

# HEPHAESTUS IN A NEW GRAFFITO FROM POPULONIA

(Con la tav. XVII f.t.)

## ABSTRACT

This article publishes a new Latin graffito on a black gloss bowl dating to ca. 100 B.C. from the acropolis of Populonia. The inscription is interpreted as a dedication to Hephaestus and attests to the cult of the forge god at this important site in Etruria mineraria.

*Questo articolo pubblica un nuovo graffito latino su una coppa a vernice nera datata verso il 100 a.C., proveniente dall'acropoli di Populonia. L'iscrizione è interpretata come una dedica ad Efesto e attesta il culto del dio della forgia in questo importante sito dell'Etruria mineraria.*

Scholarship has speculated for some time about the existence of a cult of Hephaestus at Populonia<sup>1</sup>. While the smith god's presence makes sense in a city whose economic livelihood depended upon its iron industry, until now there has been little evidence to support this connection. A Latin graffito on a black gloss bowl discovered on Populonia's acropolis is interpreted here as naming Hephaestus; as such, it appears to provide indication of the god's cult in the city. This contribution publishes the inscription and discusses the document's implications for the broader understanding of the relationship between economy and religion in Romano-Etruscan Populonia.

1. In the summer of 2018, a project jointly undertaken by the Università di Siena and the University of Toronto in collaboration with the Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per le Province di Pisa e Livorno, carried out excavations on the acropolis of Populonia, at the foot of the vaulted terrace structure known as Le

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<sup>1</sup> PAULI 1909-15, coll. 785-786; L. MALTEN, in *RE VIII* 1 (1912), s.v. *Hephaistos*, col. 323; most explicitly PFFIFFIG, *Religio*, p. 303; DE GRUMMOND 2006, p. 134; HAACK 2014, p. 203; the key to such arguments is Populonia's Sethlans coinage, discussed below.

Logge<sup>2</sup>. While a fuller account of the results will be published elsewhere, a brief summary here provides context for the inscription. The initial scope of excavation in this area was to identify stratigraphy associated with the building of Le Logge, while it quickly became apparent that construction layers were cut into by a series of later surfaces relating to an earthen roadway, which passed along Le Logge's face. During the road's lifetime, its beaten earth surface was regularly repaired and levelled with small lenses and fills of material taken from elsewhere on site. It is within one of these maintenance deposits that the inscribed base of a black gloss bowl was found<sup>3</sup>. The bowl is thus found in secondary deposition; however, the casual nature of the activity resulting in its burial makes it likely that it was initially deposited nearby within the urban area of the acropolis.

From the extant fragments, we may restore the full profile of a squat black gloss bowl (4.42 cm high) with a small interior stamp of a half moon, a broad base and foot (9.92 cm across), sloping walls, and two grooves around its exterior just beneath a slightly flanged rim (*fig. 1 a; pl. XVII a*). The bowl belongs to the generic group Morel 2320, found widely in Etruria, including at Populonia<sup>4</sup>. Volterra is identified as a production center for these forms, but local imitations are commonly found in the region, and we should not exclude that this bowl was made at Populonia itself<sup>5</sup>. While the earliest bowls date to the late second century, Morel dates most examples in the group to the first century B.C. Considering some paleographic features of the inscription discussed below, it seems best to assign our bowl a date around 100 B.C., although a somewhat later date towards the mid-first century is also possible.

The graffito of six letters is carved with a sharp tool into the underside of the bowl's base after firing (*fig. 1 b; pl. XVII b*). While the inscription need not be of the same date as the bowl, the character of the text makes it unlikely to date much later. Letter forms and the left-to-right orientation of the writing identify the language as Latin. Letters measure between 0.68 and 1.15 cm high, and their paleographic characteristics are as follows:

*E*: The vertical *asta* rises slightly above the start of the top horizontal line. All three horizontal bars incline slightly down to the right.

*P*: Open with the long right stroke curving back towards almost the midpoint of the vertical *asta*.

*E*: Squatter than the first *E* with all strokes meeting more neatly; the central horizontal bar is shorter than the upper and lower.

<sup>2</sup> On the structure, see MASCIONE 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Saggio III, US 12840.

<sup>4</sup> MOREL 1981, pp. 164-165; for examples from Populonia, see MORIELLO 2002, p. 66; COSTANTINI MILETI - RIZZITELLI 2002, p. 68; GUZZI - ROMUALDI - SETTESOLDI 2005, p. 191.

<sup>5</sup> MORIELLO 2002, p. 66 suggests Volterra; see SCOTT 2008, p. 186 for locally made examples from Cosa; for black-gloss production at Populonia, see PAGLIANTINI 2014.

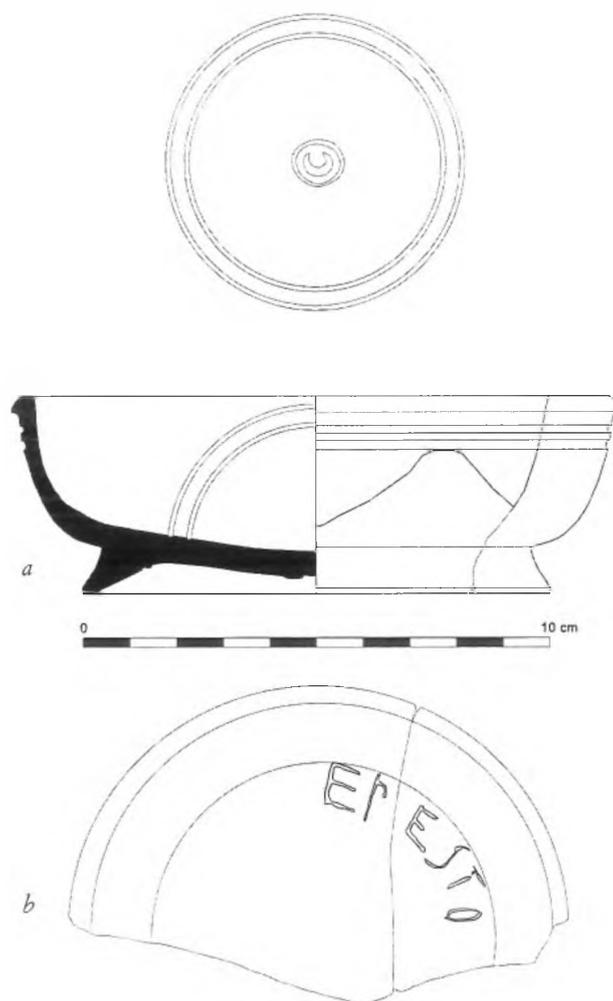


fig. 1 - a) Drawing of profile and interior decoration;  
b) Drawing of inscription.

*S*: A hole made either by an instrument or by a fault in firing partly obscures the upper part of the letter. The lower section comprises a sharply hooking line ending almost horizontally.

*T*: The vertical stroke of the letter, slightly curved, is easily visible. The horizontal bar is lightly impressed and on a rough and poorly glazed area of the bowl.

*O*: Formed from two curved lines meeting at both top and bottom.

The letters are not carefully inscribed, but the whole remains sufficiently legible. From left to right, the inscription reads *epesto*. The paleography, particularly the open *P*, shares affinities with Archaic Latin letter forms of the second century.

No classical Latin word begins *epe-*<sup>6</sup>, nor does any Archaic form of a classical word come to mind. Instead, several orthographic features otherwise common in Republican epigraphy seem to be in evidence here: the absence of the aspirate *b* before the initial vowel, the unaspirated *p* standing for the Greek  $\phi$ , and the monophthongization of *ae* to *e*<sup>7</sup>. Some of these spelling practices were starting to fall out of fashion by the later first century, when Cicero and Varro describe them as markers of archaic or rustic speech, although such spellings do persist in epigraphic documents<sup>8</sup>. In particular, we may cite several derivatives of the Greek *Hephaistos* spelled into Latin with some combination of these features in epigraphic documents of the Imperial period. This suggests that *EPESTO* would have been one, if perhaps not the only, way to write the Greek theonym in Latin in the first century B.C.<sup>9</sup>

Hephaestus is a rare personal name in both Greek and Latin, while derivative theophoric names like *Hephaistios* or *Hephaistion* are much more common<sup>10</sup>. The graffito therefore likely refers to the deity himself. The termination *-o* is a well-attested form of the early nominative, but deities' names ending in *-o* also appear in early Latin epigraphy as datives, particularly in the context of inscriptions on votive offerings<sup>11</sup>. The form of the black gloss bowl is associated with dedications, and the idea that this inscription pertains to ritual activity is attractive<sup>12</sup>.

2. I therefore advance the idea that this graffito from Populonia's acropolis names the god Hephaestus and perhaps records a dedication to him. In turn, this reading raises several linguistic and historical issues of note. First, we need to account for the transliteration of a Greek theonym into Latin. The act of transliteration itself is no

<sup>6</sup> Except *Epeus*, builder of the Trojan horse named at VARRO, *ling.* VII 38; OV., *fast.* III 825, but not a possibility here.

<sup>7</sup> See ALLEN 1978, pp. 43-44 (*b* aspirate), 26-27 (*ph*), 55 (*ae* to *e*).

<sup>8</sup> CIC., *or.* 160; VARRO, *ling.* V 97.

<sup>9</sup> For similar epigraphic variants, all later in date, cf. CIL VI 5375: *Epaestioni*; 7942: *Ephaesti* 19285: *Ephetae*; 29394: *Epaestion*; CIL XI 114: *Ephestionismus*. From North Etruria, see DI STEFANO MANZELLA 1991 for *Ephestio* from Luna.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. only CIL VI 7942, C. Urvinus Ephaestus from a Flavian-period epitaph from Rome. Otherwise, no attestations appear in standard reference works by SCHULZE, *ZGLE*; SALOMIES - SOLI 1994. On the Greek side, a search on Trismegistos of papyri returns 9 instances of *Hephaistos* mostly from late antiquity, in contrast to 167 instances of *Hephaistios*; in Greek, the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* contains numerous attestations of *Hephaistios*, *Hephaistas*, *Hephaistion*, etc., but few of *Hephaistos*. While theonyms are used by Roman slaves, the unmodified use of the name *Hephaestu* is confined only to the Flavian example cited above, as see SOLIN 1996, I, p. 336.

<sup>11</sup> SOLIN 1998, p. 104; compare the *Calvio* graffiti from Populonia published by MANACORDA 2010 for the dative, cf. CIL I<sup>2</sup> 461, *Saturno* with WACHTER 1987, p. 347; especially attractive parallels at CIL I<sup>2</sup> 26-29 with the dative *Aesculapio* attested with variations of *donum dedit* as these inscription transliterate another Greek theonym into Latin.

<sup>12</sup> For the association of *vernice nera* bowls, and particularly *pocula deorum*, with cultic activity, see MARAS, *Dono*, p. 168; NONNIS 2010, pp. 124-125; PADILLA PERALTA 2014, pp. 230-231.

entirely unexpected, and there are other dedicatory inscriptions on black gloss pots that show Greek/Latin or other bilingualism<sup>13</sup>. More particularly, the inscription's mixed linguistic orientation fits the strong local phenomenon of multilingualism at Populonia. Etruscan was the language of Populonia's earliest cultic epigraphy, while the long persistence of an Etruscan speaking elite in the religious life of the acropolis is now confirmed by the discovery of a late Etruscan monumental inscription found in the *area sacra*<sup>14</sup>. The majority of graffiti from the site is Etruscan, although there are several Latin examples, particularly on ceramics<sup>15</sup>. Greek inscriptions from Populonia date back to the Archaic period<sup>16</sup>. All of this confirms that Populonia's community was multilingual, probably in reflection of its multi-ethnic makeup and perhaps reflecting the city's commercial character, and the new graffito fits well into this context.

A related question is why the Greek god is named at all and why a Latin inscription does not refer instead to the Roman fire god Vulcan. Meanwhile, Etruscans had their own forge god Sethlans, who is identified epigraphically on at least four mirrors and a gemstone<sup>17</sup>. He is often portrayed holding a hammer, and Maras suggests an etymology of Sethlans from the Etruscan *\*zati* ("axe")<sup>18</sup>. Alongside Sethlans, the hammer-god of craftsmen and smiths, the Etruscans seem to have worshipped a fire god who not only forged divine firebolts but threw them himself<sup>19</sup>. The name for this god of destructive fire is not known, although it has been proposed from a much-debated reading of *velχ(ans)* on the Piacenza liver that he was called something similar to Vulcan<sup>20</sup>. Like the Etruscans, Greek and Roman mythology also differentiated between the god of the forge and the god of destructive fire. While the smith-god

<sup>13</sup> Cf. SEG XLIII 670, a dedication to Mater Matuta in Greek letters; RIX, *ST He 3*, a Hernician dedication in Latin.

<sup>14</sup> BENELLI 2015, dating to the early second century B.C.

<sup>15</sup> For Etruscan inscriptions, see MAGGIANI 1989; for Latin, NONNIS 2010.

<sup>16</sup> For Greeks in Populonia, see MARTELLI 1981; MARAS 2015, esp. p. 57 for Greek graffiti on locally made pottery; generally, MAGGIANI 2004; for a potential transliteration of Greek into Etruscan from Populonia, see ARBEID 2009.

<sup>17</sup> For mirrors, see CAPDEVILLE 1995, pp. 357-367, who suggests a fifth example; for the iconography, AMBROSINI 1995. The gem was stolen from the museum of Tarquinia, and its whereabouts are unknown; see AMBROSINI 2014, p. 177. Capdeville's claim that examples of the bronze *triens* bear the Etruscan inscription *sethlans* is incorrect, and the example he illustrates instead reads *vetalu pufluna*; see CRISTOFANI 1976; VECCHI 2012, pp. 293-294; BELFIORE 2015.

<sup>18</sup> MARAS, *Dono*, pp. 140-141, note 13, refuting an etymology from *\*situlanos* proposed by KRETSCHMER 1956; RIX 1998, p. 211; unlikely is the suggestion of PAULI 1909-15, coll. 787-788 of a derivation from *aithalia*, the ancient name for Elba.

<sup>19</sup> TAYLOR 1923, p. 186; DE GRUMMOND 2006, pp. 133-134.

<sup>20</sup> POGGI 1878, pp. 15-16; followed by DEECKE 1880, p. 53; PFIFFIG, *Religio*, p. 303; CAPDEVILLE 1995, pp. 369-372. For doubts, THULIN 1906, p. 13; RIX 1998, p. 226; DE GRUMMOND 2006, p. 134; MARAS, *Dono*, p. 138 suggests this is instead a toponym.

Hephaestus was readily assimilated with the Roman god Vulcanus, Vulcanus himself was more closely connected to volcanism and fire than to craftwork, and his name has been suggested to derive from Vedic and Indo-European words for fire<sup>21</sup>.

While all of these various deities fulfilled overlapping roles, the important point is that they were not perfectly substitutable. It is possible that the name Hephaestus here may have represented a deliberate choice on the part of the inscriber to name the god of metal craft and iron-working, activities closely associated with Populonia.

3. In this case, this graffito now provides a new and potentially firmer link between ritual activity at Populonia and the god of metalworking. Of course, this is not the first known reference to Hephaestus and related gods found on objects from the city. He is depicted fashioning a helmet on a late-fifth century agate scarab discovered at the necropolis of San Cerbone<sup>22</sup>. He also appears on two issues of Populonia's bronze coinage dating to the late third century, and both coins also feature hammer and tongs, linking the god with metalworking (*pl. XVII c*)<sup>23</sup>. It is these depictions, and above all the coins, which scholars have pointed to in support of previous assertions of Populonia's special relationship with the forge god's cult<sup>24</sup>. However, in isolation this evidence cannot bear such suggestions because it is not limited to Populonia. Gems depicting the metal-working god are commonly found across Etruria<sup>25</sup>. The coins prove weak evidence for the same reason. Along with Turms, Menerva, and Hercules, Sethlans is one of at least four deities found on Populonia's bronze coinage, so that the Sethlans coins hardly attest on their own to a special relationship between city and deity.

What's more, images of Hephaestus proliferate on Italian bronze coinage of the mid-to-late third century. The phenomenon has been little studied, but there is considerable evidence to suggest a broader iconographic trend<sup>26</sup>. The god appears on at least three distinct bronze issues from communities in Eastern Italy, often with hammer and tongs, while hammer and tongs themselves have a significant presence on Roman *denarii* of the second and first centuries<sup>27</sup>. Closer to Populonia, a bronze issue from Vetulonia shows a male head wearing a conical hat, possibly the *pileus*.

<sup>21</sup> WEST 2007, pp. 267-268; see also LINDERSKI 1997.

<sup>22</sup> First reported in *NSc* 1905, pp. 54-55, found by *clandestini*; ZAZOFF 1968, no. 124.

<sup>23</sup> RUTTER 2001, nos. 188, 195; VECCHI 2012, pp. 293, 311.

<sup>24</sup> See above, note 1; *contra* TAYLOR 1923, p. 171, note 21.

<sup>25</sup> AMBROSINI 2014.

<sup>26</sup> TONDO 1989.

<sup>27</sup> RUTTER 2001, nos. 8 (Ariminum), 430 (Aesernia), 631 (Pallano?); for hammers on Roma Republican coinage, see PADILLA PERALTA 2018; also cf. CALCIATI 1987, pp. 293-294 for a series of mid-fourth century bronze issues of Mytistratus in Sicily, which show a bearded god wearing a *pileus* identified as Hephaestus.

worn by Sethlans or Hephaestus<sup>28</sup>. A number of Neo-Punic and Celtic Spanish third-century bronzes also appear to show the forge god, sometimes with tongs<sup>29</sup>.

Thus, the graffito provides new and different evidence specific to the site of Populonia, while the appearance of Hephaestus on coins and gems is very diffuse. Particularly the coins seem to speak to larger trends in Hellenistic religion and iconography by no means distinct to Populonia or even to mining districts.

4. By contrast to the wide range of his appearance on coins and gems, there is very limited direct evidence of the forge god's cult in the cities of Central Italy<sup>30</sup>. Pliny reports a festival to Vulcan at Mutina related to vulcanological phenomena in the area; nothing more is known (*nat.* II 240). The only sanctuary to the deity in Etruria reported by the sources is a temple at Perugia, said to have survived Octavian's sack and destruction of that city in 40 B.C.<sup>31</sup> The temple's survival through the Late Republican destruction has been attributed to an extramural location, in accordance with Vitruvius' prescription following *Etrusca disciplina* to build sanctuaries of Vulcan outside cities' walls<sup>32</sup>. The rule was not always obeyed: Rome's own Archaic sanctuary to Vulcan was located at the center of the city below the Capitoline<sup>33</sup>. Whether or not it was extramural, the more precise location of the Perusine temple has not been established, and evidence for sacred architecture around that city is exiguous. Problematically, as Maggiani points out, no votive material from Perugia confirms the existence of cult to the forge god earlier than the Late Republic<sup>34</sup>.

In addition, there are *pocula deorum* naming Volcanus from at least two sites in Etruria, both dated generally to the third century B.C.<sup>35</sup> One from Tarquinii is the name vase of the Volcanus Painter<sup>36</sup>. The other was found at a sanctuary in the *ager Nursinus*<sup>37</sup>.

Turning to Populonia itself, no source refers to cult there of Hephaestus; however, this absence may simply be owed to the fact that the list of known Populonian cults

<sup>28</sup> RUTTER 2001, no. 200; VECCHI 2012, p. 343.

<sup>29</sup> SNG IX 2, 356-403; VILLARONGA - BENAGES 2011, nos. 786-804.

<sup>30</sup> TAYLOR 1923; PFIFFIG, *Religio*, pp. 301-303; CAPDEVILLE 1995, pp. 339-353, although his discussion of possible cults at Caere, Vulci, and Falerii Veteres is highly speculative.

<sup>31</sup> APP., *civ.* V 49, 204; CASS. DIO XLVIII 14, 5; the Greek authors call the deity Hephaestus, though this is normally taken as reference to Vulcan or Sethlans.

<sup>32</sup> Already TAYLOR 1923, p. 186.

<sup>33</sup> VITR. I 7, 1; for the Volcanal at Rome, see COARELLI 1983, pp. 161-178.

<sup>34</sup> MAGGIANI 2002, p. 268, note 10.

<sup>35</sup> SCHMIDT 1990; CIFARELLI - AMBROSINI - NONNIS 2002-2003; PADILLA - PERALTA 2014; Vulcan is a possible restoration of a fragmentary third vase, *AE* 2005, 304 b, *Volca?]*ni *pocolom*.

<sup>36</sup> *CIL* I<sup>2</sup> 453, reporting this provenance, while noting a false attribution to Vulci, which, however, continues to appear in scholarship, as see SCHMIDT 1990, p. 80; CIFARELLI - AMBROSINI - NONNIS 2002-2003, p. 316; PADILLA PERALTA 2014, p. 239; CAPDEVILLE 1995, p. 351.

<sup>37</sup> MANCONI - DE ANGELIS 1987, p. 27; CIFARELLI - AMBROSINI - NONNIS 2002-2003, appendix II, no. 19.

is not especially large. We can briefly give an up-to-date summary of the evidence<sup>38</sup>. In terms of pre-Roman cults, the Apollo of Piombino, probably an archaizing work of the late Hellenistic period, carries a Greek dedicatory inscription to Athena<sup>39</sup>. Maras lists two dedications to Etruscan gods: a cup with an inscribed dedication to Catha and an altar recording a libation to a god whose name is too fragmentary to restore<sup>40</sup>. The newly published monumental Etruscan inscription from the acropolis may include reference to Turms, although this is not the only possible reading<sup>41</sup>. There is also a possible but debated connection between the city's name and Fufluns<sup>42</sup>.

Among Roman gods, Manacorda argues that the Romano-Etruscan acropolis hosted an extensive cult site of Venus atop Le Logge<sup>43</sup>. The only firm ancient witness to a Populonian cult is Pliny's reference to an old statue of Jupiter, perhaps Tinia carved from a vine stalk (*nat. XIV 2*)<sup>44</sup>. On the basis of an associated architectural terracotta depicting the rape of Ganymede, it has been suggested that Temple I on the acropolis housed this cult to Jupiter/Tinia<sup>45</sup>. The gods worshipped at the two adjacent Temples A or C are difficult to identify; Mascione recently argues that Temple C was restored around 100 B.C. to house a newly introduced cult to Ceres Liber, and Libera, in part based on harvest motifs on related terracottas<sup>46</sup>.

There is no reason to see the new Hephaestus inscription relating to any actual cult place or structure. Given the relative paucity of evidence with which to identify the deities worshipped on Populonia's acropolis, however, perhaps we should not exclude the possibility, and it is notable to find the graffito on the acropolis and close to the city's religious center. Further study of the architecture and related finds in the *area sacra* would be beneficial.

5. While rare in Italy, cults of Hephaestus are better known from the Greek world where they often appear in relation to craft communities, as in the Athenian

<sup>38</sup> This discussion intends to update MANACORDA 2002, pp. 135-139.

<sup>39</sup> CIG XIV 2274; DE TOMMASO 2005 for the late dating.

<sup>40</sup> MARAS, *Dono*, pp. 331-332; see also MANACORDA 2002, pp. 138-139 for possible reference to Aphrodite in the gentilicium *cupria* inscribed on a Genucilian-ware plate from Poggio della Porcareccia.

<sup>41</sup> BENELLI 2015, p. 197; Turms appears on coins, but I have already noted problems in drawing conclusions about Populonia's religious topography from its coinage.

<sup>42</sup> TAYLOR 1923, p. 207; *contra* RIX 1998, pp. 214-215; see BELFIORE 2015.

<sup>43</sup> MANACORDA 2002; MANACORDA - GUALANDI - MASCIONE 2004-2005; the evidence for Venus is suggestive but inconclusive. Brickstamps from the acropolis bear the ligature *VE*, which Manacorda relates to the theonym, but this mark may alternatively be read as a personal name beginning *Ve*(--- for *Vesonii* at Populonia, see CIAMPOLTRINI 1994-95, p. 595.

<sup>44</sup> Macrobius' reference at *Sat. III 11, 5-6* to a *templum Iunonis Populoniae* is taken to refer to temple to *Iuno Populona* in Samnium; TAYLOR 1923, pp. 207-208; PFIFFIG, *Religio*, p. 267.

<sup>45</sup> MASCIONE 2007, p. 234; for the Ganymede terracotta, see MEGALE 2007. A similar Ganymede terracotta from Cosa may associate one of the *arx* temples with Jupiter, but see the critique of BISPHIA 2006, p. 100.

<sup>46</sup> MASCIONE forthcoming.

agora, as well as its famous mining districts<sup>47</sup>. One cult site of the god in the Greek world presents a particularly attractive parallel to the situation at Populonia: Lemnos was identified with Hephaestus already in Homeric poetry, and the god was associated with the island perhaps more than any other place in antiquity. Its main city was called Hephaestia, and it hosted a major sanctuary to the Cabeiri, Hephaestus' descendants, and probably other temples to Hephaestus himself<sup>48</sup>. Supporting its association with the forge god, Lemnos was an important center for iron production. The copious smoke released from this industry led to the island being nicknamed "sooty" (*aithalia*). Of course, the same nickname was given to the island of Elba because of thick emissions from the smelting of iron ore mined there and processed at nearby Populonia<sup>49</sup>.

The identical nicknames for Lemnos and Elba and their common iron industries were noted by authors writing in the Hellenistic period, if not earlier<sup>50</sup>. In these sources, the similarities were often extended further, making the northern Etruscan archipelago a sort of analogous place to Lemnos not only in respect to the metallurgical activity each region hosted, but also for commonalities in mythological traditions and even in languages<sup>51</sup>. This is what gives the Populonia graffito potential importance: the reading presented here suggests that such similarities may have also extended to each region's religious topography and to their common devotion to Hephaestus. Notably, the *Suda* confirms that Hephaestus was known as the "sooty god" (*aithaloeis theos*), an epithet which further connects him to the two Mediterranean places which bore similar names.<sup>52</sup>

Viewed in this context, the graffito's broader significance comes from its potential attestation of the intimate relationship between metal production and religion at Populonia<sup>53</sup>. Recent scholarship stresses the role played by temples and sanctuaries in Central Italy as centers for economic life, not only as places of consumption and trade, but also as important sites of craft production themselves<sup>54</sup>. Many Italian sanctuaries reveal evidence of metal production and in some cases even contained forges of significant size<sup>55</sup>. There is no indication of any such industry from the acropolis

<sup>47</sup> The best catalog remains that of L. MALTEN, in *RE* VIII 1 (1912), s.v. *Hephaistos*, cols. 311-327.

<sup>48</sup> See VARRO, *ling.* VII 10, *Volcania templa*, quoting Accius' *Philoctetes*.

<sup>49</sup> Most famously, DIOD. V 13.

<sup>50</sup> STEPH. BYZ. s.v. αἰθάλη, citing Timaeus and Polybius; Hellanicus, *FGrHist* 4 F 71, connects Lemnos and Etruria for their iron-working, and the fourth book of Apollonius' *Argonautica* includes references to Elba as Aithalia and to the Tyrrheni of Lemnos.

<sup>51</sup> DE SIMONE 1996; BREGLIA 1997.

<sup>52</sup> *Suda* s.v. Αἰθαλόεις θεός; in general for the epithet, see CORRETTI 2004.

<sup>53</sup> Mining and metallurgy are often seen as basis for cult elsewhere in antiquity, although the connection has been less investigated for Etruria; cf. DUŠANIČ 1999; BEYRIE - FABRE - SABLAYROLLES 2000.

<sup>54</sup> DI GIUSEPPE 2012, p. 27; KRÄMER 2017, pp. 13-15.

<sup>55</sup> From Etruria, evidence for metallurgical activity appears e.g. at sanctuaries in Gravisca, TORELLI - FIORINI 2007; HAACK 2014, and Tarquinia, BONGHI JOVINO 2010, p. 172, as well as at the Capitulum

of Populonia, where metal working was concentrated instead in the lower settlement along the beach<sup>56</sup>. Nonetheless, the forge god Hephaestus' presence on the acropolis in this newly discovered inscription reveals how thoroughly the production of metal and the city's economy may have informed Populonia's broader civic identity.

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at Rome, GIARDINO - LUGLI 2001. For the corollary Greek phenomenon, very widespread, see RISBEI 1998. It is, however, worth emphasizing the distinction of SESTINI 1981, pp. 4-5, between metalworking commonly attested throughout Central Italy, and the closer relationship with metal-production seen primarily in the area of Elba and around Populonia.

<sup>56</sup> Industry at Populonia was divided spatially from the area of the temples on the acropolis. Claudius Ptolemy (III 1) lists separate entries for Populonia *akron* and *polis*, while Strabo (V 2), reports different trajectories in the early empire for the city's temples and iron working district. For a metal processing workshop on the beach active at the same time as our inscription, see ACCONCIA - CAMBI 2009.

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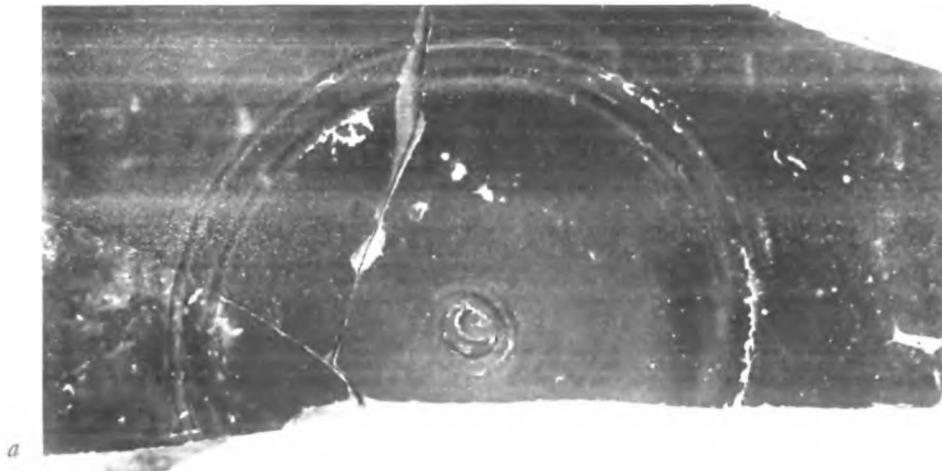
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*Pl. XVII a*: C. Mascione; *b*: Author; *c*: Courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, [www.cngcoins.com](http://www.cngcoins.com)

## DRAWING CREDIT

*Fig. 1 a*: C. Mascione; *b*: Author.



a



b



c

a) Photograph of interior decoration and stamp of half moon; b) Photograph of inscribed base of bowl; c) Late-third century bronze *triens* of Populonia, head of Sethlans right wearing *pileus* on obverse; hammer, tongs and four pellets with legend *pupluna* on reverse.