

Romance languages

Ti Alkire and Carol Rosen trace the changes that led from colloquial Latin to five major Romance languages, those which ultimately became national or transnational languages: Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, and Romanian. Trends in spoken Latin altered or dismantled older categories in phonology and morphology, while the regional varieties of speech, evolving under diverse influences, formed new grammatical patterns, each creating its own internal regularities. Documentary sources for spoken Latin show the beginnings of this process, which comes to full fruition in the medieval emergence of written Romance languages. This book newly distills the facts into an appealing program of study, including exercises, and makes the difficult issues clear, taking well-motivated and sometimes innovative stands. It provides not only an essential guide for those new to the topic, but also a reliable compendium for the specialist.

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a historical introduction



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Like general linguistics, Romance linguistics in the modern sense of the term traces its origins to the early decades of the nineteenth century. Given the weight of the accumulated scholarship, any work on the present topic will necessarily be derivative. In this book we do take some stands and venture some new analyses, but our debt to earlier researchers is immeasurable, beyond what our quotations and citations can convey.

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