A review by Carroll Quigley in *The Washington Sunday Star*, 6 September 1964, of six books:

1) *THE ETRUSCANS*,
   by Massimo Pallottino.
   Baltimore: Penguin Books, 19xx

2) *THE ETRUSCANS*,
   by Raymond Bloch,
   New York: Frederick A.Praeger, 19xx

3) *THE ETRUSCANS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD*,
   by Otto W. von Vacano.
   New York: St Martin’s Press, 19xx

4) *THE ETRUSCANS*,
   by Alain Hus.
   Xxxxx: Evergreen Profile Paperback. Grove Press, 19xx

5) *ETRUSCAN CULTURE: Land and People*,
   by Axel Boethius et al.
   New York: Columbia University Press, 19xx

6) *THE ETRUSCANS BEGIN TO SPEAK*,
   by Zacharie Mayani.
   New York: Simon & Schuster, 19xx

"The Etruscans: Some New Theories on Their Origin"
THE ETRUSCANS.


THE ETRUSCANS.


THE ETRUSCANS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD.


THE ETRUSCANS.

By Alain Hus. 192 pages, 80 illustrations. Grove Press, Evergreen Profile Paperback. $1.35.

ETRUSCAN CULTURE: LAND AND PEOPLE.

By Axel Boethius and others for Swedish Institute, Rome. 478 pages, elaborately illustrated.

Columbia University Press. $42.50.

THE ETRUSCANS BEGIN TO SPEAK.

By Zacharie Mayani. 474 pages, 93 photographs and figures. Simon & Schuster. $8.50.

Since 1955, when a spectacular exhibit of Etruscan art toured the chief European cities, there has been a growing interest in the Etruscan problem. In the same period a new "solution" has won wide acceptance. This is concerned with the origins and language of these mysterious people who preceded the Romans as rulers of western Italy between the Tiber and the Arno. For two thousand years, controversy on this subject has oscillated between the view of Herodotus (about 450 B. C.) that they were Asians who migrated by sea in the prehistoric period from Lydia in western Anatolia to Italy and the view of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (about 20 B. C.) who insisted that the Etruscans were not Asians but were the indigenous inhabitants of Tuscany, "a very ancient people which does not resemble any other either in its language or its customs."

Between these extreme positions the controversy has continued. Those who quoted as evidence of an Eastern origin the obviously Oriental character of many Etruscan beliefs and customs were refuted by the persuasive argument that these were simply survivals of a basic archaic Mediterranean culture which existed in Italy as well as Asia before the Indo-European conquests of the Greeks, Macedonians, and Romans. A most significant feature of this submergence of archaism beneath the veneer of Classical
culture was the spread of Indo-European languages. Accordingly, a significant part of the Etruscan problem became concerned with the question whether the Etruscan language was an Indo-European tongue or one of the earlier archaic languages whose most notable example is Basque.

From Several Directions

The compromise over Etruscan origins began with Alfredo Trombetti and his pupils, with its chief supporter now in Pallottino. This view contends that the Etruscan people may have come from several diverse directions, but that the formative process of the Etruscan nation and culture "can only have taken place on the territory of Etruria proper;" and we are able to witness the final stages of this process thanks to the rich archaeological documentation we possess for the period from the 8th to the 6th century B.C." (P. 69). On this subject disagreement still exists beneath the apparent compromise and the shift of emphasis from ethnic origins to cultural development.

These disagreements now appear as differential weighing of evidence. Thus Pallottino has little to say on any specific influences from the East in the Etruscan cultural development but, instead, makes constant references to the "Italinity" of the Etruscan "nation." Bloch, on the other hand, still insists that many of the dominant elements in this cultural development came from Asia in the late 7th century B.C. and that Etruscan development would have taken place on quite different lines or would probably have remained insignificant without these triggering events.

In a situation like this, the lay reader can only hope to find some single volume which will give him a fair account of what the dispute is about. Fortunately such a book is available in Alain Hus' little paperback. This concentrates on exposition, not argument, and, in view of its modest price, is now the one book to be recommended as an introduction to this subject.

The effort at reconciliation of differences in regard to Etruscan culture had much less influence in discussion of the Etruscan language. Whatever weight the various experts now place on the Oriental elements in the Etruscan cultural synthesis, they have tended to regard the language as a much less mixed entity. In general they have felt that it is basically non-Indo-European. Those who emphasize the indigenous element in Etruscan culture derive that element from Italian sources before the Indo-European invasions. Those, like Bloch, who give more weight to the Asiatic element regard that element also as pre-Indo-European. In fact, Bloch in an article in the Scientific American for February 1962 says, "Enough is known to state categorically that Etruscan is not an off-shoot of the Indo-European language, from which all the other significant languages in Western history were derived." Pallottino is less emphatic but seems to feel that any Indo-European element in Etruscan is restricted to vocabulary and is probably fairly late.

Opening a Wasp's Nest

In these circumstances Magani's volume can hardly escape smashing open a wasp's nest. His thesis, derived from J. G. von Hahn (1854) and sustained by years of research in Indo-European philology, is that
the Etruscan language is closely related to “the Illyrian Kernal of Albanian” that the Etruscan language is closely related to “the Illyrian Kernal of Albanian.” The common source of both were the Illyrian tribes who moved from the northern Balkans into Asia Minor in the 2d millennium B. C. and later spread westward as Picenians, lapygians, Messapians, Dardanians, and others. This theory combines an Eastern origin of the Etruscans with an Indo-European language and helps to explain why Etruscan and Albanian belong to the Eastern (so-called “satem”) group of the Indo-European languages rather than to the Western (or “Kentum”) group.

Mayani defends his interpretation of the evidence with page after page of minute philological discussion which will be far outside the competence and interests of all except a small group of linguistic specialists. A flowing style and an interesting subject are not sufficient to carry the ordinary reader through these many pages of philological minutiae.

Please email the editors (editors@carrollquigley.net) with corrections, questions, or if you have other works by Professor Quigley you would like to see posted.

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