

Les Anciennes Tombes Basques à Placentia

I have read with deep interest the study of these tombstones on pages 734-748 of the *Revue Internationale des Études Basques*, 1908, more especially as I wrote about them in *Notes and Queries* some time ago in hopes of obtaining a valuable addition to the supplement which I have been preparing for my collection of Baskish Inscriptions, published by the Royal Academy of History, at Madrid, in 1896. I owed my information about them to M. F. Saubot-Damborgéz, of Biarritz. From the experience gained in copying these inscriptions I know how commonly they contain gross orthographical and grammatical blunders; and it seems to me that on p. 736 one may read: «Gannis de Sale ceñ çan Ausannoneneco semea», i. e. «Jean de Sale who was the son of (the house called) Ausannonene». Çan is of course a bit of Guipuscoan, but so also is the name of Placentia. The omission or obliteration of the tilde representing the *n* of *cein* would not be surprising. If the surname of this Gannis was «de Salece», then çana might be the equivalent of «feu» in the sense of «the late» in English. This would also be Guipuscoan. The words «cena» or «içan cena» are common in this sense in the epitaphs of French Baskland. Then «Usannonenco» would be the name of his residence in the locative-possessive case. «Usann» is quite possible for *usañ* = *usain* = *odour*, in the sense of *reputation*, as in the phrase «in the odour of sanctity», just as *año* in Castilian was formerly *anno*. I do not know if *ausann* could possibly mean *vecindad*, *neighborhood*. If it did, the expression might mean «the son of *this district*». One finds «auzo» for *vecindad*; but «auza lana» in the sense of «trabajo comun de vecinos». Yet another interpretation seems possible; namely «Gannis de Sales (with ç for *s*, and a Baskish pronunciation of the name in two syllables) *eçana*» = *depositus*, i. e. *entombed*,

I am not sure if anysimilar use of *etzana* is to be found in the epitaphs of Baskland. The inscription on page 735 appears to be the conclusion of that on p. 736.

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Biblioteca Provincial, Bilbao, 10 February 1909.

