VIRES/ROBUR/OPES AND FEROCIA IN LIVY'S ACCOUNT OF ROMULUS AND TULLUS HOSTILIUS

In a recent article¹ I observed that Livy sees a dialectic at work in Roman history over the course of the reigns of the first four kings. The first king, Romulus, is associated with physical (i.e. military) strength and is devoted to war. His successor Numa is devoted to peace and to the advance of religion, law and the civilizing virtues. The Romulean thesis, having been answered by the Numan antithesis, reasserts itself in the reign of the third king, Tullus Hostilius. This time, devotion to war is even more intense: Tullus is ferocior (1.22.2) than Romulus. Excessive devotion to war, however, entailed the neglect of other things: towards the end of his reign, during a plague to which he himself eventually fell victim, Tullus turned to religion, hoping that the gods would end the pestilence if he could balance his Romulean devotion to war with a Numan concern for sacra. But his efforts were too late and inept. It was not until the reign of the fourth king, Ancus Marcius, that a synthesis was achieved. Ancus had a medium ingenium that fused the Romulean and Numan tendencies. The adoption of the ius fetiale by the Livian Ancus symbolizes this synthesis: the ius fetiale was a martial (i.e. Romulean) ritual, but it also acknowledged the Numan claims of religion and right.

What I would like to do here is to examine more closely Livy's characterization of Romulus and Tullus. Specifically, I want to draw attention to a number of motif words in Livy's account of these two kings - motif words whose significance can be fully appreciated only against the dialectic that Livy sees at work in this early stage of Roman history. First, the words themselves, and I begin with Tullus Hostilius. The motif word for his reign is ferox. This has already been remarked,² and any very careful reader of Livy's text could easily discover it on his own. The account of Tullus opens with the assertion that this king was ferocior than Romulus (1.22.2); Tullus becomes emboldened, ferox, by the death of Cluilius, king of the Albans, with whom the Romans are at war (23.4); though he agrees to settle his dispute with the Albans by some means other than full-scale war, he is nonetheless ferocior because of both his natural disposition and his hope of victory over them (23.10); later on, in a war against Veii and Fidenae, Tullus routs the Fidenates and is then ferocior in his rapid, subsequent rout of the Veientes (27.10); finally, when the plague attacks Tullus, it is feroces spiritus that are broken (31.6). Livy also calls Tullus a rex bellicosus (31.5), but the recurring word is *ferox*. The theme of *ferocia* also appears in Livy's account of the famous duel of the Roman Horatii and the Alban Curiatii, a story that is told in sections 24 to 26 of his account of the reign of Tullus. First, both sets of triplets are called feroces as they enter into combat (25.1); then, three more times (25.7, 25.11, 26.3), the adjective is applied to the victorious and sole surviving Horatius brother. The first two of these three latter usages of the adjective describe Horatius in combat; the third usage describes him as he reacts angrily to the tears his sister was shedding

¹ 'War, Peace, and the Jus Fetiale in Livy I,' CP 82 (1987), 233-7.

² e.g. by R. M. Ogilvie, A Commentary on Livy, Books 1-5 (Oxford, 1965), p. 106 (on 22.2).

over one of the dead Curiatii whom she loved and was intending to marry. Tullus' ferocia, then, is mirrored in the ferocia of his contemporaries the Horatii and the Curiatii.³

Before I say anything more about ferox, I want to go back to Livy's account of Romulus and propose that, for this reign, we should also acknowledge, not a single motif word, but a set of essentially synonymous motif words. These words are uires, robur and opes. The first two of these are commonly found in juxtaposition in Livy.⁴ Both uires/robur/opes and ferox refer, respectively, to Romulus' and Tullus' martial activities, but, as I will explain in due course, with differing connotations. Here are the passages that contain the three Romulean motif words, with comments.

- (a) '...idque [i.e. the increase in population that occurred at Rome as a result of Romulus' establishment of an asylum there] primum ad coeptam magnitudinem roboris fuit' (1.8.6).
- (b) 'hinc robore corporibus animisque sumpto iam non feras tantum subsistere [i.e. Romulus and Remus]...' (1.4.9).

Cf., with reference to 1.8.6, the observation of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (2.15.3) that the purpose of the asylum was to increase Roman power ($\delta \dot{v} \nu a \mu u \nu$) and to lessen that of Rome's neighbours. Livy's robur or uires [see (c) below] means adult males who would be able to bear arms (cf. 1.9.1, 9.5). To augment the female population, Romulus was forced to resort to ruse and forcible seizure (1.9ff.). That seizure, the rape of the Sabine women, would precipitate the first wars in which Romulus would deploy Rome's newly augmented male robur. At 1.4.9 Livy notes the robur of body and mind attained by the young Romulus and Remus (cf. Cic. Rep. 2.4; Plut. Rom. 6.2–5, 7.5 Ziegler; Dion. Hal. 1.77.2). After he becomes co-founder and king of Rome, the personal robur of Romulus is transformed into, and replicated by, the robur of the new state.

(c) 'Cum iam uirium haud paeniteret, consilium deinde uiribus parat. Centum creat senatores...' (1.8.7). This assertion follows immediately upon (a) in Livy's text. 1.8.7 ends with some very brief remarks on the size of the Romulean senate and the titles patres and patricii. Livy describes Romulus, at the beginning of the next paragraph (1.9.2), as acting ex consilio patrum and, towards the end of his account of Rome's first king, remarks that Romulus was liked more by the masses than by the senate and may even have been killed by the senators (1.15.8, 16.4); otherwise, though, he is not interested in the Romulean senate or Romulus' relations with it.⁵ Note that Romulus establishes Rome's uires first and does not create the senate until he is satisfied with the city's uires. For the pairing of uires and consilium Ogilvie compares Livy 2.56.16, [tempus] consilium uiribus additurum, and 3.62.7, consilio [i.e. a stratagem] etiam Sabini uires adiuuere.⁶ Additional examples can be given: 2.53.5, 4.24.2, 8.38.12, 22.27.7,

³ cf. J. B. Solodow, 'Livy and the Story of Horatius, 1.24–26', TAPA 109 (1979), 253.

⁴ cf., in Ovid's Fasti 2.483, the remark of Mars surveying Romulus' reign: "Iuppiter," inquit, "habet Romana potentia uires." For Livy's pairing or associating of uires and robur, see the many examples to be found in D. W. Packard, A Concordance to Livy (Cambridge, MA, 1968), under the forms of robur. Note also Livy 36.34.10 (opes ac uires), 9.39.11 (ille...dies...fregit opes. caesum...quod roboris fuit...).

⁵ There is more in Dionysius (esp. 2.12, 14, 30.3, 35.1–2, 45.3–4, 47.1–2, 52.4, 56.4). His account, of course, is much longer than Livy's and some of the material in Dionysius on Romulus' senate occurs in his systematic discussion of the Romulean *politeia* (2.7ff.). If Cicero in his *De republica* lays stress on how Romulus deferred to and was supported by the senate, it is because he wants to show that the principle of the mixed constitution – at this early stage, aristocracy balancing monarchy – was already beginning to be acknowledged at Rome (*De rep.* 2.14–15, 17, 23).

⁶ Ogilvie, A Commentary, p. 64.

- 27.1.7. If at 1.8.7 the senate is thought of as providing consilium in a state in which the uires are found in the potentially arms-bearing male citizens, on the battlefield it is the general who is thought of as providing consilium for his men: note esp. 2.53.5, mos, credo, non placebat sine Romano duce exercituque socios propriis uiribus consiliisque bella gerere, where uiribus consiliisque is chiastically parallel to duce exercituque; and 8.38.12, iam uiris uires,...iam consilia ducibus deerant.
- (d) '... dein, quas [i.e. urbes] sua uirtus ac di iuuent, magnas opes sibi magnumque nomen facere...' (1.9.3).
- (e) '... "sciantque et ita posteris tradant nullas opes humanas armis Romanis resistere posse" (1.16.7).

Passage (d) is part of the argument employed by Roman ambassadors when trying, unsuccessfully, to convince Rome's established neighbours to intermarry with the men of Romulus' new city. The magnae opes envisioned here were already in the making, developing from the *uires* established by Romulus. At 1.4.1 Livy had affirmed that, in accordance with the ordinances of fate, Roman opes would eventually be second only to the opes of the gods. In passage (e), after Livy's Romulus has been taken up into heaven, he appears to Proculus Julius and instructs him to tell the Romans that their city is destined to be the caput of the world and to urge them to attend to their military strength and to know that 'no human opes can resist Roman arms' - i.e. that Roman opes will be supreme. Note that, in Livy, Romulus' words to Proculus are concerned only with Roman supremacy and might, thereby reinforcing the image of Romulus as founder of Roman uires. Other accounts of Romulus' words to Proculus have him also or exclusively refer to his apotheosis (Cic. De rep. 2.20, Legg. 1.3; Dion. Hal. 2.63.4; Ovid, Fasti 2.505-8; Plut. Rom. 28). In Plutarch the deified Romulus' call to supremacy is not as militaristic as it is in Livy: Plutarch's Romulus urges σωφροσύνην μετ' ἀνδρείας as the path to supremacy.

- (f) '...leuique certamine docet [i.e. Romulus Caeninensibus] uanam sine *uiribus* iram esse' (1.10.4). When Rome's neighbours refused to allow intermarriage with the men of the new city, Romulus felt *aegritudo animi* and planned the rape of the Sabine women. But he was prepared for the ultimate consequences, for 'iam res Romana adeo erat ualida ut cuilibet finitimarum ciuitatium bello par esset' (1.9.1, 6). In contrast, when the Caeninenses impetuously conducted a punitive raid against Rome after the rape of the Sabines, they demonstrated that their *ardor* and *ira* (1.10.3) were not backed up by adequate *uires*.
- (g) 'Fidenates nimis uicinas prope se conualescere opes rati, priusquam tantum roboris esset quantum futurum apparebat, occupant bellum facere' (1.14.4). The Fidenates recognized the robur (or opes) of Rome and the fact that it was still increasing. For similar feelings of anxiety on the part of Rome's neighbours, cf. Livy 1.9.5 (crescentem molem); Dionysius 2.32.2 (αὐξήσει τῆς Ῥώμης δι' ὀλίγου πολλῆ γενομένη), 2.36.3 (ἰσχύν, [ἰσχύῖ] ἐπὶ μέγα προηκούση); Plutarch, Rom. 25.1 (ῥωννυμένοις τοῖς πράγμασιν, τῆ αὐξήσει). One is reminded of Mezentius' reaction to Aeneas' Lavinium (Livy 1.2.3): 'tum nimio plus quam satis tutum esset accolis rem Troianam crescere ratus [Mezentius].'
- (h) 'Ibi [i.e. at Veii] *uiribus* nulla arte adiutis, tantum ueterani *robore* exercitus rex Romanus uicit' (1.15.4). The war with Veii was the last action of Romulus' reign; Livy's account of this war is immediately followed by a final assessment of the reign and the story of how Romulus' earthly life came to an end (1.15.6ff.). The words *ibi uiribus nulla arte adiutis* implicitly contrast the Veientine war with the war against

⁷ See, on Romulus' words to Proculus, K.-W. Weeber, 'Abi nuntia Romanis ...: Ein Document augusteischer Geschichtsauffassung in Livius I 16?', *RhM* 127 (1984), 326–43.

Fidenae that immediately preceded it: in the war against the Fidenates, Roman uires had been aided by the stratagems of feigned flight and ambush (1.14.4–11). Dionysius mentions no stratagem in his version of the war against Fidenae; it is the Veientine war, in his account, that includes a Romulean stratagem, an ambush (2.53.2–4, 54.3–55.6). The battle in question against the Veientes was won by the Romans, he says, as a result of the $\sigma o \phi i \alpha \tau o \hat{v} \dot{\eta} \gamma \epsilon \mu \delta v o s$ (2.55.1). Plutarch alludes to two variant accounts of the war against Fidenae, one including an ambush set by Romulus, the other apparently devoid of stratagem (Rom. 23.6–7). Although Plutarch does not explicitly refer, as does Dionysius, to Romulus' use of an ambush in the Veientine war, his mention of the king's display of $\tau \dot{\epsilon} \chi v \eta v \mu \epsilon \tau \dot{\alpha} \tau \dot{\alpha} \lambda \mu \eta s \pi \dot{\alpha} \sigma a v$ in that conflict may well be a vague allusion to just such a stratagem (Rom. 25). Livy's version of a Veientine war devoid of stratagem allows a nice touch: the last action of Romulus' reign is characterized by pure uires, by unaided robur, Romulus' distinctive contribution to the state.

(i) 'Ab illo enim profecto *uiribus* datis tantum ualuit [i.e. Roma] ut in quadraginta deinde annos tutam pacem haberet' (1.15.7). This assertion is part of Livy's final assessment of Romulus' reign; he is saying that the *uires* provided by Romulus made possible the long peace enjoyed during the reign of his successor Numa. One might compare Livy's comments on Lavinium early in book one: the *opes* of the city had increased so much as a result of Aeneas' defeat of its enemies that, after Aeneas' death, no one dared to attack it, even though Aeneas was succeeded by a minor, Ascanius, under the regency of his mother Lavinia (1.3.4).

A coherent message, a gloss on Romulus' reign, emerges from the passages reviewed above. Rome's military strength, destined to be supreme, was founded by Romulus. It was his most fundamental contribution to the state. Its employment might have been guided by senatorial advice, and it could be enhanced by stratagem; but it had to be real and adequate to begin with. And such *uires* could result in a secure peace.

In his account of the reign of Tullus Hostilius, Livy does refer once to the *opes* of Rome under this king (1.31.1), once to the *robur* of Tullus' infantry (30.9), and three times to Tullus' own *uires* or the *uires* of Tullan Rome (22.2, 27.2, 30.4). But while Tullus could increase Rome's *uires* (as Livy says he did [30.3]), he was not the one who established it; that was the special role of Romulus.⁸ Yet it is not the contrast between

⁸ G. Dumézil, Horace et les Curiaces (Paris, 1942; repr. New York, 1978), pp. 79–81, 86, makes much of Florus 1.1.3, 'hic [Tullus Hostilius] omnem militarem disciplinam artemque bellandi condidit', and compares Orosius, Hist. 2.4.9, 'Tullum Hostilium militaris rei institutorem'. This is because these texts permit an interpretation of Rome's first four kings that is in line with Dumézil's well-known views on the tripartition of Indo-European social classes or functions. The first function, sovereignty, has two sides, one 'frénétique et magique,' the other 'juridique et réglée' (p. 79); these are represented by the first two kings, Romulus and Numa respectively. The second function, military force, is represented by the third king, Tullus. (The fourth king, Ancus, represents the third function, fecundity/prosperity: cf. J. Poucet, Les origines de Rome [Brussels, 1985], pp. 173-4.) Dumézil admits that Romulus, 'tout attaché qu'il fût à la souveraineté magique, n'en fait pas moins figure de roi belliqueux'. Still, he preserves a special place for Tullus by insisting that he was 'exclusivement un chef militaire, un technicien de la guerre... guerrier sans religion' in contrast to Romulus, 'augure combattant' who won his military victories because he was a 'client du ciel' (pp. 81-2). Dumézil does not allude to Livy's assertion that, during a military crisis, Tullus vowed to establish twelve Salian priests and to erect shrines to Pallor and Pavor (1.27.7; cf. Dion. Hal. 3.32.4); nor does he refer to the tradition that Tullus, after several military victories, consecrated ex voto a temple to Saturn and founded the Saturnalia (Macrob. Sat. 1.8.1). There was also a tradition that Tullus established the ius fetiale (Cic. De rep. 2.31, ius ... quod ... sanxit fetiali religione, ut omne bellum quod denuntiatum indictumque non esset, id iniustum esse atque inpium iudicaretur). And Dionysius, specifically Romulus the establisher and Tullus the augmenter that I want to dwell on. The words Livy uses to refer to Romulus' fundamental contribution – uires, robur, and opes – are inherently neutral words. The word ferox and its cognates, on the other hand, are ambivalent in connotation.9 The connotations of ferocia range from 'boldness' or 'spiritedness' to 'savagery' or 'arrogance'. I would contend that, in his account of Tullus, Livy wishes to exploit the ambivalence of the word *ferox*, serving, as it does, to underscore the danger inherent in excessive devotion to uires. Boldness – which, of course, Tullus, the Horatii and the Curiatii do display in an appropriate and admirable military context - can easily become savagery. This point is not merely implicit in ferox's ambivalence, but is also illustrated explicitly in the narrative itself. King Tullus punishes the treacherous Alban leader Mettius Fufetius by having his body pulled in two directions and ripped apart. Livy makes clear that Tullus' military strength and skill have here degenerated into savagery: 'auertere omnes ab tanta foeditate spectaculi oculos. primum ultimumque illud supplicium apud Romanos exempli parum memoris legum humanarum fuit: in aliis gloriari licet nulli gentium mitiores placuisse poenas' (1.28.11). The victorious Horatius brother, ferox like Tullus, also expressed his ferocia in an extreme way and was brought to trial for it (though acquitted in the end): he killed his sister for lamenting the death of one of the Alban Curiatii to whom she was engaged. Senate and plebs, Livy says, were at one in regarding this as a savage act (1.26.5, atrox facinus), mitigated only by the young man's heroic service to the state. 10 At 1.26.3 the word ferox, applied to the victorious Horatius, is interestingly placed ('mouet feroci iuueni animum comploratio sororis in uictoria sua tantoque gaudio publico'). Horatius is triumphantly entering Rome at this point, but also feeling rage towards his sister. Feroci looks back to his martial valour and forward to his atrocia.

In his account of Romulus' life and reign, Livy never applies the word ferox or its cognates to Romulus. There is a digression in Livy's account of Romulus on the origin of the Greek cult of Hercules at Rome. To explain the origin of this cult, Livy must tell the story of how Hercules killed the thief Cacus. It is Cacus who, in this digression, is called ferox – ferox uiribus (1.7.5). Ferox is intended here in its negative sense. In Livy's mind, Romulus is as removed from this kind of ferocia as he is associated with Hercules, its destroyer – for Livy clearly sees the ultimately apotheosized Romulus as a new Hercules (1.7.15, 'iam tum immortalitatis uirtute partae [i.e. ab Hercule] ad quam eum [i.e. Romulum] sua fata ducebant fautor [i.e. Romulus]'). Tor Livy, Romulus provided the state with a necessary physical strength, with military resources that were essential for the fulfilment of Rome's destiny. This unambiguous achievement is what the neutral words uires, robur and opes point to. Tullus represents a later stage, when that necessary physical strength

naming Romulus, Numa and Tullus, notes that all the kings of Rome founded religious institutions (2.23.6). All of which suggests that the ancient mind, though it did see Tullus as reacting against Numa's preoccupation with *sacra*, was not committed to as rigidly secular a view of Tullus as Dumézil maintains.

- ⁹ See the entries 'ferocia,' 'ferocitas,' 'ferociter' and 'ferox' in *TLL* and *OLD*; K. Eckert, '*Ferocia* Untersuchung eines ambivalenten Begriffs', *Der altsprachliche Unterricht* 13 (1970), 90–106. Cf. Solodow, *TAPA* 109 (1979), 253.
- ¹⁰ cf., in book seven, Manlius Torquatus, who both displays heroic *ferocia* (7.10.8) against the huge Gaul and also orders his own son to be put to death for an act of military bravery performed against orders. Livy acknowledges that the latter act improved Roman *disciplina*, but still labels it *atrox* (8.7.20, 8.1).
- ¹¹ cf. J. Heurgon (ed.), *T. Livi, Ab urbe condita, Liber primus*² (Paris, 1970), p. 45, on this passage: 'dans une perspective stoicienne, T.-L. fait de Romulus un nouvel Hercule.' See also G. K. Galinsky, *The Herakles Theme* (Totowa, NJ, 1972), p. 140.

was showing that it could become excessive and needed the tempering brought in by the second king. It is this complication, which emerged with time, that the ambivalent *ferox* points to.

There are, however, two items that require us to acknowledge that Livy does not observe the distinction *uires/robur/opes* versus *ferocia* with mathematical precision. First, Livy does use the word ferocissimus once in his account of Romulus to describe the king's fighting band of *iuuenes* (1.12.9), and he uses the word *ferox* twice subsequently in book one (19.2, 32.4) to describe the populus Romanus who were ruled by Romulus and eventually entrusted to Numa's care. Secondly, Livy actually does call Romulus ferox once, not in his account of the first king, but at the beginning of his account of Tullus, where he writes that 'Tullus was not only unlike the previous king [Numa], sed ferocior etiam quam Romulus fuit' (1.22.2). With reference to the first item, one could say that a ferox populus does not necessarily make the king ferox. With reference to the second item, one could lay stress on the fact that the remark occurs, not in Livy's account of Romulus, but in his account of Tullus; and one could note that the word *ferocior* here is predicated primarily of Tullus, only comparatively of Romulus. But such argumentation will leave one open to the charge of special pleading. The fact is that Livy has not completely dissociated ferocia – which, bear in mind, has positive as well as negative connotations¹² - from Romulus and Romulean Rome. But his predominant tendency is to reserve ferox for Tullus and Tullus' times, putting the word in a narrative context that brings out its varying connotations, and to use the neutral words uires, robur and opes for Romulus. The distinction uires/robur/opes versus ferocia in Livy's account of Rome's early kings is a real one, a significant one, even if Livy does not observe it as scrupulously as I might have liked him to do.

So long as account is taken of the special position Romulus inevitably has as the founder of Rome's might, we may affirm that neither Cicero nor Dionysius depicts Tullus' bellicosity as significantly different from Romulus'. Cicero writes that Romulus 'bella cum finitimis felicissime multa gessit' and refers to the Romans as 'instituto Romuli bellicis studiis...incensos'. Similarly, Cicero's Tullus is a king 'cuius excellens in re militari gloria magnaeque extiterunt res bellicae' (De rep. 2.15, 2.25, 2.31). Dionysius' Romulus is τά τε πολέμια δεινός καὶ φιλοκίνδυνος and understands the importance, inter alia, of τὸ διὰ τῶν ὅπλων κράτος and τὴν ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις γενναιότητα. His Tullus is comparably credited with πολεμικαὶ πράξεις πολλαί and is praised της τε εὐτολμίας ενεκα της πρὸς τὰ πολέμια καὶ της ϕ ρονήσεως της περὶ τὰ δεινά; what is more, he was steady in fighting a war to the end without being too quick in entering upon it (2.3.4, 7.1, 18.1; 3.2.1, 35.1). But Livy's Tullus differs from his Romulus, in the manner suggested by ferocia's difference from uires, robur and opes. Ferocia can be an overripe might, a physical force untempered and potentially excessive. In response to Romulus, Numa had shown how uires should be tempered. Tullus' reign points to the danger of untempered uires, to uires as ferocia in its negative as well as positive sense. It was not until the reign of Ancus, the medium...ingenium et Numae et Romuli memor (Livy 1.32.4), that a balance emerged in the person of a single king. Livy does not, of course, mean to imply that this balance was always subsequently maintained - nor that the problem of ferocia was now resolved forever. 13 Rather, he discerns in the reigns of Rome's first four

¹² Note Cicero's ascription of ferocitas in a positive sense to Romulus: et corporis uiribus et animi ferocitate tantum ceteris praestitisse (De rep. 2.4).

¹³ A problematic *ferocia* reappears frequently in the rest of Livy's first pentad: e.g. in the criminal Tullia, Servius Tullius' daughter (1.46.6); in the tyrannical Tarquinius Superbus,

kings a prime val or archetypal essay at resolution, on which future generations might build. 14

In his account of the reigns of Rome's first four kings, then, Livy has employed the motif words *uires/robur/opes* and *ferox* to reinforce narrative elements and underscore his interpretative design.¹⁵

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usurping Servius' throne (1.48.2); in Sextus Tarquinius, raping Lucretia (1.58.5); in the Roman ambassadors who violated *ius gentium* at Clusium while meeting with the Gauls (5.36.1). Ferocia is a trait that incites or exacerbates civil strife: e.g. 2.28.8, 29.5, 39.7, 55.11, 58.5-6; 3.65.10; 5.9.4, 25.12. On the other hand, an admirable ferocia drives the fight against tyranny and for libertas (1.59.5, 3.39.3, 3.41.1), and Romans can display this kind of ferocia in combat (2.33.7, 3.47.2 if the manuscripts' ferociter is retained, 3.70.10; cf. 3.68.2).

¹⁴ cf. *CP* 82 (1987), 237.

¹⁵ I am grateful to CO's anonymous readers for several improvements.