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Review of “Paesaggi mediterranei di età romana – Archeologia, Tutela, Comunicazione”, edited by G. Mastrocinque

Gianluca Mastrocinque. ed. 2017. Paesaggi mediterranei di età romana – Archeologia, Tutela, Comunicazione”, edited by, Bari: Edipuglia

The book “Paesaggi mediterranei di età romana – Archeologia, Tutela, Comunicazione”, edited by Gianluca Mastrocinque, was published by Edipuglia in 2017. It collects the proceedings of the international conference held in Bari and Egnazia in May 2016. The convention has been an important moment of discussion and updating regarding the most modern approaches to the study of ancient landscapes, with a particular focus on the Roman Era. The necessity for a multi-disciplinary method stands out in the methodological approach of all the works presented: archeology needs to interact with geomorphology, archeometry, and paleo-botany. This methodology aims at “dissecting” the landscape into the elements that make it up. Different data, gathered with various instruments, need an integrated interpretation (i.e. aerial photos analysis, written sources, surveys, and stratigraphic digs). The contributions are always the result of field studies and are aimed at the study of the relationship between man and the environment. The papers deal with features of settlement, infrastructure, production, commercial trading, and religion. In many contributions, historic-archeological knowledge is a starting point for the creation of a cultural heritage safeguarding system. Databases are usually shared among the Universities and the Soprintendenze. Many topics consider the promotion of the landscape utilizing modern and effective communication systems. In this way, people can restore the cultural value of the ancient landscape.

The book begins with a general overview by Capogrossi Colognesi. The author offers a “juridical” perspective on the Roman landscape construction, though an analysis of the relationship between theory (judicial discipline) and the *Gromatici* (land surveyor) activities. The interpretation of the texts of the *Gromatici veteres* is tightly connected to an empirical approach and, basically, to the activities carried out on the ground. The first models of agricultural division used by the Romans find in centuriation their most famous outcome.

The text, organized in three sections, covers the three sessions of the convention. In the first, contributions regarding Mediterranean landscapes are presented; in the second, attention is placed on the rural and urban landscapes in Italy; the third is dedicated, in more detail, to the urban and rural landscapes of Puglia, with a special focus on *Egnatia*.

Mediterranean landscapes

The work by Desiderio Vaquerizo Gil on Roman Córdoba goes into depth on the theme of the relationship between the urban space of the Roman city and its suburb, and more generally between the city and its territory, between urbanism and landscape. The author revisits some hypotheses on the layout of *Corduba*, looking also at the layout of the suburb, scattered villas, and at the *Ager Cordubensis*. The data of the work team are shared with citizens, according to an innovative form of cultural heritage management, in line with the idea of a “community archeology”. The volume is dedicated to the memory of Sara Santoro, who prematurely passed away after the conference. She presented, together with Marco Moderato, a project on *Epidamnos / Dyrrachium*, through an in-depth analysis of the landscape, meaning the result of the reciprocal, interlaced relationships between natural aspects and anthropological actions. They reconstruct the historic evolution of the landscape studied, with a deeper look at the relationship between the city and rural landscape; moreover, they introduce the outlines of the archeological potential of the urban area and its territory, fundamental for setting up correct archeological safeguarding. Sandro De Maria, Julian Bogdani, and Enrico Giorgi are the directors of the Italian missions in southern Epirus (Albania) since 2000. They have been digging in *Phoinike* and, since 2015, in *Butrinto* as well, and present the results of a program of investigations which started from the city of *Phoinike*. The work of research, safeguarding, and promotion has extended to the surrounding territory. The great surveying project and other topographic investigations are set up on a regional level of application within *Chaonia*, and has allowed for the reconstruction of the dynamics of occupation and exploitation of this very conservative and rugged area, over for centuries, outlining aspects of continuity and transformation in a border region. An important in-depth look at the historic-topographic dynamics is presented for the Classic-Hellenistic era and the Roman era, also by way of the urban evolution of the main cities (*Phoinike, Butrinto, and Hadrianopolis*).

Urban and rural landscapes in Italy

Francesca Ghedini introduces the excavation of the Montegrotto Terme (PV) extraordinary architectural complex. It has been excavated between 2001 and 2012 as part of the project “*Aquae Patavinae*” of the University of Padua. The interpretation

of aerial photography and LiDAR data, the analysis of the ancient epigraphic and literary sources made possible the statement of a complex and diachronic interpretation of the Euganean hot springs landscape. The article by Maria Stella Busaba and Irene Carpanese introduces the multi-disciplinary investigations of the Altino plain conducted by the University of Padua from 2000 to 2010. Besides the survey campaigns, the geo-archeological investigations have been useful for the reconstruction of the river morphology in its evolutive aspect, which very much affected the anthropic choices and the creation of the ancient infrastructures used to manage this territory. The paleo-botanic analyses have contributed to a careful reconstruction of the landscape. Data are accessible to communities through multimedia tools much oriented towards promotion (to which the *ARCA Project* is dedicated). Filli Rossi puts forth a comparison of two sacred areas linked to the cultural context of *Brixia*, investigated stratigraphically, with various cultural resemblances, but geographically located in different areas. The first is in the urban area (Republican sanctuary of Brescia), the second in a suburban area (sanctuary of the 1st century AD in Breno). The promotional project for both sites is described as well. The work by Franco Cambi analyzes the long process of Romanization of the area of Populonia. It recounts the history of the landscapes through the early contacts with the Roman world, the landscapes of the Roman *gentes* which in the 3rd century AD began to be interested in this area, up to the agricultural landscapes of the end of the Republican era. The changes made in organizing the territory are clearly outlined: in the 4th century BC the area was extensively exploited for its mining potential, and became of increasing interest to the Romans. They first aimed at controlling the iron mines, then, between the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, furthered the development of the *villa rustica* pattern and the transformation of the area into agricultural lands. Giuseppe Ceraudo introduces the project that he directs on *Aquinum*: the initial focus on the territorial dynamics, investigated with multi-disciplinary methodologies and with various research means (aerial photos interpretation, geognostic prospection, archeological survey, etc.), led the team to focus on the neighborhoods of the urban area, the object of stratigraphic excavations since 2009. Particular attention was placed on the identification and excavation of the exceptional hot springs complex. This work offers the basis for further comprehensive promotion, to be put in place with innovative musealization systems (“*Metateca*”), such as augmented reality. The now accepted bypassing of the idea of the colonies as “*effigies parvae simulacrae Romae*” offers a starting point for Tesse D. Stek to provide an innovative interpretation of the district patterns of the countryside at the end of the colonization processes, not limited simply to the relationship between urban centers and the suburban farmlands. A key feature is the contribution of data from the project *Landscapes of Early Roman Colonization* on Roman expansionism and the colonization of internal areas, through a comparison between the territories of *Aesernia* and *Venusia*. The author focuses on minor centers. Agglomerate settlements, even if in the literature they are not always adequately considered, represent a point of contact between the city and its territory.

They are central also in the Roman colonial world, in a much hazier and varied context compared to what has been traditionally presented to us.

Urban and rural landscapes in Puglia

The third section opens with work by De Venuto, Goffredo, Totten, and Volpe on the urban landscape of *Salapia*. The University of Foggia team analyzed in detail the data from written sources, which are compared to the results of the stratigraphic excavations. The research allows for the reconstruction of some characteristics of the urban spaces, also concerning the surrounding territory, which has always been used for salt extraction. An exhaustive look was taken at the dig in the residential and commercial area of the *insula XII* and the evolution of this area in the Medieval era. Again set in Puglia, there is the work of Campese, De Santis, and Foscolo, from the University of Bari. Within the borders of modern-day Terlizzi, the investigations conducted have led to the identification of a dense network of archaeological evidence. The data, cross-referenced with the analysis of the written sources, has led to the reconstruction of the territorial layout during the Roman era. A comprehensive settlement overview emerges, both from the Roman era and from that of Late Antiquity. The work is completed by a detailed analysis of the material evidence, in particular the ceramic data from the surface survey.

As already mentioned, specific attention was placed on the ongoing projects regarding *Egnatia*, identified as a case study for testing an approach of a total investigation of the city and its territory. Remote sensing, studies on the types of settlements, surveys, and communication systems for data have been tested, thanks to the collaboration of various universities and research entities, as well as institutions that work in safeguarding and promoting Cultural Heritage. Angela Ciancio describes the relationship between the ancient inhabited area and the land around it, the remodeling in 2013 of the museum exhibition of the National Archeological Museum of Egnazia. Today, the exhibition takes up 1200 square meters and presents artifacts from the Bronze to the Middle Ages. Luigi La Rocca outlines the archeological history of Egnazia, from its rediscovery in antiquity to the most recent research. These results have been made available to the new visitors' pathway of the Archeological Park, inaugurated in 2015. Through innovative communication systems, the area is accessible also by disabled visitors, and tells the story of the site, from the earliest information by Leandro Alberti to the clandestine digs, from the works by Quagliati in the early 1900s, to the research done by the Superintendency between the 1960s and the 1980s, up to the recent work on behalf of the University of Bari. It is the director of the excavations herself, Raffaella Cassano, who, thanks to the data from "*Progetto Egnazia: dallo scavo alla valorizzazione*", explains the results from the most recent excavation campaigns. The author looks back at the history of the landscape where Egnatia will then develop, from the first

settlement of the 17th to 16th century BC to the Messapian phases, to the proto-urban layout of the 4th to 3rd century BC, to the definition of the urban layout of the 2nd century BC. She talks about the *via Minucia*, the construction development of the Augustan era, and the transformation of the city in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. Particularly interesting, and central to the overall discussion regarding methodology, is the article by Gianluca Mastrocinque. As part of the project “*FIRB Archeologia dei paesaggi della Puglia adriatica in età romana: tecnologie innovative per una pianificazione sostenibile e una fruizione identitaria*”, the archaeologist offers an interpretation of the ancient landscape in its diachronic acceptance, thanks to the integrated interpretation of archeological survey data and from archeo-zoological, archaeometric, and paleo-botanic investigations, aimed at the reconstruction of the paleo-environments. The author presents a detailed analysis of the settlement dynamics from the Bronze Age, around the central place on the acropolis of Egnazia, to the Iron Age, a time about which very little data has been gathered, up to the Roman era. From the 2nd century BC, a widespread network of sites developed around the main roadway, mostly single-family farms, as well as some big *villae*, possibly linked to a regular subdividing of lots. The decrease of evidence in the Imperial era could be linked to changes in the exploitation of this area in agricultural terms. Much space is dedicated also to the population developments in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. A complete overview comes out of all of this, with the identification of the preferred morphological units for settlements in the various eras and both continuous and innovative ways in using the land on the part of mankind.

Overall, this book represents an important update on the results of various research projects carried out in different settings. Moreover it provides a historic and topographic overview of the investigated areas, in particular the landscape of *Egnatia*, analyzed in greater detail. It also deserves credit for blazing a trail to follow in its integrated methodological approach including research, safeguarding, and promotion of archeological landscapes. A model emerges that unites and blends archeological data with written sources, the use of traditional instruments and innovative technologies, the study of the geomorphology, and their influence on the choices made by mankind over the centuries.

