OSCAN IN THE GREEK ALPHABET

Oscan was spoken in Southern Italy in the second half of the first millennium BC. Here, for the first time, all the evidence for the spelling of Oscan in the Greek alphabet is collected and examined. Understanding the orthography of these inscriptions has far-reaching implications for the historical phonology and morphology of Oscan and the Italic languages (for example, providing unique evidence for the reconstruction of the genitive plural). A striking discovery is the lack of a standardised orthography for Oscan in the Greek alphabet, which seriously problematises attempts to date inscriptions by assuming the consistent chronological development of spelling features. There are also intriguing insights into the linguistic situation in South Italy. Rather than a separate community of Oscan-speakers who had adopted and subsequently adapted the Greek alphabet in isolation, we should posit groups who were in touch with contemporary developments in Greek orthography due to widespread Greek–Oscan bilingualism.

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CONTENTS

Contents

TABLES

vii

List of tables and figure

FIGURE

viii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ix

Acknowledgements

CONVENTIONS AND READINGS

This book discusses the phonetics and phonology of the Sabellic
language Oscan, and their representation in several different
alphabets. The conventions used in the book to represent these
aspects are, as far as possible, those used as standard in the fields of
historical linguistics and phonology. Quoted forms from ancient
languages are given in Roman font when in the Etruscan alphabet,
in **bold** when written in an alphabet derived from the Etruscan
alphabet (see pp. 1–2), in *italics* when written in the Latin alpha-
bet, and in the Greek alphabet when written in the Greek alphabet
(note that the Greek alphabet used to write Oscan had several
additional letters compared to the East Ionic alphabet adopted by
Athens at the end of the fifth century; see p. 3). In quoted forms I
follow the conventions of Crawford *et al.* (2011: 62); in particular,
note that [ ] surround missing letters, < > surround letters supplied
by the editors to replace those omitted or engraved in error, and ( )
enclose the expansion of an abbreviation. Crawford *et al.* (2011)
themselves are often inconsistent in the use of the angled brackets
and brackets. For example, while a missing initial <h> is enclosed
in < > in <h>οριοµ (Crimisa 3/Lu 44), <h>ιπειδ (Buxentum 1/Lu
62) and <h>ορτιηις (Vibo 8/tLu 6), it is supplied in ( ) in (h)εριηις
(Crimisa 2/Lu 24) and omitted altogether in ορτοριες (Laos 3/Lu
63) and ελ[ϝ]οµ (Thurii Copia 1/Lu 47) while these are (rightly)
translated as 'Hortorius' and 'Heluus' respectively. These incon-
sistencies are unimportant, and have not been corrected in the
forms used, for greater ease of comparison with the texts in
Crawford *et al.* (2011).

When individual graphemes are being discussed, they are
enclosed within < > (graphemes from the Latin alphabet are not
italicised when between angled brackets); on the rare occasions
when the actual symbol used for the grapheme is being discussed,
this is not enclosed within angled brackets. Phonemes and

xi

Conventions and readings

sequences of phonemes are enclosed within / /, phones within [ ]
(phonetic transcription is as broad as possible). Phonemes and
phones are represented according to the conventions of the IPA
alphabet, as laid out in the IPA Handbook (International Phonetic
Association 1999). Reconstructed forms are preceded by an aster-
isk * and use the standard orthography of historical linguistic and
Indo-Europeanist literature.[1] The reader's attention is drawn to the
fact that this leads to certain minor discrepancies between the two
conventions, primarily that the labiovelar and palatal approxi-
mants (glides) written /w/ and /j/ ([w] and [j]) respectively are
written *-u̯- and *-i̯- in reconstructions; as the second element of
tautosyllabic diphthongs, these are written /u/ and /i/ in phonemic
representation (e.g. /ai/), but as *-u̯- and *-i̯- in reconstructions (e.g.
*-ai̯-). The reader will note that several of these conventions have
more than one use (e.g. [ ] for missing letters in quoted forms, and
for representation of phones). Which convention applies should in
every case be clear from context.

Forms will be referred to according to first the reference system
used by Crawford *et al.* (2011) and second that of Rix (2002),
separated by a slash (some inscriptions are only in Crawford *et al.*
2011). Except forms from the Iguvine Tables (IT; taken from Rix
2002), and unless otherwise specified, usually in the discussion of
a given word in Chapter 6, all readings of Oscan forms and forms
from the other Sabellic languages are taken from Crawford *et al.*
(2011). It should be noted that, even though I provide a reference
to Rix (2002), some of the readings of Crawford *et al.* are very
different from those of Rix. Only where I disagree with the reading
of Crawford *et al.* (2011) have forms been changed, e.g. I read
<h>ερεστ for Crawford *et al.*'s κερεστ (Buxentum 1/Lu 62).

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[1] A superscript 'x' indicates a reconstructed form that does not match what we actually
find, while an asterisk *following* a reconstructed form indicates an unattested form that
can be confidently reconstructed on the basis of the rest of the paradigm.

ABBREVIATIONS

abl.	ablative
acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
C	any consonant
col.	column
conj.	conjunction
dat.	dative
Etr.	Etruscan
f.	feminine
fn.	footnote
fut.	future
gen.	genitive
Gk.	Greek
impv.	imperative
inf.	infinitive
IT	Iguvine Tables (Rix 2002)
l.	line
Lat.	Latin
loc.	locative
Luc.	Lucretius
m.	masculine
Mart.	Martial
Mc.	Marrucinian
n.	neuter
neg.	negative
nom.	nominative
OLat.	Old Latin
Osc.	Oscan
P.	Paelignian
perf.	perfect

List of abbreviations

PIE	Proto-Indo-European
pl.	plural
pres.	present
sg.	singular
subj.	subjunctive
U.	Umbrian
V	any vowel
Vest.	Vestinian
voc.	vocative