

The Roman Peasant Project 2009–2014

Excavating the Roman Rural Poor

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The Roman Peasant Project 2009–2014

Excavating the Roman Rural Poor

Volume 1

Edited by
Kim Bowes

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Contents

VOLUME 1

Author List	xii
Acknowledgments and Dedication	xiii
Ceramic References and Abbreviations	xv
List of Figures	xvii
List of Tables	xxvi

Part I: Old Questions and New Data

1	Introduction: Inventing Roman Peasants (KB)	1
1.1	Peasants: Definitions	3
1.2	Historiography I: Roman Peasant History and the Ancient Swerve	4
1.3	Historiography II: Archaeology and the Peasant Swerve	11
1.4	Project Questions and Hypotheses	13
1.5	Volume Outline	17
2	Methodologies (AA, KB, SCE, CG, MG, MM, JM, AMM, MS, EV)	19
2.1	Precepts (KB)	20
2.2	Archeology in Roman Social History (KB)	22
2.3	Methodologies	22
2.3.1	Field Survey (MG)	23
2.3.2	Site Selection (KB)	25
2.3.3	Geophysics (MG)	26
2.3.4	Excavation (KB, MS)	26
2.3.5	Ceramics Analysis (EV)	28
2.3.6	Faunal Analysis (MM)	29
2.3.7	Land Analysis (AA)	29
2.3.8	Movement (AA, CG)	30
2.3.9	Geological Materials (AA)	32
2.3.10	Botanical Analysis (AMM)	33
2.3.11	Small Finds Analysis (SCE)	34
2.4	Quantification (KB)	35

3	Land and Locale (AA, KB, CG, MG, ER)	36
3.1	Locale (KB, CG)	39
3.2	Land (AA)	40
3.3	Vegetation (ER)	49
3.4	Human Activity in a “Liminal” Landscape (KB)	53
3.5	Human Activity in the <i>Commune</i> of Cinigiano (KB, MG)	54
3.6	Characteristics of the Locale (AA, KB, MG)	61
3.7	Conclusions (KB)	63

Excavations

4	Pievina	64
4.1	Situation (AA, MG)	64
4.2	Remote Sensing (MG)	64
4.3	Excavation (KB)	66
4.4	Chronology (EV)	75
4.5	Ceramics (EV)	76
4.6	Faunal Materials (MM)	83
4.7	Geological Considerations, Land Units, and Evaluation (AA)	89
4.8	Botanical Materials	91
4.9	Coins (FM)	91
4.10	Small Finds (SCE)	97
4.11	Glass (SCE, ERR)	98
4.12	Building Materials (AA)	102
4.13	Discussion (KB)	104
5	Case Nuove	107
5.1	Situation (AA, CG, EV)	107
5.2	Remote Sensing (MG)	107
5.3	Excavation (KB)	109
5.4	Residue Analysis (AP, MACO)	117
5.5	Discussion of Excavation Results (KB)	119
5.6	Chronology (EV)	120
5.7	Ceramics (EV)	123
5.8	Faunal Materials (MM)	134
5.9	Botanical Materials (AMM, ER, RR)	138
5.10	Geological Considerations, Land Evaluation/Use, and Mobility (AA, CG, AM)	148
5.11	Coin Finds (FM)	153
5.12	Small Finds (SCE)	157
5.13	Glass (SCE, ERR)	159

5.14	Building Materials (AA)	161
5.15	Discussion (KB)	161
6	San Martino	165
6.1	Situation (AA, MG)	165
6.2	Remote Sensing (MG)	165
6.3	Excavation (KB)	165
6.4	Chronology (EV)	167
6.5	Ceramics (EV)	169
6.6	Faunal Materials (MM)	171
6.7	Land Units and Evaluation (AA)	176
6.8	Botanical Materials (AMM, ER, RR)	176
6.9	Coins/Small Finds (SCE)	182
6.10	Building Materials (AA)	182
6.11	Discussion (KB)	183
7	Poggio dell'Amore	187
7.1	Situation (AA, MG)	187
7.2	Remote Sensing (MG)	187
7.3	Excavation (KB)	187
7.4	Chronology (EV)	192
7.5	Ceramics (EV)	192
7.6	Faunal Materials (MM)	196
7.7	Geological Features, Land Units, and Land Evaluation (AA)	196
7.8	Botanical materials (AMM, ER, RR)	197
7.9	Coins/Small Finds (SCE)	203
7.10	Glass (SCE, ERR)	203
7.11	Building materials (AA)	203
7.12	Discussion (KB)	206
8	Colle Massari	208
8.1	Situation (AA, MG)	208
8.2	Remote Sensing (MG)	208
8.3	Excavation (KB)	210
8.4	Chronology (EV)	213
8.5	Ceramics (EV)	213
8.6	Faunal Materials (MM)	213
8.7	Botanical Materials (AAM, ER, RR)	214
8.8	Hydrological/Geological Contexts, Land Units, and Land Evaluation (AA)	218
8.9	Small Finds (SCE)	220
8.10	Building Materials (AA)	220
8.11	Discussion (KB)	220

9	Podere Terrato	223
9.1	Situation (AA, MG)	223
9.2	Remote Sensing (MG)	223
9.3	Excavation (KB)	223
9.4	Chronology (EV)	228
9.5	Ceramics (EV)	230
9.6	Faunal Materials (MM)	232
9.7	Hydrological/Geological Contexts, Land Units, and Land Evaluation (AA)	236
9.8	Botanical Materials (AAM, ER, RR)	238
9.9	Coins/Small Finds (SCE)	246
9.10	Glass (SCE, ERR)	248
9.11	Building Materials (AA)	248
9.12	Discussion (KB)	248
10	Marzuolo	252
10.1	Situation (AA, MG)	252
10.2	Remote Sensing (MG)	252
10.3	Excavation (KB, EV)	256
10.3.1	Area I	256
10.3.2	Area II	283
10.3.3	Area III	285
10.4	Ceramics (EV, KB)	293
10.5	Faunal Materials (MM)	309
10.6	Hydrological/Geological Contexts, Land Units, and Land Evaluation (AA)	321
10.7	Botanical (AMM, ER, RR)	323
10.8	Coins (SCE)	342
10.9	Small Finds (SCE)	349
10.10	Glass (SCE, ERR)	355
10.11	Building Materials (AA)	361
10.12	Discussion (KB)	361
11	Tombarelle	367
11.1	Situation (AA, MP)	367
11.2	Remote Sensing (MG)	367
11.3	Excavation (KB)	368
11.3.1	Area I: Phase 1? and 4	368
11.3.2	Area II: Phase 1	373
11.3.3	Area III: Phase 3	377
11.3.4	Area IV: Phase 2	384
11.4	Chronology (EV)	387
11.5	Ceramics (EV)	392

11.5.1	Phase 1 (Area II)	392
11.5.2	Phase 2 (Area IV)	402
11.5.3	Phase 3 (Area III)	405
11.5.4	Phase 4 (Area I)	420
11.6	Faunal Materials (MM)	420
11.7	Hydrological/Geological Contexts, Land Units, and Land Evaluation (AA)	426
11.8	Botanical Materials (AAM, AF, ER, RR)	429
11.9	Coins/Small Finds (SCE)	436
11.10	Building Materials (AA)	437
11.11	Discussion (KB)	437

VOLUME 2

Part II: A New Synthesis

12	Where Did Roman Peasants Live? Habitation and Distributed Habitation (KB, SCE, CG)	44X
12.1	Definitions: House and Households	
12.2	Peasant Houses and Households in Roman Central Italy	
12.3	The Spaces and Activities of the Roman Peasant Project	
12.4	Parsing the “Domestic”	
12.5	Correspondence Analysis	
12.6	Distributed Habitation and the Temporal Spectrum	
12.7	Distributed Habitation in Context	
12.8	Implications for the Roman Agrarian Landscape	
13	Agriculture and Land Use (AA, KB, MM, AMM, ER, RR)	
13.1	Land Suitability in the Project Area (AA)	
13.2	Land Use in the Project Area (AMM, ER)	
13.3	Plant Accumulation and Transport (AMM, RR)	
13.4	Land Use versus Land Suitability (AA, AMM)	
13.5	Land Use, Distributed Habitation, and Intensified Agriculture (KB)	
13.6	Crop rotation: Evidence and Implications (AAM, KB)	
13.7	Pasture, Mixed Farming and Its Implications (KB)	
13.8	Animal Husbandry Strategies (MM)	
13.9	Conclusions: An “Extensive-Intensive” Agricultural System (KB)	
14	Diet, Dining, and Subsistence (KB, MM, AMM, ER, RR, EV)	
14.1	Dietary Staples : grain, legumes, fruits and the missing vegetables (AMM, ER, RR)	
14.2	Meat in the Peasant Diet (MM)	
14.3	Cooking and Diet (MM, EV, KB)	
14.4	Dining and Diet (EV, KB)	

- 14.5 Subsistence, Surplus, and Storage (KB)
- 14.6 Conclusions (KB)
- 15 Non-Agricultural Production, Markets, and Trade (KB, EV, SCE, CG)
 - 15.1 Money (SCE)
 - 15.2 Production and Consumption inside the Locale (KB, EV)
 - 15.2.1 Origins of Goods: Imports and the Local
 - 15.2.2 Production and Consumption inside the Locale
 - 15.2.3 Production for the Locale and for Export: The Case of Marzuolo
 - 15.3 Geographies of Exchange (CG)
 - 15.4 Conclusions (KB)
- 16 Architecture and Recycling (KB)
 - 16.1 Materials and Form
 - 16.2 Recycling
 - 16.3 Negative Space: Installations and Yards
 - 16.4 Permanence and Friability
 - 16.5 Conclusions
- 17 Mobility (CG, AA)
 - 17.1 Landscapes and Movement
 - 17.2 Evidence for Mobility
 - 17.3 Landscapes, Ancient and Modern
 - 17.4 Establishing Parameters for Movement
 - 17.5 Scales of Movement
 - 17.5.1 Occasional Mobility
 - 17.5.2 Episodic Mobility
 - 17.5.3 Quotidian Mobility
 - 17.6 Conclusions: Meaning and Familiarity, Time and Place
- 18 Conclusions: The Roman Peasant Reframed (KB, CG)
 - 18.1 Landscapes
 - 18.2 Demographics
 - 18.3 Agriculture and Productivity
 - 18.4 Labor
 - 18.5 Land Tenure and Power
 - 18.6 City, Country, and Peasants
 - 18.7 Wealth and Poverty
 - 18.8 Peasants in Time and History
 - 18.9 Extendability
 - 18.10 Future

19 Appendices

- 19.1 Community Projects with the *Commune* of Cinigiano (MC, MG, KB)
- 19.2 Ceramics Classes, All Sites (EV)
 - 19.2a Ceramics Classes, All Sites (EV)
 - 19.2b Ceramics Form/Function, All Sites (EV)
- 19.3 Faunal Materials
 - 19.3a NISP Relative Frequencies for Consumed Taxa, All Sites (MM)
 - 19.3b Minimum Number of Individuals (=MNI) by Taxon, Age Category, and Site, All Sites (MM)
 - 19.3c Cattle – Relative Frequency by Skeletal Part Category, Calculated on the Basis of NISP and MNE, All Sites (MM)
 - 19.3d Sheep/Goat – Relative Frequency by Skeletal Part Category, Calculated on the Basis of NISP and MNE, All Sites (MM)
 - 19.3e Pig – Relative Frequency by Skeletal Part Category, Calculated on the Basis of NISP and MNE, All Sites (MM)
 - 19.3f Relative Frequency of UNID Counts by Site, All Sites (MM)
- 19.4 Pollen - Composite Pollen Table, All Sites/Phases in Chronological Order (AMM/ER)
- 19.5 Coins - Catalogue of Coins (SCE)
- 19.6 Small Finds
 - 19.6a Catalogue of Small Finds (SCE)
 - 19.6b Small Find Counts by Site (SCE)
 - 19.6c Iron Nail Dimensions (SCE)
 - 19.6d Copper Nail Dimensions (SCE)

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Dedication

This volume is dedicated to Antonia Arnoldus-Huyzendveld (d.2018), who died as the manuscript was being completed. Antonia's death robbed us of a respected colleague, admired mentor, and beloved friend. It also crystallized our realization that the intellectual trajectory of the project matched Antonia's own—and could be told in her own words. Those words, whether delivered with unapologetic directness in conversation, or meticulously rendered in her detailed annual reports, trace a journey from easy confidence in the objectivity of the tools we employed to (re)construct the lifeways and physical contexts of our peasants (“Yes, that’s it, I’m certain”); through dissatisfaction with the limitations of those tools to provide convincing answers (“all this keeps alternating my compass needle between skepticism and conviction”); to a re-embrace of their heuristic power in stimulating us to ask further, better questions. To repeat the mantra she adopted herself, over the course of the project those tools became “catalyzers to trigger ideas.”

But Antonia was not merely an encapsulation of our journey towards more nuanced understanding. She was, fundamentally, the connective tissue that bound us together. Her purposeful walk, her gruff affection, her swift and decisive embrace of novelty—all these qualities made the labors of each season just that little bit lighter, the heat of the sun and the brain-fracturing din of the town's nightly *calcetto* tournament a bit more bearable. Anti-authoritarian to a fault, she was the proud possessor of the only parking ticket ever known to have been handed out by a member of the carabinieri in the piazza of Cinigiano. Fiercely anti-papist, she regaled us with stories of the gestures she threw at the Vatican from the windows of her small home in Rocca del Papa. Intellectually demanding (some might say uncompromising) she was, also, unfailingly kind: to her collaborators, who marveled at her tireless energy; to her students, who loved her unreservedly; to the farmers, freeholders, tenants, and proprietors of the towns and *poderi* of Tuscany, across which she slowly (oh, so slowly!) drove her Fiat Panda. Above all, it is this kindness that will stay with us all.

Ceramic References and Abbreviations

Ceramic References:

Italic sigillata: Ettliger 1990; Pugliese Caratelli 1985

Experimental sigillata: See Chapter 10 in this volume, plus Ettliger 1990 and Pugliese Caratelli 1985

Black glazed ware: Morel 1981

African red slip ware: Hayes 1972; Bonifay 2004; Reynolds, Bonifay, and, Cau 2011

Camulodunum amphorae: Bertoldi 2012

Van der Werff amphorae: Van der Werff 1978; Bertoldi 2012

Spello amphorae: Panella 1989

Dressel amphorae: Martin-Kilcher 2003; Panella 2001; Bertoldi 2012

sigillata chiara tarda dell'Italia centro-settentrionale: Fontana 1998

vernice rossa interna: Aguarod Otal 1991

Color-coated ware (also termed *ingobbiate di rosso*): Fontana 1998; Fontana 2005; Vaccaro 2011; Vaccaro 2019; Menchelli and Pasquinucci 2012; Cantini 2009

Thin wall ware: Pugliese Caratelli 1985; Marabini Moeus 1973

Abbreviations:

Primary source abbreviations follow the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

Ceramic Abbreviations Used in Tables:

FW = Fine ware

KW = Kitchen ware

TW = Tableware

ARS = African red slip ware

BGW = Black glazed ware

CCW = Color-coated ware

SCT = *sigillata chiara tarda dell'Italia centro-settentrionale*

VRI = *vernice rossa interna*

AMPH = Amphora

IT SIG = Italic sigillata

ES = Experimental sigillata

CCW/CW = Color-coated ware/Coarse ware

CW/Amph = Coarse ware/Amphora

TK = Tunisian kitchen ware related to ARS

OD = *opus doliare*

AD = *Acroma depurata*

EVE = Estimate vessel equivalent

LPPI = Local Pastoral Pollen Indicators

NPP's = Non-pollen palynomorphs

SU = Stratigraphic unit

TU = Topographic unit

SF = Small find

MNI = Minimum number of individuals

MNE = Minimum number of skeletal elements

NISP = Number of identified specimens

UNID = Unidentified

RRC = Crawford, Michael. 1974. *Roman Republican Coinage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

RPC = Burnett, A. 1991. *Roman Provincial Coinage*. London: British Museum Press.

Figures: Volume 1

(color insert appears between pages 212 and 213)

1.1	Giovanni Bortolotti, <i>Capana alle Vergini</i> , 1921	2
1.2	Reconstruction of San Martino site	3*
2.1	Map of Ghisleni's field survey	24
2.2	Use of mechanical excavator during excavation of Marzuolo, 2012	27
2.3	Use of boom photography during excavation of San Martino, 2010	28
2.4	Pollen sampling from section, Case Nuove, 2010	34
3.1	Map showing location of project area	37
3.2	Map of project area, showing excavated sites and other topographic features	38
3.3	Map, overall geological features of study area	41
3.4	View of rolling Mio-Pliocene hills of central part of project area	42
3.5	View of western part of project area	42
3.6	View of eastern part of project area	43
3.7	View of "Piani Rossi" river terrace	43
3.8	View of Ombrone valley floor	44
3.9	Map, project area drainage network	44
3.10	View of Ombrone River south of Campagnatico	45
3.11	View of Ombrone River south of Paganico	46
3.12	View of Torrente Ribusieri	46
3.13	View of Torrente Trisolla	47
3.14	View of <i>fontone</i> , near Cinigiano	48
3.15	View of ground water spring west of Cinigiano	48
3.16	View of tilted strata of clay, sand, loam, and conglomerates, west of Cinigiano	48
3.17	Map of topographic zones in project area	49
3.18	View towards W over the "macigno" sandstone ridge	52
3.19	Land units map and abbreviated legend	<i>Color Figure</i>
3.20	Map of field survey results carried out by M. Ghisleni (2010)	56
3.21	Map of late Republican/early imperial-period sites from Ghisleni's survey	58
3.22	Map of high imperial sites from Ghisleni's survey	59
3.23	Map of late antique sites from Ghisleni's survey	60
4.1	Pievina, general topography and Roman sites	65
4.2	Pievina, survey surface data	65
4.3	Pievina, remote sensing results overlaid with excavated remains	66
4.4	Pievina, overall site plan	67
4.5	Pievina, aerial view with students for scale and showing major features	68
4.6	Pievina, plan, Phase 1	69

*Figure also appears in color insert.

4.7	Pievina, view of Structure 1 with drain	69
4.8	Pievina, aerial view of Structure 3, kiln	70
4.9	Pievina, plan, Phase 2.1	71
4.10	Pievina, aerial view of Structure 4	71
4.11	Pievina, reconstruction of Phase 2.1	72*
4.12	Pievina, view from E of drain near Structure 4	73
4.13	Pievina, view into drain from E	74
4.14	Pievina, plan, Phase 2.2	74
4.15	Pievina, comparative presence of functional classes of vessels from 2003 and 1006	79
4.16	Pievina, representative diagnostic ceramics from US 2003	80
4.17	Pievina, representative diagnostic ceramics from late antique contexts	81
4.18	Pievina, comparison between Pievina US 1006 with data from Roselle US 5147=5170 and 5141 (as %MNI)	84
4.19	Pievina, sketch of site showing major geological features	89
4.20	Pievina, land units map	<i>Color Figure</i>
4.21	Pievina, land evaluation map, hypothesis I	90
4.22	General map of valley morphology	91
4.23	Pievina, coins (SF 201001–SF 201010 + 201034)	94
4.24	Pievina, coins (SF 201011–SF 201037)	95
4.25	Pievina, metal small finds	99
4.26	Pievina, iron objects	99
4.27	Pievina, diagnostic glass fragments	100
4.28	Pievina, map showing nearest geological outcrops of building stones	103
5.1	Case Nuove, aerial view of hilltop before excavation (2007)	108
5.2	Case Nuove, general topography, Roman sites and springs	108
5.3	Case Nuove, remote sensing results, overlaid with excavated remains	109
5.4	Case Nuove, overall site plan	110
5.5	Case Nuove, view of <i>opus signinum</i> -lined tank (SU 5005)	111
5.6	Case Nuove, view of post holes south of <i>opus signinum</i> tank	111
5.7	Case Nuove, view of well (SU 5055)	112
5.8	Case Nuove, plan, treading surface (SU 5015)	113
5.9	Case Nuove, view of dump (SU 5062)	113
5.10	Case Nuove, dump (SU 5062), S section	114
5.11	Case Nuove, view of cistern (SU 5047)	115
5.12	Case Nuove, view of square pit (SU 5059)	116
5.13	Case Nuove, square pit, N section	116
5.14	Case Nuove, square pit, S section	117
5.15	Case Nuove, chromatogram of the total lipid extract of SU 5055 (tank)	118
5.16	Case Nuove, chromatogram of the hydrolysis in ethyl acetate of Dolium Sample 1	119
5.17	Case Nuove, chromatogram of the hydrolysis in ethyl acetate of Dolium Sample 2	119
5.18	Case Nuove, reconstruction of press installation in Phase 1	121*
5.19	Case Nuove, representative diagnostic ceramics from late Republican midden contexts (SU 5028, 5030, 5057)	126
5.20	Case Nuove, representative diagnostic ceramics from Phase 1.2	128
5.21	Case Nuove, representative diagnostic ceramics from Phase 1.2	129
5.22	Case Nuove, representative diagnostic ceramics from Phase 1.3	130
5.23	Case Nuove, representative diagnostic ceramics from Phase 1.3	131

*Figure also appears in color insert.

5.24	Case Nuove, representative diagnostic ceramics from Phase 2	132
5.25	Case Nuove, representative diagnostic ceramics from Phase 2	133
5.26	Case Nuove, map of locale showing geological and hydrological features	148
5.27	Case Nuove, geological map of site	149
5.28	Case Nuove + Colle Massari, land units map of locale	<i>Color Figure</i>
5.29	Case Nuove, land evaluation map of locale, hypothesis I	150
5.30	Case Nuove, land evaluation hypothesis of area around Case Nuove	151
5.31	Case Nuove, least cost path analysis for movement	152
5.32	Case Nuove, least cost path analysis for movement	<i>Color Figure</i>
5.33	Case Nuove, viewshed analysis	154
5.34	Case Nuove, coins	156
5.35	Case Nuove, small finds from SU 5014	158
5.36	Case Nuove, marble fragments (SF 505001) from SU 5014	159
5.37	Case Nuove, four hand mill fragments (SF 505005) from SU 5044	160
5.38	Case Nuove, representative diagnostic glass fragments	160
6.1	San Martino, general topography and Roman sites	166
6.2	San Martino, remote sensing results, overlaid with excavated remains	167
6.3	Aerial view of San Martino, taken with kite	168
6.4	San Martino, overall site plan	169
6.5	San Martino, section, also showing location of pollen samples	170
6.6	San Martino, representative diagnostic ceramics from US 4003, 4005, 4008, 4022, 4025	174
6.7	San Martino + Poggio dell'Amore locales, land units map	<i>Color Figure</i>
6.8	San Martino locale, land evaluation map, hypothesis I	177
6.9	San Martino locale, land evaluation map, hypothesis II	184
6.10	San Martino, plan showing various types of building stones	184
6.11	San Martino, map with nearest geological outcrops of building stones	185
6.12	Reconstruction of San Martino site	186*
7.1	Poggio dell'Amore, general topography and Roman sites	188
7.2	Poggio dell'Amore, view of excavations looking W	188
7.3	Poggio dell'Amore, remote sensing results, overlaid with excavated remains	189
7.4	Poggio dell'Amore, aerial view of site after excavation	189
7.5	Poggio dell'Amore, overall site plan	190
7.6	Poggio dell'Amore, SU 6013	191
7.7	Poggio dell'Amore, SU 6009	191
7.8	Poggio dell'Amore, representative diagnostic ceramics from SU 6001, 6002, 6004, 6005, 6011	195
7.9	Poggio dell'Amore, map of locale with geological and hydrological features	197
7.10	Poggio dell'Amore, view of <i>fontone</i> from the	198
7.11	Poggio dell'Amore, land evaluation map, hypothesis I	198
7.12	Poggio dell'Amore, land evaluation map, hypothesis II	199
7.13	Poggio dell'Amore, glass SF 406007 and SF 406001	205
7.14	Poggio dell'Amore, plan showing various types of building stones	205
7.15	Poggio dell'Amore, map with nearest geological outcrops of building stones	206
8.1	Colle Massari Romano, general topography, Roman sites and springs	209
8.2	Colle Massari Romano, location of scatters and trenches against aerial photograph	209
8.3	Colle Massari Romano, remote sensing results, overlaid with excavated remains, Trenches 3 and 7	210
8.4	Colle Massari Romano, overall view of site from S, showing SU 7005	211

8.5	Colle Massari Romano, plan of SU 7005	212
8.6	Colle Massari Romano, section through SU 7005	212
8.7	Colle Massari Romano, representative diagnostic ceramics from SU 7002, 7030, 7005	214
8.8	Colle Massari Romano, map of locale showing geological and hydrological features	219
8.9	Colle Massari Romano, view of N section of Trench 5	220*
8.10	Colle Massari Romano, land evaluation map, hypothesis I	221
9.1	Podere Terrato, general topography and Roman sites	224
9.2	Podere Terrato, surface scatters	224
9.3	Podere Terrato, remote sensing results for TU 404, overlaid with excavated remains	225
9.4	Podere Terrato, view of excavated site from the W	226
9.5	Podere Terrato, overall site plan	227
9.6	Podere Terrato, S section, "yard"	228
9.7	Podere Terrato, view E section of drain SU 8021 after excavation	229
9.8	Podere Terrato, Italic sigillata from SU 8001, 8002, 8003, 8005, 8026	233
9.9	Podere Terrato, Thin Walls and Coarse wares from SU 8001, 8003, 8004, 8005, 8007, 8010, 8022, 8026	234
9.10	Podere Terrato, Amphorae (AMPH), Coarse ware/Amphora (CW/AMPH), <i>Vernice rossa interna</i> (VRI) and Kitchen ware (KW) from SU 8001, 8003, 8007, 8010, 8021, 8026	235
9.11	Podere Terrato, map of locale with geological and hydrological features	237
9.12	Podere Terrato, view of landscape to W	237
9.13	Podere Terrato and Tombarelle, land units map	<i>Color Figure</i>
9.14	Podere Terrato, land evaluation map, hypothesis I	238
9.15	Podere Terrato, land evaluation map, hypothesis II	239
9.16	Podere Terrato, coin finds	247
9.17	Podere Terrato, fibulae of Aucissa type (SF 308003, 308010)	247
9.18	Podere Terrato, plan showing various types of building stones	249
9.19	Podere Terrato, map showing map showing nearest geological outcrops of building stones	250
10.1	Marzuolo, general topography and Roman sites	253
10.2	Marzuolo, map of the Catasto Leopoldino (ca. 1825)	253
10.3	Marzuolo, surface survey results (TU 100, 402, 403)	254
10.4	Marzuolo, surface survey results and gridded collection of TU 403	255
10.5	Marzuolo, remote sensing results for TU 100, including surface survey and magnetometry survey	255
10.6	Marzuolo, remote sensing results for TU 100, including surface survey and ARP survey at 0–0.5 m depth	256
10.7	Marzuolo, overall site plan with areas and trenches indicated	257
10.8	Marzuolo, plan, Area I, phased plan	258
10.9	Marzuolo, plan, Area I, church	259
10.10	Marzuolo, aerial photograph of church and Area I after 2012 season	260
10.11	Marzuolo, plan, Area I, Roman-period remains	261
10.12	Marzuolo, plan, Area I, Trench 1	262
10.13	Marzuolo, view of SU 10023, detail of terracotta bricks	263
10.14	Marzuolo, Area I, Trench 1, SU 10093	263
10.15	Marzuolo, Area I, Trench 1, Italic sigillata from SU 10093	246*
10.16	Marzuolo, Area I, Trench 1, cleaned Italic sigillata from SU 10093	<i>Color Figure</i>
10.17	Marzuolo, plan of Trench 2	266

*Figure also appears in color insert.

10.18	Marzuolo, view of terracotta bricks (SU 10066) in Trench 2	267
10.19	Marzuolo, Area I, Trench 3	268
10.20	Marzuolo, view from S, Trench 3	262
10.21	Marzuolo, N section, Trench 3, including location of pollen samples	269
10.22	Marzuolo, E section, Trench 3	269
10.23	Marzuolo, plan, Trenches 4–7	270
10.24	Marzuolo, orthophoto of Trenches 4–7	271
10.25	Marzuolo, E section, Trench 4, Room 1, including pollen samples	272
10.26	Marzuolo, view, Room 1, Feature 1	273
10.27	Marzuolo, view, Room 1, from S, after removal of Feature 1	273
10.28	Marzuolo, E section, Trench 4, Room 1, showing, SU 10086 and drain	274
10.29	Marzuolo, view from S, Trench 5, Room 1	274
10.30	Marzuolo, S section, Trench 5	275
10.31	Marzuolo, view from S, Trench 6, Room 2	275
10.32	Marzuolo, plan, Trench 7, Room 3	276
10.33	Marzuolo, S section, Trench 7, Room 3	277
10.34	Marzuolo, plan of Van Oyen and Vennarucci excavations, 2018	282
10.35	Marzuolo, plan, Area II, Structure 3	284
10.36	Marzuolo, orthophoto, Area II, Structure 3	285
10.37	Marzuolo, plan, Area III, Structure 4 with location of pollen samples	287
10.38	Marzuolo, aerial photo, Area III after excavations in 2012	288
10.39	Marzuolo, plans, kiln SU 11020 and 11052	289
10.40	Marzuolo, view from W, kiln SU 11020	289
10.41	Marzuolo, view from N, kiln SU 11052 with kiln SU 11020	290
10.42	Marzuolo, fragments of perforated muffle(?) fragments from SU 11008, 11009, 11048	290
10.43	Marzuolo, drawing, <i>tubuli</i> fragments from SU 11012/11040 and 11048	291
10.44	Marzuolo, fragments of local experimental sigillata with dotted pattern	291
10.45	Marzuolo, plan of kiln SU 12013	292
10.46	Marzuolo, view from the N, kiln SU 12013	292
10.47	Marzuolo, Phase 1, selected experimental sigillata (ES) of local production and imported (Area III)	297
10.48	Map showing Marzuolo wares (both experimental and Italic sigillata) as distributed in the project area	300
10.49	Marzuolo Phase 1, amphorae of local/sub-regional production and imported (Area III)	301
10.50	Marzuolo, Phase 2, selection of local Italic sigillata (IT SIG) dated 50–70 AD from deposit US 10093	302
10.51	Marzuolo, Phase 2, details of the IT SIG deposit (50–70 AD) US 10093	<i>Color Figure</i>
10.52	Marzuolo, Phase 2, selection of Color-coated ware (CCW), thin walls (TW), coarse ware (CW) and kitchen ware (KW)	305
10.53	Marzuolo, Phase 2, local/sub-regional and extra-regional amphorae	307
10.54	Marzuolo, Phase 3, African red slip and imitations, CCW and TW wares	310
10.55	Marzuolo, Phase 3, lamps, coarse wares, kitchen wares	311
10.56	Marzuolo, Phase 3, amphorae (AMPH)	312
10.57	Marzuolo, Phase 4, medieval ceramics	313
10.58	Marzuolo, topographic detail of the site with well/cistern	322
10.59	Marzuolo, map of locale: possible clay and fine sand collection points, and other sites with IT SIG (not necessarily produced at Marzuolo)	322
10.60	Marzuolo locale, land units map	<i>Color Figure</i>

10.61	Marzuolo locale, land evaluation map, hypothesis I	323
10.62	Marzuolo, coins (SF 210001–212004)	343
10.63	Marzuolo, coins (SF 212005–214069)	344
10.64	Marzuolo, Area III plan showing coin finds	345
10.65	Marzuolo, drawing, iron anvils (SF 310145, 310146) from Area I	350
10.66	Marzuolo, photo, iron anvils (SF 310145, 310146) from Area I	350
10.67	Marzuolo, photo and drawing of copper alloy handle (SF 310131), Area I	351
10.68	Marzuolo, photo of copper pitcher (SF 310144) from Area I	351
10.69	Marzuolo, stone tesserae	352
10.70	Marzuolo, copper alloy objects	353
10.71	Marzuolo, bone pins (SF 511014, 514014, 514015, 514016, 514026, 514064, 514072, 514019, 514025)	353
10.72	Marzuolo, various small finds: sword (SF 314068); awl (310512); die (514032); gaming token (514020)	354
10.73	Marzuolo, loom weights (SF 511005; 512008, 512009, 512010)	355
10.74	Marzuolo, representative glass fragments (SF 410001–410514)	356
10.75	Marzuolo, representative glass fragments (SF 411046–414082)	357
10.76	Marzuolo, Area II, plan showing various types of building stones	362
10.77	Marzuolo, map showing nearest outcrops of building stones	362
11.1	Tombarelle, general topography and Roman sites	368
11.2	Tombarelle, surface survey overlaid with excavation Areas	369
11.3	Tombarelle, plan of cistern (SU 16002)	370
11.4	Tombarelle, view of cistern from W (SU 16002)	371
11.5	Tombarelle, section of cistern (SU 16002)	371
11.6	Tombarelle, 3-D photoscan of cistern (SU 16002)	372
11.7	Tombarelle, Area I, Trench 2 inside cistern (SU 16002) showing <i>opus signinum</i> lining	373
11.8	Tombarelle, Area II, overall plan	374
11.9	Tombarelle, Area II, plan, excavated remains	375
11.10	Tombarelle Area II, section, including location of pollen samples	376
11.11	Tombarelle, Area II, view from W, showing edges of SU 19014	376
11.12	Tombarelle, Area III, overall plan	378
11.13	Tombarelle, Area III, aerial photoscan model	379
11.14	Tombarelle, Area III, view of paved area from W	380
11.15	Tombarelle, Area III, N section of paved area, also showing location of pollen samples	380
11.16	Tombarelle, Area III, aerial photoscan model, paved area	381
11.17	Tombarelle, Area III, S elevation photoscan model, wall SU 17021/17010	381
11.18	Tombarelle, Area III, W elevation photoscan model, wall SU 17012	382
11.19	Tombarelle, Area III, aerial photoscan model view of pit SU 17005	383
11.20	Tombarelle, Area III, view of fills SU 17002 and 17019	384
11.21	Tombarelle, Area IV, plan	385
11.22	Tombarelle, Area IV, W section, Trench 1	385
11.23	Tombarelle, Area IV, E Section, Trench 2	386
11.24	Tombarelle, Area IV, view of Trench 2 from S	386
11.25	Tombarelle, Area II, Phase 1, Black glazed ware (BGW)	389
11.26	Tombarelle, Area II, Phase 1, experimental sigillata, Italic sigillata, Thin wall ware, lamp, ceramic building materials, and possible wasters	390
11.27	Tombarelle, Area II, Phase 1, amphorae (AMPH)	396
11.28	Tombarelle, Area II, Phase 1, Kitchen wares (KW)	397

11.29	Tombarelle, Area II, Phase 1, Kitchen wares (KW)	398
11.30	Tombarelle, Area II, Phase 1, Coarse ware (CW) jars and jugs	399
11.31	Tombarelle, Area II, Phase 1, Coarse ware (CW) jugs	400
11.32	Tombarelle, Area II, Phase 1, Coarse ware (CW) bottles and open forms	401
11.33	Tombarelle, Area IV, Phase 2, <i>Italic sigillata</i> (IT SIG), amphorae (AMPH), thin walls (TW), Coarse ware (CW)	403
11.34	Tombarelle, Area IV, Phase 2, Kitchen ware (KW) and <i>vernice rossa interna</i> (VRI)	404
11.35	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, Color-coated ware (CCW) and Color-coated ware/Coarse ware (CCW/CW)	406
11.36	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, Color-coated ware dishes, imitations of ARS	407
11.37	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, Color-coated (CCW) and Coarse ware (CW) bowls, beakers and lids	408
11.38	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, Color-coated (CCW) and Coarse ware (CW) basins	409
11.39	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, Color-coated (CCW) basins	410
11.40	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, Color-coated (CCW) and Coarse ware (CW) jugs and bottles/flasks	411
11.41	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, amphorae, Color-coated (CCW) and Coarse ware (CW) table jars	412
11.42	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, overfired Color-coated ware (CCW)	413
11.43	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, <i>opus doliare</i> (OD), Coarse ware (CW) food processing and measuring cups	414
11.44	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, cooking pots	415
11.45	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, Kitchen ware (KW)	416
11.46	Tombarelle, Area III, Phase 3, kiln spacers	419
11.47	Tombarelle, Area I, Phase 4, representative diagnostic ceramics	421
11.48	Tombarelle, geological map of site	427
11.49	Tombarelle, map of locale showing geological and hydrological features	428
11.50	Tombarelle, land evaluation map, hypothesis I	429
11.51	Tombarelle, land evaluation map, hypothesis II	430
11.52	Tombarelle, SF 519001, 519019, 519022, 519024, stone scrapers, all from Area II Phase 2	436
11.53	Tombarelle, SF 517009, photo of two joining fragments of ceramic mold	437
11.54	Tombarelle, SF 517014, large fragment of tile with stamp in Etruscan	438
11.55	Tombarelle, SF 517014, detail of stamp	438
11.56	Tombarelle, Area I, plan of cistern (SU 16002) with building stones	439
11.57	Tombarelle, Area III, plan of walls of paved area, with building stones	440
11.58	Tombarelle, map showing nearest outcrops of building stones	441

Tables: Volume 1

2.1	Tables of classes used in the legend of the Land Units map	31
3.1	Complete legend of the Land Units Map of the <i>commune</i> of Cinigiano	50
4.1	Pievina, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/dates	75
4.2	Pievina, ceramic classes, all phases, by MNI and %MNI diagnostics	77
4.3	Pievina, ceramic form/functions, all phases, by MNI and % of MNI diagnostics	78
4.4	Pievina, ceramic classes from Pievina SU 1006 (mid- to late 5th c.) compared with the data from Roselle SU 5147=5170 and 5141 (late 4th–5th c.)	85
4.5	Pievina, faunal remains, NISP and MNI values by temporal phase	86
4.6	Pievina, faunal remains, UNID counts by temporal phase	87
4.7	Pievina, faunal remains, % NISP and MNI values by temporal phase for principal domestic meat taxa	87
4.8	Pievina, NISP and MNE frequency of skeletal part categories for cattle, sheep/goat and pig for Phases 2.1 and 2.2	87
4.9	Pievina, coin finds by stratigraphic context, organized chronologically	92
4.10	Pievina, quantification of glass vessels by fragment count, weight, and estimated vessel equivalent by depositional phase	101
4.11	Pievina, chronological distribution of glass vessels and their depositional phase	101
5.1	Case Nuove, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/dates	122
5.2	Case Nuove, ceramic classes, all phases, by MNI and %MNI diagnostics	124
5.3	Case Nuove, ceramic forms/functions, all phases, by MNI and %MNI diagnostics	124
5.4	Case Nuove, faunal remains, NISP and MNI values by temporal phase	135
5.5	Case Nuove, faunal remains, UNID counts by temporal phase	136
5.6	Case Nuove, faunal remains, % NISP and MNI values by temporal phase for principal domestic meat taxa	136
5.7	Case Nuove, faunal remains, NISP and MNE frequency of skeletal part categories for sheep/goat and pig for Phase 1.2	137
5.8	Case Nuove, pollen analysis	139
5.9	Case Nuove, non-pollen palynomorphs and microcharcoals analysis	144
5.10	Case Nuove, macrocharcoal analysis	145
5.11	Case Nuove, macroremains analysis	146
5.12	Case Nuove, coins by stratigraphic context, organized chronologically	155
5.13	Case Nuove, quantification of glass vessels by fragment count, weight, and estimated vessel equivalent by depositional phase	161
6.1	San Martino, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/dates	171
6.2	San Martino, ceramic classes by MNI and % of MNI diagnostics	172

6.3	San Martino, ceramic forms/functions by MNI and %MNI diagnostics	172
6.4	San Martino, tile fragments, forms, weights and quantities	175
6.5	San Martino, faunal remains	175
6.6	San Martino, pollen analysis	178
6.7	San Martino, non-pollen palynomorph and microcharcoal analysis	181
6.8	San Martino, macroremains analysis	183
7.1	Poggio dell'Amore, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/ dates	192
7.2	Poggio dell'Amore, ceramic classes by MNI and % of MNI	193
7.3	Poggio dell'Amore, ceramic forms/functions by MNI and %MNI	193
7.4	Poggio dell'Amore, tile fragments, forms, weights and quantities	196
7.5	Poggio dell'Amore, faunal remains	196
7.6	Poggio dell'Amore, pollen analysis	200
7.7	Poggio dell'Amore, non-pollen palynomorph and microcharcoal analysis	202
7.8	Poggio dell'Amore, macroremains analysis	204
8.1	Colle Massari Romano, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/dates	213
8.2	Colle Massari Romano, ceramic classes by MNI and %MNI of diagnostics	213
8.3	Colle Massari Romano, pollen analysis	215
8.4	Colle Massari Romano, non-pollen palynomorph and microcharcoal analysis	218
9.1	Podere Terrato, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/ dates	229
9.2	Podere Terrato, ceramic classes ceramic classes by MNI and %MNI	230
9.3	Podere Terrato, ceramic formal/functional classes by MNI and %MNI	231
9.4	Podere Terrato, faunal remains	236
9.5	Podere Terrato, pollen analysis	240
9.6	Podere Terrato, non-pollen palynomorph and microcharcoal analysis	244
9.7	Podere Terrato, macroremains analysis	245
10.1	Marzuolo, Area I, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/ dates	278
10.2	Marzuolo, Area III, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/ dates	294
10.3	Marzuolo, ceramic classes, all phases, by MNI and %MNI of diagnostics	296
10.4	Marzuolo, ceramic forms/functions, all phases, by MNI and %MNI of diagnostics	298
10.5	Marzuolo, list of the Italic sigillata stamps	303
10.6	Marzuolo, Phase 2 amphorae, by type and MNI and % of amphorae	306
10.7	Marzuolo, EVE calculations, Phase 3, Areas I and III, with other project sites for comparison	308
10.8	Marzuolo, Phase 3 amphorae, Area I and Area III, by type and MNI and %MNI of amphorae	308
10.9	Marzuolo, faunal remains, NISP and MNI values by temporal phase	314
10.10	Marzuolo, faunal remains, UNID counts by temporal phase	315
10.11	Marzuolo, faunal remains, NISP and MNE frequency of skeletal part categories for cattle, sheep/goat and pig	316
10.12	Marzuolo, % NISP and MNI of skeletal part categories for cattle, sheep/goat, and pig	316
10.13	Marzuolo, faunal remains, Phase 3, Area I, NISP and MNI values	317
10.14	Marzuolo, faunal remains, Phase 3, Area I, UNID counts	317
10.15	Marzuolo, faunal remains, Phase 3, Area II, NISP and MNI values	317

10.16	Marzuolo, faunal remains, Phase 3, Area II, UNID counts	317
10.17	Marzuolo, faunal remains, Phase 3, Area III, NISP and MNI values	318
10.18	Marzuolo, faunal remains, Phase 3, Area III, UNID counts	318
10.19	Marzuolo, pollen analysis, all areas, all phases	324
10.20	Marzuolo, non-pollen palynomorph and microcharcoal analysis, all areas, all phases	332
10.21	Marzuolo, macrocharcoal analysis, all phases	332
10.22	Marzuolo, macroremains analysis, all areas, all phases	334
10.23	Marzuolo, coin finds by stratigraphic context, within which organized chronologically	346
10.24	Marzuolo, quantification of glass vessels by fragment count, weight, and estimated vessel equivalent by depositional phase	358
11.1	Tombarelle, Area I, Phase 1 and 4 major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/dates	387
11.2	Tombarelle, Phase 1, Area II, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/dates	388
11.3	Tombarelle Phase 2, Area IV major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/dates	391
11.4	Tombarelle, Phase 3, Area III, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/dates	391
11.5	Tombarelle, ceramic classes, Phases 1–3, by MNI and %MNI of diagnostics	393
11.6	Tombarelle, ceramic forms/functions, Phases 1–3, by MNI and %MNI of diagnostics	394
11.7	Tombarelle, Phase 3, EVE calculations for Area III ceramics, with project sites for comparison	418
11.8	Tombarelle, Phase 3, quality of the red coatings in the Color-coated ware	418
11.9	Tombarelle, Phase 4, ceramic classes	419
11.10	Tombarelle, faunal remains, NISP and MNI values by temporal phase	423
11.11	Tombarelle, faunal remains, UNID counts by temporal phase	424
11.12	Tombarelle, NISP and MNE frequency of skeletal part categories for cattle, sheep/goat and pig	425
11.13	Tombarelle, % NISP and MNI for cattle, sheep/goat and pig	425
11.14	Tombarelle, pollen analysis	431
11.15	Tombarelle, non-pollen palynomorph analysis	433
11.16	Tombarelle, macroremains analysis	434

of charcoal made this problematic. It is also possible that the irregular cut represents two successive, adjacent postholes, with their stone props partially preserved. The cooking pots become hard to explain unless they were used as infill.

7.4 Chronology (EV)

While badly damaged, the site (Table 7.1) produced a small, but consistent collection of ceramics (see Tables 7.2–7.3). The significant quantity of Italic sigillata and the absence of Black glazed ware would point to a generic date between the last decades of the 1st c. BC and the 1st c. AD. However, the possibility of identifying most of the Italic sigillata types also allows a more precise chronology. According to the presence of one bowl (Consp. 14) (Fig. 7.8.6) the site may have started in the Augustan period although the majority of Italic sigillata types with later dates (Consp. 3, 34, and 26) (Fig. 7.8.1, 2, 4–5, 7–9) from both SU 6001 and the filling of the robber trench (SU 6002) suggests a more likely date in the first half of the 1st c. AD. Two Conspectus 34, one Conspectus 3, and the only Conspectus 26 show fabrics which look similar to that typical of Marzuolo's production phase of Italic sigillata dated 50–70 AD (see Ch. 10). These three types are all part of the repertoire produced at Marzuolo in Area I (SU 10093). More thin section analysis would be necessary to ascertain the actual provenance of these vessels from Marzuolo and so far it can be only tentative, however, the presence of these wares would date the latest materials to ca. 70 AD. As with San Martino, below, we cannot know if the site was used for the whole of the range suggested by the ceramics (i.e., ca. 30 BC–70 AD) or only a portion of

that period. At Poggio dell'Amore, the stratigraphic record was too damaged to be useful in this regard.

7.5 Ceramics (EV)

Excavations at Poggio dell'Amore recovered very few ceramics—a total of 133 sherds among which were a relatively high number of diagnostics (41) for a total of 21 MNI (Tables 7.2 and 7.3 and Fig. 7.8). Diversity among this assemblage was modest with some five different classes and 10 different forms.

The single largest class of ceramics were Italic sigillata (42.8%), an unusually high proportion even among our late Republican sites where fine wares are generally prevalent. Like nearby San Martino, in which a variety of fine wares were likewise an important component of the total ceramics, this points to a certain behavioral complexity around food consumption and in some cases, possible integration into regional fine ware distribution systems. However, as noted above, at least four Italic sigillata vessels have a fabric macroscopically similar to the materials produced at nearby Marzuolo (see Ch. 10) in the period 50–70 AD. Italic sigillata forms are, as is typical for our sites, dominated by cups (Consp. 34, 26.2, and 34), bowls (Consp. 14) (Fig. 7.8.6), and above all dishes (Consp. 3 and 34) (Fig. 7.8.1, 4–5, 7–9).

Coarse (19.04%) and kitchen (28.57%) wares are less prevalent, although the quantity of kitchen wares is relatively high. These included one Tyrrhenian Dressel 2/4 spike (Fig. 7.8.10) and an unidentifiable table amphora (Fig. 7.8.17).

As is typical of late Republican sites in the project, tablewares, some 61.88% of the assemblage, dominated over kitchen wares (28.56%). As is also

Table 7.1 Poggio dell'Amore, major excavated contexts with diagnostic ceramics/dates (EV).

Context	Chronological Information: Pottery	Total MNI	Possible date	Reliability
6001	Italic sigillata: Consp. 34 (1 MNI); Consp. 26.2 (1 MNI)	7	first half of the 1st c. AD	Medium: association with top soil
6002	Italic sigillata: Consp. 14 (1 MNI); Consp. 3 (3 MNI); Consp. 34 (2 MNI); KW pot (2 MNI), lid (1 MNI) bowl (1 MNI)	10	late Tiberian-Flavian	Good
6004	Amphora: Dressel 2/4.	1	late 1st. c. BC–2nd c. AD	Poor: small MNI
6005	CW <i>tegame</i> ; jar	2	1st. C. AD	Good

Table 7.2 Poggio dell'Amore, ceramic classes by MNI and % of MNI (EV).

Ware	Poggio dell'Amore (41 diagnostics/21 MNI)
BGW	0 or 0%
Italic sigillata	9 or 42.8%
Thin walls	0 or 0%
Experimental sigillata	0 or 0%
ARS	0 or 0%
Color-coated ware	0 or 0%
SCT	0 or 0%
Late Italic sigillata	0 or 0%
Coarse ware	4 or 19.04%
Kitchen ware	6 or 28.57%
Tunisian kitchen ware	0 or 0%
Amphorae	1 or 4.76%
Coarse ware/amphorae	1 or 4.76%
VRI	0 or 0%
Dolia	0 or 0%
Lamps	0 or 0%
Loomweights	0 or 0%
Amphora stopper	0 or 0%
Other ware (<i>tubuli?</i> and kiln spacers)	0 or 0%
Thin walls/coarse ware	0 or 0%
Color-coated ware/coarse ware	0 or 0%

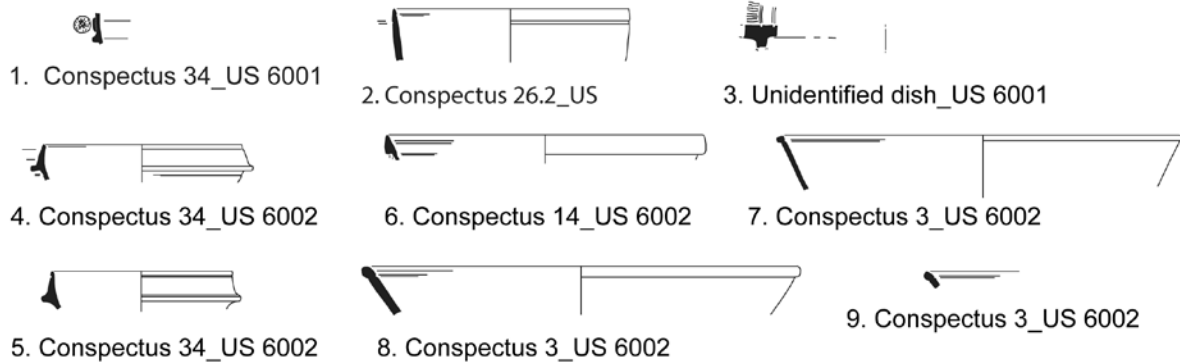
Table 7.3 Poggio dell'Amore, ceramic forms/functions by MNI and % of MNI (EV).

FORMS	Poggio dell'Amore (41 diagnostics/21 MNI)
KITCHEN (includes KW and VRI)	6 or 28.56%
Generic closed forms for kitchen	0
Cooking pots	2 or 9.52%
Cooking jugs	0
Generic open forms for kitchen	0
Casseroles	2 or 9.52%
Cooking bowls	1 or 4.76%
Frying pans/ <i>tegami</i>	0
Bread-baking pans/ <i>testi</i>	0
<i>Clibani</i>	0
Cooking lids	1 or 4.76%

Table 7.3 cont'd Poggio dell'Amore, ceramic forms/functions by MNI and % of MNI (EV).

FORMS	Poggio dell'Amore (41 diagnostics/21 MNI)
DINING/STORING (includes CW, FW and CCW)	13 or 61.88%
Generic closed forms for table and storage	0
Jugs	3 or 14.28%
Jars	1 or 4.76%
Jugs/jars	0
Beakers	0
Small table pot	0
Bottles	0
Flasks	0
Chalice	0
Flanged-Bowls	0
Generic opens forms for table	1 or 4.76%
Bowls	0
Cups	5 or 23.8%
Dishes	3 or 14.28%
Bowls/Dishes	0
Basins	0
Lids	0
Small vessels for sauces or perfumes(?)	0
Uncertain (food processing?)	0
Mortaria	0
TRANSPORT and STORAGE	2 or 9.52%
Amphora stoppers	0
Amphorae	2 or 9.52%
Dolia	0
Table amph/jar	0
LIGHTING	0
Lamps	0
OTHER "FUNCTIONAL" CERAMICS	0
Loomweights	0
Drains	0
Unguentaria	0
Kiln spacers	0
Molds	0
<i>Tubuli</i>	0
RESIDUALS	0
UNCERTAIN	0

Italic sigillata (IT SIG)



Amphorae (AMPH)



10. Dressel 2/4 (Amph)_US 6004

Coarse ware/Amphora (CW/AMPH)



17. CW/AMPH_US 6011



Kitchen ware (KW)



11. KW_US 6001

12. KW_US 6001



13. KW_US 6005



14. KW_US 6002



15. KW_US 6002

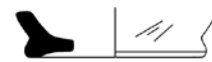


16. KW_US 6002

Coarse ware (CW)



18. CW_US 6005



19. CW_US 6001

Fig. 7.8 Poggio dell'Amore, representative diagnostic ceramics from SU 6001, 6002, 6004, 6005, 6011. Italic sigillata (IT SIG): 1, 4–5. Cups Conspectus 34; 2. Cup Conspectus 26.2; 3. Unidentified dish; 6. Bowl Conspectus 14; 7–9. Conspectus 3 dishes. Amphora (AMPH): 10. Central/northern Tyrrhenian Dressel 2/4. Kitchen ware (KW): 11, 13. Casseroles; 12. Cooking bowl; 14. Lid; 15–16. Cooking pots. Coarse ware/Amphora (CW/AMPH): 17. Small amphora/large jug. Coarse ware (CW): 18–19. Jugs. (EV).

usual, tableware open vessels are most common, predominantly dishes (14.28%) and cups (23.8%), both in Italic sigillata. Closed vessels used predominantly for liquids are somewhat less common and are

composed mostly of jugs (14.28%) and jars (4.76%) in coarse ware. Again, while the total MNI of each of these classes is tiny, the overall proportions echo trends from other sites.

Again, in tiny quantities, cooking wares show an even split between closed pots (9.52%) (Fig. 7.8.15–16) and a lid (Fig. 7.8.14), and open forms including caseroles (9.52%) (Fig. 7.8.11, 13) with and additional MNI of a cooking bowl (Fig. 7.8.12), all otherwise unclassifiable.

Finally, a quantification of the form and weight of tiles at the site supported the suggestion that the structure originally boasted a tile roof that had been later robbed (Table 7.4). While the overall fragment numbers are similar to San Martino (cf. Table 6.4), many larger fragments (particularly from SU 6002, the robbing context) and the cumulatively large weight of the tile assemblage strongly point to tiles used as roofing rather than as wall construction material.

7.6 Faunal Materials (MM)

The faunal assemblage from the site was extremely small (the entire collection weighed 13 g) and was restricted to two contexts (Table 7.5): three, isolated ovicaprid adult molar teeth (one possibly a sheep) were recovered from SU 6002, with a fourth

ovicaprid tooth and two small limb bone fragments from a medium-sized mammal deriving from SU 6011. While all these materials were fragmentary and broken, none exhibited any visible traces of butchery, burning, cooking, or other signs of cultural processing. Additionally, none registered any distinct clues with which to assess other taphonomic forces or agents (such as trampling, carnivore gnawing, surface exposure, etc.). Overall, the material might be best characterized as the odd bit of rubbish or discarded bone that might otherwise escape any broader clearing or cleaning venture.

7.7 Geological Features, Land Units, and Land Evaluation (AA)

Poggio dell'Amore has a number of micro-local geological and hydrological features (Fig. 7.9). The site is adjacent to three travertine outcrops, one directly to the E and two larger ones more distant to the SE, the easternmost is near the locality Falsettaio. One or more of these are thought to have

Table 7.4 Poggio dell'Amore, tile fragments, forms, weights and quantities (EV).

Context	Tile Fragments	Tile Weight (g)	Imbrices Fragments	Imbrices Weight (g)	Unid. Fragments	Weight (g)	Total Fragments	Total Weight (g)
6004	24	4155	14	1335	28	590	66	6080
6011	27	5940	4	465	15	285	46	6690
6002	113	32760	50	8530	37	1330	200	42620
6001	13	4020	10	920	5	275	28	5243
6015	2	580			1	75	3	655
6005	3	1100	3	345	9	415	15	1860
6010	10	1535	5	465			15	2000
TOTAL	192	50090	86	12060	95	2970	373	65148

Table 7.5 Poggio dell'Amore, faunal remains (MM).

NISP total (cattle+sheep/goat+pig)	% cattle	% sheep/goat	% pig	NISP of other principal mammalian and avian taxa present
4	—	100 (4 sheep/goat teeth, mandibular and maxillary molar fragments)	—	