

Nancy T. de Grummond, *Cetamura del Chianti*. Austin; University of Texas Press 2020. Pp. xvii, 149. \$29.95. ISBN 9781477319932.

This is the third book in the important ‘Cities and Communities of the Etruscans’ series published by the University of Texas Press. The name of the series has now changed to allow the inclusion of sites smaller than cities, a decision justified in the foreword by recognition that the development of larger urban centres can be further understood by exploring alternative forms of settlement and that Etruscan society comprised a variety of communities. The choice gives a much-needed boost to studies of less famous but informative sites and particularly those, like *Cetamura del Chianti* (near modern Siena), that have been the subject of regular publications and specialist studies and are now in a position to benefit from updated, introductory syntheses.

Cetamura shows the potential of small sites to enrich knowledge of the region and its inhabitants. The settlement extends over a hilltop with evidence of use from the seventh century BC to late antiquity, with medieval intervention and excavations since 1973, but concentrated activity between the fourth and first centuries BC. Etruscan habitation has not yet been identified on the site, but there is evidence of craft activity including ironworking, the firing of ceramics, and textile production, as well as votive rituals and systems for storing and managing water; the latter include two wells with stratigraphy that underpin the reconstruction of a continuous history of the site. Analyses of animal bones, pollen, seeds, and wood give colour to the lives of artisans and worshippers and their use of the surrounding land. For example, study of hundreds of grape pips indicates the production of a (probably white) local wine across a period of roughly six hundred years, while the composition of the nearby forest seems to have changed in the first century AD with a marked rise in the number of evergreen holly oaks. The (non-) effects of events further afield can also be traced. Surprisingly, the conflicts between Rome and Carthage that usually mark histories of Etruria in the third century BC do not seem to have disrupted life at *Cetamura*, nor is there evidence of the increasing Greek contact during *Cetamura*’s floruit that elsewhere has seen the last three centuries of the first millennium BC typically labelled the ‘Hellenising period.’ As a result, this phase of the site is instead labelled ‘Late Etruscan,’ a term that better reflects the current data. In contrast, the recovery of a vessel with coins dating to Octavian’s victory at Actium and naval fleet coinage used by Antony suggests the arrival of a demobbed Roman veteran in c.29–27 BC and thus reconnects *Cetamura* with outside events. Such details are reminders that regional histories do not always provide useful interpretive frameworks, but also that no site is likely to have been truly isolated from the wider world.

For all that *Cetamura* is a justified inclusion in the series, however, this is a more modest book than those on Caere and Veii that preceded it. While those volumes were hardback and featured a wealth of glossy-papered illustrations, this is a small paperback with plenty of helpful but lower-quality black-and-white images. It also has a sole author rather than the multiple authors of previous volumes. The result is

no doubt cheaper – a bonus for purchasers as much as the publishers – but its significance could have been communicated better if it was hardback with crisper reproduction of photographs.

The level of scholarship is nonetheless as high as ever. The prose is lucid and supported with abundant diagrams and images throughout (although many of the small finds appear without measurements or a scale). Seven well-chosen maps make the site comprehensible and are referred to frequently in the eight chapters of text, and the book includes the now customary, handy appendix with a historical timeline along with an impressive index. Rationales for particular interpretations are set out clearly and endnotes direct the reader to earlier studies. There is also welcome speculation about the nature of the sanctuary adjoining the artisans' zone, which consists of a roughly trapezoidal space with rooms on two sides of a courtyard that contains two altars, a cavity, channels, and multiple ritual deposits. Inscriptions on black gloss at Cetamura suggest the worship of two little-known deities called Leinth and Lur who may be divinities concerned with fate or fortune if items from the site such as astragali and tokens are signs of divination. Knowledge of non-canonical cult sites and deities derived from such excavations will continue to increase our understanding of Etruscan religion and thus once again contribute to wider reconstructions of Etruria as a whole. The book is thus a model introduction to a small site and to the scholarly task of drawing connections between the micro and the macro.

One consequence of the book is renewed awareness of how comparable sites such as Poggio Colla and Gravisca – as non-urban cult sites with evidence of craft activity – could further nuance traditional accounts of Etruscan society, religion, and economics. Although these sites have important differences from one another and with Cetamura, they also have the potential to challenge what de Grummond rightly identifies (p.107) as the customary division of Etruscan society into elites and non-elites. The role and status of artisans are matters of ongoing study in Etruscology but the effect of debates over potential ancient middle classes that was stimulated in Roman studies by Emanuel Mayer (*The Ancient Middle Classes: Urban Life and Aesthetics in the Roman Empire, 100 BCE–250 CE*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), among others, has yet to be fully felt. Cetamura is a case study of an artisan community and its infrastructure that could usefully inform more exploration of this phenomenon in Etruria.

In sum, this is a book and a site with much to offer.

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