

The text on the South Picene “Castignano Cippus” (AP 2, 6th/5th c. BC) is largely interpretable:

A **matereíh : patereíh : qolofítúr : qupíríh : arítíh : ímih : puíh**

B **púpúnum : estufk : apaiús : adstaíúh : súaís : manus : meitimúm**

Face B states that a group of people (**púpúnum ... apaiús**) have set up (**adstaíúh**) in this place (**estufk**) a monument (**meitimúm**) with their own hands (**súaís : manus**). Face A records an honorific activity (**qolofítúr**, e.g. ‘[the monument] is erected’, cf. Lat. *celsus* ‘lofty’) performed for parents (**matereíh : patereíh**, dat. sg.); it is performed well (**qupíríh** < adv. **kupraēd*, cf. Italic **kupro-* ‘good’) and with skill (**arítíh** < abl.[instr.] sg. **artid*, cf. Lat. *ars*). More controversial are **ímih** and **puíh**. The best interpretation of the latter (Adiego Lajara) takes **puíh** as an adv. corresponding to Lat. *piē* ‘devotedly’, with **ímih** one of four adverbial expressions qualifying **qolofítúr**: **qupíríh** ‘bene’, **arítíh** ‘arte’, **ímih** ‘with X’, **puíh** ‘pie’. Thus **ímih** should express an instrumental idea of the sort ‘with affection’ (vel sim.), morphologically parallel to **arítíh** and semantically close to **puíh**. Formally, **ímih** can reflect **ēmī(d)* (stem **ēmī-*), with PIE lengthened grade (thus **h₁ém-i-*, **h₂é(H)m-i-*, **h₂émH-i-*, etc.). What seems required is a root in (Italic) final **-m-* with a semantic range compatible with meanings like ‘love’, ‘affection’, ‘devotion’, etc. The obvious candidate is the root that underlies Lat. *amāre* ‘to love’.

Lat. *amāre* (cf. Marrucin. *amatens* ‘haben angenommen’) is now etymologized via **h₂emh₃-* ‘anfassen, anpacken; schwören’ (LIV s.v.), seen in Skt. *amī-* (Ved. *amīṣi* etc.) ‘id.’ and other forms; the semantic development begins from ‘grasping, clasping’, whence ‘attachment, devotion’ and ‘love’. A. Nussbaum has argued that some of the material is more compatible with a root **h₁emh₃-*; if so, *amāre* would be based on a prevocalic zero grade **h₁m₃-V-*. Application to SPi. **ímih** requires a preform **h₂émh₃-i-* (with Eichner’s Law) or *h₁émh₃-i-*. Morphological justification is readily available: cf. PIE lengthened-grade *i*-stem verbal nouns, e.g. Gk. *δῆρις* (Corinth. *Δῆρις*) ‘strife, conflict’, lit. ‘splitting’ < **dér-i-* (: **der-* ‘split’). Thus **ímih** would have begun as a verbal noun meaning ‘grasping, clasping’, whence ‘attachment, affection’, exactly as called for by the context of AP 2 (and as in Lat. *amāre*).

Independent support may be available in the *amī-* of Lat. *amicus* ‘loving, friendly’, a formation thus far without satisfactory explanation. While SPi. **ímih** would show a generalization of the acrostatic strong stem **h₂émh₃-i-* or *h₁émh₃-i-* (as in *δῆρις*), **amī* ‘with love’ would continue the instr. sg. of a “neo-proterokinetic” weak stem (**h₁m₃-éi-*). According to a well-established pattern, the instr. sg. can be adjectivized via productive thematic formants like **-no-* (cf. Ital. *-īno-*), **-to-* (cf. Ital. *-īto-*), **-ko-* (cf. Ved. *-ika-*, Slav. *-ikŭ* and *amicus*) or **-uo-* (cf. Slav. *-ivŭ*, and in particular Ved. *ámivā-* ‘pain, distress, illness’ < **‘that which grasps’ ~ amīcus*). The obstacle posed by spellings like *amec-/AMEC-/AMEIC-* is shown to be only apparent, and a similar analysis can be proposed for Lat. *mēdicus* ‘beggarly’.