Trinacria Trilingua: Language and Culture in Roman Sicily

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Introduction

La storia della Sicilia romana non può non iniziare con la conquista romana dell’isola, che è il presupposto necessario di una latinizzazione, per quanto sia discusso e discutibile se essa sia stata mai completata e se, in tal caso, abbia resistito alle successive vicende storiche.¹

Sicilianu, the Italian dialect spoken on Sicily that in many ways is a language in its own right, can be incomprehensible to Italian speakers hailing from other locales. This modern linguistic situation made me wonder—what was the ancient linguistic and cultural situation like on the island? For a place at the center of power struggles, war, and conquering throughout its history, how did some of these earlier settlers navigate a world that was often rapidly changing and changing hands? It was with these questions in mind that I begun this thesis, and throughout these pages I look in some way to define the linguistic and cultural identity of these ancient Sicilian settlers.

The culture of ancient Sicily is almost mysterious, and the language even more so. People lived and settled there as early as the Paleolithic, but little remains of these early cultures, giving incomplete evidence as to whom may have been the first people to settle there. The three “original” peoples on the island as recorded by ancient historians were said to come from Spain to the Aegean, but hold almost a mythic quality. Though traditionally they are separated into Elymians to the northwest, Sicani in the center, and the Sicels to the east, the material culture of the earliest of these peoples was similar, giving no inclination that they were really that different culturally.² In addition to the Elymian and Sicel languages, the Oscans and their language were also present before and after Greek colonization.

One single culture at the root of Sicily does not exist; even the Sicel people, who give the island its name, are said to have invaded from the peninsula, overtaking the Sicani, in a similar fashion to the Doric invasion story in Greece. Sicel was an established language culture, at least in eastern Sicily, at the time of Greek colonization, at which point the Greeks gained control. The Elymians built Greek-like temples, and some Sicanian survives written in Greek script, showing how even these earliest Sicilian peoples borrowed from the new power. While the Sicels were likely pushed inland and remained in the countryside for years to come, and the Elymians survived into the Roman period because they were given special status for their supposed Trojan history linking them to Rome, Magna Graecia expanded its influence on the island.3

The Punic peoples, first through Phoenicians, and then through Carthaginian expansion and rule, established cities on the island, also bringing their own language and a second power. With the Greeks in the East, the Punic people held the West, and the two often came into contact, fighting as the Greeks expanded toward the West. Both groups did not come under Roman rule until the Punic Wars, ending their official regional dominance, though not necessarily ending their cultural influence, especially as far as the Punic and Greek languages were spoken.

And so Sicily was not just composed of three main types of language speakers and cultures, but rather was a mix of many different linguistic and cultural histories. I choose these cultures, Punic, Greek, and Roman, because they were the ones of the most power and prestige on the island, and the ones with the most remaining evidence. In many ways, they can be said to be “foreign” to the island, as they pushed out and replaced original languages as some of the first conquering powers to come to Sicily. The Greek and Punic languages also overlapped with the introduction of Latin. Other languages were used later on in the island’s history, notably Hebrew

3 For more on identity and culture in Greek Sicily, see Otis Munroe, "Thinking Beyond Megale Hellas: Inter-Cultural and the Formulation of Identities in Greek Sicily" (Brandeis University, 2012).
in Late Antiquity as Jews settled there, but this settlement and language introduction was not a part of the great cultural shifts that occurred under the change to Roman rule, and so I do not discuss it here.

Answering these questions is not an easy task. *CIL X* does not include the full breath of Sicilian inscriptions, and has yet to be revised; no other comprehensive list of all Sicilian Latin inscriptions exists, with newer corpora only made on a city-by-city basis. Some sites were not excavated properly, while still many more are mixed within modern cities. Provenance is also difficult to determine for many of the items in the *CIL*. Overall, less material survives or was made; though we know the cities were thriving, epigraphic evidence is relatively scarce compared to other regions. Despite these pitfalls, the Latin epigraphic evidence from the island is still the greatest source for how this language was used on the local level, and so it will be used throughout my work here. To do this work, I read through the entries for Sicily in *CIL X*, looking for patterns, anomalies, and inscriptions mentioning names. *CIL X* contains a few hundred entries on Sicily, and by and large I focused less on fragmentary entries, simply because of the difficulty in determining meaningful information from a handful of letters. I present here my findings and interpretations of these inscriptions, which by no means represents a comprehensive survey of the entirety of Sicilian epigraphy, but rather is meant as a look into the types of inscriptions that appeared on the island.

Despite provenance discrepancies, I also focus in this thesis largely on the Late Republican and Early Imperial period. This focus is partially because of surviving evidence, and partially because this time period is when Latin usage expanded exponentially on Sicily. Because

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5 RJA Wilson, *Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 Be-Ad 535*, Archaeologists' Guides to the Roman Empire (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1990), 22.
of the difficulty in dating the epigraphic evidence, I do not always follow the historical order; while I try to keep as close to historical chronological order as possible, I move around in order to illustrate the attitudes that existed around the time of Roman settlement, along with the epigraphic evidence. In looking at this turning point, as Latin was not only more widely introduced, but also more widely used, I shed light on the cultural mingling and merging between peoples of different backgrounds and levels of language ability.
Chapter 1:
Between Settlers and Sicilians: Roman Cultural Integration on Sicily

_I won Agonalia XLV but by one contest I was conquered by zealous Cupid. Let me impatient join
that most beautiful Greek woman, my little harlot | As victor, I murdered with my sword | With
our ashes mixed together in our urn | We have lived..._ 6

This almost Ovidian inscription shows a glimpse into the relationship of one ancient
couple on Sicily, and is telling as to aspects of their cultural background. I would argue that the
man here was a gladiator who was later freed; though this man’s cultural background is not
evident from the inscription because of the absence of his name or other information, his
participation in combat games shows a gladiatorial past. He understood or appreciated Latin, and
used it for his own grave inscription, showing how Latin was likely a mark of free culture. While
Roman phenomena like gladiator games spread quickly in Sicily, how quickly or how much
Latin spread there is less clear. 7

In this chapter, I look at how the Roman settlers and the Sicilians interacted, and to what extent Roman culture spread. The different cultures present seem like separate entities, but as
time went on, the local and Roman merged together more and more, culminating with Augustus,
who pushed for more Roman influence and cultural presence on the island. This push for Roman
cultural power succeeded in many respects, but never could fully eradicate the existing cultures
and trends of Sicily, particularly in the former Greek colonies. In the case above, this
intersection of culture is shown by the gladiator who loves a Greek woman; although “Argive,”
as is used here, could just be further romanticizing on his part as more of a Homeric reference, I

6 _CIL_ X no. 1058. The original inscription used _scorpillum_, which I have translated here instead as
_scortillum_. While he could indeed be calling her his little scorpion, I think it more likely that it should
read young prostitute or the like.
7 Kalle Korhonen, "Language and Identity in the Roman Colonies of Sicily," in _Roman Colonies in the
think this is an indicator of the mixed culture on the island; after all, what could be more Roman than a gladiatorial victor inscribing in Latin as a freedman?

Though Roman rule was often destructive to the island, for the most part, local culture was initially allowed to continue in locations of Roman domination. In particular, while Roman rule brought the use of Latin to Sicily and around the Mediterranean, the Romans did not suppress local languages outright. The Roman settlement process clearly set up Roman culture as the ideal, creating a goal for locals to reach for if they wanted to be successful, but that in no way eliminated the local culture. This is even more evident on Sicily because the local culture most often was Greek. The Romans held the Greeks in more high regard than most local cultures, and indeed they even recognized their new province of “Magna Graecia” as a Greek-speaking land. I seek to define some of the ways in which Roman culture and practices merged with those of Sicily, by looking at how the island was settled and how the natives adapted to Roman rule.

Ancient authors, such as Cicero and Diodorus Siculus, do not lead us to believe that Roman rule was good for Sicily. Initially, the Romans sacked, looted, and destroyed as they went when taking the island. As many as 25,000 people from the city of Akragas were taken into slavery following its conquest, and other cities did not fare much better. Though the Romans had at least fifty years of contact and relationships with the island prior to the beginning of the First Punic War, these wars no doubt had a devastating impact to start off the official Roman rule. Discussing Roman rule (and misrule) in Sicily cannot be done without mentioning Cicero’s Verrine Orations against the corrupt provincial governor Verres, and without Diodorus Siculus’ history, as seen from his native perspective. For other authors, Sicily was often a commodity, or

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9 Ibid., 3.
another foreign land to be controlled, and looking at this outside view of the island is helpful, since both Cicero and Diodorus spent considerable time there, offering first-hand accounts from both the Roman and Sicilian perspectives. To them, Sicily was more than a farmland.

Well before the Roman rule, Plato was worried about the Sicilians living in an Italic way much earlier in the mid-fourth century BCE, when on a visit to Syracuse, he encountered the lavish lifestyle lived there, describing it distinctly as Italian and Syracusan.\(^{12}\) For Plato, a lifestyle such as this got in the way of perfect governing, and corrupted the political system; he found this evident on Sicily even before Roman rule, citing an Italian influence as the cause of the lifestyle. Sicily had its own unique culture even at the height of power of Greek Syracuse, with the island’s settlers not fully representing an “Italian” or Sicilian version of their original culture. Much later on, according to Pliny the Elder, Sicily stands in renown against all of the islands of the Mediterranean, during his lifetime in the first century CE. Pliny names five colonies on the island and sixty-three cities dotting the coast, and wonders at the almost terrifying nature of the island, from the hot ashes of Mt. Etna, to the famed Charybdis, to the Rocks of the Cyclopes thrown at Ulysses.\(^{13}\) To both an early Greek society and a later Roman, the culture and place of Sicily seems foreign; the Greek Sicilians live in a non-Greek way, while the island’s daunting natural landscapes are foreign to the Roman Pliny.

Diodorus Siculus also lamented the “Italization” of Sicily, particularly in the events leading up to the Servile War of the first century BCE; this time, the Italian effect was brought by Roman rule, rather than simply by the influence of lavish and pleasure-seeking behaviors of Plato’s account. Diodorus cites sixty years of prosperity for Sicily following the “Carthaginian collapse,” until the slave trade increased dramatically on the island, due to the “Sicilians having

\(^{13}\) Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, 3.8.86-88.
shot up in prosperity” and therefore begun purchasing large amounts of slaves with their new wealth. Diodorus then describes how the new masters treated these hordes of slaves poorly, through branding, beatings, and receiving the bare minimum of food and clothing, resulting in bands of brigands that pillaged the countryside, in order for them to make a living. Diodorus sets this background as the reason for the following long slave revolt.

Diodorus blames the revolt on Roman rule and influence and sees the Romans as taking advantage of the island. Slave owners from Enna instigated the beginning of the revolt, all of whom were Sicilian, as defined by Diodorus and by their Greek names: Antigones, Damophilus and Megallis. Diodorus makes clear that despite the Roman noblemen’s allowance of brigands and raiding, the ones whose behavior first causes revolt were Greek Sicilians. Diodorus says that Damophilus and Megallis were the cruelest, and were whom the slaves first conspire to kill. They are a part of those who “exploited the products of this mighty island,” thereby rising to a luxurious style of living. In doing so, the gap between slaves and masters widened; as the masters mistreated their slaves more, their lifestyles became more and more incomprehensible to the slaves.

While Diodorus tells us that many landowners and those in power were Roman knights and citizens, and so had begun this trend, the wealthy Sicilians are also contributing to the growing number of disheartened slaves. These Sicilians “were now rivaling the Italians in arrogance, greed, and villainy,” while the Italians that “owned large numbers of slaves had made crime so familiar to their herdsmen that they provided them no food, but permitted them to plunder.” Diodorus makes it clear that he does not hold the Italian-Roman way in high regard, and with good reason, considering the vast amounts of mistreated slaves used to cultivate his

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15 Ibid., 34/35.27.
homeland. What I find compelling is that he makes a clear distinction between the Sicilians and the Romans, alluding to the cultures as separate entities. He categorizes the Roman influence overall in a negative light because the culture caused this greed and villainy among his people, and continues this tradition of categorizing “Italian” ways of life as villainous and gluttonous. Through Diodorus, we can get a brief glimpse of how the Greek Sicilians viewed the Romans as “other,” as an interfering force between Sicilian and Greek matters, though it is also the Greeks who equally caused the slave revolts in this account.

Cicero also expresses a frustration at Roman rule in his *Verrine Orations*, from 70 BCE, although he vehemently defends the island against the praetorship of Gaius Verres, rather than viewing all Roman influence and culture as negative. In his defense of the island, Cicero is equally concerned in defending the Roman citizens harmed by Verres’ destructive rule in addition to the provincial subjects, the Sicilians. Just some of Verres’ atrocities, which Cicero describes, include stealing money from farmers, torturing Roman citizens, plundering cities for their ancient and religious art, and starving Sicilian soldiers. Cicero too separates Romans and Sicilians, saying that as governor, Verres found that he could not satisfy both sides, “et Siculis et togatis,” both Sicilians and Romans. While here Cicero is arguing against a claim made by Verres, this dichotomy, two sides that cannot be satisfied by the decisions of one rule, represents the two cultures present, and how at this time they were partially at odds, though allies. Through this categorization of Sicilians as allies, Cicero hopes he can convince others that Verres should be punished, but crimes against Romans truly bring about the most horror for Cicero.

Cicero pleads for Verres to be punished for his crimes, and though he must be appealing to the Roman sensibilities here, he is biased in favor of Roman citizens or allies. Unsurprisingly,
unlike Diodorus, he does not call upon failings in Italian or Roman ways of life, but instead focuses on the failings of Verres, which I think Diodorus would categorize as Roman for his greed. Verres reportedly stole some forty million sesterces and let the countryside go fallow, in addition to his abuse of the farmers, and if this is not enough to outrage the Romans, who need the revenues of the abundant farmland, Cicero also adds the worst charge of all: beating a Roman citizen like a slave. He describes an incident at Lilybaeum, in the large Roman community there, where an elderly Roman citizen named Gaius Servilius was beaten until he fell; Cicero makes it clear that a Roman citizen should be beaten and treated this way without just cause, saying, “before your eyes a Roman citizen was beaten by your lictors until he fell down. By the immortal gods, for what reason!” Cicero expresses shock at such an action, and expressing the belief that no legitimate reason for such an action exists, but only on the grounds of citizenry; he makes no comment as Diodorus does on the unacceptable behavior of beating slaves. Cicero is mostly concerned with Roman interests on the island, particularly that agricultural production resume to its former state, and laments the downfall and ruin of the island. He does not link this as caused by the Romans as Diodorus does. Between both writers, between the Greek and Latin perspectives, clearly Roman rule must not have been looked upon in a favorable light by the Sicilians, especially earlier on in the island’s history, as changes took place forcefully or more rapidly than they would after years under Roman rule.

So-called “Romanization” was not an outright or purposeful process, and would have occurred slowly and through a mixing of cultures. Scholars debate endlessly whether

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18 Ibid., 1.18.
19 Ibid., 2.54.
Romanization even occurred,²⁰ or if that is a proper term, and I agree that no specific process or plan existed to make others culturally Roman; regardless of contesting Romanization as a real process, one cannot deny the influence Roman culture had on local cultures. On Sicily, at least through the Republican period, the Romans were not necessarily concerned with assimilation of the peoples it conquered; this rather was a byproduct of contact and settlement. Fostering interstate kinship was not part of Roman foreign policy; calling on the idea of kinship was more a part of Greek diplomatic practice, which the Romans sometimes borrowed in their own practice, but for the most part, they did not incorporate cultural blending into their foreign policy.²¹ And so the Romans used this to some extent in establishing themselves on the island; they claimed common ancestors with the Elymians, drew parallels between themselves and the Greeks (and inserted their cultural history into the island’s history through the Aeneid), all to establish their legitimacy and explain their claim to their first province.

When I use the term Romanization, I use it more in the context of the introduction and adoption of Roman culture, in addition to those already existing; a better term would be Roman cultural imperialism. To some extent, at least in city centers, the Sicilian people adopted (or at least tolerated) aspects of Roman culture. The cultural and linguistic situation is not an issue of bilingualism or assimilation, but of “cultural ambidexterity,” as Andrew Wallace-Hadrill so aptly puts it.²² This ambidexterity occurs between the Sicilians, who can largely be categorized as Greek, and the Romans themselves. Diodorus Siculus, with his name itself marking him as a

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²⁰ Wallace-Hadrill, Rome's Cultural Revolution; Korhonen, "Language and Identity in the Roman Colonies of Sicily."
²² Wallace-Hadrill, Rome's Cultural Revolution, 5.
Sicilian, describes a clear distinction between Sicilians and Romans; in his histories, those called Sicilians bear Greek names, while the Romans are a separate entity holding the island.

In general, the degree of acceptance and adoption of Roman culture varies by location. Locations that were previously Greek colonies retain their Greek language, largely carrying on traditions of naming and epigraphy which I describe in later chapters, whereas areas to the west that were not as deeply rooted in Greek culture and control adopted Latin more quickly, following patterns in language adoption throughout the empire. These areas, which had previously been held by the Phoenicians, conceded to the Romans more quickly, and while Punic language remained, its culture did not have as lasting an impact. The Romans themselves accepted Greek, and to some level Punic, although Punic culture was not as highly regarded, and was immediately appropriated to Roman purposes.23

One way in which the Romans interacted with the Sicilian culture was through coin production. When the Romans conquered the island, they melted down locally produced silver coins and replaced them with Roman *denarii*. When they used these coins, especially in major trade, the Roman and Latin coins eventually replaced coins with Greek and Punic inscriptions.24 Even a coin from Catania acknowledges as original imagery of the city, dating back to a mythical story of two brothers saving their parents from an eruption of Mt. Etna, show the two brothers in a more Roman way. The coin, issued by Sextus Pompeius and again by Trajan, portrays the brothers carrying their parents over their shoulders, depicting them in a similar fashion to Aeneas carrying Anchises.25 This coin takes an original cultural idea, and adapts it into a Roman image. I would argue that by including this story, the symbol of the city, on the

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23 I discuss Greek and Punic influences in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively.
25 Wilson, Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 Bc-Ad 535, 282.
coin, Sextus Pompeius hoped not to alienate the largely Greek city by also using Latin on the coin. The coins produced for the province were generally done all in Latin, usually just giving them names of Roman officials.\textsuperscript{26} This practice died out in the first century BCE and soon was replaced by coins produced by individual cities, along with the common Roman \textit{denarii}. These city-produced bronze coins, especially from places like Syracuse and Catania, were Greek in design and language, with the occasional inclusion of Roman names and Latin.\textsuperscript{27} Bronze coins then were more bilingual than the more valuable silver \textit{denarii}, probably because they were more widely used than the average local funeral inscription.

Just like much else to do with the implementation of Latin in Sicily, the language and style of coins changed after Augustus.\textsuperscript{28} These changes included Roman practices such as using the emperor’s or his family members’ portraits on coins or following the shape of the Roman bronze \textit{as}. Cities stopped making their own coins once Augustus instituted these reforms to provincial coin usage, and only Panormus made its own coins beyond the reign of Augustus, with the practice stopping altogether by 25 CE.\textsuperscript{29} As coins began to look more Roman, they also began to follow Roman denomination systems; going beyond old systems like the Greek \textit{chalkoi}, the widespread use of Roman bronze coins shows an acceptance of the Roman system in the Late Republic. To what extent the Greek system was let go, if it ever was, is unknown; later inscriptions at Taormina indicate that Greek currency and denominations survived into the Imperial period in that city.\textsuperscript{30}

While in coinage some examples exist of Greek inscriptions with Latin names, overall very few bilingual inscriptions survive. Most people must have possessed varying levels of

\textsuperscript{26} Burnett, "Latin Coins of the Western Empire," 33.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 34.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
bilingual to trilingual linguistic competencies, especially of Latin and Greek. For whatever reason, they did not choose to reflect this in their funerary or public inscriptions, but instead chose the language that best suited them, whether that is because of family history or newfound adoption of Roman culture. At intersections of Roman rule and local culture, no evidence exists that suggests the creation of any creole languages among the Roman colonies and provinces, and this holds true for the evidence from Sicily.\footnote{Wallace-Hadrill, \textit{Rome's Cultural Revolution}, 13.} Instead, bilingualism and code switching, or the switching of language use for different situations, were prevalent at all levels of society. Early on in Sicily’s history this code switching would have been between Greek and Sicel, Punic and Greek, or any of the other combinations of early languages. As Latin entered the region, this bilingualism is most seen among Greek and Latin.

With Latin spoken more in the west and northern coasts, and Greek in the east from Taormina to Syracuse, the status of each language was determined by individual location. Because of the prevalence of bilingualism, one cannot simply say that the upper classes, whether Roman elite or upward-thinking Sicilians, solely spoke Latin, while the lower classes spoke Greek. This may be true in more rural areas, but in city centers people of all classes interacted in multiple languages.

This bilingualism is not depicted directly in epigraphy. Few examples exist of inscriptions using both Greek and Latin; one or the other was chosen, depending on what the inscriber wanted to say in their language choice. One of the few examples of a bilingual inscription comes from a famous stonecutter advertisement. He writes in both Greek and Latin, separated clearly down the middle by an inscribed line, that he could carve in stone inscriptions.
for both *aidibus sacreis* and *operum publicorum*, or sacred places and public works.\textsuperscript{32} The dual language used here is more fitting for his purposes because for this craftsman, being able to show his work in both languages would simply get him more work, rather than exclusively working in one or the other. His use of both languages here also further shows that it was not just the elite who knew both, or only knew Latin, but that tradesmen and other levels also used both. Because this man’s business was to know both languages, however, he does not help indicate the language and literacy choice of other working-class Sicilians.

Several more examples of this can be found among other craftsmen, including a Marsala brick-stamp that lists the names of M. Abietes and N. Sekondos.\textsuperscript{33} While the Greek name, Abietes, is written in Latin, the Roman name Secundus is written in Greek script. This switch could reflect each man’s native tongue, but I think it is a joke, switching their languages and names usages to label and represent their work. Overall, craftsmen were largely Greek, as evidenced by the large amount of other stamps and tiles marked in Greek by the men who made them. Some of these tiles even switch to Latin mid-stamp, or use some Latin characters or words.\textsuperscript{34} While this script cannot speak to the makers’ levels of Latin proficiency, Latin must not have been used exclusively by the upper class.

One notable example of the duality and fluidity of the Sicilian culture is how some Sicilians celebrated receiving Latin rights and status given by Caesar around 44 BCE; they memorialized it in Greek.\textsuperscript{35} Conferring Latin rights on Sicily affected the island in other ways, including causing an uptick in the number of Romans who moved to the island. Though more

\textsuperscript{32} Wilson, p. 314, fig. 266. Wilson, *Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 Bc-Ad 535*, 314.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 316.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.

people from Latin-speaking areas moved there, the increased settlement likely did not have a large impact on language use, and the island was a Greek-dominated place through the end of Republican period. This period is harder to pinpoint because less evidence remains from it or can be dated to it, and so scholars often neglect the area. While the reception of Latin in the earlier Republican era would be an avenue for future study, most of the texts here are likely from the late Republic to the Imperial era. This is fitting for my purposes, considering this is when Latin became more dominant in the province.

Following the Civil War and Augustus’ rise to power, the cultural and linguistic demographics of Sicily began to change. By 21 BCE, Augustus established six colonial cities on the island: Catina, Syracusae, Tauromenium, Thermae, Tyndaris, and Panormus. This was likely done as a punishment to former inhabitants and as a reward to his supporters; larger portions of Sicily were aligned with Sextus Pompeius, and so settlers were given land confiscated from Pompeius’ former supporters. The settlers were former soldiers, numbering at least 3,000 men for Catania and Syracuse alone. These men would have moved with their families and extended families, and would have been Latin-speaking, and possibly were able to speak Greek or another Italic language; they also would have at least been Latin-inscribing, influencing the epigraphic culture as they brought Latin language and style of epigraphy to the island through their own inscriptions. With the populations of Syracuse and Catania numbering about 28,000 and 13,000, respectively, the 3,000 settlers would have made up a minority of the population at first, but by the time of their settlement, their culture was not foreign to the Sicilians, and so their influence spread, especially through intermarriage. The resulting intermarriage of peoples provides one

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36 Wilson, *Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 Bc-Ad 535*, 32.
38 Ibid.
avenue for cultural imperialism to occur, as intermarriage likely occurred soon after settlement. Many inscriptions deal with mixed-named people, showing cases of intermarriage and freedmen adopting Roman names.

Latin was used in nearly all the public inscriptions after the time of Augustus, with little evidence of its use before the colonies. For some sites, public epigraphy seemingly did not exist prior to colonization, although of course this is not true; the Greek may simply not be well attested. The relatively low number of Latin inscriptions may also indicate a resistance to implementing Latin, or just a lower number of Roman citizens living in that area to bring in the language. The lower number of Latin inscriptions could also suggest that the linguistic change was more drastic in these areas with less of a foundation of inscribed language. Unlike Syracuse, where Latin made little impact and Greek prevailed, Latin overcame areas with less of a strong cultural identity. Latin may have become the most prominent over time, but all aspects of earlier languages and cultures were harder to lose, particular in the strong Greek base on Sicily. I discuss in later chapters how the Greek and Punic are dealt with, as well as how Roman naming practices evolved on the island along with language.

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41 Ibid.
Chapter 2:
Roman Onomastic Practice on Sicily

Like much else on Sicily, naming practices were split between the different cultures, with each following their own at first before some Roman influence came into the region. Names and naming practices are often so deeply ingrained into a culture and language that, by looking at how they were used on Sicily, I hope to reveal the cultural setting of the island. While the Greeks generally used personal names only, the Roman system grew more and more complicated over time, from the famous tria nomina to the popular additions of nicknames as cognomina. Whereas the Greeks had a variety of names and name variations, through the Republican period the Romans used only about 17 praenomina, before these gave way to the more popular and more varied cognomina.42 Still, Roman names were much more formulaic and distinctive, serving a more formal purpose than the simple personal name. These names could show place in society, especially for the Roman aristocracy, and were distinctive of citizenship and freedom, as evidenced by the freedmen who later adopted Roman names.

These Roman naming practices are evidenced in the epigraphic record on Sicily, from both Roman settlers and Sicilian Greeks. This convention also provided more freedom and representation to women on Sicily, as they could adopt Roman names while keeping a Greek personal name, something that Roman women sometimes lacked, since they were identified by their father’s nomen, and sometimes with their husband’s or father’s name in the genitive, if further identification was necessary.43 These types of names for women in the evidence also likely fell at a time when a binomial system regained popularity, with the praenomen falling out of use in the first to second century CE. At this time, naming practice allowed for names to

43 Ibid., 126.
commemorate matrilineal names instead of just patrilineal, as was the case before.\textsuperscript{44} Unfortunately for our purposes, this system was used both by old and new Roman citizens, making them hard to distinguish—a legacy common to the mixed population of Sicily.

Sicilian naming conventions are not a clear-cut situation; in one prominent inscription, a man with a Greek name is being cursed in Latin. The duality of languages here would be complex enough, except the man’s mother also had a Punic name.\textsuperscript{45} This man, who is named either after the Greeks for fashion or for other family history, has a mother of different origins. They are then all mentioned in Latin, and can seemingly understand the curse set against them. This example is a good representation of the different people coexisting on Sicily, it raises more questions than answers. Latin became the language of inscriptions and of the new conquerors, while Punic and Greek roots remained within language, names, and culture. This example serves to illustrate the myriad of combinations for parentage, naming, and cultural dominance at play in the naming practices in the ancient world.

Greek names in epigraphic evidence suggest intermarriage between Sicilian Greeks and Romans, as well as reflect the growth in prominence of freedmen in positions of higher social status on the island. The elite culture in Cicero’s \textit{Verrines} gives way to a growing class of former slaves taking on Roman names and customs, who explore their newfound freedom first in their names, and at the end of their life in the choice of a Latin inscription. The Latin usage may be more telling of previous slave status than Greek names or supposed language usage; while in other places Greek language was indicative of slave status, this was of course not necessarily the case on Sicily; Greek was spoken among slaves, former slaves, and the local cultural elite.

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\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., 131.  
Many women appear on funerary inscriptions with Roman family names and Greek personal names, indicating they married into a Roman family or are the child of mixed parentage. One woman with such a name, Claudia Paezusa, was *uxor* to a man named L. Cornelius. The implications of her name show a Greek personal name, Παιζουσα, which was used during the Imperial period. The common Roman name Claudia here indicates that she received this name from a Roman father or master named Claudius. Due to the fame of the Cornelius gens, I think that is more likely a daughter of previous intermarriage whose name reflects her mother’s Greek background; mothers influencing the naming practice became more common in this time. Because only two names are used for both Claudia Paezusa and L. Cornelius, and because of possible matrilineal naming, this inscription is likely from the first to second century CE.

Women with mixed Greek and Roman names among epigraphic evidence are more often freedwomen. Most prominently, a Decimia Gamice is remembered as both “simae” and *colliber*[ta]. Her two most prominent seemingly features are being flat-nosed and a freedwoman, and this is one instance in which someone is outright named a freedperson with the adjective *colliber*. Gamice is another oft-used Greek personal name in the Imperial period, with a Iulia Gamice found also in Lipara. This inscription illustrates that Gamice was a Greek-speaking slave who once freed chose to use Latin in her inscription.

Others of these Greek feminine names include those like Ζωζιµµα, a name popular in Latin inscriptions again through the Imperial period. This name appeared in locations from Catania to Messenia to Lipara, throughout the Greek regions of Eastern Sicily. Whether these women are

46 *CIL* X no. 7040.
48 *CIL* X no. 7063.
50 Ibid., 190.
Greek Sicilians or freed slaves cannot be determined with certainty because many inscriptions do not include the telling tag of *colliber*, or freed person, and do not indicate names of family or spouses to help show background. While in many locations around the empire Greek was a hallmark of slavery or former slavery, in the ambiguous and mixed linguistic setting of Sicily, that is just one possibility. As Diodorus Siculus describes in detail, Greek Sicilians, who are likely Greek speakers, as they have Greek names and are written about in Greek, owned many slaves, many of who could have spoken Greek. The prominence of Greek among slaves and future freed people could have only increased considering that if Greek was not their first language, they were likely to learn it from their masters and environment.

In one example of an inscription mentioning a Greek name, the words “votum” and “lucernam” only appear with the name of a woman called Annia Zosima.\(^5\) She could be from the Latin Annius family, but I think she is more likely a freedwoman who adopted the name of her master while retaining her personal name. In this inscription, she displays an adoption of Roman culture both in the use of Latin, and the word “votum.” Vows to deities became popular in private epigraphy during the Imperial period, demonstrating her adoption of Roman culture, through both religion and language. Other women named Zosima include Nonia Zosima and Munatia Zosima, indicating that this name was a popular personal name among Greek freedwomen adopting Roman names, and keeping with the popular timeframe of this occurring within the Imperial period.\(^5\)

The name based on Zosima was not just used by women. A Lurius Zosimus, who was only seven years old when he died, and a Luria Melanthin, who I think is his mother, are

\(^5\) *CIL* X no. 7016.
\(^5\) *CIL* X nos. 6979 and 7426, respectively.
mentioned in one inscription, made by her son. 53 Meλανθν was a name used on Sicily at least in the third century CE, if not earlier. 54 Once again, this name appears with a Roman name, this time Lurius. A mother and son share the name; in this situation, I think is a case of freed status. Because a “filio” made this inscription, I propose that a Greek family, the slaves of the Lurius family, are freed, and following the deaths of his mother and brother, another son commemorates them in Latin. This inscription also shows are names are passed down in this case; the Greek personal name is retained, and is likely the most important part of the name following Greek tradition. The son who made the inscription probably also had a Greek personal name, although he at least thought highly enough of Latin to use it for his family here. What is even more interesting is that freedmen tended to give their children Latin names, so this boy was likely not born free.

Another woman, Antonia Sympherusa, is a similar example. 55 The personal name was used on the island for a long period of time, particularly through the Roman Imperial era. 56 She is labeled as “mat(er),” while a “Gn(aeus) Fabius Fe(lix)” is the pater. 57 Their son is a Fa(bius) (Ti)tianus F(elix), who lived to an uncertain age because the right half of the inscription is lost. Once again, a woman with a Greek name is part of a family that uses Roman naming practices. She possesses a different name from her husband, indicating that she is from a family or father named Antonius; her husband and son follow Roman practices of a son taking his father’s name almost entirely. Considering the “tiano” ending of the son’s name, this name is likely from the late first century to early second century CE, if following the names Titianus or Domitianus from

53 *CIL* X no. 7072.
55 CIL X no. 7066.
56 Matthews, *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, 405-06.
57 While Mommsen cites these as CN, I find it more likely it should be GN after the common name and abbreviation, and because ‘C’ and ‘G’ are easily corrupted.
the reign of Domitian, and keeping consistent with naming practices at this time; here I have use “Titiano” as per Mommsen’s proposition in the CIL entry. Though these are just a few examples, women received personal names following their possible Greek roots or a history of mixed parentage; they did not pass these names on to their children, but instead integrated their children, or at least their names, into part of Roman culture.

Other names, like a Pomponia Domitia, a “pure” and “pious” wife indicate both marriage and slave status. In this case, the couple are both possibly freed; Pomponia’s husband made the inscription, a man named Nomius, “Domitian ser(vus),” or slave of Domitianus. While the husband is still designated as a slave, his wife seems to have adopted the name, shortened from Domitiana; though the reference to the master Domitian is also written in the genitive like her husband’s, the name agrees with the case of the rest of her name and description, causing me to believe this is written in the dative, particularly with the use of “coniugi” to finish the agreement, rather than coniunx or coniugis. Additionally, I think that this inscription is for a freedwoman because generally slaves took on the name of their patron or former master once freed. While Pomponia is a popular Roman gens, I would guess that this is not a member of the famous family, but rather a slave who adopted both Roman cognomen and nomen from her masters, rather than keeping any of her own. This does not help with determining her origins, although I would guess she might have been a Greek speaker as well as one of Latin based on her husband’s name. Nomius has kept part of his own name, which is Griko, a dialect with Greek origins that has lasted into the modern day in Southern Italy. These names also follow the fashion of adopting names of emperors, which became much more popular later with Marcus Aurelius. Therefore,

58 CIL X no.1088
these inscriptions can be dated between the deaths of Domitian in 94 CE and Domitian Longina in 140 CE.\footnote{Ibid.}

While the Greek presence within names is clear through the Imperial period, Roman names were also widely popular, both among Roman settlers of the island and by those who adopted the Roman names. While Sicilian Greek parents often kept Greek names, especially if they held a certain prestige, freedmen did tend to give their children Latin names.\footnote{Korhonen, "Language and Identity in the Roman Colonies of Sicily," 13.} Additionally, Roman onomastic practices were adopted even into Greek epitaphs. Romans often would not give Greek names to their children because those names indicated a servile origin, meaning that Roman and Latin names would become more prevalent and popular on Sicily than Greek ones, despite Greek Sicilians holding on to some of their naming practices. Popular Latin names included mention of family origin, variations of Latin \textit{cognomina}, and mention of Roman identity.\footnote{Ibid., 16.} These types of names were used both by Greeks and Romans, and in Greek and Roman inscriptions.

One type of inscription of this sort is the invocation or naming after emperors, particularly Aurelius. After Caracalla granted all free people citizenship in 212 CE, the \textit{nomen} Aurelius became an important mark of citizenship, as foreign people and former non-citizens adopted the Roman name with their citizenship. Aurelius, along with other established names like Iulius, became popular stand-in name to mark this new status for people. Because this name was popular before 212 CE, everyone named Aurelius cannot be directly linked to this new Roman identity, but the name did spike in popularity.\footnote{Salway, "What's in a Name? A Survey of Roman Onomastic Practice from C. 700 B.C. To A.D. 700," 133.} At least five inscriptions of this type appear in \textit{CIL X} from Panormus alone, including one that names a “M. Aurelius,” the common
new name, who has the “patrono optimo,” or best patron, to “Ermeros M. A. Callinico.” This example is the clearest example of someone who is likely a freed person, who could have even just have received citizenship, and took a common Roman name either to commemorate his new freed status or his new citizenship. Though the situation is complicated by the fact that he could have adopted the M. Aurelius from the M.A. in his patron’s name, I think that both men’s names are a result of the popularity of the name in general.

One Greek family who used Roman naming for their children was the family of a man named Claudius Theseus, who through the burial of four members of his family, produced four inscriptions: two in Latin, two in Greek. His children were named Claudius Claudianus, Claudia Romanilla and Claudius Romanus, while his wife was Claudia Irene. The parents, Theseus and Irene, follow more of the trend of naming after famous figures, while they chose for their children to accentuate Roman identity and Latin name derivations with the –ianus version of their own family name. The Latin inscriptions are of higher quality and have nicer lettering than the Greek, indicating that he used a more skilled and higher priced craftsman for the Latin project than the Greek one. While undoubtedly high quality inscribers and stone cutters existed for writing both Greek and Latin, I think this shows Latin inscription may have been pricier in general. He used these Latin inscriptions for his wife and his older son, indicating that he wanted to spend resources and add this prestige for them, while he either was not able to or did not want to afford this prestige to the younger children Romanilla and Romanus.

Regional places in names include mention of Sabine origin, which also probably adds to Roman identity in the age and connection to Roman past. A Crassicius Sabinus lived 24 years and was commemorated in Catania, and was likely a Roman soldier, as many men were who

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64 Wilson, *Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 Bc-Ad 535*, 314.
Another person, a woman from Mazara, also had this name designation. She, Claudia Sabina was the “sweetest wife” of L. Meteilius Proculus. The sweet adjective used for her was spelled “karissimae,” showing that even for this seemingly Latin-speaking and Roman couple, inscription mistakes can happen, and that names may not be able to tell everything about people’s backgrounds. Then again, Proculus could have just contracted out a subpar stonemaster for his inscription who did not have a full grasp of Latin. The switch of ‘K’ and ‘C’ is not unheard of in epigraphic examples from Sicily.

Common Roman names are also frequent within the epigraphic record. Some include L. Rubrius Proculus, a foot soldier to praetor “Sex(tus) Pompeius” commemorated for the “altar of greatest victory.” This shows the variation among the Romans and Latin-speakers on Sicily at this time; they ranged from soldier to higher officials. Soldiers were in particular common, and share name attributes of others. Zenonis Mar. Germanicianus was a soldier for ten years of victory, according to his inscription. His name reflects the use of Roman naming practices when he may have not been Roman. Germanicianus follows both the common Roman name and the variation idea, as it strays from the original Germanicus version of the name using the popular –ianus suffix.

Roman onomastic practice, like many other aspects of Roman culture was adopted and adapted in Sicily. While Latin names prevailed among both Greek and Latin speakers, traditional Greek families and freedmen also used Greek names. Particularly for women, the Greek personal name survived into the Roman naming process, although they did not impart their Greek heritage to their children according to epigraphic evidence. The extension of Roman citizenship also likely increased those who adopted Roman names because freedmen who might not have already

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65 CIL X no. 7062.
66 CIL X nos. 7028 and 7269, respectively.
adopted Roman names would have taken on famous names as part of the Roman system and as a sign of citizenship. Later on, this would replace the combination of original personal name and adopting the name of their former master or patron. While a name cannot reveal everything about someone’s family or linguistic history, it can shed some light on their position within the island’s culture.
Chapter 3:
S.P.Q.C: Greek Identity in Roman Catania

Catania, a city on eastern Sicily located near Mt. Etna, began as a Greek settlement, though the settlers would have had contact with the mysterious Sicilian natives, the Sicels. Catania appears to have been one of the more prosperous cities on Sicily at the time of the First Punic War, when it came under the power of Rome. The Romans conquered the island, but respected the Greek culture of its inhabitants. While not all of Sicily was Greek, much of the east, and certainly Catania, had created its own distinct Greek sub-culture. Sicilian Greek culture had its own dialect as well, because the area was founded and mixed with different Greeks.\(^67\) Catania began with the Chalcidian Greeks who founded Leontini and Naxos and later faced an influx of peoples of Doric, showing evidence for this mixed-Hellenistic culture that Rome found when it took the island.\(^68\)

Even the name of Catania itself seems to have had many forms; the most common Greek name represented was Katane, and with the introduction of Latin it appeared variably as Catana, Catina, and Catinenses.\(^69\) (The name itself was even changed to “Aitna” under the Syracusan tyrant Hieron in the fifth century BCE, before being changed back to Katane following his rule.\(^70\)) The many combinations for the spelling and use of the city’s name itself, mirror the was unsurprising diversity of its daily life as it was in its own name, which I explore here.

The language used in ancient Sicily and Catania was multivariate and was determined by the power of its culture. Though Rome was in power and became the conquering culture, they

\(^{67}\) Tribulato, *Language and Linguistic Contact in Ancient Sicily*, 18.

\(^{68}\) Lorena Jannelli Luca Cerchiai, Fausto Longo *The Greek Cities of Magna Graecia* (Los Angeles Getty Publications, 2004), 171.

\(^{69}\) Francesco Ferrara cites that under ancient sources the Greek name also appears as Katana, Katanai, and Katanaion. In the *CIL*, it often appears shortened as Katan, and appears with both “C” and “K” usages. I will use the modern name here unless quoting another source.

\(^{70}\) Luca Cerchiai, *The Greek Cities of Magna Graecia*, 171.
still had respect for Greek culture and language, and therefore allowed the culture to continue, rather than complete a strong regimen of Romanization. Roman building projects added to a Greek theater already in existence, and put the Forum in Catania near the site of the Greek city’s agora,\textsuperscript{71} maintaining, respecting, and merging with the Greek past as they expanded into the city. Rome definitely had an influence on Catania and Sicily, but it was through more of a “hybridization” of culture.\textsuperscript{72} Roman imperialism grew stronger later on in Catania and Sicily’s history, but the need for the Greek way of life—particularly agriculturally\textsuperscript{73}—meant the Romans kept old cities and ways because of their economic interest in the area. In 44 BCE, Caesar conferred \textit{ius Latii} on Sicilian cities, increasing the number of Roman people and families who moved to the new province, but the divide in support on the island between Octavian and Sextus Pompeius left the region cut off from Rome, increasing Sicilian individualism.\textsuperscript{74} It was at this time that Augustus took greater control of the island, as he did elsewhere, and used his influence to punish previous dissenters and establish cities, increasing Roman influence and control in the region. Coastal cities like Catania still flourished because of decreased taxes and trade, but inland areas of the island became Roman estates and land for the Roman elite.\textsuperscript{75}

Latin first came into greater use in Catanian epigraphic culture at this time in the colony’s history under Augustus, with fewer materials existing from its first period.\textsuperscript{76} While this later start to a wider official use of Latin does not mean Latin was not used prior to this, it does show the preferences and understanding of the culture of the time. The acceptance of the “new” language

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., 172.
\textsuperscript{72} Tribulato, \textit{Language and Linguistic Contact in Ancient Sicily}, 20.
\textsuperscript{74} Tribulato, "Siculi Bilingues? Latin in the Inscriptions of Early Roman Sicily," 299.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 300.
\textsuperscript{76} Korhonen, \textit{Le Iscrizioni Del Museo Civico Di Catania}, 71.
\end{footnotesize}
was gradual, and over time it gained prestige in bureaucratic and official communication. To what extent, however, did the people understand Latin? Greek was still widely spoken in Sicily to the end of the first century CE, and presumably people more widely understood it over Latin. Did the bureaucrats who came to use Latin inscriptions actually understand it, or simply value the culture and power it represented? Even more difficult to access, what did this mean for the lower classes? Here I prioritize how the emerging Latin language was perceived and used, if at all, rather than if traditional bilingualism existed in the city.

The sample of surviving Sicilian Latin texts is not widespread or large enough to give a reliable generalization of how Latin was used. Though Latin was used in official settings, most people were likely not literate in Latin; instead, the predominance of Greek language and culture in other areas of Italy meant that newcomers to the island were more likely able to speak with the Greek-speaking inhabitants. With the official administrative use of Latin becoming predominant under Augustus, Romans also produced a small amount of highly standardized Latin texts for official or monumental use. Indeed, many of Catania’s surviving inscriptions are on marble and were likely the bases to Roman monuments. As the upper class also began to adopt Latin in their own inscriptions, the Sicilian people did not in fact have a complete universal literacy in Latin.

In the CIL texts, Catania’s people showed a distinct sense of pride and identity through the type of language used on inscriptions. Many inscriptions refer to fighting for the “homeland,” destroying enemies, and being crowned with glory. Some examples include:

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78 Ibid.
79 Ibid., 296.
80 Korhonen, Le Iscrizioni Del Museo Civico Di Catania, 71.
81 Both Korhonen (Le Iscrizioni Del Museo Civico Di Catania, 9) and Mommsen (CIL, 721), reference some inscriptions from Catania coming from the recordings of Octavio di Arcangelo, whose Istoria delle
“I am Catanian, fighting alone for the homeland” (*CIL X 1055*)
S.P.Q.Catanen “to the homeland” (*CIL X 1056*)
S.P.Q.Katan “by extinguishing the tyrannical city” (*CIL X 1057*)
“Victors of Katanen will have eternal triumph” (*CIL X 1058*)
“I honor, I love truth / more faithful, divine middle Catania[n]” (*CIL X 1060*)

The ancient people of Catania clearly had a strong sense of pride and loyalty for their city, and so the Roman conquerors had to be mindful of that in their takeover. Though Latin was used in an official capacity, more often inscriptions were written in Greek and a third language (usually Phoenician or Egyptian according to the *CIL*), with a Latin translation or text added. By the point of these inscriptions, Rome had a distinct influence on the city, as shown by the incorporation of the famous S.P.Q.R. abbreviation to fit the needs of the people of Catania. They created a marking to signify the senate and people of Catania, both making themselves outside of Rome and making themselves just as important as Romans. This abbreviation is still used on the coat of arms of Catania today, and appears on modern fixtures around the city, showing the long-lasting effect of the ancient people’s hijacking of a Roman phrase and making it their own. Whether these are official, they were used enough that they were allowed, and Latin was considered almost a compliment to already existing inscriptions. Inscriptions from other sites, including Messina, Syracuse, and Caltagirone, use the S.P.Q.R. abbreviation, rather than their own; though these places were also diverse in their language and cultures, Catania in particular stuck to its Greek roots in adapting to its new rulers.

SPQR was used in the epigraphic material of other Sicilian cities. Indeed, this mixing can be shown throughout the island. For example, the city of Caltagirone, in the modern province of Catania, contained this inscription, probably on a Roman house, praising Rome with “SPQR,”

cose insigni e famosi successi di Catania from the seventeenth century was the first work to record inscriptions in Catania. Korhonen notes that while much of Arcangelo’s work is invaluable, *CIL X* no.1049-1060 may have been recorded falsely. Mommsen shared this concern as well, however he wrote that he included these inscriptions in his *CIL* because they also appeared in other sources, and so they appear here with the same warning.
“C. Caesar” and “aug. germ.” While the Romans and those in power clearly used “stock Latin” here to represent their power, it does not necessarily mean that everyone had a full grasp of what was written. Often, inscribers would have an incomplete knowledge of Latin, based on mistakes found in Latin inscriptions. These mistakes occurred less frequently in Greek, and often had to do with Greek usage, indicating that at least those inscribing understood and read Greek better. This includes mixing up Greek and Latin endings, or transliteration between the languages. Sometimes, these “mistakes” may have also been a Roman concession to the dominant language on the island.

While the Romans definitely made accommodations to Greek on Sicily, inscriptional mistakes and examples of hybridity still exist. One of the most common was for inscribers to switch the Greek rho with “r.” At Caltagirone, the same site of a standard Roman inscription, appears an inscription commemorating “HelioΔopus” a “most deserving leader” for a war involving slaves. Despite the obvious delta in the middle of this name, instead of Heliodopus, this name is more likely the more famous name Heliodorus, showing the usage of rho in place of r. This inscription could be referencing to the famous Heliodorus of Jerusalem, or another figure, but I would argue that accidental or not, someone whose primary language was Greek made this inscription. I would argue that the delta here is purposeful, and meant as a blending of languages—after all, mixing up delta with any Roman letter would be hard to do, but I think rho’s usage here is unclear, and more likely a mistake.

The rho-r switch in usage appears in several other epigraphic examples from Catania, along with other Latin mistakes or misspellings. In CIL X 7017, part is written in Latin and part is written in Greek-like text, including mention of “HEPA,” or Hera. This spelling is almost a

82 CIL X no. 1067
84 CIL X no. 1069
merger of the Latin and the Greek, but appears among Latin text. I think the inscriber was trying to appeal to Greek speakers here by merging the languages, considering he used the Greek name Hera, and not Juno.

The rho-r switch likely occurs in another inscription found on the Stesichorian gate, dated from the second half of the first century to second century CE. This inscription exhibits a mix of Roman and Greek culture. With the common abbreviation “D M S” or “Dis manibus sacrum,” this inscription begins in the way countless Latin ones do, although the subjects of it possibly have mixed language backgrounds. The remainder of the inscriptions reads: “Publicius Nicon / vix[it] ann[is] LV / Pompeia Epictesis f[ecit].” While Publicius and Pompeia are well known Roman names, Nicon and Epictesis are not, and have definite Greek origins; the most famous Nicon is the father of Galen. Epictesis’ origin is less clear, unless you consider that the intent may have been for it to read Erictesis. Erictesis could derive from Erechtheus, the mythical founder of Athens, or erichthonius, meaning Athenian. At this point in the first century CE, these could be people from the first generations of colonization under Augustus, and so people are representing themselves in dual ways here through Greek heritage in Latin language.

A few inscriptions imitate Greek by replacing “f” with “ph,” an unsurprising error in transliteration. Most surprising is in one that does so with the common word *fecit*. In this inscription, “Ceparius Nymphidianus lived for thirty-three years” and his mother “phecit.” Considering the name here got transliterated similarly, the fact that someone less skilled in Latin, perhaps if they were simply taking notes from oration, would make this mistake is not surprising. A similar phenomenon also occurs in another inscription, this one for the Roman names Fonteius

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85 Korhonen, *Le Iscrizioni Del Museo Civico Di Catania*, 221.
86 *CIL* X no. 7087
87 *CIL* X no. 7057
and Fonteia, appearing as “Phontius” and “Phonteea Mercailla.” Fonteius and his daughter (“fil”) Fonteia Mercatilla did however “fecit.” The names here were misspelled, while the more common fecit was correct, showing a possible greater understanding in Latin (or a more skilled inscriber).

While the name Fonteius is fairly famous and common, Nymphidianus from the previous inscription is less so. Derived from the Greek name Nymphidius, the name is a rare Latin cognomen. Another possible mistake is Nymphidianus’ distinction in the inscription. Is he a “ceparius” or onion grower, or is there a rho-r switch occurring? If you look it as a switch, he would be a cerarius, or a worker in wax, indicating his use of writing tablets. While both are possible, I think it more likely that he was a wax worker, if only because this denotes more wealth and a greater likelihood of a funerary inscription made for him. The subject of this inscription had Greek roots, while Fonteius clearly did not, showing the possible disparities in “fecit” between their inscriptions. The mistakes in both, however, reflect the greater trend in low Latin literacy and prevalence of Greek speakers.

Some inscriptions show lesser used Latin phrases, perhaps showing the local culture of Latin usage and its users. One inscription for a woman named “Aphrodito” mentions her career as a mime actor and her husband Eutychus. Both these names reflect the culture in Catania at the time. Eutychus is the Latinized version of a Greek name, while Aphrodito was a rare name more prevalent in Macedonia. The inscription also uses “mimas,” a rare version of mima, the more common form of the word for mime actress. Mimas in fact only appears in Latin epigraphy

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88 CIL X no. 7083
89 Korhonen, Le Iscrizioni Del Museo Civico Di Catania, 221.
90 CIL X no. 7046.
91 Korhonen, Le Iscrizioni Del Museo Civico Di Catania, 198.
in a few examples. This example of an uncommon usage shows the variations within Latin, especially in a locale that had more than one commonly spoken language. *Mimas* is likely either a variation in the colloquial or again a mistake. I would also guess neither Aphrodito nor her husband were Latin speakers, but instead she was an actress, receiving an inscription in the politically dominant language.

Religion seems to have also influenced in the Latin inscriptions. Many reference the sanctity of the volcano Etna using more Roman religious terminology. This usage again likely reflects an adaption of Sicilian Greek customs by the Romans, which merged the cultures. One such inscription, which was translated into Latin, reads “Muse Etna, daughter of land and heaven, by Jove, god of gods” and continues to describe “vomiting fire” from the mountain’s point of view. The mountain was definitely another point of pride and importance to the people in this area: though it destroyed, it created fertile soil. The reverence with which Etna is talked of is likely to have come from the people who lived there for years, not from the Romans new to the area. Roman practice equates Etna with Roman gods and divinity; inscriptions were translated into Latin from languages other than Greek, showing that there was a diverse population of people there. Though through the *CIL* is unclear if the inscriptions were in Egyptian, Phoenician, or another language, this language valued something of the volcano and thought it worth worshipping. Another inscription of this type reads, “Daring Hercules did not stand beyond here and we decided that the borders of this are protected altars with this monument of the goddesses ...Katan.” This description captures several cultures here: while Herakles is a Greek hero, Hercules was adapted and popularized among the Romans. The Catanians also show pride here in this story—even Hercules did not want to be near Etna, and yet Catania views her like a

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92 Ibid., 187.
93 *CIL* X no. 1049.
94 *CIL* X no. 1051
holy altar. By creating this Latin inscription, the Romans were seemingly catering to the views of the people already in the city, but as always added their own elements of influence to it.

Etna is also prevalent in a city legend that remained popular through Late Antiquity. As the story goes, two brothers (’Αμφίνος and ’Αναπιας) saved their parents during an eruption of Etna, after which a cult was founded for them to commemorate their deed. They were often referred to as Fratres pii or Fratres ambusti, and served as a symbol of Catania. The brothers appeared on coins through the Roman Republic, and their statues remained prominently displayed in the city through Late Antiquity. It should also be noted that Trajan reissued one of these Republican denarii, which had originally been issued by Sextus Pompeius. Perhaps Pompeus’ knowledge and acknowledgement of the city’s culture won their support, whereas Augustus punished them for it. Trajan may have then reissued the coin, knowing that many people at Catania would appreciate the obverse’s symbol, and the reverse’s depiction of Pompey’s face. This symbol of Catania, dating back to the Greek period, was so important that the consul of the province remade it when they were destroyed or taken. The “[F]lammifugas fratres…quos tuit hostilit[as]” were restored by Merulus, “consul[aris] provincial Sicilia.”

Merulus is the last known consul of Sicily, which dates this inscription to the fifth or sixth century CE; despite the dissolution of the empire, and facing clear problems of invasion and destruction, Merulus still chose to restore this statue. The ties to a Greek past, and to the past in general were strong throughout ancient Catania’s history. These figures represented protection for the city from disaster, whether that was by nature or man. Catania’s Greek past became ingrained within the city; though by this time Greek was much more diminished in the city, the roots of the culture were still there.

95 Korhonen, Le Iscrizioni Del Museo Civico Di Catania, 190.
96 Wilson, Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 Bc-Ad 535, 282.
97 Korhonen, Le Iscrizioni Del Museo Civico Di Catania, 157.
Greek culture still had a strong hold on Sicily upon the arrival of the Romans, and though the *CIL* lists no usage of SPQR in the city, several examples of typical Latin inscriptions and Latin names appear in Catania. None of this is to say that the city was distinctly Latin, but the examples of SPQC and Greek heritage show a certain identity that remained long after the Romans established their presence and influenced how the Romans dealt with the island’s inhabitants.
Chapter 4:  
The Punic History of Western Sicily

Panormus, modern-day Palermo, was founded by the Phoenicians, named by the Greeks, and ruled by the Romans. One of the three main cities of the Phoenicians, along with Motya and Soluntum, its founders may have called it “Ziz.” The Greeks of the eastern island called the city Panormus instead, and this name became known through Roman times, with some variation, such as the spelling “Panormus.” Though Punic people must have largely inhabited the area surrounding the city and Western Sicily, their culture and language were disregarded to the point that what they called themselves and where they lived was superseded by how the Greeks and Romans termed them. The Romans held Greek culture and language in a much higher regard than Punic, which is most simply evidenced by what survived on the island and what did not. Punic language and culture was in its heyday in the seventh century BCE, and though it would enter a sharp decline, the culture did have a lasting effect on the island, albeit diminished.\[98\]

The so-called Punic presence in the Western Mediterranean started when the Phoenicians left the East from 1200 to 333 BCE, and is often also linked with the foundation and subsequent rise of Carthage from the ninth to seventh centuries BCE. Both the Phoenicians and Carthaginians had access to and settlements on Sicily, which sometimes overlapped. In the case of Palermo, the city was first founded by the Phoenicians, but was taken under Carthaginian control in the fifth century BCE. The extent to which this change in ownership was a cultural change for the people living there is uncertain; although in some ways the cultures may have had to adjust or been in conflict, the Carthaginians and Phoenicians are so linked in history that the

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\[98\] Ibid., 158.
change was likely only nominal. Thus modern works almost interchangeably describe these groups of ancient peoples as Phoenician, Carthaginian, and Punic, because what these designations and names mean each fall into cultural categories that are not clearly defined within history.\(^9\) The terms themselves, after all, derive from Greek and Latin terms for the Punic peoples, rather than anything they called themselves. Here I use Punic when speaking generally of Phoenicians and people of Phoenician descent, because in the broadest sense, all Carthaginians and Phoenicians are Punic, though not all Punic people are necessarily Carthaginian or Phoenician. In this chapter, I explore the roots of the Punic people on Sicily, and how they were almost entirely eradicated from the island under the Romans, caused by or causing a negative connotation for the term Punic that lasted long after the people. In particular, I focus on the site that is the modern city of Palermo because the Punic presence lasted longest there; while other sites fell out of use after the Punic people declined, Palermo remained in use as a Roman city.

Another element of Punic history on the island I attempt to explain is why the Punic language and culture lasted much longer in other locations, such as North Africa, than it did on Sicily. Though the Phoenicians had an early presence on Sicily, their language stopped being found in material culture there in the first century CE; the language was probably spoken locally for many years after that point, but its popularity was clearly in decline. One reason for this decline of the Punic language is that the Punic people were possibly more open to other cultures and languages, but I think this shift was more largely was due to Greek influence and prominence that assisted in Punic cultural erosion. Unlike in North Africa, Punic culture was considered secondary not just by a new invading force, but also by the neighboring Greeks. Punic did not have the cultural hegemony in Sicily that it did in North Africa and so once the

\(^9\) Prag, "Epigraphy by the Numbers: Latin and the Epigraphic Culture in Sicily."
Punic people lost further power after the Punic Wars, they had less incentive to continue there with cultural pressure coming from both Greeks and Romans.

The Punic language lasted beyond the fall of Punic power on Sicily; although this cannot be seen clearly within the epigraphic record, Punic was still spoken. In Apuleius’ famous mention of the island in his *Metamorphoses*, Isis says to the “trilingual Sicilians” she is known as “Ortygian Proserpina.”\(^{100}\) This reference is revealing in that, though Punic had disappeared from surviving written record by the second century CE and the time of Apuleius, he still calls on three languages for the island, with the third presumably being Punic. Apuleius chooses this term, *trilingues*, to define the Sicilians, just as the Cretans are *saggitiferi*, or arrow carriers. Sicily must have been quite famous, then, for the presence of three major languages, and its people famous for generally being able to speak them.

Cicero also shows this phenomenon in his *In Caecilium* installment of the *Verrine Orations*. Cicero describes the teaching of both Greek and Latin on the island negatively, which is also a possible indication that his opponent was not a native speaker in these languages. Cicero writes that “even if you had read the Greek of Athens, not of Lilybaeum, and if you had learned Latin at Rome, not in Sicily,” he would not necessarily have the strength or abilities still to master these languages.\(^{101}\) Cicero’s insult aside, what he shows here is that while Latin education and knowledge was subpar in Sicily generally, Greek was only so more locally, at the formerly Punic city. The narration continues with Cicero describing a possible response, with the man saying he has worked since boyhood toward learning these languages and achieving this, indicating that he may not have begun as a native speaker of either Greek or Latin, and was possibly a Punic speaker. Even in the defense of Sicily against the Romans who abused their

\(^{100}\) Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.5.

power there, Cicero speaks belittlingly of its educational system, and its people’s ability to master the “superior” languages of Roman Latin and Athenian Greek.

So though evidence remains that Punic was spoken from non-Punic sources, the extent to which the spoken language survived, or where the language was most spoken, is unclear. One possibility is that the language was used in the countryside. Unlike Greek and Latin bilingualism, which all members at all social levels of society had attained at least some level, multilingualism with Punic might have been rarer. I think this is less likely, in that the same principle for the necessity of Greek and Latin knowledge exists for Punic. The Punic people had a need to learn at least some Latin and even Greek, and those who spoke Latin and Greek primarily in Western Sicily would probably understand at least some Punic, regardless whether the language prevailed mainly in the countryside. I would also add that Punic language knowledge was necessary and must have been common in port cities that traded with North Africa. After all, Punic texts did not survive in North Africa beyond the second century CE, but people spoke the language there to at least the sixth century. Though Punic was more likely to survive longer in the home of Carthaginian power, I think the language was just as likely to survive locally due to family history and trade connections. Especially in modern Marsala, former Lilybaeum, home to the closest trade connection to Africa, Punic must have been used beyond the fall of Carthage, although also for this reason Latin may have been easier to implement, depending on the degree that Punic speakers were allowed to remain in these locations.

103 Wilson, Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 Bc-Ad 535, 317.
104 Ibid., 316.
Despite the likelihood that the Punic language survived in some capacity, their culture did not. While in North Africa the worship of Punic deities under the guise of Roman ones was fairly evident and thinly veiled, in Sicily no archaeological evidence suggests this type of continuation of Punic religious and cultural influence while under the Roman Empire.\textsuperscript{105} One of the few vestigial remains of Punic culture remained in the cult of Astarte-Aphrodite at Eryx, the “mountain” in Western Sicily, now the site of modern Erice. Though the origins of the cult may have been Elymian, after 500 years of Punic control, the worship of Aphrodite Erycina had a “distinct Punic flavor” by the time the Romans captured the site in 248 BCE.\textsuperscript{106} The Punic aspect of this temple was the rite of sacred prostitution, which was kept up into the Roman times. The site at Eryx also had a close relationship with the sanctuary of Sicca Veneria in modern Tunisia. Sacred prostitution was practiced at Sicca and other Aphrodite sanctuaries with Punic associations.

Early on the Romans claimed their power over the site at Eryx, stressing the Elymian-Trojan history of the cult. Virgil even writes that Aeneas visited the mountain at Eryx and founded the temple. Indeed, this passage is not a simple shrine foundation, but a significant moment in the \textit{Aeneid}. Following the episode of the Juno-maddened Trojan women burning their own ships, Aeneas decides to let some of his people remain in Sicily, under the charge of the Trojan Acestes. Virgil writes, “Then near the stars, on the peak of Eryx / is founded the seat for Venus of Idalia, and a priest / is added to Anchises’ tomb and the sacred grove.”\textsuperscript{107} Aeneas at Eryx is not unique to Virgil, with both Diodorus Siculus and Cicero repeating this foundation myth. What is different about the Virgilian version, however, is the characterization of the holy site as a place for Aeneas’ parents, with the altar to Venus and the tomb to Anchises in some

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., 317.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., 283.
\textsuperscript{107} Virgil, \textit{Aeneid}, 5.759-761.
sense making the place a location sacred to the history and foundation of Rome. In this context, Virgil has removed all Punic connotations that the site previously held, and indeed the cult there fell out of popularity in Augustus’ time, probably due to Augustus’ promotion of all things Roman. The temple here was restored because of an appeal made by the Segestans, who had care of the site, using the Aeneas angle. After this restoration, the temple and its related worship of Venus/Aphrodite Erycina fall out of the record, which matches up to the timeframe of loss of Punic language from the epigraphic record, reflecting the broader trend of the erosion of Punic culture.

Similarly, the Punic North Africans frequently used the worship of Hercules as a stand-in for the Punic Melquart. The evidence remaining on Sicily indicates that any worship of Hercules did not reflect any characteristics of Melquart, essentially meaning that the Punic Sicilians adopted Roman and Greek religious systems and iconography. One such Punic altar existed until the first century CE, but after that point the site became a garbage dump. This disuse further indicates the growing distance from Punic culture on Sicily by the time of Augustus.

The Punic people of Western Sicily were influenced by the Greek presence long before the Romans arrived, as evidenced by the many conflicts between the two peoples as the Greeks continued to push west, and as the Carthaginians and Greeks struggled for control of the island in the Sicilian Wars. Appian describes the hatred that some Greek towns held for the Carthaginians as so strong that they gave themselves up to the Romans without a fight during the Punic Wars. Although the Greeks had weaker roots at Punic sites like Panormus, this conflict and bias that later the Romans adopted undoubtedly had an effect on how the language lasted on the island and in the area. The Greek spoken there was not considered the best or purest form, as

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108 Wilson, *Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province*, 36 BC-AD 535, 283.
109 Ibid., 285.
110 Appian, *Roman History*, 8.3
illustrated by the previous example from Cicero—it was not on par with Athens, and a man could spend years working on his mastery of the language.

Other evidence that Greek was a widely used language in areas of Punic origin shows up among roof tile engravings. Though roof tile inscriptions are a common occurrence, one roof tile from modern Mazara, a town in southwestern Sicily near the site of former Lilybaeum, contains one such tile, inscribed in Greek.\textsuperscript{111} Though this cannot tell us about the cultural history of the inscriber, the inscription does tell us that the person making the tiles knew or was learning Greek. Though a small detail, the tile shows the presence of Greek in a place founded by the speakers of a completely different language. Greek permeated the entire island and made up an important influence on how the Roman people dealt with the island’s Punic residents.

Another example of Greek usage in this area is of a possibly purposeful grammatical mistake in Greek in the milestone Aurelius Cotta erected between Panormus and Agrigentum. This milestone is significant as the oldest milestone and one of the few milestones on the island. The milestone may date to the third century BCE and commemorates the conquering of that region during the First Punic War.\textsuperscript{112} Rather than using Cotta’s name in the inscription, “Cottas” appears, with the usage of “s” giving it more of a masculine ending, rather than one that would appear feminine in the Greek. While adding the ‘S’ could be an inscription error, I think this was more likely a purposeful maneuver by the Romans. After all, Greek was common enough among the Romans, especially the educated elite; the Romans would recognize a mistake on such an important milestone, and so I think the additional ‘S’ was purposeful, so that they would want to declare their message in the way that would reach the most people. Even Romans and Latin speakers were likely to understand “Cottas” versus “Cotta,” and so they used it to reach the

\textsuperscript{111} \textit{CIL} X no. 1072.  
\textsuperscript{112} Wilson, \textit{Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 Bc-Ad 535}, 286.
widest audience. The consul was an unmistakable figure and name in an area in which he just
conquered, catering to a people that likely spoke Greek and contributing to the diminishment of
Punic.

Evidence from the Grotta Regina, a site near Panormus where several Punic inscriptions
and artifacts were found, shows some inscriptions with possible Greek lettering among the
Punic. While some of the lettering is unclear, a more distinguished pi character does appear
among the script of the Punic language. The appearance of Greek and Punic text together shows
that the people in this area early on learned and used Greek in their own distinctive social
settings, and they probably began to learn Greek from the outset of contact. This lends support to
the idea both that the Punic people were more accepting of other cultures, considering the Greeks
did not show such use of Punic in their own writings, and especially shows how Greek
influenced and pushed out Punic before the Romans even became dominant.

And so, by the time the Romans brought their own influence and language into the region,
they brought their influence into an area that knew some Greek presence. Whether the Romans
specifically removed Punic people from Western Sicily, or just oppressed them culturally, their
influence led to Latin becoming the main language of Western Sicily, at least in written evidence.
Punic was simply not accepted or esteemed as a written language and was only been passed
down orally. Regardless, by and large the cities of Western Sicily used far more Latin in
comparison to their eastern counterparts; about 73 percent of inscriptions from Panormus are in
Latin. For Latin epigraphy to be in use on Sicily, a province that was largely not urbanized, the

114 Maria Giulia Guzzo Amadasi Gianna Coacci Polselli, and Vincenzo Tusa, Grotta Regina: Le
Iscrizione Puniche, Rapporto Della Missione Congiunta Con La Soprintendenza Alle Antichità Della
Sicilia Occidentale, vol. 2 (Rome: Consiglio Nazionale Delle Ricerche, Centro di Studio per la Civiltà
Fenicia e Punica, 1979), fig. 20.
urban elite would have had to embrace Roman culture; for the Western cities like Panormus, this was less of a problem because Greek was not at the very center of the culture there.\textsuperscript{115}

The Romans originally ruled on the island by placing a praetor in Lilybaeum until the Second Punic War, after which point they switched to Syracuse, while still placing one of two quaestors on Lilybaeum.\textsuperscript{116} From the onset, the Romans moved their power into the former centers of Punic control. They took Greek names for Punic places and for the people themselves. The term Punic, first associated with the Punic Wars with the \textit{Bellum Poenicum} by Naevius, comes from the Greek φοινική (phoenix).\textsuperscript{117} The name derives from the Punic usage of phoenix and palm imagery in their coins and other public works. What the Punic people called themselves is less clear; the original Phoenicians may have called themselves Canaanites, and in the fifth century CE St. Augustine says the North Africans called themselves the Chanani, lending support to the possibility that this name traveled with them.\textsuperscript{118}

On coinage and public epigraphy, the Carthaginians and Punic people referred to regional names or familiar symbols, rather than any cultural denotations. This meant that on coins, city names were only mentioned with the use of the phoenix or palm tree symbols; these were used at Motya and Panormus into the late fifth century BCE.\textsuperscript{119} One of the few times the Punic-used name for something used by the Romans was with Carthage itself; Solinus wrote “Carthada, quod Phoenicio ore exprimit civitatem novem,” indicating that in the Phoenician language, Carthage meant “New City.” Regardless of seemingly accepting a Punic term for the powerful city, the usage of Punic, or Poenus, itself had negative connotations in Latin that it did not have.

\textsuperscript{116} Wilson, \textit{Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province}, 36 Bc-Ad 535, 318.
\textsuperscript{117} Varvaro, \textit{Lingua E Storia in Sicilia: Dalle Guerre Puniche Alla Conquista Normanna}, 34.
\textsuperscript{118} St. Augustine, \textit{Epistualae ad Romanos} 13.
\textsuperscript{119} Prag, "Poenus Plane Est -- but Who Were the 'Punickes'?," 7.
in Greek, and that lasted even into more modern works. Livy describes Hannibal as “perfidia plus quam punica,” clearly characterizing him with that antithesis to Roman piety.  

This early negativity was likely born out of years of bitter war between the peoples. In the first century CE, Silius Italicus wrote in his *Punica* of the war as a struggle between who would establish control of the world, and says that three times the Carthaginians used “unholy” warfare and broke their promises of peace with Rome, characterizing them again in a perfidious way. While generally the Roman authors are ambiguous in their usage of Punic, just as the term has uncertain meanings today, this underlying negativity and dislike for the Punic and Carthaginian people gives an idea to the attitude that might have existed toward them. Without the self-ascription of the people surviving on the island, this attitude cannot be fully determined.

As far as survival in the epigraphy, mention of Punic history does not come up. In a few examples, instances of “natione Punicus” may have been inscribed. In two inscriptions found in the *CIL X*, the “P” in inscriptions featuring “N.P.” could refer to Punic origins. While Mommsen suggested that the inscription was “N(atione) P(onticus),” the ‘P’ could stand for the Punic ethnicity of someone. With the often negative connotations associated with this term, however, along with the fact that, most often, people were described by geographic location or origin rather than ethnicity, even this is an unlikely reference to a Punic past. Not much else appears in Latin epigraphy that would relate to a Punic history or Punic culture—not even mention of Carthaginian or Phoenician origin. Most names that appear in the epigraphy of Panormus are also Roman, reflecting the Romanization and increased Roman population of the city.

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121 Silius Italicus, *Punica* 1.1-11
122 *CIL X* no. 3495; *CIL X* no. 3524
The Punic influence on Sicily faded away almost immediately following Roman control of the island, after facing both an influx in Latin and an overwhelmingly Greek population on the rest of the island. A negative attitude toward the culture and Carthaginian presence, brought on by the Punic Wars, would have ensured that traces of Punic culture would not flourish and remain in the same way that the Greek culture remained. The Romans indeed borrowed from the Greeks, even in their views on the Punic people. The Sicilian Greeks also had fought many years against the Carthaginians, lending even more rivalry and negativity to the situation. Punic language survived longer as a spoken language than a written one, with the lack of city centers slowing a complete dispersal of Latin. And so, though Punic was relegated to the bottom of major languages on Sicily by the Imperial period, many people must have had some knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Punic in order both to communicate effectively on the island and as a result of living and interacting there.
Conclusion

The linguistic and cultural history of Sicily is complicated and contains many facets. Inscriptions can tell us what people were named and what language was inscribed on their tombstone to reveal just a piece of their language use and cultural background. With the introduction of Roman power and settlement came the more uniform introduction of Latin language; whether local people accepted this or used the language extensively is unclear, but the introduction of Latin did have the effect of further driving out Punic culture. Greek culture, meanwhile, remained strong, as part of a proud heritage for the Greek Sicilians. The increase in slavery on the island under the Romans during the time of Diodorus Siculus must have also increased the Greek speakers there, and indeed, many later freedmen were Greek, adding an additional element to Greek usage on the island. The culture on Sicily, heavily influenced and seemingly pulled in all different directions, was every changing and evolving. Even the term Sicilian is broad, in that the term encompasses long-time inhabitants of the island, regardless of if they are Greek, Punic, Roman, or one of the countless other cultures interacting on the island. Like the so-called American “melting pot,” Sicily is a place where different cultures converged to become one, while remaining themselves, too.

In looking forward for future study for this complex field, I think more attention should be given to the multifaceted nature of the island’s cultural history, particularly in epigraphic research. While looking at just one culture in the context of that culture’s history or the island’s history is tempting, doing so is less productive to understanding broader cultural life. Few studies account for the epigraphic evidence from all languages present on the island, in comparison to one another. While of course this problem is due to a lack of evidence for a substantive and
qualitative, such studies could help in this greater cultural understanding. This type of work would also be more possible if the current evidence were further organized and researched. Currently, CIL X is out of date, with most recent compendiums of inscriptions focusing on city-by-city museum collections. While works such as Kalle Korhonen’s *Le Iscrizioni del Museo Civico di Catania* or Livia Bivona’s *Iscrizione Latine Lapidarie del Museo di Palermo* are valuable resources, they contain inscriptions of uncertain or outside provenance because of the nature of a museum collection; a collection of all Sicilian inscriptions would greatly help the already difficult task of Sicilian epigraphic research. Using such a collection, a broader study could be done. I would like to focus further study on the onomastic practice of settlers of the island, particularly in freedmen and soldiers, who made up the largest portion of newcomers to Sicily. From the Roman knights and noblemen to the Greek-speaking slaves, linguistic duality permeated all levels of society, as people took pride in their cultural backgrounds and newfound Roman identity.

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124 The most comprehensive study across languages is Prag, “Epigraphy by the Numbers: Latin and Epigraphic Culture in Sicily,” which takes a qualitative approach looking at most languages on the island through the entirety of antiquity.
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