

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

Mario Torelli

2014 Balzan Prize for Classical Archaeology

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Mario Torelli is Emeritus Professor of the History of Greek and Roman Art 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 Dioscuri, from Sparta to Italy

Director: Professor Mario Torelli, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei

Reseachers: Elisa Marroni, Sofia Cerrone

One line of research is dedicated to a remarkable, undoubtedly multi-faceted case of religious interference between Greece and the Latin, Etruscan and Italic world: the cult of the Dioscuri, the archaeological and historical-religious aspects of which are investigated in the area of origin as well as in Laconia and Taranto. Italy's entrance into this Greek cult is undoubtedly the fruit of the intense relationships 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 the societies on the peninsula between the Archaic and Hellenistic

ages. The underlying reasons for this impressive cultural and religious expansion 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 Dioscuri on the Italian peninsula from the Archaic to the Late Republican period. The position was awarded to Dr. Elisa Marroni, and began in October 2015. Dr. Marroni's annual grant was renewed for two more years, until September 2018. Another small grant for a young graduate for research on the theme of the cult of the Dioscuri in Sparta and in Taranto in relation to the main cults in Laconia was awarded to Sofia Cerrone, who began the research in January 2016 and concluded it in January 2017.

Upon conclusion of her work in September 2018, Elisa Marroni will present the results in the form of a book, to be published after an attentive control of the two parts of her research. One part is devoted to an unprecedented collection of the literary, epigraphic, numismatic and archaeological evidence concerning all the sanctuaries and forms of cult of the Twins known in ancient Italy from the Archaic to the Late Republican and Imperial period, was completed in September 2016. It will be published in a DVD attached to the study of the cult, and soon to be printed as a book. From the collection of data alone, a highly complex historical-religious panorama clearly emerges, with the cult of the Dioscuri appearing to be deeply rooted in many areas of Italy, ever since a very ancient period. The catalogue also clearly shows how strong a foothold the cult of Castor and Pollux had in Italy, and how widespread its diffusion was. Apart from in the main Magno-Grecian colonial centres in the most important cities of *Latium Vetus* (Rome, Ardea, *Tusculum*, Cori, *Lavinium*, Ostia) and Etruria, more remote areas were also concerned, like the Veneto area or Istria, or internal areas like Umbria or Samnium.

The work undertaken by Sofia Cerrone is finished. Cerrone produced a detailed scientific report on her research, from which it clearly emerged that in Taranto, a colony of Sparta, the funerary cult of the *Anakes*, the Dioskuri, hypostasis of the king (*anax* in the archaic form designating kings), is connected with the cult of Poseidon, whose only known religious centre in the West is Poseidonia. Sofia Cerrone has now started to work on the materials from the sanctuary of Capodifiume at Paestum, still unpublished, and is expected to complete the study of the material in March 2019. Furthermore, Professor Lucio Fiorini and Professor Mario Torelli decided to include in the research a very innovative publication of a book (*Riti e cerimonie per le dee nel*

santuario di Monte Li Santi – Le Rote, Narce) by Maria Anna De Lucia of the unique evidence of rituals gathered in her excavations in a sanctuary dedicated to various gods near Narce in the Faliscan territory. The work provides important comparisons with Gravisca's archaeological evidence concerning sacrifices and various religious ceremonies of Central Italy.

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 world and non-Greek cultures, another significant example is the rightly renowned sanctuary-emporium of Gravisca, the port of Tarquinia, where between 590 and 480 BCE Greek merchants (mainly from Ionia) 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 provide useful diagnostic data on the exact provenance of both the Greek and the Etruscan merchants.

Andrea Di Miceli, winner of the post-doctoral grant announced by the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei with funds made available by the Balzan Prize to Mario Torelli (announcement of 23 April 2015 – code 03_GRAVISCA_A; fellowship August 2015-March 2016) on the theme of the classification of the ceramics found at the Greek Sanctuary of Gravisca, execution of drawings of materials and digital illustration, has finished the classification, study and graphic documentation (including computer graphics) of amphora fragments from the so-called “South Sanctuary” at Gravisca, which were used both for the commerce of imported and local products. Together with Director Lucio Fiorini, Di Miceli wrote the text for the volume *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario Greco, 13. Le anfore da trasporto greche ed etrusche*. Dedicated to material found during the excavations of the 1970s, it will be published in the series edited by Mario Torelli.

In agreement with Mario Torelli, the Accademia dei Lincei has announced a post-doctoral grant from these funds, on the subject of Etrusco-Italic votive material of the

fourth to the second centuries BCE from the sanctuary of Gravisca. The grant was awarded to Camilla Manna, who also received an extension for an additional four months. Manna has finished the classification and related photographic documentation required by her research. Her work will be published in a volume entitled *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario Greco, 14. Il material votivo tardo*.

In agreement with Mario Torelli, Professor Lucio Fiorini used the technical instruments in the storerooms of the Museum of Tarquinia to organize the study and subsequent publication of two more volumes of the series *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario Greco*, namely *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario Greco, 3. Le ceramiche laconiche* entrusted to Dr. Francesca Boitani, former inspector responsible of the Italian Soprintendenza for Gravisca's excavations, and *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario Greco, 7. Le ceramiche etrusche dipinte arcaiche*, entrusted to Professor Lucio Fiorini. However, the recent drastic changes in the organization of the Italian Soprintendenze has caused a serious delay in the work of classification and study of the archaeological materials, and consequently on work on these last two volumes. Publication of the two volumes foreseen in the original project, *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario Greco, 13. Le anfore da trasporto greche ed etrusche*, and *Gravisca. Scavi nel santuario Greco, 14. Il materiale votivo tardo*, by Edipuglia in Bari awaits permission from the Lincei Administration.

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 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 that attributes the temple of the Round Altar in Ostia to Apollo. Research on Ostia during the Republican period has long been concerned with confirming the ancient archaeological documentation of the city with the literary sources. The Temple of the Round Altar, excavated 1969-79, is highly relevant to this debate, but has never been completely published. Thus, an announcement was made for an eight-month fellowship, which was won by Ilaria Manzini, in the *dottore di ricerca* programme of Methodology of Archaeological Research at Rome's "La Sapienza" University. Since August 2015, she has been able to complete the study of the archaeological material from the earlier excavations and

present a substantial draft for publication by the Accademia dei Lincei in *Notizie degli Scavi e scoperte di Antichità*.

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. 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 facilitating elaboration through numbering the fragments by layer and by type.

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 produced, in order to document the different types of clay identified in the course of the study.

The study has made it possible to determine the different phases of construction of this important monument, while at the same time recovering equally important elements on the plan and sacred topography of the Republican city. The richly illustrated 272-page manuscript, complete with maps, plans, elevations and charts, has been delivered to the editors of *Notizie degli Scavi*. Appendices document common types of ceramics in the catalogue, as well as the seals, clay types, stamps and other epigraphic data.

4. *Circei, the Latin Colony and its Sanctuaries*

Director: Professor Mario Torelli, Accademia 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 Circei (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 massive substructures in *opera incerta* as 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 Monte 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, winner of the Balzan grant announced in July 2015, carried out his research on the colony of *Circeii* centred on the themes of cult, roads and phases of settlement in the district, with the following results: the identification and attribution of a new sanctuary, a diachronic reading of the main monumental polarities in context, an entirely new reinterpretation of the evidence, the construction of an archaeological map with numerous unpublished sites, and the positioning of four *stationes* along the route of the Via Severiana.

The main line of research is linked to matters of cult in the colony. Ronchi’s recent investigations have identified a new sanctuary with powerful substructures, but its attribution and the circumstances of its construction have yet to be made clear. The investigations have made it possible not only to identify a cult of Venus at Circeo, but also to contextualize the origin and to attribute the previously identified sanctuary to this cult.

Another central aspect of this research is the diachronic reading of the territory as well as the diachronic reading and contextualization of the main cultural polarities scattered about the region. The history of the colony of *Circeii* was explored in greater depth, arriving at the interesting discovery of a colonial *deductio* by Caesar’s father precisely in the territory of this little centre. Thus a highly prolific, homogeneous constructive *facies* distributed throughout the entire area emerges, as well as the dedication to the divine ancestress of the *gens Iulia* of the sanctuary, up to now erroneously interpreted as a Roman republican Villa, the “Villa dei Quattro Venti”.

In order to define the phases of occupation of the territory, an archaeological map must be drawn. Derived from years of surveys and investigations on site, its most important result has been the positioning of the *stationes* of *Clostris*, *Ad Turres Albas*, *Cerceios* and *Ad Turres*, touchstones in the debate on the route of the Via Severiana.

Another result which came from the survey and analysis of the building techniques of the structures located along the road was a redefinition of the chronology of the *Fossa Augusta*. Unanimously the infrastructure leads back to the age of Nero; nevertheless the observation of the first phases of the canal structures, the materials found during the survey and other considerations favour dating at least this stretch of the infrastructure to the first years of the first century BCE. In this context, Nero's initiative recalled by Tacitus and Suetonius could have concerned the organization and conjunction of analogous infrastructures scattered along the route of cabotage.

Ronchi's research has been published in a volume entitled *La colonia di Circeii. Dal tardo arcaismo alla colonia di Cesare padre: santuari ed evidenze monumentali*.

5. Lanuvio, the Sanctuary of Juno Sospita

Director: Professor 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 Professor 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 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, spectacular architecture of the Late Hellenistic period. As planned, the project completed most of the analysis of the western half of the excavation area, corresponding to approximately the front half of the Mid-Republican 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 research was entrusted to post-doctorate candidates Luca Pulcinelli and Fabrizio Santi, and their fellowships were extended. Luca Pulcinelli's concerned the study of about 1,200 diagnostic objects subdivided into various classes, coming from around 180 stratigraphic units, and another body of around 10,000 classified artefacts. The material from the Iron Age still awaits definitive arrangement by a specialist who will

undertake the typological study of the whole body of artefacts, datable to the Iron Age and Archaic Period, with provenances from excavations carried out in the years 2006-2011 in the area of the Temple of Juno Sospita in Lanuvio, and their placement in the cultural context of *Latium Vetus*. The ceramic material was washed and only minimally restored; an inventory was begun. A general check on previous work was performed simultaneously with the execution of drawings of the diagnostic material, which was then mounted on temporary typological tables, with the drawings organized by class, form and type.

After a review of the excavation literature on Lanuvio, the study of the artefacts was set up following typological and chronological criteria, in line with the most recent trends in ceramic studies. In order to provide scholars with a research tool, a simple, traditional architectural typology easily subdivided by class and form was adopted, following ICCD (Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione) terminology where possible, thus ensuring the integrity of the information for this complete edition of the artefacts. Close attention was also devoted to the strata of provenance in order to construct a repertoire that can be consulted with ease, to facilitate the work for future studies in ceramics. While this typological analysis does not substitute a catalogue, it contains an extensive description and information on each entry, including bibliographical references and comparisons with excavation publications.

Fragments that could be reconstructed were also selected and the work was entrusted to professional restorers. The documentation resulted in 625 drawings; the work of digitizing and mounting them on panels has yet to be completed. Photographic documentation of the catalogued material consists of 460 stratigraphically organized digital photos with captions.

From the most significant and best preserved material, a selection was made with the aim of presenting it in the Museo Civico Lanuvino, which has also been responsible for curating the exhibition plan for the excavations of the temple of Juno Sospita. In the same sector, preparations for curating the exhibition *Sacra Nemora* (Villa Sforza Cesarini, Lanuvio) should also be mentioned, as should L. Pulcinelli's contributions to the Acts of the scholarly gathering held in Rome's "Tor Vergata" University on 26 and 27 October 2016 ("A sud di Roma. Itinerari per la conoscenza, la conservazione, la valorizzazione e la fruizione di siti archeologici e monumenti del Lazio"), publication forthcoming.

Fabrizio Santi, the second fellow, studied the finds from excavations carried out between 2006 and 2011 in the area of the temple of Juno Sospita in Lanuvio with the aim of publishing all of the excavations results. A thorough examination of existing literature on the subject, especially the bibliographical documentation from the first investigations on the site (over a century ago) by Angelo Pasqui, Goffredo Bendinelli and Alberto Galieti, and texts on protohistory in Latium and the archaic Latin world, is fundamental. Unfortunately, research carried out in the Archivio di Stato di Roma (Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza) and in the Archivio Centrale di Stato did not produce useful documentation on the area before and during Pasqui's excavations, but only part of the documentation related to the Savile excavations in the area of Villa Sforza Cesarini, corresponding to a portion of the sanctuary of Juno Sospita, and to work in the area of the temple of Hercules, which although of undisputed interest for ancient Lanuvio were of no use for the research project on the temple.

All of the evidence identified in the excavation area was examined – for that matter 'negative' – and then described analytically in data sheets. The drafting of these sheets required a complete revision of the photographic and graphic documentation, which was duly emended, as well as constant reflection on the elements that were most difficult to attribute, often leading to unexpected results or a better understanding of hitherto unexplained traces on the terrain, especially as regards small buildings (*capanne*). Besides these buildings, further discoveries were made in the area of the *cella* and left wing of the Mid-Republican temple. For the Late Archaic period, a better understanding of evidence around the foundations made it possible to better define the plan. Together with the study of the material, the analysis of all the structures constitutes the main part of this work on the excavation.

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. As for the Etruscan and Latin area, *Lucus Feroniae*, or "sacred woods (*lucus*)" dedicated to the Sabine-Faliscan goddess Feronia has been chosen as the most outstanding example of a cult place with intense ethnical and cultural contact between Latins, Etruscans and Faliscans.

Various excavations carried out in this sanctuary in the second half of last century have revealed an enormous quantity of votive materials amassed after it was sacked by Hannibal; they are virtually unpublished. 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, were studied, because of the accuracy and trustworthiness of the dig. 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 concerns the classification and analytic study of the ex-votos, whose provenance constitutes a fundamental indicator of the peoples that used the sanctuary.

The winner of the first announced grant, Andrea Carini, was confirmed for two more years and will finish his work on time on 1 January 2019. His task, the study of the pottery from the Moretti-Benedettini excavations, is almost concluded: he has cleaned, catalogued and carried out graphic and photographic documentation of the fine, plain and coarse pottery as well as amphorae. The artefacts were numbered and catalogued in a database with 12,012 records, including the main information on individual exemplars.

The successive phase of this work launched the study of one of the main classes of ceramics documented on the site: the black-figure pottery, which represents almost one third of all of the materials catalogued (3,865 out of 12,012). For this enormous group, 187 drawings were made, and the final phase of the study shows the different types of forms and possible variants. Although the work is still in its preliminary phases, it is possible to put forward a few hypotheses on the first results. Among the materials collected, there is a clear majority of open form vases (ca. 3,000 fragments) as opposed to closed form vases (ca. 200 fragments). A chronology for this class of ceramics can be constructed, which shows when the sanctuary was most intensely frequented (60% date to the end of the fourth and the beginning of the third century BCE; ca. 35% to the beginning to mid-third century; the remainder to the first half of the second century BCE). The analysis of the forms, as well as the clays and types of glaze used indicates local or regional production for most of the objects (at least 65%). A smaller group (ca. 35%) seems to have been produced in central or southern Italy, in northern Etruria, and in Attica. There is also a large group of exemplars of the "Petites Estampilles" group, including vase bases with decoration made from 72 different moulds, some of which were used frequently in central and southern-central Italy, while others are rare and difficult to place.

Re-processing this data has made it possible to formulate useful considerations on the reconstruction of one of the most important phases in the life of this sanctuary and to obtain information of primary importance for dating the stratigraphic levels recognized during the excavations.

Following the work of classification of the artefacts from Lucus Feroniae, carried out by Carini, both the metallic objects and the animal bones belonging to the sacrificed animals became the subject for two small fellowships. The winner of the fellowship for the metallic objects is Dr. Giovanni Ligabue, who completed his research in December 2017, while the fellow for the bone material, Dr. Nicoletta Perrone, is expected to conclude her assignment in December 2018.

All the materials studied by the various researchers will be assembled, checked and edited by the end of March 2019, to be processed and printed by the publisher by the end of 2019.

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