

The epigraphy and civic identity of *Saguntum*: A historical and sociolinguistic study of a bilingual city in the Roman West (2nd century BC to early 1st century AD)

La epigrafía y la identidad cívica de Sagunto. Estudio histórico y sociolingüístico de una ciudad bilingüe del Occidente romano (s. II a. C. – s. I d. C.)

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L'abundant registre epigràfic de Sagunt i els esdeveniments històrics que van tenir lloc durant la Segona Guerra Púnica fan d'aquesta ciutat un cas d'estudi únic per comprendre com els seus habitants van adoptar gradualment la llengua llatina i la cultura epigràfica romana i com van readaptar els seus propis hàbits epigràfics als nous estímuls culturals. Aquest article explora aquest complex procés lingüístic mitjançant un estudi exhaustiu del registre epigràfic i numismàtic saguntí atribuïble al període de la República tardana i a l'Alt Imperi.

PARAULES CLAU

SAGUNT, BILINGÜISME, EPIGRAFIA IBÈRICA, EPIGRAFIA LLATINA, NUMISMÀTICA, ONOMÀSTICA

The rich epigraphical record from *Saguntum* and the historical events that took place in the city during the Second Punic War make it a unique case study for understanding how the city's inhabitants gradually adopted the Latin language and Roman epigraphical culture and how that same population readapted its own indigenous epigraphical habits in light of new incoming cultural stimuli. This paper seeks to explore this larger linguistic process through an exhaustive study of *Saguntum*'s epigraphic and numismatic records dating from the Late Republic to the beginning of the Empire.

KEYWORDS

SAGUNTUM, BILINGUALISM, IBERIAN EPIGRAPHY, LATIN EPIGRAPHY, NUMISMATICS, ONOMASTICS

El abundante registro epigráfico de Sagunto y los acontecimientos históricos que ocurrieron allí durante la Segunda Guerra Púnica hacen de esta ciudad un caso de estudio único para comprender cómo sus habitantes adoptaron gradualmente la lengua latina y la cultura epigráfica romana y cómo readaptaron sus propios hábitos epigráficos a los nuevos estímulos culturales. Este artículo explora este complejo proceso lingüístico a través de un estudio exhaustivo del registro epigráfico y numismático saguntino adscribible al periodo de la República tardía y al Alto Imperio.

PALABRAS CLAVE

SAGUNTO, BILINGÜISMO, EPIGRAFÍA IBÉRICA, EPIGRAFÍA LATINA, NUMISMÁTICA, ONOMÁSTICA

James N. Adams *in memoriam*

Due to its role during the Second Punic War, ancient *Saguntum* (near modern-day Valencia) has received a good deal of attention in Greco-Roman literature, especially when compared to other important Hispanic cities. On account of the city's extraordinary collection of coinage, inscriptions, and archaeological remains, *Saguntum* has indeed become one of the best-known Hispanic cities from the late-Republican period. Furthermore, the abundance of evidence from an array of diverse sources has made it possible to reconstruct with more or less confidence the processes of the linguistic change between the second and first centuries B.C.E., through which the Saguntines abandoned the Iberian language for Latin. The details and contours of this process will be the focus of the present analysis. It is precisely this wealth of documentation (archaeological remains, literary testimony and numismatic and epigraphic evidence) that has made *Saguntum* stand out from other Hispanic settlements for which it is not possible to provide a similar reconstruction (Estarán, 2021a, provides a comparative analysis of the historic record preserved in different Hispanic communities). Unlike *Saguntum*, other important contemporary settlements from the Iberian Peninsula (e.g. *Valentia*, *Carteia*, *Palma* or *Pollentia*) cannot be the subjects of the same sort of in-depth analysis due to the fact that those sites have preserved a rather spotty record (be it epigraphic, numismatic or literary).

The present approach fits into a larger body of research that has proven quite fruitful over the last 20 years and draws upon the sociolinguistic analysis of epigraphic and archaeological data in order to better understand bi- and multilingualism in ancient societies. This type of research began with the monumental work of J. N. Adams and has been carried on by scholars, such as A. Mullen, J. Clackson and P. James, to name just a few (some fundamental references are: Kaimio, 1975; Adams, Janse and Swain (eds.), 2002; Adams, 2003; Mullen and James, 2012; Tribulato, 2012 for Sicily; Mullen, 2013 for Southern Gaul; McDonald, 2015 for Southern Italy; Clackson, 2015; Estarán, 2016 on bilingual inscriptions; Clackson *et al.*, 2020).

1. *Saguntum's* territory before Rome's arrival

The original Iberian settlement, *Arse*, and the subsequent Roman city were located on the site of contemporary Tossal del Castell (on the identification of *Arse* and *Saguntum*, see Estarán 2021*b*, with previous bibliography. For reasons of clarity in this paper we refer to the pre-Roman settlement as *Arse* and to the post-Second Punic War settlement as *Saguntum*) (fig. 1). This proved a strategic location that overlooked the valley of the Palencia River and hence provided access to inland cities (fig. 2). Besides this important waterway, *Arse* could boast established routes that connected it to other important Iberian cities, such as *Saitabi* (Játiva) and *Edeta* (Liria), which provided the name *Edetania* by which the larger region was then known.

Archaeological excavations have uncovered the presence of individuals from a range of Mediterranean cultures (Phoenicians, Greeks and also Italic peoples) who founded a string of communities along the Eastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula beginning in the seventh century B.C.E. These communities were largely geared towards commerce, which allowed for the generation of wealth and led to the rise of established commercial networks along the Iberian coast (see Fernández Nieto, 1999). We have good evidence for these budding networks thanks to the abundance of Greek and Punic pottery from *Ebusus* (from the sixth century B.C.E.) as well as Punic amphorae (from the second half of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E.). This sustained commercial activity led to the foundation of Iberian settlements along the coast that provided easy access to their respective *oppida* (see Pérez Ballester *et al.*, 2010: 17–18 and Aranegui, 2015*a*: 18-19). *Arse*, too, relied on its own port, which was found at Grau Vell (see Albelda, 2015 for a monographic paper with updated bibliography) six and a half kilometers from the Iberian town, which itself was on the site of

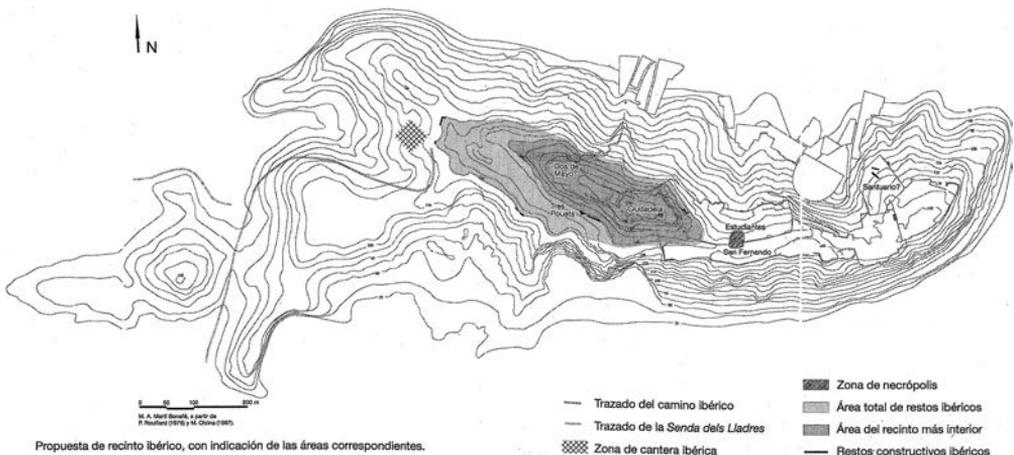


Figura 1. Iberian *Saguntum*, apud Aranegui, 2004: 97.

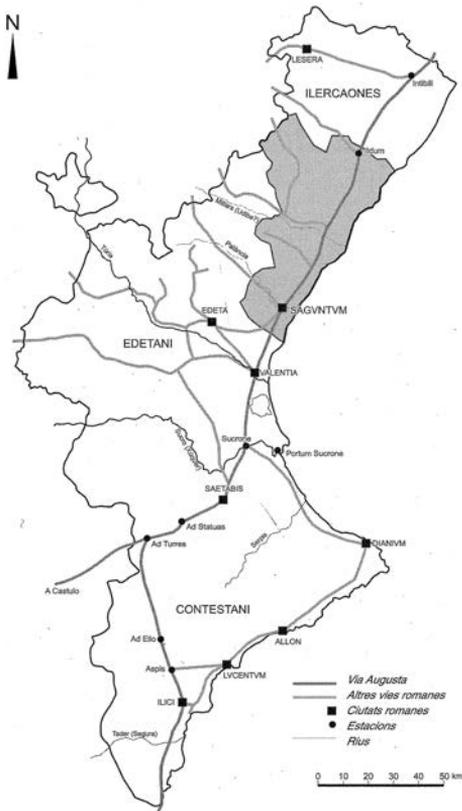


Figura 2. *Saguntum* and its territorium, *apud* Corell, 2002: 787.

modern-day El Castell. Though many have thought that the place from which the Romans set out to conquer the city was the famous—though misidentified—Temple of Aphrodite (which Polyb. III, 98, 7 placed at 40 stadia from the city), Domínguez Monedero (2011-2012: 405–406) has argued that in reality the Romans set out from the port (Grau Vell), since the distances roughly line up with Polybius and also because *emporía* tended to have sites of cultic activity. This distance does not match Livy's account, according to which the distance between *Saguntum* and the sea was one mile (Livy, *Per.* XXI.7.2. For the distance in Pliny, *three thousand steps from the sea*, see Plin. *HN*, III.20 and Corell, 2002: 9 n. 1).

However, the port and urban centre formed an integrated unit: results of excavations have ruled out the long dominant hypothesis that the site was actually a Greek trading post and have confirmed that Grau Vell was indeed an Iberian settlement, whose commercial activities can be traced back to the sixth century B.C.E., a date that has been determined thanks to the excavations carried out in Alter de Colomer (Aranegui, 2002a: 24, 2002b, 2004, 2015a: 20; see also Pérez Ballester *et al.*, 2010: 21).

Table 1. Pre-Augustan inscriptions from El Grau Vell. Apart from these inscriptions, a sealed lead ingot with was found in Trencatimons (submarine landslidings next to the Grau Vell) with the Latin text C. Vacalici. It dates from the first three decades of the 1st cent. A. D. (De Juan, Domergue 2013)

	Reference (MLH III, F.11)	Media	Language	Chronology and dating criteria (Rodríguez Ramos, 2004 and Simón, 2013)
1	Aranegui, 2004, 76-78	Lead sheet	Iberian	5th cent. BC
2	26	Grafitto on Attic pottery	Iberian	Beginnings of the 4th cent. BC (ceramic typology, palaeography).
3	Aranegui, 1982, 84, fig. 34, nº 2	Grafitto on Lamboglia 21	Iberian	4rd cent. BC

The port of *Arse* welcomed merchants from diverse cultures: besides several Iberian inscriptions found at the port (see Table 1; Aranegui, 1982: 84, fig. 34, no. 2), excavations have also turned up Punic-Ebusitan and Attic pottery. The ceramics used reflect a diminished reliance on local pottery and an increase in imports during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E. This suggests (although hypothetically, since imported welfare does not directly imply the physical presence of foreigners) a multilingual context in which Greeks, Phoenicians and even Italian merchants came together and traded with Iberians starting in the third century B.C.E. This situation would parallel that of the area surrounding Elche, where excavators have found a few *tituli picti* in Oscan painted on amphorae along the Spanish Levant (Estarán, forthcoming) as well as Phoenician *tituli picti* and graffiti found on Iberian pots (Zamora, 2012, 2013: 373–374).

Due to the port's buoyant activity, it is clear that it was an important stop on Mediterranean commercial routes, as well as the routes leading north to *Emporion* and *Massalia* (Aranegui, 2002b: 17–18) and that these routes provided sustained contact with people of Greek origin, especially in the port.

And indeed, the port's epigraphic and numismatic records provide evidence for this early and intense interaction with the Hellenic world (Aranegui, 1994, Domínguez Monedero, 2011–2012), as is seen in lead sheets used for epistolary purposes, one of which was even written in a Greco-Iberian alphabet (Fletcher and Silgo, 1991; Table 2, no. 27), as well as in the design of the city's coinage (Llorens and Ripollès, 2002). Indeed, these coins, divided in quarters or with radii, clearly betray a Massalian influence as well as some Hellenic palaeographic traits (especially with the letter *S*, which is formed with four strokes; see Velaza, 2002: 130 for a palaeographic study of the coin legends from *Saguntum*). As Aranegui (2015a: 20) puts it, "*Saguntum* betrays ... a philhellenic attitude beginning in the fourth century B.C.E., as is shown in our sources and was taken up by the local population during the city's history."

The mint at *Arse* began producing coins in the middle of the fourth century B.C.E., which means it was the first to do so in Hispania. These phenomena ought to be understood as a clear expression of the 'Hellenization' (or perhaps better 'Mediterraneanization') process that took place during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. This entailed a meaningful and fluid sharing of cultural goods across the shores of the entire *Mare Internum* (Keay,

Table 2. Republican inscriptions from *Saguntum*

Reference (MLH III, F.11)	Media	Language	Chronology and dating criteria (Rodríguez Ramos, 2004 and Simón, 2013)
1 1 = Simón, 2013, P72	Funerary stele on stone	Iberian	200–50 B.C.E. (palaeography)
2 2 = Simón, 2013, P73	Fragment of stone stele	Iberian	200–175 B.C.E. (palaeography)
3 3 = Simón, 2013, P74	Fragment of stone stele	Iberian	1st cent. B.C.E. (palaeography, cross-shaped interpunct)
4 4 = Simón, 2013, P75	Fragment of plaque	Iberian	1st cent. B.C.E. (palaeography, support, interpunct, layout)
5 5 = Simón, 2013, P76	Fragment of building element?	Iberian	200–50 B.C.E. (palaeography)
6 6 = Simón, 2013, P77	Fragment of stele or funerary monument	Iberian	200–50 B.C.E. (palaeography)
7 8 = Simón, 2013, P78 = CIL II2/14, 301	Fragment of building element (architrave?)	Iberian and Latin (bilingual)	1st cent. B.C.E. (palaeography, archaism in coerauit)
8 9 = Simón, 2013, P79	Fragment of plaque	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. B.C.E. (engraving technique)
9 10 = Simón, 2013, P80	Tombstone?	Iberian	200–175 B.C.E. (palaeography)
10 11-12 = Simón, 2013, P81	Tombstone?	Iberian	1st cent. B.C.E. (interpunct, abbreviation of the filiation)
11 13 = Simón, 2013, P82	Stele	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. B.C.E.
12 14 = Simón, 2013, P83	Tombstone?	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. B.C.E.
13 15 = Simón, 2013, P83	Tombstone?	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. B.C.E.
14 16 = Simón, 2013, P84	Tombstone?	Iberian	2nd - 1st cent. B.C.E.
15 17	Titulus pictus on kalathos	Iberian	3rd–1st cent. B.C.E. (chronology of the tituli picti on kalathoi from Liria)
16 18	Grafitto on brick	Iberian	No dating criteria available
17 19 = Simón, 2013, EP7	Stamp on loom weight	Iberian	225–50 B.C.E. (palaeography)
18 20 = Simón, 2013, EP8	Stamp on loom weight	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. B.C.E.
19 21	Grafitto on amphora fragment	Iberian	No dating criteria available
20 22	Grafitto on pottery	Iberian	No dating criteria available
21 23	Grafitto on pottery	Iberian	225–50 B.C.E. (palaeography)
22 24	Grafitto on loom weight	Iberian	No dating criteria available
23 25	Disc-shaped lead sheet	Iberian	200–175 B.C.E. (palaeography)
24 27 = Simón, 2013, P86 = CIL II2/14, 503	Stone stele	Iberian, Latin (reused; not bilingual)	1st cent. AD (Latin inscription)
25 29	Fragment of bronze sheet	Iberian	200–50 B.C.E. (palaeography)
26 31	Lead sheet	Iberian	No dating criteria available
27 Fletcher and Silgo, 1991	Lead sheet	Iberian	4th cent. B.C.E.
28 Gozalbes, 1993-1994	Lead sheet	Iberian	No dating criteria available
29 Hernández <i>et al.</i> , 1993 = Simón, 2013, P88	Fragment of building elements	Iberian	Republican (interpunct) or early 1st cent. AD (Theatre building).
30 Silgo, 1989	Dolium fragment	Iberian	No dating criteria available

2013). As Prag has observed, this process led to a clear increase in epigraphic production in the western Mediterranean that occurred independently of the language spoken in each region (Prag 2013: 323, 2018: 132).

2. The Second Punic War and Rome's settlement in the area around *Saguntum*

While 'Hellenistic' culture had the greatest influence on the epigraphic production of *Saguntum* before the Second Punic War, the end of the conflict marked a new phase in which the city's inscriptions, coins, naming practices, and urban development were influenced instead primarily by Roman practices (on the impact of the war in the topography of the city, see Aranegui, 2015*b*). This rather specific issue touches upon the much larger historiographic debate concerning the identification of the causes that led to the increasing popularity of writing practices in Mediterranean societies. In short, there are two general views on the matter: on the one hand, some scholars maintain that this was a more general tendency that had already been under way in the Mediterranean for centuries; others, however, argue that the increasing rate of epigraphic production detected in the indigenous societies ought to be seen as the result of contact with Rome (Beltrán, 1995, Beltrán and Díaz 2018, 10; Beltrán 2020). While the influence of Greek epigraphic culture in *Saguntum* is evident in an initial phase, as has been laid out in the previous section of this paper, we can also perceive changes in *Saguntum's* epigraphic and numismatic production from the time of the Second Punic War and Rome's arrival in the Iberian Peninsula that are going to be discussed in the following lines.

Things became more complex, however, when we turn to Rome's influence on Saguntine life before the war with Carthage. The 'Saguntine clause'—if such a thing really existed—would have established a close tie between Rome and *Saguntum* before the eight-month Punic siege that began in the Spring of 219 B.C.E. If such a relationship really did exist, it would naturally have not left a trace in the material record. Accordingly, the nature of Rome's influence on *Saguntum* before the war remains somewhat unclear.

The violation of the Ebro Treaty and the siege of *Saguntum* were, of course, the cause of the Second Punic War between the third century's two great superpowers. Apian (App., *Hisp.*, 7) notes that one condition of the treaty of Ebro was that the Saguntines and other Greeks in Iberia had to remain free and autonomous. Livy, *Per.* XXI,2.7 and XXI,18.9-11 mentions two conditions that Rome imposed on Carthage before renewing the treaty of the Ebro in 241 B.C.E.: according to the first, the Ebro would be the limit between the two empires; the second guaranteed the freedom of the Saguntines (this is sometimes referred to as the "Saguntine clause" in contemporary scholarship). Polybius and Cassius Dio also allude to *Saguntum's* special status, though in less detailed terms. According to Polyb.,

III,15.5, III,15.7 and III,30.1, the Saguntines had already been under the protection of Rome for many years before the war began. In fact, he claims that several years before the war Rome had acted as an arbiter in an internal dispute. Cass. Dio, XIII (cited in Zonar., VIII,21) signals that the Saguntines were under Roman protection and that the Romans ‘also took them into consideration’ (for further bibliography, see Domínguez Monedero, 2011–2012: 399. For the contradictions between the literary sources, see Sancho, 1976, Beltrán, 1984, Tsirkin, 1991, and Hernández, 2012. Jacob, 1989 collects the relevant passages about *Saguntum*). The unfortunate gap in Greco-Roman historiography for the period between the Second Punic War and the mid-first century B.C.E. prevents us from shedding more light on this contested passage.

Whatever the details may have been, we do have solid evidence for *Saguntum*’s desire to prove itself a loyal ally to Rome against Carthage beginning with the Second Punic War. The sending of ambassadors to thank Rome for liberating the city (Livy, *Per.*, XXVIII,39-1-9) as well as the capture and handing over of Carthaginian hostages to Rome (Hernández, 2011) are two examples of the growing political relationship between the two cities (in spite of which note Polybius’ description (Polyb., III,15.1-2) of the Saguntine delegation to Rome during the winter of 220-219: the envoys who asked for help before the outbreak of the Second Punic War met with little success).

Saguntum received the status of *ciuitas foederata* (in 56 B.C.E. it was a federated city, according to Cic., *Balb.* IX, 23), which granted the city a good deal of institutional and cultural independence—a fact that is key for understanding the process of Latinization explained in this paper. As time went by, *Saguntum*’s pro-Roman sentiment led to the city becoming a Latin colony in the middle of the first century B.C.E. (Ripollès and Velaza, 2002) and later obtained the distinction of being a *municipium* of Roman citizens (*CIL* II²/14 305, dated to 4/3 B.C.E., Beltrán, 1980, no. 10 and 380–386).

Saguntum’s *fides* towards Rome, which is well known thanks to Livy, *Per.*, XXVIII,39.17, has also been preserved epigraphically, as can be gleaned, for instance, from the inscription that memorializes the liberation of the city at the hands of Scipio for 200 years after the fact (Corell, 2002, no. 42-43). Furthermore, *Saguntum* was the only provincial city in the empire that could boast a college of Salian priests, a fact which likely forms another facet of the city’s attempt to construct its identity (Delgado, 2014). Such historical anecdotes appear to have become increasingly important to *Saguntum* by the end of the Republic, since they allowed the city to stress a longstanding bond with the centre. This idea of constructing the notion of Saguntine *fides* is an attractive hypothesis, according to whom the Saguntines invented a historical tradition both to strengthen their relationship with Rome and also to avoid being branded as ‘barbarians’ in the eyes of the imperial capital (Wicha, 2002-2003; Johnston, 2017: 156-159. On this myth and its relationship with the double toponym, see Santiago 1990, 1994), consisting of an aetiological myth that claimed that the city was a colony formed by Greeks from *Zacynthos* and Rutulians from *Ardea*. As Aranegui has put it, ‘the Greek factor in Saguntine society was not demographic, but rather referential’ (Aranegui, 2002b: 26).

The close relationship with Rome laid out in the literature is corroborated by the material record beginning in the second century B.C.E. The archaeological evidence from this century shows that *Saguntum* moved away from the economic orbit of Liria and opened itself up to new commercial networks (*Saguntum* was not affected by the crisis in which *Edeta* was embroiled during the middle of the second century B.C.E.; see Aranegui, 2002a: 24–26). In this same period, there was a series of urban developments, which are especially visible in the reconfiguration of El Castell (fig. 1): a newly developed area, located between Plaza de Estudiantes, Conejera, De Armas and Almenara, was added to the Iberian part of the western sector (between la Ciudadela, el Dos de Mayo and la plaza San Fernando) and followed a Roman model. This was carried out in three phases (175–150, 100–80, and 15–10 B.C.E.). In the final phase, the forum was built. Aranegui (1992, 2002a: 24–25) argues for either an enclave of foreigners or a federated city of Iberian origin that was very Romanized (for the latest research on the urbanism and archaeology of ancient *Saguntum*, see Ferrer *et al.*, 2018.).

3. *Saguntum*'s élite: diglossia or linguistic choice? A comparative study of monetary and non-monetary inscriptions

Let us now move to the analysis of the texts found in this site beginning with the first ones written in Latin: the coin legends. The types (Llorens and Ripollès, 2002: 110–111), metrology (Ripollès, 2002b: 167–171), and the inscriptions on the coinage from *Saguntum* underwent important changes in the last three centuries B.C.E. One set of changes cannot be understood independently of the others, and all of them ought to be seen in light of the city's turbulent history during this period.

3.1 Linguistic choice in coin legends

As mentioned above, before the third century the design of the city's coins followed 'Hellenistic' models, as is clearly seen in the types and the layouts of the legend. That said, from the final third of the second century B.C.E. there was a notable shift that affected the city's coin types, palaeography and choice of language. Numismatic models became Roman: the prow of a ship was the type used for *Saguntum*'s obverse (it had already been used at the end of the third century B.C.E. in bronze half and sixteenth-units and after 130 B.C.E. in unit and a half-pieces. Besides *Saguntum*, only *Carteia*, an Italian colony, used this type in Hispania, see Llorens and Ripollès, 2002: 101, 120, n. 210 and Beltrán, 2011: 31).

Despite some interruptions and with several variations, this general design endured some two and a half centuries until the reign of Tiberius (Llorens and Ripollès 2002,



Figura 3. Left: Drachma (218-130 B.C.E.) with the legend *arskitar* (Museo de Arqueología de Sagunto, Photo: M. J. Estarán). Right: bilingual unit and a half in bronze (130-72 B.C.E.) (Gabinet Numismàtic de Catalunya, n.º 15084, Photo: M. J. Estarán), both from *Saguntum*.

101–102). This type showing a warship was taken directly from Roman bronze coinage minted after 211 B.C.E. (RRC 50/3) and then enhanced with the inclusion of secondary motifs, such as winged victory or the caduceus, “perhaps to stress that the sea was an important source of income for the city” (Llorens and Ripollès, 2002: 107). We can also clearly observe changes in the legends with respect to both their content as well as their palaeography, since the letters abandoned a curved pattern (Velaza, 2002: 130) (fig. 3). As far as language choice is concerned, a topic of particular interest for the present study, we must underscore (and properly contextualize) how the Iberian language is found on the city’s coins over an extremely long period from the middle of the fourth century B.C.E. until 40 or 30 B.C.E. (see Velaza, 2002); in fact, it was the only language employed on coins until approximately 130 B.C.E. During the mint’s first two periods (mid-fourth century to 130 B.C.E.), legends comprised the toponym *Arse* and its variants with different suffixes (*arsesken*, *arseetar*, *arseetarkiterter*, *arsetar*, *arskitar* and *arse*); these early legends also contained the isolated letters *a*, *i*, *ai*, *kai* (according to Llorens and Ripollès, 2002: 87, these legends are abbreviations for personal names), *keʹ* as well as a backwards E (in cat. 63–67) which is, in reality, a die mark on the obverse and not technically part of the legend (see Witschonke, 2012 and compare the didrachmae from Naples, struck in the third quarter of the fourth century, whose obverse mark is a Greek E. These didrachmae may be one model that artisans used for the type with a bull with the face of a bearded man, see Llorens and Ripollès, 2002: 76).

It was precisely from the decade of the 130s that Latin entered the city’s numismatic record (the information that is provided in Latin on these bilingual coins is repetitive: *Saguntinu(m)* or *Sagu(ntum)*). *Arse*, the toponym written in Iberian script, was also found on these dies, and therefore the majority of unit and a half pieces from the third and fourth periods (130–40/30 B.C.E.) are bilingual. The only exceptions are found at cat. 270–271, where we only find the inscription *arse* and at cat. 272–283 which bear the inscriptions *ikorbeles balka{ka}ltuʹ* (obverse) and *arse* (reverse). Beyond these, the quarters, found at cat. 333–363, are wholly written in Iberian with the legends *aiubas* and *kai*, respectively.

In such an interesting linguistic context, the fact that the city had the two toponyms *Arse* and *Saguntum* (which were written on its coinage in the Palaeohispanic semi-syllabary and the Latin alphabet, respectively) is relevant for any endeavour to nuance our understanding of the Saguntines' linguistic behaviour. In their attempt to construct a pro-Roman identity, while firmly maintaining their Iberian identity, the Saguntines presented a Roman looking toponym (though it did not actually have a Latin origin) alongside an Iberian one (Estarán, 2021*b*).

Why did this occur at this particular time? F. Beltrán has connected these changes in Saguntine coinage to the foundation of the neighbouring *Valentia* in 138 B.C.E. (Beltrán, 2011: 31–32), which was born *ex novo* for the settlement of Roman veterans. According to Beltrán, since *Valentia*'s Roman-ness could not be called into question, *Saguntum* sought to depict itself as an ally of Rome and compete with its new neighbour in the display of pro-Roman sentiment. Though this theory of competition is speculative, the chronological coincidence of *Valentia*'s foundation and changes in *Saguntum* numismatics are noteworthy and quite possibly related to one another.

3.2 The Latinization of Saguntine Epigraphy and Adaptation of Roman models

The epigraphy from *Saguntum*, unlike the coinage, was not so rapidly affected by the Roman *linguistic* impact (for the Latin epigraphy of *Saguntum*, see Beltrán, 1980, Alföldy, 1981, Alföldy, 1995*a*, Alföldy, 1995*b*, Corell, 2002, and Velaza, 2002. For the Iberian inscriptions of *Saguntum*, see Table 2). Although the Roman influence on the epigraphic production of *Saguntum* is one of the most striking cultural changes, both in qualitative and quantitative terms, that took place after the Second Punic War, Roman influence can be perceived on the *form* of Saguntine inscriptions by the middle of the second century B.C.E. w (i.e. tools and materials, palaeography, and format, see Velaza, 2002: 126–127 for the use of stone and the palaeographic influences of the Latin alphabet). The *linguistic* influence is everything but obvious: the city's pre-Augustan inscriptions are written in Iberian with only two exceptions (Table 2, no. 7 = Estarán, 2016, I16 and Table 3, no. 12 = *ELRH* C57). This is equally the case in the urban core of the city, the port (Grau Vell, Table 1), and Montaña Frontera, which is the best-known sanctuary (Nicolau, 1998 and Civera, 2014–2015) with the greatest number of inscriptions in the city (Table 3. See *CIL* II²/14 656–86; Cebrián, 2000: 143–144, Corell, 2002: 466–493 and Simón, 2012), which provides a large sample, but lacking a precise archaeological context: «at Montaña Frontera all stones have been moved, though there have never been excavations» (Corell, 1993). Regarding datation, it must be said that many inscriptions have been discovered outside their archaeological context. Basing their analyses on formal and technical criteria, scholars have concluded that they were produced in the second and first centuries B.C.E. Besides the generic dating of the second or first century B.C.E., which has been assigned to many of the inscriptions, there are others predating these dates (see Tables).

Table 3. Republican inscriptions from Montaña Frontera (the Imperial epigraphy is compiled in Cebrián, 2000 and CIL II2/14 656-673). It is not sure whether the fragment of stone pedestal (MLH III F.11.7 = Simón, 2013, P98) was found in this sanctuary or not

Reference (MLH III, F.11)	Media	Language	Chronology and dating criteria (Rodríguez Ramos, 2004 and Simón, 2013)
1 28 = Simón, 2013, P89	Limestone pedestal	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. BC
2 30, 39 = Simón, 2013, P90	Fragments of white marble pedestal	Iberian	Beginnings of the 1st cent. AD (material)
3 Simón, 2013, P91	Limestone pedestal	Iberian, Latin (reused; not bilingual)	1st cent. BC (text in Iberian) - beginnings 1st cent. AD (text in Latin)
4 Simón, 2013, P92	Fragment of limestone pedestal	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. BC
5 Simón, 2013, P93	Fragment of limestone pedestal	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. BC
6 Simón, 2013, P94	Fragment of limestone pedestal	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. BC
7 Simón, 2013, P95	Fragment of limestone pedestal	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. BC
8 Simón, 2013, P96	Fragment of limestone pedestal	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. BC
9 Simón, 2013, P97	Fragment of limestone pedestal	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. BC
10 32	Fragment of kalathos	Iberian	2nd cent. BC (ceramic typology, palaeography).
11 33	Fragment of Iberian pottery	Iberian	2nd–1st cent. BC
12 ELRH C57 = CIL II2/14, 668	Stone block	Latin	Late 1st cent. BC (palaeography). CIL II2/14 668 and Cebrián, 2000, Fig. 109 suggest that this inscription dates to the Julio-Claudian period.

It must be underlined that this situation is quite different from that of other relevant cities from the Hispanic Levant, such as *Emporion*, *Tarraco*, and *Carthago Noua*, which had all acquired significant levels of Latin inscriptions during the Republican period (Beltrán, 2011: 33), though, unlike *Saguntum*, these were all places that received a systematic influx of Roman and Italic immigrants (Estarán, 2021a).

The media of these inscriptions were for the most part stone stelae, plaques, and construction materials meant for public display, all of which suggests that the information that was publicly displayed by the Saguntines was seen in a positive light; this feature, of course, is also notably Roman. These Iberian inscriptions, which were inspired by Roman conventions, were used in funerary and other publicly displayed contexts to represent and commemorate the individuals mentioned in the texts (several employ the Iberian formula *áfe take*, which may belong to a funerary context). Religious epigraphy is confined to Montaña Frontera, which basically consists of two types of inscriptions: on the one hand,

small stone pedestals with Iberian inscriptions; on the other, altars and *arulae* (Simón, 2012: 240 has also been able to identify fragments of at least a plaque and pedestal) inscribed in Latin (Simón, 2012, 2013, P89-P97, Civera, 2014–2015: 158–163).

The precise chronology of the Iberian texts from the sanctuary presents difficulties and the pieces cannot be dated accurately but they have all been assigned a generic (though secure) dating between the second and first centuries B.C.E., though the most precise hypotheses tend to suggest that the Iberian inscriptions date to the Late Republic (the chronological range for the archaeological materials is broader: from the fourth to the second century B.C.E., see Civera, 2014–2015: 153). Alföldy dated the Iberian inscriptions to the end of the first century or the beginning of the Imperial period based on paleography and the type of stone used (Alföldy, 1995a: 126 and Cebrián, 2000: 144). Simón, who dates the majority of the Iberian inscriptions from Montaña Frontera to the second or first century B.C.E., has proposed that one inscription (Simón, 2013, P90) was inscribed at the beginning of the first century CE, basing this date on the use of marble (Simón, 2012: 243). The dating of the Latin inscriptions falls between the Late Republic, with only one example (*ELRH C57*), and the Flavian period (Cebrián, 2000, fig. 109. On the romanization of the bronze figurines from this sanctuary, see Aranegui *et al.*, 2018).

That is to say, a pedestal in Iberian language could date to the High Empire and a Latin inscription could be Late Republican. This opens up the strong possibility that *Saguntum* did not undergo a sudden and abrupt process of Latinization (as alternative classifications of the collection would imply, see Beltrán, 2011: 33, Simón, 2012: 245), but rather that different epigraphical traditions coexisted within the city. The evidence from Montaña Frontera and, as we shall see later, the coin legends, in which some magistrates with Iberian names are interspersed with magistrates with Latin names points towards a slow and non-linear process of Latinization of *Saguntum*, which lasted until the first half of the first century A.D. Consider that inscriptions of a religious character as well as personal dedications often maintain (or maintain for longer) the local language in an environment of linguistic change (Estarán, 2019*b*).

3.3 The Names of the Mint Masters: Romans or Iberians?

Now that we have reviewed the most important information about *Saguntum's* language and epigraphy during the Republican period, let us turn back to the numismatic record in order to answer a question that can only be addressed with the contextualizing information just provided having been taken into account: why did mint masters choose to represent themselves with Roman names on the coins that they struck at a time when the city's epigraphy was not written in the Latin language? Alongside the standardized legends with the city's two names, the coins also contain the names of the magistrates in charge of the mint. What ought to be stressed here is how the onomastic and prosopo-

Table 4. Latin names in Saguntine republican coinage

<i>Q. Valeri. y M. Ae.</i>	Cat. 317	Period III (130–72 B.C.E.)
[<i>M.</i>] <i>Q. y C. S.; C. S. M. Q.</i>	Cat. 318 and 379-381	Period III (130–72 B.C.E.)
<i>L. B. M. P.</i>	Cat. 319-330	Period III (130–72 B.C.E.)
<i>M. P.</i>	Cat. 331-332	
<i>C. Ae. y P. Va.; P. V. C. A.; C. A. P. V.</i>	Cat. 364-378	Period III (130–72 B.C.E.)
<i>Q. Popil. y M. Acili.</i>	Cat. 387	Period IV (72–40/30 B.C.E.)
<i>L. Aem. y [---]ae aed. col.</i>	Cat. 388	Period IV (72–40/30 B.C.E.)
<i>M. Fabi. y M. Aemili. aed.</i>	Cat. 389-390	Period IV (72–40/30 B.C.E.)
<i>C. Baebi. Glab. y L. Calpurn. aed. c. S.</i>	Cat. 391-397	Period IV (72–40/30 B.C.E.)
<i>M. A. y M. B.</i>	Cat. 398-401	Period IV (72–40/30 B.C.E.)
<i>M. Q.</i> (on this legend, see Ripollès, 2002a: 294)	Cat. 402-404	Period IV (72–40/30 B.C.E.)
<i>Baeb. Glob. M. Pop. Ru. [aje]d. col.]</i>	Cat. 407	Period V (40/30 B.C.E. – 37 AD)
<i>L. Sempr. Vetto M. Sag. L. Fabi. Post.</i>	Cat. 408-411	Period V (40/30 B.C.E. – 37 AD)
<i>L. Semp. L. Valer. Sura lluir.</i>	Cat. 416-511	Period V (40/30 B.C.E. – 37 AD)
<i>L. Aem. Maxumo M. Baebio Sobrino aed.</i>	Cat. 512-517	Period V (40/30 B.C.E. – 37 AD)

graphical information contained in these coins reveals a discrepancy between the linguistic usage found on coins and that used in Saguntine inscriptions (Estarán, 2019a): while the language used for naming magistrates on coins is largely Latin, that used in other types of inscriptions is Iberian. Why are there so many magistrate names in Latin found in the coin legends, while the rest of the epigraphic record is Iberian? We can rule out the possibility that there were different social groups in charge of these different types of textual production: both were the domain of *Saguntum's* élite.

There are only two pairs of magistrates whose names are written in the Iberian language and writing system on coinage after c. 130 B.C.E.: *ikorbeles* and *balka{ka}ltuú* (cat. 272–283) as well as *biulakoš* and *balkaltuú* (cat. 383–86). All others give Latin names in the Latin alphabet. These Latin names are found on the same side of the coin as the Iberian toponym *arse*. As Table 4 shows (categories and series after Ripollès, 2002a; for an alternative order of coin issues, Villaronga, 1967, 2011), several mint masters from the third and fourth periods belonged to families, which were among the city's most powerful during the Imperial period, such as the *Baebii*, *Valerii*, *Aemilii*, *Calpurnii* and *Cornelii* (see Alföldy 1977 on the *Baebii*). P. P. Ripollès dates the 'Iberian' issue of *ikorbeles* and *balka{ka}ltuú* to the third period (130–72 B.C.E.). Its *terminus ante quem* can be determined thanks to the discovery of the treasure from Caudete de las Fuentes, a town which was destroyed during the Sertorian War. There, archaeologists uncovered the unit and a half pieces struck by *ikorbeles* and *balka{ka}ltuú* alongside other bilingual coins (unit and a half pieces with the legend *Saguntinu(m) – arse*, quarters with the legend *CAPV – arse*) and coins with Iberian legends from the second and

third periods (units with the legend *arse*, quarters with the legends *a*, *i*, *ai* and three dots, quarters with the legend *aiubas*, and one-eighth units with the legend *a*).

Ripollès also places the second pair, *biulakoś* and *balkaltuř*, in the fourth period (72–40/30 B.C.E.) between pairs of mint masters who are recorded with Latin names. Accordingly, he has opened up the possibility that the Latinization of Saguntine onomastics was not a completely linear process (Ripollès 2002a: 293). I concur with this understanding of the evolution of onomastic practices at *Saguntum*. Ripollès has based his proposal of ordering Saguntine coins according to stylistic criteria, which compare the coinage of *biulakoś* and *balkaltuř* with that of *Popilius* and *Acilius* (see Table 4) and the issue with the legend *L. Aem. [---]ae aed. col.* that verifies *Saguntum*'s status as a colony. Following these same criteria, Ripollès finds it difficult to date the coinage of this first pair alongside that of *ikorbeleś* and *balka{ka}ltuř*, which is securely dated to the third period, since it shares a reverse die with coinage that only has the legend *arse* (cat. 270). The coincidence between the second member of each pair of magistrates, *balka{ka}ltuř* and *balkaltuř*, could be explained by both men being members of the same family, which may have happened also in the coinage of *Castulo*, judging from the repetition of the «surname» *Iscer*. If Ripollès's classifications are correct, these two coins could not possibly refer to the same person.

Now we must turn to the mint masters with Roman names. Predictably, given *Saguntum*'s status as a federated city, there were inhabitants from *Saguntum* who belonged to the local élite and were not from Italy, unlike other contemporary Hispanic mints, such as *Carteia* and *Valentia*, where the political situation was distinct and the magistrates did come from Italy (Estarán, 2019a). Nevertheless, these individuals represent themselves with Latin names written in the Latin alphabet. The most plausible explanation for the abundance of names in Latin is that the Saguntine élite took up Roman-looking names alongside their traditional Iberian ones. Individuals would use these names in separate contexts and for different purposes. This phenomenon is not explicitly documented in any Palaeo-European epigraphical culture apart from the Etruscans, where we do find the double onomastic formulae in Latin and Etruscan: in some thirty inscriptions, the vast majority of which are epitaphs, the names clearly refer to the same individual (see Estarán, 2016: 61–63 with bibliography). In the other pre-Roman inscriptions, we can detect Latin transcriptions of indigenous names, whereas in Etruria we can see a true adaptation of traditional names to the *duo* or *tria nomina* system characteristic of Roman onomastics. As H. Rix has shown in a magisterial study (Rix, 1956), this is reflected in both the «lexical» and structural components of the names and was accomplished through the use of various linguistic resources.

The case of Saguntine magistrates with Roman names makes us think of the possibility of double names, even though we more typically find the transcription of a personal name and patronymic (both names being of local origin), followed by *filius*. The Ascoli Bronze (*CIL* I² 709) could offer support for the hypothesis that locals could use both indigenous and Roman names. The bronze shows that nearly all of the *equites* that obtained Roman

citizenship only had one indigenous name that the Roman scribe latinized, with the exception of the *equites* from *Ilerda*, that had already taken the step of acquiring Roman-style names. The fact that this document records the granting of citizenship to a *turma* demonstrates that being given or voluntarily taking up a Roman name was completely separate from these individuals new privileged status. For that reason, the magistrates from *Saguntum*, which was a *ciuitas foederata* until at least 56 B.C.E., were, if they so chose, perfectly capable of taking up a Roman-looking personal name for the sole purpose of self-representation in coin legends, possibly inspired by the *nomina* of the most influential Roman families in *Saguntum*'s area.

3.4 Bilingual *Saguntum*

The evidence points towards *Saguntum* being a bilingual community in the first century B.C.E. in which individuals chose to use one language or another based on the linguistic domain. By taking this all into account, we can revise the standard interpretation of *Saguntum*'s linguistic situation which was described by Beltrán as «diglossic» (Beltrán 2011: 34). This concept refers to situations in which two linguistic varieties (whether of the same language or different languages) are used strictly in different functions within a community, often, but not always, by the same speakers. The term is usually applied to languages or language varieties with distinct "high" and "low" statuses (for more on diglossia, see Ferguson, 1959 and Fishman, 1967 as well as the work of Gumperz. For diglossia in the Ancient world, see Adams, 2003: 399-403, 753-754).

Some scholars of linguistic contact in Antiquity have often criticized this concept and its utility, since diglossia describes a specific linguistic situation defined by functional restrictions, and we can rarely have access to the full range of domains of linguistic use through the limited epigraphic record (see Adams and Swain, 2002: 9-10). Although I believe that this term can be useful for describing many linguistic situations that could be found during the period of Latinization (especially in the Iberian Peninsula), I would maintain that in the case of *Saguntum*, the sociolinguistic picture seems to have been more complicated and fluid. Rather than relying on diglossia, we should perhaps instead use the looser term «societal bilingualism» (Mullen, 2012: 23-29. The concept deals with a situation in which two languages are found in the same community and their uses are regulated according to a range of factors that can affect the community. Fishman, 1965, 1972 calls these factors «domains»). If this societal bilingualism is unstable, it can ultimately result in linguistic change. This was the case at *Saguntum*, where Roman socio-cultural pressures led to latinization), since we cannot clearly determine that one language had a higher status, while the other was seen as being of lower status: Iberian is attested in coin legends and the epigraphic record; though Latin is only found in coin legends, it was clearly the language of power. It is important to bear in mind the different varieties and choices available, since élites constantly made decisions between Latin to represent



Figura 3. Bilingual inscription from *Saguntum* (Museo de Arqueología de Sagunto, n.º 91b, Photo: M. J. Estarán).

themselves to the broader world, and Latin and/or Iberian in internal contexts. Iberian seems to have retained prestige locally for some time, particularly, perhaps, in the religious domain, as can be gleaned from the inscriptions from the sanctuary of Montaña Frontera. The Saguntine evidence points toward a series of linguistic choices motivated by the élite's desire to present itself in a certain light to the outside world through the circulation of coins) and in a quite different light at home. Latin, then, was originally introduced at the hands of the Saguntine élite, which gave way to a process of «self-Latinization» (there is no evidence of the arrival of a Latin-speaking community in the city) and subsequently its use spread to the broader population.

The bilingual epigraph of the freedman *Isidorus* (fig. 4) (Estarán, 2016: 358-360, no. 116) provides an impressive piece of evidence for this phase of the spread of Latin along the 1st cent. BCE (for the other «bilingual» inscription from *Saguntum*, see Estarán, 2016: 374–375, no. 116, which was probably a reused piece and hence it will not be considered here). Indeed, this epigraph, despite its fragmentary state, can help illustrate the complexity of this linguistic process. It is found on a small piece of an architrave from which two consecutive fragments have been preserved. The leftmost part of the first fragment has been lost, though it is still visible in an ancient. We can see that the inscription, though currently in a sorry state, was of high quality and was meant to be displayed publicly and furthermore, it is quite possible that it was part of a monument that had been commissioned (*coeravit*) by the individual whose name is preserved.

Unfortunately, fragments of the inscription were reused for constructing the walls of domestic structures, which means that we are lacking useful details about the inscription's original context. That said, the text's palaeographic characteristics and the cutting technique which betray typically Republican features, allow us to safely date the piece to the first century (*m* is composed of four diagonal strokes, *r* with an open loop and the interpuncts take the shape of small vertical lines, border cut with a squared cross section).

Two lines of text have been conserved: the top in Latin and the bottom in Iberian (fig. 4):

[--- *M(arcus? · F)abius* [·] *M(arci) · l(ibertus) · Isidorus · coerau[it, -erunt ---]*
 [---]iur̄ · tebanen · otar [·] koroto [---]

Given the damage to the inscription and our limited knowledge of Iberian, we cannot conclusively state whether the text provides the same information in both languages or not. The first possibility appears more likely (probably with different nuances in each version, though), given the parallels in other bilingual and digraphic inscriptions from the Roman West. If J. Velaza is correct that *teban(en)* is the Iberian word for «daughter» (Velaza, 2004), then we might be missing a good deal of text since the individual named in the Latin portion is a male (*Isidorus*). None of the words separated with interpuncts in the Iberian portion can be identified with a portion of the Latin text, unless the same form (*teban*) could be used to denote a daughter and also the status of being a freedman. If more of the inscription had survived, perhaps we could have learned about the Iberian formula for expressing the idea of being a freedman, though this is speculative.

However, what I would like to underscore here is that the only known Latin inscription from *Saguntum* that can be dated to the Republican period (i.e. the Latin version of the bilingual inscription) was commissioned by a freedman; this individual was surely a foreigner, given his social status and eastern *cognomen*. Thanks to Republican epigraphy, (especially that from *Carthago Noua*), we know that freedmen were especially engaged in the commissioning of inscriptions. This can perhaps be explained by a competitive urge to represent oneself among those who were staking a claim in the promising territories that Rome was colonizing (Beltrán, 2004). This freedman foreigner (who was perhaps accompanied by other people whose names would have been preserved in the lost fragments of the inscription) had the economic resources to commission an euergetic project in *Saguntum* and to dedicate a commemorative inscription in the city (perhaps this individual enjoyed the patronage of the powerful Saguntine *Fabii* to whom Pompey had granted citizenship (Cic., *Balb.*, 51). In light of the epigraphic testimonies from *Saguntum*, the linguistic choice of this freedman (and any other possible honorands) appears quite logical: Latin was likely the language that he knew best, whereas the use of Iberian would allow his text to be read by a broader section of the Saguntine public.

To round off the complex linguistic portrait of this city and its textual remains, we have an even more attention-grabbing and singular example of such linguistic selection. I am referring to the legend from the coin issue of 29 B.C.E. which was not written in Latin or Iberian, but rather in Greek (Ripollès and Llorens, 2002, cat. 412–415): ΣΑΓ ΠΟΛ. Not only does this coin employ an unexpected language in its legend, but it also makes use of a new design (reusing previous elements like the prow and winged victory, though. It is based on the obverse of the Augustan denarii from 32–29 B.C.E., which commemorated his victory at Actium). The shoddy quality of this issue is also noteworthy (Llorens and Ripollès, 2002: 108). So why did the city mint this issue with a Greek legend? The written evidence does not suggest that there was so large a group of Greek speakers to merit the minting of coins that would only represent that particular group. Indeed, as we have seen,

the Saguntine coinage that follows a Greek model came some three centuries beforehand, just like the imported pottery and lead sheet with a Greco-Iberian inscription. Currently, Greek inscriptions that have been unearthed at *Saguntum* ((*IGEP* 251a; 251b; 251c; 251d; 251e; 252, 1; 252, 2; 253; 254; 255. Corell, 2002, no. 285 and 319. *HEp* 2003-2004, 712; *EE* 8/2, 260, 3 (Christian). For Greek inscriptions from *Saguntum* and this coin, see Velaza, 2002: 128–129) do not bear such weight or importance to argue for the existence of an influential Greek community. Accordingly, it is more probable that we have another example of symbolic linguistic choice, in which the local élite attempted to reconstruct their mythical Greek origins.

4. Conclusions

Saguntum and the surrounding area were witnesses of intense cultural interactions from at least the fourth century B.C.E. onwards, when Greek traders arrived on the eastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula. Autochthonous Iberian people were clearly receptive to these incoming influences, as can be deduced from archaeological remains and the region's oldest inscriptions and coins.

That said, *Saguntum's* bigger cultural change coincided with the Second Punic War, when the city made an effort to show itself publicly as an ally of Rome. After the war, this pro-Roman stance was accentuated as can be seen in *Saguntum's* urban planning, the opening of the port to trade with Italy and the design of the city's coinage. *Saguntum* also moved itself closer to Rome through the inclusion of Latin in its coin legends to represent one of the city's two toponyms as well as the names of many of its mint masters. As we have seen, however, it took nearly a century and a half for Latin to truly enter other parts of *Saguntum's* epigraphic record: it was not until the High Empire that Latin inscriptions were found in the city, its port, or most significant sanctuary.

Given this contrast, we see that socio-political decisions played an important role in the use of Latin in a particular context, namely its coinage, whose main function was to project a certain image of *Saguntum* to the wider world. This markedly contrasts with the texts inscribed on stone, ceramics, and metal that did not leave the city's limits and were written in the local language, Iberian.

After receiving the designation of colony (an event which is hardly memorialized in the city's epigraphic corpus, though, importantly, it is mentioned in the numismatic record) and the epigraphic explosion during the Augustan period, Latin inscriptions became a part of the Saguntine cityscape (some of these even commemorate Roman aid during the Second Punic War). Yet, the city's inhabitants continued to speak and write in Iberian until the mid-first century CE, at least when it came to religious matters, as can be seen in the inscriptions from the sanctuary of Montaña Frontera. Furthermore, there is written evidence for the continued use of Iberian personal names, as has been demonstrated.

Therefore, we can confidently say that the process of Latinization in a city that was so pro-Roman as *Saguntum* probably lasted nearly two and a half centuries, although the traditional interpretation has assumed that the process must have been much more rapid. The rootedness of the Iberian language and *Saguntum's* privileged status with Rome were two variables that perhaps explain the prolonged nature of this linguistic shift, to which a third might be added: the absence of systematic immigration from the Italian peninsula.

Even though the city was open to the Mediterranean, *Saguntum's* process of Latinization did not unfold as quickly as it did in other important urban centres that frequently welcomed immigrants from the Italian Peninsula. *Emporiae*, *Tarraco*, *Valentia* and *Carthago Noua*, in contrast, did indeed become the homes of many Latin-speaking people, as we learn from the epigraphic and archaeological record. Quite differently, *Saguntum's* population did not welcome so many immigrants, possibly because it was located a few kilometres from the port. The results of this were the flourishing of Iberian epigraphy, Latin's gradual penetration of the community's epigraphy and the élite's use of this foreign language in order to showcase the city's pro-Roman policies to the outside world, something that was not necessary in other large coastal settlements.

The unusual abundance of evidence from *Saguntum* clearly shows that we must be cautious when we tie language and identity unreflexively up together in Antiquity: *Saguntum* obviously expended much effort to depict itself as being close to Rome, first after the Ebro Treaty and then some 100 years later in the final third of the second century B.C.E. at the time that *Valentia* was founded as a colony. Only from this point onwards was Latin exploited for its symbolic potential in Saguntine coinage. We know for certain that Latin was indeed endowed with such symbolism since there are no traces of Latin in the city's other written remains, save for the bilingual inscription commissioned by an outsider.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank F. Beltrán (Universidad de Zaragoza), C. Jordán (Universidad de Zaragoza), I. Simón (Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata), N. Moncunill (Universitat de Barcelona) and B. A. Jerue (Universidad San Jorge) for their insightful comments and suggestions.

This article was written under the auspices of the contract 'Juan de la Cierva - Incorporación' (IJCI-2016-27589), the project *LatinNow. The Latinization of the Northwestern Roman Provinces: Sociolinguistics, Epigraphy and Archaeology* (University of Nottingham - University of Oxford, ERC-STG- 715626, H2020) and the contract 'Ramón y Cajal' RYC2018-024089-I (Fondo Social Europeo / Agencia Estatal de Investigación). It is framed in the project *El final de las escrituras paleohispánicas* (FFI2015-63981-C3-3-P), which is funded by MINECO.

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