

mode of articulation, under conditions of palatalization, to take us from a clear (or even “dark”) lateral to *ř*.

The most natural development for *l* in the direction of frontness (palatality) and tenseness, and one paralleled in the history of many languages, is to [l'] or [ɿ]. Such a sound type then may readily proceed (as in Spanish, French, Albanian or Romanian dialects) to a spirant tense [j]; and this in turn may develop by change in the shape of the articulator to a groove (as in some varieties of Latin-American Spanish or in the Greek of Crete) to [ž] or [ẓ̌]. It would then be natural to suppose that the poorly opposed [ẓ̌] and [ṛ̌] (? output of *d*) merged as the spirant *ř*.

The frequent Umbrian gentilic spellings in *-dius* in Latin inscriptions, appositely pointed out by Poultney (*Lang.* 25.398–9), would then simply represent the spelling which was locally known as a common “equivalent” for *ř*. Such forms had never been pronounced with [d]. Local stonecutters simply thought they were rendering their native *ř*—sound into “Latin” letters, or “translating” the name into Latin.

Presumably what took place then, after the palatalization of original *l* before front tense vowels, was a merger of two closely similar intervocalic voiced groove blade spirants.

***Ipsithilla or Ipsicilla?* Catullus, c. 32 Again**

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The name of the girl to whom Catullus, c. 32 is addressed has long puzzled editors. As consultation of the various editions will show, the manuscripts offer a choice between *ipsi illa*, *ipsi thila*, *Ipsitilla* and *Ipsicilla*, all alike without parallel, and commentators have not hesitated to add conjectures of their own. In general, however, the forms *Ipsitilla* and *Ipsithilla* have received the widest acceptance,

and the usual assumption has been that the name itself is a compound formed from the pronoun *ipsa* in the sense of *domina*. But in a recent issue of this journal Gratwick broke new ground by analyzing the name as follows: the initial *i-* is a prothetic vowel before the cluster *ps-*; the central element is *psith-*, from the adjective *psithius* describing a kind of vine and the wine made from it; and *-illa* is of course the diminutive suffix. Thus “Ipsithilla” means “Little Grape”, a name comparable in type to Plautus’ Astaphium in the *Truculentus* or Ampelisca in the *Rudens*, the girl herself is a *meretrix*, and the poem’s “level of intent” is clearly low¹). Unfortunately, two flaws—one sociological and the other linguistic—render this explanation unacceptable.

Firstly, by arguing that “Ipsithilla” is a genuine name, Gratwick has returned to the view—widely held at the start of the present century—that the girl is indeed a *meretrix*²). In the intervening period, however, there has been a definite tendency to raise her social status. Thus Kroll took her to be a *scortillum* rather than a *scortum*, what one might term a callgirl rather than a “hooker”³). Neudling conjectured that she was the mistress of P. Plautius Hypsaeus, Ipsithilla being in his opinion an uneducated version of Hypsithilla, “Hypsaeus’ Little Wench”⁴). And Quinn has suggested tentatively that the name was a *nom de guerre* for none other than Aurelia Orestilla, Catiline’s widow⁵). Whatever the merits of these suggestions, the trend itself is probably to be attributed in good measure to a feeling that “we must be on our guard against the Victorian commentator who tends to treat as a prostitute every mistress who is not her lover’s social equal”⁶). Yet it is not unjustified. The girl was obviously no *scortum*. In Rome the common

¹) A. Gratwick, *Glotta* 44 (1966/67) 174–6. This contains a full review of previous scholarship on the subject.

²) See A. Baehrens (ed.), *Catulli Veronensis Liber*, Leipzig 1885, 196; R. Ellis, *A Commentary on Catullus*², Oxford 1889, 113; G. Friedrich (ed.), *Catulli Veronensis Liber*, Leipzig-Berlin 1908, 186; cf. also A. Ronconi, *Studi Catulliani*, Bari 1953, 42.

³) W. Kroll (ed.), *Catullus*³, Stuttgart 1959, 60; cf. M. Lenchantin de Gubernatis, *Il libro di Catullo*, Turin 1951, 62. The difference between *scortum* and *scortillum* emerges clearly from a comparison of Catullus, c. 6 and c. 10.

⁴) C. L. Neudling, *A Prosopography to Catullus*, Iowa 1955, 87 after Scaliger.

⁵) K. Quinn (ed.), *Catullus: the Poems*, London-New York 1970, 188.

⁶) K. Quinn, *The Catullan Revolution*², Cambridge 1969, 75.

whores started work at the ninth hour⁷), whereas Catullus wants to spend the siesta with the addressee of his poem; *iube ad te ueniam meridiatum*, as he says in the third verse⁸). This, to be sure, does not exclude the girl from the rank of *meretrices*. Plautine courtesans remain *meretrices* even when they draw distinctions between themselves and common *scorta* (*Poen.* 265–70; *Pseud.* 173–78). But not even Plautine courtesans enjoy the freedom of action which Catullus concedes to the girl in his poem. As he indicates in verses 5–6, it is for her to decide whether he shall be admitted or she will go out, and there is not the least suggestion of a *leno* lurking in the background. If the girl were a *meretrix*, she would have to be considered a very independent operator; but the whole tenor of the poem suggests that she is in fact a talented amateur of somewhat higher social status. In which case there is no compelling reason to assume that her name must be genuine as well as unparalleled.

Let us turn now to the linguistic aspect. As Gratwick recognizes⁹), the weakness in his case lies in the fact that in Vulgar Latin prothetic vowels before the native initial clusters *sc-*, *sp-* and *st-* are very rarely attested earlier than the second century A. D. He tries to circumvent this difficulty by maintaining that Greek loan-words with a combination of consonants not native to Latin should be regarded as a separate category, and that prothetic vowels could have been attached to them as early as the first century B. C. Even if we grant the validity of the distinction¹⁰), there is nothing to back up so early a dating for the phenomenon. It has always been recognised that the prothetic *i-* is found most commonly before consonant clusters of which the first member is *s*¹¹). Now there is a consonant cluster of this type which is not native to Latin, namely *sm-* or (as it is sometimes rendered) *zm-*. A single example of the attached prothetic vowel has been found at Pompeii (*Ismurna* for *Smyrna*: CIL IV 7221), and the next instance occurs on an inscrip-

⁷) Persius, *Sat.* 1, 133 and schol.; schol. on Juvenal, *Sat.* 6, 116; cf. Plutarch, *Amatorius* 759 EF; CIL IV 1698 with the comments of F. Bücheler, *Kleine Schriften* III, Leipzig-Berlin 1930, 219.

⁸) Compare Catullus 61, 118 and 80, 3–4; Ovid, *Amores* 1, 5; and (perhaps) Plautus, *Most.* 690ff.

⁹) Gratwick, o.c. 175 n.4, following F. Sommer, *Handbuch der lateinischen Laut- und Formenlehre*², Heidelberg 1914, 293f. See also O. Prinz, *Glotta* 26 (1937/38) 97–115; V. Väänänen, *Introduction au latin vulgaire*², Paris 1967, 48–49.

¹⁰) Cf. Prinz 113–4.

¹¹) Prinz 97ff.; Väänänen 48.

tion from Rome dating to 105 A.D. (*Izmara*<*g*>*dus* for *Smaragdus*: CIL VI 156)¹²). There is therefore no reason to assume that prothetic vowels were attached to the cluster *ps*- any earlier than they were to the cluster *sm*-¹³), or that they were attached to Greek clusters of consonants any earlier than they were to native Roman clusters. And if prothetic vowels came into common use only in the second century A.D., Gratwick's analysis of the name clearly cannot stand.

Nevertheless, Gratwick has performed a useful service in demolishing the theory that "Ipsit(h)illa" can be derived from *ipsa*; as he says, there is no plausible way of explaining the intrusive *-t*-¹⁴). On the form "Ipsicilla" he comments that "theoretically, it might be a 'double diminutive'. *Ipsa*/*Ipsicula*/*Ipsicilla* would be paralleled by *anus*/*anicula*/*anicilla*. But . . . the correct diminutive of *ipsa* is . . . *ipsula*/*issula*, not *ipsicula*, which does not in fact exist¹⁵)". So far as it goes, this statement is undoubtedly valid. But in the particular context a word's non-existence is hardly decisive. To judge by the surviving evidence, there was no word *fututio* until Catullus invented it specifically for this poem¹⁶). Hence it seems not at all improbable that when Catullus cast about for a suitable name for the addressee of his poem, he jokingly invented "Ipsicilla" = "My little mistress", deriving it from *ipsa* and going through an imaginary form *ipsicula* in order to arrive at the 'double diminutive' and the *-illa* suffix regular in such contexts, no matter what the social status of the woman to whose name it was attached¹⁷).

¹²) Prinz 103 and 105-6; Väänänen, loc. cit.

¹³) CIL XIII 3826, as Gratwick 175 admits, is a Christian epitaph. The variants *ipsilion* and *ipsillium* for *psyllium* and *ipsatirus* for *psathyrus*, reported at TLL VII 2, 380, are also very late. *Ipsillium* and *ipsilion* occur in Gloss. Lat. (ed. Goetz) III 557, 46; 558, 64; and 622, 51; *ipsatirus* will be found in Oribasius, syn. 4, 1 La p. 4. This information I owe to the generosity of Prof. Dr. W. Ehlers and the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae.

¹⁴) Gratwick 175, rightly dismissing the arguments of R. Sabbadini, Glotta 3 (1912) 50-51.

¹⁵) Gratwick, loc. cit.

¹⁶) Vollmer, TLL VI 1, 1664; Catullus may perhaps have been inspired by Philodemus, A.P. XI 30. But for a word of caution note J. Whatmough, Poetic, Scientific and other forms of Discourse, Berkeley & Los Angeles 1956, 41ff. and F. Cairns, Mnemosyne 26 (1973) 21.

¹⁷) Cf. the comments of Ronconi 131 on Suetonius, Aug. 69, 2. I wish to thank Professors Carl Rubino and George Doig for reading and commenting on this paper.