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## Diversity in Death

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**Abstract:** The archaeology of death in pre-Roman Italy frequently focuses on important issues such as social stratification, gender roles and ancestor cult. Central Italy, taken as the regions Etruria, *Latium Vetus* or Old Latium, the *Sabina Tiberina* and the Faliscan-Capenate area, was however home to various Peoples and is diverse in many aspects. This variation is mirrored in the funerary record and reveals differences between main centres in each of the four above-mentioned regions. For example, the wealth as deposited in tombs fluctuated considerably per centre and period as if status differences were less expressed in some settlements than in others. Local, cultural choices in funerary rites, and even per clan, are examined in this paper in the broader context of identity. It will address issues such as child burials and the structural presence of elaborate warrior tombs in Etruria during the eighth century BC while they hardly occur in *Latium Vetus* and the other regions. The point of departure will be our excavations at Crustumerium at the crossing into these four regions since the interpretation of its funerary record remains puzzling due to assimilation of diverse cultural traits of the surrounding Peoples and its traditional rituals and ceremonies encasing death ([www.Crustumerium.nl](http://www.Crustumerium.nl); Attema et al. 2016).

### **Introduction**

At the northern perimeter of modern Rome, the Groningen Institute of Archaeology (GIA), in collaboration with the *Soprintendenza Speciale per il Colosseo e l'Area Archeologica Centrale* (SSCol), has excavated tombs with students, approximately a summer's month each year for over a decade. These tombs pertain to the frontier settlement of Crustumerium that existed as a habitation centre developing into a town from ca. 850 to 500 BC. It is not just a frontier in terms of several ethnic groups at its doorsteps but also in terms of an urban-non urban divide (Fig. 1). Crustumerium is the last settlement centre on the major road, the *Salaria*, going towards the *Sabina Tiberina*, developing definite urban characteristics during the seventh and sixth centuries BC with a population of a couple of thousands. Moreover, there is no settlement in central Italy that is geographically so near to so many tribal/ethnic groups. Fusion of diverse cultural characteristics is reflected in its material remains. Looking for comparable features of the funerary record as those observed at Crustumerium, one is

forced to examine tombs in *Latium Vetus*, of nearby Etruria, the Sabina and the Faliscan-Capenate territory. Doing so, one becomes aware of the considerable differences in burial rituals and ceremonies recorded for central Italy. This understanding is reflected in the present paper. For example, some of the tomb categories at Crustumerium refer to those in the Faliscan-Capenate area; the Narce and Montarone types with one or two lateral niches for the deposition of the deceased (di Gennaro & Belelli Marchesini 2014; Attema et al. 2016). It resulted at Crustumerium in a more varied tomb typology than in most other Latin centres. Another feature of the rituals and ceremonies surrounding death at Crustumerium is its conservative character as if differences in social status and class are less expressed in the funerary domain than at many nearby centres. In discussions, the assumption is frequently that one can also find elaborate tombs of high ranking individuals or *tombe principesche* at Crustumerium once excavations continue. The implicit premise is that with indefinite funds, the archaeological record of the numerous settlements in this region will become alike. Still, with a couple of elaborate high-ranking tombs at Crustumerium eventually to be excavated in the future, the statement remains that the approximately 400 tombs known so far, are modest and conventional in comparison to many other centres in its vicinity. It seems to me more rewarding to ponder on the available data and to examine diversity in death at different levels as a distinctive part in the construction of identity in pre-Roman Italy. In ancient literature and anthropology this variety is recorded at several degrees, be it at an individual level, of extended families, clans/*gentes*, of early states/city-states or of funerary differences per tribe/People. These are the increasingly more complex social-economic units we are dealing with during the period examined. A well known example on the level of Peoples is the Latin demise of tombs dating to the sixth century BC and later (Colonna 1977; Willemsen 2014). This is striking when compared to the funerary wealth in most Etruscan city-states. The restrained material culture of the Latin People of the fifth century BC and later is thus preceded by a general moderation of its funerary ceremonies from the sixth century BC onwards becoming a cultural attribute for them. It has to be noted that also in this respect Crustumerium does not conform to other centres in *Latium Vetus* since numerous sixth century BC tombs are recorded at the site as if in line with the simultaneous rise of chamber tombs in the neighbouring *Sabina Tiberina* (cf. Santoro 1996; Cifani 2008, 324).

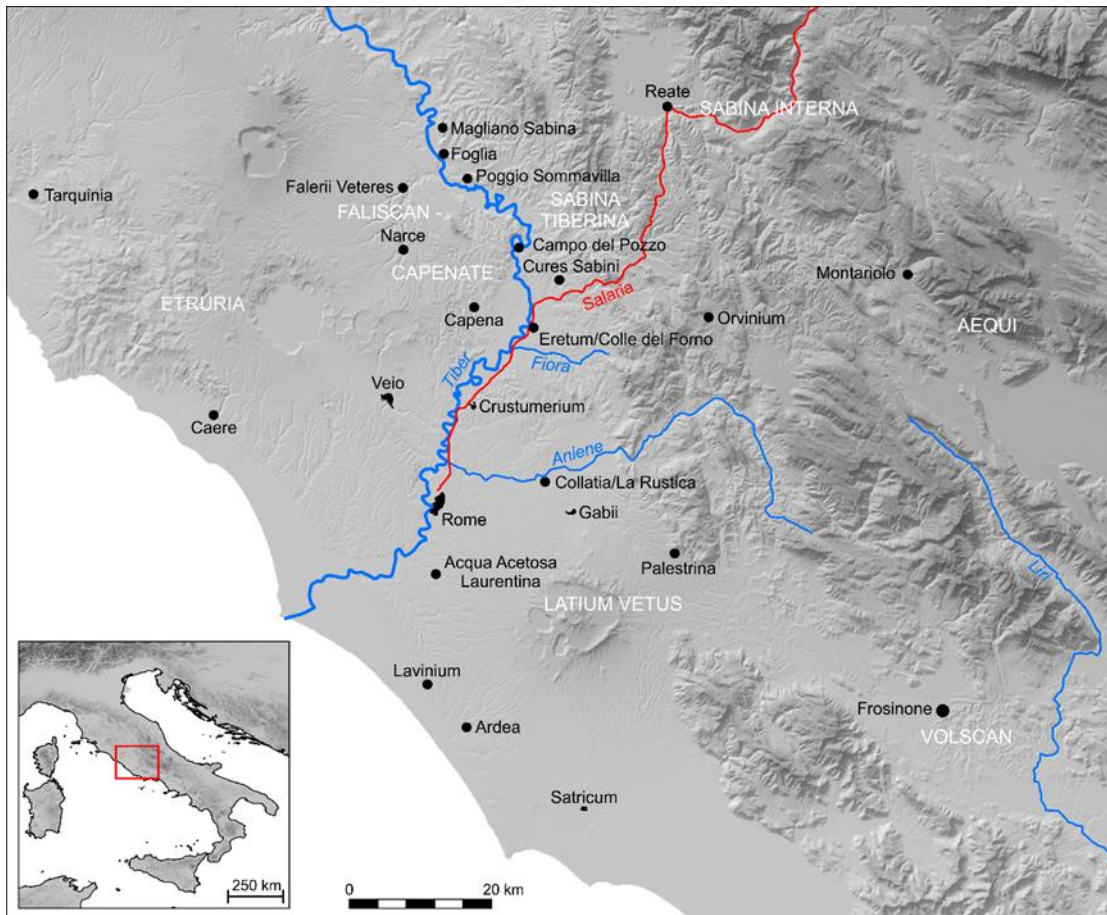


Figure 1: Map of regions immediately around Rome and Crustumerium as examined in this paper with the Peoples involved and the sites discussed.

I will employ the terms rite, ritual and ceremony as described by Jill Baker in her sensible book *'The funerary kit'* (2012). *A rite moves a person of one state of being to another, described as a rite of passage; death being the ultimate rite of passage. Rituals, consisting of the prescribed formulas, both define the specific rite and facilitate its execution. Finally, ceremony is the public, outward expression of both the rite and the ritual, which announces to the community that the aspirant(s) undergoing the rite now occupies a new status in society. During the ceremony, rite specific formulae are performed, which may include liturgies, actions, songs, chants, and prayers. Community members who attend and participate in the ceremony act as witnesses to the transformation* (From: Baker 2012, 39).

Thus, the final rite of passage, death, is accompanied by rituals and ceremonies, some of which result in lasting material culture that can be excavated.

This paper will elaborate on issues introduced above by providing examples and discussions. It will remain nonetheless an introductory article since an in-depth theoretical and definitive examination of the topic *'Diversity in death'* in central Italy, requires far more text, data and illustrations than feasible here.

### **Selection; who was buried and who was not?**

Intricate selection criteria in burial rituals and ceremonies are recorded in anthropology and history for numerous communities (cf. Morris 1989; Trigger 2003). Nonetheless selection customs remain an issue in discussions with a number of colleagues because they frequently

point to limited data sets and the hit and miss character of archaeological preservation, recovery and even publication. Considering the evidence available at present in the surroundings of Rome, consisting of thousands and thousands of tombs, of which a couple of thousands are fully published, it should be feasible to draw at least some conclusions. Established is that the process of social stratification is mirrored in elaborately furnished tombs from ca. 800 till 650 BC in all three regions around Rome but hardly in the Sabina (Fulminante 2003; 2014; Nijboer 2008a; see below). A catalogue of such rich tombs is not available but there are some guide fossils in the form of specific status symbols that indicate the scale of the phenomenon. The books written by Sciacca and Emiliozzi, give an impression. Sciacca (2005) catalogued more than 400 ribbed bowls dating from the ninth to sixth centuries BC and found from Iran to Spain and from central Europe to Palestine/Israel. The form of these bowls originates in the Near/Middle East and they were mainly used during elite banqueting ceremonies. More than 300 of these *patere bacellate* were found in high status tombs in Italy dating to the eight and seventh centuries BC, among many other valuables. It needs to be stressed that most of these bowls are made in Italy itself. Another marker for the vigour with which the elite in Italy furnished their tombs, are the approximately 130 tombs listed by Emiliozzi (1997) that contained, amongst others, parts of chariots/carriages/wagons dating to the eight till first half of the sixth century BC. It is established that the structural, massive demand for status goods in central Italy, recovered predominantly in tombs, was a main incentive for craft specialisation in ornate, high-value commodities, which subsequently, assisted by simulation and increasing demand, led gradually to craft specialisation for commoners during the period 650 to 550 BC, being one of the prerequisites for urbanisation. It follows that future, increasing quantities of richly furnished tombs to be excavated in Etruria, *Latium Vetus* and the Faliscan-Capenate region, as nice and costly as it is to find, restore and publish such tombs, will not contribute much to our understanding of increasing class distinctions. Nonetheless, a rise in the number of high-status tombs in the Sabina for the period 800-650 BC would alter our perspective on the Sabines (see below).

Furthermore we know that the proportion of the population found in the burial grounds is not representative of the whole community. Selection took place according to gender and age categories. Probably some status groups or specific clans were excluded, or excluded themselves, as well (see below). For example, infants and children are largely missing in the funerary record if one takes into account that up to 50 per cent of all children did not reach the age of five (Scheidel 1999, 266).<sup>i</sup> Thus child depositions would have constituted a considerable proportion of the burials if they all had received a ceremony with a funeral in lasting tombs. In addition, the quantity of early eighth century BC tombs at Crustumerium is so far limited, making it probable that a restricted group of people were buried (di Gennaro et al 2016). This is in line with the limited number of eighth century BC tombs known in the Sabina. It has also been pointed out that in several burial grounds in southern Etruria and *Latium Vetus*, female tombs outnumber male tombs during the eighth and seventh century BC (cf. Bartoloni 1997, 100-1). It is therefore recognized that only part of the population is formally buried in tombs. Possibly up to 50 or 75 per cent of the population was not deposited in tombs throughout the seventh and sixth century BC in central Italy (Nijboer & Willemsen 2012). For *Latium Vetus* and the Sabina this percentage was even much higher during the sixth century BC and later since hardly any tombs have been recorded while simultaneously there are data that document ongoing centralisation in the *Sabina Tiberina* and urbanisation in *Latium Vetus*.

Other forms of selection are listed in the subsequent sections that cover the various prevailing social-economic units at hand starting with the individual till we finally arrive at the level of tribes, Peoples and early states that definitely existed by the sixth century BC. Though each of the units presented would require an anthropological description appropriate for the century examined, while some can even overlap such as tribes, Peoples and early States, I employ these terms informal. What all these units vied for though, was identity reflected in stories, customs, ceremonies and behaviour; not our present, individualistic concepts of what identity should entail but a far more religiously, morally and socially embedded form of self, accompanying smaller communities and tighter networks. Many of such identities can be described through the material remains of the archaeological record.

A final remark concerns those who were not buried in tombs or whose death did not result in tangible goods. Obviously they underwent the *rite de passage* from alive to deceased and this will have been accompanied by rituals and ceremonies in some form. Unfortunately for us, this form seems not to have resulted in lasting material culture that can be excavated. I consider this form of ritual and ceremony to be a culturally defined feature of identity as well while many others point to limited data.

Adding diversity brings controversy. It is hopefully obvious that I will reconsider my statements if future, published excavations document opposing evidence. However, as always, scale remains of importance. So a couple of Sabine tombs of the ninth to seventh centuries BC are not the same as numerous Iron Age burial grounds with occasionally hundreds of tombs known from the other three territories discussed.

The subsequent five paragraphs will introduce diversities in a sequence of increasing social-economic complexity from the individual who is part of a nuclear and extended family, member of a clan to finally a resident in an early state. Each individual has thus multiple identities, as family member but also as clan associate, soldier, farmer or priestess. These compounded identities explain to some extent the diversity in death documented. Ancestor cults formed part of the individuality of elite families while clans, tribes/Peoples often venerated a mythical ancestor, the tomb of whom could become a place of worship (see below). Thus legendary genealogies were often constructed to support identity either as high-ranking families or as clans. It is especially in the religious domain that exceptions to the customs are recorded. For example, a couple of individuals were selected to be buried, some of which possibly even sacrificed, next to the shrine on the *Pianoro della Civita* while the contemporaneous practice was to bury the deceased in one of the many Iron Age cemeteries surrounding the settlement of Tarquinia (Bonghi Jovino 2007; 2010). Some other examples of religious exceptions in the funerary domain will be given further on. Most paragraphs are closed with echoes from the ancient literary record that reflect on the rituals and ceremonies surrounding death in Roman history but that can be linked to features of the archaeological record in central Italy for the period 950-350 BC.

### **Individual**

A bewildering variety surrounding death is recorded on an individual level. Each tomb is different in detail and requires full publication for study. Combined however, tombs per phase share some, or even many, features as both tombs at Crustumerium illustrate (Fig. 2). Despite Fig. 2, no real standard seems to have existed and was neither strived for. Ritual and ceremony are established but definitely not rigid. It would be senseless to pursue the issue

of variation for each of the thousands of tombs published. Instead I concentrate on a few examples of tombs that are most specific, either in terms of position within the settlement or burial ground, their subsequent history or their role within religion. In addition, I will present one example of individual choices per site in terms of expenditure.



Figure 2: Comparable but not identical artefact assemblages in tombs at Crustumerium around 650 BC; Tomb 223 of the Monte del Bufalo cemetery and Tomb 34 of the Sasso Bianco necropolis (Adapted from: Nijboer & Attema 2012, Fig. 8 and Beelli Marchesini 2006, p. 225)

An individual Early Iron Age tomb that is marked by its extraordinary position is the one on Piazza d'Armi at Veio, on the small tufa outcrop just to the south of the main settlement plateau. Excavation revealed a male adult inhumation surrounded by small post-holes (Bartoloni 2002–2003; 2007–2008; Riva 2015). The grave is radiocarbon dated to 940–810 BC and contained hardly any grave-goods except for a bronze fibula and a ceramic fragment. Status is therefore not marked by symbolic or luxury goods as the elaborate warrior tombs of the subsequent eighth century BC at Veio (cf. de Santis 2005a). The tomb at Piazza d'Armi is therefore unusual for its location and ritual at a time when cremation was the norm in southern Etruria. Northwest of the burial there is evidence for a ceremony that involved animal remains, also surrounded by post-holes. These post-holes indicate an elliptical hut covering the burial and pit. Around 750–700 BC, a rectangular building in wood replaced the

earlier hut, marking the intention to maintain the original burial site for commemoration (Bartoloni 2007–2008: 828–829). Thus the Iron Age settlement at Piazza d'Armi was ritually marked by this exceptional burial. Bartoloni considers the deceased to have been a pivotal figure for Veio, an interpretation supported by the preservation and re-elaboration of the original burial site in later times (Bartoloni 2007–2008: 823).

Contemporaneous tombs at Veio are predominantly found in the several burial grounds surrounding the settlement recording a cremation ritual. Of some men the ashes were subsequently placed in a hut-urn. The Piazza d'Armi tomb has attracted much interest due to the circumstance that it is marked by a hut as if we are dealing with an elaborate adaptation of these contemporaneous hut-urns in the burial grounds outside the settlement. These hut-urns are miniature version of genuine huts to live in, but seem to have housed the ashes of important men. To what extent the Piazza d'Armi tomb is associated with the monumental structures and temple of the late seventh and sixth centuries BC, is open to debate though the whole setting implies an important ancestor who was venerated for generations at Veio and whose funeral was an exceptional ceremony for the community he was part of.

Other individual tombs that stand out on account of their subsequent use and history are for example, the tombs in the oldest tumulus at Corvaro (see below under clan) or the *heroon* of Lavinium, where a high-ranking male was buried three generations before his tomb was consecrated as a cultic place associated with *Indiges*. Torelli (2013) linked this cult to that of Chthonian Fathers, such as Innus, a god of archaic Latium, who had a sanctuary at Fosso dell'Incastro (Ardea). Therefore the rituals surrounding the Chthonian Fathers developed in Lavinium at the tomb of this individual buried around 680 BC and this cult seems to have existed in some other archaic Latin towns as well. At Lavinium the archaeological data are more diagnostic than elsewhere, partially due to a text by Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Two major archaic sanctuaries are excavated at Lavinium, in addition to this tomb that became officially considered to be that of Aeneas, the undisputed ancestor of all the Latins. The tomb and its later adjustments were excavated in the early 1970's. The cult at this site started at least from the early sixth century BC onwards, when an older elite tomb, dated around 680 BC, was consecrated with a sacrifice including a *stèle*, a Greek transport amphora and a bucchero *oinochoe* (Sommella 1971–72). The individual buried in this tomb during the early seventh century BC, was at least 75 years later, considered to be the *Indiges* of Lavinium (Torelli 2013). Later on, in the second half of the fourth century BC, a cenotaph was built over the small tumulus that was ca. 300 years later visited by Dionysius of Halicarnassus as a place of worship. Dionysius reported an inscription that, according to Torelli, can be translated as the "(Tomb) of the Chthonian Father, who governs the course of the river Numicius" (Dion.Hal. 1.64.539). This line records that in the fourth century BC, the monument was still dedicated to *Indiges*. It is only during the second century BC that the Roman pontiffs officially recognized that the *Pater Indiges*, one of the ancestors of the Latin people, was equivalent to Aeneas, as Dionysius observed during his visit to Lavinium (Torelli 2013).

A fine example of an individual, whose tomb has less biographic and mythical memoirs than both tombs at Veio and Lavinium mentioned above, is Capena Tomb XVI, presented in detail by Mura Sommella (2004-2005). The man buried here can be identified as a sort of warrior-trader. The burial is dated around 700 BC and extremely rich in its associated finds including banqueting equipment and a chariot. The identification as warrior-trader is based on its 21



iron weapons and the presence of 2 ceramic, miniature boats. Mura Sommella interprets these boats as truthful imitations in miniature of vessels to navigate and cross rivers; the nearby Tiber, for example. She therefore considers them as symbols of the mercantile interests of the deceased (Mura Sommella 2004-2005, 283-4). This reading of Capena Tomb XVI is supported here. Miniaturisation of existing buildings and goods has a long, elaborate history in this region and calls for a symbolic reading, be it the hut-urns representing existing dwellings mentioned above or the *panoplia* in miniature in rare Latial tombs of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> century BC (Bietti Sestieri & de Santis 2008; de Santis 2011). Moreover, Capena Tomb XVI is compatible with earlier warrior-trader tombs in the Eastern Mediterranean (Nijboer 2008 b). We do not only have a significant number of weapons in these tombs but also a funerary ritual that incorporated drinking and eating as if in many regions around the Mediterranean, an elaborate funerary banquet was a structural part of the ceremony surrounding the death of some.

Many more emblematic individual tombs in central Italy could be listed, but this would add little to the statement that for specific individuals a number of extraordinary rituals and ceremonies were constructed to mark their importance for the community they came to represent.

Apart from the tombs of selected persons presented above, there are also general differences in funerary rituals per individual settlement. As example, I compare the burial grounds at Crustumerium with those at Collatia/La Rustica. Diversity in death per site can be elaborated for more settlements in the region but one example has to suffice here. Though the funerary record of both sites is merely published preliminary, the data known to me, reveal a considerable difference in rituals and ceremonies, especially in terms of excavated grave goods. Fig. 3 illustrates the most elaborate female tomb at Crustumerium (Tomb 232) dated around 650 BC and at Collatia (Tomb 81) dated around 750-700 BC. The contrast records a significant difference in quantity and value of artefacts given to the deceased. While the lady buried in Collatia/La Rustica Tomb 81 is literally covered in bronze and amber, the lady in Crustumerium Tomb 232 held merely a limited number of significant ornaments (Nijboer & Willemsen 2012). Moreover, there are other tombs at Collatia that outstrip those at Crustumerium, in quantity and value of funerary goods (<http://www.beniculturali.it/mibac/multimedia/MiBAC/documents/feed/pdf/comunicato%20stampa-imported-55938.pdf>; CLP 1976, 153-65; Fulminante 2003, 193; Pitzalis 2011, 126). A fine example is the male buried in Collatia tomb 3, around 650 BC; one of the associated finds was a sceptre that had itself been placed in a wooden receptacle. Some of the ornate tombs from Collatia are since 2015 fully exhibited in the *Museo Nazionale Romano - Terme di Diocleziano*.



Figure 3: The most elaborate female tombs at Crustumerium (Tomb 232) dated around 650 BC and at La Rustica/Collatia (Tomb 81) dated around 750-700 BC. The contrast records a significant difference in quantity and value of artefacts given to the deceased.

Table I: Main similarities and differences between Collatia/La Rustica and Crustumerium.

	Size settlement	Fortifications	Urbanisation	Evidence for 6 <sup>th</sup> century BC monumental buildings	Number of burial grounds	Tombs excavated till AD 2016	Display of wealth during burial
Collatia / La Rustica	5 ha.	Yes	Limited	Limited	One	Ca. 400	Yes
Crustumerium	60 ha.	Yes	Yes	Yes	At least five, more clusters of tombs	Ca. 400	Limited

Table 1 summarizes a number of similarities and differences between both sites. Crustumerium is located on the main road, the Salaria, overlooking the Tiber valley while Collatia, ca. 12 kilometres to the SE of Crustumerium, is on the banks of the important tributary Aniene, guarding one of its crossings. Both are considered to be Latin settlements.

The richness of some tombs at Collatia is striking when compared to the general soberness of those at Crustumerium. The disparity in quantity and value of goods per site can be explained by local customs concerning funerary ritual and ceremony. While those at Collatia are opulent, the ones at Crustumerium reveal a restrained attitude towards the display of rank during the funeral. One could state that Crustumerium was poorer than the community at Collatia but this seems unlikely due to their similar position within the overland trading network and the fact that Crustumerium fully developed into a small town with a couple of thousand inhabitants during the seventh and sixth century BC while Collatia seems to be hampered in its urban development. The funerary rituals and ceremonies at Collatia appear to be more in line with those at some other secondary sites elsewhere in Italy. For example, the excessive wealth in the tombs at Verucchio, a hill-fort overlooking a coastal plain of the Adriatic and at Marsiliana d'Albegna on the border between North and South Etruria, is well known (Nijboer forthcoming). A third example would be the small settlement at Casale Marittima, located 15 kilometres to the south-west of Volterra that is the primary centre in the region. Esposito (1999) wrote the preliminary report on which this account is based. A small nucleus of ten burials in seven tombs, pertaining to two generations of a leading family, was found in a rural context in the territory of Volterra. A nearby settlement of huts, followed in time by larger rectangular buildings, may be related to this small cluster of burials. The settlement appears to be abandoned during the early sixth century BC. The extraordinary finds at Casale Marittimo exemplify the considerable wealth that could be destroyed in a funerary ceremony even at minor sites in the decades around 700 BC. These sites held important positions within the intricate overland exchange network and did not develop into towns during the sixth century BC. It is probable that control over inter-regional trade at key locations resulted in display of wealth in the funerary rituals and ceremonies at some secondary sites such as Collatia/La Rustica. The soberness at Crustumerium is more in line with the data published on the necropolis at Osteria dell'Osa/Gabii (see below; Bietti Sestieri 1992).

Finally, the ancient literary texts can shed some light on the diverse nature of individual burials. They refer occasionally to the exceptional funerals of Kings, consuls and Emperors, reflecting the honour bestowed. Intriguing is the burial and even sporadic, ritual murder of a Vestal Virgin that has been documented for specific priestesses from early Republican times onwards (cf. Parker 2004). It seems that Vestals maintained one of the first state cults from the eighth century BC onwards, side by side with clan cults that existed in Rome as well. From the start, the Vestal preserved the hearth and fire that embodied the core of the Roman state. As such the Vestal, once inaugurated, was legally dissociated from family and *gens*. Her life and death was bound to the City and its sacred limit, the *pomerium*. Therefore she had to be buried within the *pomerium*, even when executed. She remained a *pharmakos*, a remedy, in times of severe crisis, as protector of the welfare of City and State, whose burial site became sacred, receiving yearly offerings (Parker 2004, 587). This example from the ancient literary record reinforces the notion that intricate, specific rituals and ceremonies were created and maintained to commemorate the death of some individuals resulting in a funerary record for central Italy that is diverse and frequently most symbolic. It seems that specific individuals and their commemorated funerals cemented group identities be it as People (the tomb at Lavinium becoming finally associated with Aeneas as mythical ancestor of the Latins), as state (the Vestals and their funeral cementing the Roman state) or as clan (see below).

In the next section we go from tombs of individuals to clusters of burials within burial grounds representing extended families. Such clusters of tombs are recognized at numerous sites, all over Italy, as well as in the regions examined here.

### **Clusters of tombs/Extended families**

Bietti Sestieri (1992) fully published coherent clusters of tombs within the burial ground of Osteria dell'Osa near Gabii that contained over 600 tombs. In the past decades, several scholars have distinguished comparable clusters in other burial grounds all over Italy, for example at Veii in Etruria (Toms 1986; Guidi 1993; Pacciarelli 2000: 267-276, fig. 143), at Acqua Acetosa Laurentina (Bedini 1984; Bedini 1990: 48-50) and at Satricum (Waarsenburg 1995: 315-317) in *Latium Vetus*, as well as at Torre Galli (Pacciarelli 1999: 67-106, figs. 22-25) and Pontecagnano (Gastaldi 2006: 113-114). These clusters consist of older tombs near which other burials were subsequently positioned, implying closely related individuals, kinship groups. From the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC onwards chamber tombs became *en vogue* in central Italy and could become family faults sometimes in use for generations. In previous centuries, from the 10<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century BC onwards, clusters of mostly individual tombs were formed that on average contained tens of burials, covering a period of 100 to 150 years, or four to six generations. It follows that interment in such a plot was highly selective; the vast majority of the group maintaining such a cluster for generations, was not buried at this specific location. Christopher Smith rightly points out that such individual clusters are not indicative for the existence of *gentes* or clans. He argues that the clusters are too small and too short-lived to record lasting clan lines that might comprise hundreds or thousands of people, resulting in thousands of tombs if all were buried for several generations (Smith 2006: 147-50). Such numbers are only found in large, whole necropolises and not in individual clusters of tombs in Italy. These clusters probably reflect kinship groups that used a specific burial plot for generations thus underpinning their family history and identity. It is likely, though, that the separate, large cemeteries around primary settlements in central Italy originally each represented a clan, since they were made up of several clusters or kinship groups (see below). I will present here two clusters at Crustumerium and at Veio in more detail to underline the specific character of such assemblages of tombs.

At Crustumerium there are clusters of various types (Fig. 4). First, there are small family clusters dating to the seventh and sixth century BC consisting of a limited number of tombs that frequently intersect and in their final phase also features chamber tombs. In addition there are several, burial grounds around the settlement, simultaneously in use (Fig. 5). Each of these larger burial grounds I consider to represent initially a group as well since there is an element of choice regarding the cemetery into which one was entombed and it is unlikely that a burial was sited at random considering the rituals and ceremonies involved. Finally there are larger concentrations of tombs in the vicinity of older ones. Such larger groups of tombs, closely arranged, are best illustrated by the Via della Marcigliana cluster, which includes a small but meaningful group of 17 Early Iron Age tombs (di Gennaro et al. 2016). This group of tombs dated to the period 825 – 725 BC is so far unique for Crustumerium. Together with the surrounding, later tombs, it covers an area of about 2000 square metres, forming the largest coherent cluster of tombs at the site so far. It consists of 88 tombs, including seven chamber tombs of the late seventh and sixth centuries BC. Therefore, over a period of 250 to 300 years, new tombs were inserted specifically in this section of the burial ground, resulting in a close packing of tombs and representing the demographic and social evolution of a particular group within the community living at Crustumerium. In my view,

this cluster represents a prominent extended family who traced their ancestry into a distant past. Comparable, though less long-lived clusters are found in many other sites in Italy. Selection definitely took place since an extended family during 250 to 300 years must have resulted in more than the 88 tombs recorded so far. Also the seven inserted chamber tombs of the late seventh and sixth century BC, indicates that more than one nuclear family related itself to this group of tombs at that time. It is unknown which criteria governed the selection at hand though tombs of women outnumber the male ones and those of children (Belelli Marchesini & Pantano 2014). Compared to other Latin sites, Crustumerium shows relatively much evidence for 6th-century BC tombs (Willemsen 2014). This makes the Via della Marcigliana cluster exceptional in time-depth for *Latium Vetus* since most other settlement centres reveal a sharp decline in sixth century BC tombs.

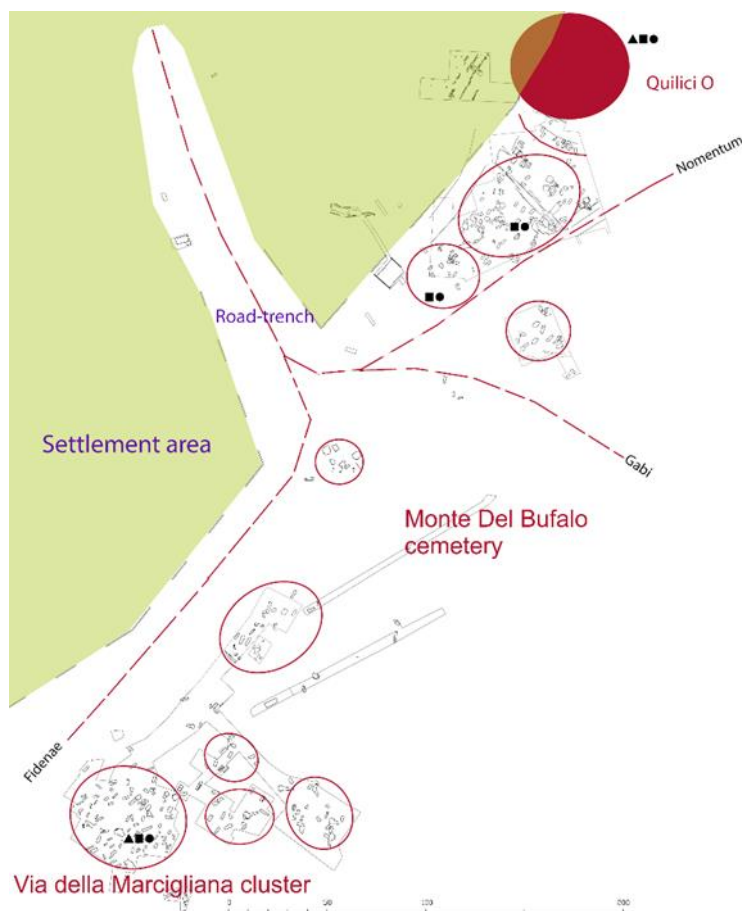


Figure 4; Crustumerium; various types of tomb clusters at the Monte del Bufalo cemetery with an indication of date range for some clusters discussed ▲ 825 – 725/700 BC; ■ 7th c. BC; ● 6th. C. BC. The cluster in the left bottom corner is the Via della Marcigliana group of 88 tombs

The second example is from Etruscan Veio, ca. 15 kilometres to the west of Crustumerium, on the other side of the Tiber (Fig. 5). So far 16 burial grounds are known, five of which were in use from the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC onwards (Bartoloni et al 1994). Some of the smaller cemeteries seem to be more like large clusters of tombs than extensive burial grounds for several extended families consisting of hundreds of tombs. One of these is the necropolis known as Macchia della Comunità of which 82 tombs were examined. An account on this necropolis was published by Sara Neri (2014) and reveals some interesting features when

addressing diversity in death. The cluster has a curious, stretched outline due to the geophysics of the terrain, along a south-west slope just below the main settlement plateau. Much of the plot is too steep for entombment and monumental graves. The 31 oldest tombs date around 750-700 BC while five tombs are assigned to the sixth till third century BC and seem to lack distinguishing features. The majority of burials pertain to the seventh century BC. There is a diversity of tomb types from pit, trench to chamber tomb, each with some variations. Intriguing is that the analysis of the associated finds indicates an average level of wealth since high-status goods and symbols of power are missing. Neri moreover wrote: *Although socially articulated and relatively wealthy, the necropolis is in general not comparable to the ostentatious wealth deposited in some other contemporary burials at Veio* (Neri 2014, 132) contributing to the theme of this paper, 'diversity in death'. She and others therefore assign this group of 82 tombs to a band that is relatively comfortable but not of elite class. The cluster could represent craftsmen who had their workshop area on the settlement plateau, just above this burial ground. During the seventh century BC they possibly produced Italo-geometric and Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics as found in these tombs and which indeed seem to have been valued, though definitely do not pertain to the group of high value - low output commodities. I would not directly link this aspect of average grave goods to well-off *hoi polloi* because a specific group might play down their standing as stressed in this paper and in some ancient literature. Rather the marginal location of the burial plot seems to set them aside. In addition there are other new and minor burial plots on the slopes of Veio. This indicates that these groups did or even could not bury their dead in the contemporaneous, larger and older cemeteries that seem to pertain to ancient patrician lineages and a selection of their relatives and associates (De Santis in Bartoloni et al. 1994, 33; 2005a).

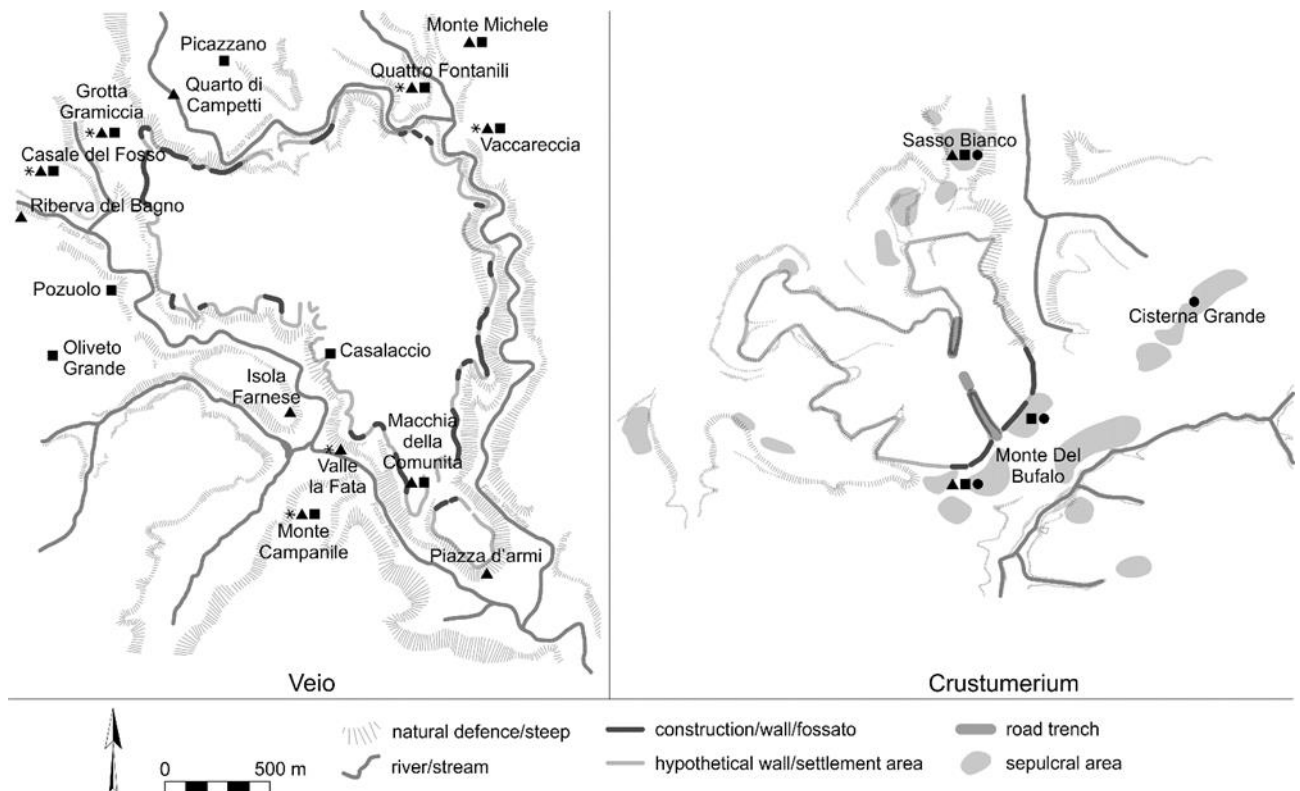


Figure 5: Separate burial grounds around Veio and Crustumium with indication of their date range: \* 10th/9th c. BC; ▲ 8th c. BC; ■ 7th c. BC; ● 6th c. BC (after Bartoloni et al. 1994, Fig. 1 and Attema et al. 2016, Fig. 4.1)

Turning finally to the theme of family, identity and the ancient literary record of later centuries, I quote Smith (2006, 34) *“it is plain that the process of self-invention at a family level, was a deep, structural element of Roman political discourse, reinforced within the context of the funeral, where the masks of ancestors were displayed and the previous glories of families rehearsed”*. This is not just valid for Rome but based on the rich archaeological, funerary record, seems to be characteristic of the fragmented polities in the whole of central Italy, centuries before these texts were written down. Though much of the evidence documented in the accidental survival of texts from Antiquity relates to Patricians, it is within the religious domain of funerary rituals and ceremonies that one can differentiate between familial and gentilitial sacra.

### Clans/gentes

To quote J. H. Herz: *people, in the long run, will recognize that authority, any authority, which possesses the power of protection* (Herz 1957, 474). A main premise of this paper is that for central Italy, the clan or *gens* and its inherent social hierarchy, is the foremost structuring feature offering security for associates. Sound alliances between clans could result in larger polities in the form of early city-states or tribes. Each clan, though, owned land of at least several square kilometres, a territory that provided food, resources and shelter for its members. The clan is the principal social-economic unit for the whole multi-ethnic region discussed in this paper though other more temporary arrangements might have existed side by side such as marauding, warrior groups. During the period examined (950-350 BC), the clan structure was still robust though synoikism or dwelling together of *gentes* forming proto-urban and later urban communities, resulted gradually in increasing

state formation from the ninth, eighth century BC onwards (cf. Terrenato 2011). Nonetheless, for many people, the *gens* to which they belonged remained the central polity and not the state. This is not just reflected in the account of the sovereign campaign of the *gens* Fabii against Veii in 479 BC (Liv. 2,48,8 – 50,11) but also in the list of 21 earliest *tribi* of the Roman state.

Regarding the Fabii, Livy wrote that the entire clan assembled, supplying 306 soldiers ‘all of one blood’. The whole Fabian clan, including women, children and members too old to go to war, is likely to have reached a figure of over 1000 followers (Cornell 1995, 291, 311; Smith 2006, 6-7, 290-95). Interesting in the context of Peoples, state, family and clan, are some of the opening lines in Livy 2.49: ‘*Men tell how a single family has taken upon its shoulders the burden of a state, how the war with Veii has been turned over to private citizens and private arms. If there were two other clans of equal strength in the City, the one might undertake the Volsci, the other the Aequi, and the Roman People might enjoy the tranquillity of peace, while all the neighbouring nations were being subdued*’ (Livy 2.49; translated by B.O. Foster, Loeb Classical Library). These lines reflect the actual political situation in Rome and *Latium Vetus* during the early fifth century BC. For example, *Satricum* lost its Latin character due to Volscan invasions as discussed below (Cf. Gnade 2007; 2014; Nijboer 2015).

Crustumium was added as the 21<sup>st</sup> *tribus* around 495 BC and its incorporation can be considered as a starting point in the slow transition of Rome from a hegemonic city-state system towards a territorial state since it was the first, relatively large centre that was added as territory, in our case as *Tribus Clustumina*. For Roman historiography, Crustumium was apparently just that, a territory, and no longer a territory pertaining to a specific clan/*gens*. All previous Roman country *tribi* in the list and thus their territories, were named after *gentes* apart from the four urban regions (Cornell 1995, 84-85, 174-6; Smith 2006).

In the archaeological record, the clan/*gens* structure of polities is best reflected and examined in the number of large burial grounds that emerged around main centres and towns from the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC onwards as mentioned above while discussing kinship groups and Veio (Fig. 5). Apart from the Sabina, most of the polities or rising city-states have several distinct burial plots not just Veio but also Crustumium (di Gennaro et al. 2016), Falerii Veteres, Capena, Satricum and many other main Etruscan, Faliscan and Latial sites (cf. Pacciarelli 2000; Fulminante 2003). For that reason, several distinct burial grounds become a structuring, organizing attribute for the groups living in the emerging towns. It is a hypothesis that the individual larger burial grounds consisting of several clusters of tombs, record the core of a clan. Hypotheses remain valid unless falsified. The opposite, that the individual burial grounds do not reflect the clan structure, is a hypothesis as well. Both statements can not be falsified though I consider the archaeological data momentarily strong enough to support the constructive one. In addition, diversity in death per clan is occasionally recorded in the ancient literary record (see below). There was a specific set of rituals, which were owned by clans and these were not part of a state cult. The clan itself was a way of preserving the *sacra*, cementing it for centuries, including a shared burial ground (Smith 2006, 47). Group identity as clan was reflected in some religious prerogatives but also in the funerary domain. It follows that certain funerary rituals and ceremonies could vary per clan. Some archaeological markers of *gentilitia* or clan identity associated with the rituals and ceremonies surrounding death are illustrated.



In the section on *Clusters of tombs/Extended families*, I differentiated for Veio between lasting burial plots consisting of hundreds of tombs and smaller, more temporary ones with up to 80-90 tombs. The larger ones are associated with a number of extended families making up the core of a clan. For Veio only one of these is fully published, the *Quattro Fontanili* necropolis of 651 tombs. A comparison with the other larger ones that emerged during the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC at Veio, such as the burial grounds of *Grotta Gramiccia* (799 tombs) or *Casale del Fosso* (296 tombs), is not feasible since these are not fully published (Fig. 5). However, there are indications that political authority shifted between the groups/burial plots on account of the four known, elaborate, warrior tombs, two from the *Quattro Fontanili* necropolis and two from the *Casale del Fosso* burial ground. Thus there are at least four male tombs of the eighth century BC that stand out at Veio. They are presented in chronological order and are marked by increasing 'wealth' until they become almost like the better known *Tombe Principesche* such as the *tombe Bernardini* and *Barberini* at Palestrina and the *Regolini Galassi Tomb* at *Caere*, which pertain to the subsequent late eighth, early seventh century BC. These four Veian tombs are:

- *Quattro Fontanili* T. AA1, Veio Phase IIB
- *Quattro Fontanili* T. Z15A, Veio Phase IIB
- *Casale del Fosso* T. 1036, Veio Phase IIC
- *Casale del Fosso* T. 871, Veio Phase IIC

One could as well point to the other 16 Veian tombs listed by Emiliozzi and dating to the eighth century BC that contained parts of chariots/wagons (Emiliozzi 1997, 324–327). More specific is that during Veio Phase IIB there are, at *Quattro Fontanili*, 11 male warrior tombs (graves with weapons such as lances, axes, shields, swords, breastplates, javelins and helmets) of which two contain an extremely rich and symbolic *corredo*: *Quattro Fontanili* Tomb AA1 and Tomb Z15A. During the subsequent period IIC, it is more difficult to find comparable evidence at Veio due to the poor publication of the *Casale del Fosso* and other necropolises. The *Quattro Fontanili* cemetery seems to have lost its predominant position since only three tombs with weapons are assigned to Phase IIC (de Santis 2005a). However the most significant male, high status tombs pertaining to this phase are *Casale del Fosso* Tomb 1036 and Tomb 871. These four Veian tombs are assigned to the Late Villanovan period and according to Pacciarelli, Veio IIB can be dated around 800 BC, while Veio IIC dates around 750 BC (Pacciarelli 1999, 63). During the whole eighth century BC, the amount of artefacts with a Levantine connotation in these tombs steadily increased starting with Tomb AA1 (Nijboer 2008a). Since the elaborate warrior tombs and the subsequent *Tombe principesche* contain symbols of power reflecting religious, military and political authority, they record that political power shifted between the two clans that each employed a specific, large burial plot. This can be interpreted as the principle of *primus inter pares* between the various clan-heads or patricians, simultaneously illuminating why lasting royal dynasties did not emerge in central Italy since the clan structure and their social hierarchy as well as alliances between clans/*gentes* prevailed.

The second example is an almost unique assemblage of tombs from ca. 850 until the second/first century BC near *Corvaro* (Borgorose, in the province of *Rieti*), locally known as *Montariolo* since it sticks out as a small mound in the highland plane (Fig. 6). The funerary data imply the existence of a real or imaginary kinship group, which is interpreted as one of the clans making up a tribe that is known from the fifth century BC onwards, as the Aequi or Aequiculi/Equicoli (Alvino 2004a). The 'Montariolo' clan intermittently employed this

funerary monument, centrally located in their highland basin on an altitude of nearly 800 metres.



Figure 6 Montariolo, Corvaro (Borgorose, Rieti); Cenotaph, ninth till second/first century BC and surroundings (adapted from: Alvino 2005, Fig. 1)

The Sabine territory predominantly consists of mountainous terrain intersected by numerous, separate highland basins or planes suitable for cultivation and connected by equally numerous gorges and watercourse valleys that form the natural routes of communication between these relatively isolated places. From the ninth till fifth century BC this large territory became more and more split into separate units or tribes primarily based on alliances between clans, such as the Aequi or the *Sabina Tiberina* near the Tiber valley. The archaeological data of the pre-Apennines as well as the Apennines itself, point to remote, well-established though small communities with thriving settlements that acted more or less independent as a polity within a large, inter-regional exchange network (Bradley *et al.* 2007, 82). One of these somewhat secluded, mountainous planes is the basin of *Corvaro*, a highland of approximately six square kilometres and linked through the gorge/valley of the river *Salto*, to the larger Sabine basin of Rieti, ca. 40 kilometres to the south-east of Corvaro. Rieti itself is on the *Salaria* and well connected along this artery to Crustumerium, Rome and other settlements. The plane of Corvaro is surrounded by hills and mountain ranges. It forms a suitable, well-confined territory for a, more or less, solitary polity. Over centuries, the group, for which the funerary monument at Montariolo was a focus, employed it selectively in three, main stages. In total more than 360 tombs were excavated that await full publication (Alvino 2004b; 2005; 2006; 2009; 2011). The oldest phase consists of a small tumulus of 11 metres diameter with a limited number of tombs and few associated grave goods that indicate the period 850-800 BC. The low number of tombs

and the limited range of lasting associated artefacts are in line with the contemporaneous funerary record elsewhere in the Sabina.

Phase II is dated to the sixth and fifth century BC and revealed at least 110 warrior tombs placed concentrically in an elaborate extension of the original tumulus thus becoming a grave mound of 3.7 metres height and 50 metres in diameter. These warriors are buried predominantly along the perimeter of the large funerary shrine, together with an array of weapons such as daggers, swords and spears and several subtypes of the Certosa *fibula*. The concentration of warriors brings to mind the lines by Livy on hostilities between Veii, Rome, the Fabii, Aequi and Volsci during the early fifth century BC, mentioned above.

Phase III is dated to the second – first century BC and consists largely of tombs lined perpendicular or parallel, just in- and outside the funerary mound. They indicate the burial of tens of women and children and some men accompanied with goods such as fibulae, rings, beads, some mirrors and *strigili*.

The whole assemblage of hundreds of tombs records a community for which this mound was a lasting point of reference reinforcing their identity as a group. It combines ancestor cult, selective burial ceremonies as well as a period of struggle marking the importance of war, in line with the account by Livy. It immediately begs the question why this selection of persons was buried here, while for other contemporaneous individuals and for those who died during the intermittent phases, we hardly have data on the rituals surrounding their death. There are no indications that this mound functioned as a communal shrine for all Aequi and therefore I opt for the interpretation as the cenotaph of a constituent clan of this tribe, partially due to its distinct geographical setting. The clan organization of the Aequi is a hypothesis and one could point to warrior groups that are not ‘of one blood’ but I consider this unlikely due to the geo-physical constraints of the Sabine territory and that of other groups living in the Apennines. These bands are based on kinship relations. In addition, Montariolo matches a description of the Sabine funerary record by Dionysius: ‘*Orvinium, forty stades from Mefula, a city as famous and large as any in that region; for the foundation of its walls are still to be seen and some tombs of venerable antiquity, as well as enclosures containing mass burials in lofty mounds*’ (Dion. Hal. 1, 14.3).

Momentarily at Crustumerium, we excavate a complex, large, funerary mound as well that was used, on and of, for burials from ca. 800 until 500 BC, though so far the number of tombs is limited compared to Montariolo (cf. Attema et al 2014, 188-190; 2016). The monument, locally known as Quilici O (Fig. 4) seems to be incorporated into the defences and it is striking that it appears to be marked by some early warrior tombs while elsewhere at Crustumerium, the number of such tombs around 800 BC, is limited. Since Crustumerium no longer functioned as an independent, urban community after 500-490 BC, this burial mound is less enduring than the one at Montariolo though future excavations have to reveal all details still concealed.

Lastly this section on clans is closed with the ancient literary record that is revealing even if they document funerary rituals and gentilitial customs centuries later. It is noteworthy that clan traditions survived the increasing relevance of the Roman state from Republican times onwards but it has this in common with other states that developed in a distant past from clan arrangements such as in North China from ca. 2000 BC onwards and the Yoruba civilization emerging around 1000 AD (Trigger 2003). It appears that clan structures are sturdy and can be reinstated when politically required.

The favoured hypothesis concerning the larger burial grounds in central Italy around primary centres as clan markers, might be contested, but it is generally acknowledged that each of the major settlements in central Italy, represented an arranged and operating cohabitation of several gentilitial groups.

Related to the theme '*diversity in death*', the literary texts mention:

1. common burial grounds for specific *gentes* and
2. characteristic burial customs for a *gens*.

Thus Cicero writes that '*The bonds of common blood hold men fast through goodwill and affection; for it means much to share in common the same ancestral tombs, to use the same sacra, to have common burial places*' (Cic. Off. 1.17.54-5). Elsewhere he writes: '*Now graves are the object of such veneration that it is considered sinful to bury in them corpses not belonging to the gens or sharing in its rites*' (Cic. Leg. 2,55). An example is provided by Festus: '*The Cincia is a place in Rome where the tombs of the Cincii are*' (Festus p. 49L). A legal case concerning the Popillii and their burial ground reveals that such plots fell under religious and gentilitial law. It was ruled that only members of the Popillii could be buried in this specific cemetery (Smith 2006, 51).

Characteristic burial customs per *gens* are occasionally referred to as well. According to Pliny, the Corneli did not cremate their dead until Sulla (Plin. HN. 7.187) while Plutarch wrote that the Valerii alone did bury their dead within the city walls (Plut. Publ. 23; for a more thorough reading of these ancient texts on *gentes*, cults and mores, see Smith 2006, 44-51). These texts indicate that we are dealing with time-honoured funerary rituals and ceremonies for clans though they also mark that these traditions can change as recorded by archaeology during the period 950 to 350 BC.

### **Early States – City States**

The transition from chiefdom to early state is in central Italy frequently identified with the change from elaborate warrior tombs (*tombe guerriero e sacerdote*) to *tombe principesche* because the even richer princely or principal tombs reflect more enforced means of controlling commodity flows and its correlated division of labour/tasks (cf. de Santis 2005a).<sup>ii</sup> This shift from elaborate warrior to principal tombs is set around 725 BC, the beginning of the Orientalizing period, a date that coincides somewhat with the foundation date of Rome by its first King Romulus in 753 BC. I consider the whole eighth century BC reflecting the definite emergence of early state societies in central Italy. The change is mirrored well in the funerary record but it is stressed that increasing social-economic complexity is based on previous arrangements, which are largely preserved and maintained. The involvedness of constituent groups or clans merely increases on an institutional and religious level. Another stage of control or political hierarchy is added, a type of institutionalised synoecism or state mores, validated by religion. For example clans or *gentes* remained of importance once Kings were chosen. It follows that the transition from chiefdom to state is restrained, which is also echoed in the gradual evolution from elaborate warrior tombs of the eighth<sup>h</sup> century BC to the *Prunkgräber* of the subsequent period, from 725 to 650 BC (Nijboer 2008a). Since the widespread excavations of the burial grounds at Crustumerium have so far not presented elaborate warrior tombs nor *Tombe Principesche*, it could be concluded that there is no evidence for a chiefdom or early state but this would be misleading and far too schematic. Instead I argue for an approach that recognizes a myriad of local variations and selections in funerary customs. It is emphasized that such elaborate tombs are so far missing in the whole micro-region between the Aniene and Fiora as well as in the *Sabina Tiberina* for the period

800 to 650 BC. People in this micro-region had access to some of the symbols of power associated with such high-status tombs elsewhere, but this apparently did not result in *tombe guerriero e sacerdote* and the subsequent *tombe principesche*. A reason could be that these inland, settlement centres had less access to overseas luxuries, especially those from the Levant, that are characteristic for such tombs. Instead they seem to control the well-developed, interior exchange and communication routes. In addition, elaborate warrior tombs of the eighth century BC are also rare in Old Latium and seem to pertain structurally more to Etruria, from Volterra in northern Etruria to Veii in southern Etruria. The picture changes if we shift the analysis from males to females during the eighth century BC. In *Latium Vetus* class distinctions appear to be predominantly expressed in tombs of women (Bartoloni 2003, 115-44; de Santis 2007; Iaia 2007).

The subsequent, exceptional *Tombe Principesche* for women and men of the period 725 to 650 BC, occur both in Etruria and large parts of *Latium Vetus*. Above I have presented 'diversity in death' between the individual sites Crustumerium and Collatia/La Rustica. Regarding Crustumerium, there is deficient evidence from its burial record to support the notion of Chiefs or Kings. There are some female tombs that pertain to level two or '*padrone di casa*' in Bartoloni's terminology while the majority of the tombs are fairly customary (Bartoloni 2003, 123-9; Nijboer & Willemsen 2012). Other archaeological data from Crustumerium, such as number of burial grounds, quantity of tombs, clustering, the fortifications, infrastructure, terracotta fragments pointing to monumental buildings etc., do indicate that it became urban rapidly in the decades around 600 BC and that there was some early state formation as at some other main settlements in *Latium Vetus* and Etruria. Class differentiation was therefore less expressed in the tombs than at some other sites in Etruria or in Old Latium south of the Aniene. I presently consider the absence of tombs of level one, a local, funerary custom as can be detected in its direct vicinity at Osteria dell'Osa/Gabii or in the *Sabina Tiberina*. This can be illustrated by tombs containing weapons. At Crustumerium there are a few male tombs dating to the eighth century BC with a limited number of weapons and these may well reflect the distinctive attitude towards arms in *Latium Vetus* as pointed out by Bietti Sestieri. At Osteria dell'Osa/Gabii, the male inhumation tomb 262, dated around 800 BC, was the first to receive a functional weapon, a bronze javelin head.<sup>iii</sup> The treatment of weapons in male tombs at both Osteria dell'Osa/Gabii and Crustumerium is comparable, characterized by limited deposition of functional weapons early on but increasing somewhat during the seventh century BC. In total there are at Osteria dell'Osa/Gabii weapons in 58 tombs of men dating from ca. 800 to 580 BC, mainly spearheads and swords. An exception is warrior tomb 600, which is unique and interpreted as an immigrant from south Etruria (Bietti Sestieri 1992, 511-12), as apparently Tarquinius Priscus was for Rome, a century later. The data on male tombs of the eighth and seventh century BC at Osteria dell'Osa/Gabii and Crustumerium indicate that in some Latin burial grounds, class was less expressed in the artefacts that accompanied deceased men. It seems that there are differences in funerary rituals and ceremonies per proto-urban or urban centre. For a detailed comparison of this theme, it would be helpful to have full publications on some of the larger burial grounds surrounding each of them. Nonetheless, it is construed that within three of the four cultural regions examined here, the urban way of life varied somewhat per centre thus reinforcing the bond between each town and its surrounding territory (cf. Wheatley 1972).

## **Tribes/Peoples**

The last category, for which one can detect diversity in the funerary record of central Italy from 950 to 350 BC, is that of Tribes/Peoples. This paper mainly deals with four neighbouring Peoples of which three consist of several, interconnected polities or city-states from the sixth century BC onwards. Thus the Etruscans represent 12 to 15 larger city-states while Cornell estimates that by 525 BC, the much smaller *Latium Vetus* counted around 20 city-states dominated by Rome (Cornell 2000, 213). Notwithstanding these ethnic diversities, it is essential to acknowledge that crossing borders, exchange, exogamy and relocation of some, form a vital part of the events taking place in central Italy. One could even argue for heterogeneous ethnicity in this region, an amalgamation of groups and customs leading to hybridity and flux. Therefore, early Rome can only be comprehended in a multi-ethnic perspective, including Etruscans and groups from the more mountainous hinterland such as the Sabines, Aequi and Volsci. Historically, ethnic identities are assorted due to migrations, marriage and coalitions but on-and-off stressed, mostly for political objectives. Even so, categories and group mores do exist even if they are malleable and constructed.

The Latin culture is quite characteristic in its selection of funerary rituals and ceremonies from the start, Latial period I (ca. 1050-975/950 BC). In recent years it has been established that the miniaturization of whole sets of weapons accompanying the burial of a number of deceased males after they were cremated, is one of the archaeological characteristics of early Latin identity (de Santis 2005b; 2011; Bietti Sestieri and de Santis 2008). This ritual treatment of weapons and goods is once more emphasized during the eighth century BC as mentioned above, which is in striking contrast to the contemporaneous elaborate warrior tombs that are rare but occur structurally in whole Etruria, from Volterra in the north to Veio, as the most southern Etruscan polity. An identity-marker from ca. 600 BC onwards seems to apply for almost all Latin city-states; the demise of tombs dating to the sixth century BC and later (Colonna 1977; Willemsen 2014). This fact remains valid since Colonna highlighted it more than 40 years ago. It marks an orchestrated resolution, setting the Latin people apart from others. This Latin resolve, more than 2500 years ago, has still repercussions for our understanding of the early Latium and Rome. The wealth occasionally deposited in the sixth century BC Etruscan tombs blindfolds us at the expense of the manifest ethnic vigour of the Latin alliances. This steadfast, cultural consistency is best illustrated by the long-standing research at *Satricum* that reveals all characteristics of a potent, emerging Latin city-state at its southern border when it became finally dominated by Volscans (cf. Gnade 2007; 2014; Nijboer 2015). The funerary rituals and ceremonies at Satricum until ca. 500 BC are comparable to those at other Latin sites, including the sharp decline of sixth century BC tombs. With the Volscan offensive during the late sixth and early fifth century BC resulting in their command of the Pomptine region, at least three burial plots emerge at Satricum, mostly located in the area that was previously part of the artificially fortified Latin settlement. For several generations, hundreds of people were buried here with rituals and ceremonies that find no parallel in the territory dominated by Rome and its Latin allies during the fifth and fourth century BC. These tombs at Satricum have more in common with contemporaneous funerary rituals and ceremonies of Volscan origin in the more mountainous Liri valley, for example with tombs recovered near modern Frosinone (Gnade 2002, 129-32; Cifarelli/Gatti 2006).<sup>iv</sup>

A final example in this paper concerns the *Sabini*. Their territory and well-established but small communities were introduced above when discussing the cenotaph at Montariolo. They are characterized as non-urban though settlement centres did emerge during the seventh century BC, especially in the *Sabina Tiberina* (cf. Santoro 1997). Looking at the

archaeological record, their history is hidden, far more so than that of the Latins. Nonetheless, they are considered an influential and powerful group that affected developments on the Latin side of the Tiber valley considerably (cf. Cornell 1995, 75-7). In the past decades the research into their territory did intensify though we still know little of their funerary record until 650-600 BC (Guidi et al. 1996; Guidi 2014; Jaia et al. 2014; Alvino et al. 2014). It seems that only a select group of persons was formally buried during the Iron Age as supposed by Jaia and his co-authors (Jaia et al. 2014, 49-51). These rare burials were hardly ever accompanied by a range of symbols of power as in the other three regions. No large Iron Age burial grounds, each containing hundreds of tombs, are so far known in the *Sabina*, as we can discern in the other three regions. Elaborate warrior tombs as in Etruria and the subsequent *Tombe Principesche* as in Etruria and *Latium Vetus*, do neither exist in the Sabine territory till 650-600 BC. Burial grounds at Magliano Sabina, Poggio Sommavilla and Eretum (Colle del Forno) were in use from ca. 650 until the third/second century BC. Additional tombs are excavated at Campo del Pozzo and Foglia (Reggiani 1987; Reggiani et al. 1998). The precise social organization of the *Sabini* remains elusive though is likely based on kinship groups and clans. In Roman historiography, patrician *gentes* such as the Claudii and Valerii claimed to be of Sabine origin. Social inequality did exist but seems hardly expressed in the funerary rituals and ceremonies. This is somewhat comparable to the evidence from bordering Crustumium. Nonetheless, a number of settlements in the *Sabina Tiberina*, such as Eretum and Poggio Sommavilla revealed clusters of chamber tombs from ca. 600 BC onwards (Alvino 1987; Santoro 1983a; 1983b; Benelli and Santoro 2009). A few of these tombs seem to have been used for centuries and this indicates resilient family lineages. Some of the tombs but mostly at the frontier settlement of Eretum, such as Colle del Forno Tombs 11, 31, 36 and 38, contain artefacts such as a *lituus*, terracotta throne, chariot, wagon and luxury table-wares for symposia that are typical for patricians in the other regions (Fig. 7). Therefore symbols of power are employed and were available in the *Sabina Tiberina* but occur rather late and often in a form that makes them characteristic for this region. Thus status symbols are occasionally deposited with the deceased in the *Sabina Tiberina*, especially in Eretum/Colle del Forno, during a period that this is no longer recorded for *Latium Vetus*.



Figure 7: Sabini; no elaborate warrior tombs of the eight century BC or Tombe Principesche of the period 725-650 BC though status symbols in a limited number of burials from ca. 625 to 500/450 BC, especially at Eretum, such as in Colle del Forno Tombs 11 and 36 (Selection of images not to scale from: <http://www.sabinideltevere.it/ita/immagini/>)

In addition, settlement excavations at *Cures Sabini* revealed sophisticated eight century BC dwellings and sixth century BC small houses with tiled roofs though so far there is no evidence for an urban lay-out or for the construction of monumental temples (Guidi et al. 1996).

The data from the fertile *Sabina Tiberina* and the more mountainous *Sabina Interna*, with its main artery, the Salaria, indicates well-established, lasting funerary rituals and ceremonies that are difficult to trace archaeologically but that are quite different from the other three regions introduced in this paper. It appears that the death of most Sabines was accompanied by rituals and ceremonies that left hardly any material culture setting them apart from the other three Peoples examined in this paper. This coincides with their reputation in the ancient literary record as pious, Spartan and frugal.

### Epilogue

The topic “Diversity in death; a construction of identities and the funerary record of multi-ethnic central Italy from 950 to 350 BC” has been illustrated by focussing on individual burials and clusters of tombs representing nuclear and extended families as well as on clans, early city-states and eventually Peoples. With increasing social-economic complexity, such compound identities become like political constructs, in order to form larger, coherent groups of tens to hundreds of thousands that can protect but that can act as well when threatened or attacked. With increase of scale, identities frequently overlap and exist side by side. This is evident in tombs such as the one associated with Aeneas at Lavinium or the cenotaph at Montariolo that originate in the burial of individuals but became a *lieu de mémoire*, an identity marker, for many. On such funeral sites the individual and the group merge, which is their quintessence.

The archaeological, rich funerary record of mainly Etruria has been known for centuries, creating initially private collections of classical antiquities in the whole of Europe and beyond from the 17<sup>th</sup> century AD onwards. However, in the immediate region around Rome, we are



confronted with several Peoples, including the Etruscans, and with diverse rituals and ceremonies surrounding death. Some of these groups seem to have a sober material culture towards the final rite the passage, hardly expressing differences between individuals in lasting, tangible goods. Deleting such attitudes from reconstructions of past identities creates uniformity and a narrow focus. Diversity in death becomes limited if one concentrates predominantly on the 'richer' tombs; the hundreds of tombs in central Italy with, for example, chariots and other status symbols. Examining the present funerary record of this multi-ethnic region around Rome for the period 950-350 BC, one can reveal a myriad of differences per site, burial ground, clan and even per territory. Thus in the *Sabina Tiberina* prior to 650/600 BC we have hardly any tombs and neither in *Latium Vetus* for the sixth and fifth century BC. This corresponds with the evidence from this whole composite region during the Late Bronze Age, a period in which only a very small number of individuals appears to have received a formal burial. Ethnogenesis from 1100-1000 BC onwards resulted in marked differences in funerary rituals per group, clan or territory. It echoes later ancient texts that reveal specific familial and gentilitial sacra, the domain to which the rituals and ceremonies surrounding death pertain.

Intriguing is a recent hypothesis for the ninth century BC as a period with increasing numbers of tombs but with hardly any expression of status or class differences in the material remains; a period with an egalitarian ideology (cf. Cuozzo 2013, 308). It looks as if we are confronted with a vague reminiscence to customs during the Late Bronze Age. It is especially during the eighth and early seventh century BC that the number of tombs increases rapidly as well as the notable differentiation in wealth and power for males and females in southern Etruria, the Faliscan-Capenate area and in *Latium Vetus*. This seems less so for the Sabine territory that might have hardly adapted their material, funerary customs from the Late Bronze Age onwards till around 650-600 BC.

The funerary record reveals massive and numerous selection principles even with increasing numbers of tombs in three of the four territories discussed in this paper. An educated guess is that at least 50-75 per cent of population was not buried during the eighth and seventh century BC leading to many small clusters of tombs in use for several generations. At Crustumerium, for example, a cluster of 88 tombs was excavated that was in use for up to 10 generations. Aggregates of such clusters resulting in hundreds of tombs per burial ground employed for several centuries probably represent some of the main clans living in the nearby settlement centre. For many of these centres it has been recorded that they were surrounded by several cemeteries, some of which small, while others record hundreds of tombs. As reflected in the later ancient literary record, the burial ground was sacred to the *gentes*.

In addition, some groups were discerned that did not furnish the tombs of their deceased with elaborate fittings during the eighth and seventh century BC, as in Crustumerium, Gabii (Osteria dell'Osa) and in Veio (the Macchia della Comunità necropolis). So, another kind of diversity reveals restricted political power or different attitudes towards the expression of such power in the funerary domain per site or burial plot. Also this attitude is echoed in the later literary record for Rome. So it is written that the Quinctii did not use gold and the Aelii did not use gold or silver (Smith 2006, 49). Thus the construction of identity on each level, be it as a family, clan or tribe, is and has to be composite, intricate and specific. This elaborate and explicit diversity is actually mirrored in the archaeological funerary record of the multi-ethnic region around Rome during the period 950 to 350 BC.

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<sup>i</sup> Scheidel writes that precise figures on infant and child mortality cannot be given but that they must have been very high. This is confirmed by historic accounts on surviving children of some Roman rulers and patricians (Scheidel 1999, 266-72).

<sup>ii</sup> The term 'Chieftom' is employed in general but would need to be defined for specific conditions around 1000 to 700 BC in central Italy. As mentioned before, the clan arrangements remained paramount; their cooperation and political dealings are important elements for such a definition, as well as the *primus inter pares* principle. A hereditary chief or lineage, as in other chieftoms, did not emerge in central Italy. See Bintliff (2016) for a lucid review of models on the rise of early states in several regions of the Mediterranean from the 10th century BC onwards, including central Italy.

<sup>iii</sup> Bietti Sestieri 1992, 785-6. The ritual treatment of has been pointed out for other periods and regions in Italy as well (Bietti Sestieri et. al. 2013, 166-7).

<sup>iv</sup> Prof. Gnade was so kind as to inform me on March 7th, 2017, that in Pofi (Frosinone), some comparable tombs as those at Satricum, were recently excavated. It seems that these have so far not been published: [http://www.beniculturali.it/mibac/export/MiBAC/sito-MiBAC/Contenuti/MibacUnif/Comunicati/visualizza\\_asset.html\\_1572042597.html](http://www.beniculturali.it/mibac/export/MiBAC/sito-MiBAC/Contenuti/MibacUnif/Comunicati/visualizza_asset.html_1572042597.html) (accessed March 8th, 2017).