

Francesca Fulminante

## Dependency and Social Inequality in Central Italy (Osteria dell'Osa, 950–580 BC)

**Abstract:** *Per lo più neglette nelle fonti antiche, dominate da una prospettiva maschile e aristocratica, le classi inferiori e dipendenti dell'antichità sono rimaste a lungo silenziose e trascurate nella narrazione storica e storiografica. Con l'avvento dell'archeologia e l'attenzione alla cultura materiale, questi attori invisibili della storia sono diventati più visibili, anche se l'attenzione maggiore è rimasta rivolta alle classi superiori e aristocratiche.*

*Questo articolo propone di colmare questa lacuna, focalizzando l'attenzione sulle classi inferiori e dipendenti deposte nella comunità di Osteria dell'Osa, una delle necropoli del centro dell'età del Ferro di Gabii, la rivale di Roma, situata a sud-est della città eterna, lungo la via Prenestina nel Latium vetus. Questo contesto, infatti, è stato investigato e pubblicato secondo metodologie di scavo e standard scientifici moderni, ed è pertanto adatto ad un'analisi statistica contestuale. Per identificare le classi inferiori è stato usato un indice di ricchezza. Sono stati creati diagrammi di distribuzione che hanno permesso di individuare soglie di differenziazione, in base alla quale una classe superiore ed una inferiore sono state riconosciute e poi analizzate.*

*Sono state effettuate diverse statistiche, in Excel e analisi spaziali in un ambiente GIS (by Esri under educational licence), e sono stati identificati trend di gender e di demografia per i due distinti gruppi identificati, che hanno permesso di comprendere se i due gruppi erano percepiti e rappresentati in modo simile o diverso. Questo approccio comparativo è risultato utile nel valutare e comprendere meglio il gruppo della classe inferiore in se stessa.*

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**Note:** This work is a result of the research, initiated many years ago in Rome, for my MA Thesis “The Princely Burials in Latium vetus” (1998, published by “L’Erma” in 2003). In that work, I focused on higher-status individuals. I am grateful to Martin Bentz and Patrick Zeidler for organizing the conference on “Dependency and Social Inequality in Pre-Roman Italy” and for inviting me, which have allowed me to focus on the less considered and less studied subordinate and/or lower classes. The original database has been updated through the years, owing to the support received through the Bristol University project/conference “Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Lives of Infant and Children in Past and Present Urban Communities: Promoting Debate to Shape Current Policies in Health and Education”, held at Bristol University in 2019, and to the funding provided by the Bioethics, Biolaw and Biosociety Research Strand of the Elizabeth Blackwell Institute, the Institute of Greece, Rome, and the Classical Tradition as well as the Arts Faculty Seeds Research Funds. Now, thanks to my participation in a fellowship at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg in Delmhorst, Germany, in 2021–2023 with the project “‘Warriors’ and ‘Weavers’: Gender Stereotypes, Identity, and Demographic Dynamics from Italy (1000–300 BC ca) to Face Modern Challenges and Impact Current Policies”, the database is being expanded to include several sites from other regions in Central and Southern Italy. I am grateful to all these institutions for their support.

# 1 Introduction

As correctly emphasized by the organizers of this conference, dependency and the lower classes have long been silenced and overlooked in historical and historiographical discourse. They were mainly overlooked by ancient authors – also the primary source of historiographical discourse – in the last couple of centuries. With the birth and growing importance of archaeology, those invisible actors of history have become more visible, but the main focus has still remained on the higher classes. I myself am guilty of this sin, having published a book on *Princely Graves in Latium vetus* a few years ago (2003). Therefore, I am grateful to the organizers of this conference, who encouraged me to rethink my old work and take a novel perspective. The focus of this paper, however, will be limited to the cemetery of Osteria dell'Osa rather than deal with all of Latium vetus. This is because this context has been investigated with the use of modern archaeological techniques and high standards,<sup>1</sup> making it more suitable for a contextual analysis. In most publications and excavation reports, including those published in more recent years, poorer tombs, which contain fewer objects and/or no grave goods at all, have generally been overlooked, also because they are often more difficult or sometimes impossible to date. This is also true for the publication on the cemetery of Osteria dell'Osa, where little space was devoted to this category of evidence.

Hence, to identify lower classes in this report, a richness index has been adopted, which was already used by the author in the volume *Princely Burials*<sup>2</sup> and was originally developed by Alessandro Guidi for the Iron Age cemetery of Quattro Fontanili at Veio.<sup>3</sup> By building distribution diagrams, a numerical threshold between higher and lower classes is identified, after which the two groups are analyzed. Several statistics are employed, and gender and demographic trends for the different groups are evaluated to assess if the two groups are perceived and represented in similar or rather contrasting ways. Finally, the data are imported into a GIS, and gender and status dynamics are visualized and analyzed spatially to again verify the similarities or differences among the two groups, which will help us to better understand the lower classes.

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1 Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri, ed., *La necropoli laziale di Osteria dell'Osa* (Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 1992).

2 Francesca Fulminante, *Le sepolture principesche nel Latium vetus fra la fine della prima età del Ferro e l'inizio dell'età Orientalizzante* (Rome: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, 2003).

3 Alessandro Guidi, *La necropoli Veiente dei Quattro Fontanili nel quadro della fase recente della prima età del Ferro italiana* (Florence: Olschki Editore, 1993).

## 2 Early Iron Age, Orientalizing and Archaic Periods in Central Italy

Thanks to the work of many scholars over the last few decades, our knowledge of urbanization processes in southern Etruria and Latium vetus (Fig. 1) from the Final Bronze Age to the Archaic Period is nowadays much more advanced. In this section, I am going to revise the many different dimensions and/or trajectories of social evolution that scholars have studied in relation to the development of cities in Central Italy in the Early Iron Age.<sup>4</sup> The absolute chronology of Bronze and Iron Age Italy is still a much debated question, which has changed from traditional approaches based on pottery typology, to modern scientific radio-carbon dates and dendro-chronologies. For a brief discussion of the state of the art, I refer the reader to my previous work.<sup>5</sup>



Fig. 1: Central Italy with the position of Gabii to the southeast of Rome in Latium vetus.

<sup>4</sup> This section also appears in my recently published book, *The Rise of Early Rome: Transportation Networks and Domination in Central Italy (1000–500 BC)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023).

<sup>5</sup> Francesca Fulminante, *The Urbanization of Rome and Latium Vetus from the Bronze Age to the Archaic Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014): Appendix 1.

This paper contains a synthetic and updated summary table that visualizes the main relative and absolute comparative chronologies in Central and Southern Italy. A very recent contribution, which I did not include in the previous discussion, contains works by Toffolo and other authors and Fantalkin and other authors; it is based mainly on radio-carbon dates and correlations of the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean, which seems to confirm the traditional low chronology by Coldstream.<sup>6</sup> This would obviously also affect discussions on the Western Mediterranean. However, the debate is still open (Tab. 1).

## 2.1 Settlement Dynamics

When considering settlement dynamics in particular (Tab. 2), it is well-known that between the Final Bronze Age and the beginning of the Early Iron Age, southern Etruria and Latium vetus witnessed a process of centralization and nucleation, transforming from small, dispersed villages during the Bronze Age to large settlements during the Early Iron Age in the same areas that later would be occupied by the cities of the Orientalizing and Archaic Periods.<sup>7</sup>

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6 Michael B. Toffolo et al., "Towards an Absolute Chronology for the Aegean Iron Age: New Radiocarbon Dates from Lefkandi, Kalapodi and Corinth," *PLOS ONE* 8, no. 12 (2013): e83117, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0083117>; Alexander Fantalkin et al., "Late Helladic to Middle Geometric Aegean and Contemporary Cypriot Chronologies: A Radiocarbon View from the Levant," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 373 (2015): 25–48, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.5615/bullamerschoorie.373.0025> [accessed 30.08.2023].

7 Francesco Di Gennaro and Renato Peroni, "Aspetti regionali dello sviluppo dell'insediamento proto-storico nell'Italia centro-meridionale alla luce dei dati archeologici e ambientali," *Dialoghi di Archeologia* 3 (1986): 193–200; Simon Stoddart and Nigel Spivey, *Etruscan Italy: An Archaeological History* (London: Batsford, 1990); Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri, "Italy in Europe in the Early Iron Age," *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 63 (1997): 371–402; Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri, *L'Italia nell'età del Bronzo e del Ferro: dalle palafitte a Romolo (2200–700 a.C.)* (Rome: NIS, 2010); Graeme Barker and Tom Rasmussen, *The Etruscans* (Oxford: Blackwell Publisher, 1998); Tom Rasmussen, "Urbanization in Etruria," in *Mediterranean Urbanization (800–600 B.C.)*, ed. Robin Osborne and Barry W. Cunliffe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005): 91–113; Renato Peroni, *Protostoria dell'Italia continentale: la penisola italiana nelle età del Bronzo e del Ferro*, *Popoli e civiltà dell'Italia antica* 9 (Rome: Spazio Tre, 1989); Renato Peroni, *Introduzione alla protostoria italiana* (Rome: Editori Laterza, 1994); Renato Peroni, *L'Italia alle soglie della storia* (Bari: La Terza, 1996); Renato Peroni, "Formazione e sviluppi dei centri protourbani medio-tirrenici," in *Roma, Romolo, Remo e la fondazione della città*, ed. Andrea Carandini and Rosanna Cappelli (Milano: Electa, 2000): 26–30; Marco Pacciarelli, *Dal villaggio alla città: la svolta proto-urbana del 1000 a.C. nell'Italia tirrenica* (Florence: All'Insegna del Giglio, 2001): 119–36; Alessandro Vanzetti, "Some Current Approaches to Protohistoric Centralization and Urbanization in Italy," in *New Developments in Italian Landscape Archaeology: Theory and Methodology of Field Survey Land Evaluation and Landscape Perception, Pottery Production and Distribution: Proceedings of a Three-Day Conference Held at the University of Groningen, April 13–15, 2000*, ed. Peter A.J. Attema et al. (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2002): 36–51; Alessandro Vanzetti, "Risultati e problemi di alcune attuali prospettive di studio della central-

Tab. 1: Comparative relative and absolute chronologies in Central and Southern Italy.

| Pontecagnano       | Pithekoussai        | Aegean | Veio            | Tarquinia       | Latium                        | Fossa                   | Trad<br>Chronology<br>(Colonna, G.<br>1976;<br>Ampolo, C.,<br><i>et al.</i> , 1980) | Phase                             | Dendro-<br>chronology<br>(Peroni, R.<br>1994;<br>Bettelli, M.<br>1994) | C14<br>Chronology<br>(Bietti<br>Sestieri,<br>A.M., <i>et al.</i> ,<br>1999-2000) | New<br>Absolute<br>Chronology 1<br>(Pacciarelli,<br>M. 2001,<br>2005;<br>Nijboer, A.<br>2005) | New<br>Absolute<br>Chronology 2<br>(Van der<br>Plicht, J., <i>et<br/>al.</i> , 2009) | New<br>Absolute<br>Chronology 3<br>(Nizzo<br>2013) | New<br>Absolute<br>Chronology 4<br>(Toffolo<br>et al. 2013;<br>Fantalkin<br>et al. 2015) |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Proto-<br>Apennine |                     |        | Grotta<br>Nuova | Grotta<br>Nuova | Grotta<br>Nuova /<br>Apennine |                         | 1600                                                                                | Middle<br>Bronze Age 1-<br>Middle | 1700                                                                   |                                                                                  | 1700                                                                                          | 1700                                                                                 |                                                    |                                                                                          |
| Apennine           |                     |        | Apennine        | Apennine        | Apennine                      |                         | 1400                                                                                | Bronze Age 3<br>Recent            | 1500                                                                   |                                                                                  | 1400                                                                                          | 1400                                                                                 |                                                    |                                                                                          |
| Subapennine        |                     |        | Subapennine     | Subapennine     | Subapennine                   |                         | 1300                                                                                | Bronze Age 3<br>Recent            | 1365/1350                                                              | 1350                                                                             | 1325/1300                                                                                     | 1325/1300                                                                            |                                                    |                                                                                          |
| Protovillanovan    |                     | LHIII  | Protovillanovan | Protovillanovan | Protovillanovan               |                         | 1150                                                                                | Bronze Age<br>Final Bronze        | 1200                                                                   | 1200                                                                             | 1175/1150                                                                                     | 1200                                                                                 |                                                    | 1200                                                                                     |
| Protovillanovan    |                     | SM     | Protovillanovan | Protovillanovan | Protovillanovan               |                         | 1100                                                                                | Age 1<br>Final Bronze             | 1150                                                                   |                                                                                  |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                    | 1100                                                                                     |
| Protovillanovan    |                     | PG     | Protovillanovan | Protovillanovan | I                             |                         | 1000                                                                                | Age 2<br>Final Bronze             | 1085                                                                   |                                                                                  | 1050/1025                                                                                     | 1050                                                                                 |                                                    | 1000                                                                                     |
| IA                 |                     | EG     | IA              | IA              | IIA                           |                         | 900                                                                                 | Age 3<br>Early Iron               | 1020                                                                   | 1020                                                                             | 950/925                                                                                       | 950                                                                                  |                                                    | 900                                                                                      |
| IB                 |                     |        | IB- IC          | IB              | IIB                           |                         | 830                                                                                 | Age 1 Early<br>Early Iron         | 950                                                                    | 900 ca.                                                                          | 900 ca.                                                                                       | 900 ca.                                                                              |                                                    |                                                                                          |
| IIA                |                     |        | IIA- IIB        | II              | IIIA                          | 1A                      | 770                                                                                 | Age 1 Late<br>Early Iron          | 880                                                                    | 850/825                                                                          | 850/825                                                                                       | 825/800                                                                              |                                                    | 850                                                                                      |
| IIB                | first<br>settlement | MG     | IIC             | II              | IIIB                          | 1B                      | 750                                                                                 | Age 2<br>Early Iron               | 810                                                                    |                                                                                  |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                    |                                                                                          |
| EOA                | LG1                 | LG     | IIIA            | IIIA            | IVA1                          | 2A                      | 730/720                                                                             | Age 2 Final<br>Early              | 750                                                                    | 780                                                                              | 750                                                                                           | 725                                                                                  | 750                                                | 750                                                                                      |
| MOA                | LG2                 |        | IIIB            | IIIB            | IVA2                          | Middle<br>Orientalizing | 670/660                                                                             | Orientalizing<br>Middle           |                                                                        |                                                                                  |                                                                                               |                                                                                      | 680/675                                            | 700                                                                                      |
| ROA                | MPCI-MPC2           |        | IV              | IV              | IVB                           | Recent<br>Orientalizing | 640/630                                                                             | Orientalizing<br>Recent           |                                                                        |                                                                                  | 630/620                                                                                       | 630/620                                                                              | 650/630                                            |                                                                                          |
| AP                 | LPC- CA             |        | AP              | AP              | AP                            | Archaic Age             | 580                                                                                 | Orientalizing<br>Archaic Age      |                                                                        |                                                                                  | 580                                                                                           | 580                                                                                  | 580                                                |                                                                                          |
| ERP                | CM                  |        | ERP             | ERP             | ERP                           |                         | 509                                                                                 | Archaic Age<br>Early Republican   |                                                                        | 509                                                                              |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                    |                                                                                          |
| MRA                | ERP                 |        | MRP             | MRP             | MRP                           |                         | 400                                                                                 | Middle<br>Republican              |                                                                        | 400                                                                              |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                    |                                                                                          |
| LRA                | MRA                 |        | LRP             | LRP             | LRP                           |                         | 200                                                                                 | Middle<br>Republican              |                                                                        | 200                                                                              |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                    |                                                                                          |
|                    | LRA                 |        |                 |                 |                               |                         | 31/27                                                                               | Late<br>Republican                |                                                                        | 31/27                                                                            |                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                    |                                                                                          |

**Tab. 2:** Settlement patterns in southern Etruria and Latium vetus, from the Final Bronze Age to the Archaic Period.

| Pre-urban/Proto-urban                        | Proto-urban                                |                                           | Proto-urban/urban                                                        | Urban                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Final Bronze Age 3 (Latial Period I)         | Early Iron Age 1 Early (Latial Period IIA) | Early Iron Age 1 Late (Latial Period IIB) | Early Iron Age 2 (Latial Period IIIA–IIIB)                               | Early and Middle Orientalizing Age (Latial Period IVA) |
| 1050/1025–950/925                            | 950/925–900                                | 900–850/825                               | 850/825–750/725                                                          | 750/725–640/630                                        |
| Nucleation and centralization of settlements | Large proto-urban centres                  |                                           | Definition of limits or emerging urban centres and internal organization | Urban consolidation                                    |
|                                              | Foundation of secondary centres            |                                           | Capillary colonization of the countryside                                |                                                        |
| Settlement hierarchy 1/2 tiers               | Settlement hierarchy 2/3 tiers             |                                           | Settlement hierarchy 3/4 tiers                                           |                                                        |
|                                              |                                            |                                           |                                                                          | Urban monumentalization                                |
|                                              |                                            |                                           |                                                                          | 640/630–509                                            |

This process is generally considered to be more sudden and revolutionary in Southern Etruria, where, mainly during the Final Bronze Age 3 (between the second half of the eleventh and the first half of the tenth century BC), small and dispersed villages from the previous Bronze Age (with an average of 5–6 ha, but sometimes up to 20–25 ha) were abandoned. At the same time, huge areas (between about 100 and 200 ha) of future historical cities (Veii, Tarquinia, Caere, Vulci, Bisenzio and Orvieto) were settled extensively, with a patchwork occupation of hut compounds interspersed with gardens and allotments. Scholars have calculated that for every large and developing proto-urban centre, about 15–20 villages had been abandoned.<sup>8</sup> In Latium vetus, the process was more gradual and slightly delayed. In this region, the formation of large proto-urban centres occurred mainly during the Latial Periods IIA and IIB (between the second half of the tenth and the first half of the ninth century BC), with the occupation of large plateaus often linked to small Acropoleis that had already been occupied during the Bronze Age.<sup>9</sup> Recent studies, however, have emphasized that in both regions, there were more varied as well as specific cases and exceptions to the gen-

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izzazione e urbanizzazione di fase protostorica in Italia,” in *Centralization, Early Urbanization and Colonization in First Millennium BC Greece and Italy, Part 1: Italy*, ed. Peter A.J. Attema, Babesch Supplement 9 (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2004): 1–28; Francesco Di Gennaro and Alessandro Guidi, “Il Bronzo finale dell’Italia centrale: considerazioni e prospettive di indagine,” in *Il Protovillanoviano al di qua e al di là dell’Appennino: Atti della giornata di studio, Pavia, Collegio Ghislieri, 17 Giugno 1995, Como 2000*, ed. Maurizio Harari and Mark Pearce, Biblioteca di Athenaeum 18 (Como: New Press, 2000): 99–132; Francesco Di Gennaro and Alessandro Guidi, “Ragioni e regioni di un cambiamento culturale: modi e tempi della formazione dei centri protourbani nella Valle del Tevere e nel Lazio meridionale,” *Scienze dell’Antichità: Storia, Archeologia, Antropologia* 15 (2009): 429–45; Maria Bonghi Jovino, “Città e territorio: Veio, Tarquinia, Cerveteri e Vulci: appunti e riconsiderazioni,” in *Dinamiche di sviluppo delle città nell’Etruria meridionale: Veio, Caere, Tarquinia, Vulci: Atti del XXIII Convegno di Studi Etruschi ed Italici, Roma, Veio, Cerveteri/Pyrgi, Tarquinia, Tuscania, Vulci, Viterbo, 1–6 Ottobre 2001*, ed. Orazio Paoletti and Giovannangelo Camporeale (Rome: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, 2005): 27–58; Alessandro Guidi, “The Archaeology of the Early State in Italy,” *Social Evolution and History* 5, no. 2 (2006): 55–90; Alessandro Guidi, “Archeologia dell’early state: il caso di studio italiano,” *Ocnus* 16 (2008): 175–92; Alessandro Guidi, “Archaeology of the Early State in Italy: New Data and Acquisition,” *Social Evolution and History* 9, no. 2 (2010): 1–26; Fulminante, *The Urbanization of Rome and Latium Vetus*: 44–47; Teresa Marino, “Aspetti e fasi del processo formativo delle città in Etruria meridionale costiera,” in *Le città visibili: archeologia dei processi di formazione urbana*, vol. 1, *Penisola italiana e Sardegna*, ed. Marco Rendeli (Rome: Officina Etruscologia, 2015): 97–141; Simon Stoddart, *Power and Place in Etruria: The Spatial Dynamics of a Mediterranean Civilization, 1200–500 BC* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Simon Stoddart et al., “Patterns of Etruscan Urbanism,” *Frontiers in Digital Humanities: Section Digital Archaeology* 7, no. 1 (2020).

8 Di Gennaro and Peroni, “Aspetti regionali”; Di Gennaro and Guidi, “Il Bronzo finale”; Guidi, “Archeologia dell’early state: il caso di studio italiano”: 176–77; Pacciarelli, *Dal villaggio alla città*: 128–36.

9 Di Gennaro and Guidi, “Il Bronzo finale”; Pacciarelli, *Dal villaggio alla città*: 119–28; Guidi, “Archeologia dell’early state: il caso di studio italiano.”

eral trends than previously thought, and therefore the two regions are probably more similar than previously assumed.<sup>10</sup>

Later, during an advanced stage of the Early Iron Age (Early Iron Age 1 Late, around the first half of the ninth century BC), both in southern Etruria and in Latium vetus satellites, secondary centres emerged from proto-urban centres. This created a settlement hierarchy of 2–3 tiers, with primary settlements generally being larger than 100 ha in Etruria and larger than 40–50 ha in Latium vetus, but sometimes also between 25 and 50 ha; small secondary settlements were always smaller than 15–20 ha.<sup>11</sup> Following this, during the Early Iron Age 2 (second half of the ninth and first half of eighth century BC), a progressively more precise definition of the limits and internal organization of the large proto-urban centres can be observed. At this point, these centres had already been developing towards urbanization, which involved a series of markedly visible changes from around the middle of the eighth century BC.

1. A demographic growth in the emerging urban centres, proven by the increased density of the sites on the surveyed plateaux.<sup>12</sup>
2. A sharp definition of the boundaries of the inhabited area of the settlements, with the concentration of the sites being rigorously within the limits of the plateaux and the abandonment of the sites previously located along the external slopes of the plateaux.<sup>13</sup>
3. The formalization of these boundaries with the realization of symbolic<sup>14</sup> or more functional fortifications.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Francesca Fulminante and Simon Stoddart, “Indigenous Political Dynamics and Identity from a Comparative Perspective: Etruria and Latium Vetus,” in *Exchange Networks and Local Transformations: Interactions and Local Changes in Europe and the Mediterranean from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age*, ed. Maria E. Alberti and Serena Sabatini (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013): 117–33.

<sup>11</sup> Pacciarelli, *Dal villaggio alla città*: 115–36, and Fulminante, *The Urbanization of Rome and Latium Vetus*.

<sup>12</sup> As an example, this was noticed on the plateau of Cerveteri (Cristiano Iaia and Alessandro Mandolesi, “Comunità e territori nel Villanoviano evoluto dell’Etruria meridionale,” in *L’alba dell’Etruria: fenomeni di continuità e trasformazione tra XII e VIII secolo a.C.: ricerche e scavi, atti del nono incontro di studi Valentano (Vt) – Pitigliano (Gr), 12–14 Settembre 2008*, ed. Nuccia Negroni Catacchio [Milan: Centro studi di preistoria e archeologia, 2010]: 61–78); Veio (Roberta Cascino et al., eds., *Veii: The Historical Topography of the Ancient City: A Restudy of John Ward Perkins’s Survey*, Archaeological Monographs of the British School at Rome 19 [Rome: The British School at Rome, 2012]: in particular, 15–16); and Gabii (Maria T. Guaitoli, “Gabii,” *Parola del Passato* 36 [1981]: 152–73, and Maria T. Guaitoli, “Gabii: osservazioni sulle fasi di sviluppo dell’abitato,” *Quaderni dell’Istituto di topografia antica dell’Università di Roma* 9 [1981]: 23–57).

<sup>13</sup> As attested in the case of Gabii (Guaitoli, “Gabii” and Guaitoli, “Gabii: osservazioni”).

<sup>14</sup> Andrea Carandini and Paolo Carafa, eds., *Palatium e Sacra Via*, vol. 1, *Bollettino di archeologia* 31–34 (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 2000).

<sup>15</sup> Paul Fontaine, “Le fortificazioni etrusche: nuove scoperte archeologiche (1997–2003),” *Etruscan Studies* 9 (2002–2003): 77–84; Anna Maria Moretti Sgubini, “Alle origini di Vulci,” in *Archeologia in Etruria meridionale: Atti delle giornate di studio in ricordo di Mario Moretti, Civita Castellana, 14–15 Novembre 2003*, ed.

4. The internal organization of these centres with the creation of public spaces and official buildings for assemblies and communal activities, cult places and special larger residencies, probably occupied by royal families or aristocratic elites.<sup>16</sup>

At this time, around the middle of the eighth century BC, there was also a more dense and diffuse occupation of the territory by 'urban' elites,<sup>17</sup> with small aristocratic settlements dispersed around the countryside. This brought about a settlement hierarchy of 3–4 tiers, with primary settlements (various orders, generally larger than 100 ha but sometimes between 25 and 100 ha), secondary settlements (always smaller than 15–20 ha) and small high-status settlements in the countryside generally indicated by small burial grounds.<sup>18</sup> At this stage, by the mid/late eighth century BC, the proto-urban centres could be considered as being properly urban, although they were to reach a mature, consolidated urban stage in a fully monumentalized form only in the Orientalizing and Archaic Periods (from the seventh to the sixth century BC).<sup>19</sup>

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Mario Moretti and Maristella Pandolfini Angeletti (Rome: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, 2006): 317–60; Francesca Boitani et al., "Nuove indagini sulle mura di Veio nei pressi di Porta Nord-Ovest," in *La città murata in Etruria: Atti del XXV Convegno di Studi Etruschi ed Italici, Chianciano Terme, Sarteano, Chiusi, 30 Marzo–3 Aprile 2005, in memoria di Massimo Pallottino*, ed. Giovannangelo Camporeale (Pisa: Fabrizio Serra Editore, 2008): 135–54; Anna Maria Cataldi et al., "La cinta fortificata di Tarquinia alla luce della nuova documentazione," in *La città murata in Etruria: Atti del XXV Convegno di Studi Etruschi ed Italici, Chianciano Terme, Sarteano, Chiusi, 30 Marzo–3 Aprile 2005, in memoria di Massimo Pallottino* (Pisa: Fabrizio Serra Editore, 2008): 155–70; Paul Fontaine and Sophie Helas, eds., *Fortificazioni arcaiche del Latium vetus e dell'Etruria meridionale (IX–VI sec. a.C.): stratigrafia, cronologia e urbanizzazione, Atti delle giornate di studio, Roma, Accademia Belgica, 19–20 Settembre 2013* (Brussels: Institut Historique Belge de Rome – Belgisch Historisch Instituut te Rome, 2016), with bibliography.

**16** See, for example, Tarquinia (Maria Bonghi Jovino, "The Tarquinia Project: A Summary of 25 Years of Excavation," *American Journal of Archaeology* 114 [2010]: 161–80, with references) and Rome (Andrea Carandini, *Roma: Il primo giorno* [Rome: Editori La Terza, 2007]); Andrea Carandini, *La nascita di Roma: dèi, lari, eroi e uomini all'alba di una civiltà* [Turin: Einaudi, 2003] and Andrea Carandini et al., *Santuario di Vesta, pendice del Palatino e Via Sacra: scavi 1985–2016* [Rome: Quasar, 2017]).

**17** Since the countryside is generally void of evidence from the earlier periods, it is generally believed that these new aristocratic settlements were generated by elites who originated from urban agglomerations. However, further research and attention are needed to reassess and have a new understanding of the degree of real occupation, or lack thereof, of rural landscapes in pre- and proto-historic times.

**18** Anna De Santis, "Alcune considerazioni sul territorio Veiente in età Orientalizzante e Arcaica," in *Le necropoli arcaiche di Veio: giornata di studio in memoria di Massimo Pallottino*, ed. Gilda Bartoloni (Rome: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, 1997): 101–44; Iaia and Mandolesi, "Comunità e territori"; Fulminante, *The Urbanization of Rome and Latium Vetust*: 47.

**19** Carandini, *Roma: Il primo giorno*; Carandini, *La nascita di Roma*; Fulminante, *The Urbanization of Rome and Latium Vetust*: 249–60; Gabriele Cifani, "Aspects of Urbanism and Political Ideology in Archaic Rome," in *Papers on Italian Urbanism in the First Millennium B.C.*, ed. Elizabeth C. Robinson, *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, Supplementary Series no. 97 (Portsmouth: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2014): 15–28.

## 2.2 Social Hierarchy and Community Identity

When considering the development of social hierarchies and the construction of community identity as mirrored in funerary evidence (Tab. 3), it is generally agreed by most scholars that princely burials during the late eighth century BC and the beginning of the seventh century BC have an important precedent in the warrior burials and rich female burials from the entire eighth century BC, and that they represent only the final point of a long process of social differentiation, whose early stages would have to be placed at least in the Final Bronze Age.<sup>20</sup> In fact, important studies carried out by Anna De Santis and Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri were able to identify the figures of religious and political leaders in a few exceptional male burials from the Latial Period I, found in the territory of Rome (for example, Quadrato di Torre Spaccata and Santa Palomba). These burials contained a full suit of armour, including round shields, double shields (identified with the Salii shields by Giovanni Colonna), grieves, spears and swords, numerous pottery items and cult and prestige objects such as a knife, an incense burner, possibly a holmos (vase stand) and a cart; according to Bietti Sestieri and De Santis, these indicated the political (sword and weapons) and religious (knife and incense burner) roles of the buried individuals.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, it is now generally agreed that the scarce funerary variability during the Latial Periods IIA and IIB and in earlier Villanovan cemeteries (from the second half of the tenth to the first half of the ninth century BC) is not due to the lack or absence of social stratification but a result of the egalitarian ideology of the newly formed proto-urban communities, which tended to mask or hide internal inequalities.<sup>22</sup> Further evidence in this sense again comes from a discovery made by Anna De

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20 Fulminante, *Le sepolture principesche*; Jorn Seubern, "The Dead and the Wealthy" (master's thesis, University of Groningen, 2005); Anna De Santis, "Da capi guerrieri a principi: la strutturazione del potere politico nell'Etruria protourbana," in *Dinamiche di sviluppo delle città nell'Etruria meridionale: Veio, Caere, Tarquinia, Vulci: Atti del XXIII Convegno di Studi Etruschi ed Italici, Roma, Veio, Cerveteri/Pyrgi, Tarquinia, Tuscania, Vulci, Viterbo, 1–6 Ottobre 2001*, ed. Orazio Paoletti and Giovannangelo Camporeale (Rome: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, 2005): 615–31; Alessandro Guidi and Paola Santoro, "The Role of the Greeks in the Formation of the New Urban Aristocratic Ideology," in *Urbanization and State Formation in Italy during the 1st Millennium BC: Session Organised at the XVII International Congress of Classical Archaeology: Meetings Between Cultures in the Ancient Mediterranean, Rome, FAO, 22nd–26th September 2008*, ed. Francesca Fulminante and Alessandro Guidi, *Bollettino di archeologia: edizione speciale – Congresso di archeologia AIAC 2008* (Rome: International Association for Classical Archaeology, 2008): 36–40; Fulminante and Stoddart, "Indigenous Political Dynamics and Identity."

21 Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri and Anna De Santis, "Il processo formativo della cultura Laziale," in *Atti della XXXV riunione scientifica: le comunità della Preistoria Italiana: studi e ricerche sul Neolitico e le età dei Metalli, Castello Di Lipari 2–7 Giugno 2000, in memoria di Luigi Bernabò Brea* (Florence: Istituto italiano di preistoria e protostoria, 2003): 745–63; Anna De Santis, ed., *Politica e leader nel Lazio ai tempi di Enea* (Rome: Microcosmi, 2011).

22 Pacciarelli, *Dal villaggio alla città*; Fulminante, *Le sepolture principesche*; for more nuanced discussions, see Alessandro Vanzetti, "Evidenze funerarie e figure sociali nel Bronzo e primo Ferro italiani"

Tab. 3. Social differentiation as reflected in the burial customs of southern Etruria and Latium vetus, from the Final Bronze Age to the Archaic Period.

| Pre-urban/Proto-urban                                                                                    | Proto-urban                                                                                                                                                             |                                           | Proto-urban/urban                                                                                           | Urban                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Final Bronze Age 3 (Latial Period I)                                                                     | Early Iron Age 1 (Latial Period IIA)                                                                                                                                    | Early Iron Age 1 Late (Latial Period IIB) | Early Iron Age 2 (Latial Period IIIA–IIIB)                                                                  | Early and Middle Orientalizing Age (Latial Period IVA)                                                                                                                                               | Recent Orientalizing Age (Latial Period IVB) & Archaic Period                  |
| 1050/1025–950/925                                                                                        | 950/925–900                                                                                                                                                             | 900–850/825                               | 850/825–750/725                                                                                             | 750/725–640/630                                                                                                                                                                                      | 640/630–509                                                                    |
| EMERGING BURIALS                                                                                         | SHARED SYMBOLS OF POWER                                                                                                                                                 |                                           | MALE WITH COMPLETE ARMOUR AND RICH FEMALE BURIALS                                                           | PRINCELY BURIALS                                                                                                                                                                                     | REDUCTION AND DISAPPEARANCE OF GRAVE GOODS                                     |
| Political and religious leaders (complete suit of armour, knife, cart, incense-burner, holmos (stand)?). | Prestige and power symbols (weapons for male burials, spinning and weaving tools for female burials, hut-urn, statuettes, knife) distributed among various individuals. |                                           | Male graves with complete suit of armour and prestige goods (flabellum, incense-burner, metal vases, etc.). | Princely burials with hundreds of pottery vases, precious material vases and ornaments (gold, silver, amber, ivory), drinking sets, oriental power symbols (flabellum or fan, footrest and sceptre). | Drastic reduction until complete absence of grave goods; family chamber tombs. |
| Rich infant burial (Le Caprine tomb 5, Latium vetus) with spinning and weaving instruments and knife.    | Exceptional tomb 6 from Tenuta Cancelliera (Santa Palomba): offensive and defensive weapons, cart, statuettes, working tools, knife, gold, many vases.                  |                                           | Rich female burials with many ornaments, bronze dist, spinning and weaving tools.                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                |

Santis, who excavated tomb 6 from Tenuta Cancelliera at Santa Palomba, a burial dated to the Latial Period IIB (first half of the ninth century BC) and equipped with amazing objects such as a complete suit of armour (including round shields, double shields, greaves, spears and swords), an axe, working tools, a cart, a small human figure and a gold nail.<sup>23</sup> In an analogous way, the populist and egalitarian ideology of the city, fully formed under the tyrannical regime of the Tarquins, imposed a drastic reduction in the number of grave goods until they eventually fully disappeared from Latin burials during the Recent Orientalizing Age and the Archaic Period (from the end of the seventh to the sixth century BC).<sup>24</sup>

Linked to the development of social stratification and urban and state institutions is the problem which derives from the birth of the 'gens' – identified as a specific institution of the Roman Republican state but often linked to 'clan', 'lineage' and 'family' organizations; these can be clearly identified in the archaeological record, such as the 'gentilician central group' at the Iron Age cemetery of Osteria dell'Osa,<sup>25</sup> or the aristocratic 'family group tumuli' of the Orientalizing period, which was related to secondary and local settlements at the periphery of the territory of Rome.<sup>26</sup> Christopher Smith offered a detailed discussion of the origin of the 'gens' by debating and comparing both literary sources and available archaeological evidence. He rather cautiously suggested that it is very difficult to link the Roman institution, as known from literary sources and classical archaeological evidence, to its predecessors, as indicated by Iron Age and Orientalizing material culture.<sup>27</sup>

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(PhD diss., University La Sapienza, 1996): 175, and Alessandro Vanzetti, "Indagini sulle strutture sociali dell'Italia protostorica mediante diagrammi di tipo rank-size," in *Studi di protostoria in onore di Renato Peroni* (Florence: All'Insegna del Giglio, 2006): 609–23.

23 De Santis, *Politica e leader nel Lazio*: 44–51.

24 Giovanni Colonna, "Un aspetto oscuro del Lazio antico: le tombe di VI–V secolo a.C.," *La Parola del Passato* 32 (1977): 131–65; Gilda Bartoloni et al., "Dall'esibizione al rigore: analisi dei sepolcreti laziali fra VII e VI sec. a.C.," in *Tra Etruria, Lazio e Magna Grecia: indagini sulle necropoli, atti dell'incontro di studio Fisciano 5–6 Marzo 2009*, ed. Raffaella Bonaudo et al. (Paestum: Pandemos, 2009): 65–86.

25 Bietti Sestieri, *La necropoli laziale*.

26 Alessandro Bedini, "Abitato protostorico in località Acqua Acetosa Laurentina," *Archeologia Laziale* 3, Quaderni del centro di studio per l'archeologia Etrusco-Italica 4 (1980): 54–58; Alessandro Bedini, "Tre corredi protostorici del Torrino: osservazioni sulla affermarsi e la funzione delle aristocrazie terriere nell'VIII sec. a.C. nel Lazio," *Archeologia Laziale* 7, Quaderni del centro di studio per l'archeologia Etrusco-Italica 11 (1985): 44–64; Alessandro Bedini, "Abitato protostorico in località Acqua Acetosa Laurentina," in *Archeologia a Roma: la materia e la tecnica nell'arte antica*, ed. Maria Rita Di Mino and Marina Bertineti (Rome: De Luca, 1990): 48–58; Alessandro Bedini, "L'insediamento della Laurentina Acqua Acetosa," in *Roma: 1000 anni di civiltà*, ed. Adriano La Regina (Verona: Leonardo-De Luca editori, 1992): 83–96; Alessandro Bedini, "Laurentina Acqua Acetosa," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte antica classica e orientale* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1994): 300–302.

27 Christopher J. Smith, *The Roman Clan: The Gens from Ancient Ideology to Modern Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

While combining literary narratives and pre-historical material evidence is always risky and must be done carefully, merit must be given to Nicola Terrenato, who lay the foundations for a constructive debate, which is also open to the inclusion of the growing archaeological evidence. He emphasised the key role of the ‘family’ and the ‘gens’ (especially, but not only, ‘aristocratic’ ones) as active agents and connecting links in the delicate and somehow still-obscure passage from pre-urban village communities to urban societies, and later on through the whole development of Roman expansion and dominance.<sup>28</sup>

### 3 Data: Osteria dell'Osa, Cemetery of Gabii, from the Latium Vetus Database

This paper focuses on the contextual analysis of burial assemblages in Osteria dell'Osa at Gabii, in Latium vetus, between the beginning of the Early Iron Age and the end of the Orientalizing Period (Latial Periods IIA–IVB, ca. 950–580 BCE). The digital source is a database compiled at the end of the 1990s, based on Bietti Sestieri's<sup>29</sup> publication and other excavation reports, intended for the contextual study of Orientalizing princely burials in Latium vetus (Latin burials database, compiled for my MA Thesis in Italian).<sup>30</sup> The database has been updated through the years with the addition of more recent discoveries and publications. To date, it includes about 1253 records from the sites shown in Tab. 4.

The database consists principally of two tables: Tombs (1253 records) and Grave Goods (9267 records). Each record in the tomb table generally corresponds to one single burial, but some multiple burials are included in the same record if it was not possible to distinguish the different grave good assemblages. In addition, some single depositions within chamber tombs were considered separately in different records where it was possible to distinguish the different individuals and their accompanying grave goods. This is the case for chamber tomb 62 at Osteria dell'Osa, for instance; hence, there were 608 records rather than 602, as in the original publication. Each record in the tomb database is linked to the table of grave goods by one up to many different relations, with each

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<sup>28</sup> Laura Motta and Nicola Terrenato, “The Origins of the State Par Excellence: Power and Society in Iron Age Rome,” in *Celtes et Galois: l'archéologie face à l'histoire, colloque de synthèse, Paris, Collège de France, du 3 au 7 Juillet 2006*, ed. Christian Goudineau et al. (Glux-en-Glenne: Bibracte, 2006): 225–34; Nicola Terrenato, “Early Rome,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Studies*, ed. Alessandro Barchiesi and Walter Scheidel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): 507–18; Norman Yoffee and Nicola Terrenato, “Introduction: A History of the Study of Early Cities,” in *Early Cities in Comparative Perspective 4000 BCE–1200 CE*, ed. Norman Yoffee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 1–24; Matthew Naglak and Nicola Terrenato, “A House Society in Iron Age Latium? Kinship and State Formation in the Context of New Discoveries at Gabii,” in *La società gentilizia nell'Italia antica tra realtà e mito storiografico*, ed. Massimiliano Di Fazio and Silvia Paltineri, Biblioteca di Athenaeum 61 (Bari: Edipuglia, 2019): 99–118.

<sup>29</sup> Bietti Sestieri, *La necropoli laziale*.

<sup>30</sup> Fulminante, *Le sepolture principesche*.

**Tab. 4:** Latin sites with number of burials included in the database.

| Site            | Total number of tombs | Site              | Total number of tombs |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Ardea           | 11                    | Le Caprine        | 5                     |
| Caracupa        | 87                    | Marino            | 32                    |
| Castel Gandolfo | 5                     | Nomentum          | 5                     |
| Colli Albani    | 1                     | Palestrina        | 10                    |
| Colonna         | 12                    | Pratica di Mare   | 8                     |
| Crustumerium    | 31                    | Quadrato di Torre | 2                     |
|                 |                       | Spaccata          |                       |
| Decima          | 41                    | Rocca di Papa     | 2                     |
| Ficana          | 47                    | Roma              | 195                   |
| Fidenae         | 5                     | Santa Palomba     | 4                     |
| Gabii           | 611                   | Satricum          | 74                    |
| Grottaferrata   | 12                    | Tivoli            | 21                    |
| La Rustica      | 4                     | Tor de Cenci      | 11                    |
| Lanuvio         | 1                     | Torrino           | 3                     |
| Laurentina      | 9                     | Velletri          | 4                     |

record corresponding to one object or sometimes more objects of the same type. Tab. 7–8 in the Appendix shows a list of the fields included in the Tombs and Grave Goods tables, respectively, along with the type of information collected and recorded in them.

Osteria dell'Osa, one of several necropoleis in the Iron Age settlement of Gabii (Fig. 2), is one of the most important contexts in the database because it was excavated and recorded with the use of modern techniques and provides excellent information for a detailed contextual analysis.<sup>31</sup> Gabii is one of the many large proto-urban centres of Latium vetus, which probably began by the end of the Final Bronze Age but more certainly by the beginning of the Early Iron Age. It started developing into an urban centre by the middle of the eighth century BC and became a fully monumentalized city during the Archaic Period.<sup>32</sup>

The cemetery of Osteria dell'Osa contains what is probably the oldest existing Greek inscription known so far, and literary tradition suggests that Romulus and Remus were sent there to learn literacy.<sup>33</sup> Recent excavations have revealed the presence of a possible regal building from the Archaic Period<sup>34</sup> and a monumental public

<sup>31</sup> Bietti Sestieri, *La necropoli laziale*.

<sup>32</sup> See synthesis in Fulminante, *Le sepolture principesche*: 51–57, with previous references.

<sup>33</sup> See, e.g., Carmine Ampolo, “L’interpretazione storica della più antica iscrizione del Lazio (dalla necropoli di Osteria dell’Osa, Tomba 482),” in *Le necropoli arcaiche di Veio: giornata di studio in memoria di Massimo Pallottino*, ed. Gilda Bartoloni (Rome: “L’Erma” di Bretschneider, 1997): 211–18.

<sup>34</sup> Marco Fabbri, “La regia di Gabii nell’età dei Tarquini,” in *The Age of Tarquinius Superbus: Central Italy in the Late 6th Century, Proceedings of the Conference ‘The Age of Tarquinius Superbus: A Paradigm Shift?’ Rome, 7–9 November 2013*, ed. Patricia S. Lulof and Christopher J. Smith (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017): 225–40.

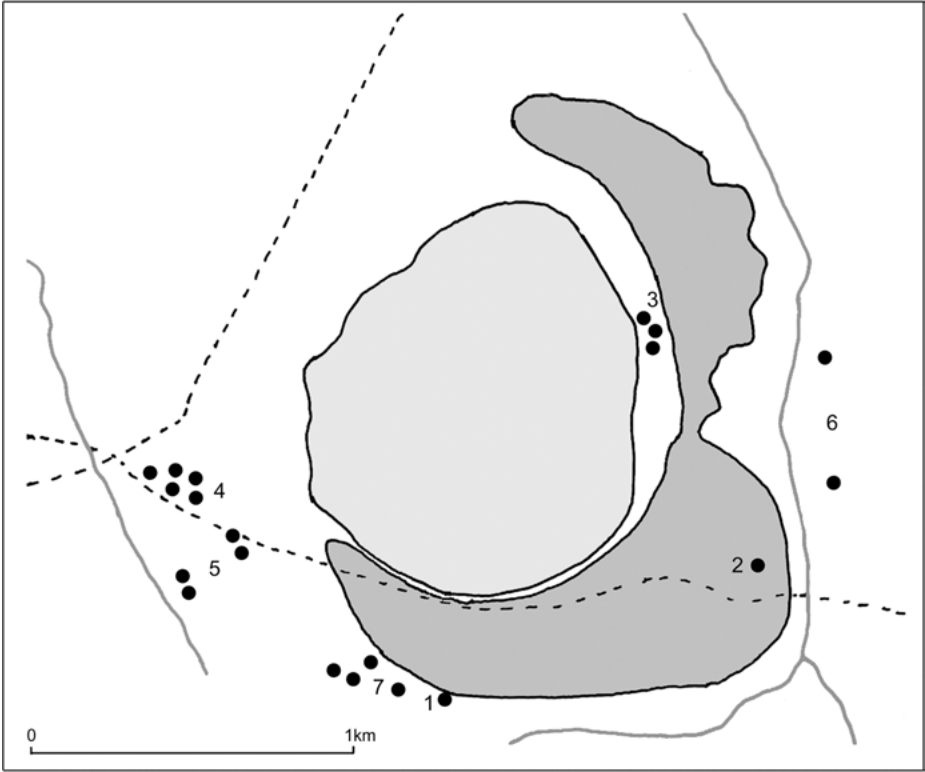


Fig. 2: Osteria dell'Osa at Gabii.

Tab. 5: Cemeteries around Gabii.

| Type of burial                   | Location                 | Map Number | Latial Phase II (950–850 BC ca) | Latial Phase III (850–750 BC ca) | Latial Phase IV (750–580 BC ca) |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cemetery                         | Castiglione              | 3          | x                               |                                  |                                 |
| Cemetery                         | Osteria dell'Osa         | 4          | x                               | x                                | x                               |
| Cemetery                         | Prenestina vecchia-nuova | 5          | x                               | x                                | x                               |
| Cemetery                         | Fosso S. Giuliano        | 6          | x                               | x                                | x                               |
| Cemetery                         | Pantano Borghese         | 7          | x                               | x                                | x                               |
| Intra-mural burials              | S. Primo Church          | 2          |                                 |                                  | x                               |
| Intra-mural burials (Sub-adults) | South-West Margin        | 1          | x                               |                                  |                                 |

Tab. 6: Burials at Osteria dell'Osa.

| Osteria dell'Osa       | Dating               | Number of individuals |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Latial Period IIA      | 950/925 – 900 ca. BC | 156                   |
| Latial Period IIB/IIIA | 900–800 ca. BC       | 287                   |
| Latial Period IIIB/IV  | 800–580 ca. BC       | 88                    |

Mid-Republican building, located at the important intersection of the roads from Tibur, Praeneste and Rome;<sup>35</sup> meanwhile, the use of geo-magnetometry allowed for the detection of a regular plan of the urban centres, which can certainly be dated to the Republican period, but possibly existing even earlier (Archaic Period?).<sup>36</sup>

The Osteria dell'Osa burials from the Iron Age (between Latial Phase IIA and the Latial Phase IVB: c. 950–580 BCE) are mostly single-trench inhumation burials and pit cremation burials in hut-urn or vase-urn, mainly reserved for adult males; however, there are also a few multiple-trench inhumations (mostly couples) and a chamber tomb. Collectively, there are 605 grave assemblages,<sup>37</sup> which include the remains of 611 individuals.<sup>38</sup> The cemetery publication provides a comprehensive interpretation of the relationship between palaeo-demographic data, archaeological data and ritual elements.<sup>39</sup> The size of the assemblage and the methods of excavation and analysis render Osteria dell'Osa one of the most complete records available to us at the moment, for contextual and demographic studies along with a comparative perspective.

As mentioned earlier, the database of Latium vetus burials created by the author has been used for the present analysis. This was based upon the information provided in the final publication of the cemetery.<sup>40</sup> This included detailed information about each tomb, its structure and ritual elements; associated grave goods; as well as associated osteological information, including age and sex determination, bone preservation, dental health and stature. Anthropological examinations and analyses of the bone remains were conducted by Loretana Salvadei and Marshall John Becker, who found that the preservation of bone remains at Osteria dell'Osa was rather poor. The determination of age and gender was mainly based on the evaluation of dentition and long bones, which were more likely to survive.

<sup>35</sup> Andrew C. Johnston et al., "A Monumental Mid-Republican Building Complex at Gabii," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 86 (2018): 1–35.

<sup>36</sup> Jeffrey A. Becker et al., "A New Plan for an Ancient Italian City: Gabii Revealed," *American Journal of Archaeology* 113, no. 4 (2009): 629–42.

<sup>37</sup> Bietti Sestieri, *La necropoli laziale*: 219–438, 551–878.

<sup>38</sup> Marshall John Becker and Loretana Salvadei in Bietti Sestieri, *La necropoli laziale*; see also Roberto Macchiarelli and Loretana Salvadei, "Paleodemography and Selective Funerary Practices at Latium Vetus, Middle-Tyrrhenian Italy," *Anthropologischer Anzeiger* 52, no. 1 (1994): 37–52.

<sup>39</sup> Bietti Sestieri, *La necropoli laziale*; Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri, *The Iron Age Necropolis of Osteria dell'Osa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 119–220.

<sup>40</sup> Bietti Sestieri, *La necropoli laziale*.

As declared by the anthropologists, ‘given the extent of damage of these remains, and the wide variation in surviving material (sometimes teeth, sometimes long bones, rarely both) no single analytical procedure could be used to determine either age or gender. The analyst, therefore, used “multiple independent techniques” employing whatever material was available to evaluate these skeletons.’<sup>41</sup> In the report, the anthropologist provided in detail the data and methods on which the determination was based; the greater or lower degree of certainty of the determination was reflected in the database with a grade of 1 (for certain), 2 (for possible) and 3 (for uncertain).

**Tab. 7:** Age classes used for the database and the case study.

| CLASS | DEFINITION    | AGE      |
|-------|---------------|----------|
| INF   | INFANTS       | 0–5      |
| CHI   | CHILDREN      | 5–11     |
| ADO   | ADOLESCENTS   | 12–20    |
| ADU   | ADULTS        | 20–40    |
| ADUM  | ADULTS MATURE | 40–60    |
| SEN   | ELDERLY       | ABOVE 60 |

According to a classification by H. Vallois (1960) that was followed by the anthropologists as well as in this paper, the age classes indicated in Tab. 5 were considered significant. In fact, as already noted by Bietti Sestieri and also confirmed by some of our own analyses, an infant (below five years of age) seems to be distinguished from children (from five to eleven years) and mature adults (from forty to sixty years), while the elderly (above sixty years) seems to be differentiated from adults (from twenty to forty years), at least in some aspect of the rituality, such as with the presence/absence of certain objects and or the use of certain rituals. In particular, gender/role categories – such as bow *fibulae* and textile tools for females and weapons and *serpeggiante/drago fibulae* for males – are generally absent from individuals below five years of age, apart from the case of richer/high-status burials.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, cremation seems to be reserved for male adults in the age class between twenty and forty years.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Bietti Sestieri, *La necropoli laziale*: 58 (translation of the quote by the author).

<sup>42</sup> Francesca Fulminante, “Intersecting Age and Social Boundaries in Sub-Adult Burials of Central Italy During the 1st Millennium BC,” in *From Invisible to Visible: New Data and Methods for the Archaeology of Infant and Child Burials in Pre-Roman and Beyond*, ed. Jacopo Tabolli (Nicosia: Astrom Editions, 2018): 29–38; Francesca Fulminante, “Infancy and Urbanization in Central Italy During the Early Iron Age and Beyond,” in *Papers in Italian Archaeology VII: The Archaeology of Death, Proceedings of the Seventh Conference of Italian Archaeology Held at the National University of Ireland, Galway, April 16–18, 2016*, ed. Edward Herring and Eoin O’Donoghue (Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing, 2018): 197–207.

<sup>43</sup> Bietti Sestieri, *La necropoli laziale*: 203; Bietti Sestieri, *The Iron Age Necropolis*: 128.

## 4 Presentation of the Analyses and Discussion of the Results

### 4.1 Defining, Quantifying and Visualizing Lower-Status Individuals and Evaluating Gender and Demographic Trends

As mentioned in the introduction, the first step in the analysis of lower-class individuals is the identification of these individuals according to a quantifiable method that is replicable and can be assessed objectively. The concept of wealth and richness is complex in itself and intrinsically relative; it is also well-known that burials are not direct mirrors of society, and the interface of ritual and ideology has to be taken into account.<sup>44</sup> However, a contextual analysis of burials in Latium vetus, already discussed several times, seems to confirm that grave goods from Iron Age cemeteries in Latium vetus are fairly representative of the wealth of the deceased, especially if we contrast this custom with the later diminution and disappearance of grave goods in the late Orientalizing and Archaic Periods. The latter was probably due to egalitarian ideology as well as limitations imposed by sumptuary laws, which were most likely introduced by the Tarquins.<sup>45</sup>

Therefore, to identify lower classes, a richness index has been adopted in this work. As previously mentioned, this index was already used in the volume *Le sepulture principesche*,<sup>46</sup> by the author and was developed by Alessandro Guidi for the Iron Age cemetery of Quattro Fontanili at Veio.<sup>47</sup> With this index, some value equivalences were used to proportionally appraise different types of objects found among Iron Age grave goods. Evidently, beads that are normally found in necklaces or in big numbers cannot be assigned the same value as that given to pottery or other complex objects. The equivalences elaborated by Guidi and adopted in this work are presented in Tab. 6. By adopting these equivalences, a wealth index was calculated for each tomb or individual.

Several trends were also investigated and analyzed against gender and sex variables. Again, we are aware that there is a huge debate on this topic, particularly relative to Pre- and Protohistory.<sup>48</sup> In this work, the assignment of gender refers to the identification of male, female or undetermined (neither male nor female) individuals

<sup>44</sup> Michael Parker Pearson, *The Archaeology of Death and Burial* (Sprakford: Sutton Publishing, 1999).

<sup>45</sup> For this, see discussion in Fulminante, *Le sepulture principesche*; Francesca Fulminante, "Early Iron Age and Orientalizing Mediterranean Networks from Funerary Contexts in Latium Vetus: Identifying Gender and Spatial Patterns of Interaction," *Memoires of the American Academy in Rome* 63–64 (2018–2019): 35–85.

<sup>46</sup> Fulminante, *Le sepulture principesche*.

<sup>47</sup> Guidi, *La necropoli Veiente dei Quattro Fontanili*.

<sup>48</sup> Bisserka Gaydarska et al., "To Gender or Not to Gender? Exploring Gender Variations through Time and Space," *European Journal of Archaeology* (2023): 1–28; see also Tamar Hodos and Francesca Fulminante, "Sex and Gender between Society and Biology" (forthcoming).

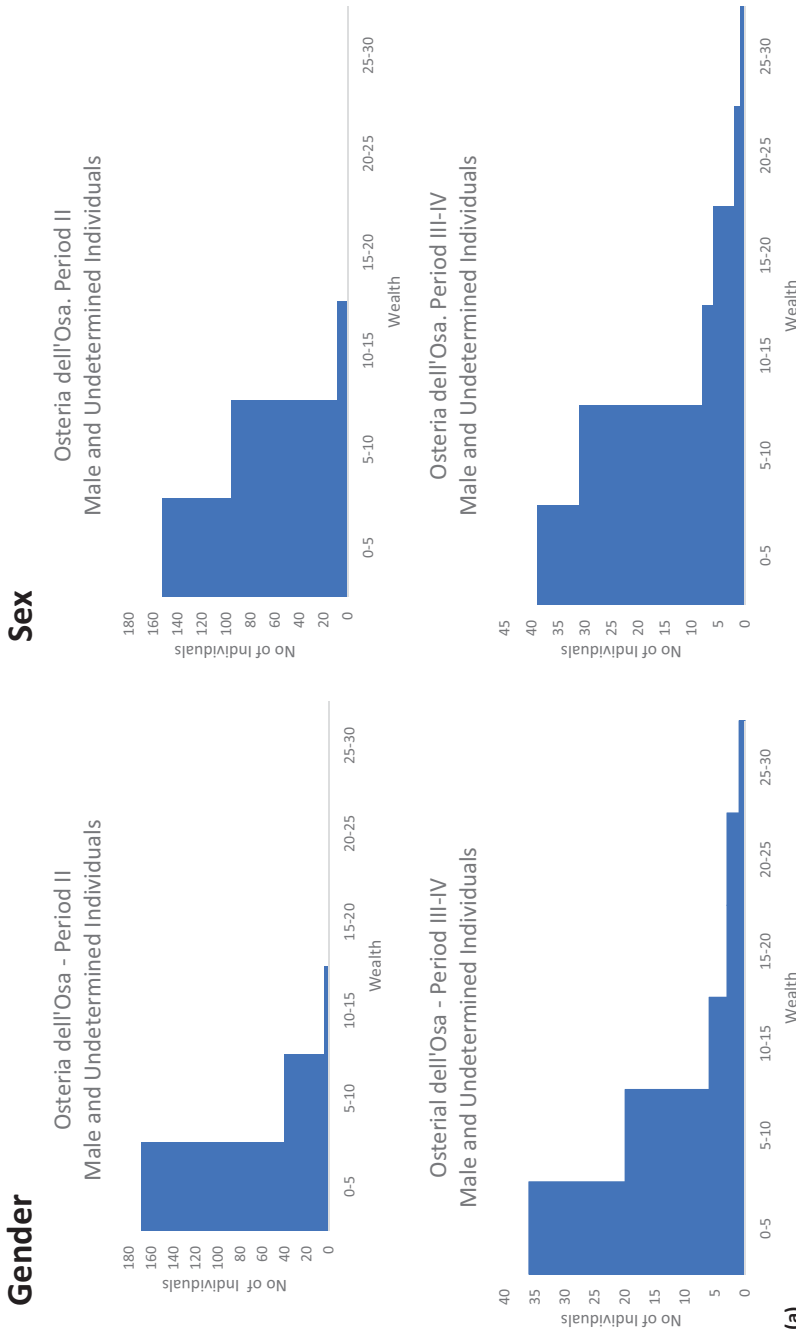
**Tab. 8:** Value equivalences used in the calculation of wealth diagrams.

|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1=1  | Pottery, male fibulae, female belts, female fibulae (gold, silver, bone and amber), weapons, utensils, objects and vases of precious material (gold, silver, bone, ivory, faience, glass), imported objects, writing |
| 2=1  | Bronze female fibulae, pins, large and flat suspension rings, rare spindle whorl (smooth)                                                                                                                            |
| 5=1  | Pendants, suspension rings, hair, bracelets, rare beads (e.g., amber allumiere type), common spindle whorl, spools                                                                                                   |
| 50=1 | Beads, small metal decorations (plaques, small rings, etc.)                                                                                                                                                          |

according to the grave goods, while a sex of male or female or undetermined (in the case of uncertainty) is indicated based on anthropological determination. Things are actually more complicated than this, as I have recently found in my research for a new project called ‘Warriors and Weavers. Gender stereotypes in Pre-Roman Italy’, but for the sake of this work, the definition and distinction described above will be sufficient.

Fig. 3 a–b are wealth distribution diagrams for the community of Osteria dell’Osa, elaborated according to gender and sex for two different sets of periods: Latial Periods IIA and IIB (from the tenth to the ninth century BC) and Latial Periods III and IV (from the eighth to the sixth century BC); bin intervals with a value of 5 were used for these diagrams. As can be seen in the figure, all diagrams show a distinctive threshold at around level 5. In order to assess its significance, I tried different scenarios. I counted the individuals in each group at the threshold of either 5 or 10. The threshold of 5 – more precisely 4.5 – resulted in more credible compositions and groups, with the assumption that the lower class was at least slightly larger than the higher class. However, this would not be true if we had to assume a bias towards richer individuals, as is the case for Latial Period I, the very beginning of Latin culture, when only members of high society were buried. The graphs also show a higher tendency for individuals from the lower classes to be characterized as male when analyzed according to sex, and an even higher tendency when the analysis was based on gender. On the other hand, the burials of higher-status individuals tended to be characterized as female according to both gender and sex.

Demographic trends among the different class groups were also investigated according to both gender and sex. To evaluate if some demographic bias was in place, the two class groups were jointly considered. As shown in Fig. 4, there is a bias towards female individuals, especially in the earliest phases of the cemetery. This trait of Osteria dell’Osa had already been noted by the directors of the excavation and by the anthropologist who performed the analysis of the remains, but no clear explanation was found. When the different wealth classes (Fig. 5) were taken into account, we noticed that in the higher class, the females are more explicitly characterized, while males are more characterized in the lower class.



**Fig. 3 a-b:** Osteria dell'Osa: wealth distribution diagrams according to gender and sex using bin intervals with a value of 5; **a:** Male and undetermined burials; **b:** Female burials.

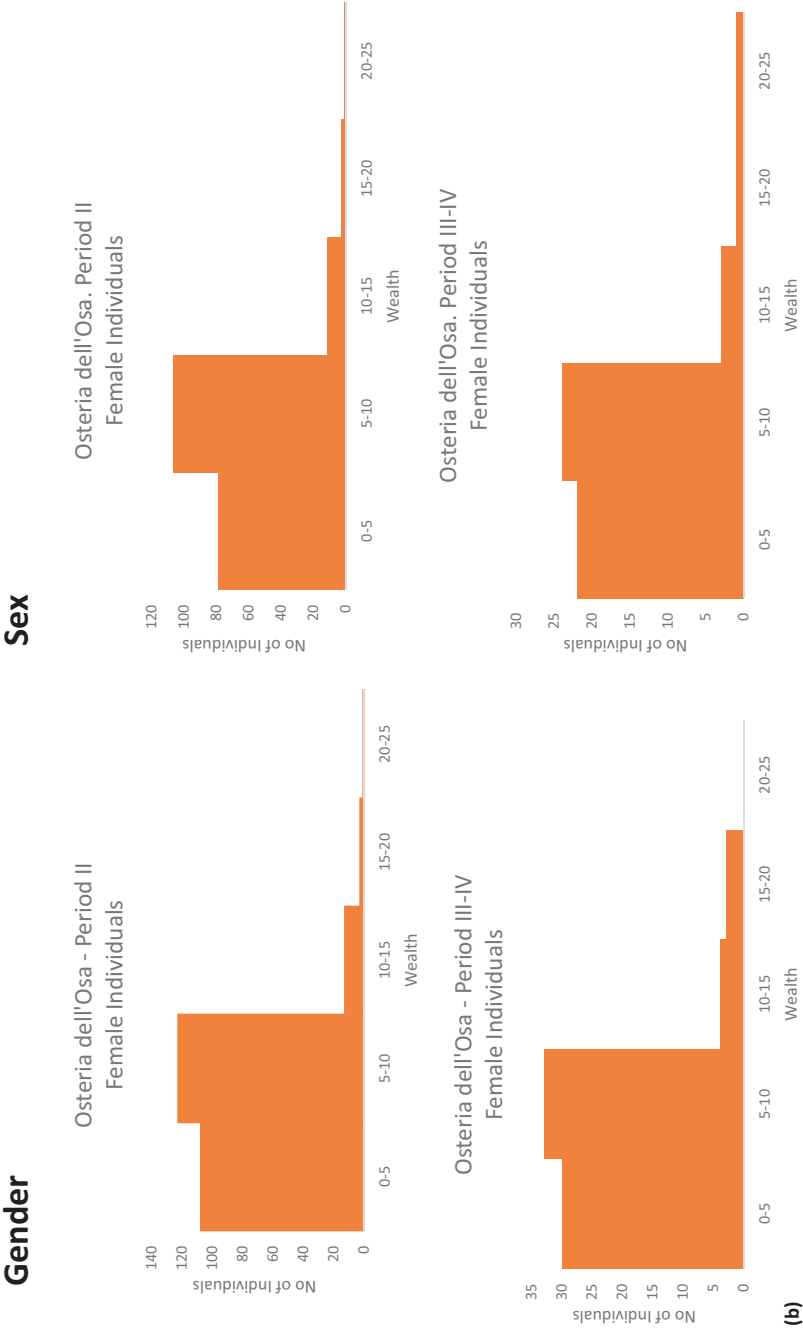
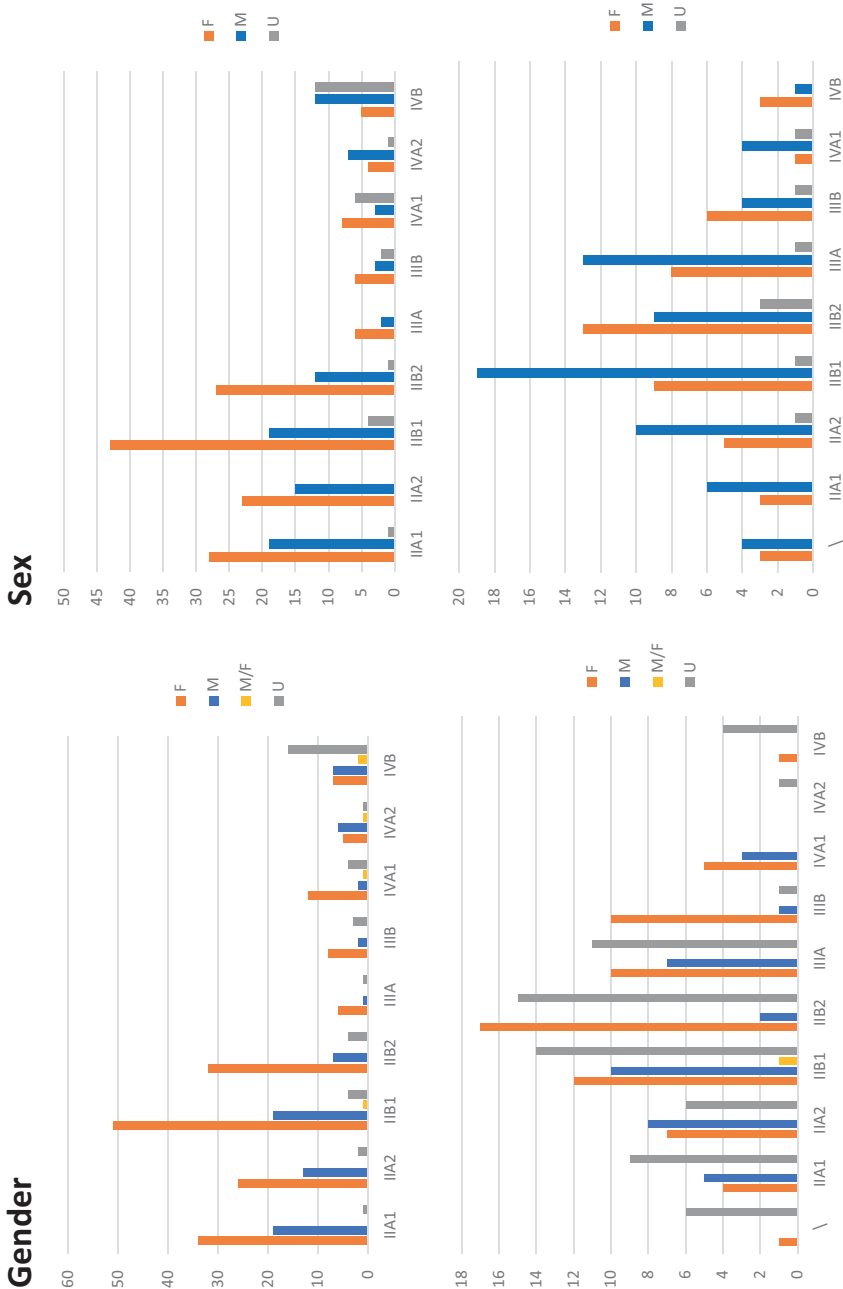


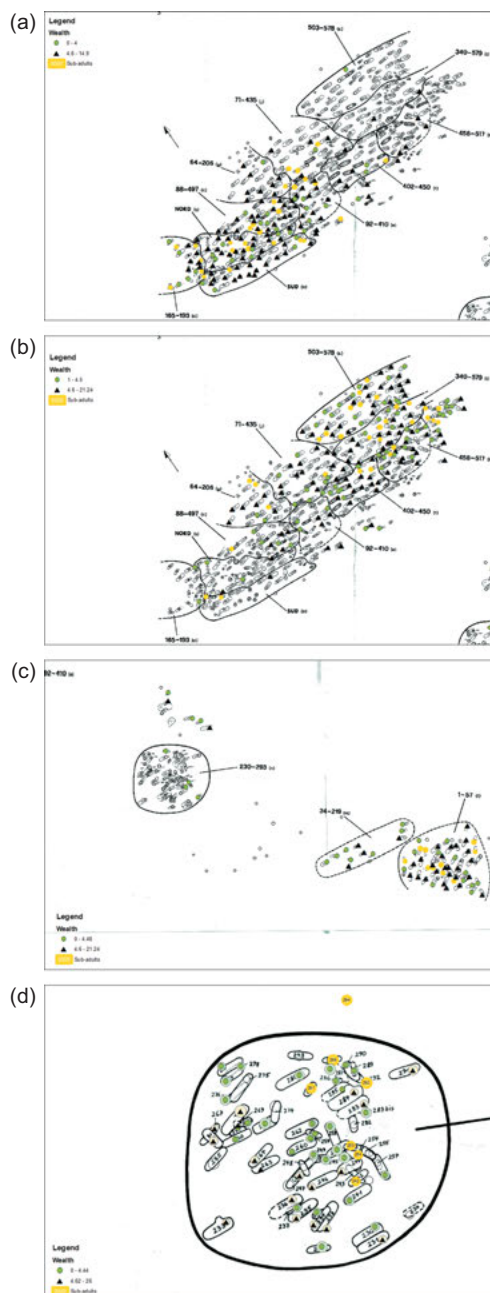
Fig. 3 a-b (continued)



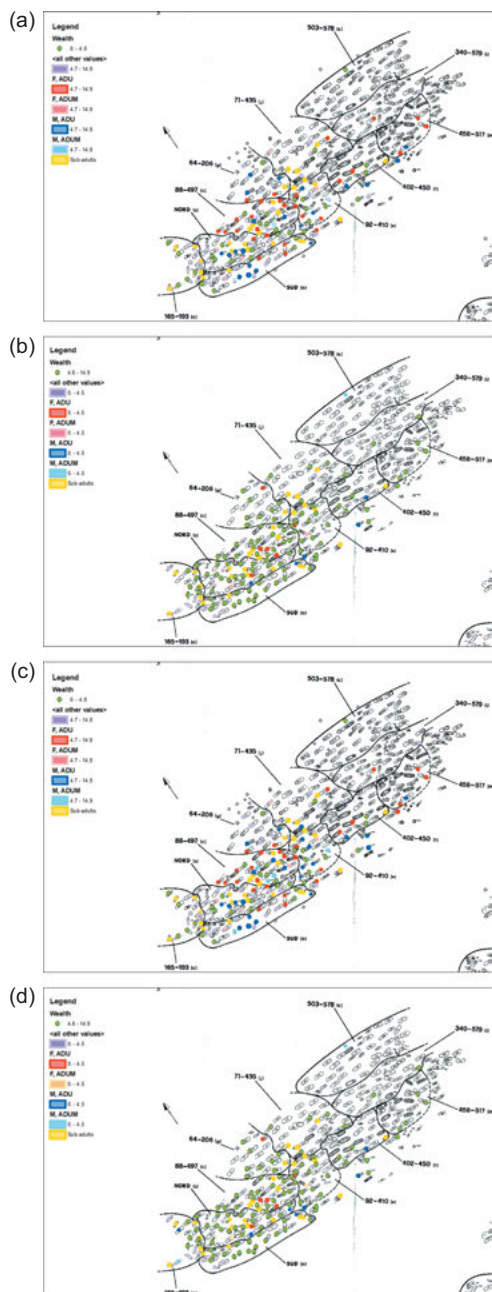
**Fig. 4:** Osteria dell'Osa: demographic distribution diagrams according to gender and sex; **a:** Gender, Higher Class: Wealth index > 4.5; **b:** Gender, Lower Class: Wealth index < 4.5; **c:** Sex, Higher Class: Wealth index > 4.5; **d:** Sex, Lower Class: Wealth index < 4.5.



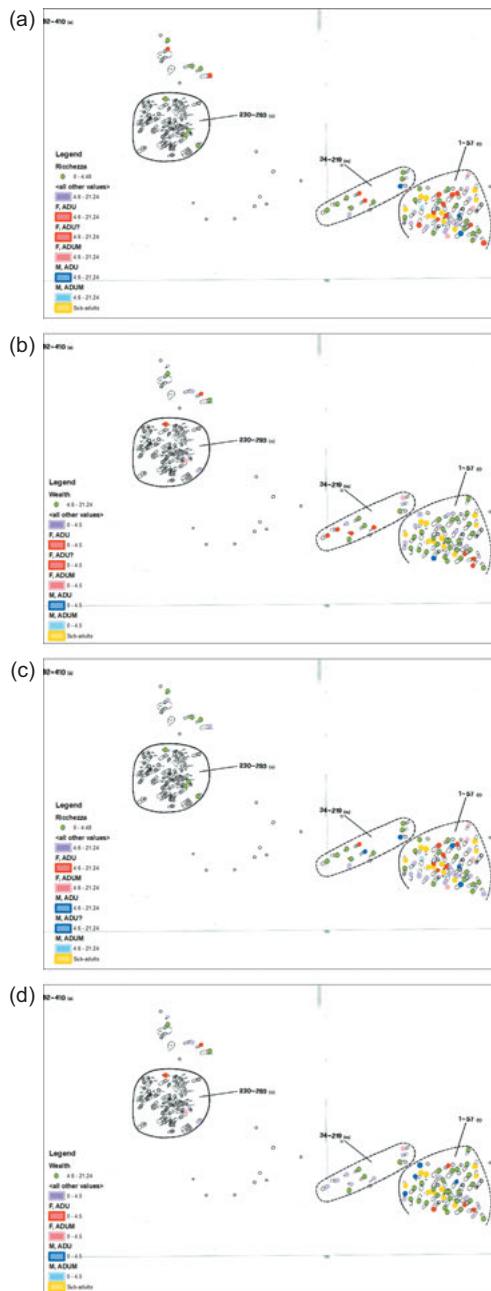
**Fig. 5:** Osteria dell’Osa: demographic distribution diagrams according to class, gender and sex; **a:** Gender; **b:** Sex.



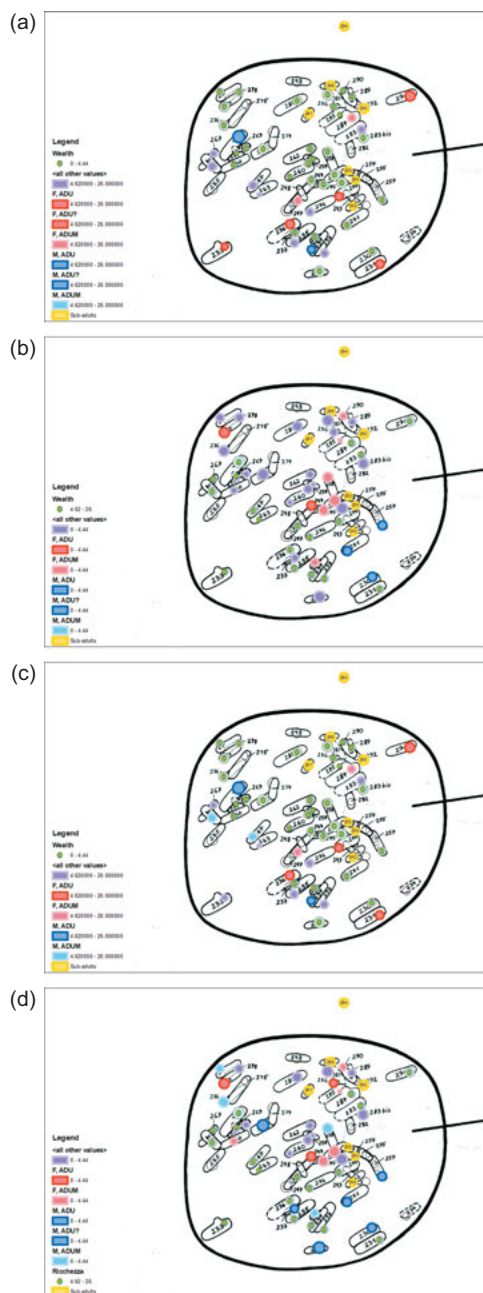
**Fig. 6 a-d:** Osteria dell'Osa: spatial distribution according to class and age; **a:** Latial Period IIA; **b:** Latial Period IIB1; **c:** Latial Period IIB2; **d:** Latial Period III-IV.







**Fig. 9 a-d:** Osteria dell'Osa, Latial Period IIB2: spatial distribution according to class, gender, sex and age; **a:** Gender, Higher Class: Wealth index > 4.5; **b:** Gender, Lower Class: Wealth index < 4.5; **c:** Sex, Higher Class: Wealth index > 4.5; **d:** Sex, Lower Class: Wealth index < 4.5.



## 4.2 Visualizing Lower-Status Individuals Spatially and Evaluating Gender and Demographic Trends

Finally, the data were imported into a GIS; gender, sex and status dynamics were visualized and analyzed spatially, to further verify the similarities or differences among the two groups and to gain further insights into class, gender, sex and demographic trends and their various combinations. Fig. 6 shows the spatial distribution of individuals according to class. Individuals with a wealth index lower than 4.6 are generally located at the margins of the group – identified by Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri as lineage groups – and are distributed all around the burials with a higher wealth index. This seems to be a trend that is present in all periods from earlier and later phases, especially in the group of Latial Periods III and IV, identified by Anna Maria Bietti Sestieri as the beginning of the ‘gens’ at Osteria dell’Osa.<sup>49</sup>

Fig. 7–10 show the spatial distribution of individuals according to class, gender, sex and age, used to investigate if couples and/or family groups are present in the cemetery in either or both of the class groups. The maps show that couples and family groups tend to be more neatly defined in the higher class, especially in the later phases of the cemetery. In particular, in the group identified as a gens in Latial Phase III and IV, there seem to be two or three prominent male and female figures, with a few other male associates, children and a significant number of individuals from the lower class. Thus, the diachronic distribution of the maps, with the spatial location of tombs according to sex, gender and age, offers a visual representation of what seems to be the emergence of the gens, which complements and corroborates the picture already offered by Cristopher Smith a few years ago.<sup>50</sup>

## 5 Conclusion

While there were many issues, biases and complications (due to funerary rituals and the inclusion and exclusion burial practices) that have to be taken into account, it was possible to use distribution diagrams and contextual spatial analyses to identify lower and higher-status classes at Osteria dell’Osa. In this particular context, by adopting Guidi’s index of wealth, a value of 4.5 proved to be a good threshold between lower and higher-class individuals. In other contexts, some adjustments might be necessary or a different index of wealth might have to be used. Another widespread indicator of wealth is the Ghini coefficient, which will also be used in further studies for this and other contexts.

<sup>49</sup> See discussion section above.

<sup>50</sup> Smith, *The Roman Clan*.

The analysis also showed that females of higher classes tended to be better characterized by gender; in contrast, wealthier males could not be characterized as well by gender. It could be possible that this represents an ideological bias, according to which males might have wanted to present themselves more as a group rather than as individuals, and that they all might have wanted to be perceived as having equal status.

At Osteria dell'Osa, lower-class individuals are generally spatially distributed around higher-class individuals and at the periphery of the groups. In this case study, there seems to be less interest in the definition of gender and/or family ties in lower status classes. Combining this element with an observation made in another study – that infants and children of higher status tended to be more neatly identified by sex and gender – seems to indicate that there is a concentration of gender and sex indicators among higher classes, possibly explained by an interest in emphasizing the continuity of the family and/or gens group and the inheritance of status and privileges. Thus, as already mentioned, this paper augments and corroborates the picture of the evolution of the gens, already provided by Smith a few years ago, based on literary, archaeological and iconographic evidence.

Further analyses of the distribution of wealth in relation to gender and age classes, also in comparison with family ties as identified by DNA studies, will complement and augment these preliminary results. In fact, there is probably still more work to do in relation to the definition and characterization of lower classes in literary and iconographic evidence, although these sources might be biased towards a mainly aristocratic and male point of view. For my new project on Gender Stereotypes at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg in Delmhorst, I am increasing the amount of data in the Latium vetus database, which is now becoming the Italy database, with the addition of several other sites from Central and Southern Italy. It would be interesting to compare different sites and regions that are also present in the work of other scholars.

## Appendix: Information from the Latin burial database

**Tab. 9:** Fields of the tomb table in the Latin burials database.

| Field       | Data Type  | Description                                                   |
|-------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sito        | Short Text | Site                                                          |
| Tomba       | Short Text | Tomb ID: Abbreviation of site and number of tomb              |
| Fase        | Short Text | Cultural dating of the tomb if different from Bietti Sestieri |
| Fase Bietti | Short Text | Cultural dating of the tomb according to Bietti Sestieri      |
| Datazione   | Short Text | Absolute dating of the tomb                                   |
| Contesto    | Short Text | Context of the tomb (intra or extra-mural)                    |

Tab. 9 (continued)

| Field                    | Data Type  | Description                                            |
|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Sepolcreto               | Short Text | Name of the cemetery/area                              |
| Gruppo                   | Short Text | Name of the group                                      |
| Posizione                | Short Text | Position within the group                              |
| Sesso                    | Short Text | Sex (anthropological and/or by grave goods)            |
| Eta'                     | Short Text | Age                                                    |
| Classe eta'              | Short Text | Age class (INF; CHI; ADO; ADU; ADUM; SEN)              |
| A/B                      | Short Text | Adults (ADO; ADU; ADUM, SEN) or Children (INF; CHI)    |
| Rito                     | Short Text | Type of rite: cremation inhumation, enchytrismos, etc. |
| Tipo Cremazione          | Short Text | Type of cremation                                      |
| Orientamento             | Short Text | Orientation of the tomb                                |
| Struttura                | Short Text | Type of tomb structure (Trench, Pit, etc.)             |
| Dimensioni               | Short Text | Dimensions of the tomb                                 |
| Copertura                | Short Text | Type of coverage of the tomb                           |
| Riempimento              | Short Text | Type of filling of the tomb                            |
| Sema                     | Short Text | Presence of element signaling the tomb                 |
| Circolo                  | Short Text | Precinct                                               |
| Tumulo                   | Short Text | Tumulus                                                |
| Dim Circolo/Tumulo       | Short Text | Dimensions of the precinct/tumulus                     |
| Testa                    | Short Text | Position/Orientation of the head                       |
| Pos corpo                | Short Text | Position of the body                                   |
| Pos braccia              | Short Text | Position of the arms                                   |
| Pos gambe                | Short Text | Position of the legs                                   |
| Dep secondaria           | Short Text | Secondary deposition                                   |
| Letto/bara               | Short Text | Presence of stone bed and/or wooden coffin             |
| Pos corredo              | Short Text | Position of the grave goods                            |
| Urna                     | Short Text | Type of urn in the cremations                          |
| Coperchio                | Short Text | Type of urn lid in the cremations                      |
| Tomba multipla           | Short Text | Multiple tomb                                          |
| Vasi rituali             | Short Text | Presence of ritual vases                               |
| Forma vasi rituali       | Short Text | Shape of ritual vases                                  |
| Pos vasi rituali         | Short Text | Position of ritual vases                               |
| Vasetto votivo           | Short Text | Presence of miniature votive vessel                    |
| Forma vasetto votivo     | Short Text | Shape of miniature votive vessel                       |
| Pos vasetto votivo       | Short Text | Position of miniature votive vessel                    |
| Offerta/dep votivo       | Short Text | Presence of offer/votive deposit                       |
| Forma offerta/dep votivo | Short Text | Type of offer/votive deposit                           |
| Pos offerta/dep votivo   | Short Text | Position of offer/votive deposit                       |
| Statuette                | Short Text | Presence of human figure statuette                     |
| Pos statuette            | Short Text | Position of human figure statuette                     |
| Ciottole travertino      | Short Text | Presence of travertine pebbles                         |
| Pos ciottole travertino  | Short Text | Position of travertine pebbles                         |
| Ossa umane               | Short Text | Human bones                                            |
| Pos ossa umane           | Short Text | Position of human bones                                |
| Offerta animale          | Short Text | Presence and type of animal offer                      |
| Pos offerta animale      | Short Text | Position of animal offer                               |
| Offerta vegetale         | Short Text | Presence and type of vegetal offer                     |

Tab. 9 (continued)

| Field                | Data Type  | Description                                      |
|----------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Pos offerta vegetale | Short Text | Position of vegetal offer                        |
| Edizione             | Short Text | Published or unpublished                         |
| Bibliografia         | Long Text  | Bibliography                                     |
| Museum               | Short Text | Museum or storage place                          |
| Notes                | Long Text  | Notes                                            |
| Danni                | Short Text | Ancient damages (tombs intersecting one another) |
| Dati Parziali        | Short Text | Incomplete grave goods                           |

Tab. 10: Fields of the grave goods table in the Latin burials database.

| Field       | Data Type  | Description                                                                                                                |
|-------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tomba       | Short Text | Tomb ID: Abbreviation of site and number of tomb                                                                           |
| Cn          | Short Text | Connotation: cc = pottery grave goods; cm = metal grave goods; ogf = female object; ogm = male object; orf = ornament etc. |
| Cl/m        | Short Text | Object class or material                                                                                                   |
| Forma       | Short Text | General shape, mainly based on function (e.g., 'Vaso biansato' – 'two-handled vase')                                       |
| Tipo        | Short Text | Details about the Shape, based on functional and/or formal attribute (e.g., 'Su piede' – 'with foot')                      |
| Miniature   | Short Text | Miniaturized object                                                                                                        |
| N Es        | Number     | Number of objects                                                                                                          |
| Import      | Short Text | Origin of imports                                                                                                          |
| Pos oggetto | Short Text | Position of the object                                                                                                     |
| Notes       | Long Text  | Notes                                                                                                                      |

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