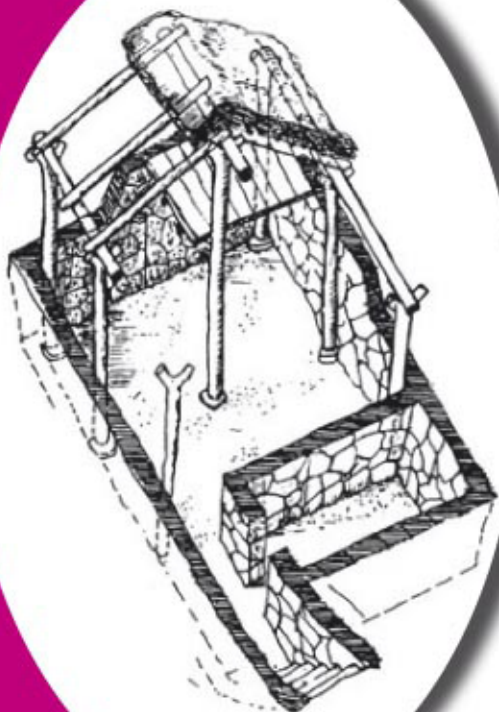




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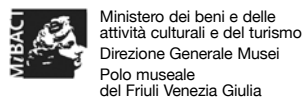
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Atti del convegno dedicato a Sara Santoro



(Udine e Forgaria nel Friuli, 5-6 maggio 2017)

INDICE

ATTI DELL'INCONTRO DI UDINE (5 MAGGIO 2017)

Massimo BIANCHI, <i>Sara Santoro e il suo approccio multidisciplinare allo studio dei siti minori</i>	p. 15
Elena CALANDRA, <i>Come si pubblica uno scavo archeologico. Il caso di Castelraimondo</i>	p. 27
Marco CAVALIERI, <i>L'insediamento minore nell'Italia settentrionale: una proposta di metodo di ricerca</i>	p. 39
Alessia MORIGI, Simone BERGAMINI, Regium Lepidi. <i>Il contributo dei recenti scavi alla ricostruzione del piano regolatore e della rete stradale dell'insediamento romano</i>	p. 55
Sonia ANTONELLI, Maria Cristina MANCINI, Oliva MENOZZI, Marco MODERATO, <i>Between 'villages' and 'towns' in the Mid Adriatic area: role and hierarchic organization of the 'minor settlements' in Roman times</i>	p. 65
Roberta BELLI PASQUA, <i>Ricerca archeologica e valorizzazione: riflessioni sul Parco Archeologico di Byllis (Albania)</i>	p. 89
Roberto PERNA, <i>I centri minori nella valle del Drino (Albania) tra V e II sec. a.C.</i>	p. 99
Heimo DOLENZ, Eleni SCHINDLER KAUELKA, <i>Rinvenimenti da una catastrofe di età tardo-celtica-protoromana presso la Glan tra Willersdorf e St. Michael am Zollfeld (Carinzia/Austria)</i>	p. 111
Mitja GUŠTIN, <i>Insediamenti su altura tra Caput Adriae e Pannonia</i>	p. 131

ATTI DELL'INCONTRO DI FORGARIA NEL FRIULI (6 MAGGIO 2017)

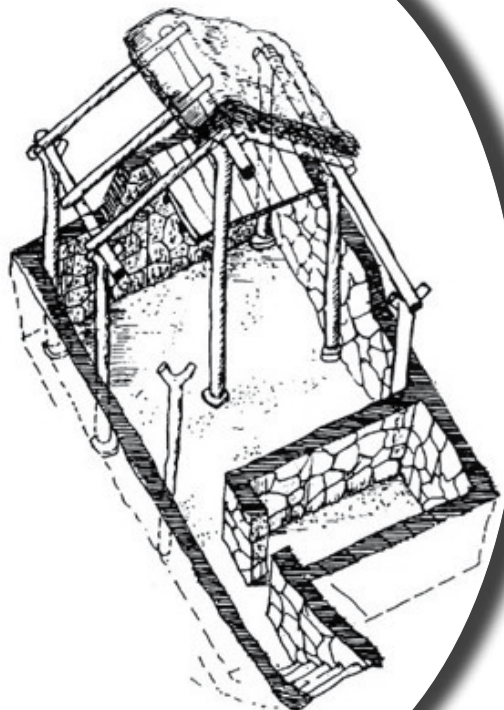
Roberto MICHELI, <i>Ricerca, tutela e valorizzazione a Castelraimondo Zuc'Scjaramont: il punto di vista della Soprintendenza ABAP FVG</i>	p. 139
Gessica BONINI, Federica MATTEONI, <i>Indagini archeologiche a Castelraimondo (1999-2005): stato dei lavori e nuove prospettive di ricerca</i>	p. 143
Alberto PRATELLI, <i>... quando fui trascinato dagli archeologi a dare una mano... note sul Parco Archeologico di Castelraimondo</i>	p. 153
Jean-Paul PETIT, <i>La mise en valeur des sites archéologiques de hauteur : quelques réflexions</i>	p. 165

ALTRI TESTI

Alessandra DELL'ANNA, <i>Aquileia vista dagli "Americani": il c.d. fondo USAAF dell'Aerofototeca Nazionale di Roma per lo studio del territorio dell'antica colonia romana</i>	p. 175
Ergün LAFLI, <i>Un tesoro nascosto nel V secolo da Izmir, Turchia</i>	p. 187
Maurizio BUORA, <i>Ancora qualche osservazione sulla pianta di Aquileia dall'esame delle foto aeree</i>	p. 213
Norme per gli Autori	p. 221
Elenco delle pubblicazioni della Società Friulana di Archeologia	p. 222

Atti della giornata di Udine

(5 maggio 2017)



BETWEEN 'VILLAGES' AND 'TOWNS' IN THE MID ADRIATIC AREA: ROLE AND HIERARCHIC ORGANIZATION OF THE 'MINOR SETTLEMENTS' IN ROMAN TIMES

Sonia *ANTONELLI*, Maria Cristina *MANCINI*, Oliva *MENOZZI*, Marco *MODERATO*

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION AND ECONOMY
DURING THE ROMAN PERIOD (M.C.M. & O.M. ¹)

The central Adriatic area in antiquity was occupied by Italic tribes, whose names are quite well known and attested in the literary sources by the 4th century BC. In this context, a crucial role, between the 4th and the 2nd century BC, was played by what can be defined as 'minor settlements', acting both politically and economically in a hierarchic territorial system, which changed smoothly between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD, and then again in the imperial period.

From the end of the 4th century BC the settlement pattern has been based on territorial sub units, attested by the Romans as *pagi*, working as semi-independent districts having their own councils responsible at local level for all social, religious and agricultural matters, clearly attested by epigraphic and literary sources ². Within the territory of each *pagus*, the most common kinds of settlements were *oppida*, *castella* and *vici*, which were generally strategically located along main natural paths and passages, and tightly connected. *Oppida* and *castella* in this territory were different kinds of hillforts ³, fortified centres ⁴ or fortifications for the control of important areas, or temporary refuges ⁵. However, only a few of these centres have been excavated, and we know very little about them. The number of hillforts and villages within a *pagus* was strongly influenced by the topography of the area, *vici* being widespread in river valleys, plains and plateaux of the eastern Apennine area, while hillforts appears to have been located mainly in the mountainous interior ⁶. However, there are examples in the Central Apennine of *vici* on hilltops, such as Marruvium or Teate, and some of the hillforts, Piano La Roma or Hatria for instance, could probably have been villages fortified later.

Within each *pagus* there was typically a large extrurban sanctuary, which played, especially for mountainous areas, an essential role acting as centre of political and economic as well as religious assembly. These sanctuaries were often situated at nodal points in the communications network, and probably served a widely scattered rural population ⁷.

The Romans at the beginning seem to have maintained the *pagus* system and used it for their administration, so much so that many early *vici* and *oppida* became Roman centres, like for example *Hatria Picena*, *Alba Fucens*, *Corfinium*, *Sulmo*, *Interamna* ⁸. Moreover, after the municipalization, the new urban centres did not interfere too much with the *pagus* system, becoming the administrative centres of these territorial units.

After the Roman conquest new forms of settlements, already used by the Romans in Latium, Etruria and Campania, were introduced in the Central Apennine area. Since the end of the 4th century BC Latin colonies were founded for the control of the local populations, such as Alba and Carseoli (303/290 BC), or used also as strategic points along the Adriatic coast, such as *Hatria Picena* and *Castrum Novum* (289 BC). The foundation of Latin colonies in the area introduced for the first time a Roman territorial view and the need of integrating two different territorial systems, although initially in a limited way and only relatively to the *agri coloniali*.

Within this territorial system *Fora* and *conciliabula* soon after the Roman conquest and before the Social War, probably played a fundamental role. They were located in nodal points of the road network and were used as assembly areas for markets, exercise of the army, or meeting centres for widespread local populations ⁹. Examples in the Central Apennines of these kinds of settlement are *Interamna*, whose status of *conciliabulum civium Romanorum* is attested by the sources ¹⁰, and probably *Iuvanum* and *Corfinium*, which can be interpreted as *fora* used, the former as market centre, and the latter as an assembly point and for the exercise of the army, as the presence of a *campus* seems to testify ¹¹. However, it is the poverty of the evidence which makes them such isolated examples at the moment, and they are likely to have been very numerous and extremely important. Moreover, details of the organisation of these settlements are very scanty and it is also difficult to understand their institutional status.

If the colonies were autonomous, the administration of small scale settlements (i.e. villages, small hillforts, farmsteads, *fora* and so on) was

based on the *praefecturae*, consisting in large districts, which were named after the main settlement in the area hosting the *praefectus iuri dicundo* ¹². However, it should be remembered here that, during the period between the middle of the 3rd and the middle of the 2nd centuries BC, the word *praefectura* meant properly the prefect's district and not the centre in which he resided, though later the word came to be used referring to particular towns. And often the confusion between these two interpretations is already in the sources. Moreover, it is still unknown which was the relationship between the original local tribal districts, and the Roman *praefecturae* soon after their introduction.

After the Social War the main settlements of the Central Apennines, which were located along the road network or in crucial points for the territorial administration, became *municipia* with full Roman citizenship. However, the ‘minor settlement’ continued to play an important role, especially for the mountainous areas (fig. 1).

The skeleton and the main meaning of this system was represented by the road network, which

has been widely exploited and monumentalised by the Romans, but was previously attested as natural routes following the main river valleys and the upland plateaux, along which villages, sanctuaries, *mansiones* and *stationes* formed crucial economic points. For this region, moreover, the road system can not be separated by the natural harbours, which were used since early period, not as structured ports, but as natural embankments, generally along the sea coasts, but in some way attested also in a river version along the Sangro river and possibly along the Vomano.

The phenomenon of urbanization gave a strong impetus to the development of the land and maritime trade. Italic merchants had already expanded the sphere of influence of their trade, establishing subsidiaries in major port cities of the Eastern Mediterranean. At the same time had been developing a new middle class, aware of its social and economic power, mainly consisted of artisans and companies often combined their common interests. Agriculture began to play an important role between production activities and

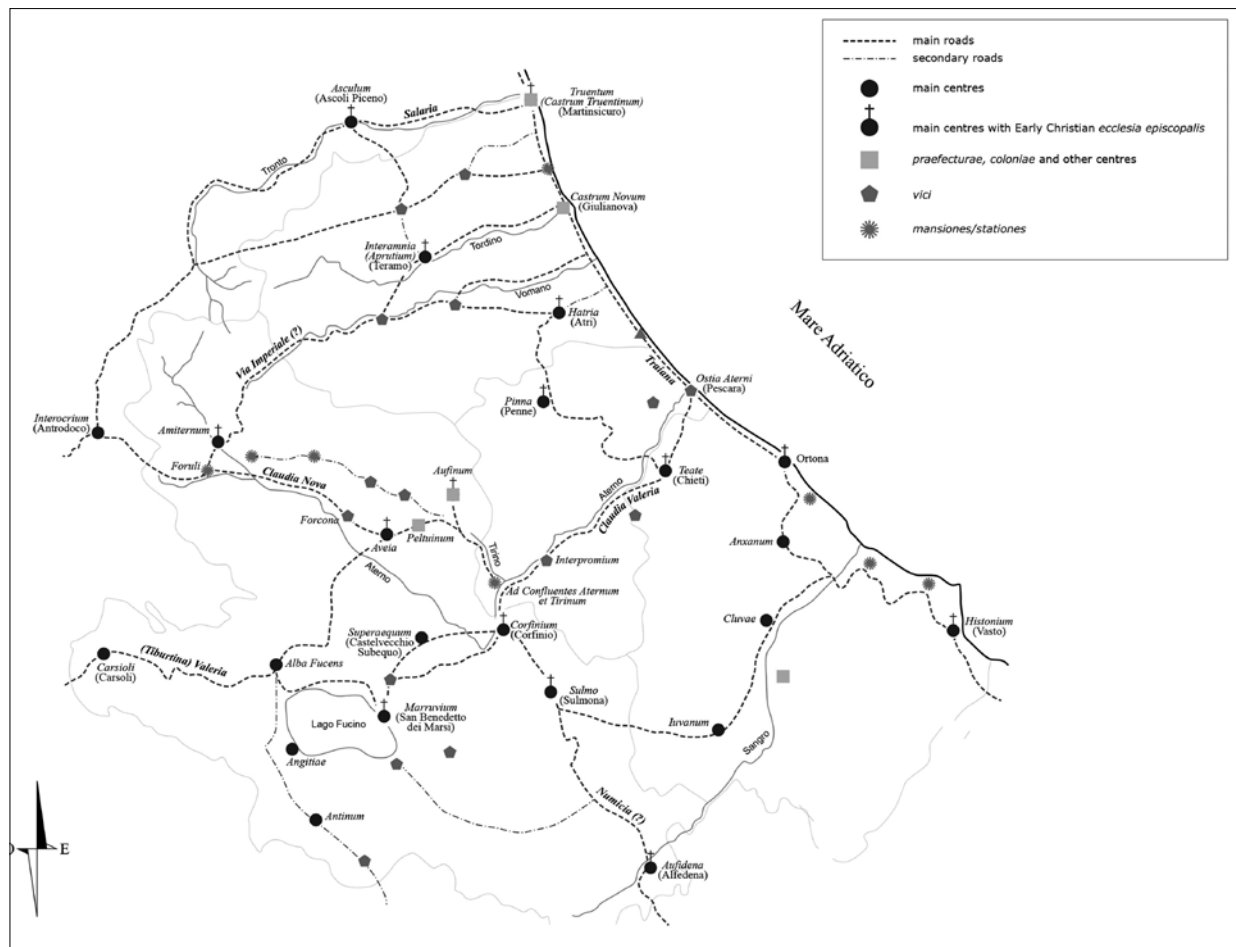


Fig. 1. Principal sites and settlements in Abruzzo (S. Antonelli).

became, along with the livestock breeding, the leading sector of the Italic economy. The economic system of goods distribution and contacts for trade sees as privileged interlocutors the minor settlements. They were connected by a dense and good road network and by river network and ended in numerous landings on the coast. Their main function was port of call for merchant ships of italic *negotiatores* and of supply of goods especially foreign and exotic goods, distributed by a network of *mercatores* in major and minor centres of Central Apennine area.

Going to look at specific examples, among the minor settlements some of the pre-roman villages, later to become *vici* during the Republican and Imperial age, occupied an important and central role within the territorial organisation. The *vici* of *Interpromium* and San Rustico are the best examples from this territory.

The *vicus* of San Rustico, in the northern Abruzzo, played an important role along the main pre-roman and roman road-network, with a strong economic vocation (as *tabernae*, kilns for metalurgy, pools and imported goods have been able to suggest). Its 'para-urban' system is based on original large quarters of *tabernae* and public and private buildings, dating to the 1st century BC, with strong modification in the giulio-claudian period, characterised by an inner reorganisation of the buildings and a 'monumentalization' of the main road, which has been properly paved. The centre of the *vicus* is characterised by an open space, with a possible function of main square/forum, in antiquity dominated by a temple, dating to the 2nd-1st century BC, according to its rich votive deposit. Most of the local productions, such as metalurgy, wine and oil production, seems to be widely attested both for the roman and for later periods ¹³. The discovery of Apulian and Hellenistic material, as well as *arulette* with Hellenistic motifs locally produced strongly demonstrates an openness of the region to overseas ports, trade and cultures ¹⁴.

The *vicus* of *Interpromium* is not yet known, except for the building discovered in 1969 ¹⁵. It was a *statio* with a rectangular plan located along the *via Tiburtina Valeria*. The *statio* had a paved rump linking the building with the main road. Several phases of the building have then been rebuilt in later times, probably with the reconstruction and restorations of the emperors Valentinianus, Valens and Gratianus. The economy of the settlement was based mainly on wine and olive oil production, livestock and the products therefrom, from the exploitation of wood, by outcrops of bitumen and asphalt mines ¹⁶. From this *vicus* an interesting inscription is mentioning a *Ponderarius Pagi Interpromini* ¹⁷, suggesting strong economic and

administrative implications for this site and its territory. The *ponderarium*, or public weighing, was the site of attesting the weights of various product on sale. It was usually placed in the immediate vicinity of a market or of production facilities ¹⁸. The claim of a *ponderarium* confirms the importance of the site as centre of production and sorting goods, located in a central point road.

As mentioned above, together with the *vici*, also some of the hillforts continued to be used in Hellenistic and Roman times. One of the most representative site is the hillfort of Monte Pallano, which continues to be an important commercial settlement also in the roman period. It was an italic hillfort already from the 5th century BC, fortified by impressive walls. It was part of a regular road network, even though remote and unfrequented place. The central area was consisting of a huge rectangular paved square, with colonnade on three sides. Around the *forum* we find public and craft places, *tabernae* and private building. Many places of worship were located in surrounding areas ¹⁹. The urban planning follows an italic urban typology. The settlement dominated the Sangro Valley, was placed along an important pastoral road, with several production sites in the territory, and a large *forum* not only with administrative and commercial function, but most likely market place and cattle fairs ²⁰.

Along the *Via Claudia Nova*, in the inner area of the region is placed *Aufinum*. It could represent a great example of minor centre. However this settlement had a great economic emphasis in the Hellenistic period, becoming a 'market area' at the crossing point of two natural routes. The settlement shows an interesting feature: that is a 'so called theatre', which has been used as point for political and economic reasons of the population. Moreover recent geo-archaeological prospection have pointed out that a large terraced road was arriving to the theatre and going to an open space, suggesting a possible simple market area, which could have been used together with the theatre for assembly in occasion of cattle auctions and fairs ²¹. The centre had a sort of decay or contraction with the Claudian period, when a new road was 'built' cutting out *Aufinum* and giving more emphasis to *Peltuinum*.

The Capestrano plain is characterised by three branches of the Tirino river and surrounded by mountainous ridges creating ideal conditions both for settling, for the agricultural exploitation of the area and for natural defence. Therefore, the area has been continuously settled, with temporary refuges since the Palaeolithic period, and permanently from the Neolithic, with an intensification of the settling in the Late Iron Age (second half of the

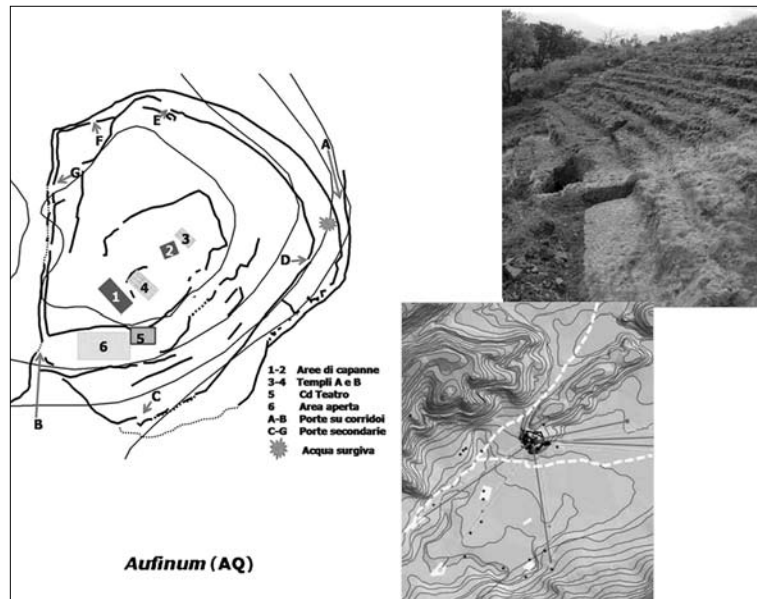


Fig. 2. Colle Sant'Antonino (Capestrano, AQ).

8th century BC) with long continuity till medieval times²². Almost nothing is known about the settlements dating from the Iron Age to the Late Archaic period; while, at the end of the 5th century BC the hill of S. Antonino was largely settled, but there are no evidence for previous periods, when probably smaller settlements must have been concentrated on other areas within the plain, which is possible to hypothesize just on the base of surface finds. The excavations on the hilltop of S. Antonino is mainly attesting the period from the 3rd century BC to Roman times, together with an intense re-use of the area and of the monuments in late antiquity and early medieval periods (fig. 2). At the moment two temples have been investigated, together with the so-called 'theatre', which represents an interesting structure for political, economic as well as rituals meetings of a scattered population leaving nearby²³. The finds from the excavation of the settlement are attesting an intense exchange of goods and influences with surrounding areas as well as with foreign contexts, probably on economic bases, as attested by a Focean coin (4th BC) and the presence of bronze and lead weights for economic purposes. The presence of the Phocaean coin is to be related with business contacts with this centre, due to the production of alum used for the processing of wool and animal skins. The numerous weights are testimony of economic activities inside the sanctuary, positioned directly under the protection of the gods worshipped²⁴.

Directly linked to the road-network are obviously the settlements well-known as *mansiones* or *stationes*. In the site of Bazzano, a huge civil complex placed along the *Via Claudia Nova* was used

probably as a *mansio* or *statio*, joined to the transhumance. The building presents a long *porticus ad viam* and three *cubicula*. Most probably it had an upper level with bedrooms for travellers. Facing the building it has been found a short stretch of the paved road, the *Claudia Nova*. Because of a collapse the building was re-used in the ground floor as a refuge for the flocks, especially during the transhumance, because very close to the main route. During the early medieval period was used as necropolis²⁵. Born as infrastructure related to road networks, it becomes popular as commercial meeting and trade place.

The *vicus* of Cinturelli, which developed probably around a *statio* or a *mansio*, is placed along the *Via Claudia Nova*, at about 13 roman

miles from Bazzano. In the *vicus*, as for Bazzano, have been discovered several buildings built along the road and dating to the Roman Imperial period, mostly workshops with their infrastructures, cisterns and kilns for pottery and metallurgy²⁶.

The picture of the Central Apennines area is completed by the ports along the Adriatic coast, serving the local communities as maritime outlet of the main roads. The western Adriatic coast has been, for a long time, considered as *importuosa litora*, because of its topographic configuration and local adverse sea currents and some of the population of this area was used to piracy, attested by Strabo²⁷.

Concerning the coastal sites, on the basis of the archaeological evidence, some explicative samples can be presented here. The first is *Ostia Aterni* (fig. 3) placed at the end of *Via Tiburtina Valeria Claudia*, to the mouth of the Aterno River, and has been always a *vicus*. The road connected Rome directly with the Central Adriatic Sea. The harbour of *Ostia Aterni* was known since the republican period as landing of Vestini, Paeligni and Marrucini tribes, it become the most important harbour during the imperial age, especially in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, because placed in a strategic position along the sea routes to Salona, the new imperial headquarter. Obviously the port of *Ostia Aterni* received the goods to be exported and imported by sea. Some inscriptions attested the economic role of the *vicus*, linked to the navigation: for instance the case of *Cassius Hermodorus* "*naucrero qui erat in colleg(io) Serapis Salon(itano)*"²⁸, confirms the relationship whit the opposite coast and the presence of owners with their merchant fleets. Along

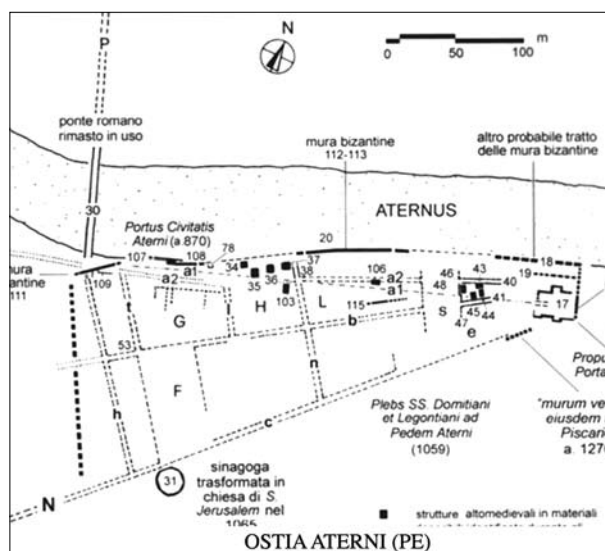


Fig. 3. Ostia Aterni (Pescara). Imperial and Late Roman Harbour (STAFFA 2004).

the banks of the river Aterno, dockings were built and linked to them commercial infrastructures for the unloading of goods from ships and their marketing and distribution networks in major urban centres and minor settlements. An ancient dock has been dug up during recent excavation, and the numerous pottery fragments testify the prominent role in trade and marketing with the Northern Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean countries²⁹, until 7th-8th century AD when commercial activities never knew a period of decay³⁰. The maritime activities is connected with the exploitation of deposits of bitumen, as well testified by an ingot³¹. Transported by land or river, the bitumen was used in caulking wooden hulls of ships and perhaps also intended for export.

A *Statio Ad Salinas*, according to the sources, was located in the area of Città Sant'Angelo (PE) along the coastal road, *Via Flaminia-Traiana*, close to an ancient harbour. The trade of local productions, probably both by land and sea, is widely attested by the large amount of amphorae and by the kilns for the production of amphorae, which have been found not far from the ancient harbour³², by the presence of salt marshes and by salt trade³³.

Similar situation has been found at *Castrum Novum* and it seems to indicate a productive complex along the seacoast. A large lamp workshop is attested and it has been partially excavated in the area a storeroom. The typology seems to be quite repetitive and can be found mainly in Adriatic contexts, dating to the Flavian period. This production is an important marker of trade through the Adriatic routes³⁴.

In the centre of San Vito Chietino, during excavations between 1991 and 1995 a settlement with a long continuity of use, dating from the 1st century BC to the early medieval period, has been found. Originally two rooms with *porticus*, overlooking the seacoast were built in the 1st century BC, and during the 1st century AD was then restructured and re-used for a workshop of "Firmalampen"³⁵.

Several italic élites were joined to the international trade, and the Paelignan gens *Peticia* has been the more important. It was a *familia* of *negotiatores* and *navicularii*, well attested by archaeological and epigraphic sources in Italy and in other countries in the Mediterranean basin. In all the epigraphic sources, the peoples of the gens *Peticia* are often cited as ship owners, at least until the full 4th century AD. The documents give a good picture of a rich and wealthy family, like many others, by Italian manufacturers and dealers, owners of ships and specialized in trading, especially wine, with the Mediterranean and the East, following precise routes already in the 1st century BC. Goods from Italy arrived in all Mediterranean ports and landings farther away, like Arabia and India. From here they imported fabrics, precious stones and spices³⁶.

The roads can be considered the main resources of transport for goods, flocks, armies, peoples and, above all, for cultural ideas. The Italic people knew the real importance of a road network in the Central Apennine area.

The road network used the special natural tracks for the transhumance, known later as *tratturi*. The strongly pastoral economy of Central Apennines already during the pre-Roman period is attested in this area. These routes were more important also for the trade of goods related to the stock raising, such as milk, cheese, meat, hide and particularly significant for wool and salt, and for the commerce of different products. Often it is difficult to distinguish the tracks of the roman roads for the transhumance from the later *tratturi*. There is frequently a coincidence of pre-roman tracks, *viae* and *calles publicae romanae* and *tratturi*. The *tratturo Magno* used part of the roads *Claudia Nova*, *Valeria Claudia* and *Traiana*.

Two relieves from Sulmona and Pretoro, dating to the 1st century BC, illustrate transhumance in Central Apennines, showing the shepherds with their flocks during their moving along these tracks and one from Pacentro remind *calles* and *callitani*³⁷. The mentions of *paenularius* and *lanipenda* testify activities linked to the wool manufacture³⁸.

Along these roads specific for the transhumance and the *viae publicae* were often located important markets, water springs, sometimes with

monumental fountains, resting points, settlements and sanctuaries. The most important was the sanctuary of *Ercole Curino*, near Sulmona, dating from the 4th century BC to the 2nd AD, probably used as market and commercial place, as well demonstrated from the cow votive offering. Often used by local communities as places of socio-political meetings and places of fairs and markets, shrines began to establish economic transactions under the tutelage of a divinity and with the guarantee of a religious authority. The most illustrative is definitely the big terraced shrine dedicated to Hercules, in Sulmona, located along an ancient route, with acquaintances already in previous eras, in which there was a market for the buying and selling of cattle. In Abruzzo many shrines are dedicated to Hercules, and beyond, along the paths of transhumance, used as places of exchange and sale ³⁹.

Numerous productions and local activities are attested in the minor settlements by epigraphic sources, are quite various and also geographically homogeneously dislocated, with activities related to the marketing of timber in the areas of *Amiternum* territory and Valle Roveto, both inner and mountainous zones, but closely located to the main road network. The cultivation of vegetables and fruits are mainly focused on the plain river terraces along the middle Aterno Valley, in the territory of *Interpromium*. Olive and grape cultivation are attested for the inner inter-valley plateaux (*Aufinum*, *Sulmo*, *Corfinum*), as well as for the smooth hilly area just at the back of the seacoasts. Moreover transhumance and their related activities, such as dairy products, as well as textiles, salt trade and re-use of animal bones, are closely related with the practice of transhumance, both long and short distance and therefore well attested along main and secondary tratturi. Moreover, while these main productive activities seems to be widely attested mainly in minor centres, the art-craft activities are exclusively attested in the main urban centres, probably for their use as main market poles, as the numerous epigraphic sources of *acuarii*, *argentarii*, *aurifices*, *ephippiarii*, *pistores*, *stabularii*, *tectores*, *sculptores*, as well as the find of *fulonicae*, seem to attest. However just the carpentry seems to be limited outside the urban centres and dislocated in the territory, for obvious problems of transport and working spaces. Concerning textiles, it is more difficult to locate exclusive productive areas, because the large numbers of finds concerning wool and linen productions (mainly tools for their work) seem to suggest a wide production both for personal use and trade ⁴⁰.

Among the typical local productions for Hellenistic and early Roman times in central Apennine area, certainly the funerary beds must

be mentioned. They were typical of graves of 40/45 years old women and consist of bone imitation of the Hellenistic funerary beds which were generally in ivory or metal, especially bronze, which became popular in the Central Italy at the beginning of the 2nd century BC and continued to be produced until the early Imperial period. These bone imitations are widely attested for the period between the 2nd and the 1st centuries BC, so much that the presence of local workshops seems now to be certain. The decorations of these bone beds were based on ivory and bronze prototypes. Till recently the only bone funerary bed completely restored and reconstructed was the fine example from Amplero, imitating bronze models; however a very recent find from tomb 520 at Fossa, which represents the finest example of imitation of ivory models, has recently been restored. The evident concentration of bone funerary beds in Abruzzo could to suppose a specialized production in Central Italy ⁴¹.

The analysis of coins from hoards, excavated sites and single finds produces a more detailed picture of coin supply and use during italic and roman period. The Italic tribes that inhabited this area produced their own coins and coinage was part of the indigenous cultures. The presence of coins from Greece and other Mediterranean Countries demonstrates the existence of important trade with and from the Mediterranean Basin. The significant presence of Italic coins, principally from Southern Italy, supports the huge economic and cultural contacts existing between the Italic populations all along, and the presence of Roman Republican silver and bronze coins, principally, supports the non-disruption in the economic and social activities. A pattern of particular interest was observed in the central region, along the River valleys, where distinctive spatial distributions of silver and bronze coins were identified. Both metals have been recovered in single finds, coins are found together as hoards. This appears to indicate that silver and bronze coins were used in inter-regional transactions with external groups on the river valley and on the coast, trade and the payment of troops or duties, and so on, while in the principal italic and roman harbours on the coast coins might have been also as a store of wealth whose value was not necessarily measured in economic terms, but probably as metal value. The entire Central Apennines was truly on the centre of the pre-Roman Mediterranean traffics and on the mainstream position of the Roman Empire, and the coin evidence suggests the day-today lives of the population in a substantial part of the country will have hardly changed for several generations after the arrival of the Roman coins ⁴².

CONCLUSIONS

The settlements of Italic tradition, were gradually integrated within the Roman administrative system with roles and functions not identical but changing through the times. Although they never became *municipia*, they played an important role for the territory as pole of aggregation, becoming Episcopal centres in early Christian times, as in the cases of *Aufinum*, *Pitinum*, *Castrum Truentinum*.

The location is strictly related to the road network and the ports-embankments generally corresponds to those of some *vici*, as the crossing point of main axes of the road network.

The archaeological evidence at the moment do not allow a detailed reconstruction of the urban systems and of the monumental forms, however the case of *Pelutium* and *Aufinum* seem to attest monumental forms for the main examples, following an urban planning, with a hierarchization of the spaces, functional organization of the areas with monumental buildings.

In other cases the relationship with the road-network seem to conditioned the planimetric asset of the buildings, as for instance the longitudinal buildings and the presence of porticoed areas.

According to the most recent finds, the network of minor settlements seems to have been characterized by specialized functions and activities integrating the urban system, where more complex activities of transformation are attested.

The archaeological data offer the possibility to reconstruct the main commercial routes on the basis of the import-export of the different typologies of goods. Therefore, it is completely confirmed the view of coastal centres working as main commercial poles for the oriental and Balkan area, as well as for north-south trade, with Apulia and northern Adriatic Italy, and inner areas as commercial link with Tyrrhenian Italy as well as with inner zones, such as Umbria and northern inner Apennine zones.

MID-ADRIATIC MINOR SETTLEMENTS IN LATE ANTIQUITY: CRISIS? WHAT CRISIS? (S.A.)

The themes related to the economy in the Roman world have been much discussed, to the contrary the investigation of late antiquity economy has stalled the development of a generic concept of crisis with a negative deviant ideological implication. The theme is widely debated and too often in the perception of the causes of the crisis in late Roman period are searched in the presence of external agents (immigration, invasions) as well as in late antiquity the movement of non-native

populations are believed to cause the rupture of equilibrium. There is a solid parallelism between the emblematic composite economic system of the Roman world (where the state economy had a strong weight) and the contemporary economic system dominated by capitalism and globalization. The breakdown of this balance leads to the so-called "crisis" which, however, must be seen as moments of transformation (there is already talk of hypothetical future economic organization generically defined system of post-capitalism).

Archaeologists have been guilty of internalizing discussions of material culture within schemes of classification and chronology, while ancient historians and economists have been concentrated upon documents and institutions. The literary conventions governing excavation reports and artefact catalogues have been part of the problem, but another difficulty is that individuals vary considerably in their cognitive abilities; some find it easier to grapple with linguistic forms and literary devices than to conceptualise space and physical shape. The privileged position of the written above the material, combined with a long-established correlation between classical scholarship and social élites, has introduced a protracted cultural distance not only between archaeologists and ancient historians but within their disciplines, according to the character of individual researches.

Evaluating the last thirty years of archaeological theory it is possible to comprehend that too often archaeologists have followed the lead of cultural theory or social science, which are based primarily on documents. At the same time archaeological publications frequently tend to be over-specialized (by necessity) and commonly somewhat forbidding to the outsider. These two factors have led to the marginalization of archaeological contributions to broader debates on the ancient economy. It is necessary theoretical equality for archaeology, arguing that archaeology needs a firmly "grounded" sense of itself if it is to be an equal partner in a truly pluralistic scholarly enterprise. Then it is very important not subordinating archaeological theories and models to the concerns of economic historians, calling for disciplinary plurality rather than hierarchy⁴³.

No other topic has witnessed a more dramatic explosion of research in the last few years than the economy and society of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. Today, we speak of "*Pirenne's thesis*" as an outdated model of understanding the very complex transition from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. In the last three decades, new approaches to documentary history, but especially the hundredfold growth of archaeological studies and findings have transformed beyond recognition

the study of the social and economic history of the period from 4th until 9th centuries AD. New questions have emerged and scholars have increasingly moved towards a comparative approach. Through reading and discussions of a variety of issues and regions, we will come to some understanding of the workings about late-antique and early medieval economy and society and focalizing especially on: trade and coins; rise of new aristocracies; emporia ("ports-of-trade"); kingdoms and communities; archaeology of late antique and early medieval social changes.

The available studies with an archaeological approach specifically and mainly pertain to the Mediterranean area and change the flow of maritime trade ⁴⁴.

In the Adriatic Italian Peninsula, the recent researches are principally concentrated on the Comacchio area, Classe and in the Apulian region ⁴⁵. The Central Adriatic regions (Marche, Abruzzo and Molise) have been marginally treated as well as has been focused the recent meeting in Ravenna ⁴⁶ and in Spoleto ⁴⁷. The current excavations and researches are highlighting different aspects respecting to the historiographical former model centralized negatively on a distinct and generalized caesura towards the middle of 4th century AD and on an economy completely ridden on political and commercial structures of the Eastern Imperial area between 5th and 7th century. The forms previously identified as crisis seem instead to be interpreted as well social and cultural changes and transformations in the picture of economy attesting adaptation and different issues according to the context.

The economic role of the minor settlements has been well investigated for the roman period and it is already evident that they directly attended to the goods productions, through multiples organized artisanal activities, to which normally remain archaeological evidences, to the services distribution and to the local and imported productions circulation in temporary markets and in permanent trade, on local and regional scale.

The relationship between minor settlements and economic system is centred on important international projects focused on some areas of Italian Peninsula, as well as the middle Tyrrhenian region, evaluating the insertion of local level in geographical and economic exchanges systems on wide-scale, individuating models of artefacts distribution and circulation in intermediary position between urban centres and minor settlements, as well *villae* and farms ⁴⁸.

In the connection of economic and commercial indicators and minor settlements one intends to propose a review of data for the middle

Adriatic region, especially modern Abruzzo, in Late Antiquity period (4th-7th century AD). The aim is to insert this area in a wider scientific debate, for important interpretations and key lectures inspiring future research projects.

In this former years, the researches on historical and cultural aspects between late Antiquity and Early Middle Age have had evident development, modifying the cognition about economic aspects. Anyway, a particular ambiguity about the interpretation of archaeological sources, especially according the deterioration of the precedent situation or of the persistence of employ.

A side from instances of reduction and "decline", more or less clear – at least by the shapes – there are instances of settlement and economic growth, as in many Britannic sites in which between 3rd and 4th AD there is a strong development and become hierarchically equal to urban centres. Old models, based on a more autarchic economic organization are surpassed toward the acknowledge of new forms of craft activity organization.

Before going into the specific content related to the economical and social aspects of the Late Antiquity minor settlements in the Middle Adriatic area, is important to clarify that the term for "minor" is not correlated to an expected hierarchization. An early and in-depth debate focused on the urbanistic, jurisdictional and terminological features of these settlements has emerged in the central and northern Europe thanks to a great deal of archaeological remains. The definition of "agglomération secondaire" has become mainly common in the archaeological literature on the continental provinces and especially on the Gaul province. Nowadays, the scientific debate seems to have overcome the inferiority prejudice involved in the term "minor" by considering others such as "petite ville" which is in line with the Anglo-saxon conceptual and theoretical model of the "small towns". In different contexts, particularly in the Mediterranean area, the derivation from the roman concept of *vicus* has led to the use of the term "villaggio" to represent a political and administrative classification, which often was totally independent from demographic and socio-economical considerations. In the northern Africa and the Iberian provinces the minor settlements are highly agricultural, therefore are commonly called "agrotowns" although their organization is such an extent complex and manifold that it can not be simplistically considered as «estensione della città nella campagna» (extension of the town in the rural area).

It is possible to talk of agglomerations which play an important role in the land use planning from both an economical and administrative point

of view. The best defined category concerning the juridical aspect is represented by the *vicus* which in specific cases seems to have quite urban dimension and structure; nevertheless, the juridical status can change during the years while remaining mainly unchanged the residential aspect, the craftsmanship and the trade roles of the settlement.

The “minor” settlements play an important role in the Late Antiquity territorial reorganization due to the fact that these were inhabited by a population mainly engaged in the production of primary goods. As to this, studying them is fundamental to verify the effective impact and extent of the crisis during the Late Antiquity. Some kind of ambiguity in the interpretation of the archaeological sources is related to this subject because to the fact that several studies tend to consider only the “decline” or the reduction both in the quality of buildings and the decorative and monumental features differently from the Roman Period⁴⁹. Others instead, are focused to detect traces of a generic “permanence of occupation” without analyzing the forms and methods of the political, social and economical context changed over the years. Currently the interpretative models based on the retreat towards an economic organization of self-sufficient type⁵⁰ are definitely overcome in favour of the acknowledgement of new forms of articulation of productive activities. The studies show different examples of contraction and “decline” more or less apparent, at least in forms, but also others characterized by a clear increase in the economy and settlement as the evolution of many Britannic sites during the Late 3rd and the Early 4th century AD which tend to occupy relevant positions in the market hierarchy along with the urban centers.

The aim of this paper is to propose a review of the economical and commercial data on the so-called “minor” settlements in the mid-adriatic region during the Late Antiquity (4th-7th century AD). A specific regard is related to the Abruzzo region in order to understand if the transformations and changes must be interpreted as a break or degeneration or otherwise these are the result of solutions adopted to react to the changes afflicting the political, socio-cultural and also economical order.

Generally, the minor settlements in Abruzzo region are located, as usual as in other contexts, directly in connection to the main viability and the coastal landing⁵¹. The settlements identified as *vici* are located in strategical places in proximity to the junction and intersection of the main roads which suggests that the viability had a fundamental role in the organization of the region economical system⁵². This phenomenon is quite clear in few sites such as Santa Maria a Vico (S.Omero,

TE), Campovalano (Campi, TE) and San Rustico (Basciano, TE). In S.Maria a Vico the *vicus* has been identified through an inscription of the Trajan period which is nowadays reused in the right nave of the church. The inscription states the existence of an association of *cultores Herculis* seated in the *vicus* called *Stramentarius* o *Stramenticius*⁵³. This settlement was located at the intersection of an important ancient axis, likely the roman *Caecilia*, which probably connected the Tyrrenic area to the Adriatic one⁵⁴. A first ramification of the *Caecilia* axis reached the coast at Tortoreto, where there was an important proto-historic settlement while during the Roman period there had to be a nucleus of many *villae rusticate*. Otherwise, the second ramification led to the north-southern coastal viability at Alba Adriatica, where it is maybe possible to locate the *statio Perturnum* mentioned in the sources by the Anonimus Ravennas and Guido⁵⁵ along the coastal road between *Castrum Truentinum* and *Castrum Novum*.

Equally, the Campovalano settlement is placed at the intersection of the north-south axis which connected the *Asculum* and *Interamnia Praetuttiorum* urban contexts to the east-western trans-Appennine road, so-called *Caecilia*.

No direct epigraphic data allowing to define the legal *status* of the settlement are present (which seems to belong to the *vicus* category over the Late Antiquity), however this information can be presumed from the presence of an inscription reused into the church of S. Pietro in Campovalano which preserves the dedication to the *divus Iulius* and it would be related to the emission of the *lex Rufrena* in the 44 BC, which promotes the diffusion of the cult in the *municipia* and the major *vici*.

On the other hand, there are not epigraphy data for San Rustico (Basciano, TE) which has been excavated during the construction of the highway, the function of the settlement has been proposed on the basis of the urban planning organization⁵⁶. Again the *vicus* is located at the intersection of the east-western axis which linked the *amiternum* area to the coastal Abruzzo via the Capannelle passage, going down to the Vomano valley. In S. Rustico location a ramification of the axis continued towards *Interamnia Praetuttiorum* while the other one led till the *Hatria* colony.

The average of the archaeological data on the Post-Classic period is definitely very low, both for the lack of systematic studies⁵⁷ and for an insufficient attention paid in the past to the Late Antiquity phases, which were already presented in other contexts⁵⁸. The presence of craft activities over the Post-Classic period is overall permanent, although, one of the most challenging issues is that the data cannot allow to estimate the real amount

of the production, therefore it is not possible to assess whether it is producing for self-consumption or if it is possible to assume some forms of local trade as well ⁵⁹. Get to the point, is quite clear that the archaeological data demonstrate some forms of occupation in the Late Antiquity, the production needs of primary commodities and, as consequence, the permanence, in these settlements, of the artisans with specific skills.

One of the most testified handcrafted activities of the Late Antique period, even for the evident marks on the ground such as for instance slags and pyrotechnic structures, is the metallurgy.

The archaeological judgement of the iron working from an economical point of view is highly difficult to define, since many generic "marks" of steel activities can be reasonably related to the construction or to the domestic and livelihood needs.

In the San Rustico *vicus* a kiln for metal working, dated post 4th c. AD, has been clearly identified. Based on the kiln related "cap" slag ⁶⁰ found out during the excavations it is likely that it was used for the iron working.

Similarly in the Centurelli *vicus* (AQ), in the Abruzzo interior, numerous "cap" slags were found in the restructuring phases of the settlement, especially in proximity of the road ⁶¹. No furnace or production facilities were identified.

The Centurelli case allows to do some considerations on the slag deposits, in fact, until few decades ago these key production indicators were not given much importance and only more recently an increase of attention is paid to proper analysis and identification ⁶². The remains of metallurgical activities, indeed, are very common and should be carefully analysed on the basis of criteria such as the quantity and the assembly, that is the coexistence of almost homogeneous quantities of different types of slags related to the post-reduction and forged activities ⁶³. Another aspect to take into account is that of their dispersion or use in the building and in the preparation of roadways such as drainage material ⁶⁴. A more accurate analysis of this deposits would likely lead to narrow the proliferation of production activities, which is often interpreted as a symptom of the contractions of medium and long range trades and other self-consumption phenomena. The abandonment of large industrial centers and multiplication of steel initiatives in many areas, as early as the 3rd c. AD ⁶⁵, could be a sign of an economic restructuring in the name of the preservation of the technological knowledge rather than the sign of the decline ⁶⁶. The studies on the *extra limes* areas have clearly shown that, between the 2nd and the 3rd c. AD, the increase of the iron working in the rural areas is

directly connected to an evolution of the agricultural practices ⁶⁷ and certainly not to a reduction of economic and commercial capabilities for autocracy purposes.

However, often the archaeological data are unsatisfactory to well understand the economic and commercial significance of these craft activities that can be effectively linked to the self-consumption or structural needs: this is the case of the rest and service places ⁶⁸ such as the coastal *statio* in S. Vito Chietino (location, Murata Bassa CH). It had to be that during the Imperial period an important plant specializing in the production of lamps was located in the S.Vito *statio*. After the roman production plant was abandoned, the area was used for funerary purposes. In an even later date, around the 6th c. AD there had to be a further settlement phase characterized by a housing made of perishable materials. At this period belongs the ceramic kiln, very small in size, which was probably related to the self-consumption needs for the welcome purposes of the *statio* ⁶⁹, however, is not possible to exclude that it could produce a surplus that fulfilled also commercial needs even in a short range.

Furthermore, the production of ceramics, in Late Antiquity, as part of a settlement in which in Roman Times were produced lamps represents an interesting case of resumption of activity, probably promoted by the availability of good quality clay.

However, on the basis of the generic marks related to the craft activities is quite difficult to define the permanence, even in the Late Antiquity, of a class of merchants, artisans or indeed the landed aristocracy ⁷⁰ in the "minor" settlements. In this sense are perhaps more indicative some materials that belong to the funerary contexts reserved for a high social class which can be interpreted as "proof" of the socio-economic dimension of some of the settlements and even of the religious context referring to the Christianization ⁷¹. As to this, there are two explicative sarcophagi of the 4th c. AD, the first of which belongs to a Roman workshop ⁷² and is currently exhibited in the Church of San Clemente a Casauria in the context of the ancient *vicus Interpronium* ⁷³, while the other is realized in Proconnesian marble and it has probably been imported from the East, it is now stored in the church of S.Pietro a Campovalano which surely was in the same settlement of which unfortunately is not possible to know the name.

The *sarcophagus* of San Clemente a Casauria is decorated only along the front side with three Christian figurative scenes and two with strigilated motifs ⁷⁴. It is an interesting case beyond the fact that a marble *sarcophagus* is still an element that distinguish a certain elite, but especially from the

peculiarity of the iconography represented, namely Susanna among the elders⁷⁵, which has comparisons with a single copy known to the writer, now preserved in Barcelona⁷⁶. It is possible to argue that these two samples come from the same workshop as the special nature of the decorative theme and especially some formal and stylistic elements⁷⁷. The decorative theme is definitely uncommon⁷⁸ compared to the conventional figure of the prayer ("orante"). However, it seems to persist the problem on the awareness of the customer and/or purchaser.

The interesting fact is that of the connection with a roman workshop well integrated in the international trade, at least basing on the sample stored in Barcelona.

An international scope also characterizes the commercial exchanges in the Adriatic area of Abruzzo during the Late Antiquity as pointed out by the text of the *sarcophagus* inscription in Campovalano (fig. 4).

Unfortunately the inscription is lost⁷⁹ but a transcript of this is preserved in the Archive of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana within the Gaetano Marini's fund⁸⁰. The inscription regards an epitaph in greek characters of a certain Aurelius Andronicus from Nicomedia, marble merchant (λιθένπορος), buried with his wife Fortuna.

The rear of this *sarcophagus* of Costantinian age, made up of Proconnesian marble, is decorated on all the four sides and is reused within the church of San Pietro in Campovalano⁸¹. The decoration consists of two levels with two other figurative

scenes focused on the Saint Peter's iconography alternating with two panels characterized by very tight strigilated motifs⁸². The decorative scheme and the type of marble seem to be linked to an eastern context as well as the deceased's home.

Another λιθένπορος named *M. Aurelius Xeronianus Aquila*, a native of Bithynia is well-known in Rome during the 3rd c. AD⁸³ through a funerary inscription in the church of S. Saba on the Aventino. The activity of these *negotiatores marmorarii* consisted in submitting the sarcophagi orders to the production workshops⁸⁴, especially after the "revitalization" of the mining activities and the resumption of the role of Nicomedia in the commerce⁸⁵.

In the 5th century the *graeci negotiatores* managed the retail in Rome, staining often of unfair competition⁸⁶ and even in the *Leges Visigothorum* they are mentioned as *transmarini negotiatores* operating in the Western area⁸⁷. Therefore, some of these eastern merchants settled in the *pars occidentalis* continuing to maintain contacts with the motherland and creating effective networks of exchange⁸⁸. They are characterized by an extraordinary mobility⁸⁹, as evidenced even in the Early Middle Ages⁹⁰. The presence of a merchant performing such an activity in a minor center, as Campovalano used to be, is a relevant factor which may be partially explained by the settlement's strategic location at the intersection of two main routes in close topographic relationship with the coastal approach of *Castrum Novum* (Giulianova, TE), which from Late Antiquity

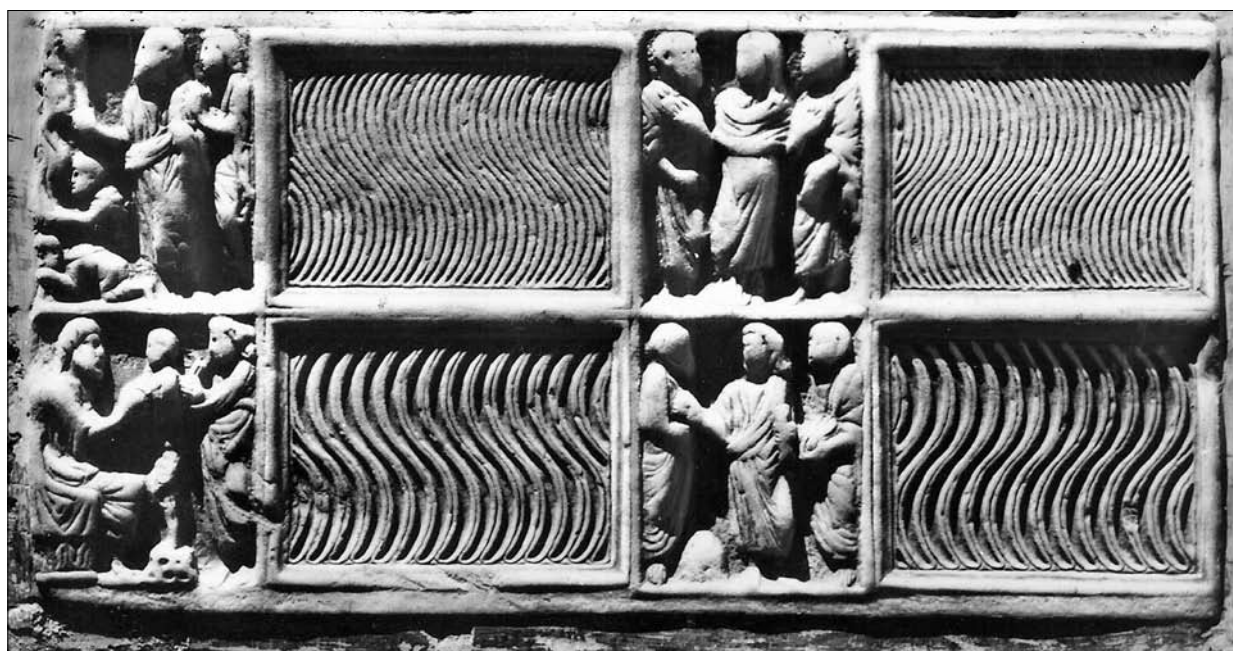


Fig. 4. S. Pietro a Campovalano (Campi, TE). Early Christian sarcophagus (foto S. Antonelli).

acquires a relevant role in the Adriatic relations with the East ⁹¹.

Furthermore, is important to take into account the dynamics related to the introduction of the Early Christian religious buildings with *cura animarum* function: they are clearly located in relation to forms of vital settlements; moreover, the furnishings indicate commercial and cultural contacts in the Mediterranean context as well as a certain economical capability.

Regarding this is definitely significant another discovery of architectural elements in Campovalano, at San Pietro church, made of Proconnesian marble, some of whom are semi-finished ⁹² (especially a column), and there is also a small *pergula* capitel with acanthus leaves decorations dating to the 6th c. AD and it is probably related to a Presbytery enclosure ⁹³. It is not clear the original function of the church but it is likely that it was in charge of the *cura animarum*.

Santa Maria a Vico instead was surely a rural parish which preserved this role for all the Middle Age. In this church there are still two pairs of window barriers with geometrical decorations dating back to the 6th c. AD. For two barriers is relevant the comparison with a product of the Euphrasius Porec complex ⁹⁴, on the other side of the Adriatic. In the Adriatic area, once again, have to be found comparisons and stylistic influences that characterize the mosaic of the church of Santo Stefano in Rivo Maris in Casalbordino (CH).

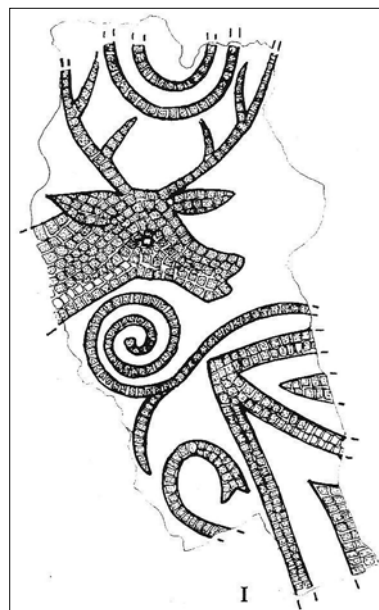
In the Late 5th c. AD the church is part of a Roman villa in close relationship with a dock and a *statio* as well.

The archaeological investigations found out a series of mosaic floors, including a fragment of figured floor with a deer that longs for a *kantaros* from which grows a vine shoot dating back to the 6th c. AD.

The most punctual comparisons refer to the mosaics known in the Balkans and the Aegean ⁹⁵ (fig. 5). This decorative motif is particularly widespread on both sides of the Adriatic ⁹⁶ and despite the diversity of representations it reveals a common iconographic matrix. Moreover, the theme of the deer which longs for a *kantaros* is usually used in relation to baptismal environments and even in the absence of the baptismal font, that has not already found, could let imagine a *cura animarum* function even for the S.Stefano in Rivo Maris church.

There is no doubt that the circulation, in Late Antiquity, of materials, patterns and perhaps workers even from long-range circuits like the other side of the Adriatic or the East attest the access of these settlements to the same circuits, but also an economic dimension and still considerable socio-cultural one.

Fig. 5. S. Stefano in Rivo Maris (Casalbordino, CH). Mosaic in the narthex (TULIPANI 2001).



In conclusion, it is possible to point out that during the Late Antiquity in Abruzzo could act an economic model based on the "minor" settlements which played an important role as local markets and service centers for the circulation and exchange of products and good, even from remote areas.

These settlements were mainly placed at the center of a systemic distribution area (the so-called theory of central places), in which a rule is to localize at least the largest settlement from an urban point of view (but not urban *strictu sensu*) where specific artisan activities took place and/or it was possible to deliver specialized services.

In this last category of settlements could be included either the coastal settlement of *Ostia Aterni* (which is nowadays Pescara), equipped with a port particularly active in the Late Antiquity, as the settlement of *Peltuinum* in the Abruzzo interior. Both the settlements never reached the municipal *status*.

The port of *Ostia Aterni* played the role of redistribution center of goods coming from beyond the Adriatic and Mediterranean ⁹⁷. The highest volume of traffic is probably included by the first half of the 6th c. AD ⁹⁸, although there are significant evidences until the 6th c. AD ⁹⁹.

The presence in the hinterland of transport containers and eastern sigillata samples ¹⁰⁰ might suggest that the role of *Ostia Aterni* was similar to that managed by other redistributor centers which were in a strong interaction system between the *pars occidentalis* and *orientalis* of the Empire, with different market dynamics imposed by pure market needs rather than "state" directives.

The *Peltuinum* settlement, in the vestine area, presented urban characteristics¹⁰¹ very close to urban settlements and played a strategic role in the development of territory in Late Antiquity.

In *Peltuinum* has been found a bronze “Zwiebelknopffibel”, which is a crossbow fibula dating back to the 4th-5th c. AD¹⁰². This crossbow fibula is mainly attested in the urban centers (*Iuvanum*, *Alba Fucens* and *Castrum Truentinum*)¹⁰³.

The presence of this type of fibula may be cautiously connected to the presence of military ranks and, therefore, to the allocation of troops¹⁰⁴, or presence of State officials and members of their families.

In *Peltuinum*, in the Post-Classical phases, many indicators of specialized craft activities were found and this could be the evidence of its role as a “mediator” center. During the Late Antiquity, probably since the 4th c. AD, in fact the north-west corner of the *porticus* of the temple, placed near the theatre, is converted back to artisan purpose. The intercolumnar spaces are buffered with reused material and create in this way a small regular environments. Some indicators allowed the identification in one of these spaces of a lapidary workshop where the stone material recovered from the same temple and the nearby theatre was worked¹⁰⁵.

In another of the rooms was instead found a large deposit of animal bones with obvious traces of cutting and also many bone’s objects, this was undoubtedly a workshop involved in the production of bone artefacts¹⁰⁶.

The bone’s processing in the Late Antiquity, as well as *Peltuinum*, seems to be confirmed only in the city center of *Alba Fucens* as part of a workshop still active in the 5th c. AD¹⁰⁷. This is a definitely a normal phenomenon since it is a specialized production that is most obvious find in the urban contexts, in the major centers or however in those centers which have an intermediate function from an economical point of view compared to smaller settlements in which instead are produced “primary” goods.

To confirm the presence of specialized productions in *Peltuinum* there is also the discovery in the *porticus* of the temple of “processing waste and slags from the fusion of the bronze, silver and iron” [...] and also from the evidence “in one of the workshops, of a likely melting bed”¹⁰⁸, as well as by the significant presence of recovered objects (statues fragments, inscriptions and decorative friezes of the Classic period found out in the sacred area) destined to be remelted.

Finally, seems quite clear that in *Peltuinum* there was a solid bronze and silver processing activity that can be considered “specialized” in

proportion to the everyday activities steel, commonly certified in most smaller town.

MINOR SETTLEMENTS IN THE PAELIGNAN VALLEY: A STUDY CASE IN ABRUZZO (M.M.)

The Peligna Valley represents an interesting case of study of the ancient central Adriatic settlement patterns for its physical and historical features: it is a meeting point between the mountainous inland (to the west) and the coastal settlement to the east, crossed by several rivers and historical roads. The instance we are going to discuss is the study of Conca Peligna (Peligna Valley) and the rural landscape of one of its main centers, *Corfinium* (fig. 6).

Corfinium is the fulcrum of the territorial organization in the northern part of the valley since preroman times and it keeps its central role during the Roman empire and also during late antiquity, when the city becomes bishop seat. It is also a context in which romanization took place early (3rd c. BC) but also where nonetheless a strong identity awareness resisted, leading the city of Corfinio being the meeting place for the *Lega Italica* formed against Rome. Its geomorphological situation, made of dry highlands, abundance of water (both in terms of sources and rivers) and steep mountains led its inhabitants to different solution in terms of inhabiting the valley. In the first phase of the project, legacy and scholar data were recorded and elaborated in the framework of the recent historical and archaeological model related to the evolution of the landscape. All the sites have been georeferenced and processed in a GIS platform on which spatial analysis were performed (mainly viewshed analysis and density heatmaps)¹⁰⁹.

The valley is known to be inhabited *vicatim* since the late Bronze Age and enters the roman orbit from the 3rd c. BC, following the concession of a *foedus* to the Peligni in 304 BC and the contemporary construction of the Via Tiburtina Valeria. As for its settlement pattern, it is usually illustrated with the so-called “*pagus-vicus*” model (see above), whose limits are recently been exposed by Tess Stek¹¹⁰. Without detailing too much, the model foresees that one or more *vici* may refer to a territorial district (the *pagus*); more *pagi* composing a *touto/populus* thus shaping the various populations that inhabited the area. Sanctuaries were a distinctive feature of the model, being the “reference point” for the local communities. In addition to the issues highlighted by Stek (poor linking with the archaeological evidence, self-justification of the model) we would like to add another expose

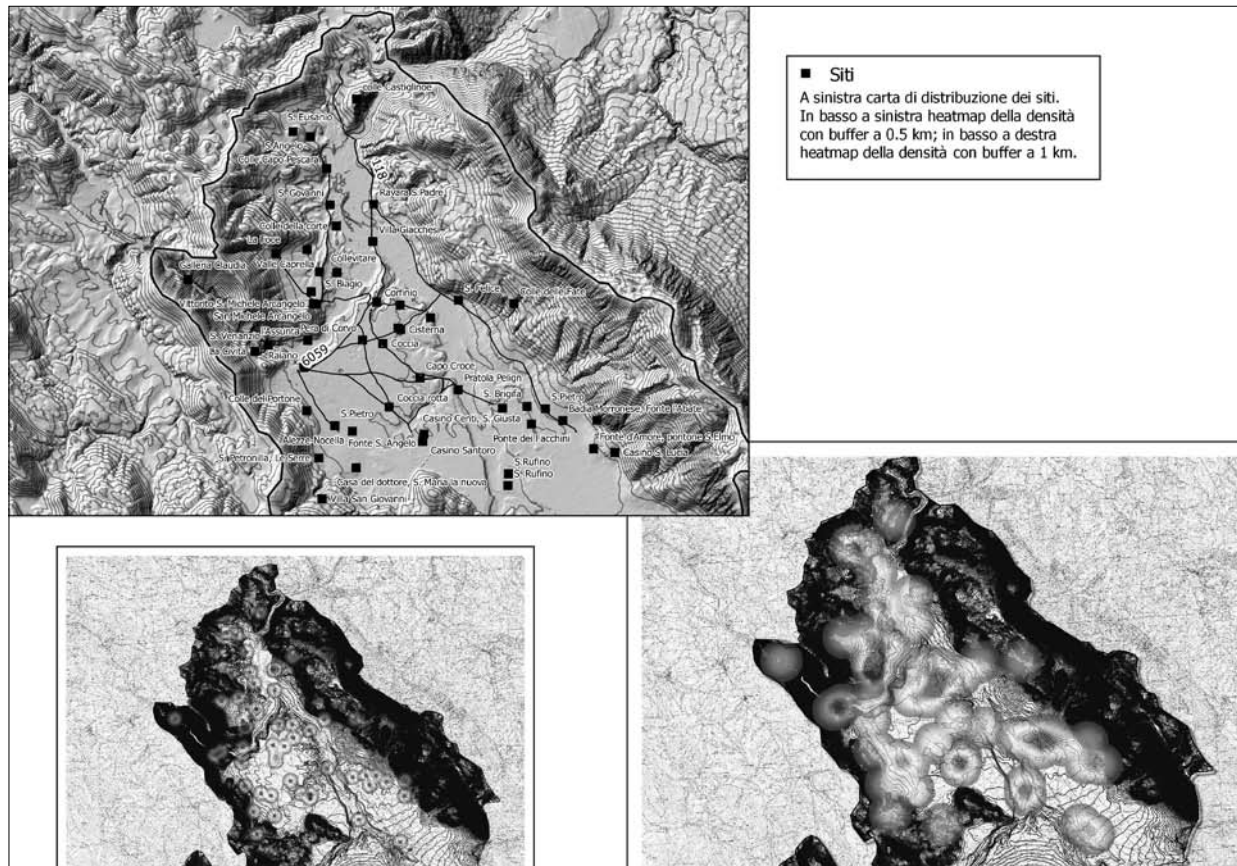


Fig. 6. Sites in the Paelignan Valley.

another flaw, related to the terminology used for the model itself. The use of the term *vicus* to generally define sparse/minor pre roman settlement may mislead the interpretation, as in roman jurisdiction *vicus* is a precise status given to a compact almost-urban settlement and it's strictly related to the roman presence and intervention on the landscape. Therefore using for example the word *vicus* to define a 3rd c. BC minor settlement in this area where roman presence does create misunderstanding between the model and the archaeological evidence. The archeological data show instead in the pre roman age for the Conca Peligna the presence of several very dispersed settlements (and their necropolis) often related to sanctuaries.

A simple GIS density analysis may help us to visualize better the shape and concentration of this territorial district; the density distance was set at 0.5 km, a short in terms of settlement patterns and at 1 km (fig. 1). It is the case of Capo Pescara, where a sanctuary related to the source of the Pescara river is associated with sparse settlements and necropolis. The area was also strategic to the control of the river cross and the passage that led towards the coast.

The *pagus* could be seen here as a territorial boundary not related to a complex settlement but in connection with a cult place (Capo Pescara) and its sparse populated area; this also may be connected to the funerary areas that appear along the route Popoli-Vittorito and Popoli-Corfinio) which therefore the southern boundary. The *pagus* may then become a *fundus* of the gens Aufidia, as some late republican epigraphs in Ravara S. Padre testify.

A similar situation is the one in Vittorito. Here, the sanctuary is located S of the settlement in an elevated position on a platform of the hill and with the full visual control on area below and on the course of the river Aterno. Traces of settlement and burial areas have been found, not far from each other in the area of San Biagio, Fontuccia, St. Maurizio and Collevitare. In this case we find the same recurrent elements: sanctuary, settlements, funerary areas.

Another district South of Corfinio can be traced in the area of Taverna della Chitarra; an inscription found in the area reports the activity of the *meddices actici*, magistrates in charge of building a structure related to water management.

Water was, as we mentioned, an important element in the management of the resources. Many of the sanctuaries of the valley were related to water sources (Capo Pescara, Fonte S. Ippolito just to mention some of them ¹¹¹). The model that D'Ercole proposed for the sanctuaries of this area (boundaries/liminal function) mainly based on the Magna Grecia examples and the De Polignac theory and on the application of Thiessen polygons, has been argued recently by Stek ¹¹². The function of these cult places is to be the social and political focus of the district, representing both a meeting point, and probably the economic fund of the *pagus*.

Unfortunately we still don't know much about the articulation of the settlements. *Corfinium*, being one of the main centers offers some more data. The ancient sources defined this settlement in the pre roman age both as an *oppidum* and as a *conciliabulum*. The archaeological data seem to confirm at least the presence of a fortified settlement in the highest part of the highland where the modern city is located. The presence of a market place, probably related the transhumance routes may be attested by the presence of a later suburban *campus militaris*, that, despite the name, was used also for other purposes as cattle market. We may suppose that *oppida* and hilltop fortified settlements were set to control the market places of the *pagi*, while sanctuaries remained as political/social reference of the pre-roman *Touto*. This role was certainly related to the geo-morphological setting but led also these centers to be chosen as residences of power by the aristocrats between 7th and 5th c. BC.

Another trace of the importance of the cult places is the presence of materials connected to the cult of Cerere, near Casino di Ciccio (southeast of Corfinio), that can also be linked to another rural settlement along the road from Raiano to Capo Canale ¹¹³.

In the southern area of the highland we can assume the presence of another territorial agency. Near Taverna della Chitarra, Van Wouterghem debated the presence of a *pagus*: an inscription in paelignan language highlights the work of two *meddices actici*, village officials, which were in charge of building structures related to water management.

During the late republican and early imperial age the situation changes. The stabilization of the routes and the subdivision of the land -centuriation ¹¹⁴ – redesigns the landscape. As some of the most important centers turn from minor settlement to *municipia* (*Corfinium*, *Sulmo*, and *Superaequum*), the sparse settlement tends to contract into more compact-agglutinated sites. Besides,

the importance of the Via Tiburtina Valeria as major link from the Tyrrhenian to the Adriatic sea, and the development of secondary road network led to the birth of a new kind of service/road settlements: *stationes* and *mansiones* appear now along the trade routes.

The centrality of the *pagus*, recedes in favor of a more crucial role of the *municipia* while several of the sparse settlement sites changes into *vici* – or other kinds of roman minor settlements as the case of Fonte S. Angelo-Taverna della Chitarra-Casino Santoro (fig. 6 n. 81, 82, 84, 85); this idea is also supported by an epigraph which highlights this change of status (*utei pequ/niam populo pageis retrib[uerunt]* CIL IX, 3173 = ILS 5642). Also in this area the density heatmap seems to point out that all the sites belonged to the same territorial instance: it must be noted the inscription dedicated to Paulo Mammio Aufidio which, by the will of the population of Corfinio, is nominated *patronus municipii*.

Also the other agglomerations (Vittorito, Raiano, Capo Ravara) still continue to exist, functioning as intermediate nodes of a settlement pattern which uses a more complex and diffused road network to connect the different sites in the valley.

This process is also testified by the second and third centurizations, dated by Soricelli ¹¹⁵ between half of the 1st c. BC and first half of the 1 c. AD. The centurization grid covers all the valley from *Corfinio* to *Sulmo*, also reflects a new perception of the ancient landscape, no more divided into sparse settlement but functionally organized to manage its agricultural resources.

The last centurization, following a module of 15x15 *actus* dates back to 48-49 AD, just before the construction of the Claudia Valeria Via which also constitutes one boundary of the system. In the same period, several water systems were built and they probably belong to the roman age. Water management had to be an integral part of the historical landscape of the Paelignan Valley: we have evidence of that in the position and the role of sanctuaries in pre-Roman and Roman times, the significant presence of elements linked to the collection and channeling of water (tanks, cisterns, etc. found in large numbers already by Van Wouterghem ¹¹⁶); and in the alignment of several axes of centurization to the water channels ¹¹⁷. In comparison to the other centuriated areas, it must be recorded that the presence of *villae* is low in the whole valley and completely absent in the *ager* of *Corfinium*. This fact can be related to the deficiency of updated data and intensive surveys. It is also possible that in this area the large estate model does not apply, as a sparse estate and settlement remains the preferred

way to organize the territory. The sanctuaries now have lost their social political role and are limited (where not almost abandoned) to their religious service. However, many of them kept their "landmark" function and will be later recovered and reused with the propagation of the Christian cult. It is the case of Fonte S. Ippolito, where the monumentalization of the sanctuary in the 4th-3rd c BC is followed by a phase of abandonment after the second half of the 1st c.AD and a reprise of use in the late antiquity and middle ages, this time as a Christian church and cemetery ¹¹⁸.

NOTE

- ¹ The two authors have respectively analysed: O. Menozzi the territorial organization and M. C. Mancini the economic aspects.
- ² For instance: *CIL* IX, 726, 1455, 2823, 3137, 3138, 3849; *STRABO* V, 4,242; *Livy* IX, 13,6, 17,2,3, XXXI, 30,6; *HORAT.*, *Carmina*, II, 13,4, *Epistulae*, I, 18,105; *FESTUS* L.502 and so on.
- ³ *PAPI* 1995, pp. 443-459.
- ⁴ Some of them are known to have been settled, like Monte Vairano, near Campobasso and Alfedena. *DE BENEDICTIS* 1989, pp. 111-115; *DE BENEDICTIS* 1991, pp. 47-55; *OAKLEY* 1995, pp. 73-76; *COARELLI*, *LA REGINA* 1993, pp. 260-267.
- ⁵ In some cases with military character, like probably Tre Torrette, above Campochiaro in Molise *COARELLI*, *LA REGINA* 1993, pp. 208-209; *OAKLEY* 1995, pp. 112-113.
- ⁶ *LIV.* XI, 45, 17; X, 18,8.
- ⁷ *GABBA* 1975; *LA REGINA* 1976; *LETTA* 1992; *CAMPANELLI*, *FAUSTOFERRI* 1997.
- ⁸ *LA REGINA* 1970.
- ⁸ *LIV.* VII, 15; XL, 19,37.
- ¹⁰ *FRONTIN.*, *Grom.*, 18, 10-11.
- ¹¹ *DEVIJVER*, *VAN WONTERGHEM* 1981.
- ¹² Interesting for the organization of the *praefecturae* is *HUMBERT* 1978.
- ¹³ *PELLEGRINO*, *MESSINEO* 1991, pp. 268-288.
- ¹⁴ *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ¹⁵ *STAFFA* 2006b.
- ¹⁶ *STAFFA* 2006b, pp. 43-46.
- ¹⁷ *CIL* IX, 3046; *STAFFA* 2004, pp. 162-164; *STAFFA* 2006b, pp. 29-30.
- ¹⁸ *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ¹⁹ *FAUSTOFERRI*, *LLOYD* 1998; *FAUSTOFERRI*, *RICCITELLI* 2005.
- ²⁰ *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ²¹ *FOSSATARO*, *MENOZZI* 2011, pp. 476-489; *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ²² Research and excavations of different teams of Chieti University, since 2002, are involved in projects of landscape archaeology of the area through intense

survey seasons, of excavations in the wide necropolis and in the settlement on the hilltops of S. Antonino-Collelungo.

- ²³ *MENOZZI et alii* 2014, pp. 278-279.
- ²⁴ *MANCINI* 2016, pp. 227-231.
- ²⁵ *STRAZZULLA* 1998, pp. 23-28; *MARTELLONE* 2007, pp. 191-202.
- ²⁶ *D'ALESSANDRO et alii* 2011, pp. 186-191; *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ²⁷ *STRABO* 7, 317.
- ²⁸ *CIL* IX, 3337; *ILS* 1265.
- ²⁹ *STAFFA* 2006 a, pp. 391-410.
- ³⁰ *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ³¹ *CIL* IX, 3072.
- ³² *STAFFA* 2001, pp. 137-139.
- ³³ *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ³⁴ *MIGLIORATI* 2006, pp. 175-179.
- ³⁵ *STAFFA* 2002, pp. 202-203.
- ³⁶ For further information on activities and on routes see: *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ³⁷ *TUTERI* 2011, pp. 36-38.
- ³⁸ *BUONOCORE* 2007, p. 165 fig. 32; *CIL* IX, 4350; *SEGENNI* 2007, p. 185.
- ³⁹ *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017; for the economic role of sanctuaries in ancient Abruzzo, see: *MANCINI* 2016, pp. 227-231.
- ⁴⁰ For bibliographical insights: *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ⁴¹ *MANCINI*, *MENOZZI* 2017.
- ⁴² *MANCINI* 2008; *MANCINI* 2015.
- ⁴³ *GREENE* 2006, pp. 109-136.
- ⁴⁴ *KINGSLEY*, *DECKER* (eds) 2001.
- ⁴⁵ *GELICHI*, *HODGES* (eds) 2012; *AUGENTI et alii* 2007, pp. 257-295; *VOLPE* 2012, pp. 27-57.
- ⁴⁶ *CIRELLI*, *GIORGI*, *LEPORE* (eds) c.s.
- ⁴⁷ *CIRELLI*, *DIOSONO*, *PATTERSON* (eds) 2012.
- ⁴⁸ See project "*Fora, stationes*, and sanctuaries: the role of minor centers in the economy of Roman Central Italy", carried out by Gröningen Institute of Archaeology, Chair of Classical and Mediterranean Archaeology (dir. Prof. Dr. P. A. J. Attema) in the Pontinian region, cfr. de HAAS, *TOL* forthcoming.
- ⁴⁹ Often this consideration is due to the poor condition of the structure and stratigraphy of the latest, also because of the bad planting or the perishable nature of the buldings, see *VAN OSSEL*, *RAYNAUD* 2012, pp. 151-152.
- ⁵⁰ *VOLPE* 2012, p. 42; for the Apulian territory see the offered synthesis in *LEONE*, *TURCHIANO* 2002, pp. 857-890.
- ⁵¹ For the ports and harbours see *FOSSATARO* 2006, pp. 51-56.
- ⁵² The viability appears of primary importance in the definition of Isidore: *Vicus autem dictus ab ipsis tantum habitationibus, vel quod vias habet tantum sine muris*, cfr. *ISID.*, *Etym.* XV, II, 12.
- ⁵³ The table was found in 1885, reused as a cover of a burial box with the inscription facing the deceased. In that occasion, as part of excavations for the construction of a farmhouse adjacent to the church, the earthworks brought to light an extensive burial ground, see *BARNABEI* 1885, pp. 167-170.
- ⁵⁴ Regarding the proposal on the problematic identifica-

- tion of the *Caecilia* with the east-west road that, dividing from the Salaria near Amatrice (*Falacrinae*), went beyond the Appennine pass of Forca, between Pizzo di Sevo and Pizzo di Moscio and ran down the throats of Salinello up to Campovalano and, from there, he went towards the Vibrata Valley, see ANTONELLI 2008, pp. 27-32.
- ⁵⁵ *Ravennatis anonymi Cosmographia* 5,1 e *Guidonis Geographica* 70, in *Itineraria Romana*, II; see FIRPO 1998, p. 962.
- ⁵⁶ MESSINEO, PELLEGRINO 1986, pp. 136-166.
- ⁵⁷ For a brief description of the findings and evidences, even epigraphic, and its bibliography see STAFFA 1996, pp. 283-285.
- ⁵⁸ ANTONELLI, SOMMA 2017.
- ⁵⁹ An interesting critical approach to the analysis of the data and the archaeological record has been recently proposed for the “agglomerations secondaires” of the north-eastern Gaul, see COQUET 2011, p. 83.
- ⁶⁰ MESSINEO, PELLEGRINO 1986, p. 146.
- ⁶¹ D’ALESSANDRO, D’ERCOLE, MARTELLONE 2011, p. 189.
- ⁶² ANTONELLI *et alii* 2013, pp. 95-112.
- ⁶³ For macroscopic classification of the slags and the possibility of associating the different types to the several steps of the working process, see CUCINI TIZZONI, TIZZONI 1992.
- ⁶⁴ The problem relating the slags dispersion and their interpretation in terms of the location of activities has been recently faced for the urban contexts of the Roman Gaul, see LEROY, MERLUZZO 2010, pp. 305-321.
- ⁶⁵ PAGES 2010. The proliferation of production sites has also been interpreted as a direct result of the inclusion of metals among the charges in kind, see McCORMICK 2008, p. 54.
- ⁶⁶ VAN OSSEL 2006, pp. 556-558.
- ⁶⁷ LA SALVIA 2011, p. 83; LA SALVIA, VALENTI 2012, p. 126.
- ⁶⁸ BASSO, ZANINI (eds) 2016.
- ⁶⁹ STAFFA 1998, p. 476.
- ⁷⁰ In relation to the *Interpromium* and Pescara valley economy see MANCINI, MENOZZI here.
- ⁷¹ CANTINO WATAGHIN, FIOCCHI NICOLAI, VOLPE 2007, pp. 85-134.
- ⁷² The *sarcophagus* dated back to the Constantinian period in PANI ERMINI 1976, p. 43 and, specifically, to the 320 A.D. in SOTOMAYOR 1975, p. 175, has been attributed by both the scholars to a Roman workshop.
- ⁷³ STAFFA 2006.
- ⁷⁴ Dimensions: 2.15 m. length; 0.54 m. width; 0.55 m height. Regarding the iconographic aspects see WILPERT 1936, p. 50 table 297, 1; SOTOMAYOR 1975, pp. 26, 27, 80-81, 227, 231; PANI ERMINI 1976, pp. 42-43. Also SOTOMAYOR 1975, p. 26 (n. 2) for the *sarcophagus* from Girona that has the same compositional scheme.
- ⁷⁵ Already claimed in the past by GARRUCCI 1879, p. 115 table 378 and BOVINI 1954, p. 40. See also ANTONELLI, SOMMA 2017.
- ⁷⁶ WILPERT 1929, p. 118, tav. CX, 3.
- ⁷⁷ The origins from the same workshop of the two *sarcophagi* from Spain and Abruzzo have already been supposed in SOTOMAYOR 1975, p. 80, tav. 2, 4.
- ⁷⁸ For the Susanna iconography see BISCONTI 2000, pp. 302-303 and RÉAU 2000, p. 450.
- ⁷⁹ The inscription belonged to the private collection of the historian G. B. Delfico who published it in 1812 without any reference to the *sarcophagus*, see DELFICO 1812, p. 151. The collection was after offered to the city of Teramo, but in the Autumn 1994 of the inscription remained only a “small portion” placed along the wall of the *atrium* in Palazzo Comunale, see BUONOCORE 2001, p. 62.
- ⁸⁰ *Cod. Vat. Lat.* 9072, p. 505 n. 1 e 9102 f. 56, published by BUONOCORE 2001, p. 62, figg. 4-5. Marini took the information directly from Mons. A. L. Antinori, who was present at the time of the *sarcophagus* discovery. Few decades ago Ferrua, after the reading of some Gaetano Marini books, successfully rewrote the events of the important *sarcophagus*, see FERRUA 1984, pp. 383-386.
- ⁸¹ The front-side preserved is 0,87 m high and 1,73 m long.
- ⁸² In the upper register are represented: on the right, St. Peter who makes water gush from the source and a prayer (“orante”) between S. Peter and St. Paul; in the lower register, again from the right, a Christ on the throne with a child and a female figure (perhaps the presentation of Jesus in the Temple), and a male figure praying again between Peter and Paul, see WILPERT 1929, I, pp. 114, table CVI, 2 and PANI ERMINI 1976, pp. 43-44.
- ⁸³ *M. Aurelius Xeronianus Aquila* carried out his activities at the *Horrea Petroniana*. Ward Perkins in the discussion of the problem about the presence of these merchants of oriental marbles, from the Late Roman Imperial period, also took into account our *Aurelius Andronicus*, but improperly talked of the inscription as coming from Terni territory probably on the basis of the presence of *Interamna* in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, which likely Ward-Perkins identified with the better-known *Interamna Nahars* rather than *Interamna* or *Interamnina Pretuttiorum*, see WARD-PERKINS 1980, p. 34 e WARD-PERKINS 1983, p. 243.
- ⁸⁴ The city of Nicomedia operates an effective trade of *sarcophagi*, exploiting well-structured trade routes for other products. The activity of the workshops and craftsmen in Nicomedia becomes highly skilled and the city in the Late Imperial period is designed as a “leader center”, even from an artistic point of view, WARD-PERKINS 1980, pp. 23-69.
- ⁸⁵ About the *sarcophagi* in Proconnesian marble, their spread, costs and methods of trade see KOCH 2011, pp. 12-15.
- ⁸⁶ These *Graeci negotiatores* were expelled in 440 A.D. as a result of a *Valentinianus’* decree, see *Nov. Valent.*, V.
- ⁸⁷ *Leges Visigothorum*, XII, 2, 14 e M.G.H. *Leges*, t. 1, p. 420.
- ⁸⁸ An overview of the eastern merchants and business networks between West and East is offered by PIERI 2002, pp. 123-132.

- ⁸⁹ McCORMICK 2008, pp. 272-278.
- ⁹⁰ This is what emerges for the North Adriatic area and its emporia, see GELICHI 2009, pp. 154-155.
- ⁹¹ With the name of *κᾱστρον Νόβω* the settlement and its port are placed in the Byzantine *castra* by the geographer Giorgio Ciprio, see *Georgii Cyprii, Descr.*, p. 98 n. 623.
- ⁹² This system not only allowed to contain costs, but also ensured the circulation of products that could be adapted to the taste of the final beneficiaries in different and distant regions of the empire, through the activity of local workshops that provided the finishing touch of the products. The same sarcophagi were sometimes exported just rough-finished and/or semi-finished, in this regard see ASGARI 1990, pp. 110-117.
- ⁹³ All presbyterial fences and liturgical furnishings were produced in series and finished on site, circulating throughout the Mediterranean. For instance is indeed noteworthy the well-known case of Marzamemi wreck in which also were present elements of a pergola, decorated with acanthus leaves, see KAPITÄN 1980, pp. 85-94. For a more detailed description of the Campovalano artefact see ANTONELLI 2008, p. 91.
- ⁹⁴ The barrier closes the east window of the southern side of the Episcopo complex, RUSSO 1991, pp. 205-206, n. 151, fig. 175.
- ⁹⁵ TULIPANI 2001, p. 328 with related bibliography.
- ⁹⁶ JAKŠIĆ 2009; JELIČIĆ-RADONIĆ 1993; for a broad review of the evidences see GIULIANI, LEONE 2011, pp. 158-159.
- ⁹⁷ About *Ostia Aterni* and analysis of the material data see ANTONELLI, SOMMA 2017.
- ⁹⁸ The pottery dates back to the V century A.D.: e.g. ARS production D form Hayes 61B3, production C5 form Hayes 85 and the mortar in coarse ware Fulford 22-23, see BONIFAY 2004, p. 449. The form Hayes 99, also found out in Pescara, is one of the most controversial and debated as regards the dating. It has been dated to the sixth century AD by Hayes and then backdated by Tortorella to the second half of the fifth century A.D., see TORTORELLA 1998, p. 43. This form has been commonly dated to the sixth century AD, even if the variant A does not seem to cross the mid-sixth century, see BONIFAY 2004, p. 181.
- ⁹⁹ Like the later forms of African sigillata Hayes 90 variant B2, Hayes 105, 106 Hayes and Hayes 107, see STAFFA 1991, p. 315.
- ¹⁰⁰ These are the Hayes forms 3D, 3E, 3H dated back between the Late fifth and early sixth century A.D. certified in different sites of the Pescara Valley, see SIENA, TROIANO, VERROCCHIO 1998, p. 678. Imports of LRC sigillata (or PRS), Middle East and microasiatic amphorae identify the close relationships between the Adriatic area and the East, as already observed in Ravenna and Dürres, to which we refer, respectively to AUGENTI *et alii* 2007, pp. 291-292 and ANTONELLI 2012, pp. 322-323.
- ¹⁰¹ Regarding the jurisdictional situation of *Peltuinum*, see MANCINI, MENOZZI 2017. The settlement is under systematic archaeological investigations by the Archaeological Superintendence of Abruzzo and the University of Rome "La Sapienza" since the nineties of the Last Century, see MIGLIORATI 2011, pp. 1-8 and related references. The forthcoming publication of ceramic materials will allow us to better understand its inclusion in broader commercial networks and the economic significance of the site itself. The study on the materials of the 1994-1997 archaeological seasons has been led by the Dr. Luciana Tulipani and I would like to thank her for the exchange of ideas and availability, see TULIPANI c.s.
- ¹⁰² For this type of fibula and for their interpretation in a historical and archaeological key see PRÖTTEL 1988, pp. 347-372; BUORA 1997, pp. 247-260; SCHIERL 2008, pp. 62-72.
- ¹⁰³ Archaeological Superintendence of Abruzzo, n. inv. 124947 and n. cat. 135514. I really thank Marzia Tornese, a friend and a colleague of mine, for giving me the data relating to the *Peltuinum* fibula which has been drawn from the research conducted for her PhD thesis entitled "Presenze alloctone in Italia centrale: tempi, modalità e forme dell'organizzazione territoriale nell'Abruzzo altomedievale" discussed on June 18, 2012, at the University of Rome, "La Sapienza" (XXIV ciclo).
- ¹⁰⁴ POSSENTI 2007, pp. 279-298.
- ¹⁰⁵ The workshop of a lapidary is still active in the tenth century A.D., see TULIPANI 1996, p. 54.
- ¹⁰⁶ For a long tradition on bone processing in the inner of Abruzzo see MANCINI, MENOZZI 2017.
- ¹⁰⁷ CECCARONI, BORGHESI 2011, p. 230, fig. 22.
- ¹⁰⁸ TULIPANI 1996, p. 52.
- ¹⁰⁹ The study was combined with the results of remote sensing and non invasive diagnostics in the study area, see LA SALVIA, MODERATO, POMPILIO 2015, p. 477.
- ¹¹⁰ STEK 2009 pp.65-70.
- ¹¹¹ MODERATO, TORNESE 2015, p. 478.
- ¹¹² STEK 2009 cap. 3.
- ¹¹³ For an overview of the cults in Corfinio, see DIONISO 2013.
- ¹¹⁴ CHOUCER 1987, SORICELLI 2011, MODERATO, TORNESE 2015.
- ¹¹⁵ SORICELLI 2011, pp. 490-93.
- ¹¹⁶ VAN WONTERGHEM 1984 p. 322.
- ¹¹⁷ MODERATO, TORNESE 2015 pp. 478-79.
- ¹¹⁸ SOMMA, ANTONELLI, CASOLINO 2015, pp. 199-200.

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Abstract

The inland mountainous region of Abruzzo is very rich as far as regards ancient populations, small towns and minor settlements, playing already from the Iron Age, especially in Roman times and in late antiquity an important role, both for the local population as well as from the mechanisms of settling and from the economic point of view. For too long, the studies of the settlement patterns and of the economic exploitation of the region have looked just to the main centres, playing very poor attention to the minor centers and to boundary areas of this territory. The main centers and sites in the area, in fact, are quite well known, while the minor settlements and the smaller towns are now widely investigated by local Superintendence, Universities and archaeologists, but they have never been properly studied systematically from the topographic point of view. The archaeological team of Chieti University is applying a new approach to the study of the inland and mountainous settling patterns, in relationship with the surrounding territory, using new technologies and methodologies, as Remote Sensing, intensive survey projects, archaeometric analysis and non invasive geo-archaeological prospecting. The region was organised during the Iron Age and in Roman times in numerous settlements, very different in typologies, wideness, role, economic vocation and position, systematically and homogeneously planned from a hierarchic point of view. In late antiquity and during the Early Medieval age the patterns of the settlement changed the hierarchic organization. Moreover, they are generally closely related to the local road network, to the most important via Claudia Nova (Tratturo Magno and Via degli Abruzzi in Medieval Age), sanctuaries and temples, transhumance trackways and their development is greatly influenced by their locations and functions toward the main settlements and the exploitation of the territory. They are often the best sites to understand the mechanisms of settling as well as the role of the local productions and economy in the development and locations of these population patterns. It could be therefore very interesting to look at these minor typologies of sites contextualising them more closely and presenting the results of the recent excavations and surveys of Chieti University as sample cases. Moreover, the appendix is completely dedicated to the analytic study of an sample area, the Paelignan context, in order to show more closely a territorial case which has involved directly Sara Santoro in the surveys and researches.

Keywords: minor settlements; economy; roads; settling patterns.

Riassunto: Tra villaggi e città nell'area medioadriatica: ruolo e organizzazione gerarchica dell'insediamento minore in età romana.

Le aree montane interne dell'Abruzzo erano abitate da popolazioni italiche, in piccoli centri urbani ed insediamenti minori che giocarono un ruolo importante a partire dall'età del ferro, soprattutto in età imperiale e tardo antica, come si può notare dal particolare meccanismo insediamentale ed economico. Per lungo tempo, gli studi sui modelli insediativi e sullo sfruttamento economico del territorio si sono incentrati sui centri principali, mostrando poco interesse verso i centri minori e le aree periferiche. Infatti, i centri e i siti principali sono ben noti, al contrario degli insediamenti minori e dei piccoli centri abitati che solo di recente sono stati ampiamente investigati dalla Soprintendenza, dalle Università e dagli archeologi, anche se non ancora studiati sistematicamente dal punto di vista topografico ed economico. Il gruppo di archeologi dell'Università di Chieti sta portando avanti approfondite ricerche sui modelli insediativi delle aree interne e montane della regione, in relazione al territorio circostante, anche attraverso l'uso di nuove tecnologie e metodologie, come "Remote Sensing", ricognizioni intensive, analisi archeometriche, prospezioni geo-archeologiche non invasive. Già durante l'età del ferro, la regione era popolata da numerosi insediamenti, differenti per tipologie, dimensioni, ruolo, vocazione economica e posizione, sistematicamente e omogeneamente pianificati in un preciso ordine gerarchico; ordine che si svilupperà ulteriormente in età romano-imperiale. Nella tarda antichità e durante l'Alto Medioevo i modelli insediativi subiscono notevoli mutamenti, cambiando anche l'organizzazione gerarchica. Questi centri, così come santuari e templi, sorgevano lungo la rete stradale locale, in particolare la via Claudia Nova (nota come Tratturo Magno e Via degli Abruzzi in età medievale), ed i percorsi tratturali e il loro sviluppo è stato fortemente influenzato dalla loro posizione e funzione rispetto agli insediamenti principali ed allo sfruttamento del territorio. Ed è proprio il ruolo dei centri minori a rendere comprensibile il meccanismo di insediamento, lo sviluppo economico e delle produzioni locali di queste popolazioni. Sono qui presentati i primi risultati di ricerche e scavi dell'Università di Chieti relativamente agli insediamenti minori ed alla loro contestualizzazione topografica ed economica. L'appendice è completamente dedicata allo studio analitico di un'area campione nella Valle Peligna, un caso studio che ha coinvolto ed interessato direttamente Sara Santoro nelle indagini e ricerche.

Parole chiave: centri minori, economia, viabilità, modelli insediativi.

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