

## The Position of Etruscan

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### 1. The position of Etruscan

The question of the relation of Etruscan to other languages, and notably to the Indo-European family, remains of interest to scholars and non-scholars. Recent discussions are not quite satisfactory to my mind.

The most recent attempt I know of is A. Morandi's series of articles (1984-5), where he argues for an Indo-European connection. He gives a large number of Indo-European etymologies, mostly Greek words. Mostly, however, these etymologies are far-fetched. It seems that he looked in Pokorny's dictionary to find a form resembling an Etruscan word, and then tried to find a semantic connection. Thus the root Etr. *sval-*, which may have meant 'to live', is compared with Gr. ἥλιξ 'somebody of one's age' (I 9). This example is typical: it cannot, of course, be absolutely excluded that the two words are cognate, but it is far from convincing and cannot be used to build upon. (If the Greek word contains \**sue* 'self, own', so that the meaning 'to live' is not expressed by *su-*, this particular etymology would be impossible, but this is irrelevant to the present argument.) I give three words discussed one after the other (I 12). *lankhumite*, which occurs in a strongly damaged text and of which the meaning is unknown, is connected with λαγχάνω, as the text may have to do with an oracle. *methlum* 'people, nation' or something like that, would be cognate with μῆδομαι, Lat. *mēditārī*, which is of course quite in the air. With *mutana* 'sarcophagus' he compares μυδᾶω 'be humid, damaged by humidity', and goes on to explain the semantics. The most peculiar etymology is the following: *sanisva* is mostly thought to mean '(fore)father' or 'deceased'; Morandi thinks it means 'in peace, blessed' and then connects it with σαίνω 'wag the tail'. The attempt is one of the worst instances of the "etymological method". It is sad that a reputed archaeologist such as Morandi does not understand that this leads nowhere. The aim of the following is to look at the arguments about the relation of Etruscan, and notably the arguments regarding an Indo-European origin, and to comment upon them from the point of view of an Indo-Europeanist. This would seem an appropriate tribute to Helmut Rix, who is both a distinguished Indo-Europeanist and a leading scholar in the study of Etruscan.

## 2. Raetian and Lemnian

It is generally agreed that Etruscan shows affinities with Raetian and Lemnian. About Raetian I will be short. We have only a few dozens of inscriptions (found between Verona and Innsbruck; see e.g. Pisani 1964, 317- 327). The language has no *-o-* and there are no voiced stops. Voiceless stops do interchange with aspirated stops (*tinaʒe/binake/-ʒe*). There is a dative ending *-ale*, and a verbal ending *-ke/ʒe*. We find a verb *muluainice* (Etr. *muluanice* 'he has given'). Enclitic *-k* means 'and'.

How these affinities are to be explained is in dispute, but the view that Raetian proves that the Etruscans came from the North has been generally rejected.

The Lemnian inscription, found in 1884, was immediately recognised as containing a language closely related to Etruscan. What we understand of the text depends almost completely on Etruscan.<sup>1</sup>

The phonological system is parallel to that of Etruscan:

Lemnian	Etruscan
<i>p</i> <i>φ</i>	<i>p</i> <i>φ</i> <i>f</i>
<i>t</i> <i>ð</i> <i>s</i> <i>ś</i>	<i>t</i> <i>ð</i> <i>s</i> <i>ś</i> <i>z</i>
<i>k</i> <i>χ</i> <i>h</i>	<i>k</i> <i>χ</i> <i>h</i>
<i>r</i> <i>l</i> <i>m</i> <i>n</i> <i>ĩ</i> <i>u</i>	<i>r</i> <i>l</i> <i>m</i> <i>n</i> <i>ĩ</i> <i>u</i>
<i>i</i> <i>o</i> <i>e</i> <i>a</i>	<i>i</i> <i>u</i> <i>e</i> <i>a</i> <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For this reason L. Aigner Foresti 1974 considers the conclusion to be a circular reasoning. That seems very sharp-witted, but is not correct. The agreements are for the most part objectively perceivable. There is no specialist, as far as I know, who doubts the linguistic conclusions on the Lemnian inscription. It is essential, I think, that Mrs. Aigner Foresti is not a linguist. Also regarding the origin of the Etruscans she judges on the basis of theoretical considerations, whereby she loses sight of reality.

<sup>2</sup> Rix's presentation (1984) is certainly the best treatment of Etruscan, but I do not follow his interpretation of the phonological system. His system may be rewritten more clearly as follows (in brackets the Etruscan letters):

<i>p</i>	<i>p'</i> ( <i>φ</i> )	<i>f</i>	<i>χ</i> <sup>v</sup>
<i>t</i>	<i>t'</i> ( <i>ð</i> )	<i>s</i>	? <i>p</i> ( <i>ð</i> )
<i>k</i>	<i>t</i> <sup>s</sup> ( <i>z</i> )	<i>χ</i>	<i>ś</i>

Here the sounds are grouped in a strange way. They should rather be grouped as follows (to the right the traditional system, which I follow):

<i>p</i>	<i>p'</i> ( <i>φ</i> )	<i>f</i>		<i>p</i>	<i>p</i> <sup>h</sup> ( <i>φ</i> )	<i>f</i>
<i>t</i>	<i>t'</i> ( <i>ð</i> )	? <i>p</i> ( <i>ð</i> )	<i>s</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>t</i> <sup>h</sup> ( <i>ð</i> )	<i>s</i>
<i>t</i> <sup>s</sup> ( <i>z</i> )	-	-	<i>ś</i>	<i>z</i>	-	<i>ś</i>
<i>k</i>	-	<i>χ</i>		<i>k</i>	<i>k</i> <sup>h</sup> ( <i>χ</i> )	( <i>h</i> )
-	-	<i>χ</i> <sup>v</sup>				

As regards morphology (and the lexicon) there are two 'formulae'. *sialχveis̑ avis̑ ... šivai* and *šivai avis̑ sialχvis̑*, which show a striking resemblance to Etr. *avils ... sealχls* 'sixty years' and *zivas* (probably) 'having lived'. The agreement is so striking that this alone *proves* that the two languages are cognate.

The other formula is *holaiesȋ pokiasiale*, which may be compared, as regards the endings, with Etr. *larθiale hulχniesi*. Rix (1968) compared the Lemnian formula *holaiesȋ pokiasiale šeronaiθ* with Etr. *zilci velus(i) hulχniesi*, and translated 'when Holaie from Phoke was seronai'. This implies that Lemnian, like Etruscan, had 'double case endings': a genitive in *-š* or *-l(a)* followed by a locative ending *-i*.

There can be no doubt that Etruscan and Lemnian developed from one language, which one might call Proto-Tyrrhenian. This is essential for the problem of the origin of the Etruscans, to which we may devote the next section.

### 3. The origin of the Etruscans

There are, or were, three or four theories about the origin of the Etruscans: 1. they arrived from the East (Herodotus 1.94: from Lydia); 2. they were autochthonous; 3. they came from the North; 4. Pallottino's 'formation-process'.

There are more sources than Herodotus for an eastern origin of the Etruscans. Some scholars point out that these stories are not identical, and therefore contradict each other, and are therefore unreliable. To my mind these stories rather prove that there was a widespread tradition that the Etruscans came from the East, so that the other stories do not contradict Herodotus but rather are independent confirmation of it (though the details may be different). Now Herodotus' tradition is strikingly confirmed by the presence of a language closely cognate to Etruscan on Lemnos, a fact of which Herodotus was unaware. The only thing that could be even nicer would be to find an inscription in Lydia saying: "From here, on the 1st of April 969 BC the Tyrsenoi left for the land that would later be called Etruria after them." The hesitation of some scholars is ununderstandable to me (e.g. De Simone 1972, 496: "è però oggi per lo meno prematuro trarre conseguenze storiche"). The alternative, viz. that the Lemnians came from the West (cf. Pallottino 1978, 458), is most improbable. It is hardly imaginable that people coming from the fertile and prosperous land of Etruria would have settled in a barren, out-of-the-way corner like Lemnos. I consider it ununderstandable that the impression still exists that the origin of the Etruscans is a problem.

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This is a strange, and therefore improbable, system. The existence of a single labio-velar phoneme is improbable. *š* would be palatal, but this does not appear from its position in the system. The fact that *χ* would designate a quite different sound from *φ* and *θ* is improbable. That *φ* etc. would be palatal seems improbable to me. The evidence is very meagre. Also Lemnian has these letters, for which an interpretation as aspirates (as in Greek) is evident.

The idea that the Etruscans were autochthonous is generally abandoned. The idea goes back to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I 26 - 30), but he does not present it as an old tradition but as his own view, for which he gives arguments which are not valid. - I may add that Tuscany is not a withdrawal area, to which people withdrew when the country was invaded (like the mountains where the Arcadians survived, or the Basques or the Caucasian peoples). Rather it is a desirable country, easily accessible to colonists. Also we know for certain that the country was inhabited by the Umbrians, who were thrown back by the Etruscans. (Umbria is much more of a withdrawal area.)<sup>3</sup>

That the Etruscans came from the North is a recent theory, based on the agreements with Raetian. It finds no adherents any more.

Since 1947 Pallottino propagates his theory of the "processo formativo". Not so much the question of their origin would be of interest, as the way in which Etruscan culture developed. He stresses that this was a long and complicated process, in which autochthonous, Indo-European and perhaps eastern components formed into a unity. It is clear that this is no answer to the question whether there was an eastern component or not. I have the impression that Pallottino wants to minimize the eastern component, and to stress the autochthonous, Italian, and Indo-European elements. As regards the language, however, it is clear that it simply came from the East (of course it will have been influenced by other languages in Italy). And as the Etruscans are described as typically un-Italian<sup>4</sup>, it is more probable that their distinctive culture was largely determined by the newcomers. The eastern theory, of course, never wanted to exclude that there was influence from the people living in Italy. - Thus, I think that Pallottino's view is superfluous inasmuch as it contends the same as the eastern theory, and wrong inasmuch as it says anything different. The idea should be given up, as it creates only uncertainties. (See also the next section on language.)

What remains to be determined is the date of the arrival. Rix<sup>5</sup> accepts the idea that the Tur(u)ša, mentioned by the Egyptians among the Sea peoples in about 1230, are the Tyrsenoi. I agree with this; it is simply too much of a coincidence. Rix then assumes that they arrived in Italy at that time. That seems very early to me, for two reasons. One is that we would expect more dialectal differences in that case (Rix is aware of the problem). Secondly, at that time, the beginning of the Proto-Villanova-culture, the Indo-Europeans probably entered Italy; and they must have been there before the arrival of the Etruscans, as these pushed the Umbrians back. So I would

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<sup>3</sup> Except for the statement in Herodotus that they landed in the country of the Umbrians, there is the river Umbro (now Ombrone) which runs through the whole of Etruria into the sea. It has been pointed out that the name of the river may be pre-Indo-European, but that would not invalidate the argument: the Umbrians were called after the river (and the surrounding country), so they must have lived there, i.e. in the centre of Tuscany.

<sup>4</sup> Dionysius of Halicarnassus I 30 calls them οὔτε ὁμόγλωσσον οὔτε ὁμοδαίον: they not only have a different language, but also a different way of life.

<sup>5</sup> Rix in a lecture in Padua, of which he kindly gave me the text.

rather think of a date around 1000 BC (not coinciding with a major archaeological break).

Not much can be said about the more exact location of the homeland. One might think of Thrace, because of Lemnian, but Asia Minor is more probable because of the tradition. It may have been the North-West of Asia Minor, the country around Troy ...

#### 4. Pallottino on language

The question of the position of Etruscan is of course discussed in the major handbook of etruscology, Pallottino's *'Etruscologia'* (1984, 496-505). (The treatment is almost identical to that of the 1978 edition, which was somewhat longer.) I here discuss three points where I differ from Pallottino's views.

First, Pallottino says that we must not think of Etruscan as imported "en bloc" (1984, 108) as a foreign language, as was the Phoenician of Carthage (1978, 460). I think that we must, and that the comparison with Carthaginian is most apt. The only difference is that in the latter case we know exactly from where these people came, so that nobody is surprised: it is simply an established fact, but in the case of Etruscan many seem to find it difficult to think of the language as imported from the East. Pallottino stresses that Etruscan is the result of "un lungo e complicato processo costitutivo", a view which we also met in the previous section. The Lemnian inscription, however, proves that Etruscan came from the East, and also that Etruscan did not change very much. The Etruscans came to Italy with their language, not with part of their language, or elements from their language, but simply speaking their own language. *This* is the language which we have. It is the only possibility.

Of course, the language changed in the course of time, and it will have been influenced by other languages, but this holds true for all languages. There is no indication that this was more specifically true of Etruscan. Pallottino's statement that there were "massicce acquisizioni di elementi di substrati e di adstrati" (1984, 503) has no basis. Lemnian - the only evidence we have - rather points to the opposite: Etruscan remained very much as it was (in the East). Pallottino himself points out that during the six centuries we know Etruscan it remained largely the same (1984, 504: "il sistema originario restò fissato sostanzialmente per tutta la durata della civiltà etrusca").

The second point concerns the influence of the (Indo-European) Italic languages. Pallottino speaks of "molteplice e profonde interferenze, fonologiche, morfologiche, lessicali ed onomastiche" (1984, 503). He mentions: 1. the presence of an *f*; 2. the initial expiratory accent; 3. "l'analogo regime dei dittonghi"; 4. the suffix *-a-* for the feminine; 5. the adjective suffix *-ie*; 6. syntactic constructions and "abiti stilistiche nell'ordine delle parole"; 7. loanwords. Point 1. could be correct, but it cannot be demonstrated. (The Lemnian inscription shows no *f*, but this could be accidental.) 2. It is not at all clear that the initial accent was taken from the Italic languages. 3. I know of nothing remarkable about the diphthongs that must be due to foreign

influence. 4. The suffix *-a-* is used only in proper names, which are marginal to the language system. 5. This is uncertain. About 6. little or nothing is known, and 7. is nothing remarkable. This means that, except for the lexicon and onomastics, there was perhaps a certain phonetic influence, but hardly any on the morphology. I conclude that there was some influence, which is only to be expected, but that it was rather marginal.

The third point regards Pallottino's attitude to the question whether Etruscan was of Indo-European origin: we must abandon the simplistic alternative ("il semplicismo") of Indo-European versus non-Indo-European (1984, 502); we must on the contrary think of "un lungo e complicato processo costitutivo". (Thus also Pfister 1982, 270.) I think we must not. Of course it is legitimate for a scholar to be not interested in the Indo-European question, or to find it unfruitful. But what we cannot do is deny the problem. (We recognize the same attitude as in the question of the origins: there, too, Pallottino tended to deny the question and to concentrate on other aspects.) A language is Indo-European or it is not; that is a clear notion. Once the question has been posed, it can only be answered by yes or no. Indo-European is a historical notion, so what happened in the course of time does not matter: a language is *in origin* Indo-European or not. Pallottino is not the only one who thinks in this way. Thus Cristofani (1973, 97) writes: "il risultato ... di questo processo, cioè l'etrusco epigraficamente documentato, non è che la stratificazione di fenomeni avvenuti in un lungo lasso di tempo la cui dinamica oggi sfugge." Pallottino's view, again, tends to make things unclear.

To my mind the situation is quite clear. Etruscan arrived from the Aegean area (where it had been influenced by other languages); in Italy it remained as it was and was even taken over by speakers of other languages (and was influenced to some extent by their languages); and it changed in the course of time, but remained very stable as far as we can see.

### 5. An Anatolian language?

Given the eastern origin it is evident to look at the languages of Asia Minor. We know mostly Indo-European languages there. (It must be realized that, when Etruscan studies began (in 1875; Pfister 1982), most of these languages were unknown. And when they became known, it took some time before it was recognized that they were Indo-European. For Carian this has only become clear in recent years. Except Phrygian and Armenian, which are not relevant here, all languages belong to the Anatolian family. This family comprises Hittite, Palaic (in the North), Lydian, and the Luwian languages, viz. cuneiform Luwian, hieroglyphic Luwian and Lycian.

Is Etruscan identical with one of these languages? It has never been maintained that Etruscan is identical with one of the more westerly languages, Lydian and Lycian. It is all the more surprising that Georgiev (since 1957) maintained that Etruscan is a form of Hittite. The theory is not taken seriously by anybody. Thus, De Simone says (1972, 495): "Non può rappresentare per me oggetto di serio discussione .." I do not

understand Pfister when he says (1982, 271): "Die Diskussion über das Etruskische und Kleinasien wird derzeit von der These Vladimir Georgievs beherrscht,..", but adds that he operated with "bodenlose Willkür". I agree with De Simone.

Another matter is the question whether Etruscan was an independent language belonging to the Anatolian group. (The Anatolian languages show marked differences. The genetic relationship of Hittite, Lydian and Lycian is not easily seen.) Rix<sup>5</sup> says that it is hard to show that this cannot be true. "Come farlo?"

I think that it is possible to do just this. We must, of course, look at the few things we know about Etruscan. 'I' and 'me' is Etr. *mi*, *mini*. Hittite has *uk*, *ammuk*, the other languages have *amu* (Lyc. also *emu*, *ēmu*) for both. The Proto-Anatolian form was *\*amu* (for the accusative; PIE *\*h<sub>1</sub>me* > *\*ame*, with *-u* from the second person; Beekes 1987). All Anatolian languages, then, retained both the *a-* and the *-u*. (It is important to realise that Etruscan is older than Lydian and Lycian.)

Etruscan has two demonstrative pronouns, *ta* and *ca*. The latter looks like an Anatolian form, Hittite *kās*, but the PIE pronoun *\*to-* is not found in Anatolian. This seeming agreement is therefore in fact a strong argument against an Anatolian origin.

The plural in Etruscan is formed with an *-r-*. Anatolian has, in the nominative, *-es* or forms with *-nz*.

The locative suffix *-di* (which Cristofani 1973, 98 considers one of the three elements that might point to an Indo-European origin) is not found precisely in Anatolian.

The Etruscan form 3rd sg. act. *-ce*, 3rd sg. pass. *-xe* have no parallel in Anatolian.

I think that we may conclude that the combined evidence of these considerations proves that Etruscan was not an Anatolian language.

## 6. An Indo-European language?

The next question is whether Etruscan is an independent Indo-European language, not belonging to one of the known language groups like Indo-Iranian, Balto-Slavic etc. Of course, possibilities are much more numerous now than in the case when we were considering whether it was an Anatolian language.

The question is an old point of debate. The study of Etruscan begins with a tragedy on this point. When W. Corssen in 1874 had published the first part of *Die Sprache der Etrusker*, in which he argued that Etruscan was an Italic language, a review by Deecke appeared, which refuted his thesis. Corssen then committed suicide (Pfister 1982, 265).

Several elements have been connected with Indo-European. Pallottino (1984, 497) gives a list, as does Durante (1968), whose article is very useful; I used it as a basis for the following remarks. His conclusion is that they were "mondi indipendenti, ma non del tutto eterogenei" on p. 17, and almost similar on p. 9. So he must have chosen this formula with care. I must say that I do not know what it means: a "no, but also yes"

requires an explanation, which is not given. It indicates that, like other scholars, he does not exclude an Indo-European origin.

In these lists the following points of agreement are mentioned: 1. acc. *-n*; 2. gen. *-s*; 3. gen. *-(a)l*; 4. dat.-loc. *-i*; 5. loc. suffix *-dhi*; 6. plur. *-r-*; 7. pron. plur. *-i*; 8. *mi* 'I'; 9. pron. *ta* and *ca*; 10. 3rd sg. pret. *-ce*; 11. *-c* 'and'; 12. *-m* 'and, but'; 13. lexical elements (*etnam, ðezi, vac(a)l, lautn, tin, tur, puia, neftś, tmia, mur-*).

We shall briefly comment on these points. (A survey of the evaluation is given below.)

1. PIE had *-m*. Etruscan has *-n* only in the pronouns, not with the nouns; it may have been lost there. But *-n* is also found in Hurrian.

2. As Durante seems to indicate (10 and 12), Etr. *-s* probably goes back to *\*-si*; thus Rix 1984, 226. PIE had *-os*, *-osio* and *-so*. The comparison, then, is problematical.

3. A genitive in *-l* is found only in Anatolian, and we have seen that Etruscan was not an Anatolian language. One also compares Lat. *tālis*, but this has a suffix *-li-*, whereas Etruscan had *\*-la*, as appears from the locative (of the genitive) *-le* < *\*-la-i* (Rix 1984, 227).

4. The Etruscan dative in *-i* was probably a locative. PIE also had a locative ending *-i*. Durante remarks that Basque and North Caucasian also have this ending.

5. The locative suffix *-di*. Durante remarks that PIE did not have an ending *-dhi*. This is correct, but Rix (1984, 224) has shown that the Etruscan form also was not an ending, but a postposition.

6. For the Etruscan plural *-r-* Durante refers to IE collectives with *-r-*, such as Slav. *četvero* 'a group of four'. These forms must be old, as they are found in Tocharian, Slavic, Germanic, Italic, and Old Irish. It is clear that these forms were derived from the word for 'four'. However, it is improbable that from this form an *r*-suffix would have developed as the general plural ending. In the languages we know it occurs only with numerals. (Only in Slavic there is a minimal extension, Russ. *detvora* 'group of children'; see Otrębski, *Die Sprache* 10, 1964, 130-133.)

7. Indo-European had a pronominal plural ending *-i* (in *-oi*), but for Etruscan this is not certain (Rix 1984, 230).

8. Etr. *mi* 'I' might go back to PIE acc. *\*h<sub>1</sub>me*. (The PIE nominative was *\*h<sub>1</sub>eĝ*.) The acc. *mini* is compared with the PIE genitive *\*h<sub>1</sub>mene*, a comparison of which I do not understand the logic.

9. The comparison of *ta* and *ca* with PIE *\*to-* and *\*ko-* cannot be upheld, because the oldest forms were Etr. *ita-*, *ika-*. Durante suggests that the Etruscan forms are analysable as *i-ta* etc. (cf. also *iśa*), and compares the *i-* with PIE *e-* (i.e. *\*h<sub>1</sub>e-*), as in Gr. (ἐ)κεῖνος. This would imply that *e-* had become *i-*.

10. The comparison of the verbal ending *-ce* with Gr. *-ke* and Anat. *\*-ha* cannot be maintained. The Greek *-k-* is a Greek innovation, Anat. *\*-h-* continues a PIE laryngeal (probably pharyngeal). But the Anatolian ending is a 1st sg. ending, the



Etruscan 3rd sg. (It has been assumed that Etruscan had only one ending for all persons, but this is not certain. In any case it is improbable that the 1st sg. became the general ending.)

11. *-c* has, of course, been compared with PIE *\*k<sup>we</sup>*, Lat. *-que*. It might have been borrowed, either in Italy or in Asia Minor, but the resemblance is rather fortuitous.

12. *-m* recalls Lyd. *-m*, Hitt. *-ma*, but also Hurrian *-ma*.

13. Lexical agreements. I shall very briefly comment on the words mentioned by Pallottino and Durante as possibly Indo-European. *etnam* 'also' resembles Lat. *etiam*, which contains *et* 'and' < *\*eti*. This comparison is very popular. To my mind it has little value: this is typically an agreement that could be due to chance. - *ðezi* 'to do', IE *\*dhē-* 'to lay, put down' can very well be an accidental resemblance. - *vac(a)l*, a religious act, IE *\*wak-/wek-*: unknown to me. - *lautn* 'family', IE *\*h<sub>1</sub>leudh-*, a.o. in Germ. *Leute*. Very unreliable. There is no evidence for a development *eu* > *au*. - *tin* 'day' has been compared with IE *\*d(e)in-* idem. This is in itself quite possible. - *tur-* 'to give' belongs to *turuce* 'he gave', so the root was probably *tur-*, whereas Gr. *δῶρον* belongs to the root *\*dō-*. - *puia* 'wife' is often connected with Gr. *ὀρνίω*, but this word is usually considered a substratum word. - *neftś* 'grandson' is mostly considered a loan, especially because of *prumaðs* 'great-grandson'<sup>6</sup>. - The comparison of *tmia* 'holy place' with Lat. *templum* and Gr. *τέμενος* seems to me no more than a bold guess. - *mur-* 'to detain', Lat. *mora*. Possibly a loan. Conclusions for the Indo-European character of Etruscan can hardly be based on it.

Thus, I arrive at the following evaluation as regards the possible evidence for genetic relationship with Indo-European:

possible	(very) doubtful	to be rejected/unreliable
1. acc. <i>-n</i>	2. gen. <i>-s</i>	6. pl. <i>-r-</i>
4. loc. <i>-i</i>	3. gen. <i>-l</i>	10. 3 sg. <i>-ce</i>
5. loc. <i>-dhi</i>	7. pron. pl. <i>-i</i>	13. the etymol. comparisons except <i>tin</i>
8. <i>mi</i>	12. <i>-m</i>	
9. <i>ta, ca</i>		
11. <i>-c</i>		
13. <i>tin</i>		

What remains as possible positive evidence, then, is not much.

We must now ask whether there are serious negative indications. A problem here is that Indo-European is a historical notion, so that 'un-Indo-European' characteristics

<sup>6</sup> Lemnian *naφoð* is also considered a loanword, but from another Indo-European language. This seems difficult. I can only think of Iranian *\*napāt*. (I do not understand why it is generally assumed that the word means 'grandson', for the context does not suggest this.)

may develop secondarily. Changes are unlimited, and the Indo-European languages show wide divergence, if we look e.g. at Greek, Old Irish, Gothic, Hittite and Tocharian. But time imposes certain limits. It is important to realise that Etruscan is almost as ancient as classical Greek, older than Latin, and much older than Germanic or Slavic.

Let us look at the situation with this in mind. Most arguments advanced against the Indo-European character of Etruscan are not decisive to my mind. Durante (9) and Pallottino (1978, 436) mention: 1. Etruscan has no *-o-*; 2. there is no opposition voiced : voiceless; 3. there are two sibilants; 4. the so-called 'double case endings'; 5. the plural 'infix'; 6. the suffixed pronouns (*sacni-cn* 'this/the sanctuary'); 7. the lexicon.

1. The absence of an *-o-* is no argument. Hittite and Germanic do not have one. 2. This opposition may have disappeared; Tocharian does not have it; it is uncertain whether Anatolian has it. (Presently it seems that Proto-Indo-European did not know the opposition.) 3. A second sibilant may easily have arisen secondarily. 4. If the genitive of the genitive and the locative of the genitive go back to a genitive resp. locative of an adjective (Rix 1984, 226), the rise of these forms is easily understandable. The Anatolian languages (except Hittite) have something comparable. 5. The plural is made as in agglutinative languages, the plural morpheme being followed by the case endings (I would not speak of an 'infix'). This is un-Indo-European feature (though it may be found in the Indo-European pronouns, e.g. loc. pl. *-oi-su*, where the *-i-* probably was the plural morpheme: languages are unorthodox as regards typology). But such a system could have arisen secondarily. In fact the Luwian languages do have something comparable, with *-nz-* as the plural morpheme. 6. Suffixed pronouns can easily arise secondarily. Compare the possessive pronoun of Anatolian, the definite adjective of Slavic, the definite article of Old Icelandic and Albanian. 7. A large part of the lexicon has no Indo-European etymology. But this is true also of the Anatolian languages. - Thus I think that these objections are not decisive.

Nevertheless I believe that there are decisive negative arguments. I distinguish between (A) features which Etruscan has and which can hardly be understood if it was an Indo-European language, and (B) features which Etruscan does not have and which you would expect if it were Indo-European. Of course, our possibilities are very limited because we know very little about Etruscan.

A. 1. The rise of the endings 3rd sg. act. *-ce* : pass. *-xe* seems to me very difficult to explain on the basis of an Indo-European background. (N.B. That *-xe* was passive, was not yet known to Durante.)

2. The plural morpheme *-r-* is also very hard to explain. (There is no indication for *s* > *r* in any stage of Etruscan, so that it is impossible to think of the ending *-es*. Cf. above).

3. The nominative in *-e*, and the *e*-stems (*medlum*, gen. *medlume-s*) have no Indo-European counterpart.

B. 1. There are several morphological elements which are very typical of Indo-European and which have been preserved tenaciously; e.g. the 3rd sg. and pl. endings *-ti/-t*, *-(e)nti/-(e)nt*; the present participle in *-nt*; the verbal adjective in *-to-*. Of these elements most languages preserved the larger part. Etruscan, however, has nothing of it.

2. A large part of the lexicon, even of the 'vocabulaire fondamental', is non-Indo-European. This is not essential. But it is serious that there is hardly a single convincing Indo-European etymology (to my mind only *tin* 'day' is a possibility). We may mention also that the numerals have no Indo-European etymology, while most Indo-European languages preserved them tenaciously. We know that numerals can also be borrowed, but the fact agrees with the other observations.

Taking all considerations together I conclude that Etruscan is not an Indo-European language. The positive arguments are too meagre, the negative ones too serious. And now we may add the negative arguments of Pallottino and Durante, discussed above. They were not decisive in themselves, but do confirm the conclusions we have reached on other grounds. All these arguments *together* make an Indo-European origin extremely improbable.

And this is actually what we expect on historical grounds. In (western) Asia Minor non-Indo-European languages were spoken before the arrival of the Indo-Europeans. It is quite reasonable to suppose that Etruscan, or rather Proto-Tyrrhenian, was one of them. They may have been pushed out of the country, into the sea, by the expanding Indo-Europeans.

### 7. A 'para-Indo-European' language?

It has been supposed that Etruscan was cognate with Indo-European at a higher level, i.e. not as a development of Proto-Indo-European, as it is defined now, but a much earlier offshoot from a common ancestor, perhaps like Uralic. Thus Kretschmer (1940) thought that Indo-European was cognate with a Raeto-Tyrrhenian family, which comprised Raetian, Etruscan, Tyrrhenian (= Lemnian) and Pelasgian.

I shall be brief on this and similar theories. First it is uncertain whether we are allowed to consider Pelasgian as cognate with Etruscan. But the essential point is that to my mind it is not permissible to construct such theories when we know so little about one half of the comparison. Our knowledge of Etruscan and its cognates is simply too limited to allow such far-reaching theories to be subject to serious consideration. To state it as sharply as I can: I consider it unscientific to discuss such theories.

Devoto calls Etruscan 'peri-Indo-European', i.e. a language at the border of the Indo-European territory, in which participated Indo-European and non-Indo-European elements. I agree with Pallottino's judgment (1978, 456): "Si potrebbe obiettare che questa definizione non risolve il problema di fondo se, ed in quale misura e per quale ordine di fatti, si debba parlare di parentele genetiche o di commistioni; ed ha

piuttosto il carattere di una constatazione genericamente descrittivo, se non addirittura di una formula nominalistica."

The apparent agreement as regards acc. *-n*, the loc. *-i*, *mi* 'I' are points that may need an explanation. But there is more of this kind. There is a theory that most language families of Eurasia are cognate. Indo-European, Uralic, Caucasian (or rather South Caucasian), Semitic, Dravidic, and Altaic would have a common ancestor according to the Nostratic theory of Illič-Svityč and others. This is a serious field of research (though I am still sceptical), but what the position of Etruscan and its family herein was, cannot be determined simply because we know not enough about the language.

We must keep to the conclusion that Etruscan is not an Indo-European language.

### 8. Non-Indo-European cognates?

Etruscan may have had non-Indo-European cognates. One problem is that only few such languages are known. One has looked for them in the West, in the Caucasus, in Greece, and in Asia Minor.

#### The West

Agreements with Basque, Iberian, or the substratum found in Italic and the Romance languages are rare. I refer to Durante 22 - 31. As the Etruscans came from the East, we would not expect to find cognates in the West.

#### The Caucasus

Some agreements with Caucasian languages have been noted. I do not have a survey of the material, and I am not competent to judge it. I have the impression that it concerns very little material, which allows no conclusions. Remarkable is that the so-called 'double case endings' (mostly of the genitive; as in Etr. *tarχna-l-ði* 'in (the territory) of Tarquinia') are not unfamiliar in Caucasian languages.

Recently Orel and Starostin (forthc.) think that Etruscan is an East Caucasian language. The article presents 44 etymologies (among them *tin!*). They cannot be judged by the non-specialist, but they do not look very attractive. To give one example: *netšvis* 'haruspex' is derived from *\*nłwcV-* 'prince; son-in-law'. They reckon Hurrian and Urartian to East Caucasian, which is, of course, not generally accepted. Many languages are adduced, and as East Caucasian consists of about thirty languages, one surmises that you can always find something. The whole is based on their reconstruction of Proto-East-Caucasian, but this reconstruction has not yet been published. It is to be expected that it is even less plausible than their claim that Hurro-Urartian is East Caucasian (for which cf. Smeets 1989).

#### Greece

Greek has a large number of substratum words; see Furnée 1972. This substratum may have been cognate with Etruscan, and Proto-Tyrrhenian. It seems that the Greek substratum is cognate with that of (western) Asia Minor. A few Etruscan words are compared with Greek (substratum) words (Cristofani 1973, 102):

Etr. *netšvis* 'haruspex': *νηδύς, νήδυνια* 'belly';

*purθ* 'a magistrate': *πρύτανις, β-, πρό-*;

*puia* 'consort': *ὀπνίω*<sup>7</sup> 'to marry';

*huθ* 'four'(?): *Υττηνία = Τετράπολις*;

*Turan* a goddess: *Τύραννος*.

Of these comparisons Turan is very uncertain. (Pfiffig 1968, 138, 306 suggests that it means *tur-an* 'the giving one'; which might eventually still be connected with *τύραννος*.) *purθ* and *huθ* seem reliable, *netšvis* is possible, though hardly very convincing.

This may seem a very slight result, but we have to realise that three or four words from the small number of Etruscan words we know and the limited number of (Greek) substratum words we know is not too bad.

#### Asia Minor

We know two non-Indo-European languages in Asia Minor, Hattic and Hurrian together with Urartian.

Hattic has a quite different structure than Etruscan and shows little or no agreement with it.

Hurrian, and its cognate Urartian, has very little that resembles Etruscan. There is a nom. *-se* (Etr. *-s* and *-e*) and an *-n* for the object (and the subject of intransitive verbs, i.e. an absolutive case). Durante (33) compares *kikk-* 'three' (?) with Etr. *ci*; *šin-* 'two' with Etr. *zelu* (not convincing), and *šinta* 'seven' with Etr. *semp*. Further there is only *-ma*.

For the rest, and for western Asia Minor, we only have substratum elements from the Indo-European Anatolian languages. No agreement with Hittite material has been found, but equations with Luwian and Lydian have been proposed. It is remarkable that, whereas our knowledge of Hittite is much more comprehensive than that of the other languages, equations with the latter languages, which were spoken in the western (and southern) part of Anatolia have been suggested. Durante mentions twelve Luwian words. I list a few of them.

Hitt. (from Luwian) *dammara-*, a functionary of the temple : Etr. *tamera/u*, a functionary.

Hier. Luw. */hilana/* 'gate' : Etr. *hil(ar)* 'gate' (?); Pfiffig 1969, 271ff thinks that it means 'earth, land'.

Luw. *ziti-* 'man' : Etr. *zati, zatlaθ* 'man' (?). It is assumed that Lat. *satellēs* comes from the Etruscan word.

<sup>7</sup> The connection of *ὀπνίω* with Hitt. *hapuša-* is very doubtful because of the meaning of the Hittite word; see J.J.S. Weitenberg, *Die Hethitischen u-Stämme* (Amsterdam 1984), § 362 with n. 372-4.

These comparisons are not really convincing, but at the present state of our knowledge they are worth considering. Durante concludes that there was a special relation with Luwian. However, Gusmani (1964 and 1980-86) gives thirteen correspondences between Lydian and Etruscan (Erg. 175). But I must say that these are not very convincing. Beside *-c* 'and' and *-m* 'but' I mention Lyd. *qira-* '(immobile) property' : Etr. *cver* 'gift' (the word is further connected with Hitt. *kuera-* 'field'). Then, *mluenda* 'part' (?) (from a verbal stem *mluen-*) : Etr. *muluani-ce* 'he gave'.

One may be sceptical about these comparisons. But I think that it is remarkable that there are comparisons with the Greek and Anatolian substrata. We may add observations of a more general nature. The Anatolian languages have no *-o-*; they have no opposition voiced : voiceless; there is inflexion of the agglutinative type; there are inflected adjectives (which may lead to 'double case endings'). It is remarkable that all these features *together* agree with Etruscan. We may have to do with areal features here, from a country where the ancestor of Etruscan was spoken. Thus it would seem that linguistic evidence of this kind also points to the Aegean and Asia Minor.

## 9. Conclusions

We arrive at the following conclusions.

The relation of Etruscan and Raetian is not yet clear.

Lemnian is cognate without a doubt. The two languages derive from one language, which we may call Proto-Tyrrhenian. This proves that the ancient traditions of the arrival of the Etruscans from the East are correct. The Etruscans brought their language with them to Italy. There is no evidence for the idea that it was strongly influenced by (substratum) languages in Italy; Lemnian rather points to the opposite. And during the time we know Etruscan it did not change very much.

Etruscan is not an Anatolian language. It can also be regarded as certain that Etruscan is not an Indo-European language. Agreements are few and not very significant, there are negative indications in that Etruscan has elements that can hardly be explained if it were Indo-European, and it has none of the most typical elements of Indo-European. The idea that it was remotely cognate with Indo-European cannot be verified because we do not know enough of the language. These theories are beyond discussion.

There is not enough evidence that Etruscan is cognate with a non-Indo-European language we know, such as Basque, Hattic, Hurrian, or the Caucasian languages.

Several words have been compared with substratum words in Greek and the western and southern Anatolian languages (Lydian and the Luwian languages). It is remarkable that such comparisons are possible. Those with Greek are few, but they look good. There are several phenomena in the western Anatolian languages that are also found in Etruscan. Thus in this way the linguistic evidence also seems to confirm

the ancient traditions that the Etruscans came from the Aegean area, probably from Asia Minor.

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