

ORTHOGRAPHIC TRADITIONS AND THE SUB-ELITE
IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

This book makes use of digital corpora to give in-depth details of the history and development of the spelling of Latin. It focusses on sub-elite texts in the Roman empire and reveals that sophisticated education in this area was not restricted to those at the top of society. Nicholas Zair studies the history of particular orthographic features and traces their usage in a range of texts which give insight into everyday writers of Latin, including scribes and soldiers at Vindolanda, slaves at Pompeii, members of the Praetorian Guard and writers of curse tablets. In doing so, he problematises the use of ‘old-fashioned’ spelling in dating inscriptions, provides important new information on sound change in Latin and shows how much can be gained from a detailed sociolinguistic analysis of ancient texts.

NICHOLAS ZAIR is Senior Lecturer in Classics (Classical Linguistics and Comparative Philology) at the University of Cambridge and Fellow in Classics and Linguistics at Peterhouse. He recently held a Pro Futura Scientia Fellowship at SCAS (Uppsala) and CRASSH (Cambridge). He is also the author of *The Reflexes of the Proto-Indo-European Laryngeals in Celtic* (2012) and *Oscan in the Greek Alphabet* (Cambridge, 2016), and co-editor of *Migration, Mobility and Language Contact in and around the Ancient Mediterranean* (Cambridge, 2020).

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Nicholas Zair

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Don't write naughty words on walls if you can't spell.

Tom Lehrer, 'Be prepared'

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FOREWORD

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NOTE ON THE TEXT

This book uses the standard conventions of epigraphy, phonology and phonetics, and Indo-European linguistics. Unfortunately, these to some extent overlap so that the same symbols may be used for more than one purpose; in other cases the ‘same’ element may be represented in more than one way. I draw attention to this here, in the hope of avoiding confusion for the reader: which convention applies should in every case be clear from context.

Where inscriptional forms are being represented, [] surround missing letters, { } surround letters engraved in error, < > surround letters supplied by the editors to replace those omitted or engraved in error, and () enclose the expansion of an abbreviation.

In quoted editions of literary texts, [] surround parts of the text that should be removed and < > a portion of text supplied by the editor.

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 sequences of phonemes are enclosed within // and 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 (The International Phonetic Association 1999). Reconstructed forms are preceded by an asterisk *,¹ and use the standard orthography of historical linguistic and Indo-Europeanist literature. There are three discrepancies between the two that I flag up here. The first is that the labiovelar and palatal approximants (glides) written /w/ and /j/ ([w] and [j]) respectively in the IPA are written *-u- and *-i- in

¹ And a form which should not be reconstructed is preceded by ×.

Note on the Text

reconstructions; as the second element of tautosyllabic diphthongs, these are written /u/ and /i/ in phonemic/phonetic representation (e.g. /ai/ [ai]), but as *-*u-* and *-*i-* in reconstructions (e.g. *-*ai-*). The second is that the vowels of the Latin phoneme system that derive from Proto-Indo-European **e* and **o* are represented as /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ respectively. The third is that long vowels in Latin words and reconstructions are marked by use of a macron, thus: *nōtum*; in the IPA they are marked by use of the symbol :, thus: /nɔ:tum/. I mark long (and, where occasionally relevant, short) vowels in Latin words when I am referring to that word as a lexeme; long vowels are not marked when quoting actual forms found in inscriptions or other texts, nor when I am using a Latin word borrowed into English.

Given that much of this book is devoted to counting particular spelling features, I have preferred to use numerals rather than words even in running text, since this makes it easier to quickly identify the key information in the text.

ABBREVIATIONS

Printed Works

AE	<i>L'Année Epigraphique</i>
CEL	Cugusi, Paulo (1992–2002). <i>Corpus Epistularum Latinarum Papyris Tabulis Ostracis Servatarum</i> . Florence, Edizioni Gonnelli
CIL	Mommsen, Theodor et al. (1863–). <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> . Berlin: George Reimer and Walter De Gruyter
GL	Keil, Heinrich (1855–80). <i>Grammatici Latini</i> . Volumes 1–7. Leipzig: Teubner. Reprint (2009). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
ICUR	<i>Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae. Nova series</i>
IEW	Julius Pokorny (1959). <i>Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> . Bern and Munich: Francke Verlag
ILA	Cagnat, René, Alfred Merlin and Louis Chatelain (1923). <i>Inscriptions latines d'Afrique (Tripolitaine, Tunisie, Maroc)</i> . Paris: Éditions Ernest Leroux
ILCV	Diehl, Ernst (1925–31). <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres</i> . Berlin: Weidmann
IS	Helttula, Anne (2007). <i>Le iscrizioni sepolcrali latine nell'Isola sacra</i> . Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae
Kropp	Kropp, Amina (2008). <i>Defixiones. Ein aktuelles Corpus lateinischer Fluchtafeln</i> . Speyer: Kartoffeldruck-Verlag

List of Abbreviations

- O. BuNjem Marichal, Robert (1992). *Les ostraca de Bu Njem*. Tripoli: Grande Jamahira Arabe, Libyenne, Populaire et Socialiste
- OLD Glare, P. G. W. (ed.) (2012). *Oxford Latin Dictionary*. Second edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- P. Dura Welles, C. Bradford, Robert O. Fink and J. Frank Gilliam (1959). *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Final Report V, Part I, The Parchments and Papyri*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press
- P. Mich. VIII Youtie, Herbert C. and John G. Winter (1951). *Michigan Papyri VIII. Papyri and Ostraca from Karanis. Second Series*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press
- Tab. Vindol. Bowman, Alan K. and J. David Thomas (1983). *Vindolanda: The Latin Writing Tablets*. London: Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies
- Bowman, Alan K. and J. David Thomas (1994). *The Vindolanda Writing Tablets (Tabulae Vindolandenses II)*. London: British Museum Press
- Bowman, Alan K. and J. David Thomas (2003). *The Vindolanda Writing Tablets (Tabulae Vindolandenses III)*. London: British Museum Press
- Bowman, A. K., J. D. Thomas and R. S. O. Tomlin (2010). The Vindolanda writing-tablets (*Tabulae Vindolandenses IV, Part 1*). *Britannia* 41, 187–224
- Bowman, A. K., J. D. Thomas and R. S. O. Tomlin (2011). The Vindolanda writing-tablets (*Tabulae Vindolandenses IV, Part 2*). *Britannia* 42, 113–44