

Fragments, Holes and Wholes. Warsaw, 12-14 June 2014

*“Reconstructing Language Contact from a Fragmentary Corpus:
Case Studies from Southern Italy”*

(1) The Corpus

- “South Oscan” refers to texts in the Oscan language, written using an adapted form of the Greek alphabet
- Some later texts are written in the Latin alphabet, e.g. the Tabula Bantina
- Around 130 texts in total
- Written mainly between 4th and 1st BC
- Found in Lucania (Basilicata), Bruttium (Calabria) and Messana (Messina, Sicily)

- Range of genres:
 - Dedications (public and private) (50)
 - Legal texts (2 South Oscan, 1 “Pre-Samnite”)
 - Official texts (e.g. to commemorate construction of a public building; excluding public or official dedications) (5)
 - Curse tablets (*defixiones*) (8)
 - Funerary texts (2, plus one doubtful)
 - Tile stamps (25)
 - Coins (around 30 different coin legends)
 - Graffiti and dipinti (8)

(2) Evidence of Greek/Oscan bilingualism



(3) Modelling evidence for bilingualism in a fragmentary corpus

	One language			Two (or more) languages	
Type of community	Closed	Open, high ethnolinguistic vitality	Open, low ethnolinguistic vitality	Even ethnolinguistic vitality	Uneven ethnolinguistic vitality
Types of bilingual texts	No bi-version. No texts displaying bilingual phenomena.	No bi-version. Few texts displaying bilingual phenomena, perhaps including lexical borrowing.	No bi-version. Texts displaying bilingual phenomena involving lexical borrowing, perhaps tag-switching.	Bi-version may be common. Texts displaying bilingual phenomena involving code-switching, borrowing, interference. Bi-directional influence.	Fewer bi-version texts. Texts displaying bilingual phenomena involving code-switching, borrowing, interference. Linguistic features of the higher vitality group are mostly found in the lower.
Domains	One language used in all domains.	One language used in all domains.	One primary language used in all domains. Borrowing may be limited to certain domains.	Languages may be specialised to different domains.	Languages may be specialised to different domains. Higher vitality language may be used in majority of domains , or show signs of taking over domains of lower vitality language.

(4) Selected References

- V. Bracco (1974) *Inscriptiones Italiae*, Vol. 3, Rome.
- M.H. Crawford (2011) *Imagines Italicae*, London.
- A. La Regina (2002) 'La formula onomastica oscana in Lucania e nel Bruzio', *Eutopia* 2, 57-69.
- K. McDonald (2012b) "Do Personal Names in South Oscan show influence from Greek?" in Torsten Meissner (ed.) *Personal Names in the Western Roman World*, Studies in Classical and Comparative Onomastics 1, Berlin: Curach Bhán: 41-58.
- K. McDonald and N. Zair (2012) "Oscan $\varphi\upsilon\upsilon\upsilon\sigma\tau$ and the Roccagloriosa law tablet" *Incontri Linguistici* 35, 31-45.
- K. McDonald (2013) *Language Contact in South Oscan Epigraphy*, PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge.
- Katherine McDonald (forthcoming) "Les langues des artistes et des artisans dans la région d'osque méridionale", in A. F. Baroni, G. Bernard, B. Le Teuff and C. Ruiz Darasse (eds.) *Territoires de l'échange*, Paris: Errance.
- A. Mullen and P. James (eds.) (2012) *Multilingualism in the Graeco-Roman Worlds*, Cambridge: CUP.
- A. Mullen (2013) *Southern Gaul and the Mediterranean: Multilingualism and Multiple Identities in the Iron Age and Roman Periods*, Cambridge: CUP.
- P. Poccetti (2010) "Contacts et échanges technologiques en Italie méridionale: langues et écritures au cours du IV^e siècle av. J.-C." in H. Tréziny (ed.) *Greco et indigènes de la Catalogne à la Mer Noire*, Errance: Centre Camille Jullian: 659-678.
- H. Rix (2002) *Sabellische Texte : Die Texte Des Oskischen, Umbrischen Und Sudpikenischen*, Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- J-L. Zimmerman (1979) 'Une cuirasse de Grande Grèce', *Museum Helveticum* 36, 177-184.

(5) Greek in Italy project

www.greekinitaly.wordpress.com

@GreekinItaly

With thanks to Nick Zair and James Clackson.