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INDICE

Polis religion, lived religion, Etruscan religion. Thoughts on recent research

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This paper seeks to compare two recent books on archaic religion and sanctuaries, one, Sandrine Agusta-Boularot, Sandrine Huber et William van Andringa (eds), Quand naissent les dieux. Fondation des sanctuaires antiques: Motivations, agents, lieux focussing on the Greek world, and the other, Elisabetta Govi (ed.) La città etrusca e il sacro: santuari e istituzioni politiche, on the Etruscans. The importance of including the Etruscan paradigm in broader surveys of archaic Mediterranean religion, identifying both similarities and differences, is underlined. The current debate on polis religion is surveyed. Ways in which the evidence for Etruscan religious behaviour can be interpreted as a symbolic order, or in the light of notions of lived religion, are discussed. The paper concludes with a discussion of the supposedly distinctive feature of Etruscan religion, the books in which it was inscribed, and suggests new avenues for interpretation and research.

Introduction: Framing the question

Much of the popular fascination of the Etruscans has inevitably been bound up with their extensive necropoleis and painted tombs, revealing a lively and exciting culture and a rich conception of the afterlife. Much thought has been expended on the methodological challenges of moving from burial evidence and ritual to understanding society, and the debate and the results have been highly interesting. One of the great steps forward of the past fifty years of Etruscan archaeology however has been in revealing the richness and complexity of the practice of religion within and between communities, as part of daily life and lived experience. This is illustrated in tomb paintings and was the subject of fascinated observation by others in antiquity, and has come into significantly sharper focus as a result of many excavations. These include long-running and revolutionary work at Pyrgi and Tarquinia for instance. So what was Etruscan religion like? Who participated in it, and what difference did it make to them? What role did the practice and experience of religion play in the society of the time, and what is the basis for the observation by others that the Etruscans were somehow distinctive?

Surprisingly, given the richness of the material, Etruscan religion has been placed in a wider context rather infrequently. Their supposed distinctiveness has left them out of other debates. The resources available for Greek religion, for instance, have allowed scholars to take up a significant array of methodological positions (for a helpful bibliography see Chaniotis 2010). Amongst these, one of the most successful, but now controversial, models was that of *polis* religion, the idea that Greek religion was highly dependent on, isomorphic with and functionally supportive of the *polis* as a collective (Sourvinou-Inwood 1988; 1990). As Sourvinou-Inwood put it in the most famous statement of the thesis, «it was the ordered community, the polis, which assumed the role played in Christianity by the Church […] The polis provided the fundamental framework in which Greek religion operated […] the polis anchored, legitimated and mediated all religious activity». Moreover, the model posits that religion is at the very heart of the Greek *polis*, providing its «framework and symbolic focus» (Sourvinou-Inwood 1990).

Roman religion has been less easily characterised in this way. Although there was a clearly defined set of state cults and priesthoods at Rome, the evidence has pointed in different directions. Votive deposits, local continuities under Roman rule, the nature of the literary evidence which has been the focus of study, has tended to lead scholars to question the idea that there was a sim-

ple correlation between that state cult, or civic religion if one will, and the wider picture of individual religious behaviour. As a consequence, perhaps the most influential model for Roman religion now is that of lived religion, the study of the experience rather of religion rather than simply its performance, with an increasing emphasis being placed on individual choice and behaviour rather than on instrumentalism or dogmatism (Woolf 1997; Bendlin 2000; Rüpke 2012).

This has had a corresponding effect on the idea of Greek *polis*-religion. This idea was never monolithic and it is easy to make it less subtle than it was (Parker 2011; Shear 2012), but even so, there are increasing suggestions that it is important to read some of the focus on individual behaviour and choice back into the Greek evidence (Kindt 2009; Bremmer 2010; Eidinow 2011). In part this has involved looking at different evidence, turning away from the set-pieces for instance of the theatre or the production of grand civic festival to different kinds of sources. Many are from the period of the Roman empire, and are precisely the sources which encouraged a different view of Roman religion.

This dichotomy of Greek and Roman is of course a massive simplification of the nature of the Mediterranean world. We would find a significantly different range of responses and models to worship, individual devotion and the nexus with state power if we looked at Pharaonic Egypt, the Punic world or indigenous settlements in for instance Spain or southern France. That is not to say that religion operates on any ethnic lines; rather that local forms and histories are the critical contingencies which shape the encounter with the transcendent. However, there is no shortage of general theories of religion, which look to form overarching theses about the role of the transcendent, the relationship with community and power, and the mechanisms by which religion perpetuates, or is perpetuated, or indeed fails, within society. Understanding religion is inevitably a dialogue between general propositions and specific circumstances.

This paper is concerned with thinking through the case of the Etruscans within an albeit limited comparative perspective. The apparent significance of religion for the Etruscans, and particularly religious knowledge and rules, has usually been the point of emphasis in modern accounts, and has been based on clear statements in the ancient etic sources. Moreover, the predominance of votive and sanctuary evidence in the archaeological evidence, and the heavy emphasis on dedications in the epigraphy of Etruria, which is almost our only textual evidence from the Etruscans themselves, has encouraged this emphasis[1].

At the same time, there has been a long-standing tendency in art historical discussions to use comparison as a method to locate the Etruscans within the broader Mediterranean paradigm, but too often as a recipient of influence. As this has begun to change, the risk has been to increase the notion of Etruscan agency, but only in the direction of choosing to become more like the Greeks, and, ultimately, the Romans. As a heuristic device, thinking of the Etruscans as essentially on the same cultural and socio-political spectrum as Greek *poleis* has some advantages, particularly given the absence of Etruscan source material as rich as that from Athens in particular. It also has significant disadvantages, since it can rapidly become a way of flattening the distinctiveness of the Etruscan case, and it understates the diversity of the Greek *polis* (Riva 2018; D'Agostino 1998; see Hansen, Nielsen 2004 for over 1000 Greek *poleis*).

The consequence has been that a very large body of evidence from Etruscan sites has been met with a relatively weak methodological framework; in other words the specific circumstances and instantiations of religious behaviour have not on the whole been contextualized within broader propositions about the role of religion. To a significant extent, Etruscan religion has been regarded as highly dogmatic, highly functional and often both. The intention of this paper is to look at recent thinking about *polis* religion, and to try to offer some preliminary thoughts as to why, how and to what extent Etruscan religion might be distinctive. I should state from the outset that I do not wish to privilege the Greek *polis* as the only natural partner to the Etruscan city-state, though I do think that comparison between roughly contemporary Mediterranean communities of roughly similar size is heuristically valuable (for discussion of the Mediterranean paradigm, see for example Harris 2014). It is the process of thinking through a much better attested religious world, one that has seen very precisely the intersection between local practice and overarching theory, which encourages me to believe that we can develop a different level of analysis for the Etruscan world.

[1]   The bibliography on Etruscan religion is enormous. Important statements include Torelli 1986; Gaultier and Briquel (eds.) 1997; Jannot 1998; Bonghi Jovino, Chiesa, Bagnasco Gianni (eds.) 2005; de Grummond 2006; de Grummond and Simon (eds.) 2006; Gleba and Becker (eds.) 2009; van der Meer (ed.) 2010; van der Meer 2011; and various summary essays in Turfa (ed.) 2013, Bell and Carpino (eds.) 2016 and Naso (ed.) 2017.

Since the material available is enormous, I intend to use as a starting point the excellent recent volume of essays edited by Elisabetta Govi on Etruscan cities and religion (Govi 2017).

The city and the sacred

Govi's volume, arising from a 2016 conference as part of *PRIN* (Progetti di Ricerca di Interesse Nazionale) project based at the University of Bologna represents the most up-to-date overview of religious architecture and institutions in Etruria. Twenty chapters cover evidence from a variety of Etruscan sites from the early Iron Age to the archaic period, with some considerations of later material. The volume also offers comparative views of Rome, Campania, Magna Graecia and the mid-Adriatic region. The key aim was to analyse the dialectic between «le forme del sacro» and political institutions.

By coincidence, the volume came out at the same time as a rich and invaluable École française de Rome volume, edited by Sandrine Agusta-Boularot, Sandrine Huber and William van Andringa in 2017 (itself part of a wider research project), on the foundation of sanctuaries from the eighth century onwards, which in part covered the same period as Govi's volume. Their project focuses on the motivations, places and agents involved in sanctuary creation (Smith 2019).

It is striking that the only area which both volumes treat is the middle Adriatic; and it is somehow symptomatic of the way that the Etruscans can be sidelined that an entire volume on sanctuary foundation can omit one of the largest and richest bodies of evidence. Placing the two volumes side by side is interesting, and if the focus here is on the way that each volume shows up gaps in the other, that is only to emphasise that this fortuitous pairing of material can offer a helpful starting point for new research.

Although neither volume explicitly embraces a strong methodological point of view, the research questions inevitably push both volumes towards a functional and politically driven model. Agusta-Boularot, Huber and van Andringa have few if any examples where personal agency is divisible from political life. What is clear from their volume, and is highlighted by Lippolis in his outstanding conclusion, is that both politics and religion go a long way down the social scale, certainly in later periods, and perhaps earlier too, though more invisibly.

The strength of *Quand naissent les dieux* is in the ways in which it forces to the surface process of choice and decision-making in the development of religious space, and Lippolis takes this further by talking about the creation of a social system. Perhaps the most obvious theoretical step is to think about the ways in which the creation of particularly kinds of space then constrain and inspire certain forms of behaviour, and the recursive nature of the ways in which that behaviour reinforces the "specialness" of the space. Here space and action interpenetrate. This model, familiar to readers of Bourdieu for instance, is in many ways critical to both volumes, even if implicitly (Bourdieu 1977; for further work on the now ubiquitous spatial turn see for instance Laurence and Newsome 2011; Scott 2013).

Much of the volume focuses on periods where literary and epigraphic evidence can assist analysis, although this is less true when the volume looks at Gaul and Iberia. The gap then between these case studies and the Etruscan examples, where there is practically no helpful information, is significant. However, there are clearly parallels that imply that similar models underpin the two accounts, and where Govi's volume well illustrates the range of available material.

If we start with Bartoloni and Sarracino's analysis of Veii, the earliest evidence from Piazza d'Armi in the ninth and eighth centuries BC, including a hut and burial which was respected over time for nearly four centuries; then we see the multiplication of cult sites in the sixth and fifth centuries which reflects the development of the community. This is similar to Rome at the same period. From the commemoration of the power of ancestors, the community develops several deities, and several different spaces (Govi 2017: 1-24).

A similar process appears to be dimly visible as the archaeological record at Verucchio becomes richer and more complex. Here, at Veii and also at Tarquinia and elsewhere, the processes include not only the multiplication of cult, but also the cancelling of cult, the definitive closure of spaces. At Volterra for instance, the reorganization of the acropolis in the mid-fifth century includes the replacement of a small archaic temple with a larger one. At Gravisca too there is a significant period hiatus before a major restructuring, also in the fifth century.

One could multiply the examples. The point is that at a certain point a start is made in exceptional commemorations, then in monumentalizing space connected to divine activity, and then again at a certain point there are indications of both duplication and refashioning.

Another important theme is the prominence of the sacred in the urban landscape. Apart from the proliferation, we also see glimpses of the scale of the religious. In the instances of Pyrgi and Gravisca, the ratio between sacred (even if not monumental) architecture and "other" architecture is extremely high; or to put it better, almost all the space is sacralized. Although both sites were active ports, and there is perhaps more to be discovered or hypothesised regarding the purely functional elements of their operation, the importance of the sanctuary element in the spatial organization is overwhelming. Even in sites where there is significantly more evidence for habitation and funerary spaces, the temple evidence is highly visible. A good if hitherto unusual example is Marzabotto, where the reorganization of the town led to five temples in all and increased the area given over to the sacred. Acropolis sites and extra-mural temples add to the combination of visibility and spatial distribution.

The last theme which I want to draw out is how Govi's collection is able to address the political part of the project. Here there is perhaps something of a sleight of hand, or slip of language, in that the *istituzioni politiche* of the title refer both to political organization, for instance in the case of political change at Pyrgi, possibly Veii and Tarquinia, and in Sassatelli's outstanding survey of northern Etruria, and to civic institutions, the fabric of the *polis*. In the case of Stopponi and Giacobbi's analysis of Campo della Fiera at Orvieto, now regularly identified as Fanum Voltumnae (Govi 2017: 121-44; cf. Della Fina 2012), the two overlap substantially and moreover, both political change and civic structure are magnified to the federal level.

These three themes, the organization of space (with a special focus on the multiplication of cult), the scale of space, and the political implications (in the broadest sense) of sacred space are by no means the only themes in this rich collection, but they are the ones around which I want to focus the remainder of this discussion. I want to begin with some observations about the way that the *polis* religion model has been reconsidered recently, with a focus on an extremely important volume by Julia Kindt (Kindt 2012), and then look at the way Etruscan religion has been characterized as a result of the nature of the sources we have.

Rethinking polis religion

«The model of *polis*-religion now stands besieged on all sides.» Thomas Harrison's elegant review essay demonstrated the range of objections which have been developed to the model of *polis*-religion, or rather, to various ideas of what *polis*-religion might mean (Harrison 2015). The warning of the danger of objecting to something never really proposed is as legitimate as the problem that there are really rather different models sitting under the same umbrella title.

Downplaying the role of the individual and of belief, and emphasising the closeness of the overlap between religion and the *polis*, the extent to which they were isomorphic in the Greek world, are two of the characteristics of the Oxford model of *polis*-religion, as it has been described. However, even the critiques of this version of *polis*-religion are often concerned with «organization, policing, control» or their absence, and with trying to understand Greek religion through opposition to particular models of other religion, especially dogmatic Christianity. The discovery of the individual, the uncontrolled, the non-prescribed is what characterises to an extent the critique of *polis*-religion, but this is often found in opposition or alongside what one might term civic religion.

To a significant degree, the critique of the model is in fact a tacit or explicit acceptance of much of what *polis*-religion claimed, but a denial that it is sufficient as a model of Greek religion (see Shears 2012 for the same point). The existence of a wider and larger context is what is being claimed. As Kindt puts it in what is the most persuasive and thorough-going rereading, «what we need in particular is a different notion of culture, in which religion is not merely part of a single hegemonic discourse but rather a vibrant symbolic medium for different and competing (power-) discourses, including, though not limited to, the discourse of the official polis institutions» (Kindt 2012: 6).

Kindt goes on to suggest that «rather than speaking of polis religion, we may therefore prefer to state that Greek religion was embedded in Greek culture with the polis as its paradigmatic worshipping group» (Kindt 2012: 19). This is a direct reference to the problem of agency, and is particularly interesting in the context of the account of sanctuary dedication. It is easy to fall into the language of assigning agency to "Athens" or "Rome" rather than to being more precise, and of course without the specific documentary evidence, one is left with hypotheses. However, the dedication of sanctuaries is a good example of where the extent to which one can specify agency beyond some formal conception of the community is limited due to the gaps in our knowledge of the political structures of archaic ancient societies; what is at stake, then, is the extent to which

that conception of the community may have been contested and what role religion may have played in that contestation.

For the purposes of this account, Kindt's chapter on political power and sacred symbols in ancient Greece and in social anthropology is particularly interesting (Kindt 2012: 55-89). Common to many *polis*-religion theories is the notion of the religion as a symbolic system. This, as Kindt notes, is an idea which is closely associated with Clifford Geertz. If religion is a cultural system, it may produce an array of symbols which then need to be interpreted to understand the culture. Although highly semiotic, Geertz was also interested in historical and political context, though perhaps insufficiently; it is easy to see however how his definition of religion could be brought to bear on a more diachronic and politicised interpretation. Geertz defined religion as follows (1993: 90): 1) a system of symbols which acts to 2) establish powerful, pervasive, and longlasting moods and motivations in men by 3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and 4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that 5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.

The functionality of religion consists in the way it addressed the «fundamental human need to create meaning». However, it is also easy to see how easily assimilable this meaning is to political order. If Geertz's male bias is partly a reflection of the linguistic choices of the time, it is also part of a tacit assumption that religion is about making sense of traditional political orders.

Kuper's essay on culture takes up Geertz's self-identification within a fundamentally Durkheimian paradigm. For Kuper, Geertz's definition of the symbolic system starts from a reassuring beginning. «Religious symbols assure us that the world is orderly, and so they satisfy a fundamental need to escape the chances of an absurd and irrational universe». The problem is history; «in situations of social change, sacred symbols can no longer speak so clearly to social realities». Thus we see the emergence of ideologies which seek to reinterpret the world (Kuper 2009, quote at 101).

It is interesting that Kindt stops short of considering the challenges raised by Geertz's remarkable late monograph, *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Geertz 1980). The fundamental argument is that the Balinese state in its precolonial phase existed not to manage war or irrigation, but to manage the theatre and opera of the court. This is a highly cognitive picture of a world «governed by ideas, expressed in symbols, enacted in rituals». Inevitably, this separation of culture and politics, the argument that the court is to a degree, or better purports to be, an ahistorical place, has been much criticised and Kuper lays this out[2]. There is something profoundly idealist about this vision, and as such it seems to become highly relevant to the way in which *polis*-religion as a model remained at a very high level of culture. It is precisely when one steps out of this, for instance into the world of magic, or when one focuses on inconsistencies, or non-Attic material, that the coherence of *polis*-religion starts to falter. This however argues again for the model being incomplete rather than unacceptable.

In the light of these arguments, Kindt is right to be surprised that Geertz has not been used more in classic studies of Greek religion (although he was a significant influence on Sourvinou-Inwood, and has perhaps been more visible in accounts of Roman religion, including Mithraism and ruler cult; Beck 2006; Price 1984). However she also develops an argument that perhaps edges beyond Geertz in its potential historical utility by insisting that «religious symbols were active players in the negotiation of socio-political power» (Kindt 2012: 89) and illustrating this through the historically specific example of the dedication of the metallic wealth of the Thirty Tyrants, melted down by the restored democracy and used for religious processions (see Shear 2012 for a rather similar argument around the cult of the tyrannicides, but seeing this less as a challenge for the *polis*-religion model).

Kindt works this example hard to demonstrate that «Religious symbols […] shaped and were shaped by the power discourses permeating Greek culture and society». How is this different from a straightforwardly *polis*-religion account? The critical issue is that the process is two-directional. Symbolic capital can be used by the wealthy elite in religious contexts, but religion can also repurpose symbolic capital. As Kindt says, using the work of Jean and John Comaroff, «socio-political power structures are involved in the production and shaping of symbols just as they are themselves shaped by them. […] The socio-political power of

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[2]   For a highly positive account of Geertz see Inglis 2000. The metaphor of cultures as texts to be interpreted was challenged by for instance Keesing 1987; Roseberry 1989; White 2007; Hoffman 2009; Laidlaw 2018; cf Kuper 1999: 75-121 for a balanced account. Graeber and Sahlins 2017: 61 note laconically on *Negara* that 'Geertz (1980) was right to speak of a Balinese "theatre state". So were those who criticized him for underplaying its material dimension.'

Greek religion must be seen as grounded to a significant extent in the persuasive and authoritative power of its symbols» (Kindt 2012: 82).

In developing this idea, I would like to try to build on a recent volume of essays which I co-edited with Claudia Moser, and which focused on the economic aspects of religion (Moser and Smith 2019). We also looked to see how religion offered the possibility of revaluation, or the transformation of value as we termed it. Our concern was to step beyond an analysis of what the economic realities of religion were, and to get closer to ideas about how religion operated transformatively, and to use Kindt's language, to ground material culture in «the persuasive and authoritative power of its symbols». Our various examples offered a variety of contexts in which we argued that religion operated transformatively, and significantly, we also focused on votive activity, which Kindt too identified as a critical area for further study in the Greek context.

In the volume, we referred to David Graeber's important account of value, but perhaps made insufficient use of his theory of production (Graeber 2002; I owe this point to Corinna Riva). In brief, Graeber argued that rethinking production, and taking Marx's arguments more carefully than has sometimes been done, has the possibility of creating a powerful theory of action. This has three stages:

«1. An effort to fulfill perceived needs on the part of the producer (these, as Marx notes, must always include basic necessities like food and shelter, but are never limited to this). It also includes the key insight that "objects" exist in two senses: not just as physical objects that actually exist in the world, but also, insofar as they are present in someone's (some subject's) consciousness, as objects of that subject's action in some sense or another – even if this is only in the minimal sense of active observation and study. […]

2. Humans being social creatures, this also means producing a system of social relations (families, clans, guilds, secret societies, government ministries, etc.,) within which people coordinate their productive actions with one another. In part this also means that production also entails.

3. producing the producer as a specific sort of person (seamstress, harem eunuch, movie star, etc.). In cooperating with others, a person defines herself in a certain way – this can be referred to as the "reflexive" element in action. It also usually means being ascribed certain sorts of power or agency, or actually acquiring them.»

Graeber then adds that: «The process is always open-ended, producing new needs as a result

of (1), (2) and (3) and thus bearing within it the potential for its own transformation.» (Graeber 2002: 58-9).

In this way production is always to some extent bound up in the symbolic, and a critical issue is the choice wherein to locate value. That is to say that value is always somewhere related to a human quality, «whether this be the creative potential of human action, or fertility, or the like, or particular histories and identities that have already been achieved» (Graeber 2002: 211); but societies manage this in very different ways. Religion fits in as part of the symbolic order which helps to project the human world onto a transcendent order, and thereby reproduce value systems which arise in social relations and attempt to secure those relations, or explain their demise.

If *polis*-religion is to some extent characterized by the functionalist utilization of ritual to confirm existing hierarchies, (though no-one would argue that this is all that *polis*-religion does), the value of the insistence on the role of religion as transforming value is that it offers a more dynamic model, but also one in which we can read the symbolic order as imbricated in the continuing production of individuals and their relationships. Geertz's high notion of the cognitive world can be understood as acting on individuals through the operation of the value systems which depend on it; and we can begin to overcome to an extent the notion of the theatre state utterly separated from the worlds of politics and economics. What has elsewhere been called the scaffolding of sovereignty is manufactured at many different levels, ritualized and contested throughout the processes of production and reflection upon those processes (Ben-Dor Benite, Geroulanos, Jerr 2018).

Kindt's notion of religion as symbolic order fits then with our insistence that the value of objects is radically transformed by ritualization and sacralization, and that this is bound up with the notion of the production and reproduction of social relations. Before turning to literary evidence, I want to pursue these ideas into the heart of the sanctuary and the temple. What do sanctuaries do in terms of value transformation and the production of symbolic order?

Sanctuaries and the Symbolic Order

a)   Construction

From an experiential point of view, the construction of tile-roofed temples on high podia behind a row of columns represented a major

change in the urban landscape (Thomas and Meyers 2013). In terms of technology, scale, appearance and the reorientation of space the temple was significantly innovative. This raises questions in itself. What motivated this move? Is emulation is a sufficient explanation for the spread of temples? Who made the relevant choices? To what extent was this elite-led and to what extent should we see the agency of the builders?

Another set of questions relates to worship and the objects of worship. Does the introduction of new architectural forms have any impact on the deities being worshipped? Can we identify changes in ritual practice? Do the processes entailed in the production of temples transform the production of social relations and individual roles?

Charlotte Potts' challenging thesis on the development of monumental religious architecture in the early sixth century BC is that whilst emulation and external influence may all be relevant, the critical motivation for the shift from smaller cult shrines to podium temples was their role in «facilitating effective and beneficial encounters, not just between mortals and gods, but also communities and cultures». The temples were «a phenomenon fundamentally tied to, and indeed a mechanism for fostering, contact and interaction» (Potts 2015, quotes at 121).

It is interesting to set this alongside the development of religious architecture in seventh century Greece. Commenting on Osborne's notion of a religious boom in seventh century Attica, Prost, Aurigny, Saint-Pierre Hoffmann and Brisart in a volume dedicated to the seventh century BC in Greece note that whilst we see similar situations elsewhere, the rhythms and specifics differ (Prost, Aurigny, Saint-Pierre Hoffmann and Brisart 2010; cf Osborne 1989). The constant feature is that communities enter a phase of religious expansion when urban reorganization and funerary expenditure is contracting. They add, and this is also evident from the evidence presented in *Quand Naissent les Dieux*, that in many instances there is an expansion of religious expression and a loosening of monopolistic elite control of the access to the gods, with evidence of increased numbers of sanctuaries, both urban and extra-urban, and more votive material. In addition, we have the phenomena of panhellenic sanctuaries at Corinth, Olympia and Delphi to consider (Morgan 2002); and the very different dynamics of the colonies in the west. As Catherine Morgan writes in another volume on the seventh century, «the 'innocent' question of why early Greeks built temples opens discussion of factors ranging from the definition

and interpretation of human and material agency to matters of tradition, innovation and memorialization» (Morgan 2017: 193).

All that must be admitted, but at the same time, if we hold on to the notion of the interaction between the symbolic world and political realities, we should be looking for the meaning of these architectural innovations somewhere in the relationship between production, value and the creation of social relationships. Importantly, this is not to make a claim for stability, for as we have seen, if religious symbolism is given its proper relationship to discourses of power, it is both affected by but also impacts upon social reality.

This takes us beyond one to one identifications of architectural change and historical event. To take an example given by Morgan (2017), at Thermon in central Aetolia, where we have evidence of a wealthy late Protogeometric elite, a *megaron* was destroyed in the late ninth or early eighth century. The area within the ruin was repurposed for cult activity, with a store room, a paved area for burnt sacrifices, and *bothroi* for animal and metal deposits, an altar, and various modifications. Around 630 BC, an archaic temple swept all this away. So here we have apparent discontinuities, and it is perhaps better to understand them not as the products of single political events so much as the outcome of prolonged thinking within a spatial context about relationships between humans and place, humans and humans, and humans and gods. This microhistorical approach must be right, and complicates simplistic political or architectural narratives, but also shows the value of Kindt's overall approach both at the level of the *polis* and at the level of whatever we want to call eighth-century Thermon.

This inevitably takes us to some kind of account of Greek elites, and how they operated within the context of their communities in the seventh century. Alain Duplouy's influential work *Le Prestige des élites* has argued for a constant struggle for place and recognition through *modes de reconnaissance sociale* (Duplouy 2006; cf now Fisher and van Wees 2015). Emphasising the role of individuals rather than stable unchanging structures, Duplouy places competition as a central aspect of the ancient Greek world. The social practices of commensality, ritual sacrifice, war, marriage, celebration of the dead all then take their place within a world in which aristocracy is performed not given.

Conversely, we might say, this attempt to "produce an aristocrat" has to be understood along the grain of the symbolic culture of the time; in other words, what is valued, what is fetishized, what

is projected onto the sphere of transcendence, should reflect the notion of what it means to have power within a community, and that as the constant struggle via the *modes de reconnaissance sociale* plays out, it will do so in direct and constant dialogue with that symbolic system. Put another way, where power is unable to replicate itself perfectly, this itself opens up the possibilities for change.

To bring this back to spatiality and architecture, let us consider briefly three examples.

First, Kindt's own suggestion of the transformation of the wealth of the Thirty Tyrants into wealth available for religious processions has parallels in the Roman world. One thinks of the confiscation of the property of *adfectatores regni* and its conversion; although the stories were no doubt subsequently elaborated, they may reflect structural realities (see Neel 2015). A powerful example is Valerius Publicola's own rededication of his house on the top of the Velia as the temple of Vica Pota (Torelli 2016). The strange transformation of the *ager* and the *bona Tarquiniorum* into the Campus Martius and the Tiber Island respectively is another example. There is I suspect a very strong understanding of the potential transformative nature of dedication, and this connects clearly to the idea of what is *sacer*.

Second, Kindt refers to the way that festivals and sacrifices can challenge everyday life. «Rather than a simple representation of social structures, such processions (and the festivals to which they belonged) are seen as reformulating social structures through the temporary inversion of the ordinary» (Kindt 2012: 69). This is common in anthropological literature. Kindt refers to Pisistratus' use of a processional trope to draw attention to his claim to power. The question of whether this ever happened is perhaps less significant than the fact that the story was clearly recounted, and the fiction that Pisistratus was indeed Herakles was both believed and disbelieved.

The association with Herakles and Athena recurs elsewhere in central Italy too (Bradley 2005); and one might suspect that something intriguing lies behind the story of Tarquinius Priscus' fateful chariot ride to Rome. The recurrent motif of a magistrate riding in a procession, which we see in Etruscan sarcophagi for instance, may be a quieter version of these highly symbolic journeys, which are also journeys towards change (Lambrechts 1959).

The absence of adequate literary evidence hampers here, but one might also bring in festivals such as the Equus October, the Regifugium and the Poplifugia, all of which have something to do with kingship and community. The Lupercalia is another festival with strong aristocratic connections, but also a communal aspect. All of these festivals use the built landscape, the network of archaic roads, temples and shrines, as a spatial index. This theatre of kingship and community is performed in the historical period largely by the elite. It follows from our argument however that we cannot simply write this as the functional celebration of the isomorphism of city-state and religion. There are too many inconsistencies for that (cf. Versnel 1988-94); and such an interpretation would miss the way that religious symbolism constrains, co-produces and responds to political change. One could argue that the enactment of past moments of change is a way of deferring future moments of change, but it is perhaps simultaneously true that it encourages reflection on the possibility of change, the permission to imagine the world as different.

Third, returning to Potts' argument about architecture as enabling contact and interaction, this can be writ large as part of a much wider process in which knowledge and deployment of the outside, the foreign, was a *mode de reconnaissance sociale*. The capacity to deploy and internalise the foreign is a critical aspect of what we call, unhelpfully, orientalising (Riva, Vella 2010). The beautiful temple was also a canvas for the external or exotic to be brought into the city, its power deployed visibly as the backcloth to elite and communal performance. The very openness to elite social mobility can be seen as reflecting and being shaped by a wider symbolism, which was itself through myth, ritual and art the product of a close engagement with the transcendent world of other cultures. By this I mean specifically that there is a connection between mobility of people and mobility of ideas, and that this is underpinned by an ideology of productive motion – the most obvious example being the figure of Herakles/Melqart/Hercle (Bonnet, Bricault 2016).

At Pyrgi, the combination of external connections and knowledge, religious syncretism, powerful artistic decoration and political change come together. The story of Thefarie Velianas' dedication of a shrine to Uni/Astarte alongside the Phoenicians is as emblematic of the much longer processes of production, value and symbolism as it is an exemplary moment of the convergence of those processes in a single space and time (Michetti 2015; Bellelli 2016).

b)   Consumption and circulation

So far we have argued for the form of the temple or sanctuary as being produced by and in-

volved in the imperfect reproductions of power. This moves on from a *polis*-religion model by insisting on the transformative symbolic capacity of the religious sphere. Production is inextricably linked to future value, and when we think of value we rapidly move to consumption. A major collection of essays in 2015 looked directly and specifically at the notion of consumption and sanctuaries, and this is our next port of call (Kistler, Öhlinger, Hoernes and Mohr 2015).

The theoretical underpinnings of the volume are derived from Appadurai's notions of circulation and globalization (Appadurai 1996; 2010a; 2010b). Appadurai's own view of consumption insists on its repetitive nature, its association with habit, and its intimate relationship to the body. It is not difficult then to move to rites of passage and seasonality; and thence to the world of the gift in which transfer of objects and shared consumption characteristically marks moments of heightened social interaction. This brings in the necessity of thinking chronologically, because gift-giving often involves action over time. As Appadurai puts it, «For our purposes, [the lapse of time between various acts of gifting] suggests that the rhythms of accumulation and divestiture that generate particular states of material wealth in many societies are products not of mechanical distributions of goods or of predictable patterns of gifting but of complex calculative sequences, built, like other agonistic forms, on shared understandings of style but considerable latitude in strategy» (Appadurai 1996: 69).

Within this, the object consumed is neither innocent nor silent; it has its own genealogy, its own biography. That genealogy depends on movement; «If the genealogy of cultural forms is about their circulation across regions, the history of these forms is about their ongoing domestication into local practice» (Appadurai 1996: 19).

Appadurai returned substantially to these concerns from the perspective of circulation in its account of the role of the local in affirming the existence of a global world. He concentrated on the importance of the circulation of forms, and here he worked up from kinds of objects to more abstract forms such as the novel or the nation (and the two, as Benedict Anderson among others has shown have something in common). The forms may exist at quite a high level (I suspect that Appadurai is playing slightly with the notion of the Platonic Form here), but they have then to be grounded in local practice, and are inevitably shaped by that practice. «Thus the circulation of forms draws our attention to the ways

in which globally circulating forms – through the work of the imagination – produce localities not by the hybridization of contents – of art, ideology or technology – but by the negotiation and mutual tension between each other. It is this negotiation which creates the complex containers which further the actual contents of local practice.» Appadurai goes on to argue that «the forms of circulation and the circulation of forms create the conditions for the production of locality, as a site, a context and a container for the negotiation between forms» (Appadurai 2010a).

It is immediately evident how close we are to the world which Potts describes, where temples are spaces in which circulating forms of knowledge, encapsulated in genealogically rich objects and symbolically rich stories and ritual practices are shared, exchanged and reproduced inexactly and innovatively.

In their summary to the volume, Kistler, Öhlinger, Hoernes and Mohr (2015: 493-540) also play with the idea of form, and look at how typology can encode meaning. An example is the pearl rim basins (*lebetai*), which are found across the central Mediterranean, were possibly used in feasting and seem to have been appropriate as victory prizes in games. They retained their traditional shape and form, and perhaps thereby their value, which was incommensurate with their technical difficulty, and were incorporated into practices of aristocratic "reconnaissance sociale"[3]. At the same time, other forms of circulation include the forms of *emporia*, the forms of hospitality and *xenia* – and here it is possible that some athletic competition might be added, given the colocation with elite funerals and display – and forms of memory, for instance through what the authors call «vertical circulation», the deployment of heirlooms or archaizing forms as metaphors of (perhaps allegedly) traditional knowledge.

In a massive and innovative collection on the archaeology of globalization edited by Tamar Hodos, Peter van Dommelen insists that we should be looking at «how local receptions, selections, adaptations and rejections of meanings and

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[3]   On pearl rim basins see Kistler, Öhlinger, Hoernes and Mohr 2015: 507-8; Kistler 2014. The suggestion that they are visible as prizes on the Tomba degli Auguri, between the two wrestlers, receives confirmation from the deposition of one in a tomb at Cumae, with the inscription «I was offered (as a prize) at the (funeral) games of Onomastos, son of Pheidileos». See on this Thuillier 1995.

practices shaped and transformed those 'global' influences and created the 'global mélange'» (van Dommelen 2017: 629; Hodos 2017). However, the emphasis on consumption leaves this discussion at a fundamentally elite level, as indeed does the use of actor network theory which, because of the evidence in part, can become an account of aristocratic horizontal social mobility.

What is striking in our context is how similar this problem at the heart of the globalization debate is to the critique of *polis*-religion. If *polis*-religion leaves too much and too many out, the same can be said of the focus on globalized consumption and circulation. What Kindt's critique of *polis*-religion offers us an additive rather than a contradictory model. In other words, we can still talk of some of the isomorphisms between *polis* and religion, as long as we also remember that these are not exclusive, that we need to think of constant renegotiation through practice, and that we need to recognise the power of the symbolic world. So too any concentration on the 'global mélange' must be tempered by the clear recognition that, as Govi's collection shows, local diversity is critical to understanding the dynamics of political and religious action.

The picture offered by Kistler, Öhlinger, Hoernes and Mohr can be associated with such complexity, even though they are often tempted to speak of trans-Mediterranean flows and pan-Mediterranean patterns. A lot was happening in the world at the same time as elites were imperfectly reproducing themselves through assimilated "modes de reconnaissance sociale". Material culture was not entirely about elite-owned and transferred *orientalia*. Sanctuary space and ritual knowledge were not homogenous across the Mediterranean, and even if processes of syncretism were at work, they do not seem to have been perfect. We can illustrate this quickly with two examples.

As Zuchtriegel argues in his presentation of the material from Latium, consumption patterns were distinctive, even if influenced by external forms of circulation and circulations of forms (Zuchtriegel 2015). Nature cult sites give way in the later eighth century to sanctuaries near or in settlements, and characterised by deposits of banquet vessels. These banquets are transformations of what was previously found in Latin domestic or funerary contexts. Sixth century forms of pottery include local imitations of Greek forms. But Zuchtriegel, using unpublished evidence from Gabii, suggests that the Italo-geometric pottery found there may have been locally manufactured, as were the votive figurines. In other words, this would imply a local set of roles and technologies, supporting consumption in the sanctuary. Then, as elsewhere in Latium, but not in Etruria, banqueting luxury reduces significantly. If the ethos of austerity is at work here, then we might be seeing one of the ways in which the symbolic order was shaped and shaped by discourses of power, which are distinctive to the region.

The place where the overlap between sanctuary, circulation and consumption is closest would appear to be the coastal emporic sanctuaries. In both Pyrgi and Gravisca, we also see highly local practices of votive deposition, often closely related to iterative ritual practices and sequences (Baglione, Belelli Marchesini, Carlucci, Gentili, Michetti 2015, cf. Baglione, Michetti 2017; Fiorini 2015, cf. Fiorini, Torelli 2017). There is also evidence which suggests both addition of cults and differentiation of space. A snapshot of either site around 500 BC would show multiple forms, multiple circulations and multiple practices, and perhaps a degree of social diversity. A focus on consumption should lead us to think about the way these sanctuaries contextualized the constitution of value and social relationships. The variety of practice and multiplicity of nodes within sites suggests that the overlap between religion and civic structures will not be complete, but we turn now to one area where they may be closest.

c)   Codification

One of the most interesting questions raised by Pyrgi and Gravisca, and the Forum Boarium at Rome, which is formally rather different but has intriguing overlaps (Coarelli 1988; Brocato, Terrenato 2012; Brocato, Terrenato, Ceci 2016), is what the presence of the gods is doing specifically with regard to the process of exchange which is visible in these port sites. In the previous section we concentrated on circulation and consumption. Here I would like to look more closely at consumption and codification.

Whilst we now are less demanding of the exactitude of ritual practice, after Humphrey and Laidlaw's brilliant demonstration (2004) of the difference between the external perception that a ritual was variable and the worshippers' firm belief that it was the same every time, we can expect that in places of heightened ritualization such as temples and sanctuaries, more care will have been taken over process. We may see this in the sequences of pottery found at Pyrgi and Gravisca, or hinted at in the deposits at Satricum (Bouma, Prummel 1996). Another aspect of process is temporal. The development of chronological se-

quences – annual rites, for instance – alongside other markers of temporal progress are a necessary part of the management of communal action and worship. Temporal markers in the Pyrgi inscriptions are a good example; one thinks also of the chronological functions of the *rex sacrorum* and *pontifex maximus* at Rome and the annual rite of fixing a nail in the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus Capitolinus, also a Volsinian practice (Livy 7.5.3-7).

One of the distinctive features of the emporic sanctuaries may have been the oversight of exchange. How archaic Italians and their visitors managed the fairness of commerce and the process of arbitration is difficult to see, but we may catch a glimpse in the striking inscription on an east Greek amphora at Gravisca, *hydrie metrie*, fair measure (Fiorini 2005: 181). By the time we get to the Roman-Carthaginian treaties, we see evidence of arbitration mechanisms (Scardigli 1991). It has consequently been suggested that the sacralised marketplace was a locus of regulation. The notion of fair exchange, and indeed of its opposite, trickery, are clearly visible in the Roman god Mercury (whose temple near the Circus Maximus is dedicated early in the fifth century (Combet-Farnoux 1980), but this is still likely to have been at least somewhat *ad hoc* in the archaic period. Roman law worked through highly personalised processes. The establishment of trust was probably similarly personal and one thinks of Riva's convincing account of the personal element of Etruscan trading in southern France (Riva 2017).

The outcome of exchange is transfer of ownership. The role of property and ownership in the development of the city-state is critical, and beginning to receive new attention, particularly in the area of land ownership (Mackil 2017). In this respect, in terms of emporic sanctuaries and urban and peri-urban temples, it is noteworthy that the notion of land which was dedicated to the gods must have been clear. Distinguishing that which is not for ordinary use, or at least not without significant desacralization processes, is not to be underestimated in the development of the notion of property.

The notion of what belongs to humans and what belongs to gods is core to the notion of sacrifice, and sacrifice returns us directly to the notion of *polis*-religion (Scheid 2012 on the normative logic of sacrifice). The clear implication of the *polis*-religion model was that sacrifice was in some ways part of the regulatory world of the *polis*. However, at a detailed level, this assumption proves difficult to justify. First we need to leave aside the evidence

for private and potentially disruptive sacrifice, but we also need to question the top-down nature of the establishment of a normative framework. As Fred Naiden has argued, the regulatory aspect at least in Athens lies with the associations such as *orgeōnes* or religious *thiasōtai* (Naiden 2017; cf. Brulé 2009). Naiden's argument is that the aetiology of sacrifice omits reference to the *polis*, and that the *polis* is as successor to smaller groups, which made their own regulations. There is a fundamental similarity between their approach, but the *polis* is not necessarily the starting point. «The *polis*, a latecomer to the scene, supplied legal backing and legal language to the associations, and cooperated with them. It did not create or run them. "*Polis* religion" gives the *polis* too much credit, and it gives tradition and the associations too little» (Naiden 2017: 149). *Nomos* is important to everyone, but it reflects a widespread tendency to regulate.

Naiden's argument assumes or implies a moment at which the *polis* comes into existence above but not necessarily supplanting the previous associations. This is not the point of his essay, but one would clearly need to work hard at finding the right formulation for this process. The ghost of Fustel de Coulanges is not hard to discern (cf. Yoffee, Terrenato 2015). Moreover, Naiden does not argue that the *polis* is never present, just that it is not primarily present chronologically or legally. This works well enough for small scale association sacrifices, although one can imagine them contributing and responding to, and learning from *nomoi* elsewhere. It is interesting to play this back to the multiplication of sanctuaries and rites which Govi's volume reveals.

For the Roman world, the obvious place to look is in the interaction of *gentes*, which we know had *sacra* of their own. The notion that the development of Roman religion is a sort of nationalization of private religion has been suggested more than once. Picking up Naiden's intriguing argument from the aetiologies of sacrifice, it is interesting to look at the material gathered in Prescendi's important book on sacrifice (Prescendi 2007). There too, the *polis* or community is not really present. The Lupercalia preserves elements of early divisions, in the Luperci Quinctii and Fabii. The Potitii and Pinarii are critical to the story of the Ara Maxima, which is the founding story for the avoidance of human sacrifice. The stories in Ovid and elsewhere on the Agonalia, which are about the beginning of animal sacrifice as opposed to vegetal sacrifice, are vague on beginnings. One would need to look to festivals like the Robigalia or Parilia, which seem to contain a notion of Ro-

man territory, to begin to find something which could be worked into the idea of sacrifice and religion embedded in a political community.

On the other hand, as Naiden notes, the figure of Numa looms larger for the legislation of sacrifice than any equivalent Athenian figure. Looking across the Tiber one would say the same of Tages' instruction of Tarchon. So we appear to have a difference here. It is possible to argue that this is circumstantial. After all, the Roman evidence is much later, and Prescendi urges caution given the massive gap of evidence – the loss of Varro for instance and all the preceding pontifical and augural literature which we know existed but can hardly reconstruct, which might have allowed us to trace the development of this discourse. So in a subsequent section we will look at this further, but for now let us summarise where we have reached.

Experience and elite in central Italian sanctuaries

Rethinking the notion of Greek *polis*-religion has focused on challenging the comprehensiveness of the overlap between religion and the political order, and the unidirectional nature of influence from that order to religion. Instead, non-polis actors come to the fore, and individual or sub-*polis* group responsibilities are given greater prominence even to the extent of shaping *polis* ideology. Moreover, the active role of the symbolic system in constraining and shaping political action is highlighted.

We have focused on the central Italian evidence for temples, shrines and sanctuaries. Since we lack most of the literary and epigraphic evidence which is available in the Athenian case, the arguments are inevitably constructed differently. However, the experiential transformation effected by the architectural revolution in temple design highlights both the potential impact of the symbolic order, and the importance of individual response. The apparently public and heterogeneous nature of religious votives and practices encourages the notion that this is part of the design of the new religious architecture. This took us to notions of consumption and circulation. Inevitably these are framed largely in terms of the elite, although we have suggested that emporic sanctuaries may have been more diverse, but they have also been framed in terms of global and local. This mirrors the spectrum of panhellenic to *polis* religion. Our framing through Duplouy's "modes de reconnaissance sociale" avoids the notion of a fixed unchanging social order, but rather encourages that of a continuous struggle for position and over the

symbolic order which legitimises power, and can indeed delegitimise it (Fisher, van Wees 2015). This is theatre to an extent, but intimately connected to all levels of production, circulation and consumption, and here we are aligned to Kindt's double movement of symbolism and power. One area of the struggle, we then suggested, might be the codification which took place in sanctuaries, over time and ritual for instance, and in the emporic sanctuaries, over exchange and value. Here the open question which arises from Naiden's work on sacrifice is the extent to which this is operating at a whole community level, or at the level of subgroups and associations. The emergence of fields of behaviour which are less amenable to gentilicial or local solutions is perhaps one contributory factor in creating the wider notion of community.

On the face of it therefore, the new paradigm for Greek religion looks applicable in its broadest terms to central Italy. But this then raises another set of questions. Were Etruscan cities really like *poleis*? Are we operating at such a level of generality that everything will look the same? Are we being seduced by the "proto-globalization" argument into smothering difference?

The question is relevant because in the case of the Etruscans there is one element which appears absent from the Greek case, and that is the supposed power of written formulations. Etruscan religion has even been called a religion of the book. We may recall that Sourvinou Inwood (1990) argued that religion gave the *polis* its framework and symbolic focus (for a critique see Hansen, Nielsen 2004: 130-4). Whilst proponents of *polis*-religion have had to struggle with the absence of much authoritative religious regulation, and have had to approximate the sorts of authorizing discourses we see in other modern situations, one might argue that armed with evidence of an Etruscan rule book, especially one devised at the level of the community for purposes of organization, policing, control, Etruscan religion could look more like *polis*-religion than Greek religion. This is our next topic.

Religion and the written word

A full account of the literary sources for Etruscan religion is far beyond the scope of this article, though a revised account is overdue[4]. What I wish

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4   Some sources are quoted in de Grummond and Simon (eds.) 2006: 191-218. The three most important texts are

to focus on here is the extent to which Etruscan religion really was so unusual in the degree to which it depended on written regulation. What are the reasons to identify the Etruscans as distinctive and what impact does that have on the overlap between religion and civic structures? Was Etruscan religion dependent upon, governed by and functional for civic institutions? As we have stated earlier, spatial and temporal contingencies produce the individuality of religious experience and expression, and in addition here we have the effect of a quasi-ethnographic Roman description of Etruscan distinctiveness, which may have been reinforced in the processes of negotiation attendant on the Roman conquest. Nevertheless, we should not be tempted to overstate this distinctiveness.

It is absolutely clear that the Etruscans had a strong notion of the relevance of writing to religion. Importantly this goes beyond divination, where most of the attention has been focused. We can divide this, simplistically, into books of record and books of regulations. The books of record may not be so surprising; the books of regulations are rather a different matter.

Festus 358-9L, summarising Verrius Flaccus, a late Republican to early Augustan writer, describes the books as follows: «Rituales nominantur Etruscorum libri, in quibus perscribtum est, quo ritu condantur urbes, arae, aedes sacrentur, qua sanctitate muri, quo iure portae, quomodo tribus, curiae, centuriae distribuantur, exercitus constituant(ur), ordinentur, ceteraque eiusmodi ad bellum ac pacem pertinentia».

But how old were these books? Cicero *de div.* 2.50-1 relates the story that Tages related to the

Etruscans the rules of haruspicy. These were added to over time. In this way, Tages operates very much like Numa, and there is a good deal more to be said therefore about how this story may have evolved in parallel with what may have been a trope of external sages delivering religious rules. The date of the first consignment of this information to writing is totally unclear, and one is reminded of the debate over the date of the pontifical annals at Rome, admittedly a book of record rather than regulation, which is dated to the last century of the Republic.

It is also clear from Cicero that the haruspical law was cumulative. Is the haruspical law the same as the *rituales Libri* which Festus mentions? There is significantly more material in the Festus reference, and it is suspiciously Roman looking. The lemma is as always desperately uninformative. Did the Etruscans really have one set of regulations for all their cities, and did all their cities look like Rome, with equivalents of tribes, curiae and centuries?

In another passage, *de divinatione* 1.72, Cicero refers to the Etruscan methods of divination as follows: «Quorum alia sunt posita in monumentis et disciplina, quod Etruscorum declarant et haruspicini et fulgurales et rituales libri, vestri etiam augurales».

Some manuscripts give *tonitruales* instead of *rituales*, but current orthodoxy is to reject this[5]. So Thulin in his important account (1906) added up the evidence to arrive at a fourfold definition of the *Libri rituales*: Foundation of the city and division of land; political organization of the state; books of fate (including prophecies regarding the *saecula* and of Acheron; and books of signs (*ostenta*).

This would indeed at first sight seem to make up a remarkably consistent matrix. Moreover, if one wanted to find an illustration of what Sourvinou-Inwood said about the Greek *polis*, that «the polis regulates the religious discourse of its subdivisions», the combination of all these texts would seem in excess of anything we find in the Greek world, even taking into account that we have only a fraction of the sacred laws that existed within communities and subsections of communities. As Parker puts it, «texts had no direct place in the conduct of the vast majority of Greek rituals» (Sourvinou-Inwood 1990; Parker 2011: 20).

the Vegoia prophecy, preserved in the corpus of Latin grammatical writers, Heurgon 1959; the Linen roll now in Zagreb, van der Meer 2007; and the brontoscopic calendar which derives from a text by Nigidius Figulus, Turfa 2012. The gathering of sources reached its most impressive and influential status in Müller 1831-97 volume 3, Bouché-Leclerq 2003: 823-98 and Thulin 1906, volume 3. Five volumes of essays in supplements 52, 54, 56, 64 and 67 of the journal *Caesarodunum* offer a variety of interpretations, under the title *La divination dans le monde étrusco-italique*. There are also important remarks for the late Republican context in Vaahtera 2001 and Santangelo 2014. The consequences of Linderski's brilliant article on the so-called *Libri reconditi*, another supposed repository of Etruscan lore, that «in whichever direction we turn we are confronted with layer upon layer of antiquarian tradition. And when the *libri reconditi* seem at last to be within our reach they reveal themselves as another late and confused compilation» should be borne in mind (Linderski 1985: 234).

[5] The argument is well made by Pease 1920-23 ad loc; the manuscripts are inferior, the corruption from *rituales* is more explicable, and tonitruales are not distinguished elsewhere from fulgurales. The opposing view is that the brontoscopic calendar is, precisely, a liber tonitrualis.

However, we need to be careful about overstating the differences. Norms for the conduct of sacrifice and other aspects of Greek religion did exist (Brulé 2009). We also find them in non-Etruscan contexts, for instance on the Iguvine Tablets (Malone, Stoddart, Allegrucci 1994 roots the inscription in longue durée landscape processes). Almost all of the material, however, looks as if it is in the nature of responses to specific omens and portents. This is all serious work; Peter Struck has recently argued that divination represents a way of conceptualizing "surplus knowledge" or intuition which cannot be explained away as trickery or fraud (Struck 2016). Finally Turfa (2012) may well be right that the protasis-apodosis (if this happens, then that will happen) was preserved ultimately from Mesopotamian models, perhaps via Phoenician influence (see also Struck 2016: 19; Rochberg 2004 for the paranomastic or analogical thinking behind Mesopotamian texts). Pallottino once characterised the Etruscan religious mentality as one of «surrender, almost abdication, of all human spiritual activity before the divine will» (Pallottino 1975:146). Rather, we should perhaps reflect on the supreme confidence of believing that one could interpret the world with any degree of certainty. But none of this makes Etruscan religion remotely similar to the great religions of the book.

Moreover, it is easy to overlook how Thulin put this all together. His key source is Censorinus, a third century AD grammarian, who probably used Varro and Suetonius extensively. Censorinus tells us that the *Libri rituales* contained the *saecula* of cities, a clearly chronological work, which presumably belonged to the same period as the chronological activity at Rome in the wake of the discovery of Eratosthenes. He goes on to cite from Varro the *Annales* of Etruria, which is said to be a work of the eighth *saeculum* (second to early first century BC, exactly the time the Annals of the Pontifices is said to have been composed). The *Libri fatales* turn the same attention to individuals, according to Varro, but Livy says they included a prophecy about the fate of Veii, so one assumes that all the "prophetic" books were called *Libri fatales*. The *Libri Acherontici* (Massa-Pairault 1998) which seem to suggest methods of becoming immortal, are then assimilated to the notion of fates of humans.

A variety of late sources indicate the inclusion of *limitatio*, or division of land, which must relate to the city-foundation texts, and this is also related in the Vegoia prophecy (also probably from the Social War period, Herugon 1959; Harris 1971: 31-40). The emphasis on division and classification is rightly seen by Maras as a key element of

the process by which these books developed, and it became critical to the roman project of translating this into a sort of civil religion, but again this is a later Republican exercise (Maras 2013; MacRae 2016).

Most of the *ostenta* were put together by the late Republican or early imperial author Tarquitius Priscus (Macr. 3.7, 3.20; Capdeville 1994; Torelli 2011). Thulin adds them to the *rituales* on the basis of Cicero *De divinatione* 2.49: «Sed quoniam de extis et de fulgoribus satis est disputatum, ostenta restant, ut tota haruspicina sit pertractata.»

In other words, he assumes that this passage relates back to the earlier description of *haruspicini et fulgurales et rituales libri*, but clearly *ostenta* will not cover everything that he has put in *rituales libri*.

Methodologically therefore, Thulin has constructed a set of texts by analogy and presumed similarity of content, not from any single ancient source. However, it is a large step to assume that there was a single collection of *Libri rituales* in four parts, as Thulin presented it. It is an even larger step to assume that this was of an early date. Everything we see here looks like the work of compilation, in other words, precisely the same intellectual activity which we see happening in Rome in the second and first centuries BC (Rawson 1985; Moatti 1997; MacRae 2016). Read differently, we have a fascinating glimpse of a number of competing accounts, some part of a process of translation into Latin, which presented Etruscan sacred history and most specifically their claim to special knowledge, at precisely the moment that their independent political history was coming to an end.

This argument requires much more elaboration, but for now the negative case is what I wish to consider. It is simply very difficult to argue for the systematization of ritual practice from an early period on the basis of the supposed evidence for an Etruscan written code. The question arises as to whether this causes a conflict with the very well-known quote by Livy on the religiosity of the Etruscans. Here I think Daniele Maras is absolutely right to read the quote in the context of Livy's own time and agenda (Maras 2017). Maras focuses on the comparison with a very similar phrase in Caesar's account of the Gauls (*BG* 6.16.1), and argues for a subtle ethnographic competition.

He also refers to the important political issue, which is the fact that the Etruscans refuse aid to Veii because they have chosen to revert to kingship. So there is an additional reinforcement, obliquely, and in between two stories of Romans, Sp. Maelius and Manlius Capitolinus, who seemed to have wanted kingship, and the confusing account

of the near kingly Camillus, of the value of staying within traditional and prescribed ordinances.

This gains significance when one considers what happens later in Livy Book 5 around the portent of the Alban Lake (Livy 5.15-17), a story we already find in Cic. *Div.* 1.100. The lake floods, and a Veientine soothsayer is overheard prophesying about it; he is carried off by a Roman sentry, and explains that the gods clearly were angry with Veii and must have intended this to be known when they put it into his mind top speak, so he repeats the message that if the Romans drain the lake, Veii will fall. Moreover, although he is at first ignored, when an embassy to Delphi returns with the same story, he is taken more seriously and he is able to reveal a flaw in the Latin festivals on the Alban Mount. There is here a complex interplay of knowledge, fault and expiation. Whether this is a traditional story, or one made up in the later Republic is another matter, but clearly in the Livian context, the Etruscan closeness to religious observance is proven, almost through the failure of Veii, and the Veientine knowledge is absorbed, as that of Alba Longa had been, into the Roman state. Interestingly, Cicero's version includes the rather important detail that the soothsayer omitted the prophecy of the sack of Rome itself six years later.

This scepticism about the extent to which the later evidence reflects an earlier state of play needs to be tempered. It is reasonable to assume that the building blocks of what was to become something close to a system were present in earlier times. Returning to the evidence presented in Govi's volume, one thinks of the presence of *litui*, the relatively formalized organization of space, the rites of foundation, the emergence of a syncretized mythological system, and, we may add, the importance of writing itself[6].

So there was surely an element of the codification mentioned earlier. One very interesting issue is how to sustain, or indeed create, coherence across the areas which were Etruscan or fell under Etruscan influence. Inevitably one looks to federal sanctuaries as one of the nodes of this sort of communication. Whether Campo della Fiera is the Fanum Voltumnae or not, the complexity of the site, its multiple temples, processional route and relatively high quality imported pottery, encourages the belief that it was a meeting place,

where one of the forms of circulation may have been ritual knowledge.

To what extent was Etruscan codification assimilable to what Sourvinou-Inwood and Parker sought in Greek *polis*-religion-organization, policing, control? If their developed form, even if not quite as systematic as Thulin thought, was substantial but nevertheless a retrospective description rather than forward-looking prescriptions, we may still see evidence for the elite control of urban organization through the (attempted) closing off of the opportunity for change. For the earlier period, if we take Kindt's Geertzian position seriously, we may want to allow for a more intricate relationship between the creation of this symbolic order and its impact on political action. If Sourvinou-Inwood insisted that religion gave the *polis* its symbolic focus, and Hansen and Nielsen insisted on political institutions, our position would argue for a much richer intertwining of the two.

Here, Rüpke's communicative model of religion may be helpful (Rüpke 2015). Throughout this paper, we have been close to essentially Durkheimian models which stress community, and understate "religion in the making" as opposed to complete symbolic orders. By emphasising the significance of communication and its media, Rüpke proposes a more processual and agent-driven account, but also one in which audience is critical. We are then closer to producing a much more layered account of Etruscan religion in which individual, family, community and trans-community audiences are simultaneously present and interpenetrating, and communicating agents are having to adapt messages and media, successfully or otherwise.

We may still be correct to see the close association of writing and signing with religion, even in the absence of a rule book. Votive dedications, the possibility of cosmological signs, even the new and rather exciting dedicatory inscription from Marzabotto (Giovi 2017: 145-80), all indicate that the Etruscans made coincident communication with gods and in front of their peers. The use of the medium of writing is often thought to be bound up with notions of permanence and property; it is also fundamentally about communication. As Clarisse Herrenschmidt nicely put it, «writing systems endure because they contain a theory of language as a medium between the visible and the invisible» (Bottéro, Herrenschmidt, Vernant 2000: 126).

We need to be careful not to overstate either the ritual cohesion and control or the religiosity of Etruscan towns. It is not clear that Etruria is particularly unusual, except in the maintenance of a specific skill set which centred on recording and

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6   Litui: see also Ambos and Krauskopf 2008; Maras 2016. On foundation rituals, Riva 2016. On the role of writing in Etruscan society, see Bagnasco Gianni 2012; *Gli Etruschi maestri di scrittura* 2016; Smith 2018.

analysing the unusual. And even that is not unknown; rather it is the consistency with which the Etruscans seem to have managed this, in practice and in the perception of others. A communicative model helps us past the question of what kinds of material the books contained and when, and towards the more interesting question of why and to whom the Etruscans communicated through the medium of written texts.

An Etruscan paradigm?

The reason I suspect the *polis*-religion paradigm was not leapt upon by Etruscologists, apart perhaps from their cautious scepticism about its overreach, is that the model which has predominated for Etruria is of a tight and effective aristocracy which preserved knowledge within families. So, drawing on the arguments above, we might argue that religious knowledge was indeed one of the modes de reconnaissance sociale of the elite. One advantage of this argument would be that it would mesh with sort of argument which Naiden offers, and is congruent with the notion of gentilicial society, that private cults in the hands of aristocrats or local associations preceded any state-wide activity.

Although the prosopography of later *haruspices* does not bear out this elite concentration (Haack 2006), we might well wish to believe it of an earlier time. The importance of writing, recording and preserving information in the Etruscan world seems genuinely to be distinctive, and it is not unreasonable to see this as at least partially the preserve of an elite group. Examples such as Laris Pulenas, whose family and priestly positions are prominently inscribed on a scroll he holds on his funerary sarcophagus has been taken to be emblematic. However, as we have already noted, we have to understand aristocracy in its performative sense (Fisher and Van Wees 2015; Duplouy 2012).

It is also perhaps worth at least complicating this model a little. Even if there was a degree of elite ownership of religion, we know far too little about the more complex bureaucracy of the sanctuaries, the scribes, sacristans, and officials who very possibly constituted a substantial additional group of individuals connected to the processes of sustaining religious action. We will perhaps only really understand ancient religion where we can actually see the complexity and density of roles, both exclusive and specialist, and part-time or voluntary, across genders and statuses, which actu-

ally constituted the texture of communal religious life. The implication is that the holding of knowledge may be a performative elite act, but it may also rest on different sorts of preserved, inherited, transmitted or collective knowledges.

Govi's volume surely challenges us to acknowledge the size and complexity of many of the larger Etruscan sites, and the admittedly unusual case of Marzabotto also tends to suggest a communal set of decision making. Where Kindt's critique of *polis*-religion seems to me most helpful is where it steers us towards a Geertzian symbolic order, which both reflects and influences behaviour, but also past it to a recognition of the power struggles which are imbricated in the production of such an order. It is evident that a good deal of the Etruscan cultural system is geared towards the maintenance of elite power, as we see reflected in the brontoscopic calendar, but even there the nervousness about uprisings and revolutions reinforces the potential fragility of that power, the need for it to be repeatedly shored up through effective performance within the community and through competition with other members of the elite.

Competition and community are also key to explanations of archaic Greece. In his account of the emergence of sanctuaries and temples in the Cycladic islands in the eighth century BC, Etienne argued for the multiplication of temples to reflect the emergence of a better defined notion of the pantheon of gods (Etienne 2017). In other words, there was a close relationship between mythological production, the differentiation of sacred space and the development of communities. If the willing absorption of external mythologies to develop a more precisely delineated pantheon approximates to what we see in central Italy, perhaps the same argument in central Italy. The idea of temples as meeting points and information brokerages is helpful too. The organization of space and the scale of religious space both inevitably reflect on the politics of religion.

What I would add is that the combination of power, some of it reliant on long traditions and deeply rooted in place, together with the knowledge intrinsic to these new circulations, seems to have encouraged in Etruria a process of elaborate codification across a wide range of civic and individual spheres. There seems good reason to believe that this too was produced by the absorption of models from elsewhere, especially the east. Thus the Etruscan amalgam was a powerful combination of different knowledge systems, captured within an Etruscan set of histories and places. This was then reproduced over time, but

the very nature of a system which depends on the refinement of conclusions based on observation may have been as much part of the reason as any instrumental elite capture of religious knowledge.

My suggestion is that we conceptualize Etruscan religion as a symbolic order, historically inflected, encapsulating a set of values which are bound up with the production and inexact reproduction of social individuals and relations. It is essential not to allow much later and rather specific perceptions of the Etruscans' coherent bookish religiosity to colour the varied and local lived experience of religion. It has not been my intention to equate Etruscan religion with Greek *polis*-religion, or with recent revisions and extensions of the model; but I do think we can learn from setting the debates in different contexts against each other.

Govi's recent volume adds to our knowledge and explicitly asks questions about the political embeddedness of the religious system; this paper has sought to draw from a parallel discourse on the Greek *polis* some of the potential steps we might need to think through in order to arrive at an even greater sense of the originality and power of the Etruscan paradigm. It will then be all the more essential for wider surveys, such as that of Agusta-Boularot, Huber and van Andringa, to include the Etruscans as a matter of course.

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