X.X Old Italic

(draft by Michael Everson, John Jenkins, Dario de Judicibus 2000-04-21)

Old Italic 10300–1032F

The prototype for the Old Italic scripts is found on a mid-seventh century BCE tablet from Marsiliana d'Albegna, and some other early abecedaries. The most important of the languages which used an alphabet derived from this prototype is Etruscan, a non-Indo-European language spoken in Etruria, now Tuscany (< *Truscania). There are some 13,000 inscriptions in Etruscan. Oscan, Umbrian, Faliscan, and Messapic are Indo-European Italic languages which made use of the Old Italic script; North Picene is non-Indo-European an appears to be related to Etruscan. The Middle Adriatic alphabet was used for languages like the central Sabellian languages.

The unification of these alphabets into a single Old Italic script requires language-specific fonts because the glyphs most commonly used may differ somewhat depending on the language being represented. Formal use of the VARIANT SELECTOR is not thought to be useful for selection of variant glyphs at the present state of knowledge and standardization of these alphabets, but it cannot be ruled out for future specification.

Of the prototype Marsiliana alphabet (U+10300–U+10319), one character is only found in the abecedaries, not in actual language texts: U+1030E ⊞ OLD ITALIC LETTER ESH. Each of the other languages have added one to three characters to this repertoire: Etruscan and Faliscan add LETTER EF; Oscan adds LETTER EF, LETTER II, and LETTER UU; Umbrian adds LETTER EF, LETTER ERS, and LETTER CHE; North Picene adds LETTER UU; Adriatic adds LETTER II and LETTER UU; and Messapic adds LETTER TA. *(TA is not currently under ballot in 10646-2, but is attested in Haarmann 1990)*

The Old Italic script differs from the early Latin script. Fonts for early Latin should use the *upper-case* code positions U+0041–U+005A. The Alpine script, which includes the Venetic, Rhaetic, Lepontic, and Gallic alphabets, has not yet been proposed for addition to the UCS but is considered to differ enough from both Old Italic and Latin to warrant independent encoding; the Alpine script is thought to be the source for Runic, which is encoded at U+16A0–U+16FF.

Character names assigned to the Old Italic block are unattested but have been reconstructed according to the analysis made by Geoffrey Sampson. While the Greek character names (ALPHA, BETA, GAMMA, etc.) were borrowed directly from the Phoenician names (modified to Greek phonology), the Etruscans are thought to have abandoned the Greek names in favour of a phonetically-based nomenclature, where stops were pronounced with a following *-e* sound, and liquids and sibilants (which can be pronounced more or less on their own) were pronounced with a leading *e-* sound (so [k], [d] became [ke:], [de:] but [l:], [m:] became [el], [em]. It is these names which were borrowed by the Romans when they took their script from the Etruscans; evidence for this can be found in the word *elementum*, which originally meant 'letter of the alphabet'.

Etruscan is attested in two periods: the early Etruscan alphabet was used from the

seventh to the fifth centuries BCE, and the late Etruscan alphabet was used from the fourth to the first centuries BCE. Glyphs for eight of the letters differ between the two periods; additionally, late Etruscan abandoned the letters KA, KU, and EKS.

Directionality. Some very early texts are boustrophedon. Most early texts have right-to-left directionality. From the third century BCE, left-to-right texts appear, showing the influence of Latin. Most modern scholars prefer left-to-right presentation of Old Italic texts, so the Old Italic script has a default directionality of strong left-to-right in this standard. When directional overrides are used to produce right-to-left presentation, the glyphs in fonts must be mirrored from the glyphs given in the tables below.

Punctuation. Earliest inscriptions are written in *scriptio continua*, with no space between words. From the sixth century BCE words were often separated by one or two dots spaced vertically above each other. This punctuation is sometimes used to separate syllables rather than words.

Numerals. Etruscan numerals are not well-attested in the available materials. The following table shows the information we have at present.

	B1990	F1880	UCS
1	|	|	|
2	||>		
5	∧	∧	∧
10	×	×	×
12 ½	×||<		
20	××		
25	××∧		
30	×××		
50	↑	↑↓	↑
100	⍟	⊕	⍟
100 alternate	⟨		⊖
1000		୪	⏀
100 or 1000?	⊕		⊕
1000 or 10000?	⊜		⊜

The meaning of the angle next to the number two in Bonfante 1990 is unclear. The angle next to the number twelve-and-a-half could be the half sign but this is unconfirmed. The only certain Old Italic numbers we have are \|∧×↑⍟; it seems prudent not to encode the others until they are better attested. That said, the examples 2, 12, 20, 25, 30, and 100 alternate are found on Etruscan coins (Bonfante 1990).

Issues. We need to decide what to do about the numbers. We need to decide what to do about punctuation. Strictly speaking if the names are transliterations, KE and KU should be CE and QU, but if they are transcriptions ZE should be TSE. We really should get in touch with Larissa Bonfante.

Name	Mar	Et1	Et2	Osc	Umb	Fal	NPi	Adr	Mes
A	Ᏻ	Ᏻ	Λ	ᏻᏔ	Ᏻ	ᎪᏚ	Ᏻ	ᎪᎪ	ᎪᎪᏻ
BE	Ᏼ			Ᏼ	Ᏼ		Ᏼ	Ᏼ	Ᏼ
KE	Ր	⟨	⟨	⟨		⟨	⟨⟨		Ր
DE	ᗪ			ᖇ		ᗪ	ᖇ		ᗪᗪ
E	Ᏻ	Ᏻ	Ᏻ	Ᏻ	Ᏻ	Ᏻ	Ᏻ	ᏳᏳ	ᏳᏳ
VE	Ϝ	Ϝ	Ϝ	Ϲ	Ϲ			Ϝ		ϜϹ
ZE	Ɪ	Ɪ	Ɪ	Ɪ	ǂ	ꞮᏞ			Ɪ
HE	目	目	目⊘	目	⊘	▯目		▯Ⅲ	目Ⅰ
THE	⊗	⊗	⊗⊙		⊙	⊙	⊗	◇⊠	⊗O
I	Ɩ	Ɩ	Ɩ	Ɩ	Ɩ	Ɩ	Ɩ	Ɩ	Ɩ
KA	Ƙ	Ƙ		Ƙ	Ƙ	Ƙ	Ƙ	Ƙ	Ƙ
EL	∟	∟	∟	∟	∟	∟	∟	∟∨	∧
EM	ᛘ	ᛘ	ᛘᛙᚤ	ᛙ	ᛙᚤ	ᛘᛙ	ᛘ	ᛙ	ᛘᛙ
EN	ᚾ	ᚾ	ᚾᛘ	ᚾ	ᚾ	ᚾᛘ	ᚾ	ᚾ	ᚾᛘ
ESH	⊞								
O	O					O	O		O
PE	Ր	Ր	Ր	Π	Ր	Ր	Ր	Ր	Ր
SHE	ᛖ	ᛖ	ᛖᛝ		ᛖ		ᛖᛘ		
KU	Ϙ	Ϙ				Ϙ		Ϙ	Ϙ
ER	Ꮲ	Ꮲ	Ꮲᗪ	ᗪ	ᗪ	ᏢᏎ	ᗪ	Ꮲ	ᏢᏢ
ES	⟨	⟨	⟨⟨	⟨	Ꮥ⟨	⟨⟨⟨		⟨⟨	⟨⟨⟨
TE	⊤	⊤	⊤	⊤	✝	⊤	✝⊤	⊤Ɩ	⊤⊤
U	Ⴤ	Ⴤ	ᏙᏙ	�	Ⴤ	Ⴤ	Ⴤ	Ⴤ	
EKS	✕	✕				✕			✛✕
PHE	Ф	Ф	ФФ						
KHE	Ⴤ	Ⴤ	ᏙᏙ						Ꮩↂ
EF	8	ϜᏰ,8	8	8	↑				
ERS				Ꮲ					
CHE				Ь					
II				┥Ɩ·├				⋈	
UU				Ɐ			Ɐ	Ɐ	
TA									Ψ

Marsiliana	*Oscan*	*North Picene*
Early Etruscan	*Umbrian*	*Middle Adriatic*
Late Etruscan	*Faliscan*	*Messapic*

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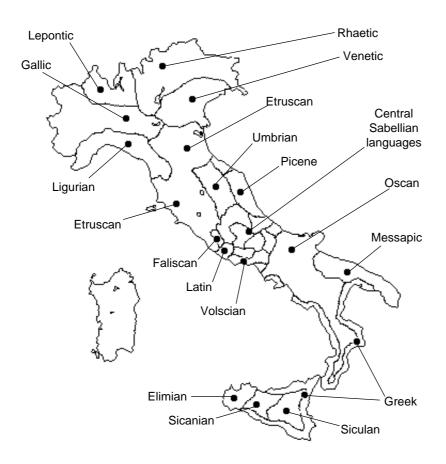
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Name	Ven	Rha	Lep	Gal
ALPINE LETTER A	ꓤꓥ	ꓤꓥ	ꓥꓤ	ꓤ
ALPINE LETTER KE	‹	‹		
ALPINE LETTER E	ꓤ	ꓤ E	ꓤ	ꓤ
ALPINE LETTER VE	ꓤ	ꓤ	ꓤ	
ALPINE LETTER ZE	‡ꓛ	⩘	‡	
ALPINE LETTER HE	ꛛ	ꛛ		
ALPINE LETTER THE	⊙		⊙	
ALPINE LETTER I	│	│	│	│
ALPINE LETTER KA	ꓘ	ꓘ	ꓘ	ꓘ
ALPINE LETTER EL	L	L	L	L
ALPINE LETTER EM	ꟿꟽ	ꟽ	ꟽ	
ALPINE LETTER EN	ꟼꓲ	ꟼ	ꟼꓲ	ꟼ
ALPINE LETTER O	◇		O	O
ALPINE LETTER PE	ꓒ	ꓒ	ꓒ	ꓒ
ALPINE LETTER SHE	ꟿ	⋈	⋈⋈	⋈
ALPINE LETTER ER	ꓒ	ꓒ	ꓒ	ꓒ
ALPINE LETTER ES	ꓢꙅ	ꓢꙅ	ꙅꓢ	ꙅꓢ
ALPINE LETTER TE	✕ꓔ	✕ꓕ	✝✕	✕
ALPINE LETTER U	ꛦ	ꛦ	ꓝꛦ	ꛦ
ALPINE LETTER PHE	⬦	⬦		
ALPINE LETTER KHE	ꛃ	ꛃ	ꛃ	
ALPINE LETTER TA		↑ꕗ		

Venetic   *Rhaetic*   *Lepontic*   *Gallic*

TABLE XX - Row 03: OLD ITALIC

	030	031	032
0	A	Γ	·
1	B	M	I
2	Γ	Q	Λ
3	D	P	X
4	E	ろ	↑
5	F	T	✳
6	I	Y	⊖
7	目	X	⓪
8	⊗	Φ	⦂
9	I	Y	⦂
A	K	8	
B	L	P	
C	Ⱶ	Ь	
D	N	⊣	
E	⊞	V	
F	O	Ψ	

G = 00
P = 01

TABLE XX - Row 03: OLD ITALIC

dec	hex	Name	dec	hex	Name
000	00	OLD ITALIC LETTER A			
001	01	OLD ITALIC LETTER BE			
002	02	OLD ITALIC LETTER KE			
003	03	OLD ITALIC LETTER DE			
004	04	OLD ITALIC LETTER E			
005	05	OLD ITALIC LETTER VE			
006	06	OLD ITALIC LETTER ZE			
007	07	OLD ITALIC LETTER HE			
008	08	OLD ITALIC LETTER THE			
009	09	OLD ITALIC LETTER I			
010	0A	OLD ITALIC LETTER KA			
011	0B	OLD ITALIC LETTER EL			
012	0C	OLD ITALIC LETTER EM			
013	0D	OLD ITALIC LETTER EN			
014	0E	OLD ITALIC LETTER ESH			
015	0F	OLD ITALIC LETTER O			
016	10	OLD ITALIC LETTER PE			
017	11	OLD ITALIC LETTER SHE			
018	12	OLD ITALIC LETTER KU			
019	13	OLD ITALIC LETTER ER			
020	14	OLD ITALIC LETTER ES			
021	15	OLD ITALIC LETTER TE			
022	16	OLD ITALIC LETTER U			
023	17	OLD ITALIC LETTER EKS			
024	18	OLD ITALIC LETTER PHE			
025	19	OLD ITALIC LETTER KHE			
026	1A	OLD ITALIC LETTER EF			
027	1B	OLD ITALIC LETTER ERS			
028	1C	OLD ITALIC LETTER CHE			
029	1D	OLD ITALIC LETTER II			
030	1E	OLD ITALIC LETTER UU			
031	1F	*OLD ITALIC LETTER TA*			
032	20	OLD ITALIC WORD SEPARATOR			
033	21	OLD ITALIC NUMERAL ONE			
034	22	OLD ITALIC NUMERAL FIVE			
035	23	OLD ITALIC NUMERAL TEN			
036	24	OLD ITALIC NUMERAL FIFTY			
037	25	OLD ITALIC NUMERAL ONE HUNDRED			
038	26	OLD ITALIC NUMERAL ALTERNATE ONE HUNDRED			
039	27	OLD ITALIC NUMERAL ONE THOUSAND			
040	28	OLD ITALIC NUMERAL ONE HUNDRED OR ONE THOUSAND			
041	29	OLD ITALIC NUMERAL ONE THOUSAND OR TEN THOUSAND			
042	2A	(This position shall not be used)			
043	2B	(This position shall not be used)			
044	2C	(This position shall not be used)			
045	2D	(This position shall not be used)			
046	2E	(This position shall not be used)			
047	2F	(This position shall not be used)			