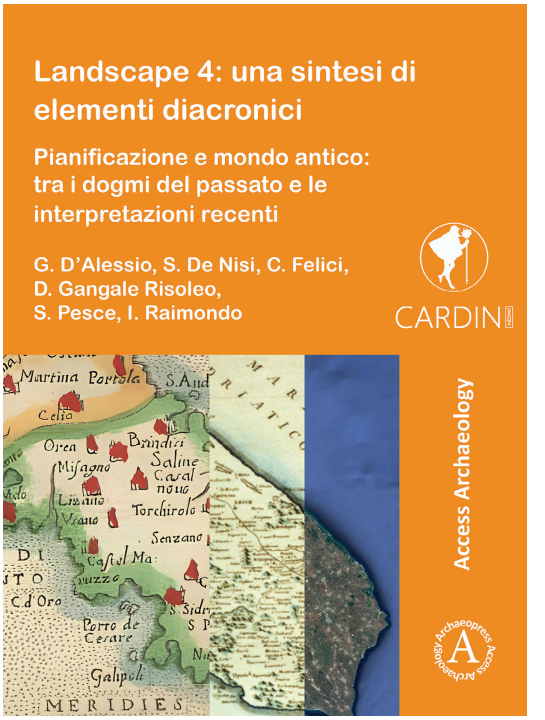
# G. D'Alessio, S. De Nisi, C. Felici, D. Gangale Risoleo, S. Pesce and I. Raimondo (eds). *Landscape 4: una sintesi di elementi diacronici. Pianificazione e mondo antico: tra i dogmi del passato e le interpretazioni recenti.* Oxford: Archaeopress | Book Review

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The volume "Landscape 4: una sintesi di elementi diacronici. Pianificazione e mondo antico: tra i dogmi del passato e le interpretazioni recenti", edited by G. D'Alessio, S. De Nisi, C. Felici, D. Gangale Risoleo, S. Pesce and I. Raimondo and published in 2025 as part of the *Cardini by Groma* monographic series by Archaeopress, brings together the contributions presented at the conference held in Lecce on 25–26 May 2023.




The papers included in the proceedings aim to critically reassess certain widespread assumptions in landscape studies, while also proposing new interpretations, developing more flexible analytical categories, and embracing the complexity and diversity of archaeological data, moving beyond overly generalised models.

Reflecting the structure of the conference, the volume is divided into four sections: "Morphologies and functions of minor settlements", "Meeting places along communication routes", "Land management and organisation", "Non-invasive, remote, and proximal sensing surveys: the future of archaeological research?". Each section is preceded by a detailed introduction by the editors, who provide a thorough summary of the contributions.

The first section reflects on the relationship between 'minor' settlements – perhaps better described as 'other' settlements – and cities, starting from an attempt to define these categories. The aim is to reconsider the rigid concept of subordination and dependence

on urban centres, proposing alternative interpretative hypotheses and highlighting the complexity of settlement dynamics, drawing on material evidence.

The second section, although smaller in the number of papers, offers valuable insights into the topic of transport networks. In addition to contributions analysing diverse evidence or presenting new data, it also includes a more methodologically oriented paper that provides a critical reassessment of existing models.

The third section is particularly heterogeneous in terms of content. Some papers highlight the importance of integrating different types of data in order to understand specific spatial planning choices. Others focus on areas traditionally considered marginal but which played an active and significant role in territorial organisation, settlement decisions, or administrative management. The section also includes a more methodological and critical contribution reassessing earlier studies, as well as a final paper emphasising the relationship between spatial organisation, natural resources, and road networks.

The fourth section brings together technical contributions focusing on the use of non-invasive technologies in support of archaeological research. While there is still a widespread tendency to focus more on technical aspects at the expense of archaeological ones, the papers highlight the undeniable contribution these new methods can offer: they generate large amounts of data that would otherwise be impossible to obtain; they allow the analysis of extensive areas that would be difficult to investigate through excavation alone; in some cases, they represent the only means of studying a building in the absence of other documentary sources. At the same time, the authors repeatedly stress the limitations of these technologies, the challenges in their application and data interpretation, and the importance of integrating these methods with other research approaches.

From a broader perspective, the volume also provides a valuable presentation of large-scale research projects carried out at universities or in collaboration with other institutions, often involving not only individual scholars but larger research teams. This allows scholars to engage not only with the general research themes and aims of these projects, but also with their results, which are often presented more extensively in other publications.

Additional aspects that enhance the value of the volume are the recognition of the importance of integrating different types of documentation and methodological tools in order to achieve the most comprehensive interpretation of the contexts under study; the wide scope of the topics addressed, both chronologically – ranging from the pre-Roman period to the Middle Ages – and geographically, extending beyond the boundaries of the Italian peninsula. Despite a few minor oversights in the layout, the editors' effort to include contributions that, in their diversity, successfully place themselves "between the dogmas of the past" and "recent interpretations" is undoubtedly commendable.

In conclusion, the proceedings of the *Landscape 4* Conference offer young scholars – the contributions, in fact, reflect a wide range of levels of scientific experience – the opportunity not only to present their research but also to propose new interpretations, which, in many cases, enrich or challenge rigid past perspectives, thereby contributing to the advancement of the research field. The decision to publish the volume in Open Access makes it widely

accessible, promoting the dissemination of new ideas and proposals and, more broadly, fostering discussion and debate within the discipline. It also allows for the inclusion of high-resolution colour images, which represent a valuable complement to the text and significantly enhance its readability.