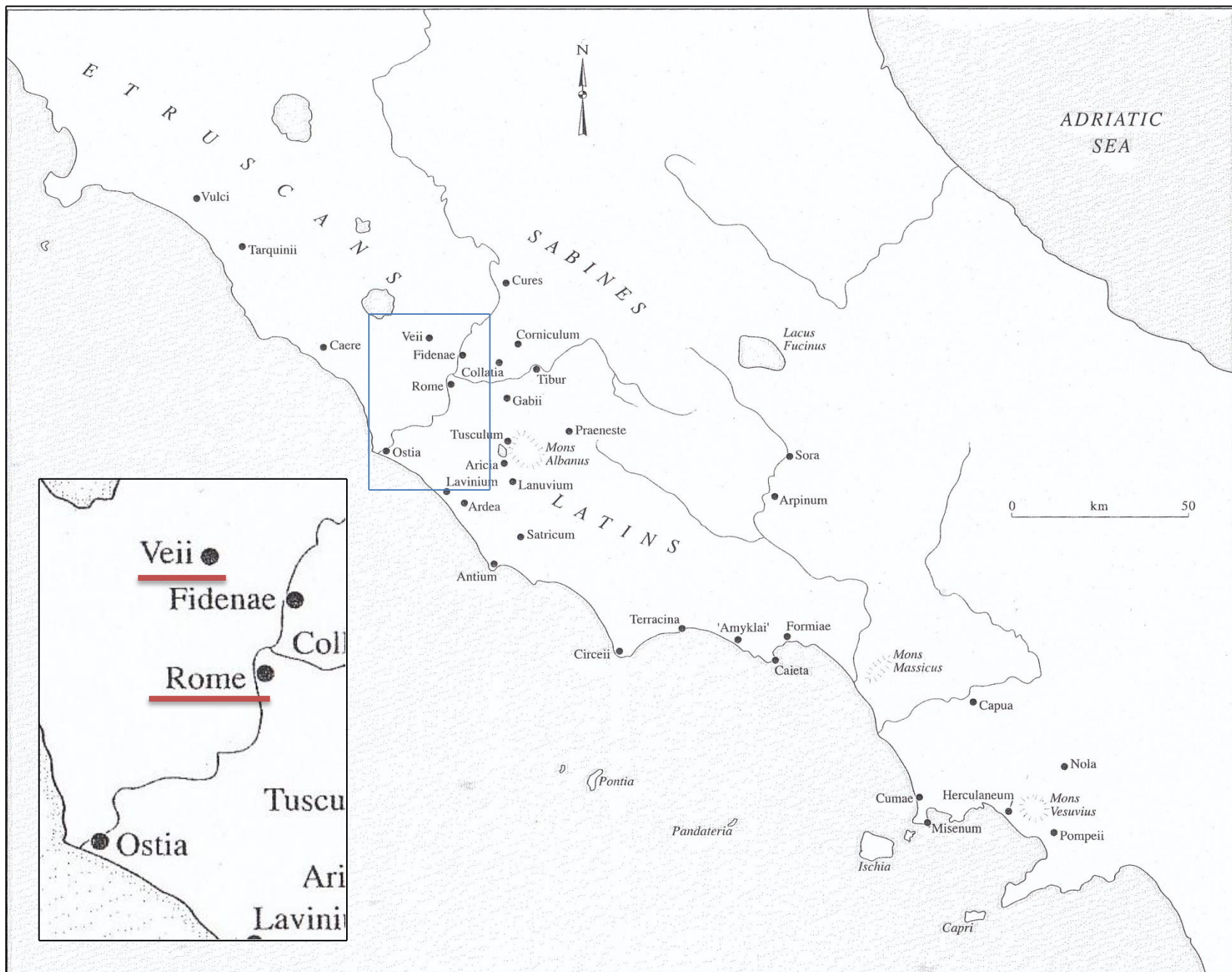
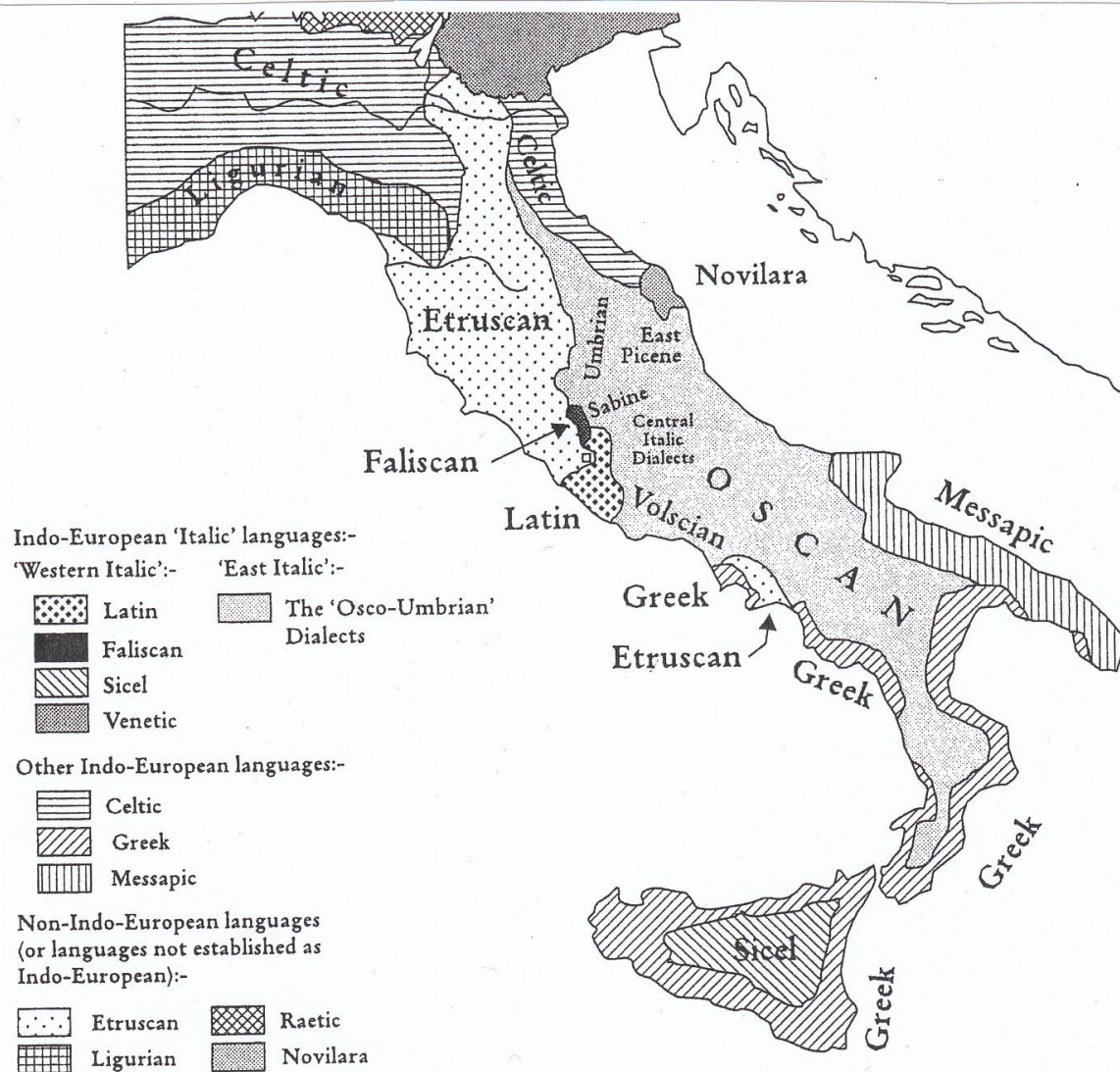


From Village to Empire: an Introduction to the History of Rome

Lecture 2: Introduction to Rome



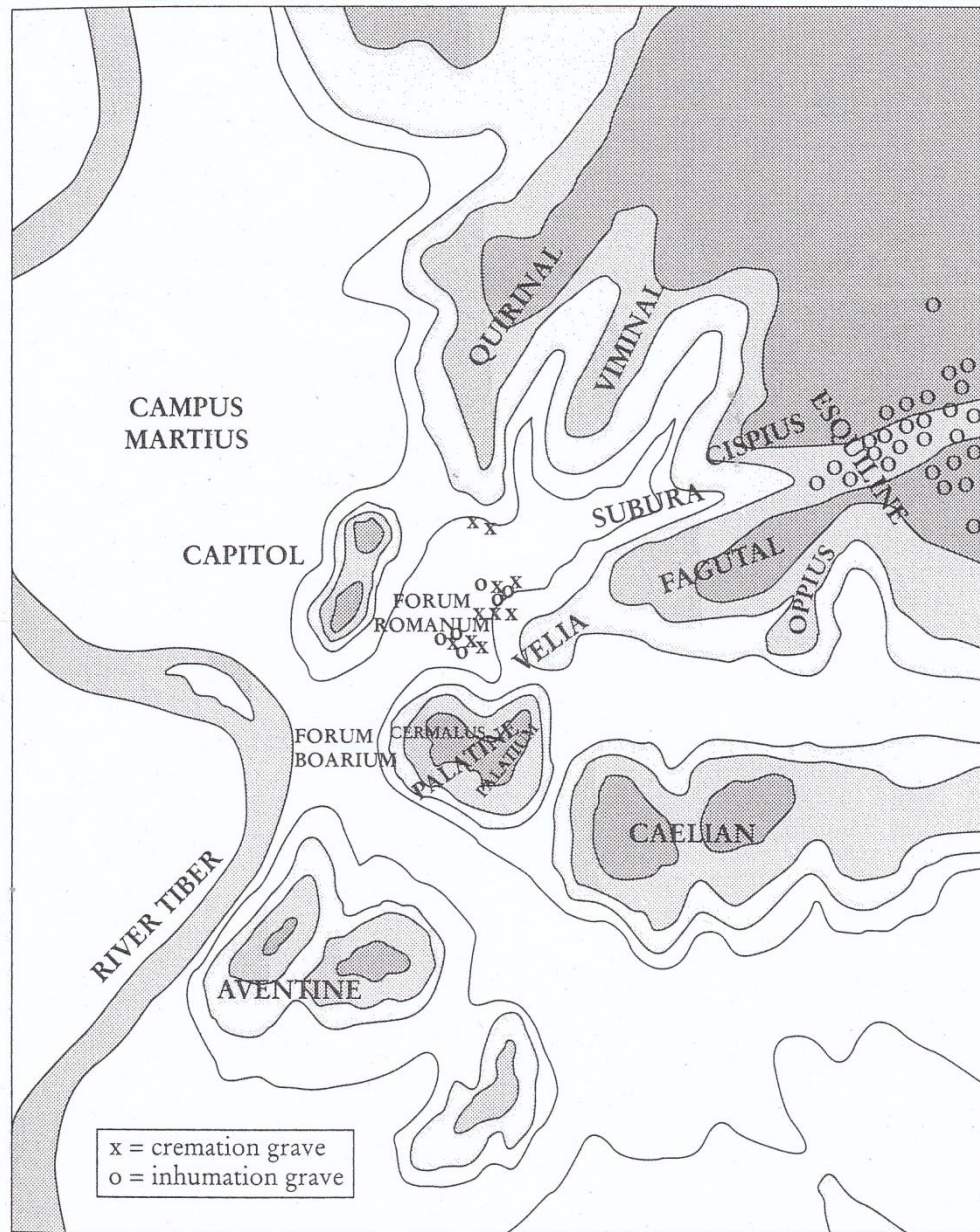


Map 2 The languages of pre-Roman Italy, c. 450–400 BC

On the site of Rome

Plutarch *Romulus* 1.1: From whom, and for what reason the great name of Rome, so famous among mankind, was given to that city, writers are not agreed. Some say that the Pelasgians, after wandering over most of the habitable earth and subduing most of mankind, settled down on that site, and that from their strength (*rhōmē*) in war they called their city Rome.

Livy 5.54.4: '[Camillus is speaking] Not without cause did gods and men select this place for establishing our city – with its healthful hills; its convenient river, by which crops may be floated down from the midland regions and foreign commodities brought up; its sea, near enough for use, yet not exposing us, by being too close, to peril from foreign fleets; a situation in the heart of Italy – a spot, in short, of a nature uniquely adapted for the expansion of a city...’.

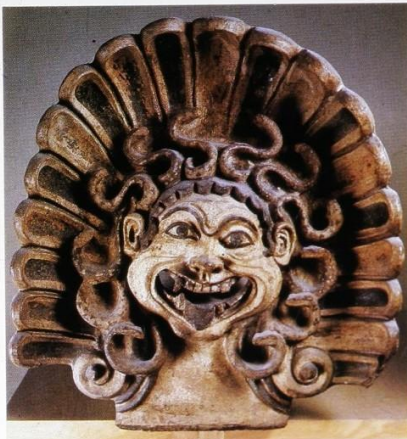
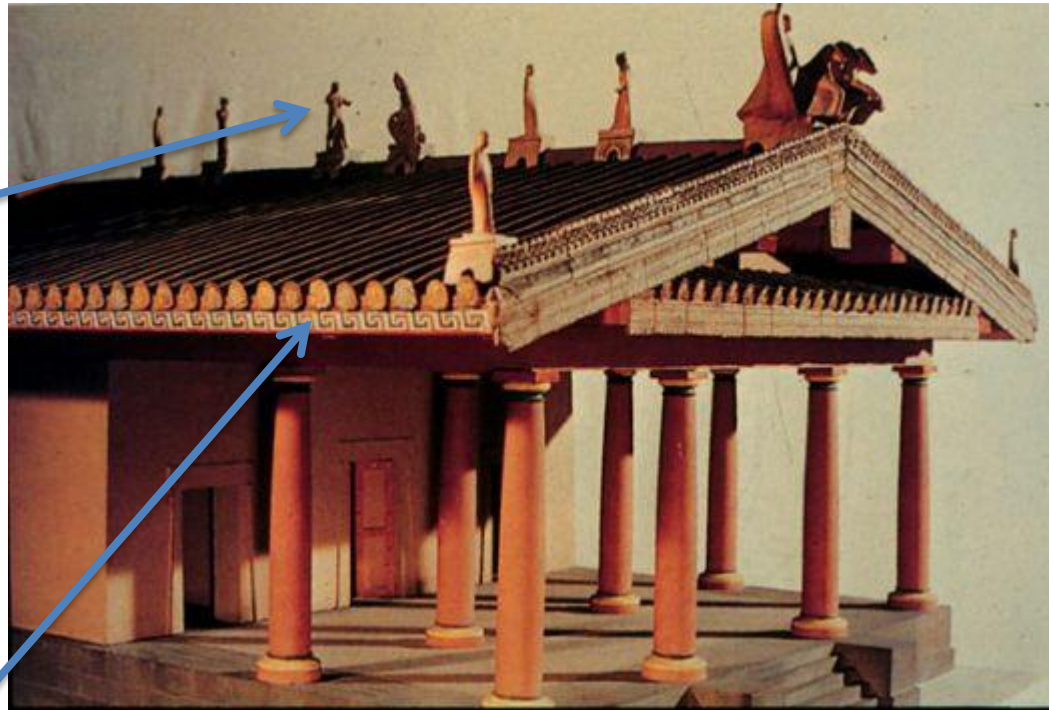


Map 3 The site of Rome, showing principal features and early burial find-spots



Reconstruction of hut village on
Palatine, 8th-7th Century BC





Livy 34.4: (from a speech given by the Elder Cato in 195 BC): And now I hear far too many people praising the ornaments of Corinth and Athens, and jeering at the terracotta antefixes of the Roman gods. For my part, I prefer to have those gods propitious to us...

When was Rome founded?

A] A generation or two after the fall of Troy?

Servius 'auctus', *Commentary on Virgil's Aeneid* 1.273: About the origin and founder of the city, different authors give different accounts. Clinias reports that Telemachus' daughter [so Odysseus' granddaughter, since Telemachus was Odysseus' son], called Rhome, was married to Aeneas, and Rome was called by her name. [...] says that Latinus, son of Ulysses [i.e. Odysseus again] and Circe, called the city Rhome after the name of his dead sister.

Festus, *On the Meaning of Words* 326-8L: Alcimus says that Romulus was the son of Aeneas' wife Tyrrhenia, and from Romulus was born Aeneas' granddaughter Alba, whose son, called Rhodius, founded Rome.

When was Rome founded?

B] Sometime in the 9th or 8th century B.C.?

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* 1.74.1-2: As to the last settlement or founding of the city of Rome, or whatever we ought to call it, Timaeus of Sicily, following what principle I do not know, places it at the same time as the founding of Carthage, that is, in the thirty-eighth year before the first Olympiad [= '813 B.C.']; Lucius Cincius Alimentus, a member of the Senate, places it about the fourth year of the twelfth Olympiad [= '728 B.C.'], and Quintus Fabius Pictor in the first year of the eighth Olympiad [= '747 B.C.']. M. Porcius Cato does not give the time according to Greek reckoning, but being as careful as any writer in gathering the data of ancient history, he places its founding four hundred and thirty-two years after the Trojan war; and this time, being compared to the Chronicles of Eratosthenes, corresponds to the first year of the seventh Olympiad [= '751 B.C.'].

How should we fill in the chronological gap between the fall of Troy and the foundation of Rome sometime in the 750s?

Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 1. 71.1-4: Silvius [supposedly a son of Aeneas, and half-brother of Ascanius], after holding the sovereignty twenty-nine years, was succeeded by Aeneas, his son, who reigned thirty-one years. After him, Latinus reigned fifty-one, then Alba thirty-nine; after Alba, Capetus reigned twenty-six, then Capys twenty-eight, and after Capys, Calpetus held the rule for thirteen years. Then Tiberinus reigned for a period of eight years. This king, it is said, was slain in a battle that was fought near a river, and being carried away by the stream, gave his name to the river, which had previously been called the Albula. Tiberinus' successor, Agrippa, reigned forty-one years. After Agrippa, Allodius, a tyrannical creature and odious to the gods, reigned nineteen years. Contemptuous of the divine powers, he contrived imitations of lightning and sounds resembling thunder-claps, with which he proposed to terrify people as if he were a god. But rain and lightning descended upon his house, and the lake beside which it stood rose to an unusual height, so that he was overwhelmed and destroyed with his whole household. And even now when the lake is clear in a certain part, which happens whenever the flow of water subsides and the depths are undisturbed, the ruins of porticoes and other traces of a dwelling appear. Aventinus, after whom was named one of the seven hills that are joined to make the city of Rome, succeeded him in the sovereignty and reigned thirty-seven years, and after him Proca twenty-three years. Then Amulius, having unjustly possessed himself of the kingdom which belonged to Numitor, his elder brother, reigned forty-two years.

The final sequence of 'events'

1. Aeneas leaves Troy ('1184/3 B.C.')
2. Aeneas arrives in Italy; founds a city (Lavinium)
3. Aeneas' son (Ascanius) founds another city (Alba Longa)
4. A dynasty of kings rules Alba Longa
5. Romulus and Remus born
6. Romulus founds Rome ('753 B.C.')

Romulus' city

Livy 1.8.1: When Romulus had duly attended to the worship of the gods, he called the people together and gave them the rules of law, since nothing else but law could unite them into a single body politic.

Livy 1.8.4-5: Meanwhile the city was expanding and reaching out its walls to include one place after another, for they built their defences with an eye rather to the population which they hoped one day to have than to the numbers they had then. Next, lest his big city should be empty, Romulus resorted to a plan for increasing the inhabitants...

Plutarch, *Romulus* 13: When the city was built, in the first place, Romulus divided all the multitude that were of age to bear arms into military companies, each company consisting of three thousand footmen and three hundred horsemen. Such a company was called a legion, because the warlike were selected (*lego* = 'I select') out of all. In the second place, he treated the remainder as a people, and this multitude was called the *populus*; a hundred of them, who were the most eminent, he appointed to be councillors, calling the individuals themselves patricians, and their body the Senate.

Romulus and the Palatine hill

Livy 1.6.4-7.3: Since the brothers were twins, and respect for their age could not determine between them, it was agreed that the gods who had those places in their protection should choose by augury who should give the new city its name, who should govern it when built. Romulus took the Palatine for his augural quarter, Remus the Aventine. Remus is said to have been the first to receive an augury, from the flight of six vultures. The omen had been already reported when twice that number appeared to Romulus. Thereupon each was saluted king by his own followers, the one party laying claim to the honour from priority, the other from the number of the birds. They then engaged in a battle of words and, angry taunts leading to bloodshed, Remus was struck down in the affray. The commoner story is that Remus leaped over the new walls in mockery of his brother, whereupon Romulus in great anger slew him, and in a menacing way added these words: 'So perish whoever else shall leap over my walls!' Thus Romulus acquired sole power, and the city, thus founded, was called by its founder's name.

Livy 1.7.3: Romulus' first act was to build walls around the Palatine, on which he had himself been reared.

A. Carandini and the wall at the foot of the Palatine

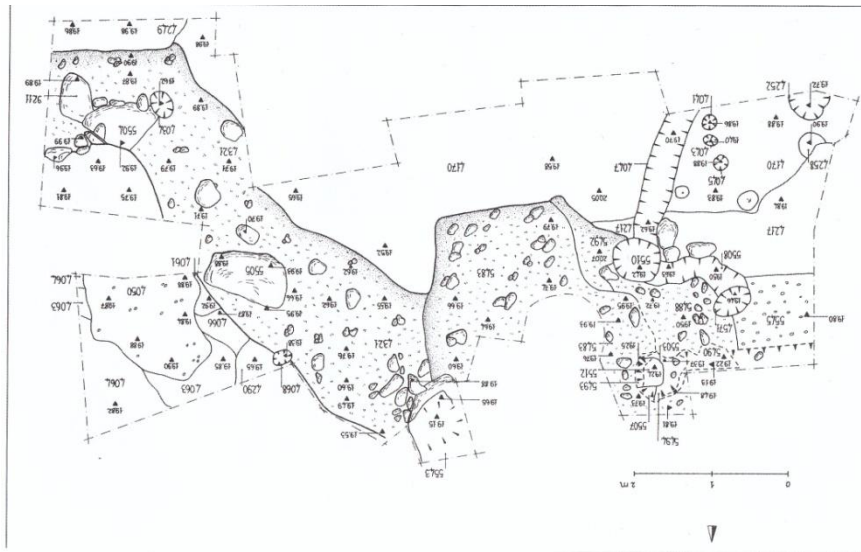


Fig. 17. Findings in Sector 9: the first wall (*Palatium e Sacra Via*, p. 144 fig. 106)

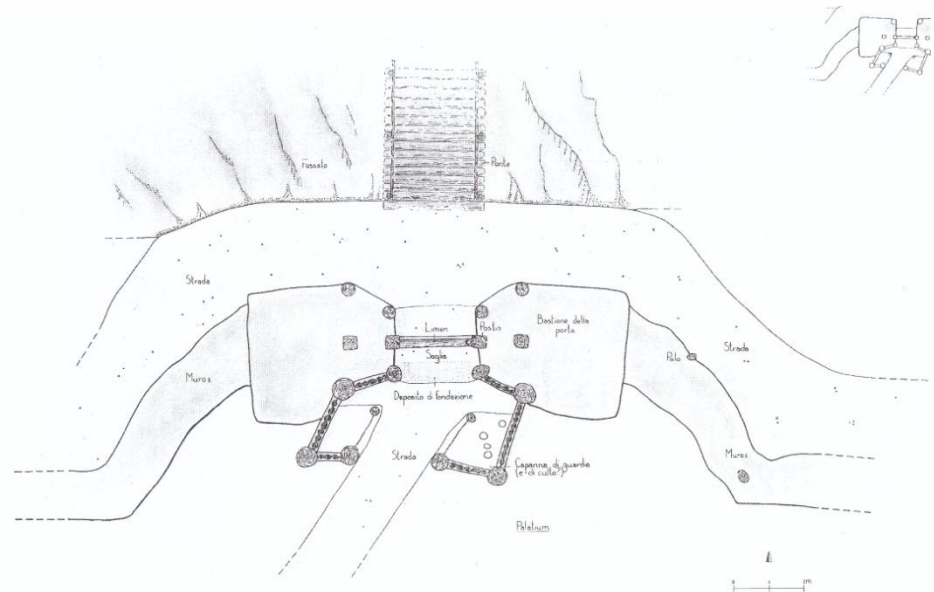


Fig. 18. Hypothetical plan of the gate complex in the first 'Palatine wall'
(*Palatium e Sacra Via*, tab. 22)

Ennius and Naevius on the foundation of Rome

Servius 'auctus' *Commentary on the Aeneid* 1.273:
Naevius and Ennius record that Romulus, the
founder of Rome, was Aeneas' grandson through
Aeneas' daughter.