

# A Historical Reconnaissance Relating to Some Archaeological Sites of Central-Northern Italy

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**Abstract:** The Italian territory is characterized by a significant historical stratification. The past, subdivided into its various epochs, has released and rendered visible the manifold expressions through which the different ethnic presences have defined the environment in the diverse regions in which the peninsula is fractioned. Etruscans, Romans, and Longobards (among others) have handed down tangible signs of their permanence in settlement terms and connected to manifestations and activities contextual and representative of the reference period. This paper takes into consideration four archaeological areas, of which three are in the Lazio region and one is in Lombardy, following the solicitations deriving from three recently published articles, whose contents inform on technological applications and new discoveries in the archaeological ambit. The analysis of the sites resumes the orientation followed in literature, translated into the different interpretative approaches suggested by historians and archaeologists within the specific editorial context.

**Keywords:** Archaeology, History, Ancient itineraries, Regional geography, Ancient urbanism.

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## 1. Introduction

Some writings (N1) published in recent years, regarding four archaeological sites located in central/northern Italy, become an instrument and occasion to enter into the formation process of the relative historical settlements, to digress into situations belonging to a past often treated in publishing ambit. The approach followed in assessing the sites mentioned in this paper makes use of the investigations and relative interpretations formulated within historical and archaeological research and diffused by books and articles referring specifically to these topics. The contributions of the different authors differ in proposing hypotheses and conjectures relating to the situations manifested in the areas of interest. What is proposed on the topic, in the reference bibliography, consents to undertake an analytical and descriptive direction oriented and supported by the results

(reflecting the historical framework of the sites) to which it has arrived in the last five/six decades.

## 2. Lazio Region (Central Italy)

**The archaeological sites of Vulci, Falerii Novi, and Interamna Lirenas. The historical and geographical context.**

A text published in 1979, whose chapters regard the landscape transformations and the relative territorial evolution affecting the northern part of the Lazio region since the pre-ancient period, highlights in the following extract some points of geographic reference of the interested area: "...the lower part of Etruria includes the lakes of Bolsena, Vico, Bracciano, and those of the Alban Hills, as well as conspicuous landmarks like Monte Cimino, which rises to a height of 1053 metres" (1). The area here

photographed is only a part of the region analyzed, which includes the archaeological sites of Vulci and Falerii Novi (Figure 1). The two sites are synthetically reviewed (commented) in subchapters 2.1 and (after a little premise opening chapter 2.2) 2.2A through a reading relating to their historical and morphological characteristics in reference to what is proposed within the specific editorial sector. In subchapter 2.2B, the same method is applied in the analysis

of the Interamna Lirenas site, located in the southern part of the regional territory within the province of Frosinone. Subchapter 2.2C closes the parenthesis relating to the Lazio Region with some evaluations regarding the urban structure of Falerii and Interamna, taking into consideration similarities and differences resulting from the comparison between the two Roman settlements.



**Figure 1.** Northern part of Lazio Region with in evidence the two archaeological sites of Vulci and Falerii Novi

## 2.1 Vulci and the ancient regional road network

*“It is visible for the first time (11th century BC) the outlines in the space (...) of future urban centres in the most fertile and flat areas of Etruria, following a colonizing movement whose epicentres are recognizable in southern Etruria”*(2).

Therefore, it is from the 11<sup>th</sup> century BC, the period identified in literature, in which the pre-existing communities scattered throughout the territory began to take the first steps towards the configuration of the main urban centres.

The formation process of these last ones is well summarized in the following extract inasmuch as *“the creation of cities was a long-period phenomenon. (...) The premise is constituted by the materialization of ecosystems composed of villages of limited proportions (...). The decisive step arrives in the 8th century BC with a marked unification of villages (...) while the 7th century sees the strengthening of the unitary structures (...). At the beginning of the 6th century BC, the city was definitively constituted”* (2). The evolution process perceptible from the extracts just reported could be a reading relating (also) to the formation and expansion of Vulci, whose origins have given life in literature to versions based on analyses, hypotheses, and theories constructed on what emerged from the excavations (N2). The material unearthed from archaeological research is numerically and qualitatively significant. Vases,

amphorae, and various types of artifacts (N3), as well as remnants relating to wall and building structures (N4), have contributed to the periodization of the evolutionary phases characterizing the settlement before and after the Roman conquest of 280 BC. While the pre-Roman phase has released a notable quantity of artifacts coming, mainly, from the Etruscan necropolises (N5), the remnants relating to the urban settlement concern, above all, structures and itineraries of the second period (N6).

The archaeological area of Vulci (Figure 1), territorially included in the current province of Viterbo, is localized between two roads built in the Republican epoch: Aurelia (Figure 2) and Clodia. The two roads (N7), although passing through the regional area (western part of southern Etruria) where the ancient settlement was localized, did not cross it as a result of specific project options carried out by the Roman conquerors (N8).

Via Aurelia, of which the current version follows a great part of the ancient route, develops its itinerary along the coastal strip, maintaining a moderate distance from Vulci inasmuch as there are hypotheses in literature relating to the existence of two routes. The first is more ancient and follows a direction close to the Tyrrhenian shoreline; the second itinerary, more aloof from the sea, was directed towards Montalto di Castro (Forum Aurelii) (N9), a town whose territory includes the archaeological area.



**Figure 2.** Via Aurelia (in red) parallel to the Tyrrhenian coast from Rome to the regional shoreline of Vulci.

Unlike the Aurelia, Via Clodia kept to an itinerary more distant from Vulci, to which it got closer through one of the post stations situated along the route that from Rome crossed the regional borders (Lazio), to then find a rejoining point with Via Aurelia near Cosa (Ansedonia). The itinerary (or part of it) of the Clodia had to have been utilized much before the advent of the Romans inasmuch as “*large parts of its route seem to have existed long before it was rationalized as a Roman trunk road*” (1). In literature, it comes underlined repetitively the pre-existence of a communications network built by the Etruscans on which the Romans, in several cases, intervened in a partial way. (N10). The functionality of Via Clodia also derived from the fact that “*it constituted the median road axis of southern Etruria*” (3), useful for connections relating to centres such as Tarquinia and Cerveteri. Probably, it had to have less influence when compared to roads such as the Cassia, which connected Rome with the northeastern part of the peninsula. Effectively, for some authors, “*the Clodia was intended, therefore, more as a service route than for rapid long-distance travel*” (1), and in this characteristic maintained, therefore, the functions of a minor itinerary. This road - in its stretch that crossed the regional area between Vulci and Bolsena Lake - comes resumed with the citation relating to the station of Maternum (Canino or Ischia di Castro) reported in the historical sources, presumably a stop point following the more important settlement of Tuscania.

Over the centuries, the evolution of the territory in which the city of Etruscan foundation is inserted comes to be described in a context of “*devastation, the result of secular wars that were followed by the depopulation of the cities and the rewilding of the countryside*” (4). The period relating to the abandonment of the settlement comes to be hypothesized in

the High Middle Ages, with the indication by some authors referring to the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

## 2.2 Falerii Novi and Interamna Lirenas

The urbanism theories connected to the origin of settlements planned by Romans evoke hypotheses referring to the resumption of project elements inherited from previous experiences (Greeks, Etruscans, Latins). But also influenced by the formal structure of the military encampments (N11) and from the conditioning exercised by the ancient augural tradition, with the consequent positioning of the religious structures belonging to the different pagan cults (N12). Certain authors introduce in the analyses regarding the subject some theories connected to a formal model utilized both in the urban ambit and in the distribution (division) of rural territory for agricultural purposes. (N13).

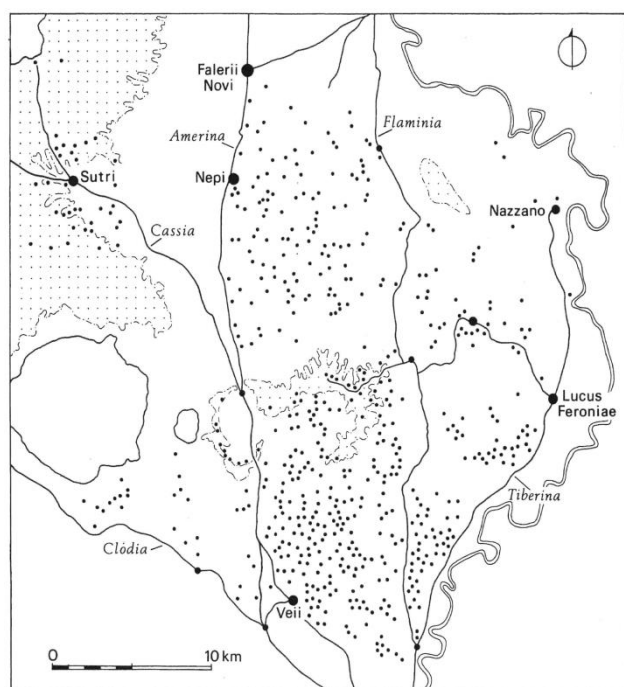
Probably, these project characteristics, just mentioned in their essentiality, have been partially utilized also in the two cities, Falerii Novi and Interamna Lirenas, founded between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC.

### 2.2A Falerii Novi and the ancient regional road network

“*The Roman conquest of south Etruria brought about a major hiatus in the history of the region (...) the frontiers of Rome’s territory were gradually extended during the fourth and third centuries (...). In some cases, new towns were created, like Falerii Novi*” (1).

The city, specified in the extract reported above, is visible in its remnants within the archaeological area situated in the northern part of the Lazio region (Figure 1). The settlement formation is dated back by historians and archaeologists to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (N14); the ancient site is territorially inserted between Lake Vico to the west and the Tiber River

to the east, not far from Civita Castellana (Falerii Veteres). The area has been affected by excavations between the 19th and 20th centuries (5), but probably, the reconstruction of the urban grid has been possible due to the significant improvements in the modalities of geophysical exploration and GPR technology (N15); this last one has allowed better visibility of the building remnants placed below ground level and, consequently, major interpretative clarity about the urban organization of the city. The various planimetric reconstructions of Falerii Novi available in editorial ambit in paper format (books) and digital ones in the various online historical-archaeological domains return, with the due interpretative differences, an urban grid classically orthogonal, organized along two main axes typical of cities founded by Romans. An element of differentiation could be detected in the presence of the walls surrounding the city, of which some parts are still visible (N16).



**Figure 3.** The ancient itineraries of the roads Amerina (until Falerii Novi) and Clodia (initial stretch).

What is evident - in the manifold graphic restitutions (especially those published in recent texts) resuming the urban space - regards the inclusion (organization) of the city blocks (*insulae*) in the road grid through a development very regular in which is positioned the central area, probably destined for the Forum at the intersection of the two main street axes. These last ones, identified in the various papers and digital representations, reproduce the urban part of the Via Amerina in the north/south axis and the urban part of a street oriented towards the Via Cimina (N17) in the east/west axis. The two roads, mentioned here in their urban section, resume itineraries reconstructed in literature on the basis of historical sources and territorial remnants relating to ancient road stretches; these last ones are sometimes visible.

The identification of the route followed by the Via Amerina (Figure 3), detectable in some maps published in paper and digital formats, does not differ in a substantial way in the various interpretations. The route, characterized by a marked verticality, left the Cassia itinerary continuing to the north, touching Nepi, crossing Falerii Novi as mentioned above, to arrive at Amelia (ancient Ameria), and then heading towards the interior of the Umbria region. About the construction times of the road, some authors hypothesize its realization in the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (N18) “*following the conquest of the Faliscan territory in 241 BC*” (1).

About the Via Cimina, in some cases the homonymous urban street (visible in certain planimetries) is detectable in relation to the decumanus of the ancient settlement. Probably, the reference concerns a hypothetical street link (from the west gate) within the network of minor roads having mainly functions of connection with the rural environment and with the main arteries. The itinerary of the Cimina comes reported as a variant of the Via Cassia, from which it separated to continue in the northeast direction, skirting Lake Vico and passing through the area of the Cimini Mountains and then re-affiliating with the consular road (Cassia) near Viterbo. Therefore, the citation of the street within the published planimetry (N19) could suggest a minor connection that started just out from the ancient settlement.

The final consideration regarding Falerii Novi resumes the reasons relative to the place adopted for its foundation. A choice probably supported by the geomorphological characteristics of the site and its position in relation to the regional road system mentioned above. In literature (N20), however, it is reiterated the determination of Romans after the capitulation (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC) of the near Falerii Veteres (Civita Castellana) in transferring part of the inhabitants of the Faliscan city to the new settlement. All this is in the framework of the territorial conquests in northern Lazio and the related new organization aimed at major military control of this regional part.

## 2.2B Interamna Lirenas in the ancient road network of southern Lazio

The context within which the foundation of Interamna Lirenas (Figure 4) happens is well synthesized in the following extract: “*It is within the framework of these military operations (Volsci, Sanniti) that it attends to the formalization of the route of the road Latina and, along its itinerary, to the foundation of the Latin colonies of Fregelle (328 BC) and – precisely – Interamna Lirenas (312 BC)*” (6). Thus, it comes to be reiterated the important relationship existing between the road and the foundation of Interamna, of which the Via Latina becomes the main axis within the urban grid. In effect, “*The colonization of southern Lazio (...) coincides with a road structuring project (...) that*

establishes a strict connection between the foundation of colonies and the road system” (7).

Via Latina “was, with the Via Appia and as an alternative to it, the most important artery for communications between Lazio and Campania” (7). Along an itinerary that, starting from Rome, passed through the inner territory (differentiating from Via Appia, which was directed towards the Tyrrhenian coast and parallel to it), crossing different settlements (Frosinone, Aquino) to arrive, finally, at S. Maria Capua Vetere (Capua). With the due differences, the route was probably utilized (partially) in the centuries preceding the Roman occupation of the territory affected by the itinerary of the ancient road. This last one underwent some variations in route between the republican and imperial phases, deduced from material evidence detected along the itinerary. In the map representations (N21), the road bifurcation from Aquino (Aquinum) is clearly visible in the ambit of connections to Interamna and Cassino (Casinum); the first is more ancient, while the second

probably was utilized in a later phase (N22). The ancient itinerary had to be well integrated into a road system functional for reaching towns and streets in the different directions. In effect, from “the route of the Latina Way, it separated some branches that allowed it to reach (...) the roads Labicana and Appia (...) and the Sora colony, from which it was possible to take the Valeria Way” (7). Another connection visible in the graphic reconstructions relating to the road system is the one between Interamna and the Tyrrhenian coast at the intersection point with the Appia Way near Minturno (Minturnae). This last settlement is indicated in literature as a harbor of reference for Interamna Lirenas and the cities positioned in the regional hinterland.

With regard to the urban organization of Interamna, in the following subchapter it is analyzed in comparison with that of Falerii Novi. Some elements come highlighted through which to recognize similarities and differences relating to the disposition within the urban grid of the main areas/streets.



Figure 4. Regional part (southern Lazio) where the archaeological site of Interamna Lirenas is placed (territory of Pignataro Interamna).

## 2.2C Some comparative elements regarding the two ancient settlements.

The report that informs on a new major visibility of the remnants of Falerii Novi resumes, with the same methodology, the area in which, through the GPR technology (N15), it has been possible to reconstruct the urban form of Interamna Lirenas (N23). As with Falerii Novi, also in this circumstance, the editorial offering on the subject is legible in paper and digital format; in this last case, published on various online sites.

It is thinkable, therefore, to make a comparison between the two planimetries reconstructed and reinterpreted in their urban composition in light of the results obtained by recent geophysical surveys. Within a global analysis of the city plan involving the two ancient settlements, it is possible to perceive similarities and differences relating to the localization of some areas and streets included in the urban

network. The positions of the areas destined for the Forum have in common the characteristic of being situated in the central part of the urban grid, in proximity to the main street axis but diversely oriented. While the area regarding the theatre results differently placed, in both planimetries it is reported in diverse sections; in Falerii Novi, in proximity to the walls, in the southern part of the city, and therefore more marginal and not directly connected to the main street, the one that should represent the east/west decumanus. Differently, in the case of Interamna Lirenas, the public edifice has been identified in an urban block bordering the one containing the forum and delimited by a street separating the two areas (N24). The organization of the urban mesh develops, in the two planimetric reconstructions, in reference to the main street axis with the positioning of the city blocks that resume an orthogonal parallelism intersected by the streets of major and minor importance. And also with reference to the masonry belt and its gates,

from which branch out the main or secondary street axes in reference to the inner urban grid and to the external roads. These last ones were probably useful and functional to maintain the connections with the rural territory and with the consular and service roads.

Overall, the reconstruction framework of the two settlements in terms of recomposition of the urban structure and insertion of the city into the regional road system allows a deeper visualization concerning the two historical sites whose visible remnants (directly and through the results of geophysical surveys) attest to a consolidated reality of the ancient age.

### 3. Lombardy Region (Northern Italy)

The only site included in the Lombardy territory, among the four here treated, the one of Castelseprio, is historically accredited to the High Middle Ages if evaluated through the remnants visible in the archaeological area. The temporal context is the one *“that separates into two parts the long process of transition between the ancient world and the medieval age”* (8). Effectively, the perception conveyed by the various analyses and theories expressed by the authors is that of a settlement fragmentation producing minor entities. All this in light of an *“impetus given to rural outskirts in the Longobard age, that determines the concrete passage between the ancient settlement structure and the medieval one”* (8). This one, probably, is the dimension in which it inserts the hamlet of Castelseprio, placed in regional terms between Maggiore Lake to the west and that of Como to the east, and between Varese to the north and Milano to the south (Northern Italy). It is proposed, hereinafter, a brief synthesis relating to the site and its framing in historical terms.

#### 3.1 The archaeological area of Castelseprio

A writing published recently (N1C) proposes the chronicle of excavations carried out in the archaeological area of Castelseprio (N25). The site of the medieval age is territorially included in the Varese province.

What emerged from the reconnaissance of the interested area brings back in time the site's origin, dated between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, inasmuch as the excavations have brought to light Roman remnants attributable to the imperial period. In any case, the area with the relative remnants, widely recognized and treated in the relevant publications, comes framed by historians and archaeologists between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (N26).

The analysis of what remained within the *castrum* has given rise to hypotheses and theories expressed by the authors involved in the editorial production relating to the site. Hypotheses that go over the indicated period and include a more ample temporal arc, above all in the evaluation of some single presences (N27).

Even Castelseprio, probably, is included in its evolution within the processes of settlement transformation recognizable in the periods following the partial disintegration of the territorial organization built by the Romans in the previous centuries (N28). The analyses findable in literature relating to these topics oscillate between authors who tend to theorize elements of continuity, more or less marked, with the ancient world and others who detect a preponderant break with the urban and extra-urban context built in Italy in the centuries intersecting the Roman epoch. Anyway, a visited argument among the various theories expressed regards the reading of the settlement realities inserted in the countryside inasmuch as *“it reenters in the perspective of inclusion of the city in the countryside the post-Roman urbanistic operation, (...) which sees a substantial detachment from urban structures and an extreme attention to rural ones”* (8). The dispersion in the territory of settlements of various sizes is legible also in the terminological context used to describe and characterize them. *Vico*, *Borgo*, and *Curtis* (N29) are three terms assigned to villages with certain characteristics, while the term *castrum* identifies the origin of the settlement as a fortified military enclosure.

The genesis of Castelseprio is probably legible within this latter context, as effectively reported in literature (N26), and remains so during the Longobard occupation that began in the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD (N30). The evolution in the following centuries was a succession of different occupations to which corresponded alternate management methodologies, more or less favorable to the maintenance and recovery of the building structures, dictated by the political and territorial interests of the various properties (jurisdictions) that succeeded one another over time until the definitive destruction of the village in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The planimetry published on various online sites (N31), a photograph of the archaeological area, highlights the positioning of the identified remnants, of which it is possible to see the hypothetical reconstructions in the drawings visible in literature (Church of St. Paul, Basilica of St. Giovanni) and the localization of the buildings relating to the Torba complex observable also for the restorations actuated (N32). As regards the route (partly graphically redetermined, partly with visible remnants) of the masonry belt, the planimetric reconstruction (N33) highlights the wall remnants (in black) within a track probably reconstituted on the basis of material elements discovered during the reconnaissance operations.

The analysis just proposed relating to the archaeological area of Castelseprio closes the reconnaissance, brief and essential, on some sites of which origins evoke different historical periods. The arguments exposed, supported by the reference literature, recall themes through which it is possible to assume a major awareness about the historical

remnants released on the peninsular territory. Constructions and infrastructures (buildings, roads, bridges, etc.) inherited over the centuries have contributed to characterizing the environment, becoming precious sources for the disciplines that explore the past.

#### 4. Final Considerations

The cultural solicitations coming from publishing (periodical press, book sector) on the archaeological theme may also be perceived in an instrumental manner. Therefore, as a means aimed at a major knowledge of the territory in historical terms and, consequently, at a comprehension less superficial when it comes to contact with the different sites localized on the peninsula. What is expressed in this writing resumes, through a summarizing communication, some situations characterized by a good visibility of the sites verifiable directly and also through images published in various online domains. The selection carried out in geographical terms, between the various historical places present within the different Italian regions, has been determined by recent novelties detected by excavations and geophysical surveys performed with advanced technologies. And also from the context presented in every single situation by the reference bibliography, through which it has been possible to understand the entity and the quality of what was detected by the operations on site and the interpretative mechanisms of historians and archaeologists in the descriptions relating to environmental (N34) transformation processes undertaken in the past.

#### Notes

N1. (A) Nucci M, Coming, looking, Vulci. Etruscans have failed (Veni, vidi, Vulci. Gli Etruschi hanno perso) *Il Venerdì*, December 29, 2017

(B) Saragosa A, The cities were unearthed without excavation (Le città dissepolte senza scavare) *Il Venerdì*, July 10, 2020

(C) Camurani A, Under the medieval house, the Roman city comes out. "A surprising discovery" (Sotto la casa medievale spunta la città romana "Scoperta sorprendente") *Corriere della Sera*, August 17, 2025:

N2. "Only through the reading and the careful study of the huge archaeological material returned by the burial grounds has it been possible to trace an itinerary (...) from the remote origins to the epilogue of the Roman conquest" (4)

N3. In addition to those mentioned, the images reported in literature show decorative elements, necklaces, plates, antefixes with different depictions, and handcrafted products of diverse types.

N4. Some remnants of this type are visible in the images of two texts cited in the bibliography list (Moretti Sgubini A.M., p.180/181 – Cavoli A, p. 25/28)

N5. The following necropolises are visible on a map (Moretti Sgubini, 2001, p.187) showing Vulci and its surroundings: Osteria, Poggio Maremma, Marrucetello, Tamariceto.

N6. "What remains of the remote settlement brings almost exclusively the imprint of Roman civilization, except for some surviving traits of the city wall (...) of Etruscan origin." (4)

N7. In literature, the references regarding the construction period of the two roads, probably between the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, are based on hypotheses derived from historical sources and archaeological remnants. In any case regarding Via Aurelia, "the ancient consular road from Roma reached, crossing regional borders, first Toscana and then Liguria. (...) In the first decades of the 3rd century, (...), began a systematic policy of colonization (by Rome) of the Etruscan coast (Tyrrhenian Sea), which marked the construction of the Aurelia Road, with the aim of creating a rapid connection with the newly founded colonies" (9).

"The ancient Via Clodia, planned to connect Rome with northwestern Etruria, was presumably built between the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd century BC. (...) The route utilizes previous itineraries of the Etruscan road network, streets of connection between the smaller towns located inland" (3)

N8. "Intentionally, the ancient Etruscan city-states (...) were excluded from the route of the road; Cerveteri, Tarquinia, and Vulci were connected to the Via Aurelia only by a system of minor streets." (10)

N9. The town (Forum Aurelii) is reported in historical sources as one of the Post Stations (*stationes*) placed along the route of the ancient itinerary. The historical descriptions, legible in literature relating to the stopping places, provide a differentiated vision about their functions and their evolution. Effectively, the following extract frames this type of settlement within "...the development of the trunk-road system (...) where a series of small wayside stations began to grow up. Many of these were sited at junctions between main and secondary roads (...). Others were dispersed along the major highways at fairly regular intervals (...) to provide services for official travellers".(1). A more circumscribed version is the following: "Every five/ten miles along the main itineraries were placed stations for the crews changing, named 'mutationes', and every fifty or more miles arose the 'mansiones' for the night's accommodation" (11).

N10. "It is necessary to be prudent in assuming that all the consular roads were laid out with a little regard for pre-existing features such as the Flaminia. Very often they

*incorporated substantial stretches of older roads (...). One such road is the Via Clodia, whose destination implies much more limited objectives than those of the other trunk roads"* (1).

N11. *"There has been much speculation about the original urban aspect of the Roman colonies of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC and on the relationship between this one and the form of the military camps"* (2).

N12. *"In the process of founding colonies (...), the auspicious practices for the orientations of the colony and the definition of its sacred and public spaces were strictly followed (...). It is here that those technical-sacral prescriptions codified since the high archaism are functioning"* (2).

N13 *"Every plot of land was marked with stones reporting the cross of the 'groma' and the indication of the numbered 'centuria' in relation to the intersection of the cardo and the decumanus (...). Also, the urban roads in some cities reported stones that demonstrate the original unity of the procedures followed in city foundations and in the agrarian divisions and of elements inherited by the Etruscan division technique"* (2).

N14. *"The town was founded in 241 BC, following the destruction by Rome of the nearby Faliscan centre of Falerii Veteres"* (12)

*"Falerii Novi, presumably built soon after the conquest of 241 (...) five kilometres to the west of Falerii Veteres on a stretch of flat ground between the Rio Crue and Rio Purgatorio"* (1)

N15. *"Ground-penetrating radar (GPR) is a reliable method that provides high-resolution 3D images of buried structures. It relies on the reflection of electromagnetic (radio) waves at transitions between materials of different dielectric permittivity."* (12)

N16. *"The walls and gates still survive in many places (...). They are built of good quality tuff blocks and are pierced by four principal gates, as well as by four minor exits"* (1).

N17. This attribution relating to what could be the decumanus of Falerii Novi is recognizable in a planimetric reconstruction published on the website <https://www.moveaboutitaly.com/faleri/>, in which the axis connecting the east gate with the Jupiter gate is indicated, probably only for its direction, as Via Cimina.

N18. *"...the main period of construction of the Amerina undoubtedly belongs to the decades that followed 241 BC"* (1).

N19 <https://www.moveaboutitaly.com/faleri/>

N20. *"...it was decided to move the population of Falerii Veteres out of this citadel onto the nearby plain, where a new town, Falerii Novi, was built"* (1)

N21. Monti, page 8 [7] and Bellini/Launaro/Millett (6), page 256

N22. *"...from Aquinum, in the imperial age, was created a new route to Casinum..."* (7).

N23. Bellini, Launaro, Millett (2017), Studi Cassinati, n.4, p.245 figure 1. (6)

Launaro A, Millett M (2023) Interamna Lirenas A Roman town in central Italy revealed, p.84 figure 5.1 (13)

N24. Regarding Interamna Lirenas, the relation of vicinity of the areas traceable to the theater and the forum is well visible in the reconstruction proposed in the text of Launaro/Millett at page 57 (13)

N25. Site recognized by UNESCO.

N26. *"Perhaps already known in the late Roman era as a small, simple military signal post located along an itinerary that connected, substantially, Como to Novara, the place developed into a real castrum, or fortified enclosure, towards the end of the 5th and beginning of the 6th century..."* (14).

N27. *"In the Church of S. Giovanni, the small apse situated at the end of the right nave would seem (...) to be of the 10th-11th century..."* (14).

N28. *"It has been identified as the 6th century, the key period of turning that separates into two parts the long process of transformation and of transition between the ancient world and the medieval age"* (8)

N29 The three old Italian terms are all variants of the synonymous hamlet and have been used to define little settlements.

N30. *"...the Longobards made the castrum of the Olona Valley the heart of their district, which, in the course of twenty years, assumed its definitive form, extending from Mount Ceneri and from Intelvi Valley to the High Milano Region and from the Seveso River and southwestern Lario Region to the banks of the Ticino River and Lake Verbano"* (14)

N31. <https://www.giornalepop.com/reportage-a-castelseprio/>;  
<https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Linsediamento-di-Castelseprio-Torba-Varese>

N32. *"With the acquisition of the Torba Complex by the FAI (Italian Fund for Environment), it begins the slow and extremely difficult rescue of the monuments and artistic paintings existing here. Nowadays it has been completed (...) in parallel with repeated small excavation campaigns that have involved the church and the tower"* (14).

N33. <https://www.giornalepop.com/reportage-a-castelseprio/>

N34. The term “environmental” in this context assumes a wide meaning connected to the transformations in the involved areas produced from settlement actions and infrastructural interventions, above all in the ancient period and, in a single case, in the High Middle Ages.

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