

## Re: Latin and Oscan

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Joachim Pense schrieb:

Were Latin and Oscan mutually intellegible?

I have also read this dictionary and I find that many words are just the same, just made unrecognizable by them crazy pronounciations. It says anyway that the grammar was almost the same and that possibly some theater pieces ("Avellana" comedy) were played in Rome in the original Oscan, so I suppose someone had to understand the language.

I remeber also that many people in Rome did understand Sannitian and Etruskan, and that not because they were mutually intellegible with Latin, but instead because in the world of the time everybody has occasions and motivation to snap some words of the many languages were spoken around in that time.

But if in reality we are talking about this argument: to be an inexplicable paradoxon that in the first century Gallia was speaking Latin and Campania was speaking Oscan, this is in my opinion not an argument, is not inexplicable and is not a paradoxon.

I am sure Gallia was never speaking Latin, not in the first century and not afterwards, because things don't go that way.

What appened was that, after Romans had conquered Gallia, the Galli kept on speaking whatever Gallian dialect they were speaking before. Some of them had to learn some Latin, if they wanted to make businness with the Romans, and the Romans got to learn some Gallic, if they wanted to go and dance with the girls. After many Romans had married their girls, they had to talk together at home and I'm sure they talked not Latin and not Gallian but the same pidgin as the baker and the shoemaker did. After some generations most people were fluent in this pidgin and it became the French language.

So Gallia did never speak Latin, instead they spoke some Gallic before and some French afterwards and both in the time between. Just the same

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happened in Campania, Hiberia and Pannonia and so on.

Some conquered people kept speaking (at home) their original languages for longer, some for not so long. And some quickly gave up their own language and adopted the conquerors' completely without building a pidgin, as is the case in Hungaria. But this is very rare indeed and did not happen AFAIK for Latin in the roman empire, so there is nowhere any language one can call a "modern Latin".

Not even in Italy, by the way. I'm from there, and if you live in any large town today, you have to learn somehow the "universal Italian" (spoken on the TV), the local version of "standard Italian" (spoken between the natives and the foreigners and between foreigners to each other), plus the local version of the "snob language" (Like French in Turin or Aosta, for instance) plus the local version of the "standard dialect" (spoken by the cultivated natives to each other) plus two to five local dialects they talk in the villages you drive to on weekends to eat in the trattoria or to swim in the lake.

None of them are mutually intelligible, but if you live some time there (say twenty years or so) you will be more or less fluent in all of them and some more, and I imagine exactly this was the situation in south Italy after the Romans had conquered it and also in Gallia and you name it.

Marco P

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