

The City-States in Latium

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Introduction: spatial and temporal limits

This paper deals with city-states in Old Latium (*Latium Vetus*), the coastal region of Tyrrhenian central Italy bounded to the north-west by the rivers Tiber and Anio and to the east by the Apennines, the Monti Lepini and the Pomptine Marshes (see Fig. 1). These boundaries, however, are to some extent artificial and even potentially misleading in the present context. Although Old Latium represents a culturally unified region inhabited by people who were linguistically distinct (i.e. Latin-speaking), and who formed a self-conscious ethnic group (the *Latini* – “Latins”),¹ its historical development cannot be studied in isolation, and the institutions and culture of its city-states can only be understood in a wider Italian context and with reference to neighbouring societies and cultures. The discussion that follows will therefore be only weakly constrained by its declared geographical boundaries, and I make no apology for frequently trespassing outside the confines of Old Latium and into the territory of the Etruscans, Umbrians, and Campanians, and in particular into the region to the south-east of Old Latium which writers of the imperial period called “Greater Latium” (*Latium adiectum*).

To set temporal boundaries is even more difficult. Written sources (mostly literary accounts of the Augustan age) date the foundation of Rome to the eighth century BC, and assume that cities existed elsewhere in Latium centuries before that. This literary tradition presupposes a world of city-states already at the time of Aeneas; Rome, on this view, was a latecomer – indeed the last of the Latin cities to be founded.² However, most modern scholars (and, one suspects, many ancient writers, including Livy) have regarded this tradition as completely legendary, and that is how it will be regarded here, in spite of recent efforts to rehabilitate it along “fundamentalist” lines.³

On the basis of archaeological evidence (the only secure information we have about archaic Latium), it is possible to set the beginnings of Rome as a city-

state in the second half of the seventh century BC at the latest;⁴ and it is probable, though less certain, that the emergence of other city-states in Latium can be dated around the same time.

A more problematic question is when to set the terminal date at the opposite end of the scale. During the sixth and fifth centuries the city-states of Latium maintained their independence but were organised in a league allied to Rome. But during the fourth century they began to be absorbed, one by one, into the ever-growing Roman state. Tusculum was the first to be incorporated, in 381 BC, and became the first *municipium* – that is, a self-governing community of Roman citizens. Others followed in 338 BC after the so-called Latin War, when the Latin League was dissolved and the majority of the remaining cities were incorporated as *municipia*. A handful retained their independence as Latin cities until the first century BC, but from 338 BC onwards Latin status meant that the city in question had a distinctive relationship with Rome rather than being part of a wider ethnic community.

The Romans also embarked on a programme of colonisation after the Latin War, by which they founded new communities on conquered territory, beginning with Caes in 334, and conferred Latin status on the newly founded colonies, even though they were outside Latium. The colonies became city-states in their own right, with institutions imposed by Rome but almost certainly modelled on those of the old Latin communities. By 200 BC the few remaining independent communities in Latium were only a small minority of the Latin name; the majority of Latins lived in the colonies, which were spread throughout Italy. Finally, after the Social War (91-89 BC), when all free inhabitants of Italy received the Roman citizenship, “Latin” ceased to be an ethno-linguistic term in any sense, and became a purely juridical category.

As far as Rome herself was concerned, her continued expansion after 338 BC led to vast increases in



Fig. 1. Map of Ancient Central Italy, from *CAH*² VII.2.

territory and population, but by replicating the device of the *municipium* she was able to retain many features of her original city-state structure.⁵ The resulting picture is perplexing. On the one hand it is arguable that Rome was still recognisably a city-state even in the late Republic; on the other hand, many of the essential features of a city-state had long since vanished – notably a compact territory with a single urban centre, a militia army drawing on the part-time service of independent peasant proprietors, and a political system based on an assembly of citizens meeting regularly in Rome. Judged by these criteria the city-state idea was already a hopeless anachronism in the third century BC, by which time Rome had surely forfeited any chance of membership of Mogens Hansen’s city-state club.⁶

At the same time, however, the extension of the municipal system and the continuing programme of colonisation gave the city-state idea a new lease of life; as a result the Latin city-state, as it had developed in the period down to around 300 BC, became the model for the later political reorganisation of Italy and the western provinces. The Western Empire came to consist of a patchwork of self-governing cities, classified as *municipia*, *coloniae*, and native provincial communities (*civitates*), that were gradually assimilated to a common pattern or ideal type. In spite of minor variations of detail, the main features of the model can be reconstructed from extensive documentary evidence, and in particular from the colonial and municipal charters that are preserved on bronze inscriptions of the late Republic and early Principate.⁷ These charters all go back to one or more prototypes of the first century BC that were designed to incorporate the communities of Italy into the Roman State after the Social War; and they in their turn contained the accumulated experience of centuries of organising municipal and colonial constitutions in Italy, beginning with the city-states of Latium in the fourth century BC.

There are good reasons for supposing that the municipal charters of the imperial period contain tralatitious elements going back to the earliest period of the Roman conquest of Italy. As an example we may note the sections that preserve traces of the strategic function of the earliest colonies. The otherwise puzzling chapter 103 of the *Lex Coloniae Genetivae*, which sets out the conditions under which the local magistrates are to defend the colony by calling up all able-bodied men under arms, makes little sense in the context of a peaceful Spanish province or indeed of Italy after the Social War; at that time all

free Italians were subject to the Roman levy, and no longer served in independent contingents organised by local communities.⁸ The right of colonies to raise military forces in their own defence is best understood as a relic of their original military function, when they served as fortified outposts in conquered territory.

In this connection Carmine Ampolo has drawn my attention to the chapters concerning construction work: *de munitione*.⁹ At the time of the charters this provision covered public works in general, but it originally referred to the building of the city’s defences by means of *corvées*. The word *munitione* is linked etymologically with *moenia*, “walls”, and *munia*, “*corvées*”. In the fourth and third centuries BC *munitione* would have referred precisely to fortifications built and maintained by the compulsory labour of the colonists.¹⁰ Here too, it seems, the imperial charters preserve elements that date back to the earliest period of Roman colonisation, as practised in the early Republic, when the Romans first began to reproduce the model of the Latin city-state.

If Roman provincial cities were organised according to this very ancient model, it follows that the category of “Latin city-states” can be taken to include all the cities of the Western Empire to the end of Antiquity. It should be noted, incidentally, that these communities undoubtedly fit the definition of a city-state as set out in the prospectus for this conference – that is, a legislative, administrative and judicial unit possessing internal sovereignty over a given territory and its inhabitants. To give a complete account of the cities of the Western Roman Empire is neither within my competence nor strictly part of my brief, which is the city-states in Latium, a rather different matter; my point, however, is that the city-states in Latium provided the model that the Romans artificially reproduced and exported, first to the rest of Italy and then to the provinces. It is therefore legitimate to make inferences about the character of the city states of early Latium from the evidence of later Roman towns; and I have not hesitated to draw upon such evidence, and particularly on the epigraphic charters, where it has seemed safe to do so.

Origins and historical development of city-states in Latium

Latium Vetus (Fig. 2) is a coastal plain intersected by spurs extending from the Apennines towards the sea. These outcrops provided defensible hilltop sites that were occupied by the first human settlements. During the early Iron Age many hill villages were estab-

following (in alphabetical order): Antium, Ardea, Aricia, Circeii, Cora, Crustumerium, Ficulea, Fidenae, Gabii, Labici, Lanuvium, Lavinium, Nomentum, Pedum, Pometia, Praeneste, Tarracina, Tibur, Tusculum, Velitrae.

Under its last king (Tarquinius Superbus) Rome was already by far the largest and most powerful city in Latium, and is said to have established some form of hegemony, a state of affairs reflected in the first Romano-Carthaginian treaty recorded by Polybius (3.22), and dated by him to the first year after the overthrow of the kings (508/7 BC).¹⁹ This situation was rapidly transformed, however, by the turbulent events that engulfed central Italy in the following years. These events can be summarised under two headings:

1. *The Volscian Invasions*. In the years around 500 BC southern Latium was overrun by the Volsci, an Italic people who spoke a language similar to Umbrian and had migrated from the central Apennines. References in literary sources indicate that Cora and Pometia were in their hands by 495 BC (Livy 2.22.2), Antium and Velitrae falling shortly afterwards (Livy 2.23.4). The Volscian presence is indicated by changes in place-names (Tarracina was renamed Anxur) and by archaeological evidence. At Satricum changes in burial practices suggest the arrival of new people at the beginning of the fifth century, a supposition confirmed by the discovery in one of the graves of a Volscian inscription. It has been suggested that Satricum is the Volscian name of Latin Pometia, and that the two places are, in fact, identical.²⁰

2. *The Latin Revolt*. After the fall of the kings Rome was faced by a revolt of an organised coalition of Latin cities. This anti-Roman alliance, which was organised by Tusculum and had its centre at Aricia, is known in modern books as the "Latin League". This phase of Latin history is documented by an important text preserved by the Elder Cato, and was almost certainly transcribed by him from an original inscription:

*Egerius Baebius of Tusculum, the Latin dictator, dedicated the grove of Diana at Aricia. The following peoples took part jointly: Tusculum, Aricia, Lanuvium, Lavinium, Cora, Tibur, Pometia, Rutulian Ardea ...*²¹

The fragment has no context, and is unfortunately incomplete. It must date from before the Volscian invasions of the mid-490s, however, since the list of peoples includes Cora and Pometia; on the other hand Rome is unlikely to have appeared in the missing part of the list, and the most probable interpretation is that the inscription records a religious event organised by

an anti-Roman alliance after the fall of the monarchy.²²

The struggle between Rome and the Latins culminated in the battle of Lake Regillus (499 or 496 BC), and was finally resolved by the treaty of Sp. Cassius (493), which established peace and a defensive military alliance on equal terms between Rome and the Latin League. A few years later (in 486) a further alliance was formed, on similar terms, between Rome and the Hernici. The nature of these agreements is dealt with below.

The alliances enabled Rome and her allies to resist the encroachments of the Aequi and Volsci and perhaps saved Latium from being completely overwhelmed. Successful campaigns gradually recovered lost ground and allowed Rome and the Latins to found colonies on conquered territory, and to provide land for their victorious soldiers. The newly founded colonies became independent communities, with the same status as the existing Latin states; they were therefore known as Latin colonies (*coloniae Latinae*). Colonies known to have been established in the fifth century include Signia, Norba, Antium, Ardea, Labici, and Velitrae; while Vitellia, Circeii, Satricum, Setia, Sutrium, and Nepes (the last two in South Etruria) were established early in the fourth century.

During this period Rome also expanded its own territory by absorbing some of its smaller neighbours. Crustumerium and probably Ficulea were incorporated before 495 BC, Fidenae was destroyed in 426, and parts of southern Latium were conquered at the end of the fifth century. These annexations increased in scale and took on a new meaning with the conquest of Etruscan Veii in 396 and the incorporation of Tusculum in 381.

By the mid-fourth century Rome's expansion was seen as a threat by the Latins, who in 341 finally took up arms together with their southern neighbours, the Volsci, Aurunci, Sidicini and Campani. The ensuing "Latin War" ended in disaster for the Latins and their allies, and in 338 the Romans imposed a settlement whereby most of the old Latin and Volscian cities were incorporated in the Roman state with full citizenship. They included Antium, Aricia, Lanuvium, Lavinium, Nomentum, Pedum, and Velitrae, all of which became self-governing *municipia*. The other Latin cities remained theoretically independent allies of Rome, but were isolated and forbidden to have any dealings with each other. City-states in this category that are known to have survived down to the time of the Social War are Ardea, Circeii, Cora, Gabii, Norba, Praeneste, Setia, Signia, and Tibur.

Some of these places continued to exist as functioning city-states (*municipia*) into the imperial period, but many declined. The coastal cities from the mouth of the Tiber to Tarracina (Lavinium, Ardea, Antium, and Circeii) all disappeared, in spite of efforts to revive them; Nero's colony at Antium, for example, was a failure (Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.27). Others, including Gabii, Cora and Norba, were deserted by the time of Augustus, and even those that survived were reduced in size. The decline of the cities of Latium can be explained by a combination of factors, including the effects of warfare (many suffered badly in the civil wars of the 80s BC, especially Praeneste and Norba), and of malaria, which was endemic in the region (though there is no reason to think that it became more pestilential in the late Republic and Principate). In general the most important cause must have been the centripetal pull of the ever-growing city of Rome, which gradually reduced the surrounding regions to a vast *suburbium*.²³ Increasingly the territories of the Latin cities were absorbed by large private estates, and the slaves who worked them replaced the free population.²⁴

Terminology

This section contains a brief discussion of relevant Latin terms. Apart from technical words such as *colonia* and *municipium*, which denote specific types of political community within the wider Roman state, the generic term for a self-governing community in classical Latin is *civitas*. Syracuse is described as a most famous Greek state (*nobilissima Graeciae civitas*) by Cicero (*Tusc.* 5.66). In the Principate the provinces were subdivided into self-governing *civitates*, classified according to status as *civitates liberae*, *foederatae*, *immunes*, etc., or simply as *civitates stipendiariae* (tax-paying communities). Although they were not necessarily city-states in the strict sense (Caesar uses the term frequently to describe the nations of Gaul), Roman rule inevitably brought about administrative centralisation based on urban centres. British scholars have devised the term "*civitas-capitals*" for these cities,²⁵ which consciously adopted the institutions and structures of the Graeco-Roman city-state.

In spite of this general usage, however, *civitas* in the sense of "a state"²⁶ is a secondary extension of its primary meaning, which is either "the quality of being a citizen" (i.e. "citizenship" – most obviously in the phrase *civitas Romana*), or "a body of citizens".²⁷ In the latter sense it means a political community, and thus comes close to *res publica*.

But in official usage the formal designation of the Roman State was *populus Romanus*,²⁸ and *populus* qualified by an ethnic adjective was also the standard method of describing any Latin community in the Archaic period. The dedication to Diana at Aricia was made jointly by a group of *populi* – Tusculanus, Aricinus, Lanuvinus, etc. (Cato *Origines* fr.58 P, cited above). There is no known instance of the Roman people being formally called *Romani*, or the Praenestine people *Praenestini*, or the Lanuvian people *Lanuvini*. This is in marked contrast to Greek usage, according to which Athens was always "the Athenians" and Syracuse "the Syracusans".

Roman diplomatic documents illustrate this contrast. For example the *lex Antonia de Termessibus* of (probably) 68 BC records the grant by Rome of privileges to Termessus Major in Pisidia – or rather, to adopt the literal sense of the document, by the *Populus Romanus* to the Termenses Maiores Pisidae (*Roman Statutes* no.19). Greek documents, on the other hand, translated the Roman formula "*per comparationem*", that is by making it conform to Greek usage. *Populus Romanus* thus becomes *ho demos ho Rhomaiôn* or *ho demos tôn Rhomaiôn*, never *ho demos Rhomaios* or *ho Rhomaïkos demos*.²⁹

In dealings with other communities, then, a Latin city-state was a *populus*; as a community of citizens it was a *civitas*.³⁰ A *Res publica*, on the other hand, was the possession of the People (as Cicero says, *res publica res populi* – *Rep.* 1.39). It was literally a commonwealth, in which the citizens were shareholders, and from which they might hope to receive dividends.³¹ The distinction between the three terms is interestingly brought out by Cicero in the *de Republica* (1.42). Having established (1.39) that a *populus* is "not any kind of collection of humans, congregating in any manner, but a numerous gathering brought together by legal consent and community of interest",³² he goes on to say that "every people (which is a numerous gathering of the kind described), every state (which is an organisation of the populace), and every republic (which, as I said, is the property of the public) must be governed by a decision-making process ...etc."³³

It is clear enough, however, that in Cicero's time none of these three concepts – *populus*, *civitas*, *res publica* – necessarily signified a city-state in the sense of a territorial unit with an urban centre. On the other hand, the words for urban centre (*oppidum*, *urbs*) have no political implications. An *oppidum* was simply a fortified place, and could apply equally to a town as to a hill-fort used as a temporary refuge (see further

below); an *urbs*, on the other hand, was an organised city, with public buildings, streets and planned open spaces; but in Roman thinking it was rigorously separated from the surrounding countryside and enclosed within a clearly marked sacred boundary (the *pomerium*). The country which the city-state controlled (its *territorium*) was divided into rural districts (*pagi*), in which there may have been small concentrations of population in villages (*vici*) and sometimes small fortified outposts (*castella*, *oppida*). But the rural settlements (*pagi*, *vici*, *oppida*) always remained clearly distinct from the *urbs*, the city proper.

The conclusion is that there was no Latin term that precisely coincided with the notion of a city-state, and no exact Latin translation of *polis*. But with the development of urbanisation in the western provinces, and the gradual assimilation of all self-governing communities to the model of the Roman (or Latin) *municipium*, the word *civitas* came more and more to signify an urban community; by the time of St Augustine *urbs* and *civitas* were virtually synonymous. The irony is that its modern derivatives – city, cité, città, ciudad etc. – have lost all trace of the original (political) meaning of *civitas*.

Territory and population

Even in the archaic period Rome was by far the largest and most powerful city-state in Latium. By the end of the sixth century the territory under its direct control embraced more than 800 km². The average size of city-state territories in central Italy at this time was around 200 km² (medium-sized examples include Lavinium 164, Frusino 190, Ardea 198, Arpinum 231, Anagnina 268), and the average population was probably around 5000; but there were considerable variations, especially in Latium Vetus, where there were a number of small states with territories of less than 100 km² and populations of 2000 or less. Rome, with its comparatively extensive territory and a population that may have numbered around 35,000, simply dwarfed all its Latin competitors, the largest of which, Tibur, had a territory of some 350 km² (see Figures 1–2). Rome also outranked its nearest Etruscan neighbours, Veii (562 km²), Caere (640 km²), and Tarquinii (663 km²).

A similar result can be obtained from a comparison of the size of the inhabited areas of the urban centres, insofar as this can be determined with any degree of accuracy. At the end of the sixth century Rome occupied an area of ca. 285 hectares.³⁴ The Etruscan cities were somewhat smaller (e.g. Veii 194, Caere 150,

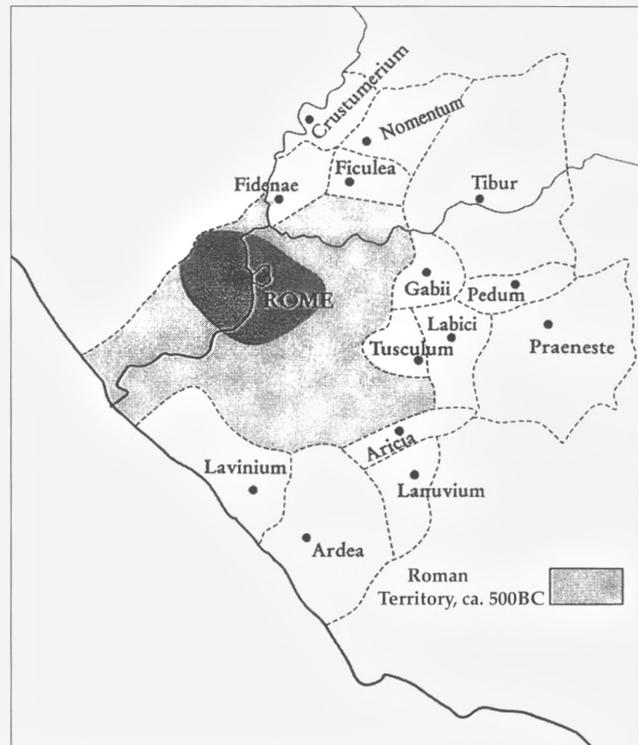


Fig. 3. Territories of the Latin city-states.

Vulci 120), and the Latin cities smaller still (e.g., among those that can be measured, Ardea 80, Gabii 70, Satricum 40, Lavinium 30: see Figure 3). By the early fourth century the balance was even more heavily weighted towards Rome. In 378 BC the urban area measured 427 ha (see below), and Roman territory had almost doubled (to 1562 km²) with the annexation of Ficulea, Crustumnerium, Fidenae, Tusculum, and above all Veii; the population, even on the most conservative estimate, would have been in excess of 50,000. The surviving Latin cities, on the other hand, are unlikely to have changed significantly since the sixth century.

Each of the city-states of Latium consisted of a single urban centre surrounded by a rural hinterland. This changed only when Rome began to absorb other city states as self-governing *municipia*, starting with Tusculum in 381. In this case there was no change in the physical structures: the city of Tusculum remained in being exactly as before, and it retained some control over its territory and the persons who inhabited it. Like all subsequent *municipia* its territory had identifiable boundaries, and it continued to be, in some sense, the territory of Tusculum (*ager Tusculanus*), even though it was now part of the Roman state and its free inhabitants were Roman citizens. It formed

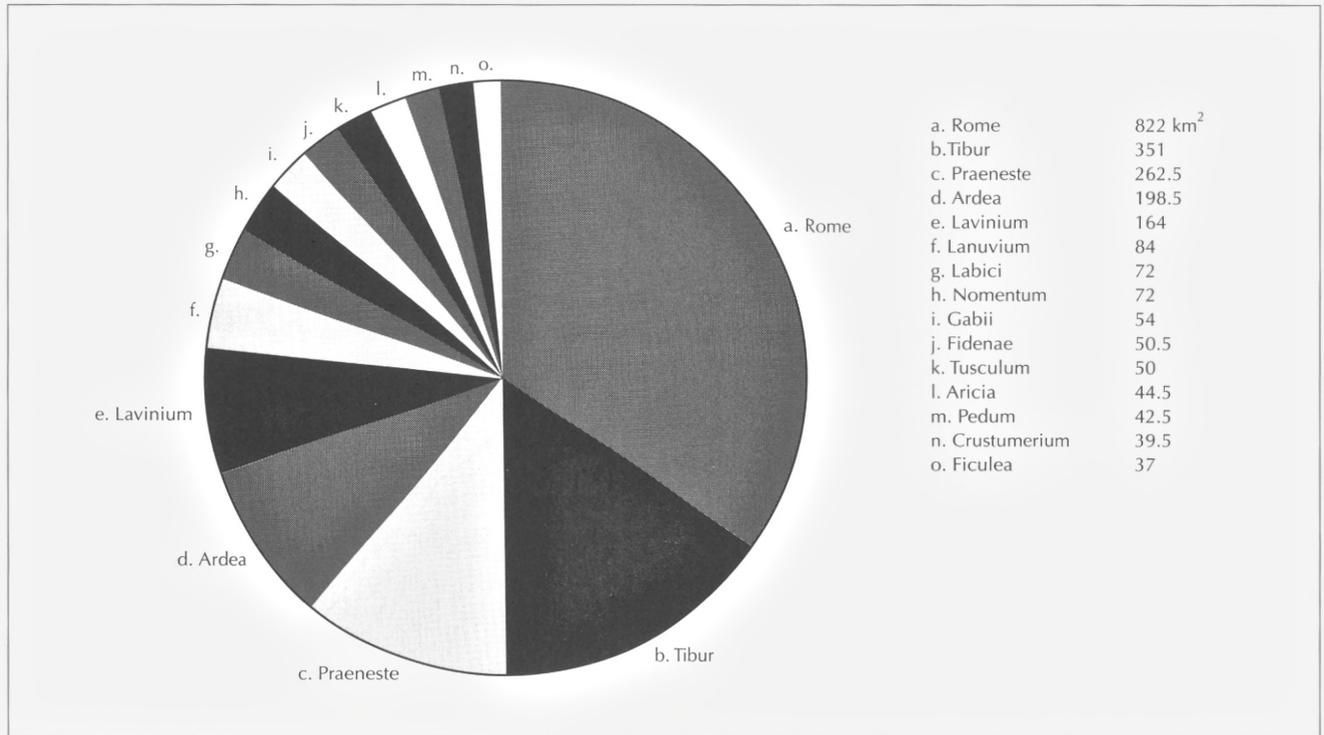


Fig. 4. Old Latium. Relative sizes of city-state territories.

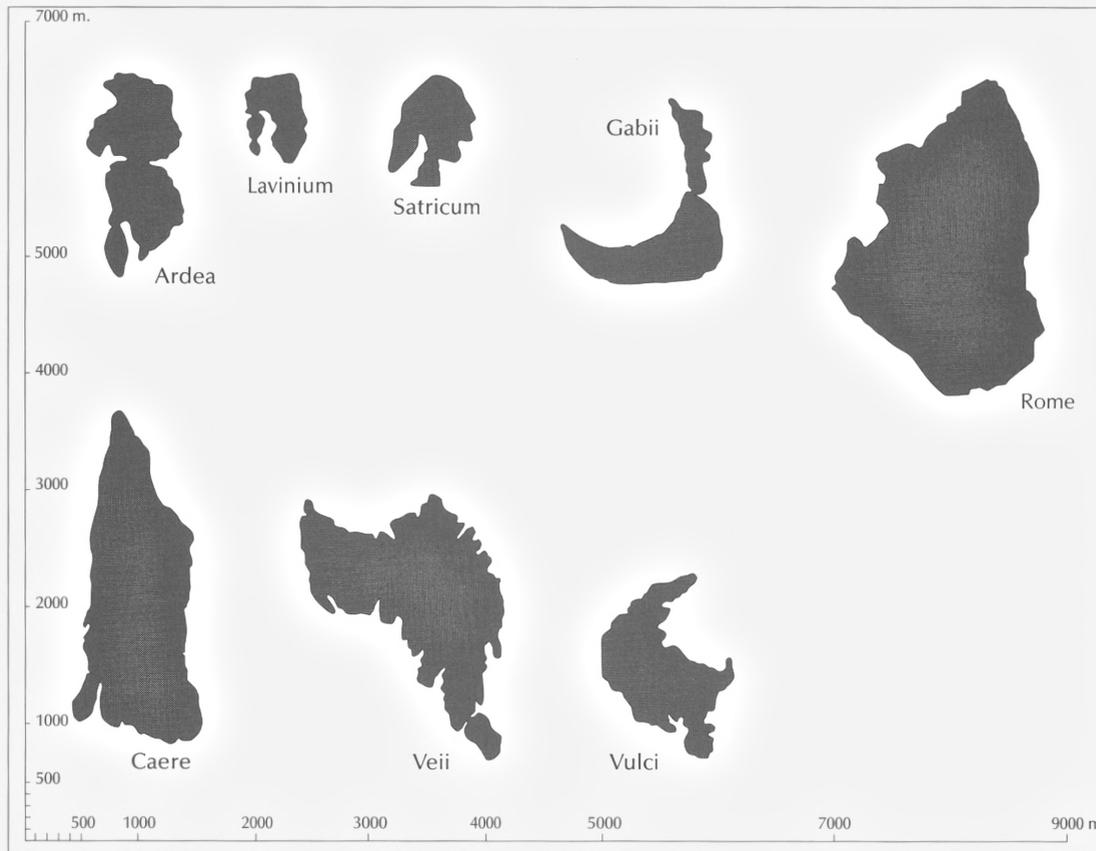


Fig. 5. Urban areas of city-states in Latium. A comparative plan.

part of the territory of Rome in this wider sense, but in strictly juridical terms it was not part of the *ager Romanus*.³⁵ It is also uncertain how far the Tusculans were made subject to Roman law. We know of cases of municipal communities that had distinct legal systems. For example, the inheritance laws at Arpinum were different from Rome's (Cato, *Origines* II.31 Ch. = fr.61 P).

In the middle Republic, therefore, the Roman state extended over a large territorial area that included several city states, each with its own territory and urban centre. Before the 380s and the invention of municipal institutions, however, Roman expansion had entailed the destruction of conquered towns and the removal of some or all of their populations to Rome. This is said to have happened in the cases of Alba Longa, Rome's mother city, of the "Prisci Latini" (a group of small places to the north-east of Rome, including Caenina, Medullia, Collatia, and Antemnae), and the settlements in the lower Tiber valley between Rome and Ostia (Tellena, Politiorium, and Ficana³⁶), all of which were overrun during the regal period. The same fate overtook places that were absorbed in the early Republic, such as Crustumium, Fidenae, Ficulea, and above all Veii.

Many of these places continued to exist, however, as dependent *vici* or fortified *oppida*, even if, as at Veii, they were on a smaller scale than the city-states that preceded them; there are also grounds for thinking that their original inhabitants were expelled and replaced by settlers from Rome.³⁷ We can be sure in any case that from the earliest times Rome's territory (the *ager Romanus*, properly so called) included some secondary settlements on the sites of formerly independent communities. There were also some newly founded settlements that functioned as fortified outposts, such as the fort established at Ostia to guard the mouth of the Tiber, dating probably to the period between 380 and 350; another was the inland fort at La Giostra excavated by the Danish Academy and the Norwegian Institute and recently published by Mette Moltesen and Rasmus Brandt.³⁸ It dates from the period of the Samnite Wars, and may have been founded to protect the southern flank of the *ager Romanus* from enemy invasion.

Secondary settlements are known to have existed also in the territories of other Latin cities, at least of the larger ones. Livy tells us that eight towns (*oppida*) were subservient to Praeneste,³⁹ and mentions Empulum, Sassula, and "other towns" (*oppida*) in the territory of Tibur (Livy 7.18.2; 7.19.1). Dependent secondary communities in the territories of the Etrus-

can cities are attested by literary and archaeological evidence.⁴⁰ To what extent, if at all, the smaller Latin cities exercised control over secondary settlements cannot be known for certain. But even in the time of the Empire memories survived of numerous small places in Latium that had once existed; in particular, Pliny the Elder lists no fewer than 53 peoples (*populi*) that had "vanished without trace" in his time (*N.H.* 3.68-9). Since it is unlikely that they had all disappeared before 500 BC, we may presume that many survived well into the Republican period. Some are mentioned in the story of Coriolanus (traditionally 490-488 BC), who in the course of his two marches on Rome captured (among other places) Tolerium, Bola, Corbio, Longula, Pollusca, Corioli and Mugilla (Dion. Hal. 8.14-36). Rather than supposing that these details serve to set the story in a pre-urban context,⁴¹ we might rather infer that Coriolanus' forces captured a series of places that may once have been independent villages, but were now secondary settlements within the territories of established city-states.

Fortifications

This is a complicated issue, on which the available evidence is scattered and intractable. There is at present no reliable and up-to-date synthesis of all the material, which is relatively abundant but inadequately published and not easily accessible. A major problem is that remains of fortifications are inherently difficult to date, and no agreed framework yet exists for the chronological classification of defensive earthworks and city walls in central Italy.⁴² This is a subject that urgently needs serious systematic study, starting with a fresh examination of all the material at first hand, and taking full account of all the historical circumstances of each site. The following is therefore a statement of what seems to me to be the most likely pattern of development, offered in the knowledge that it can only be provisional in the present state of research.

Most of the Iron-Age settlements in Latium Vetus were located on defensive hilltop sites. Natural defences were strengthened by earthworks and ditches from a very early date. At some of the small pre-urban settlements, such as Ficana, Decima and Laurentina, the fortifications can be dated to the eighth century BC. Some of the larger "urban" sites began to be fortified in this way in the seventh century; at Ardea a complex system of earth banks was constructed to protect the accessible parts of the three contiguous plateaux that form the site. The largest of these was

the furthest away from the urban centre, and acted as a first line of defence by preventing access to the so-called Casalazzara, an uninhabited zone that lay outside the city.⁴³

Something similar can be observed at Rome, where a massive earthwork (the so-called *agger*) protected the line from the Quirinal and the Esquiline that has no natural defence. This *agger* was a long way from the inhabited nucleus, and the area on the inside (i.e. immediately to the west of it) is unlikely to have been inhabited in the archaic period. There may have been an inner line of defence, but if so no trace of it has yet been discovered.⁴⁴ The dating of the *agger* is uncertain, but it must be Archaic; and there may be some basis for the ancient tradition that associated the *agger* with the sixth-century king Servius Tullius.⁴⁵ Some sources go further, and state that Servius surrounded the entire city with a stone wall (e.g. Livy 1.44.3; Dion. Hal. 4.14.1), but this is most unlikely. The great Republican city wall, of which substantial traces are still standing, particularly on the south side of the Aventine and in the Piazza dei Cinquecento outside the Termini station, is conventionally known as the “Servian Wall”, but in reality dates from 378 BC;⁴⁶ there are no good grounds for the view that it was preceded by an earlier wall going back to the time of the kings.⁴⁷

Of the other Latin cities only Lavinium, and less certainly Praeneste, are known to have had city walls in the sixth century; at Lavinium the earlier earthworks were replaced by a wall of squared blocks of *cappellaccio* which apparently surrounded the entire inhabited area. The walled circuit of Praeneste, constructed in crude polygonal masonry, is of uncertain date, but may go back to the sixth century or even earlier.⁴⁸ Praeneste and Lavinium were relatively small places, however, whose urban centres measured between 30 and 50 hectares (see above); they cannot be compared to Rome, which was of a different order of magnitude (the area enclosed within the Republican [“Servian”] walls is 427 ha.).

The situation in archaic central Italy is paradoxical, because the majority of fortified sites were not cities; I am referring in particular to the Apennine hill-forts in the territories of the Aequi and the Samnites.⁴⁹ These forts can be identified with the defensive refuges (*oppida*) that are referred to in literary sources;⁵⁰ for the most part they are remote and inaccessible, and cannot have been used for permanent habitation. On the other hand, in the Archaic period many of the cities, particularly the larger ones, were not fortified. The walls at the southern Etruscan cities of Tarquinii

and Caere, for example, belong to the fourth century, and even then did not in either case enclose the whole of the site. Similarly Veii, which stood on a naturally defensible plateau, erected stone walls only in the late fifth century, shortly before her epic struggle with Rome.⁵¹

The explanation for this apparent paradox is almost certainly that warfare in the archaic period was sporadic and limited in intensity, and did not entail systematic assaults on large centres of population (the same could be said of the Greek mainland before the fifth century, when most major cities remained unwalled). The principal type of campaign was a raid on the territory of a neighbouring state, which, if it provoked an organised response, might lead to a pitched battle. It follows that smaller settlements (such as the village at Monte Carbolino) were more vulnerable to attack than the urban centres of city-states, and were fortified accordingly; similarly, in non-urbanised regions such as Samnium or the country of the Aequi hill-forts were constructed as temporary refuges in case of attack.⁵²

An exception to this general rule is provided by the colonies that were established by Rome and her Latin allies in the course of wars against the Volsci in the fifth century. These were strategic outposts in conquered territory, and it is not surprising that they were fortified from the beginning. Thus, two of the earliest colonies in the Monti Lepini, Signia and Norba, have impressive walled circuits of polygonal masonry dating from the archaic period (late sixth or early fifth century).⁵³ The later colonies that Rome founded from the fourth century onwards were equipped with defensive walls as a matter of course. But by then all the urbanised communities in central Italy, including Rome itself, the Etruscan cities, and the cities in Latium, had fortified themselves with walls.⁵⁴ This development can be explained partly by the threat of incursions by the Gauls of northern Italy, which became a serious menace from around 400 BC onwards, and partly by the increasing scale and intensity of warfare during the period of the Roman conquest.

In the later Roman Republic, a walled enceinte, complete with towers and formal gateways, was an essential symbol of city status. In Samnium and the central Apennine districts the process of urbanisation began after the Social War, when all Italy was incorporated into the Roman state, and organised into self-governing *municipia*. The process was accompanied by rapid urban development and a spate of public building, and in particular by the construction, often for the first time, of city walls. In an important study,

Emilio Gabba has been able to list over 25 cities in Italy where inscriptions record the building or substantial repair of city walls in the course of the first century BC.⁵⁵ The phenomenon is no doubt partly to be explained by the violence and civil unrest at this period; but one may readily agree with Gabba that there might be another motive, namely that by this date city walls had come to represent “l'elemento indispensabile e caratterizzante perché un insediamento umano si qualificasse con la dignità di vera città”.

Federal Institutions

From the earliest times the Latins formed a unified and self-conscious ethnic group with a common name (the *nomen Latinum*), a single language, and a common material culture (the “cultura laziale”). Their shared sense of kinship was expressed in a myth of common ancestry. According to this legend the Latins traced their origin back to a union of Trojan refugees with the native Aborigines, whose king, Latinus, gave his name to the resulting amalgam, symbolised by the marriage of his daughter, Lavinia, to the Trojan leader Aeneas. After his death, Latinus was transformed into Jupiter Latiaris, and worshipped on the Alban Mount.

Whatever the origin of these stories – and some elements, such as the identification of Latinus with Jupiter Latiaris, may be relatively late⁵⁶ – there can be little doubt about the antiquity of the notion of common ancestry, and of its central symbol, the cult of Jupiter on the Alban Mount. The annual celebration of this cult, known as the *Latiar* or *Feriae Latinae*, was an assembly of representatives of all the Latin communities, which agreed to suspend hostilities for the duration, and each of which contributed items of produce to a banquet; a white heifer was sacrificed, and the meat shared among all the participants. The ceremony was an expression of ethnic solidarity, and constituted an annual renewal of the ties of kinship that the Latins believed they shared. Participation in the cult was a definition of membership; the Latins were those peoples who received meat at the annual festival of the *Latiar*.⁵⁷

Another common sanctuary was situated at Lavinium, the city traditionally founded by Aeneas, where annual celebrations were held in honour of the Penates, the ancestral gods of the Latins (*ILS* 5004). The famous “sanctuary of the thirteen altars” that was excavated in the 1960s has been connected with this cult;⁵⁸ the best explanation of the altars, which differ from each other in style and date, is that the several

Latin communities each maintained its own altar, just as the Greek cities had their individual treasuries at Delphi. Lavinium was also the site of a cult of an ancestor-god called Pater Indiges, who at some time before 300 BC was identified with Aeneas.⁵⁹ Common sanctuaries were also to be found at Aricia, Tusculum, Ardea, and perhaps Gabii; and at Rome a temple to Diana on the Aventine was founded by Servius Tullius as a common shrine for all the Latins.⁶⁰

It is most unlikely that these shared cults were accompanied by any kind of political unity. Admittedly the ancient sources seem to be wedded to the belief that control of a common cult centre implied political hegemony. For example, the location of the *Latiar* on the Alban Mount was interpreted as a reflection of the hegemony once exercised by Alba Longa, a hegemony that then passed to Rome when Alba was destroyed by king Tullus Hostilius. But this tradition appears to be anachronistic, and in any case conflicts with an alternative version that places the beginning of Rome's dominance in Latium to the time of Tarquinius Superbus. Tarquin's “miniature empire” in Latium may well be soundly based (it is implicitly confirmed by the Carthage treaty of Polybius), but it almost certainly has nothing to do with any religious federation. That our sources have misconceived this point is indicated by the statement of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (4.49) that it was Tarquinius Superbus who founded the *Latiar*. In fact the *Latiar* predates the reign of Tarquin, possibly by several centuries.⁶¹ More generally we may note that the many common sanctuaries throughout Latium (it is quite conceivable, not to say probable, that every Latin city had a common shrine and a festival in which all the Latins took part) cannot all have been the centres of political federations, and the chances are that none of them were.

On the other hand, it is likely enough that some political alliances had a religious dimension. Servius Tullius' foundation of the temple of Diana may have been accompanied by a bid for political supremacy, as the sources maintain (*Livy*, 1.45); and it is virtually certain that the joint dedication of a grove of Diana at Aricia recorded by Cato (cited above, p. 213) was designed to provide a religious centre for a political federation of Latin city-states. The dedication was made by an official called the Latin Dictator (*dictator Latinus*), who must be the supreme leader of the federation.⁶² Although there can be no certainty here, the overwhelming probability is that the group in question was the alliance of Latin cities that rebelled against Rome after the fall of the monarchy. This anti-Roman

alliance, which modern scholars call the “Latin League”, had its political centre at the Grove of Ferentina (the *lucus ad caput aquae Ferentinae*) in the territory of Aricia. This grove is probably to be identified with the Laghetto di Turno near Castel Savelli, and is to be distinguished from the shrine of Diana, which was situated on the north-eastern shore of Lake Nemi;⁶³ it follows that the event recorded by Cato was not the formation of the Latin League as such, but an attempt by the newly formed League to gain divine sanction by associating itself with the nearby cult of Diana – which itself was of extreme antiquity.

The clash between Rome and the Latin League ended with the Battle of Lake Regillus and the treaty of Spurius Cassius (493 BC). This was the agreement that bound the Latin city-states to Rome and effectively ended their autonomy. A principal concern of the treaty was military: it created a bilateral alliance between Rome and the Latin League which established perpetual peace and the obligation of each side to provide military assistance to the other in the event of an attack (the terms are set out by Dion. Hal. 6.95). Although the two sides shared the spoils of successful campaigns and jointly took part in the founding of colonies, in practice Rome was the dominant partner from the start.

An illustration of this is the procedure for appointing commanders for joint campaigns by the allied army. This is described in a passage of Festus (p.276L, citing the antiquarian L. Cincius), the meaning of which is disputed. The most likely interpretation is that the commander (*praetor*) was always provided by Rome, but that he had to be appointed by auspices, and then approved by the Latin soldiers who had been sent to Rome on the authority of the League council, meeting at Ferentina; the Latin soldiers would indicate their approval by hailing the *praetor* at the gate.⁶⁴

According to Dionysius, the treaty also established a relationship of “isopolity” between Romans and Latins (6.63.4; 7.53.5; etc.). This must be a reference to the reciprocal rights and privileges which Rome and the other Latin city-states shared during the Republican period, and which survived down to the time of the Empire in the form of the *ius Latii*.⁶⁵ What makes Latium unique among historical city-state societies is the high degree of interaction and mobility between individual cities. The shared rights and privileges that made this possible include the *ius conubii*, the right to contract a legal marriage with a partner from another Latin state; the *ius commercii*, the right to deal with persons from other Latin communities

and to make legally binding contracts (above all, it seems, the right to deal in real property); and the so-called *ius migrationis*, which gave a citizen of a Latin state the right to exchange his citizenship for that of another state simply by moving and taking up residence there.

It is worth stressing how very remarkable these institutions were. The best way to illustrate the point is to contrast the situation in Latium with that of the Greek world. In its classical Greek form the *polis* was a closed society which admitted outsiders to citizen rights only in the most exceptional circumstances. Moreover the right to contract a legal marriage (the key feature of which is that any children it produced automatically acquired citizenship), and the right to own land within the territory of the *polis* were rigidly confined to persons of citizen birth.

The origin of these Latin rights is disputed. Dionysius of Halicarnassus evidently thought they were an artificial creation introduced by the *Foedus Cassianum*, and this legalistic view has been skilfully restated by Michel Humbert.⁶⁶ On balance, however, it is more likely that institutions such as intermarriage and freedom of movement were a relic of a remote period when the city-state as such hardly existed, and the Latin communities were dominated by aristocratic clans that had developed networks of exchange and hospitality with their counterparts elsewhere. These exchanges would have been reinforced by intermarriage and rituals of gift-giving, of which there are clear signs already in the orientaling period.⁶⁷ This model is attractive because it can account for the many examples remembered by tradition of aristocratic individuals and groups migrating with their families and dependants to other communities and being accepted and integrated at the appropriate social level.

Famous examples include Tarquinius Priscus, who migrated from Tarquinii to Rome, where he subsequently became king; the Sabine leader Appius Claudius, who came to Rome with a retinue of armed clients in 504 BC and was admitted to the patriciate (his clients being given land), shortly afterwards rising to the consulship (495 BC); and Cn. Marcius Coriolanus, a Roman condottiere famous for his exploits at the head of a private army of clients, who went over to the Volscians and became their leader in a war against Rome. An open society of this kind reflects an aristocratically dominated milieu in which city-states were not well developed, and in which local loyalties and ties mattered less than membership of a given social group. It is interesting to note that

horizontal interaction between aristocrats in different communities is attested also in archaic Greece before the emergence of fully developed city-states. It is sufficient to refer to the aristocratic guest friendship, intermarriage and gift-exchange of the Homeric heroes, or an episode such as the wooing of Agariste, daughter of Cleisthenes of Sicyon, which is so memorably narrated in Herodotus (6.126-31). The communities of central Italy, then, were “open cities”, a state of affairs that was codified and institutionalised by formal agreements such as the *Foedus Cassianum*, which ensured the preservation of these essentially archaic forms of social interaction by means of the Latin *iura* and reciprocal grants of “isopolity”.

Social structures and political institutions

The “open-city” model implies that broadly similar social divisions existed in all the communities of central Italy, and this is indeed what our sources presuppose. Dionysius presents Appius Claudius (cos. 495) as saying that “all the nations around us are governed by aristocracies, and the plebeians in no state lay claim to an equal share in the government” (6.62.4). Whether Dionysius had any evidence to support his view cannot be known, but it is in any case likely to be correct. It is consistent with a society in which the relative ease of horizontal social mobility was matched by a corresponding vertical immobility. That is to say, the aristocracies maintained close links with one another, but kept themselves apart from the lower classes in their own communities. In Rome we find that the patricians were willing to admit to their own ranks the ruling class of the defeated Alba Longa, or voluntary migrants such as the Sabine aristocrat Appius Claudius; but they rigorously excluded their own fellow citizens who did not belong to the patriciate. The most extreme example of this policy was the ban on intermarriage between the orders that was imposed by the law of the Twelve Tables (450 BC), even though at the same time the patricians were willing to practise intermarriage with the aristocracies of other communities (this point is made explicitly by Livy, 4.3.4 – the speech of Canuleius).

At the other end of the social scale, we might ask whether the Latin communities practised the same customs as the Romans in respect of manumission; for one of the most remarkable features of the Roman *civitas* was that the freed slave of a Roman citizen himself acquired the Roman citizenship simply through the formal act of manumission. It is this fact more than anything else that distinguishes Rome from a

Greek *polis*, in which such a rule would have been unthinkable.⁶⁸ On the question of whether a similar practice existed in the cities of Latium, I know of no direct evidence (but I would welcome guidance on this point). However, in later colonies and *municipia*, including those with Latin rights, the citizen body included freedmen, and it is not impossible that this was part of an ancient Latin heritage rather than a secondary feature borrowed from Rome.⁶⁹ Naturally there can be no certainty about this, but there is one small indication that other aspects of the Roman law of slavery were applied generally throughout Latium Vetus. This is the provision of the Twelve Tables that a Roman citizen enslaved for debt could only be sold *trans Tiberim peregre* (“across the Tiber, in foreign territory”).⁷⁰ This not only means that by 450 BC the rule was established that Roman citizens could not be enslaved at Rome; it also implies that enslavement of a Roman citizen was forbidden within the territory of the Latin allies (because it had to be not only *peregre*, but also *trans Tiberim* – i.e. in Etruscan territory), and further that the enslavement of Latins was governed by the same rules.⁷¹

Turning to political institutions within the city-states of Latium, we find the same type of uniformity. That is to say, the same general principles applied everywhere, although there were differences of detail between one city and another. Every Latin city-state, it seems, was governed by a republican system and dominated by an aristocratic oligarchy. The standard features were annual magistracies, elected by a popular assembly, and a senate or council of former office holders.

One rather striking fact is that republican governments seem to have existed in Latin communities from the earliest times, and there is very little sign of an earlier stage of monarchy, as at Rome. In the literary tradition Latin kings are all mythical and form part of legendary sagas like the story of Aeneas, or are secondary antiquarian reconstructions, like the kings of Alba, or are gods like Saturnus, Picus and Faunus, who were turned into kings by a euhemerising tradition. Latin kings occasionally make their appearance in the story of Romulus, for instance Acron king of Caenina (Livy 1.10.4 etc.) and Lucerus king of Ardea (Festus p.106L), but not afterwards. The only exception is Alba Longa, which according to some accounts was still ruled by a king (Gaius Cluilus) at the time of Tullus Hostilius,⁷² but, most remarkably, his successor, Mettius Fufetius, is said to have ruled as dictator – i.e. a republican magistrate (Livy 1.23.4, etc.).

Apart from this rather revealing exception, the tra-

dition implies that the Latin city-states were all aristocratic republics during the Roman regal period. None of the Latin leaders we hear about at this time, such as Turnus Herdonius of Aricia or Octavus Mamilius of Tusculum, is described as a king. On the other hand, in later times a number of Latin cities had a *rex sacrorum* (apart from Rome, they include Lanuvium, Tibur, and Tusculum), a priest who carried out religious duties formerly performed by a real king. It is extremely unlikely that such a priesthood was instituted in imitation of Rome, especially as the Latin cities do not seem to have imposed on their *reges sacrorum* the same prohibition on office-holding as the Romans did.⁷³ A priesthood of this type would make no sense in the religious system of any city outside Rome, unless that city had itself once had kings fulfilling similar religious duties.⁷⁴ The likelihood is, then, that the city-states of Latium were once ruled by kings, but that in most cases they were replaced by republican magistrates long before this change occurred at Rome. In this sense Rome seems to have been closer to the Etruscan cities, where kingship survived much longer, perhaps in some cases even to the middle of the fourth century.⁷⁵

Our knowledge of republican magistracies in Latium comes mostly from inscriptions, the great majority dating from the late second century BC to the third century AD. Nevertheless there is considerable variation from city to city, which must indicate, *prima facie*, that the cities were able to retain their native systems even after they were absorbed by Rome, rather than having a standard Roman model imposed on them. The most distinctive Latin magistracy is the annually elected dictatorship, which is found at Lanuvium, Aricia, Tusculum, Nomentum and Fidenae.⁷⁶ Elsewhere we find colleges of two praetors, as at Praeneste, Lavinium, Cora, and Velitrae.⁷⁷ Aediles and quaestors are found at some of these places, and should probably be seen as subordinate magistrates carrying out particular tasks, as at Rome. Censors are attested at Tibur and Praeneste, whereas elsewhere in Latium the normal chief magistrates carried out censuses every five years and bore the additional title of *quinquennales*. Inscriptions recording the tenure of several of these posts by the same individual may indicate the existence of a *cursus honorum* (i.e. a set career path through a hierarchy of posts).

Prosopographical analysis of office-holders during the periods for which there is sufficient evidence (from the Gracchan age to the second century AD) indicates what we might otherwise have guessed, namely that the magistracies and priesthoods were

largely monopolised by a narrow circle of ruling families.⁷⁸ The same is true of the priesthoods, which were filled by members of the same elite, and frequently by the same individuals; as at Rome, a successful career would consist of a combination of religious and political offices. Priests in the city-states of Latium bore the same titles, and no doubt fulfilled the same functions, as their counterparts at Rome. We hear of *pontifices*, *flamines*, *augures*, *salii* and *reges sacrorum*. Finally, it is evident that each Latin city also had its Senate and popular assembly.⁷⁹

Taken together, the surviving evidence makes it abundantly clear that the political and religious institutions of the city-states in Latium were broadly comparable to those of Rome, in spite of minor differences of detail. So much is generally agreed, although the explanation of this fact is disputed. Given that almost all the evidence dates from after the Roman conquest, it would be possible to argue that the similarities arose because the Latin cities borrowed their institutions from Rome, or had Roman institutions imposed on them. Mommsen inclined to this view, and his belief that the characteristic features of Italian municipal organisation were ultimately of Roman origin was subsequently applied to all the evidence in a doctrinaire fashion by H. Rudolph.⁸⁰ But Rudolph's idea that the Romans systematically abolished all existing institutions in the communities they incorporated has always been considered extreme,⁸¹ and runs contrary to what we otherwise know of Roman practice, for example in the provinces, where their normal policy was to take over existing administrative structures and modify them only gradually if at all. Moreover the variations of detail between the several Latin cities are best explained by assuming that at least some of their traditional institutions were retained from the pre-Roman period.

The opposite position was taken by A. Rosenberg, in a seminal study of indigenous constitutions in Italy.⁸² Rosenberg reacted against Mommsen's idea that the communities of central Italy had from the earliest times been in the habit of imitating Roman institutions, which were themselves spontaneously created out of nothing by the Roman genius. Mommsen's notion of the relationship between Rome and Italy was stood on its head by Rosenberg, who argued instead that Rome's republican institutions were adapted from a native Italic model, the "ancient Italic constitution". On the other hand Rosenberg did not go so far as to suggest that the Italian city-states owed nothing to Rome. A central pillar of his brilliant reconstruction was the idea that Rome created a

unique political system by adapting and combining ideas borrowed from several different cultures. The hierarchy of collegiate magistracies was a combination of a relatively simple Italic system, in which full political and military authority was vested in a single (often collegiate) magistracy, and the more complex Etruscan organisation in which a supreme magistrate was backed up by other magistracies with clearly differentiated functions. Thus, for Rosenberg, the original magistrates of Latium were dictators or collegiate praetors, but the ‘Hilfsmagistrate’ (aediles, quaestors) were borrowed from Rome at a later stage.⁸³

But this seems overschematic; the idea of two distinct forms of magistracy is hard to prove on the existing evidence, and even harder to relate to an alleged contrast between Etruscan and Italic ideologies. But that is not all. The whole debate is based on a bogus distinction between Rome and Italy, and engages in the essentially sterile pursuit of awarding points for originality to the one side or the other. As S. Mazzarino pointed out in a pioneering study,⁸⁴ Rome cannot be artificially separated from its Italian background, but must rather be seen as partaking in a common process of cultural development together with its neighbours, be they Latin, Etruscan, or Italic.

On this view archaic central Italy was a melting-pot – something that fits perfectly with the idea of the “open city”, and with the archaeological evidence, which clearly indicates a common material culture throughout Tyrrhenian central Italy in the sixth and fifth centuries BC. This cultural *koiné*, as Mazzarino called it (using a linguistic metaphor), was inevitably accompanied by parallel developments in political and social organisation; both processes can be explained by the operation of what has been called peer-polity interaction.⁸⁵ In any event, there is no reason whatever to doubt that many of the political institutions attested in the city-states of Latium in the late Republic and early Empire were relics carried over from pre-Roman times.

There is a kind of reverse proof in the fact that the one body of institutions that were unquestionably invented at Rome are not found in any city in Latium nor, as far as we can see, in any *municipium*. I am referring to the institutions of the plebeian organisation, and in particular to the tribunes of the plebs. Although social distinctions akin to that between patricians and plebeians probably existed in the Latin communities, the revolutionary plebeian movement that created its own “state within the state” in the early fifth century was certainly unique to Rome.⁸⁶ If tribunes of the plebs were mentioned in inscriptions from

Latium, we should have no alternative but to assume that they had been instituted in imitation of Rome; but in fact they are conspicuously absent.⁸⁷ On the other hand, tribunes of the plebs *are* attested in colonies, which had artificially created constitutions that combined Roman and inherited Latin elements.⁸⁸

There are good reasons, therefore, for thinking that the tribunate of the plebs could only have been borrowed, directly or indirectly, from Rome. But there is no reason to do so in the case of other distinctive institutions. We have already argued that the practice of admitting freed slaves to citizenship was probably common to all Latin communities; the same may be true of two other equally remarkable (and perhaps related) institutions: group voting and the census.

The subdivision of the citizen body into groups for voting and for other (e.g. military) purposes is a most unusual feature of Roman public life, without parallel, as far as one can tell, in the Greek world; and, insofar as the voting units did not function as constituencies to choose representatives from among their own number, they are unparalleled also in the modern world.⁸⁹ The question to be considered here, however, is whether group voting was also practised among the Latins, and whether, so far from being an original Roman creation, it was to be found in other city-states of the Tyrrhenian *koiné*.

The evidence is unfortunately inadequate to provide a definitive answer one way or the other (but that in itself must mean that an affirmative answer should not be discounted). We know that group voting was practised in the colonies that Rome founded after 338 BC; this has been confirmed by archaeological evidence from Cosa and Alba Fucens,⁹⁰ and is in a way not surprising, although it would not have been possible otherwise to take it for granted.⁹¹ We know that some later colonies in the provinces were subdivided into tribes,⁹² and there is clear evidence for group voting by *curiae* in the municipal charters of the imperial period. The recently discovered *Lex Irnitana* instructs the municipal magistrates to establish eleven *curiae*, and the procedure for voting by *curiae* is laid down in a part of the same law preserved in the long-known *Lex Malacitana*.⁹³ *Curiae* are found in other municipal communities, such as Tarentum,⁹⁴ and especially in Africa, where the term is perhaps to be explained as the *interpretatio Romana* of some local institution.⁹⁵ Most significantly, however, *curiae* are attested at the ancient Latin city of Lanuvium, where they evidently served as voting units.⁹⁶

These instances may represent no more than the spread of Roman institutions; but there is reason to

think that there is more to it than that. From the evidence outlined above, it appears that voting groups in *municipia* were normally called *curiae* (and in Africa someone evidently thought that *curia* was the appropriate Latin term for a native division of the community), whereas *tribus* are found only in colonies.⁹⁷ The significance of the distinction is that in Rome the *curiae* were a relic of an archaic system that was reformed at a very early date, and replaced by the Servian constitution based on local tribes.⁹⁸ One would expect, therefore, that a system of subdivision adopted from, or imposed by, Rome would also be based on tribes; and the evidence of the colonies seems to bear this out (we do not know what the voting groups at Cosa or Alba Fucens were called, but on this argument we may conjecture that they too were tribes). *Curiae*, on the other hand, are best explained as an ancient type of division that was common to city-states in Latium. At Rome they were superseded by the Servian reform, but elsewhere they continued to function as before; when the Latin cities were incorporated as *municipia*, they were allowed to continue with their existing voting arrangements. The old terminology was retained, and continued to be used when the municipal system was extended to the rest of Italy and the provinces.

Finally, the census. It seems fairly certain that the census was an ancient Italic institution established throughout central Italy, where it was customary for the chief magistrate(s) of a community to carry out a periodic revision of the citizen body and its internal subdivisions. The magisterial title ‘censor’ seems to be of Oscan origin (Osc. *keenzstur*), and is attested among the Samnites and Hernici; it was adopted only in communities in eastern Latium (principally Tibur and Praeneste) that were under strong Oscan influence.⁹⁹ From here it was borrowed by the Romans, who instituted censors for the first time in 443 BC; before that the census had been undertaken by the consuls. This system continued to obtain in other Latin cities; in later times the chief magistrates would add *quinquennales* to their title if they carried out a census. Even if this title reflects the Roman practice of holding censuses at regular five-year intervals (which began around 300 BC), there can be no doubt that the census itself was an Italic institution rather than one invented at Rome and borrowed by other cities.

The primary purpose of the census was to reconstitute the citizen body. The *lustrum*, the religious ceremony that formally completed the process, was nothing less than a symbolic refoundation of the city.¹⁰⁰ What needs to be emphasised is that a census

had to be carried out periodically, albeit at first with varying levels of frequency. This had to happen because the composition of the citizen body was fluid and constantly changing, which in turn is to be explained by the extraordinary degree of social mobility that was possible in the city-states of Latium.

In a closed community, where citizenship was determined solely by birth, as at Athens, all that was needed to maintain an up-to-date list of citizens was a mechanism for registering births and marking the admission of new citizens to the constituent units that formed the political body – in the Athenian case the demes and phratries. Rome, however, was an open city, to which new citizens could be admitted from below, through manumission of slaves, and from outside, by voluntary immigration or compulsory incorporation through conquest. Periodic censuses were necessary to integrate the new citizens and to assign them to their appropriate class, century and tribe for voting (and other) purposes.

But the evidence we have been examining makes it clear that these mechanisms must have existed in the Latin cities as well. The argument has a wigwam structure: each strut is relatively weak and can barely stand on its own. The admission of freedmen to citizenship, the system of group-voting, and the institution of the census – these are only weakly documented in the Latin city-states or have to be presumed by inference – but they support each other and together form a strong argument. And they are held together by the well-documented set of reciprocal rights and privileges that the Latin communities shared from the earliest times. To put it another way, Rome could only function as an open city if all its neighbours were open cities too. It follows that the most distinctive features of Rome as a city-state were in fact characteristic of a broader city-state culture in central Italy – a *koiné* of which Rome was only one representative. This, following Rosenberg, we may still call “der Staat der alten Italiker”.

Notes

1. On the Latins as an ethnic group see Alföldi (1965) esp. 1-36; Bernardi (1973). I have discussed the issue of ethnicity and the Latins in Cornell (1997).
2. In the traditional account all the Latin cities were colonies of Alba Longa (itself founded by Aeneas' son Ascanius), and Rome itself was the last of them. Thus Livy 1.3.7; 52.2; Dion. Hal. 1.31.4.
3. Peruzzi (1970; 1973; 1978). Peruzzi accepts without argument the literal truth of all the literary accounts. More recently Andrea Carandini has made heroic efforts to fit the legends to

- the archaeological evidence, in Carandini (1997), a 750-page book dealing with historical events leading up to Romulus, who appears in the last chapter. I have to say that I am not convinced.
4. Ampolo (1983, 1988). My own view of this matter is given in Cornell (1995) 92-103.
 5. On this see above all the excellent remarks of Toynbee (1965) I, 140.
 6. See further Cornell (1991a), and notice especially the response of Ampolo (1991) 116-8, who calls late-Republican Rome a "living anachronism".
 7. The charters are now most easily consulted in Crawford (1996) I, esp. nos. 24-5, together with the so-called Flavian Municipal Law, published in full, with English translation (by M. Crawford), in González (1986).
 8. There is no evidence for local levies in late Republican Italy, *pace* Crawford (1996) 445. I am not impressed by the rhetorical statement of Cicero, *Pro Cluentio* 195, who describes Larinum as defenceless because all its men of military age have come to Rome to support Cluentius. It would be rash to infer from this that local communities in Italy, including *municipia* such as Larinum, were permitted (still less required) to raise their own military forces on their own initiative.
 9. *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* 98 = Crawford (1996) 408; *Lex Irnitana* 83 = González (1986) 175.
 10. This interpretation was clearly set out by Marquardt (1881) 137-8 and Mommsen (1887) 224-7. I am most grateful to Carmine Ampolo for these references.
 11. On the archaeology of early Latium see Gierow (1966, 1964); Colonna (1974); *Civiltà del Lazio Primitivo* (1976); Bietti Sestieri (1992); Ross Holloway (1994); Smith (1996). The pioneering study of Pinza (1905) should not be overlooked.
 12. On the process of urbanisation in general, see Ampolo (1980); Ampolo (1988); Cornell (1995) 81-118.
 13. M. Torelli, in Gros & Torelli (1988) 5-36; Cornell (1995) 92-3.
 14. Ampolo (1980) 166-7; Drews (1981); Stopponi (1985).
 15. Gjerstad (1960) 79-83; 132-8; Ampolo (1980) 166-7.
 16. Cf. Cornell (1991b) and (1995) 103-4.
 17. Colonna (1985); Cornell (1995) 108-12.
 18. These matters are treated in detail in Cornell (1995) 97-118.
 19. For this and what follows see Cornell (1989) 243-94; 309-23; 360-8; and (1995) 293-326; 347-52.
 20. On the Volsci in general see Radke (1961); Quilici Gigli (1992); For the identification Satricum-Pometia, Coarelli (1990).
 21. Cato, *Origines* fr. 58 Peter (= II.28 Chassignet): *Lucum Dianium in nemore Aricino Egerius Baebius Tusculanus dedicavit dictator latinus. Hi populi communiter: Tusculanus, Aricinus, Lanuvinus, Laurens, Coranus, Tiburtis, Pometinus, Ardeatis Rutulus ...*
 22. Cornell (1995) 297 (with further bibliography).
 23. On the *suburbium* see Ashby (1927); Quilici (1974); Champlin (1982); Morley (1996) 83-107.
 24. On the whole subject of depopulation in Latium see Brunt (1971) 345-50; 611-24.
 25. E.g. Wachter (1966).
 26. Cornelius Nepos (*Cato* 3.3) uses *civitas* as a general term for communities in Italy in his summary of the contents of Cato's *Origines*, thus: *secundus et tertius [liber continet] unde quaeque civitas orta sit Italica, ob quam rem omnes origines videtur appellasse* ("the second and third books give an account of the origins of every state in Italy, which is apparently why he called the whole work *The Origins*"). We cannot know, unfortunately, whether Nepos' words reflect Cato's own usage.
 27. Thus, e.g., Cicero, *Sest.* 96. It most probably has this meaning also in the Gracchan *Lex Repetundarum* (Crawford [1996], no.1) lines 12 and 86.
 28. More strictly, *populus Romanus Quirites* ("the Roman People, the Quirites") or *populus Romanus Quiritium* ("the Roman People of the Quirites"). This curious phrase occurs in many of the most ancient texts, such as the Fetial formulae for declaring war (Livy 1.32.11-13) and making a treaty (Livy 1.24.4-8), and the *devotio* prayer (Livy 8.9.6-8); the expression *ius Quiritium* ("the right of the Quirites") is also used in the context of legal transactions involving *res Mancipi* (Gaius 2.24; 4.16). Why the Romans were sometimes called Quirites is mysterious, and has given rise to much discussion and speculation; but the problem fortunately need not concern us here. See now Prosdocimi (1995).
 29. Magie (1905) 3; 10; 15.
 30. Notice incidentally that *civitas* is derived, by abstraction, from *civis*, the individual citizen, whereas in Greek the relationship between *polis* and *polites* (and for that matter in modern languages between "city" and "citizen") is the other way around. Cf. de Visscher (1966) 106-7; see also Benveniste (1969) 363.
 31. C. Gracchus *ap. Gell.* 11.10.3. On the general point, see Brunt (1988) 299.
 32. ... *non omnis hominum coetus quoquo modo congregatus, sed coetus multitudinis iuris consensu et utilitate communi sociatus*. Translation adapted from Niall Rudd, Cicero, *The Republic, The Laws* (Oxford World's Classics, 1998).
 33. *omnis ergo populus, qui est talis coetus multitudinis qualem exposui, omnis civitas, quae est constitutio populi, omnis res publica, quae ut dixi populi res est, consilio quodam regenda est ...*
 34. This was the so-called "city of the four regions", enclosed within the sacred boundary (the *pomerium*) traditionally ascribed to Servius Tullius.
 35. On this complicated issue see Catalano (1978) 492-8.
 36. Fischer-Hansen *et al.* (1990).
 37. Harris (1971) 41-2; Torelli (1990) 217-8.
 38. Moltesen & Brandt (1994).
 39. *octo praeterea oppida erant sub ditione Praenestinarum* (Livy 6.29.6, and see Oakley's [1997] note *ad loc.*, observing that they must have been conquered in the archaic period, when Praeneste, like Rome, expanded its territory).
 40. E.g. Livy 6.4.9-10. For archaeological evidence see Scullard (1967) 92-7; 102; 124-6; 132; etc.
 41. Thus Sherwin White (1973) 8-9.
 42. At present the standard works remain those of Blake (1947) 71-104; Lugli (1947) 294-307 (= Lugli [1965] 338-52); Lugli (1957) 51-165. Among recent accounts notice Quilici (1994); Kuhoff (1995) 68-87; and Miller (1995: *non vidi*). I am grateful to Tobias Fischer-Hansen for the latter references.
 43. Morselli & Tortorici (1982).
 44. Varro, *LL* 5.48, refers to an "earth wall" (*murus terreus*) at the Carinae, the valley between the Velia and the Esquiline. This may have marked the eastern boundary of the settlement at an early date.
 45. Strabo 5.3.7, p.234 C. Note, however, that the *agger* is attributed to Tarquinius Superbus by the Elder Pliny (*n.h.* 3.67).
 46. For the date, Livy 6.32.1. The phrases "Servian Wall" and "Wall of Servius" (*OCD*³, 1616) are modern, and have no ancient authority. Latinised concoctions, e.g. *murus Servii Tullii* (as in the standard topographical dictionaries: Platner-Ashby (1929) 350; Nash (1962) 2.104; Richardson (1992) 262), are therefore especially misleading. Steinby (1996) at

- least places it in quotation marks, thus: “‘Murus Servii Tullii’: mura republicane’. The classic study of the wall is Säflund (1930); see also *Roma medio-republicana* (1973) 7-31; Thomsen (1980) 218-35; (Cifani (1998).
47. Thomsen (1980) 218-35; Cornell (1995) 199.
 48. Coarelli (1982) 128. There are walls of a similar type at the fortified village on Monte Carbolino (Sermoneta) which must go back before the early sixth century when the village was abandoned (Coarelli [1982] 390-1).
 49. M.A. Tomei in *Enea nel Lazio* (1981), 58-9 (on the Aequi); Oakley (1995) (on the Samnites).
 50. E.g. Livy 2.48.4. In 9.45.17 he reports the capture of 30 *oppida* by the Romans (304 BC). Diodorus (20.101.5) gives the figure of 40, and describes them as *poleis*.
 51. Tarquinius: Romanelli (1948) 206-7; Caere: Pallottino (1959), 519; Veii: Ward Perkins (1959) 66-71; (1961) 32-9.
 52. I have discussed the nature of warfare in archaic central Italy in Cornell (1989) 291-4.
 53. According to tradition Cora and Signia were first established at the end of the sixth century by the last Roman king Tarquinius Superbus. Signia was refounded in 494; Norba dates from 492. On the polygonal walls see Coarelli (1982) 173 (Signia), 255 (Cora), 267 (Norba); in more detail, Brandizzi Vittucci (1968) 37-45 (Cora) and Cassieri (1997) (Signia).
 54. Lugli (1957) 135.
 55. Gabba (1972); a revised and updated version in Gabba (1994) 63-103, esp. 84-96.
 56. The story that Latinus was transformed into Jupiter Latiaris occurs only in Festus, s.v. *oscillantes*, p. 212 L, citing Cornificius, the author of a work *De etymis deorum*, written in the later first century BC. Note however that Grandazzi (1988) argues that the identification of Latinus and Jupiter Latiaris was early.
 57. The truce: Macrobius *Sat.* 1.16-17. For the banquet, see Dion. Hal. 4.49.3; peoples who shared the meat: Plin. *n.h.* 3.69; Liv. 32.1.9; 37.3.4. Discussion in Alföldi (1965) 19-25; Scullard (1981) 111-5.
 58. See Castagnoli (1974).
 59. See Gruen (1992) 24-5.
 60. For this and what follows, Cornell (1989) 265-9.
 61. The list of “peoples who used to take meat on the Alban Mount” in Pliny, *n.h.* 3.69, is evidently a relic of the pre-urban period in Latium. Brief discussion and further bibliography in Cornell (1995) 73-4.
 62. The suggestion that he was merely a religious official (Rudolph [1935] 12-18) has won few adherents; his contention that the text should read *dicator*, i.e. “(de)dicator”, instead of *dictator*, is not compelling and would not be decisive in any case. Sherwin White (1973) 13-14; Mazzarino (1945) 148-50; De Martino (1973) 115-6.
 63. Ampolo (1981); Cornell (1995) 298-9.
 64. *Praetor ad portam nunc salutatur is qui in provinciam pro praetore aut proconsule exit; cuius rei morem ait fuisse Cincius in libro de Consulibus Potestate talem: Albanos rerum potitos usque ad Tullum regem; Alba deinde diruta usque ad P. Decium Murem consulem populos Latinos ad caput Ferentinae, quod est sub monte Albano, consulere solitos et imperium communi consilio administrare; itaque quo anno Romanos imperatores ad exercitum mittere oporteret iussu nominis Latini conplures nostros in Capitolio a sole oriente auspicias operam dare solitos; ubi aves addixissent, militem illum qui a communi Latio missus est illum quem aves addix-*
erant praetorem salutare solitum qui eam provinciam optineret praetoris nomine.
- I would tentatively offer the following translation of this ambiguous passage: “Nowadays he is acclaimed praetor at the gate who leaves for his province as Pro-praetor or Pro-consul. The custom in this matter, as Cincius says in his book ‘On the Power of the Consuls’, used to be as follows: the Albans were in charge of affairs until king Tullus. Then, after Alba had been destroyed until the consulship of P. Decius Mus (340 BC), the Latin peoples used to deliberate at the Spring of Ferentina, which is beneath the Alban Mount, and to take decisions in common council concerning the command. And so in years when it was necessary for the Romans to send a commander to the army by order of the Latin name several of our people used to give attention to auspices on the Capitol at day-break. When the birds had given their decision, those soldiers who had been sent by the Latin community used to acclaim as praetor him whom the birds had nominated, who would obtain that assignment with the title of praetor.”
65. The nature of Latin rights during the Empire, and the question of who exactly possessed them, are disputed issues, but they need not concern us here. See Millar (1977) 630-5.
 66. Humbert (1978) 81-4.
 67. Ampolo (1970-71); Cristofani (1975).
 68. See the important remarks of Gauthier (1974).
 69. *Lex Flavia Municipalis* (= *Lex Malacitana*) 54 (in González [1986]); *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* (Crawford [1996] no.25) CV, 21.
 70. XII Tab. III.5 *ap.* Gell. *NA* 20.1.4-6 = Crawford (1996) II, 625.
 71. Thus Mommsen (1864) I, 110.
 72. Gaius Cluilius is called *rex* by Livy (1.22.7 etc.), but in other sources is called *strategos* (Dion. Hal. 3.9.2), *dux* (Festus p.48L and *Fragm. de praenomibus* 1), or *praetor* (Cato, *Origines* fr.22 P = I.22 Ch.). He may be the *rex Albai Longai* of Ennius 31 Sk.
 73. E.g. *CIL* XIV.2089 (Lanuvium): *C. Agilleius C. [f.] Mundus rex sacr., aed[il.], flamen Dial[is], I. S. m. r.*
 74. Here and throughout this section I am indebted to the work of Fay Glinister, who provides an exhaustive treatment of the evidence for kingship in ancient Italy in her unpublished PhD thesis: Glinister (1995).
 75. See Cornell (1995) 231-2; 460 n.61.
 76. Lanuvium: *CIL* XIV.2097; 2110, 2121; *CIL* I2 1428; 2121; Aricia: *CIL* XIV.2169; 2213; Tusculum: Livy 3.18.2; *CIL* XIV.212; Nomentum: *CIL* XIV. 3941; 3955; Fidenae: *CIL* XIV.4058
 77. Praeneste: *CIL* XIV.2890, 2902, 2906, 2960, 2994, 2999, 3008; Lavinium: *CIL* X.797; *CIL* XIV.171, 172; Cora: *CIL* X.6527; Velitrae: *CIL* X.6554 (the authenticity of this text, once widely questioned, now seems established: Panciera [1960] 12).
 78. Cébeillac Gervasoni (1998).
 79. On the magistracies of the Latin cities see in general Rosenberg (1913); Kornemann (1915); Beloch (1926) 488-522; Rudolph (1935); Mazzarino (1945); Sartori (1968); De Martino (1973) 113-7; Sherwin White (1973); Humbert (1978); Campanile & Letta (1979).
 80. Rudolph (1935).
 81. The criticisms of Sherwin White (1973) 62-5, and De Martino (1973) 114-22, seem to me decisive.
 82. Rosenberg (1913).
 83. Rosenberg (1913) 72.

84. Mazzarino (1945).
85. Renfrew & Cherry (1986).
86. On the origins of the plebeian organisation see Momigliano (1967); Richard (1978); Cornell (1995) 256-65.
87. Torelli (1984).
88. The extraordinary rules concerning tribunes of the plebs in the Oscan Law of Bantia are best accounted for by the assumption that the constitution of Bantia was copied from the charter of the nearby Latin colony of Venusia (Crawford [1996] II, 273). Venusia was founded in 290 BC, and this would account for the archaic character of the rules governing tenure of the tribunate, which was forbidden to persons who had held a magistracy – thus reflecting the situation that had existed at Rome before the *Lex Atinia* (Gell. *NA* 14.8.2).
89. The closest parallel is with the party conventions in the United States (Taylor [1966] ix). It is not wholly an accident that the practice of politics in the USA resembles that of Rome in many respects – nor that the best modern interpreters of Roman politics and political institutions have been Americans, e.g. George W. Botsford and Lily Ross Taylor.
90. Brown (1980) 5; 24-5; 27; 41; 46 n.11.
91. Notice the contrasting comments of Crawford (1981) 155, and Brunt (1988) 118 n.87. Both have some right on their side.
92. *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* (Crawford [1996] no.25) 101; other colonies known to have had tribes include Lilybaeum (*CIL* X.7233) and Corinth (Wiseman [1979] 497-8).
93. *Lex Irnitana* Ch. L; *Lex Malacitana* Ch. 55 (in González [1986]).
94. Crawford (1996) no.15, line 15.
95. On African *curiae* see Kotula (1968), who lists 132 texts mentioning *curiae*, and Gascou (1976). Jacques (1984) 381 believes that *curiae* in Africa are purely Roman. I am indebted to Graham Burton for these references.
96. *CIL* XIV. 2114, 2120.
97. Thus Mommsen (1905) 213.
98. The precise date and circumstances of this reform need not concern us here. It is sufficient to note that the local tribes were certainly in existence by 495 BC (Livy 2.21.7). See further Cornell (1995) 173 ff.
99. Rosenberg (1916) 117-27.
100. See Cornell (1995) 191.

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