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Review of Kulte – Riten – religiöse Vorstellungen bei den Etruskern und ihr Verhältnis zu Politik und Gesellschaft

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Kulte – Riten – religiöse Vorstellungen bei den Etruskern und ihr Verhältnis zu Politik und Gesellschaft, Akten der 1. Internationalen Tagung der Sektion Wien/Österreich des Istituto Nazionale di Studi Etruschi ed Italici (Wien, 4.-6. 12. 2008), herausgegeben von PETRA AMANN, unter der redaktionellen Mitarbeit von ELISABETH BRUNA. (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften, 440. Band) Wien, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2012. ISBN-10: 3700168861; ISBN-13: 978-3-7001-6886-7. Pp. 446, Ill. 29,7×21, paperback. € 83,00.

Reviewed by DANIELE F. MARAS, *Margo Tytus Fellow, University of Cincinnati*

This volume contains the proceedings of the First International Congress of Etruscan Studies organized by the Austrian Section of the Istituto Nazionale di Studi Etruschi ed Italici of Florence. The meeting was a successful scholarly event that drew the attention of an international audience to recent achievements and new frontiers in the study of pre-Roman Italy.

Etruscan religion was the topic selected for the congress, which was originally entitled: 'Öffentliche und private Kulte bei den Etruskern und ihre Auswirkungen auf Politik und Gesellschaft' ('Public and private cults of the Etruscans and their political and social implications').

A large number of European scholars, most coming from Austria, Germany, and Italy, answered the call of the organizers, Luciana Aigner-Foresti and Petra Amann. Almost all of the contributions were published in the proceedings, with the unfortunate exception of the papers by Martin Bentz (on the iconography and function of the Etruscan priests) and Friederike Bubenheimer-Erhart (on the self-representation of Etruscan proprietors in some painted tombs of Tarquinia). The resulting volume thus contains 26 contributions. Most were written in German or in Italian, which is the 'lingua franca' or koinè of Etruscan studies. The only exception is a paper in English by Larissa Bonfante.

The papers were organized into nine sections, devoted to many spheres of religious studies. The sections are: 1) the Etruscan pantheon; 2) the issue of patron-deities of towns; 3) the brontoscopic calendar and the *Liber Linteus* of Zagreb; 4) issues concerning priests and priesthood; 5) foundation rituals; 6) iconographic studies; 7) Etruscans, Italic peoples and Greeks; 8) Etruria and Rome; and 9) general considerations.

The volume constitutes an important reference text for future studies in Etruscan religion. Although it does not cover every aspect of the subject and not all scholarly opinions are represented, it does present a wide range of points of view with a pluralistic configuration.

Of course, the number of topics and the density of information contained in the volume as a whole make it impossible to summarize its contents in the space allotted for a review. Therefore, I will rapidly survey the contents of each paper, highlighting the main issues and

at times adding relevant considerations about arguments that deserve a broader exposition. In any case, I would like to stress that I strongly recommend this book to scholars interested in the aspects of religion of pre-Roman Italy.

Before starting my survey, a general observation should be made about the scholarly framework in which the congress and the subsequent proceedings took place, raising also the issue of the date of publication. The meeting took place in Vienna in December 2008; the book was published in 2012, almost four years later. The delay in the publication, not infrequent for proceedings of conferences in the humanities, creates a discrepancy in the treatment of bibliography by different authors. Some papers were updated by adding recent literature, but bibliographic references in most papers stop at the date of the meeting and do not take into consideration further scholarly developments and achievements. This is particularly relevant, and at times affects the conclusions of papers, because the congress in Vienna and the publication of its proceedings are one of an important block of studies on the Etruscans and the peoples of pre-Roman Italy, particularly as regards religious issues. In the years immediately preceding the congress several volumes appeared, demonstrating a new wave of interest in the international scholarly community with respect to the Etruscans. I cite, for example, Jannot 2005, Bonfante and Swaddling 2006, de Grummond 2006, de Grummond and Simon 2006, Haack 2006, Harvey and Schultz 2006, and van der Meer 2007. Furthermore, in late May 2008, six months before the congress in Vienna, a meeting on the 'Material aspects of Etruscan religion' took place in Leiden (Nederland); the proceedings were published in van der Meer (2010). Some authors participated in both events.

Of course, the authors writing in *Kulte – Riten – religiöse Vorstellungen* took into consideration all of the recent literature on Etruscan religion, at times even creating a dialogue with it. On the other hand, in the lapse of time between the congress and the publication of the proceedings a number of important volumes on the subject appeared. I cite, for example, Becker and Gleba 2009, Maras 2009a, de Grummond and Edlund-Berry 2011, Insoll 2011, van der Meer 2011, Bartoloni 2012, and MacIntosh Turfa 2012.

A few authors, Eichner, Amman, Bagnasco Gianni, Bonfante and Eibner, updated their papers, integrating information and results contained in more recent publications, but, regrettably, most papers remained close to the form in which they were presented at the congress. These papers cannot therefore be considered to reflect the state of affairs of Etruscan religious studies in 2012.

Heiner Eichner devoted his contribution (17–46) to the sacred lexicon of the Etruscans and to the names of several deities, thus carrying on a promising line of research explored by the late Helmut Rix.

The paper begins with a definition of the Etruscan language within the framework of the languages of ancient Mediterranean, which includes remarks on the appropriate transliteration of the epigraphic texts, especially as regards the sibilants. Although very

acute and functional, the proposed method of transcription results in a rather esoteric presentation of the Etruscan texts, with subscripts marking phonetic values and a series of additional signs that mark individual words as ill-preserved (†), hybrid (‡), dubious (§), correct (®), and so on. The diacritics provide the transcribed texts with the disconcerting aspect of mathematical formulae.

Special paragraphs are dedicated to the following words: *ais* ‘god’, *fler* and *flere*, respectively ‘sacrifice’ and ‘deity’ (proposing Indo-European etymologies), and *farθan* ‘genius’.

As for the gods, the author analyzes the name *Tina/Tinia* (transcribed as *Tiña*) in relation with the word *tin* ‘day’ and the name *Σεθlans* (transcribed as *Σεθlans*), proposing again, although with some hesitation, Kretschmer’s etymology from **Situlanus*, god of the *situlae*, bronze ‘buckets’ of archaic northern Italy.

Dominique Briquel’s paper on the relationship between the god Voltumna and the federal cults of the Etruscans (47–65) is a particularly rich offering; it is full of interesting suggestions and new perspectives for future studies. The contribution springs out of the necessity of explaining the role of Voltumna as the patron of the Etruscan league and/or of its annual *concilium*.

In the short introduction Briquel points out the existence of a plurality of federal sanctuaries among the peoples of ancient Italy that could have had a place also in Etruria. Further bibliography on the subject can be found in the proceedings of the congress *Nomen Latinum*, held in Rome in 1995,¹ and also in the proceedings of the congress *Il fanum Voltumnae e i santuari comunitari dell’Italia antica*, held in Orvieto in 2011.²

In my opinion, more attention should be paid to the difference between ethnic sanctuaries and federal sanctuaries. As a matter of fact, literary sources seem to refer to Etruscan federations in the Po valley and in Campania too, which could have had their own federal cults and institutions, although we have no evidence for this.³ On the contrary, sacred places connected, for instance, to the legend of Tarchon and Tages should be regarded as having an ethnic relevance (at the level of the *nomen*).⁴

Most valuable is Briquel’s analysis of the name of the god *Voltumna/Vertumnus* as that of a ‘Rahmengott’, patron of the flowing of the annual cycle (Prop. 4.2.11–2), whence the ‘false’

¹ See Zevi 1997: 123–142 and Coarelli 1997: 199–211.

² The volume was published in Della Fina (ed.) 2012.

³ But see Schol. Veron. ad Verg. *Aen.* 10.200: ‘<T>archon ... locum consecravit qup duodecim oppida condere’ (Briquel, pg. 59, note 83).

⁴ A visual reference to the distinct role of ethnic (national) and federal (political) deities is provided by the famous mirror from Tuscania, represented on the cover of the book I am reviewing. Represented on the mirror is a scene of divination, connected with the hero-founder Tarchon, that is performed ‘in the (sacred place) of Rath’ (presumably at Tarquinia) and in front of Veltune (whom I still think corresponds to Voltumna, notwithstanding the objections of de Simone and Briquel [pg. 56, note 58]).

etymology from Latin *uertere* ‘to turn’. The parallel between the twelve months of the year and the twelve peoples of Etruria is suggestive and provides a reasonable explanation for the insistence of the literary sources on the number twelve in relation to the Etruscans.⁵ Finally, some doubt is cast on the identity of *Voltumna* with *Tina*, as *deus Etruriae princeps* (Varro, *L.L.*, 5.46), generally considered to be the case since Pettazzoni 1928.

Incidentally, I do not share the author’s doubts on the religious aspect of the annual *concilium*, whose proximity to the *fanum Voltumnae*, as stated by Livy, should be regarded only as topographical information. In fact, the famous passage of Livy, in which he declares that the Etruscans were ‘the most religious of peoples’, refers to the actions of the king of Veii at the *concilium* (5.1.3-9), and is not far from the passage in which the *fanum* is mentioned as the actual location of the *concilia* (4.61.2).

The contribution by **Petra Amann** (69–83) is dedicated to the reception of the cult of Apollo in Etruria within the framework of the Hellenization of the Etruscan religion. The paper contains important remarks regarding the cult’s political relevance through divination, especially in connection with the Delphic oracle.

A theoretical premise of the paper seems to be the belief that the Etruscan pantheon has progressively expanded by way of the introduction of foreign deities and features, especially coming from Greece, in order to cover functions and components that were previously uncovered. From this perspective, the contrast between the relatively sparse evidence for the cult of Apollo with his Etruscanized name *Aplu* and the relevance of the Delphic Apollo according to the literary sources needs to be explained through an investigation of the available sources.⁶

The author concludes that the god was never part of the main pantheon of the Etruscans (78), but had a secondary role, at times through the assimilation to other deities, such as *Śuri*, *Manth* and *Veiovis*. Eventually the cult of Apollo/*Aplu* entered through the ‘back-door’ with Roman and Latin colonists.

Such a conclusion, in my opinion, cannot be accepted, for it is undermined by a misinterpretation of the phenomena of assimilation, which should be considered, on the contrary, as the actual core of the process of Hellenization of the pantheon. The Greek divine figures worshipped in Etruria were regularly assimilated to deities with an Etruscan name. This is the case, for instance, for Zeus/*Tina*, Hera/*Uni* and Aphrodite/*Turan*. Only a few Greek gods, for example, Herakles/*Hercle* and the Dioscuroi/**Tinas Cliniar*, have been introduced into the Etruscan pantheon with no apparent assimilation.

⁵ See also Tassi Scandone 2001: 151–196, spec. 173–182, in relation to the number of the *fasces* in Rome and their Etruscan origin.

⁶ To the list provided by the author should be added also the fragment of a bronze statue from the sanctuary of Castelsecco (Arezzo), probably inscribed with a dedication to *Aplu*: ¹[---]velus[---] ²[---]aplu[---] (Rix 1991, *Etruskische Texte*, Ar 3.3); cf. Cherici 1996: 459–464.

From this perspective, it is not the figure and the cult of Apollo that was introduced late into Etruria, but his Greek name, in the form *Aplu*, probably through Faliscan mediation already in the 5th century BCE.⁷ The need to provide the Etruscan deity with a Greek name went hand in hand with the Hellenization of his figure in visual representations on engraved mirrors and vases as well as statuettes thus showing a discrepancy between the god worshipped in cult and the corresponding figure of myth and iconography.⁸

The beautiful paper by **Gertraud Breyer** (85–104) offers a detailed analysis of the evidence available for the historical development of Dionysiac cults in Etruria as background for the affair of Bacchanals in 186 BCE as described by Livy (39.8–19).

The epigraphic sources are reviewed in thorough fashion, highlighting the earliest documentation from Vulci, which dates from the middle to the end of the 5th century BCE,⁹ and analyzing the documentation of public cults and institutions in Tarquinia during the 3rd century BCE.¹⁰

Unfortunately, the author chooses to give credit to the traditional interpretation of **Paχa* as the Etruscan name of Dionysos/Βάκχος, although Steinbauer already showed that this is in actuality the transliteration of Βάκχα (the Doric form for the Bacchant), as Breyer notes herself (86, note 11).¹¹ As far as we know, Dionysos was worshipped in Etruria only with the name *Fufluns*, which in the case of the cult of Vulci was Hellenized by adding the epithet *Paχie*.

The author dedicates very interesting pages to the historical framework of the reaction of Rome against the Dionysiac cults in 186 BCE, in which she ultimately compares the *coniuratio* of the initiates to other *coniurationes seruorum*, such as the one of 196 BCE, which characterizes the late society of Etruria before the Romanization.¹²

⁷ See Maras 2009b: 246–247. The hypothesis that considers *apalu* as a gentilicium in *-alu*, of the type spread in the Po valley, is even more problematic than recognizing in it the earliest witness of the Etruscan name of Apollo. On the other hand, the latter hypothesis is supported by the contemporary Faliscan cult of Apollo in Falerii (see Amann, pg. 73 and notes 63–64). Incidentally, the praenomen *apulas* from Pontecagnano, which is mentioned on pg. 69, is not related to Apollo, but rather to the archaic Etruscan name *apu*.

⁸ But this is not the right place to go deeper into the subject.

⁹ The author also records the alternative dating suggested by Rix to the beginning of the 5th century BCE, but does not take into consideration the chronology of the Attic vases that support the inscriptions.

¹⁰ Also in this case, Rix's dating does not fit with the archaeological context of tombs and sarcophagi.

¹¹ Further evidence for this correspondence comes from the name of the Etrusco-Campanian priestess who was persecuted as responsible for introducing Dionysiac rites in the Roman Italy, *Paculla Annia*, which is apparently a diminutive form of **Paca*, identical to the Etruscan **Paχa* (cf. Maras 2009a: 149, fn. 7). A possible epigraphic witness of a Latin Βάκχος, initiated to the mysteries, comes from a graffito on a jug found in the sanctuary of Portonaccio (Veii), dating from the 3rd century BCE, which reads: *paco* (cf. Ambrosini 2001: 84, n. I.F.7.8, with the unlikely integration *paco(nius)*).

¹² However, it should be kept in mind that, as far as we know from the testimony of the Tarquinian sarcophagi of the 3rd century BCE, the aristocracy controlled the Dionysiac mysteries in Etruria and the mysteries were not likely to be the cause of uprisings among the lower classes.

Lammert Bouke van der Meer dedicates a short, though dense, contribution (105–115) to sub-urban and extra-urban rituals in Falerii based on literary sources. This is accompanied by some general considerations on Etruscan and Italic religion. The parallel texts of Ovid and Plutarch provide an interesting witness on ancient rituals, with the features of mystery cults, still performed in the Roman period. The author compares this information with other data on the religion of the Faliscans with special regard to the goddess *luno Curitis*. The combination of procession (*pompa*) and games (*ludi*) is thus considered a recurring feature of extra-urban cults, often in relation to sacred woods (*luci*).¹³ The author gives additional consideration to the Etruscan and Italic terminology that may refer to such rituals.

Two papers focus on the deities who are patrons of Etruscan towns.

Gerard Capdeville (119–142) makes use of his broad knowledge of the Classical literary sources in order to analyze the names of some major cities of Etruria deriving from founder-heroes (such as Tarquinia/*Tarχna* from Tarchon and Capua from Capys) or from patron-gods (such as Mantua from Mantus/*Manθ* and Vetulonia/*Vatluna* from *Vatl*).¹⁴ Special relevance is given to Populonia/*Pupluna*, which is believed to have been named after the god *Fufluns*, notwithstanding the considerations of Rix (1998: 207–229, spec. 215), and Veii, whose name tallies with that of the Etruscan goddess *Vei*, corresponding to Demeter/Ceres and worshipped in the area of the town. As for Cortona, according to the author, the mention of an *Uni Curtun* in a votive dedication (*ET Co 4.6-7*) is evidence for the existence of an eponymous patron-deity of the town, assimilated to Hera/*luno*.

On the other hand, **Stephan Steingraber**'s paper (143–150) is much more concrete, for it is based upon architectural and iconographic elements relating to city-gates and funerary contexts. After a short paragraph on the recent, magnificent discovery of a sanctuary of Demeter in the countryside in southern Etruria (near Vetralla), the author reviews the cases of city-gates decorated by heads of deities, dating from the Hellenistic period.

Such deities had apparently a protecting function and presumably received a public cult; but of course it cannot be taken for granted that the patron-god (or goddess) of a town tallies with its eponymous deity, or that he (or she) has the largest or most important sacred place.¹⁵

¹³ Incidentally, the reference to cow pasturing in the area of the sanctuary, in the texts of Plutarch and Ovid, does not necessarily indicate a sub- or extra-urban cult (106), for in antiquity grazing lands existed even in urban areas (as well as small green zones considered as *luci*). Moreover, Ovid's tale takes place in the (then) abandoned town of Falerii Veteres.

¹⁴ The deity *VatImi*, mentioned in three Etruscan dedications, cannot be considered as a dative form of **Vatl(u)m*, which would rather be expected as **Vatl(u)m(e)si* or **Vatl(u)m(a)le*; cf. Maras 2009a: 142-143, with additional bibliography.

¹⁵ Even though, according to Vitruvius (*Arch.* 1.7.1), the temple of the patron-deity should be on the highest point of the town.

A final remark concerns the iconography of the urn of a Vel Rafi from Perugia. In the relief, the deceased holds a ruler (*regula*) and stands in front of a gate adorned with two heads. Even though this is an allusion to the gate of the underworld, it cannot be denied that the representation recalls the aspect of the 'Porta Marzia', one of the Hellenistic city-gates of Perugia, thus suggesting that perhaps Vel Rafi could have been its architect.

Peter Siewert's contribution on the brontoscopic calendar of John the Lydian (153–161) suffered more than others from the delay in the publication of the proceedings, for in the interim the beautiful book by MacIntosh Turfa (2012) was published, confronting the topic in depth and from many angles.¹⁶

At any rate, the line chosen by the author of evaluating the political aspects of some responses of the divinatory calendar is sharp and promising, and the contribution provides a very useful and informative review of the Greek terms used in the calendar to define the state and the *res publica*, trying to retrieve the original meaning of the Latin text (154-156).¹⁷

The title of the paper may be misleading, as the calendar is said to be the work of John the Lydian, a learned man of the Byzantine period, even though it is a Greek translation of a Latin original by Nigidius Figulus, dating from the 1st century BCE.¹⁸ The Etruscan core of the calendar, from which Nigidius derived his text, was certainly much earlier. In fact, according to Siewert, Nigidius wrote the calendar, presumably making use of existing Roman and non-Roman religious material (154); on the other hand, in her recent monograph, MacIntosh Turfa maintains that Nigidius translated an ancient Etruscan text adapting it to his time period and culture.

In my opinion, the conception of a divinatory calendar based on brontoscopy was very ancient,¹⁹ and it is probably impossible for us to reconstruct its original form from the text translated by John the Lydian. As a matter of fact the task of the Etruscan *haruspices* was not only to preserve and hand down the *disciplina*, but also to update and adapt the religious and divinatory texts over the course of time. Presumably, the text of the calendar with its list of responses underwent a long and steady stratification, generation after generation: only this can explain the coexistence of references to the Roman Civil Wars as well as to the period of the triumvirate, with somewhat anachronistic references to kings and the monarchy.

The paper on the presence of Umbrian religious elements in the text of the *Liber Linteus* of Zagreb by **Gerhard Meiser** (163–172) stands apart from the other contributions. The

¹⁶ See also MacIntosh Turfa 2007.

¹⁷ In this regard I wonder if the term *démos* should not be translated at times as *plebs* rather than *populus* (Siewert, pg. 160), with reference to political and class struggles in Republican Rome.

¹⁸ On the Etruscan divination in the late Republican period, see now Santangelo 2013.

¹⁹ Presumably taking place already in the Orientalizing period, when it derived from the Near Eastern divinatory science, as MacIntosh Turfa observed.

author adopts a linguistic approach to the text and continues a line of research initiated by H. Rix several years ago.²⁰ Some recurring passages or sentence-patterns of the *Liber Linteus* are analyzed into their components and compared to relevant passages of the rituals described in the Umbrian *Tabulae Iguvinae*, thus highlighting similarities and discrepancies, and yielding some interesting results.

It is worth mentioning here the defense of Rix's hypothesis of interpreting *un* as the Etruscan second person pronoun (166) and the translation of Umbrian *erus* as 'the ones who wish (to take part in the ceremony)', in the dative plural (167).

Additionally, an interesting hypothesis concerns the Latin expression *humano ritu*, used by Aulus Gellius in relation to the sacrifice of a goat to *Veiovis*. According to the author, it does not refer to a ritual used for human beings, but rather to the locative *humi* 'on the ground', that is to say, not on the altar (169).

Tina Mitterlechner confronts the issue of the existence of gentilician deities ('Gentilgottheiten') in Etruria, often referred to in literature, because of some epithets that strongly resemble gentilicia. The author collects the sparse epigraphic evidence for this phenomenon and analyzes the available literary sources, particularly as regards family cults in Rome, with the famous cases of the *Potitii* and *Pinarii*, and of the *Aurelii*.²¹ She stresses, correctly so in my opinion, that the sources authorize us to identify the occurrence of 'gentilician priesthoods' (that is to say, priesthoods held by specific aristocratic families) from time to time dealing with cults of public relevance, but she lets herself be dragged along by her fervor in denying the existence of gentilician epithets in Etruscan.²²

Eventually, the author proposes, correctly in my opinion, that scholars should speak of 'gentilician cults' rather than deities, and pay attention to the features of the cults and their significance in a private and public context.

Ingrid Krauskopf offers a sharp and thorough contribution to the role of Etruscan women in cult, with special regard to the evidence existing for women's priesthoods and religious colleges. The purpose of the paper is to determine what features can be detected in burials and in visual representations in order to identify feminine priestly figures.

A special case is provided by the *Tomba delle Iscrizioni* at Vulci, where two of the six chambers hosted women's burials, in several cases marked by the term *hatrencu*, which was added to the name of the deceased. Since the women buried there have different gentilicia, it can be considered very likely that the word refers to a collegial priesthood. Other terms,

²⁰ See, for instance, Rix 1985 and 1998.

²¹ Additional references, e.g., Santi 1991, de Simone 2009, and Torelli 2010, should have been included in the bibliography.

²² As a matter of fact, the list of the available evidence is longer than that used by the author; cf. Maras 2009a: 143–149 and 466.

such as *tame[r]u*, *eθvis*, and **snenaziula* can be supposed to relate to priestly women, even though with a lesser degree of certainty.

Women acting in religious rituals are represented in very early monuments, such as the wooden throne from Verucchio and, possibly, the terracotta friezes from Murlo. Possible attributes indicating a priestly role for women, as results from iconographic sources, are (sacrificial) knives, carts, and perhaps also foldable chairs (*diphroi*). Of course the presence of one of these objects in funerary goods may hint at, but is not evidence for, the sacred functions of the deceased.

The author also supposes a priestly nature for the married couple, *Larth Tetnies* and *Tankhvil Tarnai*, sculpted on the sarcophagus in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts because of features represented on the capse: the man's paraphernalia are a magistrate's chair (*sella curulis*), a scepter, and a *lituus*; the woman's a bucket (*situla*), a parasol, and a fan. All together such attributes seem to point out a political as well as religious role for the couple, that is therefore, unconvincingly in my opinion, compared to the Roman *rex sacrorum* and the Athenian *archon basileus* (191).

Friedhelm Prayon's paper explores the orientation of the altars and the priests who use them in archaic Etruria (199–214). Since the topic is one of the author's specialties, he deals in a masterly fashion with the argument, incorporating new evidence from recent discoveries into the framework of the previous scholarly studies.²³

Not only altars in sanctuaries, but also funerary contexts—either tumuli, or chamber-tombs, or sacred areas—are analyzed by the author, introducing the hypothesis of the cyclic mutation of the cardinal points East and West in different periods of the year (that would explain the range of different orientations of the altars from E-SE to E-NE).²⁴

As regards the altars provided with ramps for access by officiants and victims, it is usually taken for granted that the direction of the ramp indicates the orientation of the ceremony; still it is possible that in certain rituals the direction was determined by religious considerations and was different than that suggested by the ramp.²⁵

The contribution that follows, by **Hans Taeuber** (215–220), is slightly out of place in the volume, for it deals with the political relevance of Greek priestly figures and can be connected to Etruscan civilization only in order to look for comparanda. This complex and important subject is rapidly investigated in the pages of this short paper, founded exclusively upon literary sources, and without reference to the archaeological data.

²³ If a piece of criticism can be leveled at the paper, since it deals mostly with orientation, it would be that the same orientation should have been used for the all of the maps shown in the illustrations.

²⁴ See Stevens 2009: 153–154.

²⁵ See Maggiani 2009: 221–238. On the topic of altars in Etruria see Rafanelli 2013: 566–593.

The term ‘priests’ of the paper’s title (‘Priester’ in German) is to be understood in its broad and general meaning, comprehending cult-officiants, sacrificers, priest-kings, seers, and so on; therefore the paper in effect concerns the interrelation between politics and the sacred in Greece through the role of the mediating priestly figures.

A few pages by **Adriano Maggiani** are dedicated to the archaeological contexts of three Etruscan foundation deposits in relation to city-walls, with some general remarks on such category of finds (223–234). Although short, this paper is particularly rich and purposeful; it draws attention to the kinds of offerings that are found in connection with foundation rites, at times surprisingly modest in nature.

Offerings (such as coins) and sacrifices (of pigs as well as fishes) were seemingly usual in Hellenistic Etruria, although the evidence is still too little to draw general conclusions. Some archaeological finds in Roman contexts show that the ritual was different there; and I would like to stress that it is dangerous to use Greek categories and definitions for the Etruscan finds (226), for it is known that the Etruscan *Libri Rituales* prescribed ‘what rite was to be used to found towns, or to consecrate altars and temples, what inviolability attached to walls, what law to gates’ (Festus, 358 L.). We should therefore expect that Etruria had its own rites and practices to perform such ritual actions (228).²⁶

The two following papers are linked to one another for the latter seems to answer a question posed by the former.

Giovannangelo Camporeale surveys the origin of the visual motif of the ‘solar boat’, which made its way into Etruscan arts and crafts from Bronze Age Europe. The motif, representing a floating boat with bird-heads at both ends and a circle or disc in the middle, decorates Etruscan urns as well as razors, pendants, and tools.

The quick ‘destruction’ of this motif (in Italian ‘destrutturazione’), soon losing its central disc, or further stylizing the bird-heads, or changing the boat itself into a linear sign, shows that the original sacred value of the decoration, if any, was soon lost on Etruscan craftsmen, and any reference to the cult of the sun should be considered hypothetical. On the other hand, the motif preserves its connection with the elites even over the Villanovan period.

Taking over from Camporeale, **Arianna Medoro Kanitz** (253–271) carries out an investigation of the meanings of the representations of birds from the Iron Age to the Orientalizing period. The author presents a thorough and systematic analysis of the motifs, schemes and variants of the figures of birds on locally produced objects, from the ‘solar boat’ to the water-birds, and to the so-called ‘aironi’ decorating several classes of Orientalizing pottery. She spots the origin of different variants from Europe as well as from

²⁶ On the concept of *sanctitas* in relation to city-walls, see Tassi Scandone 2013: 105–118.

Greece, pointing out specific cases in which birds occur in ‘narrative’ contexts, at times interacting with human beings or other animals (257).

As a result of her survey, the author maintains that the elaboration of types and combined versions of the bird-motif derives from a convergence of different ideologies, spread from the Mediterranean to central Europe, and matching in the Etruscan culture. Eventually, the cross-reference to sky and water, marking the boundary between the human world and the divine, as well as the afterlife, seems to fade and to lose its emblematic function in coincidence with the act of anthropomorphizing the gods.²⁷

An interesting methodological contribution by **Cornelia Weber-Lehmann** (273–286) encourages scholars to verify accurately what can be connected to religious rituals in the figural representations of the painted tombs of Tarquinia.

The author surveys scenes of mourning, dance and music, and sacrifice and worship, confronting different models of interpretation proposed by Torelli, Jannot and Colonna. She wisely observes that the categories of cult and ritual are indeed appropriate in the process of interpretation, but that they are not the only ones (281).

A long and systematic paper by **Giovanna Bagnasco Gianni** (and collaborators) is devoted to the possible role as divinatory tools held by some selected items represented in the figural scenes engraved on Etruscan mirrors (287–314). The basis of the research is the acknowledgment of the multifaceted meaning that the mirror had in the ancient society as a means for divination, as well as a component of women’s toiletry, a wedding gift, and, in funerary contexts, a religious object.

She examines mirrors, eggs, (lifted) cloths, styluses or pins, and alabastra: to each is dedicated an appendix, listing occurrences on mirrors and commenting on their possible divinatory function. According to the author, the study was intended to encourage researchers to take into consideration the different functions of mirrors when interpreting their representations in mythical contexts. As a matter of fact, mythological scenes engraved on Etruscan mirrors often do not match up with the narratives of Classical literature.

The contribution by **Alessandro Naso** also appears to me out of place in the proceedings of a congress on the Etruscan religion, for it deals with the discovery of Etruscan and Italic materials in the Aegean region (317–333).

The original title of the paper presented at the congress was ‘Doni etruschi nei santuari greci’, which focused specifically on the religious contexts of the find-spots. By extending the coverage also to the (small number of) objects not found in sacred places, for example,

²⁷ See Cristofani 1993: 9–21.

bronze thrones, weapons, fibulas, and bucchero vases, the author provides a comprehensive review of the Etrusco-Italic presence in the Greek area from the Iron Age to the Archaic period.

Larissa Bonfante's paper focuses on the phenomenon of the ostentation of wealth and high rank through precious, refined, and at times exotic components of dress, exhibited in the grave goods (335–344). Such items were not simply parade displays, as the Greek sources seem to suggest by accusing the Etruscans of *tryphe*, unrestrained luxury, but they acquired also special significance in relation to their ritual, funerary context.

The author stresses the peculiar symbolic value of amber—at one time believed to be magical material—in the production of fibulas, pendants, and gems, often placed in tombs of women and children. After the great diffusion of such objects in Etruria and Italy in the Orientalizing period, it is remarkable that the necropolises of Puglia show amber objects from the last quarter of the 6th to the 4th century BCE. And even in the Roman period some of these symbols of funerary luxury and magic show a striking continuity with the tradition of the Iron Age.

Continuing the theme of the symbolism of power and religion in archaic Italy, **Alexandrine Eibner** devotes her contribution to the visual world of the 'Situlenkunst' of northern Italy (345–378). As a matter of fact some of the ancient, emblematic status symbols of the Orientalizing elites can be found in representations incised on *situlae*, such as thrones, crowns and scepters, rings, necklaces and torques, and special items of clothing.

After a systematic review of every single occurrence of each of these items—and with an impressive apparatus of footnotes and bibliography—the author presents a concise survey of the corresponding *realia* found in archaeological excavation, and adds a section on written sources and comparanda among the neighboring peoples of Italy and Europe.

The paper presented by **Cesare Letta** (379–390) is dedicated to the religious tradition of the central Italic peoples, the Marsi, the Vestini, the Paeligni, and the Marrucini, in the Hellenistic period, before the admission to the Roman citizenship in 90 BCE. The author is primarily interested in the information drawn from epigraphic sources and the analysis of the Classical literature. The endurance of genuine Italic features of the cult, intertwined with a steady influx of Greek influences, shows that Romanization found a flourishing and persisting religious tradition that only partially and rather superficially was affected by the contact with the Roman religion.

The genesis of the Roman triumph and its early development are the subject of the contribution by **Mauro Menichetti** (393–406). The author surveys the recent bibliography in

order to reassess the theory of attributing Etruscan roots to the ceremony and a connection with the cult of Dionysus.

The author presents a case study of the most remarkable funerary displays of weapons and symbols of rank in Etruscan and Latin tombs of the 8th and 7th century BCE, highlighting the central position of the chariot. On the other hand, the link between the ritual consumption of wine and the military victory is stressed by some literary sources. And some iconographic sources show that aristocratic ideology praised the victorious *principes* as comparable to the heroes of the myth.

Eventually, these seemingly separate threads allow the author to reconstruct the development of the ceremony of the Etrusco-Roman triumph in the context of the kingdom of the Tarquinii and the cult of Jupiter Capitolinus.

Santiago Montero's paper (407–419) analyzes the relationship between the Etruscan *haruspices* residing in Rome and in the Capitoline temple. He focuses on the prodigies that occurred in relation to the temple throughout the centuries and on their interpretation. In particular, the author highlights the role that the *haruspices* had fighting against the introduction of foreign religious practices (*externae superstitiones*), such as in the case of the cults of Isis in the 1st century BCE. A steady collaboration between the Senate and the *haruspices* throughout the Imperial period is thus detectable by means of the available sources, collected by the author in a detailed appendix.

A short, interesting contribution by **Ekkehard Weber** is devoted to the evidence for the practice of the Etruscan *Disciplina* in the Roman provinces outside of Italy (421–426). A selection of epigraphic testimony from different parts of the Roman empire is presented and then discussed by the author, thus showing that the ancient religious tradition, now become a Roman cultic feature, was still broadly practiced in a public and military context until the late Imperial period.

The editors selected **Gerhard Dobesch's** contribution (429–443) as the concluding paper in the volume. Its title declares that his aim is to present 'general considerations' on the relationship between cult and state in Classical antiquity ('Polis, Staat und Kult' in German).

Public religious practice was an essential component of the ancient Greek *polis* as well as the Roman *res publica*. As the author remarks, there was no distinction between political and religious power, but they were intertwined and at times integrated in the same public figures.

This complex system had its historical roots in ancient Near Eastern cultures and was preserved through a changing apparatus of symbols and ceremonies throughout the Roman Empire, even leaving its stamp on the development of medieval and modern society.

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