

**Working group on the Etruscan Origin: New and Multidisciplinary Methods***under the Patronage of***Turkish Historical Society Foundation**

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The anthropological characterization of the people whom we know as Etruscans, has been a subject of interest for hundreds of years. Although questions about the origins of this great civilization have been always asked, no satisfactory answers have been up to now formulated. At different times and among different schools of thought, various opinions have been put forward on the provenance of their artefacts, their biological relationships with ancient populations, their emergence from an aboriginal substratum or for the possibility of exotic genetic contributions. The wide divergence in the approaches to this problem and the different theories that have emerged, have only increased the popular belief in its beginnings.

A new approach would be the use of population genetics as a working method. Hundred and twenty generations ( twenty years times unit) are not an incommensurable historical time and even sex exchange occasionally occurred with foreign populations, some trace of the original genetic background can be estimated to be preserved at the chromosomal level ( that is the nuclear DNA).

The present knowledge of the genome sequence will certainly give us the opportunity to find homologies in populations living in different territories if they had a common connection. This possibility increases if we consider the mitochondrial (cytoplasmic) DNA as its heredity is transmitted only through the maternal line and therefore transferred only through the eggs cytoplasm.

The present agreement therefore foresees a genetic and molecular anthropology project for reconstructing the movement of the East Mediterranean peoples half a millennium b.c. and this is the result of the Bodrum symposium of June 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007, strongly wanted and wonderfully promoted by Madame Basar Gunseli and supported by the Turkish Historical Society.