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CHAPTER ONE

Rome and the Greek World

FIRST THERE were the Greeks, then there were the Romans. That is how theatre history usually begins, as in the first sentence of the first chapter of *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Theatre*:

> Greek and Latin literature and drama have been central and formative components of the Western cultural tradition ever since the Middle Ages; and modern conceptions of theatre in general, as of 'tragedy' and 'comedy' as particular dramatic forms, are indelibly shaped by the specific performance modes that evolved during the sixth to fourth centuries BC in Athens and during the third to first centuries BC in Rome.[1]

The separate chronologies are a factual datum: Aeschylus and Aristophanes in Greek wrote long before Plautus and Terence in Latin.

But surviving play-texts are not the only source of information. By taking account of a wider range of evidence, including the material record of archaic Rome (incomparably better understood now than it was fifty years ago), we may discover that '*first* there were the Greeks, *then* there were the Romans' is not, after all, a self-evident truth.

1.1. The orthodox version

Greek drama supposedly began with Thespis, who was evidently active in Athens in the years between 560 and 520 BC.[2] Roman drama supposedly began three centuries later with Lucius Livius ('Livius Andronicus'),[3]

1. Griffith 2007, 13. For a much more nuanced view see now Fulkerson and Tatum 2024, 6–14 and 41–58.

2. Marmor Parium *FGrH* 239 F43 (between 540 and 520 BC); Plutarch *Solon* 29.4-30.1; Diogenes Laertius 1.59-60 (c. 560 BC); *Suda* Θ 282 (535–532 BC). For the chronological problems see West 1989, Wright 2016, 1–12.

3. Cf. Aulus Gellius 6.7.11 (*L. Liuius*), 1.9.5 (*Liuii Andronici*); Goldberg 1995, 28–30.

whose debut is dated to 240 BC. Cicero provides that date, and he does so more than once, with some emphasis. The information comes in two passages from dialogues written in 46 and 45 BC:

> Greece used to surpass us in learning and in all types of literature. It was easy to win against no opposition, because while poets were the earliest authors in Greece, and Homer and Hesiod lived before Rome was founded and Archilochus during the reign of Romulus, we Romans were late-comers to poetry. It was in about the 510th year from the foundation of the city that Livius produced a play in the consulship of Gaius Claudius, Caecus' son, and Marcus Tuditanus, the year before Ennius was born.[4]

> Livius' plays aren't worth reading twice. This Livius was the first to produce a play—it was in the consulship of Gaius Claudius, Caecus' son, and Marcus Tuditanus, the year before Ennius was born, in the 514th year from the foundation of the city, as Atticus here says, and I follow him.[5]

What better authority could we hope for? But even Cicero has to be read carefully.

We need to ask why he was so insistent about the date,[6] and why he had to explain how he knew it: following Atticus, he had discovered the information 'in old documents'.[7] It evidently wasn't common knowledge, and he went on to apologise for this uncharacteristic historical pedantry.[8] Since

4. Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 1.3: *doctrina Graecia nos et omni litterarum genere superabat, in quo erat facile uincere non repugnantes. nam cum apud Graecos antiquissimum e doctis genus sit poetarum, si quidem Homerus fuit et Hesiodus ante Romam conditam, Archilochus regnante Romulo, serius poeticam nos accepimus. annis fere CCCCCX post Romam conditam Liuius fabulam dedit C. Claudio Caeci filio M. Tuditano consulibus, anno ante natum Ennium.*

5. Cicero *Brutus* 71-2 = Atticus *FRHist* 33 F6: *Liuianae fabulae non satis dignae quae iterum legantur. atqui hic Liuius primus fabulam C. Claudio Caeci filio et M. Tuditano consulibus docuit anno ipso ante quam natus est Ennius, post Romam conditam autem quartodecimo et quingentensimo, ut hic ait, quem nos sequimur.* The inconsistent *ab urbe condita* dates may be the result of textual corruption, or just Cicero's use of two different chronological systems (cf. Wiseman 2009, 95–6). The 'foundation' of Rome was of course a legendary story, not a historical event.

6. He mentions it again at *De senectute* 50, where the elder Cato refers to Livius' play produced 'six years before I was born, when [C. Claudius] Cento and [M. Sempronius] Tuditanus were consuls'; cf. Fulkerson and Tatum 2024, 7 ('a surprising and suspicious exactitude').

7. Cicero *Brutus* 72: *et Atticus scribit et nos in antiquis commentariis inuenimus.* That evidence disproved a rival version that put Livius' work a generation later (details and discussion in Oakley 1998, 61–3).

8. Cicero *Brutus* 73: 'put the blame on Atticus—he's fired me with enthusiasm for chasing up the lives and times of eminent men'.

Livius' play was produced at the *ludi Romani*, which were the responsibility of the curule aediles,[9] the documents that dated it were no doubt in the aediles' archive on the Capitol.[10]

What Cicero found there was the name and date of the first *known* Roman poet and playwright. What he inferred from it, that 'Romans were late-comers to poetry', depended on the assumption that there had been no unrecorded poets and playwrights before 240 BC. But absence of evidence is not in itself evidence of absence, and he may have been wrong to assume that. It is perfectly possible that the innovation in 240 BC was not poetry and drama as such, but the recording of playwrights' names in an annual archive of the public games.[11]

Cicero's contrast with 'Greece' (*Graecia*) requires equally careful handling. No doubt he shared our modern assumption that 'Greek' and 'Roman' were always mutually exclusive concepts. In fact, they were not. Livius Andronicus himself was a Greek, from Taras in south Italy, enslaved when his city fell to the Romans in 272 BC.[12] At that time Rome itself could be thought of as a Greek city,[13] founded by Achaeans blown off course on their return from Troy (as Aristotle believed), or by exiles from the Arcadian town of Pallantion (as in Stesichorus' 'lyric epic' *Geryoneis*, written in the sixth century BC).[14]

9. Cassiodorus *Chronica* 316 Mommsen = *MGH Chronica minora* 2.128: *his consulibus* ['239 BC'] *ludis Romanis primum tragoedia et comoedia a Lucio Liuio ad scaenam data.* Responsibility: Livy 6.42.12-14 (with Wiseman 2008, 169–70), Dio Cassius 37.8.1 (Caesar as curule aedile).

10. Mentioned by Polybius 3.26.1: Rome's treaties with Carthage were 'preserved even now on bronze tablets beside the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in the treasury of the aediles'.

11. As suggested in Wiseman 2015, 45–7. *Contra* Feeney 2016, who takes Cicero as documenting 'one of the strangest and most unlikely events in Mediterranean history' (4), 'the reform in the year 240 of the great annual festival of the Roman state, the *Ludi Romani*, to allow for the staging of a Latin play translated from a Greek original' (60); he assumes that previously the Roman *ludi scaenici* had featured merely 'improvisatory medley' or 'slapstick farce' (105–6).

12. Cicero *Brutus* 72-3 (misdated by Accius); cf. Suetonius *De grammaticis* 1.2 (*semigraecus*).

13. Heraclides Ponticus fr. 102 Wehrli (Plutarch *Camillus* 22.2): πόλιν Ἑλληνίδα Ῥώμην. For *Roma* as ῥώμη, see Lycophron 1233, Plutarch *Romulus* 1.1; sometimes explained as translated from an earlier Latin *Valentia* (Solinus 1.1, Festus 328L = Hyperochos of Kyme *BNJ* 576 F3, Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 1.273 = Ateius Praetextatus fr. 14 Funaioli).

14. Aristotle fr. 609 Rose (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.72.3-4); Stesichorus *Geryoneis* fr. 21 (Pausanias 8.3.2) with Usener 1913, 330, Davies and Finglass 2014, 290.

In the mid-second century BC a distinguished senator called Gaius Acilius wrote a history of Rome in which the Greek ritual at the archaic altar of Hercules (*ara maxima*) was taken as proof that Rome was a Greek foundation.[15] He could equally well have used the rituals for Saturn (Kronos) or for Ceres (Demeter), both cults established in the late sixth or early fifth centuries BC and conducted, as three separate and well-informed sources attest, 'in the Greek manner'.[16]

By Cicero's time, however, Rome was believed to be of Trojan origin. According to the poets, Romulus was the son of Aeneas' daughter;[17] the historians, constrained by the supposed chronology, used not only the tale of Aeneas' voyage from Troy to Italy but also the elaborate quasi-history devised by Fabius Pictor in the late third century BC, in which fifteen generations of Aeneas' descendants ruled at 'Alba Longa' before the birth of Romulus.[18] Of course it was a fictional narrative (to be more precise, a combination of two fictional narratives), but its acceptance by the first century BC as the canonical account of the origin of Rome is itself a historical fact of some importance.[19] Thanks largely to Livy and Virgil, in modern times it has come to be treated as 'the' Roman foundation-legend; but it was only one story out of many,[20] with no resemblance to anything like historical reality.

15. Strabo 5.3.3 C230 = Acilius *FRHist* 7 F7: καὶ ὅ γ' Ἀκύλιος, ὁ τῶν Ῥωμαίων συγγραφεύς, τοῦτο τίθεται σημεῖον τοῦ Ἑλληνικὸν εἶναι κτίσμα τὴν Ῥώμην, τὸ παρ' αὐτοῖς τὴν πάτριον θυσίαν Ἑλληνικὴν εἶναι τῷ Ἡρακλεῖ. For Acilius see Cicero *De officiis* 3.115 (*qui Graece scripsit historiam*), Plutarch *Cato maior* 22.4 (ἀνὴρ ἐπιφανής).

16. Cato *Orationes* 77 Malcovati (*Graeco ritu fiebantur Saturnalia*), Cicero *Pro Balbo* 55 (*sacra Cereris . . . adsumpta de Graecia et per Graecas curata sunt semper sacerdotes*); cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.40.5 (*ara maxima* sacrifice ἔθεσιν Ἑλληνικοῖς), 6.1.4 (altar of Kronos established at Rome by Herakles Ἑλληνικοῖς ἔθεσιν).

17. Servius *auctus* on Virgil *Aeneid* 1.273: *Naeuius et Ennius Aeneae ex filia nepotem Romulum conditorem urbis tradunt.*

18. Fabius Pictor *FRHist* 1 F1-6, with Wiseman 2024, 29–30; for the fiction of 'Alba Longa' as a city see Grandazzi 2008, 179–514.

19. Lucretius 1.1 (Romans as *Aeneadae*), cf. Caesar *ap.* Suetonius *Diuus Iulius* 6.1 (*a Venere Iulii, cuius gentis familia est nostra*); the supposed descent of the patrician Iulii from Jupiter, via Venus and her son the Trojan prince Aeneas, will have helped to establish the story (Wiseman 2019, 77–81).

20. For the variety of competing 'origin of Rome' stories see Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.72.1 (ἀμφισβητήσεως δὲ πολλῆς οὔσης καὶ περὶ τοῦ χρόνου τῆς κτίσεως καὶ περὶ τῶν οἰκιστῶν τῆς πόλεως), Plutarch *Romulus* 1.1 (τὸ μέγα τῆς Ῥώμης ὄνομα . . . ἀφ' ὅτου καὶ δι' ἣν αἰτίαν τῇ πόλει γέγονεν, οὐχ ὁμολόγηται παρὰ τοῖς συγγραφεῦσιν), Servius *auctus* on Virgil *Aeneid* 1.273 (*sed de origine et conditore urbis diuersa a diuersis traduntur*), Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 7.678 (*de auctoribus conditarum urbium dissensio inuenitur, adeo ut ne urbis quidem Romae origo possit diligenter agnosci*). See Wiseman 1995, 160–68 for a collection of surviving examples.

Another quasi-historical datum accepted as axiomatic by Romans in Cicero's time was the belief that their ancestors had made the republic great from a very humble beginning.[21] The *paupertas* of early Rome was a source of pride and an article of faith,[22] unshaken even by the counter-evidence of surviving architecture:

> The temple as it stands was built many years later, because in the times of the kings all religious buildings were on a small scale.[23]

We don't know which particular temple Marcus Varro was referring to here; what matters is the reason he gave for his belief, which archaeology has now thoroughly disproved. Some religious buildings in the time of the kings and the first years of the republic were on a very substantial scale indeed.

The grandest of them was the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitol, built by Tarquin and dedicated immediately after his expulsion, but at least six others were constructed in the late sixth and early fifth centuries BC.[24] Discussing the scale of their remains, a leading authority on early Roman architecture comes to this very striking conclusion:

> With its excess of temples—from modest to monumental to colossal—and its houses to rival any in the region, Rome appears to have been unparalleled by any contemporaneous city on the whole of the Italic Peninsula.[25]

For the Capitoline temple at least, the closest parallels were in Sicily, Athens and Ionia. The sheer size and number of the Roman building projects, not only in the time of Tarquin but for decades after his expulsion, imply

21. See for instance Cicero *Pro Caelio* 39 (*eos qui haec ex minimis tanta fecerunt*), Sallust *Catiline* 51.42 (*qui ex paruis opibus tantum imperium fecere*) and 52.19 (*rem publicam ex parua magnam fecisse*); cf. Suetonius *Diuus Augustus* 31.5 (*qui imperium p.R. ex minimo maximum reddidissent*).

22. See for instance Varro *De uita populi Romani* frr. 3 and 6 Pittà (Nonius 63L, 239L), Sallust *Catiline* 53.4, Livy pref. 11.

23. Varro *De uita populi Romani* fr. 8 Pittà (Nonius 792L): *haec aedis quae nunc est multis annis post facta sit, namque omnia regiis temporibus delubra parua facta.* For the context see Wiseman 2016, cxiv–v.

24. Wiseman 2024, 11–14: to Matuta (Leukothea) and Fortuna (Tyche), exact date uncertain; to Saturn (Kronos), c. 498 BC; to Mercury (Hermes), 495; to Ceres, Liber and Libera (Demeter, Dionysus and Kore), 493; and to Castor and Pollux (the Dioskouroi), 484. For the general reliability of the transmitted dates see Cornell 2014, 253–4.

25. Hopkins 2016, 173; details in Hopkins 2016, 66–125 ('on a new scale', 550–500 BC), 126–52 ('continuity of splendor', 500–450 BC).

that the city had both the ambition and the resources to undertake grand projects and pay for the necessary imported expertise.[26]

Not only that: each temple implied a commitment to a cult, with sacrifices and appropriate annual festivals. Previously financed at the king's expense, after the expulsion of Tarquin they became a public responsibility, with public officials (*aediles*) appointed to guarantee the upkeep of the buildings and the funding of the public 'games'.[27] And that is why the archaeological evidence is so important for our subject: whenever it was that 'Roman theatre' began, those games were where it happened.

1.2. A different perspective

There is thus a fundamental mismatch between what the Romans of Cicero's generation believed and what archaeology has now revealed: the beginning of the Roman republic was characterised not by poverty and frugality but by wealth and public display.

A generation after Cicero, when Livy's history of Rome came to report an event in 364 BC that involved theatre games (*ludi scaenici*), his lengthy account of 'small beginnings' depended on the same moralising mindset.[28] He treated stage performance as a complete novelty, unconnected with the Greek theatre tradition flourishing at that time, of which he evidently assumed the Romans could have known nothing.[29] A quite different perspective, however, was offered by one of Livy's contemporaries.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus' detailed history of early Rome was written in the years between 30 and 7 BC.[30] His aim was to show that Rome had been a Greek city from the very beginning,[31] and he was unaffected by any Roman prejudice in favour of virtuous frugality. On the contrary,

26. See Winter 2009, 580–81 and Hopkins 2016, 110–16, detecting the work of 'east Greek' experts. Two names happen to be known: Damophilos and Gorgasos, the terracotta modellers who decorated the new temple of Ceres, Liber and Libera (Pliny *Natural History* 35.154, quoting an archaic inscription).

27. As spelt out by Cicero as aedile-elect (*In Verrem* 2.5.36): *habeo rationem quid a populo Romano acceperim: mihi ludos sanctissimos . . . faciundos, mihi sacrarum aedium procurationem . . . commissam.*

28. Livy 7.2.4 and 13 (*parua principia*), 7.3.1 (*ludorum primum initium*); cf. pref. 4 on Rome itself, *ab exiguis profecta initiis*. The passage is analysed in section 3.1 below.

29. Livy 7.2.3 (*noua res*), with Oakley 1998, 54 ('he manages to avoid mentioning Greek drama throughout the digression').

30. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.8.2 (from the origins down to 265 BC), cf. 1.3.4 and 1.7.2 for the time of composition.

31. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.5.1 (Ἕλληνας τε αὐτοὺς ὄντας ἐπιδείξειν), 1.79.1 (Ἑλλάδα πόλιν), 7.70-73.

in his account of the first years of the republic he refers several times to the Romans' great expenditure on sacrifices and sacred festivals.[32] That certainly makes good sense in the light of the archaeological evidence. But how could Dionysius, a Greek rhetorician only newly resident in Rome, know better than the Romans themselves what the early republic was like?

The answer may be that Dionysius had better sources. Having decided to make the origin and early history of Rome his subject, he naturally turned first to the Greek historians who might be able to provide information.[33] Right at the beginning of his account he cited 'Antiochus of Syracuse, a very early historian, in his work on the settlement of Italy', even quoting verbatim what look like the opening words:

> Antiochus son of Xenophanes put together this written account of Italy from the most reliable and intelligible of the ancient stories.[34]

Writing in the late fifth century BC, and certainly aware of Rome,[35] Antiochus was a very valuable source—'not just any historian', as Dionysius put it, 'and not a recent one either'.[36]

It is a remarkable fact that the only authors known to have used 'Antiochus on Italy' are Dionysius himself and Strabo of Amaseia, another Greek historian working in Rome at the time.[37] Furthermore—and it's unlikely to be a coincidence—Dionysius and Strabo are the only authors to give a

32. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 5.36.4 (θυσίας ἀπέδοσαν τοῖς θεοῖς ἀπὸ χρημάτων πολλῶν, 506 BC), 6.1.4 (δημοτελεῖς ἀναδειχθῆναι . . . ἑορτάς τε καὶ θυσίας, 497 BC), 6.10.1 (θυσίας τε μεγάλας ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐπιτελέσειν χρημάτων καὶ ἀγῶνας καταστήσεσθαι πολυτελεῖς, 496 BC), 6.13.4 (θυσίαι τε πολυτελεῖς, 496 BC), 6.17.2 (ἀγῶνάς τε καὶ θυσίας τοῖς θεοῖς ἀπὸ τετταράκοντα ταλάντων, 496 BC). Cf. Cornell 2014, 254: 'the archaeological evidence confirms the general prosperity and sophistication of Rome in the sixth century'.

33. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.6.1: Hieronymus of Cardia, Timaeus, Antigonus, Polybius, Silenus 'and countless others'.

34. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.12.3: Ἀντίοχος δὲ ὁ Συρακούσιος, συγγραφεὺς πάνυ ἀρχαῖος, ἐν Ἰταλίας οἰκισμῷ . . . εἰπὼν ὧδε· Ἀντίοχος Ξενοφάνεος τάδε συνέγραψε περὶ Ἰταλίης ἐκ τῶν ἀρχαίων λόγων τὰ πιστότατα καὶ σαφέστατα. See Pearson 1987, 11–18 on Antiochus; his importance as a source for Dionysius was already noted by Pais 1908, 233–4.

35. Diodorus Siculus 12.71.2 (Antiochus' history of Sicily stopped at 424–3 BC); Antiochus *BNJ* 555 F6 = Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.73.4-5 (ἄνδρα φυγάδα ἐκ Ῥώμης).

36. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.73.4: οὐ τῶν ἐπιτυχόντων τις οὐδὲ νέων συγγραφεύς.

37. Strabo 6.1.4 C254 (Ἀντίοχος ἐν τῷ περὶ τῆς Ἰταλίας συγγράμματι); Antiochus *BNJ* 555 F2 and 4-6 (from Dionysius), F3a and 7-13 (from Strabo). The natural inference is that a rare copy survived in the 'Greek library' on the Palatine (Suetonius *Diuus Augustus* 29.3, Houston 2014, 220–22) or one of the other libraries of Augustan Rome.

circumstantial account of the careers in Italy of Demaratus of Corinth and his son. Here is Dionysius on the subject:

> The Corinthian Demaratus, of the family of the Bacchiadae, sailed to Italy in his own ship with his own cargo, which he sold in the Tyrrhenian cities, at that time the most flourishing in Italy. Having gained great profit from it, he no longer wanted to visit any other market but continued to work the same sea, carrying Greek cargo to the Tyrrhenians and Tyrrhenian cargo to Greece, and thus became the possessor of very great wealth.
>
> But when Corinth was gripped by civil strife and the tyranny of Cypselus rose against the Bacchiadae [c. 657 BC], Demaratus thought it unsafe to live under a tyranny as a rich man belonging to the oligarchic family, so he collected together as much of his property as he could and sailed away from Corinth. He had many good friends among the Tyrrhenians as a result of his close association with them, especially at Tarquinii, then a large and prosperous city, so he built a house there and married a lady of distinguished family.[38]

And here is Strabo, who merges the story with the Roman 'seven kings' tradition:[39]

> Corinth was ruled by the Bacchiadae, a rich, extensive and aristocratic family, who held power there for nearly two hundred years and exploited the city's trade without opposition. Cypselus overthrew them and seized power. . . . Demaratus, one of the previously ruling family, escaping from the political upheaval, took so much wealth from his home city to Tyrrhenia that he himself became ruler of the city that received him [Tarquinii], and his son was even made king of the Romans.
>
> Demaratus arrived from Corinth with a multitude of people,[40] was received by the Tarquinians and married a lady of the place by whom he had a son called Lucumo. A friend of Ancus Marcius, king of Rome, Lucumo became king himself and changed his name to Lucius Tarquinius Priscus.[41] Like his father before him, he too

38. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 3.46.3-5; see also Polybius 6.11a.10, Cicero *De republica* 2.34, Livy 1.34.1-10, Zonaras 7.8.

39. Strabo 8.6.20 C378 and 5.2.2 C219-20. See Wiseman 2024, 29–30 on the Roman tradition, evidently created by Fabius Pictor.

40. λαὸν ἄγων ἐκ Κορίνθου: not colonists, as assumed by Biffi 1988, 33.

41. The *cognomen* is an obvious anachronism: he only needed to be called *Priscus* ('the former') when he had to be distinguished in retrospect from the later king Tarquinius, his son or grandson. Similarly, 'Ancus Marcius' may well have been an invention of the late third century BC (Wiseman 2008, 314–17).

> embellished Tyrrhenia,[42] the father by the great supply of artisans he had brought with him from Corinth, the son by means of resources from Rome.[43]

I think it is a reasonable supposition that this narrative was first put on record by Antiochus in the fifth century BC in Syracuse, a Corinthian colony itself founded by one of the wealthy Bacchiadae.[44]

Modern historians are reluctant to believe in Lucumo son of Demaratus as a real historical figure, but it seems to me that such doubts are unnecessary.[45] Even the later Roman tradition knew things about 'Lucius Tarquinius Priscus' that were not integral to the factitious narrative of the seven kings, and may therefore derive from some earlier and more authentic source. First, he created a public market-place surrounded by workshops;[46] second, he marked out a space for horse-racing, and provided wooden stands for spectators;[47] third (and most important for the lost history of Roman theatre), he founded the annual festival, known as

42. ἐκόσμησε τὴν Τυρρηνίαν: for the nature of the embellishment see for instance Blakeway 1935, 147–9, Winter 2009, 578–80. The Greek term 'Tyrrhenia' meant west central Italy in general, not just Etruria: according to Hesiod (*Theogony* 1011–16) it was ruled by 'Latinos, excellent and strong', son of Odysseus and Circe and eponym of the Latins.

43. ὁ μὲν εὐπορίᾳ δημιουργῶν τῶν συνακολουθησάντων οἴκοθεν, ὁ δὲ παῖς ἐκ τῆς Ῥώμης ἀφορμαῖς: for the artisans cf. Pliny *Natural History* 35.16 (Ecphantus of Corinth, pioneer painter), 35.152 (terracotta modellers Eucheir, Diopus and Eugrammus); the Roman resources may have been the clay-beds now known to have existed in the stream valley between the Palatine and the Capitol (Ammerman et al. 2008, Winter et al. 2009).

44. Archias: Thucydides 6.3.2, Strabo 6.2.4 C269 (emphasising the consequent wealth of Syracuse).

45. See for instance Cornell 1995, 124 ('a secondary extension of the tradition'), Forsythe 2005, 101 ('probably not historical'); but it is hard to imagine any motive for its invention, and the assumption that Greek sources about Corinth 'are unlikely to have been interested in Rome' (Cornell) is essentially a *petitio principii*. For Lucumo's historical context see now Bradley 2020, 74, 118–19.

46. Livy 1.35.10 (*circa forum priuatis aedificanda diuisa sunt loca; porticus tabernaeque facta*), Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 3.67.4-5 (τήν τε ἀγοράν . . . ἐκόσμησεν ἐργαστηρίοις τε καὶ παστάσι περιλαβών); see Hopkins 2016, 27–34 for the probable creation of the Roman Forum in the seventh century BC, Ampolo 2013, 268–70 for the introduction of tiled roofs at that time as an index of Rome becoming an urban society.

47. Livy 1.35.8-9 (*tum primum circo qui nunc maximus dicitur designatus locus est. loca diuisa . . . fori appellati; spectauere furcis duodenos ab terra spectacula alta sustinentibus pedes*), Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 3.68.1 (κατεσκευάσε δὲ καὶ τὸν μέγιστον τῶν ἱπποδρόμων . . . ποιήσας περὶ αὐτὸν καθέδρας . . . ἐπ' ἰκρίοις, δοκῶν ξυλίναις σκηναῖς ὑποκειμένων).

'great games' because of the great expense involved, that later became the *ludi Romani*.[48] Contradicting the 'poverty of early Rome' tradition as they do, such items are unlikely to have been invented from nothing.

In fact, the vast wealth Demaratus brought from Corinth is a recurring theme in Dionysius' ongoing narrative.[49] Lucumo inherited it, took it with him to Rome, and used it to establish his position there;[50] the younger Tarquin insisted that his own inheritance of it entitled him to rule;[51] he demanded its restoration when he and his family were expelled from Rome,[52] but the Romans declared it forfeit because of his tyranny.[53] If that narrative was well founded, perhaps reported by Antiochus of Syracuse less than a century after the final events, it would account for how the newly free Roman state could afford those temples and those expensive festivals.

So yes: surprising as it seems, Dionysius of Halicarnassus did have better information about early Rome than either Cicero or Livy. And unlike their romantic idea of virtuous poverty, it is wholly consistent with the material evidence for prosperity and architectural splendour that has emerged in the last fifty years.

48. Cicero *De republica* 2.36 (*primum ludos maximos, qui Romani dicti sunt, fecisse accepimus*); Eutropius 1.6.1 (*circum Romae aedificauit, ludos magnos instituit qui ad nostram memoriam permanent*), *De uiris illustribus* 6.8 (*circum maximum aedificauit, ludos magnos instituit*). Expense: ps.Asconius 217 Stangl: *Romani ludi sub regibus instituti sunt magnique appellati, quod magnis impensibus dati.*

49. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 3.46.3-4 (πολλῶν χρημάτων κύριος . . . πολλὰ κεκτημένος); cf. Cicero *De republica* 2.34 (*fortunis facile ciuitatis suae principem . . . fugisse cum magna pecunia dicitur*), *Tusculan Disputations* 5.109 (*fugit Tarquinios Corintho et ibi suas fortunas constituit*).

50. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 3.47.1-2 (τὸν πατρικὸν πλοῦτον μέγαν ὄντα . . . τά τε χρήματα πάντα συσκευασάμενος), 3.48.1 (πᾶσαν τὴν πατρικὴν οὐσίαν ἐπαγόμενος), 3.48.44 (χρημάτων μεταδόσει); cf. Livy 1.34.1 (*uir impiger ac diuitiis potens*), 1.34.4 (*omnium heredi bonorum*), 1.34.11 (*Romanis conspicuum eum nouitas diuitiaeque faciebant*).

51. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 4.31.1 (προσήκει μοι . . . μὴ μόνον τῶν χρημάτων ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ κληρονομεῖν), 4.31.3 (ἅμα τοῖς χρήμασι καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν ἀποδεδωκέναι), 4.37.3 (σὺν τοῖς χρήμασι καὶ τὴν ἀρχήν).

52. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 5.5.2 (τὴν οὐσίαν ἣν ὁ πάππος αὐτοῦ πρότερον ἐκέκτητο), 5.21.1-2 (τὰς οὐσίας ἀνακομισάμενος ἃς ἀφῃρεθησαν), 5.31.3 (χρήματα . . . ἅπαντα ὅσα Ταρκύνιός τε ὁ πρεσβύτατος κατέλιπε); cf. Livy 2.3.5-6 (*bona repetentes*), 2.4.3 (*reddenda bona*), 2.19.10 (*ob erepta bona*).

53. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 5.5.3 (κατέχειν τὰ χρήματα συνεβούλευσε τιμωρίας τε χάριν ἀνθ' ὧν οἱ τύραννοι τὸ κοινὸν ἠδίκησαν), 5.32.2 (ἐκ τῶν κοινῶν τοῖς τυράννοις μηδὲν ἀποδιδόναι); cf. Livy 2.5.1-3 (*de bonis regiis*), 2.34.4 (*pro bonis Tarquiniorum*).

1.3. The right conditions

The notion of Rome as a Greek city,[54] apparently so paradoxical, turns out to be perfectly credible. There is no reason to think that Rome had any kind of urban identity before the arrival, some time in the second half of the seventh century BC, of wealthy Lucumo, son of Corinthian Demaratus, who created an *agora* and a *hippodromos* (the Forum and the Circus Maximus) and set up the 'great games' that would bring honour to the city.[55]

At this point we need to remember that a *hippodromos* was not restricted to horse- or chariot-racing, or athletics. What went on there on all the days of the year when such elaborate set-piece events were *not* happening? Our best evidence happens to come from a Greek city in the second century AD, where Dio 'Chrysostom' in one of his moral sermons was urging his audience not to be distracted by the bustle of everyday life. This is the illustration he chose:

> I've seen it myself just now, walking through the *hippodromos*—lots of people doing different things in the same place, someone playing the pipes, someone dancing, someone juggling, someone reciting a poem, someone singing, someone telling a story or a myth, and not one of them prevented anyone from concentrating on doing their own thing.[56]

We should think of a *hippodromos*—including that of Lucumo at Rome—as a sort of fairground, suitable for all kinds of public performance.

Lucumo may also have set up the cult of Herakles, from whom his family, the Bacchiadae, traced their descent.[57] The foundation story of the *ara maxima* was that the hero himself was present in Rome with the cattle of Geryon, and built the altar when he learned of his future deification from the prophetess Themis, mother of Evander.[58] That tale evidently goes back to the *Geryoneis* of the Sicilian poet Stesichorus in the

54. See nn. 13–16, and cf. Cornell 1995, 151–72 on 'the myth of Etruscan Rome': the Tarquins were a Corinthian dynasty, not (as is often said) an Etruscan one.

55. See nn. 46–8, and cf. Pindar *Nemean Odes* 9.12 (ἄμφαινε κυδαίνων πόλιν) for the aim and effect of a king's newly founded games.

56. Dio Chrysostom *Oratio* 20.10: ἤδη δέ ποτε εἶδον ἐγὼ διὰ τοῦ ἱπποδρόμου βαδίζων πολλοὺς ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἀνθρώπους ἄλλο τι πράττοντας, τὸν μὲν αὐλοῦντα, τὸν δὲ ὀρχούμενον, τὸν δὲ θαῦμα ἀποδιδόμενον, τὸν δὲ ποιήμα ἀναγιγνώσκοντα, τὸν δὲ ᾄδοντα, τὸν δὲ ἱστορίαν τινὰ ἢ μῦθον διηγούμενον· καὶ οὐδὲ εἷς τούτων οὐδένα ἐκώλυσε προσέχειν αὐτῷ καὶ τὸ προκείμενον πράττειν.

57. Thucydides 6.3.2, Diodorus Siculus 7.9.4-6.

58. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.40.2-6, cf. 1.31.1 and 3; Livy 1.7.9-14 (mother not named); Strabo 5.3.3 C230 (mother Nikostrate); Ovid *Fasti* 1.497-500 and 583-4, cf. Virgil *Aeneid* 8.339-41 (mother Carmentis).

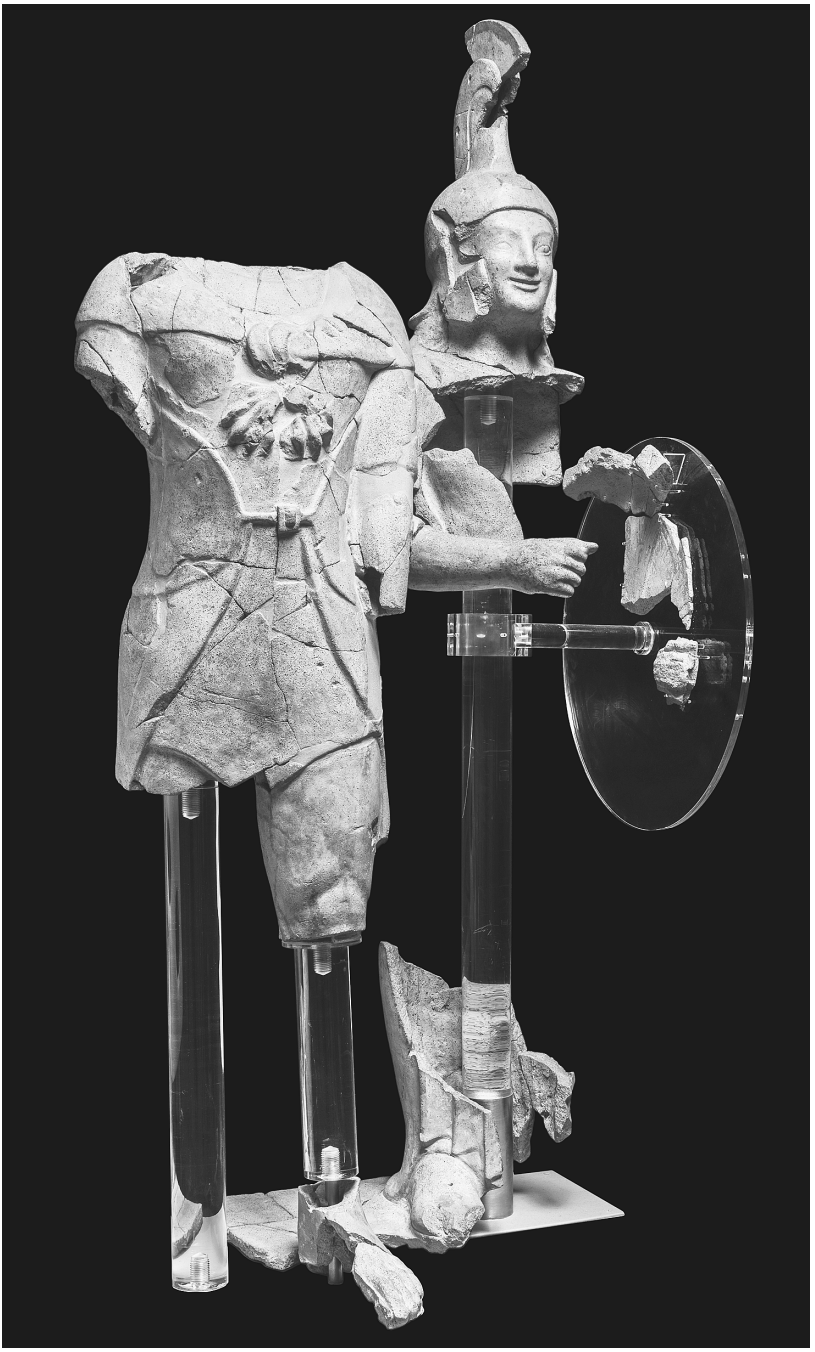

FIGURE 2. *Akroterion* statue group of Herakles and Pallas Athene from the rebuilt archaic temple at S. Omobono, c. 530 BC: Rome, Musei Capitolini, Palazzo dei Conservatori: Archivio Fotografico dei Musei Capitolini. © Roma, Sovrintendenza Capitolina ai Beni Culturali.

mid-sixth century BC,[59] a narrative demonstrably familiar to the Romans and their neighbours at just that time. At Rome and Satricum in Latium, and at Caere and Veii in south Etruria, artists in the east-Greek style were commissioned to create terracotta statues (*akroteria*, to stand on the roofs of temples) showing Pallas Athene escorting the newly deified Herakles to Olympus (fig. 2).[60] The hero was shown wearing the lionskin, a detail introduced into the story by Stesichorus himself.[61]

Stesichorus could have presented his *Geryoneis* at any or all of those Latin and south-Etruscan centres,[62] no doubt flattering his hosts each time with a reference to Herakles stopping there on his epic cattle-drive back to Argos. It was a sung narrative, a kitharode's 'lyric epic', of the kind Thespis in Athens, at just this time, was developing into 'drama', with performers in costume singing or speaking the roles.[63] In that context it is important to remember that festivals like the games founded by Lucumo were 'outreach' events, attracting spectators and competitors from far afield.[64] A famous example a couple of generations earlier was the kitharode Arion of Lesbos, who worked in Corinth but undertook a very profitable tour of the festivals of Sicily and Italy.[65] Since performers from many parts of the Greek world might meet at such events, we may suspect that Thespis' innovation soon became widely known.

It was certainly known and practised in Sicily, where, we are told, 'Epicharmus together with Phormus invented comedy in Syracuse', thus challenging even Athens for historic precedence as the origin of drama.[66]

59. Stesichorus *Geryoneis* fr. 21 (Pausanias 8.3.2) with Usener 1913, 330, Davies and Finglass 2014, 290.

60. Lulof 2000, Winter 2009, 377–80 (Veii and Rome), 466–7 (Satricum and Caere), 501–2 (Veii).

61. Athenaeus 12.512f-513a, quoting Megaclides (fourth century BC).

62. Cf. Herodotus 1.167.2 for games at Caere ('Agylla'), ordered by Delphi about 530 BC.

63. See n. 2; Herington 1985, esp. 19–20 (Stesichorus), 97–8 (Thespis); West 2015 ('lyric epic').

64. See for instance Fabius Pictor *FRHist* 1 F15 (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 7.72.1 and 73.4) on the *ludi Romani*: ἵνα φανερὰ γίνοιτο τοῖς ξένοις . . . ἐπιδείξεις τοῖς εἰς θέαν συνεληλυθόσιν). So too the games in the Romulus story: Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 2.30.3-4 (περιήγγελλεν εἰς τὰς ἔγγιστα πόλεις καλῶν τοὺς βουλομένους ἀγορᾶς τε μεταλαμβάνειν καὶ ἀγώνων . . . συνελθόντων δὲ πολλῶν ξένων εἰς τῆν ἑορτὴν), Plutarch *Romulus* 14.4 (ἀγῶνα καὶ θέαν ἐκ καταγγελίας ἐπετέλει πανηγυρικήν· καὶ πολλοὶ μὲν ἄνθρωποι συνῆλθον).

65. Herodotus 1.24.1 (section 4.5 below); one would expect him to have performed at games newly founded by a Corinthian ruler.

66. *Suda* E 2766 (Ἐπίχαρμος . . . εὗρε τὴν κωμῳδίαν ἐν Συρακούσαις ἅμα Φόρμῳ); Aristotle *Poetics* 1448a33-4 (Ἐπίχαρμος ὁ ποιητὴς πολλῷ πρότερος ὢν Χιωνίδου καὶ Μάγνητος), 1449b5-9 (τὸ δὲ μύθους ποιεῖν [Ἐπίχαρμος καὶ Φόρμις] τὸ μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐκ Σικελίας ἦλθε). For

Nothing is known of Phormus (or Phormis), but Epicharmus had attended the teachings of Pythagoras,[67] so his career as a dramatist probably began in the last two decades of the sixth century BC. He was evidently familiar with Rome: he knew that Pythagoras had been enrolled as an honorary citizen there, presumably after the expulsion of Tarquin,[68] and must have been aware that the games at Rome offered opportunities for people like himself.

Epicharmus' work, contemporary with the earliest Athenian satyr-plays, was itself in some sense satyric.[69] Certainly he was known for his association with Dionysus and the satyrs,[70] and it must be significant that satyrs were regularly portrayed in terracotta on public buildings in Sicily at just this time.[71] It is equally significant, though much less often noticed, that that architectural fashion was followed elsewhere only in Latium and at Rome (fig. 3).[72]

A Sicily–Rome connection in this period is implied also in Dionysius' account of the confiscation by the Romans of the ancestral wealth of the Bacchiadae after the expulsion of Tarquin.[73] How they used it is explained in his elaborate narrative of the great battle at Lake Regillus in 496 BC that finally freed Rome from the threat of the exiled Tarquin. He presents the Roman commander encouraging his troops:

> Postumius praised their enthusiasm, and vowed to the gods that if the battle had a good and fortunate outcome, he would provide sacrifices

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theatre in 'west Greece' (Sicily and south Italy) see Bosher 2012, Csapo and Wilson 2020, 276–428.

67. Iamblichus *Vita Pythagorica* 266, Diogenes Laertius 8.78; other evidence that dates him to the 480s BC is not incompatible, since he lived to the age of ninety.

68. Plutarch *Numa* 8.9: Πυθαγόραν Ῥωμαῖοι τῇ πολιτείᾳ προσέγραψαν, ὡς ἱστόρηκεν Ἐπίχαρμος ὁ κωμικὸς ἔν τινι λόγῳ πρὸς Ἀντήνορα γεγραμμένῳ, παλαιὸς ἀνὴρ καὶ τῆς Πυθαγορικῆς διατριβῆς μετεσχηκώς. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the reference (Wiseman 2024, 10–11); for Romans among Pythagoras' disciples see Diogenes Laertius 8.14, Iamblichus *Vita Pythagorica* 241, Porphyry *Vita Pythagorae* 22.

69. Shaw 2014, 56–77; for Athens see *Suda* Π 2230 = *TrGF* 4 T1 ('499–6 BC'), with O'Sullivan and Collard 2013, 22–8.

70. *Anthologia Palatina* 7.82 (κεκορυθμένον ἀνέρα Βάκχῳ | καὶ σατύροις), cf. Theocritus *Anthologia Palatina* 9.600.

71. Marconi 2006, 81–7, Shaw 2014, 71–3; cf. Csapo and Wilson 2020, 364 on 'the (almost exclusively) Sicilian practice of attaching silen antefixes to temples'.

72. E.g. Satricum: Cristofani 1990, 243–4 (9.6.71-2). Rome: Cristofani 1990, 63 (3.4.1, Forum), 69 (3.6.1, Capitol), 91 (4.1.4, Palatine), 254 (10.1.4, Esquiline). See Marconi 2006, 84 ('l'antefissa silenica viene introdotta contemporaneamente, alla fine del VI secolo, sia in Sicilia, che in Italia Centrale'), Wiseman 2024, 14–17 and section 4.5 below.

73. See nn. 52–3: probably derived from a Syracusan source (Antiochus).

FIGURE 3. (a) Terracotta antefix from Satricum, 500–490 BC. Rome, Villa Giulia (foto n. 4559): © Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, Archivio fotografico. (b) Terracotta antefix from the Roman Forum, 500–490 BC. Rome, ParCo_Archivio-Moderno-Fotografico_Foro-Romano-Palatino_Basilica-Giulia_Antefissa-a-testa-di-Sileno_Bruno-Angeli_Inv.1916_1. By permission of the Ministero della Cultura—Parco Archeologico del Colosseo.

> at great expense and establish lavishly funded games to be held every year by the Roman People.[74]

And after the victory the same commander pays the vow:

> Having set aside one tenth of the booty, he put on games and sacrifices to the gods and let the contract at forty talents for temples to Demeter, Dionysus and Kore.[75]

Demeter and Kore were the patron goddesses of Sicily.[76]

In Latin the three divinities were Ceres, Liber and Libera, with Demeter's daughter (Kore, 'the virgin') given the same 'speaking name' as Dionysus himself: Liber and Libera from *libertas*, gods of a free city.[77] Their joint temple was a magnificent one, dedicated in 493 BC next to the Circus Maximus where the games were held.[78] Were dramatic performances presented there, as they were in Sicily? Given the circumstantial evidence, there is no obvious reason to rule it out.

1.4. The god of drama

The Romans' choice of divinities, in a state newly freed from tyranny, could hardly be a random one. Demeter and Kore were the *Thesmophoroi*, guardians of the rule of law;[79] at Rome they guaranteed the *sacrosanctitas* of plebeian magistrates,[80] and their temple was where the plebeian aediles preserved the texts of *plebiscita*, and later *senatus consulta* too.[81] We should expect the choice of Dionysus (Liber) to be no less significant.

74. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 6.10.1: καὶ ὁ Ποστόμιος ἐπαινέσας τὸ πρόθυμον αὐτῶν καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς εὐξάμενος, ἐὰν εὐτυχὲς καὶ καλὸν τέλος ἀκολουθήσῃ τῇ μάχῃ, θυσίας τε μεγάλας ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐπιτελέσειν χρημάτων καὶ ἀγῶνας καταστήσεσθαι πολυτελεῖς, οὓς ἄξει ὁ Ῥωμαίων δῆμος ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος, ἀπέλυσεν ἐπὶ τὰς τάξεις.

75. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 6.17.2: ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν λαφύρων ἐξελόμενος τὰς δεκάτας ἀγῶνάς τε καὶ θυσίας τοῖς θεοῖς ἀπὸ τετταράκοντα ταλάντων ἐποίει καὶ ναῶν κατασκευὰς ἐξεμίσθωσε Δήμητρι καὶ Διονύσῳ καὶ Κόρῃ κατ' εὐχήν.

76. Diodorus Siculus 5.2.3-5.3, Cicero *In Verrem* 2.4.106; see Kowalzig 2008 for their relevance to drama.

77. Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 4.638, Wiseman 2008, 84–5; Dionysus is first attested as *Leiber* on a fourth-century BC *cista* (*ILLRP* 1198, Wiseman 2008, 87, fig. 17).

78. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 6.94.3 (τὸν νεὼν τῆς τε Δήμητρος καὶ Διονύσου καὶ Κόρης . . . ὅς ἐστιν ἐπὶ τοῖς τέρμασι τοῦ μεγίστου τῶν ἱπποδρόμων), Tacitus *Annals* 2.49.1; cf. Cicero *In Verrem* 2.4.108 (*pulcherrimum et magnificentissimum templum*).

79. Aristophanes *Thesmophoriazusae* 297-8 (τοῖν Θεσμοφόροιν τῇ Δήμητρι καὶ τῇ Κόρῃ), cf. Pindar fr. 37 Bergk (Kore), Diodorus Siculus 5.5.2 (Demeter).

80. Livy 3.55.7, Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 6.89.3, 10.42.4; cf. Cicero *In Verrem* 2.4.108 for the need to placate Ceres (Demeter) after the murder of Tiberius Gracchus.

81. Livy 3.55.13 (*Scta*), Pomponius *Digest* 1.2.2.21.

His Roman name was a calque of Dionysus *Eleuthereus*,[82] the god of the main Athenian dramatic festival, the City Dionysia. His Roman festival, the *Liberalia*, which took place on 17 March each year,[83] certainly featured theatre games in the third century BC,[84] and for all we know may have done so from the start. Once it is recognised that Cicero's date of 240 BC is not, after all, a *terminus post quem*, the origin of Roman theatre can be conjecturally placed wherever contemporary evidence suggests an appropriate context.

Dramatic festivals were an expensive enterprise. At Syracuse they were funded by the 'tyrant' Hiero, who even brought Aeschylus from Athens to work in Sicily.[85] The Athenian democracy solved the financial problem by the 'liturgy' system, which required wealthy citizens to take turns funding specific public expenses, including the *choregia* to pay for the festivals.[86] At Rome, the windfall asset of the Tarquins' confiscated wealth wouldn't last for ever, and the constant warfare against newly aggressive neighbouring peoples must have been a drain on public resources throughout the fifth century BC.[87] Nevertheless, public buildings were still being constructed, and surviving antefix fragments are enough to show that satyrs were still a familiar part of the city's visual ambience.[88]

The financial problem was addressed in 367 BC, when the long political conflict between plebeians and patricians was finally resolved: a significant part of that historic compromise was the institution of 'curule aediles', as a way of channelling patrician wealth to the general benefit by subsidising expensive games.[89]

It is at this chronological point that our sources for Rome are at their most baffling. On the one hand, two contemporary Greek philosophers (each with an interest in the history of drama) took it for granted that

82. Alexander Polyhistor *BNJ* 273 F109 (Plutarch *Quaestiones Romanae* 104 = *Moralia* 289a): ἀπὸ τοῦ παρ' Ἐλευθερὰς τῆς Βοιωτίας Ἐλευθερέως Διονύσου προσαγορευομένου.

83. Degrassi 1963, 6 (*Fasti Antiates*), with Wiseman 2004, 63–5 for the significance of the date.

84. Festus (Paulus) 103L (*quae apud Graecos dicuntur* Διονύσια), citing Naevius ('*ludis Liberalibus*'). Later discontinued, presumably in the crackdown on '*Bacchanalia*' in 186 BC (Livy 39.8-18), Liber's games were absorbed into the *ludi Ceriales* (Ovid *Fasti* 3.783-6).

85. Probably in 471–468 BC: Anon. *uita Aeschyli* 8-10 = *TrGF* 5 T1; Herington 1967, Kowalzig 2008, Shaw 2014, 65–7, Csapo and Wilson 2020, 355–64 (also for Aeschylus' second Sicilian sojourn, at Gela in 458–456 BC). For a possible earlier visit by Phrynichus see Anon. *De comoedia* 32 = *TrGF* 3 T6; Csapo and Wilson 2020, 345–6.

86. Full details in Wilson 2000.

87. Details in Cornell 1995, 304–9.

88. Hopkins 2022, 660–3, fig. 3: two examples dated mid to late fifth century BC.

89. Livy 6.42.12-14, 7.1.1-2; Wiseman 1995, 134–6. For the expectation of generous subsidies see for instance Plutarch *Sulla* 5.1, *Caesar* 5.5.

Rome was a Greek city;[90] on the other hand, writing more than three hundred years later about an event in 364 BC, Livy chose to describe at length what he saw as the humble beginnings of the Roman theatre games, pointedly avoiding any hint of Greek influence.[91] It is good historical method to give greater weight to contemporary evidence, and in this case the material record gives us every reason to do so.

From the late fifth century BC to the end of the fourth, the cultural world of southern and central Italy is spectacularly illustrated by the red-figure vase-painters of Apulia, Lucania, Campania and Etruria, and the bronze-engravers of Etruria and Latium.[92] Dionysus, with his satyrs and maenads, is a ubiquitous presence in the iconography,[93] not least in his role as the god of drama. Intensive recent work on the vase-paintings has revealed widespread familiarity with the plots of Athenian tragedy, comedy and satyr-play.[94] And although Rome and her Latin neighbours had no local red-figure potters, they did have bronze-engravers working in an iconographically identical artistic tradition.[95]

Pottery survives, if only in fragments; bronze gets melted down and used for something else. By a fortunate chance, however, it seems that in the fourth century BC the Latin city of Praeneste (modern Palestrina), unlike Rome, still allowed the burial of precious objects with the dead.[96] That was what brought about the fortuitous preservation of the engraved bronze caskets that are now known as 'Praenestine *cistae*' (*ciste prenestine*) from the fact that the vast majority of surviving examples were discovered by plundering the cemeteries there.[97] The most famous of them, signed 'made

90. Aristotle and Heraclides Ponticus (n. 13); see Diogenes Laertius 5.88 for Heraclides' works περὶ τῶν τριῶν τραγῳδοποιῶν and περὶ ποιητικῆς καὶ τῶν ποιητῶν.

91. Livy 7.2.2-13 (nn. 28–9).

92. Painted pottery: Beazley 1947 (Etruria), Trendall 1987 and 1989 (South Italy and Sicily). Engraved bronzes: Beazley 1949 (Etruria), Battaglia and Emiliozzi 1979 and 1990 (Latium).

93. An authoritative judgement on the south-Italian vase-paintings—'Dionysos, in his triple capacity of god of wine, drama and the mysteries, appears more often than any of the other divinities' (Trendall 1989, 256)—applies equally across the whole range of the material.

94. Well summarised in Hart 2010; see especially Taplin 2007 (tragedy), Taplin and Wyles 2010 (satyr-play), Taplin 2020 (comedy). The iconography was not restricted to the Greek-speaking areas of the far south (Wiseman 2015, 29–36).

95. Battaglia and Emiliozzi 1979 and 1990, Pairault Massa 1992, 139–75, Menichetti 1995, Wiseman 2004, 87–114, Coarelli 2010, 207–29.

96. For Rome, cf. Cicero *De legibus* 2.22 and 59 on discouraging conspicuous expense at funerals.

97. Coarelli 2011, 200, rightly insisting that Praenestine provenance proves nothing about where they were made.

in Rome' by Novius Plautius,[98] is decorated around the cylindrical body of the casket with a Dionysiac version of an episode from the voyage of the Argonauts (the binding of Amykos, king of the Bebrykes), a story treated on the stage by Epicharmus in Syracuse and Sophocles in Athens.[99]

Even more significant for the argument of this chapter is a *cista* acquired by the Barberini family in the nineteenth century, which was engraved with a scene of Iphigeneia about to be sacrificed at Aulis, the theme of Euripides' classic tragedy (fig. 4).[100] This artefact didn't just represent a mythological story: it represented the *performance* of a mythological story, with music and dance. More even than that, it represented *theatre*, with Artemis taking part in the action through a window in the stage set (fig. 5).

Such windows are well illustrated on a near-contemporary red-figure vase-painting made either in Sicily or at Paestum in Lucania, about 180 miles south-east of Rome (fig. 6),[101] showing a stage performance in honour of Dionysus, presumably at his festival. The naked girl on stage, inspected by characters in the drama, is a feature of Athenian 'Old Comedy';[102] so too is the cross-talk between characters at windows, described by Aristophanes as typically comedic.[103]

The engraver of the bronze *cista* chose not to make his scene so specifically theatrical. There are no masks here, the plot is not comedy but tragedy (or tragic burlesque), and the naked young woman is part of the drama itself, even playing the heroine. The window alone, however, is enough to evoke a stage performance. Together, these two artworks imply a Dionysiac theatre tradition in fourth-century BC Italy that presupposed

98. Battaglia and Emiliozzi 1990, 211–25, no. 68 (Rome, Villa Giulia inv. 24787), *ILLRP* 1197 (*Nouios Plautios med Romai fecid | Dindia Macolnia filea dedit*); Wiseman 2004, 89–97, Coarelli 2011, 207–18.

99. Scholiast to Apollonius Rhodius 2.98 (Ἀπολλώνιος μὲν ἐμφαίνει ὡς ἀνῃρημένον τὸν Ἄμυκον, Ἐπίχαρμος δὲ καῖ Πείσανδρός φασιν ὅτι ἔδησεν αὐτὸν ὁ Πολυδεύκης); Athenaeus 3.94e, 9.400b (Sophocles); see Shaw 2014, 61–2, evidently unaware of the evidence of the *cista*.

100. Battaglia and Emiliozzi 1990, 273–7, Menichetti 1995, 65–7, Wiseman 2015, 33 and 38–9, fig. 14.

101. From the 'important group of vases which provides a direct link between Sicilian and the first truly Paestan vases from the workshop of Asteas' (Trendall 1987, 42, cf. Trendall 1989, 198–9 and 251); for windows in theatrical scenes (including fig. 7 here) see Green 1995, 109–10 and plate 10; Todisco 2020, 156, fig. 52; 161, fig. 62; 162, fig. 64.

102. As for instance at Aristophanes *Wasps* 1341-80, *Peace* 868-86, *Thesmophoriazusae* 1172-1201; dancing girls also at *Acharnians* 1091-3 and 1199-1221.

103. Aristophanes *Ecclesiazusae* 889 (produced in 393 BC): ἔχει τερπνόν τε καὶ κωμῳδικόν.

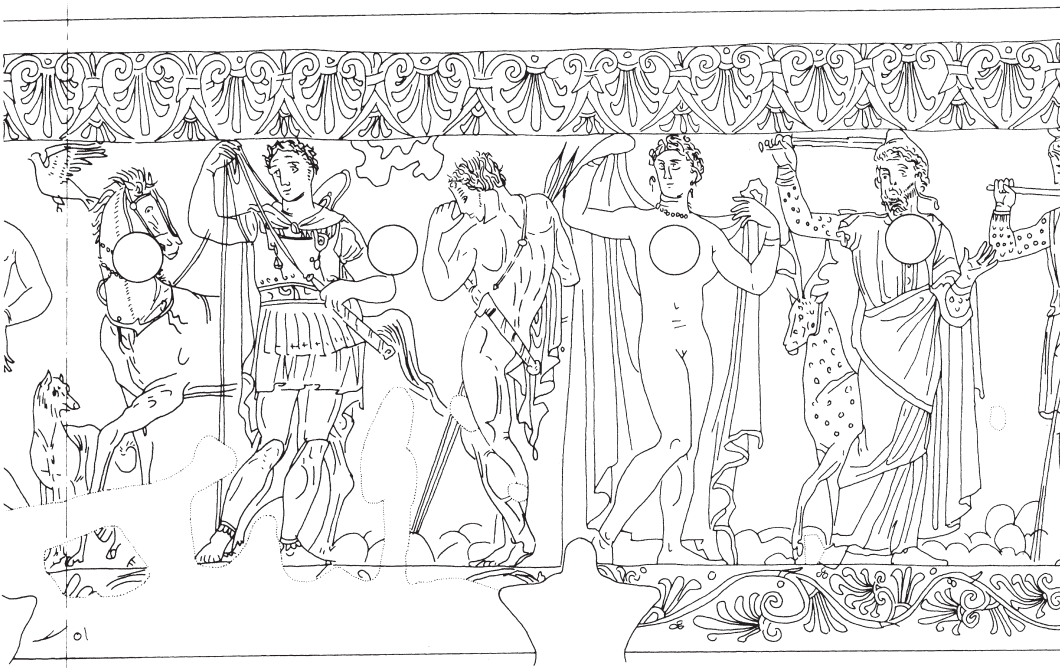
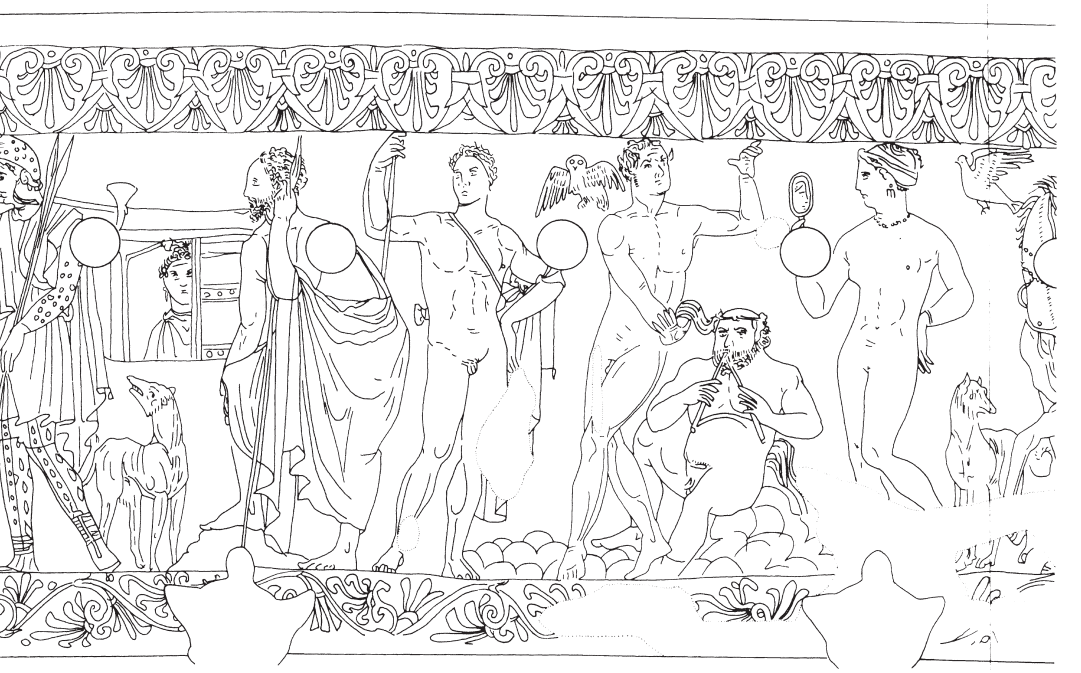


FIGURE 4. 'Unrolled' engraving on a cylindrical 'Praenestine' *cista*, fourth century BC: Rome, Villa Giulia (inv. 13141). Battaglia and Emiliozzi 1990, no. 82: drawing by M. Tibuzzi, reproduced by permission of the Istituto di Studi sul Mediterraneo Antico (CNR, Rome).
Left to right: (1) unidentified male figure, with horse and hunting dog; (2) grieving male figure, perhaps Achilles, Iphigeneia's promised bridegroom; (3) Iphigeneia disrobing; (4) Calchas, with the stag that caused Artemis' anger; (5) sacrificial attendant (*uictimarius*), with hunting dog; (6) Artemis or Clytemnestra watching through the window; (7) Agamemnon; (8) unidentified male figure with staff and sword-belt (Orestes?); (9) dancing satyr, with owl behind; (10) piping satyr seated on rocks; (11) naked young woman with mirror, her jewellery (ear-rings, necklace, bracelets) matching that of Iphigeneia.
For the satyr's hand-gesture (χεὶρ σιμή, Athenaeus 14.630a), matching that of the dancing satyr in fig. 3(a) above, see Wiseman 2008, 104–8.

'Greek drama' in all three of its forms, comic, tragic and satyric, and was certainly not confined to Greek-speaking communities.[104] On the contrary: the same iconography of satyrs, dancing girls and stories from Greek

104. Paestum, once the Greek city of Poseidonia (a colony of Sybaris), had been taken over by 'barbarian' Lucanians about 410 BC (Aristoxenus *ap.* Athenaeus 14.632a, Strabo 5.4.13 C251), half a century before the vase-paintings with the theatre scenes were produced there. On a Campanian red-figure jug of about 350–340 BC a comic actor playing Xanthias was identified in Oscan retrograde script (Taplin 1993, 40–41 and 94, British Museum inv. F 233).



drama is found right across southern and central Italy, from Apulia to Etruscan Clusium.[105]

Cicero and Livy, to whom we owe the 'orthodox version' of the origin of Roman drama, were either unaware of all this or unwilling to believe it. In 186 BC the Senate had declared Dionysiac rites (*Bacchanalia*) un-Roman and unacceptable, and that was still the official line when Cicero and Livy were writing.[106] Greek authors, however, had no such inhibitions, and once again Dionysius of Halicarnassus provides a valuable corrective. One of the proofs for his contention that Rome had been a Greek city from the very beginning was the presence of Dionysiac elements (satyrs and *silenoi*) at the *ludi Romani*, as attested by Fabius Pictor, the earliest of the Roman historians, at the end of the third century BC.[107]

It was probably a contemporary of Fabius' great-grandparents who commissioned the artist to engrave her bronze jewellery-box with a naked girl acting Iphigeneia at Aulis, and satyrs playing the music and dancing along (fig. 4).

105. For examples see Wiseman 2008, 107–8 (figs 34–5) and 112–13 (figs 37–8).

106. Livy 39.8-19, *ILLRP* 511; Cicero *De legibus* 2.37, Valerius Maximus 1.3.1, 6.3.7.

107. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 7.72.10-12, quoting Fabius Pictor *FRHist* 1 F15; see n. 31.

FIGURE 5. Reconstruction of a temporary theatre in fourth-century Italy, based on Paestan vase-paintings like the one in fig. 6. Beacham 2007, 213–14, fig. 18. Photo courtesy of Richard Beacham: © Martin Blazeby, King's 3D Visualisation Lab.

1.5. Mercury and the twins

What sort of performances took place on those *ad hoc* stage sets (fig. 5) at the Roman games in the fourth century BC? Contemporary red-figure pottery from Paestum may help us to imagine it (fig. 7).[108] This time, the comic scene is of 'Zeus on a love adventure, lighted on his way by Hermes'.[109]

Both gods were conspicuous in early Rome, Zeus (Jupiter) in Tarquin's great Capitoline temple, Hermes (Mercury) at one of the temples built after Tarquin's expulsion.[110] Hermes was born in Arcadia, and his cult at Rome was attributed to his son Euandros (Evander), the Arcadian

108. Trendall 1987, 124–5, plate 73a; Trendall 1989, 201–2, fig. 364; Hart 2010, 121, no. 58; Todisco 2020, 162, fig. 64.

109. Trendall 1989, 201; the woman is often identified as Alkmene (Alcumena in Plautus' *Amphitruo*), but Zeus's adulterous affairs were very numerous.

110. Livy 2.21.7, 2.27.5-6 (495 BC).

FIGURE 6. 'Kalyx-krater' of Sicilian or Paestan manufacture, 370–60 BC. Lipari, Museo Eoliano (inv. 927): by permission of the Department of Cultural Heritage and I.S. of the Sicilian Region—Archaeological Park of the Aeolian Islands, Luigi Bernabò Brea Museum—Lipari.
On a raised stage, to the left Dionysus sits holding a *thyrsus*, watching a naked girl acrobat perform; to the right are two actors in comic masks, one of them closely examining the girl; behind, two actors in female comic masks engage in dialogue from windows in the stage set. The other side of the vase shows a bearded satyr holding torches and a young woman with a tambourine (not on a stage).

FIGURE 7. 'Bell-krater' from Paestum, attributed to Asteas, 360–40 BC. Vatican Museums (inv. 17106 U19): photo copyright © Governorate of the Vatican City State—Directorate of the Vatican Museums. Two masked comic actors playing Zeus, with a ladder, and Hermes, with a candle in one hand and his *caduceus* in the other; the woman at the stage-set window is not masked.

exile who welcomed Herakles in Stesichorus' *Geryoneis*.[111] The temple was situated at the turning-point of the Circus Maximus, at the opposite end of Lucumo's *hippodromos* from where Demeter, Dionysus and Kore would be

111. Ovid *Fasti* 5.87-100, cf. nn. 58–9; for Evander as Hermes' son see Virgil *Aeneid* 8.138-9, Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.31.1, Pausanias 8.43.2.

installed a few years later.[112] We can, I think, assume that the god's annual festival exploited that fairground space for whatever would best instruct and entertain his worshippers. As Plato pointed out, people learned about the gods 'by hearing the stories in prayers at sacrifices, and watching the shows accompanying them that the young most enjoy seeing and hearing'.[113] We needn't think of scripted plays, but we should certainly think of theatre in the broad sense, and of favourite scenarios presented every year.

An old story retold by Ovid could be one of them.[114] Mercury is accompanying his father Jupiter, who is hoping to seduce one of the nymphs of the Tiber. They are all summoned to hear Jupiter's instructions not to let Juturna evade his advances, but one of them, Lara, not only warns Juturna but even spills the beans to Juno as well. Furious, Jupiter tears out her tongue and tells Mercury as *psychopompus* to take her to the underworld; Mercury escorts Lara to the appropriate sacred grove, where he takes advantage of her inability to protest, and only then fulfils his mission.[115] In due course she gives birth to the Lares, Rome's guardian gods,[116] and is herself worshipped as 'The Silent Goddess'.[117]

One way of playing this story is suggested by the Paestan scene (fig. 7), but to keep it farcical throughout would defeat the object of the exercise, which was to teach people about the gods. The outcome of it all is shown in a quite different style on a near-contemporary bronze mirror (fig. 8), where the iconography clearly alludes to three Roman festivals that took place during the nine-day period in mid-February when contact with the world of the dead was believed to be possible.[118]

112. Ovid *Fasti* 5.669 (*templa . . . spectantia Circum*), Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 6.8.2 (*retro metas Murcias*); n. 78. Exact relative dating is impossible because our two authorities calculated the chronology differently, but Livy put the dedication of the Mercury temple in the twelfth year of the republic and Dionysius put that of the Ceres Liber Libera temple in the seventeenth.

113. Plato *Laws* 10.887d: καὶ μετὰ θυσιῶν ἐν εὐχαῖς αὐτοῦς ἀκούοντές τε, καὶ ὄψεις ὁρῶντες ἑπομένας αὐτοῖς ἃς ἥδιστα ὅγε νέος ὁρᾷ τε καὶ ἀκούει πραττομένας θυόντων.

114. Ovid *Fasti* 2.583-616 (introduced with *disce, per antiquos quae mihi nota senes*); Wiseman 2004, 80 and 116–17.

115. Modern readers naturally find this tale of mutilation and rape repugnant; one can only hope Ovid's casual retelling reflects an original comic staging that minimised the brutality.

116. For the *Lares praestites* see Ovid *Fasti* 5.129-6; Robinson 2011, 388–90.

117. Ovid *Fasti* 2.572 (*Tacitae*), 583 (*dea muta*), with Robinson 2011, 362–3; for Tacita cf. Plutarch *Numa* 8.6, who explained her as a reminder of the Pythagorean virtue of silence.

118. *Parentatio* (13–21 February): Ovid *Fasti* 2.533-70, Degrassi 1963, 408–13. Iconography: Wiseman 1995, 65–71.

FIGURE 8. 'Praenestine' bronze mirror, second half of the fourth century BC. Rome, Antiquario comunale (inv. MAI 49): *Monumenti inediti* 11 (1879) 3.1. She-wolf suckling twin boys. Surrounding figures, clockwise from top left: (1) Hermes/Mercury, identified by his *petasos* hat (Athenaeus 12.537f); (2) veiled female, no doubt Tacita, 'the Silent Goddess' (Ovid *Fasti* 2.583-616); (3) the god Quirinus, whose festival was on 17 February (*Quirinalia*), identified by his physiognomy (Crawford 1974, no. 427.2, plate LI) and by the spear he carries (Ovid *Fasti* 2.475-8, Plutarch *Quaestiones Romanae* 87); (4) a lion, perhaps referring to the *Feralia* ('wild-beast festival') on 21 February; (5) Pan Lykaios, whose Roman festival was on 15 February (*Lupercalia*), identified by the shepherd's staff he holds (*Homeric Hymn* 19.5, νόμιον θεόν) and the goat-skin knotted round his neck (Justin *Epitome* 43.1.7).

The twin boys in the main scene must be the Lares.[119] The figures above are their father Mercury and their mother, now a goddess of the underworld; she has evidently given birth on 15 February—the 'wolf-festival' (*Lupercalia*), nine months after Mercury's own festival on 15 May—and left her new-born children in the world of the living, to be nourished and protected by wild beasts. Their rescuers are the Arcadian god Pan Lykaios, son of Hermes (and like him, introduced to Roman cult by Evander),[120] and Quirinus, eponym of the Roman People, the *Quirites*.[121]

If this mirror was made about 330 BC (a reasonable guess), the buyer who commissioned it and the artist who engraved it had probably never heard of Romulus and Remus. Romulus' first appearance on the stage of history is an unimpressive one, quoted from the lost work of a little-known Sicilian historian writing some time in the fourth century BC:

> Alkimos says that Romulus was the son of Aeneas' wife Tyrrhenia, and from Romulus was born Aeneas' granddaughter Alba, whose son, called Rhodius [Rhomus?], founded the city of Rome.[122]

Just one in a sequence of patently aetiological 'speaking names',[123] this Trojan Romulus has no brother and no story. The tale of Romulus and Remus, twin founders of Rome, is first attested in 296 BC, as reported by Livy:

> Also in that year the curule aediles Cn. Ogulnius and Q. Ogulnius prosecuted several moneylenders, whose property was confiscated; from

119. For the Lares as twins see Ovid *Fasti* 2.615-16.

120. *Homeric Hymn* 19.1 (Ἑρμείαο φίλον γόνον); Ovid *Fasti* 2.271-80, 5.91-102, Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.32.3 (Evander). For *Lupercalia* as a calque on Λύκαια see Ovid *Fasti* 2.423-4, Virgil *Aeneid* 8.343-4, Plutarch *Moralia* 280c = *Quaestiones Romanae* 68.

121. Varro *De lingua Latina* 5.73 (*Quirinus a Quiritibus*), Festus (Paulus) 43L (*a Quirino Quirites*), cf. Ovid *Fasti* 2.479. The temple of Quirinus on the Quirinal was vowed by L. Papirius Cursor (Livy 10.46.7, Pliny *Natural History* 7.213), probably in 326 BC as consul or 325 BC as dictator.

122. Alkimos *BNJ* 560 F4 (Festus 326-8L): *Alcimus ait Tyrrhenia Aeneae natum filium Romulum fuisse, atque eo ortam Albam Aeneae neptem, cuius filius nomine Rhodius condiderit urbem Romam*. Another fourth-century Sicilian historian (Kallias *BNJ* 564 F5a) named Romulus as one of the three sons of Latinos and Rhome, 'one of the Trojan women who came into Italy with the other Trojans' (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.72.5).

123. Tyrrhenia = the land over which Latinos ruled (Hesiod *Theogony* 1011-16); Romulus = Rome (but *not* named as its founder); Alba = *mons Albanus*, federal cult-site of the Latins (Varro *De lingua Latina* 6.25, Pliny *Natural History* 3.68-9). Francis Cairns (email to TPW, 23 May 2024) explains 'Rhodius' as a misreading of Ῥῶμος in Alkimos' text, 'a Syracusan splayed mu mistaken for delta iota'.

FIGURE 9. Reverse of a 'Romano-Campanian' silver didrachm, c. 290 BC (Crawford 1974, 137, no. 20.1; Coarelli 2013, 44–6): Bibliothèque nationale de France, REP-1364, Gallica Digital Library. The she-wolf stands with her head turned back and down to attend to the twins below. Legend in exergue: *Romano*(*rum*).

> the share that came to the public treasury . . . they set up at the *ficus Ruminalis* images of the founders of the city as infants under the teats of a she-wolf.[124]

The *ficus Ruminalis* was at the Lupercal,[125] and the bronze statue-group there was immediately used as a symbol of Rome itself, on one of the very earliest Roman coin issues (fig. 9).[126] These two very different uses of the same mythological motif presuppose a fast-changing Roman world.

124. Livy 10.23.11-12: *eodem anno Cn. et Q. Ogulnii aediles curules aliquot faeneratoribus diem dixerunt; quorum bonis multatis ex eo quod in publicum redactum est . . . ad ficum Ruminalem simulacra infantium conditorum urbis sub uberibus lupae posuerunt.* For the twins as joint founders of the city see also Cassius Hemina *FRHist* 6 F14, Diodorus Siculus 37.11.1, Varro *Res rusticae* 2.pref.4 and 2.1.9, Conon *BNJ* 26 F1.48.7, Strabo 5.3.2 C229, Pliny *Natural History* 15.77, Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.777, *CIL* 6.33856; the joint foundation is also implied (*pace* Briscoe 2013, 167) by Virgil *Aeneid* 1.292-3, Propertius 2.11.23 and 4.1.9-10.

125. Pliny *Natural History* 15.77; for the statue-group see Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1.79.8 (χαλκᾶ ποιήματα παλαιᾶς ἐργασίας).

126. The image is repeated on other coins of the third and second centuries BC: Crawford 1974, 150, 235, 267, 302 (nos 39.3, 183.1–6, 235.1, 287.1).

The mirror was a wealthy lady's private property, decorated with a piously educational religious scene; the coin-type was a statement of national identity, announcing the guaranteed currency 'of the Romans' (*Romanorum*). What had happened in the forty or so years between the engraving of the mirror and the engraving of the coin-type was the Romans' extraordinary achievement of military and political dominance throughout central Italy. As their surveyors marked out conquered land for settlement and their engineers altered the landscape with roads and bridges,[127] 'Roman Italy' was being made permanent.

This new reality changed the way the Romans presented themselves to the world. In the story on the coin-type, the twin boys suckled by the she-wolf at the Lupercal were not the sons of Mercury and a river-nymph; they were the sons of Mars and Aeneas' daughter Ilia, 'lady of Troy'.[128] Perhaps the 'Greek Rome' inherited from Lucumo's dynasty, reflected in Stesichorus' origin-legend of Arcadian Evander (section 1.3 above), seemed less appropriate now that the Greek cities of the south were potential adversaries.[129] Whatever the reason, a new diplomatic identity had been created. When the Greeks of Taras called in king Pyrrhos of Epirus to help them against Rome in 280 BC, as a descendant of Achilles he regarded it as a war against Trojan colonists.[130]

Ordinary Romans were probably not much concerned about such questions. What they needed to know about gods and men in the distant past, they learned from what they saw at the public festivals.[131] We can be sure that the story of the she-wolf suckling Remus and Romulus was dramatised for them, because we have evidence for it from only two generations later.[132]

127. Velleius Paterculus 1.34.3-4 lists ten colonial settlements founded by the Romans in Italy between 334 and 295 BC; Diodorus Siculus 20.36.2 describes the effect (and expense) of the Via Appia, built from Rome to Capua in 312 BC.

128. Cf. Servius *auctus* on Virgil *Aeneid* 1.273 (*Naeuius et Ennius Aeneae ex filia nepotem Romulum conditorem urbis tradunt*), with Ennius *Annales* 56 and 60 Sk and Servius on Virgil *Aeneid* 6.777 for the name Ilia. For the adaptation of the Mercury–Lara story see Schwegler 1853, 432–5, Wiseman 1995, 71.

129. The hostility of Taras, the most powerful of them, is first attested in 282 BC, when a Roman ambassador there was regarded as a *barbaros* (Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 19.5.1).

130. Paus. 1.12.1: στρατεύειν γὰρ ἐπὶ Τρώων ἀποίκους Ἀχιλλέως ὢν ἀπόγονος. Cf. Timaeus *BNJ* 566 F36 and 59, assuming Rome's Trojan origin despite an alleged foundation date of 814 BC (F60, synchronised with Carthage).

131. Compare Plato *Laws* 10.887d (n. 113) with Varro *De lingua Latina* 6.18: *cur hoc,* [*fabula*] *togata data eis Apollinaribus ludis docuit populum.*

132. Donatus on Terence *Adelphoe* 537 (*dicitur interuenisse lupam Naeuianae fabulae alimonio Remi et Romuli dum in theatro ageretur*); see Manuwald 2001, 141–61 on Naevius' *Romulus*.

1.6. The phlyax *authors*

Pyrrhos failed to protect Taras, which was taken by the Romans in 272 BC. They were now masters of a long-established Greek city, one which already, like Athens, had a permanent stone-built theatre for its festival of Dionysus.[133] What effect the new situation had on Tarantine theatre culture we can only guess; what we do know, however, is that Rhinthon, one of their leading playwrights, had an effect on the theatre culture of Rome.

Born in Syracuse, working in Taras in the early third century BC, Rhinthon pioneered the dramatic form of 'cheerful tragedy' or 'foolery' (*phlyax* in Greek), 'transforming tragic themes into the laughable'; it was also called 'Italian comedy'.[134] A fellow-poet wrote a charming epitaph for him:

> Laugh aloud as you go by, and give me a friendly word. I am Rhinthon of Syracuse—only a minor songbird of the Muses, but from my tragic fooleries I gathered ivy that was all my own.[135]

When Roman scholars centuries later came to list the various types of comedy performed in Rome, one of the categories they identified was that of *fabulae Rhinthonicae*.[136]

Three other *phlyax*-writers are known by name (their fragments gathered in the first volume of *Poetae Comici Graeci*): Skiras, also from Taras; Sopatros, from Paphos in Cyprus; and Blaisos of Capri, whose neighbours included the Latin colonists of Paestum, Suessa and the Pontiae islands.[137] To judge by their titles, it was Euripides above all who gave them their plots.[138] That should remind us of the scene on the bronze *cista* (fig. 4),

133. Attested in 282 BC: Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 19.5.2-3, Florus 1.13.3-4, Dio Cassius 9.39.5. The Theatre of Dionysus at Athens was built about half a century earlier.

134. *Suda* R 171 = 4.295 Adler (Ῥίνθων, Ταραντῖνος κωμικός, ἀρχηγὸς τῆς καλουμένης ἱλαροτραγῳδίας, ὃ ἐστὶ φλυακογραφία. ὑιὸς δ' ἦν κεραμέως καὶ γέγονεν ἐπὶ τοῦ πρώτου Πτολεμαίου [306–282 BC]); Stephanus Byzantinus 603.1 (Ῥίνθων, Ταραντῖνος φλύαξ, τὰ τραγικὰ μεταρρυθμίζων ἐς τὸ γελοῖον); Athenaeus 9.402b (τῆς Ἰταλικῆς καλουμένης κωμῳδίας).

135. *Hellenistic Epigrams* 2827-30 Gow-Page (*Anthologia Palatina* 7.414): καὶ καπυρὸν γελάσας παραμείβεο, καὶ φίλον εἰπὼν | ῥῆμ' ἐπ' ἐμοί. Ῥίνθων εἶμ' ὁ Συρακόσιος, | Μουσάων ὀλίγη τις ἀηδονίς· ἀλλὰ φλυάκων | ἐκ τραγικῶν ἴδιον κισσὸν ἐδρεψάμεθα.

136. *De comoedia* 6.1 (Kaibel 1899, 68), Evanthius *De fabula* 4.1 (Kaibel 1899, 66), Lydus *De magistratibus* 40: probably from Suetonius (sections 3.3 and 3.4 below).

137. Settlements founded in 273 (Paestum) and 315 BC. Blaisos wrote a *Satournos* (Athenaeus 11.487c), a Greek spelling of the Latin name of the Greek god who gave Latium its name (Virgil *Aeneid* 8.322-3, Ovid *Fasti* 1.238).

138. E.g. *Herakles* (Rhinthon), *Hippolytus* (Sopatros), *Iphigeneia at Aulis* (Rhinthon), *Iphigeneia in Tauris* (Rhinthon), *Medea* (Rhinthon), *Meleagros* (Rhinthon, Skiras), *Orestes* (Rhinthon, Sopatros), *Telephus* (Rhinthon).

(continued...)

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