ETRUSCANS IN LATIN POETRY: POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND PERSONAL IMPLICATIONS IN THE AGE OF AUGUSTUS



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ABSTRACT

The intention of this thesis is to attempt for the first time to explore the presence of Etruscan themes in the Augustan poets in all their facets and shades, in their political as well as cultural context, while also being mindful of the unique ways in which each individual poet engages with traditional tropes. The thesis examines the presence of Etruscan themes as they surface in Augustan poetry, by exploring the particular ways in which each subject takes shape and the different forms they assume, re-contextualising and re-appraising overly well-known material by framing narratives according to more unorthodox intra- and inter-textual connections. The investigation will be supplemented by ample recourse to material evidence, in an attempt to reconstruct each subject in its many ramifications and expressions. The intent is not to read the text as truthful substantiation of the archaeological evidence, of course, but as one of many pieces of a puzzle, all equally required to reveal the overall picture in its most complete form. Such an outlook will enable the reader to better discern the framework in which the emergence of Etruscan themes can be investigated and understood. Emphasis on the need to incorporate Etruria and the rest of Italy into the new Augustan political programme coexists with a resurgence in the cultural milieu of the late republic of a vigorous interest in Etruscan antiquities, amongst others. To these stimuli, poets respond either by forcefully seeking to legitimise the Etruscans' role in Rome's past or by maintaining a more traditional stance and offering conventional portrayals of Etruscan self-indulgence and treacherousness. The ambition of this work overall is thus to provide a comprehensive account of the ways in which Augustan poetry engages with Etruria and the Etruscan people at the twilight of their civilisation.

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PREFACE

'What we see, in the etruscan (*sic*) remains, is the fag end of the revelation of another form of cosmic consciousness: and also, that salt of the earth, the revelation of the human existence of people who lived and who *were*, in a way somewhat different from our way of living and being.'[1] Even amongst the many misapprehensions that characterise his judgment, D. H. Lawrence picks up on a crucial aspect of the impression that the Etruscan people have left for centuries on those who have tried to read them: their almost mystical uniqueness. They left us with a myriad of unanswered questions, cryptic clues and arcane traces of a civilisation that appeared enigmatic even to its contemporaries. The degree of misconception that emanates from ancient sources who were in direct contact with Etruscans is remarkable: to the Greeks, they are hedonistic and self-indulgent, to the Romans they are the most treacherous enemies. There is a sense of distance, of remote distinctiveness in the way in which the Etruscans are portrayed by their contemporaries, which to the modern reader cannot but clash with the historical reality of a society deeply interconnected with its neighbours.

This is perhaps the single most important notion to retain when one approaches any ancient literature on this subject. It is indeed vital to bear in mind that 'most of history is based on the memories of humans who once reported what they saw or heard. Thus, every slip of their memories, every false reconstruction, and every one of their subjective reinterpretations was transferred into the written sources or pictorial representations that now constitute the storehouse of information from which historians reconstruct a vanished past.'[2] In antiquity, this assertion is applicable above all to the Etruscans, whose study for the longest time was, and to a certain extent still is, affected by misconceptions and misrepresentations, often deriving from misconstructions and false beliefs originating in ancient times.

By the end of the first millennium BC, many Etruscans believed that the story of their great civilisation was reaching its ineluctable end: the tenth and last *saeculum* of the Etruscan nation, as

[1] Lawrence 1932, 176.
[2] Stock, Gajsar, Güntürkün 2015, 369.

predicted by the haruspices, had begun, heralding, amidst a mounting sense of impending doom, the twilight of Etruria.[3] Incidentally, this phase coincides with the final stages of the process of assimilation and Romanisation of Etruria into Augustus' new *Italia*. The Augustan age is indeed a uniquely privileged moment in history for those who wish to investigate the ways in which memories are subjected to distortion and can be profoundly altered by a strongly suggestive environment. Indeed, 'to make a difference in a society, it is not enough for a certain past to be selected. It must steer emotions, motivate people to act, be received; in short, it must become a socio-cultural mode of action,'[4] and the *princeps*' urgent quest for a unifying national past generated a pressing need to re-shape the collective memory of the Roman people to justify and legitimise the new political order, carried out by means of a series of initiatives intended to impress a new and emotionally charged meaning on the *monumenta* of Rome. The choice to single out this moment in time for the study of the representation of Etruscans and Etruscan themes in Latin literature thus stems from the collision of two factors, namely the cultural and historical end of the Etruscan nation, and the remarkably favourable conditions for literature in the Augustan age, which, more than in other times in history, can be read and understood vis a vis the explicit needs of the society in which it is produced.

As for the specific intention of this thesis, it will not be to reach any factual verdict on the life and culture of the Etruscans of the Augustan age, nor to discuss broad subjects to which many illustrious scholars have already dedicated numerous pages. The reader will perhaps at first be taken aback by the range of seemingly unrelated topics. However, these have not been selected *a priori*, but are directly derived from the close study of the selected sources, namely the great tetrad of Augustan poets, Vergil, Horace, Propertius and Ovid. Evidence emerges both in the form of minor, incidental mentions and less frequently in more fully-articulated narratives. This material has been carefully arranged into five chapters dedicated to subjects ranging from stereotypical representations to political dynamics, toponymic relics, emotional involvement and the great re-mythologisation of

[3] Cf. Censorinus *DN* 17.6. See also Rawson 1978, 146 and Haack 2003, 62 with bibliography.
[4] Confino 1997, 1390.

early Latium. Each chapter, in turn, explores two distinct aspects broadly belonging to the same theme.

The intention of this thesis is thus to examine the presence of Etruscan themes as they surface in Augustan poetry, by exploring the particular ways in which each subject takes shape and the different forms they assume, re-contextualising and re-appraising overly well-known material by framing narratives according to more unorthodox intra- and inter-textual connections. The analysis of individual passages relies on the invaluable research collected in numerous scholarly contributions, especially commentaries, of which ample use was made and which are referenced throughout the present work. In addition, following a somewhat holistic approach, the investigation will be supplemented by ample recourse to material evidence, in the form of epigraphs, paintings, pottery and statuary, in an attempt to reconstruct each subject in its many ramifications and expressions. The intent is not to read the text as truthful substantiation of the archaeological evidence, of course, but as one of many pieces of a puzzle, all equally required to reveal the overall picture in its most complete form. Such an outlook will enable the reader to better discern the framework in which the emergence of Etruscan themes can be investigated and understood. Emphasis on the need to incorporate Etruria and the rest of Italy into the new Augustan political programme coexists with a resurgence in the cultural milieu of the late republic of a vigorous interest in Etruscan antiquities, amongst others. To these stimuli, poets respond either by forcefully seeking to legitimise the Etruscans' role in Rome's past or by maintaining a more traditional stance and offering conventional portrayals of Etruscan self-indulgence and treacherousness.

This thesis will for the first time attempt to explore the presence of Etruscan themes in the Augustan poets in all their facets and shades, in their political as well as cultural context, while also being mindful of the unique ways in which each individual poet engages with traditional tropes and the peculiar requirements of the poetic compositions. The ambition is thus to provide a comprehensive account of the ways in which Augustan poetry engages with Etruria and the Etruscan people at the twilight of their civilisation.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AE	*L'Année épigraphique* (1888-)
Cardauns	B. Cardauns, *Marcus Terentius Varro, Antiquitates rerum divinarum* (1976)
CIE	*Corpus inscriptionum Etruscarum*
CIL	*Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*
Courtney	E. Courtney, *The Fragmentary Latin P*oets (2003)
CSE	*Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum*
FHG	C. Müller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum* (1841-51)
FGrHist	F. Jacoby, *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (1923-)
Cornell	T. J. Cornell, *Fragments of the Roman Historians* (2013)
Funaioli	G. Funaioli, *Grammaticae Romanae fragmenta* (1927)
Gigon	O. Gigon, *Aristotelis Opera* (1960-1987)
Grilli	A. Grilli, *M. Tulli Ciceronis Hortensius* (1962)
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae* (1903-)
Inscr. It.	*Inscriptiones Italiae* (1937-1963)
Jocelyn	H. D. Jocelyn, *The tragedies of Ennius: the fragments* (1969)
Maurenbrecher	B. Maurenbrecher, *C. Sallusti Crispi Historiarum reliquiae* (1867)
Riposati	B. Riposati, *M. Terenti Varronis De vita populi Romani* (1939)
Rose	V. Rose, *Aristotelis qui ferebantur librorum fragmenta* (1886)
Sk.	O. Skutsch, *The Annals of Q. Ennius* (1985)
SVF	*Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* (1903-1924)
Syll.^{3}	*Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum* (1915-1924)
TLE	*Thesaurus Linguae Etruscae* (2009-)
TrGF	B. Snell, R. Kannicht, S. L. Radt, *Tragicorum graecorum fragmenta* (1971-2004)
Walt	S. Walt, *Der Historiker C. Licinius Macer: Einleitung, Fragmente, Kommentar* (1997)

INTRODUCTION

PART ONE: ETRURIA'S TROUBLED HERITAGE

The history of the relationships between Rome and Etruria is extremely complex and multifaceted, and deeply informs the way in which the Romans perceived their neighbours to the north. As a consequence of the conventional belief that they originally migrated from Lydia, Etruscans were often regarded as a foreign entity which did not belong to the ethnological framework of central Italy. Sources indeed reveal a tendency to trace back to the age of Romulus individuals and events clearly belonging to the Tarquinian phase of Rome, a process defined by Musti as 'romulizzazione degli Etruschi', resulting in the representation of the Etruscans in an auxiliary and subordinate role.[5] In addition, the tradition attempts to conceal the strong continuity between the Etruscan monarchy and the republic as regards institutions, as well as culture and religion, and instead appears eager to fill the vacuum of familial traditions for the regal period by developing the role of the Sabines, in all likelihood, according to Musti, under the aegis of the Sabine *gens Valeria*, which counted amongst its members the annalist Valerius Antias. The marked 'filosabinismo' of many authors, in particular Cato and Varro, thus informs the ensuing literary production, resulting often, but not always, in more or less pronounced instances of 'antietruschismo'. In the context of the power struggle for the dominion over Latium, Rome emerges victorious after over a century of conflicts with the Etruscan cities, many of which in turn continue to harbour feelings of resentment which continue to resurface frequently, even after the concession of citizenship with the *lex Iulia* of 90 BC. However, by the end of the I century BC, Etruscans figure in large numbers as members of the élite and even in the *princeps*' entourage, signalling the conclusion of a long and often painful process of assimilation. The understanding of these complex relationships is crucial to a full appreciation of the different dynamics at play in the portrayals of Etruscans in the poetry of the Augustan age.

[5] Cf. Musti 1970, 40-1.

i. FROM HERODOTUS TO DIONYSIUS OF HALICARNASSUS: A CENTURIES-LONG DEBATE BETWEEN FOREIGN ORIGINS AND AUTOCHTHONY

The subject of the origins of the Etruscans, 'l'annosa "questione"' in the words of Pallottino, has been debated for centuries and has not to this day been decisively resolved.[6] Herodotus in the V century BC is the first author to address the issue, and he traces the Etruscans back to Anatolia:[7]

> 'in the reign of Atys son of Manes there was great scarcity of food in all Lydia. For a while the Lydians bore this with what patience they could … But the famine did not cease to plague them, and rather afflicted them yet more grievously. At last their king divided the people into two portions, and made them draw lots, so that the one part should remain and the other leave the country … Then one part of them … sailed away to seek a livelihood and a country; till at last, after sojourning with many nations in turn, they came to the Ombrici, where they founded cities and have dwelt ever since. They no longer called themselves Lydians, but Tyrrhenians, after the name of the king's son who had led them thither.' Hdt. 1.94 (translation by A. D. Godley)

Herodotus' account was widely accepted by ancient authors, and until recent times a number of modern scholars still maintained that, if not in its entirety, the passage of the *Historiae* preserved traces of a genuine tradition, particularly after the discovery of the so-called Stele of Lemnos in 1885, the language of which is akin to Etruscan, thus seemingly corroborating the theory of a movement westwards.[8] The migration thesis was defended as late as the mid-XVIII century by Nicolas Fréret and followed a century later by Niebuhr and Mommsen, although in the form of a relocation of

[6] Cf. Pallottino 1947, ix and the more recent and exhaustive volume edited by Bellelli with bibliography (cf. Bellelli 2012). For a list of works of historiographical or antiquarian interest dating from the V to the I century BC concerned with the Etruscans (taken from Korenjak 2017) cf. Hdt. 1.94, 166-7, Hellanic. *FGrHist* 4 FF 4, 71c, 92, Th. 6.88, 103, 7.53-4, Ephor. *FGrHist* 70 F 137a, Theopomp. *FGrHist* 115 FF 204, 354, Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 100, Anticlides *FGrHist* 140 F 21, Timaeus *FGrHist* 566 FF 1, 85, Lyc. 805-6, 1238-49, 1351-61, Arist. *Pol.* 3.5.10-1, frr. 60, 607-8 Rose, Heraclid. Pont. fr. 611.44 Rose, Fabius Pictor F 8 Cornell, Cato F 72 Cornell, Polyb. 1.6.4-6, 2.17.1-3, Posidonius *FGrHist* 87 F 119, Dion. Hal. 1.26-30, 7.2-3 *et passim*, Liv. *passim*, Varro *passim*, Strabo 5.2.2-9, Cic. *Nat.D. passim*, *Div. passim*, Vitr. *De arch.* 1.7.1-2, 4.6.6-7.5, 6.3.1, Sostratus of Nysa *FGrHist* 23 F 3.

[7] For an in-depth analysis of the ancient sources see Briquel 2013.

[8] Cf. Dennis 1883, xxxv. The discovery provoked little enthusiasm amongst Italian archaeologists, who despite being 'dismissed by non-Italians as chauvinistic … were reading the excavation reports which Italian archaeologists were writing about Villanovan sites' (Drews 1992, 25 n. 46). For an argument in favour of a Phocean source for Herodotus see Holland 1937.

population from across the Alps, in Rhaetian territory. However, since the mid-XIX century an increasing number of scholars, relying on substantial archaeological records, have drawn attention to the complete absence of traces of a sizeable migration from the east, further noting that evidence appears to point to an organic development of the Etruscan civilisation from Villanovan Etruria, in turn evolved directly out of the Protovillanovan.[9] The theory of autochthony nowadays represents the broader consensus of the scholarly community.

Nevertheless, already in antiquity sources register the circulation of versions that diverge from Herodotus, such as that attributed to Hellanicus, recording that in the reign of Nanas the Pelasgians were driven out of their country, and after taking Croton they proceeded to colonise Tyrrhenia.[10] Yet the only author to present an argument in open contrast to Herodotus, as far as extant evidence reports, is Dionysius of Halicarnassus. The historian noted that the episode of the migration was conspicuously absent from the Λυδιακά of the Lydian historian Xanthus, a contemporary of Herodotus, adding that not only was it remarkable that a man of Lydian origin, an author of historical writings moreover, was not aware of such a tradition, but also that he records an entirely different account of the events instead:[11]

> 'Xanthus of Lydia, who was as well acquainted with ancient history as any man and who may be regarded as an authority second to none on the history of his own country, neither names Tyrrhenus in any part of his history as a ruler of the Lydians nor knows anything of the landing of a colony of Maeonians in Italy; nor does he make the least mention of Tyrrhenia as a Lydian colony, though he takes notice of several things of less importance. He says that Lydus and Torebus were the sons of Atys; that they, having divided the kingdom they had inherited from their father, both remained in Asia, and from them the nations over which they reigned received their names.' Dion. Hal. 1.28.2 (translation by E. Cary)

Dionysius is in fact the only ancient author to argue an autochthonous origin of the Etruscans, however he does so with the explicit intent to demonstrate the Greek origin of Rome and the predominance of the Greek element in the rise of the city: the distinction between Lydians and

[9] For an account of the issues associated with an alleged migratory movement, see Drews 1992.
[10] Cf. Hellanic. *FGrHist* 4 F 4.
[11] For a detailed discussion of the testimony of Myrsilos of Methymna (cf. *FGrHist* 477 F 9), who might be regarded as a precursor of Dionysius' argument, see Jacoby's comment, Gabba 1975 and Musti 1981.

Tyrrhenians allows the historian to dismiss the latter as one of the numerous barbarous tribes of Italy who came into contact with the Romans, and the emphasis placed on the Greek heritage comes inevitably with the consequent reduction and minimising of the contribution of the Etruscans to the history of Rome.[12]

The lack of a reliable Etruscan written tradition on the subject prevents any comparison with Greek and Roman authors, but based on the evidence, it is apparent that the Etruscans are regarded broadly as an extraneous element in central Latium and Italy, both in terms of ἔθνος and culture: their distinctiveness is either represented as derived from their eastern origin, which accounts for the extraordinary refinement of their civilisation (Herodotus and most ancient authors), or as characterising them in analogous terms to the many other barbarians encountered by Rome (Dionysius), thus denying them any role in the history of the Roman people. The consequence of both approaches is a tendency to single out Etruria as something 'different' and 'distinct' from Rome, overlooking the important continuity, political as well as cultural, which the Etruscans brought about in central Latium.

ii. ETRUSCAN KINGS IN ROME: THE DIFFICULT LEGACY OF THE TARQUINS AND ETRURIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

Around the last quarter of the VII century BC, coinciding with the time when according to Roman tradition Tarquinius Priscus became king, archaeological evidence appears to confirm Rome's entering into the cultural circle of Etruria and its subsequent transformation from a conglomerate of *pagi* into an *urbs*:[13] the great public works implemented by the Etruscan kings include, amongst many others, the drainage and paving of the Forum, which became the focal point of the city, and the related construction of a major drainage system, the *cloaca maxima*, the planning of regular streets, above all the *Via Sacra*, the early development of the area of the Forum Boarium, the

[12] Cf. Dion. Hal. 1.89.3. For a detailed analysis see Musti 1970, 7-20.
[13] A thorough summary of this material evidence can be found in Meyer 1983. Cf. also Scullard 1967, 247ff. and Ogilvie 1976, 30ff.

establishment of the great temple of *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus* on the Capitoline hill, the new religious centre of the city. 'By the time of the last Tarquin, Rome was a city. It had its public monuments … it had its markets and shops; it had its streets and its drains; it had its houses and its Curial halls; it had its place where the people could assemble to discuss politics or to engage in the religious activity of sport. It had indeed become what one ancient writer called a Greek city.'[14] However, the historiographical reconstruction of this period is heavily biased: as will be explored in detail in chapter 2.1, the Roman historiographical tradition displays a tendency to significantly demean the contributions of Etruria, either by accentuating negative features, for instance in the case of the last Tarquinius, who despite his successful policy of expansion and monumental development of the city is transfigured into the embodiment of despotic power, or by appropriating the accomplishments of Etruscan individuals, as it is the case with Servius Tullius, who on account of the acclaimed set of social reforms he promoted is stripped of his Etruscan origin and made into a Latin.

As a result, the tradition on the monarchical period in Rome is complex and multifaceted. Traditionally, the foundation of the *res publica* itself was inherently linked to the expulsion of the kings, and in Cicero's formulation the dynamic *regnum~libertas*, characterised as foundational of Rome's ideology, is programmatically defined by the mutual exclusion of the two concepts; accordingly, the anti-monarchical sentiment is associated *ab origine* with the tyrannical reign of Tarquinius Superbus, developing originally from the hatred prompted by the tyrant, *odium regis*, which is in turn transmuted into aversion for the political system in which the tyrant operated, *odium regni*.[15] Later in the II century BC monarchy begins to seduce the imagination of many politicians. Tiberius Gracchus is accused in 133 BC of *adfectatio regni* and Sullan propaganda seems to appropriate the parallel between the dictator and Romulus, as we infer from Lepidus' polemical address to his enemy as *scaevos iste Romulus*.[16] The figure of Romulus himself sustains significant re-appraisal, a process which is still ongoing when Octavian and his associates, after deliberating at length about a *cognomen* that would

[14] Ogilvie 1976, 32-3. *Contra* Cornell 1995.
[15] Cf. Cic. *Rep.* 1.62, 2.43.
[16] Sall. *Hist.* 1, fr. 55.5 Maurenbrecher. However, Cicero plays on a Romulean identification in his speeches against Catiline (cf. Vasaly 1993, 86).

distinguish him, decided to choose *Augustus* instead of *Romulus*, which the *princeps* had previously favoured 'as a way of comparing his accomplishments to a second founding of Rome',[17] because too closely associated with the notion of kingship.

Regardless of the degree of historical distortion and the widespread tendency to diminish their accomplishments, the fact that the Etruscans represented a crucial component of the cultural melting pot of early central Italy and of early Rome herself could hardly be obscured. Florus writes that 'since the Roman people united in itself the Etruscans, the Latins and the Sabines, and traces the same descent from all alike, it has formed a body made up of various members and is a single people composed of all these elements.'[18] Indeed, when illustrating the archaic community of the Urbs, sources refer to three groups, *Tities*, *Ramnes* (or *Ramnenses*) and *Luceres*, which are associated with three distinct ethnic groups, Sabines, Romans and Etruscans, regarded as foundational and therefore dated to the reign of Romulus.[19] As observed by Momigliano, 'there is very little in the ancient evidence to suggest that blood relationship was at the basis of the tribes',[20] and nowhere is it mentioned explicitly that the members of each tribe were descendants of Tatius, Romulus or Lucumo, nor that the *Tities* and *Luceres* were Sabine and Etruscan respectively. In other words, as much as the Etruscan component in early Rome is undeniable, these interpretations of the tribes as they stand were eponymic, not ethnic. Varro (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.55) records that the *ager Romanus* was first divided into three 'tribes', *Tities* and *Ramnenses* named after Tatius and Romulus according to Ennius, *Luceres* named after Lucumo according to Iunius (M. Iunius Gracchanus).[21] To Volnius, an individual of Etruscan origin, who wrote tragedies in Etruscan, which in all likelihood date to the Hellenistic period, is attributed the somewhat odd claim that all names were Etruscan, which appears to expressly clash with the conspicuous ethnic differentiation suggested by most authors.[22] The same

[17] Eck 2007, 55-6.
[18] Flor. 2.6.1 (translation by E. S. Forster).
[19] 'In throwing back the origin of these institutions to Romulus the Romans were partly influenced by the normal desire to attribute everything to 'the founder'' (Ogilvie 1965, 80). For relevant bibliography see Momigliano 1963, Palmer 1970 and Ampolo 1981.
[20] Momigliano 1963, 111. In the following pages Momigliano rejects Dumézil's theory of the Indo-European tripartition (cf. Dumézil 1958).
[21] Cf. Spencer 2019, 148-9.
[22] Cf. also Varro *Ling.* 5.89, 91, Cic. *Rep.* 2.14, 36 and Dion. Hal. 2.7.2, although he does not mention the names of the tribes. For the Etruscan origin of the names see Schulze 1904, 218.

names, though referring to *centuriae equitum* and not to tribes, are reported in Livy,[23] with the origin of *Luceres* regarded as obscure. On this subject, various conjectures circulated in antiquity, namely that the name came (i) from an Etruscan king Lucumo, Lucius or Lucomedius who assisted Romulus in the war against Tatius, (ii) from Lucerus, king of Ardea, (iii) from *lucus*.[24]

The widespread notion that Rome was founded on a tripartite ethnic core is illustrated in Vergil and Propertius' celebration and immortalisation of Rome's rise to power and the splendour of Augustan times through the representations of archaic Rome as a Golden Age pastoral landscape.[25] Here the ethnic component appears to be if not explicitly declared, at least strongly alluded to: Vergil does not use the names of the tribes, but rather refers to *Sabini*, *Remus et frater* and *fortis Etruria* (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 2.532-3), whereas Propertius mentions *Tities Ramnesque viri Luceresque*, but also the eponyms, Lycmon, Tatius and Romulus (cf. Prop. 4.1a.29-32).[26] In other words, both Vergil and Propertius see the ascent of Rome as a result of the integration of the three ethnic components which Varro emphasises in his antiquarian work, of which the Etruscan element is for both somewhat predominant. On the one hand, with the use of the adjective *fortis* Vergil underscores the might of the Etruscan nation as opposed to the conventional portrayal of the Etruscans as a self-indulgent and effeminate people;[27] on the other, Propertius places emphasis on the role of Lycmon as the first to assume the characteristic functions of a military leader.[28] Etruria, despite her complex legacy, is therefore legitimised as a vital component of Rome's future greatness, which, as will be explored in more detail below, fits into Augustus' narrative, focused as it was on the notion of *Italia* and *Itala virtus*.

[23] Cf. Liv. 1.13.8, 36.2 and Serv. *ad Aen*. 5.560.
[24] Cf. (i) Cic. *Rep.* 2.14, Varro *Ling.* 5.55 and Dion. Hal. 2.37.2, (ii) Festus 106L, (iii) Plut. *Rom.* 20. Lucumo is to be regarded, according to Poucet, as a double of Caelius Vibenna, whereas according to Pais, as a double of Tarquinius Priscus (cf. Poucet 1967, 356 n. 85 and Pais 1913, 437, 476).
[25] Cf. Verg. *Georg.* 2.532-5 and Prop. 4.1.29-32.
[26] It is interesting to notice that the form of the name chosen by Propertius is not the Etruscan *Lucumo*, nor the Latin *Lycomedius*, but rather a Hellenised form, reinforced by the origin from λύκος. Ovid briefly mentions the tribes, *Titienses*, *Ramnes* and *Luceres* (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 3.131-2).
[27] The theme will be examined in detail in chapters 1.1 and 4.1.
[28] Lycmon is presented wearing the *galerus*, a rough wolf-skin cap, often of a sacrificial victim (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.688-9 and Serv. *ad Aen.* 2.683), *primus* to pitch a tent.

The role of Etruria is crucial also in the phase of transition from monarchical power to the republic and provides a strong sense of continuity to many political and religious institutions which will constitute the symbols of republican Rome herself. First and foremost, archaic Etruscan and Latin regality is traditionally neither dynastic nor genetic, but rather founded on ἀριστεία, so once the prehistoric monarchy was overthrown, the republican magistracies inherited the forms and trappings of power that had been in use in Etruria: as formulated by Torelli, 'religioni del rito come quelle etrusca e romana hanno in maniera del tutto naturale espresso anche le gerarchie politico-sociali sì da renderle visibili e fisse, attraverso l'esibizione del possesso di strumenti propri dell'attività magico-religiosa e politica.'[29] The Romans thus appropriated two distinct sets of symbols, those of the regular magistrates and those of absolute power, that of the *triumphator*. Amongst the former can be listed primarily the *lictores*, the attendants who accompanied the magistrates invested with *imperium*,[30] and the *fasces* and *secures*, the rods and the axes, originally symbols of the authority to inflict capital punishment, of both sacral and political nature, testifying to the inextricable link between *imperium* and divine investiture by means of *auspicia*.[31] Other adornments and emblems of Etruscan origin were the *toga praetexta*, a wool garment decorated with a purple border, and the *sella curulis*, an ivory seat reserved for higher magistracies.[32] As to the *insignia* of the triumphant commander, whose presence in Etruria Torelli associates with the introduction of regal symbols from the east during the Orientalising period (VIII-VII century BC), Dionysius lists the crown, the ivory throne, the sceptre, the *tunica palmata*, a flowered tunic, and the *toga picta*, made of purple wool and gold thread.[33] Additionally, according to Servius, the Romans had inherited from the Etruscans a certain type of footwear, the *crepida*, first reserved for senators, and later adopted by knights and soldiers (Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.458).[34]

[29] Torelli 2006, 205. Cf. Dion. Hal. 3.61 and Strabo 5.2.2.
[30] Cf. Liv. 1.8.3 and Diod. Sic. 5.40.
[31] Cf. Torelli 2006, 423. For a detailed study of these symbols see Tassi Scandone 2001.
[32] Cf. Liv. 1.8.3 and Diod. Sic. 5.40.
[33] Cf. Dion. Hal. 3.61.
[34] Vergil attributes this footwear to Evander, creating an anachronistic connection with Roman institutions. Cf. Fratantuono & Smith 2018, 537.

In the realm of culture, to Etruria is attributed the crucial introduction of the alphabet, borrowed in turn from Euboean settlers at Pithecusae and Cumae.[35] The long-lasting cultural pre-eminence of Etruria in central Italy is confirmed by Livy's remark that in the IV century BC young men from aristocratic families were sent to Caere to be educated in Etruscan language and literature,[36] as they were later sent to Athens to be trained in Greek *litterae*. In addition, a series of aspects of Roman society was variously ascribed to the Etruscans. The *ludi scaenici* for instance are said to have been introduced to Rome by the Etruscans, as a way to appease the gods during an epidemic.[37] A passage in Varro[38] casts further light on the subject, recording that the Etruscans wrote classical plays (cf. the above-mentioned Volnius). The language of theatre itself appears heavily influenced by Etruscan, as the Latin word *histrio*, denoting the professional performer, reflects the Etruscan *ister*. The introduction of the *ludi circenses* is equally ascribed to the Etruscans. According to Livy,[39] Tarquinius Priscus is said to have organised extremely sophisticated games, including horses and boxers brought to Rome from Etruria, to celebrate his victory over the Latins.[40] Finally, Etruscans had a significant impact on Roman culture in the realm of music. According to Strabo,[41] the trumpets (σάλπιγγες) and all music used publicly by the Romans, had come from Tarquinii. Plenty of sources record that the trumpet was an invention of the Tyrrhenians, or at least they appeared to show a distinctive familiarity with this object.[42] In particular, the Τυρρηνίς σάλπιγξ was associated with the blaring

[35] Cf. Strabo 5.2.2.
[36] Cf. Liv. 9.36.3.
[37] Cf. Liv. 7.2 and also Val. Max. 2.4.4 and Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 107. For a detailed account of this episode see pp. 40-1. Iconography provides testimonies in the form of funerary paintings and reliefs, such as those in the Tomb of the Pulcinella, the Tomb of the Augurs and the Tomb of the Olympic Games, in which performers, sometimes wearing masks, danced to choreographed ballets often based on mythological premises (cf. Thuillier 2013, 833). Cf. also Maxwell 1996, who points out the connection between the *fescennini versus* and the Etruscan town of Fescennium and suggests that the Romans received mime from Etruria.
[38] Cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.55.
[39] Cf. Liv. 1.35-5-7.
[40] Material evidence confirms the popularity of boxing and wrestling since the late VII century BC and of horse racing since the early VI century (cf. Thuillier 2013, 834-5). Cf. also Thuillier 1985 and Jolivet 1993. Coarelli (cf. Coarelli 1977) argues that the *Trigarium*, where *triga* races were held, dates from the age of the Tarquins.
[41] Cf. Strabo 5.2.2.
[42] Cf. Posidonius *FGrHist* 87 F 119, Ath. 4, 184, Sil. 2, 18-9, Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.526, Clem. Al. *Strom.* 1.16.75.1.1, Poll. *Onom.* 4, 85, Sch. Ar. *Ran.* 133, Sch. Eur. *Phoen.* 1377, Isid. *Etym.* 3.21.3, 18.4 and Tzetz. *in Lycophr.* 250. For a detailed discussion of the trumpet in the classical world see Petretto 1996, Tobin 2013 and Berlinzani 2007 with relative bibliography.

sound of war,[43] but it is also attested in public contexts, when the herald's voice was insufficient, such as dramatic *agones* and sporting events, in processions, in funerals, in sacred offices.[44] In the *scholia* to Euripides' *Phoenissae* (cf. Sch. Eur. *Phoen*. 1377) the scholiast writes that the Tyrrhenians invented the trumpet during the wars in Italy, which makes it all the more interesting to find the instrument mentioned by Vergil: pondering over Evander's request to lead the Tyrrhenian army to war, Aeneas receives from his mother Venus a sign from heaven, the blasting sound of the Tyrrhenian trumpet pealing through the sky, announcing impending war in Latium (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.520-36).

Most importantly perhaps, religion is to be regarded as the field in which the Etruscan contribution was most significant and also universally acknowledged: as observed by Ceccarelli, 'Etruscan religion, as well as Roman, was a scrupulous performance of a set of rules; it can be defined as a "ritualistic religion", where rituals and sacrifices were aimed to maintain harmony with gods, and to restore that order when it was disrupted.'[45] But Etruscan religion was also a 'revealed' religion, which set the Etruscans apart from other peoples as receivers of the revelation, giving rise to a sense of cohesion if not outright unity. As Pallottino wrote, 'non soltanto l'idioma, così caratteristico e in apparenza isolato entro il grande arco dei dialetti italici e latini; ma è il "nome" del popolo, cioè il concetto nazionale che abbraccia la comune origine genealogica e ancora più il vanto della primitiva unità religiosa.'[46] Etruscan religious lore was known as *Etrusca disciplina*,[47] divided into *libri haruspicini*, dedicated to the inspection of the entrails of victims, especially the liver, *fulgurales*, concerned with the interpretation of thunder and lightning, and *rituales*, which consisted in a set of rules and prescriptions about city founding, consecration of temples etc.[48] The Etruscan tradition recorded a prophet Tages, whose story, mainly preserved with some discrepancies by Cicero, Ovid, Johannes Lydus and Verrius

[43] Cf. Eur. *Heracl.* 830-2, *Phoen.* 1377-8, *Rhes.* 988-9, Diod. Sic. 5.40 and Clem. Al. *Paed*. 2.4.42.2.
[44] Cf. Aesch. *Eum*. 567-8, Soph. *Aj*. 17, Hor. *Sat.* 1.6.42-4, Prop. El. 4, 11, 9-10, Petron. *Sat.* 78, Plut. *Sull*. 7.2-7, Paus. 5.22.1.5, Poll. *Onom*. 4.86-8 and Himer. *Or*. 61.5.
[45] Ceccarelli 2016, 35.
[46] Pallottino 1939, 44.
[47] An attempt to identify elements of the *Etrusca disciplina* in the poets of the Augustan age has been made in the volume *Les écrivains du siècle d'Auguste et l'Etrusca disciplina. Vol. 1* (1993), with important contributions by Massa Pairault, Briquel, Champeaux, Fabre-Serris, Berthet.
[48] Cf. Cic. *Div*. 1.72, 2.49.

Flaccus,[49] can be briefly outlined as follows: while a ploughman was cutting a furrow in the ground, a child sprang up and started singing, and his words were written down and transmitted by the *lucumones*, the leaders of Etruria, who in turn passed this lore down within their families.[50] The myth is associated with the city of Tarquinii, explicitly in Cicero, more subtly by Lydus, according to whom the ploughman was none other than Tarchon himself, founder of the city. As to the content of Tages' prophecy, sources refer broadly to the teachings of the *disciplina* (cf. Cic. *Div.* 2.38), haruspicy (cf. Cic. *Div.* 2.23), lightning and haruspicy (cf. Arn. *Adv. nat.* 2.69), the foundation of cities (cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 5.19.13), earthquakes (cf. Lydus *Ost.* 54C), and agricultural knowledge (cf. Columella *Rust.* 10.5, 337-47).[51] Another prophet known from the tradition is Vegoia,[52] who is regarded as a source for the account of the creation of the world and to whom are attributed the books on lightning, translated into Latin and passed down fragmentarily in the text of the *gromatici*;[53] Vegoia is said to have delivered her teachings to a certain Arruns Veltymnus, sometimes identified as a prince of Clusium.[54]

The religious duties were performed by a variety of types of priests, the most prominent of whom, judging by extant sources, were the *haruspices*.[55] The phenomena which they were asked to interpret were numerous, but mainly (i) lightning–the Etruscans knew three different types of bolts, *consiliarium, auctoritatis et quod status dicitur* (Sen. *QNat.* 2.39)–, for which we are in possession of an invaluable document, the Brontoscopic Calendar,[56] compiled in Latin by Nigidius Figulus in the I century BC

[49] Cf. Cic. *Div.* 2.23, Ov. *Met.* 15.553ff., Lydus *Ost.* 2.6B and Festus 359.14L. Ovid interestingly recounts the story of Tages as a wonder in the last book of the *Metamorphoses*, thus in the 'Italian section' of the poem: the presence of an Etruscan tale, alongside the mention, only few lines later, of a *Tyrrhenae gentis haruspex* (Ov. *Met.* 15.577) suggests the acknowledgement on the part of the poet of Etruscan religiosity. For a discussion of the *Etrusca disciplina* and the myth of Tages see Thulin 1906-1909, Clemen 1936, Pfiffig 1975, Wood 1979, 1980 and Jannot 2005, 3ff.

[50] De Grummond (cf. De Grummond 2006, 28) mentions the finding in the territory of Tarquinii of a skeleton of a seven- or eight-year old child, whose remains had been buried (unusual at the time) in the late IX century BC, presenting a deformation of the bones associated with epilepsy; nearby was found a natural cavity connected to an altar by a drainage channel. Given the special powers attributed to epileptics in antiquity, the scholar points to this evidence as 'a most suggestive backdrop for the myth of the wise child Tages'.

[51] Archaeology provides evidence in the form of scarabs (cf. e.g. the Villa Giulia scarab from the IV-III century BC), but especially in the form of the famous bronze mirror from Tuscania, dated to the III century BC (see Pallottino 1930).

[52] Cf. Heurgon 1959.

[53] Cf. Blume, Lachmann, Rudorff 1848, 350-1.

[54] Once again, archaeology supplies precious testimonies, namely two mirrors and a gold ring bezel.

[55] See Haack 2003 for a thorough account of this subject.

[56] Cf. Turfa 2007.

and transmitted by Johannes Lydus, recording thunder prophecies, (ii) entrails, particularly livers, of animals, as attested for instance by the gem of Natis and the Piacenza liver,[57] and (iii) birds, as recorded by Pliny,[58] who refers to the notes on the subject by the scholars Labeo and Nigidius, and by Livy, who reports the episode of the *omen* of the eagle removing and replacing Tarquinius Priscus' hat, correctly interpreted by Tanaquil, *perita ut vulgo Etrusci caelestium prodigiorum mulier* (Liv. 1.34.9), as foretelling greatness, and portrayed in the painting of Vel Saties at Vulci. Livy seems to suggest that *haruspices* were active in Rome already at the time of Tarquinius Superbus, who summoned them from Etruria to explain the finding of a human head on the Capitol, and attributes to them the interpretation of the *omen* of the overflow of the Alban Lake as foreshadowing the fall of Veii.[59] Later the Romans began to consult the *haruspices* regularly, especially during military campaigns, but also by the senate in case of tremendous prodigies, summoning them from Etruria to offer explanations of the portents that occurred in Rome, and by private individuals for advice on field work and their daily lives. In order to ensure the integrity of the soothsayers, the senate established that a number of children would be selected to be sent to Etruria to be instructed in haruspicy,[60] and may have favoured the installation of Etruscan *haruspices* in Rome under the purview of the *Xviri*, later *XVviri*. Progressively the consultations of the soothsayers became more personalised, and on the one hand they began to be used by military leaders to justify their political ambitions, on the other they revealed a strong pro-senatorial posture, disavowing demagogic and monarchical enterprises. Under Augustus it appears that the *haruspices* were formally organised into an order of sixty members, while at the same time the activity of private *haruspices* began to be very strictly monitored, and consultations on the life of the prince were even prohibited.[61] When his house on the Palatine was struck by lightning in 36 BC, the *princeps*, in accordance with haruspical advice, built on that very same spot a

[57] Cf. Bonfante Warren 2006.
[58] Cf. Plin. *HN* 10.37.
[59] Cf. Liv. 1.56.4, 5.15.4-11 and Cic. *Div.* 1.44.100.
[60] Cf. Cic. *Div.* 1.92, *Leg.* 2.21 and Val. Max. 1.1.1.
[61] Cf. Haack 2003, 85ff.

Temple of Apollo, in which were kept the prophecies of Vegoia as well as the Sibylline Books,[62] probably a sign of the intent to oversee the discipline more strictly.

iii. LOYALTY AND UNREST AMONGST THE CITIES OF ETRURIA: FROM THE ROMAN CONQUEST TO AUGUSTUS AND THE FINAL STAGES OF THE ASSIMILATION PROCESS

The period of Roman expansion extended from the seizure of Veii, Rome's powerful neighbour across the Tiber, in 396/390 BC to the conquest of Volsinii in 264 BC, and corresponds to a period of crisis for the cities of Etruria. It was the decisive dispute not only over primacy in central Italy, but over the independence and the survival itself of the Etruscan nation, and it revealed the divergence of attitudes and consciousness amongst the Etruscan peoples, whose policy was dictated by the nature of the cities' individual interests, ranging from fierce resistance to a framework of friendships and alliances. Accordingly, while southern Etruria witnessed the acceleration of its decline to the point of its ultimate demise, the existence of the prosperous cities of the north was not significantly transformed.[63] After the fall of Veii, following a century-long conflict culminating in a ten-year siege, Tarquinii made an unsuccessful attempt to lead an army to Rome (358 BC), which caused the submission of Caere, whose involvement in the conflict had been criticised by the Romans and which in turn lost its political independence and fell into the sphere of influence of Rome (351 BC); in 274-273 BC half of the city's territory was confiscated to found the colonies of Alsium, Fregenae, Pyrgi and Castrum Novum.[64] At the onset of the third Samnite War (298 BC), most of the Etruscans joined

[62] Cf. Suet. *Aug.* 29.3.
[63] Cf. Pallottino 1939, 182-3.
[64] According to Gellius (cf. Gell. *NA* 16.13.7), the Caeretans were the first community to receive *civitas sine suffragio*, which Strabo (cf. Strabo 5.2.3) regards as a reward for their assistance against the Gauls in 390 BC, but Livy (cf. Liv. 7.20) seems to imply that the Caeretans were not yet Roman citizens in 353 BC. These arguments are prompted by the attempt to explain the phrase *tabulae Caeritum*, lists of names of the citizens who had been deprived of their voting rights by the censors, which must have been called thus as they once only contained the names of Caeretans. Brunt (cf. Brunt 1971, 515ff.) argues that Caere was the last community *sine suffragio* to be incorporated into the Roman state. In Horace (cf. Hor. *Epist.* 1.6.62) the *tabulae Caeritum* are mentioned in the context of a discussion against the idolatry of various pleasures, which prompts men to deserve to be recorded on the wax of Caere.

forces with Gauls, Umbrians and Samnites, but the Roman response was swift and resolute: after the decisive victory at Sentinum (295 BC), the Romans penetrated the centre and north of Etruria, where they renewed treaties of alliance with many communities and proceeded to conquer the city of Rosellae. In 284 BC Volsinii joined the Gauls to besiege Arretium, which had remained loyal to Rome, but the coalition was defeated by the Roman troops of P. Cornelius Dolabella. Volsinii and Vulci arose alongside Senonian Gauls and Boii against the Roman troops of P. Tiberius Coruncanius, but the conflict concluded with the submission of Vulci (280 BC), whose defeat was sealed with the foundation of the colony of Cosa in 273 BC. Tarquinii was probably involved in the confrontation, as it is believed that the triumph celebrated by Q. Marcius Philippus in 281 BC *de Etrusceis* signalled the loss of independence of the city, whose territory was in part confiscated. The last remaining enemy of Rome, Volsinii, was taken fifteen years later by M. Fulvius Flaccus in the context of dramatic internal political tensions.

The subjugation of Etruria was followed by a period of adjustment, during which archaeological surveys reveal no dramatic changes in the occupation of the landscape, but rather an intensification of landscape exploitation, fitting the land-ownership structure of the elitist Etruscan society;[65] territory was progressively re-shaped, partially by means of harsh confiscations and partially by imposing centuriation in the context of new settlements and colonies. Local aristocracies maintained control as a result of a policy of alliance with Rome's ruling class.[66] Accordingly, whilst colonisation was largely unnecessary, the speed of Romanisation in Etruria was significantly affected as a result:[67] the loyalty demonstrated by local élites in challenging times granted Etruscan cities a significant degree of good treatment, so much so that in the wake of the Social War they were granted Roman citizenship as a result of the *lex Iulia* of 90 BC.

However, in the turbulent political climate of the late republic, a pattern of profound unrest can be detected amongst the cities of Etruria, which prompted turmoil and upheaval throughout the

[65] Cf. Barker & Rasmussen 1998, 268ff.
[66] Cf. Liverani 2012, 236-7 and Ceccarelli 2016, 32. Sources record revolts in a number of cities in Etruria, where local élites appealed to Rome to intervene on their behalf (cf. Harris 1971, 92).
[67] Cf. Harris 1971, 144.

region, followed by harsh confiscations and colony foundations.[68] In the immediate aftermath of the Social War, when tensions were mounting between Sulla on one side and Cinna and Marius on the other, many Etruscans seemed to espouse the cause of the *populares*, joining the forces of Marius.[69] When Sulla was left victorious to rule over Rome, he inflicted harsh punishments against those who had sided with his enemies, resulting in considerable confiscations and the establishment of several colonies for his veterans.[70] As a result, when M. Aemilius Lepidus attempted to overthrow Sulla's aristocratic constitution by leveraging the discontent widespread within Italy, he managed to collect a large army amongst the insurgents: discontent in the region was heated and dispossessed landowners around Faesulae had attacked some of Sulla's veterans, killed them and restored the lands to their previous owners.[71] The instability of the region was re-ignited only few years later, when, in the context of the Catilinarian conspiracy, Etruria was listed by Cicero amongst the strategic areas assigned to the corrupt and debauched conspirators in order to raise new levies.[72] The rebels' choice to establish a stronghold at the Sullan colony of Faesulae had strategic implications, seeing as the town was close enough to Rome, whilst also providing a safe escape into Transalpine Gaul. However, Catiline was, in the words of Dyck, 'an aristocrat schooled in unscrupulous violence under Sulla',[73] and many in Etruria were still suffering from the loss of their property caused by the latter, which makes it striking that the Etruscans decided to make common cause with those responsible for the expropriation of their lands. And yet usurpers and dispossessed both stood beside Catiline, seemingly attesting to a shared discontent towards the traditional and Rome-centric policy of the Urbs. Sallust in particular underscores the resentment and eagerness on the Etruscan side towards uprising (cf. Sall. *Cat.* 28.4 *egestate simul ac dolore iniuriae novarum rerum cupidam* [*scil. plebem*], *quod Sullae*

[68] Signs of agitation had shown already during the Second Punic War but were swiftly and promptly suppressed (cf. Liv. 27.21.6-8, 28.10.5-6).
[69] Cf. App. *BCiv.* 1.67.
[70] Cf. Cic. *Att.* 1.19.4, *Cat.* 3.15, *Mur.* 49 and App. *BCiv.* 1.100. Priscian quotes from a speech *Pro Tuscis* delivered by Licinius Macer (fr. 26 Walt), in all likelihood exerting patronage to protest on their behalf against Sulla's expropriations in Etruria.
[71] Sallust, who provides crucial evidence for this episode, places emphasis repeatedly on the disaffection of those who had seen their land confiscated (cf. Sall. *Hist.* 1, frr. 65-77 Maurenbrecher).
[72] Cf. Cic. *Cat.* 2.6.
[73] Dyck 2008, 8.

dominatione agros bonaque omnia amiserat) and the presence of *latrones quoiusque generis* (Sall. *Cat.* 28.4) in abundance.

Only a few years later, after the suppression of the Catilinarian conspiracy, Etruria would again be involved in the tensions between the leaders of the *optimates* and *populares*. When Cicero in 52 BC takes on the defence of T. Annius Milo, accused of assassinating P. Clodius, he portrays the Etruscans as victims of Clodius' relentless conduct:[74] slaves had been employed to raid the *silva publica*, most likely located around Perusia, Clusium and Rosellae,[75] and the Etruscans had been deprived by armed forces of a large portion of land.[76] To further emphasise his argument, Cicero tries to persuade the court that everyone wishes for Milo's acquittal, stressing how, had the murder taken place at night on the way to Rome, the place itself and several people who suffered Clodius' iniquities would lie under suspicion, *tota denique rea citaretur Etruria* (Cic. *Mil.* 50). Etruria thus, despite the rapidity and depth of the process of Romanisation in the region, appears to represent an area of long-lasting unrest and resentment towards Rome and its centralising policies all the way to the end of the I century BC.

In the context of the clash between Caesar and Pompey, the degree of support received by the former has been amply debated. It is generally assumed that as ideological heir of Marius and Cinna, Caesar mustered extraordinary support from the Etruscan cities,[77] but despite the insistence, on Caesar's side, on his enthusiastic reception by the Italians,[78] evidence is insufficient, and in fact the dictator assigned allotments in Etruria to his veterans, presumably confiscated from his opponents. Torelli[79] even argued that the support for Caesar in Etruria was almost nonexistent, on account of a unitary and coherent Etruscan political consciousness, based on the assumption that Etruscan aristocracy retained a hatred of monarchy even greater than the Romans ever did. As abundantly

[74] Cf. Cic. *Mil.* 26.2.
[75] Cf. Liv. 28.42.18.
[76] Cf. Cic. *Mil.* 74.4 and the use of the harsh verb *vastare* at 87.11.
[77] Cf. Zecchini 1998.
[78] Cf. Caes. *BCiv.* 1.15.1-2, 18.2, 20.4-5 *et passim*.
[79] Cf. Torelli 1969, 285

demonstrated by Rawson,[80] there is plenty of evidence attesting to individuals from the higher classes, seemingly originally from Etruria, who display unequivocal anti-Caesarian sentiments.

At the death of Caesar, the young Octavian was firmly resolved to play on the legacy of his adoptive father and to pursue a strategy committed to mustering troops in Italy, as he himself emphasises in a chapter of the *Res gestae*: *iuravit in mea verba tota Italia sponte sua, et me belli quo vici ad Actium ducem depoposcit* (Aug. *RG* 25). Syme underscores how the notion of the rallying of Italians was not only familiar from recent history, but its practice was even older, insofar as 'aid from Italy could be invoked for revolution, for reaction or for domination, even for all three ends at once.'[81] The use and abuse of this trope[82] however, as observed by Moatti, testifies to the awareness of the political weight of the Italians, or rather more precisely of the influence of Italian public opinion upon the political life of Rome.[83] This *iuratio Italiae* would be at the centre of Augustus' propaganda, it would symbolise the triumph of the austere *mores* of the west against the corruption and depravity of the east (embodied in the union between Antony and Cleopatra) which would constitute the core of the Augustan cultural programme of restoration of Roman morality and re-definition of Roman identity. The *princeps* creates a narrative of glorification of the *Itala virtus*, namely an ethos shared amongst the peoples of Italy regardless of their individual differences, enhancing the contribution of the Italic community to Rome's success. After all, 'it was not Rome alone but Italy, perhaps more than Rome, that prevailed in the War of Actium.'[84] Octavian's legitimacy as torch-bearer of western values is beautifully epitomised in the words of Vergil: *hinc Augustus agens Italos in proelia Caesar / cum patribus populoque, penatibus et magnis dis* (Verg. *Aen.* 8.678-9). Amongst these *Itali*, the Etruscans undoubtedly still held great prestige and renown, especially on account of their widely recognised religiosity,[85] they were represented in the senate and more broadly figured in large numbers as members of the élite,

[80] Cf. Rawson 1978.
[81] Syme 1939, 285.
[82] The tribune Livius Drusus had employed this theme (cf. Liv. *Per.* 71, Diod. Sic. 37.11, Flor. 2.5.1 and *De vir. ill.* 66.12), as well as Caesar (cf. the above-mentioned Caes. *BCiv.* 1.15.1-2, 18.2, 20.4-5 *et passim*) and Cicero (cf. Cic. *Dom.* 5, *Prov. cons.* 43, *Sest.* 16, 25, 36, 38).
[83] Cf. Moatti 2015, 266-7.
[84] Syme 1939, 453.
[85] Cf. Liv. 5.1.6.

so much so that several individuals of Etruscan descent can be identified as belonging to the *princeps*' entourage.[86]

Around this time we can thus argue that the process of political and administrative assimilation of Etruria into the sphere of influence of Rome is completed: as recorded by Pliny,[87] Augustus created the *Regio VII*, which included the territory of Etruria, formed by 54 communities and 27 colonies, and he also reconstituted the Etruscan League, which held annual religious festivals at the Fanum Voltumnae, and reinstated the title of *praetor Etruriae* (probably corresponding to the Etruscan *zilath mechl rasnal* known from funerary inscriptions). In the words of Pallottino, 'l'affermazione dell'impero augusteo segnò anche per l'Etruria, stanca di tante contese, il sospirato ritorno all'ordine e alla pacificazione, il rifiorire della vita cittadina, perfino la rinascita di tradizioni obliate o interrotte … Ma il mondo spirituale e culturale degli antichi Etruschi era ormai dissolto nella vita della nuova Italia: la funzione storica dell'Etruria, come entità distinta ed inconfondibile, poteva dirsi per sempre terminata.'[88]

[86] See Hall 1984, 1996. The most eminent figure is Maecenas (see pp. 28ff.), but it is also interesting to note that Verrius Flaccus, renowned for his knowledge of Etruscan antiquities, was entrusted of the education of Gaius and Lucius, the grandsons of the *princeps*.
[87] Cf. Plin. *HN* 3.8.
[88] Pallottino 1939, 210.

PART TWO: ANTIQUARIANISM AND THE REVIVAL OF ETRUSCAN ANTIQUITIES

The forceful emergence of Etruscan themes in the poetry of the Augustan age appears to stem from the tireless collection of antiquarian material, specifically Etruscan, by several authors of the previous generation. Varro in particular influenced much of the Augustan literary production: on the one hand, the poets found in the antiquarian the most authoritative source for a remarkably wide range of matters, which allowed them to flaunt their aetiological erudition; on the other, the *princeps* was supplied with literary works which espoused, more or less genuinely, his political and cultural programme, focused on the re-appropriation of Rome's past and ancient *mores* according to Varro's formulation. However, it is notable that material on Etruscan antiquities, predominantly in the field of religion, was also collected by Etruscan authors, and, though surviving solely in the form of scanty fragments, their works reveal the degree of interest in and circulation of such Etruscan material in the late republican age. In addition, in the context of Augustus' political and cultural milieu no Etruscan was more prominent than Gaius Maecenas. The patron openly and unashamedly flaunted his Etruscan origins, and his public *persona* was so inherently associated with his Etruscan identity that his detractors often depicted him according to the tropes traditionally ascribed to the Etruscan people. The contributions of all these intellectuals undoubtedly informed the surge in fascination for Etruria and its people in the age of Augustus' revival of Italy and its local communities.

i. AUGUSTUS, THE PAX ROMANA AND THE RESTORATION OF THE MOS MAIORUM

At the end of the I century BC, after a century of destructive civil wars, which had taken a toll on Romans and Italians alike, Augustus proceeded to inaugurate an age of peace, prosperity and reconciliation. A series of public initiatives announced to the people of the Urbs and Italy and the whole empire the *princeps*' programme of restoration of the social harmony: in 13 BC the erection of the Ara Pacis was undertaken in the Campus Martius, inaugurated in 9 BC, which stood as a memento of the peace brought about by the coming of Augustus and his explicit association not only with Rome but with Italy as well;[89] on three separate occasions the gates of the temple of Janus were closed to signal the end of all wars and the beginning of an era of peace;[90] in 7 BC Tiberius began the monumental restoration of the temple of Concordia, dedicated in 10 AD as temple of Concordia Augusta, in celebration of the concord inaugurated by the *princeps*.[91] Augustus was thus reshaping the history of Rome to make space for himself, legitimised by his descent from the *gens Iulia*, which claimed to have the goddess Venus as its ancestor, and presenting himself as Aeneas' successor, he took measures to associate his person with an age of re-founding. His political programme indeed rested on the notion of 'restoring', *restituere*, the ancient traditions of the city, but only in spirit: Augustus in fact presented himself as the founder of a new golden age, a perfect time almost suspended from history, and in doing so he abolished time itself and implicitly established that it was not possible to progress any further.[92] The appearance of the city is suggestively re-shaped to conform to the re-shaped collective memory: Roman past is thus adjusted to serve current needs.[93]

[89] The reliefs on the western panel portray Mars and the twins Romulus and Remus on the left, and Aeneas on the right; on the eastern panel are depicted Roma to the right while to the left figure Venus, Tellus and Italia; on the northern and southern panels are illustrated in procession Augustus and his family, priests, senators and the leading families of Rome.
[90] The exact dates are debated. For an overview on the issue see Syme 1977 and DeBrohun 2007 with bibliography.
[91] Cf. Orlin 2007, 87.
[92] Cf. Moatti 2015, 163.
[93] Cf. Lowenthal 1975 and Orlin 2007, 2015.

This was in part made possible by the development of antiquarian research in the previous century. By the early II century BC, Rome had undergone severe institutional changes,[94] which led to the rise of men with personal ambitions who, in the name of the pursuit of self-interest, twisted conventional *mores* to serve an immediate gain. No truth was thus recognised as universal and its validity for all began to be called into question, because words could now be used at one's pleasure: *vera vocabula rerum amisimus*.[95] The principles embodied in the Republican system could not manage the greater demands of a growing empire. The republic was in the midst of a crisis of unprecedented proportions, and the only hope for enduring and ultimately surviving it was to make sense again of those traditions that had allowed Rome to become the most powerful contender in the western world, in other words, to re-construct the Romans' collective memory and identity by means of a scientific process.[96] The expansion of the empire, brought about in the age of the conquests, opened the Romans to the world, and learning about other peoples' past made them curious about their own, and eager for confrontation and comparison. Comprehension of their own past meant appropriation. Spurred on by their growing political success in the Mediterranean, the Romans wanted to legitimise their supremacy by officially writing their past into the chronology of others, particularly the Greeks, and 'to give Rome a historical place in the world'.[97] However ambiguous and elusive in reality, the reconstruction of Rome's history engendered, in the eyes of contemporary Romans, a new understanding of the system of *mores* on which the Roman republic was founded and which incidentally owed so much to Etruria's legacy. This heritage, ostensibly unearthed and re-discovered in all its glory thanks in particular to Varro's rigorous and extensive study, was in fact the product of

[94] For an in-depth treatment of the topics briefly discussed in this section I refer to Moatti's volume (see Moatti 2015).
[95] Sall. *Cat.* 52.11.
[96] See Galinsky 2014.
[97] Moatti 2015, 76; see also p. 94. This process began in two spheres deeply interconnected and interdependent, that of the law and that of religion. Around 300 BC Cn. Flavius published the city's official calendar, Appius Claudius published the *De usurpationibus*, a dictionary of legal language of a sort, and Tiberius Coruncanius began giving legal consultations in public, and in the early II century BC Sextus Aelius Peto published his *Tripertita*, a commentary of the Law of the Twelve Tables, the text of which was by then obscure to most, shattering the monopoly of the *pontifices*, who were the only depositaries of this oral tradition. At an unknown date, the *Annales* of the *pontifices* are made public.

an authentic process of creation *ex novo*, and as such was later re-purposed to serve the needs of Augustus' Roman Italy.

ii. (RE)-CONSTRUCTING ROME'S COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Varro is thus to be regarded as a central figure not only in the broader context of the reappropriation of Rome's past,[98] but also and more specifically in the process of re-appraisal of the role of Etruscan antiquities in the history of Rome.

> 'We were wandering and straying about like visitors in our own city, and your books led us, so to speak, right home, and enabled us at last to realize who and where we were. You have revealed the age of our native city, the chronology of its history, the laws of its religion and its priesthood, its civil and its military institutions, the topography of its districts and its sites, the terminology, classification and moral and rational basis of all our religious and secular institutions.' Cic. *Acad.* 1.3.1 (translation by H. Rackham)

Thus Cicero addressed Varro and his monumental work of antiquarian research, whose scope of interests extended to embrace chronology, civil and military institutions and topography, in an attempt to promote an attitude of universality: antiquarianism was born precisely not as a new branch of study, but as a frame of mind, a method, and 'the term *antiquitas* covers every form taken by the collective memory (law, language, history and so forth), all of which are intrinsically linked within traditional social practice and so are indistinctly present in all works on law, history, grammar and philosophy.'[99]

This approach is best exemplified by Varro's body of work, which according to Augustine[100] consisted of 74 writings contained in 620 books and included cultural history (cf. the *Imagines*, or *Hebdomades*, a collection of portraits of Greek and Roman figures similar to Cornelius Nepos' contemporary *De viris illustribus*, and the *De vita populi Romani*, which examined Rome's political, social and cultural institutions), chronology (cf. the *Annales*), literature (cf. the *De poetis*), agriculture (cf. the

[98] For Varro see Butterfield 2015. For an insightful analysis of the *De lingua Latina* see Spencer's recent publication (cf. Spencer 2019).
[99] Moatti 2015, 95.
[100] Cf. August. *De civ. D.* 6.2.

De re rustica), language (cf. the *De lingua Latina*), genealogy, law, theatre and so on.[101] Varro was regarded as the most knowledgeable and the most curious man of his time,[102] and he is unquestionably the father of the discipline, particularly on account of his monumental *opera Antiquitates rerum divinarum* and *Antiquitates rerum humanarum*. Varro is aware that the greatest threat to the state is not an enemy invasion, but the neglect of its own citizens, and as a measure to prevent this eventuality from happening he, in Augustine's words, 'says that in rescuing [the gods] from this downfall, and in storing and preserving them in the memory of good citizens by writing such books, he is performing a service more essential than the much renowned deeds of Metellus, who rescued the holy appurtenances of Vesta from the fire, and of Aeneas, who saved the Penates from the fall of Troy.'[103] The preservation of the collective memory of Rome can only take place by means of a strictly methodical process consisting in *digerere*, *conferre* and *redigere*, a process which clashed for instance in the realm of chronological and historical studies with the general attitude of the annalistic tradition, accused of distorting the truth to promote family glory. For this reason, aristocratic families in the I century BC began to turn to antiquarians to draw up their genealogies and legitimise their élite status: Varro wrote a *De gente populi Romani* and a *De familiis troianis*, Valerius Messala composed a *De familiis romanis*, and Atticus wrote genealogical works for the Iunii, the Fabii and the Claudii, 'in order, from their origin down to our own time, noting the parentage of each member of the family and the offices which he had held, with their dates.'[104]

In this virtual encyclopaedia of the Roman world, Varro and the authors of antiquarian studies sought to collect and illustrate the *monumenta* of Rome's culture, in whatever form they presented themselves, either as written documents or as material evidence, in order to make them available to all. But it was not only Rome's traditions that antiquarians were zealous to preserve. Italian traditions

[101] A list of Varro's works was found in a letter by Jerome contained in a manuscript of Arras entitled *Preface to Origen on Genesis*, published by Ritschl in 1847 and incorporated into *Rheinisches Museum* for 1848 (cf. Ritschl 1848). In 1856 Chappuis discovered the same preface in two Parisian manuscripts, which presented an epitome of the *Imagines* in four books missing from the manuscript of Arras; Ritschl published the corrections the following year. For a discussion of Jerome's preface see Hendrickson 1911.
[102] Cf. Dion. Hal. 2.21.2 and August. *De civ. D.* 6.2.
[103] Varro *Ant. rer. Div.* fr. 1a Cardauns=August. *De civ. D.* 6.2 (translation by G. E. McCracken).
[104] Nep. *Att.* 18 (translation by J. C. Rolfe). For legendary genealogies in Rome see Wiseman 1974.

were also dying out as a result of Romanisation and the adoption of the Latin language in non-Latin communities.[105] The focus on Italy is paralleled by the emphasis on local histories and culture, including Etruria's past, particularly in the light of the deep cultural exchange that took place around the VI century BC. Although fragmentary, Varro's work dedicated much space to Etruria, to its history and to its linguistic, religious and cultural legacy to Rome. Varro was certainly familiar with his contemporaries who had dedicated written works to Etruscan themes, especially to the transmission of Etruscan religious lore (see below), and the access to this material in all likelihood shaped and informed his own research.

The number of works published on the subject, to which perhaps could be added many more which have left no trace, dictated by the sense of urgency engendered by the disappearance of Etruscan language and the assimilation of Etruria, seems to have resonated in Varro, whose curiosity unquestionably attracted him to this relatively obscure and arcane material. In the realm of religion, to which so much of Varro's research was dedicated, fragments record the god Vertumnus and his role as chief deity of Etruria (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.46), but they also register the founding of cities in Latium *Etrusco ritu* (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.143) and sacrifices associated with marriage rites for members of the Etruscan élite (cf. Varro *Rust.* 2.4.9). Another sphere in which the Etruscan contribution is particularly significant is language, and Varro often provides Etruscan etymologies for key Latin words, such as *Tiberis*, the names of the three Romulean tribes, *idus* and *subulo* (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.30, 55, 6.28, 7.35), while in the realm of topography Varro's testimony sheds light onto the origin of the toponym *Vicus Tuscus* (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.46). Varro's fragments tell the reader about episodes of the history of Rome and Latium, supplying information about the Romulean tribes (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.55) and about Mezentius and the *primitiae* (cf. Plin. *HN* 14.88), but also about cities and towns of the Italian peninsula, likely constituting the source of Vergil's threefold representation of Mantua (see pp. 198-200). But references to Etruria further include the observation that the Etruscan fields are an *exemplum* of rich soil in Varro's agricultural treatise (cf. Varro *Rust.* 1.9.6), to the description of the 'Tuscan' architectural style of temples (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.161) and the account of the introduction of

[105] For a detailed overview of the process of ousting of Etruscan by Latin in Etruria see Kaimio 1975.

the *ludi scaenici* from Etruria, which seems to be behind the rendition of Livy's book 7 (see pp. 40-1). These scattered testimonies are probably but a sample of the broad and extensive interest in Etruscan antiquities demonstrated by Varro and the meticulous research he conducted on the subject, which is undoubtedly at the core of the curiosity and fascination displayed by the poets of the following generations.[106]

iii. FRAGMENTARY EVIDENCE OF ETRUSCAN LITERATURE

As to literature either in Etruscan or about Etruscan matters, only very scarce evidence survives. Varro lists the above-mentioned Volnius as author of tragedies in Etruscan and records *Tuscae historiae* written in the eighth Etruscan *saeculum*,[107] while the emperor Claudius, who is recorded as author of a *Tyrrhenica*, mentions Etruscan sources in his speech, pronounced before the senate in 48 AD and preserved on a bronze tablet from Lyons.[108] Cornell[109] argues that the emperor must have been in a privileged position to consult Etruscan sources on account of his personal connection to individuals from leading Etruscan families (e.g. his wife Urgulanilla), who had managed to hold on to their Etruscan identity for a remarkable length of time, and who were in all likelihood responsible for the preservation and transmission of historical knowledge. Evidence for this contention would be the *elogia Tarquiniensia*,[110] inscriptions dated to the early imperial age discovered at Tarquinii, recording the celebration of a series of individuals and events from the history of the city, more specifically the ancestors of the leading *gentes* belonging to the senatorial élite of the early empire: according to Cornell, the degree of detail can hardly be attributed solely to oral transmission, and must be ascribed to written sources dating back from an early period, most likely private archives of aristocratic families who wished to legitimise their prestige in the eyes of their Roman colleagues.

[106] 'Aucun de ses contemporains romains, en tout cas, dans l'état actuel de notre documentation, n'en a dit autant sur les Etrusques. On a l'impression d'ailleurs … que Varron est comme gêné: on le dirait retenu par le préjugé du particularisme romain qui cherchait, plus ou moins consciemment, à étouffer l'antique grandeur des Etrusques' (Collart 1954, 246).
[107] Cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.55 and Censorinus *DN* 17.6.
[108] On Claudius' contribution to Etruscan studies see Heurgon 1953b. Cf. Suet. *Claud.* 42.
[109] Cf. Cornell 1975.
[110] See Torelli 1975b.

The most prolific field is perhaps that of translation and collection of Etruscan religious lore. Very little is known about its transmission in written form: in the funerary inscription of Lars Pulenas of Tarquinii, dated approximately at the II century BC, the deceased, an aristocrat of high rank, records that he had written books on haruspicy,[111] and the so-called *Liber Linteus Zagrabiensis* (the date is disputed) seemingly records a ritual calendar on a linen cloth wrapping a mummy.[112] However, the names of four authors have been passed down to us, alongside scarce fragmentary evidence of their work of translation or collection of Etruscan religious lore, namely Aulus Caecina, Nigidius Figulus, Tarquitius Priscus and Verrius Flaccus. Aulus Caecina[113] was a renowned orator, a friend and contemporary of Cicero, who famously defended his father in an inheritance case.[114] The family was originally from Volaterrae, where it was one of the most prominent, as the numerous inscriptions in both Etruscan and Latin confirm.[115] As a consequence of the publication of a libellous book against Caesar, the younger Caecina was sent into exile after the battle of Pharsalus (48 BC), and later tried, although with no success, to make amends by publishing a book of *Querelae*.[116] According to Cicero,[117] he was trained in the *Etrusca disciplina* and held in high regard because of it; he is mentioned by Pliny *ex auctoribus* of book 2 of the *Historia naturalis* and by Seneca in the *Naturales quaestiones* as regards his knowledge of lightning,[118] and a fragment of his work is preserved in the *Scholia Veronensia*,[119] concerned with the founding of Mantua by Tarchon. Nigidius Figulus[120] was also a friend and contemporary of Cicero and an eminent scholar, a naturalist and a grammarian; after Pompey's defeat, he was sent into exile, where he died in 45 BC. Pliny lists him as a source for several books of the *Historia naturalis*, and to him are attributed a *De extis* and a *De diis*,[121] as well as the above-

[111] Cf. *CIE* 5430.
[112] See Van der Meer 2007.
[113] See Hohti 1975, Rawson 1978, 1985, Guillaumont 1986 and Capdeville 1993.
[114] Cf. Cic. *Caecin.*
[115] Cf. *CIE* 1.18-42 (Volterrae), 2.5494-5 (Tarquinii), 1.2.2027 (Clusium), 2.5682 (Volsinii). The *gens* is attested in the area as late as 414 AD, when Caecina Decius Acinatius Albinus, prefect of Rome, was known to have a villa there (cf. *CIL* 11 p. 325). Excavations conducted between the 1739 and 1861 brought to light four tombs belonging to the Caecinae, which display several Etruscan and Latin inscriptions (see Oleson 1974).
[116] Cf. Cic. *Fam.* 6.6.8.
[117] Cf. Cic. *Fam.* 6.6.3
[118] Cf. Plin. *HN ex auct. lib. II* and Sen. *QNat.* 2.39.1, 49.1, 56.1.
[119] Cf. *schol. Veron. ad Aen.* 10.200.
[120] See Piganiol 1951, Weinstock 1951 and Della Casa 1962.
[121] Cf. Gell. *NA* 16.6.12 and Serv. *ad Ecl.* 4.10.6.

mentioned brontoscopic calendar, handed down to us in the Greek translation of Johannes Lydus. Tarquitius Priscus was a friend and contemporary of Varro, of Etruscan origin, perhaps from the city of Tarquinii.[122] He is recorded as the author of a Latin translation of the Etruscan *Libri ostentaria* (an *Ostentarium Tuscum* or *Ostentarium arborarium* according to Macrobius),[123] and figures in Pliny's catalogue of sources for books 2 and 11 with regard to lightning and extispicy. Verrius Flaccus was the most renowned grammarian of his generation, so much so that he was entrusted around 10 BC with the education of the *princeps*' grandsons, Gaius and Lucius; he was author of a *Res Etruscae*, a fragment of which is preserved in the *Scholia Veronensia* alongside Caecina's to attest the founding of Mantua by Tarchon.

iv. MAECENAS TYRRHENA REGUM PROGENIES

Maecenas is undoubtedly the most eminent individual of Etruscan ancestry of his time.[124]

> 'Gaius Maecenas, of equestrian rank, but none the less of illustrious lineage, a man who was literally sleepless when occasion demanded, and quick to foresee what was to be done and skilful in doing it, but when any relaxation was allowed him from business cares would almost outdo a woman in giving himself up to indolence and soft luxury.' Vell. Pat. 2.88.2 (translation by F. W. Shipley)

Velleius' portrayal, albeit consistent with the traditional representation of Maecenas, leaves out a significant component of his character, namely his flaunted Etruscan descent. The Tyrrhenian origin appears to be for Maecenas fundamental for his self-identity, and yet we have little factual material to corroborate his claims. The evidence regarding the family is scarce:[125] Schulze contends that the name *Maecenas* is originally Etruscan, for *gentilicia* ending in *-nate* in Etruscan can be identified in Latin

[122] See Heurgon 1953a and Torelli 1975b.
[123] Cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 3.7.2, 20.3.
[124] For comprehensive studies of Maecenas see Avallone 1962, André 1967, Le Doze 2014, Costa 2014 and Chillet 2016.
[125] According to Syme (cf. Syme 1939, 129-30), Maecenas' grandfather is to be identified with the C. Maecenas mentioned in Cic. *Clu.* 153, his father was L. Maecenas (cf. *CIL* 6.21771; for the epitaphs of Maecenas' *liberti* cf. Chillet 2016, 395ff.), a Maecenas is also mentioned by Sallust (cf. Sall. *Hist.* 3, fr. 83 Maurenbrecher), alongside M. Perperna and C. Tarquitius, attending the banquet where Sertorius was murdered.

gentilicia ending in *-nas*, *-natius*,[126] yet Tacitus (echoed by Augustus in a fragment of a letter addressed to Maecenas) refers to Maecenas by the *gentilicium Cilnius*[127]—the *Cilnii* were a leading family from Arretium, whose wealth was such that, according to Livy, it occasioned the envy of their fellow citizens, who tried to drive them out in 302 BC. Based on *CIL* 6.21771 we can establish with a certain degree of confidence that *Cilnius* cannot be a *gentilicium*,[128] which has prompted some scholars to regard it as a matronymic, and as much as we can certainly adduce *argumentum e silentio*,[129] the argument is consistent with epigraphical evidence, for Maceneas is said to belong to the *Pomptina* tribe, into which the citizens of Arretium were incorporated in 88 BC. There is no need to infer that Maecenas assumed his matronymic as a formal *gentilicium*, but we can contend that he paraded his belonging to the Etruscan family of the *Cilnii* as a matter of great distinction.

That Maecenas must have privately and publicly flaunted his Etruscan descent becomes apparent from the way the people closest to him address him.[130] Already in the 30s, Horace addresses his patron as the noblest of the Lydians that are settled in Etruscan lands (cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.6.1-4): Maecenas is placed not only within distinct geographical and cultural boundaries, but also within distinct social boundaries, with his ancestors both on the paternal and the maternal side in command of military contingents. The practice of flaunting prestigious, and often fictitious, genealogies is common towards the end of the I century BC,[131] and the elusiveness of the poet's reference to Maecenas' nobility might indicate no more concrete evidence of the patron's Etruscan descent than we possess

[126] Cf. Schulze 1904, 529-30. Varro (cf. Varro *Ling.* 8.84) argues that the *nomen* would derive from a toponym, but we have no evidence to that.
[127] Cf. Tac. *Ann*. 6.11.2 and Macrob. *Sat.* 2.4.12, where *Cilneorum* is a rustic form in lieu of *Cilnii* (cf. De Biasi & Ferrero 2003, 745). Tacitus hardly mistook *Cilnius* for a patronym, and preposterous is the argument that he erroneously restored *Cilnius* for *Caius* (the name is reported in the form C. Maecenas in Plin. *HN* 7.172.4, Vell. Pat. 2.88.2, Tac. *Ann.* 14.53.9 and Cass. Dio 49.16.2; for a detailed discussion about the linguistic debate on the name cf. Chillet 2016, 24ff. and Mountford 2019 in his first chapter with relevant bibliography); it has been observed that as a senator, Tacitus might have looked with concern at an *eques* being set in charge in a quasi-senatorial position of Rome and Italy, and his reference to Maecenas' descent from the *Cilnii* could be simply interpreted as a sneering remark. For the *Cilnii* cf. Liv. 10.3.2; for epigraphical evidence cf. Maggiani 1986.
[128] Given that the inscription reads *C. Maecenatis L. f.*, *Maecenas* is to be interpreted as a *gentilicium* and not a *cognomen* (there is no instance of a *cognomen* mentioned before the tribe in inscriptions).
[129] Furthermore, the use of a matronymic is traditionally applied exclusively to abnormal family circumstances (cf. Simpson 1996, 395).
[130] Cf. Chillet 2016, 22.
[131] Cf. Martin 1994, 233f.

today, and equally immaterial evidence of his noble ancestry.[132] Maecenas certainly reveals a great sense of self-awareness and belonging to a non-Roman cultural framework,[133] and such self-representation seems to have followed a progression which increasingly insisted on the glory and majesty of his lineage in conjunction with his increased influence within the new political establishment. We notice an accumulation of occurrences of the motif of the regal ancestry in the 20s, when he is jokingly alluded to as *rex* in a letter from Augustus,[134] and when a formula is applied in *variatio* in the opening line of three poems by Horace and Propertius, adapted in different metrical systems, imparting a grandiose tone to each piece[135] by immediately signalling the status and prestige of the addressee, whose identity is marked by his Etruscan extraction and by his descent from royalty (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 1.1.1 *Maecenas atavis edite regibus*, 3.29.1 *Tyrrhena regum progenies*,[136] Prop. 3.9.1 *Maecenas, eques Etrusco de sanguine regum*). The phrasing in both Horace and Propertius seems to suggest a recurring topic in private conversations involving the patron and the poets of his circle who were closest to him, especially Horace, who repeatedly uses variations on the subject. It is particularly significant that the poet, addressing Maecenas in the opening of his first ode[137] to express his desire to be included in the canon of classics, appeals to the patron's regal ancestry, which can therefore be inferred to have been his greatest pride. Horace here does not explicitly mention Maecenas' Etruscan origins, but having referred to him as belonging to the Lydians previously, the ethnonym is not really necessary: the patron's Etruscan, indeed royal, parentage seems to have been such common knowledge as to allow the poet to hint at one of the two elements without having any doubt that his readers will appreciate the reference to the other. Furthermore, the fact that Propertius' opening clearly echoes *Carm.* 1.1.1 could be interpreted as an attempt, on the poet's side, to apply this

[132] Nevertheless, scholars have tried to identify Maecenas' regal ancestor in Servius, based on Hor. *Sat.* 1.6 or Porsenna, based on Augustus' letter (cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 2.4.12).
[133] Cf. Aigner Foresti 1996, 16.
[134] Cf. Suet. *Poet.* 40, where the reference to Maecenas' table as *parasitica* implies that he is the *rex*, the term used since the early *fabula palliata* to indicate the person who maintains a parasite. The letter is roughly dated around 25 BC (cf. De Biasi & Ferrero 2003, 747).
[135] The form *edite* as well as *atavis* at Hor. *Carm.* 1.1.1 is grandiloquent (cf. Virg. *Aen*. 8.136f.), and *progenies* at Hor. *Carm.* 3.29.1 'is rather stately when applied to an individual' (Nisbet & Rudd 2004, 348) (cf. Catull. 34.6, Val. Max. 4.3.4). As noticed, Propertius' opening is very Horatian (cf. Heyworth & Morwood 2011, 183).
[136] Cf. Hornsby's reading of the subject of royalty (cf. Hornsby 1958).
[137] The patron is also the addressee in the opening poem of Horace's *Epod.*, *Sat.* 1 and *Epist.* 1.

flattering pattern, which had likely already proven successful, in order to mitigate Maecenas' reaction to his *recusatio*: as observed by Heyworth, there is no external evidence to prove a relationship between the patron and the poet,[138] which would make this objection all the more necessarily forceful and assertive. Propertius thus cleverly employs the pleasing motif of the Etruscan ancestry, drawn from none other than Maecenas' beloved Horace, to reject the *princeps*' requests for a national poetry, vigorously reasserting his commitment to erotic elegy. This motif appears to have survived even after Maecenas' death, for it can still be found in the first *Elegia in Maecenatem* (cf. [Verg.] *In Maec.* 1.13-4), which replicates the lofty style and vocabulary of Horace and Propertius.

As to Maecenas' personality, some of his most noticeable traits are closely comparable to a series of clichés associated with the Etruscans (see chapter 1.1), which will be examined according to the triad *animus-cultus-stilus*.[139] The main feature of his personality according to the sources appears to be an overall *mollitia*, a feminine weakness which, despite his resolute and resourceful character, led him to crave time away from his official affairs to indulge in hedonistic activities, exhibiting an overly-womanish personality prone to indolence and idleness.[140] Maecenas must have been conscious, and likely unashamed, of such a trait of his personality, which is humorously mocked by Augustus in his letter, where the *princeps* playfully uses colloquialisms as well as grecisms to depict his friend as an effeminate bon viveur. Maecenas is compared to a *margaritum*, which, used in lieu of *margarita*, immediately suggests a *puer delicatus*, and to a *μάλαγμα moecharum*, an emollient, a cataplasm to apply on the skin, and teased for his *myrobrechis cincinnos*, his perfume-dripping curls.[141] The patron appears to have been a connoisseur of wines, and author of a *Symposium*:[142] his taste was apparently quite refined,[143] and Horace subsequently and aptly chooses him as a primary addressee of several

[138] Cf. Heyworth 2007a and Stahl 1985, 162-71. Propertius addresses only 2.1 and 3.9 to Maecenas, and in both cases, he rejects the request to write Augustan epic.
[139] Cf. Schoonhoven 1980, 44.
[140] This must have been a widespread opinion, if the author of the first *Elegia in Maecenatem* felt compelled to debunk it by underscoring how Maecenas' resolution would, in times of need, outweigh what appears to be his more spontaneous temperament, *tener* and *mollis*.
[141] Horace mentions that the patron had the habit of styling his hair with *balanus*, a perfumed oil obtained by crushing the fruit of an Egyptian palm (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 3.29.3-5).
[142] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.310.
[143] With a predilection for Caecuban and Calenian wine, exemplars from Latium and Campania respectively (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 1.20.9-10). According to Pliny, Maecenas even gave his name to a specific quality of wine, the Maecenatian, probably brought into fashion by him (cf. Plin. *HN* 14.67).

sympotic poems.[144] Maecenas' *mollitia*, however, was not only manifest in his appearance and manners, but also in his writing. The *princeps* used to mock him for his somewhat mannered style, which he described as *remissus*, *mollis* and *dissolutus*, and compared to his perfumed hair.[145] In his letter, Augustus even imitates words and expressions that appear to be drawn from one of Maecenas' poems dedicated to Horace,[146] playing on the opposition between exotic and local, but also on Maecenas' self-identification as an Etruscan, and reminding him that, as much as he flaunts his urbane and sophisticated ancestors, he is still son of the humble *Italia*.[147] However, as much as criticism of Maecenas' character, appearance and style were already circulating in the literary works of his contemporaries, later sources seem to indicate that it acquired harsher tones following Seneca's stern condemnation,[148] with the author attacking Maecenas' prose style by constantly comparing it to his licentious and debauched lifestyle. Afterwards, the literary interest in Maecenas increased significantly, as attested by Pliny, Caesius Bassus, Quintilian, Tacitus, Martial and Juvenal, often with harsh tones of criticism.

In substance, 'the relationship between Maecenas and the Etruscan world was not created by the poets to justify, by praising it, the patron's lifestyle; they simply provided a positive interpretation of ancient negative prejudices which in turn derived from traditions different from the Romans.'[149] However, we need to ask ourselves if Maecenas' attitude is an indication of the existence in Rome of an autonomous consciousness amongst the Etruscans, of the persistence of a sense of belonging to a distinct group, formed ethnically, or else geographically and socially by the members of the families,

[144] Cf. Hor. *Sat.* 2.8, *Epod.* 9, *Carm.* 3.29.
[145] Cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 2.4.12 and Suet. *Aug.* 86. There seems to be a reference to Maecenas' *mollis* style in [Verg.] *In Maec.* 1.67.
[146] Cf. Maecenas fr. 2 Courtney. The letter is filled with colloquialisms, with *lasar* in lieu of the traditional *laser*, *margaritum* for *margarita*, the rustic *Cilnei* for *Cilnii*, *berulle* for *berylle*, but also of preciosities, such as the inflectional grecism *iaspi*, ἵνα συντέμω πάντα for the usual *ut breviter dicam*, and the Greek μάλαγμα matched in alliteration with the grecism *moecharum* (cf. Gelsomino 1958, Cugusi 1972 and De Biasi & Ferrero 2003, 742-3).
[147] Cf. Cugusi 1972, 158.
[148] Cf. Sen. *Ep.* 114, where the author presents a portrayal responding to the philosophical criteria according to which literary style reflects men's nature (this notion was already operative in Pl. *Resp.* 3.11.400d and Cic. *Brut.* 117). For the criticism of Maecenas' style cf. also Quint. 9.4.28 and Tac. *Dial.* 26.1. The *Elegiae in Maecenatem* could be regarded as a response to Seneca's invective (cf. cf. Schoonhoven 1980, 39-68 and *passim*), since the poet's concern appears to be almost exclusively Maecenas' defence more than his praise.
[149] Cf. Aigner Foresti 1996, 24.

or by a certain number of individuals that certain criteria allow to define as such.[150] Chillet poses a fundamental question, which is yet impossible to answer, for in order to determine whether such Etruscan consciousness really existed further evidence would be required of a number of individuals explicitly claiming Etruscan descent, as well as outside testimony regarding these instances as part of a wider phenomenon. The extant sources do not provide either.

[150] Cf. Chillet 2016, 54.

CHAPTER ONE

CONVENTIONAL PORTRAYALS OF ETRUSCAN WEALTH AND DECADENCE

1.1 LUXURIA PROLAPSA EST

Etruria was known in ancient times as a land of extraordinary wealth and abundance. '[Etruria] is studded with trees, has excellent pasturage for flocks and herds, and an abundance of rivers. It had also eighteen cities, large and fair, well equipped for profitable commerce and for sumptuous living.'[151] Indeed, not only was Etruria fertile, it was able to produce at a higher yield than anywhere else,[152] and workable land extended over a territory far larger than they could tend.[153] Inherently associated with the over-abundant wealth of the Etruscan land, there is found, in a number of both Greek and Roman testimonies, the notion of τρυφή/*luxuria*. In Diodorus Siculus, recording Posidonius, we find the best illustration of how Etruria's excessive production led to self-indulgence and moral decay:[154]

> 'the land the Tyrrhenians inhabit bears every crop, and from the intensive cultivation of it they enjoy no lack of fruits, not only sufficient for their sustenance but contributing to abundant enjoyment and luxury. For example, twice each day they spread costly tables and upon them everything that is appropriate to excessive luxury, providing gay-coloured couches and having ready at hand a multitude of silver drinking-cups of every description and servants-in-waiting in no small number […] and, speaking generally, they have now renounced the spirit which was emulated by their forebears from ancient times, and passing their lives as they do in drinking-bouts and unmanly amusements, it is easily understood how they have lost the glory in warfare which their fathers possessed. Not the least of the things which have contributed to their luxury is the fertility of the land; for since it bears every product of the soil and is altogether fertile, the Tyrrhenians lay up great stores of every kind of fruit.' Posidonius *FGrHist* 87 F 119=Diod. Sic. 5.40.3-5 (translation by C. H. Oldfather)

[151] Plut. *Cam.* 16 (translation by B. Perrin). Varro (cf. Varro *Rust.* 1.9.6) regards Etruscan territory as emblematic of the best type of soil, while Dionysius (cf. Dion. Hal. 1.37.2) records that Etruscan vines produced the finest grapes in the greatest abundance with the least labour. Cf. also Strabo 5.2.2, 9 and Liv. 9.36.11.

[152] Cf. Polyb. 12.4.8, Varro *Rust.* 1.44.1, Liv. 5.24.5 and Plin. *HN* 18.20. The variety of resources that the Etruscan cities produced ranged from grain and wood to linen and iron, which was so abundant at Elba as to be thought inexhaustible (cf. Liv. 28.45.15-18, [Arist.] *Mir. ausc.* 93, Verg. *Aen.* 10.173-4 and Strabo 5.2.6). In fact, in Etruria could be found most metals used in the ancient world (see Craddock 1984, 212), and bronze, an alloy traditionally composed of copper and tin, was used to forge *sigilla* (cf. Plin. *HN* 34.34 and Tert. *Apol.* 25.13), figurines mentioned by Horace in a list of precious things, epitomising a life of luxury (cf. Hor. *Epist.* 2.2.179-81).

[153] Sources record that, when the Gauls attempted to occupy Etruscan territory in the early IV century BC, the Etruscans had more land than they could till (cf. Liv. 5.36, Dion. Hal. 13.11.2 and Plut. *Cam.* 17.2).

[154] The derivation from Posidonius is generally accepted by most scholars, with the exception of Jacoby, who is inclined towards a derivation from Timaeus (cf. *FGrHist* 566 F 1). Firpo (see Firpo 1997) argues that Diodorus' passage assembles multiple other sources alongside Posidonius.

The language echoes the characterisation of Asia in the Hippocratic treatise *De aere aquis et locis*, founded on the principle that environment and cultural dispositions are inescapably linked, as a land whose gentle and mild climate favours the growth of fruits, cattle, and men, where accordingly 'manly courage, endurance of suffering, laborious enterprise, and high spirit, could not be produced in such a state of things either among the native inhabitants or those of a different country, for there pleasure necessarily reigns.'[155] The narrative of Posidonius, however, is one of decline, for the author does admit that the Etruscans' ancestors were glorious in war, and does not claim that the Etruscans are innately effeminate because of their environment. Nevertheless, the Etruscans' purported eastern origins established them as a repository of customs and practices inherently antithetical to Greek civilisation.[156]

Rome, for her part, inherits and adopts the clichés of Greek ethnographic and historiographical literature, continuing to perpetuate the cultural stereotypes developed by Greek authors.[157] However, in addition to traditional commonplaces, the negative representation of Etruria is pre-eminently informed by the desire to dismiss a fierce enemy once dangerous and powerful.[158] The controversial reign of the Tarquins and the long and arduous contest for the dominion over central Italy left a vivid picture of the Etruscans as a constant and vicious menace. In this chapter, I will investigate the way in which a series of traditional negative stereotypes relating to Etruscan *luxuria*, namely obesity, women's oversexualisation and men's effeminacy, is differently addressed in the poetry of the Augustan age.

[155] Hippoc. *Aer.* 12 (translation by F. Adams).
[156] The same notion can be found in Aristotle with regard to Miletus (cf. Arist. fr. 509 Rose), in Theopompus with regard to peoples treated as barbarians, such as the Illyrians, the Ardiaians, the Umbrians (cf. *FGrHist* 115 FF 39, 40, 132), and also in Timaeus with regard to the Sybarites (cf. *FGrHist* 566 F 50).
[157] Cf. Becker 2016, 298.
[158] Cf. Scheffer 2014, 52.

i. OBESITY

Diodorus' image of the Etruscans' opulent and sumptuous banquets, thrown not once but twice a day, epitomises the cliché of obesity as a by-product of excessive eating and drinking: 'since much of the ancient world was constantly on the brink of want if not starvation, over-indulgence could be interpreted as disdain or outright flaunting of one's good fortune.'[159] Archaeology appears to substantiate such predilection: the site of Poggio Civitate (Murlo) offers a uniquely well-preserved complex of inter-related monumental buildings, dated to the VII and VI century BC, where carved ivory, bronze cauldrons, and pottery were found, belonging to a sumptuous banquet service, alongside terracotta frieze-plaques portraying, amongst other things, a banquet. The scene is luxurious, with reclining banqueters, music, what looks like ivory furniture and lavish banquet equipment. The similarities between the items depicted on the frieze and those found at the site have prompted scholars to conclude that banquets such as the one portrayed on the plaque must have regularly taken place in the building,[160] surely in connection with the introduction of Greek- and Near Eastern-style banquets and wine as a status activity of the élite.[161] That these gatherings were grand seems to be confirmed by Berkin's estimate that a number of guests between 20 and 59 could have participated in the banquets.[162] Murlo is only the first testimony of a motif that will find wide distribution, especially in funerary paintings. In fact, as pointed out by Cristofani,[163] although undoubtedly contextualised in the realm of luxury, the banquet is fundamentally to be understood as a paramount ceremony in which the group periodically renews its will to aggregate.

In Roman literature, the image of the fat Etruscan first appears in Catullus' *Carmen* 39: in a harsh attack against one of Lesbia's lovers, Egnatius, the rival is reproached for his relentless and

[159] Turfa 2016, 323.
[160] Cf. Cristofani 1987, 126 and Rathje 2007, 178.
[161] The detail of the reclined banqueters on the frieze (cf. Arist. fr. 472 Gigon) is significant to corroborate the argument of influences from Greece and the Near East, for the habit of reclining first appears in Assyrian art, in the relief from Assurbanipal's palace (VII century BC), emerging on Corinthian pottery at the beginning of the VI century BC, and shortly thereafter in Attica, continental Greece and Ionia. Contemporaneously, the motif surfaces in Etruria, where the traditional practice, analogous to Homeric representations of banquet-scenes, was to dine seated, as apparent from the ossuary of Montescudaio from the VII century BC (cf. De Marinis 1961, 113ff.).
[162] Cf. Berkin 2011, 121.
[163] Cf. Cristofani 1987, 123.

inopportune smiling and mocked for being a Celtiberian, as to this people of north-central Spain is ascribed the hideous habit of brushing their teeth with their own urine. In doing so, the poet enumerates a series of Italian peoples whom, though more civilised in their dental hygiene, he would not want to hear laughing as much either: amongst these is the *obesus Etruscus* (Catull. 39.11).[164] Catullus must have known that in reading his poem his audience would readily recognise and appreciate the directory of ethnic stereotypes. In fact, even centuries later, while modern commentaries are mostly silent on the matter, Ellis still suggested that the Etruscans' 'fatness was connected with their luxurious living',[165] in substance endorsing the conventional image perpetrated by ancient authors. In addition, scholars such as Mommsen, Fordyce and Merrill[166] all noticed in some respect that representations of Etruscans in art seem to substantiate the stereotype of stout figures. The quintessential *obesus Etruscus* appears portrayed on the nenfro sarcophagus from the first half of the II century BC, produced in the region of Tarquinii/Tuscania, now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen:[167] the man presents 'a sagging chest, rounded abdomen and rolls of fat; his head has multiple chins below a strong jaw, large nose, jowls and thick, coarse hair.'[168] However, a more comprehensive survey of funerary sarcophagi and urns from the IV to the I century BC reveals that very few examples can be regarded as portraying overweight or obese individuals.[169] As a matter of fact, even if the number of specimens depicting Etruscans as overweight or obese was indeed much higher in ancient times, it is hardly likely that the Romans could have had access to

[164] The term *obesus* was known and used in medical circles (cf. Celsus *Med.*1.3.13, who juxtaposes *obesus* to *gracilis* to describe the different nature of bodies).
[165] Ellis 1876, 141.
[166] Cf. Mommsen 1900, 150, Fordyce 1961, 186-7 and Merrill 1976, 70.
[167] Inv. no. HIN 429.
[168] Turfa 2016, 332.
[169] Amongst stone-carved effigies, Turfa identifies a few dozen outright obese figures, whereas amongst effigies on terracotta lids, fewer than ten deliberately model heavy bodies, for a total of 80 specimens. The scholar furthermore points out that style and technique of carving must have determined the degree of constraint imposed on the sculptor by the medium: while coarse stone does not allow fine details, the technique of terracotta manufacture appears to have produced a higher number of thin effigies, with rather flat bodies. Further evidence can be gathered from inscriptions preserving the age of the deceased, anatomical votive models and the examination of skeletal remains. In addition, Roman portraits, particularly dating from the early imperial age, equally show 'large-bellied topless Romans (or perhaps Etruscans living in Roman communities) reclining on a dining-couch' (Bradley 2011, 26).

any of these artefacts, seeing as they were buried with the bodies. As a result, it appears that, in his derogatory portrayal of the Etruscan, Catullus was drawing on a widely established iconography.

The echo of Catullus resonates distinctly in Vergil's portrayal of the sleek Tyrrhenian in the *Georgics*, though the mordant taunts of the scorned lover are replaced with the joyous celebration of Etruria's *ubertas*. In the context of the tribute to Italy and Italian people that is the second book of the *Georgics*, Vergil dedicates a section to the description of the different types of soil,[170] dedicating to each a brief vignette. Amongst these, writes the poet, rich soil is ideal for vines, which are in turn offered to the gods (Verg. *Georg.* 2.184-94). The passage, though not explicitly, refers to Etruscan territory, which Varro cites as *exemplum* of a rich soil as opposed to poor and medium soil (cf. Varro *Rust.* 1.9.6). This allusion to Varro must have been immediately noticeable to the reader, who, well aware of the long-established trope of the exuberant fruitfulness of the Tyrrhenian land, would have easily drawn a connection between Vergil's *pinguis humus* and the rich Etruscan fields. These few lines are filled with terms belonging to the semantic field of prosperity and fertility—*pinguis* and *laeta* (184), *fertilis* and *ubere* (185), *felicem* (188), *pascit* (189), *fertilis* (191), *pinguis* (193)—and paints a picture of a lush and luxuriant land, blessed by mountain streams and thick with vegetation. The almost miraculous fecundity of Etruria, illustrated here in the superabundant production of wine,[171] even summons up representations of the Golden Age, with its streams of nectar spontaneously flowing from the ground,[172] and the image of the rich flood of Bacchus could very well bear an allusion to the Etruscan habit of banqueting often and with copious amount of drinking involved.

The vignette closes with the vivid description of the *pinguis Tyrrhenus*, blowing his ivory flute beside the altar: the overall lushness of the Etruscan landscape is reflected here in the minute details of the sacrifice-scene, in the wine, offered in golden bowls, in the precious ivory flute, in the steaming meat on the altar,[173] placed on curved dishes, and in the flautist, as *pinguis* as his native land. The phrasing *pinguis Tyrrhenus* is visibly a *variatio* of Catullus' *obesus Etruscus*, but in this celebratory context the

[170] Following in the tradition of Theophrastus (*Caus. pl.* 2.4), Cato (*Agr.* 6) and Varro (*Rust.* 1.7.5-10, 1.9). Cf. White 1970.
[171] Pliny (cf. Plin. *HN* 14.36) provides a list of the varieties of grapes from the region.
[172] Cf. Verg. *Georg.* 1.132, 4.384 and Ov. *Met.* 1.111.
[173] Cf. Serv. *ad Georg.* 2.193.

representation of the Tyrrhenian as 'fat', though conspicuously drawing on an established iconography, is re-appropriated to embody the *pinguitudo* of his land, with the more derogatory *obesus* replaced by *pinguis*. The adjective in fact appears with great frequency in the *Georgics*, in reference to all four subjects of the poem, thus creating a Leitmotiv which reasserts the pre-eminence of Italy both in terms of geography and in terms of wealth produced by virtue of such an advantageous location.[174]

In view of this 'Italian frame', I believe emphasis must be placed on the characterisation of the Tyrrhenian as a flautist. The instrument to which Vergil refers, according to Servius, is a *tibia*.[175] The flute, which Greeks called αὐλός, had acquired a bad reputation in Greece, as symbol of the debauchery of private banquets, so much so that Aristotle excluded it from musical education,[176] but appears frequently in Etruria in banquet-scenes, leading the dances of the κῶμος, alongside the lyre and cithara.[177] According to the tradition, flautists, *tibicines*, were introduced to Rome from Etruria on occasion of the institution of the *ludi scaenici* in 364 BC, when Etruscan performers were brought in to dance to the sound of the flute to appease the gods and halt a dreadful pestilence (cf. Liv. 7.2.4). They became so integral to sacrificial ceremonies[178] that when, in 311 BC, forbidden to hold their traditional feast in the temple of Jupiter, they went on strike off to Tibur, the senate was so troubled that representatives were immediately dispatched to bring them back (cf. Liv. 9.30.6). Interestingly, Livy records that, in order to restore the *auletes* to Rome, they were plied with wine, 'of which that type of people is greedy' (cf. Liv. 9.30.8-9): the historian's disparaging insertion once again appears to underscore a stereotypical characterisation of Etruscan individuals as devoted to excessive

[174] The term is used for soil (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 1.64, 105, 2.92, 139, 184, 203, 248, 274, 4.118), plants or trees (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 1.14, 192, 2.304, 425, 4.183), animals (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 1.341, 2.525), manure and the earth's nutrients (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 1.80, 87, 2.347) and the full beehive (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 4.14) (see Thomas 1988, 70).
[175] Cf. Serv. *ad Georg.* 2.193. Liébert describes it as something more similar to a double oboe (cf. Bélis 1984 and Liébert 2006, 217).
[176] Cf. Arist. *Pol.* 8.1341a, even though sources do not seem to draw a direct link with τρυφή (cf. Arist. fr. 608 Rose, Eratosth. *FGrHist* 241 F 4); a fragment by Alkimos (cf. *FGrHist* 560 F 3=Ath. 518b) lists the flute as a feature of the Etruscans' luxurious lifestyle.
[177] Cf. Liébert 2006, 220.
[178] Cf. Varro *Ling.* 7.35, Ov. *Ars am.* 1.111 and Festus 402L. In the Golini Tomb I at Orvieto the inscription *śuplu* appears next to a flautist (cf. *CIE* 5082). In Ovid the *tibicen Tuscus* leads the dancers at the festival during which Romulus gives the signal to abduct the Sabine women (cf. Ov. *Ars am.* 1.111-14). Cf. also Ov. *Ars am.* 3.13.11-12. For a survey of the use of musical instruments during sacrifices in Etruria see Hugot 2008, 75ff.

drinking, which in this particular case is perhaps further associated with the presence of wine during sacrifices.[179]

I believe the accent on the Etruscan flautist in a sacral context found in Vergil derives directly from Varro and reflects the *princeps*' interest in reviving ancient religious practices. Amongst his many resolutions in religious matters, Augustus re-introduced the religious conventions associated with the census, which was traditionally followed by a *lustratio* and the sacrifice of the *suovetaurilia*, rituals most likely to be performed to the sound of the *tibicines*. The source on the origins of the *tibicines* performing in sacrificial ceremonies must have been Varro's three books of *De scaenicis originibus* and his discussion of *scaenici* in the *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*.[180] Oakley, in his commentary on Livy's book 7, argues that the entire narrative of the introduction of the *ludi scaenici* presents strong Varronian elements,[181] adding that the reappearance of related themes in Augustan poets seems to further corroborate such a contention. Although the scholar is predominantly concerned with the subject of rustic songs and dances,[182] I believe that the motif of the *carmina* celebrating the *laudes maiorum* to the sound of the flute could be adduced to strengthen his case. Although the existence of such *carmina* has long been disputed,[183] an echo can be found in Horace's last ode (cf. Hor. *Carm*. 4.15.29-32), which closes with the glorification of the great men of Rome, evoking the *carmina* sung during banquets according to the fathers' ancestral custom (*more patrum*)[184] and accompanied by the sound of the Lydian flutes (*Lydis … tibiis*). The similarities in tone and the emphasis on the Etruscan flautists suggest a common source for Vergil, Horace and Livy on the matter, and, despite the absence of direct testimonies, this

[179] The episode, as recalled by Ovid and Plutarch (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.651-92 and Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 55), offers an aetiological explanation for the *auletes*' tradition of wearing female clothes during the festival of the lesser Quinquatrus (13 June), which somewhat fits into the conventional image of the effeminate Etruscan.
[180] Cf. August. *De civ. D.* 4.1.
[181] Cf. Oakley 1998, 40ff. Two passages are adduced as persuasive evidence, namely Tert. *De spect.* 5-12 and August. *De civ. D.* 1.32, certainly derived from Varro.
[182] Cf. Tib. 2.1.51-6, Verg. *Georg.* 2.380-96 and Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.139-76.
[183] The arguments in favour have relied mainly on three pieces of evidence, namely Cic. *Brut.* 75 and *Tusc*. 1.3, 4.3, both quoting Cato, and Varro *De vita populi Romani* fr. 84 Riposati; these *carmina* seem to have disappeared long before the time of Cato, according to Cicero, and it can be safely concluded that they were not re-discovered afterwards. For a brief history of the so-called 'ballad theory' cf. Momigliano 1957. On the *carmina convivalia* see Habinek 2005, in particular p. 39.
[184] As acutely observed by Putnam (cf. Putnam 1986, 271), the placement of the phrase *more patrum* is ambiguous, to be read both with *functos*, as describing the early Romans who conducted their lives according to the ancients' customs, but also with the following *canemus*.

common source has to be identified with Varro, further corroborating the notion that the antiquarian is perhaps the most consequential author in the broader context of a return to the ancient *mores* promoted by Augustus.

In his celebration of *Italia* and its virtues, and the virtues of its peoples, Vergil thus echoes themes that were contemporaneously appropriated by other authors and by the *princeps*' political programme, focused on the pre-eminence of Italy and its diverse communities. Within this 'Italian frame', the poet is at pains to stress the distinction of Etruria: the prosperity of this region, its *pinguitudo*, is epitomised by the figure of the *pinguis Tyrrhenus* blowing the flute, additionally evoking the central role of Etruria in the Roman religious apparatus. Etruria's wealth and religiosity, alongside the strength of its men (cf. shortly after Verg. *Georg.* 2.533 *fortis Etruria*) are by Vergil solemnly recognised as fundamental to the prosperity and strength of Rome herself and of the *princeps*.

ii. OVERSEXUALISED WOMEN AND EFFEMINATE MEN

Alongside Posidonius, perhaps the most significant source for the representation of Etruscan τρυφή is a passage by Theopompus of Chios, on whose work later authors appear to have relied far more than on any direct evidence. The historian, recorded by Athenaeus, particularly focuses on moral decline as illustrated by the Etruscans' lasciviousness: 'the Etruscans are not embarrassed not only to do anything in public, but to have anything done to them; because this is another aspect of their local customs.'[185] This behaviour is actually attributed by Herodotus to the Caucasians (Hdt. 1.203) and Indians (Hdt. 1.101), and to the Mossynoecians by Xenophon (Xen. *An.* 5.4.33), Diodorus (Diod. Sic. 14.30) and Pomponius Mela (Pompon. 1.106). Indeed, the condemnatory assessment of this lascivious lifestyle appears to reclaim a series of τόποι of Herodotean ethnography associated with barbarous peoples, subsequently adopted by the Greco-Roman world, even though material evidence does not appear to provide support for these claims in Etruria. Etruscans are explicitly said to belong to the category of οἱ πρὸς ἑσπέραν οἰκοῦντες βάρβαροι (Ath. 518b), a series of populations

[185] Cf. Theopomp. *FGrHist* 115, F204=Ath. 517e (translation by S. D. Olson).

inherently different and distinct from the Greeks. Theopompus' argument on the one hand emphasises with indignation the liberty, especially in terms of sexual freedom, enjoyed by Etruscan women, and on the other denounces the predilection for homosexual activities imputed to Etruscan men.

According to the historian,

> 'it is an Etruscan custom that their women are common property.[186] They take very good care of their bodies and frequently exercise with the men, although at other times they do so by themselves; because they are not ashamed to be seen naked.[187] They do not eat dinner only with their husbands, but with anyone who happens to be there; and they propose toasts to anyone they want.[188] They are both heavy drinkers and extremely good-looking. The Etruscans raise all the children their wives produce, without knowing who the father is in any particular case.' Theopomp. *FGrHist* 115, F204=Ath. 517d-e (translation by S. D. Olson)

This criticism in all likelihood stems from the recognition of perhaps the most substantial difference between Etruscan society and Greece and Rome. As Bonfante notes, 'all the evidence points to the fact that the lives of upper class Etruscan women, in the Archaic period … had an element of autonomy and privilege surprising in comparison to that of other women in the ancient Mediterranean world.'[189] Some practices associated with this autonomy are not at all substantiated by material evidence, for instance the nudity, which is not a common motif in funerary paintings (with the exception of erotic groups), where emphasis appears to be placed instead on the sumptuousness of the garments,[190] and the habit of exercising naked, which occurs only for men, whilst women appear often dressed and as spectators, as in the Tomb of the Chariots. Other practices bear negative overtones for they were often associated with courtesans. Personal care for instance

[186] This detail appears in Herodotus in connection with the Auses (Hdt. 4.180) and Massagetae (Hdt. 1.216). For an exhaustive account of the sources cf. Liébert 2006, 270-8.
[187] Similarities can be observed with regard to the physical education of Spartan girls (cf. Xen. *Lac.* 1.4, Eur. *Andr.* 595-601 and Plut. *Lyc.* 14.2, and specifically as to nudity, cf. Xen. *Lac.* 1.4 and Plut. *Lyc.* 14.4-15.1; there is no clear evidence that girls exercised with boys). The parallel is significant in light of the fact that, as observed by Pomeroy, 'in Greek thought … Sparta functioned as "the other"' (Pomeroy 2008, 222), thus illustrating within the confines of the Greek world that 'otherness' which the Etruscans, amongst many non-Hellenic ethnic groups, encapsulated in the eyes of the Greeks first and later the Romans.
[188] These details evoke the *mores* of the Nasamones (cf. Hdt. 4.162) and the Illyrians (cf. Theopomp. *FGrHist* 115 F39).
[189] Bonfante 1995, 245.
[190] Timaeus ascribes the nudity to the slave girls (cf. *FGrHist* 566 F1), but even in this case we do not have parallels in the material evidence.

was very restrictive for Greek women, whereas in Etruria perfumed oils are attested by the widespread presence of ἀρύβαλλοι both imported from Greece and the Near-East and produced in Italy, and Ovid even mentions a certain *semen Tuscum* as an ingredient for a medicament for radiant skin.[191] As to Etruscan women's participation in banquets, the use of wine appears to be linked to social status, and the presence of wine services in women's tombs could be explained as a result of the fact that the administration of wine, as a domestic activity, was associated with the *mater familias*.[192] But more importantly, the presence of men and women together at banquets is well attested in iconography from the *sposi* sarcophagus type, popular from the VI to the I century BC, and from tomb paintings showing men and women banqueting together on couches:[193] the representation of women participating in banquets in funerary paintings should most likely be explained in religious and ceremonial terms, as symbolic of the reunion of the family in the afterlife. A certain sexual freedom might be suggested by the detail of the woman tenderly holding her right neighbour by the neck on the left wall of the Tomb of the Chariots, and the naked slave sitting on the knees of a young woman richly dressed in the Tomb of the Painted Vases, but these are mere speculations.[194]

The Romans' traditionalist view of the place that a woman occupied in society is perhaps best illustrated, in comparison with the perceived libertinism of Etruscan women, in a passage from the *Fasti*, where Lucretia is described as spinning wool like the quintessential *matrona*, while Tarquinius' daughters-in-law are intent on enjoying a party and drinking.[195] But the motif of the licentiousness of Etruscan women (and all Etruscans more broadly) is most interestingly touched upon by Horace in the lively ode 3.10.[196] The poem is presented as a παρακλαυσίθυρον, a lover's lament and plea outside the woman's closed door, with elements drawn from the tradition of the Hellenistic poets

[191] Cf. Ov. *Med.* 65, in all likelihood alluding to *Triticum spelta*, 'a variety of common wheat, native to the Mediterranean, including Etruria, and one of the oldest domesticated cereals … known to have emollient properties and for this reason used in cosmetics' (Johnson 2016, 65-6). The use of cosmetics (κοσμητική), according to Galen, was considered a branch of medicine (cf. Kühn 1826, 435), and the Etruscans were known in antiquity as φαρμακώδεις (cf. Theophr. *Hist. pl.* 9.15 and Mart. Cap. 6.637), which might suggest that they were experts in the art of cosmetics as well (cf. Rallo 1989, 173-80 and Turfa & Becker 2013).
[192] Cf. Colonna 1980, 53.
[193] For a list of Steingräber specimens cf. Scheffer 2014, 51 n. 12.
[194] Cf. Liébert 2006, 77-8.
[195] Cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.739-43. For a more detailed account of the episode see pp. 76ff.
[196] For a detailed analysis of this poem I refer to Pasquali 1920, Copley 1956, Pascucci 1982 and Nisbet & Rudd 2004.

combined with distinctively Roman features.[197] The distance that the poet, here playing the part of the *exclusus amator*, places between himself and his creation, produces 'a deflating parody' of a παρακλαυσίθυρον,[198] with a subtle irony dominating the poem. Furthermore, in a remarkable divergence from tradition, Horace's relationship with his *dura puella*, whose name is Lyce, literally 'she-wolf'[199] (a speaking name that implies innate cruelty), is a *furtivus amor*, for she is not a *meretrix*, but a married woman. She lives in a handsome house, with a courtyard adorned with a peristyle and trees, which suggests she was a woman of a certain stature and not a simple courtesan, and is said to have a *paelex*, a rival woman in relation to a wronged wife, often socially inferior and stigmatised for being foreign.[200] By openly flaunting Lyce's husband's infidelity, Horace is introducing in the poem the theme of *diffamatio*, a word of illicit intrigue that 'moves in the world of gossip and slander [whose] purpose is to amuse and defame, and the truth or falsity of its accusations is a matter of little concern.'[201] The hard-heartedness of the woman is conventional in παρακλαυσίθυρα, and this is how Lyce is described, more cruel and strict than a Scythian woman, who drinks the water of the river Don and is married to a savage man[202]–cf. *extremum* and *saevo* at lines 1-2 with *asperas* at line 3–, more inflexible than an oak and more cold-hearted than a Moorish snake,[203] who rejects the lover's *munera*,

[197] 'The vigil, the lover's suffering from the rain, wind, and snow, the warning that pride is a weapon that cuts both ways, the *exemplum* of Penelope, the lover's pallor, his humility, the girl's hardness of heart, and the final threat that the lover will not always be so long-suffering–all these are direct descendants of the Greek paraclausithyron' (Copley 1956, 63). For the Roman setting cf. the mention of *pulchra tecta* at line 6, as well as the traditionally Roman personification of the door, the *asperae fores* of lines 2-3 (cf. Plaut. *Curc.* 147ff. for a parody of the subject, but also Catull. 67, Prop. 1.16 and Tib. 1.2). Some other traditional elements are absent, such as tears and kisses, inebriety, the garland. For a detailed analysis of models I refer to Pasquali 1920, 419ff.
[198] Nisbet & Rudd 2004, 141. Cf. also Pasquali 1920, 423 and Pascucci 1982, 31, who notices the almost absence of the first-person pronoun.
[199] The name perhaps appeared in Greek poetry, for it is mentioned by Herodian (cf. Hdn. 1.313, 31L). A woman by the same name appears in Hor. *Carm.* 4.13.1-2.
[200] The *paelex* is likely a Macedonian woman living in Rome, or a woman that Lyce's husband encountered travelling abroad, which would explain his absence and suit the contrast of Lyce with Penelope (cf. Nisbet & Rudd 2004,147). The prosaic term *paelex* is counterbalanced by the adjective *Pierius*, epithet traditionally employed to define the Muses.
[201] Copley 1956, 64.
[202] The river Tanais was regarded as the boundary of Europe (cf. Manil. *Astron.* 4.677-8 and Luc. 3.273-5). There is a suggestion that the cold water of the Tanais makes the woman cold (cf. Nisbet & Rudd 2004,143). The Scythians were known as savage and Scythian men for the strict sexual *mores* they imposed on their wives (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 3.24.24).
[203] For the hardness of the oak cf. Ov. *Met.* 13. 799. North Africa was notorious for its snakes.

his *preces*, his *pallor*, and is not moved by jealousy of her *paelex*. Horace can only throw himself on her mercy, even though he warns Lyce that he will not endure her doorstep and the rain forever.[204]

The composition can be divided into three parts: the poet opens and closes with two sections of eight lines each, dedicated to the woman's impossible but conventional stubbornness and her rejection of any of his attempts to persuade her. The core of the poem is dedicated not to Lyce's hard-heartedness, but to a subtle *variatio* on the theme of her stubbornness, her *superbia*, which the poet does not address in a burst of frustrated passion, but with collected reasoning (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 3.10.9-12). The poet first encourages the woman to refrain from her haughtiness, for it is not welcomed by Venus, and could have unfortunate repercussions.[205] Then he provides the reason why his lover should not be so arrogant: Lyce's father is Etruscan, and he certainly did not raise a Penelope. The irony that accompanies the impudent comment is apparent in the use of lofty language, namely *Tyrrhenus* for *Etruscus*, and also *parens* for *pater*.[206] This brief and climactic remark by Horace perfectly encapsulates the cliché of the licentious Tyrrhenian woman, by 'cynically reversing the commonplace that fine people produce fine children.'[207]

The crucial thing to notice is the mention of Penelope, traditional paradigm of spousal fidelity:[208] the structure of lines 11-12 places *non te Penelopen* in incipit in direct correspondence with *Tyrrhenus*, which immediately suggests that as an Etruscan Lyce is by definition not a loyal and faithful wife, but an adulterer. The image of the faithful wife spinning the wool, immediately evoked by Penelope, also recalls the chaste Lucretia, seen while intent on her spindle. The notion that Horace's lover does

[204] Cf. the admonition to Neaera at Hor. *Epod.* 15.12-14.
[205] The threat is an essential element of the παρακλαυσίθυρον, often reminding the reluctant lover that he/she will soon become old. The chastity of Hippolytus was regarded by Aphrodite as an affront (cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 6). For a woman's *superbia* cf. Prop. 1.18.5, 3.25.15 and Ov. *Fast.* 1.419 (cf. Nisbet & Rudd 2004,145). It is interesting to notice that Horace is addressing a married woman: as observed by Pasquali, 'Orazio si mostra assai malizioso nel rivolgere un ammonimento così solenne a una maritata, ché la dispregiatrice dell'amore, non la sposa che dell'amore gioisce castamente, ha a temere dell'ira della dea: il poeta innamorato si foggia la divinità a modo suo' (Pasquali 1920, 434).
[206] Lofty language has been observed by commentators throughout the poem, e.g. in the epic opening *extremum Tanain si biberes*, a formula found exclusively in poetry, based on the Homeric model of *Il.* 2.824ff. and on Callim. *Hymn* 1.40, introduced in Latin by Vergil, who employs it at *Ecl.* 1.62, 10.65 and especially *Aen.* 7.715, and adopted by Horace in *Carm.* 4.15.21, *Epist.* 1.18.105, but also in *porrectum*, evoking the heroes fallen to the ground after a fatal blow (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 6.595-7, 9.589, Prop. 2.8.33-4 and Tib. 1.3.75), and *obicere*, used by Vergil in the dramatic monologue pronounced by Dido (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 4.548-9).
[207] Nisbet & Rudd 2004, 145-6. Cf. *Od.* 4.63-4, 611, Hor. *Carm.* 4.4.29, and Verg. *Aen.* 1.606.
[208] Cf. Thgn. 1126ff., Catull. 61.221ff., Prop. 3.12.38 and Lucian. *Dial. meret.* 12.1.

not deny herself to anybody regardless of her marital status appears to be consistent with the trope that we found in Theopompus, according to which Etruscan women enjoyed a remarkable freedom, and a certain independence from their husbands. Lyce's husband in fact never appears in the poem, he is mentioned only as a background character, someone who would not thwart the lovers' encounters or at least would not object to his wife's relationship with another man. After all, the man himself seems to have a lover of his own, a remark which further reaffirms Theopompus' cliché of both spouses being accustomed to be unfaithful to each other. Lyce is therefore an anti-Penelope, and not just because of her refusal to surrender to her lover's advances, but most of all because she is Etruscan, and as a result fundamentally libertine. The charge of debauchery is reinforced by the term *difficilis*, associated with Penelope: the faithful wife of Ulysses is characterised as obstinate in her will to remain loyal to her husband and reject the advances of her suitors, whereas by contrast Horace's *puella* is implicitly portrayed as *facilis*, promiscuous and compliant,[209] and ready to take on multiple lovers, as the reference to Penelope's *proci* substantiates. Horace subtly paints a picture that resonates with the conventional images associated with Etruscan women, and uncritically adopts traditional negative tropes.

As to the treatment of men by Theopompus,

> 'when they are done drinking and are ready to go to sleep, but while the lamps are still lit, their servants bring prostitutes into the room for them, or sometimes very attractive boys, or at other times their wives. And after they enjoy them, the servants next bring them strapping young men, who take the active role in their relations. Sometimes they watch one another while they have sex and enjoy intercourse, but generally they put screens woven out of wicker around their couches and throw cloths over them.[210] They have quite a bit of sex with women, but they much prefer sleeping with boys and young men; the young men in their country are in fact very good-looking, since they enjoy a luxurious lifestyle and remove the hair from their bodies.'[211] Theopomp. *FGrHist* 115, F204=Ath. 517f-518a (translation by S. D. Olson)

[209] Cf. the use of *difficilis* at Hor. *Carm.* 3.7.29-32.

[210] The καλύβη was said to be in use amongst the peoples who live near the Prasiad lake (Hdt. 5.16.3), whilst the ἱμάτιον occurs in relation to the Etruscans in fragments by Aristotle (cf. fr. 607 Rose) and Heraclides Ponticus (cf. *FHG* 2, p. 217, 16). See Liébert 2006, 98ff. In fact, only iconography from the IV and III century BC shows couples lying down under the same cover, e.g. the sarcophagus of Ramtha Visnai, although not in the context of the banquet, but in that of the married couple, where it symbolises the indissoluble union of the consorts, in what ethnography regards as a nuptial initiation, one of Van Gennep's rites of aggregation (cf. Van Gennep 1909, 39).

[211] We do not know of the existence of scenes of depilation in Etruscan art. Interestingly, Varro (cf. Varro *Rust.* 1.2.26) reports a recipe for a depilatory cream from Saserna (Seserna, father and son, were Romanised Etruscans), but this does not prove that depilation was a common practice in Etruria.

There is an example of a homosexual erotic scene in the Tomba dei Tori, but overall material evidence does not seem to show propensity for lasciviousness or effeminacy.[212]

The same stereotypes drawn from ethnographic literature appear to be behind the dismissal of Etruscan men's masculinity and vigour, the best illustration of which is perhaps Tarchon's speech of *cohortatio* to his men in the midst of the war in Latium (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.732-40).[213] The Tyrrhenian chief, in a passage modelled on Agamemnon's speech to Menestheus and Odysseus,[214] urges his men to resume the fight and demonstrate their courage before the enemy, and he does so by employing all the negative motifs applied to the Etruscans by the ethnographic tradition. The first section of the speech is arranged as a climactic sequence of three interrogatives. The opening question addresses the fear (*metus*) and cowardice (*ignavia*)–cf. the two interrogative pronouns, *quis* and *quae*, introducing the two terms–that has fallen on the Tyrrhenians' heart,[215] according to the notion that the Etruscans are cowardly and do not face the enemy directly,[216] commonly associated with a lack of manly vigour. Tarchon makes use of a terminology belonging to the semantic field of weakness and idleness, reinforcing his condemnation by explicitly characterising his men as *numquam dolituri* and *semper inertes* in geminated interjections–note the rhetorical use of *numquam* and *semper*–, thus suggesting their innate proclivity for feminine fearfulness, especially on the basis of the word *inertes*, which appears to be glossed by *ignavia* and originally bears the meaning 'without *ars*', in the sense of military *virtus*,[217] i.e. *muliebris*. And the theme of effeminacy is reasserted by *femina* in incipit at line 734, introducing the criticism that all this panic–Vergil uses *palor*, a Lucretian verb, also found in Plautus and perhaps

[212] See Liébert 2006, 115, n. 310.
[213] For the analysis of this passage I mainly refer to Horsfall 2003.
[214] Cf. *Il.* 4.340-8.
[215] The phrase *animis … venit* appears to be unparalleled (cf. Horsfall 2003, 398).
[216] See pp. 107ff. about the Ovidian passage in which the brave Fabii are ambushed and killed treacherously by the Veientines (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.211ff.), and p. 178 for the fearful reaction of the Etruscans to Mezentius (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.715-16).
[217] Cf. Horsfall 2003, 397-8. Cf. Varro fr. 233 Funaioli. However, if on the one hand Tarchon is rebuking the Tyrrhenians for being *numquam dolituri* and *semper inertes*, it is also to be noted that *animis … venit* might imply that the troops are overcome by an unusual feeling.

occurring in Ennius as well[218]—is caused by a woman, the warrior-maiden Camilla.[219] The third and last question quite simply points out that the arms they are holding in their hands (*ferrum*, *tela*) are vain and idle unless they summon some courage.

Following the τόπος of cowardice is a series of polemical remarks. First, Tarchon criticises his men because that same sluggardliness displayed in war does not occur in the context of the *nocturna bella* (the Etruscans are here defined *non … segnes*): the phrase immediately recalls Catullus' *nocturnae … rixae* (Catull. 66.13), and evokes the realm of erotic exploits that we read in Theopompus, the lasciviousness but also the homoerotic insinuations. Tarchon is using the traditional language of the *militia amoris* to emphasise that while the Tyrrhenians do not dare face Camilla openly, they are more than eager to engage in a different battleground, that of nocturnal frays.[220] Alongside their predilection for Venus, the Etruscans are denounced by their leader for indulging in Bacchus' dances to the sound of the *tibia*: dancing in Roman society was frowned upon, and when a man was accused of dancing it was usually during a symposium, where he is said to have danced naked, displaying his drunkenness and effeminacy.[221] And banquets are explicitly mentioned immediately afterwards, when Tarchon uses a derisive imperative to reprimand the Tyrrhenians for their lack of restraint at the table—*plenae* suggests a certain lavishness that is consistent with pictorial representations. *Hic amor, hoc studium*, adds Tarchon, in a final reassertion of the life of delights that his men lead, and in this remark are encapsulated all the clichés of the debauched life of the Etruscans, spent entirely amongst effeminate and idle activities, far from the hardship of war.

And yet, this degeneracy is balanced by the supreme virtue, *pietas*, when the *haruspex*'s announcement of the sacrifice recalls the Tyrrhenians from their pleasures and diversions. As observed by Nielson, 'in his mockery, [Tarchon] reminds his men of the basic aspects of civilized life, of Etruscan life, of course, which in his own words, is balanced between earthly pleasures and

[218] Cf. Lucr. 2.10, 1031, 4.575, 5.974, Plaut. *Bacch.* 1136 and Verg. *Aen.* 5.265, 9.21, 780, 10.674, 11.734, 12.615, 738.
[219] In this reprimand there might also be a hint of the widespread notion that Etruscan women held power over the men, as attested in the literary creation of characters such as queen Tanaquil, for whom see pp. 83ff.
[220] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 11.736.
[221] Cf. Nep. *Epam.* 1.1.2, Cic. *Verr.* 2.3.23, *Cat.* 2.23, *Mur.* 13, *Deiot.* 26, *Pis.* 22 and Sen. *Controv.* 1 *praef.* 8. The phrase *curva … tibia* recalls the Phrygian ἔλυμος.

pietas.'[222] Tarchon's approach is to present his troops with the most condemning portrayal of Etruscan indolence and moral decadence, as if uttered by an enemy, and not the Tyrrhenians' own leader. By doing so, Vergil provides the outside perspective, the chastising depiction of a people perceived as different and distinct from both Greek and Roman culture. The identity of the speaker ostensibly serves to corroborate and validate this stereotype. But at the same time the attitude displayed by the Tyrrhenians during the war, and by their leader *in primis*, portrayed as an *exemplum* of not only traditional *pietas*, but also of manly courage and military prowess, is a plain refutation of the cliché, as illustrative of the coexistence in the Etruscan people of pleasure and valour.[223]

The same issue was posed by the Trojans, who, as a Near-Eastern people, are often accused of being devoted to a luxurious lifestyle. The most iconic tirade against Aeneas' men is voiced by Numanus Remulus,[224] whose language closely recalls that of Tarchon, as well as the brief attacks of Iarbas and Turnus, derived from the Homeric description of the Phaeacians.[225] Tone and τόποι coincide with motifs of Roman invective, but also with the moralistic comparison of the severe *mores* of the forefathers and the later decline into *luxuria*.[226] First the Italic chief refers to the Trojans with the disparaging *o vere Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges* (Verg. *Aen.* 9.617), a conventional rebuke to male pride[227] addressed to Aeneas and his men by both Iarbas and Turnus, alluding to the traditional effeminacy attributed to eastern peoples, which easily anticipates the *muliebris* fearfulness of Tarchon's men. Afterwards, Numanus criticises their indulgence in *desidiae cordi* (Verg. *Aen.* 9.615), a form of *otium* especially dishonourable in ancient Rome,[228] and in particular their love for dances (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 9.615) and the sound of the *tibia* (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 9.618), both themes mentioned in Tarchon's speech.

[222] Nielson 1984, 31.
[223] See McGill 2020, 240. The theme will be explored in depth in chapter 4.1.
[224] For a detailed analysis of the passage, with special attention to the sources employed by Vergil for the representation of both Italians and Trojans cf. Dickie 1985.
[225] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 4.215-17, 12.97-100 and *Od.* 8.248-9.
[226] See Nisbet 1987, 194-5.
[227] Cf. *Il.* 8.163. The theme of line 617 is also explicitly Homeric (cf. *Il.* 2.235, 7.96 Ἀχαιΐδες, οὐκέτ' Ἀχαιοί, voiced by Thersites and Menelaus respectively).
[228] Cf. Sall. *Cat.* 53.5 and Lucr. 5.48.

The type of the *effeminatus* was in fact a widespread τόπος of ethnographic literature, and in the overall structure of the poem posed a significant problem: how to reconcile these characteristics, ascribed not only to the Trojans but also to the Etruscans (the association of the two peoples is not casual), both on the winning side of the conflict, with the rustic and warlike temperament of the Italic peoples? The persistence of such characteristics would have certainly led to the decay and eventual collapse of Italian virtue, which explains why Aeneas was not allowed to settle in Carthage, where the dangers of *luxuria* were awaiting.[229] Vergil is not denying the indulgent nature of Trojans and Etruscans, but in the context of his programmatic narrative he needs to dispose of it in order for Rome and her rustic warriors to arise. Troy thus must perish, along with its name, its language, its attire. As to Etruria, the solution adopted by Vergil is ingenious. First, the poet employs traditional disparaging tropes only to reject them, depicting the Etruscans as valorous and pious despite their chief's rebuke, a powerful repudiation of conventional portrayals and acknowledgement of the contribution of Etruria to Rome's greatness. Then he subtly removes the Etruscans altogether from the narrative: already established in a subordinated position, Tarchon and his men will not participate in the final agreement with Latinus, and nothing is conspicuously ever revealed about their leader's fate.

[229] Cf. Horsfall 1971, 1114.

CONCLUSIONS

The widely accepted belief that the Etruscans' origins were to be found in Asia Minor, and more specifically in Lydia, deeply informs the way in which both Greeks and Romans regard the Tyrrhenians as a population marked by eastern customs and practices. Indeed, they appear to exercise the same *forma mentis* that Herodotus had ascribed to the Persians, who, in the words of the historian, 'honour most of all those who dwell nearest them, next those who are next farthest removed, and so going ever onwards they assign honour by this rule; those who dwell farthest off they hold least honourable of all; for they deem themselves to be in all regards by far the best of all men, the rest to have but a proportionate claim to merit, till those who dwell farthest away have least merit of all.'[230] As a result, to the Etruscans are ascribed a set of habits that closely resembles those of several different barbaric populations, whose cultures are perceived as distant and often conflicting with Greek customs and conventions. In particular, the Etruscans are accused of indulging in luxurious activities, sumptuous banquets, dances to the sound of the flute, homoerotic sex, all practices traditionally associated with eastern peoples, so much so that even their physical appearance is construed as a reflection of their degenerate lifestyle of gluttony and excess.

The Romans welcome the stereotypes elaborated by Greek ethnographic literature and continue to perpetuate the image of the Etruscans as a people whose *mores* are utterly incompatible with their own particularly because this allows them to lay out the narrative of 'the tamed Etruscan, once an oppressing warrior, now a retired man of peace.'[231] The dismissal of the Etruscan dominion over the peninsula could thus be justified by the inherent faultiness of the Tyrrhenian character. Still in the I century BC, the audience appears to be responsive to the conventional portrayal of the Etruscans, and even Augustan poets do not shy away from such prejudiced tropes. Horace applies the cliché to exploit its humorous potential: the accusation of lasciviousness addressed to the cruel Lyce is voiced through the mention of her Tyrrhenian father, who could not have possibly raised her to be a faithful wife, illustrated by the *exemplum* of spousal fidelity of Penelope. The ploy proves particularly effective,

[230] Hdt. 1.134.2 (translation by A. D. Godley).
[231] Turfa 2016, 333.

with the universally acknowledged cliché of the lustful Etruscan functioning as epitomisation of Lyce's licentiousness.

Conversely, Vergil recuperates and re-appropriates the stereotypes by presenting them in contexts of praise of the Etruscans: the emphasis on *Italia* as promoted by the Augustan regime prompted Vergil to reverse the traditional imagery associated with the Tyrrhenians in order to legitimise the heritage of Etruria and its role in the rise of Rome, which was only possible by acknowledging the traditional set of clichés established by Greek ethnographic and historiographical literature and disproving them. In the *Georgics* the conventional image of the sluggish Tyrrhenian does not function to evoke dissolute banquets and moral decadence but is re-contextualised as a symbol of the fertility and lushness of the Etruscan territory, as well as symbol of religiosity. In the *Aeneid*, where the celebration of the Etruscan heritage serves an even more explicit purpose, Vergil could not avoid the subject of the Tyrrhenians' debauched lifestyle, and chose to put it in a prominent position, in the speech of rebuke of the Tyrrhenian leader himself against his own men. In doing so, the poet is straightforwardly acknowledging the truthfulness, to a degree, of the stereotype, but at the same time he emphasises the vigour and courage of the Etruscans, without whom Aeneas could not have overcome the Italics, presenting them, in the form of Tarchon, as an *exemplum* of religious *pietas* and military prowess. The Etruscan *luxuria* is furthermore linked to the Trojans, accused of the same dissolute lifestyle in a series of direct speeches of invective uttered by their enemies, and it is obviously not coincidental that the same criticism is addressed to both, seeing as they are related. However, while the Trojan *mores* will be counterbalanced by the virtues of the Italics, the disappearance of the Etruscans from the narrative suggests their eventual assimilation and subordinated role to Rome. The acknowledgement of the Tyrrhenians' predilection for a life of pleasure thus does not prevent them from displaying courage and religious devotion to the same extent as other peoples of the peninsula.

1.2 THE EPISODE OF THE TYRRHENIAN PIRATES

> 'Now at first the Tyrrheni, since they were subject to the orders of only one ruler, were very strong, but in later times, it is reasonable to suppose, their united government was dissolved, and the Tyrrheni, yielding to the violence of their neighbours, were broken up into separate cities; for otherwise they would not have given up a happy land and taken to the sea as pirates, different bands turning to different parts of the high seas.' Strabo 5.2.2 (translation by H. L. Jones)

This passage from Strabo's *Geography* introduces a further reflection on the process of decline of the Etruscan civilisation, namely that were it not for the collapse of their political structure, Tyrrhenians would have had no reason to abandon their fertile land and resort to piracy. The author evidently does not see piracy as a potential by-product of a thalassocracy, but rather as a degenerative phenomenon,[232] drawing on a well-established trope that recognised the Tyrrhenians as pirates, a trope that can be dated back to the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus.

The saga of Dionysus embraces a wide range of episodes, some of which are preserved in a large number of testimonies, and some others only found in scanty sources. A case in point is the episode of the Tyrrhenian pirates, referred to in relatively few literary works: *Hymn. Hom. Bacch.*, Eur. *Cyc.* 1-22, Ov. *Met.* 3.582-691, Hyg. *Fab.* 134; *Poet. astr*. 2.17, Sen. *Oedip.* 449-66, Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.5.3, Serv. *ad Aen.* 1.67, Opp. *H.* 1.646-85, Nonnus *Dion.* 31.89-91, 41.240-9, 45.105, 47.507-8, 629-32.[233] The myth is depicted in figurative art,[234] most notably in the late-archaic Etruscan black-figured Toledo hydria (500-490 BC), which is the earliest datable document illustrating the episode, the choregic monument of Lysicrates (335-4 BC), the tondo of a Genucilia stemmed plate from Rome (end of the

[232] Even though he seems to concede, almost contradictorily, that it could be seen as a manifestation of maritime power when he mentions that Agylla did not engage in piratical activities albeit powerful (cf. Strabo 5.2.3; cf. also Strabo 16.2.28, 37, where the Jews are engaged in piracy at a time of political success, although their descent into robbery is explicitly connected with the degeneration of their political institutions). The theme of Etruscan thalassocracy is recurrent for instance in Diodorus Siculus (cf. Diod. Sic. 5.13.4, 20.4, 11.51.1-2), who mentions it also in association with piracy (cf. Diod. Sic. 5.9.4).

[233] Further succinct mentions are in Prop. 3.17.25-6, Sen. *Agam.* 451, Luc. *DMar.* 8, *Salt.* 22, Aristid. *Or.* 41.8, Charax of Pergamon *FGrHist* 103 F 31, Longus 4.2-3, *Anth. Pal.* 9.82, 524 and a brief account in the *fabula Liberi et Tyrrhenorum* in *Myth. Vat*. See James 1975.

[234] For a detailed catalogue of the iconographic evidence see Harari 1997a. I will confine this survey to the mention of the most representative cases, passing over a series of minor pieces of evidence, the interpretation of which is still disputed, and those documents portraying the aftermath of the encounter. For the Roman testimonies see Romizzi 2003.

IV century BC), the Lansdowne relief from the Villa Adriana (the identification is almost certain), a polychrome mosaic from the House of Dionysus and Ulysses in Dougga (age of Gallienus, AD 253-68), the Rusicade sarcophagus (first half of the III century AD), and a Tunisian terracotta *pelike* (first half of the IV century AD). The storyline can be briefly described as follows: Dionysus is captured by Tyrrhenian pirates, who want to sell him as a slave; the helmsman recognises the god and begs his comrades to free him, but they refuse; Dionysus' bonds fall off, and the god proceeds to perform a series of miracles; eventually the terrified pirates leap into the sea and are transformed into dolphins, while the pious helmsman is rewarded. Alongside minor details,[235] many narrative discrepancies appear within the sources,[236] pointing to one or more lost versions of the myth, and confirming the lack of a firmly established tradition. As a result, the episode has been variously interpreted by scholars, by some as alluding to an eschatological message,[237] by others as an αἴτιον of how dolphins came into being.[238] I would favour the interpretation of the episode as a 'revenge myth': revenge myths involve a series of kings, heroes, gods and semi-gods who refuse to recognise Dionysus' divinity and are therefore punished for their impiety with utter destruction and the eventual establishment of the god's cults, whereas those who embrace his orgiastic teachings are

[235] For instance, the god is taken either on a promontory (*Hymn. Hom. Bacch.*) or on the shore (a generic shore in Servius, the island of Ceos or Chios in Ovid, where the reading at *Met.* 3.597 is disputed), although not always properly captured: in Apollodorus Dionysus hires a Tyrrhenian pirate ship to cross from Icaria to Naxos, and similarly in Hyginus' *Poet. astr.* the Tyrrhenians take him on board as a boy together with his companions to restore him to his nurses in Naxos. According to Apollodorus and Philostratus the Tyrrhenians leap into the sea induced by madness rather than fear, and both Ovid and Nonnus seem to refer to this divergence in earlier sources (cf. Ov. *Met.* 3.670-1 and Nonnus *Dion.* 45.152ff.). In Hyginus' *Poet. astr.* the pirates are so delighted by the singing of the god and his companions that they get seized by the desire to dance and *inscii* throw themselves into the sea.

[236] The main discrepancies can be listed as follows: (i) Dionysus in Eur. *Cyc.* driven mad by Hera, who also sets the Tyrrhenians onto the god; (ii) Nereus calming the sea and turning the waters into meadows in Seneca, which anticipates Nonnus' marine meadows, suggesting a common source; (iii) two ships in Philostratus, one manned by the Tyrrhenian pirates and the other by Dionysus and his followers, seemingly an alteration not earlier than the Hellenistic period, perhaps reflecting a version in Attic drama (cf. Silenus in Eur. *Cyc.* who sets out with the Satyrs to rescue Dionysus); (iv) πέτρᾳ μοι διείκασται about Dionysus' ship in the *Imagines*, which can be compared to Nonnus' mention of a Tyrrhenian ship turned to stone and fixed in the water by Dionysus in the western sea, and seems to be alluded to in Ovid's mysterious halting of the ship, suggesting a common tradition; (v) Nonnus' association of the myth with Sicily (Σικελὸς μῦθος).

[237] On account of the presence of dolphins leaping into the sea in Etruscan monuments from the late archaic period, such as the Tomb of the Lioness from Tarquinia (end of the VI century BC), which would symbolise the passage into the world of the dead. Cf. also Paleothodoros 2012, 472 and Romizzi 2003, 359.

[238] Cf. Allen, Halliday, Sikes 1936, 377, who add that capture by pirates is a favourite topic of storytellers (cf. the story of Arion in Hdt. 1.23 and that of the attempted abduction by the Tyrrhenian pirates of the statue of Samian Hera in Menodot. *FGrHist* 541 F 1 and Ath. 672b-c).

mightily rewarded.[239] However, the episode of the Tyrrhenian pirates stands out as anomalous, for the group does not represent a distinct community, nor does it specifically oppose Dionysus' cult.

[239] Cf. Paleothodoros 2012, 455-6.

i. THE ORIGINS OF THE MYTH

In order to establish the origin of the myth, it is first necessary to briefly address the issue concerning the identity of the people denominated as Τυρρηνοί.[240] Tyrrhenians are often associated, if not identified, in Greek sources with the Pelasgians and the island of Lemnos,[241] and yet multiple sources seem to have, already at an early stage, knowledge of the western Tyrrhenians, i.e. Etruscans.[242] How do we then establish when we can definitively identify the Tyrrhenians with the Etruscans?[243] First of all, if we accept a potential etymology from a stem *turs-* associated with τύρσις ('tower'/'fortification'), we can easily imagine that the ethnonym initially designated generically the inhabitants of fortified coastal settlements,[244] and eventually came to refer to pirates, seemingly active in the upper Aegean around the VI century BC,[245] thus accounting for the testimonies about Tyrrhenians in Lemnos and the Chalcidice. The argument has been advanced that these Tyrrhenians are indeed Etruscans who reached Lemnos and continental Greece around the VIII century BC,[246] on the grounds of Villanovan artefacts found for instance in Olympia. This conjecture gains some support from a fragment of Ephorus referring to Tyrrhenian pirates infesting the coasts of Sicily before the foundation of Naxos on the island in 736 BC, hampering Greek colonisation.[247] However, the earliest documents pertaining to Tyrrhenian piracy date from the second half of the VI century BC, and most significantly it is much more likely that luxury items such as those

[240] The original ethnonym is Τυρσηνοί, Τυρρηνοί appears only in the V century BC. For a concise account of the regions associated with the Tyrrhenians in antiquity see Bakhuizen 1988, 26ff.
[241] Cf. Hellanic. *FGrHist* 4 F 4, Th. 4.109, Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 100, Anticl. *FGrHist* 140 F 21 and Diod. Sic. 10.19.6. The exception is Herodotus, who draws a distinction between the inhabitants of Lemnos, whom he calls Pelasgians, and the Tyrrhenians (cf. Hdt. 1.57, 167).
[242] Cf. Hes. *Th.* 1015-16, Hecat. *FGrHist* 1 F 59, Theopomp. *FGrHist* 115 F 204, Myrsil. *FGrHist* 477 FF 8-9 and Arist. fr. 60 Rose=Iamb. *Protr.* 8 (47.21-48.9 Pistelli)=August. *Contra Iulianum* 4.15.78. The Aristotelian passage seems to unequivocally allude to the Etruscans, as confirmed by two fragments belonging to a work of historical as well as ethnographical interest entitled Νόμιμα βαρβαρικά, where he describes the Tyrrhenians' luxury and sadism in familiar terms (cf. frr. 607-8 Rose discussed in more detail at pp. 172-3).
[243] For a detailed account of the historical and archaeological evidence see Ormerod 1924, 128-60, Dell 1967 and Giuffrida Ientile 1983.
[244] Cf. Dion. Hal. 1.26.2.
[245] See Giuffrida Ientile 1983, 9ff.
[246] See De Simone 2000 and Gras 1985.
[247] Cf. Ephor. *FGrHist* 70 F 137. Diodorus also mentions Tyrrhenian piratical activities in the southern Tyrrhenian, sometime after the early VI century BC (cf. Diod. Sic. 5.9.4).

discovered on the mainland of Greece arrived by commercial traffic rather than by piratical activities.[248]

Ephorus' testimony is not substantiated by material evidence, and rather seems to reflect the author's own times: Etruscan piracy is well attested in the Tyrrhenian Sea between the IV and III century BC, in all likelihood associated with the collapse of the Etruscan thalassocracy after the defeat at Cumae in 474 BC: Syracuse's attempts to fill the power vacuum in the lower Tyrrhenian area may have been the catalyst.[249] Traces of the growing antagonism between the Etruscans and Syracuse can already be observed in the early V century BC, as both Strabo and Diodorus attest,[250] but it is from the IV century BC, when the Etruscan cities have fallen under the influence of Rome, that we find overwhelming epigraphical evidence of Tyrrhenian piracy, testifying to an intense activity both in the Adriatic,[251] and in the lower Aegean Sea.[252] Historiographical sources prove also to be well aware of the Tyrrhenians' piratical activities:[253] Strabo reports that both Alexander (the Great or, more likely, the Molossian) and Demetrius Poliorcetes forwarded formal complaints to Rome about the troubles caused by pirates from Antium, associated with the Etruscans.[254] The Romans' response to the request to exercise more direct control over these activities is to institute in 311 BC the *duoviri navales* in charge of the state fleet.[255]

[248] In addition, no Villanovan material has been found on Lemnos.
[249] Cf. Giuffrida Ientile 1983, 66 and Cristofani 1984, 3.
[250] Strabo reports that in 482 BC the tyrant of Rhegium and Zancle, Anaxilaus, fortified the Scyllaeum promontory in order to prevent the Tyrrhenian pirates from passing through the strait of Messina (cf. Strabo 6.1.5), and according to Diodorus thirty years later Hiero of Syracuse sent forth a second expedition that ravaged the coasts of Etruria and Corsica and took control of Aethaleia, modern Elba (cf. Diod. Sic. 11.88.4-5).
[251] Cf. an Athenian decree of 325/4 BC listing ships and equipment for the establishment of a colony in the Adriatic as protection (φυλακή) against the Tyrrhenian pirates (*IG* 2.2.1629). It can be determined that Athenians were well aware of the Tyrrhenians' piratical activities, as confirmed by two lost speeches, Dinarchus' Τυρρηνικός and Hyperides' Περὶ τῆς φυλακῆς τῶν Τυρρηνῶν.
[252] In 299 BC the Delians took 5000 drachmae from the temple treasure εἰς φυλακὴν τῶν Τυρρηνῶν (*IG* 11.2.148), and a Rhodian inscription from the first half of the III century BC mentions, amongst others, a man who fell fighting against the Tyrrhenian pirates (Syll.^{3} 1225).
[253] Cf. Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 100 and Menodot. *FGrHist* 541 F 1. It is not clear whether the Tyrrhenians were called pirates in Aristotle's *Protrepticus*, since the text in Iamblichus only mentions τοὺς ἐν τῇ Τυρρηνίᾳ, whereas Augustine explicitly uses the word *praedones*.
[254] Cf. Strabo 5.3.5. The passage has been disputed, partly as a result of a pattern of unwillingness to accept evidence for significant contacts between Rome and Greece before the Illyrian Wars, but nevertheless it sounds consistent and plausible within standard Hellenistic practice (cf. Bispham 2012, 239ff.). Cf. also Strabo 5.2.2.
[255] Cf. Liv. 9.30.4.

By reviewing the evidence, I believe it possible to establish that, given the frequent conflation of trade and piracy in antiquity,[256] the identification of the Tyrrhenian pirates with the Etruscans is not always necessarily substantiated. The connection first established by Greek sources from the VI century BC with the Pelasgians suggests the identification of the Tyrrhenians as belonging to an un- or pre-Hellenic stratum, and as outcast or more generally as a group operating at the fringes of society.[257] Between the V and the IV century BC, with the defeat at Cumae, the theme of Tyrrhenian=Etruscan piracy in historiographical sources emerges and is consolidated, alongside the surfacing of the theme of τρυφή associated with the decline of the Etruscan dominion in continental Italy. Etruscan piracy indeed seems to represent a form of compensation for the cities' internal imbalance, especially in southern Etruria, where a society polarised around few gentilicial groups began to progressively marginalise communities.[258] The conflation of the Tyrrhenians active in the Aegean with the Etruscans once again testifies to the widespread proneness of Greek and Roman authors alike to carelessly regard the Etruscans as an entity operating at the fringes of society,[259] with no legitimate claim to hegemony in the western Mediterranean, and whose barbaric and excessively indulgent habits had ultimately been the source of their decline.

On the basis of this account it is fairly safe to say that the myth probably originated in the Aegean around the VI century BC,[260] as seemingly confirmed by the earliest literary sources,[261] whereas, on the contrary, the western version of the legend appears to be a much later development in which the

[256] See Gras 1976, 367-8 and De' Spagnolis 2004, 50-1.
[257] Cf. De' Spagnolis 2004, 49. Nevertheless we can conjecture an initial distinction between Tyrrhenians and western Tyrrhenians, i.e. Etruscans, later conflated in the erudite tradition around the IV and III centuries BC (cf. Torelli 1975a, 431).
[258] See Cristofani 1983, 106 and Cristofani & Proietti 1982, 71-2.
[259] Bakhuizen (cf. Bakhuizen 1988, 28f.) offers the definition of 'horizon' as a cognitive border between the Hellenic world and the world perceived as peripheral, to which peoples such as Dryopans, Chalcidians, Pelasgians and Tyrrhenians would belong.
[260] See Giuffrida Ientile 1983, 37ff. Bruni (cf. Bruni 2013, 764) argues that the myth developed in Corinth in relation to the dangers presented to Corinthian seafarers by Etruscan piracy in their navigation to the west.
[261] The Homeric hymn does not provide specific geographical indications, and furthermore the mention of the Hyperboreans should discourage from trying to assume geographical accuracy by the author, but the reference to Egypt and Cyprus points to an eastern-Mediterranean setting, which is consistent with Apollodorus, Hyginus, Ovid and Servius, who all refer to the Aegean (most often Naxos, insofar as Hyginus claims to derive his version in the *Astronomica* from Aglaosthenes' *Naxica*). A broadly Aegean setting is also alluded to in the *Cyclops*, where the expedition to rescue Dionysus is attacked by a storm off Cape Maleas, but it cannot be ascertained whether the direction of the journey is eastwards (although it seems more likely).

Tyrrhenians are unequivocally identified with the Etruscans.[262] The presence of the myth in Etruria in the second half of the VI century BC, testified by the Toledo hydria, and therefore the cultural appropriation of the figure of Dionysus and his iconography, is at first sight surprising, given the negative portrayal of the Tyrrhenians in this episode, but it can be explained as part of that broader process of appropriation and re-elaboration of Greek culture which engaged, probably with political overtones, local élites who intended to enhance their social status. In addition, it might be further evidence that the identification of the Tyrrhenian pirates with Etruscans is not yet operating in this early phase. The process of transfer of the myth from Greece to Rome testifies precisely to the degree of stereotypisation in the portrayal of the Etruscan people, seeing as the parallelism with un-Hellenic ethnic groups established in Greek ethnographic literature is wholly appropriated by Roman authors, for whom Etruscans are comfortably interchangeable with their eastern homonyms, even in contexts, such as the Dionysiac episode, in which the distinction of the two ethnic groups could not be more blatant.

ii. THE EPISODE IN OVID'S METAMORPHOSES

We turn now to Ov. *Met.* 3.572-691, the longest poetical account of the myth.[263] The episode is introduced as part of the more extended section about Pentheus, for which, alongside Euripides' *Bacchae*, the author might have drawn from lost works by Aeschylus, Iophon, Xenocles, Cleophon, Chaeremon, Thespis,[264] as well as Roman tragedies, like Pacuvius' *Pentheus* and Accius' *Bacchae*,[265] although it is impossible for us to determine the extent to which Ovid re-elaborated his predecessors. The story of the Tyrrhenian pirates is certainly absent from Euripides but appears again twice in Ovid associated with Pentheus' doom and Lycurgus, at *Met.* 4.22-4 (cf. also 422ff.) and *Fast.* 3.721-4: the former is a sort of spontaneous hymn illustrating the conversion to Bacchic cult of the majority

[262] Only the case of Nonnus stands out, referring as it does to a Sicilian tradition, and yet Italy has no role in the *Dionysiaca*, and Tyrrhenians are called the inhabitants of Sicily.
[263] For the analysis of this passage I refer to Bömer 1969 and Barchiesi & Rosati 2007.
[264] Cf. Aesch. *TrGF* 3 117, Iophon *TrGF* 1 22 F 2, Xenocles *TrGF* 1 33 F 1, Cleophon *TrGF* 1 77, Chaeremon *TrGF* 1 71 FF 4-7 and Thespis *TrGF* 1 1 F 1c; cf. also the Πενθεύς attributed to Lycophron at *Suda* λ 827.
[265] Cf. Pacuvius mentioned in Serv. *ad Aen.* 4.469 and Accius *Bacch.* 235-61 Ribbeck.

of the Thebans, whereas the latter is a direct intertextual reference, and they both could be interpreted as acts of literary awareness if the link between Pentheus and the Tyrrhenian pirates is an Ovidian innovation.[266] However, a certain scepticism is advisable, for, given the seemingly certain existence of several lost testimonies common to authors ranging from the Augustan period onwards, I would rather hypothesise that the association already existed in a previous source available to Ovid. When we look at Propertius 3.17, published a few years earlier, the poet briefly recalls Dionysus' exploits, mentioning his miraculous birth, the Indian expedition, Lycurgus, Pentheus and the Tyrrhenian pirates:[267] the same order is echoed in *Met.* 4.20ff. and in *Fast.* 3.713ff., though Pentheus and Lycurgus are inverted, and even in Hyginus' collection, which presents a section dedicated to Dionysus, the episode of the Tyrrhenian pirates immediately follows the episode of Lycurgus.

Although no exact pattern emerges, it seems that the god's encounter with the pirates was closely associated with both Pentheus and Lycurgus. Indeed, on the one hand these episodes present distinct narrative similarities, as they can all be considered examples of 'revenge myths', while on the other they seem to be isolated on account of the common geographical setting, i.e. Greece. We could assume that some testimony, perhaps a mythographer, might have collected a list of Dionysus' exploits, or we can again attempt to trace the original source back to one or more of the lost tragedies on the subject,[268] even though, due to the absence of a distinct poetic phraseology, I would lean towards the former solution. Indeed, Cameron puts forward the possibility that amongst Hyginus' sources are to be listed mythographic collections as well as hypotheses to Euripides' dramas.[269]

The episode, though extraneous to Euripides, is a dramatic parallel of *Bacch.* 432-518, where a stranger, who eventually turns out to be Dionysus himself, is imprisoned and asked by Pentheus

[266] Cf. Barchiesi & Rosati 2007, 222.
[267] Cf. Prop. 3.17.21-6. See Leigh 2000.
[268] We could even in this case advance the hypothesis that either Pacuvius or Accius (or both) are a model for Roman authors, but, given the extant evidence, I would not go as far as that (cf. D'Anna 1967, 137).
[269] Cf. Cameron 2004, 89ff., where he argues that Hyginus would have hardly had first-hand knowledge of the sources he cited. Cameron also addresses in the previous chapter the matter of the existence of a commentary to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* compiled in the late antiquity, which he is inclined to deny, in favour of an early date for the *Narrationes*, summaries of Ovid's metamorphosis stories supplied with additional material, which appear to draw on Hyginus amongst others and to be available to the Vatican Mythographer and the author of the scholia to Statius' *Thebaid* amongst others. For an overall account of the activity of Hyginus as a mythographer see Fletcher 2013.

πρῶτον μὲν οὖν μοι λέξον ὅστις εἶ γένος (cf. *Met.* 3.580-1 *ede tuum nomen nomenque parentum / et patriam*). The prisoner, presented as *manibus … ligatis* (*Met.* 3.575), just like the Vergilian Sinon,[270] is in the epic identified with the helmsman, whom the critics have recognised as the god Dionysus, or a *figura* of him, according to the Euripidean dramaturgic ploy. He is given the name Acoetes[271] and, in Ovid's most original narratological innovation, he himself recounts the events as a cautionary tale to Pentheus, giving plenty of details about his origins and family.[272] As observed by Cameron, this serves a double narrative function: on the one hand it gives distinguished prominence to a marginal character, allowing him 'to update the story of his own life, to fill in a gap',[273] while on the other it establishes the character, through the recollection of his own memories, as a mouthpiece for the author's own 'poetic memory'.

Acoetes professes his homeland to be Maeonia (cf. Ov. *Met.* 3.583), a district of Lydia, and is described as *Tyrrhenus* at lines 576 and 696 (cf. Ov. *Met.* 3.576 *Tyrrhena gente* and 696 *Tyrrhenus Acoetes*).[274] I believe it possible to identify the helmsman specifically as an Etruscan. First, the phrase *patria Maeonia est* alludes quite explicitly to Eur. *Bacch.* 464 Λυδία δέ μοι πατρίς, reasserting the deep intertextual exchange with the Euripidean drama and similarly suggesting that the character is none other than Dionysius himself in disguise. Secondly, the toponym *Maeonia* had been employed by Vergil to refer to the Etruscans awaiting the foreign commander (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.499), fully legitimising its use in explicitly Etruscan contexts. In addition, one of the sailors, Lycabas, is explicitly said to come from an Etruscan city, *Tusca … ab urbe* (Ov. *Met.* 3.624; cf. Hyg. *Fab.* 134 *Tyrrheni, qui postea Tusci sunt dicti*), which appears to suggest that all members can be identified generically as Etruscans, seeing as the detail is indeed not given to differentiate Lycabas from his crew. In fact,

[270] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 2.57. 'Se Penteo sapesse decifrare l'allusione a Virgilio, avrebbe motivo di preoccuparsi' (Barchiesi & Rosati 2007, 223).
[271] Acoetes is also the name of Evander's former *armiger* in Verg. *Aen.* 11.30ff., who is appointed guardian to the dead body of Pallas. Servius Danielis (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 4.469) mentions Acoetes as a character in the tale of Pentheus *secundum tragoediam Pacuvii*, but he is not identified as a helmsman, rather as a *comes*.
[272] The character of the helmsman, already prominent in the Homeric hymn, where he is however silent about himself and his family, is strikingly absent from Nonnus' version.
[273] Cameron 2004, 105. The same privilege is granted notably to Achaemenides at Ov. *Met.* 14.158-222.
[274] Line 576 is deleted by Heinsius, followed by Tarrant, but I believe that, as much as the anticipation could be easily removed (cf. Galasso 2006), there is no compelling evidence that the line is to be regarded as spurious (cf. Bömer 1969, 587).

there is no hint, in Acoetes' reminiscing from his youth to his journey towards Chios, that he ever joined the Tyrrhenian crew from a country different from that of his companions.

As a closure to his lengthy biographical description, Acoetes mentions that instead of following in his father's footsteps, that is instead of being a fisherman, he learnt how to steer a ship and read the sky: as a matter of fact, Acoetes is not a pirate, nor is he ever called that by Ovid. And this is an important detail, when we look at the language used by his predecessors, strongly underlining the Tyrrhenians' identification with their piratical activities: λῃϊσταί / λῃσταί and the corresponding adjective λῃστρικός dominate in the Greek sources,[275] according to what looks like a quasi-formula, where λῃσταί is the epithet that specifically defines the Tyrrhenians and λῃστρικός their ship, seemingly confirming the argument of a predominantly un-Hellenic element that is only distinguished for its illicit activities. But even amongst his Roman contemporaries and successors, Ovid appears to be alone (with the exception of Propertius' brief description) in avoiding the characterisation of the Tyrrhenians as pirates.[276] When we look at both Hyginus and Seneca, the terminology appears unambiguous in portraying a band of robbers (cf. Sen. *Oedip*. 449 *Tyrrhena … manus*, 461 *praedonibus*), whose primary activity is piracy (cf. Hyg. *Fab*. 134 *Tyrrheni … cum piraticam facerent*, Sen. *Oedip.* 459 *pirata*), which they pursue with greed and violence.[277] Instead, Ovid presents his characters as sailors willing to carry out criminal ventures, never hinting at their activities as habitually nefarious.[278]

The only account that appears to resemble Ovid's is Hyginus' *Poet. astr*., according to which some Tyrrhenian sailors found Dionysus and his companions and promised them to bring them back to Naxos but prompted by their greed decided to steer away from the island. This version presents conspicuous parallels with the text of the *Metamorphoses*, where the Tyrrhenians are called *nautae* (*Met.* 3.632) and act under the impulse of greed (*Met.* 3.620 *praedae tam caeca cupido est*)[279]—the use of *praeda*

[275] Cf. *Hymn. Hom. Bacch.* 6-8, Eur. *Cyc.* 11-12, Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.5.3 and Philostr. *Im.* 19.1.
[276] He uses *Tyrrhena … corpora* at *Met.* 4.23-4, *Maeonios … nautas* at *Met.* 4.423 (*nautae* appears also in Propertius 3.17.25), *Tyrrhenaque monstra* at *Fast.* 3.723.
[277] It is worth remembering that, according to Philochorus, the term τύραννος is derived from the Tyrrhenians, who were βιαίων καὶ λῃστῶν, violent and piratical (cf. Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 100).
[278] Cf. James 1975, 24 and Barchiesi & Rosati 2007, 224.
[279] This is a philosophical phrasing, for which cf. Lucr. 3.59 *honorum caeca cupido*.

in both cases is noticeable, which immediately places their motivation pretty close to *praedones*–, favouring the derivation from a common source. Further proof seems to be the mention of the names of the Tyrrhenians: in the *Metamorphoses* Acoetes states that of the twenty members of his crew he was the only survivor, of whom Ovid mentions eleven names corresponding almost identically to Hyginus' list,[280] although he rejects the form of the catalogue, and reinforces the expressive character of certain names.[281]

While the portrayal of the Tyrrhenians as pirates is only alluded to rather than explicitly asserted, they have a characteristic that appears to be distinctive, namely their *impietas*: the crew is an *impia turba* (*Met.* 3.629 and cf. *Met.* 3.656 *manus impia*), who deceive the young boy[282] and scorns Acoetes' attempt to stop them, mocking his tears for the offence.[283] Impiety appears thus to be the reason behind their conduct, and amongst them Lycabas stands out for his reckless audacity: he corresponds to the captain who refuses to recognise Dionysus' divinity in the Homeric hymn, but his character is given a distinctive prominence specifically as antithetical to Acoetes. His most intriguing feature is that he was exiled from Etruria on account of a dreadful slaughter, which closely recalls Vergil's Mezentius, another exile from the Etruscan Agylla, also infamous for his cruelty and impiety.[284] On the contrary, on account of his *pietas,* Acoetes' recognition of the god is indeed immediate and needs no miracle: though he professes to be uncertain about which god he is, he knows in his heart that before him is a divine being, and promptly pleads with him to protect and forgive them.[285] And even when his crew rebukes him and rejects his prayers, he nonetheless reasserts his intention not to let any sacrilege profane the ship. Ovid thus appears to stay true to the core meaning of the myth: the

[280] The only differences are Aethalides and Melas as opposed to Aethalion and Melanthus, and Simon in place of Proreus (if not capitalised, *proreus* could simply refer to the lookout Melanthus). Hyginus speaks of twelve people, but only mentions eleven.
[281] See Barchiesi & Rosati 2007, 227. The fact that none of the names presents Etruscan echoes favours an originally Greek source for the catalogue, in addition to the presence of the name *Libys* (Ov. *Met.* 3.617), literally meaning 'Libyan', which substantiate the argument that under the generic label 'Tyrrhenians' the Greeks identified individuals belonging to different ethnicities regarded as un-Hellenic.
[282] Cf. Ov. *Met.* 3.638. Typical of those who conduct their lives on the sea (cf. Palinurus in Verg. *Aen.* 6.351 *maria aspera iuro*). In this instance though it also alludes to the sea as potentially treacherous and untrustworthy.
[283] Cf. Ov. *Met.* 3.645-6, 656-7.
[284] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.483-4.
[285] Cf. Ov. *Met.* 3.609-14. In the Homeric hymn the helmsman only recognises Dionysus' divinity after this miracle, and not by his godly appearance. The elliptical description of the god's appearance adds to the mystery of Acoetes' identity (cf. Barchiesi & Rosati 2007, 227).

Tyrrhenians are punished for their failure to recognise the god, whereas the helmsman is rewarded for his *pietas*.

The structure of this episode appears to conform to the Vergilian representation of the Etruscan people in the *Aeneid*: setting aside the detail of their piratical activities, Ovid prefers to draw a most significant distinction on the grounds of the opposition between *pietas* and *impietas*, and to create two antithetical characters that embody each respectively. In the case of Vergil, this distinction clearly favours the larger part of the Etruscans, portraying them as prompted by a rightful fury[286] against a savage tyrant, whose epithet is accordingly *contemptor divum/deum* (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.648, 8.7). In contrast, in Ovid the pious Acoetes appears to be alone in his devotion, and diametrically opposed to the remaining Tyrrhenians: as James notices, 'Ovid is at pains to implicate the whole crew by the immorality of their words and deeds.'[287] As a matter of fact, Ovid's is the longest and most detailed account of the myth, and as such we can assume a certain degree of freedom in the re-elaboration of his material, especially in this case, where no other source presents a single antagonist to the helmsman, but rather offers a broader opposition between the helmsman and the crew. His emphasis on Lycabas, with his Vergilian reminiscences, will hardly be accidental, and it appears to attempt to reverse the dynamics at play in the *Aeneid*: if in Vergil's epic we infer that most Etruscans are pious, as opposed to the *contemptor divum* Mezentius, here the Tyrrhenians are an *impia turba* that counters the pious Acoetes. In this passage is once again attested the inescapable twofold representation of the Etruscan people as exemplars of religiosity, but also capable of atrocious deeds, that is seemingly recurrent in the collective memory of the Romans.

Furthermore, Lydia was traditionally associated not only with the Etruscan people, but also with Dionysus and his cults.[288] It is interesting here to allude briefly to the episode of the Bacchanalian affair of 186 BC, which opens a window on the established relationship between Etruria and the introduction of the cults of Bacchus in Rome. Livy explains that a Greek of obscure origins, a

[286] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.494 *ergo omnis furiis surrexit Etruria iustis*, where the word order implicates the whole of Etruria in the outrage.
[287] James 1975, 24.
[288] Cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 13-14, 55, 154, Verg. *Georg.* 4.380 and Ov. *Met.* 460-4. At *Met.* 4.423 the pirates are also called *Maeonios … nautas*.

sacrificulus et vates (Liv. 39.8.3), first came to Etruria and initiated both men and women, youth and elderly people alike, to the rituals in honour of Bacchus, at which participants enjoyed the pleasures of wine and feasts in utter disdain for modesty, so that *corruptelae primum omnis generis fieri coeptae, cum ad id quisque quo natura pronioris libidinis esset paratam voluptatem haberet* (Liv. 39.8.6). Livy emphasises the promiscuous behaviour of all attendees, mostly women, the source of the mischief, joined by *simillimi feminis mares, stuprati et constupratores fanatici, vigiliis vino strepitibus clamoribusque nocturnis attoniti* (Liv. 39.15.9; cf. Liv. 39.16.1), adding that there were allegations of both heterosexual and homosexual licence, but more abuse of young men, who were initiated before their twenties and were brutally raped to the blare of cymbals and the beating of the drums (cf. Liv. 39.10.6-8).[289]

Indeed, this aspect of lust and brutality is present in some versions of the Dionysiac episode. Already in the Homeric hymn there are hints of the characterisation of Dionysus as object of τρυφή in his description as a handsome youth, which is echoed in Ovid's portrayal, and in Nonnus, where it is the god himself who lures the pirates disguised as a 'desirable boy'.[290] In later versions, the motif of the abduction prompted by the intent to exert a form of violence associated with τρυφή is fully matured. In Hyginus' *Fabulae* the pirates' intention is not to sell the boy, but explicitly to rape him (cf. Hyg. *Fab.* 134 *atque vellent ob formam constuprare*), and Servius Danielis appears to be also aware of this tradition, as he writes *alii dicunt, quod stuprum Libero patri inferre temptaverint ac propterea hoc pertulerint* (Serv. *ad Aen.* 1.67). This version, according to James, must have been present in Hyginus' source and thus in Ovid's as well.[291]

All of these Bacchanalian perversions are said to have taken place in Etruria, and from there to have spread like the contagion of a pestilence (cf. Liv. 39.9.1). Certainly the dislocation of population caused by the Hannibalic war had resulted in a large-scale influx of immigrants from southern Italy, where the Dionysiac worship is attested in Locri and Tarentum,[292] and Etruria, where the cult

[289] On the subject of the *Bacchanalia* see the exhaustive Pailler 1988, on Livy's account of the Bacchanalian affair see Van Son 1960. As observed by the scholar, 'l'essence de l'âme étrusque et le genre de vie de ce peuple, en quelque sorte, se confondraient avec de perpétuelles Bacchanales' (Pailler 1988, 490).
[290] Cf. *Hymn. Hom. Bacch.* 4-6, Ov. *Met.* 3.607 and Nonnus 45.120-2.
[291] Cf. James 1975, 24-5. In addition, *praeda* as associated to rape occurs in Ov. *Ars am.* 1.114, *Met.* 2.873 and Petron. *Sat.* 80.1.
[292] Cf. Frank 1927.

appears to be established in cities like Bolsena.[293] However, the Bacchanalian affair is regarded as a conspiracy of foreign influence determined to undermine the fabric of the state, and it is not surprising to see how it is associated in the sources with Etruria, whose degeneracy constituted a threat to the social conventions of Rome and her citizens. The descriptions of the rites in Livy are extremely close to those of the Etruscans in Theopompus and Posidonius, suggesting a common origin in the biased representation of Near-Eastern peoples by Greek historiographers and ethnographers.

[293] Cf. the inscription of Laris Pulenas, a priest of Bacchus, dated around 200 BC, and the discovery of a subterranean Bacchic place of assemblage at Volsinii from the late III century BC.

CONCLUSIONS

If the themes of τρυφή, as examined in the previous chapter, and piracy are both associated in Greek sources with the decline of Etruscan power in Italy, they do not immediately present themselves as interdependent, but can to a certain extent be regarded as alternative: in the words of Musti, 'alternativi per contesto ambientale e referente socioeconomico, perché la pirateria riguarda il mare e la τρυφή appare invece collegata con la ricchezza delle terre possedute; ma anche alternative per la diversità della dinamica e causalità storica connessa: per Strabone, 5.2.2, la pirateria è l'effetto dell'impoverimento conseguente alla crisi politica e alla perdita di terre fertili, mentre la τρυφή appare altrove sia come effetto della ricchezza agraria, sia però anche come causa della perdita di questa ricchezza.'[294]

The development of the mythological episode of Dionysus and the Tyrrhenian pirates in the Aegean around the VI century BC corresponds to a phase in which the so-called Τυρρηνοί are not yet identified with the Etruscans, but designate more broadly an entity belonging to an un- or pre-Hellenic stratum. The determination that this ethnic group does not belong to the civilised Hellenic world results in the inevitable assumption that it must represent an entity operating at the fringes of society, and in the Aegean context this conclusion leads to the identification of the Tyrrhenians with pirates. The subsequent conflation of western and eastern Tyrrhenians thus occurs based on the premise that both ethnic groups traditionally present characteristics that set them distinctively apart from Hellenic culture, a certain savagery and brutality that the Greeks often associate generically with barbaric populations from the Near-East.

In Latin literature, where the episode is unequivocally associated with the Etruscans, we find both an explicit emphasis on piracy as a traditional national activity, in all likelihood following Greek sources (cf. Hyginus and Seneca), but also, and more interestingly, an intense focus by Ovid on the dichotomy *pietas*/*impietas*, structured in a way that closely resembles the dynamic at play in the *Aeneid*.

[294] Musti 1989, 24. This is what appears to set Etruscan decline narratives apart from Roman *exempla*: if Roman authors tend to emphasise the wealth brought about by the conquest of Carthage or Asia as a source of corruption of Rome's strict ancient *mores*, τρυφή/*luxuria* does not seem to be regarded explicitly as a cause of decadence, despite an unquestioned moral judgement.

The negative portrayal of the crew, implicated in the blasphemous behaviour of their captain, responds broadly to the negative portrayal of the Etruscans in a large portion of Greek and Roman historiographical literature, and points to the existence of a specific iconography associated with a character of almost inhuman savagery, who commits atrocious deeds and is expelled from his community. On this type is modelled the Vergilian Mezentius, who is furthermore accused of performing a variety of torture that was traditionally ascribed to the Tyrrhenian pirates, and which we incidentally do not find mentioned in the *Metamorphoses*, who has his counterpart not only in the *pius Aeneas* but also in the pious Tarchon, and the Ovidian Lycabas, who has his counterpart in Acoetes. Both cases appear to point to the re-elaboration of an established twofold conventional image of the Etruscans that is developed by Roman authors: the more comprehensive portrayal of the Etruscan supremacy as implemented *terra marique*, alongside the acknowledgement of the function of Etruscan forms and rituals of power, of war, of conquest and of dominion in Roman society, create a more positive image, one in which religion is paramount and pre-eminent with respect to the lingering negative stereotypes originated in Greek historiographical literature.

CHAPTER TWO

POWER DYNAMICS AND PRO-ROMAN NARRATIVES: SOME CASE STUDIES

2.1 MONARCHS AND TYRANTS

Before archaeological evidence definitively revealed the extent of the impact the Etruscans had on the growth and flourishing of Rome, scholars had long debated about the debt the Romans owed to their Tyrrhenian kings. A strain of scholarship emerged very critical of the view projected by the early annalists concerning the Etruscan dominion over Rome and its cultural and societal reverberations:[295] Bloch acutely noticed a tendency in Latin historiography to diminish the accomplishments and the contributions of foreign peoples by means of a process of appropriation of their traditions, which, he argues, is especially true in the case of the Etruscans. He noticed that, in the standard tradition of early Roman history, alongside the distortion caused by prominent powerful families in order to emphasise their own glory, there operated a stronger and more constant cause of distortion, namely Roman national consciousness.[296] More specifically, as introduced earlier, Musti noticed a tendency to predate to the age of Romulus figures and events clearly belonging to the period of the Tarquins with the intent to represent the Etruscans in an auxiliary and subordinated role, corresponding to a broader 'filosabinismo'. It is essential to be aware of these tendencies in Roman historiography, which remain predominant throughout the centuries.

[295] See Rawson 1976 for an overview.
[296] Cf. Bloch 1967.

i. TARQUINIUS SUPERBUS AND SEXTUS TARQUINIUS: NEGATIVE DISTORTION IN THE NARRATIVE OF THE FALL OF THE KINGS

The figure of Tarquinius Superbus is established in the traditional narrative of the overthrowing of the kings as an outright villain. The undisputable distortion undergone by the character serves to create a momentous and dramatic (and patently fictitious) rationale for the birth of the republic: the Romans, tired of the yoke imposed upon them by the tyrannical and despotic Tarquinius and triggered by the offence suffered at the hands of his equally contemptuous son, take up arms and expel the king and his family. The whole episode is in Ogilvie's words 'pure melodrama',[297] and its credentials have been variously challenged by scholars, who have repeatedly pointed out the likeliness of an oral transmission.[298] Tarquinius thus becomes the tyrant *par excellence*, who bears in his own name the infamy of his character, often associated with the symbols of regal power, the fasces and axes. In Propertius (cf. Prop. 3.11.47), what help is it now, asks the poet, that the Romans have broken the axes of the tyrant Tarquinius, the one whose very name is synonymous with *superbia*, whose life granted him such an odious epithet, if they are bound to be subjected to a woman, the queen Cleopatra?[299] The two monarchs are somehow equated, not only in terms of the threat they posed to the sovereignty of the city, but also as abominable individuals, unworthy of the dignity of Rome. By choosing to associate Cleopatra with Tarquinius, Propertius, we might argue, is transferring the accusations addressed to the queen to the Etruscan king: Cleopatra and her people are lascivious, treacherous and effeminate (cf. Prop. 3.11.30-3, 45), just as the Etruscans, as examined in the previous section, are often condemned in similar terms for their debauched and depraved lifestyle. Propertius is not explicitly ascribing these shameful attributes to Tarquinius, yet the readers

[297] Ogilvie 1976, 79.
[298] The chronology of the events in particular and the sudden character of the episode most likely conceal a much more gradual process (cf. Cornell 1995, 217).
[299] Even more shameful is, in the mentality of the ancients, being subjugated by a woman (cf. Prop. 4.6.57, Hor. *Epod.* 9.12, [Verg.] *In Maec.* 1.53-4 and Dio 50.24.7). Dionysius reports of Tarquinius' private assumption of the axes, which he distributed amongst his servants (cf. Dion. Hal. 4.38.2 and Liv. 1.49.1).

could draw such a connection quite easily. The most contemptible tropes traditionally ascribed to the Etruscan people overall appear to be concentrated on the despicable king.

However, it is another heinous woman who is traditionally regarded as Tarquinius' counterpart, namely his wife Tullia, Servius Tullius' daughter. In the *Fasti*, Tarquinius, outlined in book 2 as a treacherous and wicked man, unjust yet puissant in arms, who had taken and overturned cities, including Gabii, conquered by foul play (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.687-90),[300] is introduced in his early days in book 6 as an ambitious and unscrupulous young man who had long attempted to delegitimise Servius in the eyes of the people of Rome in order to take over from him as king; after his marriage to Tullia, which followed the assassination of their spouses (their respective brother and sister), he is further goaded by her into usurping the throne; Servius confronts him, but is killed by Tarquinius' men; the wicked Tullia, in a final act of depravity, drives her carriage over her father's corpse, after which dreadful crime the place was ever since known as *vicus sceleratus* (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.587-610).

Livy's narrative of the death of Servius, which is incontrovertibly behind Ovid's rendition, is quite lengthy and dramatic, a tragedy worthy of being immortalised next to that of the House of Atreus and Laius, whose protagonist is the anti-heroine Tullia.[301] Ovid's account, as so often happens, is much more condensed than Livy's, and focuses almost exclusively on the female protagonist, relegating Tarquinius to a passive role, his ambitions manipulated and directed by his wife. Tullia is *scelerata* (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.595 *regia res scelus est*, she tells him to urge him to action), keen to always undertake greater atrocities, and she exploits Tarquinius to obtain the power she wants for herself. Dreadful is the image of her driving down the street on her carriage erect and haughty, when she orders her servant to drive over her father's corpse.[302] In comparison, Tarquinius fades into the background and is relegated to an ancillary role, whose only action in this drama is condensed into

[300] Cf. Liv. 1.53 (cf. Ogilvie 1965, 186).
[301] See Liv. 1.46-8. According to Ogilvie (cf. Ogilvie 1965, 184-5), the tradition on this episode must have been established long before the first annalistic accounts, for it is presented with very rare differences. In comparison, Dionysius, who appears to follow the same source, presents a less compelling account (cf. Dion. Hal. 4.28ff.).
[302] The form *ibat* is usually reserved, in the *Fasti*, to the progression of deities or heroic figures (Omphale at 2.309, Liber at 3.737, Juno at 5.233 and Priapus at 6.341), enhancing the tragic nature of this icastic image (see Littlewood 2006, 181). As observed by Grottanelli (cf. Grottanelli 1987), Tullia's characterisation echoes a Claudia, sister of Claudius Pulcher who lost a fleet in the Second Punic War, who was tried for treason because, struggling to move through the throng with her carriage, she publicly expressed her wish that her brother might come back to life to lose another fleet, so as to reduce the crowd in the city (cf. Suet. *Tib.* 2.3).

one line, which focuses on the dramatization of his hideous gesture (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.600 *sceptra gener socero rapta Superbus habet*).[303] The traits that characterise Tarquinius as a *dramatis persona* can only be inferred, on account of the two being *pares* (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.589), from the extensive portrayal of Tullia.[304] The prominence accorded to her is consistent with a conspicuously recurrent pattern amongst the members of the Tarquins' dynasty, all of whom, as will be further discussed in the section dedicated to Servius Tullius, owe their ascent to the throne to powerful women. In the shaping of this tradition, we can certainly detect the exploitation of the trope of the Etruscan couple, construed here not in terms of reversed sexual roles, i.e. oversexualised women~effeminate men, but rather in terms of reversed power dynamics, i.e. influential and domineering women~submissive men.

The rigid *facies* of the established narrative, however, is also challenged to different degrees. In Horace's Pindaric *Carm.* 1.12,[305] the poet mentions within a list of heroes (for a certain lack of *exempla* perhaps) Romulus, Numa and, surprisingly enough, Tarquinius Superbus. Horace here introduces the image of the fasces to symbolise the regal power with which the king is invested, and to the fasces, almost accomplices to the king's offence, he transfers the adjective *superbus* in hypallage. The tyrant's presence in this abridged list of Rome's monarchs is undoubtedly puzzling. Certainly, Tarquinius can be understood as embodying the hatred which fuelled the cause of the republic, prompting the victory of the people of Rome against his proud *fasces*, thus epitomising the birth of the republic. The mention of Cato Uticensis, the hero who sacrificed himself for the good of the *res publica*, symbol of the resistance against the tyrannical power of Caesar, which immediately follows could be adduced as supporting evidence.[306] And yet, the tyrant also embodies a moment of extraordinary growth for the city: as with many other tyrants in history, Tarquinius Superbus pursued a policy of expansion, great urbanistic plans were implemented under his reign, and many small towns in the vicinity of the

[303] 'Ovid reduces Tarquinius' guilt to meek acquiescence' (Littlewood 2006, 178).
[304] Tullia finds another mention in Ovid's work: in his invective against Ibis, amongst the many curses against his enemy the poet wishes him to have a daughter like Tullia (cf. Ov. *Ib.* 363-4).
[305] Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 2.2.
[306] His presence is also quite bewildering, for it does not fit with the chronological sequence, and provoked the strong reaction of the scholars, who conjectured *catenis nobilitatum* (Hamacher) to agree with *Regulum* in the next line, or *anne Curti* (Bentley), referring to M. Curtius. Harrison's solution to read *catenis / nobile letum / Reguli* could represent a sound emendation of the text which would restore the chronological sequence (cf. Harrison 2014).

city fell under her control, giving Rome a significant advantage in the region. The remarkable hegemony to which Rome rose under him was a fact of such undeniable pride for the city that it might have prompted Horace to enlist Tarquinius Superbus as one of the Roman 'heroes'.[307] The poet's ambiguity leaves the reader with a certain sense of bewilderment and unease, forcing him to reconsider, if only for a moment, the orthodoxy of the accepted tradition.

Even more disorienting is Vergil's re-elaboration of this theme. In his list of Roman kings upon whom Anchises and Aeneas gaze from the mound,[308] he generically refers to the *Tarquinios reges*. However, *superbus* does not identify here the last Tarquinius, but rather, in a shocking departure from tradition, the adjective is attributed to the founder of the republic Brutus (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 6.817-18).[309] 'Unparalleled, arresting, thought-provoking and peculiarly appropriate in a passage … where V. seems to accumulate historical oddities.'[310] Vergil's judgement is at the very least ambiguous, it expresses an ethical as well as semantic ambivalence, a conflation of admiration and reproach for the hero of the republic.[311] The reader's deep discomfort is further increased in reading Brutus' condemnation in conjunction with the following *laudum … immensa cupido* (Verg. *Aen.* 6.823). Certainly, the intransigence of Brutus' character, apparent in the sacrifice of his own children, might be grounds for an accusation of *superbia*,[312] which could then in turn be read as somewhat more neutral for it would stem from Brutus' adhesion to the highest values of the republic. However, the ambivalence created precisely by the proximity with the figure of Tarquinius, whose attribute of *superbia* unquestionably entails the most severe criticism, inevitably gives rise to a certain unease.

[307] Cf. Nisbet & Hubbard 1970, 156.
[308] On the parade of heroes in *Aeneid* 6 see O'Hara 1990, 164ff.
[309] This reading aroused perplexity already amongst ancient readers and commentators (cf. Don. and Serv. *ad Aen.* 6.817). Modern scholars also disagree, ascribing *superbus* to the Tarquins according to a historical context (Norden, Paratore-Canali, Calzecchi Onesti) or to Brutus according to the syntactical order (Conington-Nettleship, Goelzer-Bellessort, Mynors). However, the delayed *-que* tends to rarely occur in Vergil, and usually attached to *iam* or to avoid *-que* after a monosyllable preposition (cf. Horsfall 2013, 557).
[310] Horsfall 2013, 557. La Penna even refers to it as an ἀπροσδόκητον (cf. La Penna 2003, 232).
[311] Cf. Traina's two categories of *superbia*, that of the masters and that of the adversaries in war (cf. Traina 1988, 1073). I doubt that we can interpret *superbam* in a positive light as 'magnam et excelsam' (Forbiger 1873, 771), in view of the solemn and unequivocal *debellare superbos* at line 853, and I am equally sceptical that *immensus* suggests a positive reading in view of Verg. *Georg.* 1.29, 49, 2.54, 3.541, 4.957, *Aen.* 6.355f., 6.186, 7.377 (cf. La Penna 2003, 234).
[312] Dionysius (cf. Dion. Hal. 5.8.1) explicitly addresses the possibility that his Greek readers might find Brutus' actions σκληρὰ καὶ ἄπιστα.

The third and final element of the tricolon is *fascisque videre receptos* (Verg. *Aen.* 6.818): here the *fasces*, again the symbol of royal power, are immortalised in their movement towards Brutus, emphasising the transmission, and possibly the uninterrupted and often problematic legacy of the monarchical institutions. Alongside the *fasces* Vergil presents the cruel axes (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 6.819 *saevasque secures* in alliteration) to prepare for the tragic death of Brutus' children. The rods and the axes represent, in early Roman history, the power of the magistrate to inflict physical punishment,[313] later limited by the power of *provocatio*, thus the use of the adjective *saevus* sounds appropriate in the context of the execution of innocent young men. Yet again, the adjective was especially reminiscent of the cruelty of the tyrant, to whom the *secures* were once attributed, creating a complex narrative of the passage from monarchy to republic that is conscious of the complexities of every historical process.

I would agree with Traina's insightful analysis, which emphasises reservations on the part of the poet not about the history of Rome in general, but rather about the motivations of a behaviour prompted by disparate urges, both altruistic (patriotism) and individualistic (ambition), which seemed to recur in Decimus Brutus.[314] This episode of Rome's past is, I believe, to be appreciated in the problematical web of political implications of the time, mainly the assassination of the 'tyrant', Caesar, at the hands of another Brutus, eventually avenged by the *princeps* in the midst of a bloody civil war. The pain, the suffering, the deaths, the inevitable price of the revolution, are accounted by Vergil and his sensitivity towards those who are caught in the violence of the fight. In Vergil's portrayal the Tarquins and Brutus are ineluctably entwined in the history of Rome, and so are the symbols of the power that is transferred from the hands of the former to the latter. Their respective names occupy a line each, with the narrative proceeding in enjambment, placing the controversial *superbam* at the end of the line to emphasise its ambivalence.

As to Tarquinius Superbus' son, Sextus, he is regarded as the individual truly responsible for the crime which led to his family's expulsion from Rome, an episode which does not find much space in

[313] See Cornell 1995, 165-6.
[314] Cf. Traina 1988, 1073. See also Feeney 1986.

the poets of the Augustan age, except for Ovid, who appears to be fascinated by the dramatic potential of the story. The poet dedicates an extensive portion of the second book of the *Fasti* to the episode of the rape of Lucretia and the *Regifugium* (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.685-852).[315] The narrative, one of the longest in the *Fasti*, once again mainly follows the guidelines of Livy's account, which occupies the last chapters of book 1, condensing much of the action and focusing on the polarity between the heinous Sextus, who dominates the first section, and the virtuous Lucretia, dramatic protagonist of the epilogue of this ghastly affair.

First Sextus, true scion of his father, cunningly deceives and overpowers the Gabini by means of two stratagems: first he endures the pains of being beaten in order to convince the people of Gabii that he has fallen out with his father (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 691-700);[316] once he has established their trust, he sends a friend to inquire from his father how to destroy the city, to which question the king answers by mowing down the tallest lilies; acknowledging his father's message, Sextus proceeds to execute the leading men of Gabii (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.701-10).[317] Sextus' crime appears even more dreadful in the light of the poet's elegiac characterisation of the Gabini, whose delicacy and frailty are visually epitomised in the image of the lilies, which replace the traditional poppies,[318] and reiterated in their empathetic reaction to Sextus' circumstances. The juxtaposition of the *callidus* Sextus and the *ignari* citizens matches the contrast *hostis*~*hospes* between Sextus and Lucretia a few lines later (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.789-90), which substantially conforms to the treacherousness and deceitfulness traditionally associated with the Etruscan people, often portrayed as cowardly and lacking manly vigour.[319]

This episode mainly serves as a preamble introducing the character of Sextus, highlighting his wickedness and treacherousness, and preparing the reader for the pivotal narrative of the rape of

[315] For the analysis of this passage I refer to Robinson 2011.
[316] The episode is a direct parallel of the episode of Zopyras and the siege of Babylon at Hdt. 3.151-8 (cf. also Liv. 1.53.4-54.4, Dion. Hal. 4.55, Zonar. 7.10, Frontin. *Str.* 3.3.3 and Polyaenus 8.6). In Livy's narrative the detail of the beating is missing. Nevertheless Ovid, drawing from the historian, makes sure to employ the adjective *crudelis* (Ov. *Fast.* 2.695), to conjure up Liv. 1.53.8. Very dramatic is the detail of Sextus alone at night, unarmed, *in medios hostes* (Ov. *Fast.* 2.692), quite different from Liv. 1.53.5 *transfugit Gabios*. The passage is reminiscent of Sinon and the Trojans at Verg. *Aen.* 2.57-194.
[317] Again, the episode is a direct parallel of the episode of Thrasybulus and Periander at Hdt. 5.92 (cf. also Arist. *Pol.* 3.1284a26-37, 5.1311a20-2).
[318] See Heinze 1919, 45-7. For the significance of the lilies, cf. Robinson 2011, 449ff.
[319] Cf. pp. 48ff. for Tarchon's rebuke to his men and pp. 107ff. for the treacherous behaviour of the Veientines.

Lucretia, where the depravity of Sextus reaches its climax. Ovid skilfully delays the encounter by setting the context (lines 721-60): one night, during the siege of Ardea, the men find themselves wondering about the loyalty of their wives while they are away at camp, each praising his spouse, until Collatinus suggests that they go back to Rome and Collatia to see with their own eyes; while Sextus' wife is found in the midst of a party, Lucretia, Collatinus' wife, is working at her wool, and her beauty and virtue shine so bright that the son of the tyrant cannot but become infatuated with her. At this point, there appears to be a movement from the elegiac tone that permeates the description of Lucretia to an epic and strongly martial timbre for the narrative of Sextus' ferocious passion.[320]

In the following passage we can distinguish two sections, dedicated to the erotic fury that takes over the Tarquin (lines 761-83) and to the enactment of his horrific resolution (lines 783-812).[321] By means of a succession of short clauses, Ovid evokes the wild passion arising in Sextus and the crazed desire mounting to the point of clouding his senses: the young man is described as catching fire and fury, and raving entranced by blind love, almost overpowered and incapacitated (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.761-70).[322] After returning to the camp, the distance does not diminish his rapture, but rather causes Sextus to grow even more enamoured of her,[323] as we see through his eyes her snowy hue, her blonde hair, her grace, her voice, and her incorruptibility.[324] The fact that the Tarquin is captivated by Lucretia's virtue is an important detail, which fits to perfection with his wicked nature: the scion of the tyrant is so depraved that his desire to have the virtuous woman is not at all redeeming. On the contrary, it stems from his perverse desire to destroy the quality that makes her his antithesis. The language embodies the fundamental dissonance at play in this episode, which sees Tarquinius in his erotic pursuit as 'an epic figure who as a lover fails to adapt to the elegiac world.'[325] Ovid thus creates

[320] See Robinson 2011, 480.
[321] Ovid is here dramatically expanding on Livy's account (cf. Liv. 1.57.10).
[322] Some scholars have been suspicious of the repetition *furiales … furit*, and suggested to replace it with either *ruit* (Heinsius) or *perit* (Hornstein). However, the repetition seems to me appropriate to intensify the vehemence of Sextus' feelings (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 4.65-9).
[323] Cf. Verg. *Aen*. 4.83.
[324] Cf. Medea and Jason in Ap. Rhod. 3.453-5.
[325] Robinson 2011, 480.

a narrative that is essentially elegiac in content, the infatuation for a *puella*, whose language is by and large appropriate for a lover consumed by desire, yet tainted by the nature of the pursuer himself: the use of words such as *furiales … ignes*, *raptus*, *attonitos*[326] all suggest the intensity of Sextus' infatuation, indicating, as observed repeatedly by Robinson, that the traditional *militia amoris* is embarked on in a literal way. The final speech that the Tarquin addresses to himself is strongly reminiscent of the words of a commander to his men to urge them to fight[327], and as much as the notion of *fortis fortuna adiuwat* is recurrent in erotic poetry,[328] the repetition in tricolon of *audeo* appears to hint at its negative aspects (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.781-3). In this climax of frenzied passion, Sextus burns, but the fire that goads him is that of an unrighteous love (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.779), hence the expedients devised to pursue it cannot be but violence and guile:[329] the conquest of Lucretia is going to be undertaken just as he undertook the conquest of Gabii, promptly and with violence.

As in the case of Gabii, Collatia opens its gate to Sextus–note the pathetic personification at line 785–and so does the unsuspecting Lucretia: her assailant, immediately identified in incipit as *hostis*,[330] reveals his deceitful nature, with the alliteration *hostis ut hospes* reinforcing the fallacy of the victim's judgement, called *inscia* and *infelix* only a couple of lines later, and the unscrupulous nature of the aggressor, whose steps we are following as he enters the house by the slow, cadenced rhythm of the closing spondees. The narrative is further delayed by the insertion of the author's comment (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.789),[331] and the addition of a series of details to slow the pace and increase the dramatic tension up to the moment when, in the middle of the night, he resolves to take action: the action proceeds rapid and swift, and at once Sextus draws his sword and enters Lucretia's room,[332]

[326] The adjective generally refers to being struck by fear (cf. Ov. *Met.* 3.40, 4.802), but can be found in erotic contexts (cf. Ov. *Her.* 16.135-6, *Ars am.* 2.296, *Met.* 10.154).
[327] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.280-4, where Turnus is prompting the Rutulians to be bold keeping in mind their loved ones and especially their wives; Sextus' intent is instead of violating another man's wife.
[328] Cf. Ter. *Phorm.* 203 and also Tib. 1.2.15-16 and Ov. *Ars am.* 1.608, *Met.* 10.586.
[329] *Dolumque* is the reading of UZς, while Aς has *metumque*. Although *vimque metumque* is often evocative of tyrannical behaviour (cf. e.g. Cic. *Verr.* 2.2.14, 150, 3.55) and would therefore be perfectly suitable in this context, I would argue that the *lectio* of UZς *dolumque*, suggesting that Sextus is not only a violent man, but also deceitful, represents a more incisive *variatio* on the traditional dyad.
[330] Cf. Liv. 1.58.8.
[331] Cf. the insertions in Verg. *Aen.* 4.65, 412, increasing the dramatic nature of Dido's fate.
[332] As observed by Robinson, Ovid, as many other authors (cf. Liv. 1.58.2, Dion. Hal. 4.64.65, Diod. Sic. 10.20.2 and Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.646), appears to see this detail as epitomising the violation of the female sphere by the male, representing to some degree the realms of elegy and epic.

threatening her with death–see the emphasis on *ferrum* at line 795. It is significant that only now does the young Tarquinius reveal his name, for Ovid has deliberately delayed even this seemingly lesser detail, which announced now acquires a whole new terrible and climactic meaning.[333]

The dynamic between the two characters is visualised in terms of man v. woman, elegy v. epic, power v. silence, so that the incapacity of Lucretia to utter words becomes the symbol of the female victim overpowered by the male aggressor, but also, on a political level, the silencing (which is the negation of *libertas*) carried out by force by the tyrannical power.[334] This notion is reinforced by the epic simile of the wolf and the lamb.[335] The most interesting psychological feature in Ovid's account though is Sextus' intention: in his perverse passion, perfectly encapsulated in the oxymoronic *iunctura amans hostis* (Ov. *Fast.* 2.805), he does not want to merely force himself upon her, but rather see her compromising her virtue and surrendering to him of her own volition,[336] which explains his recourse to the traditional prayers and threats, but also to bribes,[337] none of them capable of moving Lucretia–Ovid is here re-elaborating Livy's *obstinatam*[338] by repeating, in the same order in the pentameter, the inefficacious devices listed in the previous hexameter. The ultimate stratagem to which Sextus resorts, ignoble and despicable, is the threat to kill her and a slave, pretending he caught them in adultery and was vindicating the honour of his kinsman Collatinus. Overcome by the fear of infamy, which would taint her honour, she succumbs: Ovid provides here the climax of this erotic epic, where the victim Lucretia, explicitly called *puella*, a word hardly suitable for the *matrona* she was, and which heightens the sense of her youth and innocence, is declared defeated as an enemy would be–see the polyptoton *victa ... victor ... victoria* at lines 810-11.[339]

[333] Frazer punctuated *'natus' ait 'regis ...*', which would identify Sextus as the son of the king and would be consistent with Dion. Hal. 4.65.2 and Diod. Sic. 10.20.2, where Sextus uses his regal status to appeal to Lucretia. However, it is more incisive to read only *Tarquiniusque loquor* as part of the direct speech (see Robinson's discussion).
[334] See Robinson 2011, 490-1.
[335] Cf. *Il.* 16.351-7, 22.261-7 and Verg. *Aen.* 9.565-6. However, the simile is mainly used by Ovid in erotic contexts (cf. *Ars am.* 1.118, *Met.* 1.505, 5.626-7).
[336] See a discussion on the details of this passage in Livy in Langlands 2006, 88.
[337] The detail of the *pretium* is absent in Livy (cf. Liv. 1.58.3) and is more in tune with the elegiac world (cf. *Ars am.* 1.443-54).
[338] Cf. Liv. 1.58.4-5.
[339] Military language, as previously mentioned, is traditional in elegiac contexts–as Robinson notes 'various characters cry *vicimus* at their moment of erotic triumph throughout the *Metamorphoses* (cf. Tereus at 6.513,

The analysis of this passage sheds some light on the representation not only of the protagonist of this affair, but on the whole Tarquin family. Ovid never mentions Sextus by name, always referring to him in terms of his relationships with the royal dynasty (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2. 708 *filius*, 725 *Tarquinius iuvenis*, 726 *rege creatus*, 761 *iuvenis ... regius*, 796 *Tarquinius*, 825 *Tarquinio*, 843 *stirpe*, 851 *prole*), and only identifies him as the youngest of the three sons of Tarquinius (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.691).[340] Very little interest is found in the glorious epilogue of this episode, to which only a few lines are dedicated,[341] and this mainly because, as mentioned above, the poet is intrigued by the emotional implications, by the potential of Lucretia as a female erotic figure, and by the literary experiment which sees the epic character apparently defeating his elegiac opponent, only to be defeated himself. It is a complex web of intratextual exchanges and metaliterary divertissement, available to Ovid in part precisely because the episode clearly presented the appearance of a myth rather than a historical event, where Sextus plays the part of a man of unthinkable wickedness, to the point that he can be seen as a villain plain and simple, without the nuances of a historical figure. Furthermore, the re-elaboration of not one but two episodes from Greek history within this narrative should make the readers suspicious, alongside the acknowledgement that this episode, as abominable as it might have been, could hardly have been the trigger for the overthrow of the monarchy in Rome, as appears to be confirmed by the fact that an extremely similar episode is the cause of the overthrow of the Second Decemvirate. The figures of the Tarquins appear to be thus distorted to a significant degree in the sources, and their Etruscan origin pushed in the background as they came to represent the embodiment of tyrannical power.

That the Roman version might not be the only version of this episode can be proposed on the basis of three Etruscan urns from the I century BC, Volterra 499, Florence 5769 and Volterra 346, all bearing similar images.[342] The scene they share can be divided into three parts: in the centre are

Salmacis at 4.536 and Myrrha's nurse at 10.443)' (Robinson 2011, 494), yet, given the martial characterisation of Sextus, it acquires a strongly aggressive tone.

[340] In Polyaenus Sextus is the youngest son (cf. *Str.* 8.6.1), whereas in Cicero he is the elder (cf. Cic. *Rep.* 2.46 and *Leg.* 2.10), and in Dionysius the eldest (cf. Dion. Hal. 4.55.1 and also 4.63.1, 64.2, 65.2).

[341] See Lee 1953, 107.

[342] For a detailed discussion see Small 1976.

three men, the one on the left nude, while the two on the right are draped and bearded; to the left is a fully draped woman sitting on a stool in an attitude of sorrow, a nude man fleeing, and a semi-draped winged female figure standing between him and the central group; to the right a woman is lying on a couch.[343] Körte suggested, amidst several doubts, that the urns portray a scene from Euripides' lost tragedy *Melanippe Desmotis*, preserved by Hyginus,[344] but Small points out that his interpretation misidentifies, or fails to provide a satisfying explanation for certain figures, in turn arguing that the three urns rather represent the death of Lucretia. The scene is indeed generally compatible with Livy's account: the nude male figure on the left is Sextus Tarquinius fleeing, in the centre Lucretius restrained by the young Collatinus and Brutus, and to the right is the dead Lucretia; the matron on the left can easily be read as Lucretia's mother, and the little boy in Volterra 499 might be her child; the winged figure is to be interpreted as Venus. The artist decided to illustrate a moment of highest suspense, Sextus barely escaping while Lucretius is stopped merely seconds before exacting his vengeance.

Given that it would appear surprising to see such an anti-Etruscan subject depicted on an Etruscan urn, Small maintains that in all likelihood this is in reality a pro-Etruscan version of the story.[345] Most of the characters involved, Small reminds the reader, are in fact not Roman, but Etruscan, and more specifically members of the Tarquin family, namely Sextus, Collatinus and Brutus, hence the existence of an Etruscan version of the episode in question is highly likely. Furthermore, it needs to be observed that the theme of the three urns belongs to the group of urns representing interrupted acts of revenge,[346] the language of which implies that the pursued always

[343] The central figure has drawn his sword and raises it over his head, while the two men to his sides attempt to restrain him; in Volterra 499 and Florence 5769 the nude man fleeing wears a band girding his chest, while Florence 5769 and Volterra 346 clearly show that the woman is a *matrona*, and in Florence 5769 the winged female figure wears a necklace; the woman to the right–Florence 5769 is broken beyond this point– in Volterra 499 has fallen onto a sword and her clothes have fallen down to her hips, while behind her a female figure holds her hand and leans towards her, and below stands a nude little boy, while in Volterra 346 the woman is fully draped, the sword is not shown and two female figures stand behind her.

[344] See Brunn & Körte II, 233-5. Cf. Hyg. *Fab.* 186.

[345] The alternative explanations are (i) that a member of some Romanised Etruscan family might have wished to demonstrate his allegiance to Rome by choosing a strongly pro-Roman episode, or (ii) that on account of the tension between Etruscan cities, some Etruscans from Volterra might have looked favourably at this episode because it reflected poorly on Tarquinii.

[346] E.g. the recognition of Paris, popular subject on Volterran urns, or Telephus in the Greek camp.

escapes. Consequently, the Etruscan version might present different motivations and a different outcome by portraying a feud within the Tarquin family over a woman: Sextus is fleeing Lucretia's chamber with the help of Venus, while she, no emblem of virtue, kills herself, either because unsuccessful in her attempt to entrap him (like Phaedra or Stheneboea) or because abandoned (like Dido); Brutus and Collatinus, blaming, as customary in the ancient world, the woman, stop Lucretius from avenging his daughter's death. The presence of the *matrona* and the child, absent in the Roman accounts, might be further evidence of a non-Roman version of the events, distorted by Latin sources in order to create a strongly pro-Roman narrative.

ii. A DIFFERENT INSTANCE OF DISTORTION: SERVIUS TULLIUS, THE GOOD KING

The distortion operates also in another interesting direction, namely the characterisation of the king Servius Tullius.[347] Servius Tullius is unanimously regarded by the sources as the architect of Rome's social reforms at the core of the city's political and military growth, and consequently the details of his origins and his accession to the throne were substantially altered to fit a Romano-centric narrative. There are two main traditions regarding the origins of the king, a Latin and an Etruscan one. According to the Latin tradition, Servius Tullius was the son of a woman named Ocrisia, taken prisoner from the Latin town of Corniculum and sentenced to be a slave in the palace of the king Tarquinius Priscus and the queen Tanaquil.[348] As for the father, there is no consensus amongst the sources, which indicate (i) an unknown father (Liv. 4.3.12), (ii) a Tullius–either Servius (Liv. 1.39.5) or Spurius (Festus 182L and Zonar. 7.9.1)–leading man of Corniculum (cf. also Dion. Hal. 4.1.2, [Aur. Vict.] *De vir. ill.* 7.1), (iii) a client of Tarquinius Priscus (Cic. *Rep.* 2.37, Plut. *De fort. Rom.* 10), (iv) a divine figure (Dion. Hal. 4.2.1ff., Ov. *Fast.* 6.627ff., Plin. *HN* 36.204, Plut. *De fort. Rom.* 10, Arn. *Adv. nat.* 5.18). The fact that sources unanimously report that Servius Tullius was born from the slave

[347] I shall only discuss the Etruscan elements. For a detailed analysis of the sources cf. Thomsen 1980, 57-114.
[348] The forms *Ocresia* and *Oclisia* are also found, but otherwise the sources unanimously present *Ocrisia*. Cf. Liv. 4.3.12 and 1.39.5, where the woman, likely to avoid the offense of a slave-born king, was received by the queen as a free person; cf. also Dion. Hal. 4.1.2.

Ocrisia can certainly not be 'a piece of genuine history' that has been preserved, as Ogilvie suggested, but is rather clearly an attempt at an etymological rationalisation of his name.[349] According to this version, the child grew up in the royal palace, treated like a son by the royal couple; he participated in the wars alongside Tarquinius Priscus and was promoted to *magister equitum*, distinguishing himself to the point that he married the king's daughter and in his capacity as son-in-law took over the power after the death of Tarquinius under the prompting of queen Tanaquil.[350]

An irreconcilably different version seems to come from the Etruscans, seemingly portrayed in the frescoes of the François tomb at Vulci[351] and reported in the so-called Lyons speech that the emperor Claudius delivered in the senate in 48 AD, inscribed on a bronze tablet and placed at Lugdunum,[352] where he mentions a version of the tradition that he ascribes to the Etruscans (*si Tuscos* [*sequimur*]), according to which Servius was called Mastarna[353] and was a companion of Caeles Vibenna. The former piece of evidence, which appears to confirm Claudius' account, has been known since 1857, and represents an extremely complex document whose interpretation has not always been unanimous:[354] in the central T-shaped room of the tomb, on the right walls a, b and c, is depicted a series of scenes of assault with the characters organised in four pairs, preceded by a pair of men, which appears to represent a group of Vulcentane warriors, Caeles Vibenna, Mastarna, Rasce, Aulus Vibenna and *Marce Camitlnas*, taken prisoner by Cn. Tarquinius and his men and being rescued by *Larth Ulthes*. Alföldi, noticing the details of the mantles worn by two of the attacked, reminiscent of the *toga praetexta* and the *tunica laticlavia* of the Roman curule magistrates and senators respectively, which both originated in Etruria, argues that these individuals must be 'kings or dynasts',[355] and it is reasonable to assume the latter, since *Cneve Tarchunies*, on account of his beard, must be of mature age and thus the leader of the group. Since the origins of the attacked are explicitly given next to

[349] Ogilvie 1965, 159.
[350] Cf. Liv. 1.39-41 and Dion. Hal. 3.65.6, 72.7, 4.3-5.
[351] For a comprehensive survey see Messerschmidt 1930. Cf. also Gardthausen 1882, Körte 1897 and Alföldi 1963, 221ff.
[352] Cf. *CIL* 13.1668 1.16ff.
[353] On the debate about the identification of Servius Tullius with Mastarna see Thomsen 1980, 95-103.
[354] Some have even doubted that the three panels belonged together (see Gardthausen 1882, Münzer 1898 and Hoffmann 1948, 818).
[355] Alföldi 1963, 223.

their names,[356] by inference, the prisoners are to be regarded as Vulcentane, for their hometowns are not specified, and furthermore sources report the two Vibenna brothers as coming from Vulci.[357] These frescoes must be therefore read as the glorification of the deeds of a group of Vulcentane warriors, as appears to be confirmed by the fresco cycle on the opposite wall, portraying the slaughtering of Trojan prisoners, considered the ancestors of the people of Vulci. There is no need to assume that these frescoes reflect historical reality,[358] but the finding of the foot of a bucchero cup dated around 550 BC during the excavation of the temple of Portonaccio near Veii in 1939, whose inscription in Etruscan letters reads *mine muluv*[an]*ece avile vipiiennas*, 'A. Vibenna dedicated me', testifies to the existence of an Etruscan-speaking member of the Vibenna family during the VI century BC.[359]

The name *Servius Tullius* itself certainly does not come from *servus*–an argument that weakens the Latin tradition–and might even, if Schulze is correct, be Etruscan in origin.[360] As regards *Mastarna*, Cuno already in 1873 had advanced the hypothesis, generally accepted in scholarship,[361] that the name corresponded to the Latin *magister*, the official title by which Servius was known, which would suggest that he bore that title at some point in his life before becoming king. According to Dionysius, Tarquinius Priscus had served in a military capacity under the reign of Ancus Marcius, and so did Servius Tullius under Tarquinius Priscus against the Sabines,[362] in a position with similar functions to those of a *magister populi*.[363] Subsequently, his accession to the throne might have happened in conjunction with military action taken against the king that Servius had once served, rather than in

[356] The ending *-ach* suggests provenance, hence *Velznach* is almost unanimously regarded by scholars as referring to Volsinii, *Sveamach* to Sovana, and *Rumach* to Rome. As to the place of origin of *Venthi Cau*[ ] *plsachs* scholars generally agree on a *non licet*.
[357] Although some sources date Caeles to the reign of Romulus (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.46, Festus 38L and Dion. Hal. 2.36.2), Tacitus already presents the divergence in the ancient writers, indicating the possibility that Tarquinius Priscus rewarded him for his aid rather than *quis alius regum* (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.65), a statement that reads quite close to Claudius and to a passage in Festus' epitome of Verrius Flaccus, partially reading]*entes fratres Caeles et Vibenn*[|]*Tarquinium Romam secum max*[(Festus 355L).
[358] Cf. Messerschmidt 1930, 139 and Hoffmann 1948, 818.
[359] A similar instance of material evidence testifying to the existence of an individual bearing the same name of a figure recorded in legendary accounts can be observed in the case of Mezentius (see pp. 167ff.).
[360] Cf. Schulze 1904, 231, 246.
[361] *Contra* Alföldi 1963, 214.
[362] Cf. Dion. Hal. 3.39.2, 40.4, 41.4, 4.6.4 and 3.65.6, 4.3.2 respectively.
[363] Cf. De Francisci 1959, 647.

the peaceful and legitimate way described by the sources. Even the Latin tradition in fact appears to hint at some degree of irregularity in the succession process: it is repeatedly stated that the reign of Servius began without the authorisation of the people (Cic. *Rep.* 2.37 and Liv. 1.46.6) and under the appearance of a tyranny (Liv. 1.46.6 and Dion. Hal. 4.5.3), sometimes without ratification by the senate (Cic. 2.38 and Dion. Hal. 4.8.2), sometimes with it (Liv. 1.41.6). The substantial discrepancies in the respective accounts and the various fruitless attempts to legitimise the king are signs of a lack of a solid tradition behind the Latin version of the events, and only follow in the line of the annalistic sources, who would have felt almost compelled 'to conceal a conquest of Rome by the Etruscan condottiere Servius Tullius/Mastarna by fabricating a novel-like account to the effect that, thanks to his eminent virtues–and divine protection–the Latin Servius Tullius, born under the most humble conditions, succeeded in becoming king of Rome as Tarquinius Priscus' natural and, in his capacity of son-in-law, legitimate successor.'[364]

A similar process occurs with Porsenna of Clusium, whose name appears to correspond to the Etruscan title *purthne*.[365] The historical reality was probably that Porsenna was another condottiere known by his title, in the likeness of Servius/Mastarna, who attempted to occupy Rome and indeed succeeded.[366] However, sources tend to paint a different picture, of Porsenna as an ally of the Tarquins, who ventured to reinstate them on the throne in Rome, but was defeated by the heroic intervention of Horatius Cocles, and subsequently abandoned his endeavour and voluntarily retreated[367]. Both in Horace and Vergil this episode of the early history of Rome is indelibly fixed as symbolic of the many threats sustained by the *patria*, but also of the capacity of her citizens to react and sacrifice themselves in her name. Horace opens his *Epod.* 16 with a priamel featuring a list of the enemies of Rome, from the closest to the most distant, each characterised by an adjective or a periphrasis, and amongst these Porsenna, mentioned in the second line by the phrasing *minacis aut Etrusca Porsenae manus* (cf. Hor. *Epod.* 16.4), specifically as Etruscan–the poet is in part drawing a

[364] Thomsen 1980, 108.
[365] In Latin the name appears as *Porsena*, *Porsenna*, *Porsina* and *Porsinna*.
[366] Traces of this version can be detected in both Pliny and Tacitus (cf. Plin. *HN* 34.139 and Tac. *Hist.* 3.72.1).
[367] Cf. Liv. 2.9-13, Dion. Hal. 5.21-34, Plut. *Popl.* 16-19 and Flor. 1.4.1-2.

geographical map of the adversaries of Rome in order to enhance the destructiveness of her own civil strife – and threatening, which suggests the extent of the danger engendered by his assault.[368] In similar fashion, Vergil includes this episode within the ἔκφρασις of the shield of Aeneas, amongst the chapters of early Rome. Following the traditional account, Vergil shows Porsenna in the midst of the siege of Rome, pressing the Romans to reinstate the Tarquins, describing him in a language reminiscent of Horace, *indignans* and *minans* when confronted by the heroism and spirit of his enemies Horatius Cocles and Cloelia (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.646-51). Porsenna's story was once again substantially manipulated by ancient sources, especially the early annalists, to fit the notion that Rome, once the kings had been expelled, was not temporarily occupied by another Etruscan commander, but immediately rejected monarchy altogether by establishing the *res publica*.

Enough evidence has hopefully been provided to support the argument of a significant bias by most sources in the account of the accession and reign of Servius Tullius, the only legitimate version of the events until the time of emperor Claudius. Unsurprisingly, this version is widely adopted by Augustan authors. Horace only mentions Servius in passing in *Sat.* 1.6, but the context is significant: the poet is praising Maecenas' appreciation of a man's worth based on his *ingenuitas* rather than his pedigree, and briefly outlines some historical *exempla* of the inclusion and exclusion of individuals from the political life of Rome–the poet's tone sounds almost defensive, for the subject inevitably involves him and his merits as the son of a freedman. The passage is built on the ambiguity of its terminology, beginning with *generosus* at line 2, which can be read both as 'noble' and 'magnanimous', and proceeding with *ingenuus*, which bears the meaning of both 'free-born' and 'gentleman'. The first two characters who appear to be paired are Servius Tullius and Valerius Laevinus, descendant of Valerius Publicola, involved alongside Brutus in the expulsion of the kings (cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.6.9-17). Horace does not refer explicitly to Servius' servile origin, but describes his reign with the oxymoronic adjective *ignobilis*, 'humble', hinting at the traditional Roman account of the king's birth from the slave Ocrisia. As expected, no mention of Servius' Etruscan ancestry–although the association with

[368] For the acknowledgement of the danger posed by Porsenna cf. Sall. *Hist.* 1, fr. 11 Maurenbrecher, Liv. 2.9.5 and Dion. Hal. 5.34.5.

Maecenas, as touched upon in the introduction, might somehow imply it–which appears consistent with Horace's general lack of interest in Etruscan themes except in the praise of his patron's lineage. The phrasing *ante … regnum*, as Gowers noted, is ambiguous,[369] for it suggests either that with his accession to the throne Servius restored the privileges of the patricians by creating the class system, pointing out the outstanding hypocrisy, or that the king himself is the *exemplum* of the opportunity to rise to the highest office regardless of social extraction. The latter reading appears to me to be more consonant with the following *contra* at line 12, which introduces Laevinus: a man of such rank, belonging to the illustrious *gens Valeria*, was instead given a *nota*, a public mark of condemnation usually placed by the censors, and placed here by the people.[370] It is interesting how Horace chooses to present the two characters as diametrically opposed: a slave-born who became a great king on account of his moral qualities, and a descendant of the great Publicola whom even the plebs, generally accused of stupidity, obsequiousness and blindness, condemned as a degenerate. Servius is, as might be expected, the *exemplum* of the virtues of those who are not born in wealth, and in some respects, in this context, a double of Horace himself.

More complex is the treatment of Servius in Ovid's *Fasti*. The king is a prominent figure in the second half of the sixth book, associated with the festival of the *Matralia*, and the foundation of the adjoining temples in the area of the Forum Boarium of Mater Matuta and Fortuna, both of which the poet dates to June 11 (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.479-80, 569). The two deities presided over two distinct phases of a woman's life, namely the passage from virginity to fecundity, for which Fortuna was responsible, and the care of children entrusted to wet-nurses, of which Mater Matuta was in charge, and for this reason their respective temples formed a complex dedicated to the cycle of women's cult.[371] In the Forum Boarium archaeologists have found remains of an archaic temple (600-575 BC)

[369] See Gowers 2012, 223.

[370] Horace uses an epic phrase to emphasise Laevinus' prominent lineage (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 1.3.27, 2.18.37-8 and Verg. *Aen.* 2.5.62-3). According to Porphyrio (cf. Porphyr. *ad Sat.* 1.6.13-14), this Laevinus was a contemporary of Horace, who was halted from rising to the consulship on account of moral corruption, but this judgement appears to stem from the poetic text itself, thus it can be regarded as unreliable. For a detailed analysis see Sharland 2017, 87ff.

[371] The same pattern is identifiable in the Etruscan temples A and B of Pyrgi (the cult of Mater Matuta is attested also in Latin Satricum), dedicated to Leucothea, a κουροτρόφος deity often associated with Mater Matuta, and Hera/Uni/Astarte, goddess of fertility, often associated with the goddess of birth Ilythuia/Lucina,

beneath the church of Sant'Omobono, regarded as dedicated to Mater Matuta, seemingly damaged by Tiber floods in the late VI century and subsequently redecorated, adjoined by a second temple built much later, dedicated to Fortuna; in the republican period twin temples were erected above the original archaic temple, rotated on a different alignment in all likelihood to protect against floods; the temples were repeatedly restored afterwards. As Littlewood observes, in Ovid 'like their temples, the paired cult stories of Mater Matuta and Fortuna take the form of a diptych: two parallel, but contrasting, passages in which virtue is rewarded and retribution meted out and the two goddesses are seen to triumph in their particular spheres of influence: childcare and marriage.'[372]

In the section dedicated to Mater Matuta, Servius is merely mentioned as the founder of her temple, with the evocative image of his *sceptriferas … manus* (Ov. *Fast.* 6.480),[373] whereas he is the undisputed protagonist of the αἴτιον of the statue in the temple of Fortuna, associated in ancient Latium not only with women's transition into marriage, but also with 'king-making', in particular in the case of Servius Tullius.[374] In the ancient world, tyrants often claimed divine blessing to legitimise their power, surrounding their origins with legends of gods' intervention and mediation, strengthened by monumental plans of urban development to increase their prestige,[375] and so Servius appears to have done. These two elements can both be found in the Ovidian passage, celebrating not only the foundation of the temple of Fortuna, but also the divine tradition of the origins of the king.

This section carries on the theme of divine preservation of the Roman race.[376] The narrative focuses on the identity of a statue in the temple of Fortuna, undoubtedly identified by Ovid with

and Thesan/Eos, 'Dawn' (cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 1.28, *Nat. D.* 3.48 and Hyg. *Fab.* 2 and 223). It is worth noticing that the first appearance of Matuta is as goddess of the dawn (cf. Lucr. 5.656, 740).

[372] Littlewood 2006, 152.

[373] Cf. the Homeric σκηπτοῦχος.

[374] It is interesting to notice, with Grottanelli (cf. Grottanelli 1987, 105), that in Livy, where no mention occurs of the goddess Fortuna, the term *fortuna* is recurrent in the context of Servius' exceptional career.

[375] For an *exemplum* of divine blessing used to legitimise a tyrant's power, see Herodotus' account of the return of Pisistratus to Athens, where a woman disguised as the goddess Athena was driven into the city while heralds invited the Athenians to welcome Pisistratus, whom Athena herself honoured above all men and was bringing back to her own acropolis (cf. Hdt. 1.60). For Pisistratus' monumental plans of urban development, see Shapiro 1989, 5-8 and Angiolillo 1997.

[376] Illustrated in the episode of Carna and Proca, heir to the throne of Alba, and in that of the Gallic invasion, where Vesta miraculously prevents a siege of Rome (see Littlewood 2006, 172).

Servius (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.570-1),[377] and develops as an αἴτιον to expound the fact that the statue itself is covered by garments. Three possibilities are offered: (i) the goddess Fortuna, ashamed of her passion for the king, hides the effigy of his beloved to hide her guilt, (ii) the people, after the murder of the king, decided to conceal the statue of their leader, the sight of which was bringing unceasing sorrow, (iii) after Tullia's abominable actions she dared to touch the temple built by her father, and the statue in the likeness of Servius put its hands to its eyes and demanded that its face be covered lest it should see the abhorrent face of Tullia, after which Fortuna prescribed that the robes should not be touched, declaring that the day the statue will appear with its head unveiled will signal the relinquishment of *pudor*. There is no internal symmetry, for to each section is assigned a variable number of lines, ranging from 8 to 4 (the first two accounts are only briefly mentioned), to the 37 line-long passage devoted to the account of Tullia's execrable deeds examined above. Ovid appears here to create space within the narrative to accommodate a digression in the form of a condensed Roman tragedy in the manner of Euripides, with the *deus ex machina*, the goddess Fortuna, vouching to forever protect the statue of Servius from being unveiled and thus safeguard its *pudor*.

Overall the portrayal of Servius is that of an exceptional man, who is endowed with the favour of both a divine being and his people, yet his character is left to the reader to infer from the goddess' extraordinary passion, from the inconsolable grief of the Roman people, from the horrifying and perverse behaviour of Tullia, all motifs suitable for elegiac poetry.[378] Little space is given to Servius himself, who is only afforded two lines of direct speech to condemn his daughter (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.615-16). In the first αἴτιον the focus is on the shameful love of Fortuna, a forbidden feeling that she fostered the king alone amongst all men, which turns Servius into the only human being to whom the goddess is devoted, the only one worthy of her furtive passion, in line with the tradition of Servius' rise on account of his personal merits. A similar inclination emerges from the third narrative, where Fortuna upholds the king's righteous will, which puts him in direct contrast with his daughter's

[377] Cf. Dion. Hal. 4.40.7 and Val. Max. 1.8.11. The question suggests that the tradition is not unanimous, and in fact sources report that the statue represented Fortuna (cf. Plin. *HN* 8.197, Cass. Dio 58.7.2 and Varro *De vita populi Romani* fr. 17 Riposati). According to Coarelli (cf. Coarelli 1968), there were two distinct statues, a statue of Servius placed in the archaic temple of Fortuna, and a statue of the goddess.
[378] See Littlewood 2006, 174.

abhorrent nature. As to the people, Ovid portrays them as bewildered by the death of their gentle chief, and to such extent overwhelmed by sorrow, that the sight of that statue was a constant reminder of their grief and in order for them to overcome the misery they had to cover the king's effigy. A few lines later, the close relationship between Servius and the plebs is reiterated in the celebration of the festival dedicated to Fors Fortuna (lines 771-84), worshipped by the common folk because the king himself was of their number, and by the slaves because his mother was herself a slave. This characterisation clearly reflects *a posteriori* the significance of Servius' social reforms.

As much as Servius is the protagonist of this section, he is an indirect one, almost absent from the scene. However, the conclusion of the Ovidian passage is dedicated to reaffirming the king's divine auspices at his birth. The transition occurs by referencing the conflagration of 213 BC, which burnt the temple, but left the statue untouched: the poet explains that Vulcan himself spared his son, and thus introduces the miraculous conception, encouraged by the queen. Tanaquil, assisted by the slave Ocrisia, after performing the rites *de more*, 'in due form', instructs her to pour wine on the adorned hearth, where she finds the shape of a phallus; the queen orders Ocrisia to sit down at the hearth, where she is impregnated by Vulcan, giving birth to Servius.[379] This story closely recalls the conception of Romulus, Caeculus and Modius Fabidius,[380] founders of Rome, Praeneste and Cures, enhancing Servius' role as second founder of Rome by means of his revolutionary reforms. However, Servius is also equated to a different series of founders, namely Aeneas, Ascanius and Augustus, on the grounds of a second awe-inspiring *miraculum*, which identifies him as exceptional, the appearance of flames harmlessly encircling the child's head (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.635-6).[381] This detail is also reported by Livy and Dionysius (cf. Liv. 1.39.1-4, Dion. Hal. 4.2.4), for it represents a key feature of the re-elaboration of the figure of Servius as a uniquely extraordinary human being, whose distinction cannot but bear a mark of the divine.[382] This mark is further enhanced in Ovid by the role played by Tanaquil, who assists in the child's birth and rise to power.[383]

[379] Cf. Liv. 1.39.5 and Dion. Hal. 4.2.1-3.
[380] Cf. Plut. *Rom.* 2, Verg. *Aen.* 7.678 and Dion. Hal. 2.48 respectively (see Littlewood 2006, 185).
[381] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.270-2, 2.682, 8.680-1.
[382] Cf. the flames that enwrap Ascanius' head at Verg. *Aen.* 2.679ff. and Lavinia's at Verg. *Aen.* 7.71ff.
[383] For the significance of the role of Tanaquil cf. Plut. *Mor.* 323b.

The poet seemingly intends to portray Servius as a legendary figure, champion of virtue, assisted by the gods, and beloved by his people. There is no interest in the Etruscan version of the legend, which he might have known from Verrius Flaccus' *Res Etruscae*, for it would contradict the traditional pro-Roman reconstruction of the events, opening a controversial gap in the history and forcing the acceptance of a contentious rise to kingship by an Etruscan leader. The Latin tradition allows Ovid more space to manipulate the literary accounts of his predecessors and contemporaries, and to engage in a poetic challenge.

The mythological *facies* of the narrative of Servius Tullius perfectly illustrates the difficulties of reconstructing what Dumézil defined as the 'faits' of archaic Rome. But, as suggested by Ampolo,[384] if it is true that often the tradition transforms myth into history, in the case of Servius Tullius it can be argued that the opposite occurred, and that historical events were transformed into myth. Grottanelli develops this argument even further, maintaining that some noticeable themes of Servius' story, namely the palace intrigue and the goddess Fortuna granting the power to Servius, can be found similarly in the Near East, particularly in Cyprus and Phoenicia, and such themes were in all likelihood adopted already before the age of Servius, but were afterwards gathered and re-organised around a figure ready to receive them, in this case the usurper and innovator Servius.[385] Corroboration could be found in the acroterial group of Herakles and Athena from Sant'Omobono, in the area of the Forum Boarium, which presents analogous traits to the representation of the ascent of Pisistratus in Athens as recorded by Herodotus,[386] with the goddess conferring power on an exceptional individual, and details comparable to the contemporary statuary from Cyprus and Phoenicia.

But perhaps more interesting evidence can be provided by the bilingual inscription found at Pyrgi,[387] recording in Etruscan and Phoenician the dedication of a temple to the Punic goddess Astarte, the Etruscan Uni, by the leader of Caere, *Thefarie Velianas*, dated around 500 BC, either to

[384] Cf. Ampolo 1983, 397.
[385] Cf. Grottanelli 1987, 91.
[386] Cf. Hdt. 1.60.
[387] Cf. *CIE* 6314-16.

express gratitude for elevating him to power or to celebrate a ceremony of ἱερὸς γάμος between Thefarie and the goddess.[388] In recent years, Colonna[389] studied a series of inscriptions from the Tomba delle Iscrizioni Graffite at the Necropolis of the Banditaccia in Cerveteri, which appear to commemorate the inauguration of the tomb of a Larice Veliinas by a group of *sodales* and by his wife Ramatha Spesias. The deceased is identified by Colonna, postulating his death around 520 BC, as the father of Thefarie, and the men gathered for his burial as Thefarie's companions, who helped or were going to help his ascent to the throne. The presence of Thefarie's mother, Ramatha Spesias, could therefore be interpreted in the long tradition of Etruscan women 'faiseuses de rois'.[390] The coupling of Astarte, who in Phoenician tradition grants the power to the Punic kings,[391] and Ramatha Spesia thus appears to reflect the two female figures who are responsible for Servius' ascent, namely the goddess Fortuna and the queen Tanaquil.

[388] Cf. Heurgon 1966, 10-11.
[389] Cf. Colonna 2007.
[390] Cf. Heurgon 1961, 103-11.
[391] Formulas in the Pyrgi tablets seem to find comparisons in Phoenicia (for a detailed account see Grottanelli 1987, 101ff.).

CONCLUSIONS

The tradition concerning the role of the Etruscans in the early history of Rome suffered, most likely already in the accounts of the early annalists, significant distortion caused by the tendency in Roman historiography to demean the contributions of non-Roman peoples and especially Etruscans, often by appropriating their accomplishments. This process can be still observed in the poetry of the Augustan age, where the portrayal of the last three kings essentially follows the guidelines of the conventional accounts. The figures of Tarquinius Superbus and Sextus Tarquinius are established in the tradition as villains in order to enhance the sense of urgency and gravity which is functional to provide a rationale for the expulsion of the kings and the momentous birth of the *res publica*. Tarquinius Superbus in particular embodies the cruelty typical of the tyrant, whose features closely recall the portrayal of the Vergilian Mezentius, himself despot *par excellence*: he is a treacherous and wicked man, unjust yet powerful, who bears in his own name the infamy of his tyrannical nature, and is often associated with the symbols of regal power, the fasces and axes. However, the figure of the last king is problematised by Vergil, who places emphasis on the transmission of power from the Tarquins to Brutus, himself *superbus* instead of the monarch: the poet seems to be underscoring the problematic legacy of the monarchical institutions under the new regime, and although reservations are not voiced about the motivations behind the birth of the *res publica* itself, Vergil appears critical of the motivations of a behaviour prompted by opposing urges displayed by Brutus and potentially replicated in the *princeps.* As to Sextus Tarquinius, Ovid portrays him according to tradition as the true scion of his father, who uses deception and cunning equally to overthrow the city of Gabii and to subdue Lucretia. The degree of distortion is apparent in the duplication of the respective narratives: the account of the fall of Gabii is explicitly modelled on the Herodotean episode of the siege of Babylon and that of Thrasybulus and Periander, whereas the rape of Lucretia is replicated in the assault of Virginia, equally leading to the overthrow of an abusive regime, the Second Decemvirate. Material evidence might have uncovered an Etruscan version of the events which seems to suggest a scenario in which Sextus does not force himself on Lucretia and even escapes Lucretius' revenge with the help of Collatinus and Brutus, members of his family. The existence of

multiple versions of the same episode supports the argument of a process of distortion, operating already in an early phase of Roman historiography, with the explicit intent to establish a strongly pro-Roman narrative.

Conversely, the distortion operates in a different direction in the representation of the beloved Servius Tullius, architect of Rome's social reforms: the details of the king's origins and his accession to the throne appear to be substantially altered to fit a Romano-centric discourse by dismissing his Etruscan identity in favour of an unequivocally fictitious Latin parentage, even divine according to a number of sources. The positive impact of the king prompts authors to envision a smooth transition of power, occasioned by Servius' extraordinary virtues and 'divinely' ratified by Tanaquil/Fortuna, over a violent power-struggle and eventual overthrow of Tarquinius Priscus' kingship. Servius' Etruscan origin, seemingly depicted in the frescoes of the François Tomb at Vulci, was later reasserted by the emperor Claudius, again revealing the existence of multiple versions of the events developing in different circles and responding to different motivations.

Furthermore, I believe it is possible to observe, in the narratives of the Etruscan kings, the re-surfacing of some of the conventional tropes traditionally associated with the Etruscan people. Sextus Tarquinius is depicted as a treacherous individual who resorts to guile and deceit to obtain what he wants, whether this be the overthrow of a city or the subjugation of a woman. This behaviour implies a lack of manly vigour, which Ovid imputes also to the Veientines fighting against the Fabii (see pp. 107ff.), and which stems once again from the notion that Etruscans are inherently self-indulgent and cowardly, and do not dare face the enemy openly. Equally stemming from the traditional portrayals of Greek historiographers and ethnographers is the characterisation of Etruscan men as somehow subjected to their women, and there certainly is a recurrent pattern of powerful women in the Tarquins' dynasty. In fact, it can be argued that all Tarquins owe their regal power to their women, Tarquinius Priscus and Servius to Tanaquil, Tarquinius Superbus to Tullia, who incite them to prove their virtue, supported by their feminine cunning and ambition.[392] Servius in particular is elevated

[392] Cf. Grottanelli 1987, 85, who rightly emphasises the recurrent use of the formula *si vir es* in Livy's account of Tanaquil and Servius as well as in Ovid's narrative of Tullia and Lucius Tarquinius (cf. Liv. 1.41.3 and Ov. *Fast.* 6.594 respectively).

by a female figure, in the duplicated form of the goddess Fortuna and the queen Tanaquil, but he is also taken down by a woman, his daughter Tullia. The parallel acquires a more complete form if we take into consideration the *sors* of the Fiesole Museum, which reads *se cedues, perdere nolo. ni ceduas, Fortuna Servios perit* ('if you yield, I do not wish to ruin you. If you do not yield, [remember that] because of Fortuna, Servius perished').[393] The text, which records the oldest written mention of Servius, dated to the III century BC, provides evidence for a narrative in which Servius Tullius was punished by the goddess Fortuna, thus creating in full circle a parallel of rise and fall dictated by a goddess who finds her double in a woman. The prominent position of the regal women in Ovid's narrative not only might very well be a testament to the centrality of the woman in Etruscan culture, but could also adumbrate a negative judgement of weakness and unmanliness on the part of the men.

[393] Cf. Guarducci 1972.

2.2 THE VEIENTINE WARS: AN EPIC SAGA

The Etruscan city of Veii was situated on a rocky plateau some 12 miles north of Rome. Extensive archaeological surveys of the area carried out throughout the twentieth century[394] have revealed a flourishing urban centre, with control over a considerably large and fertile territory, mostly under cultivation or grazing.[395] The city reached the apex of its power in the middle of the VI century BC, and archaeological findings confirm its wealth and artistic prominence.[396] To the south-west its territory extended to the coast, where the city controlled the salt-pans at the mouth of the Tiber, while to the east its frontier ran along the river banks to reach Fidenae and the entrance to the Cremera valley, providing it with the ability to preside over commercial traffic with central Italy. It was precisely about the control of these two points of access to the Tiber valley, which were vital for the economic prosperity of both cities, that the contention between Veii and Rome arose. The conflict was pursued for the length of a century, in three major phases.[397] Such events brought Rome to consolidate her power in Latium: this generated growing self-confidence and national consciousness, resulting in a surge of expansion;[398] but more importantly, they reveal the degree of particularism that existed amongst Etruscan cities, especially apparent in the lack of support that Veii received from her fellow Etruscans. The repeated refusals to bring aid voiced by the members of the League summoned at the Fanum Voltumnae seem to spring from radically different interests that set Veii and the rest of Etruria in opposition to one another, the latter more inclined to maintain a neutral position given the commercial role which Rome had taken on in the Tiber valley.[399]

[394] In particular, the campaigns of the British School at Rome between 1950 and 1974.
[395] One of the things produced in the Veientine countryside was apparently low-quality wine, as attested by Horace (cf. Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.143) and Martial (cf. Mart. 1.103.9).
[396] The city appears to retain a somewhat distinguished status up to the Augustan age: Horace mentions Veii alongside Aricia in *Epist.* 2.2.167 seemingly as suburban areas of high value. For Veii's stature as artistic centre cf. especially the acroterial statues from the Portonaccio temple, likely to be attributed to the school of Vulca, who was also commissioned the statues for the Capitoline temple by the Tarquins.
[397] For a detailed account of the overall conflict see Ogilvie 1976, 148ff. and Cornell 1995, 309ff.
[398] Cf. Ogilvie 1965, 627.
[399] Scullard speaks of a 'lack of national sentiment', adding that the cities of the north wanted to keep the commercial routes to the south open, and even Caere, Veii's neighbour, preferred to stay uninvolved. Only Capena and Falerii, farther up the Tiber valley, provided support to Veii (see Scullard 1967, 268-9). Cf. also Sordi 1960, 17-23 and Ogilvie 1965, 627, 632.

But, as Cornell notes, this 'ran counter to the expectations of the Roman annalists',[400] and caused the failure, on Livy's part, to identify the true causes of such a fracture within the Etruscan cities. The historian seemingly cannot escape the assumption that, in normal circumstances, aid would have been brought to Veii (cf. Liv. 5.1.3-6), and thus elaborates patently fictional reasons, based on 'moral' grounds, to justify the decision to refuse aid to the Veientines: Veii is to blame for their decision to appoint a king, when most of Etruria had abandoned the monarchical institutions by the end of the IV century, and most importantly for their king's religious transgression on the occasion of some *ludi*. The narrative of the conclusive stage of the war, despite the indisputable historical authenticity of the episode, underwent significant literary embellishment, so much so that its length was made to correspond to that of the Trojan war (cf. Liv. 5.4.11, 22.8),[401] ascribing an epic resonance to the conflict. In addition, Livy builds his narrative on a fatal dialectic between Veii and Rome,[402] such as to give grounds for Rome's victory in terms of religious justice: the doom of Veii is determined by their king and his *impietas*, which both run contrary to those elements inherently defining the Roman *res publica*, namely *libertas* and *pietas*. Such a dynamic emerges in the emphasis on the religious zeal of the Romans, transpiring from the general aura of mysticism which permeates the episode, and moreover incarnated in the figure of the *dux fatalis* M. Furius Camillus.[403] The Livian chapter closes with the dramatic *evocatio* of Juno Regina, who finally abandons Veii and whose statue is transported to Rome and dedicated by Camillus in a temple on the Aventine.[404] What emerges from this brief introduction is the epic potential offered by the antagonism between Rome and Veii, and its subsequent re-elaboration to fit into the Roman narrative, especially, as far as our evidence goes, during the Augustan age. Episodes from the Veientine saga are in fact, as we shall see, addressed also

[400] Cornell 1995, 312.
[401] Statuettes of Aeneas and Anchises found at Veii confirm that the legend of Troy already circulated in southern Etruria around the V-IV century BC. The chronology 406-396 BC is provided by Livy as well as most ancient authors, but some, like Diodorus and Cornelius Nepos, date the end of the war at 388 BC. As Ogilvie notes, the absolute dates are wrong, but we could maintain the six years period between the fall of Veii and the Gallic invasion, traditionally dated at 390 BC, by moving the capture of Veii to 392-391 BC (for further details on this matter cf. Ogilvie 1965, 629).
[402] Cf. Sordi 1960, 9.
[403] Camillus is evoked also in Prop. 3.11.67, Verg. *Aen.* 6.825 and Ov. *Fast.* 1.641.
[404] Cf. Liv. 5.22.3-6.

by Propertius (cf. Prop. 4.10.23-38) and Ovid (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.195-242), although in extremely different terms.

i. PROPERTIUS AND THE SPOLIA OF TOLUMNIUS

The tenth elegy of Propertius' fourth book is dedicated to the cult of Jupiter Feretrius: in the small temple on the Capitol, supposedly founded by Romulus, were dedicated the *spolia opima*, the arms of the enemy commander slain in single combat. The only three Roman generals who had obtained them were Romulus, A. Cornelius Cossus and M. Claudius Marcellus. The subject had recently been in the spotlight, after the *princeps* announced the discovery of evidence proving that Cossus was consul when he dedicated the *spolia opima* in 437 BC: this pronouncement bore momentous implications, since Augustus had recently blocked M. Licinius Crassus' claim to righteously dedicate the enemy's *spolia* on account of the fact that he was not fighting under his own auspices, as opposed to his three predecessors.[405] The elegy, quite short for the average length of the compositions in book 4, focuses almost exclusively on these three episodes, encompassed by a brief opening and conclusion which address, in Ringkomposition, the origins of Feretrius. The overall tone, as Hutchinson notes, 'is unremittingly martial and masculine',[406] and the content is immediately identified as epic, as suggested by *armaque* in the incipit of line 2, recalling Vergil's very first verse of the *Aeneid*, but significantly placed in the pentameter, and by the ambitious statement *magnum iter ascendo, sed dat mihi gloria vires: / non iuvat e facili lecta corona iugo* (Prop. 4.10.3-4), reminiscent of Hesiod's hard path.[407] The three episodes however are not symmetrical: while the accounts of Romulus and Cossus occupy 18 and 16 verses respectively, the Marcellus passage is only 6 lines long.

The episode I will focus on (lines 23-38)[408] belongs to the Second Veientine War (437-435 BC): according to the sources,[409] the conflict broke out when the prince of Veii, Tolumnius,[410] killed four Roman ambassadors; he was in turn killed in single combat by Cossus; the city of Fidenae was besieged and captured. Propertius, in introducing the passage, immediately sets the scene in a time *vincere cum Veios posse laboris erat* (Prop. 4.10.24), with the epic phrasing *vincere posse* borrowed from

[405] Cf. Harrison 1989, Rich 1996 and Kraus & Woodman 1997, 71-2. Cossus is briefly mentioned in Verg. *Aen.* 6.841.
[406] Hutchinson 2006, 220. Cf. also Hubbard 1974, 128.
[407] Cf. Hes. *Op.* 286-92.
[408] For a detailed analysis of these lines I refer to Hutchinson 2006, Heyworth 2007b and Fedeli 2015.
[409] Cf. Liv. 4.17-20 and Dion. Hal. 12.5.
[410] For epigraphic evidence on this figure cf. *TLE* 38.

Ennius,[411] followed by a strongly military lexicon (cf. *belli sonus*, *praeda*, *captae*). The poet's reference to *Nomentum* (Mentana) and *Cora* (Cori), a Latin centre to the north-east of Rome and a settlement in Volscan territory respectively, point to a moment in the history of the Urbs when those were the most ambitious targets of her relatively modest expansionism–cf. the use of *ultima praeda* and *iugera terna* to stress the limitation of Rome's enterprise at the time.[412] Rome's interests were limited to the left bank of the Tiber, until Veii became evidently the power to confront in order to gain control over commercial traffic with the interior, particularly through the acquisition of Fidenae, just on the other bank of the river. As Heyworth noticed, both Nomentum and Cora were actually further from the city and came into Roman power later,[413] but Veii was a prominent and powerful force, belonging to a world, Etruria, that was quite distinct and removed from the simple reality of early Rome by means of the border represented by the river Tiber.[414] The choice to refer to Nomentum and Cora, both modest settlements on the left bank of the river, is thus dictated by the intention to enhance their ideal distance from Veii.

Comparing Propertius' lines to Livy's account, the two could not be more distinct.[415] The *Veiens* Tolumnius (cf. lines 23 and 31), is not the scornful and impious king described by Livy (cf. Liv. 4.17.1-6), whose use of words such as *scelus*, *facinus*, *nefandus*, contributes to the portrayal of a devious and perfidious figure, consistent with the conventional charges of the Etruscans' treacherousness and deceitfulness, and who sees the death of the Veientine king as an act of piety, following a recurrent pattern in his characterisation of the war with Veii as a religious duty. In the elegy, conversely, Propertius never suggests that a *nefas* is committed and never employs negative tropes of

411 Cf. Enn. *Ann.* fr. 167 Sk. For Ennian reminiscences in these lines see Fedeli 2015.
412 It has been argued that lines 25-6 actually belong to the Romulus episode and thus need to be moved before line 23, but I do not see any incongruity in the narrative in its current state: Propertius is expanding the scope of Rome's expansionism, and the progression moves from the Urbs to *ultra Tiberim*. Furthermore, the original manuscript order heightens the pathos of Veii's fall (cf. Camps 1965, 150). As Richardson notes, Veii 'was Rome's first serious invasion of Etruscan territory' (Richardson 1977, 479).
413 Cf. Heyworth 2007b, 496.
414 As will be examined in detail in chapter 3.2, the Tiber will become a foundational element of Rome once it will be taken away from Veii's control.
415 Livy reports that the Fidenates revolted and joined the Veientines and that, at Tolumnius' command, they added the crime of killing the Roman envoys who had come to enquire about the situation; he adds that some seek to mitigate the king's actions, but maintains that he did it so that the Fidenates would be implicated in the crime to the extent that they would have no hope for reconciliation with Rome (cf. Liv. 4.17).

duplicitousness to describe Tolumnius: the two commanders are introduced with their names at the two ends of the hexameter, as if adversaries in a duel, with Tolumnius epically giving parley from the *arx* above the tower of the city while the enemies are battering the walls. Cossus on his part addresses his opponent as *fortis*, thus acknowledging his valour as a peer (cf. Prop. 4.10.35).[416] The confrontation itself is not described, contrary to Livy, and the only detail the poet provides is the beheading of Tolumnius, gruesomely closing the passage.[417] Propertius thus gives the reader a picture of an even fight between two *fortes*, whose exploits however are not celebrated, but elided, in order to concentrate on their violent outcome. The elision enhances the futility of the fight, whose result is moreover determined not by human factors, but by the gods themselves:[418] in this way Propertius is emptying one of Rome's greatest military exploits of its meaning.

The poet's attitude towards the Etruscan commander reflects his attitude towards the city. Propertius is clearly not at pains to diminish Veii's magnificence, he in fact intrudes a lament for the city's tragic fate,[419] with the picture of the *aurea sella* towering over the *forum* utterly effective in its conciseness, and the emphasis on the proclamation of the antiquity of the Veientine *regnum*–cf. *veteres*, notably in alliteration. But the reminiscence of Veii's past wealth and power (*tum* at line 27) is soon counteracted by the reality of the present (*nunc* at line 29): the poet presents a scene of pastoral stillness, marked by the slow spondaic rhythm of line 29 and intensified by the adjective *lentus*, which however lacks any liveliness or delight, as reasserted by the grim image of the shepherd reaping the fields *vestris ossibus*.[420] Propertius is deliberately creating a setting full of pathos and bleakness.[421] But this characterisation does not correspond to the historical reality: the consequences of the conquest

[416] For the Vergilian reminiscences in these lines cf. Verg. *Aen.* 5.368, 6.17, 465, 9.677-8, 12.71, 706. Cf. also Enn. *Trag.* frr. 3, 98 Jocelyn, *Ann.* fr. 92 Sk.
[417] The two images of the beheading and the Roman steeds bathed with blood are derived from Enn. *Ann*. frr. 483-4, 485-6 Sk. and *Trag.* fr. 89 Jocelyn respectively. The description of the death of Tolumnius itself differs in the two accounts: in Propertius the king is killed by decapitation, whereas in Livy (cf. Liv. 4.19.4-5) Cossus plunges his spear in Tolumnius' body and then beheads him. Cf. Heyworth 2007, 498 and Ingleheart 2007, 73f.
[418] Cf. Prop. 4.10.37 *di Latias iuvere manus*, reminiscent of Verg. *Aen.* 10.320. See Poccetti 2012, 193.
[419] The image somewhat recalls Livy's estimation at 2.50.2.
[420] The lexicon is borrowed from hexametric poetry, e.g. *intra muros* from Enn. *Ann.* fr. 390 Sk. and found in Verg. *Aen.* 2.33 and Liv. 5.5.2.
[421] Cf. Poccetti 2012, 193. 'The repetition of the second person underscores Veii's decline from prosperity to ruin – you(r) kingdom, your throne, your bones' (Welch 2005, 153).

of Veii were not as dire as the poet presents them, for the city did not revert to desolation and neglect, as the romantic picture drawn by Propertius suggests.[422] Such gloom serves an ulterior purpose. The desolation of this picture is absolute, so much so that it closely recalls an extremely significant Vergilian passage (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 1.493-7), in which the image of the farmer cleaving the soil with the curved plough and finding rusty arms and bones follows the description of the horrors of the civil wars, and closes the first book of the *Georgics* with a dreadful message. Propertius' passage is certainly reminiscent of Vergil's words: his *pastor* is envisaged attending to his work in a time post-war, when the once bloody battlefield is nothing but a pasture scattered with bones. But the tone in Vergil is grand and ominous, whereas in Propertius it is melancholy that prevails, the misery of the present compared to a past magnificence.[423] The passage is also reminiscent of Propertius' early production: with 1.21 and 1.22 the poet closed his *monobiblos* with a quite unconventional σφραγίς, marked by the memory of the *arae Perusinae* and by strong accents of grief.[424] The repeated association of *ossa* with the Etruscan landscape enhances the personal character that this event presents for the poet, whose youth appears profoundly marked by such a gruesome episode of the civil conflict, and thus necessarily informs our reading of the passage in 4.10.

Looking at the poem as a unified whole, it appears to concentrate on the triumphant commanders no more than on the defeated: the focus on the violent death of the enemy leaders can be interpreted as an insinuation that 'Rome's oldest temple commemorates not Rome's great victories, but rather the violence that is at the heart of Rome's identity.'[425] As a self-identified Umbrian,[426] Propertius is in fact not shy in quite openly rejecting Rome's imperial stance, especially towards the Italian neighbours, and especially towards Etruria,[427] which he recognises as part of the emotional landscape of his youth. Propertius is here weaving a web of intertextual references which unequivocally raises the spectre of the civil wars in order to condemn Rome's *imperium*. Propertius' strategy will not elude

[422] Cf. Scullard 1967, 109. Cf. also Sordi 1960, 23, Galinsky 1969, 138 and Ogilvie 1976, 155.
[423] As Poccetti suggests, Propertius would be drawn to Veii for its illustrious regal past in contrast with a wrecked present (cf. Poccetti 2012, 175).
[424] Cf. Ingleheart 2007, 72ff. For a more detailed discussion of these two elegies see chapter 5.2.
[425] Welch 2005, 134. Cf. also p.152.
[426] Cf. Prop. 1.22.9-10, 4.1a.63-4, 1b.121ff.
[427] Cf. Ingleheart 2007, 72-3.

the educated reader: the poet deprives the episode of its ideological content by stripping the narrative climax, represented by the battle between the two leaders, and by insinuating language and imagery associated with the horrors of the civil wars.

But the exercise goes even further. Propertius had repeatedly offered *recusationes* for not writing epic poetry (cf. Prop. 2.1, 3.1, 3, 9), so forcefully that the pronounced aetiological content of his fourth book would appear at first sight unforeseen: the allusion to Callimachus, used elsewhere to reject epic, would be seemingly repurposed to accept it.[428] And yet it is precisely such allusion that should advise the reader to take this poetic conversion with a grain of salt: Propertius has not rejected elegy as a genre, and our expectations should be alerted as a result. Hence the martial content and language of our passage, coming dangerously close to actual epic poetry, are nothing but a disguise, for 'the poet's austere mask is proved fragile, with the Callimachean elements functioning as Trojan horses that import unsettling connotations into its ostensibly inflexible frame.'[429] The use of strong epic markers for an episode of strong military content points to an operation of dismantlement of the content through the form.

ii. OVID'S FASTI AND THE DIES CREMERENSIS

In the second book of the *Fasti*, Ovid addresses another episode of the conflict between Rome and Veii: in the First Veientine War (483-474 BC), after an initial victory (480 BC), the Romans were countered by the Veientines, who advanced into Roman territory and occupied a fortified post on the Janiculum; as a response, a *praesidium* was established near the river Cremera (479 BC). According to the sources, the 300 (or 306) members of the Fabian *gens*, joined by their clients and other companions, took the burden of the military action upon themselves, and all perished in a disastrous defeat two years later, leaving a single young man behind.[430] It appears that different traditions

[428] The Callimachean rejection of the epic genre illustrated in the image of the Assyrian river and its muddy waters as opposed to the pure and undefiled stream of the holy fountain (cf. Callim. *Hymn* 2.105-12) is echoed in Propertius' *recusatio* at 2.1.39-42 and is later employed to proclaim his renewed aetiological poetic program at 4.1.58-60.

[429] Garani 2007, 101.

[430] Cf. the main accounts in Liv. 2.48.7-50.11 and Dion. Hal. 9.15-22. As Cornell observes, the role of the Fabii in this phase of the conflict is to be associated with the location of their tribe on the border of the *ager Veientanus*, on the river Cremera, and was thus primarily intended in defence of their own private interests. The

developed on this episode, which underwent significant embellishment, most likely beginning with the Fabian *gens* itself:[431] the narrative appears to be substantially dictated on the one hand by the synchronism and correspondences with the battle of Thermopylae, and on the other hand by the τόπος of the hero who takes the fate of his homeland on his shoulder, and it is evident from Livy's account that the attention is focused on the tragedy of the Fabii, and, in order to do so, to condense the events to fit into the Aristotelian unity of action of a single day.[432]

As to Ovid, it has been acknowledged since Heinze[433] that these lines stand out as an exception within the elegiac fabric of the *Fasti* for their strong epic tone, apparent in their martial content, the character of the similes, the constant allusion to Homer and, to a lesser extent, to Vergil, and a series of metapoetic markers. The epic tension, consistently maintained throughout the whole passage, stems from what appears to be a poetic attempt to explore the potential of the elegiac verse so as to bend its boundaries to the greatest possible extent. As Merli notes,[434] the hypertrophic concentration of epic features appears all the more exposed when compared to Dionysius and Livy's account, whose guidelines it essentially follows:[435] Ovid's account is compressed and simpler, and lacks a sustained narrative into which to distribute and merge those features, so that the heavy epic material acquires an extraordinary prominence by imposing itself on a light and fragmented texture.[436] The passage

author considers this the result of 'an archaic form of social organisation which was probably already in an advanced state of obsolescence' (Cornell 1995, 311).

[431] Ovid recounts this episode on February 13, but Liv. 6.1.11, Tac. *Hist.* 2.91, Plut. *Cam.* 19.1 and the *Fasti Antiates ministrorum* (cf. Degrassi, p. 208) all agree on July 18, the same day as the *dies Alliensis*. For a detailed account of the controversy cf. Lefèvre 1980, Fantham 1983, Richard 1988a, 1988b, Harries 1991, Barchiesi 1997, 144-52. The family also recorded 307 Roman prisoners from the army of Caius Fabius Ambutus massacred at the hands of the Etruscans in 353 BC (cf. Liv. 7.15.10) and 300 Romans dead in the Second Punic War under Fabius Maximus. It has been argued that Ovid might have also drawn here from a private chronology of the Fabii (cf. Richard 1988b, who argues against this suggestion, and Harries 1991, who judges the hypothesis unnecessary on account of the personal relationship between Ovid and Paullus).

[432] See Ogilvie 1965, 359ff.

[433] See Heinze 1919, 339f. Cf. also Barchiesi 1989, 62 and Merli 2000, 201-64.

[434] The following analysis summarises the ample and exhaustive study conducted by Merli.

[435] The epic tone is somewhat present in Livy as well: 'both narratives hurtle along at fever pitch, with phrases recalling epic, or at least epyllion, usage' (Harries 1991, 154). See Sofer 1906 for a more detailed account of the correspondences between the two texts.

[436] Cf. Merli 2000, 203.

appears thus framed (lines 195-204 and 237-42), or rather contained, within the bounds of the aetiological progression.[437]

The epic narrative, which extends between lines 205-36, is marked by three similes, the most prominent feature of epic. A sequence of similes can be usually found in scenes with military content, that is in epic contexts: in the *Iliad* three or more similes are quite frequent (cf. *Il.* 2.455-83, 4.422-56, 17.725-59), whereas the *Odyssey* presents only a single significant sequence at the end of book 5. This tendency that we observe in Homer appears to be fixed in the *Argonautica*, where it has the function of illustrating the epic character of the section: Apollonius ordinarily avoids sequences, but employs them in openly epic passages.[438] In the *Aeneid*, in conformity with Apollonius, similes concentrate in the second half of the poem and in book 2. The conspicuousness of Ovid's habit of concentrating epic material is especially apparent in comparison with his use of similes in hexametric poetry, where the two scenes portraying battles present much less extended similes, moreover distributed in longer portions of text,[439] whilst similes tend to appear with wider breadth in pathetic sections.[440] Ovid's epic similes appear very much influenced by the Homeric model: the lion, to which the Fabii are compared in lines 207-12, the flooding stream in lines 219-24, the boar in lines 231-4, all appear with frequency in the *Iliad*.[441] Yet the traditional rhythm is variously disrupted, by means of insertions and dislocations, to accommodate the elegiac distich, creating instances of condensation (first simile), expansion (second simile) or both (third simile).[442] The intertextual dynamic with Vergil appears to be less straightforward. Fairly precise correspondences can be easily identified for all three Ovidian similes, yet they seem to be more distant in Ovid's mind:[443] for instance in the first simile

[437] Cf. e.g. the strong aetiological opening of *haec fuit illa dies* at line 195 and the aetiological motif offered by the image of the Fabii exiting the city through the Porta Carmentalis at lines 201ff.
[438] Cf. the beginning of book 2, the end of book 3, and the two sections of book 4 concerning the stealing of the golden fleece, at lines 110-82, and the killing of Apsyrtus, at lines 456-91.
[439] Cf. Ov. *Met.* 5.1-235 and 12.210-535. We must note that Ovid does not depict armies clashing, but rather wedding banquets turned into a bloody fight. Baldo also observes that in such battle scenes Ovid does not seem to display a particular commitment towards allusions (cf. Baldo 1995, 177).
[440] Cf. e.g. Ov. *Met.* 3.482ff., 4.346ff., 5.625ff., 6.516ff., 11.476-569.
[441] Cf. Fränkel 1921, 59-70, 25ff. and 66ff. respectively. On Homeric similes see Buxton 2004 with relevant bibliography. It is important to notice in his regard that it appears more productive to refer to large typologies rather than seek a specific 'hypotext' for each metaphor (cf. Merli 2000, 204-5).
[442] For a detailed analysis see Merli 2000, 201-24.
[443] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 9.339ff., 2.304ff. and 9.792ff. respectively. Some scholars have argued to the contrary, identifying in Vergil the main source for Ovid's similes (cf. e.g. Harries 1991 and Robinson 2010).

the Fabii are compared to a pride of lions attacking a scattered and fearful herd, which summons up the image of the unfed lion mangling the feeble flock dumb with fear (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 9.339ff.), but what we have here is a single lion, and moreover what is totally missing is the panicked fleeing, which is a central element in Ovid's (and Homer's, cf. *Il.* 11.172 and 15.636) account. Another illustrative example is line 212 *sanguine terra rubet*, which is clearly reminiscent of Verg. *Aen.* 12.691 *sanguine terra madet*, and yet despite the extreme similarity, the image of the ground turning red does not actually appear in the *Aeneid*, but it is instead recurrent in Homeric formulaic expressions.[444]

What appears to emerge is the intent to write a piece 'in the style of' Homer, by means of a series of stiff formulaic segments hypertrophically assembled to give the episode an archaic *facies*.[445] Within this Homeric *facies* though, Ovid appears to accommodate a problematic moral: at line 225 the poet addresses the Fabii with *quo ruitis?*, a formula recurrent in epic poetry, although traditionally uttered by a character,[446] and repeatedly suggests a certain impulsiveness and lack of judgement very close to the τόπος of the young hero, whose inexperience leads to his death, thus seemingly insinuating that the sacrifice of the Fabii was for nothing, and that they fell victims of their own *securitas*.[447] The epilogue, with the announcement of the future greatness of Fabius Maximus Cunctator, activates the comparison with his winning strategy, hence rendering the celebratory tone hollow, just like the standardised epic used to express it. In other words, 'l'epilogo non ha quindi soltanto la funzione di mediare per gradi l'inserimento nel tessuto dell'opera del corpo più propriamente epico della narrazione, ma di questo nucleo svuota l'esemplarità, disinnescando il potenziale stridore ideologico di un modello guerriero ed eroico rispetto alle direttrici pacifiste dei *Fasti*.'[448]

How do the Etruscans fit into this narrative? Merli has observed how the three metaphors have the particular function of characterising the Fabii as combative and impetuous; as a result, the

[444] Cf. *Il.* 10.484 ἐρυθαίνετο δ' αἵματι γαῖα and 11.394 ὃ δέ θ' αἵματι γαῖαν ἐρεύθων.
[445] Hence the limited presence of Vergil. Cf. also the allusions to Enn. *Ann.* fr. 67 Sk. at 205-6, to fr. 258 Sk. at 235-6 (cf. here also Luc. 5.999f.), and to fr. 363 Sk. at 242.
[446] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 2.519f., 10.811, 12.313f. and Ov. *Met.* 9.429. In elegiac poetry cf. Ov. *Her.* 13.130f., 16.123. Two extremely interesting instances of the author's apostrophe are Hor. *Epod.* 7.1 and Prop. 4.1.71. For the Ovidian use cf. Heinze 1919, 353.
[447] For the young and inexperienced hero cf. Patroclus in *Il.* 15.685-6, Eurialus and Lausus in Verg. *Aen.* 9.342ff. and 10.811ff. respectively. A polemic tone is present also in Livy's account (cf. 2.50.3), which stresses the private character of the expedition. Cf. Harries 1991.
[448] Merli 2000, 261.

Veientines are identified by comparison as the opposite. In the first simile Ovid outlines the herd scattered through the vast fields, and immediately afterwards, in order to specify the association and reassert the fearful character of the enemies, he adds that they flee and receive dishonourable wounds in the back. The use of *diffugere*, with its negative connotation, already characterises the movement of the Veientines as chaotic and cowardly, but it is the detail of the *inhonestaque volnera* that is especially significant as a distinct mark of shame.[449] What follows is the dramatic *Tusco sanguine terra rubet* (Ov. *Fast.* 2.212). The choice by Ovid to use the generalising adjective *Tuscus*, although certainly dictated amongst other reasons by metrical necessity, seems to make a further suggestion, namely that the poet, much like Livy, and possibly equally obliviously, struggles to discriminate between the behaviour of one Etruscan city and the whole of Etruria. What transpires is the insinuation that such cowardly behaviour is not to be attributed solely to the Veientines, but it is instead distinctive of the Etruscan people as a whole.

But it is essentially more than uneasiness on Ovid's part, for this attitude rather appears to be, to a certain extent, deliberate: after suggesting, at the beginning of the passage, that the Veientines are at the centre of this episode, their characterisation is almost entirely negative, in the sense that it only proceeds in opposition to the actual description of the Fabii. Ovid establishes a precise opposition *virtus~fraus* to which also corresponds the opposition Fabii~Veientines. The Veientines are never again mentioned by name in the episode, and what the reader is able to conclude about them is only by inference. Their strategy reflects their treacherousness: while the Fabii filled the valley (each single word conveys the idea of openness, *latus*, *dis-cursus*, *impleo*), the enemies execute a plan based on concealment, they hide and deceive (the phrasing reinforces this negative portrayal, *armaque tecta*, *claudebant* and *occulere*, *abdita* and *latet*). The courage demonstrated by the Fabii, even in their last moments, is reiterated in the simile of the boar scattering the hounds, which again suggests the cowardice of the Veientines. In essence the battle is won with trickery, as a result of which the Fabii fall, with the complicity of their excessive confidence: the author even directly addresses them,

[449] Cf. Sall. *Iug.* 85, 29, where Marius boasts about his scars *advorso corpore*, and Plin. *HN.* 7.101, where the author, discussing the bravest men, mentions a L. Siccius Dentatus *quadriginta quinque cicatricibus adverso corpore insignis, nulla in tergo* (see Robinson 2011, 190).

rebuking them for their naivety, hence reminding them of the traditional unreliability of the Etruscans, strongly indicated by *perfida tela*, and supplemented by the conclusion *fraude perit virtus* (Ov. *Fast.* 2.227).[450] The characterisation of the people of Veii in this episode thus appears to proceed from Ovid's inherent mistrust and to a certain extent lack of interest in Etruscans generally, as confirmed by his failure to differentiate, or rather his lack of concern in differentiating, Veii from her neighbouring cities.

[450] Also, in Livy it appears that the Veientines are encouraged to implement their deceitful plan by the Fabii themselves (cf. Liv. 2.50.4-6). 'It is usual to see the trapping and slaughter of the Fabii in both Livy and Ovid as the triumph of guile and *fraus* over simple native virtue' (Harries 1991, 155). Cf. also Dion. Hal. 9.20.3.

CONCLUSIONS

The long antagonism between Romans and Veientines for the control over the commercial routes to central Italy and the triumph of the former over the latter was soon understood as a crucial moment in Rome's expansionistic rise in Latium, and as a result, its narrative was re-shaped and enriched to reflect such historical significance. The parallels with the Trojan War and the battle of Thermopylae appear, by Livy's time, established in the historiographical tradition, and the occasional discrepancies furthermore testify to the wide circulation of these episodes and to the degree of embellishment they underwent over the centuries in order to rise to an epic status. This epic quality of the Veientine saga emerges preponderantly in the Augustan age, foreshadowing in the *dux fatalis* Camillus another commander summoned by fate, Augustus, and marking a momentous juncture in the teleological unravelling of history towards the age of peace brought about by the *princeps*.

In Livy, the narrative of the Veientine wars is founded on a fatal dialectic, formulated on the inescapable opposition *pietas~impietas*. The contrast is established on ideological grounds in a straightforward antithesis: the Veientines commit the sin of electing a king, in some way violating the Roman principle of *libertas*, and in turn the king taints himself and his people with his impiety; the Romans' victory, pursued with religious zeal and with the gods' favour, is thus to be regarded as legitimate and divinely sanctioned by Juno herself. Ovid re-interprets the ideological opposition in terms of *virtus~fraus*. The poet, in accordance with his broader attitude towards Etruscans, resorts to more traditional tropes to frame the confrontation between the Veientines and the Fabii: the courage, the boldness, the fierce spirit of the latter is juxtaposed to the former's fearful nature, which leads them to adopt trickery and deceit to overpower the enemy. The Veientines, who appear to be indiscriminately equated to the rest of the Etruscans, are condemned for being cowardly, for concealing, hiding and receiving shameful wounds in the back. The trope of treacherousness is thus exploited by Ovid in all its forms and nuances, perfectly encapsulated in the phrase *perfida tela*, testifying to its wide circulation and to the readiness of many Roman authors to adopt it in order to diminish the accomplishments of their enemies.

Conversely, in Propertius there is no trace of ideological opposition and the narrative rejects the 'dialettica fatale' to embrace an outcome essentially dictated by chance. The epic nature of the conflict is rather conferred by the fact that it is carried out by peers. The two commanders are portrayed as equal in their valour, *fortes*, immediately dismissing the accusations of *impietas* levelled against Tolumnius by Livy, and fight openly facing each other, thus countering Ovid's portrayal of the Veientines as cowardly and fearful. The city of Veii is even celebrated with nostalgic accents for its illustrious and glorious past, reasserting its pre-eminence in central Italy and singling it out amongst the cities of Etruria for its distinction. Propertius' painful memory of the fate that touched Perusia, another once eminent Etruscan city, deeply informs the reader's understanding of Veii: the shift in focus from the celebration of Cossus' victory to the violent death of Tolumnius suggests the condemnation of Rome's imperial stance, particularly towards the communities of Italy, subjugated despite their contributions to the greatness of the empire.[451]

These two extremely different attitudes towards Veii and its citizens find voice by means of an analogous poetical operation: the elegiac fabric is bent to accommodate an epic matter which is in turn deprived of its ideological content. Both in Propertius and in Ovid the martial tone that accompanies the subject matter and the very explicit use of metapoetic markers is only a façade, for it is precisely by means of this exercise that epic as a genre is rejected. The pentameter thus, as distinctive feature of elegiac poetry, becomes the chosen position for quoting and referencing the hexametric tradition, whose ideology is repudiated in favour of a more polished and sophisticated society that has its raison d'être not in military supremacy, but 'nel gioco amoroso'. In Propertius such repudiation is signalled by the Callimachean reference at Prop. 4.1.58-60, and by the subtle denunciation of Rome's *imperium*; in Ovid, who is certainly influenced by the aetiological content of Propertius' fourth book in the drafting of the *Fasti*, it is the hypertrophic concentration of epic markers, especially the similes, that alerts us of the mechanism at play. In both cases, the evocation of the only epic passage in the poems is associated with the legendary and celebrated clash between the two great cities of central Italy. Regardless of the personal attitude of the poets towards Etruria,

[451] This theme is also addressed, although in different terms, in the Vertumnus' elegy (see chapter 3.1).

the confrontation with Veii received the features of a sort of epyllion, and probably as such finds its place in aetiological poetry.

CHAPTER THREE

ETRUSCANS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE LANDSCAPE OF ROME

3.1 THE VICUS TUSCUS AND THE STATUE OF VERTUMNUS

The Vicus Tuscus was one of Rome's main arteries of communication, running from the Forum along the western side of the Palatine up to the Forum Boarium and the Circus Maximus; at its northern end, between the Basilica Iulia and the Temple of Castor, was situated the statue of the god Vertumnus. The denomination *Vicus Tuscus* is unquestionably to be associated with an early settlement of Etruscans in the southern Forum, variously dated from the time of Romulus to Porsenna;[452] modern scholars generally agree that the area hosted the Etruscan workmen in charge of the construction of the temple of Iuppiter Capitolinus.[453] The early association with the Etruscan presence in the area seems to determine the linguistic use: the syntactical order seems to establish its onomastic status, according to the pattern that is conventional for toponyms, such as *Via Sacra* or *Campus Martius*, which responds to their common and everyday use.[454]

As Vasaly noted, 'metaphysical topography'[455] is crucial to investigate a text with the awareness of the audience it was originally addressed to, and this is especially true for the Vicus Tuscus. Its many shops of various kind made it a lively and busy thoroughfare, frequented by *sericarii*, *vestiarii*, *purpurarii* amongst others, and *turarii*.[456] The street also bore an objectionable reputation, mainly due to the thriving presence of prostitutes, as testified as early as Plautus,[457] and the vibrant and bustling character of this area is still attested in the Augustan age, captivating Horace's imagination. The poet

[452] According to Varro *Ling.* 5.46, the Etruscans initially inhabited the Caelian hill, named after Caeles Vibenna, who had brought aid to Rome; later, suspicious and worried that the piece of land they had granted was too strongly fortified, the Romans moved the Etruscan community onto the level ground of the valley (cf. also Serv. *ad Aen.* 5.560 and Prop. 4.2.50-2). Livy and Dionysius (cf. Liv. 2.14.8-9 and Dion. Hal. 5.36.3-4), who appear to depend on a common source, report that, after the repulse of Porsenna at Aricia, a group of his followers, wounded and unarmed, drifted to Rome, where they were received with kindness and compassion, and were allotted the thoroughfare that was later named, after them, Vicus Tuscus.
[453] Cf. Hall 1996, 151 with n. 9.
[454] Cf. Adams 1976, 89 and Poccetti 2012, 183.
[455] I.e. the set of associations of particular activities with different monuments and areas of the city generated by daily practice and literary representation (cf. Vasaly 1993, 40-1 and O'Neill 2000).
[456] Cf. Mart. 11.27.11, *CIL* 6.9976, 33923, 14.2433, and Porphyr. *ad Epist.* 1.20.1 about the *turarii*, the perfume and incense dealers after whom the street was later re-named.
[457] Cf. Plaut. *Cist.* 562-3 (cf. also Hdt. 1.93) and *Curc.* 482.

envisages himself carried into a box as a roll of worthless poetry to be sold alongside cheap bric-a-brac of all sorts amid a mishmash of exotic smells and wastepaper (cf. Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.267-70).[458] This image immediately echoes the crowd of riffraff in the company of the squanderer Nomentanus, and in particular the *Tusci turba impia vici*, the people associated with the prostitution trade (cf. Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.227-30),[459] but also the ill-famed bookselling district located between the Vicus Tuscus and the bottom of the Argiletum upon which Horace's *liber* gazes as if it were 'a slave boy who yearns for the pleasures of the city', in an ambiguous parallelism between books and prostitution trade (cf. Hor. *Epist.* 1.20.1-2).[460] Such a questionable reputation also seems to apply to the god who overlooks the Vicus Tuscus, Vertumnus. In fact, when one attempts to fully penetrate the depth of this charming and enigmatic god's nature, he is met with a certain resistance. The god can hardly be found in the surviving art,[461] and the literary and epigraphical evidence, where his name appears both in the form *Vertumnus* and in the (possibly archaic) variation *Vortumnus*,[462] is often inadequate and confusing. Fortunately, Propertius offers a uniquely precious window into this impenetrable deity, who himself tells his enigmatic tale in Prop. 4.2.

[458] Such boxes traditionally contained discarded rolls to be used as wrapping paper.
[459] Porphyry (cf. Porphyr. *ad Sat.* 2.3.228) corroborates this interpretation, and in the following lines it is in fact a pimp who addresses the host as spokesperson of these parasites gathered at Nomentanus' table.
[460] Mayer 1994, 269. For the bookselling district cf. Mart. 1.3.1-2 and 1.117.9-13. For Horace's choice of language cf. *prostes*, meaning the offering of goods for sale, but also 'to sell one's body, to prostitute one's self'; *pumice mundus*, describing the papyrus roll polished to be purchased and also the depilated body of male prostitutes; *communia*, standing for *loci communes*, brothels; *contrectare*, generally taken as 'to handle', but often meaning 'to fondle sexually' or even 'to have sexual intercourse' (see Mayer 1994, 269-71).
[461] See Bettini 2015, 3. Bettini's monograph collects an invaluable amount of research about the god Vertumnus, of which ample use was made in the present chapter.
[462] Corresponding to the oscillation in the Latin verb *vertere/vortere*. For *Vertumnus* cf. *CIL* 3.14206, 5.7235, 9.5892, 11.4644; for *Vortumnus* cf. *CIL* 6.803, 804, 9.327, 2320.

i. VERTUMNUS IN ROME

We know of three geographical τόποι associated with Vertumnus in Rome, namely the Vicus Tuscus, the Aventine and the Capitol, associated with the introduction of this god into Rome either at the time of the Sabine war against Tatius or after the defeat of the Etruscan city of Volsinii: alongside the extensive evidence of Vertumnus in the Vicus Tuscus, Varro reports that Tatius dedicated an altar to Vertumnus on the Capitol,[463] and multiple sources record a temple on the Aventine, associated with the defeat of Volsinii in 264 BC by M. Fulvius Flaccus.[464] In Propertius' elegy, the god first introduces himself by declaring to like 'this throng', reminiscent of Horace's *turba*, and not to take pleasure in an ivory temple, being content with the sight of the Forum Romanum (cf. Prop. 4.2.5-6). The Vertumnus addressing the reader is the statue of the god situated at the beginning of the thoroughfare, in sight of the Forum (cf. Prop. 4.2.49-50), once (cf. Prop. 4.2.60 *ante Numam*) a rudimentary stump, now a bronze statue forged by the illustrious Veturius Mamurrius.[465] Epigraphy provides some material evidence: in 1549 was found, *in vico Tusco ad radicem Palatini*, a marble base for a statue most likely testifying to a revival of an archaic cult of Vertumnus during the Tetrarchy;[466] the base has since been lost, but the inscription and the find spot appear to confirm the existence of a statue of the god at the crossroad between the Forum and the Vicus Tuscus. Even more cogent is the evidence provided by archaeology: the Cloaca Maxima, which runs along the Vicus Tuscus, in the location where the base of the statue of Vertumnus was found, describes a noticeable double bend, only to restore its course afterwards. This can be explained as a result of the intention to avoid an obstacle, identifiable as this sacred area.[467] Since there is no indication that the

[463] Cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.74, Liv. 1.55.2 and Dion. Hal. 2.50.3.
[464] Cf. the *fasti Vall.* (*Inscr. It.* 13.2, 149) specifying *in Loreto maiore* (i.e. on the NW side of the Aventine, where Varro *Ling.* 5.152 and Festus 362L record that Titus Tatius' tomb was located), *fasti Allif.* (*Inscr. It.* 13.2, 181) and *fasti Amit.* (*Inscr. It.* 13.2, 191). The *dies natalis* is recorded on August 13 by all the three calendars mentioned and in *fasti Ant. mai.* (*Inscr. It.* 13.2, 16). See Ziolkowski 1992, 183-5. The temple hosted a painting depicting Flaccus' triumph (cf. *fasti Triumph.* (*Inscr. It.* 13.1, 264 p. 547 and Festus 209L), and Pliny (cf. Plin. *HN* 34.34) reports that on this occasion two thousand statues were brought to Rome as part of the booty.
[465] The legendary sculptor who was commissioned by Numa to make eleven perfect replicas of the *ancile*, the shield that descended from the sky and was kept by the Salii in the shrine of Mars, in order to prevent its theft (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 3.259ff.). Cicero and Livy speak of a *signum Vortumni* (cf. Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.154 and Liv. 44.16.10), whereas Porphyry mentions a *sacellum* (cf. Porphyr. *ad Epist.* 1.20.1).
[466] Cf. *CIL* 6.804. See Putnam 1967.
[467] Cf. Colonna 1987, 61.

course of the Cloaca was modified after the monarchy, we can infer that the statue might have already been there during the reign of the Tarquins.

As observed by Bettini, the existence of multiple *loci religiosi* associated with the cult of Vertumnus within the city is not to be regarded as an indication of the evidence's unreliability. An interesting parallel is in fact provided by the Veientine Juno: after the conquest of Veii, the goddess was evoked and her cult brought to the city, where she was worshipped in a temple on the Aventine as *Iuno Regina*, and the existence of multiple Junos simply corresponds to the plurality of epithets and functions associated with the goddess. Although no source mentions an *evocatio* of Vertumnus in conjunction with the destruction of Volsinii, it would be consistent with the dedication of a temple on the Aventine.[468] The language in Propertius actually seems to suggest this scenario when the god admits he does not regret having abandoned the hearths of Volsinii during the battle (cf. Prop. 4.2.3-4):[469] the epic nexus *inter proelia* sets the scene in the midst of the fight,[470] the dramatic *deseruisse* possibly suggests a precise reference to a ritual formula,[471] and the plural *foci* is a favourite of the poet, who employs it also in reference to Perusia.[472]

Vertumnus proceeds to illustrate his *signa paterna*, his 'biographical' information (cf. Prop. 4.2.2-4), by using the verb *orior*, suggestive of the technical term *origo* as opposed to *patria*, alluded to a few lines later: it is well attested that an individual belonging to a *municipium* could acquire Roman citizenship while at the same time maintaining his own citizenship, and just like men, foreign gods were to be co-opted amongst the members of a *civitas* in order to be fully integrated.[473] Vertumnus therefore, though still proud of his Etruscan origin, assures his readers that he equally proudly regards himself as a fully-fledged Roman citizen. Furthermore, Vertumnus makes two significant statements,

[468] Cf. Suits 1969, 485, Marquis 1974, 494 and Radke 1979, 317f.
[469] Eisenhut argues, I believe unconvincingly, that *Volsinios* is a synecdoche for *Tuscos* (cf. Eisenhut 1958, 1677).
[470] The almost epic tone is enhanced by the enjambement (for *inter proelia* and *sim.* cf. Enn. *Ann.* fr. 286 Sk., Verg. *Aen.* 11.541, 12.337, Ov. *Tr.* 5.6.9-10, Luc. 10.85, Val. Fl. 8.336 and Sil. 2.188). See Fedeli 2015.
[471] See Pinotti 2004, 48-9. Cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 3.9.7 for the *evocatio* of the gods of Carthage by Scipio in the Third Punic War. Ovid's Juno employs a similar phrasing at *Fast.* 6.49-51.
[472] Cf. Prop. 1.1.20, 2.1.29, 54, 2.1.62, 4.11.42. See Ingellis 2013, 136.
[473] Cf. the use of *signum* in Plaut. *Men.* 1110 and in some funerary inscriptions to introduce the name of the dead (cf. *CLE* 181, 4-5, 256.5 Buecheler). For individuals belonging to a *municipium* who acquired Roman citizenship cf. Cato at Cic. *Leg.* 2.5 and Cicero himself with his brother at Cic. *Leg.* 2.3, and for co-opted foreign gods cf. Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.39, *Leg.* 2.26, *Fin.* 3.64. For this evidence see Bettini 2015 *passim*.

(i) that he was attributed his name *ab eventu*, suggesting that the god was assigned his current name after a certain moment in time, and (ii) that this current name reflects *patria lingua*. Propertius is here playing with the ambiguity that surrounds the origins of Vertumnus and seems to suggest that the god was known with a different name and was later re-named in the language of his newly acquired *patria*.

As to the identity of the Etruscan deity, it is possible to put forward a correlation with the male god[474] *Voltumna*, the Etruscan **Velθumna*/**Veltumna*, at whose *fanum*, in all likelihood located at Volsinii (Campo della Fiera), gathered the Etruscan league.[475] The name in its current form suggests an epithet comparable to a *gentilicium* or a toponym,[476] possibly to be attributed to Tinia/Jupiter on account of Varro's contention that Vertumnus is *deus Etruriae princeps* (Varro *Ling.* 5.46):[477] in a process analogous to the passage from the Etruscan *lasa vecuvia* to the Latin Vegoia, a form **tin(ia) velθumna* can be reconstructed, meaning 'the Tinia of Volsinii', equivalent to the *tina θvariena* from Area C of the sanctuary of Pyrgi or *tinia calusna* in the Belvedere temple at Orvieto. This deity is seemingly portrayed on a bronze mirror from Tuscania dated to ca. 300 BC and currently at the National Archaeological Museum of Florence,[478] portraying an *extispicium* attended by two divine figures, a *raθlθ*, an Apollo-like deity to the left and a *veltune* to the right, possibly representing a god of the underworld, on account of similarities in his attire to that of Eris in the Mariemont mirror from ca. 330 BC.[479] Voltumna/Veltune could also be associated with the realm of trade, as recorded by

[474] *Contra* Schulze and Devoto (cf. Schulze 1904, 252 and Devoto 1940, 279). The *-a* ending is consistent with a common onomastic pattern in Etruria, attested for both people (e.g. *Vibenna*, *Sisenna*) and deities (e.g. *Tinia*, *Paχa*).

[475] Cf. Latte 1960, 191f., Pfiffig 1975, 235ff. and Marquis 1974, 497ff. For the *fanum Voltumnae* cf. Liv. 4.23.5, 25.7, 61.2, 5.17.6, 6.2.2. The relevance of this suburban sanctuary is confirmed by the survival, at least up until the Constantinian age, of religious ceremonies, as attested by the so-called 'Rescritto di Spello' (cf. *CIL* 11.5265), issued between 333 and 337 AD, which allowed the Umbrians to celebrate their annual rites and related games in Spello, without having to go *aput Volsinios*.

[476] Cf. Cristofani 1985c, 78. *Contra* Capdeville 1999, 124 n. 68.

[477] Capdeville (cf. Capdeville 1999) argues, I believe unconvincingly, that *princeps* would not refer to 'chief', but to 'first', because Vertumnus' statue was the first of an Etruscan god in the city, whereas Marquis (cf. Marquis 1974), equally unconvincingly, suggests that Vertumnus is the first god to be invoked in the strictly-established order of the sacred ceremonies.

[478] Cf. *CIE* 3.10411, Cristofani 1985b, Harari 1997b, Small 1997, De Grummond 2006, 29-30 and Harari 2009.

[479] The presence of horizontal straps above the god's ankles, not attached to any footwear, with a protruding loop and hanging ends along the sides, worn by the infernal Eris, could signal a chthonic attribute, which would

multiple sources, and with the notion of *casus* and *sortes*, for, according to Donatus' scholia to Terence's *Adelphoe*, he has the ability to influence the course of events, either favourably or unfavourably.[480]

ii. ETYMOLOGIES

The etymology of the god's name remains to this day a topic of debate amongst scholars. As observed by Poccetti, a theonym associated with the stem of *vertere* is not isolated in the landscape of Italic languages,[481] and the alternation of the vocalism in the first and second syllable suggests that the god's name was variously adapted to the spoken language, confirming the popularity of Vertumnus' cult, whose *simulacra* functioned as topographical landmarks.[482] The name, never recorded in Etruscan inscriptions, is in all likelihood not originally Etruscan,[483] but rather appears to be an adaptation of an assonant form which, by the Augustan age, had been lost and forgotten, giving rise to a number of false etymologies. Propertius' Vertumnus accounts for the lack of certainty and offers three different etymologies, but then, by a process of elimination, presents the reader with the only reliable and truthful explanation. However, the reader must keep in mind that the god is by nature multifaceted and deceitful, and his words are to be taken with a grain of salt: as Barchiesi writes, 'the suspicion could well arise that the god might also be capable of imitating an expert in Roman antiquities.'[484]

prompt the interpretation of the Tuscania mirror as an *extispicium* scene framed by a celestial and an infernal deity, as attested in the Castelgiorgio mirror (cf. Van der Meer 2013).

480 For the former cf. Porphyr. *ad Epist.* 1.20.1, ps-Asc. *ad Verr.* 2.1.154 and Columella *Rust.* 10.308-10. An inscription from Ancona (cf. *CIL* 9.5892) records a certain *dispensator* Karus, someone concerned with financial matters, usually of humble origins, making an offering in fulfilment of a vow *Vertumno Augusto*. For the latter cf. Ter. *Ad.* 191 *quae res tibi vortat male* and 728 *di bene vortant*. In this regard, Bettini (cf. Bettini 2015, 120) observes that the finding of an altar in Trier dedicated to *Vertumnus sive Pisintus* (cf. *AE* 1928, 190), alongside three inscriptions nearby dedicated to the *Dii Cas(s)us*, the deifications of chance, by a *sortilegus*, a priest in charge of the interpretation of the oracular *sortes*, in conjunction with the attestation of the circulation of divination practices by *sortes* in Etruria from the republican age, might support Donatus' assertion.

481 Cf. the names of Latin and perhaps Sabellic deities such as *Postvorta*, *Antevorta*, *Prorsa* (cf. Poccetti 2012, 200-1).

482 Cf. *CIL* 6.9393 *faber argentarius ad Vortumnum*. Letta and D'Amato (cf. Letta & D'Amato 1975, 103ff.) list an inscription perhaps from Marche, which, alongside evidence of the god in Marsica, Lucania and Apulia, seems to point to a widespread cult of Vertumnus in agricultural and pastoral contexts.

483 *Contra* Schulze, who argues a derivation from Etruscan *gentilicia* such as *Veltymnus*, *Veldumnius* and **Vertumna* (cf. Schulze 1904, 252).

484 Barchiesi 1997, 188.

The only truthful etymology, according to Vertumnus, combines *vertere* and *omnis*: Vertumnus would be 'he who can turn into anything', like Horace's fickle Priscus, described as *Vertumnis quotquot sunt natus iniquis* (Hor. *Sat.* 2.7.14).[485] And the god has the ability not only to transform, but to do so *decenter*, gracefully, as attested in one of the elegies of the *Corpus Tibullianum* dedicated to Sulpicia and her *decor*, where the author compares her to Vertumnus who *mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet* ([Tib.] 3.8.14). Moreover, if we are to believe the Commentator Cruquianus, the *simulacra* of the god were adorned by passers-by, which would explain Propertius' use of imperatives, suggesting that rather than performing the metamorphosis himself, Vertumnus lacks agency and an external source induces his transformations.[486] The veracity of this etymology is proclaimed by declaring that the rumours are false and that the only reliable source the reader should trust is the deity who speaks about himself: the *index* of his name is his ability to transform his appearance as he pleases, for his nature suits any semblance. Vertumnus thus resembles the god Proteus,[487] though he seemingly lacks his crucial prophetic faculty: Proteus belongs to the mythological τόπος of the seer who must be seized to reveal his secrets, and his metamorphic ability is essentially finalised to escape capture, whereas Vertumnus' potential for transformation appears to be *ad infinitum*. Unlike most deities with the ability to transform their semblance, who once the metamorphosis has taken place return to their own appearance, Vertumnus does not seem to hold any core manifestation.[488]

But the other two etymologies presented by Propertius are just as compelling. The first etymology combines *vertere* and *amnis* (Prop. 4.2.7-10): the god would have been given his name after the course of the Tiber was deviated (*verso … ab amne*). Propertius refers to the fact that the plain of the Velabrum was once covered by waters, hence Vertumnus would be 'he who diverts the river', a god of draining. A similar interpretation is attested in Ovid's *Fasti*, with an allusion to Propertius' incipit to 4.1: the poet, surprised at the sight of a Roman *matrona* walking barefoot through the plain, is addressed by

[485] Cf. Ps-Acronis *ad Sat*. 2.7.14 Keller *Vertumnus dictus, qui humanis mentibus praeest, a vertendo. hic quondam Romae colebatur … Vertumnus dicitur deus, qui praeest sensibus, ab eo, quia vertit et mutat cogitationes humanas*. With regard to the plural *Vertumnii* cf. Plaut. *Stich*. 278 and Catull. 3.1, 13.12, 86.6.
[486] Cf. Comm. Cruq. *ad Sat.* 2.7.14.
[487] Cf. *Od.* 4.417-18, 456-8 and Verg. *Georg.* 4.4.05ff.
[488] Cf. Bettini 2012, 102.

an elderly woman, who recalls the days when the Velabrum was a marshland of reeds and rushes, before the waters withdrew and Vertumnus took his name (Ov. *Fasti* 6.409-10 *nondum conveniens diversis iste figuris / nomen ab averso ceperat amne deus*).[489] Ovid lets his reader guess by means of subtle allusions, in particular the etymological play on *averso*, which would evoke the origin of the god's current denomination. The exercise works well precisely because it suggests a time when Vertumnus as a god existed, but no name was in place by which the author can refer to him. Evidently this was a popular etymology, which associated the god with an early time in the history of the city and bound him intrinsically to its topography. Its circulation is testified by a Servian note, where the commentator reports how the *ficus ruminalis* was located where the Tiber once ran along, *antequam Vertumno factis sacrificiis averteretur* (Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.90). The gloss might suggest that the god was invoked specifically on account of his *vis*, his power to divert the course of rivers, but the commentator could simply be drawing attention to the detail of the sacrifices made to a local deity (which he knows as Vertumnus) to further illustrate the relationship between the god and the episode of the drainage.

The second etymology combines *vertere* and *annus* (Prop. 4.2.11-18): Vertumnus would be 'he who turns the year', and as such would be associated with the seasons as well as with the changes which they bring about. The god's *vertere* manifests itself from the grapes turning purple, to the swelling corn, to the orchard, where thanks to him fruits grow sweet and ripe. Even more, his *vis* finds its greatest renown in the gardens, (Prop. 4.2.41-6), where the cucumber, the pumpkin, the cabbage and even the flowers all blossom in his name. Yet Vertumnus' *vertere* presides not only over a natural process, but governs also the realm of the *insitor*, for the god, Propertius tells us, is honoured above all by the grafter, who pays his vows with a garland of fruit: the *insitor*'s endeavours are in fact traditionally pursued in the name of change, for his expertise makes him capable of bending plants' nature in order to create something new.[490] It is precisely for these reasons that Vertumnus is worshipped by the people, as Propertius explicitly informs us that to the god is dedicated an actual

[489] Such a practice is only recorded by Ovid. Once again, suspicions arise that this elderly woman in in fact Vertumnus in disguise (cf. Barchiesi 1997, 188-9).
[490] Propertius illustrates this point by re-appropriating the image of the pear tree bearing apples from Verg. *Georg.* 2.32-4 (cf. also Prop. 4.2.18). See Dee 1974, 47.

religious rite, according to which people honour him with *primitiae*, the first-fruits of the changing season,[491] thus allowing the reader to catch a glimpse of the execution of this popular cult, seemingly revolving around the earth's produce, which as a result represents the symbols of the god.[492]

iii. VERTUMNUS AND POMONA

Let us linger for a moment in this domain of the *horti*, for a garden is also the setting of the erotic exploits of the god, the story of Pomona and Vertumnus, as told by Ovid in *Met.* 14.623-771.[493] The episode, conveniently placed within the *Aeneid*-framework of the poem, in the obscure world of Italian aetiology, is the last amatory episode of the whole epic poem: Vertumnus is the most persistent suitor of the nymph Pomona, who loves nothing more than gardens and orchards and is reluctant to surrender to the advances of her admirers; thanks to his ability to transform, the god resorts to every stratagem in order to seduce her, but without any success; so he decides to disguise himself as an old woman, and to enter, with the help of this non-threatening appearance, her well-defended garden to try to persuade her, first with flatteries and then with the admonitory tale of Iphis and Anaxarete; when even this last expedient does not seem to move the nymph, and Vertumnus, frustrated, returns to his actual form ready to take her by force, Pomona, smitten by his beauty, finally succumbs.[494] Both the first person narrator and the reference to the origin of a statue suggest a tight intertextual exchange with Propertius 4.2, which is further exposed in the list of the many characters into which

[491] Cf. Columella *Rust.* 10.306-10, referring to a farmer bringing his products to sell in the city, and offering some of them to Vertumnus.
[492] Capdeville submits that this association with the changing seasons might relate to the fact that the Etruscan League seemingly gathered at the Fanum Voltumna once a year (cf. Capdeville 1999, 121).
[493] The episode is not attested before Ovid, who might have drawn from a Hellenistic source with a similar narrative (for potential sources cf. Forbes Irving 1990, 285).
[494] The episode is structured as a double παρακλαυσίθυρον: within Vertumnus' primary narrative is embedded a secondary narrative, containing the αἴτιον for the statue of Aphrodite Parakyptousa, which alludes to the punishment due to those unyielding to love. Vertumnus is portrayed by Ovid as an elegiac suitor, or rather, on account of his ability to metamorphose and adapt to every set of circumstances, the ideal *innamorato*. Myerowitz (cf. Myerowitz 1985, 134) goes even further and suggests that the god must be regarded as the 'mythic archetype for Ovid's instructions to the male lover in the *Ars Amatoria*' (cf. Ov. *Ars am.* 759-62). A further allusion to *Ars* is provided by a humorous expedient, which sees the conventional bribing of the mistress' nurse (cf. Ov. *Ars am.* 1.351ff.) turned into Vertumnus' disguise as a nurse of sort in order to persuade her beloved to succumb to his pursuit with his own words.

Vertumnus turns himself in order to seduce Pomona, some of whom are explicitly drawn from Propertius' list at lines 23-40.[495]

Very little is known about the female protagonist of this erotic tale,[496] but in Ovid's account she is clearly made into an ideal counterpart for Vertumnus (cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.623-34). Pomona is introduced as the most skilled and zealous in the culture of gardens,[497] so much so that she takes her name from their fruits, and her symbol is the *adunca falx*, the curved pruning-hook, which she uses not only to trim, but also to engraft, in this reminiscent of the Propertian *insitor*. Vertumnus himself cannot help pointing out to his beloved how similar they are, they are indeed a perfect match. The minute description of Pomona, precisely because of her close affinity with the god, can in turn be read as a description of Vertumnus himself, presented, similarly to the Propertian portrayal, as a rustic god, who receives the fruits of gardens and orchards. But the erotic characterisation of the episode closely suggests a parallel with Priapus, mentioned in the list of Pomona's suitors (cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.640), made even more explicit by the allusion to the god in Propertius[498] as well as Horace's *Sat.* 1.8 and Tibullus' 1.4, creating an intricate web of intertextual allusions.

The choice to insert this episode, one of the longest and most elaborate of the entire poem, as the last erotic tale of the epic sparks many questions, seeing as Vertumnus appears to be a minor deity in the Roman pantheon.[499] Yet Ovid is clearly drawing from contemporary erotic poetry, *Priapea*, and Propertius' elegy, which undoubtedly prompted great fascination and curiosity in the poet. What

[495] The god becomes a reaper (cf. Prop. 4.2.28 and Ov. *Met.* 14.643-4), a mower (cf. Prop. 4.2.25-6 and Ov. *Met.* 14.645-6), a soldier (cf. Prop. 4.2.27 and Ov. *Met.* 14.651), a fisherman (cf. Prop. 4.2.37 and Ov. *Met.* 14.651), a ploughman (cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.647-8), a pruner (cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.649) an apple-picker (cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.650), a young man (cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.766), and an old woman (cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.654-6). About Propertius' list of Vertumnus' *figurae*, somewhat reminiscent of Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.227-30, Dee writes, 'Vertumnus settles down to what is in effect a catalogue of professions and activities, all of which were part of normal, everyday life in Rome and the surrounding countryside' (Dee 1974, 49).

[496] Varro (cf. Varro *Ling.* 7.45), quoting Ennius (cf. Enn. *Ann.* frr. 116-18 Sk.), mentions a *flamen Pomonalis* whose origin would be from *Pomona*.

[497] The expression *hic amor, hoc studium* is a direct quote from Verg. *Aen.* 11.739.

[498] The god is associated with the gardens, often in a custodial capacity with erotic innuendos, to him were dedicated the earth's produce, and his attribute was a *falx* (for the erotic innuendos cf. *Priap.* 5.3-4, 15, 38, 71, for the god's association with the earth's produce cf. *Priap.* 16, 21, 42, 53, and for the *falx* as Priapus' attribute cf. *Priap.* 6.2, 11.2, 30.1, 33.7, 55.1, Tib. 1.4.8 and Verg. *Georg.* 4.109-11 respectively). See Suits 1969, 477ff. Prop. 4.2 further shares traits with Callimachus' *Iamb.* 9, where an Ithyphallic Herm addresses the question posed to him by a passer-by and declares his Tyrrhenian origin (see Myers 1994, 236-7).

[499] Fulgentius (cf. Fulg. *Serm. ant.* 11) regards both Vertumnus and Priapus as *semones*, inferior deities.

also appears clear, however, is Ovid's utter indifference to the literary potential offered by the Propertian god's Etruscan origin, which is thoroughly ignored in favour of an Italian characterisation.[500] As Fantazzi observed, 'Ovid does capture in the story of Pomona and Vertumnus the charm and simplicity of native, Italic myth and daringly sets it against the sophisticated Greek importations. This myth is much more instrumental for the assertion of Italic and Roman qualities in these last books than the tale of Aeneas perfunctorily taken over from Vergil.'[501] Yet I do not agree with his assertion that the tale, with the original coupling of Etruscan and Italic deities, would allude to the peaceful alliance between Etruscans and Italians, for Vertumnus' Etruscan origin is never mentioned, nor even hinted at, throughout the episode. The following reference to the peace with Tatius (cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.803-6) does suggest the ancientness of the events, but not Etruscan associations. Vertumnus' allure inevitably rests in his main attribute, the ability to *vertere*, the Protean predisposition to metamorphosis: the god, 'whose name … embodies the subject of the whole of the *Metamorphoses*, is an appropriate figure to announce Ovid's final change in direction and to recapitulate many of the themes which have already figured prominently in the poem.'[502]

iv. PROPERTIUS/VERTUMNUS

Propertius had announced in the opening elegy of book 4, as part of his poetic program, his intention to sing of rites and deities and ancient names of places (cf. Prop. 4.1.69), and this solemn declaration to celebrate Roman aetiology appears consistent with Augustus' political programme of restoration of ancient monuments and religious ceremonies. However, the choice to celebrate, in the first aetiological poem of the collection, the statue of Vertumnus presents some unexpected issues:[503] as much as the monument was a landmark for many Romans, a prominent feature of the daily landscape of the city, Vertumnus' statue does not appear included in Augustus' monumental urban

[500] See Littlefield 1965 and Gentilcore 1995.
[501] Fantazzi 1976, 284.
[502] Myers 1994, 226.
[503] Cf. Pinotti 2004, 46.

project, and, in addition, Vertumnus is not, at least originally, a Roman god.[504] Propertius thus appears to intentionally depart from the so-called 'Augustan landmarks', a series of monuments formally recognised as symbolic of the political programme of the principate, in order to shed light onto monuments conveying a very different message.

Vertumnus proclaims his Etruscan ancestry in a solemn distich (lines 3-4):[505] the incipit, with the phrasing *Tuscus ego*, recalls hymnic poetry and 'Ich-Stil' monologues typical of eastern cults,[506] followed by a polyptoton and by the verb *orior*, the resultative present privileged in the Augustan age for its archaic patina. Yet the reference to his noble homeland functions to announce the circumstances of the god's introduction in Rome, possibly as a result of his *evocatio* during the war against Volsinii, and gradually prepares the reader for the scene of his complete and successful integration in the religious life of the Roman people.[507] Propertius thus purposefully celebrates, rather than a Roman god, the foreign Vertumnus, *exemplum* of a peaceful assimilation and integration of outsiders, both peoples and gods, into the *urbs*. *Origo* and *patria* are, for Vertumnus and many citizens, not in opposition, but rather harmoniously coexist: the god is both Etruscan and Roman, his *signa paterna* refer to his ancestry, but with *patria lingua* he is assigned 'an etymologically Roman past.'[508] This dynamic finds expression in Vertumnus' speech, where the god's pronouncement that his name comes from his *patria lingua*, namely Latin, suggesting his acceptance into Rome by means of its language, is immediately followed by the reminiscence of *meis … Tuscis*, which reasserts Vertumnus' Etruscan origin.

[504] Vertumnus' foreignness was not necessarily a problem for Augustus, under whom Apollo was very prominent.
[505] Tränkle (cf. Tränkle 1960, 39, 175) already noticed the epic tone of the poem in the phrase *divum sator, ut Romana per aevum* at line 55, and in the enjambment *Romana … turba* (55-6). See also Dee 1974, 53 and Ingellis 2013, 133.
[506] For the influence of the Alexandrian tradition cf. on the one hand the funerary inscriptions addressing passers-by in the eighth book of the *Anthologia Palatina* and the anathematic epigrams in which the dedicated object tells its story from book 6 of the *Anthologia Palatina*, on the other the talking statues in Callim. *Aet.* And *Ia.* 7 and 9. For the analogies with religious texts, in which the initial formula was followed by a list of the god's epithets and powers cf. the *res gestae reginae Isidos*. For a detailed account cf. Pinotti 2004, 46-7, 54ff. and Ingellis 2013, 134-5.
[507] Cf. Ingellis 2013, 135.
[508] Welch 2005, 37. Cf. also p. 50.

The placement of Vertumnus' statue is also quite significant in this regard. The Vicus Tuscus was a diverse thoroughfare, which was with all probability frequented by many foreigners as well. The decision to have the Vicus Tuscus' Vertumnus speaking, rather than the Aventine god, speaks to the positive message conveyed by the poem:[509] the statue was a token of the peaceful coexistence of an Etruscan minority in the city of Rome; the Aventine temple, conversely, suggested a violent assimilation. Propertius' Vertumnus appears to assume a position of nonconformism towards the official cults, highly politicised as part of the Augustan religious program, which is suggested by his pleasure in observing the humble and variegated crowd of the Vicus Tuscus. The author, not shy elsewhere of condemning the forceful subjugation of Italian communities, here avoids allusions to the violent fall of Volsinii in order to concentrate on a positive outcome.

It has frequently been suggested by the critics that Vertumnus acts as a mouthpiece of a sort for Propertius, as embodiment of his poetry's Callimchean ποικιλία,[510] very appropriate for such a multifaceted god, and that 4.2, the first properly aetiological poem, would further the implications of the poetic programme announced in the first elegy:[511] the fourth book, as a result, is an expression of such versatility, 'assuming sometimes male and sometimes female perspectives, sometimes amatory and sometimes epic themes.'[512] The variety celebrated is not only that of elegiac poetry, but also that of a multifaceted Roman identity, of which Vertumnus is a perfect *exemplum*. But I would argue that if Vertumnus is a *figura* of Propertius, then the poet is also an *exemplum* of a happy assimilation and hybrid identity. Both the god and the poet celebrate their native land (cf. Prop. 4.1.64 *Umbria Romani patria Callimachi*, 4.2.3-49 *Tuscus ego, et Tuscis orior … et tu, Roma, meis tribuisti praemia Tuscis*), but both are later welcomed in Rome after tragic events and find pride in the new *patria*. The celebration of their respective origins indeed coexists with their belonging to the Roman *civitas*.

[509] Cf. Pinotti 2004, 51.
[510] Significant is the closing pentameter of the elegy, *unum opus est, operi non datur unus honos* (Prop. 4.2.64), which alludes to the *varietas* of the collection.
[511] Cf. Dee 1974, Shea 1988, DeBrohun 1994, 53ff., Newman 1997, 275-7 and Janan 2001, 14-15.
[512] Welch 2005, 35. Moreover, it has been noticed how the language adopted by Vertumnus closely recalls that of a poet discussing his book (cf. Shea 1988 for a detailed account).

However, as Poccetti observes,[513] ethnonym and toponym are inverted: Propertius juxtaposes the choronym *Umbria* to the ethnonym *Romanus*, while Vertumnus applies the ethnonym *Tuscus* to the toponym *Roma*. In Prop. 4.10, the reality of the cities of Etruria is portrayed as wrecked and derelict, in contrast to a distant past of glory, whereas Umbria, as will be explored in detail in chapter 5.2, is depicted as an extremely vital and dynamic entity in the poet's 'emotional landscape': the opposition between a region of shelter and prosperity (cf. Prop. 1.22.10 *terris fertilis uberibus*) and a region of dust and sorrow (cf. Prop. 1.22.6 *pulvis … dolor*) would explain the absence from Propertius' poetry of the choronym *Etruria*, the referent of which is in his eyes empty and sterile. Nonetheless, the proximity of the toponym and the ethnonym clearly alludes to the mutual exchange between the two entities.[514]

Propertius' perspective on the identity debate, revealed with quite a unique forcefulness, is that of a member of the provincial élite, who retains great pride in his Italian ancestry despite feeling integrated into Roman society, and who vigorously asserts the contribution of minorities to the growth and prosperity of the empire. What appears to be absent is a hierarchical structure at the top of which sits Rome. Instead, the attention to localisms and the processes of integration indicates a biunivocal system of continuous exchange between the centre and the periphery, of which Vertumnus is an allegory. As Welch well put it, 'Vertumnus is also a symbol not so much of Roman Italy, but rather of Italian Rome.'[515]

[513] Cf. Poccetti 2012, 178.
[514] I do not see, with Sullivan, an 'underlying criticism' (Sullivan 1976, 41). Propertius' intent here appears to be rather to underscore the multiplicity of the Roman experience, which finds its raison d'être in the diversity of its ethnic core.
[515] Welch 2005, 49.

CONCLUSIONS

Vertumnus qualifies as a mysterious divine entity, of which very little is known and relatively little can be inferred. Thanks to Bettini's monograph we now possess a much richer tapestry of documentation that enables us to shed some light on previously obscure matters relating to the god and his manifestations. Unfortunately, due to a lack of material evidence, it still remains challenging to determine potential associations of Vertumnus with Etruria. However, the god's centrality in the geography of Rome appears to be unmistakable in the context of the Vicus Tuscus, a lively and busy thoroughfare frequented by a diverse set of people, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, honest and cunning, citizens and foreigners. The statue of Vertumnus must have thus embodied the character of this neighbourhood, its multifaceted nature but also its crafty and deceitful side. Its geographical proximity and close association with the Vicus Tuscus seem to suggest a deeper connection, possibly in the form of a local unofficial or minor cult established in an early phase by the Etruscan community settled in the area and later appropriated by the state, in particular after the fall of Volsinii in 264 BC.

As scarce as the material evidence is, Propertius is an invaluable source to explore the Etruscan legacy of Vertumnus. The dynamic between the god's Etruscan origin and his assimilation into the Roman pantheon is crucial to understand the cultural background of the god, and the extremely dense lines 3-5, placed in prominent position, appear to denote a solemn declaration of identity on the part of the god. The reiteration of the adjective *Tuscus* in the incipit leaves no space to doubt that this is a foreign deity adopted by the Romans from the Etruscans, and the explicit reference to Volsinii further narrows the geographical identification of the god. Vertumnus thus appears to be truthful about those elements of his story that should be known to all, but he is secretive and enigmatic about the etymologies of his name, which clearly already belonged to the sphere of forgotten linguistic relics: the language employed by Vertumnus is distinctly asseverative when the god recalls details of his origins, yet when he is listing the different etymologies of his name, even the one he claims to be correct, the poet makes ample use of words denoting an oral transmission that is inherently unreliable (cf. 7 *aiunt*, 12 *creditur*, 19 *mendax fama*, 20 *crede*, 41 *fama*).

Vertumnus' initial description is a unique testimony for the reader: the quite clear allusion to an *evocatio*, apparent in the vocabulary, confirms the foreign identity of the god, to whom is dedicated a temple outside the *pomoerium* on the Aventine, in a similar fashion to the Veientine Juno. However, Propertius insists on the fact that the Vertumnus who is talking is the statue overlooking the Forum, and not the god of the temple: this choice appears to respond to a desire by the poet on the one hand to give voice to a popular deity, more closely associated with the *turba* of the Vicus Tuscus, *mea turba* (Prop. 4.2.5), and on the other hand to emphasise the antiquity of Vertumnus' presence in the city, seeing as the statue of the god was much more ancient than the marble temple, and thus much more embedded in the cultural milieu of Rome. Propertius in fact specifies that Vertumnus witnessed the conflict against the Sabines of Tatius and that 'his Etruscans' were rewarded for their assistance, whereby the Vicus Tuscus maintains its name to this day. The ancientness of Vertumnus' presence works to counter the god's wish that the Romans will for all time pass before his feet.

This choice is also significant from a poetical viewpoint, seeing as it has often been noticed that Vertumnus can be regarded as a mouthpiece for Propertius. The god's insistence on his Etruscan heritage echoes the poet's insistence on his own Umbrian origin: in the first elegy of the fourth book, Propertius had declared himself the Roman Callimachus, whose books he wishes will make his *patria*, Umbria, swell with pride (cf. Prop. 4.1a.63-4), with a repetition that marks great honour and devotion, which the poet shares with Vertumnus. But Propertius also shares with Vertumnus an emotional connection to the neighbouring Etruria. Etruria belongs to the geography of the poet's youth, dense with sentimental overtones of melancholy and pain, the former associated with the loss of a great civilisation (cf. the lament for Veii in Prop. 4.10), the latter with the loss of a relative during the siege of Perusia (cf. Prop. 1.21-2). Hence the choice of a deity like Vertumnus stems from a similar experience the two share, a native land outside Rome, of which both are proud and which they unapologetically celebrate, but a new-found home in the city, for which they both feel a deep and rooted sense of belonging.

That is another reason for the poet to have the statue of Vertumnus on the Vicus Tuscus address the reader and not the god in the ivory temple, seeing as the latter would have suggested a violent and forceful process of integration. In other words, Propertius also presents an *origo* that is distinct

from his *patria*, but the two peacefully and harmoniously coexist. In this sense, the poet and his speaking god are fitting *exempla* of assimilation of a foreign element into the city and of the religious as well as political syncretism promoted by Augustus.[516] However, Propertius is not fully endorsing the *princeps*' programme: the celebration of Vertumnus, a foreign god, as the first aetiological poem of the collection suggests a subversion of the Augustan agenda seemingly espoused in the opening elegy, focused on Roman antiquities, in favour of a 'municipal' perspective, that is a shift from the state-sponsored notion of Roman Italy to that of an Italian Rome, made great by the invaluable contributions of the many peoples who are part of the rich ethnic fabric of the city, in particular the Etruscans, a people for whom Propertius has evidently great respect and admiration.

[516] Cf. Pinotti 2004, 50.

3.2 THE RIVER OF ROME: TUSCUS TIBERIS

An analogous process is attested for the Tiber, evoked by the Augustan poets as *Tuscus*, originally extraneous to the Romans but later turned into one of the very symbols of Rome.[517] The Romans knew their river originally as *Albula*, and the name *Tiberis* was established only after the king of Alba Tiberinus (*Tiberius* in Cincius) perished in it;[518] the corresponding river-deity was *Tiberinus*. The first mention of both in literature can be found in Ennius' *Annales* (cf. Enn. *Ann*. 26 Sk. *teque pater Tiberine tuo cum flumine sancto* and 453 Sk. *et Tiberis flumen ‹flavom›*[519] *vomit in mare salsum*), and its imagery is recurrent in the poets of the Augustan age, with relatively little degree of elaboration.[520] Probably the most suggestive description of the Tiber however can be found in the *Aeneid*, at the outset of book 7 (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.30-4), in a picture of absolute grace, with the Trojan fleet entering the quiet and safe *alveus* of the *flavus Tiberinus*, the *amoenus* river.[521] Sources prior to Vergil located the arrival of Aeneas' fleet *in agro Laurentino* or περὶ Λώρεντον, but never at the mouth of the river,[522] which in the *Aeneid* corresponds also to the site of the table prodigy and the prodigy of the sow, as well as the location where the settlement of Troia is founded.[523] This first encounter with the Tiber is thus foundational, and deserves to be celebrated in all its splendour as the symbol of the greatness of Rome.[524]

[517] Cf. Boldrer 1999, 31. Both the *vicus Tuscus* and the Tiber can be interpreted as 'lieux de mémoire' (see Nora 1984-1992).
[518] Cf. Cinc. fr. 6 Cornell, Varro *Ling.* 5.30, Liv. 1.3, Dion. Hal. 1.71.2, Ov. *Met.* 14.614-16 (with reference to 14.328), *Fast.* 2.389-90, Plin. *HN* 3.53, Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.72 and Varro *Ling.* 5.30.
[519] The adjective seems to be traditionally attributed to the Tiber (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 7.31 *epitheton proprium*), and, regardless of its position, the textual choice seems to be confirmed by the frequent imitations of this line in later authors.
[520] Cf. the echo of the first fragment in Hor. *Epist.* 1.11.4, Prop. 1.14.1, Verg. *Georg.* 4.369, *Aen.* 8.72, 10.833, 11.449; for the second fragment cf. Hor. *Carm.* 1.2.13, 1.8.8, 2.3.18, Verg. *Aen.* 7.30-2, 9.816, Ov. *Met.* 14.448, *Fast.* 6.228.
[521] The Lucretian language (cf. Lucr. 2.344-6, 4.136 6.436) contributes to create what La Penna calls 'idillio eroico' (La Penna 1996, 112).
[522] Cf. Liv. 1.1.4, Dion. Hal. 1.45.1, 53.3, 63.3, 72.3, Strabo 5.3.2. Vergil's version will be followed by Horace (cf. *Carm. saec.* 37).
[523] Cf. Carcopino 1919, 441ff. and Boas 1938. The significance of the choice is enhanced by the intentional parallel with Apollonius Rhodius (cf. Rehm 1932, 81 n. 168, Buchheit 1963, 176 n. 15, 179, La Penna 1996, Pierini 1999 and Nelis 2001, 262ff.).
[524] Cf. Cic. *Rep.* 2.5, where Romulus is celebrated for choosing the site on the banks of the Tiber for the foundation of the city.

The same foundational role of the Tiber is powerfully evoked by Propertius, who envisages the dramatic opposition between Octavian's Rome, ideological pillar of civilization, and the abominable and corrupt Egypt of Antony and Cleopatra as embodied by their respective rivers: to *nostra … urbe~te, saeva* corresponds *Tiberi~Nilo* (cf. Prop. 2.33a.19-20), just as to *Iovi nostro~Anubin* corresponds *Tiberim~Nili* (cf. Prop. 3.11.41-2).[525] This symbolic opposition is employed also by Vergil,[526] who describes Carthage as *Italiam contra Tiberinaque longe / ostia* (Verg. *Aen.* 1.13-14), illustrating in geographical terms the historical distance of Carthaginians and Romans.[527] The device appears again at Verg. *Aen.* 7.302-4,[528] where to the fearsome Syrtes and the monstrous Scylla and Charybdis, embodying the dangers of the unknown and the menace of sailing, Vergil counters the security of the longed-for Tiber.

[525] Cf. Fedeli 2005, 931 and Pinotti 2015, 41. In the first instance, *longa … via* at line 16 draws attention to the distance between Rome and Egypt (cf. Stok 2012, 168), and the polarity is enhanced by the use of military language (*fugare*) and by the ideological justification of the eternal enmity of the two peoples (*gratia nulla*, not in terms of *beneficium*, but rather as *amicitia*, as observed by Fedeli). In the second poem, the polarity is intensified by the use of the verb *opponere*. The same scene is depicted on the shield of Aeneas and described in similar tones (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.698-700), however it is not possible to determine which section was written first. I would not exclude that the inspiration might have come for both poets from an artistic rendition of the battle of Actium, since the language is extremely visual.
[526] Cf. also Hor. *Epist.* 1.11, where the Tiber is mentioned as symbol of Rome *contra* a series of Greek cities.
[527] Cf. especially the use of *longe* (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 1.13).
[528] Cf. Catull. 64.156 and Lucr. 1.722.

i. THE TIBER AS A FOREIGN ENTITY

The picture that emerges is one where the Tiber is raised to the status of symbol of the city itself in express opposition to a foreign power. And yet another Propertian passage seems to paint a somewhat different picture: *Tarpeiusque pater nuda de rupe tonabat, / et Tiberis nostris advena bubus erat* (Prop. 4.1a.7-8).[529] The poet is pointing out to an imaginary *hospes* the places of early Rome, a bare landscape of *collis et herba* occupied only by Evander's cattle, where gods of clay had not yet been dedicated golden temples but inhabited crudely built huts, dominated by the Tiber, the great protagonist, as noted by Pinotti, of many representations of 'Rome before Rome', defining element of the Roman identity.[530] The picture of a primitive *paupertas* and *simplicitas* owes a great deal to Vergil's portrayal of the early site of Rome in book 8 of the *Aeneid*, and if we look back at Evander's words when describing the exiguous forces he can provide and the pressing presence of the Rutulians at their walls, he asserts *hinc Tusco claudimur amni* (Verg. *Aen.* 8.473). Hence it might not be coincidental that in the context of primitive Rome Propertius calls the Tiber *advena*, for if, as I believe, we correctly interpret *advena* as 'foreign',[531] the poet might be here referring to the widespread notion that the river was originally Etruscan.[532]

The adjective *Tuscus* in fact, as used of the Tiber, has generally been interpreted by modern scholars as referring simply to the source and course of the river, which rises in and flows through Etruscan territory, but such an interpretation, however self-evident, seems too simplistic. Horace uses *Tuscus* twice, without any allusion to Etruria (cf. Hor. *Sat.* 2.2.32-3 and *Carm.* 3.7.27-8), which suggests that the adjective was possibly regarded as a traditional epithet, possibly imitating in *variatio* the widespread use of the adjective *Tyrrhenum* for the stretch of sea overlooked by the coast of Etruria.[533] The argument seems to acquire strength especially in the light of the reference of *Tuscus* to the mouth of the river (cf. Hor. *Sat.* 2.2.32-3), located approximately 30 km from Rome and traditionally

[529] The manuscript tradition is not unanimous: *bubus* $\mathcal{N}\Lambda$: *tutus* Π: *murus* Heyworth : *bubus iit* Hutchinson. The river is called *advena* also in Ov. *Fast.* 2.68, 3.524.
[530] Cf. Pinotti 2015, 39.
[531] Booth seems to be isolated in interpreting *advena* as 'comer'/'visitor' (cf. Booth 1987).
[532] In this regard it is interesting to mention Havet's conjecture *Tuscus* for *bubus* (see Havet 1916).
[533] For the establishment of the epithet cf. Dion. Hal. 1.11.4.

associated with the foundation of Ostia under king Ancus Marcius. And yet precisely about the foundation of Ostia Livy (cf. Liv. 1.33.9) reports that it followed the annexation of the Silva Maesia, in the territory of Veii, which provided once and for all the control of the saltworks.[534] The phrase *Tuscus Tiberis* thus seems to suggest the distant memory of the Veientine power over the right bank of the Tiber.

A Vergilian passage offers more interesting possibilities. The author recounts the *scelus* of the civil wars towards the end of book 1 of the *Georgics* and presents a powerful appeal to Rome's indigenous deities to allow Octavian to provide new *salus* to the wounded republic (cf. *Georg.* 1. 498-502). The concise invocation *di patrii Indigetes et Romule Vestaque mater* at line 498 introduces here those gods that are most representative of the foundation of the city: the native *di patrii Indigetes*, Romulus as the actual founder of Rome, and Vesta, goddess of the hearth brought to Latium by Aeneas alongside the Penates, as element of continuity with the Trojan heritage.[535] The importance of the component of Rome's own foundational religiosity in this passage is essential, insofar as it is expressed in the problematical context of civil strife.[536] The appeal to the indigenous gods to protect the young *princeps* and to allow him to *succurrere* the subverted generation seems to stress the role of autochthonous virtues in restoring harmony and peace to tumultuous and chaotic circumstances. Within this framework, it is meaningful that Vesta is said to preserve *Tuscum Tiberim et Romana Palatia* (Verg. *Georg.* 1.499), for the denomination of the Tiber as *Tuscus*, paired with *Romana Palatia*, cannot only be a geographical detail,[537] but rather points to an acknowledgement of the Etruscans' role in Roman

[534] According to the sources, the Romans had established control over the saltworks at the mouth of the Tiber already under Romulus, but the conflict was only settled under Ancus (cf. Dion. Hal. 2.55.5, 3.41.3). The final destruction of Veii resulted in the occupation of its territory on the right bank of the Tiber and the definitive monopoly of salt production and distribution through the Via Salaria (cf. Camporeale 1997).

[535] Thomas argues that 'the first three words of the line refer to two groups' (cf. Thomas 1999, 151) on account of Ovid's imitation (*Met.* 15. 861-2). I am not entirely convinced, as the syntactical structure seems to isolate with *et* two groups of deities with different functions: on the one hand the *di patrii Indigetes*, broadly referring to the original domestic gods of Rome, and on the other the two figures of Romulus and Vesta who act as *parentes patriae* (cf. the epithet *mater* attributed to Vesta; for Romulus as *pater patriae* cf. Ov. *Fasti* 2.132 and Barchiesi 1997, 81).

[536] Interestingly enough, Montanari argues that there might be a political subtext here: 'Virgilio si rivolge … alle divinità più intime del popolo romano: qui forse può cogliersi un'eco della propaganda contro Antonio, tutta fondata sul rischio che la politica filo-orientale del triumviro mortificasse (anche sul piano religioso) le tradizioni romano-italiche' (Montanari 1990, 515).

[537] Not least because of the scarce interest in geographical accuracy displayed in the previous lines.

history. The only other reference to Etruscans in the *Georgics* is in fact, by no coincidence, within the section of the *laudes Italiae* dedicated specifically to Latium and its peoples, where the tripartite ethnic core of Rome is highlighted in recognition of the unity brought about by a policy of inclusion (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 2.532-5).[538] *Tuscus*, therefore, cannot be in this passage simply a stock epithet for the Tiber but implies the role in Rome's rise to greatness of a complex Etruscan heritage.

Qualifying the Tiber as Etruscan seems to be even more meaningful within the ideologically charged context of the *Aeneid*. Interestingly enough the river appears to be called *Tuscus* in contexts dominated by an Etruscan presence, first of all in the speech made by Ilioneus before Latinus, in which he recalls the Trojans' descent from the Etruscan Dardanus and the response of Apollo, who urged them to reach the *Tyrrhenus Thybris* and the sacred shores of the Numicus (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.241-2): the reference to this Italic ancestry is essential in securing the favour of king Latinus, as it provides the Trojans with the legitimacy to be received amongst the peoples of Latium as allies and not enemies.[539] Such legitimacy seems indeed to be confirmed by Latinus' proposal to assign to the Trojans some land defined as *antiquus ager Tusco mihi proximus amni* (Verg. *Aen.* 11.316), thus, if not in Etruscan territory, in an area close enough for the Tiber to be identified as the river that separates Latinus' territory, situated south of the Tiber, from the Etruscans on the right bank.

ii. FROM TUSCUS TIBERIS TO THYBRIS

If the use of the epithet *Tuscus* can be regarded as establishing the 'Tuscanity' of the Tiber, a further step seems to be taken by Vergil to strengthen even more the association of the river with Etruria.[540] Examining the nomenclature of the Tiber in the *Aeneid*, there appears to be an inconsistent pattern: (i) the most common Latin name, *Tiberis*, is used only once, in the geographical catalogue at 7.715,[541] (ii) the substantival form *Tiberinus* three times in narrative passages (6.873, 7.30, 797;

[538] For a detailed discussion see pp. 7-8.
[539] Of course this refers to the initial acceptance of the Trojans and Aeneas, who will be identified by Latinus as the foreign leader announced by the prophecy and as such formally legitimised.
[540] On the names of the Tiber in the *Aeneid* see Jenkyns 1998, 401ff. and Cairns 2006a.
[541] Boas (cf. Boas 1938, 66) suggests that Virgil chose this form because of a sound association with the immediately following Fabaris.

possibly a fourth time at 8.31), and (iii) the form *Thybris* eighteen times in direct speech (2.782, 3.500 twice, 5.83, 797, 6.87, 7.151, 242, 303, 436, 8.64, 72, 86, 330-1, 540, 10.421, 11.393). Servius is alert to the issue, and offers a categorisation: *in sacris Tiberinus, in coenolexia Tiberis, in poemate Thybris vocatur* (Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.31).[542] But his explanation of the pattern is not satisfactory, as (i) 'one instance does not make a category',[543] and furthermore it does not seem like Vergil considered the regular form *Tiberis* as prosaic, since it appears in the profoundly religious context of *Georgics* 1.499; (ii) the claim of a sacral context can only be accepted in one passage containing *Tiberinus*, namely at 8.31, where Tiberinus is explicitly called *deus* in the moment preceding his powerful address to Aeneas;[544] and (iii) *Thybris* is self-evidently not the only form used *in poemate*.

The form *Thybris* could be easily mistaken for a poetic grecism (cf. the aspirated *th*<θ and the *y*<υ), but it soon becomes clear that this is not the case.[545] In Greek both the form Τίβερις and the form Θύβρις~Θύμβρις exist,[546] the former regularly employed in prose, the latter used in poetry from the late I century BC/early I century AD. The first mention of the form Θύβρις can be found in Theoc. 1.117-18, but the *lectio* is uncertain,[547] and despite the surviving scholia interpreting Θύβρις as either a river or the sea, all modern scholars take it to mean either a mountain or a valley, not a river.[548] The first instance of the form Θύμβρις to specifically denote the river Tiber is in an epigram attributed to Diodorus of Sardis, dated to the first half of the I century AD (*Anth. Pal.* 9.219).[549] Based on extant evidence and seeing as the Latin *Tiberis* caused no difficulty to Greek pronunciation, thus making the transposition from *Tiberis* to Θύβρις unnecessary in the first place, a Greek origin must

[542] Servius seems to be alluding on the one hand to the everyday language as opposed to *in sacris*, and on the other to the language employed in prose, as opposed to *in poemate*.
[543] Cairns 2006a, 67 referring to the use of *Tiberis*.
[544] At 7.797-98 the presence of the adjective *sacrum*, even though referred to the Numicus, could be adduced to suggest a sacral context ἀπὸ κοινοῦ.
[545] For this section cf. Meister 1916, 53ff.
[546] The form can be a phonetical analogical adaptation, with the weak articulation of the parasitical μ before occlusive, as it often happens in loanwords with a non-Greek phonetic group (e.g. Σαββάτιος : Σαμβάτιος), or in non-Greek words adapted to similar Greek words (e.g. καμψάριος : capsarius) (cf. De Simone 1975).
[547] Cholmeley prints Θύμβριδος, whereas both Gow and Hopkinson print Θύβριδος; a third *lectio* Δύβρ- is attested in K, the Ambrosianus 886.
[548] Cf. Gow 1950, 26. Servius (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 3.500) reports that the Siculi named the Tiber *Thybris ad imaginem fossae Syracusanae*, but there is no indication that Theocritus' Θύβρις/Θύμβρις refers to a moat. However, a connection with rivers can be, though loosely, established by citing a Thymbres, Tymbres or Timbrius, flowing in Phrygia and running into the Sangarius, and the Thymbrius, tributary of the Scamander.
[549] Cf. Gow & Page 1968.

be rejected. As to Latin, Ennius has the form *Tiberis*, and *Thybris* presents characteristically non-Latin phonetic features,[550] which means that an early Latin source must also be ruled out.[551]

At this point, Meister advances the hypothesis that Vergil found *Thybris* in oracular language, reflecting Etruscan linguistic residues in the vernacular or in the fossilised language of the priests of Campania,[552] resting on the notion that Etruscan religious lore was traditionally entrusted to a written form, as illustrated in the mirror from Volsinii of the early III century BC, portraying the prophet Cacus about to be ambushed while he pronounces his oracular message to the sound of the lyre, and his pupil Artile beside him, holding a tablet, either writing down his words or following them with the aid of a diptych.[553] Incidentally, the form *Thybris* is used in the *Aeneid* by the Cumaean Sibyl,[554] and certainly in the poem the river represents a mystic setting for the eventual unwrapping of the mysterious future of the Trojans, who on this site witness the solution of the table prophecy, the last *arcanum* left.[555] However odd, Meister's suggestion triggers a reconsideration of a potential Etruscan origin.

The perusal of the linguistic evidence recording *gentilicia* related to *Tiberis* in Etruscan epigraphs (no extant testimony provides the river name) proves especially compelling:[556]

[550] Cf. Meister 1916, 70-1 and Bonfante 1985, 204.
[551] The *lectio* found in *Catalepton* 13.23 *Thybrim*, which could potentially attest, if the poem is not to be attributed to Vergil, a contemporary and independent circulation of this form, is a conjecture. Cf. Meister 1916, 54 n. 1, Albini 1932 and Rostagni 1933, 48ff., who attributes the poem to Vergil.
[552] Cf. Meister 1916, 64ff., who cites a Sibylline oracle preserved by Phlegon, reading ῥέζειν ἐν πεδίῳ παρὰ Θύβριδος ἄπλετον ὕδωρ (Phlegon *De Longaev.* 6.3.168 Stramaglia). However, Phlegon cannot be regarded as a reliable source in this case (cf. Stramaglia 2010, xi-xii), and, furthermore, the phrasing closely recalls the Theocritean formula καλὸν κατὰ Θύβριδος ὕδωρ, which recurs in *Anth. Pal.* 9.352.1 (the MS has Θύμβρ-, Θύβριδος is a conjecture by Stadtmüller) and Luc. *Alex.* 27.
[553] For detailed bibliography on the mirror cf. Walters 1899, Cristofani 1985a, Small 1982, Swaddling 1986, De Grummond 2006. Cf. also the story of Tages and the portrayals of Orpheus, usually accompanied by someone who transcribes or interprets his message (cf. Luschi 1991, 107). For the importance of the written transmission of oracles in Etruria cf. Poccetti 1998.
[554] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 6.87. Not only does Vergil seem to have familiarity with the *Oracula Sibyllina*, but he also knew of the eastern Sibylline oracles, produced by the Hellenised Jews of Egypt (cf. Nisbet 1978).
[555] Since the sow prodigy actually concerns the future foundation of Alba rather than Aeneas' mission.
[556] See De Simone 1975.

ARCHAIC ETRUSCAN:	NEO-ETRUSCAN:
-f- form > *θihvarie / θefarie*(i)	*θefri* (-iś) (cf. lat. *Tiberius*)
-*p*- form > * *θeparie*	*θepri*(e) (cf. lat. *Thebris*)

The Latin form resulting from the neo-Etruscan *θepri*(e), *Thebris*,[557] offers a promising course when set side by side with Varro's crucial testimony, seemingly connecting a possible etymology for the river Tiber to the king of Veii, *Thebris*: *de Tiberis nomine anceps historia. nam et suum Etruria et Latium suum esse credit, quod fuerunt qui ab Thebri vicino regulo Veientum, dixerint appellatum, primo Thebrim* (Varro *Ling.* 5.30). The Varronian passage seems also to be explicitly echoed by Vergil, who has Evander evoking the kings of Latium and the fierce Thybris, after whom the Italians call the river *Thybris* (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.330-2 *tum reges asperque immani corpore Thybris, / a quo post Itali fluvium cognomine Thybrim / diximus*).

In combination with three funerary inscriptions, two from Rome and one from Samnium, presenting the masculine name *Thybris*,[558] these testimonies suggest one of two things: (i) that already in Etruscan an alternation *Thebris/Thybris* existed, not attested but plausible by conjecture, or (ii) that *Thybris* is a poetic Hellenisation on Vergil's part of the name *Thebris*, found by the poet in Varro, designed to make the form sound less alien to Latin ears.[559] A further argument could be adduced, namely that the choice to Hellenise an Etruscan word might reflect the widespread belief that Etruscans came originally from Lydia: in this way, by ascribing a Greek nuance to the Etruscan *Thebris*, the poet would indirectly address the most common opinion of a Lydian origin. And yet the fact that he never formally engages with the current debate does not allow in my opinion an unequivocal defence of this argument.[560] In the absence of further evidence supporting the existence of an Etruscan form *Thybris*, I am inclined to regard the second option as more likely, as this practice

[557] Cf. Schulze 1904, 247 n. 5, Kretschmer 1909, Devoto 1929, Ernout 1930, 83, De Simone 1975.
[558] Cf. *CIL* 6.19119, 6. 22910, *AE* 1989, 213 (cf. Solin 1989 and Cordella & Criniti 1988, 196). *Thybris* is considered a 'raro grecanico' (Cordella & Criniti 1988, 196), attested only for a *libertus* and a slave.
[559] Cf. Schulze 1904, 247 n. 5 'er wird wohl gewusst oder gefühlt haben, dass die Namensform halbetruskisch ist'.
[560] Cf. Montenegro Duque 1949, 77.

has already been suggested by Malamud for the name *Ocnus*, regarded by the scholar as originally Etruscan (even though *Ocnus/Aucnus* are not attested as Etruscan names) and Hellenised by Vergil.[561]

Whether this is an Etruscan or Etruscoid form, Vergil's intent appears evident: he needs a variant of the name of the Tiber which avoids the anachronism represented by the widespread belief that the river derived its name from the later king Tiberinus.[562] Pliny the Elder seems to confirm this chronological development when he writes *Tiberis antea Thybris appellatus et prius Albula* (Plin. *HN* 3.53). Vergil is not necessarily concerned about creating an entirely historically plausible setting for his poem,[563] but his Callimachean fascination for aetiology would easily account for the poet's interest in contributing to the contemporary cultural debate revolving around the names of the Tiber. That is the reason why the authorial voice uses *Tiberinus* and *Tiberis*, whereas the characters, living at a time that precedes Alba, only know the river by the Etruscan name that belongs to it as indivisible element of Etruscan territory. The intentionality is undisputed, hence, in his re-elaboration of the Ennian line in which the Tiber is invoked (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.72), Vergil substitutes *Thybris* for *Tiberinus*, despite certainly knowing that *Tiberinus pater* was the sacramental formula in Rome.[564]

Two occurrences, however, appear to less straightforwardly fit into this categorisation, namely Verg. *Aen.* 7.151 *hunc Thybrim fluvium, hic fortis habitare Latinos*, in the context of the Trojans exploring the newly reached Latium, and Verg. *Aen.* 8.86ff. *Thybris ea fluvium, quam longa est, nocte tumentem / leniit*, in the context of the description of the Tiber smoothing the way for Aeneas to reach Evander, in which *Thybris* is used in a narrative context. The first passage, where the language appears to be deeply influenced by the characters, as the use of the deictic *hunc* and *hic* shows, can be interpreted as an instance of 'deviant focalisation', by which Fowler refers to 'instances where in normal language

[561] Cf. Schulze 1904, 129f., who conjectures that *Ocnus/Aucnus/Aunus* are all related, and Malamud 1998, 113. For a more detailed discussion see p. 197.
[562] Cf. Horsfall 1990, 157. Cairns (cf. Cairns 2006a, 66) refers to Horsfall's argument, but exposes some issues, which will be addressed below. 'Il lettore si può chiedere quanta deliberata attenzione il poeta dedicasse al problema di evitare consapevoli anacronismi … le distinzioni, tuttavia, non sono perfettamente elaborate, e Virgilio comunque le avrebbe potute trarre facilmente dalle sue fonti antiquarie' (Horsfall 1984, 153). For the presence of co-existing variants cf. for example *Ascanius~Iulus* and *Dido~Elissa*.
[563] Cf. the distinction between primary and secondary anachronisms in Sandbach 1956.
[564] Cf. Momigliano 1966, 617, Fordyce 1977, 61ff., and Cairns 2006a, 67. See the pontifical invocation *adesto Tiberine cum tuis undis* (Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.72) and Horatius Cocles' prayer before jumping into the Tiber (Liv. 2.10.11 *Tiberine pater … te sancte precor*). See also *CIL* 6.773, 14.376.

we should expect focaliser and narrator to coincide but they do not',[565] whereas the second one could be directly referencing the name used by the god, only a few lines above, to reveal himself to Aeneas (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.64), and which the hero uses to address him immediately afterwards (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.72).

It appears therefore that the use of *Thybris* should be interpreted as a deliberate choice by the author, intrigued by the opportunity to confront the 'many conflicting versions of the etymologies and aetiologies of the river and its names',[566] in the tradition of Hellenistic poetry, to prevent anachronisms by selecting a name for the Tiber that would be consistent with the 'historical' setting. Naturally, we do not expect Vergil to ascribe any substantial factuality to his narrative, but nonetheless his intent to create a world in which his characters move and talk in a way that is consistent with the expectations of his learned readers cannot be denied.

Conversely, none of this appears to be at play in Ovid. A quick analysis will reveal that (i) *Tiberis* is used for a total of 8 times, (ii) *Tiberinus* 10 times (4 times as an adjective, 6 times substantivated), (iii) the hapax adjective *Tiberinis* once to describe the nymphs of the river at *Fast.* 2.597, (iv) *Thybris* 17 times; (v) *Tuscus* to designate the Tiber 8 times. What emerges is the following:

- there seems to be a visible preference for the form *Thybris*

- Servius' argument is again not applicable, since *Tiberis* is used repeatedly in *Fasti* and once at *Ib.* 138

- the use of *Thybris* is not dictated by direct speech[567]

- the use of the adjective *Tuscus* and of *Thybris* does not stem from an Etruscan context.

At a closer examination, it can also be ruled out that the use of *Thybris* is dictated by the intent to avoid anachronisms, for Ovid does indeed employ the term in passages set at a time that precedes

[565] Fowler 1990, 42. It is particularly interesting to notice that Fowler acknowledges the potential concurrence of instances of indirect speech and deviant focalisation: 'many of the discussions of point of view in the *Aeneid* do not distinguish clearly between deviant focalisation and free indirect discourse, and the distinction is obviously not a strong one. I would reserve the label of FID for more extended instances of assumed point of view in proximity to a reference to thought or speech, but there are obviously borderline cases and the one may pass into the other' (Fowler 1990, 45).

[566] Cairns 2006a, 68.

[567] *Thybris* is used in direct speech only by Dido addressing Aeneas at *Her.* 7.145, by Ianus at *Fast.* 1.242-3, and by the wife of the Flamen Dialis at *Fast.* 6.227-9.

the foundation of Alba, but he himself addresses the Tiber as *Thybri* at *Fast.* 5.635. Furthermore, there seems to be no consistency in the chronological succession of the terms before the establishment of *Tiberis* after Tiberinus, king of Alba,[568] but rather *Thybris* and *Albula* seem to be co-existing terms to denote the Tiber at an ancient time.[569] In Ovid's narrative, consistent and comprehensive historical plausibility appears to be dismissed in order to adjust to each episode's individual poetical demands, that is the episode's single poetical unit matters more to the poet than the way it interacts with the broader framework to which it belongs. Therefore, as it appears, no cultural statement emerges from Ovid's *usus*, no attraction for nor explicit pursuit of acknowledgement of the historical relevance of the Etruscans in Rome's past.[570] On the contrary, Ovid is noticeably intrigued by the recent masters, especially Vergil, whom he often re-elaborates in combination with reminiscences from the more traditional canon.[571]

[568] Cf. Ov. *Fast.* 4.48.
[569] In the episode of Picus in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid uses *Albula* to designate the Tiber at 14.328, but *Thybris* at 14.426, and within the episodes set at the time of Evander in the *Fasti*, the river is designated as *Albula* at 4.68 and 5.646, but *Thybris* at 6.502.
[570] Ovid's broader reduction of Vergilian material 'implies a set of values in which the public concerns of the *Aeneid* merit only passing mention' (Tarrant 2002, 26).
[571] Cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.448, *Fast.* 6.228, *Tr.* 5.1.31, where the Vergilian *Thybris* is paired with the traditional Ennian attribute *flavus*.

CONCLUSIONS

The Tiber appears to have been regarded, before the foundation of Rome, as something extraneous, *advena* in Propertius' words. In particular, the river seems to be specifically associated with the Etruscans, whose control reached its right bank all the way to the Tyrrhenian Sea. Theories were thus circulating with respect to the possibility that the Tiber took its name, *Tiberis*, not from the Latin, but rather from the Etruscan, being named after *Thebris*, the king of Veii, situated precisely on the right bank of the river. As argued by Ampolo, the true frontier of Rome and Latium is the one to the north-west, that is towards Etruria, embodied by the Tiber, most likely owing to the fact that the Etruscans, and especially the Veientines, were long considered the most dangerous enemy of all.[572] A certain Callimachean fascination with etymologies and αἴτια might therefore account for the widespread use amongst Augustan poets of the epithet *Tuscus* as a display of antiquarian knowledge. But whilst Horace and Ovid seem to primarily appreciate the poetical potential of the *iunctura*, Vergil takes a step further and manipulates it in order to acknowledge the power of the Etruscan people within pre-Roman Latium and their role in the early history of Rome. His determination to reassert the Etruscans' cultural relevance is further attested by the coinage of the seemingly Hellenised Etruscoid form *Thybris*, created as a historically plausible term to precede the later *Tiberis*.

But there is more. The Tiber clearly emerges as a unifying force within the landscape of the *Aeneid*. Not only does the river intervene to assist Aeneas during his nocturnal voyage (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.86-9) and extend his favour to the Trojans' allies when he grants a successful blow to Pallas after the young man addresses a prayer to the river-god Tiberinus just before hurling his spear against the unfortunate Halaesus (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.421-3). Most significantly, the Tiber accords the same benevolence to Aeneas' enemies. At its waters, for instance, the savage Mezentius washes his wounds (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.833-5), in a scene that reintroduces him in the narrative as the sympathetic character of an aggrieved father.[573] Yet perhaps the most remarkable occurrence of the Tiber's

[572] Cf. Ampolo 1987, 76.
[573] Cf. Harrison 1991, 269. For the purificatory character of the Tiber cf. Le Gall 1953b (especially p. 72).

involvement is the intercession to save Turnus surrounded by the Trojans (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 9.815-18). A certain perplexity seems to have arisen already amongst ancient readers, as testified by Servius who interprets Turnus' rescue as serving to intensify Aeneas' glory.[574] I agree that it is a requisite for the eventual merciless death of the Rutulian hero, but Turnus is not spared by the Tiber solely to allow the Roman people to arise, his preservation also testifies to the favour of the gods of the Italian countryside towards him and his people, and it is interesting to notice how, in this instance, the river is not referred to as *Tuscus*, but rather by the use of the traditional Ennian attribute *flavus*. The whole passage presents the archaic traits of a ritual, and appears to conjure up in Ringkomposition the scene of ceremonial hand-washing and prayer by Turnus at the beginning of the book.[575] Vergil paints again, by means of the graceful and delicate language employed, an exquisite picture of peacefulness, that concludes with the joyful return of Turnus amongst the Rutilians *abluta caede*.[576]

This ambiguity perfectly represents the status of the Tiber in Roman culture. Tiberinus is first and foremost the river-god of the myth: at his banks convene Etruscans and Italians alike, as well as the foreigner Arcadians and Trojans; along his banks fight Aeneas as well as Turnus, and both are generously assisted by his currents; his name is echoed in the names of the Trojan *Thymbris* and the Rutulian *Thymber*; his waters are fouled with the blood of Italians and Trojans alike. But he is also the river-god of the history of Rome herself: the Tiber saves Romulus and Remus, abandoned in a cradle by Amulius to be drowned in the river's current, and according to certain sources marries their mother Silvia, into its waters Horatius Cocles leaps having halted the attack of the Etruscan Porsenna, and one of Porsenna's prisoners, the young Cloelia, swims across the river to escape her captor: the twins, Cocles and Cloelia incidentally all appear on the shield, the description of which closes with the image of the Nile in mourning, the Euphrates, the Rhine and the Araxes, the rivers now subdued to Augustus and Rome and Rome's own river. What emerges is therefore the Tiber as

[574] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 9.813. Hardie is rightfully not convinced by this interpretation (cf. Hardie 1995, 249).
[575] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 9.22-4. The episode occurs after receiving an *omen* from Iris, just as Aeneas at 8.68-78 washes his hands and prays to the Nymphs and the Tiber after his vision of Tiberinus.
[576] I do not agree with Jones that 'the Tiber, in saving Turnus, symbolically returns him to life and, by doing so, accomplishes for Turnus a transition from one state of being to another. The idea that Turnus emerges from the river in a changed condition suggests apotheosis' (Jones 2005, 35).

a force that unified the two great civilisations, Roman and Etruscan, and more broadly the sacred river of Rome unified, rather than dividing, all peoples who in the course of history had reached its shores, and now, under Augustus, unified the peoples of the whole world.[577] The journey towards Rome, enjoined by Tiberinus, is the journey from the myth to the history of the Roman people, which, as Vergil shows, proves impossible to untangle from the history of Etruria. Therefore, the river, as a symbol of Rome itself, becomes a symbol of the policy of integration and inclusion that made the city great.

[577] Cf. La Penna 1996, 113-21.

CHAPTER FOUR

ETRUSCANS AND THE MYTHOLOGY OF EARLY ROME

4.1 OMNIS ETRURIA: PAST AND PRESENT ETRUSCAN ALLIES

'In Virgilio troviamo non solo la più famosa celebrazione della leggenda di Enea, ma anche la più chiara valorizzazione del *nomen Etruscum*.'[578] It is undeniable that Vergil's *Aeneid* presents an unmistakably philo-Etruscan narrative of the war in Latium, departing from the more widespread tradition recorded by Cato in which Turnus, waging war against Latinus and Aeneas, seeks help from the Etruscan Mezentius.[579] In Vergil the Etruscans appear on both sides of the conflict, with the Agyllini of Mezentius on Turnus' side but the rest of Etruria unreservedly loyal to Aeneas. This narrative choice is not a Vergilian invention. From the IV century BC, the legend of Aeneas was associated not only with Hesperia and the west, but more specifically with Etruria: in the Sicilian historian Alkimos, Romulus is the son of Aeneas and Tyrrhenia, a character that can be interpreted as a personification of Etruria itself, suggesting a potential appropriation of the Aeneas legend in Etruscan areas; in Lycophron's *Alexandra* Aeneas, ancestor of Romulus and Remus (although it is not clear by what descent), after a series of wanderings establishes an alliance with Tarchon and Tyrsenus in Etruria; in Plutarch either Aeneas or Ascanius marries Roma, who is said to be the daughter of either Italus or Telephus, and as a result, since the latter is regarded as Tarchon's father in Lycophron, also potentially Tarchon's sister.[580]

Material evidence, in particular a strong interest in Iliadic themes, especially associated with Aeneas, in the Italic black-figured production of the beginning of the VI century BC, suggests that already in the early VI century BC the character and saga of Aeneas were superimposed on those of a *princeps* or *rex* from Lavinium who died in the early VII century.[581] The establishment of the Trojan

[578] Scuderi 1978, 88.
[579] Cf. Cato *Orig.* frr. 6-9 Cornell and Liv. 1.2.3.
[580] Cf. Alkimos *FGrHist* 560 F 4, Lyc. *Alex.* 1238-49 and Plut. *Rom.* 2.1. Lycophron, whose source is likely Timaeus, also mentions the cities of Pisae and Agylla (cf. Lyc. *Alex.* 1241), which appear in Vergil's catalogues (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.179, 7.652). For the presence of Lycophron in Vergil see West 1983, 132-5.
[581] Cf. Torelli 1991, 48-9. Schauenburg lists 57 vases portraying Aeneas leaving Troy, and of the 27 whose provenance is known 17 were found in Etruria (cf. Schauenburg 1960). Cf. also the *Tabula Iliaca* dated to the late I century BC (*IG* 14.1284, cf. Welcker 1829, 234 n. 10, Galinsky 1969, 106ff. and Horsfall 1979, 26ff.) and

legend can be thus regarded as the outcome of a process of selection of Greek cultural forms occurring during the emergence of big cities and aristocracies in southern Etruria and Latium, as an instrument to impose cultural and social norms and likely as a link to aristocratic genealogies.

The myth of Aeneas, however, in some respects introduced an *aporia*, insofar as it attributed an Oriental foundation to Rome, to which Vergil responds by making the Trojans descendants of the Etruscan Dardanus from the city of Corythus,[582] thus turning Aeneas' voyage into a legitimate νόστος. Some scholars have argued that this is a Vergilian creation,[583] but the claim appears to be invalidated by the finding, between 1907 and 1915, of an Etruscan inscription in the vicinity of Carthage, seemingly dating to the beginning of the I century BC, mentioning the *tvl(ar) tartanivm*, the 'borders of the Dardanii':[584] the inscription seems to belong to a group of settlers who escaped Sulla's massacre, who would therefore testify to a tradition preceding Vergil which located Dardanus in Etruria.[585] In the poem the story is told by Latinus as communicated by the *Aurunci senes* (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 7.205-11), a rather obscure legend already by then, which allows Vergil to justify his own literary choice to select a little-known version of a well-attested saga. The Trojans themselves have only recently been made aware of their fated destination and Dardanus by the Penates (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 3.167-8, 503-4, 7.239-42). The state of the characters' knowledge, therefore, seems to reflect the secondary role of the tradition and its limited circulation.

However, the poet appears to reassert the Etruscans' eastern origin by calling them on more than one occasion either *Lydii* or *Maeonidae*.[586] And the confusion is further engendered by Evander, who

the Etruscan so-called Luynes scarab, dated to the VI/V century BC (Bibliothèque Nationale, Collection de Luynes. Inv. 276, cf. Pallottino 1958, 337 and Alföldi 1963, 286-7).

[582] Traditionally Dardanus was said to be born in Arcadia (cf. Dion. Hal. 1.61-2 and Serv. *ad Aen.* 3.167). As to Corythus, Servius and Servius Danielis regard it as a *mons*, *oppidum* or *civitas Tusciae* (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 1.380, 3.104, 170, 7.209, 9.10), while Silius follows Dionysius (cf. Dion. Hal. 1.26.1) and identifies it with Cortona (cf. *Corythus* at Sil. 4.720, 5.123 and *Cortona* at 8.472). Scholars have generally attempted to identify Corythus with either Cortona or Tarquinii. For a detailed analysis of the connection of Dardanus with Corythus cf. Colonna 1980, who traces the Hellenised form *Corythus* back to the pattern at play in the alternation *Thybris/Tiberis*, denying any relationship with *curθ/tu*-Cortona (cf. Colonna 1980, 10).

[583] Cf. e.g. Buchheit 1963, 151ff.

[584] Cf. *BCTH* 1915, CCXXXIIff., Heurgon 1969a, 1969b and Carruba 1976.

[585] Cf. Colonna 1980. Further evidence for the legend of Dardanus could be represented by the testimony of Myrsilos of Methymna, who reports that the Tyrrhenians, forced to abandon their land, migrated to Greece (cf. Myrsilos *FGrHist* 477, FF 8-9).

[586] Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.499, 10.155, 11.759.

refers to the inhabitants of Agylla as *Lydia gens*, all the more significant at the time of their arrival in Etruria (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 8.478-80), yet adding that they settled *iugis Etruscis*, 'on the Etruscan hills', seemingly implying that the presence of Etruscans pre-dated the establishment of the Lydians. Therefore, it appears that, although the poet is not endorsing Dionysius' argument in favour of autochthony, he is committed to portraying the Etruscans as an integral part of the landscape of early Italy. The legitimacy of the Trojans' presence in Italy, provided by means of Dardanus,[587] is further reasserted by means of prophetic mediation. In recalling the foundation of Agylla, Evander explains that all Etruria rose against the tyrant Mezentius, the same Etruria that he is going to entrust to Aeneas: the Etruscans, Evander says, are ready to fight against Mezentius, but are held back by the aged soothsayer, whose prophecy dictates that only a foreigner will be permitted to lead them (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 8.498-503).[588]

[587] For Dardanus' *auctoritas* cf. Verg. *Aen.* 3.503, 4.365, 6.650, 8.134. Dardanus is also included in the Groves of the Blessed with Ilus and Assaracus (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 6.648-50).
[588] The prediction of the *externus dux* had been hinted at previously at Verg. *Aen*. 7.69-70.

i. AENEAS AS LEADER OF THE ETRUSCANS AND THE ETRUSCAN CATALOGUE

As much as the Tyrrhenians fight for both sides, there is a distinct disproportion between the sizes of the contingents deployed, and significantly Vergil refers to the Trojans' allies with expressions suggesting their utter cohesion with the newcomers. Vergil's emphasis on *omnis Etruria* thus responds to an important notion, namely that, with the single exception of Mezentius, the Etruscans are on the right side of the conflict, just as Etruria was part of that *tota Italia* that swore their loyalty to Octavian during the civil war.[589] For Aeneas' enemies, the fact that Mezentius is on Turnus' side makes very little difference in the observation that Etruria is to be considered an adversary, as much as the Trojans and the Arcadians (cf. Turnus at Verg. *Aen.* 9.148-50 and Juturna 12.231-3).[590]

However, as has been frequently observed, there was a risk of attributing too conspicuous a role to the Etruscans, which Vergil avoids by means of a subordination of the Tyrrhenian forces to the Trojan coalition.[591] Probably the most meaningful visual representation of these circumstances is the image of Aeneas in all his glory and majesty leading the Etruscan fleet, with the Etruscan people, freed from its fate, finally put into the hands of the *externus dux* foretold by the prophecy (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.154-62). This brief passage sets the scene for a further proem in the epic, which introduces the catalogue of the Etruscan heroes who sail with Aeneas to reach the Trojan camp. The significance of the insertion of this second list, after the catalogue of the Latin forces in book 7, is marked not only by the repetition of the opening line (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.641, 10.163), which directly pairs these two moments as complementary, but also by the lofty language.[592] Vergil appears to be following

[589] Cf. Aug. *Res Gestae* 25. Cf. also Enn. *Ann.* fr. 142 Sk., referring to the Etruscan war of either Tarquinius (cf. Dion. Hal. 3. 57-9) or Servius Tullius (cf. Dion. Hal. 4.27), where Etruria is characterised as a whole. Ovid inherits Vergil's characterisation of a conflict fought between *Latium* and, in *variatio*, *Tyrrhenia tota* (cf. Ov. *Met.* 14.452). In Verg. *Aen.* 7.426 the antagonism between Latins and Etruscans is used to incite Turnus by Allecto in the form of the priestess of Juno Calybe, with *Tyrrhenas … acies* and *Latinos* symbolically framing the line.
[590] There are also more neutral instances, e.g. a scene of assault (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 12.122-3), in which the phrasing is significant because never found in connection with the Arcadians, who are never explicitly mentioned paired with the Trojans without being associated with the Etruscans as well (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.429-30, 11.92-3, 834-5, 12.231-2, 280-1, 551), and in the context of Camilla's ἀριστεία (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.502-4, 597-9, in which case the reference to *equitumque exercitus* could very well allude to the Arcadians, mentioned as cavalrymen at 8.518, 10.364, 11.835, 12.551).
[591] Cf. Gagé 1929, 130.
[592] Cf. Hes. *Th.* 1 and Enn. *Ann.* fr. 403 Sk.

Homer's precedent of separate catalogues,[593] yet, as Harrison notes, 'the original purpose of the epic catalogue of warriors was to identify the major participants in the forthcoming action (thus 125 of the 140 named in the two catalogues of *Iliad* 2 reappear in the poem); in the *Aeneid* this is true of the Latin Catalogue of book 7 (all but three of the fifteen listed reappear), but not of this Catalogue of Etruscans (only three of the eight listed are heard of again).'[594]

Therefore, the poet's intent seems to respond to a different demand, namely that of elevating and legitimating the Etruscans as a vital component of Aeneas' victory, and more broadly of the cultural and social fabric of Roman civilization, as an illustration of that *fortis Etruria* celebrated at *Georg.* 2.532-5. The single heroes certainly provide an opportunity for the display of obscure antiquarian knowledge and literary embellishment, but the Etruscans in the poem as a whole are seen as a cohesive unit (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.164-5),[595] a uniform entity, in striking contrast with the historical reality that sees Etruria as a diverse territory bound together by a common culture. It is this common culture that Vergil is emphasising here, its homogeneity as opposed to its dispersed structure.[596]

As to the catalogue itself,[597] it lists six contingents lead by eight chiefs (there are two cases of double command), Massicus, Abas, Asilas, Astur, Cuparus, Cupavo,[598] Ocnus, Aulestes (the last two commanders will be discussed at pp. 195ff.), to whom are dedicated 4-6 lines,[599] none of whom will reappear in the poem, except for a brief moment, as is the case for Abas, killed by Lausus, evoked for his courage as 'the knot and stay of the battle' (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.427-8), Asilas, listed as *fortis* at the

[593] Cf. *Il.* 2. 484-760, 817-77 for the catalogues of the Greek and Trojan forces and *Il.* 16. 168-97 for the shorter catalogue of Myrmidons.
[594] Harrison 1991, 106. Cf. also the list of tribes crossing the Hellespont with the Persians in Choerilus of Samos (*Supp. Hell.* 319-20), the catalogue of the Argonauts in Ap. Rhod. 1.20-228 and Ennius' Italian forces at Enn. *Ann.* fr. 29 Sk. Both the catalogue of the Myrmidons (where two of the five characters listed reappear in the poem) and the Argonauts' list (where fewer than half the heroes named are seen again) could be adduced as precedents for Vergil.
[595] As observed by Harrison (cf. Harrison 1991, 107), much like Homer's Myrmidons, the Etruscans are relevant in the narrative as a group rather than individuals.
[596] 'Single-mindedness, uniformity, regularity, and control under leadership of the Trojan Aeneas' (Saylor 1974, 255).
[597] This passage has been intensely studied by scholars, and I will merely proceed to collect and summarise their extensive and exhaustive research.
[598] Cunarus is the leader of the Ligurians, and so is most likely Cupavo (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.189-94). The inclusion of the Ligurians (see Harrison 1991, 109) can be justified by the fact that their territory was regarded as beginning at the river Magra, just north of Pisa (cf. Strabo 5.2.5).
[599] With the exceptions of Cupavo and Ocnus, to whom are devoted 13 and 9 lines respectively.

head of the Trojans with his squadrons (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.620), and Aulestes, killed by Messapus (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 12.290). In terms of the characterisation of these leaders, there is no attempt by Vergil to portray them consistently according to Etruscan categories. Their names do not appear to be Etruscan, despite the many attempts by scholar to find epigraphic parallels: Massicus, leader of the contingents from Clusium and Cosa,[600] bears the name of a mountain in Campania, a region famous for its wine,[601] Abas is quite common in Greek epic, and occurs for two more heroes in the *Aeneid*,[602] and Astur, variously associated with the Astures in north-western Spain and the island-city of Astura in southern Latium,[603] appears to be a wordplay with the Greek ἀστήρ, 'star'.[604] Asilas is the only character that Vergil is at pains to depict following an almost stereotyped image of the Etruscans: his name appears to be, according to Servius Danielis, Etruscan,[605] despite the fact that it occurs also for a Rutulian warrior (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 9.571), and in Silius the Asili are a tribe from Picenum (cf. Sil. 8.445), and he is a soothsayer, *hominum divumque interpres* (Verg. *Aen*. 10.175), expert in the teachings

[600] Schulze (cf. Schulze 1904, 189, 553) derives *Massicus* from an Etruscan *masni* which he finds in inscriptions from several sites including Clusium. An inconsistency was noticed here, as at Verg. *Aen*. 10.655 is mentioned the ship in which king Osinius (the name is again regarded as Etruscan by Schulze; cf. Schulze 1904, 131) sailed from Clusium: Servius advanced (i) that Massicus was an *appellativum*, along the lines of Numa Pompilius, Numanus Remulus, or (ii) that Vergil was making a distinction between two different characters who would be leaders of Clusium and Cosa respectively, or (iii) that Osinius was a distinguished citizen under the command of Massicus, as it is the case for Rhamnes and Remulus.

[601] Other heroes carrying the name of a mountain in the *Aeneid* are Cunerus (Verg. *Aen.* 10.186) and Aventinus (Verg. *Aen.* 7.657). Servius' comment (cf. Serv. *ad Aen*. 10.167 *oppidum iuxta Massicum*) is in all likelihood an autoschediasm, for this seeming incongruity occurs also in the case of Asilas, Halaesus and Messapus (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 10.175-6, 7.352-3, 7.354). As suggested by Timpanaro (cf. Timpanaro 1978, 310), Vergil could be alluding to the Etruscan dodecapolis in Campania.

[602] Cf. *Il.* 2.542, Ap. Rhod. 1.142 and Verg. *Aen.* 1.121, 3.286. According to Montenegro Duque, the name bears correspondences to attested Etruscan forms such as *apa*, *apas*, *apaś* (cf. Montenegro Duque 1949, 144-5 and Buffa 1935, 258, 805, 1021 *apa*, 320, 500 *apas*, *CIE* 4117 *apaś*), and to an extended family of names such as *Abenna*, *Abenius*, *Abinius*, *Abonius* (cf. *CIL* 14.3311, 8.1227, 6.10455, 5.3120 respectively).

[603] For the former cf. Sil. 3.332-4 (the islands were still in arms against Rome in 25 BC, which makes it quite improbable for Vergil to allude to them here; see Harrison 1991, 117); for the latter cf. Holland 1935, 215. Schulze (cf. Schulze 1904, 131 n. 7) also recalls a stream Astrone in Tuscany, with a tributary, Astroncello.

[604] The habit of calling a handsome human a 'star' can be traced back to Homer (cf. *Il.* 6.400-1). Cf. also Theodoridas (*Anth. Pal.* 6.156.3), Eur. *Hipp.* 1122, Musaeus 22 and Hor. *Carm.* 3.9.21. Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.180 *pulcherrimus*. The manuscripts oscillate between *Astur* and *Astyr*, but the latter form is found at line 180 only in the Mediceus and Gudianus, and at line 181 in the Romanus; the indirect tradition is equally split, with only Diomedes reading *Astyr*. The reliability of the Palatinus on the one hand, and the clear dependence of both Diomedes and Carisius on the same source, which suggests a horizontal infiltration of the tradition bearing *Astyr*, indicate that *Astur* was most likely the form adopted by Vergil (cf. Timpanaro 1978, 312-50).

[605] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 12.127. Modern scholars generally agree (cf. Schulze 1904, 129 and Saunders 1930, 72). Montenegro Duque suggests an association with the Etruscan *asil* (cf. *CIE* 5168), interpreted by Pallottino as 'sacred object', which would find a correspondence in the characterisation of the hero (cf. Montenegro Duque 1949, 148-9).

of the *Etrusca disciplina*, extispicy and astrology, ornithomancy and divination by lightning. The presence of a seer-warrior is a conventional feature in epic poetry,[606] and Vergil appears to be here more interested in giving his *variatio* on the motif rather than displaying a deep knowledge of the Etruscan lore.[607]

The commanders' armies are mainly formed of cavalrymen,[608] and overall equipped with weaponry drawn from Homeric epic and antiquarian material relating to ancient Italy, without any attempt at reconciliation.[609] Massicus' men are armed with arrows, light quivers on the shoulders, and deadly bows;[610] Abas' troops are described as shining with conspicuous arms, likely derived from the use of iron, primary resource of the island of Ilva; Astur is portrayed according to the Homeric canon, confident in his horse, and displays the precious Homeric iridescent armour.[611]

The catalogue does not appear to follow any geographical order,[612] with the leaders and their ships mentioned in order of sailing: Massicus *princeps* (Verg. *Aen.* 10.166) sails on the 'bronze-sheathed' *Tigris*, followed by Abas *una* (Verg. *Aen*. 10.170; cf. the Homeric ἅμα at *Il.* 2.542),[613] sailing on the *Apollo*, and Asilas *tertius* (Verg. *Aen.* 10.175).[614] The geographical criterion employed responds to the demands of a naval catalogue, i.e. a list of coastal cities. Abas leads an army from Populonia

606 Cf. *Il.* 2.858 ff. and Ap. Rhod. 1.65-6, 139-41. A sort of counterpart could be adduced in the figure of Umbro in the catalogue of allies of Turnus (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.750-8). See Harrison 1991, 115.
607 Cf. Thulin 1906, vol. 3, 90.
608 Vergil is perhaps in accordance with Cicero's statement that Tarquinius Priscus was responsible for the organisation of the cavalry that was maintained to his days, even though, as shown by Helbig, Vergil's horsemen were in all likelihood mounted hoplites (cf. Cic. *Rep.* 2.36. See Helbig 1905 and Saunders 1930, 132-3).
609 For a detailed account of military equipment and attire cf. Heinze 1994, 160-3.
610 Particularly interesting is the *gorytus*, or *corytus*, generally used as a synonym of pharetra, from the Homeric γωρυτός (cf. *Od.* 21.53-4, Sil. 2.106, 7.443, 15.773 and Stat. *Theb.* 4.269, 7.660, 9.730, 12.527). Outside the epic genre, the term occurs only in Ov. *Tr.* 5.7.15 (associated with peoples from barbaric Scythia), and Sen. *HF* 1127.
611 For the first detail cf. *Il.* 23.319 (the expression recurs at 11.706). The equestrian reference prompted Servius Danielis to make a connection between the commander and the Spanish Astures (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.181), famous for their horsemanship (cf. Plin. *HN* 8.166 and Mart. 14.199). For the armour cf. *Il.* 5. 292-5.
612 Cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 5.15.4. While Gagé maintains a criterion based on antiquity, Saunders explicitly denies it (cf. Gagé 1929, 140 and Saunders 1930, 64-5).
613 See Harrison 1991, 114.
614 For the ship name *Tigris*, which occurs five times in Rome, cf. Miltner 1931, 956; for the name *Apollo* cf. Miltner 1931, 952 and Saunders 1930, 69, who notes that one would perhaps expect Vulcan to be the tutelary god of the iron workers, but the fact that the bronze statue of Apollo of the Louvre was found nearby Populonia could be of significance. For the use of animals and gods, after whom ships were named, as figureheads see Casson 1971, 352-3, 357 and 347 respectively.

and Ilva, the latter famous for its iron industry[615], the former a coastal town some 100 km north of Cosa, directly opposite the island, which had contributed to Scipio's army in the Second Punic War (cf. Liv. 28.45.15);[616] Asilas is the commander of the contingents from Pisae, Alphean in origin, but Etruscan in site (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.179-80), whose antiquity or prestige was hardly remarkable, but which enjoyed a long-standing friendliness to Rome and with the *princeps*, who sent a Latin colony to the city in the late I century BC;[617] the army led by Astur is formed by men coming from quite a large portion of territory, moved, according to the Homeric model, by the same purpose, despite their origins,[618] from Caere, representing the citizens freed from the tyrant Mezentius,[619] a city of antiquity, prestige and influence, whose relationship with Rome had been mostly friendly (during the Gallic invasion the city provided asylum to the *sacra* of the city, the Vestals and the Flamen Quirinalis, which earned them a covenant of hospitality by Camillus and a pardon for partnering with Tarquinii against Rome, but also during the Second Punic War),[620] and its port Pyrgi to the south, to the river Minio and Graviscae to the north, seemingly acting as Tarquinii's port, as confirmed by Etruscan findings from the VI century BC.[621] The criterion is only suspended in case of Clusium and Mantua:

615 *Ilva* is the Ligurian name of Elba, which was called by the Greeks Αἰθάλη or Αἰθάλεια, 'smoky', for its iron-smelting activities. Cf. [Arist.] *Mir. ausc.* 93 and Plin. *HN* 3.81. Vergil probably took the detail of the inexhaustibility of the mines from Varro (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.174), probably from *Res humanae* 11; the information is reported also in Strabo 5.2.6. The island features in the mythical voyage of the Argonauts (cf. Ap. Rhod. 4.654-8). See Harrison 1991, 114-15.

616 Cf. Liv. 28.45.15.

617 According to Servius Danielis (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.179), in Cato Pisa was founded by Tarchon. The reference is to a branch of the tradition which regards the city as a foundation from Pisa in Elis, likely to be derived from Varro's *Res humanae* (cf. Dion. Hal. 1.20.5, Strabo 5.2.5 and Plin. *HN* 3.50), but probably incorrect, since the Arcadians are not known as colonists, and the Italian town presents the name in the plural form, Pisae, whereas the city in Elis has the singular Πισα. The consul A. Atilius landed at Pisae on his return from Sardinia in 225 BC (cf. Polyb. 2.27.1), P. Scipio used the port to set out for and return from Spain during the Second Punic War (cf. Polyb. 3.41.2-4, 56.5 and Liv. 21.39.3 respectively), and especially during the Ligurian wars of the II century BC Pisae was loyal to Rome, which made it her base of operations (cf. Liv. 33.43, 34.56, 35.3-4). Livy refers to it as a *provincia* in 195 and 178 BC (cf. Liv. 33.43.5 and 41.5.7 respectively). Cf. two inscriptions in which Lucius and Gaius, Augustus' grandsons, are the recipients of honours (cf. *CIL* 11.1420, 1421). See Rehm 1932, 104, Reeker 1971, 20-1 and Harrison 1991, 116.

618 Cf. *Il.* 13.487 πάντες ἑνα φρεσὶ θυμὸν ἐχοντες. The northernmost city, Graviscae, is over 40 km distant from the southernmost one, Caere.

619 The form *Caerete* is quite unusual in lieu of *Caerite* but occurs also in Liv. 5.16.5. Indeed, at the end of the poem the Agyllini are mentioned alongside Trojans and Arcadians, displaying the three components of Aeneas' coalition, responding to the Laurentine attack (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 12.281). See Harrison 1991, 117-18.

620 Cf. Liv. 5.40.7-10, 5.50.3, 7.20.8 and 28.45.15.

621 Vergil plays with its etymology, which, as already attested in Cato, was linked to its insalubrious climate (cf. Cato *Or.* fr. 71 Cornell, Liv. 40.29.1-2 and Rut. Namat. 1.281-2). Until 1969 the city was considered a Roman colony founded in 181 BC. See Harrison 1991, 118-19.

while Mantua is inserted to celebrate the poet's native city, Clusium, the only city of the Etruscan League mentioned alongside Populonia and Caere, was probably introduced because of its illustrious past,[622] and paired under the command of Massicus with the coastal city of Cosa, some 100 km west.[623] As to Vergil's sources, it is most likely that the poet drew his list from an existing catalogue of Etruscan cities in a literary source, perhaps Varro.[624]

ii. FURTHER ETRUSCAN PRESENCE IN BOTH CAMPS

In the course of the narrative, the reader encounters two other Etruscan warriors who are not mentioned in the catalogue, namely Ornytus and Arruns (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11. 677-89 and 759-867 respectively), a victim of Camilla and the cause of her death respectively. Ornytus, who bears the same name as a character of Apollonius,[625] rides an Apulian horse, and appears to be the first in his family to participate in a war. The most striking feature of his appearance is certainly his attire, reminiscent of that of many Italic warriors,[626] wholly consistent with his depiction as a *venator*:[627] the warrior wears the hide of a steer on his broad shoulders, and a hood made of the vast gaping maw of a wolf showing its white teeth; his weapon is a peasant shaft. Incidentally, the description of Ornytus appears to closely recall the frescoes of Corneto (Tomba dell'Orco) and Orvieto, portraying a demon whose head is tight in the maw of a wolf, representing the Etruscan Pluto,[628] and, if somehow familiar to Vergil, might have influenced the way the poet imagined the attire of ancient

[622] For a concise account of the relationship between Clusium and Rome see Saunders 1930, 65-6.
[623] This is to be read as a simple anachronism (the same occurs with the mention of Velia at Verg. *Aen.* 6.366), for Cosa is not an Etruscan settlement, but rather a Latin colony of coastal Etruria, seemingly established in 273 BC (cf. Plin. *HN* 3.51 and Vell. Pat. 1.14.7). For a history of Cosa see Brown 1980. The plural *Cosae* is only attested in Latin in this passage (cf. Strabo 5.2.8), while inscriptions and coins present the singular *Cosa* (cf. *CIL* 11.1, 415). See Harrison 1991, 113.
[624] All of the cities mentioned in the *Aeneid* are included in Strabo and Pliny (cf. Strabo 5.2.5-8 and Plin. *HN* 3.50-1). A catalogue of Etruscans occurs in Silius' *Punica* (cf. Sil. 8.468ff.), but includes only Caere, Graviscae and Clusium from Vergil's list. Rehm argued that Vergil, Pliny and Silius drew their material from Varro's *Res humanae* 11, a description of products from the regions of Italy (cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 3.16.12), whereas Reeker suggests Varro's *De ora maritima* (cf. Rehm 1932, 96-106 and Reeker 1971, 118ff.).
[625] Cf. Ap. Rhod. 1.207, 2.65. Horsfall suggests an etymology from ὄρνυμι (cf. Horsfall 2003, 377).
[626] Caeculus' men wear wolfskin caps (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.688-9), just as Lycmon does in Prop. 4.1.29, Aventinus wears a lionskin (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.666-9), the young Camilla wears the hide of a tiger (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.576-7).
[627] The Etruscans were skilful hunters (cf. the Tomb of hunting and fishing), and experienced horsemen (cf. the *equites Tyrrheni* at Verg. *Aen.* 8.555 and 11.504).
[628] Cf. Anziani 1910.

Italics. Hunter and huntress face each other, but Camilla's military experience outdoes the seemingly inexperienced Ornytus, pierced by her arrow and scorned with grim words for failing to appreciate the difference between war and hunting, and recognise that his adversary is not a beast but a capable warrior[629]–cf. the seemingly derogatory and contemptuous *Tyrrhene* in the mouth of the Volscian.[630]

As to Arruns, his origin is not explicitly mentioned, but his name is unequivocally Etruscan, being traditionally recognised as the name of one of the sons of Tarquinius Priscus and the Etruscan who guided the Gauls across the Alps to attack Clusium.[631] The warrior, who will hurl his spear and kill Camilla, is a more worthy adversary: his prowess with the spear is immediately emphasised, and Vergil is at pains to stress his relentlessness in pursuing the queen–see the two pairs of *qua … hac* at lines 762-5, the repetition of *hos aditus* at line 766, and the use of verbs of movement such as *detorqueo*, *pererrare*. The contorted chase[632] sees Camilla riding back and forth amidst the ranks, and Arruns surreptitiously following her every move with persistence and resolve. Their dance is further entangled by the apparition of Chloreus in his far-resplendent Phrygian arms, which prompts the maiden to recklessly pursue him for his spoils, leaving a fatal opening for Arruns. The Etruscan proceeds to address Apollo of Soracte,[633] solemnly concluding by declaring that he seeks no plunder, no trophy and no spoils, rejecting precisely what the maiden so eagerly desires.[634] After piercing Camilla to death, Arruns flees, struck by panic yet pleased with his deed, and his retreat is significantly compared to that of a wolf after slaying a shepherd or a bull,[635] both suddenly

[629] His inexperience is revealed by the fact that he moves with his full head above his companions, which prompts Vergil to observe *neque enim labor agmine verso* (Verg. *Aen.* 11.684).
[630] Camilla could simply not know her opponent's name. Dickey (cf. Dickey 2002, 208) notices that substantive ethnics seem to be less polite than the adjectives, citing this instance as well as a passage in Statius' *Thebaid* where Tydeus addresses his dying enemy with *Thebane* (cf. Stat. *Theb.* 8.473).
[631] Cf. Liv. 1.34.2 and 5.33 (cf. Schulze 1904, 263, who refers to *Aruntis* in *CIE* 988).
[632] Horsfall rightly described this scene as a 'deadly (and beautifully articulated) ballet' (Horsfall 2003, 408), and Gransden notes that the word-order becomes more and more interlaced as the two draw together (cf. Gransden 1991, 133).
[633] Servius, quoting Donatus, argues that Arruns must be fighting on Turnus' side on the grounds of his association with Apollo of Soracte, because the people of Soracte worshipped the deity (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 11.762), and it has been suggested that the warrior might be Faliscan. Soracte could very easily be a rural sanctuary attracting worshippers from different areas (cf. Horsfall 2003, 421).
[634] The episode is reminiscent of the death of Patroclus at *Il.* 16.813ff.
[635] Vergil's choice of a wolf instead of the beast par excellence, the lion (θήρ in Homer and Apollonius), seems appropriate for Arruns, who appears associated with the mountainous landscape. Furthermore, the priests of Apollo Soranus were called *Hirpi*, from the Etruscan word for wolf, likely suggesting an association (cf. Horsfall 2003, 430).

acknowledging their *audacia*. The warrior's flight is vain, for he will be the victim of the fatal blow struck by Opis to avenge Camilla on behalf of Diana.

However, amongst the characters that make an appearance on the Rutulians' side, a few present a distinctly Etruscan name.[636] The first is the leader of the Marsi, Umbro, who takes his name from an Etruscan river, the modern Ombrone, which rises east of Siena and flows into the sea south of Grosseto.[637] He is portrayed as a *sacerdos*, reminiscent of the Etruscan Asilas, of whom he would be a double, however, his lore appears to be more primitive, given that Umbro is a snake-charmer with healing powers.[638] His appearance is overtly that of a priest, he wears olive leaves over his helmet, which, as Horsfall put it, 'is the appropriate insignia for a wide range of religious occasions and correct priestly wear in both Greek and Roman usage, [though] its addition to a helmet is singular, if not droll, and we might reasonably think of a few symbolic twigs rather than a full wreath.'[639] The warrior briefly reappears in Aeneas' ἀριστεία, alongside another Italic with an Etruscan name, Tarquitus,[640] closely reminiscent of the city of Tarquinii and the Tarquins, son of Faunus and Dryope, both associated with *silvae*.[641] A few lines packed with Homeric references are dedicated to this character. With his shining arms, Tarquitus faces Aeneas, but the Trojan's spear pins the opponent's shield against his cuirass, and Tarquitus is decapitated.[642]

636 Cf. Montenegro Duque 1949, 113-14 for a list of Etruscan associations in the onomastics of the allies of Turnus.
637 Cf. Ufens and Halaesus, commanders of the Aequicoli and of a coalition from southern Italy, whose names are those of a river of southern Latium and of the region of Mount Etna respectively.
638 Vergil ignores the tradition according to which the Marsic lore and magic were derived from Medea/Circe (cf. Plin. *HN* 7.15, 25.11 and Gellius fr. 18 Cornell). For the Marsi as snake-charmers cf. Lucil. 575-6 and Hor. *Epod.* 17.27f.; for the Marsi as healers cf. Plin. *HN* 28.30; for charming and healing as linked cf. Ael. *NA* 16.28 and Plin. *HN* 7.13f. See Horsfall 2000, 488ff.
639 Horsfall 2000, 489.
640 *Tarquitii* are attested in Clusium (*CIL* 11.2454), Sutrium (*CIL* 11.3253), Caere (*CIL* 11.3630, 3634), Veii (*CIL* 11.3801, 3805, 3840) and Capena (*CIL* 11.4004) (cf. Schulze 1904, 96).
641 Dryope, daughter of the Thracian king Dryops, derives her name from the Greek δρῦς, 'oak-tree'.
642 For *fulgentibus armis* cf. *Il.* 5.295 (the formula recurs six times in the *Aeneid* at the end of the line, at 2.749, 6.217, 861, 10.550, 11.188, 12.275); for the decapitation cf. especially the death of Dolon at the hands of Diomedes at *Il.* 10.454-7, but also *Il.* 145-7, 13.202-4; for Aeneas' taunting words above the mutilated corpse of his enemy cf. Achilles to Lycaon at *Il.* 21.122-5, but also Achilles and Hector at *Il.* 22.352-4 and Odysseus and Socus at *Il.* 14.452-4. For the formula *super haec inimico pectore fatur* cf. *Il.* 21.121. It is interesting to notice an Ennian echo in Verg. *Aen.* 10.558 (cf. Enn. *Ann.* fr. 126 Sk.) and the use of Lucretian language in *deturbo* (cf. Lucr. 5.401) and *truncus* (cf. Lucr. 3.404). See Harrison 1991, 211ff.

The last Italic bearing an Etruscan name is Tolumnius, one of the warriors whose vigour sustains the hopes of the Italics for success (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.428-9).[643] He is the protagonist of the final reigniting of the hostilities in book 12: at the sight of Juturna's sign sent from heaven, a swan, seized by an eagle, rescued by the flock of river-haunting birds, Tolumnius, an *augur*, is the first one to interpret the omen favourably[644]–cf. the repetition of *hoc* at line 259–as proof of the auspicious future that awaits the Italics. As a result, Tolumnius hurls his spear at the enemies as a declaration of war,[645] striking one of nine brothers born of a Tyrrhenian woman–the woman is described as *fida*, like a *matrona*–and Gylippus of Arcadia, and triggering the final phase of hostilities. Tolumnius is responsible for breaking the truce, just like Pandarus[646] and most notably the homonymous king of Veii (see pp. 100ff.): Veii is another Etruscan city which, much like Tarquinii, is passed over in silence by Vergil, in all likelihood because of the long history of hostile relationships with Rome, and with this allusion to a dramatic episode of Rome's past the poet seems to utterly condemn the *augur*'s gesture.

iii. TARCHON

The most prominent figure amongst Aeneas' Etruscan allies is undoubtedly Tarchon.[647] The name is immediately associated with the city of Tarquinii, both originating from the Etruscan *tarc-/tarχ-*, and the complex of legends which developed around this figure must be attributed to a historical moment when Tarquinii had a hegemonic role in central Italy (V-IV century BC). As observed by Cristofani, the link with Tarquinii is quite solid, for the text of a fragmentary *elogium* discovered at the temple of the Ara Reginae, the most significant sanctuary of the city, makes

643 The epithet *felix* will prove to be ironic.
644 The formula *accipio adgnoscoque* occurs also at 8.155 when Evander recognises Aeneas, and is standard augural language. See Tarrant 2012, 155.
645 The gesture corresponds to that of the priest Laocoon at 2.50ff. and Turnus as Verg. *Aen.* 9.52 (cf. also Liv. 1.32.13-14), and alludes to the practice of declaring war by having one of the Fetiales casting a spear into the enemy's territory (cf. Tarrant 2012, 156-7).
646 Cf. *Il.* 5.290-6. The fact that the reader is not told who kills Tolumnius enhances the notion that his is a rightful death.
647 This is the common form of the hero's name, who is called *Tarcho* at 8.603. This is a casual Homer-type variation.

reference to the hero.[648] Tarchon was known in the tradition as the brother of Tyrsenus in Lycophron, as son of Tyrrhenus in Cato's *Origines*–he is the only source to identify him thus–and founder of Pisae.[649]

The leader is not afforded a formal introduction in the poem, unlike his companions, nor does he figure in the catalogue. He makes his first appearance in the words of Evander, recalling the prophecy of the *externi duces* (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 8.505-7), where his name is delayed in a large hyperbaton that extends along two lines, as if in anticipation of a familiar character: he is characterised as the formal representative of the Etruscan coalition, as he hands the *insignia* of power to Evander on behalf of the 'Tyrrhenian kingdoms'.[650] Once Evander declines their request, Tarchon and his men set up camp in the vicinity of Caere, waiting for the fated commander to lead them to war. This introductory setting of the scene, which is interrupted by the presentation of the shield by Venus only to be resumed in book 10, significantly places Tarchon and his men in a densely and explicitly religious space:[651] the location is described as an *ingens lucus*,[652] revered far and wide with ancestral awe and surrounded by rolling hills and dark fir trees,[653] where, rumour tells, the Pelasgians who once inhabited this land dedicated the grove and a sacred day to Silvanus, god of fields and flock.[654] Not far from there is the Tyrrhenian camp, situated in a sheltered spot, where Aeneas heads to address Tarchon–note the urgency of the Trojan leader in the five present-tense verbs in swift succession[655] (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 10.148-56). It is clear that Aeneas does not turn to Tarchon in his capacity of leader of his city, but as leader of a gathered cluster–the camp is broadly characterised as *Etruscum*, and a

[648] Cf. Torelli 1975b, 146, who reads *[Tar]cho[n Tyrrheni f.]* on the first line, and Cristofani 1990, 40.
[649] Cf. Lyc. 1238-49 (Tarchon is the son of Telephus in the *scholia* to the *Alexandra*) and Cato *Or.* fr. 70 Cornell. In Strabo Tarchon is appointed by Tyrrhenus, who leads the Etruscans from Lydia, to found cities in Italy (cf. Strabo 5.2.2).
[650] The *corona* and sceptre are regal symbols from the east, whereas Latinus mentions *sella* and *trabea* (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 11.334), more appropriate from a Roman's perspective: Servius notes *insigne, non re vera coronam, quam Tusci reges numquam habuerunt* (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.505), but in Dionysius a golden crown figures amongst the regal *insignia* alongside an ivory throne, a sceptre with an eagle, a purple tunic decorated with gold, and an embroidered purple robe (cf. Dion. Hal. 3.61.1).
[651] 'Here, as always, setting is a crucial factor while the poet builds up the meaning of a scene' (Putnam 1966, 145).
[652] The grove closely recalls Romulus' asylum (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.342-3).
[653] Cf. amongst the others Verg. *Aen*. 7.172 of Latinus' palace, and Verg. *Aen.* 7.608 of the *Belli portae*.
[654] This is the first and only appearance of the god in the *Aeneid*, but it is reminiscent of Evander's words (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.314-15).
[655] Cf. Harrison 1991, 101. Notice that there is no traditional mediation by an embassy.

few lines later his men are referred to as *gens Lydia*.[656] The prophecy that held them back is finally fulfilled, and the Etruscan people are freed from their fate, and able to join the fight against Turnus and Mezentius, entrusted to the fated foreign commander.

It is interesting to examine the brief indirect speech that Aeneas addresses to Tarchon to ask for his support: after the standard formula of revealing one's name and birth, followed by *quidve petat quidve ipse ferat*, the Trojan first mentions Mezentius and the forces he has gathered, and only in second place Turnus and his violent intentions. In order to guarantee their assistance, Aeneas stresses Mezentius' role in the conflict, which, given the rather limited amount of forces he must have had with him, could not be more prominent than Turnus', because he is aware of the resentment that all of Etruria felt towards the tyrant. The addition of the appeal to *fiducia* and the *preces*, though thoroughly appropriate, is almost unnecessary.[657]

It is only then that Vergil proceeds to list the Etruscan commanders of each contingent, and it is therefore apparent why Tarchon needs not be listed in the catalogue. Tarchon sails to join the fight with his men, whom he addresses heroically as *lecta manus* (Verg. *Aen*. 10.294)–cf. also *validis … remis* as 5.15 of Aeneas' crew–: the excited tone of his brief speech, with the series of imperatives in asyndeton– cf. *tollite*, *ferte*, *findite* at line 295–, the emotional personification of *inimicam … terram* (Verg. *Aen*. 10.295-6), and the 'ironic climax' of the envisaged wrecking traded for landing on enemy territory,[658] alongside the fact that he is the only Etruscan to whom Vergil dedicates a significant presence in the poem, leaves no doubt that Tarchon qualifies as leader of the Etruscan coalition as a whole, in opposition to the leader of the rest of the Etruscans, Mezentius. The characterisation as antithesis of Mezentius is reaffirmed by what appears to be the most important feature of Tarchon, namely his role of chief *lucumo*, a king with sacral offices, as explained by Servius.[659] Hence the double occurrence of *rex* at 10.149 to refer to Tarchon in polyptoton, which Vergil uses to refer to Tarchon

[656] Note how the phrase is encompassed by *iussis … divum*, enhancing the religious character of their mission.
[657] Fratantuono & Smith rightly underscore the fact that Tarchon shows no monarchical ambitions despite his characterisation (cf. Fratantuono & Smith 2018, 569). The expression *foedusque ferit* is found in Enn. *Ann.* fr. 32 Sk., and Livy explains that a *foedus* is ratified by a blow, hence *ferire*, to a sacrificial animal (cf. Liv. 1.24.4ff.).
[658] Harrison 1991, 152. Cf. the speech of Brasidas at Thuc. 4.11.4.
[659] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen*. 8.475.

and Mezentius with frequency and only once to Aulestes (not characterised as a king in the catalogue) and Osinius, whereas the term is recurrent for many of the Italic leaders.[660] Historically monarchy as an institution was limited to Etruria, therefore we should interpret these *reges* as equivalents of the Homeric βασιλεῖς,[661] as Vergil is seemingly ascribing a heroic monarchy to all Italy, without the restrictions dictated by the adherence to antiquarian pedantries.[662]

The only two other passages featuring the Etruscan leader are particularly illustrative in this sense. At Verg. *Aen.* 11.182ff. Tarchon is mentioned alongside Aeneas as overseeing the rituals for the funeral ceremony (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.184-7): the two leaders stand side by side as equals–note the positioning of their names in the same line, both introduced by *iam*, with the penthemimeral caesura falling on *Aeneas* and *Tarchon* at the end of the line, almost symmetrical–, and no mention is made of the Arcadians. This is an extremely symbolic moment, as emphasised by the adherence to the standard practices of burial which appear to be shared by everyone.[663] Reassertion of such religious role is given by the protection afforded to him by Jupiter himself: the god is not only responsible for Tarchon's fury in combat (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.725-8), but in his merciless assault on the mighty Venulus he is compared in a long and articulated simile to an eagle, Jupiter's bird, thus presenting himself as executor of the divine will. Seeing as only Aeneas is allowed to identify with Jupiter's will, Tarchon in sharing such a privilege represents a double of Aeneas, by virtue of the characteristic that most of all embodies not only him but the Etruscan people as well, that is *pietas*. Indeed it has been observed that the statuary type associated with the *elogium Tarquiniense* shows a man wearing a toga *velato capite* in the act of performing a sacrifice, which corresponds to the symbolic image of the *Tarquinienses* in the relief from the so-called 'Throne of Claudius' from the I century AD found at Cerveteri, which would easily fit the Vergilian characterisation of Tarchon. Furthermore, Tarchon figured in the late

[660] Latinus and Turnus *in primis*, but also Caeculus, Messapus, Evander, Rhamnes, Dercennus. The plural *reges* occurs repeatedly.
[661] In opposition to what appears to be the more complex terminology for Italic magistracies in Ennius (cf. Enn. *Ann.* fr. 289 Sk. and relative commentary).
[662] See Horsfall 1991.
[663] This is an interesting detail, for the Etruscans had the habit of inhumating their dead. Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 11.186.

Johannes Lydus as the one who assigns to writing the knowledge of Tages, the youth sprung from the earth, whereas the rest of the tradition has an anonymous farmer.[664]

The parallel with Aeneas thus revolves around *pietas* and valour, as reasserted by the characterisation of Tarchon as both 'speaker of words' and 'doer of deeds',[665] and by the explicit parallel *volat igneus aequore Tarchon / arma virumque ferens* (Verg. *Aen*. 11.746-7), which immediately pairs him with the Trojan. Furthermore, Tarchon's exemplarity appears to be explicitly made manifest, seeing as the Etruscan leader is the only character to whom the term *exemplum* is referred: after his ἀριστεία, in which Tarchon displays a good deal of fervour and force, Vergil portrays his men taking courage and charging the enemy precisely because of the example set by their commander (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 11.757-9).[666] The leader's exemplarity appears further reinforced by the parallel, underscored by Leigh,[667] with the Decii portrayed charging to their deaths on warhorses (cf. Val. Max. 5.6.5-6 *concitato equo* and Liv. 10.28.18 *concitat equum*)[668], the same way Tarchon is described spurring his horse into the throng, ready himself to die (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.741-2 *equum in medios moriturus et ipse / concitat*), thus suggesting the ritual of a *devotio*.

However, it has also been argued that the figure of Tarchon presents some disquieting aspects. Pomathios suggested that 'cette virtus guerrière n'est pas exempte de sauvagerie et de démesure, comme le montre son acharnement contre Vénulus.'[669] It was even proposed that the shipwreck caused by Tarchon 'is a foreboding of the reckless passion' of the Tarquins,[670] but however compelling, this thesis appears to too easily dismiss the stature of Tarchon within the narrative of the poem: on the one hand shipwrecks are a familiar feature of epic poetry, and need not be read as

[664] Cf. Lydus *Ost.* 2-3, compared to Cic. *Div.* 2.23.50 and Ov. *Met.* 15.552ff. (Censorinus locates the myth *in agro Tarquiniensi* (cf. Censorinus *DN* 4.113). The representation of Tarchon as a wise man can be found also in Strabo, who describes him as a hoary youth (cf. Strabo 5.2.2), and Columella, who attributes to him the use of surrounding the fields with bryony to avert the bolts of Jupiter (cf. Columella *Rust.* 10.346-7). The myth appears to be portrayed in the above-mentioned bronze mirror from Tuscania.
[665] Nielson 1984, 32.
[666] Cf. Goldschmidt 2013, 179, n. 115.
[667] Cf. Leigh 1993, 95-6.
[668] As observed by Versnel, 'the element of *furor*, ecstasy and rapture, [is] realized by means of the uncheckable impetus of the frantic animal' (Versnel 1981, 153).
[669] Pomathios 1987, 55.
[670] Muse 2007, 600. In view of its analogy with the shipwreck prompted by Sergestus in book 5, and of the familial bond that links Sergestus himself, the ancestor of the gens Sergia, with Catiline, the failed landing would in both cases anticipate the wreck of the state by their descendants.

foreboding looming calamities, while on the other the fierceness in battle, almost to the point of reckless incautiousness, is often a distinct attribute of the epic hero (in the *Aeneid* this behaviour is especially characteristic of Turnus, but it surprisingly emerges in Aeneas as well, particularly in the impetuous impulse to kill Turnus). Tarchon is certainly not so incautious and reckless to fall victim of one of his opponents, for as much as the reader knows he is not killed in battle, his fate is left unsaid.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the Etruscan characterisation in Vergil's narrative of the arrival of the Trojans and the subsequent war in Latium runs counter to the traditional account that can be pieced together from extant sources, in which the Tyrrhenians are unequivocally portrayed as adversaries of Rome and led by Mezentius. The poet enacts a series of deliberate choices which dramatically shift the perception of the role of the Etruscans within the early history of Rome, beginning with the decision to trace back the origins of the Trojans to Dardanus and Etruria.[671] As noted above, Vergil rarely introduces details of his own invention, and in this case, he seems to draw from a tradition developed by the Tyrrhenians themselves around the first half of the VII century BC to assign a Greek genealogy to their foundational myths. Notwithstanding that the author does not explicitly take part in the debate about the origins of the Etruscans, and surely does not seem to endorse Dionysius of Halicarnassus' argument in favour of autochthony, he creates an unswerving link between east and west: Dardanus, the Trojans' ancestor, is often and repeatedly mentioned in connection with the Etruscan city of Corythus, but his genealogy presents undoubtedly Homeric elements as well. However, Vergil is patently at pains to stress the Etruscans'–and subsequently the Trojans'–sense of belonging to the cultural and social structures of central Italy and their assimilation within this complex fabric.

The portrayal of this anthropological reality reflects the cultural and social diversity amongst the peoples of the peninsula in the early days of Rome, as illustrated by the use of nomenclature, which presents Hellenised forms for Etruscan warriors as well as Etruscan-sounding names for Italics, along with details of attire, weaponry and burial habits that do not seem to set the Etruscans apart from the other Italics. In addition, I believe it is possible to infer the diffusion of practices of mixed marriages in the emphasis on the fact that the warrior maiden Camilla was long sought as daughter-in-law by many mothers through the Etruscan cities (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.581) and the mention of a

[671] Wilhelm (cf. Wilhelm 1992, 129) rightly notes that Vergil's motivations were as much personal as political, yet I would not put too much emphasis on the personal aspect, on which we have relatively scarce information.

Tyrrhenian woman married to the Arcadian Gylippus, reinforcing the notion of a profoundly connected world, despite its diversity.

Vergil is not concerned with historical consistency and accuracy, and, as Leigh has observed, 'at once, both writes within the conventions of Homeric epic form, producing characters spiritually recognisable as Homeric heroes, and introduces customs, situations and patterns of action which his audience can define as distinctively Roman. Our job is less to question the strictly Roman credentials of this or that custom or action than to observe the simple fact of someone trying to construct a national identity.'[672] The fluidity of the cultural and social frame allows the construction of a national identity intrinsically coherent despite the multifaceted historical background. In his pursuit of a national epic, Vergil creates a world in which the individual is subordinated to the whole, in which the attributes that distinguish one people from another are subordinated to a common ἦθος. The foundation of *Italitas* rests in this search for an ethological matrix that, in the words of Giardina, is shared and prevailing, in which military and civil virtues are not in contradiction, but complementary, with on the one hand the rougher Marsi, Sabellians, Ligurians and Volscians, and on the other the more civilised Sabines, Latins, Romans and Etruscans.[673] All this cultural differentiation will inevitably constitute the core of *Romanitas*, a combination and contamination of factors, none of which are exclusive or preeminent, the shared blood, the geographic origin, the urbanism, the customs and the material culture, the language; none of these factors is unimportant, but none is allowed an exclusive privilege.[674]

The endeavour to construct a national identity responded to Augustus' political needs. The *princeps*' *Res Gestae* read *iuravit in mea verba tota Italia sponte sua, et me belli quo vici ad Actium ducem depoposcit* (Aug. *RG* 25), acknowledging and celebrating the spontaneous manifestation of popular sentiment that led the Italics to pledge allegiance to Octavian in the civil war against Antonius. But 'though the whole land was enfranchised after the Bellum Italicum, it had not coalesced in sentiment with the

[672] Leigh 1993, 89.
[673] Cf. Giardina 1997, 34 (translated by the author).
[674] Cf. Barchiesi 2008, 248 (translated by the author).

victorious city to form a nation.'[675] The *princeps* needed to create support for a unitary national sentiment that did not exist, and entrusted Vergil with the high mission of providing mythological foundations to the *tota Italia* that had so significantly contributed to his victory. The ethical framework that Octavian promotes is that of the *antiqui mores* of the origins, whose core virtues are military and religious.

Within this *Italia* Etruria was a recognised civilisation, its antiquity afforded unparalleled authority, especially in religious matters, and the extent of its power, at the apex of its ascendancy, was unprecedented in the peninsula. Furthermore, despite the extreme contentiousness that had characterised the relationship between the Etruscan cities and Rome for centuries, Etruria played a significant role since the Social War as an important ally, and the local aristocracies had progressively gained more political prestige and social status. Vergil celebrates the pivotal role of Etruria in the growth and expansion of Rome, bearing in mind not only its early contributions in terms of religion and culture more broadly, but also of military engagement and sacrifice. Vergil is at pains to acknowledge most of all the *fortis Etruria*, the Etruria that once had under its control central Italy, Campania, the Po valley, the Tyrrhenian Sea, and in order to do so, he needs to create a narrative dynamic in which the Etruscans are a crucial component of Aeneas' victory, just as Etruria had been a crucial component of Octavian's victory.

However, Vergil was risking assigning too significant a role to the Etruscan community by making the Tyrrhenians the most conspicuous part of Aeneas' coalition. The figure of Tarchon in the poem as leader of the Etruscan allies embodies the notion of that *omnis Etruria* that stood up courageously against tyrannical power, and the representation of his bravery as an *exemplum* for his men further emphasises the coincidence between *omnis Etruria* and *fortis Etruria*. The commander is characterised as a counterpart of Aeneas, a second in command to a certain extent, pious and brave, and his cavalry provides an invaluable support to the Trojans. And yet Tarchon does not figure in the final agreement ratified between Aeneas and Latinus. The Etruscan leader remains in fact subordinate to Aeneas, and his disappearance from the narrative after book 11 serves to reassert his secondary role

[675] Syme 1939, 286.

within the coalition. The poet draws from existing sources such as Lycophron, where he finds an alliance between the Trojans and the Tyrrhenians, but structures this alliance in hierarchical terms by having Aeneas lead the Tyrrhenian coalition, which willingly subordinates its contingents to him. Tarchon is thus instrumental in ensuring the smooth transition of power when he entrusts Evander with the regal *insignia* to be handed to the foreign destined to guide him and his men. Furthermore, Vergil ensures the legitimacy of Aeneas' leadership by means of divine sanction: the Etruscans willingly accept their subordinate role as dictated by the *haruspex*'s prophecy. 'Thus in those ancient times fate had already decreed a situation which was only to come about in reality after hard struggles throughout many centuries, the subordination of Etruria to the control of the descendants of Aeneas.'[676]

[676] Heinze 1994, 146.

4.2 MEZENTIUS BETWEEN IMPIETY AND HEROISM: THE REDEMPTION OF ETRURIA'S SINS

Mezentius is known as Aeneas' opponent from Cato's *Origines*:[677] the defeated Turnus takes refuge with Mezentius, who agrees to join him in the battle; in the next confrontation both Turnus and Aeneas are killed; the fight is carried on by Ascanius and Mezentius, and Mezentius is killed. Similar are the accounts of Livy and Dionysius, most likely based on the recent annalists, in which Mezentius is not killed, but defeated by Ascanius, who grants him an honourable peace.[678] No mention is made of Mezentius as tyrant of Caere, but this detail, present in Livy, must have already existed in Cato.[679] The figure of Mezentius is also visible in archaeological evidence. The name, regarded by Marbach as Etruscan,[680] was recently found by Gaultier in the Louvre, on an impasto vessel from the VII century BC whose provenance was established from Caere, reading *mi Laucies Mezenties*, meaning 'I belong to Laucie Mezentie'. This modest artefact thus places an individual named Laucie Mezentie at Caere in the VII century BC:[681] as observed in the case of Vibenna this does not mean that Vergil's character embodies a historically authentic figure, but does place him in the broader realm of history, therefore dismissing some scholars' claims that Mezentius is wholly a Vergilian invention. Briquel

[677] Cf. Cato frr. 6-9 Cornell. As to Latinus' involvement in the war, Servius mentions two different traditions, one in which the king figured as ally of Turnus (cf. Cato fr. 6 Cornell=Serv. *ad Aen.* 1.267-8), the other in which he figured as ally of Aeneas (cf. Cato fr. 7 Cornell=Serv. *ad Aen.* 6.760; the fragment is preserved also by the so-called First Vatican Mythographer, cf. 2.100.10-15 p. 110 Zorzetti/Berlioz).

[678] Cf. Liv. 1.3.4-5 and Dion. Hal. 1.65.5. As observed by Eden, Dionysius calls Turnus Τυρρηνός (cf. Dion. Hal. 1.64.2), 'which is more likely to be an important clue rather than a scribal error, for the basic kernel of truth in the whole saga is no doubt a reminiscence of early wars between a settlement on the Latian plain and two Etruscan princes, Mezentius and Turnus, who were at least united in hostility to what they considered their natural subjects' (Eden 1965, 33).

[679] Cf. Liv. 1.2.3. For a detailed account of the sources cf. Thome 1979, 186-235.

[680] The scholar argues this on the grounds that the theme *mes-*, which can be found in names such as *Messius*, *Messenius*, *Mestrius*, *Mestrinius* (cf. Schulze 1904, 113), and the suffix *-nt* are both Etruscan (*contra* De Simone 1991). He adds that, since the letter *z* disappears in the age of Appius Claudius only to reappear in the Augustan age, the form in Cato must have been *Messentius* (cf. Marbach 1932, 1513-14). The form *Messentius* however, alongside the alternative form *Med(i)entius*, found in Priscianus (cf. *GLK* 2.24, 36), are to be regarded as secondary, in view of the Louvre inscription (cf. Briquel & Gaultier 1989b, 110-11). De Simone prefers to reconstruct an Italic form ***medyent-* (cf. De Simone 1991).

[681] Cf. Briquel & Gaultier 1989b, 103-5. Di Fazio is somewhat sceptical of the identification of a Mezentius leader of Caere with the individual from the vase in view of the modesty of the piece (cf. Di Fazio 2018, 330).

goes even further, observing that the so-called 'heroon of Aeneas'[682] is contemporaneous with the attestation of a *gens Mezentie* at Caere, and suggesting that such chronological proximity might indicate a reference to the intervention by a leader from Caere in the territory of coastal Latium, countered by a Latin leader, killed in such circumstances and buried in the Lavinium heroon. The argument would be supported by the fact that the main tradition always has Aeneas die and not Mezentius, surprising for a tradition developed in Latin context: one would rather expect such outcome, hardly glorious for the Latin, to be passed over in silence, suggesting that it reflects the memory, still alive, of real events.[683] However, a more cautious approach is suggested by Di Fazio,[684] who employs the notion of 'figures of memory'[685] to explain how individuals' profiles are shaped and altered, handed down by tradition and adopted for different purposes.

A second noteworthy piece of evidence is the so-called Villa Giulia Mirror.[686] The artefact, dated ca. 300 BC, portrays Mezentius (*Mezntie*), seemingly in dismay because of some ominous news, with a warrior possibly the subject of the prophecy or prepared to react to it, and the other figures counselling or comforting him. The last piece of material evidence put forward by De Grummond is a scene from a cycle of paintings for a *columbarium* on the Esquiline Hill, often associated with the Statilii, dated to the second half of the I century BC. The cycle portrays episodes from the mythological past of Rome, including what appears to be the proclamation of a truce, in all likelihood depicting the end of hostilities between Trojans and Rutulians, ratified, according to the literary

[682] The tomb of a local hero of Lavinium (modern Pratica di Mare), site of a cult later associated with Aeneas.
[683] Cf. Briquel & Gaultier 1989a, 44.
[684] Cf. Di Fazio 2018, 334ff.
[685] Borrowed from Halbwachs: 'if a truth is to be settled in the memory of a group it needs to be presented in the concrete form of an event, of a personality, or of a locality' (Halbwachs 1992, 200). See also Assmann's 'Erinnerungsfiguren' (cf. Assmann 1992, 37-42).
[686] The mirror shows four figures, two Greek, Achilles and Odysseus (*Achle* and *Uhuze*), two Etruscan, *Ethun* and *Velachtra*. On the far left is depicted *Mezntie*, seated in an elaborated throne, resting his right hand on a staff, with long hair bound with a diadem, and wearing a dress with long sleeves, which prompted many scholars to identify the figure as a female (cf. Buonamici 1938 and De Simone 1991). However, as De Grummond observes (cf. De Grummond 2018, 111-12), the hair resembles that of *Ethun*, and the garment can be found worn by a bearded male figure on a mirror in the Louvre, stylistically similar to the Villa Giulia mirror and probably from the same period (cf. *CSE* France 1.1.14). On one of the rungs of the throne a head seems to emerge from sprigs of vegetation, which resembles the so-called 'isolated heads' from southern Italian vase painting heads' (cf. Heuer 2011, 245), which De Grummond argues may represent the voice of a prophecy. Most scholars do not agree with the argument presented by De Grummond, mostly on epigraphic grounds (cf. Di Fazio 2018, 329).

tradition, by Mezentius, whose name was once identifiable thanks to an inscription beneath the figure, which read *MC.ENT*.[687]

It is impossible to determine if and how material evidence informed Vergil's creation of the character of Mezentius. It can be assumed that the poet drew from literary sources, Cato *in primis*, but the extent of his departure from the tradition is obscure. What can be determined from extant evidence is that Vergil maintained the alliance between Mezentius and Turnus, but brought major variations to the narrative:[688] (i) in the literary tradition Mezentius seems to represent the Etruscan nation, but in the *Aeneid* he is the exiled tyrant, forced to take refuge with Turnus (and not vice versa); (ii) traditionally Mezentius survived Aeneas and was later killed by Ascanius (Cato), or established peace with him (Livy and Dionysius), whereas in Vergil the tyrant is killed by Aeneas; (iii) great substance is given to the death of Lausus, found only in Dionysius, where he is killed not by Aeneas but by the Latins, prompting Mezentius to surrender and conclude an honourable peace.

[687] For a study of the Tomb of the Statilii cf. Holliday 2005.
[688] For a review of the Catonian source cf. Schröder 1971.

i. MEZENTIUS, THE EXILED IMPIOUS TYRANT

Mezentius is introduced in the poem in a place of honour: in the catalogue of Latin forces in book 7 he figures first alongside his son Lausus (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 7.647-54). Most space is dedicated to the young man, who appears to have nothing in common with his father, 'worthy to be happier in a father's rule, a father other than Mezentius',[689] and whom the Agyllini are said to have followed. Lausus' epithet is *equum domitor*[690] *debellatorque ferarum*, a formula which recurs once for Picus (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 7.189) and repeatedly for Messapus in the abridged form *equum domitor* (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 7.691, 9.523, 12.128, 550). To Mezentius himself are dedicated only two lines, in which he is said to come from the Tyrrhenian shores, and is explicitly and unequivocally characterised according to his most distinctive trait, his *impietas*: the two qualifying terms employed to describe him are *asper*, bearing the meaning of *ferox*, and *contemptor divum*, used also in the opening scene of book 8, with the mobilisation of the Italics (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 8.6-8). It is first necessary to establish the correct interpretation of *impius*, which, I believe, is the one offered by Henry, broadly accepted by most scholars and articulated by Glenn as 'one whose attitude toward gods is contempt, disdain, or indifference'.[691] The arguments asserting Mezentius' atheism[692] or Epicureanism,[693] are, I believe, to be rejected, for with regards to the former the king does not deny the existence of the gods, nor, with regards to the latter, does he ignore them, rather he denies and infringes the moral system they safeguard.[694] The phrase *contemptor divum* thus qualifies as a Homeric-type epithet, and identifies Mezentius as direct opponent of *pius Aeneas*, justifying his primary position in the catalogue.[695]

The initial characterisation of Mezentius originates in the account of the dramatic circumstances that led the king and his son to join Turnus' army. In order to increase the emotional impact of the

689 Translation by H. R. Fairclough.
690 Cf. the Homeric ἱππόδαμος.
691 Glenn 1971, 136. Cf. Henry 1881, 630-1.
692 The claim is well dismissed by Thome, who notes how Mezentius' attitude is the exact opposite of the substantive core of the Roman concept of *religio*, namely the observation of the gods and their instructions (cf. Thome 1979, 78-80). Henry surveyed the use of *contemptor alicuius* and found that it never means 'disbeliever in the existence of something'.
693 As to Kronenberg's thesis that Mezentius is an allegory of Epicureanism (cf. Kronenberg 2005), I remain sceptical despite the scholar's compelling arguments. Cf. also Burke 1974a, 209.
694 Cf. La Penna 1980, 14.
695 Cf. Serv. *ad Aen*. 7.647.

story, Vergil presents it through the words of Evander, enveloped in the sombre picture of a bloody war.[696] The ancient and once prosperous city of Agylla, inhabited by Lydians, fell under the rule of the arrogant and cruel king Mezentius; exhausted, the citizens took up arms against the brutal tyrant, slaying his followers, and forcing Mezentius to flee and take refuge with Turnus.[697] Evander's speech is solemn and emotional. The Arcadian king has reason to despise the Etruscan as he defies the religious and moral code that he stands for, but he also recognises the danger that he poses to his young son. In his farewell to Pallas, Evander laments his old age, which prevents him from joining the fight himself and sheltering his child from Mezentius, whose threatening contribution to the forces of the Rutulians makes him most fearful. Evander's representation of Mezentius (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.569-71) emphasises his *superbia*,[698] his cruelty (*saevitia*) and ruthlessness (*insultans*), his disregard for his fellow men (*finitimo … huic capiti*) and the consequences of his action (*tam multis viduasset civibus urbem*).

As previously examined, Vergil is clearly at pains to emphasise that the whole of Etruria arose in righteous fury, implying that Mezentius' case represents an isolated and unrepresentative instance of cruelty and inhumanity. Isolation and inhumane cruelty are indeed the two distinctive traits of this character. As far as it is known from extant evidence, the tradition did not know Mezentius as a bloodthirsty tyrant, but his literary creation by Vergil responds to a series of criteria consistent with the figure of the ancient *tyrannus* as established in Greek tragedy and further developed in the philosophical thought of Plato.[699] However, Vergil's Mezentius is not subject to feral instincts, he consciously founds all his values in the absolute rejection of the λόγος and the divine, and furthermore, he does not share an essential trait of the traditional tyrant, he does not live in fear: as perfectly articulated by La Penna, 'Mezenzio disprezza, non teme'.[700] And yet he displays that

[696] Gotoff rightly notices that Evander's speech is a 'rhetorical *vituperatio* in the high style, complete with *praeteritio*, and anaphora in the rhetorical question' (Gotoff 1984, 193).
[697] It is worth recalling the Ovidian character of Lycabas, himself an Etruscan, exiled from his city (see p. 64).
[698] *Superbia* is also attributed to the other Vergilian tyrant, Metabus from Privernum, Camilla's father (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.539 *viris … superbas*).
[699] Cf. Plato *Rep.* 9.571c-d. If Attic drama insists on the notion of contempt for the laws, Plato emphasises the feral impulses of the tyrant as a result of an overturning of the internal hierarchies of the soul, which causes the τὸ θηριῶδές τε καὶ ἄγριον, 'the untamed savage side', to dominate the rational side. See La Penna 1980.
[700] La Penna 1980, 12.

isolation that is afforded by a profound solitude, only alleviated by the great affection for his son Lausus and his warhorse. It is thus not by chance that, as continues La Penna, Mezentius' ferocious cruelty is outlined in Evander's speech and not directly by the narrator, for Mezentius' cruelty is a premise, it does not dominate the epic tragedy of book 10.

To the tyrant Vergil attributes a sophisticated torture, traditionally ascribed to the Etruscan pirates, mentioned by Aristotle in his *Protrepticus* to illustrate the conjunction of body and soul, in all likelihood found by the poet in Cicero's *Hortensius*, passed on in a passage of Augustine's *Contra Julianum*: the bodies of the living were linked to corpses, fitting hand to hand and face to face, and left to die slowly on the decomposing body.[701] Kronenberg interprets the torture in the light of Epicurean philosophy, as a 'remythologization of the binding together of the soul to the body',[702] and yet the abominable punishment is not only evocative of the imprisonment of the soul, but a perversion of the erotic embrace.[703] On the contrary, Eden suggests that the practice described by Vergil evokes a ritual performed by the Etruscan *praedones*, who, in order to appease the spirits of their dead, demanding revenge and threatening if left unsatisfied, would sacrifice their prisoners to feed and nourish them with new blood.[704] Evander's *praeteritio* is immediately followed by the description of the torture, with no hesitation about reporting gruesome details, and as much as the epithet *contemptor divum* suggests a frequent habit of impious practices, Mezentius is not associated with any specific cruel deeds other than this one. As Servius notes, Vergil is ascribing to Mezentius a practice that does not feature in the previous tradition on the Etruscan tyrant,[705] however, he might have drawn from other sources to create this abhorrent portrayal: Herodotus recalls how in 534 BC the Caeretans, allied with the Carthaginians, had driven out the Phoceans from Alalia and Corsica,

[701] Cf. Arist. frr. 607-8 Rose and Cic. *Hortensius* fr. 112 Grilli. The torture is mentioned also by Valerius Maximus (cf. Val. Max. 9.2.10).
[702] Kronenberg 2005, 409. She also sees in Mezentius' gesture of clinging to the body of the dead Lausus and in the collapse of Rhaebus, Mezentius' horse, on top of his master, a further illustration of the embrace of the living with the dead.
[703] Cf. Burke 1974a, 203 and La Penna 1980, 12.
[704] Cf. Eden 1965, 36-8. Eden mentions ritual sacrifices such as the burial of *Gallus et Galla* and *Graecus et Graeca* in the Forum Boarium, which he connects to the Etruscans, and the gladiatorial games, originally associated with the funerals of aristocratic individuals, whose origin seems to be illustrated in the so-called Tomb of the Augurs.
[705] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen*. 8.479.

and, once the prisoners had been brought back to Caere, they stoned them to death.[706] The frequent association of the Etruscans with piratical activities, and subsequently with grim practices, is combined by Vergil with the tradition about the cruel treatment of the Phoceans at the hands of the Caeretans to create the narrative of a savage tyrant from Caere.

The creation of the character of the impious tyrant Mezentius, for which Vergil had no precedent in the tradition, rests on a series of figures from Greek drama and Hellenistic epic, such as Idas in Apollonius (cf. Ap. Rhod. 1.467), Capaneus and Parthenopaeus in Aeschylus' *Septem* (cf. Aesch. *Sept.* 425 ff. and 529 ff. respectively), and especially Sophocles' Ajax.[707] The Sophoclean hero is an *exemplum* of ὕβρις: Ajax reasserts his self-confidence with arrogance, declaring 'together with the gods even one who amounts to nothing may win victory; but I am confident that I can grasp this glory even without them',[708] and a few lines later the hero addresses Athena urging her to stand beside the other Greeks, for where Ajax stands the battle will not break them.[709] Vergil's language also echoes the caves of Polyphemus (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 3.6625ff.) and Cacus (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.196f.), and the analogy with a monstrous creature, in particular Polyphemus, did not elude Glenn, who famously suggested a parallel between the cyclops and Mezentius on the grounds of their *impietas*. The Homeric Polyphemus is explicitly characterised as a *contemptor divum*, as apparent from his exchange with Odysseus at *Od.* 9.259-80, in which the cyclops scornfully reminds Odysseus that he does not fear the gods, for the cyclopes pay no heed to them, considering themselves far better. The Vergilian creature does not present this Homeric trait,[710] but does share Mezentius' brutal inclinations–cf. *sanies*, *tabum*, *fluens* in the description of Polyphemus devouring his victims and in the portrayal of the victims of Mezentius' torture at Verg. *Aen.* 3.623-7 and 8.487-8 respectively.

[706] Cf. Hdt. 1.167.1. Gras argues that Mezentius is responsible for the lapidation of the Phoceans (cf. Gras 1985, 452ff.), but I firmly believe this cannot be drawn from extant sources.
[707] See Sullivan 1969, Nethercut 1975 and La Penna 1980, 13.
[708] Translation by H. Lloyd-Jones.
[709] Cf. Soph. *Aj.* 765, 767-9, and 774-5.
[710] It is interesting to note that the Ovidian giant is described as *contemptor Olympi* (cf. Ov. *Met.* 13.759-61).

Furthermore, Mezentius' *impietas* is reinforced by a significant parallel, in the moment when he re-enters the scene in book 10 to confront Aeneas, with the giant Orion (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.763-8):[711] the Etruscan tyrant, brandishing his spear, is compared to Orion, first towering above the waves while walking in the deep sea, and then towering with his head hidden in the clouds while carrying off an aged ash from the mountains.[712] In the tradition, Orion is regarded as a monstrous figure, infamous for his *impietas* and punished by Dionysus who blinded him. These traits closely recall Polyphemus in his first appearance in the poem, where he moves amongst his flocks leaning on a lopped pine (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 3.659-65): once he has reached the shore, he washes the oozing blood from his eye's socket, gnashing and groaning, and strides through the open sea towering above the waves. If all these parallels are pertinent, the conclusions drawn by Glenn appear to me less cogent. He argues that between the two episodes there is a dynamic correspondence, and that the monstrous giant, carefully avoided by Aeneas in book 3, prefigures the cruel tyrant the hero will eventually face in book 10. La Penna has correctly rejected this interpretation, and rather maintained that the characters of Polyphemus, Orion and Mezentius share the Platonic notion of the bestial nature of the tyrant, which in Mezentius' case comes out in his actions, but can also be obliterated by his heroic courage.[713] The analogy is further reinforced by a version of Orion's myth mentioned by Servius:[714] blinded by Dionysus as a punishment for assaulting Merope, daughter of king Oenopion of Chios, Orion has to wander at sea towards the east, accompanied by a cyclops, to regain his sight.[715] The association of Orion with the cyclopes, the blindness that affects him much like Polyphemus, but unlike him will be healed, create a multifaceted parallelism, in which the brutish Mezentius, who shares with the monstrous creatures a savage cruelty (as well as an imposing stature), will eventually find redemption (i.e. light) in the re-evaluation of his ruthless life. As finely observed by Leach, as a

[711] As noted by La Penna, *turbidus* immediately before the simile suggests the storms that accompany the rise and fall of the constellation of Orion, and Leach adds that it 'suggests the onset of a new storm of battle threatening the Trojans and their allies with new peril' (cf. Leach 1971, 84 and La Penna 1980, 14).
[712] This second comparison, drawn from the *Odyssey*, where Odysseus sees the mighty hunter Orion in the Underworld (cf. *Od.* 11.572-5), foreshadows Mezentius' impending death (cf. Leach 1971, 85).
[713] Cf. La Penna 1980, 15.
[714] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.763.
[715] With slight variations, the story was the subject of Sophocles' *Cedalion*, and features in Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.4.3, Eratosth., [*Cat.*] 32, Hyg. *Poet. astr.* 2.34 and several scholiasts.

bloodthirsty tyrant and as a scorner of gods, Mezentius, like Orion and Polyphemus, moves in a spiritual blindness which will be healed only moments before the king's death.[716]

As a result, the tyrant's *impietas* explicitly characterises Mezentius as directly antithetical to Aeneas, the pious and virtuous king, and illustrates the fundamental ideology on which the Augustan principate was established.[717] In their final duel, the opposition between *pietas* and *impietas* is fully on display. Aeneas repeatedly reasserts his dependence on the gods and promises to set up trophies for them (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.541-2, 11.6ff.), Mezentius openly professes to only rely on his spear[718] and his living trophy, if he wins, will be his son clothed with Aeneas' spoils (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.773-6). Finally, when the tyrant returns to the field to avenge the death of Lausus, to Aeneas' prayers to Jupiter and Apollo to bring on the combat, Mezentius contemptuously replies by affirming his own strength, claiming it equal to the divine power (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.878-80). And yet Vergil does not make Mezentius the existential antagonist of Aeneas, for the *Aeneid* rejects such a simplistic moral opposition: on the one hand the impious tyrant finds redemption in death, and Aeneas' ultimate adversary will be the mighty Turnus, whose arrogance–cf. how he is also referred to as *superbus* at Verg. *Aen.* 10.445, 514, 12.326–is balanced by the protection he enjoys from no less than the queen of the gods, Juno, and on the other Aeneas himself, triggered by the compulsion to avenge Pallas, will show a darker side, by mercilessly killing Turnus despite his prayers.

Significant in this context, I believe, is the reference to Aeneas as *praedo* (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.362, 10.774, 11.484), a term which closely recalls Paris,[719] which further reinforces the notion of the war in Latium as a second Trojan War.[720] The accusation is voiced repeatedly in the poem, first by

[716] Cf. Leach 1971, 86.
[717] This same conspicuous religious symbolism can be found in Livy's narrative of the war against Veii (see p. 98): an Etruscan king hated for his *impietas* faced by a *dux fatalis*, who is in turn joined by all Tyrrhenians except Capetanes and Falisci, and a hostile deity, Juno, who eventually turns to favour the Romans. Such coincidence in structure has prompted scholars to argue in favour of an influence of the narrative of the war against Veii on the episode of Mezentius: Ogilvie presents it as nearly beyond doubt, 'unless the resemblances … are wholly illusory', and Galinsky alludes to it as generally accepted (cf. Ogilvie 1965, 628 and Galinsky 1969, 138 respectively). Marta Sordi discusses it extensively (cf. Sordi 1960, 1964), yet her argument appears 'complicato, ingegnoso, ma poco convincente' (La Penna 1981, 26).
[718] 'Quasi … una caricatura delle formule rituali' (La Penna 1980, 14). La Penna suggests that the impious prayer might bear evidence of a primitive cult of the spear (cf. Couissin 1928).
[719] Cf. Hdt. 1.3. Cf. also Verg. *Aen.* 4.215, where Iarbas explicitly refers to Aeneas as *Paris*.
[720] Cf. Horsfall 2000, 252.

Amata, inflamed by Allecto, then by Mezentius, vowing Lausus clothed with the spoils of the enemy as a trophy over Aeneas, and finally by the mothers gathered around Amata and Lavinia in the temple of Pallas at the renewed outbreak of the war. The term accentuates the sense of injury and outrage of the Latin side against an individual whose arrival in Latium, although blessed by the gods, is perceived as an unjust invasion, but is perhaps most conspicuous when pronounced by Mezentius, whose savage torture evoked the atrocities performed by the Tyrrhenian *praedones*. Thus in this double parallelism, *pietas* and *impietas* are not structural categories, but an expression of human nature, which is in turn intrinsically flawed and responsive not only to internal dictates, but also to external factors, so that even the most pious individual, under certain circumstances, can act prompted by negative emotions and display *impietas* and vice versa. The *pius Aeneas* at the end of the narrative will prove to be a much less intransigent *exemplum* of *pietas*, just as much as the *contemptor deum* Mezentius will prove to be capable of selflessness and compassion.

ii. MEZENTIUS: TRAGEDY OF THE HOMERIC HERO

Mezentius is not a one-dimensional character, for, as Gotoff points out, 'before the confrontation can take place, Virgil makes substantial changes in his characterization of Mezentius.'[721] It has been extensively proved that the character can be regarded as a Homeric hero, and the tyrant's exploits have been widely acknowledged as a Homeric ἀριστεία. Mezentius makes a brief appearance in book 9, first brandishing his spear and hurling smoking brands, and then whirling his sling around the head three times and splitting in two the temples of an unnamed enemy (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 9.521-2 and 586-9 respectively). His might and strength are illustrated in the brutality of the images and the sense of chaotic and violent motion suggested by *quasso* and *fumiferos … ignis*, and prefigured by the poet's ominous insertion, *horrendus visu* (Verg. *Aen*. 9.521). But it is in book 10 that Mezentius' heroic grandeur is on full display (lines 689-745)–the Homeric character of his exploits is emphasised by the use of three similes and a series of Iliadic references–, preparing for the first encounter with Aeneas

[721] Gotoff 1984, 193.

(lines 762-90). The duel is interrupted by the interference of Lausus, who bravely offers to face the Trojan leader to spare his father, and will find his death in the confrontation (lines 791-872), only to resume when Mezentius hears about his son's tragic fate and returns to the fight only to be killed, pleading for Lausus' body to be buried (lines 873-908). On account of the epic tone of the passage, Sullivan has searched for a literary model for Mezentius, which he finds, correctly I would argue, in Telamonian Ajax:[722] the hero is described in the *Iliad* as a towering man, second only to Achilles for his prowess, who singlehandedly rescued the Greek army on multiple occasions, and, unlike most Homeric heroes, fights unattended by the gods. He is in fact young and modest, while Mezentius is a mature hero and a scorner of the gods, and yet Vergil seems to suggest the parallel between the two characters in the exact analogy of all three similes.[723]

While Turnus is being carried away from the battlefield by Juno, Mezentius takes his place at the forefront of the Latin coalition, urged by Jupiter's instructions–this detail can appear inconsistent with the god's resolution to remain impartial, but his incitement only causes Mezentius' death and his punishment to draw closer.[724] The Etruscan king is *ardens*, prepared to attack the Trojans, just like Aeneas was described at line 514 in his feverish pursuit of Turnus. The Tyrrhenians all gather hastily to face their enemy, *omnibus uni, / uni odiisque viro telisque frequentibus instant* (Verg. *Aen.* 10.691-2): the righteous fury of the Etruscan army is perfectly encapsulated in the epanalepsis of *uni*, the verb in syllepsis, the word-play *omnibus uni* and the emotionally charged *odiis* framed by *uni … viro*, and reasserted as *iustae … irae* (Verg. *Aen.* 10.714), to once again compose the image of an Etruria consistently opposed to the *impietas* of the tyrant.[725] The isolation of the hero, opposed by his former subjects, is reinforced by the two following similes. The simile of the *rupes* (lines 693-6), employed already for Latinus at Verg. *Aen.* 7.586-90, increases the feeling of beleaguerment and seclusion–the

[722] Cf. Sullivan 1969, especially pp. 220-1.
[723] Cf. the lion simile at *Il.* 17.132ff. and Verg. *Aen.* 10.723-9, the boar simile at *Il.* 17.281ff. and Verg. *Aen.* 10.707-18, and the rock simile at *Il.* 17.746ff. and Verg. *Aen.* 10.693-6.
[724] As acutely observed by Thome (cf. Thome 1979, 51-3), here there is no contradiction attributable to Vergil's negligence, as the phrase *Iovis monitis* is not to be understood as purely formulaic, for on the one hand it recreates the transition to the Homeric battle scenes, and on the other restores equal opportunities, temporarily destroyed by Juno's intervention, maintaining the validity of *rex Iuppiter omnibus idem* (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.112).
[725] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.692.

whole force of his foes is against him–, but also his show of resilience, while the boar simile (lines 707-18) emphasises the comparison between Mezentius and the wild animal, his bestial side–the phrase *dentibus infrendens* (Verg. *Aen*. 10.718) is used elsewhere in the poem of Polyphemus and Hercules (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 3.664, 8.230 respectively)–, though maintaining the notion of besiegement and almost stoic fearlessness.

However, Mezentius is neither Latinus nor a Stoic. The third and last simile of this section enriches the representation of the feral nature of the character by employing a traditional epic comparison, that with a ravening lion: the unfed lion's ferocious lust for blood, prowling in search of a prey, his vast gaping maw, his bristling mane, his pouncing on his victim and his basking in the foul blood which washes his relentless mouth, all contribute to a portrayal of Mezentius as a proud, ruthless, and merciless warrior, whose strength and vigour–cf. also the image of the huge rock, which suggests the immense force necessary to throw such a massive object–are only equal to his eagerness for battle. Furthermore, unlike a certain stereotype underlining the cowardice and treacherousness of the Etruscans–there is surely a certain irony in the fact that the Tyrrhenians do not have the courage to charge him with the sword, but only provoke him from a distance–, Mezentius faces his enemies openly and boldly, as we acknowledge in his encounter with Orodes, in which the Etruscan king refuses to strike down his opponent as he flees, but instead bars his path and meets him face to face, prevailing not by stealth but by the strength of his weapons. Mezentius thus adheres to the heroic ethic, and in Orodes' death scholars have seen the deaths of Patroclus at the hands of Hector (cf. *Il.* 16.843ff.) and of Hector at the hands of Achilles (cf. *Il.* 22.337ff.),[726] where the death of the slayer is foretold by the victim: Mezentius is implicitly compared with the two great heroes of the *Iliad*, legitimising his role in the narrative as a worthy adversary for Aeneas.

The confrontation with the Trojan leader is introduced a few lines later by the Orion simile examined above. Mezentius meets Aeneas with all his resilience and his huge frame, and prepares to hurl his spear: the prayer addressed to the spear–cf. the use of *adsum*, *voveo*–is a perversion of religious

[726] As frequently observed, the dry *brevitas* of Mezentius' victory speech (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.737) as he rests his foot on the prostrate Orodes, leaning on his spear, is not expression of contempt for the gods, but rather an echo of Achilles' pride (cf. La Penna 1980, 13 and Harrison 1991, 249).

practice which will inevitably lead to death,[727] and serves to once again reinforce the notion of Mezentius' *impietas*, overshadowed in the account of his military exploits by his spiritedness. It has been already established that in this precise moment Mezentius and Aeneas are antithetical figures in the specular quality of their gestures, one of which deserves special attention: the Etruscan vows Lausus himself, clothed with the spoils of the enemy as a trophy over Aeneas. The image closely recalls Mezentius' donating his spoils to Lausus instead of dedicating them to the gods during his ἀριστεία, and the impiety of this gesture will eventually lead to both Lausus' and Mezentius' demise. The throw is repelled by Aeneas' shield and ends up killing Antenores. 'Then *pius Aeneas*'–the *virtus* of the Trojan hero is emphasised in his clash with the *impius* king–throws his spear, piercing Mezentius in the groin. Aeneas is ready to finish his enemy, but here the confrontation is interrupted by the intervention of Lausus.

The extant evidence suggests that this tradition was unknown, with the exception of Dionysius:[728] there the youth is at the head of an advanced post, which the Latins seize, causing chaos and confusion amongst their enemies, who end up slaying one another; after hearing about his son's fate, Mezentius decides to send heralds to Lavinium to treat for peace. As with Mezentius, Vergil does not hesitate to manipulate his sources, and creates a grandiose tragic role for the young warrior. It was briefly noted that Lausus is immediately characterised as antithetical to his father, and yet if there is one thing that pulls Mezentius out of his isolation it is the love for his son, to whom he dedicates his spoils, turning him into a living trophy as a reflection of his own κλέος. This parental love is returned by the devoted child, who immediately intervenes to protect his wounded father:[729] Lausus is turned into an ideal youth, whose tragic fate (much like Euryalus and Pallas) Vergil lyrically laments *in propria persona* before his death (cf. Verg. *Aen*. 10.791-3), and afterwards Aeneas mourns,

[727] As in the case of Parthenopaeus (cf. Aesch. *Sept.* 529-30) and Idas (Ap. Rhod. 1.466-8). See Harrison 1991, 258.
[728] Cf. Dion. Hal. 1.65.
[729] The structure of the episode is reminiscent of the self-sacrifice of Antilochus to save his father Nestor from Memnon described in the *Aethiopis* (cf. Pind. *Pyth*. 6.28ff., from which the detail of the *canities* could derive), and, according to Servius (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.800), modelled on Scipio (the future Africanus) rescuing his father at the battle of Ticinus in 218 BC (cf. Polyb. 10.3.3 and Liv. 21.46.7ff.), although Scipio, unlike Lausus and Antilochus, survives. See Harrison 1991, 260-1.

stricken by *patriae … pietatis imago* (Verg. *Aen*. 10.824), commiserating the untimely death of such a noble child. Aeneas' inner tension between heroic fervour and acknowledgement of Lausus' honourable *pietas*, which had led him to warn the young man to desist, eventually leaves space for such feelings of grief, prompting the hero to vow not to despoil his body, but leave Lausus' arms to him, and to send his corpse back to Mezentius. The image of Lausus' lifeless body, with gore befouling his hair so neatly and duly arranged is powerful in its pathetic characterisation, which closes the section on a poignant and deeply moving note.

The tragedy of Lausus is not only in itself a literary insertion of great dramatic weight but serves the ulterior purpose of triggering Mezentius' redemption. The king was left wounded dragging himself away from the battlefield, and is found by the bank of the Tiber, staunching his wound with water and resting on a tree trunk. The re-introduction of Mezentius in the narrative pathetically depicts him in the serene frame of a traditional *locus amoenus*: the running water, the green meadow, the shade of the trees, the bronze helmet hung down from the branches and the heavy arms lying at rest on the grass all contribute to the contrast with the brutal nature of the war raging all around. Mezentius himself looks different, he is breathing weakly, while refreshing his neck, his hanging beard flowing over his chest, his hair grey. This is not the cruel and savage Mezentius, surrounded by his men; here, he is a parent (*genitor*),[730] tormented, inquiring about his son, who at the sight of his child's lifeless body shows a deeply sympathetic reaction: foreboding evil and recognising the lament from afar, he befouls his hair with dust, stretching his palms to heaven and clinging to the corpse, a dramatic gesture which resonates with a deep religious meaning.[731] Mezentius, gasping for air and wounded, slowly begins to realise that he is fragile and vulnerable, like all men are, he does not recognise the gods' will, but acknowledges his utter helplessness and the consequences of his

[730] In Mezentius' parental love the tyrant is reminiscent of the wicked Creon of Sophocles' *Antigone*, who reveals his only trace of profound humanity in the affection for his son Haemon, whose death prompts remorse and regret for the king's cruel past (cf. Thome 1979, 122 n. 305 and La Penna 1980, 19ff., who also references Jason in Euripides' *Medea*, Hercules in the homonymous tragedy and Theseus in the *Hippolytus*).
[731] The image closely recalls that of Latinus, faced with Amata's suicide and the fall of his city (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 12.609-11), but also that of Priam mourning Hector, often called ἱππόδαμος (cf. *Il.* 22.408ff.).

abhorrent deeds in a sudden epiphany (Verg. *Aen.* 10.846-56).[732] The humanisation of Mezentius and his ethical recognition can only occur because of the grief triggered by the death of Lausus, a structural device essential to ensure the multifaceted nature of the character.

Mezentius' speech is profoundly humane and emotional, and reveals the tender affection of a father for his son.[733] The phrase *morte tua vivens* tragically sums up the harrowing condition in which the father finds himself, alive thanks to his son's death. However, the sudden coming to grips with the sacrifice of Lausus induces a painful reconsideration of Mezentius' circumstances, now become utterly intolerable: the king recognises that he has stained Lausus' name with his *crimen*, which he appears to acknowledge as the reason for the hatred of his subjects that led to his eventual expulsion, seen by Mezentius as a debt of punishment he owes to his country.[734] Mezentius openly professes his desire to have given up his guilty life, as his ultimate act of repentance in a life dominated by contempt for both gods and men alike, well aware that his end is near.

The pathetic scene is closed by Mezentius' touching speech to his horse Rhaebus, closely reminiscent of Achilles' conversation with his horse Xanthus, although here the animal does not respond, according to a conventional rhetorical technique to increase pathos.[735] The address, as acutely observed by Glenn, also recalls the speech of Polyphemus to his favourite ram,[736] with the two deeply unsympathetic characters both showing a glimpse of humanity in their affection for an animal to whom they turn in the wake of a tragedy for solace and comfort. Rhaebus is described in tender words, looking back at their shared history, as Mezentius' glory, as his loyal companion on

[732] Cf. Sullivan 1969, 223. I am not entirely convinced that the emotion showed in self-hatred, as Gotoff argues (cf. Gotoff 1984, 201), but the scholar is absolutely correct in pointing out the significance of such realisation from a man utterly incapable of guilt, remorse, self-doubt or self-criticism. As maintained by Nethercut, 'the moment is one in which Mezentius opens himself to what is larger than himself and seeks to make whole his pain, but this impulse, while religious at heart, need not imply belief in or respect for the gods' (Nethercut 1974, 35).

[733] Cf. the double alliteration at line 846, the frequent use of the possessive adjective *tuus*, to reinforce the sense of tragic and senseless loss, and the reiteration of *nate* in vocative at lines 846 and 851, and *genitor* at line 848. Cf. the speech of Evander to Pallas at Verg. *Aen.* 11.161-3, but also of Theseus to Hippolytus at Eur. *Hipp.* 1410. It also presents a line of argument that excessively underscores his culpability, as apparent from the phrase *vivendi voluptas*, which does not apply to him in the slightest.

[734] As observed by Harrison, *meorum* at line 853 should suggest affection, but is here perverted into hatred (cf. Harrison 1991, 273).

[735] Cf. *Il.* 19.400ff.: both heroes are about to return to the battlefield where they are going to die. Cf. also the scene of Achille's weeping horses at *Il.* 17.426ff. Cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 4.6.10. See Harrison 1991, 274-5.

[736] Cf. Glenn 1971. Cf. *Od.* 9.447ff.

many victorious campaigns. Mezentius' address is a stern acknowledgement of human mortality and frailty, but also a noble testament to the king's heroic nature: he and his faithful horse will either avenge the death of Lausus or fall in the midst of battle, for according to the heroic ethical code no other outcome is acceptable.[737]

The final encounter with Aeneas is thus informed by this deeply emotional passage, which prepares the reader for the fall of the tyrant. The inner state of Mezentius is condensed in the closing of this section (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.870-1), an immense *pudor* and *insania*, mixed with *luctus*, all swirling in Mezentius' chest as he charges for the middle, point to a state of mind dominated by powerful emotions, all capable, in their own right, of overwhelming and overpowering any man. And yet the Etruscan king reveals himself to be ready to accept his destiny, when, in response to Aeneas invoking the gods, he replies by solemnly declaring his lack of fear of death and reasserting his contempt for the gods (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.878-82). Mezentius grandiosely proclaims his self-sufficiency, further increased by the loss of his only affection.[738] The brief speech (cf. *desine* at line 881) echoes the Epicurean notion of μὴ πεφρικέναι τὸν θάνατον, and has prompted scholars to regard Mezentius as the epitome of the Epicurean sage.[739] Stoic teachings have also been correctly identified by La Penna, who underscores how in his αὐτάρκεια the *sapiens* somehow challenges Jupiter.[740] Certainly traces of Epicurean and Stoic doctrine are detectable, and this portrayal is far from the depiction of the brutal and savage tyrant examined earlier, especially in the description given by Evander, as Aeneas seems to detect (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.897-8). However, Mezentius is still affected by emotions, he does not live in a state of ataraxy, he is fully aware of the consequences that his own actions will bring and is ready to accept them with fair mind. His last words are a reiteration of the question posed at lines 875-6, *quid me … terres?* (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.900), a declaration of defiance of the enemy and of an unyielding spirit. Mezentius is not an Epicurean sage, he is a man who is well aware of and acknowledges his

[737] As noted by Gotoff, Vergil brilliantly maintains Mezentius' isolation, even in this tragic time, by having him address not a fellow man or a god, but an animal (cf. Gotoff 1984, 204).
[738] Cf. the use of the *pluralis maiestatis* and the pathetic *natus* to refer to Lausus.
[739] Cf. Philodemus' *De morte* in *Pap. Erc.* 39.7. Cf. also Epicurus *Ep.* 3.125 and Cic. *Tusc.* 2.2. According to Kronenberg, 'Mezentius accepts his death like a philosopher, with full knowledge and equanimity' (Kronenberg 2005, 424).
[740] Cf. e.g. Sen. *Ep.* 53.11. The notion comes from Cleanthes (cf. *SVF* 1.564) and Chrysippus (cf. *SVF* 3.246).

shortcomings, but does not admit defeat, even in his last moments: it is in his αὐτάρκεια that Mezentius is similar, and simultaneously opposite, to the wise philosopher.[741]

The king concludes with further recognition of his people's hatred, enhanced by the use of *circumstare*, visually pointing to the Etruscans gathered to witness the duel: Mezentius understands that the rage of his former subjects could fall on his corpse after his death,[742] and fearing exposure and mutilation pleads with Aeneas to prevent this *furor* from happening, and, appealing to the heroic code, asks for his body to be buried together with Lausus.[743] Mezentius' death is not embellished, he is weak and wounded, and there is no celebration of Aeneas' triumph, but as the sword penetrates his throat, the Etruscan is *haud inscius* (Verg. *Aen.* 10.907), reasserting his full awareness of what is to come.[744] The end of the book is both grandiose and anti-climactic, confirming Mezentius as Aeneas' great antagonist, yet not an epic antagonist, for, as La Penna acutely observed, Mezentius' opposition is situated outside the Homeric divine world and against it, outside the Stoic world governed by Fate/Reason and against Fate, his literary background being not the Homeric epic, but Greek tragedy.[745]

iii. MEZENTIUS AND THE VINALIA

There is a further aspect of the characterisation of Mezentius that mainly derives from a fragment from Cato's *Origines* (cf. Cato *Or.* fr. 9 Cornell), namely the claim that the tyrant ordered the Rutulians to offer him the first-fruits traditionally offered to the gods, αἴτιον of the celebration of the festival of the *Vinalia*.[746] Similarly, a passage of Varro passed down by Pliny reports that, in exchange for his assistance in the war against the Latins, Mezentius asked the Rutulians for the wine that was then in

[741] Cf. La Penna 1981, 28.
[742] At Verg. *Aen.* 11.9-10 the reader learns that Mezentius' breast-plate is pierced twelve times, which surely symbolises the Twelve Cities of Etruria (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 11.9).
[743] Cf. the similar request of Hector to Achilles at *Il.* 22.338 ff. No mention of the fate of Mezentius' body, but his request appears to be fulfilled in the amnesty of book 11 (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.100ff.). See Harrison 1991, 283.
[744] A parallel with gladiators has been often offered (cf. Gotoff 1984, 210 and Harrison 1991, 283).
[745] Cf. La Penna 1981, 24.
[746] Two distinct festivals were celebrated, one on April 23 (*Vinalia urbana* or *priora*), one on August 19 (*Vinalia rustica* or *altera*).

Latin territory,[747] while an entry in Festus and the *Fasti Praenestini* (about the *Vinalia priora*) record a more demanding Mezentius, claiming the offering of all the wine.[748] The account, which does not involve Aeneas nor the Trojans directly,[749] is left out from Vergil's main narrative, but the poet appears to find a brilliantly subtle way to reference it in the opening of book 11. While the fight is suspended to allow for the funerals of the dead, Aeneas proceeds to dedicate a trophy to Mars from the arms of the defeated Mezentius, and as the Trojan leader addresses his men to remind them of their bravery in battle and to dispel any fear for the future, he points to *haec … spolia et de rege superbo / primitiae* (Verg. *Aen.* 11.15-16). Here Vergil seems to purposefully delay the reference to the *primitiae*, further adding a twist: this time Mezentius is not the one to demand the first-fruits, he himself becomes the *primitiae* offered to the gods.[750]

Ovid, albeit maintaining Vergil's main narrative structure, inserts the episode in the *rubrica* dedicated to the *Vinalia priora*[751] (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 4.863-900), this time presenting the opposition between Mezentius and Aeneas.[752] The introduction to the section seems to announce an erotic tale:[753] Venus' pre-eminence in the book was suggested by the poet at the outset, with a reassertion of his allegiance to the goddess (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 4.8), and the reader is further prompted to expect an elegiac subject by the opening lines, in which Ovid displays the rivalry between Aeneas and Turnus for the hand of Lavinia (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 4.879-80). Instead, Ovid creates an episode characterised by a sustained epic tone and by a strong Vergilian flavour. In re-elaborating Vergil's text Ovid, as often happens, proceeds to condense and abridge his model, asking the reader to supply facts and circumstances and

[747] Cf. Plin. *HN* 14.88.
[748] Cf. Festus 322L.
[749] Schilling argues that Aeneas is in fact already assimilated to the Latins in all versions except Vergil's (cf. Schilling 1982, 138 n. 3). This seems to be true for the Ovidian passage (cf. Fantham 1998, 259).
[750] The irony might have been apparent to the educated reader, who perhaps associated Mezentius' *impietas* with this specific episode. Cf. Macrob. *Sat.* 3.5.11. Sceptical Burke and La Penna (cf. Burke 1974b, 28f. and La Penna 1980, 9).
[751] For Verrius Flaccus as Ovid's source cf. Briquel 1998. The section's closing refers to *Autumnus*, which appears to clash with the festival celebrated here and rather allude to the *Vinalia Rustica* (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 4.897).
[752] The same opposition is later offered by Plutarch, where the shift from *Vinalia* to *Veneralia* can be interpreted as nothing more than an oversight (cf. Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 45). See Fantham 1998, 259.
[753] The festival was associated with both Venus and Jupiter: the latter was the receiver of the sacrificial offering by Aeneas, while the former acts as an intermediary between her son and the king of gods (for a detailed analysis of the cult of the *Vinalia* see Schilling 1982, especially 91-155).

creating 'more a narrative of characterisation than of events.'[754] The portrayal of Mezentius is clearly drawn from the *Aeneid*: the poet describes Mezentius as *ingens*, reminiscent of the Orion simile, and *indignans*, which closely recalls Vergil's description of the deaths of Camilla and Turnus (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11.831, 12.952). And yet, where the reader would expect a description of the confrontation between the two leaders, he finds that Aeneas is not even mentioned, and Mezentius' death is only briefly considered.

The narrative, despite its brevity, focuses almost exclusively on the Etruscan leader (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 4.884 *dux … Tuscus*), while in comparison, 'the poet does not waste a single epithet on characterising Aeneas.'[755] The Etruscans are said to be summoned by Turnus for help due to the fame enjoyed by Mezentius for his military prowess: the Tyrrhenian leader is a fierce warrior–cf. the adjective *ferox*, used by Vergil in the boar simile (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.711), which here Ovid seems to employ not to emphasise Mezentius' feral character, but rather his relentless vigour and courage–, whose ability on horse is only exceeded by his superiority on foot.[756] The king presents himself as a practical man, with his speech, divided into three couplets, revealing self-confidence and self-reliance. First, he promptly affirms his worth,[757] then he asks for his price and finally proposes the outcome. It has been noticed that the language of Mezentius is quite prosaic and unpoetic: the term *opera* is used by Ovid only in erotic elegy,[758] and, according to Fantham, it reinforces Mezentius' 'gross materialism',[759] while the verb *stare* used of cost is traditionally and prevalently employed in prose, satire and comedy.[760] Furthermore, Mezentius' arrogance does not appear to be much different from the

[754] Gosling 2003, 70.
[755] Preseka 2008, 224.
[756] This detail closely recalls the Vergilian characterisation of Mezentius' ἀριστεία, and the allusion to the horse might very well be a reference to Rhaebus.
[757] A certain element of *impietas* can be detected here in the pronouncement that Mezentius' arms are his only *testor*, rather than the gods, and recalls the sacrilegious invocation of his own hand and spear at Verg. *Aen.* 10.773-4.
[758] Cf. Ov. *Am.* 2.10.26, *Ars am.* 1.366, 2.673; however, cf. *Rem. am.* 165.
[759] Fantham 1998, 261.
[760] As observed by Gosling, in Vergil *stare* is only used in the context of arrogant boasting by Turnus after killing Pallas (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 10.494-5), while a previous occurrence in the *Fasti* is issued as a warning against Sextus Tarquinius (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.812). It is perhaps not a coincidence the use of the term for three men by the same qualities (cf. Gosling 2003, 67-8).

traditional self-assurance of the Homeric heroes: his *virtus* is well known to him, and has cost him dearly, as his many wounds attest.

As regards the antithesis *pietas/impietas*, which characterises the dynamics in the *Aeneid*, this seems to be somewhat presupposed in the narrative, yet not openly explored: to Mezentius' demand Aeneas replies briefly, and the conflict is quickly resolved by the formula *vota valent meliora* (Ov. *Fast.* 4.895). So, is Mezentius' request sacrilegious in the first place? The Etruscan king is not characterised as a despiser of gods and fellow humans, no sacrilegious words are assigned to him, no abominable tortures. Equally Aeneas is not explicitly depicted as the pious hero of the Vergilian saga. Aeneas' offer to Jupiter is unequivocally and inevitably *melior*, but Mezentius' demand is not explicitly portrayed as profane; after all he himself, in asking for the wine, qualifies it as *non grandia … praemia* (Ov. *Fast.* 4.887-8), possibly referring merely to its economic and commercial value. Therefore, considering that the episode narrated by Ovid is the aetiology for the institution of the religious festival of the Vinalia, we could suppose that before this occurrence the *primitiae* might not have been necessarily sacred. It is perhaps intended that the Tyrrhenian's demand is sacrilegious in that he is essentially claiming for himself an honour reserved for the gods, and it does not mean that the gesture did not acquire a deeply religious connotation, but that might have happened *a posteriori*.[761]

[761] Cf. Di Fazio 2005, 59-60.

CONCLUSIONS

It is inevitable to envisage Mezentius as the impious and bloodthirsty tyrant of the *Aeneid*, fierce and merciless, but also self-assured and self-possessed before his own death. Surely Vergil's portrayal of the Etruscan king is one of his most compelling, but Mezentius already appears to be a fascinating figure from the few scattered testimonies that precede him. In an interesting study, Di Fazio applied the structuralist categories of 'mythemes' and 'functions' to the legend of Mezentius and observed how nearly all the elements that characterise the archaic mentality occur in the narrative associated with him.[762] The legend of Mezentius would therefore be an excellent illustration of that 'koiné culturale italica' formulated by Mazzarino.

The choice by Vergil to alter the tradition regarding Mezentius responds to the literary operation of creating mythological foundations for Augustus' *tota Italia*. Alongside the Etruria that had pledged allegiance to the young Octavian and had been a loyal ally of Rome since the time of the Social War, there was another Etruria, that of the powerful dodecapolis, that of Veii, that of the Tarquins, that which had strenuously opposed the rise of Rome and took every chance to rebel and line up with her enemies. The Urbs' relationship with neighbouring Etruria was always characterised by a difficult and highly contentious dynamic, from which Rome, only after centuries, had ultimately emerged victorious. In the figure of Mezentius Vergil summons up a series of individuals and events ingrained in the collective memory of the Roman people as representative of Etruria's most vile and wicked proclivities. We have mentioned the analogies between the narrative of the impious Tolumnius in Livy and the Vergilian Mezentius, as well as the echo of Herodotus' prisoners stoned to death by the Caeretans, which undoubtedly inform the poet's portrayal of the savage tyrant. But the king of Caere is also characterised as a *superbus*, and as such he is strongly reminiscent of the last Tarquin, historical emblem of tyranny and viciousness. Like Tarquinius Superbus, Mezentius is a ruler who abuses his people and displays no regard for his fellow humans: the abhorrent torture that is attributed to him

[762] First politics (in the form of negotiations) and war, with subsequent victory, as two sides of the same coin; then the importance of wine (the request, as the need to get possession of the resources from neighbouring communities); religion (the offer) is presented in its most primitive facies, that of *do ut des* (wine in exchange for victory); and finally the reproductive sphere manifests itself in the figure of Lavinia (the offence), though associated with power matters. See Di Fazio 2005, 56.

was traditionally ascribed to the Tyrrhenian pirates, but to Tarquinius Superbus was also accredited a cruel practice, namely that of fixing to a cross the corpses of those who hung themselves because forced to build sewers.[763] Intimidation and oppression are for both the instruments to enforce their dominance. But just like Tarquinius, Mezentius will not enjoy his power until the end of his days, for a revolt, much like that led by Brutus in 509 BC, arose amongst the oppressed people, and the tyrant was expelled.

Although there is no doubt that the character of Mezentius is in no way shaped by Vergil to embody Tarquinius Superbus,[764] echoes of the memory of the tyrant's yoke over Rome, which led to the momentous insurgency of the citizens and the establishment of the *res publica*, are left to linger in the reader's mind. The introduction of the Etruscan king into the poem is necessary for the establishment of an appropriate antagonist of Aeneas, for, as observed by La Penna, 'il buon re Enea e il tiranno Mezenzio sono tipi ambedue necessari, strutturalmente connessi, del poema in quanto poema augusteo.'[765] The wicked tyrant is an essential component in the Augustan design of the poem: it is the overcoming of the evil enemy to ensure the triumph of the *pius* hero. However, the Vergilian Mezentius is created as a highly complex and multifaceted figure: his *impietas* coexists with a self-reliance evocative of the epicurean or stoic philosopher, and his resolve once confronted with his own frailty and mortality is that of a Homeric hero.

Moreover, Vergil introduces a momentous component to the character, namely his final redemption. Mezentius' transformation does not imply a Christian-type repentance and 'conversion', but nonetheless demonstrates his capacity for introspection and recognition of the pain caused by his wicked behaviour. The Vergilian character is thus not granitic, in him virtues and vices coexist, with 'the further implication … that in both situations, the poetic and the historical, there is no absolute right or wrong - only varying degrees of blindness and culpability inextricably blended with devotion and courage.'[766] The complexity of the Vergilian character, his tragic spirit, his

[763] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 12.603.
[764] The parallels between Mezentius and Tarquinius Superbus seem to me to be overstated by Thome (cf. Thome 1979, 207ff.).
[765] La Penna 1981, 24.
[766] Burke 1974a, 209.

philosophical subtleties are by Ovid significantly diminished, although Mezentius' *ferocia* is maintained. The elegiac poet is not interested in the redeeming qualities of the king and the subsequent implications in the history of the relationship between Rome and Etruria. The echoes of Vergil permeate the episode, yet Ovid does not seem to want to revisit the *Aeneid*, but rather to add to the epic narrative the section that was missing from it. As often with Ovid, it is the surprising twist, the unexpected intertextual exchange that the poet seeks, more than the straightforward re-elaboration of his models.

Mezentius' acknowledgement of his guilt cannot save him, for his death is necessary to the triumph of Aeneas, just as much as Turnus' death is. His awareness serves a further purpose, however: as a result of this process of recognition, to the Vergilian Mezentius, the degenerate tyrant, much like the proverbial scapegoat from the Old Testament,[767] is assigned sole responsibility for all the sins of Etruria. Ingrained in the eyes of the Roman people was a notion of a hostile and inimical nation, which Vergil rejects by setting out the character of Mezentius as the exception, the one individual whose abhorrent behaviour stands out amongst his fellow Etruscans. Consequently, Mezentius' expulsion from his own community appears as the symbolic expression of the liberation of the Tyrrhenians, the reinstatement of a set of values from which the tyrant had deviated. This operation allows the Etruscans to finally be relieved of the burden of guilt that had oppressed them for centuries. Concomitantly Etruria is definitively recognised as a vital component of Rome's success despite their contentious relationship. Etruria's cultural and political heritage thus finally finds acceptance and reconciliation within the Roman mythological foundation story: not only its contributions in the early days of the Urbs and more broadly of Latium in terms of religiosity, symbolism of power, urbanistic development of the archaic settlement, art and culture, but also and especially the acknowledgement of its sense of belonging to the historical framework of ancient Italy are celebrated in the *Aeneid* and therefore established in myth.

[767] Cf. Thome 1979, 205.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ‘EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE’

5.1 VERGIL'S MANTUA: FROM BUCOLIC FICTION TO EPIC GLORY

In the autumn of 43 BC, it was established that eighteen cities would be assigned as a reward to those soldiers who served amongst the Triumviral legions, and *ad hoc* commissioners were appointed as substitutes for the formal *deductores*, the Triumvirs. Amongst the largest colonies was Cremona, confiscated after Philippi, with its territory seemingly containing an estimated 1,600 *centuriae* distributed in lots of 35 *iugera*.[768] Fieldwork has shown that the existing grid of the city was modified to accommodate slightly larger *centuriae* and extend northwards across the Oglio and into the territory of Brixia, and eastwards into the *ager Mantuanus*.[769] The city of Mantua was seemingly stripped of over 70% of its territory, and the process, despite evidence showing that traditional procedures were followed, caused significant distress and anguish for the local population, who found themselves deprived of land and sustenance.[770]

[768] The land, however, would have hardly accommodated 9,000 men. A more reasonable estimate seems to be around 3,000-4,000 (cf. Keppie 1981, 368, who accounts for estates handed back to senators and former owners as well as unusable land).
[769] Cf. Tozzi 1972, 56ff.
[770] Cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 9.28 and App. *BCiv.* 5.12.

i. VERGIL'S BUCOLIC MANTUA

Although there is no direct evidence to confirm that Vergil himself or his family were the victims of expropriations,[771] the episode left in the young poet a profound sense of loss and disillusion, one that marked his early poetry greatly.[772] In the *Eclogues* particularly, Vergil draws from familiar places to create some of the pastoral settings in which his herdsmen move, a landscape often reminiscent of his native Mantua: two elements predominate, the woods and the small farms below (cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 2.62 and 5.58), and the interaction between them contribute to an underlying tension that disrupts the idyllic peacefulness, revealing how the lives of Vergil's shepherds are in fact not immune from sorrow and death. The *Eclogues*' countryside is and is not an ideal land of bliss, where its inhabitants joyfully pass their days singing and tending their sheep and goats beneath the shade of trees, it is and is not a haven from outside afflictions, a refuge from history. Nevertheless, Vergil's familiar landscape is not realistically portrayed, rather the Mantuan territory presents a series of features that are not at all consistent with its geography: the city is at times imagined by the sea, when in fact the coast is over 85 miles to the east (cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 9.57-8),[773] or inhabited by Hyblaean bees, which is a species originally from Sicily (cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 1.53-5),[774] and moon-clover flowers, which never grew in the Cisalpine region (cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 2.64)[775] and surrounded by mountains, which are not visible until 40 miles away to the north (cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 1.83-4). As observed by Cucchiarelli, the landscape of the *Eclogues* is filtrated through a bucolic sensitivity: rather than unfolding in an organic spatial whole, single details and actions come to the reader as a series of fragments belonging to a broader, but

[771] According to Suetonius, the poet's land was secured from expropriations thanks to the intervention of Asinius Pollio, Alfenus Varus and Cornelius Gallus (*VSD* 19), whereas in his introduction to the *Eclogues* Donatus, followed by Servius and Probus, reports that Vergil lost his estate, but regained it thanks to the help of Maecenas and his powerful friends (*VSD* 63). Unfortunately, much information provided by these scholiasts is the result of misconceptions and misinterpretations (cf. Gordon 1934, 1-2). For a detailed account of the controversy I refer to Tozzi 1984.

[772] Vergil is in fact the only contemporary source for the Triumvirs' activity in the *ager Mantuanus*. The only author who mentions Mantua before Vergil is Polybius (cf. Polyb. 40.7). For a comprehensive list of sources cf. Tozzi 1972, 70-2.

[773] Servius Danielis attempted to explain the incongruity by interpreting *aequor* as *spatium campi*.

[774] This is the first mention (alongside Verg. *Ecl.* 7.37) of the honey produced in the Sicilian city of Hybla, which will find great success in later poetry (cf. Clausen 1994, 52), and might very well be signalling a reference to Theocritus' pastoral poetry.

[775] Cf. also Verg. *Ecl.* 1.78, 9.31, 10.30. The *cytisus* is a clear Theocritean echo (cf. Theoc. *Id.* 5.128, 10.30).

indefinite world, as the single vignettes on which the individual herdsman-poet lays eyes.[776] The tension between idealisation and reality manifests itself in the violent intrusion of history into the idyllic scenery, which despite its Arcadian and Theocritean features is repeatedly disturbed by the harsh reality of the Triumvirs' confiscations.[777]

Significantly, the poems virtually framing the collection, *Ecl.* 1 and 9, are strongly reminiscent of Mantua and deal with the experience of loss and deprivation caused by the systematic re-settling of veterans which followed the civil wars. The two compositions are clearly to be read in conjunction, and their place within the collection reflects the centrality of this motif in Vergil's early poetry. *Ecl.* 1 takes place during the turmoil of the expropriations (lines 11-12),[778] with Meliboeus forced to flee his *patria* and his fields: his melancholic lament abounds with emotional adjectives reflecting the profound and long-running affection for his land–*dulcia arva* at line 3, *flumina nota* at line 51, *patrios … finis* at line 67, alongside possessive forms reaffirming a strong sense of belonging such as *mea regna* at line 69, which matches the reiteration of *tua rura* and *tibi magna satis* at lines 16-17–and results in the acknowledgement of the old Tityrus as *fortunate senex* (lines 16 and 51) for having what has been instead taken away from Meliboeus. His wish to one day see his modest field again is categorically denied with a series of negatives–*non … nulla … non* at lines 75-7–and the placement of Meliboeus' own happiness, and the happiness of his herds, categorically in the past (cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 1.74). The condemnation of those responsible for the herdsman's displacement is unequivocal and absolute: a godless and barbarian soldier will now own the fields once sown with hard labour by Meliboeus, this is the tragic outcome of years of civil discord (cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 1.70-2).[779]

[776] Cf. Cucchiarelli 2012, 20. The author interestingly draws attention to the similarities between Vergil's mimetic technique and the traces of contemporary Roman painting.
[777] The impulse to accept Vergil's poetic description altogether as faithful representation of the Mantuan countryside, and as a result the conviction that it is possible to identify those details in the topography of the region (cf. Wellesley 1966) is to be restrained.
[778] The impersonal *turbatur*, 'there is chaos' (the MSS have *turbamur*, but Quintilian reads *turbatur* and Servius knew and preferred this reading) is interesting, since it is only attested before in Cic. *Sull.* 57.5 and Lucr. 6.377-78, both times referring to a context of civil disorder. The expression is certainly not casual, but rather alludes to the historical background of civil strife.
[779] The harsh *impius miles* must have made quite an impression, since it clearly resonates twice in the *Appendix Vergiliana*, in *Dirae* 30-2 and in *Aetna* 51-2.

The same sense of irreparable injustice surfaces in *Ecl.* 9, where the motif of the *impius* and *barbarus miles* opens the poem with the disconsolate acknowledgement of the unpredictability of chance: Moeris bemoans his fate, that a stranger, who is now in possession of his estate, urges him to go away (lines 2-4). The expropriations are over, and a desolate peace has returned to the countryside.[780] Even at the end of the book, there is no silver lining, only the bitter awareness that men are impotent in the face of such an evil. Vergil's pastoral world is not only disturbed by history, but it is also, and more importantly, subjected to it: the chronological sequence he unravels presents no positive outcome. As Cucchiarelli put it, 'uno dei significati del mondo bucolico, in Virgilio, è nella sua perdita, nel paradosso di una società che lo infrange proprio nel momento in cui vorrebbe ri-attualizzarlo … Uno tra i miti d'origine della società romana (quello pastorale) è contraddetto dalla storia, con la sua arbitraria selezione di cose e individui, quali da salvare, quali da perdere.'[781]

The language associated with Vergil's homeland is filled with expressions of hopelessness and melancholy for the state of things, all contributing to a deeply emotional portrayal. In this idealisation, Mantua is somewhat transformed into a *locus amoenus*: Vergil's herdsmen enjoy the shade by the familiar streams and springs, which in turn, with their gently cadenced rhythm, harbour beautiful white swans. These two elements, water and swans, act in Vergil's poetry almost as symbols of the city, as to enhance the dichotomy between lushness and loss that is so inherent to his poetic evocation of the homeland. In a brief portrayal in the *Georgics* (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 2.198-9), where the city is described as a suitable land for breeding herds, the pastoral beauty of Mantua is once again disrupted by an evil fate which renders it barren: the prosperity embodied by the image of the field nourishing the snowy swans with its grassy river is negated pre-emptively by the adjective *infelix* in the first line, bearing the double meaning of both unproductive and wretched. The idyll meets history anew.

Yet the streams and swans of Mantua are more than features of the pastoral landscape, they serve a higher purpose, namely that of immortalising Vergil, his patrons and his poetry. In *Ecl.* 9 Moeris

[780] See Clausen 1994, 266.
[781] Cucchiarelli 2012, 134.

sings an unfinished song by Menalcas (lines 27-9), dedicated to Varus, generally identified with P. Alfenus Varus, jurist and *consul suffectus* in 39 BC, who, according to Servius Danielis, was put in charge by Octavian of the distribution of land in the province of Gallia Transpadana, and in that capacity ensured that Vergil's land was not going to be assigned to the veterans.[782] The completion of the song is inherently bound to the destiny of Mantua, and, were the city be spared, its swans would be assigned the critical endeavour of bringing Varus' name to the heavens.[783] Similarly, in *Georg.* 3 the grassy plains along the river Mincius[784] will be the chosen site for the marble temple to be erected in honour of Octavian, the symbol of the undying poetry Vergil is offering him (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 3. 10-15). Thus, it is apparent that the significance that Mantua attains in Vergil's epic poetry, largely as a result of a process of emotional visualisation, is mediated through his sensitivity and set of personal experiences. From the desolate pastoral landscape of the Triumvirs' confiscations, the city progressively acquires the magnified role of 'immortaliser', both of Vergil's poetry and others by means of it.

ii. VERGIL'S ETRUSCAN MANTUA

It will not be surprising then to find Mantua again celebrated in Vergil's most ambitious endeavour, the *Aeneid*. However, the brief passage in question is quite different in tone and content from the bucolic atmosphere of Vergil's early work: in the midst of the conflict, the Trojans are struggling, besieged by the implacable Rutulians, while Aeneas is away to gather allies amongst the Etruscans. There is nothing idyllic or pastoral about the situation in which the heroes find themselves, only slaughter and death. What follows, as examined in depth at pp. 149ff., is the catalogue of Etruscan allies, amongst whom is Ocnus, presented by Vergil as the mythical founder of Mantua (cf.

[782] Cf. Serv. *ad Ecl.* 6.6. Less likely, according to scholars, the identification with Quintilius Varus, intellectual and friend of both Vergil's and Horace's, who held neither political nor military office.
[783] A problem soon presented itself to Vergil: we know from Servius Danielis of a speech by Cornelius Gallus, in charge of the taxation of the Transpadane townships, against Varus, accusing him of drastically reducing the territory of the city (cf. Serv. *ad Ecl.* 9.10). Gallus would therefore be responsible for Mantua being reprieved, hence the exceptional honour bestowed with *Ecl.* 10. To Varus would be in turn dedicated the *recusatio* in *Ecl.* 6. See Wilkinson 1966.
[784] The Mincius is a tributary of the Po, flowing from Lake Benacus, modern Garda, through Mantua (cf. also Verg. *Ecl.* 7.12-13).

Verg. *Aen.* 10.198-206). The passage closes with a look at the Mantuan landscape, dominated by the lake Benacus, here *pater Benacus*, and the river Mincius, veiled in *harundo glauca*, reminiscent of the pastoral stillness of Vergil's early poetry.[785] The representation of the Mincius with its grey-green reeds recurs in Vergil's poetry as a Leitmotif, providing a strong sense of continuity, and reaffirms the degree to which Mantua is crystallised in his poetic vision as a bucolic fiction. Only the poet cannot reject the ineradicable brutality of life, and this peaceful image is disturbed by Ocnus' *infesta pinus*, the hostile pine-ship that carries the Etruscan contingent to war. What Vergil is actually describing is in fact not the Mantuan landscape, but rather the figurehead representing the river-god after whom the ship itself was named,[786] reinforcing the pre-eminence of the Mincius as symbol of Mantua. The idyllic Mantua of Vergil's herdsmen is long gone, and only peeps out as a distant and melancholic memory in the poet's mind. But a new Mantua arises, a city that can legitimately claim its epic status, with a mythical founder of divine origin and an illustrious history: this is the Etruscans' Mantua. Vergil's emphasis on the Etruscan heritage of his native land requires investigation, not only because no other source documents Ocnus as founder, but also in the light of the complete absence of Etruscan references in the many previous mentions of Mantua.

As far as extant evidence goes, we are not aware of any source prior to Vergil who reports the tradition according to which Ocnus was the mythical founder of the city of Mantua.[787] Silius Italicus echoes Vergil's version of the myth, but appears to reject the association between Ocnus and Mantua: the city is celebrated as the home of the Muses, whereas the hero is mentioned a few lines later, as companion of the Trojans in the war against Laurentum, in connection with Bononia (cf. Sil. *Pun.*

[785] Cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 7.12-13 and *Georg.* 3.14-15.
[786] This interpretation is shared by most scholars (cf. Harrison 1991,125-6). The issue has been raised of the logistics of the voyage, for the reading suggests that the Mantuans sailed down the Mincius and circumnavigated Italy, which appears highly unlikely. There is no need to ascribe consistent geographical accuracy to Vergil's epic, and furthermore, as Harrison observes, 'a wholly impossible epic voyage already existed in the return of the Argo via Danube and Rhône to Marseilles in Ap. Rh. 4' (Harrison 1991, 126). As Casson notes, bodies of water, and particularly rivers, feature prominently in the naming of ships ('practically all the major rivers in the Roman Empire had a ship or ships named after them', Casson 1971, 358).
[787] The Greek form ὄκνος means a rare type of heron, believed to be ominous (cf. Ar. *HA* 9.617a5 and Paus. 10.29.2; as Malamud observes, 'it is appropriate for the son of the prophetess Manto to have the name of an oracular bird' (Malamud 1998, 113). A certain Ocnus appears to be a proverbial *exemplum* of labour expended in vain (cf. Plin. *HN* 35.40.137 and Paus. 10.29.1-2). Diodorus reports that the myth of Ocnus was performed as part of a religious festival in Egypt (cf. Diod. Sic. 1.97).

8.593-9).[788] Servius clarifies that Ocnus is indeed the founder of Mantua, which takes its name from the hero's mother, the prophetess Manto, daughter of Tiresias, who arrived in Italy after the death of her father; Servius Danielis adds that some consider Manto the daughter of Hercules, and that Ocnus was either the son or the brother of Aulestes,[789] the founder of Perusia, who, not being able to contend with him, founded *in agro Gallico* Felsina, *quae nunc Bononia dicitur*, allowing the construction of fortified settlements including Mantua.[790] He also specifies that some say Mantua was founded by Tarchon, brother of Tyrrhenus, and took its name from Mantus, the Etruscan counterpart of Dites.[791]

In the *Aeneid*, as previously observed, Ocnus is enlisted in the catalogue to immortalise Vergil's *patria*, meaning that he serves a very specific purpose. First of all, the character is introduced by *ille*, used as at 175 to emphasise his distinction, in all likelihood to counterbalance the actual novelty of the myth, and is given a name that appears to be a Hellenised form of an Etruscan *Aucnus*[792]—although it must be stressed that neither *Ocnus* nor *Aucnus* are attested as Etruscan names. His descent from the Tiber appears to be a complete fabrication: the character has connections to Perusia, which, it can be argued, is close enough to the river to justify the association, but the city itself is never identified with the river in the way Rome or Etruria more generally are. As for Ocnus' mother, Vergil's choice

[788] 'Silius puts him [*scil.* Ocnus] back where he belongs' (Holland 1935, 204).

[789] The name appears to derive from an Etruscan *Aule*, corresponding to the Latin *Aulus* we find in such names as A. Caecina and A. Persius Flaccus, both originally from the Etruscan city of Volaterrae (cf. Schulze 1904, 73, who associates the name *Aulestes* with the *gentilicium* found in Etruscan inscriptions *aulśtni* (*CIE* 1800ff.), *auluśtni* (*CIE* 1799), and *aulśtn-* (*CIE* 2640). According to Ritter, the ending *-es* would be an attempt to echo Greek names such as Orestes or Thyestes (see Ritter 1901, 93 n. 1). It has been argued that the traditional association of Aulestes, mentioned immediately after Ocnus at lines 207-12, with Perusia would allude to the tragic fate of the city at the hands of Octavian, an episode that the *princeps* surely did not want to revive (cf. Saunders 1930, 84-5 and Holland 1935, 204-5). Holland goes even further, suggesting that Aulestes' death is reminiscent of that of the Perusini (see Holland 1935, 205).

[790] Ocnus' links with Perusia and Felsina could easily justify Vergil's line 198, where the hero is said to summon a host *patriis … ab oris*. Harrison suggests the phrasing might be purely conventional, as at 11.281 (cf. Harrison 1991, 123).

[791] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.198. Ocnus is furthermore identified with the Bianor of Verg. *Ecl.* 9.60, whose tomb, 'a tomb bearing a name that had no further identity, a venerable landmark by the side of the road' (Clausen 1994, 286), is reminiscent of Theocritus' tomb of Brasilas (cf. Theoc. *Id.* 7.10-11). It is more reasonable to believe that Vergil added this detail to the *ager Mantuanus* to echo Theocritus and possibly Diotimus (see Herrmann 1930 and Tugwell 1963), author of an epigram included in Meleager's Garland where a σῆμα for the young Bianor is mentioned (cf. *Anth. Pal.* 7.261).

[792] On *Ocnus* as derived from an Etruscan *Aucnus* see Müller & Deecke 1877, 287, who consider him a prehistoric hero of Perusia, and Schulze 1904, 129f. Both scholars believe that *Ocnus/Aucnus/Aunus* are all related. On *Ocnus* as Hellenised version of *Aucnus* see Malamud 1998, 113.

of Manto, the prophetess daughter of Tiresias or possibly Hercules, appears to be dictated by the desire to give the city a Greek influence[793]–Servius Danielis mentions the Thebans as first inhabitants of the area[794]–and is particularly interesting in the light of the existence of the (presumably earlier) tradition reported by Servius Danielis, and no doubt known to Vergil, according to which Tarchon found Mantua, and named it after the Etruscan Dites, Mantus.

Despite Tarchon's centrality in the second half of the poem, it appears that Vergil might have wanted here to reject an association with the Etruscan leader, possibly in part to avoid the concentration of myths and legends from the Etruscan realm around just one character, but especially in order to display his Callimachean knowledge of an obscure version of the tradition, which in turn made Mantua all the more exceptional. The resulting genealogy provided for Ocnus thus implies a certain type of heritage for Mantua, ethnic as well as cultural. In particular having the Tiber, *Tuscus amnis*, as ancestor has the potential to evoke not only a strong Etruscan legacy, but also the legacy of Rome itself, with the river acting as a *de facto* symbol of the city. As a result, I believe that Ocnus' genealogy can, to a certain extent, allude to Vergil's own personal and poetic heritage: poetically, the influence of Greek literary models on his work cannot be overstated; ethnically and culturally on the other hand, Vergil, like many members of the municipal élite, whilst identifying fully as a Roman citizen, maintains a strong sense of belonging to his original homeland and its local Etruscan traditions, the celebration of which by no means threatens the delicate equilibrium between Rome and the Italian *municipia*.

It can be argued with a certain confidence that Vergil is either creating a foundation myth for Mantua *ex novo*, in order to legitimise its presence in the catalogue of Etruscan allies and immortalise it in his epic, or, more likely, that he is at least partly drawing from the patrimony of local Mantuan traditions. The poet's knowledge of the folklore and myths related to his native city appears to be exhibited particularly in the epithet with which he describes Mantua, *dives avis, sed non genus omnibus*

[793] Cf. Saunders 1930, 85.
[794] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.201.

unum (Verg. *Aen.* 10.201): Vergil explains that Mantua presents a *gens triplex*,[795] with four peoples within each *gens*; of these twelve *populi* Mantua is the *caput*, the 'capital city'. Servius comments, evidently mistakenly, that Mantua was formed by three tribes with four *curiae*, each commanded by a *lucumo*, and that Etruria was divided into twelve peoples like prefectures commanded by *lucumones*.[796] As noted by Harrison, Vergil's description of the ethnic composition of Mantua suggests an antiquarian source, possibly Varro's *Res humanae*, for it closely recalls the division of the Salentini as represented by Varro in Probus' commentary to *Ecl.* 6.[797]

Scholars have long wondered about these elusive lines, where there appears to be a degree of historical accuracy alongside poetic invention to suit Vergil's celebratory intent. The threefold division seems to correspond to the historical ethnic composition of the area, abundantly testified by archaeology, as well as the degree of social mobility amongst the local inhabitants.[798] Before the enfranchisement of the Transpadanes by Caesar in 49 BC,[799] the *ager Mantuanus* had witnessed a succession of different peoples, first the Veneti, followed by the Etruscans. For the latter, archaeology is now able to provide material evidence, particularly regarding the V century BC,[800] although it is not yet clear whether the Etruscan centres were established on pre-existing Venetic settlements–as it happened in the Adriatic–, and whether the two cultures were completely separated or somehow co-existed. The Cenomani seem to have taken over around the IV century BC, once the economic and social reality of the region had substantially transformed.[801] Vergil might then very well allude to the Veneti and the Gauls alongside the Etruscans,[802] the only group explicitly identified by the poet, who

[795] As Harrison notes, the use of *gens* alludes to both racial diversity and political unity (cf. Harrison 1991, 124). The threefold composition is reminiscent of the Rhodians in the catalogue of Greek ships at *Il.* 2.668. Vergil might be here echoing a remark attributed to Ennius and quoted by Gellius, *Quintus Ennius tria corda habere sese dicebat, quod loqui Graece et Osce et Latine sciret* (Gell. *NA* 17.17.1), and 'it is natural that Vergil who felt the mantle of Ennius upon his shoulders liked to think that he too came of a place where three peoples and three languages contributed to an enriched inheritance' (Holland 1935, 204).
[796] Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.202.
[797] Cf. Prob. *ad Ecl.* 6.31.
[798] For a detailed analysis of the cultural relationships between Etruscans, Veneti and Celts and individual mobility see Sassatelli 2013.
[799] *Contra* Philipp, who argues that Mantua was a Roman colony from 214 BC (cf. Philipp 1968).
[800] See Menotti 2005.
[801] Ptolemy names Mantua amongst the cities occupied by the Cenomani, and Pliny lists a series of cities in the area occupied by the Cenomani, the Veneti and the Etruscans (cf. Plin. *HN* 3.130).
[802] Servius Danielis mentions the Thebans, the Etruscans and the Gauls (cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 10.201).

further reinforces the notion of a significant Etruscan presence in the area declaring that Mantua draws her strength *Tusco de sanguine*. This notion appears to be consistent with Vergil's characterisation of Etruria in the *Georgics* as *fortis* (cf. Verg. *Georg.* 2.533), emphasising a trait that essentially negates with forcefulness the stereotype of the sluggish Tyrrhenian.[803]

As much as the notion of Mantua's ethnic composition as *gens triplex* appears to have historical consistency, that of the twelve *populi* of which Mantua is the leader is to be received with a certain degree of scepticism. Vergil is here in all likelihood alluding to the so-called dodecapolis of Transappenine Etruria, mentioned by A. Caecina in his work on Etruscan antiquities[804] and by Livy, who informs us that the Etruscans had 'twice twelve cities', first *cis Appenninum*, then *trans Appenninum*, characterising the settlements in the Po valley as colonies of the original cities of Etruria.[805] As Sassatelli rightfully notes, 'we are not in a position to recognize a true dodecapolis in the Po region, but the stable presence of the Etruscans in the Po Valley and their efficient organization on a commercial as well as political and institutional framework, thus represents a consolidated historical fact that the ancient authors knew well.'[806] Vergil's statement about the *duodecim populi* would therefore in itself be consistent with the historical reality of the Transpadane region, yet the contention that Mantua was the leader of these cities appears to be wholly unfounded. According to the sources, Felsina appears to be the most prominent settlement *trans Appenninum*, as testified by Pliny,[807] where archaeological evidence points to an earlier stage of Villanovan occupation, followed around the VI century BC by a more systematic reorganisation of the area and the founding of new cities, amongst them Mantua, the northernmost settlement in the Po valley. Furthermore, both Strabo and Martial testify to the city's modest size, confirming the limited role it most likely played in the area.[808]

[803] Cf. Scuderi 1978, 90.
[804] Cf. *schol. Veron. ad Aen.* 10.200.
[805] Cf. Liv. 5.33.9-10.
[806] Sassatelli & Govi 2013, 281.
[807] Cf. Plin. *HN* 3.115.
[808] Strabo, in his description of the region of the Po valley, mentions Mediolanum and Verona as the two main cities in the area, and amongst the smaller ones Mantua, whereas Martial likens the debt of gratitude both Catullus and Vergil owe their respective native cities regardless of their different sizes (cf. Strabo 5.1.6 and Mart. 14.195 respectively). It is to be noted that Pliny refers to Mantua as *Tuscorum trans Padum sola reliqua* at 3.130, but this might be due to his misreading of Vergil's passage (cf. Tenney 1922, 4-5).

Many scholars have attempted to establish that Vergil himself was, at least partially, of Etruscan origin.[809] First of all, the *cognomen* Maro could potentially correspond to the Etruscan title *maru*,[810] survived at Caere in the form of *aedil*, whose office appears to have been primarily priestly: the name, as Gordon suggests, 'may therefore have originally commemorated the tenure of a priesthood, like Curio, which the Scribonii seem to have used in preference to their *gentilicium*.'[811] Schulze regards it as an Etruscan *cognomen*, used at times as a *nomen*,[812] and it needs to be acknowledged that it does occur occasionally with originally Etruscan names, while it is absent in Africa, Gallia Narbonensis and in the Rhine provinces, as observed by Braunholtz, who regards this as strong evidence against a Celtic origin. He adds that the poet's name, always scanned with ă, must not be confused with the Celtic *Mārus*, *Mārio* etc., even though the Italian *praenomen Marus>gentilicium Marius* was formed from a stem *măr*-, which offers the possibility of an Italian origin. There is also evidence of a Greek name Μάρων, mentioned in *Od.* 9.197 as the son of Euanthes, priest of Apollo at Ismaros in Thrace, which might point to a Greek or Thracian origin. With regard to the *gentilicium*, many freedmen of the name *Vergilius* are found at Ostia and Rome, as well as in Cisalpine Gaul, but the *nomen* predominantly appears outside Rome amongst the local Italian gentry. Even though proportionally its scanty presence in Celtic areas seems to confirm that *Vergilius* was not a common Celtic name, there is still plenty of material evidence that appears to point in that direction.[813] Its origin from a stem *verc*- or *verg*- might be Greek (see ἔργον or ὀργή), but a Ligurian origin has also been proposed. Schulze again argues in favour of an Etruscan *vercna*, Latinised as *Verginius*,[814] which would be consistent with the ten *Vercilii* or *Vergilii* found in Etruria, including some with Etruscan names. The same uncertainty surrounds the origin of Vergilius' mother, Magia Polla.[815] As a result of this lack of conclusive

[809] What follows is a concise account of the arguments brought forward. For more detailed accounts see Braunholtz 1915, Gordon 1934 and Enking 1959.
[810] It is to this day not clear whether it was borrowed by the Umbrians from the Etruscans or vice-versa.
[811] Gordon 1934, 4.
[812] Cf. Schulze 1904, 189.
[813] Zeuss argued in favour of a Celtic origin (cf. Zeuss 1871, 11), but Braunholtz emphasises the lack of evidence that would corroborate this thesis. However, he also adds the occurrence in the inscription of Italy proper of the name *Vergilius* with the *cognomen Gallus*, which might suggest the nationality of the individuals in question, but also be simply an honorary *cognomen*.
[814] Cf. Schulze 1904, 100, 319.
[815] Cf. Braunholtz 1915 and Gordon 1934.

evidence, I believe it is not advisable to regard Vergil's positive attitude towards Etruscans strictly as a by-product of his family history. After all the poet never claims Etruscan ancestors for himself. The exercise he is performing concerns his homeland, Mantua, which undoubtedly presented *Tuscus sanguis* in its veins, and as citizen of Mantua Vergil shares his city's history and culture, which makes him too, in a way, Etruscan.

CONCLUSIONS

The near-absence of Etruscan themes in connection with Mantua in the *Eclogues* reveals the true object of Vergil's early poetic inspiration, namely the pain of the civil wars and their tragic consequences for the people of the area, which completely obscures any interest the poet might have in focusing on the Etruscan heritage of the city. Mantua is imagined and described in emotional terms, of both melancholy and affection, and by means of recurrent images, particularly waters and swans, which establish the city as an idealised *locus amoenus*, and the river Mincius with its grey-green reeds as symbol of this crystallised bucolic fiction, whose poetic visualisation is strongly mediated through the poet's personal sensitivity. This 'emotional landscape' is however intruded on and ravaged by the misery of history, inserting a further element of Vergil's individual experience in the painful recollection of the expropriations and the subsequent profound feeling of loss and disillusion. Still in the *Georgics* the representation of Mantua essentially follows the romanticised traits encountered in the *Eclogues*, but already, also as a result of a shift from the bucolic to the epic genre, the city comes to embody Vergil's undying poetry and the celebration of his homeland.

With the *Aeneid* a significant progression takes place towards the celebration of Mantua in the context of its Etruscan heritage. I believe this is partly due to the poet's complex relationship with Augustus, who intended to promote Etruria as belonging to that *Italia* that swore to fight on his side during the civil war, showing the unity of the Roman west against Antony and Cleopatra. In addition, Vergil's treatment of Etruria and Etruscan themes appears to be influenced by his friendship with Maecenas: the patron, proud of his Etruscan heritage, and not shy in boasting about it, was most likely an expert in antiquarian knowledge, and surely provided Vergil with plenty of obscure traditions and myths, which only added to the poet's acquaintance with Varro's antiquarian work, giving him a plethora of material to further enrich his vision of the early history of the peninsula. In the *Georgics*, Vergil is still quite reluctant to raise the Etruscans as subject of his work, despite his acknowledgement of their contribution to Rome, its early history and its culture. His attitude never changes, what changes is the degree of poetic interest displayed in his work. In the *Aeneid* the theme of the Etruscan heritage of Mantua is inserted into a celebration of the city which displays clear signs

of continuity, especially in the portrayal of the Mincius, but also abandons the pastoral imagery in favour of a distinctively epic framework. Mantua rises to an epic status by the attribution of a mythical founder and an illustrious history, which legitimise its place amongst the other legendary Etruscan cities: Vergil is clearly in possession of antiquarian material concerning the city which he either was not aware of previously, or only now finds appropriate to explore. The antiquarian interest is undoubtedly on full display in the whole catalogue, which would suggest that the poet is not establishing a foundation-myth *ex novo*, but rather re-elaborating antiquarian material, most likely from Varro's *Res humanae*, perhaps supplemented by his patron Maecenas, to be regarded as a further stimulus for Vergil's curiosity and source of knowledge, even about his own town.

The sentimental overtones which permeate the depiction of Mantua in the *Eclogues*, engendered by an emotional response to the memory of the poet's painful experience, produce an equally ideal/melancholic and realistic/harrowing portrayal, allowed by the 'bucolic space', the genre itself. But even where the genre is conventionally more sustained in tone, Vergil echoes his own emotional Mantua in the perfect pastoral stillness of the Mincius and its grassy plains, so close to that first conceptualisation and described both in the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*, almost as a reminder of a lost paradise that never was. Mantua is thus not only the poet's homeland, it is transformed into a symbol of the poet himself and his poetry: celebrated in the *Georgics* in all its future potentiality, as foreshadowing the honours his work will bestow upon him, Vergil's *patria* finds its place within the framework of the mythological foundations of Rome and Vergil finds his place within the canon of great poets.

5.2 PROPERTIUS' PERUSIA: DESOLATE LANDSCAPES AND THE LAMENT FOR A LOST WORLD

In the aftermath of Philippi, Octavian was assigned the distribution of allotments to the veterans. With Antony occupied in the east, L. Antonius and Fulvia readily picked up on a wide discontent amongst the Italian landowners, who feared confiscations and dispossessions. According to Dio,[816] while he was on his way to Gaul, Lucius was forced to retreat to Perusia, where he was intercepted by Octavian's lieutenants. The siege did not last long: Lucius soon capitulated and was spared by Octavian, who appointed him governor of Spain, and many of the senators who espoused the Perusini's cause were put to death along with the members of the local government. 'These judicial murders were magnified by defamation and credulity into a hecatomb of three hundred Roman senators and knights slaughtered in solemn and religious ceremony on the Ides of March before an altar dedicated to *Divus Iulius*.'[817] The city was turned over to the soldiers, and expropriations extended all across the Umbrian valley, both in the form of colony foundation and as *viritim* allotments, affecting especially the local families, both aristocratic and non-aristocratic, owners of small lots, the *domi nobiles*.[818] Despite its gravity, or probably on account of it, the *Bellum Perusinum* did not find much emphasis in the ancient sources, and was purposefully passed over by Octavian in his *Res Gestae*, likely concerned that it might damage his image in the conciliatory climate established after Actium and the reconciliation of 2 BC when he received the title of *pater patriae*.

[816] Cf. Cass. Dio 48.14.1.
[817] Syme 1939, 212. Cf. Suet. *Aug.* 15, Cass. Dio 48.14.4 and Sen. *Clem.* 1.11.
[818] Cf. Spadoni 2010, 98.

i. PROPERTIUS' PERUSIA

This episode of Rome's recent history left a deep and dark suggestion in Propertius's memory: as Poccetti observes, 'è superfluo ricordare che l'Etruria, oltre che filtrata da un sapere libresco e dotto, doveva appartenere anche all'universo delle conoscenze personali, essendo adiacente alla patria del poeta.'[819] The *Propertii* are in fact an Umbrian *gens* from Assisium, as confirmed by an Umbrian inscription,[820] belonging to the local aristocracy, who saw their property confiscated as a consequence of the siege of Perusia.[821] Cato interestingly reports an otherwise unknown *Propertius* king of Veii,[822] a fact which bears out the archaic penetration of the *gens* in Etruria, not surprising as it would correspond to other 'Italian' *gentilicia* attested in archaic Etruscan epigraphs.[823] In his early poetry, Propertius gives voice to accents of profound grief, a feeling that must be terribly personal: Prop. 1.21 and 22, which specifically deal with the aftermath of Perusia, provide the book with an extremely controversial epilogue, as a result of Propertius' open display of sentiments of abhorrence for the civil war, which must have surely caused a certain sense of unease in the leadership.

In 1.22, which represents the proper σφραγίς of his *monobiblos*, Propertius reluctantly addresses in incipit the insistent questions posed by his friend Volcacius Tullus,[824] an Italian of consular family, about his parentage. However, the poem does not really seem to answer Tullus' request, but rather tries to elude it, by referencing the *Bellum Perusinum* and the death of a relative, whose limbs lie

[819] Poccetti 2012, 174.
[820] Cf. the epigraphic evidence in Forni 1986, 176ff., Vivona 1986, 110ff. and Rix 2002. A member of Propertius' family was in the late II or early I century BC one of the *marones*, the magistrates in charge of the construction of the city walls alongside the *quattuorviri* and the *quinqueviri* (see Cairns 2006b, 8ff.).
[821] We infer this information from Prop. 4.1.121-30, where the poet has the astrologer Horos recall his noble origins and the humble house where the family lived after their rich and well cultivated land was taken from them.
[822] Cf. Cato fr. 69 Cornell.
[823] Cf. Poccetti 2012, 175. This evidence is interesting in the light of the attention given by Propertius to the city of Veii in his poetry, as the only one considered for its illustrious regal past as opposed to a wretched present.
[824] Volcacius was originally from Perusia, and it is possible that Propertius' mother was somehow related to the family of the Volcacii (cf. Forni 1986, 119), whose status, although not equivalent to Tullus', would have provided protection for the young poet after his father's death (see Cairns 2006b, 61-2). The position of the family during the war is not altogether clear (Cairns seems to regard as more convincing the argument in favour of Volcacius' involvement on L. Antonius' side, see Cairns 2006b, 46ff.), however a member, L. Volcacius, was held in high favour by the *princeps*, as he was *consul ordinarius* in 33 BC as Octavian's colleague, and became *proconsul* of Asia in 29 BC. This might have come as a reward for the Volcacii's support for Octavian in the Perusine War.

unburied; the request is only briefly fulfilled in the closing distich: *proxima supposito contingens Umbria campos / me genuit terris fertilis uberibus* (Prop. 1.22.9-10). The answer is thus only available to Tullus by means of the contemplation of the pain endured by many in the war, and it acquires intensity because of this delay. No name, no other biographical detail. Or so it seems, because with the allusion to the *Perusina … sepulcra* (Prop. 1.22.3) Propertius is actually giving information on an episode that shaped his life as a young man and must be therefore regarded as extremely formative. In this sense, the elegy represents the proper counterpart to Prop. 1.1, where the poet recalls his first encounter with his lover Cynthia, creating a Ringkomposition, by virtue of the fact that both poems are addressed to Tullus and cover, in the form of an autobiographical account, crucial moments of his young life.[825] A similar view is held by La Penna, who argues that, for Propertius, the memory of his homeland and of his childhood are inextricably bound to that of the *Bellum Perusinum*, and for that reason the poet chooses, in presenting himself to the public for the first time, to close his book with a poem dominated by this tragic episode and the lament for his relative, who died in that circumstance and was left unburied.[826]

This argument can be used against all those who have had issues with this closing elegy as a result of a certain degree of unease that seems to emanate from the composition:[827] as it has been observed, no poem can satisfy the demands that we impose on it, thus we should rather first explore the possibility that the incongruities might be intended by the author. Propertius seems to want us to be appraised of the discrepancy: indeed, considering the insistence with which Tullus addresses his friend, examined alongside the broken distich and the interrupted syntax, we can argue that 'this disruption itself is well integrated into the overall structure',[828] so to suggest that Tullus should not

[825] See Stahl 1985, 124-5.
[826] Cf. La Penna 1977, 9.
[827] Already Nicolas Heinsius considers 1.21 and 22 as 'fragmenta operis maioris' (Heinsius 1742, 333), whilst Leo argues that the final part of 1.22 must have gone missing at the time the first book circulated independently (see Leo 1960, 169ff.), and Housman even resorts to a series of transpositions of lines from 2.30 and 4.1 (see Diggle & Goodyear 1972, 30-1). Various arguments have been advanced to make sense of the incongruity, involving the influence of the Greek βίοι which preceded the Alexandrinian editions, Hellenistic epigrams that served as σφραγίς, the funerary epigram which maybe closed Callimachus' book as it was customary, didascalic poetry from Hesiod to Vergil. But once we observe how Roman authors deal with the issue, we will immediately notice a lack of uniformity (cf. the alternation in the presence of the author's name in Verg. *Georg.*, Hor. *Epist.* 1 and Ov. *Ars am.* 2, *Am.* 3, *Tr.* 4). For a more detail account cf. Fedeli 1980, 496ff.
[828] Stahl 1985, 107.

pose the question in the first place, since the answer would involve inconvenient information about the tragic fate of Propertius' family as a consequence of their stand against Octavian. This way the reader can understand better why Tullus is chosen as mouthpiece for these fictitious questions which the author does not want to answer but does not want to be left unasked either.[829]

Turning to 1.21, which appears immediately related only to 1.22, the poem provides information for understanding the subsequent composition which is especially emotional.[830] The elegy is extremely difficult to interpret and has given rise to many controversies which would be unfeasible to address here, therefore I will provide my own reading and will interpret the poem accordingly: a dying soldier,[831] who identifies himself with the name Gallus,[832] addresses a wounded comrade who is fleeing after the defeat,[833] and who, perhaps frightened or anguished, turns away from his appeal; he pleads with him to report to his sister about his death, but to keep silent about the way he died:[834] he managed to escape Octavian's army, but found his death by unknown hands:[835] better for her to believe he fell on the battlefield; finally he asks that he reveals to her where his bones lie scattered.[836]

[829] Cf. Stahl 1985, 102.
[830] See Du Quesnay 1992.
[831] Many have argued that Gallus is dead, and that he talks to the soldier either as a ghost or from a cenotaph on which the poem would be written.
[832] It is *communis opinio* amongst the scholars, and I agree, that this Gallus is Propertius' relative mentioned in 1.22.7.
[833] According to historical sources no one escaped from the siege, so we must assume that the comrades managed to avoid being killed. Some have argued that the two men are related, i.e. that Gallus is either engaged or married to the wounded soldier's *soror*, or even that they are brothers, but I believe there is no indication in the text that could suggest it (cf. Quinn 1969, Bodoh 1972, 238, Stahl 1985, 112-13, Traill 1994 and Heiden 1995).
[834] Reitzenstein, followed by Heiden, suggests that Gallus is here trying to not add to his sister's mourning by making her aware of his somewhat shameful death, but Stahl argues instead that he does not want her to know about his death to avoid her further sorrow by finding out that he had managed to escape Octavian's swords only to find death by someone else's hands (cf. Reitzenstein 1936, Heiden 1995 and Stahl 1985, 114). I believe the two arguments can coexist, for knowing that Gallus did not die in battle would have caused increasing misery, added to the fact that he was almost safe on his way home.
[835] He was probably ambushed by brigands, as the disparaging phrasing *ignotae manus* (Prop. 1.21.8) seems to suggest in opposition to the more pompous *Caesaris enses* (Prop. 1.21.7) (see Fedeli 1980, 485). Another possibility, I believe, is that he found his death during the pillage of the city which followed the siege: Gallus would have thus been spared by Octavian only to be killed by unknown soldiers plundering Perusia.
[836] The *lectio inferior* of the MSS, *quicumque*, supported by Postgate, Frothingham and Traill, cannot be accepted, as 'these lines are a message from the dying Gallus to his sister, so *quicumque* is clearly wrong: Gallus has no concern with "whosoever finds bones on the Etrurian mountains"' (Housman 1893, 184). Cf. also Parker 1991. Hommel and Reitzenstein have argued that Propertius is describing a scenario that recalls the modern 'unknown soldier' (cf. Hommel 1926 and Reitzenstein 1936), but such argument is clearly anachronistic.

The two poems give little factual and situational information, but rather paint a picture that is highly emotional. The two characters in 1.21 are purposefully unidentifiable, for they symbolise the countless victims of a conflict in which Propertius and his family were personally and painfully involved, hence what captures the poet's attention and constitutes the focus of the elegy is the human involvement: this explains the repeated employment of the personal pronouns *tu~ego* and relative adjectives, which qualify the characters in relational terms and are a reminder of their familial bonds. There are no geographical details except for the mention of the Etruscan mounds (Prop. 1.21.2 *Etruscis … aggeribus*) and the Etruscan mountains (Prop. 1.21.10 *montibus Etruscis*), which are echoed by the *pulvis Etrusca*[837] at 1.22: here Propertius' full and reasserted identity as an *Umber*, juxtaposed with but not erased by his Roman identity,[838] is paralleled with the Etruscan world in the context of the *Bellum Perusinum*, where the contrast is enhanced between the image of death, destruction and loss represented by the Etruscan *pulvis* (Prop. 1.22.6) and the prosperous Umbria (Prop. 1.22.9-10), a land that is as geographically close to as it is emotionally distant from Etruria in the poet's mind.[839]

Landscape in Propertius' poetry often epitomises the dynamics between the poet and Cynthia,[840] and here it appears to perform a similar function, in embodying the memory of his youth through the qualifying adjective *Etruscus*. As noticed above about 1.21, 'he puts his emphasis especially on place, not nomenclature, on the relationship of one man with another (*propinquitas*) and of both men to a certain spot,'[841] and what emerges from both texts is that more than a geographical indication, the adjective *Etruscus* operates at the level of emotional involvement. It also appears to refer to a progressive and irreversible loss of a distant identity and indeed of a civilisation itself, a decline that is represented for Propertius in the fall of Veii, Volsinii and eventually Perusia,[842] creating an overall imagery of sombreness and loss of a once glorious people whose vigour has gradually worn out and

[837] The word hints to certain 'morbid overtones' considering that it is previously used only to refer to Propertius' death at Prop. 1.17.23, 1.19.6, 22 (cf. Clarke 2012, 370). The poet invokes *pulvis*, but this cannot respond, and the invocation remains unresolved.
[838] Cf. Prop. 4.1a.63-4, 1b.121-6.
[839] Umbria represents a safe space to the poet, a place of prosperity that he turns to in order to escape the tragic and dismal contemporary events (see Putnam 1976, 106 and Poccetti 2012, 178-9).
[840] Cf. Clarke 2012, 366ff.
[841] Putnam 1976, 104-5.
[842] Respectively described in Prop. 4.10, 4.2, 1.21, 22 and 2.1.

now stands tragically as nothing but dust. Proof of this is the absence of any other qualifying adjectives alongside *Etruscus*: in Propertius' memory those mountains, the mountains of his youth, are associated with the Etruscan people, who once ruled the land, and the sad destiny that touched Perusia is *figura* of the fate of their whole civilisation.

It is indeed noteworthy, as noted elsewhere, that Propertius never employs the term *Etruria*, but does use the corresponding adjective, which could mean that for the poet Etruria as a geographical entity has faded and has been assimilated into the broader 'Italian' framework. A sense of tension can be detected between the centre and the periphery in lines 3 to 5: *Perusina*, *Italiae* and *Romana* stand out in incipit, but *Perusina … sepulcra* and *Italiae … funera* are marked in continuity by asyndeton,[843] so that Propertius is suggesting that the many deaths of the Italians, of which Perusia is a powerful symbol, were in fact caused by Rome's own *discordia* (cf. the use of *suos … cives*). As Clarke notices, Propertius offers a 'stark presentation of Rome as the enemy of Italian peace and prosperity',[844] embodied by the fertility of Umbria. As Poccetti observes, the presence of Etruria in Propertius can be inscribed within two frameworks, on the one hand the ideological framework of the Augustan propaganda, focused on Rome as a centripetal force capable of unifying ethnic and linguistic elements in the name of *consanguineitas*, and on the other the framework of the regionalisms and the single individuals' experiences. These two do not always reconcile in a harmonious and dialectic picture, but rather fall apart in different points of view on themes that appear distant from the present, such as origins and kinship, and yet they display tight links to the present, such as the interpretation of the continuity and legacy of the past.[845]

This is especially important in the light of the significance of Propertius' epilogue for his political stance and the way it connects with the opening of his second book. While 1.21 and 22 are unexpectedly not concerned with the poet's celebration of his own eternity, as is customary, but with the painful recognition of universal mortality,[846] 2.1 is a long *recusatio* addressed to Maecenas, where

[843] As Putnam notices, the episode of the Perusine War 'is expanded both spatially and temporally' in the passage from *patria* to *Italia* (cf. Putnam 1976, 100).
[844] Clarke 2012, 370.
[845] Cf. Poccetti 2012, 173-4.
[846] Cf. Putnam 1976, 93.

Propertius assures him that were he not a love poet, he would write epic celebrating Augustus' exploits, and yet, once he starts enumerating them, he chooses to allude, amongst others, to the most controversial and unsettling episodes of the Civil War, i.e. Mutina, Philippi, Naulochus and once again Perusia. The phrasing is especially powerful, as he refers to the *eversosque focos antiquae gentis Etruscae* (Prop. 2.1.29), where the overthrown hearths of Etruria convey the image of a sacrilegious act. The line appears to be echoed in 4.2, when Vertumnus declares to be glad to have abandoned the hearths of Volsinii (cf. Prop. 4.2.4 *Volsinios deseruisse focos*), but the two contexts could not be more different. The god willingly abandons Volsinii (cf. Prop. 4.2.3 *nec paenitet*), finding a new *patria* in Rome, he represents an *exemplum* of Roman imperialism carried out by means of cultural assimilation of foreign elements into the city. Conversely, the representation of the overthrow of Perusia is characterised by desolate and violent overtones, in a line dense with deeply emotional language: *eversosque focos* in fact implies utter destruction of a religious symbol, an act that is inherently profane and reprehensible, especially conducted against the Etruscan people, whose distinction is enhanced by the use of *antiquus*, adding to its pathetic tone. The fall of Perusia thus represents the other side of Roman imperialism, carried out by means of the forceful assimilation of local communities. As it already emerged in the σφραγίς to book 1, Etruscans are a noble and ancient civilisation that has been tragically subverted and now belongs to a distant past, and all that's left is a desolate landscape of ruins.

CONCLUSIONS

The landscape of Propertius' youth is characterised, like Vergil's Mantua, by deeply emotional language, but if the associations of Mantua with Etruria are in Vergil the outcome of a long process of re-discovery of the city's Etruscan heritage, in Propertius Etruria is at the centre of the poet's 'emotional landscape' since his early poetry, alongside his native Umbria. The language employed to describe Perusia appears to particularly dwell on the geographical features of the landscape, explicitly identified, in more than one occasion, as *Etruscus*, as to enhance its deep sense of belonging to the Etruscan people, almost inherent and eternal, but also the poet's emotional response to the recollection of such landscape. Etruria in fact undoubtedly belongs to the sphere of the poet's personal relationships and possibly his family, which creates a deep and intimate connection with a territory that is noticeably closely akin to his actual homeland. An unmistakable signal of this is the space dedicated to the fall of Perusia in an elegy which traditionally addresses the author's origins: Umbria is the land which gave birth to Propertius, but in Perusia the poet identifies something bigger, the city which once belonged to a great civilisation and is now subdued by Rome's power. The Etruscan land appears characterised by a sense of melancholic nostalgia for a civilisation regarded as once illustrious and ancient, but no longer really alive: throughout his production, Propertius laments the fate of Volsinii, Veii, but most of all Perusia, which seems to embody the painful experience of the Etruscan people as a whole, and of all municipal communities, including the poet's native land. The painful memory of the Perusine War, whose weighty presence in the σφραγίς of book 1 suggests the profound impact of this episode in the life of the young Propertius, especially in its intertextual exchange with the first elegy of the collection, evokes the violent and oppressive yoke that Rome exerts over the Italian *municipia*, their struggle against the Urbs' centripetal force of attraction. The centrality of the episode of the Perusine War is due to the exemplarity of Perusia's experience, as the last insurgence of Italian pride against an often violent process of assimilation. And in this sense, particularly in the distinctive brutality of its repression, Perusia represents all the local communities who suffered the same fate and consequences.

EPILOGUE

The evidence presented reveals a complex set of interrelated factors each contributing to the creation of a multifaceted portrayal of Etruria and the Etruscans in the collective memory of the Romans of the I century BC. However, due to the degree of particularity necessary to address such a wide range of topics, a broad overview is now required to attempt to determine the larger framework in which the emergence of Etruscan themes has been investigated and explained. The study conducted in this thesis suggests that the portrayal of Etruria and the Etruscan people in the poetry of the Augustan age is effectively informed by three aspects, namely the political climate, so eager to create the foundations for an Italian national identity; the cultural legacy of antiquarian research, which illuminates the incidence of Etruria in a vast range of realms; and finally the extent of each individual poet's engagement with the debate on Rome's early past and the role to be assigned to Etruria therein. The latter is illustrated by the varying use by poets of standard tropes, and is as much a matter of genre as personal preference. In this final section, I will re-examine the evidence previously submitted in the light of these three broader categories, in the hope of drawing out further connections between what perhaps appeared as unrelated themes. The reader will forgive the repetitiveness of some portions of the following analysis, but I believe it is imperative to recapitulate the main points of the argumentation in order to fully capture how the characterisation of a single issue can be more thoroughly understood in the wider political and cultural context as well as within the bounds of each author's poetic choices.

i. DIFFERENT OUTLOOKS ON AUGUSTUS' POLITICAL PROGRAMME

During the course of this work, I have often alluded to the sense of urgency surrounding the *princeps*' desire to legitimise his power by means of a broad re-definition of Roman identity. The young Octavian had capitalised on the growing influence of Italian public opinion on the political life of Rome by turning himself into a champion of western values against the threat of corruption embodied by Antony and Cleopatra, and in the aftermath of Actium he found himself in need of legitimising his new political authority. The *princeps* thus formulated a broad cultural programme aimed at promoting Rome's ancient *mores*, military and religious virtues, in pursuit of an ideological matrix shared amongst the Italian peoples and capable of constituting the foundation of a national identity, and all poets found themselves encouraged to engage, with more or less genuine enthusiasm, with Augustus' propaganda themes. The treatment of Etruria is thus partly informed by the way in which the individual poets envisage the broader dynamic between Rome and Italy, and the place which Etruria holds within the tapestry of Italian peoples against the backdrop of the newly established Augustan principate. Vergil and Propertius seem determined to ascribe to Etruria a prominent role in the framework of Italian localisms, but the different degree of commitment towards the *princeps*' programme substantially reflects their different understanding of the role of Etruria in the history of Rome.

Vergil's interest in Etruria does not manifest itself in the poet's early production, but rather appears to follow a progression which coincides with his increasingly close relationship with Maecenas and Augustus. Etruscan themes are completely absent from the *Eclogues*, and begin to emerge, in the form of scarce, although extremely significant, remarks in the *Georgics*, only to fully materialise within the narrative scope of the *Aeneid*. Such a progression seems to suggest that Vergil's concern with the subject of Etruscan antiquities developed in a deeply political context and did not originate organically from the poet's personal experience, as appears to be the case with Propertius. This is a crucial distinction, for it reflects their respective outlooks on the ideology promoted by the *princeps*, forcefully rejected by Propertius, embraced by Vergil as a form of compromise. Accordingly,

the portrayal of Etruria which emerges from Vergil's poetry directly responds to Augustus' vision of an *Italia* unified by a shared ethos founded on military and civil virtues. The poet thus proceeds to systematically reverse the most damning tropes perpetuated by Greek and Roman authors, rejecting the traditional characterisation established in Greek ethnographic literature and legitimising the Etruscans as a component of the myth and history of Roman Italy.

Already in the *Georgics*, Vergil lays the foundations for the vigorous reaffirmation of the legitimacy of Etruria in the history of Rome. Etruria is indeed celebrated, in the framework of the celebration of Italy and the virtues of its peoples, for its wealth, its religiosity and the strength of its men, all factors which contribute to creating the image of a strong and pious people as a repudiation of the tropes associated with *luxuria*. The negative depiction of Etruscan *pinguitudo* as the manifestation of a corrupted and debauched lifestyle, illustrated in mordant terms in the poetry of Catullus, is re-appropriated in the broader framework of the joyful celebration of Etruria's *ubertas* as embodiment of its wealth and prosperity. The figure of the sleek Tyrrhenian flautist accompanying the sumptuous sacrifice further offers an opportunity to reassert the Etruscans' pre-eminence in religious matters, thus removing any negative connotation from the notion of Etruria's affluence: the produce of this rich land is reframed, from opulent private banquets to the hallowed context of a religious sacrifice. But even more significantly, Etruria's role in the rise of Rome is reasserted by the recognition of the Etruscans as one of the original ethnic components of the early settlement. Etruria's characterisation as *fortis* stands out as a straightforward rejection of the notion of Etruscan self-indulgence and hedonism, assimilating the Etruscans to the Italic peoples, traditional specimens of hardiness and vigour. With the glorification of Etruria's virtues and merits, Vergil solemnly recognises them as fundamental to the prosperity and future greatness of Rome, supporting Augustus' vision of an *Italia* united by its strengths and character.

With the *Aeneid*, Vergil was thus entrusted with the lofty mission of providing mythological foundations to the new Augustan Italy, an anthropological reality diverse yet extremely fluid, in which Etruria evidently was to find a place of distinction. If the stimulus came from the *princeps*, who had surrounded himself by many individuals with ties to Etruria, or from Maecenas, proud to publicly flaunt his Etruscan heritage, is impossible to determine. Certainly, it would have been

reasonable, on account of the ancientness and illustriousness of their civilisation, and their absolute primacy in religious matters, to assign to the Etruscans a sizeable role in the narrative amongst the coalition of immigrants, alongside Trojans and Arcadians. However, historically the relationship with Etruria had always been complex, and Vergil, well aware of the circumstances, proceeds to create a complex narrative in which the contentiousness and hostility are not ignored, but acknowledged in the form of a deviation from the norm and finally overcome. In other words, the *Aeneid* re-writes the history of the relationships between Rome and Etruria in an attempt to finally cleanse the latter of the residue of a long and deep-rooted animosity. Etruria was now officially part of Augustus' Italy as *Regio VII*, and as such any suspicion of guilt had to be quashed in order for it to convey the message of greater concord reached by Augustus.

Reversing the traditional accounts, Vergil turns the Etruscans into Aeneas' most precious allies. They make a sizeable part of the Trojans' coalition and their valour and courage are reiterated throughout the poem: Abas is the knot and stay of the battle, Asilas' epithet is *fortis*, Arruns overcomes the fierce Camilla with his prowess, and Tarchon is an *exemplum* of bravery and fearlessness for all his men. The Etruscan leader furthermore rebukes his men for being self-indulgent and intemperate, thus reclaiming the conventional trope of effeminacy and lack of manly vigour and rejecting it through a constant display of courage. This was perhaps the most widespread negative trait ascribed to the Etruscans, and Vergil could not shy away from a direct confrontation. However, the poet finds an intriguing expedient: the reprimand in fact is uttered not by an adversary, but by the Etruscans' leader himself, and as such it seemingly functions to incite rather than chastise the addressees. Tarchon himself is portrayed according to attributes which characterise him as the complete antithesis of the stereotype: the exemplarity of his nature, his heroism and his *pietas*, pairs him with the mighty Aeneas, to whom he is a match, *arma virumque ferens*. His distinction amongst the Etruscan chiefs responds to his overall role as leader of a gathered cluster rather than of a single city.

Vergil is indeed at pains to depict the Etruscans as a cohesive unit, a uniform entity, placing emphasis on the homogeneity of Etruria's culture as opposed to the decentred nature of its political organisation. In the phrase *omnis Etruria* Vergil coalesces all the positive attributes of the Etruscan people, thus glorifying their pivotal role in the rise of Rome, both in terms of culture and religion

more broadly, and also of military engagement and sacrifice. This Etruria is the *fortis Etruria* of the *Georgics*, the Etruria that was a crucial component of Octavian's victory, whose ancestors contributed mightily to Aeneas' triumph. However, the phrase *omnis Etruria* corresponds also to another important notion, namely that the Etruscans fight on the right side of the conflict, with the remarkable exception of Mezentius. The internal dynamic of Etruria is construed on the opposition *pietas~impietas*: Mezentius embodies an isolated and unrepresentative instance of cruelty and inhumanity, against whom the whole of Etruria arises in righteous fury. Once again, Vergil reverses the tradition, which does not appear to know Mezentius as an impious tyrant, to create a straightforward antithesis between a virtuous and a wicked Etruria. In this character the poet summons up individuals and events representative in the collective memory of the Romans of Etruria's most vile and hateful proclivities. The overcoming of the *impius* tyrant is thus essential in the broader framework of the *Aeneid* to ensure the triumph of the *pius* Aeneas, just like the subjugation of Etruria is required for the triumph of Augustus' concord.

However, precisely because the integration of Etruria into Augustan Italy was intended as illustrative of the peaceful coexistence and cohesion of Italian communities under the aegis of Rome, Vergil adds a further momentous facet to the character of Mezentius, namely his redemption. The self-awareness that the king shows in his final moments, belatedly triggered by the death of Lausus, prompts him to acknowledge the debt of punishment he owes his citizens for his *crimen*, and in the recognition of his guilt Mezentius assumes the guilt of the fierce Etruria he embodies. This operation allows Vergil to gather the sins of Etruria into the king, and to Mezentius, acting as a scapegoat, is assigned sole responsibility for them, thus ultimately redeeming the virtuous Etruscans who in the poem rebel against the degenerate tyrant and historically contributed so significantly to Rome's success. Mezentius thus stands out as an exception, an abhorrent deviation, and Etruria, finally relieved of the burden of guilt that had oppressed it for centuries, can be definitively recognised as a vital component of Rome's history, and its cultural and political heritage can find acceptance and reconciliation within the Roman mythological foundation story.

Nevertheless, Vergil's intention was never to assign too conspicuous a role to the Etruscans in the narrative, thus running the risk of undermining the centrality of Aeneas. Etruria is a crucial ally, but

does not act independently, and the poet establishes a clear hierarchy at the top of which sits the Trojan leader, *dux fatalis*, with the Etruscans willingly accepting the subordinate role dictated by fate. This secondary status, illustrated in the image of Aeneas sailing at the head of the coalition of Etruscan chiefs, is revealed also in their absence from the final agreement that ends the war, ratified exclusively between Trojans and Latins, leaving the fate of the respective allies unresolved. Even Tarchon's mysterious disappearance from the narrative after book 11 functions to reassert the Etruscans' marginal role in the grand scheme of the epic. By means of this expedient, Vergil is free to celebrate Etruria and its heritage as legitimately belonging to the mythological foundations of Rome, without compromising the pivotal role of Aeneas as ancestor of the *princeps*. Augustus' programme is thus functionally embraced and his vision substantially fulfilled: with the *Aeneid* Vergil re-writes the myth of Rome as a prefiguring of the order brought about by the *princeps*, signalling the future teleological unravelling of history culminating in the coalescence of Italy under Octavian's aegis and the triumph over his enemies.

Conversely, Propertius' treatment of Etruria is prompted by a deep emotional connection and shaped by the painful memory of the Bellum Perusinum and the confiscations which ensued and touched the poet's family. Perusia is undeniably at the centre of the poet's non-erotic early poetry: both the σφραγίς to book 1 and the allusion to the overthrown hearths of the Etruscans in the opening *recusatio* of book 2 are characterised by emotional language and desolate and dark overtones evoking a sense of irreparable loss of a once great civilisation, tragically subverted by violence and now standing as a landscape of ruins. Perusia's experience is thus exemplary of the forceful process of assimilation of Italian communities carried out in the name of Rome's imperialism, and stands out, particularly for the remarkable brutality of its repression, as the last assertion of Italian pride. Propertius' allusion to controversial episodes in Augustus' career such as Mutina, Philippi, Naulochus and Perusia in his *recusatio*, signals the unwillingness of the poet early in his career to be complicit in the perpetuation of a myth, that of the *pax Augusta*, which claimed a spontaneous coalescence of Italian sentiment around the *princeps* while whitewashing the violence and the pain inflicted on many communities.

Later on, when even the reluctant Propertius fell in with the project of producing celebratory poetry for Augustus, the poet substantially maintains his stance, though under the disguise of Roman aetiology. Just as he had done for Perusia, Propertius elevates two other great Etruscan cities, Veii and Volsinii, the first and last to fall under Rome's dominion, which incidentally do not find space in Vergil's epic, concentrated as it is on the web of alliances with Etruscan cities rather than the contentiousness that characterised the relationship between them and Rome. Propertius, in contrast, emphasises the friction by magnifying the tragic fall of these great and powerful cities, subjugated by Rome's ruthless imperialism. The fate that befalls Veii is lamented in an elegy supposedly celebrating three victories of Rome over her enemies. The episode, immortalised in Livy's history as the triumph of republican *pietas* over an impious and perfidious king, foreshadowing another commander summoned by fate, Augustus, is turned by Propertius into an epic confrontation between equals, the outcome of which is solely dictated by chance. Killing Tolumnius is not a religious duty, and his death is accordingly not glorified, but rather elided, thus guiding the reader's gaze onto the emptiness of this violent outcome. Informed by the painful memory of Perusia, which suffuses this passage, Propertius, instead of extolling one of Rome's greatest military exploits, negates it by emptying it of its meaning, as if holding the mirror up to Roman society to reveal the hollowness of a myth centred on suppression and violence. Roman identity is thus for the poet inextricably tied to the brutality with which the expansionism was carried out, particularly against Italian communities, and especially against an illustrious city such as Veii, whose splendour and magnificence are nostalgically evoked as a relic of a long-gone past.

A similar stance is taken with the fall of Volsinii, whose violent subjugation is alluded to by the god Vertumnus. However, in this elegy Propertius addresses the issue of the forceful assimilation of Italian communities from a different angle. The god who speaks is not the one who inhabits the ivory temple on the Aventine, symbol of the capitulation of Volsinii, but the statue overlooking the Vicus Tuscus, a busy thoroughfare visited by foreigners and citizens alike, embodying the diversity and heterogeneity which characterise Rome's cosmopolitanism. With this choice Propertius emphasises a different process of integration of Italian communities, illustrated in the peaceful coexistence of an Etruscan minority in Rome since the time of Romulus, as opposed to the glorified violence inherently

at the heart of Rome's imperialism. Augustus' message is again subverted, not only in the rejection of Rome's traditional narrative, but also in the choice to celebrate Vertumnus itself. Propertius had in fact announced, at the outset of book 4, his resolution to sing of Roman rites and deities and ancient names of places, thus seemingly embracing the *princeps*' request for an aetiological poetry which upheld his programme of restoration of ancient monuments and religious ceremonies. Yet, in the first aetiological poem of his collection, he chooses to honour a foreign deity, the Etruscan Vertumnus, whose Etruscan identity is emphatically reiterated throughout the poem. Although indubitably a prominent feature of the landscape of Rome, the statue of Vertumnus was not included in Augustus' monumental urban project, and his experience did not illustrate the Roman myth according to Augustus, in which Rome's expansionism was implicitly responsible for the coalescence of Italian communities around the *princeps* during the civil wars, the myth of a Roman Italy. Instead, Propertius presents a different perspective, that of cultural and religious syncretism, that of the *municipia* which contributed to Rome's greatness with loyalty and a strong sense of identity steeped in pride for the native land and for Rome alike, his own perspective as an Umbrian who takes pride in his origins but who also cherishes his Roman identity. Once again, the Callimachean elements, ostensibly conveying Augustus' ideology, serve instead to insinuate unsettling imports into the established narrative. Etruria's experience, as a distinguished civilisation, is thus exemplary of the experience of all the communities subdued by Rome in the name of imperialism.

The different ways in which Vergil and Propertius address Etruscan themes thus stems substantially from their different outlooks on Augustus' programme. Vergil appears to embrace, at least partially, the *princeps*' political and cultural ideology. Already in the *Georgics* the reader can find the celebration of Italy as a perfect land, whose peoples, in all their diversity, including the Etruscans, manifest a remarkable strength and capacity of endurance at the core of the Roman character. However, it is in the *Aeneid* that Vergil creates new mythological foundations for Augustus' Roman Italy: here the poet manipulates the tradition and re-writes a history of Rome in which Italy, with all its peoples, somehow predates Rome by virtue of a core ethos that is shared by all throughout the peninsula, constituting the core of *Romanitas* itself. Etruscans are thus re-introduced into the myth of Rome not as the traditional enemies, although the contentious aspect of their relationship with Rome

is illustrated by the tyrant Mezentius, but as crucial allies, who fight with courage alongside Aeneas and are critical to his victory, however always in a subordinate position. As a result, Etruria's stigmatised image as a fierce antagonist is rejected, along with the trope of self-indulgence and cowardliness, and its heritage is finally legitimised and embraced as meaningful to Rome's own identity.

As to Propertius, the distance that the poet put between himself and Maecenas allowed him, at least for a while, to distance himself from the *princeps* as well and to maintain a strong personal stance against the myth of a Roman Italy perpetrated by Augustus. The impact which the episode of the siege of Perusia had on the young poet visibly shaped his views on Roman imperialism and the subjugation of Italian communities, which in Propertius' eyes is seen as a pure act of violence and brutality. Augustus, responsible for the ruthless treatment of the Perusini, epitomises Rome's imperial stance against Italian *municipia*, extolling Perusia's experience as exemplary of the fate which had befallen the Italians, a fate which the *princeps* eagerly attempted to suppress, alongside other controversial episodes to which Propertius alludes as belonging in effect to the young Octavian's military legacy. In the course of his poetic career, Propertius' focus shifts from the small Perusia, whose landscape of ruins evokes emotional memories of his youth, to the great Veii and Volsinii, symbols of Etruria's power and glory. The poet thus proceeds to empty Rome's military exploits of meaning, revealing the hypocrisy of a myth of 'soft colonisation', which is instead carried out with violence and the forceful subjugation of Italian communities. In Propertius' aetiological poetry, Augustus' programme is not celebrated, but revealed in all its hollowness, and Etruria's experience, for the prestige of its civilisation, is elevated as exemplary of the fate of many small communities throughout the peninsula.

ii. VARRO'S ANTIQUARIAN INFLUENCES

As difficult as it is to determine Varro's contribution to the re-surfacing of Etruscan themes in the poetry of the Augustan age, the scarce fragments of his *opus* nevertheless suggest a deep interest in Etruria's history and its linguistic, religious, and cultural heritage in Rome. His influence as pertains

to matters of *antiquitates* is abundantly testified in the literature of the following generation and more broadly in the formulation of Augustus' cultural programme, and his attention to local histories and culture was perhaps partly informed by the recognition of the progressive loss of Italian traditions as a result of Romanisation and the adoption of the Latin language. It will therefore not be unwarranted to assume that in his vast production Varro dedicated ample space to the rich and conspicuous traditions of Etruria and its legacy.

His knowledge in this field, however, is received primarily by those authors who had independently displayed an interest in Etruscan themes, namely Vergil and Propertius. Both poets appear to draw from Varro material pertaining to the ancient past of Rome, in particular the age of Romulus, in which many references to Etruscans seem to converge. As briefly mentioned in reference to historiographical tendencies and instances of distortion, there is a clear inclination in historiographical accounts of early Rome to concentrate the Etruscan cultural and demographic contribution during the kingship of Romulus rather than accrediting it to the period of the Tarquin dynasty, thus assigning a secondary and subordinate role to the Etruscans, treated reductively as Romulus' allies and not as responsible for the creation of a number of political and cultural institutions. This tendency visibly operates in Varro, whose 'filosabinismo' was already noted by Musti, in particular his dating of Caeles Vibenna and the tribes to the age of Romulus: Varro records that Caeles Vibenna fought alongside Romulus against the Sabines, dying in battle, and his men, who originally inhabited the Caelian hill, named after their leader, were moved onto the level ground of the valley in an area named Vicus Tuscus after them; as to the tribes, the author associates their respective names with Romulus, Tatius and Lucumo. Both Caeles and Lucumo appear to be duplicates of characters attested during the Tarquin monarchy, Caeles as companion of Servius Tullius, and Lucumo as Tarquinius Priscus, and their retrojection to the time of Romulus is one illustration of that process of 'romulizzazione degli Etruschi' addressed previously.

Vergil and Propertius appear to embrace Varro's traditional timeline. Both poets allude to the tribes to immortalise Rome's tripartite ethnic core seemingly according to Varro's representation: Vergil does not use the names of the tribes but refers to *Sabini*, *Remus et frater* and *fortis Etruria*, thus underscoring the ethnic component, while Propertius employs the designation *Tities*, *Ramnes*, *Luceres*

alongside the eponyms, Lycmon, Tatius and Romulus. What is being argued is not necessarily a direct derivation from Varro for both poets–in fact Propertius presents the variation *Ramnes* for *Ramnenses* and *Lycmon* for *Lucumo*–but rather the acceptance of the broader portrayal of the tribes as foundational and therefore backdated to the reign of Romulus, as is manifest from the explicit mention of Remus and Romulus respectively. In addition, Propertius seems also to embrace Varro's backdating of a significant Etruscan component in Rome in the Vertumnus elegy. We noticed how the poet chooses to address the reader not as the Vertumnus who inhabits the ivory temple on the Aventine, but rather as the statue of the Vicus Tuscus, partly because he wished to emphasise the very early presence of Etruscans in Rome, which corresponds to Varro's timeline. Furthermore, the god explicitly informs the reader that he was established as a reward for his Etruscans at the time they came to Rome in support of Romulus against the Sabine troops of Tatius, and that the Vicus Tuscus was named after them. These particulars come close to matching the extant fragments of Varro on the matter, in which the author records that the Vicus Tuscus was named after the Etruscans of Caeles Vibenna, who fought alongside Romulus against Tatius. This is in fact the reason why the statue of Vertumnus stood there, for he was the chief god of Etruria. Varro adds that Tatius dedicated an altar to Vertumnus on the Capitol, consistent with Propertius' characterisation of the statue as a reward for the aid brought during the war against the Sabines. Propertius was thus perhaps influenced in the choice to celebrate Vertumnus by Varro's contention that he was *deus Etruriae princeps*.

One last instance of Varro as a potential source for the broader backdating of Etruscan elements to the age of Romulus could be illustrated by the narrative structure of the *Aeneid*. The process of 'romulizzazione degli Etruschi' results in the depiction of the Etruscans not as the powerful kings responsible for the creation of pivotal political and cultural institutions, but in the secondary and subordinate role of allies of Romulus. In the *Aeneid*, as discussed at length, Vergil portrays the Etruscans as auxiliary forces for Aeneas: their contribution is repeatedly characterised as crucial, their courage and valour praised, and yet their role within the narrative structure of the poem is only functional to ensure the triumph of the Trojans. Their role is even dictated by fate itself, which prevents them from joining the fight unless summoned by a foreign leader, Aeneas/Romulus, who

will lead them to battle. The recognition of the value of the Etruscans for Roman culture in Vergil's work, as explored throughout this thesis, is not at odds with the tendency to backdate Etruscan elements, in fact it facilitates the maintenance of a certain distance from the controversial period of the Tarquin dynasty, which is significantly suppressed and only adumbrated in the figure of Mezentius in order to allow for a reconciliation which would have otherwise been too contentious. This way Etruria is established in myth, and therefore in history, as an ally and divinely subordinated to Rome.

Given that this tendency is less visible in Livy, whose sources (such as Licinius Macer) perhaps are not all characterised by 'romulizzazione', we could argue that, despite their positive attitude towards the Etruscans, neither Vergil nor Propertius knew or accepted the Livian tradition (which is best characterised, as Musti observes, less as pro-Etruscan than as not anti-Etruscan). The poets thus choose to follow Varro instead, whose authority as regards the representation of early Rome appears unchallenged.

Varro's influence as to Etruscan themes, however, can also be detected elsewhere in Vergil's production. Already in the *Georgics*, the overall vignette representative of Etruria appears to be influenced by Varro's testimony: the portrayal of Etruria as a land of abundance and fertility, which incidentally is placed within the framework of a description of the different types of soil, echoes Varro's testimony that Etruscan territory was emblematic of the best type of soil. In addition, as I argued in the first chapter, the emphasis on the Etruscan flautist in the sacral context of the religious ceremony seems to be somehow also derived from Varro, who must be the source for the introduction of the *tibicines* to perform in sacrifices in Rome in his *De scaenicis originibus* and in his discussion of theatre in the *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*. The similarities in tone amongst Augustan authors, Vergil, Horace and Livy, indeed suggest a common source, most likely to be identified in Varro.

In the *Aeneid*, Vergil finds even more opportunities to display his antiquarian knowledge of obscure local traditions. First and foremost, we mentioned that the catalogue of Etruscan allies in book 10 seems to be heavily influenced by Varro's *Res humanae*, in particular book 11, which records a catalogue of products from the regions of Italy, and possibly the *De ora maritima*: the list of Etruscan

cities itself, the detail of the inexhaustibility of the mines of the island of Ilva, the Etruscan Pisa as a foundation from Pisa in Elis, and in particular the details about the ethnic composition of Mantua, which closely recalls that of the Salentini according to Varro in Probus' commentary to *Ecl.* 6, all seem to derive from Varro's collection. In fact, several contemporaries of Varro, as reported in the introduction, had dedicated written works to Etruscan themes, but as far as we know their books recorded predominantly religious lore, whereas in Varro the poets could find arcane material about an extremely wide variety of topics. Vergil's explicit statement, pronounced by Evander, that the river Tiber took its name after the king Thybris, is another clear instance of derivation from Varro: the antiquarian author records that the etymology for *Tiberis* was claimed by both Latins and Etruscans, the latter maintaining that the river was named after a king of Veii, Thebris, and this passage is utterly consistent with Vergil's description, which appears to have been derived directly from Varro's account.

Due to the fragmentary status of Varro's immensely vast production, the argument for a significant Varronian influence on the poets of the Augustan age as pertains to Etruscan themes is necessarily speculative, and yet I believe a broad influence from Varro, the only author as far as we know who addressed not only Etruscan religious subjects, but a broad spectrum of topics which converged with Etruscan antiquities, the past of Rome, linguistics, topography, architecture, theatre and agriculture, cannot be denied. Their knowledge must have been supplemented by individuals such as Maecenas, who appears to be, from the ample testimonies of the people around him, not only the poets, but also the *princeps* himself, imbued with Etruscan lore, but on account of the almost total absence of surviving evidence, the extent of his influence over his contemporaries in this respect is impossible to establish. The same goes for 'Etruscan authors', meaning both authors who wrote about Etruscan matters and authors of Etruscan origins, whose books were in all likelihood available to the Augustan poets, but whose impact on their poetry cannot be corroborated. The impression left by Varro's work, especially with regards to Etruscan themes, is thus to be regarded as pivotal and decisive.

iii. INDIVIDUAL APPROACHES TO THE PORTRAYAL OF ETRURIA

Alongside the political and cultural factors, it is necessary to address the 'personal' aspects involved in the representations of Etruria and Etruscan people. By 'personal' aspects I do not mean the private motivations behind the individual poets' choices as stemming from their family background or their own innate proclivities and inclinations–with the notable exception of Propertius, whose oeuvre is so suggestive of his unique life experience–but rather the distinctive and idiosyncratic ways, dictated by a range of motivations, in which the poets choose to engage with the contemporary intellectual debate on Rome's early past and Etruria's role within it. The Romans had inherited and adopted the clichés established in historiographical and ethnographic literature, and continued to perpetuate them in the form of tropes associated with τρυφή/*luxuria*. Obesity resulting from the intemperate eating habits of a self-indulgent society, whose territory produced in abundance to satisfy their excessive needs, the social freedom enjoyed by women, who dared challenge the patriarchal structures of Greek and Roman societies, the hedonism in which men took pleasure, so far removed from the austere ancient Roman *mores*, are all recurrent themes in the portrayal of the Etruscans in Latin literature. However, the representation of Etruria in Rome, while strongly influenced by Greek assessments, is also profoundly informed by their close and often contentious relationship. Their desire to dismiss an enemy once fierce and powerful prompts the Romans to develop the image of a tamed Etruscan, who resorts to treachery and deceit in battle, hiding and concealing instead of facing the enemy directly, ultimately revealing his cowardice and lack of manly vigour. A sharp distinction can thus be detected between Vergil and Propertius on one side, and Horace and Ovid on the other, in the way they employ standard formulas and conventional tropes: while the former, albeit in different ways, repudiate the tropes to exalt the Etruscans as a great and powerful civilisation, thus legitimising their role in the cultural foundations of Rome, the latter are very resistant towards accepting Etruria as a component of Rome's success, displaying a pronounced predisposition to 'Italic' virtues, regarded as the sole virtues consistent with Roman *mores*, and frequently employing stereotypical language and images in connection with the Etruscans.

As mentioned above, Vergil does not appear to reveal an inherent interest in Etruscan themes. In his portrayal of Mantua in the *Eclogues*, the poet never alludes to the city's Etruscan heritage, which is instead so central in the glorification of the native land in the *Aeneid*. This suggests an evolution and a progression, triggered perhaps by contact with Maecenas and Augustus, eager, the former for reasons of personal pride taken in his Etruscan origins, the latter for political motivations, to ensure for Etruria a place of honour in the framework of Italian peoples on which Augustus' *Italia* was built. The incentives from Vergil's patrons appear to be fully accepted and embraced in his ensuing production. The individual tropes are not ignored nor disregarded, but rather appear meticulously re-appropriated and ultimately rejected in order to legitimise the Etruscans as a virtuous component of Rome's framework.

The trope of obesity, illustrated by Catullus in a directory of ethnic stereotypes, is claimed by Vergil in the context of the prosperity and *ubertas* of Etruria, of which the sleek Tyrrhenian is embodiment and image. The Etruscans' *pinguitudo* is thus no longer the expression of an intemperate society, of corruption and moral vice, but becomes a joyful paradigm of a generous and fruitful land, blessed by the gods to whom the riches of the territory are in turn dedicated in solemn sacrificial ceremonies. The reassertion of Etruscan religiosity, by means of the vignette of the flautist playing while steaming meats are placed on the altar, has the further function of emphasising the one trait that even Etruria's most vehement detractors could not dispute, their expertise in religious matters, which had so significantly permeated Roman religion itself. *Pietas* is also the main attribute of Tarchon in the *Aeneid*, which identifies him as a double of Aeneas: not only does he stand beside the Trojan leader during the extremely symbolic moment of the funeral ceremony, but he is also afforded protection by Jupiter himself, who ignites his fury in combat. In addition, Tarchon embodies the repudiation of another trope, that of Etruscan self-indulgence and hedonism. The speech that the chief addresses to his men encapsulates every single aspect of the trope, the fearfulness and cowardice, the effeminacy and lasciviousness, their fondness for eating, drinking and dancing, all contributing to create the portrayal of the Etruscan lifestyle as debauched and degenerate. However, Tarchon's words have the effect of reigniting his men's courage, driven by the *exemplum* of their fearless leader, and the members of the Etruscan coalition display their bravery repeatedly and unflinchingly, thus

reversing the conventional trope and assimilating the Etruscans' valour to that of the other Italic peoples. Tarchon and his men are an illustration of the *fortis Etruria* celebrated in the *Georgics*, legitimately standing beside Romans and Sabines and their *mores* a vital component of Rome's civilisation.

And the contributions of Etruscan culture are also visible in the context of Vergil's native land: Mantua, crystallised in the *Eclogues* as a bucolic fiction, inhabited by shepherds tending their sheep along the grassy banks of the river Mincius, in the *Aeneid* is raised to all its glory as a city with a tripartite ethnic core, just like Rome, which draws its strength from its Etruscan blood, the sole component to be mentioned and celebrated. In his portrayal of Mantua, Vergil appears to fully embrace the Etruscan legacy of his native land, and whether the tradition selected was newly discovered, either from Varro or Maecenas, or another author of Etruscan antiquities, or simply newly embraced, it appears that the poet openly takes pride in its city's ancestry. Naturally, Vergil would have been prompted to engage with the theme of Mantua's Etruscan heritage primarily to address the demands of an epic deeply concerned with the character of Italy and its relationship to Rome. Thus, whether Vergil's family was Etruscan or of Etruscan descent is not relevant to the recognition of the efforts expended by the poet to legitimise the Etruscans within the foundational mythology of Rome.

As for Propertius, his attitude towards Etruria primarily stems from the poet's own personal experience. The *Propertii* might be themselves Etruscan or related to Etruscan individuals, and Umbria lay beside neighbouring Etruria, and shared with that region a profound tradition of cultural exchange. Perusia in particular is the most prominent city of the area. The indelible memory of the brutal treatment of the Perusian insurgents surfaces forcefully in Propertius' early poetry, paired in Ringkomposition with the encounter with Cynthia, signalling the two most consequential events of the young poet's life, the former under the sign of love and passion, the latter under the sign of suffering and death. This episode is so integral to Propertius' identity that to his friend Tullus' request about his parentage he cannot help but evoke Perusia and the death of a relative, whose limbs lie unburied, before finally answering: the poet's self-identification is thus fulfilled by means of the contemplation of the pain endured by his family and many others in the war. The pain and misery

that the fall of Perusia engendered in Propertius are expressed through the emotional characterisation of the Etruscan landscape, so profoundly marked by the passage of a great and illustrious civilisation, of which nothing remains but dust. The avoidance of the choronym *Etruria* appears somewhat significant as an illustration of the poet's image of an Etruscan nation wiped out by Rome's violent assimilation, of which Perusia's experience, as the last insurgence of Italian pride, and on account of the brutality of the treatment meted out to the city, is exemplary and universal.

In Propertius' later poetry, the downfall of Veii is explicitly lamented in emotional terms, and its leader, the king Tolumnius, is elevated to the stature of the great commander Cossus, whose exploit is elided to concentrate on its violent outcome. The poet here reverses the trope of Etruscan treacherousness and cowardice by presenting a figure recognised by his own opponent as *fortis*, who faces his adversary openly and dies honourably, ignoring the traditional portrayal of Tolumnius as an impious and scornful individual, which he certainly understands as fictitious and functional to justify Rome's victory as a religious triumph. The ideological opposition of the fatal dialectic which permeates the conventional account of this episode is rejected and the prevailing feelings are nostalgia and the melancholic evocation of a lost world.

The degree of emotional involvement in Propertius is made even more overtly manifest in the Vertumnus elegy. The poet maintains his orientation against Rome's imperialistic stance by refusing to celebrate the god of the Aventine temple, symbolic of the destruction of Volsinii, and choosing the god introduced perhaps unofficially in Rome during the age of Romulus and thus legitimately belonging to the most ancient landscape of the city. The profound sense of belonging of the deity illustrates the process of cultural assimilation, taking place peacefully as a result of the continuous exchange between civilisations, and antithetically opposed to the forceful subjugation of communities. The area itself where the statue of the god was located is representative of the diversity of the city, a melting pot of peoples and cultures harmoniously coexisting. The self-identification of the god as proud of his Etruscan origins but also fully integrated into Rome reflects the poet's own identity, split between his deep sense of belonging to fertile Umbria and his Romanness. Both prompted by painful events, the destruction of Perusia and Volsinii respectively, the god and the poet embrace their double identity and celebrate a native land whose traits are described in emotional

tones and in terms of kinship. Thus Etruria, regardless of Propertius' Etruscan descent or lack thereof, is alive in the poet's imagination in a distant past of glory, now a wretched present of ruins. But Propertius will not allow the contributions of this great civilisation to be forgotten, and, though under the disguise of Roman aetiology, will proceed to glorify it, embodied in the Etruscan god who takes pleasure in observing the Roman people passing by his statue, symbolising the character of the thoroughfare named after his Etruscans, the Vicus Tuscus, frequented by all sorts of people, foreign and citizens, rich and poor, honest and cunning. Propertius celebrates the diversity of Rome, not its imperial stance, his own twofold identity, the memory of Etruria and its glory, and not the subjugation of all those Italian communities who contributed so much to Rome's success.

If both in Vergil and Propertius' poetry can be detected a deliberate intention to reverse some of the conventional imagery associated with the Etruscans, conversely negative tropes are used abundantly in the poetry of both Horace and Ovid, who perpetrate the stereotyped notion of the Etruscans as a foreign people, whose moral values appear consistent with those of eastern societies and thus inherently antithetical to Roman principles. For the two poets the 'Italic' ethos is perceived as intrinsically irreconcilable with Etruscan values.

The moral values of the Italians are frequently celebrated by Horace as foundational for the strength of Rome: *paupertas*, *simplicitas*, *modestia* along with civil and military virtues are regarded as the ancient arts by which the Latin name, the vigour of Italy, and the fame and majesty of the empire were extended from west to east (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 4.15.13-14). These virtues are variously ascribed to Marsi, Apulians, Lucanians, Daunians, Sabellians and Sabines, all displaying the *Italum robur* feared by the Parthians (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.13.18-19), but also frugality, hardiness and sobriety. This attitude can be attributed to Horace's broader 'filosabinismo', promoting the reverence for the Sabine constituent of the ethnic and cultural composition of early Rome as embodiment of these simple and modest *mores*. But the poet's fondness for the Sabines and their values was in all likelihood also informed by reasons of affection for the Sabine region, where his villa was located and where Horace spent much time in *otium*. Accordingly, the set of values espoused by the Etruscans is framed by Horace not only outside the moral system of the Italians, but it is deemed irredeemably irreconcilable: the Etruscan lifestyle is thus paradigmatic of those corrupt *mores* which the poet

regards as the ultimate cause of the civil wars, the *mollitia* and *muliebritas* chastised in *Epod.* 16, characteristic of eastern peoples and opposed to the values of the west. Horace thus fully embraces the notion of the intrinsically oriental nature of the Etruscan people.

In Horace's poetry, his profound aversion to Etruria can be detected in the more or less explicit espousal of negative tropes, and perhaps more significantly in a series of eloquent silences. In the portrayal of the poet's lover Lyce, Horace encapsulates all the stereotypes associated with Etruscan licentiousness in an incisive distich: the woman is the daughter of an Etruscan, and he certainly did not raise a Penelope. The poet is not ascribing Lyce's libertine behaviour to her own personal disposition, but rather to the inevitable legacy of a Tyrrhenian father, who, dissolute himself as all Etruscans are, has imparted his promiscuous behaviour to his child. The opposition between Lyce and Penelope, paradigm of spousal fidelity, is reinforced by the characterisation of Ulysses' spouse as *difficilis*, suggesting without any subtlety that Lyce is conversely *facilis*, and by the allusion to the *proci*, insinuating Lyce's readiness to take on multiple lovers. As Penelope is the archetype of the faithful wife, Lyce is the archetype of the adulteress. Furthermore, the woman's husband himself has a lover, a *paelex*, a Macedonian woman, who seems to keep him away from Lyce, as implied by his absence from the poem: both spouses thus appear to happily tolerate each other's extramarital relationships. The tone recalls Theopompus' remark that in Etruria both spouses are accustomed to being unfaithful to each other, stemming from the atypical freedom enjoyed by Etruscan women, confirming Horace's tendency to uncritically adopt conventional negative tropes in his treatment of Etruria and Etruscan themes. A similar, albeit subtler, judgement of the Etruscans can be found in the criticism of the crowd who frequents the Vicus Tuscus as *impia*, and in the mention of *Tyrrhena sigilla* as an example of extravagant luxury, implying an overall rebuke of Etruscan wealth and *luxuria*.

However, what is perhaps the most significant indication of Horace's attitude towards Etruria is his silence as to the contributions of the Etruscan people in the context of early Rome.[847] Horace appears to push Varro's 'filosabinismo' to the point of a substantial 'antietruschismo', deliberately ignoring the Etruscan participation in the rise of Rome. Perhaps even more overt is Horace's silence

[847] See Firpo 1998.

in the context of the account of the origins of Roman theatre: in his treatment of drama, the poet once again deliberately ignores the tradition, seemingly traceable back to Varro and embraced by Livy, of the introduction of the *ludi scaenici* in Rome from Etruria, thus dismissing the Etruscans not only as a significant ethnic component of early Rome, but also in terms of their contribution to Roman culture more broadly. Horace does not acknowledge any political or cultural sense of continuity but maintains the conventional image of Etruria as a distinct and foreign element within the diverse framework of Italian peoples. Their oriental nature, illustrated by their corrupt and debauched lifestyle, is irredeemably irreconcilable with the values displayed by the Italians.

In comparison with Horace's overall indifference to Etruria and his refusal to include it as a component of Rome's success, Ovid's negative characterisation of the Etruscans is primarily associated with the memory of the contentiousness of Rome's relationship with Etruria. The poet, like Horace, minimises the Etruscan component in the early history of Rome: the *Luceres* are mentioned alongside *Titienses* and *Ramnes* (cf. Ov. *Fast.* 3.131-2), yet in the account of the rape of the Sabine women (cf. Ov. *Ars am.* 1.89), Ovid makes no mention of the aid brought to Romulus by the Etruscans. His portrayals of the Etruscan kings conform to traditional accounts: Tarquinius Superbus is the tyrant of unspeakable cruelty and his son, Sextus, shares his father's callousness and ruthlessness, while the beloved Servius Tullius is afforded a divine ancestry. Even the god Vertumnus, whose Etruscan identity appears indisputable and unequivocal from Propertius' elegy, is transformed by Ovid in the *Fasti* into an Italian deity, and his Tuscanity thoroughly ignored.

But the poet goes even further: his portrayal of Sextus Tarquinius in particular is imbued with depictions of the prince's deceitfulness and treacherousness, two traits typical of the Roman representation of the Etruscans as enemies whose success is only granted by their recourse to devious duplicity and deception. The *callidus* Sextus overpowers Gabii by using stratagems, the same way he will enter Lucretia's room with deception, and the fall by force of the unaware Gabini corresponds to the violence exerted on the innocent Lucretia. The oppositions *callidus~ignari* and *hostis~hospes* respectively enhance the deliberateness of Sextus' cruel actions, dictated by a nature inherently wicked and prone to perfidy. The trope of the treacherousness of the Etruscans stems from the desire by the Romans to dismiss the Etruscan successes as obtained by unscrupulous and dishonourable

means, derived in turn from the notion that Etruscans are effeminate and lack manly vigour. Sextus' vileness is such that his infatuation for Lucretia is predominantly driven by his perverse desire to destroy the qualities that make her virtuous and irreproachable. And to Tarquinius Superbus too, of whom Sextus is the true scion, Ovid reserves the same treatment: he is unjust yet powerful, treacherous and wicked, an unscrupulous young man who had long attempted to delegitimise the good king Servius Tullius in the eyes of the Roman people in order to obtain his throne. When finally he meets his match, the wicked and ambitious Tullia, the two, always keen to undertake greater atrocities in order to obtain what they want, proceed to first assassinate their spouses, their respective brother and sister, and then, in a final act of depravity, kill Servius, driving Tullia's carriage over her father's corpse. The vicious eagerness of Tarquinius is exceeded by his wife, who manipulates and manoeuvres him, almost relegated to a passive role. The same traits are displayed by the Veientines against the brave and fearless Fabii. The Etruscans are portrayed as a scattered herd, fearful and cowardly, as confirmed by the dishonourable wounds they receive in the back as they shamefully flee in chaos, but also as cunning and deceitful, as they conceive a strategy to overcome the Romans based on concealment. Their victory is thus marked by the shame of duplicity and deviousness. The opposition between Rome and Veii laid out in the Livian account, structured as one between Roman *pietas* and the *impietas* of the Etruscans, is reinterpreted in terms of *virtus~fraus*, more appropriate for the dishonesty of the Veientines, and the war is won by their *perfida tela*.

An interesting and somewhat isolated instance of negative portrayal of the Etruscans is Ovid's rendition of the mythological episode of Dionysus and the Tyrrhenian pirates. Although initially ascribed to the Aegean Tyrrhenians, the myth was eventually associated in Roman authors with the Etruscans. The myth encapsulated the brutality of these people, to whom was traditionally attributed a dreadful torture by which the bodies of the living were linked to corpses, fitting hand to hand and face to face, and left to die slowly on the decomposing body. This grim practice was performed, as Vergil alludes to in the *Aeneid*, by the tyrant Mezentius, and surely the association rests also partly on the cruel torture ascribed to another tyrant, Tarquinius Superbus, of fixing to a cross the corpses of those who hung themselves because they had been forced to build sewers. The Romans thus appear to appropriate the Aegean myth and to supplement it with the echoes of more recent events and

characters from their own history. It is interesting to notice that Ovid does not elaborate this trope of Etruscan brutality, but subtly alludes to it by creating the character of Lycabas: Lycabas is distinguished by reckless audacity, he is scornful and contemptuous, and he was exiled from an Etruscan city on account of a dreadful slaughter. Ovid does not need to be more explicit, for by this powerful Vergilian reminiscence the poet has charged Lycabas with a series of references to the impious and abominable behaviour of other Etruscans, chastising them again for their cruelty and ruthlessness.

However, Ovid does not only employ Roman tropes in his negative portrayals of Etruscans, he also appears to exploit one of the tropes associated with τρυφή/*luxuria* and women. The contrast between the chaste and virtuous Roman *matrona* and the dissolute Etruscan woman is perfectly illustrated in the opposition between the modest Lucretia spinning wool and the daughters-in-law of Tarquinius Superbus drinking and partying. Furthermore, Ovid dedicates much space to the most wicked of Etruscan women, Tullia, who shares the men's ambition and lust for power, and who is willing to commit the most heinous of crimes, assassinating her own father, the king Servius Tullius, in order to obtain it. More broadly, in his representation of the Etruscan kings, Ovid appears to suggest a pattern of men who owe their power to women, Tarquinius Priscus and Servius to Tanaquil, Tarquinius Superbus to Tullia, which appears to reflect the prominent role of women in Etruscan society. In addition, a further implication is intimated, namely that Etruscan men are relegated to a passive and somewhat subordinate role for a lack of manly vigour, which is conversely displayed in all its forcefulness by their women, who manipulate and manoeuvre their men's ambition. Once again Ovid, drawing on traditional tropes, paints a picture of Etruscan individuals whose power was not earned with courage and fearlessness, but rather with the cunning and guile of their women.

CONCLUSIONS

The study conducted in this thesis has hopefully provided a comprehensive and thorough review of the testimonies of Etruscan themes surfacing in the poetry of the Augustan age. Due to the preponderance of evidence in the form of succinct remarks rather than extensive narratives, I deemed it most appropriate to carry out the survey according to macrotopics, each illustrating a particular thread analysed in its most relevant facets. In this final section, these seemingly unrelated threads were pulled together in order for the reader to better discern the larger framework in which they manifest themselves and can be understood. The portrayal of Etruria and Etruscan themes in the poetry of the Augustan age appears informed by three significant aspects, the political climate, the legacy of Varro, and the individual poets' responses to the intellectual debate about the history of Rome within the confines of the peculiar requirement of the poetic compositions. On the last point, a primary distinction can be drawn between the poets who are willing to accept Etruria's role in Rome's early past and endeavour to reverse the conventional negative portrayals of the Etruscan people, Vergil and Propertius, and those who exhibit suspicion of, if not overt aversion towards, Etruria and maintain a more traditional stance by preponderantly employing tropes and stereotypical imagery, namely Horace and Ovid.

Prominent in the latter poets is the eloquent silence concerning the cultural and political contributions of Etruria, especially in the early history of Rome. However, if Horace's attitude is mostly one of contemptuous indifference, Ovid goes out of his way to represent the Etruscans as defeated enemies,[848] whose power was obtained solely by means of deceitfulness and cunning, drawing more on the distinctively Roman set of tropes than on the Greek portrayals of Etruscan τρυφή/*luxuria*.

More complex is the combination of factors influencing the portrayal of Etruria in Vergil and Propertius. The two poets are unmistakably influenced by Varro's work: the re-discovery of Etruria and its traditions generated by the broader interest in Italian antiquities shapes the way in which the

[848] Cf. Ov. *Fast.* 6.201, 361.

Etruscans' role in the early history of Rome is forcefully reasserted, in particular during the age of Romulus, in which Etruria comes to the assistance of the Romans against Tatius and the Sabines, thus maintaining a subordinate position to Rome. The broader narrative of 'romulizzazione degli Etruschi' is fully embraced, albeit in the light of a consequential acknowledgement of Etruria's contributions to Roman culture. However, even between Vergil and Propertius a significant distinction can be drawn.

The Etruscan legacy of Mantua is not immediately received by Vergil, who appears to come to Etruscan themes by way of Maecenas and Augustus: the *princeps*' emphasis on the contribution of the Italians to the myth and history of Rome in his political programme, alongside Maecenas' flaunted Etruscan descent, prompts Vergil to create a narrative in which Etruria's place in the mythological foundations of Rome is legitimately established. The sins of Etruria are thus redeemed through the defeat and final redemption of Mezentius, who encapsulates the contentiousness of the Etruscan people, capable of atrocious deeds but ultimately fearless and heroic even in their downfall. Vergil thus proves to broadly embrace the themes of Augustus' political and cultural programme, of which he becomes the official voice.

Conversely, Etruria belongs to the emotional memory of Propertius' youth: the impact of the brutal treatment of Perusia, the landscape of which was located within the geographical horizon of the young poet, at the hands of Octavian, is so significant that it profoundly informs his early poetry, engendering an aversion for the *princeps* and his treatment of Italian *municipia*. The experience of Perusia thus becomes exemplary of the fate which had befallen all Etruria, once a great civilisation irreconcilable with a present of ruins. Throughout his production, Propertius will repeatedly employ Etruria as the symbol of a lost world, that of the Italian communities, subdued by Roman imperialism: the violent assimilation of Italy under Augustus, disguised by the *princeps* as the coalescence of a national sentiment around his persona, is subtly denounced by means of the frequent reference to Etruria, the most powerful and prominent civilisation of central Italy.

The interconnection of these factors creates vastly different outcomes, but the forceful re-surfacing of Etruria in the debate around the myth and early history of Rome appears undeniable. All poets thus find themselves addressing the matter, either by reasserting the Etruscans' contributions to

Roman culture or by diminishing and dismissing them. At the twilight of their existence as an autonomous cultural entity, the Etruscans somehow manage to reaffirm their stature and prestige by being part of the cultural and political conversation. The desire to commit their religious knowledge to posterity, in the form of books written in Latin, the language which by then had almost entirely replaced Etruscan, alongside a broader widespread interest in local antiquities displayed by intellectuals of the late republic, create fertile ground for the re-appraisal of the Etruscan civilisation in the context of the new 'Italian' political landscape. The Augustan ideology provides a further vigorous stimulus to engage with Etruscan themes to illustrate the achievement of concord and consensus amongst Italians under the *princeps*' auspices. The Etruscans perhaps more than any other people of Italy retain a distinction and stature which, despite the rapid and intense Romanisation reaching its apex at the end of the I century BC, would remain unique and unparalleled throughout the centuries. The celebration of their nation by Vergil and Propertius, and the contemptuous silences of Horace and Ovid both testify to the magnificence of a civilisation whose enigmatic nature has captivated the imagination of men to this day.

The aspiration of this thesis is to contribute to the study of classical literature in its broader social and anthropological framework, in constant exchange with the testimonies supplied by material culture. Text and context interact in ways yet unexplored in the ancient world and it is now more relevant than ever to open up to new avenues of investigation and interdisciplinary dialogue. 'Every religion, every philosophy, and science itself, each has a clue to the cosmos, to the becoming aware of the cosmos. Each clue leads to its own goal of consciousness, then is exhausted. So religions exhaust themselves, so science exhausts itself, once the human consciousness reaches its own limit … What we have to realise in looking at Etruscan things is that they reveal the last glimpses of a human cosmic consciousness–or human attempt at cosmic consciousness–different from our own … Civilisations rise in waves, and pass away in waves. And not till science, or art, tries to catch the ultimate meaning of the symbols that float on the last waves of the prehistoric period; that is, the period before our

own; shall we be able to get ourselves into right relation with man as man is and has been and will always be.'[849]

[849] Lawrence 1932, 176-7.

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