

How to use “Etruscan Phrases” Etruscan Glossary A Spreadsheet

By Mel Copeland

“Etruscan Phrases” Etruscan Glossary A ([Etruscan GlossaryA.xls](#)) has three columns:

English	Etruscan	Location
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In the left-hand column the meaning of the Etruscan word is shown in English, with related Latin, Italian and French cognates. The middle column contains Etruscan words in alphabetical order, as one scrolls down the page. On the right-hand column are alphanumeric locators that show where the word may be found in various Etruscan texts on the “Etruscan Phrases” website. To locate the words and how they are used, open the Etruscan Phrases website (http://www.maravot.com/Etruscan_Phrases_a.html). Using the Etruscan Glossary we may scroll to the name, ACHLE. This is the Trojan War hero Achilles’ name (Etr. ACHLE) which is found in texts MM-2, CG-1, DP-1 and possibly LM-4. A variant spelling of the name (ACHL) is found in text CH-2. Another version of the name (ACHVLE) is at text CQ-2.

Mirror CQ carries an illustration of Achilles and his mother Thetis and a girl who appears to be Briseïs his concubine that he captured from the Lyrnessan King Eveneus. Agamemnon (Etr. AKMEMNVN) later ordered Achilles to give the girl to him, causing an infuriated Achilles to withdraw from the warfare altogether. Word CQ-3 adjacent to the girl (ACHLVSR, ACHLPIMSR?, ACHVPIMSR?) can’t be clearly identified at this moment. (See http://www.maravot.com/Translation_ShortScripts_f.html).

Another name, Alcesti, (Etr. ALCSTI) daughter of Pelion and wife of Admetus, (Etr. ATMITE) can be seen on an image on a vase, Script V-8. (See http://www.maravot.com/Translation_ShortScripts_a.html) This text illustrates a grammatical pattern in Etruscan writing of an interpolated vowel. Alcesti = ALCeSTI in Etruscan. In the Greek myth Admetus (Etr. ATMITE) fell ill and as he was dying he was told that only a substitute willing to die on his behalf will save him. Admetus asked his aging parents if they would give up their remaining years to save him, but they declined. Alcestis offered to die on his behalf. It is believed that she was later resurrected from Hades by the goddess of Hades, Persephone (Etr. PHERSIPNEI – See text PH-2, Tomb of Orcos). In the Etruscan vase to the left of the embracing couple, ALCSTI and ATMITE, is Charon the ferryman of Hades (Etr. CHARVN) who carries a mallet ready to hammer ALCSTI on the head, to assure that she entered Hades dead. On the right-hand side of the panel is the demon god Tuchulcha who threatens the couple with snakes. Tuchulcha can also be seen in script CC-2 where he is threatening the hero Theseus (Etr. THESE) with two snakes. Theseus and his friend were trapped in Hades, frozen to the “Seat of Forgetfulness.” Herakles (Etr. HERKLE) rescued Theseus when he descended into Hades to capture the three-headed (Hesiod says it has fifty heads) watchdog of hell named Cerberus. Cerberus was known to attack and eat those who attempt to escape Hades. (See http://www.maravot.com/Translation_ShortScripts_a.html)

On a lighter note is the goddess Aphrodite (Etr. TVRAN) who can be seen in texts M-8, DM-1, CB-1, OB-3, MG-5, AC-12, CK-4, CAC-1, DA-4, DR-2, DS-2, and LM-1. Script M is the most important of her texts, since it is a mirror that is inscribed with the gods and heroes of the Trojan War and has an ironic theme: That at the time King Agamemnon bargained for Helen’s hand in marriage to his brother Menelaus, the Etruscan goddess MEAN (who is like the perpetual virgin huntress Artemis - Etr. ARTVME) is crowning

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Alexander, (Paris, the prince of Troy) with laurel leaves. The event was prophesied by the son of King Priam of Troy whose name is Aesacus (Etr. AECAI). Aesacus was born of Priam’s wife, Arisbe, daughter of King Merops. Priam’s other wife Hecuba gave birth to the champion of Troy, Hector. When she was about to give birth to another son, Paris (Alexander – Etr. ELCINTRE, ELCHINTRE, ELACHSNTRE, ELKSVNTRE) she had a dream that she gave birth to a firebrand that would consume Troy. Aesacus (Etr. AECAI). who had diviner’s powers told Priam to expose the child at birth, but instead of being exposed the child was sent to live with the King of Thrace. When the child grew to adulthood he returned to the court of Priam but was not recognized until Cassandra, a daughter of Priam by Hecuba, pointed out the young man as his lost son. Paris was accepted in the court and later became involved with the intrigue that brought on the destruction of Troy. Cassandra also had acquired the gift of prophecy when she slept overnight in the Thimbraean Temple of Apollo. She prophesied the destruction of Troy, but no one believed her. She was later taken captive by Agamemnon after the destruction of Troy.

In mirror “M” we see a goddess fleeing the room where Agamemnon (Etr. ACHMEMNVN) is bargaining for Helen’s (Etr. ELINAI) hand in marriage to his brother Menelaos (Etr. MENLE). The goddess’ name is LASA THIMRAE, which may be an Etruscan name for Cassandra. Paris is known in Etruscan mythology as Alexander (ETR. ELCHINTRE). His name appears in scripts “MG” (spelled ELCINTRE), “OB” (spelled ELACHSNTRE) and “CK” (ELCHSVNTRE).

At the top of mirror “M” is the god TINIA with his consort RALNA. In the Greek myth, Helen is born from the goddess Nemesis who Zeus chased and seduced. In the chase Nemesis transformed into a goose and Zeus changed into an eagle. The result of the seduction was an egg that was given to the king of Sparta Tyndareüs and his wife Leda. From the egg came Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world at that time. We know that RALNA is Nemesis because beside her throne is a goose. We note here that the “R” appears as an “O.” Her name declines: RAL, RALNA, RALNE (Etr. OAL, OALNA, OALNE).

TINIA appears in many texts. Here his name carries the “ia” suffix, probably the genitive singular declension. His name appears in texts DM-5, K94, CE-1, DH-1, DK-3, DN-3. The spelling TINI appears in an important text called the Piacenza Liver (Script, PL-16, PL-32) the Zagreb Mummy script (Z1097), and the Tavola Cortonensis (TC318). The Piacenza Liver is an Etruscan bronze showing the regions of the liver for divining purposes. The Piacenza Liver is at http://www.maravot.com/Piacenza_liver.html.

Every word of the texts cited in “Etruscan Phrases” carries an alphanumeric locator, facilitating their validation as Etruscan words, and all words in the Etruscan Phrases texts are represented in the Etruscan GlossaryA.xls. The mirrors help us verify words and declension patterns, as we can identify names and their actions with known Greek myths and their characters. The more challenging discipline is to isolate the individual words of the 6,000+ word texts.

The name of the Etruscans that the Romans said the Etruscans called themselves is Rasna or Rasenna. The name RASNA appears in texts Z158, TC38, PO-7. The name declines as RASNE, following conventions seen in other words: K24, K115, K124, with the plural RASNES at K119. Script K is the Perugia Cippus, a stela of 195 words that records the names of kings and queens, notably among them a queen, Rina Sarina (Etr. OINA MARINA – the O = R, M = S). This name also appears engraved on the forehead of a beautiful woman’s bronze head in the Louvre, Paris. Here we have an image of a character described on a stela in the Perugia Museum.

We have isolated from the 6,000+ words in the Etruscan texts about 2,300 individual words. The

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repetition of these 2,300 words (amounting to the 6,000 word count) allows better refinement of translation, since the repetition exposes declensions and conjugations of the words. We discovered at an early stage of marking the repetition that the declensions were following Latin forms, and recognizing these forms allowed further refinement of the Etruscan Glossary.

Coupled with the identification of grammatical forms is, of course, the translation of the phrases in which the words are used. Having established a working declension table we can now begin to refine the translations in the various texts.

Punctuation is also critical to the understanding of the Etruscan words and the phrases in which they are used. Sometimes the Etruscans used a colon (three dots in a few instances) and other times a single dot (period). The dots and colons separated words and phrases. The punctuation may indicate that the forgoing word has nothing to do with the next word; i.e., a new phrase is introduced. Also part of the punctuation involved the facing of letters. One reads from right to left (sometimes boustrophedon, as the ox plows.) Sometimes a character, such as “F” is turned facing to the right, in contrast to the direction of the other letters in a phrase. It signifies that the character belongs with the word it is facing. Such instances appear when the character can be read in either character group, preceding it or following it, and this would change the context of the message. An example of an Etruscan text that is very similar to Latin can be found in script “VF,” the “Chiusi Fibula” in the Louvre museum. The text in this artifact reads from right to left. Our discussion on this text (See http://www.maravot.com/Chiusi_Fibula.html) is as follows:



VF-1 MI ARA
CHIAFE (⊗) IAFE)
LAFES NASIA
MACHIMAS (MA
⊗) IMAS) [to me
(Lat. meus-a-um,
my, mine) the

gold (Lat. aurum-i) key (It. chiave) of praise, fame (Lat. laus, laudis); of Nasia the great (Lat. maximus-a-um)]

Note: This gold fibula confirms the Etruscan word for gold, "ara," which may be a homonym with the verb "to plow" or a noun "altar." The fibula appears to have the name for a pin or clasp, "chiafe," that may be related to the word for "key." It also suggests the grammatical use of the "F" when used with a vowel. If the F in CHIAFE is an "f" then the F in LAFES is also an "f." The suffix, "ia" is a gen. case ending for names in Etruscan. The ⊗ is rare and in the word, maximas, establishes a value which may be close to "ch." The Greek value of this sign is "chi" pronounced "kh."

Finally, the alphabet used by the Etruscans carries characters familiar to those using the Latin alphabet (which makes sense since the Latin alphabet was derived from the Etruscan alphabet). There are unique characters to the Etruscan alphabet that can change the appearance of the text from something that is totally unintelligible to that which can be recognized as a familiar Latin / Indo-European construction. For instance, there are two “Rs”: one which is written as a “P” following Greek convention and another with a shortened stem, often lacking a stem altogether, written as “O.” This character can be mistaken for the Greek theta “Θ” which is also used in the Etruscan texts, such as the name of Thetis, the mother of Achilles. Her name is spelled THETIS and once as THETHIS, as seen in scripts MM-3, MR-4, CQ-1, CR-1.

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Other characters that are unusual are the “8” as in 8RATER (L. frater) and the F, L, V which can be confused. The “F” can be a consonant at the beginning of a word and a vowel in the body of a word, as seen in the “Chiave Fibula.” The “V” is usually the vowel “o” as in the name AKMEMNVN (Agamemnon), but appears to be a vowel “u” in some cases. The “B” appears to be rare, probably substituted with “8.” The “8” appears in “V” consonant words, such as L. valles-is (Etr. 8ALES), L. vaccae-ae (Etr. 8ACA, 8ACE), L. vas, vasis (Etr. 8AS, 8ASE, 8ASEI), L. fasti-orum (Etr. 8ASTI, 8ASTIA), L. vates-is (Etr. 8ATE). The Etruscan town, Veii, is spelled 8EIA and the Etruscan town in Campania, Velcha, is 8ELCIA, 8ELCES. The common Roman name Velerius is Etr. 8ELERE, 8ELEREI, 8ELERES. Latin veles-itis is 8ELS (8ELeS).

The queen of heaven (Greek Hera) is Latin Juno, Etruscan VNI, VNIA. Here the Etruscan “V” is the Latin “u.” VNIA can be seen suckling Herakles (Herkle) in script “AH,” a mirror with the god Tinia showing a writing tablet with a message explaining what is going on in the mirror’s illustration. That text is at http://www.maravot.com/Uni_suckling-Heracles.html. The text appears as:

ECA: SeREN: TFA ICHNA Ce: HERCLE: VNIA Le : CLA NORA: SCE.

Rarely is the omega “o” used in Etruscan texts, but this appears to be an exception. ECA (L. en! ecce! Behold) SeREN (L. sereno-are they are quiet or sero-serere, serui, joined together?) TFA ICHNA “Two inexperienced” (L. duo-ae, ignarus-a-um), Heracles Unia there (le): CLA NORA : SCE. “CLA, Cleo (a muse?) (L. nurus-us, daughter-in-law?) you know” (L. scio, scir, scivi, to know).



The scene involves two young men, a young woman who seems astonished, a bearded Heracles (Etr. HERCLE), VNIA (Hera) and TINIA (Zeus). A cherub or Erotes appears in the bottom panel below the scene, with an old man hovering in the top panel. Hera’s act of suckling the child Heracles resulted in her breast milk being spilled and that created the Milky Way. Uni (Etr. VNI) appears in the following locations: Z1654, TC171, N173, N435, J25, AH-7, PL-31, MG-2, CE-2, CK-3, DN-2. Unia (ETR.VNIA) appears in these locations:

Au13, AH-7, Aph-3.

As we have seen in using Etruscan Glossary A.xls both Unia and Tinia have their regions in the Piacenza Liver, script “PL.” As noted, the “ia” suffix appears to reflect the genitive case, used in script “DM” in Helen’s name. Corresponding with this suffix, also used in Helen’s name is Etruscan ELINEI, appearing in script “MM.” We can compare this declension to that of PHERSIPNEI in script “PH” and the “Tomba del Oro.”

While declension and conjugation patterns can be discerned in the Etruscan GlossaryA.xls, we attempted to organize them in a “Declension Table” on the Etruscan Phrases website (http://www.maravot.com/Etruscan_Grammar-2.html). Besides proper names showing declension patterns, we have the Latin accusative singular suffix, “um” used in such words as: PATREVM, VINVM, VOLVM, RATVM, PERVM, SCELVM, SECVVM, AVERVM, PVPVLVM, TRVTVM, KATRVVM, PESVNTRVM, CISVM, SVRVVM, RESTVM, SERVM, FRATRVM (8RATRVM), ATRVM, AVRATVM, MVTINVM, ORSVM, SETVM, TECVM, VNVM, MERLVM, TRINVM and SPINAVM. Spinaum is the name of Spina, an Etruscan city near Venice. The name appears in the Tavola Eugubine and declines as follows: SPINIA, SPINAVM, SPINA, SPINI.

Another declension pattern of interest is “os.” RINVS declines as RINVR, RIN, RINV, RINA, RINES (initial R written as O); PILVS, ORVS, ERVS, NEPVS, FETVS, CATVS (declines as CATV, CATE, CATES), FELVS, IAPVS, SITVS, CVPVS, KAPIRVVS, TELMVNVVS, CASVS (declines as CASA, CASE, CASI? – the L. verb causer-ari may

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apply); THANCHUILOS, METVS, TARKVNVS, SeRELVS, KARNVS (declines, KARNE), FILVS, PETRVS (declines, PETR, PETRV); TIVS (declines, TIV, TIE, TIFI, TIES); TEUS (Etr. TEFS – declines as TEIA, TEV, TEIFA, TEI, TEIM, TEIS). The “im” suffix appears in AVIM (declines, AVIS), ORIM, NACIM, TISIM, TERIM (declines, TERA, TERI), PINCIM (declines, PINCA) RVIM (Etr. RVIM – declines: RVI, RVIS – “R” written as “O”); and ATHINIM. TELMVNVS is used with AIFAS in mirrors showing Ajax Telemenos: VA-1, DC-1, DC-3. SeRELVS is the name of a warrior pictured on famous tombstone from Vetulonia : T-2. He is called “Lord Serelus,” “Aule Serelus” (Etr. AFLE SeRELVS). Aule is a common Latin name as well as a word for “lord.” AFL, AFLE, AVLE appear at: BS-3, T-1, AF-2, AL-1, DD-1, K45, TC90, TC241, TC279 respectively, as can be discerned in the Etruscan GlossaryA.xls.

Examples of verb conjugation can be seen in the verb (L. teneo, tenere): TEN, TENA, TENE, TENIN, TENV, TENEr; CAVE, CAVER (L. caveo, cavere); PAF, PAFA (L. paveo-pavere). The word PAF, PAFA is of particular interest since it can be seen in a mirror, DL-9, where an haruspex is reading a liver before King Tarquin, saying, “Fear Tarquins” (Etr. TARKIE). TARKIE declines as TARKVNVS. Tarquin’s wife, Taniquil (Etr. THANCHVILVS) is also indicated in a short fragment, A-3. Note the suffix “ie” in contrast to the “ei” suffix used in Helen of Troy’s name (ELINEI and ELINAL) and Persephone’s name (PERSIPNEI). PAV (PAF) is used in an important text TC38, from Cortona.

Other words include CEN, CENI, CENV (L. ceno-are)TVL, TVLERA, TVLeRAN (L. tolero-are); IT IS, ITV, ITVN (L. ito-are; itus-us, movement); APA, APE, APEN, API (L. abeo-ire); SAT, SATA, SATE, SATI, SATV (L. sator-oris); SER, SeRAN, SERE8, SERI, SERV, SERAMV? (L. eero-serere, serui); 8eNES, 8ENV, 8eNV, 8ENVVS, 8eNER (L. venio, venire); ENA, ENAS, ENV (L. eno-are); CELA, CELI, CELV and CELeRIM – hidden (L. cello-are); MENA, MENAN, MENAS, MENE, MENES, MENIAR (It. menare; Fr. mener); ACA, ACI, ACIS (L. acciaio); APNE, APNI, APNIS (L. abnuo-nuere-nui); CINA, CINE, CINAS, CINI, CINV, CINVS (L. incendio-cendere, It. Incendiare, Welsh cyunnau); 8ETA, 8ETES, 8ETV (L. veto [voto] votare); CRA, CRE, CRI (L. creo-are); CVSV, CVSVR (L. causor-are); CERE, CEREN, CERES, CERI (L. queror, queri); PVNE, PVNES, PVNI (L. pono, ponere); SIN, SINA, SINE, SINIA (L. sino, sinere – note SINIA could be a noun or past imperfect tense); PVT, PVTE, PVTe S (L. poto-potare); FAL, FALE (L. fallo, fallere); RVN, RVNA, RVNE, RVNEM, RVNI, RVNO, RVNS, RVNTV (This appears to behave like a verb but our only reference is to nouns such as It. ronda, rounds; Fr. rond); TEC, TECE, TECVM - buried (L. tego, tegere); REGL, REGLE, REGLO, REK (L. rego, regere); ES, EST, ESTE, ISVNT, SVM, SVME, SVNT (L. sum, esse, sunt).

The verb CINV is used in the Tavola Eugubine; its case CINA appears also at TC-46 and PQ-4. A word used frequently in the longest text, the Zagreb Mummy, is ENV. The text, like the Tavola Eugubine, appears to be a dedication to the departed. FAL, FALE appears also in the text with the word FILE (L. filia-ae, daughter) as FILE FALE, in a hierophantic context. REGL, REGLO (to rule) is also use in the Tavola Eugubine . The word for king, ROI - Etr. OVI – “O” = “R,” “V” = “O” (L. rex, regis; It. re; Fr. roi), is found at Z606, Z1161, Z1310, Z1334, Z1386, Z1578, Z1780, TC28, TC179, AT-10, L31, AM-3; MS-1, AF19, AM-3, FR-2, L17, RA-4, PQ-10. RVIM (Fr. royaume) is found at Z1243. RVIS (L. rex, regis) is found at Z1623, BT-10.

These are just a few of the words shown in the Etruscan GlossaryA.xls. Most of the words in the glossary can be related to known Latin conjugation and declension patterns. A few words in the glossary can be related to Italian and French cases, but not Latin. The Etruscan written language appeared long before Latin appeared in written form, and thus the correlations of Etruscan to Latin would not be from the Etruscans borrowing Latin words, as has been suggested by some Etruscologists. Some of the more prominent scholars also have claimed since the time of Massimo Pallottino (“The Etruscans” 1942) that Etruscan is not an Indo-European language but an isolate, unlike any other language known to man. Of course no one can verify the “language isolate” claim since the presentations of the “non-Indo-European” research would best be identified as gibberish, without grammatical confirmation.

In contrast “Etruscan Phrases” has offered a 2,300 word vocabulary that is close to Latin, Italian and French, with recognizable grammatical similarities and shifts from one language to another. For

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instance, the “us” suffix of Latin, as in Titus, shifts to “o,” as in Italian Tito: i.e., Etr. TITV. Final consonants in Latin are dropped as in French, such as L. Heracles, Fr. Hercule, Etr. HERCLE.

Etruscan conjugation of verbs follows Latin patterns. But 1st person singular present in Etruscan tends to resemble French forms. As in Latin teneo (to hold), the Etruscan infinitive is TENV. 1st person singular indicative in Latin is teneo, whereas 1st person singular in Etruscan is TEN (French tene); we see a similar shift in Etruscan PAF, FAL, REGL, RVN, SAT, etc.

“Etruscan Phrases” carries the major, extant Etruscan texts and we have taken care to present images of the artifacts and their location so that the transcriptions offered on “Etruscan Phrases” can be verified by interested scholars. Once the individual words in the various texts are confirmed “as words” then using the Etruscan GlossaryA.xls one can examine the correlations of the words to other Indo-European languages. Our early examination of Etruscan words to Indo-European words can be seen in Etruscan Phrases Indo-European Table 1 (http://www.maravot.com/Indo-European_Table.html). Because of the strong bias to Latin, we shifted our focus from a general Indo-European study to refining the Etruscan GlossaryA.xls in the context of Latin, Italian and French.

The 2,300 word Etruscan GlossaryA.xls can be easily authenticated. Further refining of the words is in progress. We are particularly interested in 1st person plural conjugations in Etruscan.

Related to the study we investigated Phrygian texts to see if there was any correlation between the writing of Phrygian and Etruscan. The two languages were so similar we included the Phrygian words in the Etruscan GlossaryA.xls, all of which carry the alphanumeric designation “X.”

A Phrygian-Etruscan relationship would confirm an early movement of the Etruscan people from Asia Minor, as reported by Herodotus. Herodotus also reports that the Phrygians were originally called Brigians and had their origin in southeastern Europe, “in Macedonia.” (Persian Wars, Book VII, chapter 73) He also says in the same paragraph that “the Armenians are Phrygian colonists.” We saw few similarities between the Etruscan-Phrygian languages and Armenian, however. Our work on the Phrygian connection is at: <http://www.maravot.com/Phrygian.html>. Since Homer records the Phrygians among the allies of the Trojans in the Trojan War we can relate the Phrygians to the period of 1,200 B.C.

The Etruscan texts range in time from ~600 B.C to ~400 B.C. and as artifacts recently discovered (since the middle of the nineteenth century A.D.) the Etruscan language is also a relic, frozen in time. As a relic, un-tampered with for 2,400 years, Etruscan gives us a glimpse of an early Indo-European language, as well as another look at the distribution of some Indo-European “Italic” languages at the time of the Trojan War (~1,200 B.C.).

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