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Series 3047, Oxford, 2021 | Book review**

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D. Gangale Risoleo, I. Raimondo (eds) 2021. *Landscape: una sintesi di elementi diacronici. Metodologie a confronto per l'analisi del territorio*, BAR International Series 3047, Oxford: B.A.R.

The book contains the proceedings of the conference on the new methodological issues applied to the study of the archaeological landscape, promoted by the PhD candidates of Tuscany's Doctoral Programme in 'Antiquity and Archaeological Sciences', with the support of 'Consulta di Topografia Antica' held in 2019 in Pisa.

Since its early beginning, the ancient topography has improved itself with the application of new inquiring methods: from the classic studies promoted by the positivistic science in the second half of eighteenth century, focusing on epigraphy (build of corpora and indexes) and classic authors, to nowadays satellite images and geophysical methods, through the massive archaeological data integration following the 1st World War and the aerial photography in the post-2nd World War. However, P. Liverani in the Introduction (p. V) to the book stresses out how technological advances do not always correspond to improvements to the discipline itself but rather a speedup of methodological approaches already in use. On the other hand, as the use of archaeologists in photointerpretation and the deployment of geognostic analyses to a territorial scale have testified, the good application of new methodological approaches can bring big improvements in documenting the ancient landscape. The aim of the conference is then to display the latest researches led by PhD candidates in order to have a benchmark set up by other researchers and well-known academics in ancient topography and landscape archaeology, that could offer hints and inspiration exposing research projects already built and well established. In the two-day conference four sessions were scheduled that became the four sections of this book: *I. Urbanistica e gestione delle risorse*, *II. Vie di comunicazione nel mondo antico*, *III. Nuove tecnologie per lo studio del territorio*, *IV. Paesaggi antichi: Metodologie a confronto*. Each session of the conference was guided by a member of the scientific board and introduced by a key speaker's presentation displaying a well-known project matching the session's topic.

The first one (*Sezione I. Urbanistica e gestione delle risorse*), introduced by A. Claridge (Royal Holloway, University of London) and P. Liverani (*Università degli Studi di Firenze*), is about urbanistic studies and resources management and focuses on aspects, such as the functional relations between urban spaces, that are usually neglected if compared to the close attention of studies on the urban planning. The first essay by B. Fochetti (*Note preliminari sul rapporto tra tabernae e impianti termali pubblici a Ostia imperiale*, p. 5) examines the city of Ostia, in particular the relation between *tabernae* and public thermal buildings. The author takes into account not

only planimetric issues but extends the study to the architectural and topographical aspects, including the volumetric analysis of the buildings.

The following papers, by D. Gangale Risoleo and E. Tamburrino, share the topic of water supply and management in urban contexts. The first one (*Urbanistica dell'acqua: i casi di Brescia e Verona*) pays attention to the hydric system of Brescia and Verona, and by using different types of sources (archaeological, remote sensing, written records) outlines a global reconstruction of the hydric systems of these cities. By taking into account dating, construction costs, type of commission and distribution issues it underlines out how private hydric purchase is way more documented than the written sources do. The second paper (*The Impact of Water Management in the Urbanisation and Urban Planning Processes. Some Preliminary Insights from the Roman Eastern Alps*, p. 27) deals with the issues linked to urban planning and water management, in particular the wastewater disposal, in towns built on slopes or in the foothills. The paper provides some relevant examples of wastewater handling of Roman settlements located between the *Regio X - Venetia et Histria* and the Province of *Noricum*.

The following section (*Sezione II. Vie di comunicazione nel mondo antico*) is introduced by G. Ceraudo (Università del Salento), and is focused on the routes of communication in the ancient world with the papers spanning through the Mediterranean, from Sardinia to Aegean islands, across the Southern Italy (Irrpinia and Puglia). Most of the essays point attention to the Roman road network, except the one by A. Querci (Θάλαττα, Θάλαττα: *the way the sea and the wind drew the trade routes in the Aegean Sea during the Bronze Age*) that focuses on the sea routes between Aegean islands during the Bronze Age trying to point out how the current climate conditions can be considered valid also for the Bronze Age and how these conditions could have affected the drawing of the sea-routes.

The other papers underline how latest methodological improvements can be used along with the traditional ones to achieve best results in the reconstruction of ancient routes of communication and ancient settlements. Pretty significant are the contributions by I. Raimondo (*Retracing an Ancient Roman Road: Aerial Photography and Topographical Survey of the Aecas-Siponto Road in Northern Apulia, Italy*) in which aerial photography and remote sensing are used along with historical and written sources (*itineraria*) to rebuild the route of the road between *Aecae* and *Sipontum* and the one by R. Montanaro e P. Guacci (*Vero o falso? Integrazione di strumenti remote sensing per la comprensione del territorio antico lungo la via Herculia*), where the use of remote sensing (LiDAR), topographical surveys and aerial orthophotos brought to the identification of a medieval fortified settlement along the *Herculia* road.

The third section, introduced by M. Millet (University of Cambridge) and S. Campana (Università degli Studi di Siena), considers the contribution of new technologies in the research (*Sezione III. Nuove tecnologie per lo studio del territorio*) and has a methodological profile. The section collects papers that focus on aspects that in recent years are becoming essential to reach a correct understanding and contextualization of the archaeological data, from the data collection to its disclosure to the public. In this perspective, F. Coschino's paper (*Il GIS come mezzo di analisi e divulgazione di contesti archeologici e bioarcheologici su scala variabile*) offers, through two case studies, some insights into how a GIS can be used both to have a multiscale analysis of the archaeological records and to disseminate the results to the outside. The following contributions, on the other hand, are based on the application of



archaeometric methodologies for the study and reconstruction of landscapes. The paper by L. Russo (*Produzione e circolazione di ceramiche acrome medievali nella Toscana sud-occidentale: studi morfologici ed archeometrici*) combines petrographic analyses on ceramic samples with those on clay samples to reconstruct the supply basins and the circulation of pottery between 7th and 9th centuries CE in the south-west of Tuscany; the other by C. Sciuto (*Racconti di pietre: l'applicazione di metodi archeometrici portatili allo studio dei paesaggi*), aims at the reconstruction of the landscape, through the use of portable tools for the geochemical characterization of stones, in particular at the localization of the mining sites of the building stones.

The fourth section (*Sezione IV. Paesaggi antichi: Metodologie a confronto*) is dedicated to the comparison of the different methodologies applied to the study of the ancient landscape, and is introduced by F. Vermeulen (Ghent University) who briefly traces the history of landscape archaeology to underline the progress made, with a particular focus on those of the last two decades that allow, in many cases, an updated and more accurate reconsideration of legacy data.

Following this line of research, the paper of R. Brancato (*Ricognizioni archeologiche e legacy data in Sicilia orientale: l'integrazione tra metodi per la ricerca sui paesaggi rurali in età romana*) displays the possibilities of integration between archaeological, topographical and legacy data through the use of geodatabase and how this can lead to the reconstruction of the rural Roman landscape in Catania's plain. Integration between different data and sources is also the common thread of the other essays and, as clarified by V. Limina (*Methodological Issues for the Integrated Analysis of Landscapes of Power: the Case Study of Volterra. Centuries 1st BC-5th AD*), it's an approach that can give good results even in areas often considered marginal.

The same diachronic approach, aimed to seize landscape modifications, supports the work by S. Berrica (*Paesaggio minerario nella zona nord di Madrid (Spagna) tra VII e VIII secolo*) that focuses on changes in the mining landscape of northern Madrid territory.

The three remaining papers show how it can be possible to bring together research, protection and preservation activities, acting in close synergy with local authorities and the ones responsible for the protection of the Culturale Heritage. The contribution of G. Forte, M. La Trofa, A. Piergentili Margani and G. Savino (*Ricerche topografiche tra tradizione e innovazione: dalla carta archeologica d'Italia all'esperienza del Progetto Ager Lucerinus*) follows the path traced by the experience of 'Carta archeologica d'Italia' and investigates, combining traditional methods to innovative ones, the western territory of Luceria working side-by-side with the town municipality; the same effort can be seen in the work of F. Matteoni (*Conoscere un territorio attraverso il costruito storico: il censimento dell'edilizia medievale nelle valli bergamasche*) on the medieval architectonic heritage of the northern Bergamo territory. The data collected during surveys and documentation of rural medieval buildings are shared with local authorities in order to be properly considered when drafting urban and territorial tools. A good example of this new approach is the case of upper Val d'Agri exposed by S. Montonato and F. Tarlano (*Ager Grumentinus: ricerche topografiche e tutela del paesaggio archeologico in Alta Val d'Agri, Basilicata*) where the multidisciplinary survey was conducted by including, in addition to traditional topographical research techniques, geomorphological and paleoenvironmental analysis. This brought to the recognition for this area of the 'Area of Archaeological interest' title, with consequent protection under the 'Codice dei Beni Culturali e del Paesaggio'.

In conclusion, the book offers a good display of the latest methodological trends in the study of the ancient landscape, combining the point of view of specialists in ancient topography, archaeologists and experts in archeometric methodologies. An addition of extreme interest, in particular for those who could not attend the conference, could have been the inclusion of brief essays of the speech exposed during the days of the convention from the key speakers, hopefully this could be done in the next issues.