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Manager

Claudia Napolitano

Editing

Francesca Petrucci, Eleonora Lollini, Francesca Verdiani

Informatic assistance

Massimo Arcidiacono, Michele Gasparello

Landscape and Population of the Roman Countryside (2nd Century BC - 1st Century AD)¹

ALESSANDRO LAUNARO
University of Pisa

ABSTRACT

Following the final victory over Carthage (201 BC), Rome began a gradual process of political, economic, social and cultural change, the effects of which have traditionally been interpreted as having exacted a heavy toll on the rural population of Italy. As a result, new relationships of power and culture were established in and on the landscape, the actual scale of which can only be evaluated by using an integrated approach that draws on historical demography, agrarian history and landscape archaeology. Setting aside the specific description of such relations, this chapter aims at showing how archaeological field surveys can make an important contribution to producing new demographic evidence which can be framed constructively within the theme of 'power and culture'.

A seguito della sua vittoria su Annibale (201 a.C.), Roma iniziò un graduale processo di trasformazione che investì in più punti i suoi originari assetti politici, economici, sociali e culturali. Più specificamente, gli effetti di questo cambiamento sulla popolazione rurale libera dell'Italia sono stati a lungo ritenuti disastrosi e drammatici: la cosiddetta 'eredità di Annibale' (la cui prima sistematica ed approfondita enunciazione è dovuta ad Arnold J. Toynbee nel 1965) ha dato il via ad un filone di studi che ha investito tutta la ricerca sugli ultimi due secoli della Repubblica romana, raccogliendo attorno a questo comune dibattito contributi provenienti da paesi e discipline diverse.

Il quadro così delineato da questa ormai tradizionale linea interpretativa ritiene che le guerre di conquista d'oltremare (innescate dalla Seconda Guerra Punica, 218-201 a.C.) abbiano prosciugato le riserve di uomini atti alle armi secondo ben precise dinamiche. Infatti, il cittadino-contadino-soldato, da sempre la spina dorsale politica, economica e militare della Repubblica romana, sarebbe stato allontanato dai propri campi per servire in guerra: in sua assenza le sue terre furono acquisite da ricchi possidenti e messe a coltura tramite schiavi, a loro volta resi disponibili dalle vittoriose campagne d'oltremare. Nuovi rapporti di 'Potere e Cultura' sembrerebbero essersi imposti nel paesaggio dell'Italia romana: una logica imprenditoriale e orientata al mercato Mediterraneo avrebbe soppiantato (con un chiaro impatto demografico) un'economia fondata sulla piccola proprietà e rivolta all'autoconsumo.

Tuttavia, le reale portata di questo processo può essere valutata solo sullo sfondo di un approccio integrato di demografia storica, storia agraria e archeologia del paesaggio. Lasciando da parte la specifica analisi di tali nuovi rapporti, questo contributo mira a mostrare come una corretta integrazione dei dati archeologici derivati dal field-survey possa davvero fare la differenza, mettendo a disposizione una rinnovata documentazione demografica capace di essere proficuamente inquadrata nella problematica dei rapporti di Potere e Cultura.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a general introduction to the demography of Roman Italy from the Late Republic to the Early Empire (2nd century BC - 1st century AD). Although historical demography is generally viewed as producing quantitative and serial data to be framed against a background of economic development (e.g. territorial carrying capacity and manpower), it is obvious that population trends over time both influence and are influenced by a wide array of political, social and cultural processes. This sphere of relations is the subject of population studies². Accordingly, the demographic debate over Roman Italy represents an interesting case study which has significant implications for the interpretive framework provided by the issues of 'power and culture'. However, instead of presenting an analysis of such a relationship in a specific and concrete way, my present goal is to outline the integrated approach which is necessary in order to pursue this, that is building both historical narratives and quantitative evidence (i.e. population figures derived from written sources and archaeological patterns) into a coherent picture, bridging different kinds of sources and related disciplinary fields³. This chapter begins by outlining the historical framework in which the demographic debate is rooted. The argument then proceeds by both summarising the different interpretive perspectives held by historians and defining ways in which landscape archaeology can make a critical contribution with regard to rural settlements and population. At the end of the chapter, the 'power and culture' relationships that were actively involved in shaping the landscape, and which can be profitably assessed by an integrated approach, are discussed.

FROM HANNIBAL TO AUGUSTUS: PEASANTS AND SLAVES

Many of the traditional interpretations of Roman history refer to the Second Punic or Hannibalic War (218-201 BC) as a turning point in the development of what became known as the Roman Empire. Indeed, one of the most influential books written on the subject makes this explicit in its title *Hannibal's Legacy. The Hannibalic War's Effects on Roman Life* by Arnold J. Toynbee (1965)⁴. Less controversially, it has been argued that the Hannibalic War simply triggered large-scale, far-reaching processes in both Roman society and the Mediterranean world, the basis of which had already been laid in previous centuries.

Before proceeding, it is useful to note some relevant aspects of Roman and Italian society on the eve of this war. By 272 BC the whole of central and southern Italy was

under Roman hegemony and the city became more ambitious. Aspirations towards the western Mediterranean had already led to a clash with Carthage in the First Punic War (264-241 BC). Rome's hegemony was based on a diverse array of relations with the allied *civitates* [communities]. Although such people were obliged to provide a certain amount of troops or goods in case of war, they were not granted the status and rights deriving from Roman citizenship until 90 - 89 BC, following the Social War. On the other hand, all Roman adult male citizens of a certain wealth that had been registered in the official *census* were required to serve in the legions, leaving their homes and businesses for the duration of the war⁵. This situation had two major consequences: a) although Rome had an almost inexhaustible source of manpower and goods from its Italian allies, many of them were ready to desert or even to revolt on the right occasion; b) at the same time, to destroy a legion (that is, an army of citizens) would have struck at the very heart of the Roman Republic, thus reducing its hegemonic potential, both military and economic, over allies.

Hannibal's plan recognised these considerations. With limited resources at his disposal, he knew he could not plan a massive destruction campaign aimed at erasing Rome. Instead, relying on a great tactical advantage, deriving from both his personal ability and the character of his army, Hannibal sought to defeat his opponents in a series of fast and decisive battles. This would create the political conditions necessary for dissolving the system of Italian alliances supporting the Romans, thus reducing the city to just another Italian community⁶. But even though he achieved large-scale victories, the war lasted longer than planned and the number of deserting allies was far less than expected. The Carthaginian army which invaded and ravaged Italy had to withdraw to defend Carthage, which itself surrendered in 201 BC.

These events and their consequences were first given a complete and coherent interpretation by Arnold Toynbee⁷. According to his analysis, the Hannibalic War exacted a heavy toll on the Italian countryside. In addition to the destruction caused by the Carthaginian armies in Italy and the massive number of casualties suffered by both Rome and its allies, land from several former allied communities that had proved disloyal to Rome (Capua, for example) was confiscated and transformed into *ager publicus Populi Romani* [public land of the Roman people, i.e. Roman state property]. However, the shortage of manpower prevented the land that had been seized from being settled by Roman peasants. Furthermore, instead of representing 'peace', the Roman victory over Hannibal became a prelude to the conquest of the Mediterranean basin. By the end of the 2nd century BC, Roman rule stretched across the Mediterranean, encompassing most of the surrounding land. This process was carried out mainly through military conquest and involved a constant mobilisation of Roman citizens and Italian allies. Such 'continuous war' is usually interpreted as having weighed heavily on the free peasantry (that is, the free rural population) of Italy: being displaced from their small farms, their 'abandoned' lands became part of huge properties owned by a rich senatorial aristocracy, employing scores of slaves made available by the campaigns of war overseas⁸. There-

fore their continuous involvement in military campaigns, as well as their growing impoverishment, would have triggered a general demographic decline in the citizen population.

Tiberius and Caius Gracchus acknowledged this decline and saw the issue from a military perspective. In their opinion, allowing the impoverishment and decline of the traditional citizen-peasant-soldier would lead to a more general crisis of the Roman war-machine, since armies were recruited from citizens with at least some property. Their reforms (133-121 BC) tried to return land to the poor, clashing with the interests of rich landholders. The two brothers were murdered and almost nothing changed. As a result, impoverished families continued to flee from the countryside to the city of Rome, where they swelled the numbers of the lower strata of the urban population. Being largely dependent on their wealthy patrons, they became a political tool in the hands of prominent figures. As the Roman voting systems required citizens to vote in Rome, this urban-resident citizen *plebs* could be easily summoned to influence the outcome of an election or any other poll. A further change saw the consul Caius Marius (107 BC) open army recruitment even to citizens without minimum property (*proletarii*). Such newly-formed legions were comprehensibly more loyal to their generals (whose victories brought soldiers not only glory but also booty and land-grants) than to the Republic, acting simply as personal armies. Whether employed as a political or military tool, the dispossessed free people from the countryside actively contributed to the social unrest and Civil Wars of the 1st century BC, culminating in the fall of the Republic and the rise of the Empire with Augustus (whose reign lasted from 27 BC to 14 AD). Such was 'Hannibal's Legacy'.

This traditional interpretive framework implies that a process of radical change occurred in the landscape of Roman Italy during the 2nd-1st century BC⁹. The pre-Hannibalic countryside had always been characterised by intensive agriculture based on small farms owned by free peasants. Production was almost exclusively directed towards self-consumption and was usually integrated with resources from common lands. As such, these properties were rather exposed to the risks arising from the ravages of war and from the prolonged absence of their owners. These were the very conditions produced by and subsequent to the Hannibalic War. Those same lands were then taken over by senators (i.e. aristocracy) who could afford the costs of making them productive once more. Large investments of wealth (made available by overseas conquests) allowed the upper classes to build huge properties, applying a renovated and extensive agriculture that sought to make a profit and which was based on slavery¹⁰. Accordingly the Italian rural landscape began to be 'dotted' with *villae* [villas], both productive structures and pleasant residences, surrounded by vast plantations (particularly of vines), whose products were to be sold across the whole Mediterranean market¹¹. Most of the free-peasant population who had previously lived in the Italian countryside could not stand this change and moved to the provinces (for example, to Cisalpine Gaul, Northern Italy), fled to the city of Rome, or just 'disappeared'. Slaves now ran the countryside on behalf of their opulent masters.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC ARGUMENT: THE RURAL POPULATION OF ROMAN ITALY

The entire interpretation summarised above rests on a fundamental premise, namely that the free population of Italy collapsed during the Late Republic. Explanations of this phenomenon all are founded on a demographic argument whose origin can be traced back to the ground-breaking study of Karl-Julius Beloch in the second half of the 19th century¹². His analysis was based on the list of *census* figures preserved in written sources like the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* [The Accomplishments of Deified Augustus]¹³. This official document provided enumerations for the *census* of 28 BC, 8 BC and AD 14 (4,063,000, 4,233,000 and 4,937,000 citizens respectively)¹⁴. These figures were regarded as too high when compared with the assessment of 70/69 BC (910,000 citizens). According to these new figures the Roman citizen population almost quadrupled in just 40 years! Beloch thought this impossible to explain in rational way. Subsequently, he proposed that whereas previous *census* enumerated adult male citizens only, the Augustan ones also included women and children of citizen birth, thus heavily reducing the alleged rate of population growth.

In 1971, Peter A. Brunt provided the best formal presentation of the links between such demographic arguments and the centuries-spanning crisis outlined by Toynbee¹⁵. Taking into consideration other issues (citizens living in the provinces, newly-made citizens etc.), he further reduced the actual figure for Augustan Italy, thereby pointing to a negative demographic trend. Given that all free people in the peninsula had already been given citizenship in 90 - 89 BC, the alleged decrease in the number of Roman citizens in Italy between 70/69 and 28 BC would have meant a decline of its whole free population, and thus of Italian manpower. Keith Hopkins further explored the implications of this view in 1978: in light of the significant number of towns and the urban development of the 1st century BC, with rising levels of urban population, the demographic crisis was interpreted as having primarily affected the free rural population, the latter being in turn gradually replaced with imported slaves¹⁶.

Given such a premise, the *census* figures have unquestioningly proved to be a crucial source of support for the traditional narrative of Late Republican Italy outlined above. Nevertheless, it is equally clear that such historical reconstructions rested more on Beloch's interpretation than on the preserved numbers. Although those readings were not universally accepted, it was only in 1994 that the 'Beloch-Brunt orthodoxy' began to be thoroughly analysed and critiqued in a series of papers by Elio Lo Cascio¹⁷. Drawing on an array of interpretive tools (modern demographic models and comparative evidence), he supported the view that the *census* of 28 BC referred only to adult male citizens. He even theorised that there was a slight increase in the whole free population of Roman Italy across the 2nd to 1st centuries BC. The historiographic debate has since been polarised between the "low-counters" (those supporting the Beloch-Brunt low estimates: i.e. that the Augustan *census* included women and children of citizen birth) and the "high-counters" (those arguing for a higher figure, i.e. that the Augustan *census* reported adult male citizens only)¹⁸. In fact, there has been no agreement about the

significance that should be attributed to the Augustan figures and no scholar has been able to produce undisputed evidence.

At this point it is important to note how the entire interpretive framework outlined so far (i.e. the transformations of Italy between the 2nd century BC and the 1st century AD) hinges on a simple quantitative issue, that is the relative growth trends of both the free and slave population of the Italian countryside. Written sources are unable to produce serial data about this beyond those provided by the generic *census* returns and also lack any reference to a credible estimate of the number of slaves. Nevertheless, a specific kind of material evidence could help to shed light on the relative presence of peasants and slaves across the landscapes of Roman Italy.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD-SURVEYS

Field-survey is a specific archaeological methodology applied to the surface exploration of landscapes, hence landscape archaeology. It is based on an intensive and systematic survey of ploughed-fields where buried archaeological materials are brought to the surface by mechanized ploughing and made visible to the surveyors. Such surface evidence is then recorded, collected and analysed. The typology and chronology of findings are then plotted on a map, producing a representative picture of human settlement patterns in a given region, as well as its evolution through time¹⁹. Since the 1950s field-survey has been employed in many areas across the Mediterranean basin and has brought a radical change in scholars' perspective. Thousands of archaeological sites were found in almost every area surveyed (from deserts to mountains), thus producing clear evidence for a dense and dispersed human settlement that had been under-represented, if not completely ignored, by ancient authors²⁰. Whereas Moses Finley described the Ancient World as "a world of cities" – of people commuting daily between towns and fields – John Lloyd introduced the idea of a "busy countryside" where people lived and worked away from major centres²¹. Besides this general consideration, accurate analytical tools have been developed that allow archaeologists to define the typology and chronology of human occupation without the need for excavation. As a result, survey projects were able to employ serial data to map past settlement patterns, defining hierarchical and functional relationships based on the "ploughsoil assemblage", that is, the body of finds recovered through field-survey.

In the case of Roman Italy's countryside, archaeologists have been able to identify *villae* and small farms, the latter being far more common than the former in almost every period. Such a long-lasting presence had occasionally been interpreted as evidence for the persistence of the free peasantry during the Late Republic and beyond²². Nevertheless, while arguing against the decline of the free rural population of Italy, the same scholars who employed survey-derived evidence did not take into account the formal demographic roots of the Beloch-Brunt argument²³. As such, despite the fact that landscape archaeology has the potential to provide historical demography with a wealth of new evidence, the specific involvement of the former in the debate outlined so far has been

passive and marginal²⁴. One of the reasons for this might be that such demographic studies require many different survey datasets to be compared and integrated into one coherent picture. The quantity and quality of collected data is clearly influenced by a wide array of variables (e.g. surface visibility and survey intensity) that are research-specific. This seriously hinders both how representative and comparable they are²⁵. In other words, the number of recovered sites can be a result of such variables rather than reflecting settlement patterns. This means that different survey projects, while being internally coherent, may not be comparable in a straightforward way (e.g. settlement density on the basis of number of sites).

Nevertheless, these issues could possibly be bypassed by a more thorough processing of the available data in relation to the specific terms of the demographic debate²⁶. Whereas *villae* can be taken as evidence of the presence of a slave workforce, small farms can be reasonably attributed to free people (since slaves were not ‘usually’ allowed to live away from their master and controllers). If we establish such a relationship between specific social groups and specific site-categories, then it might be possible to quantify their relative change over time (i.e. between the 2nd century BC and the 1st century AD). Outlining such trends for each of the areas explored by field-survey might produce relative, quantifiable and comparable rates of growth to be presented in one coherent and comprehensive map of the demographic changes that affected the rural free peasantry of Roman Italy.

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES ON ISSUES OF POWER AND CULTURE

Traditional archaeological interpretations of population patterns in space have generally involved two opposing aspects: “nature” (i.e. environment) and “culture” (i.e. human beings). Since the 1960s, processual archaeology has tried to define such relationships in terms of adaptation, where the environment (primarily seen as a resource) strongly influenced (even ‘determined’) human choices²⁷. Culture was then presented as “man’s extrasomatic means of adaptation” to nature, reducing the human ‘power of choice’ in terms of material survival²⁸. It follows from this argument that given similar environmental conditions, similar human responses (i.e. cultures) could be expected. However, since the 1980s this view has been challenged and strongly criticized by what became known as post-processual archaeology²⁹. Within this theoretical framework it has been suggested that the environment is related more to human perception (i.e. how people experience the world around them) than to an objective and infallible appraisal³⁰. In this view culture is not passively “determined” by the surrounding environment. On the contrary it actively contributes to defining such environments according to the available knowledge and technology, social behaviour, religious beliefs, mentalities and ideologies. Set within this framework, landscape is culture³¹. At the same time, it follows that different human groups react differently even to the same environmental conditions due to their different cultural background, while social differences may also involve a different relationship with the landscape³². As such, human choices (i.e. agency) affect

and are affected by the landscape according to the way people experience it, exerting a power which differs both qualitatively and quantitatively. As an example, some studies dealing with Romanization discuss landscapes of ‘resistance’ and ‘opportunity’, outlining the different relationships of power and culture³³.

Given these premises, it is possible finally to track down the demographic debate outlined-above and fully understand its implications for ‘power and culture’. Different people (a wealthy senator, a free peasant working his land, or a slave from a conquered country) not only experienced the landscape in very different ways (as profit, survival, or oppression) but left material evidence (settlement patterns, for example) of the various meanings of the same landscape. In other words, the relative proportion of social groups would have strongly affected the way the landscape was treated and transformed. More specifically, these different perspectives on the same landscape represented a way of negotiating power relations between an intensive and an extensive economy, locally-based and market-oriented production, a free or a slave source of labour. Such an outline of patterns of human settlement across the landscape is instrumental to identifying and understanding underlying relations of power and culture. In order to pursue this goal, boundaries such as those between landscape archaeology, historical demography and agrarian history, must be crossed. This also involves a broad-based, international debate gathering contributions from across Europe and beyond. This truly integrated approach, involving many different perspectives and all available sources, constitutes a fundamental theoretical statement. Forming a much more mature relationship between history and archaeology is not only a goal of this research, but broadly constitutes a necessary step towards a complete understanding of the ‘Power and Culture’ discourse of the landscape³⁴.

NOTES

¹ I wish to acknowledge my deep gratitude to David J. Mattingly, Paolo Malanima and Cesare Letta, who read and commented on earlier drafts of this chapter. Being derived from the original Introduction to my Doctoral Thesis it also benefited from more general comments by Graeme Barker, William Harris, Elio Lo Cascio, Martin Millett, Marinella Pasquinucci, John Patterson and Robert Witcher.

² While formal demography is usually concerned with solely demographic phenomena (like size, structure and their respective development), population studies are more generally devoted to “the relations between demographic events and social, economic or cultural phenomena” (W. Scheidel, *Progress and Problems in Roman Demography*, in W. Scheidel (ed.), *Debating Roman Demography*, Leiden - Boston - Cologne 2001, p. 1).

³ This is part of a research-in-progress whose end results will be presented in A. Launaro, *Peasants and slaves: the rural population of Roman Italy (II. c. BC - I c. AD)* [Doctoral Thesis - University of Pisa, forthcoming].

⁴ A. Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy. The Hannibalic War's Effects on Roman Life*, London 1965.

⁵ See E. Lo Cascio, *Il census a Roma e la sua evoluzione dall'età «serviana» alla prima età imperiale*, in “Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome. Antiquité”, 2001, 113, pp. 565-603.

⁶ G. Brizzi, *Storia di Roma, 1. Dalle origini ad Azio*, Bologna 1997, pp. 191-194.

⁷ Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy* cit.

- ⁸ K. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, Cambridge 1978, pp. 25-37, especially p. 30: "Roman victories overseas were creating an alternative source of labour, in slaves. Roman peasant soldiers were fighting for their own displacement".
- ⁹ The following studies (in chronological order) are particularly noteworthy for their wide influence: Toynbee, *Hannibal's Legacy* cit.; P.A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower, 225 BC - 14 AD*, Oxford 1971; Hopkins, *Conquerors* cit.; E. Gabba, *Il processo di integrazione dell'Italia nel II secolo*, in A. Schiavone, A. Giardina (eds.), *Storia di Roma*, Turin 1996, pp. 281-297.
- ¹⁰ This productive system has traditionally been termed the "slave mode of production": A. Schiavone, A. Giardina (eds.), *Società romana e produzione schiavistica*, Rome - Bari 1981.
- ¹¹ See A. Carandini, *La villa romana e la piantagione schiavistica*, in Schiavone, Giardina (eds.), *Storia di Roma* cit., pp. 775-804.
- ¹² See n. 8; K.J. Beloch, *Die Bevölkerung der Griechische-Römischen Welt*, Leipzig 1886, pp. 306-443.
- ¹³ Brunt, *Italian Manpower* cit., p. 13, table 1. The *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* represented the political testament of Augustus: it was inscribed in stone and widely distributed across the Roman Empire. It is mainly known from an exemplar on the wall of the Temple of Rome and Augustus at Ankara (hence *Monumentum Ancyranum*, as it came to be known by the 16th century).
- ¹⁴ *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 8. 2-4.
- ¹⁵ Connections with the previous work of Toynbee were made explicit by Brunt himself in his Introduction (Brunt, *Italian Manpower* cit., p.viii).
- ¹⁶ Hopkins, *Conquerors* cit., pp. 68-69, table 1.2.
- ¹⁷ Frank and Jones accepted the Augustan *census* as referring only to adult male citizens and adopted different solutions to explain the 40 years' leap (e.g. under-registration in the Late Republic): T. Frank, *Roman census statistics from 225 to 28 BC*, in "Classical Philology", 1924, 19, pp. 329-341; A.H.M. Jones, *Ancient Economic History*, London 1948. Rich even attacked the very premises of the alleged manpower decline: J.W. Rich, *The supposed Roman manpower shortage of the later 2nd century BC*, in "Historia", 1983, 32, pp. 287-331. E. Lo Cascio's contributions are: *The size of the Roman population: Beloch and the meaning of the Augustan census figures*, in "Journal of Roman Studies", 1994, 84, pp. 23-40; Id., *La dinamica della popolazione in Italia da Augusto al III secolo*, in *L'Italie d'Auguste à Dioclétien*, Rome 1994, pp. 91-125; Id., *Popolazione e risorse agricole nell'Italia del II secolo a.C.*, in D. Vera (ed.), *Demografia, sistemi agrari, regimi alimentari nel mondo antico*, Bari 1999, pp. 217-245; Id., *The Population of Roman Italy in town and country*, in J. Bintliff, K. Sbonias (eds.), *Reconstructing Past Population Trends in Mediterranean Europe (3000 BC - AD 1800)*, Oxford 1999, pp. 161-171; Id., *Recruitment and the size of the Roman population from the third to the first century BC*, in Scheidel (ed.), *Debating Roman Demography* cit., pp. 111-137; E. Lo Cascio, P. Malanima, *The Italian population before the demographic transition (225 BC - AD 1900)*, in "Rivista di Storia Economica", 2005, 21, 3, pp. 5-40.
- ¹⁸ The foremost "low-counter" is undoubtedly Walter Scheidel: W. Scheidel, *Measuring Sex, Age and Death in the Roman Empire: Explorations in Ancient Demography*, Ann Arbor 1996; Id., *Human mobility in Roman Italy, I: the free population*, in "Journal of Roman Studies", 2004, 94, pp. 1-26; Id., *Human mobility in Roman Italy, II: the slave population*, in "Journal of Roman Studies", 2005, 95, pp. 64-79. In addition to the work of Elio Lo Cascio (see n.16 above), a recent "high-counter" contribution has been made by Geoffrey Kron: G. Kron, *The Augustan census figures and the population of Italy*, in "Athenaeum", 2005, 93, pp. 441-495. A much less sharp position is held by Neville Morley: N. Morley, *Metropolis and Hinterland: the City of Rome and the Italian Economy 200 BC - AD 200*, Cambridge 1996; Id., *The transformations of Italy, 225 - 28 BC*, in "Journal of Roman Studies", 2001, 91, pp. 50-62.
- ¹⁹ For a general methodological introduction see E.B. Banning, *Archaeological Survey*, New York 2002.
- ²⁰ A traditional collection of fieldwork carried out across the Mediterranean basin is provided by G. Barker, J. Lloyd (eds.), *Roman Landscapes. Archaeological Survey in the Mediterranean Area*, London 1991.

- ²¹ “The Greco-Roman world was a world of cities. Even the agrarian population, always a majority, most often lived in communities of some kind, hamlets, villages, towns, not in isolated farm homesteads”: M. Finley, *The Ancient City: from Fustel de Coulanges to Max Weber and beyond*, in “Comparative Studies in Society and History”, 1977, 19, pp. 305-327. On John Lloyd’s “busy countryside” see J. Lloyd, *Forms of rural settlement in the Early Roman Empire*, in G. Barker, J. Lloyd (eds.), *Roman Landscapes. Archaeological Survey in the Mediterranean Area* cit., p. 238.
- ²² E.g. M.V. Frederiksen, *The contribution of archaeology to the agrarian problem of the Gracchan period*, in “Dialoghi di Archeologia”, 1971, 4-5, p. 356; D. Rathbone, *The development of agriculture in the «Ager Cosanus» during the Roman Republic: problems of evidence and interpretation*, in “Journal of Roman Studies”, 1981, 71, pp. 10-23; S.L. Dyson, *Community and Society in Roman Italy*, Baltimore - London 1992, pp.27-35.
- ²³ On this aspect see Lo Cascio, *Popolazione* cit., p. 218, note 2.
- ²⁴ On the relationship between landscape archaeology and demography: Bintliff, Sbonias (eds.), *Reconstructing Past Population trends* cit. The only attempt at comparing *census* and survey evidence from some areas of Italy has been sketched out by Robert Witcher. However he did not focus on the demographic debate or consider all its implications (see R. Witcher, *The extended metropolis: Urbs, suburbium and population*, in “Journal of Roman Archaeology”, 2005, 18, pp. 120-138).
- ²⁵ “[...] the credibility of survey results has to be evaluated within each regional context on the basis of the problems and conditions posed by the specific survey area, the methodology followed and specific answers that can be given to a series of questions related to the recovery, dating and interpretation of data”: J. Bintliff, K. Sbonias, *Demographic and ceramic analysis in regional survey*, in R. Francovich, H. Patterson, G. Barker (eds.), *Extracting Meaning from ploughsoil Assemblages*, Oxford 2000, p. 253.
- ²⁶ This approach constitutes the methodological core of my doctoral thesis where it will be discussed at length. What follows must be taken as a very simplified sketch in order to avoid the current study becoming overly technical and archaeologically-specific.
- ²⁷ Processual archaeology (originally known as ‘New Archaeology’) developed in the English speaking world from the 1960s. It was largely oriented towards the definition of general laws of human behaviour to be researched and tested by archaeological evidence. An introductory overview can be found in M. Johnson, *Archaeological Theory. An Introduction*, Oxford 1999, pp. 12-84; see also A. Launaro, *Concerning landscape*, in “Agri Centuriati”, 2004, 1, p. 35.
- ²⁸ L. Binford, *A consideration of archaeological research design*, in “American Antiquity”, 1964, 29, pp. 425-441.
- ²⁹ Post-processual archaeology developed mainly in Britain as a reaction to processual archaeology: it has been strongly influenced by recent tendencies in other disciplines like geography, anthropology and the social sciences at large: see Johnson, *Archaeological*, cit, pp. 98-115.
- ³⁰ In this sense, a fundamental theoretical statement has been C. Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape*, Oxford 1994, pp. 7-67.
- ³¹ Hence *cultural landscape*, a notion derived from Cultural Geography: see P. Claval, *La géographie culturelle*, Paris 1995.
- ³² See Launaro, *Concerning* cit., p. 35-37.
- ³³ The notion of Romanization has been long disputed and it is impossible to present an informed definition in this brief study. To simplify, Romanization means a complex process by which social, economic and cultural relationships were established on the background of Roman imperialism. For more see D.J. Mattingly (ed.), *Dialogues in Roman Imperialism*, Ann Arbor 1997 and S. Keay, N. Terrenato, *Italy and the West*, Oxford 2001. On landscapes of “resistance” and “opportunity” see S.E. Alcock, *Greece: a landscape of resistance?*, in D.J. Mattingly (ed.), *Dialogues in Roman Imperialism* cit., pp. 103-115; D.J. Mattingly, *Africa: a landscape of opportunity?*, *ibid.*, pp. 117-139.
- ³⁴ On this point see I. Hodder, S. Hutson, *Reading the Past. Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology*, Cambridge 2004 (particularly Chapter 7, Archaeology and history, pp.125-155).

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