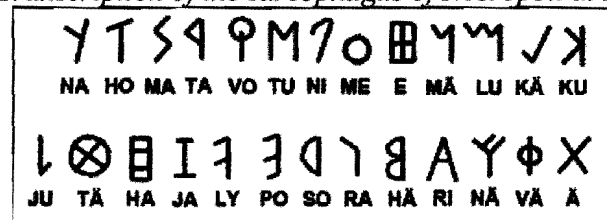


Necropolis of Banditella sarcophagus: 'In a moon you give the bones to a hill'

A sculpted stone sarcophagus from Necropoli di Banditella, at Marsiliana d'Albegna near Manciano, 50 miles south of Sienna, carries a long inscription in Etruscan, dated second quarter of the VII century (675-650 BC). It now rests in the Archaeological Museum of Florence.

The text instructs how to proceed with internment of the bones in a hill by providing benches for the people, plenty of strong wine mixed with imported herbs, and lots of singing.

Figure 1 Transcription of the sarcophagus of Necropoli di Banditella.¹



Translation

Etruscan (arranged to read left to right, punctuation added)

KU KĀ LU MĀ, E, ME.
NI TU VO TA MA, HO-NA.
Ā VĀ NĀ RI HĀ RA.
SO PO.
LY JA HA TĀ JU.

Finnish

Kuuhuen käy luut mäen, eheät, meihin.
Niin tuo voian taiat maan [vino], horneä.
Äijä väen näet rii'ää hää rahat.
Soia pois.
Lyö jauhe haahen tähän juoa.

English

In a moon, you give the bones to a hill, unbroken, favorably disposed.
Then you bring to anoint wizards of the earth [wine], lukewarm.
Many of the people you see will make do with wedding benches.
Ring out freely.
Beat imported powder into this to drink.

Italian

In una luna, si danno le ossa di una collina, ininterrotta, ben disposto.
Poi si mettono al annoint maghi della terra [vino], tiepida.
Molte delle persone che vedete farà fare con panche di nozze.
Risuonare liberamente.
Sbattere in polvere importato in questo da bere.

¹ Copy from life. Unfortunately, I did not take a photograph and cannot find one on the web.

Notes on Translation

KU < *kuuhuen* 'in a moon'

KÄ < *käy* 'you give'

LU < *luut* 'the bones'

MÄ < *mäen* 'to a hill'

E < *eheät* 'unbroken'

ME < *meihin* 'favorably disposed'

NI < *niin* 'then'

TU < *tuo* 'you bring'

VO < *voian* 'to annoint'

TA < *taiat* 'wizards', ie. strong wine

MA < *maan* 'of the earth'

HO-NA < *horneä* 'lukewarm'

Ä < *äijä* 'many'

VÄ < *väen* 'of the people'

NÄ < *näet* 'you see'

RI < *rit'ää* 'will make do', fr. *riittää*

HÄ < *häät* 'wedding'

RA < *rähit* 'benches'

SO < *soia* 'ring out'

PO < *pois* 'freely'

LY < *lyö* 'beat'

JA < *jauhe* 'powder'

HA < *haahen* 'imported'

TÄ < *tähän* 'into this'

JU < *juoa* 'to drink', fr. *juoda*, 'a drink' is
juoma

Stuart Harris, Ballycastle, Co. Antrim, June 2013, email stuhar@onlymyemail.com