

ANCIENT ITALY

Regions without Boundaries

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and *Corinna Riva*

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CHAPTER 5

Etruria and the Etruscans

Recent Approaches

Vedia Izzet

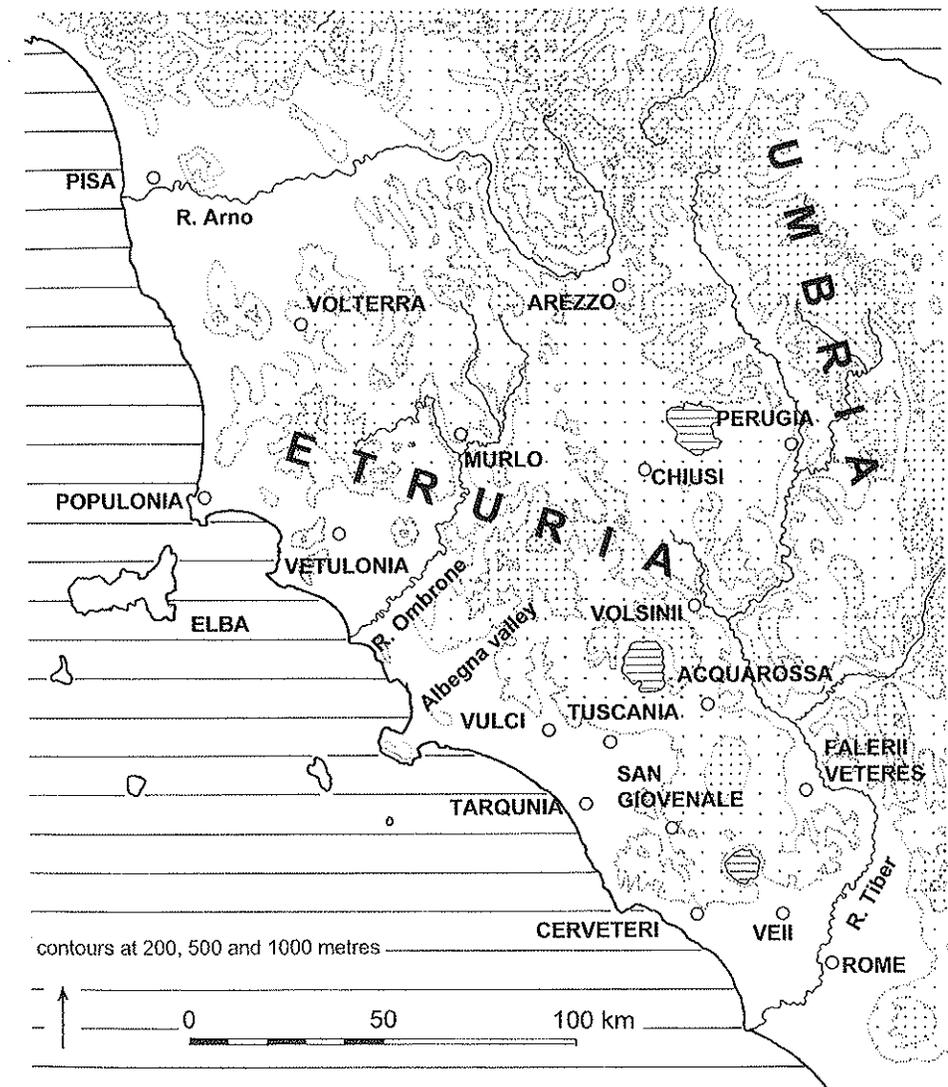
Introduction

The discipline of Etruscology is barely recognized outside Italy, yet the material culture of the Etruscans not only arouses interest in scholars internationally, but also, as part of a wider inquiry into the past, illustrates, and forms part of, debates that are of interest to more 'mainstream' archaeologists and historians. The discipline is frequently seen from the outside as arcane and introspective. To a large extent this is true: in a reconfiguration of the now-famous cartoon characterizing the impact (or lack of it) of theoretical debate on prehistoric as opposed to Classical archaeology, the pipe-smoking, *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*-reading professor of Classical archaeology could just as easily be an Etruscologist reading the *Thesaurus Linguae Etruscae* (for a reproduction of the original cartoon, see Johnson 1999, 183). Yet this is to underestimate the work done in many parts of the world, where more recent, 'anthropological', or theoretically informed work on the Etruscans is beginning to have an effect. Such work combines a move from the traditional obsessions of the discipline of Etruscology, such as origins and language (both effectively put out to grass some fifty years or so ago: Pallottino 1991), with a rejection of some of its methodologies—most notably the art-historical tradition that has dominated studies of Etruscan artefacts (Perkins 1999).

The problem with the art-historical tradition is that it results in work that is particularistic and ignores the wider material and social context in which artefacts functioned in the past. This is not to tar all art history with the same broad brush—by the art-historical tradition I mean the traditional approach, rather than all practitioners of art history in its widest (and newest) sense. However, in the traditional approach, where social context is acknowledged, material culture is, at best, seen as the end result of social or historical events. This does not take into account the recent developments in material culture studies, where cultural artefacts are seen as participants in social life to the same extent as human actors (Dobres 2000; Dobres and Robb 2000; Knappett 2005).

One of the most common characteristics of the traditional art-historical approach is the emphasis placed on external sources for changes in Etruscan

material culture. Interaction between cultures is seen as the impetus for local changes. Again, such approaches are rehearsed as though in ignorance of the theoretical developments in anthropology and the social sciences more widely, and in archaeology in particular (Sahlins 1988; Thomas 1991; Howes 1996). Most importantly for the Etruscans, the nature of adoption has been shown to be far more complex and culturally specific than simple arguments of superiority allow.



22 Map of Etruria (drawn by Howard Mason, with additions by Guy Bradley and Corinna Riva)

With these problems in mind, this chapter intends to provide a broad history of Etruscan culture; due to the wider exposure of Etruria than other regions in Italy in English-speaking publications (see Further Reading), it will be primarily a synthesis of recent work. The chapter will be divided into three unequal sections along chronological lines, roughly corresponding to the Orientalizing period (seventh and sixth centuries BC), the Archaic and Classical periods (fifth century BC), and the period of Romanization (fourth to second centuries BC). The first section, drawing on the work of Stoddart and Riva, will argue that this was a period of complex state-formation (or re-formation) in Etruria, in which the polities of later Archaic and Classical Etruria became established, and in which new material articulations of power emerged that were to sustain Etruscan elites for the rest of their history (Stoddart 1987, 1989, 1990; Riva 2006, forthcoming).

The second and third sections will be divided between themes based loosely on different types of material culture. The themes of gender, ritual and landscape will each be treated as a resource for examining the social changes that the cultural entities established in the Orientalizing period underwent in subsequent periods. The last section will draw on the work of Terrenato and Roth for the Roman period (Terrenato 1998, 2001; Roth 2007).

The reason for selecting these authors to guide us through Etruria is that they provide accounts that differ self-consciously from traditional ones. They are theoretically informed, and take a wide perspective on their specific periods. They touch on the issues problematized above: cultural interaction (whether 'Orientalization', 'Hellenization' or 'Romanization'), and material culture change. Of course, the choice is narrow—there is much excellent recent work that is not referred to explicitly. My selection has an obvious unity of origin (and so, to a large extent, of approach), so they are more easily woven together into a single account, as appropriate for a volume like this one. Importantly, however, the work of these authors together forms the starting point for an integrated treatment of Etruscan history that restores primacy to ancient material culture for the first time.

The Orientalizing Period

The traditional shorthand definition of Etruria, which is based on the later Augustan division of Italy into regions (see Bradley, this volume), is the area of central Italy that is bounded to the south and east by the Tiber, and to the north by the Arno (Figure 22). Culturally, however, Etruria extended well into Campania and into the Po Valley at various points. The region is exceptionally rich in agricultural, marine, and mineral resources, and this played a crucial part in its historical development. It is conventional to divide the region into north and south, roughly corresponding to modern Tuscany and northern Lazio

respectively. The landscape of southern Etruria is dominated by the natural and artificial moulding of the soft tufa rock. The ease with which tufa is eroded by running water has meant that, in the course of time, rivers and streams have carved steep, deep valleys, leaving the original ground-level high above them. Frequently such streams surround plateaux that are flat, easily defended and with good water supplies. These formed ideal locations for settlements, and were exploited as such by Etruscans (and their predecessors). In north Etruria, the tufa is not as prominent and the landscape is characterized by a wide coastal plain, and a more rugged mountainous interior, making access and communication more difficult. Along its entirety, the coast has many natural harbours that were exploited by the Etruscans. It was within this natural setting that Etruscan culture flourished.

The early part of Etruscan history has been one of some controversy in the last thirty years or so, first in terms of chronology, and then (and in consequence) in terms of the 'positioning' of the emergence of social complexity and state-formation. Traditional Etruscologists, using funerary and settlement evidence from sites that were to become the major urban centres of the region, have maintained that the beginnings of state identities were in the period known conventionally as Orientalizing, that is, in the eighth and seventh centuries BC. More recently, the 'Roman' school of prehistorians have used the evidence of material from early settlements, as well as patterns of settlement distribution, to demonstrate origins stretching far back into the Late Bronze Age, and this view is gradually becoming the dominant one (for a summary of the debate and accompanying bibliography, see Vanzetti 2002). Despite this revision of our chronology, the terminology of earlier accounts persists (and will be used in this chapter). The early first millennium culture of Etruria (and beyond) is known traditionally as Villanovan, or Iron Age. The archaeological material from this period suggests a society emerging from the Late Bronze Age that had a degree of foreign contacts, internal social differentiation, and settlement hierarchy. This was gradually elaborated in the ensuing Iron Age, during which time such patterns were slowly accentuated. After the late eighth century, there is a sudden and rapid increase in the wealth and complexity of the material (and particularly funerary) record. The dead are placed in monumental burial mounds in which chambers are carved from the rock. These chambers contain assemblages of enormous wealth and diversity, such as gold and silver vessels and jewellery, amber and faience amulets or vessels, bronze arms and armour, and ceramics of different fabric and type. These collections are typical of the 'Orientalizing' phenomenon throughout the Mediterranean in emphasizing the wealth and the eastern origins of the stylistic repertoire of which they form part.

It is at this point that Riva's study of the nature of power in the Orientalizing period begins, and what follows draws heavily on this work (Riva 2000; 2006). It is important to remember that, unlike many other Etruscological treatments of the Orientalizing phenomenon, Riva's is set firmly within her

wider, pan-Mediterranean view of the concept, following Pallottino (1965). Traditional accounts of Orientalizing in Etruria stress the transmission of objects and lifestyles from the east to central Italy for local elite consumption and affirmation of status: alongside the elaborate metalwork, and new forms of vessel and ornamentation, came new ideas, ritual practices, forms of writing and recording, and social practices such as communal dining and wine. The evidence of these new lifestyles derives in major part from funerary contexts, consisting of objects such as drinking vessels, feasting equipments (such as firedogs and spits), ritual objects and inscriptions. Nevertheless, excavations during the second half of the twentieth century (most notably at Murlo and Acquarossa, but also at smaller high-status sites) have yielded evidence of this lifestyle in a non-funerary, residential context. All these features are drawn into discussions of elite status display and legitimization within increasingly complex political communities. These objects were deposited in funerary contexts, where they signalled Etruscan elite power. However, Riva points out that the reason that these objects, or the lifestyles they imply, are thought to be markers of elite, or princely, status is because of their role as such in their eastern point of origin (she gives as examples of such trans-cultural symbolism as the paradise flower motif, the architectural features of the tumulus and the bronze fan). She therefore argues that such interpretations are diffusionist in suggesting the transmission of objects and cultural practices, unchanged, from east to west.

In an attempt to re-contextualize the material from these burials, Riva follows recent work on settlement patterns. Here Pacciarelli and others have shown that the social and spatial differentiation that traditionally characterizes the Orientalizing phenomenon in Etruria can be traced back to the ninth-century reorganization of the landscape, with the emergence of larger settlements that would have necessitated greater socio-political organization (Pacciarelli 2000). Once the pre-Orientalizing origins of the new social structure are established, Riva is able to challenge the idea of the eastern origin of 'princely' power, and of one of its putative symbols, the *lituus*. Instead, she proposes that the funerary symbolism that is truly at work in the expression of power is based around the imagery of the house or hut, a visual tradition that extends back before the Orientalizing period in the form of hut urns, and into the Orientalizing period in the elaborate replication of domestic interiors inside the monumental tumuli. This argument is based on the important link between the house, family and landownership. Iron Age hut urns are extremely rare, but they are often associated with wealth and warrior status. Similarly the Orientalizing chamber tombs contain great wealth and items associated with warfare, such as shields and chariots. The affirmation of political power in death is in the link between military prowess and the household.

Though this is not a case made explicitly by Riva, her argument echoes the emphasis in recent archaeological thought on the importance of the material world in materializing and creating social realities. Her stress on the importance

of pre-existing social differentiation is part of her refutation of a colonialist (though she terms it diffusionist) perspective in which eastern models are thought to be, somehow, the natural choice for Etruscan elites. She rightly questions why these objects were chosen by elites at the point at which they were, suggesting in the end that such questions are unanswerable. Instead, she turns her attention to a pre-existing cultural template for the articulation of power: the links between the household and military prowess. She shows, through the Iron Age antecedents, the importance of the household in the funerary representation of power relations from a period of Etruscan history that pre-dates the eastern imports, and that this funerary ideology persisted, though different in detail, through the Orientalizing period. In this way, she detracts from the importance of external signifiers in Etruscan social symbolism, and emphasizes the importance of the local, pre-existing construction of social realities through the medium of material culture. In this way her work is in line with the central argument of this chapter: that material culture is both a reflection of social concerns and relations, as well as a part of their construction.

A similar characteristic is evident in Stoddart's work on the formation of complex polities (Stoddart 1987; 1989; 1990; forthcoming). Here, the occupation and structure of the Etruscan landscape is shown to have undergone dramatic changes in the first half of the first millennium BC, and, like Riva and Pacciarelli, Stoddart sees the origins of the complex-state formation of the seventh and sixth centuries as part of a longer process that extends back to the Late Bronze Age. He describes the way that the distribution and size of settlements varies over time, reflecting a different socio-political organization. The seventh and sixth centuries saw, first the emergence, and then the destruction of middle-ranking, independent polities in 'buffer zones' between the territories of the major Etruscan cities. The destruction is seen as part of the extension of power by these cities, and their incursion into the territories of the middle-ranking sites. This is thus a crucial period in Etruscan state formation, as it resulted in a renewed centralization with major cities as the focus of authority—a pattern that was maintained in the Archaic period and beyond.

The Archaic Period

The Archaic period in Etruria saw major changes in the archaeological record. This can be characterized as a new focus on the definition and ordering of social, cultural and material categories. This was manifest in several areas of Etruscan cultural life. At this time, as in the previous centuries, the material world of the Etruscans simultaneously reflected, was implicated in, and drove the social and cultural changes that Etruscan society underwent.

One such area was the gender identity of individuals. Iron Age burials are notoriously difficult to sex: the combination of cremation rite and background

levels of acidity means that skeletal data are not only scarce, but also rarely in a condition that allows osteological analysis of a sufficient resolution to give an accurate picture of the sex of the buried individual. As an alternative, archaeologists have turned to the analysis of grave goods in order to assign a sex to the burials they have found. The result is a somewhat predictable checklist of putative sexually diagnostic artefacts (among others, weapons and razors for men; spindle whorls and mirrors for women). A frequently noted, though rarely explored, phenomenon is that a minority of burials contain items from both male and female lists (Henken 1968, 42–7; Cristofani 1969, 17–19; Fedeli 1983, 92; Gentili 1987; Toms 1998).

The same difficulty arises in the so-called princely tombs of the Orientalizing period, in which military equipment—notably chariots, but also shields, spears and helmets—are found alongside jewellery and other typically female objects (Bartoloni and Grotanelli 1989; Martelli 1995; Colonna and Colonna di Paolo 1997; Emiliozzi 1997; Winther 1997; Bartoloni 2000; Rathje 2000). These burials are explained by drawing on the anthropological categories of status and role: the social status of the individual was such that their political or economic identity overrode their gender identity, as expressed in burial. In other words these were females whose membership of the highest echelons of the elite allowed them to express their status with male symbols of authority and leadership. This amalgamation of male and female roles is encapsulated in references to ‘warrior princesses’ (Bedini 1977; Riva 2000).

Despite the mixture of roles that the Etruscan evidence suggests, archaeologists ultimately come down on the side of a female assignation of the burial. Never is it suggested that the individual may have been biologically male with female roles—a weaving warrior, say, drawing on Strathern’s social evaluation of behaviour (Strathern 1981; see also Moore 1988, 7)—or that the sexual and gender identity of the individual may not have fitted into a dualistic categorization of male or female, but may instead have combined elements of male and female, drawing on anthropological analogies such as the two-spirit, or *berdache* (Lang 1998). Instead of proposing or maintaining one of these three possible positions for the Etruscan context, it is perhaps sufficient to acknowledge the ambiguity of the material at this time. Though, of course, such a claim for ambiguity is open to the criticism that it operates within the traditional parameters of male and female oppositions, a long-term examination of gender identity puts such a claim into context. This reveals that the sixth and fifth centuries of Etruscan culture saw an alignment of biological sex and gender roles, and an increasing clarification and bifurcation of male and female roles.

In previous analyses of Etruscan bronze hand mirrors, I have argued that the sudden appearance of these objects in the material record marks a change in the representation (in burial) of attitudes to the self (Izzet 1998; Izzet 2007). This change is characterized by the increased acknowledgement of the surface of the body as the interface between the individual and society. This is derived from

the function of the mirror: ostensibly to alter and manipulate the appearance of the body. Thus the deposition of this object in the grave signals an increased interest in the representation of the body to other members of society. This is not to argue that personal appearance was not a means of establishing personal identity before, but that self-representation was of such particular interest at this period that it was represented in the context of burial.

More importantly for the discussion here, the mirrors frequently contain engraved images on their non-reflective sides—images that, by virtue of their position on an object used in the presentation of the self, are implicated in the presentation of the individual persona. As such these images were held in the hands of individuals as they went about creating images of themselves. The images contain exemplars of behaviour that are unambiguously delineated along male and female lines: the bodies of women represented on the mirrors are undergoing the process of adornment, with the process of beautification signalled as being for a male audience through the presence of male viewers in the scenes, and the frequency of scenes form the story of Helen of Troy, and in particular, the Judgement of Paris. Alongside this, the numerous appearances of the Etruscan Aphrodite, both alone and as part of a group (including adornment scenes), indicates the erotic aspect of female adornment. The fictive space of some of the scenes is divided into male and female halves, and in such images a contrast is drawn between the domestic, female setting, and the external male arena. The representation of male bodies centres on the transformation of the appearance of the body through athleticism, or the acquisition of armour. The male roles that are presented to the individual (male or female) holding the mirror are martial or athletic. Such a division of roles between men and women is echoed in other objects found in burials. The evidence of the mirrors and their iconography suggests a far clearer funerary representation of gender roles than the earlier ambiguity of Iron Age and Orientalizing burials. Rather than trying to decide the ‘real’ sex of these early ambiguous burials, we should see this ambiguity as part of the unfolding of the creation of social realities that were concerned with gender identity—concerns that were to undergo a process of clarification from the late-sixth century.

It will be obvious that many of the normative images on the mirrors are scenes taken from Greek mythology. Though the degree of understanding of Greek myth in Etruria is contested for the Orientalizing period (see Riva forthcoming), it is generally accepted that by the time these mirrors were in use, the scenes they contained would have been widely understood. In fact, the presence of such scenes, and of huge quantities of Attic pottery with similar scenes, has been taken as an obvious indicator of the degree to which Etruria was culturally indebted to Greece. However, in the same way that Riva showed the pre-existing symbolic power of house imagery and a rejection of ‘Orientalization’ as a conduit for the institution of kinship, Hellenization is insufficient as an explanation of the changes in Etruscan material culture in the sixth and fifth

centuries. Instead, the scenes selected from the Greek mythological repertoire were those most appropriate for Etruscan needs, such as the Judgement of Paris, and Turan (Aphrodite). Thus Hellenization was not a process of unthinking acceptance of a somehow obviously preferable repertoire; it was (if it can still be said to have existed at all) a process of exchange and interaction whereby specific elements of Greek culture were appropriated and transformed into local products, serving local contingencies.

While the categories of individual and social and male and female were drawn ever more sharply in the objects with which Etruscans were burying their dead, other distinctions were similarly sharpened in the non-funerary sphere. Perhaps the clearest example is that of the creation, towards the end of the sixth century, of a distinctly ritual space. The remains of an Iron Age hut on the site of a later major Etruscan sanctuary at Cerveteri are some of the earliest evidence for ritual activity within a domestic setting (Izzet 1999–2000; 2000; Rizzo 2001). Here the architectural features of a hut are consistent with domestic residence; the palaeobotanical remains are concordant with both ritual and domestic occupation; and the finds from one pit—a collection of bronze ingots—are normally associated with ritual. Such evidence should not lead to a debate over the original function of the site: ritual or domestic? Instead the ambiguity of the material record should be seen as a reflection of ancient reluctance to assign a single function to the space. In other words, the evidence from Cerveteri suggests the combination of ritual and domestic functions in the early phases of the site's use, and such a situation would not be unique in the Etruscan context—a similar situation has been proposed at Tarquinia (Bonghi Jovino and Chiaramonte Treré 1997).

A similar ambiguity can be argued for the so-called 'monumental complexes' of the Orientalizing period. The function of these large, architecturally complex and iconographically rich buildings has been the subject of debate for four decades, with suggestions ranging from that of elite residences to prototype sanctuaries. The debate is focused on Murlo (Poggio Civitate), though the principle applies equally to other centres (Phillips 1993 for Murlo; Torelli 2000 for others). Again, the categories of ritual and domestic should not be seen as mutually exclusive at this time, and the desire to allocate a single function prevents us from acknowledging the slippage between ritual and domestic space.

This uncertainty over the identification of ritual space comes to a halt at the end of the sixth century. It is at this point that structures that are identifiable as temples appear in the material record, and such temples are located in physically differentiated spaces called sanctuaries. The location of the sanctuary within its immediate surroundings, its enclosure within a sanctuary wall, its internal layout, and the details of temple architecture all work together in creating a particular sacred area as distinct from the secular space that surrounds it. For example, as well as a sanctuary wall that enclosed and demarcated the sacred space from the non-sacred space around it, the area within the sanctuary itself

contained buildings that differed from those found outside, such as temples, altars, treasuries and sacred pools. The way in which the temple was conceived and built also worked to separate off the sacred from the profane. The temple was placed on a podium, and, in this way, held a position that was over and above the space around it, elevating it from the profane world below. In order to reach the raised temple, steps were constructed, and these were placed at the front of the podium, and, according to some reconstructions, only at the centre of the front of the podium (that is, the steps did not run the entire width of the building). Thus the only way of access to the temple was from the front, and this was narrowed further by building steps only in the centre of the façade. In this way, the distinction between sacred and profane was signalled and sharpened through location of the entrance to the temple. The distinction was concentrated in a specific location: the centre of the front of the building.

If this sounds like much ado about nothing, a comparison with Greek temple architecture is instructive. Here temples were not built on a podium; instead the temple (canonically) rose from three steps that surrounded the building. Entry to a Greek temple was thus not restricted to a certain place by the positioning of steps. Such a comparison offers a viable alternative to the Etruscan model, yet it was not the model followed by Etruscan temple builders. The reason for this was that such a model did not accord with late-sixth-century Etruscan conceptions of the relationship between sacred and profane space. The architectural articulation of this relationship in the construction of the temple draws attention to, highlights and exaggerates the difference between these ontological positions.

Because of the use of several features that are superficially similar to those of Greek temple architecture—most notably the pediment and columns—it is easy to see the details of Etruscan temple architecture as another example of Hellenization. However, I hope it is clear that such a position is not compatible with the one outlined above, in which the architectural form of the temple is not seen as an aesthetically superior way of building a religious building, but rather as the materialization of particular Etruscan concerns with differentiation between religious and non-religious space.

The marking of such difference is echoed throughout the construction of the temple, ranging from the more immediately obvious such as the location of steps just discussed, to the more detailed and less obvious, such as the choice of decoration, and location of decoration. Examples include the use of a gorgon's head as an antefix (a typical apotropaic device), or the manufacture of painted terracotta plaques specially shaped to fit around the temple's doorway. The elements of sanctuary and temple design, then, were deployed in the physical differentiation of the space: sacred and profane.

When expressed in this way, there are clear parallels between on the one hand the emergence of formal sanctuaries with temple architecture, and on the other hand the deposition of mirrors and their elaboration of differing gender roles. Both involve the material differentiation of social categories. I have argued

elsewhere that a similar concern with the physical marking of social differences characterizes the development of domestic architecture, funerary monuments, urban form and landscape.

Material culture thus plays a vital role in articulating social and cultural categories of difference. However, it is equally important to remember that the physical marking of these differences was not simply a reflection, or by-product, of social change; it was part of that change. Once built, the sanctuary not only reflected the desire of the commissioners and builders to materialize the difference between sacred and non-sacred space by its physical presence, it helped to create that difference and maintain it for the future. In this way, the material culture of Etruria was directly involved in the creation of Etruscan society. Another feature is the rejection of external factors as the primary reason for change in Etruscan material culture. This feature is apparent in recent treatments of the period of the so-called 'Romanization' of Etruria.

The 'Romanizing' Period

Harris's picture of the Romanization of Etruria as a dramatic upheaval involving numerous bloody military encounters not far short of ethnic cleansing has been rejected for some time, and this is due in no small part to the work of Terrenato in the territory of Volterra (Harris 1971; Terrenato 1998). In an analysis of a field survey project that investigated settlement evidence of the Cecina Valley, the changing number of settlements between the 'Hellenistic' and Republican periods was described as an 'anticlimax'. Terrenato compared the number and type of settlements before and after the Roman conquest—the third and second centuries BC with the late first century BC and early first century AD—and saw a far slighter change in the pattern than conventional accounts of Romanization would suggest. There was only a modest decline in the number of sites in this period traditionally characterized as one of dramatic change in the region. This result has been echoed elsewhere in Etruria—for example in the results of the Civitella Cesi survey, which showed similarly minimal disruption of the existing pattern of settlement size and distribution, and undramatic assimilation of Roman settlers within the Etruscan landscape (Hemphill 1993; 2000).

In fact, the most significant change in the occupation of the landscape of Etruria appears to have been in the earlier period, and this is in accord with the transformations of the late sixth century discussed above. In the late sixth century, the evidence from different surveys in Etruria (south Etruria, Albegna Valley, Tuscania, Civitella Cesi and Cerveteri) suggests an intensification of landscape exploitation in a wide chronological penumbra ranging from the late seventh to the fifth century; this can be seen as a further example of the spatial mapping of social difference—this time between urban and rural, and the 'creation' of a specifically 'rural' landscape (Izzet 2007). The evidence from the Cecina survey

fits in well at the later end of this range, in suggesting that a significant increase in the occupation of the landscape took place in the Hellenistic period, evinced by a massive increase in the number of small rural sites (small scatters of a hundred to two thousand square metres) that were widely distributed throughout the area surveyed.

What is very striking about the Cecina data is the absence, as Terrenato points out, of villa sites except along the periphery of Volterran territory. These villas, with their fashionable architectural styles and impressive decorative schemes, did not disrupt the rural landscape of the region in the way previously postulated for southern Etruria, and for the Ager Cosanus in particular. Instead, these rural villas appear to fit into, and leave largely unchanged, the pre-existing Etruscan settlement pattern, a pattern that was integral to the landownership structures and social organization of the Etruscan elites, and a pattern that this elite was at great pains (successfully) to maintain despite the 'Romanization' of the region. Terrenato (following Purcell) argues that these villas were highly visible Etruscan aristocratic investments in the landscape, a symbolic and material strategy in the maintenance of elite supremacy in the area. He pushes this argument further in his discussion of the 'Auditorium House' on the northern (Etrurian) outskirts of Rome, where he sets the development of large, elite residences in the context of the longer history of such structures in central Italy, arguing that the villas of the later period were markers of aristocratic status and landownership, rather than the imposition of a new, Roman, mode of agricultural production (Purcell 1995; Terrenato 1998; 2001). It would appear, then, that here we have an idiom that extended back in the symbolic repertoire of Etruscan elites to the seventh century at least—and according to Riva's analysis of funerary symbolism further, through the Orientalizing, Iron Age, and late Bronze Age periods of Etruscan history.

While amply underplaying the importance of Roman influence on the lives of Etruscan farmers and elites in Volterra, this recent study brings to the fore the role that material culture played in creating the worlds in which Etruscan individuals lived. The cultural continuity suggested by the stability in the settlement pattern has been echoed in the excavation of a small farmstead in the valley. The site of San Mario shows conservatism in architecture, landscape exploitation and tenancy from the fourth century BC until the fifth century AD. The use and reuse of certain building types, methods of production and modes of land control were therefore ways in which these institutions were re-inscribed on the lives of Etruscans and their descendants. In the same period, ceramics were incorporated into the negotiation of issues of cultural change and conservatism. In his study of the so-called 'black-glaze' pottery of the region Roth has elaborated the role that pottery style, technique and use played both in maintaining social and economic stability for non-elites, and in the retention of political and cultural power by the elites of Volterra (Roth 2007). The picture that emerges from these studies is that 'Romanization' was not as dramatic a

feature of the second half of the first millennium BC as traditional accounts would suggest. This is now widely accepted in studies of the region. However, they also emphasize the specificity of local responses to external factors, and, most importantly, the importance of material culture (including landscape) in negotiating cultural difference.

Conclusion

The criteria for the selection of examples in this chapter have not been the most recent archaeological discoveries, nor the most comprehensive of studies. Instead, I have chosen authors who are working with Etruscan material in a different way from traditional studies. I do not mean to suggest that this is the only interesting work carried out in Etruscology—the truth is far from this. However, these examples serve to illustrate the importance of linking two theoretical positions: the importance of material culture and cultural interaction. They show the role of material culture in creating social realities for the people making, commissioning and using objects in their daily lives. Objects and spaces were a response to the social and cultural worldviews in which they were formed, but they also shaped the formation of ensuing ones. A recurrent theme of the first millennium BC for the region of Etruria was increasing contact with other peoples—both within Italy and beyond. This brief survey, has, I hope, served to show the way in which material culture responded to, and helped to elaborate and create, cultural difference, as well as to bridge it for Etruscans.

FURTHER READING

General books in English are published fairly regularly: G. Barker and T. Rasmussen, *The Etruscans* (1998); L. Bonfante (ed.) *Life and Afterlife of the Etruscans* (1986); S. Haynes, *Etruscan Civilization: A Cultural History* (2000); N. Spivey, *Etruscan Art* (1997); N. Spivey and S. Stoddart, *Etruscan Italy* (1990); M. Torelli (ed.), *The Etruscans* (2000).

A feature of Italian archaeological publications is the exhibition catalogue, and the volumes from the 1985 'Year of the Etruscans' are still useful, though largely in Italian: F. Borsi (ed.), *Fortuna degli Etruschi*; G. Colonna (ed.), *Santuari degli Etruschi*; M. Cristofani (ed.), *Civiltà degli Etruschi*; S. Stopponi (ed.), *Casa e palazzi d'Etruria*. Also useful are the more recent A. Emiliozzi (ed.), *Carri da Guerra e principi Etruschi* (1997), and A. M. Moretti Sgubini's edited *Veio, Cerveteri, Vulci: Città d'Etruria a confronto* (2001). Parlovecchia's edited *Les Etrusques et l'Europe* (1992) is published in French and German. Torelli's edited *The Etruscans* is a unique example of a catalogue that has been translated into English.

Beyond these general works are more specific publications of individual sites or fieldwork projects, or of types of material. For the English-speaking reader, the choice is limited, as most of the publication of results and analysis is in Italian. Some English examples are P. Perkins, *Etruscan Settlement, Society and Material Culture in Central Coastal Etruria* (1999); M. Söderlind, *Late Etruscan Votive Heads from Tessennano* (2002); L. Pieraccini, *Around the Hearth. Caeretan Cylinder-Stamped Braziers* (2003). Publications in Italian include those of the Tarquinia excavations (M. Bonghi Jovino, C. Chiaramonte Treré (eds), *Tarquinia. Testimonianze archeologiche e ricostruzione storica: scavi sistematici nell'abitato, campagne 1982–1988* (1997); R. Linington and F. Serra Ridgway, *Lo scavo nel Fondo Scataglini a Tarquinia* (1997)), those at Lago dell'Accesa (G. Camporeale, *L'abitato Etrusco dell'Accesa: il quartiere B* (1997)), or those at Veii (G. Colonna (ed.), *Il santuario di Portonaccio a Veio I* (2002)).

Examples of synthetic work in Italian are rare, though M. Menichetti's *Archeologia del potere* (1994) and F.-H. Pairault Massa's *Iconologia e politica nell'Italia antica* (1992) are unusual exceptions. It will be apparent from the bibliography which follows that we are on the brink of publication of a clutch of more specialized syntheses in English by Izzet, Riva, Roth and Stoddart. Edited volumes on a particular theme are also relatively unusual, though some good examples include a volume on women edited by A. Rallo, *Le donne in Etruria* (1989), on bucchero edited by A. Naso, *Appunti sul bucchero* (2004) and one on landscape, edited by P. Attema, G.-J. Burgers, E. van Joolen, M. van Leusen and B. Mater, *New Developments in Italian Landscape Archaeology* (2002).

The journal dedicated to the Etruscans, *Studi Etruschi*, publishes articles (largely in Italian) on a wide range of Etruscan material, including a heavy bias towards language, and notices of recent discoveries. Another Italian journal notable for its Etruscological content is *Ostraka*, which aims to publish articles with a stronger anthropological and sociological approach. Many English-language journals include frequent articles on Etruscan material, including *Etruscan Studies*, the *Papers of the British School at Rome*, the *Journal of Roman Studies*, the *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, the *American Journal of Archaeology* and the *Accordia Research Papers*.

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CHAPTER 6

The Faliscans

Letizia Ceccarelli and Simon Stoddart

Introduction

Ancient literary accounts characterize the Faliscans as the occupants of a distinct dissected volcanic terrain of some three hundred square kilometres in the bend of the Tiber, bounded by the Capenates to the south-east and the Etruscans to the north, south and west. These accounts note an (externally perceived) distinct identity on the level of language and culture. However, the identity of the Faliscans is more complex than this, and even ambiguous in its reception by different audiences. The main self-identity of the Faliscans was situated in the 'place' of the community, which was itself broken down into descent groups represented by the constituent burial communities. This is particularly evident at the two major settlements, Civita Castellana (Falerii Veteres) and Narce, and a number of smaller urban centres (including Nepi, Corchiano, Gallese, Vignanello and Orte), all within a loosely related territory bordering on the Etruscan city of Veii (Figure 23).

A number of issues arise from the essential tension between the written evidence external to the Faliscans and the archaeological evidence whose context is internal. This crosscuts another tension between the qualitative evidence on the one hand, largely associated with identity, and the quantitative evidence, often related to settlement and territory size. In common with Veii, the Faliscan territory was on the political and military frontier of the Latins, and thus recorded prominently in Livy in terms of regular political and military encounters. An idealized set of externally perceived aspects of the Faliscan cities, their populations, language, political (especially military) events, deities and cults are recorded in the written sources, whereas the archaeological and epigraphic sources provide information about their monuments, settlement organization, ritual practice and material culture. Four prominent issues emerge. To what extent did the Faliscan communities differentiate themselves from the power of Veii, the neighbouring Etruscan city? How did individual communities construct a sense of place that lay behind the localized sense of identity? How distinct were the materialized identities of the Faliscans from other groups defined by the written sources? How distinctive was the language of the Faliscans compared particularly with Latin and Etruscan?