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THE CELTIBERIAN VOCABLE 'KAR' IN TWO INSCRIPTIONS FROM
CENTRAL SPAIN

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In 1948 Antonio Tovar published a dolphin-shaped bronze token excavated by the Marquis of Cerralbo at Arcobriga (Monreal de Ariza, province Zaragoza).¹ The text is difficult to read because the support is a palimpsest, an earlier inscription having been scraped off. Tovar read the first line as 'IKAR ARCOBRIG.' and the second as 'GOICIANDO...CIDOSO'. The supposed Goiciando is not really visible in Tovar's photograph, and Lejeune more cautiously read 'G[...]CIDOSQ'.² In fact, the photograph allows the first two letters to be read 'CO', suggesting a personal name Co... followed by a gentilic '...cidos(i)q(um)'. There are numerous Celtiberian names beginning Co..., and gentilics in -iquum or -icum (e. g. Letondiquum, Counesicum), transliterating the Celtiberian form -ikom, are likewise well attested.³

The first line presents a different problem. Tovar restored the first word as the personal name 'Ikar(os)', paralleled by the apparently Celtic name Icarus found in parts of Gaul,⁴ perhaps cognate with the Greek homonym borne by a fabled aeronaut. Returning to the photograph, however (of which I append a transcription), it is noteworthy that the supposed 'I' is really an elongated dot, only half the height of the other letters; it could be a deliberate punctuation (cf. a dot of similar size, but horizontal rather than vertical, at the start of line 2), or a random surface flaw, or a remnant of the underlying text which was insufficiently erased. This would leave the reading 'KAR', which happens to be the standard epigraphic abbreviation of the Celtiberian word for 'friendship'. It comes from the Celtic root 'car-' (to love), cognate with Latin 'carus', as seen in Irish 'care' (friend) and Welsh 'câr' (kinsman). A fuller form is attested in the oblique case 'karuo' on the famous Luzaga tablet.⁵ 'Kar' occurs frequently in Celtiberian script on tesserae hospitales, including one found at Arcobriga,⁶ and is the nearest Celtiberian equivalent to Latin 'hospitium'. We therefore seem to have a

¹ A. Tovar, *Emerita* 16, 1948, 83–4.

² M. Lejeune, *Celtiberica*, Salamanca 1955, 104.

³ Co... names: M. L. Albertos Firmat, *La onomástica personal primitiva de Hispania Tarraconense y Bética*, Salamanca 1966, 91–98. An alphabetical index of gentilic names appears in M. C. González Rodríguez, *Las unidades organizativas indígenas del área indoeuropea de Hispania*, Vitoria / Gasteiz 1986, 138–40.

⁴ J. Whatmough, *The Dialects of Ancient Gaul*, Cambridge Mass. 1970, 214, 1279; D. E. Evans, *Gaulish Personal Names*, Oxford 1967, 352.

⁵ Tovar (above n. 1), 87.

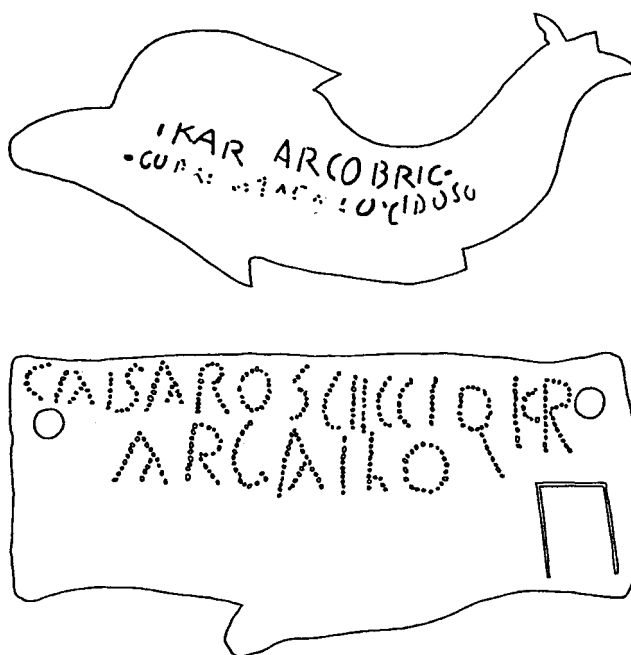
⁶ 'uentanaka kar': J. Untermann in *Studia Indogermanica et Paleohispanica in honorem A. Tovar et L. Michelena*, Salamanca 1990, 358. Untermann (365) suspected that 'kar' lurked in 'IKAR', but could not explain the gratuitous 'i'.

tessera hospitalis (as suggested also by the shape of the artifact) in Latin alphabet but Celtiberian language:⁷ 'kar Arcobriga Co[---]cidos(i)q(om)' = 'friendship (between) Arcobriga (and) Co... of the ...cidosici'.

We proceed to a second text, CIL II 5762 from Paredes de Nava (prov. Palencia). This too is a tessera hospitalis, in the shape of two clasped hands, with an inscription on the flat reverse. E. Hübner's CIL reading was 'CAISAROS CIICCIQ PR / ARCAILO', and he interpreted PR as the Latin word 'pr(inceps)'. Fidel Fita had earlier read these letters as 'ICR', which he implausibly expanded 'Icr(um)'. For his part, Lejeune preferred to read 'RR', interpreting this as a title of some sort.⁸ Fortunately, an excellent colour photograph has recently been published — though without commentary — which makes the true reading patent (see transcription).⁹ The correct solution is neither 'PR', 'ICR' nor 'RR', but 'KR'. Since this can hardly be a Latin word, we again have a tessera in Latin alphabet but Celtiberian language: 'Caisaros Cecciq(om) k(a)r Arcailo' = 'Caisaros of the Ceccici (has the) friendship of Arcailos'.¹⁰

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⁷ On other Celtiberian inscriptions in Latin alphabet, see Tovar, *Emerita* 27, 1959, 349–65. On dolphin tesserae from Italy, see CIL X 6231, 8072.12.

⁸ F. Fita, *BRAH* 13, 1888, 329; Lejeune (above n. 2), 104–5.

⁹ J. A. García Castro (ed.), *Los Celtas en la Península Ibérica* (supplement to *Revista de Arqueología*), Madrid 1991, 52.

¹⁰ On the Celtiberian genitive singular ending '-o' see J. Untermann in *Beiträge zur Indogermanistik und Keltologie* J. Pokorny ... gewidmet, Innsbruck 1967, 281–8, esp. 286.