Italy Before the Romans

The Iron Age, Orientalizing and Etruscan periods

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CHAPTER 8

The Origins of Rome: A Survey of Recent Discoveries and Discussions

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This chapter is a translation of M. Pallottino, "Le origini di Roma: considerazioni critiche sulle scoperte e sulle discussioni più recenti", which originally appeared in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* I, 1, 1972, pp. 22–47.

FOREWORD

The resumption of excavation on the Palatine in 1948 initiated a close and continuing interest in the problems surrounding the birth and early years of Rome that is already familiar to classical scholars and in particular to Roman historians. The quantity and variety of writings that have accumulated on the subject in a comparatively short space of time bear witness to the lively state of archaeological and topographical research, the importance of the new discoveries, the need to extract as much as possible from material long known, the desire to interpret the archaeological evidence, the consequent general re-opening of all the controversies that surround the history and the historians of early Rome, the growth of new problems, the proposing of various solutions (sometimes mutually exclusive) and the development of polemical warfare in general.

The time is not ripe for an exhaustive and definitive summary of this complex mass of research and interpretation—itself still far from complete. The present writer has contributed to the discussion with earlier papers (Pallottino, 1960*a*; 1963; 1966): in this one, he proposes to tackle certain general questions of methodology, and certain individual archaeological and historical questions—in all of which his aim is to define terms clearly, and to indicate solutions that are as concrete as possible.

A. A MEETING-PLACE OF DISCIPLINES AND METHODS

Let us begin with a closer examination of the overall character of the various activities involved in the enquiry under consideration. We have to bear in mind

not only their variety but also their essential interdependence both in practice (survey, excavation, field-work, study of material) and in the critical sense (cultural and historical interpretation). A glance at the relevant bibliography shows, side by side and inextricably bound up with each other, the results obtained by pre- and proto-historians (e.g. S. M. Puglisi, H. Müller-Karpe, R. Peroni and P. G. Gierow), by classical archaeologists and Etruscologists (E. Gjerstad, P. Romanelli, G. Carettoni, H. Riemann, R. Bloch, J. Heurgon and the present writer), by Roman topographers (G. Lugli and F. Castagnoli), by ancient historians and Roman lawyers (P. Fraccaro, P. de Francisci, A. Alföldi, A. Momigliano and J. Poucet) and by philologists (G. Devoto). Each operates on the basis of his own experience and of the methodology proper to his own discipline, sometimes within specialized limits but often with a more open-minded approach that has led to constructive collaboration between scholars with widely varying backgrounds.

The variety of approach corresponds to the nature and to the needs of the raw material itself, which is—in a very real (and not merely chronological) sense—"proto-historic": our knowledge of it does not take the form of pure and simple description of external features appropriate to the treatment of a prehistoric culture, nor can it become a direct narrative of historical facts. We are engaged in a process of reconstruction, in which we have to deal at the same time—and without undue emphasis on one or the other—with the evidence of archaeology and of context, the echoes of tradition, philological considerations and so on.

This is the sense in which the origins of Rome, like analogous subjects, must be seen in interdisciplinary terms. Clearly, the convergence of different specialized disciplines and methods is instrumental in providing the documentation: it remains true that the sole aim is the writing of history. I would like to insist on the essential parity of the different types of evidence in relation to the desired objective of historical reconstruction, in view of the natural tendency to favour one at the expense of the others. Proto-historic archaeology, topography, the critical study of traditions and institutions, ethnographic and linguistic investigations: all these are parts, rather than the whole, of the complex story of early Rome. The contribution of the historians themselves is bi-partite: on the one hand, the critical exegesis of the ancient literary sources (in collaboration with archaeologists, topographers etc. where necessary); on the other, the composition of the final synthesis (but it does not follow that this *has* to be left to historians!).

B. A SUBJECT OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH IN ITS OWN RIGHT?

The present state of our knowledge about early Rome and its contingent problems demonstrates that we are no longer dealing merely with a brief first chapter, to be inserted automatically—on the basis of more or less first-hand acquaintance—at the beginning of every Roman history text-book.

The fact of the matter is this: the origins of Rome have created their own brand of critical interest and capacity on the part of scholars attracted to the fascinating questions involved by personal curiosity, independently of their other professional interests. The historical reconstruction of early Rome, based as it is on such a wide variety of types of evidence (all of them essential), has nothing in common with the methods of work appropriate to the study of Roman history in the usual sense of the term.

This is not surprising: the subject-matter itself, the historical reconstruction of the earliest phases in the life of Rome, is quite different from that of the later periods in which Rome and the Roman world were called to assume their determining and universal role in the history of the human race. It is still difficult for us to free ourselves from the retrospective reflection of Rome's future greatness, in the form of those hallowed legends with which the ancients sought to provide a rational explanation for the foundation of the Urbs, in terms of a perfect geographical choice by gods and men (Vitruvius, *De Arch* VI, 1, 11; Livy, V, 54): but it cannot be said too often that it is a gross historical error to study the events of remote antiquity in the light of a more recent past. Any and every historical reality can only be considered reasonably in the light of what has gone before it: it is in this way that we can hope to perceive at least some of the causes that we may suppose to exist.

Only in this last sense can the origins of Rome be included under the heading of "Roman history", the "diachronic" history of the institutional, political, military and cultural development of Rome from *polis* to empire. If, on the other hand, an immediate and objective understanding of the realities is desired, we must look at them against the background of their period—the method of synchronic history. On this reckoning, the history of Rome between the seventh and the fifth centuries B.C.—the "great Rome of the Tarquins", in the felicitous expression of Pasquali (1942), attacked in vain by Alföldi (1965)—is to be seen as an integral part of the history of the Archaic Greco-Italic world (see my observations *ad rem*, Pallottino, 1957, p. 261, taken up by Momigliano, 1966, p. 245): and the study of early Rome takes its rightful place among investigations into the formation of the historical communities of early Italy.

All these considerations (the intensity and specialized nature of the research itself, the variety of the sources and of the methods, the twin possibilities of diachronic and synchronic perspective) lead us to accept the autonomous status of our subject in its organization, in its results and in what we hope will be its future developments.

C. THE PRESENT STATE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE. ITS FUNCTION

It seems appropriate to begin by remembering three previous summaries which have appeared at intervals in the last half-century, from the pens, respectively, of a prehistorian, a topographer and a classical archaeologist: Antonielli

(1929), Lugli (1943), Romanelli (1965). These papers give us an idea of the state of knowledge at the respective times of writing: above all, however, they bear witness to the boom in archaeological discovery characteristic of the last twenty-five years. A complete and meticulously documented account of the archaeological evidence, old and new, will be found in *Early Rome* (ER), the monumental work of Einar Gjerstad (1953–[1973]). Its objective value as a catalogue is universally recognized in spite of the reservations that have been expressed regarding Gjerstad's historical and chronological interpretations.

Leaving the vestiges of more remote antiquity on one side, we know that the urban and immediately suburban area of Rome has yielded some Copper Age material: the degree of continuity between this and the later periods is not yet clear. Much more important, however, is the presence—particulary in the sacred area of Sant'Omobono—of some Apennine sherds and rather more Late and Sub-Apennine material: this shows that the area at the bend of the Tiber and the surrounding hills—the heart of the Rome of the future—were already inhabited in the Bronze Age, beginning in the Middle Bronze Age and increasing in the Recent Bronze Age. There is also a small quantity of material that can be referred more or less definitely to the Final Bronze Age—the period of transition to the Iron Age: it comes from Sant'Omobono again, from the Palatine, from the foot of the Quirinal and in particular from the Roman Forum below the Palatine—all of which have yielded evidence for settlement at this time. To this period—the Final Bronze Age—however, typology enables us to assign the first cremation tombs in the well-known Iron Age series; which will be discussed further. In other words the evidence shows that continuous occupation of the hills and lower ground of Rome goes back, in all probability, at least to the Recent Bronze Age and possibly to the Middle Bronze Age.

Early tombs have been discovered on the Palatine, both recently and not so recently, in the valley of the Roman Forum between the areas of the Arch of Augustus and the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina (the location of the famous burial ground excavated by Giacomo Boni between 1902 and 1905), in the Forum of Augustus under the lower slopes of the Quirinal, and last, but not least, on the Esquiline. They range in date from the Final Bronze Age (or transition period) to the first half of the sixth century B.C., in a succession of phases established and classified in a variety of ways (in particular by Gjerstad, ER II and IV; Müller-Karpe, 1959; 1962; Riemann, 1960; 1970). Reservations have been expressed about the excessively detailed and rigid nature of these divisions (Pallottino, 1960*a*); in general terms, however, and according to the most acceptable interpretation, they may be defined as follows:

Phase 1: corresponding to the "Proto-Villanovan" burials of Tolfa and to the earliest Latial groups of the Alban Hills;
—exclusively cremation tombs;
—ten tombs in the valley of the Roman Forum, one on the Palatine, one in the Forum of Augustus.

Phase 2: corresponding to "typical" Villanovan, or Villanovan I, of Veii and Tarquinia;
—cremation and inhumation;
—tombs in the valley of the Roman Forum, in the Forum of Augustus and on the Esquiline.

Phase 3: corresponding to "evolved" Villanovan, or Villanovan II, in southern Etruria;
—mainly inhumation;
—tombs in the valley of the Roman Forum, on the Quirinal and on the Esquiline.

Phase 4: corresponding to the spread of Orientalizing in Etruria and in Latium—which now includes a tomb recently discovered by Castagnoli at Lavinium, as well as the well-known tombs of Praeneste—but comparatively modest;
—inhumations, particularly of infants, in the valley of the Roman Forum and on the Velia; inhumations on the Esquiline and on the Quirinal.

Phase 5: corresponding to Late Orientalizing, in other words to my "quarta facies" (Pallottino, 1939, pp. 113ff.) in southern Etruria. This phase has been defined and dated to the last decades of the seventh and the first decades of the sixth centuries B.C. by Colonna (1964 [a revised version of which appears as the next chapter of this book]);
—inhumation tombs on the Esquiline and on the Palatine.

This impressive documentation provided by the funerary evidence constitutes the outline of our acquaintance with the cultural development of Early Rome. In addition, the distribution of the cemeteries and of the individual burials provides information essential to the definition of the settlements themselves and to the tracing of the gradual formation of the urban complex. In this latter connection, two points may be made:

(1) although the known funerary complexes mainly occupy the regions surrounding the hills, and the little valleys between then, they also occur—at least sporadically—on the hills themselves: the Palatine is a case in point;

(2) in general terms, the earliest tombs are found in the Palatine–Forum area and the latest ones on the Esquiline.

Furthermore, in the valley of the Roman Forum, an unmistakable chronological sequence may be observed in the burials from West to East—from the area of the Arch of Augustus, passing under the Regia [on which see now Brown, 1976], to the "cemetery" and within it (its "horizontal stratigraphy" was accurately worked out by Peroni (1960); the funerary area diminishes to a few infant burials and is definitively abandoned during Phase 4).

Obviously, these facts and the historical and topographical deductions based on them must be treated with considerable reserve, in view of both the fragmentary nature of the observed evidence and the general methodological considerations expounded below. The greatest reserve arises in connection with the problem posed by the absence of multiple and monumental tombs, and by the relatively modest appearance of the tomb-groups belonging to Phases 4 and 5. This negative feature surely cannot mean that Rome was simply less important or rich than the surrounding and contemporary centres in Etruria and Latium, like Caere and Praeneste (and now Lavinium as well): given the intense urban development of the city over more than two millennia, it is much more likely that the most impressive tombs or complexes have either been lost for ever or else have not yet been found (Pallottino, 1960*a*).

As far as regards the remains of proper habitations and sanctuaries—apart from the traces, already mentioned, of Middle–Recent Bronze Age and Final Bronze Age (transition) deposits in the valley areas of the Forum Boarium (S. Omobono) and of the Roman Forum—we now know for certain that the summit of the Palatine was already occupied by vast concentrations of huts in the Early Iron Age (corresponding to Phases 2 and 3 of the tombs). I refer to the group on the western extremity of the Germalus, well excavated and published (after the first old soundings of Dante Vaglieri) by Puglisi (1951) and Romanelli, and to the group on the Palatium under the Domus Flavia, which in all probability was originally distinct; it should be noted, however, that we do not possess analogous information about other areas of the Palatine, with particular reference to the northern sector of the Germalus, under the Domus Tiberiana, immediately above the earliest cremation tombs of the Roman Forum. For this reason, the existence, or otherwise, on the Palatine of settlements even earlier than the beginning of the true Iron Age (Phase 2) is still an open question: so far, there are indications only lower down, but the settlements themselves must have been *somewhere*!

Thus there is relatively abundant archaeological evidence for the early, dense and continuous nature of the occupation of the Palatine: this contrasts sharply with the extremely sporadic and limited evidence for the earliest phases in other parts of the urban area of the future (apart from the evidence of the tombs, naturally). At least in part, this may also be explained in terms of the purely casual lack of exploration and discovery: all the more so when one considers that there must obviously have been nearby habitations corresponding to the groups of tombs of Phases 1–3, like those at the foot of the Quirinal and on the Esquiline. It is significant, however, that from Phase 4—from the seventh century B.C.—onwards, evidence for domestic and civil life not only intensifies on the Palatine but also extends to cover the whole of the adjacent valley of the Roman Forum to the foot of the Capitol.

Evidence for cult-places, in the form of votive deposits, also appears now: the latter are also found elsewhere, on the Esquiline, on the Quirinal, on the Capitol (in spite of Gjerstad, who would exclude any presence there before the sixth century B.C.: Pallottino, 1963, pp. 16ff,; Riemann, 1970, pp. 61ff.) and in the Forum Boarium, immediately under the archaic temple of S. Omobono (this deposit has yielded the earliest locally inscribed sherd yet found in Rome, bearing five Etruscan letters and datable *c.* 600 B.C.: Pallottino, 1956, p. 505). The impression that this provides is one of growth, spreading outwards from the original nuclei of the Palatine–Forum area. The intermediate valley is no longer used for funerary purposes: the settlement which now covers it implies the continuous extension of the complex as a whole, as far as the Esquiline, which, on the grounds of its size and other characteristics, must now be defined as urban (or proto-urban).

With the sixth century—the full historical period—the nature of the archaeological evidence is further enriched by new features, which may be summarized as follows:

(1) all types of evidence for domestic and civil life, and for cults, are now found all over the territory roughly enclosed by the so-called "Servian wall", and as far as the bend in the Tiber;

(2) the appearance of urban works (such as the paving in the Roman Forum, of which Gjerstad has made so much), fortifications and monumental sacred buildings with architectural decorations in terracotta (on the Capitol, in the Forum Boarium, in the Roman Forum, on the Velia etc.);

(3) the disappearance of funerary depositions within the limits indicated above;

(4) the presence of various Latin and Etruscan inscriptions, which prove that writing is now widespread. All these elements combine to demonstrate beyond any doubt—and independently of the memories of tradition—that an urban organism has by now been constituted, and that it is well defined and significant both in its extent and its economic and cultural development: obviously this is the "city of the four regions", or tribes, of Servius Tullius (Livy, I,43,13), and therefore the Archaic Rome of the Etruscan kings.

The enthusiasm engendered by the new discoveries, however, has also provoked in recent years authoritative warnings about the limits of archaeological evidence, and the fundamental and indispensable value of the literary tradition (Momigliano, 1963; Heurgon, 1973, pp. 244ff.). Such attitudes are part of the general tendency in contemporary historiography towards a reappraisal of the classical sources in the study of proto-history—a reaction against the doubts and rejections of hypercritical positivism and, no less, against the arbitrary ethnographic and historical reconstructions based solely on the evidence of material remains. The present writer adheres without reserve to this tendency, has constantly applied its tenets—more particularly with

reference to the beginnings of Rome—and would put on record here a further essential motive for caution in the use of archaeological data. This consists simply of the immense and permanent gaps in our knowledge: especially in pre- or proto-historic archaeology, "it is not too much to say that what we do *not* know is the rule and what we *do* know is the exception" and that, therefore, "every attempt to bring order or to reconstruct should take account of this negative reality as if it were a concrete fact" (Pallottino, 1960*b*, p. 35)—a methodological premise which some scholars, in the heat of reconstruction and the passion for compiling minutely detailed schemes, have apparently forgotten (though there are exceptions: see Rittatore Vonwiller, 1969, p. 183).

Nevertheless, it should be made clear that in our particular area of research on the origins of Rome the contribution of archaeology has been, and is, truly decisive for two reasons: firstly, the extraordinary richness of the newly acquired cultural and topographical concepts amounts to a closely-knit and solid background against which real historical facts—ethnic, economic, social and institutional—can be brought into play; and secondly, the archaeological information, far from contradicting the historical information in the written sources, actually confirms and reinforces its substantial validity in a way which accords well with the modern critical tendencies indicated above. To be precise, I mean that if the archaeological evidence is reviewed without preconceived ideas (that are in any case extraneous to it) its correlation with the main lines of the traditional stories does not present any great difficulty. On the other hand, every attempt to diverge critically (or hypercritically) from those main lines requires a more or less considerable degree of strain on the simplest and most obvious interpretation of the material evidence discovered. This is clearly demonstrated by—to cite only the most recent and sensational example—Gjerstad's attack on the traditional chronology of the regal period (to be discussed later) and Alföldi's rejection of the annalists' traditional account of the development of Rome in the sixth century B.C. (Alföldi, 1965: but see Momigliano, 1967).

D. INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS

1. CHRONOLOGICAL KNOTS

All the major protagonists in early Roman studies find themselves involved in chronological investigations and controversies concerning, on the one hand, the absolute dating of the cultural phases and, on the other, the historical evaluation of these dates *vis-à-vis* calculations based on ancient tradition. Though intimately linked, these are two separate questions.

Under the first category—that of absolute chronology—the archaeological

phenomena of the Rome area cannot be considered in isolation: they are part of the wider context of proto-historic problems in Latium, in the Tyrrhenian area or, even more generally, in the whole of native Italy—a classic example of the "synchronic" approach and methodology in research on the origins of Rome. Naturally, the determination of absolute chronology proceeds by stages, from the maximum uncertainty and disagreement of the earliest phases to the maximum security and precision of the later ones, from the seventh century B.C. onwards. It is well known that today there are two anitithetic schools of thought: the "high chronology" of German tradition, which assigns Rome Phase I to at least the tenth century B.C. and Phase 2 to at least the ninth (Müller-Karpe; Peroni), with the indirect support of recent, extremely high interpretations of the Villanovan of Tarquinia (Hencken, 1968; but see Pallottino, 1968*a*) and of Veii (Close-Brooks, 1967); the "low chronology" of Swedish tradition, which squeezes the whole Roman series of tombs below the upper limits of the eighth century (Gjerstad; Gierow). In addition, there is an intermediate position which, in effect, assigns Phase 1 to the ninth century B.C. and Phases 2 and 3 to the eighth (Riemann). On more than one occasion (and also in a wider context; see Pallottino, 1960*b*), the present writer has expressed his preference for an approach that coincides with the third solution, though with different emphases: I believe that the successive transitions from one phase to the next can be seen in terms of "overlaps"—hangovers and anticipations—according to the contexts and social levels of the cultural horizons concerned, and that in any case the beginning of Phase 2 should still be in the ninth century B.C. (on the basis of correlation with the more acceptable Villanovan chronology for Tarquinia and Veii).

We now come to the problem of the traditional dates. The discovery of the Palatine village on the Germalus, the earliest stages of which were dated to the eighth century B.C. by Puglisi (and now, by Riemann (1970), more precisely to *c.* 750), was hailed by scholars as a unique and exciting confirmation of the canonical date for the foundation of Rome, fixed by Varro at 754–753 B.C., and by other Hellenistic and Roman calculations at various points between 814–813 (Timaeus) and 728–727 (Cincius Alimentus). There is no point in recalling all the arguments for and against the validity of this coincidence, or in repeating the many collateral observations made by archaeologists and historians on the subject (see, among others, Pallottino, 1960*a*, pp. 4ff.; Müller-Karpe, 1962, pp. 63ff.; Romanelli, 1965; Heurgon, 1973, pp. 24ff.). It is clear, however, that no historical significance can be derived from the exact numerical equivalence between the Varronian date and Riemann's archaeological date. However seductive, the coincidence must be regarded as purely casual, for two different reasons—one from each side. On the one hand, as we have seen, it is possible and probable that the earliest huts found on the Germalus do not in fact mark the beginning of the Palatine settlements; on the other, we have no guarantee that Varro's date is particularly authentic, or more authentic than the other dates in the ninth–eighth century range yielded by the annalists and by ancient

historiography in general. Another interesting coincidence might be quoted: 880 B.C. for the foundation of Rome according to Ennius' alleged calculation (fr. 389B: Pareti, 1952, pp. 252ff.; Pallottino, 1960*a*, p. 9) and the radiocarbon date of the "Proto-Villanovan" monumental building at Luni sul Mignone that is approximately contemporary with Rome Phase 1—835 ± 70 B.C. or, with the Godwin correction, 918 ± 70 B.C. (Östenberg, 1967, p. 286). This brings us back to the problems of the absolute chronology of the proto-historic cultures of central Italy. A ninth-century date for at least the later phases of "Proto-Villanovan" would appear to be confirmed by the radiocarbon date of 828 ± 95 B.C. for the Ancona settlement site (Pallottino, 1960*b*, p. 21). This seems, therefore, to be the most probable time for the beginning of the Roman series of tombs, and consequently for the development of the important Palatine–Forum settlement-complex—in other words for the formative period of Rome: and this agrees as well as can be expected with the traditional dates understood in their widest sense.

This "beginning", around which the memories of the traditional foundation of the city could have been concentrated, does not preclude the existence of earlier settlement—which is indeed attested by archaeological evidence going back to the Middle and Recent Bronze Ages. This fact has been connected with the legendary stories about the earliest Rome in the time of Hercules, Evander and Aeneas (Pallottino, 1960*a*; Romanelli, 1965; Heurgon, 1973).

The uninterrupted quantitative increase in the evidence for the occupation of the Rome area, from the appearance of the earliest cremation tombs up to the full flowering of the single monumental city of the Archaic period, takes place—it should be stressed—within a well-defined chronological system that becomes progressively more stable with time. We shall probably not be far out if we assign, with all due reserve, Phase 1 to the ninth century B.C. and Phase 2 to the late ninth and first half of the eighth centuries; Phase 3 then falls more or less conveniently into the second half of the eighth century, Phase 4 into the seventh, Phase 5 into the late seventh and first decades of the sixth; and, finally, the Archaic city under Etruscan influence covers the rest of the sixth down to the beginning of the fifth century B.C.

It should not be too difficult to superimpose on to this framework of culture and chronology the sequence of events in the history of early Rome, along with their retrospective dating according to literary tradition. The following venerable traditions have long been discussed:

(1) the supposed and probable position in Rome of some of the thirty most ancient *populi Albenses* listed by Pliny (*NH* III, 69: *Velienses, Querquetulani*, perhaps *Tutienses, Vimitellarii, Latinienses*);
(2) the *geminata urbs* of Romulus and Titus Tatius (Livy, I, 13, 5);
(3) the so-called *Septimontium* (Varro, *Ling. Lat.* V, 41, etc.).

Whatever their real historical value, the "formative" phases corresponding to

them seem to fit sufficiently well into the picture of progressively more intense use of the inhabited areas (and of the associated burial grounds) that emerges from the archaeological evidence for Phases 1–4, representing the successive situations between approximately the ninth and the seventh centuries B.C. The annalists put the period of the first four kings of Rome between similar limits (eighth–seventh centuries). Leaving on one side all questions of name, status and number of these personages (see below), there is no reason why they should not reflect a series—probably rather longer than the traditional one—of Latin and Sabine chieftains of the communities in the city that was being born precisely in the period that corresponds to the first four archaeological phases, before the arrival of the Etruscan rulers. There is considerably less reason to displace the dates and compress the reigns of the kings within the sixth century—the effect of Gjerstad's (1961; 1962*a*; etc.) anachronistic and gratuitous manipulation of the traditional data.

It would be superfluous and needlessly polemical to re-open now the discussion on the Swedish school of chronology. In brief, it involves a general lowering of the dates for the regal period, the earliest in Rome's history, so that it falls between 575 and *c.* 450 B.C. instead of the traditional range between 754–753 and 509: this has been met with a great variety of arguments, both direct and indirect, in a vast number of recent publications—and the result of the discussion has been the progressive isolation of Gjerstad from the great majority of scholars, both historians and archaeologists (especially after the conclusions of the Fondation Hardt 1967 symposium). Reduced to its bare essentials, Gjerstad's theory depends basically on the preconceived idea of a sharp contrast between "pre-urban" and "urban" epochs, respectively before and after the date of 575 B.C. (for the paving of the Roman Forum). The error lies in the interpretation of this date as a "foundation date" in the traditional sense, and in the consequent down-dating (and contraction) of the whole pre-Etruscan period of Roman history. In fact, 575 B.C. sees the culmination of the process of urbanization carried out by the Etruscan kings—in other words the constitution of the "city of the four regions" of Servius Tullius, on the simplest and most obvious correlation with the chronology of the tradition. Furthermore, a correct interpretation of the archaeological evidence shows that, as early as Phase 5 (i.e. from the last decades of the seventh century onwards), a close-knit and practically continuous urban structure extended from the Palatine to the Roman Forum, to the Esquiline and probably also to the Hills and to the Capitol; its form and institutions are well on the way to earning the title of *polis*; and in this connection we may also cite the persistent echo of an enclosure by "*muro lapideo*" in the time of Tarquinius Priscus (Livy, I, 36 and 38, etc.). Nor should we forget, on the side of the traditional chronology, the previously mentioned Etruscan inscription from S. Omobono. All the later, and impressive, archaeological evidence is absolutely in line—some of the detailed correspondences are remarkable— with the canonical dating of the Etruscan dynasties of the sixth century (Pallottino, 1963;

Heurgon, 1973: both with previous bibliography). However, this has taken us away from our present theme of origins.

2. STADTGRÜNDUNG OR STADTWERDUNG?

Gjerstad's inclination for a decisive distinction between "pre-urban" and "urban" phases of early Rome has re-opened the question of the city's birth: is it to be identified with a definite event and a precise moment in time, or should we think of it as an evolutionary process of formation?

Classical tradition saw Romulus' foundation in terms of a colonial *ktisis* (although with the addition of ritual elements inspired by Etruscan doctrines). This model of urban genesis is, moreover, notoriously widespread in the mythology and historiography of the ancient world. Nevertheless, in the case of the origin of Rome, there are motifs in the tradition which seem in some way to contradict, or at least to attenuate, the rigid scheme of an instantaneous beginning: for example, the cities of Evander and Pallas; the traces of Hercules' passage through the places of the future urban area of Rome; the oscillating preferences in the versions of the foundation itself for the time of Aeneas and the time of Romulus; the double and converging establishment of Romulus and of Titus Tatius; the references to the existence of a *septimontium, ubi nunc est Roma* and to the development of the city in terms of a confluence of *pagi* and *montes*, and of the addition of the *colles* to the *montes*, to the point of what was, and remained, the definitive urban structure of Rome (in other words the quadripartite city of Servius); and finally the idea of new "foundations", such as that attributed to Camillus after the Gauls had burnt the city—to say nothing of the consciousness of a continuous living growth of Rome through the widening of the sacred circle of the *pomerium*, which did not cease until Imperial times. Although these hints are undoubtedly interesting, we have to recognize that the concept of *urbs condita* was of primary importance for Roman historiography, and more generally for all ancient historical thought, as a well-defined beginning not only of the material life of Rome but also of a new era and a new cycle of world history.

The wholesale demolition of old myths by nineteenth century historians naturally affected the traditional accounts of Rome's foundation. Alternative hypotheses began to appear, based on the findings of the new sciences of comparative philology and prehistory. The origin of Rome now took the form of a prehistoric immigration and of an establishment by Italic folk of Indo-European stock. At one point it was even supposed that Romulus' *Roma quadrata* on the Palatine represented nothing less than an occupation by the original inhabitants of the *terremare* (the Bronze Age pile-dwellings, allegedly square in shape, typical of the Po Valley): these were identified with the *prisci Latini*, and the actual name of the Palatine was supposed to derive from *palus* (Pigorini: see especially 1920). In these modern theories, too, we can detect an almost instinctive tendency to see the birth of the city as a single conclusive

fact—even when, instead of Romulus, the protagonists were a group of northern invaders bearing the Latin language and the cremation rite!

Meanwhile, a more careful and direct study of Roman topography, of the archaeological discoveries (the Esquiline tombs, the *Lapis Niger*, the Forum cemetery, etc.), of the classical sources relating to the places, the events and the institutions of early Rome, was giving rise to a new approach to the problem. The observation of the "*Realien*", allied with the evolutionary spirit of the times, gradually brought scholars to see the origin of Rome as the progressive expansion of one or more prehistoric settlements leading to the full growth of the city: and this idea has been consistently confirmed by later discoveries. In fact, to use the concepts and vocabulary of Dohrn (1964), we are now in a position to state that whereas the ancient view consisted of the "*einzigen Menschengestalt*" of Romulus' foundation, the modern view is the diametrically opposed one of a long and complex urbanization to which, after Müller-Karpe (1962), we may apply the term "*Stadtwerdung*".

We must now consider the following problem: did the beginning of this formative process take the shape of a single inhabited nucleus or complex (logically identifiable with the Palatine, according to the best-known traditions of antiquity, and in the opinion of most modern historians and topographers)? Or should we see the progressive institution of the urban context of Rome in terms of the aggregation of separate villages, of more or less equal importance, on the various hills (the process has improperly been christened "synoecism")—like Pinza (1905) and some of those who came after him? The conflict between these two positions has recently been re-opened by the disagreement between Gjerstad and Müller-Karpe: the latter has pointed to the priority and pre-eminence of a Palatine–Forum system (which is justified not only by the archaeological evidence but also by the traditional memory of an original establishment in the Comitium: Plutarch, *Rom.* II, 1ff.).

The present writer has already signified his general preference for the view of Müller-Karpe—a preference that includes the hypothesis of an original undifferentiated extension (on both high and low ground) of groups of habitations and tombs, as opposed to the old-fashioned, over-simplified and unrealistically schematic concept of a clear-cut functional differentiation that put the villages on the high ground and the cemeteries in the low-lying valleys between them. But if we admit, for an initial phase at least, the existence of unequal and separate concentrations or groups of huts (as might indeed be the case of those on the Germalus and on the Palatine, between which is interposed an early, Phase I, cremation tomb: Carettoni, 1955), it is legitimate to ask if, to what extent, in which period and in what circumstances these units could have had the character of distinct and autonomous communities. We should also enquire whether the presence of analogous small settlements outside the Palatine–Forum area can be entirely ruled out: such a presence would go some way, within certain chronological limits, towards providing a historical and topographical meaning to the traditions—which are in any case difficult to

discount—of the *populi Albenses* and of the *Septimontium*. Nor should we forget the enormous problem of the relationships between the Palatine–Forum system (progressively extended also to the other *montes*, Esquiline and Caelian) and the northern area of the *colles*, i.e. of the Quirinal and of the Viminal. This problem is undoubtedly intricate, and, for the moment at least, it clearly cannot be reliably solved in view of the chronological contradictions of the sources (fusion of the "cities" of Romulus and of Titus Tatius; inclusion of the Quirinal by Numa Pompilius according to Dion. Hal. II, 62, 5; inclusion of the Quirinal and of the Viminal by Servius Tullius, according to Livy, I, 44, 3, and others)—to say nothing of the still insufficient archaeological evidence. Finally, we are left with other no less problematic aspects: the function, in the formative stage of the urban context, of the Capitol, and above all of the area destined to become the Forum Boarium along the bank of the Tiber—the scene of venerable cults and probably also of extremely remote movements linked with the water-borne traffic and the river crossing.

These observations seem to suggest a reality that is more complex and solutions that are less clear-cut than those implied by the simple antithesis of Gjerstad's theory of synoecism and Müller-Karpe's theory of uniform development. Both processes—fusion and enlargement—could have contributed to the formation of Rome in different circumstances and at different times. The undoubted existence of a pre-eminent (bigger, more important and better known) inhabited complex centred on the Palatine–Forum area—in a period corresponding largely to the archaeological Phases 3–5, i.e. between the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.—is no guarantee that its origin could not lie in the coagulation of a number of early groups or hamlets. Likewise, the enlargement of this proto-urban complex by the progressive incorporation of the *montes* and of the *colles* does not exclude any pre-existing minor settlements on them being absorbed.

It is now time to return to the basic question treated in this section: should the birth of Rome be seen as an instantaneous "happening", or as a gradual "becoming"? On the one hand, we cannot fail to recognize the evidence for a continuous development from the original Bronze Age occupation up to the completed urban form of the *polis* of the Tarquinii; on the other hand, there is much to indicate certain outstanding moments of particularly intense and decisive innovation, which must be linked to specific economic and political facts. These moments are:

(1) hypothetically, the far-off beginning of the Bronze Age settlements—with their possible legendary reverberations in the movements and establishments of the heroic age: one thinks especially of the "foundation" by Aeneas or Rhomos or Rhome, and also of a conceivably real connection with the events or effects of Mycenaean maritime expansion along the coasts of Italy. We should remember that Müller-Karpe (1959) has pointed to Aegean echoes in the culture of Latium;

(2) the appearance of the cremation tombs and the associated beginning of the settlements in the area of the Palatine and the Forum: as we have already seen, this can be made to coincide with the traditional "foundation" of Rome, dated by the ancients between the ninth and eighth centuries B.C.;

(3) the development of a vast, uninterrupted conglomeration in the Palatine–Forum area and its extension to other zones of the *montes*: in the seventh century—see Livy, I, 30, 1 (*Roma interim crescit . . .*); we can also point to the first unified urban installations, especially to the τείχη assigned to the reigns of Ancus Marcius and of Tarquinius Priscus;

(4) the achievement of the urban organization of Servius Tullius' quadripartite city—around 575 B.C.! It is thus apparent—and in any case historical logic compels us to accept—that the formative process, when carefully analysed, resolves itself into a series of stages which can be more or less exactly fixed in time. Each stage is essential to the story of Rome's origins: and each stage therefore has a claim to be identified with the decisive fact of the "birth of Rome". But the desire today to select a "foundation" date from these moments or events—the time of Rome's mythical establishment according to ancient tradition and, apparently, 575 B.C. according to Gjerstad—would appear to be an exercise in abstraction, with no relevance to a deeper knowledge of historical truth.

3. ETHNIC, SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The classical literary sources and, to a somewhat lesser extent, epigraphic texts and linguistic conjectures, enable us to investigate the ethnic and social structures, the political and religious institutions, and the economic conditions of the communities in the area of early Rome. In other words, we can examine a whole range of essential realities that underlie the external manifestations of the forms of life, of the distribution and the development of the settlements, and of the chronological sequences as shown by the archaeological evidence. Obviously, a true "history" of the origins of Rome would be unthinkable if we had no knowledge of these more profoundly human factors. Also it is no less evident that the position of Rome in this respect is one of truly unique privilege compared to that of other cities in the Italic world—for whose origins we are almost always limited to the archaeological evidence.

It is superfluous to recall that the many intricate questions arising out of the subjects considered here have been critically debated for more than a century. Essential bibliography and synthesis will be found in Heurgon (1973, pp. 106ff., 229ff., 244ff., 300ff.): he rightly draws attention to the permanent state of uncertainty that surrounds many of the solutions or reconstructions so far

proposed. Here, we shall be concerned more particularly with methodological considerations.

The greatest single danger, as always (and especially in this type of enquiry), is the tendency to proceed according to preconceived schemes of reasoning. Such schemes arise out of an understandable need for orderliness in the interpretation of facts at the level of the working hypothesis: but too often they end in contrived over-simplifications by which the complexity and the variety implicit in the permutations of historical reality are confined and petrified—a severe handicap to the further free development of the critical process. A particularly instructive example is that of some well-known attempts to interpret the three primitive tribes of the Tities, the Ramnes and the Luceres. The ancients (Florus, III, 18, 1) and to a large extent the moderns have wished to see in these names the designation of the three supposedly principal ethnic components of Rome at the time of its birth: respectively the Sabines, the Latins and the Etruscans. This definition presupposes a clear awareness of the distinction between these stocks as organized and institutionalized groups as well. A variation on the traditional reconstruction, also based on the concept of the division into three ethnic groups (though with greater emphasis on linguistic considerations) was proposed by Devoto (1953). He sees these three tribes as reflecting the presence of three Indo-European strains: for him, the Tities are the "Proto-Sabines", characterized by the *rufus* type from the Indo-European *rudh-* root; the Ramnes are the "Proto-Latins" with *rutilus*; the Luceres are the "Proto-Italici" with *ruber*. Meanwhile, for Dumézil (1941), the three tribes represent an original division into three social groups: producers (Tities), priests (Ramnes) and warriors (Luceres), linked on the religious plane respectively to the three divinities Quirinus, Jove and Mars (or, in hierarchical order, Jove, Quirinus and Mars: the supposed primitive triad of Rome) and their *flamines*. These undoubtedly brilliant and stimulating reconstructions cover a wide range of juridical, institutional, ethnic, social and religious aspects: they offer interpretations through well-constructed comparisons and parallels, in which the dominant influence is that of the symbolic value accorded to the number three (in the case of Dumézil there is also a prejudice in favour of an Indo-European "tripartite ideology", on which see Momigliano, 1963, pp. 113ff.); and all this is highly relevant to the problem of the origins of Rome.

Clearly, no study of the genesis and the significance of the three tribes can ignore either the ethnic or, probably, the social and religious factors involved: and indeed it is likely that the reconstructions reported above contain some element of truth. But it must be pointed out at once that there are other elements and other perspectives to consider. For example, the origin of the traditional names of the three tribes is definitely Etruscan (Volnius in Varro, *Ling. lat.* V, 55, which leaves no doubt as to their phonetic and morphological appearance); there is a possible relationship between the name of the *Tities* and the Alban *Tutienses* (= *Titienses?*) and with the *sodales Titii* or *Titienses* preserved in the Sabine cults; another relationship might exist between the name of the Luceres

and the *Luci* of the Esquiline and of the Caelian; consequently, there is a growing tendency today to see the three primitive tribes in terms of ancestral or territorial groupings etc. (Pareti, 1952, pp. 232, 273ff.; de Francisci, 1959, pp. 537ff.; Pallottino, 1960*a*, pp. 27, 30; Heurgon, 1973, pp. 120ff.). What is wholly unacceptable at the present time, however, is the definition and solution of these extremely delicate problems by over-simplified generalizations: such formulas are not so much infused with critical observations of the evidence (coupled with a sense of its limitations) as with the preconceived ideas and prejudices of the authors responsible—almost to the point of the purely intellectual exercise, or indeed fantasy.

If we are to clear the ground of fetishes and abstractions, our first task must be to reassess the importance hitherto accorded to the discussion of the ethnic problems. Contemporary historiography has not yet completely succeeded in ridding itself of certain cumbrous inheritances of the positivist mentality: among them is the idea of strains or nations preconstituted as separate entities in prehistoric times, from which are derived the fundamental characteristics of historical peoples and civilizations. During the last few decades, dissatisfaction with this determinist concept has been increasing: criticisms are based on the evidence of hard facts, and on an awareness of the "formative" view of historical structures (Heurgon, 1973, pp. 225ff.). But let us reverse the terms in which the problem is posed, and place the accent on economic, political, religious and other eventualities (representing the infinite variety of possibilities in time and chance) that could have determined presences, attractions, meetings, cohabitations, rivalries and collaborations between small groups, families and even individuals long established in one place or originating from different places—and bringing their separate packages of customs and traditions (including linguistic traditions). Such a process effectively breaks up the crude old ethnic schemes in favour of a more concrete enunciation of the human facts. With it, we can achieve a better interpretation of all the available evidence, which, though fragmentary and often obscure, is nevertheless sufficient to demonstrate the highly complex nature of the events that actually took place—and also the extreme difficulty of reassembling the pieces. If we treat the problem like this, we are really putting ourselves in a position to grasp, if not historical "truth", at least historical "likelihood": all the more so, if we take account of analogies with equivalent and better-known situations in other periods and cultures.

The basic Latinity of the first inhabitants of Rome ought to be related to what we can know or infer of the development of Latin-speaking folk between the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age. It is not enough to relate it to the well-known picture of the historical Latins of the sixth century B.C. onwards: this would be a patent and monstrous *petitio principii*, and the picture is in any case already more or less profoundly changed by the active presence of Rome itself. Of the conditions of the earlier period, we can glimpse the following:

(1) a significant early diffusion of Latin (or "proto-Latin") speakers, not only in the Latium of the future but also across the Tiber in the future Ager Capenas and Ager Faliscus, if not beyond (so that Rome is born not, as is generally maintained, on the fringe, but in the heart of this ancient Latinity); there are possible sub-divisions into territorial groups like those of the Albenses in the Alban area as far as the Tiber, of the Rutuli to the south, of the supposed Prisci Latini in the area between the Tiber and the Monti Sabini, and of the Capenati and the Falisci on the right bank of the Tiber (Bernardi, 1964; he denies, however, the Latinity of the Rutuli);

(2) an organization broken up into minute communities like those attested by the list of the *populi Albenses*, and like those which emerge archaeologically in the numerous proto-historic villages scattered over the hills. Although these sites are continuously inhabited from the Bronze Age into the Late Iron Age, only a few last into the full historical period; such communities must already have been associated *ab antiquo* in religious and perhaps economic and political leagues, like that of the Albenses. This picture of remotely antique settlements and of slow, peaceful, developments would seem to eliminate the appearance, evoked by so many modern scholars that it has almost become a dogma, of the "invading cremators". The diffusion of the cremation rite during the Final Bronze Age is probably above all a religious phenomenon—aided no doubt by ethnic movements and other considerations—common to the whole of Italy. The "Latin" communities in the area of Rome, especially if they were included among the *populi Albenses*, will not have been different from those in all the territories mentioned above. Their (archaeological) contemporaneity with the communities in the Alban Hills does not agree with the idea of dependence in the sense of the traditional colonization from Alba Longa: but interest on the part of the inhabitants of the Alban Hills in the lower valley of the Tiber and especially in the area of the vital river crossing is both possible and probable, and might well justify influence from them on the development of the settlements on the Roman hills, leading to mutually binding links. As a result, we might say that the tradition of the league of the *populi Albenses* provides indirect but singular confirmation for the substance of the legend of Romulus' foundation, namely the ἀποικία despatched by the Albani (Dion. Hal., I, 73, 3; II, 2, 1): these two versions both seem to echo the same remote circumstances and events from totally different points of view.

As for the Sabines, the present writer has already had occasion to offer a solution that differs from the traditional ones (Pallottino, 1960*a*). He has suggested that the foreign-speaking component of Rome's early population accumulated as a result of progressive infiltration and immigration on the part of

persons and groups from the mountain regions of the interior, attracted (by the possibilities that the growing community afforded) to settle in particular on the north-western fringes—that is, on the *colles* and on the Esquiline. This hypothesis enables us to retain and to explain at least some elements of the tradition and of the alleged archaeological and linguistic proofs of an early Sabine presence in Rome; it removes the need to invoke the legendary and unhistorical invasion by an organized people; and it has therefore found favour among the severest modern critics of the "Sabine legend" (Müller-Karpe, 1962, p. 46; Poucet, 1967, p. 414). Here too, it is a question of shifting the emphasis from ethnic abstractions to the concrete realities and small change of social, economic and other factors. We may imagine that the provenances and dialects of these immigrants were anything but uniform; and it was probably only after their integration into the community or communities of emergent Rome that they were defined as "Sabines", with all that that implies for the establishment of topographical, cultural and institutional traditions on which the subsequent legendary versions of the annalists drew so heavily.

The story of the Etruscans is different. Their presence and their activities in Rome are historical facts that can be checked, belonging as they do, and as we have seen, to a relatively advanced—indeed final—phase in the process of the city's formation. There is a contrived air about ancient references to the participation of the Etruscans, or of Etruscan condottieri such as Lucumon and Caelius Vibenna, in the events of the Romulean period (Varro, *Ling. lat.*, V, 46; Cicero, *Rep.* II, 14; Dion. Hal., II, 36, 2; Servius, *ad Aen.*, V, 560) and the accompanying tendency to put the Etruscans on the same footing as the Latins and the Sabines in the original formation of the Roman people. In fact, the ancients were well aware of the "outsider" status of the Etruscan world *vis-à-vis* the first, basic, stages in the growth of Rome. The Etruscan contribution should be sought, above all, in the political impulse towards final urbanization, and rather less so on the demographic front—even during the period of the Etruscan kings and in spite of the considerable onomastic and toponomastic marks left by the Etruscans on Rome. But with facts like these we are already, and not for the first time, outside the period of origins.

Reference has been made on more than one occasion in the preceding pages to certain methodological considerations, and especially to the need for a conscious assessment of the limits to our knowledge and the difficulty of establishing a perspective of facts and concrete circumstances for historical events and cultural phenomena. These considerations obviously apply to the direct and specific study of the problems posed by religion, institutions (for example the origin of the curiae, the character of early kingship etc.) and by social factors: and yet such problems are often tackled by historians and jurists with abstract and unilaterally isolated arguments. A typical, and in the opinion of the present writer a particularly deplorable, case is the interpretation of the religion and indeed of the actual history of early Rome in terms of the Indo-European traditions, as proposed by Dumézil (most recently: 1966).

4. DRAMATIS PERSONAE

As in other analogous cases, modern hypercriticism (of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) rejected more or less completely and unconditionally the authenticity of the traditional personages connected with the origins of Rome. Their invention was variously attributed to learned speculations (as in the case of the personification of eponyms), to the humanization of divinities or the assumption of popular saga-figures into the stories told by the annalists, to the satisfaction of family pride (or interest) by the artificial creation of legendary founding fathers or heroes, and so on. The scepticism of such scholars extended well beyond the limits of the true origins period into later historical times—almost down to the sack of Rome by the Gauls. As a personal testimony to this deep-rooted and extreme hostility to the evidence of tradition, the present writer cannot refrain from recalling the utter amazement (and consequent honest re-appraisal) of Gaetano de Sanctis, in 1939, at the discovery of the Avile Vipiiennas votive inscription at Veii: for all practical purposes, this text proved that Aulus and Caelius Vibenna were real people and not mythical figures, as the Grand Old Man of Ancient History had always thought!

The situation has changed dramatically during the last decades, in the atmosphere of that reassessment of ancient traditions to which reference has already been made (Heurgon, 1973, pp. 244ff.). Most scholars now accept that there is at least a core of historical truth in the figures which represent the protagonists and actors in the events of early Rome: and this not only in the phase that can be historically checked (the period of the Etruscan kings and of the beginnings of the "Republic"), but also for the time of such early personages as the first kings of Rome, apart from Romulus (Fraccaro, 1952; Pareti, 1952; de Francisci, 1959; Gjerstad, 1962*a*; Heurgon, 1973). However, dissenting voices have been heard, even recently: they have advocated a partial return to the old position of annalistic inventions (Alföldi, 1965); or else their direction and perspective are wholly at variance with those of modern critical currents, in their explanation of the first kings of Rome as "functional characterizations" of juridico-religious (Romulus and Numa), warrior (Tullus Hostilius) and economic (Ancus Marcius) motifs present in primitive societies (Dumézil, 1966).

The current trend reflects a number of features typical of our time: the taste for the concrete, the search for and exaltation of the human factors in history—and also a certain polemical open-mindedness against the excesses or the abuses of the critical process. We may add a passionate hostility towards the negative radicalism of past generations (which recalls the no less passionate opposition of nineteenth century hypercriticism to the ingenuous anthropomorphism of the ancients). But it must be said—perhaps partly for all these reasons—that present efforts to vindicate the historical nature of the characters involved in the origins of Rome are still rather confused and makeshift: given the lack of an

adequate critical commitment (on the part of the scholars just mentioned), attributions are generally hurried, summary and poorly documented—almost more impressionistic than reasoned. The fact of the matter is that this fundamental and peculiarly attractive problem has yet to be tackled on a proper scientific basis, comparable to that used in analogous contexts (such as the historical status of the characters in the Homeric epics, the Germanic sagas, the knightly cycles, etc.).

The initiation of an ordered and systematic discourse on this subject implies, in the first instance, the definition of the aims and limits of the research in question. The controversy surrounding the authenticity or otherwise of the characters recorded by tradition cannot be dissipated by a simple "yes" or "no". In each case, we must distinguish what may be defined as true from what may be defined as false: and we must also evaluate the nature, extent and significance of the "truth" concerned. Current thinking has already arrived at a rough distinction between the seeming substantially historical nature of certain characters (for example the last kings of Rome, Porsenna, etc.), authentic names that may be identified with more or less artificial personalities (as has been thought in the case of some other kings of Rome), and finally mythical or symbolic figures that are wholly fictitious both in character and in name (Romulus). However, the cases to which our attention is drawn are much more complex and varied than this. They could usefully be considered or grouped not only by chronology but also under other headings—such as categories of person (kings, female personalities, etc.); sacred character; the relationship between them in particular sagas; onomastic similarities or correspondences; and so on. And the investigation cannot proceed in isolation and on an abstract plane, divorced both from the general historical problems that concern the birth of Rome and from the contribution available from non-literary sources—especially epigraphy.

Let us, for example, consider the question of the first kings of Rome: are they, or are they not, historical? If we put the question in terms of the literal veracity of the traditional stories regarding names, achievements, number, sequence—as has been done, and even done recently—we are faced with all the unresolved uncertainties and objections of the modern critical tradition (fictional aspects of the names, symbolic characterizations, anachronistic or contradictory attributions, etc.). And these are aggravated by some of the findings in the historical and cultural spheres of the earliest period—such as the chronology which prolongs the duration of Phases 1 to 4, from the first tombs in the Forum until the beginning of the Etruscan period (that is, for more than two centuries), so that the succession of only four kings is absurd. We could, however, consider the possible stages in the formation and growth of the Palatine–Forum aggregate—what I myself would call the "city of the Velienses" (Pallottino, 1960*a*, pp. 26ff.)—up to its fullest "proto-urban" extent in the seventh century B.C.: and could admit that its rulers—who must at a certain point have resided actually on the Velia or near the Porta Mugonia as Varro (in Nonius, 531)

remembers of Tullus Hostilius and of Ancus Marcius—could have been considered the direct predecessors of the Etruscan kings who created and dominated the united city. If we did so, then it is both possible and probable that some of the more eminent figures in this early historical period were remembered and included in what later became the canonical list of seven kings. Thus we see that the historical status of the characters in the first phase of the monarchy should be discussed and judged independently of the traditional schemes of their mutual relationships and of the general framework of this period's events as seen by the annalists. If anything, the question should be transferred to another historical context: namely that which, less precise but more authentic, may be glimpsed from the findings of archaeology and topography.

The hypothesis of erratic reminiscence might also open the way to interesting onomastic researches into the diversity of origin and structure between the names themselves, and into the possibility of alterations at different times and in different circumstances. In any case, however, the multiplicity of evidence, especially that of Archaic Etruscan inscriptions with *praenomina* of heterogeneous type (otherwise, and later, unusual) reinforces our conviction that the names of the kings of Rome from Numa Pompilius to Ancus Marcius are authentic Archaic names—true or "likely". It remains to consider the name of Romulus which, because of its direct relationship with that of Rome and its single onomastic component (it is not composed of *praenomen* and *gentilicium* as is otherwise the rule—even in the case of Romulus' contemporary and friend, or enemy, Titus Tatius!) has been, and is, unanimously held to be an artificial and typically eponymic creation. Nevertheless, it would be technically wrong to wholly exclude the possibility that the form Romulus represents a real name: that is the "single name" or original *praenomen* which is the root of the *gentilicium Romulius* (*Romilius*), attested historically by a *gens* and by a *tribus Romilia* (*Romulia*)—and also indirectly by the corresponding form of the Etruscan *gentilicium Rumlna* (which might be based on the simple onomastic form *Rumla?*—similar to that of the *praenomen Murila*: Pallottino, 1968*b*, no. 149). The possibility, however remote, that a real person called Romulus may actually have existed somewhere or at some time (or that his existence may have been believed in, as head of a *gens* even earlier than as founder of the city: see Schulze, 1904, pp. 579ff.) diminishes, even if does not eliminate, the distinction between a (fictitious) Romulus and his (authentic) successors, on which scholars such as Fraccaro, Pareti and Gjerstad have insisted.

As to the nature of the figures themselves, all the evidence combines to suggest that they are the result of mulitfarious and complex later elaborations. Even here, however, it might be that some element of transmitted truth survives, or that the inventions of the annalists at least reflect probability. For example—and in spite of Heurgon (1973, p. 136), who in this is strangely hypercritical—the period traditionally assigned to Tullus Hostilius coincides precisely with the decline of the proto-historic centres in the Alban Hills (the

destruction of Alba Longa?); nor does it seem reasonable today to suppose that Ostia—allegedly founded by Ancus Marcius—has no Archaic period; and in any case the "proto-urbanistic" activities of Ancus Marcius find a precise chronological counterpart in the intense development of Rome in the seventh century B.C. (Pallottino, 1960*a*). These statements do not mean literally that a king (of Rome, or of the city on the Palatine or Velia that preceded it) called Tullus Hostilius won a war against the Albensi in the first half of the seventh century, or that another king called Ancus Marcius enlarged, unified and fortified the growing city in the second half of the same century (extending its dominion as far as the coast—Ostia). I wish merely to admit the *possibility* of these circumstances and of these achievements, and to suggest that the ancients might have preserved and transmitted some memory of them, partly true and partly "likely". The attribution—even if hypothetical or invented *per se*—of a certain action to a certain person might be taken to presuppose the authenticity of both the action and the person, along with the certain or probable knowledge that action and person are compatible. It is precisely in this sense that memories concerning war-like activities could accumulate round the figure of Tullus Hostilius, while those concerning public works are attached to Ancus Marcius: this certainly alters the facts, but the result also contains a large proportion of information that is of authentic historical interest.

Naturally enough, the horizons of prosopographical research broaden as we approach the problems connected with the final phase of the regal period. We should not allow our suspicions to be unduly aroused by the coating of romantic ingenuity that overlays the figures and human actions at this time. In fact, the veneer of literary convention conceals a profound gap *vis-à-vis* the preceding phases, for which we have no reliable basis of information—any more than the annalists themselves presumably had. The difference resides essentially in the diffusion of writing. The existence of sacred and annalistic documents, and the transmission of their contents over the centuries, the possibility of direct knowledge of the persons and events of the past through the numerous Archaic inscriptions that still survived at the end of the Republic and beginning of the Empire (an extremely important fact so far undervalued by modern scholars), the contacts with the Greek world (absorbing information for onward transmission): all these possibilities must have combined to preserve and fix memories that are substantially true, and—above all—to preclude extensive perversion or alteration of the historical reality. In this sense, the position recently assumed by Alföldi (1965) emerges as anachronistic in the extreme. Epigraphic documentation is now an essential fact of life: it is sufficient to recall the dedication (mentioned above) of Avile Vipiiennas found in a sanctuary at Veii and datable to the mid-sixth century B.C. (the period of Servius Tullius!). If this does not belong to the famous Etruscan condottiere, the ally of Mastarna—and king of Rome forgotten by the canon (Alföldi, 1965, pp. 216ff.)—it bears the self-same name, and thus constitutes indirect proof, or likelihood, of his historical status. Finally, we have to recognize that, whereas

for the formative period prior to the sixth century we have little chance indeed of distinguishing either any individual figure or the memory of any particular name, the reverse is true of the "great Rome of the Tarquins": this affords a highly reliable gallery of personalities who can be more or less precisely identified and defined in their characteristics and actions (in spite of the layers of inevitable embroidery and learned interference applied by the annalists). Our gallery contains the first Tarquin, or the first Tarquins, who can be reliably assigned to the late seventh or early sixth century—there is at least one individual proof in the form of the name Cneve Tarchunies in the Tomba François at Vulci (*CIE* 5275); the "queen–priestess" Tanaquil (on whom see, most recently and most cogently, Heurgon, 1973, pp. 142ff.); the towering figure of Servius Tullius ("characterized" on one hand as a regal town-planner and builder and on the other as a great reformer, possibly connected with the Mastarna of Etrusco-Roman legend and with the other personalities—all undoubtedly real—of the same cycle, namely Aulus and Caelius Vibenna, Marce Camitlnas, Rasce "the Etruscan", etc.); the clearly-defined tyrannical figure of the last of the Tarquins; Lars and Arruns Porsenna; and finally the personalities of the first "Republic", of which the names come down to us in consular lists that are recognized today as substantially authentic.

This evidently historical nature of Archaic Rome corresponds in the sphere of urban processes to the full attainment of city status. The cycle of the origins is complete. The history of Rome—or Roman history—begins.

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