

ON THE REINTERPRETATION OF SOME GAULISH INSCRIPTIONS


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*The purpose of the present paper is to demonstrate that there is still room for seeking alternative solutions in the interpretation of Gaulish inscriptions. Three inscriptions, Voltino, Chamalières, and Lezoux 67, have been chosen on the basis of one common feature, the hypothetical existence of continuants of the Indo-European pronoun of the first person sg. *eǵo.*

1. Voltino

The funerary text of the inscription of near the Voltino Lago di Garda contains both Latin (A) and Celtic (B) parts. The Latin part is written in the Latin alphabet, the Gaulish part is written, at least partially, in the Sondrio variant of the North Etruscan script in *scriptio continua* (see *CIL* V.1, 4883; Whatmough 1933, 57-58; Meid 1989, 17-26; 42: photo; Eska/Weiss 1996, 289). Let us compare the segmentation and interpretation of its Celtic part by (a) Thurneysen (1923, 8-10) and (b) Eska/Weiss (1996, 290-291).

(A) TETVMVS SEXTI DVGIAVA SAŚADIS [Ś written as “Tetumus, [son] of Sextus, and Dugiava, [daughter] of Saśid[ia] [are buried here]” *vel sim.*

(B) 

T O M E D E C L A I O B A L D A N A T I N A

(a)

| | | | | |
|------------|------------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| <i>to</i> | <i>med</i> | <i>ec-</i> | <i>lā-</i> | <i>-i</i> |
| connective | 1 sg. acc. pron. | perf. preverb | “put” | 3 sg. perf. |

(b)

| | | | | | |
|------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| <i>to</i> | <i>me</i> | <i>de-</i> | <i>ec-</i> | <i>lā-</i> | <i>-i</i> |
| connective | 1 sg. acc. pron. | perf. preverb | perf. preverb | “put” | 3 sg. perf. |

“[and] Obalda, [their] daughter, set me [i.e. the monument] up.”

The only difference consists in interpretation of the segment *med*. Thurneysen saw in this form the acc. sg. corresponding to Old Latin *med*. Eska/Weiss (1996,

290-291) reject this and offer the complex of two perfective preverbs *de-* & *ec-*. Let us mention that the existence of the form *med* may be supported by a newly identified Gaulish form *met* attested in the syntagm *met-ingi-set-ingi* “between me (and) between her” in the inscription from Châteaubleau (Lambert 1998-2000, 112)¹. On the other hand, in Gaulish only the prefix *ex-* is attested (cf. Delamarre 2001, 142-145). But it is not the only possibility to interpret the complex *tomedecelai*. Thurneysen and Eska/Weiss see in *-lai* the 3rd person perfect of the verb **lā-* “to put” (Schumacher 2004, 443-446; LIV 399: **leH₁-*). But with the same probability it can be the 1st person perfect of the same verb (Lambert 2002, 182; de Bernardo Stempel 2008: “Anche per me ho fatto io Obalda, la figliola”), cf. the form *ievri* attested in the inscription on the clay dish from Lezoux, see § 3, and maybe also ειωραι (Nîmes) < **e-or-ai* < **pe-por-ai* “I have devoted/sacrificed” (Lambert 2003, 65, 104; Delamarre 2001, 158-159). With regard to this alternative the segment *ec* (the sign **G** is quite unique in the Sondrio script and can reflect /g/; the same may be said about **B** /b/ — see Whatmough 1933, 58) should be the 1st person pronoun. In this case it remains to determine the function of the initial sequence which can be segmented as (i) *tomed*; (ii) *to med*; (iii) *tom ed*.

(i) The form **tomed* could be interpreted as the ablative **to(s)med¹* ± “for him” from the demonstrative **so-*, obl. **to^o*. In Celtic the pronominal forms with medial *-m-* are reliably attested in Celtiberian, where *somei* and *somui* have been interpreted as the loc. and dat. sg., respectively, from the demonstrative root **so-*, and dat. sg. *iomui* from the interrogative-relative **io-*. Similarly e.g. Sanskrit abl. sg. *tásmād*, dat. sg. *tásmāi*, loc. sg. *tásmīn*, and abl. sg. *yásmād*, dat. sg. *yásmāi*, loc. sg. *yásmīn*, Avestan (Young) *yahmāē*, (Old) dat. sg. *yahmāi*, loc. sg. *yahmī*, Mycenaean *to-me /tohmei*, Gothic dat. sg. *þamma*, Prussian dat. sg. *stesmu*, etc. (Wodtko 2000, 342-343). Schrijver (1997, 14) mentions the scarcity of the *t*-pro-

¹ With exception of the forms *met* & *set* from the inscription from Châteaubleau no similar case forms are known in Gaulish. More archaic is the situation in Celtiberian. The ablative in *-ō* is reliably attested in the nominal declension (examples from Wodtko 2000):

| stem | ending | late IE projection | examples |
|------------|--------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>-o-</i> | <i>-uō</i> | <i>*-ōd</i> | <i>ruōimuō, karaluō, usamuō</i> |
| <i>-ā-</i> | <i>-aō</i> | <i>*-ād</i> | <i>lakaō, sekotiaō</i> |
| <i>-i-</i> | <i>-iō</i> | <i>*-īd</i> | <i>bilbiliō</i> |
| <i>-u-</i> | <i>-ueō</i> | <i>*-e^u-ed</i> | <i>karaueō</i> |
| <i>-n-</i> | <i>-uneō</i> | <i>*-ōn-ed</i> | <i>barskuneō, oilauneō</i> |
| consonant | <i>C-eō</i> | <i>*-C-ed</i> | <i>sekobirikeō</i> |

Although it is impossible to expect the same reflexes in Gaulish, it is probable that the abl. sg. from the pronominal root **so-/*to-* would be extended by the ending of the *o*-stems, namely **somud* or **tomud*. The same can be said about Indo-Iranian abl. & dat. sg. But the loc. sg. *tásmīn* indicates the consonant stem inflection (Schrijver 1997, 12-13). If the consonant inflection was generalized in the early Gaulish pronominal paradigm, the form **tomed* is quite regular.

nouns in Italo-Celtic. But it does not mean that there are no traces of them here. In Latin e.g. the adverb *tum* “at that moment, then” < acc. sg. **tom*; in Insular Celtic e.g. Old Irish *tó* “yes”, Welsh *do* “indeed” < **tod* “that (is)” (Schrijver 1997, 15). In Gaulish the *t*-demonstrative even with the *m*-extension may be identified in the form *teme* (Châteaubleau), perhaps the loc. sg. m. (Lambert 2001, 93).

(ii) The segmentation **to med* was already applied by Thurneysen in his solution (1923, 8-10). But the interpretation *ec lai* “I have put” excludes the function of the oblique case of the 1st person sg. pronoun ascribed to the segment *med* by Thurneysen.

(iii) The segmentation **tom ed* can correspond to Latin *tum id* “then it”, cf. Gaulish ^o*ton-id* in the syntagm *lungetutoniid* attested in the inscription from Larzac (Lambert 2003, 64, 68, 169). Concerning the form **ed*, cf. Gaulish *ed* (plate of Lezoux) in the syntagm CORIIOSSED (McCone 1996, 107, 111), Old Irish *ed* “it” < **ed-e(d)*, *-e* in *seche* “past him” < **sek^uos-ed* (Schrijver 1997, 15, 56, 66). But there is one objection: it seems, in Cisalpine Gaulish the final **-m* changed into *-n*, cf. the forms **LOKAN** “urna” known from the inscription from Todi, probably the acc. sg. f. **longām* (see McCone 1993, 248, who supports this reconstruction based on such examples as Old Irish *long* “vase, vaisseau”, Welsh *llong* “vaisseau”), or **TEUOXTONION**, attested in the inscription of Vercelli, representing the gen. pl. of the compound **dēuo-gdonion* < **deⁱuo-d^hghomⁱom* “of gods and people”, in the parallel Latin text the dat. pl. “deis et hominibus” was used (Lambert 2003, 78-80). But in the same inscription a counter-example appears in the word in nom. sg. A^NTOM “campus” (the transcription ATOŚ, reflecting the acc. pl. **antons*, is also possible). By the way, the final *-n* in the sequence **LOKAN.KO[]SIS** in the inscription from Todi can be explained via sandhi directly from **LOKAM KOISIS*. And further the compound **XEVOYXOM** from the inscription from Vercelli is alternatively transcribed as **TEUOXTOM**, i.e. **dēwo-γdōm^o*, by de Bernardo Stempel (2008). These interpretations exclude any witness of the development **-m* > **-n* in Cisalpine Gaulish. But the question of the final nasal may also be eliminated, if the complex *tomed* is interpreted as the loc. sg. **tome* < **to(s)mi* ± “here” or “there” & nom.-acc. sg. ntr. **ed* “it”.

Summing up, both new solutions, (i) and (iii), can be interpreted as follows:

(i) **TOMED¹ EC² LAI³ OBALDA⁴ NATINA⁵**

“For him¹ I² have put³, Obalda⁴, a daughter⁵.”

(iii) **TOM¹ / TOME² ED³ EC⁴ LAI⁵ OBALDA⁶ NATINA⁷**

“Then¹ / (t)here² I⁴ have put⁵ it³, Obalda⁶, a daughter⁷.”

2. Chamalières

The inscription from Chamalières (near Clermont-Ferrand) was unearthed in 1971. The text is written in Latin italics on lead tablets, which were preferred in communication with the other world. The present interpretation follows K.H. Schmidt (1981, 260):

ANDEDÍON UEDIÍUMI DÍIUION RISU NARITU MAPON[ON] ARUER-
NATIN.

“By the magic tablet, I honour the divine Maponos Arvernatis, in whom a god dwells.

LOTITES SNÍ EDDIC SOS BRIXTÍA ANDERON

Quicken us [in the attack] and the following [men] by the magic of the Anderoi:

: C.LUCION, FLORON NIGRINON ADGARION, AEMILION PATERIN,

the invoker C. Lucios Floros Nigrinos, Aemilios Paterin(os),

CLAUDION LEGITUMON, CAELION PELIGN[ON], CLAUDION
PELIGN[ON],

Claudios Legitumos, Caelios Pelign(os), Claudios Pelign(os),

MARCION UICTORIN ASIATÍCON. ADDEDILLI

Marcios Victorin(os), Asiati(cos), the son of Adðedillos

ETIC SECOUI TONCNAMAN TONCSIÍONT-IO.

and the Segovii, who will swear the oath.

MEÍON, PONC SESIT, BUET-ID OLLON.

The small thing will become great, when he has sown it.

REGU-C CAMBION EXSOPS PISSÍU-MI ISO-C CANTÍ RISSU

I straighten the bent one. Though blind, I will see so by means of the song tablet.

ISON SON BISSÍET.

He will strike that one [the enemy].

LUGE DESSU-(M)MI-ÍIS. LUGE DESSU-MÍ-IS. LUGE DESSU-MÍ-ÍS.

I prepare them for Lugus. I prepare them for Lugus. I prepare them for Lugus.

LUXE

Swear!”

Let us concentrate on the lines 8-9 of the original:

MEÍON¹ PONC² SESIT³ BUETID⁴ OLLON⁵

“The small¹ thing will become⁴ great⁵, when² he has sown³ it.”

REGU⁶ C CAMBION⁷

“I straighten⁶ the bent⁷ one.”

Lambert (2002, 279) expresses his doubts concerning this translation, in principle accepted by Fleuriot, Schmidt, Meid, and McCone. His main objection is based on the final *-c* in *reguc*.

For the final *-c* in the form *reguc* the following explanations have been proposed thus far (see Rubio Orecilla 1997, 39, nt. 6):

- (i) Fleuriot (1981, 106-107) explained it through the influence of the enclitic **is* added to the verb in the 1st person sg. and following *sandhi* process: **regu+is kambion* > **regus kambion* > **reguñ kambion* > **reguc cambion*.
- (ii) Similarly de Bernardo Stempel (2010) thinks about the phenomenon *sandhi*: **regō-m(i) kambiom* > **reguN kambion* > *reguccambion*.
- (iii) Kowal (1987, 251) identified in *-c* the conjunction “and” apocopated from **-k^he* (cf. Lambert 2003, 67) and associated with the verb in the 1st person sg.: **regu+k^he kambion* > **regu-k^h kambion* > *reguc cambion*.
- (iv) Lambert (1996, 61; 2003, 159) sees in *reguccambion* a compound and seeks in the first component the noun **regut-s* formed from the adj. **regu-* “direct”, cf. Old Irish *di-riuch* “direct”; Lambert finds an analogous dental derivation in the semantically rather distant Old Irish *rig*, gen. *riged* “forearm”: **reguts kambion* > **regut kambion* > *reguc cambion*. His translation of the fragment of line 9 *buetid ollon reguccambion* is “qu’il soit guéri, bras et jambes” (Lambert 2002, 279).

But most scholars see in the form *regu* the first person sg. of the verb “to straighten, make straight” *vel sim.*, also appearing in the form *regu* in the inscription on the plate from Lezoux; further cf. Old Irish *a-t:reig* “rises”, *rigid* “stretches, distends”, Middle Welsh *dy-rein* “to arise, come”, Old Breton *regim* “to lead, drive” (Fleuriot 1976-77, 186; McCone 1996, 111).

The fourth solution consists in a hypothesis identifying in *-c* the enclitic 1st person sg. pronoun, i.e. *regu-c cambion* < **regō eg kambion* < **(H)regō eĝ(H) kṃbĭom* “I make straight the bent one”. A similar syntax is well-known in Germanic languages, e.g. the Old Runic enclitic *-eka* & *-ika* (Antonsen 1975, 55, 65, 37, 81, 85):

- hateka* “I am called” (Lindholm, Sweden; AD 300);
- tojeka* “I prepare” (Noleby stone, Sweden; AD 450);
- haitika* “I am called” (Sjælland, Denmark; AD 450-550);
- rAisodokA* “I raised” (Krogsta stone, Sweden; AD 550);
- felAhekA* “I commit” (Stentofsten stone, Sweden; AD 600-650).

Old Icelandic *-k* (Nedoma 2001, 59):

emk < *em ek* “bin ich”, *hafðak* < *hafða ek* “hatte ich”.

Old English *-ic* & *-ig* (Sievers 1942, 283, § 355; 344, § 409.2):

wēnic < *wēne ic*, *willic* < *willo ic*, *forġeldig* < *forġeldo ic*, etc.

The difference between the expected **-g* and the actually attested *-c* can be explained from *sandhi* with the following *c-*, but also as a result of the so-called *c/g/q*-convention in the Latin alphabet, causing *g* to be frequently written as *c*, e.g. Old Latin *ECO* “ego” (Caere; 630-600 BC). The letter *c* instead of *g* appears directly in the inscription from Chamalières, where the word **SECOUI** may reflect the tribal name *Segovii* (Fleuriot 1976-7, 184; Schmidt 1981, 260). Similarly **TEXTORICI** (Néris-les-Bains) for *Textorigi* (Lambert 2002, 382;

Lejeune 1988, 95), **TROUCI..** (Le Gué-de-Sciaux à Antigny) for *Trougi..* with regard to Old Irish *truág* “miserable” (Lambert 2002, 198), etc.

Some scholars, e.g. Schmidt (1981, 265), Evans (1983, 39-40), Kowal (1987, 252), Lambert (2003, 64), ascribe to the particle *-mi(-)* appearing in such verbal forms of the 1st person sg. as *uediiu-mi* “I honour”, *pissiu-mi* “I will see”, *dessu-mi-is* “I prepare them”, the function of the enclitic of the 1st person sg. This assumption is not compatible with the present hypothesis, proposing the same function for the enclitic *-c*. But it is not the only explanation. Fleuriot (1976-77, 176) and, a little sceptically, Lambert (2003, 64) saw in these forms a conglomerate of the thematic ending in **-ō* and athematic in **-mi* of the type Sanskrit *bharāmi*. McCone (1991, 119-120) developed this idea, assuming that *-mi* was added to the indicative to eliminate homophony with the subjunctive (cf. Rubio Orecilla 1997, 39). One of the latter solutions leaves room for the present interpretation of *-c* as the 1st person sg. enclitic. And this conclusion confirms the translation of Schmidt *et alii*.

3. Lezoux 67

The inscription on the clay dish from Lezoux (L 67) consists only of four words:

E[.]O IEURI RIGANI ROSMERTIAC

The first word is incomplete — the medial sign is almost totally unintelligible. Lambert (2002, 179) thinks about */s* or *ṛr*, Lambert (2003, 147) admits only *s*. Following Lejeune, he reconstructs the neuter pronoun **eso(d)* or **e(d)-so(d)* (2002, 182). Lejeune/Marichal (1976-77, 153 f.) offered the interpretation:

“I have sacrificed it to Queen and Rosmerta.”

In spite of the alternative solutions of Szemerényi (1978), Villanueva Svensson (2001) or de Bernardo Stempel (2010: “To Esos I dedicated, and to the Queen Rosmerta”) the idea of Lejeune should be supported. He saw in *rigani* and *rosmerti-ac* datives and in the final particle a postpositional conjunction corresponding to Welsh *ag*, Breton *hag*. The Cisalpine Gaulish gen. sg. **RIKANAS** (cup of d’Oleggio) represents a convincing witness to the *ā*-stem, whose dat. sg. should be **-āi* > **-ī*, cf. dat. sg. βηλησαμι in the inscription from Vaison, corresponding to the Latin dative in the dedication *Mineruae Belisamae* (*CIL* XIII, 8; Lambert 2003, 58, 86-87). Similarly the dative function of the form **RO-SMERTI** is confirmed by the parallel theonym in the dat. sg. **CANTI-SMERTI** (Vannes) and with the Latin dat. sg. *CANTI-SMERTE* (*CIL* XII, 131) — see Lambert 2003, 149-50. It is important to determine the function of the initial word *e...o*. The slant line appearing under the lower border of the breach which caused the second sign to be unknown, narrows the choice. It may actually be *s*, or less probably *r*. But the damaged sign may also be *X* “x”. In the hypothetical form **exo* a lenited

variant of the expected **ego* may be identified. The question of lenition in Gaulish is discussed by Lambert (2003, 47-48). According to him, the coin legend **ARXANTI**, coined by Suessiones, reflects the stem **argant-* “silver”. In this perspective it is possible to interpret the form *axat*, known from the sentence *in mon derco marcos axat ison* appearing in the medicine compendium written by Marcellus of Bordeaux (4th-5th cent. AD), as **agāt*, which corresponds to Old Irish *aga* (cf. Fleuriot 1974, 65; Meid 1996, 45; Schumacher 2004, 189, 192).

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