



# Etruscan News



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## Remembering Mario Del Chiaro... 1925-2020

by Lisa C. Pieraccini

Mario Del Chiaro, the pioneer of Etruscan art and archaeology in the US, passed away at his home in Santa Barbara California on November 14, 2020. He was 95 years old. Mario's story is special: born in San Francisco in 1925, he was the son of Italian immigrants who left Italy to seek the American dream. He entered the

US Army-Air Force during WWII when he was only 17 years old. After service he received funding through the GI Bill which allowed him to pursue higher education. Mario started his university studies in 1949 at the University of California Berkeley and earned a BA, MA and PhD in the newly founded History of Art Department. Mario was one of the first PhDs (if not the first) in the department, and his dissertation was on an Etruscan topic, "The Genucilia Group" *continued on page 48*

## DIS MANIBUS SACRUM



Etruscan Mario brothers, California, 2013.



## In Memoriam Mario Torelli 1937-2020

by Stephan Steingraber

On September 15 Mario Torelli passed away in the heart of baroque Sicily, in Donnalucata di Sicli near Ragusa. He was 83 years old, but in spite of several health problems during the last decades, the sad message of his death was a surprise for many colleagues and friends, as he was still very active pre- *continued on page 52*

## Hidden in Plain Sight

### A surprising discovery on a terracotta plaque from Velletri featured in the exhibition "Gli Etruschi e il MANN" Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli (2020-2021)

by Daniele F. Maras

An important Etruscan exhibition is currently on display at the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, although the measures against the COVID-19 pandemic make it currently impossible to visit the show in person. "Gli Etruschi e il MANN" recounts the relationship between the museum of Naples and Etruscan culture, through 600 objects including archaeological contexts from Latium and Campania, as well as material from historical Italian

collections dating from the 16th to the 19th centuries.

A series of terracotta plaques from the site of the SS. Stimate at Velletri hold a special position in the exhibition, and the best preserved example has been chosen as the logo of the event (Fig. 1).

It is therefore astounding that this very object, known by scholars for over 200 years, still hid a surprise—and what a surprise!—which is now presented here for the

first time to the readers of *Etruscan News*. The discovery is due to the keen eagle eye of Gary Enea, *Etruscan News*' long-time layout editor, who never stops at the surface of things.

### Discovery and history of the plaques

As early as 1784, during the renovation of the church of S. Maria della Neve at Velletri (also known as "delle SS. Stimate di S. Francesco"), an excavation un-



Fig.1. Terracotta Plaque from Velletri, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli Inv. 21595.

earthed architectural terracottas of an Archaic temple, including a number of relief plaques with traces of painting. These were soon (and wrongly) labelled the "Volscian reliefs" and entered the collection of antiquities of the Borgia family, under the auspices of the learned and powerful Cardinal Stefano Borgia. After a first restoration, they were published by Filippo Angelo Becchetti with colored watercolors by the painter *continued on page 6*

## ETRUSCAN NEWS

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*Layout and design Editor*

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Ancient Studies



Etruscan Interest Group at the A.I.A. annual meeting in Washington D.C, January 2020.  
We don't have to name names. You all know who you are!

**Dear Editors:**

*Grazie anzitutto per quanto comunicati di Etruscan News e desidero esprimerti anzitutto il più vivo compiacimento per l'iniziativa di proseguire il prezioso impegno profuso dalla cara Larissa Bonfante che ricordo volentieri sia come studiosa, sia anche per la sua puntuale presenza e attenzione per ogni nuova iniziativa promossa a Villa Giulia, nel territorio dell'Etruria meridionale e non solo.*

Anna Maria Moretti Sgubini  
Roma

**Dear Editors:**

I am putting a few words together because I would like to honor Larissa.

Creativity, freedom, individuality, naturalness, simplicity, spontaneity are all words a variety of writers have used to describe the Etruscans. I can use these words to describe Larissa. From the time I was with Jane at Spannocchia and worked with her team at La Piana, I have been attending Etruscan events as well as visiting Etruscan sites. This is now 25 years ago and it was at one of these seminars that I met Larissa and she, with all her commitments, writing and teaching was so welcoming and encouraging to me and our daughter, Kim. I am now surrounded by her books and just last night was reading one of the last, *Giuliano Bonfante and Historical Linguistics*. I particularly like "A Daughter's Memories"...and now you are working on more writings that will continue her legacy.

Photo at left, Barbara's boars betwixt the books.

That is why I am grateful to you for printing in *The Etruscan News* the picture of our grandson, Marshall, who with his 3D printing made a copy of the sarcophagus in Perugia. Now he has made one of the Porcellino from Florence. If you ask any of our five grandchildren my chief interest, they would all say, "the Etruscans"...so the seeds have been planted and are growing.

Another grandson, Peter, is now a sophomore at Case Western Reserve in Cleveland. I was most fortunate to visit him last in early March, just before we became housebound. Peter immediately took me to The Cleveland Museum of Art and directly to the Etruscan Collection, which is outstanding. The family had previously gifted me a replica of an Etruscan Boar (see photo) which the head curator of Ancient Civilizations is now suggesting has a different background. The additional objects there include a boar pendant...and so many other things. So the Etruscans are alive and well within our family. Daughter Kim still enjoys the Etruscan room in her Boulder home...and we have so much here.

In the very large picture, Larissa will continue to be our important bridge to Italy and to the Etruscans. She certainly lives on in her many books and contributions in many ways and her spirit continues to inspire me.

Barbara Martini Johnson  
Minneapolis

**Dear Editors:**

Musings about Larissa: Many of you might not know that Larissa was born in Naples, Italy (bella Napoli). When she came to visit me two years ago, I introduced her as a Neapolitan. I cannot tell you how much joy that elicited from the various people she met. Everyone took pride in the fortunate circumstances of her birth and attributed her genius and sympathetic character to being Neapolitan. Even a taxi driver, when questioned as to where she was from said, "she's Neapolitan, you can see it in her face and in her soul." Another Neapolitan engaged her in a conversation regarding the meaning of "troia." In Naples, the word is derogatory, indicating a woman of loose morals. Larissa explained that in Sicily, the surname "Troia" was quite common and it harkened back to the remembrance of the glorious city of Troy and Aeneas' subsequent arrival on the island of Sicily.

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We went to visit the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli where a massive display of handmade manger scenes (*presepe*) were on display. The theme was the discovery of Pompeii in the 1700s; she took great delight explaining the tiniest of details that only her expert eye could discern. The scenes did in fact show the wall frescoes emerging from the rubble, the amphorae and statues of dieties protruding from the ash and the architectural details of the destroyed homes. After, we went to see the actual antiquities from Pompeii including all of the “adults only” artifacts, which she explained with her usual wit.

One of Larissa’s most endearing characteristics was her openness to new ideas. Because of this, I felt I could share one of my desires with her knowing that she would treat my idea with respect and intelligence.



Larissa, Mary Knight, and myself at Pompeii.

It started over dinner two years ago, where I brought her a book on the discovery of the presumed tomb of St. Peter in the catacombs beneath the Basilica, which provided me an opening to talk about my personal wish—an Etruscan tomb—for myself once I departed this life. I told her that I was not content with a footstone or a marble angel when I could have something much more suitable to my tastes. Although I wanted a full-sized one, I didn’t think it would be allowed in the cemetery so I decided on one of those used to deposit funerary ashes (although I shall be buried, not cremated). This would be about a meter wide and tall and could be my grave monument.

The more I talked, the more intrigued she became, questioning my choice of marble as being too heaving and suggesting travertine, alabaster or even terracotta as alternatives. She even suggested sculptors and artisans who could help me.

I told her that I wanted to be lounging on top of the tomb with an ample bosom (I wanted in the next life what I didn’t have in this one). I also wanted plants and animals on the perimeter friezes of the tomb. She said there were some things she would send me which might fit my needs. Unfortunately, there was not time to re-

Washington D.C., January 4, 2020: long before the pandemics, protests and violence, a lone brave Etrusco-Florentine, Dr. Alessandro Nocentini, joins our fervent protest movement and swears to the cause in support of truth and justice. Long live the Etruscans, and long live *Etruscan News* !

**Dear Editors:**

Larissa was a very generous friend. I met her for the first time in the beginning of the Eighties during the Congress in Benevento. From that time I had lively discussions about the Etruscans and my research at Tarquinia. For me is this is a great loss. Farewell Larissa, my dear friend!

Maria Bonghi Jovino

Photo, Benevento 1981. From left to right: Friedhelm Prayon, Maria Bonghi Jovino, Larissa Bonfante, Stephan Steingraber, Vittoria Bonfante.



**Dear Editors:**

Thank you for sending me *Etruscan News*, which makes us feel that our world is united and smaller. I add my condolences for Larissa Bonfante’s death (and Gentili, Cataldi and Torelli). I remember her in Perugia and on many other occasions in Italy. She certainly would have liked Belmonte Piceno’s wonderful ivory box. With my best regards (and apologies for my English from electronic translator.)

Gabriele Baldelli  
Ancona

**Dear Editors:**

After the lockdown in Southern Etruria this spring we managed to travel (during the Italian pandemic hiatus) to Southern Italy and visit the Athenion of Castro di Lecce in Puglia. I am sending the story of my trip to *Etruscan News* for you to enjoy. Now back in Etruria locked down again with even more time to read good books. (*Ed. see story page 23*)

Stephan Steingraber

ceive them, so I am now putting out an appeal for authentic tomb designs that have pastoral motifs.

I have an artist who will prepare the design. He could even do it in three dimensions for me. Then I shall set off for Tuscany to have it carved.

I am sure that anyone walking through the cemetery after I am gone will be duly impressed.

Ann Pizzorusso  
Naples, Italy

**Editor’s response:** *Ann, your burial plot in the little cemetery on Three Mile Course in Guilford, CT will become a tourist attraction.*



## Letter to our Readers

**Dear Readers,** With an annual publication such as *Etruscan News*, it sometimes happens, without planning or design, that an issue forms itself around a dominant theme. Volume 22 (2020) centered on the loss of Larissa Bonfante, one of our founding editors, our most important Etruscan scholar, and, as evidenced by the many tributes that continue to flow in, a much-loved friend and mentor.

The grief in last year’s *leitmotif* bleeds into this issue’s theme: the pandemic. Almost all the articles, reviews, letters, and announcements mention its international impact. Our poem for this issue (p. 4) is an ancient healing remedy in Latin. We have lost two more giants of Etruscan scholarship, Mario Torelli and Mario Del Chiaro, although not to COVID; but two other renowned archaeologists, Iris Love and Filippo Gambari, did succumb to the virus, as did the influential Latinist Reginald Foster.

We had anticipated that this issue would be slim, with no foreign excavations, all the museums closed, no international travel allowed. In fact, this is our largest issue ever. Reviews of museum exhibitions have become reviews of the exhibition catalogues—longer than our usual submissions because they walk us through paths that were physically forbidden. Etruscan research has not slowed down or been deterred. This issue presents some new and surprising discoveries, several true “scoops:” Daniele Maras’ analysis of the just-discovered incisions on the Velletri Tiles (p. 1), the unexpected emergence of an intact amphitheater in Volterra (p. 24), news of private (pp. 28, 32) and public (p. 30) collections that are being opened to the public for the first time in centuries.

And for the first time, *Etruscan News* will not be printed in hard copy to be distributed at the AIA Annual Meeting. But then, there is no physical Annual Meeting. Volume 23 is a virtual issue for a virtual meeting. We do anticipate, however, that a more limited number of copies will be printed for mailing and distribution once the pandemic has receded.

We are grateful to Matthew Santirocco of NYU’s Center for Ancient Studies and to Maura Pollard for continuing to post and store the online issues of *Etruscan News* on that website. This gesture ensures Larissa’s legacy.

We wish a successful and  
“normalized” 2021 to all,  
Jane Whitehead  
Gary Enea

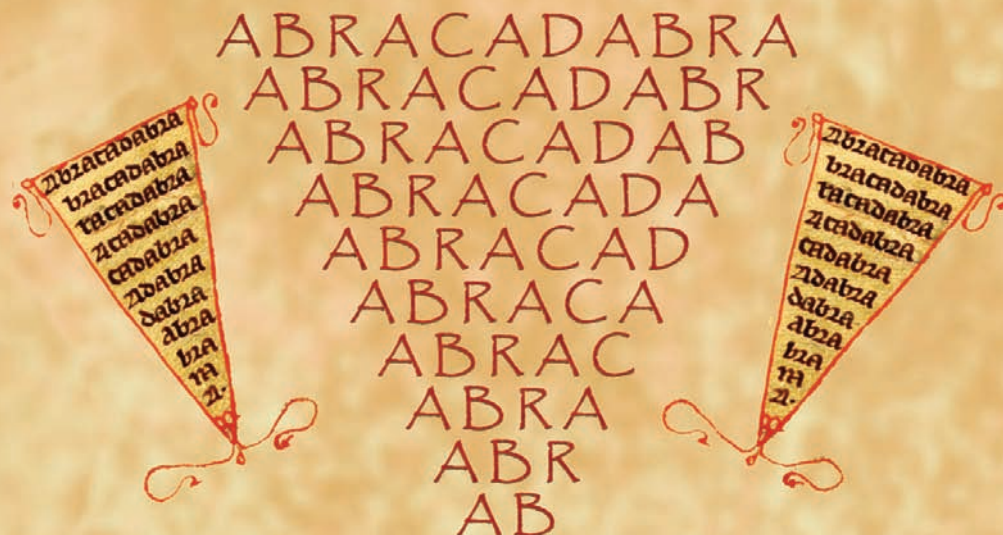
# ARCHAEOCAT



Merchants brought it from Cuma, they call it Mau!  
It comes from distant lands beyond the sea. (from *Romulus*, Sky TV, see page 41).

## POETRY

A HEALING POEM



INSCRIBIS CHARTAE, QUOD DICITUR ABRACADABRA:  
SAEPIUS ET SUBTER REPETIS, SED DETRAHE SUMMAM,  
ET MAGIS ATQUE MAGIS DESINT ELEMENTA FIGURIS:  
SINGULA QUAE SEMPER RAPIES ET CAETERA FIGES,  
DONEC IN ANGSTAM REDIGATUR LITERA CONUM.  
HIS LINO NEXIS COLLUM REDIMIRE MEMENTO

A "WRITE SEVERAL TIMES ON A PIECE OF PAPER THE WORD  
'ABRACADABRA,' AND REPEAT THE WORDS IN THE LINES BELOW BUT  
TAKE AWAY LETTERS FROM THE COMPLETE WORD AND LET THE LETTERS  
FALL AWAY ONE AT A TIME IN EACH SUCCEEDING LINE. TAKE THESE  
AWAY EVER, BUT KEEP THE REST UNTIL THE WRITING IS REDUCED TO  
A NARROW CONE. REMEMBER TO TIE THESE PAPERS WITH FLAX AND  
BIND THEM ROUND THE NECK."

Inscribis chartae quod dicitur Abracadabra:  
Saeplus & subter repetis, sed detrahe summam,  
Et magis atque magis desint elementa figuris:  
Singula quae semper rapies, & caetera figes,  
Donec in angustum redigatur litera conum.  
His lino nexis collum redimire memento.

QUINTUS SERENUS SAMMONICUS:  
LIBER MEDICINALIS 200 AD



Dear Editors:

I am writing to you from my farmhouse on the eastern slopes of the Chianti hills. For many years I have run a riding centre here and our rides have often taken us into that part of the Chianti where the Chianti Classico wine is produced, between Florence and Siena.

Opaxir, my photographer friend responsible for the photos of my latest book about the cycle of the months (a fascinating theme of Italian medieval art), has often spoken to me about the archaeological sites in Chianti, which I had previously only glimpsed from the back of a horse! So I was thrilled when he took me to see the tumulus of Montecalvario above the village of Castellina in Chianti, and also the ruins of an Etruscan city at Cetamura, where excavations by American archaeologists from Florida State University have revealed some surprising facts about how the Etruscans lived. The excavations have been led by Nancy T. de Grummond, whom I would very much like to meet when she returns to the site, hopefully in the near future.

So I have become a reader of *Etruscan News*, which apparently seems to interest one of my horses (Ruby in the photo), too!

Jenny Bawtree  
Rendola Riding  
Monteverchi, Arezzo



A.I.A annual meeting in Washington D.C. From left to right: Ugo Fusco, Shirley Shwarz, Daniele Maras and Nancy de Grummond.

# ARTICLES

## Etruscan Cosmology: Different Ways to Divide the Sky

by Giovanna Bagnasco Gianni  
and Antonio P. Pernigotti

Some of the main issues that have always attracted studies on the Etruscan cosmology are certainly those concerning the division of the sky into sixteen parts and those, closely related, concerning the correct orientation of the Liver of Piacenza and of the sixteen cells of its external edge. Scholars have connected the sequence of these cells to those listed in the well-known chapter of Martianus Capella (*De Nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*, I 41-61).

Research carried out in collaboration with G. Magli of the Politecnico di Milano within the Coordinating Research Center's "Tarquinia Project," directed by G. Bagnasco Gianni, focuses on these issues. It aims at exploring possible connections between the astronomical aspects of the Etruscan cosmology and the design of urban spaces and monuments at Tarquinia and in the Etruscan world in general. Preliminary results are published in two papers.

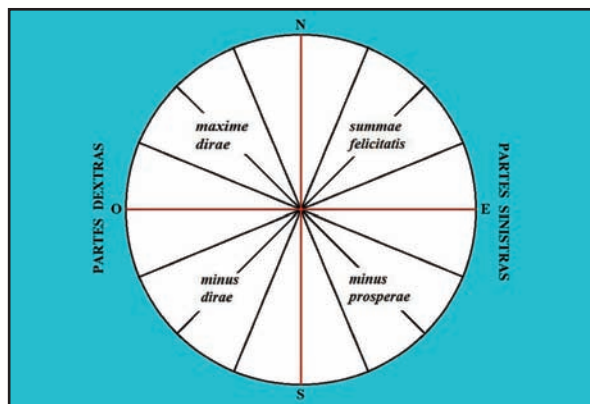


Fig. 3. Daily motion of the sun: the division of the sky, according to the cardinal points. (Figures 2-4 Pernigotti 2019)

The first paper, by G. Bagnasco Gianni, was presented at the First International Workshop on Archaeoastronomy in the Roman world (*Quis dubitet hominem coniungere caelo?* Milan, 3-4 November 2016), and recently published in the volume *Archaeoastronomy in the Roman World*. It concerns the similarity between the *ratio* of the sequence of theonyms of the inscription of the Tumulus of the Crosses at Cerveteri (end of the 7th -beginning of the 6th century BC) and that of the cells of the outer edge of the Liver of Piacenza (2nd century BC). They both contain reference to the infernal god of the underworld and of the absence of light, who is the counterpart of *Nocturnus* according to Martianus Capella's corresponding sequence (5th century AD): *Aita* in the case of the Tumulus and *Cilen* in that of the Liver. Comparison between the concept of "place beyond the light" or "place without light" expressed by *tinasa* in the first case and the large area of the cell containing the inscription *cilens*, which is the largest of the cells distributed on the external edge of the Liver, opened the way to reconsideration of its general epigraphic layout. Three different groups of inscrip-

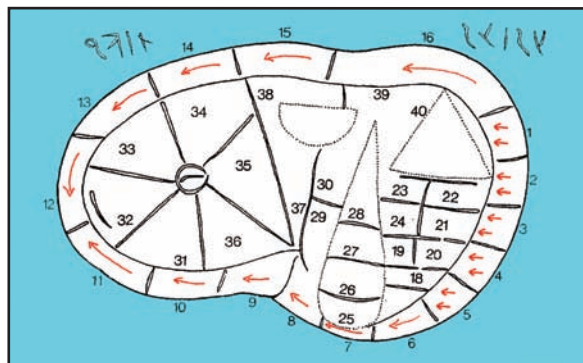


Fig. 1. Red arrows show direction of the inscriptions inside the 16 cells of the external edge. (Bagnasco Gianni 2019)

tions show similar epigraphic features (Fig. 1):

- cells 12-16 contain counterclockwise inscriptions
- cells 6-11 contain clockwise inscriptions
- cells 1-5 contain two-line inscriptions.

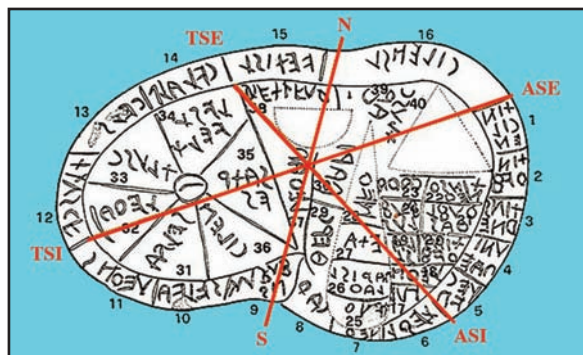
Projection towards the center of the Liver of the two axes, which originate from the dividing lines that separate the abovementioned three groups of inscriptions along its margin, designs a scheme that matches that of the solstitial axes (calculated at the latitudes of Etruria) (Fig. 2). This scheme could therefore represent the astronomical *ratio* of orientation of the Liver of Piacenza and makes it possible to locate the celestial dwellings of the gods in accordance. The same *ratio* is shared by the list of gods mentioned by Martianus Capella, who does not deal with the dimension of their celestial dwellings. Those could vary, as it happens with the cells of the Liver of Piacenza, which have irregular size.

This scheme reflects the four large parts of the sky separated by the points of sunrise and sunset at the solstices, where the sun:

- rises
- never rises or sets, but goes through every day of the year. This part is between the points of sunrise and sunset at the winter solstice.
- sets
- never goes through. This part is between the points of sunset and sunrise at the summer solstice.

The second paper, by A. P. Pernigotti, was published in volume LXXXI (2019) of *Studi Etruschi*. Starting from the abovementioned study of the Liver of Piacenza and its orientation according to the solstitial axes, it focuses on the archaeological and literary sources related to the division of the sky into sixteen parts, explicitly attributed by Latin authors to the Etruscan world.

According to Cicero, Pliny and Servius, division in sixteen identical parts would have originated from multiple. Fig. 2. Graphic representation of the projection of the solstices according to the authors on Maggiani's drawing of the Liver: ASE = summer solstice sunrise; ASI = winter solstice sunrise; TSE = summer solstice sunset; TSI = winter solstice sunset.



lication of the four parts in which the sky is divided by the cardinal points. It is meant for interpretation of the favorable or unfavorable nature of the points of origin, arrival and return of lightning. No ancient author connects this division with that of the celestial dwellings nor attaches interpretation of lightning to the region in which a specific deity was based.

According to a number of authors, Jupiter could throw lightning bolts; Servius (*Aen.* VIII 427) states that he could do that from all the sixteen parts of the sky. Other authors attribute this prerogative to nine deities, who could hurl eleven or twelve different types of lightning. In no case do these numbers match the sixteen regions of the sky, interpreted as celestial dwellings of different gods: this means that the lightning gods and the regions of the sky belonged to two different concepts.

The comparison between the literary sources and the epigraphic evidence of the Liver opens the way to figuring out two different systems of division of the sky within the *Etrusca Disciplina*.

The first system is based on the cardinal axes. They depict the journey of the sun during the day from east to west, according to the rotation of the earth around the north-south axis (Fig. 3). This system makes it possible to control lightning and its correct reading and interpretation, within the practices of the *ars fulguratoria*. Pliny

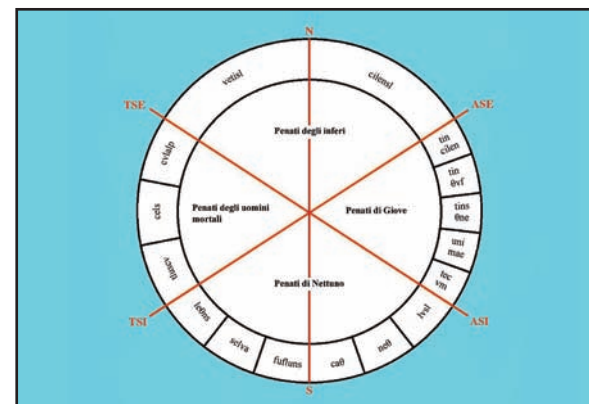


Fig. 4. Annual motion of the sun: the division of the sky, according to the solstitial axes: ASE = summer solstice sunrise; ASI = winter solstice sunrise; TSE = summer solstice sunset; TSI = winter solstice sunset.

explains (*H.N.* II 142-144) that this system focuses on the south, which is where every day the sun stops ascending and starts its descending course. This system of division of the celestial space, based on multiples of four, is meant for divinatory purposes and is shared by a number of Mediterranean civilizations, including Rome, where it is expressed by the concept of *templum*.

The second system is based on the journey of the sun during the year and on the solstitial axes, which are originated from its rising and setting each day in different points of the celestial horizon. The solstitial axes depict the end of the journey of the sun during the year and divide the sky in four main areas (Fig. 4).

The resulting four main areas contain the sequence of dwellings of the divinities, according to the layout of the Piacenza Liver, which mirrors Martianus Capella's list. This situation recalls Nigidius Figulus' theory of the Etruscan Penates, reported by Arnobius (III 40,1), which identifies four species of Penates, belonging respectively to Jupiter, Neptune, the underworld and mortal men.



Fig. 3

**Hidden in plain sight, continued from page 1**

Marco Carloni in 1785 (Fig. 2). The plaques date from around 530 BCE and depict chariot races, galloping horsemen, official processions, banquets and an assembly of sitting gods. Further fragments and examples were later found at the site during regular excavations at the beginning of the 20th century and are on display in the Museo Archeologico of Velletri. In 1814 the collection was acquired by the Royal Museum of Naples following the bankruptcy of the Borgia family.

**Scholarship on the plaques**

Since then the plaques have been analyzed by scholars as important examples of Archaic Etrusco-Latin architectural terracottas. Scholars who have studied them include Arvid Andr en (1940), Francesca Fortunati (1986 and 1989), Mauro Cristofani (1987), Mario Torelli (1988) and, most recently, Nancy Winter (2009) and Claudia Carlucci (2011) (Fig. 5). In addition, an exhibition in 2001 presented the plaques in the context of the Borgia Collection, and now the current exhibition in Naples highlights the Etruscan connections to the Velletri terracottas.

**Surprising new discovery**

Despite the fact that the Borgia plaques have been on display for so long and have been studied by generations of scholars and repeatedly subjected to conservation in the course of the last two centuries, only in 2020 was Gary Enea able to notice the presence of some graffiti on the best preserved example, which depicts an assembly of gods. It represents a standing couple, a youth holding a bow followed by a woman; both gesture to the right towards a suite of at least five deities sitting on folding stools. The first from the left is bearded and holds a spear in his right hand; the second holds a lituus

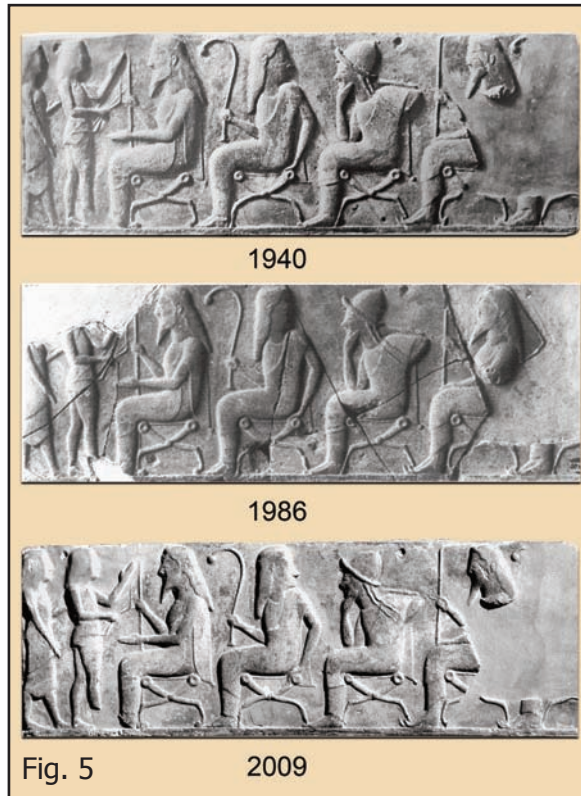


Fig. 5 1940 1986 2009

and is turned backwards; the third wears a brimmed hat and braids and touches his beard with his hand as if pensive; the fourth also holds a spear but is partially damaged; and the fifth is almost entirely lost.

**The graffiti**

A close inspection of the graffiti, which I carried out in early September 2020, proves that they were incised with a thin stylus on the surface of the dried clay before firing. The most visible graffiti is a W-shaped *siglum* closed at its top by a stroke slightly ascending to the right, incised on the upper thigh of the first seated deity on the left (Fig. 3). An actual sequence of letters, albeit less visible, is incised horizontally on the thigh of the following deity, who holds a lituus.

The graffiti are difficult to see because the incision is very thin and the colors of the clay surface inside and outside the strokes are very close, which allows one to see them only with a strong raking light from the upper left (Fig. 4) This might help to explain why the inscriptions had never been noticed before. Nonetheless, the authenticity of the inscription is confirmed both by the fact that the incisions were made before firing, and by the visibility of their main strokes in a photo published by Arvid Andr en in 1940 (Fig. 5).



Fig. 4

**Significance of the inscriptions**

The letters of the second sequence are Latin and correspond to forms attested in the 6th century BCE (Fig. 6) From left to right we can recognize: a letter M, whose right half is cut by a slanting stroke, barely visible, as though an afterthought; a triangular A, with a descending middle stroke; a small upside-down V-shaped sign that is partially damaged by a chipping of the surface; an Archaic right angled letter P (notably, this is the same form found in the Niger Lapis inscription); a T with slanting upper stroke; a thin I.

All considered, most probably the scribe wrote originally a sequence MAPTI. Then, reconsidered and decided to add a further A after the first letter (Fig. 7), which was obtained by adding a cross-bar: M^A APTI. Finally, not content with the result, the scribe chose to add a small superscript A in between the regular A and the following P: MA {A}PTI.

It seems likely that the first two letters MA (just M in the first version) are the abbreviation of a name, to be integrated as Ma(rco) or Ma(merco): that is, Marcus in Classical Latin. Significantly, this is one of the earliest onomastic abbreviations in Latin, comparable to the *siglum* LA recurring on several 6th century sherds from the Palatine (Pensabene *et alii* 2000).

The following word is probably part of a name formula, to be interpreted as either an unparalleled gentilicium Apti(os), or a surname in genitive Apti, from the adjective aptus, that is to say "suitable, ready." In fact, while \*Aptius is never attested in Latin as a gentilicium, the form Aptus is often attested in Classical Latin as both a cognomen and a name for slaves as well as for craftsmen (for instance on sigillata ware). In an early context such as that of the Archaic plaque, the presence of a cognomen is quite unlikely, while a surname suitable for a craftsman or a slave seems a better option. Therefore, most probably, notwithstanding its being almost invisible, the inscription on the plaque is the only known signature on a Latin architectural terracotta, to be integrated as (*opus*) Ma(rci) Apti, "(work) of Marcus Aptus," unless the binomial formula is attributed to a "Ma(rcus slave) of Aptus." In addition, as regards the associated W-shaped mark, it is worth mentioning that it might be interpreted as a monogram of Marcus himself, when considering that the upside-down M is attested in the not distant centers of Lanuvium and Anagni (Maras 2004).



Fig. 2

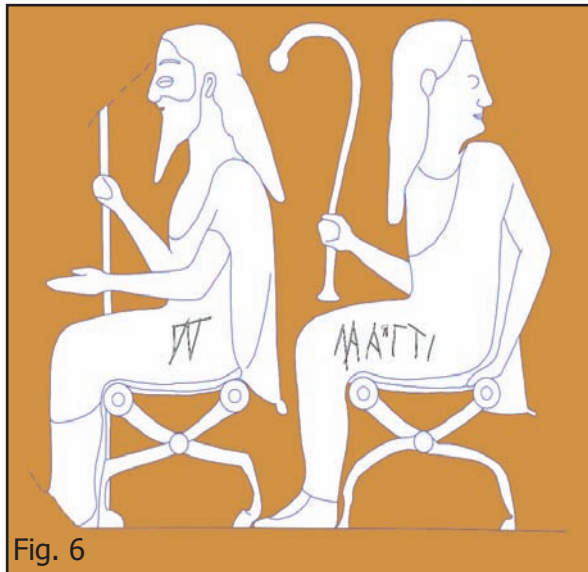


Fig. 6

Apparently, the craftsman marked one of the serial plaques with his name, incised on the thigh of a deity, presumably in order to gain divine protection against the evil eye. He incised the signature with strokes so thin that they were almost invisible to the naked eye and did not highlight it with pigments in order to diminish the sin of arrogance intrinsic in handing down one's name to posterity.

A similar procedure has been recently recognized in the signature of an Etruscan artist on a painted plaque from Caere, about one generation more recent than the plaque from Velletri (see *Etruscan News* 21, 2019). In this case, the inscription also was incised with a thin stylus before firing, and is made visible only with a strong raking light: a further “magical” protection is granted by the association with the grotesque figure of a Silenus. The comparison between these two terracottas, therefore, provides evidence for a recurring pattern among Archaic pre-Roman craftsmen, who left the inconspicuous trace of their pride hidden in plain sight on their works.

#### How to read hidden inscriptions

A passage from the *Poliorketika* by Aeneas Tacticus, an expert on military codes of the 4th century BCE, recounts how was it possible to read this sort of inscriptions hidden under a painted surface (31.15-16): “If you

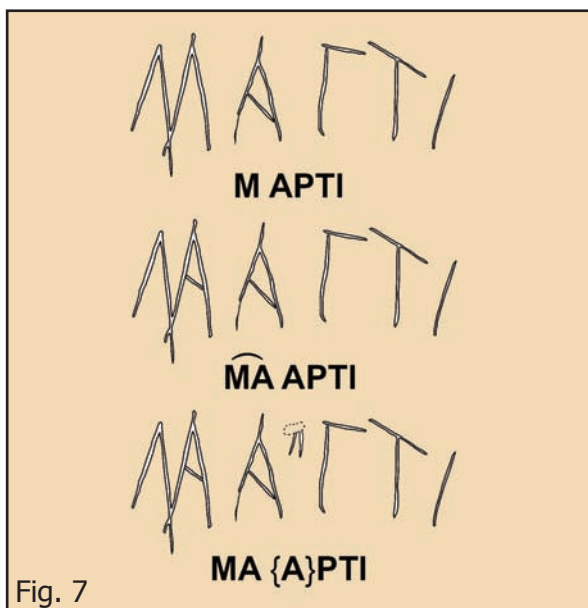


Fig. 7

write whatever you wish on a votive tablet and subsequently whiten it, after drying you can draw on it a horseman with a torch or whatever, with cloak and horse white—or even other colors except black. ... Who is destined to read the written message shall ... take it home and pour oil on it, so all inscriptions will come out.”

In fact, when the terracotta surface is greased, dark oil gathers into the incised grooves making them temporarily visible. This phenomenon occurred on the painted plaque from Caere every time it was treated with substances to make the colors brighter (Maras 2020), but was less likely to happen on the roof of a building in Velletri. However, it is possible that raindrops were just dark enough to make the name faintly visible on the pale background of the clothed figures as reproduced in the watercolor of 1785 (Fig. 2), when the colors were better preserved than today.

#### Who then was Marcus Aptus?

Three possibilities come to the mind, depending on whether we consider him just a workman operating in the workshop that produced the plaques, or the owner of the workshop, or even the architect who was responsible for the entire arrangement of the roof decoration. (On the contrary, a fourth possibility, that the name belonged to an art patron and owner of the building, is ruled out by the fact that the inscription was hidden from sight.)

Since the inscribed plaque belongs in the Roma-Veii-Velletri series, whose molds and models were originally created in workshops of Veii or possibly Rome (Carlucci and Winter 2019), it seems unlikely that the signature referred to the original artist. At the same time, such a rare event as an Archaic signature can hardly depend on the initiative of a simple low-grade workman. Therefore, the best hypothesis is that Marcus Aptus (or even Marcus, slave of Aptus) was the skilled craftsman responsible for the production of the whole terracotta decoration, who possibly was one and the same as the architect of the roof.

After 2550 years of oblivion and after over 200 years from the discovery of the fragments, the name of a terracotta master of early Latium has come back to the light and provides us with a precious if unexpected glimpse of the life and pride of an Archaic workshop.

*\* I heartily thank Gary Enea for asking me to study in depth his outstanding epigraphic discovery, in exchange for the promise to publish it first in Etruscan News, which I am happy to keep now, in fond memory of Larissa.*

#### Guide to further reading:

On the plaques from Velletri and their find contexts, see Nancy Winter, *Symbols of Wealth and Power: Architectural Terracotta Decoration in Etruria & Central Italy, 640-510 B C* (MAAR, Suppl., 9), Ann Arbor 2009: 311-393; Luciana Drago, “Velletri,” in *Biblioteca Topografica della Colonizzazione Greca in Italia e nelle Isole Tirreniche*, Pisa-Rome-Naples 2012: 719-799.

On the invisible signatures of terracotta masters, see Daniele F. Maras, “La firma ‘invisibile’ di un artista ceretano,” in A. Campus, S. Marchesini, P. Poccetti (eds.), *Scritture nascoste, scritture invisibili*, Rome 2020: 49-74.



## Ancient Olive Oil from Herculaneum in the MANN

by Giulia Freni, Classicult.it

The deposits of the National Archaeological Museum of Naples (MANN) contain many finds that can broaden our knowledge of the daily life of Campania Felix before the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79. Significant among the various artifacts is a glass bottle, which since 2018 has been the subject of a study in a collaboration between the Department of Agriculture of the Federico II University and the MANN. This container perhaps comes from Herculaneum, but as happens in many cases, the information relating to its discovery has now been lost. As for the formal characteristics of the find, it is a cylindrical glass bottle with a height of 25.5 cm, consisting of a single handle and a rather short neck. Inside there is a substance of waxy and yellowish organic matter, which has solidified over time. It is significant to note its correspondence with a bottle represented in a fresco of the Praedia di Giulia Felice in Pompeii.

In 2018 Alberto Angela, who became interested in the object during a visit to the MANN warehouses, had hypothesized that the bottle could contain wine residues, but this theory has now been definitively disproved. Chemical analysis and Carbon-14 dating conducted by the team of prof. Raffaele Sacchi, of the Department of Agriculture, have in fact made it possible to identify a sample of olive oil inside the bottle, whose altered chemical composition can be explained both by the high temperatures of the eruption of Vesuvius, and by the environmental changes since AD 79.

Therefore, it is not wine, but olive oil, a product that was certainly widespread and important in Roman times, both as a food product and for other uses related to daily life: from lighting to human body care, from perfumed ointments to cosmetics. This discovery takes on greater relevance if we consider the intense production of this product in Campania Felix, as also emerges from literary sources such as the *Epigrams* of Martial (XII, 63, 101) or the *Naturalis Historia* of Pliny the Elder (XVIII, 111).

Also significant in this regard is the statement by Prof. Raffaele Sacchi, whose work is therefore an important element in understanding the daily habits of ancient Herculaneum, “This is the oldest sample of olive oil that has come down to us in large quantity, the oldest bottle of oil in the world. The identification of the nature of the ‘archaeological oil bottle’ gives us irrefutable proof of the importance that olive oil had in the daily diet of the populations of the Mediterranean basin and in particular of the ancient Romans in Campania Felix.”

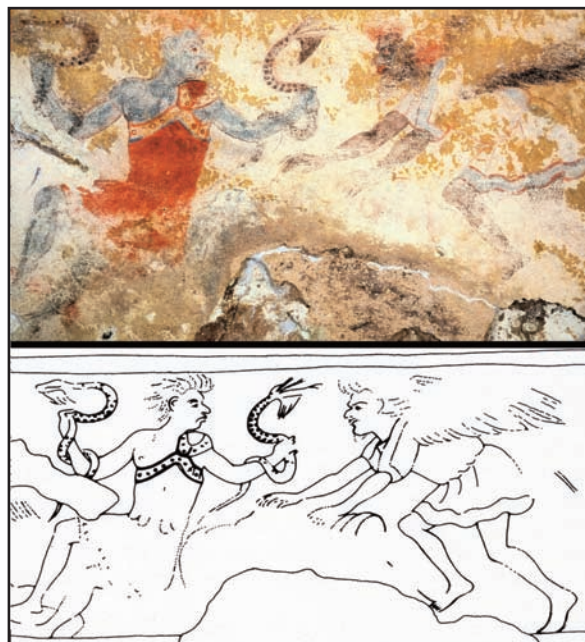
## An Etruscan Pandemic? The Evidence from Archaeology for Social, Economic and Cultural Change in the 5th century BCE

by Nancy de Grummond  
Florida State University

Pandemics in ancient Greece, Italy and the Mediterranean have been extensively studied and are under renewed scrutiny in this era of COVID-19. Typical is the recent announcement from Brown University of a webinar in their archaeology division called *Pandemics and Plagues in Antiquity*, held in October and November of 2020. Great interest has always attached to the terrible plague in Athens (430-426 BCE) that occurred inside the packed city during the Peloponnesian War, described at length by Thucydides. It is estimated to have killed as much as one-third of the population. Other major plague events were the Antonine plague of the Roman Empire, which lasted around 15 years (165-180 CE) and is estimated to have killed 5 million people, and the bubonic plague of Justinian (541-545 CE at Constantinople), which spread all over the Mediterranean and killed an estimated 25 million. Other later plagues have often been brought in for comparison, especially the Great Mortality (Black Death) of 1347-53, a bubonic plague that wiped out at least one-third of the entire known population of Europe and Asia. Closer to our own time, amid the devastating daily news, reference is frequently made to the “Spanish” Flu of 1918, in which 20 million or more died.

Recently Adam Kucharski of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine issued a book called *The Rules of Contagion* (2020), in which he started out by declaring that if you have seen one pandemic, you have seen one pandemic; that is, all pandemics are different. But the thing about the five pandemics referred to above is that they have one important common factor: they all reveal significant depopulation. And as a consequence of depopulation came severe economic and social upheaval. Many years ago Etruscan scholars noted that there was evidence of a significant depopulation in the settlements of Etruria in the 5th century, and a concomitant economic and social depression. In my classes I have often proposed the idea that a key factor may have been a plague. This possibility does not seem to have been explored by serious Etruscan scholars.

As is well known, for research on the Etruscans one of the greatest obstacles is that we have no Etruscan texts as we do for Greek and Latin. Etruscan books did exist, but they are almost totally lost except that occasionally we catch reflections or even quotations from them in the Greek and Roman writers. These scraps provide a starting point for the present inquiry. For example, the late Greek translation of an Etruscan calendar by Johannes Lydus refers to plagues in humans and animals, five or six times in different months (the year is unspecified). The leading expert on the difficult topic of Etruscan medicine, Jean McIntosh Turfa, has extensively examined the significant plague reported at the Etruscan coastal city of Caere, ca. 535, but she has not discussed disease as a possible factor in the depression of the 5th century. The ambitious international seminar



Above, Demons of the Etruscan Afterlife, Tomb of the Blue Demons, ca. 425-400 BCE. Below, drawing by E. Ferrero.

in 1987 at the French School in Rome addressed the crisis in Italy in the 5th century, *Crise et transformation des sociétés de l'Italie antique au Ve siècle av. JC* (published 1990) but failed to take account of the strong possibility of the problem of disease in the second half of the century in both Rome and Etruria. And yet in addition to the well-known plague in Athens ca. 430, there are also plagues reported by the Roman historian Livy that occurred, or rather recurred, at almost the same time in Rome (437, 436, 435, and 433 BCE; Livy IV.20.9; 21.2; 21.6; 24.3-7), and even earlier. Athens and Rome both had important port facilities, and it would have been easy, even likely, for plagues in these cities to be transmitted through the ports of southern Etruria such as Caere and Tarquinii. Indeed Veii, just across the Tiber River from Rome, is more than likely to have been exposed to the pestilences in Rome of the 430s.

So far in Etruscan archaeology there does not seem to be a report of a mass burial that might be a symptom of a pandemic. In any case, analysis of skeletal remains is problematic, since even in Greece experts have been unable to agree on what the skeletal matter actually can tell us about the Athenian epidemic. (An article by Greek scientists in the *International Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 2006, cites results from dental pulp in Athenian burials as implicating typhoid fever. Many regard the study as intriguing but inconclusive.) It may be more fruitful to concentrate instead on intensive research on remains of material culture such as artifacts and monuments, and the evidence for depopulation all Demons threaten Alcisti and Atmite. red-figure krater, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ca. 400 BCE. After Dennis, *Cities and Cemeteries*, 1848.



around Etruria.

At first examination the severest depression seems to take place at cities on the coast in southern Etruria near the Tiber River. For example, the importation of Greek pottery dries up in the southern Etruscan cities in the second half of the 5th century. Could this reflect an Etruscan attempt to shut down the entry of Greek ships that might bring the plague? Or, instead, the shunning of the harbors in this area by traders who knew of the presence of plague? (It is remarkable that Greek vases did continue to enter the Etruscan cities of Adria and Spina on the opposite—eastern—coast of Italy on the Adriatic Sea.) The brilliant series of Etruscan painted tombs at Tarquinia declines and almost disappears in this period. A new study by Matilde Marzullo lists only 16 tombs as painted during the period from 430-400; for the preceding period from 460-425 she counts 51 (*Spazi sepolti e dimensioni dipinte nelle tombe etrusche di Tarquinia*, 2017). Is this statistic related to economic decline and social change in which the elite are unable to hold ambitious funerals (i.e., was there “social distancing”?) Do representations in art bolster the argument that the Etruscans were experiencing terror from the disaster? The representation of death demons in Etruscan tombs actually begins around 425. (Compare the disturbing images of skeletons and demons in Italian 14th century frescoes after the Black Death. It has even been argued that the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s led to a surge of depictions of zombies and vampires in the 1990s!) Prior to this the Etruscan afterlife was a merry feast with dancing and games in sunny groves. In the 4th century the mood is completely different, featuring hideous demons with discolored flesh patrolling a dark, misty and treeless ambient.

Many sites elsewhere in Etruria were depopulated or abandoned in the 5th century, including my own site of Cetamura del Chianti in the hills of Tuscany, where I have found artifacts of the 7th-6th centuries and 4th-1st centuries, but absolutely nothing of the 5th century. How many sites have this pattern and where are they located? The roll has not been taken on this possible indicator of the extent of a pandemic. This could be a research process in which a careful and painstaking documentation might be made of all the sites that show a similar hiatus. Such a study may also help to establish a significant timeline for spread and recurrence of disease. Indeed the bubonic plague of Justinian went on for decades as it spread from place to place.

The theory under exploration is *terra incognita* in Etruscan studies. The concise history of the Etruscans by Mario Torelli in a leading popular book on the Etruscans, *Etruscan Daily Life and Afterlife* (edited by Larissa Bonfante, 1986), gives various reasons for the Etruscan impoverishment in the 5th century: changes in rulership, sumptuary laws, internal tensions, military crises. An Etruscan naval defeat at the hands of Syracuse off the Bay of Naples in 474 is often taken as a prime cause of the decline of markets. But in fact there is no other Etruscan military defeat of great consequence known after that until the fall of Veii in 396. This study thus has the potential to add a new dimension to the little-known and always difficult topic of the history of the Etruscans. It could shed fresh light on a chapter in the history of early Italy that might be relevant for what we know overall of pandemics in the ancient world.



## Bronze Age Ostrich Egg Hunt

Eggeptional Study from the University of Bristol  
*The History Blog*

For thousands of years during the Bronze and Iron Ages, carved and painted ostrich eggs were traded around the Mediterranean; they were objects so highly prized by the elite of the region that they were buried with them. Up until now the decorative eggs have been classified by scholars according to style and motif, but a new study enlists state-of-the-art technology to determine where the eggs came from, the trade routes they followed, and the techniques used in their manufacture.

Eggs have been symbols of rebirth and renewal to mark the transition from winter to spring in many religious and cultural traditions ancient and modern. Egg-shaped stones with a flattened base were used by Phoenicians as cippi (altar pedestals) or placed on top of pillar-style cippi. Ovoid sacred stones known as betyls have a very ancient lineage going back to the Bronze Age cultic traditions of prehistoric Egypt and Mesopotamia. Ostrich eggs have been found in funerary contexts dating as far back as the 2nd millennium BC in Cyprus and Syria and extending to Greece, Italy and Spain, where there are no native ostriches.

For this study, researchers examined five whole ostrich eggs from the Etruscan Isis Tomb at Vulci (625-550 BC), now in the collection of the British Museum. This tomb belonged to a family of very high rank, who were buried with rich grave goods, including the bronze bust of a goddess originally believed to represent Isis (now thought to be a local deity), gold jewelry, bronze vessels, Greek pottery and Egyptian scarabs. The combination of high-end local and imported objects is typical of the Etruscan Orientalizing Period (720-575 BC), characterized by intense contact between the Etruscans, Phoenicians, Egyptians and Greeks.

Four of the five eggs were decorated with both carving and paint. One was painted without carvings. The decorative motifs include sphinxes, wild animals, plants, geometric designs, warriors and chariots. Holes were drilled in the thick shells to drain the contents, then the empty eggs decorated. They were originally mounted with metal fixtures — spouts, stands — to convert the eggs into vessels.

Carved and painted ostrich egg depicting a line of marching hoplites (British Museum).



Two decorated ostrich eggs in the British Museum, from the so-called Isis tomb in Etruscan Vulci.



Fragment of ostrich eggshell with carved decoration on the inner surface (27th Dynasty, Sanctuary of Apollo, Naukratis, Egypt). (British Museum)

In the study, published in the journal *Antiquity*, the researchers describe for the first time the surprisingly complex system behind ostrich egg production. This includes evidence about where the ostrich eggs were sourced, if the ostriches were captive or wild, and how the manufacture methods can be related to techniques and materials used by artisans in specific areas.

“The entire system of decorated ostrich egg production was much more complicated than we had imagined! We also found evidence to suggest the ancient world was much more interconnected than previously

thought,” said Dr. Hodos, Reader in Mediterranean Archaeology in Bristol’s School of Arts.

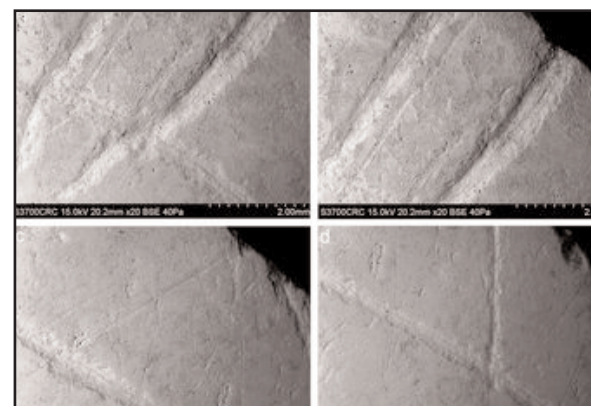
“Mediterranean ostriches were indigenous to the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa. Using a variety of isotopic indicators, we were able to distinguish eggs laid in different climatic zones. What was most surprising to us was that eggs from both zones were found at sites in the other zone, and this suggests the existence of more extensive trade routes.”

Ostriches are known to have been hunted and killed as well as captured. Assyrian texts document the practice and point to the birds having been kept for breeding, perhaps to stock exotic gardens, or as sources of feathers, leather and giant eggs.

Dr. Hodos and colleagues believe eggs were taken from wild birds’ nests, despite evidence of ostriches being kept in captivity during this period. This was no ordinary egg hunt. Ostriches can be extremely dangerous, so there was a tremendous risk involved in taking eggs from wild birds.

“We also found eggs require time to dry before the shell can be carved and therefore require safe storage. This has economic implications, since storage necessitates a long-term investment and this, combined with the risk involved, would add to an egg’s luxury value,” said Dr. Hodos.

Carved sphinxes on an ostrich egg from the Isis Tomb in Vulci (British Museum).



## An Etruscan *tripudium*?

by Lora Holland Goldthwaite  
University of North Carolina at Asheville

A unique Etruscan gemstone (Fig. 1) depicts a man bending over to reach into a cage, in sectional view, in which stands a “weird chicken” (I owe this phrase to Nancy de Grummond). The bird is facing away from the man and has one foot raised perpendicular to the body to signify motion as the man’s hand enters the cage behind the bird’s head. It is here argued that this may be an early representation of the ritual known to the Romans as the *tripudium*, in which the actions and sounds of a bird, especially when it was fed, were used for divination. The keeper of these birds was called a *pullarius*, from the Latin word for chickens. Several Latin authors relate incidents that illustrate the efficacy of this rite, but perhaps the best known of these concerns the Roman commander Publius Claudius Pulcher. When he failed to obtain divine approval for a naval battle through these auspices, he ordered the sacred chickens thrown overboard with these words, “since they are unwilling to eat, let them drink.” Needless to say, Pulcher lost the battle.

Boardman published this gem in 1971 and proposed its connection to the Roman rite, but it has received little subsequent attention in the scholarship. Foti’s (2011) study of the evidence for Roman chicken keepers notes the gemstone’s existence, but only in a brief footnote. An online publication of the gem by the Alfred Danicourt Municipal Museum in Péronne, where it is housed, follows Boardman in its description ([www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/joconde/08150001255](http://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/joconde/08150001255)). Another description published online by the Classical Art Research Centre reads as follows: “A man wearing a chlamys and holding a short branch bends over a cage containing a bird. Over his head an insect (?). Hatched border. This may imply some form of divination, attended by what in Rome was called a *pullarius*, but a practice of Etruscan origin.” Since the bird is not recognizably a domesticated chicken a precise identification is avoided, yet insinuated, by the term *pullarius*.

The scene is undeniably evocative: a bird in a cage with a man holding a branch of what appears to be ripe grain corresponds closely to both written and visual sources about the keepers and the rite of taking auspices from birds in Roman religion. We may compare the gemstone with a Roman depiction of the cage for hold-



Fig. 1. Cornelian gemstone, Etruscan, 4th c. BCE. Provenance unknown. Municipal Museum Alfred Danicourt, Péronne, France.

ing birds for divinatory observation (Figs. 2a and b). This image is carved on a Roman legionary officer’s tombstone, which was set up by the freedman Atimetus, who identified himself as a *pullarius*. The Etruscan cage, which appears to be made of worked wood, is open at the top, whereas the wooden Roman cage opens to the front with double doors.

Three Roman gemstones set in gold rings (*Antike Gemmen*, Toelken’s #s 175, 1484 and 1485), are similar to the Etruscan gemstone in that they portray a *pullarius* or *auspex*, cage, bird, and food for the bird, even if they differ in the details, such as the shape of the cage, the type of bird, and a bag for feeding instead of a branch of grain. These gemstones provide crucial evidence for the general agreement of Etruscan and Roman practices, at least in outline, even though, as Foti laments (2011: 91, f. 7) we lack corroborating Etruscan literary evidence.

The Latin literary evidence identifies three main types of tripudial divination from birds: the *tripudia solistima* (Pliny *NH* 10.49), which refers to augury from the entire observation of a rooster (*gallus*); the *tripudia soniua* (Cic. *Fam.* 6.6.7 and Fest. 382 Lindsay), which refers to augury from the sounds involved in feeding chickens (and other birds), especially the sound of food falling from beak to ground; and *tripudia oscina*, which refers to augury from the song of certain birds (Appian Claudius’ *Auguralis Disciplinæ Liber I*, referenced by Fest. 214 Lindsay). The Iguvine Tables reveal an Umbrian word for *tripudium*, if the identification of the word *ahtrepuřatu* (appearing several times in Tables II, VI, and VII) is correct, but no Etruscan term for this rite

Fig. 2. (left) Tombstone of M. Pompeius Asper, prefect of the XX Legion in Britain, set up by his *pullarius*, the freedman Atimetus. His chickens in a portable cage are depicted at bottom right of the relief, with a drawing of the same to the right by Charles le Brun in Montfaucon 1772.



has been identified. Moreover, in Etruscan art birds feeding are commonly depicted; but this gemstone is the only one, as far as I know, that shows a divinatory scene with a caged bird and a *pullarius*. The keeper holds in his right hand a branch of grain (spelt?), suggesting preparation for an observation. The bird’s feeding behavior and the sounds associated with it, which may include the bird’s cry and movement, the grain that is about to fall, and, if the object above the keeper’s head is an insect (either as food for the bird or because of the sound it makes), accord with later Roman practice for observing domesticated chickens. Boardman (1971: 211), however, notes that the oddly shaped object may instead be a stylized thunderbolt. In my view, this is the more likely identification. Augury was the bailiwick of the sky-god Jupiter in Roman religion. In Etruscan religion, numerous deities wielded the thunderbolt; but in Etruscan art it is most often associated with the god Tinia, Jupiter’s counterpart.

There is abundant evidence that the Etruscans were familiar with the appearance of the domesticated chicken. First, scientific sources date the arrival of the domesticated chicken to Italy prior to the Archaic period: “The central European chicken was likely derived from the early Greek founder population, which was distributed throughout the northern Mediterranean, and from there introduced to Central Europe across the Alps around 600–400 BC” (Ghirland Flink *et al.* 2014, *Table S1*); but pre-Roman chicken bones in archaeological contexts are sporadic (De Grossi Mazzorin 2000: 352, who also notes that they appear as early as between 900 and 600 but are not common before the Roman period).

Turfa (2005: 34) affirms that the chicken was a relative latecomer to Etruscan art, arriving from the Greek east as its domestication spread westward during the Archaic period. For instance, roosters are sometimes molded in bucchero fabric, such as the well-known Met rooster decorated with the Etruscan alphabet, dating from 700–650, and there are numerous bucchero finials of chickens, often rooster-hen pairs, from the 6th c. BCE (Turfa 2005: 185–186, no. 183, and commonly seen in Chiusine contexts, de Puma 2013: 100). These chickens do not have a recognizably divinatory context. Other birds, however, do appear in association with divination, such as the wild birds, probably cormorants — perhaps not coincidentally another species of water bird — depicted in the Tomb of the Augurs at Tarquinia. In sum, domesticated chickens were well known in Etruria, if the gem-cutter had wished to portray one. In addition,

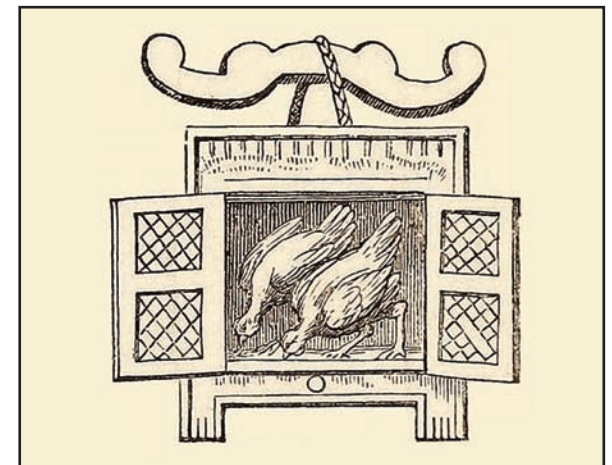




Fig. 3. Purple gallinule feeding on a pomegranate. House of the Little Fountain, Pompeii.

we must avoid the “ignorant artisan” type of argument. But if not a chicken, is it possible to identify the bird in this context that so closely corresponds to the Roman rite of *auspicia ex tripudiis*? I argue that the bird depicted on the gemstone is not a “weird chicken” but is a wild bird that is chicken-like in some important ways.

The bird depicted on the gem has a long, skinny, curved neck and a larger beak than is associated with the anatomy of the domesticated chicken (*Gallus Gallus f. domestica*). It also seems to have a small crest or tuft of feathers atop its head, but this detail is not entirely clear. The tail feathers are short and are banded with white at their base. Its wing feathers are folded close to the body and are also short. It has chicken-like feet and its overall aspect is galline except for its neck and head. The bird’s head and neck appear somewhat similar to those of the griffon vulture (*Gyps*), a species that was sometimes held in captivity in antiquity and was an augural bird. But the bird’s neck as depicted on the gemstone has no ruff and its feet do not have vul-

ture talons. Instead, I suggest that the bird is a member of the genus *Gallinula*, a type of long-necked wild bird related to rails and other marsh birds. As the name suggests, the birds in this genus are chicken-like both in appearance and in some behaviors.

More precisely, with its long neck and large beak the best candidate is *Porphyrio Porphyrio*, often referred to in modern literature as a purple gallinule, swamp hen, or coot (Figs. 3-4), an easily tamed marsh bird. Various Greek and Roman authors mention this bird and its close relationship with humans from the 6th c., and a recent study documents this relationship into the modern period (Lopes et al. 2016, who cite only English translations of the ancient sources). This bird is depicted in Pompeian wall paintings at least nine times, sometimes in the act of feeding (as in Figs. 3-4), and at least once at Herculaneum. They are also represented on mosaics throughout the Roman Empire, often depicted in cages and in other captive environments. In the wild they are omnivores and feed on a variety of plants, small aquatic creatures, and insects, including bees. They are portrayed on wall paintings in Pompeii eating fruits and *fruits de mer*, dietary choices for these birds in captivity that are confirmed in the *Histoire Naturelle* of Buffon in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Aelian (*de nat. anim.* 3.42) asserts that the purple gallinule is not eaten by humans and cites its presence as a sacred bird in temples, which also suggests a possible connection to divination rites.

If my identification is correct, the relationship between *Porphyrio Porphyrio* and humans in Italy can be pushed back by four centuries. This would make the association roughly contemporary with Aristotle (*Hist. Anim.* II.509a.10), who comments on the bird’s long neck and unusual method of drinking in gulps, and how it grasps its food in its claw and breaks it into small bits before bringing it to its mouth, traits also mentioned by Pliny (*NH* 10.129). Drinking in gulps and breaking food into bits that fall to the ground no doubt produces distinctive sounds. This unusual trait is reminiscent of the Roman focus on the sound and eager motion of the feed-



Fig. 4. Purple gallinule about to feed on fruits that Jashemski identifies as pears. House of Polybius, Pompeii.

ing chickens when taking the auspices. The purple gallinule feeding on a pomegranate (Fig. 3) is scattering bits that fall to the ground from its mouth, one of the hallmark traits in the observation of chickens (Fest. s.v. *puls*, 285 Lindsay).

This gemstone provides precious evidence that the Etruscan practice of divining from the purple swamp hen or gallinule, a chicken-like wild water bird with unusual eating habits, preceded the Roman rite that eventually made exclusive use of the smaller, more portable, and tastier domesticated chicken. And if you were wondering, Varro (*RR* 3.3.5) informs us, as Jerzy Linderski recently reminded me, that the Roman augurs had chicken farms where they produced the birds they needed. The use of a wild bird as depicted on this gemstone not only accords with Cicero’s assertion about the use of wild birds for taking the auspices in earlier times (Cicero *Div.* 2.73), but also suggests the Etruscan origin of the Roman *tripudium*. ”

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## Mausoleum of Augustus will reopen to the public in March

by Stacey Liberatore, *Daily Mail*

A massive mausoleum built in 28 BC for Rome’s first emperor Augustus has been restored and is set to open to the public next year. Towering above Rome’s historic center, the ancient tomb was once used as a military look-out point and hosted the lavish parties of the Roman dynasty. The structure was also transformed into a hanging garden and then an auditorium for bull-fighting and firework displays. At the start of the last century, it became a huge theater for concerts and operas before the Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini ordered the dismantling of it as he sought to restore the landmarks of ancient Rome. The site fell into disrepair over the years, trees grew from the walls and rubbish filled the pathways. It was finally shut down 14 years ago when it became unsafe for visitors. For about three years, city officials have been clearing the overgrown vegetation and securing the structure, all of which will cost \$12.25 million.



Newly restored tomb and inner burial chamber.

“This is an historic moment,” Rome Mayor Virginia Raggi told reporters. She said the site would open to tourists on March 1, with entrance free for all until April

21, the day of the city’s founding in 753 BC. “To reopen a monument like this is a signal of hope as we look with good faith towards the future despite the uncertainties of the pandemic,” Raggi said.

Augustus had the mausoleum built for himself and the imperial family, and it also housed the bones and ashes of Emperors Vespasian, Nero and Tiberius. He was 35 when he had the mausoleum built, shortly after his victory in the naval Battle of Actium. The circular structure measures 295 feet in diameter and stands 137 feet high.

At the center of the structure are chambers that once held urns of the Imperial family. However, the inner most area of the mausoleum is believed to have been where the emperor’s remains were stored. The chambers were reached by a narrow corridor that started at the entrance through two large pink granite pillars, which now stand in the Piazza dell’Esquilino and at the Quirinal fountain. The original marble that adorned Augustus’ tomb was destroyed centuries ago and a statue that once towered over the tomb has long vanished, but tourists will get the chance to experience the ancient relics in virtual reality tours.

# News From The Field

## Norchia: Who is the “monster” of the Lattanzi tomb?

by Benjamin Houal and Vincent Jolivet

Already known and visited during the first half of the 19th century, the tomb excavated in 1852 by the doctor Mariano Lattanzi yielded five sarcophagi depicting the deceased at the banquet, with inscriptions showing that it belonged to the aristocratic *Churcle* family. It is one of the largest Etruscan rock tombs, directly comparable to the one excavated in recent years in Grotte Scalina, near Viterbo (Fig. 1). To the left of the banquetting hall (Fig. 2), which had four beds, an imposing sculpture carved out of the tufa cliff was first interpreted as a sphinx, then as a lion, or even as a griffin. None of these identifications was truly convincing, so in 1935 Augusto Gargana simply referred to it as a “monster.” In 2020, the resumption of work on this tomb, with the agreement of the Italian armed forces of the Poligono Militare in Monteromano, within which it is located, made it possible to take up this question again. The cleaning of the sculpture revealed that its left hind leg, the only one preserved, ended in a hoof, which made it possible to exclude all the hypotheses so far formulated. It showed that the animal in question was a bovid.

In spite of the fragmentary nature of the sculpture, whose surface is very eroded in places, a three-dimensional survey and study (Figs. 3-5) have led to a solution that seems to be the only acceptable one: it is a life-size representation of the abduction of Europa by Zeus disguised as a bull, or more specifically, the moment when the Phoenician princess sets foot on the soil of Crete.



Fig. 6. Campanian krater by Astreas, depicting Europa riding a bull.

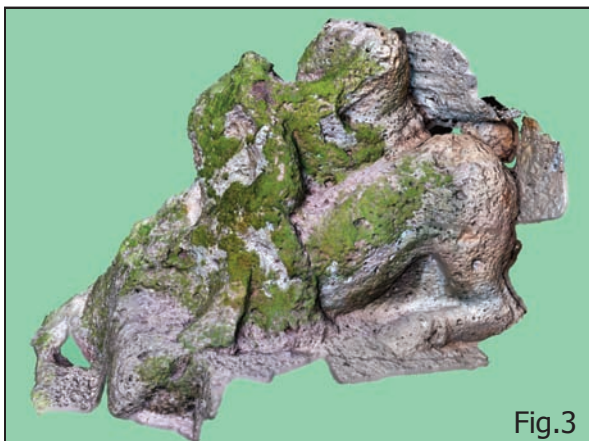


Fig.3



Fig. 2. Sculpture carved from tufa cliff, *in situ*.



Fig. 1. (above) Lattanzi Tomb, Grotte Scalina, 3-D reconstruction.

Fig. 7. (below) Tarquinian mirror depicting Europa riding a ram.



Figs. 3-5. Photogrammetric scan, elaboration of the 3-D model, and the final virtual reconstruction.

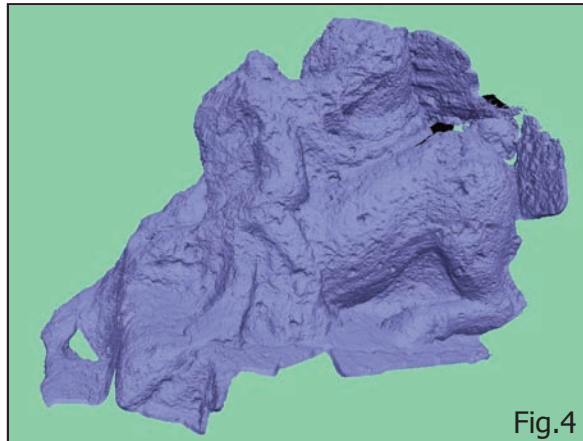


Fig.4



Fig.5

The tufa was of course stuccoed and painted, but no trace of its covering has been preserved. In accordance with the numerous representations of the scene in the Greek world, particularly a famous Campanian crater by Astreas (Fig. 6), Europa was represented wrapped in veils, which here surround a rounded object placed on the bull's rump. This can only be the *omphalos*, the sacred stone of Zeus, symbol of his universal power, which underlined the meaning of the scene, and could be the object of libations during funeral banquets.

This exceptional representation of a myth known, around the same period, on a mirror from Tarquinia (Fig. 7; where the princess rides a ram), can be easily explained in a funerary context. According to the ancient sources, the union of Zeus and Europa gave birth to two of the three judges of the Underworld, who were called upon to decide the fate of the dead: Minos and Rhadamanthus. The third one, Aeacus, was himself the son of Zeus and the nymph Aegina. By paying them homage in this way, or even by having them present at funeral ceremonies such as at Grotte Scalina, where their busts were probably installed in the three niches of the banquetting hall, the members of the *Churcle* family intended to facilitate the passage of their deceased into a world where they would be promised an eternal banquet.

Just as the architecture of the tomb is inspired by that of the Macedonian palaces, the choice of the myth of Europa refers to a theme particularly dear to the Macedonian elite. This is recently illustrated by the discovery of a mosaic depicting it in one of the most important rooms of the Palace at Vergina.



Fig. 1. Piana del Lago on shore of Lake Bolsena.

## New Researches on the Sanctuary of Piana del Lago (Montefiascone, VT)

by Vincent Jolivet, Edwige Lovergne, and Martin Jailliet

This year, a new excavation project started in the Etruscan sanctuary of Piana del Lago (Montefiascone, Viterbo, Lazio), on the shore of Lake Bolsena (Fig. 1). This complex, discovered in 1987 during construction work on the lake's sewage treatment plant, was excavated by the Superintendency of Southern Etruria in 1988, and between 2001 and 2005, and established the presence of a place of worship, considered a "small rural sanctuary." Fifteen years after the last excavation campaign, the field work was resumed on the site.

### The site

Cleared since the beginning over an area of 1300 square meters (Fig. 2) the sanctuary of Piana del Lago, about 30 m. from the southern shore of Lake Bolsena, west of Montefiascone, includes two small temples (A and D), a 60 m.-long temenos wall (B), a portico (C), and one altar (E). The 2020 campaign (July 13-August 21) realized with a team of about 15 archeologists, most of them students, focused on the central part of the sanctuary (Fig. 3). The temenos wall, preserved about 1 m. high, was built using a mixed technique known as checkerboard (*a scacchiera*): squared blocks of tuff alternating with irregular rubble of volcanic rock. It is framed by a L-shaped portico, which seems, so far, to be the first construction in this area. Temple A, (Fig. 4)

Fig. 3. Students excavating the sanctuary.

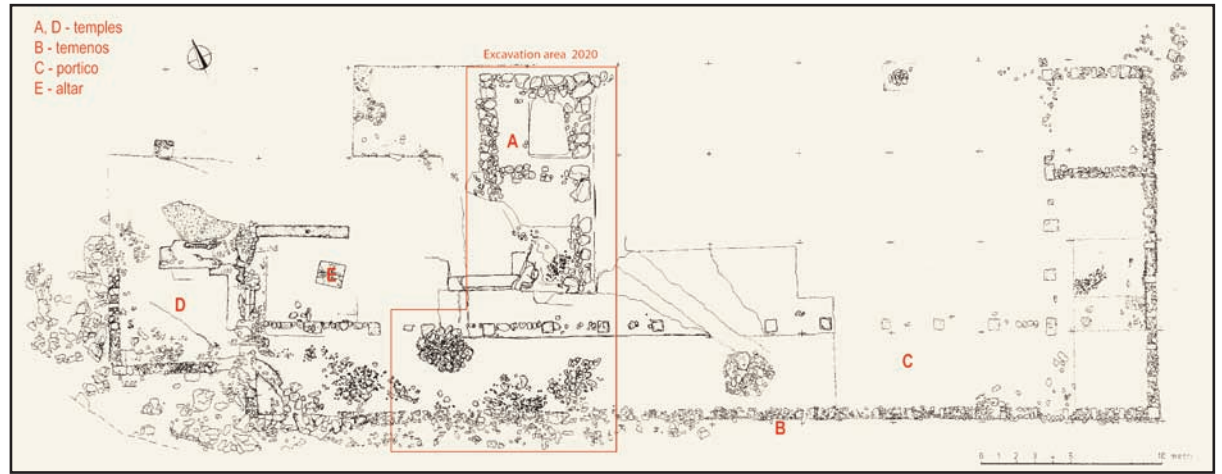


Fig. 2. Plan of the sanctuary of Piana del Lago.

the only one excavated during this campaign, is a small building (12 x 6 m) oriented north-south, preserved only at the foundation level, which is made of large irregular blocks of volcanic magmatic rock. Its construction during the first half of the 2nd century, or even later, is well-established by the coins found in its foundation levels. At that time, this area had long been under Roman rule (*Tarchna* was conquered in 280, *Velzna* in 264 BC), but it seems clear that the sanctuary was founded earlier, at the latest during the 4th c. BC.

### The archaeological evidence

More than 250 boxes of material, still to be studied, had been collected during the first excavation campaigns. The 2020 excavation has also brought to light a large amount of artifacts. Various sherds of impasto attest to its already well-documented Villanovan presence, but the main part of the material dates back to the 3rd-2nd c. BC. The ceramics, mostly miniature and fragmentary, apart from small *olpai* and *ollae* found intact and in an upright position, consist mainly of black-glazed ware and common pottery. The rest of the material consists of 200 fragments of anatomical ex-votos (especially head and foot parts) and terracotta statuettes, six small votive bronzes (Fig. 5) — mainly praying figurines of the 3rd and 2nd c. BC — architectural fragments, and 14 bronze Republican coins. The foundation period of the sanctuary, between the 6th and 4th c. BC, remains so far hardly documented.

### To whom was the sanctuary dedicated?

Without inscriptions, the identification of one or more deities to whom the sanctuary was dedicated remains, so far, impossible. Only the abundance of anatomical ex-votos makes it possible to raise the classical hypothesis of a healing sanctuary. But the results of the 2020 campaign are still too limited to claim a clear identification, even if the terracottas — two antefixes (Fig. 6) with the head of Ceres (?) and Athena — as well as some artifacts (doll's leg, spindle whorl, loom weights) seem to suggest a feminine cult.

### Research perspectives

Geophysical (both magnetic and electrical) surveys will be necessary to map the subsoil around the sanctuary and to highlight potential structures and/or associated habitat in the fields to the west, north and east of the sanctuary. The prosecution of excavations in the western sector, where large fragments of life-size terracotta statues have been found, will also constitute a priv-

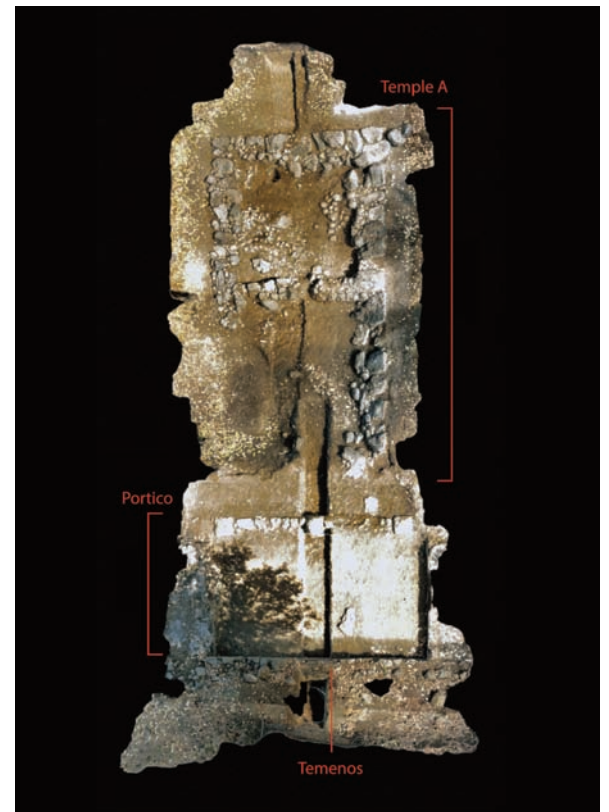


Fig. 4. Orthophoto of the temple in the sanctuary. The digging of two perpendicular trenches will also give a complete stratigraphic profile, allowing a better definition of the chronological phases of the sanctuary.

Fig. 5. Bronze votive figurine.  
Fig. 6. Terracotta antefix in process of excavation.





Fig. 2. Aerial view of the Western sector of the Monte Abatone necropolis.

## New Excavations at the Monte Abatone Necropolis, Cerveteri

by M. Bentz, A. Coen, F. Gilotta, M. Micozzi

The months of September 2018 and 2019 saw the first excavation campaigns at the Monte Abatone necropolis, south of the plateau of the ancient city of Caere. The work was carried out as part of a joint project by the Universities of Campania “Luigi Vanvitelli,” Tuscia and Bonn, along with the Superintendency for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for the metropolitan area of Rome, the province of Viterbo and Southern Etruria (Fig.1).

The investigations involved an area of 60 sq. m. in the western sector of the necropolis (Fig. 2), near the Tumulo Campana, where both the archaeological prospecting carried out by S. Piro (CNR, ITABC) and the IGM frames and satellite images show the presence of tombs unidentified during the investigations performed on the plateau by the Lerici Foundation between 1956 and 1961.

During the new excavations, tombs # 73 and 83, discovered by the Lerici excavation, were again brought to light, and five new ones were identified and numbered, according to the Lerici numeration, from # 642 to 646 (Fig. 3). More importantly, however, for the first time the area outside the tombs was investigated, the mounds and dromoi of the chamber tombs, as well as shaft tombs and quarry areas were uncovered. For the first time, too, for a restricted area, it is possible to reconstruct the ancient funerary landscape of the necropolis, with examples of all the tomb typologies in use at Caere between the end of the 8th and first half of the 6th centuries B.C.E.

Tomb #83 (Fig. 3), at the center of the investigated area, is of the “semi-constructed” type; dating from the Early Orientalizing period, it is among the most ancient in the necropolis. The excavation made it possible to complete the rather summary Lerici plan, both with regard to internal space, and the presence of a mound of more than 12 metres, with a wide dromos, forming a sort of wider access space to the tomb.

To the same architectural typology belongs tomb #645 (Figs. 3-5), on the south-west boundary of the ex-

cavation, including a mound of little more than 10 m. in diameter. Inside are two beds of different length united by a bench on the entrance side. The materials probably belonged to one (or two) female depositions of the late Orientalizing period; these include several Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian unguentaria, bucheri and several instruments for weaving (six spools, five spindle whorls), as well as objects of personal adornment, including four glass-paste pearls, fibulae and one brooch.

Towards the northern sector of the dig, a smaller

Fig. 3. Five new tombs (#642-646) and two tombs excavated by Lerici Foundation (#73, 83.)

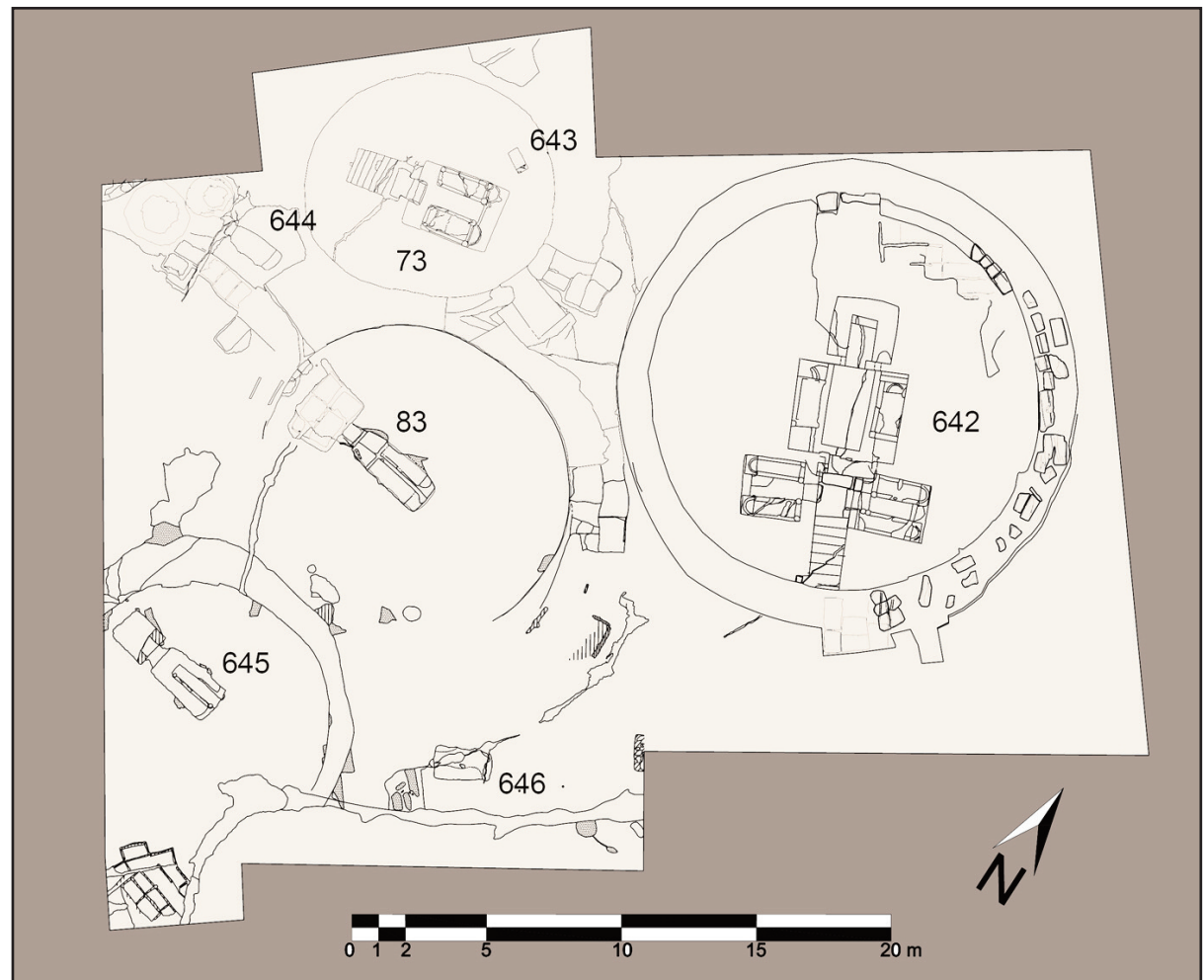


Fig. 4. Martin Bentz, front right (University of Bonn) with some colleagues.

mound (little more than 9 m. in diameter) covers tomb #73 (Fig. 3), with a hypogeal chamber (Prayon B2 type), datable between the second quarter and the middle of the 7th century. In the upper part of the mound, accessible by a ramp diametrically opposite the entrance, was discovered the small shaft tomb #643 (0.90 x 0.40 m.) (Fig. 6), probably belonging to a little girl. The grave goods include products imported from Corinth that date the deposition to shortly after the mid-7th c., and bear witness to the rank of the deceased child.

Immediately to the south-west of #73, shaft tomb #644 (Fig. 3) was identified with its small entrance. The



Fig. 5. Tomb #645.

numerous highly fragmentary and scattered materials discovered indicate a late Orientalizing deposition. Another shaft tomb, #646, came to light in the southernmost area of the excavation (Fig. 3).

Finally, the last hypogeal tomb, #642, of the area investigated (Figs. 3, 7) dates to between the end of the 7th and beginning of the 6th c.; this tomb was not excavated by the Lerici Foundation. Its mound is bigger (diam. ca. 14.50 m) and its layout largely matches Prayon type C2, with two coaxial and two lateral chambers giving on to the dromos; the central chamber is provided with a transversal columen, an element customary in subsequent tombs of similar typology with a “real” atrium. The remains of the grave goods, conspicuous in spite of probably repeated violations by grave robbers, allow them to be given a chronological range from the end of the 7th to the first half of the 6th c. (SOS amphora, Ionian cups, Ionian bucchero alabastron, Corinthian and Etrusco-corinthian oinochoe and unguentaria, olla and pithos in Caeretan red impasto with metope decoration, a considerable set of bucchero vases).

Only after restoration and complete study of the materials can any analysis be fine-tuned to provide the chronological relations among the tombs. Even at this stage of analysis, however, we can certainly say that the possibility of evaluating for the first time the various external types of architecture and the physical relationship of these tombs has totally changed our perception of the Monte Abatone necropolis.

The development model that can be inferred from the excavation is very close to Linington’s hypothesis on the Orientalizing phases of the Laghetto. In this case, too, the space between the more ancient semi-constructed tombs is used for the first hypogeal chamber tombs, which often, like tomb #73, have smaller and irregularly shaped mounds so as to respect pre-existing



Fig. 7. Tomb #642.

ones. Amongst the chamber tombs, lastly, shaft tombs have been dug, frequently destined for infants. Only at the end of the 7th c., when the space between the oldest mounds had all been utilized, does there appear to be a trend to expand towards the still-free surrounding area, and to construct funerary monuments, often with an orientation that differs from the previous ones, and no longer characterized solely by astronomical bearings.

In short, developments were continuous, with constant renewal but without any actual interruption or shift either topographically or chronologically. This would suggest uninterrupted management of the area by the same group, probably a social-family group that systematically continued to occupy a well-defined space, within which they even found construction material for the tombs, as shown by the numerous quarry areas uncovered by the excavation.

This aspect will naturally be verified at Monte Abatone in continuing the research, albeit, as we may imagine, with great difficulty in view of the available documentation and the impossibility of any extensive rechecking of the excavation area, but with the hope that these new acquisitions can guide us in a new way of re-reading the whole context.

Fig. 1. Excavation team 2019. Leaders Marina Micozzi (University of Tuscia), pink shirt. To her left, Alessandra Coen and further left, Ferdinando Gilotta (both Università della Campania). (See \* below).



Fig. 6. Tomb #643.

**For further reading:**

- A. Coen, F. Gilotta, M. Micozzi, *Continuità e discontinuità delle aristocrazie a Cerveteri in età orientalizzante. La documentazione della necropoli di Monte Abatone*, in *Annali Faina* 27, 2020, pp. 655-678.
- M. Bentz, A. Coen, F. Gilotta, M. Micozzi, *I nuovi scavi nella necropoli di Monte Abatone - Cerveteri*, in *Gli Etruschi e gli altri popoli dell'Italia centrale tra storia, cultura materiale e modelli di auto rappresentazione. Scritti in onore di Gilda Bartoloni in occasione del suo 75° compleanno* (Mediterranea suppl.), in print
- D. Beck, M. Bentz, F. Birkner, Ch. Briesack, V. Carafa, A. Coen, F. Galiffa, F. Gilotta, L. Lucchetti, M. Micozzi, C. Rizzo, *Die Monte Abatone - Nekropole von Cerveteri, Vorbericht zur Grabungskampagne 2019*, in *Kuba*, in print.



## Sirolo (AN): Burial of a Picene warrior

by Stefano Finocchi

A new noble tomb from the Picene period was found in Sirolo (AN) during recent preventive archaeology investigations carried out by the Superintendency of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of the Marche, in agreement with the municipal administration. (Fig. A).

The burial was discovered in an area not far from the necropolis "dei Pini" (photo above) and from the so-called Tomb of the Queen, which still represents the most spectacular funerary complex of ancient Numana, as well as one of the richest tombs in all of Italian and European protohistory (last decades of the 6th c. BC). Its contiguity and adjacency to the current inhabited area of Sirolo mean that the places of archaeological interest of Numana Picena affect both municipal territories.

The settlement of Numana is located on the coast, south of Monte Conero (AN), in central Piceno. The first Picene settlements date back to the end of the 9th c. BC. with the presence of cremation tombs, whose grave goods bear witness to strong relationships with the Villanovan culture and with the opposite Adriatic coast. From the mid-6th c. Numana became an emporium so active and structured that it was, together with Spina and Adria, the main Adriatic port for the redistribution of Attic pottery.

The data presented here can be useful for an initial classification, and will require further analysis and a systematic study of the finds that we hope will be carried out in a short time.

The tomb is an inhumation burial from circa the second half of the 6th c. BC. It contains a warrior armed with his helmet, spear, long sword, dagger (with its scabbard) and axe. These are buried together with a rich



Fig.C



Fig. 1

assortment of ceramic and bronze grave goods, in addition to the characteristic fibulae (in bronze, amber and bone) placed on his chest (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2).

The tomb is a rectangular pit; the deceased is placed in a crouched position on his right side with his arms folded and the ample accompanying finds placed beyond his feet, where most of the ceramic finds are grouped. The ritual practiced is the same attested in other Numanic warrior burials from both the high Archaic age (580-520 BC), and the early 5th c. BC. Starting from the end of the 6th c. to beginning of the 5th c. there is a change in the funeral ritual: there are some



Fig.3



Fig. A

tombs in which the deceased assumes a semi-extended position and other numerous cases of deposition with supine skeletons.

The helmet, for its shape and decoration with stylized horns, is attributable to the Montelparo variant of the classification of M. Egg (M. Egg, *Italische Helme*, I-II, Mainz, 1986). (Fig. B, complete example in the Ancona Museum) The form, also known in specialist literature as "ram" or "with horns and animal ears," is characteristic of the southern Picene region in the first half of the 6th c. The long sword is of the scimitar type (*machaira*) and is accompanied by a dagger, inserted in its scabbard, probably of the Stamen Group; the latter is provided with a chain and suspension plate (Fig. 3). The *machaira* type grew more common from the Picene IV B phase (about 520-470). It is characterized by a single-edged curved blade and a flat end with a rectangular hole for the handle.

The grave goods placed at the western edge of the pit are completed by an axe and an iron spearhead with a cannon handle (Fig. 2). The presence of at least two skewers, one placed at the eastern edge of the pit, and some other iron tools (*creagra*) for cooking meat, are important references for the practice of the banquet.

Among the personal accoutrements are bronze fibulae, both of the "pre-Certosa" type and those with a leech-shaped arch decorated with parallel lines and a long stirrup ending with a vase-shaped button, whose most immediate comparisons refer to north-western Italy, in the Golasecca area (Fig. 4). These fibulae increase the number of the few examples of North-Italic



Fig.4





Fig. B

and Hallstatt origin (Fig.C) known in Numana from burials in the “Quagliotti” necropolis, from tomb 54 in the necropolis of Montalbano and from the Tomb of the Queen. These are also flanked by arched fibulae covered with two trapezoidal elements of bone with an amber element in the center, already known from the Tomb of the Queen.

From the arrangement of some fibulae placed under his skull and on his chest, it is possible to hypothesize that the deceased was wrapped in a shroud and then placed at the bottom of the pit (or perhaps inside a chest) above a layer of gravel, probably marine: a ritual that is not exclusive to the Conero area but which characterizes the Picene era from the very beginning. On the other hand, the fibulae concentrated below his chest (Golasecian specimens and fibulae with arches covered in bone and amber), bring to mind ornamental elements originally attached to organic material, probably leather. These may call to mind a cardiophilax to be considered a ceremonial parade object, not a defensive weapon.

The warrior’s prestigious status is evidenced by some particular bronze objects. A Rhodian-type “lobed” oinochoe, with a ribbon handle divided into four longitudinal grooves with a palmette at its lower attachment, datable to the first half of the 6th c. BC, can be attributed to Greek or Etruscan production. It is placed in a prominent position near the head of the deceased (Fig. 5). The oinochoe, recognizable from its pyriform body and truncated cone foot, is to be compared with specimens from Sirolo-Numana, Fabriano, Pitino di San Sev-



Fig.7



Fig. 2

erino and Campovalano.

In the accompanying goods, placed beyond the feet of the deceased, there is also a bronze corded cista (Fig. 6), its cylindrical body decorated with horizontal and parallel cords and a pair of movable handles; it is datable to the 2nd half of the 6th c. BC. In addition, separate from the other material and in contact with the wall of the pit, an object, which more than all the others represents the status of the personage, was placed as the last object: a *diphros*, a folding stool composed of thin iron rods terminating with bronze studs, which supported the original seat surface (Figs. 7-8). Of the *diphros* were found the two tubular iron hinges (length 8.5 cm. and 1.5 in diameter), with a bronze stud termination, which



Fig.5



Fig.6

hinged the wooden legs. The rods that framed and fixed the seat surface, spaced 17 cm. apart, are made of iron (48 cm. long and 2 cm. wide) and retain the numerous iron nails (1.5 cm. high) for attaching the seat, which we can imagine would have been in fabric or leather. These rods ended with bronze studs, like those of the hinges, and were inserted into a still-preserved disc of bone or ivory, 3 cm. in diameter. On the bottom of the pit, in the space between the two long rods and on axis with the hinge, traces of the decay of one the arched wooden legs were detected.

Originally our specimen must have resembled the folded *sella curulis*, held by a slave, intended for the personage (of power) depicted with a purple toga on a wall in the tomb of the Auguri in Tarquinia (530-520 BC). The *diphros* present in the funerary contexts of the first half of the 5th c. of southern Etruria, the Agro Falisco and the Etruria of the Po (today there are about twenty) were buried as symbols of power: *sellae curules*, symbols of magistracy. Even if at the current state of research it is difficult to distinguish with certainty between an exclusive political role for our individual and broader references to the Homeric epic; the *diphros* of Numana ranks among the first attestations of this important object ever recorded in the Picene region and in Italy. The last thing to consider concerns the position of our *diphros*: it was deposited overturned and folded in the tomb, as if to stress its loss of function.

**Editors note: see the Velletri plaque on the cover depicting important magistrates seated on the *diphros*.**



Fig.8

## News from the Faliscans: giving voice to their “capital” city, Falerii

by Maria Cristina Biella,  
Sapienza Università di Roma

Falerii (Civita Castellana, VT), the main city of the ancient Faliscans (Fig. 1), is undoubtedly one of the most thoroughly investigated pre-Roman cities. Large scale excavations began in the last decades of the 19thc., initially focussed on the necropoleis and subsequently in the area of the ancient city.

In relation to the city itself, the focus has now been shifted to the inhabited area, which spread across two hills: a wider one, on which the town of Civita Castellana has developed since the Middle Ages and the hill of Vignale (Fig. 1). The ongoing research project, co-



Fig. 3. Vignale, Ortophotograph (elab. F. Materazzi).

ordinated by Maria Cristina Biella and Maria Anna De Lucia Brolli, is divided into two parts: the first is a complete analysis of the old excavations carried out in the period 1873-2010 in the urban area, while the second part is concerned with the investigation of the Vignale hill.

In regard to the first part, most of the old excavations were carried out as part of so-called preventive archaeology and brought to light relevant parts of the ancient city (traces of artisanal workshops and productive areas (Fig. 2), sacred and domestic contexts, sections of the road and drainage systems, ...). The documents and the materials found during these interventions are currently scattered across several Italian archives and museum depots. Over the last 15 years, the painstaking task of collation between the two sets of data has been carried out. These contexts are particularly significant because they give to us information about the Civita Castellana plateau, on which the continuity of settlement from an-

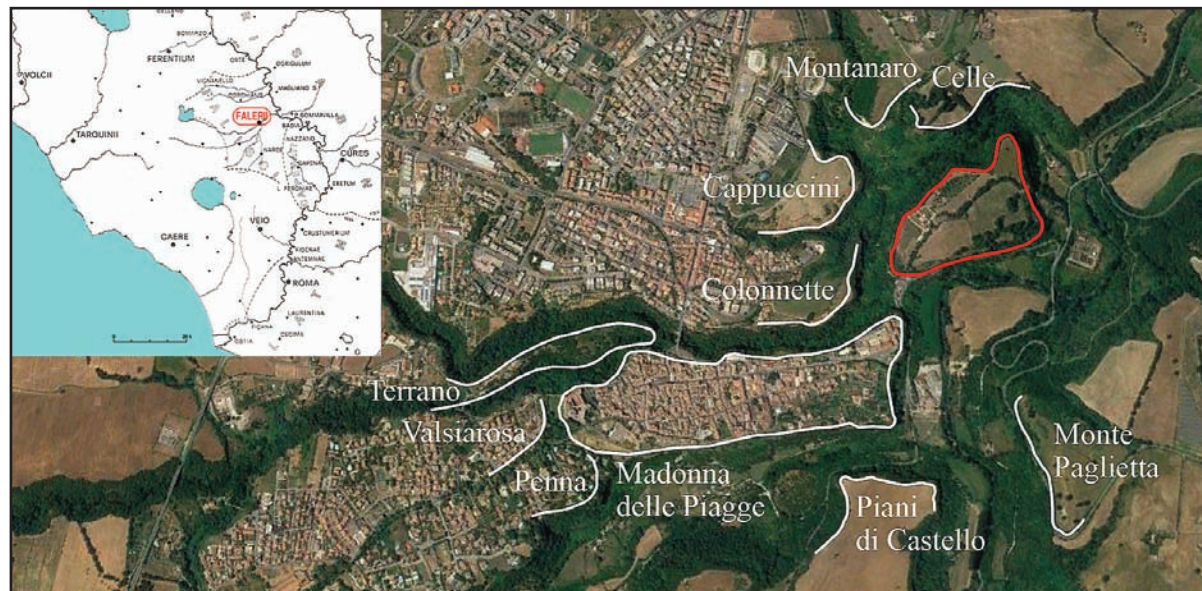


Fig. 1. The city of Falerii, Vignale hill outlined in red (elab. M.C. Biella).

tiquity onwards would otherwise prevent the understanding of the ancient city.

The part of the city located on the Vignale hill, on the other hand, has remained largely abandoned since antiquity (Fig. 3). Overlooking Mount Soratte, the Vignale is still free from the myriad of buildings that sprang up in modern times on the Civita Castellana plateau and the remains of two monumental cisterns, in the area of one of the most important sanctuaries in the city sacred to Apollo, can still be seen there (Fig. 4). Vignale is therefore an ideal field of research.

After some minor investigations of the end of the 19th c. by Raniero Mengarelli, in part still unpublished, from the 1970s onwards topographical surveys and geophysical prospection have been carried out on the hill, with the most recent campaigns conducted by the British School at Rome.

In the months of May and November 2020 a complete remote sensing UAV multispectral and thermal survey of the hill was carried out by Filippo Materazzi, and a new field campaign, was carried out adopting the same 30x30 m. grid previously used during the 2000-01 campaign by the British equipe. The material found

Fig. 2. Civita Castellana plateau, Palazzo Feroldi Antonisi de Rosa. Excavation 1992, elements of potters' workshops (a-c firing supports, d-e black gloss testers) (elab. M.C. Biella).

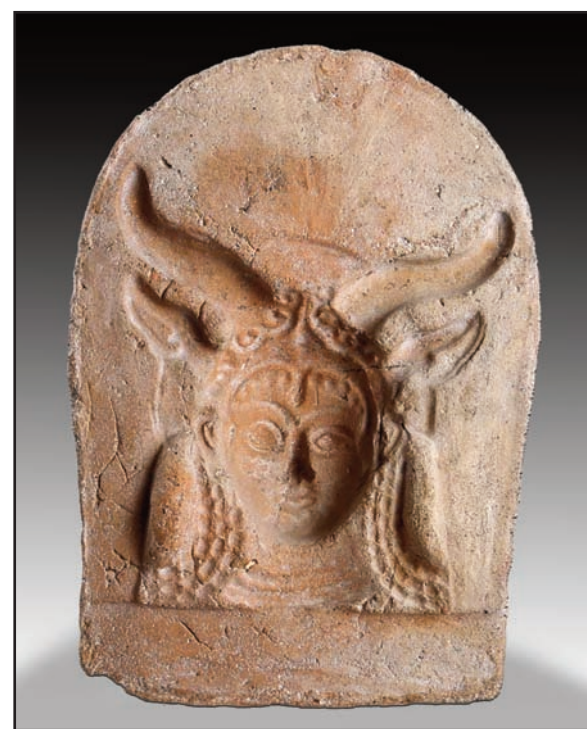
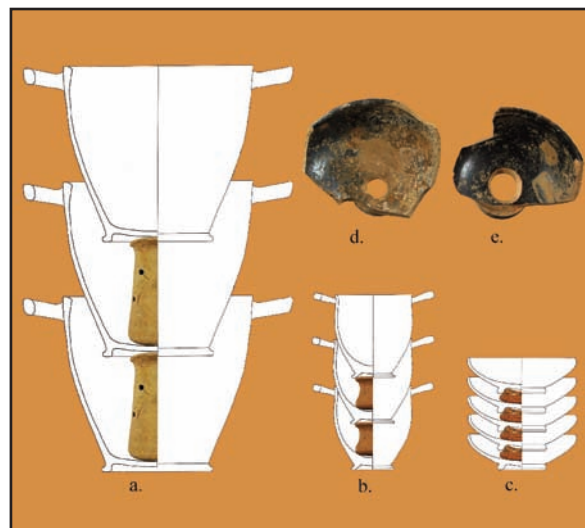


Fig. 4. Vignale, Northern cistern, Juno Sospita, antefix mould (photo Villa Giulia Photo Archive).

on that occasion, which had only been preliminarily analysed, has also been fully reconsidered and compared with the new artifacts found in the 2020 survey. Together they fully confirm the hypothesis that the area was occupied from at least the late Bronze Age. The considerable quantity of architectural revetments, alongside pottery shards, makes it possible to identify a considerable 8th - 6th c. BC phase, while the materials that can be dated to the late Archaic period are currently less numerous on this part of the hill.

Such observations open up new research perspectives, making it possible to speculate about the location of housing structures in the western part of the plateau. Further investigations of the area will be carried out in the near future, in order to, on the one hand, understand the layout of this sector of the pre-Roman city throughout the centuries and, on the other hand, understand its relationship with the already known monumental sacred area on the eastern part of the plateau.



## Unexpected pre-Roman discoveries at Poggio Gramignano (Lugnano in Teverina, Umbria)

by David Pickel, Roberto Montagnetti,  
and David Soren

The Roman villa at Poggio Gramignano (Lugnano in Teverina, Umbria) is most well-known for the late antique (ca. 450 CE) infant and child cemetery that was discovered within its ruin during excavations conducted between 1987 and 1994 (Soren and Soren 1999). Renewed excavation, however, has brought to light new and exciting evidence of this site's pre-Roman history.

Begun in 2016, the Villa Romana di Poggio Gramignano Archaeological Project picks up where the first excavations left off. Led by David Soren of the University of Arizona and conducted in collaboration with the Soprintendenza Archeologia dell'Umbria and the Comune di Lugnano in Teverina, the project's principal goal has been to excavate the cemetery space further in order to study the link between these infant and child deaths and infectious diseases such as malaria. So far, 59 individuals have been uncovered, ranging in age from prenatal to 8-10 years old (Pickel *et al.* 2017; Montagnetti *et al.* 2020; Pickel *et al.* forthcoming) (Fig. 1).

During the 2019 field season, an unexpected discovery was made at the cemetery's northern limit: a large circular pit (top d., 2.7 m; bottom d., 2 m; depth, 2.94 m) that had been cut into the thick Pleistocene era clay that underlies Gramignano hill (Fig. 2). Found deposited within this pit were numerous sherds of impasto and possibly bucheroid pottery, as well as many decomposing brick fragments, large charcoal pieces, three spindle whorls (Fig. 3 enlarged), some faunal remains (pig and sheep/goat), and one unidentified metal object, possibly a fibula pin. Study of these artifacts is ongoing, but it is clear that they reflect pre-Roman forms. Preliminary analysis suggests an Archaic period date. Excavation in this area is helping to understand the deposit's relationship with the villa structure.

The Poggio Gramignano villa was constructed during the last quarter of the 1st century BCE. While only a portion of the villa has been uncovered, survey makes clear that it once spanned the entirety of Gramignano hill (2.46 ha). Excavation has so far revealed the villa's southwestern corner; it comprises some luxurious spaces and a number of walls running SE-NW, likely built to buttress the villa structures terraced above. Some of these walls later formed partitions between a number of west-facing subterranean rooms with barrel-vaulted ceilings. (It is within these subterranean rooms where most of the infants and children were deposited, specifically rooms 11, 12, and 17.) One of these walls (Wall AA) bisects the pre-Roman deposit.

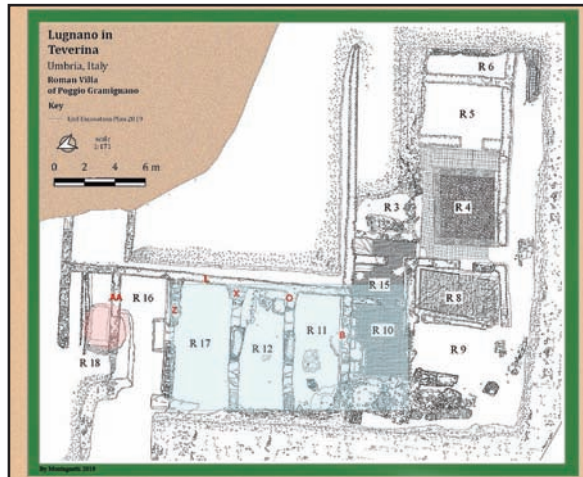


Fig. 1. Plan of the Poggio Gramignano villa excavations, ca. 2019. The pre-Roman deposit is in red.



Fig. 2. The pre-Roman deposit, bisected by Wall AA, after excavation.



Fig. 3. Spindle whorl. Fig. 4. The larger impasto and bucheroid sherds *in situ* deposited just outside of the pre-Roman cut and fill. Fig. 5. The bucheroid vessel and associated sherds in the lab.



Fig. 7. Interior of a barrel-vaulted hypogean tomb. (Photo by Gianluca Belei 2019.)

Many pre-Roman sherds from the same vessel were found on opposite sides of Wall AA. Most of these artifacts were found *in situ*, in compacted heavy clay. Some of the largest pre-Roman ceramic sherds, however, were found just outside of the pit's fill (Fig. 4). A group of these sherds belong to a large bucheroid vessel of some kind, perhaps a cooking olla. This vessel



Fig. 6. Cadastral map showing the locations of Poggio Gramignano and the Fossa del Molinaccio.

was decorated with vertical ribbing and stamped concentric circles (Fig. 5). The deposition of these sherds suggests careful placement, as many remained articulated well enough to reveal a nearly intact upturned vessel. Also, many smaller sherds similar to this bucheroid vessel were found within the pit's fill; this placement suggests that the vessel had formerly been deposited within the pit. Thus, it is likely that these larger sherds (perhaps once a nearly intact vessel) were discovered at the time of Wall AA's construction, after having been removed from the wall's founding trench, and were re-deposited nearby by the builders.

Just northwest of this pit was found an interesting ovoid deposit of dark-red clay with a pinkish aura. This deposit was found to contain numerous dolia sherds, all showing signs of burning. It is likely that this was a fire event of some kind that occurred during or soon after Wall AA's construction.

Another interesting aspect of the relationship between Wall AA and this pre-Roman deposit is the fact that in the space where they interface Wall AA was here founded much deeper than in other sections of its span. This seems a purposeful choice by the builders, who, after encountering the deposit, appear to have decided to found this section at a lower elevation, laying it into the thicker clay further below. In this way, Wall AA would have more structural integrity. After extending beyond the limit of the pre-Roman deposit, Wall AA's foundation returns to a level equal to its southeastern extent.

At the moment, little is known of the pre-Roman landscape of Lugnano in Teverina, particularly when compared to those better studied Faliscan, Etruscan, and Umbrian landscapes nearby at Civita Castellana, Orvieto, and Terni. Nevertheless, cursory survey in the territory has recently revealed a possible necropolis near Poggio Gramignano. Four hypogean barrel-vaulted tombs have been found in the Fossa del Molinaccio, around 600 meters north of Gramignano hill (Fig. 6). Most likely these tombs were originally painted inside, as evidenced by traces of color on the tomb walls (Fig. 7). Unfortunately, all have been looted, with two also having been reused to stable animals during the modern era. These new discoveries make clear that the territory of Lugnano in Teverina may yet reveal an archaeologically rich pre-Roman landscape, perhaps with Poggio Gramignano and Fossa del Molinaccio once being interrelated "cities of the living and of the dead," reflecting the typical scheme of pre-Roman settlements.

## A Great Interethnic Sanctuary: Lucus Feroniae

by M. Gilda Benedettini  
and Anna Maria Moretti Sgubini

The sanctuary dedicated to Feronia, established in the territory of Capena near the right bank of the Tiber, was famed in antiquity (Fig. 1). Known from ancient sources and long sought after by historians and topographers since the 19th century, Lucus Feroniae was identified in 1952 next to the forum of the Colonia Iulia Felix Lucus Feroniae, near the modern Via Tiberina, about 18 km north of Rome (Fig. 2). From the very first excavations, which included the extensive sacred area along with the colonial settlement, the importance and richness of the ancient place of worship were evident, and indicate clearly why the site was looted by Hannibal in 211 BCE during the Second Punic War.

After those first excavations, which remained essentially unpublished, systematic research was conducted between 2000 and 2010. It brought to light the remains of an imposing building erected at the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 2nd c., and in any case after 208 BCE (Fig. 3). Connected to the foundation of this building, sacred preparations have been identified that marked significant moments related to the consecration of the chosen space and the initial phases of construction of the building.

Of particular importance is the discovery of a foundation deposit that has shed light on the oldest phases of human presence in the sacred area. Metal gifts, such as figurines, instrumenta, ornaments (Figs. 5-7), and pottery, not only locally produced, but also imported, confirm the presence of a female deity established and venerated here at least since the beginning of the 6th century. The archaeological record also shows that the sanctuary reached its maximum flowering between the 4th and 3rd centuries, as indicated by the bulk of ce-



Fig. 2. Panoramic view of Lucus Feroniae: to the right, the sacred area and temple of Feronia.



Fig. 1. Centers in the Tiber valley: Lucus Feroniae in red.

Fig. 3. Plan of the temple structure in the sacred area at the conclusion of excavations, 2000-2010.



Fig. 4. Votive base with a dedication to di T. Didius Q. f. at Feronia.

Fig. 5. Bronze ring with raised relief bezel.



ramic materials, coins and aes rude, in addition to the ex votos of the adjacent votive deposit of the “Bambocci.”

The articulated panorama of the pattern of offerings outlines the continuity of worship between the titular goddess of the sanctuary of the Archaic age and the Feronia venerated in Classical and Hellenistic times. The analysis gives us the image of a place of worship with a complex physiognomy, in which the religious aspect is intertwined with the social, cultural and economic aspect. The material culture informs us about the strata of society that frequented the sanctuary; they were composed not only of representatives of the upper and middle classes, but also of members of the lower classes, with a detectable presence of the servile component, as documented by the rich epigraphic heritage acquired over time (Fig. 4). Through the excavation it was therefore possible to retrace the long history of the sanctuary and confirm what was reported by the sources that indicate in Lucus Feroniae the site of flourishing markets as well as a meeting place for people of different ethnicities.

The new volumes of *Un Grande santuario interetnico: Lucus Feroniae, Scavi 2000-2010*, edited by Benedettini and Moretti Sgubini, MOUSAI 2019 (see above), utilized the contributions of a multidisciplinary group of scholars. Mario Torelli, who as a profound *conoscitore* also of this cultural reality, has supported us in every way with his sensitivity and authority. To him go our thoughts.



Fig. 6. Filigree and embossed gold bead.

Fig. 7. Crest-holder applique for a bronze helmet.



## San Casciano dei Bagni The great Sanctuary of Apollo has been revealed as having Etruscan Origins

adapted from *Archeologia Viva*

A gigantic “*salvific*” or healing sanctuary dedicated to Apollo has come to light in Tuscany in San Casciano dei Bagni (Si); it is the surprising result of the second excavation campaign conducted in the summer of 2020 in the Bagno Grande area by the Superintendency of Siena. The international excavation team expected to be investigating “simple” thermal structures of the Roman period, but the stratigraphic excavation instead uncovered a vast sanctuary active between the 1st century BC and the 2nd century AD, with Etruscan pre-existences and Late Antique reuses. Inscriptions dedicated to Asclepius/Aesculapius, Hygieia and above all to Apollo, from the vicinity of the Bagno Grande in San Casciano dei Bagni, were known as early as the mid-16th century, celebrating the health properties of the hot springs. Archaeologists have disclosed the discovery of the sanctuary structure, with a remarkable pavement and an inscription from the Imperial age that begins with the unequivocal “*Apollinis sacrum pro salute ...*”.

### Place of worship next to hot springs

“This is an epochal discovery for San Casciano dei Bagni,” commented superintendent Andrea Muzzi. “We finally have the certainty that in this sacred valley a large sanctuary dedicated to Apollo was surrounded by the hot springs. Moreover, it is a splendid metaphor: after these difficult months of pandemic, this excavation brings to light a healing sanctuary dedicated to Apollo. A wonderful wish for the beginning of great excavation seasons and a bet for culture in these difficult times.”

### A history of healing that dates back to the Etruscan era

According to Jacopo Tabolli, archaeological funzionario & coordinator of the project, “It is due to the stubbornness of the team, which has faced a difficult excavation, working in mud and hot water, that were brought to light the first monumental traces of the cult of Apollo at the Bagno Grande in San Casciano dei Bagni. Linked to the exceptional inscription, amazing votive offerings were found, such as splendid bronze and lead ears that allude to the healing powers of the

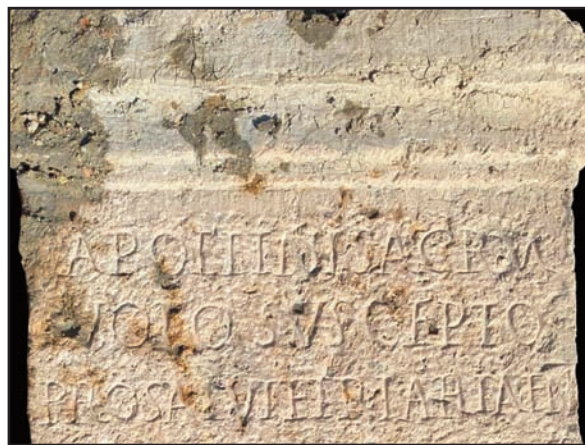
Bronze and lead votive ears.



Photos also - [www.archeostorie.it](http://www.archeostorie.it) CC BY 4.0  
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Ancient thermal sanctuary on the left and the modern thermal pool on the right.  
All photos courtesy Jacopo Tabolli, (SABAP-Siena).



The inscription begins with *Apollinis sacrum voto suscepto pro salute Triariae*: altar of Apollo, a vow fulfilled, for the health of Triaria. Other dedications by a certain *Triaria* have been found in the area around San Casciano. Below, the altar *in situ*.



god. After all, lead is sacred to the Etruscan god *Suri*, before Apollo: from the material that has emerged we can imagine that the cult at these thermal springs precedes the Romans and was established in the Etruscan era.”

### A unique emotion: the enthusiasm of young researchers

Mayor Agnese Carletti triumphantly states, “The days spent on the excavation were beautiful and seeing the bright eyes of the students in front of their discoveries was a unique emotion. A project that, already started by the past Administration, and an awareness that has today become certain: the wealth we have underground is immense and we will work to make it fully emerge. With this discovery, the importance of the waters and spas of San Casciano dei Bagni in the history of the entire area is sanctioned and, not least, an incredible opportunity is created for the development of our entire territory.”

### The International team

The scientific direction of the excavation is by Emanuele Mariotti, assisted by a scientific committee coordinated by Jacopo Tabolli (Superintendency of Siena, Grosseto and Arezzo) and composed of Lisa Rosselli (University of Pisa), Stefano Camporeale (University of Siena), Hazel Dodge (Trinity College Dublin) and Paraskevi Christodoulou (University of Cyprus).

Students from the Associazione Archeologica “Eutyches Avidienas”, Pisa, Siena, Sassari Universities, working together under hot and wet conditions.





Fig.2

## Uncovering the first Chiusi: a Story Written in the Water

by Jacopo Tabolli with Mattia Bischeri

In February 2020, just a few weeks before the COVID-19 pandemic changed the course of events, an extraordinary discovery took place at Chiusi, in the locality of Arcisa (Figs. 1-2). It revealed traces of the early proto-urban settlement as well as evidence of the *longue durée* occupation of the site, from at least the 9th to the 3rd c. BCE.

The project of restoring the late 19th century Ex Lavatoi (Washhouse), just north of the Mediaeval Porta Lavinia, involved a series of preventive test trenches to evaluate the archaeological risk of the area. The area of the Arcisa – likely recalling in its name the reference to an *arx* – had always been considered outside the perimeter of the ancient settlement of Chiusi and especially of the one occupying the hill of I Forti and the Rocca



Fig.3

Paolozzi. Although it had been the generally accepted opinion that, at its origins between the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age, Chiusi consisted of several nucleated villages, the school of protohistory of Rome led by Renato Peroni has shown that the early proto-urban center of Chiusi was instead a single entity, physically unifying the different hills and valleys. This consistent process of formation is confirmed by the location of its Early Iron Age necropoleis, which form a circular belt around the proto-urban site, and thus identify the communal separation between the spheres of the living and the dead.

The excavation at the Arcisa has confirmed for the first time that, even on a slope descending from the top of the plateau, there was dense human occupation. During the second half of the 9th c. in this area a large roughly rectangular cistern for water collection was carved into the clay bedrock (Fig. 3) and on its western edge there were carved steps to descend into its bottom, over two meters deep. This exceptional structure functioned most probably as a communal infrastructure for the Early Iron Age society of Chiusi. Around the end



Fig.1

of the 8th c., this cistern began to be abandoned. The excavation of all the layers of filling brought to light an amazing series of Early Iron Age artifacts (figs. 4-6), including biconical vases, cups, bronze pins and molded figurines. In the mid-7th c. the entire area was transformed with the creation of a structure, which is preserved at the foundation level: here a base made of pebbles and topped by a wall in *pisé*, testifies to the presence of a domestic unit, where also a workshop may have operated; this hypothesis is based on the presence of a beautiful impasto firedog. On top of the eastern edge of the Early Iron Age cistern an Orientalizing hut was built, as we found clear traces of postholes defining



Fig.4

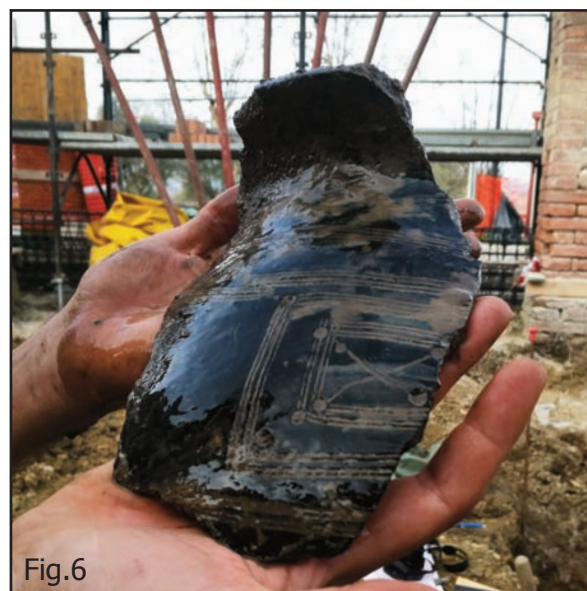


Fig.6



Fig.7

a circular perimeter. This hut, similarly to the domestic unit, was dismantled at the beginning of the 6th c. The importance of the hut can be perceived by what appears to have been a ritual of fragmentation inside the remains of one of its postholes; such a ritual signifies the abandonment of this structure. Here we found an elegant bucchero chalice, identical to the famous type of La Pania, an example of which also comes from the necropolis of Tolle. Such prestigious finds reveal the character of the (aristocratic?) inhabitants of this building.

During the mid 6th c. a huge square building occupied the area. We know very little about this structure because during the mid-second half of the 5th c., this building was dismantled and the space became an open area with two intercommunicating wells, which granted access to the famous system of *cuniculi* of Chiusi, built for managing the water collection of the Etruscan town



Fig.5

(Fig. 7). The presence within the stones of one of the two wells of a fragment of Attic Black Glazed Ware pottery gives us a *terminus post quem* for the construction of the wells – and it is important to stress that it is the first evidence of chronology for the *cuniculi* of Chiusi ever found. Moreover, the intercommunicating wells recall similar infrastructures all along the late Archaic and Hellenistic town walls of Chiusi and possibly can be related to the political events of transformation of Chiusi's urban space at this time. These events are echoed by the narrative of Porsenna.

During the 3rd c. the area of the Arcisa was once again transformed into a monumental building, which included the earlier wells and functioned at least for over two centuries as a communal space. The large square travertine blocks of this building were reused for the construction of the late 19th century washhouse.

From the 9th c. BCE to the present day, the finds of this excavation have proved the strong connection of this part of Chiusi with water, and thus outline the resilience of the identity of the local community in defining its functional spaces.

## News from Southern Apulia: The Athenaion of Castro di Lecce

by Stephan Steingräber, Università Roma Tre

Thanks to the recent excavations under the leadership of Francesco d'Andria (former professor of Classical Archaeology at the University of Lecce and excavator of the Messapian town of Cavallino near Lecce and of Phrygian Hierapolis) we know much more now about the history of this Messapian town located on a steep hill dominating the rocky Adriatic coast of Southern Apulia/Salento (Fig. 1) where one can see in clear weather the coast of Albania (Butrinto) and Greece (the islands around Korfu) on the other side of the Adriatic sea from. The coast of Castro is famous also for its Romanelli and Zinzulusa grottoes frequented since pre-historic times. According to Vergil (*Aeneid* III 530,1), Aeneas landed for the first time in Italy at "Castrum Minervae." According to other ancient authors Castro was founded by Cretans. Strabo (*Geographica* VI 3,5) emphasizes the promontory of Castro dominated by the temple of Athena, whereas Dionysius of Halikarnassus mentions the "harbor of Aphrodite" below the town.

In historic times Castro and Southern Apulia were inhabited by the Messapians but also frequented by Greeks (who toward the end of the 8th c. BC had founded the famous colony Taras/Taranto). The earliest



archaeological finds go back to the later Bronze Age, the oldest Messapian inscriptions to the 6th c. BC. Thanks to the recent excavations and restorations one can admire today several huge remains of the Messapian city walls and fortifications dating from the 4th c. BC and incorporated partly in the walls of the 16th c. (Fig. 2). In 123 BC Castro became a Roman colony.

The Athena sanctuary was definitely identified in 2008 on the top of the hill (Fig. 3) and had its most flourishing period between the 4th and 3rd c. BC when it was probably visited by some famous Greek "condottieri" such as Alexander Molossos and Pyrrhos. In any case there existed a local cult as early as the 8th c. BC for a chthonic goddess, as is shown by ceramics with serpent decorations. During the 4th c. a Doric temple was erected and dedicated to Athena Iliaca (the Trojan Athena).

Among thousands of votive gifts (ceramic cups, silver rings, weapons, statuettes in marble and bronze etc.) a bronze figure (14 cm. high) is of special interest representing Athena as a warrior goddess with peplos and Phrygian helmet (Fig. 4). In 2015 was discovered the



fragment of a monumental statue in fine limestone (*pietra leccese*) with remains of purple red color (Fig. 5). Without any doubt we are dealing here with a part of the Athena Iliaca cult statue wearing a chiton and peplos and probably holding a lance in her left hand. The



statue was originally between 3 and 4 meters high and reflects models of the Late Classical period.

Apart from the sculpture fragment there were found several fragments of a monumental frieze (more than 1 meter high) decorated with high reliefs of high quality showing peopled scrolls populated by hares, birds and winged Nikai (Fig. 6). They belonged probably to a balustrade or temenos wall around the Athena temple. Concerning the iconographic motifs we find the best comparative examples on many Apulian red figured vases and in the Ipogeo Palmieri of Lecce, which is dated from the end of the 4th c. BC. The sculptor was probably not a local one but came perhaps from Taranto and had good experience in working the so-called *pietra leccese*, which much later became the symbol of the unique Leccese Baroque.



One can admire these new finds and many other objects (mostly ceramics) in the Museum of Castro, which is located in the Mediaeval Castello Aragonese (12th – 13th c.) in the center of the old town and dedicated to the local geologist Antonio Lazzari (Figs. 7-8).



## Volterra's Amphitheater: the "Archaeological Discovery of the Century" or "The Amphitheater that wasn't There"

by Annie Adair, photos by Opaxir

It is not every day that you discover an ancient Roman amphitheater. Actually, it is not even every century that you make a discovery of this kind, not even in Italy. Volterra's newly discovered amphitheater is starting to send shock waves through the archaeological community as the magnitude of this discovery is further revealed with the continuing excavation.

Although the amphitheater was first identified in the summer of 2015, it was only this year that a few surprising discoveries, including the existence of a 15-foot walkway with a perfectly intact vaulted ceiling leading to the main entrance, suddenly brought the excavation back into the national spotlight. This is a serendipitous discovery for Volterra, a city in the running to be named Italy's Culture Capital for 2022.

Measuring 82 x 64 m. (270 x 210 ft.) and most probably constructed in the early 1st century BCE, Volterra's amphitheater is not the biggest ever discovered (that would be Rome's Colosseum), nor is it the oldest (the amphitheater in Pompeii from 70 BCE can claim that title), nor is it the grandest of amphitheaters (Pozzuoli, Arles Nimes, Pula, Verona and the Colosseum are the top contenders). In Tuscany Volterra's amphitheater is the best preserved of all, and the only amphitheaters similar in size or larger would have been in Lucca, Florence and Arezzo.

What makes Volterra's amphitheater utterly unique is the fact that no one in the past millennium knew of its existence; and that means that the latest theoretical and scientific developments in the field of archaeology can be put to the test without contamination or interference from previous excavations. Of the 230-odd Roman amphitheaters known in the world today, almost none of them were "discovered," simply because their remains were never lost, but were transformed by human interaction for most of their existence.

For nearly a thousand years Volterra's amphitheater lay forgotten under a field below the town cemetery, just within the ancient Etruscan walls that also served as the city's boundary in Roman times. There is evidence of early Mediaeval plowing in the upper strata of the excavation. It seems that is the last time it witnessed any Southern tiers of intact seats, still to be excavated.



Aerial view of the excavation site, from 150 meters. human activity. From the initial survey in 2015 (See *Etruscan News* Vol.18), led by Elena Sorge, head archaeologist for the project, it was evident that the amphitheater was quite intact, but since the dig resumed in July 2020 it has become clear that the structure is actually in an extraordinary state of conservation.

### The Emotion of Discovery

It is as if the amphitheater had been in a cocoon, lying dormant, waiting for someone to break the surface to let it emerge. It is fitting then that it was discovered by a woman whose last name, Sorge, means to arise and spring forth. It was in 2015, while preparing drainage ditches near the ancient Etruscan gate of Porta Diana, that an excavator hit a mound of rocks just below the soil. Work stopped, and Sorge was called in. It was clear to Sorge that they had found a Roman wall, and after just a few days she realized that the wall extended well into the adjacent field, forming what seemed to be an oval. "The first thing I did was to look for someone who would tell me I was just dreaming, that it wasn't true. Two colleagues specializing in Roman archaeology came, and they looked and finally came to me saying "Elena, brace yourself... you really have found an amphitheater!"

The many coins found span roughly 1300 years, from a silver denarius of Vespasian, 69 AD, to a 13th century silver *grosso* from the mint of the Pisan Republic.



But this is far from the only aspect that makes Volterra's amphitheater important. Researchers are learning things not only about how amphitheaters were built, but also about Volterra's role in ancient Rome.

### The Amphitheater in Volterra

Volterra's amphitheater could seat about 10,000 spectators. They sat on three tiers of stone bleacher seats facing the arena. Much as in stadiums today, the sections were a reflection of social status: the *ima cavea* is the lowest, where patricians and senators would sit; the *media cavea* is the middle section, where the middle strata of society could sit; and the *summa cavea*, which was the nose-bleed section for the plebs. The dig has uncovered about a quarter-section of the cavea and has recently revealed the top of the podium wall that separated the cavea from the arena beneath. The team has recently found a narrow service corridor running the inner perimeter of the seating area used by those with the unenviable job of having to clean out the arena after the fights.

The amphitheater was built with *pietra panchina*, a local stone that was also used to construct the city's Roman theater and ancient walls. *Panchina* is a very robust sandstone that has the peculiar characteristic of being easy to cut but hardens on contact with the air. Though the structure may have been covered with marble, little evidence of this remains.

It is difficult to guess much about the amphitheater that still lies underground, since each meter of the dig has brought forth surprises. Sorge explains: "In many Backhoes and excavators work in the arena's main entrance, deep below modern ground level.







View looking north-east. To illustrate the amount of earth moved, the photo at right shows Elena Sorge and Paolo Nannini at the initial survey in 2015. The apple tree, left in place, shows the dig's progress.

cases, you can see that amphitheatres were built in series. Once you've excavated a sector — say, a quarter of an amphitheater — then you just have to multiply that to get the rest. Here, on the other hand, no two meters are the same. Even the techniques used are extremely diverse, all throughout the structure, and this is something that is simply extraordinary from a scientific perspective."

Evidence seems to date the structure to the early Empire, around the same time as the city's theater. For a city to have both of these important public venues in use in the same period tells us that Volterra was certainly a vibrant city at the time.

#### Recent Discoveries

In early September, the archaeologists were carefully removing stones and dirt from an upper-level corridor that had collapsed in centuries past when a small fissure appeared in the ground. On their hands and knees they gently enlarged the fissure in the sandy soil with their trowels. The top stones of an arch appeared. Beyond this thin layer of soil lay a long and perfectly preserved grandiose walkway, free from debris. It looked like an *ambulacrum* that could have been abandoned just a few years prior, if it were not for the stalactites hanging from its vaulted ceiling. They enlarged the hole so that Pocobelli and Sorge could harness up and descend into these spaces that no one had touched, Entrance to the newly discovered gallery. Far right, inside the underground spectator entrance, *ambulacrum*. Connecting galleries can be seen below.



seen — or even breathed in — for over a thousand years. "When I entered the first time, I tried to speak but I couldn't find the air... in this place closed to the world, I was the first person breathing its air. Now it is different, you can breathe more easily, but that also means we have altered its microclimate."

#### Rewriting History

The existence of this amphitheater means that the Roman chapter of Volterra's history needs to be rewritten. Historians have always painted a picture of Roman Volterra as a small provincial town, in certain decline from its glory days in Etruscan times. But this does not fit with the picture of Volterra that is emerging. As Sorge told me, "you only find amphitheatres in the important urban centers." For a city to have an amphitheater built around the same time as a theater, as well as a large underground cistern and several public baths, it would require a considerable investment in public works; this suggests not only a growing population, but also a powerful economic center. In fact, for most of its history, Volterra was indeed an important center of trade and commerce, thanks to its proximity to the sea and ports (just a 5-hour walk) and wealth of resources (minerals in the hills to the southwest, salt deposits in the valley, alabaster all around and fertile land for grain, wine and oil production).

Backside of a tiny winged bronze figurine.



#### The next step

The next steps of the excavation will need to be done with extreme caution to avoid any damage to the passageways, and will require extensive and continuous scientific surveys. There is the risk of a slope collapsing on the dig itself: on the southern side, where the recent discoveries have been made, a wall of bedrock and vegetation towers over the site. A torrential rainstorm would make the perfect recipe for a landslide. Sorge has called in an Alpine company that specializes in securing rock walls, but the tens of thousands of euros that will be needed weren't in the initial budget. "We've got the most important research organizations involved, like the CNR [National Research Council], universities, a big cooperative that is excavating with us... it is truly a team of the highest caliber." But if financing is not found to ensure the dig will continue in the spring, they might have to disband.

What will it take to move forward? Unfortunately, Covid has put a damper on the plans that were in the works for collaborations with archaeologists and their students from foreign universities, though Sorge says the door is always open to these possibilities. Sorge strongly believes the monument should be accessible and open to the public as soon as possible, even before the excavation and restoration are complete. To accomplish this, and create an interactive visitor's center, several million euro must still be found.

The Italian government has included the amphitheater in its Art Bonus Project, making all donations 65% tax deductible. The Bank of Volterra, one of the main contributors thus far, has created an ad hoc committee to facilitate donations to the amphitheater dig that, since the initial discovery, has continued in fits and starts as the weather permits and as financing is found.



## Not Etruscan, but Etruscan Style The Roman amphitheater and necropolis of Sutri

by Daniele F. Maras

The Roman amphitheater and necropolis of Sutri were carved into the tufa rock following an Etruscan architectural tradition, presumably in order to blend with the landscape of south-Etruria and its earlier rock buildings. Ancient Sutri shared the same location as today's town on a tall tufa cliff surrounded by two creeks. On the opposite side of the modern via Cassia another tufa cliff hosts the archaeological compound of the Amphitheater and Mithraeum of Sutri. Its strategical placement, overlooking the single pathway between the Sabatini mountains to the south and the Cimini to the north, provided Sutri with a prominent role since its foundation as a Roman colonial outpost in 384 BCE (according to tradition the earliest Latin colony) up to the Middle Ages and beyond.

The town was at a crossroad where the territory of the Etruscan cities of Veii to the south and Caere to the north met the Faliscan region, along the pathway towards Tarquinia and Orvieto: the future Via Cassia.

The most impressive and evocative monument is the rock-carved amphitheater, which is part of a single compound including the southern necropolis (Fig. 1) and the



Fig. 1

### Pompeii, the latest excavations reveal the mystery: It was founded by the Etruscans

Presentation by Massimo Osanna  
to the Accademia dei Lincei

From *RAI News*, December 13, 2020

Strabo traced the origins of Pompeii to the Oscans, a Samnite population of pre-Roman Campania, and for many centuries it was thought that the ancient Greek geographer was right. But the mystery has always remained about its foundation, which took place at least 700 years before its tragic end. A fog is now lifting, due to the results of the latest excavations in the archaeological park, a World Heritage site. The finds tell a different truth: that of an Etruscan city “by language and culture,” albeit one built with its own style, recalling little or nothing of the motherland.

Discussing this subject recently, the Director of the archaeological park Massimo Osanna (photo above) and the archaeologist Carlo Rescigno presented these new discoveries at the Accademia dei Lincei. It was the Etruscans, many centuries before the city became a Roman colony, who founded Pompeii, shaped and formed its



Fig. 2

Mediaeval church of the Madonna of the Birth (the so-called “Mithraeum”).

Although small in dimensions (49.60 x 40.60m.), the amphitheatre of Sutri is the only known example of a major Roman building for public spectacles entirely carved into the rock.(Fig. 2)

Only the southern gate is preserved of the two placed at the ends of the longer axis; the opposite gate, facing the current day via Cassia, was damaged by the collapse of the entrance gallery and the terraces. The entrance leads directly to the arena, which is surrounded by a podium having ten doorways, five on each side, which open onto a circular covered service hallway.

As is usual for this type of building, the terraces (called *caveae*) (Fig. 3) are divided into three parts, respectively called *ima*, *media* and *summa cavea*, distinguished from one another by two narrow aisles, called *praecinctions*. The lowest section (*ima cavea*) is better preserved on the north-western side.

On the north-east is a large rectangular niche with a small service stairway, which has been interpreted as a honor box. From the service aisle people reached the terraces through four stairways (*vomitoria*), set in correspondence with the shorter axis and carved into the thickness of the wall flanking the podium.



walls, organized its streets “following the sky and the stars,” as they had already done for Tarquinia, Veio, and Cerveteri, the cities from which its first inhabitants seem to have arrived.

The Etruscans founded the first sanctuaries, starting with one outside the city on the road that led from the town to the port of Stabiae. Reinforcing the hypothesis of an Etruscan foundation, explains Osanna, are above all the artifacts: hundreds of amphorae, vases and vessels, (on exhibit, see photo inset) including over 70 cups with inscriptions. These were found in the excavation of the sanctuary, built along the road that connected the city to the sea. This rectangular, open-air construction emerged a few hundred meters from the southern city walls in what is referred to as the “Fondo Iozzino,” from the name of its ancient owner.

Four additional *vomitoria* led to the middle section (*media cavea*), which included six steps, now much damaged. Facing the lowest step, eight boxes shaped as semi-circular niches with seats at their back would have been reserved for privileged spectators.

The remains of a drainage system that took rainwater out of the amphitheater are visible along the walls of the *vomitoria*. The upper section (*summa cavea*) could be reached only through the terraces.

At the northern side, a monumental back wall was cut into the tall tufa cliff over the top of the *cavea*. This was originally decorated with a molding and relief Tuscan-style semi-columns, whose sparse remains are still partially visible.

The chronology of the monument is placed between the Augustan and the early Imperial periods and was probably connected with the concessions granted by the first emperors to the citizens of the Italian regions after their inclusion into full Roman citizenship. The rock necropolis along the modern via Cassia probably was begun in the same period, although most tombs date from later times.

The choice to build an amphitheater entirely carved into the tufa seems to derive from an intentional reference to the ancient Etruscan tradition of rock architecture in Tuscia. It thus confirms the role of early Imperial Sutri as “the gateway to Etruria,” as the Roman historian Livy wrote in these same years.



Fig. 3

The temple had been already identified in the 60s and excavated again in the 90s, but the most interesting finds and the systematic study of these are chronicled in recent times, with the excavation campaign started in 2014. This discovery, Osanna stresses, makes Pompeii “the place that has returned the largest number of Etruscan inscriptions outside Etruria.” Many of these cups bear graffiti with ritual phrases accompanied by the name of the person who made the offering. As it happens, these are always Etruscan names, some of which have never been found before in Campania but are well known in the Etruscan centers of central Italy. The divinity honored on these objects is always indicated by the generic “*Apa*” (“father” in Etruscan). Such evidence is repeated, he points out, “for the sanctuary of Apollo, the main Pompeian sacred area, next to the forum,” where both older and more recent excavations have turned up cups with inscriptions “once again in the Etruscan language and alphabet.”

The architecture of the urban center, on the other hand, is quite different from both the Etruscan and the Greek, as demonstrated by recent excavations in the sanctuary of Apollo and in the Triangular Forum. The hypothesis is, in short, that the city was founded and built within a few decades by *continued on page 36*



## EOS - Etruscans on the Sea: survey on the Etruscan city of Spina

by Elisabetta Govi and Andrea Gaucci

EOS, a project to study Etruscans on the Sea, is organized by the Chair of Etruscology of the Department of History and Cultures of the University of Bologna. It aims at investigating the Etruscan settlements of the Po Delta, Spina and Adria. The acronym evokes the Greek goddess of the Dawn, represented kidnapping young men on the red-figure Athenian vases of the graves of Spina.

Currently, the main focus of EOS is Spina, the Etruscan city that ruled the Adriatic Sea and had privileged relations with Greece. Its discovery represents one of the most important pages of Italian archaeology of the twentieth century. Hidden by the lagoons of the Po Delta for centuries, this harbor, famous among ancient historians and geographers for its role on the Adriatic Sea, was brought back to light in the period between the 1920s and 1960s. The long-lasting commitment of the University of Bologna to research on the Etruscan city has ancient roots and starts with Nereo Alfieri, Professor of Ancient Topography, previously Director of the Ferrara Museum and, in the 1950s and 1960s, excavator of the necropolis of Valle Pega.

Since 2007, Giuseppe Sassatelli and now Elisabetta Govi have started the systematic study of the necropolis of Valle Trebba, which had been excavated between 1922 and 1935 and then in 1962 by Alfieri. This is the northernmost funerary area of the city; it extends into the sandy islands emerging in the lagoon, between the city to the west and the sea to the east. With the ancient landscape of the necropolis already reconstructed, the study of the 1,215 graves excavated up to 1935 is being completed and with hope it will soon be finally published.

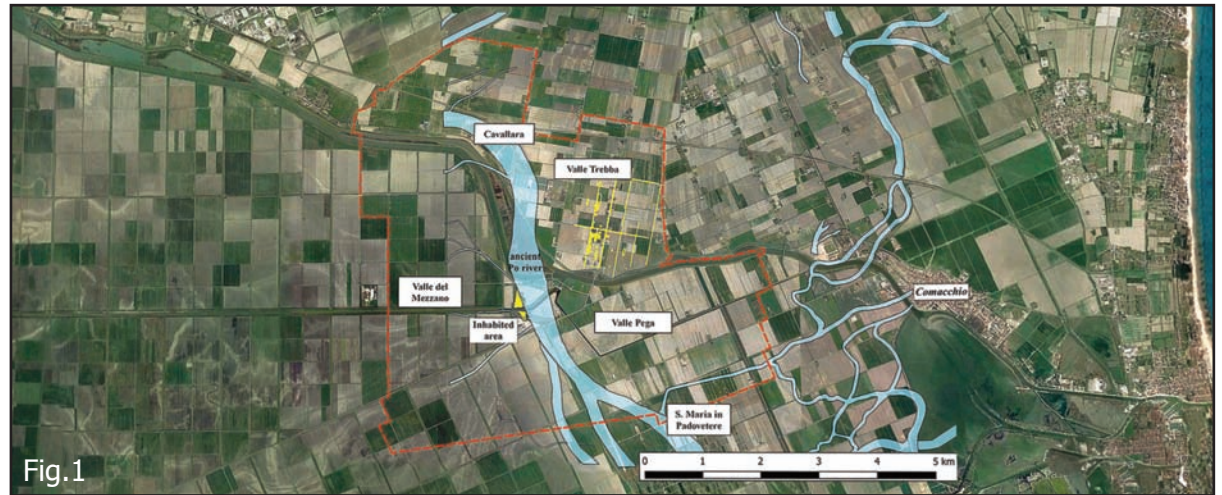


Fig. 1

Since 2020 EOS has another aim: investigating the ancient settlement of the city (Fig. 1), of which we still know so little, starting with the location of the harbor and sacred buildings, prominent in Etruscan cities. We aim to understand the urban grid, the internal and external viability along with the relationship between the settlement and the necropoleis, and possibly to identify sacred places. This project will be possible thanks to the funding of the Municipality of Comacchio, leader of the European project VALUE-enVironmental And cuL-tUral hEritage development, which involves 5 Italian partners (the Municipality of Comacchio, the Veneto Region, the Emilia-Romagna Region, the Regional Po Delta Park of Veneto and the agency DELTA 2000) and 3 Croatian partners (the municipalities of Kastela, Korcula and Cres).

The primary task of EOS is to investigate the site through non-invasive methods. Although limited by the COVID-19 restrictions, we have been able to organize the first archaeological campaign, which took place October 5-23, 2020. Under the direction of Prof. Govi, the research group (Fig. 2) includes researchers and technicians, as well as research fellows, PhD students, students of the School of Specialization in Archaeological Heritage and Students of the two-year Master's degree in Archaeology and Cultures of the Ancient World.

Indeed, EOS is also teaching. In the past years many students have had the chance to study first hand the grave goods of Valle Trebba and now are walking through the fields that were once the cityscape of Spina. During the first campaign, the research group was engaged for three weeks in the valli (in the local dialect: flat territories bordered by low hillocks created by

rivers) around Spina. The methods used did not involve excavations, but only extensive field-walking within a wide area of about 28 sq km. Such activities had the essential support of the Consorzio di Bonifica Pianura di Ferrara and of the University of Ferrara.

Since there is no modern settlement on the site, it has been possible to apply numerous non-invasive methods, such as UAV photogrammetry, geophysics (in particular magnetometry), and field survey (Figs. 3-4). These will make it possible to identify traces of buried structures and geomorphological evidence.

The planned goal for the next campaign, which we hope will take place in the early months of 2021, will be to apply geophysics in the areas identified as of greatest interest through field survey. The scheduled activities will point out the most remarkable areas to investigate through shovel tests and wider excavations.



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

# EXHIBITS

## Review Article

*Tesori delle terre d'Etruria. La collezione dei Conti Passerini di Bettolle.* Edited by Mario Iozzo and Maria Rosaria Luberto. Livorno: Sillabe 2020.  
by Ingrid Edlund Berry

At other times, the excitement over the opening of an exhibit in Florence could only be matched by the expectations of reading the exhibit catalogue both before and after a visit to the Archaeological Museum. This year, for most of us, the exhibit is out of reach, and the catalogue will have to serve as our main guide to exploring the Passerini collection visually and virtually.

Mario Iozzo, Maria Rosaria Luberto, and Stefano Casciu and their colleagues have presented us with a splendid catalogue that allows us to use the Passerini collection as a welcome tool to explore the landscape around Siena, the history of excavating and collecting antiquities, and the appreciation of ancient pottery and other objects as elements of history and culture. Indeed, the Treasures of the Earth of Etruria have a lot to offer!

Although the background of how private collections of antiquities were created is sometimes tarnished by the realities of improper protection of the objects, it is important to learn about the physical history of the individuals involved and the geographical and cultural context in which collections were formed. While names such as Sinalunga and Bettolle may be less well known to non-Italian readers, their long history within the rich landscape of Tuscany is portrayed through the account of the people who lived and worked there, in this case, the Passerini family.

Following the Preface by Stefano Casciu, six chapters provide the background for the collection, its creators, and the exhibit today. Mario Iozzo introduces the founder of the collection, Napoleone Passerini (1862-1951), son of Count Pietro Passerini from Cortona (1791-1863). The family was wealthy, and owned properties in several areas, including villas at Scandicci and at Bettolle. Napoleone Passerini, following in his father's footsteps, developed an interest in collecting ancient objects found on his property, and the collection was noted and described by Marquis Chigi Zondadari in *Notizie degli Scavi* as early as 1877. Through discoveries on his property and through contacts with other collectors, Passerini accumulated an astonishing collection of the finest Etruscan grave goods, which also included remarkable Greek vases. As the collection grew, it was divided in two parts, of which one was kept in the villa at Bettolle and the other at the Villa "Le Rondini" at Scandicci. Some objects were sold to the Archaeological Museum in Florence by 1890, and with time some of the Greek vases found homes in foreign museums. The collection at Bettolle remained in the villa until the death of Passerini in 1951, when it was passed on to his heirs. In 1999 its importance was recognized, and the collection was bought by the Italian State and housed in the archaeological museum at Chiusi. Meanwhile, the collection at Scandicci was registered in 1910 by the archaeological authorities but remained intact and mostly



The exhibition in the Museo Archeologico, Firenze. forgotten until 2016 when an anonymous donor reported her ownership of some 80 objects and offered them to the Archaeological Museum in Florence.

As Mario Iozzo reveals the history of the complete Passerini collection, the reader marvels at the quantity of objects and how the wealth of the land was expressed in precious grave goods that represented the Etruscan heritage through the centuries. Although it is unfortunate that some of the Greek vases are no longer part of the collection now on exhibit in Florence, the description and splendid illustrations help in gaining an overview of the beauty of what the collections once looked like.

Although the Passerini collection was impressive in its own right, it formed part of the heritage of Tuscany, and many scholars, both Italian and foreigners, explored the estates where discoveries continued to be made. In his account of the archaeology of the Val di Chiana, Giulio Paolucci describes both the governmental involvement with recording existing collections as well as new discoveries, and the attention paid by scholars such as Wolfgang Helbig, who traveled in the Val di Chiana area in 1879 and reported on what he had seen of the Passerini collection.

While it may seem unreal today that one family could assemble such a rich collection of artifacts for the most part found on their own property, it is also clear that the whole area had been densely populated in antiquity. Although the buildings that once formed the local Etruscan communities have not been preserved, the

Portrait of Pietro Passerini, restored in 1910.



large number of graves is witness to the original population. In her account of the territory in the central part of the Val di Chiana, Ada Salvi introduces an archaeological history, which includes a number of sites, some of which were on Passerini property. As shown in the exhibit today, individual objects ranging from the Greek vases to Etruscan bucchero and jewelry once formed the precious contents of tombs around Bettolle, whereas other objects from excavations at Foiano della Chiana were bought by Passerini.

While Napoleone Passerini had a unique personal interest in the antiquities found on his property, Maria Rosaria Luberto highlights the importance of his long family history, which included among other notables Cardinal Silvio Passerini (1469-1581), who was invited to the Medici court and ended up serving under pope Leo X (1475-1521). Through Valerio Passerini, the Cardinal's brother, the line continued to Pietro Passerini, Senator of the Parliament of Tuscany in 1848, and to his only son, Napoleone. He married Vittoria Matilde Ghetti, and of their five children, three are said to have inherited their father's intellectual interests.

It is not surprising that Napoleone Passerini valued not only the part of his property that produced antiquities, but also the land itself. His interest in botany and agriculture is highlighted by Daniele Vergari and Sara Passerini. In addition to creating a School of Agriculture at Scandicci, he conducted research to improve the productivity of the land and was the first to introduce the cultivation of tobacco in Val di Chiana. He also promoted the valuable breed of Chianina cattle, which were raised on his property, and he published books and articles on agriculture. As related by his great-granddaughter, Sara Passerini, Napoleone Passerini was passionate about his interests, although perhaps a bit "grumpy and gruff" (*scontrosa e burbera*) in his old age.

Another family member, Alessandro Tramagli, great-grandson of Lupo Passerini, completes the background of the Passerini collection. The long family tradition of caring for the land has influenced each generation, and Napoleone Passerini's commitment to the School of Agriculture has benefitted many family members as well as students and colleagues. He was a man of many talents, including perfect pitch, and treasured all aspects of the land, including hunting and fishing. Not surprisingly, when he watched a plough getting stuck on any of the properties, the work was stopped immediately so that he could inspect the soil and rescue any antiquities that had been uncovered.

An exhibit catalogue has many functions, and the 243 entries for the Passerini collection are exemplary in that they bring out factual information (provenience, measurements, description, and bibliography) accompanied by exquisite color photographs and drawings, as well as interpretations and analyses for future study. Whether read by a beginning student or a seasoned scholar, many entries stand out as complete mini studies of a particular Greek vase painter or a pottery shape.

The nine categories discussed in the catalogue include show pieces as well as more modest fragments. The vases that have been published previously serve to link the collection to a specific museum, whereas the large number of unpublished examples of especially Etruscan bucchero and metal objects provide new and

interesting comparanda for study.

### 1. Attic pottery

As can be expected, the quality of the Attic pottery is high, and all fourteen entries present information of interest. In addition to the vases that are already well known, it is a bonus to see some previously unpublished examples, including a superb Attic Black-Figure lip-cup with a nonsense inscription; a hydria by the Leagros group (center) with an assembly of gods and goddesses; a Red-Figure stamnos by the Dokimasia Painter (right) with a scene of eleven Greeks at Troy in the process of voting on who should receive the weapons of Achilles, Odysseus or Ajax; a Red-Figure Kylix by the Angular Painter with a scene of young men; an intriguing Attic Red-Figure semi-cylindrical support with a checkerboard pattern; and an elegant Attic red-figure plate by Paseas with a dancer and *aulete* (below).



### 2. Etruscan pottery

The large section on Etruscan pottery includes a variety of a previously unpublished vases, such as an Italo-Geometric olla with a design of horses on the shoulder, some high-quality bucchero of different shapes, Red-Figure, black gloss, impasto, and other wares. Some of



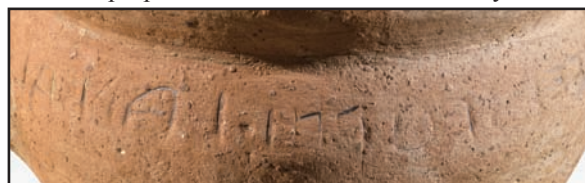
the published bucchero vases display unusual shapes (above), some with relief designs; an intriguing olla of a reddish fabric with a collar neck and an inscription is identified as a honey pot (upper right).

### 3. Inscriptions

As indicated in the catalogue entries, a few vases preserve inscriptions containing individual letters or personal names, all important because of their local script,



typical of the Arezzo area (below). The purpose of the inscriptions may vary, but in a few cases, they can be linked to proper names recorded also in family tombs.



### 4. Urns

A small group of urns includes two lids with reclining figures in a Chiusine style, and three unpublished house urns in *pietra fetida*, also well known at Chiusi.



### 5. Jewelry

While the original collection may have included much jewelry, only a few pieces can be attributed to the collection today. They include a diadem (above), pairs of earrings and a number of unpublished beads.

### 6. Metals

The metal objects include a large number of unpublished pieces, ranging from bronze *graffioni* (hooks), buckets and vessels, to mirrors, and weapons.

### 7. Terracottas, bone and ivory objects.

Small appliques of terracotta, and pieces of bone and ivory objects, some unpublished, represent the remains of furniture and household items that furnished the once richly decorated tombs.



### 8. Glass tokens

Unpublished glass tokens (e.g. above) represent a common Etruscan type. Their provenience is unknown.

### 9. Spindle whorls, prehistoric stone objects

The ninth category is divided between two unpublished spindle whorls, and a group of unpublished prehistoric stone tools.

In addition to the nine categories of objects, the catalogue includes a tenth section on restoration, which illustrates previously discussed pottery and bronzes and also a restored photograph of Pietro Passerini (1791-1863), the father of Napoleone Passerini.

In short, thanks to this thorough and thoughtful catalogue, the Passerini collection has gained a well-earned place in Etruscan studies, and future readers can stroll through the Archaeological Museum in Florence or the hills of Bettolle with a guide in hand: for now, virtually, but we hope, soon in person.

## The Etruscans at the MANN

Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli,  
until May 31, 2021

by Alessandra Randazzo

It has been a difficult year for the organization of large exhibitions throughout Italy but, once the emergency was partly over, it was possible to inaugurate the grand exhibition of the Etruscans at MANN: a project curated by Valentino Nizzo, Director of the National Etruscan Museum of Villa Giulia and by Paolo Giulierini, Director of the Archaeological Museum of Naples, in collaboration with Electa. (Ed. see pp. 1 and 45)

The exhibition program narrates the story of the Etruscans, through its long chronological and territorial evolution, in the territory of Campania, which is still lit-



tle studied in its most ancient phase. Over 600 finds are divided into two thematic itineraries that start from the distant 10th century to the 4th century BC, when on the Mediterranean front there were other powers in play. The historian Polybius in the 2nd century BC said that “whoever wants to know the history of the power of the Etruscans must not refer to the territory they currently own, but to the plains they control.” The compelling history of this people, whose best known presence lies in central Italy, actually has wider horizons, although not yet fully studied and investigated.

Scholars have investigated the relations with the peoples, from the Po Valley in the north to the plains of Campania in the south, affected by the expansionist aims of the Etruscans; the important collections of the MANN have provided an unprecedented cross-section of studies of this land up to the decline of one of its most

Clay model of a cart from Gricignano d'Aversa.



important components. The Etruscans between the 6th and 5th centuries BC suffered several naval defeats near Cuma, which led to their gradual disappearance from Campania.

### The exhibit

The exhibition opens on a large geographical map that sets the stage for the Etruscans' role in southern Italy. The first theme of the exhibition is a chronological itinerary; the second focuses on Etruscan finds acquired and restored over the centuries by the Naples Museum.

### The first theme

The objects from the Campanian necropoleis extending from from Apennine hinterland towards the Tyrrhenian sea give precious insights; the necropoleis of Carinara and Gricignano d'Aversa, and that of Capua for the protoVillanovan culture indicate how the interaction with the Etruscans had an economic, commercial and cultural value. From Gricignano di Aversa, the LXII cremation burial, lent by the Agro Atellano Museum (Succivo), reassembles an important tomb group, in which a model of a cart drawn by a pair of yoked horses (lower left) and driven by a male figure stands out; the terracotta work (late 9th to early 8th century BC) uses the motif of the calesse to illustrate the prestige of the deceased.

Through the artifacts found in Santa Maria Capua Vetere, it is possible to retrace the phenomenon of the formation of the first Campanian “cities” worthy of the

Gold *bauletta* earrings. Carnelian scarab ring incised with suicide of Ajax. Filigree vase pendant.



name. Tomb 1/2005 (early 9th c. BC), lent by the Museum of Ancient Capua, is a monumental burial of a warrior-chief found in the necropolis of Nuovo Mattatoio. Tombs 662 and 664 of the Fornaci necropolis (second half of the 8th c. BC) testify to a form of cultural osmosis *ante litteram* with the Greeks, who had recently settled in Ischia and Cuma.

Tomb groups such as those from Capua attest to the presence in the region of the “early Etruscans,” i.e. the Villanovans. Their culture is characterized by the preva-



Bronze offerer from Elba found in 1764, first object from *Etruria* in the MANN collections. Acroterion of a female sphinx. Etrusco-faliscan stamnos. Below. Large bronze disk parade fibula from Suessula.





lence of cremation, with biconical cinerary urns decorated with comb-engraved geometric motifs. An artifact from Suessula, Acerra, in the Spinelli collection of the MANN was restored and reassembled just for this exhibition. It is a pectoral pendant in laminated bronze (below) with cast bronze pendants (8th century BC) bearing three bird-shaped figures and terminating in the characteristic motif of the solar boat.

The Orientalizing period culture, which developed between the 8th and 7th centuries BC, adopts new artis-



Bucchero oinochoe (the Gorgon workshop). Pectoral pendant in laminated bronze from Suessula. Below, the "Cista Bianchini" with a dancing satyr and maenad on the lid was found near Palestrina.



tic and behavioral models inspired by the aristocratic fashions of the eastern Mediterranean and its Homeric heroes. This is represented with Tomb 104 of Artiaco di Cuma, discovered in 1902 by Gaetano Maglione and Giuseppe Pellegrini. Its valuable finds belonged to a wealthy person who wanted to make the heroic-Homeric ethos his own.

In close dialogue with this precious Orientalizing testimony is a loan from the National Etruscan Museum of Villa Giulia: the grave goods from the Bernardini tomb in Palestrina (675-650 BC), one of the richest treasures that archaeology has ever yielded. It was discovered in 1876 by the Bernardini brothers in the necropolis of ancient Praeneste, whose wealthy prince was buried with gold and silver of Etruscan manufacture, royal and parade weapons, and typical objects of the banquet.

#### The second theme

Among the finds from that *wunderkammer* (chamber of wonders) constituted by the deposits of the MANN, the Borgia collection stands out with objects acquired from the Royal Bourbon Museum; these include a substantial group of coins, the *nummi unciales* (3rd-2nd c. BC), precious evidence of the first coin production in Etruria and in Etruscan Campania and Latium. Also featured are the bronze statuette of the offerer from Elba (far left), probably produced in Populonia and datable to the late 6th, early 5th century BC, and the cista Bianchini (below left), which belonged to the famous art Naked male figures clasping their mouth and anus. 17th c. forgeries created to prove religious theory.



dealer Francesco Ficoroni before it entered the Borgia collection. Also in the collection is the group of finds known as "Ripostiglio Bianchini" (below center) from the name of the historian and astronomer Francesco Bianchini (1662-1729), who was the first to publish it under the name of Cista Mystica. It is an extraordinary forgery from the late 17th century that testifies to the taste of the time for ancient religion and mystery cults. The exhibition ends with the splendid censer cart in sheet bronze from the end of the Iron Age (bottom photo).

#### A few Words from the Directors

"The Etruscans at the MANN returns for good. Not only with a refined exhibition of the highest scientific rigor, but with the announcement of the permanent exhibition that will return to the public another fundamen-



tal piece of the history of our Museum, "home" of the treasures of Pompeii and Herculaneum, as well as guardian of a much older inheritance," declares Paolo Giulierini.

"Digging in the endless deposits of the MANN is always a unique privilege. Doing it to 'go hunting for Etruscans' made it even more exciting. On the one hand, because it has thus been possible to outline a rigorous historical-archaeological path aimed at reconstituting the web of relationships that characterized the centuries-old presence of the Etruscans in Campania. On the other hand, because the deepening of the antiquarian and collecting events linked to the rediscovery of the importance of their dominion in the region has offered a perspective in many ways unprecedented on the evolution of the archaeological discipline," comments Valentino Nizzo. (all photos © MiBACT and MANN)

Bronze incense brazier cart, possibly for cult ritual.





**Exhibition at Rome's Musei Capitolini  
The Torlonia marbles:  
Collecting Masterpieces**

**A first step in finding a permanent home**  
by James Imam, *The Art Newspaper*

Following half a century of obscurity, the world's last great private collection of Classical sculpture opened to the public. Ninety-two marble sculptures from the Torlonia collection are now on show at the Villa Caffarelli, part of Rome's Musei Capitolini, until June 29, 2021. There are plans to move all 620 ancient Greek and Roman works to a new museum in Rome, and this first step in that direction has drawn feverish anticipation. In a virtual conference ahead of the press preview, the Italian culture and heritage minister Dario Franceschini said, "the Italian state is ready to provide resources and spaces to create a museum for the Torlonia collection."

In the 1970s, the Italian prince Alessandro Torlonia dismantled the Museo Torlonia and placed its contents in storage. Following a long and bitter battle with the Italian state, however, he formally agreed in 2016 to ex-



hibit the works. The prince died a year later at the age of 92, leaving the family's foundation to organize the exhibition.

Those that spoke at the conference seemed eager to capitalize on the show's momentum. "We have already allocated €40m to renovate the Palazzo Silvestri-Rivaldi in Rome, which could be the ideal place to host the museum," revealed Franceschini.

In the compact Villa Caffarelli, the collective richness of the carefully restored works is mesmerizing. The visitor is greeted with a glittering sea of busts arranged in tiered rows, before encountering beautifully decorated vases, immense sarcophagi bookended with lions' heads, a bas relief depicting a shopping scene with assistants as Greek goddesses, and a statue of Ulysses clinging onto the underside of a ram. The joins for noses, digits and genitalia testify to each work's individual evolution through previous restorations. A 1st century goat, whose ridged fur glistens beneath spotlights, has a head attributed to Gian Lorenzo Bernini.



As curator Salvatore Settis has insisted, this is less an exhibition of individual pieces and more "a collection of collections." The works have been arranged into four color-coded sections: Pompeian red walls for the area dedicated to the Museo Torlonia, earthy brown for pieces excavated by the Torlonia themselves, sky blue for the Albani and the Cavaceppi collections, yellow recalling gold for the collection of Vincenzo Giustiniani, and, finally, green for works collected in the 15th and 16th centuries.

The designers have opted for grey brick platforms instead of plinths, apparently to recall the peperino used in the 6th century BC Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, which once stood on this site. The resultant effect is of works scattered around a palazzo or garden, rather than arranged as centerpieces. A row of mostly-Classical busts on a long platform features one from the 18th century. Risqué details include a teasing satyr placed before a young nymph, and copies positioned next to originals as if to wryly hint at their owners' insatiable hunger for marbles. Rome's best kept secret can now be rediscovered.



**Exhibition  
The Iron Age.  
Europe without Borders**  
**State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg,  
January 11 - February 28, 2021**  
**State Historical Museum, Moscow,  
April 15 - 15 July 15, 2021**

The exhibition is devoted to sites of the early Iron Age (1st millennium BC) spread across the territory of Western, Central and Eastern Europe. This large-scale scholarly project represents the latest step in the sphere of collaboration between museums in Russia and Germany, including joint research efforts between Russian and German museums, and the "reuniting" of archaeological complexes to be displayed together.

The display in the Manege of the Small Hermitage presents more than 1,600 objects from the archaeological collections of the State Hermitage, the State Historical Museum, the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts and the Berlin State Museums. The exhibition is unique in the breadth of the material featured: the Iron Age in Italy, the Hallstadt Culture, antiquities of Celtic culture, the famous treasures of Scythian burial mounds in the



Bronze belt from Slovenia. Umbrian warrior, Scythian silver gilt vessel, Italic bronze volute plaques from Comacchio, bronze helmet, incised blackware flask from Mat hausen, Germany. Detail of a Slavic bronze belt, top.



steppes, artifacts from the Classical World, well-known hoards, antiquities of the Koban culture of the Northern Caucasus and of the cultures of the Eastern European forest belt.

The aim of the exhibition is to use the archaeological material to show elements of the culture, economy, daily and ceremonial life of Europeans in the iron age. The display is organized along chronological and geographical lines with several thematic sections corresponding to the archaeological cultures that came into being across the extensive territory from the Atlantic Ocean in the West to the Ural Mountains in the East. The artifacts featured are arranged according to regional groups of cultures and archaeological complexes that include burial sites, settlements, hoards and chance finds.

Of particular significance are the objects whose fate was altered due to the tragic events of the Second World War. The display includes a large number of exhibits that belong to what are termed "displaced collections" which were removed to the USSR as trophy art. Because of their status, for many years they remained unavailable for study. This makes it all the more valuable that, against a background of still continuing controversy over the ownership of these archaeological collections, their joint presentation in the exhibition demonstrates the potential for friendly coordinated work between museum staff from Russia and Germany.



# MUSEUM NEWS

## The Etruscan necropolis in Orvieto New Director, New Activities, New Antiquarium by Claudio Bizzarri

Just before the start of the COVID19 era, Dr. Luana Cencioli retired and Dr. Lara Anniboletti was appointed new director of both the National Archaeological Museum in Orvieto and the necropolis of Crocifisso del Tufo. Dr. Anniboletti has her degree in Archaeology and a Ph.D. from the University of Rome "Tor Vergata." Previously she was on the team of the Archaeological Park of Pompeii and was also the head of their Communications office. She and I, as the scientific director of the Crocifisso del Tufo necropolis, which since 2015 has resumed investigation of the site, decided together that a series of activities had to be planned.

Lara Anniboletti, new museum and site director.



Under the difficult situation dictated by the pandemic, we were able to organize some small lectures and guided tours, during which we managed to reopen the small rock-cut chapel of Crocifisso del Tufo, the 16th c. religious site that gives the name to the necropolis itself. One of the highlights was the inauguration of the revised collection kept in the antiquarium dedicated to Mario Bizzarri. Finally some of the most recent finds, such as the golden earrings, the pasta vitrea pendant and belt fastener and the fabulous Tyrrhenian amphora, found their home in a show case.

Tyrrhenian amphora, 560-550 BC, now on display.



The newly restyled logos (top) for the archaeological museum and Crocifisso del Tufo with its refurbished antiquarium dedicated to Mario Bizzarri.

At the end of the 1960s Mario Bizzarri and Claudio Curri, in their book *Magica Etruria*, wrote of the necropolis of Crocefisso del Tufo, "What makes this necropolis of particular note is the fact that it resembles a 'living' city with the tombs lined up like houses, their entrances all opening onto the streets... One almost expects the rhythmic activities of daily life to start up from one moment to the next, with people bustling in the streets, the regular beat of the metal worker's hammer, the gay voices of children calling from door to door... One can almost sense a human presence here and it



Mario Bizzarri with some American students digging at the Crocifisso del Tufo in the 1960s.

comes as no surprise that every architrave is inscribed with the name of the owner of the tomb: "Mi Velthurus Scanesnas... Mi Venelus Papanas..."

As new excavations in the cemetery are under way, "the spaces are so limited and the work is so exacting that it can be done only by the human hand. (See photo of excavator Paolo Binaco.) It is almost as if the ancient rituals were being repeated. The physical endeavors of

the workers, their labored breathing, the intermittent blows of the pickax, do away with the intervening lapse of time in a single stroke... The fallen blocks return to their proper places, the broken architraves are recomposed and the fragmentary inscriptions fit back together almost as if resuming an interrupted conversation... The keystones of the pseudo-vaults still have a hollow on each side so that a single man can grasp the block and set it in place. An apparently banal detail, but in repeating that gesture the workman of today stands side by side with his Etruscan forebear."

In spite of the apparent uniformity of the general scheme, we find "unexpected setbacks in the shared facades, small lateral courtyards that house minor tombs, cippi set up in the corner spaces, stelae marking the point where three streets meet. The types of tombs also vary, from the common single chamber to what we might call a more "aristocratic" dwelling... separated from its neighbors, as in a residential area, by a zone of respect that marks a continuing position of privilege, even in death. Often, however, other lesser tombs have been fitted into those spaces, almost as if a sort of justice



One of the gold *bauletta* earrings now on display in the antiquarium. Shown below *in situ* upon excavation in 2015.

were being re-established, creating relationships "after the pyre" that superseded the relationships in earthly life. Then come the many tombs dug under the street level, simple fossa (*a cassetta*) tombs, both for burials and for cremations, with grave goods that are often very modest but which, thanks to this modest placement, escaped the greed of the looters."

No space is too limited for archaeologist Paolo Binaco, portrayed here excavating a tomb at the necropolis of Crocifisso del Tufo.



# NEWS FROM THE FELLOWS

## Student Updates for Etruscan and Related Projects

### University of Birmingham, UK

**Jacqueline K. Ortoleva** (PhD candidate). *Sight, Sound, and Space: A Cognitive Approach to the Etruscan Painted Tomb Space in Tarquinia and Orvieto*. Advisors: Paul Garwood, Dominik Maschek (Oxford).

### Cambridge University

**Ann Frijda Schmidt** (PhD candidate). *Feeding the Etruscans*. Advisor: Simon Stoddart. In Progress.

**Elisa Schulz** (PhD candidate). *A communications revolution in the Central Mediterranean?* Advisors: Robin Osborne, Cyprian Broodbank.

**Camilla Zeviani** (PhD candidate). *In search of the In-visible Etruscans: a study on Etruscan landscape and rural settlements between the 7th and the 6th century BC*. Advisors: Simon Stoddart, Alessandro Launaro. In Progress

**Marianna Negro** (MPhil). *Museum Collections of Etruscan bronze figurines. An evaluation of the relationship between object collection and colonial identity*. Advisors: Jody Joy, Simon Stoddart. Completed 2020.

**Molly Sheldrake** (MPhil). *Micromorphology in Archaeology: Reconstructing Built Space Through the Analysis of Floors and Occupation Debris - A Case Study from Etruscan Tarquinia*. Advisor: Charles French. Completed 2020.

**Elisa Schulz** (MPhil). *Italo-geometric pottery and the rise of figurative art*. Advisor: Robin Osborne. Complete 2019.

**Ines De Larrinaga** (MPhil candidate). *Attic vase iconography in Etruscan city contexts*. Advisors: Robin Osborne, Simon Stoddart. In Progress.

**Kerry Gnant** (MPhil candidate). *The Development of Central Italy during the Late Bronze Age*. In Progress.

### Columbia University

**Joseph Woldman** (PhD candidate). *Look at Me: Faces and Gazes in Sixth - Fifth Century BCE Etruria*. Advisors: Francesco de Angelis, Zainab Bahrani, Ioannis Mylonopoulos. In Progress.

**Brian van Oppen** (PhD candidate). *Radiant Bodies: Living With Etruscan Bronze Candelabra*. Advisors: Francesco de Angelis, John N. Hopkins (NYU), Ioannis Mylonopoulos. In Progress.

**Alexander Ekserdjian** (PhD candidate). *Immortal Bodies: The Sculptural Representation of Mortals and Gods in the Sanctuaries of Central Italy*. Advisors: Francesco de Angelis, Zainab Bahrani, Ioannis Mylonopoulos. In Progress.

### Duke University

**Katherine McCusker** (PhD candidate). *Reanimating Etruscan Cities: Visualizing Vulci's Landscape and Urban Context*. Advisor: Maurizio Forte. In Progress.

**Antonio LoPiano** (PhD-track). The Vulci 3000 Archaeological Project, GPR Survey. Participant's dissertation to relate to this project. Advisor: Maurizio Forte.

### Florida State University

**Conor Meade** (MA Paper). *Personal Adornment and the Provenance of Pigments in Wall Paintings on the Italian Peninsula*. Advisor: Nancy de Grummond. In Progress.

**Taylor Cwikla** (MA Paper). *Don't Forget the Little People: Miniatures Figures in Etruscan Painting*. Advisor: Nancy de Grummond. In Progress.

### University of Glasgow

**George Prew** (PhD candidate). *How did funerary dress effect and reflect the transformation of communities and the rise of House Societies across the central Italic Iron Age?* Advisors: Susanna Harris, Rachel Opitz. In Progress.

### Leiden University

**Gerrie K. van Rooijen** (PhD). *Goddesses of Akragas. A Study of Terracotta Votive Figurines from Sicily*. Advisor: Natascha Sojc (Univ. of Augsburg, formerly Leiden Univ.). Defended 12/12/19.

**Marthe Donders** (MA). *Italian Capitolia and Romanization: re-evaluating identifications and new perspectives*. Degree awarded 10/31/19.

### Oxford University

**Allia Benner** (PhD candidate). *Cults of Heracle and Ritual Water at Four Etruscan Sanctuaries*. Advisor: Charlotte Potts. In Progress.

### University College London

**Ines De Larrinaga** (BA, First Class Honors). *Amazons of Etruria: A Consideration of Archaeological Context in the Interpretation of Amazon Imagery on Attic Vases found in Vulci*. Completed 2020.

## Micromorphology in Archaeology: Reconstructing Built Space Through the Analysis of Floors and Occupation Debris – A Case Study from Etruscan Tarquinia by Molly Sheldrake, Cambridge University

This study is based on a new set of micromorphological samples from a hut in Etruscan Tarquinia, dating from the Villanovan to Hellenistic periods. Micromor-

phology, the qualitative study of thin sections (slides produced to analyze structured soil samples) using a polarizing microscope, is an increasingly used method in archaeological studies. My work reassesses the need for micromorphology in the archaeological study of human activity and occupation sequences of built space; it underlines the need for this method alongside other archaeological analyses. Micromorphology aids in identifying sequences of soil processes, and interpreting pre-depositional, depositional, and post-depositional activities that form the basis of lived societies.

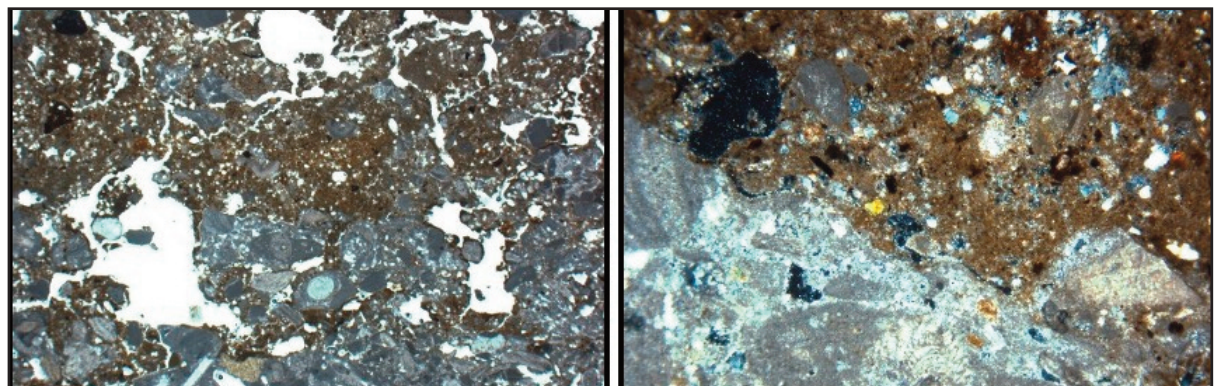
The hut, located at the Tarquinian Pian di Civita's Monumental Complex, is regarded by excavators as an area bound by ritual, with two potentially sacrificial burials in its earliest fills. Everyday practices were thought to be ritualized through forms of embedded ritual, causing a complex mixture of domestic and ritual practices often seen through the archaeological record. This study uses micromorphology to attempt to determine whether this is ritual (as suggested by other interpretations), simply an accumulated fill, or a combination of both.

## My New Job at the American Museum of Natural History

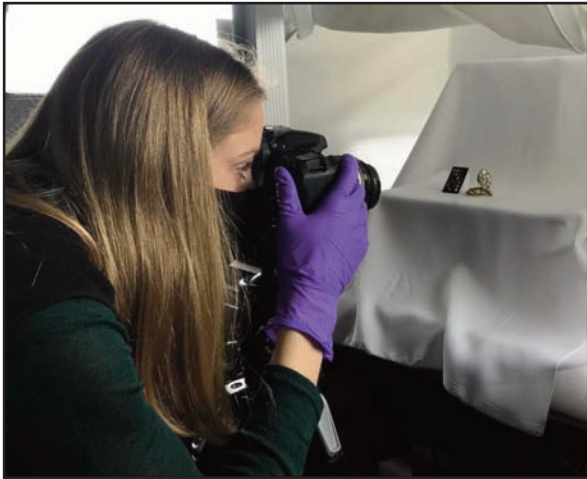
by Janet Spiller, Florida State University

I graduated from Florida State University with a master's degree in Classical Archaeology in 2019. A few months after I returned home to the New York City area from Tallahassee, I had the good fortune to be hired as a museum technician at the American Museum of Natural History. In this position, I work closely with museum conservators to document and photograph objects before they are installed in the new Hall of Gems and Minerals. Many of the skillsets that have made me a successful employee in this position were acquired or enhanced by my experience as a graduate student at FSU.

During my time at FSU, I was able to pursue multiple trajectories simultaneously. Through rigorous coursework and specialized seminars focused on the archaeology of the ancient world, I learned how to research, describe, and analyze material culture at the academic level. The FSU Classics department continued to fund me for a third year of study during which I completed a specialized study in Museum Theory and Practice. This specialized study introduced me to the



Photomicrographs of a potential level. Compact limestone, trample, and soil levels. (1.5 cm field of view [left]; 4.5 mm field of view [right]; PPL.)



Photographing gemstones at the AMNH in N.Y.C. history and evolution of museums and made me familiar with modern museum objectives and procedure.

Among my courses was an advanced level course on the Etruscans with Dr. Nancy de Grummond, in which I worked especially on Etruscan gems and jewelry. My coursework was complemented by summers spent working directly with artifacts on excavation sites in Greece. In 2018 and 2019, I had the opportunity to work with and learn from my FSU professor, Dr. Christopher Pfaff, as well as experienced local Greek archaeologists at the site of Ancient Corinth. During the day, I learned to document the excavation of a trench and in the evenings, I learned to process and document artifacts at the local museum. In the summer of 2018, the FSU Classics department awarded me the Langadas Fellowship, which enabled me to continue my work as an artifact photographer on the Gournia Excavation Project on Crete.

### Spools and Suspension Holes: A Preliminary Analysis of the Poggio Buco Tomb B Assemblage

by Darcy Tuttle, University of California, Berkeley

As part of Dr. Lisa Pieracinni's spring 2020 seminar on Etruscan Tomb Biographies, I analyzed contents of the Poggio Buco Tomb B assemblage, a 7th century BCE Etruscan burial that was excavated between 1896 and 1897 and is currently housed in the Hearst Museum. The assemblage, associated with a single inhumation, comprises 110 objects and contains items indicative of elite trade, feasting activity, warrior culture, and weaving. Of particular interest are 6 iron knives, 4 iron spears or javelins, a bronze cheese grater, numerous other items related to feasting activity (including 35 drinking vessels), and 43 *rocchetti* (Fig.1) (weights



### Museum Collections of Etruscan Bronze Figurines: An Evaluation of the Relationship between Object Collection and Colonial Activity

by Marianna Negro, Cambridge University

Etruscan civilization, despite being the object of great interest and curiosity, is often referred to as “pre-Roman” in the museum dialectic. This terminology can be considered disparaging and devalues the Etruscan culture in the collective imagination. This study argues that this is due to the role of colonial ideology in heritage. Decolonization of heritage often refers to the need to challenge the representation of colonized people and their objects. Ancient heritage is also colonized, affecting the perception of ancient objects.

The study focuses on Etruscan schematic bronze figurines; they are frequently considered inferior to classical objects, dismissed as primitive, whilst the

likely used for tablet weaving). Most of these *rocchetti* are decorated. The recurrence of many of the same symbols makes it more likely that these *rocchetti* comprised a weaving set, perhaps one used by the person buried in the tomb. On a different note, the collection of 35 drinking vessels also provides a window into household storage regimes in the Poggio Buco area. The presence of suspension holes (Fig. 2) in the vast majority of these vessels suggests that such small, light vessels were generally hung on string loops from the wall or ceiling when not in use. Similar suspension holes are also evident in other Poggio Buco tomb assemblages, and in ceramics attributed to Vulci and Narce. The great variety of these vessels, spanning from undecorated, locally manufactured goblets to a proto-Corinthian skyphos, may also be evidence of how social stratification was articulated during local feasts, and could indicate that the deceased was a particularly high-status individual.



Top, schematic figurines in the Pitt-Rivers Museum, Oxford. Inset, naturalistic figurines in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

naturalistic ones are decontextualized and celebrated for their Greek influence in style. There is a dangerous parallel between ancient and modern colonization in the celebration of the superiority of the Greeks and Romans; it risks the reinforcement and perpetuation of modern colonial discourse instead of dismantling it.

The significance of this research relies on the demonstration that decolonization of heritage should also include ancient history.



Recording at the Tomba degli Hescanas, Orvieto.

### A Tomb at Orvieto

by Jacqueline Ortoleva, University of Birmingham

I had the great pleasure throughout the spring, summer, and fall of 2019 to document 16 painted tombs in Tarquinia and Orvieto under the guidance of the Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per l'area di Roma, e di Viterbo e l'Etruria Meridionale and Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio dell'Umbria. Funding was provided by The Etruscan Foundation and I am grateful for their support. My project draws on my former background in cognitive science to assess how aural, visual, and spatial characteristics in the Etruscan painted tomb structured conditions of action during the funerary event in Tarquinia and Orvieto. The goal is to approach the burial event from the perspective of the funerary participant via bodily movement and sensory phenomena involving sound and visuals. Publications are forthcoming in 2021 and a portion of the project will be presented during the 2021 AIA meeting in January as part of the colloquium, “Constructions of Body and the ‘Embodied Mind’ in Pre-Roman Italy.”

# NEWS FROM THE SECTIONS



Conference in Vienna in March, 2020. Some participants in the pre-Roman Italy section of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, with David Hack and Raffaella da Vela sitting in the middle of the first row.

## News from the Section Austria-Vienna

by Petra Amann, University of Vienna

### Conferences:

In collaboration with the working group “Etrusker & Italiker/Etruscans & Italic peoples” of the German Archaeologists’ Association (**DARV** Deutscher Archäologen-Verband) we organized and hosted the international conference “Gesellschaft und Familie bei Etruskern und Italikern/Society and Family in Etruria and Pre-Roman Italy” (March 6-7, 2020) explicitly addressed to young scientists in the field. It was a successful event with interesting discussions (the online publication is in preparation) (Fig. 1 above).

### Projects:

In February 2021, a new research project financed by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) will start. The four-year project “Etruscan Mirrors in Austria” (Et-MirA) is a collaboration between the Department of Ancient History, Epigraphy and Papyrology of the University of Vienna, the Collection of Greek and Roman Antiquities of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, and the Computer Vision Lab of the Vienna University of Technology; the project leader is Petra Amann. The project intends to produce a detailed study of all Etruscan mirrors held in Austrian museums and public collections, to be published as the volume *Austria* in the *Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum* (CSE). The comprehensive scholarly analysis of circa 60 (partly unpublished) Etruscan mirrors includes the graphic rendering of the artifacts using state-of-the-art techniques of digital pictorial documentation, with exact drawings produced using 3-D scans (Fig. 2).

### Publications:

Our colleague Tina Mitterlechner (University of Vienna) published her fundamental study *Das Bankett. Ein*

*Bildmotiv zwischen Diesseits und Jenseits im vorrömischen Italien (8.-2./1. Jh. v. Chr.)/The banquet. A pictorial motif between this world and the next in pre-Roman Italy*, Holzhausen, Vienna 2020 (series *Phersu* 2). Representations of banquets played an important role in the various communities of pre-Roman Italy; this is especially true for sepulchral art. The motif symbolizes a peaceful and pleasant peer activity both in this world and the next. The study presents the first systematic and comparative analysis of all these scenes in pre-Roman Italy based on the definition of specific banquet types – single banquet, banqueting couple and family banquet – according to the number, gender and posture of the persons depicted. These types convey specific messages about the persons who commissioned the banquet scene and the society they lived in (Fig. 3 right).

### PhDs:

In July 2020, our colleague Claudio Negrini (University of Vienna) successfully completed his doctoral studies with a thesis on the topic “Le comunità pre-romane e la loro identità nella Romagna (Italia) tra VII e III sec.a.C./Pre-Roman Communities and their Identity in the Romagna Region (Italy) between 7th and 3rd centuries BC.” The publication of this study is in preparation (series *Phersu* 3). This thesis analyzed the process of self-identification of the Italic people in Romagna by examining not only archaeological, epigraphic and historical literary sources, but settlement dynamics as well. The multiple and varied pieces of evidence gathered has provided a better understanding of how Italics in this area, formed their own (cultural) identity in contrast to the Etruscans.

David Hack (University of Vienna) is working on his PhD, “Figur und Ideal des Kriegers in Etrurien des 7.-3. Jhs.v.Chr. aus sozialhistorischer Perspektive/ Figure and Ideal of the Warrior in Etruria from a Social Histor-

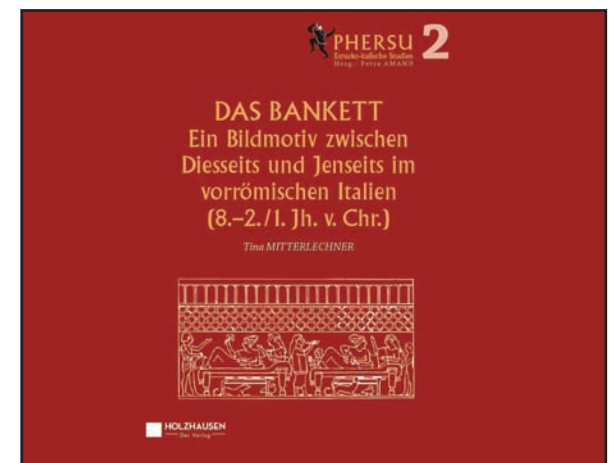


Fig. 2. Inscribed Etruscan mirror in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (inv. ANSA VI 3384), with Tinia flanked by Letun (left) and Uni (right). Probably from Castiglion Fiorentino (Arezzo). Late 4th century BCE. KHM-Museumsverband.

ical Perspective (7th to 3rd centuries BC).” This dissertation is part of the socio-historical focus of the Vienna chair of Etruscology and Pre-Roman Italy Studies.

(Ed. see page 38 for 2021 DARV conference.)

New in the *Phersu* series, by Tina Mitterlechner.



*Pompeii continued from page 26,*

perhaps also freed slaves, a community of Etruscan language and culture. They, however, in order to build their walls, houses and temples, made use of “local workers,” and thus formed a melting pot of cultures, which then animated the Campania region, from the Italics to the Greeks. This rich and powerful city dominated the territory and had its satellite center in nearby Stabiae; which had thousands of foreign contacts and businesses but at the same time honored the values and cults of its origins.

A tragic end came in 474 BC because of the historic naval battle of Cuma, which the Greeks won against the Etruscans. Pompeii, which had sided with the motherland, after that battle was abandoned by its inhabitants. A bit like a *damnatio memoriae*, the darkness that fell over its houses and sanctuaries for decades also took away the memory of its founders.

# CONFERENCES



## The Latest International Congress of Picene Studies and the New Season of Research at the National Archaeological Museum of the Marche (Ancona)

By Nicoletta Frapiccini, Director  
Museo Archeologico Nazionale delle Marche

Many studies, conferences and events have been dedicated to the Picene civilization, from the 1920s to the beginning of the third millennium. They have contributed to defining many traits of this culture, which in 1975 Massimo Pallottino still described as a “great ghost.” Many years later, Giovannangelo Camporeale reiterated in his introductory speech to the XXII Congress of Etruscan and Italic Studies “*The Picenum and Middle-Adriatic Italy*” (Ascoli Piceno, Teramo, Ancona, in 2000), how important it was to fill that gap, so suggestively evoked by the great Pallottino.

Twenty years later, the author of this article promoted a new International Congress of Picene Studies, a meeting point among scholars who, in this long period, have continued or undertaken new studies and researches that have significantly expanded our knowledge on the Picene civilization in the Marche region.

The Congress, (poster above) held in the National Archaeological Museum of the Marche on November 14-16, 2019 included three sessions: the period of the formation of the Picene civilization; the age of its apogee; and finally, the phase of its decline.

Among the studies presented in the first session of the Congress were papers on the finds in our museum: the extensive survey on the materials of the necropolis of Fermo, by Marco Pacciarelli; and the reconstruction of settlement dynamics in Fermo, coordinated by Carmen Esposito (Queen’s University, Belfast), who employed an isotopic study of the geographic mobility of the odontoskeletal collection from the necropoleis. Pasquale Miranda (Univ. Napoli “Federico II”) conducted a further study on the most recent unpublished Fermo graves from the necropolis of Contrada Mossa di Fermo, datable between the 7th and 6th centuries, which give evidence for the ethnic transformation of the settlement of Fermo from a Villanovan to a Picene culture. Many interesting observations also emerged from the systematic study of the oldest burials of the necropolis and the settlement in Montefranco di Pollenza (MC), datable to the 9th-8th century. Benedetta Ficcadenti’s (Univ. Firenze) paper outlines the characteristics of a hitherto unknown phase of this hinterland center, located on an important trade route along the Potenza river valley.



Fig. 1. Holmos from Matelica, Passo Gabella, tomb 1, Ancona, National Archaeological Museum of the Marche.

Tommaso Sabbatini examined in depth the moment of transition between the first Iron Age and the following Orientalizing period in the necropolis from Matelica (Fig. 1), one of the main archaeological contexts of the central Marche. A new contribution on the Orientalizing is given by Anna Maria Sgubini Moretti, in her wide and detailed presentation of the necropolis of Pitino of Sanseverino. It takes into account possible comparisons with the most recent discoveries. Alessandra Sena (Univ. Napoli “Federico II”) is also working on the systematic comprehensive study of the necropolis of Pitino.

Two wide research projects are dedicated to the very rich necropolis of Numana-Sirolo, a site of fundamental importance in Picene studies. Markus Egg and Giacomo Bardelli, with the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum of Mainz, are leading the restoration, study and systematic publication of the grave goods in the “Tomb of the Queen” of Sirolo, which are exhibited in the Antiquarium of Numana (Fig. 2). Fabio Milazzo, responsible for the Superintendency’s laboratory of restoration, collaborates on the project, which is carried out partly in Italy and partly in Germany, while Vincenzo Baldoni is engaged with the study of the numerous Attic figured vases in the tomb (Fig. 3).

Vincenzo Baldoni (Univ. Bologna) coordinates the second project, dedicated to the Hellenistic phase of the necropoleis of Numana-Sirolo. The project considers their development and their burial rituals in the light of recent investigations, with a focus on the Quagliotti Davanzali area of Numana.

Joachim Weidig (Friburg) is studying the finds from the important Archaic necropolis of Belmonte Piceno, which were discovered during the excavations by Innocenzo Dall’Osso in the early 20th century. These



Fig. 2. Above, fibula with zoomorphic pendant, bronze and bone. Below, fibula with zoomorphic protomes, iron and bone. Both last quarter of the 6th century BC, from Sirolo, “Tomb of the Queen, Numana, State Antiquarium.

old finds, and some extraordinary objects from the new excavation campaigns, such as an ivory and amber casket (*Etruscan News* 22, Winter 2020, p. 1), illustrate the Etruscan, Greek and Greek-Oriental influences on this territory. The contacts with Etruria, Greece, Magna Graecia and the eastern Adriatic coast, are the central theme of the reflections on the figured amber from Piceno, in an extensive and updated paper by Nuccia Negroni Catacchio and Veronica Gallo (Univ. Milano).

Finally, the Celtic phase is also the focus of new research; an Italian-French group of scholars, coordinated by Paola Piana Agostinetti (“Sapienza” Univ. Roma) within the ANR CAECINA project, has been conducting the critical review of the 19th century excavations of the rich necropolis of Montefortino di Arcevia. New interpretations were proposed by Edoardo Brizio.

We hope that in the near future these studies will converge in a new, great exhibition on the Picene civilization, to share with the public the new discoveries of the last twenty years of research. This would be the best conclusion of this long and difficult period during which Museums have been closed, and a promising beginning for the future. (*Ed. see new Picene tomb on page 16*)

Fig. 3. Attic black figure krater, end of the 6th century BC, from Sirolo, “Tomb of the Queen, Numana, State Antiquarium.



## LECTURES



ISTITUTO NAZIONALE  
di Studi Etruschi ed Italici

### Convegno of the Istituto Nazionale di Studi Etruschi ed Italici 2021

Plans have been formulated for the next Convegno of the Istituto di Studi Etruschi, according to President Giuseppe Sassatelli. The meeting is to have the theme of “The Etruscans North of the Apennines,” with three major directions of research: 1. The city and its territory: origins and formation (10th-7th century BCE); urban structuring and political reorganization (6th-5th century BCE); 2. Ritual and funerary ideology in the various chronological phases; 3. Relations and interactions with neighboring cultures.

Numerous abstracts have been received and will be sorted into reports (30 minutes), communications (20 minutes) and also posters (no formal presentation), with all eventually to be published in the Atti of the Convegno.

The meeting is planned to take place in Bologna with a target date of October 28-30, 2021. Given the development of the pandemic situation, there remains the possibility of postponing the Convegno to another date.

## ACCORDIA

### Accordia Lectures 2020 – 2021

Professor Ruth Whitehouse has announced the Lectures of the Accordia Research Institute of the University of London for 2020–2021. Because of the on-going pandemic, the lectures will be delivered via Zoom. If the situation changes, Accordia will return to live lectures. If you wish to attend on Zoom, notify Ruth at [accresearch20@gmail.com](mailto:accresearch20@gmail.com). For more information see <https://www.accordia-research.org/>

2020

October 20, 2020

*Who can I be now? Creating community identities in pre-Roman Italy*

Edward Herring, University of Ireland Galway

November 17, 2020

*Gian Francesco Abela: re-assessing the legacy of a 17th century antiquarian in Malta*

Reuben Grima and Nicholas Vella, University of Malta

December 8, 2020

Accordia Anniversary Lecture

*Production and consumption of textiles in pre-Roman Italy: archaeological evidence*

Margarita Gleba, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

2021

January 19, 2021

*Toxic tombs with hegemonic husbands: reconsidering masculine identity in Archaic central Italy*

Eóin O'Donoghue, University of St Andrews

February 23, 2021

*Bodies in persistent places: another look at Nuragic figurines from Sardinia*

Isabelle Vella Gregory, University of Cambridge

March 16, 2021

*World War II in Sicily: protecting archaeology and museums under threat*

Antonino Crisa, University of Ghent

May 11, 2021

*The relics that made Rome: a mythological-material approach to Rome's legendary sacred objects, the pignora imperii*

Eva Mol, University College London

May 25, 2021

*Underwater archaeology in Sicily: a case study of in situ preservation*

Rosanna Volpe, MOLA



AG Etrusker und Italiker  
dArV  
Deutscher Archäologen-Verband e.V.

### Extra muros.

Tombs and surrounding areas  
of Etruscan and Italian cities  
Institute for Archaeological Sciences  
19th Meeting of the Etruscan  
& Italian Working Group  
Bochum, May 14-15, 2021

#### Program

May 14, 2021

#### Section I. Grave Contexts: Architecture, Equipment and Distribution

Sophia Mann (Würzburg), “The Etruscan bronzes of the Martin von Wagner Museum in comparison with pieces from Etruscan tombs.”

Giacomo Bardelli (Mainz), Stefano Finocchi (Ancona), Vincenzo Baldoni (Bologna), “The necropolis of Numana (Prov. Ancona, Italy): Topography, organization and development of the tomb landscape.”

Laura Nazim (Bochum), “Etruscan chamber graves with sarcophagus burials.”

Raffaella Da Vela (Tübingen), “Hidden, but easily accessible. The barrel-vaulted chamber tombs of Cortona. Between interior and landscape.”

Robinson Krämer (Rostock), “Monumental tumuli in Etruria in the 7th century v. Chr. and their function as identity-creating reference points.”

May 15, 2021

#### Section II. Settlement Dynamics

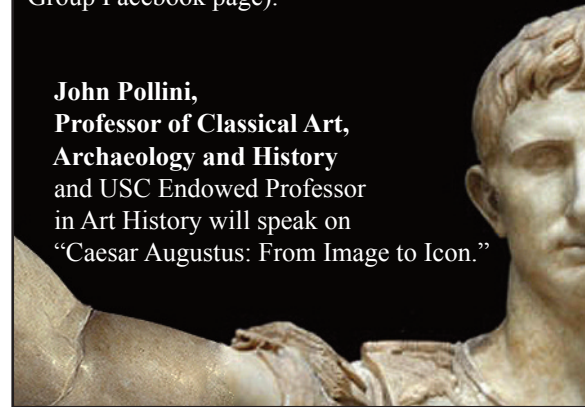
Matthias Hoernes (Innsbruck), “Intra Muros et Extra: walls, graves and Settlement Dynamics in Early Hellenistic Southeast Italy.”

L. Bouke van der Meer (Leiden), “Etruscan surrounding gods.”

### The Del Chiaro Center and the History of Art Department, Berkeley announces the 2021 Del Chiaro Lecture Caesar Augustus: From Image to Icon

The 2021 Del Chiaro Lecture will take place in the spring of 2021. (Stay tuned for exact date; webinar information can be found on the Etruscan Interest Group Facebook page).

John Pollini,  
Professor of Classical Art,  
Archaeology and History  
and USC Endowed Professor  
in Art History will speak on  
“Caesar Augustus: From Image to Icon.”



The Del Chiaro Center  
and the History of Art Department,  
Berkeley announces the  
2021 Del Chiaro Lecture



Archaeological Institute of America  
Larissa Bonfante Lecture

Etruscan Women from Cradle to Grave:  
The Legacy of Larissa Bonfante  
Dr. Jean MacIntosh Turfa,  
The University of Pennsylvania Museum  
Sunday, March 21, 2021 at 3:00 PM

Ever since the Iron Age, Etruscan women have intrigued and challenged those around them. Greek and Roman authors looked askance at their freedom and luxury, but still copied Etruscan culture and technology. Today we understand Etruscans, their society, and especially their women as real people thanks to the engaging research of the late Larissa Bonfante. This lecture is a retrospective of a small fraction of Larissa's studies on Etruscan women's daily lives, with references to discoveries made by students and fellow scholars whom she befriended over the years. Among the topics to be investigated are love, marriage, babies, health (and the invention of false teeth), literacy, jewelry (and the far-flung trade that spread Etruscan civilization to Celtic Europe), fashions (like designer shoes for Greece), priestesses, and divination.

All lectures for the 2020-2021 season will be conducted via Zoom. More specific instructions will be provided as the lecture dates approach.



**tourismA** – International exhibition of archaeology is aimed at all the cultural and economic activities in archaeological, artistic and monumental fields: private and public research institutes, archaeological parks and museums, tourist boards, tour operators and cultural associations. [www.tourisma.it](http://www.tourisma.it)



**Mediterranean Archaeological Tourism Exchange**  
This is the only event of its kind: home to the world's first and largest exhibition hall of archaeological heritage including "ArcheoVirtual," an innovative international exhibition of multimedia, interactive and virtual technologies; a place for in-depth study and dissemination of themes dedicated to cultural tourism and heritage. [www.borsaturismoarcheologico.it](http://www.borsaturismoarcheologico.it)

## PAST LECTURES



### Il vasellame bronzeo nell'Italia preromana (6th-4th c. BC): Forme, associazioni, servizi

An online Seminar, November 13, 2020

Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II"

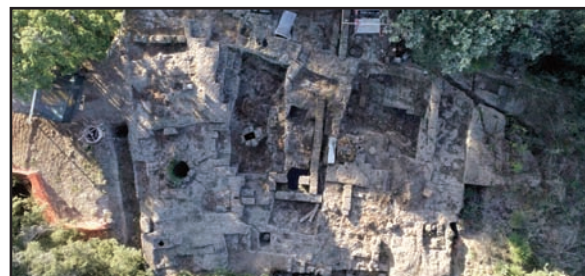
A substantial series of research projects is dedicated to bronze vessels for the banquet and the symposium. These vessels were introduced in the 7th century BC in the central and southern regions of the Italian peninsula subsequent to contact with peoples of the Near East and Greece. Aristocratic groups made a show of these attributes of wealth for the consumption of prestigious items of food and drink. Especially important was wine, and the ways to drink it, with the addition of substances that varied from region to region and therefore required different utensils. The seminar intended to collect common characteristics along with local developments, and to confirm the composition and consistency of significant centers with the ultimate goal of shining a spotlight on contacts and relations among elites.

Presentations at the seminar by: Alessandro Naso (Introduction), Giulia Morpurgo (Felsina), Giacomo

Bardelli (Picenum), Martina Zinni (Agro Faliscus), Rocco Mitro (Lucania), Maria Pina Garaguso (Enotria), Daniela Fardella (Samnium), Fernando Gilotta (Santa Maria Capua Vetere).

## The Barker Etruscan lecture series British Museum

**2015:** Tom Rasmussen, University of Manchester, *An Etruscan affair: the impact of early Etruscan discoveries on European culture*. **2016:** Lisa Pieraccini, UC Berkley, *Dining with the Dead: Consumption, Commemoration and Catering in Etruria*. **2017:** Vincent Jolivert, CNRS, *Etruscans Macedonians and the enigma of the Grotte Scalina tomb*. **2018:** Patrick Davidson – goldsmith, *Etruscan Goldwork through the eyes of a Practising Goldsmith*. **2019:** Nancy de Grummond, FSU, *Sanctuaries Gods and Myths of the Etruscans*. Graham Barker, sponsor of this lecture series is author of the recent book, *Imperial Legitimation: The Iconography of the Golden Age Myth on Roman Imperial Coinage of the Third Century AD*. **2020**, ISBN 978-1-912667-47-5.



### Cerveteri: nuovi scavi e ricerche nel santuario del Manganello

Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche  
Istituto di Scienze del Patrimonio Culturale

November 24, 2020

Salvatore Piro (ISPC Roma), "Le prospezioni geofisiche nell'area esterna al santuario del Manganello."

Vincenzo Bellelli (ISPC Roma), "Memorie dal sottosuolo: i risultati della campagna di scavo 2019 nel santuario del Manganello."

Mario Mazzoli (A.S.S.O. Archeologia Subacquea Speleologia e Organizzazione), "L'intervento nel Pozzo Sud."

Lorenzo Chiricò (Università di Bari), Federica Galletta (Università di Firenze), "Il Pozzo Sud: La struttura e il riempimento."

Folco Biagi (Università La Sapienza; Museo di Murlo), "Contributo alla storia della ricerca archeologica a Cerveteri: appunti sulla figura e sull'opera di Sabino De Nisco."

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



Call for Papers  
International Virtual Mirror Studies  
Conference (IVMSC) March 2021

Page 39

The Mirror Studies Project and Normal University in Beijing are organizing an International Virtual Mirrors Studies Conference in March 2021. The conference theme is *Mirrors: an interdisciplinary approach*. Scholars and researchers from different academic backgrounds are all welcome. Topics are mirrors and geography; humanities; social sciences; sciences; art; philosophy; and mirrors as archaeological objects.

The date of the conference is March 5, 2021, abstracts should be submitted by December 30, 2020, to: [goran.djur-djevich@gmail.com](mailto:goran.djur-djevich@gmail.com); Extensions may be granted for topics on Greek, Roman or Etruscan mirrors (Please copy Nancy de Grummond, [ndegrummond@fsu.edu](mailto:ndegrummond@fsu.edu)).

Organizers will provide a book of abstracts with the main information about the conference schedule, contact and instructions for online attending. Proceedings have the potential to be published.

You can learn more about the Mirror Studies Project at [www.mirrorstudies.com](http://www.mirrorstudies.com).



Call for Papers  
Southeastern Italy  
in the 1st millennium BCE  
AIA 2021 Annual Meeting, San Francisco

Although South Italian artifacts constituted the backbone of the collections of the major European museums from their very beginning, the economically depressed state in which Apulia and Basilicata remained in the 19th century had long lasting consequences on how this region has been perceived and discussed in scholarship. Yet, in antiquity it was far from being peripheral. Archaeological excavations in the past 60 years have revealed evidence of long-range trade, migration, and extensive cultural contacts with the eastern Mediterranean, ever since prehistory.

Possible topics may include: local and International trade and economy; production and trade of pottery, textiles, or metal objects; technological innovations and hybridity; architecture and urban development; mobility (peninsular and transadriatic); religion (sanctuaries, cults); funerary practices; social developments.

Abstracts for papers should be submitted electronically by February 15, 2021 to [SEItaly2022@gmail.com](mailto:SEItaly2022@gmail.com), preferably with the subject heading "AIA 2022 Abstract." They will be judged anonymously and should not reveal the author's name, but the body of the email should provide name, abstract title, and affiliation. Abstracts should be 300 words or fewer and should follow the AIA guidelines.

Questions or inquiries may be directed to:

Bice Peruzzi ([bice.peruzzi@classics.rutgers.edu](mailto:bice.peruzzi@classics.rutgers.edu))  
Christian Heitz ([christian.heitz@uibk.ac.at](mailto:christian.heitz@uibk.ac.at)) or  
Leah Bernardo Ciddio ([lbciddio@umich.edu](mailto:lbciddio@umich.edu)).



### Field School

## Necropoli del Vallone di San Lorenzo 2021: Montecchio (TR), IT

July 5, 2021 to July 30, 2021

Application Deadline: March 31, 2021.

Affiliation: Università degli Studi di Perugia

Project Directors: Prof. Gian Luca Grassigli (Università degli Studi di Perugia), Prof. Sarah Harvey (Kent State University)

Project Description: This Umbro-Etruscan necropolis was first excavated in 1855 by Domenico Golini, and work continued in the mid 20th century and later by the archaeological superintendency, with more recent excavations in 2017 and 2019. Around 50 chamber tombs have been discovered to date, and a remarkable tomb built from travertine blocks was discovered in 2019. We will continue to excavate around the vicinity of this tomb in 2021, and plan to explore an adjacent plateau of Copio, where we hypothesize the settlement was located. Survey data indicate the occupation of Copio may have extended from the Iron Age to the Roman period.

Participants will be trained in excavation techniques, recording methods, and artifact processing, and learn about the site history. They will also work with artifacts from the current or previous seasons in the local museum. Occasional field trips to other ancient sites and/or museums in the region will take place as well.

Project Size: 1-24 participants

Minimum Length of Stay for Volunteers: 4 weeks

Minimum Age: 18

Info at: [www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/necropoli-del-vallone-di-san-lorenzo-2021](http://www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/necropoli-del-vallone-di-san-lorenzo-2021)

### Exhibition

## Taras and Vatl, Gods of the Sea, Founders of cities

Archaeology of Taranto in Vetulonia  
Vetulonia, Archaeological Museum  
"Isidoro Falchi"

April 17 - November 7, 2021

The subject of this new exhibition, in collaboration with the National Archaeological Museum of Taranto (MARTA), are two cities, one Greek, the other Etruscan, whose destinies, from their origins in the mythical nature of their founding heroes, appear timelessly inter-



### Field School

## Monteverdi: Interconnected Mobility of People and Economy along the River Ombrone Project

May 23 – June 30, 2021

The field school excavations focus on a late Etruscan-Republican sanctuary and related vicus (Podere Cannicci), and on a deserted Medieval village (Castellaraccio di Monteverdi), along with the middle valley of the Ombrone river. These sites represent a unique occasion to investigate economies in transition and settlement patterns in the territory of Paganico. The number of participants is limited to 16 to ensure an exceptional learning experience. The excavations are carried out by the University at Buffalo – SUNY, Michigan State University and the Cooper Union of New York.

The course is a fundamental introduction to stratigraphic excavation methods and to studies of excavated artifacts. Subjects include excavation methods and their application, analysis of built structures and archaeological features, context analysis, finds handling and recording, and studies of ceramic, glass, metal, bone, and numismatic material. The field school is located near the modern town of Paganico (Grosseto, IT). It is set in the breath-taking middle valley of the Ombrone river close to Montalcino, Siena, and Grosseto. Deadline to enroll in the program: March 14, 2021.

As we constantly monitor the progress of the Covid-19 pandemic in Italy and around the world, a final decision on the field school will be made in April 2021.

Contact us:

Dr. Alessandro Sebastiani, [as424@buffalo.edu](mailto:as424@buffalo.edu) or

Dr. Michell Hobart, [michelle.hobart@cooper.edu](mailto:michelle.hobart@cooper.edu)

[www.imperoproject.com](http://www.imperoproject.com)



twined with the sea, with its symbols and its natural, divine and monstrous creatures. The connected historical events of the two centers, Taranto and Vetulonia, are the theme of the exhibition. The symbol and principal example of this connection will be the mythological fig-



Dr. Lucio Rovati in the foundation's new library.

## Science, Etruscology, Art The library of the Rovati Foundation is born in Monza

The Rovati Foundation of Monza is completing the construction of the Etruscan Museum in Milan and it announces the opening in 2021 of the museum's library, which will be in Monza in the historic headquarters of Rottapharm Biotech. In synergy with the forthcoming Etruscan Museum, the core of the library consists of two important and large book collections devoted to archaeology. The first one was put together by Giovannangelo Camporeale (1933-2017), late President of the Institute for Etruscan and Italic Studies and Lucumon of the Accademia Etrusca of Cortona, and it is completely focused on Etruscology. The second belonged to Professor Emilio Arrigoni (1939-2020), full professor of Historical Geography for the Ancient World at the University of Milan.

The Foundation will also incorporate the scientific library created during Professor Rovati's entrepreneurial career and the private collection of art books belonging to the founders. The library will offer books and papers on the history of landscape, ancient topography, archaeology, the history of religions, antiquities, Greek and Latin, the geography of the ancient world, and relevant collections such as the *Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum* and *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*; it will also house specialized magazines, as well as art volumes with a focus on contemporary arts. The Fondazione Luigi Rovati dedicates the new library to the late Professor Emeritus Professor Luigi Rovati one year after his passing.

This new space will feature a large and welcoming study room equipped with computers. The whole catalogue will be accessible online, and the Foundation is currently digitizing the vast collection of books and magazine extracts. Instructions on how to access the library and the relevant safety measures will be disclosed on occasion of the opening in 2021.

ures on the most representative coins of the two cities: Vatl, with the sea dragon hood on his head, on the bronze coin from Vetulonia; and Taras, with his trident, riding the back of a dolphin on the silver coin from Taranto. Co-curated by Eva Degli Innocenti (MARTA) and Simona Rafanelli (Museo "Isidoro Falchi"), the event will coincide with an international archaeological conference focused on the same themes. The exhibition and conference are dependent upon COVID-19 restrictions. For future info: [www.museoisidorofalchi.it](http://www.museoisidorofalchi.it)



# MOVIE REVIEWS



Director versus director, author with Matteo Rovere in his studio (Photo: A. Tanzarella).

## From Movie to Museum An unprecedented collaboration between the Villa Giulia and a major international television series

by Valentino Nizzo

Director of the National Museum of the Villa Giulia

My meeting with Matteo Rovere, director and producer of the *Romulus* series, happened almost by chance in February 2019, thanks to an “archaeoreview” of his highly acclaimed film “Il Primo Re,” “The First King,” published on my YouTube channel Etruschannel. The brilliant young director asked me to collaborate as a consultant on the series being produced by Britian’s Sky TV. The movie was already almost entirely outlined in the plot and essential characters. Thus in the museum galleries I suddenly found myself not only commenting on the scripts with the authors, set designers, costume designers, prop makers, scriptwriters, and assistant directors, but also verifying the sets once they were set up.

Unusual questions arose that could range from the correctness of a certain actor’s expression to what they ate, to the interior furnishings, the choice and reconstruction of a scene, or the method of measuring time and space. (At the same time, I also arranged the making of a documentary related to the series, shot almost entirely inside the National Etruscan Museum of Villa Giulia.) Not all of my suggestions were accepted, either



for the sake of the narrative or for such issues as safety. The use of stirrups and the very practice of riding, or the presence of windows in Villanovan huts are details that could not be corrected. Also, the characters of augurs and haruspices, in an era in which the King most likely drew the auspices or interpreted divine will, were narrative liberties deemed necessary by the authors to give movement to the plot.

On the one hand, the approach of the creators and directors to this new saga is characteristic of fiction that aims to attract the general public and consequently must *Below*, scenes from the *Romulus* series taken from Sky-Now TV (Photos: F. Fago.)



feed on some necessary stereotypes and narrative conventions. On the other hand, it aims with great courage and intelligence to propose a hyper-realistic myth-historical landscape. But the literary tradition contains innumerable anachronisms and contradictions, and it is also not possible to offer a realistic and correct image of the 8th century BC as we know it from the archaeological record. With *Romulus* we are therefore faced with an anthropological reconstructive process, with fantasy, but starting from mythological and narrative archetypes based on the sources.

In the plot, examples of this are the ceremonial initiation rites of the Luperci and the invention of the Ruminales people — a group of youths devoted to a newly invented goddess, Lupa/Rumia — who were forced to



The author inside a hut rebuilt on the set of *Romulus* in July 2019. (Photo: S. Sanchirico).

leave their homeland according to the practice of the *Ver Sacrum*. The whole narrative fabric is aimed at re-establishing legend on a new basis, the mythical and sociological heritage of the period.

Critics and commentators will have a lot of fun trying to identify the many learned references hidden among the folds of the series: from the temple of Vesta, its structure based on the bronze hut urn from Vulci preserved in Villa Giulia; to the cat called Mau, inspired by one found in the excavation of a hut at Fidene; to the ancillia shields hanging on the walls of the cave of Attus and reproduced from those found in tomb 1036 of Veio’s Casale del Fosso; to the name of the Greek potter Eulinos.

The *Romulus* series also represented a very ambitious narrative challenge in the use of the languages artificially reconstructed, such as Proto-Latin or Oscan. For those like me who had to supervise its historical content and verify its archaeological credibility, it was a unique experience. In many respects it was necessary to make a leap of imagination, but I approached this goal with the pleasure and fascination of seeing what I have studied for years manifested in the film, of seeing an anonymous Latin people - certainly not those we have studied in books – come to life, act, suffer, die, fight, and fall in love. It has been a stimulating experience, a challenge to bring the widest possible audience closer to an era that has been an extraordinary moment in western history and, we hope, to inspire them to look for what they saw on television inside the halls of an extraordinary but still little visited museum such as the Villa Giulia.



## BOOK REVIEWS

### Etruscan Literacy in its Social Context



edited by  
Ruth D. Whitehouse

*Etruscan Literacy in its Social Context.* Edited by Ruth D. Whitehouse. Volume 18, *Accordia Specialist Studies on Italy*. London, Accordia Research Institute, University of London, 2020. Pp. 200. ISBN 978-1-873415-37-5. With a tribute to Larissa Bonfante. Review by Jean Turfa.

This set of papers originally presented at the Accordia Conference of September 2010 illustrates the wide variety of the authors' interests and is one of a happily – growing number of major publications in English dealing with Etruscan society and/or Etruscan language and literature. The chronological focus of the conference was the 8th through 5th centuries, so the Orientalizing and Archaic periods are well represented here, with many later examples also included.

A. Tuck and R. Wallace offer their imaginative interpretation of the impressive variety of types and find-spots seen in the inscriptions of Orientalizing Poggio Civitate (Murlo). Gift and exchange tokens, architectural inscriptions (including *sigla*) express the associations and importance of Murlo's ruling class, and some of those named are women.

J. Gran-Aymerich and M. Hadas-Lebel discuss options for analyzing inscriptions on pottery from the region of Caere and Pyrgi, with special insights from the excavations at La Castellina del Marangone. They suggest modes of sorting the data to furnish information on the activities of obtaining, making and social display of locally produced vases, with special attention to *sigla*.

V. Belfiori and L. Medori develop rigorous criteria for identifying artists' signatures, such as verbs of making, *zinace*, and find only 12 unequivocal examples. Early signatures name both donor and artist in gift exchange. From the late 7th century on, decorators are named but not donors; this suggests the presence of specialized workshops with literate artists. D. Maras considers some of the same examples among gift vases that name donor and decorator (with several female donors) and suggests some complex poetic figures of speech that may preserve hints of oral aspects of Etruscan language.

D. Paleothodoros considers Etruscan 6th-5th-century vase painters' signatures: most names are slightly unusual, indicating for images inspired by Greek art the cachet of foreign origins or special training (naming Greeks like "Arnth Praxias," and an Etruscan from Campania, Kape Mukathesa). (See also Bonfante, below).

M.C. Biella presents the early expertise of the Faliscans of Narce and Falerii in inscribing complex statements on vases. All seven Narce vases are in the Etruscan language; of five vases at Falerii, one is in Etruscan, the rest Faliscan. Clearly craftsmen traveled early and widely and many embraced new influences readily.

L. Ambrosini analyses the inscriptions on Etruscan gems and finds that buyers/commissioners probably wrote the labels and selected mythical images of relevance to their family histories. Later gems display *praenomina*, early engravings identify the *gens* as socially significant.

G. Bagnasco-Gianni and N.T. de Grummond present the International Etruscan *Sigla* Project, to create a corpus of such short inscriptions, letters, numbers or symbols found on all categories of Etruscan artifacts. Already such surveys are pointing up some previously unsuspected ritual activities. A dozen common signs are codified under Latin terms, including anchors, double-axes, branches, stars and tridents. Excavators, museum folk *et al.* should all be contributing to this major corpus.

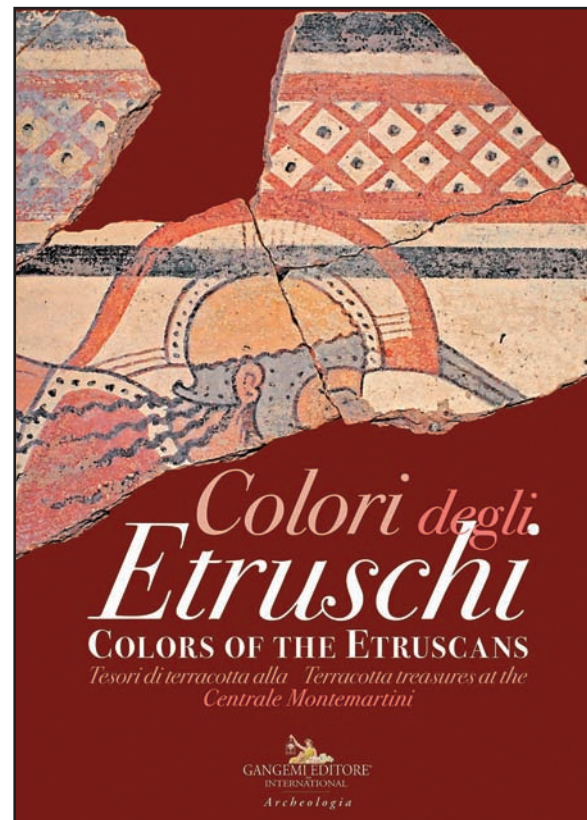
M. Di Fazio summarizes past scholarship on uses of inscriptions among the Etruscan elite, suggesting that monuments of land division, family history, and markers of time were intended to show the accomplishments of the grand families. (See also Becker, below.)

The late Larissa Bonfante pointed out some cases where Etruscan labels were applied to mythical compositions that originated in Greek art, for instance the Praxias vase (discussed from a different angle by Paleothodoros) commuting the image of Hermes and baby Dionysos to Peleus and baby Achilles. The 7th-century Tragliatella oinochoe may have turned the story of Ariadne into an Etruscan family history by discerning use of labels.

M. Harari offers an imaginative interpretation of the use of the Pyrgi gold plaques by the Caeretan ruler Thefarie Velianas. He implies the ruler's intensive pro-Punic leanings, which may have provoked the citizens' animus expressed in the Temple A *columen* sculpture portraying divine punishment.

H. Becker surveys the colorful evidence for private archives in Etruria; aristocratic families and sanctuaries may well have dedicated space and time for the archiving of documents, but it seems as if the state had little involvement in this. The number of representations of supernaturals (Vanth, male and female demons) displaying human documents is impressive.

R. Whitehouse presents anthropological background to the study of Etruscan naming conventions with much food for thought. In addition to hers, several more articles could be quite useful to start off students in research topics (Belfiore and Medori on signatures, Bonfante on labelling of art, Bagnasco Gianni and de Grummond on *sigla*, and Becker on archives and images of documents.



*Colori degli Etruschi. Colors of the Etruscans. Tesori di terracotta alla – Terracotta treasures at the – Centrale Montemartini.* Editors: N. Agnoli, L. Bochicchio, D.F. Maras and R. Zaccagnini. Rome, Gangemi editore, 2019. ISBN 978-88-492-3767-2. Pp. 256.

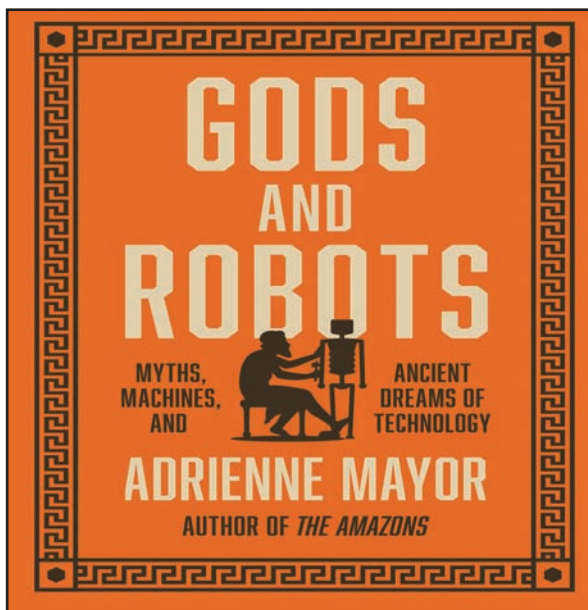
Review by Jean Turfa.

This exhibition (July 11, 2019 to February 2, 2020) is a reworking of the exciting 2018 show, *Pittura di Terracotta*, originally staged in the Santa Severa castle at Pyrgi. (See *Etruscan News* 21, 2019, pp. 1, 6-7; 26.) Eminently accessible to anglophone readers, it is completely bilingual Italian-English, although some English translations fail to do justice to the elegant Italian originals. All the confiscated plaques are fragmentary, and it may be difficult for laymen to visualize their original state in the absence of reconstruction drawings.

Painted terracotta plaques from several museums are linked with the fragmentary finds confiscated from antiquities dealers who had hidden them in a Geneva warehouse. In addition to the items recovered and repatriated to Italy by the Carabinieri are loans from several foreign museums; these include plaques, architectural terracottas (pp. 219-240, nos. 117-168) and other items such as Attic vases, which illustrate the art and cultural interests of the Etruscan heartland in the 6th and 5th centuries BCE. This show is arranged thematically, with a catalogue of all items and a series of essays by assorted authors on related topics, including the history of the seizures, the Heracles images, Greek myths in Etruscan art, production and technical details, and conservation procedures for the recovered terracottas. Themes gathered mythological narratives, "A partying people" (banquets, entertainment), sports, games and music, and "the valor of warriors" (with brief interesting background on Etruscan warfare by Vincenzo d'Ercole).

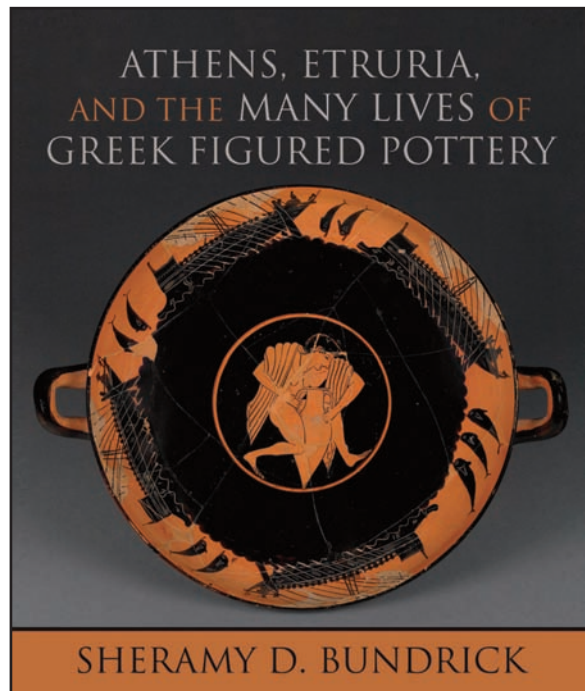
Painted plaques made in Cerveteri have been appearing, in tombs and other contexts, since the excavations of the Banditaccia tombs in 1836-1853; the famous

Campana Plaques (Louvre) and Boccanera Slabs (British Museum) are early examples. Some of the Geneva trove came from clandestine excavations during the 1960s to the present that probably exposed (and destroyed) residential areas of the city. Although terribly damaged, many pieces give glimpses of astounding beauty and color; some are so fine they were once mistaken for forgeries (many items are now validated by thermoluminescence or other testing noted here). Several display details of manufacture such as installation marks (letters), scoring from controlled breaks for special mounting, or ancient repair, retouching, or remounting in a different structure from the original location. Daniele Maras points out an artist's signature; some have ancient graffiti and must have been accessible for many years. Some are narrative, with sets of tile-like segments mounted together to show the progression of a story. Male skin tones range from near white to brown and dark red, while one scene shows two youths, one white one black. Other gems of Etruscan painting are rare myths such as the Blinding of Teiresias (with nude Athena), flamboyantly costumed musicians, athletes, dancers and warriors, including actual armor rescued from the illicit art market. This color catalogue is a resource for all sorts of research and enjoyment.



**Not specifically Etruscan, but noteworthy:** Adrienne Mayor, *Gods and Robots. Myths, Machines and Ancient Dreams of Technology*. Princeton University Press, 2018. Pp. 275. ISBN 978-0-691-18351-0. Review by Jean Turfa

The ancient imagination that fueled Hephaistos' robotic handmaidens, the menacing bronze giant Talos and the not-quite ultralite flight of Daidalos and Ikaros ultimately spawned a host of modern movies such as *Metropolis* and remains a rich source of Classical names for weapons and other products. The author, who has researched *The First Fossil Hunters*, *The Poison King* and *Amazons*, has credited the artists of Etruscan mirrors with creating unique interpretations of a number of famous Greek techno-myths: p.18, fig. 1.7 (Talos); p.40, fig. 2.4 (Medea's rejuvenation "magic"); p.55, fig. 3.2 (Eos/Thesand and Tithonos); p.140, fig. 7.7 (Sethlans/Hephaistos making an artificial horse "Pecse"); and p.75, fig. 4.3 (Pasiphae and baby Minotaur, a Faliscan Red Figure kylix from Vulci).



Sheramy D. Bundrick, *Athens, Etruria and the Many Lives of Greek Figured Pottery*. *Wisconsin studies in Classics*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2019.

Review by Nancy de Grummond

This book makes a refreshing innovative change from the standard treatment of Greek vases in Etruria, in which they are often admired for their high quality, studied as valuable trade items, and researched as examples of leading potters, painters and workshops in Attica and other geographic areas. Such a perspective also normally stresses the context of how the Etruscans got Hellenized, a much overworked theme. Bundrick turns the view around and looks at Greek vases as objects that have a biography—many lives—beginning in the workshops, passing through the hands of traders who understood consumer demand, continuing with acquisition by Etruscans, who would then utilize the vessels for their own purposes. She stresses the placement in tombs, a limited and liminal space, in which the vessels might have special meaning because of form, iconography or function.

Scrutinizing batch trading marks, prices and shipwrecks, Bundrick establishes a context of merchants who knew their routes and customers, and who gave feedback to the workshops in Athens on the type of wares they would like to take to Etruria. It has frequently been observed that the Nikosthenic amphora was a product that showed attention to forms popular in Etruria; Bundrick now asks the same question from a much more detailed and varied point of view that looks into the various usages of Athenian vases in the final stage of their "lives," and thereby closely examines Etruscan practices and reasoning in including Greek vases in their tombs. For example, in a chapter on "The Mastery of Water," she argues that vessels that related to the Etruscan interests in water—whether in navigation, hydraulics, rituals or beliefs in the afterlife—were actually targeted to attract buyers in Etruria. She even refers to the "etruscanization" of Greek workshops that were in the business of answering to the requests for supplying these items. There are many other similarly fresh observations and arguments in the volume that provide

a new way of interrogating items in Etruscan tombs and understanding more meaningfully the dynamics of intercultural trade.



*"L'Uomo di mare" di Tarquinia, Tavola Rotonda: Tra archeologia e antropologia. Quali interazioni, quali problemi?* Edited by Maria Bonghi Jovino. Collana Tarchna -- Quaderni 1 2018 Ledizioni.

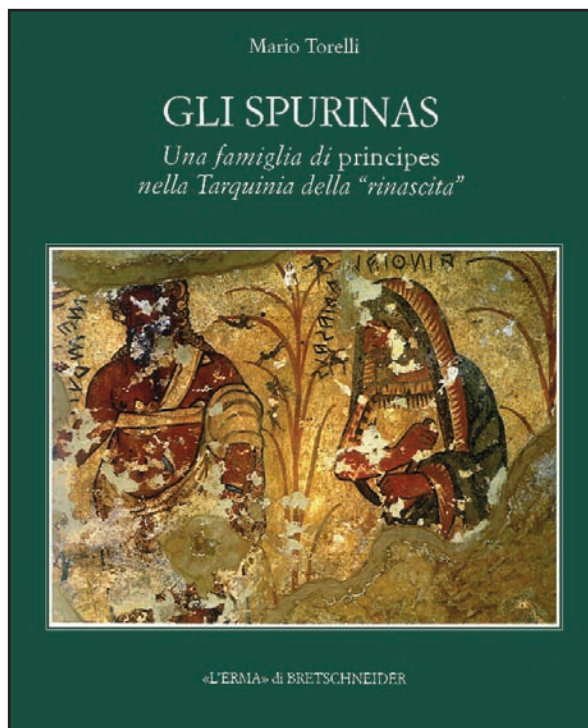
Review by Nancy de Grummond

The idea of this new book is to assemble the results of a round table based on the volume edited by M. Bonghi Jovino, *"L'uomo di mare" di Tarquinia. un sacrificio umano nel contesto abitativo tra riflessione teorica e documentazione archeologica*, Tarchna Suppl. 5, Milan 2017 (*Etruscan News* 21, Winter 2019, p. 27). It opens up the series *Quaderni di Tarchna* and follows the preceding round table dedicated to the results of excavation at Tarquinia after fifteen years (1998): *Archeologia della città. Dal documento alla ricostruzione – Appunti per un dibattito*.

As had happened in 1998, when evidence of the formation of one of the most important Etruscan cities was coming to light, Tarquinia yielded evidence in the last fifteen years of a theme that is now drawing the attention of scholars of different disciplines: archaeology, palaeoanthropology, and anthropology. Burials of adults and sub-adults came to light in the "monumental complex" of the Pian di Civita showing that a new category of "buried among the living" had to be added to that of the well-known deposition of infants in the *suggrundaria*.

After Giuseppe Sassatelli's and Marco E. Minoja's introduction, Mario Torelli, Valentino Nizzo and Massimiliano Di Fazio offer a general overview of the theme of the "buried among the living" and human sacrifice. Elisabetta Govi and Giovanna Bagnasco Gianni present new data from Marzabotto and Tarquinia.

The topic is difficult and complex in its implications because it occupies a large space with a wide range of evidence: excavation documentation, interpretation of literary and historical sources, characteristics of rituals, aspects of religious conceptions, and evaluation of the invisible in the various anthropological contexts.



**Mario Torelli, *Gli Spurinās, Una famiglia di principes nella Tarquinia della "rinascita."* Rome: "L'ERMA" di Bretschneider, 2019.**

Review by Nancy de Grummond

This is a profoundly personal book, written by Mario Torelli in his last years among us. It begins with an almost lyrical account of how the young Torelli first began to be intrigued with the Latin inscriptions concerning the Spurinna (Etr. Spurinās) family, discovered earlier at Tarquinia beside the grand temple called "Ara della Regina." While on an academic errand in 1968 on behalf of the great French archaeologist Jacques Heurgon, who had asked for a photo of a noted inscription, Torelli ended up in the *magazzini* of the Palazzo Vitelleschi at Tarquinia looking at all the Latin marble inscriptions it was possible to assemble. Coming across one that had the letters *SPVR*, he quickly intuited its relationship to a group of 4 other joined fragments and in a flash transformed the understanding of that inscription, as referring to the career of the noble Velthur Spurinna, son of Lars.

Torelli began to publish on the Latin inscriptions, dated to the early Roman Empire, and worked on issues concerning them throughout his career. Thus in this new book he refers to some 35 of his publications, most important of which was his 1975 study, *Elogia Tarquiniensia*, which systematically reviewed the inscriptions, and identified three members of the family: Velthur son of Lars; Velthur son of Velthur; and Aulus son of Velthur; and he conjectured about the dating and nature of their distinguished political and military lives. In that work he also explored the context of the inscriptions within the sanctuary of the temple of the Ara della Regina (Who was the deity of the place? What do other inscriptions tell us?) and taking a close look at the Tarquinian Tomba dell'Orco, he argued from Etruscan inscriptions that it was actually the great burying ground of the family. He thus brilliantly associated in a compelling way three major categories of Etruscan archaeology—inscriptions, temple and painted tomb – and connected some of the most famous monuments of the Etruscans to produce a series of hypotheses that would for the first

time provide something of a history of a great Etruscan family.

In this new and final treatment, Torelli brings together a *summula* (as he modestly calls it) of 50 years of scholarly debate, sometimes acrimonious, in which his edifice of the Spurinās family has been intensely and passionately scrutinized—sometimes being applauded and sometimes attacked. He relitigates old disagreements, and sometimes admits that he has changed his mind about some points. He frequently writes in the first person, and we can walk in his shoes as he goes over and over old ground and rakes it with newly sharpened tools. He has also veered into new controversies, for example in his pronouncements on the Ara della Regina, which in a period after the 1975 volume became the object of lengthy and scrupulously careful examination and extensive publication by the University of Milan team led by Maria Bonghi Jovino and subsequently by Giovanna Bagnasco Gianni. He has persisted in his belief that the temple was dedicated to Tinia, although Bonghi Jovino has stated clearly that there is not a scrap of evidence for this Etruscan god (*Studi Etruschi*, LXXXI), and he has insisted that the famed winged horses of the Ara della Regina were pulling a biga within which was Tinia, instead of Heracles at his apotheosis; the latter was well demonstrated by Bagnasco Gianni, who recognized that the pediment of Temple III of the Ara della Regina contained the image of the Hyades putting out the fire of the funeral pyre of the hero (*Deliciae Fictilis* IV).

One of the finest features of the new work is the section on the Tomba dell'Orco, dated to the 4th century BCE, the heyday of the Spurinās, with numerous high-quality color photographs made for Torelli by his colleague Lucio Fiorini. The paintings of the Orco are examined in the minutest detail, and even if there may be objections to the connection of the tomb with the Spurinās (see below), the descriptions and review of scholarship make this the basic reference work for future study of the iconography of the tomb. As usual, Torelli was spurred to his own original passionate observations by his opposition to stances made by other scholars. The unusual ground plan of the Tomba dell'Orco, which has been argued to be two separate tombs (Orco I and Orco II) that were joined by cutting a third between them (Orco III), is interpreted so that Orco III is no longer labeled thus. Instead this *corridoio* is considered to be done at the same time as Orco II, with the same subject matter, a *templum sub terris* of the Underworld.

Torelli tries again to answer adequately his critics who have objected to his reading of the inscriptions that refer to a family name ending in [...]*urinās*. Nowhere in the tomb does the name Spurinās occur, but in one inscription the name is clearly Murinās (A. Morandi Tarabella and G. Colonna, *Studi Etruschi* LXI). Thus in the cases where the name is [...]*urinās*, it has been argued that the reference is to the Murinās family. Torelli's solution to this problem is to insist on his own readings for the original usage of the tomb, and to argue that the Murinās family came to the tomb late, after the Spurinās were in decline. This interpretation is strengthened by the fact that the Murinās inscription is written in lamp-black and not painted, and is on a roughly dressed, unpainted part of the wall that may have been created when the *corridoio* was cut.

The book concludes with the last of the Etruscan Spurinās family, and a touching note of reconciliation with Morandi Tarabella, who had recognized an inscription identifying young Arnth Spurinās depicted on a sarcophagus of the 3d century BCE of the Partunus family, into which his mother had remarried. Apparently deceased as a child (he holds a ball and a bird), Arnth represents for Torelli the vicissitudes of a once great family that had its last representative die young as a member of another, more powerful, family.



**Sabino De Nisco, *Cerveteri, Pyrgi e le origini degli Etruschi*, edited by Vincenzo Bellelli and Folco Biagi, preface by Rossella Zaccagnini, Johan & Levi Editore, Monza, ISBN 978-88-6010-231-7, 128 pages.**

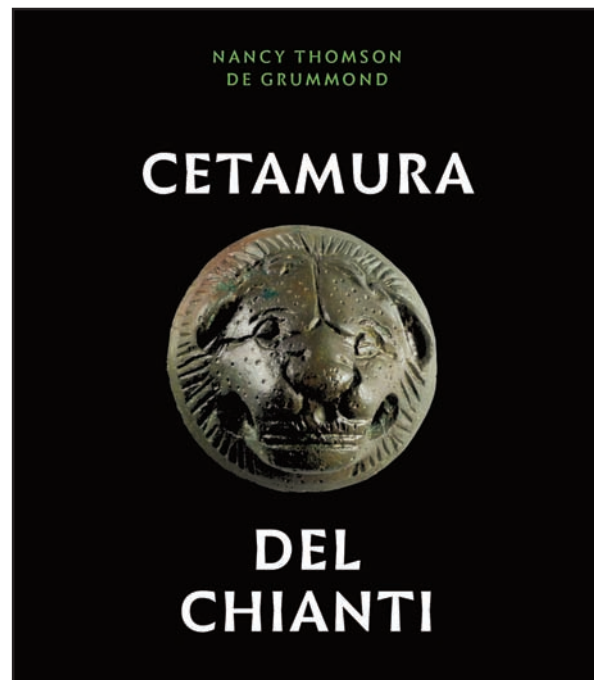
Review by Micaela Acquistapace

Two essays by Sabino De Nisco originally published in 1909, "Origini di Caere. Monografia storico-archeologica-geografica" and "La divinità del tempio di Pyrgi nella mitologia e nella storia," have been collected in this elegant booklet. Thanks to the introduction by the two editors, Vincenzo Bellelli and Folco Biagi, they regain experts' attention after a long time in oblivion. De Nisco's biographical details were and remain scarce, although a copy of the original manuscript of the text on Cere, fortuitously found in a flea market, has provided enough information to sketch the author's youth and education. He was born in a village near Avellino in the Campania region, studied in seminary and graduated at the University of Naples, members of his degree commission being the archaeologist Giulio De Petra, the geographer Filippo Porena and the historian Alberto Pirro. He then moved and lived for a long time in Cerveteri; he apparently left the priesthood behind after the publication of the two essays and left almost no trace of his life experiences in the following years.

The two texts give proof of a solid knowledge of the territory of Cerveteri, a strong archaeological competence and awareness of topographical issues. These qualities are also evident in the three tables (the map of "Caere and surroundings," the "Galassi-Regulini [*sic*] tomb" and the "terramare of Rovere") drawn for the text on Cere, which was an elaboration of his thesis.

It is on the basis of a topographical-historical approach, mixing ancient sources and archaeological evidence, that De Nisco's text on the origin of Cere actually unfolds as a theory on the origin of the Etruscans themselves, to become a fully-fledged contribution to the archaeological debate of that time. De Nisco refuses the theory of a sea migration from the East, and actually embraces a position that will get a foothold only decades later, in favor of the idea of an evolution influenced by the northern terramaricoli.

The second essay has its roots in the same method of analysis, combining written traditions and archaeological proofs despite a more historical bias, and identifies as Leucothea the goddess worshipped in the temple of Pyrgi. The method and the conclusion are no novelty, but De Nisco offers an extremely fresh and intriguing description of Pyrgi as a lively commercial port where Etruscans could consolidate their trades and exchanges with the Greeks and Phoenicians. To support his viewpoint, he quotes the third book of Aristotle's *Politics* and refers to the Etruscan inscription on ivory found in Carthage. In the light of the discovery of the Pyrgi tablets in 1964, his stance gains a somewhat prophetic flavor.



*Cities and Communities of the Etruscans*  
Nancy T. de Grummond, *Cetamura del Chianti*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-4773-1993-2

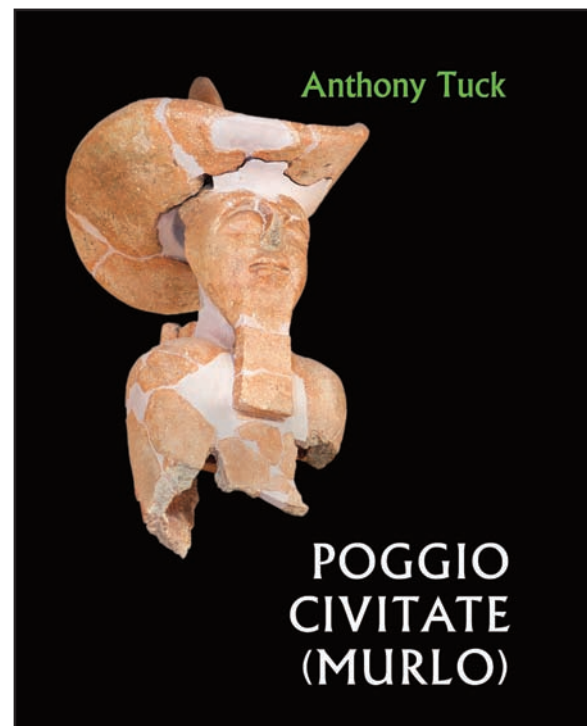
Anthony Tuck, *Poggio Civitate (Murlo)*, Austin: University of Texas Press, ISBN: 978-1-4773-2295-6 forthcoming.

Submission from the University of Texas Press

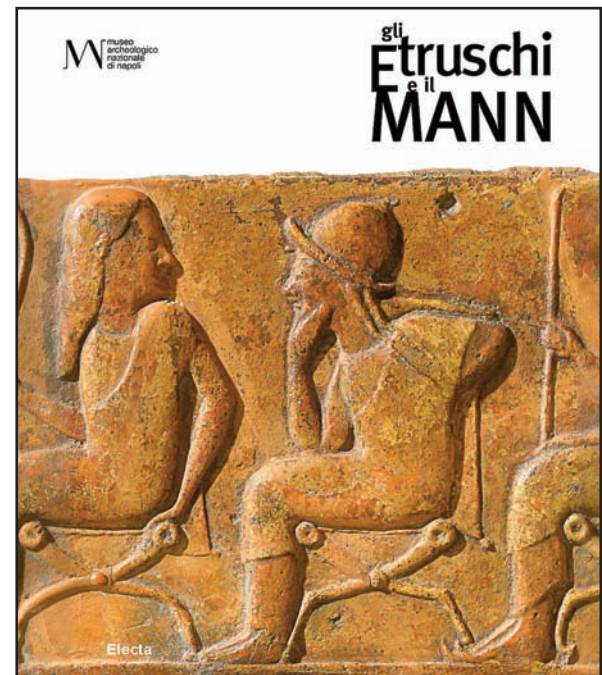
The University of Texas Press series on cities of the Etruscans founded and edited by Lisa C. Pieraccini and Nancy T. de Grummond, has now expanded to be called *Cities and Communities of the Etruscans*. Two new volumes have now been prepared.

*Cetamura del Chianti* by Nancy de Grummond, which appeared in 2020, details an Etruscan community of the 4th-1st cent. BCE, with particular emphasis on the artisans' quarter, in which several crafts were practiced side by side—ceramics, iron working, and textile making—all located next to a water supply and sanctu-

ary of the 3rd-2nd c. where the little known Etruscan gods Lur and Leinth were worshipped. There is specific evidence of ritual customs with bloodless sacrifices, orientation observance and divination in this rural hilltop community in the context of some of the latest known Etruscan habitation. Recent excavations in two Etruscan wells have yielded a working stratigraphy of the most important periods of Etruscan and Roman times and a continuous arc of biological materials that show how the environment changed and which animals and crops were nurtured through the centuries. Of the greatest importance is the discovery of some 4,500 water-logged grape seeds that are under investigation for what they reveal about viticulture over a period of ca. 600 years.



*Poggio Civitate (Murlo)* is in press and is announced as available in June 2021. Antony Tuck is the author of this important and much-needed broad synthesis of decades of work at the intriguing hilltop site of Poggio Civitate in the territory of Murlo. Tuck covers a wide range of issues in the period from the late 8th century to the 6th century BCE, and deals with elite and non-elite society and economic and social customs. The site has yielded a great deal of information about manufacturing, art and architecture, banqueting practices and communication systems during these centuries. Some of the finds are quite well known: the unique terracotta sculptures and the huge Archaic building they decorated, as well as the inventive bucchero forms. Tuck brings in many details of recent discoveries, such as the more than 1000 murex specimens having great implications for the textile industry at Poggio Civitate. Inscriptions discovered in recent years and studied by Rex Wallace and Tuck have yielded tantalizing hints of links with Cerveteri and the aristocratic Paithnas family. Hundreds of *sigla* have now been studied and analyzed for their functions, as in the well-known examples applied to roof tiles. Also included are recent investigations on relationships between Poggio Civitate and the surrounding cemeteries and settlements, which help to define the community overall.



*Gli Etruschi e il MANN*. 2020. Valentino Nizzo, ed. Electa S.p.A. Milan. 357 pages. ISBN 9788891825520  
Review by Tony Tuck

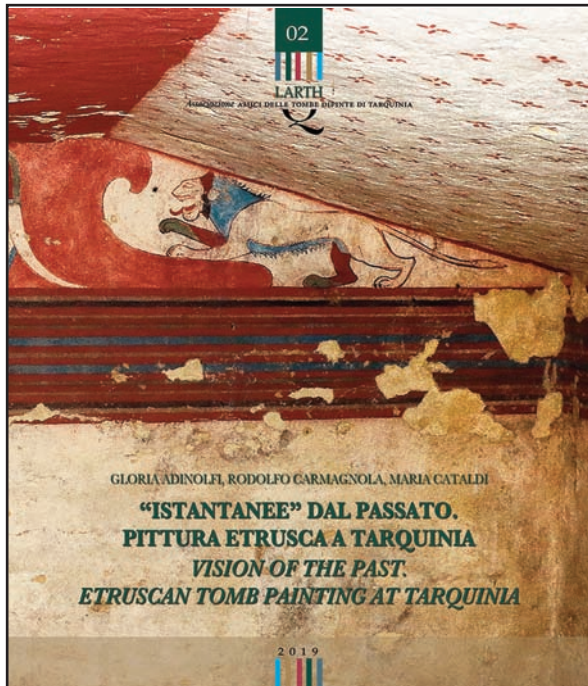
Numbered among the numerous frustrations brought on by the global COVID-19 pandemic was limited access to this remarkable show hosted by the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli. Fortunately, this elegant volume and companion quaderno edited by the irrepressible Valentino Nizzo provides a sense of what was missed.

The introduction of the associated quaderno calls upon the viewer to loosen the constraining bonds of assumption about loaded and ultimately problematic terms such as ethnicity and race. Instead, we are encouraged to celebrate cooperation, communication, and engagement as we witness the physical history of the Etruscan presence in Campania and Magna Grecia. Parallel to this consideration of the archaeological evidence is the historiography of excavation, research and partnership within the Italian academic community and beyond, as generations of scholars explore the complex interrelationship between communities both ancient and modern.

The primary catalog reflects the two-fold organization of the MANN show. The first section explores the material shape of the Etruscan presence in Campania, and draws on a wealth of evidence from communities such as Capua and Cuma while providing comparison to assemblages from communities further north such as Palestrina. As one would expect from such an Electa publication, color illustrations are copious and of the highest quality throughout.

The second section traces the history of collection of Etruscan materials at the MANN itself. This story is as much one of antiquarianism in Napoli as it is a history of the larger currents of the past several centuries of the Italian experience. Throughout this history, and through the surviving materials of those collections, we can see a people celebrating a sense of emerging national identity through the lens of a shared past.

In spite of the volume's exceptional production quality, the work remains very accessibly priced, ensuring that this meticulously curated and visionary show will receive the audience it richly deserves.

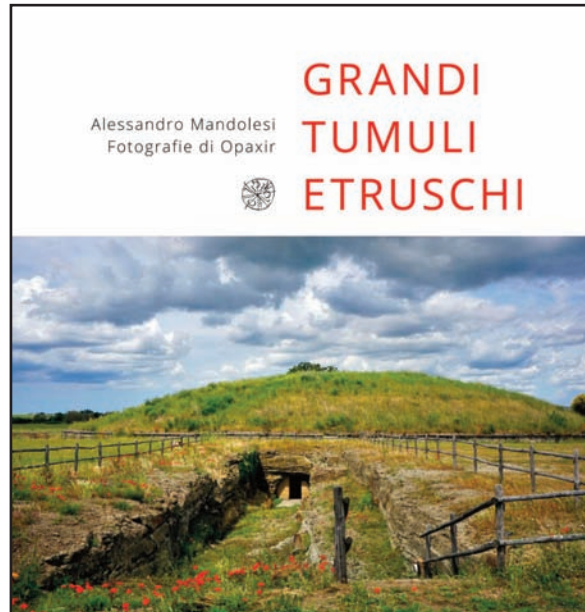


Adinolfi Gloria, Carmagnola Rodolfo & Cataldi Maria. 2019. *“Istantanee” dal passato: Pittura Etrusca a Tarquinia*. Historia Associazione Culturale. Viterbo. 109 pages. ISBN: 8895769732

Review by Tony Tuck

This slender, well-illustrated volume offers to readers an introductory overview of the development of painted burial spaces from Tarquinia. The initial section considers early examples of painted tombs beyond Tarquinia and emphasizes Veii’s importance in the emergence of this distinctive phenomenon. The volume’s middle section appropriately explores the rise of the justly-famous examples of painted tombs of the Archaic and early Classical periods. This section explores the rich body of iconography invested in these images by considering a range of depicted themes related to the larger ritual environments these images complimented. This section also gestures to examples of painting from Caere and elsewhere that hint at a considerably wider but largely lost tradition of similar decorative forms. Two subsequent sections consider the influence of Attic vase painting on various examples of such sepulchers while looking to the increasingly baroque examples of the phenomenon that survive from the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods.

This volume is by no means exhaustive. A great number of worthy and important examples of Tarquinia’s painted burial spaces are not mentioned and considerable range of alternative interpretations of a many features of these burials is often left unexplored. However, the audience for this volume is not an academic one. The mirrored Italian and English text ensures a wide accessibility to the information presented and the quality of illustrations is very high. This is an ideal introduction for any interested layperson to an important body of Etruscan burial spaces so closely associated with one of the Etruscan world’s greatest cities.



Alessandro Mandolesi. 2020. *Giganti Etruschi: I grandi tumuli principeschi*. All Insegna del Giglio. Sesto Fiorentino. 86 pages. ISBN: 9788878149915

Review by Tony Tuck

This handsomely illustrated, efficient volume reminds us that architecture is an artifact in its own right. Mandolesi’s compendium gathers together examples of tumuli associated with settlements throughout Etruria proper, considering their form and place within the physical and social landscape of their communities. The volume is both thematically and topographically organized with brief sections focusing on tumulus form in specific communities and others considering interior organization and construction techniques across a range of examples throughout the region.

Through an effective combination of archival, landscape, and aerial photography, Mandolesi’s work provides a vividly illustrated lens through which to better appreciate the arresting and impressive purpose of these monumental modifications of landscape. Indeed, this mosaic of approaches to visualizing such sepulchers is an especially useful tool. With it, we might better understand the complex symbolic and ritual interplay between such permanent declarations of familial identity and the lived political experiences of the people who built and buried their dead within them.



*Immaginare l'Unità d'Italia. Gli etruschi a Milano tra collezionismo e tutela*. Atti del convegno internazionale 30-31 May 2019, Palazzo Litta, Milano. Edizioni Fondazione Luigi Rovati, 2020; ISBN: 9788831338028; pp. 304; ill. 100 b/w.

The conference “Immaginare l'Unità d'Italia. Gli Etruschi a Milano tra collezionismo e tutela” took place

in the Palazzo Litta alongside the exhibition “Il Viaggio della Chimera. Gli Etruschi a Milano tra archeologia e collezionismo.” The proceedings pivot around the collecting of Etruscan finds, which had a special foothold in Milan, as a phenomenon that was strongly spurred, from the mid-19th to the beginning of the 20th century, by the nationalistic and identity movements, which recognized in the history of this people the first experience of (partial) unification of the Italian territory under a common “identity.”

The essays set off with a general introduction on the collecting of antiquities in Milan in the 18th and 19th centuries (F. Slavazzi) and move on to the Etruscan holdings of two Milanese collectors, Biondelli and Ancona (G. Paolucci). Further essays detail the Etruscan art collections in Verona in the 19th century (M. Bolla); the Gorga collection held in the Università Cattolica di Milano (G. Baratti); and Etruscan objects in the Sambon collection (C. Lambrugo and L. Napodano). Other papers focus on the collectors Pompeo Castelfranco (R.C. de Marinis), Elia Lattes (G. Bagnasco Gianni) and Emilio Seletti, who donated his archaeological collection to the Municipality (A. Provenzali). The book takes on international breadth as it provides detailed information on the Des Vergers Etruscan collection in the Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts in Lausanne (L. Pernet) and on the archaeological collections in Philadelphia. The volume returns to Italy with Bartolomeo Nogara and his contribution to the Vatican’s Etruscan collection (M. Sannibale). The proceedings then analyse the more identity-related issues (M. Harari); and focus on some political characters of the Risorgimento, such as Carlo Alberto, Cesare Correnti and Ruggiero Bonghi (F. Delpino). The last contributions cast a light on the role of the Istituto Nazionale di Studi Etruschi in fostering the Etruscan heritage (G. Sassatelli); on the evolution of the laws dealing with collecting and heritage protection from the pre-unitary period (F. Muscolino) through the liberal years (E. Fusar Poli) up to the mid-19th century, with the emblematic case of the Etruscan finds from Spina that were moved to Milano (P. Desantis).

*Collezionisti, Accademie, Musei: Storie del Mondo Etrusco dal XVI al XIX secolo. Atti dei Convegni Internazionali “La tradizione etrusca e il collezionismo in Europa dal XVI al XIX secolo,” Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa, 2014-2016; edited by Ilaria Bianchi and Giulio Paolucci; Edizioni Fondazione Rovati 2020, ISBN: 978-88-3133-800-4; pp. 343, ill. 160 b/w.*

This volume is the first in the series of conference proceedings published by the Fondazione Luigi Rovati. It brings together the proceedings of the two international conferences held in 2014 and 2016 at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa under the title “La tradizione etrusca e il collezionismo in Europa dal XVI al XIX secolo.” The richly illustrated contributions are divided into two sections, the first of which focuses on collecting. Here light is cast on the cultural exchanges between Cortona and Bologna (I. Bianchi); on the setup of the Bucelli Museum in Montepulciano (G. Paolucci); on the savant collector Giovan Girolamo Carli (E. Bruttini); on Severino Servanzi Collio and, among his numerous excavation documents, his reports on the discovery of the Ipogeo dei Volumni (S. Fatti). It concludes with Giovan Pietro Campana, two unpublished documents stored in

the Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento, a letter to G.P.G. Rossetti, and a portrait of Pope Pio IX that once belonged to the collector (S. Sarti, M. Benucci).

The second section deals with archaeological excavations and museums. The essays recount Cavalier Paolozzi's excavations in Bisenzio (M. Bischeri); excavations in Veii supported by Maria Cristina of Bourbon-Two Sicilies and the House of Savoy (F. Delpino); the dispersal of Villanovan finds from San Giovanni in Persiceto (M. Marchesi); and the princely tomb goods from Capua's Tomb of the Fourteen Bridges, identified from collections (V. Bellelli and S. Karl). The reader can also follow the stories of a false Etruscan inscription in the Medici's collections (J. Labregère); the contribution of the Bucelli collection to the Uffizi Gallery (S. Sarti); Etruscan bronzes held in French collections until the beginning of the 19th century (L. Haumesser); the exchanges of antiquities between Perugia and Bologna in the second half of the 18th c. (A. Dore and M. Marchesi); how antiquities were presented in the tourist guidebooks of Rome and Florence between the 16th and 19th centuries (L. Di Cosmo and L. Fatticcioni); and finally the evolution of the Kircherian Museum and its cultural politics (F. Delpino).



### Power and Place in Etruria

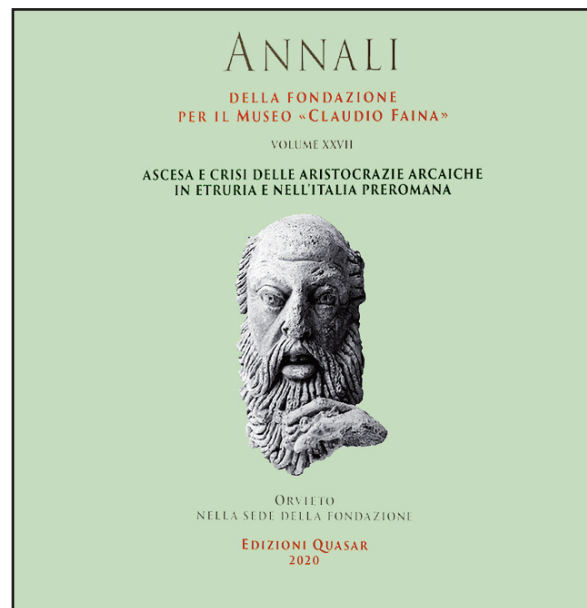
The Spatial Dynamics of a  
Mediterranean Civilization,  
1200–500 BC  
Simon Stoddart

**Simon Stoddart, *Power and Place in Etruria, Volume 1, The Spatial Dynamics of a Mediterranean Civilization, 1200–500 BC.* (Cambridge University Press 2020). Hardback ISBN: 9780521380751 pp. 350.**

This volume fills a gap in the study of an important, yet neglected, case of state formation by taking a landscape view of Etruria. Simon Stoddart examines the infrastructure, hierarchy/heterarchy and spatial patterns of the Etruscans over time to investigate their political development from a new perspective. The analysis both crosses the divide from prehistory to history and applies a scaled analysis to the whole region between the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Arno and Tiber rivers, with special focus on the neglected region between Populonia on the coast and Perugia and the north Umbrian region adjoining the Apennines. Stoddart uncovers the powerful places that were in dynamic tension not only between themselves, but also with the internal structure constituted by the descent groups that peopled them. He unravels the dynamically changing landscape of chang-

ing boundaries and buffer zones, which contained robust urbanism, as well as less centralized, polyfocal nucleations.

It includes the art of Samuel Ainsley with five views of the c. 1847 landscape of Etruria.



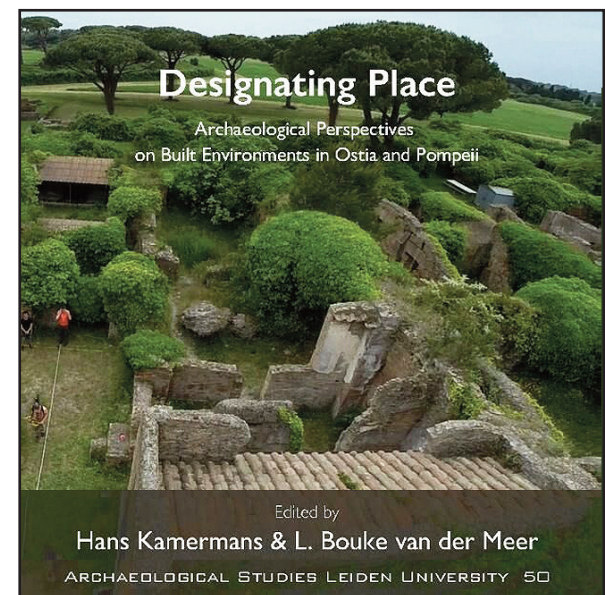
**Giuseppe M. Della Fina, ed., *Annali della Fondazione per il Museo "Claudio Faina,"* 27 (2020). ISBN: 978-88-5491-100-0 p. 792.**

Contents:

**Giuseppe M. Della Fina**, "In ricordo di Mario Torelli (1937 - 2020)." **Mario Torelli**, "Le radici dello sviluppo. Riflessioni sulla nascita delle aristocrazie nel Lazio e nell'Etruria meridionale." **Joachim Weidig**, "Connessioni ideologiche tra le aristocrazie arcaiche dell'Italia Appenninica e medio-Adriatica." **Federica Boschi**, "Nuovi dati sull'aristocrazia picena di età Orientalizzante nell'Ager Gallicus. La tomba principesca di Corinaldo (Ancona)." **Maria Cristina Biella**, "Falerii: l'élite e la città." **Mauro Menichetti**, Carmine Pellegrino, "Le aristocrazie arcaiche: gestione della tradizione e della memoria." **Alessandro Naso**, "Caratteri distintivi delle élites arcaiche nell'Italia preromana." **Adriano Maggiani**, "La costruzione dell'immagine del princeps. I cinerari iconici di Chiusi." **Teresa Cinquantaquattro**, "Tra Capua e Cuma. Aristocrazie arcaiche della Mesogaia." **Folco Biagi**, Andrea Camilli, Matteo Milletti, "La Tomba dei Flabelli e l'Orientalizzante a Populonia." **Martino Maioli**, "Aristocrazie arcaiche a Populonia: il carro "celeste" della cd. Fossa della Biga." **Giovanna Mandara**, **Simona Rafanelli**, "Nuove riflessioni sulla Tomba del Duce di Vetulonia." **Daniele F. Maras**, **Laura M. Michetti**, "Dal Tumulo Chigi alla Veio dei re." **Francesco Roncalli**, "Le nuove aristocrazie e la ridefinizione dello spazio nella decorazione architettonica templare." **Luca Pulcinelli**, **Paolo Binaco**, "Il distretto volsiniese settentrionale: gruppi aristocratici tra Orvieto, Chiusi, Perugia e gli Umbri." **Maria Angela Turchetti**, "Il Tumulo di Poggio Gaiella prima e dopo Porsenna." **Ada Salvi**, **Jacopo Tabolli**, "Spazi del potere ai confini di Chiusi: nuovi dati sulle "residenze" aristocratiche." **Anthony Tuck**, **Ann Glennie**, "The Archaic Aristocracy: The Case of Murlo (Poggio Civitate)." **Mario Cygielman**, **Luca Cappuccini**, **Matteo Milletti**, "Roselle: la tomba di Sassi Grossi e la nascita di una aristocrazia." **Giuseppina Carlotta Cianferoni**,

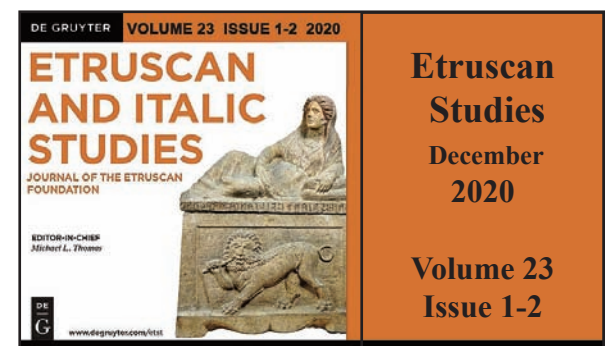
"Segni dell'aristocrazia. Novità sugli avori dell'Etruria settentrionale." **Stefano Santocchini Gerg**, "Rituale e società nell'Orientalizzante Bolognese." **Simonetta Stopponi**, "Un santuario e un tiranno." **Alessandra Coen**, **Fernando Gilotta**, **Marina Micozzi**, "Continuità e discontinuità delle aristocrazie a Cerveteri in età orientalizzante. La documentazione della necropoli di Monte Abatone." **Maria Chiara Bettini**, **Gabriella Poggesi**, "La nascita delle aristocrazie nel territorio di Artimino: le necropoli di Prato Rosello e di Comeana." **Annalisa Pozzi**, "San Giovanni in Compito (fc): scoperta di una tomba principesca con carro." **Maria Bonghi Jovino**, "Decorazione architettonica: messaggio e percezione visiva (Foro Boario e Capitolino: una proposta di lettura)."

## BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS



**L. Bouke van der Meer. *Designating Place: Archaeological Perspectives on Built Environments in Ostia and Pompeii*, Leiden University Press, December 2020 ISBN: 9789087283575.**

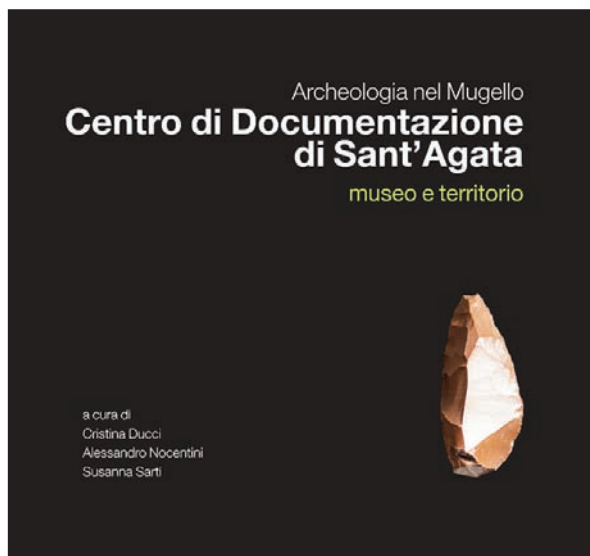
*Designating Place* analyses the urban space of Roman Ostia and Pompeii in different ways, namely via geographical analysis, spatial analysis, iconographic analysis and epigraphic analysis. This book honors the work of Hanna Stöger, the late Leiden scholar. The book presents new data on Ostia obtained by techniques such as Space Syntax, high-resolution, shallow seismic reflection survey, the analysis of operational-sequences, linguistic landscape studies and collective memory studies, by international scholars. As a bonus a selection of these papers form a hidden book on Roman bathing and water management.





**Valentino Nizzo, *Gli Etruschi in Campania Storia di una (ri)scoperta dal XVI al XIX secolo*. Electa 2020 pp. 192 ISBN 9788892820050**

*The Rediscovery of the Etruscans in Campania* offers an unprecedented look through almost four centuries, during which archaeology, definitively established as a historical science, was finally able to solve the enigma, and restore to the Etruscans of Campania that consistency that some critics had denied them. In the background looms the history of the National Archaeological Museum of Naples, protagonist and, often, also victim of this complex process of reconquering an important fragment of our past.



***Archeologia nel Mugello. Centro di Documentazione di Sant'Agata, museo e territorio*, edited by Cristina Ducci, Alessandro Nocentini, and Susanna Sarti. Consiglio Regionale della Toscana, 2020.**

Published for the first time is this the entire collection of a small Museum in the Mugello Area in northern Tuscany, with a rich photographic documentation of the archaeological objects (from Prehistory to the Modern Age), as well as views of the landscapes of the western Mugello area. The volume also offers a selection of eleven papers focused on key issues of the territory.



### **Updates on Tombs of Etruscan Tarquinia: Paintings and Funerary Architecture**

by Annette Rathje

The painted tombs of Tarquinia (UNESCO heritage site since 2004) are among the most well-known and most investigated Etruscan funerary contexts. Since the centuries of the first discoveries, various scholars, artists, collectors of antiquities, ordinary visitors, noble personalities in search of fortune, and learned persons frequented the necropoleis of Etruria. Every one wondered, among the many other questions, what led the Etruscans to create the famous underground art gallery, defined by M. Pallottino as “the first chapter of Italian art history.” The debate is still very current, and has been the subject of a ten-year research project of the University of Milan, which has led to the publication in the *Tarchna* series of two volumes by Matilde Marzullo:

***Grotte Cornetane: Materiali e apparato critico per lo studio delle tombe dipinte di Tarquinia*, Tarchna suppl. 6, Milano, Ledizioni, 2016.**

***Spazi sepolti e dimensioni dipinte nelle tombe etrusche di Tarquinia*, Tarchna suppl. 7, Milano, Ledizioni, 2017.**

These studies have considerably expanded the number of painted hypogea in Tarquinia and have demonstrated specific fundamental principles in the spatial conception of the Etruscan funerary ritual expressed by the painted tombs. The qualities that characterize Tarquinia seem to distinguish the city from other Etruscan metropoleis. This situation suggests the existence of specific beliefs at the heart of the local design of funerary space.

The books aim to assess the situation by offering an account of the aspects that emerged from the history of research and the latest lines of inquiry and the interpretations acquired so far. The resulting studies discuss the choices and the motivations at the root of the formation and development of the painted tombs by considering each local peculiarity. The results grow directly from the data collected systematically in all the 500 monuments identified during the research. For the first time all the graphic, architectural and descriptive information is brought together: the result is a system of tools created for the specific needs of Etruscan funeral wall painting, and expressly developed to deepen our understanding of the Tarquinian area. Thus there is a clarification in depth of the role that architecture and funeral painting played within the community and how these conceptions evolved from the Orientalizing to the Hellenistic period.

Through these tools it is now possible to observe the distribution of all the Tarquinian hypogea during the time, in order to identify the reasons, goals, social values, and overall role of these extraordinary monuments.



Mario at Morgantina in Sicily playing his guitar.

*Del Chiaro, continued from page 1*

(published in 1957). Upon graduating he was offered a job at the University of Goleta (now the University of California, Santa Barbara). Mario’s extensive research throughout his career in the field of Mediterranean studies took him from Sardis, Spain and beyond. His long list of publications speaks to the many contributions he made in the field of ancient Mediterranean art and archaeology, with special emphasis on ancient Italy and the Etruscans. In fact, Mario’s contributions to the field are so vast and extensive that he was knighted twice by the Republic of Italy for his work on pre-Roman Italy.

Mario Del Chiaro framed the field of Etruscan Red-Figure vase painting as a whole and distinguished the subtle differences between Caeretan and Faliscan vase painting. His publication, *The Etruscan Funnel Group* (1974), exemplified his knowledge of vase painting at Tarquinia and thus southern Etruscan vase painting as a whole. But he published many articles in other media, such as bronze mirrors, bronze statuettes, stone reliefs and painted plaques. His work as a field archaeologist can be best appreciated by his work at Sardis, the Roman Forum, Split and the Hellenistic settlement of Ghiaccio Forte (see *Etruscan Ghiaccio Forte: University of California, Santa Barbara, excavations in Tuscany* (1976).

His legacy lives on at UC Berkeley with a lecture series in his name (set up in 2011), as well as the Del Chiaro Center for Ancient Italian Studies (2015): both a testament to the relevance of Etruscan studies in the broader field of the ancient Mediterranean. They enhance the Etruscan collection at the Hearst Museum, one of the largest in north America. Just last year (fall 2019) Mario attended a full-day workshop organized at UC

The last time Mario was on the UC Berkeley campus for an Etruscan workshop, October, 2019.







Enjoying his cake at the first Del Chiaro Lecture in 2012, with Stephan Steingraber as the lecturer.

Berkeley entitled *Etruscan Identities: Image and Imagination*. At 94 years old he commented on research and shared ideas and interest with attendees. But those of us who knew Mario, even those who have met him only once, have been enriched, not only by his academic acumen, but his vivacious and warm personality. He exuded a certain *joie de vivre*, similarly to the very people he spent his life studying. How many academics are accomplished guitar players, marvelous cooks, athletic enough to play handball daily in their late 80s, paint a fresco on their dining room ceiling, study Turkish, Chinese and Arabic on the side and be an aficionado of Classical music?

Mario was fortunate to spend these final years with his beloved son Marco, who put his own career on the side to spend 100% of his time with his father. Whether tending to their home and garden in the Santa Barbara hills, taking the dog for walks at the beach with his dad or watching baseball games together, Marco relished the time he spent with his father. They both would tell me how lucky they were to be in each other's company. I was fortunate to be Mario's last PhD student and to experience first-hand the immense knowledge he shared in his classes. He had a gift for identifying individual vase painters, connecting broader aspects of Etruscan and pan-Mediterranean art and expanding the Etruscan horizon in the study of the ancient Mediterranean at large. In fact, one of the last things Mario said to me was, "keep the Etruscans on the map." Mario Del Chiaro was an internationally renowned guiding force of Etruscan studies, and he leaves behind a legacy of vibrant intellectual contributions that continue to enhance and broaden the field he so diligently "put on the map" in the US.

(Photos by Lisa Pieraccini)



## OBITUARIES



### Norma Kershaw 1924-2020

by Laetitia La Follette

President, Archaeological Institute of America

It is with the deepest sadness that we share the news of Norma Kershaw's passing and offer our sincere condolences to her family, friends, colleagues, and students.

Long-time AIA friend and supporter, Norma Kershaw, aged 95 years, died peacefully at her home in Mission Viejo, CA on September 14, 2020.

Norma was born on New Year's Eve in 1924. She worked for seven years in advertising before marrying Reuben Kershaw, a real estate investor, in Glen Neck, NY. After raising their two daughters, at the age of 43, Norma enrolled at Queens College, City University of New York, to pursue a double major in anthropology and art history. She completed her B.A. in 1972, graduating Phi Beta Kappa, and went on to earn a M.A. degree from Columbia University in art history and archaeology in 1974.

Norma participated in archaeological fieldwork in Israel, Cyprus, and Egypt. Her first excavation was in Tel Gezer, outside of Jerusalem, in 1972. She taught art history and archaeology courses for 18 years at the Great Neck Adult Program (1971-1989), Hofstra University Continuing Education (1973-1989), where

Photo left, L-R Ingrid Edlund Berry, Mario Del Chiaro, Lisa Pieraccini and Marco Del Chiaro at the 2015 Del Chiaro Lecture at UC Berkeley. Below, Larissa Bonfante and Mario.



she earned the Conger-Patterson Award for Distinguished Teaching, and LIU Post (the C.W. Post campus of Long Island University, 1982-1989). Known for her ability to relate archaeological research with humor and charm, Norma became a widely respected and sought-after lecturer on the archaeology and art history of the Middle East. She served as a lecturer for the United Nations Cultural Affairs Committee from 1976 to 1989.

Norma was a stalwart and long-time supporter of the AIA. In 1968, she helped found the Long Island Society, serving as its president from 1977 to 1981. She became a Lifetime Member of the Institute in 1976 and received our prestigious Martha and Artemis Joukowsky Distinguished Service Award in 1989. She even served as a travel editor for our flagship publication, *Archaeology* magazine, from 1980 to 1985.

In 1990, Norma and Reuben moved to Mission Viejo, CA to be closer to their daughters. Without wasting any time, Norma founded the Orange County Society in 1991 and served as its first president. She joined the AIA Governing Board in 1992, and, in 1996, was the first female (and still the only) named as a Trustee Emeritus of the Institute. Norma established two very important funds, for which the AIA is extremely grateful. The Kershaw Lectures in Near East Archaeology, established in 1994, have brought world-renowned experts to share their research with Societies across the country. The Kershaw Fund for the AIA Newsletter allows us to share the important work of the Institute with the greater AIA community. Norma was also a valued member of our Charles Eliot Norton Legacy Society.

In addition to everything Norma was involved in at the AIA, she also had deep associations with other archaeological organizations. She served on the editorial board of the *Biblical Archaeology Review*, was a founding president of the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute, founding member of the Orange County chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt, honorary trustee of the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, and honorary trustee of the American Schools of Oriental Research, from which she received the Richard J. Scheuer Medal (1997) and The Charles U. Harris Service Award (2014). Norma helped bring the Dead Sea Scrolls and House of David Inscription exhibitions to the Bowers Museum of Cultural Art in Santa Ana, CA, and, in 2007, they named their 300-seat auditorium after her. She's also responsible for endowing two university chairs, one at UCLA and one at UCSD.

The AIA and the field of archaeology as a whole are forever indebted to the wisdom, generosity, and commitment of Norma Kershaw.

### Reginald Foster MCMXXXIX-MMXX

One of the world's foremost experts on Latin, Father Foster was a monk who looked like a stevedore, dressed like a janitor and swore like a sailor. A former plumber's apprentice from Wisconsin who, in four decades as an official Latinist of the Vatican, dreamed in Latin, cursed in Latin, banked in Latin and ultimately tweeted in Latin, died on Christmas Day at a nursing home in Milwaukee. He was LXXXI.



**Iris Love**  
1933-2020

by Rebecca Cope, *Tatler*

There is no great American dynasty more closely associated with the world of museums than the Guggenheims. Solomon Guggenheim, one of patriarch Meyer Guggenheim's seven sons, founded the now world-famous museum and foundation, while Peggy Guggenheim, Meyer's granddaughter and Solomon's niece, made a name for herself as an art collector, with her



**Filippo Maria Gambari**  
1954 - 2020

by Dario Seglie, CeSMAP

Filippo Maria Gambari was born November 12, 1954 in Milan. From the age of 15 he gained experience on archaeological excavations and construction sites in many regions of Italy. He graduated with honors in Classics at the University of Milan (1977) with a paleoethnological curriculum and thesis in Etruscology. He specialized in Archaeology (with honors) at the same university.

In 1979 he was appointed Prehistoric Archaeologist at the Superintendency of Piedmont, and in 2009

eponymous gallery in Venice. So it is unsurprising that Iris Love, Meyer's great, great granddaughter, herself pursued a career in archaeology, to discover pieces that would be exhibited globally.

Ms Love was one of the victims of COVID-19 in New York City; she died at the age of 86 after an illustrious career that saw her rediscovering the Temple of Aphrodite in Knidos in 1969 and enduring the ensuing media storm when celebrities like Mick and Bianca Jagger flocked to the site. It was a momentous day all round, with Neil Armstrong also walking on the Moon.

Born in New York in 1933 to Cornelius Love (an investment banker and diplomat) and Audrey Josephthal (the heiress daughter of Edyth Guggenheim), she developed an interest in archaeology from an early age, after finding encouragement not only from the many noted academics who socialized with her parents, including Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art James Rorimer and archaeologist Gisela Richter, but her British governess, who was a Classicist that taught her Latin.

During her university degree, she spent a year studying at the University of Florence, where she compared Etruscan warrior figures at the National Archaeological Museum of Florence with those at the Met in New York and concluded that the latter was housing fakes. Out of respect for one of her favorite hometown museums, she warned them of the publication of her thesis, but they pipped her to the post and told the *New York Times* of the forgeries, essentially "scooping" her story.

Controversies like this seemed to follow her around, such as the aforementioned media circus surrounding

became the Director of the Superintendency for Archaeological Heritage of Liguria. Over the course of his life, he held the following positions: Superintendent for Archaeological Heritage of Lombardy, Interim Director of the Archaeological Park of Herculaneum, Director of the Regional Secretariat for Sardinia, Ministry of Goods and Cultural Activities and Tourism. He participated in the scientific design of various exhibitions and organized the arrangement of the prehistoric sections of the Museums of Novara, Turin (Museum of Antiquities and Royal Armory), Arona, Biella, Cuorné, Mergozzo and Borgosesia.

He planned and directed about a hundred excavations and interventions in the Piedmont area, mainly relating to the pre-Roman period and prehistoric rock art.

Filippo Maria Gambari was an active member of the Italian Institute of Prehistory and Protohistory, of the Institute of Etruscan and Italic Studies, Honorary Member and member of the Scientific Council of the Aosta Valley Society of Prehistory and Archeology, the Scientific Committee of CeSMAP (Study Center and Museum of Prehistoric Art of Pinerolo).

From 1986 he has lectured and was part of the examination commissions for the chair of Etruscology and Italic Archaeology of the University of Turin. He was appointed to teach Prehistory and Protohistory in the Degree Course in Sciences of Cultural Heritage at the Faculty of Literature and Philosophy of the Turin University. He held a series of lectures as invited professor at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes at the Sorbonne in Paris.

He produced over 200 publications in specialized magazines, exhibition catalogs, monographs, and con-

her most notable archaeological discovery of the Temple of Aphrodite. She also made headlines during a feud with the curator Bernard Ashmole, after she claimed the original head of Aphrodite by the artist Praxiteles was in the vaults of the British Museum.

One of the most prominent female archaeologists of the 1960s and 1970s, the society beauty was fodder for the media. She appeared in the *New York Times* with her tanned limbs (honed from a 12-year dig in Turkey) and her cropped blonde hair three times. One report noted her stacks of fan mail at her Upper East Side apartment.

"She brought archaeology and ancient art to whole new strata of society," Carlos Picon, an antiquities expert who was curator of Greek and Roman art at the Met for 28 years, told the *New York Times*. "She popularized it and warmed it up, and it seemed as if everybody knew her name. You could go to the middle of the most far-away city and they would have heard of Iris. There are enough PhDs, and whether we gained another book or not doesn't matter in the long run. More than once Iris helped me secure objects and funding for the museum."

In 1977 she met gossip journalist Liz Smith and the two soon became a couple. In her memoir, Smith said of Love, "[she was] a Givenchy-clad scientist with a name like a movie star." They later broke up, in part due to Love's relationship with Italian baroness Bice Brichetto. Later in life, she retired from archaeology and took up another passion: breeding prize-winning Dachshunds. She liked to name them after Classical figures, with pups called Achilles and Tyche.

ference proceedings relating to the themes of Prehistory and Protohistory, rock art, pre-Roman epigraphy, the most ancient Cisalpine viticulture, Etruscan influences on the cultures of the Iron Age of northern Italy and Celtic Cisalpine archaeology.

Lastly, he was the Director of the Museum of Civilizations at EUR, the state institute of Rome, which brings together the Pigorini Prehistoric, Popular Arts and Traditions, the Early Middle Ages and the Oriental Art Museum.

Admitted to the Spallanzani Hospital in Rome at the end of October, he had just turned 66 when the coronavirus took him away.

CeSMAP had shared many enterprises with Filippo Gambari, including the first investigations at the grandiose site of Monte Muretto, located between the Municipalities of Pinerolo and Roletto, with archaeological evidence from the Middle Neolithic, 5th millennium BC, until Romanization, 4th century AD.

An unbridgeable loss for science and a void of enormous proportions befalls us with the disappearance of the precious and generous friend who was Filippo.

**IN MEMORIAM**  
**Elisa Lissi Caronna**  
1926 - 2020

On December 28, 2020 Elisa Lissi Caronna left us: the former Superintendent of Rome, Accademica dei Lincei, she was an acute and witty scholar, an archaeologist of outstanding human and scientific depth and an example for everybody who knew her. For many years she edited the publications of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei.



Dolce & Gabbana's Alta Moda 2019 show in the Temple of Concordia, Valle dei Templi, Agrigento ....

### ETRUSCAN CULTURE

#### ACROSS

2 Etruscan's Zeus  
5 Drunken procession  
7 Sweet baby  
8 Deity of Prophecy  
9 Small vessel with pour spout  
10 Mother  
12 Painted or sculpted horizontal band of decoration  
13 Female goddess of death  
15 She loved her bling  
16 Priest who interprets nature as from the divine  
18 Ceremonial walkway  
19 Thick layers of paint  
20 Hammer -wielding underworld character  
24 Low pedestal often inscribed  
26 Warding off evil  
27 The \_\_\_\_\_ of Gimignano, measuring figure  
28 Liver reader  
29 Lustrous black pottery  
31 Hammered into relief from reverse side  
36 Wife of Tinia  
37 2 faced door god  
38 Tintinabulum  
40 Shallow ritual plate  
41 Jeweled head band  
42 7 against \_\_\_\_\_

- #### DOWN
- 1 Ancient copper coin
  - 2 Porous calcium carbonate rock
  - 3 Large jar for grave goods
  - 4 Shell used for purple dye
  - 6 Place for bones of the dead
  - 8 A good read for a prophet
  - 9 Roof tile with a face or figure
  - 11 Masked man
  - 12 Mural technique using pigments and wet plaster
  - 14 Mound of earth over a grave
  - 17 Etruscan style of gem cutting
  - 21 Ancient silver coin; ten asses
  - 22 Chiusi ash urns with heads
  - 23 Columns with wide fluting
  - 25 Sunken part in atrium carrying water away
  - 30 Vent above indoor fire pit
  - 31 What Etruscans called themselves



- 32 Symbols not letters
- 33 Toga fastener
- 34 Hollow locket
- 35 Flat block projecting under a cornice
- 39 Ugly Goddess

### CROSSWORD

The Etruscan Crossword was designed by Joan Matey, Curator and Program Developer for the Carrabelle History Museum and Crooked River Lighthouse Museum in Carrabelle, Florida.



...fashion gods and goddesses attended in droves.



Pandemic-created artifact. Don't ask us what it is.



These Roman bronze artifacts have captured the curiosity of scientists worldwide. What could they really be? Did the Romans possess advanced medical knowledge of the Coronavirus? Let us know, dear *Etruscan News* readers. We are curious.

*Torelli, continued from page 1*

paring, among other projects, a big exhibition on Pompei.

Torelli was doubtlessly one of the most brilliant Italian archaeologists and scholars of antiquities after the last World War. Born on May 12, 1937 in Rome, he studied at the Roman University La Sapienza with famous academic scholars such as Massimo Pallottino and, in particular, Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli. Torelli began his professional career at the Archaeological Soprintendenza of Southern Etruria (1964-1969), became professor at the University of Cagliari in Sardinia (1969-1975), and finally professor of "Archeologia e storia dell'arte greca e romana" at the Umbrian University of Perugia, where he was active as a highly respected teacher and researcher for an extended time (1975-2010).

He is seen today as a classical archaeologist, and also an Etruscologist, ancient historian, epigraphist and topographer. He was a real *polypragmatos*, with manifold interests and enormous knowledge. As an interna-



In 2016, on occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Museo Nazionale Tarquinese, Torelli captures the crowd in the shadow of the *cavalli alati*.

tional and polyglot scholar (he was fluent in Mandarin), Torelli taught as visiting professor in several European countries (such as Great Britain and France), in Canada and in the United States (at the universities of Colorado, Michigan and California).

Since the 1970s, Torelli became well known and highly appreciated in the US, where he last returned in 2013 for the Mario Del Chiaro Lecture at The University of California, Berkeley. Torelli received a *laurea honoris causa* from the German University of Tübingen and the Spanish University of Jaén. He was a brilliant speaker/orator and charming entertainer, especially at congresses, and an eminent academic teacher; he created a real academic "school" with many remarkable students, who ultimately became well known professors and researchers.

Torelli also organized several important archaeological exhibitions, largely dedicated to Etruscan culture and art (Florence 1985, Venice 2000, Rome 2008) and archaeological congresses focused on ancient pre-Roman wall and tomb paintings in Etruria, Southern Italy, Macedonia and Thrace (Perugia 2005, Messina 2009). He was the main spirit behind the new organization of the venerable Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca e della Città di Cortona, a member of numerous academies and scientific institutions (such as the Accademia

dei Lincei and the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton) and honorary citizen of several Italian cities, such as Tarquinia and Pompei.

His scientific legacy includes 27 monographs, and more than 400 publications on an impressive number of themes from the Greek, Colonial Greek, Etruscan and Roman cultures. He published overview works for a larger public, partly in cooperation with other eminent scholars such as R. Bianchi Bandinelli, D. Musti, F. Coarelli, E. Greco und P. Gros. Quite often he wrote articles in Italian newspapers (*La Repubblica*, *Il Messaggero*, *Il Corriere della Sera*), and since 1992 served as



Above, Torelli at the Etruria and Anatolia workshop in 2016, at the Villa Giulia in Rome. L to R: Maurizio Harari, Bruno d'Agostino, Maria Paola Guidobaldi, Luca Cerchiali, Rita Consentino, Mario Torelli and Maurizio Sannibale. fD\cht: @gJ'DJYfUWj]k

Right, again speaking at the 100th anniversary of the Tarquinia Museum. Behind him, more friends and colleagues, L to R: Lucio Fiorini, Angelo Centini, Stefano Bruni, Beatrice Casocavallo, Matilde Marzullo and Francesca Boitani. fD\cht:gA " @/[ b]k



Lecturing in 2014 at the site of Gravisca, Tarquinia. Below, Mario at the Insula of the Chaste Lovers in Pompeii (Photo by Massimo Osanna).



editor of the archaeological journal *Ostraka*.

Torelli became famous as an excavator. Thanks to his excavations in Etruria and Southern Italy, especially in Gravisca (the harbor town of Tarquinia with a Greek emporion and sanctuaries dedicated to the cult of Adonis), Santa Marinella (the Etruscan sanctuary of Minerva), Veii (the Etruscan sanctuary at Porta Cerere), Paestum (the suburban sanctuary of Aphrodite) and Heraclaea/Policoro (the sanctuary of Demeter). We learned a tremendous amount regarding sanctuaries and religious cults and rites in pre-Roman Italy and their connection to the Greek world. Generally, we should emphasize his main academic achievements: his research on Gravisca, the Elogia Tarquiniensia, the Tomba dell'Orco in Tarquinia, the sanctuaries and cults in Magna Graecia and Sicily, the Etruscan and generally pre-Roman Mediterranean tomb paintings, particularly of the Hellenistic period, and the ancient urbanism and the topography of ancient Greece through a new edition of Pausanias.

Torelli was also very interested in politics. Like his mentor, R. Bianchi Bandinelli, Torelli was an active



member of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) until 1988 and was much engaged in cultural politics. Together with many other eminent Italian scholars, he was a decisive opponent of the recent damaging reform of the Italian Soprintendenze. In 2014, Torelli received the highly endowed award "Premio Balzan" from Italy's President Giorgio Napolitano for his scientific life work and especially for his innovative ideas and methods, which are characterized by a global vision of the ancient Mediterranean cultures with iconological, epigraphic, historical, religious, anthropological, socio-economic and ideological aspects. After Massimo Pallottino, he was the first Italian archaeologist who had been awarded the Balzan Prize.

I had the honor and pleasure to meet Mario Torelli for the first time as a young student 1975 in Tarquinia, in the well renowned Ristorante "Bersagliere." We met for the last time in December 2019 in Orvieto during the Annual Etruscan Congress of the Fondazione Faina. In those almost 45 years I had the chance to meet and discuss with him many times, mostly in Italy but also in Germany, Austria, France, and Great Britain. He was both a teacher and a friend to me. Unfortunately for health reasons he was not able to come in 1999 to Japan where I had organized an international congress on Hellenistic painting at the University of Tokyo (Today).

Mario Torelli's death is a great loss for the Italian and international archaeology and classical studies. Unfortunately, *panta rei* ...