

A Brief History by the Victor: Roman Portrayal of Etruscan Influences

BY

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## Abstract

The extent of Etruscan influence on early Rome is nearly impossible to determine because ancient authors have masked Rome's Etruscan heritage. The primary written sources preserve a complex and often disguised account of Rome's debt to Etruria but Etruscan origins are obscured to such a degree that the arguments over the magnitude of Etruscan influence range from claims that the influence is minor to advocacies for a wholesale Roman import of Etruscan ideas and technology. Modern scholars have attempted to add to the list present in the primary sources by using archaeological and linguistic evidence but there is no consensus for an accepted set of Etruscan borrowings.

By investigating the primary sources, I argue that the seemingly disordered Roman treatment of Etruscan influences is not accidental and that the complexity of the tradition illustrates the willingness of ancient authors to remove all traces of Etruscan recognition from Roman rituals.

In 56 BCE, the Roman senate was faced with a grave omen: the region to the north of Latium had shaken with a violent rumbling. The senate consulted the *haruspices*, an authoritative body of priests that dealt with matters of prodigies and their expiation. The *haruspices* were a select set of Etruscan soothsayers who used lightning divination and hepatoscopy (liver divination) to help Rome understand signs from the gods and also made general analyses of any unusual phenomena that occurred in and around Rome. After the senate received their response, Cicero delivered the *de Haruspicum Responsis*, in which he stresses the importance of the *haruspices* to Roman religion and, in particular, their authority on prodigies. He warns that the omen from Latium must not be ignored and that the insult to the gods, as laid out by the *haruspices*, must be corrected or else there would be great danger for the Republic (*Har.* 61). In his warning, Cicero claims that when faced with strange phenomena threatening the well-being of the Republic, it was not native Roman religious knowledge that the senate relied on; instead it was Etruscan divination.

Cicero's description of the Etruscan origins of the *haruspices* is ingenious: he credits his (and the senate's) Roman ancestors, *maiores nostros*, as being authors and teachers for the cultivating of religious matters (*auctores ac magistros religionum colendarum*) who had sufficient wisdom to entrust the religious safekeeping of the Republic to the most appropriate bodies:

[They] thought that customary and solemn ceremonies should be preserved by the Pontifices, the authority of conducting state affairs properly by augury, the ancient predictions of the oracles by the books of the priestesses of Apollo, and the explanations of portents by the discipline of the Etruscans. This

discipline indeed is so great that, within our memory, they clearly predicted for us in advance first that deadly beginning of the Social War, then the near extreme crisis of the time of Sulla and Cinna, and finally the recent conspiracy for burning the city and destroying the Republic.<sup>1</sup>

*qui stater sollemnesque caerimonias pontificatu, rerum bene gerundarum auctoritates augurio, fatorum veteres praedictiones Apollinis vatum libris, portentorum explanationes Etruscorum disciplina contineri putaverunt: quae quidem tanta est, ut nostra memoria primum Italici belli funesta illa principia, post Sullani Cinnanique temporis extremum paene discrimen, tum hanc recentem urbis inflammandae delendique imperii coniurationem non obscure nobis paulo ante praedixerint (18).*

As Cicero explains, Roman religion relied on a complex system in order to maintain correctly the status quo. Of the four essential elements mentioned, the pontificate and the augurs are native to Rome, but the oracles of Apollo, borrowed from the Greeks, and the *haruspices*, borrowed from the Etruscans, are of foreign origin. Of these two foreign examples, the Etruscan *haruspices* are the only priesthood in Cicero's list that was not originally Roman. While the oracles of Apollo were Greek, the decemvirate (later, a quindecimvirate), the priesthood established by Tarquinius Superbus for their safekeeping, originated in Rome.

The focus of Cicero's praise is not on Etruscan expertise in expiation, but rather his ancestors' ability to innovatively make use of that expertise. The Etruscans are only important, it seems, because the employment of their expertise serves to display Roman ingenuity in adopting and adapting foreign arts or skills for the glory of Rome. Polybius states in his histories that this readiness to take up anything of benefit from other civilizations is one of Rome's virtues: "the Romans are good at adapting customs and striving for improvement" (*ἀγαθοὶ γάρ...μεταλαβεῖν ἔθνη καὶ*

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<sup>1</sup> Translations throughout are my own.

ζηλωσσαι τὸ βέλτιον καὶ Ῥωμαῖοι; Polyb. 25.11). The *haruspices*, so it appears, provide an illustration of the way in which Rome is superior to all nations. Cicero's *de Haruspicum Responsis* presents Rome as the great synthesizer, utilizing the best of the Etruscan arts for her own advantage.

Rome's synthesized culture, however, is not the product of a mere *à la carte* choosing of Etruscan elements, as Cicero's quotation implies. The *haruspices* illustrate only one example of Rome's relationship to her Etruscan neighbors. Contrary to Cicero's presentation, the application of Etruscan concepts evolved from a complex system of borrowing and influence that has often been obscured in the annalistic tradition. Cicero's description of his ancestors as authors and teachers provides a typical example of this phenomenon. He acknowledges Rome's debt while at the same time, by crediting his ancestors with the inclusion of the *haruspices* in Roman religion, he conceals that they were not a Roman invention. Even twenty-first century Roman historians cannot come to any agreement over what elements of Roman civilizations can be credited to the Etruscans. A great controversy has raged for years over what exactly the Romans owed to the Etruscans and this debate has resulted in a large range of conclusions. In my reading of modern historians, I have discovered that all aspects of Roman civilization are owed to the Etruscans, and conversely that Rome developed independently of her Etruscan neighbors. Each modern author cites the same primary sources and archaeological evidence to support his/her claims yet many scholars reach radically different conclusions.

Is there an explanation for all this controversy and inconsistency? The masking of Etruscan influence on Roman culture is prevalent in the writings of Greek and Roman authors, leading me to ask the question: how can these integral parts of the Roman state have their origins obscured in public memory? While it infuriates the modern-day historian, many religious and civic rites were practiced in Rome with no ancient consensus regarding basis or purpose. Surviving literature, such as Livy's history of Rome from its founding, Cicero's philosophical works, and Varro's history of the Latin language, demonstrates a Roman obsession with origins although these sources are frequently not in agreement and, in many cases, a single source will present several alternatives for a given ritual's origin.

I, in the spirit of these Romans, will not concern myself with the historicity of the primary texts and, while presenting the arguments of modern scholars, I will not argue for the validity or irrelevancy of their claims. Instead, I will first examine the dimensions of the historical problem in modern scholarship, namely that the same evidence can result in widely differing views of Etruscan influence on Rome. Then, by exploring a selection of the influences that the Romans themselves credited to the Etruscans, I will attempt to become more aware of Rome's understanding of her Etruscan heritage.<sup>2</sup> Next, I will sample the list of borrowings that modern scholars have attributed to the Etruscans by using evidence outside of the annalistic tradition, which is my primary source. Finally, I would like to present a pattern of Roman

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this project a search was undertaken to collect an authoritative list of all primary sources that record Etruscan influence on Early Rome. For this list in its entirety please see Appendix A. Appendix B contains the original Greek or Latin text of each passage discussed in this paper.

treatment of Etruscan influences that emerges from this study of ancient and modern perspectives.

Examples of Dissent: T.J. Cornell and Raymond Bloch

According to T.J. Cornell's *Beginnings of Rome*, Rome was not importantly influenced by the Etruscan civilization. Cornell forgoes a former model of the history of Rome that credited Rome's earliest achievements to her proximity to the Etruscans and even to early Etruscan rulers.<sup>3</sup> Cornell does not doubt the historicity of the ancient literary tradition; instead he finds fault with modern interpretations of it:

The evidence of the sources suggests that the encounter with the Etruscans had only superficial effects on Roman life and culture. Formal dress, magisterial symbols, ceremonial trappings, ritual technicalities and architectural forms—these amount to little more than outward tokens (169).

For Cornell, these influences are only “trappings” that go no deeper than surface symbolism. He further argues that even the great accomplishments that modern scholars attribute to Etruscan kings cannot be accredited to Etruscan ingenuity. For instance, Tarquin (either Priscus or Superbus, the tradition varies among ancient authors) built the *cloaca maxima*. Cornell refutes the assumption that sewers were Etruscan technology because they were implemented by an Etruscan king with his sarcastic comparison: “one might as well connect the foundation of the Bank of England (1696) with the fact that William III was a Dutchman” (165). He makes a similar argument about the Etruscan architects who designed the Temple of Jupiter

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<sup>3</sup> Cornell reacts throughout his book to “Etruscan domination” theories, which assume that every refinement or technological innovation in Rome is an Etruscan influence, as though during the regal period Rome was civilized by her Etruscan monarchs. For instance, see R.M. Ogilvie, *Early Rome and the Etruscans*.



Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline. Rather than exhibiting the influence of Etruscan architecture on Roman temples, Cornell believes that Roman use of Etruscan architects only proves that Rome was able to employ the most skilled craftsmen, who could then have been trained in a Roman style.<sup>4</sup> He also proposes that the presence of foreign craftsmen is evidence of the cosmopolitan nature of early Rome. It is mere coincidence that these craftsmen come from Etruria (167).

Cornell argues that the primary sources support his views: Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo all report lists of insignia and symbolism as Etruscan influences.<sup>5</sup> He states: “it is evident that the traditional list of Etruscan borrowings is limited to external adjuncts of Roman public institutions and ceremonies, and does not extend to the institutions and ceremonies themselves” (166). Cornell discusses the Roman triumph as an example. He claims that the Romans themselves credited the Etruscans only with the outward symbols of the triumph and not with the actual institution. Overall, Cornell finds fault with the assumption that the “trappings” presented by primary historians naturally prove that the institutions themselves must then have been borrowed (166).

For Cornell, the primary sources exaggerate the importance of Etruscan influence in early Rome. Because the Romans found the ability to reshape and improve upon the technology and culture of others to be one of their greatest virtues, naturally they would have emphasized examples in their histories (169-170). Also, in

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<sup>4</sup> Cornell’s point is that these craftsmen would have been instructed by Romans as to which style they should use. Therefore, Etruscan craftsmen would not have been introducing a foreign element but instead applying their superior skills to the style that was status quo in Rome at the time. Cornell himself does not exactly define a Roman style.

<sup>5</sup> Livy 1.8.3, 1.44.4; Dion. Hal. 3.61; Diod. 5.40; Strabo 5.2.2.

very early Rome there would have been little difference between Roman and Etruscan civilizations: since the two cultures had developed in such close proximity there were bound to be similarities. These similarities in culture would have faded into the background with time, forcing some Etruscan rituals into the category of “other” and the rest into the category of “archaic.” By the Late Republic, “Etruscan civilisation seemed to the Romans alien, mysterious, even barbaric; that there had once been a time when they and the Etruscans had shared the same culture was something of which they were not remotely aware” (169). In addition, since most Etruscan influences date to the archaic period, the Romans in the Late Republic associated “Etruscan” with antiquity as much as they associated it with foreignness (169). According to Cornell, any ancient ritual with a history obscured by time would have been considered “Etruscan.” It was more likely, however, that any common ritual had originally been shared by the two cultures rather than being an import into one from another.

Cornell’s assertions about the superficial nature of Etruscan influence are adequately supported by his own evidence and by other examples as well, such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus 3.61, although he does not mention the episode.<sup>6</sup> Dionysius presents the surrendering of the Etruscan symbols of power to Tarquinius Priscus as though the Romans had obtained these symbols of Etruscan power (the lictors, the *fasces*, the purple toga, etc.) because they symbolized Roman hegemony

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<sup>6</sup> While Dionysius is not himself Roman, E. Gabba, *Dionysius and the History of Archaic Rome*, argues that Dionysius must have used only Roman sources for local histories because previous Greek writings concerning Rome were conspicuously silent about many episodes of Italian history. Therefore, in the case of localized episodes in Roman history, Dionysius would have to have been presenting a Roman tradition (86).

over a great empire (i.e., the once great Etruscan Empire). Despite this and comparable evidence, Cornell's wholesale rejection of any significant Etruscan influence on Rome takes the matter to an extreme. Gary Forsythe, in *A Critical History of Early Rome*, says: "Cornell has perhaps gone too far in minimizing the significance of early Rome's borrowings from its Etruscan neighbors" (118).

By contrast, Raymond Bloch argues in his article "Livy's Use of Etruscan Sources" that the literary tradition conceals the significance of the Etruscan origins of adopted practices and cultural borrowings. Bloch theorizes that there is a tendency in the ancient literary tradition to emphasize only Roman mastery and improvement over imports from Etruria. He illustrates this by using several examples from Greco-Roman literature that distinguish an inferior Etruscan form of divination from the superior Roman version. Bloch's thesis stands apart from Cornell's by maintaining that "everything in the tradition is carefully arranged to contrast Latin piety to Etruscan incredulity and to deprive Etruscans of any merit in the final adoption of the sacred ritual" (16). Rather than considering the use of Etruscan symbols to be insignificant adoptions of "trappings," the Romans remember that they improved upon the borrowed cultural elements to such an extent that each appropriation no longer bore any resemblance to its Etruscan original. Therefore, it had become a truly Roman innovation.

Bloch supports this thesis with the use of two examples: Attius Navius' confrontation with Tarquinius Priscus (Livy 1.36) and Tarquinius Superbus' purchase of the Sibylline books (Dion. Hal. 4.62). In the first story, Livy reports that Tarquin

wanted to increase the number of centuries in the Roman army. Attius Navius, the most famous Roman augur of the time, reminded Tarquin that no changes could be made unless favorable omens were received: “nothing was able to be changed and nothing new was able to be established unless the birds had given their assent” (*neque mutari neque novum constitui nisi aves addixissent posse*; 1.36.3). Tarquin mocked Navius’ superstition and asked him to divine by augury if what he happened to be thinking at that moment in time could be done. Navius took the auspices and said that it certainly could. Tarquin then revealed that he had been thinking that Navius should cut a stone with a razor. Attius Navius took a razor and cut a stone, just as he had predicted that he could. Most significantly, as a result, the importance of augury increased in Rome:

Without a doubt, such honors were given to augury and the augurs that afterward nothing at war or at home could happen without the auspices being taken; meetings of people and the assembling of the army, the greatest of things, would be broken up when the birds had not given permission.

*auguriis certe sacerdotioque augurum tantus honos accessit ut nihil belli domique postea nisi auspiciato gereretur, concilia populi, exercitus vocati, summa rerum, ubi aves non admisissent, dirimerentur* (1.36.6).

For Bloch, this episode demonstrates how a Roman augur outwits or overcomes the religious ignorance and disrespect of the “Etruscan” king.

A similar theme recurs in Bloch’s second example, which is not pulled from Livy’s narrative, as his title might suggest, but from Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Bloch, 15). According to Dionysius, a “not local” woman came to town with nine

books reported to contain important prophecies for Rome.<sup>7</sup> Tarquin refused to pay the price she had asked for them so she left, burned three of the books, and returned asking the same price for the remaining six books. Tarquin refused yet again and again she left, burned three of the books, and brought the last three back to Tarquin, asking for the third time the original price, now for only three books. This time, Tarquin consulted Roman diviners who, realizing the importance of the books and the magnitude of Tarquin's folly, advised him to purchase the three remaining books at any cost (4.62).

Bloch argues that the point of these episodes cannot be to show that the Etruscans were irreverent toward religious rites, since the rite of divination was originally Etruscan. Instead, in the case of the Attius Navius episode, it was "to give the specifically Roman form of divination, namely auspices, a striking and divine confirmation" (15). According to Livy, Navius was enforcing the *mos maiorum*. When Romulus had established the original centuries, he had waited for favorable auspices, but Tarquin, as an outsider, had no intention of abiding by the ancient custom. Livy explicitly gives the reason for Navius' objection: "since Romulus had done this thing according to augury" (*id quia inaugurato Romulus fecerat*; Livy 1.36.3). Tarquin's opposition exemplifies his contempt for the Roman improvements over an originally Etruscan art and his mockery of that art is an attempt to show the superiority of Etruria in matters of divination. Navius, however, foils his plans and completes an impossible task, presumably helped by an act of the gods. Such an

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<sup>7</sup> οὐκ ἐπιχωρία ("not of that land;" 4.62.2) see n. 8.

intervention would have demonstrated the divine sanction of Roman augury and the gods' inclination away from the Etruscan king.

Similarly, in the Sibylline episode, Bloch argues, Tarquin is uninformed in matters of true religious importance. His rejection of the books based on their cost demonstrates that although he is Etruscan and in that capacity should have an understanding of such matters, especially considering that all Etruscan divination relied on sacred books, he is truly ignorant (16). The reaction of the Roman diviners demonstrates this. The diviners,

Learning that he had turned away a great godsend and predicting his not buying of all the books to be great disaster, bid him to pay the gold to the woman, however much she wanted, and to take the remaining oracles.

*μαθόντες ὅτι θεόπεμπτον ἀγαθὸν ἀπεστράφη, καὶ μεγάλην συμφορὰν ἀποφαίνοντες τὸ μὴ πάσας αὐτὸν τὰς βύβλους πρίασθαι, ἐκέλευσαν ἀπαριθμηῆσαι τῇ γυναικὶ τὸ χρυσίον, ὅσον ἦται, καὶ τοὺς περιόντας τῶν χρησμῶν λαβεῖν (4.62.3).*

According to Bloch, this episode has another implication: “it appears to me as a late invention of Greek and Roman historians, an invention meant to hide the fact that, originally, the sacred books were made, at least partially, of expiatory rules of Etruscan origin” (16). Bloch believes that Dionysius masks the true origins of the books and further legitimizes their oracles by Hellenizing them. Since oracular divination was not part of the Roman tradition, a Latin priestess would have been unbelievable. Instead, the prophetess must be Greek, and since the oracle at Delphi

was a Greek institution, a Greek woman lent the most legitimacy to the oracles.<sup>8</sup> By intentionally obscuring the Etruscan origin of the books, the literary tradition is able to attack Tarquin's Etruscan heritage and to minimize the importance of Etruscan influence on early Roman religion.

Bloch operates on the assumption that the Romans perceived the Tarquins as "Etruscan". He says, "annalistic tradition presents them as foreign tyrants; it minimizes their good points and underlines their shortcomings" (12). For him, the Tarquins were Etruscans first and monarchs second. The question of the social and political position of the Etruscans in early Rome is an important one. Were the Etruscans "others"? Were the Tarquins foreign tyrants? Was the rape of Lucretia and the subsequent expulsion of the Tarquins a metaphor for Rome throwing off the yoke of foreign domination? Bloch surely thinks so; by expelling the Tarquins, Rome freed herself from foreign leadership so that she could stand on her own.

But Cornell argues that the Etruscans were not considered outsiders. Instead, Rome was a cosmopolitan city that incorporated a population consisting of peoples from varying backgrounds. The Etruscans would not have stood out in such a crowd (157-8). Furthermore, according to Cornell, the Tarquins were not expelled because they were Etruscan, but rather because they were tyrants. In direct opposition to Bloch, Cornell states: "the literary sources give no indication that the hatred incurred by Tarquinius Superbus had anything to do with his being an Etruscan" (224).

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<sup>8</sup> Dionysius does not call the woman a Greek. Instead, she is *οὐκ ἐπιχωρία* (not of that land) (4.62.2). Her non-local status, in relation to the Romans and to Tarquin, implies that she is neither Latin nor Etruscan. By process of elimination then, she must be Greek.

Cornell also points out that Tarquinius Priscus, the father of Superbus, was not of Etruscan origin. Livy writes: “for at that place [Tarquin] had been born of foreign stock ... he was the son of Demaratus of Corinth” (*nam ibi quoque peregrina stirpe oriundus erat ... Demarati Corinthii filius erat*; 1.34.1-2).<sup>9</sup> The Roman literary tradition preserves Tarquinius Priscus’ Greek heritage and at the same time recognizes that he was born in Etruria. Cornell finds that even in the literary tradition the Tarquins were a symbol of diversity in ancient Rome because the Romans record that the family represented three different groups (Greek, Etruscan, and Roman). Forsythe demonstrates that the cognomen “Tarquinius” follows the pattern for toponymical clan names (100-101) and that it merely demonstrates that the Tarquins were from the Etruscan city of Tarquinii; therefore, it would be almost the equivalent of calling someone “Sam the Englishman” when he is not in England. The mere mention of Tarquinius Priscus’ Greek heritage, however, can be seen as evidence against Cornell’s theory. If Rome was truly multinational, the presence of multinational people would not have been noteworthy. But the Romans were very concerned with parentage and country of origin, hence the mention of Tarquin’s heritage. Even if their situation was not unique, the Tarquins certainly were of foreign origin, whether Greek, Etruscan, or both.

While Bloch’s argument is interesting, his theory that Rome’s attitude toward the Tarquinii was a reflection of her attitude toward the Etruscans is without merit. Conversely, even if the Tarquins were not primarily considered to be Etruscan, the

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<sup>9</sup> Bloch does not mention the Tarquins’ Greek heritage.



Etruscans themselves were considered outsiders. Livy demonstrates that the Tarquins, as well as the Etruscans, were aware of their own Etruscan heritage. After his expulsion from Rome, Tarquinius Superbus appealed to the Etruscans that they help reinstate him as king because he “was born from the Etruscans, of the same blood” (*se ortum ex Etruscis, eiusdem sanguinis*; 2.6.2). In the same episode, he records that the Etruscans were interested in restoring Tarquin because “it seemed good to them that one of their own rule in Rome” (*pulchrum videbatur suos Romae regnare*; 2.6.4). Moreover, the Emperor Claudius, though not a republican source, stated that throughout history outsiders had been greatly valued as leaders in Rome. He gives as one example the early Etruscan kings (Inscr. Dessau 212; CIL 13.1668).

That is not to say, however, that Bloch has not correctly recognized a common trend in the Roman literary tradition; there does seem to be a tendency to emphasize Roman enhancement rather than borrowing. Bloch claims that the literary tradition is “constantly eager to deprive Etruscans of the merit of progress and acquisitions Rome owed them” (23). Although he does not mention them, there are two other episodes in Dionysius of Halicarnassus that support Bloch’s claim. Both the discovery of the head on the Capitoline hill (4.59-61) and the diversion of waters from the Alban Lake (12.10-11) show that the literary tradition does emphasize Roman victory over Etruscan rituals.

Dionysius reports that while digging the foundations for the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline, a human head was discovered. In order to interpret the prophecy correctly, messengers were sent to a prophet in Etruria. When

the messengers arrived, the prophet's son greeted them and he cautioned them against the treachery of his father's divination. The son warned the messengers that his father would draw lines on the ground in a representation of the Capitoline Hill and that he would ask them to indicate on the drawing where the head had been found. The Romans, advised the son, were to insist that the head was found in Rome among Romans, and not to point to any part of the drawing. Just as cautioned, the old prophet attempted to trick the Romans by drawing lines on the ground to represent the Capitoline, but the prophet could not fool the Romans because they followed the son's instructions. As a result, the prophet gave them the correct interpretation: that, in whatever state the head had been found, that state would become head of the whole world. The old prophet had tried to change fate; if he had succeeded in convincing the Romans to say that the head had been found somewhere on his drawing, that would have credited the discovery of the head to Etruria, thus making Etruria the head of the whole world. Even though the Roman messengers would most likely have been fooled if the man's son had not intervened, the Roman messengers were still able to outsmart the prophet, demonstrating Roman superiority over Etruscan divination. Dionysius reveals that the Etruscan diviners are con-artists, not honest diviners. According to this episode, even a Roman messenger is cleverer than an Etruscan diviner.

In the second episode, the Romans overcome an Etruscan prophesy. While the Romans were besieging Veii, a lake in the Alban hills overflowed, destroying many lands and houses. The Romans believed that some god was angry at them and

they accordingly sent envoys to the oracle at Delphi. Meanwhile, an Etruscan diviner guarding the walls of Veii one day met with a Roman centurion with whom he was friends. After the Roman taunted the Etruscan with threats of the fall of Veii, the Etruscan revealed to the Roman that he knew of the Alban Lake and of the oracles concerning it and that they stated,

that it was fated for the city that it would be destroyed when the lake in the Alban Hills, lacking springs, no longer mixed with the sea.

*ὅτι τῇ πόλει τῆδε τότε πέρωται ἀλῶναι ὅταν ἢ πρὸς Ἄλβανῶ λίμνη  
σπανίσασα τῶν αὐθιγενῶν ναμάτων μηκέτι μίσηται θαλάττη  
(12.11.2).*

The next day, the Roman centurion went to the tribunes and explained what he had heard. Returning to the walls of Veii, he then pretended to need some help interpreting prodigies and kidnapped the Etruscan. The tribunes took the Etruscan back to the senate, and, after the oracle at Delphi confirmed the Etruscan prophecy, the Romans devised a plan. They would divert the waters artificially, a strategy which ultimately won them the city. In this case, the Romans knew of the prophecy and manipulated the circumstances for their own benefit. By intervening, they were able to satisfy the terms of the prophecy and conquer the city. Once again, Roman cunning trumps Etruscan divination.

In some ways, these last two examples, though not from Livy, demonstrate Bloch's argument more accurately. Rather than relying on the incorrect assumption that, for the Romans, the Tarquinii represented an inferior "other," these examples set up Romans against actual Etruscan diviners. Dionysius' examples demonstrate both the criminal craftiness of the Etruscan *haruspex* attempting to interpret falsely the

omen of the discovery of the head on the Capitoline, and the Roman power to alter mechanically the circumstances necessary to force the prophecy to completion.

Cornell and Bloch represent just two of the many contrasting views concerning the extent of Etruscan influence on early Rome. An exploration of the scholarship reveals that there is a controversy over Rome's debt to the Etruscans arising from various legitimate interpretations of the historical and material sources. The specifics of the arguments are less important than the demonstration that, although these two scholars contradict one another, in both cases there is ample support for and against each author's claims from the literary evidence. There are some things that the textual sources are not ambiguous about, however, and by examining these passages it is possible to see what the texts themselves can reveal about Etruscan influence on early Rome. By looking at these primary sources, a better assessment of Rome's representation of the assimilation of knowledge from neighbors and enemies is revealed, as well as the nature of the debt that Rome owes to Etruria.

#### The List in Diodorus Siculus of Etruscan Influences

The major surviving ancient sources seem to be in agreement on a set of accepted Etruscan influences.<sup>10</sup> Of these sources, Diodorus Siculus gives the most complete list, differing from the others significantly by what appears to be an organization for his catalog. This is not to say, however, that Diodorus' list is

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<sup>10</sup> Please see n. 2 regarding Appendix A.

authoritative, for he leaves out many Etruscan influences that are preserved in other authors. Diodorus' syntactical groupings appear to divide his list of Etruscan borrowings into two main spheres. His catalog includes both insignia and cultural aspects adopted by the Romans and Roman perfection of adopted civic rituals. Diodorus' partition lends credence to both Cornell and Bloch. Cornell reads the list literally, taking the Roman description of Etruscan influences at face value. By contrast, Bloch trusts the Roman portrayal of their appropriation and improvement over Etruscan rituals and practices. Neither scholar, however, critically approaches the reliability of the literary tradition.

Although this particular organization is not explicitly stated by Diodorus himself, his list, perhaps unwittingly, does embody this bipartite separation of Etruscan influence on Rome. Diodorus' list is presented here in its entirety with significant parts in boldface type for emphasis:

It remains for us to speak concerning the Etruscans. For these men, outstanding for bravery in ancient times, gained possession of much land and they founded many and famous cities. Being equally strong in naval power and ruling over the sea for a long time, they caused the sea near Italy to be named Tyrrhenian after themselves, and being powerful on land, they invented what is called the salpinx, most useful against the enemy, and called "Tyrrhenian" after themselves. They also **made honors for their leaders**, placing rod bearers and ivory chairs and purple edged togas around them, and for their houses they discovered peristyle courts, a most useful discovery for dealing with the trouble of attending crowds. **Most of these things the Romans imitated and improved upon, changing them to fit with their own state.** [2] [The Etruscans] brought to greater sophistication letters, science, and the study of the gods, and they exceeded all peoples in improving lightning divination. For this reason, even up to the present time, those who rule over nearly the entire inhabited land marvel at the [Etruscans] and consult them as interpreters for both the signs from heaven and lightning.

Λείπεται δ' ἡμῖν εἰπεῖν περὶ τῶν Τυρρηνῶν. οὗτοι γὰρ τὸ μὲν παλαιὸν ἀνδρεία διενεγκόντες χώραν πολλήν κατεκτήσαντο καὶ πόλεις ἀξιολόγους καὶ πολλὰς ἔστισαν. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ναυτικαῖς δυνάμεσιν ἰσχύσαντες καὶ πολλοὺς χρόνους θαλαττοκρατήσαντες τὸ μὲν παρὰ τὴν Ἰταλίαν πέλαγος ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν ἐποίησαν Τυρρηρικὸν προσαγορευθῆναι, τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὰς ῥεζᾶς δυνάμεις ἐκπονήσαντες τὴν τε σάλπιγγα λεγομένην ἐξεῦρον, εὐχρηστάτην μὲν εἰς τοὺς πολέμους, ἀπ' ἐκείνων δ' ὀνομασθεῖσαν Τυρρηνήν, **τό τε περὶ τοὺς ἡγουμένους ἀξίωμα κατεσκεύασαν**, περιδέντες τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ῥαβδούχους καὶ δίφρον ἐλεφάντινον καὶ περιπόρφυρον τήβενναν, ἔν τε ταῖς οἰκίαις τὰ περίστωα πρὸς τὰς τῶν θεραπευόντων ὄχλων ταραχὰς ἐξεῦρον εὐχρηστίαν· ὧν τὰ πλεῖστα Ῥωμαῖοι **μιμησάμενοι καὶ πρὸς τὸ κάλλιον αὐξήσαντες μετήνεγκαν ἐπὶ τὴν ἰδίαν πολιτείαν**. [2] γράμματα δὲ καὶ φυσιολογίαν καὶ θεολογίαν ἐξεπόνθησαν ἐπὶ πλεόν, καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν κεραυνοσκοπίαν μάλιστα πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἐξείργασαντο· διὸ καὶ μέχρι τῶν νῦν χρόνων οἱ τῆς οἰκουμένης σχεδὸν ὅλης ἡγούμενοι θαυμάζουσί τε τοὺς ἀνδρας καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἐν τοῖς κεραυνοῖς διοσημείας τούτοις ἐξηγηταῖς χρῶνται (Diod. 5.40.1-2).

Diodorus' first section, resembling Cornell's "trappings," contains both military insignia (σάλπιγγς) and political insignia (τό τε περὶ τοὺς ἡγουμένους ἀξίωμα). Immediately following this section, Diodorus maintains that the Romans did not merely imitate the Etruscans (μιμησάμενοι) but improved upon them (αὐξήσαντες), in recording the broader arrangement of Etruscan influences on early Rome. The items on the latter part of this list fall into two major sections, civic rituals (like the *salutatio* ritual that is implied by the mention of the peristyle court, τὸ περίστωον) and cultural aspects (γράμματα, φυσιολογία, θεολογία, and κεραυνοσκοπία), though once again, this organization is not clearly delineated by Diodorus. Diodorus' list provides a model for the classification of Roman borrowings from the Etruscans and the remaining primary sources may then be examined according to their

correlation to the adopted insignia (military, political, and cultural) and to the improvement over Etruscan originals (civic ritual).<sup>11</sup>

Following a description of Etruscan military supremacy, the *σάλπιγξ*, a military trumpet, is the first Etruscan invention listed. Diodorus is not alone in attributing the original use of the *σάλπιγξ* to the Etruscans. Strabo records its adoption from the Etruscans (5.2.2) and Silius Italicus claims that the Etruscans first introduced trumpets in military expeditions: “and this same place discovered how to stir up battles with bronze” (*haec eadem pugnas accendere protulit aere; Pun.* 488). However, nowhere does the literary tradition explicitly credit the Etruscans with developments in military strategy or organization; the *σάλπιγξ* is merely a symbol.

Diodorus gives a more detailed account of the political insignia that Rome adopted from the Etruscans: *ῥαβδούχοι*, *δίφρος ἐλεφάντινος*, and *περιπόρφυρος τήβεννα* (lictors, the *sella curulis* or ivory chair, and the *toga praetexta* or purple bordered toga). Notably absent from the list are the fasces (bundles of rods and axes carried by the lictors) which Silius Italicus credits originally to the Etruscans: “and [Etruria] first gave twelve fasces to go before / and joined the same number with the silent terror of the axe” (*bissenos haec prima dedit praecedere fasces / et iunxit totidem tacito terrore securis; Pun.* 8.484-85).<sup>12</sup> The lictors are a particularly interesting Etruscan import. Not only are they originally an Etruscan symbol of

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<sup>11</sup> For the full context of each of the following cited passages, please refer to Appendix B (see n 2 regarding appendices).

<sup>12</sup> Alternatively, *securis* could be an accusative plural modified by *totidem*. The translation would then read “and joined as many axes in silent terror.” In addition to Silius Italicus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (3.61.1) and Strabo (5.2.2) also record an Etruscan origin for the lictor.

power but, according to Livy, the number of lictors accompanying consuls, twelve, is significant in an Etruscan context: “after a common king was created from the twelve peoples, each people gave a lictor apiece” (*ex duodecim populis communiter creato rege singulos singuli populi lictores dederint*; 1.8.3). Taken together with Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ depiction of the surrendering of the Etruscan symbols of power to the Romans, the twelve lictors become a symbol of Roman domination over each of the original twelve Etruscan communities and by extension all of northern Italy.

Both the *sella curulis* (δίφορος ἐλεφάντινος), the chair on which the higher Roman magistrates sat, and the *toga praetexta* (περιπόρφυρος τήβεννα), the official garment worn by members of the Roman senate, were important symbols of Roman power.<sup>13</sup> However, the *toga praetexta* was arguably one of the most significant Roman symbols. Non-citizens were barred from wearing any toga, and only patrician families and citizens that had held public office were permitted to wear the *toga praetexta*. Although of Etruscan origin, the *toga praetexta* was truly the premiere symbol of Roman political honor.

Also absent from Diodorus’ list, although still arguably examples of political insignia, are the symbols of the Roman triumph. Perhaps on account of the significance of the triumph to military honors, the primary sources unwaveringly present the triumph as a Roman ceremony that merely utilizes Etruscan symbols. Nowhere in the tradition is the triumph given an Etruscan origin. Strabo reports that

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<sup>13</sup> Both the *sella curulis* and the *toga praetexta* are attributed to the Etruscans by Livy (1.8.3), Silius Italicus (8.486-487) and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (3.61.1). Pliny the Elder describes the origins of the *toga praetexta* as well (*N.H.* 8.295; 9.136).



the Romans imported “the ornament of the triumph” (*θριαμβικὸς κόσμος*; 5.2.2) from Etruria and Appian claims that the dancers in the triumph were “an imitation of an Etruscan procession” (*μίμημα Τυρρηνικῆς πομπῆς*; 8.66). It is interesting that in such an important military ceremony the Romans would admit any influence from a foreign nation, especially since the triumph was the highest honor a Roman commander could receive.

The peristyle court, *τὸ περίστυον*, implies an important connection with the Roman practice of *salutatio* and the entire Roman political system relies on the patron-client system that the *salutatio* facilitates. According to Diodorus, the peristyle court was a discovery most useful for dealing with crowds: *πρὸς τὰς τῶν θεραπευόντων ὄλγων ταραχὰς ... εὐχρηστίαν*. Since the Roman elite were visited by large numbers of their clients, Diodorus’ remark concerning the utility of physical arrangement implies that the Etruscans also participated in a *salutatio*, or at least that their houses were equipped to deal with one.

The Etruscans appear to have been the originators of other important parts of Roman civic life as well, although Diodorus does not mention them in his list. Varro records that the names of the original tribes were all Etruscan words: “but all these words are Etruscan” (*sed omnia haec vocabula Tusca*; Varro *Ling.* 5.55). Also, even more important to Romans is the *pomerium*, the sacred boundary of the city. Both Livy (1.44.3-4) and Varro (*Ling.* 5.143) state that the *pomerium* has its origin in Etruria. Moreover, the *pomerium* is part of an even larger Roman tradition that extends throughout time and space. The *pomerium* is used in the founding of Rome

itself and for colonies from the early Republic down to the founding of the last Roman colony in history. The use of the *pomerium* is geographically widespread as well, because the Romans plowed one for every colony from Italy to the farthest reaches of the empire.

Also pertaining to civic rituals are horse races and the theater, which the Roman borrowing of Etruscan *histriones*, or actors implies. Horseracing, which is an important part of Roman civic games, is credited to the Etruscans by Livy (1.35.8-9). Livy (7.2.4-7), Tacitus (*Ann.* 14.21), and Plutarch (*QR* 107) all record that the *histriones* were brought from Etruria during a plague in order to perform dances that would appease the gods. Both of these activities become an integral part of Roman civic religion by the Late Republic, in addition to their function as entertainment. Horseracing was an important part of the October sacrifices to Mars and plays were put on as part of several festivals.

The remainder of Diodorus' list is a general account of Etruscan influences on Roman culture: *γράμματα*, *φυσιολογία*, *θεολογία*, and *κεραυνοσκοπία* (letters, science, theology, and lightning divination). Letters, *γράμματα*, is probably a reference to writing and the alphabet while science, *φυσιολογία*, probably involves the way that the Romans examine their physical world. By contrast, exactly what Diodorus means by *θεολογία* is unclear. For lightning divination, the Romans are said to have inherited it from the Etruscans, who "exceeded all peoples in improving lightning divination" (*καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν κεραυνοσκοπίαν μάλιστα πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἐξείργασαντο*). Of all of the cultural aspects mentioned, lightning

divination is the most significant because of its relationship to the *haruspices*, who are the interpreters of lightning omens. The Etruscan origin of both lightning divination and the *haruspices* was certainly not disputed in antiquity, as demonstrated by Cicero as well as Dionysius (2.22.3).<sup>14</sup>

### Modern and Non-Roman Categories

The list presented by the ancient sources is not complete; it remains silent concerning many aspects of Roman culture that modern scholars, using linguistic analysis and archaeological discoveries, have now identified as Etruscan influences. A number of Etruscan loan words are present in the Latin language. Some of these loanwords, as discussed below, imply a connection that is deeper than surface similarity between the Etruscan ritual or concept and the Roman adoption of the Etruscan word. These loan words can be divided into several categories such as words used to express identity, military tools, and leisure activities. In addition to Etruscan loanwords, linguistic evidence has identified other Etruscan derivations. Archeological excavations in Etruria have found confirmation for many technical advances in architecture and urban planning predating Roman use, like sewers, temples, and arches, as well as links between religious concepts such as the Roman practices involving ancestor worship. Combined, archaeological and linguistic

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<sup>14</sup> Strabo also lists divination, though not specifically lightning divination, as an Etruscan borrowing, in addition to prophecy in a more general sense (5.2.2). Dionysius records the Etruscan origins of lightning divination (9.6.4).

evidence has linked gladiatorial competitions and Roman houses with Etruscan precedents.

### Etruscan Loanwords

The Latin words *mundus* “world” and *populus* “people” come originally from Etruscan (Baldi, 166). *Mundus* defines a basic Roman concept, though this is not to say that the Roman concept of the universe was originally Etruscan. It could, however, be possible that the borrowing of a word is evidence for the borrowing of a concept. Similarly, *populus* is an important word for Roman politics because the Roman state is primarily divided into two categories, the senate (*senatus*) and the Roman people (*populus Romanus*). Though the implication here is not necessarily that the Roman people as a political body identified themselves as Etruscan, one key constituent of that identity could have originated from an Etruscan concept. Margaret Watmough addresses the implications of an Etruscan origin for *populus* in *Studies in the Etruscan Loanwords in Latin*, discussing the controversy over the original meaning of *populus*. She states that originally *populus* may have meant “army” and she cites a possible relation to the Umbrian word *poplo* (which does mean “army” rather than “people”) as evidence for the argument that “army” was the original meaning. She adds, however, that verbs like *depopulare* “ravage” or “lay waste to” (literally “take the *populus* away”), form the basis of the argument that the original meaning of *populus* was people. Watmough herself is more convinced by “army” as an original meaning (69-71). Whatever its initial meaning, the significance of the

origin of the word *populus* is that, although Etruscan, as a Latin word it defines an integral part of Roman identity.

Military terms do make up a category of Etruscan loanwords (supporting Watmough's claim for army as an original meaning of *populus*). Words such as *balteus* "sword belt," *clipeus* "shield," *pluteus* "moveable screen used for siege warfare," *antenna* "yardarm," *caduceus* "staff carried by heralds as a token of peace," and *malleus* "hammer" are all words with military connotations that come from Etruscan (Bonfante, 99). Diodorus credits the Etruscans with inventing the military trumpet (*σάλπιγξ*, 5.40.1) although, as discussed previously, the ancient sources do not credit the Etruscans with influencing Roman military tactics. The abundance of military words imported from Etruria seems to imply a deeper connection between the Roman army and the Etruscans, but considering that the sources are silent and there is no other direct evidence either way, no concrete conclusions can be drawn.<sup>15</sup>

Another word that is loosely associated with the Roman military is *subulo* "flute player." One major role of the flute player outside of the stage was on the battlefield (Bonfante, 99). In the context of the stage, however, *subulo* can be associated with *histrion*, whose Etruscan origin Livy, Tacitus, and Plutarch all report.

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<sup>15</sup> In addition, *culleus*, "leather sack," which Bonfante links with military expeditions is another Etruscan loanword (99). Perhaps more interesting than its military context, the *culleus* was the standard implement used to drown parricides. Men found guilty of parricide were sewn up in the *culleus* and drowned. The implication of an Etruscan origin for the Roman punishment of parricides is interesting because parricides, like prodigies, were contrary to the natural order of the universe. However, according to the OLD, the *culleus* was also used as a unit of measurement for wine (roughly 120 gallons). The implementation of the *culleus* in the punishment of parricides may be more directly related to its size rather than its Etruscan origin.

The pattern of stage related words does not end there. The Latin *persona* “mask” comes from the Etruscan *persu* (Watmough, 53; 65-67). The presence of Etruscan loanwords for the Roman theater strongly implies that there was some connection between the early Roman stage and Etruscan participants. Livy’s account of the introduction of the *histrion* describes how a plague had killed off all the Roman poets and other similar entertainers so an actor had to be brought in from Etruria to appease the gods (7.2). From Livy it is clear that entertainers were already present at this time in Rome and were not viewed as originally Etruscan, but that actors had not been seen previously in Rome. The number of loanwords does suggest that Roman theatrical entertainment had an Etruscan origin, but Livy’s telling of the introduction of the *histriones* implies exactly the opposite, that some sort of theater did previously exist in Rome. If Livy is to be taken at face value, the importation of the *histriones* reveals that only a refinement of theatrical art came from Etruria.

Linguistic evidence has also shed light on other Etruscan borrowings. Gary Forsythe demonstrates that the Roman worship of Hercules and the Roman festival of the Lupercalia may have Etruscan roots. In the case of Hercules, the spelling of the god’s name implies that although he was originally Greek, he came to Rome via the Etruscans. The Greek spelling is *Herakles* and, according to Forsythe, if the Romans had imported him directly from the Greeks, it is likely that they would have retained the original Greek spelling as in the case of the god Apollo. Forsythe points out that when the Oscan adopted the god directly from the Greeks, they called him *Herekleis*. By contrast, when the god was adopted by the Etruscans, they dropped the second

vowel, changing it to *Herkles*. This produced a consonant cluster that would have to be broken up in Latin by inserting a u, resulting in the Latin *Hercules* (Forsythe, 119).

Furthermore, argues Forsythe, the Lupercalia, an important Roman fertility festival, is either derived from the Latin word for wolf, *lupus*, or the Etruscan *lupuce* “he died”. An indication that the Etruscans associated wolves with death is the depiction of the Etruscan god of the dead in the Tomb of Orcus at Tarquinii, who wears a wolf skin complete with a wolf head (133-135). Considering that fertility is often connected to the gods of the underworld (consider the Persephone myth and its importance to the beginnings of spring), the possible connection between the Lupercalia and the Etruscan god of the underworld is strong.

#### Archaeological Evidence

Harriet Flower discusses the archaeological evidence for an Etruscan form of ancestor worship that predates the Roman version. Archaeologists have discovered statues thought to represent ancestors in the Etruscan Tomba delle Statue near Ceri. The statues found in the entry room of the tomb imitate statues that could have been in the entryways of Etruscan houses, although the examples of statues from Etruscan houses are no longer extant. As Flower points out, the tombs of Etruscans frequently incorporated some aspects of domestic dwellings, so the presence of the statues in the tomb could easily be an imitation of a practice common in Etruscan houses. The practices implied by the statues are similar to the Roman practices of ancestor worship (343-345).

Archaeology also provides support for an Etruscan influence on many elements of Roman architecture. S. Judson and A. Kahane discuss Etruscan drainage systems that were built before the Romans constructed sewers, such as the *cloaca maxima*, to drain the forum (74-94). Fred Kleiner credits the first use of arches in Italy to the Etruscans (12) and believes that city planning for Roman colonies was influenced by the rigid grids of Etruscan settlements such as Marzabotto (18). He also discusses the influence that Etruscan religious architecture had on early Roman temples, such as the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline (2). Etruscan architecture and urban technology clearly had an impact on the early development of Rome, even if Etruscan influence does not necessarily imply an Etruscan domination. Certainly Etruscan technology was employed by the Romans from an early date.

In addition to public architecture, Harriet Flower presents evidence that Roman houses were modeled on Etruscan precedents. Baldi's identification of *atrium* as an Etruscan loanword supports her claim (Baldi, 166). Houses with an *atrium* and *tablinum* were found at Marzabotto that date to the fourth century, and Etruscan tombs built to replicate Etruscan houses have been excavated that date as early as the seventh century (Flower, 189-190). As previously discussed, Diodorus credits the Etruscans with the invention of the peristyle court (5.40) and implies that the Etruscans practiced some sort of *salutatio* ritual. Archaeological evidence combined with the literary tradition demonstrates that Roman domestic architecture as well as domestic ritual was influenced strongly by the Etruscans.



Alison Futrell argues that there is linguistic, archaeological, and literary evidence to support that gladiators were an Etruscan import. The word *lanista* “manager of a troop of gladiators” is an Etruscan loanword. Depictions of *lanistae* are present throughout Italy, indicating that gladiatorial competitions were widespread. In the Late Republic, Campania, a region heavily influenced by Etruria prior to Roman conquest in the late 4<sup>th</sup> c. BCE, was a major supplier of gladiators. Futrell believes that it would be too much of a coincidence that an Etruscan loanword would be unrelated to the fact that a major source for gladiators was a region so indebted to Etruria. Futrell maintains that there are depictions of gladiators painted on Etruscan tombs and she discusses one example from the Tomb of the Augurs that she finds particularly compelling. A man labeled “Phersu” holds a vicious animal on a leash that is attacking an almost naked man who is holding a club. While gladiatorial combat is more traditionally man against man or man against beast, she maintains that the scene from the Tomb of the Augurs does closely resemble the punishment of prisoners (man feeding man to beast) that took place during Roman gladiatorial competitions. Also, depictions in a group of tomb paintings from the sixth and fifth centuries of what are believed to be *Pyrrhica* (men that are not obviously soldiers participating in dance-like military maneuvers) could also be reclassified as gladiators. These depictions from Etruria predate the Roman practice by about one-hundred years, establishing that Etruscan gladiators existed prior to the Roman ones. The literary evidence concerning the origin of the gladiators comes from Nicolaus of Damascus who claims that gladiatorial games in Rome had been

imported from the Etruscans: “the Romans created spectacles of gladiators ... in festal assemblies and in the theaters, adopting this custom from the Etruscans” (τὰς τῶν μονομάχων θέας ... ἐν πανηγύρεσι καὶ θεάτροις ἐποιοῦντο Ῥωμαῖοι, παρὰ Τυρρηγῶν παραλαβόντες τὸ ἔθος; *Ath.* 4.153-154). Another fragment, attributed to Suetonius, credits Tarquinius Priscus with introducing paired gladiators into Rome, though Futrell questions the historicity of the evidence (14-19).<sup>16</sup> At any rate, Futrell’s argument that Etruscan gladiators predate the Roman practice is particularly compelling.

#### Subterfuge, Camouflage, and Supremacy: How the Romans Cope

The Romans seem to have minimized the importance of Etruscan influences in three specific ways: direct obscuring of a ritual’s Etruscan origin, deemphasizing the Etruscan elements of a ritual to imply that only the trappings came from Etruria, and Roman improvement upon the adopted ritual. Each of these three mechanisms to cope with Etruscan heritage falls under the umbrella term “genesis amnesia.”<sup>17</sup>

While the Romans are content to praise the effectiveness of an Etruscan import, they conveniently create ways around its origin, obscuring that Rome owed anything to Etruria. The Etruscans were just one among many civilizations from which the Romans adopted rituals and customs, but the lengths to which the sources for early

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<sup>16</sup> “Earlier than the Romans, Tarquinius Priscus put on shows of two pairs of gladiators annually for twenty-six years” (*Tarquinius Priscus prior Romanis duo paria gladiatorum edidit quae comparavit per annos XXVI*) (A. Reifferscheid, *C. Suetonii Tranquilli praeter Caesarum libros reliquiae* (Leipzig; B. G. Teubner, 1860), p. 320).

<sup>17</sup> For the borrowing of the phrase “genesis amnesia” see Bourdieu, P. and C. Passeron. *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, p.9.

Rome go in order to minimize Rome's debt to Etruria make that relationship unique. The two civilizations certainly developed in close contact with one another, but by the Republic, Etruscan rituals seem to have gone out of style in Rome's growing empire. In order to maintain superiority over her conquered subjects, Rome obfuscated her cultural or technical debt to them. In order to exemplify the three Roman modes for incorporating Etruscan influence, I will examine three examples of the Roman treatment of her Etruscan heritage: the Etruscan loanword *satelles*, the Roman triumph, and the *haruspices*.

The Latin word *satelles* ("king's attendant") is originally Etruscan and has interesting connections with the Latin word *lictor*. *Satelles* comes from the Etruscan *zatlaθ* ("axe carrier") (*zat* being an axe and *laθ* being an agent noun suffix). Similarly, the Roman *lictor*'s function was to carry the fasces (rods and axes). *Lictor* comes from the Latin *ligo* ("bind") and is definitely Indo-European in origin. The Romans, separating themselves from foreigners, used the word *satellites* to describe those people in foreign cultures that carried out the duties analogous to that of the Roman *lictor*. In classical Latin, the term *satelles* had negative connotations and was used to describe the attendants of a tyrant or someone aspiring to be a tyrant (Watmough, 103-133). *Satellites* become, by the Republic, the attendants of the "other" and are to be contrasted with the attendants of legitimate Roman power holders.

By not applying the Etruscan loanword when they adopted the office, the Romans seem to be obscuring the Etruscan origin of the office of *lictor*. Dionysius of

Halicarnassus reports that the lictors, *ῥαβδούξοι*, were symbolically handed over to the Romans by the Etruscans when Etruria surrendered to Rome (3.61). The Romans could have adopted the office and the word *satelles*, but renamed the legitimate attendants of the office holders (i.e., Roman attendants) with an obviously Latin name in order to contrast them with the illegitimate Etruscan precedents. While there is no direct evidence to prove that the Roman concept of the lictor is an Etruscan import, the presence of the Etruscan loanword *satelles* together with the similarities between the positions of lictor and *satelles* is hard to ignore.

As previously discussed, the ceremonial trappings of the Roman triumph are attributed by ancient authors to the Etruscans (Strabo 5.2.2; App. *Lib.* 8.66). Linguistic evidence, as presented by Larissa Bonfante, clearly demonstrates an Etruscan origin for the Latin word *triumphus*. Bonfante argues that *triumphus* comes from the Greek *θρίαμβος* via the Etruscan *triumpe* for two reasons. First, the Greek *β* does not transfer into Latin as a p, but she argues that the Greek *β* does become p when Greek words are imported into Etruscan, so if *triumphus* had been imported directly from *θρίαμβος*, the Latin word would have been *\*triambos*. Second, the Greek *α* has been attested to change to a u in Etruscan, but no such change seems to be attested from Greek to Latin (Bonfante, 94-95).<sup>18</sup> Versnel's *Triumphus* attributes the entire ritual of the triumph to the Etruscans, based on the same linguistic evidence and on his observations of Etruscan influence in other Roman ceremonies (284-300).

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<sup>18</sup> In addition, it might be worth pointing out that *triumphus*, because of the aspirated "ph," cannot be a native Latin word.

Mary Beard in *The Roman Triumph*, however, does not agree. She has found that the idea of a wholesale importation of the Roman triumph from Etruria must be tempered based on insufficient evidence, although she does not directly disprove Versnel's theory (306-318).

The origin of the triumph Etruria is doubtful, though it is a striking possibility. Whether or not the triumph was truly an Etruscan import might never be proven beyond any reasonable doubt as there is a lack of concrete evidence. What is more interesting, and attested in primary sources, is the trivialization of the Etruscan involvement in the development of the triumph. The only mention in ancient literature of the origin of the triumph as a ritual is Varro,

thus it is called "to triumph", because the soldiers, returning with their commander, cried "Io triumphe" to him as he went through the city onto the Capitoline; it is possible that this is said from *Ἰοίαμβός* [used] as an epithet of the Greeks for Liber.

*sic triumphare appellatum, quod cum imperatore milites redeuntes clamitant per Urbem in Capitolium eunti "Io triumphe"; id a thriamboi ac Graeco Liberi cognomento potest dictum (Ling. 6.68).*

Varro's etymology is not technically incorrect, as Bonfante has demonstrated. Moreover, Versnel demonstrates that there are no examples of a Greek ritual that resembles the Roman triumph and the Dionysian procession in Greece was not called a *Ἰοίαμβος* (26). Since no other origin is given by ancient sources for the triumph, it cannot be concluded that its origin was not Etruscan. The controversy surrounding the origin of the triumph today, I believe, is a direct result of the Roman desire to remove the rite from its Etruscan heritage by claiming that only the superficial symbols of the triumph can be attributed to the Etruscans. In order to make legitimate

as a Roman ceremony that which was once Etruscan, the Romans obscured the Etruscan roots and credited them with only introducing ceremonial trappings. Thus, the triumph could then be claimed as a Roman ritual.<sup>19</sup>

Perfection of the haruspical art brings this study on Etruscan influences in early Rome full circle and emphatically underscores the extent to which the Romans depended upon earlier Etruscan achievements. Bruce MacBain, in *Prodigy and Expiation: A Study in Religion and Politics in Republican Rome*, argues that the earliest function of the *haruspices* was to interpret lightning strikes. Furthermore, the first prodigy for which the senate consulted them was a lightning strike, and they were the traditional resource for the Roman senate whenever lightning omens occurred. MacBain points out several examples in the literary tradition where the *haruspices* were even believed to be able to control lightning (50-52).<sup>20</sup> If we recall Diodorus Siculus 5.40, “[The Etruscans] exceeded all peoples in improving lightning divination” (καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν κεραυνοσκοπίαν μάλιστα πάντων ἀνθρώπων

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<sup>19</sup> Similarly, *curulis*, from *sella curulis*, is an Etruscan loanword (etymology from the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*). While there is no direct evidence linking the curule magistracies with Etruria, the linguistic link suggests that the connection might have been obscured by Roman authors in an attempt to legitimize the false Roman origins of these magistracies.

<sup>20</sup> Pliny reports many instances where lightning was called down from the sky: “there exists in the record of the annals that by certain rites and prayers lightning is gathered or controlled. The old story from Etruria is that the Volsinians invoked lightning after its fields were destroyed by a monster arriving at the city, which they called Oltam, and that an attack was called down by king Porsina. Also L. Piso, a respected author, reports in the beginning of his own annals that before Porsina, Numa often had accomplished this deed and that Tullius Hostilius in a faulty imitation of the rite was struck with lightning. In addition, we have groves, altars, and sacred rites and we accept that among the various titles of Juppiter, Stator, Tonans, and Feretrius, there is also Elicius” (*Exstat annalium memoria sacris quibusdam et preceationibus vel cogi fulmina vel impetrari. vetus fama Etruriae est, impetratum Volsinios urbem depopulatis agris subeunte monstro, quod vocavere Oltam, evocatum a Porsina suo rege. et ante eum a Numa saepius hoc factitatum in primo annalium suorum tradit L. Piso, gravis auctor, quod imitatum parum rite Tullum Hostilium ictum fulmine. lucosque et aras et sacra habemus interque Statores ac Tonantes et Feretrius Elicium quoque accepimus Iovem; N.H. 2.140*).

ἐξειργάσαντο), it is clear that the Romans chose to adopt the haruspical art of lightning divination only after it was perfected by the Etruscans. Hence, the only area for which the literary tradition is in agreement concerning Roman indebtedness to Etruria involves a priesthood that the Roman government took special care to mark as foreign. With their distinct clothing and consultation of obscure texts composed in the Etruscan language, the *haruspices* were clearly outsiders not only in their cultural practices, but in their visible presence.<sup>21</sup> Also, lightning divination was the sole skill that the Romans could not somehow claim to have improved. Instead, the Romans emphasize that they had enough wisdom to recognize the unique abilities of the *haruspices* and incorporate them for the good of Rome.<sup>22</sup>

While it is clear that the *haruspices* were originally Etruscan, when they first came to Rome is up for debate. The literary tradition preserves that the *haruspices* were present in Rome as early as the Tarquins, but MacBain argues that the annalistic tradition is probably erroneous because there was constant hostility between Rome and the Etruscans which was not resolved until some time between 280 and 270 BCE. He states: “it is impossible to believe that [Rome] allowed the Etruscan enemy access to the political and religious machinery of the State” (46). However, the annalistic tradition preserves an early contact with the *haruspices* and an early reliance on their priestly expertise. In the episode about the Sibylline books, it is the *haruspices* that

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<sup>21</sup> I assume that the body of *haruspices* in Rome would have dressed much like their Etruscan counterparts; for the Etruscan evidence, see N. de Grummond, "Prophets and Priests," pp. 35-38.

<sup>22</sup> See discussion of Cicero *Har.* 18 above.

realize the magnitude of Tarquin's mistake and advise him to purchase the books (Dion. Hal. 4.62).

Even if the *haruspices* were not an officially distinct body in Rome until the late third century, their importance to the Roman state is undeniable. The controversy over the date of their introduction to Rome illustrates the effort that is undertaken in the annalistic tradition in order to obscure their origins. Even though their Etruscan prowess is downplayed by the Romans, in some ways their "otherness" was emphasized. Of all the Roman priestly bodies, the *haruspices* are the only ones not to have a collegiate organization, marking their foreign status quite clearly. At the same time, *haruspex* is a Proto-Indo-European word. The Etruscan word for *haruspex*, *netśvis*, was not adopted along with the priesthood, deemphasizing its Etruscan origins. Conversely, their non-Roman status was further accentuated, adds MacBain, because as foreigners, the *haruspices* would not have been allowed to conduct sacrifices within the city limits (65). However, according to Beard, North, and Price *Religions of Rome*, it would have been exactly this foreignness that gave this particular priesthood such religious power and authority (1: 19-20).

The *haruspices* truly led a liminal existence in Rome. Since Rome had adopted them as a priestly body, they were no longer completely Etruscan, even though they were part of Rome's Etruscan heritage. At the same time, they were also not Roman since they could not perform sacrifices in Rome and they did not have a collegiate organization. In the Late Republic, the *haruspices* exemplified the boundary between the Etruscans and the Romans, a boundary that the literary



tradition shows to be a cause of serious unease for the Romans. Episodes in the annalistic tradition support Bloch's conclusions that there is an emphasis on the Roman improvement over Etruscan *haruspices* and there are at least three examples. Tarquin's purchase of the Sibylline Books (Dion. Hal. 4.62) displays the extent to which the Romans mastered haruspical prowess. The discovery of the head on the Capitoline (Dion. Hal. 4.59-61) demonstrates the deceitful nature of the Etruscan *haruspex* as well as the innocence of the nearly deceived Roman. The draining of the Alban Lake (Dion. Hal. 12.10-11) shows how the Romans are able to overcome the prophecies of Etruscan *haruspices*. By examining these episodes, it becomes clear that the Romans actively attempted to alter the way in which their Etruscan heritage was represented.

The *haruspices* make up a necessary element in the Late Republic, but they remained foreign and therefore under suspicion. While recommendation for the expiation of portents fell under their purview, they, like all other priestly bodies, were subordinate to the Roman senate, which was responsible for the actual expiation after approving a course of action that had been recommended by the *haruspices*. In this way, the foreign *haruspices* would always be inferior to the Roman senate. True Romans are always superior to Etruscans. The treatment of the *haruspices* in the primary sources makes clear the strategies that the Romans employed to deal with their Etruscan heritage.

The inconsistency and in some cases ambiguity of the sources is intentional on the part of the Romans, and the obscurity this inconsistency creates for modern scholars demonstrates its effectiveness. Out of such a complex tradition of primary sources, Cornell and Bloch are both able to find support for their claims. Exploring the literary tradition results in what seems to be, at least at first glance, a haphazard list of the debts that Rome owed to Etruria. The primary sources, however, are not to be taken at face value.

Analyzing broad trends in the literary tradition shows that the Romans tend to divide the influences they credit to the Etruscans into two areas. The first area is comprised mostly of superficial symbolism. Military, political, and civic insignia are credited to the Etruscans, as if by utilizing these symbols, the Romans demonstrate their dominance over a conquered civilization, as in the case of the Roman triumph. The second area consists of a Roman portrayal of their Etruscan heritage as though they improved somehow on the less-developed, foreign element. The Roman portrayal of Etruscan *haruspices* demonstrates this tendency. Finally, some Etruscan influences are left entirely out of the historical record, while certain other things, as exemplified by the Etruscan loanword *satelles* and its relationship to Roman lictors, are eradicated from Roman collective memory.

Does the Roman treatment of her Etruscan heritage indicate a discomfort or a specific anxiety about the Etruscans? Can it be inferred that the Romans perceived the Etruscans as barbarians because of the effort undertaken to disguise Etruria's role in the development of early Rome? These are questions that cannot be answered,

especially since the extent of Etruscan influence is still not entirely comprehended by modern scholars. Rome's debt to Etruria is significant, but not central, because it only constitutes part of the complexity of Roman society. The Romans claim that the Etruscans provide lictors but not magistrates, actors but not theater, curule seats but not curule magistracies. Just like Cicero's description of the inclusion of the *haruspices* in Roman religion as evidence of the piety of his ancestors, Etruscan influence is both apparent and yet concealed.

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## Appendix A: Roman Borrowings from the Etruscans

### **Military:**

#### War trumpet

- Diod. 5.40 *σάλπιγξ*
- Strabo 5.2.2 *σάλπιγξ*
- Sil. *Pun.* 8.483-488 *haec eadem pugnas accendere protulit aere*

### **Political Insignia:**

#### Lictors

- Diod. 5.40 *περιθέντες τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ῥαβδούχους*

#### 12 Lictors

- Livy 1.8.3 *ex duodecim populis communiter creato rege singulos singuli populi lictores dederint.*
- Dion. Hal. 3.61 *τοὺς δώδεκα πελέκεις ... ῥαβδοφόρον*

#### Fasces

- Sil. *Pun.* 8.483-488 *fasces et iunxit...securis*
- Dion. Hal. 3.61 *τοὺς δώδεκα πελέκεις*
- Strabo 5.2.2 *ῥάβδοι καὶ πελέκεις*

#### Purple Toga

- Livy 1.8.3 *toga praetexta*
- Diod. 5.40 *περιπόρφυρον τήβενναν*
- Pliny 8.195; 9.136 *Praetextae; toga praetexta*
- Sil. *Pun.* 8.483-488 *vestem praetexuit ostro*
- Dion. Hal. 3.61 *περιβόλαιον πορφυροῦν ποικίλον*

#### Curule chair

- Livy 1.8.3 *sella curulis*
- Diod. 5.40 *δίφρον ἐλεφάντινον*
- Sil. *Pun.* 8.483-488 *eboris curulis*
- Dion. Hal. 3.61 *θρόνον ἐλεφάντινον*

#### Triumphs

- Strabo 5.2.2 *θριαμβικὸς κόσμος*
- App. *Lib.* 8.66

1) Diod. 5.40.1

τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὰς ῥεζᾶς δυνάμεις ἐκπονήσαντες τὴν τε σάλπιγγα λεγομένην ἔξευρον, εὐχρηστάτην μὲν εἰς τοὺς πολέμους, ἀπ' ἐκείνων δ' ὀνομασθεῖσαν Τυρρηνήν, τό τε περὶ τοὺς ἡγουμένους ἀξίωμα κατεσκεύασαν, περιθέντες τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ῥαβδούχους καὶ δίφρον ἑλεφάντινον καὶ περιπόρφυρον τήβενναν.

2) Strabo 5.2.2

Λέγεται δὲ καὶ ὁ θριαμβικὸς κόσμος καὶ ὑπατικὸς καὶ ἀπλῶς ὁ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἐκ Ταρκυνίων δεῦρο μετενεχθῆναι καὶ ῥάβδοι καὶ πελέκει καὶ σάλπιγγες.

3) Livy 1.8.3

*me haud paenitet eorum sententiae esse quibus et apparitores hoc genus ab Etruscis finitimis, unde sella curulis, unde toga praetexta sumpta est, et numerum quoque ipsum ductum placet, et ita habuisse Etruscos quod ex duodecim populis communiter creato rege singulos singuli populi lictores dederint.*

4) Sil. Pun. 8.483-488

*Maeoniaeque decus quondam Vetulonia gentis.*

*bissenos haec prima dedit praecedere fasces*

*et iunxit totidem tacito terrore securis. 485*

*haec altas eboris decoravit honore curulis*

*et princeps Tyrio uestem praetexuit ostro.*

*haec eadem pugnas accendere protulit aere.*

5) Dion. Hal. 3.61.1

ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ σύμβολα τῆς ἡγεμονίας, οἷς ἐκόσμου αὐτοὶ τοὺς σφετέρους βασιλεῖς...χιτῶνά τε πορφυροῦν χρυσοσημον καὶ περιβόλαιον πορφυροῦν ποικίλον...τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα τῶν ἀμφισμαμάτων Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν τόγας, Ἕλληνες δὲ τηβέννας καλοῦσιν

6) 3.61.2

ὡς δὲ τινες ἱστοροῦσι, καὶ τοὺς δώδεκα πελέκει ἐκόμισαν αὐτῶ λαβόντες ἐξ ἐκάστης πόλεως ἓνα. Τυρρηρικὸν γὰρ εἶναι ἔθος δοκεῖ ἐκάστου τῶν κατὰ πόλιν βασιλέων ἓνα προηγείσθαι ῥαβδοφόρον ἅμα τῇ δέσμῃ τῶν ῥάβδων πέλεκυν φέροντα.

7) Pliny N.H. 8.195

*Praetextae apud Etruscos originem invenere. Trabeis usos accipio reges; pictae vestes iam apud Homerum sunt iis, et inde triumphales natae.*

8) N.H. 9.136

*Purpurae usum Romae semper fuisse video, sed Romulo in trabea; nam toga praetexta et latiore clavo Tullum Hostilium e regibus primum usum Etruscis devictis satis constat.*

9) App. Lib. 8.66

αὐτοῦ δ' ἡγοῦνται τοῦ στρατηγοῦ ῥαβδοῦχοι φοινικοῦς χιτῶνας ἐνδεδυκότες, καὶ χορὸς κιθαριστῶν τε καὶ τιτυριστῶν, ἐς μίμημα Τυρρηρικῆς πομπῆς, περιεζωσμένοι τε καὶ στεφάνην χρυσὴν ἐπικείμενοι· ἴσα τε βαίνουσιν ἐν τάξει μετὰ ὠδῆς καὶ μετ' ὀρχήσεως.

## **Civic Ritual:**

### Pomerium

- Livy 1.44.3-4
- Varro *Ling.* 5.143

### Histriones

- Livy 7.2.4-7 *nomen histrionibus inditum*
- Tac. *Ann.* 14.21
- Plut. *QR* 107 καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πάντας “ἰστρίωνας” ἀπ’ ἐκείνου προσαγορεύεσθαι

### Peristyle Court

- Diod. 5.40

### Tribe Names

- Varro *Ling.* 5.55

10) Livy 1.44.3-4

*locus quem in condendis urbibus quondam Etrusci qua murum ducturi erant certis circa terminis inaugurato consecrabant, ut neque interiore parte aedificia moenibus continuarentur, quae nunc volgo etiam coniungunt, et extrinsecus puri aliquid ab humano cultu pateret soli.*

11) Varro Ling. 5.143

*Oppida condebant in Latio Etrusco ritu multi, id est iunctis bobus, tauro et vacca interiore, aratro circumagebant sulcum (hoc faciebant religionis causa die auspicato), ut fossa et muro essent muniti. Terram unde exculpserant, fossam vocabant et introrsum iactam murum. Post ea qui fiebat orbis, urbis principium; qui quod erat post murum, postmoerium dictum, eo usque auspicia urbana finiuntur.*

12) Livy 7.2

*Sine carmine ullo, sine imitandorum carminum actu ludiones ex Etruria acciti, ad tibicinis modos saltantes, haud indecoros motus more Tusco dabant. Imitari deinde eos iuventus, simul inconditis inter se iocularia fundentes uersibus, coepere; nec absoni a uoce motus erant. Accepta itaque res saepiusque usurpando excitata. Vernaculis artificibus, quia ister Tusco uerbo ludio uocabatur, nomen histrionibus inditum.*

13) Tacitus 14.21

*eoque a Tuscis accitos histriones*

14) Plut. QR 107

*ἢ δι' ἣν αἰτίαν Κλούβιος Ροῦφος ἰστόρηκε; φησὶ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πάνυ παλαιοῖς χρόνοις Γαίου τε Σουλπικίου καὶ Λικινίου Στόλωνος ὑπατευόντων, λοιμώδη νόσον ἐν Ῥώμῃ γενομένην πάντας ὁμαλῶς διαφθεῖραι τοὺς ἐπὶ σκηνὴν προερχομένους· δεηθεῖσιν οὖν αὐτοῖς ἐκ Τυρρηνίας ἐλθεῖν πολλοὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς τεχνίτας, ὧν τὸν πρωτεύοντα δόξῃ καὶ χρόνον πλεῖστον ἐνευημεροῦντα τοῖς θεάτροις Ἴστρον ὀνομάζεσθαι· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πάντας “ἰστρίωνας” ἀπ' ἐκείνου προσαγορεύεσθαι.*

15) Diod. 5.40.1

*ἐν τε ταῖς οἰκίαις τὰ περίστωα πρὸς τὰς τῶν θεραπευόντων ὄχλων ταραχὰς ἐξεῦρον εὐχρηστίαν·*

16) Varro Ling. 5.55

*Ager Romanus primum divisus in partis tris, a quo tribus appellata Titiensium, Ramnium, Lucerum. Nominatae, ut ait Ennius, Titienses ab Tatío, Ramnenses ab Romulo, Luceres, ut Iunius, ab Lucumone; sed omnia haec vocabula Tusca, ut Volnius, qui tragoedias Tuscas scripsit, dicebat.*



## **Cultural aspects:**

### Haruspices

- Dion. Hal. 2.22.3 *ὃν ἡμεῖς μὲν ἱεροσκόπον καλοῦμεν*
- Cic. *Har.* 18

### Augury

- Dion. Hal. 3.47.4 *οἰωνοσκοπίας*

### Divination

- Strabo 5.2.2 *ἱεροποιίαι*

### Lightning divination

- Diod. 5.40 *κεραυνοσκοπίαν*
- Dion. Hal. 9.6.4 *αἱ τῶν κεραυνῶν γίνονται βολαὶ*

### Letters (alphabet), science, theology

- Diod. 5.40 *γράμματα δὲ καὶ φυσιολογίαν καὶ θεολογίαν*

### Horseracing

- Livy 1.35.8-9

17) Dion. Hal. 2.22.3

ἔτι πρὸς τούτοις ἔταξε μάντιν ἐξ ἐκάστης φυλῆς ἓνα παρεῖναι τοῖς ἱεροῖς, ὃν ἡμεῖς μὲν ἱεροσκόπον καλοῦμεν, Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ ὀλίγον τι τῆς ἀρχαίας φυλάττοντες ὀνομασίας ἀπούσπικα προσαγορεύουσιν.

18) Cic. Har. 18

*portentorum explanationes Etruscorum disciplina contineri putaverunt*

19) Dion. Hal. 3.47.4

Θαυμαστοῦ δὲ καὶ παραδόξου πᾶσι τοῦ σημείου φανέντος ἡ γυνὴ τοῦ Λοκόμωνος ὄνομα Τανακύλλα ἐμπειρίαν ἱκανὴν ἐκ πατέρων ἔχουσα τῆς Τυρρηνικῆς οἰωνοσκοπίας, λαβοῦσα μόνον αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῶν συνόντων ἠσπάσατό τε καὶ ἀγαθῶν ἐλπίδων ἐπέπλησεν ὡς ἐξ ἰδιωτικῆς τύχης εἰς ἐξουσίαν βασιλικὴν ἐλευσόμενον.

20) Strabo 5.2.2

καὶ ἱεροποιαὶ καὶ μαντικὴ καὶ μουσικὴ, ὅση δημοσίᾳ χρῶνται Ῥωμαῖοι.

21) 5.40.2

γράμματα δὲ καὶ φυσιολογίαν καὶ θεολογίαν ἐξεπόνησαν ἐπὶ πλεόν, καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν κεραυνοσκοπίαν μάλιστα πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἐξεργάσαντο·

22) Dion. Hal. 9.6.4

οἳ τε μάντις ἀκριβέστερον τῶν ἄλλοθί που δοκοῦντες ἐξήτακέναι τὰ μετάρσια, πόθεν τε αἱ τῶν κεραυνῶν γίνονται βολαὶ καὶ τίνες αὐτοὺς ὑποδέχονται μετὰ τὰς πληγὰς ἀπιόντας τόποι, θεῶν τε οἷς ἕκαστοι ἀποδίδονται καὶ τίνων ἀγαθῶν ἢ κακῶν μηνυταί, χωρεῖν ὁμόσε τοῖς πολεμίοις παρήνουν διαιρούμενοι τὸ γενόμενον τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις σημεῖον κατὰ τάδε·

23) Livy 1.35.8-9

*Tum primum circo qui nunc maximus dicitur designatus locus est. Loca divisa patribus equitibusque ubi spectacula sibi quisque facerent; fori appellati; spectavere furcis duodenos ab terra spectacula alta sustinentibus pedes. Ludicrum fuit equi pugilesque ex Etruria maxime acciti. Sollemnes deinde annui mansere ludi, Romani magnique varie appellati.*

## Appendix B: Primary sources for Etruscan Influence on Early Rome

### 1. App. Lib. 8.66

*Καὶ ὁ τρόπος, ᾧ καὶ νῦν ἔτι χρώμενοι διατελοῦσιν, ἐστὶ τοιόσδε. ἐστεφάνωνται μὲν ἅπαντες, ἠγοῦνται δὲ σαλπικταί τε καὶ λαφύρων ἄμαξαι, πύργοι τε παραφέρονται μιμήματα τῶν εἰλημμένων πόλεων, καὶ γραφαὶ καὶ σχήματα τῶν γεγονότων, εἶτα χρυσὸς καὶ ἄργυρος ἀσήμαντός τε καὶ σεσημασμένους καὶ εἴ τι τοιουτότροπον ἄλλο, καὶ στέφανοι ὅσοις τὸν στρατηγὸν ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα ἀναδοῦσιν ἢ πόλεις ἢ σύμμαχοι ἢ τὰ ὑπ' αὐτῶ στρατόπεδα. βόες δ' ἐπὶ τοῖσδε λευκοί, καὶ ἐλέφαντες ἦσαν ἐπὶ τοῖς βουσί, καὶ Καρχηδονίων αὐτῶν καὶ Νομάδων ὅσοι τῶν ἠγεμόνων ἐλήφθησαν. αὐτοῦ δ' ἠγοῦνται τοῦ στρατηγοῦ ῥαβδοῦχοι φοινικοῦς χιτῶνας ἐνδεδυκότες, καὶ χορὸς κιθαριστῶν τε καὶ τιτυριστῶν, ἐς μίμημα Τυρρηνικῆς πομπῆς, περιεζωσμένοι τε καὶ στεφάνην χρυσοῦν ἐπικείμενοι· ἴσα τε βαίνουσιν ἐν τάξει μετὰ ψῆς καὶ μετ' ὀρχήσεως. Λυδοὺς αὐτοὺς καλοῦσιν, ὅτι (οἶμαι) Τυρρηνοὶ Λυδῶν ἄποικοι. τούτων δὲ τις ἐν μέσῳ, πορφύραν ποδήρη περικείμενος καὶ ψέλια καὶ στρεπτὰ ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ, σχηματίζεται ποικίλως ἐς γέλωτα ὡς ἐπορχούμενος τοῖς πολεμίοις. ἐπὶ δ' αὐτῶ θυμιατηρίων πλήθος, καὶ ὁ στρατηγὸς ἐπὶ τοῖς θυμιάμασιν, ἐφ' ἄρματος καταγεγραμμένου ποικίλως, ἔστεπται μὲν ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ καὶ λίθων πολυτίμων, ἔσταλται δ' ἐς τὸν πάτριον τρόπον πορφύραν, ἀστέρων χρυσοῦν ἐνυφασμένων, καὶ σκῆπτρον ἐξ ἐλέφαντος φέρει, καὶ δάφνην, ἣν αἰεὶ Ῥωμαῖοι νομίζουσι νίκης σύμβολον. ἐπιβαίνουσι δ' αὐτῶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἄρμα παῖδες τε καὶ παρθένοι, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν παρηόρων ἑκατέρωθεν ἠῆδοι συγγενεῖς. καὶ παρέπονται ὅσοι παρὰ τὸν πόλεμον ἦσαν αὐτῶ γραμματεῖς τε καὶ ὑπηρέται καὶ ὑπασπισταί. καὶ μετ' ἐκείνους ἢ στρατιὰ κατὰ τε ἴλας καὶ τάξεις, ἐστεφανωμένη πᾶσα καὶ δαφνηφοροῦσα· οἱ δὲ ἀριστεῖς καὶ τὰ ἀριστεῖα ἐπίκεινται. καὶ τῶν ἀρχόντων οὓς μὲν ἐπαινοῦσιν, οὓς δὲ σκώπτουσιν, οὓς δὲ ψέγουσιν· ἀφελῆς γὰρ ὁ θρίαμβος, καὶ ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ λέγειν ὅ τι θέλοιεν. ἀφικόμενος δὲ ἐς τὸ Καπιτώλιον ὁ Σκιπίων τὴν μὲν πομπὴν κατέπαυσεν, εἰστία δὲ τοὺς φίλους, ὡσπερ ἔθος ἐστίν, ἐς τὸ ἱερόν.*

### 2. Dion. Hal. 2.22.3

*ἔτι πρὸς τούτοις ἔταξε μάντιν ἐξ ἐκάστης φυλῆς ἓνα παρεῖναι τοῖς ἱεροῖς, ὃν ἡμεῖς μὲν ἱεροσκόπον καλοῦμεν, Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ ὀλίγον τι τῆς ἀρχαίας φυλάττοντες ὀνομασίας ἀπούσπικα προσαγορεύουσιν.*

### 3. Dion. Hal. 3.47.4

*Θαυμαστοῦ δὲ καὶ παραδόξου πᾶσι τοῦ σημείου φανέντος ἢ γυνὴ τοῦ Λοκόμωνος ὄνομα Τανακύλλα ἐμπειρίαν ἱκανὴν ἐκ πατέρων ἔχουσα τῆς Τυρρηνικῆς οἰωνοσκοπίας, λαβοῦσα μόνον αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῶν συνόντων ἠσπάσατό τε καὶ*

ἀγαθῶν ἐλπίδων ἐνέπλησεν ὡς ἐξ ἰδιωτικῆς τύχης εἰς ἐξουσίαν βασιλικὴν ἐλευσόμενον.

4. Dion. Hal. 3.60

(1) Ταύτας λαβόντες οἱ πρέσβεις τὰς ἀποκρίσεις ᾤχοντο καὶ μετ' ὀλίγας ἡμέρας παρήσαν οὐ λόγους αὐτῷ μόνον φέροντες ψιλούς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ σύμβολα τῆς ἡγεμονίας, οἷς ἐκόσμουσαν αὐτοὶ τοὺς σφετέρους βασιλεῖς, κομίζοντες στέφανόν τε χρύσειον καὶ θρόνον ἐλεφάντινον καὶ σκῆπτρον ἀετὸν ἔχον ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς χιτῶνά τε πορφυροῦν χρυσόσημον καὶ περιβόλαιον πορφυροῦν ποικίλον, οἷα Λυδῶν τε καὶ Περσῶν ἐφόρουσαν οἱ βασιλεῖς πλὴν οὐ τετραγώνον γε τῷ σχήματι, καθάπερ ἐκεῖνα ἦν, ἀλλ' ἡμικύκλιον. τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα τῶν ἀμφιεσμάτων Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν τόγας, Ἕλληνας δὲ τηβέννας καλοῦσιν, οὐκ οἶδ' ὁπόθεν μαθόντες. Ἕλληνικὸν γὰρ οὐ φαίνεται μοι τοῦνομα εἶναι. (2) ὡς δὲ τινες ἰστοροῦσι, καὶ τοὺς δώδεκα πελέκεις ἐκόμισαν αὐτῷ λαβόντες ἐξ ἐκάστης πόλεως ἓνα. Τυρρητικὸν γὰρ εἶναι ἔθος δοκεῖ ἐκάστου τῶν κατὰ πόλιν βασιλέων ἓνα προηγεῖσθαι ῥαβδοφόρον ἅμα τῇ δέσμῃ τῶν ῥάβδων πέλεκυν φέροντα· εἰ δὲ κοινὴ γίνοιτο τῶν δώδεκα πόλεων στρατεία, τοὺς δώδεκα πελέκεις ἐνὶ παραδίδοσθαι τῷ λαβόντι τὴν αὐτοκράτορα ἀρχήν. (3) οὐ μὴν ἅπαντές γε συμφέρονται τοῖς ταῦτα λέγουσιν, ἀλλὰ παλαιότερον ἔτι τῆς Ταρκυνίου δυναστείας πελέκεις δώδεκα πρὸ τῶν βασιλέων φέρεσθαι φασι, καταστήσασθαι δὲ τὸ ἔθος τοῦτο Ῥωμύλον εὐδὺς ἅμα τῷ παραλαβεῖν τὴν ἀρχήν. οὐδὲν δὲ κωλύει τὸ μὲν εὔρημα Τυρρητῶν εἶναι, χρήσασθαι δ' αὐτῷ πρῶτον Ῥωμύλον παρ' ἐκείνων λαβόντα, κομισθῆναι δὲ Ταρκυνίῳ σὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις κόσμοις βασιλικοῖς καὶ τοὺς δώδεκα πελέκεις, ὥσπερ γε καὶ νῦν Ῥωμαῖοι τὰ σκῆπτρα καὶ τὰ διαδήματα δωροῦνται τοῖς βασιλεῦσι βεβαιοῦντες αὐτοῖς τὰς ἐξουσίας, ἐπεὶ καὶ μὴ λαβόντες γε παρ' ἐκείνων ἔχουσιν αὐτά.

5. Dion. Hal. 9.6-7

οἳ τε μάντιες ἀκριβέστερον τῶν ἄλλοθί που δοκοῦντες ἐξητακέναι τὰ μετάρσια, πόθεν τε αἱ τῶν κεραυνῶν γίνονται βολαὶ καὶ τίνες αὐτοὺς ὑποδέχονται μετὰ τὰς πληγὰς ἀπιόντας τόποι, θεῶν τε οἷς ἕκαστοι ἀποδίδονται καὶ τίνων ἀγαθῶν ἢ κακῶν μηνυταί, χωρεῖν ὁμόσε τοῖς πολεμίοις παρήνουν διαιρούμενοι τὸ γενόμενον τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις σημεῖον κατὰ τάδε·

6. Livy 1.8.3

*Rebus divinis rite perpetratis vocataque ad concilium multitudine quae coalescere in populi unius corpus nulla re praeterquam legibus poterat, iura dedit; quae ita sancta generi hominum agresti fore ratus, si se ipse venerabilem insignibus imperii fecisset, cum cetero habitu se augustiorem, tum maxime lictoribus duodecim sumptis fecit. Alii ab numero auium quae augurio regnum portenderant eum secutum numerum putant. me haud paenitet eorum sententiae esse quibus et apparitores hoc genus ab Etruscis*

*finitimis, unde sella curulis, unde toga praetexta sumpta est, et numerum quoque ipsum ductum placet, et ita habuisse Etruscos quod ex duodecim populis communiter creato rege singulos singuli populi lictores dederint.*

7. Livy 1.35.8-9

*Tum primum circo qui nunc maximus dicitur designatus locus est. Loca divisa patribus equitibusque ubi spectacula sibi quisque facerent; fori appellati; spectavere furcis duodenas ab terra spectacula alta sustinentibus pedes. Ludicrum fuit equi pugilesque ex Etruria maxime acciti. Sollemnes deinde annui mansere ludi, Romani magnique varie appellati.*

8. Livy 1.44

*ita pomerium profert. Pomerium verbi vim solam intuentes postmoerium interpretantur esse; est autem magis circamoerium, locus quem in condendis urbibus quondam Etrusci qua murum ducturi erant certis circa terminis inaugurato consecrabant, ut neque interiore parte aedificia moenibus continuarentur, quae nunc volgo etiam coniungunt, et extrinsecus puri aliquid ab humano cultu pateret soli. Hoc spatium quod neque habitari neque arari fas erat, non magis quod post murum esset quam quod murus post id, pomerium Romani appellarunt; et in urbis incremento semper quantum moenia processura erant tantum termini hi consecrati proferebantur.*

9. Livy 7.2

*Et hoc et insequenti anno C. Sulpicio Petico C. Licinio Stolone consulibus pestilentia fuit. Eo nihil dignum memoria actum, nisi quod pacis deum exposcendae causa tertio tum post conditam urbem lectisternium fuit. Et cum uis morbi nec humanis consiliis nec ope diuina leuaretur, uictis superstitione animis ludi quoque scenici, noua res bellicoso populo—nam circi modo spectaculum fuerat—inter alia caelestis irae placamina instituti dicuntur; ceterum parua quoque, ut ferme principia omnia, et ea ipsa peregrina res fuit. Sine carmine ullo, sine imitandorum carminum actu ludiones ex Etruria acciti, ad tibicinis modos saltantes, haud indecoros motus more Tusco dabant. Imitari deinde eos iuuentus, simul inconditis inter se iocularia fundentes uersibus, coepere; nec absoni a uoce motus erant. Accepta itaque res saepiusque usurpando excitata. Vernaculis artificibus, quia ister Tusco uerbo ludio uocabatur, nomen histrionibus inditum.*

10. Pliny N.H. 8.195

*Praetextae apud Etruscos originem inuenere. Trabeis usos accipio reges; pictae vestes iam apud Homerum sunt iis, et inde triumphales natae.*

11. Pliny N.H. 9.136

*Purpurae usum Romae semper fuisse video, sed Romulo in trabea; nam toga praetexta et latiore clauo Tullum Hostilium e regibus primum usum Etruscis devictis satis constat.*

12. Plut. *QR* 107

ἢ δι' ἣν αἰτίαν Κλούβιος Ροῦφος ἰστόρηκε; φησὶ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πάνυ παλαιοῖς χρόνοις Γαίου τε Σουλπικίου καὶ Λικινίου Στόλωνος ὑπατεούντων, λοιμώδη νόσον ἐν Ῥώμῃ γενομένην πάντας ὁμαλῶς διαφθεῖραι τοὺς ἐπὶ σκηνὴν προερχομένους· δεηθεῖσιν οὖν αὐτοῖς ἐκ Τυρρηνίας ἐλθεῖν πολλοὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς τεχνίτας, ὧν τὸν πρωτεύοντα δόξῃ καὶ χρόνον πλεῖστον ἐνευημεροῦντα τοῖς θεάτροις Ἰστρον ὀνομάζεσθαι· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πάντας “ἰστρίωνας” ἀπ' ἐκείνου προσαγορεύεσθαι.

13. Sil. *Pun.* 8.483-487

*Maeoniaeque decus quondam Vetulonia gentis.  
bissenos haec prima dedit praecedere fasces  
et iunxit totidem tacito terrore securis. 485  
haec altas eboris decoravit honore curulis  
et princeps Tyrio uestem praetexuit ostro.  
haec eadem pugnas accendere protulit aere.*

14. Strabo 5.2.2

Λέγεται δὲ καὶ ὁ θριαμβικὸς κόσμος καὶ ὑπατικὸς καὶ ἀπλῶς ὁ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἐκ Ταρκυνίων δεῦρο μετενεχθῆναι καὶ ῥάβδοι καὶ πελέκει καὶ σάλπιγγες καὶ ἱεροποῖαι καὶ μαντική καὶ μουσική, ὅση δημοσία χρῶνται Ῥωμαῖοι.

15. Tacitus *Ann.* 14.21

*maiores quoque non abhorruisse spectaculorum oblectamentis pro fortuna, quae tu[m] erat, eoque a Tuscis accitos histriones.*

16. Varro *Ling.* 5.55

*Oppida condebant in Latio Etrusco ritu multi, id est iunctis bobus, tauro et vacca interiore, aratro circumagebant sulcum (hoc faciebant religionis causa die auspicato), ut fossa et muro essent muniti. Terram unde exculpserant, fossam vocabant et introrsum iactam murum. Post ea qui fiebat orbis, urbis principium; qui quod erat post murum, postmoerium dictum, eo usque auspicia urbana finiuntur. Cippi pomeri stant et circum Ariciam et circum Romam. Quare et oppida quae prius erant circumducta aratro ab orbe et urvo urbes; et, ideo coloniae nostrae omnes in litteris antiquis scribuntur urbes, quod item conditae ut Roma; et ideo coloniae et urbes conduntur, quod intra pomerium ponuntur.*

17. Varro *Ling.* 5.143

*Oppida condebant in Latio Etrusco ritu multi, id est iunctis bobus, tauro et vacca interiore, aratro circumagebant sulcum (hoc faciebant religionis causa die auspicato), ut fossa et muro essent muniti. Terram unde exculpserant, fossam*

*vocabant et introrsum iactam murum. Post ea qui fiebat orbis, urbis principium; qui quod erat post murum, postmoerium dictum, eo usque auspicia urbana finiuntur.*