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From Saviours to Salvation*

Salus in Republican Italy

0. Introduction

The goddess Salus is one of the deities who take their names from concepts; modern scholars have defined these gods and goddesses as Virtues, Qualities or conceptual deities, although in antiquity these categories did not exist.[1] The strong association with a concept makes these deities very helpful to reflect on polytheistic divinities. It has been argued that polytheisms work to a great extent as semantic systems, in which divinities have different roles and meanings.[2] In this paper I shall argue that concepts can be a helpful hermeneutic category for polytheism. In the definition of Koselleck, concepts must have multiple meanings at the same time, and can continuously assume new ones.[3] The multiple meanings with which concepts are endowed can account for the variety and multiplicity of different, potentially conflicting interpretations that ancient gods were given in antiquity, which a structuralist approach cannot, as it is based on the assumption that there must be a stable connection between deities and functions.

Modern scholars have frequently connected ancient gods to a single function, formulating interpretations of divinities which often failed to address a large portion of the evidence, which is disregarded as 'foreign influence' or 'late development'. A marked inconvenience of such a functional approach is that it supposes a great deal of continuity, and it normally struggles to cope

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[1] Clark 2007, Miano 2015; 2018.

[2] On polytheism see Assmann 2008, Versnel 2011 and Parker 2017.

[3] Koselleck 1979; for discussion: Miano 2015; 2018.

with discontinuity. A variant of this approach consists in describing ancient divinities as poly-functional, but this is equally problematic. If polytheistic divinities were indeed poly-functional, how useful is the traditional hermeneutic category of "function"? And, if "function" has proved to be unhelpful to our understanding of ancient gods, why keep using it? One has the impression that functions were almost reified, as if, somewhere on the way, they stopped being hermeneutic tools and were turned into objects of investigation.

Polytheistic deities are inherently located within a tension between unity and multiplicity. The argument goes that, as a semantic system, polytheism has a tendency to multiply exponentially a single godhead, as is particularly clear in the case of epithets.[4] The epithets of Iuppiter Victor and Invictus are called *cognomina* by Cicero (*leg*. 2.28), and if we take this analogy further we must conclude that they were different persons, not unlike a Cornelius Sulla and a Cornelius Scipio. At the same time, they share the *nomen* of Iuppiter, and this implies the possibility of joining them in a single, broader godhead – unlike humans. The act of naming deities is a complex phenomenon that can be seen under different points of view. There is on the one hand a linguistic and conceptual aspect, so that Iuppiter Victor is the Jupiter who wins, and Iuppiter Stator is the Jupiter who stands his ground, and on the other a religious aspect, so that Jupiter Victor and Stator might be considered in a way different specifications of the same god, and in another way different deities with clearly delimited fields of action that overlaps their conceptual aspect (winning and standing one's ground respectively). These two aspects are merely different point of views to observe the same process.

This tendency to the multiplication of divinities cannot be adequately represented in terms of functions, and a merely structuralist approach that does not take into account the multifarious aspects of ancient deities and the ambiguities in naming them risks presenting an oversimplifying account. Concepts, on the other hand, have by definition multiple meanings and the ability to assume new ones. Therefore, they not only have the advantage of responding to the semantic

[4] In particular Parker 2003, Assmann 2008, Versnel 2011.

structure of polytheisms, but they are also a plausible model for the relationship between unity and multiplicity that one can detect in the evidence on ancient gods. Finally, a conceptual study of polytheistic gods can also account satisfactorily for the phenomenon of gods in translation, that is for divinities from polytheistic systems from of different linguistic areas which are considered mutual translations, like Zeus : Iuppiter. Gods in translation are not unlike concepts in translation. The translation is established because the two concepts from different cultures or languages have one or more common meanings (see also Clark, this volume). Multiple translations are also possible, related to different meanings of a concept in one of the languages, which are expressed and overlap with more than one concept in the other language.[5] In cultural and postcolonial studies, it has been underlined how translation transcends the linguistic act and it is one of the ways in which innovation is brought about; a translator is an individual who finds himself or herself for historical reasons at the border of different linguistic systems, and the act of translating allows him or her to exert agency.[6]

This chapter will offer a study of the goddess Salus with a conceptual approach. In the first part, I shall summarise the *status quo* in modern historiography. In the second part, I shall reconstruct the concept/conceptual field of *salus* and look at the evidence on salvation and saviours up to the battle of Cynoscephalae (197 BC), and in the third in the period up to the death of Caesar. I have chosen this periodization because it is with the attribution of the title *sōtēr* to T. Quinctius Flamininus that Italians probably heard for the first time that a man could be a "saviour". I shall focus mostly on the goddess Salus but also on human and divine "saviours" attested in other languages in Italy.

First of all, I shall argue that the evidence on Salus in Italy shows a complex picture in which the goddess has a variety of separate meanings attached to her. Different individuals, cities, and communities were free to elaborate the meaning of Salus that suited their needs at a given time. At the same time, for these attributions of meaning to be comprehensible, these agents had to take into

[5] Essential Assmann 1996, and now Parker 2017
[6] Bhabha 1994: 212.

account the accepted set of meanings associated with Salus, that is the concept of "health/rescue/welfare".

Secondly, I shall consider possible connections between the goddess Salus and other gods and goddesses presented as saviours. The evidence for divinities called "saviours" in Latin is sparse for this period. This is strikingly different from what happens with the goddess Victoria, as associated epithets like *victor* or *invictus* were common, and from the equivalent Greek usage, in which many gods and goddesses were given the epithet *sōtēr/sōteira*, "saviour".[7]

Thirdly, I shall address precisely the question of the translation of Salus into more than one Greek word, and I shall argue that these different translations were used to construct different meanings of Salus; in other words these translations were themselves attempts to renegotiate and define what Salus meant. All translations seem to have been imperfect, and multiple translations seem to have been in use simultaneously. In the relationship with σωτηρία this is reflected in the apparent difficulty to translate into Latin the Greek word for 'saviour', *sōtēr*, which in the late Republican period seems to have been translated mostly with circumlocutions.[8] At the same time, Salus was translated with ὑγίεια, as is shown by the association with Aesculapius in Rome and Fregellae (see below), and by a passage of Plutarch, who called the Roman sanctuary of Salus 'temple of Hygieia' (ναὸς τὴς Ὑγιείας).[9] This plurality of translations seem to reflect possible meanings of Salus, ranging from physical health (ὑγίεια) to safety from dangers and an association with the welfare of the state (often connected with σωτηρία in the Hellenistic period), but with significant differences with regard to the ways in which 'salvation' is connected with benefactions and benefactors.

1. Writing Salus

[7] I shall not consider here divinities who occasionally grant safety in dangerous situations, but who are not called saviours. E.g. see for Apollo, Santi 2008: 167-171, and in this volume for the Dioscuri.
[8] See *ILLRP* 177 = *IGUR* I, 6, and Cic., *Verr.* 2.2.154 on which see section III below.
[9] Plut., *Cat.* 19.

For a very long time the dominant treatment of Salus was that of Georg Wissowa.[10] Wissowa's main contention was that, through her epithet Semonia, which he derived from the divine name Semo Sancus Dius Fidius, Salus was an archaic divinity connected with Iuppiter. Wissowa thought that Salus was the goddess of the welfare in a rather broad sense, although in public cult this meant primarily the welfare of the state, and became associated with health only at a later stage. He believed, however, that Salus had nothing to do with the vows for the welfare of the state (*vota pro salute rei publicae*), made by the consuls when they entered office.[11]

Another essential foundation of the current historiographical narrative on ancient salvation and saviours is a monograph by Hans Ulrich Instinsky.[12] Instinsky's main focus was the development of the idea of salvation of the state in early Christianity, and how this was influenced by earlier conceptions. In his view, the welfare of the state and that of individuals were closely connected: it is from the Hellenistic period that collective welfare was increasingly associated with the welfare of kings.[13] Roman expansion caused the notion of *sōtēr* as saviour to be absorbed into the semantics of *salus*. The verb *salvare*, "to make safe", is a late construction of Christianity, from which comes *salvator*, the Latin translation of *sōtēr* in a Christian sense. Classical Latin used *servare*/*servator* and *conservare*/*conservator* to express the concept of saviour or preserver of welfare. Instinsky argued that the notion of the welfare of the state became increasingly connected with the personal wellbeing of state leaders in the imperial period.[14]

In modern scholarship up to this point the antiquity of the cult of Salus was not really called into question. The connection between Salus and σωτηρία was considered the interplay of similar concepts with an independent development, which occurred relatively late. Both propositions were

[10] Wissowa 1912[2], 131-3; 1909-1912.
[11] This was part of a polemic against previous scholarship, e.g. Preller 1858: 601-602; Marquardt 1878: 361.
[12] Instinsky 1963.
[13] Instinsky 1963: 22-26.
[14] Instinsky 1963: 28-37.

radically challenged by J. Rufus Fears, whose essay on Roman Virtues had a lasting effect on the study of Salus.[15] Fears famously argued that conceptual divinities at Rome are a Hellenistic phenomenon, inspired by the Eastern monarchies and then "transmitted" to the rest of Italy, advocating a model of cultural change in Italy which was very popular at the time. Within this general assumption, Fears agreed with Wissowa that Salus came to be identified with the Greek Hygieia in the early second century BC, whereas originally she had been identified perhaps with σωτηρία.

In his Salus. *Vom Staatskult zur politischen Idee*, Lorenz Winkler accepts to a great extent Fears' reconstruction of Salus as a Hellenised goddess, but he tries to reconcile it with Wissowa's argument of an archaic Salus. Winkler concludes that the foundation of the temple of Salus occurred under the influence of Greek and Roman elements. The Greek element was the concept of *sōtēr*. The foundation of the temple of Salus occurred in "chronological parallelism" with the use of the title *sōtēr* by the Diadochi.[16] The Hellenistic idea of a powerful individual hailed as *sōtēr*, according to Winkler, could not be accepted in the Roman Republic, and for this reason the concept of *salus* itself was personified. Winkler again underlines that Salus must have had a previous cult, in a form which we cannot reconstruct, but he argues that the cult connected to the temple of Salus, the regular cult found in the Republic, must have come from a local development of the Greek concept of *sōtēr*, specialised and distinguished from a concept of σωτηρία because of its political meaning.

The discussion above shows that scholarly reconstructions of Salus, saviours, and salvation seems to have believed that there were well defined, and rather monolithic and homogeneous 'Roman' or 'Greek' ideas of salvation in the ancient world, that could change only by influencing one another in rather passive ways – interestingly, there seems to be very little interest in the agents that made possible these interactions, as if concepts themselves had agency. A conceptual approach, which

[15] Fears 1981. Marwood 1988 and Cattaneo 2012 stay very close to Fears' reconstruction.
[16] Winkler 1995: 26 'zeitlich Parallelität'.

assumes that these concepts were inherently ambiguous and were constantly manipulated by a variety of agents will be able to give a more satisfactory account of the evidence.

Moreover, previous studies in general have had a quite Graeco-Romano-centric approach, in which the role of Italians is essentially non-existent, and salvation is defined by interaction of Romans and Greeks only. This must be corrected in two ways. First of all, I find it more helpful to consider the interaction of concepts in different languages as a problem of translation rather than of combination of several "influences". Secondly, I shall show that the lack of consideration of the role of the Italians in this process has led to the construction of a misleading narrative of the history of salvation in Italy.

2. Early evidence on salvation and divine saviours in Italy

There are good reasons why the history of salvation as a conceptual deity in Italy should start in 311 BC, when the temple of Salus at Rome was vowed by C. Iunius Bubulcus Brutus. Wissowa argued that Salus was an archaic goddess on the following basis: the antiquity of the epigraphic evidence; the mention of a *collis Salutaris* in the list of *sacra Argeorum* provided by Varro, who was quoting from a priestly record that was assumed to be very ancient; the connection of Salus with Semo Sancus, a god who had a temple from the fifth century BC, through her epithet Semonia. These elements are not enough to make a strong case for a high antiquity of Salus. Let us examine them in turn. The epigraphic evidence will be discussed in detail below but it is worth noting here that most of the evidence in Latin can be firmly dated after the construction of the Roman temple of Salus. The priestly document quoted by Varro, on the *sacra Argeorum* (*LL* 5.52), cannot be used to establish that the cult pre-dated the Republican temple. The document itself, which is also the only attestation of the name *collis Salutaris*, mentions the temple of Salus, and must therefore be dated

after 311 BC if not much later. This means that the name *collis Salutaris* may ultimately depend on the *aedes Salutis* rather than vice versa.[17] The same could be said about the *porta Salutaris*, a gate whose name is attested only in Festus, the author of an epitome of the Augustan antiquarian Verrius Flaccus, in turn epitomised by the great Carolingian scholar Paul the Deacon (436, 435 L.), both of whom explicitly relate it to the temple of Salus. Wissowa's final argument regards the epithet Semonia, which would imply a connection between the goddess and the temple of Semo Sancus Dius Fidius, founded by Sp. Postumius in 466 BC (Dion. Hal. 9.60.8). This is also very uncertain: in a paper which is still the most significant contribution to the study of Semo Sancus, Jacques Poucet argued that the official and earliest name of the god to whom the sanctuary was dedicated was Dius Fidius, and Semo Sancus was a later addition.[18] The evidence for the epithet Semonia itself is relatively late. We know from a very badly preserved passage of Festus (404 L) that the epithet was mentioned by Verrius Flaccus. Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.16.8) mentions a festival of Salus Semonia. With regard to the epigraphic evidence, we have an inscription mentioning the dedication of an altar of Iuppiter by the freedman L. Lucretius Zethus in AD 1 (*CIL* VI 30975). The inscription starts with a long list of divinities whose benevolence to the emperor is invoked, all in the dative case. A different hand added at the beginning of the list *Mercurio*, and another hand added at the end of the inscription *Salus Semonia* and *populi Victoria*, in the nominative. Semonia comes from Semo, a word which is also attested in the plural *semones*, who might have been a class of extra-human beings or a group of deities. The epithet of Salus may be a way to argue that the goddess

[17] Discussions of the *sacra argeorum* can be found in Platner-Ashby 1929: 51-53 (with previous bibliography); Richardson 1992: 37-39; Coarelli 1993: 120-125. On the ritual in general Graf 2000.

[18] Poucet 1972 : 55. See also Freyburger 2004. The calendars recording the festival of the god, the *Fasti Antiates maiores* and the *Fasti Venusini* , have the inscription *Dio Fidio* (*Inscr. It.* XIII, 2, p. 465), and the calendars, according to Poucet, are more trustworthy on the official denomination of a cult. Moreover, the *sacra Argeorum* also mention the temple as belonging to Dius Fidius, without any reference to Semo Sancus (Varr., *LL* 5, 52). The name Sancus was therefore very probably attached to the god in a second phase, and in a third phase (which according to Poucet should be late Republican) he was finally called Semo.

was also part of this group, or create a connection with it.[19] In conclusion, Wissowa's argument for a very early cult of Salus must be rejected.

Once established that there are no solid grounds for asserting that Salus was an archaic goddess, let us turn to the evidence referring to the fourth century BC temple. The Roman sanctuary was vowed during the Samnite Wars by C. Iunius Bubulcus Brutus in 311 BC. We cannot reconstruct the circumstances of the vow from the historiographical accounts of the events of the year because Livy refers to the vow only retrospectively when he writes about the censorship and the dictatorship of Iunius in 306 and 302 BC, when the sanctuary was contracted and dedicated respectively (9.43.25; 10.1.9).[20] For 311 BC the only episode which Livy tells at greater length is a Roman victory over the Samnites, in which Iunius and his army managed to quickly react after an ambush at a gorge (9.31); this would be a plausible context for such a vow, and the monumentalisation of the story with a temple foundation would explain its historiographical transmission, although we cannot know whether the vow took place in this circumstance.

The two locations for the temple proposed by scholars of topography, corresponding to the modern Palazzo del Quirinale and Palazzo Barberini, depend on the interpretation of a number of inscriptions.[21] The temple should be considered one of the victory temples vowed in battle which are so typical of mid-Republican Rome. Although, as noted, Livy does not tell the story of the vow, this is made very clear by two pieces of evidence. First of all, according to the *Fasti Triumphales*, C. Iunius Bubulcus celebrated a triumph in 311 BC, the year of the vow of the temple, and this

[19] Poucet 1972 : 63. Also Flower 2017: 333-334. There is other evidence on Semo / Semones. See *ST*, *Sa* 16, *Pg* 9 (= *Im.It.* Terventum 8-10, Corfinium 6). The first inscription is perhaps an *elogium*, probably mentioning a magistrate who dedicated a temple of Semo, dated in the last quarter of the second century BC, whereas the second is a funerary inscription commemorating Prima, a priestess of Ceres, Persephone and the Semones, dated around 100 BC (*Im.It. ad loc.*). In the *carmen Arvale*, *semunis/semones* are invoked together with Lares and Mars, but it is difficult to establish the exact meaning of the hymn. The *carmen Arvale* (*CIL* VI 2104) was recently commented on by Hickson Hahn 2011: 243-244.

[20] Oakley 2005: 401-404 for a detailed discussion confronting the account of the year in Livy (9.31) with Zonaras (8.8.1) and Diodorus (20.26.3-4). Oakley argues that the comparison with the fasti Triumphales (*Insc. It.* 13, 1, p. 542) makes Livy's account of a Roman victory more plausible than Zonaras' story of a harsh defeat. Diodorus cannot be reconciled with Livy and Zonaras.

[21] The two arguments are presented by Ziolkowski 1992: 144-146 (Palazzo Barberini) and Coarelli 2000 (Palazzo del Quirinale); The inscriptions are *CIL* I^2 727 = *CIL* VI 373 = *ILLRP* 176 (*populus Ephesius*); *CIL* I^2 728 = *CIL* VI 374 = *ILLRP* 177 = *IG* XIV 987 = *IGUR* I 6 = EDR105932 (*populus Laodicensis*).

triumph was held on the future *dies natalis* of the temple (*Inscr. It.* XIII, 1, p. 542). Livy also underlines that the temple was dedicated on the same day on which C. Iunius celebrated a triumph in 302 BC (9.1.9). This information is slightly problematic, because the *Fasti Triumphales* record that the triumph of 302 BC was celebrated on a different date (*Inscr. It.* XIII, 1, p. 543), and Livy might have confused the dates. In the temple were painted the celebrated frescoes of the first Fabius Pictor, who earned his cognomen because of them.[22] The subject of the frescoes is unknown, but it is usually speculated that it was a depiction of the war fought against the Samnites, although Iunius' triumph or the circumstances of the vow are also possible subjects. It is difficult to reconstruct what precise meaning was given to the first utterance(s) of the goddess Salus. Victory temples were often (but not always) dedicated to deities with military meanings, such as Bellona (vow 296), Iuppiter Victor (vow 295), Victoria (dedication 294), Iuppiter Stator (vow 294), Quirinus (dedication 293), which makes it possible that the 'safety' referred to by the vow is one from extreme danger, especially if the temple was dedicated during the Samnite ambush at the gorge.

If by 311-302 BC the Romans had Salus, do we also find an interest in the saving powers of divinities in other parts of Italy? The answer is, without doubt, affirmative, and we can see this in several regions in Italy, although the evidence is fragmentary. It is from Latium and Etruria that we have the most interesting evidence in this regard. The first place of interest is Lanuvium, where Iuno Sospita was also considered a saviour goddess. Festus writes that "the ancients usually called Iuno *Sispes*, whom the crowd calls *Sospes*, as it seems that this word was taken from Greek 'saving' (σώζειν)".[23] In 338 BC, following the Latin wars, Lanuvium was incorporated into the Roman citizenship as a *municipium*, and Iuno Sospita came to be worshipped by both cities. There is no reason to doubt that the epithet Sospita, perhaps in the slightly different form suggested by Festus, was already used in 338, and from that point Roman consuls probably took part to the festival of the

[22] Plin., *NH* 35, 4, 19; Val. Max. 8, 14, 6.
[23] Fest. 462 L.: *Sispitem Iunonem, quam vulgo sospitem appellant, antiqui usurpabant, cum ea vox ex Graeco videatur sumpta, quod est* σώζειν.

goddess, although the direct evidence we have refers to 62 BC.[24] Iuno Sospita had long been classified as a goddess of fertility by scholars of Roman religion, but recent work has reappraised this, arguing that political meanings were also attributed to her.[25] Her epithet shows that she also had a meaning connected with salvation. Although Sospes does not derive from σώζειν as the crowd had it, there is a semantic connection between the two terms, as is made clear by some fragmentary lines of Festus, in which he collects quotations of authors using the adjective *sospes*, referring to Afranius, Ennius, probably Accius (388 L). Paul the Deacon thus summarizes the passage: "*Sospes* means 'safe' (*salvus*). Ennius, however, uses *sospes* as a synonym for *servator* (saviour)".[26] What is left of the text of Festus shows that Ennius called Liber *sospes* in this sense.[27] The adjective *sospes* in its intransitive meaning of 'safe', and the deriving predicate *sospito*, which has the transitive meaning of 'saving', were abundantly used by Plautus and fragmentary early authors.[28] Interestingly, the meaning of salvation connected to *sospes* and derivatives seems to always refer to a process ('saving') or a status ('being saved') rather than a concept ('salvation'). So we have things that are 'safe' and the act of 'saving', but we do not have a derivative word for 'salvation' or 'safety', as nouns such as *sospitas* or *sospitatio* are only attested from late antiquity.[29]

A series of epigraphic documents testifies to the presence of several saviour goddesses in central Italy. These appear on a number of bronze strigils bearing the marks σώτειρα, "(female) saviour", and one with the mark σώιζουσα, "she who saves".[30] Similar marked strigils are well attested in central Italy, and we know that these marks were references to the workshops that produced them, as they normally bear a Greek name in the genitive, interpreted as the name of the craftsman. The

[24] Liv. 8.14.2; Cic., *Mur.* 90. A Republican inscription from Lanuvium documents a votive gift *Iunone Seispitei / Matri Reginae*, "to Juno Seispita, Mater, Regina" (*CIL* I^2 1430 = *ILLRP* 170 = EDR109670).
[25] In particular Schultz 2006; Hermans 2012.
[26] 389 L: *Sospes, salvus: Ennius tamen Sospitem pro Servatore posuit*. On etymology see De Vaan 2008: 577; Neri 2011.
[27] 598 Skutsch. I am grateful to John North, who shared with me the current state of the text and the commentary on this passage produced by the Festus project.
[28] E.g. Plaut.; *As.* 17; 683; *Au.* 546; *Cap.* 873; *Poen.* 1188; *Ps.* 247; *Rud.* 631. They also appear in fragments of Ennius, Pacuvius and Lucilius.
[29] Neri 2011, 72-4.
[30] On the use of these epithets see Jim 2015.

instances of interest to us bear instead female epithets, and this suggests that they were probably produced by workshops connected to sanctuaries.[31] There is only one σώιζουσα strigil, which comes from Musarna, an Etruscan town not far away from modern Viterbo, probably founded by settlers from Tarquinia. Most of the σώτειρα strigils come from Praeneste (six in total), but three come from Etruscan towns (Barbarano Romano – territory of Tarquinia, Orvieto, and Aleria in Corsica).[32] I have argued elsewhere that, at least for the Praenestine production, it is reasonable to think that the goddess to whom the strigils refer is Fortuna Primigenia.[33] This, of course, does not necessarily apply to the other strigils, and it is likely that there were Etruscan goddesses with this epithet. This material evokes several important questions which, although they probably cannot be answered, are worth asking. Why were goddesses in Etruria and Latium called "saviours" in Greek, and why was this apparently not translated into a Latin or Etruscan epithet? There might have been an issue of translatability, or lack thereof, between Greek and Latin concepts which were considered somehow similar but not quite the same, so that Fortuna Primigenia could be called a saviour in Greek, but not in Latin.

The case of Praeneste is particularly important to understanding this early stage, because we have further evidence for a cult of Salus there. An inscription on a *tufo* block, found in the *ager* of Praeneste, testifies to the existence of an old cult of Salus (*CIL* I^2 62 = *ILLRP* 132 = EDR110696). The inscribed text is a dedication to Hercules by L. Gemenius, where it is stated that the offering is performed according to the ceremonial rules of an "altar of Salus" (*ara Salutus - sic*).[34] The palaeography and the language of the inscription allow it to be dated at the end of the fourth or to the third century BC.[35] We do not know where this altar was located, but it is reasonable to suppose

[31] Most importantly Jolivet 1995.
[32] Jolivet 1995: n. 84-94. The datable contexts are Barbarano Romano and Aleria, both c. 300 BC. Several marked strigils from Sicily were not discussed by Jolivet. See Manganaro 1999: 72-73; *ILipara* 62.
[33] Miano 2018, 171-3.
[34] "Lucius Gemenius son of Lucius Pelt(- - -) offers this to Hercules willingly and deservedly for himself and his family, according to the same rules of the altar of Salus", *L(ucios) Gemenio(s) L(uci) f(ilios) Pelt(- - -) / Hercole dono(m) / dat lubs mertod / pro sed sueq(ue), / ede leigibus / ara Salutus*.
[35] Granino Cecere 2005: n. 614 (end of fourth/third century BC); Nonnis 2012 (half third century BC).

that it was either a lost adjacent altar, or one connected to a better known sanctuary. In this case, Rome is a possible candidate.[36] The σώτειρα strigils, however, show that a concept of divine salvation was known to some at Praeneste at the time of the gift offered by L. Gemenius, and this might suggest that the altar was rather at Praeneste. Safety from danger seems to have been one of the meanings attached to Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste, to whom were offered gifts by the Praenestine survivors of the allied garrison of Casilinum who came back home alive after the particularly harsh siege that Hannibal had laid to the town.[37] Although this cannot be proved, if an altar of Salus was at Praeneste, somehow associated with the sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia, this might have been a reaction to the dedication of the Roman temple, and a development from salvation as a process (through a saviour goddess) to salvation as a quality which is only partially independent by other deities.

As for the Etruscan goddess(es) called σώτειρα or σώιζουσα, no hypothesis can be formulated. It might be helpful, however, to recall that in the Etruscan necropolis of Horta a *pocolom* of Salus was found (*CIL* I^2 450 = *ILLRP* 254: *Salutes pocolom*). *Pocola* were vases of various forms, bearing the painted inscription *pocolo(m)* and the name of a divinity in the genitive, and this particular object must be dated in the first quarter of the third century BC.[38] Several theories have been elaborated about these objects, and they clearly show the importance of individual mobility to the diffusion of conceptual divinities in Italy.[39] It is tempting to imagine that in this case the Etruscan saviour goddess(es) called by the Greek epithets σώτειρα or σώιζουσα in contemporary documents was/were translated into Latin as Salus, and this would have been favoured by phenomena of individual mobility and the increasing importance of the Latin language in the peninsula. Even if this is not the case, the contemporary presence of these epithets and Salus points at an increasing importance of the concept of salvation in central Italy, attested in multiple languages and different

[36] Marwood 1988: 89; Palmer 1974: 60.
[37] Liv. 23, 19. Miano 2018, 28, 45.
[38] Cifarelli-Ambrosini-Nonnis 2003.
[39] Miano 2015.

forms ('saviours' and 'salvation'). Very much later, Salus is included alongside other gods in the first of the celestial regions listed by Martianus Capella, in a passage which is normally believed to be a late and deformed expression of original Etruscan beliefs.[40] However, it is doubtful whether or not such a late document can be seen to represent continuity with the period which we are analysing. There is no way of reconstructing the process of translation between Etruscan and Latin with Greek as intermediary in detail, but the evidence above shows that the contemporary presence of these multiple utterances of salvation in the region in the third century BC must show a significant development.

Another saviour goddess from this early period is attested on coinage of Metapontum, recently dated by Rutter to around 400-340 BC.[41] On these coins a female bust is accompanied by the inscriptions ὁμόνοια, ὑγίεια, νίκα, and, crucially, ΣΩΤΗΡΙΑ. The latter could be interpreted as σωτήρια, "salvation festivals", and we could imagine that the coinage might have been minted on the occasion of one such festival; or as σωτηρία, "salvation", supposing that the inscribed word is an epithet of a goddess or a conceptual goddess of her own.[42] I am inclined to see it as an epithet, and I believe that for the interpretation of the whole group a particular coin-type is crucial, on which the inscription reads ΔΑΜΑΤΕΡ ΟΜΟΝΟΙΑ, making it clear that these names should be interpreted as epithets of Demeter.[43]

The fourth and third centuries BC, then, see the emergence of Salus at Rome and perhaps Praeneste, but the presence of several saviour goddesses in Latium and Etruria is indirectly attested by the strigils, produced by local Greek workshops and marked in Greek, with the exception of Iuno Sospita, of which we are better informed. Between *salus*, *sospes*, σώτειρα, σώιζουσα there seems to be a partial relationship of translatability, but one which looks problematic and asymmetrical, as if

[40] Mart. Cap. 1.45, on which Weinstock 1946, and, for a rather sceptical view, Capdeville 1996.
[41] Rutter 2001: nos. 1516-1517, 1524-1524, 1535.
[42] See the discussion in Rutter and Giacometti 2005: 98-99. At Metapontum ὑγίεια is also attested as an epithet of Athena in a sixth century BC inscription, which has probably nothing to do with the coin series. See the discussion in *IGDGG* II, 41.
[43] Rutter 2001: 1535.

something would be lost in the process, or a precise translation would not be possible. It seems to me that in this earlier evidence there is a focus on the concept of salvation as a process ('saving') or as a status ('saved') using the word *sospes* and derivatives in a Latin context, translated on the strigils with adequate Greek epithets (σώτειρα, σώιζουσα), and granted by a specific deity (such as Iuno, Fortuna, Demeter). Although σωτηρία from the coinage of Metapontum formally refers to 'salvation' as a noun, as an epithet of Demeter this utterance still points to salvation as a process (i.e. it is Demeter than delivers salvation). The concept of salvation as a process or status seems to have been only later overlapped with salvation as a noun with the emergence of the goddess Salus in the late fourth century BC. The use of unrelated words used to express these concepts of salvation as a process and as a noun (sospes, Salus) highlights that these concepts overlapped only partially, within the unresolved tension and convergence of transitive and intransitive use, status, process and noun.

3. After 197 BC: human saviours and the multifariousness of salvation

When T. Quinctius Flamininus granted the freedom of Greek cities during the Isthmian games of 196 BC he was hailed as *sōtēr* by the Greeks.[44] He also received cults as *sōtēr* in Chalkis and Gytheion.[45] Flamininus remained the only Roman hailed as *sōtēr* for quite some time.[46] King Prusias of Bithynia hailed the Roman Senators as "saviour gods", θεοὶ σωτῆρες, during his visit to Italy in 167 BC, but it was much more common for Romans honoured by Greek cities to be called "benefactors" (εὐεργέται).[47] Q. Mucius Scaevola is called *sōtēr* in a honorary inscription at

[44] Polyb. 18.46.12; Plut., *Flam.* 10.7.
[45] Plut., *Flam.* 16 (Chalkis); *Syll.*[3] 592 (Gytheion).
[46] On divine honours of Flamininus see Fishwick 1987: 46-47; Dimitriev 2011: 274-276.
[47] On Prusias see Liv. 45.44; Polyb. 30.18. For Romans as "benefactors", εὐεργέται see e.g. *Syll.*[3] 607-608 (M. Acilius at Delphi, 191/190 BC) *IC* II, 3, 5 (in Crete in honour of the Scipiones, c. 189 BC), *Syll.*[3] 617 (P. Cornelius Scipio ad Delos, 189 BC). Erskine 1994 has a full discussion.

Olympia, set up somewhere after his governorship of Asia in 98/97 BC.[48] We know from Cicero that Verres was called *sōtēr* in Syracuse already in the seventies.[49] From the sixties of the first century BC, however, we have increasing examples showing Romans called σωτῆρες in a Greek context, as in the cases of Cn. Pompeius at Samos and Mytilene, Cn. Cornelius Lentulus at Cyrene, Q. Caecilius Metellus Scipio at Pergamon, and Julius Caesar at Athens and Ephesus.[50] Plutarch occasionally applies the term *sōtēr* to Marius, Sulla, and Cato the Younger, but these instances might be anachronisms.[51] Calling benefactors σωτῆρες was normal Greek use, and it is doubtful whether this would have had a precise Latin equivalent. *Sospes*, discussed above, seems to have nothing to do with euergetism. Before discussing Salus and saviour gods, it is important to clear away Fears' assertion that Salus might have been an equivalent of this Hellenistic usage to denote relationships of euergetism by calling one's benefactor *mea salus*.[52]

We have some traces of men called "saviours" from the Republican period, but the exact meaning of these expressions is not always clear. The word *servator*, "saviour", makes its first appearance in Plautus' *Pseudolus*. The context is a joke: a cook with dubious professional credentials is accused by the pimp Ballio of being a poisoner (*veneficus*), to which the cook replies that he is, on the contrary, a *hominum servator*, "saviour of men".[53] The contrast between *veneficus* and *servator* probably implies that there must be a prominent element of physical health in play.

The term is then unattested until Cicero, who frequently refers to himself in his post-exile speeches as the *(con)servator rei publicae*, *urbis*, *patriae*, etc.[54] Before his exile, we have one instance in which Cicero openly discusses the difficulty of translating *sōtēr* into Latin.[55] He refers to the titles

[48] *OGIS* 439. I am grateful to John Thornton for pointing out this inscription to me. Discussion of the date of Mucius' governorship is in Ferrary 2000, 163-7.
[49] *Verr.* 2.2.154, discussed below.
[50] *Syll.*[3] 749b (Samos, c. 67 BC), 751, 752, 755 (Mytilene, after 63 BC), 750 (Cyrene, c. 67 BC), 757 (Pergamon, 48/49 BC), 759-760 (Athens and Ephesus, 48/49 BC).
[51] E.g. Plut., *Mar.* 39; *Sull.* 34.; *Cat. Min.* 64; 71.
[52] Fears 1981: 861.
[53] 872-876. See the analysis of this passage in Fontaine 2010: 79-81.
[54] Neel 2015: 107-111. I am grateful to the author for sending an offprint of this article to me.
[55] Refered above in the introduction.

Verres received in inscriptions in Syracuse: not only he was called *patronus* of Sicily in Latin, but he is also called *sōtēr*, "saviour", in Greek. Cicero adds: "And what does this word mean? It means so much that it cannot be rendered by any single Latin word; *sōtēr* in fact signifies he who gives salvation" (*qui salutem dedit*).[56] It must be observed that Cicero here is following a clear rhetorical strategy, namely that of depicting Verres as some sort of Hellenistic tyrant, corrupted by Greek luxury. Underlining that Verres was given a Greek title without a Latin equivalent would have worked well as a part of this strategy. We find confirmation that Cicero's choice of translating *sōtēr* with a circumlocution was not uncommon in a bilingual inscription found at Rome near Palazzo Barberini, as mentioned above possibly from the temple of Salus. The inscription commemorates a gift offered by the people of Laodicea to the Roman people, and is probably connected to the wars against Mithridates. In the Greek version of the text, the Romans are simply called "saviours" of Laodicea (τὸν δῆμον τὸν Ῥωμαίων γεγονότα ἑα[υτῶι] σωτῆρα), whereas in the Latin version this is replaced by a dative of purpose, the Romans were "cause of safety" to Laodicea (*populum Romanum quei sibei salutei fuit*).[57] Cicero was, of course, perfectly capable of translating *sōtēr*, as he demonstrates in the *Pro Flacco*, delivered in 59 BC, where he gives a Latin translation of the titles of Mithridates, among which *conservator* must be the translation of *sōtēr*.[58] In the *Verrines* he chooses to accentuate the difficulty of the translation for rhetorical purposes, but he could not do so if there was a common and universally accepted translation, and the inscription of the people from Laodicea shows that there was not one. In *De re publica* Cicero keeps playing with this concept of human saviour, but he also gives a divine dimension to it, stating that the men who deserved divine honours are those who founded or saved a city.[59] *Conservator* seems to be, in conclusion, a word to which Cicero

[56] 2.2.154: *Hoc quantum est? Ita magnum ut Latine uno verbo exprimi non possit. Is est nimirum SOTER qui salutem dedit*.
[57] *ILLRP* 177 = *IGUR* I, 6.
[58] Cic., *Flacc*. 60: *Mithridatem dominum, illum patrem, illum conservatorem Asiae, illum Euhium, Nysium, Bacchum, Liberum nominabant*, "They called Mithridates Lord, Father, Saviour of Asia, Euhius, Nysius, Bacchus, Liber". In *Sest*. 116 (56 BC) Cicero refers to Gaius Marius as the saviour of the republic (*conservator rei publicae*).
[59] 1.12: *Neque enim est ulla res, in qua propius ad deorum numen virtus accedat humana, quam civitatis aut condere novas aut conservare iam conditas*, "For there is really no other occupation in which human virtue approaches more closely the august function of the gods than that of founding new cities or preserving those already in existence" (trans. Loeb, modified).

gives a new relevance and a new set of meanings in this period, probably very close to the Greek *sōtēr*, and of which we find no trace outside his writings during the Republican period.[60] This coincides with the period in which the title of *sōtēr* is used more frequently as an epithet to Roman benefactors in the Greek speaking part of the empire.[61]

Before Cicero, however, we have no trace of such a concept. We have evidence from Plautus of individuals called *mea salus* by others.[62] The meaning of these expressions in Plautus is not always clear, however, and this might have been a simple colloquial expression, as the author frequently uses them alongside utterances such as *mea commoditas, mea vita, mea voluptas, mea delicia* etc.[63] Outside Rome the evidence is even more meagre. A Paelignan inscription on a gravestone from Corfinium may testify to a similar expression in Paelignian.[64] The inscription, in Latin characters and datable in the Late Republican period, reads *Arghillus salavatur.* Arghillus is a transliteration of the name Ἄρχιλλος, and the lack of other names implies that the individual is question was probably a slave.[65] *Salavatur* is, etymologically, a name of an agent ultimately deriving from the adjective **saluo-*, 'safe'. Paolo Poccetti interpreted the word *salavatur* as an equivalent of Latin *servator*; Jürgen Untermann thought of some kind of priesthood; and Emanuel Dupraz has argued that the substantive should be the Paelignian word for 'doctor'.[66] Excluding the Ciceronian evidence, the aspect of physical health seem to be very strong in the forms of 'salvation' associated with human 'saviours', and there is no direct equivalent of the Greek custom of referring to patrons and benefactors as 'saviours'. There seems to have been divine saviours, but human saviours appear

[60] See Cole 2013.
[61] See n. 54 above.
[62] Plaut; *Bacch*. 879; *Cas*. 801; *Cistell*. 644; *Poen*. 366-368; 421. Cicero calls P. Lentulum *salus nostrae vitae* because of his lobbying to recall him from exile (Cic., *red. pop*. 11 cf. *red. sen.* 8), on the interpretation see Cole 2013: 70-71. As I observed above, Cicero, especially after his exile, makes quite a lot of his *salus*.
[63] *Poen.* 366-368; 421. Only in the *Asinaria* Plautus has a clear reference to Salus (712-718): the slaves Libanus and Leonidas claim divine honours from their master Argyrippus as Salus and Fortuna Obsequens. The parasite Ergasilus similarly states *nunc tibi sum summus Iuppiter* ("I am now Jupiter to you") in the *Captivi* (863-864). The multitude of gods with whom Plautus does the trick shows that this has nothing to do with the deification of individuals called *sōtēres*, as Fears believed (1981: 861).
[64] *CIL* I^2 3236 = *ST* Pg 42 = *ImIt* Corfinium 9.
[65] Untermann 2000: 652.
[66] Poccetti 1982: 334-335; Untermann 2000: 652; Dupraz 2012.

in specific contexts: mostly in the writings of Cicero, and probably as a reaction to the attribution of this epithet in a Greek context. *Mea salus* is definitely not a Latin translation of *sōtēr*, as Fears had it, and the relationship between the two concepts is much more dynamic and complex.

We have a crucial piece of evidence from this period that suggests that the goddess Salus was connected to the welfare of the Roman state. John Scheid demonstrated that by 176 BC it was customary for consuls to make sacrifices to Salus and the Capitoline Triad on day they entered office.[67] Scheid's demonstration is based on Livy's account of the sacrifices offered by the newly elected consuls, Cn. Cornelius Scipio Hispallus and Q. Petilius Spurinus (41.14-15). When Q. Petilius offered his sacrifice of an ox to Iuppiter it was found that the liver of the animal had no 'head'. When the consul reported this to the Senate he was ordered to repeat the sacrifice, and the Senate went on to discuss the consular activities for the subsequent year. The discussion was interrupted by a messenger, who urgently summoned the other consul, Cn. Cornelius (15, 1). When Cornelius came back, he announced that the liver of the ox he sacrificed had disappeared during the cooking of the *exta*. Q. Petilius announced that, although he had sacrificed three oxen, he could not get a favourable sacrifice. A worried Senate then urged the consuls to repeat the sacrifices until they could achieve *litatio*, and Livy informs us that these sacrifices were successful except for the one to Salus, from whom Petilius was unable to get a favourable response (41, 15, 4: *ceteris diis perlitatum ferunt; Saluti Petilium perlitasse negant*). As Scheid argues, this casual reference by Livy makes it certain that the *vota pro salute reipublicae* performed by the consuls at the beginning of the year included sacrifices to Iuppiter (and probably the Capitoline Triad) and Salus.[68] Scheid's reading of this neglected passage of Livy has been extremely important for the interpretation of the goddess Salus: it demonstrates the existence of a connection between Salus and the *vota pro salute rei publicae*, which implies on the one hand a strong connection between Salus and the welfare of

[67] Scheid 1990: 300-302. On this prodigy see also Engels 2007: 511-512.
[68] Scheid 1990: 302.

the state, and on the other hand a connection between Salus and Capitoline Iuppiter, the other main recipient of the sacrifices.

In the second century BC the evidence for the goddess Salus starts becoming more abundant. One of the places concerned is Pisaurum, where one of thirteen inscribed *cippi* found in what is believed to have been a sacred grove bears a dedication to Salus (*CIL* I^2 373 = *ILLRP* 18 = EDR015979: *Salute*; see Di Fazio, this volume). The Roman colony of Pisaurum was founded in 184 BC. It is likely that some of the blocks are older than that and belong to a pre-colonial settlement, but this does not seem to be the case for the one offered to Salus.[69] The deities to whom the gifts in the sacred grove were offered should not be interpreted as a coherent group, but are probably the expression of a variety of concerns within the community. One of the inscriptions, a gift to Iuno, displays a decisively strong sense of local identity.[70] It has been convincingly argued that the colonists must have been a diverse group of Romans and non-Romans.[71] The specific meaning attached to Salus in Pisaurum can only be speculated. It might have been that of safety from danger and welfare for the community, for a Roman outpost at the outskirts of the Gallic territory, a response to the connection between the welfare of the state and Salus attested in Rome with a local specification given by the historical context of the foundation of the colony.

Salus is attested in another colonial context at Fregellae, a Latin colony founded in 328 BC, during Roman expansion towards Campania and Samnium (Liv. 8.22). A dedication to Salus on a terracotta statue base was found in the temple of Aesculapius (*AE* 1986, 120: *Salute*). Coarelli proposed dating the inscription in the middle of the second century BC.[72] The presence of the votive statue in the temple of Aesculapius suggests that Salus here should probably be interpreted as the Latin translation of ὑγίεια. However, it might also highlight the saving power of Aesculapius, who

[69] A. Degrassi believed all the blocks to postdate the foundation of the colony (*ILLRP*, *ad loc*.). For the hypothesis of the pre-colonial settlement see Cresci Marrone-Mennella 1984: 109. For the date of the Salus inscription see Coarelli 2000a: 197. For interpretations of this complex see Braccesi 1981: 103-105; Coarelli 2000a: 201; Harvey 2006.
[70] *CIL* I^2 378 = EDR015984: *iunone re(gina) / matrona / pisaurese / dono dedrot.* "The matrons of Pisaurum offered this as a gift to Iuno Regina."
[71] Peruzzi 1990, 48, 126, Harvey 2006: 122, 127-128.
[72] Coarelli 1986: 44.

is frequently called *sōtēr* in Greek, and one would therefore have a situation similar to that which I hypothesized for Praeneste (above). Back in Rome, there is other evidence for this specific translation of Salus as Hygieia. According to Livy, in 180 BC a plague killed a consul and claimed numerous other victims, and its severity was considered a prodigy (40.37.1).[73] The *pontifex maximus* C. Servilius was charged with finding the appropriate *piacula*, and the *decemviri* were instructed to consult the Sybilline books. The consul was ordered to set up golden statues of Apollo, Aesculapius and Salus. The *decemviri* ordered a public prayer *ualetudinis causa* by all those aged over twelve, who had to wear a garland and a laurel wreath. It seems to me that Wissowa was right to see in this statue of Salus a Roman translation of the Greek Hygieia. Both the context of the procuration – a plague – and the association with Aesculapius strongly support this reconstruction.[74] We have evidence that ὑγίεια was well known in Italy during this period, as is suggested by a series of marked goblets produced by a Campanian workshop around 190 BC, bearing the mark ΤΗΣ ΥΓΙΗΣ, "of Hygieia".[75] These translations of Salus with Hygieia in the first half of the second century BC suggest that one of the meanings that could be attached to Salus was that of physical health an integrity.

A further utterance of the goddess Salus during the Republican period appears in Pompeii, in a painted inscription from a niche above a street altar.[76] The niche has two inscriptions, above two painted horns of abundance (*cornucopiae*), which read "of Salus", and "Sacred to Salus".[77] The latter has a dative in *–ei* (*Salutei sacrum*), and is therefore probably Republican. Recent excavations have determined that the altar was originally erected in the late second century BC, with the current inscriptions belonging to a later phase.[78] The street altar may be interpreted as a *compitum* shrine,

[73] On the episode see Musial 1992: 40 ; Engels 2007: 507-508 ; Briscoe 2008: 501-502.
[74] We find this translation also in the healing prayer in Terence's Hecyra 338: *quod te, Aesculapi, et te, Salus, nequid sit huius oro*, "I pray to you, Aesculapius, and to you, Salus, that this would not happen".
[75] *IGDGG* I 32. The complex interplay between Salus and Hygieia might have been at the heart of occasional attribution of the epithet σώτειρα to the latter. See Jim 2015, 69.
[76] Cooley 2004: 109 for the location: IX, 8, 8.
[77] *CIL* I^2 1626 = *ILLRP* 253: *Salutis. Salutei sacrum*. "Of Salus. Sacred to Salus."
[78] Anniboletti 2008: 216-218. Anniboletti thinks that the attribution of the altar to Salus is post-Augustan, but the form *Salutei* can hardly be so late.

more conventionally dedicated to Lares and maintained by *magistri*. Even if this was not a conventional *compitum* shrine, the specification of Salus must be here localised in the neighbourhood, or possibly even a specific house, for which the 'safety' offered by the goddess was invoked.[79]

In many of the instances above, the specification of possible meanings of Salus can be reconstructed, if at all, with great difficulty because of the fragmentary nature of the evidence. We can in one case, however, appreciate the complexity and the richness of the attribution of simultaneously meanings to Salus: this is the case of Brundisium. Cicero notes that when he returned to Italy from exile he arrived at Brundisium on 5 August 57 BC, a day which coincided with the birthday of his daughter Tullia, with the anniversary of the colony of Brundisium, and with the festival of Salus (*Sest*. 131; *Att*. 4.1.4). Cicero notes that the people of Brundisium were aware that the anniversary of the colony was on the day of the festival of Salus and openly celebrated this day, alongside his return to Italy.[80] Anna Clark has shown that Cicero had probably exploited this coincidence, he used it to present his personal Salus as the *Salus publica*. The letter to Atticus makes it possible that Salus was somehow involved in the celebration of the anniversary of the colony. We do not know the details of the foundation of the colony of Brundisium in 246 BC (Liv., *per*. 19; or 245 BC, Vell. 1.14.8). It is unclear whether or not the synchronism of anniversaries of the colony and of the temple of Salus was a deliberate choice. It is also possible that the coincidence of the dates between the foundation of the colony and that of the temple of Salus was valorised only

[79] For the traditional interpretation see Mau 1899: 229. Anniboletti 2008 has argued that rather than with the crossroad, this altar should be connected with the entrance of a house. Flower 2017: 145-156 discusses *compitum* shrines and *lararia* at Pompeii.

[80] *Att*. 4.1.4: *Brundisium veni Non. Sext. ibi mihi Tulliola mea fuit praesto natali suo ipso die, qui casu idem natalis erat et Brundisinae coloniae et tuae vicinae Salutis; quae res animadversa a multitudine summa Brundisinorum gratulatione celebrata est.* "I landed at Brundisium on the Nones of August. My little Tullia was there to welcome me. It was her birthday and also, as it happened, the foundation day of the colony of Brundisium and of the temple of your neighbour Salus, a coincidence which attracted popular notice and was joyfully celebrated by the townsfolk." (trans. Loeb). Commented on by Clark 2007: 176-177. It could be discussed what was precisely the remarkable coincidence that the Brudisines celebrated, as this passage could be interpreted in different ways, but it seems to me that the coincidence of the foundation date of the colony and of the temple of Salus must be the one celebrated by the 'multitude' of citizens.

when Brundisium became a *municipium* after the Social War.[81] Whether such a connection existed from the foundation of the colony or not, it is clear that Salus here had an eminently public meaning in Brundisium, which coincided partially with that of the goddess at Rome as celebrated in the *vota pro salute rei publicae*, but will have been modified by the inclusion of the celebration in municipal rituals. To that level Cicero adds a more political meaning: the important synchronism here is the one of the day of his return to Italy with the foundation day of the temple of Salus. Finally, there is also the more intimate aspect of the story, connected with the birthday of Tullia. As I observed above, the topic of *salus* is a recurring theme in post-exile Ciceronian oratory; in this particular passage this theme is embedded in the story of his return and the fortunate synchronism of dates, and is given a clear spatial and temporal setting. So, if we can see in this passage a municipal meaning attached by the Brundisines to Salus, we can at the same time see how Cicero uses this passage to construct what we might call a foundation story of his own salvation using the goddess as a main focus. This attribution of multiple and simultaneous meanings to Salus is an excellent demonstration of the richness and the semantic complexity that a recourse to conceptual goddesses allow.

We have, in the period after 197 BC to Cicero's return in 57 BC, less compelling evidence for saviour gods and goddesses. Iuno Sospita and Fortuna Primigenia, of course, continued to be worshipped, and both received a temple in Rome in 194 BC.[82] There is indirect evidence that Fortuna Primigenia was honoured as a saviour goddess by king Prusias, during his visit to Italy after the defeat of Macedon in 167 BC, but this still does not lead to the creation of an adequate Latin epithet.[83] There is then a number of passages from literary sources in which the action of 'saving' is attributed to the gods without further specification, in what would appear to be colloquial

[81] Recent work has underlined that in the religion of Roman colonies the local population always played a fundamental part. See Bispham 2006; Coles 2009.
[82] Coarelli 1996: 128-129, Miano 2018, 105-7.
[83] Liv. 45.44; Polyb. 30.18. I discuss this matter closely in Miano 2018, 31.

expressions. Plautus uses *servare* in such way, as in the expression *di me servant*.[84] A similar use is attested in Cicero, who calls the gods "guardians and saviours of this city and the empire" (*Sest*. 53: *custodes et conservatores huius urbis atque imperi*). *Servare* is occasionally referred by Plautus to Salus herself.[85] Although these expressions testify to a semantic connection between gods and the act of saving, they do not allow to determine more specific meanings.

4. Conclusions

The pages above have proposed a study of the goddess Salus using as a focus her conceptual aspect. The first issue considered was the multiplicity of meanings and the modalities in which in cult and language the meanings of *salus* could be attributed, contested and challenged. Here we have found indeed a very complex variety of overlapping meanings given to Salus by communities and individuals. Through the vows for the welfare of the Republic celebrated by consuls at the beginning of the year, Salus was given a prominent role in the welfare of the state in association with the Capitoline Triad. At Rome itself, however, this meaning must have overlapped with a variety of others, as proved by the association between the goddess and Aesculapius from the early second century BC, which implied a connection with physical health. In Italy the situation is even more complex, although the scarcity and the fragmentary nature of the evidence rarely allows us to determine the meanings of utterances of Salus with precision, forcing me to speculate on the basis of the archaeological and historical context of the evidence. To the colonists of mixed background at the outskirts of at *ager Gallicus* at Pisaurum Salus might have been somehow connected with safety from military danger; to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood at Pompeii where the altar

[84] *Am.* 1089; *Aul*. 207; *Merc*. 966; *Ps*. 613. On these passages and religion in Plautus, Hanson 1959 is still essential. On the use of conceptual goddesses by Plautus: Clark 2007: 73-116.
[85] *Cir.* 742; *Bacch*. 879-80; *Poen.*128. To describe hopeless situations we find expressions with the meaning "not even Salus may save me" *Capt*. 529; *Mostell*. 351.

stood a general aspiration to well-being; to the worshippers of Aesculapius at Fregellae safety from illness, identified with physical health; to the municipal citizens of Brundisium a direct connection with the foundation of the colony and the Roman temple. The example of Brundisium and the Ciceronian letter show that these multiple meanings can be attached to Salus at the same time: a celebration of the former colonial past of Brundisium and the foundation of the colony at the end of the First Punic War (Salus as a safety from the dangers of war), a celebration of a connection with Rome (Salus as the well-being of the Roman Republic), and a celebration of individual salvation (Cicero happily returning to Italy after his exile). In this case all these meanings are embedded in the story of Cicero's happy return from the exile, which is strategically used to develop them. It is reasonable to suppose that similar linguistic strategies were used to attribute meanings to Salus and other conceptual goddesses.

The two other issues that I purposed to address, namely the relationship between Salus and human and divine saviours, and that of the Greek translations of Salus are strongly interconnected. I have attempted to provide new perspectives to this old problem by considering the broader Italian picture and giving a place to Italians in phenomena of cultural change and the creation of relations of translatability. This has been a difficult task because of the difficult and fragmentary nature of the evidence, but the results are rewarding if tentative. There is probably a number of goddesses in Latium and Etruria in the fourth and the third centuries BC that were connected with the semantic field of safety and salvation. To the well-known example of Iuno Sospita one can add a group of goddesses in Latium and Etruria named 'saviours' in Greek but not in the local languages, among which was probably Fortuna Primigenia from Praeneste. These show the importance of Latin and Etruscan communities to develop translations of Greek concepts. These translations, however, tend to be imperfect and ambiguous, open to challenge of interpretation. I have argued that these early instances of saviour goddesses show a prevalent interpretation of salvation as a process or a status rather than as a quality or a concept. In this sense the creation of the goddess Salus at Rome in the

late fourth century represents a significant innovation, as Salus is able to become focus for discourses of salvation as a quality or concept but also as process and status, and the flexibility of Salus is probably the main reason for her success. In some instances, there seems to be cases different gods express their saving powers through a connection with Salus. At Rome Salus operates closely to Iuppiter, at Praeneste perhaps to Fortuna Primigenia, at Fregellae to Aesculapius. In Latin, gods can indeed be saviours, but they are named as such because they save only through Salus, the godhead who grants safety and salvation.

If Italians played an essential role in the early multi-sided process of translation of concepts of salvation between Greek, Latin and local languages we can see glimpses, in the later Republican period, of a more direct process of translation between Greek and Latin concepts which depends largely on imperialistic relationships of patronage. From the seventies and the sixties BC an increasing number of powerful Romans are called 'saviours' by Greek communities, and as I have discussed this leads to a wave of innovation in the meanings of *servare* and derivatives, in which Cicero must have played a prominent role. If then we might have started with divine saviours ending up with Salus, in the late republican period we have the slow emergence of human saviours. Although our evidence is mostly confined to the writings of Cicero, we find unsurprisingly an overlap between concepts of human saviours and Salus, which had been, and will be the focus of discourses on salvation for centuries.

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