ČLANCI I RASPRAVE

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THE BILINGUAL PHOENICIAN-ETRUSCAN TEXT OF THE GOLDEN PLATES OF PYRGI

In 1964, the archaeologists excavating the ancient Etruscan city of Pyrgi brought to light three golden plates. Two of the plates were written in Etruscan, while the third one had a Phoenician inscription on it. The archaeologists suspected immediately that the longer Etruscan inscription and the Phoenician text might be related. Yet, scholars' hopes that the promising text of the Etruscan plate might have been an Etruscan kind of "Rosetta stone" were dashed to the ground. They realized very soon that the two texts were — at best — a paraphrasis of each other but they contained no literal translation which might have offered a key to Etruscan hermeneutics. Since then, no author was able to offer a reliable interpretation of the Etruscan plate, dealing with the donation made by the Etruscan chieftain or "king" of the important city of Caere, Thefariei Velianas, to the Phoenician goddess 'Aštart. We therefore decided to re-examine the plates "from scratch". As a first step, we went through extant translations of the Phoenician inscription and we discovered that some of its terms had been misunderstood and/or mistranslated. After preparing a new and more reliable translation of the Phoenician *lamina*, we used it as a key to compare and translate the doubtful expressions of the Etruscan text. We are now glad to publish our results that represent the first integral and — in our humble opinion — creditable translation of these laminae.

Introduction

Pyrgi, the port of the important Etruscan city of *Kaisrai* (Latin: *Caere*, today: *Cerveteri*) was identified, after systematic excavations carried out as from 1957, in the bay near the present-day castle of Santa Severa. Up to that point of time

it was known from literary sources only. Its sanctuary, dedicated to a female divinity, called Leucothea (Λευκοθέα)[1] by the Greeks, Uni by the Etruscans and ʿAštart by the Phoenicians, was famous all around the Mediterranean Sea. In 384 BC, the tyrant Denys (Διονύσιος) of Syracuse made an unexpected incursion and sacked the treasury of the goddess and pillaged the enormous amount of one thousand talents. Archaeological excavations brought to light this important sanctuary together with the remains of the Etruscan town. Pyrgi was linked to the city of Caere through a wide, 13-km long route. Along the route there are big *tumuli* of archaic age (VII century BC). The sanctuary included two temples. The plant of the two temples is different. The most ancient one (temple B) goes back to the end of the VI century BC; it was built upon the Greek models, that is it has one cell only surrounded by columns on the four sides. The other temple (A) was built approximately on 460 BC and it shows the canonic plant of the Etruscan holy places, that is three cells and a prostyle. Both temples were built side by side and faced the sea, yet only their gigantic foundations have been preserved.

The wooden roofs were decorated with polychromous terra cottas. The top beam of temple A had its front ornated with a magnificent haut-relief. It represents an episode of the Greek myth of the seven chieftains fighting against Thebes. Zeus strikes by a lightning the hero Capaneus[2], while another hero (Tideus) is caught in the frightful act of biting the nape of the neck to Melanippos the Theban. The goddess Athena, struck with horror, withdraws while clasping the small pot containing the philter of immortality that she shall deny to the impious heroes.

In 1964, the archaeological excavations — directed by Massimo Pallottino — reserved an exceptional surprise. During the exploration of the site, they brought to light a small rectangular "pool" in the area between temple A and B. The archaeologists found inside it three golden plates, together with a fourth bronze plate (CIE 6312) and several architectonic terra-cottas. When the golden plates came to the light, they were rolled up so as to form a sort of "scroll". After careful unfolding, they were found to be in an excellent state. Two of the

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[1] Leucothea, lit. 'the white goddess'. It was the name of *Ino* after she became one of the divinities of the sea. In Rome the goddess was identified with *Mater Matuta*, the archaic Italic divinity of the daybreak. She was later venerated as the patron goddess of child-bearing women. She had been dedicated a temple in the *Forum Boarium* and the Romans honoured her on the 11th day of June with the *Matralia* festival.

[2] Capaneus was the son of Hipponeus and Astimone and the husband of Evadne. He was one of the seven chieftains who declared war to Thebes in defense of Polynices against Eteocles. He proudly declared that he would had seized Thebes, thus defying the gods that protected the city, and compared the lightnings of Zeus to the heat of the sun at midday. Zeus, offended by his impiety, stroke him with a lightning while he was scaling the city walls.

golden plates (plate A and B) are written in Etruscan while the third one (plate C) is written in Phoenician. The plates were meant to be nailed up, since their margins are pierced. The Etruscan *laminae* have ten holes each, while the Phoenician *lamina* has twelwe holes. The original nails, made of bronze and with a golden head, were found inside the "scroll". The archaeologists suspected immediately that the longer Etruscan inscription and the Phoenician plate might be related, yet — as everyone knows — scholars' hopes that the promising text of the Etruscan plate might have been a literal translation of the Phoenician text were soon dashed to the ground.

If we consider both the meaning and importance of the golden plates of Pyrgi we shall realize that they have some characteristics that make them unique: (α) it is the first and (to date) only coeval *historical* document of the Etruscans handed down to us; (β) it is the only Etruscan document citing the name of a ruler; (γ) It contains the text that the ruler himself emanated; (δ) a striking peculiarity is the use of the Phoenician language, thus showing the presence of a Punic influx in an area where it was not known to occur.

Both the use of Phoenician and the very fact that the *laminae* are made of gold represent a tangible testimony of the importance attributed to the inscription by the ruler who had them drawn up. Summing up what has been said, "king" Thefarie Velianas wanted to pay homage in his city to a Punic goddess and he did it in the most conspicuous and expensive way. In order to understand his reasons, it is necessary to recall the historical situation of the Mediterranean Sea in the period around 500 BC. Under the pressure of the Greeks, Puns and Etruscans entered into an alliance so as to protect their positions. In 535 BC the allies defeated the Phoceans in a naval battle near Alalia (Corsica), thus blocking up the sea routes of Corsica and Sardinia to the Greek ships. Their sphere of influence was divided: the Etruscans ruled Italy from the Alps to Campania, while the Puns had the supremacy on the south-eastern arch that closed the area of Greek influence. We do not know the reason why "king" Thefarie Velianas dedicated a sanctuary to a Punic goddess and wrote his dedication both in Etruscan and Phoenician on golden plates. Perhaps he wanted to get into the good graces of his powerful allies, or he was in a subordinate position to Carthage and the plates reflect this situation[3]. Yet, it might also be that the town of Pyrgi was partly inhabited by Punic traders — if so, the Latin place name *Punicum*[4] might be much more meaningful than expected.

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[3] We remind here the words of Aristotle (*Politics*, III, 1280a) concerning the treaties of friendship, trade and alliance between Etruscans and Carthaginians. Archaeologists found a large number of Etruscan objects in Carthage, including an Etruscan inscription mentioning this city.

[4] Punicum (today: Santa Marinella) was situated next to Pyrgi (today: Santa Severa).
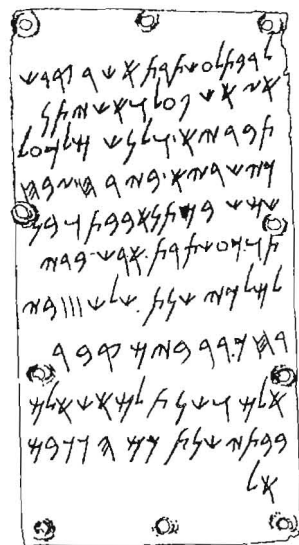
Plate A

Plate B

Plate C

The contents of the Punic and Etruscan inscriptions are similar, yet the Punic and the Etruscan texts are no literal translation, thus being at best paraphrases of each other. This fact persuaded the researchers that the Etruscan text has to be studied according to »*the most certain bases of traditional hermeneutics*« [?], thus the Phoenician (Punic) inscription could be used only to draw a possible linguistic parallel »*so as to test the value of the results obtained against those obtained with the other text*«[5]. As a matter of fact, beyond the methodological doubts related to the degree of contextual equivalence, the uncertainties connected with certain passages of the Punic plate did not allow a scrupulous analysis of the Etruscan texts.

This is why we "revisited" the Punic text and analyzed it anew. The new translation that we present in these pages allows for a refinement of the comparison between the structures of both inscription, thus hopefully granting a greater degree of reliability to our tentative translation of the Etruscan inscription.

Lamina C: The Phoenician text

The plate containing the Phoenician inscription has the size of 92 × 193 mm. The text of the Punic inscription is very clearly carved on eleven rows and contains 39 words. The upper and lower margins are left free. Each row contains

from 13 to 14 symbols, each better being approx. 1 cm high. The first row contains 16 characters, while the eleventh row consists of two letters only. Hereunder we transliterated the Phoenician text both with Hebrew and Latin letters for greater ease of readability.

Phoenician text	Hebrew transliteration		Latin transliteration
ᚹᛅᛈᛥ ᚹᚹᛣᚴ ᚼᚼᚹᛟᛚ ᚼᚹᚦᛚ	לרבת לעשתרת אשר קדש	[1]	lrbt lʿštrt ʾšr qdš
ᛈᚼᛐ ᚹᛣᚤ ᛚᛟᚦ ᚹᛣ ᚴ	אז אש פעל ואש יתן	[2]	ʾz ʾš pʿl wʾš ytn
ᛚᛣ ᛈᛚᚤ ᚹᚤᛚᚤ · ᛣᛐᚹᚦᛈ	תבריא . ולנש מלך אל	[3]	tbryʾ . wlnš mlk ʾl
ᛒᚦᚲ · ᛒᚦᛐᚹ · ᛣᛐᚦᚹᚹᛐᚹ	כישריא . בירח . זבח	[4]	kyšryʾ . byrḥ . zbḥ
ᚤᚦᚤ ᚼᚦᚤ ᛣᚤᚼᚤᚤ ᚹᚤᚹ	שמש במתנא בבת ובן	[5]	šmš bmtnʾ bbt wbn
ᛐᚦᚤ ᚹᛣᛣ · ᚼᚼᚹᛟᚦ ᚤᛈ	תו כעשתרת . ארש בדי	[6]	tw kʿštrt . ʾrš bdy
ᛐᚦᚤ III ᚹᛚᚹ ᚼᚤᚹ ᛐᚹᛚᚤᛚ	למלכי שנת שלש III בי	[7]	lmlky šnt šlš III by
ᚦᛈᚤ ᚤᛐᚦᚤ ᚦᚤᚦ ᛒᚦ	רח כרר בימ קבר	[8]	rḥ krr bym qbr
ᚤᛚᛣ ᚹᛣᚤᛚ ᚼᚤᚹᚤ ᚤᛚᛣ	אלמ ושנת למאש אלמ	[9]	ʾlm wšnt lmʾš ʾlm
ᚤᚦᚦᚦᚦᚦ ᚤᚤ ᚼᚤᚹ ᛐᚹᚼᚦᚤ	בבתי שנת כם הככבמ	[10]	bbty šnt km hkkbm
ᛚᛣ	אל	[11]	ʾl

[C.1] lrbt lʿštrt — »to (l) [our] Lady (rbt), to (L) ʿAštart (ʿštrt)«. The dedicatory formula is quite regular. Punic inscriptions usually begin with the word lrbt 'to [our] Lady' or lʾdn 'to [our] Lord', according to the gender of the captioned divinity[6].

[C.2] ʾšr qdš — »holy (qdš) place (ʾšr)«. Only one similar inscription seems to be attested in the corpus of the Phoenician-Punic inscriptions, i.e. ʾšr hqdš (with the praefixed article h)[7]. The word ʾšr 'place, site, location' occurs in Hebrew as a verb only, in the meaning 'to walk, to walk straight'. Yet, corresponding words can be found in cognate languages, cf. Aramaic (ʾšr 'trace, place'), Ugaritic (ʾtr 'place'), late Aramaic and Syriac (ătār 'place'[8]) and Accadic (ašru 'Ort; Stelle; Stätte' [AHw III]; '1. place, site, location, emplacement; 2. region, country, city, building complex, sacred place, cosmic locality' [CAD]).

[C.3] ʾz — 'this'. The typical form of this demonstrative pronoun in Phoenician is z (= Hebrew ze). Levi Della Vida correctly noted that the form appearing in this text (possibly pronounced ez) is commonly regarded as typical of the Punic dialect spoken in Cyprus. Yet, rather than denoting a Cypriote origin of the text, it supplies evidence of the vitality of the Cypriote-Punic dialect among the colonies spread all over the Mediterranean.

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[6] Cf. *KAI* 47, 64, 63, 66, 71, 72, 77, 81, 83, 97, 99, 102ff, 117, 129, 137, 159.

[7] See *CIS* I, 1779.

[8] Latin *atrium* possibly originates from the Aramaic base *Atr* meaning 'to walk, walk straight, walk in'.

[C.4] ʾš pʿl wʾš ytn — 'that (ʾš) made (pʿl) and (w) that (ʾš) donated (ytn)'. Similar formulae occur in many Phoenician/Punic inscriptions. In Cyprus a common dedicatory formula is ʾš ytn wyṭn 'who made and built' while in Spain we find pʿl wndr wḥdš 'he made, dedicated and renovated', etc.

[C.5] tbryʾ wlnš — This is the Punic form of the personal name appearing in the Etruscan text as *Thefariei Velianas*. From an orthographic point of view, it is interesting to note the final *aleph* in *tbryʾ*, which seems to suggest its use as a *mater lectionis* for *a* or *e*, exactly as it in the word *kyšryʾ* occurring in the fourth line of this text. Concerning the final [š] in *wlnš*, which is supposed to be the representative of Velianas, the regular form should had been [s]. Two hypotheses were made to explain the phenomenon. The first one views in the final [š] a palatalized realization of [s] in Etruscan, hence the Punic form is assumed to be orthoepically adapted to the supposedly Etruscan pronunciation. The second hypothesis takes into account the fact that western Punic dialects seem to show a frequent passage from [s] to [š] (e.g. *ptlmjš* for Πτολεμαῖος in Cyprus[9]).

[C.6] mlk ʿl kyšryʾ — »king (*mlk*) over (*ʿl*) *kyšryʾ*«. Most commentators view *kyšryʾ* as a place-name and many of them maintain this is the Punic variant of the name of the important Etruscan city of *Xaire* (Latin: *Cisra, Caere*, today: *Cerveteri*)[10]. Yet, the Punic expression »king over Caere« is quite unusual, the regular form being »king of«, with the word »king« in construct state and without prepositions.

According to Livy (i, 8, 1—3) and in ancient ages the Etruscan *lucumones* or *principes* who represented the *twelve peoples* of Etruria (*duodecim populi*, δώδεκα ἡγεμονίαι) elected a king over them by furnishing him with their lectors:

> *Rebus divinis rite perpetratis vocataque ad concilium multitudine quae coalescere in populi unius corpus nulla re praeterquam legibus poterat, iura dedit; quae ita sancta generi hominum agresti fore ratus, si se ipse venerabilem insignibus imperii fecisset, cum cetero habitu se augustiorem, tum maxime lictoribus duodecim sumptis fecit. Alii ab numero avium quae augurio regnum portenderant eum secutum numerum putant: me haud paenitet eorum sententiae esse quibus et apparitores hoc genus ab Etruscis finitimis, unde* sella curulis, *unde* toga praetexta *sumpta est, numerum quoque ipsum ductum placet, et ita habuisse Etruscos quod ex duodecim populis communiter creato rege singulos singuli populi lictores dederint.*

»After the claims of religion had been duly acknowledged, Romulus called his people to a council. As nothing could unite them into one political body but the observance of common laws and customs, he gave them a body of laws, which he thought would only be respected by a

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[9]   See Friedrich 1951:21.
[10] As an example, cf. Pallottino 1964:69.

rude and uncivilized race of men if he inspired them with awe by assu-
ming the outward symbols of power. He surrounded himself with grea-
ter state, and in particular he called into his service twelve lictors. Some
think that he fixed upon this number from the number of the birds who
foretold his sovereignty; but I am inclined to agree with those who think
that as this class of public officers was borrowed from the same people
from whom the »sella curulis«[11] and the »toga praetexta«[12] were
adopted — their neighbors, the Etruscans — so the number itself also was
taken from them. Its use amongst the Etruscan is traced to the custom of
the twelve sovereign cities of Etruria, when jointly electing a king furni-
shing him each with one lictor.

This custom is confirmed by Servius Honoratus: *nam Tuscia duodecim lucu-
mones habuit, id est reges, quibus unus praeerat* »Etruria had twelve lucumones,
i.e. kings, one of whom presided over«[13]. Later, in historical age, there are
mentions of *coniurationes* (i.e. »solemn oaths«) of the *populi* appointing a *sacer-
dos* (priest)[14]. In other words, the primitive tribal solidarity was later replaced
by the appointment of a *rex sacerdos*, i.e. a priest-king, choosen among the *prin-
cipes*, who were the foremost magistrates of the twelve Etruscan nations, and
the investiture was confirmed by an oath sworn in front of »*Voltumna, deus
Etruriae princeps*« [=][15].

The Punic text calls Thefariei Velianas »king over *kyšry*« (*mlk ʿl kyšry*),
while in the Etruscan text his title appears as *sal cluvenias* (cf. sub A.5). There is
no trace in the text of the name of »king« handed over to us by a glossa of
Hesychios, i.e. **θruna*, cf. TLE (Hesych.): δροῦνα . ἡ ἀρχη ὑπὸ Τυρρηνῶν [=
»drouna: the chieftain (ruling) over the Tyrrhenians«]. The lack of correspon-
dence in the archenym (dignity name) of Thefariei Velianas as reported by the
Punic and the Etruscan text is a long debated question on which it has been
impossible to find a common consensus.

There seem to be an almost general consensus on the fact that the Punic
word *kyšry* is probably related to the variant *Cisra* of the Latin name of *Caere*
and that it possibly originates from an Etruscan form **caizrai*. As a matter of

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[11] Lit. 'the seat of power', and hence the seat of the supreme magistrate when
administering justice.

[12] Lit. 'the bordered toga', i.e. edged with purple, worn by the higher magistrates
and priests, and also by all free-born boys till about their sixteenth year and by girls
till their marriage.

[13] »Sed tibi ego: *artificiose agit, ut etiam quae monstrantur auxilia, ipsius esse videantur.
'Ingentes' autem 'populos' non sine causa dixit: nam Tuscia duodecim lucumones habuit, id est
reges, quibus unus praeerat: unde est »gens illi triplex, populi sub gente quaterni«».* (Servius
Honoratus, *Aen.* viii,475)

[14] Livy, v, 3—8.

[15] Varro, *LL.* v,46.

fact, the forms *caisriva*, *ceizra* and *cezrtli* (latinized in *caezirtli*) are attested in extant epigraphy. The Punic word *kyšry*ʾ can be transliterated as either *Cišria*, *Caešarie* or *Caešaria*, where the suffix *y*ʾ is used to form nouns from other nouns (the Hebrew and Arabic equivalents are -*yāʰ* and resp. -*iyyaʰ*, while in Aramaic it sounds -*yâ*), yet it could very likely render also the Greek and/or Latin suffix -*ia*. As we said before, a noteworthy peculiarity of the Punic text is that it does not state »king of *kyšry*ʾ«, as it uses the preposition ʾ*l* 'over, on'. This possibly shows that Thefariei Velianas did not rule a kingdom. Much rather, he presided *over* an assembly composed by the chieftains (*lucumones* or *principes*) of the Etruscan cities, and the words *kyšry*ʾ and *cluvenia* seem to point in the same direction.

[C.7] bjrḥ zbḥ šmš — »in (B) the month (*yrḥ*) Zabʰaḥ Šemeš [=»Sacrifice to the Sun«]«. Punic inscriptions often mention a month having a similar name, that is *zbḥ šmš* 'sacrifice of the sixty'. Levi Della Vida considered *šmš* as a corruption of the word *ššm*. Nevertheless, the name *zbḥ šmš* occurs in another inscription found in Cyprus (*CIS*, I, 13), thus confirming the validity of the denomination.

[C.8] bmtnʾ bbt — »in (B) donation (*mtn*ʾ) in/to (*b*) the House (*bt*) [= temple]«. The ancient Semites had no particular word to designate the 'temple' and they called it simply 'house'[16]. The word *mtn*ʾ 'gift, present' is formed from the verb ntn 'to give' with a *m* [m] praefix and first suffix ʾ [ʾ]. From a linguistic point of view, the suffix ʾ [ʾ] shows the loss of the feminine ending *t* [t] and its replacement with an aleph, that is — according to J. Friedrich — a *mater lectionis* for *e*, a phenomenon that is widely attested as from the Neo-Punic age only. According to Licia Vlad Borrelli, the form *mtn*ʾ is a typically Punic word. Nevertheless, compare it against the similar Hebrew forms *mattănāʰ* and *mattān* as well as Aramaic *mattĕnâ* 'gift, present, donation', formed from the verb *nâtan* 'to give' prefixed with the deverbative *m*-.

[C.9] wbn tw — The sentence has been variously interpreted. At first it was considered as a single word, and several scholars thought that the *wāw* ending was a suffixed personal pronoun. Nonetheless, owing to the fact that such a suffix is attested only in the most recent inscriptions of Byblos, some scholars were prone to consider it as the result of a vernacular usage. Levi Della Vida rebutted this theory and proposed to view *wbntw* either as a personal name, a theonym (i.e. name of a god) or a place name. Licia Vlad Borrelli maintained it possibly meant the τέμενος (i.e. 'holy [fenced] place'). It was only in 1969 that J. Friedrich[17] isolated the word *tw* and translated it as 'Innenraum, Zelle' (= 'in-

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[16] Cf. Hebrew *bēth* 'House of God' (Ez. 8:14), *bēth hamiqdaš* 'House of the Holy', i.e. the Temple of Jerusalem; *bēth kĕneset* 'house of gathering' (that is synagogue), *bēth mĕlūkhah* 'house of the king', i.e. royal palace, etc.

[17] Friedrich 1969:207ff.

ternal room, cell'). Thus, he put it into relationship with the (quite different!) Hebrew word *tā* 'guardroom (of palace)[18]; room, compartment (esp. in the Temple)'.[19] This word, together with Hebrew *tēbʰaʰ* 'ark, box' (> Arabic *tābūt* 'chest, coffin'), Aramaic *tāwâ*, *tâwanâ* 'cell' and Syriac *tawanâ* 'cell' are borrowings from the Accadic word *tū*, *tā* 'chest, coffin[20]; shrine, chapel (inside a temple)' [21]. Since the Phoenician verb *bn* has the same meaning of Hebrew *bānāh* 'to build, create, make', Friedrich gave the following reading of the sentence: 'and he built a chapel (inside the temple)'.

Nevertheless, the possibility of an equivalence of the Phoenician word *tw* with the Hebrew word *taw* 'mark, sign' is more verisimilar. Thus, the sentence could be read 'and he made [this] sign'. It is perhaps possible to assume that the meaning of 'sign' here reflects the Latin usage, where *signum* had — among others — a meaning of 'figure or image, statue or effigy (of a divinity)', exactly as the obsolete word *sign* in English. For example, the *Roman Elegies*[22] of Sextus Propertius (47 B.C. — 14 B.C.) report that the *signum Vorumni* was the statue of the Etruscan god Vortumnus (Voltumna) erected in the so-called *vicus Tuscus*, that is the one-time fluvial Etruscan port of Rome.

Therefore, the possible meaning of this sentence is: »and (*w*) he built/made/erected (*bn*) the effigy [of the divinity] (*tw*)«.

[C.10] kᶜštrt ʾrš bdy — This is one of the crucial sentences of the inscription since it focuses on the reason why the "king" of the Caerites made his dedication. The sentence caused many troubles to the scholars who tackled to translate it. This was mainly due to the fact that they misunderstood the meaning of the last word, that is *bdy*. The word is formed by a locative/instrumental praefix *b* 'in; with', a possessive suffix *y*, while its core consists of what was thought to be the word for 'hand', that is *d* (pron. *ad*).

Levi Della Vida, who correctly recognized in the Semitic base *Arš* the meaning 'to desire' (cf. Hebrew *ărešet* 'desire'), translated *Arš bdy* as: '[the goddess] choose by means of his [i.e. the king's] hand', thus assuming that the word was to be understood as an idiomatic expression meaning 'choose through him'. J.G. Février hypothesized that the word *ʾrš* should be traced back to the Semitic root *ʾrś* 'to marry a woman by paying a price' (cf. Hebrew *arāś* 'to betroth'). Thus, he emphasized the meaning of 'ransom' so as to be able to translate the sentence as follows: '[the goddess] redeemed with her hand'. Yet, he did not explain the why of the phonetic change /s/ > /š/. In the eyes of Vlad Borrelli, though, the most appropriate translation seems to be '[the goddess]

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[18] Cf. 1Kings 14:28.

[19] Cf. Ezechiel 40:7,36.

[20] Cf. also ancient Egyptian *tbt* 'chest, coffin'.

[21] Heise—Stadhouders 1997:216—7.

[22] Sextus Propertius, *Roman Elegies*, IV, 2, 1ff.

raised (choosed) [him] with her hand as a king'[23]. Nonetheless, she did not explain from which Semitic verb she took the meaning 'to raise, choose'. So far, the translators failed to note that, in all of their translations, the trailing *k* 'like, as' at the beginning of the sentence had little or no meaning at all.

It is important to point out that the meaning of the Phoenician graphic symbol *d* was misunderstood by most scholars who translated this text. They took it for the shortened representative of the word *yad* 'hand' (cf. Hebrew *yād*, Aramaic *yad*, Ugaritic *yd*, Syriac *yad*, Arabic *yad*, Ethiopic *ʾed* of same meaning). Nonetheless, *d* matches the word appearing in Hebrew as *dē*, the meaning of which is 'sufficiency, necessary supply, enough'. Evidence of the presence of the latter word can be found in the corpus of Phoenician-Punic inscriptions in compounds like *md*, where the latter matches exactly the meaning of Hebrew *middāy* 'as long as it is sufficient, as often as'.

The Hebrew word *dē* occurs in several biblical passages, thus enabling us to understand its usage, cf. *dayyām* 'their necessity, enough for them' (Ex 36:7); *dayyekhā* 'as much as suits you' (Pr 25:16); *dē śeh* 'expenditure for a sheep' (Lv 5:7); *ʾen dē bāʿēr* 'does not suffice for' (Is 40:16); *dē hašībⁱ lō* 'necessities for restitution' (Lv 25:28). It can have negative meanings too, as in *bĕdē-rīq* 'for nothing' (Je 51:58, Hb 2:13); *ʿad bĕlī dāy* 'until there is no more necessity, sufficient' (Ma 3:10); *middē* 'more than necessary' (Ex 36:5) and it is also used in idioms like *kĕdē* 'corresponding to' (Dt 25:2), *middē* 'according to the need' (1S 7:16), 'as often as' (1K 14:28), etc.[24] To these forms we should probably add one of the biblical attributes of God, i.e. *šadday* 'the Almighty' which, according to the explanation given by such important exegetes as Aquilas, Symmachos and Theodotion, is formed by *dy* and the proclitic form *š*, its meaning thus being ἱκανός 'sufficient' (i.e. 'whose divinity suffices for every creature'). It follows from the above that the Phoenician expression *bdj* means 'in (to) her satisfaction'.

The word *ʾrš* occurs frequently as a personal name in Punic inscriptions (where it matches exactly the meaning of the Latin personal name *Desiderium*), and it is sometimes used in theophoric names. It originates indeed from the Semitic verb *ʾrš* 'to desire', cf. Accadic *erēšu* 'verlangen; fordern; erbitten; wünschen', 'to request, demand, ask for, desire'[25], *erištu* 'desire, request'[26]. Biblical Hebrew did not hand down to us the verb but the noun *ărešet* 'desire' only.

It becomes now easy to translate the whole sentence as follows: *kˢštrt* 'as/like ʿAštart', *ʾrš* 'desired', *bdy* 'so as to suit her, to her satisfaction' or, more properly, 'in order to fulfill the desire/request of ʿAštart'.

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[23] Cf. Scavi 1964:72.

[24] Holladay 1988:70 s.v.

[25] AHw II: 'verlangen'; Heise—Stadhouders 1997:54.

[26] AHw II: 'Verlangen, Bedarf'; Heise—Stadhouders 1997:54—55.

According to G. Levi Della Vida[27], L. Vlad Borrelli[28] and G. Colonna[29], the goddess might have expressed her desire through either an oracle or the haruspical interpretation of a prodige.

[C.11] lmlkj šnt šlš III — »[during the] year (*šnt*) three (*šlš*) III of his reign (*lmlkj*)«, lit. »of his reign year three III«.

[C.12] bjrḥ krr — »in the month *krr*«. The name of this month is attested thanks to the Punic inscriptions found in Cyprus. In the cognated languages this base has the following meanings: Hebrew *krr* 'to turn about, to move to and fro, to roll'; Ugaritic *krkr* 'to intertwine the fingers'; Arabic *karra* 'to return, recur, come back, repeat, attack anew', Ethiopic *kʷarkʷara* 'to roll', from a possible original meaning 'to be round, to turn, to recur'. Thus, the Punic name of month *krr* might mean '[the month that] recurs, returns, comes back [each year]'. Nonetheless, according to E. Klein[30], this verb supplies the base for words like Hebrew *kikar* 'talent (weight unit)', Punic *kkr*; Aramaic *kikkĕrâ*; Syriac *kakkĕrâ* 'talent' (assimilated from *krr*); *kikar* 'loaf of bread'; *karāh* 'to dig' < 'to make round' (cf. Aramaic *kĕrē* 'heap', Syriac *kārĕyâ* 'heap'). In this sense it can be related to the Accadic word *karū* 'Getreidehaufen; Speicher', that is 'pile of cereals; silo' [AHw]; 'pile of barley (prepared for storage)' [CAD], and perhaps its ultimate meaning is 'month in which cereals are harvested and piled up and/or stored in silos'[31].

[C.13] bjm qbr ʾlm — »in the day (*bjm*) the divinity (*ʾlm*) is buried (*qbr*)«. The mention of the burying of the statue of goddess ʿAštart is of foremost importance from the point of view of the history of religions. The culture of the Phoenician-Punic world was by far non-homogeneous. As from the second millennium B.C., the Phoenicians attempted to unite and reconciliate diverse tenets and practices in the fields of culture, religion and mythology, and their religious creeds reflect this situation. Unfortunately, the more than 6000 Phoenician-Punic inscriptions found so far offer very scanty data about the religion. Almost all documents that bear any relation with the religious sphere contain only laconic information about the occurrence of the cult of some divinity, thus stating the name only of the concerned god. We are therefore compelled to have recourse to indirect sources, as it is the case of cognated Semitic peoples and late Greek sources[32].

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[27] Levi Dalla Vida 1965:37.

[28] Scavi 1964:71.

[29] Colonna 1989—90:201.

[30] Klein 1987:288 s.v. XXX.

[31] It is interesting to note the proximity of the Semitic words mentioned afore with the name of the Roman gods of cereal crops, i.e. *Ceru* and *Ceres*.

[32] Ribichini 1988:104.

Aštart. Phoenician bronze.
XIV–XIII c. BCE. Paris,
Musée du Louvre.

In origin ʿAštart was a Sumerian goddess, named Innin or Inanna. The Accadic name of Innin is *Aštarte* and *Ištar*; the Moabites called her *ʿIštar*; her Aramaic name was *ʿAttar*, while in Ugarit she was called *ʿṯtrt* and in Greece Ἀφροδίτη, Aphrodite. The Bible mentions the name of the goddess (1Kings 11:5) as *ʿAštōreth*, that is by giving it the vowels of the word *bōšeth* (= 'shame') to show Israel's horror of the hideous practices of the heathens[33]. According to the Egyptian source named 'Papyrus of Aštarte', which calls her 'the goddess of the Asians', she was the wife of Yam, the god of the sea. Lucianus (Λου-κιανός, approx. 120–180 CE) mentions the *Dea Syria*, the most important goddess of northern Syria, who resulted from the merging of the characteristics of the goddesses *Atargatis* (one of the hellenized names of Ištar) and *Anat*. Among the Phoenicians we can notice the preminence of some feminine divinities: ʿAštart, Baʿalat, Tanit, etc. It is possible to assume for these goddesses an almost equal connection with fecundity, prosperity, love and war. In Ugarit, as we learn from the succinct mentions occurring in the Hebrew sources, ʿAštart was considered the mightiest among all goddesses.

For a better understanding of what the 'burying of the divinity' might mean, we have to go back to the core of the myth of Ištar as we know it from those Sumeric sources that supplied the base for its further spreading. The Sumerians reputed Innin or Inanna as the most important goddess of fertility. In her most archaic form she appears as a reed, i.e. the typical plant of marshes. It is only at the beginning of the third millennium B.C. that she appears in human form, mostly as a woman, but sometimes the divinity is represented as a bearded warrior. Inanni represents the contrasts of nature. She is at the same time fertile and sterile, virgin and lecherous, the one who gives the life and the one who kills, placid and destructive, peaceful and waging war. Her attributes are reflected in the animals depicting her character: the dove, the owl and the lion. She is the goddess of the planet Venus, the 'star of the sea'. Dumuzi complements the figure of this goddess. Dumuzi personi-

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[33] The same happens to the name of the Semitic god *Molokh* < *Melekh* ('king'), who was propitiated by the sacrifice of children. The Bible mentions it as *Mōlekh*, thus adapting its vowels so as to fit the Hebrew word *bōšeth* ('shame').

fies the fertility of sheeps, as the meaning of his Sumerian name ('Creator of Life') shows[34]. In the myths he is a shepherd himself. In the course of centuries he turns into the god of vegetation, and later he becomes a god of fertility, thus catching up with Innin. In the mythology, Dumuzi and Innin are linked together by close bonds, as Dummuzi is at the same time the son, the lover and the brother of Innin. The epic poem encased in the dirge *The fate of Dumuzi* narrates that in the oppressive summer heat Dumuzi fell asleep near his flock. While he was about dreaming his ominous fate, the demons thrilled him away (this myth and the similar ones are related to the summer infertility of the flocks). In the epic poem named *Innin, Dumuzi and Bilulu*, Dumuzi is killed by the woman demon Bilulu and her son Girgire. Innin takes vengeance on them and then she mourns for Dumuzi. The myth of the divinities of fertility culminates always with their death, thus their divine nature perfects itself by their death which corresponds to the new period of fertility. The bonds linking Innin and Dumuzi together are better cleared in the epic poem named *Innin's voyage to the netherworld.* Innin travels to the netherworld and, while crossing its seven gates, she is deprived of her seven ornaments, judged and executed. Her ambassador, taking her interests, visits — one after the other — all the Sumeric sanctuaries. The god Enki helps her by creating two beings who rescue the goddess by means of the plant and water of life. Yet, for her to be free, someone else must take the place of the goddess in the netherworld. Innin does not want to part from her lover Dumuzi. While Innin was away, though, Dumuzi was unfaithful to her. This is why she decides to send Dumuzi to the netherworld in her place. After a long pursuit, the demons succeed in laying hold of him. Dumuzi will remain six month in the netherworld, while for the remaining six months Innin takes his place.

The Hebrew-Aramaic name of Dumuzi is *Tammuz*[35], while in Syria and Phoenicia he was known under the name of *ʾĂdōn* ('lord, master', whence the Greek name of Ἄδων or Ἄδωνις). In Phoenicia was called *Ešmūn*[36] and his myth seems to be somewhat different. Aštart harasses the beautiful young man with her love and Ešmun evirates himself (exactly as Attis, his Phrygian counterpart, does). Ešmun dies of his wounds but the goddess, whose fervent love is life-giving, resuscitates him. According to another Phoenician myth reported by Greek sources, Ἀφροδίτη (Aphrodite = ʿAštart, *interpretatio Graeca*) fell in love with the beautiful Ἄδων or Ἄδωνις (Adonis, possibly *ʾĂdōn* or *Ešmūn*) but her husband Ἄρης (Ares), actuated by jealousy, changed himself into a wild

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[34] Later, the Semites interpreted his name as 'the Faithful Son' on the base of a popular etymology.

[35] Ezechiel, 8:14: »Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's House which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz«.

[36] The name of this god seems to be etymologically related to the Semitic base for 'olive oil'.

boar and killed the young man near the spring named *Afqa*[37]. Ešmun's blood painted red the water of the streamlet the ancient name of which was Adonis (today: *Nahr Ibrahim*, 'the river of Abraham')[38]. Aphrodite descended to the Infers to rescue Adonis, but Περσεφόνη Persephone (possibly the Phoenician divinity *mwt Mōt* 'Death') allowed him to go back to the earth for six months only every year. Late Greek sources mention the fact that in Paphos (Cyprus) there was a »tomb of Aphrodite«. It is therefore possible that the mysterious mention of the »burial of the divinity« is related to the above myths and religious practices.

[C.14] wšnt lm ᵓš ᵓlm bbty — »and (*w*) years (*šnt*) to (*l*) the statue (*m ᵓš*) of the divinity (*ᵓlm*) in (*b*) its House (*bty*)«. The word *m ᵓš*, which appears in Phoenician and Cypriote-Punic inscriptions as *mš* (i.e. lacking the central *āleph*) is usually translated as 'statue'. This word is possibly related to the Semitic root appearing in Accadic as *mašālu* 'gleichen' [AHw], 'to be similar; to make similar; to copy; to make of equal rank or value' [CAD], Aramaic *mĕtāl* 'to resemble, to be like', Arabic *mathala* 'to be like, resemble, imitate', Ethiopic *masala* 'to become like' as well as to the Hebrew noun *mĕšel* 'likeness, similarity' (a *hapax legomenon* in the Bible, occurring Job 41:25 in the form *mašlō* 'his like'). If so, the most correct meaning of the word is not 'statue' but rather 'simulacrum' or 'effigy'.

[C.15] šnt km hkkbm ᵓl — »years (*šnt*) like/as many as (*km*) the (*h*) stars (*kkbm*) these (*ᵓl*)«. From a paleographic point of view, the two letters *k* are slightly different from the *k*-s appearing elsewhere in the text. This sentence can be translated without problems. It means 'as many years as these stars'.

The last phrase is a nominal sentence where the verb is implied. If the verb was in the indicative, we could reckon with a real compound (i.e.: 'the years *are* as many as these very stars'), thus it becomes difficult to understand the reference made to the stars. Yet, should the implied verb be a conjunctive (i.e. 'and *may* the years *be* as many as these very stars'), the problem consists in understanding the meaning of the deictic 'these'. One of the hypotheses made by the researchers was that of viewing the sentence as referred to the Roman-Etruscan rite of the *inauguratio* of holy places, when the sanctuaries were oriented according to *stellae* (i.e. 'stars') and *cruces* (i.e. 'crosses'). However, the Semitic construction of article + deictic *h*-...*ᵓl* shows that here the text mentions 'these *very* stars', thus probably indicating that the captioned stars were painted or nailed around the place where they nailed the golden plates.

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[37] Up to the fourth century of our era the sanctuary of Adonis stood next to the Afqa spring. The temple was destroyed by Constantinos the Great.

[38] Every spring the colour of the waters of the Adonis river turns red owing to the thawing of snow containing iron oxide.

In our opinion, though, the entire structure of the phrases cited under [C.14] and [C.15] seem to be built in the form of a *Glückwünsch* or *wishful omen*. Thus, the Semitic form *wšnt* 'and years' is very likely an idiomatic expression meaning 'long life'. We translate therefore these sentences as follows: 'And years [= long life] to the simulacrum of the divinity in its House [= temple], may its years be as many as these (very) stars'.

We shall now compare some of the former translations which were given for this text against our own translation:

G. Levi Della Vida's translation[39]:

> *To Lady 'Aštart. This is the sanctuary (holy place) which was made and dona-*
> *ted by TBRY᾿. WLNŠ king of KYŠRY᾿ in the month of Zebaḥ ŠŠM (ŠMŠ cor-*
> *ruptum) in MTN in the temple of WBNTW because Aštart choose through him*
> *in the year III of his reign in the month of KRR in the day of the burial of the divi-*
> *nity and in the year of the statue of the divinity in her temple [and] in the year of*
> *these stars [???]*

L. Vlad Borrelli's translation[40]:

> *To Lady 'Aštart. This is the holy place which was made and which was given*
> *by TBRY᾿ WLNŠ, king over KYŠRY᾿, in the month of ZBḤ ŠMŠ donated in the*
> *temple and in its fenced place because Aštart elevated me with her hand in her kin-*
> *gdom for three years in the month of KRR in the day the divinity is buried. And*
> *the years of the statue of the divinity in her temple [are as many] years as these*
> *stars.*

Our translation:

> *To [our] Lady, to 'Aštart. This holy place was made and donated by Thefarie(i)*
> *Velianas, who reigns over KYŠRY᾿, in the month of the Sacrifice to the Sun, as a*
> *donation to the House [= temple]; and he made [this] effigy, so as to satisfy the*
> *wish of 'Aštart , [during] the third year of his kingdom, [in] the month KRR, in*
> *the day the divinity is buried. And years [=long life] to the simulacrum of the*
> *divinity in its House [= temple], [may its] years [be] as many as these (very)*
> *stars.*

The Etruscan language

Before giving our translation of the Etruscan text, we deem necessary to provide our readers with some words of explanation. Etruscan is an irremediably dead language that left no successors behind it. From this axiom it follows that it is impossible to know it but through the exteriority of written testi-

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[39] Scavi 1964:75.

[40] *Ibidem*, 74.

monies. These relics are, moreover, very limited in number and quality. Thus, linguists have to deal with a linguistic relictum — or *Restsprache* — rather than with a properly documented language. This is why studying the Etruscan language is inseverable from the analysis of available texts. It might seem obvious that, in order to understand an inscription, it is necessary to know both the script and the language, thus linguistic knowledge should precede the interpretative process, hermeneutics being dependant on the degree of our knowledge. It is therefore necessary to mention here the *vexata quaestio* of the methods used for the interpretation of Etruscan texts.

During the second half of last century, the debates and polemics among scholars raised this question almost to the rank of manifestos. In the eighteenth century it became possible to read the alphabet, while the punctuation of late Etruscan texts was of help in parsing the inscriptions into distinct words. Yet, since the very beginning, the main problems arose in connection with the possible lexical meaning of the words. The question of grammar has been since ever a marginal one and was often viewed just as subsidiary to semantics. There had formerly been fanciful attempts to explain the Etruscan language as originating from Hebrew, Greek as well as from the Italic languages. The methodological question implied by hermeneutics became of paramount importance during the second half of the last century owing to the polemics which arose among the scholars who tackled the interpretation of Etruscan texts in different ways.

When the genetic relationship of the Indo-European languages became evident, it eventually inspired W. Corssen to write his book *Über die Sprache der Etrusker* (1874—75), a work that marked the birth of the so-called *etymological method*. The essence of this approach consisted in defining an interpretation system based on the "etymological" comparison of Etruscan words and forms against words and forms of another language or language family which was assumed to be *genetically* related to Etruscan. W. Deecke criticized the work of Corssen and demonstrated in a few pages that it failed to show any result. In spite of this, the etymological method developed by Corssen kept on living along the borderline between science and amateurism, with the hypotheses of Armenian affinity by S. Bugge, Italic affinity by E. Lattes and G. Hempl, Greek affinity by U. Coli, up to the more recent theory of V. Georgiev[41] who tried to show the derivation of Etruscan from the Hittite language. On the other hand, the failure of Corssen's attempt induced the scholars to search for affinities falling beyond Indo-European. V. Thomsen tried to relate Etruscan to the Caucasic and Basque languages. Konow sought a connection with the Dravidic languages, while the attempt of J. Martha to relate Etruscan to the Finno-Ugric

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[41] Georgiev 1962.

languages ended up in a clamorous failure[42]. The fundamental error of the *etymological method* was that it sought a *genetic* relationship where there is probably none[43].

Later, Deecke reconsidered his position with regard to a possible Indo-European connection. Yet, his criticism had favoured the development of the so-called *combinatory method*. This method was proposed in antithesis to the etymological method. It consisted on the study of Etruscan from within its interior, thus excluding any kind of comparison with other languages. It *prejudicially* excluded any relationship with the Indo-European languages in the first place, claiming that the system of *external comparisons* had been improductive. C. Pauli, A. Torp, G. Herbig, F. Skutsch, S. P. Cortsen and others adhered to this linguistic school. This approach sets out from a minimum number of notions that are considered as acquired, i.e. personal names, captions of pictures, glosses, evident resemblances with Greek and Latin words. The Etruscan texts were examined as if they were completely isolated from a linguistic point of view, thus avoiding any kind of reference to other languages. Since this approach purported to explain Etruscan from Etruscan, they compared Etruscan texts among themselves and examined their reciprocal relationships. The accentuated criticism in textual analysis yielded some results, mainly in the field of grammar. The principal problem of this approach was that it left out of consideration the strict relationship between the documentary sources and the historical reality in which they were born. Moreover, the data obtained from these studies were then complemented with *personal hypotheses* purporting to test and verify the meaning of words and their formal variants. As a consequence of this, the core of this approach was hardly more

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[42] We shall not mention here the most wild amateurism trying to find connections with the most disparate language families, from Semitic to Chinese, let alone the languages of American Indians.

[43] Strictly speaking, a relationship between languages can only be proved by demonstrating that the similarities between them cannot reasonably be attributed to borrowing or to chance. But, in order to progress beyond a mere demonstration of relationship, one must employ traditional comparative techniques based on the discovery and exploitation of sound correspondences. Unfortunately, unless the linguistic relationship being investigated is very close, only a small minority of the historically genuine correspondences will appear to be statistically significant; the rest will be too rare. The only way to distinguish genuine correspondences and cognates is the rigorous application of the comparative method, based on the recognition of strict sound correspondences and ultimately on the observation that sound changes which have been carried to completion in a linguistic community are almost always completely regular (i.e. »sound laws«). All etymologies not based on those principles are in effect *Gleichklangsetymologien*; by themselves they have no probative value at all, and any hypothesis which crucially depends on such etymologies will be forever beyond proof. Yet, in the case of *linguistic borrowings*, the situation is very different as the phonological constraints, in the case of loanwords, are much weaker.

than an *educated guesswork* about the possible meaning of a word compared as occurring in various contexts. The limits of this method were soon reached by A. Thorp with his works *Etrüskische Beiträge* (1902—3) and *Etruscan notes* (1903) since, by adding new hypotheses formed on former hypotheses, the probability index fell very soon to zero.

A. Trombetti attempted to harmonize the combinatory and etymologic methods. The new perspective enabled to apply very cautiously the *etymological method* within the sphere of Peri-Mediterranean languages in conjunction with the refined possibilities supplied by the *combinatory approach*. In this way, A. Trombetti attained some positive results. A different perspective was opened in 1933—34 with the so-called *historic-cultural comparison* or *bi-linguistic method* (»Bilinguentheorie«). It consisted *grosso modo* in inferring the meaning of formulae or Etruscan texts from the models of formulae or texts having a similar content that can be found in known languages sharing the same civilization context of the Etruscan language. In other words it means that, even if the origin of the Etruscan language seems to be far from the origins of the languages spoken by Greeks, Romans and other Italic peoples in the Iron Age, there *must* be analogies and connections with those languages that shared a common — and often profound — cultural unity. This proceeding was consciously and deliberately used by Massimo Pallottino for the first time by putting a Faliscan inscription and an Etruscan inscription the one next to the other and comparing them. The Faliscan inscription said: *eco quto eutenosio* 'I am the jug of Eutenos (a personal name)', while the Etruscan inscription said: *mi qutum lemausnas* 'I am the jug of Lemausna (a personal name)'. From the identical contents of the two inscriptions written in two different languages it was possible to infer that Faliscan (i.e. archaic Latin) *eco* (= *ego*) 'I' is the equivalent of Etruscan *mi* 'I', and the same applies to the Etruscan words *quto/qutum* (< Greek κύτος 'jug'). There is nothing basically new in this method. The first and most simple notions concerning the semantic values of the Etruscan wordstock as well as some grammatical form (cf. for example the genitive in sentences like Etruscan *Marces clan*, Latin *Marci filius* 'son of Mark') go back to the seventeenth century and were based on intuitions as well as on the external evidence supplied by indications or clues of whatsoever nature which served as exegetical "keys" for the translation. Such "keys" were glosses, pictures, or the match in meaning of two different contexts. At a closer look, the nature of the semantic information obtained from these "indices" or "clues" is essentially extralinguistic and proceeds from the *cultural* and *conceptual* contents of the sources examined. Thus, the so-called bilinguistic method has, in reality, little to do with linguistics. Nevertheless, by using the bilinguistic method *cum granu salis* in connection with the older, etymological and combinatory, methods it is sometimes possible to attain satisfactory results, as in the case of the "translation" of the *Liber Linteus* (»mummy of Zagreb«).

In the last few years some scholars claimed that an organic knowledge of
the lingustic structures of the Etruscan language is needed in order to translate
it effectively. The attempts to study the morphological structure of the Etru-
scan language *per se*, thus prescinding from the underlying hermeneutics,
were rare enough in the past (cf. the works of W. Deecke, A. Trombetti, M.
Pallottino). Although the number of such studies was recently enlarged by the
works of A. J. Pfiffig, M. Cristofani, H. Rix (thus making A. L. Prosdocimi
write of an assumed move of linguistic etruscology from the paradigm of her-
meneutics to that of grammar), they never were much more than endeavours.
Any claim that the linguistic structure of a semi-unknown language should be
studied separately from the language is a good example of circular thinking,
since the structure of a language cannot be studied if the language itself is not
properly known. Even if there is a number of facts which are reputed as acqui-
red, they are mostly a cluster of superficial and fragmentary knowledge of sin-
gle partial aspects of the reality, thus lacking a homogeneous picture.

Such substantial deficiency is mirrored in the problem of the origin and
classification of the Etruscan language. The attempts made as from the end of
last century did not end up in a satisfactory solution. It is common knowledge
that the great majority of the Etruscan words, the meaning of which is known,
are of Indo-European origin. As from the end of last century, scholars propo-
sed the most ingenious hypotheses. Etruscan was variously viewed as either a
»pre-Indo-European« language (i.e. the relict of one of the languages spoken
in the Indo-Mediterranean area before the expansion of the Indo-Europeans),
or »proto-Indo-European« (that is a language belonging to a branch of com-
mon Indo-European which separated before the others), or »peri-Indo-Euro-
pean« (a language connected to other Mediterranean languages, particularly
the Aegean-Anatolic languages, which assumedly did not belong to the
Indo-European stock but developed at the borders of the area of Indo-Euro-
pean influence). So far, none of these hypotheses proved satisfactory. M. Pal-
lottino suggested to set apart the abstract ideas of »Indo-European« and
»non-Indo-European« and dwell instead on the formation process of Etrus-
can. According to Pallottino,

> »possono aver concorso fattori di varia origine, in parte comuni a
> quelli delle lingue indoeuropee storiche, in parte riferibili ad altri am-
> bienti linguistici più o meno identificabili«

> »A number of factors of various origins may have contributed. These
> factors are partly shared with the historical Indo-European languages
> and are partly related to other — more or less identifiable — linguistic
> environments«

The prevailing opinion of Etruscologists, though, is that the idea of a mixed
formation of the Etruscan language should be rebutted, thus tracing back Etru-
scan to a *»homogeneous linguistic individuality«*, whatever the extent of its borro-

wings, innovations and developments might have been.

In spite of the latter opinions, M. Pallottino was very likely right, since a number of features of Etruscan seem to point to a *mixed* origin[44]. The Etruscan wordstock — as we know it — seems to be set up by a number of Greek, Latin, Italic, Celtic and even Germanic[45] loan-words. Within the limited scope of the present study, though, we shall not discuss this point in detail. Nonetheless, we decided to have recourse to *all* the analytic methods described afore so as to reach the best possible refinement of hermeneutics as allowed by the state--of-art of modern Etruscology. In this sense we had recourse to both the *bilinguistic approach* and the so-called *etymological* method too, although taking cautious care so as to keep the latter confined within the boundaries of highly probabilistic considerations.

In principle, the so-called *etymological method* should never be applied to an unknown text, unless the tentative match is supported by hard contextual or extra-linguistic evidence. The main problem of "etymological exercises" is that sometimes they can supply us with some information about the lexical history of words and morphemes, but they can tell us very little on how these words and morphemes are used in a synchronic context. Moreover, etymologists might think that a word or a morpheme originates from a specific source because they can easily match either the form or its meaning while, in reality, the concerned word or morpheme might originate from a much different source or it possibly happened to be used in a different grammatical category or might have acquired a completely new meaning. That's why, instead of applying the old "etymological" method, we preferred to use a *multilateral comparison* as a heuristic for selecting from which language or set of languages a given word might originate. The matches we proposed are *not* proven, just more likely as compared to less likely. In this case, though, the Punic text of the bilingual inscription — even if it is not the faithful translation of the Etruscan inscription — served as a reliable guide, thus enabling a more serious attempt to tackle the translation of the Etruscan *lamina*.

Not only the hermeneutic process, but the entire development of our approach to the Etruscan language sets out from the consideration of objective data in relation with external facts which might put light into the meaning of the words, according to the approach which has been called *bilinguistic*. From the sources of primary, external evidence it is often possible to trace back — in a more or less reliable way — the approximate semantic value of the Etruscan

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[44] Cf. Agostini 2000.

[45] An attempt to trace a relationship between the Etruscan and Germanic languages should be published in short by I. Nesbitt Jones (ed.): *Five Texts in Etruscan. Early Gothic Language of Tyrrhenians and Ancient Jutes.* (Berkeley Insights in Linguistics and Semiotics, Vol. 36).

words. At the same time it becomes possible to gather every element which may prove helpful to reconstruct the peculiarities of the grammatical structure. The lack of languages *genetically* related to Etruscan does not mean that it is not possible to seek common elements shared by Etruscan and those Indo-European languages which are *areally* related to it. Yet, the essential methodological point to be observed is that such concordances must not be regarded as established *a priori*. Much to the contrary, they proceed as a direct consequence of the data acquired during the interpretative process. As an example, if we say that *θuvas* is the genitive of the word *θuva* it is not because there is an apparent likeness with genitival forms of the Greek type Ἕκτορος < Ἕκτωρ. Much to the contrary, the comparison of the Greek and the Etruscan forms becomes possible *only because* textual evidence confirms that *θuvas* is the "genitive" of *θuva*.

It goes without saying that a step-by-step reconstruction often involves an uncertain and approximate reconstruction of the meaning. Nonetheless, the translation that we present hereunder is the most complete published so far.

Lamina A: A tentative translation of the Etruscan text

The plate containing the longer Etruscan inscription has the size of 81 × 185 mm. The inscription is very clearly carved on sixteen rows and contains 36 words. The contents of the Etruscan *lamina* reflects the Punic text of plate B but it is not its faithful translation. This is why up to now it has been very difficult to match the two texts. From their contents it is not possible to gather if both plates were written at the same time, but the latter seems to be the most likely hypothesis.

ꓱꓭ ·ꓛꓥꓛꓲ · ꓮꓲꟽꓔ · ꓮꓔꟷ	1	ita · tmia · icac · he
ꓱꟽꟷꓲꓔꓭꓭ · ꓮꓭꟽꓮꟽꓮꓭ	2	ramaśva · vatieχe
ꓮꟷꟽꓱꓳ · ꓭꓱꓥꓔꓭꓮꓭꓮꓵꓵ	3	unialastres · θemia
ꓮꓭꓴꓳ · ꓮꓔꓥꓳ · ꓵꓱꟽ · ꓮꓭ	4	sa · meχ · θuta · θefa
ꓵꓮꓭ · ꓭꓮꓥꓮꓵꓥꓭ · ꓲꓱꓵ	5	riei · velianas · sal
ꓦꓮꓔꓴ · ꓭꓮꓲꟽꓱꓭꓴꓵ	6	cluvenias · turu
ꓭꓮꓭꓦꓳ · ꓭꓮꓔꓭꓲꟽꓦꟽ · ꓱꓴ	7	ce · munistas · θuvas
ꓱꓱꓛꓵꓲ · ꓮꓴꓭꓱꓛꓱꟽꓮꓔ	8	tameresca · ilacve
ꓲꓮꓮ · ꓲꓴ · ꓴꓮꓵ · ꓭꟷꓭꓮꓭꓵꓴꓔ	9	tulerase · nac · ci · avi
ꓔꓲꓱꟽꓮꓲꓭꓱꓔ · ꓭꓭꟷꓴꓵꓴ · ꓴ	10	l · χurvar · teśiameit
ꓱꓭꓮꓭꓵꓮ · ꓱꓱꓛꓮꓵꓲ · ꓱꓵꓮ	11	ale · ilacve · alśase
ꓛꓮꓵꓲ · ꓭꓱꓥꓮꓭꓔꓮ · ꓛꓮꓥ	12	nac · atranes · zilac
ꓵꓭꓮꓛꓳ · ꓮꓵꓮꓔꟷꓱꓵꓭꓭ · ꓵꓮ	13	al · seleitala · acnaśv
ꟽꓮꓭꓱꓭ · ꟽꟷꓥꓮꓔꓲ · ꓭꓰꓭ	14	ers · itanim · heram
ꓴꓦꓵ · ꓮꓛꓮꟷꓮ · ꓴꓲꓮꓭ · ꓱꓱ	15	ve · avil · eniaca · pul
ꓮꓵꓵꟽꓴꓦ	16	umχva

[A.1] ᴀⲓⲘⲦ·ᴀⲦⲒ | ita · tmia — There is no doubt concerning the meaning of the deictic *ita* (case 0), attested in a number of inscriptions. As far as the Etruscan word *tmia* is concerned, M. Pallottino[46] invited the researchers to examine the possibility of linking the Etruscan word *tmia* to Greek τεμενος 'holy place, fenced place, sanctuary' (and Latin *templum*). The same author, in a later writing[47] regards as »more than likely« the identicalness of the Greek and Etruscan roots, thus unequivocally matching the sense of the Punic wording ʾšr qdš 'holy place'. H. Rix[48] maintains that *tmia* has the meaning of 'ein Kultraum'. Consensus' translation of this sentence is »this holy place«.

[A.2] ᴀⲓꙅᴀⲘᴀⲞᴇꞚ·ⲔᴀⲪⲒ | icac · heramaśva — The sentence *ita · tmia · icac · heramaśva · vatieχe unialastres* was tentatively translated by Massimo Pallottino as »this holy place and this statue were dedicated to Uni-ᶜAštart«[49]. The word *icac* is a deictic (*ica*) ending with the well-known enclitic conjunction -*c* 'and', the latter corresponding to Lydian -*k*, Venetic -*ke*, Latin -*que*, etc.[50] *Ica* is attested in the accusative form *ikan* in TLE 939 (*ikan ziχ*, lit. 'this [he] writes')[51]. In more recent inscriptions we find the forms *eca* and *ca*, while *ita* occurs in late inscriptions as *eta* or *ta*. The two deictics *ita* and *ica* 'this' do not seem to have a substantially distinct meaning or function. M. Pallottino mentioned the possibility of slight nuances in meaning, as in Latin *hic iste* »this [and more precisely] this«[52].

The word *heramaśva* originates from the verbal base *heram-*, a root occurring twice in this text, i.e. in lines 1—2 and 14. The ending of *heramaśva* is a suffix cluster formed by -*aś*, which is very likely a deverbative used to form nouns (< *-az*), as well as a plural (dual) suffix -*va*, thus confirming that, in this case, we are dealing with a noun. In line 14, the same base appears with the verbal suffix -*ve*, that is a preterite verbal form. The endings -*va* and -*ua* usually appear as the mark of dual of the direct case[53], as — for example — in words like *renχzua*,

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[46] Scavi 1964:83.

[47] Pallottino 1984:437.

[48] Rix in: *GvP*, 84.

[49] Pallottino 1986:340: »Questo luogo sacro e questa statua sono stati consacrati a Uni-Astarte«.

[50] Originating from IE *kʷe, an enclitic conjunction meaning 'and'.

[51] The same deictic possibly occurs also *ikam* (Narce, TLE 29), where -*m* < -*ma* is a suffix indicating aim or purpose. The same suffix occurs also in the word *itanim* that we shall consider below.

[52] Scavi 1964, 83.

[53] M. Pallottino (1931:261), following in Trombetti's footsteps, maintains the (very unlikely) existence of plurals in -*a* and concludes as follows: »un vero segno del plurale -*u-a* non esiste (tanto meno -*v-a*) e che le uniche forme [di plurale] studiate, tanto simili per terminazione, non sono altro che temi in -*u*, cui si aggiunge la desinenza del plurale -*a* (per es. *murzu-a, θeusnu-a, renχzua, catru-a, menu-a*)«. The -*va* ending, accor-

catrua, suciva, zuθeva (occurring in the Linen Book of Zagreb, *Liber Linteus Zagabriensis*), as well as in *saniśva*[54], *murzua, clutiva*[55], *θusaθua, selasva*[56], etc. Naturally, the Etruscan language has some words ending in *-va/-ua*, which certainly can not be considered dual forms, as for example *ruva* 'brother', *sceva* or *skaiva* 'left-handed' (= Latin *scaevus*), **eleiva* '(olive) oil', *snua-* 'to turn?', etc. Nonetheless, since in *heramaśva* the ending *-va* occurs *after* another suffix, we can be almost sure that it does not belong to the base but it is used here as a suffix. Some feminine theonyms show the presence of the same suffix, for example *Latva* (= Leda, which does not originate from the usual Greek form Λῆδα, but much rather from a "Doric" dialect[57] complemented with the suffix *-va*); *Metua* (= Μήδεια or Medea, probably with the suffix *-ua*); *Men(e)rva* (= Minerva, a name of Etruscan origin[58]) as well as *Eθausva*. Not every *-va/-ua* suffix can therefore be considered as a "true" dual, but when occurring in theonyms it might be a dual plural form used to express the majesty of the divinity. That's exactly what happens in Phoenician, where the word *Alm* 'divinity' is very likely a (dual?) plural form. Should our hypothesis be correct, *icac heramaśva* means »and this (divine) simulacrum«. Yet, should it be a regular dual, we ought to translate it as »and these [two] simulacra«.

Several authors, from M. Pallottino to H. Rix, hypothesized that *heramaśva* might match the Punic construction *m'š 'lm* 'statue of the divinity', but they were unable to account for its etymology so as to connect it to the meaning of the verb *heram-ve* (as we said before, *-ve* is a verbal preterite). In our opinion, by linking the Etruscan form *heram-* to a verb occurring in Old Norse , i.e. *herma* 'to imitate; to communicate'[59], it becomes possible to infer that the meaning of **heram-az* is 'simulacrum', while *heram-* means 'to imitate or represent (the reality), for example by carving, cutting, engraving or painting an image, or by writing fiction, poetry, songs, etc.' Evidence thereof can be sought in the inscription TLE 290 painted on a *patera* which bears a drawing of both the sun

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ding to Pallottino (1931:259), might be an adjectival suffix. Later though, this same author inclines to accept the thesis of H. Rix (1968:121) according to whom the *-ua/-va* endings are used as plural marks (Pallottino 1969:83,15). Also H. Rix (1991:681) assumes that *sanisva* is the plural of *sanisa* (in reality, though, it is very likely the dual form of *sanis*).

[54] Tomb of the Claudii (Clavtie) in Caere, CIE 6213: *apac atic saniśva θui cesu*, lit. »and the father and the mother [the construction is similar to Latin *paterque materque*] the two united here rest«.

[55] Hypogean of San Manno, Perugia, TLE 619: *murzua* are the two corpses of the brothers Larth and Aule Precu and *clutiva* are the two sarcophagi where they were buried.

[56] Leaden plate of Volterra, TLE 402.

[57] The name of Leda possibly originates from Lycian or Cretan *lada* 'lady'.

[58] The cult of Minerva was probably introduced in Rome by the *Tarquinii*.

[59] *Herma*: 'melden, erzählen; nachahmen' [AEW].

(*erus*) and moon (*lusχnei*). The text says: *s(eθre) tasinu herma*[60] *tins ceχe*, i.e. 'S(ethre) Tasinu pictum Iovi pensat' — 'S. Tasinu [this] drawing gives as compensation to Jove'. The stem **herm-* occurs in the long inscription engraved on the sarcophagus of Laris Pulenas, which is believed to contain a number of (inexistent!) names of public offices. Preformed prejudices prevented the researchers from realizing that the sentence *alumnaθe hermu melecrapisces* simply means »alumnus fictor melographi« (the latter Etruscan word being a borrowing from Greek μελόγραφος 'song or poem writer').

[A.3] ꝃꝃᴎᴛⵥᴀᴊᴀⵑⵈⴸᴀⴸᴀⵑᴛᴀꝃ | vatieχe unialastres — C. de Simone observed that the suffix *-ce* in *vatieχe* confirms that this is the regular form of the passive preterite (while *-ce* is the most often occurring active form), yet he considers this word »ein Attribut oder nähere Bestimmung zu *heramaśva*«[61]. On the other hand, H. Rix maintains that *vatieχe* behaves like a passive verb[62]. Both scholars agree on the fact that the meaning of this word should be 'geweiht' ('consecrated') or 'gestiftet' ('donated')[63], a meaning sought on purpose so as to comply with the Punic wording *'š p'l w'š ytn* 'which made and donated' [C.4]. Yet, both G. Colonna[64] and A. Cristofani[65] acknowledged the possibility of a close connection of Etruscan *vatieχe* with the Indo-European base **wat-* or **wot-* (IEW 1113) geistig angeregt sein, occuring (1) in Latin as *vātēs* 'soothsayer, prophet, poet' and *vaticinare* 'to vaticinate, prophesy'; (2) in the Celtic languages, cf. Gaulish **vātis* 'soothsayer, prophet'[66], Old Irish *faidh* 'soothsayer, prophet', Cymric *gwawd* 'poem; Gedicht'; as well as (3) in the Germanic languages, cf. Gothic *wōds* 'to be possessed', old Icelandic *óđr*, Anglo-Saxon *wōd* of s. m., Old High German *wuot* 'insanitus', Old Icelandic *ósa* 'rasend; verrückt machen', Anglo-Saxon *wédan*, Old High German *wuoten*, old Swedish *wódian* 'wüten, rasen; verrückt sein', etc.

In our opinion, though, it should be phonologically possible to connect the Etruscan base *vati-* to the semantic area of the Indo-European base **wadh-* 'Pfand, Pfand einlösen'[67], whence Latin *vadimōnium* 'Bürgschaft', *vas*, *vadis*

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[60] Già vari autori avevano ipotizzato che in *herma* e *hermu* fosse elisa la seconda vocale di *heram-*.

[61] De Simone 1981:64—65.

[62] Rix 1981:75—76.

[63] *GvP*, 1981:78,80.

[64] Colonna 1989—90:197 ff.

[65] Cristofani 1989:85—93.

[66] The *vātis or *wātis* was one of the classes of the old Gaulish druids: ούατεις, soothsayers, prophets, mentioned by Strabo along with δρυιδα 'Druids' and βάρδοι 'Bards', as a third order in the Gaulish hierarchy. Ούατεις was Strabo's Greek transliteration of the Proto-Celtic **vāteis* (Stoke), pl. of *vātis or *wātis*, old Irish *faith*, modern Irish and Gaelic *faidh*. »The *Bardi* were the poets, the *Vates* were the sacrificers and naturalists« (Chambers, *Cycl.* Š1728Ć s.v. *Druidi* quoted by OED s.v. *vatis*).

[67] Cf. IEW 1109.

'Bürge', Gothic *wadi* 'Pfand, Handgeld', etc. Both the Indo-European and Etruscan base do mean 'to stand surety, to go bail, to undertake, to engage oneself, to pledge, to pawn, to bind oneself'. Evidence thereof is supplied by the Etruscan form *vatlmi*[68] which seems to match Latin [*in*] *vadimonio*, cf. TLE 738: *ecn : turce : fleres̀ : vatlmi : arθ : cainis̀*, i.e. 'hoc donavit aeneum signum in vadimonio Arth Cainis̀' ('Arth Cainis̀ donated this bronze statue in token'). The same meaning can be attributed to the word *vatlmi* occurring on a candelabrum of the fifth century B.C. dedicated to the god *Lur*. Thus, the possible meaning of *vatieχe* is »was promised by a solemn oath or formal engagement«.

Pallottino translated the word *unialastres* as »to Uni-ʿAštart«. According to H. Rix, though, it should be analyzed as *unialas,* that is »eine Kasusform des Götternamens *uni* 'Juno'« and *-tres*, »eine enklitische Partikel oder Postposition«[69].

In *uni-alas-tres* we can recognize the plural suffix of the oblique case[70] *-V-las*, occurring in words like *snenaθiulas, veleθnalas, [a]panalas*. It is easy to realize that there is congruence of the plural suffixes, since the plural obliquity mark is attached to the plural suffix, exactly as in the case of plural obliques ending in *-ur-as* (where *-ur* is the pl. suffix and *-as* is the mark of the oblique case). *Uniale* is a plural form of the theonym *Uni* that occurs elsewhere in the Etruscan corpus. It should tally with the mention made, thus obtaining the following sentence: *per Iunones vadati* [*fuerunt*] 'they were solemnly promised in Junos' names'. It is difficult to define the value of *-tres*[71]; yet, taking into account the various inscriptions where the suffix occurs, we can infer that it is possibly used in a number of meanings: 'through, by, for, on behalf of, toward, against' and the like.

Why should there be a mention of a twofolded Juno? R. Block, when drawing a connection between the cult of the goddess Uni of Veii — who was known in Rome with the name of *Iuno Regina* ('queen Juno') — and the great goddess of Carthage — the cult of whom entered Rome under the name of *Iuno Caelestis* ('heavenly Juno') — very acutely noted[72]:

> *On comprend mieux ainsi pourquoi, au moment où Hannibal faisait trembler Rome, tous les esprits se sont tournés vers Junon, honorée sous diverses epithètes, et surtout vers Iuno Regina, qui représentait la vieille déesse étrusque Uni, venue de Véies sur l'Aventin, dans une cérémonie organisée par Camille et demeurée célèbre chez les historiens car les Romains n'avaient pas dû perdre le souvenir de*

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[68] The function of the liquid /l/ in *vatlmi* is very probably vocalic.

[69] GvP 73.

[70] The suffix of plural ∅-case is *-(V)-le,* cfr. DE 35.

[71] Rix (*Studi Maetzke* 464) ends up in assigning to *-tres* a simple dative value, and translates *vatiee unialastres* as 'are consecrated to Uni'.

[72] *GvP* 127.

la vieille alliance scellée entre Uni et la déesse principale de Carthage. Aussi, en 217, au plus fort de la crise, la Junon Reine de l'Aventin se vit-elle offrir une statue de bronze, signum aenaeum, (Liv. XXI, 62). Dix ans après, lors de l'expédition redoutable d'Hasdrubal, les craintes s'avivent à nouveau et la Junon Reine de l'Aventin manifeste sa colère par un prodige très redouté. La foudre tombe sur son sanctuaire (Liv. XXII, 1, 19). Les matrones romaines s'empressent pour l'apaiser de lui offrir un bassin d'or et d'organiser une procession et lui font apporter deux statues *de bois de cyprès qui certainement la représentent* . »Duo signa *cupressea Iunoni Reginae portabantur«. La Junon guerrière de Lanuvium demande aussi, au même moment toutes sortes d«apaisements.*

The two *signs* 'effigies, statues' made of cypress wood evidently point to the twofold nature of the archaic cult of Juno—Uni. We cannot exclude that similar practices took place at the sanctuaries of Pyrgi, much the more if we take into account the plural form used for the name of Uni in the word *unialastres*.

[A.4] ᐱⲦVO·↓Ǝⵜ·ᐱƧⴷIⵕ�30 | θemiasa · meχ · θuta — *θemiasa* is the only Etruscan word which might match the Punic word *p'l* 'to make' occurring in [C.4][73]. The ending *-asa* is a suffix marking a preterite gerundium-participle. This evinces clearly by analyzing words like *acnanas(a), trutanasa, arvasa, svalas, teśamsa* etc. as well as forms ending in *-θ-as(a)*, as *sval-θ-as, ten-θ-as, trin-θ-asa, zilaχn-θ-as*,[74] etc. We can exclude at once the possibility that *meχ θuta* might be the subject of *θemiasa*. As a matter of fact, in every occurrence of verbs with the suffix *-as(a)*, the subject of the gerundium is also the subject of the main clause. It follows that the subject of *θemiasa* is Thefariei Velianas, who is also the subject of the verb *turuce* that we shall find again at line 6—7, cf. [A.6]. As far as the meaning of the base *θemi-* is concerned, we believe that it it perhaps possible to link it to the Indo-European base **dhē-* 'setzen, stellen, legen'[75] which is close enough to the meaning of the Punic *p'l* 'make, build' in [C.4].

The word *meχ* was earlier assumed to mean 'people' but this interpretation was soon abandoned. We shall have recourse again to Indo-European, more exactly to the Indo-European root **meǵ(h)-* (IEW 708) 'groß; big, large', cf. Sanskrit *mah-* 'big, large', Armenian *mec*, Greek μέγας and μεγα-, Albanian *math*, Latin *magnus* (< **meǵ-nó-s*), etc. It is verisimilar that the Etruscan word is a loan-word originating either from Greek μέγας or from an early Indo-European (Italic?) language in the form **meǵ-* thus meaning 'big, large'.

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[73] Scavi 86.

[74] A closer analysis of the occurrences shows that the variant *-as ~ -asa* was not significant from a diachronic point of view.

[75] Cf. Messapic *hi-pa-des*, Phrygian εδαες 'posuit'; Latin *con-dere* 'to build'; Old High German *tôm, tuom* 'to do, make'; Lithuanian *dèmì* 'ich lege, stelle'; Greek τίθημι 'setze' : aor. med. ἐθέμεν; etc. (IEW 235—6).

In order to establish the meaning of θuta, we shall set out from Indo-European *teu- (IEW 1079) occurring, among others, in old Irish *cum-túth* 'defence; Schütz'. In particular, we shall take into account the Latin word family of *tueor, tuērī* 'to protect, defend' (the most original forms of which appear in compound verbs like *in-, ob-, con-tuor con-tuō*), whence *tutor* 'watcher, protector; protecting or watching over a particular person, place or thing' and its feminine form *tutrix, tut(t)us* 'sure, defended, protected, watched'. *Tutor* has also the meaning of 'any element serving as a support', for example the poles used in agriculture to support or keep upright young plants in the vineyards. *Tutilina* was the name of the goddess that watched and protected the crops. The word *tutela* originates from *tuttus* and means 'the office, function or action of a tutor or a guardian'. The last word supposedly belonging to this family is Latin *tutŭlus* which, according to the earliest glosses, is of Etruscan origin. As a matter of fact, it does not seem to originate from the same Latin stem as the other words considered above to such a point that Pokorny and other authors think it might originate from a different Indo-European root[76]. The *tutŭlus* was a Roman head-dress formed by plaiting the hair in a cone (a 'tower'[77]) above the forehead[78], worn esp. by the *pontifex Flamen* and his wife. *Tutŭlus* was also the name of the hair plaiting of the Roman *matronae* formed by curly locks kept upright ('tutored' — thus showing that the word *tutŭlus* is related indeed to the base *tueor*) by a high band. However, what is more important, the Romans called *tutŭlus* the crown *made in form of a city wall* worn by the goddess Αρτεμις (Diana) of Ephesus.

It seems verisimilar that the Etruscans borrowed the Latin base in the form θuta, since it occurs in the meaning of *tutor* in several inscriptions (e.g. *velusθansinas ati θuta*, that is *Velui Thansinia mater tutrix*). Yet, the original meaning of the word was loaned in its widest sense, that is 'to defend, protect', thus including the notion of *deus tutelarius* 'tutelary god' as well as »defensive works, defences, fortifications, bulwark, city wall', etc. The Latin word *tutŭlus* is very likely the result of a re-borrowing from Etruscan in the meaning 'hair plaiting in the form of a towerlet, small fortification'. In fact, the Latin word *tuta* means 'secure, protected place'. If our hypothesis is correct, the Etruscan sentence mentioned under [A.4] should be read as 'building a big wall/fencing wall'.

[A.5] ᛉ𐌀𐌉𐌍𐌄𐌖𐌋𐌂·𐌋𐌀ᛉ·ᛉ𐌀𐌍𐌀𐌋𐌄𐌄·𐌉𐌄𐌉𐌃𐌀𐌁𐌄𐌏 | θefariei·velianas·sal·cluvenias — The first problem we meet in this sentence is the final *-i* of the personal

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[76] Namely, in IEW 1081 it is considered as a possible reduplicated form of the root *tēu-, *tau-, *tewə-, *twō-, *tŭ- 'schwellen' with an *-l* extension.

[77] Chambers wrote: »*Tutulus*, among the Romans, a manner of dressing the hair, by gathering it up on the forehead into the form of a tower... *Tutulus* likewise signified a woollen cap with a high top.« (*Cycl. Supp.*, 1753, quoted by OED s.v. *tutulus*).

[78] The so-called *pillĕus lanātus* 'hohe kegelförmige Haartracht, Toupet der Flamines und Pontifices'.

name Thefarie, that finds no explanation. From a grammatical and syntactical point of view, the most economical hypothesis is the one expressed by C. de Simone, who maintains that *θefariei velianas* is in the 0-case. Thus *θefariei with -ei* ending is possibly a nominative as *θefarie (ei > e)*[79] and — at the same time — it is the subject of the verb *turuce*. We already dealt with this sentence under [C.6]. The presumable meaning of *sal* is *rex sacerdos*, 'priest-king'[80]. The *-as* in *cluvenias* is a genitive mark, that is the sentence should be translated as »*sal* (priest-king) of *cluvenia*«. It is interesting to note that the word *sal* occurs in the Linen Book of Zagreb (column VII, 7—14), as well as on a mirror going back to the IV century BC[81]. On the latter there is the head of a Gorgon as well as an inscription where we can read the following sentence *sal : mama : tins* which can be possibly translated as »*pontifex maximus* (?) *Iovis*«. From the golden plate of Pyrgi we learn that the *sal* was not only a religious leader (*rex sacrorum*) but perhaps a »political" leader too. Nonetheless, we have to keep in mind the words of Livy concerning the aversion of Etruscans to absolute monarchy which induced them to refuse succours to Veii[82]: *quod offendit Etruscos, rex creatus Veiis* »what gives such displeasure to the Etruscans, namely, the election of a king in Veii«.

As far as the word *cluvenia* is concerned, M. Pallottino noted that:

> »ad una spiegazione onomastica invoglierebbero i larghi confronti latino-italici *Cluvius, Cluventius, Cloventius, Clovatius,* umbro *Kluviier,* osco *Kluvatiis,* il toponimo *Cluviae* nel Sannio ecc.«

> [= »The large number of Latin-Italic comparisons as *Cluvius, Cluventius, Cloventius, Clovatius,* Umbrian *Kluviier,* Oscan *Kluvatiis,* the place-name *Cluviae* in the Samnium, and others, might allure us to find an onomastic explanation«]

To these names and place-names we ought to add the Etruscan gamonym (or, less likely, patronym) *cluviesa (< cluviesta* 'cluviensis' f.), yet this does not

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[79] This thesis was first expressed by C. de Simone (1966:397). In fact, he connects the form *θefariei* to an unattested masculine nominative **spuriei = spurie*. More realistically, he could have connected it to *velei, cacei, anei*). The hypothesis rests on the fact that *velianas* is undeclined. For the variant *velianas / veliiunas* see Pfiffig (1965:28); C. de Simone (1966:398, 11); H. Rix (GvP 89—90). We stress however the fact that *èefariei* is not a *praenomen* like *aranè, laris, velèur* etc., but much rather one of the members of the compound gentilicius (which may serve also as *cognomen*) *èefariei velianas = èefri velimnas*. This does not prevent *èefariei* from being possibly used also as a *cognomen* and/or *nomen*. Owing to the fact that, beyond the paternal name the *praenomen* too is lacking, the conjectures of C. de Simone (1981:66) about the *homo novus* Thefariei Velianas rest on very weak bases.

[80] We deem not impossible that the word *sal* could be eventually related to Latin *salius* 'Salian', thus supplying some further ground to our hypothesis about the meaning of priest-king.

[81] Roncalli 1971—72:75.

[82] Livy, v,5.

help. In fact, even admitting that a borrowing from some neighbouring language took place, it is almost impossible to find an acceptable origin and meaning for the word *cluvenia*.

[A.6] ꔰ⊃ⵊꝺꝺꔸꔸꔸⱯꔰ⊃ꔸⱯꝺⱯꝺⱯꔸꔸꔸVꔳ·ꔰꝺVꝺVꔸ | turuce · munistas · ϑuvas tameresca — The meaning of *turuce* 'he donated' is acquired since long. The direct object of this verb is *tameresca*, which is formed on the Etruscan word *tamera*. The latter word is attested in three inscriptions occurring on sarcophagi (namely TLE 170, 172 and 195), as well as on a tombstone (TLE 863) where it is possible to read *laris a[t]ies an cn tamera φurθce*, i.e. 'Laris Aties who ?prepared this ?ark (i.e. sarcophagus or tomb)'. According to the testimony supplied by its occurrences, *tamera* might mean 'ark, case, coffer, coffin' in the case of the three sarcophagi as well as 'cell, temple' in the case of the tombstone TLE 863. Also H. Rix attributes to the word *tamera* the meaning of 'ein Raum'[83].

From a formal point of view, *tameresca* seems to include an enclitic deictic, thus recalling forms like *avilesca* 'that of Avile' or *aθemeiscas* (oblique case). It therefore denotes something related to the (sepulchral) ?'ark', possibly '?site of the (sepulchral) ?ark'.

Munistas θuvas is a genitive-dative linked to *tameresca*. *Θuves* occurs in an inscription on the lid of an urn (TLE 672) in the sentence *θuker akil tus θuves*, i.e. 'Thuker made the *tus* of the *thuve*'. Its approximate meaning is 'room, inner space, cell'. We can tentatively try to link *θuve* to the word *θues* (*θuve* > ? *θue*) occurring in the hypogean of San Manno (Perugia), which very likely designates the funerary room of the hypogean.

Many scholars connect *munistas* to Latin *mūnus -eris* (archaic *moenus*) 'Leistung, Amt, Abgabe, Geschenk', a meaning that — in our humble opinion — is better sought in the Etruscan base *men-* (cf. *mene, menece, menaχe, menitla*). On the contrary, the word *munistas*, morphologically related to *θuvas*, is formed from the same base of words like *munise, munsle* and *munisuleθ*. The latter form is generally regarded as an equivalent of *municleθ*. In this connection, M. Pallottino maintained that »*si può considerare attualmente acquisito il significato «locus»*, in senso lato« [»We can presently consider as acquired the meaning of »locus« in its widest sense«][84]. However, the interpretative hypotheses are quite far from unanimous[85]. In our opinion, *municleθ* (locative form) denotes a

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[83] Rix 1981:84.

[84] Scavi 90.

[85] See also Pallottino 1940:468, according to whom *munis, munsle* etc. express the meaning of '*locus*, place' etc. This hypothesis was accepted also by Herbig, Cortsen and others. More recently, G. Colonna (1984:286) translated *municlat* as 'in this place'. E. Vetter (1940:168) rebutted this thesis and translated *munsle nacnvaiasi* 'in ufficio optimi' and *lupuce munisvle calu* 'in magistratu decessit'. H. Rix (1968:218) translates *munisvle / municle?* as 'in Amte'.

building (usually a funerary building). Thus, *munic(le)* might be related to Latin *mūniō* < archaic Latin *moeniō* 'aufmauern; aufdämmen (einen Weg); verschanzen, befestigen'. Should *munisuleθ* equal to *municleθ*, the most likely meaning of *munista* is 'aufgemauert', i.e. 'built with walls'[86]. If so, the hypothesis of M. Pallottino that the shrine built by Thefariei Velianas was perhaps made of perishable materials must be dropped. We shall address this topic later in the present study.

[A.7] ꓯꙅꓯ◘ꓱꓹVꓕ ꓱꓲꓷꓯꓱꓲ | ilacve tulerase — »in the month of *tuler*« The formulae *ilacve tulerase* and *ilacve alśase*, owing to their position in the text, match the corresponding months quoted in the Punic text, that is [C.7] *byrḥ zbḥ šmš* 'in the month Zab^hah Šemeš (= 'Sacrifice to the Sun')' and [C.12] *byrḥ krr* 'in the month *krr*'. They moreover recall similar forms occurring in the Tile of Capua (*ilucve apirase, ilucve anpilie, alśi ilucve*) on the calendarial structure of which there is an almost universal consensus[87]. The *-se* ending in month names like *tulerase, alśase, apirase* appears also in one of the formulae of the Mummy of Zagreb, i.e. *eθrse tinsi tiurim avils* (possibly: 'in another day and month of the year'). The *-se* ending might be the output of an oblique suffix *-s* coupled with a temporal suffix *-e(n)*, similar to the well-known Umbrian suffix *-en*, which usually follows accusative or ablative morphemes.

[A.8] ꓕꙅꓯ·ꓲꓷ·ꓷꓯꓲꓵ | nac · ci · avil — »after three years«. The meaning »three years« of *ci avil* is indisputable. Here the Punic text [C.11] has the formula *lmlkj šnt šlš III* '[during the] year three III of his reign', lit. 'of his reign year three III'. The syntax of the Etruscan sentence makes clear that *nac* is a morphological mark used to express a temporal clause. E. Vetter made this idea explicit when

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[86] It follows that the inscription *hupni / munis* on a squared stone found in a sepulchre of Caere (CIE 6083) means 'the sleep (or: the sleeping person) protect (or a similar meaning)', where *hupni* < Greek ὕπνος 'sleep'. Again in Caere, on the inscription CIE 6170, we can read *munise* 'protect?', 'is protected?'. The final morpheme *-se* recalls words like *fanuse, racuse, utuse* — the latter ones possibly being verbal forms.

[87] See *DE* chapter 12. K. Olzscha (1955:85,88ff.) hypothesized that *ilucve apirase* was a calendarial date: »in the calends (day of the invocation) of the month *apir-* (April?)«. H. Rix (1981:92—94) embraced the thesis of Olzscha thus concluding: »Damit stimmt überein, daß im phönizischen Pyrgi-Text die eine Datierung nur den Monat nennt (*BYRḤ ZBḤ ŠMŠ* 'im monat *x*'), die andere Monat und Tag (*BYRḤ KRR BYM QBR ʾLM* 'im Monat *y* am Tag *z*'); im phönizischen wie im etruskischen Text ist die zweite Datierung die genauere. Um es noch einmal explizit zu sagen: Die Wortfolge *tesiameitale ilacve alsase* des längeren Pyrgi-Textes hat eine einwandfreie morphologische, syntaktische und semantische Parallele in bestimmten Syntagmen aus den Abschnittsanfängen der Capua-Tafel, etwa in isveitule ilucve apirase«. H. Rix nevertheless maintains that it is not possible to offer any hypothesis based on such calendarial »artikulierten Formen«. As a matter of fact, though, *isveitule* and *tetiameitale* are words that have nothing in common with the calendar.

he hypothesizes that *nac* is a temporal conjunction meaning 'after, when, as soon as'[88]. This assumption is accepted by other authors. As a matter of fact, *nac* — as it is possible to infer from its occurrences in other contexts — serves here as a temporal conjuction much in the same way the Romans used the conjunction *cum*. The same word *nac* occurs later in line 12 (see under [A.11]).

[A.9] ꓯꓶꓮꓕꓟꓮꟾꟾꓯꓒꓔ· ꓳꓯꓶꓷꓦꓶ | χurvar·teśiameitale — The corresponding passage of the Punic text, that we translated »[during the] year three III of his reign«, induces us to think that χurvar teśiameitale must include the concept of ruling, reigning. In this perspective, the word χurvar (which is a plural form, as the *-ar* ending shows) can perhaps be matched with Greek κῦρος »Macht, Kraft, Entscheidung; power, might, determination«[89].

The Etruscan word χuru occurs twice as a verb in the Linen Book of Zagreb, cf. *ratum χuru* (col. X, line 4) and *θuium χuru cepen sulχva* (col. X, 1.17). Apparently, the passage from Greek /k/ to /χ/ is not rare in Etruscan, cf. Greek Κάλχας (personal name) > Etruscan χalχas (and perhaps χaluχasu)[90]; Greek κυλίχνη 'little drinking jug or vessel' > Etruscan χuliχna, culiχna and culcna[91].

We can try to verify if our guess about the meaning of the noun χuru ~ *curu (Sg) is right by having recourse to words which, according to ancient Latin writers and historians, are related to Etruscan traditions and customs.

Since ever, the *sella curulis* (i.e. the seat of the supreme magistrate when administering justice, cited in the passage of Livy mentioned afore) has been associated to the Latin word *currus* 'chariot'. This is a popular etymology, though, as in the example hereunder.

G. Dumézil[92] mentions the fact that in Tibur and Falerii there was a cult of *Juno Curitis*. Several glossae of Servius explain that the *Juno Curitis* whom they worshipped in Tibur was an *armed protectress*. According to Servius though, the word *curitis* originates from *currus* 'chariot': *habere enim Iunonem currus certum est* »it is certain that Juno had a chariot« (Serv. *Aen.* 1, 17); *namque Iuno multa habet numina: est Curitis, quae utitur curru et hasta, ut est* »hic illius arma, hic currus fuit« »Indeed, Juno has many divine powers: she is *Curitis,* who uses both chariot (*curru*) and spear, so that "here was her weapon, here the chariot"« (Serv.

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[88] Already E. Vetter (1940:154ff.) hypothesizes that *nac* is a temporal conjunction meaning 'thereafter, as soon as'. Such meaning is accepted by other authors, too.

[89] Whence κύριος 'Kraft, Macht habend, herrschend, maßgebend; that who has the power or the might, ruler, that who decides' i.e. 'lord, master'.

[90] Cf. de Simone 1968—70, Vol. II, 184.

[91] Perhaps it is possible to show the occurrence of the inverse phenomenon, i.e. the passage from /χ/ to /k/ in borrowings, should the hypothesis of C. de Simone — who assumes that the word *crisiθa* is the Etruscan equivalent of the Greek personal name Χρυσηίς — prove true.

[92] Dumézil 1977:265.

Aen. 1,8). Yet, Servius probably based his explanation on coeval popular ety-
mologies: *in sacris Tiburtibus sic precantur »Iuno curitis tuo curru clipeoque tuere
meos curiae vernulas«* In the ceremonies at Tibur they pronounce the following
prayer: »Juno Curitis, protect with your chariot (*curru*) and your shield my
young curial ? (*curiae*) slaves who were born in my house« (Serv. *Aen.* 1,17). As
a matter of fact, the name of Iuno Curitis is not related to the word for chariot,
since it rather goes back to the Sabine word *curis* 'spear', thus probably mea-
ning 'Iuno hastata'. Words like *Curitis, Quiritis* [Sabine forms] and *Quirinus*
[Latin form] possibly originate from the same word[93], while the ethnonym
Sabini Cures means 'the Sabines armed with spears' (lest the latter ethnonym is
related to the name of *Curi*, the ancient capital city of the Sabines).

Popular etymology linked the Latinized word *curulis* to *currus* 'chariot', yet
the loss of the geminate [r] remains unexplained. Thus, the locution *sella curu-
lis* has very likely nothing in common with a chariot as it has been supposed,
but it rather originates from Etruscan χuru ~ *curu* 'power', its probable mea-
ning being 'seat of power'. Very likely, the same applies to the Latin words
Latin *curiō* 'chieftain of a curia'[94] where *curiā*[95] does not go back to an alleged
form *co-uiriā* < *ko-uirio-* (cf. IEW 613) but it possibly originates from the sel-
fsame Etruscan word χuru ~ *curu*, thus meaning 'meeting place of the empo-
wered ones, assembly of the empowered ones'. The ultimate origin of this
word can be sought in the Greek word κῦρος 'Macht, Kraft, Einfluß'. A cognate
of the captioned words occurs also in the so-called Tabella Lanuvina (ILLRP 2,
1271a), found in Lanuvium and going back to the VI century BC: *Castorei
Podlouqueique qurois* ('[consecrated] to the *lords* Castor and Pollux'). The word
qurois appearing in the Tabella Lanuvina is a plural dative which reflects
exactly the meaning of Greek κυριος 'lord; he who has the power'.

Regarding the second word of this sentence, i.e. *tesiameitale*, we shall note
that the same base *tesiam* ~ *tesam* occurs in the word *tesamitn* of the Linen Book
of Zagreb. *Tesamitn* is a past participle with the *n*-ending of the accusative,
while *tesiameitale* has a plural *le*-ending (direct case). According to H. Rix[96],
various authors regard *tesiameitale, seleitala, riθnaita* — as well as *sanχuneta*,

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[93] Cf. Calzecchi Onesti 1967:578.

[94] Cf. Varro, *LL.* v,83: »Curiones dicti a curiis, qui fiunt ut in his sacra faciant.«;
vi,46: »Curiae, ubi senatus rempublicam curat, et illa ubi cura sacrorum publica; ab
his curiones.«.

[95] *Curia* means »one of the 30 ancient divisions of the patricians; place of assembly
of the *curia*; building for the assemblies of the Senate; Senate; place of meeting of the
Salians on Mount Palatine; place of meeting of foreign authorities«. Cf. Varro, LL.
v,32: »Curiae duorum generum: nam et ubi curarent sacerdotes res divinas, ut curiae
veteres, et ubi senatus humanas, ut Curia Hostilia, quod primus aedificavit Hostilius
rex.«

[96] Rix 1984:230.

racuneta, enizpetla (obl.), *menitla* (obl.) etc. — as articulated forms which include the enclitic deictics *ita* and *ica*. While agreeing on this, we stress the fact that these forms are preterite participles which, generally speaking, have a passive value[97]. We therefore maintain that *teśiameitale* is a declined (nominative plural) passive participle. Since Etruscan uses no copula[98], we may assume that χ*urvar* is the subject of the clause, while *teśiameitale* is a verbal predicate. Taking into account the former sentence [A.8] 'three years later' and the possible meaning of χ*urvar* 'powers', we shall use the Punic text as a guide to infer that the presumable meaning of *teśiameitale* is 'were bestowed [upon him]'. Thus, against the Punic sentence [C.11] '[during the] year three III (=third) of his reign', we find here the following rephrasing: 'three years after the powers were bestowed [upon him]', i.e. »three years after having been empowered«.

[A.10] ꓱꓤA꒐ᘔA꒐ A꒐ᘔAꓦꓲ | ilacve · alśase — »in the month of *alś(a)*« The month name of **alś* appears in the Tile of Capua in the sentence *par alśi ilucve* 'during the month of **alś*'. We used the asterisk because the nominative of this month-name is not attested; the final morpheme *-i* is, very likely, a temporal suffix occurring, for example, in words like *zilc-i, tiur-i-, tins-i*. Owing to the fact that the Tile of Capua lists the monthly offerings starting from the month of March[99], it is possible to infer that *alśa* possibly corresponds to July.

[A.11] AꓦATꓲꓱꓤᘔꓤ·꒐A꒐Aꓦꓲꓲ·ꓱꓲ꒐A� | nac · atranes · zilacal · seleitala — We met in [A.8] the Etruscan word *nac* used as a temporal conjunction, followed by the case 0. In the sequence *nac atranes* though, *nac* is used as a temporal preposition followed by the oblique case. The interpretation of this sentence depends upon the meaning of the word *atrane*. In TLE 135 (Sarcophagus of Tarquinia), after the onomastic formula we can read the words *suθiθ atrsrce*, the most likely meaning of which is 'he was buried in the tomb'. In Vulci they found five occurrences of the funerary formula *hels(c) atrś*, which seems to have the meaning of 'recumbens sepultus (est)'. Again in Vulci, the word *atrenu* is attested[100] with a similar meaning. It is perhaps possible to assume that *atrane* means 'burial, burying'[101], thus matching the Punic text in [C.13] where it states *bzm qbr ʿlm* 'in the day the divinity is buried'. If *nac atranes* means

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[97] However, they can be active if they are connected to a deponent verb.

[98] Words like *ame, am(V)ce* are certainly no copula, cfr. *DE* 48.

[99] The name of the month of March is missing here, but we know its name from TLE 856: *Velcitanus Tuscorum lingua Martius mensis dicitur*, thus we can assume that its Etruscan name is **velitne* or **velitna*.

[100] ET 1.182.

[101] The existence of the stamp »*atrane(s)(i)*« on a number of earthenwares, occurring even in Latin age, does not deny the meaning we attributed to this word. The stamp might be indicative of the funerary destination of these objects. The Etruscan base can be possibly linked to Latin *āter* 'schwarz, dunkel', the origin of which is

where it states *bzm qbr ʿlm* 'in the day the divinity is buried'. If *nac atranes* means 'when burying', it follows that *zilacal seleitala* (genitive forms linked to *atranes*) should match the meaning of Punic *ʿlm* 'divinity'. As a matter of fact the form *zilac* is a hapax legomenon in the corpus of Etruscan inscriptions. The forms *zilc*[102] ~ *zilχ* are well attested and designate a magistracy or a public office, possibly 'praetorship' (?), while *zilat ~ zilaθ* probably mean 'officer in charge of the magistracy' (usually translated — for the sake of clarity — as 'praetor'[103]). There are also several verbal forms (*zilaχnu, zilaχnuce, zilaχce*) confirming the meaning 'to rule, govern'. It is therefore possible that the form *zilac* occurring in the Plate of Pyrgi has a more general meaning of 'governor, ruler'[104].

Owing to its final suffix, *seleitala* can be seen as a past participle, like in the case of *teśiameitale*. The word is a hapax legomenon and its meaning is obscure. Yet, taking into account the context where it appears, since it looks like an attribute or epitheton of the word *zilac*, we might audaciously try to link it tentatively to the Indo-European base **swel-* (from which words like Sanskrit *svargá-* 'heaven, sky', Lithuanian *svìlti* 'sengen, ohne Flamme brennen' and possibly Eolian σελάννα, Greek σελήνη 'moon' as well as σέλας 'Glanz' originate), thus attributing it the meaning of 'heavenly, bright, shining'. The boldness of our hypothesis is partially mitigated by the fact that the inscription TLE 402 appearing on the Leaden Plate of Volterra says θesaθua | selasva | θlutupit [?] | isecetati [?]. It is difficult to read the words appearing in the third and fourth line, but here we need only to note that the base of θesaθua (dual form) is the same of θesaθei = θesanθei and seems to be related to the theonym θesan 'Aurora; daybreak'. Therefore the meaning of *selasva* (dual form linked to θesaθua) should not be far from 'bright, shining' and the like. Unfortunately, the Punic text lacks any mention of a 'shining', 'illuminated' or 'heavenly' ruler and it only mentions an unspecified 'divinity'.

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unclear. Generally, *āter* is thought to originate from the Indo-European base **āt(e)r* 'fire', thus the original meaning of the Latin word might be 'verbrannt; burnt'. Nonetheless there are derivate Latin words, like the plant names *ātella* corresponding to Oscan *aderl(ā)* as well as *ātrius*, corresponding to Oscan *aadíriis*, which are supposedly of Etruscan origin (cfr. IEW 69).

[102] According to some authors, the word *zilc* is a syncopated form of *zilac*. In our opinion, though, they have to be kept distinct.

[103] Also H. Rix (*Studi Maetzke*, 437, footnote 1), believes that *zilc = zil* denotes the office (magistracy), while *zilaè* indicates the magistrate. Recently, A. Maggiani (1996: 101) accepted this assumption.

[104] Surprisingly enough, A. Maggiani (1996:*passim*) cites a number of magistracies, including unexisting ones as *zilac seleita* or *zil munica* (sic!), yet he forgets to mention *sal*. The Author writes: »... mi sembra non si sia abbastanza insistito sulla espressione **zilac selaita* (o *seleita*) della lamina A di Pyrgi, che deve indicare una carica particolarmente importante, se nel testo punico la funzione istituzionale ricoperta da θefarie Velianas è definita con il termine 'regno'«.

[A.12]   ꓱꓯꟽꙆꓷꓯꓱꞴ·ꟽꟾꟾꓵꓯꓔꟾ   ꝶꓷꓱꟾꝫꓯꓵꟾꓵꓯ | acnaśvers · itanim · heramve —
heramve is a *ve*-praeterite exactly as in the case of *tenve* :: *tenu* and *zilaχnve* ::
zilaχnuce[105]. We dealt already with the base *heram* under [A.2] and we have
seen that its most likely meaning is 'to imitate or represent (the reality)', for
example by carving, cutting, engraving or painting an image, or by writing
fiction, poetry, songs, etc. In extant inscriptions, the final morpheme *-m* (origi-
nating from a more ancient form *-ma* as shown by the alternance *iśum* / *iśuma* of
the Tile of Capua) has always a telic meaning. The subject of this sentence, the-
refore, cannot be *itanim*. At the same time, *acnavers* seems to be a direct object.
As a matter of fact, the final *-s* in this epoch is no obliquity mark because the
vowels preceding *-l* and *-s* in the oblique cases are still visible, as it is proved by
the very *laminae* of Pyrgi. We have therefore to infer that the subject is Thefariei
Velianas. Thefariei ordered to prepare the effigy of the divinity, yet both in the
Etruscan and Punic text he is the subject of the verb, i.e. the one who "creates"
the effigy.

Acnasvers is perhaps the most enigmatic word of the entire text. Other
Etruscan words beginning with *can-* are: (1) *acnanas(a)* which, in funerary
inscriptions, usually refers to the sons and, in one case, to the grandsons of the
dead; (2) *acnaice* (TLE 509), on an *ossarium*, immediately following an onoma-
stic formula; (3) *acnaine*[106] isolated on a vase; (4) the caption *acns priumnes* con-
cerning one of the figures appearing on a sarcophagus from Volterra. The mea-
ning of the last inscription could be indeed 'simulacrum Priumnis'. All in all
though, we lack any circumstancial proof that could be of help in determining
the meaning of this word, but the Punic text itself, which requires here the
meaning of 'effigy, statue, simulacrum'.

The Etruscan word *itanim* (where the *m*-ending is a telic morpheme) corre-
sponds to the Phoenician word *bt* 'house' (= 'temple'). The vowels /e/ and /i/
often alternate in Etruscan, as it becomes evident from the equivalence of the
theonyms *eθausva* and *iθavusva* as well as from the deictics *eta ~ ita, eca ~ ica*[107].
The Etruscan base *it-, et-* occurs in some words of the Tile of Capua (*itna, ituna,
etula, ital*), in the great stone of Castelluccio di Pienza (TLE 506, *itunia*) as well
as in TLE 301 (*itu*)[108]; in the golden plates of Pyrgi the base occurs twice, the
first time as *itanim* in the A-plate as well as *etanal* in the B-plate. The word is
possibly an Etruscan formation originatin from a borrowing of Latin *aedēs* 'tem-

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[105] In the year 1929, M. Pallottino, while interpreting the inscription TLE 233
(1929:570ff., and later in *ELE*, 83) mentioned the fact that *tenve, zilanve* are praeterites.
Among the most recent studies on the same topic see for example de Simone 1992:15.

[106] ET Vc 7.39.

[107] It follows that the words *itanim* (appearing in the A—Plate) and *etanal* (occur-
ring in the B-plate) can be traced back to the same base.

[108] This inscription must be read as *mi larus artial itu numtasu*, see *DE* 306.

ple; an edifice or place regarded primarily as the dwelling-place or 'house' of a deity or deities'[109].

The sentence *acnaśvers itanim heramve* can be tentatively translated as 'he represented, reproduced (carved or painted) the simulacrum (?) for the temple'.

[A.13] ꓷ꓄ꓥⱯꓦꓓꓦ�носⱯꓱ꓂ꓮ꓂ꓳⱯ | avil . eniaca . pulumχva — Owing to the fact that the Punic text states *šnt km hkkbm 'l* 'years as many as these stars' and taking into account the fact that the Etruscan sentence begins with the word *avil* 'year', many researchers considered reasonable and straightforward to translate the Etruscan word *pulumχva* as 'stars'. Nonetheless it has to be noted that the plural mark in this case is not the usual form *-va* but rather *-χva*. In fact, in the *elogium* of a member of the Leinie (TLE 233) we find a singular form *pulum*. In our opinion, this particular plural mark seems to be used as a collective plural or as a plural denoting a set of similar objects as in *cilθ* : *cilθcva* and *fler* : *flerχva*.

The meaning of the hapax legomenon *eniaca* is obscure. K. Olzscha[110] hypothesized that it can be split into *enia* + a comparative particle *-ca*. A. Tovar[111] maintains that »*eniaca* ist ein Adverb, das sich auf *itanim* bezieht: 'ebenso-(viele)-wie'«. In our opinion, the Etruscan word *eniaca* matches indeed the meaning of the Phoenician word *km* 'like, as'. While agreeing with the opinion of K. Olzscha that *eniaca* is very likely a compound word formed by *enia* + *ca*, we think that *-ca*, rather than a comparative particle, is the well-known enclitic deictic[112]. Moreover, we humbly suggest — as a work hypothesis — that *enia* might originate from the relative pronoun *an*. Its usage might have been similar to Latin *quam* and Greek *hē* in comparative clauses.

We provided our translation with full explanations, clarification and, whenever available, evidence. Nonetheless, we have to stress that it often happens that Etruscologists do not to explain the reasons which induce them to translate certain words or forms as they actually do. Moreover, no complete (and commented!) translation of the Etruscan plate was ever published by other researchers. We cannot therefore compare our translation against former translations as we did in the case of the Punic plate. For the sake of comparison we propose hereunder the translation of the initial and final parts of the plate as published by M. Pallottino[113]:

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[109] The Latin word occurs also in the form *aedis*, cf. Macedonian ἄδις · ἐσχάρα (Hes.), i.e. 'fireplace (house, altar); base, pedestal, plinth, socle, footstall, footing; scab, scur'.

[110] Olzscha 1966:92.

[111] Tovar 1981:106.

[112] Olzscha 1966:92 puts forward the hypothesis that *-ca* might be a postponed deictic, yet he is wrong in translating *enia-ca* as 'these stars'. According to A. Tovar (*GvP* 106), »*eniaca* ist ein Adverb, das sich auf *itanim* bezieht: 'ebenso-(viele)-wie'«.

[113] Pallottino 1986:340.

»Questo luogo sacro e questa statua sono stati consacrati a Uni-Astar-te. La comunità (di Caere) (?) con Thefarie Veliana (li) hanno dedicati [......] E per la statua gli anni siano come le stelle (?)«

[= »This holy place and this statue were consecrated to Uni-Ashtart. The community (of Caere) (?) with Thefarie Velianas dedicated (them) [......] And for the statue may the years be as stars (?)«]

as well as a short glossary of some of the Etruscan terms prepared by H. Rix[114]:

ita, ica 'pron. dem.'	*ci avil* '3 Jahre'
tmia 'ein Kultraum'	*avilχva* 'Kollektiv, dazu'
heram(aś)va 'Kultbild' oder ähnl.	*zilac* 'pricipatus'
meχ 'Bund' oder ähnl.	*itanim* 'ebenso'
turuce 'weihte'	*θamuce* 'baute'
tamera 'ein Raum'	*masan* 'ein Opfer'
ilacu 'ein Monatstag'	*vacal* 'Trankopfer'
tulerase, alśase 'Lokativ von Monatsname'	*amuce* 'war'
nac 'so, als'	

Hereunder we have the pleasure to present our own translation, the most complete ever published to date:

A.1	ita · tmia	this holy place
A.2	icac · heramaśva	and this simulacrum (?these two simulacra)
A.3	vatieχe unilastres	was/were solemnly promised to Uni (?the Junones)
A.4	θemiasa · meχ · θuta	having built a large (fencing) wall
A.5	θefariei · velianas · sal · cluvenias	Thefarie Velianas priest-king (rex sacrorum) of Cluvenia
A.6	turuce · munistas · θuvas tameresca	donated this protected place (?cell) for the sepulchral ark
A.7	ilacve tulerase	in the month of Tuler
A.8	nac · ci · avil	three years after
A.9	χurvar · tesiameitale	the powers had been bestowed upon him
A.10	ilacve · alśase	in the month of Als(a)
A.11	nac · atranes · zilacal · seleitala	after the burial of the ?illuminated Ruler (divinity)
A.12	acnaśvers · itanim · heramve	the simulacrum for the temple carved (or: portrayed)
A.13	avil · eniaca · pulumχva	[may its] years [be] as many as this (set of) stars

Comparison of the parallel texts

By examining the structure of the Punic text it is possible to divide it into four distinct parts:

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[114] Rix in *GvP*, 84.

1. *Preamble* (entreaty or dedication): 'to our Lady, to ʿAštart';
2. *Donation* of a 'holy place'. The statement includes a date (i.e. the month *zbḥ šmš* 'sacrifice to the Sun') when the donation was made, and where it was made: 'in the temple';
3. *Donation* of a *signum* or *simulacrum*. The dating is very detailed, as it mentions the year ('the third year of reign'), the month ('in the month *krr*') and the day ('the day the divinity is buried') when the donation was made;
4. Final *omen* or Glückwünsch.

We can therefore expect the Etruscan inscription to follow closely the same text structure. According to our translation we see that it is indeed based on the same scheme, yet it contains some more details:

1. *Preamble,* in which it is mentioned the fact that the donation had been formerly promised to the divinity.
2. *Donation.* The donated 'holy place' is specified in detail (*meχ θuta + munistas θuvas tameresca*) and its descriptions contains the spatial reference which was made explicit in the Punic text with the words 'in the temple'. Moreover, the temporal reference to the Punic month of *zbḥ šmš* ('Sacrifice to the Sun') is preserved in the Etruscan text with the words *ilacve tulerase,* i.e. 'in the month of Tuler'.
3. *Donation of the simulacra.* The donation of the *simulacrum* or *simulacra* contains the same time specifications as in the case of the Punic text, that is: the year ('after three years of reign'), the month (*ilacve alśase,* i.e. 'in the month of *alśa*') and the day ('when the divinity is buried').
4. *Final omen.* The Glückwünsch treads in the steps of the Punic text, that is: 'may the years be [as many] as these stars'.

ETRUSCAN TEXT	PUNIC TEXT
1. *Preamble*	1. *Preamble*
This holy place and these effigies were promised to Juno (? the Iuniones)	To [our] Lady, to ʿAštart.
2. *Donation 1*	2. *Donation 1*
Having built a large wall, Thefarie Velianas priest-king (rex sacrorum) of Cluvenia donated [this] protected place (?cell) [as] site of the (sepulchral) ark in the month of tuler.	This holy place was made and donated by Thefarie(i) Velianas, who reigns over the principes, in the month of the Sacrifice to the Sun (*zbḥ šmš*), as a donation to the House [= temple]
3. *Donation 2*	3. *Donation 2*
three years after the powers had been bestowed upon him, in the month of alse, after the burial of the divinity (zilac seleita-la), the effigy for [her/his/its] temple he carved (or: portrayed).	and he made [this] effigy, in order to satisfy the wish of ʿAštart, [during] the third year of his kingdom, [in] the month *krr*, in the day the divinity is buried.
4. *Final omen*	4. *Final omen*
[May her/his/its] years [be as many] as [these] stars.	And years [= long life] to the simulacrum of the divinity in its House [= temple], [may its] years [be] as many as these (very) stars.

Thefarie's gift

As the early researchers correctly pointed out, one of the crucial points consists in understanding the exact nature of Thefarie Velianas' gift. We deem therefore necessary to remind some indisputable acquisitions.

The three golden plates do concern the so-called temple B of the Pyrgian holy area. In fact, they were found in a small "pool" a few metres north of the so-called C-area together with some stones originally belonging to the B-temple. The "pool" leans against the remains of the fencing wall that encompasses on the north-western side the holy area around temple B, the construction of which begun, very likely, in 510 BC[115]. The fragmented bronze plate, which was found folded together with the golden plates, probably refers to the inauguration of this temple. The fragments of another bronze plate were found a few metres from the right (south-eastern) side of the A-temple. This bronze plate is likely to be connected with the A-temple. Temple A was built approximately fifty years later and, in order to build it, they had to demolish one of the four sides of the fencing wall that encompassed the B-temple, so as to close both of them in a larger fence.

We do not know what happened to the building (ναίσκος[116]) found in the C-area; the excavations are probably unable to unveil its mistery. Was it perhaps destroyed after the building of temple A because it became superfluous? According to the archaeologists, the "pool" containing the golden plates was

PYRGI (C-area)

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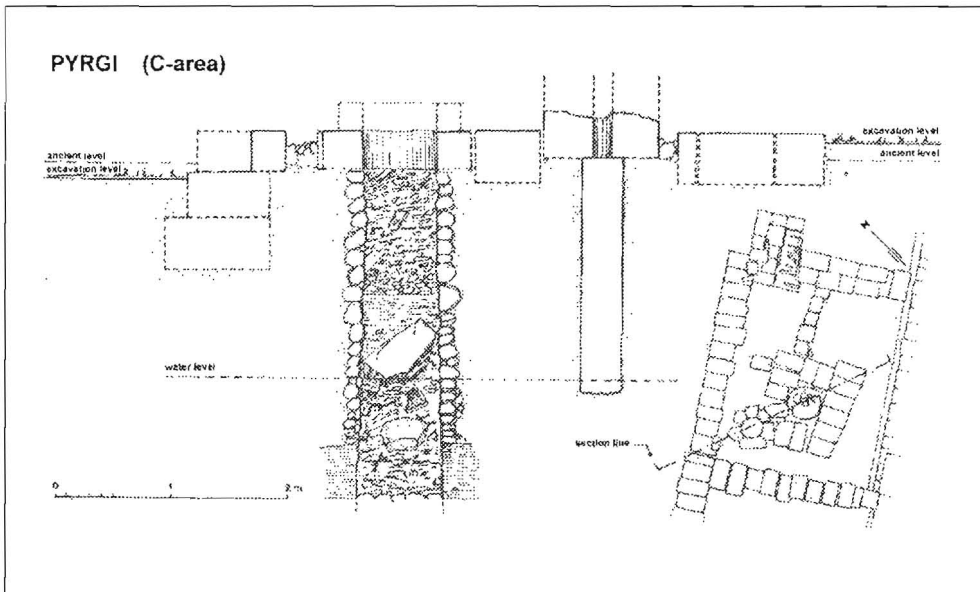
[115] Colonna 1985:129—130.
[116] Dimin. of ναός 'temple, nave, aisle, chapel'.

"hastily" built after the dismantling and abandonment that took place after the third century. This is a matter of opinion, though, since it does not explain how did the golden plates escape the sack of the tyrant Denys (Διονυσιος) of Syracuse. We might assume that the plates were carefully (and not "hastily") hidden so as to avoid a possible sacrilege when they built the A-temple. A prove thereof is the fact that they were rolled together with their nails, as if they were bookscrolls mindfully placed on a shelf for later use, so that the archeologists were able to unfold them quite easily. The "pool" might have been built by employing some stones left over from the construction of temple B. Be it as it may, the golden plates were written before the construction of temple A, thus they can not contain any reference to temple A. Nonetheless, an implicit reference might be sought in the word *unialastres* appearing in the Etruscan plate, provided our translation »*to the Iunones*« is correct.

The tradition mentioning the sack of the sanctuary made by Denys of Syracuse mentions the »sanctuary of Leucothea«. Yet, Strabo mentions a source that attributes a Pelasgic origin to the Etruscans and reports a »sanctuary of Ilityia (Ειλειτυια)«. In the Pelasgic city of Argos, Ilithya is one of the aspects of Hera, that is the Greek homologous of the Etruscan goddess Uni[117]. G. Colonna correctly notes that »sia l'una che l'altra interpretazione fanno perno sugli aspetti indigeni di Uni, in quanto dea matronale e insieme ctonia« [»Both interpretations center on the native aspects of Uni both as matronal goddess and, at the same time, goddess of the netherworld[118]«]. Yet, in our opinion, it is inappropriate to set in opposition these aspects to those of »*Astarte guerriera e dispensatrice d«amore del tempio B*« [»the war- and love-maker goddess Ashtart of the B-temple«][119].

Should the bronze plate CIE 6312 be related to the A-temple, one of its cells was dedicated to the goddess *Thesan* (= 'Aurora'[120], assimilable to Leucothea), thus showing that the A-temple was dedicated to the *alter ego* of the netherworld«s Uni, whom they worshipped in the B-temple or — at least — in the C-area.

In conclusion, it cannot be excluded that the initial project foresaw the construction of a large complex of sanctuaries dedicated to the Uni-goddesses (*Iunones*). Thus, until temple A was not yet completed, temple B — including the C-area (connected with the netherworld rites) — was used for the cult of Uni both in her heavenly and netherworld variants. In temple B the archaeologists

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[117] In origin, Ilithyia was the goddess of the Parthians and she was later identified with the Greek goddesses *Hera* or *Arthemis* as well as with the Roman goddess *Lucina*.

[118] The Author uses here the Greek adjective χθόνιος 'subterranean'.

[119] Colonna 1985:129—130.

[120] The (Roman) goddess of the dawn, represented as rising with rosy fingers from the saffron-coloured bed of Tithonus.

found a bowl going back to approx. 500 BC with the inscription *unial* ('to Uni').
This fact seems to confirm that the B-temple was dedicated to Uni.

M. Pallottino inclined to think that temple B belonged to the so-called *Greek
period* and that the bronze plate No. 4 went back to the same period. As a con-
sequence of this, he considered the foundation made by Thefarie Velianas as
an additional, small-size building (perhaps a ναίσκος) located anywhere inside
temple B or perhaps in the Caerea[121]. On the contrary, G. Colonna maintains
that ʿAštart's »holy place« should be identified with the cell of temple B and
the construction of the whole temple was due to a »philopunic« *princeps*[122].
The C-area, connected to temple B, was reserved for the netherworld cult of
Uni and Tin, which was different from the cult of Uni-ʿAštart[123]. M. Pallotti-
no[124] observed that this thesis clashes with the fact that we learn of the nether-
world rite from the very Punic plate, since it states *bjm qbr ʿlm* [C.13] 'in the day
the divinity is buried', thus it cannot be excluded that the netherworld rites
were dedicated to a Punic divinity (ʿAštart or a πάρεδρος, i. e. a divinity asso-
ciated to her cult). M. Pallottino[125] assumes that

> »gli stessi blocchi componenti il recinto o »vasca« delle lamine possano
> essere il risultato della scomposizione in situ di un originario *naiskos* (di
> tipo punico?) contenente il simulacro della dea, cioè appunto dello ʿšr qdš
> di Astarte«
>
> [= »the very blocks composing the enclosure or "pool" where the plates
> were found might result from the demolition on the site of an original
> ναίσκος (of Punic type?) containing the simulacrum of the goddess, that
> is precisely the ʿšr qdš of ʿAštart«]

In our opinion, the ναίσκος is of paramount importance to understand the
Etruscan text. As a matter of fact, this is most likely the object donated by The-
fariei Velianas. Practically, this is a cell — called *thuva* in Etruscan — leaning
against the wall that encompassed the area of temple B. On the opposite side it
was delimited by the side of temple B next to the corner-edge of the front.

This ναίσκος — which is much smaller than the cell of temple B, its size
being approx. 5x5 metres — contains an altar with a small pit for offerings to
the netherworld divinity as well as a βόθρος, that is a cylindrical pit, approx. 64
cm in diameter. We therefore agree with the hypothesis of G. Colonna,
accepted by most scholars, that the C-area was used for a netherworld cult. In
our view, this was the very cell where the divinity was »buried«. It closely

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[121] Pallottino 1970: 742.

[122] Colonna 1989—90 : 197ff.

[123] Colonna 1985a : 129—130.

[124] *Ibidem*.

[125] *Ibidem*.

recalls the hypogeans in Volsinii which were used, as F. Roncalli assumes[126], for the cult of Tinia of the netherworld.

In our opinion, the presence of an occult and infernal god (Tin) in the area of the sanctuary is attested by the bronze plate CIE 6312. It mentions *Thesan* (the name of the goddess Aurora, assimilable to Leucothea, see note 1), »in the temple of Uni« (*uniiaji*), as well as *hutila tina* (*-a* nominative or genitive?), where *tin* is the name of a male divinity (»Jupiter«) and *hutila* seems to be a synonym of *calusna*, thus meaning »occult, covered«[127]. We can hold for certain, however — on the base of archaeological evidence — that the male divinity connected to Uni had in Pyrgi both a heavenly and a netherworld character. It follows that the burial mentioned both in the Etruscan and Punic text might refer to a male divinity rather than to Uni (ʿAštart) herself.

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[126] F. Roncalli (1985:64—65), when citing the inscriptions *tinia tinscvil* (on altars having a hole or pit in the middle) and *tinia calusna* (a *patera* from the Belvedere temple) mentions (a) il »vano sotterraneo con banchine e pareti interamente intonacate, rinvenuto da Pernier circa 20 metri a Nord dell'angolo settentrionale del tempio«; (b) »la vasca intonacata per regger l'acqua rinvenuta nel 1880 nell'area di S. Giovanni al di sotto dell'ara recante l'iscrizione *tinia tinscvil* (TLE 258)«; as well as (3) »la cella di un *tempio sotto il duomo di Orvieto, cella da cui proviene l'ara forata con la scritta tinia ti[nscvil]*«. This is why Roncalli with good reason hypothizes that these places were intended for netherworld cults. See also Colonna 1985a:129.

[127] Cf. *DE* 222.

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Dvojezični feničko-etrurski tekst zlatnih pločica iz Pyrgija

Sažetak

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Ključne riječi: etrurski jezik, tekst pločica iz Pyrgija
Key words: Etruscan language, Pyrgi golden plates