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***Ultimus inter pares.* Inequality within the Italic Communities in Romagna (Italy) between the Sixth and Fifth Centuries BC**

Abstract: *Questo lavoro indaga le disuguaglianze all'interno delle comunità cosiddette "umbro-romagnole", attraverso il confronto tra le fonti antropologiche e quelle archeologiche. L'analisi si concentrerà sulla rappresentazione simbolica del defunto, ovvero il complesso sistema comunicativo di auto-rappresentazione utilizzato dalle società antiche durante il rituale funebre, per sottolineare proprio le disuguaglianze esistenti e riaffermare, in questo modo, i rapporti di potere. Le sepolture delle due principali necropoli "umbro-romagnole" di Montericco di Imola (BO) e di San Martino in Gattara (RA) evidenziano come, tra il VI secolo a.C. ed il V secolo a.C., venisse esaltata l'identità guerriera dei maschi adulti in età per combattere, mettendo in secondo piano tutto il resto. Sia le tombe femminili che, soprattutto, quelle infantili si presentano infatti più povere e prive di markers di rango. Per questo motivo, a partire dallo studio delle deposizioni che sono state antropologicamente attribuite a individui pre-adulti, questo lavoro si concentra in particolare sulle sepolture dei bambini che, sotto l'aspetto della rappresentazione simbolica del defunto, sembrano relegati ai margini della comunità, data l'estrema povertà dei loro corredi funerari.*

The lack of ancient literary sources and inscriptions makes it very difficult to investigate inequality within the communities of the pre-Roman Italic peoples of Romagna. In order to understand the social structure of the so-called 'Umbrians' of Romagna and gain insights into possible inequalities within the group hierarchy, research must rely on archaeological remains. Since settlements and sanctuaries yield only a limited amount of data, the main sources chosen for this study are the two main necropoleis of the 'Umbrians' of Romagna found at Imola-Montericco¹ and San Martino in Gattara.² On the basis of the strong correlation between ancient society and necropoleis, and through the comparison of archaeological and anthropological data, this study aims at

1 Patrizia von Eles, "Imola, via Montericco: Necropoli," in *La Romagna tra VI e IV secolo a.C.: La necropoli di Montericco e la protostoria romagnola*, ed. Patrizia von Eles (Imola: Santerno Edizioni, 1981): 25–141.

2 Maria Giovanna Bermond Montanari, "Elementi sabini in Romagna," in *Identità e civiltà dei Sabini*, ed. Guglielmo Maetzke (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1996): 375–79; Maria Giovanna Bermond Montanari, "Nuovi dati sulla cronologia della necropoli di San Martino in Gattara (RA)," in *XLIII Corso di Cultura sull'Arte Ravennate e Bizantina*, ed. Raffaella Farioli Campanati (Ravenna: Edizioni del Girasole, 1998): 75–84.

understanding the hierarchical social structure that was behind the organisation of the necropoleis and identifying the less prominent categories. It analyses the arrangement of the tombs in the burial grounds, the composition of the grave goods and, above all, it focuses on the symbolic representation of the deceased – that is, the funerary practices employed by an ancient population to restore an image of itself, through which the roles and hierarchies existing within the social group were stressed and reaffirmed.³

Evidence from the ‘Umbrian’ necropoleis in Romagna shows that gender and, above all, age were the main discriminators, with pre-adult individuals and children strongly marginalised within the cemetery as compared to adults. However, considering that child burials in pre-Roman Italy were susceptible to strong ideological and ritual conditioning,⁴ the marginalisation that can now be observed in the necropoleis is largely attributable to ideological and religious reasons.⁵ The exclusion and/or marginalisation within the necropoleis indicates on the whole that certain groups of individuals were not considered full members of the community.

From a historical point of view, the ‘Umbrians’ of Romagna are an Italic population that settled in the upper Tiber valley at the end of the seventh century BC.⁶ They occupied a large part of inland Romagna, from the Apennine Mountains down to the plain, inhabiting a territory surrounded by Etruscans. This population, defined by scholars as ‘Umbrian’ on the basis of later historical sources,⁷ is characterised as being an Italic enclave within Padanian Etruria (Fig. 1).⁸

3 Mariassunta Cuozzo, “Rappresentazione e interpretazione: obiettivi e prospettive nella lettura delle necropoli,” in *L’écriture et l’espace de la mort: Épigraphie et nécropoles à l’époque préromaine*, ed. Marie-Laurence Haack (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2016): 36–42; Katharina Rebay-Salisbury, *The Human Body in Early Iron Age Central Europe: Burial Practices and Images of the Hallstatt World* (London: Routledge, 2016): 14–21.

4 This aspect is stressed, for example, in Jacopo Tabolli, ed., *From Invisible to Visible: New Methods and Data for the Archaeology of Infant and Child Burials in Pre-Roman Italy and Beyond* (Nicosia: Astrom Edition, 2018) and Elisabetta Gavi, ed., *Birth: Archeologia dell’infanzia nell’Italia preromana* (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2022).

5 Valentino Nizzo, “‘Antenati bambini’: Visibilità e invisibilità dell’infanzia nei sepolcreti dell’Italia tirrenica dalla prima età del Ferro all’Orientalizzante: dalla discriminazione funeraria alla costruzione dell’identità,” in *Dalla nascita alla morte: antropologia e archeologia a confronto*, ed. Valentino Nizzo (Rome: E.S.S. Editorial Service System, 2011): 51–56.

6 Cristiano Iaia and Marco Pacciarelli, “Trebbio (Sansepolcro, AR): An Italic Settlement in the Borderland between Northern Etruria and Umbria,” *Archeologia Classica* 72 (2021): 21–22; Claudio Negrini, “Dalla valle del Marecchia a San Martino in Gattara: Influenze etrusche ed alto-tiberine nelle produzioni ceramiche umbro-padane di VI sec. a.C.,” in *Officine e artigianato ceramico nei siti dell’Appennino tosco-emiliano tra VII e IV sec. a.C.*, ed. Luca Cappuccini and Andrea Gaucci, Biblioteca di Studi Etruschi 66 (Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider, 2022): 231–32.

7 Pseudo-Scylax, *per.* 16–18; Polybius 2.17–18; Dionysius of Halicarnassus 7.3; Livy 5.35.2 and Strabo 5.2.10. See Giovanni Colonna, “Ricerche sugli Etruschi e sugli Umbri a nord degli Appennini,” *Studi Etruschi* 42 (1974): 11–19.

8 Luigi Malnati, “La Romagna tra VII e III secolo a.C.,” in *Primi insediamenti sul Monte Titano: Scavi e Ricerche (1997–2004)*, ed. Gianluca Bottazzi and Paola Bigi (Florence: All’Insegna del Giglio, 2008):

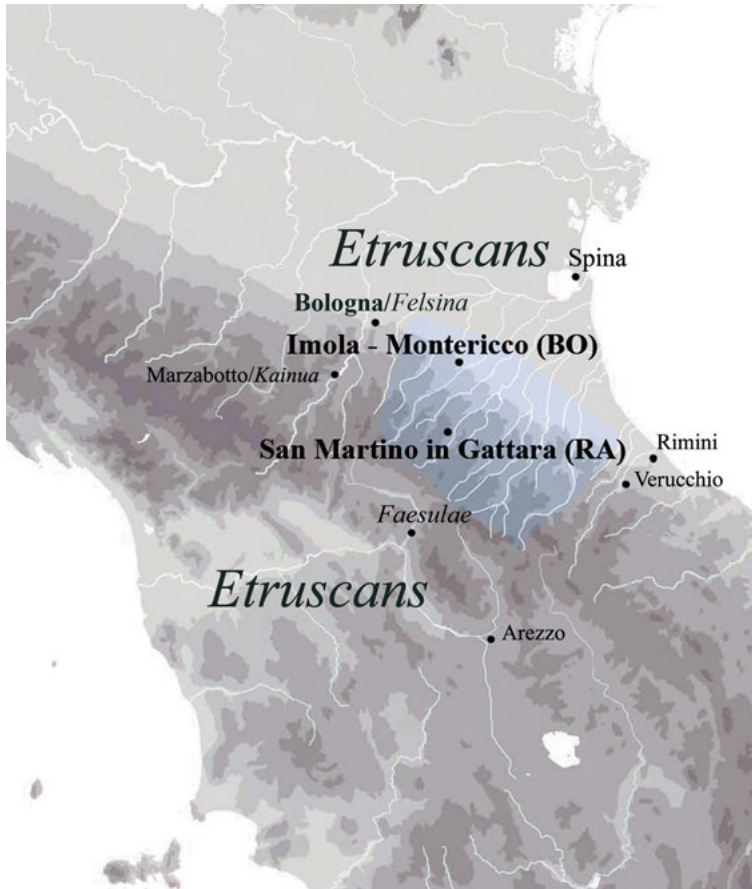


Fig. 1: Map of Romagna and surrounding areas between the sixth and fourth centuries BC.

220–26; Petra Amann, *Die antiken Umbrier zwischen Tiber und Apennin unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Einflüsse aus Etrurien* (Vienna: Holzhausen, 2011): 71–76; Claudio Negrini, “Zwischen Umbriern, Etruskern und Kelten: Zur Frage des Identitätsgefühls vorrömischer Siedlungsgemeinschaften der Romagna (Italien),” in *16. Österreichischer Archäologentag in Wien*, ed. Günther Schörner and Katharina Meinecke (Vienna: Phoibos, 2018): 338–41. On pre-Roman Po Valley, see Giuseppe Sassatelli, “Gli Etruschi nella valle del Po: Riflessioni, problemi e prospettive di ricerca,” *Annali della Fondazione per il Museo Claudio Faina* 15 (2008): 71–114; Alessandro Naso, “Etrusker an der Adria: Verucchio und seine externen Beziehungen,” in *Gegenwart und Altertum: 125 Jahre Alte Geschichte in Innsbruck*, ed. Robert Rollinger et al., Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft N. F. 3 (Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachen und Literaturen der Universität Innsbruck, Bereich Sprachwissenschaft, 2011): 115–46; Andrea Gucci, “Gli Etruschi dell’Adriatico dalla prima Età del ferro alla Romanizzazione,” in *Salso mar: Ἀλμυρὸς Πόντος*, ed. Antonio Panaino and Paolo Ognibene (Sesto San Giovanni: Mimesis, 2017): 63–96; Lorenzo Zamboni, “The Urbanization of Northern Italy: Contextualizing Early Settlement Nucleation in the Po Valley,” *Journal of Archaeological Research* 29, no. (2021): 387–430.

Such a peculiarity indicates a constant relationship with the Etruscans, from whom the 'Umbrians' of Romagna borrowed cultural models. They were a non-urbanised population that occupied the territory through a dense network of small settlements.⁹ In terms of funerary arrangements, two different types of burial grounds are known. Alongside small burial groups, sometimes consisting of only one or two graves distributed throughout the territory and probably connected to small settlements, larger necropoleis have been accounted for between the second half of the sixth and the beginning of the fourth centuries BC. The necropoleis at Imola-Montericco (Fig. 2) and San Martino in Gattara (Fig. 3) in the upper Lamone valley are the better preserved ones, consisting of several dozen tombs grouped in funerary circles.¹⁰ The deceased was inhumated and laid supine in a pit, while the grave goods were placed on the sides and at the feet of the body.¹¹ The arrangement of the burials in closed circles and side by side suggests that the necropolis was organised through the juxtaposition of groups, who were bound by some sort of bond – perhaps a family one – and shared a given circle. This layout is reminiscent of pre-urban models and is very different from those recorded in coeval Felsinean necropoleis, which instead reflect an urbanised society.¹² In the case of Imola-Montericco, no traces of settlements were found near the necropolis, suggesting that the cemetery was used by more than one community located in the environs.

The necropoleis show that male warriors played a central role in the society they pertained to. Male individuals are always characterised as warriors by the deposition of weapons. Javelins and spears are placed in the tomb in two different positions. Usually, one or more spears are placed next to the body with the spear heads next to the skull, highlighting the warrior role of the deceased. At the same time, a broken spear is typically placed next to the feet, carrying the symbolic value of the weapon that would accompany the owner in the afterlife. Grave goods also generally included pottery vessels, while burials of higher-rank individuals contained imported bronze vessels, rich defensive panoplies alongside tools for preparing and cooking meat (Fig. 4).¹³

9 Claudio Negrini, "L'età del Ferro," in *Archeologia nell'Appennino romagnolo: il territorio di Riolo Terme*, ed. Chiara Guarnieri (Imola: Bacchilega, 2007): 40–42; Luigi Malnati and Valerio Manfredi, *Gli Etruschi in Val Padana* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1991): 209–13; Negrini, "Zwischen Umbrern": 339–40.

10 Colonna, "Ricerche sugli Etruschi": 15; Malnati and Manfredi, *Gli Etruschi in Val Padana*: 210–12; Malnati, "Romagna tra VII e III": 224–25; Bermond Montanari, "Elementi sabini": 378–79; Monica Miari, "Nuovi rinvenimenti riguardo alla presenza umbra in Romagna," in *Gli Umbri in età preromana*, ed. Giovannangelo Camporeale (Pisa: Fabrizio Serra, 2014): 215–17.

11 Von Eles, "Imola": 25–29.

12 Giuseppe Sassatelli, "Topografia e 'sistemazione monumentale' delle necropoli felsinee," in *La Formazione della città preromana in Emilia-Romagna* (Bologna: Istituto per la Storia di Bologna, 1988): 197–259.

13 Claudio Negrini, "Weapons and the Symbolic Representation of Warriors in the Necropoleis of Romagna (Italy) between the 10th and the 5th Century BC," in *Ancient Weapons: New Research Perspectives on Weapons and Warfare*, ed. Giacomo Bardelli and Raimon Graells i Fabregat, RGZM – Tagungen 44 (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2021): 41–42.

Imola - Montericco
Necropolis plan



Fig. 2: Necropolis of Montericco (Imola – province of Bologna/I) – General plan.



Fig. 4: Necropolis of Montericco (Imola – province of Bologna/I) – Tomb 4.

steinverkleidung aus der 'Tomba della Regina' von Sirolo-Numana (Prov. Ancona, Italien),” *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts: Römische Abteilung* 126 (2020): 39–44, with further references.

Between the sixth and fifth centuries BC, the centrality of high-rank warriors is stressed by the presence of tools for preparing and distributing meat in a banquet (cauldrons, knives, skewers, andirons and *kreagra*), which appear in grave goods alongside rich armoury elements – such as spears, helmets, greaves and shields – as well as bronze and imported vessels. These objects are of exclusive male and elitist pertinence, and are sometimes directly associated with weapons, as in the case of Tomb 72 at Imola-Montericco (Fig. 5).¹⁶ They possibly suggest the existence of *Speisegemeinschaften*; that is, warrior brotherhoods in which sharing meat represented a significant ritual. The lack of these objects in female burials may suggest a *Männerbund*, a practice exclusively reserved for men.¹⁷ From this perspective, it would be tempting to assume that the funerary circles were reserved for warriors who were members of these brotherhoods and their relatives, although this is a suggestion that cannot be proven at the moment.

As far as evidence is concerned, the necropolis of Imola yielded seventy-seven tombs arranged in four circles, while fifty-seven tombs arranged in two circles were uncovered at San Martino in Gattara. Imola has been the subject of modern archaeological investigations and a full publication, while information on San Martino in Gattara is only known through a few published burials. Both cemeteries were used during the same time period and can be divided into the same three phases: the first dating to the second half of the sixth century, the second to the first half of the fifth century and the third to the second half of the fifth century BC.¹⁸

Anthropological studies are available for both necropoleis: forty-eight individuals have been investigated at Imola, while only twelve burials have been analysed at San Martino in Gattara,¹⁹ with generic information on age and gender having been recorded by the former director of the excavations, Maria Giovanna Bermond Montanari. Of all the necropoleis of the 'Umbrians' of Romagna, these two cemeteries are the only ones where individual child burials have been accounted for so far: remains of children have never been found in the isolated burials scattered throughout the

16 Von Eles, "Imola": 128–34; Negrini, "Weapons": 41–42.

17 Christopher Kohler and Alessandro Naso, "Appunti sulla funzione di alari e spiedi nella società arcaiche dell'Italia centro-meridionale," in *Papers of the Fourth Conference of Italian Archaeology: The Archaeology of Power*, vol. 2, ed. Edward Herring, Ruth Whitehouse and John Wilkins (London: Accordia Research Centre, 1991): 45–46; Negrini, "Weapons": 43.

18 Giovanna Bergonzi and Patrizia von Eles, "Archaeological and Anthropological Evidence from the Iron Age Necropolis at Montericco, Imola (Emilia-Romagna, Italy): A Comparison," *Rivista di Antropologia: Supplemento* 66 (1988): 340–45; Maria Giovanna Bermond Montanari, "L'abitato di San Martino in Gattara: Nuove considerazioni," *Hesperia* 18 (2004): 316.

19 Fiorenzo Facchini, "I resti scheletrici del sepolcreto gallico di San Martino in Gattara (Ravenna)," *Studi Etruschi* 36 (1968): 73–97; Patricia Brasili Gualandi and Maria Giovanna Belcastro, "Una necropoli dell'età del Ferro in Emilia-Romagna: Montericco (Imola) (VI–IV sec. a.C.)," *Rivista di Antropologia* 63 (1984–1985): 213–30.



Fig. 5: Necropolis of Montericco (Imola – province of Bologna/I) – Tomb 72.

territory. The scantiness of pre-adult burials in a society in which infant mortality must have been extremely high should not be overlooked.

Even if women seem to hold a subordinate position in the rigid warrior society of the 'Umbrians' of Romagna, they still fully belonged to the community and had the right to be buried in the necropolis. This does not apply to children and pre-adult individuals, who seem to have been excluded or at least strongly marginalised. The larger amount of data available for the Imola-Montericco necropolis made it a sound choice as the main source for the following analyses. The dynamics that will be highlighted here, however, also seem to be relevant to San Martino in Gattara.

At Imola-Montericco, 63% of the burials belonged to adults, 17% were of children and only 2% were of adolescents. Fourteen burials belonged to children up to the age of ten, two graves belonged to adolescents aged between eleven and nineteen. These data were refined by skeletal analyses, leading to the identification of eight individuals under the age of five among the children.²⁰ As far as San Martino in Gattara is concerned, only four child graves were identified. This number might have inevitably been influenced by the fact that a large part of the necropolis is still unpublished.²¹ The scantiness of attestations is remarkable: the number of pre-adults is just over 20% of the total, well below the percentage that, according to modern estimates, must have characterised infant mortality in ancient societies (between 30% and 50%) (Fig. 6).²²

The data become even more significant if we focus only on Imola-Montericco, the better-known context: here, the graves are not evenly distributed across all three phases. Sixteen pre-adult burials were identified in the four circles, which are named South, East, West and North. Only one burial (Tomb 33) could not be assigned to a specific phase, even if the presence of a fibula of the 'Certosa' type among the grave goods suggests a date within the first two phases; that is, until the mid-fifth century BC.²³ The other fifteen tombs can be dated precisely.

20 Brasili Gualandi and Belcastro, "Una necropoli dell'età del Ferro": 214–15. The pre-adult graves at Montericco are: T. 18, 25, 33, 40–42, 46–47, 56–57, 59, 61–63; see von Eles, "Imola": 49, 59, 70, 81, 83–84, 90–95, 105–10, 115.

21 The pre-adult graves at San Martino in Gattara are: T. 8, 12 (Facchini, "I resti scheletrici": 81, 83–84), 21 (Maria Giovanna Bermond Montanari, "San Martino in Gattara: Lo scavo del 1968," *Atti e Memorie di Storia Patria per le Province di Bologna*, n.s. XLV (1995): 110–11; Maria Giovanna Bermond Montanari, "San Martino in Gattara (Ra): Scavi 1969–1970," *Padusa* 41 (2005): 196).

22 Diego Elia, "Sepolture di pre-adulti nelle necropoli greche dell'Italia meridionale: osservazioni sulle strategie di rappresentazione tra periodo tardo-arcaico ed età classica," in *L'enfant et la mort dans l'Antiquité III: Le matériel associé aux tombes d'enfants*, ed. Antoine Hermay and Céline Dubois (Aix-en-Provence: Centre Camille Jullian, 2012): 98–99; Rebay-Salisbury, *The Human Body*: 176; Giulia Morpurgo, "Le sepolture di defunti in età subadulta nei sepolcreti etruschi di Bologna di 'fase Certosa': un primo bilancio tra questioni di metodo ed aspetti rituali," in *Birth: Archeologia dell'infanzia nell'Italia preromana*, ed. Elisabetta Govi (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2022): 160.

23 Von Eles, "Imola": 70.

Imola - Montericco
Necropolis plan

Legend:
Tombs of sub-adults: ●

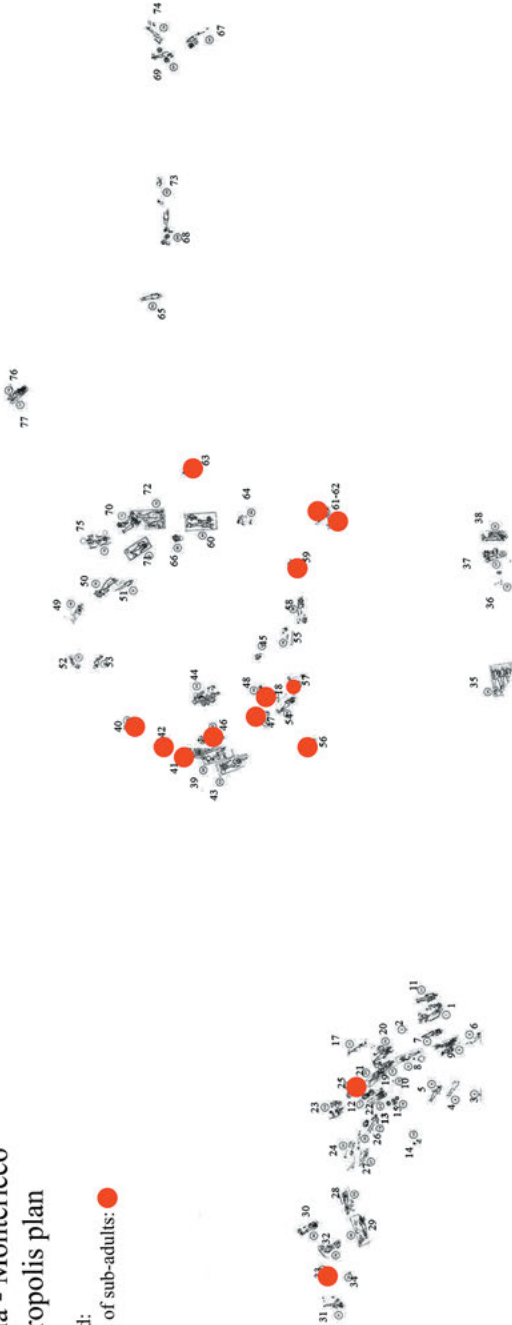


Fig. 6: Necropolis of Montericco (Imola – province of Bologna/I) – General plan with sub-adult burials.

Only one burial dates to the first phase (that is, the second half of the sixth century BC), to which twenty-nine adult tombs also belong. Eight pre-adult burials and eighteen adult graves have been accounted for in the second phase (the first half of the fifth century BC). Four pre-adult burials and twenty-six adult graves belong to the third phase (the second half of the fifth century BC). Therefore, it seems that the exclusion of infant tombs from the necropolis did not affect the entire period of use, but only the first phase. Such peculiarity can also be observed at San Martino in Gattara, where child burials were found to be lacking in the first phase. Therefore, up until the fifth century BC, necropoleis seem to have been reserved only for adults. It is likely that in this period, pre-adult individuals, from infancy to adolescence, were not considered as full members of the community and for this reason were buried elsewhere. The only burial dating to the first phase is one of the poorest in the whole necropolis and contained only two *fibulae*.

Observing the distribution of pre-adult burials within the necropolis, one notices that fourteen out of sixteen depositions are located in the West circle – the only one entirely investigated. The infant burials in this circle are not distributed regularly along the perimeter like those of adults, but are mainly concentrated along the southern border of the circle. In addition, considering the widespread practice in central Italy of grouping children's graves in certain sectors of the necropolis,²⁴ the concentration of infant graves in the West circle possibly suggests the existence of areas reserved for infants, which have not been identified in the other incomplete circles. If we assume that a circle was the burial ground for a specific group of people, possibly connected by family ties, we see that the completeness of the West circle provides significant evidence for understanding the chronological development of funerary practices. While the tendency to exclude children from the necropolis during the first phase is confirmed, with only one occurrence (Tomb 18) out of nine tombs, there is a noticeable increase in the number of child graves from the fifth century BC onwards, with as many as eight burials (Tombs 40–41, 46, 56, 57, 61–63) out of seventeen, corresponding to about 50% of the total. In the second half of the fifth century, that is, during the third phase of use, the percentage of children remains quite high and corresponds to 30% of the total, with three children's graves (Tombs 42, 47, 59) out of a total of ten burials. During the fifth century BC, that is, during the second and third phases, the percentages of child graves are close to those estimated by modern studies for ancient mortality (Fig. 7).

The increase might suggest that starting from the second phase, all members of the community were allowed to be buried in the circle, regardless of age. The transition from the first phase to the second one clearly reflects deep changes in funerary practi-

24 Joachim Weidig, "Lutto, rito funebre e status sociale: Considerazioni sulle sepolture infantili in Umbria e nelle aree limitrofe dalla prima età del Ferro all'epoca arcaica," in *Birth: Archeologia dell'infanzia nell'Italia preromana*, ed. Elisabetta Govi (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2022): 572–73.

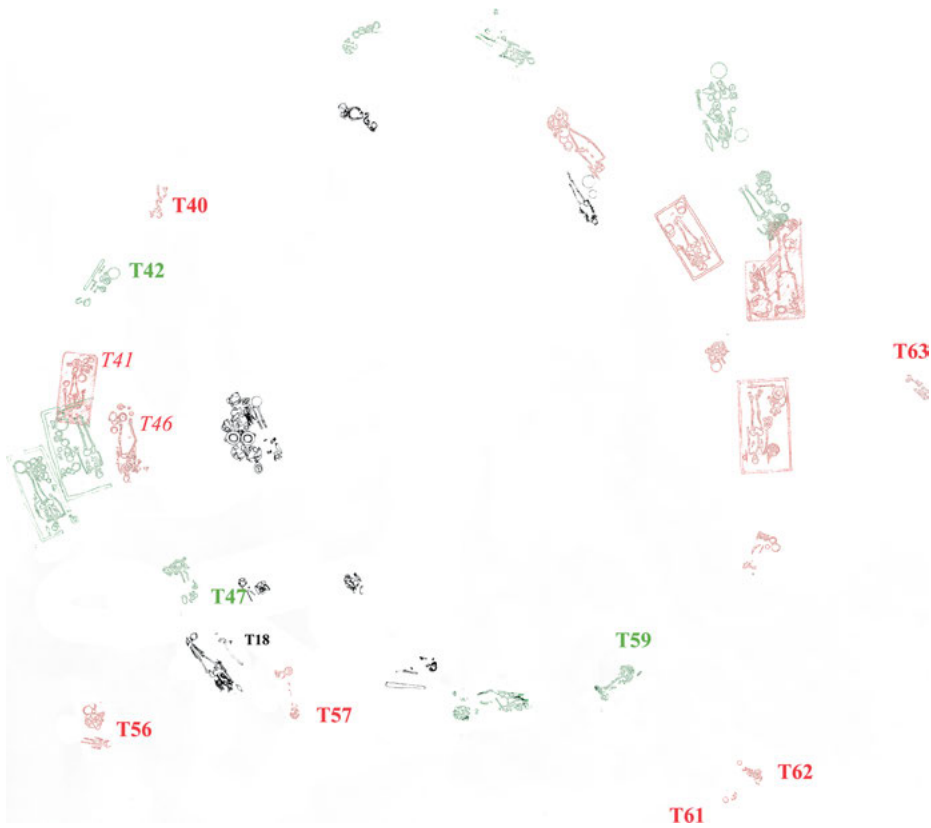


Fig. 7: Necropolis of Montericco (Imola – province of Bologna/I) – the so-called West circle. The tombs of the first phase are marked in black, those of the second phase in red, those of the third phase in green. Child graves are marked with a number.

ces. A sort of ‘democratisation process’ of the afterlife seems to have occurred: the necropolis became accessible to those categories that had been excluded until then.

The progressive emancipation of children as reflected in funerary practices can also be noticed when looking at the grave goods. If the only burial from the first phase stands out as one of the poorest in the entire necropolis, in the next phase, the grave goods are found to be richer, with those of younger children being poorer than those of older children and adolescents. The only three graves classified as being very poor belong to infants under the age of five; they were buried outside the outer perimeter of the circle, and their graves contain only a small bowl placed at the feet.²⁵ The location outside the circle possibly indicates a partial exclusion of the younger children from the rest of the social group. On the other hand, the burials of the older children

²⁵ Graves T. 61–63.

show more substantial grave goods, albeit characterised by infant features. The composition of the ceramic set and the type of vessels are similar to those of the adults,²⁶ but the vases are smaller in size – not miniatures, just smaller. Only male children show a gender characterisation: they are buried with weapons such as javelin heads, which could be interpreted as reduced-size spears, similar to what can be observed for the vases. In Tomb 57, which belongs to a child under the age of ten, the two javelin heads were placed at the feet of the deceased and were laid without the shafts, while intact weapons, such as those usually placed on the sides of the body in adult tombs, were missing. This possibly suggests that the javelin heads had a symbolic meaning, emphasising the role that the child would have played once he had become an adult.²⁷ In this respect, the case of the adolescent of Tomb 41 is also elucidating. The ceramic set was smaller than its actual size, but the weapons were similar to the ones found in adult burials, with a defunctionalised spear laid at the feet, clearly indicating that the child was already considered to be part of the warrior community (Fig. 8).²⁸

In the third phase, that is, from the mid-fifth century BC onwards, the difference between children and adolescents disappears. The three burials that can be dated to this period belong to boys buried with grave goods similar to those of adult individuals. The objects are smaller, but entire javelins are placed next to the bodies, in the same exact position as in adult graves. This suggests that children were no longer considered as future warriors: this time, they were characterised as actual warriors, even if young, and were probably fully integrated into the community.²⁹

This reconstruction has also been confirmed by the evidence from San Martino in Gattara, although published data from this necropolis are limited. Children burials have only been accounted for in the larger and smaller circles from the fifth century BC: three date to the first half of the century and one to the second half. Compared to those found at Imola, the tombs at San Martino in Gattara are generally richer (Fig. 9). One of the inhumations in the larger circle, Tomb 21, is located marginally outside of the circle, showing a similarity with the three poorer tombs of very young children found outside the West circle at Imola. The small size of the skeleton, as reported by Maria Giovanna Bermond Montanari, suggests that the deceased was a very young child. The few grave goods, consisting in an armilla and glass paste beads, confirm the general poverty of infant tombs. However, one of the oinochoe-shaped glass paste beads is an import from the East. It is a precious object that possibly reveals the wealth of the family of the deceased, albeit wealth that is limited by the age of the child, which evidently did not allow for any other exception to the ritual (Fig. 10).³⁰

²⁶ See Tomb 40.

²⁷ Von Eles, “Imola”: 106–7.

²⁸ Von Eles, “Imola”: 82–83.

²⁹ Von Eles, “La ceramica”: 89.

³⁰ A length of only 60 cm; see Bermond Montanari, “San Martino in Gattara: Lo scavo del 1968”: 110–11.

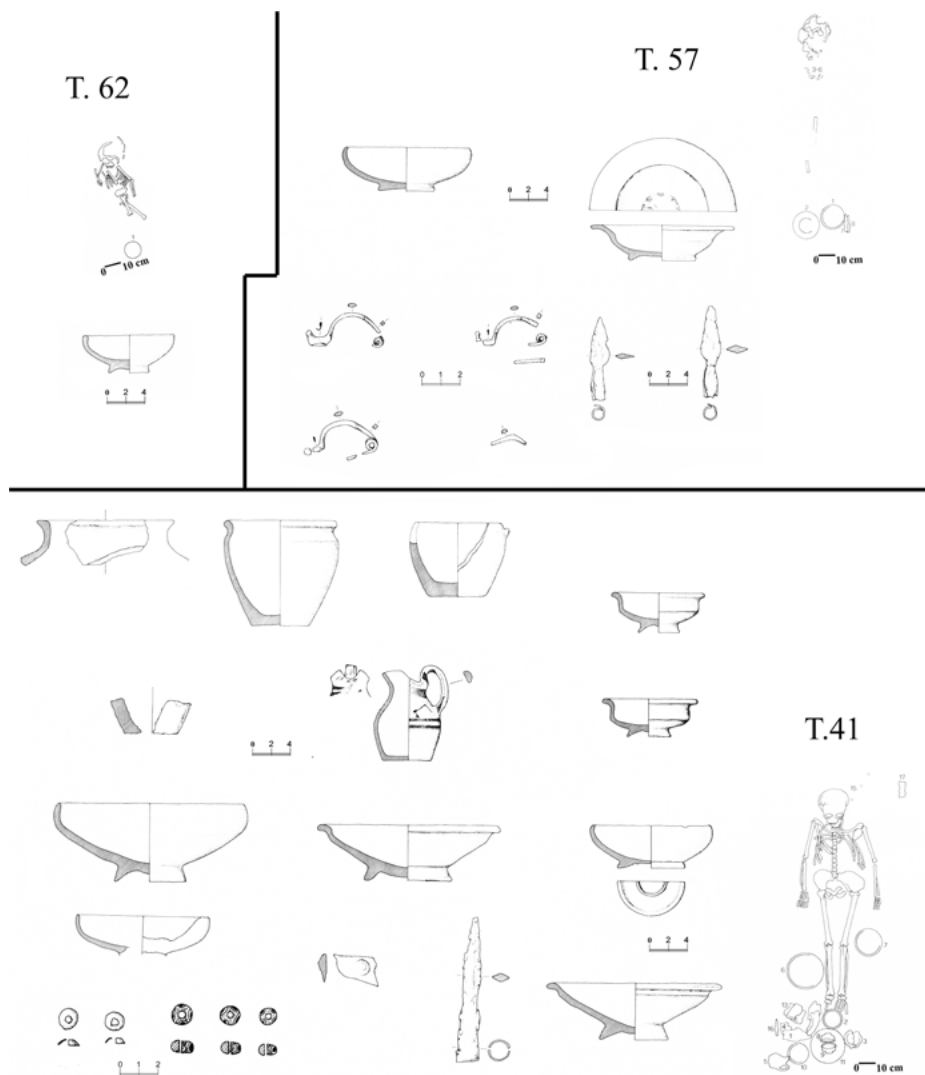


Fig. 8: Necropolis of Montericco (Imola – province of Bologna/I) – Tombs 41, 57 and 62.

The other two tombs dating to the first half of the fifth century (Tomb 8³¹ and Tomb 31³²) belong to two males, only one of whom was an adolescent aged between ten and twelve, as anthropological investigations have shown. Anthropological data are, however, lack-

³¹ Maria Giovanna Bermond Montanari, “La necropoli protostorica di S. Martino in Gattara (Ravenna),” *Studi Etruschi* 37 (1969): 213–28.

³² Bermond Montanari, “San Martino in Gattara (Ra): Scavi 1969”: 196.

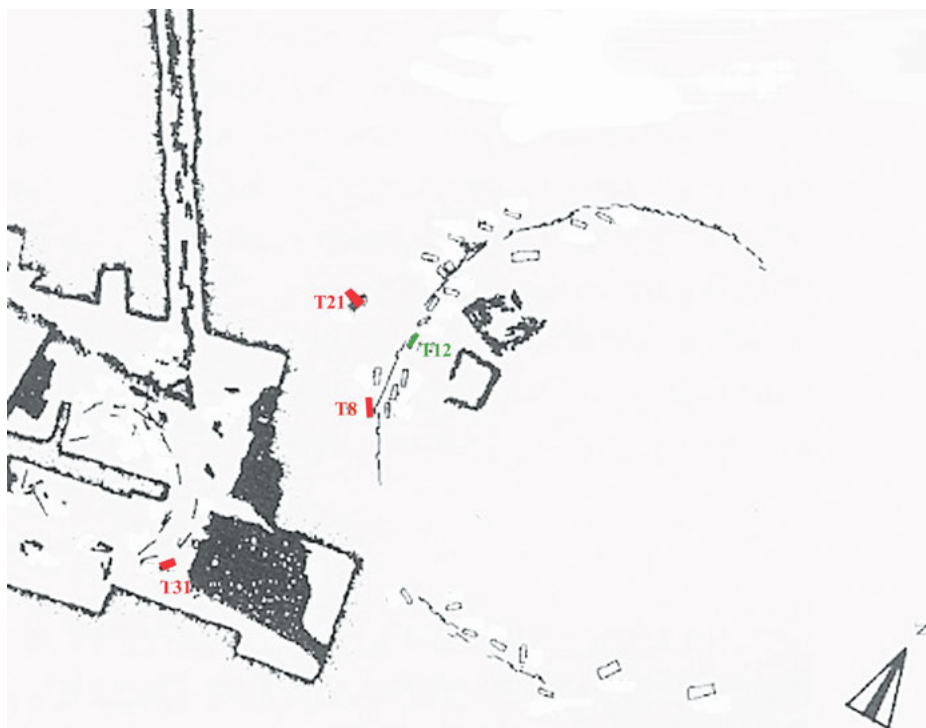


Fig. 9: Necropolis of San Martino in Gattara (Brisighella – province of Ravenna/I) – General plan with sub-adult burials.

ing for the second individual.³³ The grave goods share common features with those found at Imola: their composition is similar and the objects are smaller (Fig. 11). In both cases, javelin heads were found next to the head of the deceased, possibly indicating that the weapons had a representative function as they were not intentionally broken. In this respect, the adolescent burial is comparable to the other adolescent burial at Imola, where the deceased was characterised as a warrior.

In the third phase of the necropolis, that is, in the second half of the fifth century BC, the integration already noticed at Imola is even clearer at San Martino in Gattara. The only known child burial, Tomb 12, refers to an individual of about eight years of age³⁴ and is one of the richest of the entire necropolis. The grave goods, consisting of small vases, were enriched by an Attic crater (the only one currently known from an 'Umbrian' tomb in Romagna), an Attic skyphos, a kyathos, a bronze pan, several spearheads, a knife and andirons. Although belonging to a young child, the burial

³³ Facchini, "I resti scheletrici": 81.

³⁴ Facchini, "I resti scheletrici": 83–84.

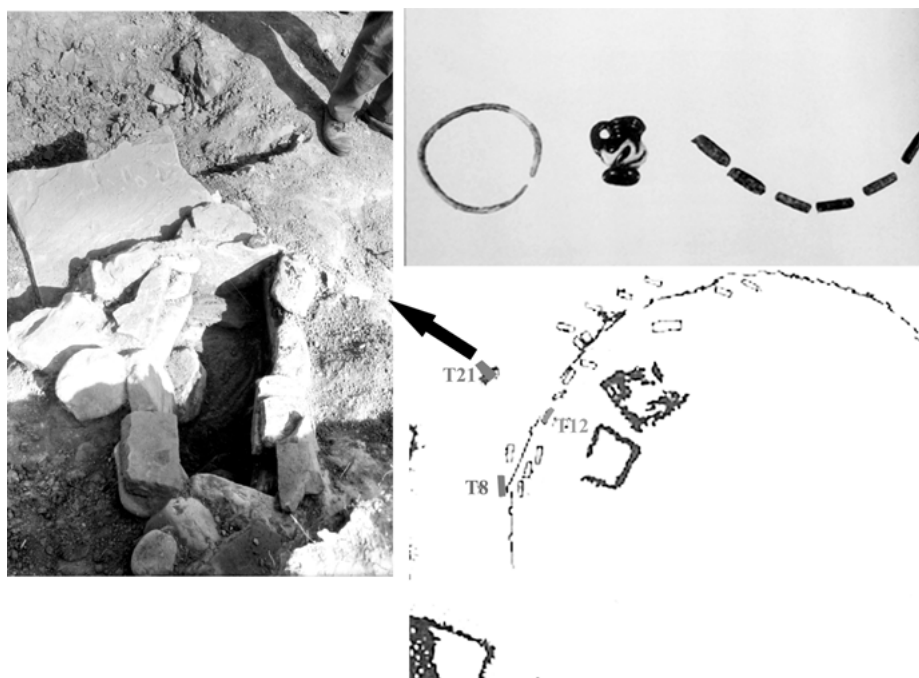


Fig. 10: Necropolis of San Martino in Gattara (Brisighella – province of Ravenna/I) – Tomb 21 during excavation and its grave goods.

displayed all the indicators of rank that had been the prerogative of adult males of high lineage until then (Fig. 12).³⁵ This suggests that the child had the right to receive the same privileges.

The integration of children into the necropolis at Imola and, above all, at San Martino in Gattara possibly suggests that the society in those areas slowly absorbed a model in which, after infancy, children entered the community on the basis of lineage and not actual capability. The son of a warrior and the son of a warrior chief were considered as such and were as such characterised in the burials. This reconstruction lacks the female counterpart, as girl burials are not evidenced in the last phase of the necropoleis. The reason possibly lies in the limited amount of information available, but one cannot rule out the possibility that given the central role played by warriors in society, only boys were allowed a privileged status.

Other contexts outside of Romagna show that the funerary practices of the ‘Umbrians’ of Romagna convey a cultural stiffness, with children burials characterised by a certain degree of backwardness. In Bologna, in the necropolis of Via Belle Arti, two tombs date to the last phase of the necropolis, that is, to the beginning of the second

³⁵ Bermond Montanari, “La necropoli protostorica”: 224–25.



Fig. 11: Necropolis of San Martino in Gattara (Brisighella – province of Ravenna/I) – Tomb 8, grave goods.

half of the sixth century BC, roughly contemporary with the first phase of the necropoleis in Romagna. The burials in Bologna yielded ‘Italic’ fibulae, which are very rare in the Bolognese area and probably indicate the presence of ‘Umbrians’ of Romagna who had moved to the Etruscan centre. One of these tombs, Tomb 105, belongs to a small child. The grave goods were not particularly rich, but not too different from those of other child burials documented in the same necropolis. In contrast to the situation in Romagna, where child graves are almost absent, in Bologna, children are buried together with the adults, albeit accompanied by fairly poor grave goods. Tomb 105 is located near Tomb 91, which possibly belongs to an individual of ‘Umbrian’ origin, thus showing how the graves followed the Bolognese custom that saw children placed near an adult with whom they must have had a certain bond.³⁶

The child grave in Bologna underlines the cultural difference between the two areas in spite of having the same ethnic origin. In fact, the child in Bologna had the right to be buried with the adults and was in some way perceived as an integral part

³⁶ Patrizia von Eles, Marta Mazzoli and Claudio Negrini, “La necropoli villanoviana e orientalizzante di via Belle Arti a Bologna,” in *Preistoria e protostoria dell’Emilia-Romagna*, vol. 2, ed. Maria Bernabò Brea (Florence: Edizioni Firenze, 2018): 307. Tomb 91 is still unpublished.



Fig. 12: Necropolis of San Martino in Gattara (Brisighella – province of Ravenna/I) – Tomb 12, grave goods.

of the social group that used the necropolis; the same was not true in Romagna in this period.

The delay with which infants were integrated into the social body among the ‘Umbrians’ of Romagna is also shown by the composition of the grave goods. From the late Iron Age onwards, evidence from areas contiguous to Italic Romagna, such as Verucchio, Umbria or Picenum, shows that children in the necropoleis were characterised by rank indicators that underlined their aristocratic lineage. This feature suggests a society in which children inherited privileges at birth. This is the case, for example, with the princely tombs at Spoleto or Verucchio in the seventh century BC, where even hierarchical relationships between children of high lineage have been documented. The children were evidently destined to hold different positions at the top of the social pyramid from the day they were born.³⁷ In Romagna, their integration into society occurred

³⁷ Maria Laura Manca and Joachim Weidig, eds., *Spoleto 2700 anni fa – Spoleto vor 2700 Jahren: Seppulture principesche dalla necropoli di Piazza d’Armi – Zepter und Königskinder aus der Nekropole von Piazza d’Armi* (Spoleto: Gruppo Editoriale Locale, 2014); Giorgia Di Lorenzo et al., “Verucchio: The Social Status of Children: a Methodological Question Concerning Funerary Symbolism and the Use of

very late (only in the fifth century BC), and only in the second half of the century was the integration complete. The reasons for this delay are difficult to explain. The social structure that is evident from the necropoleis in the sixth century BC still appears very rigid. The social role of the deceased is directly linked to their actual role in the community. This is clear from the earliest phase of the Imola necropolis, where the richest tombs belong to adult males of fighting age, while older males over sixty years and no longer fit for war are still characterised as warriors by the presence of spears but are buried in the poorest graves; on the other hand, children were not allowed in the necropolis at all. In this context, children were evidently not yet perceived as effective members of the adult community. Only from the fifth century onwards does this aspect seem to change.

It is perhaps no coincidence that the rigid funerary practices loosen up during the transition between the sixth and fifth centuries BC, when Italic Romagna, following intensive frequentation by people from Etruria, starts adopting its neighbour's models and customs. In this period, the material culture of Romagna was also affected by significant changes: earlier customs and ceramic productions typical of central Italy were discontinued, and new models deriving from Padanian Etruria were absorbed. In the funeral ritual, the introduction of the banquet can be observed, as well as the progressive separation between lineage and the actual role of the deceased. It is likely that these transformations reflect the social changes experienced by the 'Umbrians' of Romagna and have been influenced by their contact with their urbanised neighbours, the Etruscans.³⁸

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³⁸ Petra Amann and Claudio Negrini, "San Martino in Gattara (Ra) e le sue relazioni con gli Etruschi," in *Gli Etruschi nella Valle del Po, Atti del XXX Convegno di Studi Etruschi e Italici* (Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider, forthcoming).

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