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# *Lusitanian inscriptions and their Italic parallels: a study on multiple animal sacrifice*

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## Introduction

The linguistic history of the Iberian Peninsula is a very fascinating yet complex subject, especially for what concerns those languages which can provide very scarce written sources. This is the case of Lusitanian, a Western Indo-European language probably spoken by the populations settled in the area between Central Portugal and the Western region of Extremadura, in Spain, in the pre-Roman era. Due to the lack of native material, the categorisation of Lusitanian into one of the branches of the Indo-European language family has posed many challenges to historical linguists. Among the various hypotheses, the two main ones are the Celtic and the Italic theories. The former affirms that Lusitanian is a Celtic language, as all the other ancient Indo-European languages of the Iberian Peninsula. The linguists who support this hypothesis believe that the Indo-European invasion of these territories, which took place between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C., was carried on by Celtic populations. They mainly base their hypothesis on the linguistic similarities, mainly consisting of shared vocabulary, which can be noticed between Lusitanian and Celtiberian. The latter, on the contrary, argues that Lusitanian could be related to Italic languages. This theory suggests that the Indo-European populations which invaded the Iberian Peninsula for the first time could have included, among the others, Italic populations and not only Celtic ones. The linguists who developed this hypothesis found a good number of linguistic and cultural parallels between the Lusitanian and the Italic populations. The aim of this work is to explore the Italic hypothesis by comparing Lusitanian and Italic material concerning multiple animal sacrifice. As a matter of fact, the majority of the Lusitanian extant inscriptions are texts describing the sacrifice of multiple animal victims. Showing the similarities between the structures and the formulaic language of the Lusitanian inscriptions and the religious ceremonies of the Roman *suovetaurilia* and of the rituals described in the Uguvine Tables, which both involve the immolation of multiple animals, will hopefully underline the validity of the Italic theory.

The first chapter will be dedicated to the analysis of the trifunctional theory, developed by the comparatist George Dumézil in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and later explored, criticized and evolved by other intellectuals. This part of the work will consist of two sections: the first section will contain a brief presentation of the theory, using Dumezil's

*L'ideologie tripartite des Indo-Européennes*<sup>1</sup>, one of the most mature works produced by the French intellectual for what concerns this subject, to quote some examples of the application of the theory within the Indo-European world; the second section will present only a sample of the many critics, reflections and modern evolutions of the theory, to show the impact it had on the comparativist field. The aim of this chapter is firstly to show the evolution of the comparativist method, essential in the analysis of ancient languages, but also to provide the reader with some information and tools which will be useful for the interpretation and analyses of the text presented in the following chapters.

The second chapter will analyse the characteristics of multiple animal sacrifice in Western Europe, in Italic civilisations, in particular. It will be divided into four main sections: the first two will focus on specific multiple animal sacrifice rituals, the third one will concentrate on animal sacrifice in the Celtic population and the fourth one will explore the meaning and the characteristics of animal sacrifice in ancient societies. To be more precise, the first section will be devoted to the description of the Roman *suovetaurilia*, a multiple animal sacrifice consisting of the killing of a pig, a sheep and a bull. The first part of this section will contain mainly general information about the ritual, while the second part will report Watkins' detailed analysis of Cato's lustration of the field poem<sup>2</sup>, which was recited before the performing a *suovetaurilia*, which had a purifying purpose. The second section will include a presentation of the content of the most important written source for the study of the Umbrian culture: the Iguvine Tables. This document describes the performing of a series of religious ritual ceremonies, which usually consisted in the multiple or singular immolation of animals. The third section will contain a brief analysis of the main aspects characterising Celtic religions and their practice of animal sacrifice. In this case, the reader will notice that animal sacrifice was performed quite often but usually did not involve the immolation of multiple victims within the same ritual action. The fourth and last section, which will use Ekroth Gunnell's article *Animal sacrifice in antiquity*<sup>3</sup> as its main source, will focus on the analysis of

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<sup>1</sup> Dumézil George, *L'ideologia tripartita degli Indoeuropei*, Il Cerchio, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Watkins Calvert, *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*, Oxford University Press, USA, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Animal sacrifice in antiquity* in *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life* edited by Gordon Lindsay Campbell, Oxford University Press, 2014.

zooarchaeological remains within the study of animal sacrifice in antiquity and on the occasional conflict between them and other kind of sources.

The third chapter will represent the heart of this work: it will be entirely devoted to the analysis of the Lusitanian language. While the first section will present the two main theories developed by linguists arguing about the origins of this Indo-European idiom, the second section will present a detailed analysis of three of the most important Lusitanian extant inscriptions: Arronches, Cabeço das Fraguas and Arroyo de la Luz I. The main sources used in this part of the work are academic articles which include the meticulous analyses of Lusitanian inscriptions, presenting one or more hypothesis and offering linguistic and anthropological interpretations of the texts. The majority of these sources include the conspicuous work made by Blanca María Prósper, who also happens to be the person who inspired the idea of the present study.

The fourth and last chapter contains a very brief personal reflection on the main themes analysed in this study, which will attempt to give a unitary direction to all the information gathered within the first three chapters.

The idea for the development of this work aroused during my Erasmus in Salamanca, in the last three months of 2021. My ideas for my master's degree thesis were not very clear but they were all reaching towards a comparative linguistic and anthropologic analysis of ancient Indo-European languages. Professor Prósper suggested I could study the parallels between Italic languages and Lusitanian, exploring the realm of multiple animal sacrifice, a subject which has seldomly been studied in Italy. Thanks to her indications, suggestions and the material she provided, this work could develop in a coherent way. For this reason, I ought to thank her for the time she dedicated to me and to the present study.

## 1. The Indo-European trifunctional theory

The present chapter will be devoted to the analysis of the trifunctional theory, developed by the comparatist George Dumézil in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The first part of the chapter will offer a very brief presentation of Dumézil's thought and analysis method, offering a few examples taken from his book *L'ideologie tripartite des Indo-Européennes*, entirely devoted to the explanation of the trifunctional theory.

The second section will present a few critics, reflections on his works and modern application of his trifunctional theory, in order to underline the immense influence Dumézil has had on the field of comparativism.

The aim of this chapter is to give some elementary tools which will be useful in the interpretation of the next two chapters. As a matter of fact, even if the application of the trifunctional theory can sometimes seem forced, it represents an important key element which can help with the comparison of Indo-European cultures.

### 1.1. Comparative data: Dumézil and the trifunctional theory.

Georges Dumézil was a French intellectual, who identified himself as an historian<sup>4</sup> but whose work cross many fields: anthropology, linguistics, history of religion and more. He dedicated his academic life to the study of the Indo-European world, researching the similarities and the parallelisms between the cultures which shared this background.

Before analysing Dumézil's work, it seems important to take a brief overview of the content and history of Indo-European studies. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, linguists discovered Sanskrit, a long-lost language spoken in ancient India, and noticed that its basic vocabulary shared many similarities with the one of some European languages, like Latin and Ancient Greek. After comparing the phonetics and the morphology of some words of these three idioms, the linguists concluded that they must be related. To be more precise, they assumed Sanskrit, Latin and Ancient Greek, and other such as ancient Germanic, Slavic, Celtic, Iranian languages, all shared the same

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<sup>4</sup> Allen Nicholas J., *Debating Dumézil: Recent studies in comparative mythology*, Jaso 24/2, 1993, p. 119-120.

background, an ancient society which spoke the same language. Intrigued by this hypothesis, intellectuals started wondering if other living and dead languages could belong to this primal family and so they started comparing Sanskrit, Latin and Ancient Greek to many other idioms: Gothic, Irish, Slavonic, Iranian and many more. They soon realised that the majority of European languages and some of the idioms of northern India, Iran, along with Tocharian, a dead language attested in northern west China, all shared the same ancestor. The Indo-European languages, so-called because they extended from Europe to the Indo valley, mainly, were believed to be the evolution of Proto-Indo-European, a language spoken by a civilisation probably settled in the Pontic-Caspian steppe, in Eastern Europe. The discovery of Indo-European languages marks the evolution of the sub-discipline of linguistics: historical linguistics. As a matter of fact, after having traced a common ancestor for European and northern Indian and Iranian languages, linguists wondered if other languages of the world could also share similarities and thus being grouped in other family languages. In other words, the discovery of Indo-European languages represents the start of comparative linguistics.

Turning back to Dumézil, as Allen states<sup>5</sup>, he can be considered a comparativist *par excellence*, still riding the wave of enthusiasm concerning historical comparative linguistics. Even though he was mainly interested in the Indo-European domain, he had a vast knowledge of other cultures. Allen compares his method to the one used by anthropologists: he complemented the study of written sources with a more practical and direct observation of all the traditions belonging to the cultures he was analysing.<sup>6</sup>

His research on Indo-European cultures, mainly the ancient ones, resulted in the elaboration of the trifunctional theory. The trifunctional theory, as the name suggests, states that the original tripartition of the Proto-Indo-European society could still be spotted, more or less clearly, in the structure of Indo-European cultures. While the original purpose of Dumézil's theory was to compare data from the documented and

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<sup>5</sup> Allen Nicholas J, *Ibidem*.

<sup>6</sup> Dumézil applies the structuralist method: he tries to reconstruct a religious system through the relationships between the actors of the system. Moreover, the French linguist was convinced that the comparison of parallel words of different Indo-European languages could re-create the original Proto-Indo-European form. On the other hand, modern historical linguistics confronts the words in order to create a unitary "prototype". Finally, it is important to remember that Dumézil believed that the structures of the Indian and Iranian societies could be more similar to the Proto-Indo-European society than other cultures of the same family languages because they were more conservative. This is not totally true.

still living Indo-European societies in order to reconstruct the structure of the Proto-Indo-European culture and the reasons behind this interpretation of reality, the more recent work made by the linguist on this matter mainly focuses on the application of the trifunctional theory on the documented Indo-European societies themselves. The main source used for the development of this section was *L'ideologie tripartite des Indo-Europennes*<sup>7</sup>, which was published in 1958, during the mature stage of his thoughts on trifunctional theory. This means that the brief and synthetic presentation of the trifunctional theory and of its application in the documented Indo-European societies which will be developed below will reflect this last phase.

Dumézil started his comparative work by analysing the structure of the Indian society. The population is divided into four main castes, called *varṇa*, which literary means “colours”. Even though the castes are four, only three of them are categorised as *arya*, while the other one is considered impure and thus subordinate to the other three. The three *arya* are associated to a certain “mission”, which they must fulfil to keep society balanced and well-organised. Belonging to a caste or the other is determined by heritage and it cannot be changed: one should grow up, marry and operate within their *arya* throughout their whole lives. The first *arya* is composed by *brāhmaṇa*, the priests, whose aim is to study holy matter and perform sacrifices. The second *arya* is formed by *kṣatriya* (also called *rājanya*), the warriors, whose purpose is to protect the population with their weapons and their physical strength. The third *arya* consists of *vaiśya*, a heterogenous group composed by farmers and by those who produced or sold material goods. Above this hierarchy was the king, called *rājan*, who usually belonged to the second *arya* but who was in charge of the whole society. This division of society can already be spotted in the nine books of *Ṛgveda*, which date back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> millennium B.C, where the *arya* were not labelled like this yet but were characterised by the qualities from which their names derived: *brāhmaṇ*, the “knowledge and use mystic relations between the visible and the invisible”, for what concerns the first *arya*; *kṣatra*, “power”, for what concern the second *arya*; *viś*, “peasantry” or “organised habitat”, for what concerns the third *arya*.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Dumézil George, *L'ideologia tripartita degli Indoeuropei*, Il Cerchio, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Dumézil George, *Ivi*, p.15-16.



Given how ancient the books of *R̥gveda* are, Dumézil, along with Benveniste and Spiegel, believed this division into castes could date have characterised the Indo-Iranian era, a phase in which Indians and Iranians were part of the same society. The evidence which supports this hypothesis can be found in the *Avesta*, a collection of religious texts of Zoroastrianism, dating back to the 8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The society described in these books seems to be composed by *āθaurvan/ āθravan*, the priests, *raθ aē.štar*, the warriors and *vāstryō.fšuyant*, a group composed by farmers and breeders. A fourth caste of artisans, *hūiti*, is presented but Dumézil thought it could be a later addition to the original tripartite division into social functions. The linguist observes that Iranian societies did not interpret this system in a rigid way, as Indians did, but as an abstract division of the population according to the main role they played within society.<sup>9</sup>

Looking at these parallels between the Indian and the Iranian societies and considering how back the tripartition society dates in both cultures, Dumézil decided to analyse other Indo-European societies, to see if they presented this schema as well. He surprisingly found many correspondences with Celtic and Italic, Western Indo-European languages.

For what concerns Celts, Dumézil analysed some of Caesar's descriptions of the Gauls and some texts about Ireland before the spread of Christianity. Comparing the data of these two populations, the linguist reconstructed a society lead by a king called *\*rīg* (which shares the same etymology of Sanskrit *rāj-* and Latin *rēg-*) and divided into three main social groups. The most important one was composed by the druids, the religious chiefs, who reflected the traditions, the knowledge and values of society. The second most important group was composed by the warriors, who belonged to what can be described as "military aristocracy" and to whom belonged the Irish soil, called *flaith* (which has the same etymology as Sanskrit *kṣatra*, the quality attributed to the caste of warriors in India). The last social group was formed by the "free men", called *bó airig*, who were cow breeders, generally.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Dumézil George, *Ivi*, p.16-17.

<sup>10</sup> Dumézil George, *Ivi*, p. 20-21.

As for Italic populations, Dumézil focuses mainly on the Roman civilisation. He states that the historical Roman society is not divided into three groups but into patricians and plebeians (he does not mention the group of slaves, probably because they were not considered part of the society, just as the fourth caste in India). However, researching the origins of the foundation of Rome, Dumézili finds some data which could connect the original organisation of the Roman society to the Indo-European trifunctional theory. The main source he uses to prove this evidence is an elegy written by Propertius, where he recounts the origins of Rome. The story narrates that Rome was originally constituted by three ethnical groups, three tribes, which funded the city: the *Ramnes*, Romulus and Remo's Latin comrades; the *Luceres*, Romulus' Etruscan allies, headed by Lucumo; the *Titienses*, Romulus' Sabin enemies, led by Titus Tatius. Presenting the three tribes which funded the city, Propertius mentions their role in the original Roman society: the *Ramnes* are those who deal with sacred and political matters (priest and rulers); the *Luceres* are warriors; the *Titienses* are rich breeders.<sup>11</sup>

The comparison of these and more data from other Indo-European cultures which showed this trifunctional schema applied to the structure of their social, political or religious life led Dumézil to the formulation of the tripartite theory. As it was mentioned above, this theory assumes that the Proto-Indo-European society could have been divided into three social groups, each fulfilling a function of society: the priests, the warriors and the farmers. Dumézil insists on the exclusivity of the use of this system among Indo-European populations. According to his research, there are no other social groups outside the Indo-European family which present this tripartite structure of society. The linguist analysed many non-Indo-European civilisations, like the Chinese, the Jewish, the Finno-Ungic or the Fenician ones and did not manage to spot a similar scheme. He claims that the majority of these society is led by a powerful chief or monarchy, who stands above a scattered yet homogeneous mass. According to him, there is no clear-cut distinction between priests, warriors and farmers, which can sometimes be identified in the same person or not be considered a crucial social group in the society.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Dumézil George, *Ivi*, p. 21-24.

<sup>12</sup> Dumézil George, *Ivi*, p. 25-29

Dumézil affirms that the only cases in which non-Indo-European civilisations show some of the typical traits characterising the tripartition of the Proto-Indo-European society is when they have been in close contact with an Indo-European society. The linguist reports the case of Egypt, where, according to the linguist, the tripartite scheme can be spotted because Egyptians were heavily influenced by the Indo-European populations which settled in Asia Minor and Syria around the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium B.C. The contact with the latter was, according to Dumézil, what generated the rising of the social group of the priests and the one of the warriors (apparently, before that era Egyptians were not equipped with a proper a proper army).<sup>13</sup>

Dumézil underlines how the comparison between the structure of the various Indo-European cultures can be useful to imagine the hierarchy and the general distinctions between the three functions in the Proto-Indo-European society but it cannot give us many information on the practical repercussions the tripartition had on this society. He argues that the distinction could have involved the whole society or just a few families, which represented and preserved the knowledge of their caste and which dominated over the rest of the population. Unfortunately, the reason behind this division, which Dumézil considers the ultimate goal of comparativists like him, cannot be recovered. However, linguists can try to understand the way in which this ideology expressed itself in the organisation of society. According to Dumézil, the practical applications of the second and the third functions are relatively easy to deduce. The former was devoted to sacredness and to the relationship between men and the religious world (cults, magic), to regulating the relationships between men on behalf of the divinity (law and administration) and to rule over the rest of the population within to the will of deities, to guard knowledge and science, which were not considered as separate entities from religion. The latter, on the contrary, can be considered the expression of physical strength, which usually found its purpose on the battlefield. The third function, unlike the first two, is not as easy to determine, because it is a very heterogeneous group, formed by members who were all bound together but who also had different characteristics. This class identifies with fecundity of any type, pleasure, beauty and

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<sup>13</sup> Dumézil George, *Ivi*, p. 25-27.

abundance not only in material goods but also in its internal composition (the large majority of society probably belonged to this caste).<sup>14</sup>

According to Dumézil, the trifunctional theory is expressed differently, more or less explicitly, with more or less modifications on its original structure, according to the culture and to the field of application. There are societies, like the Indian one, which are more traditional, in this sense, and have preserved the tripartition of society quite faithfully, while others which have changed drastically, like the Roman one. However, there are many areas in which the tripartite theory can be spotted: mythology, religion, literature (especially the oral one). This brief discussion will not include the analysis of all these fields of application and the results which were the outcome of the immense comparative research work made by Dumézil during his academic life. Some of these applications will be mentioned in the next chapters, though.

The Dumézilian trifunctional theory surely presents many contradictions and its application can sometimes seem a bit forced but its contribution to the field of comparative historical linguistics is undeniable. Dumézil and the trifunctional theory represent the starting point of the modern theories concerning the Indo-European world, which could manage to solve some of the contradictions which characterise his work.

## **1.2. Debating Dumézil: modern input and criticisms on the trifunctional theory.**

Dumézil's influence on linguistics and on comparative studies was immense. During his academic career, the intellectual managed to collect, analyse and interpret an impressive quantity of material, which was also very varied. His work, which showed some inconsistencies and unclear points, of which Dumézil was more than aware, has either been taken as an example, a starting point to expand, develop and perfect the trifunctional theory or criticised more or less strongly. This section will present two criticisms or observations of the method used by Dumézil in his comparative analyses and two modern applications of his theory.

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<sup>14</sup> Dumézil George, *Ivi*, p. 27-29.

### 1.2.1. Gonda's criticism on Dumézil's excessive application of the trifunctional theory

Gonda's view on Dumézil's work and on his tripartite theory is not entirely negative. The Dutch Indologist writes an essay called *Some observations on Dumézil's views of Indo-European mythology*<sup>15</sup> only 2 years after the publication of Dumézil's *L'ideologie tripartite des Indo-Europennes*<sup>16</sup>, the book in which the French linguist resumes the main points of his tripartite theory and enriches it with new or revised examples. Gonda does share Dumézil's comparative work and his theory that the ancient European society was probably divided into three main groups, each one expressing a function, an activity, some values which could contribute to the well-being of the community but he argues that the French linguist tends to oversimplify and force some parallels between Indo-European cultures. The Dutch linguist believes that Dumézil's idea that almost everything which can be found in Indo-European religions and myths can be naturally reconducted to the trifunctional tripartition of the ancient Proto-Indo-European society and that the comparison between different traditions between this family group will result into an explication in accordance with the tripartite theory is a bit too optimistic. He agrees that, for example, the Roman religion shows many similarities with the Indian one for what concerns both linguistics and ritual actions but that some of these parallels could simply be caused by similar natural evolutions, which resemble each other but which are not necessarily related. Gonda adds that Dumézil has the tendency to make a selection of the information obtained from a source. He would state only what's convenient for his work and discard the rest. The Dutch linguist gives the example of his analysis and description of the Indian god Varuna, which contains only the qualities which are suitable for his work. Gonda also argues that Dumézil is sometimes too quick in discarding other linguists' opinions which do not match with the trifunctional theory. In sum, Gonda does share Dumézil's tripartite theory and thinks some of the similarities which he found between related religious systems actually seem plausible but the systematic and almost obsessive way

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<sup>15</sup> Gonda Jan, *Some observations on Dumézil's views of Indo-European mythology*, Mnemosyne, Jan 1, 1960.

<sup>16</sup> Dumézil George, *L'ideologia tripartita degli Indoeuropei*, Il Cerchio, 2015.

in which Dumézil applies his theory can sometimes produce some questionable parallels, which seem a bit too forced.

### **1.2.2. Miller and the praise of Dumézil's flexibility**

In the essay *Georges Dumézil: Theories, Critiques and Theoretical Extensions*<sup>17</sup>, discussing the different approaches, reactions and modern versions of the tripartite theory, Miller shows his appreciation towards Dumézil and his work. First of all, Miller underlines the great flexibility and openness characterising Dumézil. As a matter of fact, the French comparativist always refused to create a “school” of thought, as many other linguists did. According to the author, this is what enabled and still enables the creation of new ideas, which do not have to stick to precise guidelines, but which can simply take inspiration from his theories, develop them or extend them to other realms of application. He then proceeds to remind those criticising his theory the importance of the Dumézil trifunctional theory in the field of historical comparativism: Dumézil has provided the basis and the instruments which new intellectuals can use to explore, develop and change his ideas. According to Miller, Dumézil's flexibility was also the caused by his ability to change his mind about his own theories. As a matter of fact, as it was stated in the previous section, the Dumézilian tripartite theory has changed and evolved through the years, as Dumézil re-examined and rationalised its points. Dumézil “refused to take himself too seriously”, as Miller states: he affirmed that if his theory had been wrong, they would have not lasted.

### **1.2.3. Lyle's simple and complex triads**

One of the most interesting modern developments of the Dumizilian tripartite theory is offered by Emily Lyle. The linguist argues that some applications of the Dumizilian tripartite theory on the Indo-European pantheon, like the Mitanni set of gods and the Uppsala triad, which she analyses in her article *Which Triad? A Critique and Development of Dumézil's Tripartite Structure*<sup>18</sup>, do not seem to work. She proposes an alternative re-interpretation of the trifunctional theory which would explain in a more coherent way the relationships between the gods which compose this triad, according to

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<sup>17</sup> Miller Dean A., *Georges Dumézil: Theories, Critiques and Theoretical Extensions*, Religion (2000) 30, p. 27–40.

<sup>18</sup> Lyle Emily, *Which Triad? A Critique and Development of Dumézil's Tripartite Structure*, Revue de l'histoire des religions, Janvier - Mars 2004, Vol. 221, p. 5-21

her. Lyle's hypothesis claims that there are two types of triads: a simple triad, which presents some of the characteristics of the Dumizialian triad, and a complex triad, which is based on the relationships between its three parts. For what concerns the simple triad, Lyle identifies it with the colours white, red and black and with the Dumilizilian functions of the sacred, the fertility and the prosperity. However, while Dumézil associates every function to a real division of society into three different castes, Lyle, along with her colleague McCone, associates it to the social division into male age grades. The stage of senility, represented by the old man, corresponds to the first function, the religious function; the mature age, identified with the adult man, can be paired up with the first function, the function concerning fertility; finally, youth, expressed by the young man, coincides with the second function, the function connected to war. Similarly, the simple triad could also be associated with the seasonal cycle: spring is paired up with the first function, summer is related to the second and winter to the third. Both male age grades and the seasonal cycles are characterised by ritually marked transitions, which are birth, initiation and marriage and their representations in the year. These transitional points, which mark the relationships between the elements of the two simple triads, are the elements which form the complex triad. As it was mentioned above, the complex triad can give a more complete and coherent explanation of the Mitanni set of gods. Instead of following the Dumizialian tripartition of the four Indian gods in Mitra-Varuna, Indra and the Nāsatya, Lyle resumes Christensen's division of these gods into two groups, the Asuras (Mitra-Varuna) and the Devas (Indra and the Nāsatya). As a matter of fact, as Lyle points out, the Indian and Iranian ancient traditions make a clear distinction between these two groups: the Asuras as "dark gods" and the Devas as "gods of light" and together they represent the total cosmos. The dark gods can thus be associated to the death transition. As Lyle states: "In terms of the ritual year, the dark gods are recognised at the death transition, and the fact that a half of the panthéon is being noticed at this time explains, at least in part, why this festival is such an important one in the year".<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, the elements composing the simple triad, in this case, are spring, summer and winter. Lyle believes her theory might need

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<sup>19</sup> Lyle Emily, *Ivi*, p. 14.

improvement but that it could also open the trifunctional theory to new interpretations of the Indo-European universe.

#### **1.2.4. Lynn's re-analysis of the tripartism of the Flavian amphitheatre**

In his essay *Dumézil's trifunctionalism: the state of play*<sup>20</sup>, Miller underlines how the work produced by Dumézil caught the eye of Chriss Lynn, the honorand of the essay. Lynn followed in his path, applying and developing the Dumizilian trifunctional theory. His work is labelled by Miller in three main categories: the study of excavated objects whose decoration or format seem to follow the trifunctional theory; the analysis of archaeological sites or remains which appear to be projected according to the trifunctional scheme; the examination of once extant objects that have gone lost but which can still be studied through the aid of written descriptions contained in ancient sources; analysing the artefacts or objects created by the imagination of an ancient poet.<sup>21</sup> Miller then proceeds to describe one of Lynn's most important works, where he applied the Dumizilian trifunctional theory. Studying the Flavian amphitheatre, Lynn confirmed the tripartition which characterised the structure of the monument discovered by Dumézil but re-examined his analysis. Dumézil identified the functions with the triplicism of the human body: the third function corresponded to the lowest part of the theatre, the second function to the middle zone and the first function to the highest point. Lynn suggests that the order should be re-verses, because the sacral area of the arena was closer to the lowest section, reserved for the emperor and the aristocracy (function one), while the middle section and the highest one were assigned to the rest of the population (functions two and three).<sup>22</sup>

The Dumizilian trifunctional theory, exposed in this chapter, will be a useful tool for the analysis of the next two chapters. In the second chapter, the theory will be applied both to the interpretation of the Umbrian and to the original Roman Capitoline Triads, to the analysis of Cato's prayer, describing the lustration of fields. In the third chapter, it will be useful to identify the Indo-European cultural and religious elements

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<sup>20</sup> Miller Dean A., *Dumézil's trifunctionalism: the state of play*, Ulster Journal of Archaeology, Third Series, Vol. 74, Papers in honour of Chriss Lynn, 2017-2018, p. 11-19.

<sup>21</sup> Miller Dean A., *Ivi*, p. 14-15.

<sup>22</sup> Miller Dean A., *Ivi*, p. 15.



of the Lusitanian inscriptions. The comparativist method, in particular, will be applied to search for the parallels between Lusitanian and the Italic languages.

## **2. Multiple animal sacrifice in Western Europe**

The present chapter is going to revolve around the practice of multiple animal sacrifice in Western Europe, focussing mainly on Italic populations. The aim of this part of the work is to show the consistency of multiple animal sacrifice in Italic populations compared to the scarce attestations of it in the Celtic ones. The data and information shared in these sections will be later confronted with the ones provided by some Lusitanian inscriptions in order to seek for similarities, parallelisms and possible connections.

The first section is going to explore a very ancient and popular Roman ritual: the *suovetaurilia*. This multiple animal sacrifice has been described by a great number of historians and studied by many linguists, archaeologists, art critics and anthropologists for its importance in the Roman religious life and its numerous parallels in other Indo-European contexts. The general presentation of the ritual will be followed by a detailed analysis on Cato's lustration of the field poem, recited before the ceremony of purification of the fields, which involved the sacrifice of *suovetaurilia*. Given that it is probably the most ancient surviving text of the Roman culture, it can not only contain useful information about the origins of Rome but also about a possible archaic Italic background.

The second section will be devoted to the analysis of one of the most important written testimonies of classical antiquity: the Iguvine Tables. This collection of texts, which were written in two different redactions, one in the Etruscan and the other one in the Latin alphabet, describe a series of rituals, mainly animal sacrifices, performed to protect the city of Iguvium and its population from catastrophes and invasions. These tables represent a significant tool to interpret the Umbrian religion and culture but also to investigate the characteristics of the archaic Italic and Indo-European societies.

The third section is going to analyse the practice of animal sacrifice in Celtic populations, focussing mainly on Gauls. While many Indo-European traits can be spotted in some of these rituals, multiple animal sacrifice does not seem to be practiced as much as in the Italic context.

The fourth and last section of this chapter will focus on archaeological sources and on the issues that can arise from the comparison between them and other kind of sources. The purpose of this section is to give general information about animal sacrifice

in ancient Western European societies not only from a religious and anthropological perspective but also considering the economic and socio-political factors which took part in the performing of this type of ritual.

## 2.1. The Roman *suovetaurilia*

The *Suovetaurilia* is the rite of sacrifice of three animals, usually a pig, a sheep and a bull, in honour of Mars. The victims can be fully-grown beasts or young animals that still need to be nursed, therefore the sacrifice can be referred as *suovetaurilia lactentia*<sup>23</sup>. Dumézil<sup>24</sup> lists the occasions in which a *suovetaurilia* might be performed: public and private ceremonies, the *lustratio agri*, the purification of the fields but also a way to expiate an error of religious nature. He then proceeds to give the reader the example of a sacred object, a javelin used by generals while reciting a formula to the Manes and Tellus before a battle, that must not fall into enemy hands. If so, it is necessary to precede with a *suovetaurilia*, as quoted by Titus Livius: *si potiatur, Marti souevetaurilibus fieri*<sup>25</sup>. Tacitus<sup>26</sup> writes that a *suovetaurilia* was performed on the ruins of the old burned Capitol before the reconstruction, so that the space was purified and ready to host new sacrifices and sacred ceremonies. According to the linguist, in war scenarios, a *suovetaurilia* before the battle could be a “powerful medicine, equally to prevent and cure”<sup>27</sup>. As a matter of fact, there is an actual attestation of purification of a whole army through the rite of *suovetaurilia*; Tacitus<sup>28</sup> reports that it was before a raid that had the goal to replace the fugitive Parthian king with a new one.

Roman sacrifices started with a *pompa*, a procession which could involve the participation of many people, if it was the case of a public ceremony, or only of a few individuals, if it was a private ceremony. While the slaves (*victimarii*) carried the sacrificial victims, musicians played their instruments all around. After entering the place in which the sacrifice was performed, the preliminary rituals began: they consisted in the purification of the sacred space, a libation, which was called *praefatio* when the victims

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<sup>23</sup> Benveniste Émile, *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes, I: Économie, parenté, société*, Éditions de Minuit, 1969, p. 32.

<sup>24</sup> Dumézil Georges, *Archaic Roman religion: with an appendix on the religion of the Etruscans, volume 1*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 238.

<sup>25</sup> Titus Livius 8.10.14 quoted by Dumézil Georges, *Ibidem*.

<sup>26</sup> Tacitus, *Historiae* 4.53 quoted by Dumézil Georges, *Ibidem*.

<sup>27</sup> Dumézil Georges, *Ivi*, p. 239.

<sup>28</sup> Tacitus, *Annales* 6.37 quoted by Dumézil Georges, *Ivi*, p. 238.

were animals, as in the case of the *suovetaurilia*. The emperor, standing by the altar, threw some wine, contained in a *patera* (a bowl), into the flames of the near-by hearth. The emperor could also be assisted by a boy, who would throw incense in the same fireplace, summoning Mars so that he could join the sacrifice. Following the *praefatio* was the *immolatio* of the victim, whose back was covered with *mola salsa*, a mix of emmer flour and salt, after the priest had poured the sacred wine into the horns of a bull. This phase could be wrongly identified with the physical killing of the animal, because of its name. However, as Valérie Huet observes, this step represented the symbolic killing of the animal, marked by the application of the *mola salsa*.<sup>29</sup> The next part of the ceremony is what archaeologists call *immolation boum* (immolation of the bull, given that the bull is the most represented sacrificial victim in Roman reliefs) but it actually consisted in the physical killing of the victim. In some representations, the animal is held by two *victimarii*, the slaves who also carried the animal on the sacrificial scene, while the *popa*, the *victimarius* in charge of the ending the victim's life, killed the animal with an axe. The following step, the *litatio* or *probatio*, consisted in the dismemberment of the animal and in the extraction of the entrails, which were examined by the priests in search of some signs from the god to whom the sacrifice was dedicated, Mars, in this case. The ceremony ended with the sacrificial banquet, where the sacrificial meat was distributed between some of the participants of the ritual. As a matter of fact, not everybody could get access to the sacrificial banquet: only the elite, composed by the emperor, the priests and the senators, participated, while all the other people involved in the ceremony had to buy the sacrificial meat at the local butcher's shop. This matter will be issued in detail in section 2.4.<sup>30</sup>

In his book *L'ideologie tripartite des Indo-Européennes*<sup>31</sup>, dedicated entirely to the trifunctional theory and its expressions in the Indo-European world, Dumézil associates the original Roman Capitoline Triad, composed by Jupiter, Mars and Quirinus (which correspond to the gods forming the Umbrian triad: *Juu-*, *Mart-* and *Vofion(o)*) to the three original functions which he claimed characterised the Indo-European society. Dumézil

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<sup>29</sup> Huet Valérie, *Roman Sacrificial Reliefs in Rome, Italy, and Gaul: Reconstructing Archaeological Evidence?* in *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome. Supplementary Volumes*, Vol. 13, *Ritual Matters: Material Remains and Ancient Religion*, University of Michigan Press for the American Academy in Rome, 2017, p. 15.

<sup>30</sup> Huet Valérie, *Ivi*, p. 13-17.

<sup>31</sup> Dumézil Georges, *L'ideologia tripartita degli Indoeuropei*, Il Cerchio, 2015.

starts by affirming that, through history, these three gods have been served by three categories of priests, called *flamines*. Jupiter was served by the *flamines maiores* (or *dialis*), Mars by the *flamines martialis* and Quirinus by *flamines quirinalis*. The original Capitoline triad was soon replaced by the one formed by Jupiter Optimus Miximus, Juno and Minerva. According to Dumézil, this means that the original triad was the expression of a more archaic civilisation, probably reflecting the trifunctional structure characterising the Proto-Indo-European society on a deeper level. Some rituals, like the ceremony in honour of the foundation of the city, the rite of *devotio*, which consisted in the voluntary immolation of a general to save his army and the sacrifices in honour of *Fides*, the goddess of trust, still showed the presence of the original Capitoline Triad. Dumézil associates the gods composing this triad to the three functions of the Indo-European society. Jupiter, powerful, mighty and characterised by both positive and negative qualities, is the god who puts order in religious matters and regulates justice, so he is associated to the first function. Mars is the god of war, he represents physical power, which can be used both on the battlefield but also in physical activities, like farming the land. For these reasons, he is associated with the second function. Quirinus's name could originally mean "protector of the mass", according to Pisani and Benveniste<sup>32</sup>. Moreover, he is usually the god to whom many peasant festivals are dedicated to. Quirinus, whose name is related to the *Quirites*, the population which did not belong to the military class, is thus associated with the third function.<sup>33</sup>

Dumézil's theory, even if a bit forced at times, could explain the reason why Mars is the recipient of the sacrifice of the *suovetaurilia*. As it was mentioned above, Mars represents physical power, which can be expressed during a fight but also in physical activities, especially those related to work in the fields. Among the different occasions, listed above, in which a *suovetaurilia* was performed, both military ceremonies and agricultural ceremonies were mentioned.

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<sup>32</sup> Dumézil Georges, *Ivi*, p. 69.

Both linguists have affirmed that the name of the Umbrian equivalent of Quirinus, *Vofion(o)*, could derive from the form *\*Le-udh-yo-no*, which means "protector of the masse". Even though this hypothesis makes sense in relation to the parallels between the Umbrian and the Roman triad, it still seems a bit forced.

<sup>33</sup> Dumézil Georges, *Ivi*, p. 66-70.

According to Benveniste<sup>34</sup>, the word *suovetaurilia* comprehends the ablative forms of three nouns which are juxtaposed and followed by the adjectival suffix *-ilis*, *-ilia*. The three nouns in the ablative case correspond to the three animals which are offered in sacrifice during the rite: *sū*, the ancient ablative for *sūs* (pig), *oue* (sheep) and *taurō* (bull). The reason why the nouns indicating the victims are in the ablative case can be explained by looking at ritual language: the archaic formula did not present the typical construction *facere*+accusative “sacrifice an animal” but *facere*+ablative, where the ablative corresponds to the sacrificial victims. It is logical to assume that, in sacrifices, the animal was not seen as an object, given as a present to the god, but as a medium through which mortals could reach out to the divine being and celebrate them. That is why the most adequate translation must not be, for example, “sacrifice a pig” but “sacrifice through the means of a pig”. His analysis is one of the most accepted, among historical linguists, however, his analysis presents there are some unclear parts. First of all, the formation of words on an ablative theme could not be correct, if the *ū* of *sūs* is read as the theme of the Indo-European root *\*suh<sub>3</sub>-*, as de Vaan suggests<sup>35</sup>. Secondly, the *-ī-* inserted after *taur-* could be caused by the presence of suffix or by a possible genitive form *taurī* and not by an evolution of the *-ō*, but it could also be the evolution of a morpheme which closed the whole compound. Finally, the reconstruction of the periphrasis *facere*+ablative does not seem as plausible as the periphrases *agere/ambulare*+ablative.

The *Suovetaurilia* is not exclusive to the culture of ancient Rome. As a matter of fact, similar sacrifices can be found in some other Indo-European contexts. To begin with, Benveniste<sup>36</sup> argues that the word *suovetaurilia*, composed by two or three elements, has other Indo-European words that are constructed in a similar way. He gives the example of Greek *νυχθήμερον* “the 24 hours that contain a day and a night”. Both Dumézil<sup>37</sup> and Watkins<sup>38</sup> state that the Greek sacrifice *τριττός τρίττοια* shows many similarities with the

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<sup>34</sup> Benveniste Émile, *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes, I: Économie, parenté, société*, Éditions de Minuit, 1969, p. 29-30.

<sup>35</sup> de Vaan Michiel, *Etymological Dictionary of Latin and the other Italic Languages*, Brill, 2008, p. 603.

<sup>36</sup> Benveniste Émile, *Ivi*, p. 29.

<sup>37</sup> Dumézil Georges, *Archaic Roman religion: with an appendix on the religion of the Etruscans, volume I*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 237-238.

<sup>38</sup> Watkins Calvert, *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*, Oxford University Press, USA, 1995, p. 198.

Roman *suovertaurilia*. Firstly, as the name of the sacrifice suggests, this sacrifice involves the killing of three animals, which happen to be the same of the Roman rite: a bull, a ram and a boar. According to Dumézil<sup>39</sup>, a ritual which is similar to the *suovetaurilia* is the *sautrāmaṇi*, a sacrifice performed in Vedic India. It involves the same number of animals as the *suovertaurilia* but the recipient is Indra *Sautrāmaṇ*, which means “the good protector”. The animals which are chosen to be immolated can be various: horses, oxen, sheep, goats and, sometimes, even men. The linguist writes that there are two types of *sautrāmaṇi*. One has to be part of a royal consecration and has a preventive goal, while the other one has no restrictions and is usually performed as a medication, a purification from something that has already occurred, like a battle. In the Umbrian Uguvine Tables, there is an extensive attestation of rituals that resemble the Roman *suovertaurilia*. This matter will be issued and explored later on (2.2).

The Roman *suovetaurilia* has been studied by many linguists, historians, anthropologists and art critics. One of the most classical analyses on this matter was carried on by Georges Dumézil in his *Archaic Roman religion: with an appendix on the religion of the Etruscans*<sup>40</sup>. In his work, the linguist focuses mainly on finding parallel rituals in other Indo-European contexts, probably to try to reconstruct the original Indo-European language and religion. In “How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics.”<sup>41</sup>, Watkins compares Cato’s prayer recited during the lustration of the fields, which was recited during the performing of *suovertaurilia*s, with other Indo-European prayers or formulas that have similar patterns and themes. The analysis of this text will be the main subject of the next section (2.1.1.). Benveniste, on the other hand, includes an analysis of the Roman *suovertaurilia* within his study on the opposition between *sus* and *porcus*, in *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes*. The ritual is his starting point to investigate the reasons behind the distinction between these two words or the lack of it in some Indo-European languages.

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<sup>39</sup> Dumézil Georges, *Archaic Roman religion: with an appendix on the religion of the Etruscans*, volume 1, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 237-238.

<sup>40</sup> Dumézil Georges, *Archaic Roman religion: with an appendix on the religion of the Etruscans*, volume 1, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

<sup>41</sup> Watkins Calvert, *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*, Oxford University Press, USA, 1995, p. 198.

As it was previously mentioned, the ritual of the *suovertaurilia* is a topic that covers a vast number of disciplines. This means that the sources that can be found are very heterogenous and varied. The advantage of studying the same subject from different perspectives is that hypotheses made in one field can be confirmed by evidence found in another domain. Archaeological remains, for example, can be very useful to prove the existence of a sanctuary that was cited in a literary text or to confront the animals represented in a relief with the bones recovered in an archaeological site. As it will be discussed later (2.5), literary sources can be a useful tool to interpret images which portray the sacrifice, because they can help historians detect which elements represent the ritual in itself and which other correspond to the artistic interpretation of it. Unfortunately, not much epigraphic material can be found on this subject. While in the Umbrian (2.2) and Lusitan contexts (3) there is actual epigraphic evidence concerning *suovertaurilia*, there is a lack of it in the Roman world.

### **2.1.1. Literary sources on the Roman *suovertaurilia*: the case of Cato's lustration of the fields prayer.**

The Roman *suovertaurilia* is attested in written literary sources. As it was mentioned above (2.1.), Titus Livius<sup>42</sup> and Tacitus<sup>43</sup>, for instance, give more detailed information about the circumstances in which a *suovertaurilia* can be performed and make some examples of special occasions in which it was offered.

However, the most important literary source on *suovertaurilia* can be found in Cato's *De agri cultura*<sup>44</sup>. Calvert Watkins examined this prayer in detail in his book *How to kill a dragon*<sup>45</sup>, explaining his own ideas about the text but also Benveniste's point of view, that inspired his own studies on the matter. This section will lay out part of his analysis, that takes into account both the structural organization of the text and its connections to the Dumézilian tripartite theory.

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<sup>42</sup> Titus Livius 8.10.14 cited by Dumézil Georges, *Archaic Roman religion: with an appendix on the religion of the Etruscans, volume I*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 238.

<sup>43</sup> Tacitus, *Historiae* 4.53 and *Annales* 6.37 quoted by Dumézil Georges, *Ibidem*.

<sup>44</sup> Cato, *De agri cultura* 141.1 cited by Watkins Calvert, *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*, Oxford University Press, USA, 1995, p. 197.

<sup>45</sup> Watkins Calvert, *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*, Oxford University Press, USA, 1995.



The prayer was recited during the performing of the so-called “lustration”, a ceremony of purification of the fields. The ritual started with some preliminary instructions, that the author describes as syntactically intricate:

cum diuis uolentibus quodque bene eueniat,  
mando tibi, Mani, uti illace suouitaurilia  
fundum agrum terramque meam  
quota ex parte siue circumagi siue circumferenda censeas  
uti cures lustrare

That with the gods favorable everything will turn out well,  
I order you, NN,1 to take care of the lustration of my  
farm, field, and land, from whatever side you deem these  
suouitaurilia should be driven or carried around them.<sup>46</sup>

As a matter of fact, *illace suouitaurilia*<sup>47</sup> is extracted from its own clause and moved to the beginning of the sentence, before the objects of the verb *lustrare*. This unusual construction of the sentence is justified by the fact that religious texts followed precise rules that abided to Roman formal solemn diction. After the instructions, the prayer to Mars is introduced by a preliminary prayer and a libation offered to Janus and Juppiter.

According to Risch<sup>48</sup> this prayer to Mars can be considered “the oldest latin text preserved”, “actually older than Early Latin literature”. His theory enriches

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<sup>46</sup> Cato, *De agri cultura* 141.1 quoted by Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p. 197.

<sup>47</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ibidem*.

According to Prosdocimi (Prosdocimi Aldo, *Studi storico-linguistici in onore di Francesco Ribezzo*, Mesagne, Museo civico archeologico “Ugo Granafel”, 1978, p. 183), *suolitarurilia* and *suovetaurilia* are not equivalent. In Cato, *suovetaurilia* is accompanied by the modifier *lactentia*, while *suolitarurilia* occurs on its own. This means that *suolitarurilia*, since it describes the usual sacrifice, involving adult victims, could have been the original term referring to the *hostiae maiores*.

<sup>48</sup> Risch Ernst, *Zur altlateinischen Gebetssprache*, *Incontri Linguistici* 5, 1979 cited by Watkins Calvert, *Ibidem*.

Benveniste's<sup>49</sup>, who already understood that this poem is extremely ancient and that it was composed way before Cato's times (234-149 B.C.).

## I

1      Mars pater te precor quaesoque  
2              uti sies uolens propitius  
3      mihi domo familiaeque nostrae:  
4 quoius rei ergo  
5      agrum terram fundumque meum  
6              suouitaurilia circumagi iussi

## II

7 uti tu  
8      morbos uisos              nuisosque  
9      uiduertatem              astitudinemque  
10      calamitates              intemperiasque  
11              prohibessis defendas auerruncesque

## III

12 utique tu  
13      fruges frumenta              uineta uirgultaque  
14              grandire              (du)eneque euenire siris  
15      pastores pecuaque              salua seruassis

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<sup>49</sup> Benveniste Emile, *Symbolisme social dans les cultes greco-italiques*, Revue de l'Histoire des Religions 129, 1945 quoted by Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p. 198 ss.

16        duisque (du)onam salutem ualetudinemque

17        mihi domo familiaeque nostrae

#### IV

18 harunce rerum ergo

19        fundi terrae agrique mei

20        lustrandi lustrique faciendi ergo

21 sicuti dixi

22        macte hisce suouitaurilibus lactentibus immolandis esto

23        Mars pater eiusdem rei ergo

24        macte hisce suouitaurilibus lactentibus esto

#### I

Father Mars, I pray and beseech you

that you be favorable (and) propitious

to me, my house, and our household:

to which end

I have ordered the suouitaurilia to be driven around

my field, land, and farm;

#### II

that you

forbid, ward off, and brush aside

diseases seen                      and unseen,  
depopulation                      and devastation,  
storms                                  and tempests;

### III

and that you

                let grow tall                      and turn out well  
                grains (and) corn                  and vineyards (and) shrubwork  
and keep safe                      shepherds (and) cattle  
and give good health                  and soundness  
to me, my house, and our household.

### IV

To these ends,

                to purify and perform the purification  
                of my farm, land, and field

so as I spoke

be magnified by these suckling suouitaurilia to be sacrificed;

                Father Mars, to that same end,

be magnified by these suckling suouitaurilia.<sup>50</sup>

The poem is divided into 4 strophes, structured in a nestling arrangement, with strophes I and IV that “wrap” strophes II and III with their pattern of responsions. In a

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<sup>50</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p. 199-200.

cyclical scheme, it can be noticed that strophe I includes the introduction and the first invocation of Mars, a classic *captatio benevolentiae*, while strophe IV serves as a conclusion, with the final invocation of the god.<sup>51</sup>

As it was mentioned, the element that connects the introduction to the conclusion of the prayer is a pattern of responsions. These responsions are equivalence tokens that create rings that bind together strophe I with strophe IV.<sup>52</sup>

Watkins<sup>53</sup> observes that there are synonymous doubling and tripling figures, enumerations caused by the application of merisms: *Mars pater* is repeated both in line 1 and 23; *precor quaesoque* (line 1) and *uolens propitius* (line 2) are connected to *lustrandi lustrique faciendi* (line 20); the group of three elements *mihi domo familiaeque nostrae* of line 3 recurs in the exact same form in line 17.

The linguist notices another interesting phenomenon present in the text<sup>54</sup>: the use of mirror-image repetitions, that form parallels between the first and the last lines of the poem: *agrum terram fundumque meum* of line 5 reflects the words of line 19 *fundi terrae agrique mei*.

According to the author<sup>55</sup>, other responsions include the single postposition of *ergo* in line 4, that is repeated three times in strophe IV (lines 18, 20, 23), the use of the first person singular, with the verbs *iussi* (line 6) and *dixi* (line 21), which underlines the position of the worshipper as agent. The name of the sacrifice itself, the *suovetaurilia*, which can be found in line 6 and is reiterated in lines 22 and 24.

In order to connect the introduction and the conclusion (strophes I and IV) to the heart of the text, the poem uses a phrase that does not appear to have any purpose if not the one of binding the two parts of the poem together: as a matter of fact, *mihi domo familiaeque* can be found both in lines 3 and 17.<sup>56</sup>

The ring composition is used by the poet to connect strophe I to strophe IV and is applied to create a link between strophe II and strophe III, as well. It can be noticed that

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<sup>51</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p.200-201.

<sup>52</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ibidem*

<sup>53</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ibidem*.

<sup>54</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p. 200.

<sup>55</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ibidem*.

<sup>56</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p. 201.

*morbos* (diseases), the first word of strophe II (line 8) receives the “answer” of the word that ends strophe III, *ualetudinemque* (health). Watkins states that the semantic antithesis between the two terms marks the limits of the “real” poem.<sup>57</sup>

For what concerns the style of the text, the linguist notices that, strophes I and IV are very elaborated from a stylistic point of view. This is probably due to the fact that they reflect the third century B.C. Roman solemn religious language, that diverge greatly from the spoken colloquial language of the time. However, the strophes that contain the real archaisms of the poem are strophes II and III, given that their language probably dates back to a time when the Roman Republic did not even exist.<sup>58</sup>

Watkins embraces Benveniste’s analysis of this poem, that he made in 1945, in his article “Social symbolism in Greco-Italic cults”<sup>59</sup>. The French linguist states that the Dumézilian tripartite theory can be applied in the case of the structure of this prayer. First of all, *suovetaurilia*, the name of the ritual itself, is a compound-name formed by three terms, which correspond to the three animals that are sacrificed to Mars. The whole poem is organised in a tripartite scheme and, as it was mentioned above, presents a great number of tripling and doubling figures.

According to Benveniste, the structural tripartition of the strophes can be associated to the Dumézilian idea of a possible tripartition of Indo-European societies. Each one of the three functions of society corresponds to a specific social status: sovereignty is associated to priests, force to warriors and fecundity to farmers. However, it is likely that the Roman society of the first millennium B.C., the time when this prayer was probably composed, had a different structure. Citizens were probably categorised according to the parameters of birth, wealth and clientship and farmers could have served both as priests and warriors. It is possible, though, that the tripartite organisation of the text, which is utterly visible, reflects the structure of a far more ancient society, maybe the Indo-European one.

This is visible in strophes II and III, which can be considered the body of the poem. As a matter of fact, strophe II contains a triad of scourges the divinity is asked to

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<sup>57</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ibidem*.

<sup>58</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p.201-202.

<sup>59</sup> Benveniste Emile, *Symbolisme social dans les cultes greco-italiques*, *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 129, 1945 quoted by Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p. 198 ss.

block (illness, devastation and natural catastrophe), while strophe III includes a triad of benefits that the god should grant (good health, safety from depredation and agricultural prosperity). Each scourge of strophe II can be paired up with one of the benefits, so that the “antidote” to illness is good health, the solution to devastation is safety from depredation and the “medicine” to natural catastrophe is agricultural prosperity. According to Benveniste, both the triads of scourges and benefits correspond to a function of the tripartite society suggested by Dumézil: sovereignty is associated with illness and good health, force with devastation and safety from depredation and prosperity with natural catastrophe and agricultural prosperity.<sup>60</sup>

Watkins observes that the tripartite scheme can be found in the poetic form of the prayer and in the use of grammatical figures as well.

For what concern the first matter, the linguist notices a constant use of tripling and doubling figures. As a matter of fact, he points out that the whole thematic structure is divided into three parts: each part is then expressed by a grammatical doubling, which is doubled again, on some occasions. The vast use of doublings creates some stylistic figures that are believed to be typical of Indo-European poetics. For instance, the linguist notices some examples of argument+negated argument (*morbos uisos inuisosque*), argument+synonymous argument (*uiduertatem uastitudinemque, calamitates intemperiasque, (du)onam salutem ualeitudinemque*) and merism (*\*fruges uinetaque, pastores pecuaque*).<sup>61</sup>

For what concerns the second matter, Watkins notices that the use of the enclitic copulative conjunction *-que* creates a great number of grammatical figures in the form of doublings (A+B: AB-*que*) and triplings (A B+C: ABC-*que*), which are arranged either vertically or horizontally. The linguist points out that the verbs of the strophe are disposed horizontally (11 *prohibessis* (A) *defendas* (B) *auerruncesque* (C-*que*)), while those of the antistrophe are organised vertically (15 *seruassis* (A) 16 *duisque* (B-*que*)). Similarly, the verb phrases of strophe II are arranged in a vertical setting (8 *morbos uisos inuisosque* 9 *uiduertam uastitudinemque* 10 *calamitates intemperiasque* 11 *prohibessis defendas auerruncesque*) which resembles an upside-down T. The theme of verticality is repeated

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<sup>60</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p. 202 ss.

<sup>61</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ivi*, p. 204 ss.

in antistrophe III, where *fruges frumenta* and *uineta uirgultaque* (line 13) are respectively paired up with *grandire* and *dueneque euenire* (line 14). It is interesting to notice that line 13 contains the *doublings* of the words which compose the hidden formula *\*fruges uinetaque* “grain and grape”, which indicates the products of the earth in their totality. As a matter of fact, it can be assumed that *\*fruges* is doubled in *fruges* and *frumenta*, while *\*uinetaque* is doubled in *uineta* and *uirgultaque*.<sup>62</sup>

In conclusion, this prayer, which was reported by Cato in his *De Agri cultura*, clearly shows its ancient roots not only because it was written in the typical Roman solemn religious language, already outdated at Cato’s time, but also because it contains many references to the Indo-European world. The abundant use of doubling and tripling figures, which creates vertical and horizontal schemes of words, is likely to be an Indo-European inherited trait. As for the content of the prayer, it is clear that *suovetaurilia* is a sacrifice that dates back to a very ancient religious universe that reflects the costumes and the probable tripartition of its society, the Indo-European one.

## 2.2. The Iguvine Tables

The Iguvine Tables were discovered in 1444 in a basement of the ancient city of *Iguvium* (the modern Gubbio). According to some sources, which are not necessarily believable, they originally were nine but two of them were sent to a Venetian scholar and never came back. The other seven tables were moved to the Consuls Palace in Gubbio, where they can still be found. Table I to V, with the exception of the last eleven lines of table V, were written in a local alphabet derived by the Etruscan spelling, in a language that was later demonstrated to be Umbrian, the local idiom spoken by the Umbrian population. Table VI-VII, on the other hand, were written in the Latin alphabet. Although the first group of tables dates back to a time between the 200 and 120 B.C., the second one, which was written approximatively between 170 and 150 B.C., seems to be based on more ancient and possibly oral sources.<sup>63</sup> This can be deduced by the fact that the tables written in the Latin alphabet contain the same information that can be found in the

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<sup>62</sup> Watkins Calvert, *Ibidem*.

<sup>63</sup> Prosdocimi Aldo, *Le Tavole Iguvine*, Leo S. Olshki Editore, Firenze, 1984.



ones written in the Etruscan alphabet, but in a more precise and detailed way and using some archaisms that cannot be found in the Umbrian version.<sup>64</sup>

According to Devoto, the Iguvine Tables are “the most important ritual text of classical antiquity. We do not own anything comparable to it, not even in Latin or in Greek: to seek parallels, one must turn to the literatures of the East or the Far East”.<sup>65</sup> The Iguvine Tables are not only important because they are a big testimony of the religious and political traits which characterised the Umbrian society but because they offer a rich and interesting parallel to another important Italic population: the Roman one. Analysing the Tables of Iguvium could also be useful to know more about the roots of the most archaic phases of the Italic and the Indo-European religious traditions.

Like many other polytheistic religions of the antiquity, the Roman and the Umbrian religions did not see life and afterlife as two separate realms: divinities were part of both worlds and they manifested themselves in life itself, especially in its eternal perpetration, family.<sup>66</sup> These two religions also shared the recurrent use of divination. In both societies, like in many other Indo-European contexts, the preservation of sacred habits, traditions and formulas was entrusted to religious fraternities: in Rome, the Arval Brothers, in Gubbio, the *Fratres Atiedii*.<sup>67</sup> Both these groups of priests were in charge of a very important part of the Italic religious life: the interpretation of omens. Pucciarini notices an interesting parallel between the formula that was used after a negative response in both cultures. As a matter of fact, the Umbrian formula *fetu puze neip eretu* and the Roman one *non consulto* suggest that the recipient of the augury does not listen to it and does the contrary of what the divinity said. This is a very specific and typical trait that characterises both the Roman and the Umbrian religions: as long as the ritual is performed in the correct way, men are very often free to behave as they wish, there is much more freedom of action as opposed to Semitic religions, for instance. This open-minded and unrestricted vision of religion and the perpetration of ancient rituals provided Roman

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<sup>64</sup> Bradley Guy, *State, culture, and identity in central Italy from the Iron Age to the Augustan era*, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 74-75.

<sup>65</sup> Devoto Giacomo., *Le tavole di Gubbio*, Firenze 1977, p. 3 (translation) quoted by Pucciarini Marco, *Le tavole Eugubine ed il mondo religioso umbro ed italico* in *Arthos*, a. IX-Y, n° 22-24, Genova, giugno 1981, p. 8.

<sup>66</sup> Colonna di Cesarò Giovanni Antonio, *Il mistero delle origini di Roma*, Milano, 1938, p.241 quoted by Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 4.

religion with a solid traditional base but also left room for other religions and cult to complement it. As the Umbrian religion sat on the same cultural background, when Romans started their colonization in Umbria, the whole cultural and religious system did not have to change completely but gradually evolved into something that had very similar characteristics.<sup>68</sup>

Moreover, the Umbrian religious triad and its nomenclature deeply resemble the structure of the Roman Pantheon. The names of the Umbrian gods are usually followed by an apposition, a genitive and an adjective. Pucciarini believes that the presence of these modifiers does not have to be seen as a way to multiply or arrange the divine sphere but as a sort of characterisation, as a participation of a god in the domain of another one.<sup>69</sup> The linguist notices a recurrence of the number three in ritual practices. This tendency was analysed by many scholars, who tried to investigate around its origins. While Devoto<sup>70</sup> thinks this trait was inherited from the Etruscan tradition and Banti<sup>71</sup> affirms that it could derive from an archaic Italic background, Dumézil<sup>72</sup> remains consistent with his thought and connects it with the Indo-European trifunctional theory. According to the linguist, its structure resembles the archaic Roman theory, composed by Jupiter, Mars and Quirinus: the Umbrian one presents Jupiter, Mars and Vofonius, which all share the *supernomen* Grabovius, as Wissowa explains.<sup>73</sup> The rituals performed in honour of the triad reveal its internal hierarchy: the three gods receive three bulls each, while their deities which characterise them, normally minor divinities, are offered other animals. There is also an internal distinction between the three gods which are part of the triad: while *Jou-* and *Mart-* are nouns, *Vofion(o)-* is an adjective formed by a nominal theme in -no. The fact that the exact same distinction can be observed by a morphological analysis of the Roman triad helps reinforcing the hypothesis that the Roman and the Umbrian

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<sup>68</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 3-4.

<sup>69</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 13.

<sup>70</sup> Devoto Giacomo, *Contatti etrusco-iguvini*, SE, IV, 1930, p.221-247 and Devoto Giacomo, *Nomi di divinità etrusche*, SE, VI, 1932, P.246-249 quoted by Pucciarini Marco, *Ibidem*.

<sup>71</sup> Banti Luisa, *Il culto del cosiddetto "tempio di Apollo" a Veii e il problema delle triadi etrusco-italiche*, SE, XVII, 1943, P.233 quoted by Pucciarini Marco, *Ibidem*.

<sup>72</sup> Dumézil Georges, *La Religion romaine archaïque*, Paris 1974, trad. It. Milano, 1977, p.137 quoted by Pucciarini Marco, *Ibidem*.

<sup>73</sup> Wissowa Georg, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, Hand.d. Altertumswissenschaft, V 4, München, 1912, p. 23 quoted by Pucciarini Marco, *Ibidem*.

religions must share an archaic Italic background that retains many characteristics and features typical of the ancient Indo-European culture.<sup>74</sup>

As it was mentioned above, the Umbrian triad, thoroughly analysed by Prosdocimi<sup>75</sup>, can be characterised by the post-modifier Grabovius (*grabouio* in ancient Umbrian) in the case of some ritual ceremonies. Its etymology is uncertain: while Kretschmer<sup>76</sup> dates its origin back to a form like *\*grabo*, which is likely to be related to Macedonian *grábion* “oak torch”, Garbini<sup>77</sup> seeks for its origins in the local dialect of Camerino, in Marche region, where the word that refers to “gate” or “door” is *ràppu*, which shows great similarities with Umbrian *grab-*. Jupiter is the most important god of the Grabiovian triad and the juridic *Pater* that attends, among the others, the ceremonies which do not concern him directly as well. He is called *Fisio/Fisovio*, because a quality that is always associated to him is the *Fides*, the sacred loyalty which must be laid when making an agreement. Both Jupiter and Mars Grabovius share many characteristics with their Roman equivalents, probably inherited by a common archaic Italic background. Coherent with these traditions, Mars is often connected to the mythical foundation of cities and the stories which explain the origins of populations. Mars stands on its own but its epithet *Martio-* determines the two groups of gods who are connected to him: *Tursa Çervia Çertifèr Martie*, a female *Terror*, belongs to the first group, while *Prestota Çertifèr Martie*, a female *Praestas*, connected to Jupiter as well, is part of the second one. The prayer which is recited in honour of these gods usually asks for the destruction of the enemy, clearly expressing Mars’ connection to war. *Tursa* is specifically asked to frighten the enemy and thus represents the source of terror which is connected to Jupiter: the unexpected miraculous fear of the opponents. *Prestota*, on the other hand, is begged to transfer the evil that threatens *Iguvium* to the enemies: this is the source of terror which is usually connected to Mars. The triad is completed by Vofionus, who corresponds to the Roman Quirinus.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 13-14.

<sup>75</sup> Prosdocimi Aldo, *Le Tavole Iguvine*, Leo S. Olshki Editore, Firenze, 1984

<sup>76</sup> Kretschmer Paul, *Der Götterbeiname Grabovius auf den Tafeln von Iguvium* in *Festschrift A. Bezenberger*, Gottinga, 1921, p. 89-96 quoted by Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 17.

<sup>77</sup> Garbini Giovanni, *Grabovius* in *Studi linguistici in onore di Vittore Pisani*, I, Brescia, 1969, p. 395-400 quoted by Pucciarini Marco, *Ibidem*.

<sup>78</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 12-19.

The Grabovius triad is strictly related to the first ritual described in the Iguvine Tables: the *piaculum*. The ceremony, preceded by preliminary rituals, is divided into three main steps, which correspond to the killing of a group of three animals in front of each of the three city gates, in honour of one of the gods composing the Grabovius triad. The whole ceremony ends with other two sacrifices, performed in sacred woods. The first step of the ceremony were the preliminary rituals, which started with the examination of the flight of some birds in a *templum*. This part of the ritual was led by a priest called *Arsfetur*, who had to interpret the movements of the birds according to two reference points: the sacred altar and the augural stones. This phase was then followed by the actual *augurium*, which consisted in lightning of the fire in specially made vases, called *vasors*. The first group of sacrifices was performed near the *Porta Trebulana*: three bulls were sacrificed in honour of Jupiter Grabovius in front of the gate door. The prayer, which was recited out-loud, according to the tables written in Umbrian, and whispering, according to the ones written in Latin, had to be repeated three times, one for each of the sacrificial victims. The formula asks the god to purify the city of *Iguvium*, the *Arce Fisia*, the citizens, the animals and the harvest. After this, the animals were immolated and their entrails inspected. This part of the ritual ended with the offering of two cakes (*Mefa* and *Ficla*) and of grains and wine. The same procedure was repeated at the back of the gate door, where three pregnant sows were sacrificed to *Trebo Giovio*. The second group of sacrifices took place near the *Porta Teseneca*: other three bulls were immolated to Mars Grabovius in front of the gate doors and three piglets were offered to *Fisu Sacio*, the god of pacts, at the back of the gate door. The prayer was recited with the same modalities of the formula repeated to ask for Juppiter Grabovius purification, in the first group of sacrifices. The third group of sacrifices was performed near the *Porta Veia*: other three bulls, which presented a white mark on their head, were offered to *Vofiono Grabovio* in front of the gate door and three female lambs were immolated to *Tefro Giovio* at the back of the gate door. The prayer was recited with the same modalities of the formulas repeated in the other two groups of sacrifices. The last step of the *piaculum* was performed in the sacred woods *Giovo*, where three calves were sacrificed in honour of *Mars Hodio*, and *Coretio*, where other three calves were offered to *Hondo Çerfio*. If any of these steps were

not performed correctly, the whole procedure had to start all over again, or the ceremony would be ineffective.<sup>79</sup>

The ritual of *piaculum* thus serves as a consecration of the Grabovius triad. Each god received three bulls in front of one of the three gate doors and was asked to perform a “mass purification” to protect the city of *Iguvium* and of everything and everyone that was part of it. The fact that every group of sacrifices took place near the three main gate doors of the city might represent the willingness to mark the sacred space, which was, in this case, the whole area of *Iguvium*. This act embodies the deepest and original meaning of *sacer*: a closed, purified area dedicated to the divine sphere and separated from the outside world. The importance of a secluded, closed space can also be spotted in the name of the god who is related to *Jou-Grabouio*; as a matter of fact, *Trebo-Iovio* might be connected to Oscan *Triibum*, *triibarakavûm* “to build” and Umbrian *tremnu* “tabernacle”.<sup>80</sup>

The second ceremony presented in Iguvine Tables is a type of lustration called *anferom/andersaom*, words which mean “to go around in circle” and thus expressing very well one of the salient actions of this ritual. Like the *piaculum*, the actual ceremony was preceded by an interpretation of the way in which birds flew in the *templum*. The following step, the lightning of the fire, appears to be a much more important stage in this ritual than in the *piaculum*. The fire was prepared in a brazier called *Ahti*, which was the symbol of the *Fratres Atiedii*. The priest who was in charge of carrying the torch on a plate called *aso* walked towards the *akersonia*, a sort of Umbrian *Campus Martius*, where the sacrifices were held. After another interpretation of the flight of birds, the actual ritual of lustration could start. The ceremony opened with an *exterminatio*, a sort of spell put on foreigners, that had to walk away from the place where the ritual was taking place. Once the area was clear of all the foreigners and the population had positioned itself in a proper way, the priest carrying the torch, along with two other ministers, walked in circle around the sacrificial victims and the community for three times. While doing so, he had to recite a prayer, which was also repeated three times. The formula asked *Çerfo Martio*, *Prestota Çerfia* and *Torsa Çerfia* to curse foreigners and bless the Umbrian population in

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<sup>79</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 14-17.

<sup>80</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 17-20.

many different ways. After this, the citizens were excused but did not actually move. The formula was recited twice more, before and after the priest had walked twice around citizens. Finally, the population could leave, while the immolation of the victims in honour to the same three gods that were invoked in the formula was about to start. Like the *piaculum*, the victims were three for each sacrificial immolation, which were also three. The whole ritual ended with the hunting of some heifers, which involved the whole population of *Iguvium*. Given the fact that they were not sacred animals, Pucciarini believes that this practice could represent the ancient hunting of wild sacrificial victims.<sup>81</sup>

In this ritual, the opposition *sacer-profanus* as connected to what can or cannot stay within certain boundaries can be noticed as well. Foreigners were excluded from the ritual of purification because they represented chaos and evil, which should be erased from society. In antiquity, foreigners corresponded to an unknown thus dangerous universe, that menaced the stability and peace of society. In *Iguvium*, foreigners lived in a separate neighbourhood, all together but far from the proper citizens. While the local population resided mainly in the central area of the city, foreigners had settled at the margins. This can be seen as an indication that no matter how integrated they were, foreigners would never be part of the community that lived within the sacred gates that delimited the city. What was inside *Iguvium* had an order, a purpose and a certain unity which corresponded to the sacred area, while everything outside of it was unruly, chaotic and sketchy. Even if the foreign population outnumbered the native one, the latter was so well-organised, solid and cohesive that the inhomogeneous and disorganised foreign community could not prevail. However, local citizens needed a way to exorcize the fear of the stranger so these rituals of purification of the population and of cursing the foreign community served this purpose. The formulas recited during the lustration expressed the distinction between the sacred territory, delimited by gate doors, and the profane outside world: *totaper iiouina, tutaper ikuvina* “for the city of *Iguvium*” was a sentence that separated the social, civilised universe from the wild, chaotic area that surrounded it.<sup>82</sup>

The formulas used during the lustration ceremony reflect the Italic and Indo-European nature of this population. As a matter of fact, six names, paired up to form three

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<sup>81</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 20-22.

<sup>82</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 21-23.

groups of two words each represented the subjects which were asked to be purified by the god. If *nerf* referred to “warriors”, *arsmo* was the word which indicated ritual actions and so the term that was used to indicate “priests”. *Ueiro* simply meant “men” and *pequo* the “cattle”, while *castruo* referred to the cultivated land and *frif* the “fruit”, its outcome.<sup>83</sup> These categories clearly corresponded to the tripartition of the Indo-European society theorised by Dumézil, which included three castes: priests, warriors and farmers. Moreover, an interesting connection with Cato’s lustration of the fields prayer, analysed in the section above (2.1.1), can be noticed. In the Latin text men ask the god to protect them from destruction, while in the Umbrian prayer they ask to preserve the army; In Cato’s prayer, men ask Mars to guard them from illnesses, whereas in the formulas reported in the Iguvine Tables they ask him to protect priests; in the *suovetaurilia carmen*, men ask the divinity to receive a great harvest, while the outcome of the work of farmers in the fields is asked to be protected in the Umbrian prayer.

Following the lustration is the sacrifice of a dog, called *Hondia*. According to Pucciarini, this ritual could be connected to the Roman sacrifices of the fulvous dog and of the sheep which were offered during the *Robigalia* or to the immolation of the dog in front of the *Porta Catularia*, which was performed to protect cereals from infection and rust. The aim of the Umbrian sacrifice was probably similar: to preserve the harvest from bad weather and destruction in general. The origin of the name *Hondo*, the god that was the recipient of the sacrifice, is unclear but it could be connected to the word *humus* “soil”.<sup>84</sup>

After this ritual, the Iguvine Tables describe two other ceremonies: one was public, the other one was private. The former consisted in the immolation of a profane pig to *Jupiter Pater* and of a young goat to *Jupiter Satio* to ask for the protection of each of the ten sections in which the population of the city was divided into (*dekvias*). The latter, on the other hand, was a ritual involving the purification of part of the *Fratres Atiedii*, where *Jupiter Pater* received a lamb as sacrificial victim.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 23.

<sup>84</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 24.

<sup>85</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ibidem*.

The last ritual described in the Uguvine Tables is the ceremony of the “Drink”. The preliminary rites consisted in the consecration of a vase, containing a special drink that could not be touched. After the purification, the victims, a sheep and an unknown animal, were led to a field, where a fire was lit and sprinkled with perfumes and where the offerings were immolated to *Jupiter Pater*. The killing of the animals was followed by some ritual actions concerning the cutting and the division of the different parts of the victims, which were then purified by the gods.<sup>86</sup>

The Uguvine Tables, with their detailed descriptions of the actions and of the formulas which characterised their rituals, reflect a community that sought unity and harmony within its parts. All the sacrifices presented in tables ask the gods for their protection from chaos, from the outside world that could destroy the balance that dominates the sacred area within the gates of Iguvium.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, in ancient societies like the Umbrian one, where the spoken word prevailed over the written one, words had an agentive power, just like actions. If a formula was not recited in the correct way, the ritual was considered ineffective and the ceremony had to start all over again. Pucciarini<sup>88</sup> compares the language of the Iguvine Tables to the one of law: words had a power, so they had to be used carefully. For this reason, the instructions given by the text of the tables sometimes indicate the way in which some formulas should be pronounced: outloud, to underline the powerful nature of words, or in a soft, quiet tone, to focus on thought.<sup>89</sup>

### 2.3. Parallels among the Celts

In common thinking, Celts are mostly connected to human sacrifices, while the ones concerning animals seem to attract less attention. This is probably due to the influence of Roman literary sources. As a matter of fact, many historians like Caesar, Diodorus, Strabo and Lucan described these types of rituals in a very evasive way, only referring to them as public and private sacrifices that the Druids performed<sup>90</sup>. The reason behind this omission might be a political one: Celts, Gauls mainly, were described as

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<sup>86</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 24-25.

<sup>87</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 25.

<sup>88</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ivi*, p. 26.

<sup>89</sup> Pucciarini Marco, *Ibidem*.

<sup>90</sup> Brunaux Jean-Louis, *Les religions gauloises, Ve-Ier siècles av. J-C: Nouvelles approches sur les rituels celtiques de la Gaule indépendante*, Editions Errance, 2000, p. 134.



savages, an exotic and irrational population that could not compete with the efficient and civilized Romans. By hiding this information, Romans convinced their citizens that they had nothing in common with these wild and primitive populations and that they were superior to them<sup>91</sup>. Considering the fact that these Roman sources are pretty much the only written direct testimony of the Celts there is left and their influence on the Western world, it is not a surprise that even at these days there is a tendency to associate Celtic religious traditions exclusively to human sacrifices. On the contrary, according to archaeological sources, Celts seemed to perform animal sacrifice quite often and in many different forms.

Animal sacrifice in the Celtic culture was deeply connected to the idea that nature was sacred. Vegetation and wild animals were part of the divine world and so they had to be treated with care by humans.<sup>92</sup> For this reason, Celts respected nature not to upset the gods, with whom they made deals.<sup>93</sup> This means that, if humans took something from the divine natural world, they had to give something back to the gods, or they would suffer the consequences of their actions.<sup>94</sup> For this reason, Celts very rarely killed wild beasts but often immolated domestic animals, probably because they did not consider them part of nature, as men took part in their “creation”<sup>95</sup>. Apart from archaeological sources, which affirm that the majority of the sacrificial bones found in sanctuaries and necropolis belonged to domestic animals, some literary sources confirm this hypothesis. In the first century A.D., Arrian, a Greek historian, described a peculiar Celtic ritual in honour of Artemis, the goddess of the hunt. Every time a wild animal was killed, the man who did it had to put a coin in a common fund. With this money, the community bought a deer, a ram or a calf that was sacrificed to the goddess of the hunt, as a sort of payment for the killing of all the wild animals.<sup>96</sup> According to Brunaux<sup>97</sup>, avoiding to sacrifice anything that was not produced by men could be an Indo-European tradition, since it is visible in

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>92</sup> *Ivi*, p. 136.

<sup>93</sup> Green Miranda J., *The Celtic World*, Routledge, 1995, p. 441.

<sup>94</sup> Brunaux Jean-Louis, *Les religions gauloises, Ve-Ier siècles av. J-C: Nouvelles approches sur les rituels celtiques de la Gaule indépendante*, Editions Errance, 2000, p. 136.

<sup>95</sup> Brunaux Jean-Louis, *Ivi*, p.135.

<sup>96</sup> Brunaux Jean-Louis, *Ivi*, p.135-136.

<sup>97</sup> Brunaux Jean-Louis, *Ivi*, p. 136.

other contexts, like Rome and ancient India, which shared the same origins and a similar hierarchy of “holiness” for sacrificial domestic animals.

Among the victims, bulls represented one of the most common choices. In Gaul, to be more precise in the sanctuary of Gournay, zooarchaeological remains of this animal helped with the reconstruction of a chthonian sacrifice. A bull was led in front of a pit and killed in a way that varied depending on the god the immolation was dedicated to. The corpse was left in the ditch for about six months, so that the power of the sun could purify the flesh with putrefaction and nourish the chthonian gods. After it, the body was deboned and drawn out of the pit. The bones were put in another ditch, with the exception of skulls, that were exposed in temples along with some human skulls and weapons, before being thrown in the pit with the other bones, after some time.<sup>98</sup>

Unlike Romans and Greeks, who ate dogs in everyday life but did not immolate them on altars, Celts made them their sacrificial victims quite frequently. In Britain, there is evidence of bones of puppies and dogs, sometimes buried with humans.<sup>99</sup>

As it was mentioned above, not all sacrificial victims had the same importance: some stood higher on the hierarchy and received special treatment. This is the case of horses, which were considered almost at the same level of humans. In the Gallic site of Gournay, horses were carefully buried in singular pits and one of their skulls has the same occipital incision that all the human skulls displayed. In Ribemont, not only the skulls of horses presented an occipital cut, normally found in human skulls, but there is also evidence of horses buried in the same tombs of humans. It is likely that, when a knight died, he was buried with his horse.<sup>100</sup> The horse was probably not seen as a regular domestic animal but as a partner, a loyal friend that had to follow his owner for his last trip.

To sum up, this brief analysis of animal sacrifice in Celtic cultures shows their clear link to the ancient Indo-European religion and thought, especially for what concerns the sacredness of wild animals. Despite the misleading information from Roman historians, Celtic sacrifices appear to have shared many similarities with other Greek and

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<sup>98</sup> Brunaux Jean-Louis, *Ivi*, p. 138-141.

<sup>99</sup> Green Miranda J., *The Celtic World*, Routledge, 1995, p. 440.

<sup>100</sup> Brunaux Jean-Louis, *Les religions gauloises, Ve-Ier siècles av. J-C: Nouvelles approches sur les rituels celtiques de la Gaule indépendante*, Editions Errance, 2000, p. 142-143.

Roman rituals. One thing that probably characterises Celts from these two other populations, though, is the respect they showed to some of their sacrificial victims, especially horses, life companions that were buried with their owners.

## **2.4. Archaeological sources**

In antiquity, animal sacrifice, but also sacrifice in general, was seen, primarily, as a mean to communicate with the gods. The reasons why humans would want to do it are various: to thank them for something, to ask them for favours or for their protection but also to feel closer to the divine sphere.<sup>101</sup> The whole ritual of sacrifice comprehended many steps that had to follow specific rules and that had to be performed in a certain way to be considered effective. The killing of the animal was the highpoint of a series of actions, which included prayers, invocations and special practices concerning the handling of the animal. While this part was more connected to the religious dimension, the ritual of the distribution of the meat, that was usually the final step of the whole process, was a social matter, because the access to the meat marked the degree of importance of all of those involved in the sacrifice.<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, sacrifice was greatly connected to the economic sphere: the meat was either bought before the sacrifice or sold right after it at local butcher's shops. This topic will be discussed more in detail later on in this section.

The animals that were chosen to be sacrificed usually belonged to the domesticated species: pigs, cattle, goats and sheep. However, the choice of the perfect victim depended on many factors. First of all, the budget; if the sacrifice was public, the financial resources that were deployed for it were much more than those destined to a private sacrifice. Even in this last case, different social classes could afford different types of animals. Taking all of this into consideration, public ceremonies involved the slaughter of a great number of animals, that were usually of the finest species and the quality of the meat was generally very high; wealthy private citizens could sacrifice a smaller number of animals but could still count on the quality of the meat, while people who belonged to lower social classes had to fall back on animals that were considered less valuable and on lower-quality. Even the size of the animal had a part in the selection of the best sacrificial

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<sup>101</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Animal sacrifice in antiquity* in *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life* edited by Gordon Lindsay Campbell, Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 324.

<sup>102</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Ibidem*.

victim for the ceremony: while big public events saw the contribution of a great number of people and were usually performed in sanctuaries or on altars and thus could handle big-sized beasts, private rituals involved less participants and took place in homes, so smaller animals were mostly preferred. The divinity and the nature of the ritual that had to be performed influenced the choice of the animal. According to the Greek and the Roman religions, the victim had to be pure, perfect, faultless and its immaculateness depended on specific criteria, that could vary depending on the culture, on the occasion and on the availability of meat at that particular time.<sup>103</sup> It would be natural to think that castrated or infertile animals might have been considered unfit for sacrifice but, apparently, the pureness of the sacrificial victim was not affected by it. Evidently, the reason behind this choice is quite practical: it was not convenient to kill a fertile animal that could still reproduce and thus help the flock grow in number. Moreover, castrated animals, due to their condition, were more likely to be fatter and thus feed more people. Some rituals specifically required castrated animals to be sacrificed, like Jupiter, that had to be given castrated oxen.<sup>104</sup> For what concerns pregnant animals, they were less likely to be sacrificed for the same reasons why fertile beasts were not habitually chosen, although there are some instances, confirmed by archaeological remains, of sacrifices that involve pregnant beasts, offered to the goddess of fertility and agriculture or to goddesses connected to the education and nurturing of children.<sup>105</sup> Species and sex were important factors in the choice of the perfect victim. Generally, no species were banned but there were some preferences that could depend on local conditions and traditions but, as it was mentioned above, also on economics. Apparently, it was quite common to immolate female beasts to goddesses, while the male ones were offered to gods, even though there were some exceptions.<sup>106</sup> Age and colour of the offering were taken into consideration as well. As for the first aspect, Romans typically divided *hostiae maiores*, which were grown beasts, from *hostiae lactents*, animals which were still suckling. Female animals were rarely killed when while they were fertile, while castrated males were killed fairly young or when they were no longer useful as traction beasts or providers of milk and wool. For what concerns the second aspect, the colour of the animal played an important role on

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<sup>103</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Ivi*, p. 332.

<sup>104</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Ivi*, p. 334.

<sup>105</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Ibidem*.

<sup>106</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Ivi*, p. 333.

some occasions. In Greece, Olympian gods could receive white animals, while chthonian divinities were generally offered black beasts. Moreover, some Greek and Roman gods, like Dionysos, Vulcan and Robigo, were associated with red-furred victims.<sup>107</sup>

As it was stated above, sacrifice played a big role in the food industry. The graffiti listing the provisions that was distributed among the population of Rome and its provinces show that bread, cheese and wine were the food eaten by citizens on a daily basis.<sup>108</sup> Being meat almost a luxury good, it was served on special occasions, such as parties and smaller or bigger gatherings that took place in private homes but, mainly, after the performing of an animal sacrifice. According to John Scheid<sup>109</sup>, sacrificial meat was so abundant that it was basically the only type of meat that was sold in butcher's shops. After the ceremony, the immolated animal was normally cooked and its meat was shared between the religious officiants and those who participated in the ritual action. It seems, though, that not everybody could get free access to the meat: as a matter of fact, sometimes only a small number of people were offered the sacrificial meat, while all the others had to purchase it from local butcher's shops. In Rome, these were usually placed in the *via sacra*, along with other artisans' boutiques and they were typically run by slaves.<sup>110</sup> According to Van Andriga<sup>111</sup>, the animal remains discovered in the city centre of towns of the Roman Empire can be easily associated with the bones found in sanctuaries, confirming the hypothesis that the nature of sacrifice was not merely religious but also involved the economic sphere and the social life of citizens.

Sanctuaries were usually the place where big public sacrifices took place so studying the zooarchaeological remains that are found in them can be really useful in the understanding of these practices. The results deriving from their analysis can be compared with the information collected from literary texts, inscriptions and images to help create a clearer idea of the meaning animal sacrifice might have had in ancient societies.<sup>112</sup> A great variety of animal species can be found in ancient sanctuaries: not

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<sup>107</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Ivi*, p. 335.

<sup>108</sup> Van Andriga William, *Sacrifices, marché de la viande et pratiques alimentaires dans les cités du monde romain* in *Food & History*, vol. 5.1, Brepols Publishers, 2007, p. 13.

<sup>109</sup> Scheid John, *Quand faire, c'est croire. Les rites sacrificiels des Romains*, Editions Aubier, 2011 quoted by *Ibidem*.

<sup>110</sup> Scheid John, *Ivi*, p. 12.

<sup>111</sup> Scheid John, *Ivi*, p. 13-14.

<sup>112</sup> DeFrance, Susan D., *Zooarchaeology in Complex Societies: Political Economy, Status, and Ideology.*, *Journal of Archaeological Research* 17, no. 2, 2009, p. 105.

only cattle, sheep, goats and pigs but also horses, dogs, game, donkeys and some exotic animals. It is hard to distinguish which of these remains correspond to the actual victims of sacrifice and which are leftovers of meals. Having said that, there are some criteria that can help identify bones that belonged to the animals that were slaughtered during rituals.<sup>113</sup> Generally, the bones that present evident burns, that are carbonised or calcinated and that were chopped into very small fragments are those of sacrificial victims. As a matter of fact, in some cultures, it was believed that, if the rests of the animal that was consecrated to the divinities were incinerated, the smoke produced by the burning bones would reach the gods and feast their noses.<sup>114</sup> Moreover, specific bones can be associated to ceremonial garbage, such as thighbones, kneecaps, caudal vertebrae or sacrum bones. By contrast, the bones of animals that were simply eaten as meals are usually the meatier ones, like ribs, vertebrae and legs. They normally present chop or knife marks, signs of the distribution of the meat between the dinner guests. If the bones of sacrificial victims were burnt and still present the traces of that practice, the meat that was prepared as a simple meal was usually boiled and thus the bones surrounding it do not present any particular marks.<sup>115</sup>

Although these criteria are helpful, it is still hard to distinguish between dinner leftovers and sacrificial meat. This is partly due to the fact that there is a discrepancy between literary and artistic evidence and the zooarchaeological sources. This means that the animals that are described or represented as sacrificial victims in inscriptions, texts and engravings do not always correspond to the bones that are found in sanctuaries. In her essay *Roman Sacrificial Reliefs in Rome, Italy and Gaul: Reconstructing Archaeological Evidence?*<sup>116</sup>, Valérie Huet analysed three different corpora of Roman reliefs that represent sacrificial scenes: the first one is a corpus of ritual images found in Rome and Italy, dated between the end of the second century B.C.E. and the beginning of the fourth century C.E; the second one is a corpus formed by sacrificial scenes from

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<sup>113</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Animal sacrifice in antiquity* in *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life* edited by Gordon Lindsay Campbell, Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 338.

<sup>114</sup> Ekroth Gunnell, *Ibidem*.

<sup>115</sup> Ekroth Gunnell *Ibidem*.

<sup>116</sup> Huet Valérie, *Roman Sacrificial Reliefs in Rome, Italy, and Gaul: Reconstructing Archaeological Evidence?* in *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome. Supplementary Volumes*, Vol. 13, *Ritual Matters: Material Remains and Ancient Religion*, University of Michigan Press for the American Academy in Rome, 2017.

the Gauls and Germania which are more or less as ancient as the ritual images found belonging to the first corpus; the third one served as a comparative corpus, since it contains Mithraic reliefs of the same theme. What she noticed is that sacrificial scenes change according to the culture but also according to the geographical area in which they were discovered. The ritual images from Rome and Italy mostly represent scenes from the *pompa*, the *praefatio* and of the *libatio*. The first two steps were usually the ones that artists chose to portray because they were the ones that underlined the central role of the actors that were involved in the sacrifice: the emperor, the senators, the magistrates but also the assistant, the slaves and the offerings. The *libatio*, on the other hand, was probably represented to show the *pietas* of the officiants. On the other hand, the reliefs showing the actual sacrifice, the killing of the victim, are only a few. Huet explains that the lack of representation of these scenes is not caused by some taboos on death but by the fact that they revolve around actors who are not Roman citizens: the immolated animal and the slaves who performed the sacrifice. It is quite common to find banquet scenes in private houses and in funerary monuments but it is extremely rare to find them associated with sacrifice. This is probably due to the fact that the banquets following these rituals were not opened to anybody, not even when the ceremony was public. Only the elites, including the emperor, the senators, the magistrates and the priests had the opportunity to take part in them, while common people had to buy the sacrificial meat at local butcher's shops. All things considered, Romans were more likely to represent the public parts of the ceremony, the moments everyone could take part in, and the ones that revolved around the altar, where the actors, the most influential people in town, showed their mercy and their deference by taking part in the rituals that lead to the actual killing of the animal.<sup>117</sup> In the images belonging to the second corpus, the ones that from the Gauls and Germania, there is also a tendency to avoid the representation of the killing of the sacrificial victim. However, there is an important difference: in these reliefs gods appear in a more explicit way than they do in the ones that belong to the corpus of images from Rome and Italy. As a matter of fact, the Italian scenes make reference to the deity to whom the sacrifice is dedicated in a very subtle way: writing their name in an inscription, portraying specific rituals, temples or groups of officiants that could easily be associated to that god or goddess. On the other hand, in the images that are from Gaul and Germania the gods and

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<sup>117</sup> Huet Valérie, *Ivi*, p. 18-19.

goddesses that were the recipient of the sacrifice appear next to the priests and the elites who are attending the ceremony.<sup>118</sup> For what concerns the third corpus, the one containing Mithraic scenes, Huet underlined that they “should not be disconnected from other scenes, including those associated with the God Mithras”.<sup>119</sup> It is very common to find images of the god killing the sacrificial victim himself, under the watch of Cautes and Cautopates. Clearly, Roman citizens are not the main actors in these reliefs, since they are not portrayed in killing scenes and are only present in a few marginal scenes of the predella.<sup>120</sup>

All things considered, animal sacrifice in antiquity probably had a very different meaning to the one it tends to be associated to nowadays. It was not just a religious ceremony that revolved around the killing of an animal in honour of a god but it was also a social event, where the most influential people could remind others of their power. The economic nature of animal sacrifice can be showed by underlining that sacrificial banquet were probably one of the few occasions in which meat could be eaten and by stressing the importance of butcher’s shops, that sold sacrificial meat leftovers. Furthermore, it is important to remind that literary and artistic sources must be interpreted when it comes to animal sacrifice. As a matter of fact, ancient cultures did know the whole process of this kind of rituals so they did not portray it all but only the steps that were more meaningful or convenient to them. For this reason, it is important to compare the data from literary and artistic sources to the ones that emerge from the analysis of zooarchaeological remains, in order to obtain more precise answers about animal sacrifice in antiquity.

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<sup>118</sup> Huet Valérie, *Ivi*, p. 19.

<sup>119</sup> Huet Valérie, *Ivi*, p.25.

<sup>120</sup> Huet Valérie, *Ibidem*



### **3. Multiple animal sacrifice in Iberia: the case of Lusitanian.**

This chapter is going to analyse a Western Indo-European language attested in the Iberian Peninsula: Lusitanian. Given the poor linguistic information and the scarce written material concerning this language, there are many theories about its origins. The first section will discuss various hypotheses about the roots of this language, focussing mainly on the two most accepted ones: the theory which classifies Lusitanian as a Celtic language and the one which categorises it as an Italic language.

The second and last section will be devoted to the analysis of three of the most important Lusitanian inscriptions, in order to underline the parallels and the similarities between Lusitanian and the Italic languages and culture. To be more precise, the information about multiple animal sacrifice which was presented in Chapter 2 will be compared with the content of these texts, which often describe rituals resembling the Italic ones analysed in the previous part of this work. Comparing these materials will help prove the validity of the theory that Lusitanian could be related, linguistically and culturally, to the Italic languages.

#### **3.1. Lusitanian and its linguistic categorisation**

The linguistic history of the Iberian Peninsula is very difficult to reconstruct, like the one of many other areas, because there is a lack of written sources. Archaeology can be a useful tool to reconstruct some aspects of the ancient populations which were settled in a certain area, like some information on their lifestyle, on their religious life and on their economy but it cannot give detailed information about their ethnicity, their language and, in general, their origins. In this case, linguistics can be helpful but, in order to find some answers, some written direct sources are needed.<sup>121</sup> When attested, the data which can be derived from some ancient literary sources, like the Roman ones, can certainly be useful but they are not completely reliable because they reflect the colonisers' point of view and could thus offer an inaccurate representation of certain populations and their culture. For these reasons, since there are no epigraphic or written sources, in general, for the majority of the populations which inhabited the Iberian Peninsula before the Roman colonisation, very little can be deduced about their language and their linguistic roots.

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<sup>121</sup> Villar Francisco, *Los indoeuropeos y los orígenes de Europa*, Gredos, 1996, p. 498.

However, thanks to the written testimonies of some of these languages, some deductions about the linguistic situation of the peninsula can be made. A first categorisation of the languages spoken in Iberia must distinguish between Indo-European and non-Indo-European populations. The best attested non-Indo-European language of the peninsula is Iberian, the only population in that area which had developed a written tradition. Thanks to their influence in trade markets, their alphabet and writing in general spread through the Eastern area of the Iberian Peninsula and was adopted by some Indo-European populations, like the Celtiberians, as well. Celtiberians not only shared the Iberians' writing system but they also learnt how to mint coins from them. It appears that the Western area of the Iberian Peninsula was not influenced by the Iberian's civilization. First of all, the populations which inhabited these lands did not share the use of coin: it appears that, while Eastern society made a vast use of metal, the Western ones preferred stone, especially for public monuments. Moreover, they did not adopt any written system before the Roman colonization so there are no epigraphic or literary sources which date back to the pre-Roman era, for what concerns these populations. Moreover, many religious beliefs can be attested from the civilizations settled in the eastern territories of the Iberian Peninsula. In this area, many anthroponyms, toponyms and theonyms reflect the names of those who were likely to be local deities who were connected to the natural world, like REVE (river), OCRIMIRAE (mount Mira) and ABNE (brook).<sup>122</sup> However, it is unlikely that these gods belonged to a fixed religious pantheon, since their names have their local variants and their nature or the rituals connected to them could change from region to region. The indigenous invocations of gods found in these areas present some common characteristics: the name of the deity is usually followed by an epithet, which can occasionally be double. Sometimes the epithet can occur without being preceded by the god's name; these types of epithets are composed by the name of the deity or of the area in which it is venerated and a velar suffix. The abundance of theonyms attested in the eastern part of the Iberian Peninsula does not reflect the situation of eastern territories. The scarcity of data for what concerns theonyms surely does not equal poor religious practices in these areas but shows there is lack of evidence concerning it. However, the theonyms which were attested in these societies do not match with the ones

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<sup>122</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *La lengua lusitana en el marco de las lenguas indoeuropeas occidentales y su relación con las lenguas itálicas* in *El mediterráneo antiguo: lenguas y escrituras* edited by Carrasco Serrano Gregorio, Oliva Mompean Juan Carlos, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2010, p 364.

found in the eastern ones. All this information could serve as evidence to suggest that the Indo-European Eastern and the Western populations of the Iberian Peninsula might have developed simultaneously and that they might not share the same roots.<sup>123</sup>

Traditionally, linguists categorised the Indo-European populations which settled in the Iberian Peninsula as Celtic. As it was mentioned above, Celtiberians adopted many customs and the writing system from Iberians quite early, so they produced a reasonable number of written sources in their indigenous idiom. Even after the Roman invasion, Celtiberians were one of the societies which interacted the most with the colonizers, so the idea that all the Indo-European populations settled in the Iberian Peninsula must have been Celtic could have been influenced by the fact that Celtiberians constituted a prominent civilization in this area. However, there is evidence which suggest that this theory might be a little reductive. Some attested languages but also some theonyms, toponyms and anthroponyms present characteristics which can be traced back to other Indo-European idioms but not to the Celtic family. This means that these languages could be Indo-European but belong to a different family than the Celtic one. If this hypothesis were correct, it would mean that the Celtic invasion, which took place around the 8<sup>th</sup>- 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C., was not the only invasion which was carried out by an Indo-European population in the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>124</sup>

One of the Indo-European languages of the Iberian Peninsula which presents these characteristics is Lusitanian. Lusitanian inscriptions can be found in the Western part of the Iberian Peninsula, in an area between Central Portugal and the region of Extremadura, in Spain. All the extant texts in this language date back to an era when the Roman colonisation had already taken place (after the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.) and are written in the Latin alphabet, information which indicates that the Lusitanian culture had already undergone a reasonable level of romanisation. As a matter of fact, some of the inscriptions written in Lusitanian are introduced by a Latin formula, indicating how the civilisation who produced it might have started using a writing system only after the invasion of the Romans.<sup>125</sup> The Lusitanian extant inscription are less than a dozen, along with some other fragmentary written sources. The most important ones are the inscriptions of Lamas de

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<sup>123</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *Ivi*, p. 361-364.

<sup>124</sup> Villar Francisco, *Los indoeuropeos y los orígenes de Europa*, Gredos, 1996, p. 498 ss.

<sup>125</sup> Villar Francisco, *Ibidem*.

Moledo, Cabeço das Fraguas, Arroyo de la Luz and Arronches (see Picture 1). While the inscription of Arroyo de la Luz has been lost and it can be analysed only through a transcribed copy made by abbot Masdeu in *Historia critica de España y de la cultura Española*<sup>126</sup>, in 1800, the inscription of Arronches was discovered quite recently. Among all these texts, it is the Southernmost and probably the most ancient, dating back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. Their content is very homogeneous: the majority of them describes an animal offering sacrificed in honour of one or more deities, which was presumably performed in the area where the inscription was found. With the exceptions of Lamas de Moledo and Arroyo de la Luz, the other texts describing a religious ceremony illustrate a ritual involving the sacrifice of three animals, which was compared by many linguists to the Roman *suovetaurilia* and the Umbrian triple animal sacrifice, attested in the Uguvine Tables. Given the scarce number of native written material and the very few information which can be deduced about their culture, it is maybe a bit too risky to affirm that the Lusitanian pantheon has a tripartite organisation, reflecting the Dumizialian trifunctional theory of the Indo-European society.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Masdeu Juan F., *Historia critica de España y de la cultura Española*, vol XIX, Madrid, 1800 quoted by Prósper Blanca M., *La lengua lusitana en el marco de las lenguas indoeuropeas occidentales y su relación con las lenguas itálicas* in *El mediterráneo antiguo: lenguas y escrituras* in *El mediterráneo antiguo: lenguas y escrituras* edited by Carrasco Serrano Gregorio, Oliva Mompean Juan Carlos, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2010, p. 361-364.

<sup>127</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 360-373.



Figure 1: The most important

Lusitanian inscriptions<sup>128</sup>

As it was stated above, Lusitanian was categorised as a Western Indo-European language, since it presents unmistakable traits which link it to this family. However, the poor written evidence and the complex history of the linguistical situation of the ancient Iberian Peninsula do not allow a certain classification in one of the many branches of the Indo-European language family. There are various theories on the origins of this language.

Prósper<sup>129</sup> rejects the hypothesis made by some Galician archaeologists, who suggest that Lusitanian might not be a proper language but a “macaronic” version of Latin. The archaeologists base their theory on the fact that many Latin-like words appear in the Lusitanian inscriptions but, as these words are part of the basic vocabulary of every language (see PORCOM), this hypothesis seems completely incongruous.

Another hypothesis, supported by Tovar, suggests that the Celtic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula might have been preceded by another Indo-European invasion, prior to the Iron Age, of Ligurians, Illyrians and “Para-Celts”, or more in general, Western Indo-Europeans who spoke, more or less, the same dialect, which retrieved the initial or intervocalic /p/ phoneme, unlike Celtic languages. This theory is described as “imprecise” by Prósper and, given the fact that not much is known about Ligurians and Illyrians, there

<sup>128</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 367.

<sup>129</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 376-377.

would probably never be enough linguistic data for a comparison between Lusitanian and these languages to prove its validity.<sup>130</sup>

The two main hypotheses, though, argue whether Lusitanian should be classified as a Celtic or as an Italic language.

The first theory, upheld by Untermann, Prosdocimi and Anderson, believes that Lusitanian is a Celtic language, to be more precise a continental Celtic language. According to this theory, the only Indo-European invasion which took place in the Iberian Peninsula was the one carried out by Celtic populations. This means that all the Indo-European languages attested in this area must be Celtic languages, Lusitanian included. The linguists mentioned above indicate some of the characteristics which would prove the Celtic origins of Lusitanian, which are the following:

a) The retention of the Indo-European /p/ in intervocalic or initial position, which Celtic languages have lost, could have been retained in Lusitanian because it was a very archaic and rather isolated Celtic language. Evans adds that the much more recent and innovative insular Celtic languages should not be compared to continental Celtic languages, which are older and could thus not show the loss of this phoneme systematically, as the case of Lusitanian would show.

b) There are many parallels for what concerns vocabulary, especially regarding anthroponyms, theonyms and toponyms. An interesting example concerns the Celtic toponyms in *-briga*, which can be attested in the whole Iberian Peninsula, in Lusitanian written sources as well.<sup>131</sup>

c) The Lusitanian nominative plural in *-oi*, which differs from the Indo-European form *-\*ōs*, can be found in Celtic languages as well.<sup>132</sup>

The second theory, supported by linguists like Tovar, Villar, Schmidt and Prósper, affirms that Lusitanian cannot be associated with Celtic languages, not even to the

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<sup>130</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 380-381.

<sup>131</sup> Lorrio Alvarado Alberto J., *Los celtíberos*, Real Academia de la Historia: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Editorial Complutense, Universidad de Alicante, 1997, p. 9-16 (chap. XI).

<sup>132</sup> Villar Francisco, *Los indoeuropeos y los orígenes de Europa*, Gredos, 1996, p. 501.

geographically close Celtiberian, because it presents some characteristic traits which cannot be found in these languages. The most important ones are those listed below:

a) Lusitanian retains the Indo-European /p/ at the beginning of the word or in intervocalic position, which Celtic languages have lost (see Irish *orc* “pig”). This phenomenon can be observed in the inscriptions which contain words belonging to the every-day language (so words which cannot be classified as borrowings from other languages), like PORCOM (“pig”). It is true that continental Celtic languages are more archaic and older than insular Celtic languages but the loss of the Indo-European /p/ in initial and intervocalic position can be attested quite systematically in all Celtic languages. To be more precise, it could be considered one of the traits which distinguishes Celtic languages to other Indo-European varieties. This means that Lusitanian cannot belong to this language family.

b) Lusitanian retains the Indo-European diphthong /eu/ (see TEVCOM), while Celtic languages turned it into /ou/.

c) The use of the conjunction or adverb with a temporal and spatial nuance INDI does not seem to be found in Celtic languages, while it presents some parallels in the Italic and Germanic ones.

d) The Indo-European aspirated voiced labial /bh/, retained by Celtic languages, in Lusitanian turned into a voiceless fricative (see IFADEM/IFATE). This hypothesis cannot be considered unquestionable, due to the poor evidence in which this particular phenomenon can be attested, though.<sup>133</sup>

e) The development of a present form of the root *\*do*, which is not attested and does not seem to have any parallels in Celtic languages.<sup>134</sup>

Moreover, it is true that the Lusitanian nominative plural in *-oi* can be found in Celtic languages as well, but it is not a trait which is shared by these two idioms only. As a matter of fact, many Indo-European languages, like Latin, Greek and Balto-Slavic varieties present it as well. This means that Lusitanian and Celtic languages are surely

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<sup>133</sup> Villar Francisco, *Ivi*, p. 500.

<sup>134</sup> Lorrio Alvarado Alberto J., *Ibidem*.

related but not more related than Lusitanian and one of the other Indo-European languages mentioned above, relating to this matter.<sup>135</sup>

For what concerns the vocabulary, the majority of words which contain Celtic traces are toponyms, anthroponyms and theonyms, which are not basic vocabulary but words which could have been easily borrowed from the Western Hispano-Celtic language.<sup>136</sup>

The theory which identifies Lusitanian as a Celtic language does not stand on very solid grounds. As a matter of fact, the only substantial linguistic evidence which supports a remarkable similarity between the two languages is the vocabulary they share. However, as it was stated above, these words do not belong to every-day basic vocabulary and could thus be loanwords which entered the Lusitanian linguistical system as a consequence of the contacts between two populations. This theory does not affirm that Lusitanians and Celtiberians did not influence each other, even on a linguistic level, but it refuses to believe that the languages they spoke were closely related.

If Villar simply states that Lusitanian should not be classified as a Celtic language but merely as a Western Indo-European language, Prósper suggests that Lusitanian could be related to the Italic languages. Her theory builds on the idea that the Indo-European invasion of the Iberian Peninsula could have been carried out by different ethnic groups, populations speaking Indo-European languages belonging to different families, which settled in the area more or less at the same time. The linguist believes that Lusitanians could have been an Italic population which separated quite early from their original settlement and entered the peninsula, while other groups of Italic populations might have crossed the Alps and inhabited some parts of Italy.<sup>137</sup>

The similarities and parallels which can be spotted between Lusitanian and the Italic languages does not only concern language but also culture. As a matter of fact, striking similarities were noticed by comparing some Italic ritual ceremonies to the ones

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<sup>135</sup> Villar Francisco, *Los indoeuropeos y los orígenes de Europa*, Gredos, 1996, p. 501.

<sup>136</sup> Villar Francisco, *Ibidem*.

<sup>137</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *La lengua lusitana en el marco de las lenguas indoeuropeas occidentales y su relación con las lenguas itálicas* in *El mediterráneo antiguo: lenguas y escrituras* in *El mediterráneo antiguo: lenguas y escrituras* edited by Carrasco Serrano Gregorio, Oliva Mompean Juan Carlos, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2010, p. 380-387.



described in some Lusitanian inscriptions. To be more precise, the multiple animal sacrifice ritual illustrated in these texts appears very similar to the Roman *suovetaurilia* and its Umbrian equivalent, not only for what concerns the ritual actions and the modalities in which the sacrifice was performed but also for what concerns the formulas and the vocabulary used to refer to the victims. Unfortunately, the scarce Lusitanian written sources do not allow a certain classification of this language but the linguistic and cultural parallels and similarities with some Italic languages, which will be pointed out in detail in the next section, might offer solid bases for the validity of this hypothesis.

### 3.2. Lusitanian inscriptions

This section is dedicated to the analysis of three Lusitanian inscriptions found in Central Portugal and in Western Spain. Among the half dozen Lusitanian extant inscriptions, the ones of Arronches, Cabeço das Fraguas and Arroyo de la Luz I were selected for their remarkable similarities with Italic languages and their respective ritual practices.

Firstly, the analysis of the inscription of Arronches will underline the parallelism between the ritual described in the text and the Roman and Umbrian *suovetaurilia*. While the interpretation of some forms and of the word order might slightly change according to the different theories, the similarities shared with the Italic multiple animal sacrifice seem pretty obvious.

The second part of this section will be devoted to the study of the inscription of Cabeço das Fraguas. Like the inscription of Arronches, this text describes a ceremony including a ritual which shares many traits with the Roman and Umbrian *suovetaurilia*. To be more precise, the rite consists of two parts: the sacrifice of three adult animals, which corresponds to a *suovetaurilia*, and the immolation of two *hostiae minores*. This analysis will offer further evidence that Lusitanian and Italic cultures show many similarities.

The last part of this section will be dedicated to the interpretation of the inscription of Arroyo de la Luz I. According to Prósper<sup>138</sup>, the text of this inscription represents the

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<sup>138</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *Latin sancītō va. Lusitanian SINGEIETO. Is the Lusitanian inscription of Arroyo de la Luz I the westernmost lex sacra?*, *Studia Philologica Valentina*, Vol 22, n.s. 19, 2020.

Westernmost *lex sacra* because it shows many linguistic parallels with Celtic but, especially, with Italic sources of the same nature.

The aim of this part of the present work is to show that the parallelisms between Lusitanian and Italic languages are numerous and very consistent, while the ones with Celtic languages are less prominent and do not affect the language on a deep level. The religious similarities between the rituals described in these texts and the ones which are typical of Italic cultures could serve as evidence that Lusitanian might have a stronger connection with Italic languages than with any other Indo-European varieties.

### 3.2.1. Arronches

This inscription was discovered in 1997 in Monte do Coelho, near Arronches, in the district of Portalegre, located in Portugal. The text is written in Latin characters and it can be divided into two parts: the first one, which coincides with the first five lines, presents what linguists believe could be the actors of a ritual, that is to say the victims and the deities the sacrifice is offered to; the second one, formed by four lines that are separated by the first five by a big blank space, was probably added at a later stage and have not been interpreted with a meaning shared by all linguists yet.<sup>139</sup>

The most accepted interpretation of the inscription is:

- 1 +++A+++AM • OILAM • ERBAM [4-5]  
2 HARASE • OILA • X • BROENIAE • HA[RACAE]  
3 OILA • X • REVE • A • HARACVI • T • AV[RO]  
4 IFATE • X • BANDI • HARAGVI • AVR [2-3]  
5 MVNITIE CARLA CANTIBIDONE • A[1-2]  
(vacat)  
6 APINVS • VENDICVS • ERIAÇAINVS  
7 OVGVRANI

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<sup>139</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Observaciones sobre la inscripción lusitana de Arronches* in Bermejo Barrera José Carlos, García Sánchez Manel, *Desmoî philías = Bonds of friendship : studies in ancient history in honour of Francisco Javier Fernández Nieto*, 1ª edición, Universitat de Barcelona Editions, 2017, p. 335.

This analysis, which follows the one made by Jaime Ruiz Siles in his essay *Observaciones sobre la inscripción lusitana de Arronches*<sup>141</sup>, will consider only the first five lines of the inscription and, while giving a general overview of the syntactic order of the constituents of the text, it will focus mainly on the reconstruction of the ritual and on its parallels with the Roman *suovetaurilia*.

According to Siles, the syntax of this inscription is not easy to disentangle, mostly because of the poor state of the upper-left part of the stone. It seems that every deity is paired up with a victim, that will be sacrificed in their honour during the ritual. There are two theories for what concerns the syntactic order of these lines: one is proposed by Ribeiro<sup>142</sup> and the other one by Prósper and Villar<sup>143</sup>.

According to Cardim Ribeiro, the gods in honour of whom the ritual was performed would be in the dative and appear before the sacrificed victims, in the accusative singular or plural, depending on the deity. On the other hand, Prósper and Villar suggest the first unreadable word of line 1 might be a name in the accusative singular feminine, although they also take into consideration the possibility that it might be a verb with an implicit subject. The first element of line 1 and OILAM ERBAM, also in the accusative singular, could be sacrificial victims, while HARASE, the first word of line 2, might be the god the animals are offered to.<sup>144</sup>

The complexity of the syntax of this text is given by the presence of a three-member asyndeton (the coordination of some elements without the use of conjunctions) as well. This literary scheme, along with the absence of the verb, is typical of archaic religious language. The verb, on which the victims in the accusative and the gods

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<sup>140</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 335-336.

<sup>141</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*.

<sup>142</sup> Ribeiro J. Cardim, *Algumas considerações a inscrição em lusitano descoberta em Arronches*, Serta Palaeohispanica in honorem Javier de Hoz, Palaeohispanica 10, 2010 and *La inscripción lusitana de Arronches*, in Álvarez Martínez J.M., Carvalho A., Fabiao C. (Eds.), *Lusitania Romana. Origen de dos pueblos. Lusitânia Romana. Origem de dois povos*, Badajoz, 2015 quoted by Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 336.

<sup>143</sup> Prósper B.M. and Villar F., *Nueva inscripción lusitana procedente de Portalegre*, Emerita, LXXVII, 1 enero-junio, 2009 quoted by Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>144</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ibidem*.

depend, the recipients of the ritual, in the dative, might have a generic meaning like “give” or a more specific one, used in this case, such as “sacrifice, offer”.<sup>145</sup>

The theory proposed by Prósper and Villar is criticised by Ribeiro, who believes that a powerful god like REVE, which he compares to the Italic Juppiter in terms of importance, would probably receive more than just ten sheep (OILA X). According to the linguist, it is more likely that he would receive ten bulls (TAV... IFATE • X). For this reason, he suggests a different syntactic order. It can be noticed that the final parts of lines 3 (HARACVI TAV(ROM)) and 4 (HARAGVI (T)AV(ROM)) are very similar and the reason why they do not completely match might be due to a mistake made by the stonemason. Following this path, it is plausible to think that the A that appears at the end of line 5 is the abbreviation of the final words of lines 3 and 4 (TAVROM) and that it is the sacrificial victim offered to MVNITIE CARLA CANTIBIDONE (line 5). If this were the case, the beginning of the text, which is unreadable, would probably be a dative singular theonym, followed by the victims sacrificed in her honour. The -AM at the end of the sequence could suggest the presence of an accusative singular form, a noun or an adjective agreeing with OILAM.<sup>146</sup>

By contrast, Prósper and Villar affirm that OILAM ERBAM might be, respectively, a noun and the adjective it agrees with, given the fact that this interpretation matches with the SVO order that can be noticed in other Lusitanian inscriptions, like the one found in Cabeço das Fraguas. As it will be stated in the next section, this inscription contains both the forms OILAM and OILAM VSSEAM, which led Tovar to suggest that VSSEAM could be the adjective agreeing with OILAM, a noun in the accusative singular. Prósper and Villar use the comparison with the inscription of Cabeço das Fraguas also to prove the validity of their interpretation of the syntactic structure. According to Siles, pairing up a sacrificial victim with the god the animal will be immolated to creates distributional symmetry, typical of religious language and spotted in both texts, although in different forms. If the inscription of

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<sup>145</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>146</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 336-337.

Cabeço das Fraguas presents the structure accusative+dative, the one of Arronches shows the structure dative+accusative.<sup>147</sup>

For what concerns the victims, Siles reports the hypothesis developed by Prósper that the ones present in line 1 are probably in the singular, given the fact that the desinence is -AM; conversely, the animals listed in line 2,3 and 4 (OILA X, OILA X, TAV(RO)/TAV(RV) X) seem to be in the plural, although there are some doubts concerning the final part of line 4. It is not possible to understand if the word is (TA)AV(ROM), the singular form, or (T)AV(RO/ (T)AV(RU), the plural form, because the poor state of the stone hides the hypothetical qualitative adjective and numeral that might be paired up with the noun. Given the fact that OILA, in line 4, and TAV(RO)/TAV(RV) are both linked to the numeral X, it could be the same. The linguist marks the difference between the victims presented in line 1 and those listed in lines 2,3 and 4: in the first case there is no numeral which is paired up with the animals, that are likely to be one for each species because of the presence of the desinence -AM; in the second case, the offerings are always followed by the numeral X.<sup>148</sup>

According to Siles, the hypothesis that line 1 might have listed three animals shows an interesting parallel with the Roman *suovetaurilia*. In this case, the ritual described in this inscription might not have changed for what concerns the number of victims, that could still be three, but for what concerns the recipient of the sacrifice. The Roman *suovetaurilia* was usually performed in honour of *Mars* that, being a god, received only male offerings. In this inscription, though, the divinity must have been a goddess, because the desinence -AM, which marks the noun indicating one of the victims, is in the accusative feminine (only female animals could be immolated in honour of female goddesses). The linguist affirms that the word preceding OILAM (which could correspond to the *ouis* of the Roman *suovetaurilia*) could be \*PORCAM (the Lusitanian counterpart of the *sus* of the Roman *suovetaurilia*), since it was attested both in the inscription of Lamas de Moledo (PORGOM) and in the one of Cabeço das Fraguas (PORCOM). To complete the parallel with the Roman *suovetaurilia*, the other victim should be ERBAM (which is likely to be the *tauro* of the Roman

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<sup>147</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 337-338.

<sup>148</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p.338.

suovetaurilia).<sup>149</sup> However, these are just speculations, given the fact that the poor state of the stone does not allow to see anything more than an accusative feminine singular desinence, indicating the immolation of a female animal of unknown species.

Ribeiro supports this theory, comparing ERBAM with a similar form found in the inscription of Arroyo de la Luz I (ERBA) and some theonyms (ERBINA, AERBINA, IRBI, ERBEIDVS and ERBUTI). The linguist compares ERBAM with the ancient Irish word *erb*, which actually means “cow”. Furthermore, Albertos Firmat<sup>150</sup> attempts a reconstruction of the word through Celtic \*erba. After analysing the ancient Irish words *heirp* (“deer”, “goat”) and *erp* (“cow”), respectively reconstructed as \*erbhi and \*erbha, she comes up with the root \*er, which might have meant “goat”, “lamb”, “cow”, “deer”.<sup>151</sup>

An interesting hypothesis on how to interpret ERBAM is formulated by Prósper and Villar, who suggest it might be an adjective and not a noun indicating one of the victims of the ritual. To be more precise, ERBAM could be an adjective indicating the colour of the sacrificial animal. As it was mentioned in chapter 2 (2.4), in antiquity and especially in the Indo-European context, the victims were chosen according to some criteria. In this case, the characteristics of the animal might have matched with the ones of the god that was the recipient of the ritual. The two linguists believe that ERABAM could mean “dark”, “brownish” and thus that HARASE might have been a chthonian god, since dark-furred animals were offered to the gods of the underworld (while Uranian ones received white-furred victims, usually).<sup>152</sup>

Following Prósper and Villar’s supposition, Siles elaborates a rather bizarre theory, which is not shared by Prósper but which will be reported here for informative reasons. According to the linguist, ERBAM could actually be an adjective indicating the colour of a sacrificial victim; to be more precise, the linguist believes this form could be the Lusitanian equivalent of Latin *albam* “white” (in the accusative feminine, here). If this were the case, the god that is the recipient of the ritual must have been a

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<sup>149</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p.338-339.

<sup>150</sup> Albertos Firmat M<sup>a</sup>. L., *La onomástica personal primitiva de Hispania: Tarraconense y Bética*, Salamanca 1966, p. 116 quoted by Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p.339.

<sup>151</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p.339.

<sup>152</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ibidem*.

Uranian one. In the Italic context, there are attestations of white-furred victims. In Rome, Jupiter, which was compared to REVE by Ribeiro<sup>153</sup>, received white bulls as sacrificial victims. It appears that offering white bulls to the most important gods was a common and ancient practice in Rome, although in times of scarcity, they could be offered red-furred ones. In the Umbrian equivalent of the *suovetaurilia*, white bulls (*treif:buf:kaleruf* or *buf trif:calersu*) were immolated in honour of Vofonio Grabovio. While the etymology of *albus*, which has its equivalent in Umbrian *alfu*, is not clear, its meaning can be explained when compared with the other adjectives indicating the white colour: *candidus*. Isidor's words<sup>154</sup> *Candidus autem et albus invicem sibi differunt. Nam albus cum quodam pallore est; candidus vero niveus et pura luce perfusus* clarify that, while *candidus* indicating something stainless and pure, a bright white, *albus* simply referred to a pale, washed-out colour. For this reason, *albus* was the word that was normally used to describe a white animal, while *candidus* became a term used in poetic language. Siles adds how the denomination of animals changed according to the part of the body that had white fur: as Isidor explains<sup>155</sup>, if only the paws were white, the beasts would be referred as *petili*; on the contrary, if head was covered in white fur, they would be called *callidi*.<sup>156</sup>

The hypothesis that ERBAM might be an adjective indicating the colour of the animal is sustained by the parallelism that Siles notices between the inscription of Cabeço das Fraguas and the one of Arronches. As a matter of fact, if OILAM USSEAM, present in the first text, could be analysed as a pair noun+adjective, so could OILAM ERBAM, the last word being classified as an adjective expressing a feature of the sacrificial victim.<sup>157</sup>

According to Siles, the theory which affirms that ERBAM indicates one of the sacrificial victims is more viable. As a matter of fact, if ERBAM were interpreted as one of the animals offered to a deity, its presence in the text, along with the one of OILAM and the desinence -AM, the other two victims, would create an interesting parallel with many Indo-European traditions. This hypothesis is compatible with the one

<sup>153</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 336-337.

<sup>154</sup> Isidor, *Or. 12, I, 51* quoted by Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 340.

<sup>155</sup> Isidor, *Or. 12, I, 52* quoted by Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>156</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>157</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 341.

supported by Ribeiro, who believed that ERBAM meant “cow” but has a significant difference: the age of the victim changes. The Roman *suovetaurilia* described by Cato in a passage of *De agri cultura* (2.1.1.) shows that the victims that once were adults (*hostiae maiores*) might have been replaced by younger animals of the same species (*hostiae minores* or *hostiae lactentes*). The “reduction” of the original *suovetaurilia* can be explained by comparing the nouns composing the word “*suovetaurilia*” and the ones used by Cato to describe the ritual. *Sus*, “pig”, has been changed with *porcus*, “piglet”, *ouis* “sheep” with *agnus* “lamb” and *taurus* “bull” with *vitulus* “calf”. It seems that the same change had occurred in the Umbrian ritual, which involved the immolation of *iveka perakre* (“young cow”) and of *tref:vitlup:turup*, *tref:vitlaf*, *vitlu:vufriu*, *estu vitlu:vufriu* and *tref vitlaf* (“calf”) instead of a cow and a bull.

According to Benveniste<sup>158</sup>, the difference between *sus* and *porcus* has very ancient roots. In Latin *sus* is the wild species of swine, while *porcus* indicates a domesticated pig. Comparing many Indo-European languages, the linguist notices that only European languages had a specific term to designate the domesticated species of pigs (*porcus*), while both European and Indo-Iranian languages had a word that indicated the wild animal (*sus*). Considering that European and Indo-Iranian languages all share the same roots, this distinction suggests that the Indo-European society might not have domesticated pigs and that only European populations might have started practicing it, in a later stage. This theory does not convince Benveniste. Analysing Cato’s description of a *lustratio* of the fields, in *De agri cultura* (2.1.1), he notices that two of the animals that were sacrificed in the *suovetaurilia* were the younger versions of the victims offered in the classic ritual: *ouis* “sheep” was replaced with *agnus* “lamb” and *taurus* “bull” with *vitulus* “calf”. On this occasion, *sus* was changed with *porcus*. Given the fact that *vitulus* and *agnus* both referred to younger animals, it seems reasonable to think that so does *porcus* in relation to *sus*. The same opposition can be found in many European languages: Greek (*βῦς*, *σῦς* (pig) *χοῖρος* (piglet)), in Umbrian (*si* (pig) and *purka* (piglet)), Germanic (*swein* (pig) and *ferkel* (piglet)), in Slavic and Baltic languages (*svin* (pig) and Lit. *paršas*, Sl. *Prase* piglet)), among the many. As it was

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<sup>158</sup> Benveniste Émile, *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes, I: Économie, parenté, société*, Éditions de Minuit, 1969, p. 27 ss.



mentioned before, *porcus* does not appear in the Indo-Iranian languages; however, the Finno-Ugrian forms (Fin: *porsas*, Mord: *purts*, Zyr: *porś*), which convey the same meaning as the European ones (*porcus* indicates a young pig) can help with the reconstruction of the Indo-Iranian phase, which was after the Indo-European stage but before the separation between Indian and Iranian. This stage was likely to have the form *\*parśa*, which can be confronted with the word *pasa*, present in an Iranian dialect, which actually means “piglet”. This proves that the theory that the Indo-European society did not domesticate pigs is probably wrong and that *porcus* and *sus* originally indicated the younger and the older version of the same animal, not the domesticated and the wild species of pigs.

For what concerns the substitution of *taurus* with *uitutlus*, Siles analyses some parallels within the Indo-European context. For what concerns Latin, *taurus* is a generic noun that does not indicate the sex of the animal, which is determined through the use of the adjectives *mas* or *femina* accompanying the name. The same distinction can be noticed in Umbrian, with *bum perakne*, *bue peracrei* and *turup*, *turuf*. In *bum perakne*, the accusative form, the adjective *perakne* indicates the age of the animal. Considering that *acnu/acunu* means “year” in Umbrian and Oscan, respectively, the genitive form *perakne* refers to an animal which is at least one years old. On the other hand, the ablative *peracrei* marks the physical qualities of the beast, that can be both its body size and its sexual prowess. The equivalent of the *uitutlus taurus* can be expressed by *vituluf:turuf*, which specifically refers to the calf that is going to be immolated.<sup>159</sup>

Taking all these Indo-European parallels into consideration, Siles believes that the *agnus* offered as a sacrificial victim in the ritual of the Roman suovetaurilia, as described by Cato, can be a lamb, an *hostia lactens* just as *porcus* and *uitutlus*.<sup>160</sup>

In this essay, Siles reminds the reader that in the Roman society the qualities required for a victim to be considered *sacer*, suitable for the sacrifice, changed according to what was convenient at a specific time. This is why castrated and infertile

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<sup>159</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Observaciones sobre la inscripción lusitana de Arronches* in Bermejo Barrera José Carlos, García Sánchez Manel, *Desmoi philias = Bonds of friendship : studies in ancient history in honour of Francisco Javier Fernández Nieto*, 1ª edición, Universitat de Barcelona Editions, 2017, p. 342-343.

<sup>160</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 343.

animals were sacrificed but also why younger animals replaced older ones and some species were changed with other ones. For this reason the linguist does not agree with Ribeiro's idea that sacrificing OILA X instead of T.AV(RO) IFATE X is not a sufficient offering for a god like Reve. Siles quotes a passage of the Aeneid, where a female deer was killed in honour of Jupiter, a major male god.<sup>161</sup>

All things considered, Siles suggests that (PORC)AM, OILAM and ERBAM, the animals mentioned in the first lines of the inscription of Arronches could be *hostiae lactens* of a suoveturilia which corresponds to the one described by Cato in De Agricultura. \*(AM) seems to be a noun in the accusative feminine that could indicate a younger female piglet and OILA the diminutive of \*ouillam a younger sheep, interpretation proposed by Tovar and generally accepted. Taking into consideration the symmetry and the equivalence to the Roman suovetaurilia, the parallels with the Umbrian ritual and with the Vedic religious context, ERBAM must also refer to a young female calf. For what concerns the form CANTIBIDONE, Untermann interprets it as CAND-EBERONIO: according to him, it shows similarities with the toponym *Eberobriga*, while CAND- might be the abbreviation of a local male theonym. Siles adds that CANTIBIDONE could also be connected to CANTISMERTA.<sup>162</sup>

For what concerns the deities who are the recipients of the offerings presented in this inscription, HARASE could be related to AHARACVI and HARACVI, epithets which follow the name of a god, according to Prósper and Villar. Regarding HARACVI and HARAGVI, the epithets following REVE and BANDI, deities whose names are attested quite often in Lusitanian inscriptions, they could be two variants of the same original form. HARAGVI could be the voiced version of HARACVI, or the two options could simply be the result of a graphic variation. The form TAV(---) IFATE is compared by Prósper and Villar<sup>163</sup> to the sequence TAVROM IFADEM, attested in the inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas. The linguists affirm that both forms, which are likely to be the evolution of \*tauro, do not show drastic changes on a phonetic level, unlike Celtic languages, in which the original form has undergone a process of metathesis and

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<sup>161</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 344.

<sup>162</sup> Siles Ruiz Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 345-346.

<sup>163</sup> Prósper Blanca M., Villar Francisco, *Nueva inscripción lusitana procedente de Portalegre*, Emerita, Revista de Lingüística y Filología Clásica (EM) LXXVII 1, enero-junio de 2009, p. 13-14.

turned into *\*tarwo-* and eventually *\*tarβo-*. Prósper<sup>164</sup> suggested to interpret these forms as the evolution of the agent compound-name *\*en(i)-bhat-yo-* “attacking”. In the case of IFADEM, like all the other Western peninsular non-Celtic dialects, the intervocalic unvoiced sound *-t-* would have undergone a process of voicing. The form IFATE, which does not show the voicing of the unvoiced dental *-t-*, confirms the hypothesis that the present inscription is the most ancient among the extant ones. The linguist believes that the *-I-* could be the evolution of the Indo-European preposition *\*H<sub>1</sub> en-*. She affirms that the most ancient Lusitanian texts already show the loss nasal sounds when preceding voiceless fricatives and reports the example of COSSVE, an Asturian divinity probably deriving from the form *\*kom-dhH<sub>1</sub>-tu-*. The linguist claims that this phonetic change could have occurred before the integration of the Latin alphabet and that it can sometimes be spotted in some texts of archaic Latin inscriptions, which sometimes represented the real pronunciation of the sound. She also adds that there was a tendency to close long vowels, which is confirmed by the attestation of closed [o:] sounds in some occurrences of ND COSSVE and by the closed [e:] of IFATE in this position. In relation to this phenomenon, Prósper suggests that IFATE could stand for the accusative plural form *\*\*IFATES*. The original form could have suffered the following phonetic evolutions: *-yons > -ins > -ens > -es/-ēs > -eh/-ēh > -e/-ē*. She adds that the ruined portion of the text, which stands on the right of this word, could be an indication that what was following TAV[--] might have not been composed by more than two letters, which could be [RO] or [RV], followed by *\*ons*, the desinence expressing the accusative masculine plural.

To conclude, the inscription of Arronches shows traits which can be found in many Indo-European languages and cultures. The parallels which can be traced with Italic languages and, especially, the ones detected with their religious practices is remarkable. The similarities which were spotted by the linguists who analysed this inscription show that the ritual described in this text could be related very closely to the Roman and Umbrian *suovetaurilia*. This is not enough to prove that Lusitanian was an

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<sup>164</sup> Prósper, Blanca M., *Varia Palaeohispanica Occidentalia*, *Palaeohispanica* 4, 2004, p. 169-194 quoted by Prósper Blanca M., Villar Francisco, *Ivi*, p. 14.

Italic language but it surely is an evidence which suggests that this option might not be that unlikely.

### 3.2.2. Cabeço das Fraguas

This inscription was discovered on the side of a mountain in Central Portugal, in Cabeço das Fraguas. It is the longest Lusitanian inscription that was ever found and one of the most analysed by linguists. Of all the inscriptions presented in this chapter, it is probably the one that aroused the most discussions among the origins of Lusitanian. While Untermann and Guyonvarch underline some similarities with Celtic languages, Prósper and Siles find parallels with some Italic varieties. This analysis stands on the hypotheses of the latter, for this reason it will be based on their essays *The inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas revisited. Lusitanian and Alteuropäisch populations in the west of the Iberian Peninsula*<sup>165</sup> and *Sobre el orden seguido en el ritual de Cabeço das Fraguas y la naturaleza de las hostiae y victimae en él ofrecidas y sacrificadas*<sup>166</sup>.

Untermann and Wodtko<sup>167</sup> interpret the text as follows.

OILAM.TREBOPALA.

INDI.PORCOM.LABBO.

COMAIAM.ICCONA.LOI

MINNA.OILAM. VSSEAM.

TREBARVNE.INDI.TAVROM

IFADEM

REVE.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *The inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas revisited. Lusitanian and Alteuropäisch populations in the west of the Iberian Peninsula*, Transactions of the Philological Society Volume 97:2, 1999.

<sup>166</sup> Siles Jaime, *Sobre el orden seguido en el ritual de Cabeço das Fraguas y la naturaleza de las hostiae y victimae en él ofrecidas y sacrificadas*, Anuari de filologia. Antiqua et mediaevalia (Anu.Filol.Antiq.Mediaevalia) 8, 2018.

<sup>167</sup> Untermann Jürgen, Wodtko Dagmar, *Monumenta Linguarum Hispanicarum, Band IV. Die tartesischen und lusitanische Inschriften*, Dagmar Wodtko (col.), Jürgen Untermann (ed), Wiesbaden, 1997 quoted by Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 928.

<sup>168</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ibidem*.

According to Siles, the inscription presents five sacrificial victims immolated and offered to some gods. They are likely to be the three *hostiae* of a ritual which resembles the Roman *suovetaurilia* and its Umbrian equivalent and two other distinct victims. INDI, which can be interpreted either as a temporal adverb or as a conjunction, marks the different steps of the ritual: the offering of the first victim, OILAM, in line 1, the offering of the second victim, PORCOM, in line 2, and the offering of the third victim, TAVROM, in line 5. Between the presentation of the second (PORCOM) and the third offering (TAVROM IFADEM) marked by the adverb INDI, there are other two: COMAIAM (line 3) and OILAM USSEAM (line 4) are not introduced by INDI and so their ritual killing must have been performed at the same time of the immolation of PORCOM. As a matter of fact, INDI temporally and spatially marks the steps of the ceremony, so the ones which are not introduced by this adverb must take place at the same time and in the same area of the immolation of PORCOM, the offering marked by INDI which precedes them. As it was already mentioned in the analysis of the inscription of Arronches (3.2.1.), this construction, three elements which are not coordinated by a conjunction, is called three-member asyndeton. In this case, as it was in the inscription of Arronches, the verb was elided but the same syntactic structure can be spotted in the inscription of Lamas de Moledo along with a verb (*doenti*).<sup>169</sup>

Siles presents other alternative interpretations of the text which do not change the main syntactic order presented above.

First of all, the first syllable of what was interpreted by Untermann as COMAIAM (line 3) can be considered part of the previous word, LABBO (line 2), according to Untermann. In this case, the sequence would be \*LABBOCO MAIAM, instead of LABBO COMAIAM. Siles compares LABBO to other similar forms of theonyms in the dative singular and MAIAM to the accusative singular of the word indicating the castrated pig in Latin (*majalis*).<sup>170</sup>

The second observation, which follows the hypothesis already proposed by Witczak<sup>171</sup>, who reconstructs the form LAEPO as LABBO, evolutions of \**lase-bos*,

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<sup>169</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 328-329.

<sup>170</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 329-330.

<sup>171</sup> Witczak K.T., *On the Indo-European origin of two Lusitanian theonyms (Laebo and Reve)*, Emerita 67, p. 65-73, 1999 quoted by Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 330.

comparable to Latin *lares*<sup>172</sup>. This form would be a theonym in the dative plural which suffers the loss of the final -s because followed by a word which begins by consonant (COMAIAM). The form can be justified etymologically (it can be compared to the desinence -BOS) but it does not show many similarities with other Lusitanian theonyms, with the exception of LAEPVS, a god in honour of whom three altars were dedicated in Pousafoles, a location that is relatively close to Cabeço das Fraguas.<sup>173</sup>

The last alternative option suggested by the author reads LABBO as LARBO, which is interpreted as a possible evolution of LAR(I)BUS, the dative for the Latin word LARES, which might have endured the elimination of the post-tonic vowel -I and of the final syllable, apart from the loss of the final -s, caused by the presence of the consonant of the following word (COMAIAM).. Siles enriches this theory by explaining how divinities like the *Lares*, the guardians of the domestic walls, were likely to be the recipients of a reduction of the original version of the *suovetaurilia*; it is reasonable to think that important deities like TREBARVNE and REVE received *hostiae maiores*, while less powerful and influential gods like the *Lares* were offered *hostiae minores*.<sup>174</sup>

Another hypothesis is formulated by Prósper in her recent essay *Lusitanian oblique cases revisited: new light on the dative endings*<sup>175</sup>. The linguist suggests that LAEPO could share the same stem as Latin *lares*, which could have turned into the form *\*lābbo* (*\*lās-bo* > *\*lāhbo* > *\*lābbo*), which corresponds to the one reconstructed by Witczack. Prósper explains that this transformation might have been caused by regressive assimilation across a transparent morpheme boundary. She claims that the most plausible etymology for Latin *\*lās-es* > *\*lāres* (>> *Lāres*) is Indo-European *\*deh2-es-*, which can be translated with “distributor”. This form is likely to have originated from an adjectival compound meaning “distributing something”. She adds that Italic languages are the only family in which *\*da* has turned into *\*la-*, a change which had probably already occurred in Proto-Italic. As the form LABBO seems to

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<sup>172</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *The Lusitanian oblique cases revisited: new light on the dative endings*, in a *Festschrift* (pre-print version), 2021, p. 4.

<sup>173</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>174</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>175</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *The Lusitanian oblique cases revisited: new light on the dative endings*, in a *Festschrift* (pre-print version), 2021.

derive from \**deh2-es-bhos*, the evolution from \**da* into \**la-* can be considered further evidence for the possible Italic roots of Lusitanian.<sup>176</sup>

In her essay *The inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas revisited. Lusitanian and Alteuropäisch populations in the west of the Iberian Peninsula*<sup>177</sup>, Prósper critically analyses a few theories concerning the interpretation of some syntactic components of the inscription.

The linguist does not share Búa's explanation<sup>178</sup>, which presents TREBARVNE and *Reve* as deities, as the most common interpretation, but TREBOPALA, LABBO and ICCONA LOIMINNA as toponyms. According to Búa, a dative in *-a* is not attested in the Indo-European context, so the *-a* desinence must derive from the Indo-European ablative \**-ād* and indicate the place where the sacrifice was performed.

Untermann<sup>179</sup> rejects the hypothesis of a feminine dative singular in *-a*, because he thinks it could not derive from the Indo-European ending \**-āi*, therefore interprets TREBOPALA, LABBO and ICCONA LOIMINNA as nominatives: the feminine names might indicate the priestesses performing the sacrifice, while the masculine one would be a an *-ōn* stem which underwent a process of gemination.

Prósper argues that the dative singular in *-a* is indeed attested in some Latin inscriptions, used as an alternative form of the more common *-ae*. She also offers some examples of a possible masculine dative singular in *-o*, which could be the equivalent masculine form of the dative in *-a*, in Lusitanian.<sup>180</sup>

However, in one of her most recent works *Latin sancītō va. Lusitanian SINGEIETO. Is the Lusitanian inscription of Arroyo de la Luz I the westernmost lex sacra*, which analyses the inscription of Arroyo de la Luz and which will be looked into

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<sup>176</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *Ivi*, p. 5.

<sup>177</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *The inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas revisited. Lusitanian and Alteuropäisch populations in the west of the Iberian Peninsula*, Transactions of the Philological Society Volume 97:2, 1999.

<sup>178</sup> Búa, C., *Hipótesis para algunas inscripciones del ámbito religioso indígena del occidente peninsular*, in F. Villar (ed.), *Actas del VII Coloquio sobre lenguas y culturas paleohispánicas*, Salamanca, 1999 quoted by Prósper Blanca M., *Ivi*, p. 154.

<sup>179</sup> Untermann Jürgen, *Monumenta Linguarum Hispanicarum*, IV. Die tartessischen, keltiberischen und lusitanischen Inschriften, Wiesbaden, Reichert, 1997 quoted by Prósper Blanca M., *Ivi*, p. 155.

<sup>180</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *Ivi*, p. 155.

detail in the next section, on the bases of new data, Prósper rejects the hypothesis that an ending in *-o* might mark the masculine dative singular so other alternatives must be sought to find an adequate meaning for this ending.<sup>181</sup> This matter will be issued in detail in the section dedicated to the inscription of Arroyo de la Luz (3.2.3).

According to Prósper, Untermann's interpretation of the text does not work for syntactic and semantic reasons either, though. As a matter of fact, the fact that in the first lines the recipient of the animal offerings are the people of the village but in the following ones the gods are those to whom the sacrifice is offered, makes this a very intricate and asymmetrical interpretation of the text. Another aspect which looks very asymmetrical to the linguist is the fact that Untermann categorises in different classes the compounds beginning with TREBO-: some should be priests, other ones should be deities. Prósper also discusses the inhomogeneous repartition of the parts in the ritual. First of all, the fact that the priestess is offered a sacrificial victim and is put on the same level of the god does not conform with this kind of texts. The same objection could be made on the fact that REVE and TREBARVNE, both prominent gods in the Lusitanian religious tradition, receive very unequal offerings. Untermann favours this hypothesis because he believes the theonyms ending in *-e* are, in fact, *-a* stems feminine suffixes, view which is not shared by Prósper.<sup>182</sup>

Prósper rejects Maggi's interpretation of TREBARVNE and TREBOPALA, which identifies the former as a dative singular, as the most accredited theory states, but the latter as a nominative because, according to him, such different endings cannot express the same function, the one of indirect object. If this were the case, an OILAM would be offered in sacrifice to TREBOPALA, while an OLEAM VSSEAM would be gifted by the village to TREBARVNE. According to Prósper, this hypothesis does not respect the word order of Lusitanian: as a matter of fact, an SVO language would require the inverse word order cases like this one, where the verb is implicit and there is no topicalization.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *Latin sancitō va. Lusitanian SINGEIETO. Is the Lusitanian inscription of Arroyo de la Luz I the westernmost lex sacra?*, *Studia Philologica Valentina*, Vol 22, n.s. 19, 2020, p. 6-7.

<sup>182</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *The inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas revisited. Lusitanian and Alteuropäisch populations in the west of the Iberian Peninsula*, *Transactions of the Philological Society* Volume 97:2, 1999, p. 155-156.

<sup>183</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *Ivi*, p. 155.



Following Siles's interpretation of the text<sup>184</sup> the ceremony described in it could be divided into two distinct parts: the sacrifice of two *hostiae minores* (OILAM and PORCOM) and the immolation of three *hostiae maiores* (COMAIAM, OILAM VSSEAM and TAVROM IFADEM).<sup>185</sup> However, this is just an hypothesis.

For what concerns the former, OILAM and PORCOM must be two young and small animals, a young sheep and a piglet, respectively. This assumption can be justified by the comparison with the Roman reduced version of the *suovetaurilia*. As the name suggests, this ritual included the sacrifice of a *sūs* (pig), a *oue* (sheep) and a *taurō* (bull). In the section dedicated to Cato's lustration of the fields prayer (2.1.1.), it has been pointed out that this type of ritual could be performed in a "reduced" version, immolating the same animals but younger in age and smaller in size: the *sūs* was replaced with a *porcus* (piglet), the *ouis* with an *aguns* (lamb) and the *taurō* with a *uitulus* (calf). For what concerns the parallelism with Latin *aguns*, the inscriptions of Freixa de Numao and Lamas de Moledo present two forms which phonetically appear very similar: ANCNVN and ANGOM. It is evident that the victims mentioned in the inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas show many parallels with the ones of the reduced version of the Roman *suovetaurilia*. OILAM, a young female lamb, perfectly matches with Latin *ouis* but retains the form of the original diminutive for this animal: OILAM resembles *\*ovillam* more than *ouis*. Similarly, PORCOM, a male piglet, corresponds to Latin *porcus*, which originally indicated a pig of younger age and not a domesticated pig, as Benveniste initially thought, as it was explained in the section devoted to the inscription of Arronches (3.2.1.). Following the parallelism offered by the Roman *suovetaurilia*, OILAM and PORCOM, being two *hostiae minores*, should be offered to two minor deities.<sup>186</sup>

On the other hand, COMAIAM, OILAM VSSEAM and TAVROM IFADEM could correspond to the *hostiae maiores* of the original Roman *suovetaurilia* and, for this reason, they need to be sacrificed in honour of major divinities. In this case, the deities receiving the offerings appear to be ICCONA LOIMINNA, a female goddess

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<sup>184</sup> Siles Jaime, *Sobre el orden seguido en el ritual de Cabeço das Fráguas y la naturaleza de las hostiae y victimae en él ofrecidas y sacrificadas*, Anuari de filologia. Antiqua et mediaevalia (Anu.Filol.Antiq.Mediaevalia) 8, 2018.

<sup>185</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 931.

<sup>186</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 931-932.

followed by an epithet, and REVE, a male god that seems to be accompanied by an epithet as well but, since the stone where the inscription was engraved is very deteriorated, this will remain just a hypothesis.<sup>187</sup>

For what concerns the species of the three animals offered as victims during the sacrifice, Siles states that there are many theories. The hypothesis he presents interprets is the one elaborated by Prósper in her essay *The inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas revisited. Lusitanian and Alteuropäisch populations in the west of the Iberian Peninsula*<sup>188</sup>. COMAIAM as *porca* or *sus grávida*, an adult sow, which might be pregnant. The goddess receiving it could be ICCONA LOIMINNA, since there is correspondence between the sex of the deity and the one of the animal which is sacrificed. As it was already mentioned in section 2.5, in some Indo-European cultures, like the Roman one, the sex of the victim had to match with the sex of the god that was the recipient of the sacrifice. The hypothesis that COMAIAM might indicate a pregnant sow developed after confronting it with the Umbrian accusative plural form *kumiaf*, which was interpreted as “pregnant” by Poultney.<sup>189</sup> This word can be compared to Latin *gomia* “glutton”, probably borrowed from the Umbrian language, according to Bücheler<sup>190</sup>; Poultney and Untermann<sup>191</sup> connect it to Greek *gómos* and its respective verb *gémo*, which means “to be full, to carry something”.<sup>192</sup>

As the possible corresponding Umbrian form of COMAIAM, *si kumiaf*, presents a noun specified by an adjective, Siles reads VSSEAM as an adjective determining OILAM, the second victim of the suovetaurilia described in the inscription. For what concerns the meaning of VSSEAM, which seems to agree with OILAM in number, gender and case, there are different hypotheses. A parallel of VSSEAM found by Siles in the Latin religious world concerns *agna opima*. This expression refers to the sacrificial victim made in honour of the gods of agriculture. The nature of the gods who

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<sup>187</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 932.

<sup>188</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *The inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas revisited. Lusitanian and Alteuropäisch populations in the west of the Iberian Peninsula*, Transactions of the Philological Society Volume 97:2, 1999, p. 174-178.

<sup>189</sup> Poultney, James W., *The Bronze Tablets of Iguvium*, Baltimore&Blackwell, Oxford, 1959, p. 308 quoted by Siles Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>190</sup> Bücheler Franz, *Petronii satirarum reliquiae*, 3rd edition, 1882, p. 523 quoted by Siles Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>191</sup> Untermann Jürgen, *Wörterbuch des Oskisch-Umbrischen*, Heidelberg, 2000, p. 310 quoted by Siles Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>192</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ibidem*.

are the recipient of the ritual suggest that *agna opima* is an *hostia minor* (the gods of agriculture usually received *hostiae minores*, as it can also be noticed in Cato's lustration prayer, where the ritual of purification of the fields includes a reduced version of the *suovetaurilia*), in opposition to the Lusitanian OILAM, which is a grown animal. This parallel could also give more information about TREBARVNE, the Lusitanian god receiving OILAM VSSEAM: if *agna opima* is the younger equivalent of OILAM VSSEAM, TREBARVNE could be a god connected with agriculture, sharing the same nature of the goddess who is offered the *agna opima*. Another interesting correspondence can be found between OILAM VSSEAM and Umbrian *uvem sevakni*: the latter could correspond to the former, just like *agna opima*, even though the meaning of *sevakni* is not clear, given that it could be referred to the size or the age of the victim.<sup>193</sup> A more coherent hypothesis is reported by Prósper<sup>194</sup>, who states that VSSEAM could derive from the form *\*uts-yo-*, from which also originated Latin *vetus* and the Greek reconstructed form *\*wétos*, has been interpreted as an adjective agreeing with OILAM and meaning "one year old".

The last *hostia maior* in the *suovetaurilia* of Cabeço das Fráguas is TAVROM IFADEM, sacrificed in honour of REVE. Untermann<sup>195</sup> affirms that IFADEM could be an adjective agreeing with TAVROM but he does not share Tovar<sup>196</sup>'s hypothesis, which interprets TAVROM IFADEM as "well-endowed". Siles proposes another option: he compares the two-part ceremony described in this text to the two Indian rituals. According to the linguist, the first part, corresponding to the sacrifice of the two younger victims, resembles the *garhapatya*, the ceremony of "the owner of the house", while the second part, the one corresponding to the Roman *suovetaurilia*, can be compared to the *ahavaniya*, the ritual "of the offerings". The meaning of TAVROM IFADEM can be deduced by comparing it with the names of the other two victims of the *suovetaurilia*, as well. Considering the context in which TAVROM IFADEM

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<sup>193</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 935-936.

<sup>194</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *The inscription of Cabeço das Fráguas revisited. Lusitanian and Alteuropäisch populations in the west of the Iberian Peninsula*, Transactions of the Philological Society Volume 97:2, 1999, p. 165.

<sup>195</sup> Untermann, Jürgen, *Monumenta Linguarum Hispanicarum, Band IV: Die Tartessischen, Keltiberischen Und Lusitanischen Inschriften Wiesbaden*, L. Reichert, 1997 quoted by Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 936.

<sup>196</sup> Tovar Antonio, *L'inscription du Cabeço das Fráguas et la langue des lusitaniens*, Études Celtiques 11 (1966/67), 1967, p. 257 quoted by Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 936.

appears, it could be considered the equivalent of Umbrian *uitulum vufru*, which is the “chosen calf”, the animal selected to be the victim of the sacrifice because of its qualities. As it was already explained in section 2.5., the criteria characterising the perfect victim could vary according to the culture, the economical situation or, simply, what was more convenient in that moment. In this case, IFADEM could be the equivalent of Latin *effetus*, which means “sterile”. As it was mentioned, sterile animals were not considered less worthy of being sacrificed, on the contrary, in some cases their incapacity to procreate was the quality which defined their sacredness. The same principle was applied in India, where sterile cows were considered powerful because what they lacked on the physical level, they regained on the religious one. In Rome, the sex of the sacrificial animal had to match the one of the deity it was offered to; Jupiter, for instance, received a sterile or castrated *bos mas*, which was characterised by the adjective *ecfor* “consecrated”, which could also be the equivalent IFADEM. The last possible translation provided by the linguist is that IFADEM is the Lusitanian equivalent of *lactens*. This means that TAVROM IFADEM could be the equivalent of a *bos femina lactens*. This last option seems the most viable one, given the fact that it creates an interesting parallelism with the other animals offered in the ritual of suovetaurilia. As a matter of fact, all the victims of this sacrifice could be characterised by fertility: COMAIAM corresponds to a *sus grauida*, OILEAM USSEAM to an *agna opima* and TAVROM IFADEM to a *bos femina lactens*. If this were the case, REVE could correspond to a female goddess like *Dia*, the goddess of agriculture, and thus of fertility as well.<sup>197</sup>

According to Siles, the Umbrian sacrificial ceremony described in the Uguvine Tables might help reflect on the distinction between young and adult victims, like the one described in the inscription of Cabeço das Fraguas: the first part of the ritual consisted in killing two younger animals, while the second part, which corresponds to the original Roman suovetaurilia, included the immolation of three adult victims. As it was mentioned above, Cato’s lustration of the fields prayer, included in *De Agri cultura* 141, offers a very useful parallel for what concerns the distinction between older and younger sacrificial victims. The animals immolated in this occasion are *hostiae*

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<sup>197</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 937-938.

*lactentes*, which means that they are still being suckled. However, the *suovetaurilia* is still composed by the same species of animals, which are only younger and smaller in size: *sus* is replaced with *porcus*, *ouis* with *agnus* and *taurus* with *vitulus*. Comparing different forms connected to the words *sus* and *porcus* from many Indo-European, and also non Indo-European languages, Benveniste<sup>198</sup> is able to demonstrate that the difference between the two originally did not concern the opposition wild-domesticated but the opposition young-adult. Thanks to his analysis, *porcus* and *agnus* can be put on the same level, indicating two younger animals, and *ouis* could consequentially carry the same characteristics. This led Siles to think that PORCOM and OILAM might not only be the equivalent of *porcus* and *ouis* for what concerns the animal species but also for what concerns their age and their size.<sup>199</sup>

This means that the ritual described in the inscription of Cabeço das Fraguas could be formed by two parts. These moments of the ceremony, however, need not be considered as two separate rituals: the sacrifice of the three *hostiae maiores* and of the two *hostiae minores* would be performed at the same time (as the use of INDE preceding some of the victims suggests), as different steps of the same rite. As Scheid<sup>200</sup> affirms, the two rituals are part of the same process and the gods who receive their respective offerings joint the banquet all together, at the same time.

To sum up, the process described in the inscription one Cabeço das Fraguas, which resembles the one illustrated in the inscription of Lamas de Moledo, consists of two parts. The first part of the ritual involves the killing of some *hostiae minores*: a lamb (OILAM), offered to the goddess TREBOPALA; a piglet (PORCOM), immolated to LARES, LABBO/LAEBO or LAR(I)BOS, depending on the theories. The *hostiae maiores* sacrificed in the second part, in a ritual resembling the Roman *suovetaurilia*, are: a sow (COMAIAM), whose recipient was ICCONA LOIMINNA; a sheep (OILAM VSSEAM), offered to TREBARVNE, a well-attested theonym in the Lusitanian area; a bull (TAVROM IFADEM), sacrificed in honour of REVE, another divinity which

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<sup>198</sup> Benveniste Émile, *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes, I: Économie, parenté, société*, Éditions de Minuit, 1969, p. 27 ss.

<sup>199</sup> Siles Jaime, *Sobre el orden seguido en el ritual de Cabeço das Fraguas y la naturaleza de las hostiae y victimae en él ofrecidas y sacrificadas*, *Anuari de filologia. Antiqua et mediaevalia* (Anu.Filol.Antiq.Mediaevalia) 8, 2018, p. 933-934.

<sup>200</sup> Scheid John, *Romulus et ses frères. Le Collège des Frères Arvales, Modèle du Culte Public dans la Rome des Empereurs*, Roma, 1990, p. 323-324 quoted by Siles Jaime, *Ivi*, p. 934.

occurs in many Lusitanian inscriptions.<sup>201</sup> This inscription confirms the Indo-European origin of Lusitanian both on a linguistic and on a religious level. As a matter of fact, there are many linguistic traits which match with other present in idioms belonging to the Indo-European family. Many religious and cultural parallels can be spotted in the comparison with some rituals, like the Indian ones. However, the most striking similarities can be noticed with Italic languages like Latin and Umbrian and with their respective cultures. The linguistic matches between the names of the victims and Italic formulaic religious language, along with the similarities in the ritual actions of multiple animal sacrifices like the one described in this inscription, favour the hypothesis that Lusitanian could have had a very strong connection with Italic languages.

### 3.2.3. Arroyo de la Luz

The inscription of Arroyo de la Luz, engraved on a slab divided into two parts, can no longer be analysed directly but its text can be studied thanks to the drawing made by Juan Francisco Masdeu<sup>202</sup>, in the nineteenth century. In her recent study *Latin sancītō va. Lusitanian SINGEIETO. Is the Lusitanian inscription of Arroyo de la Luz I the westernmost lex sacra?*<sup>203</sup>, Blanca Maria Prósper identifies the inscription of Arroyo de la Luz I as a *lex sacra*, in this case, probably a prescription on how to cut and distribute the meat of sacrificial animals, after their immolation. This section will follow the linguist's analysis in order to find new parallels and similarities with some Italic languages and cultures.

The text of the inscription reads as follows:

AMBATVS / SCRIPSI / CARLAE PRAISOM / SECIAS. ERBA. MVITIE/AS.  
ARIMO.

PRAESONDO. SINGEIETO / IN(D)I AVA. INDI. VEA/M. INDI. [.JEDAGA/ROM.  
TEVCAECOM /

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<sup>201</sup> Siles Jaime, *Ibidem*.

<sup>202</sup> Masdeu Juan F., *Historia critica de España y de la cultura Española*, vol XIX, Madrid, 1800 quoted by Prósper Blanca M., *Latin sancītō va. Lusitanian SINGEIETO. Is the Lusitanian inscription of Arroyo de la Luz I the westernmost lex sacra?*, *Studia Philologica Valentina*, Vol 22, n.s. 19, 2020.

<sup>203</sup> Prósper Blanca M., *Ibidem*.

INDI. NVRIM. / INDI / VDE[A]EC(OM?). RVRSE[.]CO1 / AMPILVA / INDI /  
LOEMINA. INDI

ENV/PETANIM. INDI AR/IMOM. SINTAMO/M. INDI TEVCOM / SINTAMO(M)<sup>204</sup>

Prósper opens her essay with the analysis of the first sentence in Lusitanian, which follows the Latin sentence AMBATUS SCRIPSI, indicating the person who wrote the inscription. The first indigenous sentence is CARLAE PRAISOM. According to the linguist, CARLAE is probably a locative singular form which expresses the place in which the *lex sacra* was likely to be applied: *\*karlā*. It appears that it corresponds to a settlement which was in the same area where the inscription was found, in Arroyo de la Luz, a present-day village near Cáceres, in the region of Extremadura, in western Spain. For what concerns PRAISOM, Prósper believes that it could derive from the past-participle *\*preh<sub>2</sub>i+d<sup>h</sup>h<sub>1</sub>to-*, which suffered a laryngeal loss and an evolution of the consonant cluster *\*-tt-*, changed to *-t<sup>s</sup>t-* and eventually to *-ss*, a very common phenomenon in Western Indo-European languages. It is important to underline that the prefix *pr-*, attested in Italic varieties, retains its /p/, unlike Celtic idioms, which systematically lose it. The linguist presents two main hypotheses for the meaning of this sentence. The former classifies it as a simple heading: “promulgated in Carla”. On the other hand, the latter identifies it as a passive sentence in which the auxiliary verb is not expressed, another phenomenon which characterises Italic languages: “it has promulgated in Carla that...”.<sup>205</sup>

The linguist then proceeds to analyse the following sentence SECIA(S) ERBA(S) MVITIEAS ARIMO PRAESONDO SINGEIETO.

According to her, SECIA(S) ERBA(S) MVITIEAS is the direct object, which is put at the beginning of the sentence as a topicalization, very common in texts like this one. SECIA(S) ERBA(S) MVITIEAS is identified as the meat of the sacrificial victim killed during an immolation. SECIA(S), which has many parallels like Latin *prōsiciae* and Umbrian *prusecīa*, probably derives from the common Italic form *\*seka-jo/e-*, an evolution of *\*sekh<sub>1</sub>-*, which means “cut”. MVITIEAS, on the other hand, shares similar traits to Latin *mūutus*, Sicel *μoίtov* and derives either from the verb *\*moito-* “exchange”

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<sup>204</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 2.

<sup>205</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 3.

or from the action name related to it *\*moiti-*. As it was already clarified in the section devoted to the inscription of Arronches (3.2.1), ERBA(S) could refer to a “dark brown animal”. For what concerns the syntactical analysis of the constituents, while SECIAS probably expresses an accusative plural, ERBA and MVITIEAS could be genitive singular forms, given the fact that they resemble genitive singular Latin forms like *familias* in the formula *pater familias*. Prósper thinks that the most appropriate translations for these words might be “the meat cuts of the brown (sheep) offered” or simply “the offered meat cuts” but also considers the hypothesis which reads ERBA as an ablative form (*\*erbād*) and thus offers a different interpretation of the sentence, that might be: “(cuts) from the sheep”. MVTIEAS could be a past participle which refers to the meat cuts, probably entrails, and which indicates their distribution.<sup>206</sup>

For what concerns SINGEIETO, Prósper classifies it as a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> person future imperative form in *\*-tōd*. This type of imperative, which loses the final -d but preserves the Indo-European /o:/, probably derives from *sg̃gĩe-* < *\*sæŋkĩe-* < *\*sHnk-jo/e-*, which means “sanctify, confirm, establish legally”. In this case, the linguist notices the voicing of a voiceless stop preceded by a nasal but labels it as a universal tendency. She also adds that this evolution cannot be found in all the extant Lusitanian texts, because the process was probably not completed before Lusitanian became a written language. As a matter of fact, SINGEIETO could have some parallels in Latin *sanc̃ito* and Proto-Italic *\*sank-ietōd*. If this were the case, the verb could refer to the ritual of purification of the meat of the sacrificial victims. In order to offer it to the gods, who will be mentioned in the following lines of the inscription, the meat has to undergo a process of purification to become *sacer*, so that it can be distinguished from the profane meat, which is not destined to the gods.<sup>207</sup>

This imperative form can be found in many Indo-European languages, such as Celtiberian, Italic, Greek and Indo-Iranian varieties. Some examples can be spotted in Classical Latin archaic formulas of legal texts, like Old Latin -<TOD>, which was added to the present stem of regular verbs or to the stem of irregular verbs and which was used for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular. The same happened in Sabellic. Some

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<sup>206</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ibidem*.

<sup>207</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 3-5.



occurrences of this type of imperative can be spotted in the Umbrian Iguvine Tables as well. As it was mentioned above, this is a trait which can be found in texts of juridic nature. To be more precise, it was very common in Western European legal texts, especially in Old Celtic and Italic languages. Other syntactic phenomena defining the language of these documents include the implicit subject, which represents the magistrate or the priest who performed the ritual, and the topicalization of the direct object, moved at the beginning of the sentence, which could also be interpreted as a trace of the SOV order, characterising the archaic stage of the language. The verb served as a coda and it could be preceded or followed by other complements. The unmarked word order of the noun phrase would have Noun+Adjective or Noun+Genitive Complement, a sequence which characterises SVO languages as well.<sup>208</sup>

For all these reasons, Prósper affirms that this inscription could be labelled as a *lex sacra*, the Westernmost one attested, apparently. These types of texts served as a tool to regulate the distribution of meat to those attending a ritual or the act of gifting the gods with sacrificial meat.<sup>209</sup>

The linguist notices an interesting connection between the imperative form SINGEIETO and the word SINTAMO(M), an accusative singular or genitive plural form which appears in the following portion of the text: they belong to the same paradigm. In this case, SINTAMO(M) might have retained the voiceless stop in the syllable onset, due to the presence of a velar stop after the nasal in coda position. It could have suffered weakening and turned into a glottal fricative, only to disappear after the development of context-sensitive voicing of the stop. Another hypothesis states that the nasal disappeared before the evolution into fricative, as it happened in Sabellic, and was later restored by analogy, when the velar was lost. This phenomenon can be observed in Latin as well, in *sānctus*, which is basically an artificial form. SINTAMOM could derive from the superlative form of the past participle *\*sHnk-tó*, which can be translated both with “*sanctissimus*” and “legally sanctioned”. This form could explain why /t/ was not voiced in a sequence like *-nt*. The velar stop probably underwent a process of fricativisation and palatalisation, which weakened it (the same phenomenon

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<sup>208</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 3-4.

<sup>209</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 4.

can be observed in the Italic form *\*sæŋxto-*, which might have evolved into *\*sæŋçto-*), suffering the loss of the nasal in coda position, restored through analogy in a pre-literate stage of the language, or the elimination of the velar sound. The complex coda -*ŋk-* in a pre-consonantal position and the velarisation of the nasal might have triggered the pre-nasal raising, which is already a very common phenomenon. The linguist compares this form to a passage found in the Oscan tabula of Agnone, where the sentence *saahtúm tefúrúm ... saka(?ra)híter* literally means “a sacred burnt-offering ... has to be sacrificed”.<sup>210</sup> In this case, SINGEIETO would carry a nuanced meaning of obligation and could be rendered with “should be sacrificed”. For what concerns the other elements of the sentence, according to Prósper, SECIAS would be “deprived of its most plausible etymology”, given the fact that it would be bizarre to sacrifice some meat which has already been vut<sup>211</sup>; ERBAS, on the other hand, could either indicate a plural offering of unknown nature or be an adjective agreeing with SECIAS and determining the colour of the fur of the victim, dark brown, in this specific case.<sup>212</sup>

The linguist presents another possibility: if SINGEIETO and SINTAMOM derived from the original present form *\*sng-jo/e-*, which means “to burn, to roast”, the process described in these line could be interpreted as an holocaust, a ritual which was very popular in Indo-European cultures (especially in the Greek one) and which involved the total burning of the victim, so that the smoke caused by the burning of its flesh could tickle the gods’ noses. SINTAMOM could then still be considered as a superlative and translated as “completely burnt”. For what concerns superlative forms, Prósper adds that Lusitanian probably did not share the introduction of the complex suffix *\*-is-amo-*, which can be noticed systematically in Celtic and Italic languages and retained the original form *\*-amo-*.<sup>213</sup>

For what concerns the sequence ARIMO PRAESONDO, Prósper analyses it as an ablative or instrumental absolute construction. According to this theory, ARIMO might be a derivative in *-mo*, built from an enlarged version of the root *\*h<sub>2</sub>er-* “assemble”, while PRAESONDO could be interpreted as an active present participle of

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<sup>210</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 6.

<sup>211</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ibidem*.

<sup>212</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 4-6.

<sup>213</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 6.

a compound *\*preh2i-* + *h1s-ont-*, which presents a generalisation of the thematic ending, attested in Oscan as well. Comparing it with the present participle of Latin *praesum*, *praesens*, which appears very similar, the meaning can be reconstructed to something like “being in front” or “present”, “taking presence”, “propitious”. The linguist does not share the hypothesis that the desinence *-o*, spotted in this sequence, could mark the dative singular, deriving from the ending *\*-ōi*. While in some of her older works she did not reject this theory and took it into consideration for the interpretation of some Lusitanian inscriptions, she dismissed it after analysing new data. As a matter of fact, in a new inscription studied by Sánchez Salor and Esteban Ortega<sup>214</sup> there is a form LABBO, the god to whom the ritual is dedicated, which the two linguists analyse as a dative singular. Prósper, however, does not agree with their hypothesis and interprets LABBO as a simple dative plural in *-<BO>*: this ending is likely to be the evolution of the Indo-European form *\*-bhos* and works well for the interpretation of the word LABBO found in Cabeço das Fraguas as well. Therefore, the linguist believes that all the forms ending in *-o* that had been analysed as markers of the dative singular should be read as endings expressing a different case, which might be the thematic ablative or the instrumental, given the fact that their syncretisation happened very early in Italic. The same phenomenon could have taken place in Lusitanian.<sup>215</sup>

The words in the accusative case following SINGEIETO are interpreted by Prósper as a list of victims offered to the goddesses AMPILVA and LOIMINNA, mentioned later on in the same line. The linguist believes the two deities could be the recipients of the sacrifice because their ending in *-a* matches with the one of LOIMINNA, attested in Cabeço das Fraguas. After their names, other forms in the accusative case follow (INDI ENV/PETANIM. INDI AR/IMOM. SINTAMO/M. INDI TEVCOM / SINTAMO(M)). It is likely that this sequence reflected the one reported above: some victims are offered to a God with the construction Accusative+Dative. This means that the forms in the accusative written after LOIMINNA could be offerings as

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<sup>214</sup> Sánchez Salor Eustaquio, Esteban Ortega Julio, *Un testimonio del dios «Labbo» en una inscripción lusitana de Plasencia, Cáceres. ¿«Labbo» también en Cabeço das Fráguas?*, Emerita, Revista de Lingüística y Filología Clásica LXXXIX 1, 2021, pp. 105-126 quoted by Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 7.

<sup>215</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 6-7.

well and they could be followed by the name of some divinities to whom the sacrifice was dedicated or of those officiating the ceremony.<sup>216</sup>

In relation to the word TEVCOM, Prósper connects it to *\*téuko-*, which corresponds to the the Italic noun *\*téuko-*, probably meaning “fat”. It is interesting to underline that TEVCOM and TEVCACOM, written some lines above in the text, cannot be words of Celtic origin, because they retain the Indo-European diphthong /eu/, while Celtic languages, especially those of the Iberian Peninsula, seem to have the tendency to simplify these sounds and create monophthongs. For what concerns the meaning of TEVCOM SINTAMOM, the comparison with Italic led the linguist to think that it might indicate the fat or the hind legs of the victims. Similarly, ARIMOM SINTAMOM could refer to another anatomical part of the victim. In this case, it is likely that it was the shoulder or the upper arm, given that there are some Indo-European parallels, all originating from the form *\*H<sub>1</sub>H-mó-*, which point in this direction: Latin: *armus*, Sanskrit. *īrma-*. These were probably considered the best parts of the animal and were thus offered to the deities or to the authorities officiating the ritual. As it was already mentioned in section 2.4, it was very common to leave the best meat for magistrates and priests, while commoners had to purchase their ration from local butchers’ shops. The distribution and consummation of the meat can be considered the last step of the ritual. According to Prósper, this means that ARIMOM SINTAMOM and TEVCOM SINTAMOM can be read as “an explanatory expansion of ENVPETANIM”<sup>217</sup>, which could be translated as “choice meat”.<sup>218</sup>

The derivative adjective ENPETANIM is extensively analysed by Prósper, in her essay. Given the fact that the raising and backing of /o/ near labial stops is an early Lusitanian invention, the linguist reconstructs the word from which ENPETANIM could have originated in the form *\*en(i)-opetā-n-(i)jo-*, which shows similarities with Latin adjectives like *-āneus*, originating from compound verbs of the *-ā*-class, like *transportāneus*. Its suffix was so productive in Latin that it extended to other verb classes, creating new adjectives like *consentāneus*, deriving from the verb *consentiō*. She first compares ENPETANIM to Latin *optāre*, meaning “choose, wish”, verb

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<sup>216</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ibidem*.

<sup>217</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 8.

<sup>218</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 7-8.

which presents a great number of derivate compounds, like *exoptāre*, *adoptāre*, *praeoptāre*. There is a hypothesis which assumes that it might be a frequentative formation of the form *\*optā-*, or *\*opetā-*. As a matter of fact, the linguist states that: “Frequentative verbs in *-ā-* built from the past participle are a typically Italic innovation”<sup>219</sup>.

Vine<sup>220</sup> shares a different view on the etymology of ENPETANIM: he believes that Latin *optāre* and Umbrian *upetu* might originate from the form *\*hlop-ėje/o-*. The linguist believed that the Latin form *praedopiont*, used by Festus, was the outcome of a misinterpretation and thus a mistake the person who was copying the manuscript made. If this were the case, Latin *\*opiō* would not have existed. A possible hypothesis is that the Italic verb to which the suffix *-tāre* was attached could have disappeared in an early stage and forms like Umbrian *upetu* might simply be the genitive singular of *upeter*, the regular past participle of a possible verb *\*opeto-*. If this were the case, *upetu* would be the only survivor of the original paradigm: through the restoration of medial /e/ and the creation of the agent noun *\*ope-tōr* and the iterative *\*opetā-*, *\*optāre* was probably generated.<sup>221</sup>

Prósper finds occurrences of Umbrian *upetu* used mainly as what seems like a past participle but also as an imperative, although only on one occasion. The imperative *upetu* could have derived from *\*opeje-tōd*, while the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural form could be based on Italic *\*op-ē-*, evolution of the reconstructed form *\*Hop-ėje-*. This theory agrees and explains Viti’s hypothesis that «the relationship with prefixes must be of relevance to explain the very origin of frequentative verbs... We claim that in frequentative verbs the prefixed form is primary compared to its correspondent unprefixed form, that is, *exoptāre* is for example primary with respect to *optāre*». If this were the case, both Italic and Lusitanian might have directly inherited the innovative prefixed form *\*en(i)-opet-ā-jo/e-*.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 8.

<sup>220</sup> Vine Brent, *Latin opiō and optāre* in Fleishman L. et alii (eds.), *Essays in Poetics, Literary History and Linguistics Presented to Viacheslav Vsevolodovich Ivanov on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, Moscow, 1999 p. 520-526 quoted by Prósper Blanca M, *Ibidem*.

<sup>221</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 9.

<sup>222</sup> Prósper Blanca M, *Ivi*, p. 10.

In sum, the inscription of Arroyo de la Luz presents itself as a *lex sacra*, the extant Westernmost one. Firstly, it gives important information about the type of sacrifices and about the rituals following them practiced in this area. As it was mentioned in section 2.5, the cutting of the victim and the distribution of its parts to the people attending the ceremony were socially regulated and followed precise rules. The similarities with Italic and, in general, the Indo-European cultures appear quite strong in this text. For what concerns the language, the inscription shows many resemblances with other Indo-European languages, with a great number of parallels with the Italic ones, in particular. Even though the syntactic order and some vocabulary might have been partly influenced by Celtic languages, the variety of this text has many forms and sequences which match with the ones attested in Italic languages, such as Latin, Sabellic, Oscan and Umbrian. In other words, this document might represent further evidence that Lusitanian is not a Celtic language but shares some of their traits because of the frequent contacts with the neighbouring Celtic varieties spoken in the Iberian Peninsula. On the other hand, the analysis of this inscription might suggest that Lusitanian could be related to Italic languages.

#### **4. Final considerations.**

This worked offered a brief overview of multiple animal sacrifice in antiquity. Specifically, it presented a comparison between Lusitanian and the Italic languages and their respective cultures, in order to try to understand the origins of Lusitanian. This section contains a little selection of my personal thoughts and considerations about what was discussed in the previous chapters, in order to give a general overview of the challenges, the discoveries and the conclusions which characterise the writing of this work.

Since antiquity, humanity has been trying to research the origins of phenomena but also of itself. A useful tool to start with this investigation is language. Language is the expression of society, of the relationship between its members, of their personal vision of the world. The aims of historical linguistics and of history in general are two: analyse ancient languages, in one case, and civilisations, in the other, in order to understand the way in which our ancestors perceived the world they lived in but also reconstruct the linguistical and social evolution which led to today's society to better comprehend our own thought and perception of the world. The trifunctional theory, presented in chapter one, was one of the first attempts to categorise reality, in this case only the Indo-European world, in a scientific and systematic way. Dumézil's comparative work in various fields, including religion, mythology and literature led him to believe that the ancient Proto-Indo-European society could be characterised by three main castes, each one fulfilling a different need of the society. The French linguist has been thoroughly criticised for this theory, because some of the parallels he found were considered too forced and his associations a bit too simplistic, sometimes. One could argue that history and events eventually change the shape and the internal organisation of a society to the point that it could have nothing in common with its ancestor. Furthermore, language itself is subject to change: it means that even if two or more languages seem to share the lexical material related to a belief or an ideology, not necessarily the way those concepts are encoded in each society is the same as in past linguistic stages. Again, in principle the possibility of reconstructing a unitary Proto-Indo-European linguistic stage does not entail the same possibility of reconstructing a single, unitary Proto-Indo-European society in detail. Data about the animal sacrifice confirm that, in fact: Italic and Lusitanian texts show the remnants of a similar ritual

inheritance, but they also reflect different ways of adapting those rituals to historical societies, to their civil organization, to the specific historical situation.

This is absolutely plausible but it is also reasonable to think that some elements are so eradicated within that culture that they could still show, even if in a slightly or heavily changed version. Civilisations tend to borrow from other societies they have contacts with but they also tend to hold on to their traditions or to those of their immediate ancestors. This is the case of Christmas, a Christian holiday celebrated the same day of the Roman *Natalis Invicti*, a festival in honour of the birth of the solar deity. For what concerns the tripartite theory, this does not mean that every occurrence of tripartition in modern Indo-European societies necessarily dates back to the original Proto-Indo-European culture. In order to find out the roots of a phenomenon, it is necessary to trace its evolution step by step, going back in time as much as possible. Modern historical linguistics operates according to this principle. Unfortunately, the scarcity of written sources and information about certain populations and their languages result in the formulation of more or less solid theories, which cannot be totally confirmed. However, these hypotheses can still help shed light on the matter and lead us to a gradual comprehension of the ancient world.

This study focussed on multiple animal sacrifice, in particular. This type of ritual could be the expression of the religious but also the socio-political values of a society. As it was mentioned in chapter 2, religious ceremonies, especially if they were public, involved many fields of the society. The choice of the sacrificial victim depended on the physical characteristics possessed by the animal. However, these criteria, changed according to economic factors, to what the society could offer and to what it needed at the moment. If there was scarcity of bulls, for example, a sacrifice which usually required the immolation of this specific animal could be modified and the adult animal could be replaced with a younger beast, or with the female animal of the same species. Sacrifices were also public occasions used to display the power of certain social classes and to stress the social hierarchy. As it was mentioned in chapter 2, the artistic display of these ceremonies also showed the importance which was given to some phases of the sacrifice. The most represented parts were those in which the authorities (priests, emperors, senators, etc) played an active role, while the ones which were depicted the less corresponded to the moments in which they had to stay in the background or to the



private parts of the ceremony. For what concerns this matter, the access to the banquet where the sacrificial meat was displayed was not provided to the whole population but only to the elite class, who were showing, once again, that the social hierarchy had an impact on everyday life. Those who could not get direct access to sacrificial meat, as previously stated, had to buy it at local butchers' shops. Since meat was not eaten on a daily basis, especially by the poorest classes, sacrifice was practically the only occasion in which it was eaten. As a matter of fact, it was estimated that the majority of sacrificial meat sold in these shops belonged to immolated animals. One may wonder if animal sacrifice still had religious and spiritual meaning in some of these communities or if it was a mere device used to display socio-political influence and to regulate the food industry. This could be true for public sacrifices, which reflected the power of the highest social classes, but it could not be the case of private sacrifices, especially those concerning the cult of minor religions.

The social function of sacrifice can be easily detected in the Umbrian rituals illustrated in the Uguive Tables. The Tables describe public sacrifices which often involved the participation of the entire community. As it was mentioned in Chapter 2, a central theme in these ceremonies is the exclusion of the "other". This is reflected in the ritual of purification of the city, from which foreigners were excluded, and in the ritual of *piaculum*, which consisted in the immolation of a group of animals at each main gate door of Iguvium, so as to delimit the sacred space inside the city, to protect it from what the dangerous outside world. The Umbrian religion seems to insist on the opposition sacred/profane. Whatever corresponds to the former element is organised, safe and under the protection of the deities, while whatever is associated with the second term is dominated by chaos, evil and dangerous, because it cannot be controlled by the gods. As it was mentioned above, this polar opposition is expressed through the physical delimitation of space. The exclusion of the profane from the sacred space is not only practiced during religious ceremonies but in everyday life as well. The fact that Umbrians inhabited the city centre while foreigners were pushed to the peripheral areas of Iguvium can be seen as a way of exorcising the fear of the "other". The 'actual' text, however, tells us more: in particular it shows how those inherited pieces of archaic thoughts were still available as a kind of 'political' instruments. The Iguvinian community grounded itself on sharing those rituals, and in doing so Iguvinian people

stressed their political specificities with respect to the Romans. It is crucial to highlight that we could not understand that without the textual remnants of the rituals: it is the language, the way it is employed and renewed for explaining the rituals, that gives us the key to interpret the meaning' of the ritual itself for that society.

Unlike Umbrians, Romans did not fear the “other”. One important aspect of this civilisation is actually its tolerance for other cultures. Romans were colonisers but they were always respectful of the native population's traditions and beliefs. The process of romanisation happened very gradually and was not caused by an imposition but by the gradual integration of the Roman administrative system and by the settlement of Roman citizens, who eventually mixed with the local population. This openness towards the “other” can be spotted in the continuous borrowing of religious cults, gods and probably even rituals from other cultures. This could be caused by two elements which characterise the Roman civilization. First of all, they originated from the melting pot of different populations, which contributed to form a varied and rich cultural background. Secondly, their military system and their social structure were so complex yet well-organised that for a long time they were practically unbeatable and very aware of that, so they did not need to worry that much about possible intruders.

This respect Romans showed towards the colonising populations can be spotted in the culture of native civilisations of the Iberian Peninsula from the III millennium to the phase of total romanisation of the area. As Romans did not impose their religion, these populations carried on practice their religious cults for many centuries after the settlement of the colonisers. This could be the case of Lusitanian, an Indo-European language, spoken by a community who probably inhabited central Portugal and the Western region of Estremadura, in Spain. This idiom is the main subject of this work. To be more precise, showing the parallels which can be spotted between this language and the Italic ones was the ultimate aim of this study. As it was mentioned in chapter 3, many are the hypotheses on the origins of Lusitanian, which is clearly a Western Indo-European language but which cannot be categorised into any of its sub-families due to the scarcity of native written material. The few extant inscriptions in Lusitanian are written in the Latin alphabet, showing a good degree of Romanisation of this population. One could argue that the Italic elements which can be found in these texts could be a result of the influence of the Roman colonisers but, for what concerns some

of these characteristics this hypothesis is not solid. The elements which Lusitanian share with Italic languages concern both language and religious cults. Similarities are visible on many different levels: morphology, syntax, phonetics, vocabulary. The parallelisms noticed between the Lusitanian and the Italic ritual formulas and religious terminology cannot be ignored. From what it can be inferred by the few written sources, multiple animal sacrifices seem to have had a central role in the Lusitanian religion. The recurrence of triads of victims, especially pigs, bulls and sheep, not only shows connections to the Dumizilian trifunctional theory and to the Indo-European world but also indicate a probable correlation with other Italic rituals which consisted in the immolation of three animals as well, like the Roman *suovetaurilia* or the ceremonies described in the Iguvine Tables. A thorough parallel between the Lusitanian data and the far richer documentation from the Latin-Italic world should take into consideration many aspects indeed: the difficulty in offering an interpretation for many Lusitanian words, whose etymology is sometimes uncertain; the relevant differences in the way the rituals are presented and framed: the deities to which they are dedicated, the officiants who manage them, their social meaning. The careful analyses by Prósper have shown that it is possible to interpret Lusitanian data in the light of Umbrian rituals, both from a linguistic and ‘material’ point of view. This would have very relevant consequences in our knowledge of Indo-European antiquity: not only with respect to the genealogical relationship between Italic and other Western peoples, but (perhaps, even more) from the point of view of understanding how archaic Indo-European pieces of culture, rituals and myths underwent original developments in different areas of the ancient Indo-European Europe.

As it was already affirmed in chapter 3, the similarities spotted in this work do not automatically label Lusitanian as an Italic language but, at least, they offer solid bases for the potential affirmation of this thesis. On the contrary, the Celtic theory does not report remarkable parallels between Celtic languages and Lusitanian neither for what concerns language, which shows only superficial similarities, which could have been acquired through the contact between the two populations, nor for what concerns the religious domain, at least in relation to multiple animal sacrifice, which does not seem to be a very common practice in the Celtic world. As it can be noticed, historical linguistics, despite the application of the scientific method, which results in a great level

of accuracy, is an evolving field, which is still characterised by a certain degree of subjectiveness in the analysis. However, the great advancements made in the last few years in this area could represent a step towards a more accurate interpretation of ancient languages and their respective cultures.

## Conclusions

The main goal of this work was to show the similarities and the parallels between Lusitanian and Italic languages and cultures within the context of multiple animal sacrifice, in order to support the theory which suggests that these languages could be related.

The first chapter focused on the analysis of the Dumézilian trifunctional theory and its critics and modern developments. After a brief introduction on the intellectual background in which Dumézil operated, the first part was dedicated to the explanation of the theory, which stated that the recurrent tripartition showed by the literature, the mythology and the religion of some ancient and modern Indo-European cultures is the expression of the Proto-Indo-European social hierarchy, which was likely to be composed by three main castes, each fulfilling a social function: the priests, the warriors and the farmers. The explanation of the theory was accompanied by some examples of its expression in Indo-European societies, especially the Indian one. The main source used for this section, Dumézil's *L'ideologie tripartite des Indo-Européennes*<sup>223</sup>, or any other work written by the French linguist can provide many more. The second part of this chapter aimed to demonstrate the impact Dumézil's comparative work had on modern thought: as it was shown in this section, his studies were criticised by many but admired by many other and they represented the starting point for new developments of this subject. A very interesting expansion of this theory is the one developed by Emily Lyle, briefly summarised here but explained in detail in her essay *Which Triad? A Critique and Development of Dumézil's Tripartite Structure*<sup>224</sup>.

The second chapter was dedicated to the study of multiple animal sacrifice in Western Europe, especially in Italic cultures. The first section presented a description of the Roman *suovetaurilia*, an animal sacrifice which consisted in the immolation of three victims (a pig, a sheep and a bull), and contained a special section, dedicated to the analysis of Cato's lustration of the field prayer, recited before the performing of a *suovetaurilia*. The poem showed the use of a very archaic language, consisting of vocabulary and fixed formulas which can be reconducted to classical Indo-European

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<sup>223</sup> Dumézil George, *L'ideologia tripartita degli Indoeuropei*, Il Cerchio, 2015.

<sup>224</sup> Lyle Emily, *Which Triad? A Critique and Development of Dumézil's Tripartite Structure*, *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, Janvier - Mars 2004, Vol. 221, p. 5-21

poetics. The analysis presented by Watkins in his book *How to kill a dragon*<sup>225</sup> offers more detailed information on this matter. The second section offered a brief general overview of the content of the Iguvine Tables, the most important document of the Umbrian civilisation. The main themes recurring in the description of the different sacrificial ceremonies were the power of the spoken word, the obsessive search for perfection in the performance of ritual actions and the importance of delimitating the sacred space, in order to protect the city from the dangerous outside world. For a detailed linguistic analysis of the Iguvine Tables, *Le tavole iguvine*<sup>226</sup>, by Aldo Prosdocimi, is strongly suggested. The third section, which contained a small presentation of the animal ritual practices in the Celtic world, showed that, while animal sacrifice was quite common, the immolation of multiple victims at the same time was not largely attested in this civilisation. The last section of this chapter, comprehending a general analysis of animal sacrifice in antiquity, underlined the importance of the comparison between different types of sources, in order to obtain a plausible interpretation of the modalities in which this practice was conducted in antiquity.

The third chapter was entirely devoted to the study and the analysis of the Lusitanian language. The first section contained a brief overview of the linguistic history of this idiom but also the presentation of the different hypotheses suggesting its possible roots. As it was shown, the Celtic hypothesis is based mainly on the fact that Lusitanian and Celtiberian share some vocabulary, while the Italic one can count on many linguistic and cultural parallels with the Italic populations, including similar basic vocabulary, morphology and ritual practices. The second section comprehended the linguistic and anthropological analysis of three Lusitanian inscriptions. What can be noticed in this chapter is that the similarities between Lusitanian and Italic language seem to be more solid than the ones between this Lusitanian and Celtic languages, because they are spotted in the deepest structure of the language. As for the sources used in this part of the thesis, Prósper's works are strongly suggested for their detailed linguistic and anthropological analyses of the Lusitanian inscription.

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<sup>225</sup> Watkins Calvert, *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*, Oxford University Press, USA, 1995, p. 197-213.

<sup>226</sup> Prosdocimi Aldo, *Le Tavole Iguvine*, Leo S. Olshki Editore, Firenze, 1984.

The fourth chapter, containing my personal thoughts and considerations about the information gathered in the three preceding chapters, aimed to give this work a unitary vision, which was expressed by a comparison between the different ways in which religion influences societies and by a discussion on the main purposes of historical linguistics.

Despite its limitations, this work tried to present the main linguistic and anthropological parallels which can be spotted between Lusitanian and Italic languages. While it represents a very discussed and studied subject in the Iberian Peninsula, it is a rather original topic in Italy. More detailed linguistical and anthropological studies on the ancient common roots shared by Italic languages could be a useful comparison to the extant analyses of Lusitanian inscriptions and they could lead to a better comprehension of the origins of this Western Indo-European language.

## **Abstract**

La storia linguistica della Penisola Iberica è tanto affascinante quanto complessa. L'epoca preromana vede l'insediamento di diverse popolazioni, Indo-Europee e non. La scarsità di fonti scritte della maggior parte di queste lingue permette di ricavare solo una quantità limitata di informazioni sulla storia e la cultura di queste civiltà. Questo lavoro si focalizza sull'analisi del Lusitano, una lingua Indo-Europea occidentale parlata da popolazioni preromane stanziate tra l'area più centrale del Portogallo e la zona più occidentale della Spagna, corrispondente all'attuale regione dell'Estremadura. Il Lusitano non conobbe l'uso della scrittura fino all'epoca della colonizzazione romana, perciò le uniche iscrizioni esistenti sono scritte in alfabeto latino e non coprono la fase più arcaica della storia di questa civiltà. Per questo motivo, la classificazione linguistica del Lusitano è sempre stata materia di dibattito. Tra le teorie proposte, ce ne sono due che spiccano: l'ipotesi che il lusitano sia una lingua celtica e quella che sia una lingua italica. La prima teoria, sostenuta, tra gli altri, da Untermann, ipotizza che il lusitano, così come tutte le altre lingue Indo-Europee parlate nell'antica Penisola Iberica, siano celtiche. Questa ipotesi si appoggia soprattutto alle somiglianze tra alcuni toponimi, antroponimi e teonimi riscontrati in celtiberico e in lusitano. La seconda teoria, sostenuta soprattutto da Prósper, ipotizza che le popolazioni Indo-Europee che invasero la Penisola Iberica per la prima volta potessero essere non soltanto celtiche, ma anche appartenenti ad altre famiglie linguistiche. Il lusitano, secondo questa ipotesi, sarebbe una lingua di origine italica, poiché presenta fenomeni fonetici, morfologici e lessicali simili a quelli riscontrati in lingue come il latino o l'antico umbro. Inoltre, l'analisi delle iscrizioni lusitane rivela interessanti paralleli tra i sacrifici animali multipli eseguiti dai lusitani e quelli compiuti dalle popolazioni italiche. Il fine ultimo di questo studio è appoggiare l'ipotesi che il lusitano sia una lingua di origine italica. Per fare ciò, verranno messi a confronto testi italici e iscrizioni lusitane, per cercare somiglianze a livello linguistico e culturale. La tesi si aprirà con un capitolo introduttivo, che presenterà la teoria trifunzionale, elaborata da Georges Dumézil intorno alla metà del XX secolo, e che fornirà gli strumenti adeguati per affrontare un'analisi comparatistica all'interno del mondo indo-europeo. Il secondo capitolo sarà invece dedicato all'analisi del sacrificio animale nelle popolazioni indo-europee occidentali, focalizzandosi prevalentemente sulle popolazioni italiche. Le quattro sezioni tratteranno,



rispettivamente: della suovetaurilia, un sacrificio multiplo praticato a Roma; dei sacrifici animali multipli descritti nelle Tavole Iguvine, il più importante documento scritto riguardante la civiltà umbra; il sacrificio animale e la concezione della religione presso i popoli celtici, che sembrano praticare spesso il sacrificio animale singolo ma non quello multiplo; lo studio di resti zoo-archeologici e il rapporto conflittuale che può venire a crearsi dal confronto con altri tipi di fonti utili allo studio del sacrificio animale. Il terzo capitolo sarà incentrato sull'analisi linguistica e culturale di tre iscrizioni lusitane, il cui contenuto sarà confrontato con quello dei documenti analizzati nei capitoli precedenti, per ricercare parallelismi e somiglianze tra Lusitano e lingue italiche. La tesi si chiuderà con una riflessione personale che comprenderà tutti i temi affrontati nei capitoli precedenti.

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