

The foundation of Rome

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ABSTRACT – In this study, some of the most relevant names occurring in the myths concerning the foundation of Rome are analysed in order to obtain confirmations or new informations on the origin of the city and its early inhabitants. In particular, the role of Latin and Etruscan tribes in populating the Roman hills is investigated. The contribution of these peoples is considered together with that of other ancient peoples who have been recognised as migrated in ancient Italy mainly during the II millennium BC, according to a recent diffusion model based on the time and space distributions of ancient and current geographical names and ethnonyms. The analysis of the names reported in the foundation myths leads to the conclusion that Latins originally were a people of the Etruscan federation as well as the peoples who inhabited Volsinii and Felsina at the beginning of the I millennium BC. Moreover, the name of Romans originally was an exonym by which Latins called other peoples of the Etruscan confederation and later was extended to indicated all the inhabitants of Rome. Lastly, most of the names of the mythological founders of Rome or their ancestors are eponyms of the peoples that populated ancient Lazio and contributed to the rise of Rome.

KEYWORDS – Rome, Founders of Rome, Romans, Latins, Etruscans, Aborigines, Roman tribes.

INTRODUCTION

About the foundation of Rome and the origin of Romans and Latins many myths have been handed down. Some of them place the foundation of Rome in the late bronze age (XII-XI sec. BC), particularly around the times of the Trojan war, some other in the early iron age (IX-VIII century BC)¹. The founding of Rome has then been attributed to some mythological character, having a local origin, such as *Romus* (son of Italus² or sprung of Jupiter³), or arrived from abroad, mainly from Greece, such as *Evander*⁴. Otherwise, the founder of Rome has been recognised as an hero of the Trojan war or some of their descendants, such as the the Trojan *Aeneas*⁵, *Rome* (daughter of the Greek Telemachus⁶), or *Romulus* (son or grandson of *Aeneas*⁷ or grandson of Numitor⁸). The most ancient myths have been handed down orally and then elaborated after the diffusion of the writing. In particular, at the end of the V century BC, authors such as Hellanicus⁹ and Damasthes¹⁰

¹ Fusco 2014.

² Dionysius 1.72.6; Plutarhcus 2.

³ Festus p. 266 M.

⁴ Servius 1.273.

⁵ Festus, p. 266 M; Dionysius 1.72.2.

⁶ Servius 1.273; Plutarhcus 2.

⁷ Dionysius 1.72.2.

⁸ Dionysius 1.79.9.

⁹ Jakoby et al. 1999: FGrHist 4 F 84; Dionysius 1.72.2.

¹⁰ Jakoby et al. 1999: FGrHist 5 F 3; Dionysius 1.72.2.

began investigating the origin of Rome and Romans and reporting myths about it¹¹. Diocles of Peparetus and Fabius Pictor¹² contributed to elaborate the foundation myth which became the most acknowledged. However, we received nearly 30 different versions of myths concerning the foundation of Rome¹³.

The truthfulness of the content of such foundation myths has been discussed for a long time. In particular, in the first decades of XIX sec. a strong aptitude to disown the truthfulness of foundation myths has been developed and has characterized the work of historians such as Barthold Niebuhr and Ettore Pais¹⁴. This aptitude has been reduced when the excavation activities of the XIX and XX centuries brought to the light the remains of objects cited in the myths, such as the *lapis niger* found in *Comitius* by Giacomo Boni¹⁵ and the ruins of walls on the Palatine Hill dating back to VIII century BC excavated by Andrea Carandini¹⁶. However, such archaeological finds only prove that a *lapis niger* really existed in *comitius* and somebody built walls on the Palatine Hill in the VIII century BC. They do not prove that such a *lapis niger* was part of the grave of Romulus¹⁷ nor that Romulus built those walls¹⁸, as believed in the historical ancient age¹⁹.

Concerning the truthfulness of Rome foundation myths, we must remember that the facts they described occurred some or several centuries before the time they have been reported by ancient historians. They have been handed down orally for long time and have been enriched of particulars aimed to explain and justify the events mentioned. The authors who collected and elaborated the received foundation myths could have distorted them aiming to inspire some sentiments towards the people described or to attribute a particular characteristic to the founder. These are for example the case of Anatolian Greek historians who wanted to inspire solidarity against Persians²⁰ and that of Roman historians who wanted to attribute a Greek origin to Rome²¹. Moreover, some characters were introduced to confer a noble origin to somebody. This is probably the case of Iulus, introduced as an additional son of Aeneas or as Ascanius under an alternative name²².

In general, myths are a product of the human mind inspired by some particulars, such as events, names, conditions, and are similar in some aspects to other products of the human mind, as for example the dreams. A mechanism acting on the production of both myths and dreams is the condensation. Often, in fact, different events are condensed in one. Similarly, both in myths and dreams, a single event can be duplicated and placed in different times. Moreover, an event can be transposed from a time to another.

In the case of Rome foundation myths, the particulars which seem to have mostly inspired the human mind are the names of persons, peoples, and cities. Although some part of the accounts frequently seem to be imaginary, unreal, contradictory, or impossible, the names reported furnish informations which usually agree with the peopling of ancient Italy, as it can be reconstructed by a global analysis of the time and spatial distributions of toponyms, ethnonyms and eponyms in ancient and current Europe and Asia.

In the following, we then analyse names reported by the foundation myths in order to find confirmations and new informations on the peopling of ancient Lazio and Italy. In Appendix A, we resume some characteristics of the peoples that inhabited ancient Italy, reconstructed in recent

¹¹ Ampolo 2013.

¹² Plutarchus, *Romulus* 3.1.

¹³ Ampolo 2013.

¹⁴ Musti 1991; Ampolo 2013.

¹⁵ Ammannato 1984.

¹⁶ Carandini 2013; Carandini 1986.

¹⁷ Festus p. 184 L.

¹⁸ Plutarchus, *Romulus* 9.4; Solinus 1.17.

¹⁹ Carter 1909; Grandazzi 1993; Mastrocinque 1998.

²⁰ Ulf 2017.

²¹ Hill 1961.

²² Livius 1.3; Servius 1.267.

works²³ following a diffusion model based on the analysis of the time and space distributions of ancient and current geographical names and ethnonyms, taking into account historical testimonies. In Appendix B we resume some phonetic changes occurred in the language of the peoples that inhabited ancient Italy. We also show some deformations by which Romans adapted to their language the ethnonyms or the poleonyms of other peoples.

VALENTIA AND LATINI

In his commentary of Vergilius' Aeneid, Servius reports that "Ateius adserit Romam ante adventum Evandri diu Valentiam vocatam; sed post Graeco nomine Rhomen vocitatam"²⁴ (According to Ateius, Rome was called Valentia for a long time before the arrival of Evander; but later was called by the Greek name Rhome). Such an early name was confirmed by Solinus, who refers that Rome received this name by Evander, who found a oppidum called Valentia by the Latin youth, translated into Greek by the name Rhome²⁵. Also Festus cites a city called Valentia founded on the Palatine Hill by colonists from Athens, Sicyon, and Thespieae, called Aborigines from their wandering, and specifies that the name was changed to Rhome after the arrival of Evander, Aeneas, and many Greek-speaking followers²⁶.

The cited authors inform us that some foundation myths attributed to *Rome* in its early age the name *Valentia*, that this name derived from the vigour of the founders, and that the later name, *Rome*, derive from the translation in Greek of the previous one. As we will demonstrate, the name *Valentia* is not connected with the vigor nor with the name *Rome*. *Valentia* and *Rome* derive in fact from the names of different tribes of the Etruscan federation.

As described in Appendix B, by comparing some Latin poleonyms with the reconstructed prehistorical names of the Etruscan tribes, it has been observed²⁷ that Romans often used to translate the names of the Etruscan cities changing the desinence *-zna* into *-entia*. Therefore, if we apply the inverse change to the name *Valentia*, we obtain the possible corresponding Etruscan name **Valzna*. Such a word is very similar to the name *Velzna*, by which some Etruscans called the cities that Romans called *Felsina* (Bologna) and *Volsinii* (or *Volsinium*, located by current Orvieto or Bolsena). The sound *z* was often unvoiced into *s*. Therefore, also the form *Velsna* is attested²⁸. For reasons which we discuss in the next sections, we can assume that **Valzna* was a variant of *Velzna* and had therefore the same meaning.

The desinence *-zna* was a form by which Etruscans in the late age wrote the oral desinence *-zḡna*, in which *ḡ* indicates a sound intermediate between Lat. *e* and *i*, corresponding to *ḡ* Greek letter (cf. Gr. *Τυρσηνοί*²⁹). In the late age, in fact, Etruscans used to omit in writing internal unstressed vowels³⁰. Therefore, we can assume that the name **Valzna* was pronounced **Valzḡna*.

In the I millennium BC the desinence *-zḡna* had already assumed the meaning of tribe, people, or city. Such a desinence in Latin was translated into *-sena* or *-sina*, as in *Caesena* and *Felsina*. As described in Appendix A, *Velzḡna*, *Velzna*, or *Velsna* were the names by which some tribes of the Etruscan confederation indicate some others which lived for example in *Felsina* and *Volsinii*. The former called themselves by names such as *Rasna* or *Razḡna* (cf. Gr. *Ρασέννα*³¹, *Rasenna*) and spoke some dialects that we know as the Etruscan. The latter, in the following indicated by the name *Velsna*, spoke Indo-European dialects, and should have called themselves by names such as

²³ Fabbri 2017; Fabbri 2018a.

²⁴ Servius 1.273.

²⁵ Solinus 1.1.

²⁶ Festus p. 266 M.

²⁷ Fabbri 2019.

²⁸ Pallottino 2016: 277.

²⁹ Herodotus 1.94.7.

³⁰ Moscati 1988: 88; Banti 1969, 129.

³¹ Dionysius 1.30.3.

**Volvoni* (whence **Volvonia*, **Bol'onia*, and *Bologna*). Both *Velsna* and **Volvoni* are names derived from the reconstructed prehistorical name **G^waulg^waunas*.

It must be noticed that when Romans translated the names *Felsina* and *Volsinii*, they did not use the metathesis of *-zna* into *-entia*. This means that the translation occurred in a time in which the Etruscan name of the cities was written without omitting the vowel between *z* and *n*. Moreover, while the name *Felsina* is the exact transliteration of *Velzḡna*, the name *Volsinii* shows that Romans knew the correct pronunciation of the *Vol-* suffix, by which the tribes living in that closer city distinguished themselves.

The sound *z* in the *-zḡna* desinence results from the aspiration of a previous voiced dental *d*. Therefore, the *-zḡna* desinence was pronounced as *-dḡna* in a previous age. Such a form is attested in several names of people or cities, as for example *Modena* and *Udine*. In the Etruscan alphabet, both the voiced and unvoiced occlusives were represented by the same letter³². In particular, voiced dental *d* was written as *t*, as in Lat. *Mutina* (*Modena*). We can then assume that the name **Valzḡna* was previously pronounced **Valdḡna* and written **Valtina*, from which we can obtain through metathesis the form **Vlatina* and after fall of the initial *v* the name *Latina*, transformed in Lat. *Latini* (Figure 1).

We actually have obtained the name of *Latini* from the early name attributed to Rome in myths, that we have connected to the prehistorical name of the ancestors of *Velsna*. We can then conclude that the name *Latini* was an exonym by which some *Rasna* relative tribes indicated a *Velsna* relative people living in the territory around Rome. The name **Valzna* was also used by *Rasna*, but it diffused in a later age.

It must be noticed that the late name **Valzna* can not have influenced the foundation myths since the origin of Rome. In particular, its translation *Valentia* should have been introduced in the last half of the I millennium BC. As described in Appendix A, *Velsna* were a rural people used to live on cattle breeding and knowing simple technologies such the iron manufacturing to make weapons and instruments, while *Rasna* were merchants and artisans used to live on trade and knowing many sophisticated techniques concerning every aspect of the life. In the development of the city of Rome, the Etruscan (*Rasna*) culture played an important role, particularly in the religious and magic field. When some important action had to be decided, Etruscan aruspices were consulted and the Etruscan techniques of interpreting the auspices were exploited³³. In the age in which the city reached an high cultural level, Romans scholars studied and translated the religious books of the Etruscans³⁴. It was probably in these books, kept reserved and secret for centuries, that the name **Valzna* was found and translated into *Valentia*. The name *Valentia* has been in fact also considered a secret magic name of Rome³⁵.

Albani

In the previous section, it has been assumed that the Etruscan (*Rasna*) name *Velzna*, attested in *Felsina* and *Volsinii*, was alternated to the name **Valzna* in the territory around Rome. Such an alternative form can be the result of an ancient tendency in the territory to change into *a* the *e* or *o* vowels occurring elsewhere in the exonyms and endonyms of *Velsna*. If we now apply such a change to the endonym **Volvoni* which has been hypothesised in *Felsina*, we obtain the name **Valvani* and, through fall of the initial *v* and deaspiration of the internal one, *Albani*. We can then conclude that *Albani* was the endonym of the *Velsna* relative tribes living in the territory around Rome and indicated with the exonym *Latini* by some *Rasna* relative tribes.

³² Actually, it is probable that Etruscans were used to confuse voiced and unvoiced occlusive sound as still occurs in some dialects in Lazio and Central-Southern Italy, in which lenition is applied to the unvoiced occlusives.

³³ Keller 1971: 88; Pallottino 2016: 251.

³⁴ Cicero, *De divinatione*.

³⁵ Ferri 2010: 179-198; Plinius 3.65; Servius 1.277.

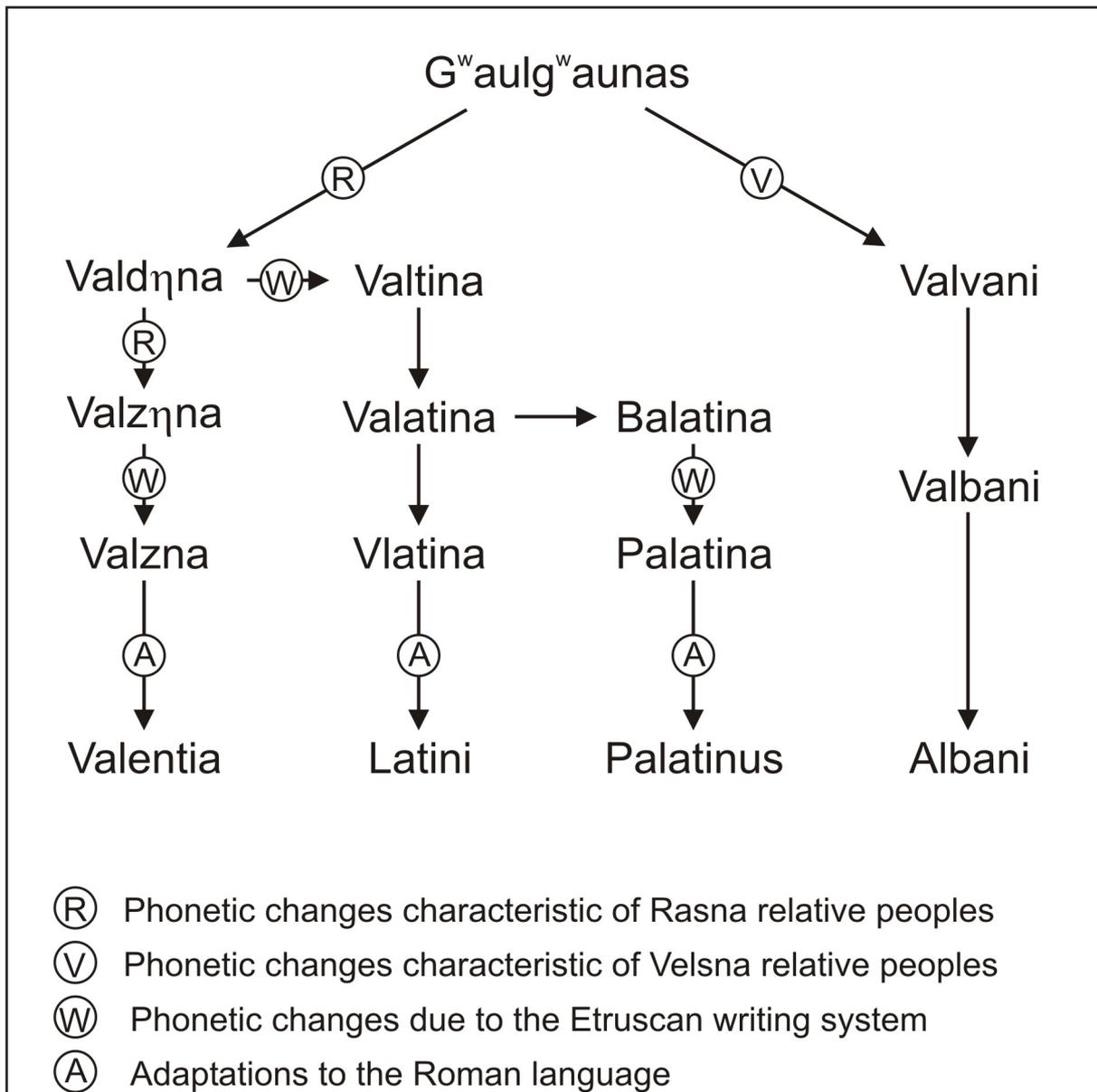


Figure 1 – Relationships between the words Valentia, Latini, Palatinus, Albani.

The tendency to changed to *a* the vowels in the names of *Velsna* can be attributed to *Proto-Umbrians* and *Proto-Calabrians*. We can in fact observe this tendency in the names of *Calvana* mount chain, located south of Bologna, of *Calbano* mount, placed near Sarsina, and of *Campania* region. As described in Appendices A and B, all this three names derive from $*G^w aulg^w auna$, the prehistorical name of *Velsna* ancestors, changing the original diphthongs into *a* and the initial labiovelar into velar, which are characteristical phonetic changes of *Proto-Umbrians* and *Proto-Calabrians*. However, we find some exceptions in the name of *Volsinii*, *Volsci*, and *Collatia*, that even had been exposed to the influence of *Proto-Umbrians*.

Latinus and Lavinia

By analysing the name *Valentia*, we found that the names of *Latins* derives from $*G^w aulg^w aunas$, the prehistorical name of *Velsna* ancestors. In particular, the *t* dental is the result of an internal labiovelar g^w , that usually resulted into dental in the languages of *Rasna* and into labial in those of *Velsna*, as described in appendices A and B. This seems confirmed by the foundations myths.

According to the mythology³⁶, the eponymous king of *Latins* was called *Latinus* and his daughter *Lavinia*. The name of the daughter, with the characteristic desinence *-ia*, indicates some female one deriving from *Lavin-us* or *Lavin-a*. In the first case, *Lavinus* is an alternative form of the name of the father (according to Servius³⁷, *Lavinus* was brother of *Latinus*). In the second case, *Lavinia* is daughter of the couple *Latinus+Lavinia*, that in the myth language represents the identity of two alternative forms. Therefore, the foundation myths were inspired by the alternation of the names *Latini* and *Lavini*, influenced by *Rasna* and *Velsna*, respectively.

The name of *Latins* has been also derived³⁸ from the prehistorical name **G^wau-la-ta-nas* attributed to *Proto-Gaul-Latins*. As described in appendix A, this people reached Central Europe and Italy as a vanguard of the Proto-Etruscan confederation. It is then possible that also the derived form **Vol-la-ta-na* was originally used as an endonym alternatively to the exonym **Valdḡna/*Valtina* and both contributed to the name of *Latins*.

Palatinus and Evander

According to some foundation myths³⁹, *Evander* and his people from Arcadia founded by the *Palatine* hill (figure 2) a city called *Pallanteum* or *Pallantium*. Dionysius⁴⁰ reports different theories about the origin of such a name. Among these, the historian relates that *Pallantium* was the name of the Arcadian city where *Evander* was born. It is commonly believed that the *Palatine* hill takes its name, Lat. *Palatinus*, from *Pallantium*. However, the names *Pallantium* and *Palatinus* have the same origin of *Valentia* and *Latini*.

We saw that the name *Valentia* derives from the Etruscan name **Valdḡna*. Adding an euphonical *a* between the two consonants, we obtain the name **Valadḡna* and its later form **Baladḡna*, which in the Etruscan alphabet was written as *Palatina*, whence Lat. *Palatinus*. From **Valdḡna* we can also derive **Baldḡna*, **Paltna*, the Roman adaptation (see Appendix B) **Palentum*, and its derivations **Palentium* and **Palenteum*. The similarity with the Greek name *Παλλάντιον* induced who handed down or elaborated the myths to change the names to *Pallantium* and *Pallanteum*. and to believe the city founded by Greeks, in particular Arcadians. This led to believe that *Roma* was a Greek name and *Valentia* its translation in Latin. Moreover, *valentia* was considered as derived from *valen-s/-tis*, i. e. a man having *valor* or good *virtus* (Gr. *ἀνδρεία*), whose name in Greek should have been *Εὐ-ανδρος* (*Eu-andros*, *Evander*).

Volcanus

According to the mythology⁴¹, *Romulus* and *Titus Tatius* dedicated a sanctuary to the god *Volcanus* at the foot of Capitoline hill. The site where the sanctuary was located, the *area Volcani*, was considered a sacred place. The kings of Rome used to stay there while speaking to the people adunated in a lower place, called *comitius*. *Volcanus* was considered the god of the fire⁴². He was associated to the Greek god Hephaistos and to iron manufacturing. It has also been considered as a god of water⁴³. However, his name has the same etymology and original meaning of the names *Latini* and *Velsna*.

As described in appendix A, some tribes of the Etruscan confederation relative of *Tarchna* (or *Tarchuna/Tarchona*, the people of *Tarquini*) had resulted in velar, also aspirated and muted, in their dialects the internal labiovelar of the desinence *-g^wauna*, and thus mutated such a desinence into

³⁶ Livius 1.1; Vergilius 7. 46-67; Dionysius 1.44.3, 1.57.2, 1.59.3.

³⁷ Servius 7.59.

³⁸ Fabbri 2018a.

³⁹ Vergilius 8.51-54; Dionysius, 1.45.1; Solinus, I.1.

⁴⁰ Dionysius 1.31.1-1.32.1.

⁴¹ Dionysius 2.50.3; Plutarchus, *Romulus* 24.3; Plinius 16.236; Festus 238.

⁴² Varro 5.10.13.

⁴³ Rose 1933.

-kauna and later -chana or -chona (-chuna in writing). Therefore, they should have called *Volchana the descendents of *G^waulg^waunas that Rasna called *Veldḡna (also *Seldana; see next section), *Valdḡna, and Latina.

The name *Volcanus* was introduced in the foundation myths as the eponym of one of the peoples who inhabited Rome, the *Latins*. Later, when myths were elaborated, it became the name of one of the most important deities of the city. The iron manufacturing attributes associated to the god were inspired by the iron technology that *Latins* should have brought along their migration. The word *Kalvis* (< *G^waulg^waus) in Lithuanian means in fact *smith*.

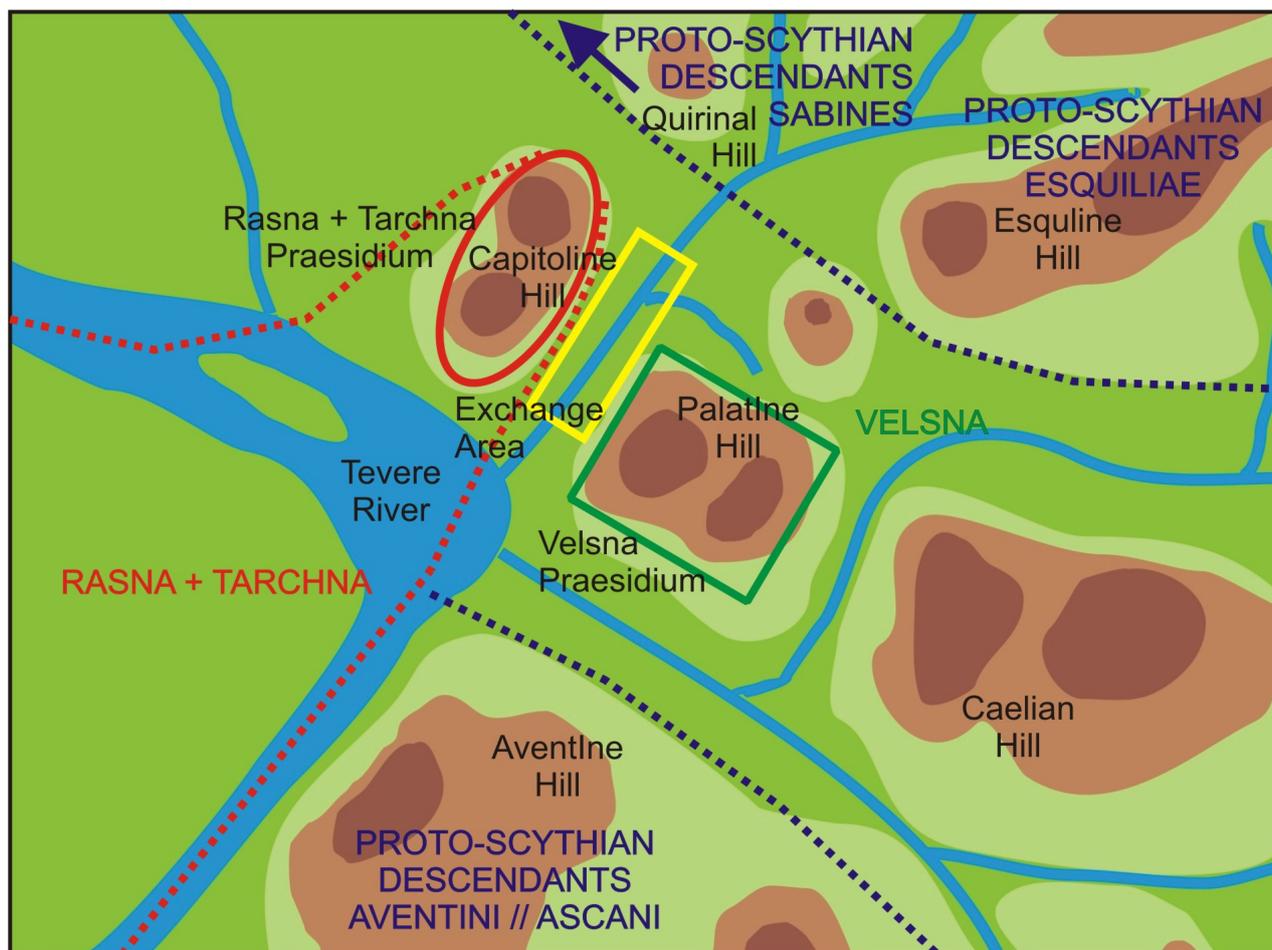


Figure 2 – Settlements of Rasna, Tarchna, and Velsna relative peoples and descendants of Proto-Scythians during the formation phase of Roma in the VIII century BC, approximately.

Silvii

According to the mythology⁴⁴, *Silvius*, the son of *Aeneas* and *Lavinia*, was born after the death of his father. He takes its name from the wood (Lat. *silva*) where he was raised by his mother, hiding him from *Ascanius*, first son of *Aeneas*. He became king of *Alba Longa* after the death of *Ascanius*. After *Silvius*, the kings of *Alba Longa* are called *Silvii*. However, such a name has the same origins of *Velsna* and *Latins*.

We saw that in the dialects spoken by the *Rasna* relative tribes usually one of the labiovelars of the name *G^waulg^waunas resulted in dental (*d/t*, *z=dh*, *s*) and the other in labial (*v*). In particular, in most cases the internal one resulted in dental, while the initial one in labial. Less frequently, both labiovelars resulted in dental. This is the case of the name of the Etruscan god of fire and volcan

⁴⁴ Dionysius 1.70.1-5; Gellius 2.16.1-10; Livius 1.3.

Sethlans (< **Selthans* < **Seldanas* < **G^waulg^waunas* > *Volcanus*) . In other less frequent cases, the internal one resulted in labial, while the initial one in dental. This should have occurred for the name *Silvius*.

For the city of *Volsinii* the Etruscan names *Velz-u* (< **G^waulg^waus*) and *Velz-na* (< **G^waulg^waunas*) are attested⁴⁵. By inverting the results of the two labiovelars, we obtain *Zelv-u* and *Zelv-(e)na*, whence Lat. *Silv-us* and Lat. *Silv-anus*. *Silvanus* was the god not only of the woods, but of the more general countryside, where the rural *Velsna* relative tribes bred their cow herds and did the most of the activities on which they lived. He was the deification of an other aspect of *Velsna* people life.

Rasna called therefore *Velsna* also by names similar to *Silvi*, that were introduced in the myths as synonyms of *Latins*. To motivate these names, the tradition added the hiding in the wood of the son of *Lavinia* and named him *Silvius*.

ROMA AND ROMANI

According some foundations myths⁴⁶, the city of Rome takes its name from its founder *Romulus*, who was twin brother of *Remus* (*Ῥώμος*, *Romos*, according to Strabo⁴⁷). According other myths, Rome received its name from a woman called *Rhome*. She was a captive of some Greeks returning from Troy⁴⁸, the daughter of Telemachus and wife of Aeneas⁴⁹, a daughter of Evander⁵⁰ or Italus⁵¹. In other more myths, as we saw, the name *Roma* derives from the translation in Greek of the name *Valentia*. Actually, the name *Roma* seems to have the same origin of the name *Rasna*. and to have been assigned to the city after its inhabitants.

We saw that *Rasna* or *Razhna* called *Velsna* or *Velzḡna* the tribes of the Etruscan confederation that were relative of *Latins*. In Bologna, *Vel-sna* should have called themselves **Vol-voni* and indicated *Ra-sna* consequently as **Ra-voni*. The name *Ravone* is in fact attested in Bologna as the name of a torrent that should have been the border between the tribes of the city (*Velsna*) and those of the merchants (relatives of *Rasna* and *Tarchna*, i. e. *Tyrrhenoi*) settled by *Reno* (Lat. *Rhenus*, cf. *Tyrrhenus*) river (Fig. 3). In Rome, **Valzna* should have called themselves **Valvani* and indicated *Rasna* consequently as **Ravani*.

A phonetic change that can be observed in some Etruscan name and in some Italian ones derived from Etruscan and Latin names is that of *v* into *m*. It should have occurred for example in the name of the Etruscan city of *Melpum* (< **Velpu* < **Velbos* < **G^waulg^waus*; probably current *Melzo* < *Velzu*, or Milano) and in the Italian name of *Meloncello* (< *M[e]l-an-zel*⁵² < **Melzel* < **Vel-zḡ-la* < **G^waul-g^wau-las*) torrent, which flows in Bologna very close to *Ravone* torrent and was the first crossed by Etruscans moving from *Reno* river to *Vel-zḡ-na*. It is also attested in the name of *Velinus* river, that was changed to *Mellino* in the Middle Ages and recently reformed to *Velino*. We can then assume that the change of *v* to *m*, has occurred also in the name **Ravani*, thus obtaining the ethnonym **Ramani*.

As described in Appendix A, the name *Rasna* derive from the prehistorical one of their ancestors **Thyr-g^wau-nas*. In the derived names, the *y* vowel of *Thyr-* suffix often change to *a*, as in *Tar-chna* and **Ra-sna* (< **Tra-sna* < **Tar-sna*), but also do not change, as in Gr. *Τυρσηνοὶ* (*Tyrsenians*⁵³) or change to *u*, as in the cases that we show in the next section. We can assume that the change to *u*

⁴⁵ Pittau 2018: 279.

⁴⁶ Livius 1.7; Dionysius 1.71-72; Quartarone 2015.

⁴⁷ Strabo 5.3.2.

⁴⁸ Festus p. 269 M; Solinus 1.2; Servius 1.273.

⁴⁹ Plutarchus, *Romulus* 2; Servius 1. 273.

⁵⁰ Servius 1. 273.

⁵¹ Plutarchus, *Romulus* 2.

⁵² cf. the addition of a nasal preceded by a vowel in the name of the Bologna torrent Mel-on-cello, in the name of the Bologna character Bal-an-zone (< **Bal-zona* < *Velzḡna*), and of Bologna street Bell-in-zona (< **Bel-zona* < *Velzḡna*).

⁵³ Herodotus 1.94.

occurred in the territory around Rome and beside the name **Ramani* also diffused the ethnonym **Ruma-na*, namely the people of *Ruma*. Therefore, the name *Ruma* was assigned to the territory or village where *Rumana* lived: *Ruma* was called after *Rumana*. The Etr. *Ruma* was later translated in Lat. *Roma*.

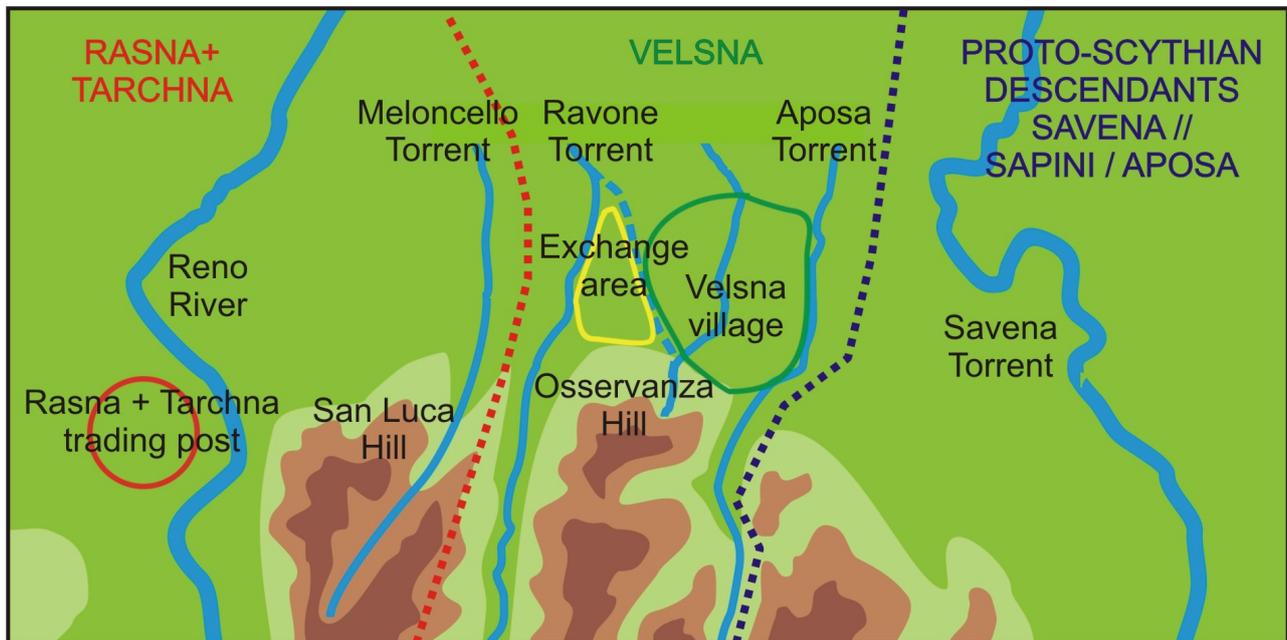


Figure 3 – Settlements of Rasna, Tarchna, and Velsna relative peoples and descendants of Proto-Scythians in the territory around Felsina in the VIII-VI century BC.

Turnus and Rutuli

According to the mythology⁵⁴, before the arrival of *Aeneas*, *Turnus*, (*Τυρρηνός*, *Tyrrhenos*, for Dionysius⁵⁵), king of *Rutuli* and son of *Daunus*, expected himself to marry *Lavinia*, daughter of *Latinus*. According to Vergilius⁵⁶, after *Latinus* gave *Lavinia* in marriage to *Aeneas*, *Turnus* incited *Aborigines* against Trojans starting a war. *Turnus* received the help of *Mezentius*, exiled by the *Etruscans* of Caere, Clausus, prince of Sabines, Ufens, chief of Aequi, Camila, queen of Volsci. *Aeneas* received instead the help of *Evander* and the *Etruscans* gathered by *Tarchon*. *Aeneas* killed in battle both *Turnus* and *Mezentius*⁵⁷, won the war, and joined Trojans with *Aborigines*. According to Livius⁵⁸, *Latinus* allied instead to *Aeneas* against *Rutuli* of *Turnus*. In a first battle *Rutuli* were defeated but *Latinus* died. Afterward, *Turnus* allied to *Mezentius* leader of *Etruscans*.

The name of *Tur'nus* (< **Tur-chna* < **Tur-chana*) can be derived from **Thyr^wg^wau^w* by changing the labiovelar into velar aspirated and later muted. As described in Appendix A, such a change, which occurs also in Gr. *Τυρρηνοί* (*Tyrrhenians*⁵⁹), is characteristic of peoples relative of *Tarchna* (actually the *Tyrrhenians*), who started reaching Italy by sea around the beginning of the II millennium BC. *Turnus* was then an endonymous eponym of these peoples.

The name of *Rutuli* (< **Tru-tu-la* < **Tur-do-la*) can be derived from **Thyr-g^wau-las* by changing the labiovelar into voiced dental. As described in Appendix A, such a change is characteristic of peoples relative of *Ra-sna* (< **Tar-sna* < **Tar-d^hna*). Therefore, *Rutuli* was an endonym of *Rasna*

⁵⁴ Vergilius 7; Livius 1.2;

⁵⁵ Dionysius 1.64.2.

⁵⁶ Vergilius 7-12.

⁵⁷ Farron 1981.

⁵⁸ Livius 1.2.

⁵⁹ Strabo 5.1.7.

and and exonym of *Tarchna*. The result of the *-la* derivation in the name of *Rutu-li* has probably the same meaning as in the name of Sabe-lli (< *S^w-g^w*au-las*), who were considered colonists of Sabines (< *S^w-g^w*au-nas*). Therefore, the name *Rutulii* probably indicated colonists of relatives of *Rasna* and *Tarchna* out of Etruria, firstly in Rome (*Rumuli*, see next section) and later further South and East, as close to Laurentum and Ardea⁶⁰.

Daunus is usually associated to the Adriatic people of *Dauni*. However, both *Daunus* and *Dauni* can be derived from g^w*auna* through the phonetic change characteristic of the dialects of *Rasna* relatives, as well as *Faunus* (< **Vaunus*) through that of *Velsna* relatives (cf. *Felsina* < *Velzŋna*). Applying inversely to the name *Mez-entius* the adaptation of Etruscan names to the language of Romans, we obtain the name *Mez-zna* (< **Myg-g^wauna*), eponym of the Etruscan confederation.

Romulus and Amulius

According to the mythology⁶¹, *Romulus* was grandson of *Numitor*, a king of Alba who had been dethroned by his brother *Amulius*. By applying to **Thyrg^wau-la* the phonetic changes characteristic of *Velsna* relative peoples, the names *Romulus* (Etr. *Rumule* < **'Rumula* < **Truvula* < **Tyrvola* < **Thyrg^waula*) and *Amulius* (< *Amulus* < **'Amula* < **Travula* < **Tarvola* < **Thyrg^waula*) can be derived. These are, therefore, exonymous eponyms of tribes relative of *Rasna* and *Tarchna* and wrongly are listed in a Latin dynasty in myths.

Ramnes and Tities

According to Livius⁶², during the life of *Romulus* the population of Rome was divided into three tribes: *Ramnes*, *Titienses*, and *Luceres*⁶³. Propertius⁶⁴ cites *Tities* instead of *Titienses*. *Ramnes* were considered relatives of *Romulus*, while *Tities/Titienses* of *Titus Tatius*. According to the myths, they were therefore *Latins* and *Sabines*, respectively. However, the names of *Ramnes* and *Tities/Titienses* seem to have the same origin of *Rome*.

The sequence *-mn-* occurs in Latin in some words having Etruscan origins. It results sometimes from the sequence *-rn-* (as in *Volturnus* > *Vertumna*), and some other from the omission of a vowel (as in *alumenos* > *alumnus*). We find such a sequence in the ethnonym *Samnites*, that indicates peoples derived from *Sabini*. The equivalent ethnonym in Greek is *Σαυνῖται*⁶⁵ (*Savnites*), which is clearly derived from **Savini-tes*⁶⁶, after fall of the *i* vowel between *v* and *n*. In Latin we find the sequence *-mn-* instead of *-vn-*, after phonetic change of *v* into *m*. This is an other exemple of such a phonetic change beside those above reported. Applying the inverse phonetic changes to the name *Ramnes*, we obtain **Ravnes* // *Rasna* > **Thyrg^wauna*. Otherwise, we can see the name *Ramn-es* simply as the latinisation of the contraction (*Ramn-a*) of *Ramana*, about which we spoke above.

The names *Titus* and *Tatius* (derived from *Tatus*) can both be obtained from **Thyrg^waus* through the phonetic changes of *Rasna* relative peoples⁶⁷. We saw in fact that *Tyr-* (as in *Tyr-senians*) and *Tar-* (as in *Tar-quinians*) are alternative results of suffix *Thyr-*. Therefore, from **Thyrg^waus* we obtain *Tyr-du* // *Tar-du* > *Ti'tus* // *Ta'tus*. This demonstrates that *Tities* were not *Sabines*, but a people relative of *Rasna* and *Tarchna*.

⁶⁰ Livius 1.57.

⁶¹ Livius 1.3; Dionysius 1.76.1; Strabo 5.3.2.

⁶² Livius 1.13.

⁶³ Domingo 2018.

⁶⁴ Propertius 4.1.31.

⁶⁵ Strabo 5.3.1.

⁶⁶ Fabbri 2020.

⁶⁷ Fabbri 2020.

Tribus and vulgi

According to Varro⁶⁸, the word *tribus* was connected to the number three. This is the reason for which in myths the tribes of Rome are remembered as being originally three. However, in the previous section we saw that *Ramnes* and *Tities* were not *Latins* (e. g. peoples relatives of *Velsna*) and in the following sections we will see that neither *Luceres* were *Latins*. Therefore, beside these mythological tribes, at least one other composed of *Latins* should have originally existed in Rome. This means that the number of tribes was higher than three.

Actually, the word *tribus*, as well as the equivalent Osco-Umbrian *touta*, seems to be connected not to the number three, but to the eponym **Thyrg^waus*⁶⁹. Applying in fact the inverse phonetic changes of *Velsna* relative peoples and then the direct ones of *Rasna* relative peoples, we obtain: *tribus* < **tirbus* < **thyrvus* < **thyrg^waus* > **thyrdaus* > **theudas* > **teuta* > *touta*. Therefore, the *Tribus* probably were for *Latins* some particular peoples or tribes of the Etruscan confederation, those relative of *Rasna* and *Tarchna*. Later, the word was extended to indicate all tribes of the Etruscan confederation and then every tribe in general. It is possible that *Ramnes*, *Tities*, and *Luceres* were remembered as being *Tribus* with the original meaning, i. e. peoples relative of *Rasna* and *Tarchna*, beside whom Latin *vulgi* (< **G^waulg^waus*) and other peoples inhabited Rome.

LAURENTUM AND ABORIGINES

According to Dionysius⁷⁰, *Aborigines* originally lived in little villages in Lazio and nearby beside *Siculi*. After the arrival of *Pelasgians*, *Aborigines* allied to them and chased out *Siculi*. *Pelasgians* and *Aborigines* mingled together originating a people that later was called *Latini*, after king *Latinus*. Dionysius reports different opinions about the origins of *Aborigines*, among which that they were colonists of *Ligurians*⁷¹. According to Strabo⁷², *Latinus* ruled on *Aborigines* when Aeneas came to Lazio. According to Vergilius⁷³, *Latinus* ruled in *Laurentum*.

The name *Aborigines* is probably a correction of **Aborigenes* and has been derived from the names of *Proto-Hiberians*⁷⁴. As described in appendix A, this people was called in Italy by protohistorical names such as **Subaras*, **Tubaras*, **Lubaras*, **Hubaras*, and derivations of these. Considering the alternation of *u* and *a* vowels in the names of some people of the Etruscan federation, as we discussed above, we can derive from **Lubaras* and **Hubaras* also the names **Labara* and **Habara*, respectively, and even **Labura* and **Habura*. Moreover, during the second millennium BC different peoples having names ending in *-g^wauna* arrived in Italy. Such a desinence had assumed the meaning of “people” and was probably added by the newcomers to the names of the peoples that they found in Italy, particularly of *Proto-Hiberians*. From **Habur-g^waunas* we can then easily derive **Haburgainas* > **Aborigenes*.

The derivation of the name *Aborigines* from those of *Proto-Hiberians* seem to be confirmed by the etymology of the name *Laurentum*. We saw in fact that Romans should have been used to transform Etruscan names ending in *-tna* into other ending in *-entum* (see appendix B). Applying then the inverse change to *Laurentum*, we obtain **Laur-tna*, whence we can go back to **Laur-d^hna* and then **Labur-g^waunas*.

⁶⁸ Varro 5.6, 5.9.

⁶⁹ Fabbri 2020.

⁷⁰ Dionysius 1.9.2-3.

⁷¹ Dionysius 1.10.3.

⁷² Strabo 5.3.2.

⁷³ Vergilius 7.

⁷⁴ Fabbri 2020.

Luceres and Lucumones

According to Propertius⁷⁵, *Luceres* were the tribe composed of the people following *Lycmon* (or *Lygmon*). This was an Etruscan chief who helped *Romulus* in the war against Titus. According to Varro (reporting Propertius) he was called *Lucumo*⁷⁶, according to Dionysius, *Λοκόμων*⁷⁷ (*Locomon*). This was the Etruscan name even of Lucius Tarquinius Priscus⁷⁸, fifth king of Rome. Moreover, in the Etruscan society some administrators were called by names translated in Lat. *Lucumo-nes*⁷⁹. This leads to think that *Luceres* were an Etruscan tribe. However, the names *Lygmon* and *Lucumo* seems indeed to be connected with *Luceres* and indirectly to *Etruscans*, but primarily to *Proto-Hiberians*.

We saw that the names *Ramnes* or **Ramones* can be derived from **Ra-vones* and **Thyr-g^waunas* through phonetic changes characteristic of *Velsna* relative peoples. Similarly, *Lyg-mones* can be derive from **Lug-g^waunas* and *Lucu-mones* from **Lugur-g^waunas*. As described in appendix B, both these names can be derived from **Lubur-g^waunas*, ethnonym that in turn can be derived from the names of *Proto-Hiberians*, particularly from that of *Proto-Ligures*.

As described in appendix A, in the first half of the second millennium BC, *Proto-Hiberians* were forced towards the Tyrrhenic Coast by the arrival of *Proto-Umbrians* and *Proto-Calabrians*, pressed in turn by *Proto-Schytians*. They then lived beside *Tirrhennians*, the *Proto-Etruscans* who reached Italy by sea, and probably they partially mingled with them, originating a confederation of villages. Such a confederation was later expanded to include newcomers and particularly the *Rasna* and *Velsna* relative tribes that reached Italy at the end of the second millennium BC. The inhabitants of the Proto-Hiberian villages were called **Lugur-g^waunas* by *Proto-Schytians* and later *Lucu'-mones* by Latins. It is possible that the chiefs of the villages having a Proto-Hiberian origin were indicated among the administrators as the *Lucumones* ones, and later, when the origin was forgotten, the term assumed the meaning of village administrator in general.

Lupercus and twins

According to the foundation myth introduced by Fabius Pictor⁸⁰ and acknowledged by most of the following authors, *Romulus* and his twin brother *Remus* were breastfed and raised by a she-wolf⁸¹, in Latin *Lupa*. Moreover, according to Plutarchus⁸², the name of the *Lupercalia* festivity can derive from the she-wolf that breastfed the twins. During such a festivity, in fact, young men called *Luperci* ran around by the Palatine hill starting from the point where the twins had been raised⁸³. *Lupercus* (or *Lubercus*) was also the name of the god celebrated during the *Lupercalia* festivity, who has been identified as *Faunus* by Ovidius⁸⁴. He was considered the protector of shepherds⁸⁵ from the attacks of wolves and was worshipped in the same cavern, the *Lupercal*⁸⁶, where the twins were breastfed by the she-wolf. Plutarchus also reports⁸⁷ that, according to Butas, *Romulus* and *Remus*, after having defeated *Amulius*, ran to the spot where they were breastfed by the she-wolf when they were babes, and the *Lupercal* festivity was performed in imitation of that running. But, it is also believed

⁷⁵ Propertius 4.1.29.

⁷⁶ Varro 5.9.

⁷⁷ Dionysius 2.37.2.

⁷⁸ Dionysius 3.46.5.

⁷⁹ Servius 2.278; Censorinus 4.13; Pallottino 2016: 313; Keller 1971: 80..

⁸⁰ Dionysius 1.79.4.

⁸¹ Dionysius 1.79.6; Livius 1.4.

⁸² Plutarchus, *Romulus* 21.4.

⁸³ North 2008.

⁸⁴ Wiseman 1995.

⁸⁵ Plutarchus, *Cesar* 61.1.

⁸⁶ Dionysius 1.32.4.

⁸⁷ Plutarchus, *Romulus* 21.4.

that the *Lupercalia* festivity was originally instituted by *Evander*, and even *Romulus* and *Remus* ran during its celebrations⁸⁸. However, the names *Lupa* and *Lupercus* seems to be connected with *Proto-Hiberians* and the image of the she-wolf breastfeeding the twins seems to be derived from the Proto-Etruscan symbology.

As described in appendix A, one of the pre-historical names of Italic *Proto-Hiberians* should have been **Lubaras*. By adding to this name the proto-scythian desinence *-g^waus*, that in the course of time lost his original significance assuming that of people or territory, we obtain **Lubar-g^waus*. Such a name, adapted and written by *Tyrrhenians*, become **Luparcu*, whence Lat. *Lupercus*.

The name *Lupercus* was therefore introduced in the myths as an eponym of *Proto-Hiberians* (*Luceres // Aborigines*). The similarity of the initial part of this name to the Latin word *Lupus* induced who handed down and elaborated the myths to explain the name by introducing a wolf in the account. Moreover, we observed that in the myths several alternative eponyms of *Rasna* similar to *Remus*, *Romus*, *Romulus*, or *Amulius* occur as names of the founders of *Roma* or their ancestors. In the myths, alternative names are often represented as names of brothers. This is the case of *Latinus* and his brother *Lavinus*, and probably that of *Aulus* and *Caelius Vibenna*, whose names can both derive from **G^waulas*. Therefore, in the foundation myth introduced by Fabius Pictor, the image of the wolf has been introduced by reporting an eponyms of *Proto-Hiberians* and that of the twin brother by reporting two alternative eponyms of *Rasna*. The two images have recalled the symbol of the she-wolf breastfeeding the twins, and have been condensed in the myth in such a symbol. The symbol of a she-wolf breastfeeding two twins is common in the nomad peoples of Central Asia⁸⁹ and should have been brought in Italy by the nomad merchants ancestors of *Rasna* relative peoples.

Tiberinus and Tiberis

According to the foundation myths⁹⁰, *Tevere* (Lat. *Tiberis*, previously *Thyberis*⁹¹ and *Thybris*⁹²) river took its name from *Tiberinus Silvius*, one of the kings who ruled on *Alba*. However, both *Tiberis* and *Tiberinus* seem to be derived from the Proto-Hiberian prehistorical name **Tubaras* or **Tubaranas*⁹³.

The alternative old names of Tevere river *Rumon*⁹⁴ (< **Ruvon* < **Tru-vona* < **Thyr-g^wau-na*) and *Albula*⁹⁵ (< **Valbola* < **G^waul-g^wau-la*) seem instead to derive from the Proto-Etruscan tribes relative of *Rasna* and *Tarchna* and from those relative of *Velsna*, respectively.

ASCANIUS AND SICANI

According to the mythology⁹⁶, *Ascanius*, first son of *Aeneas*, founded the city of *Alba*, thirty years after the foundation of *Lavinium*, and was its first king. However, the name *Ascanius* seems to have originally inspired the foundation myths not as the name of *Aeneas*' son, but as an eponym of *Proto-Schytyians*, who lived in Lazio before *Rasna* and *Velsna* and later beside them.

As described in appendix A, *Proto-Schytyians* arrived in Italy in the first half of the second millennium BC, still using in their language labiovelar sounds and having names derived from **s^w-g^wau-s*, such as **S^w-g^wau-na-s*, **S^w-g^wau-la-s*, and **S^w-g^wau-ta-s*. Their neighbours adapted these

⁸⁸ Dionysius 1.80.2; Livius 1.5.2-3.

⁸⁹ Drompp 2011; Beckwith 2009: 4; Azarpay 1988.

⁹⁰ Dionysius 1.71; Livius 1.3.

⁹¹ Plinius 3.53.

⁹² Vergilius 8,330.

⁹³ Fabbri 2017.

⁹⁴ Servius 8.63, 8.90.

⁹⁵ Plinius 3.53; Vergilius 8.332.

⁹⁶ Livius 1.3; Dionysius 1.66.1.

names to their language. In particular, *Tyrrhenians*, *Proto-Umbrians*, and *Proto-Calabrians* resulted the labiovelar into velar, and changed the labiosibilant introducing euphonical vowels. From *S^wg^w*auanas* the names **Awskaunas* and **Swikaunas* were then created, while from *S^wg^w*aulas* the names **Awskaulas* and **Swikaulas*. From these ethnonyms we can obtain the historical names *Ascanius*, *Sicani*, *Asculum*, and *Siculi*.

Vergilius⁹⁷ cites *Sicani* as allied of *Rutulii* in the war against *Aeneas* and *Latinus*. Moreover, according to Dionysius⁹⁸, *Siculi* (Gr. Σικελοί) were the first people remembered as having inhabited the land where Rome rose. They were chased out by *Aborigines* united to *Pelasgians* mingled with some Greeks⁹⁹ and later reached Sicily after *Sicani*¹⁰⁰. Strabo¹⁰¹ relates that *Siculi* firstly settled by the Adriatic coast of current Calabria, whence later were chased out by Oenotrians towards Sicily. In Calabria *Proto-Scythians* are also remembered by Josephus¹⁰² under the name *Aschanaxes*, which is strictly connected with that of *Ascanius*.

The names *Ascanius*, *Sicani*, and *Siculi*, have been handed down in the myths as a recall of the time in which *Proto-Scythians* arrived by the Medio-Tyrrhenic Coast and fixed pacts of convivence with *Proto-Hyberians* (*Aborigines* // *Ligures*) and *Tyrrhenians*. These pacts were broken when *Rasna* and *Velsna* relative peoples arrived. Some *Proto-Scythians* are remembered as having remained allied of *Tyrrhenians* (*Sicani*), some others of *Proto-Hiberians* (*Ascanius*). The name of *Ascanius*, eponym of *Ascani* // *Sicani*, induced later historians to imagine the arrival of *Aeneas* in Lazio instead of that of the later Etruscan tribes.

Ausoni and Aurunci

From **Awskaunas*, *Tyrrhenians* derived the names **Auschona* (or **Auschon*; cf. *Tarchon*¹⁰³), **Aushona*, and **Aus'ona*, which later was written as **Ausuna* or **Ausun*. Romans received the name *Ausones*¹⁰⁴ (cf. Gr. Αὔσονες¹⁰⁵) probably from Greeks in a later time, while earlier they received from *Tyrrhenians* the name *Ausun*, which they rotacised into *Aurun-ci*.

In the historical age *Ausones* were located in Lazio south of Circeo promontory¹⁰⁶, in Campania¹⁰⁷ beside Osci, and, in an early age, also in Calabria¹⁰⁸; *Aurunci* were settled in Lazio north of Circeo promontory¹⁰⁹.

Aventinus and Sabines

According to the foundation myths¹¹⁰, one of the kings who ruled on *Alba* was called *Aventinus Silvius*, and is believed to have given his name to the *Aventinus* hill. According to Varro¹¹¹, the name of *Aventinus* hill derive from the verb *advehere* (to carry to), since people originally reached it on boat¹¹². Servius¹¹³ believed that the *Aventinus* hill had taken name from the birds (Lat. *aves*).

⁹⁷ Vergilius 7.795.

⁹⁸ Dionysius 1.9.1.

⁹⁹ Dionysius 1.9.2.

¹⁰⁰ Dionysius 1.22.2.

¹⁰¹ Strabo 6.1.6.

¹⁰² Josephus 1.6.1.

¹⁰³ Vergilius 8.506; Bonfante and Bonfante 2002, 10.

¹⁰⁴ Plinius 3.56.

¹⁰⁵ Dionysius 1,12,4,

¹⁰⁶ Plinius 3.56.

¹⁰⁷ Strabo 5.3.6.

¹⁰⁸ Strabo 5.3.6.

¹⁰⁹ Plinius 3.56.

¹¹⁰ Dionysius 1.71; Livius 1.3; Vergilius 7.656.

¹¹¹ Varro 5.43.

¹¹² Wiseman 2013.

¹¹³ Servius 7.656.

However, the name *Aventinus* seems to derive from an eponym of descendants of *Proto-Scythians* living in Lazio after the arrival of *Velsna*.

The Proto-Etruscan tribes relative of *Velsna* adapted to their language the names **S^wg^wau-na-s*, **S^wg^wau-la-s*, and **S^wg^wau-ta-s* by resulting the labiovelar into labial, changing the diphthong *au* into *ai*, and introducing an euphonical *a* vowel in resulting the labiosibilant. The names **Sa-wai-nas*, **Sa-wai-las*, and **Sa-wai-tas* were then created, from which we can obtain the historical names *Sabines*, *Sabelli*, and *Sabates*. Moreover, from the derivation **Sa-wai-na-tas* we can obtain **Saw'nites* and **Sawen'tes*, from which the ethnonym *Samnites* and the hydronyms *Avens/Aventis* and *Aventus*, respectively. The first of such hydronyms was an alternative name of *Velinus* river, which flows in Sabine Hills, the other refers to a river near the *Aventinus* Hill. From *Aventis* and *Aventus*, the derivation *Aventi-nus* can be obtained.

The name *Aventinus* can also be derived from the name **Ausdḡna* (> **Avtina* > **Avtna* > **Aventum* > *Aventinus*) in *Rasna* relative dialects equivalent to **Awschona* in *Tarchna* relative dialects, name indicating *Proto-Scythians*.

Siculi, i. e. the descendants of *Proto-Scythians*, were not completely chased out of Lazio after the arrival of late Proto-Etruscan tribes (ancestors of *Rasna* and *Velsna*) but partially remained and integrated with the new comers originating the Italic peoples relative of *Sabines*. In the areas where the influence of *Proto-Umbrians* and *Proto-Calabrians* was stronger, particularly near the Apennine Mountains chain, the result in velar, eventually followed by labial, remained in the names of the descendants of *Proto-Scythians*. Among these names we can consider that of the *Esquiline* (< **Aws-kwaula-nas*) hill and the ethnonyms of *Aequi* (< **Aws-kwaus*) or *Aequiculi* (< **Aequili* < **Aws-kwau-las*).

CONCLUSIONS

After having analysed some characteristic names reported in the myths concerning the foundation of Rome and the origins of Latins and Romans, we come to the following conclusions.

Latins were originally a people of the Proto-Etruscan confederation. They spoke an Indo-European language different from those that we call Latin or Old Latin, which were instead languages developed by *Romans*. In the historical age, some of the closest relatives of *Latins*, settled in *Volsinii* and *Felsina*, were called *Velzna* or *Velsna* in the language that we call Etruscan and were considered Etruscan peoples.

The name *Valentia*, which in the mythology is remembered as the name of an early city by the Palatine Hill, was not inspired by the strength or the valour of the founder, but was an adaptation to the language of *Romans* of the name **Valzna*, that should have been a variant of *Velzna*.

The name *Latini* was an exonym originally used by the tribes of the Etruscan federation relative of that people called *Rasna* in Etruscan. *Latini* called themselves by endonyms similar to the name *Albani*. The name *Romani* derives from exonyms such as **Ramani* or **Rumani*, by which *Latini* called the tribes of the Etruscan confederation relative of the peoples called *Rasna* and *Tarchna* (the inhabitant of *Tarquiniā*, who namely were *Tyrrhenians*) in Etruscan.

Many names occurring in the myths are eponyms of the peoples who inhabited the territory of Rome when their early villages rose. In particular, among these peoples, *Proto-Hiberians* (*Aborigines*, *Lucumones*, *Tiberinus*, *Laurentum*, *Luperci*), *Proto-Scythians* (*Siculi*, *Sicani*, *Ascanius*, *Sabines*, *Aventinus*), ancestors and relatives of *Velzna*/**Valzna* (*Valentia*, *Latinus*, *Lavinium*, *Alba*, *Silvii*, *Volcani*), ancestors and relatives of *Rasna* and *Tarchna* (*Roma*, *Romulus*, *Amulius*, *Turnus*, *Rutuli*, *Ramnes*, *Tities*) are remembered.

We can imagine that Rome, as other ancient Italic cities, rose as a commercial center where different peoples exchanged their goods and products. Among the peoples remembered in the foundation myths, *Proto-Hiberians* originally were mainly farmers and breeders of small animals, *Proto-Scythians* and the ancestors of *Velsna* were cow breeders, and the ancestors of *Rasna* and

Tarchna were artisans and merchants. The ancestors of *Rasna* and *Velsna* (the Proto-Etruscan confederation) arrived in Lazio mainly from the north, pressing *Proto-Scythians* southwards and eastwards and the ancestors of *Tarchna* (*Tyrrhenians*) toward the coast. *Proto-Velsna* with their cows settled mainly on the left side of Tevere river in the grassland near *Proto-Scythians*, while *Proto-Rasna* on the right side by *Tyrrhenians*. *Proto-Rasna*, together with *Tyrrhenians*, crossed Tevere river to exchange their craft with milk, meat, and leather produced by their confederate *Proto-Velsna*. The latter left a permanent praesidium near the river on the Palatine hill. The former called such a praesidium by names such as **Vlatina*, **Valatina*, and **Valzna*, from which *Latini*, *Palatinus*, and *Valentia* derive. *Proto-Velsna* called instead the exchange center “the place by **Ramani*, **Rumani*, or **Rumuli*” and, in the course of time, simply *Ruma* and *Roma*. It is possible that also *Proto-Rasna* and *Proto-Tarchna* left a praesidium beyond the Tevere river and the name *Roma* referred to it. Such a praesidium was probably located on the Capitoline hill (Figure 2). God *Sa-turnus* (< **Sarzna* // **Turchna*) was in fact believed to have originally inhabited it. Moreover, in the early city on the Palatine hill (*Roma quadrata*) the gate *Porta Romanula* or *Romana* was directed toward the Capitoline hill. It is possible that *Tyrrhenians* called it “the place by **Campa-ua* (< **Kalka-s* < **G^waulg^wau-s*; cf. Etr. *Campeua*, Lat. *Ca'pua*; cf. Lat. *Ca'pe-na*¹¹⁴) or **Ca'pa-ta*, whence the names *Capitolium* (It. *Campidoglio*) and *Capitolinus*. The border between *Proto-Rasna* and *Proto-Velsna* then became the valley between *Capitoline* and *Palatine* hills. This valley was just occasionally inundated and became the place where the commercial exchanges were made. *Proto-Scythians* left *Praesidia* on the *Aventinus* hill, whose name was influenced by *Latini*, and on the *Esquilinus* hill, whose name was influenced by late *Proto-Umbrians*.

Such a scenario is similar to that we can imagine for *Felsina*¹¹⁵ where the Proto-Etruscan confederation arrived pressing *Proto-Scythians* beyond *Aposa* (< **Sabos* < **S^wg^waus*; cf. Lat. *Sabus*) torrent and around *Savena* (< **S^wg^wau-na*) torrent, which both are called after *Proto-Scythians* (Figure 3). *Proto-Velsna* settled near *Proto-Scythians*, while *Proto-Rasna* settled around *Reno* (Lat. *Rhenus*; cf. Lat. *Tyrrhenus*) river, that in the following centuries became an important Etruscan commercial route between Adriatic and Tyrrhenic Seas. The border between *Rasna* and *Velsna* were *Ravone* (< **Ra-voni* // *Ra-σηνα*) and *Meloncello* (< *M[e]l-an-zel* < **Melzel* < *Velzη-la*) torrents which flow one close to the other. *Rasna* and *Velsna* named the torrent closer to themselves after the name by which they called their neighbours. *Velsna*, who originally were nomad cow breeders, had their stable praesidium and then their acropolis by the Osservanza hill, while *Rasna* probably had their acropolis by San Luca hill.

The city of Rome then resulted from the union of the villages that rose and developed on its hills. These villages were originated by local peoples. None of them was founded by Greek or Trojan heroes. The belief of a Greek origin of Rome was introduced in the myths due to the meaning equivalence of Lat. *valentia* and Gr. *ῥώμη* (*Rhōmē*) or the similarity between names such as **Palentum* or **Palenteum* and *Pallanteum* (latinisation of Gr. *Παλλάντιον*, *Pallantion*). But we saw that these are casual coincidences and the names have distinct etymologies. The belief of a Trojan origin was introduced by the similarity between the names of Proto-Scythian *Ascani* / *Sicani* and *Ascanius* son of *Aeneas*. Actually the name *Ascanius* (latinisation of Gr. *Ἀσκάνιος*, *Ascanios*) derives from *Proto-Scythians* who left their name to the region of *Ascania* (Gr. *Ἀσκανία*) in Anatoly. But these were only distant relatives of the Italian ones, who arrived in Italy much earlier than the Trojan war.

¹¹⁴ Fabbri 2019.

¹¹⁵ Fabbri 2018b.

APPENDIX A – SOME PEOPLES OF ANCIENT ITALY

The peopling of ancient Italy has been reconstructed¹¹⁶ following a diffusion model based on the analysis of the time and space distributions of ancient and current geographical names and ethnonyms, taking into account historical testimonies. We resume in the following the main results in order to compare them with the informations which can be obtained by analysing the names handed down in the myths concerning the foundation of Rome and its early age.

Proto-Hiberians

Among the peoples who inhabited Italy, *Proto-Hiberians* were the most ancient one whose presence in Europe and Asia can be recognized by comparing the archaeological finds with the name distribution of their historical descendants. They arrived in Europe from Western and Central Asia mainly in the IV millennium BC and settled in Italy mainly in the III millennium. They had a caucasoid morphology and were particularly dolichocephalic¹¹⁷.

Proto-Hiberians reached Italy mainly through the Alps and Adriatic Sea. They merged with a palaeoanthropic substrate and contributed to the Terremarne Culture¹¹⁸. Their prehistorical names have been reconstructed as **Suparas*, **Subaras*, **Tubaras*, **Lubaras*, **Hubaras*, and derivations of these. In the historical age, their descendants were known as *Hiberi*, *Liguri*, and *Liburni*, and were mainly located at the west side of Italy¹¹⁹ and also in some places by the Adriatic coast¹²⁰, due to more recent migrations from Illyria,.

Proto-Scythians

At the beginning of the II millennium BC, *Proto-Umbrians* and *Proto-Calabrians* migrated to Italy pressed by *Proto-Scythians*. The latter were a people that originally lived in the grasslands between southern Russia and Iran in the IV and III millennium BC. In that place *Proto-Scythians* domesticated the horse¹²¹ and became able to drive large herds of cows through the prairies, searching for suitable pastures. For this reason, the surrounding peoples should have indicated them as the “cow breeder people”. Therefore, the prehistorical names of *Proto-Scythians* have been reconstructed¹²² by composing the Proto-Indo-European roots **sw-* (self, own) and **g^wau-* (cow) into the word **s^wg^wau-s*¹²³, to which the meaning of “own cow”, “bred cow”, or “herd of cows” can be attributed. Some derivative forms have then been obtained. In the Indo-European languages and even in Etruscan¹²⁴ the *-na* derivation is very common. Other common derivations are *-ta* and *-la*. From the derivative forms **S^wg^wau-na*, **S^wg^wau-ta*, and **S^wg^wau-la*, through the result of the labiosibilant *s^w* in *sw*, *ws*, or *s*, and with the possible addition of an euphonic *a* vowel, the following historical Scythian names can be easily obtained: Hebr. *Askenaz*¹²⁵ (through the ablative **(A)ws^wg^wau-nat*, “from the country of cow breeders”), Gr. *Σκόθαι*¹²⁶ and *-σαγέται* (as in *Μασσαγέται*¹²⁷), Ass. *Ashkuzai*¹²⁸, Gr. *Σκολότοι*¹²⁹ (from the derivation of the derivation **S^wg^wau-la-ta*).

¹¹⁶ Fabbri 2018a; 2020; 2021.

¹¹⁷ Lehmann 1977, 77.

¹¹⁸ Cardarelli 2010.

¹¹⁹ Plinius 3.38; Strabo 4.6.2.

¹²⁰ Plinius 3.56; 3.112.

¹²¹ Toynbee 1977: 104; Diamond 1998: 122.

¹²² Fabbri 2017.

¹²³ Fabbri 2020.

¹²⁴ Pallottino 2016: 466.

¹²⁵ Genesis 10.3; Jeremiah 51.27.

¹²⁶ Herodotus 4.6.

¹²⁷ Herodotus 1.201-216.

¹²⁸ Szemerényi 1980: 7.

¹²⁹ Herodotus 4.6.2.

In the last half of the III millennium BC *Proto-Scythians* started to move westward from current Kazakhstan, forcing their western neighbours *Proto-Hiberians* to penetrate Europe or descend on Asia Minor through Caucasus. At the beginning of the II millennium BC *Proto-Scythians* occupied Central Europe, after having chased *Proto-Hiberians* towards the Atlantic Ocean and *Proto-Umbrians* northwards and southwards.

From Central Europe, *Proto-Scythians* started penetrating the Italic peninsula through North-Eastern Alps, driving their herds of cows to the pastures of Padanian Valley and pressing *Proto-Umbrians* on the Apennini mount chain from Liguria to Marche. In the same period, other Proto-Scythian tribes settled in the Balkan area and progressively penetrated Italy through the Otranto strait and the Adriatic coasts nearby, driving their cows in the plains of South-Eastern Italy and pressing *Proto-Calabrians* on the mountains.

From the prehistorical names of **S^wg^wau-tas*, **S^wg^wau-nas*, **S^wg^wau-las*, and **S^wg^waus*, through the above described changes of the labiosibilant and the euphonic addition of *a* or *i* vowels, we can derive the historical names of *Sabates*, *Sabines*, *Sabelli*, *Sicani*, *Siculi*, *Aschanaxes*, *Ausones*, *Asculum*, *A'puli*, *Osci*, and *O'pi-ci*. In the historical age, these peoples were mainly located in Central and Southern Italy. However, the past presence of Proto-Scythian tribes even in Northern Italy is attested by many hydronyms (*Savena*, *Aposa*, *Seveso*, *Savio*) and toponyms (*Savona*, *Sabatia*, *Spezia*, *Spina*)¹³⁰. We can observe that in the Italic names derived from **S^wag^waus* the labiovelar *g^w* results both in labial and velar. This brings us to believe that *Proto-Scythians* still used labiovelar sounds in their language when they started inhabiting Italy.

The migrations of *Proto-Hiberians* and *Proto-Scythians* have been often confused in the reconstructions based on archaeological finds, since both reached Central Europe from the East through Central Eurasia and both were caucasoid. However, compared with *Proto-Hiberians*, *Proto-Scythians* were less dolichocephalic, since their ancestors probably mingled with a minority of mongoloid eastern neighbours. Moreover, *Proto-Scythians* were nomad cow breeders, while *Proto-Hiberians* were more sedentary, breeding small animals and living on agriculture. Lastly, only *Proto-Scythians* spoke a Proto-Indo-European language.

Proto-Umbrians and Proto-Calabrians

Proto-Umbrians and *Proto-Calabrians* were hybrid peoples that grew in a border zone between *Proto-Hiberians* and *Proto-Scythians*. At the beginning of II millennium BC, such a border zone stretched from Anatolia to current Poland, approximately. The prehistorical names of these hybrid peoples, **G^waumbras* (< **G^waunas* **Hubras* < **Swag^waunas* **Hubaras*) and **G^waulubras* (< **G^waulas* **Hubras* < **Swag^waulas* **Hubaras*), have been then reconstructed by mixing the names of their neighbours and ancestors¹³¹. The name **G^waumbras* diffused inside the Únětice culture¹³², in an area of commercial and cultural exchanges, where the main ancient communication routes between Asia and Europe (along Boristhenes, Danube, Vistula, Elbe, and Rhine rivers) crossed. The name **G^waulubras* diffused mainly to the south.

In the course of the great migration of the beginning of the II millennium BC, when *Proto-Scythians* moved their border up to the Rhine valley, **G^waumbras* were forced to move to the North Sea and Baltic Sea and to descend on Italy. We can, in fact, derive from the name of **G^waumbras* the historical ethnonyms or geographic names in the territories where they migrated: *Cambri*, *Cumbri*, *Humber*, *Cimbri*, *Ambrones*, *Umbrians*. From the name of **G^waulubras* we can instead derive the historical names of Anatolian *Chalybes* (Gr. *Χάλυβες*¹³³), Balcanian *Galabrii* (Gr. *Γαλάβριοι*¹³⁴), and Italic *Calabri* (Gr. *Καλαβροί*¹³⁵).

¹³⁰ Fabbri 2018b.

¹³¹ Fabbri 2017.

¹³² Gimbutas 1965, 44; 2017, 56.

¹³³ Herodotus 1.28.1.

¹³⁴ Strabo 7.5.7.

The Proto-Umbrian people of **G^waumbras* penetrated Italy from North-Eastern Alps, while the Proto-Calabrian people of **G^walubras* through the South-Eastern coasts, mainly near the Otranto Strait. Both these peoples pressed *Proto-Hiberians* towards the Tyrrhenic coast and partially overlapped them. The historical descendants of **G^waumbras*, the *Ambrones* and *Umbrians*, were located in Liguria¹³⁶ and around Umbria¹³⁷, respectively. However, the past presence of relatives of these peoples is attested also between these two regions by some hydronyms such as the names of *Sambro* torrent and *Ombrone* river, which flow south of Bologna and further south, respectively. The historical descendants of **G^walubras*, the *Calabri*, were instead located in the South-Eastern part of Italy (current Puglia)¹³⁸.

We can recognise in the historical descendants of *Proto-Calabri* and *Proto-Umbrians*, observing their names (*Calabri*, *Cambri*, *Cumbri*, *Cimbri*, *Chalybes*, *Humber*, ‘*Ambrones*, ‘*Umbrians*), a tendency to transform the labiovelar *g^w* into unvoiced velar also aspirated and muted.

Proto-Gaul-Latins

A new wave of peoples descending from *Proto-Scythians* reached Central Europe during the great migration of the last centuries of II millennium BC. These peoples were previously settled between the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea, and have been pressed westwards by populations coming from the Orient. Among these migrating peoples, the tribes of *Itali* and *Vetuloni* (< **Sg^wytas* / **Sg^wetas*) have been recognised¹³⁹, followed by some other tribes that have been considered as a distinct people and indicated by the name *Proto-Gaul-Latins*. For these latter tribes, that partially settled in Central Europe and partially descended on Italy, the names **G^waulas*, **G^waula-tas*, and **G^waula-ta-nas* have been reconstructed¹⁴⁰, from which the historical names *Galli*, *Galati*, *Collati*, *Collatini*, *Latini*, *Lithuans*, and *Lettons* can be derived. However, in the present work we demonstrate that *Proto-Gaul-Latins* were a part of the Proto-Etruscan confederation, the most of which reached Central Europe and Italy shortly after them. This avanguardia of *Proto-Etruscans*, descended on Italy mainly from North-East, penetrated the Proto-Scythian tribes previously immigrated, and settled in the Padanian Valley. Hence, it crossed the Apennine chain and diffused along the Tyrrhenian coast up to Central Italy. In the present work we also present an alternative etymology for the name of *Latins*.

Proto-Etruscans

The Etruscan culture developed on the Italic soil and is characteristic of Italy. Therefore, *Etruscans* can be considered as an autochthonous people¹⁴¹. However, the names of Etruscan tribes or communities can be connected to those which have been reconstructed¹⁴² for peoples that in the III millennium BC lived in Central Asia on the border with *Proto-Scythians* and arrived in Italy in different waves between the end of the III and that of the II millennium BC. In particular, the Etruscan tribes can be associated with three distinct lineages descending from *Western *Thyrg^waunas* (e. g. *Tarchna*), *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* (e. g. *Phersna* and *Rasna*), and **G^waulg^waunas* (e. g. *Velsna*)¹⁴³.

The names **Thyr-as G^wau-nas* or **Thyr-g^wau-nas* have been reconstructed for a population originally living on the border (cf. Gr. *θύρα*, door; cf. Etr. *tular*, border) between *Proto-Scythians*

¹³⁵ Strabo 6.3.1.

¹³⁶ Plutarchus, *Marius* 19.4.

¹³⁷ Plinius 3.109; 3.112.

¹³⁸ Plinius 3.99.

¹³⁹ Fabbri 2018a; 2020.

¹⁴⁰ Fabbri 2018a.

¹⁴¹ Pallottino 2016: 106.

¹⁴² Fabbri 2019.

¹⁴³ Fabbri 2018a; 2019.

and mongoloid morphology peoples and resulted from the crossing of these populations. As a border people, **Thyrg^waunas* were subjected to commercial and cultural exchanges, thus developing the aptitude to the commerce and acquiring the knowledge of advanced technologies. The names **G^waulas G^waunas* or **G^waulg^waunas*. have been instead reconstructed for *Proto-Scythians* living immediately close to **Thyrg^waunas*. The repetitions of *g^wau* root in these names was aimed to emphasize that they were pure *Proto-Scythians*, having maintained the original costumes and language. In fact, they still lived mainly on cow breeding, while **Thyrg^waunas* also lived on trade and had simplified and adapted their language in order to better communicate with the bordering peoples.

In the second half of the III millennium BC **G^waulg^waunas* broke into the lands around *Volga* river, separating **Thyrg^waunas* into two branches. The western branch was forced towards Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and Eastern Europe, while the Eastern one towards Mongolia and China. From Anatolia *Western *Thyrg^waunas* moved along the course of Danube river to Central Europe, where they participated to the Únětice culture. At the beginning of the II millennium BC they were forced to Italy together with **G^waumbras*. They also reached Italy by sea from Anatolia through stopovers on the Syrian and African coast and the Italian islands. *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* stopped migrating eastwards at the beginning of the II millennium BC and slowly flowed back into the lands of **G^waulg^waunas*, who in turn invaded the territories of other tribes of *Proto-Scythians*. These tribes were then forced to expand further west, starting the first great migration of the millennium. A new back-flow of *Thyrg^waunian* tribes occurred in the second half of the II millennium BC when the expansion of Mongol and Chinese peoples started the second great migration. *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* forced **G^waulg^waunas* around *Volga* river to crash into *Proto-Gaul-Latins*, who in turn pressed toward Central Europe other *Proto-Scythian* tribes located north of Black Sea (**Sg^wytas* and **Sg^wetas*). In the course of time *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* and **G^waulg^waunas* fought each other, interacted and joined into a multilingual confederation of peoples. Such a confederation of *Proto-Etruscans* or ancestors of the Etruscan peoples was known in the Aegean area as **Mykg^waunas*, the *Mixed People*¹⁴⁴.

In Italy the *Proto-Etruscan* confederation of the descendants of **Eastern Thyrg^waunas* and **G^waulg^waunas* arrived mainly from North-East at the end of the II millennium BC. The descendants of **G^waulg^waunas* arrived as first and stopped in the lands most suitable for cow breeding. Those of *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* headed instead for the commercial ports and settled mainly by the coasts. They knew how to transform the marshes near the sea, the “maremme”. into fertile lands since their ancestors learned and developed drainage techniques in the Orient¹⁴⁵. Moreover, on the Tyrrhenic coast, the descendant of *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* met peoples descending from *Western *Thyrg^waunas* (*Tyrrhenians*), previously arrived by sea (cf. Müller 1828). They learnt the script, probably by Greeks¹⁴⁶, and developed an alphabet adapted to their own language. Probably, such a script system was acquired by the Italic descendants of **G^waulg^waunas* who used it in an ideographical way. This can explain the fact that we have scarce attestations of the endonyms of the descendants of **G^waulg^waunas*, and we have to reconstruct them by determining the phonetic changes and analysing the geographical names in the territories where they lived.

By analysing the migrations of *Western* and *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* and **G^waulg^waunas* and their descendants, the following conclusions have been obtained¹⁴⁷. The people of *Tyrrhenians* (Gr. *Τυρρηνοί*¹⁴⁸), the Anatolian god of the sky and storm *Tarhun* (also *Tarhuna* and *Tarhunt*¹⁴⁹), the Etruscan city of *Tarquiniā* (Etr. *Tarchuna* or *Tarchna*¹⁵⁰) received their name from *Western*

¹⁴⁴ Fabbri 2017; 2019.

¹⁴⁵ Keller 1971: 59.

¹⁴⁶ Pallottino 2016: 452.

¹⁴⁷ Fabbri 2019.

¹⁴⁸ Strabo 5.1.7.

¹⁴⁹ Taracha 2009: 47.

¹⁵⁰ Bonfante and Bonfante 2002: 16; Pallottino 2016: 494.

Thyrg^wauⁿas*. In these derivative names the original labiovelar *g^w* results in unvoiced velar also aspirated or muted, and the vowel in the first syllable also change to *a*. The peoples of *Tyrsenians* (Gr. *Τυρσηνοί*¹⁵¹), *Shardana* or *Sherden* (cf. the letters of Amarna: EA 61, 122, 123; the inscription at Karnak: rows 13 and 15; the stele of Tani), *Thraces* (Gr. *Θραῦκες*¹⁵² and Gr. *Θρήικες*¹⁵³), *Phryges* (Gr. *Φρύγες*¹⁵⁴), and *Arzawa*, the *Ferghana Valley*, and to the Etruscan city of *Perugia* (Etr. *Phersna*¹⁵⁵) take instead their name from **Eastern Thyrg^wauⁿas* or **Thyrg^wau^as*. We can observe in these derived names the result of the labiovelar *g^w* into dental (d**), also aspirated (**dh** = **z**) and unvoiced (**s**), again the change to **a** of the first vowel, and the fall of the initial aspirated dental (**th**) or the change to unaspirated dental (**t**), sibilant (**s**), and even aspirated labial (**ph** = **f**), which is also characteristic of Latin (cf. Gr. *θύρα* with Lat. *foris*, door). Lastly, **G^waulg^wauⁿas* and **G^waulg^wau^as* left their name, for example, to the *Volga* river, the Etruscan city of *Bol'ogna* (Etr. *Velzna*¹⁵⁶, Lat. *Felsina*¹⁵⁷), and to the peoples of *Volcae*¹⁵⁸, *Belgae*¹⁵⁹, *Caledones* (Gr. *Καληδῶνες*¹⁶⁰), *Halizones* (Gr. *Ἀλιζῶνες*¹⁶¹, Gr. *Ἀλιζῶνοι*¹⁶², and Gr. *Ἀλαζόνες*¹⁶³). We can observe that in these derived names the initial labiovelar mainly results in labial, while the internal one has different results by influence of the neighbour peoples, in particular of **Thyrg^wauⁿas*.

Moreover, it has been observed that in the course of time, by the contraposition of **G^waulg^wauⁿas* and **Thyrg^wauⁿas* the term *g^wauⁿa* lost the original meaning of "bovine", "related to cows", "fodder for cows", "fence for cows", "cow breeder", "group of cows", assuming that of "shelter", "refuge", "fortified place", "village", "group of breeders", "community" (as Etr. *zena* translated into Lat. *sena* / *sina*, Celt. *bona*, and Celt. *din* / *dun* latinised in *dinum* / *dunum*). Similarly, the terms derived from *-g^waus* assumed the meaning of country or region (as Ger. *-gau* in *Breisgau* and *Thurgau*, Dutch *gouw*, Frisian *goa*).

Applying the above described phonetic changes to the terms **Mykg^waus* and **Mykg^wauⁿas* (*Mixed People*), we can obtain the names of *Mysians* / *Moesians* (Gr. *Μυσοί*¹⁶⁴ / *Μοισοί*¹⁶⁵), *Meonia* (Gr. *Μηονία*¹⁶⁶ < **Mech^wonia*), *Mygdonians* (Gr. *Μυγδόνες*¹⁶⁷) and *Mycenaeans* (Gr. *Μυκῆναι*¹⁶⁸ < **Μυκ^wήναι*). Moreover, we can derive from **Thyrg^waus* and **Thyrg^wauⁿas* the mythological name of *Atys*¹⁶⁹ (< **Sa^wdys* < **Sardus* < **Thyrg^waus*), *Telephus*¹⁷⁰ and *Torebus*¹⁷¹ (both from **Tarbus* < **Thyrg^waus*), and *Teutamis*¹⁷² (descendant of **Teutamos* < **Teu'tana* < **Thyrdana* < **Thyrg^wauⁿa*). We can also derive the names of *Turks* (Gr. *Τουρκοί*¹⁷³ < **Turkas* < **Thyrg^waus*) and *Huns* (Gr. *Χούνοι*¹⁷⁴ < **Tyr-khuna* < **Thyrg^wauⁿas*). Since in the historical age *Turks* and

¹⁵¹ Herodotus 1.57.1.

¹⁵² Xenophon 6.3.4.

¹⁵³ Herodotus 6.45.1.

¹⁵⁴ Herodotus 7.73.1.

¹⁵⁵ Camporeale 2004.

¹⁵⁶ Pittau 2018: 488.

¹⁵⁷ Plinius 3, 115.

¹⁵⁸ Caesar 6.24.

¹⁵⁹ Caesar 2.4.

¹⁶⁰ Ptolemaeus 2,2.

¹⁶¹ Homer 2.856; Stephanus of Byzantium 1,74,1.

¹⁶² Strabo 12.3.4.

¹⁶³ Herodotus 4.17.1.

¹⁶⁴ Herodotus 7.20.2.

¹⁶⁵ Strabo 7.3.2.

¹⁶⁶ Dionysius 1.27.1.

¹⁶⁷ Strabo 7.3.2.

¹⁶⁸ Strabo 8.6.19.

¹⁶⁹ Dionysius 1.28.2.

¹⁷⁰ Dionysius 1.28.1.

¹⁷¹ Dionysius 1.28.2.

¹⁷² Dionysius 1.28.3.

¹⁷³ Simokattes 3.6.9.

¹⁷⁴ Ptolemaeus 3.5.

Huns spoke Altaic languages, we can assume that **Thyrg^waunas* originally spoke a Proto-Uralo-Altaic language.

On the basis of the described phonetic changes, it has been assumed¹⁷⁵ that the Italic descendants of **G^waulg^waunas* call themselves by names such as **Volvoni* or **Volvona* (< **G^waulg^waunas*; whence the name of the city of *Bologna* < **Bol'onía* < **Volvonia*), and were also called **Calvona*, **Calvana*, or **Galvana* (whence the names *Calvana* mount chain between Bologna and Florence and *Calvano* mount near Sarsina) by influence of *Proto-Umbrians*, **Campana* (whence Lat. *Campania*¹⁷⁶ and Etr. *Campe-ua*¹⁷⁷) by *Proto-Calabrians* or *Proto-Oscans*, **Volkas* (whence Lat. *Vulci*¹⁷⁸ and Etr. *Velch*¹⁷⁹) by descendants of *Western *Thyrg^waunas*, and *Velzina*¹⁸⁰, *Velzna*¹⁸¹, and *Velsna*¹⁸² (whence the Lat. *Felsina*¹⁸³) by descendants of *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas*. Moreover, in this work we show that they also called themselves **Valvani* (whence Lat. *'Albani*¹⁸⁴) and were called **Valtini* or **Vlatini* (whence Lat. *'Latini*¹⁸⁵) by *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas*. The descendants of *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* called instead themselves by names such as **Sarsna* (whence the names of *Sarsina* city and *Sarsinates*¹⁸⁶ tribe), *Rasna* or *Rasenna* (Gr. *Ρασέννα*¹⁸⁷), and *Phersna*¹⁸⁸ (Etr. name of Perugia).

It has been observed that in Italy the descendants of **Thyrg^waunas* were generally known in the historical age as *Tusci*¹⁸⁹ or *Etrusci*¹⁹⁰. These ethnonyms have been connected to the prehistorical name **Thyrg^waus* through the alternation of the names of the tribes descending from **Thyrg^waunas*, that changed the labiovelar into velar (from *Western *Thyrg^waunas*) or in sibilant (from *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas*): **Thyrg^waus* > **Turkas* / **Tursas* > Umbr. *Tursko*¹⁹¹ > Lat. *Tu'sci* / Lat. *E-trusci*. In the same way, the name *Volsci*¹⁹² has been derived from the alternation of the names by which the tribes descending from *Western and Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* called the descendants of **G^waulg^waunas*: **G^waulg^waus* > **Volkas* / **Velsas* > Etr. *Velch*¹⁹³ / Etr. *Velzu*¹⁹⁴ > Lat. *Volsci*.

In the historical age, *Etruscans* were settled mainly by the Thyrrenic coast¹⁹⁵ from Liguria to Campania, on the border between Tuscany, Lazio, and Umbria and also in the Padanian Valley¹⁹⁶ and by the Adriatic coast¹⁹⁷ from Veneto to the Marches.

¹⁷⁵ Fabbri 2018a; Fabbri 2019.

¹⁷⁶ Plinius 3.60.

¹⁷⁷ Facchetti 2000.

¹⁷⁸ Bonfante and Bonfante 2002: 223.

¹⁷⁹ Bonfante and Bonfante 2002: 223; Pallottino 2016: 274.

¹⁸⁰ Pittau 2018: 279.

¹⁸¹ Bonfante and Bonfante 2002: 222.

¹⁸² Pallottino 2016: 428.

¹⁸³ Plinius 3.115.

¹⁸⁴ Plinius 3.69.

¹⁸⁵ Plinius 3.133.

¹⁸⁶ Plinius 3.114; Servius 10.201; Pallottino 2016: 128.

¹⁸⁷ Dionysius 1.30.3.

¹⁸⁸ Camporeale 2004.

¹⁸⁹ Plinius 3.38.

¹⁹⁰ Plinius 3.52.

¹⁹¹ Pallottino 2016: 6.

¹⁹² Plinius 3.56.

¹⁹³ Pittau 2018: 477.

¹⁹⁴ Pittau 2018: 489.

¹⁹⁵ Plinius 3.50.

¹⁹⁶ Plinius 3.115.

¹⁹⁷ Plinius 3.112.

Pelasgians

Most of the Proto-Scythian tribes that occupied the Aegean area (**S^w-g^wau-las* and **S^w-g^wau-nas*) in the III millennium BC was forced to move by sea westwards to Italy (*Siculi* and *Sicani*) or eastward to Anatolia and Syria (*Ascani* and *Ashqalonians*) at the beginning of the following millennium and in the course of it, due to the arrival of *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* (*Shardana*, *Tyrsenoi*, *Proto-Thessaloi*, *Proto-Thraces*, and *Proto-Phryges*). The Proto-Scythian tribes that remained and settled (**stha*) by the northern coast of the Aegean sea were indicated as **G^waula-sthas* and **G^wauna-sthas* and were considered as a subordinated class subdued to *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas*. These tribes had merged with the Pre-Indo-European population that inhabited the Aegean area before the arrival of *Proto-Scythians*¹⁹⁸.

At the end of the second millennium BC new Indo-European peoples arrived in the Aegean area. The descendants of *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* integrated with those of **G^waulg^waunas* in the *Mixed People* were then partially forced to move in turn westwards to Italy and Central Europe and eastwards to Syria and Egypt, and partially subdued and included in the subordinated class. The newcomers were named after the territories where they settled. Therefore, we know them for example as *Phryges* and *Thraces* (who actually spoke Indo-European languages in the historical age). The subordinated classes should have assumed at that time the names **Bailastas* and **Bainastas*, by influence of the descendants of **G^waulg^waunas* (*Mycenaeans*) and of the newcomers, and the names **Dailastas* and **Dainastas* by influence of the descendants of *Eastern *Thyrg^waunas* (*Mygdonians*). We can easily derived from these names those of *Pelasgians* (Gr. *Πελασγοί*¹⁹⁹ < **Belasdai* < **Bailastas*), *Penastae* (Gr. *Πενέσται*²⁰⁰ < **Benestai* < **Bainastas*), and *Philistines* (Hebr. *Pelištīm*²⁰¹, Egyp. *Peleset* by consonants *p-r-s-t* in Medinet Habu Inscriptions, and Ass. *Palastu* in Tiglatpileser III Inscriptions).

Pelasgians were therefore some tribes of the *Mixed People* (the Proto-Etruscan confederation) integrated with *Proto-Scythians* and Pre-Indo-European peoples. Some of them are remembered having reached Italy mainly through the Adriatic coast. According to Dionysius, most of *Pelasgians* passed to Italy²⁰² from the region around Dodona landing on the Adriatic coast. Some of them landed at the mouth of Po river²⁰³. Hence, they penetrated the land of *Umbrians* conquering some of their cities²⁰⁴. Later, they were chased out by *Umbrians* and near Cutilia met *Aborigines*, with whom they allied and integrated²⁰⁵. The resulting people was later called *Latini* after king Latinus²⁰⁶, and integrated with other peoples migrated to Lazio from Peloponnesus after *Pelasgians* (led by *Evander*²⁰⁷ and *Heracles*²⁰⁸) and from the Trojadis (led by *Aeneas*²⁰⁹), founding many cities, among which, sixteen generation after the Trojan war, Rome²¹⁰.

According to Herodotus²¹¹, in the historical age some Pelasgian tribes still lived near the city of Creston in Macedonia and in the cities of Placia and Scylace on the Hellespont.

¹⁹⁸ Fabbri 2018a.

¹⁹⁹ Herodotus 1.57.1.

²⁰⁰ Aristoteles 2.9.3.

²⁰¹ Genesis 10.14.

²⁰² Dionysius 1.18.2.

²⁰³ Dionysius 1.18.3.

²⁰⁴ Dionysius 1.19.1.

²⁰⁵ Dionysius 1.19.2-4.

²⁰⁶ Dionysius 1.9.3.

²⁰⁷ Dionysius 1.31.1.

²⁰⁸ Dionysius 1.34.1.

²⁰⁹ Dionysius 1.45.1.

²¹⁰ Dionysius 1.9.4.

²¹¹ Herodotus 1.57.1-2.

APPENDIX B – PHONETIC CHANGES AND NAME ADAPTATIONS

In Appendix A we saw that *Proto-Scythians* still used labiovelar sounds in their languages when they arrived in Italy. Their descendants changes these sounds under the influence of the poples who lived nearby or with whom they miggled. Moreover, we saw that descendants of *Western *Thyrg^w aunas* (*Thyrrhenians*), *Proto-Umbrians*, and *Proto-Calabrians* changed the labiovelar *g^w* mainly into unvoiced velar (*k*), also aspirated (*ch*) and muted (*h*). The descendants of *Eastern *Thyrg^w aunas* changed instead the labiovelar *g^w* mainly into dental (*d*), also aspirated (*dh = z*) and unvoiced (*s*), while those of **G^w aulg^w aunas* mainly into voiced aspirated labial (*v*) also subsequently unaspirated (*b*).

It must be noticed that *Proto-Umbrians*, and *Proto-Calabrians* were not the same peoples that inhabited Umbria and Southern Italy in the historical age. They only left their name to their territories, where later they were overlapped or replaced by other peoples. In the historical age these territories were inhabited by peoples speaking *Osc-Umbrian* dialects, which seem to have resulted the Proto-Indo-European labiovelars into labials. Moreover, the language spoken by the ancestors of Latins was different from that we call Latin or Old Latin and was spoken by Romans. In Latin, in fact, the labiovelars result both in velars and labials. The latter result is considered anomalous and induced by Sabines²¹². In this work we propose that it was induced by Latins.

In Appendix A, we also observed that in the names of peoples descending from *Proto-Scythians* the results of **g^w au-na*, and similarly **g^w au-la*, and **g^w au-ta*, lose the meaning of “herd of cows” and “cow breeder” and assumed that of “people”, “community”, and “city”. We can then recognise these derivations in the names of ancient peoples and observe how the labiovelar has been changed in order to distinguish the people that influenced the name deformation. For example, the names of *Proto-Scythians* was early changed to *Sicani* (< **Sikanas* < **S^wg^w aunas*), *Siculi* (< **Sikolas* *S^wg^w aulas* < **S^wg^w aulas*), and *Asculi* (< **Auskolas* < **S^wg^w aulas*), *Ascanaxes* or *Aus’ones* (< **Auskonas* < **S^wg^w aunas*), *Osci* (< **Auskas* < **S^wg^w aus*) in Central and Southern Italy by *Thyrrhenians*, *Proto-Umbrians*, and *Proto-Calabrians*. But later, when the descendants of **G^w aulas* / **G^w aulg^w aunas* arrived and partially miggled with them, their name changed to *Sabini* (< **Saw^wnas* < **S^wg^w aunas*; for *η* vowel see below), *Sabelli* (< **Saw^wlas* < **S^wg^w aulas*), and *Ap’puli* or *A’puli* (< **A^wswolas* < **S^wg^w aulas*), *O’pi-ci* (< **A^wswa-kas* < **S^wg^w aus-ko-as*)²¹³.

The name of *Ligures* is often attested with the voiced velar *g*, but also with the voiced labial *b*. Strabo²¹⁴ reporting Hesiod calls *Ligures* *Λιβυεες*, while Herodotus²¹⁵ and Diodorus Siculus²¹⁶ call them *Λίγυεες*. The alternation of the labial and the velar in the historical names of *Ligures* could lead to think that in the prehistorical forms a labiovelar occurred. However, by analysing the time and space distribution of the names of *Proto-Hiberians*, it is possible to conclude that the original sound was labial, while the velar seems to have been introduced by *Tyrrhenians* as an hypercorrection. *Tyrrhenians*, in fact, should have been used to correct in velar the changes in labial in the words deformed by the descendants of **G^w aulg^w aunas*.

Many names of ancient peoples or cities were distorted in the historical age in order to adapt them to an alphabet or a language. This is the case of some names we received throug Etruscans. In the Etruscan alphabet, in fact, voiced occlusives were missing and substituted by the respective unvoiced ones. Moreover, the sounds corresponding to *o* and *u* letter of Latin alphabet were both written as *u*²¹⁷. Lastly, some Etruscan tribes resulted the Proto-Scythian diphtong *au* in a sound intermediate between Lat. *e* and *i* corresponding to *η* Greek letter (cf. Gr. *Τυρσηνοί*²¹⁸), which was

²¹² Burman 2018:154.

²¹³ Fabbri 2020.

²¹⁴ Strabo 7.3.7.

²¹⁵ Herodotus 7.72.1.

²¹⁶ Diodorus 5.39.1.

²¹⁷ Pallottini 2016: 240.

²¹⁸ Herodotus 1.94.7.

some time translated by Romans to *e* and some other to *i*. Therefore, the name of the Italian city of *Modena*, for example, was received by Romans through the Etruscans as *Mutina*.

It has been observed that, in the late age, *Etruscans* frequently used in writing to omit internal unstressed vowels²¹⁹. The name of *Perugia*, for example, was written as *Phersna* (< **Phèrsḡna* < **Thyrg^wauna*), those of *Bologna* and *Bolsena/Orvieto* as *Velzna* (< **Vèlzḡna* < **G^waulg^wauna*), and that of *Tarquinia* both as *Tarchuna* (< **Tàrchona* < **Thyrg^wauna*) and *Tarchna*. Such contracted names were often changed by Romans into sounds more similar to their language and possibly having a meaning in it. In particular, the Etruscan names were changed by introducing the metatheses *tn* > (*e*)*nt* and *zn* > (*e*)*nti*, sometimes doubling the dentals: *tn* > *t(e)nt*²²⁰. This occurred mainly when Romans refounded a city or when founded a new city in a territory where Etruscan peoples were living. For example, when Romans founded the city of Trento, they probably found in the territory Etruscan related peoples who call themselves **Tritna* (< **Tirdḡna* < **Thyrg^wauna*) and then named the city *Tridentum* (cf. Lat. *tridens*, trident). Similarly, when they founded the city of *Firenze* (*Florence*), in a territory where the peoples should have called themselves **Phirzna* (< **Phirzḡna* < **Phirdḡna* < **Thyrg^wauna*), Romans probably transformed such a name firstly into *Phirentia* and then into *Florentia* (cf. Lat. *florens*, flourishing) to attribute a meaning. However, the original names of *Trento* and *Firenze* should have survived in the local tradition just with the euphonical metatheses *tn* > (*e*)*nt* and *zn* > (*e*)*nti*, since they are more similar to the current ones than the Roman renominations do.

²¹⁹ Moscati 1988: 88; Banti 1969: 129.

²²⁰ Fabbri 2017.

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