Reassessing the 'Cumaean Chronicle': Greek Chronology and Roman History in Dionysius of Halicarnassus*

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Early in Book Seven of the *Roman Antiquities* (7.2–11), Dionysius of Halicarnassus makes a brief digression from his main narrative to discuss the life and career of the Cumaean tyrant Aristodemus Malacus. The story is of a type familiar in Greek historical literature.[1] It begins with a battle, in which Aristodemus gains prominence on account of his military valour (7.3.1–4.3). After his ambitions are thwarted by the city's ruling faction, this charismatic figure aligns himself with the interests of the common people (7.4.4–4.5). When an attempt is made to get him out of the way, Aristodemus hatches a plot to assassinate the oligarchs and seizes power in a storm of bloodshed (7.5.1–8.2). Years later, after a long and mostly uneventful reign, the tyrant is overthrown and killed by a group of returning exiles, many of whom are the children of the murdered aristocrats (7.10.2–11.4). Though this digression appears to provide a self-contained narrative, it also has important implications for the study of early Roman history.

Because of certain points of overlap between the story of Aristodemus' life and events relating to the origins of the Roman republic, this passage has long been recognized as important evidence for the nature of the source tradition regarding the early history of Rome. Current assessment of its significance rests largely on the interpretation offered by Alföldi in the course of his wide-ranging revisionist treatment of early Roman history, *Early Rome and the Latins*.[2] In this work, Alföldi revived and modified an earlier hypothesis, arguing that Dionysius' account of Aristodemus' biography was based ultimately on a local Cumaean document of some kind. This source, which Alföldi referred to as a 'Cymean chronicle', has been credited with providing a highly reliable record of the history of Central and Southern Italy during this period. It is suggested that Roman historians consulted Greek accounts derived from this early Cumaean source to uncover valuable information about their own history. On this view, the credibility of the 'Cumaean chronicle' becomes a surrogate for that of the Roman tradition itself and is used to justify belief in a number of details associated with the expulsion of the Tarquins from Rome.

Though the full substance of Alföldi's ideas about early Roman history has not been widely accepted, his arguments about the nature and importance of the Cumaean tradition have had a profound impact on current views on the relationship between Roman and

* Portions of the argument were presented at the 2005 meeting of the American Philological Association. Amanda Wilcox, Chris Baron, and Denis Feeney read earlier drafts and offered invaluable advice and encouragement. Thanks to them and to the Editorial Board of *JRS* for suggesting additional improvements.

[1] M. Frederiksen, *Campania* (1984), 96.

[2] A. Alföldi, *Early Rome and the Latins* (1963), 56–72, citing E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums* II (1893), 809; W. von Christ, *Grundfragen der melischen Metrik der Griechen*, Abhandlungen der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse 22 (1905), 62–9; and E. Meyer, 'Zur Frühgeschichte Roms', *MH* 9 (1952), 176–81, at 180.

JRS 97 (2007), pp. 50–67.

campanian historiography for the period in question.[3] The significance that is now ascribed to this hypothetical local 'chronicle' of Cumae has developed in a way that is quite different from Alföldi's original purpose. While Alföldi noted the value of the Greek tradition as a potential source for Fabius Pictor and others, his argument rests on the premise that information derived from this original Cumaean source (as preserved in Dionysius) could be used to discredit some of the more familiar aspects of the Roman tradition concerning the origins of the republic.[4] In contrast, a standard reference work now cites Alföldi's discussion to support the claim that Dionysius' short biography of Aristodemus 'provides independent confirmation of a famous episode of the early Roman republic'.[5] This claim does not directly contradict Alföldi's analysis, but the shift in emphasis from the apparent conflict between the two traditions to the way in which the hypothetical Cumaean source appears to exonerate the trustworthiness of the entire Roman account imputes a significance to the Cumaean tradition that may not be warranted by the available evidence.

This article proposes to re-examine the origin and development of the Greek tradition for Cumaean history under Aristodemus, and to reassess its possible value as evidence for early Roman history. In the discussion that follows, I focus on three apparent points of contact between Rome and Aristodemus. The first involves the indirect confirmation of that 'famous episode from the early Roman republic', namely, the invasion of Latium by an Etruscan army sometime towards the end of the sixth century B.C.E. Though the nature and purpose of this invasion continue to be debated, the fact of its happening does seem to be confirmed by Dionysius' distillation of Cumaean tradition.[6] Alföldi's analysis went further than this, however. Building on his hypothesis of a local Cumaean 'chronicle', he claimed that the date Dionysius gives for the Etruscan invasion is more reliable than Livy's. This position is untenable. Careful consideration of the possible origins of Cumaean historiography reveals that there cannot have been a contemporary, chronologically reliable record of these events. Greek sources cannot be used as an independent check on the traditional Roman chronology for the period in question, and neither system of dating should be regarded as more accurate than the other.

The two remaining instances of overlap between Cumaean and Roman events represent cases of direct involvement by Aristodemus in the course of Roman history. The first incident appears as part of the Roman tradition about Tarquinius Superbus' death, according to which the exiled king spent his final days in Cumae as a guest of Aristodemus. The other, related episode centres on Aristodemus' obstruction of a Roman embassy sent

[3] To cite only a few: E. Gabba, 'Considerazioni sulla tradizione letteraria sulle origini della Repubblica', in *Les origines de la république romaine*, Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique 13 (1967), 133–69, at 144–7; T. J. Cornell, 'Notes on the sources for Campanian history in the fifth century B.C.', *MH* 31 (1974), 193–208, at 207; T. P. Wiseman, *Clio's Cosmetics: Three Studies in Greco-Roman Literature* (1979), 9; A. Mele, 'Aristodemo, Cuma e il Lazio', in *Etruria e Lazio arcaico: Atti dell'incontro di studio, 10–11 novembre 1986* (1987), 155–77; F. Zevi, 'Demarato e i re "corinzi" di Roma', in A. Storchi Marino (ed.), *L'incidenza dell'antico: Studi in memoria di Ettore Lepore* (1995), 291–314, at 303; N. Purcell, 'Becoming historical: the Roman case', in D. Braund and C. Gill (eds), *Myth, History and Culture in Republican Rome* (2003), 12–40, at 24.

Alföldi's general premises and conclusions have come under fire from all directions: compare the reviews of A. Momigliano, *JRS* 57 (1967), 211–16 (= *Quarto Contributo*, 487–99); R. M. Ogilvie, *CR* n.s. 16 (1966), 94–8; and J. Heurgon, *Historia* 16 (1967), 370–7. Each accepts Alföldi's assessment of the importance of the Aristodemus passage as evidence, but rejects the conclusions he draws from it, i.e., that Rome was an insignificant hamlet controlled by stronger neighbours until the fifth century B.C.E. For a more recent appraisal, see A. Grandazzi, *The Foundation of Rome: Myth and History* (1997), 35–6.

[4] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 50–2, 79.

[5] *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd edn, 2003), 162, s.v. 'Aristodemus (2) Malacus' (T. J. Cornell); see also T. J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c. 1000–264 B.C.)* (1995), 237. M. Meier in *Der Neue Pauly* 1 (1996), 1108, s.v. 'Aristodemos [5]' simply elides any distinction between the Greek and Roman sources regarding Aristodemus.

[6] Dion. Hal. 7.5.1–6.2; cf. 5.36.1–4; Livy 2.14.5–9. The testimony of Plin., *NH* 34.139 and Tac., *Hist.* 3.72 suggests that there was an alternative tradition in which Rome actually fell to Lars Porsenna. For further evidence and discussion, see Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 73–7.

to purchase grain in Cumae a few years later. These accounts, which are attested to only in surviving Roman sources, raise more difficult problems of interpretation than the indirect confirmation of the Etruscan invasion that is found in the digression on Aristodemus' biography. It is widely maintained that these references to Aristodemus were derived from the same Cumaean sources that formed the basis of Dionysius' discussion of the tyrant's career. I intend to show that this view is not convincing, and will argue instead that the idea of a relationship between Aristodemus and Superbus was a unique feature of the Roman historical tradition. While the importance of Greek historiography as a potential source of information for early Rome remains indisputable, appeals to the authority of a 'Cumaean chronicle' cannot be used to bolster the credibility of what the Romans had to say about the fall of the monarchy and the early days of the republic.

It is worth emphasizing at the outset that the purpose of this study is not simply to clarify an obscure point of *Quellenkritik*. I hope that my analysis of the problems involved with this particular case will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between Greek and Roman historical writing in general. Rather than treat the appearance of Aristodemus in the Roman tradition as evidence for mechanical dependence on certain Greek sources, I propose that these features should be seen in the light of a dynamic process of cultural appropriation and differentiation, in which the annalists adopted a comparative perspective to underline the significance of major developments in early Roman history. Since it is unlikely that the earliest Cumaean historians paid much attention to Rome, I suggest that the Roman annalists' own creative engagement with Greek sources better explains the transmission of these tales. The point was that liberty was a rare thing, especially in the early fifth century, when tyrants were still common in the Greek communities of the Western Mediterranean. By emphasizing these links between Aristodemus and Tarquinius Superbus, the annalists sought to call attention to the unique character of the Roman republic.

I THE 'CHRONICLE' HYPOTHESIS

Alföldi begins his discussion of the sources for the digression in Dionysius' *Roman Antiquities* by marking a distinction between this account of the tyrant's life and the version given by Plutarch in his description of the virtues of Aristodemus' wife, Xenocrite.[7] Along with the slender fragments of a *Cumaica* attributed to Hyperochus, the source of Plutarch's account seems to reveal an awareness of the eventual importance of Rome. In light of this apparent hindsight, Alföldi agrees with Jacoby that these two sources belong to a late stage in the development of Western Greek historiography.[8] On the other hand, the portrait of Aristodemus' life in the *Roman Antiquities* does not appear to be contaminated by a similar interest in Roman affairs. Alföldi therefore concludes that Dionysius took the substance of his account directly from one of the earlier Hellenistic-era historians of the West (probably Timaeus), and that this historian derived his information in turn from a local Cumaean source.[9]

Though he claims to be agnostic about the exact nature of this original source, Alföldi repeatedly refers to it as a 'chronicle'.[10] In its narrow sense, this term refers to a relatively simple form of historiography in which the events of successive years are recorded in

[7] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 57–8; Plut., *De mul. vir.* 261e–262d. The reference to the Cumaean tyrant Malacus in an excerpt of Diodorus Siculus (7.10) seems to agree with Dionysius, but is much too brief to be of any real value in sorting out the nature of the tradition.

[8] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 59; cf. Jacoby, *FGrH* IIIb (1955), 607–8 (on Hyperochus F 3 (= Festus 328 L)). Jacoby's interpretation of this passage as evidence for the late date of Hyperochus' work is disputed by G. Urso, 'Iperoco di Cuma', in R. Vattuone (ed.), *Storici greci d'Occidente* (2002), 487–506, at 488–90.

[9] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 62–4.

[10] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 50, 56, 57, 64, 71.

chronological order with minimal narrative elaboration.[11] This choice of words suggests that Alföldi may have been drawing on an old theory, traceable to Wilamowitz, which held that information about the history of the sixth century was available to later historians in the reports of annual records compiled by priestly officials in certain Greek *poleis* (and at Athens in particular).[12] Like the pontifical *tabulae* kept at Rome or the local monastic annals of the Middle Ages, such a source would have had primary value as a record of dated events.[13] Alföldi accordingly places a great deal of trust in the 'reliability of the time element' in material derived from this hypothetical Cumaean source.[14] Noting the connection between the Aristodemus story and the Roman tradition, he suggests that 'the Cymean chronicle became the real backbone of the chronology of events in Latium at the end of the sixth century', and he even uses a date derived from this source to support his claim that the beginning of the Roman republic took place in 505 B.C.E., four years after the dedication of the Temple of Iuppiter Capitolinus.[15]

However, insofar as it implies an organized, yearly tabulation of events, the term 'chronicle' is certainly a misnomer for the literary origins of the Cumaean tradition, as most scholars who rely on Alföldi's reconstruction of the sources seem to realize.[16] This point bears emphasis, since it has rarely been stated directly.[17] Put simply, the idea that the local history of a Greek *polis* could be derived from the records of a priestly chronicle was thoroughly and convincingly disproved by Jacoby long ago and should not be revived in this case without compelling evidence.[18] There is no ancient testimony to suggest the existence of such a documentary practice in any of the Greek cities of Italy, much less at Cumae.[19] Even if we were able to suppose that some sort of annual record was compiled at Cumae in the late sixth century, it would still be necessary to explain how this record of events survived the city's capture by the Samnites and the emigration of its Greek population to Neapolis in the late fifth century.[20]

Furthermore, the chronological data available for the history of Cumae under Aristodemus are not so extensive as to require the hypothesis that they derived from a local chronicle or list. Dionysius' discussion of the tyrant's life contains three explicit references to dates, only two of which can reasonably be taken as originating in an independent Cumaean source. First, the biography begins when Cumae is attacked by a confederation of Etruscans, Daunians, and Umbrians 'in the sixty-fourth Olympiad, when Miltiades was

[11] *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 1 (1993), 397, s.v. 'chronicle, n.', definition 1A.

[12] U. von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, *Aristoteles und Athen* I (1893), 277–82.

[13] See, e.g., B. W. Frier, *Libri Annales Pontificum Maximorum: The Origins of the Annalistic Tradition*, PMAAR 27 (1979), 83–93; D. J. Wilcox, *The Measure of Times Past: Pre-Newtonian Chronologies and the Rhetoric of Relative Time* (1987), 95 (on Roman *tabulae*); H. E. Barnes, *A History of Historical Writing* (2nd edn, 1963; original pub. 1937), 64–8 (on medieval annals and chronicles). As F. Jacoby, *Atthis: The Local Chronicles of Ancient Athens* (1949), 62 points out, Wilamowitz's chronicle hypothesis involves an unfounded analogy between Greek practice and the yearly reports issued by the Roman *pontifices*.

[14] Alföldi, op. cit (n. 2), 64.

[15] Alföldi, op. cit (n. 2), 71, 79.

[16] As in the title of this paper, hesitation to accept Alföldi's formulation is most commonly signalled by the use of scare-quotes (or their verbal equivalent) when referring to the Cumaean source tradition. See, e.g., Gabba, op. cit. (n. 3), 144: 'la cosidetta *Cronaca Cumana*'.

[17] A notable exception is L. Pearson, *The Greek Historians of the West: Timaeus and his Predecessors* (1987), 122–3. See also Frederiksen, op. cit. (n. 1), 163; Frier, op. cit. (n. 13), 25. In contrast, Cornell, op. cit. (n. 3), 207 describes Alföldi's chronicle as 'no more than a theoretical possibility' but stops short of rejecting it outright.

[18] Jacoby, op. cit. (n. 13). Jacoby's developmental model of Greek historiography, in which all local history comes after the panhellenic breadth of Herodotus' work, has been challenged as too rigid by R. L. Fowler, 'Herodotos and his contemporaries', *JHS* 106 (1996), 62–87, at 62–9. While it may be true that 'the gaps in the record are simply too great for dogmatism', the affirmative case for pre-Herodotean chronicles has not been made.

[19] F. Jacoby, *FGrH* III b (1955), 606–7 (on the *Cumaica* of Hyperochus). See also *FGrH* III a (1943), 1–2; III b (1955), 480–1, on the regional (as opposed to purely local) character of Greek historiography dealing with the West.

[20] On the fall of Cumae, see Livy 4.44.12; Diod. Sic. 12.76.4; Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 15.6.4. Compare Livy's famous comment (6.1.1–3) on the difference in the availability of sources for the period before versus after the Gallic sack of Rome.

archon at Athens' (= 524/3 B.C.E.).[21] This was the battle in which Aristodemus first distinguished himself for valour, launching his political career. The next major event reported by Dionysius takes place 'in the twentieth year after this' (7.5.1), when the Latin town of Aricia, under siege by Lars Porsenna's son Arruns, sent ambassadors to Cumae seeking help. Through the machinations of his political enemies, Aristodemus was sent to aid Aricia with a small, poorly equipped force. He went on to a great victory, however, and quickly returned home to become tyrant. After this, the remainder of Aristodemus' reign is narrated without any specific mention of chronology whatsoever. We are not told when he died or even how many years he ruled as tyrant, although there is a vivid account of his assassination (7.11).[22]

The third and final chronological marker provided by Dionysius occurs after the author has resumed his main narrative, at which point Roman envoys sent to purchase grain in Cumae have been arrested. These men are brought to trial 'in front of this Aristodemus, who had been tyrant at Cumae for close to fourteen years' (7.12.1). This comment, which stands outside of the digression proper, serves to remind Dionysius' readers of the chronology of the main narrative by bringing us back to the year in which the grain shortage at Rome had caused the senate to dispatch this embassy. Since it was the long-established habit of Roman annalistic historiography to take note of the years in which grain shortages occurred, it is better to assume that Dionysius derived the date of this diplomatic encounter from a Roman source.[23] Citing the authority of various Roman historians, he had already made quite a fuss about placing this event in the consulship of T. Geganius and P. Minucius, which he equates with the second year of the seventy-second Olympiad (490 B.C.E.: *Ant. Rom.* 7.1.5; cf. Livy 2.34.1–3). The reference to the arraignment of the Roman ambassadors in the fourteenth year of Aristodemus' reign serves to coordinate the timeframe of the Cumaean digression with Roman chronology. This is certainly Dionysius' own calculation, not something he found in a Greek source.

Thus, the only secure evidence that we have for the chronological framework of the Cumaean tradition are the two dates that Dionysius gives for the battles of Cumae and Aricia. It is the date that Dionysius gives for the second of these events that establishes the importance of this passage for students of Roman history. The battle at Cumae, which Dionysius places in 524/3 B.C.E., has no obvious connection to events in Rome.[24] In contrast, the news of Aristodemus' victory over the invaders at Aricia in the twentieth year after this provides confirmation that there was a hostile Etruscan presence in the vicinity of Rome at the close of the sixth century. Though intrinsically an event of Cumaean (not to mention Etruscan and Arician) history, the defeat of Arruns Porsenna at Aricia was also familiar to the writers of Roman history, some of whom associated it with the creation of a 'Tuscan quarter' (*vicus Tuscus*) in their city.[25] Because the Etruscan invasion also forms part of the traditional story of the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus, consultation with a Greek account of this battle, perhaps one written by Timaeus, could have provided a

[21] *Ant. Rom.* 7.3.1. The references to Olympiads and Athenian archon dates clearly do not derive from a sixth-century Cumaean source. Dionysius' use of these systems reflects a scholarly convention established by Timaeus in the late fourth century: see below, at the end of Section II.

[22] Compare the very different version in Plut., *De mul. vir.* 262c.

[23] Cato, fr. 77 Peter, with further discussion below, Section IV.

[24] For the importance of the battle of Cumae as it connects to Etruscan aims in Campania, see Frederiksen, op. cit. (n. 1), 127–8. In contrast, J. Heurgon, *Recherches sur l'histoire, la religion et la civilisation de Capoue preromaine des origines à la deuxième guerre punique* (1942), 64–5 considers Dionysius' report of this battle to be an anachronistic fiction.

[25] See now J. B. Lott, *The Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome* (2004), 22–3. For the ancient sources, consult S. B. Platner and T. Ashby, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (1926), 579, s.v. 'Vicus Tuscus'; also E. M. Steinby (ed.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* 5 (2000), 195–7, s.v. 'Vicus Tuscus' (E. Papi).

Roman historian with the opportunity to check its date against the chronology he had settled on for the beginning of the republic.[26] On this basic point, Alföldi is surely correct.[27]

But as Livy sagely pointed out when discussing the controversy surrounding the year in which the battle of Lake Regillus (2.21.4) took place, the sources for the chronology of this period were hopelessly contradictory and confusing. In this case, Dionysius (5.36.1–4) places the battle of Aricia in 504 B.C.E., a date consistent with the chronology laid out in his digression. Livy (2.14.5–9), on the other hand, assigns it to the year we call 508. Since we cannot assume that the ultimate source of the Cumaean tradition was a contemporary annalistic record or chronicle, Alföldi's confidence in the precision of Dionysius' date for the battle of Aricia is misplaced. The evidence of a Greek source may seem preferable for a 'Greek' event, but there is no compelling reason to prefer one chronological system to the other.

II THE LITERARY FORM

Although he repeatedly refers to the principal source of the Cumaean tradition as a 'chronicle', it should be noted that Alföldi is scrupulously imprecise about the actual purpose and character he envisioned for this document. Apparently assuming that any Greek source would be more reliable than the 'pseudo-history' of Fabius Pictor and the Roman annalists, Alföldi insists that 'we can simply disregard at this time the exact definition of the literary form of that ultimate Cymean source, lost forever, because only the facts contained in its preserved Hellenistic adaptation are relevant for us'.[28] This deliberate muddying of the issue may deflect criticism aimed at a 'chronicle' hypothesis *sensu stricto*, but it also unfortunately stands in the way of a reliable assessment of the value of the Aristodemus biography as evidence for early Roman history. In order to scrutinize the credibility of the information that we might derive from the Cumaean tradition, we must consider the genre as well as the possible timeframe for the composition of this original record.

We can begin by eliminating a few possibilities. As Alföldi's reference to a 'literary form' makes clear, the identification of this ultimate Cumaean source with an oral tradition seems to be out of the question. Though such a tradition would have preserved much valuable information about Aristodemus and his tyranny, it is obvious that oral reports could not have provided Timaeus or any other Hellenistic intermediary with the degree of chronological reliability that Alföldi attributes to Dionysius' account.[29] A similar objection applies to another possible source of much of the information found in this digression — lyric poetry. The tyrant of a city as large and wealthy as Cumae at the end of the sixth century certainly could have attracted the attention of someone like Simonides. It is possible to imagine the existence of poems from the reign of Aristodemus celebrating his power and early military exploits. While subsequent computation of this hypothetical poet's *akme* could have provided ancient readers with an approximate range of years for

[26] From the time that Fabius Pictor initiated Roman historiography as a Greek genre, it is clear that Roman historians were familiar (to a greater or lesser extent) with the works of their Greek predecessors. For the early annalists' familiarity with Timaeus in particular, see L. Moretti, 'Le origines di Catone, Timeo ed Eratostene', *RFIC* n.s. 30 (1952), 289–302; E. Rawson, 'The first Latin annalists', *Latomus* 35 (1976), 689–717, at 691–4; A. Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (1990), 99–101.

[27] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 70–2.

[28] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 56, 68.

[29] On the value of chronological information contained in oral tradition, see D. P. Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Tradition: Quest for a Chimera* (1974); J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (1985), 173–85.

Aristodemus' tyranny, there is little evidence that Greek poetry from this period ever included specific references to historical chronology or the dates of particular battles.[30]

Without the annual lists of a priestly chronicle or something similar to fall back on, we are left, I think, with one final option. If we wish to believe that the chronologically oriented narrative of Dionysius' supposed Hellenistic source was derived in turn from an earlier written account, it stands to reason that this original source must have been the work of a historian. If so, it is immediately obvious that such a source cannot have provided a contemporary record of Aristodemus' life and reign. Unless we choose radically to rewrite the history of Greek literature, the first properly historical account of sixth-century Cumae is best assigned to the period that followed the publication of Herodotus' *Histories*. This date is notoriously difficult to pin down, but we can probably fix the earliest possible *terminus post quem* for historiography of this sort at 425 B.C.E.[31] This limit fits well with what we know about Antiochus of Syracuse, one of the earliest historians of Italy according to Dionysius (*Ant. Rom.* 1.12.3), since 424/3 was the last year covered in his nine-book history (Diod. Sic. 12.71.2).[32] Since Aristodemus was long dead by this point, it appears that no historical account of his life was ever written that did not involve a considerable amount of hindsight.[33]

This *terminus post quem* has another important implication. As has already been mentioned, the final decades of the fifth century were a period of considerable turmoil in Campania. Starting in about 438 B.C.E., the Greek presence in this area was overwhelmed by a massive migration of indigenous peoples from Central Italy.[34] According to a tradition that made its way into the Roman annalists, Cumae itself was captured by the Samnites in or around 421 B.C.E.; the survivors who managed to escape slavery relocated to Neapolis, one of the few Greek cities to hold out against the invaders.[35] Of course, such widespread upheaval need not have created an obstacle to the writing of the region's history. On the contrary, we might imagine that the intensity of the conflict between the Greeks and the native barbarians would have served to reignite the memory of Aristodemus' heroic exploits against similar invaders a few generations before.[36] An account of these deeds would also present a natural response to Herodotus' *Histories*, in that it would serve to place the Western Greek accomplishment in the late sixth century on a par with the defeat of the Persians in the East.[37]

[30] L. A. Stella, 'Studi Simonidei I: per la cronologia di Simonide', *RFIC* n.s. 24 (1946), 1–24, at 5–10, rightly interprets the poem (Simon., *Ep.* 28 Page = 77 Diehls) that places a poetic victory by Simonides at the age of eighty in the archonship of Adeimantus as a product of the Roman period. *Contra*, J. H. Molyneux, *Simonides: A Historical Study* (1992), 318–26 argues for the traditional attribution of this poem to Simonides himself.

[31] Taking Aristophanes, *Ach.* 523–9 as evidence for Athenian familiarity with the opening of Herodotus' *Histories* at this date. J. Sansone, 'The date of Herodotus' publication', *ICS* 10 (1985), 1–9 defends this interpretation against C. Fornara, 'Evidence for the date of Herodotus' publication', *JHS* 91 (1971), 25–34, who suggests that Herodotus' work was not published until as late as 414 B.C.E. There may have been a number of prose writers in the Ionian enlightenment, contemporary with or even a bit before Herodotus, whose works could be described as 'historical'. The critical element here is that Herodotus appears to be the first historian to pay attention to dates. Whether or not he invented chronography, the practice can be said to begin with him: see Fowler, op. cit. (n. 18), 74–6.

[32] Hippys of Rhegium, said by some to be the earliest Western Greek historian, is a much more shadowy figure. F. Jacoby, *FGrH* IIIb (1955), 482–3 and Pearson, op. cit. (n. 17), 8–10 are probably correct to suggest that he was a phantom of late epitomators' imagination. *Contra*, G. Vanotti, 'Ippi di Reggio', in R. Vattuone (ed.), *Storici greci d'Occidente* (2002), 33–54.

[33] *Pace* Zevi, op. cit. (n. 3), 303, who seems to imagine Aristodemus commissioning a court historian in the manner of a Hellenistic monarch.

[34] Frederiksen, op. cit. (n. 1), 137–41; M. Pallotino, *A History of Earliest Italy* (1991), 99–105.

[35] Livy 4.44.12; Diod. Sic. 12.76.4; Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 15.6.4. For an explanation of the inclusion of this information in the Roman tradition, see Cornell, op. cit. (n. 3).

[36] Compare the genesis of Roman historiography with Fabius Pictor and Cincius during the Second Punic War, described by E. Badian, 'The early historians', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Historians* (1966), 1–38, at 2–6, or the origins of Atthidography during Athens' conflict with Philip II, discussed in Jacoby, op. cit. (n. 13), 71–9.

[37] cf. Mele, op. cit. (n. 3), 165–6.

With this background in mind, let us assume that there was a historian in Campania at the end of the fifth century with both the opportunity and the inclination to commemorate the deeds of Aristodemus and to establish them in a particular chronological framework. The fact remains, however, that an interval of at least one hundred years stood between the date that Dionysius provides for the battle of Cumae and the earliest possible moment at which this date could have been formulated by this author. This is a long time, but not necessarily too long for some basically reliable information still to be available in the living memory of the Cumaean people. The century-long gap between this earliest hypothetical Campanian historian and the early exploits of Aristodemus is actually a slightly shorter time than that which separated the beginning of Herodotus' research from the age of Croesus, a figure whom he identifies as standing at the outer limit of the period within which reliable data could still be recovered (1.5.3–6.2).[38]

As Herodotus also tells us (1.59.1), the age of Croesus coincided with the reign of the tyrants in Athens. In spite of the long divide between that period and his own day, Herodotus nevertheless was able to include a few pieces of chronological information in his discussion of the Pisistratid tyranny. Relying primarily on oral accounts about these distant events, Herodotus was able to learn: (a) that Pisistratus ended his second exile 'during the eleventh year' of his stay in Eretria (1.62.1), (b) that Hippias continued to rule 'for four years' after the assassination of Hipparchus (5.55.1), and (c) that the total period of Pisistratid domination over Athens lasted 'for thirty-six years' (5.65.3). The thing to notice about each of these references is that Herodotus speaks in terms of intervals of time rather than fixed dates. This is not unlike his listing of the reign-lengths for various eastern kings, in that it provides only a general chronological framework rather than a precise reckoning of the yearly progression of events.[39] While due consideration should be given to Herodotus' literary artistry, his treatment of chronological matters reflects the limitations imposed upon the historian by the evidence that was available at that time.[40] More precise dates could not be given for events that took place in the third generation before the advent of a historical consciousness in Athens.[41]

As described by Dionysius, the 'Cumaean' date for the battle of Aricia appears to reflect similar chronological limitations. Dionysius says that this battle occurred 'in the twentieth year' after Aristodemus' defence of Cumae (7.5.1). Like Herodotus' description of the return of Pisistratus from his second exile, this date is established through the relative chronology of two important events in the tyrant's career. This is precisely the kind of chronological information that we might expect to have been available to the first historian who undertook to investigate and write about Aristodemus' life and times. Furthermore, the ascription of the battle of Aricia to the twentieth year after the defence of Cumae suggests an approximate interval, perhaps derived from the stages in Aristodemus' life course to which oral tradition assigned these accomplishments.[42] As with Herodotus' Pisistratid chronology, the degree of accuracy that attends such calculations is open to debate.[43]

In contrast to this era-based chronology, the date that Dionysius gives for the battle of Cumae is defined through a combined reference to an Olympiad number and the Athenian

[38] D. Lateiner, *The Historical Method of Herodotus* (1989), 123. Modern investigations into the historical usefulness of oral traditions suggest that these tend to be reliable up to but not beyond the second generation before the oldest living one: see Vansina, op. cit. (n. 29), 192–3.

[39] → M. E. White, 'Herodotus' starting-point', *Phoenix* 23 (1969), 39–48, at 42.

[40] Jacoby, op. cit. (n. 13), 188–96; cf. Vansina, op. cit. (n. 29), 176–8. Lateiner, op. cit. (n. 38), 114–25 and Wilcox, op. cit. (n. 13), 65–6 emphasize the fluidity of Herodotus' application of chronology as an organizing principle.

[41] It is worth noting in this context that the first known publication of an authoritative list of archons in Athens (ML 6) also dates to approximately 425 B.C.E., the accepted year for Herodotus' publication: Jacoby, op. cit. (n. 13), 171–6.

[42] In Plut., *De mul. vir.* 261e–f, the nickname 'Malacus' is said to derive from the Oscan for 'youth', owing to the tender age of Aristodemus at the battle of Cumae. Twenty years would make him a mature adult at the point that he became tyrant. Cf. Mele, op. cit. (n. 3), 167, who proposes to date the tyrant's death as an old man in 485/4 B.C.E. on the basis of a similar conjecture.

[43] See especially M. Lang, 'The generation of Peisistratus', *AJPh* 75 (1954), 59–73.

archon year (7.3.1). The application of these systems of absolute chronology to the story must reflect a later stage in the development of the Cumaean tradition, in which the chronological sequence of local events was mapped onto a coherent framework of universal time reckoning.[44] Such a calculation cannot predate Timaeus of Tauromenium, whose *Olympionicae* marks the first known attempt to bring together and reconcile the diverse chronological systems of the Mediterranean according to the common era of the Olympic cycle.[45] In this regard it is worth recalling that Timaeus is commonly regarded as the immediate source for Dionysius' digression on Aristodemus.[46] If so, it would have been he who took the vague indications of relative chronology found in an earlier Cumaean source and gave them the authoritative stamp of Olympiad and archon dating. This could have happened no earlier than the turn of the third century, about two hundred years after Aristodemus' rise to power.

According to the hypothetical reconstruction of the sources outlined so far, it is possible that there was an early, local, and relatively reliable historical account of Aristodemus' career that provided the ultimate basis for later Hellenistic discussions of Cumaean history. Insofar as it would have offered an independent account of the invasion of Latium by the Etruscans at some time in the late sixth century, this retelling of indigenous Cumaean tradition could have contributed to the Romans' understanding of their own early history. By using the universal dates applied to these events in the retelling of some Hellenistic intermediary, the Roman annalists would have been able to check their own chronology for the siege of Rome by Lars Porsenna. However, the fact that Livy's date for the battle of Aricia does not agree with that of Dionysius suggests that careful double-checking with Greek sources was not a primary concern for the authorities whom Livy followed.

Beyond this confirmation of the basic timing of Lars Porsenna's invasion, the value of the digression in Dionysius of Halicarnassus as a source of chronological information appears to be quite limited. The amount of time between the possible origins of systematic historiography at Cumae and the events described in this digression precludes any assumption about the presence of uniquely reliable chronological information in Dionysius' account. The Olympiad date that he provides for the battle at Cumae was only introduced to the tradition at a much later stage, and cannot be of much value in itself. Faith in the general outlines of Aristodemus' biography may be warranted, but once again there is no reason to insist on correcting Livy's date for the Etruscan invasion of Latium to make it conform with a chronological system that was introduced to this narrative by Timaeus or one of his successors.[47]

III THE TYRANT AND THE KING

This discussion so far has dealt with the sources for Cumaean history as forming a distinct tradition, which developed in isolation from the Roman world and the writing of Roman history. If we follow Alföldi in reading Dionysius of Halicarnassus' account of Aristodemus' exploits as a faithful restatement of such an independent tradition, we find that the Cumaean sources are able to offer corroborating evidence for an external condition (i.e., the Etruscan invasion) that is also described in the Roman annalistic tradition. The digression gives no indication that this independent tradition ever mentioned Rome. There

[44] A. Mosshammer, *The Chronicle of Eusebius and Greek Chronographic Tradition* (1979), 85–97 provides a brief summary of the development of Greek chronography, which began with Hellanicus' investigation of the Athenian archon list at the end of the fifth century and was fully realized by Timaeus' adoption of Olympiad dates in the late fourth century.

[45] T. S. Brown, *Timaeus of Tauromenium* (1958), 10–14; E. Bickerman, *Chronology of the Ancient World* (1968), 75; D. Asheri, 'The art of synchronization in Greek historiography: the case of Timaeus of Tauromenium', *SCI* 11 (1992), 52–89, at 52–4.

[46] See especially Frederiksen, op. cit. (n. 1), 95–8; also Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 68; Mele, op. cit (n. 3), 161–2.

[47] *Pace* Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 79.

are some Roman accounts, however, which present Aristodemus as an active participant in the unfolding of events that did have a direct impact on Rome. In order to judge the importance of the Cumaean tradition as a possible source for Roman history, it is necessary to determine whether or not these stories also derived from an early account of Cumaean history.

To begin with, a number of Roman sources suggest that an arrangement of hospitality existed between the Cumaean tyrant and Rome's last king, Tarquinius Superbus.[48] According to these accounts, the exiled Superbus died as Aristodemus' guest in Cumae during the consulship of Appius Claudius and P. Servilius. Building on Alföldi's concept of an indigenous historical tradition at Cumae, a number of scholars have concluded that these Roman writers derived their knowledge of this event from the same Greek sources as provided the basis for Dionysius' portrait of Aristodemus.[49] Even those who tend to view the early Roman tradition with a fair degree of scepticism are willing to accept the truth of Superbus' exile, following the theory that it was attested by the external authority of the 'Cumaean chronicle'.[50]

While the appearance of a Roman king in an early account of Cumaean history would have important implications for our understanding of the history and cultural horizons of both cities, the evidence unfortunately does not support this hypothesis. It is only modern inference that makes Tarquinius Superbus an object of Cumaean historiography. In my opinion, the idea of a relationship between Superbus and Aristodemus is much more likely to have been fostered by Roman historians, who were motivated by a desire to integrate the history of their city with that of the wider world. The story's preservation, if not its invention, is more convincingly explained within the context of the Roman historical tradition.

In considering the link between Superbus and Aristodemus, it will help to bear in mind that the Roman tradition contains a number of similar stories that connect Rome's kings with figures from the Greek cultural zone that lay to the south. Archaeology confirms that Latium and Central Italy were in communication with the Greek world going back to the earliest days of westward colonization.[51] Yet these stories of direct personal connections between Romans and prominent Greeks are not always true. One tradition, for example, held that Numa Pompilius was a student of the philosopher Pythagoras before he became king.[52] This famous collocation was popular among Roman writers, no doubt because they felt it raised the profile of their city in a Mediterranean zone dominated by Greek culture. Connection with the celebrated wisdom of Pythagoras, whose statue stood next to that of Alcibiades in the Roman Comitium, no doubt brought a certain lustre to the heritage of a city aspiring to the status of world power.[53]

The story itself was an obvious fabrication, however. Once a chronological framework for the reigns of the seven kings was established, comparison with the dates given in Greek sources revealed that Numa's reign ended about two hundred years before Pythagoras'

[48] Cic., *Tusc.* 3.27; Livy 2.21.5; Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 6.21.3; [Aur. Vict.], *De vir. ill.* 8.6.

[49] The suggestion is made in passing by Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 59, 64, and is enlarged upon by Gabba, op. cit. (n. 3), 144–6. See also Wiseman, op. cit. (n. 3), 9; Mele, op. cit. (n. 3), 174–7; Zevi, op. cit. (n. 3), 303; A. Momigliano, 'The origins of the Roman Republic', in *Quinto contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico* (1975; original pub. 1969), 293–332, at 303.

[50] See T. P. Wiseman, 'The legend of Lucius Brutus', in M. Citroni (ed.), *Memorie e identità: La cultura romana construisce la sua immagine* (2003), 21–38, at 21. Wiseman's views on the local Roman tradition are perhaps best summarized in his review of Cornell, op. cit. (n. 5): 'What do we know about early Rome?', *JRA* 9 (1996), 310–15, which provides references to previous debate.

[51] See, e.g., E. La Rocca, 'Note sulle importazioni Greche in territorio Laziale nell' VIII secolo a.C.', *PP* n.s. 32 (1977), 375–97.

[52] Cic., *Rep.* 2.28; Livy 1.18.2; Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 2.29; Plut., *Numa* 1.3–6.

[53] E. Gabba, *Dionysius and the History of Archaic Rome* (1991), 12–15; E. S. Gruen, *Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy* (1990), 160–2. For the statues, see Plin., *NH* 34.26; F. Coarelli, *Il Foro Romano II: periodo repubblicano e augusteo* (1985), 119–23.

sojourn in Italy.[54] By the late republic, most educated Romans were probably as aware of the impossibility of this relationship as Cicero was (*Rep.* 2.29; *Tusc.* 4.2).[55] Nevertheless, the idea of a connection between the philosopher and the king continued to hold an irresistible appeal for Ovid, who must have known better (*Fasti* 151–4; *Met.* 15.1–8, 60–72). Even Plutarch, who admits to complete awareness of the chronological problems involved, refused to reject the story altogether (*Numa* 1.2–4; 8.4–10).[56]

The connection between Aristodemus and Tarquinius Superbus is likely to have had a similar appeal to a Roman audience. Just as the supposed tutelage of Numa by Pythagoras served to highlight the Roman king's sagacity and benevolence, Aristodemus' willingness to harbour Superbus in his final days would have underscored the despotic nature of Rome's last king. As Ogilvie has demonstrated, the traditional account of the life and character of Tarquinius Superbus shows several signs of being modelled on the stories of Greek tyrants.[57] The deaths of such figures constituted a popular theme in Classical literature, so it is natural that Roman authors would be interested in relating the circumstances of Superbus' demise. This is borne out in Cicero's discussion of the event, where the king's final days are compared to those of Aeetes and Dionysius the Younger of Syracuse (*Tusc.* 3.26–7; cf. Dion. Hal. 6.21.3). It was fitting for a despotic ruler to die a miserable death in exile; that Superbus died while under the protection of another notorious tyrant only served to drive this point home more forcefully.

In fact, the Roman tradition suggests that Tarquinius Superbus was in contact with no less than three different representatives of autocracy following his expulsion from Rome. The first of these was Lars Porsenna of Clusium. According to Livy (2.9.1–10), Superbus convinced Porsenna to support his cause not only by appealing to their shared Etruscan ancestry, but also by invoking the natural abhorrence that all kings felt towards liberty. Porsenna worked to return the king to power by force, but soon ended his association with Superbus when he learned to respect the *virtus* of the Roman people.[58] Superbus then turned to his son-in-law, the Tusculan dictator Octavius Mamilius. This distinguished and influential ruler also tried to re-establish the Roman monarchy through violent means, ultimately inciting a rebellion of the Latin league.[59] After Mamilius was killed at the battle of Lake Regillus, Superbus took his final refuge with Aristodemus Malacus. His military options exhausted, the exiled king lived out his final days in Cumae and died quietly under the protection of a fellow tyrant.[60]

This itinerary of exile may reflect a combination of three distinct traditions, each of which offered a unique explanation for what happened to Superbus after his fall from power. Perhaps one solution emphasized the Etruscan connections of the Tarquinii, linking the king's expulsion with Rome's near-destruction at the hands of Porsenna during the first years of the republic. Another version would have joined Superbus and Mamilius together to make the king an instigator of the Latin uprising, thus explaining another major war that was supposed to have occurred soon after Rome's liberation. The third account in this progression would have drawn on the supposed Corinthian origins of the Tarquin household, placing Superbus' death in a nearby Greek city. By the time of Livy and Dionysius, diverse traditions along these lines could have been collected and reconciled to form a more-or-less coherent story of successive arrangements of hospitality

[54] See especially Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 2.29.2–4.

[55] The point at which this discovery was made is uncertain, but Q. Petilius' decision to destroy the Pythagorean writings discovered in what was thought to be Numa's coffin in 181 B.C.E. may reflect an awareness of the chronological difficulty: Plin., *NH* 13.84–7; R. M. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy: Books 1–5* (1965), 90; cf. Gruen, op. cit. (n. 53), 163–7. Gabba, op. cit. (n. 3), 163 attributes the discovery of the chronological issue to Timaeus.

[56] cf. Plutarch's defence of the famous story of Solon's interview with Croesus at *Sol.* 27.1.

[57] Ogilvie, op. cit. (n. 55), 195–219.

[58] Livy 2.9.1–14.4; Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 5.21.1–34.5.

[59] Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 4.45.1–48.3; 5.50.1–55.3; 6.2.1–21.3; Livy 2.15.7; 18.3–20.13.

[60] Livy 2.21.5; Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 6.21.3.

between the exiled king and various foreign contemporaries.[61] What all of these stories have in common is that each places Superbus in the company of another tyrant figure.

Given the state of our ignorance about the sources for early Roman history, we must concede the possibility that any or all of these relationships could have been discovered (or at least verified) by a Roman historian who took the time to consult the evidence that was available in non-Roman accounts. Perhaps the king's sojourn with Aristodemus was recorded in the Cumaean tradition, as some have suggested. It is also possible that Superbus' brief influence with Porsenna was discussed somewhere in the *Tuscae historiae* mentioned by Varro (ap. Censorinus *DN* 17.6), or that the marriage of his daughter to Octavius Mamilius was attested in some as-yet-unknown Tusculan tradition.[62] There is, however, no affirmative evidence to support any of these claims. In such circumstances, the governing methodological principle should be obvious: unless it can be demonstrated that the independent Cumaean tradition contained references to Superbus, we must reject as circular any argument that invokes the 'Cumaean chronicle' to shore up the reliability of what surviving Roman accounts have to say about a connection between Aristodemus Malacus and Tarquinius Superbus.

In fact, the extant sources may indicate that this connection was not mentioned in any independent account of Cumaean history. Our best evidence for the character of the early Cumaean tradition, the digression on Aristodemus in the *Roman Antiquities*, contains no reference either to Superbus or to Rome. A compelling argument from silence can be offered here. Given the fact that Dionysius' primary interest was the early history of Rome, it should be expected that he would report on any reference to Tarquinius Superbus that he found in a Greek source, especially since this might bolster his claim that Rome was originally a Greek *polis*.[63] Apart from a cross-reference to his own earlier discussion of the battle of Aricia (7.5.1), however, there is no mention of any connection between Cumaean and Roman events within the course of the digression. Indeed, Alföldi calls attention to this 'total indifference to Roman affairs', which he uses as a criterion for establishing Dionysius' faithful adherence to an early, non-Roman source throughout the digression.[64]

Still more telling is the silence in Plutarch's discussion of Aristodemus' wife Xenocrite. This account (*De mul. vir.* 261 F), which belongs to a later stage in the development of the Cumaean tradition, also describes how Aristodemus was sent on a dangerous mission against an invading Etruscan army before becoming tyrant. However, Plutarch suggests that he was sent to the aid of the Roman people instead of the Aricians, and that he defeated the Etruscans as they were trying to restore Tarquinius Superbus to the throne. In his discussion of this passage, Alföldi argues convincingly that the original story of Aristodemus' defence of Aricia, which had made no mention of Rome, has been distorted in a clumsy attempt to make it conform more closely to the Roman account of Lars Porsenna's invasion.[65] But in order to turn Aristodemus into an ally of the Roman people against their exiled king, the author of this corruption must not have known that the tyrant would later welcome Superbus at Cumae as his friend. This inconsistency suggests that the relationship was not a feature of the Cumaean tradition, since it is clear from the rest of the portrait of Xenocrite that the source upon which Plutarch relied contained a considerable amount of independent information about Cumaean history.

[61] See T. P. Wiseman, 'Roman Republic, Year One', *G&R* 45 (1998), 19–26 for a similar attempt to unravel the multiple traditions that might lie behind the smoothly running narratives of our sources.

[62] The potential impact of Etruscology on ancient accounts of early Rome is demonstrated by the emperor Claudius in the Lyons tablet: *ILS* 212, col. 1, ll. 16–23, on which, see A. Momigliano, *Claudius: The Emperor and his Achievement* (1934), 10–19. Mele, op. cit. (n. 3), 174–6 attempts to interpret the story of Superbus' alliance with Octavius Mamilius through the lens of early traditions about the origins of the Mamilian *gens*, whose members claimed descent from Circe.

[63] Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 1.5.1; Gabba, op. cit. (n. 53), 195–200.

[64] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 64.

[65] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 62.

While these cases do not provide definitive proof, it is nevertheless significant that two separate authorities who were otherwise steeped in Cumaean lore do not seem to have found anything in the available Greek literature about a connection between the tyrant Aristodemus and Rome's last king. It could be that the sources used by Dionysius and Plutarch belonged to a branch of this tradition in which earlier references to Aristodemus' friendship with Superbus had been omitted, while the Roman annalists had access to accounts in which their connection was discussed. While such a scenario is possible, it would go against the usual pattern, reflected in Plutarch and Hyperochus, whereby references to Rome were added to (rather than removed from) the Greek tradition as it developed over time. A simpler explanation of these omissions is that the details of Tarquinius Superbus' death at the court of Aristodemus were never originally a part of the local tradition of Cumae, and that the Roman annalists put the two rulers together independently. The claim that Superbus expired at Cumae may reflect historical reality, but the transmission of this information in the historical record cannot be explained by the mere existence of a Greek tradition that discussed the accomplishments of Aristodemus.

IV THE *BONA TARQUINIORUM*

According to the surviving Roman accounts, Superbus' residence with Aristodemus had little impact on the course of Cumaean history. No wars were launched or battles fought on behalf of the exiled king. The tyrant simply allowed Superbus to live out his final days under his protection. Eventually, however, Aristodemus did behave in a hostile manner towards Rome. A few years after Superbus' death, there was a famine in Rome and envoys were sent to Cumae to purchase grain (Livy 2.34.1–4; Dion. Hal. 7.1.1–12.2). Cumae was a flourishing centre of commerce at the time, and thus a natural place to turn in times of need. According to Livy, Rome received *annona* from Cumae as early as 508 B.C.E., and sent embassies there for the same purpose again in 492, 433, and 411 B.C.E.[66] On this particular occasion, however, Aristodemus arrested the envoys and the Romans were forced to seek relief elsewhere.

It is often argued that Rome's dependence on foreign provisions of wheat during this period was documented, at least in part, by historians writing from the Greek perspective, and that Roman historians learned of these early crises from Greek accounts.[67] With regard to the annalists' reliance on Cumaean sources of information, however, the difference in style and purpose that separated the earliest accounts of Cumaean history from the Roman annalistic tradition suggests that faith in this line of transmission cannot be maintained with any confidence. A well-known fragment of Cato the Elder (fr. 77 Peter) makes it clear that discussion of grain shortages constituted a prominent feature of Roman annalistic historiography, which took the yearly record of the pontifical *tabulae* as its basis.[68] In contrast, the earliest Cumaean historians would not have had a similar rationale for recording occasional sales of grain to neighbouring communities. While the mistreatment of foreign ambassadors might have provided a topos in the characterization of a tyrant,

[66] Livy 2.9.6; 2.34.4 (this case); 4.25.2; 4.52.5.

[67] A. Momigliano, 'Due punti di storia romana arcaica', in *Quarto contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico* (1969; original pub. 1936), 329–61, at 340–8; G. Rickman, *The Corn Supply of Ancient Rome* (1980), 29 n. 14; Ogilvie, op. cit. (n. 55), 256–7; Frederiksen, op. cit. (n. 1), 165–6.

[68] On pontifical records and the format of Roman annalistic historiography, see A. H. McDonald, 'The style of Livy', *JRS* 47 (1957), 155–72; Frier, op. cit. (n. 13), 202–5, 269–75. There continues to be a great deal of speculation about the physical nature and 'publication' of these records (G. S. Bucher, 'The *Annales Maximi* in the light of Roman methods of keeping records', *AJAH* 12 (1995), 2–61; G. Forsythe, 'The Roman historians of the second century B.C.', in C. Bruun (ed.), *The Roman Middle Republic: Politics, Religion and Historiography c. 400–133 B.C.* (2000), 1–11, at 6–8), but as E. Rawson, 'Prodigy lists and the use of the *Annales Maximi*', *CQ* n.s. 21 (1971), 158–69 showed, most annalists probably did not consult the pontifical records directly.

Aristodemus' obstruction of this particular grain mission cannot be securely attributed to such a context.[69]

Some scholars have called attention to the date that Dionysius gives for the famine at Rome: 'in the second year of the seventy-second Olympiad, when Hybrilides was archon at Athens, seventeen years after the expulsion of the kings, as these and almost all the other historians agree' (7.1.5) (= 490 B.C.E.). It is argued that the use of Olympiad and archon dating here reflects the story's origin in a Greek source.[70] This is a red herring. Despite Dionysius' reference to Greek chronological systems, the date he uses for the Roman embassy to Cumae was not taken from a Greek source, chronicle or otherwise. In this passage, Dionysius is attacking the chronological carelessness of two Roman *sungrapheis*, Cn. Gellius and Licinius Macer, who had misidentified the Sicilian tyrant to whom another embassy had been sent during the same grain shortage (7.1.4).[71] Because the historians in question were Romans, it follows that they used the Roman system of eponymous dating to indicate the year of this crisis. This was in the consulship of T. Geganius and P. Minucius, which is the dating formula that Dionysius has already mentioned at the beginning of his entry for this year (7.1.1). Livy (2.34.1) refers to the same consuls in his account of the grain embassy, which proves that both historians were working from a common, Roman tradition.[72] Working forward from his own date for the beginning of the Roman republic (Ol. 68.1 = 507 B.C.E.), Dionysius has converted this consular date, which he tells us amounts to 'seventeen years after the expulsion of the kings', into Olympiad/archon format in order to compare it more easily with the chronology of Greek events in Sicily. Such conversions are common in the *Roman Antiquities*, and as a rule they do not reflect any special dependence on Greek sources.[73] There is therefore no reason to assume that the formulation of this date was influenced by the chronological notices that Timaeus or some other historian might have applied to the local traditions of Cumae or Syracuse. Dionysius is here following the chronology that was established by the Roman annalistic tradition, even if he expresses it in Greek terms.

But what about the consequences of the embassy itself? Might not those have been described in the original Cumaean tradition, even without a specific date? In a stimulating recent discussion of the history of the Tarquin household, Zevi calls attention to the description of this episode in Livy (2.34.4), where it is stated that Aristodemus seized the Roman ships as partial restitution for the property of the Tarquinii (*bona Tarquiniorum*), over which the tyrant claimed ownership in his capacity as Superbus' heir.[74] He cites Alföldi's discussion of the local historical tradition at Cumae and suggests that some reference to Aristodemus' status as the inheritor of the Tarquins' fortune was preserved in the earliest accounts of Cumaean history.

Zevi also acknowledges, however, that the assassination of Aristodemus, which was accompanied by the eradication of his entire family (described by Dionysius, *Ant. Rom.*

[69] Indeed, Mele, op. cit. (n. 3), 176–7 interprets the encounter between Aristodemus and the Roman ambassadors as reflecting a local tradition that was *favourable* towards the tyrant.

[70] Momigliano, op. cit. (n. 67), 343–4; Frederiksen, op. cit. (n. 1), 165–6.

[71] As Gabba, op. cit. (n. 53), 85 points out, Dionysius frequently attacks the chronological carelessness of his Roman predecessors.

[72] As is generally acknowledged, the year in which Dionysius (*Ant. Rom.* 1.74.6) assigned the first year of the Roman republic was two years after the 'Varronian' date adopted by Livy: see A. E. Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology: Calendars and Years in Classical Antiquity* (1972), 251–2; C. Schultze, 'Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Roman chronology', *PCPS* 41 (1995), 192–214. Thus, when the two historians refer to the same consular year, they are usually referring to different dates according to absolute chronology. This essential point is overlooked by Frederiksen, op. cit. (n. 1), 165–6, who argues that Dionysius started from the Olympiad and archon date and then worked backwards to identify who the consuls were during the grain shortage. If so, he would have arrived at different consuls from those mentioned in Livy.

[73] Schultze, op. cit. (n. 72), 211 n. 63 gives a summary of Dionysius' dating formulae. Dionysius himself (1.74.2) claims to have produced a special study of chronology before undertaking the *Roman Antiquities*. This *Peri Chronon*, which Dionysius based on the work of Eratosthenes, is now lost. For discussion, see F. Jacoby, *FGrH* IIB (1962), 251; O. Leuze, *Die römische Jahrzählung* (1909), 177–82.

[74] Zevi, op. cit. (n. 3), 301–3.

7.11.3–4), would have left no one to continue this claim beyond the early fifth century. He therefore puts forth the proposition that there was a contemporary historical account of Superbus' bequest, which enabled the memory of his status as the Tarquins' heir to find its way into subsequent discussions of the history of that family's fortunes. Since it is now clear that no such record could have existed in the early fifth century, this argument collapses under its own weight. Without a contemporary historical record to give the tyrant's claim permanence, there is little reason to believe that this legal issue ever made much of an impact on the Greek tradition regarding Aristodemus.

On the other hand, the fate of the kings' property under the republic was an issue that continued to excite a great deal of interest among Roman historians. The first real threat to Rome's liberty after the expulsion of the Tarquins was a conspiracy of young aristocrats stirred up by ministers of the king who had come to Rome under the pretence of arranging the return of the regal *bona*.[75] According to Livy (2.3.5), there was ambivalence in the Senate about whether the property should be returned as a peace offering or be kept back so as not to help finance the king's forces in an inevitable war. Ultimately, however, the discovery of the ambassadors' plotting led the Roman people to refuse any further attempts by the Tarquins to retrieve their fortune. They even went so far as to dump all the grain that was ripening on the king's estate into the Tiber and to rededicate this field, once the *ager Tarquiniorum*, as the Campus Martius.[76] This public confiscation and destruction of the Tarquins' property played a central role in effecting the final break with the kings and establishing Rome's *libertas* within the framework of a *respublica*. It is therefore not surprising that Livy, who is particularly attuned to these issues, was interested in discussing Aristodemus' desire to claim this lost inheritance.

Once again, the mute testimony of Dionysius of Halicarnassus suggests that Aristodemus' status as the heir to the Tarquins' fortune was not a part of the independent Cumaean tradition. Though his digression on the life of Aristodemus is supposed to have been derived from an early Hellenistic restatement of the earliest Cumaean sources, Dionysius is apparently unaware of this bequest. In his account of the grain embassy's troubles (*Ant. Rom.* 7.2.3), a group of royalist exiles from Rome come forward to institute proceedings against the captured envoys. Aristodemus agrees to hear the case, but when the Roman captives flee, he confiscates the money, slaves, and transports that they had left as bail (7.12.1–2). Perhaps this provided some restitution for the exiles' confiscated fortunes, but no mention is made of any regal inheritance.[77] Had Aristodemus' status as the heir to the fortune of Tarquinius Superbus been attested in the source of his biography, it is unlikely that Dionysius would have ignored this issue so completely when discussing the tyrant's behaviour towards the envoys. That Dionysius would have overlooked this detail is made all the more unlikely by the fact that the digression on the tyrant's life intervenes at this exact point in his narrative.

The inconsistency between Dionysius' and Livy's accounts of the grain embassy indicates that the terms of Superbus' will were not central to the telling of this story. Instead, the essential point of both accounts is the opposition that the envoys encountered. This suggests that the original version of the tale was grounded in a Roman perspective on the diplomatic difficulties that accompanied a particular famine in Rome, and that the different explanations for why this embassy failed were produced as secondary elaboration by later historians. It is within the Roman historiographical context, rather than in any Greek consideration of the Cumaean tyrants rights *vis-à-vis* the wealth of the Tarquins, that Aristodemus' obstruction of the Roman envoys takes on its particular significance.

[75] Livy 2.3.5–4.4; Dion. Hal. 5.4.2–7.1.

[76] Livy 2.5.1–5; Dion. Hal. 5.13.2–5; Plut., *Publ.* 8.1.

[77] The question of the historicity of this episode is further complicated by Rickman, op. cit. (n. 67), 31–2, who argues that the *frumentatores* of the early republic were all private traders, not publicly subsidized officials. The seizure of their property would thus have nothing to do with the recovery of regal wealth that had been confiscated by the *respublica*.

V CONCLUSION: ARISTODEMUS AND ROME

The grain shortage in the consulship of T. Geganius and P. Minucius occurred at a critical juncture in the history of the Roman republic. At this point in time, Rome's new-found liberty faced a number of serious threats, both internal and external. As both Livy (2.34.1–2) and Dionysius (7.1.1–2) explain, the previous year had seen the first secession of the plebs, during which no crops were planted. The resulting famine was, therefore, directly linked to a general breakdown in the concord between the orders. Furthermore, when the Senate attempted to buy grain from neighbouring communities, they encountered opposition in many places, not just in Cumae. Ambassadors sent to purchase grain among the Volsci and in the Pomptine plain were even under threat of physical violence.[78] When a load of grain finally did arrive in Rome, the conflict between the *patres* and the *plebs* reignited after a group of nobles attempted to block the distribution of this food among the people.[79] The leader of this conservative faction was Marcius Coriolanus, who would eventually be driven into exile, join forces with the Volsci, and wage war against his homeland. Within the confines of the Roman tradition, the significance of all these events is clear: ongoing wars had left Rome isolated, and internal dissension only made the situation more precarious.

The famine in the consulship of Geganius and Minucius fits precisely within this meaningful and complex narrative. Though Tarquinius Superbus was dead by this time, the collapse of the republic and the return of tyranny remained a serious threat for Rome. The hostile interaction between Aristodemus Malacus and the Roman envoys serves to reinforce this vulnerability. It was not lost on the Roman historians that their neighbours were still ruled by tyrants while the republic was going through these early growing pains. Dionysius describes the situation in this way:

> τύραννοι δὲ τότε κατὰ πόλεις μὲν ἦσαν, ἐπιφανέστατος δὲ Γέλων ὁ Δεινομένους νεωστὶ τὴν Ἱπποκράτους τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τυραννίδα παρειληφώς, οὐχὶ Διονύσιος ὁ Συρακούσιος, ὡς Λικίννιος γέγραφε καὶ Γέλλιος καὶ ἄλλοι συχνοὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων συγγραφέων οὐθὲν ἐξητακότες τῶν περὶ τοὺς χρόνους ἀκριβῶς, ὡς αὐτὸ δηλοῖ τοὔργον, ἀλλ' εἰκῇ τὸ προστυχὸν ἀποφαινόμενοι. (*Ant. Rom.* 7.1.4)
>
> There were tyrants in the cities then, the most prominent being Gelon, the son of Deinomenes, who recently had taken over the tyranny of his brother Hippocrates. It was not Dionysius the Syracusan, as Licinius and Gellius and many more of the Roman historians have written, who did not examine the dates carefully as the evidence reveals itself, but randomly stated the first thing they came upon.

Dionysius goes on to specify the date of the embassy in the Greek terms outlined above, pointing out that Dionysius the Elder did not come to power in Syracuse until eighty-five years later. This passage is adduced by Alföldi as evidence that Dionysius, unlike his *bêtes noires* Licinius and Gellius, was able to break away from the annalistic sources and consult a Greek historical account to identify the tyrant in question properly.[80] If so, he does not seem to have read this Greek source very closely, since Gelon was not in fact Hippocrates' brother.[81] Be this as it may, the more important issue is that Dionysius' Roman predecessors were interested in drawing a connection between the steps that were taken to deal with this grain shortage and the fact that a tyrant was in power in Sicily at the time. Such a connection was regarded as significant, regardless of whether they got the tyrant's name right. Once again, there is a similarity here to Plutarch's insistence on discussing the

[78] Livy 2.34.4; Dion. Hal. 7.2.2.
[79] Livy 2.34.7–35.2; Dion. Hal. 7.20.3–25.4.
[80] Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 2), 63.
[81] H. Berve, *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen* (1967), 140–1. Some editors (e.g., E. Cary in the Loeb edition) remove this difficulty by deleting the words τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ from the above-cited passage.

relationship between Numa and Pythagoras, which he found meaningful even though he knew it was historically impossible.

While it might be entertaining to focus on how careless some Roman historians could be about matters of global chronology, perhaps more attention should be paid to the assumptions about the historian's working methods that underlie Dionysius' pedantic tirade. He explains what he sees as the origins of the Roman error as follows:

> ἀλλ' ἔοικεν ὁ πρῶτος ἐν ταῖς ὡρογραφίαις τοῦτο καταχωρίσας, ᾧ πάντες ἠκολούθησαν οἱ λοιποί, τοσοῦτο μόνον ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαίαις εὑρὼν ἀναγραφαῖς, ὅτι πρέσβεις ἀπεστάλησαν ἐπὶ τούτων τῶν ὑπάτων εἰς Σικελίαν σῖτον ὠνησόμενοι καὶ παρῆσαν ἐκεῖθεν ἄγοντες ἣν ὁ τύραννος ἔδωκε δωρεάν, οὐκέτι μὴν παρὰ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἐξετάσαι συγγραφέων ὅστις ἦν τύραννος τότε Σικελίας, ἀβασανίστως δέ πως καὶ κατὰ τὸ προστυχὸν θεῖναι τὸν Διονύσιον. (*Ant. Rom.* 7.1.6)
>
> But it seems that the first one to enter this into the annals, whom all the others have followed, found in the old histories only that ambassadors were sent under these consuls to Sicily to acquire grain and that they arrived back from there bringing a gift that the tyrant bestowed. He searched no further among the Greek historians for who was then the tyrant of Sicily, and uncritically wrote down the first name that came to mind, which was Dionysius.

In other words, the perceived cause of this mistake was the way in which some unnamed annalist went about the elaboration of an older, more laconic account of Rome's history.[82] Dionysius does not suggest that new or better information about the Roman embassy to Sicily could have been found in the works of the Greek historians. He only expects that the Roman writers would look far enough into this material to be able to avoid blatant anachronism when they introduced new details. If the Roman historians had managed to get the name right, describing a diplomatic mission to Gelon instead of one to Dionysius the Elder, the Halicarnassian critic's ire would not have been provoked.

This interpretation of the error raises an important question about the references to Aristodemus that we find in the Roman tradition. If the writer who lay behind Gellius and Macer was caught out in his attempt to link this grain shortage with Dionysius the Elder, might not another unknown predecessor, adopting the same *modus operandi*, have introduced a reference to the tyrant of Cumae, but with greater chronological accuracy? Some Roman annalists were quite careful about matters of chronology, after all. Already in the late second century, L. Calpurnius Piso, the first historian to write what could strictly be termed *annales*, pointed out that the length of Servius Tullius' reign made the traditional royal stemma, in which Tarquinius Superbus was said to be the son of Tarquinius Priscus, impossible.[83]

Beyond uncovering the errors of one's predecessors, a principal benefit of the close study of chronology was the discovery of synchronisms, which act as nodal points that enable historians to connect developments in different parts of the world within a common timeframe.[84] Timaeus, the inventor of a systematic universal chronology based on Olympiads, used synchronisms to make comparisons between the history of his native Sicily and that of Athens, his home in exile.[85] Such temporal connections made it possible for

[82] Here is a concrete example of the process that Badian, op. cit. (n. 36), 11 termed the 'expansion of the past'.

[83] Calpurnius Piso, fr. 15 Peter. This observation was taken to heart by Dionysius, who cites it repeatedly (*Ant. Rom.* 4.6.1–7.5; 4.30.2–3; 4.64.2–3). On this connection, see G. Forsythe, *The Historian L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi and the Roman Annalistic Tradition* (1994), 230; Schultze, op. cit. (n. 72), 199–200; and Leuze, op. cit. (n. 73), 200–2. → A. Momigliano, 'Time in ancient historiography', *History and Theory* 6 (1966), 1–23, at 16–17 (= *Quarto Contributo*, 32–4); see also Asheri, op. cit. (n. 45). For the structural importance of synchronisms in the organization of the work of Herodotus, see H. Strasburger, 'Herodots Zeitrechnung', *Historia* 5 (1956), 129–61, esp. 135–40.

[85] A. Momigliano, 'Atene nel III secolo A.C. e la scoperta di Roma nelle storie di Timeo di Tauromenio', *RSI* 71 (1959), 529–56, at 546–7 (= *Terzo Contributo*, 41–2). This use of chronology was not without political implications. Timaeus seems to have revised the chronology of Herodotus (7.166) slightly to make Gelon's victory over Carthage at Himera synchronize with the disaster at Thermopylae instead of the victory at Salamis: see Diod. 11.24.1; F. W. Walbank, 'Timaeus' views on the past', *SCI* 10 (1990), 41–54, at 43.

historians to think in comparative terms, across regional and cultural divides. Roman historians engaged in this kind of reasoning as well, and by the time of scholars like Cornelius Nepos and Atticus, they knew of a number of important synchronisms between their own history and that of the Greek states.[86]

Because of the important chronological and causal connections that were drawn between the invasion of Lars Porsenna and the battle of Aricia, most Roman annalists were sure to be aware of the fact that the early years of the republic coincided with the start of Aristodemus' tyranny at Cumae. If one of these writers had wanted to elaborate on the circumstances of Rome's inability to purchase grain in Italy during the critical year of Geganius' and Minucius' consulship, he could easily have introduced a scene at Cumae involving Aristodemus to add colour to his account. Likewise in elaborating on the death of Tarquinius Superbus, the invention of a connection between the king and Aristodemus would have involved a relatively straightforward chronological deduction. Careful checking with Greek sources would not have been necessary.

Nor was it likely to have been very profitable. While the existence of a Greek account of the relationship between Aristodemus and Tarquinius Superbus remains a possibility, it is not a very likely one. It is quite possible that there was an early account of Cumaean history that preserved a great deal of reliable information about Aristodemus' reign. However, whatever the Roman historians may have gleaned from Hellenistic accounts, it was not a year-by-year record of their city's interaction with Cumae in the late sixth and early fifth centuries. I have argued that the Cumaean sources had little to say about things that happened at Rome apart from providing a basic timeframe for the Etruscan invasion of Latium in the late sixth century. While the accounts of Tarquinius Superbus' death in Cumae and the difficulty of purchasing grain under the consuls Geganius and Minucius involve interactions between the Greek and Roman worlds, they appear to belong exclusively to the Roman historical tradition.

Still, the appearance of Aristodemus in the pages of the Roman annalists does reflect an engagement with Greek sources. If my arguments are correct, however, the nature of this engagement needs to be reconsidered. The Roman annalists did not simply mine the works of Greek historians for stray pieces of information about their own city. They interacted with these sources dynamically, sometimes making novel connections in order to draw their own historical lessons.[87] Like the notoriously anachronistic visit by Solon to the court of King Croesus in the pages of Herodotus, the significance of Superbus' death in Cumae as the guest of Aristodemus is ultimately less about its chronological feasibility than the link that it establishes between two otherwise distinct historical traditions. From the perspective of the annalists, an important lesson could be drawn from an engagement with Cumaean history. This was that other Italian cities continued to be ruled by tyrants after the Romans had successfully expelled their kings. As Dionysius puts it when discussing the grain shortage, 'there were tyrants in the cities at that time' (7.1.4). This deceptively innocuous chronological observation serves to illuminate just what was at stake when the Romans were taking their first, faltering steps under liberty.

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[86] Gell., *NA* 17.21 provides an intriguing list of synchronisms, on which see E. Fantham, 'The synchronistic chapter of Gellius (*NA* 17.21) and some aspects of Roman chronology and cultural history between 60 and 50 B.C.', *LCM* 6 (1981), 7–17. For chronological research in the late republic, see F. Münzer, 'Atticus als Geschichtschreiber', *Hermes* 40 (1905), 50–100; and J. Geiger, *Cornelius Nepos and Ancient Political Biography* (1985), 68–70, which overstates the case for Nepos' originality in my view.

[87] See Asheri, op. cit. (n. 45) for discussion of the didactic use of synchronisms.