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Fonctionnements  
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Genres  
épigraphiques  
et langues  
d'attestation  
fragmentaire  
dans l'espace  
méditerranéen

sous la direction  
d'Emmanuel DUPRAZ  
et de Wojciech SOWA

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# **Genres épigraphiques et langues d'attestation fragmentaire dans l'espace méditerranéen**

Sous la direction d'Emmanuel Dupraz et de Wojciech Sowa

## Introduction

L'étude des langues d'attestation fragmentaire documentées dans le bassin méditerranéen au 1<sup>er</sup> millénaire avant notre ère a souvent été faite dans le passé selon les méthodes de l'analyse étymologique et de la grammaire comparée. Ces procédures ont permis le déchiffrement et l'analyse de ces textes difficiles, puisque renvoyant à des langues mal attestées. Dans le cadre de ces recherches, la comparaison se faisait principalement à l'échelle proprement linguistique, d'une part, et à celle des formes et non des textes, d'autre part : il s'agissait de prouver des parentés originelles entre langues – démontrer par exemple que l'étrusque appartenait, ou en l'occurrence n'appartenait pas, à la famille des langues indo-européennes – et, par ailleurs, de rechercher des parallèles pour telle ou telle forme ou lexème attestés dans une inscription issue d'une langue d'attestation fragmentaire. Il n'est pas question de minimiser les résultats obtenus par ces méthodes : ce sont eux qui permettent l'accès aux textes des langues fragmentaires du bassin méditerranéen.

Pour autant, une autre voie d'analyse est possible, celle de l'étude sociolinguistique. À la vérité, cette voie n'est pas neuve elle non plus, et les recherches sur la diffusion de l'écriture, par exemple, ont toujours fait intervenir les questions sociolinguistiques – quel milieu social, dans quel contexte économique, politique ou culturel, a fait tel usage de l'écriture, à quelles fins ? Mais la recherche sociolinguistique permet une étude à une échelle qui n'a pas été souvent envisagée dans la recherche passée, l'échelle des genres de texte.

En effet, les langues d'attestation fragmentaire sont documentées non seulement par un petit nombre de textes, mais aussi par un petit nombre de genres épigraphiques qui possèdent chacun ses caractéristiques précises, en termes de support, de contexte archéologique, de visée communicative et de contenu sémantico-référentiel. Ainsi, telle langue d'attestation fragmentaire a livré surtout des épitaphes – c'est par exemple le cas de l'étrusque – telle autre au contraire, sauf cas particulier, a livré surtout des commémorations de travaux publics ou de dédicaces – ainsi notamment l'osque.

L'étude de ces caractéristiques n'est pas moins instructive que celle des formes attestées ou des apparentements linguistiques. Elle permet, en coopération avec l'archéologie des supports et des contextes, une détermination des milieux sociaux concernés par l'écriture et de leurs attentes. Même si ce point n'est pas directement pertinent pour la reconstruction étymologique, l'histoire sociale et culturelle a beaucoup à attendre d'une telle détermination. L'étude de la diffusion des genres épigraphiques d'une langue à une autre donne aussi accès aux modalités de contact entre celles-ci – il est possible, par exemple, que telle société apprenne l'écriture au contact de telle autre, mais, et c'est capital pour évaluer les relations de l'une à l'autre, fasse de l'écriture des usages inconnus dans la société d'origine, soit neufs, soit inspirés d'un autre modèle encore. La diffusion des

genres épigraphiques renvoie donc potentiellement à une autre histoire des contacts entre populations que celle de l'écriture elle-même, qui reste largement à écrire. Par ailleurs, une analyse en termes de genres épigraphiques se voit confrontée aux conventions qui caractérisent ceux-ci tant au niveau du support matériel et de l'*ordinatio* qu'à celui des formules et des contenus. Ces conventions affectent l'analyse proprement linguistique elle-même : l'étude de ces conventions peut permettre une meilleure compréhension de la langue, mais elle peut aussi indiquer que tel trait présent dans les textes est purement conventionnel et ne saurait être représentatif du diasystème linguistique de la société considérée, c'est-à-dire de l'ensemble des usages écrits et oraux de la ou des langues employées par celle-ci et de leur distribution sociale, géographique et diachronique.

Les études réunies dans le présent volume sont issues des travaux d'un colloque tenu à l'université de Rouen les 25, 26 et 27 juin 2012. C'est à dessein que nous les avons regroupées par thème et non pas par aire : il nous a semblé important de confronter, à propos des mêmes thèmes, les données des différentes régions du bassin méditerranéen et les approches des chercheurs qui travaillent sur chacune de ces régions, même si un semblable classement par thèmes est souvent difficile et arbitraire.

Une première série d'études porte sur les questions d'alphabet et de graphie. L'article d'Ignasi-Xavier Adiego porte sur la normalisation d'une variété d'alphabet lycien par le pouvoir politique à des fins de centralisation. Même le choix d'une forme pour tel graphème peut être un enjeu sociolinguistique significatif. Celui de Marie-Laurence Haack s'attache à un genre précis, celui des inscriptions alphabétiques étrusques, et montre que le choix de graver l'alphabet, attesté à plusieurs périodes, avait des finalités différentes selon l'époque. Marta Muscariello aborde les débuts de l'usage de l'écriture dans le Latium : les premières inscriptions, coupées de toute finalité pratique, servent de vecteur d'auto-représentation des élites. Giulia Sarullo, quant à elle, aborde le genre des textes en *boustrophedon* dans l'Italie archaïque : ce mode de gravure a été privilégié pour des textes officiels, contrairement à ce qui a lieu dans les aires helléniques dont ce type de gravure provient ; il y a donc là un choix fait par les populations d'Italie et non la simple reprise d'une pratique grecque.

Même si les langues d'attestation fragmentaire sont pour l'essentiel documentées par des sources épigraphiques, les textes littéraires des langues classiques fournissent aussi des informations à leur sujet, y compris pour une analyse en termes de genres de textes. Manuela Anelli étudie un cas rare, celui d'une forme attestée à la fois par une inscription osque et par des glossateurs latins, et propose des hypothèses sur le statut social auquel renverrait cette forme. Barbora Machajdíkova aborde pour sa part une glose latine qui pourrait renvoyer à un lexème sabellique ; son analyse montre la difficulté d'analyser de telles sources, mais aussi leur intérêt pour des champs lexicaux aussi importants que celui du rituel, en complément des textes épigraphiques eux-mêmes.

L'étude linguistique et la grammaire comparée peuvent bien entendu être associées à l'analyse des sources épigraphiques en termes de genres et de contexte social. José Luis García Ramón tente par exemple, à partir d'inscriptions lyciennes et des données de la comparaison, de reconstituer une terminologie des institutions sociales et sa préhistoire. Gerhard Meiser propose une étude syntaxique des Tables Eugubines : il montre comment, dans le cadre d'un genre très précis, celui de la description de rituels, les prêtres ombriens pouvaient introduire des variations correspondant à leurs préférences

ou à l'évolution de la langue. Craig Melchert, dans l'étude d'une famille étymologique lycienne, montre combien une analyse rigoureuse du système de la langue, en synchronie et en diachronie, est indispensable pour tirer des sources épigraphiques les conclusions d'histoire sociale qu'elles peuvent livrer. L'article de Matilde Serangeli est consacré à une problématique voisine, toujours à propos du lycien qui se révèle un domaine en pleine évolution et pour lequel l'apport de la comparaison est capital. Wojciech Sowa, quant à lui, examine une langue géographiquement voisine, le phrygien, et montre la difficulté d'analyser des formulaires attestés dans des textes peu nombreux, quoique standardisés et appartenant au même genre, celui des malédictions ou bénédictions en contexte funéraire. Enfin, Sabine Ziegler, au-delà du cadre temporel de l'ouvrage, mais de manière exemplaire pour la problématique de celui-ci, étudie une inscription dans une langue inconnue retrouvée en Libye et datée de la période impériale romaine : la connaissance du contexte historique combinée avec des principes typologiques relatifs à la structure des langues permet des hypothèses précises sur la nature de la langue employée dans ce texte.

Une question centrale dans l'étude des genres de texte documentés dans les langues d'attestation fragmentaire est celle de la visée communicative que se proposaient les auteurs et du public auquel était destiné le texte. Il s'agit là d'enjeux spécifiques à chaque langue, qui nécessitent une analyse précise du contexte social exact de la culture correspondante, et qui pour cette raison sont à la fois centraux et difficiles à généraliser. Francisco Beltrán Lloris examine ainsi comment les populations de la péninsule ibérique, qui ont appris l'écriture d'abord sur la côte orientale, ont pu reprendre ou au contraire moduler les usages monumentaux de celle-ci. Dominique Briquel, pour sa part, examine la relation entre une marque étrusque d'appartenance au mobilier funéraire et le support, céramique ou métal, sur lequel ce message était inscrit. Les variations entre les habitus épigraphiques des différentes cités étrusques apparaissent nettement. Emmanuel Dupraz examine l'épigraphie attestée chez les Marse, un peuple sabellique, dans les deux siècles qui ont suivi la mise en place de la domination romaine, et conclut que le choix du latin, bien documenté, relève d'un genre épigraphique unique de textes d'apparat, probablement peu significatif de l'ensemble du diasystème linguistique local. Sophie Minon aborde le cas de plusieurs dialectes grecs : nombre de ceux-ci peuvent être considérés comme des langues d'attestation fragmentaire, secondairement en contact avec la koinè, donc soumis à une dialectique de normalisation et d'écart par rapport à la norme qui dépend du genre épigraphique et des milieux sociaux. Giovanna Rocca, enfin, publie et commente une défixion sicilienne en grec et aborde la combinaison de traits formulaires privés et publics que ce genre peut recéler.

Pour finir, l'étude des genres de textes dans les langues d'attestation fragmentaire entraîne bien entendu souvent l'examen des contacts entre langues, soit avec d'autres langues d'attestation fragmentaire, soit avec des langues mieux documentées. Maria José Estarán Tolosa propose, pour tout l'occident méditerranéen, une étude des différents types d'inscriptions bilingues documentées, qui varient selon le type de contact avec les grandes langues véhiculaires. Joaquín Gorrochategui et José Vallejo, à partir d'exemples ibériques et aquitains, montrent que l'étude des aires onomastiques, définies par la diffusion concordante de formes onomastiques nombreuses, permet des conclusions pour la diffusion des langues elles-mêmes, lorsque celle-ci n'est pas directement documentée

par l'épigraphie. Katherine McDonald examine le corpus des inscriptions osques en caractères grecs et s'attache à montrer que les choix graphiques effectués peuvent varier selon le genre du texte et la visée communicative qui lui est attachée. Paolo Poccetti propose une synthèse sur le genre bien attesté des défixions dans la Grande-Grèce. Les populations oscophones ont emprunté ce genre aux Grecs et ont su moduler dans leurs inscriptions les traits linguistiques et formulaires présents dans la langue originelle. Coline Ruiz Darasse achève le volume par une communication consacrée à la diglossie dans le monde ibérique nord-oriental, examinant si les différents genres de textes attestés permettent de déterminer quelle population faisait usage de l'écriture et dans quel but.

Le choix a été fait pour le présent volume de laisser chaque contributeur libre de la langue de son article. Nous avons ainsi voulu à la fois faire dialoguer les traditions scientifiques liées à la langue allemande, anglaise, espagnole, française et italienne, et, d'autre part, refléter l'autonomie de chacune de ces traditions et les méthodes différentes de la recherche dans les aires germanophone, anglophone, hispanophone, francophone et italophone.

Le lecteur pourra constater que les méthodes suivies à propos de chacune des aires méditerranéennes varient, au-delà même de l'école nationale du contributeur. Les recherches sur les langues de la péninsule ibérique, par exemple, s'attachent bien plus aux questions de contacts entre langues et de visée communicative que celles qui portent sur les langues de l'Anatolie, pour lesquelles l'étude socio-linguistique est plus liée à la reconstruction étymologique. Le cas des aires italiennes est intermédiaire. C'est précisément cette diversité d'approches – qui s'explique en partie, bien entendu, par le caractère nettement indo-européen des langues de l'Anatolie au I<sup>er</sup> millénaire avant notre ère et par les progrès récents de la reconstruction dans ce domaine, ainsi que, de l'autre côté, par les avancées de l'archéologie ibérique – que nous avons voulu respecter et reproduire. Nous espérons ainsi montrer que les recherches présentes en appellent d'autres, futures.

C'est pour nous un devoir agréable de remercier ceux et celles qui ont permis l'ouvrage collectif que nous publions ici, tout d'abord les contributeurs pour leur venue à Rouen et les débats auxquels le colloque a donné lieu, ensuite les directeurs successifs de l'Équipe de recherche interdisciplinaire sur les aires culturelles de l'université de Rouen, Laurence Villard et Miguel Olmos, qui ont activement encouragé nos travaux, enfin le conseil scientifique de l'université de Rouen et le conseil régional de Haute-Normandie, qui ont bien voulu soutenir notre recherche.

Emmanuel Dupraz et Wojciech Sowa

# Genres, Continuity and Adaptation in the Epigraphy of South Oscan

Katherine McDonald

## INTRODUCTION

The Oscan language of ancient Italy is written using at least four distinct alphabets<sup>1</sup>. This article is concerned with the adapted form of the Greek alphabet used to write Oscan in Lucania, Bruttium and Sicily. In contrast to Central Oscan, which (like Latin) adopted the Euboean Greek alphabet through the intermediary of Etruscan, South Oscan was adapted from the Hellenistic Ionic Greek alphabet used in a number of the Greek colonies in Southern Italy<sup>2</sup>. This transmission probably took place in the first half of the fourth century BC, perhaps half a century after the creation of the Central Oscan alphabet (Lejeune 1970: 272). The precise timing and mechanism of this transmission is still a matter of considerable debate, however, with correspondingly different views on the degree and duration of Greek influence on the Oscan-speaking communities of Italy<sup>3</sup>. Some aspects of South Oscan epigraphy may have been subject to on-going interaction with Greek after the initial introduction of the alphabet—this contribution discusses one aspect of this problem<sup>4</sup>.

In the use of any existing alphabet to represent a previously unwritten variety, there will inevitably be compromises and adaptations. The adapted alphabet may show, for example, inconsistent usages, variation across different communities, or changes over

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1. For more details, see Crawford (2011: 2).

2. The terms Osco-Greek, Osco-Etruscan (or Native Oscan) and Osco-Latin are sometimes used for Oscan written in the adapted Ionic Greek alphabet, the adapted Etruscan alphabet, and the Latin alphabet respectively; however, I use the terms South Oscan, Central Oscan and North Oscan, since they cause less ambiguity about the language of the inscription. In the use of “South Oscan” for the Oscan alphabet derived from the Ionic Greek alphabet, I am following a number of previous scholars, including Lejeune, who speaks of “osque méridional” as well as “osco-grec”. For the former, and similar terms, see for example the usage of Conway (1897); Vetter (1953); Lejeune (1966: 172); for “osco-grec” and similar terms, see for example Lejeune (1970: 274); Cristofani (1998: 275-279); Poccetti (2009a).

3. Lejeune (1970); Lejeune (1972a); Cristofani (1998); Crawford (2011: 54-55).

4. For more discussion of the relationship between South Oscan and Greek, see McDonald (2013) and (2015).

time. These variations are not linguistic variation proper, since the spelling of a word in one way or another does not affect the message of the inscription, nor does it necessarily reflect any variation in the spoken language. However, like linguistic variation, orthographic variation can be revealing of social variation, the community's attitudes to different languages, and the strength of social norms within the group, among numerous other things; it is therefore a fruitful source for sociolinguistics, particularly historical sociolinguistics which relies on written sources.

This article will deal with what I am calling, for now, "extra characters": that is, letters used in the South Oscan alphabet that were not required to represent the sounds of Oscan. These include signs that represent more than one phoneme (such as <ψ> = /ps/), as well as signs that represent in Greek phonemes not shared by Oscan (such as <χ> = /k<sup>h</sup>/)<sup>5</sup>. An in-depth study of these characters in South Oscan, and the way in which the use of these characters varies across genres, indicates that they were not considered by (at least some) writers of Oscan to be fully part of the alphabet as much as, say, the signs <α> or <κ> were. In fact, the use of these "extra" signs, which would have been familiar from Greek inscriptions, is an indication of how Oscan-speakers formed their own norms of epigraphy and orthography, based on Greek epigraphic models and on-going contact with Greek speakers. It also shows that some communities—notably Messana—may have formed different epigraphic norms, though the evidence for this is far from clear.

The use, or avoidance, of these extra characters can show a desire to forge, maintain or react against connections to Greek texts and Greek identities, particularly in names. For example, we will see that certain orthographic practices are used by some writers of Oscan to increase the "Greek" appearance of a text. This orthographic "Greekness" can appear, but does not necessarily, in the same texts as lexical, morphological and syntactic borrowings from Greek. In many cases, the Greek influence that we see in these Oscan texts is not the result of learner errors or low literacy, but is a consciously-made choice by the writer, apparently conditioned by certain genre-based expectations. In this way, the epigraphy of South Oscan shows how Oscan-speakers formed flexible norms of orthography, and how writers used these norms in a variety of ways.

## PSI, XI AND ZETA

Psi and xi each represent two phonemes in Greek – /ps/ and /ks/, respectively – and these letters are used in the same way in Oscan. Zeta is probably used to represent /z/, an Oscan phoneme arising from several different sources, for which other spellings were available. These characters are normally considered to be part of the South Oscan alphabet, and not ad hoc graphic borrowings from Greek by each individual writer. While I also do not consider them to constitute borrowings as such, they are used in ways that suggest that they may have been thought of as distinct from the normal alphabet.

5. Angled brackets, e.g. <ψ>, represent letter forms; slashes, e.g. /ps/, represent phonemes; square brackets [ps] represent phonetic transcription. I will use letter names (such as psi, zeta, etc.) to refer to letter forms, not sounds.



## USE OF PSI

We can see from Table 1 that the Greek letter psi is the most common way to spell the cluster /ps/ in South Oscan. However, it is not used consistently where this cluster occurs. All our examples of psi are found in names, whether personal names or divine names. The few examples of <πσ> are found in other kinds of words (see also an example from Messina, below), and we do not have any non-onomastic words that use psi.

Where <πσ> is used, we might explain this as arising from familiarity with the Central Oscan alphabet, which contained no letter psi and always used <ps>. The use of <πσ> is unlikely to come from contact with another variety of Greek. The <πσ> spelling is very rare in all Greek varieties, apart from in very early inscriptions in “green” epichoric alphabets (for example, on Crete) and some very late Roman Imperial inscriptions: areas without a psi character usually write <φσ>, not <πσ> (Clackson 2002: 23). This has been variously put down to aspiration of the stop in this combination (i.e. <ψ> = [p<sup>h</sup>s]), a lenis or lax stop in this position (Lejeune 1972b: 72), or an increased voice-onset time in both aspirated stops and stops followed by [s] (Clackson 2002: 29). The exact reason for this orthography does not matter here—the important point is that the spelling with the aspirate was dominant throughout the Greek-speaking world where this option was available. One of the rare examples of <πσ> in Hellenistic Greek is found in the spelling of a Greek name (Αὔτοπσια) on a red-figured pot produced in Italy (Threatte 1980: 20; Trendall 1967: no. 797). Other exceptions, where <πσ> is used in Greek-language inscriptions, are found on Amorgos (in the name Λαμπσαγορεο, IG xii.7 141), the lead tablets from Styra in Euboea (word-finally only, in the name Χάροπς, IG xii. 9 56) and a law from Eretria (IG xii.9 1273-4; Clackson 2002: 23).

Lu 5 (Potentia 1)<sup>6</sup> is one of the inscriptions which shows the use of <πσ>. It is from Rossano di Vaglio, where a number of other inscriptions show <ψ>, though it is quite a late inscription and therefore may behave differently from other texts from the same area; for example, it may be that Central Oscan or Latin epigraphy was acting more strongly as a model by this time. However, Lu 5 still aligns itself with Greek epigraphy in other ways—for example, it uses Greek acrophonic numerals instead of the Roman numerals that were used in Central Oscan<sup>7</sup>. It is possible that the split in usage is between names (which use <ψ>) and other words (which use <πσ>), rather than between inscriptions which do or do not use psi. Unfortunately, we have no inscriptions that use both <ψ> and <πσ>, so this is difficult to confirm.

6. Oscan inscriptions are referred to here by their number in Rix's *Sabellische Texte* (two-letter code plus number) and in Crawford's *Imagines Italicae* (town name plus number). Where there is no ST number available, only the *Imagines* number will be used. See Rix (2002); Crawford (2011). Dates are given according to Crawford.

7. Note that the use of acrophonic numerals was in decline by this time, at least in Attica; it is normal there only until the end of the second century BC. Threatte (1980: 112).

Table 1: Use of &lt;ψ&gt; and &lt;πσ&gt;

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Laos 1	Coinage	350-300	στα οψι (male name)
Lu 46/Laos 2	Curse	330-320	νοψιν (male name) νοψιν (male name) οψιον (male name) νοψιν (male name) οψιον (male name) νοψα (female name)
Laos 4	Curse	–	νυμψιοσ (male name)
Lu 28/Potentia 20	Dedication	–	νυμψδοι (god name?) νυμψδοι (god name?)
Lu 29/Potentia 21	Dedication	250-200	[νυ]μψδοι (god name?)
Lu 20/Potentia 26	Dedication	300-200	[-]νπψηδ[-] (male name?)
Lu 61/Heraclea 2	Graffito	Before 275	νοψ (male name)
Lu 47/Thurii Copia 1	Curse	350-300	νομψισ (male name)
Lu 43/Teuranus Ager 1	Curse	Before 250	νυμψιμ (male name)
Lu 5/Potentia 1	Dedication (Official)	125-100	(ω)πσανω (“to be built”—gerundive)
Lu 37/ Metapontum 1	Dedication	400-375	Καμπσανασ* (unknown)

\* Uncertain reading: may also be καμμσανασ. Crawford (2011: 1451).

#### USE OF <Ξ> AND <ΚΞ>

Table 2 shows that the use of xi follows a similar pattern to psi, although the cluster /ks/ is rarer than /ps/. Like psi, xi <ξ> is more common than the written-out form <κσ>, but the difference here is slight because of the small number of examples. The written-out version of xi in Greek would normally be <χσ>, which is never found in Oscan. As above, it seems that the division may be between names, which use xi, and non-names, which use <κσ>, though no inscription uses both spellings.

Table 2: Use of &lt;ξ&gt; and &lt;κσ&gt;

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Lu 45/ Buxentum 3	Curse	–	μαμερεξ (male name)
Lu 29/Potentia 21	Dedication	250-200	-υξ (male name?)
Petelia 2	Curse	c. 300	αραξ (male name)
Lu 3/ Cosilinum 1	Dedication (Official)	c. 300	εκσ (“thus”)*

\* C.f. *ex* (Lu 1 / Bantia 1), *ekss* (Cm 1 / Abella 1).

Note that Rix also reads λεκσε in this inscription; however, Crawford reads λεκ(?) σε[νατεισ].

## USE OF ZETA

Table 3 shows the use of the letter zeta. Zeta is considered by Lejeune to have been added to the South Oscan inventory of signs at a later stage than the original transmission (Lejeune 1990: 34). It is found being used both for the outcome of the initial cluster *\*dy-* (for example, in the divine name “Jove”), for the voiced sibilant which develops when original *\*s* stands between vowels (i.e. [z]), and for voiced fricatives from other origins, as in Lu 35 (Potentia 11) and Lu 31 (Potentia 22) in Table 3, below (Lejeune 1990: 34).

We find one spelling with zeta for “Jove” at Rossano di Vaglio, but also several with <δι>. The consistent use of initial <z> in this context is found in later inscriptions from nearby Bantia, written in the Latin alphabet: *zicolom* “day (accusative)” in the Tabula Bantina (Lu 1 / Bantia 1), *zove* “of Jove” in a dedication (Lu 38 / Bantia 2). The sound represented is probably [z], and seems to be a regional development in Lucania or parts of it, since inscriptions from other areas show spellings with <di-> or <i-> (Rix 1996: 250). The letter zeta had started to represent [z] (rather than the cluster [zd]) in Attic Greek in some circumstances, usually before a voiced consonant, from the mid-fourth century BC (Threatte 1980: 547). This fricative [z] is likely to be what the letter zeta represented in most Koine inscriptions (Horrocks 2010<sup>2</sup>: 86). There is perhaps a small chance that the writer of Lu 35 was making a visual link with the name “Zeus” in Greek, though it is more likely that the letter has been adopted to represent a recently-emerged new phoneme in the language with considerable similarities to the sound represented by zeta in Greek. Lejeune considers the outcome of *\*dy-* to be the original use of zeta in Oscan, with its use for intervocalic [z] arising from a perceived similarity between the two sounds (Lejeune 1990: 34; Stuart-Smith 2004: 91).

For /s/ voiced between vowels as [z], we find both zeta and sigma being used in South Oscan. Thus, “the same men”, probably pronounced something like [eʒədom], is found spelled with either sigma or zeta at Rossano di Vaglio (see table 3 below: Lu 5 / Potentia 1, Lu 11 / Potentia 5). Since Central Oscan lacks a <z> character, the spelling with sigma more closely reflects the Central Oscan orthography: the same word is spelled *ísíđum* (Po 3 / Pompei 24, Cm 3 / Abella 3) or *esídum* (Sa 3 / Teruentum 4, Sa 10 / Teruentum 16, among others) in Central Oscan. It is likely that the sound represented here is something like [z], and was phonetically very similar to the outcome of original *\*dy-* described above: the Tabula Bantina consistently uses <z> for original *\*s* between vowels, e.g. in *eizac* (line 10), c.f. Po 3 / Pompei 24 *eisak*, alongside its use of <z> for the outcome of original *\*dy-*<sup>8</sup>.

Writing <s> for both voiced and unvoiced variants of a sibilant is not cross-linguistically unusual where the difference is not contrastive. See for example the use of <s> in German, where [z] is the allophone used in syllable onsets, with [s] elsewhere (e.g. Sohn [zo:n] vs. Bus [bʊs])<sup>9</sup>. In the Classical Greek alphabet, sigma is likewise used to represent both [s] and a voiced [z], which arose when original *\*s* occurred before a voiced consonant (Allen 1987<sup>3</sup>: 45). The lack of the letter <z> in some Oscan writing systems probably does not indicate that the sound [z] was absent from the language in

8. Other examples of <z> in the Tabula Bantina are: *angetuzet*, *censazet*, *egmazum*, *eizac*, *eizasc*, *eizazunc*, *eizeic*, *eizeis*, *eizoic*, *eizuc*, *ezum*. Bakkum (2009: 83).

9. Note that the letter <z> is not available for [z] in German because it is used for the sound [ts].

these areas. Rather, it is likely that the orthographic difference in use of zeta for a voiced allophone of /s/ does not reflect any dialectal difference (e.g. voicing of medial /s/ in Rossano only): in fact, the voicing of intervocalic /s/ to [z] may go back to Proto-Italic (Bakkum 2009: 83).

Table 3: Use of &lt;ζ&gt;

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Lu 5/ Potentia 1	Dedication (Official)	125-100	αιζνω (“bronze”), ειζιδου (“the same men”)
Lu 35/ Potentia 11	Dedication	200-100	ζωφηι (“to Jove”)*, πιζηι (“pious?” < *pid(e)zei)
Lu 31/ Potentia 22	Dedication	250-100	φευζηι (“to Venus”, *ven(e)zei)
Caulonia 2	Dedication	325-300	φεζεισ (“of Venus”)
Lu 11/ Potentia 5	Dedication (Official)	200-100	εισειδου (“the same [men]”)

\* C.f. Spellings with <δι-> (Lu 6 / Potentia 9, Lu 27 / Potentia 12, Lu 25 / Vibo Valentia 2, Lu 13 / Potentia 40, Lu 7 / Potentia 10) and <ι-> (Lu 14 / Paestum 1). Both di- and i- are found in the Central Oscan alphabet. The spelling <z-> is found in the Latin alphabet at Bantia (Lu 38 / Bantia 2).

### THETA, PHI, CHI AND DOUBLE GAMMA

This section deals with four very marginal spellings in South Oscan orthography: theta, phi and chi, and the double gamma spelling <γγ> for /ηγ/. Unlike what we have seen so far, these letters often seem to be the result of deliberate graphic borrowing by the writer, intended to make the word or text appear more “Greek”.

#### USE OF THETA

Theta has a number of different uses in South Oscan, shown in Table 4. It is used in relatively early inscriptions at the Rossano di Vaglio sanctuary (Lu 28 / Potentia 20, Lu 30 / Potentia 24, Lu 36 / Potentia 19; Lejeune 1990: 28). In these cases, it is being used as a symbol for /f/, though it is not clear whether it has been adapted directly from the Greek alphabet or whether it is in part an adaptation of Central Oscan <8><sup>10</sup>. These possibilities need not be completely mutually exclusive – for example, it could be that <8> was borrowed but adapted by some writers to resemble Greek <θ> more closely, with subsequent movement back towards the <8> or <S> model<sup>11</sup>.

Theta is also used in bilingual Greek/Oscan texts, such as the Petelia 2 curse tablet, which is primarily in Oscan, with a Greek final formula. The coinage of Laos shows both Oscan and Greek names, and it is in one of the Greek names that theta is used. In these cases, it is clear that theta has been used as part of a Greek word or name; in Petelia 2, in particular, this is more likely to be an instance of code-switching into Greek than

10. Lejeune (1970: 276); Colonna (1984: 235-237); Cristofani (1998); Stuart-Smith (2004: 89); Crawford (2011: 55).

11. For more detail on the development of signs for /f/ in South Oscan, see McDonald (2013: 67-88) and (2015: chapter 3).

borrowing a Greek word into Oscan. It is therefore not surprising that the spelling with theta is maintained.

Lu 46 (Laos 2) is a curse tablet, with a series of Oscan-type names. The name βοθρονη(-), or possibly βοθονη(-), has not been adequately explained. If this name is Greek-influenced, or borrowed from Greek and incorporated into the Oscan naming system as a gentilicium, then the retention of the theta is notable. It perhaps represents an effort to maintain a spelling or pronunciation found in the corresponding Greek name, as in φοινι[-] in Lu 45 (Buxentum 3)—see discussion of phi, below. So, the letter theta is primarily used in South Oscan where a whole word, phrase or name is being borrowed from Greek, or the word/phrase is part of a code-switch into Greek; the letter theta does not seem to be borrowed in isolation.

Table 4: Use of <θ>

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Laos 1	Coinage	350-300	εϋθυμο(ς/υ) (male name)
Lu 46/ Laos 2	Curse	330-320	βοθρονη(ον), or βοφονη(ν) (male name)
Petelia 2	Curse	c. 300	χθωνιε (Greek: “of the underworld”) καθεκε (Greek: “place (them)”) )

USE OF PHI

The letter phi is used on a number of occasions in Oscan-language texts, though always in the context of names. The letter phi represents a voiceless aspirate labial stop [p<sup>h</sup>] in Classical Greek, while in later Greek, it represents a fricative [φ] or [f]. It has been suggested that the change of the Greek aspirated stop [p<sup>h</sup>] to a fricative could date to as early as 300 BC, though the first undisputed evidence of this change is from Roman Imperial times (Threatte 1980: 469). The first clear indication of the [p<sup>h</sup>] > [f] change is in Attica and Asia Minor during the C2nd AD; there is apparently no evidence of such a change in the Egyptian papyri throughout the Roman Empire and into the Byzantine period (Gignac 1975: 98; Horrocks 2010<sup>2</sup>: 170). On the other hand, we know that Laconian Greek had already undergone a change [t<sup>h</sup>] > [θ] by the fifth century BC, with possible suggestions of similar changes in Elean, Cretan and Thessalian, though this need not also imply an early change affecting [p<sup>h</sup>] (Buck 1955: 59; Horrocks 2010<sup>2</sup>: 170-1). The first transliteration of the Greek letter phi with Latin <f> (*Dafne*), indicating that Greek [p<sup>h</sup>] had become a fricative in some forms of Greek used in Italy, is in the latter stages of the history of Pompeii (C1st AD; Gignac 1975: 99). It is not out of the question that Greek phi represented a fricative in the Greek spoken in Italy during the period when South Oscan was being written, but there is no positive evidence of this change before the turn of the millennium.

Crawford has suggested that at least some of the occasional usages of <φ> in South Oscan represent the labiodental fricative /f/ (Crawford 2011: 55). If this is the case, this would show the use of a Greek character instead of the usual South Oscan letters for /f/, mainly signs with a curved or angular <S> shape, derived from the <8> which

represents /f/ in Central Oscan (Lejeune 1970: 276; Cristofani 1998). This claim has not been explored in detail previously, and so merits some discussion here.

In Greek-language inscriptions, the letter <φ> can be used to represent Oscan /f/. For example, the coinage of Fistelia (c.325-275) was produced with both Greek language/ alphabet and Oscan language/ alphabet (that is, Central Oscan alphabet) legends: in the Oscan legends, the sound /f/ is represented by <8>, and in the Greek legends by <φ><sup>12</sup>. However, in Central Oscan, Greek /p<sup>h</sup>/ (i.e. the sound conveyed by the letter <φ>) is represented either with <p> (e.g. *diumpaís*, Sa 1 ~ νύμφη) or with <PH> (*aphinis*, Po 40 ~ Ἀφίνιος); the digraph <ph> is used only from the second half of the second century BC, with no difference of usage between names and other kinds of words<sup>13</sup>. The Greek letter phi that (at least some) Oscan-speakers were familiar with represented a voiceless aspirated stop, not a fricative, and so the Greek use of <φ> (/p<sup>h</sup>/) for Italic /f/ was only an approximation (Stuart-Smith 2004: 136).

With this background in mind, we can look in more detail at the apparent examples of <φ> being used for /f/ in South Oscan. In the curse tablet Lu 46 (Laos 2), Rix reads the name βῶθρονι(ov) as containing the letter theta (see above); Crawford, on the other hand, reads βοφρονι(v), with a phi as the third character and the fourth character crossed out. He gives the Latin equivalent of this name as *Bufoinius* (Crawford 2011: 1346). However, the name βῶθρονι(ov), or possibly βοφρονι(v), has not been adequately explained. It is not clear whether this name is a Greek name incorporated into the Oscan naming system, or a Greek individual name; in either case, it does not correspond to any known Greek or Italic name. It could be derived from Greek βόθρος “ditch”; or it could be a compound name, with a first element *bou-* (McDonald 2012). Unfortunately, there is no similar Greek name, and it may just be the letter theta which has been borrowed for visual effect. Crawford’s alternative reading with phi does not produce any clearer parallels in Oscan, Latin or Greek.

In Buxentum 3, the name φοινι[-] appears. *Phoinix* is a Greek name from the fifth century onwards (ultimately derived from “Phoenician”; Poccetti-Gualtieri 1990: 149). In this case, however, it has been incorporated into an Oscan-style name as a gentilicium, and may well have been considered to be an Oscan name. Since Oscan lacks a phonemic distinction between aspirated and non-aspirated consonants, this name would be pronounced as [poinikis] or similar<sup>14</sup>. There is little reason to think that phi represents [f] here, as Crawford implies (2011: 55). The use of the letter phi rather than pi suggests a desire to make a visual connection to the Greek name, or even an attempt to retain the aspirated pronunciation (Poccetti-Gualtieri 1990: 150). This level of loyalty to the Greek spelling in a name that has been fully integrated into the Oscan praenomen/ gentilicium onomastic system is somewhat surprising; it is possible that the intended

12. Crawford (2011: 587-588). Another option in Greek language inscriptions is to borrow the Central Oscan character <8> where the sound [f] needs to be written, e.g. Allifae 1. Crawford (2011: 581-582).

13. Stuart-Smith (2004: 136); Sironen (1987: 114). Note also that it was around the second half of the second century BC that Latin started to represent Greek <φ> as <ph> rather than <p>. It is possible that this Latin spelling influenced the spelling in Central Oscan, or that both Latin- and Oscan-speakers were becoming more aware of Greek orthography at this point. This does not alter the central point, that the Greek sound was a stop rather than a fricative.

14. There is a possible example of this name used in the Central Oscan alphabet, spelt with an initial <p>, but the reading is in doubt. Crawford (2011: 460). (He reads *pumik(iis)*).

effect is primarily visual (using the Greek name as a model to make the text appear more Greek) rather than linguistic.

There is one further possible use of <φ> = /f/ suggested by Crawford. In Petelia 2, Crawford “translates” the names νοῖο ἀλαφῶ and μινάδο σκαφίρω as *Novia Alfia* and *Minata Scafria* (2011: 1476). “Alfius” is an attested Latin gentilicium, and so the translation seems at least possible, though “Alpius” is also attested. However, the second name is problematic, since “Scafrius” lacks good comparanda in Latin. Solin and Salomies list Scafius, but no Scafrius or Scafrius; they do however list Scarpus and Scarpus as attested gentilicia (Solin-Salomies 1994<sup>2</sup>). Both of these, with metathesis of the /r/ and anaptyxis, could be a close equivalent to Scaprius.

Therefore, although Greek-language texts did use phi for Italic /f/, as an approximation, there is little evidence that South Oscan texts used phi for their phoneme /f/, since they had their own character <S> to represent this sound. Where phi appears, it is more likely to represent [p] or [p<sup>h</sup>]. In some or all cases this letter may be used with reference to Greek-language orthography. The writer could have been motivated by a desire to make his curse tablet appear more visually Greek; alternatively, he could have been under the impression that these names were etymologically Greek, or the bearers of those names could have been Greek speakers. The writer could therefore have been motivated by a number of non-linguistic considerations to spell these names in a “Greek” way.

Table 5: Use of <φ>

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Lu 46 / Laos 2	Curse	c. 330-320	βοθροῖ(ον), or βοφροῖ(ν) (male name)
Lu 45/ Buxentum 3	Curse	–	φοῖνι[-] (male name—“Phoinix”)
Petelia 2	Curse	c. 300	ἀλαφῶ (female name—“Alpia”?) σκαφίρω (female name—“Scapria”?)

USE OF CHI

The Greek letter chi <χ> is used several times in Greek words in Oscan texts, but also occasionally in words and names of Oscan origin. Lejeune characterises this as the occasional use of chi in words borrowed from Greek, but in fact the usage is slightly more complicated than he implies (1970: 315). In Petelia 2 and Potentia 39, the words are themselves clearly Greek words, and the spelling with the aspirate has been maintained. There is a strong argument for Potentia 39 being a Greek-language text, rather than an Oscan-language text with extensive borrowing of Greek lexical items and morphology. This would make this use of chi unsurprising; but the matrix language here is a matter of debate (Crawford 2011: 1422). The section of Petelia 2 where this word appears seems to be a code-switch into Greek, or a Greek phrase (probably a magical formula) in an Oscan text. However, chi did not have to be used even where a Greek word was borrowed which contained /k<sup>h</sup>/. The word-division and interpretation of Lu 29 (Potentia 21) is quite controversial, but possibly κρομοῖ is a borrowing from Greek, with the aspirate



represented by <kh> (Del Tutto Palma 1987: 369). This is a strategy also found in Latin texts from about the middle of the second century BC.

Chi is also used, in Lu 45 (Buxentum 3) and possibly also Lu 39 (Anxia 1), in names that begin in *mak-*. The names seem to be Oscan in origin—the name **makkiis** is attested a number of times in Central Oscan<sup>15</sup>. The use of chi here seems to be an attempt to create a visual link with Greek names in *makh-*, particularly those ending *-makhos*. A similar phenomenon is found in one instance of a Greek inscription which spells the Latin name Domesticus as Δομέστιχος, making a link with Greek names of similar endings (Threatte 1980: 469). Cf. The use of chi in the Greek spelling of the Italian town Acerrae as Ἀχέρραι: Poccetti suggests that this is a folk-etymological spelling based on the similarity to the mythical river Ἀχέρων (2009b: 38). Alternatively, the use of chi in *mak-* names is another instance of voiceless stops in Italic languages sounding aspirated to Greek speakers, even though μαχίεσ (Lu 45) does not show the proximity to a liquid which is commonly seen where a stop is spelled as an aspirate.

The use of chi in the abbreviated form of the ethnic name *Volceientes* on the coinage of Volcei may reflect the pronunciation of the name or the city in Greek. Possibly there was some non-phonemic aspiration of Oscan /k/, whether in certain environments or in all environments, and this was interpreted by Greek-speakers as an aspirated consonant.

Table 6: Use of <χ> and <kh>

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Lu 45/ Buxentum 3	Curse	–	μαχίεσ (male name)
Volcei 1	Coinage	–	φελεχα- (abbreviated ethnic name)
Potentia 39	Official	400-300	αρχησ (Greek: “magistracy”)
Lu 39/ Anxia 1	Funerary	300-250	αχερηι (Unclear. Male name [μ]αχερηι, or from Greek Ἀχέρων, “underworld”)
Petelia 2	Curse	c. 300	χθωνιε (Greek: “of the underworld”)
Lu 29/ Potentia 21	Dedication	–	κθομοι (Unclear. Perhaps from Greek χῶμα, “mound”)

#### USE OF <ΓΓ> AND <ΝΓ>

The use of <vy> and <γγ> to write the sound /ŋg/ is shown in Table 7. In Central Oscan, as in Latin, this sequence would be written <ng>. In Greek, the “standard” spelling was <γγ>, though <vy> was also used as a variant (Threatte 1980: 597-601). South Oscan follows the general Oscan practice by using <vy>. This sequence is attested a number of times in the South Oscan corpus, mainly in the word τανγινოდ, “decision”, which typically appears in official inscriptions referring to a decision of the senate. In one instance, however, the writer of the inscription (Lu 62 / Buxentum 1) seems to write <vy>, but then decides to correct to the more typically “Greek” spelling <γγ>. Alternatively, he was aware of two available spellings and ended up using both by forgetting that he

15. Pompei 98, Fagifulae 9, Aeclanum 16, Pompei 122.



had already begun the first <vγ>. Lu 62 is a legal text, probably written with a degree of professionalism. The writer does make a number of mistakes and omissions in the text, so it is easy to conclude that he was incompetent, wrote the same sound twice, and happened to do it in two different ways. However, there does seem to be a possible motivation for the correction—the writer wanted the visual effect of the <γγ> spelling. We might also note that, while this writer does make other mistakes, such as writing delta for alpha in ηιδ<α>σ (line B1), the apparent haplology in [με]δδεε<εσ>σουφ (line A6) and ιαφκ <κ>λοπουστ (line A7), and the inclusion of the letters {κα} in error (line B8), he does not often correct himself. The only other apparent correction is of an <ο> to an <ι>, by writing the latter over the former (line B8).

Table 7: Use of <γγ> and <vγ> for /ηγ/

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Lu 24/ Crimisa 2	Official	300-200	καvγ- (Unknown)
Lu 2/ Atina Lucana 1	Official	c.150	τανvγινοδ (“decision”—abl. sing.)
Lu 5/ Potentia 1	Dedication (Official)	125-100	τανvγινοτ (“decision”—abl. sing.)
Lu 6/ Potentia 9	Dedication (Official)	200-175	τανvγινοδ (“decision”—abl. sing.)
Lu 7/ Potentia 10	Dedication (Official)	200-175	τανvγινοδ (“decision”—abl. sing.)
Lu 62/ Buxentum 1	Legal	300-200	τ{αν}αγγινουδ (“decision”—abl. sing.)

MESSANA—A DIFFERENT TRADITION?

The use, and non-use, of the “extra” characters in the Oscan inscriptions of Messina indicates that these inscriptions may represent a separate strand in the tradition of Oscan epigraphy, or even an independent adaptation of the Greek alphabet, though the evidence is far from clear. Historically, the idea of a separate tradition is plausible, since the Mamertines who occupied Messina were apparently Oscan-speaking mercenaries hired in Campania. This would suggest that they might have been familiar with the Central Oscan alphabet, but that they came to use the Greek alphabet in their epigraphy on Sicily.

However, any epigraphic differences between Messina and the rest of South Oscan can generally be better accounted for by the fact that the Oscan-speakers of Messina integrated with the Greek-speaking community very quickly, rather than by any earlier contact with the Central Oscan alphabet; evidence for a relatively quick shift to Greek is detailed by Clackson (2012). It is telling, for example, that all the monumental inscriptions in Oscan at Messina are dated to c.275-250. Given that the historical date for the take-over of the Mamertines is 288 BC, it is possible that there was only one fully Oscan-speaking generation at Messina, or at least that there was only one generation that produced Oscan inscriptions. It is possible that one of these inscriptions also shows a shift to a Greek style of naming, with the praenomen followed by the father’s name in the genitive—this is the style of naming that occurs at other sites where it seems that Oscan-speakers have shifted to Greek, for example at Entella<sup>16</sup>. If the Oscan-speakers

16. Clackson (2012); La Regina (2002: 68); McDonald (2012).

of Messana were under particularly strong pressure from Greek, it is possible that this impacted on the orthography of their Oscan-language inscriptions as well as the syntax of names.

The use of <πσ> in Messana has a comparandum in the relatively late Lu 5, from Rossano di Vaglio. The earlier use of the <πσ> at Messana could be explained by contact with the Central Oscan alphabet, in which the spelling <ps> was always used. However, since our examples from the rest of South Oscan do not permit us to see a clear pattern in how <ψ> and <πσ> are used, and we have only one example from Messana, it is not clear that the usage in Messana differs from that elsewhere.

Table 8: Use of &lt;πσ&gt; in Messana

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Me 1/Messana 4	Dedication (Official)	c. 250	ουπσενσ (“built” — 3 <sup>rd</sup> pl. perf.)

Messana also gives us the only non-name word where xi appears: μεδδειξ. There are various spellings for this nominative plural found in the Central Oscan alphabet—in Central Oscan we find both <ks> and <ss>, because of a sound change which leads to assimilation of the /ks/ > /ss/. Our only example of a name spelled with <κσ> rather than <ξ> is also from Messana, at around the same time. This appears to be a reversal of the pattern we find elsewhere in South Oscan, though the evidence is very limited. It is possible that in either, or both, areas these spellings were actually in free variation – or that these inscriptions from Messana happen to be exceptions to a general rule.

Table 9: Use of &lt;ξ&gt; in Messana

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Me 1/ Messana 4	Dedication (Official)	c. 250	μεδδειξ (“magistrate” nom. pl.)*
Me 4/ Messana 6	Dedication	c. 275	μαμερεκσ (male name)

\* C.f. *medix* (Corfinium 1) and *medd[i]ks* (Surrentum 1).  
Also *meddiss* (Nola 3). All nominative plural.

The tile stamp Messana 3 is the most unusual in spelling, because it shows theta being used in an Oscan ethnic name that would more normally be spelt with a tau; this use of theta does not occur in any other South Oscan inscription. This word also shows a Greek genitive ending, and the language of the inscription is probably intended as Greek. Possibly the spelling with theta reflects the Greek pronunciation of this ethnic—we do not know whether this Greek pronunciation of the name had been borrowed into the Oscan of Messana. The fact that this text also shows a Greek text on a tile stamp also indicates a community that was in particularly close contact with Greek while continuing to use an Oscan ethnic name.

Table 10: Use of theta in Messana

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items
Messana 3	Tile stamp	250-150	μαμερθινων (ethnic name)

While the evidence is very limited, therefore, it is possible that there were differences between the orthography of Messana and the orthography of the rest of South Oscan. How much these differences are due to chance is not at all clear. If there was a divergent orthographic tradition in Messana, it is likely to have been a result of closer contact with the Greek written in Sicily rather than knowledge of the Central Oscan alphabet which, other than perhaps the <ps> spelling, seems to have had little influence here. However, we would need considerably more instances of these spellings being used consistently to demonstrate that the orthography of Messana was consistently divergent from the rest of South Oscan<sup>17</sup>.

CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN GRAPHIC BORROWINGS AND OTHER KINDS OF BORROWING

In this section, I will briefly explain how the orthographic patterns explained above correspond to the presence or absence of other types of borrowing. In Table 11, there is a summary of the inscriptions that have both “extra” characters and some other form of borrowing or code-switching. For these purposes, “extra” Greek characters are not included when they are used in a section of text that may be in the Greek language, such as the use of chi and theta in the word χθωνιε—in these situations, there cannot really be a separation into “graphic” and “lexical” borrowing. With this restriction, we can see that it is only in a minority of cases that inscriptions using extra characters also show another form of borrowing or other influence from Greek. Lu 39 (Anxia 1) and Potentia 39 are unclear cases; the other two examples are both curse tablets. So, it seems that it is not overwhelmingly common for graphic borrowing and other types of borrowing to co-occur in the same text.

17. For other evidence of linguistic differences between Messana and the rest of South Oscan, see Zair (forthcoming: chapter 4).

Table 11: Inscriptions with both graphic/orthographic “extra” characters + other types of borrowing

Inscription	Genre	Date	Items	Details
Lu 45 / Buxentum 3	Curse	-	φοινι[-] μαχιεσ “δυφο [με]διμνο(ι) πολεντα[ι]”	Graphic: phi, chi Code-switching: Greek opening phrase
Lu 39/ Anxia 1	Funerary	300-250	αχερηι Or: [μ]αχερηι	Graphic: chi And/or Greek lexical borrowing
Potentia 39	Official	400-300	“επι τησ νυμμελου αρχησ”	Graphic: chi Morphological: genitives Lexical: επι Greek language text* <sup>1</sup>
Petelia 2	Curse	c. 300	αλαφιω, σκαφιριω “ηερμα χθωνιε ταυτα και καθεκε αυτει”	Graphic: phi Code-switching: final Greek formula

1. For more discussion of the evidence of Greek/Oscan contact in this formula, see McDonald (2013: 227-230).

\* C.f. *medix* (Corfinium 1) and *medd[i]ks* (Surrentum 1).  
Also *meddiss* (Nola 3). All nominative plural.

However, Tables 12 and 13 show the levels of different types of borrowing from Greek in different genres of texts, and the extent to which graphic borrowing and other types of borrowing tend to occur in the same genres of texts, even if they did not occur in exactly the same texts. The table shows that borrowing and interference phenomena can be found almost across the board in different types of texts. They are much more likely in coin legends (which are, in any case, best seen as Greek-language texts) and in curse tablets, matching up well with the pattern of “extra” characters we have already seen. However, although the numbers of inscriptions are quite small, we can see that borrowing was not excluded from “official” inscriptions, of both a religious and secular nature. This suggests that, even if they did not always occur in the same texts, particular genres of texts tended to attract both graphic and other kinds of borrowings from Greek, while others consistently show lower levels of this kind of contact-induced phenomena. It seems that graphic and linguistic borrowing from Greek was probably not an issue of competency of individual authors, since every genre shows a range of inscriptions of different competencies. Rather, this is a matter of different genres having different norms.

Table 12: Percentage of inscriptions with some form of borrowing, code-switching, etc., by genre

Inscription type	Total number	With borrowing(s)	Inscriptions	Percentage of total
Coin	18	11	Brettii 1 Laos 1 Lucani 1 nMe 1/ Messana 1 Nuceria 1 Orlanoi 1 Orsantinoi 1 P. Peripoloi 1 Petelia 1 Vibo 1 Volcei 1	61.11%
Curse	8	4	Lu 62/ Buxentum 3 Lu 46/ Laos 2 Laos 4 Petelia 2	50.00%
Dedication	46	4	Me 5/ Messana 7 Lu 18/ Luc/Sic/Bret 3 Potentia 29 Lu 13/ Potentia 40	8.69%
(of which "official")	12	1	Me 5/ Messana 7	8.33%
Official (other)	6	2	Potentia 29 Lu 23/ Crimisa 1	33.33%
Funerary	3	1	Lu 39/ Anxia 1	33.33%
Tile stamp	24	1	Messana 3	4.17%
Legal	2	1	Lu 62/ Buxentum 1	50.00%
Graffiti and makers' marks	10	0	-	0
Other (inc. unknown)	10	0	-	0

Table 13: Types of borrowing, by genre of inscription

Type of borrowing	Inscription types	Inscriptions	Details
<b>Graphic</b>	Coin	Laos 1, Volcei 1	Greek texts
	Curse	Lu 45/ Buxentum 3, Lu 46/ Laos 2, Petelia 2	
	Funerary	Lu 39/ Anxia 1	May be lexical.
	Legal	Lu 62/ Buxentum 1	
	Official	Potentia 39	Greek text
<b>Morphological</b>	Stamp	Messana 3	
	Coin	Brettii 1, Laos 1, Lucani 1, nMe 1/ Messana 1, Nuceria 1, P. Peripoloi 1, Orlanoi 1, Orsantinoi 1, Petelia 1, Vibo 1	Greek texts
	Curse	Laos 4, Lu 46/ Laos 2	Greek text?
	Official	Potentia 39	Greek text
	Dedication	Potentia 29	
<b>Lexical</b>	Stamp	Messana 3	Greek text?
	Coin	Vibo 1, Laos 1	Greek texts?
	Funerary	Lu 39/ Anxia 1	May be graphic.
<b>Syntactic</b>	Official	Potentia 39	Greek text
	Dedication (Official)	Me 5/ Messana 7	
<b>Whole phrase</b>	Curse	Lu 45/ Buxentum 3, Petelia 2	
	Dedication (Official)	Lu 23/ Crimisa 1	

## CONCLUSIONS

The use of “extra” characters in Oscan is a key part of our evidence for contact with Greek. The epigraphy and orthography of these texts do not have to be viewed as “correct spelling” and “errors” as they have sometimes been in the past. Indeed, it is impossible to build up a complete picture of the epigraphy or language of these (essentially multilingual) communities if these elements are excluded. Rather than being a sign of incompetency, the norms of writing seem to have developed such that various kinds of borrowing from Greek were associated with certain types of writing in the “epigraphic habit” of these communities. It appears that Oscan-speakers felt it was appropriate for certain kinds of texts to have a Greek appearance or Greek linguistic features.

For curse tablets, for example, it is understandable if Oscan-speakers felt that the “Greekness” (from their point of view, the “foreignness”) of curse tablets was part of what made the magic work, in the same way that the Greeks themselves wrote names backwards, used magical words, or otherwise obfuscated the text to put it at one step

removed from everyday language (Gager 1999: 5; Adams 2003: 128). For Oscan-speakers, deliberate graphic or linguistic borrowing could have been a way of separating curse tablets from ordinary language. Alternatively, the Greek-influenced spelling of names such as  $\varphi\omicron\upsilon\nu\kappa\iota\sigma$  may reflect how Greek-derived names were spelled and pronounced in the South Oscan area – something for which we have little evidence in monumental stone inscriptions. While it remains a possibility that the Greek influence found in curse tablets is caused exclusively by imperfect learning of Oscan by Greek-speaking writers (Prodocimi 1976: 792; Pugliese Carratelli 1992: 17), this is far from the only possible explanation of the kinds of borrowing and interference that we find.

Official and legal texts, particularly dedications, show only a limited amount of borrowing. Greek features were not necessarily a feature to be avoided completely, but something that could be admitted into even expensive, officially-backed texts to some extent. Considerable Greek influence also affected the language of coin legends: these were part of how these communities projected their identity to others, but were fundamentally a type of text created in the Greek-speaking world. The language of coin legends is therefore often Greek rather than Oscan. It also seems likely that different communities developed different norms. For example, texts from Messana may have behaved differently from texts produced elsewhere, though this is far from proven based on the usage of extra characters alone.

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GENRES ÉPIGRAPHIQUES  
ET LANGUES  
D'ATTESTATION FRAGMENTAIRE  
DANS L'ESPACE MÉDITERRANÉEN

Sous la direction d'Emmanuel DUPRAZ  
et de Wojciech SOWA

Le bassin méditerranéen est au I<sup>er</sup> millénaire avant notre ère un espace multilingue dans lequel sont documentées de nombreuses traditions épigraphiques différentes. Cependant la pauvreté de la plupart de ces nombreux corpus représente une grave difficulté pour l'étude des langues correspondantes. La perspective choisie dans le présent volume s'attache à une donnée souvent négligée dans l'analyse des langues d'attestation fragmentaire : chaque corpus présente non seulement un nombre réduit de textes, mais aussi un nombre réduit de genres de textes, définis comme l'emploi de supports matériels précis pour l'écriture d'un message structuré d'une manière précise, l'association des deux obéissant à une visée communicative précise auprès d'un public escompté précis. La relative fixité de l'association entre support, texte, lectorat et acte de langage permet des interprétations pluridisciplinaires, qui permettent des conclusions plus riches que la simple analyse d'éléments isolés. Ces recherches peuvent combiner des méthodes étymologiques, onomastiques, archéologiques, épigraphiques. À son tour, l'étude des habitus documentés pour chaque langue est susceptible d'aboutir à des hypothèses significatives sur les transferts entre cultures et sur la typologie des inscriptions à l'échelle de l'ensemble du bassin méditerranéen.

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