnote 30.