

C. DE SIMONE, *I Tirreni a Lemnos*. Evidenza linguistica e tradizioni storiche. Firenze, Olschki, 1996. 117 pp. Pr. Lit. 50.000.

De Simone defends in this book the thesis that the eastern Tyrrhenians, from whom we have the Lemnos inscription, were Etruscans who came from Italy. The standard view is that the Lemnos inscription, which has a language closely related to Etruscan, is a testimony of the Tyrrhenians in their original homeland from which a part migrated to Etruria.

Apart from other reasons he thought he had found decisive evidence

in a name on a loom weight which recently became known. He read LATITA, and thought that LA was a first name (Larθai?), and considered that TITA was a name related with Lat. *Titus*. As this name was taken over in Etruscan from the Italic languages, it would prove that the Tyrrhenians from Lemnos had come from Italy. Apart from problems of detail, the whole idea became impossible when it appeared that the inscription had to be read in the other direction: ATITAS (with *s* instead of *l*). In a reaction De Simone (1997) still defended his reading, but a glance at the inscription on the object makes it evident that the latter reading is the correct one. For this case De Simone again proposed the possibility of reading a first name A with a family name TITA, but the whole can be explained differently; a similar inscription *Atitas* has been found in Athens. In his book he treats a few other forms of the Lemnos inscription but these are very complicated and can hardly be used as decisive evidence. (A short survey of the inscription can be found in Beekes-Van der Meer 1991, 92 f.)

De Simone criticizes me for assuming (Beekes 1993) that Etruscan and Lemnian derived from a Proto-Tyrrhenian. What he means is that Lemnian could as well be just a dialect, a recent offspring of Etruscan. The problem is that the Lemnos text contains, beside six names, 15 words, of which five are cognate with Etruscan: *sialxvis*—Etr. *sealxls* ‘60’; *avis*—*avils* ‘year’; *sivai*—*zivas* ‘he lived’; *maras*—*maru* ‘a magistrate’; and see hereafter. So there is not much to base exact reconstructions on. Steinbauer in his review (1999) points out that Lemn. *mav* may continue the original numeral (‘four’ or ‘five’) from which Etr. *muvalx* ‘40’ or ‘50’ is derived, whereas Etr. *max* developed from (**mav*). This cannot be reconciled with De Simone’s idea that the Tyrrhenians came to Lemnos, from Italy, about 700 B.C. In general the fact that so many words have no correspondences in Etruscan rather points to a long separation of the two languages.¹⁾

De Simone further protests against the possible connections of Etruscan with the Greek substratum language(s). Of course, every suggestion must be thoroughly investigated, and this is not easy as we know so little about all the languages concerned. Nevertheless, it is sometimes obvious to do so. E.g. Gr. πρύτανις must be compared with Etr. *purθne*, *epθni* ‘(he was) a magistrate’. The question is what the relation was. It is certain that the Greek word is a loan from (a non-Indo-European) language in Greece; and (some of) these languages were spoken in Asia Minor, where we find the Tyrrhenians. One possibility is, then, that the Etruscan word comes from the same language from which Greek took it. Other aspects too make us look to Asia Minor. The presence versus absence of *e-* in the word just given (and in *Etrusci* versus *Tuscus*) may be compared with material in Asia Minor: Furnée (1972, 376)

compares Lycian *esedeplēmi* against Σεδεπλεμις. Again, Etruscan has case endings added to case endings, e.g. *-le* < **-la-i*, a genitive ending followed by a dative (locative) ending. Lubotsky drew my attention to the new Carian inscription from Kaunos which has *ot₂onosn*, an accusative of a genitive ('Ἀθηναίων'; cf. Frei-Marek 1997, 35). It may be objected that there is no material in the west that could be compared with Etruscan, but that does not diminish the interest of the eastern comparisons.

Half of the book is devoted to ancient traditions (39-84). In this context he discusses two names.

For Πελασγοί he accepts (p. 49) an etymology of Françoise Bader. This etymology is bizarre. The name would be Indo-European, but not Greek, **pelh₂-g-sko-* 'migranti'. This root/stem is impossible. We have **pelh₂-* 'anstossen, sich nähern' (Pok. 801; Gr. πελάζω) and 2. **plāk/g-* 'schlagen' (Pok. 832; Gr. πλῆσσω, perhaps also πλάζω). The first has no forms with velar, the second has no form with **pel-* and cannot have it. Pokorny 831 still gives a root 1. **plāk-*, **pelag-* 'breit und flach ausbreiten', but the latter form is based only on πέλαγος 'sea' of which the etymology is uncertain. Further the etymology supposes a Greek sound law, *-gsk-* > *-sg-* (as in μίσγω). A Greek sound law combined with a non-Greek form (necessary because *-sko-* is not found in Greek) is quite improbable. The meaning assigned (Fr. 'errer'; Ital. 'migrare') is mainly based upon πλανάομαι, which has a quite different structure. So this is a completely unacceptable concoction. It is made even worse when πελαργός 'stork', which is explained from **πελαγο-αργός* 'errante-rapido'(!), is said to be identical (sic Bader) with the word πελασγικός. The variant πελαργικός rather points to variation in a non-Indo-European word, which is what we expect of names of ancient peoples (the Pelasgians are often called the oldest inhabitants of Greece). The sequence *-σγ-* is not frequent in Greek, and found in words, like φάσγανον, which are probably of substrate origin. The comparison with the Πελαγόνες in Macedonia, which is largely accepted, shows another variant, without *s*. These phenomena are known from substrate words, see Furnée 1972, 299 and 305.

Another question regards the name *Tursānoí*. It is known that the suffix of this form was at home in the North East of the Aegean. De Simone finds this problematic as the term was first used of the Western Tyrrhenians (the Etruscans), while the Eastern Tyrrhenians were called at that time Pelasgians. Also, there is the question that the use of the term for the western and the eastern Tyrrhenians implies that the Greeks would have recognized their identity. (At least this is what I understand. A difficulty with the book is that the author often does not make clear what he wants to say. He also often adds theoretical considerations which do not make the matter simpler. As it concerns questions

that are well known to his colleagues, he could have stated them in a few words.) Now De Simone suggests that the name was coined by the Greeks in the West. He adduces the name Καπριήνη 'Capri' as evidence for its use in the West. I don't think that this is enough to make his suggestion probable: As the Tyrrhenians are found in North West Asia Minor, and as this is also the area where the suffix *-ānoi* is at home, it is most probable that the name arose here. The problem of the identity remains.

The mention of the Pelasgians brings us to a further point. De Simone goes far in discussing the use of this name, but he does not reach any new results. As is known, the matter is very complicated. It seems that sometimes the term is used for Tyrrhenians, but it is not clear when and where.

If the Tyrrhenians on Lemnos are Etruscans (who came there at a not very early date), are there indications for their arrival? Homer mentions on Lemnos the *Sinties*, but no Tyrrhenians. The Sintians are generally considered as Thracians. In historical times we find the Tyrrhenians, who were driven off around 500 by Miltiades. Does this prove that the Tyrrhenians arrived after Homer's time?

Herodotus (I 57) says that the Lemnian 'Pelasgians' came from Attica. This is mostly rejected as political propaganda of the Athenians; it would justify their conquering of the island. However, De Simone thinks it is a reminiscence of an 'arrival' of the Tyrrhenians. Archaeologists also reckon with it. Beschi (1994) takes the beginning of the finds of the necropolis and of the sanctuary in Hephaestia as the time when the Tyrrhenians arrived on Lemnos. This would be around 700. De Simone also uses this date. He draws from this an important conclusion: if the Tyrrhenians on Lemnos are a remnant of the people from which the Etruscans came, it must have been there, on Lemnos, since time immemorial. What he does not understand, however, is that the eastern Tyrrhenians can be (the) old inhabitants of this area, but at the same time be recent arrivals *in specific places*. We shall return to this below.

Then De Simone discusses (p. 73) an interesting statement by Hellanikos (FGrH 4, 71). He says that the Pelasgians (= Tyrrhenians) arriving on Lemnos, found there the Sinties who lived in harmony with the Greeks. The statement belonged to his Περὶ Χίου κτίσεως. This makes it more trustworthy, I think, as it may contain simple local knowledge, not influenced by general theories on the Pelasgians and other peoples. Also the fact that it does not speak about violent events but about peaceful developments makes the possibility greater that it just contains facts. De Simone too stresses that this has the air of reliable evidence. Now the essential thing is that Hellanikos states that the Tyrrhenians came from Tenedos. De Simone, who on p. 73 estimated

this as reliable, in his conclusions (p. 89), while repeating his judgement (“narrazione, circostanziato e realistico, con referenti e dati storici precisi”) says that it is difficult to believe that this statement (their coming from Tenedos) is true. This, in my opinion, is due to the wrong ‘reading’ of the historical facts by De Simone.

I think it is improbable that the Etruscans, who lived in a rich land, came to settle in the north of Greece. One might think of trading posts, but they settled there permanently, and we have no evidence whatever for trading activity and trading cities. They were generally known as pirates, and though this often went together with trade, in this case there is no evidence for trade. And if they founded cities there, coming from Etruria, we would most probably have heard about it explicitly.

It is known (and there has been no doubt on these statements) that the Tyrrhenians also lived in Plakie and Skylake, near Kyzikos. It is expressly stated that they are ὁμόγλωσσοι with the Tyrrhenians driven from Lemnos who now live in Krestoon on Akte (Hdt. I 57). Now what is the general picture we get from the Tyrrhenians in Greece? They are often mentioned as having been driven away, from one place to another. They were trying to find a place to live, and a means to live. For the latter they became pirates, i.e. they had to steal, to fight for their living. This means that they were near their homeland, but that they were driven out of it. De Simone cannot fit in their arrival from Tenedos, but in my view this fits exactly. It is one of the places they fled to, from the mainland of Asia Minor. And what is more, into this picture also fits their definitely leaving the lands of their homeland, to Italy . . . It is stated “that some of them [the Tyrrhenians of Lemnos] joined Tyrsenos, son of Atys, to Italy” (p. 57; Strabo 5, 221).

Also the fact that it is often mentioned that they settled Imbros together with Lemnos, does not so much seem evidence for more trading posts, but rather for a people looking for a place to live. Further, the mere fact that the Tyrrhenians are mentioned on so many places, rather points to a people of old living in the area.

A good parallel is provided by what happened to the Leleges: “these settlements were associated with the Leleges who were driven from their homeland in north-west Asia Minor following the destruction of Troy. Some of them apparently resettled on the Aegean coast . . ., until they were again displaced by the Ionian migrations and finally occupied the peninsula between Myndos and Halikarnassos.” (Bryce 1986, 31). If this is roughly correct, it gives a good impression of what may have happened also to the Tyrrhenians. We see a people losing ground before disappearing; but in Italy they found a new life, and a remarkable place in history.

It may further be remarked that the advance of Indo-European peoples may have been the, direct or indirect, cause of the movements of these peoples.

Thus, the direct evidence for the Lemnian Tyrrhenians being Etruscan colonists, the new inscription from Lemnos, has proven untenable. There are hardly any other arguments for this thesis. Therefore the old interpretation that the Etruscans came from north west Asia Minor stands, and seems now definitely confirmed by several considerations.

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1) Hesiod *Theog.* 1013 mentions two Tyrrhenian kings (apparently in Italy) Ἄγριος and Λατῖνος, the first name of which is a puzzle. Now on the Lemnos inscription occurs a name *Aker*. I wonder whether this name was turned into Greek as Ἄγριος. Cf. *Alexander* — Ἀλέξανδρος. As *Ἄγρος was not suitable, it may have been remade into Ἄγριος, an existing name (e.g. in Homer).