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Crime as Destiny

A Study of Criminal Twins

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Foreword by J. B. S. Haldane

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Demographic Change and Social Breakdown: The Role of Intelligence

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It is proposed that populations with a high mean general intelligence are less likely to participate in violent crime than those with low mean general intelligence. The current study determined the correlation between racial composition and cognitive ability, as measured by Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, of college bound high school students of the 50 States and District of Columbia. Also, the relationship between percent racial composition and rate of violent crime was examined. An overall negative correlation was found between violent crime and intelligence. Furthermore, unique racial correlates between crime and intelligence were observed. There was a positive correlation between percentage of blacks and rate of crime and a negative correlation between percentage of blacks and SAT scores. In contrast, a positive correlation was observed between percentage of whites and SAT scores and a negative correlation between percentage of whites and crime. A negative correlation was observed between percentage of Asians and SAT scores and rate of crime. These findings suggest that intelligence and race underlie violent criminal behavior. Areas of the United States with a high concentration of blacks and almost devoid of whites, tend to have high rates of violent crime. Asian immigrants from countries other than China and Japan appear to be decreasing the traditional East Asian dominance in scholarship. Socialization to an American culture that emphasizes individualism and materialism is having a negative effect on social behavior on all American racial groups, both immigrant and native.

Key words: intelligence; racial difference; violent crime; United States

Introduction

With varying degrees of sophistication, cognitive ability has been measured by numerous methods. Tests have measured verbal and nonverbal cognitive ability, via paper and pencil or by button-pushing

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paradigms that measure neural efficiency (reaction speed), requiring no language or mathematical proficiency. Differences in cognitive ability have been observed between the various human races, particularly between American blacks and whites (Baker, 1974; Lynn, 1991; Rushton, 1995). Significant differences in cognitive ability have persisted ever since the administration of the first IQ test, irrespective of testing method ("culture free" tests as well as reaction speed). A significant portion of the differences are presumed to be genetically mediated, as suggested by monozygous twin and adoption studies (references in Rushton, 1995). Brain size and structure significantly differ between whites and blacks and increased "whiteness" of American blacks (increased white background) parallels an increase in intelligence approaching white levels (Baker, 1974; Rushton, 1995). Although yet-to-be-defined "environmental" influences may shape early human intelligence, biological factors (e.g. genetic) undoubtedly underlie racial differences in human intelligence.

The Scholastic Assessment (formerly "Aptitude") Test (SAT) has been previously used as a psychometric test and has been a target of selective reporting by the media.² The media have occasionally reported the SAT scores by race and highlighted the modest improvement of minorities over the previous year. When white scores have been reported, it is noted that the scores have changed little in recent years. However, the media continue to be silent on the fact that the black and white gap in SAT scores has persisted for as long as scores have been reported by race. If it is ever mentioned, the media curtly dismisses racial differences in SAT scores as due to "cultural bias."

To assess the effectiveness of educational programs designed to

² "Aptitude," which suggests innate ability, has been dropped in favor of "assessment," thereby connoting that the Scholastic Assessment Test measures knowledge and skills acquired in and out of one's environment (Braswell, 1992). The SAT is gradually becoming more "democratic," with allowance of calculator use and de-emphasis on speed and accuracy.

If the standard deviation of the combined score is assumed to be 200, the standard deviation units are: between the combined statewide score and the combined national score: -0.1; between Hawaii private schools and the national mean: +0.5; between Hawaii public schools and the national mean: ± 0.3 .

enhance cognitive ability, comparisons between groups are vital (e.g. children that have or have not undergone "enrichment programs" such as Headstart). However, comparisons based only on "have" and "have not" have been used by egalitarians as justification for enacting programs and policies that help no one and harm everyone. Comparisons of cognitive ability based on race are usually denounced as "flawed" and are recast in socioeconomic terms. The unique biological characteristics of the races are never publicly considered when designing educational programs. So far, egalitarians have pushed the implementation of "one-size-fits-all" educational programs, which inevitably fails to address innate limitations and discourages nurturing of the gifted.

Another race-related issue that undergoes the media's selective reporting is the disproportionate rate of Black American involvement in crime, compared to White Americans. As with the racial gap in cognitive ability, the media have dismissed excessive black criminality as being exclusively due to "socioeconomic" factors. Crime reduction programs, like educational programs, that are based on egalitarian precepts rather than reality will ultimately fail and worsen the black-white gap.

The current study sought to correlate race with intelligence and crime in the United States. Cognitive ability, as measured by SAT scores, was correlated with state rates of violent crime and percentages of the various racial populations. The results demonstrate patterns of intelligence and criminal activity unique to each race and further suggest unique racial behavior.

Methods and Results

Except where noted, projected state population data, SAT scores and rates of violent crime were for the year 1995 and included Washington, D.C. (College Board, 1997; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1995, U.S. Department of Justice, 1996). Correlation analyses were performed between state racial population, expressed as a percent of the total state population, SAT scores, as proxies for intelligence, and state rate of violent crime (per 100,000), which include murder, non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robber and aggravated assault.

The mean 1995 projected population percentages of the various American races of the 50 states plus Washington, D.C. are: white,

78%; black, 11%; Hispanics, 6% and Asians, 3% (Table 1). Although census projections have a separate category for "Hispanic," Hispanics have been included in the "white" category, thus the percentage of European whites may be lower (around 75%) and the Hispanic percentage higher (about 11%) (Lee, 1998). The Bureau of the Census classification criteria for "Hispanic" are probably based on primary language, so the category will include a mixture of Spanish-speaking North American Indians and mestizos as well as Spanish-speaking Europeans. Also, classification of Hispanic includes blacks from Spanish-speaking countries. The state percentages of Asians and Hispanics ranged widely, from about 0.5% for both groups to as high as 60% for Asians (Hawaii) and 38% for Hispanics (New Mexico). The percentage distributions for these two groups were not normally distributed, compared to white and black populations. Accordingly, the standard deviations for the mean Asian and Hispanic populations were large, so caution should be used when examining results for Asians and Hispanics.

States currently do not measure the intelligence of its residents and tests that are employed to measure academic, thus cognitive, ability differ from state to state. The SAT lends itself to nation-wide comparison of cognitive ability. The College Board notes that "comparing or ranking states on the basis of SAT scores alone is invalid and strongly discouraged by the College Board." Thus, rather than analyzing individual states, comparisons were made between the aggregated top 10 scoring states, bottom 10 scoring states and the national mean. The sum of the Verbal and Math scores was used to rank the top and bottom 10 scoring. It should be noted that the SAT is taken by a select population group (potential college-bound high school students) and state participation rates in the SAT ranged from 4-79%.

The "un-recentered" 1995 SAT scores by race were (Verbal and Math): white, 448 and 498; black, 356 and 388; "Hispanic," (separate category from Mexican and Puerto Rican), 389 and 438, and Asians, 418 and 538 (U.S. Department of Education, 1997). The maximum Verbal or Math score is 800 and the standard deviation is about 100 points. The "un-recentered" national mean SAT scores were approximately 428 and 484 (Verbal and Math, respectively), which were

Table 1. State racial composition, SAT scores and violent crime rate

	All States (Mean)	Top 10 States (Mean)	Bottom 10 States (Mean)
% White	78.3	88.0 ⁺	63.4 ⁺
% Black	11.0	5.2	20.2 ⁺
% Hispanic	6.0	3.5	8.2
% Asian	3.1	1.5	7.9
Verbal	531.8	572.7 ⁺	489.8 ⁺
Math	528.8	573.7 ⁺	488.9 ⁺
Crime Rate (per 100,000)	596.5	410.6	899.8 ⁺

⁺ $p < 0.05$ (Students-Newman-Keuls), compared to "All States"; * $p < 0.05$ compared to "Top 10 States"

Table 2. Coefficient of correlation for race, SAT scores and rate of violent crime

	Verbal	Math	Crime Rate (per 100,000)
White	0.42*	0.37*	-0.69*
Black	-0.27	-0.33*	0.76*
Hispanic	-0.22	-0.15	0.31*
Asian	-0.28*	-0.14	-0.04

* $p < 0.05$ (Fisher's r to z)

recalculated from the "recentered" scores given by the College Board (1997). These scores suggest a hierarchy, with Asians and Whites being above the national mean and Hispanics and blacks below the mean. This hierarchy has remained fairly constant since 1976, when reporting of scores by race began. (The rationale behind "recentering" will not be considered here, the final outcome being to raise scores. Most of the current publicly available SAT scores have been mathematically manipulated. The College Board numbers are used here only for comparative purposes.) In contrast to the "re-centered" national mean, the actual (calculated) national mean SAT scores for the 50 states and Washington, D.C. are: Verbal 532 and Math 529 (Table 1).

There is a significant direct correlation between Verbal and Math SAT scores ($r = 0.97$, $p < 0.0001$), that is, achievement in one sub-test parallels achievement in the other. Compared to all states, the top 10 scoring states had a significantly higher mean percentage of whites ($p < 0.05$) and tended to have less racial minorities (Table 1). Also, compared to all states, the mean rate of violent crime in the top 10 scoring states tended to be less. In contrast, in the bottom 10 scoring states, the mean percentage of whites was significantly decreased and the mean percentage of blacks significantly elevated, compared to all states as well as the top 10 scoring states ($p < 0.05$). Additionally, the mean rate of violent crimes in the bottom 10 states was over twice the mean of the top 10 states and about 1.5 times the mean of all states ($p < 0.05$). Although the mean percentages of Asians and Hispanics were increased in the bottom 10 states compared to the means of all states and the top 10 states, this was not statistically significant. These data suggest a racial dimension to intelligence, that states with high SAT achievement scores are nearly homogeneously white with low levels of minorities, compared to states with higher minority presence, particularly blacks, which tend to have low achievement.

It has been postulated that criminal activity is more likely to occur in people with diminished cognitive ability. A correlation analysis was performed between SAT scores and rates of violent crime. An indirect relationship exists between cognitive ability, as measured by either Verbal or Math scores, and rate of violent crime ($r = -0.3$; $p < 0.05$). This observation supports the finding in Table

1, that the top scoring 10 states (higher overall cognitive ability) have significantly less violent crime than the bottom 10 states (lower overall cognitive ability).

The correlation between race and SAT scores and rate of violent crime is summarized in Table 2. For both Verbal and Math SAT scores, there were significant direct correlates with the percentage of whites, whereas a significant negative correlation was observed between percentage of whites and the rate of crime ($p < 0.05$). In contrast, negative correlates were observed between SAT scores and the percentage of minorities. The negative correlation between percentage of blacks and Math scores was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Also, the negative correlation between percentage blacks and Hispanics and rate of violent crime was significant ($p < 0.05$). The correlation between rate of crime and percentage of whites was -0.69, whereas the correlation between rate of crime and percentage of blacks was 0.76. For Asians, there were negative correlations between percentage of Asians and SAT scores. The correlation coefficients were similar to those of the Hispanics, but the Asian's Verbal score coefficient was significant ($p < 0.05$). In contrast to other minorities' positive correlations with crime, a negative correlation was observed, but this was small and not statistically significant. These findings suggest that cognitive ability, as measured by performance on the SAT, can be linked with race. As the white population becomes more homogeneous, Verbal and Math scores increase, whereas lower scores are found with an increasing minority, particularly black, population. In addition, rates of violent crime are strongly linked to race, that is, increasingly homogeneous white populations have lower rates of crime, whereas increasing populations of blacks and Hispanics have higher rates of crime. Increasing populations of Asians correlate with lower SAT scores, but there is almost no correlation with crime, unlike the positive correlation for crime seen with blacks and Hispanics.

Discussion

The current study demonstrated significant correlates between cognitive ability, as measured by SAT scores, race and rate of violent crime in the United States. Cognitive ability increased in an

increasingly homogeneous white population. Also, a homogeneous white population was correlated with a low rate of crime. In contrast, as the racial minority increased, with a countervailing decrease in of whites, cognitive ability decreased and the rate of violent crime increased. Thus, a homogeneous white population is characterized by higher cognitive ability and a lower rate of criminal behavior compared to a racially diverse population, especially one with a significant black population. These findings point out unique racial characteristics in behavior and also suggests that increasingly negative characteristics will emerge as the United States increases racial diversity.

Studies have documented the high cognitive ability of East Asians Chinese and Japanese. Despite a high percentage of American Asian families with low incomes, Asian SAT Math scores are higher than American blacks and whites. Furthermore, Asian SAT Verbal scores of students from very low-income families are better than scores of blacks from middle class families (National Science Foundation, 1994). The differences in intelligence cannot be attributed to socio-economic factors alone. It has been hypothesized that the Asians' lack of criminal behavior is due to their passivity and strong family structure. However, few have suggested that these characteristics are biological (genetically based) and are evolutionary strategies unique to a given race (Rushton, 1995). The traits of intelligence, lack of criminal behavior and strong family structure have evolved with the Asians to become the characteristics that distinguish Asians today. The Japanese and Chinese actively ensure cultural homogeneity and secure racial identity by restricting immigration and discouraging miscegenation. Egalitarians ignore this crucial fact, as they vainly try to force the "square" Asian model of education and crime prevention into "round" American culture.

The current results demonstrated a negative correlation between intelligence and increasing percentage of American Asian, which is counter to conventional wisdom. The negative correlation may be due to the tendency of American Asians to live in areas that are highly concentrated with blacks and Hispanics, the effect being to lower SAT scores. In fact, a former Japanese prime minister remarked over 10 years ago that American competition with Japan was weak because of the large black and Hispanic population. Two

other observations may explain the current result: 1) American Asian cognitive ability is lower than that of their brethren in the home country; 2) the Asian population as officially designated is a mixture of various Asian races. Despite the observation that American Asians rank as well or slightly better than whites in terms of cognitive ability, American Asians lag behind their peers in the homeland. The IQ difference ranges from 3-10 points in favor of those in the home countries (Baker, 1974; Lynn, 1991). It has been assumed that the Asian immigrants who have come to America are of high intelligence, thus the high intelligence of today's Asians. However, most of the Asian immigrants of the late 19th and early 20th century were laborers of low-average social and intellectual standing. The high educational attainment of the subsequent generation of American Asians may be due to high motivation and rational assessment of priorities rather than intelligence alone. The goal of a life better than their parents may have also encourage Asians to participate and succeed in scholarship. Thus, the success of American Asians may be primarily due to innate traits other than, but related to, intelligence (Herrnstein Murray 1994; Lynn, 1991).

The "Asian" population examined in the current study is a mixture of East Asians as well as Southeast Asians from the southeast and "Pacific Islanders." The IQ of recent Asian immigrants range from 87-96 (Lynn, 1991). Little information is available on the cognitive abilities of the major Asian races currently immigrating to the U.S.: Filipinos, Chinese and Vietnamese. As mentioned earlier, it is possible that most of these are from rural areas and are cognitively suited for nothing more complex than unskilled labor. Welfare participation is higher among people with low cognitive ability than among people of high cognitive ability (Herrnstein Murray, 1994). The high rate of welfare participation by the recent Asian immigrants, about 10% of Chinese and Filipinos and 25% of Vietnamese, suggests lower overall intelligence compared to the host population. In contrast, about 7% of native-born Americans are on welfare (Brimlow, 1996). The influx of Southeast Asian immigrants into the U.S. has lead to increased crime and welfare spending, compared to neighboring regions with few immigrants, which has persisted almost a generation following their arrival (Brimlow, 1996). The current

finding of a negative correlation between SAT scores and percentage of Asians may be due to increased immigration of Asians of lower cognitive ability, the effect being to dilute Asian SAT scores.

The state of Hawaii can be used to further illustrate the enigma of American Asian cognitive ability. Of all states, Hawaii has the highest concentration of "Asian," the majority of which are East Asians and "Pacific Islanders," which include Filipinos, Samoans and aboriginal Hawaiians. Another significant racial group is that of "mixed-race," combination of either white, Asian or Pacific Islander, which accounts for over one-third of the state population (Hawaii State Department of Health, 1993). The combined Math and Verbal Hawaii SAT scores are lower than the national mean and lower than the white mean. It is possible, that there is an overall negative effect on cognitive ability, due to the sizable population of Pacific Islanders and persons with mixed ancestry. Although SAT scores by race are not available, scores by school type are (Hawaii Department of Education, 1996). Generally, most East Asians (Chinese and Japanese) and whites attend private schools, whereas Pacific Islanders and Asians from outside East Asia make up the bulk of students attending public schools. The combined SAT score of Hawaii private schools is slightly above the national private school mean and is well above the national mean. In contrast, the combined Hawaii public school score is well below the national public school average as well as the national mean. The contributions of the various racial groups, particularly the influences of "mixed race" and Pacific Islanders, to overall SAT scores should be further elucidated. Examination of the mixed race population, particularly those with varying degrees of Asian ancestry, will further elucidate the biologic aspect of Asian cognitive ability.

In the current study, the finding of a significant negative correlation between an increasing Asian population and Verbal score is consistent with previous findings that Asian verbal ability is less well developed than visuo-spatial intelligence (Lynn, 1991). The significant negative correlation, similar to the blacks' negative correlation with verbal ability, may be accounted for by several extrinsic factors. It appears that the younger Asian generation has fully embraced American values and rejected those of the older Asian American generation. The American emphasis on "multiculturalism"

have weakened the incentive for Asians to assimilate (which includes mastery of English) and American values that emphasize material gain and consumerism over scholarship have replaced Confucian precepts espoused by the older Asian American generation, such as self-sacrifice and restraint. Guaranteed social welfare that ensures the continuity of the inept and mediocre will further erode overall Asian intelligence. The external factors that impinge on minority intelligence should be identified, where possible. However, it is not certain that modern social engineering, with its emphasis on "diversity," will result in any significant positive gain in cognitive ability, for any racial group.

Egalitarians have argued that the racial disparity in intelligence can be eliminated by hiring more qualified teachers, building more school buildings, buying more computers and racial diversification of the student body. Unfortunately, programs such as "affirmative action" have had barely measurable positive long-lasting enhancement of intelligence. Indeed, intelligence and standards have fallen as a result of egalitarian policies. Increased education spending does not correlate with increased cognitive ability. No correlation exists between the top scoring states of 1993 and dollar spent per student (Feistritzer, 1993). European students regularly outperform American students in academic achievement, even of those nations that spend much less per student than the U.S. (6,541), such as Hungary (1,685) and France (5,685) with similar school year lengths (U.S. Department of Education, 1996, 1997, 1998). Economic privilege does not guarantee high cognitive ability. The student bodies of European nations are racially homogeneous, with very small non-European minorities. Students of highly racially diverse nations such as Brazil and South Africa, ostensibly free of "racism," because the white population is the minority, consistently fare much worse than students of European nations. As Table 1 indicates, the significant factors of the top 10 states for 1995 (as well as for 1993) are that the mean population is over 80% white and about 5% black. The bottom 10 scoring states are more racially diverse, with an overall mean of one-third minority. The egalitarians' unceasing push for racial heterogeneity in American schools will lead to the destruction of the American education system, with the result that American students

will be on par with Third World students.

Egalitarians have denounced the racial aspects of academic achievement as "racist" and forced the debate over to sociological considerations. Rotberg (1998) has suggested that high academic achievement be based on degree of minority access to advanced degrees in science and engineering and extent of productivity in science and engineering. There is significant minority participation in American graduate schools, however, overwhelmingly by Asians. Over seven times as many Asians and almost three times as many Hispanics as blacks received advanced degrees in engineering and science (National Science Foundation, 1994). Rates of earning advanced engineering and science degrees were similar for Asians and whites. Asians have utilized their strength in visuo-spatial intelligence to earn over four times as many doctorates in mathematics and computer science as blacks (National Science Foundation, 1994). Perhaps indicative of the Asians' weak verbal abilities, about 16% of the doctorates earned by Asians in the sciences were in psychology and social science, much less than those earned by whites (34%). A general evaluation of the various races' contributions to America's scientific and technical advancements demonstrates active participation by whites and Asians, whereas black contribution is seriously lacking (Weyl, 1989). An evaluation of white, Asian and black civilizations based on Baker's (1974) 21 criteria for civilization will highlight the immature level of black African civilization, compared to white European and Asian civilizations. Thus, examining minority intellectual participation in graduate education and contribution to science and technology only highlights the racial gap in intellectual capacity and ability to build and sustain advanced civilizations.

Some have singularly ascribed the root of violent criminal behavior to socioeconomic factors, such as "backlash" against society. The current findings indicate that intelligence is a critical determinant of criminal behavior. Irrespective of race, criminal behavior as well as poverty, unemployment and welfare dependency have been directly correlated with low intelligence (Herrnstein Murray, 1994). Those with low cognitive ability may have other innate factors that may increase the likelihood that they will be involvement in crime, such as decreased inhibition for committing mayhem and lack of understanding of cause-effect and right-wrong. However, environment influence

should not be entirely excluded. The modern mass media provide numerous inappropriate cues (e.g. "gangsta rap" music) that encourage less social inhibition and satisfying base pleasures. Sadly, those of low cognitive ability are at the mercy of intelligent people who may also have warped morals and no reservations about manipulating and exploiting people of low cognitive ability to further their own agenda.

United States government crime statistics demonstrate that American blacks, in proportion to their numbers, are over-represented in suspect reporting, arrests and incarceration, compared to whites (U.S. Department of Justice, 1996). Furthermore, in the commission of violent crime, blacks choose whites victims over 50% of the time, compared to whites who choose blacks as victims about 2% of the time (Taylor, 1992). The propensity of American blacks to commit barbarous inter-racial crimes and mass violent demonstrations, may have intrinsic biological basis, such as enhanced hormone levels and need for aggressive, physical self expression. A biological basis is further supported by criminality studies of monozygotic twins that were raised apart and in the differing hormone levels between the races (see references in Rushton, 1995). Characteristics that encouraged violent, physical behavior, which translates into criminal behavior in civilized society, may have been essential for the black race to survive in Africa. Skills such as foresight or strategic planning were probably not critical for survival, since the blacks' early environment was not as severe as northern Europe or Asia. The contention that "poverty" and "racism" are responsible for black criminality entirely disregards the unique biology of blacks. Far from being doomed based on their biology, development of rational criminal and educational policies should acknowledge black strengths and limitations.

The current study uncovered a negative correlation between percentage of Asians and rate of violent crime, although not statistically significant. Most Asians, including American Asians, have low rates of violent criminal behavior (Rushton, 1995; U.S. Department of Justice, 1996). However, the increase in Third World Asian immigration to the U.S. has been accompanied by a rise in criminal activities that are more organized and violent than the previous generations (leinknecht, 1996). The rise in crimes committed by

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these immigrants, is not limited to urban areas (Brimlow, 1996). In general, today's Asian population may still be characterized as having strong familial bonds and respect for authority, characteristics that tend to suppress criminal behavior. It is not clear if the negative correlation observed in the current study between an American Asian population and rate of violent crime will persist into the future. The Asian population is diverse, and if an the inverse relationship between certain segments of the Asian population and SAT scores increases to significance, it is possible that a direct correlation between that section of the Asian population and crime may become significant as well. Sparked by increased competition for diminishing resources, social disruption stoked by demagogues may escalate into violence by the lower performing segment of society (Chang, 1997).

The current study confirms previous observations that a decrease in overall intelligence is correlated with an increase in rate of crime, poverty and other indicators of social breakdown (Hama, 1998; Whitney, 1995). If the less intelligent element of the population increases, large areas in U.S. cities may one day reach the same state of chaos as so many modern Third World cities. With the evacuation of talented European administrators from the developing nations following the end of the colonial era, government and economic administration in many such countries has fallen onto the shoulders of less capable administrators, and despite massive Western aid, the new leadership element in Africa and various other regions has brought their people an endless parade of famine and social chaos, frequently culminating in genocide. The decay of infrastructure is in part attributable to the exodus by competent administrators and persons with the technical expertise to maintain the cities. Further breakdown of city services in the Third World, or elsewhere, may well incite the populace to violence.

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Towards a Peri-Indo-European Interpretation of the Etruscan Language

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The linguistic affiliation of the Etruscan language, spoken in Central Italy up to the Roman times, is considered as highly uncertain by scholars. While most see in it a Pre-Indo-European isolate, others favor an Anatolian affiliation, with no decisive proof being brought from either side. However, the core of the language - both basic vocabulary and morphemes - shows striking similarities with Proto-Indo-European, while its closeness to Anatolian, or any other family is more dubious. These similarities, along with the regular sound change laws which can be drawn from them, allow us to think that the Etruscan tongue could have some old, but strong, links with Proto-Indo-European, even if major divergences between Etruscan and mainstream Indo-European would suggest that these links are quite remote.

1 Introduction

The Etruscan language was spoken up to the first centuries of the Christian Era in Central Italy by one of the most civilized peoples of the time. Albeit known through thousands of inscriptions - some of them quite long - it remained totally obscure to scholars until very recently. Bearing no similarities with the neighboring Italic tongues, it had to be deciphered through study of short and repetitive funeral inscriptions, a work which led to a very basic knowledge of the structure and vocabulary of the language but is quite far from allowing us to read longer texts (Pallotino, 1975).

This shadowy knowledge did not help to solve the question of the affiliation of the language. By the way, the discussion on that matter did not make much progress since the controversy between Denys of Halicarnasse and Herodotus, and generally followed the same pattern. Albeit numerous scholars have taken a position upon that problem, aside from the usual bunch of amateurish 'decipherments' seeing in Etruscan anything from Modern Ukrainian to Albanese, no real consensus has been reached upon that point. The most cautious