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## Review of Gerhard Meiser (ed.), *Etruskische Texte*

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**Etruskische Texte. Editio minor. Teil 1: Einleitung, Konkordanz, Indices. Teil 2: Texte**, edited by GERHARD MEISER. Baar-Verlag, Hamburg 2014. Pp. 338, Teil 1; Pp. 859, Teil 2. € 150. ISBN 978-3-935536-71-4.

Reviewed by MICHAEL WEISS, Cornell University

The 1991 edition of the linguistically significant Etruscan texts, *Etruskische Texte*, by Helmut Rix and others was a landmark in Etruscan studies. For the first time it was possible to see the near totality of the evidence in one handy and relatively affordable place. The Rix edition concisely provided reliable texts, dating, generic classification, and information on find spots, material types, and earlier editions. Complete indices, including an invaluable index *a tergo*, rounded out the work. Since it was conceived as an *editio minor*, there were no drawings or photos of texts, nor was there any commentary or interpretation. In the intervening years since 1991, the discovery of new texts and the re-reading of old texts have proceeded apace and a new edition became a desideratum. One of the co-editors of the first edition, Gerhard Meiser, along with co-editors, Valentina Belfiore and Sindy Kluge, has now produced a second edition that includes about 1,100 texts not found in the first edition (p. 6). The most notable and longest of these is the *Tabula Cortonensis*, here called the *Aes Cortonense*, first published in 2000.

Volume 1 includes a general introduction, which begins with a quick explanation of the abbreviatory conventions and symbols (pp. 3–5). There then follows an explanation of the organization of this edition. Since the first edition has become a standard reference, Meiser has decided to retain the original numbering of inscriptions in this edition. Some inscriptions have been reassigned to a different locale and this means that the old number of the first edition is now an empty slot with cross-reference to the new location. For example, Cr 2.42 first assigned to Caere has now been assigned to Veii under the number Ve 2.10 and the reader who looks for Cr 2.42 will be referred to Ve 2.10. In order to keep track of these reassignments each subsection of the work includes a *conspectus editionum* which lists (a) *tituli novi* (b) *tituli in alia loca transpositi* and (c) *tituli ex aliis locis transpositi*. Pages 62–65 give the complete *conspectus editionum*.

The first edition grouped funerary inscriptions together by locale and family, but organized all other text genres chronologically. This edition continues this principle. The editors have inserted newly discovered funerary texts in their correct geographical locale and the reader can find newly localized texts through a cross-reference at their former number. New *tituli* in the other chronologically arranged genres are appended to the end. Since this breaks the chronological order, the editors provide an *ordo chronologicus* at the head of each genre subsection. An

organizational change from the first edition concerns multiple distinct text types on the same object. The first edition gave these texts in their generically appropriate loci, and created a special subsection (X) to join together all texts on one object. The new edition now gives the multiple texts in the first possible location and adds cross-references to the subsections where the other texts are repeated in their generically appropriate place.

From the linguistic/epigraphic point of view the most significant change is the representation of the Etruscan sibilant system. As is well known—and leaving aside further complications—Etruscan had, roughly speaking, a contrast between /s/ and /ʃ/, but this contrast was represented in two different and inverse ways in Northern and Southern Etruria. In the South *sigma* was used for /s/ and *san* for /ʃ/, but in the North *san* was used for /s/ and *sigma* was used for /ʃ/. This situation has created great difficulties for would-be editors of Etruscan who aim at a linguistically meaningful and informative transcription. In the first edition Rix et al. represented this situation by using the Latin alphabet <s> to represent /s/ and Greek <σ> to represent /ʃ/. To represent Southern spelling these signs were used without any further diacritics, but for Northern spelling <ś> and <ó> were employed. In the new edition Meiser has decided on a transcription that is more epigraphically oriented. The sign *sigma* is always transcribed as *s* and the sign *san* is always transcribed as *ś*. When *sigma* <s> and *san* <ś> have the value /ʃ/, they are provided with a double strikethrough. Thus one can always tell both what sign the inscription actually has and what value is to be assigned to that sign. The drawbacks, however, to this new system are (a) that it is graphically quite unappealing and (b) hard to reproduce. (I personally have no idea how to create this effect on my computer).

The introduction also includes an extensive set of instructions for using the edition (Gebrauchsanweisung, pp. 16–32) at the end of which we are told in a paraphrase of the *Kursbuch Deutsche Bundesbahn* “Eine [...] Gewähr für die Richtigkeit des Inhalts [dieser Edition] kann daher nicht [in allen Fällen, GM] übernommen werden”! The new introduction is followed by complete reprint of the preface to the 1991 edition.

There is no space to examine many inscriptions here, but two little texts caught my eye as worthy of some comment. Inscription Ad 2.80 from Adria, *mi verkantus* ‘I am of Verkantos’ or perhaps ‘of Verkantu’, dated to the 4th–3rd century BCE (cf. Ad 2.92–4 with the same text from a bit later), evidently contains a Celtic name. The tomb where the texts were found includes typical La Tène grave goods (Gaucci and Pozzi 2009:63). \**Verkantos* is a near perfect match for Old Welsh *Guorcant* (Book of Llandaf). The first element is *ver-* ‘over’, but it is unclear whether the second is \**kanton* ‘100’ (Old Irish *cét*, Middle Welsh *cant*), i.e. ‘he who is over(seer of) 100’ or \**kantos* ‘rim, border’ (MW *cant*) ‘he who is over the border’. Another Celtic name,

*eluveitie* (Pa 0.3, ca. 300 BCE), to be compared with Latin *Helvetii*, Greek Ἑλουήτιοι (Strabo), confirms Thurneysen's (1923:12) brilliant etymology from \**elu-eitu-ijo-* 'die Landreichen'. Compare Old Irish *il* 'much' < \**elu-* and *íath* 'land' < \**eitu-*. The preservation of the original diphthong *ei* is a notable archaism. Amusingly, a Google search for *eluveitie* turns up the learned Swiss folk metal band of the same name, who sing some of their songs in Gaulish.

The second edition of *Etruskische Texte* will be an essential tool for research for many years, or at least until the next edition.

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