

The time spent in Rome has allowed me to carry out basic morphological analysis (sex and age-at-death). A total of 99 graves (n individuals = 172) were analysed from Fermo (10 cremations, 162 inhumations). If we add those tombs to the ones previously studied, a total of 171 tombs has been reached for Fermo (n individuals = 292). The osteological analysis will soon be published with the main archaeological information. The study of the necropolis of Vulci Ponte Rotto is still ongoing and so far has encompassed fifteen tombs. This period has also allowed an intensive sampling campaign for histological and isotope analysis, contributing to the ERC MOTHERS (ERC-2022-STG 101077348), MSCA TULAR (Grant agreement ID: 101065320) and other collaborative projects with Cardiff University. Other activities have involved research articles, a book chapter and conferences.

The combination of diverse disciplines has so far contributed to the understanding of the Italian Early Iron Age, a crucial moment for the formation of groups that dominated the Mediterranean. In the long term, TULAR will set new directions in research on community connectivity and its impact on ancient and modern societies, making a major contribution to current themes surrounding human mobility and migration.

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Villa pulcherrima imminet litori: maritime villas, ports and Africa Proconsularis in Trajan's Mediterranean politics

Imperial villas, far from being just luxurious leisurely retreats or mere locales for conspicuous consumption, played a crucial role in the daily life of the Roman imperial court, as emerges from a wealth of archaeological, epigraphic and literary evidence. My doctoral research (Oxford, 2022) examined the use of imperial villas as centres for the government of the empire, and investigated the extent to which the activities that emperors performed in fulfilment of their role impacted on the design of the spaces allocated to them (reception halls, entertainment buildings, bathing facilities and dining halls).

The research that I carried out at the BSR explored this 'public' role of imperial residences in further detail and from a different angle, focusing on a group of seven maritime villas on the coast of northern Lazio and southern Tuscany, that were either built from scratch or altered significantly in the Trajanic period. Alongside their chronological framework, the residences under examination have two further elements in common. First, they all have large ports, as well as articulate facilities such as reservoirs and warehouses, that could hardly have been geared solely to the need of importing and exporting goods for the exclusive consumption of the villa. Second, they lay on the final section of one of the maritime routes that connected Africa Proconsularis to Rome. Whilst my PhD examined villa sites individually, focusing on

the layout and dimensions of the spaces allocated to the different imperial activities and comparing them only at a later stage, this project looked at the residences under examination as elements of a coherent group, and sought to understand the reasons behind Trajan's consistent building initiatives in this region; in other words, the possible functions of this group.

The position of these villas on one of the routes connecting Africa and Rome led me to consider its commercial role, and to examine it in light of the main reason leading to the establishing of a route between the grain-producing regions of the empire and Italy: the transport of goods to be distributed to the people of Rome as part of the *annona*. The organization of the food supply to Rome was defined, in its main features, in the first century of the empire; substantial efforts were made, in particular, by Claudius — who built the first nucleus of Portus — and Trajan, who completed the port and, at the same time, liaised with *collegia* of merchants and bakers to promote their involvement in the transport and milling of grain. It therefore seemed logical to connect the two bodies of evidence — the chronological framework of the seven villas under consideration and Trajan's interventions in the organization of the *annona* — and examine the villas against this background.

My work was deeply inspired by participation in a workshop hosted at the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome in February, in which the concept of glocalization was examined in a number of papers centred on different issues. The opportunity to present my own research led me to reconsider it under a new light, and to focus on aspects that I had hitherto overlooked. Glocalization, i.e. the interplay between global and local elements in geographical settings characterized by interactions between 'dominating' and 'dominated' cultures, has recently been used as a theoretical framework to re-examine romanization, highlighting the role played by local elements in the definition of 'Roman' identity. The stimulating discussions of the workshop and the valuable feedback that I received on my presentation have enriched my work enormously, and prompted me to use glocalization as a new tool to understand how a 'global' aim — the transport of grain from Africa to Italy — was obtained with the involvement of a large number of local actors. The article that I am preparing for the workshop's proceedings will offer an innovative view of the *annona*, alongside using the framework of glocalization for a better understanding of an economic instance.

During my Rome Fellowship I analysed the port facilities of the seven villas under consideration, and examined the definition and evolution of maritime routes in the Mediterranean, particularly between Africa and Rome and on the coasts of Sardinia and Corsica. Part of the results of my research will be published in the proceedings of the glocalization workshop, but other issues, such as the actual capacity of the several ports in relation to the possible number of vessels transporting grain from Tunisia to Italy, need further examination, and will form the core of another article. I could not be more grateful for my time as a Rome Fellow: I could not have wished for a more pleasant, stimulating and exciting environment to carry out my research.

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