INTRODUCTION

CHRISTOPHER SMITH

The volumes of the *Cambridge Ancient History* to which this volume of Plates is related were published in 1989. This volume is concerned with Italy and the western Mediterranean; in Italy the span is somewhat wide, from the Iron Age on, reflecting the interest in *CAH* VII.II in the beginnings of Rome. Other chapters focus more intensely on the fourth to second centuries, reflecting the interest of both volumes in the expansion of the Roman Empire and the processes of conquest, imperialism and transformation which much of the western Mediterranean experienced through the Punic Wars, as Rome wrested control of the sea coast after the defeat of Carthage. Twenty years on, what can we say now about the state of the subject, and what new light does this volume shed?

Archaeology has changed our view of some areas radically; early Rome is the best example because of the wealth of information provided by more recent excavations. More generally, our capacity to use the variety of mechanisms which archaeology now has to develop richer regional pictures is clearer from this volume than its textual counterparts; aerial photography, survey, excavation and archival work are all represented in most of the chapters, and we made the deliberate decision to allow for more extensive introductions to clarify the interplay of archaeology and history. In this way we hope that this volume escapes the accusation of presenting archaeology merely as a support for the more significant work of the historian by grounding the material culture in a fuller contextual discussion.

This leads us to consider the specific ways in which material culture has become important in the re-evaluation of the period. The way in which the text volumes were arranged perhaps necessarily foregrounded the textual narrative of Roman expansion, a narrative derived from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Livy and Polybius in large part. Just as the ancient narratives include an element of the destined evolution of Rome into a world power, so too the *Cambridge Ancient History* leads with Romans, having separated the Hellenistic world, whose period of flourishing is exactly contemporary with the 'rise of Rome' in the fourth to second centuries BC, into a separate volume. This wholly practical distinction nevertheless needs to be recognised for what it is, and not confused with any sense of the lived reality of the period. One of the very striking aspects of this volume is the degree of shared artistic experience across the western Mediterranean, much of it intimately connected with the lively transmission and transformation of Greek culture. From magnificent Iberian stone sculptures, through to Sicilian temple architecture, the development of Roman coin types, the intense trade with southern Gaul and back round to the fascinating amalgam of cultures represented in Carthaginian culture, we have to do here with an interconnected and interdependent world, and one which demonstrates repeated similarities with the eastern Mediterranean. Indeed we have chosen deliberately to complement the chapter on Sicily in *CAH Plates* VII.I with our own chapter, both to bring out some of the newer developments, but also to reinforce the connection with the east.

Moreover, material culture has a complex relationship with the textual evidence specifically in regard to the development of the Roman Empire. One can of course see the Roman Empire impinging on local culture in many instances, in terms of devastation and abandonment, both in parts of Italy and of course Carthage itself, destroyed after 146 BC, but also in the various ways in which the Roman impact is expressed through architecture, the traces of legal forms, especially in inscriptions, in language more generally and indeed in the reciprocal transformation of Rome itself.

Were the *Cambridge Ancient History* to be rewritten now, it is hard to imagine that the word Romanization would not have featured in the index, as it does not in either of the text volumes to which this volume relates. Of course, many of the characteristic processes which are gathered under

that term are recognized and commented on in the text, and this is not the place for a discussion of the now enormous literature on the term, its history, its own archaeology one might say, its relationship with concepts of empire, colonialism and ideology, and the nuanced local responses which are now at least as prominent in the modern literature as the apparently inexorable top-down pressure the Romans were once thought to have exercised. Numerous examples could be given of where interpretations have been challenged, so for instance the key episode of the Bacchanalian conspiracy, and Roman responses to it, remains a site of contest between interpretative models of heavy-handed Roman repression, and indications of more pragmatic tolerance, and it is of course as salutary to see how archaeology has followed the texts perhaps against the grain of the evidence as it is to see the number of rather critical objects here whose authenticity is now denied, or whose date is questioned.

Presenting the local culture as we do here, one can also see good reasons to challenge the over-dependence on a Rome-centred model. The north African material in particular reveals the sophistication of the Carthaginian culture, and even the relatively less substantial remains of two other great foes of Rome, the Samnites and the Gauls, are still impressive, especially, and here perhaps unsurprisingly, in regard to their focus on the military. This volume displays with great clarity the consequences of the loss of all substantial accounts from Italy and the western Mediterranean except the Roman version, and serves both as the necessary corrective to a highly text-based narrative, and also as a demonstration of the relatively univocal account we have of a very rich, developed and differentiated group of cultures.

Each chapter of this account shows this tension between individuality and interdependence. Inevitably the two major vectors are artistic expression and economic or commercial activity. A less fragmented account than the format of the volume permits would spend more time on the mechanisms of these exchanges. Yet it is immediately clear that both examples involve a full range of society. The exchange of luxury goods to support an aristocratic lifestyle is evident. Artists and artisans were almost certainly highly mobile in this period. Agricultural produce, and, one has to assume, the means of such production on a relatively intensive scale, slaves, were also transported around the western Mediterranean as well as the eastern Mediterranean. All the evidence points to a ferment of commercial endeavour, and most of the chapters include illustrations of coinage too, some of which will have facilitated trade. At the same time, another function of coinage, and another driver of mobility on a micro-regional and macro-regional scale, is also abundantly evident: war. From the disputes arising from transhumant mobility through to the huge movements of armies and navies in the period of the Hannibalic War, from war as masculine competitive display to the organized deployment of massed forces, the material record is from the very beginning full of the evidence of conflict as a strong underlying motif of Mediterranean life.

Some level of religious or spiritual need is also clearly demonstrated. Funerary remains are exaggeratedly visible in the material record because of the privileged nature of their deposition and therefore survival, but we are reminded repeatedly of the amount of time, effort and imagination expended on the proper rituals for the deceased. In particular, the paintings which we see in funerary contexts remind us vividly that our picture of the ancient world is all too often far more monotone than the lively originals. Moreover, it is hard not to be impressed at the eschatalogical inventiveness of the western Mediterranean cultures, and the significance of cultic sites as markers of territory and prestige, of interaction between peoples, and of course between peoples and their gods, and of the susceptibility of these particular practices and places to external influence. Like agriculture, especially as revealed through several examples of Roman-influenced centuriation exposed by aerial photography, cult is an interesting barometer of the influence of Rome.

The volume ends, for all the western Mediterranean, at a point of transformation. The textual volume concludes in 133 BC, that watershed year of Tiberius Gracchus' tribunate and attempt both to transform Roman exploitation of Italian land, and to control the profits of a rapidly developing empire. By the time at which the next volume of the historical text draws to a close after Caesar's death, all of Italy will have been subordinated to Rome, granted Roman citizenship and implicated in the internal dissension of the Roman state. Rome's minor involvement in northern Italy and southern France will have been left far behind by Caesar's conquest of Gaul and incursion into Britain, an island scarcely known to the Mediterranean during the period of our volume. Spain and Africa will have

seen devastating wars, both against the Romans, and of Romans fighting Romans, and Carthage will be rising again as a Roman colony. Local languages and coinages will be increasingly scarce. Romans will have come to see the Mediterranean as *mare nostrum*, their own sea.

1. EARLY ROME

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It is arguable that of all the subjects treated in this volume, the one which has been transformed the most by recent archaeological discoveries since the publication of the second edition of *CAH* VII.II and VIII is the study of early Rome. In 1928, when the first edition of the relevant *CAH* volume (VII) appeared, Hugh Last could write only with caution about the potential of archaeology. There were no archaeological finds from the early period on either the Capitoline or the Quirinal, and nothing before the sixth century on the Palatine. The majority of that account was based on the literary evidence.

The second edition of *CAH* had somewhat more to say. Ogilvie, Drummond and Momigliano drew on the still slight evidence. Studies by Müller-Karpe and Gjerstad had placed the evidence on a more solid footing, even though Gjerstad's dating was already dismissed. Brown's vital work on the Regia and the continuing excavations at the Forum Boarium (S. Omobono) had provided very significant additional information about a building of central importance to the subsequent chapters on social and political institutions.

Nevertheless, it is notable that by 1989 the most significant archaeological developments had taken place not in Rome, but in the hinterland of Latium. The construction of the Grande Raccordo Anulare and a range of associated finds, together with the increasing amount of information from what would prove to be one of the most significant necropolis excavations in central Italy, Osteria dell'Osa, and work in southern Etruria (which Ridgway presented in *CAH Plates* IV in 1988), permitted a range of analogies to be presented which allowed some of the gaps in the Roman material to be filled. Ogilvie had written 'Rome itself is an impossible place to excavate: too many layers of priceless heritage have covered it' and described the excavation activity which had occurred thus far as 'trifling', though he acknowledged the profound importance of the results.

This situation has been completely overturned in the subsequent twenty years, and there is now a hugely significant set of new material emerging from the intersection between the Palatine and the Via Sacra; from the south-west Palatine; from the Capitoline and both the original and the imperial Forum area. The impetus for this development may be attributed in part to the enormous excitement generated by Coarelli's ground-breaking topographical studies of the Forum, Forum Boarium and Campus Martius, and Carandini's finds in the Palatine and Via Sacra area, which revealed the potential for new discoveries of great significance, and also by the massive spur to consolidation of knowledge begun by the Giubileo year 2000. Equally, the codification of information provided through such works as the *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (*LTUR*) has been important.

We can now be far more confident about the significance and the extent of the settlement of Rome from the beginning of the first millennium BC, and we can begin to postulate exciting connections between the earliest phases and subsequent developments. In particular, the possibility for a more coherent and detailed account of the Palatine Hill is becoming very real. At the same time, there remain profound difficulties in terms of methodology in this area of study. Both the first and second editions of *CAH* spent a considerable amount of time on the problem of the source material, and this is one area where limited progress has been made, and where perhaps little can be made, since even the relatively improbable discovery of new sources in papyri is unlikely to overcome the difficulty of the chronological gap between the sources and the period they are describing.

Any new account of the city of Rome will therefore need to take account of the crucial archaeological evidence, but it must also be sensitive to the difficulty of forcing the sources to carry more weight than they may reasonably be expected to. It is remarkable that we have such a close connection between the eighth-century growth of Rome and the alleged date of Romulus, or between the

sixth-century development of the city and the period of the Etruscan kings, but we must also remember that the emergence of this chronological schema was in part the result of scholarship of the third century BC and afterwards (Cornell 1995: 70–3). Furthermore, in a period so productive of new finds, we must acknowledge that we will need time fully to assimilate the information which has been provided and to arrive at fully tested conclusions. This chapter therefore presents a relatively conventional and conservative account of the most significant archaeological evidence from Rome and Latium.

The early evidence from most Latin sites is predominantly mortuary. For Rome, the Forum necropolis remains the most substantial collection of early material (**1–2**), but has been joined, very recently, by material from the Capitoline and the Forum of Caesar. There is a general pattern of cremation followed by inhumation across the region, and the pattern is most completely observable, and minutely documented, at Osteria dell'Osa (**4**). It is absolutely clear that there is evidence for role and gender differentiation, and, as elsewhere in Italy, the figure of the warrior is of early significance (**13**). We still have work to do to be sure of the nature of very early Roman warfare, but there are elements of a kind of heroic mentality, and of the sorts of commemoration we associate with heroes in the Greek world (*CAH Plates* III 244–7 for illustrations of Lefkandi).

Like Etruria, Rome and Latium were strongly influenced by the impact of Phoenician and Greek trading and colonization (see **7–8** for some examples). This can be seen in pottery, housing, social customs such as banqueting and the development of literacy (**5**, **9**, **10**, **15**). In order to participate fully in the new trading networks, the elites of central Italy had to produce greater surpluses, and we can see evidence of intensification in settlement size and pattern, which was accompanied by the kinds of conspicuous display that both resulted from and reinforced an increasingly hierarchical society. The princely tombs of Praeneste (Palestrina) are the obvious Latin examples, and are striking both intrinsically and by the fact of their great similarity to specific Etruscan tombs; we can see the results here both of the trading network and the *koine* of artefacts for elite display, and the potential of horizontal social mobility, of marriage and movement between settlements (**6**). These general patterns across the period from the eighth to the sixth centuries differ slightly from site to site, of course. Castel di Decima and Osteria dell'Osa, important sites in earlier centuries, disappear, whereas Rome, Satricum, Tibur and Praeneste survived and grew (**12**, **15**).

In terms of the settlements themselves, the three key features of their development in the sixth century are, first, the increasing monumentalization, visible in walls, temples and elite housing; second, the diminution of surviving burial evidence during the sixth century, which is so widespread a phenomenon as to be indisputable as a feature of the period and not a gap in the evidence; and, third, the creation of public space, most visible at Rome in the Forum (**10**, **11**). Taken together, there is good evidence therefore for both a level of urbanization at this time, but also a discourse about the relative importance of public and private display and expenditure, which is inextricably linked with the political development of Rome, our best-known example, where powerful kings in the sixth century were replaced by a republic, and, as we shall see in Chapter 2, the archaeological record reflects this development. The development of the Forum at Rome in the sixth century is a vital piece of evidence for the interplay between individual power and communal identity in the archaic city.

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Rome and Latium: Economy and Society c.1000 to 500 BC (Oxford, 1995). Carandini's views are now extensively represented in *La nascità di Roma: Dei, Lari, eroi e uomini all'alba di una civiltà* (Turin, 2003) and *Remo e Romolo: Dai rioni dei quiriti alla città dei romani (775/750 – 700/675 a.C.)* (Turin, 2006).

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1

1. The Forum necropolis. This aerial view of the Forum necropolis beside the temple of Antoninus and Faustina as it was being excavated by Boni from 1902 onwards shows some of the earliest-known burials in the city of Rome. Forty-one tombs were discovered in an area of 250 m^2, but which was nevertheless only a fraction of the whole. There is a mixture of cremation and inhumation, both of which styles are illustrated later. The cremations, from the late tenth and early ninth centuries BC, precede the inhumations, and it is usually thought that the necropolis precedes the necropolis found on the Esquiline Hill, which has predominantly inhumations. Other contemporary tombs are found elsewhere in the Forum, near the Arch of Augustus, and on the Palatine itself. Most importantly, there is new evidence for burials on the Capitoline Hill, and very recent finds have been made in the Forum of Caesar. There are no adult burials found in the Forum much after the end of the ninth century BC.

The Forum necropolis probably served the inhabitants of the Palatine and Velia Hills (the latter destroyed completely for the modern Via dei Fori Imperiali, built by Mussolini). It would originally have been outside the inhabited area of the city, but, as the settlement expanded, it was covered and abandoned, and burials increasingly are found further from the areas of housing, as is typical for the ancient world.

It has recently been suggested that the Forum necropolis may have been contemporary with the earlier phases of the Esquiline, which would indicate a larger burial population in Rome in the earliest phase. The idea that the shift from one burial site to another represented an immigrant population in Rome is now discounted. The grave goods found in the early tombs are very similar in style to those found in tombs in the Alban Hills. Traditionally, Rome had strong links with Alba Longa, which were preserved in ritual; the annual festival of Jupiter Latiaris, the Feriae Latinae, took place on the Mons Albanus (modern Monte Cavo), and all Latin peoples were represented there.

(Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma E 2323)

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2. Hut-urn burial. Cremations were interred in large holes in the tufa, with *dolia* or containers of pottery, within which were further finds.

2

Characteristic of some sites in central Italy are hut-urns, typically varying in height from about 20 to 35 cm; of some 200, those in Latium are the earliest and constitute 30 per cent of the total, and a further 33 lids in the shape of a roof have been found; there are also examples of bronze helmets surmounting pottery containers for the ashes. These urns and lids appear to mimic habitation, and can be used to reconstruct the huts whose post-holes we have found. The gradient of the roof, as well as the absence of tiles before the mid seventh century, indicates that roofs were thatched; some also have decorations in the form of horns or birds, or even humans. Circular urns are the most common in Latium.

(Photo C. J. Smith)

G. Bartoloni, F. Buranelli, V. D'Atri and A. De Santis, *Le urne a capanna rinvenute in Italia* (Archaeologica 68, Rome, 1987); H. Damgaard Andersen, in J. R. Brandt and L. Karlsson (eds.), *From Huts to Houses: Transformations of Ancient Societies* (Stockholm, 2001) 245–62.

3. Palatine hut. The post-holes which reveal a set of ninth- to eighth-century huts on the Palatine have been known since their first publication in 1947 and are dated by early Iron Age material found associated with them in that excavation. They were immediately associated with the hut-urns and a reconstruction made, based on that evidence. Further huts were alleged to have been found under the Regia, though there have been concerns expressed about whether these were intended for human habitation. The evidence from the Palatine was connected with the tradition of a hut of Romulus, first attested in Varro's account of the *Argeorum sacraria* (*de Lingua Latina* V.54) but allegedly preserved over time. Recent reconsiderations have developed the concept of the Palatine village. Perhaps the most certain and intriguing parallel is outside Rome: the discovery, and reconstruction, of a hut at Fidenae

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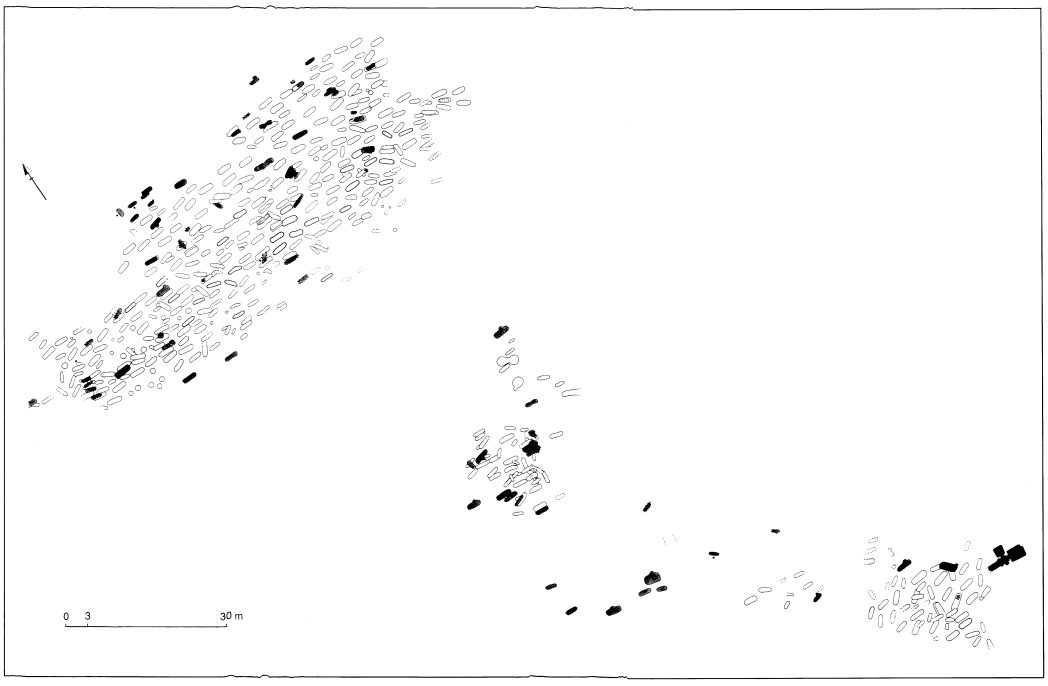

4a

from the late ninth and early eighth centuries BC allows us to confirm the details of the Roman structures and to compare it with other examples at Ardea and Lavinium (Pratica di Mare), also sites with a clear early phase of occupation.

Hut A illustrated here and at *CAH* VII.II[2] Figures 19a and b (reconstruction) measured 4.9 m × 3.6 m; the majority of the rock-cut holes were 0.45 cm in depth and 0.42 m in diameter at the surface; the central hole supported the roof, and there was a hearth nearby; there were doorposts and a small porch, drainage channels for water, and the construction was wattle and daub.

(Photo C. J. Smith)

S. M. Puglisi, *Mon. Ant.* 41 (1951) 1–98; F. E. Brown, in L. Bonfante and H. von Heintze (eds.), *In Memoriam Otto J. Brendel: Essays in Archaeology and the Humanities* (Mainz, 1976) 5–12; A. Carandini (ed.), *Roma: Romolo, Remo e la fondazione della citta* (Rome, 2000) 283–7 and C. Angelelli and S. Falzone, *JRA* 12 (1999) 5–32 for modern debate. For Fidenae, A. De Santis, R. Merlo and J. De Grossi Mazzorin, *Fidene: Una casa dell'età del ferro* (Rome, 1998), with references.

4b

4. Osteria dell'Osa. Although cremations and inhumations are found at sites throughout Latium, no site has been published in such detail as Osteria dell'Osa. The first tomb was discovered at the site in the nineteenth century, but it was further explored from the 1970s, and fully published in 1992; the finds are now displayed superbly in the Museo Nazionale di Roma in the Baths of Diocletian. As such it is the only complete or nearly complete

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necropolis known from archaic Latium, and the combination of the relatively good preservation of the site and the detail attainable in modern excavations make it a uniquely significant contribution to our knowledge. Some 600 burials have been published.

The necropolis is situated about 24 km from Rome, and is one of a number of sites that surrounded an extinct volcanic crater (part of the same chain that formed the Alban Hills) which at some stage, probably after ancient times, flooded to form the Lago di Castiglione. All the sites here appear to have coalesced around 600 BC to create the important town of Gabii. Osteria dell'Osa itself has not produced any significant settlement evidence, and there is no reason to assume that in the period before the synoecism it was of particular wealth or importance, which makes the burial evidence all the more interesting, since it may justifiably be regarded as typical in its broadest features.

The necropolis begins around 900 BC with a series of cremations. These cremations form two groups, and around them cluster groups of later inhumations; thus it is conjectured that we have two descent groups from the early cremated individuals, or perhaps two communities using the same burial ground. It is very significant to note that there are distinctions between the pottery styles of the two groups that last for about a century, until the burying group changes its ritual and size. This shows that the production of pottery for the burials was tied to the expression of group identity, and the decoration may have held meaning that is largely unrecoverable by us today.

The cremations follow the form that is standard in Latium (see above). The move to inhumation is variously explained, but would appear to be a reflection of a cultural choice, since it occurs not only in Latium but also in Etruria at the same time. A similar range of objects are found with the deceased, though of increasing size, quantity and complexity through to the eighth century BC. Anthropological data from Osteria dell'Osa indicate that there was a tendency towards a gender differentiation in the goods deposited, with weaponry being more common for men, and the tools of weaving and the appurtenances of the cooking and distribution

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