

Guided path to the archaeological remains of Saepinum



Le foto in bianco e nero sono state realizzate agli inizi degli anni sessanta da Edizioni Arcari Palerio: la naturalezza degli scatti evidenzia la monumentalità degli edifici all'indomani dei restauri effettuati in quegli anni sotto la guida dell'allora soprintendente archeologico di Abruzzo e Molise, Dott. Valerio Cianfarani. Erano gli anni in cui Saepinum iniziava a mostrare la sua rilevanza al mondo dell'archeologia, rivelando tesori preziosi e inestimabili la cui importanza all'epoca era ancora circoscritta all'ambito locale. Fu allora che molti giovani del posto riscoprirono la valenza di questo luogo, appropriandosi di origini inesplorate e dignitose che la nebbia del tempo non era riuscita a cancellare. L'imponenza e la classicità dell'architettura vitruviana emergeva nelle murature, nelle colonne, nelle fontane e nei mausolei imprimendosi in quella luce nuova e, per molti aspetti, senza tempo che ancora oggi affascina migliaia di turisti e visitatori.

Il colonnato della Basilica nella foto sopra - Il Decumano a pag. 5 – La Fontana del Grifo a pag. 6

These black and white photos were taken in the early sixties by Edizioni Arcari Palerio: the naturalness of the shots highlights the monumentality of the buildings after the restoration carried out in those years under the guidance of the then archaeological superintendent of Abruzzo and Molise, Dr. Valerio Cianfarani. These were the years in which Saepinum began to show its relevance to the world of archaeology, revealing precious and inestimable treasures whose importance at the time was still limited to the local area. It was then that many young people of the place rediscovered the value of this place, appropriating unexplored and dignified origins that the fog of time had not managed to erase. The grandeur and classicism of Vitruvian architecture emerged in the masonry, in the columns, in the fountains and in the mausoleums imprinting themselves in that new and, for many aspects, timeless light that still fascinates thousands of tourists and visitors.

The colonnade of the Basilica in the photo above - The Decumanus on page 5 – The Grifo Fountain on page 6

ANTONIO TAMMARO

Discovering the disinterred city

English translation: prof. Marino D'Orazio





Provincia di Campobasso



Comune di Sepino



Foto dell'interno:



Studio fotografico
Mamiphoto
Sepino (CB)



Studio fotografico
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Mamiphoto Studio Sepino (CB)

Cover picture by:

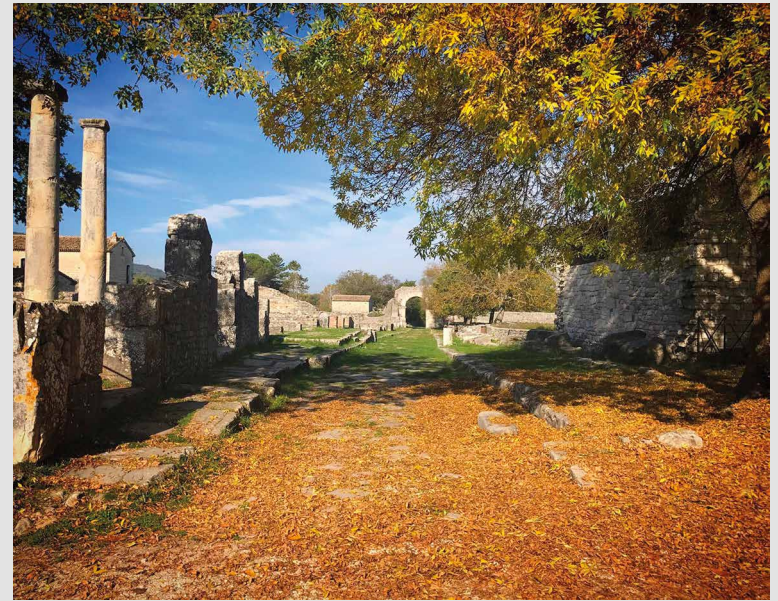
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(Alessandra Tamarro Pictures)

It is rare to discover an archeological site which arouses in the visitor such delightful wonder as does ancient *Saepinum*. The entire complex of this Roman city preserves, still today, all the allure of the ancient urban layout, while the magnificent rural landscape which surrounds the ruins creates an atmosphere both suggestive and magical.

The author



Il Decumano - The Decumanus

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

THE ORIGINS

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THE LOCAL SAMNITES

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THE DEFEAT AT *TERRAVECCHIA*

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TERRAVECCHIA TODAY

*

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE *BELLUM SOCIALE*

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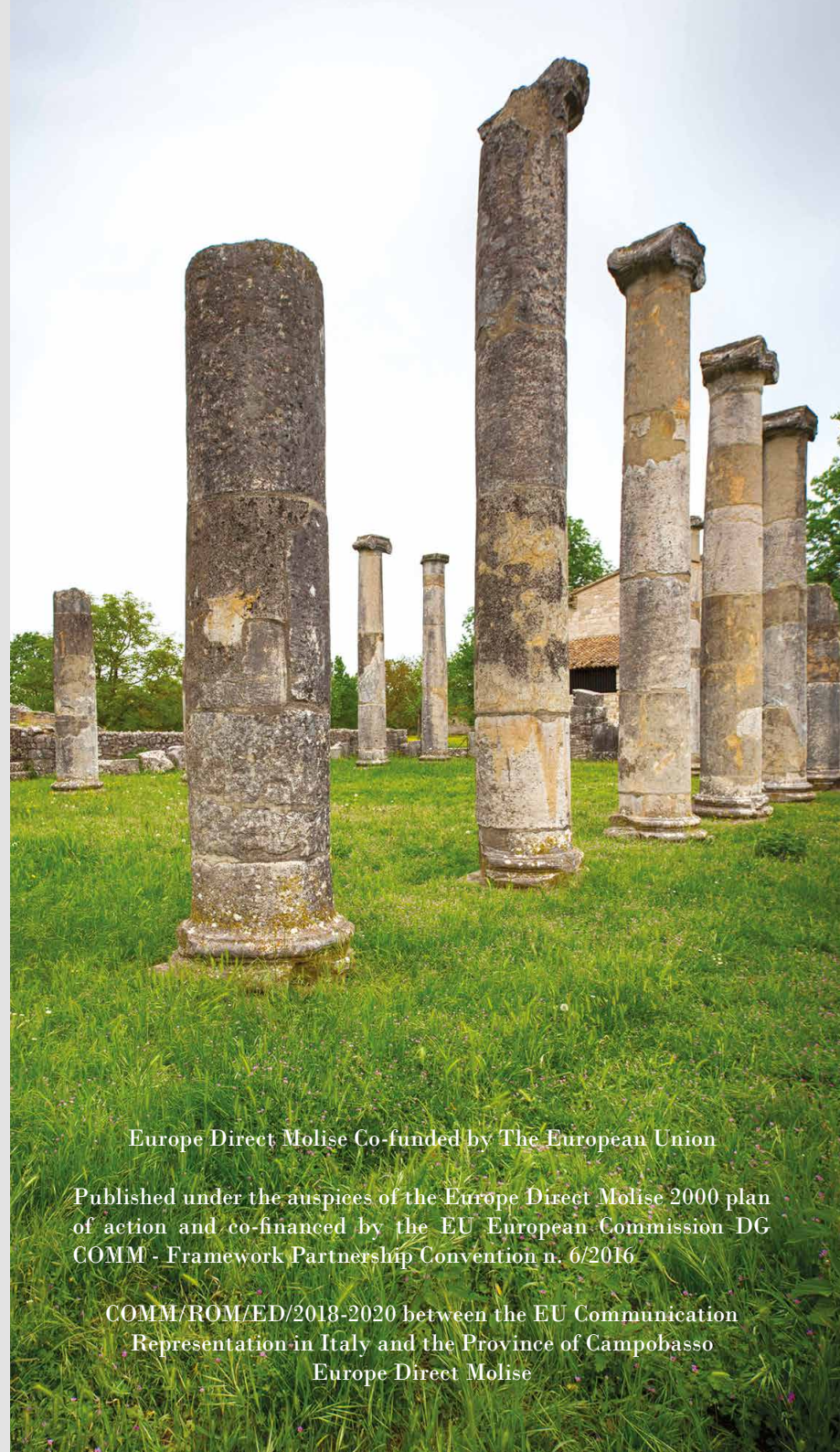
THE NEW MUNICIPAL STRUCTURE

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DIMENSIONS AND ENTRANCES TO THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE



La Fontana del Grifo - The Grifo Fountain



Europe Direct Molise Co-funded by The European Union

Published under the auspices of the Europe Direct Molise 2000 plan of action and co-financed by the EU European Commission DG COMM - Framework Partnership Convention n. 6/2016

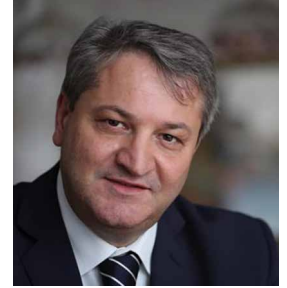
COMM/ROM/ED/2018-2020 between the EU Communication Representation in Italy and the Province of Campobasso
Europe Direct Molise



Il Presidente

Oltre a rappresentare un momento di arricchimento dal punto di vista umano e sociale, i beni culturali costituiscono un elemento importante all'interno dell'economia, in particolare in un paese come l'Italia, dotato di un patrimonio artistico e culturale di assoluta preminenza a livello mondiale, con ben 47 siti iscritti nel Patrimonio mondiale UNESCO su 935 in totale. Questo pone l'Italia al primo posto al mondo. La maggiore concentrazione di offerta di beni artistici e culturali si registra, per ovvi motivi, nelle più importanti città d'arte. Nel Molise non abbiamo grandi città d'arte ma tanti frammenti di storia, un patrimonio culturale multiforme e diffuso, con ben due siti archeologici nella sola provincia di Campobasso: quello di Saepinum e quello di Larino.

Ed è proprio a Saepinum che abbiamo voluto dedicare questo Itinerario guidato, curato da Antonio Tammaro che ringraziamo per il prezioso e accurato lavoro attraverso il quale ci conduce sapientemente all'interno dell'area archeologica mostrandone tutti i dettagli. L'ampio parco archeologico di Sepino ricomprende oltre alla città sul tratturo, anche un magnifico tempio in località San Pietro in Cantoni e la roccaforte di Terravecchia, antico baluardo dei Sanniti Pentri. Nelle campagne di questo piccolo borgo molisano e nel suggestivo e complesso sito archeologico sono racchiusi i segni più eloquenti del passaggio dei Sanniti e dei Romani in terra molisana, una vera e propria città di epoca romana nel cuore della nostra regione di cui riusciamo ancora ad apprezzare la bellezza.



The President

In addition to enriching us on both a human and social level, our cultural heritage is an important and essential element of a nation's economy, especially in a country like Italy which is blessed with an artistic and cultural patrimony of worldwide preeminence. Italy now boasts 55 UNESCO Cultural Heritage Sites out of a total of 935, ranking it number one in the world. The vast majority of these sites is concentrated, for obvious reasons, in our most important historic cities of art. None of these great cities is located in Molise, but the region contains many important historic sites, a rich and diffuse cultural patrimony, with two archeological sites in the province of Campobasso alone: at Saepinum and at Larino.

The author and curator of this guide to Saepinum is Antonio Tammaro, who is owed immense gratitude for this valuable and precious work, in which he guides us expertly throughout the archeological zone in all its important details. The extensive archeological area at Sepino encompasses not only the city on the tratturo, but extends to the magnificent temple at San Pietro in Cantoni, and to the citadel at Terravecchia, the ancient stronghold of the Pentri Samnites. The suggestive and complex archeological site of Saepinum and the surrounding countryside contain the most eloquent signs of the passage of the Samnites and Romans in the region. Saepinum, this authentic city of the Roman era, situated in the heart of our region, continues even now to allow us to appreciate its great beauty.

Ci auguriamo che questa pubblicazione possa dare ulteriore merito e contribuisca a promuovere questo gioiello del nostro territorio che vogliamo fortemente venga conosciuto sempre di più. Un ringraziamento va al Comune di Sepino, nelle persone del Sindaco Paolo D'Anello, del Vicesindaco Antonio Piacente, dell'Assessore alla cultura Marisa Ciaramella per il patrocinio conferito.

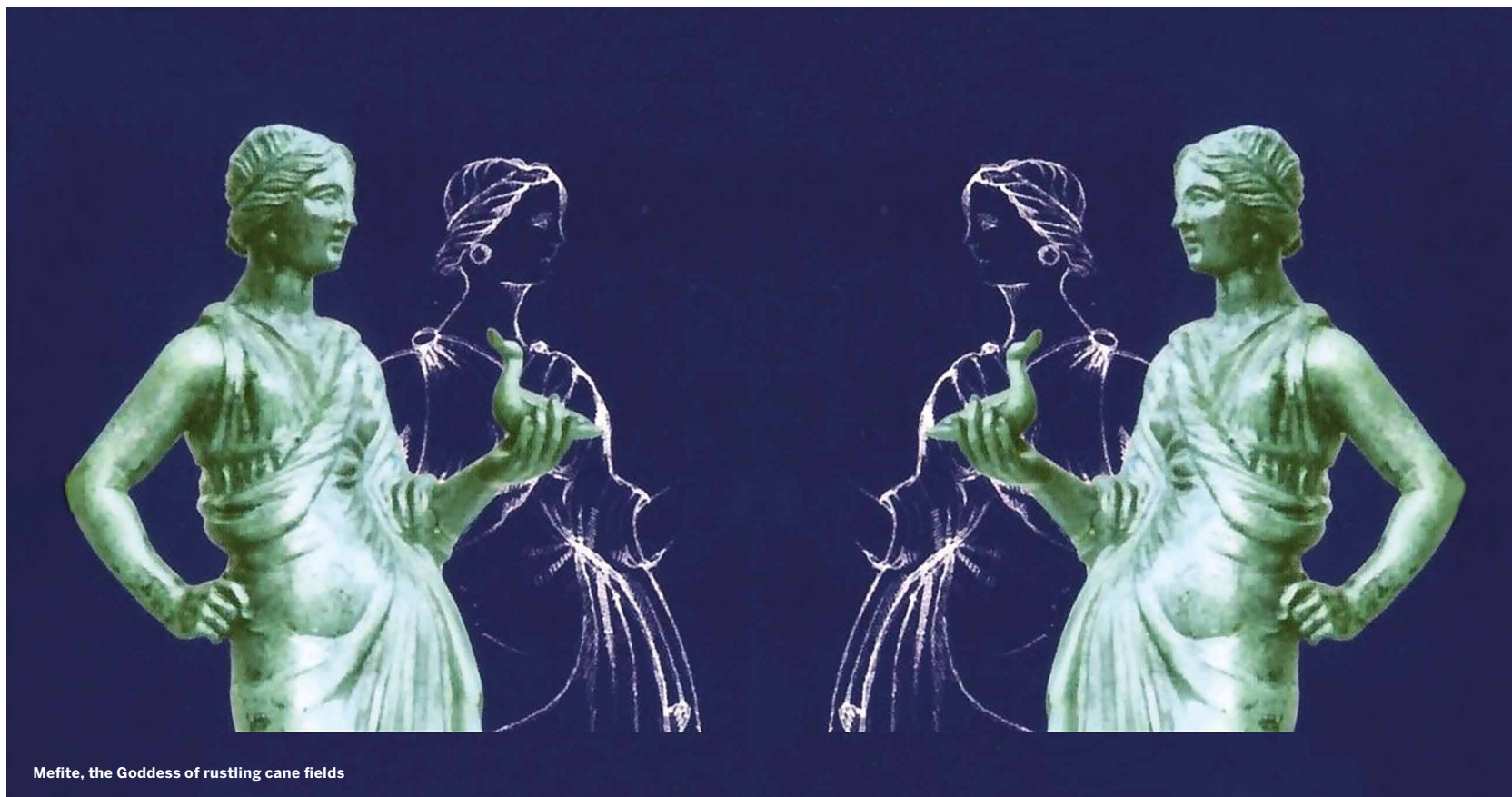
I ringraziamenti sono estesi alla Soprintendenza Archeologica, Belle arti e Paesaggio del Molise (Mibac).

FRANCESCO ROBERTI
Presidente della Provincia di Campobasso

We trust that this guide will be a valuable contribution to our efforts to promote and further an appreciation of this jewel in our territory, a jewel which deserves to be more and more well known. We wish to thank the Comune of Sepino, its mayor Paolo D'Anello, its vice mayor Antonio Piacente, and the cultural assessor Marisa Ciaramella for her backing and sponsorship.

Finally we extend our gratitude to the Soprintendenza Archeologica, Belle Arti e Paesaggio del Molise (Mibac).

FRANCESCO ROBERTI
President of the Province of Campobasso



Mefite, the Goddess of rustling cane fields

L' UNIONE EUROPEA E IL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE

La politica dell'Unione europea a tutela e salvaguardia del patrimonio culturale è declinata in tutte le dimensioni e attività dell'Unione, che vanno dalle politiche di sviluppo territoriale e dell'innovazione all'interno del territorio dei 27 Stati membri al sistema delle relazioni esterne.

L'Unione Europea identifica il patrimonio culturale in tre macro-categorie: tangibile, intangibile e digitale.

Queste tre tipologie si declinano poi in diversi esempi di patrimonio, che spaziano dai siti naturali, edificati e archeologici, musei, monumenti e opere d'arte, centri storici, opere letterarie, musicali e audiovisive e le conoscenze, tradizioni e costumi dei popoli europei monumenti, edifici o siti di interesse culturale al patrimonio paesaggistico naturale, dalla letteratura e la musica fino alle più recenti forme di espressione artistica derivanti dalle tecnologie digitali o i nuovi settori creativi e culturali.

Il patrimonio culturale, con la sua stessa esistenza, arricchisce la qualità della vita di ognuno di noi, traina i settori culturali e creativi e contribuisce a creare e rafforzare il capitale sociale dell'Europa, senza dimenticare che esso rappresenta un'importante risorsa per la crescita economica, l'occupazione, la coesione sociale e per la promozione di un turismo sostenibile. Stime della Commissione Europea ci dicono che nel 2018 il settore dei beni culturali dava lavoro a 8,4 milioni di persone, con un valore totale dell'ecosistema dei servizi ad esso legati pari a circa 300 milioni di euro.



Magno Palace, the headquarters of the Province of Campobasso

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS CULTURAL HERITAGE

The European Union's agenda for safeguarding its cultural heritage manifests itself in all EU dimensions and activities, ranging from development and innovation within the territory of each of its 27 member states to the system of external relations among them.

The European Union classifies its cultural heritage in three macro categories: the tangible, the intangible, and the digital.

These three areas are further divided into more specific categories: natural open spaces, buildings, archeological sites, museums, monuments and works of art, historic centers, literature, music, audiovisual works, education about the culture, traditions and customs of individual states, and to the most recent forms of artistic expression derived from digital technologies and new creative and cultural fields.

Our cultural heritage enriches the quality of life of each individual, stimulates cultural and creative sectors, and contributes to the creation and strengthening of the social capital of Europe.

It is a driver of economic growth, of jobs, of social cohesion, and contributes to the promotion of sustainable tourism. Surveys by the European Commission tell us that in 2018 the cultural sector employed 8.4 million people, about 4% of total employment, with a total value of the services provided equaling 300 million euros.



The Constitution Room, Province of Campobasso

Un settore rilevante, che genera occupazione pari a poco meno del 4% di quella complessiva, e che la Commissione intende continuare a supportare tramite nuove misure che abbracciano diversi settori, dalla tutela dei siti di interesse storico culturale grazie a progetti di restauro e tutela alla promozione del turismo nelle aree più caratterizzate da beni culturali di rilievo.

Una giusta valorizzazione del patrimonio storico-culturale nei diversi Stati membri, trasforma l'inevitabile costo per la società – principalmente in termini di manutenzione e restauro – in risorsa economica e culturale. Se le politiche culturali competono in primo luogo agli Stati membri e agli enti regionali e locali, in questo campo l'UE è comunque impegnata a salvaguardare e valorizzare il patrimonio culturale.

La competenza dell'Unione nell'ambito della cultura non è "esclusiva" ma "sussidiaria", vale a dire integra l'agire politico in materia dei 27 Stati membri, che vengono in questo modo sostenuti e coordinati.

L'intervento dell'UE ne completa l'azione allorché si tratta di affrontare sfide comuni, come ad esempio l'impatto della digitalizzazione, o l'evoluzione dei nuovi modelli di gestione della cultura e riguarda diversi ambiti: salvaguardia del patrimonio culturale europeo, cooperazione tra le istituzioni culturali dei vari paesi e promozione della mobilità degli operatori del settore creativo.

Allo stato attuale il patrimonio culturale europeo beneficia, all'interno dell'UE, di: politiche specifiche, un Quadro strategico (Agenda europea per la cultura), programmi di azione (Europa Creativa e HORIZON 2020), di



Dr. Angelo Fratangelo at the award ceremony of...

The commission intends to continue to support and strengthen this sector with new measures and initiatives embracing different areas, from restoring and protecting sites of historical significance to promoting tourism to those sites.

A proper valuation of the historical-cultural patrimony of each member state will certainly transform the costs to the society associated with maintenance and restoration into economic and cultural benefits.

Although in the first instance cultural policies are specific to individual member states, the EU is nevertheless committed to promoting and safeguarding its cultural heritage.

The role of the EU in this field is not "exclusive" but "supplementary", in that it strives to integrate and coordinate the political efforts of each of its 27 members states.

The intervention of the EU in essence coordinates individual efforts by confronting common issues such as the impact of digitization and the evolution of new models of administration of culture, by safeguarding the common European cultural heritage, by fostering cooperation among the cultural institutions of individual states, and by fostering the mobility of operators in the creative sector.

Currently the cultural heritage of the European Union is supported by specific political efforts: a strategic framework (A New European Agenda for Culture), plans of action (Creative Europe and HORIZON 2020), and ad-



...Molise Women at the helm

ulteriori finanziamenti (all'interno del Fondo europeo per lo sviluppo regionale (FEASR) e del Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR)) e di strategie specifiche.

Per quanto concerne invece le relazioni esterne, ulteriori misure e priorità politiche vengono individuate mediante la cooperazione culturale internazionale, specie sotto forma di discussioni con gli Stati membri e relazioni periodiche sull'attuazione dell'agenda europea per la cultura. L'8 giugno 2016 la Commissione e l'Alta Rappresentante dell'Unione per gli Affari esteri e la politica di sicurezza hanno adottato la comunicazione congiunta "Verso una strategia dell'UE per le relazioni culturali internazionali", che mira a incoraggiare la cooperazione culturale tra l'UE e i suoi paesi partner e a promuovere un ordine globale basato sulla pace, sullo Stato di diritto, sulla libertà di espressione, sulla comprensione reciproca e sul rispetto dei valori fondamentali.

Le politiche

Si inizia a parlare di una politica culturale europea a partire dal 1993 quando, con l'entrata in vigore del Trattato della Comunità Europea, fu introdotto il Titolo IX sulla cultura composto solamente dall'ex art. 128 CE, con cui la cultura diventò formalmente competenza europea. Tuttavia, l'interazione tra la materia culturale e l'ordinamento giuridico dell'Unione ha avuto inizio molto prima del 1993, e si fa risalire agli anni '50.



ditional financing for regional and rural development (European Agricultural Programme for Rural Development - FEASR).

In the area of foreign relations further measures and political priorities are being identified through international cooperation and discussion among member states. On June 8, 2016 the European Commission and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy adopted the joint communication "Toward a EU strategy for international cultural relations", which aims to encourage cultural cooperation between the EU and its partner countries, and promote a global order based on peace, the rule of law, freedom of expression, mutual understanding, and respect for fundamental values.

The political sphere

The formal discussion of a European political agenda on culture begins with the effective date of the Treaty of the European Union in 1993. On this occasion Title IX about culture was introduced, composed solely of the former art. 128 CE, with which culture formally became a European competence. But the interaction between cultural matters and the legal framework of the EU can be traced back to the 1950's.



Numerosi sono i documenti che, nel corso dei decenni, hanno fatto riferimento al tema della cultura e della sua tutela, sia in maniera diretta che all'interno della trattazione di altri argomenti.

Ricordiamo la Convenzione europea per la salvaguardia dei diritti dell'uomo e delle libertà fondamentali (1950), la Convenzione culturale europea (1954), la Convenzione europea per la protezione del patrimonio archeologico (1992), la Convenzione quadro per la protezione delle minoranze nazionali (1995), la Convenzione europea del paesaggio (2000), la Convenzione quadro sul valore del patrimonio culturale per la società.

A questi documenti vanno ad aggiungersi i **Trattati europei** che costituiscono la normativa primaria di riferimento. Nello specifico, la cultura è menzionata all'Articolo 3 del Trattato sull'Unione Europea (TUE) e agli artt. 6, 36, 107, 167, 198 del Trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione Europea (TFUE). A questi vanno ad aggiungersi gli artt. 13 e 22 della Carta dei Diritti Fondamentali dell'Unione Europea. Il primo stabilisce che «le arti e la ricerca scientifica sono libere», il secondo sancisce invece che «l'Unione rispetta la diversità culturale, religiosa e linguistica».

Nel corso degli anni inoltre si sono susseguiti anche una serie di Regolamenti, Direttive e Raccomandazioni.



Numerous documents through decades refer to the theme of culture and its tutelage, both directly and within the context of other discussions.

For example: the European Convention on Human Rights (1950), the European Cultural Convention (1954), the European Convention on the protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1992), the framework Convention for the protection of national minorities (1995), the European Landscape Convention (2000), the framework Convention on the value of culture to society.

Added to these documents are various **European Treaties** which provide the primary legal framework. Culture is specifically mentioned in Article 3 of the Treaty of the European Union, and in articles 6, 36, 107, 167, 198 of the Treaty on the Function of the European Union. See in addition articles 13 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union: the first establishes that “art and scientific research are free”, the second states that the “Union respects cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity”.

Further regulations, directives and recommendations have been added over the years.

La Transumanza

La Convenzione europea per la salvaguardia dei diritti dell'uomo e delle libertà fondamentali (1950), la Convenzione culturale europea (1954), la Convenzione europea per la protezione del patrimonio archeologico (1992), la Convenzione quadro per la protezione delle minoranze nazionali (1995), la Convenzione europea del paesaggio (2000), la Convenzione quadro sul valore del patrimonio culturale per la società.

The Transhumance

The European Convention on Human Rights (1950), the European Cultural Convention (1954), the European Convention on the protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1992), the framework Convention for the protection of national minorities (1995), the European Landscape Convention (2000), the framework Convention on the value of culture to society.

Il quadro strategico

Il 22 maggio 2018 la Commissione ha adottato una nuova **Agenda europea per la cultura**, continuando così a fornire un quadro strategico per l'azione dell'UE nel settore culturale.

La nuova Agenda propone tre obiettivi strategici che impattano sulla dimensione sociale, economica ed esterna: sfruttare il potere della cultura per la coesione sociale e il benessere; sostenere la creatività basata sulla cultura in materia di istruzione e innovazione, l'occupazione e la crescita; rafforzare le relazioni culturali internazionali. L'Agenda stabilisce metodi di lavoro consolidati con gli Stati membri, la società civile e i partner internazionali ed è realizzata mediante un nuovo piano di lavoro per la cultura (2019-2022) approvato dal Consiglio il 27 novembre 2018, che delinea cinque priorità, da attuarsi mediante 17 azioni concrete: sostenibilità nell'ambito del patrimonio culturale; coesione e benessere; un ecosistema che sostenga gli artisti, i professionisti creativi e della cultura e i contenuti europei; parità di genere; e relazioni culturali internazionali.

I Programmi d'azione

L'Unione europea opera attraverso una programmazione di fondi e di attività che copre archi temporali di sette anni attraverso cui realizzare gli obiettivi fissati nelle strategie di sviluppo a lungo termine. I vari Programmi UE, utilizzando il budget a disposizione, contribuiscono allo sviluppo del settore cui fanno riferimento.



The strategic framework

On May 22, 2018 the Commission adopted a **New European Agenda for Culture**, thus continuing to provide a strategic framework for action by the EU in the cultural sector.

The new Agenda proposes three strategic objectives within social, economic and external spheres: to harness the power of culture for social cohesion and well-being; to support creativity, education, innovation, sustainable employment, and growth; to strengthen international cultural relations.

The Agenda establishes employment methods integrated among member states, civil society, and international partners through a new Work Plan for Culture (2019-2022) approved by the Council on November 27, 2018. The plan lists five priorities to be achieved by means of 17 concrete actions: sustainability in the area of cultural heritage; cohesion and well-being; an ecosystem that supports European artists, creative and cultural professionals, and content; gender equality; international cultural relations.

Action Plans

The European Union operates through seven year action plans to implement the objectives established in its long term development strategies. The various EU Programs, using the available budget, contribute to the development of the sector to which they refer.



In seguito ad una lunga consultazione culminata nel Forum europeo per la cultura del 1998, a cui seguirono numerose azioni pilota nel 1999 finalmente, nel 2000, prese avvio Cultura 2000, un singolo programma di finanziamento e programmazione per la cooperazione culturale, che sostituiva i tre programmi pluriennali e accumulava sotto un unico quadro finanziario il supporto dell'Ue alla cultura. Mediante l'attuale programma **Europa creativa (2014-2020)** l'Ue ha istituito, per la prima volta, uno strumento finanziario destinato ai settori culturali e creativi complementare ad altri strumenti dell'UE nel quadro dei fondi strutturali o del programma per la competitività e l'innovazione. Il Programma intende apportare un importante valore aggiunto europeo, sta consentendo di realizzare attività di creazione di reti e di apprendimento tra pari, di conseguire effetti di sistema aumentando il numero di istituzioni finanziarie in possesso di competenze nei settori culturali e creativi, sta ampliando la loro distribuzione geografica e contribuendo a incentivare notevoli investimenti privati. La dotazione di 1,46 miliardi di euro, relativa all'intero periodo di programmazione, è del 9% superiore rispetto al livello precedente.

Oltre agli aspetti programmatici e legati a finanziamenti o progetti, l'Unione Europea ha promosso, nel corso degli anni, diverse iniziative di ampio respiro. Ricordiamo tre azioni dell'UE specificamente destinate al patrimonio culturale: le **Giornate europee del patrimonio**, il **Premio dell'Unione europea per il patrimonio culturale** e il **Marchio del patrimonio europeo**.



An institutional delegation from the Province of Campobasso visiting Brussels

This occurred after a period of consultations culminating in the 1998 European Forum for culture and followed by a number of pilot plans.

Culture 2000 unified financing and planning for cultural cooperation. Under the current plan – **Creative Europe (2014-2020)** – the EU has, for the first time, instituted a financial instrument for culture and creativity which complements other EU financing instruments to foster competition and innovation.

The Programme seeks to generate common areas of creativity and foster networks of education among equal partners, to increase the number of financial institutions with particular expertise in the creative and cultural fields, and to expand their geographical reach.

Its budget of 1.46 billion euros over seven years represents a 9% increase over the previous budget.

Over the course of these years the European Union has also promoted a number of large scale initiatives.

Three action plans specific to the cultural area are: **European Heritage Days**; the **European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage**; and the **Seal of European Cultural Heritage**.



On 23 September 2020, at the invitation of the European Direct Molise official, Dr Carmela Basile, the Youth for Democratic Agnone participated in the event "A coffee with Ambassador 2.0" and had the opportunity to dialogue with Viktor Elbing, the German ambassador to Italy.

Inoltre l'Unione Europea ha dimostrato una crescente capacità e indipendenza nell'adottare iniziative rilevanti nel settore culturale istituendo il premio **“Capitale Europea della Cultura”** (1985), **Europa Cinema Network** che sostiene le produzioni cinematografiche indipendenti e ne promuove la distribuzione (1992). L'UE ha ratificato la **Convenzione UNESCO sulla Diversità Culturale** che permette a ciascun paese di supportare le proprie industrie culturali (2005) e ha dato vita al **Guarantee Facility** per stimolare gli investimenti nel settore culturale (2016).

Completa il quadro complessivo delle iniziative, l'**Anno europeo del patrimonio culturale 2018**, che ha inteso sottolineare il ruolo svolto dal patrimonio culturale dell'Europa nella promozione di un sentimento condiviso di storia e identità. Non da ultimo l'UE, con la **direttiva 2014/60/UE**, ha inteso tutelare i patrimoni nazionali conciliando la protezione con il principio della libera circolazione dei beni con la garanzia di restituzione fisica dei beni culturali usciti illecitamente dai territori dei paesi dell'UE.

A cura di Europe Direct Molise

The EU has also demonstrated a growing capacity and independence in adopting new initiatives in this sector. For example: the **European Capital of Culture Prize** (1985), and the **Europa Cinema Network**, which supports the production and distribution of independent films. The EU has also ratified the **UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity** (2005) which allows each individual state to support its own cultural industries, and it has created the **Cultural and Creative Sector Guarantee Facility** (2016) to stimulate investment in the cultural sector. Completing these initiatives is **The European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018** which aims to strengthen the role cultural heritage plays in fostering a sense of belonging to, and sharing in, a common history and identity. Finally **Directive 2014/60/EU** of the European Parliament aims to protect national treasures while facilitating their free circulation, with the guarantee of restitution of any cultural objects illegally removed from the territory of member states.

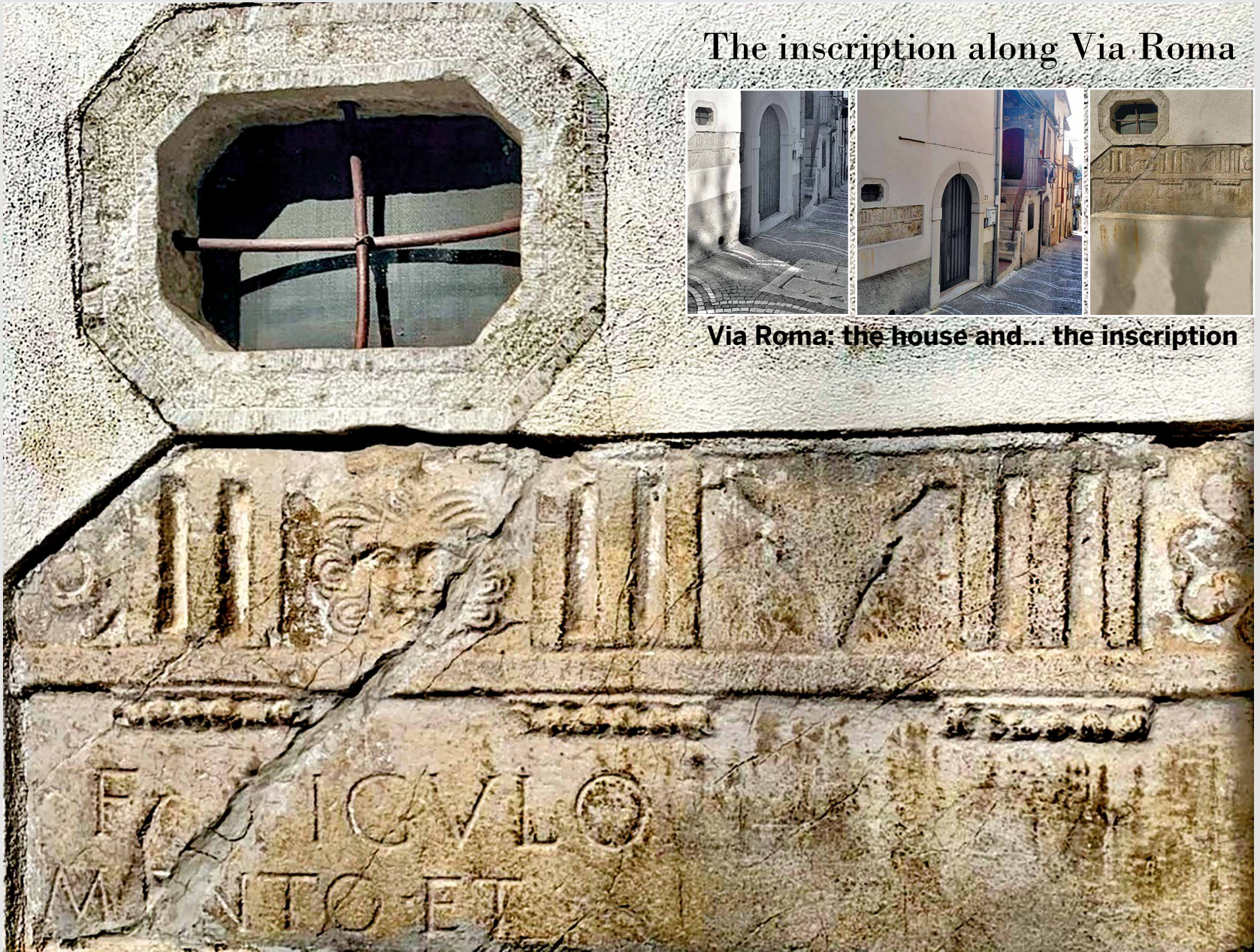
By Europe Direct Molise



The inscription along Via Roma



Via Roma: the house and... the inscription



DESCRIPTION OF SYMBOLS AND THEIR MEANING

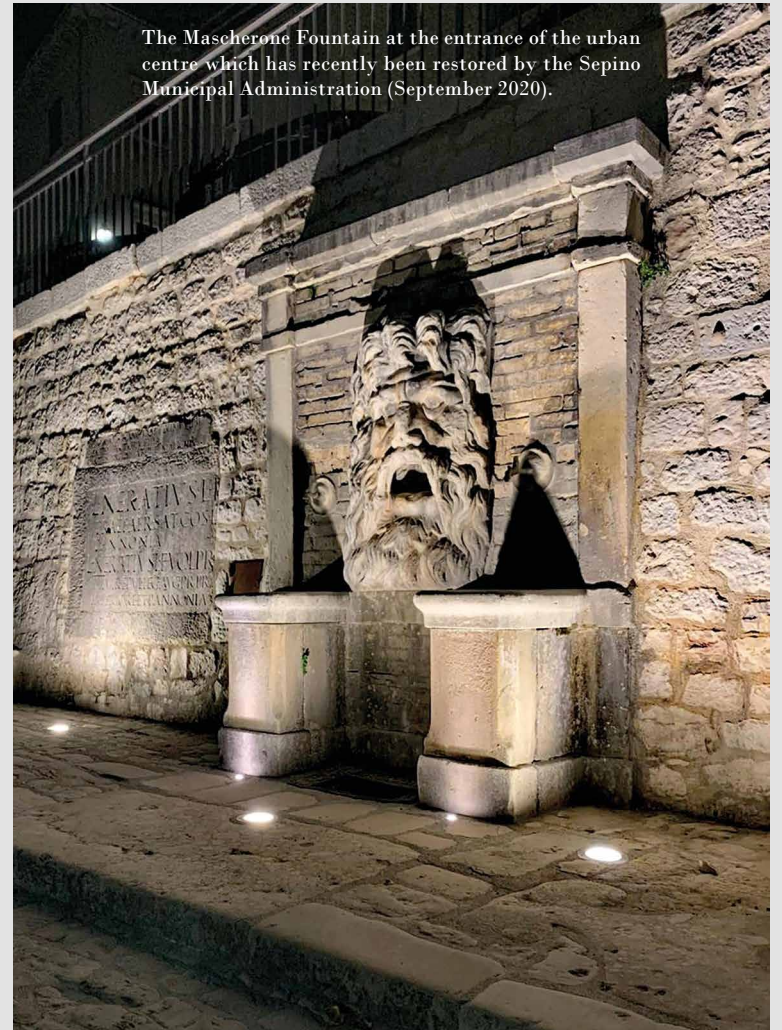
“In the stone insert of Via Roma we can find the following decorative elements: it is a part of a frieze with triglyphs and metopes representing, from left to right, a patera (an earthenware or metal saucer used by the ancient Romans for drinking and for libations at

sacrifices), a child with corollary hair, the head of a bull and a rosette with four heart-shaped petals. The text gives us little indication since it lacks the whole first part: in the first line we can see the name of a noble person F. FIGULO, while in the second line there are the following letters:]MENTO ET to confirm that the inscription is incomplete.”

The Mascherone Fountain



The Mascherone Fountain at the entrance of the urban centre which has recently been restored by the Sepino Municipal Administration (September 2020).



THE ORIGINS.

Around the sixth or fifth century B.C.E. the area surrounding the future *Saepinum* came to be inhabited by the *Sanniti Pentri*, a fierce and proud people accustomed to working the land and raising livestock. They probably came from Sabina, in Central Italy, as recounted in the legend of the *Ver Sacrum* (Sacred Spring).

In fact many Italic peoples, because of unforeseen events like war or famine, were forced to leave their native lands in search of new territory and a new social and economic life. According to this legend, this also happened to the Samnites' ancestors, the Sabines. After the war against the Umbrians, in order to avoid impending famine, the Sabines consecrated to *Mamerte* (Mars, the god of war) all the sons born in the spring of that year, with the promise that, once these young men reached the age of twenty-one, they would be sent away to found a new colony. When the time came, the young *Sabelli* ("little Sabines") departed, guided by a bull, their totemic animal. The bull stopped in the land of the Oscians, at the foot of the Matese Mountains, where the pastures were green and the water limpid and pure. It is here that the *Sabelli* decided to settle and where they founded new villages.



THE SAMNITES IN THE TERRITORY OF *SAEPINUM*.

The vicus (a settlement on level ground) arose in the valley of the Tammaro River, on the site where the Roman city *Saepinum* would eventually be built. The village sat at the intersection of two main roads facilitating commercial exchanges and the movement of livestock. Here the Samnites probably erected the first wooden palisade: an enclosure (*saeptum*) which served as a watering place and shelter for the animals. They also embarked on a number of quasi-industrial activities tied to the breeding of livestock.



Although located in an advantageous commercial position, the low-lying village was easily exposed to enemy aggression; so, on a nearby hill just south-west of *Saepinum*, the Samnites constructed a fortification called the *Ocre Saipinatz* (in their Oscan language: “fortress in defense of the enclosure”). It consisted of an imposing *oppidum* (fortress/stronghold) with stone perimeter walls and access gates. Today we can still identify the *postierla del Matese* (Matese postern), *porta dell’Acropoli* (Acropolis gate), *porta del Tratturo* (Tratturo gate).

The discovery of an Italic temple in the San Pietro-Cantoni area, on a principal transit route between the

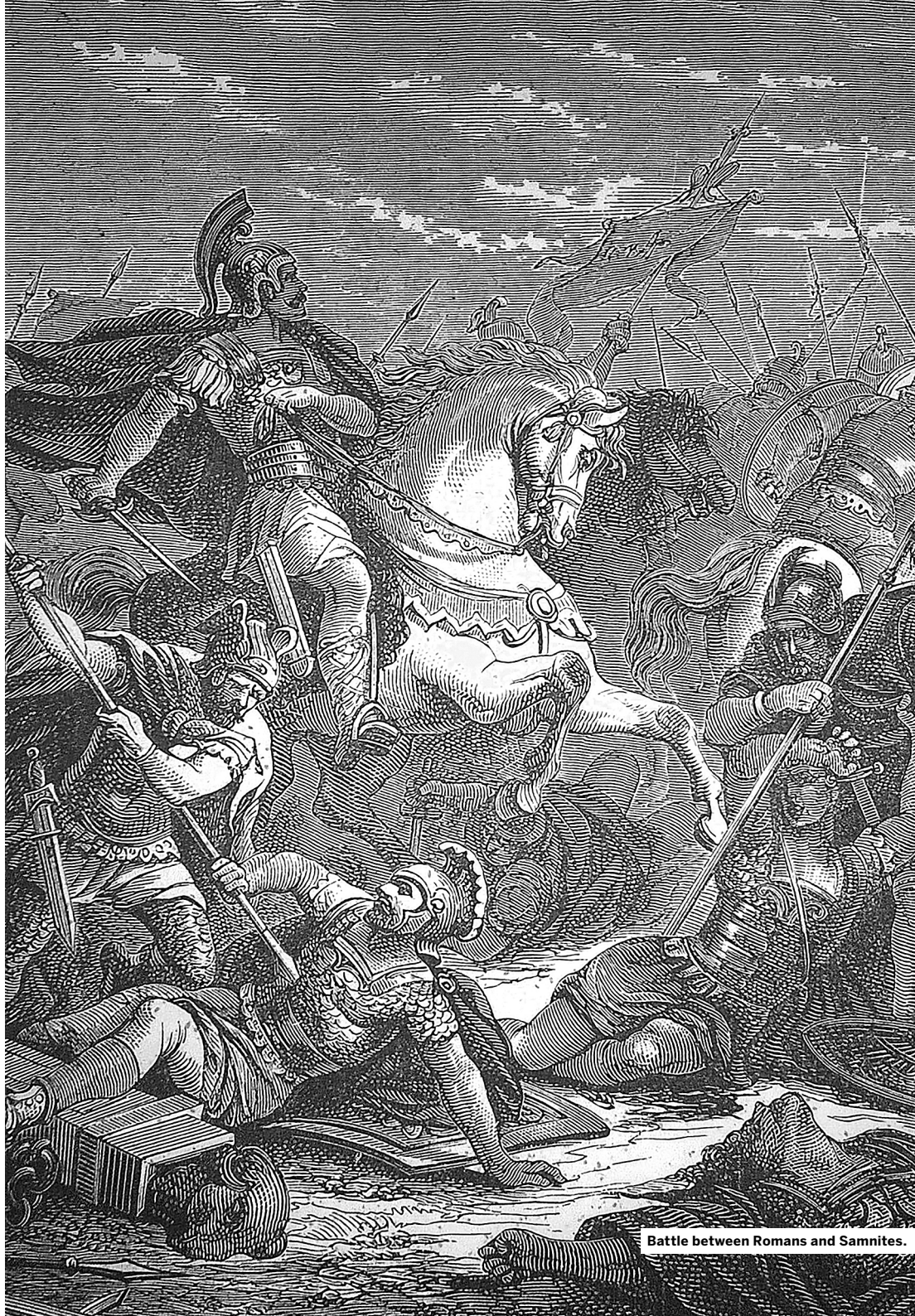
fortress and the settlement below, is further evidence of the existence of a very organized civil and religious community with a true center of worship. The dimensions of the temple are impressive; it is perhaps the most important sanctuary in the Samnium *pentro*, inferior in size only to the temple at Pietrabondante. Architecturally the ancient sanctuary consisted of a prostyle temple with a monumental podium – which is still visible – of considerable height. The sanctuary must have been visited by numerous pilgrims, as evidenced by the existence of ample structures and spaces for their shelter.

THE DEFEAT AT TERRAVECCHIA.

During the now famous Samnite Wars the local Samnites sought refuge in the *Ocre Saipinatz* (today known as *Terravecchia*), in order to defend themselves against attacks by their Roman enemies. Here in 293 B.C.E. one of the bloodiest battles of the wars occurred between the Samnite army and the Roman legions led by consul Caius Papirius Cursor. The Samnites fought ferociously. In fact, the historian Livy reports: "...the Samnites came out of the gates of the city to defend the walls with their own breasts." But they were finally defeated by the overwhelming power of the Roman army. The tragic episode ended with approximately seven thousand four hundred men killed in battle and three thousand taken prisoner. The few survivors scattered throughout the countryside. Eventually many of them reestablished a new settlement, now ostensibly under Roman dominion. This is the beginning of the slow but inexorable process of the "romanization" of the Samnium, and more specifically of *Saepinum*.



Samnite warrior death (terracotta sculpture by prof. Cesare Tammaro)



Battle between Romans and Samnites.

TERRAVECCHIA TODAY.

The ancient Samnite fortress, 953 meters above sea level, was built to serve two needs: as protection and refuge for the residents of the vicus in the valley below, and as a defensive stronghold against Roman armies. It was built by the Sabine people who had left their lands in fulfillment of the *Ver Sacrum* (Sacred Spring). It was called in the Oscan language *Ocre Saipinatz*: fortification in defense of the enclosure. Better known as *Saipins*, it is now called *Terravecchia*. Still visible are sections of the double perimeter walls as well as its three access gates: the Matese postern, on the south-west side, the Acropolis gate, to the north-west, and the Tratturo gate facing east: the most important of the three since it communicated most directly with the settlement in the valley below.

In the Middle ages, the ancient fortress, which had been destroyed in the Third Samnite War, was reoccupied by the local inhabitants. On higher ground they constructed a new castle-like structure: *Castrum Vetus* (Castelvecchio – old castle). The remains of some of its towers and a cistern are still visible today. The site also contains remnants of walls and pavements belonging to three churches – San Vito, San Nicola, and San Martino – erected outside the walls.

In the same period, at the site of present day Sepino, the Normans also built a castle, which came to be called *Castellum Sepini*. The inhabitants of



these two settlements soon came into armed conflict. There were boundary disputes, mutual accusations of theft of livestock, and conflicts over timber rights in the adjoining forests. It's likely that Castelvecchio suffered most of the losses in these skirmishes and, finally, following an earthquake in 1456, the site was abandoned once and for all.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE *BELLUM SOCIALE*.

The indomitable character of the Samnite people created a number of problems for Rome in the centuries following the battle at *Terravecchia*. Noteworthy of course are the formation of the *Lega Italica*, the minting of local coins, and the establishment of a “capital” of the Samnium at *Bovianum* (present day Bojano). The Samnites were eventually and finally defeated by the Roman general Lucius Cornelius Sulla in the *Bellum Sociale* (91- 89 B.C.E.), the Third Social War. As a result, the Romans consolidated their dominion over the Samnium. The first administrative measure undertaken was a “census” which imposed Roman citizenship on the local population and created new municipal structures in the cities of the region. The citizens of *Saepinum* were inscribed into the tribe of the *Voltinii*. When Caesar Augustus became Emperor, a number of areas in the Samnium – among them parts of the *Saepinum* territory – were allotted to the veterans of the Social War. These allotments were divided into *centuriae*, square plots of land about 710 meters in length.



Social War Coins with the inscription “Vitelü” in Oscan language and the inscription “Italia” in Latin.

THE NEW MUNICIPAL STRUCTURE.

In this period *Saepinum* took on the dimensions of a true urban center. Surrounded by perimeter walls, towers, and gates, it became an imposing and stately city. The *princeps* Tiberius and Drusus, adopted sons of the Emperor Augustus, financed these constructions, probably using spoils from the wars (*manubiae*) against Germanic tribes.

According to inscriptions above some city gates, the edification of the walls, towers, and gates occurred between the years 2 B.C.E. and 4 C.E. The name *Saepinum*, however, refers to an organized territorial, cultural, and urban center which predates the arrival of the Romans. We need only remember the wooden palisades built by the Samnites. The name probably derives from the Latin word *saepio*, meaning “I enclose”, indicating an enclosed area capable of establishing economic and social relations with neighboring communities. Because of its location at the intersection of two main roads, *Saepinum* became an important layover, shelter, and marketplace for the herds passing through the territory.

The two main crossroads of the Roman city – *Cardo* and *Decumanus* – of necessity follow the preexisting roads used by the Samnites. In this respect they do not follow the traditional layout of a Roman campus, where the *Cardo* is the main North-South road and the *Decumanus* the main East-West road. At *Saepinum*, following the ancient Samnite routes, the *Cardo* runs generally East-West (*Porta Tammaro* to *Porta Terravecchia*) and the *Decumanus* generally North-South (*Porta Bojano* to *Porta Benevento*).



DIMENSIONS AND ENTRANCES TO THE CITY.

The city is quadrilateral, surrounded by walls, and covers an area of about 12 hectares (29.5 acres).

There are four main Gates (*Porte*) which delineate a perfectly symmetrical layout.

- *Porta Terravecchia*, so called because it faces the ancient Samnite fortress on the hilltop, is dedicated to Venus. Its keystone, with the image of the goddess, is preserved in the Beneventum section of the Museum;

- *Porta Tammaro* owes its name to the river which flows in the nearby valley. It is also probably dedicated to a female deity, although there is no clear evidence of it.

- *Porta Boiano* faces the Samnite city for which it is named. It is dedicated to Hercules.

- *Porta Benevento* is also named for the city it faces. It is dedicated to Mars, the God of war.



VISITING THE ANCIENT CITY

THE TAMMARO GATE

*
THE THEATRE

*
THE *CAMPUS, PISCINA, PORTICUS* COMPLEX

*
THE PERIMETER WALL AND THE NORTH TOWER

*
THE MAUSOLEUM OF *PUBLIUS NUMISIUS LIGUS*

*
THE BOIANO GATE

*
THE THERMAL BATHS

*
THE DECUMANUS

*
THE TEMPLE

*
THE *MACELLUM*

*
THE TRIBUNAL

*
THE BASILICA

*
THE FORUM

*
THE *COMITIUM*

*
THE CURIA

*
THE TEMPLE OF JUPPITER

*
THE TEMPLE OF CONSTANTINE

*
THE FULLONICA

*
THE PUBLIC BATH AT THE FORUM

*
THE GRIFO FOUNTAIN

*
THE HOUSE OF THE SAMNITE *IMPLUVIUM*

*
THE MONUMENTAL ARC DEDICATED TO *PUBLIUS NERATIUS PRISCUS*

*
ROOMS IN SEQUENCE

*
THE FOUNTAIN

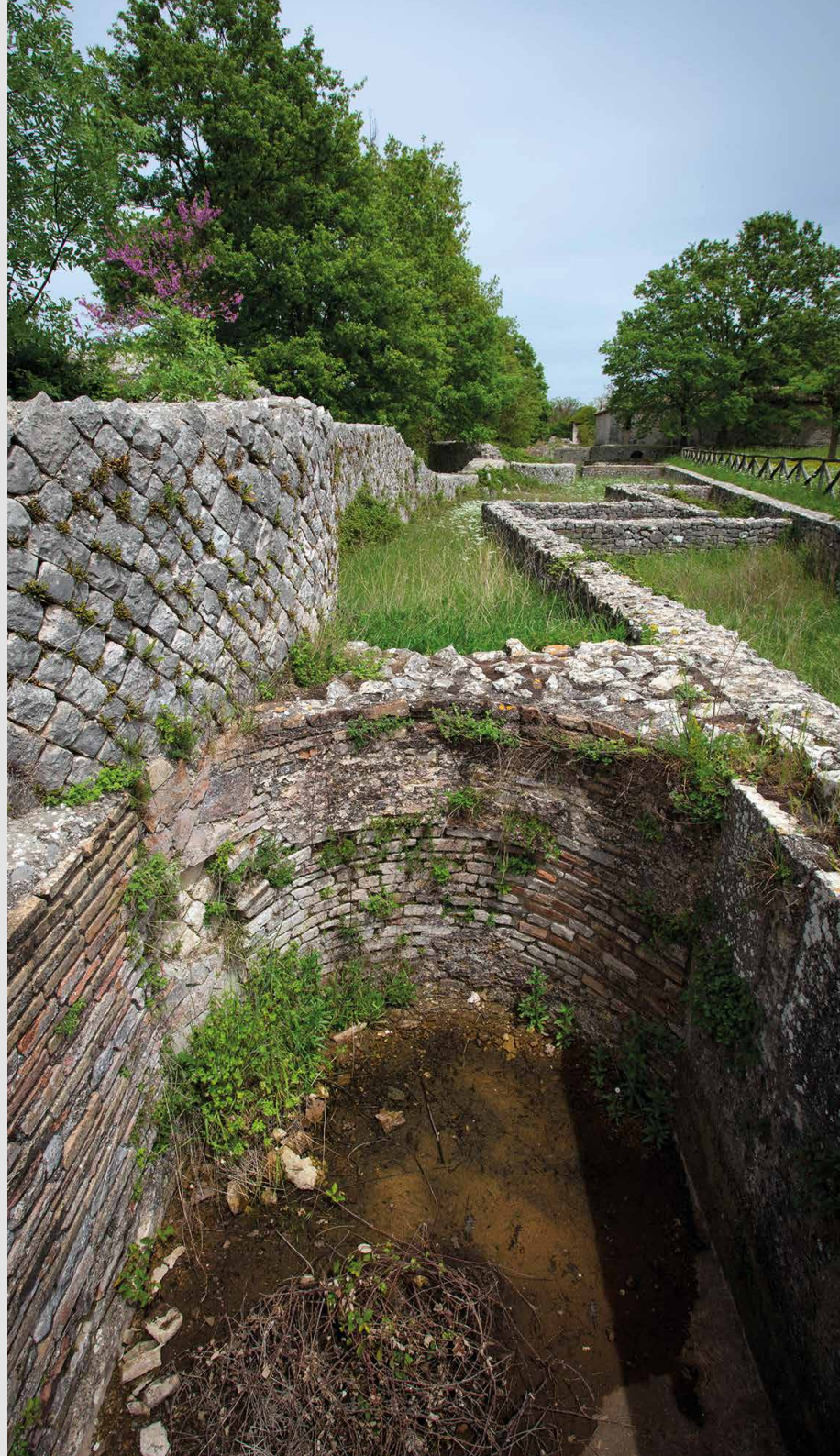
*
THE WATER MILL

*
INTERRED JARS

*
THE POPULAR NEIGHBORHOOD

*
THE BENEVENTO GATE

*
THE MAUSOLEUM OF CAIO ENNIO MARSO



PORTA TAMMARO - THE TAMMARO GATE.

The entrance to the city through the Tamarro Gate, near the current State Road, immediately invokes reflection and wonder, sentiments which will remain with visitors throughout their visit. A few stone houses, typical of the local area, enclose, and seem to imprison an arch supported by pillars of square stone blocks. The walls of some of the attached houses incorporate the lattice stonework of the Roman walls; this is visible on the left side of the exterior arch. On the right side, the walls of a house are attached to, and follow, the curvature of the arch. On the interior side of the arch we can see a fragment of an inscription imbedded in a corner block of the same dwelling. We are witnessing modern events literally coopting ancient history, while preserving a fundamental part of it. The vaulted entrance to the city thus also becomes a small tunnel into the past.



At *Saepinum*, as elsewhere, life has, over the centuries, reconfirmed the rules of adaptation and evolution of human settlements. But it has also preserved the pathways of our memory, which we must explore if we are to better understand our own identity. *Porta Tamarro* is certainly one of these memory portals.

Another way to defend ourselves.

Near the right side of the arch, a bas-relief of a phallus is preserved: this magical symbol of virility and fertility served as protection against negative influences or dangers posed by people, animals, or things entering the city.



THE THEATRE.

The theatre is the city's most imposing structure, located in the northern section adjacent to the perimeter wall. It is surrounded by a group of farmhouses dating back to the eighteenth century; a unique example of spontaneous architecture in perfect harmony with the remains of the ancient structure. The entire complex has two distinct sections, the *edificio scenico* (the performance area) and the *cavea* (the tiered seating for the audience). These were fully connected by a network of lateral passageways. The *edificio scenico* is rectangular. It is bordered by a background structure called the *frontescaena* and two lateral right-angled walls enclosing the stage itself (*scaena*). Three portals in the *frontescaena* were used by the actors to access the stage: *Porta ospitalis destra*, *Porta ospitalis regia*,



Porta ospitalis sinistra. Two of these are still completely visible behind the rural farmhouse built over the location of the ancient stage. Also visible are the carved inserts in which were placed the wooden beams which supported the floorboards of the stage. Some pivot holes, probably used to position moveable scenery, have been discovered in the aforementioned structure (now a museum) which sits above the ancient stage. The front of the stage contains a façade (*proscenium*) decorated with alternating semi-circular and rectangular niches. Between the proscenium and the stage there is a sizable hollow to help with acoustics, and from which one reached the substage (*iposcaenium*). This space was also used to store the curtain (*aulem*). Within it, in fact, we find a number of small pits utilized in the process of raising the aulem. The mechanism consisted of a series of wooden poles folded together when closed. When activated, the machinery telescoped out and

raised the curtain with it. At the base of the proscenium there is a drainage canal, originally covered by moulded decorated panes. This canal was connected to the stage, whose sides contained holes to collect and drain rainwater into the canal.

Before describing the architecture of the tiered spectator seating (*cavea*), it's important to talk about the two *tetrapyla* and the orchestra. The *tetrapyla* were four-sided portals with rounded arches sustained by large moulded square pillars. They were built at exact opposite ends of the external semicircle passageway which originally supported the upper tier of seats (*summa cavea*). These portals served as the main entrances to the *cavea*, especially for the nobility. Through these portals and along two corridors, known as *paradoi*, the orchestra is reached. This area is more semi elliptical than semicircular in shape, and it still retains its original pavement of rectangular stone slabs.

Today there are a number of seats missing from the intermediate section of the *cavea*, while its uppermost section is completely hidden by the ring of farmhouses constructed over it. The walls of these farmhouses in fact incorporated blocks from the original upper tier of seats. The *cavea* originally contained three sections: the *ima cavea*, the section reserved for the upper classes, the *media cavea*, and the *summa cavea*, which was for the common people. On close inspection we can see that the seats in the *ima cavea* are wider and lower than those in the *media cavea*. Moreover the whole section is separated from the one above it by a parapet (*balteus*) that runs all along the corridor (*praecinctio*) between the sections. In the *media cavea*, on either side, are small steps permitting access to different sections. Between the houses, on the right, there is a small stairway leading out to the external passage-



way. This is one of the original *vomitoria* (Lat. “spewing forth”), secondary exits used by the common people to leave the theater. The site contains no preserved evidence of the *summa cavea* itself, other than a number of stone blocks lying or stacked on the ground in the external passageway. Some of these may also be the remains of a small circular temple (*tholos*) erected above the *summa cavea*, on the same line as the towers along the perimeter wall.

Weightlifting.

On the wedge-shaped pieces of the arches of the tetrapili, we can see some imprinted holes on both sides of the stones. These were used for lifting and carrying the stones into the right position. This kind of structure was built by means of winches installed on supporting poles, previously used by Greeks with the name of *trispastos*. This winches used big iron pliers called *ferrei forcifices*.

At the base of this small temple, just behind the cavea, there is an opening in the perimeter wall, with protruding rectangular borders. This so called *postierla del teatro* (theatre postern), was in all likelihood built after the erection of the city walls. It originally had a wooden door and

served as a kind of emergency exit for those spectators who lived outside the walled city. The theatre had a seating capacity of about three thousand. Its financing seems to have been provided by a certain Pomponius Saturninus, a local magistrate.



When there's too much sun.

In order to protect the audience from the sun, a *velarium* would be raised. This "awning" was fastened to the top of wooden poles which were anchored in holes drilled in stone shelves in the external walls of the *cavea*.

What's playing tonight?

We don't know precisely what pieces were presented at the theatre: proba-

bly the comedies of Plautus and Terence, and certainly the *Atellanae*, popular farces in the Oscan language, similar to the *Commedia dell'Arte*. And in the orchestra, there might be mimes, pantomimes, and dances with music. It is possible that gladiator fights were also staged here, since nearby there was a campus or gymnasium, where reliefs depicting fight scenes have been found. (1 century C.E., Theatre Museum).

THE *CAMPUS*, *PISCINA*, *PORTICUS* COMPLEX.

A lapidary inscription discovered near the theatre is dedicated to a certain Herennius Obellianus. It identifies him as the person who financed the complex of structures built between the rear of the theatre's performance space and the *Cardo* road.

In this complex there were a *campus*, gymnasium where young athletes as well as gladiators trained; a *piscina* (fish-pond or swimming pool), next to the gardens behind the *postcaenium* (rear stage); and a *porticus*, a portico with a reticulated back wall, and columns resting on a U shaped stylobate, part of which is still visible.



THE PERIMETER WALL AND THE NORTH TOWER.

Exiting the theatre from the aforementioned *postierla del teatro*, we find ourselves outside the city proper, in an area which served as a necropolis. Looking back, we immediately notice the sequence of circular towers built along the perimeter wall. The best preserved is the north tower, now partially covered by ivy.

There were a total of thirty-two towers along the wall, each consisting of two levels. The first level was at the height of the walkway for sentries at the top of the wall; the second level, about eleven meters high, served as a lookout post, and was accessed by an internal wooden staircase. Some architectural stone elements found on the ground suggest the existence of crenellations that crowned the top of the towers.

The perimeter wall of the city rose to a height of approximately five meters. Like the towers, the exterior was constructed in *opus reticulatum* – a reticulated pattern, using a light grey limestone from the Matese mountains. The interior was filled with stone chips and cement. The reticulated pattern was obtained by wedging together rhomboid shaped stones known as *cubilia*.



THE MAUSOLEUM OF *PUBLIUS NUMISIUS LIGUS.*

Outside the city walls, in an open field, stands a mausoleum dedicated to the family of Publius Numisius Ligus: tribune of the third Augustus legion, prefect, questor, and patron of the city. The inscription on the façade tells us that on the occasion of the death of the young son of Publius Numisius Ligus, the decurions of the city decreed that the monument be erected at public expense. In the end, however: *pater fecit sua pecunia* (“his father built it with his own money”).

Architecturally the mausoleum is a typical quadrilateral altar style tomb, resting on an elevated moulded base. At the top of the tomb, rising from each corner, there are four angular plinths, decorated with botanical themes.



Detail of the inscription.



PORTA BOIANO - THE BOIANO GATE.

Walking along the perimeter wall, we arrive at the *Tratturo* – the main pathway for herds passing through the city – and come upon the imposing *Porta Boiano*, which has been completely restored. The Gate consists of a single arch flanked by two lateral lookout towers. On its external façade we find the following decorative architectural elements:

- a bas-relief on the keystone depicting a bearded man: probably the demigod Hercules, worshipped by the Italic people as a symbol of power and physical prowess.

- two statues of Germanic warriors in chains - one on each side of the armilla of the arch - represent successful campaigns by Roman armies and serve as a warning to any prospective attackers of the city. Sculpted by local artisans, or perhaps in *Bovianum*, each statue sits on a base formed by three molded stone blocks in a trilithic configuration.

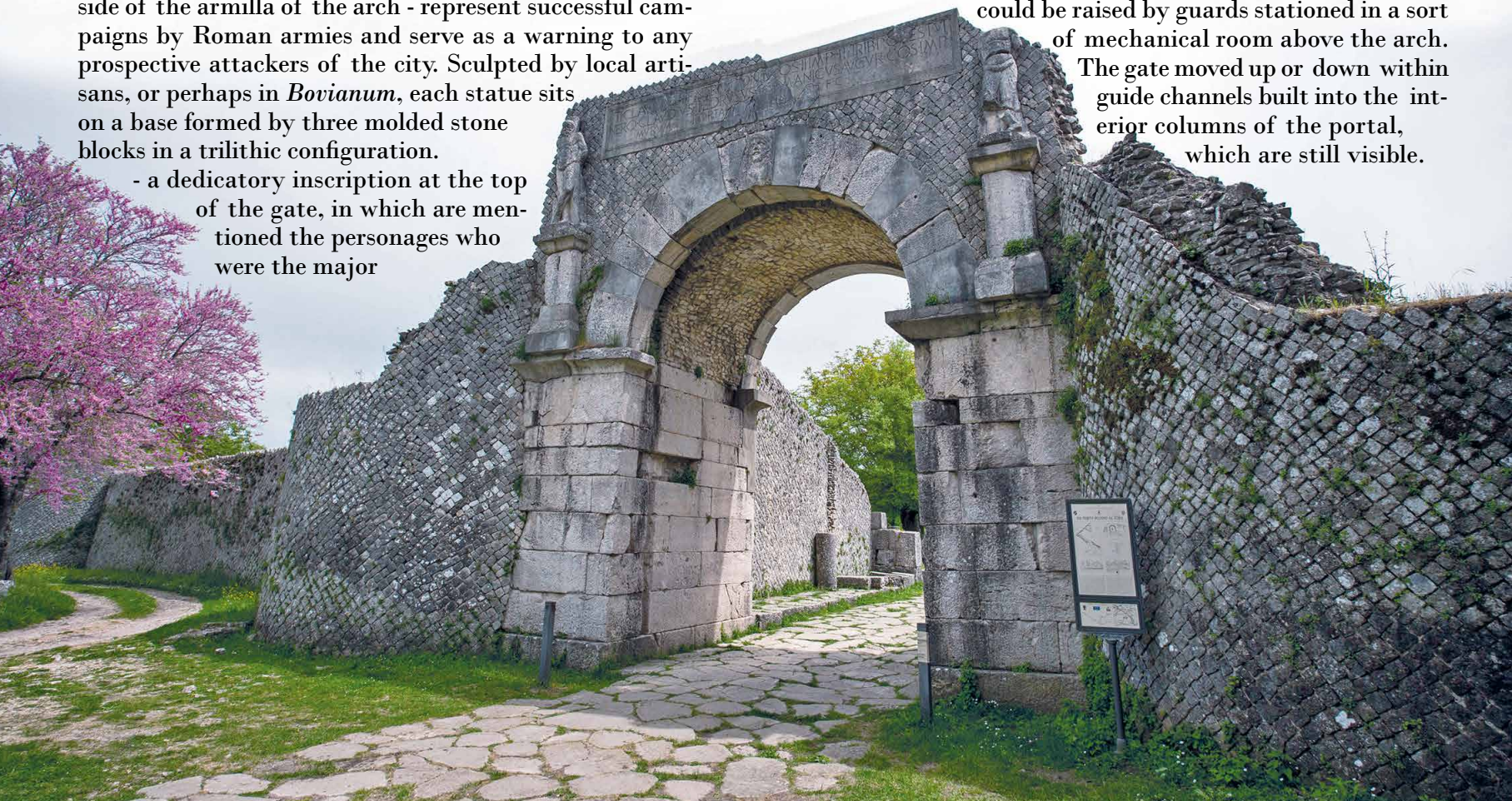
- a dedicatory inscription at the top of the gate, in which are mentioned the personages who were the major

financiers of the protective structures of the city. This inscription merits reading in its entirety.

“TIBERIUS CLAUDIUS TIBERI FILIUS NERO PONTIFEX CONSUL II IMPERATOR II TRIBUNICIA POTESTATE V / NERO CLAUDIUS TIBERI FILIUS DRUSUS GERMANICUS AUGUR CONSUL IMPERATOR II / MURUM PORTAS TURRIS DE SUA PECUNIA FACIUNDUM CURAVERUNT”.

(*Tiberius Claudius Nero son of Tiberius, pontifex, consul, commander of the army, having the power of tribune / Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus son of Tiberius, augur, consul, commander of the army / financed with their own funds the construction of the walls, gates and towers.*)

Entrance into the city was protected by a large gate which could be raised by guards stationed in a sort of mechanical room above the arch. The gate moved up or down within guide channels built into the interior columns of the portal, which are still visible.



A small enclosed courtyard (*cavaedium*), immediately beyond the gate, served as a checkpoint where agents (*stationarii*) checked visitors' credentials. Usually a tax was imposed (*vectigal ex scriptura*) for herds crossing the city. An important historical document – *de grege oviarico transeundo* – is inscribed on one of the stone blocks on the right side of the gate. It is datable to around 168 C.E., during the reign of the emperor Marcus Aurelius. This inscription summarizes correspondence between two local fiscal agents (Settimianus and his supervisor Cosmus) and two imperial prefects, Macrinus Vindice and Baseus Rufus. The correspondence refers to an episode involving an abuse of power by local soldiers, sanctioned by the authorities, against shepherds guiding imperial herds through the area. Specifically, these shepherds had been falsely accused of being runaway slaves and of having engaged in *abigato*, the theft of livestock. They were arrested and had their herds confiscated. This resulted in the issuance of a severe injunction by Rome against the magistrates of *Saepinum* and *Bovianum*. Moreover, it was ordered



that the edict be inscribed on the gate itself, as a warning against repeating such abuses.

In the internal courtyard we can see traces of the heavy stone slabs of a watering trough for the animals. Also visible are the two pivot holes of a great double-sided wooden door. This heavy door was opened using wooden beams stored in two protruding cupboards on the lateral walls of the yard.

If you push ... we'll go in...

The internal closed courtyard was also used as a counting space for livestock. The amount of tax to be paid was based on a head count of the animals inside.

IL DECRETO SUL TRANSITO DELLE GREGGI

DE GREGE OVIARICO TRANSEUNDO

(168 D.C.)

CIL IX, 2438

BASSEUS RUFUS ET MACRINIUS VINDEX MAGG(ISTRATIBUS) /
SAEPINAT(IBUS) SALUTEM / EXEMPLUM EPISTULAE SCRIPTAE
NOBIS A COSMO AUG(USTI) LIB(ERTO) / A RATIONIBUS CUM HIS
QUAE IUNCTA ERANT SUBIECIMUS ET ADMONEM/US ABSTINEA-
TIS INIURHS FACIENDIS CONDUCTORIBUS GREGUM OVIARICO/
RUM CUM MAGNA FISCO INIURIA NE NECESSE SIT RECOGNOSCI
DE HOC / ET IN FACTUM SI ITA RES FUERIT [UT OPORTET] VIN-
DICARI / COSMI AUG(USTI) LIB(ERTI) A RATIONIBUS SCRIPTAE
AD BASSEUM RUFUM ET AD / MACRIN(I)UM VINDIC(EM) PR(A-
EFECTOS) PR(AETORIO) E(MINENTISSIMOS) V(IROS) EXEMPLUM
EPISTUL(AE) SCRIPTAE MIH(I) / A SEPTIMIANO COLLIBERTO ET
AUDIUTORE MEO SUBIECI ET PETO TANTI / FACIATIS SC(R)IBE-
RE MAGG(ISTRATIBUS) SAEPIN(ATIBUS) ET BOVIAN(ENSIBUS)
UTI DESINANT INIURIAM / CONDUCTORIBUS GREGUM OVIARICO-
RUM QUI SUNT [SUNT] SUB CURA MEA FACERE / UT BE(NE)FICIO
VESTRO RATIO FISCO INDEMNIS SIT SCRIPT(AE) A SEPTIMIANO
AD CO/SMUM (CUM) CONDUCTORES GREGUM OVIARICORUM QUI
SUNT SUB CURA TUA IN RE PR(A)ESENTI / SUBINDE MIHI QUE-
RERENTUR PER ITINERA CALLIUM FREQUENTE INIURA(M) / SE
ACCIPERE A STATIONARIS ET MAGG(ISTRATIBUS) SAEPINO ET BO-
VIANO EO QUOD IN TRA(N)SITU / IUMENTA ET PASTORES QUOS
CONDUCTOS HABENT DICENTES FUGITIVOS ESSE ET / IUMENTA
ABACTIA HABERE ET SUB HAC SPECIE OVES QUOQUE DOMINICAE /
[DIFFU]GIANT IN ILLO TUMULTU NECESSE HABE(B)AMUS ETIAM
SCRIBERE QUIETIUS AG/ERENT NE RES DOMINICA DETRIMENTUM
PATERETUR ET CUM IN EADEM CONTUMACIA / PERSEVERENT DI-
CENTES NON CURATUROS SE NEQUE MEAS LITTERAS NEQUE SI TU
EIS / SCRIPS[ISSES] LITTER[A]S T[E] ROGO DOMINE SI TIBI VI-
DEBITUR INDICES BASSEO RUFO / ET MACRIN(I)O VINDICI PR(A-
EFECTIS) PR(AETORIO)E(MINENTISSIMIS) V(IRIS) UT EPISTULAS
EMITTANT AD EOSDEM MAGG(ISTRATUS) ET STATI/ONARIOS [---]
TANDIU (!) T[EME]RE(?) [IR]RITUM(?) FACTUM EST

THE DECREE REGARDING THE PASSAGE OF SHEEP

DE GREGE OVIARICO TRANSEUNDO

(168 C.E.)

CIL IX 2438

Baseus Rufus and Macrinus Vindice give greeting to the magistrates of *Saepinum* – We are providing a copy of the letter written to us by Cosmus, freedman of the emperor, minister of finance, together with the others he enclosed, and admonish you not to commit any violent acts against sheep herders, these acts cause grave damage to the imperial treasury. If we find this to be the case, appropriate measures will be taken. – Letter of Cosmus, freedman of the emperor, minister of finance, to Baseus Rufus and Macrinus Vindice, eminent praetorian prefects. – I enclose a copy of the letter I have received from Septimianus, freedman of the emperor, and my assistant, and I ask that you write to the magistrates of *Saepinum* and *Bovianum*, instructing them to cease committing violence against sheep herders under my jurisdiction, so that by your favorable intervention the finances of the empire are not damaged. – Letter from Septimianus to Cosmus. – Sheep herders under your jurisdiction have complained that during the movement of their herds along the *tratturi* they have suffered abuses from military guards and magistrates of *Saepinum* and *Bovianum*. They affirm that when crossing these cities, they have been accused of being runaway slaves and of stealing horses. During the inspections done under this pretext, and in the resulting confusion, sheep belonging to the empire have disappeared. It is necessary that these people be told to behave with more moderation, so that imperial property suffer no more losses. And since they are persevering in these unjust actions, claiming that they have no intention of taking into account both my letters and those you might write, I ask that you, if you deem it appropriate, ask Baseus Rufus and Macrinus Vindice, most eminent praetorian prefects, to send letters to these guards and magistrates...

THE THERMAL BATHS.

As we proceed along the *Decumanus* from the Boiano Gate, on the left, and adjacent to the perimeter wall, we find the ruins of a series of connected rooms with apses. These were the city's thermal baths. Users could pass from room to room, bathing in water at different temperatures: *calidarium* (hot bath), *tepidarium* (warm bath), *frigidarium* (cold bath). The hot and warm baths were heated by an sub-floor furnace called a *praefurnium*. In one of these rooms, were found remnants of mosaics which decorated the walls, as well as fragments of strigils, used to scrape the skin, and jars to hold various unguents. With the passage of time, however, this evidence has been lost.

But the most noteworthy feature of the thermal baths is the *praefurnium*. In this heating system, a number of small round columns (*suspensurae*) supported the floor above the furnace, while a series of hollow square brick tubes (*tubuli*), along the edges of the floor, circulated hot air into the rooms.

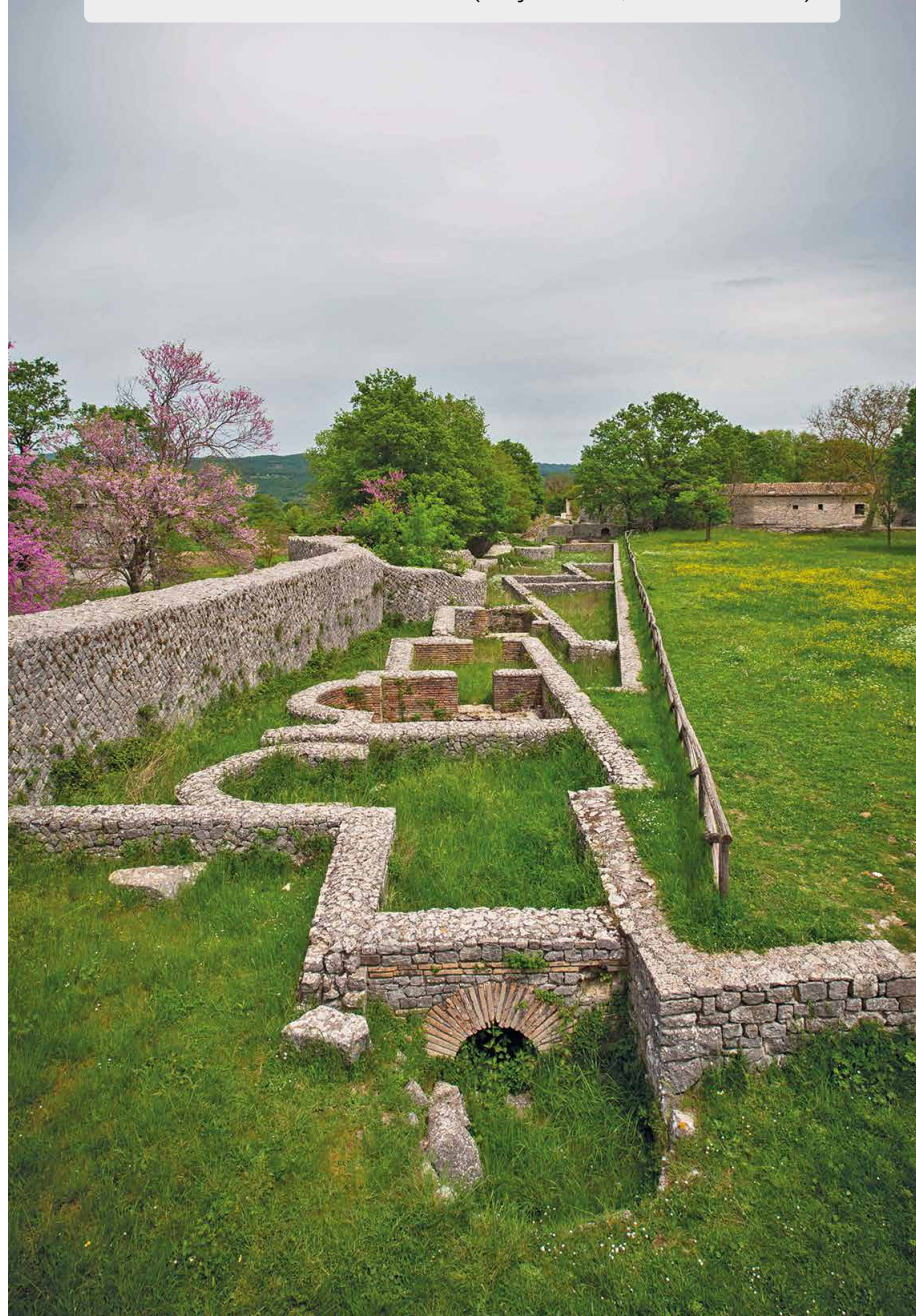


Detail of the floor and the brick tubes.

The deal of the century.

The *suspensurae* were invented by a certain Sergius Orata, an entrepreneur from Pozzuoli, who made a fortune with his invention.

(Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*).



THE DECUMANUS.

Saepinum's main thoroughfare, the *Decumanus*, can loosely be compared to an important avenue in a modern city. It even had the equivalent of crosswalks, large raised stone slabs used to cross the road on rainy days; and, of course, it had stores (*tabernae*) on both sides. The shop fronts were protected by a covered colonnade – a portico – which ran all along the entire length of the *Decumanus*.

At the entrance to the stores, we can still see the grooves made by shutters, as well as the holes where the supports for the sales counters were inserted. In the back of the stores were various small rooms used for sleeping (*cubicula*). These rooms were built around an open-air atrium which contained a large basin (*impluvium*) used to collect the rainwater which drained from the roofs above. Near some of these collection basins, a number of small pits have been unearthed. These were used for drainage, and apparently were connected to the sewer system under the road.

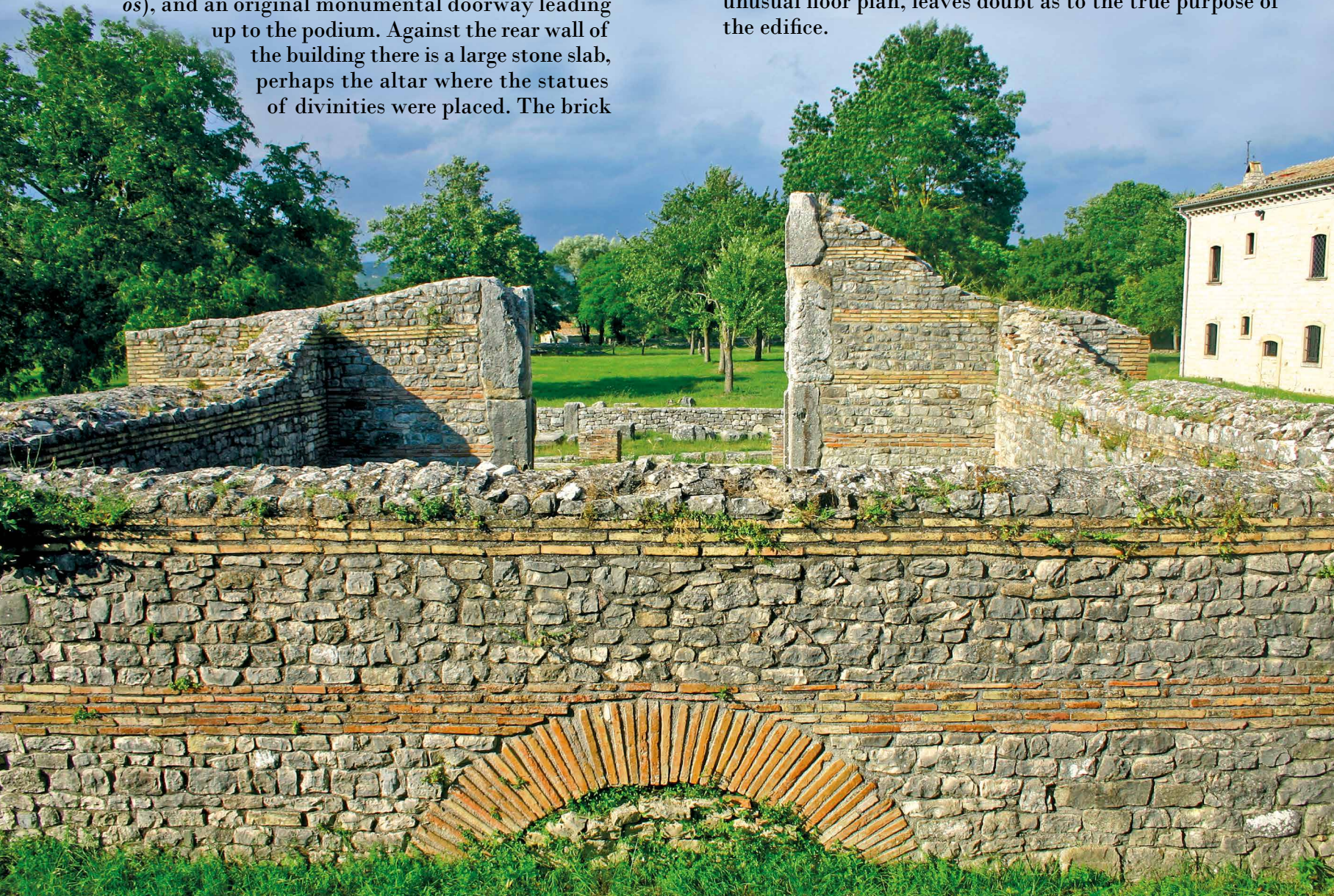


THE TEMPLE.

Further along the *Decumanus*, past the stores and houses on its right side, the walkway rises to the level of the first public building we encounter. It is a quadrilateral religious structure, or temple, with a vestibule (*pronaos*), and an original monumental doorway leading up to the podium. Against the rear wall of the building there is a large stone slab, perhaps the altar where the statues of divinities were placed. The brick

decorative arch (*armilla*) on the wall itself is undoubtedly original.

The entire edifice, whose walls were constructed in alternating levels of stone and bricks, is still under restoration. It's important to note that the structure has no plinths or bases for columns. This fact, along with the unusual floor plan, leaves doubt as to the true purpose of the edifice.



THE *MACELLUM*.

Next to the temple is the *macellum*, the marketplace – the Latin term derives from the place where animals were butchered. The *macellum* was the center of this agricultural community, a place where all types of food products were sold. A short entryway led to a covered octagonal courtyard surrounded by shops. At the center of the atrium was a basin. This basin now contains a large millstone, perhaps an oil press, originally belonging to the water mill situated along the *Decumanus*, near the Beneventum Gate. The floor of the atrium is composed of white mosaic tiles, among which, two bands of black tiles are noticeable.

The *macellum* was financed by an *augustale* (a member of the college of priests dedicated to the cult of the Emperor Augustus), named Marcus Annius Phoebus.



THE TRIBUNAL.

Behind the *macellum* are two interconnected rooms which were accessible only from inside the basilica. This space was used as a small tribunal (*tribunal columnatum*) where local magistrates (*iure dicundo*) administered justice.



The Tribunal (front side).



The Tribunal (back side).



THE BASILICA.

The Basilica stands next to the *macellum*, at the intersection of the *Cardo* and *Decumanus*. This building is the most imposing in the forum area, both for its majestic structure, and for the public activities which occurred there.

Dedicated to the highest divinities, the Basilica was a center of financial and commercial activity, as well as political debates: essentially a multifunctional center, where the economic, political, and social fortunes of the city were decided.

Architecturally the entire structure of the buildings aims toward rationality, proportionality, as well as a rigorous respect for perspective. The interior space is harmonious and balanced, reflecting the typically Roman ideal of representing man as the measure of all things.

The building consists of a single central nave surrounded by a peristyle of twenty columns with ionic capitals, only nine of which are still standing in their entirety. It was probably covered by a wooden, double pitched roof, framed by a windowed truss resting centrally on the colonnade. The main entrance was through a stone vaulted portal which opened onto the *Decumanus*.

We have few details regarding its actual construction. The most informative is an inscription found at the façade of the tribunal. It gives thanks to a certain Lucius Nevius Pansa, the financier of the edifice.

Among other characteristics of the Basilica, are the following:

- fountain basins found along the longer side of the building, next to the *Cardo*.
- the diversity in the styles of the capitals: some with spirals and others containing very unique decorations, probably sculpted by local artisans.
- the duplication of the wall next to the *Cardo*, caused by the various efforts at restoration of the Basilica by two provincial governors of the Samnium: Fabius Maximus and Flavius Uranus. These restorations were probably made after the disastrous earthquake of 346 C.E.

THE FORUM.

On the other side of the Basilica, across the *Cardo*, is a large open space shaped like a trapezoid. This was the *forum* – the city’s piazza. Unfortunately, the public buildings all around its perimeter are no longer visible. The pavement consisted of large limestone slabs set in parallel rows; but these too contain many gaps, now simply covered by grass. Near the center of the square there is a dedicatory inscription which records the names of the magistrates who financed the original pavement.

Still visible, in the grooves of the pavement, are the fastening points for the bronze letters of the inscription:

C(AIUS) PAPIUS C(AI) F(ILIVS) FABER C(AIUS)
 ... F(ILIVS) SC(ATO) FORUM STERNENDUM
 S(UA) P(ECUNIA) C(URAUERUNT).

(Caius Papius Son of Caius, Faber Caius [...] Son of Scatus financed the paving of the Forum with their own funds).

A small drainage canal (*euripus*) which ran along two sides of the forum is still visible: this canal permitted wa-



ter to flow into small catch basins. One of these has been found near the fountain next to the Basilica, and the other on the opposite end, near the *Grifo* Fountain on the *Decumanus*.

Also belonging to the forum are some squared stone pedestals which, according to inscriptions, probably supported statues of emperors. One of these inscriptions refers to a statue dedicated to the Divine Augustus. This finding is significant, since it gives us a clue as to the date of the forum’s construction. It’s likely that *Saepinum*’s forum was part of the improvement projects for the city which began in the Augustan age with the construction of the perimeter walls.

Restoration of the sewer system: a very recent discovery

Beneath the Decumanus road from Porta Boiano to Porta Benevento has been discovered a vaulted covered sewer collection system which runs along a straight path under the roadway itself. It measures approximately 1.6 meters in height and 77 cm. in width. Recently the Soprintendenza Archeologica of Molise has begun excavating, restoring, and flushing out a section of the system near the Public Baths at the Forum, and adjacent to the Grifo Fountain. The work has been directed by the archaeologists, Dr. Isabella Muccilli and Dr. Gabriella Carpentiero. In the interior walls of the collection basin have been found numerous connecting drainpipes which transported wastewater from the buildings along the road. During the excavation and cleaning out operations a number of archeological findings have been made which are currently under analysis to more precisely determine their age and function.



THE *COMITIUM*.

To the left of the forum we can see the partial remains of what were probably public buildings. These were unearthed during excavations that took place here in the 1950's. There are remnants of a series of walls of mixed construction – stone and brick – at the same height above the ground. These partial remains, unfortunately, do not

permit a clear or precise identification of the nature of the buildings themselves.

The first space consists of a single room with eight plinths arranged in two parallel lines, supporting eight columns. These suggest that this may have been the porticoed entrance to the building. And the building may have been a *comitium*, a place of public assembly during elections for local officials.



THE CURIA.

The second space consists of two rooms separated by a transverse wall. This was, in all probability, the Curia – the meeting place of the decurions, the senate of the city, from whose members were elected the local magis-

trates: *quattorviri* and *duorviri*. The first room is paved with limestone tiles; the second, which is accessed by two openings in the separating wall, has been excavated to a deeper level. This room has a ceramic floor which antedates the Roman construction, and a small impluvium from the Samnite period (second century B.C.E.).



THE TEMPLE OF JUPPITER.

The third space is centrally located with respect to the forum. An inscription found nearby tells us that it was most likely a temple dedicated to Jupiter Optimus Maximus. The two parts of the building are clearly distin-

guishable. The first part forms the base leading to the entrance staircase. On the first step are three funerary pillars, one of which bears an inscription to the emperor Constantine. The second part is the podium. This rests on large squared limestone blocks, and is further divided into two rooms by a transverse wall.



THE TEMPLE OF CONSTANTINE.

Next to the temple of Jupiter, there is a fourth area, on which, in the fourth century C.E., a temple, probably dedicated to the cult of the emperor Constantine, was erected. Confirming this belief is the discovery of a statue and dedication to Helena, the mother of the emperor.

The building has a columned façade ending with grooved semi-columns up against the antae.



THE *FULLONICA*.

Excavations under the temple of Constantine have brought to light a quasi-industrial structure whose activities perhaps ended around the second century B.C.E.

This is the *fullonica*, a type of laundry building, closely connected to the business of livestock rearing (*pastorizia*), the most important commercial activity of the local Samnite community. The excavations have unearthed a series of washtubs, waterproofed with a ceramic coating, and connected to each other in decreasing size order. This is where wool products were washed, finished, or dyed, and where hides were tanned.

Before the space was completely covered and filled in – in order to build the temple above it – the *fullonica* seems to have been re-occupied by some sort of dwelling, as evidenced by the presence of a red stucco pavement with diamond and swastika patterns.

We had nothing else.

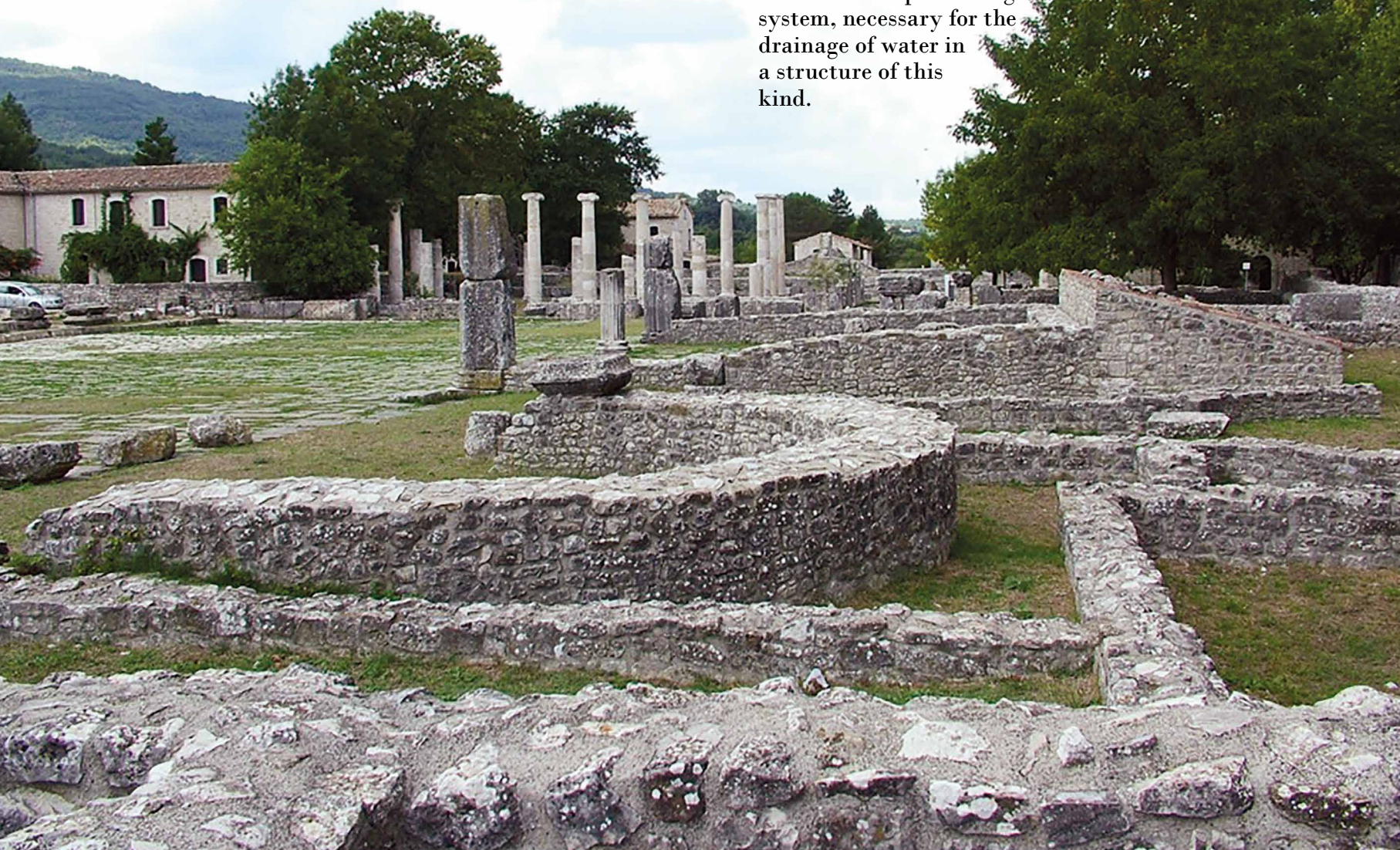
In these washtubs, wool products and hides were pounded, degreased, and washed in a mixture of bicarbonate and water, or in urine – since soap was not yet known in the area.



THE PUBLIC BATHS AT THE FORUM.

The public baths at the forum, next to the temple of Constantine, have not been completely excavated, so we do not have their exact dimensions. The entrance to the baths was probably a colonnaded portico, as evidenced by five plinths (which supported the columns) found at the site. An inscription, also found here, gives us the date

(357 C.E.) of the restoration of the portico, as well as the name of its sponsor: the provincial governor, Fabius Maximus, the same person who sponsored the reconstruction of the Basilica after the earthquake of 346 C.E. Inside the portico we find a semicircular recess (*exedra*), and a series of side entrances into the heated baths themselves. This area was immediately identified as thermal baths, given the easy passage from room to room and the presence of a complex sewage system, necessary for the drainage of water in a structure of this kind.



THE GRIFO FOUNTAIN.

Just beyond the baths, along the *decumanus*, we find the *Grifo* Fountain, a rectangular basin which takes its name from the mythological beast sculpted on its façade. The griffin – with the head and wings of an eagle and the body and tail of a lion – is pictured crouched on its hind legs and resting upright on its front taloned paws. At the center of the relief is a hole for the water spigot. Above the beast there is an inscription dedicated to the financiers of the fountain.

C(AIUS) ENNIUS C(AI) FILIUS) MARSUS / L(U-
CIUS) E(NNIUS) C(AI) FILIUS) FILIUS) GALLUS /
LACUS S(UA) PECUNIA F(ACIUNDOS) C(URAVE-
RUNT).

(Caius Ennius Marsus, son of Caius, Lucius Ennius Gallus, son of Caius, son, with their own funds financed the construction of the fountains).

It is noteworthy that the term *lacus* in the inscription is plural, which leads us to believe that there was more than one fountain in the area. (A second fountain may have been placed on the *decumanus* near the Boiano Gate, with a bas relief of a faun on its façade.)



Caius Ennius Marsus was a very influential figure in the Augustan era, who became High Magistrate of *Saepinum*. This is confirmed by an inscription on the Mausoleum outside the Beneventum Gate. It seems that on the occasion of his election, as a form of gratitude to the citizenry, Caius Ennius Marsus provided a sum of money (*summa honoraria*) to be used for public projects, like the construction of the fountains, and for gladiatorial contests (*ludi gladiatorii*). This may explain the presence of the Grifo on the façade of the fountain, for the griffin was connected to Nemesis, a tutelary goddess of arenas and symbol of divine retribution and fate.



THE HOUSE OF THE SAMNITE *IMPLUVIUM*.

Next to the public baths there were a number of majestic residences. The best preserved is a *domus* called “house of the Samnite *impluvium*”. In the center of its atrium, or courtyard, there is a basin (*impluvium*) to collect the water that dripped down from the roofs. This basin, made of large limestone slabs, was constructed above a preexisting smaller one, made of diamond shaped terracotta bricks. On the moulded frame of the older *impluvium*, a number of letters in the Oscan language are inscribed.

This inscription, from the second century B.C.E., is further evidence of the existence of the ancient Samnite settlement on the site of the Roman city.



The Oscan alphabet.

The *Sabelli*, ancestors of the Samnites, adopted the language of the Oscan tribes when they migrated into the Campania and Molise regions (around the fifth century B.C.E.). The Oscan alphabet, of Etruscan origin, contains twenty-one letters. The writing moves right to left, and a period separates one word from another. Its grammatical rules are similar to those of Latin, including analogous declensions, conjugation of verbs, and syntax. The differences are phonetic, morphological, and orthographic. For example: the frequent Latin ending with the letter "t", in Oscan is a "d" (*dedit-dedid*); the Latin combination "pt" is "ft" (*scriptae-scriftae*). Another peculiarity of the Oscan language is its preservation of the diphthongs "ai", "ei", "ou", which are common only in Greek.

𐌆 𐌇 𐌈 𐌉 𐌊 𐌋 𐌌 𐌍 𐌎 𐌏 𐌐 𐌑 𐌒 𐌓 𐌔 𐌕 𐌖 𐌗 𐌘 𐌙 𐌚

a b g d e v z h i k l m n p r s t u f i o

Smoke gets in your eyes.

The term "atrium" derives from the Latin adjective *ater* (dark), because the smoke from the fireplace located in this space rendered the walls dark. This is connected to the cult of the "ancestral images" (*imagines maiorum*) also called *imagines fumosae*, smoky images, because they were displayed in the atrium. These images were essentially clay death masks which reproduced the faces of dead ancestors, both in size and in color. They were also worn in funeral ceremonies by persons who portrayed the ancestor, and who also donned the attire corresponding to the social and political status of the deceased. (Polibius, *Naturalis Historia*).



The ivory mask
1st century BC

Magnificent ivory plaque depicting the god Dionysus: it decorated either a chest or a bed. It testifies the presence of the cult in the city of Saepinum.

Dionysus was considered a civilizing god because he had spread agriculture and in particular the cultivation of vines among human beings.

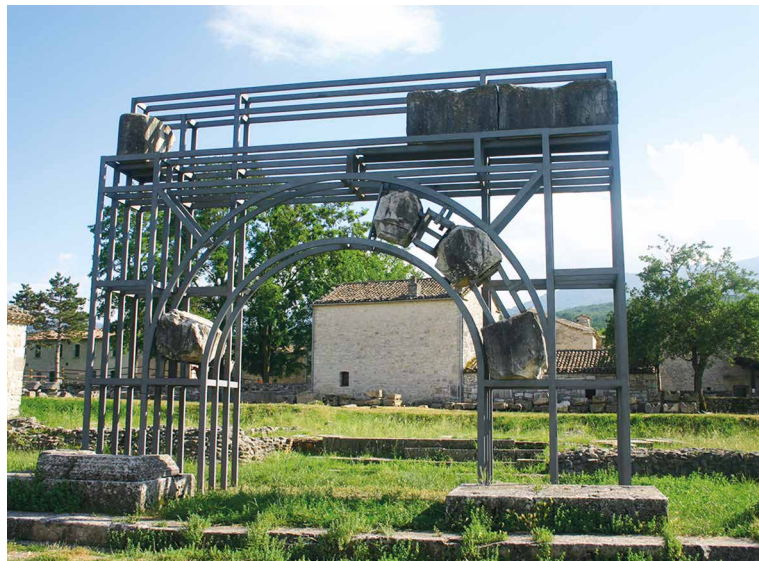
The mask was discovered during the archaeological excavations in Saepinum and today it is exhibited in the State Samnite Museum in Campobasso.

THE MONUMENTAL ARCH DEDICATED TO *LUCIUS NERATIUS PRISCUS*.

On the opposite side of the forum, near the *Cardo*, some excavations, carried out in the 1980's by the Archeological Institute of the University of Perugia, have unearthed the remains of a grandiose public edifice whose façade extends to approximately twenty-four meters. This building was elevated, and was accessed by a wide staircase leading up to a large room paved with limestone slabs.

In front of the building stood a monumental arch constructed with large squared stone blocks (*opus quadratum*). The excavations have yielded many original pieces: among them the keystone, the wedges of the vault, and also part of the inscription:

L. NERATIUS LUCII FILIUS VOLTINIA TRIBU
PRISCUS QUAESTOR TRIBUNUS PLEBIS PRAE-
TOR CONSUL IIVIR EPULONUM LEGATUS
AUGUSTI PRO PRAETORE IN PROVINCIIS
GERMANIA INFERIORI ET PANNONIA SUA PE-
CUNIA FECIT.



This inscription identifies the person who commissioned and financed the work as Lucius Neratius Priscus. This eminent person, belonging to the *gens Neratia*, lived during the reign of the emperor Trajan. He became a renowned Juriconsult and personal counsellor to the emperor. He continued in his office as magistrate and administrator of the province of Samnium also under the emperor Hadrian, becoming a member of his council. In addition to his numerous books on Roman Law, Lucius Neratius Priscus established the concept of *Ius finitum* – the law must be certain – a concept which has influenced legal education and doctrine for many centuries.

In the *gens Neratia* belonged other eminent Roman personages. They included Lucius Neratius Marcellus, the brother of Neratius Priscus, who also became a consul and governor of the province. But Marcellus apparently seized too much power in the region, and was eventually banished, and ordered to commit suicide by Hadrian. Another person who also contributed to the embellishment and improvement of *Saepinum* – by financing buildings, monuments, and fountains – was a certain Neratius Cerealis, consul and praetorium prefect in Rome, who eventually became a relative of the royal family.

Women in power.

The emperor Trajan had apparently designated as his successor, Lucius Neratius Priscus. (Aelius Spatianus, *Vita Hadriani*). However, Trajan's wife, Plotina, in a power grab, imposed the nomination of Hadrian, after her husband's unexpected death at Selinunte (*Selinus*) in Sicily. Surely the fortunes of *Saepinum* would have been quite different had Neratius Priscus become Emperor!

Take the money and run.

Lucius Neratius Priscus Junior, the son of the eminent juriconsult, also made a career in Roman politics. But he was described as *homo improbus atque immani vecordia* (an evil and crazy person), because he had a very peculiar habit: he liked to slap people he met in the street. Then, in order not to incur penalties, as provided in the Law of the XII Tables, he would order a servant, who followed him with a purse full of coins, to pay the victim twenty-five assi. (Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*). Perhaps today there may be people willing to stand in line to receive such slaps!

ROOMS IN SEQUENCE.

Continuing along this side of the forum, we find a series of constructions lined up in sequence. In front of them, are a number of plinths which supported the columns of a portico designed to fit harmoniously with the other buildings at the forum.

The two most visible spaces have floors which differ in style. One of these is paved in *opus sectile*, a design pattern consisting of square multicolored marble tiles. The walls of this room were probably plastered and painted. The other room is paved with small black and white tiles.

Still visible on this floor are some letters framed by a thick black border. The C is probably the initial of a first



name, and the H the initial of a noble surname: perhaps C(AIUS) H(ERENNIUS). The two rooms, on either side of these, are narrower and less visible.

The four spaces were, in all likelihood, municipal buildings. One theory is that they were offices for guilds, or associations; others believe that they were places of worship (*tholos*). The second opinion derives from the discovery, in one of the rooms, of a table base crowned with the bust of Hercules.



THE FOUNTAIN.

At the end of the sequence of rooms there was a fountain, which seems to have been originally covered by a kind of roof resting on four square angular pillars. The grooves cut into the thresholds for the wooden doors are still visible. The interior is paved with limestone slabs arranged in parallel rows of different height.

The original basin rested on a base formed by squared stone blocks, whose imprint on the ground is still visible today. In front of the fountain there is an inscription with a dedication to the *quattuoviri aedilicia potestate* (magistrates in charge of public projects):

L(UCIUS) VARIUS C(AI) F(ILIIUS), L(UCIUS) HERENNIUS C(AI) F(ILIIUS) L(UCIUS ET) N(UMERIUS) PLINIEI C(AI) F(ILII) S(UA) PECUNIA F(ACIUNDUM) C(URAUERUNT)

(Lucius Varius son of Caius, Lucius Herrenius son of Caius, Lucius and Nemerius sons of Caius Plinius, financed this construction with their own funds).



THE WATER MILL.

On the opposite side of the Forum, across from the covered fountain just described, are the remains of a structure of great interest, both archeologically and for a greater understanding of the socio-economic organization of the inhabitants of *Saepinum*. The building is located along the *decumanus*, next to the House of the Samnite *impluvium*, and has been identified as a water mill.

In front of the building itself, there is a rectangular ditch which housed a large water wheel. The flow of water which powered the wheel was regulated by means of stone sluices. As the wheel turned, it activated the grinder or millstone located in an internal square chamber.

The water which powered the mill may have been stored in a cistern (*castellum aquae*) located in the left tower of the Beneventum Gate. This may be why the walls of this tower were not constructed in *opus reticulatum* (reticulated pattern), like all the others, but in small square blocks stacked horizontally.





INTERRED JARS.

Behind the *taberna* (shop), whose portico can be traced next to the water mill, there are four interred jars, constructed with clay bricks, and connected to each other by a small canal. These jars may have been used to store the oil produced by a small family olive press. The jars were impermeable, and were interconnected in descending size order, so that the oil was filtered and purified as it reached the last vessel.

Recently, however, researchers have come to believe that the structure may have been a tannery.



THE POPULAR NEIGHBORHOOD.

The excavations at *Saepinum* have revealed that this provincial community was organized, albeit on a smaller scale, with all the characteristics and public structures of a typical Roman city. The life of its common citizens, however, is most evident in the remains of a popular neighborhood – unearthed in 1977 – on the right side of

the *decumanus*, near the Beneventum Gate.

The ruins pertain to a number of modest one-story houses inhabited by the less well-to-do or common citizens of the city. These houses are each divided by a common courtyard, and are attached to shops lining the road. This is evidenced by the presence of grooves on the doorsills made by store shutters, and holes for the placement of sales counters.



PORTA BENEVENTO
THE BENEVENTUM GATE.

The *decumanus* ends at the Beneventum Gate. The design of this entrance is the same as the others: a single arch, with two side towers, and a security courtyard with its double-sided door. Most of the decorative elements on the Gate's façade have disappeared, but it appears that they corresponded perfectly with those found at the Boiano Gate:

- the Germanic soldiers in chains (of whom only one base and the fragment of a foot are now visible).
- the dedicatory inscription to Tiberius and Drusus (very fragmentary and currently located on the interior side of one of the pillars).
- the keystone decorated with the image of a warrior (perhaps Mars).

A noteworthy difference between this Gate and the other entrances to the city is the construction of the left tower. As pointed out in the description of the water mill, this tower was not built in a reticulated pattern, but by using small blocks stacked horizontally. It is believed that this construction was meant to house a water cistern rather than a lookout tower.



THE MAUSOLEUM OF CAIUS ENNIUS MARSUS.

Outside Porta Benevento, along the *tratturo*, stands a cylindrical monument resting on a large square stone base. This is the mausoleum of the previously mentioned Caius Ennius Marsus, eminent magistrate and financier of many public structures (see the notes to the *Grifo* fountain). On each front corner of the base, in symbolic defense of the mausoleum, stands a lion in the act of crushing an enemy warrior with its paw. In all likelihood, originally, there were two others on the back corners. The monument is topped with battlement like elements above a moulded frame which circles the whole structure. On the inside, the foundations of the octagonal sepulchral cell are below ground.

A number of decorative elements on the front side of the mausoleum celebrate, in one way or another, the life and personality of the magistrate.

First, there is an inscription which lists his career achievements (*cursus honorum*):

C(AIO) ENNIO C(AI) F(ILIO) VOL(TINIA) MAR-
SO, PATRONO MUNICIPI, TRIB(UNO) MIL(I-
TUM), PRAEF(ECTO) FABR(UM), IIVIR(O)
QUINQ(UENNALI), IIVIR(O) I(URE) D(ICUN-
DO) IIII, PRAEF(ECTO) I(URE) D(ICUNDO) BIS,
IIIVIR(O), Q(UAESTORI) III.

(To Caius Ennius Marsus Son of Caius, inscribed in the Voltinii district, patron of the city, tribune of the army, prefect of military engineers, quinquennial duovir (joint magistrate), four times duovir with judicial authority, twice prefect with judicial authority, quattuorvir, three times quaestor).

Below this inscription, sculpted in bas-relief, are various symbols of judicial powers:

- the *sella curulis* (curule seat): the folding seat used by magistrates during public ceremonies and in processions;

The backrest is decorated at its center with a fluted vase flanked by two facing sphinxes; on either side appears the profile of a head in relief: a man on the right and a woman on the left; on the armrests two more figures in relief face us; and below them there is a footstool;

- the *cista*, a basket or container for documents, is placed next to the chair;
- *lictors' fasces* (a bundle of rods tied together, sometimes containing an axe): symbol of judicial power, authority, and punishment – so called because they were carried by *lictors* (the attendants of magistrates).

The mausoleum was erected during the Augustean age, soon after the construction of the perimeter fortifications, and at the same time as the *Grifo* Fountain. In fact, the workmanship of the inscriptions and decorative elements is all very similar.



Mayors...Better two or four?

Duoviri (two men) and *quattuorviri* (four men) were municipal magistrates. Some had judicial powers (*iure dicundo*), others were *aedilis*, in charge of public projects and construction.

Detail of the inscription on the mausoleum of Caius Ennius Marsus.



The name *Altilia*.

The archeological zone at Sepino is known as *Altilia*. This term is possibly of Germanic origin, derived from the combination of *alt* (old) and *theil* (part). According to Bonifazio Chiovitti, it may have been imposed on the area by the Bulgarian colony of Alczeco in the year 667. However, these people spoke a Slavic language, so it is hard to attribute to them a Germanic term. It may have originated with prior invasions by the Visigoths in the V and VI centuries, but there is no evidence for this. Another theory proposes a connection between the term *Altilia* and its first inhabitants, the descendants of the legionnaires of the consul Marcus Attilius, who called the area *Altilia* in his honor. (G. Masciotta, *Il Molise dalle origini ai nostri giorni*, Napoli, 1915).

THE MUSEUMS

THE THEATRE SECTION

*

THE *PORTA BENEVENTO* SECTION

*

Altilia's museums are housed in rural farmhouses which date back to the eighteenth century. The first exhibits were completed in the 1980's and contained photographs and discovered artifacts. More recently, the *Soprintendenza Archeologica* of Molise has expanded the museum spaces throughout the farmhouses which surround the upper tier seats of the amphitheater. The materials now on display are of particular interest since they contain artifacts pertaining to the daily life of the ancient city: utensils, domestic furnishings, coinage, pottery, buckles, and statues. Also on exhibit are excavated pieces of lead piping (*fistulae*) belonging to the water drainage system.



THE THEATRE SECTION.

The eighteenth-century farmhouse built over the original stage is now a museum. On the ground floor are displayed materials excavated at the necropolis; on the second floor there are important inscriptions, and an interesting photographic and documentary exhibition relating to various excavations done in the theatre area.

Principal materials on display:

- funerary lion belonging to the Mausoleum of Caius Ennius Marsus;
- statue of a male figure, headless, wearing a toga;
- the sarcophagus of Mettia Valeriana;
- reliefs with gladiatorial images;
- niched monuments (57 *edicule*) with busts of the deceased.



THE *PORTA BENEVENTO* SECTION.

This section of the museums is located in a building next to the Gate itself. On the ground floor are exhibits relating to the perimeter walls and gates, and a number of inscriptions relating to the city's roads and to the construction of the *Macellum*. The second floor is dedicated to materials found in the area of the Forum.

Principal materials on display:

- the keystone of one of the city gates, displaying the bust of a goddess (Venus);
- boundary stone with a distance measurement;
- the cast of a *Mascherone* from a fountain – the original decorates one of the fountains in present day Sepino;
- pieces of a ceramic floor decorated with hunting scenes.



THE MASCHERONE FOUNTAIN.

Coming into present day Sepino, near the eastern entrance to the medieval town (though still outside the walls), in the San Nicola neighborhood, we come upon a majestic *mascherone* decorating a fountain with two basins. The relief (122 cm. high x 80 cm. wide) appears to be carved from a single block of marble by an expert stone-cutter who, most certainly, also had formal training in sculpture. This marble relief was undoubtedly taken from the excavations at *Saepinum-Altília* and placed here.

This is evident not only because of its unnatural placement in a brick, rather than stone wall, but also because it is framed by columns from a relatively recent period. The mask's disproportionate size with respect to its elevation, and the placement of the catch basins laterally, are also quite unusual. Next to the fountain, there is an inscription in Latin, dating back to the Roman Empire, which mentions Lucius Neratius Priscus a distinguished member of the *Gens Neratia*, an important family of the Samnium and *Saepinum*.

Above it, there is another, much more recent inscription (perhaps from the 18th or 19th century) which may indicate the ultimate date of the relocation of the fountain. There are also other interesting objects placed at the site. Of particular interest is the large catch basin with a triple moulded cornice, located to the right of the fountain, and partly recessed in the wall. Some letters engraved on the wall suggest that originally this may have been a sarcophagus.

All these elements lead to the almost certain conclusion that the *mascherone* was found during excavations at *Altília*, the location of the Roman city of *Saepinum*. Scholars have dated the relief to the Antonine dynasty (second century C.E.), since it is similar to designs popular during that period. Given the location of its discovery, and in the absence of specific dates, another important indication of the date of the *mascherone* is its similarity to other works found at *Saepinum*.

APPENDIX

THE MASCHERONE FOUNTAIN

*

SOURCES, MASKS, MYTHS IN SEPINO

*

RECENT DISCOVERIES AT *ALTILIA*



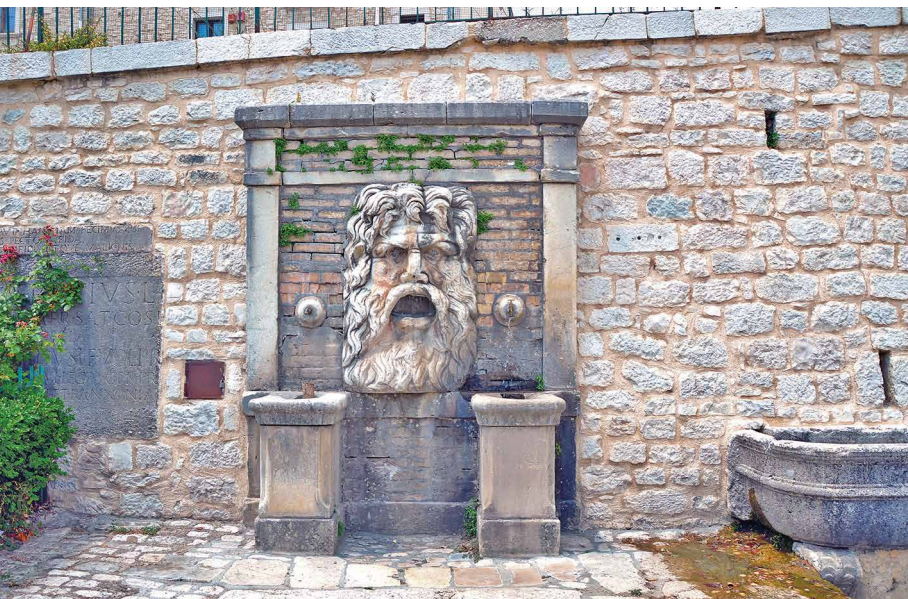
It has been observed that the various sculptures or reliefs in *Saepinum* were either made by one sculptor or, almost certainly, come from a single workshop of expert stonecutters. See, for example, the Germanic prisoners; the Boiano Gate keystone, with its bearded Hercules figure; the relief on the *Grifo* fountain (or its now lost twin, the *Faun* fountain); or the funerary lions placed at the corners of the Mausoleum of Caius Ennius Marsus. One of these, though somewhat damaged, is on display at the Archeological Museum above the stage of *Saepinum's* theatre. The lion's mane bears the same soft fluent lines as the beard and hair of the *mascherone*. The similarities in workmanship and engraving style in all these works, and in certain specific details – one in particular the shape of the eyes – places them in the first decades of the imperial era, a period of intense building activity in *Saepinum*.

However, the plasticity in the sculpture of the *mascherone*, although recalling that initial fervent period, is undoubtedly the fruit of an expressionistic development belonging to a later age, of which we have no similar examples found in the excavations at *Saepinum*. Hypotheses regarding the symbolism of this *mascherone* are also limited. Large masks in ancient times were used for different purposes, most of which went beyond the purely ornamental: from the purely apotropaic, to oracular effigies or simulacra (ex. *Bocca della Verità* in Rome), to ornaments for impluvia, or, even for manhole covers for sewers. The relationship between *mascheroni* and water is omnipresent.

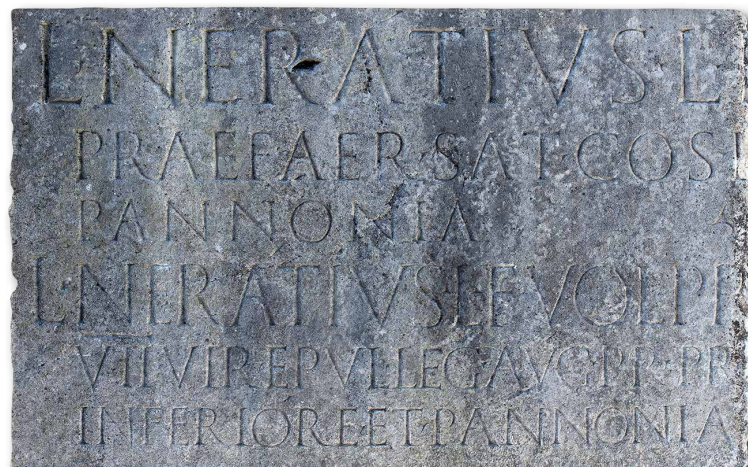
Therefore, a monumental fountain, or perhaps a nymphaeum (monument consecrated to nymphs), are the most likely hypotheses for the original location of Sepino's *mascherone*. What leads, most of all, to the conclusion that this relief was probably destined to become the façade ornament of one of *Saepinum's* fountains, is the objective manifestation of the sculptor's intended image on the mask. Scholars have advanced a number of hypotheses, but the most likely answer may be found in the historical iconography of *Oceanus*, the Greek Titan God.

See, for example: the thick mane of hair which, descending, blends with the beard, forming a kind of frame for the entire figure; the prominent furrowed eyebrows, accentuated by two thick wrinkle lines on the forehead; the prominent nose in proportion with the rest of the face; the raised mustache to amplify the opening of the mouth; finally the double row of leaves below the lower lip, underlying the image's relationship with nature and life. Everything on the face seems to flow in wave-like motion, from the tufts of hair to the curl of the beard, in a kind of uninterrupted circle closing in on itself like an inexhaustible fountain.

The *mascherone's* allusion to water as the source of sustenance and regeneration, is undoubtedly a reference to the original importance of the *Saepinum* territory: its location near springs, torrents, and rivers. With his severe, admonitory gaze, the *mascherone* serves as the tutelary deity of a place whose riches reside in its waters. He reminds us that his function is to defend and preserve these resources throughout the ages.



Inscription dedicated to Lucius Oriens next to the Mascherone fountain.



Inscription about Lucius Neratius Priscus next to the Mascherone fountain.



Mysterious inscription next to the Mascherone fountain.

SOURCES, MASKS, MYTHS IN SEPINO.

As the indispensable source and giver of life, water has been one of the primary thematic elements of our historical journey from archaic times to the present. And there have certainly been periods in which water has been mythologized more than in others, above all through external manifestations in art and in representations on monuments. This transmigration from a connection to nature to human feeling reached its apex in the myth of *the fountain of eternal youth*. From classical to modern literature, to cinema and virtual technology, there has been a constant exploration, in varied forms, of the fascinating theme of the search for immortality (think of the science-fiction film, *Cocoon*).

Sepino, this delightful town at the foothills of the Matese, is one of those places which has made of this essential element its *genius loci*. The town and its water have an indissoluble bond, so much so, that Sepino is known as *il paese dell'acqua*. It was given this epithet not only for the presence of a spring containing water recognized for its sensory and mineral qualities, but also because the town and its numerous *contrade* – both high and low – contain hundreds of natural springs. Not all of these have been capped, but many are characterized by the presence of ancient fountains named for their location. The hand of man is obviously more pronounced and attentive in the town itself, where the needs of daily living have made it more necessary to facilitate access to this valuable resource. And it is here that artistry has claimed its power of connection to myth.

In order to reach our main point, we cannot ignore the mystery surrounding the façade relief of the *Fontana del Fauno* (Fountain of the Faun) found at *Saepinum-Altilia*. Some notes made by excavators at the site suggest that the façade of this fountain – twin to the nearby *Grifo* fountain – has disappeared or been lost.

They refer to a mysterious black and white photograph, taken in the 1970's, of a limestone relief propped

up on some rocks rather than properly fixed or installed, as was the case with the *Grifo* fountain. This precarious placement obviously put the piece in grave danger of disappearing, which in fact it did. But the term “lost”, with respect to a block of limestone, of notable size and weight, in the midst of important excavations, is not strictly accurate. It might be more appropriate to say that it was “plundered” for a private collection. The photograph shows a beautiful framed relief from the imperial period, with an inscription identical to the one at the *Grifo* fountain: a dedication to Caius Ennius Marsus and his son Lucius Ennius Gallus, aediles magistrates, who financed the construction of the two fountains.

Ignoring, for now, the suggestive archeological mystery a la Indiana Jones – which no one seems to have tried to solve completely – let's examine the symbolism and mythology of *Saepinum's* faun. We see a figure with the curved horns of a male goat, flowing hair and beard, thick eyebrows over almond shaped eyes, wide aquiline nose, and more distinguishing, a band below the horns which falls on the side in a sinuous twist.

The Faun, in the Italic pantheon, is a minor deity tied to the agricultural and pastoral world, a protector of flocks. Coincidentally, his woodland alter-ego, Silvanus, is also present at *l'Altilia*, and is also connected to water, but in a different context. He is found at the public baths at the forum, which, because of a dedicatory inscription found there, are also called *Terme di Silvano*. A search for more sources reveals that in the *Aeneid*, Faunus marries the water nymph, Marica, who then gives birth to their son Latinus. In other sources – more strictly Italic – we find that Faunus is tied to Mefitis, goddess of marshes and springs. It is no coincidence that on a hill above Sepino, in the San Pietro in Cantoni district, and near *Teravecchia*, an ancient temple dedicated to Mefitis has been unearthed. Archeologists have also recovered a magnificent bronze statuette of the goddess at the site.

Thus, the faun, a deity of agriculture and pastures, usually united with eponymous forms of water, was pla-



ced here on the *decumanus* of *Saepinum* – a provincial city of the early Empire – when the *transumanza* (the seasonal movement of livestock) was the principal source of local sustenance and commerce.

And it is this Faun which intrigues us most, because its aspect, quasi antagonistic, surely masks apotropaic functions. It is very likely that this faun is the true archetype of *Saepinum*'s fountain masks, and not the more famous *Mascherone*, which more likely seems to belong to a nymphaeum.

Searching further into pagan symbols, we find other, more “carefree” meanings attached to the faun: with his horns, and his playful and sensual nature, he becomes a creature who is not, so much innocent, as he is seductive and even diabolical (remember that later, in Hellenistic and Roman mythology, the faun becomes a Satyr, connected to the god Pan and to Dionysian rites). In this context one might hazard a guess that someone may have thought it inconvenient to put this faun on display for the tourists visiting the *Saepinum* ruins.

On the heels of this somewhat mysterious ancestral inspiration, the master stonecutters closer to our time – whose works, for the most part, were produced between the 1500's and the 1700's – preferred to sculpt, both on public and private fountains, masks with aspects decidedly oafish and boorish.

They abandoned the beautiful, in order to emphasize the horrid or frightful, not understood as ugly or in bad artistic taste, but more as a form of admonishment, laden with superstitious overtones. Therefore, anyone about to make use of this valuable resource – water – will come face to face with a mask serving as reminder that man's nature also contains hidden, deceitful, and even frightening meanings. In essence, we partake of the essential element of life through a mask; a face which commands our respect and counterbalances our smile every time we return. The mask reminds us of the fallacies in our nature and reveals the perennial internal struggle between appearance and truth.

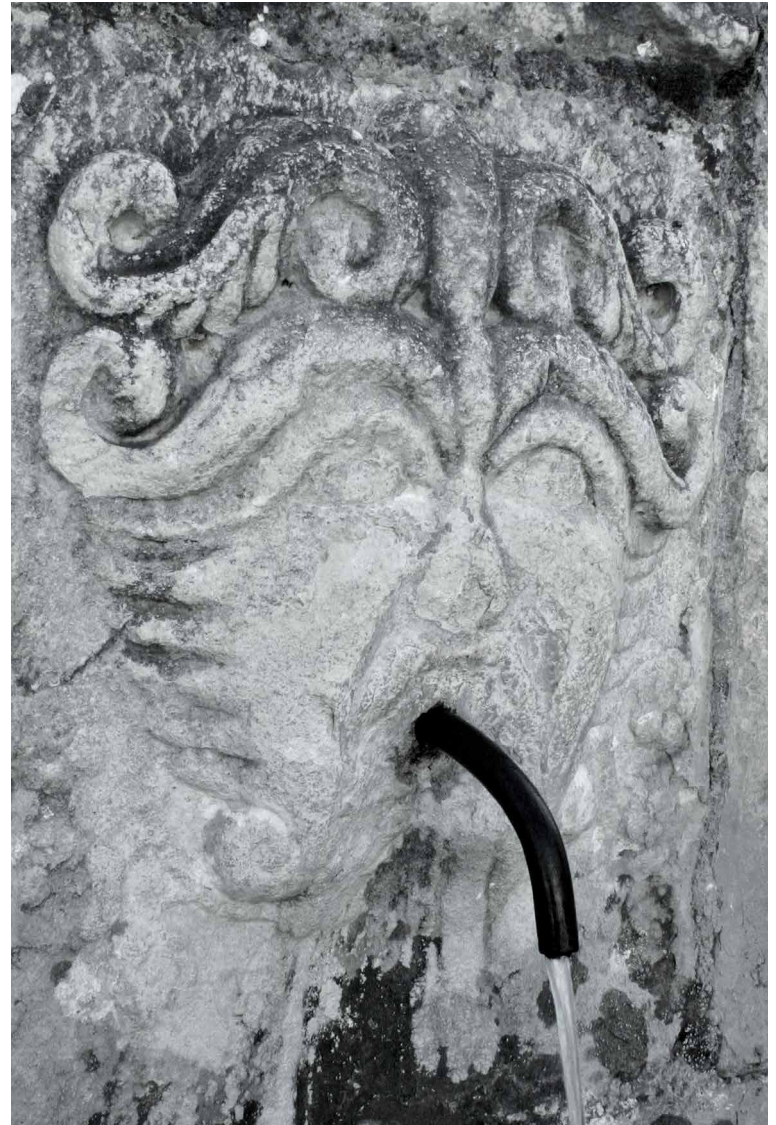
After the above-mentioned fountains – all pertaining to the Roman city of *Saepinum* – we arrive at a monumental fountain in the historical center of present day Sepino: the so-called *Fontana della Canala*, located in Via della Fonte. This fountain, with attached wash basin, was constructed in the XVI century. It has three *maschere* with spigots. The two on either side portray anonymous curly-haired males with pronounced ears and large eyes. The central mask portrays a female with a peculiar hairstyle (unfortunately not intact), which reminds us of a scaled *tortiglione* in the shape of a snake, or perhaps the coif of a Renaissance noblewoman. Obviously these two possibilities lead to different and conflicting interpretations.

More imaginative are the *maschere* which decorate two fountains located near Sepino's *Convento*. The first, located in the Piazzale facing the building itself, portrays a bizarre bearded male with a sort of double comb-over or topknot. The second mask, located in the internal garden of the convent, portrays an elderly man with a circular beard and a bewildered expression. (Perhaps we should recall here the principal masks of Greek comedy and tragedy: the *Xyriàs*, a very old man with flabby cheeks; the *Leukòs*, with ringlets around the head and beard, and sloped eyebrows; the *Spartapòlios*, an old sage with white hair; the *Mèlas*, a person with an arrogant, disagreeable visage.)

Throughout Sepino, many similar, and different, masks can be found in the homes of the old nobility, or in private gardens, usually near fountains or other water sources. Most of these houses, and their Italian gardens, date back to the eighteenth century; within them we find evidence of a pronounced taste for art, and frequent references to neoclassicism.

This brief excursus is meant to emphasize the existence of a continuum from the ancient pagan world, through the fortifications of the medieval era, to our own time. A continuum which in central Italy is primarily found in works chiseled in stone, another durable and essential

resource of the area. Stone gathers and enriches water, guides it, and carries it to its destination, in an unending circular flow; a flow which must not stop, so that it can – through feeling, art, and religion – transform earthly illusion into eternal certainty.



Mask on the Convento's Fountain.



Fontana della Canala.

RECENTS DISCOVERIES AT ALTILIA.



On the left: The fifth city gate.

Below: funerary niche.



THE MOST RECENT
DISCOVERY.

Another important public building – a podium style temple from the second half of the first century B.C.E. – has recently been unearthed in the area between the forum and the southern wall of the city.

With it, a number of interesting wall and roof decorations have also been recovered.



Two different phases of the excavation:



1- The inner parts of the temple



2 - and the stone materials unearthed during the excavation.

SPUNTI D'AUTORE.

È davvero un grande passo che mi riempie di orgoglio ed emozione: la prima pubblicazione interamente in lingua inglese dell'itinerario guidato alla città di *Saepinum*.

La comunicazione è il mezzo più potente di cui dispone l'uomo per trasmettere le scoperte e non ci si poteva esimere dall'utilizzare un linguaggio universale con l'auspicio che i nostri gioielli di archeologia, ancora in gran parte inesplorati, divengano fucine di interesse e di richiamo internazionale, nel rispetto di un turismo sempre sostenibile e trasmissibile alle generazioni future.

Tutto ciò è stato possibile:

- ◆ grazie all'incessante impegno del Presidente della Provincia di Campobasso Dott. Francesco Roberti e dei suoi collaboratori di progetto, in particolare all'opera della Dott.ssa Carmela Basile e del Dott. Angelo Fratangelo, che hanno saputo essere lungimiranti, ottenendo e canalizzando le risorse europee nei settori della programmazione e della promozione turistica del Molise e puntando fortemente sul nostro sito di *Saepinum*;
- ◆ grazie al Sindaco del Comune di Sepino, Dott. Paolo D'Anello, il quale, con il fattivo e indispensabile supporto dell'esecutivo composto dal Vicesindaco Geom. Antonio Piacente e dall'assessore alla cultura Dott.ssa Marisa Ciaramella, ha creduto nel progetto del sottoscritto, dando fiducia alla ricerca e alla divulgazione delle ric-

AUTHOR'S NOTES.

This first publication in English of my guide to the ancient city of Saepinum is an event which fills me with much gratitude and pride. Communication is the most important means we have at our disposal to disseminate discoveries, therefore it was essential to employ the current universal language for this purpose, so that our archeological treasures, still not fully explored, might become an engine of world wide interest in sustainable tourism for us and future generations.

Acknowledgments

- ◆ I wish to thank the President of the Province of Campobasso, Dr. Francesco Roberti, for his unceasing support, and that of his collaborators, particularly Dr. Carmela Basile and Dr. Angelo Fratangelo, who have been forward-looking in their utilization of European resources to promote tourism in Molise, with particular emphasis on Saepinum.
- ◆ Thank you to the mayor of Sepino, Dr. Paolo D'Anello, who with the support of his vice mayor, Antonio Piacente, and cultural assessor, Marisa Ciaramella, has believed and supported this project and the dissemination of the priceless riches of Sepino, and who has worked tirelessly to help in the publication of this guide.

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1 - 2: Guided visit to the ruins of Saepinum near Boiano Gate.

3: The Mayor of the Municipality of Sepino: Dr. Paolo D'Anello - The Governor of the Molise Region: Dr. Donato Toma - The Regional councilor for Culture Dr. Vincenzo

Cutugno - The Director of the Superintendence of the Arts of Molise Dr. Dora Catalano.
4: The day of creation, celebrated by H.E. Mons. Giancarlo Bregantini, Metropolitan Bishop of Campobasso, in the theatre of Saepinum.

- chezze inestimabili di cui gode il territorio di Sepino, prodigandosi per dare alle stampe il presente volume;
- ◆ grazie al mio zio d'America Dott. Marino D'Orazio, che merita tutto il mio plauso perché ha realizzato non una semplice traduzione ma si è immerso nella storia, nelle sue curve pericolose, nei suoi meandri a dir poco complessi, per restituire un testo nuovo, brillante e ricco di fascino per il lettore appassionato;
 - ◆ grazie all'amico Alfredo Arcari, dello staff del Sindaco che, nel progetto editoriale, mi ha sostenuto e invogliato nel lavoro dispensando consigli e suggerimenti preziosi sull'editing, sul layout e sulla grafica del volume;
 - ◆ grazie a mio cugino Massimiliano Ferrante che mi ha concesso la sua mano e il suo occhio di fotografo esperto per sottolineare l'aspetto insieme storico e artistico dei reperti e dei monumenti descritti nella guida;
 - ◆ grazie a mio fratello Michelangelo che, dalla prima edizione, si è occupato del rilievo e del disegno prospettico della mappa della città di Saepinum, che è divenuta nel tempo uno dei supporti grafici più utilizzati per la visione d'insieme dei rilievi archeologici del sito;
 - ◆ grazie all'amico Vittorio Arcari per averci supportato nel lavoro di composizione grafica del testo e delle foto con grande professionalità e diligenza.
 - ◆ grazie all'amico Antonio Longo, che, con estrema pazienza e dedizione, ha messo al servizio di questo lavoro la sua pluridecennale esperienza e professionalità di tipografo, curandone gli aspetti di impaginazione, di



- ◆ Thank you to my uncle in America, Dr. Marino D'Orazio, who has not chosen to provide a simple translation, but has immersed himself in the complex and at times dangerous meanderings of our history, in order realize a new and fascinating text for the enthusiastic reader.
- ◆ My thanks to my friend, Alfredo Arcari, on the mayor's staff, who has helped and sustained me in the editing process by providing in valuable counsel and suggestions for the layout and graphics of the volume.
- ◆ Thank you to my cousin, Massimiliano Ferrante, who has brought the vision and skills of a photographer to highlight the historical and artistic aspects of the archaeological findings and monuments described in this guide.
- ◆ Thank you to my brother, Michelangelo, who, from the very first edition, has overseen the topographical and prospective design of the map of the city of Saepinum, which has become one of the most utilized graphic tools for the vision and understanding of the entire archeological site.
- ◆ My thanks to my friend, Antonio Longo, who, with patience and dedication, has put at the service of this work his decades long experience as typographer by curating all aspects of pagination, layout, and printing.
- ◆ Thank you to my friend Vittorio Arcari for helping us with the graphic composition of the text and photos with great professionalism and diligence.

Sepino archeologia vivente

Appartengo a questa terra: il posto dove devo essere. Grata ad essa, divenuto Guida Turistica per trasferirne l'amore e la conoscenza ad altri. Ha inizio così la professione più bella del mondo. Contatti confronti, scambi con altre realtà, altre tradizioni e usanze, altri approfondimenti. Il territorio sepinate, nel cuore del Matese, affascina il visitatore per la sua millenaria e completa storia: "Testimonianze Preistoriche nella Valle del Tammaro".

Patrizia Iamartino
Guida Turistica

Sepino a living archaeology

I belong to this land: this is the place where I want to be. Grateful to it, i became a "Tourist Guide", transferring love and knowledge to the others. Thus, for me, the most beautiful profession in the world began. Contacts, comparisons, exchanges with other realities, others traditions and customs, other insights. The land of Sepino, in the heart of the Matese Mountains, fascinates the visitor for its millenary and complete history.

Patrizia Iamartino
Molise Tourist Guide

layout e, naturalmente, di printing;

- ◆ grazie a mia moglie Patrizia Iamartino per la sua carica inesauribile, per il sostegno che mi ha dato in ogni momento, per l'amore che nutre, fin dall'infanzia, nei riguardi di *Saepinum Altilia*, una passione che ci conduce insieme ad una sorta di commozione estatica per questo eccezionale luogo del cuore;
- ◆ grazie alla Soprintendenza Archeologica, Belle arti e Paesaggio del Molise (Mibact) per averci concesso l'utilizzo delle immagini e per il sostegno costante all'opera divulgativa delle scoperte archeologiche che sta portano avanti con solerzia e che arricchiscono culturalmente e storicamente il nostro Molise.



ANTONIO TAMMARO - L'AUTORE

Nasce a Campobasso, il 30 dicembre 1969, vive a Sepino, incantevole borgo molisano.

Appassionato di storia, musica e narrativa, tra l'altro guida turistica, è alla scoperta del mistero in tutte le sue forme vitali.

Grazie ai progetti editoriali promossi dal Comune di Sepino, ha pubblicato, nella prima veste editoriale del 2000, la guida cartacea sugli scavi archeologici di Altilia, dal titolo "*Saepinum - Alla scoperta della città dissepolta*" in doppia versione italiano-inglese, italiano-tedesco e italiano-spagnolo e, nel 2019, la nuova versione in una rinnovata veste editoriale, interamente in italiano; la pubblicazione su "Storie di brigantaggio nel contado di Sepino, nella Valle del Tammaro e nel Sannio beneventano agli albori dell'Unità d'Italia: *Fuite, currete, li briante so turnate!*". Inoltre ha collaborato, in veste di editor, alla stesura del volume "*Vincenzo Tiberio, un italiano precursore degli studi sulla penicillina*" di Vincenzo Martines.

È risultato vincitore, per due volte, del premio letterario "Le streghe di Montecchio", ottenendo la pubblicazio-

- ◆ Thank you to my wife, Patrizia Iamartino, for her inexhaustible energy, for her constant support, for the love she has nourished since childhood for *Saepinum Altilia*; a passion which produces in us both a sort of ecstatic fervor for this exceptional "luogo del cuore".
- ◆ Thank you to the Soprintendenza Archeologica del Molise, Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali e per il turismo (Mibact), for allowing us to use images and for its constant support for educational efforts and events regarding archeological discoveries which continue to enrich the culture and history of our Molise.



ANTONIO TAMMARO - ITALIAN AUTHOR

Antonio Tammaro was born in Campobasso on December 30, 1969 and now lives in Sepino, a beautiful town in Molise. His passions are history, music, and literature. Among other pursuits he is a guide to the history and archeology of the region, while constantly in pursuit of the mysterious in all its vital forms. Thanks to editorial projects sponsored by the town of Sepino, in the year 2000 he published a guide to the archeological excavations at Altilia entitled, *Saepinum - Alla scoperta della città dissepolta*, in Italian-English, Italian-German, and Italian-Spanish versions. In 2019 a new revised edition, entirely in Italian was published. He has also edited a book by Vincenzo Martines, *Vincenzo Tiberio, un italiano precursore degli studi sulla penicillina*. He has twice received the literary prize "Le Streghe di Montecchio" and published the stories *Giulia* and *Il mio mondo è fatto di farfalle* with Fefè Editors in Rome. He has also received two honorable mentions in the national poetry prize "L'arte in Versi" curated by the "Associazione Euterpe" in Jesi (AN). His

ne dei racconti “*Giulia*” e “*Il mio mondo è fatto di farfalle*” con la casa editrice Fefè Editore di Roma. Inoltre ha conseguito due menzioni d’onore al premio nazionale di poesia “L’Arte in Versi”, ideato e curato dall’Associazione Euterpe di Jesi (AN).

Attualmente è presidente di “Officina creativa”, associazione culturale attiva da alcuni anni sul territorio molisano che promuove e realizza eventi nel panorama culturale, etnico e musicale locale.

MARINO D’ORAZIO - IL TRADUTTORE

Nasce a Sepino (CB) Italia, emigra con la sua famiglia negli Stati Uniti all’età di appena undici anni.

Grazie al suo impegno negli studi di diritto e giurisprudenza, diventa avvocato di fama e costruisce la sua dimensione di successo senza mai trascurare le sue origini italiane e molisane. Ottiene un dottorato di ricerca in Letteratura Comparata e produce una serie di notevoli lavori letterari e di traduzioni dall’Italiano, sia in ambito novellistico che saggistico.

Attualmente vive con la moglie e la sua splendida famiglia a Saratoga Springs (New York).

last work is the publication about *Stories of banditry in the Sepino countryside, in the Tammaro valley and in the Benevento Sannio at the dawn of the Unification of Italy: Fuite, currete, ri briante so turnate!*

He is currently president of “Officina creativa”, a cultural organization active for a number of years in the Molise region, which promotes local cultural, ethnic, and musical events.

MARINO D’ORAZIO - THE TRANSLATOR

Marino D’Orazio was born in Sepino (CB) Italy, and emigrated to the United States with his family at the age of eleven, but has always remained attached to his Italian roots, especially to Sepino and Molise. He is an Attorney and also holds a PhD in Comparative Literature. In addition to practicing law he has taught language and literature at various levels, including university. He is also a translator of both fiction and non-fiction books from the Italian. He has three grown children and lives with his wife in Saratoga Springs, NY.

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1: Excursion to the Samnite city of Terravecchia – The group is near Matese Postierla.
2: Maurizio Matteini Chiari, prof of the faculty of Archaeology of Perugia, promoter of the excavation campaigns in Sepino.

3: Students during a guided tour in Sepino – Excursion to the ruins of the italic temple in San Pietro in Cantoni.
4: The young trekkers gathered around their guide, Dr. Antonio Tammaro, author of this book.

FONTI ICONOGRAFICHE

Pag. 13 - “Battaglia tra Romani e Sanniti”, da Albino P., *Ricordi storici e monumentali del Sannio Pentro e della Frentania*, 1879 vol. I, p. 33.

Pag. 66 - “Maschera di Dioniso in avorio”, riproduzione di Alessandra Tammaro dall’originale in avorio conservato nel Museo Provinciale Sannitico di Campobasso.

Pag. 98 - “Prospetto di fontana: Il Fauno”, da *Saepinum, Soprintendenza Archeologica Beni Ambientali Architettonici Artistici e Storici del Molise, Istituto di Archeologia Università di Perugia*, p. 82, fig. 115.

Pag. 108 - “Busto marmoreo”, foto acquisita da internet e pubblicata dal quotidiano on line *Corriere della Sera*, sez. “Il bello dell’Italia” in data 4/12/2018.

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ICONOGRAPHIC SOURCES

Pg. 13 – Battle between Romans and Samnites P. Albino, 1879, *Ricordi Storici e monumentali del Sannio Pentro e della Frentania*, v. 1, p. 33.

Pg. 66 – Mask of Dionysus in Ivory. Reproduction by Alessandra Tammaro from the original on display in the Museo Provinciale Sannitico di Campobasso.

Pg. 98 – Façade of Faun Fountain from Saepinum, Soprintendenza Archeologica Beni Ambientali Architettonici Artistici e Storici del Molise – Istituto di Archeologia Università di Perugia, p. 82, fig. 115

Pg. 108 – Marble Bust, photograph taken from *Corriere della Sera*, online, “Il bello dell’Italia” Dec. 4, 2018.

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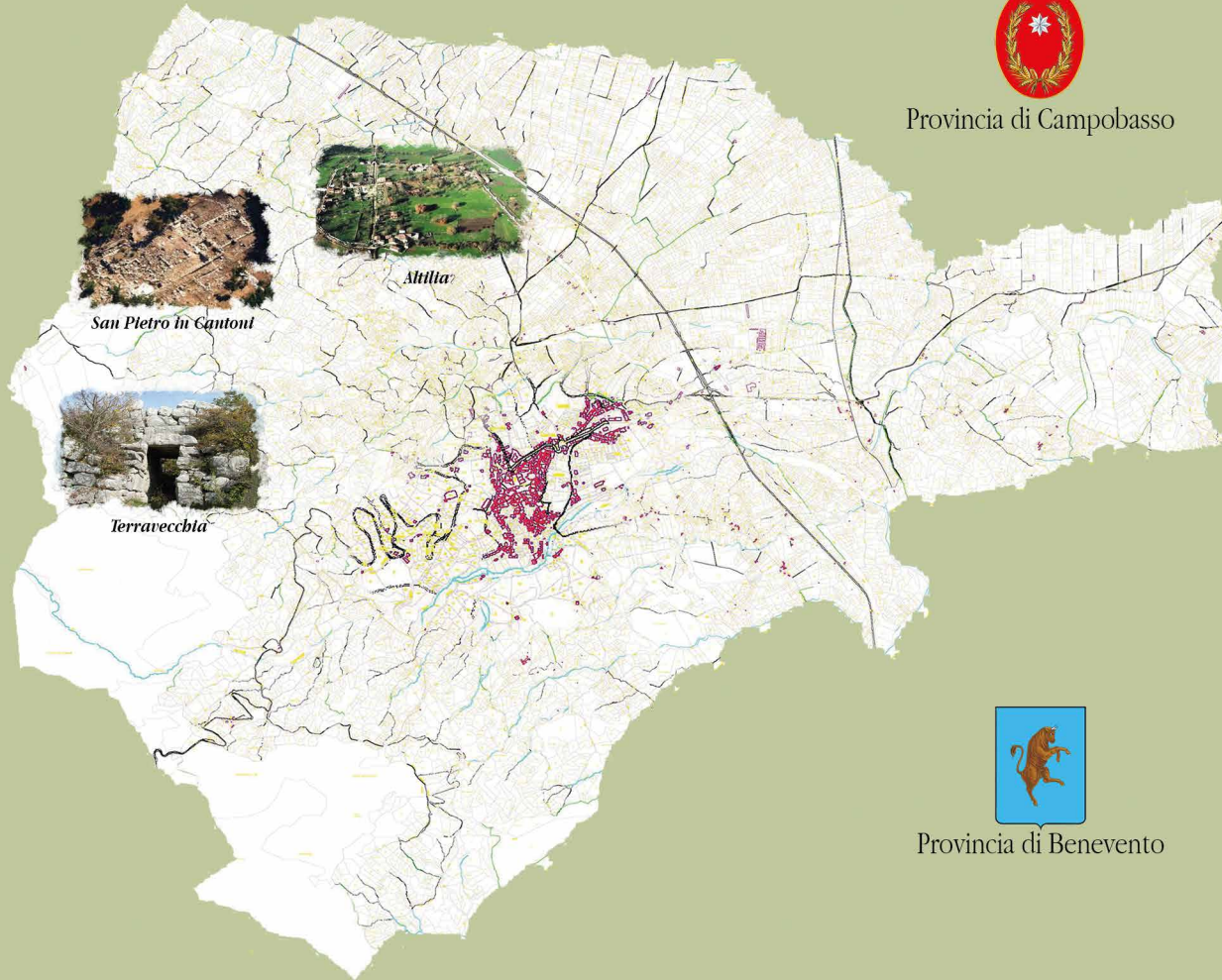
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Mausoleum of Caio Ennio



Tomb of Numisi



The italic Temple - San Pietro in Cantoni



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The Mascherone fountains



The Canala fountains



The Roman inscription in Roma Road

The printing of this volume has been made possible
thanks the patronage of :
Province of Campobasso
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Co-funded by the European Union.

* * *

Also thanks to :
the Municipality of Sepino
Soprintendenza Archeologica del Molise
MIBACT
for permission to use text and
photographs from the Italian Edition.



A marble bust, first century C.E., restored by the Soprintendenza Archeologica del Molise.

*The author wishes to thank everyone
who collaborated in the
realization of this work!*

Antonio Tammaro