

# PAPERS ON ITALIAN URBANISM IN THE FIRST MILLENNIUM B.C.

edited by

**Elizabeth C. Robinson**

*with contributions by*

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# Introduction

Elizabeth C. Robinson

This volume stems from a session of the Roman Archaeology Conference held in 2009 at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. While the session itself provided a mix of five papers that employed diverse approaches for the study of urbanism in the Italian peninsula, for the sake of rounding out the volume it was decided to invite six additional papers: J. N. Hopkins on the creation of the Forum and the making of monumental Rome; E. Govi on Etruscan urbanism in the Po river plain; P. S. Lulof on Archaic temple roofs in Rome, Etruria and Latium; E. van't Lindenhout on the urbanization of Latium Vetus in the Archaic period; a multi-authored paper (P. A. J. Attema, F. di Gennaro, J. F. Seubers, B. Beelli Marchesini and B. Ullrich) on the urbanization of Crustumerium from the 9th to 5th c. B.C.; and S. Pope on the urbanization of indigenous sites in Archaic and Classical Sicily. The conference panel and this volume have also been greatly enriched by the concluding remarks of P. Attema. I am grateful to the conference organizers and participants for their interest in this topic, and I hope that this volume will stimulate further discussion by providing a useful resource for those interested in current approaches to the archaeology of urbanism in Italy of the first millennium B.C.<sup>1</sup>

Urban archaeology in Italy continues to expand our understanding of the ancient landscape and the human populations that operated within it. Archaeological fieldwork within urban centers, as well as in their hinterlands, demonstrates the complexity of ancient urban sites and highlights their importance not only as centers of concentrated population, but also as the catalysts of social and cultural processes. Urban centers continued to fulfill this rôle in Italy throughout the Roman period and on into late antiquity, and the relationships between the cities and their hinterlands have played a key rôle in debates about the nature of Greek and Roman cities in the first millennium B.C. and beyond.<sup>2</sup> Whereas the archaeological remains of nucleated urban centers have long attracted attention, it is only in recent decades that attention has been paid to other key areas (e.g., Samnium) which lack nucleated urban centers yet still display an increase in societal complexity during this time period.<sup>3</sup> These areas can provide important information about the characteristics of centers that do not fit canonical Greek and Roman urban models, yet still manifest important developments and possess significant elements that can contribute to our understanding of the nature of urbanism in Italy in the first millennium B.C.

Despite some ancient conceptions of Italy, such as the *tota Italia* of Augustus, that suggest homogeneity, regional diversity and complexity have always defined the peninsula.

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1 All dates are B.C. unless otherwise indicated. Despite the attempt at an overall coverage of Italy, the reader will notice an obvious difference with respect to the coverage of certain areas. In part, this is a reflection of the state of research in these areas. It is worth noting, however, that in Sicily and Sardinia, as well as in the non-Greek regions of South Italy, the degree of urbanism in the landscape differs greatly from that seen in central Italy (especially Rome and the cities of Etruria). Thus, studies of urbanization in non-Greek South Italy, as well as Sardinia and Sicily, can be viewed as somewhat separate from the other cases discussed here. Another session at the same Roman Archaeology Conference dealt more specifically with the nature of settlement in the South Italy and Sicily in the Late Republican period, and I suggest that the interested reader look there (Colivicchi 2011) for further information. Another good discussion of urbanism in central and southern Italy can be found in Attema 2004.

2 Erdkamp 2012, 242.

3 Burgers 2004, 121.

As archaeologists and historians continue to study the composition of ancient Italy, one factor that stands out alongside regionalism is the importance of the urban center in the landscape. As a place, the city fuels the imagination and the productivity of societies. It is clear that in many parts of the ancient world the city was the engine that powered complex civilizations. Of course, the city of Rome is often cited as the paragon of urban achievement, and the study of Rome's own urban development remains an important field of inquiry; yet increasingly there is a demonstrable need to consider not only Rome's own trajectory, but also the ways in which Roman urbanism (and urbanism at Rome) affected the urban trajectory of the rest of the Italian peninsula, and to what extent these 'Roman' processes were related to, or influenced by, other trends in urbanization.<sup>4</sup>

This volume is a collection of approaches currently being taken to the study of urbanism in Italy of the first millennium B.C. Such a work is needed since the pace of scholarship has been increasing and the combination of intensive field survey and pioneering excavations has revolutionized our understanding of the processes of state formation and urbanization, especially for the Iron Age. This has been true in Latium,<sup>5</sup> Etruria,<sup>6</sup> the Po Plain,<sup>7</sup> and, of course, Magna Graecia and Sicily.<sup>8</sup> Further, regions once deemed somewhat peripheral (e.g., Umbria<sup>9</sup> and Lucania<sup>10</sup>) have been receiving their due in terms of scholarly attention. Works such as the edited volume *Centralization, early urbanization and colonization in first millennium BC Italy and Greece* signal the importance of the landscape approach to the study of these themes.<sup>11</sup> Yet the landscapes dealt with in that collection, namely Calabria, Apulia, Lucania, Southern Latium, Etruria and the Veneto, are for the most part different from the ones dealt with in the current work. What emerges clearly from both works, however, is the importance of the relationship and cooperation between landscape-based archaeological methods and the excavation of key urban sites. While the regional analyses of urban centers has proved to be an effective method for studying particular phenomena at work throughout Italy, it should also be remembered that the impetus for many of these phenomena originated at the local level.<sup>12</sup> This is especially true for many regions of S Italy (e.g., in the Brindisino), where evidence of central management and regional cohesion is scarce.<sup>13</sup> It is therefore important, while analyzing regional patterns, to continue to explore individual centers and to investigate local urban elements.

This book begins with G. Cifani on the rise of urbanism in central Italy from the Late Bronze Age to the 6th c. B.C. It proceeds to a more in-depth look by J. N. Hopkins at the city of Rome and the creation of its archaic cityscape. We then shift to Etruria, where P. Perkins provides a discussion of several sites in N, S and central Etruria, and the dates of

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4 For example, Peroni (2000, 27) points out that recent research has proven that the transition in Italy from the village to the city preceded Greek colonization by around 300 years, and therefore must have had some kind of indirect influence, perhaps from Protogeometric Greece or the Mediterranean Levant.

5 Bietti Sestieri 1992a and b; Pacciarelli 2000.

6 Paoletti and Camporeale 2005.

7 Bentz *et al.* 2008; Govi 2007.

8 Kleibrink 2004.

9 Bradley 2000.

10 Isayev 2007; Osanna 2006.

11 Cf. Attema 2004a; Horsnæs 2004, 97.

12 Burgers 2004, 135.

13 *Ibid.* 121.