

MONTETOSTO, COMUNE DI CERVETERI, PROVINCIA DI ROMA, REGIONE LAZIO

doi: 10.1017/S0068246218000089

The Etruscan and Roman site of Montetosto is located 4 km to the west of *Caere*, along the monumental road (Fig. 1) that connected the Etruscan city to its main port at Pyrgi (Colonna, 2000, Michetti 2015). Until 1962 the site was known only for the visible tumulus – presently the largest known in Etruria – excavated by Raniero Mengarelli between 1924 and 1929 (Mengarelli, 1927, Rizzo, 1989).

Excavations carried out between 1965 and 1969, following the fortuitous recovery of some architectural terracottas, led to the discovery of a square building (with regular sides of 54 m in length), which was immediately compared to recently discovered palatial structures at Murlo and Acquarossa (Colonna, 1985). The sacred function of the building in the period 6th–2nd century BC could be understood due to the recovery of both architectural and votive terracottas. In the late 2nd century BC the function of the complex shifted from sacred to profane.

Despite limited field research, the Montetosto sanctuary has played a crucial role in scientific debates of the last forty years. According to the reconstruction first proposed by Colonna and subsequently widely accepted, it was erected in the place where the Phocian prisoners were stoned to death after the Battle of Alalia (540 BC); its palatial shape probably hints at the aristocracy's responsibility for the murder and it is ideologically connected with the monumental, earliest tumulus (Belelli Marchesini, Biella, Michetti, 2015, 147–9, 154).

The finds and data of the excavations of the 1960s were fully published in 2015 (Belelli Marchesini, Biella, Michetti, 2015, 147–9, 154 with previous bibliography) and whilst a better understanding of the site has emerged several questions still remain. In particular the layout of the building itself as well as the possible presence of further structures, either below or in close proximity. In addition, the sanctuary needed to be better understood in its wider topographical context, both considering its physical connection with the Caere–Pyrgi road and its visual link with the monumental tumulus. Therefore in 2018 a new phase of investigations began through a joint research partnership between the Sapienza Università di Roma (Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Antichità) and the British School at Rome.

A short season of geophysical survey was conducted in March 2018 in close collaboration with the Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per l'area metropolitana di Roma, la provincia di Viterbo e l'Etruria Meridionale. An area of 1.07 ha was surveyed between the Montetosto tumulus and the eastern edge of the previously excavated building (Fig. 2).

The magnetometry survey¹ highlighted the presence of a substantial series of additional walls and features in the eastern sector of the complex (Fig. 2: 1) in an area not fully explored in the excavations of the 1960s. Indeed, the supposed absence of structures in the central part of the building led to the recognition of a central courtyard and consequently to the definition of a sanctuary in the form of a palace (Colonna, 1985, 193), which still remains unique in the panorama of Etruscan sacred structures.

In the northern part of the survey area the magnetometry precisely mapped the perimeter of the west side of the tumulus which is now buried (Fig. 2: 2), confirming a

¹ The survey was undertaken using a Bartington Grad 601–2 with a traverse interval of 0.5m and a reading interval of 0.25m.

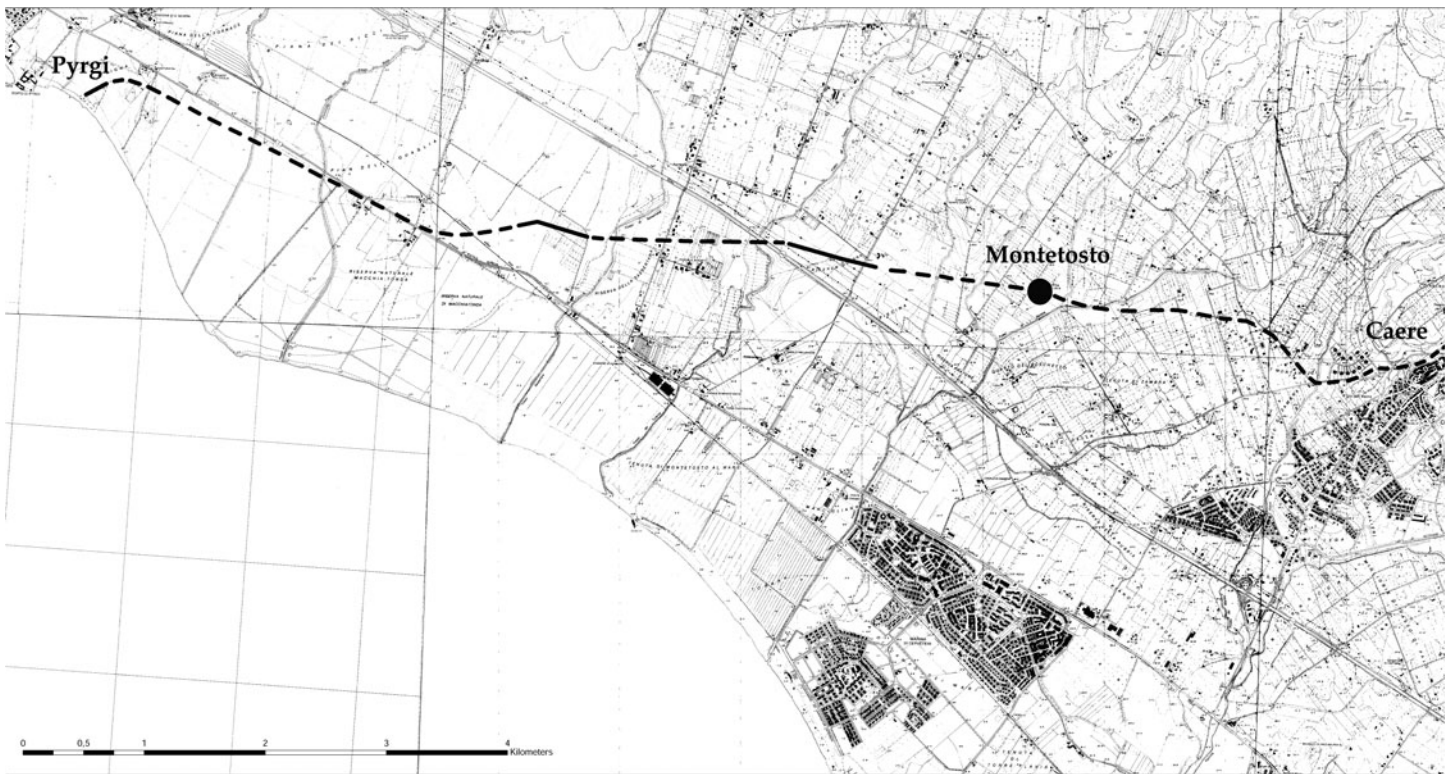


Fig. 1. The Caere-Pyrgi road and the location of Montetosto.

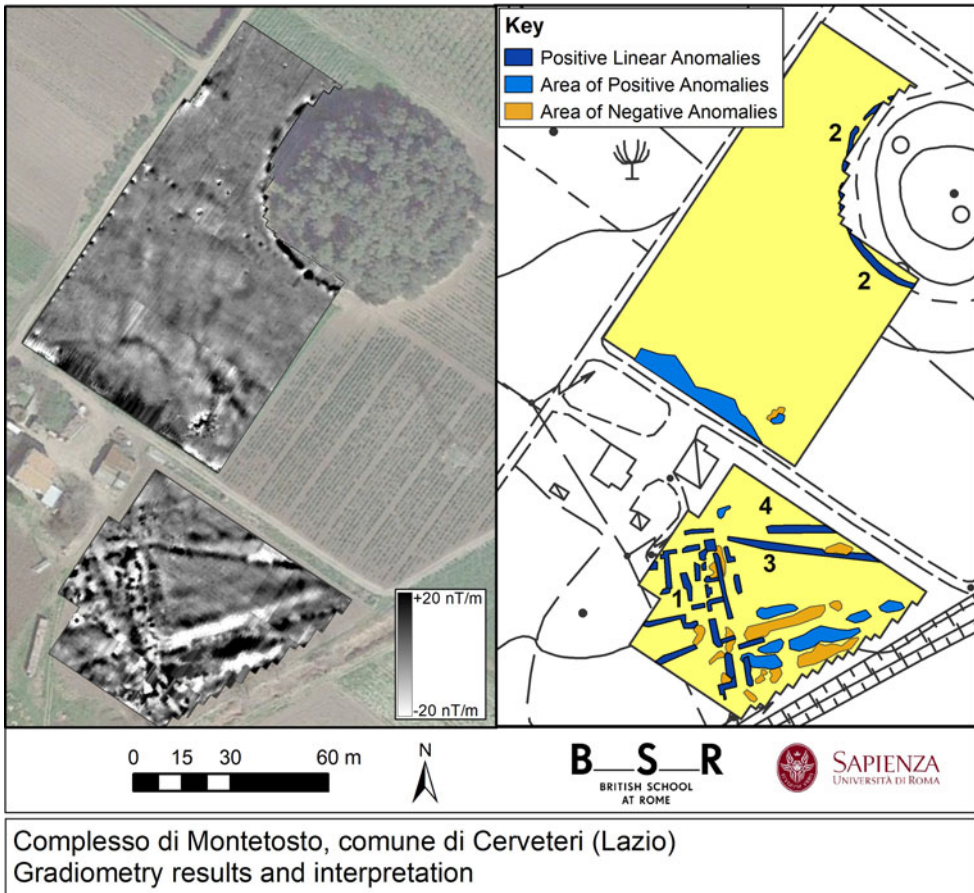


Fig. 2. The geophysical survey results from Montetosto with the magnetometry data (left) and interpretation of major features (right).

diameter of 65 m. On the exposed eastern side of the monument several red tuff slabs which formed part of the base of the monument were visible.

The route of the Caere–Pyrgi road between the tumulus and the sacred building was suggested by the topographical surveys carried out in the 1960s. The fieldwork indicated the general trajectory of the road, but it was clear that in the vicinity of Montetosto it had already undergone substantial destruction (Giuliani, Quilici, 1964, 8). The magnetometry has highlighted the presence of two parallel anomalies to the north-east of the sanctuary which may be associated with the Caere–Pyrgi road (Fig. 2: 3–4); however, these features need to be further explored to confirm the hypothesis.

The geophysical survey at Montetosto has clearly demonstrated the need for further research² in the area, both with further geophysical prospection in the adjacent fields and for excavation in the eastern sector of the sacred building.

² Further details and a full summary of the work will be given in the volume 25.1 of the periodical *Scienze dell'Antichità* of the Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Antichità (Sapienza, Università di Roma).

Acknowledgements

The geophysical survey was undertaken thanks to the fundamental support of the Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per l'area metropolitana di Roma, la provincia di Viterbo e l'Etruria Meridionale with particular thanks to Dott.ssa Rita Cosentino, Dott.ssa Monica Arduini and the Soprintendente Dott.ssa Alfonsina Russo. The magnetometry survey was undertaken by Stephen Kay (BSR Archaeological Officer) and Elena Pomar and was funded by a donation by Charles Williams II.

References

- Belelli Marchesini, B., Biella, M.C., Michetti, L.M. (2015) *Il santuario di Montetosto sulla via Caere–Pyrgi*. Roma, Officina Edizioni.
- Colonna, G. (1985) *Il santuario di Montetosto. Case e palazzi d'Etruria* (Catalogo della mostra). Milan, Electa: 192–6.
- Colonna, G. (2000) *Il santuario di Pyrgi dalle origini mitistoriche agli altorilievi frontonali dei Sette e di Leucotea*. *Scienze dell'Antichità* 10: 251–336.
- Giuliani, C.F., Quilici, L. (1964) La via Caere–Pyrgi. *Quaderni dell'Istituto di Topografia Antica dell'Università di Roma*, 1: 5–15.
- Mengarelli, R. (1927) Caere e le recenti scoperte. *Studi Etruschi* 1: 169–71.
- Michetti, L.M. (2015) La via Caere–Pyrgi all'epoca di Thefarie Velianas: il santuario di Montetosto. In M.P. Baglione, L.M. Michetti (eds), *Le lamine d'oro a cinquant'anni dalla scoperta. Dati archeologici su Pyrgi nell'epoca di Thefarie Velianas e rapporti con altre realtà del Mediterraneo*, *Scienze dell'Antichità* 21.2: 153–72.
- Rizzo, M.A. (1989) Cerveteri – Il tumulo di Montetosto. *Atti del Secondo Congresso Internazionale Etrusco* (Firenze 1985), Rome, Giorgio Bretschneider Editore: 153–61.

BARBARA BELELLI MARCHESINI, MARIA CRISTINA BIELLA,
STEPHEN KAY AND LAURA M. MICHETTI
(Sapienza Università di Roma, British School at Rome, Sapienza Università di Roma)
barbara.belellimarchesini@uniroma1.it; maria.cristina.biella@uniroma1.it;
s.kay@bsrome.it; laura.michetti@uniroma1.it

POMPEII: PORTA NOLA NECROPOLIS PROJECT (COMUNE DI POMPEI, PROVINCIA DI NAPOLI, REGIONE CAMPANIA)

doi: 10.1017/S0068246218000090

Since 2015 the research project at Porta Nola has explored different aspects of the necropolis ranging from the excavation of individual tombs to the study of the plaster casts made of victims of the AD 79 eruption. The aim has been to draw together the various strands of information, including archival material and publications, in order to provide a new synthesis of the necropolis.

The 2017 season of excavation focused on two areas within the necropolis: the burials of Praetorians identified during the 1970s clearance of the area between the city wall and road which ran alongside the city wall; the area immediately north of the tomb of Obellius Firmus (excavated in 2015, Kay *et al.*, 2016), between the rear wall of the tomb and a tufa wall (possibly delimiting the funerary area) 5 m to the north.

On the steep slope that lies between the city wall of Pompeii and the paved road that ran alongside, a series of marble *columellae* were discovered during the clearance