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### REFERENCE ARTICLE

## History of the Occitan and Gascon Lexicon

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### Abstract

The process of differentiation of the Occitan and the Gascon lexicon began under the Roman Empire, increasing from the 8th century onward, and was further accentuated during the course of the second millennium. The dialects but also the written varieties of Medieval Occitan and Gascon were highly developed and remained pluricentric. The mechanisms of lexical innovation engendered by the development of the various textual traditions, as well as by intertextuality, caused the vocabulary to develop considerably between the 12th and the 15th centuries. From the 16th to the 19th centuries, the process of elaboration of written culture began to grind to a halt, although the two languages continued to be spoken throughout the territory. The traditional vocabulary continued to diversify, parallel to the development of regional literature and the constitution of significant lexical inventories. Thus, at the start of the contemporary period, the dialectal varieties of Occitan and Gascon had reached a pinnacle of diversification, but use of the spoken variety diminished throughout the 20th century, despite the powerful revival movements of the 19th and 20th centuries. Future research should intensify its efforts in the field of lexicological analysis with the object of emphasizing the richness of dialectal varieties and the expressivity of contemporary literature.

**Keywords:** Occitan, Gascon, Latin, lexicon, dialects, linguistic elaboration, discourse traditions, onomasiology, philology

**Subject:** Historical and Diachronic Linguistics, Semantics, Linguistics

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# 1. Defining the Object of Study

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## 1.1 General Overview

The vocabulary of Occitan and Gascon has undergone a fundamentally endogenous evolution within the Romance languages. It largely consists of words inherited directly from the Latin lexicon, and it is highly dialectalized. It thus comprises fewer substrate words than Sardinian, for example, with the possible exception of Gascon (cf. section 2.3), fewer Germanic loanwords than French, fewer words of Arabic origin than Spanish (cf. Kiesler, 2006, pp. 1653f.; see also Putzu, 2019, this volume; Olivier, forthcoming, this volume; Dworkin, 2021, this volume), and for the Middle Ages, fewer French loanwords than Italian. Particularly during the Middle Ages, however, Occitan was subject to a high degree of interference from Catalan and Aragonese, as well as from French from the 16th century onward (cf. sections 1.2 and 4.1). In addition, contact between eastern and Alpine Provence and northern Italy has been uninterrupted (cf. Trotter, 2006, pp. 1779f.). More surprisingly, both Occitan and Gascon contain fewer learned borrowings from Latin than do French or Italian. Finally, as the elaboration of the two languages never progressed beyond the regional stage, neither in the medieval nor in the modern period, and as the territory in which they are spoken is of a relatively mountainous nature, lexical diatopic variation is particularly pronounced.

A quantitative account of the evolution of Occitan vocabulary from its constitution during the 7th and 8th centuries up to the 21st century would necessitate the study of an enormous amount of lexemes (cf. section 1.4): for the Middle Ages, the current dictionaries list around 33,000 (30,000 entries in the DOM-en-ligne, 23,000 of which belong to LvP, 1909; cf. Lv, 1894–1924; DOM, 1996–2000). For the modern period, Mistral contains approximately 68,000 headwords. Thus, all in all, the Occitan lexicon may be said to contain between 75,000 and 80,000 lexical forms, or at least 200,000 lexical units (= lexemes) if polysemy is taken into account, because a lexical unit is defined as the combination of one lexical form with one meaning (cf. Glessgen, 2011).

Analyzing a corpus of this size is no easy task, as research in the field in general is very patchy. Far fewer studies have been carried out on Occitan than on neighboring Romance varieties, particularly since the 1980s. In France, until the end of the 1970s two-thirds of all university theses in linguistics were in historical linguistics or dialectology, and a quarter of these were on Occitan. Only 10% of all doctoral dissertations since the 1990s, however, have been written on topics relating to historical linguistics, and those on dialectology or Occitan are almost nonexistent.

For Gascon, the state of the art is even less advanced than for Occitan. For the Middle Ages, the DEAG (2024a), once completed, will contain 12,000 headwords, most of which will correspond to the headwords of the DOM. Modern dialects can be studied only by combining various local or regional dictionaries, and there is no existing tradition of interpretative studies on Gascon vocabulary or its development (cf. the overview; Kristol, 2023).

## 1.2 The Dialects of Occitan and Gascon

From a dialectological point of view (cf. section 4.2.1) it is necessary to distinguish

1. The two main southern varieties of Occitan: Languedocian and Provençal, which represent the most elaborated varieties both during the late Middle Ages and today.
2. The northern varieties: Auvergnat and Limousin (= Alverno-Limousin), and Vivaro-Alpin (= southern Dauphinois), which shares certain traits with Alverno-Limousin, but whose vocabulary is similar to that of Provençal (cf. section 4.2.1). Vivaro-Alpin also displays genetic similarities with southern

Francoprovençal. For the Middle Ages the region known as *Occitania submersa*, which today corresponds to the southwestern part of the *oïl* domain (Charente and Poitou), must also be considered.

3. The Gascon varieties, which display a certain degree of internal diversification between the Pyrenees (Béarn, Bigorre, and the Val d'Aran), the central region (Gers), the Atlantic coast (Landes), and the northern amphizone (Bordeaux and its surrounding area). The status of Gascon has been the subject of perpetual debate. Despite the persistence of ideological views to the contrary, however, the individual character lent to this variety by its internal features is very pronounced. Gascon displays a high degree of phonetic differentiation dating back to the first period (cf. Chambon & Greub, 2002, as well as Baldinger, 1962, pp. 331f. or Straka, 1987, p. 408); its vocabulary contains a large number of words unusual in Occitan (cf. *infra* section 3.2; section 4.2.1), and the elaboration it underwent during the medieval period was clearly endogenous and much more highly developed than previously thought (cf. Glessgen, 2021). Although there is no doubt that significant interference occurred between southeastern Gascon and western Languedocien as well as between the Bordelais and the Périgord, the internal physiognomy of Gascon remains clearly recognizable.

The ontological problem of the relationship of Occitan and Gascon with the Romance varieties beyond the Pyrenees remains; the similarities, of a primarily lexical nature, between Languedocien and neighboring eastern Catalan are remarkable (cf. Payrató, 1991; Trotter, 2006). The similarities between Aragonese and Occitan or Gascon varieties are equally pronounced. Nevertheless, Occitan was already distinguishable from Catalan in the Middle Ages as a result of their differing developmental history. During the modern period, the internal evolution of the different varieties shows a sharp divergence due to contact with the respective predominant languages of French and Spanish. This divergence has been further accentuated by the intensive elaboration undergone by Catalan since the beginning of the 20th century.

### 1.3. Periodization

The evolution of Occitan and Gascon may be considered according to the following periods (for the *oïl*-speaking area, cf. Carles & Glessgen, 2015, pp. 112–115):

1. The earliest period (c. 500–c. 1100), is predominantly oral, and is characterized by the absence of any real vernacular texts; during this period, the nature of linguistic variation in the zone known as *Romània continua*—Gallo-, Italo-, and northern Iberoromània—is more homogeneous than in the later periods, even though the dialectalization of Gascon and also Occitan had taken place long before (cf. section 2).
2. The Middle Ages saw the appearance and elaboration of a written tradition (c. 1100–c. 1500 for Occitan, and from c. 1180/1220 onward for Gascon). In Southern Occitan a rich textual tradition developed, whose evolution essentially followed the same lines as that of the neighboring varieties. Certain text-types, however, were established earlier in southern Occitan varieties than in the others. The same cannot be said for northern Occitan and Gascon, where non-documentary texts remained few and far between (cf. section 3).
3. During the modern period (c. 1500–c. 1800), Occitan and Gascon came under the sociolinguistic domination of French, which was adopted as the written language across the whole of Gallo-Romance territory from the 16th century onward (cf. Brun, 1923a, 1923b; Carles, 2023; Courouau, 2009). Although firmly established as a written variety, French remained a foreign language for the vast majority of the Occitan- and Gascon-speaking population, particularly in rural areas. Moreover, Occitan or Gascon vocabulary did not undergo the process of elaboration characteristic of the standard Romance languages in the 16th and 18th centuries (cf. section 4.1).
4. The contemporary period (from c. 1800 onwards) has seen a progressive increase in divergence from the

standardized languages. Although Occitan and Gascon remained in use as a spoken language until the first half of the 20th century, with French, the standard variety, being spoken by a very small minority until the 19th century, they subsequently experienced a sharp decline due to the absence of intergenerational transmission. It may be assumed that Occitan will die out as a “natural” language during the course of the next few decades, followed nearly a generation later by Gascon (cf. Bernissan, 2012). During the 19th and 20th centuries, Occitan and also Gascon underwent substantial elaboration (as did several other primary Romance dialects), as a result of the efforts of several revival movements; however, these were not met with the expected widespread acceptance (cf. section 4.2.2).

## 1.4 Current State of Research

The inventory of medieval and modern Occitan vocabulary is relatively well advanced due to the existence of various specialized dictionaries (completed and in progress), as well as the FEW (*Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 1922–2003; cf. FEWGuide, 2019; FEWCompl, 2010). The situation is more critical for Gascon, for which the FEW and DAG/DEAG remain the only general reference works. The following list contains the reference dictionaries for the Middle Ages (cf. the detailed description FEWGuide, 2019; pp. 135–179, which also offers an introduction to electronic corpora and onomastic resources, including those for medieval Latin; cf. section 3.1 for the vocabulary of the troubadours and that of documentary texts):

- Rn = Raynouard (1838–1844). *Lexique roman, ou Dictionnaire de la langue des troubadours* (6 vols.): despite its age, this work remains a helpful resource;
- Lv = Levy (1894–1924), *Provenzalisches Supplement-Wörterbuch: Berichtigungen und Ergänzungen zu Raynouards Lexique roman* (8 vols.): essential supplement to Rn, particularly from the letter C onwards; [the volume of LvP contains the nomenclature of both Lv and Rn, with no further documentation];
- DAO = Baldinger (1975–2007). *Dictionnaire onomasiologique de l'ancien occitan* (10 fasc.): uncompleted but very rich for the (few) semantic fields treated;
- DOM = Stimm et al. (1996–2020). *Dictionnaire de l'occitan médiéval*. [www.dom-en-ligne.de](http://www.dom-en-ligne.de): complete for *a-album* only; however, the online version allows convenient access to Rn and Lv and includes hyperlinks to the FEW as well as valuable but non-elaborated complementary material;
- DAOA = Olivier (2009). *Dictionnaire d'ancien occitan auvergnat: Mauriacois et Sanflorain, (1340-1540)*: c. 12 000 lexemes from documentary sources; a valuable supplement to Rn/Lv;
- DAG/DEAG = Baldinger (1975–2021). *Dictionnaire onomasiologique de l'ancien gascon* (23 fasc.); Glessgen (2024c–). *Dictionnaire étymologique d'ancien gascon*: in an advanced state of progress, limited by nature to the vocabulary of documentary texts (cf. 3.1).

Given their incomplete and complementary nature, however, these resources must be consulted as a whole; the researcher is obliged to combine the information extracted from one with that of the others in order to obtain a complete picture. It is also essential to consult the various bibliographies for the Middle Ages (DOM, DEAGBibl, Glessgen, 2024b, DEAOBibl, 2024c/RepCrit, 2023, LvBibl, 1983 [= ‘Levy-Schlüssel’]). A significant amount of work remains to be done on the Middle Ages. Moreover, the extensive documentary sources that exist for the whole of the Occitan and the Gascon areas have been only partially exploited to date (cf. section 3.2).

Lexicological research on medieval Gascon is virtually nonexistent, and the valiant efforts made in the field of Occitan are highly fragmented, consisting mainly of monographs or studies focused on a particular author or text. Studies in the domain are known for their substantial nature and high standards, as becomes obvious upon consultation of the DOM bibliography, whose 4,800 entries include editions often accompanied by glossaries, as well as lexicological inventories and studies with a particular focus. All important publications

between 1975 and 2008 have been critically evaluated by Max Pfister in three dense 10-year “reports” (Pfister, 1993a, 2000, 2011; cf. also Pfister, 1993b, 1999 as well as Klingebiel, 2011, pp. 293–330 [medieval and modern vocabulary]). These include some 30 articles and numerous reviews written by Jean-Pierre Chambon, Max Pfister’s 20 fundamental studies, such as his remarkable *Lexikalisches Untersuchungen zu Girart de Roussillon*, the glossaries and/or lexicological articles in M. Glessgen’s *Thesaur* (ThesSSpG, Glessgen, 1989), Monika Tausend’s *Legenda aurea* (LegAurT, Tausend, 1995), and the *Trésor galloroman des origines* (Carles, 2017), to say nothing of the volumes of documentary texts edited by Paul Meyer (DocMidiM, Meyer, 1909) and Clovis Brunel (ChartPrB and ChartPrB2, Brunel, 1926/1952). The considerable lexicological contribution made by this body of work has been incorporated into the revision of letter A- of the FEW (Vols. 24 and 25) and the ongoing revision of letter B- (online), as well as into the articles of the DOM and the DAO. These inventories thus provide a glimpse into the unexploited potential of medieval vocabulary, but represent only a very partial coverage of the lexical stock and completely conceal its pronounced diatopic diversification.

For the contemporary era, a much larger proportion of the dialectal vocabulary of the Occitan and the Gascon areas is to be found in the FEW, which thus far exceeds the *Tresor dóu Felibrige* compiled by Frédéric Mistral (1879–1886), and the *Dictionnaire béarnais ancien et moderne* compiled by Vastin Lespy and Paul Raymond (1887), which constitutes the only inventory of Gascon from a panchronic perspective (cf. Chambon, 2010a, pp. 881f.). The FEW contains the material from approximately 500 glossaries and lexicological inventories—all of which are listed in the *Bibliographie des patois galloromans* (cf. Keller et al., 1969, pp. 255–300 [Occitan] and pp. 301–316 [Gascon])—as well as all the material contained in the ALF and ALG (1914–2000). To this can now be added the THESOC database (1992, cf. Brun-Trigaud, 2016; cf. Section 4.2.1), as well as several high-quality lexicological repertoires for Gascon (Arnaudin, 2001; Coromines, 1990; Massourre, 2021).

Furthermore, it is surprising to note that there has been no synthetic overview of and/or systematic work either on medieval or modern Occitan vocabulary (cf. the extremely succinct overview by Lafont, 1991). Rare examples of systematic studies include the monograph *Word-Formation in Provençal* by Edward L. Adams (1913), pertaining to the medieval period, as well as, from a dialectological perspective, the chapters on *Les mots dérivés* (‘Derived words’) and *Les mots composés* (‘Compound words’) in Jules Ronjat’s *Grammaire istorique* (Ronjat, 1930–1940, 1937, Vol. 3, pp. 330–482); a complement to the latter is provided by Rohlfs’s repertoire of 80 Gascon suffixes (Rohlfs, 1931; cf. also Rohlfs, 1977, pp. 225–231). These works are nevertheless dated and emphasize the formal aspects of word structure, and with the exception of Rohlfs, they display no real consideration of the role played by semantics, historical development, textual genres, and onomasiological categories.

According to G. Hilty, Walther von Wartburg had intended to write a history of Gallo-Romance vocabulary from Antiquity to the present day after completing the FEW (cf. Baldinger, 1971, p. 34). Unfortunately, this project never materialized. K. Gebhardt’s thesis on Occitan loanwords in French (Gebhardt, 1974), which is based on the material of the FEW, follows this logic, but unfortunately considers Occitan as a source language and not as a target language (cf. also Swiggers, 1998, pp. 70–72; Trotter, 2006, pp. 1780–1783). Christian Schmitt’s attempt to retrace the development of the Gallo-Romance linguistic areas in his thesis of 1974 is more general. However, the assumption that the geographical distribution of modern dialectal forms reflects that of the 3rd and 4th centuries renders it problematic (cf. Sections 2.4 and 3.2).

## 2. Formation and Emergence of the Vernacular (c. 400–c. 1100)

### 2.1 Evidence From the Earliest Period

The formation of Occitan vocabulary, like that of the other future Romance languages, essentially begins from the 5th century onward. In contrast to what can be assumed (and reconstructed) for oral developments, the vocabulary of Latin written texts prior to the 6th century still displays very little evidence of diatopic differentiation. After a systematic gathering and reviewing of such evidence, James N. Adams was able to identify a total of 73 lexemes either specific to or in frequent use throughout the territory of Gaul (Adams, 2007, pp. 276–369). Upon further examination, roughly half of these lexemes turn out to be pan-Gallo-Romance (39/73), sometimes crossing the Pyrenees and/or the Alps (Carles, 2017, pp. 205f.), thereby confirming the relative coherence of Gallo-Romance vocabulary.

Only approximately 10 of these lexemes may be said to be characteristic of the southern regions from the end of the Empire onward, and consistent with the Romance data. These words, already identified by the FEW, are present in only five sources (Polemios Silvius, 448/449, Lyon; Marcellus, 5th century, Bordeaux (?); Eucheria, 5th century; *Lex Salica* 507/11; Anthimus, beginning of the 6th century). They mainly represent names of plants and animals, and therefore reflect regional realia:

Frp. (within modern French territory)/Dauph./Prv.: *lacrimusa* N.F. ‘small grey lizard’ (Polemios Silvius, Adams, 2007, p. 297; cf. FEW 5, 122b, LACRIMUSA, supposedly of pre-Latin origin)

Frp./Dauph./NPrv.: *darpus* N.M. ‘mole’ (Polemios Silvius, p. 297; cf. FEW 3, 13b/14a, \**darbo*, supposedly of pre-Latin origin)

Frp./Prv.: *leuaricinus* N.M. ‘pollan, white-fish’ (Polemios Silvius, p. 296; cf. FEW 5, 286b)

Frp./Prv./Lgd.: *sofia* N.F. ‘dace (leuciscus vulgaris)’ (Polemios Silvius, p. 298; cf. FEW 12, 23a/b, SOFIA)

WPrv./Lgd.: *ripariol* N.F. ‘bank-dweller swallow (hirundo riparia)’ (Marcellus, Bordeaux(?), p. 291; cf. FEW 10, 417a, Occ. *ribeirola*)

SOcc. [+Cat.]: *craxantus* N.M. ‘toad’ (Eucheria, p. 336; cf. FEW 2/2, 1295b, Gaul. *craxantus*)

SWOcc.: *malum ingenium* N.N. ‘trickery’ (*Lex Salica*, p. 316; cf. FEW 4, 685b, INGENIUM)

Auv.-Lim., Béa.: *tecco* N.M. ‘young salmon’ (Polemios Silvius, p. 331; cf. FEW 13/1, 148b/149a, [Gaul.] *tecco*)

Lgd., (Gsc.): *trucantus* N.M. ‘gudgeon’ (Polemios Silvius, p. 331; Anthimus, FEW 13/2, 324b/325a, Gaul. *trucantus*)

Gsc., (Lgd.): *cracatius* N.M. ‘sturgeon’ (Anthimus, p. 330f.; cf. FEW 2/2, 1266a, CRAGACUS, supposedly of Gaulish origin)

Gsc.: *sitrus* N.M. ‘hellebore’ (Anthimus, p. 334; cf. FEW 11, 661b, SITERUS, supposedly of pre-Indo-European origin)

There are thus very few visible traces of differentiation, and the majority of these words are of Gaulish or pre-Latin origin, and as such are particularly prone to regional diffusion (cf. section 2.2 (3)). These findings suggest a lack of homogeneity throughout the Occitan, Gascon, and Francoprovençal dialect areas, as the 10 words

concerned have all undergone dialectalization; none are pan-Occitan or pan-Gascon. The same conclusions may be drawn for the *oïl* and Francoprovençal areas (24/73, cf. Carles, 2017, pp. 205f.).

## 2.2 Evidence from the Merovingian and Carolingian Periods

Few texts from the Merovingian period have survived. Rare traces of the vernacular mainly concern onomastic evidence found on coins, which provides a significant contribution to historical phonetics, for Proto-Gascon in particular (Chambon & Greub, 2000, 2002). It does not, however, provide any lexical evidence.

Parallel to its reform of written Latin, the Carolingian Renaissance served as a catalyst for the elaboration of vernacular writing within the context of Latin. On the basis of Latin documentary sources written between c. 800 and c. 1100, it is possible to examine the nature and scale of lexical changes that had occurred in previous centuries (Carles, 2011, 2017). Such documents produced during the period preceding the appearance of fully fledged vernacular texts included vernacular or partially Latinized lexemes, new lexical meanings, and delexical toponyms accompanied by the article (cf. Chambon, 2014).

This type of fragmentary elaboration is found exclusively in Latin documentary texts predominantly from the southern Occitan area (amounting to almost 900 original documents in the ARTEM corpus), but also from the Alverno-Limousin area (175 documents), and from the region known as *Occitania submersa*. Vivaro-Alpin and Gascony, however, are absent from this corpus, and any analysis of Gascon vocabulary before c. 1100 based on empirical data is thus impossible (Carles, 2017, p. 17; Glessgen, 2021, section 3.2).

The vernacular vocabulary of documentary texts necessarily focuses on the areas of property management, law, agriculture, and the Church. The data examined by Carles (2017) thus includes 279 lexemes and delexical toponyms from the Occitan area and 36 others attested only in the French corpus but shared by Occitan, which slightly increases the total (= 315 words, cf. pp. 55f., 197f.). The analysis of a corpus expanded to include the documents in the *Chartae Galliae* (transmitted in the form of copies) would certainly yield over 1,000 lexemes (Carles, 2011, pp. 309f., 327–330; cf. *Chartae Galliae*, 2014).

By investigating the elaboration of Occitan vocabulary within the context of Latin it is possible to gain insight into its etymological composition as well as its geolinguistic evolution (Carles, 2017):

1. In the 10th and 11th centuries the *oïl* and *oc* dialect areas still shared almost two-thirds of all lexical types with the other two Gallo-Romance languages, and almost one-sixth with one of them, at least partially; only one-sixth of the lexemes are limited either to Occitan or to the *oïl* area (55/315 lexemes for Occitan and 48/291 for the *oïl* area; Carles, 2011, pp. 197f.).
2. Pan-Gallo-Romance words allow better insight, *ex negativo*, into the chronology and the nature of the processes of lexical innovation at work in Occitan (Carles, 2011, pp. 150–153, 129); these are distributed among the following categories:
  - Inherited etyma attested in Latin before 500, particularly non-derived and short forms (p. 150): AQUA, ARCUS, CARCER, CELLA, CUPA, DENS, EREMUS, FASCIA, FRUMENTUM, GRANDE, HABERE, IENUARIUS, MANDARE, MERCATUS, MESSIO, MONACHA/-US, MONS, OPERA, ULMUS, HORDEUM, PALLIUM, PARS, PASSUS, PINUS, PLANUM, PODIUM, PONTE, PORTA, PUTEUS, PRATUM, QUIETUS, SACCUS, SANCTUS, SECALE, SERO, SAGMA, TERRA, TURRE.
  - Less frequently, derivatives with semantically transparent affixes: AQUOSUS, CONSUETUDINE, DECANUS, DECIPERE, DIMIDIUS, DISJEJUNARE, INFANS, LINTEOLUM, MINISTERIALIS, MOLINARIUS, NATIVUS, ORATORIUM, PARTIRE, PASTIONE, SEPULTURA, SEXTARIUS, STRATA, TORCULUM, VERVACTUM, VICARIA, VIRIDIARIUM.It is immediately apparent that these words all reflect concepts central to the daily life of the period, and are therefore words of very high frequency;

- Inherited etyma attested in Latin between c. 500 and c. 700, part of the Latin lexical stock and displaying low variance as regards gender, part of speech, or radicals: CAPPA, GURGUS n.m., MANSUS n.m., PARETE, RACIMUS, RIUS) as well as derived forms attested at the same period and pertaining to daily life (DIURNALIS, EXCLUSA, EXSARTUM, GRANICA, PULLICENUS, PULVERATICUM, ULMETUM and VULPICULUS); only a series of denominations for indirect taxation, almost certainly linked to the Merovingian authorities, is limited to French (PONTATICUS, PORTATICUS, RIPATICUS, ROTATICUS).
- Loanwords of Old Dutch origin before c. 700, some of which are attested as early as the 6th or 7th centuries (late Lat. ALODE ‘freehold tenure’, BANNUS ‘territory under the jurisdiction of a sovereign’, MARISCALCUS ‘groom’, LOBIA ‘arbour’, WADDIUM ‘pledge’, WARDIA ‘guard’, WERPIRE INF. ‘abandon, throw’), while others only appear during the 9th–11th centuries (ODch. \*bord ‘board, plank’, \*fehu ‘cattle’, \*friskinga ‘young pig’, \*want ‘glove’, \*sal ‘hall house’, \*skara ‘captain’, \*thwahlja ‘towel’, \*waddi ‘pledge’, \*wārjan INF. ‘guarantee’, \*werra ‘confusion, discord’; Grm. \*alino ‘ell’, \*bosk ‘bush’ and \*wardôn INF. ‘observe’, OHGer. \*sazjan INF. ‘place’).

In short, pan-Gallo-Romance diffusion primarily concerns the words that were part of Latin written tradition in Imperial times, but also those that appear to have been formed between the end of the 4th and the end of the 5th centuries, and which had been sufficiently integrated in the usage of the period to be employed in written texts. To the latter may be added the Germanic non-derived loanwords that had succeeded in establishing themselves throughout the whole of Gallo-Romance territory. For at least a century and a half after the fall of the Roman Empire, Latin provided lexical continuity across the territory of future Gallo-Romance. This suggests that the Latin lexicon displayed a high degree of homogeneity as well as horizontal continuity in its spoken form, which strongly contrasts with the phonetic diversification of Gallo-Romance as early as the 5th and 6th centuries (cf. once again Chambon & Greub, 2002 for Gascon, and for Francoprovençal Chambon & Greub, 2000, pp. 167, 174; cf. also Carles, 2017, p. 151).

A follow-up study of a quarter of the entries of Carles’s lexical corpus (Montigel, manuscript in preparation) also shows that half of the words identified as pan-Gallo-Romance are shared by Italo- and Ibero-Romance (often with the exclusion of Portuguese), whereas the other half are divided equally between (a) Gallo- and Italo-Romance words, (b) Gallo-Romance words encompassing Catalan and/or northern Italian, and (c) exclusively Gallo-Romance words (Carles, 2017, chapter 4.3.1). Gallo-Romance vocabulary as a separate entity is therefore recognizable, but it is still very much a part of “central” Romania.

3. Very few of the Latin words that were already part of written tradition underwent differentiation within Gallo-Romance. All in all, only 11 Occitan words of the 153 analyzed (i.e., 7%) are the result of selection from an established stock of words attested before 500 (Carles, 2011, pp. 127–133):

pan-Occitan words: *mallol* ‘land newly planted with vines’ < MALLEOLUS, *montel* [-λ] ‘small natural elevation above the surrounding terrain’ < MONTICULUS, *pinna* ‘pine cone’ < PINEA, *pontell* ‘small bridge’ < PONTICULUS, *val* ‘valley’ < VALLE (p. 155);

dialectalized Occitan words: SOcc. *figeira* ‘fig-tree’ < FICARIA and *verdre* ‘to run’ (applied to liquids) < VERTERE, Lgd./Auv. *quadros* ‘hewn blocks of stone’ < QUADRUS, Lgd./Auv./Gsc. *devesa* ‘reserved area of land’, as well as the two lexemes found only in Latin context which survive in the form of toponyms accompanied by the article: Auv. *monsteriole* ‘small monastery’ < MONASTERIOLUM and *sindocius* ‘hospital, hospice’ < XENODOCIUM (pp. 165–167).

4. Two further categories of Latin words formed before c. 700 display more pronounced differentiation within Gallo-Romance territory: that of words of Gaulish or pre-Latin origin, which are always transmitted through

the medium of Latin, and that of derivatives that are unattested before 700 (for the delicate nature of the identification of this category cf. Carles, 2011, pp. 124–126, 133–134 and the examples given on p. 138).

- i. In the first of these categories, out of the 12 words of Gaulish origin and the six pre-Latin words, just over half are pan-Gallo-Romance (10/18, e.g., Gaul. \**balma* ‘cave’, \**brogilos* ‘ground, terrain’), while the others display regional diffusion either within the three Gallo-Romance dialect areas or across part of each of the areas belonging to two or three languages (Carles, 2011, pp. 131f.). Occitan has reflexes belonging to the following six lexical types (i.e., 37.5% of the 18 forms observed within this category):

NOcc./Frp. *raxia* ‘long and narrow plot of land (particularly for vines)’ < pre-Lat., *vern(i)a* ‘alder’, part of a toponym, < Gaul. *verno-* ‘alder’ and *vorze* ‘group of willows’, id., < Gaul. \**worra* ‘willow’, Auv./Gsc. (found only in Latin context) *nava* ‘plain surrounded by hills or mountains’ (?), id., < Gaul. \**nawa* ‘hollow’, SOcc. *patu* ‘communal pasture’ < pre-Lat., eastern Gallo-Romance *sainna* ‘marshy field’, part of a toponym, < pre-Lat.

The advanced state of dialectalization displayed by these lexemes can be ascribed to the fact that they underwent spatial differentiation before the three linguistic areas had become autonomous—considering that the regional diffusion of Gaulish words may already have taken place during the Latin stage of their development.

- ii. For proto-Romance derivatives (formed before 700, but not attested until later), the base is just as likely to be Latin as Germanic or pre-Latin. Carles (2017) listed no fewer than 109 examples of evolution of this type, only half of which are pan-Gallo-Romance (e.g., \*AFFIDARE < FIDERE, \*ALODARIUS < ODch. \**alôd* ‘freehold tenure (land)’, \*BRUCARIA < Gaul. \**bruco* ‘heather’). The patterns of diffusion displayed by the other half are limited to a particular language or dialect; there are 17 proto-Romance derivatives absent from the *oil* varieties and Francoprovençal, and which experienced differing degrees of diffusion and varied chronology throughout the Occitan area in both the medieval and modern periods (up to 15.5% of the 109 words observed, cf. Carles, 2011, pp. 133–138):

wide-spread diffusion: Occ. (Lat.) *barta* ‘brushland’ < \**bárr-ata*, *conobrare* ‘to exploit land’, *flaxata* ‘woollen covering’, *francal* ‘free from taxes (applied to land)’, *nogairetus* ‘area where walnut trees grow’, *parran* ‘enclosed garden in proximity to a dwelling’, *quartairada* ‘agricultural unit of measurement’, *resclausa* ‘sluice, lock’, *rival* ‘stream’, *toron* ‘spring’, *vaissa* ‘hazel’ (p. 155f.);

regional diffusion: NOcc./Prv. *acaptar* ‘to acquire feudal rights’, Auv. Lat. *arzilerius* ‘terrain containing clay deposits’, Lgd. Lat. *cabanile* ‘rudimentary shelter or storage construction’ as well as the following delexical toponyms: Auv. *pedrucia* ‘stony ground’ (?), SEOcc. *salella* ‘small seigneurial residence’, and Lgd. Lat. *vadello* ‘ford’ (p. 165).

5. These results for the early period are in stark contrast to those gleaned from the analysis of later derivatives which probably date from the Romance period and for which there is no evidence of pan-Gallo-Romance diffusion. Hence there is no reason to assume continuity of “horizontal” communication between the different Gallo-Romance languages after 700. Across all categories, the lexical corpus contains 60 innovations ranging from the 7th to the 11th century, 35 of which are characteristic of Occitan (up to 60%; cf. Carles, 2011, pp. 133–144, 156–162, 165–167). One third of these 35 display evidence of fairly wide Occitan diffusion (12), while the others show regional diffusion to a higher or lower degree (23):

Occ. *acapta-mentum* ‘acquisition of feudal rights’, *berl-etus* ‘area where cress grows’(?), *boat-aria* ‘area where cattle are gathered (field, market)’ (?), *con-obre* ‘exploitation of possessions’, *flex-aria* ‘area covered in bracken’, *formi-mentus* ‘costs relating to funerals’, *gur-picione* ‘ceding of a possession’, *mai-*

*a-das* ‘scattering of branches (over an area)’, *mej-aria* ‘tenanted farm’, *peir-at* ‘area covered in stones’, *pog-et* ‘hill’, *vineogol-ia* ‘tax on the exploitation of vineyards’ (p. 156);

NOcc./Lgd. *abs-eddat* ‘uncultivated land’, *bec-eira* ‘area where birches grow’ toponym, *preveir-il* ‘(fiefdom accorded to a parish priest)’

NOcc. *cap-mas* ‘principal dwelling of a domain’, *mas-ale* ‘country dwelling, farm’, toponym, *mol-eta* ‘area containing several mills’ (?), toponym, *parc-eria* ‘proportion of produce ceded as rent’, *ug-on-encos* (eponymous adj. of uncertain provenance), *vec-eria* ‘area where hazel grows’, toponym;

SOcc. *afronta-ciones* ‘territorial boundaries’, *amas-adus* ‘collected, grouped together’, *figuair-eda* ‘area where fig-trees grow’, toponym, *meisson-enc* ‘at harvest time’, *melgoires-ense* ‘coined in Melgueil (applied to currency)’, *mercad-al* ‘of large capacity (applied to measures)’, *mergol-ies* ‘coined in Melgueil (applied to currency)’, *porc-ada* ‘unit of measurement: area of land sufficient for the pasture of one herd of pigs’, *ross-els* ‘specific to Roussillon (denotes a currency)’, *trescol* ‘crest of a hill’, toponym;

Auv. (in Latin context) *aprad-az* ‘land converted into meadows’, *claus-atge* ‘enclosed plot of land’, Prv. (in Latin context) *braz-aria* ‘small tenancy exploited without the aid of animals’, toponym?, Lgd. (in Latin context) *albenqu-eta* ‘terrain characterized by soil of a whitish hue’, toponym? (pp. 165–167)

6. Of the 10 lexemes found to be exclusively Occitan within the territory of modern France, three are found only in this variety, while the remaining seven are also found in Catalan and/or in northern Italian (Montigel, manuscript in preparation, chapter 4.3.2/4.3.4). Once again, there is recognizable differentiation, which, however, is still coherent with the broader geolinguistic framework.

### 2.3 Evidence from Reconstruction and Toponymy: Substrates and Superstrates

Traditional written sources provide a general orientation that can be considerably enriched by the contributions of comparative reconstruction (cf. DÉRom I–III, 2014, 2016, 2020; Chambon, 2014a) and of toponymic sources (cf. the methodological articles collected in Chambon, 2017, pp. 943–1149 and the perspective by Carles, in Chambon, 2017, pp. 939–942). The articles of the DÉRom in particular allow a more in-depth approach to the question as to the lexical identity of Gallo-Romance, Occitan, and Gascon (cf. the maps of proto-Romance in, DÉRom II, 2016, pp. 107–162 [J. Delorme]).

Ancient Greek forms that entered Latin as regionalisms and that were later preserved in Occitan are few, but easily identifiable (nautical: *cau* ‘rope’, fishery: *broumet* ‘bait’, horticulture and viticulture: *empeltar* ‘to plug’). According to von Wartburg (1952), these date back to *Magna Grecia*; however, they could also partly represent later loanwords from the Mediterranean (cf. Felixberger, 2003, p. 599).

The true provenance of the few loanwords considered to be of “Aquitanian,” “Iberian,” and “Ligurian” origin, and which entered Occitan or Gascon as Latin regionalisms, remains unclear. For the whole of the Gallo-Romance area, apart from Gascony, the total number of all presumed pre-Latin and pre-Gaulish (or generally pre-Indo-European) words amounts to the reflexes of no more than a few hundred etymological bases. For Gascon, however, their impact may have been far more significant, given that Rohlfs (1977, pp. 40–59) listed approximately 100 words of pre-Latin—sometimes Basque—origin, which include denominations for plants and animals and terms belonging to pastoral life and territorial denominations (cf. also the index of over 200 Basque etyma, p. 245).

The most significant substrate for Gallo-Romance geolinguistics, again with the exception of Gascony, is Gaulish, as it was a contact language of Latin for centuries until the fall of the Roman Empire (Ternes, 1998, p. 281). Most Gaulish loanwords belong to specific lexical fields, particularly to that of rural life. Due to the current state of research, the number of these loanwords is as yet unclear, particularly as the potential afforded by

toponymy as a methodological tool has been systematically underexploited (cf. the exemplary article on Gaul. *attedgia* ‘caban, hut’ [Adams, 2007, p. 316] by Billy & Chambon, 1990). In the FEW, 240 etyma are explicitly labeled as Gaulish (Müller, 1982), a figure that can be increased to approximately 330 words by the inclusion of lexemes whose classification remains uncertain. However, an in-depth study of this corpus would most likely lead to a further reduction in volume (cf. Felixberger, 2003, p. 597). The Celtisms in Occitan have not been the subject of specific studies, unlike those identified in French (cf. Felixberger, 2003, as well as the complementary lists of 134 confirmed Celtisms in French and 60 Latin words of Gaulish origin in Lambert, 2003, pp. 188–206; these lists also include several Occitan words such as SOcc. *agragnoun* ‘plum; type of black grape’, < \**agran(i)o* ‘id.’ FEW 24, 268b). However, the geolinguistic analysis carried out by Müller (1982) identified several areas throughout the Gallo-Romance territory that display clusters of loanwords: the Francoprovençal area in particular, as well as the neighboring northern Occitan domain, including northern Languedoc. For southern Languedoc and Provence, the percentage is much lower, as is the case for the *oïl*-speaking areas (p. 617, map 3).

As has already been observed by Müller (1982, p. 610), the relatively high number of Celtisms labeled «béarn.» in the FEW is surprising and might be an artifact due to the older lexicography: While the Pyrenean region of Gascony is generally rich in substrates, words of Gaulish origin are mostly absent from Gascon as the pre-Latin population was Proto-Basque rather than Celtic (the index in Rohlfs, 1977, p. 245, contains only 16 Celtic etyma, mostly widely diffused throughout Galloromania).

Müller’s overview is consistent with the conclusions reached by Carles (2017), particularly regarding the observation that the words of Gaulish origin fall into two categories: those already attested in written Latin and which therefore underwent subsequent wide diffusion throughout the Gallo- and Italo-Romance areas, and those that were limited to regional spoken Latin in Antiquity and have thus existed as regionalisms in Occitan from the earliest period.

The Germanic superstrate, on the other hand, has been studied in depth (Felixberger, 2003, pp. 602–604; Pfister, 1978, 1998). While interest in this question was originally fueled by pan-Germanism (E. Gamillscheg, W. von Wartburg), the treatment of Germanisms in the FEW (vols. 15–17) remains exemplary and has even been surpassed by further studies since (M. Pfister, W. Haubrichs). This evidence suggests that superstrates played a more significant role than substrates in the lexical fragmentation of the *Gallo-Romània*.

The impact of the superstrates, however, primarily concerns the *oïl*-speaking areas; conclusions for Occitan can only be drawn *ex negativo*. The predominant contact language of Gallo-Romance, Old Low Franconian (or Old Dutch, in accordance with current terminology), has strongly permeated the *oïl* dialects (particularly in the northern areas of Picardy and Wallonia), as well as the Francoprovençal dialects to a certain extent. Only those Old Dutch loanwords already present in Latin are found in the *oc*-speaking area, along with other borrowings from Old Germanic—these are the same words that later became pan-Gallo-Romance (cf. the geolinguistic summary of Pfister, 1973, which definitively identifies 51 Old Dutch words belonging to the latter category as pan-Gallo-Romance, “diffused by the Merovingian chancellery”; Pfister, 1973, pp. 145–148). No Old Dutch loanwords are specific to Occitan or Gascon within the Gallo-Romance area, apart from a certain number of derivatives formed at a later period (e.g., *salella*, section 2.1 (3)).

Possible Burgundian loanwords, which sometimes spread to Occitan varieties, are extremely rare and should be considered with extreme caution (according to Pfister, 1998, pp. 234f., only a dozen bases can be considered as plausible; cf. Felixberger, 2003, p. 603).

Finally, Gothic also exercised an influence on Occitan and Gascon, as the Visigoths occupied a large part of the southern territory of Gaul throughout the 5th century. After their defeat at the hands of Clovis in 507, they held sway over Languedoc and eastern Provence until 711. However, it is necessary to examine potential Gothic loanwords in detail, as they have not been re-evaluated since Gamillscheg’s *Romania Germanica* (Gamillscheg, 1934, Vol. I, pp. 297–398, including pp. 363–398; cf. Pfister, 1978, 1998, pp. 235f.; Felixberger, 2003, p. 603; cf. also

Carles, 2017, p. 121: A Gothic etymon is retained here for OOcc./OPoit. *vaissa*, which was rejected for *gardia* ‘tax collected as payment for seigneurial protection’ and *lobia* ‘arbor’ [both pan-Gallo-Romance] and remains uncertain in the case of OOcc./Ofrp. *Guurpire* ‘to relinquish possession of a fiefdom or property’).

## 2.4 Observations Resulting from Reconstruction: The Latin Etyma

The selection from Latin made by the different Romance languages is illustrated, at least in part, by the inventory of C. Schmitt (1974), based on Volumes 1–23 of the FEW. Although Schmitt’s dating of diatopic divergence between the 1st and the 4th century was too early, his inventory and onomasiological classification remain valid. He thus provided a repertoire of vocabulary exclusive to each of the Gallo-Romance idioms according to the respective selection of Latin bases. For the Occitan and Gascon areas, this includes nearly 550 etyma whose reflexes are absent from French and Francoprovençal (Schmitt, 1974, pp. 130–179), but unfortunately omits concepts relating to regional realia (p. 133). He also provided no systematic evidence concerning diffusion within these areas. Schmitt’s analysis of the material was too concise and he failed to consider the medieval period. Because the inventory was based on the Latin etyma rather than on the countless forms resulting from semantic and formal evolution within the etymological trajectories examined, the study focused on a selection made primarily from an inherited Latin stock rather than on later developments belonging to the 8th and 9th centuries.

If one were to subtract all loanwords contained in Volumes 15–20, all substrate words, and Hellenisms, the number of Latin etyma in the FEW would amount to approximately 14,000. The 550 reflexes listed by Schmitt that are exclusively Occitan or Gascon thus correspond to approximately 4% of all Gallo-Romance lexical stock inherited from Latin. This figure would increase if one were also to take into account the 6,000 Latin derivatives (cf. Büchi, 1996, pp. 405–565) and, more particularly, the numerous proto-Romance formations that Wartburg classified under the main etyma as opposed to treating them as etyma in their own right (cf. FEWGuide, 2019, pp. 44f.). These forms are in fact absent from Schmitt’s inventory. A calculation based on the combination of the different parameters would therefore appear to confirm the figures cited by Carles (2017) regarding the percentage of Latin words selected within the Occitan dialect area (c. 12%, cf. section 2.2).

## 2.5 Summary

The process of spatial differentiation of vocabulary within the future Gallo-Romance (and Romance) area began under the Roman Empire. Based on the testimony of the ARTEM corpus (ARTEM, 2010) analyzed by Carles (2017), this development is relatively limited but nevertheless tangible before 700. An intensification can be identified from the 8th century onward with the collapse of horizontal communication throughout *Gallo-Romània*, although the Gallo-Romance idioms still displayed relative lexical coherence around the year 1000. From this point onward, the lexical identity of Occitan was clearly recognizable when compared with that of the neighboring Romance languages, although it continued to undergo diversification throughout the second millennium (cf. Carles, 2017, p. 198).

The peculiarities of Gascon may have begun to develop earlier, given the high percentage of pre-Latin loanwords, although the absence of written sources precludes a more precise periodization.

## 3. The Late Middle Ages (c. 1100–c. 1500)

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### 3.1 The Development of Genres

The year 1100 saw the beginning of the development of a rich tradition of vernacular writing in the Occitan area, catalyzed by the expansion of European culture, to which it contributed (cf. the detailed overview by Carles, 2023; cf. also Zufferey, 2008). The southern Occitan area represents one of the epicenters of this intellectual and artistic revolution, due to its pivotal geographic position between the Mediterranean and Northern Europe, as well as its proximity to al-Andalus and to the city-states of the Italian peninsula. During the 12th century, written Occitan established itself in three areas:

1. the lyric poetry of the troubadours, whose first epicenter was in the Limousin area (cf. Glessgen, 2022b), and subsequently in Languedoc (cf. the evolving reference database BEdT, 2014), the electronic editions CAO, in preparation/RIALTO, 2019, and the concordance COM2, 2005);
2. scholastic legal texts (through the translation of the *Codex Iustinianus* as early as 1149/1154 [Valence], cf. Codi, 2019; Glessgen, 2023; Mariotti, 2023) and, at the same time, legal practice, primarily in Languedoc (cf. Brunel, 1926/1952; Glessgen, 2018); and
3. religious texts (translations of the New Testament, etc.) of which the Limousin area was also the first epicenter (Glessgen & Pfister, 1995a, 1995b).

Between the 13th and the 15th centuries, Occitan vernacular writing was primarily concentrated in Languedoc and Provence, particularly in the areas of secular and religious literature (Chambon, 2010a; Menichetti, 2016) as well as documentary texts (property management, inventories, accounting). It also included other genres (medicine and pharmacognosy, astronomy, technical texts), but to a much lesser extent than in French or Italian (cf. the inventory of Brunel, 1935, containing 357 entries, replaced by the description of 500 non-documentary mss. in the *Répertoire Critique* [RépCrit; cf. Menichetti, 2020]; cf. also Jonas (Romance section), 2013 and cf. DiTMAO, in preparation for medico-biological glossaries in Hebrew script). In the Auvergne and Limousin areas, written culture was also diversified, although documentary texts tended to prevail, especially during the 14th and 15th centuries (cf. Chambon, 2012; Chambon & Olivier, 2000 for Auvergne; Glessgen & Pfister, 1995b for Limousin). Finally, in the Vivaro-Alpin territory, textual production—even that of documentary texts—remained limited (cf. DocMidiM, Glessgen, 1995; Meyer, 1909).

In the Gascon area, the production of Latin texts began to gather pace around the middle of the 12th century, and the first Gascon texts are dated no earlier than 1180/1220. The latter maintained a solid presence from the 14th to the end of the 16th century, and were exclusively of documentary nature, including numerous legal texts such as customs (*coutumes*), statutes, and *fors*. Only two religious texts from the early 15th century are known to date (cf. Baldinger, 1962 and the approximately 500 references in the DAGBibl; Allières, 1995; Glessgen, 2022a).

It is clear that the elaboration of written culture had an immediate effect on the development of the lexicon; indeed, the two processes are inseparable. Occitan thus acquired a range of poetic, religious, and legal and administrative terminology from a very early stage, and developed denominations for a large series of specific concepts in the domains of the emotions, courtliness and court life, feudalism and chivalry, religion and worship, law, wealth management, agriculture, and trade. Parallel to the words commonly used in the spoken language in each of these domains, the texts contain new word-formations resulting from the process of translation (particularly in religious and legal texts), thereby enriching the lexical stock through both semantic change and derivation. The expansion of the lexicon occurred in a similar manner in the case of terminology belonging to the semantic fields of medicine and biology, although the denominations of primarily plant-based pharmaceuticals were heavily influenced by Mediterranean trade.

### 3.2 Factors Affecting Internal Cohesion and Differentiation

The grapho-phonetic and morphological physiognomy of the *scriptae* belonging to the Occitan area is highly regionalized, thus facilitating the identification of the affiliation of a particular text with a large area such as Languedoc, Provence, or Limousin. The Occitan dialect group thus constitutes an example of polycentric codification, with no single center of high prestige. The Gascon *scriptae* are more homogeneous, although they display an obvious distinction between the two amphizone areas (Bordelais, south of Agen), the transitional area between Gascony and Languedoc (Comminges/Couserans), and the central and southern regions; here again, the eastern “Gascon Noir” and western dialects can be identified, the latter clearly distinguishable from the adjacent Languedoc and Limousin areas (Glessgen, 2021, 2022a).

The extent to which this geolinguistic diversification is reflected in the lexicon, however, remains wholly unappreciated (cf. section 1.4). The current state of research suggests the radical misapprehension that the lexical variation apparent in the different Occitan textual traditions seems not to show a high degree of spatial differentiation, in contrast to the pronounced regional nature of grapho-phonetic variation and the high level of dialectalization characterizing the modern spoken varieties.

For the discourse tradition of documentary texts, the *Dictionnaire de l'ancien occitan auvergnat* (DAOA) by Philippe Olivier allows an approximate estimation of the degree of internal differentiation displayed by Occitan. The DAOA contains the vocabulary of administrative Auvergnat texts (Mauriac and Saint-Flour/Cantal) between 1341 and 1537. This can be compared to the completed section of the DOM (*a-album*) as the latter essentially represents the southern Occitan written tradition.

This comparison does not take grapho-phonetic variation into account, which reflects dialectal differences between the major Occitan areas (e.g., the systematic opposition /ka/ ~ /tʃa/ as evidenced by Auv. *achabamen* vs. SOcc. *acabamen* ‘summit; completion; perfection; accomplishment’), and within a particular region as exemplified by *aguada* versus *aigada* ‘flood; high tide’ (< AQUA), *agar* versus *egar* ‘to irrigate’ (< AEQUARE) or *aprial* versus Lgd. *abril/abriu* ‘April’ (cf. FEW 25, 59b, APRILIS).

The entries *a—album* of the DOM correspond to the first 200 (of 12,000) entries of the DAOA. Of these, 20 show significant lexematic variation, that is, variation involving radicals, derivatives, or semantics:

- 4 cases of semantic specialization in Auv.: *aconhadet* 3SG-accommodate-PRF ‘put (a dwelling) at s.o.’s disposal’ 1387, *aisimen* ‘useful equipment, fittings (in a dwelling)’ 1378 [poss. < Fr.], *aysinas* ‘id.’ 1381, *alberc* ‘tax for accommodation in a seigneurial dwelling’ c. 1397
- a single derivative from a particular dialect with a specific meaning: *ayresselh* ‘parsley(M)’ (1427), attested only in the work of Daudé de Pradas (Rgt.) and in NMOcc. (FEW 3, 239a, ERICIUS); a second derivative also appears to be geolinguistically marked: *afrontador* ‘barrier against wind or snow(M)’ (1429); cf. OOcc. *afrontar*
- 3 (+ 2) word-formations shared by the *oil* area, which can be assumed to be loanwords or simply the result of spatial contiguity:

*acomplisment* ‘achievement(M)’ (1428); cf. Fr. *accomplissement* (since 1384, JMeun, FEW 2, 982a, COMPLERE)

*affretz* ‘periodic payment(M.PL)’ (1409); cf. Mid. Fr. *frais*, OAuv. *freiz* (1400, Cantal, FEW 3, 755a, FRANGERE), with the subsequent derivatives *afretar* INF-TR. ‘pay, distribute (tax)’(?) (1387) and *affretacios* ‘payment, distribution (of a tax)(F.PL)’(?)

*haynos* ‘hostile’ (1439); possibly related to the type Fr. *haineux*

- a series of 5 prefixations *a/ad*:

*ablanchesir* ‘to coat with lime’ (1395); cf. Frp. *blätseyi* (FEW 15/1, 141a, Grm. \*blank); the type preceded by *a-* is attested sporadically throughout the Gallo-Romance area (Mid. Fr. *ablanchir* 1453, Alais *ablanqui*, FEW 15/1, 142a/b), which suggests a polygenetic origin

*acoregir* ‘to correct’ (1494); cf. OOcc. *corregir*

*acreysensa* ‘enlargement(F)’ (1476); cf. OOcc. *creisensa* / OFr., Mid. Fr. *accroissance*

*adaygrezir* ‘to turn into vinegar’ (1383); absent from FEW 24, 97b/98a, ACER; cf. OOcc. *aigrezir*

*adhaguada* ‘sudden increase in the volume of a river(F)’ (1418); absent from FEW 24, 134b, ADAQUARE; cf. OOcc. *adagar*

- 2 variants with extended radicals:

*aconplinnament* ‘action of completing a task(M)’ (1388); cf. EOPrv. *acompliment* (1488, Pans, Avignon, FEW 2/2, 981a, COMPLERE)

*agrandesir* ‘to enlarge’ (1468); cf. OOcc. *agrandir*

- 2 isolated Latinisms due to insufficient mastery of written Latin:

*acsequatoria* ‘document drawn up for the execution of a court decision(F)’ (1391); cf. lat. EXECUTORIUS adj.

*adjurpacion* ‘usurpation(F)’ (1463); cf. Lat. USURPATIO

- 2 entries that are difficult to analyze, one due to the inadequate treatment of letter B- in the FEW, the other due to its being a hapax:

*abonnar* ‘to subject s.o. to a specific tax’ (1475); *abonnat* M. ‘s.o. who is subject to taxation’ (id.); cf. Oïl *aboner*, Prv. *abourna*, Lim. *abou(r)na* (FEW 1, 466a, Gaul. \*botina ‘boundary marker’)

*agiala* ‘type of vat(F)’ hapax (1509) (cf. FEW 4, 123b, GERULUS)

Given the relatively high lexical cohesion throughout the medieval Gallo-Romance area—Carles (2017, pp. 197f.) assumed that almost 80% of Occitan words were common to all or part of the Gallo-Romance area in the 11th century—the 10% variance within the Occitan area identified by this sample is therefore remarkable.

At the same time, the findings are based on a clearly defined discourse tradition, with a high percentage of Latinisms and stereotypical elements present among the terms specific to the fields of agriculture and property management. This vocabulary—which is characteristic of documentary texts—has undergone a highly developed process of textualization, and, as part of spoken language, has been shaped by multiple exchanges among different regions.

A systematic analysis of poetic, religious, or medical vocabulary comparing two series of similar texts from different periods and regions would lead to similar results. Much more obvious differences would emerge, however, from a comparison between the different textual traditions with which medieval vocabulary is inextricably linked, as each tradition selects only a limited number of words (cf. Glessgen & Dallas, 2019).

Various textual traditions are operational throughout the whole of the Occitan area, which leads to the establishment of textual models in terms of discourse structure, syntax, and vocabulary (cf. the classic example of the judicial sentence, Krefeld, 1987). Because most genres originated in southern Occitan, the vocabulary of this region must necessarily have played a significant role in the constitution of various discourse traditions. Nonetheless, this should by no means be interpreted as evidence for the existence of a wide-reaching Medieval Occitan “standard,” particularly as this apparent homogeneity was counterbalanced by maximal variation in the domains of grapho-phonetics and morphology.

The nature of medieval lexical variation can be more clearly defined by comparing the vocabulary treated in the DAG and DAO. Both dictionaries possess the two-fold advantage of being organized by lexical fields and of being based essentially on vocabulary extracted from primary sources. The typological comparison of these onomasiological repertoires by Montigel (cf. 2021, 2023) aimed to identify the convergences and divergences between Gascon on the one hand, and southern and northern Occitan on the other and gave rise to three additional observations:

1. For core vocabulary corresponding to concepts that are fundamental from a cognitive point of view (such as parts of the body, wild animals, etc.), Gascon and the four main areas of Occitan display a high degree of similarity and are in some cases identical.
2. Vocabulary elaborated in the context of written culture (e.g., law, medicine, religion), and/or in the field of trade and its associated products, also shows little geolinguistic variation within the Occitan areas and between these and Gascon. The impact of the discourse traditions across the languages is unmistakable in these fields.
3. Finally, words pertaining to daily life, primarily linked to regional culture and fundamentally shaped by the spoken language (land, agriculture, kinship names) are very highly diversified; here, Gascon and Occitan, but also southern and northern Occitan and smaller areas display profound differences (e.g., 9 of the 12 kinship names found in OGsc. are absent from the Occitan varieties). The investigation also showed that similarities between Gascon and Languedocian are much more marked than those between Gascon and Limousin, even though both regions border on Gascony.

It may thus be concluded that the degree of internal differentiation displayed by medieval vocabulary is inextricably linked to the lexical fields represented. The apparent homogeneity of the vocabulary specific to the various written discourse traditions masks the profound regional differentiation in other important segments of the lexicon. The numerous studies and reviews written by J.-P. Chambon regarding the vocabulary of a particular Occitan text or group of texts also bore witness to the dialectalized nature of these varieties. His identification of hundreds of diatopically-marked lexemes in all genres highlighted the omnipresence of dialectal diversity throughout the whole of the Occitan area. As the written variety tends to show a predilection for lexemes with a wide areal diffusion—and thus for pan-Occitan forms—dialectal words of limited areal diffusion are not often present in written texts. The consequence of this is that research has vastly underestimated the quantity of such forms (Carles, 2020; Carles & Glessgen, 2023; cf. also DRM, 2023; Glessgen & Trotter, 2016).

This variance, which the lexicon naturally shares with phonetics, morphology, and morphosyntax, massively contradicts the view that in Occitan, at least in the late 14th and 15th centuries, a more or less homogeneous written standard, or ‘koinè,’ developed. This hypothesis is still to be found in recent textbooks (e.g., Swiggers, 1998, p. 68 or Weth, 2014, p. 494), but is, however, fundamentally flawed (cf. Glessgen, 2022b; Glessgen & Pfister, 1995a). The Occitan territory has never constituted a geopolitical unit, nor has it ever had a general standard or ‘koinè’; this applies to both its poetic and its administrative varieties (cf. Carles, 2023). The elaboration of Occitan—as well as that of Gascon remained pluricentric during the medieval period, with no single variety functioning at a supra-regional level.

## 4. The Modern and Contemporary Period (c. 1500–2022)

### 4.1 The Modern Era (c. 1500–c. 1850)

The modern era, from the 16th to the middle of the 19th century, represents the period of evolution of Occitan and Gascon about which the least is known (cf. Chambon, 2010a, p. 880). Even if regional Occitan *scriptae* had mostly been replaced by French between the end of the 15th and the middle of the 16th centuries, and the Gascon ones from the end of the 16th century onward (Brun, 1923a, 1923b), both languages have even preserved a written tradition to some extent. The traditional vocabulary continued to evolve and diversify, alongside the development of regional literature and the compilation of significant lexicographic inventories, particularly in regions possessing a strong tradition of written culture, such as Languedoc, where Gascon authors were also active, and Provence (cf. Boyer & Gardy, 2001, pp. 119–220; Brun, 1927; Gardy, 1985, 1997; Lafont, 1974; Lafont & Anatole, 1970, pp. 267–482; [for religious language: Eygun, 2001]; Bernsen, 2006, pp. 1988–1992; Courouau, 2008, 2017 and, above all, Courouau, 2015, pp. 489–542, which boasts a large inventory of mss. and 18th-century Occitan printed editions; cf. also the 160 works written between 1600 and 1830, collected in the Digital Library *Tolosana* 2020). In addition to erudite baroque poetry, therefore, minor genres are particularly well-developed, such as pastorals and *noëls* (devotional poems or songs in the vernacular), songs, carnivalesque farces, and popular theater. Evidence of a clear linguistic awareness of Occitan authors is frequently revealed through explicit statements; compare, for example, the verdict of Robert Ruffi (1542–1634), royal notary and first archivist of the city of Marseilles: *Qui non escrieu son saber/En sa lengo naturalo/Va dementent lo dever/De sa patri maternalo* ‘he who does not write his work in his natural language betrays the duties he has towards his motherland’ (around 1600; Gardy, 1997, p. 35).

The 18th century saw intensified efforts in lexicography, especially in the Rhodanian area: the *Dictionnaire provençal et françois* by Father Sauveur-André Pellas (Avignon, 1723; c. 10,000 entries, Pellas, 1723; cf. Stéfanini, 1964), the dictionary of the same name by Father Pierre Puget (Aix-en-Provence, c. 1730/1740, inedited, Puget, 1730/1740), the *Dictionnaire languedocien-françois* by Father Pierre Augustin Boissier de Sauvages (Nîmes, 1756; 2 vols., 1785 [2nd ed.], Boissier de Sauvages, 1756/1785; cf. Lieutard, 2010; c. 10,000 entries), followed by the *Dictionnaire de la Provence et du Comté Venaissin* by Claude-François Achard (Marseille, 2 vols., Provençal-French, French-Provençal, 1785, Achard, 1785; c. 12,000 entries), and, lastly, a rich anonymous dictionary, still in manuscript form (Arles, 6 vols., c. 1770; c. 34,000 entries, cf. Thomas, 2013).

An analysis of the first few entries for the letter A of the latter dictionary shows that at most a third of the nomenclature corresponds to originally Occitan lexemes, most of which have a very broad distribution; for example, *acara* ‘to confront (witnesses and criminals)’ (FEW 2/1, 349a, CARA: Occitan word borrowed from southern regional French), *acarnassi* ‘who likes meat; obstinate’ (FEW 2/1, 385a, CARO), and *acata* ‘to cover’ (FEW 2/2, 814a/b, \*COACTITARE). Occitan lexemes whose distribution is restricted to the eastern area (Provençal and Vivaro-Alpine), consistent with the author’s origin, are rarer; compare the two agricultural technicalisms *acana* ‘to bring fruit down from a tree with an instrument’ and *acanaoui* ‘pole used to bring fruit down from a tree(F)’ (FEW 2/2, 199b, CANNA).

In contrast, Gallicisms are legion and generally of the learned (Latinized) type: *accelera* ‘to accelerate, *acceleratioun* ‘acceleration,’ *accent* ‘accent, prosody,’ *accepta* ‘to accept, *acceptable* ‘acceptable,’ *acceptaire* ‘receiver,’ *accessible* ‘accessible,’ *acceptacioun* ‘acceptance.’ While these lexemes are documented in various modern dialectal sources, the author also integrated lexemes whose specific use in Occitan is unproven, probably with the intention of contributing to the elaboration of the language by following the French model: *acantou* ‘architectural ornament imitating the acanthus leaf(M)’ (FEW 24, 65b, ACANTHUS), *accentua* ‘to mark syllables with accents’ (FEW 24, 70b, ACCENTUS), *acceptant* ‘he who accepts a legacy, a gift’ (FEW 24, 71b, ACCEPTARE), *acceptioun* ‘favoring of one person to the detriment of another’ (FEW 24, 71b/72a, ACCEPTIO).

This tendency seems to be shared by the entire Rhodanian lexicographical tradition. Pellas's work is also very French-oriented, and that of Sauvages, despite its declared purpose of facilitating the learning of French, is also based on a nomenclature that deliberately steers clear of Gallicisms (cf. for the rich lexicography of the 18th century, also encompassing northern Occitan and Gascon, Courouau, 2015, pp. 307–350 [D. Fabié]; Schlieben-Lange, 1991, particularly pp. 115–121).

The development of texts written in modern dialect reached its peak at the time of the Revolution; political texts and translations were accompanied by many scattered offerings based on folklore (cf. Boyer et al., 1989; Merle, 1990 and particularly Pic, 1989, which contains an inventory of about 230 mss. and editions, as well as a bibliography; for the Auvergne region cf. Chambon & Olivier, 2000). Significant editorial work remains to be carried out on the Occitan and Gascon texts of the modern period. This would provide a foundation upon which to base lexicological analyses with the aim of highlighting the diversity and creativity inherent in this heritage.

Only one aspect of modern linguistic history has been studied more specifically to date: this concerns the interaction between French and Occitan, which led on the one hand to the integration of Gallicisms into Occitan varieties, and on the other hand to the formation of a regional French variety based in part on the dialects in these areas from the 16th century onward, with an intensification in the 18th and 19th centuries (cf. Swiggers, 1998, p. 74 and particularly Chambon, 1997; Chambon & Carles, 2007; Chambon & Gréolois, 2007). Typologically, they are characterized (a) by loanwords from widespread dialect words, (b) by syntagmatic, semantic, and formal innovations in French, and (c) by the preservation of French lexemes fallen out of use elsewhere (cf. Carles, 2020). The French regional varieties developed among bilingual speakers, primarily the urban bourgeoisie (approximately 5% of the population at the time of the French Revolution). A prominent early example can be found in the work of Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592), whose highly elaborate texts nevertheless featured individual French regional words borrowed from his mother tongue, a dialect of a region located directly on the border between Perigordian and Gascon (referred to by Montaigne himself as «mon vulgaire Perigordin»). According to the available secondary literature, Couffignal (2014, pp. 60–68) compiled about 60 corresponding lexemes and phraseologisms; compare the following French regional words:

- from Prg. or San.: *appiler* 'to pile up' (FEW 8, 477b, PILA), *ensuerer* 'to wrap (a dead body) in a shroud' (FEW 12, 395b, SUDARIUM), *estausser* 'to prune' (FEW 13/2, 132a, prérom. \**toutio*)
- from Gsc.: *bastine* 'padded pack saddle(F)' (FEW 1, 280a, \*BASTUM), (*crier*) *bihore* 'a shout to encourage a horse to move faster', derived from Gsc. *bia-hore* < VIA + FORIS, FEW 14, 377b, VIA)
- from Prg./San. or Gsc.: *bonnetade* 'a gesture denoting respect, employed in a political setting (F)' (FEW 24, 41b, ABONNIS), *escarbillet* 'alert, quick-witted' (FEW 3, 337a, \*EXVIGILARE)

The use of regional French at the expense of the Occitan or Gascon dialects intensified sharply around 1900, following the introduction of compulsory schooling, which led to generalized bilingualism (Glessgen, 2020).

Parallel to the introduction of Occitanisms into French through the channel of regional French, the Occitan dialects absorbed an ever-increasing number of French words, which often replaced dialectal forms (cf. Chambon, 2010c). Regional French varieties developed throughout the whole of the territory starting from the urban centers. The "Gallicisms" in Occitan, however, are the result of a general north-south movement, particularly pronounced along the axis of the Rhône, which emerges very clearly from certain maps of the ALF (e.g., 712 *jardin*, ALF 738 *loup*, 850 *meunier*). Numerous encounters—primarily due to commercial exchanges that took place via the principal channels of communication—served as a catalyst for the francization of the dialects, particularly from the 18th century onward. In addition, the phenomenon known as *parachutage* ('air drop') led to periodic lexical substitutions, seemingly random from a geographical point of view, also frequent in ALF maps.

## 4.2 The Contemporary Era (c. 1850 onwards)

### 4.2.1 Diversification of Traditional Vocabulary

The internal differentiation of the vocabulary of the dialectal varieties of Occitan and Gascon reached its peak during the 19th century after 15 centuries of evolution. As a result of the absence of the development of a supra-regional standard between the 16th and 19th centuries, both languages contain a relatively small proportion of Latinisms, as well as a limited number of loanwords from neighboring languages, except in border regions and without considering French. The pronounced diversification of the Occitan and Gascon varieties has been favored by the absence of physical geographical unity and the lack of geopolitical autonomy throughout the area in which they are spoken.

It is against this backdrop that the previously mentioned inventories of traditional lexical forms were compiled by dialectologists between the end of the 19th and the second half of the 20th century (cf. section 1.4), culminating in the *Nouveaux atlas linguistiques de la France* (NALF). The six atlases pertaining to the South further improved coverage of the Occitan and Gascon area. The systematic reorganization of this material in the THESOC database (1992, in progress), as well as the digitization of the FEW (FEWél, 2023 also in progress), will provide a new foundation for future interpretative research. Due to their onomasiological approach, the atlases paint a perfect picture of the extreme micro-diversification of Gallo-Romance dialects and their innovative dynamics that have emerged over the centuries (cf. also Glessgen, 2019).

A characteristic example is the concept of the ‘firefly,’ studied repeatedly since Salvioni (1892), for which the ALF (1902–1910 map n° 1342, ‘ver luisant,’) already contains no fewer than 90 lexical types, with a particular concentration in Northern Occitan and Languedoc. Gascon, however, shows—as in many cases—a relative internal coherence; in the west (‘Gascon noir’) with the basic type *ba’rbɔt ly’zɛn* (< *bau* [FEW 1, 298b n° 3; not: BARBA + -OTTU, FEW 1, 244b/245a] + LUCENTE), in the east with *lydzɛn’krāmbɔ* (+ CAMERA, FEW 5, 478b); but here, too, ALF and especially ALG (n° 64) contribute further variants, such as—in the west—*ber*, *bermi*, and *bœrnat* (< *Bernard*) instead of *ba’rbɔt*, *de luts* instead of *ly’zɛn*, and in the Pyrenees *bermi de sɛn’jān* (= *ver de saint Jean*). Even Provence, which shows little variation in the ALF, has no fewer than 13 specific types according to the ALP (map n° 1028; cf. Ferrat, 1995):

- widespread: *ly’zeto*(F) W (< LUCE + ITTA), *lyzɛnt’eno* C (< LUCENTE + INA) and *ly’(z)erno* E (< LUCERNA ‘lamp’),
- more local: *kyu’ly*(M) (< CULU + LUCET) NW; *lyza’relo* (< LUCERE + -ILLA) and *ly’me* (< LUMEN + ETU) C; *lyzyr’nejtæ* (< LUCERNA + -ETA) and *lyme’net* (< LUMINE + ETU) NE; *barba’rotæ* (= *ba’rbɔt* with infix) and *ba’bɔja* (< *bau*) NE; *be’zeto* SW (< onomat. *bis-*, cf. FEW 1, 377b comment); *papa’lysa* (< PAPILIO ?) and *tera’lysa* (< TERRA + LUCENTE) SE
- in addition, the general terms: *ver(p) lysɛnt*, *verp*, *lūmbrik* (< LUMBRICU), and *besty de’hwæ* (< BESTIA, NOCTE)

From a geolinguistic perspective, H. Goebel’s dialectometric transformation of the material contained in the ALF allowed researchers to establish on a quantifiable empirical basis the dimensions of the various linguistic areas of the Occitan and Gascon domains, at least in their physiognomy of c. 1900 (cf. ALFnum, 2019; cf. also the overview in Ravier, 1991, essentially based on phonetic criteria). Goebel’s dialectometric tool renders visible the geolinguistic distribution of vocabulary and phonetic features on the base of dendrographic maps (471 for the lexicon and 1,117 for phonetics). By the establishment of between 2 and 20 sets of features [called “choremes”], the following observations may be made with regard to the lexical differentiation of Occitan and Gascon within Galloromania:

1. Unsurprisingly, the principal distinction among the Gallo-Romance varieties is that between the Occitan and Gascon varieties on the one hand and the French and Francoprovençal varieties on the other (2 choremes). Three choremes separate Franco-Provençal from French.
2. Of a more unexpected nature is the fact that the lexical distance between the northeastern varieties of French on the one hand, and the central and western varieties on the other (4 choremes), is more pronounced than that between the Gascon/Languedoc area on the one hand, and NOcc. (which includes the Bordelais region), as well as the Vva/Prv. areas on the other (5 choremes); the distinction between the Gascon/Languedoc area and NOcc. represents the maximum lexical opposition within the Occitan/Gascon dialect group.
3. The second distinction within the Occitan/Gascon dialect group, subordinate to the first, is that between the northern group (Bord./Lim./Auv.) and the eastern group (Vva/Prv.), while the Gsc./Lgd. group show convergence (6 choremes); it should be mentioned that the character of eastern Pyrenean Catalan shows more similarity with the Vva/Prv. group than with all other varieties, which suggests that a certain degree of caution in interpreting the dialectometric results may be required.
4. Subordinate to these distinctions, Gascon vocabulary (still with the exception of the Bordelais) is finally distinct from Languedocian (7 choremes).
5. After determination of the three major Occitan areas (NOcc., Vva/Prv., Lgd.) and the Gascon territory, any further distinctions mainly concern the *oil* area and Francoprovençal. Further sub-categories of Occitan include the distinction between Alpine Prv. and the Vva/Prv. area (10 choremes), that of ELgd. and WLgd. (15 choremes), Auv. and Lim./Bord. (16 choremes), and, finally, the distinction between the northern third of WLgd. and the central and southern parts (20 choremes); lexically, the Béarnais displays solidarity with western Gascon, as does the Vivaro-Alpin with Provençal.

On the phonetic maps, however, the rupture between Gascon and Languedocian is more significant, comprising 5 choremes as opposed to the 7 displayed by the vocabulary, and it occurs earlier than that between NOcc. and Vva/Prv. (8 choremes instead of 6); the Bordelais, however, displays similar traits to central and southern Gascon.

Once progress has been made on the digitization of the THESOC database, it will be possible to further refine these results. A first dialectometric analysis of the 232 maps contained in the six atlases collected in THESOC confirms (a) the fundamental divergence between the three large areas of NOcc., Vva/Prv., and Lgd. as well as Gascon, (b) the composite character of Lgd., divided into three groups (N., S., and EOcc.), and (c) the transitional character of Bordelais on the one hand, and of Vva on the other (Brun-Trigaud et al., 2017).

An in-depth investigation with the scope of refining this macroscopic geolinguistic inquiry should take the form of an onomasiological approach. It is thus difficult to evaluate the foundational study carried out by Gerhard Rohlfs (1977) within the general framework of linguistic variation and change, as the nomenclature, consisting of some 700 lexemes, either exclusively Gascon or belonging to both the Gascon and the Ibero-Romance area (Rohlfs, 1977, pp. 38–115), is not organized by lexical field. It is, however, very significant from an etymological point of view.

- Compare, as an example, the first few entries belonging to the category of ‘exclusively Gascon words’ (pp. 101f.), which provide a remarkable series of highly specific formations:

OBéa. *abaa*, Bayonne *aban* ‘grandmother’ (< \*AVANE, FEW 25, 1189b)

Béa./Gers *ábets* ‘cereal bales(PL)’ (< APICE, FEW 25, 6a; cf. WLgd. *abets*, Cat. *àbecs*)

Gir. *acho*, Béa. *ache* ‘armpit(F)’ (< AXILLA by back-formation, FEW 25, 1282b; 1284a, etymon unknown to Rohlfs)

Béa. *ajiu*, *ejéu* ‘fir needle(M)’ (etymon unknown, FEW 21, 72b, but Rohlfs convincingly assumed a proto-Romance formation on the base ACU, \*ACILE, corresponding to ACULA, parallel to ACICULA/ACUCULA)

Bigorre *ejello*, *illasso* ‘fir branch(F)’ (id.)

Béa./Bigorre (a)*mauguè* ‘sheepskin used as a churn(M)’ (pre-Romance \**malg*, FEW 6, 95a)

Béa. *anésco* ‘yearling ewe(F)’ (< \*ANNISCA; FEW 24, 625a, ANNUS; cf. Cat. *anyesca*. ‘yearling goat’)

– In contrast, less attention is paid to semantic developments peculiar to Gascon:

Land./Béa. *abitá* ‘to light up’ (< VITA, FEW 14, 542b/543a; cf. Occ.Cat. *avida(r)* ‘give life, etc.’; = innovation)

OBéa. *alebà*/Oland. *alabar* ‘to injure, to cripple’ (< ALAPARE, FEW 24, 289a; = continuation of a Latin word)

Comminges/Bigorre/Aran *ampouro* ‘liquid substance from fir trees (F)’ (< AMPULLA, FEW 24, 489a; = innovation)

A more coherent picture of the lexical autonomy of Gascon is to be gained from an approach focused on a particular conceptual domain such as the denominations of plants, for example, which have been studied in depth by Jean Séguy (1953) and Gerald Bernhard (1988). The etymological analysis of some 350 names of Aranese plants carried out by Bernhard under the direction of Johannes Hubschmid showed the clear diversification of Gascon in this particular conceptual field, both in the Middle Ages and during the modern period (Bernhard, 1988, pp. 122–134).

Differentiation could also be investigated from the point of view of word-formation. Although the suffixes primarily found in the Romance languages are also present in Occitan, they are not used in the same manner throughout the Gallo-Romance area. Thus the exemplary studies carried out by Franz Rainer on the suffixes *-men(t)*, *-aria*, and *-on(e)* show that Occitan behaves quite differently from the neighboring varieties of Francoprovençal, Catalan, and French in this respect (Rainer, 2018a, 2018b, 2020). Studies of this type can be greatly enriched by the consideration of variation within the Occitan and Gascon dialects themselves.

The issue of geolinguistic differentiation represents one area among many, all of which merit in-depth study. The present considerations, however, highlight the real potential that resides in diachronic and variational lexicological studies on the basis of the Occitan and Gascon varieties, but also in the analysis of the relationship between the composition of the vocabulary at any given time and place and the manner in which it is exploited in vernacular texts.

## 4.2.2 The Effects of Linguistic Elaboration

The contemporary era is characterized by two significant developments, the first of which involves lexical enrichment, the second impoverishment. The vigorous renaissantist movements experienced by Occitan—the Félibrige (founded in 1854), followed by Occitanism emanating from the literary journal *Oc* (founded in Toulouse in 1923) and the Institut d'Études Occitanes (Institute for Occitan Studies, founded in 1945)—served as a catalyst for significant poetic creativity. Although this facet of Occitan history remains unknown to most French speakers, it has been the object of intense research led by Occitanist sociolinguistics, but essentially limited to external factors (cf. the overviews by Bec, 1991; Boyer & Gardy, 2001, pp. 221–462; Teulat, 1979; Tomàs, 2006; Weth, 2014).

Once again, it may be said that lexicological aspects have been treated as the 'poor relation,' despite their significant involvement in the process of elaboration. Leaving aside the macro-dictionary that is the FEW, Frédéric Mistral's *Tresor d'òc Felibrige* thus remains the richest lexicographical inventory of modern Occitan, despite its serious defects (cf. Chambon, 2010b, pp. 208–210). An analysis of the lexical choices in *Mirèio*, Mistral's masterpiece, reveals the level of attention paid to the choice of words, taken from the variety he aimed to establish as standard. The geolinguistically composite character of his vocabulary is made apparent by Jean-Claude Rivière's thesis (Rivière, 1985; cf. also Rostaing, 1971). An analysis of the first 200 verses conducted for the purposes of the present article identifies approximately 30 diatopically marked lexemes by comparison with the FEW. Forty percent of these (13/31) belong, as expected, to Provençal or Vva/Prv., and less frequently to Rhodanian:

- Prv.: *aloubati* 'greedy (wolf-like)' 21, *abrama* 'inflamed by desire' 24, *terreiròu* 'burrow(M)' 133, *estoublo* 'fallow(F)' 139, *spelido* 'hatched(F)' 166, *esvalir* 'dissipate', *batudo* 'labour(F)' 181, *escàfi* F. 'mockery' 191;
- Vva/Prv.: *vege* 'willow(M)' 119, *cano* 'reed(F)' 135, *eigagno* 'dew(F)' 102; 169;
- WPrv./Rhd.: *canestello* 'basket(F)' 42; 97, *barrulaire* 'ploughshare(M)' 114.

One-third of these words (9/31), however, are characteristic of eastern Lgd., or of both this region and (western) Prv.

- ELgd.: *falabrego* 'nettle tree(F)', *esplanca*. 'to break (applied to branches)' 22, *jitello* 'branch(F)' 25, *afrescoulido* 'cool' 168; Lgd.: *magagno* 'pain(F)' 170;
- WPrv./ELgd.: *oustaloun* 'small dwelling(M)' 38, *capistello* interjection. 64, *magnan* 'silkworm(M)' 101, *pesqui* 'fishpond(M)' 87.

These first investigations lead to the conclusion that Mistral constructed his lexical model on the basis of WPrv. and (E)Lgd., thus fusing the two main southern varieties possessing the most highly developed tradition of written culture. Furthermore, a tendency to prefer pan-Occitan words can be noticed (with the exception of Gascon), as well as toward the incorporation of archaic Gallicisms (mostly dating back to the 18th century and often characteristic of Prv.):

- pan-Occitan words (excluding Gascon): *clafi* 'to fill' 69, *fedo* 81, *baudufu* 'spinning top(F)' 188;
- Gallicisms: *chato* 'young girl(F)' 1, *chatouno* 'little girl(F)' 101, *ventoulet* 'light wind(M)' 31, *aubrage* 'clump of trees(M)' 85, *estampa* 'fashioned' 122;
- compare also a recent Arabism (Algerian loanword): *ràfi* 'farmhand(M)' 145.

The lexical character of *Mirèio* thus reflects a composite variety of southern Occitan quite distinct from both Gascon and the Alverno-Limousin group, but not averse to already well-integrated loanwords from French.

This remains an isolated example. Modern Occitan literature constitutes an extraordinary linguistic observatory due to the fact that it is doubly rooted within a long tradition of written culture and varied dialectal heritage. The intertextual, stylistic, as well as lexical choices that characterize it are thus charged with significance and are endowed with a poetic function. This is emphasized by the studies of Philippe Gardy in an exemplary manner, particularly as regards the work of Max Rouquette (Gardy, 1996) and by those of Jean-Pierre Chambon on the work of Jean Boudou (Chambon, 2017, pp. 677–703, 749s., 829–935).

Lexical elaboration undertaken by the renaissantist movements (whose principal actors have often been activists, writers, and linguists, such as P. Bec or R. Lafont) represents part of a broader desire to endow Occitan with a standard variety. These efforts, intended to counteract the decline of intergenerational language transmission, experienced very limited social acceptance, with many speakers even remaining unaware of their existence. The resulting semi-artificial and therefore secondary varieties were unable to halt the impending demise of the primary varieties of Occitan. Nonetheless, they dominate contemporary schoolbooks as well as the media (newspapers, music, radio, television, blogs) and are practiced by neo-speakers who naturally imitate the semantic and formal models provided by French.

On the basis of these observations, two desiderata may be identified: the encouragement of linguistic fieldwork in order to facilitate the recording of primary Occitan and particularly Gascon varieties—better preserved and less well-known—before their inevitable extinction, and an intensification of efforts in the field of lexicological analysis with the object of emphasizing the richness of dialectal varieties and the expressivity of contemporary literature.

## 5. Conclusions and Perspectives

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The trajectory of lexical development in Occitan and Gascon reveals a varied and promising field of study for which considerable desiderata remain. From a geolinguistic point of view, the Occitan dialect groups as well as the Gascon dialects are highly diversified and they must also be observed within the context of the neighboring varieties: Catalan, Aragonese, Poitevin, Francoprovençal, Alpine, and northeastern Italian. Contrary to other minority Romance languages currently in existence, Occitan developed a written tradition very early on and underwent four centuries of significant lexical elaboration, making it one of the principal Romance languages of the Middle Ages.

A significant range of primary sources exists for the Occitan and even the Gascon varieties: With the—important—exception of documentary texts, medieval texts are relatively well edited, and rich lexicological inventories of excellent quality exist for the modern dialects. Nevertheless, the lexical material pertaining to both the medieval and modern period has not yet been integrated into the existing lexicographical reference works. The current patchy state of lexicography hinders systemic lexicological inquiry. Thus, only a very limited number of interpretative studies has been carried out on the Occitan lexicon to date and nearly none on Gascon lexicon.

It is, however, certain that a thorough investigation into the history of the vocabulary of these languages would yield a significant typological contribution to the study of the mechanisms of lexical variation and evolution that characterize the Romance language family as a whole.

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