

Ancient Sanctuaries of the Area of Etruria and Lazio: Religious and Cultural Interference

Mario Torelli

2014 Balzan Prize for Classical Archaeology

Balzan GPC Adviser: Paolo Matthiae

Project Directors: Mario Torelli, Fausto Zevi, Lucio Fiorini

Main Researchers: Elisa Marroni, Sofia Cerrone, Andrea Di Miceli, Ilaria Manzini, Diego Ronchi, Fabrizio Santi, Luca Pulcinelli, Anna Maria Sgubini Moretti, Gilda Benedettini, Andrea Carini

Affiliated Institutions: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei; Università di Roma “La Sapienza”; Università di Perugia

Period: 2015-

Mario Torelli is *Professore emerito di Storia dell'arte greca e romana* at the Università di Cagliari and Università di Perugia. At the centre of his six-fold project is the religious interference which grew out of the different cultures in contact with each other between the proto-historic age and the Archaic and Classical periods.

1. The cult of the Dioskuri, from Sparta to Italy – Director: Professor Mario Torelli, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei – Researchers: Elisa Marroni, Sofia Cerrone

One line of research will be dedicated to a remarkable, undoubtedly multi-faceted case of religious interference between Greece and the Latin, Etruscan and Italic world: the cult of the Dioskuri, the archaeological and historical-religious aspects of which will be investigated, as will the area of origin, Laconia and Taranto. Italy's entrance into this non-Greek cult is undoubtedly the fruit of the intense relationship between the Etruscan and Latin world and the world of the Greek motherland and its colonies, which started between the eighth and the seventh century BCE and progressively expanded to all of the societies on the peninsula between the Archaic and Hellenistic ages. The underlying reasons are essentially still unknown.

An announcement was posted for an annual renewable grant for a doctoral researcher in the field of the history of religious cults, for a research project on the theme of the cult of the Dioskuri on the Italian peninsula from the Archaic to the Late Republican period. The position was awarded to Elisa Marroni, and started in October 2015. Another smaller grant for a young graduate for research on the theme of the cult of the Dioskuri in Sparta and in Taranto in relation to the main cults in Laconia was awarded to Sofia Cerrone, who began research in January 2016.

Whereas the work of Sofia Cerrone has just started, Elisa Marroni's analytic recording of literary, epigraphic, numismatic and archaeological evidence (monuments, sculpture, painting, ceramics, etc.) of the cult of the Dioskuri in Lazio, in Abruzzo, in Sardinia and in Calabria is vigorously underway. In the course of the first year, she plans to have finished her work for the Italian peninsula and for Sicily. Marroni's grant work is closely connected with other work, and together with Professor Mario Torelli, she has completed and published (Edizioni ETS, Pisa) the volume *L'obolo di Persefone. Immaginario e ritualità dei pinakes di Locri*, with the first results of the Balzan Prize research. Printed in January 2016, it is available to subscribers.

2. Gravisca. The Greek Sanctuary at the Port of Tarquinia – Director: Professor Lucio Fiorini, Università di Perugia – Researcher: Andrea Di Miceli

From the wide-ranging case history of this instance of interference between the Greek area and non-Greek cultures, another significant example is the justly renowned sanctuary-emporium of Gravisca at the port of Tarquinia, where between 590 and 480 BCE Greek merchants (mainly Greek-Orientalizing) traded with their Etruscan counterparts under the protection of divinities venerated in both their Greek and Etruscan aspects in dedications and inscriptions: two types of materials are planned for publication, to be included as the last two volumes in the final edition of the excavations, one on archaic painted ceramics of clear Ionic inspiration and the other on Greek and Etruscan transport amphorae. The study of these two types of ceramic materials may furnish useful diagnostic data on the precise provenance of both the Greek and the Etruscan merchants.

Andrea Di Miceli won the postdoctoral grant announced by the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei with funds made available by the International Balzan Foundation. He is at work on the theme of the classification of the ceramics found at the Greek Sanctuary of Gravisca, the execution of drawings of materials and digital illustration. His

fellowship lasted from August 2015 to March 2016, during which time he classified and prepared digital drawings of the Greek shipping amphorae found at Gravisca. Moreover, this served as preliminary work for the publication of the volume *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario greco 13. Le anfore da trasporto greche ed etrusche*, part of the series directed by Professor Mario Torelli and dedicated to the study of the artefacts which came to light during the excavations carried out in Gravisca in the 1970s. At the same time as this undertaking, an analysis of the painted ceramics discovered at Gravisca is also underway, with an eye toward the publication of a second volume in the abovementioned series. This will be published as part of the project in question, with the title *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario greco 7. Le ceramiche etrusche dipinte arcaiche*.

3. Ostia, the Temple of the Round Altar – Director: Professor Fausto Zevi, Università di Roma “La Sapienza” – Researcher: Ilaria Manzini

Another case of interference between the Etruscan-Latin world and the Greek world concerns the cult of Apollo. From the boundless evidence of the presence of the god of Delphi in Italy, one controversial case was chosen: a recent hypothesis attributes the temple of the Round Altar in Ostia to Apollo. The unpublished study of the materials discovered years ago in the excavations of the *cella* and the overall re-examination of the archaeological, epigraphic, topographical and monumental documentation are expected to lead to new data for a more certain identification with the divinity.

In order to carry out the approved project, an announcement was made for an eight-month fellowship, which was won by Ilaria Manzini, in the *dottore di ricerca* programme in Methodology of Archaeological Research at the Rome’s “La Sapienza” University. She began her work in August 2015. During the first six months of this grant, the following activities were carried out:

1. *Subdivision of the material by category, number and morphological classification.* Overall, 10,733 fragments of various categories were examined. For the most part, they were ceramics, but there were also architectural, plaster and stucco, glass, metal, and bone fragments. Wherever possible, they were compared with the reference typologies of related categories and with bibliography pertinent to other contexts of the excavation, with the purpose of placing them in a topological and chronological framework. A catalogue of the types of clay used for the different categories of ceramics was also produced. The data were compiled in an Excel table in order to make further elaboration easier (numbering the fragments by layer and by type).

2. Graphic and photographic documentation of the material.

Altogether, 504 drawings of the most significant material for the reconstruction of the chronology of the strata in question were carried out. They were then elaborated using Adobe Illustrator. Again, with the aim of producing documentation for a publication on the excavation, 232 photographs of various materials and 103 photographs of broken ceramics fragments (magnified 50 times through a microscope) were taken in order to document the different types of clay identified in the course of the study.

3. Editing text for the scientific publication on the excavation.

The drafting of a text to present the material in the general edition of the excavation was begun. The material is presented according to stratigraphic sequence, which is in turn organized by phase. Strata outside the sequence are presented in a separate section. The text is organized as follows: synthetic presentation of the strata for each phase, including a discussion of the chronological data revealed by the study of the material as a whole; hence, a presentation of the material by category, together with tables and diagrams.

In the months Manzini held the fellowship, she proceeded by working on comparisons and on drafting the text for publication, as well as organizing drawings in the tables. A continuation of her fellowship may be necessary before the final submission due to the imposing amount of material under examination.

The work, which the directors of the project are completely satisfied with, even if it does not seem that it will generate crucial elements as far as the most ancient phases of the city are concerned, will thus reach its primary objective: to ascertain the chronology of this important building in the abovementioned temple context, acknowledging it as one of the most significant among those which have come to light in Ostia in the Republican period, and the most significant for the complex, with its important references to the urban environment.

4. Circeo, the Latin Colony and its Sanctuaries – Director: Professor Mario Torelli, Accademic Nazionale dei Lincei – Researcher: Diego Ronchi

Yet another case concerns the cult of Circe, the goddess at the centre of one of the most important myths of the Odyssey. The sanctuary dedicated to her rose in the Latin colony of Circeo (393 BCE), which took its name from the mythical sorceress and from the promontory where the cult was located. The editing of a recently defended doctoral thesis on the centre and its many antiquities has shown that the traditional

identification of a colossal base supported by vaulted structures in *opera incerta* with a villa (the so-called Villa dei Quattro Venti) is unfounded. Both the data collected by the careful analysis of the structures and the discovery of a votive dedication from the Republican period on the inside of the complex suggest instead that this great monument can be identified as the sanctuary of Circe, and that the imposing architectural complex can be recognized as one of the “Sullan sanctuaries” of Lazio, like Fortuna Primigenia in Palestrina and Hercules Victor in Tivoli. Once the general framework of the archaeological district of Circeo has been analysed, this sanctuary will mainly be discussed in relation to what different sources say about the relationship with the place of the cult of Circe.

Diego Ronchi won the grant announced in July 2015, and it was agreed that he should draft a volume based on research for his *dottorato di ricerca* in archaeology at the Università di Roma “Tor Vergata” (2015). The volume should have nine chapters, four of which have already been written and approved by Torelli (chapter 1: the territorial context; chapter 2: historiography; chapter 3: analysis of the literary sources; chapter 4: the so-called Sanctuary of Circe in Circeo). The remaining five will be finished by the end of the fellowship period in the summer of 2016 (chapter 5: the Sanctuary of Monticchio; chapter 6: the so-called Villa of the Four Winds; chapter 7: the colony of the *Circeii*; chapter 8: access and the road system; chapter 9: conclusions: the acquisition of a great new “Sullan” sanctuary), and the volume will then be ready for print, with the provisional title *La colonia latina di Circei e il santuario di Circe*.

5. Lanuvio, the Sanctuary of Juno Sospita – Director: Fausto Zevi, Università di Roma “La Sapienza” – Researchers: Fabrizio Santi, Luca Pulcinelli

On the larger theme of the so-called Sullan sanctuaries, a link will be re-established with research on the sanctuary of Juno Sospita in Lanuvio, already begun three years ago under the direction of Prof. Fausto Zevi, who will continue to supervise the research, addressing the study of ceramic materials found in the excavation and expanding investigations to the area of the lower sanctuary of the late Republican and Imperial era. Together with Ronchi’s study, it will be possible to obtain not only more articulate information on the Proto-historic and Archaic phases, to which the birth of the cult is dated, but also more precise data on the plan in terms of the late Republican, monumentalizing phase of the sanctuary, which in fact connects the transformation of the sanctuary complex to the grandiose, scenographic architecture of the Late Hellenistic period.

According to plan, the project completed most of the analysis of the western half of the excavation area, corresponding to approximately the front half of the mid-republic temple. Thus far, the analysis carried out has led to the identification of elements not completely recognized until now. To that end, two fellowships were planned, for twelve and eighteen months respectively.

The twelve-month fellowship began in September 2015, and was assigned to Fabrizio Santi, *dottore di ricerca* in classical archaeology at Rome's La Sapienza University, and already known for his scholarly research on archaic temple architecture. The work of the first months of research concentrated essentially on the detailed analysis of the evidence from the 2006-2011 excavations, in order to produce a complete *regesta* of all of the structures, tombs and operations of various kinds identified in the temple of Juno Sospita. Then it proceeded with the drawing up of data sheets for the individual items (small buildings, tombs, pits, etc.) that, with the assistance of plans and indicators numbered according to the stratigraphic units under consideration, would make up a substantial, fundamental part of the final publication on the excavation. The positive or negative stratigraphic units that could not clearly be associated with any structure were also catalogued, because they can be inserted into a specific chronological phase and serve as *pendants* to the analysis of the materials of a late archaic temple wall, which did not have, as in the hypothesis put forward by Galieti, a second row of columns behind those of the façade, but a wall with an opening providing access to the cella. Hence this meant a substantial modification of the reconstructions presented to date. The editing of the data sheets came about through the use and collation of the general plan, the chart of phases, the photographs, the UUSS data sheets, the heights and the measurements. This made it possible to better understand, in some cases, the traces on the ground that have inexplicably remained there until now. The intention is to go on with work in this direction, ending the close examination of all of the evidence hitherto not analysed. From 11 to 13 December 2015 in Orvieto, Santi participated in the XXIII Convegno Internazionale di Studi sulla Storia e l'Archeologia dell'Etruria with a paper on the theme *Dalla Capanna al Palazzo. Edilizia abitativa nell'Italia preromana*.

The eighteen-month fellowship also began in September 2015, and was assigned to Luca Pulcinelli, *dottore di ricerca* in Etruscology at Rome's La Sapienza University. On the basis of drawings and inventories, he first re-examined the documentation, which in some cases was further expanded with new drawings. The next step was to prepare provisional typological tables in which the drawings of the artefacts were

organized by category and by form, thus also initiating a summary distinction of types. At the moment, this work is limited to material from the Orientalizing and Archaic periods, which in any event constitute the largest part of the artefacts under study. Over 350 diagnostic objects subdivided into various categories have been identified. After long reflection, and an examination of the excavation publications that in some way can be compared with the situation in Lanuvio, the study shifted to the artefacts according to prevalently typological and chronological criteria in line with the most recent trends in ceramics studies. Despite the risks resulting from the relative meagreness of the sample analysed, and from problems posed by the well-known events associated with the history of the site (pollution from modern interventions, much of the stratigraphic sequence previously removed but not documented), this set-up was preferred in the hopes of providing scholars with a useful tool to analyse a territory and a historical era that still need an overall framework. In consideration of these limits, an extremely simple, traditional (hence 'closed') structure was adopted, and a flexible subdivision by form (based as far as possible on dictionaries of terms), with the forms divided by type and progressive number. For the same reasons, variants were used as little as possible (indicated by a letter of the alphabet) as were further subdivisions. Thus a typological repertory was set up that could in the future serve as "contributions to a typology" rather than a typology in its own right (an 'open', articulated structure, in accordance with current orientations in the discipline). In any event, the typological analysis of the artefacts from Lanuvio complements but does not substitute a catalogue-type presentation for them, where under each entry there is space for more detailed information on the ceramic body and the surface treatment, but where above all, the associations between categories and different types within the strata and contexts under examination can be appreciated. In the data sheets in preparation, for every type, possible concordances with general existing typologies are indicated, as well as proposed chronology, bibliographic references and comparisons with excavation publications. For the comparisons, sacred and inhabited contexts contemporary with Rome and sites of *Latium vetus* were preferred where possible, and only secondarily with centres of southern Etruria, with special attention to evidence from the Veii area.

At present, even if bibliographical analysis and comparative research still have to be expanded and taken into greater depth, types related to Attic, black figure, Italo-geometric and Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics, to *bucchero*, to sandy white clay and red clay have found a definitive arrangement.

6. A Great Inter-ethnic Sanctuary: *Lucus Feroniae* and Its Votive Offerings – Director: Professor Mario Torelli, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei – Researchers: Anna Maria Sgubini Moretti, Gilda Benedettini, Andrea Carini

No less significant are a few known cases of interference that took place in the religious sphere between the various *ethne* on the Italian peninsula, and the characteristics of inter-ethnic sanctuaries have been recognized. Pertinent to the Etruria-Lazio area that is the subject of this research, one example of such a place of ethnical and cultural contact has been chosen from among these different places: the *Lucus Feroniae*, or “sacred woods” dedicated to the Sabine-Faliscan goddess Feronia. The sanctuary, where three cultures met (Latin, Faliscan-Capenate and Etruscan), has on several occasions revealed an enormous quantity of votive materials amassed after it was sacked by Hannibal. However, only those retrieved in the most recent excavation campaigns carried out by former Superintendent of the Villa Giulia, Anna Maria Sgubini Moretti, and her collaborator, Gilda Benedettini, will be studied. The extraordinary archaeological situation of the deposition of the votive objects, all of very high quality, will be presented by the excavators, while the research carried out by young Balzan research fellows will in fact concern the classification and analytic study of the ex-votos, whose provenance will constitute a fundamental indicator of the currents that used the sanctuary.

The winner of the first announced grant, Andrea Carini, started his work in January 2016. The project has only just begun, Carini and his research fellows Sgubini Moretti and Benedettini, have made progress in the classification of the immense amount of material in bronze, which, besides the substantial amount of ornamental objects, tableware and arms, contains very important V-IVth century BC votive figurines of worshippers.

Publications

- De Miceli, Andrea. *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario greco, 13. Le anfore da trasporto greche ed etrusche*. (forthcoming)
- Fiorini, Lucio. *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario greco, 7. Le ceramiche etrusche dipinte arcaiche* (planned for December 2017)
- Marrone, Elisa and Mario Torelli. *L'obolo di Persefone. Immaginario e ritualità dei pinakes di Locri*. MOUSAI. Laboratorio di archeologia e storia dell'arte 1. Pisa: ETS, 2016.
- Ronchi, Diego. *La colonia latina di Circei e il santuario di Circe*. (in progress)