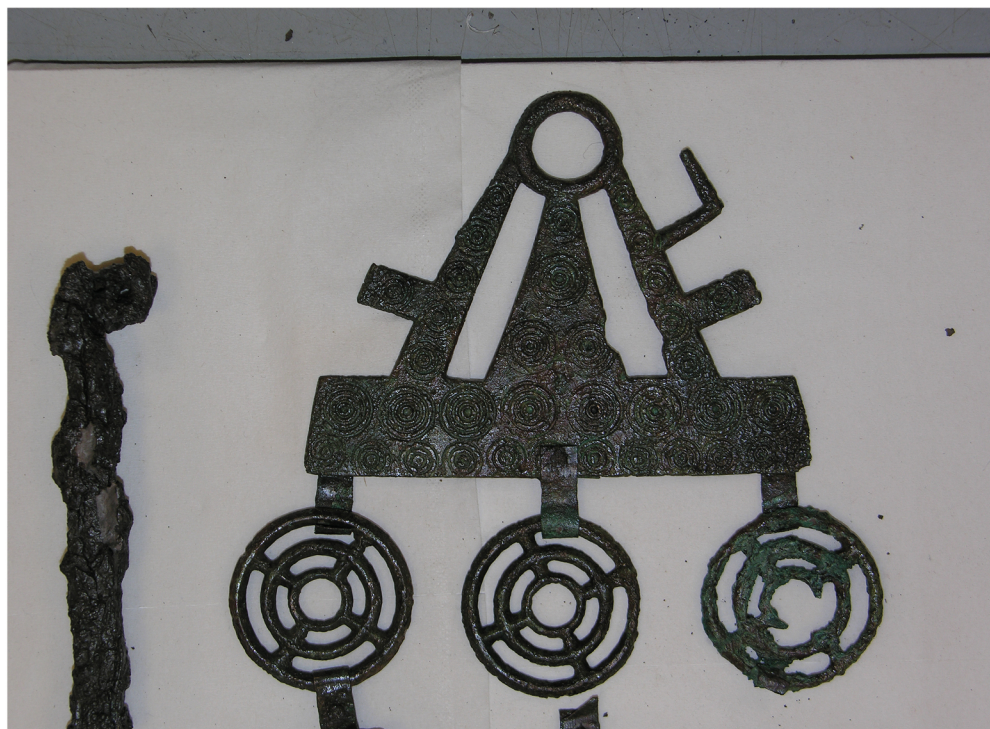




International Meeting

FAMILIES, GENDER, MOBILITY AND INTERCULTURALISM IN THE ETRUSCO-ITALIC NECROPOLIS

Some cases from Campania and Veneto
(FaGeMI)

November 11-12, 2025

Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Families, Gender, Mobility and Interculturalism in the etrusco-italic necropolis. Some cases from Campania and Veneto (FaGeMI)

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Final conference of the PRIN-2022 FaGeMI Project "Families, Gender, Mobility and Interculturalism in the etrusco-italic necropolis. Some cases from Campania and Veneto"

Carmine Pellegrino - 'Agro picentino' and Middle Ground system in Campania in the VIIIth century B.C.

The speech is dedicated to the rapid changes in Campania during the 8th century BC. A turning point was the stabilizzazione of the Greeks in the Gulf of Naples following the foundation of Pithecusa and perhaps the first settlements in Cuma and Parhenope. The Euboean settlements are the fulcrum of a network that integrates the indigenous communities of Campania and the surrounding areas: this system is explained through the 'Middle Ground' model.

The Middle Ground system includes new settlements in the Campania plain and Ager Picentinus (Gulf of Salerno), which are known thanks to the excavation of the necropolises.

In the Gulf of Salerno, the settlements of Casella and Arenosola control the landings, while the one at Monte Vetrano dominates the northern way in to the Ager Picentinus.

The site of Monte Vetrano is a sort of indigenous emporium: it attracts the people of the Irpinian and Enotrian hinterland who come to the Tyrrhenian Sea and participate in the trade that develops around the Greek settlements.

The 'Middle Ground' system of Campania lasts a few decades. In the Ager Picentinus, the restructuring of Pontecagnano at the beginning of the Orientalizing period and the simultaneous abandonments of Monte Vetrano and Casella highlight the interaction between the sites and the complex social and political dynamics which can be outlined through archaeological record.

Antonella Massanova - The northern necropolis of Monte Vetrano in the Porte di Ferro area

The Porte di Ferro necropolis is located on the northern slopes of Monte Vetrano, which dominates the northern access to the coastal plain. The site developed in the second half of the 8th century and is configured as a sort of emporium, where converge the people of the hinterland.

The necropolis has returned approximately 220 tombs, distributed in clusters on distinct terraces or delimited by cobblestone walls or streets.

The intervention intends to present the development of the necropolis, the composition of the funerary lots, the forms of funerary representation that sometimes distinguish one group from another in order to highlight the heterogeneous composition of the community.

Mariassunta Cuzzo - Pontecagnano in Orientalizing time

As the varied material culture bears out, at the time of its maximum flourishing during the Orientalizing period, Pontecagnano is a cosmopolitan community that tends to integrate different contributions and components and one of the most important centers of Campania alongside the Greek settlements of Pithekoussai and Cuma with which it demonstrates very close and privileged relationships.

The Picentine site represents, as is known, a true crossroads of people and cultures from the Tyrrhenian, the Mediterranean and the hinterland: Greeks, Phoenicians, Etruscans, Italic populations. Composite relationships that also imply phenomena of mobility are documented with the surrounding Campanian and

Italic communities, first of all, the southern Irpinia groups known as Oliveto Citra-Cairano, the communities of the Sarno valley, Capua, the Enotrian environment.

Within the FaGeMI Project it was possible to investigate from an archaeological and anthropological point of view the complexity of the dynamics put in place: gender, age, intercultural and to explore their interconnections from a social and cultural point of view.

Rosa Cannavacciuolo - The western Necropoli in Pontecagnano: gender and ages in the graves of the Promenade Archéologique

The excavation of the area of the Promenade Archéologique, carried out between 2006 and 2007 on a surface area of approximately 10,000 m², is part of a project aimed at creating a promenade archéologique connecting the western necropolis and the Picentia Archaeological Park.

The archaeological investigation involved two excavation trench: trench 1, located at the SE corner of the area to be investigated, of approximately 200 m², and trench 2, carried out in the space intended for the housing of a fountain, corresponding to a long strip, oriented E-W, of approximately 32 x 10 m.

In the area of trench 2, 61 tombs were excavated, mainly pit inhumations, which highlighted a phase of more intense occupation dating back to the Early and Middle Orientalizing period and a second phase, datable to the mid-6th century BC. In this area, there is a particular concentration of burials with signs that refer to the Irpinia facies of Oliveto Citra-Cairano is evident.

The excavation of trench 1 has returned a total of 19 burials dating from the second quarter of the 7th century BC. These are burials in tombs of travertine slabs or in simple pits. Characteristic of this excavation area is the state of conservation of the monumental platforms that incorporate some burials, in particular of individuals belonging to the lower age groups that were probably related by family ties.

Alessandra Sperduti, Federica Iovino - Pontecagnano and Montevetrano necropolis: comparing osteobiographies

The study of skeletal remains from ancient necropolises represents an irreplaceable source of information for the reconstruction of the biological and social dimension of the deceased, as well as the funeral rituals reserved for them. The integrated analysis of various bone and dental indicators on single individuals allows to trace their osteobiographies, the first step for an overall reading of the living conditions and demographic dynamics of the reference community.

As part of the "FaGeMI project - Families, Gender, Mobility and Interculturalism in the Etrusco-Italic necropolis. Some cases from Campania and Veneto" the Servizio di Bioarcheologia of the Museo delle Civiltà has studied the remains from the Iron Age Campania necropolis of Pontecagnano (Promenade nucleus; 56 tombs) and Montevetrano (Porte di Ferro nucleus; 139 tombs). From their comparison, distinctive elements emerge in the rules of access to burial for particular age groups, in addition to some differences regarding health status and lifestyles.

Giulia Riccomi, Teresa Cinquantaquattro, Alissa Mittnik - Osteoarcheogenetic biographies from late Iron Age southern Italy (Casella, Campania, late 8th century BCE)

During the Iron Age, the Italian peninsula was a mosaic of diverse social groups, each with distinct cultural trajectories, interaction networks, and responses to internal and external pressures. In this research, we adopt a site-specific approach to investigate the osteological, archaeological, and genetic profiles of individuals from the site of Casella, a 'minor' place dated to late 8th century BCE and located within a natural environment of coastal lagoons and dunes, in close proximity to the main protourban center of Pontecagnano (Salerno, Campania).

Osteological analysis revealed a demographic composition of 10 adults (six females and four males) and 15 preadults, with most of them aged between 2-6 years. The high proportion of infants and children aligns with broader regional funerary patterns of similar chronology, reflecting ideology of preadult visibility and formal access to funerary areas. Skeletal pathologies indicated exposure to infectious diseases, metabolic deficiencies linked to early childhood diet, and evidence of hormonal fluctuations among adult individuals.

Funerary topography suggests the presence of family burial clusters within the Casella necropolis while accoutrements revealed a gender-based distinction and exchanges with groups in Campania and Etruria. High-quality ancient DNA was successfully extracted from 16 of 17 individuals with well-preserved petrous bones or auditory ossicles. Preliminary genetic analyses provided insights into genetic sexes and ancestry kinship relations, population structure ...

By integrating osteological, paleopathological, archaeological, and molecular analyses, the findings from Casella offer a unique opportunity to investigate life histories across multiple age groups within a single community. This multidisciplinary approach not only informs current debates on regional interaction, kinship structures, social dynamics, and transformative processes, but also provides valuable insights into lived experiences enhancing our understanding of how communities in protohistoric southern Italy responded to environmental and cultural change.

Giovanna Gambacurta, Claudio Cavazzuti, Anna Cipriani, Mariolina Gamba, Federico Lugli, Angela Ruta Serafini - Making and unmaking cities between identity and mobility

The paper aims to define a synthesis of the data resulting from the FaGeMI project, with particular attention to the recomposition of the profile of the earliest social groups behind the origin of the main cities in Veneto, Este and Padua. The integrated analysis of a significant number of samples from the earliest phases of the necropolises of both urban centres aims to recompose a historical and socio-political framework concerning the origin of the cities.

The identified groups of burials were examined as examples of the representation of family ties and were analysed from different points of view, such as the forms of inheritance, the role of women and the elderly people, and the special attention paid to certain children. In addition, on the basis of a large sample of Strontium isotopes, the contribution of external individuals to the formation of communities was assessed.

The overall picture offers a new reconstruction of the social body at the origin of the cities in the early Iron age in Veneto.

Fiorenza Bortolami, Cecilia Moscardo, Nicola Pollon - Identity and mobility: living together in Padova between 9th and 7th cent. BCE

Padova was a major center of Iron Age Veneto, playing a key role in the region throughout the first millennium BCE. While its origins and early protourban development remain under investigation, rich funerary evidence from the eastern and southern necropolises offers a valuable case study for reconstructing these phases and identifying the site's first settlers between 9th and 7th cent. BCE. This study applies strontium isotope analysis ($^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$) to explore human mobility and the integration of local and non-local elements in early Padova. The results show the presence of non-local individuals from the earliest phases and highlight complex dynamics of social integration and funerary representation, deepening our understanding of the diversity in funerary practices in Padova and Iron Age Veneto.

Fiorenza Bortolami, Cecilia Moscardo - Identity and mobility: living together in Este between 9th and 7th cent. BCE

The importance of Este in protohistoric northeastern Italy has been acknowledged since the first discoveries made in the 19th century. While its necropolises have been extensively explored and published, to date we still lack information about the origin and mobility of the people who first inhabited the settlement. This contribution presents new insights drawn from the archaeological study of a previously unpublished sector of the northern necropolis, combined with strontium isotope analysis ($^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$) on a broad sample of burials. The aim is to identify cases of individual mobility and explore how non-local individuals were integrated and socially assimilated into the early Atestine community.

Francesca Bertoldi, Lorenzo Bigo, Fiorella Bestetti, Gabriele Scorrano - Osteobiography of the subjects buried in Tomb 133 Via Tiepolo, Padova

The eastern necropolis of Padua-Via Tiepolo is a burial area in which the funerary tumuli represent family ties. Tumulus A (VIth century B.C.) is a big one with a diameter of more than 20 metres. Tomb 133 is one of the peripheral grave of the group, nearby two burials with horses and a man. The central tombs of the tumulus were reach cremations. Taphonomical data collected during the excavation point to an "atypical" burial of a fully adult female subject. She was placed in a supine position in the ground (full space decomposition) but, as a general impression, lacking a precise will of funerary treatment, but rather resting in the position immediately took after death. The degree of preservation of the skeleton is not very good, however we could diagnose the female sex. A Dna results confirmed the female sex and will be compared to Tomb 68 of the same tumulus A and others from the necropolis and coeval sites in northern Italy.

Nicoletta Onisto - Anthropological study of the cremation burial 148. A case of a familiar grave?

The cremation burial 148 from the archaeological site Casa di Ricovero (Este, PD, Italy) dated from the end of the 8th century to the beginning of the 7th century, is very probably a familiar grave, because inside of it three ossuaries are present, moreover in two of these the bones of more than one individual have been recognized. From anthropological analysis the bones belong to both adult and infant individuals, both females and males, for a total of 6 individuals.

For determining the sex and age at death of the individuals, the standard anthropological procedures were applied. Chromatic scales of Holk and Shipman have been used in this analysis to determine the combustion degree. The determination of the minimum number of individuals, was based mainly on the repetition of bone pieces. A precise scientific scale was used for the weight determination. Measurements were carried out using a digital caliper (0.01 mm).

The anthropological work has been carried out without any prior knowledge of the archaeological determination of age and sex.

Michele Cupitò, Giusy Capasso, Giovanni Leonardi - The CUS-Piovego necropolis and the emergence of a new elite group of allochthonous origin in the 6th century BC Padua

After more than 40 years of research by the University of Padua's Protohistory team, the CUS-Piovego necropolis, dated between the first half of the 6th and 4th centuries BC is the largest and best-documented funerary pole in pre-Roman Padua. So, the complex is a unique vantage point for studying the socio-political dynamics that shaped Padua during its fully urbanised phase.

Since the 1990s, the emergence of this new cemetery – located along the axis of the Meduacus river, ca 700 metres east of the Via Tiepolo-Via S. Massimo necropolis – has been linked to the rise of a new elite group. Thanks to the recognition by A.L. Prosdocimi of the Celtic origin of the name of the subject to whom a large

porphyry pebble found in the central part of the necropolis is dedicated, it was proposed that this phenomenon was triggered by the arrival in Padua of an allochthonous group.

This study re-examines this issue through an integrated archaeological and bioarchaeological analysis of the most prominent graves, contextualising the results within the broader phenomenon of horizontal – but also vertical – mobility in the Archaic period.

Giacomo Capuzzo, Elisavet Stamataki, Michael Allen Beck De Lotto, Giovanni Tasca, Christophe Snoeck - Reconstructing Chronology, Mobility, and Funerary Practices at the Late Bronze to Early Iron Age Urnfield of San Valentino (San Vito al Tagliamento, Italy) through a Multi-Proxy Approach

San Valentino (San Vito al Tagliamento) is one of the main urnfield cemetery in northeastern Italy. Excavated in the 1970s, it revealed cremation deposits, mainly in urns, with pottery and metal grave goods, which indicate strong ties with other north-Adriatic communities, especially in the Veneto area. This study applies an innovative multi-proxy approach: radiocarbon dating on bone apatite to refine site chronology, strontium isotopes and concentrations on calcined remains to assess human mobility, and FTIR-ATR coupled with carbon and oxygen isotopes to explore funerary practices. Results place the use of the cemetery at the end of the Late Bronze Age and during the Early Iron Age. Strontium isotope data suggest a local population exploiting nearby resources. Notably, variations in cremation conditions have been detected between San Valentino and the contemporary sites of Velzeke, Blicquy, Grand Bois, and Herstal, located in Belgium, by using FTIR-ATR and carbon and oxygen isotope data.

Matija Črešnar, Tamara Leskovar, Branko Mušič, Luka Gruškovnjak, Agni Prijatelj, Manca Vinazza, Carina Gerritzen, Tom Boonants, Christophe Snoeck - Interdisciplinary research of cemeteries opens up new pathways for understanding LBA/EIA societies in the SE Alpine region

Extensive flat cremation and barrow cemeteries are among the most iconic prehistoric features far beyond the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age of the SE Alpine region. Their research history goes back to the work of antiquarians, when the foundations for our discipline were laid. They also contributed to the development of the classical research and interpretation toolbox of prehistoric archaeology, which still form the basis of our research today. In the last decade(s), however, a number of new/adapted techniques and methods have been introduced into prehistoric archaeology, which increasingly contribute to a better understanding of its many facets. However, we sometimes fail to integrate all the innovations into reliable approaches and to harmonise them with existing knowledge.

In my talk, I will try to highlight what the most important new interdisciplinary developments have contributed to the research of the LBA / EIA periods of the SE Alpine region and how the results have been integrated into the already established interpretations. The focus is on the integration of different datasets, coming from several archaeological excavations and detailed analyses of various types of finds, with geoarchaeology and bioarchaeology playing the most important roles. To mention only the latter, it is the stable isotopes and genetic studies that have enriched our knowledge and understanding not only of individuals, their familial and other social ties, but also of entire populations and their ways of life in unprecedented ways.

Katharina Rebay-Salisbury - Families, gender-specific mobility and the use of glass beads at the early Iron Age cemetery of Statzendorf, Lower Austria

The cemetery of Statzendorf in Lower Austria, excavated between 1902 and 1925, contains 373 graves with 376 deposits of human remains from the Early Iron Age (c. 800-450 BC). The majority of the dead were cremated and scattered in the grave pit or placed in urns, and about a tenth of the burials were inhumations. The dead were equipped with several vessels from an extensive set of drinking and dining dishes. Common ceramic types include handled pots, bowls, cups, and large conical necked vessels, with unusual shapes like

cists and triple vessels also present. Meat offerings are evidenced by animal bones and small iron knives. Gendered objects include ceramic spindle whorls, often associated with female burials, and iron axes, lance heads, and horse harnesses, which are rare and indicate male burials. Bronze and iron costume items and jewelry are also part of the funerary assemblages.

Recently, we have carried out state-of-the-art bioarchaeological analysis of the human remains, including strontium isotope analysis to track mobility and sex identification using sex-specific peptides in dental enamel. We have also re-examined the glass beads from the cemetery to understand links to northern Italy. In this paper I will discuss how the new data change our perception of Iron Age communities north of the Alps.

Diego Voltolini - The Picene cemeteries of Torre di Palme (Fermo): family representations and community identity

The excavations carried out with scientific methodology in 2016-2017 at the cliff of Torre di Palme, on the Adriatic coast of Fermo, have uncovered two necropolis, for a total of eighteen examinable Picene burials, datable to the 6th century BC.

The amount of the data and the high quality of the documentation now also allow the re-evaluation of previous discoveries in Torre di Palme, such as Dall'Osso's excavations in 1912 and the 1967 recoveries, offering an articulate case study.

The analysis of the contexts reveals the presence of family-like groupings, with eminent female figures, included in numerically limited necropolis.

The various small cemeteries were distributed on the slopes of the cliff hosting the settlement, forming a crown around it.

The analysis of the grave goods made it possible to highlight the recurrence of certain artefacts and associations, which go to define an identity of customs peculiar to the specific area of Torre di Palme, within the Picenian cultural aspect of the 6th century BC.

Rare occurrences of these artefacts in cemeteries of other Picenian centres make it possible to identify cases of mobility, with particular regard to female figures.

Marco Pacciarelli, Francesco Quondam, Camilla Cittadini, Carmen Esposito, Lorenzo Fiorillo, Fabiana Grilli, Pasquale Miranda - At the dawn of Etruscan Society: The Villanovan Necropolis of Ponte Rotto at Vulci

Between 2020 and 2022, the University of Naples "Federico II" conducted three excavation campaigns in the Villanovan necropolis of Ponte Rotto in Vulci. Although already known, mainly thanks to the extraordinary accidental discovery of the so-called "Tomb of the Sardinian Bronzes", this burial ground has never been the subject of systematic and in-depth research. During the three seasons excavation, as many as 120 cremation and inhumation burials were discovered, mainly dating from the Early Iron Age to the height of the Orientalizing period.

Despite the significant impact of clandestine excavation, the research has provided a highly informative topographical cross-section of the cemetery. The funerary area is organised into dense and cohesive burial clusters, comprising individuals of both sexes, spanning different age groups and covering an extensive chronological range of at least 200 years.

By integrating archaeological evidence with anthropological data and large-scale isotopic analyses, this study offers a multi-scale perspective on the burial evidence at Ponte Rotto, shedding light on the dynamics at play during the crucial early centuries of the first millennium BC. Particular attention is paid to the increasing importance of family-based social units, which played a central role in shaping the evolving social framework.

Francesco Quondam - The Northern Ionian Arc during the Early Iron Age: Cultural Dynamics, Society and Mediterranean Interactions

During the Early Iron Age, the regions of the Upper Ionian Arc in Calabria and Lucania, facing the Gulf of Taranto, were characterized by a distinctive socio-economic and political trajectory. This trajectory combined deeply conservative aspects, such as the multi-century continuity of settlements, with elements of strong social dynamism and medium- to long-term interrelations, especially during the 8th century BCE.

By integrating different categories of available archaeological sources, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the socio-cultural dynamics unfolding in this geographical area at the beginning of the first millennium BCE.

This dynamic is also evident in the interaction between the Upper Ionian regions and neighboring areas, in particular with Campania. Such exchanges were not limited to material culture, but also included social practices and technological innovations, facilitating the movement of ideas and people. The wider context of Mediterranean mobility context further shaped these interactions and contributed to the region's position as a crossroads between local, deeply rooted traditions and external influences. This period marked a pivotal moment in the evolution of local societies, as their growing complexity and interconnectedness laid the foundations for the broader political and cultural shifts that would define the Mediterranean world in the centuries to come.