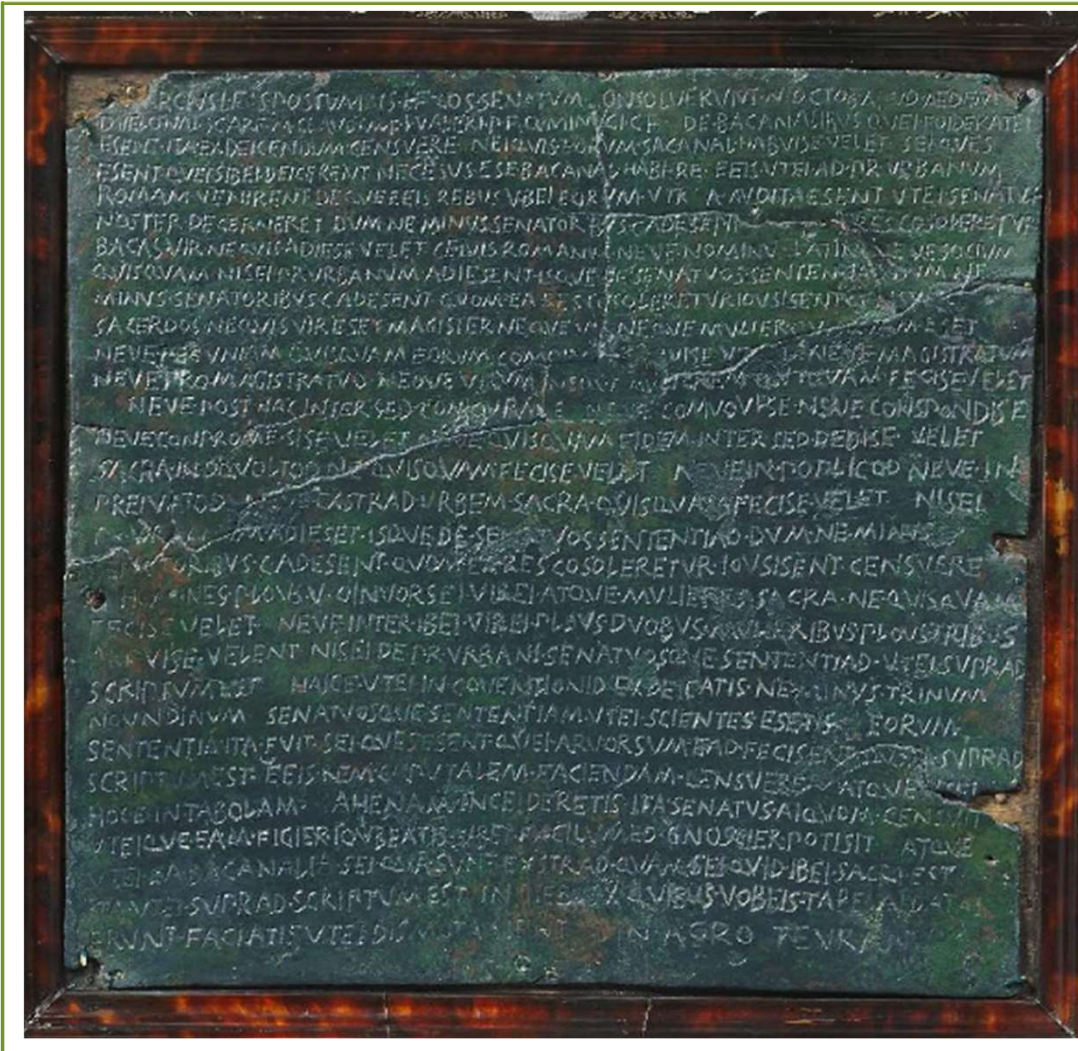


## 4.3 SOCIETY – RELIGIOUS IDENTITY



Type: Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus

Chronology: 186 BC

Findspot: Tiriolo (Calabria, Italy)

Actual location: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Antikensammlung (inventory nr. III 168).

Website:

<https://www.khm.at/en/objectdb/detail/52468/?pid=2295&back=270&offset=2&lv=listpackages-5434>

This is a bronze slab reporting the content of a senatorial decree (*senatus consultum*) of the Roman Senate prohibiting the Roman festival of Bacchus (*Bacchanalia*) throughout all Italy, except in certain special occasions which must be approved by the Senate.

It offers an excellent example of the role of the Roman state in determining which religious practices were allowed under Roman rule during the Republic and the relationship between state and religion in the Roman period. It relates to the suppression of the cult of Bacchus throughout Italy during the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, when it was believed in Rome that the cult could be a threat to the security of the state (the full account of the story is in Livy, *Ab urbe condita*, 39.8-39.18)

### MY RESEARCH

What is the historical and cultural context in which the Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus was passed? How far fear for Greek acculturation of the Roman elites affected the passing of the law?