

Reviews

I. ARCHAEOLOGY AND ART

CAMILLA COLOMBI, *LA NECROPOLI DI VETULONIA NEL PERIODO ORIENTALIZZANTE*. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2018. Pp. 406, illus., maps, plans, CD-ROM. ISBN 9783954902675. €168.00

This fascinating work, arising from Camilla Colombi's 2014 Basel doctoral thesis, offers the first systematic and structural analysis of the necropolises of the Orientalising period at Vetulonia, based on a detailed analysis of 159 tombs of the Villanovan and Archaic periods. The Introduction sets out the objective of investigating the social structure of the community represented by the burials. Through the use of archival excavation documentation, reconstruction of the grave goods, careful study of the materials, chronological sequencing of the grave assemblages and reconstruction of the tombs' horizontal stratigraphy, C. aims to clarify the origins of the aristocracy and its customs and the self-representational system of the groups in power. C.'s rigorously contextual approach leads to the exclusion of those tombs for which verifiable documentation is no longer available, and hence she excludes several tombs from the late Orientalising period.

Ch. 2 is dedicated to the history of archaeological research, of which Isidoro Falchi was the protagonist (thirty-four excavation campaigns 1884–1913, leaving good quality documentation). C. carefully records the relevant archival materials, hosted at the National Archaeological Museum in Florence (where in 1966 they suffered flood damage). This patient recovery of early excavation data will be useful to all those dealing with Vetulonia more generally. A brief historical overview of Vetulonia focuses on the transition from the Final Bronze Age to the Iron Age; the organisation of the first settlement in the early Villanovan period; the configuration of the city in the Archaic and Classical phase, when it was endowed with sacred buildings, testified by architectural terracottas; and a presumed 'crisis' and possible decline in favour of Populonia and Roselle, reflected in the collection of broken helmets of the 'Haspnae' (L. Cappuccini, in L. Aigner Foresti and P. Amman (eds), *Beiträge zur Sozialgeschichte der Etrusker* (2018), 135, referring to the Syracusan siege). But this crisis should perhaps be played down, in light of the considerable construction activity at the end of the fifth century B.C. (S. Rafanelli, in *Aspetti dell'età arcaica nell'Etruria settentrionale*, forthcoming). The chapter closes with a detailed topographical analysis of the necropolis, based on a subdivision of the funerary area into thirty zones. Thanks to C.'s exhaustive archival research, ch. 2 will from now on be a major reference point for future research about the city.

Ch. 3 is dedicated to the analysis of tombs and grave assemblages. Of a total of 184 tombs mentioned in the excavation reports, C. was able to identify 86 by their grave goods, while 89 assemblages were found to be missing. Only 19 per cent of the burials were found to be intact. The analysis of the grave structures (ch. 3.2) reviews the various types of tombs documented during the period and focuses on the interpretative problems (e.g. Vetulonia as the first Etruscan centre to document circle tombs).

Given the scarcity of excavation data, C. focuses on the grave assemblages, divided into five groups (vessels and containers; jewellery and dress accessories; weapons, tools and symbolic objects; bridle and chariot parts; varia). The objects are classified by shape and type, with comparanda from other published necropolises. The vessel shapes are distinguished by ceramic body, which rather hinders our understanding of the relationship between imports and local productions, but the tables with drawings bring them together in a useful overview. Some shapes have their roots in local tradition, such as the kantharos with raised and composite handles, typical of Vetulonian workshops; when it reaches large dimensions, it probably served as a krater. The unique inscribed kyathos from the Tomba del Duce is of considerable importance in understanding the meaning of this precious vase type in the context of gift exchange. A workshop

producing these kyathoi and kantharoi (with similarly decorated handles) was established at Vetulonia in the mid-seventh century B.C.; the craftsman, 'Maestro C', probably produced the kyathos of the Tomba del Duce and is linked to the workshop that, in the second quarter of the seventh century, produced some vases in Cerveteri (L. Cappuccini, *Studi Etruschi* 80 (2017), 61–82). The earliest writing in this area had already arrived from Vulci c. 675–650 B.C.; subsequently northern Etruria is influenced by a more southerly writing model, that of Tarquinia, and around the mid-seventh century the bucchero kyathoi brought yet another new type of writing, first developed in Cerveteri (A. Maggiani, *Studi Etruschi* 80 (2017), 133–48).

Ch. 4 is dedicated to the development of the necropolis. Using statistical analysis, C. defines six chronological phases, from the Villanovan to the beginning of the sixth century, and identifies common and characteristic types of items for each. The analysis of ritual practice starts from gender, unfortunately only possible on the basis of the grave assemblages. In phases 2–3, the most well represented, female tombs outnumber male ones by 2:1, as women represent a pre-eminent component in princely funerary representation. Elements of ritual are then grouped by type. Chariots and horse harnesses are more abundant at Vetulonia than in other necropolises, even from c. 800 B.C. Moreover, 30 per cent of the tombs have weapons, demonstrating the importance of representing the deceased as warriors. The analysis of vessels and drinking paraphernalia allows for a distinction between collective consumption and private use. Many other objects are intended as status symbols, some related to the deceased's priestly role.

Finally, C. wonders what defines and indicates a princely tomb (no universally valid criteria). The analysis allows us to isolate prestige indicators according to their rarity (ch. 4.2), based on the intrinsic or symbolic value of the objects. Among the 173 tombs examined, 71 do not present any indicators, because of looting or poor preservation; the remaining 102 tombs contain one or more indicators, with some recurring associations. Those which contain all the indicators are defined as 'princely grave assemblages'. The scale is therefore quantitative, which may be reductive since it puts all objects on the same level; C. assumes that the rules of funeral representation are the same for all groups. Finally, the burials are analysed diachronically to evaluate (dis)continuity in the use of the sepulchral areas. In the conclusion, C. traces the phases and recognises the aristocratic structure of some aggregations of tombs, clustered around both male and female tombs. The volume concludes with useful correlation tables of some 500 tombs, and German and English summaries.

C.'s book undoubtedly increases our knowledge of the most important phase of the city of Vetulonia, and should encourage further study of the city's funerary contexts. By highlighting the role of this centre, one of the liveliest in Etruria, she has contributed substantially to the study of the entire Orientalising period.

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doi:10.1017/S0075435820000908

JEAN GRAN-AYMERICH, *LES VASES DE BUCCHERO: LE MONDE ÉTRUSQUE ENTRE ORIENT ET OCCIDENT* (Bibliotheca archaeologica 55). Rome: «L'Erma» di Bretschneider, 2017. Pp. 287; 392 pp. of plates; illus., maps. 1 CD-ROM. ISBN 9788891308177. €450.00.

Jean Gran-Aymerich's book is the first comprehensive attempt at an overall synthesis of bucchero production. It includes seven chapters, with extensive illustrations at the end of each, and a summary in English at the start. Ch. 1 considers the name 'bucchero' and a history of bucchero studies, with an emphasis on French contributions. Possible ancient representations of bucchero and written sources are also briefly discussed.

Ch. 2 is concerned with the techniques of making bucchero, derived from earlier *impasto* wares. G.-A. discusses the gradual adoption of the potter's wheel, the assembly of vessels and their burnishing, without considering the process of turning vessels when leather-dry that was responsible for much of the characteristic detailing of bucchero shapes. The inconclusive evidence for firing, production of the characteristic black surface, scientific analysis of clays and experimental firing are then discussed. A very detailed section follows that analyses the wide range